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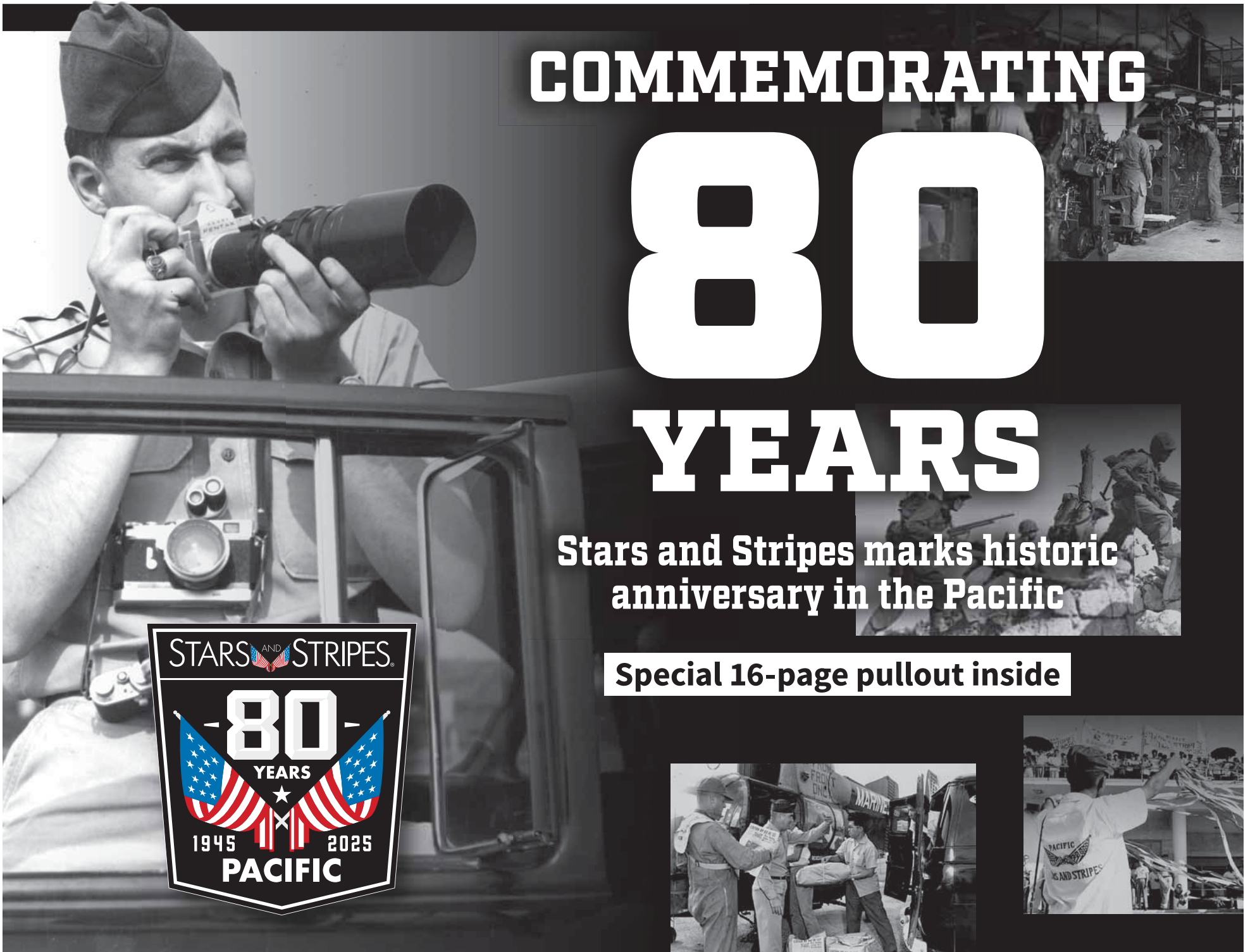
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Celebrating Month of the Military Child

MY LIFE

I am a military child
My parents serve the country
They let us have a free life
We smile at them with glee

Sometimes they have to leave for a while
They may be gone about half a year
Or maybe even more
When they come home, I cheer

I move to different place, just like Guam

It took me time to adjust
I slid right through the good and bad
But I trusted my parents with all my trust

I am a military child
My parents still push with all their might
They make many risks for us to live
So I won't have to grow up to fight

- Leanna Lim, 5th Grade
Andersen Elementary School

READ MORE MILITARY CHILDREN STORIES INSIDE



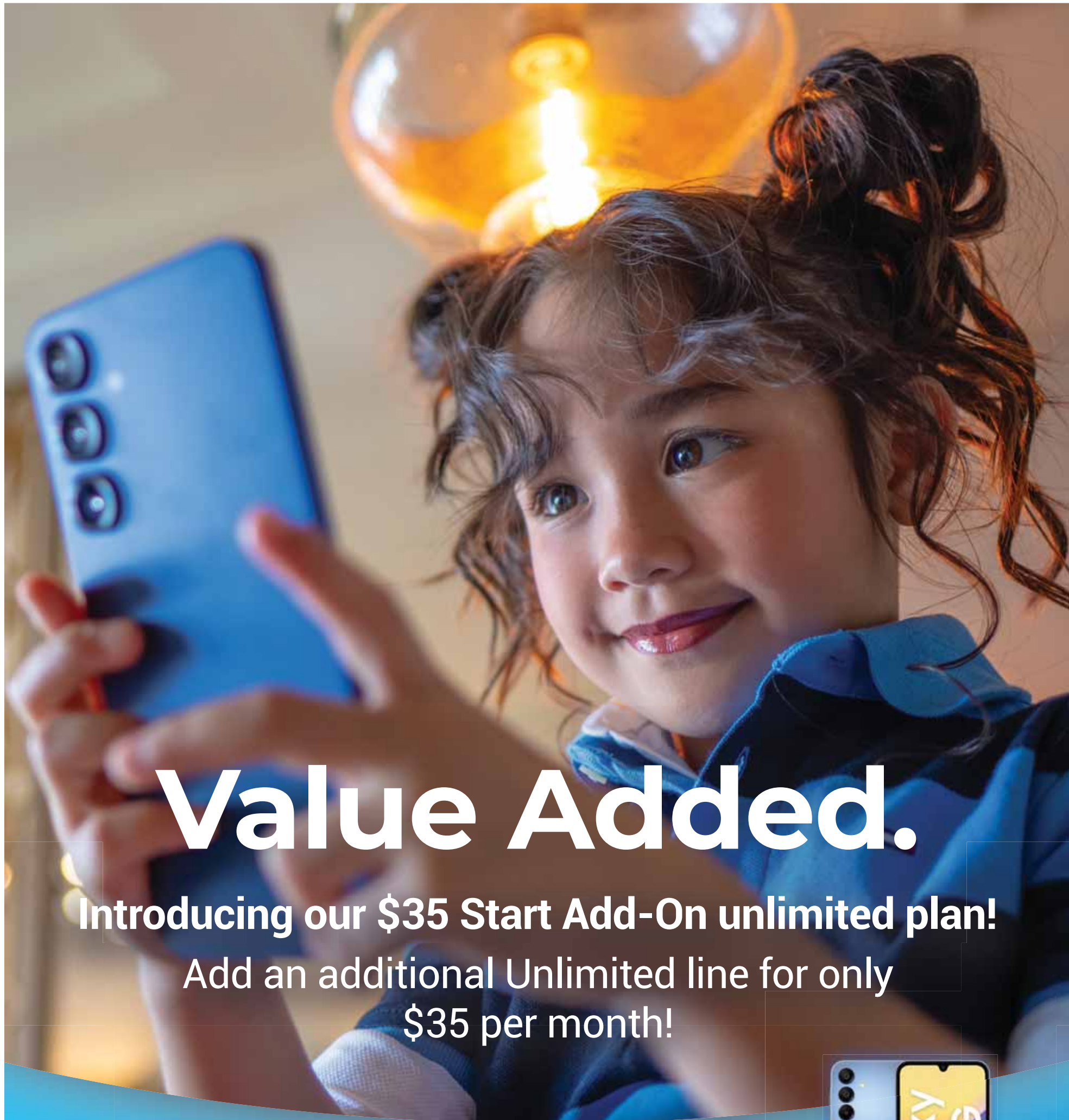
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celebrating Month of the Military Child Andersen Elementary School

3rd Grade * Mrs. Rhodes

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

By Callie Miller

My dad is in the military and that means I am a military child. I love being a military child but there are some bad things about it. Here are a few personal examples from my journey.



I get to travel all around the world. I have been to islands, mountains, and even deserts. It is fun going on all the planes when I travel. It is also fun trying new foods and getting to meet new people!

Whenever I move, I have to leave my old friends, and sometimes it is hard for me to make new friends quickly. When people start to know me, it ends up being time for us to move so that is always something I am thinking about. I also have to get used to the new places and people and try to respect their culture at the same time. The worst thing is that I don't get to see my family much! I miss seeing my family and hanging out with them and when I am not there I begin to feel like I am no longer a part of the family. I feel like the bond I have with my cousins is hanging on by a thread because we don't get to talk or play as often as we did in the past. Now that we are further away from them we can't go back home for short visits.

So while there are several bad things there are also good things about being a military child and it is an experience I would not want to change.

By Ava Montgomery

In my opinion being a military kid has its ups and downs. I have been able to make a lot of friends, and travel to many different places.



This life can be fun because you can make new friends often. Sometimes it can be difficult because you might have to move away, or your friend might have to move away. In my opinion this has been sad. Making new friends helped me along the way.

Another reason I like being a military kid is I get to travel the world. I have lived in Texas, North Dakota and Guam. I have traveled to and visited Japan, Alaska, Seattle, South Korea, and many other places. My favorite place so far was Japan!

In Conclusion, being able to travel the world is my favorite thing about being a military kid. My least favorite is leaving friends behind when moving to a new place. Therefore, being a military kid has its ups and downs.

By Grayson Jackson

To me being a Military kid is happy and sad because see and meet new cultures. And at the same time you have to leave friends and family when you PCS then make new friends. Being a military kid makes me feel special because there are so many military children and I am happy to be a part of that.

By London Bush

I like being a military child. I get to move to different places, like Japan, Boston, Washington, and Texas. It's awesome but I still miss my friends along the way. Being a military child has its ups and downs. I'm moving to Utah this year where a lot of my family lives so that means I'm leaving Guam. Sad but still I'm proud to be a military child!!!!!!



By Harpyr Schiffman

What it means to be a military kid to me is moving to different places, meeting new people, and making friends.

Being a military kid is sometimes really great because we get to move to a lot of really cool new places and countries. When we move we also get to go on lots of different vacations.



Sometimes moving is really sad though, I miss my old house and all my friends and my school. Change isn't easy for me and takes me a long time to know everything. But going to a new place means I make new friends.

Moving also means that sometimes my daddy has to leave, and I don't like it when my daddy leaves but I know he is protecting our country from bad guys.



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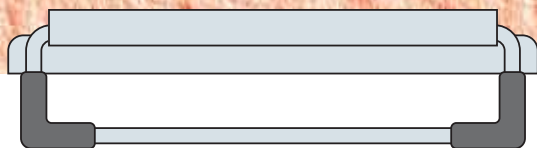
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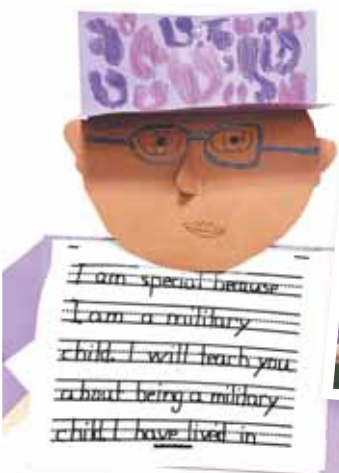
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What Does it Mean to be A Military Child?

By Hannah Pastor

Being a military child means a lot, it means that you never stay in one place forever, it means that you never only have one friend. My dad is in the military, he is in the Air Force. I am really proud of my dad because he works hard to serve our island and he makes me a military child.

I will tell you what being a military child means to me. Since I am a military child, my life has a lot of changes like: moving, making new friends, living in a new house, being enrolled in a new school, living in a new town or city. It is hard at first but you will get used to it. Just like I did, for me moving is actually fun now! When you move, it might be sad but it will be fun and exciting when you experience it.

My family goes through a lot of changes every few years and it is pretty hard and sad. But, I learned that being a military child is actually a fun experience because I get to visit new places, meet new people, and go to a new school. When I first moved, I was really sad because I lived in Germany for seven years. When I heard my family and I were moving to North Carolina, I was really sad. But, if I hadn't moved I wouldn't know what moving would be like and how it felt.

I was also enrolled in a new school and boy, was I nervous! But, then a girl named Journey came up to me and started talking to me. From then on, we were close friends. I made even more friends as the school year went on. Now, when I think about my first move I remember how sad I was but now I am happy that I moved. I made a lot of memories over the years.

To me, being a military child means: happiness, joy, emotion, and adventure. Being a military child is an adventure because like the people in those adventure movies they go through emotion, finding new surroundings, being happy, and when they reach where they were headed they are joyful. Just like military children. I am a proud military child! ☺

What It Means to be a Military Child

By London Jackson

There are a lot of things a military child goes through. Some of them are moving, exploring different cultures, and meeting many different people. There are also many ups and downs of being a military child and what I go through.

As a military child I move everywhere. When I move sometimes it makes me happy or excited, and sometimes it makes me upset, like a chunk of me gets ripped out and I need to start completely over. That is because making new friends is amazing but leaving old ones is really hard.

Since I'm a military child I have met so many people. That means I have a lot of friends. That also means that I have learned about many different cultures. Like when I moved to Guam, I knew nothing about the Chamorro culture but when I met new people and I learned about it in culture I felt a little more connected.

The last thing that military children go through is when parents get deployed. When my dad gets deployed he leaves for about 6 months and I don't see him until those 6 months are over. It makes me really upset to see him go but I know that I'll see him again. But I still get to call him every day before school. Even though it's not the same as when he's actually here, it's a huge step up from not talking to him at all.

Military children go through a lot of different things. But not all of them have to be hard to go through, especially because they aren't alone. That is what it means to be a military child.

What Does Being A Military Child Mean to Me

By Riley Harte

I am a military child. Being a military child can be good or challenging. I will tell you about three challenging things about being a

military child and three good things about being a military child.

One of the challenging things about being a military child is that you have to move a lot. When you move, you leave all of your friends behind. When you move you also have to pack everything up into boxes. You might lose one of your favorite toys! Or you could forget to pack something up and lose it!

Another challenging thing about being a military child is you have to go to different schools. Sometimes those schools have a different curriculum. Or sometimes those schools are in a different part of the world so they might speak a different language that you do not know. Maybe the school does things you are not used to and it takes a long time to get used to it. Or the school does things you already know so you are not learning right away.

One last challenging thing about being a military child is you have to make new friends. For some people they may like to make new friends, for others they may be shy and are afraid to make new friends. Or maybe none of the kids at school are like them and they are afraid to talk to them. Or maybe the kids speak a different language and you want to be their friend but they do not understand you.

One of the good things about being a military child is that you make new friends too! One thing is that you might find a friend that is better than the last. Or you could have the best friend ever and never ever want to leave them. Or last but not least, you could love your friend and they would like you and you stay in that one spot forever and have the best friend ever forever.

Another reason that being a military kid is that you could know a language that others don't know in your new home, or you could learn a new language. Some kids might think that speaking a different language is cool. So you will make friends easier. Or you could teach other kids to speak that language. Then those kids will move and maybe teach that language to other people.

The last reason being a military kid is good is because you could move places and there could be another culture and there might be some cool stuff that you like. Or there could be some new stuff that you have never seen before. Or you could see people that look and speak differently. This is good because this will teach you about different cultures. Last but not least there could be new friends from different cultures.

In conclusion, these are three of the bad things about being a military child, and three of the good things about being a military child. This is what I like about being a military child. I am glad that I am a military child.

What it Means To be a Military Child

By Alonzo Richardson

Have you ever had to move or travel to different places many times? I have. Some military kids travel more. Military kids like me and others have to go through things that other kids don't have to experience and that's fine. Just because we don't do stuff other kids do doesn't mean that we're different.

You travel across the world left and right and round and round. Being a military child means experiencing a different culture or history about the country or state you go to. You might come to the states, come to the islands and go back to the states.

You leave friends behind when you go somewhere else but the good thing is you make more friends. I made friends on the first day of school here on the island of Guam. You make memories with your best friend somewhere else then you leave but you make new memories wherever you go.

In conclusion, being a military child is really great! You learn different cultures, you learn new things, new history, and getting new friends. Being a military child is great and all. You make new memories with new friends. That is why I think being a military child is amazing!



celebrating Month of Andersen Element 4th Grade

What It Means to be a Military Child

By Aurelia Salinas

There are a lot of military kids in the world. As one of them I want to make sure that everyone knows that they aren't the only ones who go through the things that a military child has to go through. Hopefully, this will help other military children who are having trouble dealing with the things that a military child has to go through.

As a military child, there are a lot of things that my family has to go through. One of them is moving. It's a bit harder for my family to move since we have six people in our family. When I move it's like I leave half of my life on the other side of the world, where I can never reach it. I leave my friends, my family, and my home. But every time I left my home, I soon learned that everywhere is my home and that the other half of my life is unknown, or in other words, a mystery.

I've had friendships everywhere I've lived, and I've lived in a lot of places, including New Jersey, which is where I was born, Texas, Japan, Montana, and Guam, which is where I am now. My favorite part about moving is that I can make new friends and learn about different cultures, but I really hate leaving my other friends behind.

Another part about being a military child is that we can learn new things such as different cultures, different traditions, and maybe even different languages too. I'm Mexican but I don't even know how to speak Spanish, but my mom can.

Another thing about being a military child is that sometimes family members deploy. I know that my dad has deployed a few times. One time he even deployed for a year. It was very hard to have him gone for such a long time.

Learning new things, moving, leaving friends behind, it's all part of being a military child. But for me, I'm so lucky to be a military child because I get to travel across the world and meet new people, and I get to know some of their cultures too. That is why I love being a military child.

What Does it Mean to be a Military Child

By Claire Hardesty

Being a military child isn't easy. Being a military child is challenging. I should know. I am a military child. It means you don't have a group of friends forever or you don't grow up in the same house. I will tell you what it is like for me.

We all know it's hard to be a military child. You move to different houses, you get enrolled in new schools, get new friends. Look at it this way: You have a group of friends in one place and you don't want to leave them, right? Eventually, you move and meet new friends. This is a consistent life of being a military child.

Teachers, students, and staff work together to make schools like Andersen Elementary School (AES) a better place for students. That's what happens when you move. You make schools a better place to learn. You make people's days by just smiling at them. You help your family stay strong and keep pushing through the rough but I know what made this school such a cool place. All the people in my classroom rely on it: the military. Do you realize you're on GUAM! A tiny island it's only 212 mi² that's small! You do realize how lucky you are?! The military helped you get here with amazing principals, teachers, and friends. You can't buy friends or teachers like this, you have to make friends, you have to build the school community.

Because I'm a military child I got a chance to meet all of you, the staff and people that made this school a better place to learn. That is once in a lifetime. Unless we move back but that would be a 1% chance, again the military.

The first place that I moved to was Casablanca, Morocco in Africa. That place is HUGE. My brother and I didn't have school there so I couldn't meet anybody new for school. But I could meet a lot of people in the neighborhood. My best friend was Auchie, a dog. Although some might say dogs are easier to be friends with than people. He always crawled through our little fence to hang out. We also had a turtle named Rocco for Morocco. He used to eat hibiscus flowers and he also used to follow Auchie. But when it was time to move the owners wouldn't let us take Auchie so we had to leave him behind. We moved to Virginia without Auchie but got Red back, that is our other dog.

Once I moved to Virginia I went to Preschool. I was TERRIFIED! But I realized my parents were there to help me. It was fun to meet the class. In preschool I met a kid named Penny and no she was not an actual penny. She and I were best friends. The one thing that helped me make friends were my parents.

That is what it's like to be a Military child. It's a whole bunch of emotions to get used to. But your family is there to guide you.

What Does it Means

By Gavin

What does it mean to be a military child? Some military children go on all of these fun adventures. Well that is true, but to me means leaving schools, and finding new friends.

As a military child I know what it's like. I was born in Nevada, then I was in Texas for a while. I went to South Carolina, then I came back from South Carolina to Guam where I am now. I have friends throughout all of these places. I stayed strong and brave.

When I moved here I didn't know what school was going to be like. On the first day of school I met amazing friends, teachers, and staff. Andersen Elementary School is a great place to learn.

It's not just leaving schools that's hard, it's leaving friends. It's hard to find a house to buy when you are used to your old home. It's hard to find the people you used to be friends with because you might be in a new place.

In conclusion, being a military child is hard while you move, but you make new friends. If you are a military child you can get through the hard times. This is what it means to be a military child to me.

What is it like to be a Military Child

By Leila

What is it like to be a military child? I think it's fun to move to different places. I have to move away from my friends and family. Sometimes your mom or dad have to go on a work trip. I have to go with them, sure it's sad to leave presents from different friends.

When I first moved to a new place, I was scared. At the end of first quarter in school, the classroom everyone was in was a substitute asked one of my friends to be my friend. I was shy at first but I wanted to explore and become friends with everyone. I learned about new cultures and languages.

Since we move around a lot, I am my closest family member. I am the Taino family. He keeps me through and when we do our secret language. I like things like we both don't want to go back home. I'm a military brat. He is here with me, when I move.

When you're a military child, you PCS a lot. You can probably have never met before. I have a lot of my cousins live there. I would meet them there. I have a BFF and she and I have a lot of fun. Whenever we meet in the world. That's one of the things mentioned in so many different



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of the Military Child mentary School * Ms. Perez



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That is what I think being a military child
is about in my opinion. You can learn different
languages and speak with people you want to
be friends with and communicate with their
friends too. You visit with your family and en-
joy new places.

What it Means To Be a Military Child By Akira Shankles

These are the meanings about being a
military child. There are a lot of mean-
ings of being a military child. It may be
sad or good. I handle these tough times yearly.
In every way I make the year fun.

You probably want to know about the good
stuff, so I guess I will do this first. Whenever I
travel around the world, I stay happy and hope
the flight goes well. I just have to try and look
on the bright side. So I learn a lot of new stuff.
Like probably something that I have never done
at my old school before.

I will add more facts about the good stuff.
I get to meet new people. They teach me a
new language. Also, they make me feel more
comfortable like at home. Maybe a lot of new
friends. Just like my old school.

Now I will tell you about the sad stuff. I
sometimes have a different point of view. For
example, when I leave my old school I would lose
my friends there. I never asked for it but that's
just how life is.

I will talk about some more sad stuff. Some-
times they would probably speak a language
you don't know. It's frustrating to try and un-
derstand them. So it's harder for me to make
new friends. Sometimes the teacher does not
know the language that I know.

As you can see, this is what it means to be a
military child. It's also why I am still proud to be
a military child. These meanings were the bright
side and the sad side. But, when it's time for me
to sacrifice, it will be good for me in the end.

What it Means to be a Military Child By Loralai Lashley

Being a military child is hard but some-
times fun. My dad is a retired Air Force
engineer. He was in the military for
twenty years. He is now working on a building
layout on Camp Blaz, the new Marine Base on
Guam. We've moved about five times. My dad
was born in Ohio. If my dad did not join the
military I would have not been born. My dad
moved to Guam because of the military and met
my mom.

It's hard to be a military child because you
go through a lot of moving, changes, and your
parents sometimes have to travel for a work
project. My dad had to go for a lot of stuff like
weddings for his military friends or to work on
a building. The first time we got to go with him
was when we moved to Boston. That's when I
was born. I don't know how long we were there
but after I was born we went to Georgia where
we lived for about a year.

Then we moved to Alaska that is where I
picked my first pumpkin. Alaska was the cold-
est place I've been to so far. After the move
to Alaska we went to Colorado. That's when I
went to daycare at the Child Development Cen-
ter. My dad had work and my mom worked at
the CDC. Every time she had a long shift my dad
would pick me up and take me home, or I waited
in the lounge.

After 2-3 years we moved to Ohio. Where
I went to grand mountain school for first to
second grade. When I got out of first grade we
went to Guam but i am sad that all my friends
are still in Ohio. I go to DoDEA and have a
friend named Audrey. She is moving soon but
that is what happens when you go to a DoDEA
school and make friends.

Ever since my dad joined the military we
got to travel and take a trip. We all chose Japan
to take a trip to because we were planning to
go to both Disneysea and just Disney. We went
on a plane and saw a Japan airport. We had a
hard time adjusting to the weather. We all got
on an Uber that took us to Tokyo. We got to
our hotel and went out to eat. Luckily my dad
was military because we didn't have Yen.

When we got back we had four days left of
spring break so when they were over , more
school. I was happy seeing Audrey again after
a long break. In May she will be moving. That is
why I'm sad. I've gone through a lot of moving,
packing, and having to make new friends.

Being a military child is hard, but also has
great parts too. I enjoy taking trips, meeting
new people, and enjoying my family.

How it Feels to Be a Military Kid By Arwin Fresnoza

Being a military kid can be sad and chal-
lenging. I remember feeling sad and
missing my friends when my family
moved to Guam.

Being a military kid is having to leave my
old friends though I still have a friendship with
them I still miss them. I had a lot of old friends
back then but i will never forget about the
friendship I had with my old friends. When I
was five my dad left me to shore for 2 years
just to serve and protect the country.

My dad had to fight off different kinds of
ships. I love my school now but I will still miss
and love my old teachers and friends. I still
love my school now because I have new friends
and teachers.

Why it's sad to be a military child for me
is my family and I have to move to a different
house because we had to move. We had a lot of
memories in the house we used to live in.

It could be sad for other kids or people, but
all of this is why it's sad for me to be a military
kid. I keep the memories close and make the
most of the next place we move with my family.

What it Means to Be a Military Child By Kade Cruz

Being a military child is sometimes chal-
lenging because you make new friends
and you leave old friends. Also, moving is
expensive but it is sometimes fun! Like maybe
a new friend might be silly or fun! Making new
friends and discovering new places are fun too!
If there is an amusement park, you can go there.

Being a military child is fun because you can
make a new adventure. A new home can help
too! Some people think that being a military
child is wrong. They are right, but there is a lot
of fun being a military child. Also, there might
be a chance to see your old friend. That's ex-
citing, right?

Some people are not military, but they can
be a connected military child! Everyone can
have fun when you become a military child.
Making new friends, a new house, going to an
amusement park, everything that you do when
you become a military child

That is what it means to be a military child!

5th Grade * Dr. Duenas

What is it like to be
a military child?
By Taisiia Stepanova

I am a military child
To be one is very hard
We travel all around the world
Our parents sometimes guard

I just recently moved to Guam
I went to a new school
I met many people
It is very cool

To be a military child
It is very hard
Going to new schools
Getting some report cards

Before I came to Guam,
I lived in the USA
I said many goodbyes
So many things to say

In the United States,
My dad went away
So many times in a couple of
years
But he still came back someday

What is it like to be
a military child?
By Leanna Lim

I am a military child
My parents serve the coun-
try
They let us have a free life
We smile at them with glee

Sometimes they have to leave for a
while
They may be gone about half a year
Or maybe even more
When they come home, I cheer

I move to different place, just like Guam
It took me time to adjust
I slid right through the good and bad
But I trusted my parents with all my trust

I am a military child
My parents still push with all their might
They make many risks for us to live
So I won't have to grow up to fight

What does it mean to be
a military child?
By Maiia Stepanova

Being a military child means
Traveling to places
Going to new schools
And seeing new faces

These places may change weather
It may change from hot to cold
The weather here on Guam is different
It always changes and it's hard to be foretold

When you have parents that work in the mili-
tary
You may see them fly away for a while
My dad was once gone for 8 months
When he came back I just couldn't hold back
my smile

Moving to new new places
Means saying many goodbyes
But it also means
Meeting new people and saying hi's



What Being a Military Child Means to Me
By Alayah Shaw

I am a military child
People think its nice
But year after year its wild
Next year I might be skating on ice

I get to see places you might never see
I get to meet people around the world
I'm losing friends left and right so just
let me be
My friends from the other side of
the world

I miss my friends
Sometimes I want to cry
I hope this nightmare will end
I really don't know why

But on the good side I make new friends
Sometimes I wish it will never end
It is a weird mix of emotion
And now I show devotion

You can watch me roar
You can't watch me cry in a cave
Being a military child
Means I am strong and brave



Annie

Write a message to your
graduate in this space.
You can write up to a
maximum of 20 words.

Sender's name

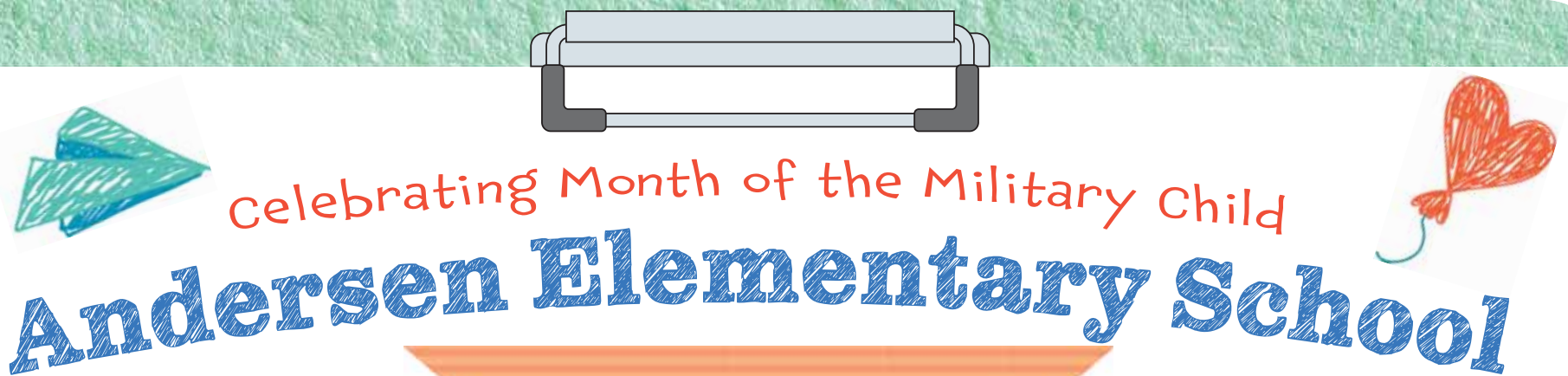
Congratulate a 2025 grad!

Our annual Grad Tab highlighting
Pacific DODEA high schools and their
graduating classes will appear in the
May 26 edition of Stripes Guam.

For just \$19, customize your own
message that will appear in this
keepsake edition.

What you need:
• A photo of the graduate
• Graduate's first name
• Your name, as you want it to appear in
print (e.g. "Suzy & Steve" or "Mom & Dad")
• A congratulatory message of no
more than 20 words
• The graduate's high school

Send info by May 13, 5 p.m. to
PacificGrad@stripes.com
and a Stripes representative will
follow-up with you right away.



celebrating Month of the Military Child Andersen Elementary School

Month of the Military Child
By Isabelle Hyde

Being a Military child is exciting and kinda scary at the same time. As a military child I get to travel and move to different places. All the places I have lived in were Germany, South Carolina and now Guam.

What I like about being a military child is that I get to see new places and get discounts when eating at a restaurant. What I don't like about being a military child is having to leave my friends. Do you like being a military child?

By Aaron Alarcon

1. What is it like to be a Military child? It's awesome/cool but sometimes it's kind of sad. The cool thing is you can go on base and live there where bad guys most likely will not rob you or harm you. Another thing is that you can get a Military discount for example when you're buying a ticket to fly to let's say for example Italy. They also have on base a barber shop and they are very good at the Military cut but when I get my haircut it's not the way my mom wants it.
2. The Sad part is that for my family I don't know if it's the same for other families, but we only stay in a country or island for three years and then we move and that means you have to say goodbye to your friends. But luckily for me when I moved and got to fifth grade it was kind of like my old friends in fourth grade in Texas. But when I was getting packed up, I had to destroy my Lego table but when I got here it turned out cooler then it was in Texas.
3. But being a Military child isn't that bad even though you lost friends along the way. But you can still remember them in your heart or in your mind and while you are leaving somewhere else you will still be remembered by the kids you remember. So never forget your friends when you are a military connected child who has nothing to lose.

What is it like to be a military connected child?
By Cameron Fernandez

Being a Military Child feels fun because you get to travel but you always have to say goodbye to your friends. Having to say goodbye to your friends is sad but your family is always with you. Being a Military Child is fun because you can say hello to new friends. My friends Eleveni and Ian have been there ever since first grade. They have been good friends to me. Military children travel to new stations overseas. At school, my friends hangout with me and we always play American football or basketball. Playing sports with my friends has always been fun.

5th Grade * Ms. Bertucco

By Iris Wilcox

Being a military child can be sad because you leave friends, family, and people that you love. I had to leave all my friends, and I miss them. I had all my family where I used to live, and I love and miss them all. I will probably never see those friends or teachers again. I don't know if I will be at peace with it or never will, but I will make new friends and hopefully not be sad anymore. What I am trying to say is that you will and can get through this. Also, you are not alone. There are others like you. Smile, be friendly, and you will make new friends. Trust me.

By Layla Walters

Being a military connected child has pros and cons. One thing that I like about being a military child is that you can travel to cool places like Guam, Japan, et cetera. Another cool thing about being a military child is that you can celebrate Month of the Military Child. Every school I've gone to while my dad was in the Air Force had a big celebration for April. (MOMC)

Although being a military connected child can be cool, it can also have some downsides. For example, right now, all of my grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins are in Kentucky, which is almost three days of traveling away. Being far from family isn't the best. Same with friends. It might be hard to keep in touch because of time differences.

So, being a military connected child isn't all that bad, and isn't all that good. Whether it comes to deployments, MOMC, or travelling, it can have a good or bad side to all of it. What do you think? I, personally, don't think being a military connected child is that bad. I thankfully have the privilege to FaceTime family and friends. Other than me being far away from them, it isn't too bad.

What is it Like to be a Military Connected Child
By Lars Anderson

In my opinion being a military child can be challenging. I am constantly moving and saying goodbye to friends. I also enjoy being a military child because I am always seeing new places. Even though I am saying goodbye to friends, I'm still making new ones. That is my opinion on being a military child.

All About Being A Military Connected Child
By Ysabella F.

What is a military connected child?

A military connected child is when someone in your family is in the military. Either your mom, your dad or brother or sister.

What are the privileges you get as a military connected child?

The privileges you get as a military child is that April is also called the month of the military child. In some places mostly schools on a base does this thing called spirit week on the first day of april.



In my experience

In my experience being a military kid is cool and a little sad. It's cool and great to travel around the world. And it is sad to see people leave. Sometimes I am the one who is leaving.

Ending

That is what it is like being a military connected child.

By Mason Beardsley

The downside of being a military child is that each time you move you literally restart your life. You have to make new friends, have a new school, get a new house, live in a whole different town or city, etc. I've done this 3 times in my life. I went to California, Key West (is the southernmost point of America), and Guam (in the middle of the Pacific Ocean). I'm 10 by the way. Fun Fact about Key West: Key West is closer to Cuba in miles than it is to Florida's mainland.

That was the down sides of being a military child. So these are the perks of being a military child. Well, you get to travel around America, you get military benefits, you get to serve the military, you get to protect your country and finally be honored for your service in the military. One of the military benefits is a military discount. Military discount is a discount for when you buy something. Some stores don't take military discount.

I think being a normal kid is better than being a military child. Because when you move you have to make new friends again. Then you have to do the whole process all over again. That is all about how it is like to be a military child.

What is it like to be a military connected child?
By Ariella Benton

Being a military connected child can be very sad. You need to say goodbye to pets and friends when you move to different places. You might have to leave your pets with people you do or don't know. You need to say goodbye to friends when you leave. At the same time, being a military child is fun. You get to meet new people and make new friends. Being in the military means you might be risking your life. You may need to say goodbye if one of your family members dies in a war or loses a friend in a war. Sometimes, when you see a friend again, they might have changed. If you're lucky, they are still a friend. If your childhood friend is now being mean to you, all you need to do is walk away. Moving around is fun because you get to learn new languages and go to new schools. What is it like for you to be a military connected child?

By Joshua T.

Being a military child is hard because you have to leave the friends you have made. But it is also fun because you get to travel around the world and experience new culture, foods, places, and so much more.

And you can make new friends that could be different meeting different people is a good thing though because if everyone was the same then life would be boring. Even though moving can be hard your family will always be there for you because they might know how it feels because whether a friend or you moves it is still sad for you both. But that just means the people who go to your school should be greeted with a warm welcome. And must ask, was there ever a time where you moved to your new school and on the first day everyone was kind and everyone told how everything works and the schedule of school and just giving a helping hand on what they could?

But anyway that is just I feel you should be treated when you have just gotten to a new school. This is what being a military child feels is like for me.



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



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celebrating Month of the Military Child Andersen Elementary School

1st Grade * Mrs. Herrera



Ashron 4-8-2024
Why I like being a military kid I like when they celebrate us I like when we travel to different countries. I like when we meet our friends. I like being a military kid. Do you?

Ashton D.



Dylan Wilkerson 4-8-25
I love being a military kid I can help and make new friends I can visit places and speak languages I can also learn about the military and have things to you like being a military kid?

Dylan Wilkerson



Early 4-8-25
This is why I like being a military kid. I get to travel and go to different places. I like eating different foods and learning new stuff. Do you want to be a military kid?

Early Tamondong



Olivia Easterlin
I like being a military kid. I get to make new friends. I get to try new food. I get to learn about the military. I get to travel. Do you want to be a military kid?

Olivia Easterlin



Spencer 4-8-2025
I love being a military kid I can move far away. Me and my family travel things. Me and my family went to Japan and I got a Stitch. Do you like being a military?

Spencer Egbert



Rhea A. 4-8-25
I like being a military child. You can make new friends. You can travel on planes and eat new food. I can learn about the military. Are you a military child?

Rhea Alarcon



Jordyn Ballard 4-8-25
Why I like being a military child. I get celebrated every April. I get to make new friends and get to try new food. I can learn about the military and visit places.

Jordyn Ballard



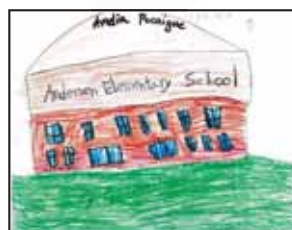
Adamina Tiki 4-8-25
Why do I like being a military child. My dad gets to go on first class. We get to try new food. Last year can help.

Adamina Tiki



Kaiden 4-8-25
This is why I like being a military child. I like to travel and meet new people. We learn new languages. We get celebrated on April and we get new friends. How about you?

Kaiden Reyes



Andra P. 4/11/2025
This is why I like being in a military school. We support the flag. We learn new stuff. We learn how to be safe. When we get different grades we get smarter. I love my school.

Andra P.

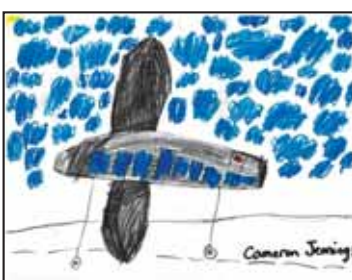


Elijah Killian 4-8-25
Why I like being a military kid. I like being a military kid because I can travel and help people. I like to try new food. I like learning about the military.

Elijah Killian

Michael S. 4-9-2024
Why I like being a military child. I get to learn languages. I get to try new food. We celebrate us. I love being a military child.

Michael Serman



Sammy 4-8-25
This is why I like being a military kid. I can travel. I can learn new stuff. I can help people. Are you a military kid too?

Sammy Raymond

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CELEBRATING MONTH OF
THE MILITARY CHILD

McCool Elementary Middle School

2nd Grade • Mrs. Torres



I Am A...
By: Charlie Weniger

My name is Charlie
I was born in Virginia
Loving
Intelligent
Tidy
Amazing
Really good at math
Youth

Cool
Helpful
Informational
Loving
Do good stuff

I am ...

My name is Elena Jensen
I feel safe
Loved
Improving
Terrifying
Awesome
Really good
Youth

Cool
Happy
I'm good
Like my life
Doing good in school

I Am A Military Child...
By: Caleb Min

My name is Caleb Min.
Incredible
Loving
Intelligent
Talented telling stories
Awesome
Ready
Your friend

Cool
Healthy
Invincible
Likable
Delightful

I AM A MILITARY CHILD.....

M. My name is Khaden Hernandez
I. Im loved.
L. Im brave.
I. I like PE.
T. I try my best.
A. Talent.
R. Respect.
Y. Your friend.

C. Careful.
H. Healthy.
I. I am a goal getter.
L. Lovey.
D. Delightful.

I am a Military Child
By: McKinzee Kicrease

My name is McKinzee
I love my family
Loving
I like soccer
Terrific
A hard worker
You're my friend

Caring
Happy
I love Art
Learner
Daddy's girl

I AM A...
By: Adina

My name is Adina
Independent
Loving
Incredible
Talented
Amazing
Ready
Your friend

Child
Helpful
I like Cheerleading
I love Taylor swift
Delightful

I AM A Military Child
By: Sawyer Brown

My name is Sawyer Brown.
I love playing games.
Loving
Invisible
Talented
Awesome
Robot lover
Your friend

Child
Hard working
Invincible
Loving
Delightful

I Am A Military Child
By: Stella Westman

My name is Stella Westman
I love my family
Loving
I like sports
Talent
Awesome
Running
Your friend

Caring
Helpful
I love art
Learning
Delightfully

I Am a Military Child...
By: Sullivan Hardt

My name is Sully
I am 8.
Love my mom and dad
I like going to zoos.
Tough kid
Adding numbers is my favorite
Really good at math
Yes I like school

Caring
Helpful
Interesting
Loved
Daring

I AM A...
By: Serri Powell

My name is Serri
Informational
Loving
Tree climber
A hard worker

Child
Helpful
Intelligent
Loving
Delightful

I Am a Military Child
By: Abbygale Tomeldan

My name is Abbygale
Incredible
Love puppies
Intelligent
Terrific
Awesome
Ready
Your friend

Cool
Hatch
Insane
Loving
Daring

I Am a Military Child...
By: Ezra Pocaigue

My name is Ezra
I love my dogs.
Loving
I like Art
Terrific
A hard worker
Ready to learn
Your friend

Caring
Happy
I love me.
Learner
Dad is my hero.

I AM A MILITARY CHILD...
By: Caleb Smith

My name is Caleb Smith.
I try my best every day.
Loved
Intelligent
Talented
Angel
Respectful
Young

Creative
Helpful
Informational
Love dinosaurs
Dinosaur fan

MY NAME IS THANE SICHENGA
I LOVE TO INVENT NEW THINGS
LOVED
INVINCIBLE
TALENT
AWESOME
RESPECTFUL
YOUR COOL

CARING
HELPFUL
I LOVE MINDCRAFT
LOVING
DO EVERY THING I BEEN TOLD

I Am A Military Child...
By: Easton Beuter

My name is Easton.
Improving
Loving
I'm kind
Tree climber
Amazing
Ready

Cool
Helpful
Intelligent
Loving
Dependent

I am a...

My name is Eli
Intelligent
Loving
Informative
Terrific
A good kid sometimes
Really good at practically everything
Your helper/friend

Can run all day
Has a dad in the military
Impressive
Loves the U.S.A
Does want to be a veteran

I AM A...
By: Rowen Melton

My name is Rowen
I am nice
Loving
I am safe
Treat full
Art
Really nice
Your friend

Christian
Holy
Intelligent
Little
Descriptive

I am a

My name is Van
Informational
Loving
Intelligent
Awesome
Ready
Youth

Cool
Happy
Incredible
Logic
Diligent













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- Graduate's first name
- Your name, as you want it to appear in print (e.g. "Suzy & Steve" or "Mom & Dad")
- A congratulatory message of no more than 20 words
- The graduate's high school

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Annie

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Macaroni

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TIKI BAR



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Boonie Stomps Guam

INFORMATION PROVIDED BY
GUAM BOONIE STOMPERS



Ague cove

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 8 AM. 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. 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



SCHEDULE 2025	
May 17 (Sat.)	Southern Mountain to Finacresta (2x Difficult)
May 24 (Sat.)	Ague Cove (Medium)
May 31 (Sat.)	Ghost Cave (Difficult)
Jun. 7 (Sat.)	Gun Beach, FaiFai to Tanguissan Beach (Medium)
Jun. 14 (Sat.)	Southwest Coast (Agat to Umatac) (Difficult)
Jun. 21 (Sat.)	Jumullong Manglo' "Summer Solstice Sunrise Hike" (Medium)
Jun. 28 (Sat.)	Faha and Priest Pools (Easy)

FOR EVERYONE'S SAFETY:
No Pets Allowed
No Drones Allowed

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



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.

Complete 10 Boonie Stomp hikes to earn a free Boonie Stomp T-Shirt.

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Crossword

by Margie E. Burke

ACROSS

1 Kind of blocker
5 Like the Sahara
9 Rolex rival
14 Hollywood's Ken or Lena
15 Playing with a full deck
16 Plant root
17 Draws a bead on
18 Wavering
20 Cheap ship accommodations
22 Youth's inn
23 Inventor Nikola
24 Gas guzzler
26 Enduring
28 Large vases
32 Longtime CBS News host Charles
34 Of the stars
36 Holiday guests, often
37 Petal-plucker's word
39 Nada
40 Langley group
41 Ordering option
44 Mouth-watering
46 Texter's "seize the day"
47 Key element (var.)
49 "Streetcar" cry
51 Laundry pairs
54 "Dust in the Wind" group
57 Jolie of film
59 Juice drink brand
61 Guinness and others
62 Hit heavily
63 Culture medium
64 Herbal brews
65 Studly guys
66 Nevada city
67 Whirlpool-like current

DOWN

1 Talk big
2 Cream of the crop
3 Striking clock, e.g.
4 San _____, California
5 Qatar's continent
6 Yogi's nemesis
7 Hits the tab key, say
8 Wallace of "E.T."
9 Hunter of myth
10 Spa staffer
11 Make revisions to _____ and take
13 Figure skating jump
19 Immature
21 Quimby of kid-lit
25 Profit
27 Like argon or radon
29 Made peace
30 Hair removal brand
31 Kill, as a dragon
32 Rubber-stamp

Answers to Previous Crossword:

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

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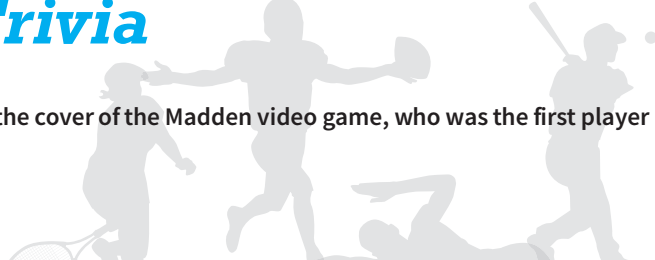
Contact Us
Doug Johnson, Guam Multimedia Consultant
E-mail: johnson.douglas@stripes.com • DSN: 355-5160 /671-687-5041



Stripes Sports Trivia

After many years of the namesake himself on the cover of the Madden video game, who was the first player to grace the cover?

Answer *Eddie George*



SUDOKU

Difficulty: Easy

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

Edited by Margie E. Burke

HOW TO SOLVE:

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

Answer to Previous Sudoku:

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

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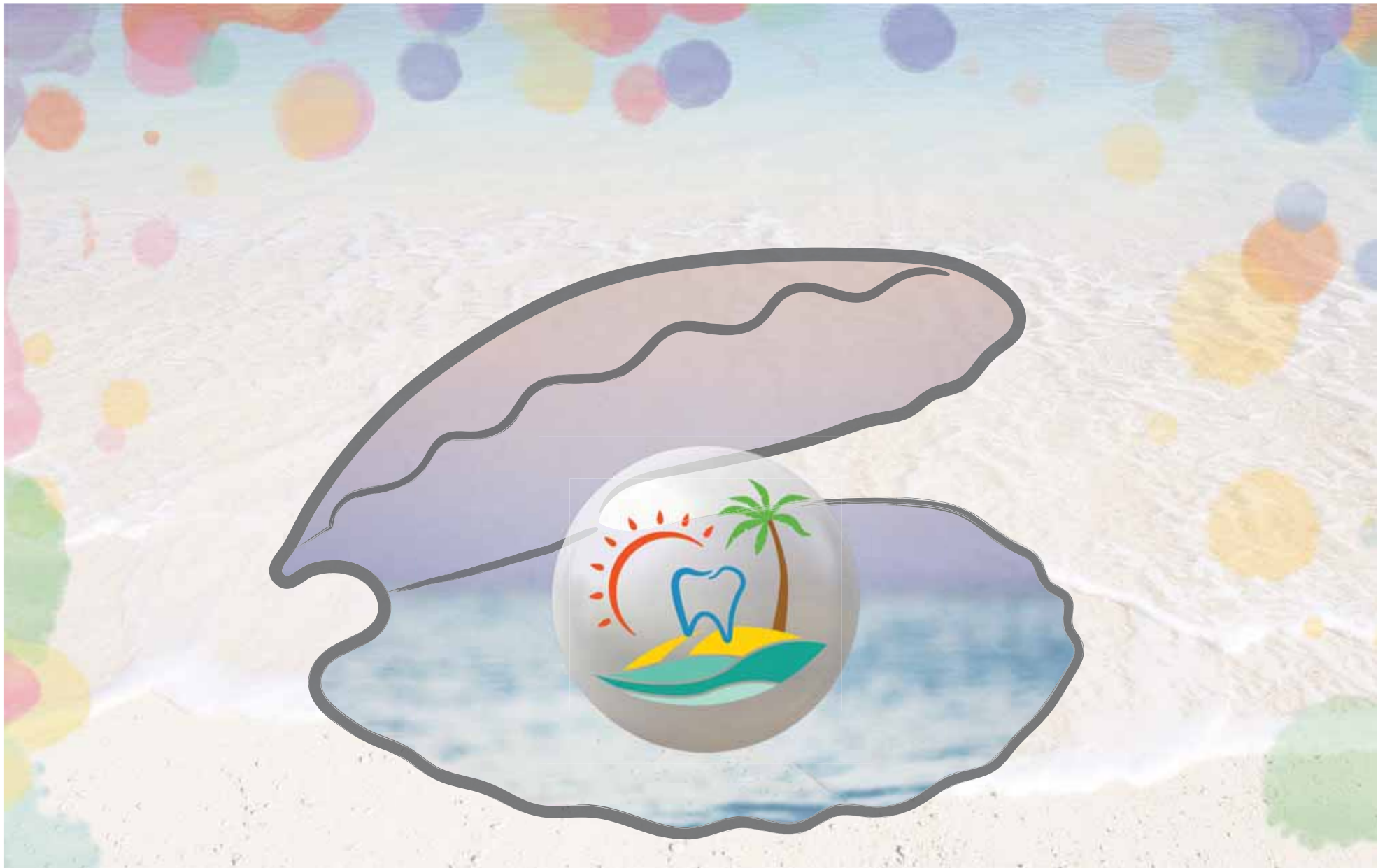
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4-page pullout



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 16th Agat Mango Festival on May 23-25. 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

■ 16th Mango Sunset 2k/5k Run/Walk

LOCATION: Agat Mayor’s Office
HOURS: May 17 (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)

■ 16th Agat Mango Festival

LOCATION: Sagan Bisita (adjacent to Community Center, Agat Mayor’s Office and Post Office)

May 23 (6 p.m. – 10 p.m.)

6 – 7 p.m. Opening Ceremony
7 – 7:30 p.m. Marcial A. Sablan Elem.
7:30 – 8:30 p.m. OMS Choir
9 p.m. Fireworks

May 24 (10 a.m. – 10 p.m.)

11 – 11:30 a.m. Pika Burger Contest
11:30 a.m. – noon Pika Mango Contest
Noon – 1 p.m. Jonah Hanom
1 – 2 p.m. Bright Eyes
2 – 3:30 p.m. Kanani & Company
3:30 – 4 p.m. Talent Box
4 – 5 p.m. Marinas Revival
5 – 7 p.m. Malak Mo’na
7 – 10 p.m. Mix Plate

May 25 (10 a.m. – 10 p.m.)

10 – 11 a.m. Awards
11 a.m. – 1 p.m. Strangers w/Candy
1 – 3:30 p.m. Kanani & Company
3:30 – 4 p.m. Talent Box
4 – 6 p.m. Precious Metal
6 – 7 p.m. Local Strings
7 – 8 p.m. Guma Nina’en Acho Latte
8 – 9 p.m. Raffle



festival with the Mango Sunset 2k/5k Run/Walk on May 17. 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

A Taste of Guam

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RESTAURANT INFO

Tasty treats



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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GUAM.STRIPES.COM

peach mangos, to name 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 25 at 8 p.m.

Besides these culinary and entertainment

features, the festival is also a good chance to get various wares and collectibles handmade 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 25 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 this fun festival?
taguchi.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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RESTAURANT INFO

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GUAM EDITION

MAY 12, 2025

Opening day approaching

Marine barracks nearly
ready on Guam **Page 2**



Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Chairman U.S. Marine Corps Sgt. Maj. Troy Black speaks with military leaders outside the barracks and recreation facility construction site at Marine Corps Base Camp Blaz, Guam, in March.

SAMANTHA JETZER/U.S. Navy

COVER STORY

Blaz's new barracks nearing completion

Okinawa-based Marines could move to Guam this summer

By ALEX WILSON
Stars and Stripes

Marines are expected to arrive at their new quarters on Camp Blaz, still a work in progress on Guam, as early as June, a base spokeswoman said recently.

Blaz anticipates about 75 junior Marines and sailors to begin moving into bachelor enlisted quarters, Maj. Diann Rosenfeld told Stars and Stripes by email.

"Current planning efforts support the commander's priority to begin moving Marines and Sailors into the barracks aboard the Main Cantonment as early as June," she wrote. "The barracks are designed to support the ranks of sergeant and below."

The base has eight enlisted barracks under construction with a capacity for about 600 troops each, for a total of around 4,800 Marines, Rosenfeld added.

Blaz — the first new Marine Corps installation in 72 years — is still largely under construction, but the base has completed numerous projects as it prepares for an influx of Marines from Okinawa.

The Marines opened their first chow hall on the island on April 18 at nearby Andersen Air Force Base's North Ramp, where the Marines plan to locate their aviation element.

The chow hall is open to all active-duty service members on Guam, according to a Marine news release that day.

"Our program's mission is to ensure the fighting force is eating healthy and sustaining them-



AFTON SMILEY/U.S. Marine Corps

Marines eat during the grand-opening of the first Camp Blaz-owned chow hall at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, in April.

selves," Master Sgt. Kelvin Tapia, the camp's acting food service officer, said in the release. "[This is] not just for Camp Blaz but for all the rotating forces in the Pacific."

Two bachelor officers quarters, each capable of housing an additional 388 Marines, are also under construction, Rosenfeld said.

"Ongoing construction completion dates for these living quarters is phased over the next one to three years," she wrote.

About 4,000 Marines are expected to move from Okinawa to Guam, part of a 2012 agreement between the U.S. and Japan to reduce the American military footprint on Okinawa, where nearly 30,000 of the 55,000 U.S. service members in Japan are stationed.

About 1,300 members of III Marine Expeditionary Force

may be permanently stationed on Guam, while another 3,700 Marines may rotate through the island on temporary deployments.

The Defense Policy Review Initiative relocates some Marine assets from Okinawa to Guam, and elsewhere, including Hawaii. Japan is providing approximately \$3 billion of the estimated \$8.6 billion to build Blaz and other infrastructure.

Completed projects on Guam include numerous infrastructure upgrades, an aviation maintenance hangar, a waterfront headquarters building at Naval Base Guam, family housing units at Andersen, a fire station and an administration building, according to a Dec. 18 email from Rosenfeld.

wilson.alex@stripes.com
@AlexMNWilson



ALEX WILSON/Stars and Stripes

Guam contractors work on a portion of one of Marine Corps Base Camp Blaz's bachelor enlisted quarters in December.

Army names its new hypersonic missile 'Dark Eagle'

By CAITLYN BURCHETT
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Army dubbed its new hypersonic missile the "Dark Eagle," paying tribute to a U.S. national symbol, as the developing system nears the end of testing.

The land-based, truck-launched weapon has a reported range of more than 1,700 miles. The hypersonic missile is intended to be maneuverable, potentially making it more difficult to detect and intercept. "Eagle" is for the national bird, representing independence, strength

and freedom, the Defense Department said. Meanwhile, "dark" embodies the missile's long-range firing capability meant to take out enemy targets with the goal of being undetectable.

"The Dark Eagle brings to mind the power and determination of our country and its Army as it represents the spirit and lethality of the Army and Navy's hypersonic weapon endeavors," the Defense Department said.

The Dark Eagle has been tested in recent years by the Army's Rapid Capabilities and Critical

Technologies Office and the Navy's Strategic Systems Programs, which partnered to field land and sea variants of the hypersonic weapon. Originally, the Army planned to have the first system in the hands of soldiers by late 2023. But from 2021-2023, testing of the Dark Eagle has failed, delaying the deployment of the system to at least September 2025.

The weapon successfully completed at least two end-to-end flight tests in 2024, which evaluate the performance of the system from launch to target en-

gagement. The first successful test was June 2024, with the missile launching from the Pacific Missile Range Facility in Kauai, Hawaii, according to the Defense Department. A second successful test was announced by the Pentagon in December 2024. The missile was launched from Cape Canaveral Space Force Station in Florida.

The Army originally planned for three flight tests before putting it in the hands of soldiers, according to the Congressional Research Service.

The Government Accountabil-

ity Office, a federal watchdog, said in 2024 that with successful flight tests, the initial missiles could be fielded by July 2025. The Defense Department did not say whether the weapon is scheduled for operational fielding in 2025.

The 5th Battalion, 3rd Field Artillery Regiment at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash., was designated to operate the first Dark Eagle battery of eight missiles.

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@CaitlynBurchett

MILITARY

Guam plans state-of-the-art medical center

Island planning to build \$743M medical complex

By ALEX WILSON
Stars and Stripes

Guam is advancing plans to build a \$743 million medical complex aimed at improving health care for its civilian and military populations, according to a spokeswoman for Gov. Lou Leon Guerrero.

The U.S. territory's only public hospital, Guam Memorial in Tamuning, would relocate to a new site in the Barrigada-Mangilao area, about five miles south-east, Krystal Paco-San Agustin said.

The proposed Guam Medical Complex is intended to counter the island's geographic isolation and chronic health care shortages with a state-of-the-art facility, she said.

The cost to build the complex is slightly less than the \$760 million price tag to renovate infrastructure such as the aging Guam Memorial Hospital, which the U.S. Government Accountability Office described in an April 3 report as in "severe disrepair."

"Systemic failures due to environmental exposure, aging and insufficient funding for necessary repairs" have left the hospital barely functional, according to the report.

Paco-San Agustin said that while the project is in its early stages, environmental assessments, topographic studies and preliminary design work are already underway.

"A more definitive construction timeline will emerge once the environmental permitting process and design phase are com-



ALEX WILSON/Stars and Stripes

The Guam Governor's Office hopes to relocate Guam Memorial Hospital in Tamuning to Mangilao as part of a proposed medical complex.

plete, but the Governor's Office is committed to advancing the project with urgency and transparency," she said.

Leon Guerrero has committed \$104 million in American Rescue Plan funds to the project and is seeking additional support through federal aid, local resources and potential public-private partnerships, Paco-San Agustin said.

The new facility would feature 250 to 300 beds, expanded trauma and emergency services, modern surgical suites, a women's and children's center, and advanced diagnostic labs.

Its location along Route 15 — about 10 miles from Andersen Air

Force Base and Naval Base Guam and eight miles from the Marine Corps' Camp Blaz — was selected for its central access to both civilian and military populations.

Guam's military health infrastructure includes Naval Hospital Guam, Apra Harbor Clinic, and the 36th Medical Group's clinic at Andersen. A fourth facility at the newly constructed Camp Blaz is expected to open this fall but will serve only active-duty patients.

DOD civilian employees are limited to space-available appointments, adding further stress to Guam's already burdened health system. Roughly 22,000 U.S. military personnel live on

the island, including around 1,000 civilian employees and contractors.

The DOD population is expected to grow to 35,000 by 2037, according to the Guam Daily Post, citing a Defense Department briefing.

Guam has 1.9 hospital beds per 1,000 residents — below the U.S. average of 2.7 reported by the World Health Organization in 2020. The island also struggles with staffing shortages, aging infrastructure and limited access to specialty care.

Its remote location — 1,600 miles from Japan or the Philippines and 3,800 miles from Hawaii — contributes to its classifi-

cation as medically underserved by the U.S. government. Maternity care is particularly scarce, according to the GAO.

Adding to the challenge is Guam's high cost of living — 41% above the U.S. average — and income levels that leave many ineligible for Medicaid, according to 2021 congressional testimony from Guam's Department of Public Health and Social Services.

Paco-San Agustin said the new medical complex is also intended to help recruit health care specialists to the island.

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Air Force teams up with Guam to control 'boonie dogs'

By JEREMY STILLWAGNER
Stars and Stripes

The Guam government and U.S. military have reached a novel agreement that lets civil engineers work outside Andersen Air Force Base to help rein in the island's stray dog population.

The 36th Wing at Andersen will provide vehicles, animal-handling equipment, kennel maintenance assistance and personnel, according to a recent news release from the U.S. territory's Agriculture Department.

"This is a first-of-its-kind agreement and shows the amazing relationship between Andersen Air Force Base and the Government of Guam," Marlyn Aguilar, an attorney adviser at

Andersen's Office of the Staff Judge Advocate, said recently. "We are proud to continue supporting the local communities and building strong connections across the island."

The agreement marks a significant step toward coordinated efforts to control Guam's strays — known locally as "boonie dogs" — according to the Agriculture Department and the wing.

Significantly, it permits the 36th Civil Engineer Squadron to assist with off-base operations, Guam territorial veterinarian Dr. Mariana Turner said.

A 2014 Humane Society International survey estimated approximately 24,500 strays are living on Guam, which spans 212

square miles — about the size of Chicago.

In September, the Agriculture Department established a Dog Population Management Task Force to pursue humane solutions. The Agriculture Department conducted a survey earlier this year to update the decade-old information, but the results have yet to be released.

Guam's stray dogs have been blamed for attacks on people and pets, traffic hazards, and the spread of disease and pests, according to the Agriculture Department.

Many suffer from starvation, injuries and illness.

The Agriculture Department division in charge of animal health and control is "passionate

and dedicated to finding solutions, yet we are restrained by limited resources," Turner said. "The collaboration with Andersen AFB serves as a force multiplier for our efforts."

Andersen's civil engineers have been supportive in recent years by capturing strays and helping with adoptions, wing spokesman Capt. Casey Bell said.

Airmen from the base have also repaired damaged fences and kennels at Guam Animals in Need, and the wing expects to deepen its relationship with that shelter, Bell said.

Turner credited wing commander Brig. Gen. Thomas Palenske with helping to finalize the agreement.

"General Palenske has been very active with pursuing a solution to the free-roaming boonie dog population on Guam," she said.

No funds are transferred under the agreement, which allows the Agriculture Department and the wing to share resources and expertise and creates a formal process for each party to request support services, according to the news release.

The agreement is valid for up to 10 years, the release said.

Both sides will conduct annual reviews to ensure its effectiveness and relevance to the community.

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MILITARY

Trade war threatens US weapon production

BY SVETLANA SHKOLNIKOVA
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The U.S. military relies on a network of countries around the world to produce the sophisticated weapons and equipment that arm its warfighters.

It imports missiles from Norway and specialized technology from France and Italy for fighter jets. It equips Army soldiers with a recoilless rifle produced by a Swedish company and depends on Canada to assemble combat vehicles such as the Stryker.

“There’s not a single weapon system that I know of that doesn’t have some type of foreign content,” said Bill Greenwalt, a former Defense Department acquisition official now at the conservative American Enterprise Institute, a Washington think tank.

That global supply chain, built up for decades, could now be under threat as President Donald Trump’s administration seeks to lessen American reliance on imports and bring more manufacturing back to the United States.

Tariffs imposed in recent weeks on nearly all foreign-made products and the prospect of more levies to come could make American weapons more expensive, dampen weapon sales abroad and tarnish the reputation of the U.S. as a reliable partner, according to some experts and lawmakers.

“In the short term, the announced tariffs alone will increase costs for U.S. defense industrial supply chain companies,” Sen. Jeanne Shaheen, D-N.H., wrote in a letter recently to Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth. “In the long term, tariffs will drive up the Department of Defense’s contracting and procurement costs, limit the Department of Defense’s buying power and ultimately harm the warfighter and our military readiness.”

In addition to 25% tariffs on steel and aluminum, the Trump administration has implemented a blanket 10% tariff on most U.S. trading partners. A plan to introduce higher tariffs on nearly 60 countries has been paused until July while a trade war with China has raised tariffs on Chinese imports to 145%.

A Pentagon official said that the department is “closely monitoring existing tariffs and their impacts on procurement and manufacturing of goods overseas with international partners and allies.”

The Defense Department has agreements with 28 partner countries that allow it to override congressionally mandated



ROSE L. THAYER/Stars and Stripes

Soldiers from the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division of Fort Carson, Colo., unpack Stryker combat vehicles in April, after they were recently shipped to Fort Bliss, Texas, for use in detecting illegal activity at the U.S. border with Mexico.

“Buy American” requirements and engage in billions of dollars of defense trade with countries such as the United Kingdom, Germany and Japan, according to the Government Accountability Office, a federal watchdog.

It is unclear how those arrangements will be affected by Trump’s tariffs and whether the defense industry will be strategically carved out of the levies, as business groups and some lawmakers have been requesting. “Right now, you just have to operate on the fact that prices are going to go up because there is foreign content,” Greenwalt said. “A lot of this foreign content is because of agreements like we have with the F-35 [fighter jet] but the majority of it is because our allies produce better technology than we do.”

Dak Hardwick, vice president of international affairs at the Aerospace Industries Association, said the trade group has received an assurance from the Trump administration that duty-free entry for materials destined for the military would continue.

The nearly 300 aerospace and defense companies who are members of the association continue to seek clarity from the administration and are engaging with their foreign counterparts, Hardwick said.

“Sales to international partners are critical for the health of the U.S. defense industrial base,” he said. “We want to continue to do those sales because it keeps our industrial base lines hum-

ming, it certainly keeps them warm at times when the U.S. government isn’t necessarily buying certain types of capabilities.”

While the U.S. received 3.1% of global arms imports from 2020 to 2024, it leads global trade in weapons with a share of 43% of exports, according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute.

Tariffs could chip into that dominance by raising the cost of U.S. defense products domestically and abroad.

“You’re going to see a greater instance of ‘Buy Europe’ and ‘Buy Asia’ and that’s going to lead to fewer aerospace and defense sales for the United States and drive down the one place that we have a large positive trade balance,” Greenwalt said.

The Philippine ambassador to the U.S., Jose Manuel Romualdez, told Reuters last month that tariffs could affect his country’s economy and its ability to pay for a potential \$5.58 billion purchase of F-16 aircraft from the American defense manufacturer Lockheed Martin.

“These F-16s ... are very expensive for us ... and we won’t be able to afford it if, obviously, we won’t have the resources to be able to buy them,” he said.

Other countries are scrutinizing their security dependence on the U.S., seeing the Trump administration’s “reciprocal” tariffs as evidence that the U.S. is becoming an erratic supplier

and customer, according to Greenwalt.

Some lawmakers in recent weeks expressed particular concern about the defense relationship with Australia, which has an agreement with the U.S. and the United Kingdom to acquire nuclear submarines. Australia had free trade with the U.S. before becoming subject to the Trump administration’s 10% “baseline” tariff.

Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said the levy was “not the act of a friend” and some within his center-left Labor Party have questioned whether the U.S. can be relied upon to deliver the submarines.

“There is definitely collateral damage to our allies,” Rep. Joe Courtney, D-Conn., said of the tariffs at a congressional hearing last month, noting he has been in touch with Australian parliament members.

In Canada, Prime Minister Mark Carney declared “the old relationship we had with the United States, based on deepening integration of our economies and tight security and military cooperation, is over.”

American defense companies are bracing for retaliatory measures — it’s something that’s “top of mind,” Hardwick said.

The European Union, which recently launched a rearmament effort focused on purchasing weapons from European manufacturers, prepared to hit back with counter-tariffs of nearly 21 billion euros before Trump

paused his 20% tariffs on the bloc.

China has responded to Trump’s moves with a 125% tariff on U.S. goods and most pointedly, a limit on exports of certain rare earth minerals and magnets essential for defense technology such as missiles, radar systems, drones, robotics and jet engines.

Trump issued an executive order recently directing Howard Lutnick, the commerce secretary, to open a national security investigation into potential new tariffs on all U.S. critical minerals imports, escalating the fight.

The consequences for the military industrial base could be steep. A single F-35 contains 900 pounds of rare earths, a Virginia-class submarine contains 9,200 pounds of them and China processes 90% of the world’s rare earths supply.

“Even before the latest restrictions, the U.S. defense industrial base struggled with limited capacity and lacked the ability to scale up production to meet defense technology demands,” according to an analysis by the Center for Strategic and International Studies think tank.

“Further bans on critical minerals inputs will only widen the gap, enabling China to strengthen its military capabilities more quickly than the United States.”

There were signs that the trade war could be abating somewhat. Trump recently said the 145% tariff that he put on Chinese imports will “come down substantially.” Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said he was engaged in trade negotiations with more than a dozen countries.

Defense companies have, for the most part, expressed optimism that they will be able to weather the changing tariff policies with minimal impact on business, with Northrop Grumman saying that it did not yet see significant risk to its programs.

But defense contractor RTX, formerly known as Raytheon Technologies, cautioned it could take a \$850 million hit in profit if global tariffs and separate levies on steel and aluminum and goods from China, Canada and Mexico remain in effect through the year.

“Like many companies in the industry, our supply chain and customer base are global, and we import raw materials, parts and modules from around the world,” CEO Chris Calio said in an earnings call. “In light of this, we would be impacted if the current environment were to stay in place.”

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MILITARY

Navy cancels Biden-era climate policy

Rescinded plan had committed to cutting emissions by 65% by 2030

By CAITLYN BURCHETT
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Navy Secretary John Phelan has canceled the Navy's Climate Action 2030 program, which was enacted by the Biden administration in 2022 to improve the service's energy efficiency.

"We need to focus on having a lethal and ready naval force, unimpeded by ideologically motivated regulations," Phelan said in a video posted to his official X account.

The rescinded plan had committed the Navy to reducing its overall emissions by 65% by 2030 and reach net-zero emissions by 2050. Net-zero emissions mean some greenhouse gases are released but are offset by the removal of an equivalent amount of the gases from the atmosphere.

Scientists have said rising sea levels, recurrent flooding and more frequent and destructive hurricanes result from man-made climate change and are a particular challenge for the Navy.

Hurricane Sandy, in 2012,

caused \$50 million in damage to Naval Weapons Station Earle, a critical ammunition resupply base in New Jersey. The Navy combined \$1.9 million in defense funds with \$61 million from the local county to restore the beaches and salt marsh to protect the installation from storm surge.

Those efforts were still underway in 2020 when Hurricane Sally significantly damaged more than 600 facilities at Naval Air Station Pensacola, Fla. The Navy deferred \$49 million in sustainment and modernization requirements to fund initial response and repairs to withstand future storms.

"Climate change increases risk, exposes vulnerabilities to our people, installations, platforms, operations, and allies and partners," Meredith Berger, assistant secretary of the Navy for energy, installations and environment, said in 2022 when the program was announced.

The goals listed were meant to hit targets included in an executive order issued in 2021 to all



JACQUILYN DAVIS/U.S. Marine Corps

Navy Secretary John Phelan, left, speaks with Marine Corps Lt. Col. Matthew Bagley, commanding officer of Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 461, during a tour at Marine Corps Air Station New River, N.C., last month.

federal agencies by former President Joe Biden. President Donald Trump axed Biden's executive order, "Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad," on Jan. 20, when he rescinded 78 orders issued by the previous administration.

In mid-March, the Defense Department announced it would

flush climate change policies and initiatives deemed "inconsistent with our core warfighter mission." Phelan canceling the Navy's Climate Action 2030 brings the sea service into compliance with those efforts.

"Now, it's done," Phelan said in the video.

Neither Phelan nor his office

provided additional details about what efforts were canceled or whether any were being considered separate from the now defunct Climate Action 2030 program.

"The Department of the Navy is focused on shipbuilding, deterrence and warfighting. We will no longer be sidetracked by climate-focused decision-making. Any distraction to those core priorities removes valuable resources better spent on readiness and operational effectiveness," said Kristina Wong, spokeswoman for Phelan.

Wong did not say how much money the Navy expects the canceled climate plan to save the service.

Later, Phelan announced the cancellation of 45 "nonessential" grants and awards, as well as information technology contracts deemed ineffective and over-budget, which he said would save the Navy nearly \$300 million. Among the items canceled, Phelan said, was the studying of the "population consequences of the disturbance of humpback whales in the context of climate change."

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Pentagon planning to limit medical waivers for recruits

By CAITLYN BURCHETT
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Pentagon is reviewing the medical standards for military enlistment this month with plans to update the list of health conditions for which potential recruits can request medical waivers.

"High, uncompromising, and clear standards are a hallmark of the U.S. military and are essential to helping us remain the most lethal and effective fighting force in the world. To uphold these standards and ensure that our warfighters are capable and ready, no matter the domain, adversary, or conditions, the secretary of defense has directed my office to conduct a review of existing medical standards for enlistment or appointment into military service," said Jules Hurst, a senior Defense Department official for personnel and readiness.

In 2022, the Pentagon eased restrictions on medical conditions that would have previously disqualified a person from military service unless they were approved for a medical waiver. A medical waiver is a formal re-

quest to consider an individual for military service despite a current or past medical condition that does not meet the medical standards for the armed forces. The Defense Department initially eased restrictions on 38 conditions. The list was expanded to include 51 conditions as of October 2024.

The intent was to boost recruiting numbers. By removing the requirement to get a medical waiver for select conditions, the enlistment process could be sped up, as well as free up medical evaluators to review candidates with more complex medical histories.

In recent years, the services have struggled to meet recruiting goals. In 2023, the Air Force reached only 89% of its active-duty recruiting goal of 26,977 enlistments, according to Defense Department data. The Army also fell short at 77%. In 2022 and 2023, the Navy only contracted 22,000 and 30,000 sailors, respectively, and emptied its delayed-entry pool, a program that allows people to sign up for the armed forces up to one year before they start basic training.

Only the Marine Corps met its 2023 goal of nearly 29,000 new recruits. Each of the services reportedly met the 2024 recruiting goals and are on track to meet the 2025 recruiting goals, the Defense Department has said.

The two most-common conditions for which recruits seek new waivers are attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, or ADHD, and childhood asthma, the Defense Department said in late 2024. Changes last year had further eased the restrictions on such conditions, moving the time without treatment for ADHD from the past three years to one year, and allowing people who have not needed an inhaler for asthma in the last four years to bypass the waiver process entirely.

Military entrance stations conducted 312,000 medical exams from October 2023 to September 2024, with about 36% of people disqualified during the initial exam, the DOD said. That dropped to 19% after service medical waivers were applied.

The new review of medical conditions was ordered by De-



MADELYN KEECH/Department of Defense

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth signs a memorandum regarding medical waivers recently at the Pentagon.

fense Secretary Pete Hegseth. He noted in a memorandum that conditions such as schizophrenia, paraphilic disorders, congestive heart failure, and chronic use of oxygen, are now eligible for medical waivers.

"While the desire to serve the United States is honorable, individuals with such conditions are generally unlikely to complete initial military training or their first term of service," Hegseth said.

The review aligns with broader efforts to balance recruitment

needs with operational effectiveness, the Defense Department said. Proposed updates to the medical standards for military enlistment must be submitted to Hegseth by May 24. The forthcoming review, the department said, will ensure "only fully capable applicants" join the military services.

"High standards equal lethality," Hegseth said in a pre-recorded video recently posted to X.

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MILITARY

DOD building \$400M fuel storage facility

The facility in Papua New Guinea will be able to store 70M gallons

BY WYATT OLSON
Stars and Stripes

The U.S. Defense Department is funding a \$400 million fuel storage facility in Papua New Guinea as part of the growing military ties under a 2023 defense agreement between the two countries.

The facility will have the capacity to store almost 70 million gallons of fuel, the U.S. Embassy to Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu said in a recent news release.

Adm. Samuel Paparo, head of U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, personally informed Papua New Guinea's deputy prime minister and foreign minister of the funding, according to the release.

U.S. armed forces will have access to the facility and the fuel as part of the 2023 agreement.

The complex will be built by DGC Corp., an aerospace and defense company based in McLean, Va. Construction is projected to complete in 2030.

DGC "has a successful history of constructing and operating large scale fuel facilities in Afri-

ca, South America, the Middle East, and Central Asia," the release said.

The announcement follows a U.S. Navy search for alternative fuel storage facilities with the closure of the Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility in Hawaii.

A massive fuel spill at Red Hill in late 2021 contaminated the aquifer near Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam. Red Hill had a capacity for 250 million gallons of fuel.

In his March 2022 order to permanently close the World War II-era underground storage facility, then-Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said a centralized fuel hub makes less sense now than it did in the 1940s.

"The distributed and dynamic nature of our force posture in the Indo-Pacific, the sophisticated threats we face, and the technology available to us demand an equally advanced and resilient fueling capability," Austin said in the announcement. "To a large degree, we already avail ourselves of dispersed fueling at sea and ashore,



SHANNON M. SMITH/U.S. Navy

Adm. Samuel Paparo, head of U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, speaks with Papua New Guinea Defense Minister Billy Joseph at the National Disaster Center in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, July 15, 2024.

permanent and rotational. We will now expand and accelerate that strategic distribution."

Papua New Guinea, lying just northeast of Australia, is significantly closer than Hawaii to the South China Sea and Taiwan, which are major hotspots in the relationship between the U.S. and China. The island nation would be central in the event of military conflict with China.

The 2023 defense agreement is spurring other U.S. military

investments in the country.

Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command recently broke ground for two key facilities at Lombrum Naval Base on Manus Island, north of the nation's main island, the embassy said in a news release.

The Regional Maritime Training Center and the Small Boat Team and Bosun Facility are intended to "support maritime readiness, enhance the capabilities of the Papua New Guinea

Defense Force, and support long-term regional security in the Indo-Pacific," according to the release.

The \$16 million projects are expected to be completed by next spring. The bosun facility will provide maintenance and operational space for three Papua New Guinea military small boat teams, which conduct coastal operations and "respond to maritime threats," the release said.

The U.S. Army recently wrapped up the two-week Tamiok Strike exercise in the capital city of Port Moresby and several other locations. Among the training events were staff planning exercises, medical training, infantry tactics drills and a construction project.

"The relationship that we have with the U.S. military and [Papua New Guinea's defense force] is built on our shared history and values," Brig. Gen. Larry Opa, the defense force deputy commander, said during the closing ceremony, according to a news release. "Tamiok Strike is a demonstration of the progression of this relationship."

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Army changes its physical fitness test once again

BY LYDIA GORDON
Stars and Stripes

Soldiers will once again have to get familiar with a different physical fitness test, as the Army moves toward a renamed one that drops an event and alters scoring standards, the service recently announced.

Beginning in June, a revised version called the Army Fitness Test will replace the 3-year-old Army Combat Fitness Test, according to an Army statement.

The updated test will feature five events instead of the current six and introduce higher, sex-neutral and age-normalized standards for soldiers in combat arms roles, the statement said.

It remains unclear how event scoring will differ from current standards, though the Army said additional guidance, including details on scoring, will be given this month.

"The change reflects the Army's continued focus on building a physically ready force capable of meeting operational demands in austere environments," the statement said.

The new test's combat occupation standard will apply equally to men and women, with scores adjusted only for age.



DURAN JONES/U.S. Army

Soldiers take part in the Army Combat Fitness Test. Beginning in June, the ACFT will be replaced by the Army Fitness Test.

The general standard, however, is based on performance expectations tailored by both sex and age groups, according to the statement.

One notable difference is the removal of the standing power throw.

That event has proved broadly unpopular with soldiers, a number of whom say the event is geared more toward technique than power and puts shorter soldiers at a disadvantage.

The most recent Army Combat Fitness Test was updated in 2022

after originally replacing the decades-old Army Physical Fitness Test in 2020.

The ACFT differed significantly from its predecessor test and was aimed at diminishing injury risk and assessing combat readiness.

Events retained in the Army Fitness Test from the 2022 update are the three-repetition deadlift, hand-release pushups, sprint-drag-carry, plank and 2-mile run.

Soldiers in combat arms roles will be required to score at least 60 points of a potential 100 per event, with a minimum overall score of 350.

Those in combat support specialties must also achieve a minimum of 60 points for each event, with a reduced minimum total score of 300.

The Army Fitness Test is based on Rand Corp. analysis and service data from nearly a million records, the statement said.

Announcement of the testing changes comes in the wake of a March 31 memo from Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth calling for a review and enhancement of physical fitness standards in combat arms roles.

Soldiers will no longer take the ACFT after May 31, though all fitness testing prior to that date will remain valid, the Army secretary said in an April 17 memo.

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MILITARY

Improvement of USMC barracks faces delays

Initiative hindered by uncertain funding, federal hiring freeze

By CAITLYN BURCHETT
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Marine Corps' barracks improvement effort is being hindered by uncertain congressional funding and the federal hiring freeze as the service has pushed back its completion goal to at least 2037.

"[Our Marines] don't ask for much — just a decent, quiet place to lay their head at night. With a continuing resolution, all that comes to a screeching halt," Gen. Eric Smith, commandant of the Marine Corps, said at the recent Modern Day Marine expo in Washington.

With a price tag of about \$11 billion, the Marine Corps Barracks 2030 initiative aims to modernize unaccompanied housing for single Marines, streamline barracks maintenance and refresh furniture and appliances every 10 years. The initiative, with an initial target completion of 2030, is now on track to have Marines in modernized barracks by 2037, service officials said this week.

But delays in funding, such as the stopgap measure under which the federal government is operating, could push the completion date to as late as 2045. Additionally, President Donald Trump implemented a federal hiring freeze in January that is preventing the Marine Corps

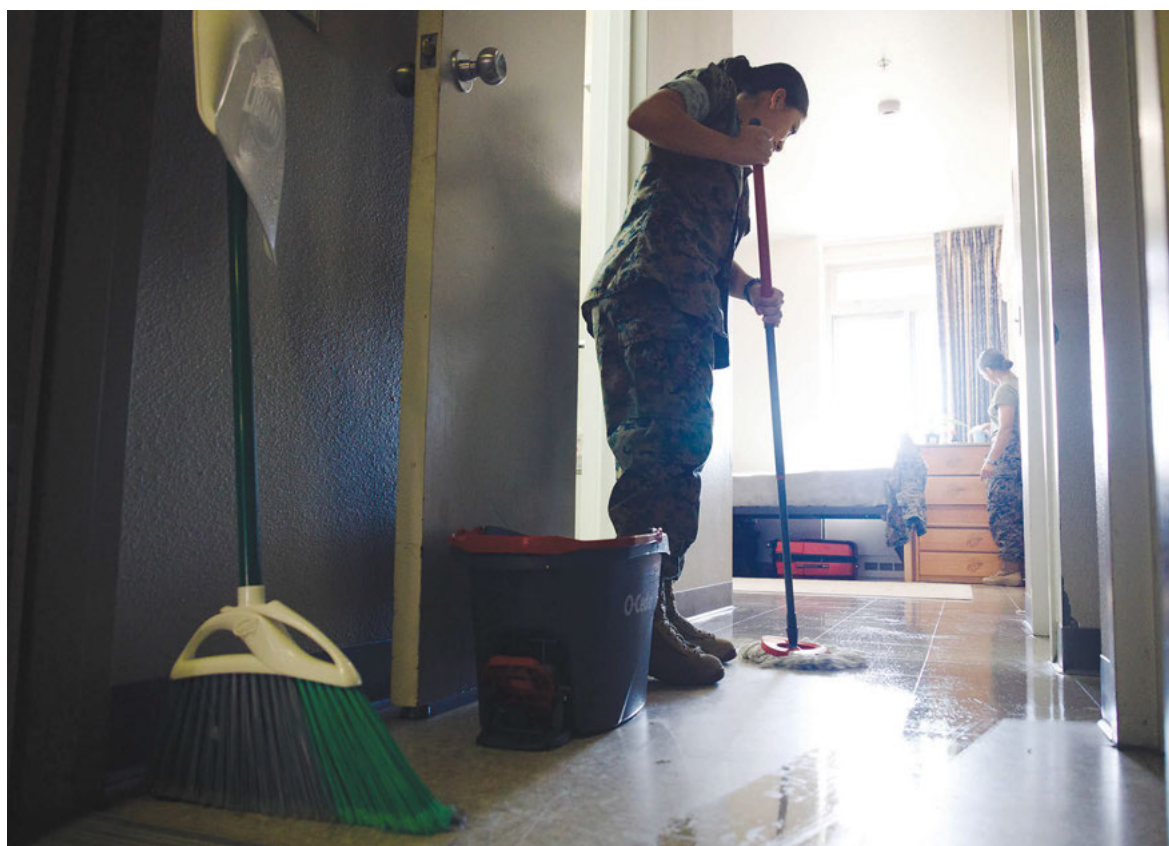
Installations Command from hiring about 150 civilian housing specialists to do work now being done by Marines. Those specialists were slated to start in February but are unable to do so until the hiring freeze is lifted.

The federal government has been operating under a full-year continuing resolution since March 14, after lawmakers failed to agree on appropriations for fiscal 2025, which began Oct. 1. The stopgap funding bill is a temporary extension of last year's funding, plus an additional \$6 billion for pay raises for junior troops as well as weapons purchases and operations.

"You can't hire the labor. You can't buy the building or materials. You can't start a new project. So, you continue to put lipstick on a pig, and you keep the old barracks around for just another year, and another year, and another year," Smith said.

About 17,000 junior enlisted Marines were living in squalid barracks as of 2023, according to the Government Accountability Office, a federal watchdog report. During barracks inspections at various installations, the GAO observed mold, pests, sewage issues, and extreme temperatures.

With questions about long-term funding, the Marine Corps is doing what it can now to im-



LUKE RODRIGUEZ/U.S. Marine Corps

Marine Corps Pfc. Emily Laragonzalez and Pfc. Nayeli Dominguez clean their room at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., last month.

prove the barracks, service officials said. Eric Mason, unaccompanied housing team lead for the Marine Corps Installations Command, said that the number of Marines living in poor conditions was lower than 17,000 now.

"I can only tell you that number has decreased, and it will continue to decrease. Once we get out to our potential 2030 — or 2035, 2037 — [completion date], that number should hopefully go away," Mason said.

The service has 11 ongoing renovation projects, with 12 more in the pipeline. Additionally, programs are being rolled out at Marine Corps bases that are collecting data on streamlining maintenance and improving barracks security.

The service launched a pilot program in March at Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort, S.C., that installed common access card-enabled door locks on nine barracks. A common access card is the standard identification for

active-duty troops.

The program at Beaufort is meant to provide better security for troops, as they swipe into their private rooms rather than using a key or a key card. Troops also must swipe into common areas in the barracks buildings.

The program will run for one year before it potentially expands to other installations. If approved by the Defense Department, Mason said CAC-enabled locks would likely not become standard for Marine barracks until at least 2027.

The Marine Corps also rolled out a program for troops living in barracks to submit maintenance requests to building managers to streamline repairs for issues such as leaks, mold and pests. The online portal is already seeing widespread use, capturing 1,000 requests per week.

"As someone from public works, that's a bit of a concern. We want to get that number down. We don't want the main

source of things that need to be fixed in the building to be the Marines seeing the problem," said Jason Canfield, program manager for QSRMax, the new service portal that Marines use to register maintenance requests.

While the service initially aimed to make certain current junior enlisted Marines would see improved barracks conditions, the new timeline for 2037 or later means they might not benefit from the Barracks 2030 initiative.

But service officials said fixing the barracks remains a top priority.

"When you start hearing Marines say, 'I am going to my home' [when] referring to barracks — I think that's a great way to measure the success that we have had on improving the quality of life," Mason said.

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Sex assaults in military dropped nearly 4% overall in 2024

By MATTHEW ADAMS
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Sexual assaults reported across the military dropped by nearly 4% last year, marking an overall decrease for the second year in a row as the Pentagon works to reverse a troubling trend that saw an increase of incidents in three service branches, according to a report released earlier this month.

There were 8,195 reported sexual assaults in 2024 involving members of the military, compared with 8,515 in 2023.

Of the total, 6,973 service

members reported sexual assault during their military service and another 512 reported an assault that happened before they entered the military.

The figure also includes 641 civilians who said they were assaulted by a member of the military.

This report does not include a sexual assault prevalence rate. The Defense Department conducts the Workplace Experiences Survey of Military Members, a biennial confidential survey, to get a clearer understanding of the problem.

The next survey will be con-

ducted in the fourth quarter of the fiscal 2025.

"We encourage greater reporting of sexual assault to connect victims with care and, also, to have the opportunity to hold offenders appropriately accountable," Nathan Galbreath, director of the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office, told reporters.

The overall decrease was due to a 13% drop in reported sexual assaults across the Army, according to the report.

Three other services saw increases. The Navy had the largest jump of 4.4%, while the Air

Force had a 2 increase and the Marine Corps rose by less than 1%.

"It's important to note that sexual assaults are not always reported in the same [fiscal year] they occur, although the majority are," the Air Force said in the report.

The Pentagon has worked for years to drive down the rates of sexual assaults and harassment within its ranks, a scourge that has long drawn the ire of Congress.

Top Pentagon officials have also conceded it likely has a negative impact on military

recruiting.

The Pentagon has implemented efforts in recent years to address the problem after former Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin commissioned an independent review of the Pentagon's sexual assault prevention efforts in 2021.

It has invested heavily in implementing dozens of findings from that commission, nearly doubling its sexual assault prevention budget to more than \$1 billion in 2023 and 2024.

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PACIFIC

DNA collection effort nears key threshold

USS Arizona's unknowns may be exhumed for identification

BY MATTHEW M. BURKE
Stars and Stripes

A Virginia real estate agent is close to finishing a self-appointed mission aimed at collecting enough DNA to meet the threshold for exhuming dozens of unknown Pearl Harbor victims who were serving aboard the USS Arizona.

Kevin Kline hopes that will lead to identification of the service members' remains, a task once deemed unfeasible.

In 2023, he started Operation 85, an advocacy group that has helped the Defense Department track down the majority of the 592 families thus far that have either given DNA or are in the process of submitting a DNA kit, Kline said recently.

The group represents nearly 1,200 family members of the Arizona's crew, he said.

The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency requires a general threshold of family samples from 60% of the "potentially associated service members" before it will disinter the remains for identification, according to Defense Department regulations.

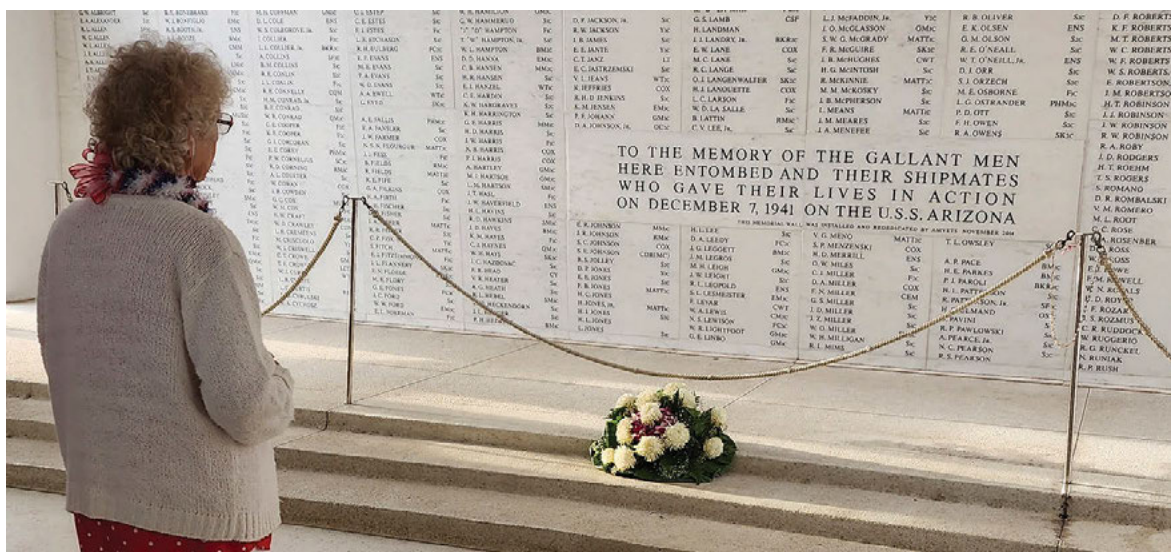
In the case of the Arizona, Kline takes that to mean samples from 643 distinct families, or 60% of the current missing and unaccounted for.

The Navy, however, is putting the required number at 681, spokesman Lt. Cmdr. Stuart Phillips, said in an emailed response to questions.

It is unclear how that figure was determined, but Kline said Operation 85 will reach the higher number regardless.

The U.S. government had just 25 families on file shortly before Operation 85 began their efforts, according to a Navy report to Congress in March 2022.

"We've done this in under two years," Kline said. "Operation 85



A woman pays respects at the USS Arizona Memorial in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. The memorial honors 1,102 of the 1,177 sailors and Marines killed in the Japanese attack on Dec. 7, 1941.



Kevin Kline, executive director of the USS Arizona family group Operation 85 and grandnephew of Arizona sailor Petty Officer 2nd Class Robert Kline, poses with Kline's Purple Heart.

should be able to meet the DOD 60% threshold goal by this summer, but we do not have any plans of stopping the search for family once we hit a specific number."

He is the grandnephew of Petty Officer 2nd Class Robert Kline, a gunner's mate who remains missing from the Japanese attack on the U.S. Pacific Fleet in Hawaii on Dec. 7, 1941.

Kline described himself as a "random guy who ... was told no by the DPAA, that it couldn't be done," adding that he "got so mad" that he decided to do it himself.

The Pearl Harbor attack claimed the lives of 1,177 sailors and Marines on the Arizona.



James Silverstein, grandnephew of USS Arizona sailor Petty Officer 2nd Class Harry Smith, poses with Smith's Purple Heart and the associated documents.

Today, 1,072 remain missing, the DPAA website states.

Answering family member questions in 2021, a year before Kline began his effort, DPAA director Kelly McKeague called the project unfeasible and said preliminary discussions had taken place about potentially entombing the unknowns back in the ship.

Disinterring the unknown sailors and Marines from the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific would mean DPAA had to get family reference samples, McKeague said in the question-and-answer session uploaded to YouTube by Operation 85.

"It's not a proposition that makes pragmatic sense," he said. Over 900 members of the

crew's 1,512 men remain interred in the ship's submerged hull, which is today part of the Pearl Harbor National Memorial complex.

There are 86 sets of likely comingled remains associated with the Arizona buried as unknowns in the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific, otherwise known as the Punchbowl, and an additional 55 that have no known ship affiliation, McKeague wrote in a letter to Kline on Feb. 19. It is unclear whether the 55 would be disinterred as part of the Arizona effort.

A Navy report to Congress in March 2022 estimated it would cost approximately \$2.7 million and take 10 years to track down enough families for DNA to reach the Defense Department threshold for disinterment, the report states.

Kline and his group have tracked down 567 families in about two years, at a cost of around \$70,000, put up by Kline. By comparison, the report drafted by the Navy cost \$83,000 to produce.

Phillips defended the Navy's cost estimate, saying a similar project involving the USS Oklahoma had been extremely challenging. The Oklahoma also came under attack in the Pearl Harbor incursion and capsized, killing 429 of those aboard.

As of April 3, the Navy and Marine Corps had officially processed the DNA of 509 families, according to reports from the two services' casualty offices that collect the samples.

Priority for family reference sample collection is given to what DPAA designates as "official projects," Phillips said, adding that the Arizona is not currently an official project.

After a family trip to the Arizona memorial in 2022, Kline attended a DPAA family update meeting and was told the agency would not identify the unknowns



U.S. Navy/National Archives

The USS Arizona burns after being struck by Japanese bombs during the attack.

from the ship anytime soon.

Kline decided to put his business on hold and undertake the effort. He enlisted Melinde Lutz Byrne, one of the country's top forensic genetic genealogists, in June 2023 and efforts really took off.

Different types of DNA carry different genetic information that is passed to certain relatives. Until January, the government was not accepting what are known as autosomal single nucleotide polymorphism DNA samples, such as those of paternal nieces and grandchildren, Kline said.

This sort of DNA is beneficial for distant-donor relationships and highly degraded skeletal remains, which includes nearly 100% of DPAA's cases, said Dawne Nickerson, a spokeswoman for the medical examiner's office at Dover Air Force Base, Del., which does the testing.

As a result of the policy, the government was limiting the field of potential donors.

James Silverstein, a California attorney and maternal grandnephew of Petty Officer 2nd Class Harry Smith, is angry he was turned away from giving a sample prior to DPAA's announcement.

I have a "deep concern over how this process has played out," Silverstein said. "This is such a basic request. This is something that the government should be happy to do, and yet it's been anything but that, and these (service members) deserve better and the families deserve better."

The change on autosomal single nucleotide polymorphism DNA inched Operation 85 closer to the line by 45 families in a little over a week, Kline said.

Kline and Byrne believe the government's accounting needs to be overhauled and certain tasks farmed out to the private sector. He wants to use the infrastructure they've built to help other groups find closure.

"I don't want to put this away," Kline said. "I think other people can use what we've built."

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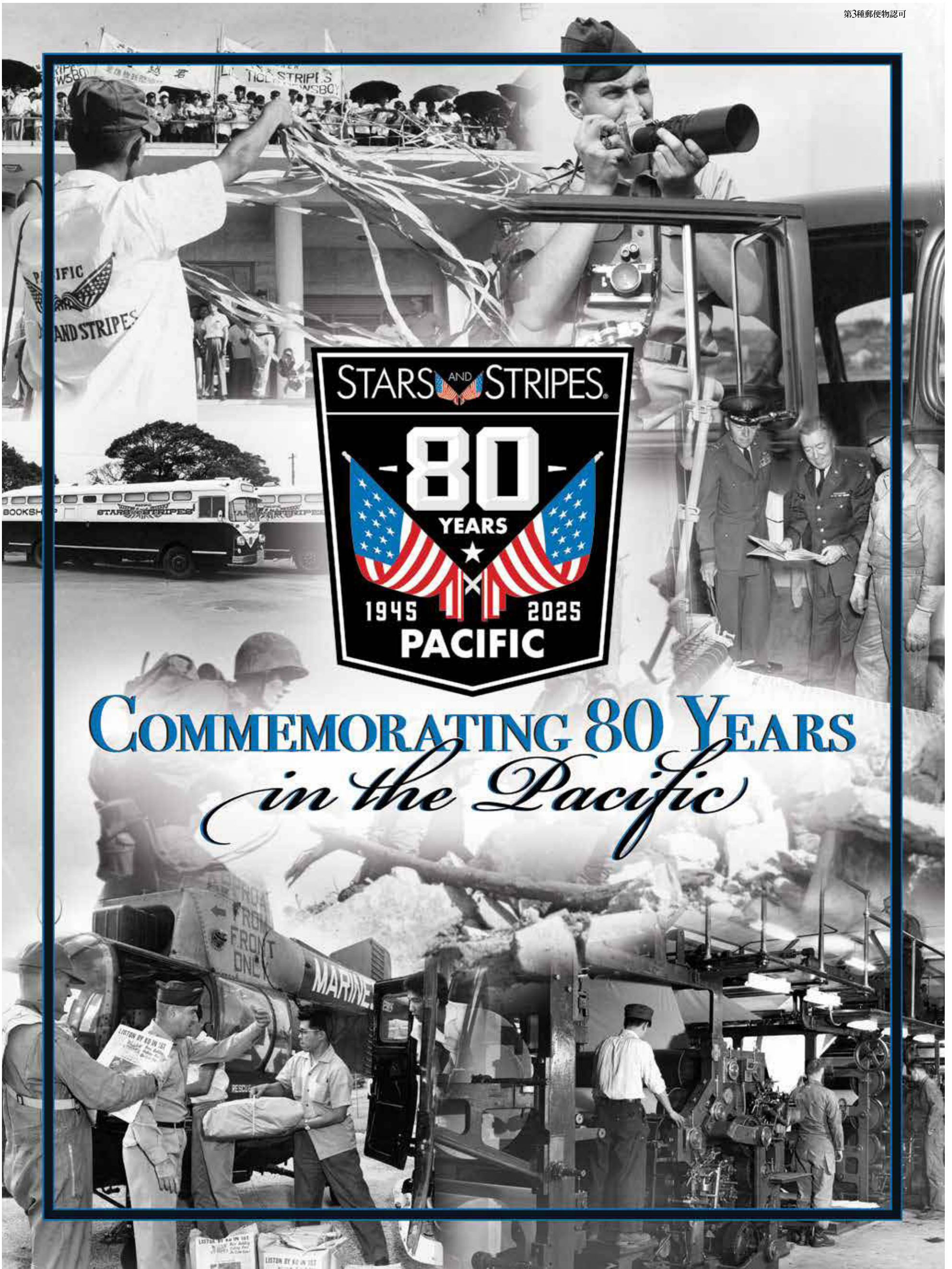
for members of the military community.

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COMMEMORATING 80 YEARS *in the Pacific*



PROUDLY SERVING THOSE WHO SERVE FOR 80 YEARS



On May 14, 1945, Stars and Stripes published its first newspaper in the Pacific. To commemorate 80 years serving the military community in the theater, we're taking a look back at Stripes history through the writing and photography of a dedicated staff spanning generations. Stars and Stripes has proudly supported the Pacific military community since the beginning and will continue to serve the troops and families at the heart of our work.

Check out more of our history at



www.80.stripes.com

More than eight decades ago, as the world reeled from the devastating attack on Pearl Harbor, the United States entered a war that would reshape history. Amid the turmoil of the Pacific theater, Stars and Stripes emerged as a vital source of information, reporting the battles, the hardships, and the triumphs of American service members.

Today, as we mark the 80th anniversary of Stars and Stripes Pacific, we celebrate a legacy of dedication to truth, service, and the enduring bond between the U.S. military and the region it has helped shape and the commitment to those who served.

From the fiery days of World War II to the Cold War standoff in Korea, from the Vietnam War to the long fight against terrorism, Stars and Stripes has been the eyes and ears of those who serve. Our journalists have embedded with troops, walked the streets of post-war Japan, and documented the changing face of U.S. military strategy across the Indo-Pacific.

Through it all, our mission has remained the same: to report the facts, give voice to the men and women in uniform, and help their families understand the sacrifices they make.

The Indo-Pacific of today is a vastly different place than it was in 1945. Nations that once stood as bitter enemies are now steadfast



Toshi Tokunaga, Arthur Millholland and his wife compare tabloid size from 1951 to current size in 1963. Stars and Stripes

allies, bound by shared interests and a common commitment. American military families have spent generations calling this region home, forging friendships and deep cultural ties.

Yet, the need for a strong U.S. presence endures. China's rise, North Korea's nuclear ambitions, and other regional security challenges demand continued vigilance, partnership, and commitment to maintaining peace and stability.

As much as the military's role has evolved, so too has Stars and Stripes. We have embraced new technologies, expanded our storytelling through digital platforms, and adapted to the changing ways service members consume news.

But one principal has never changed: our commitment to independent journalism. In a world where information is often weaponized, Stars and

Stripes remains a trusted source, standing apart from the military commands while standing beside those who wear the uniform.

To all Stars and Stripes staff members who have contributed to this mission over the years—this anniversary is yours.

To our loyal readers—whether in the barracks, aboard a Navy ship, or at home with loved ones—thank you for allowing us to tell your stories. Your experience inspire us, and your sacrifices humble us.

And to the men and women who continue to serve in the Indo-Pacific, know that Stars and Stripes will be there, as it always has been, to record history as it unfolds.

Here's to 80 years of reporting with courage and integrity. And here's to the future—wherever the next story takes us.

In a world where information is often weaponized, Stars and Stripes remains a trusted source, standing apart from the military commands while standing beside those who wear the uniform.



Stars and Stripes' Tokyo office circa 1965.



Max D. Lederer Jr.

The publisher of Stars and Stripes news media organization was appointed in 2007 after holding various positions with Stars and Stripes since 1992 including chief operating officer, general counsel and general manager of Europe operations. Before his employment with Stars and Stripes, Lederer served as a U.S. Army judge advocate with assignment in Europe and South Korea, and Fort Ord, Calif., and Fort Sill, Okla. During his time with the Army, he was Airborne-qualified. He also deployed with 2nd Armored Division (Forward) to operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm to liberate Kuwait in 1990-91. He received his Juris Doctor degree from the University of Richmond law school in Virginia and Bachelor of Arts from Marshall University in West Virginia.

STARS AND STRIPES is the editorially independent daily newspaper serving the U.S. military community worldwide. Stars and Stripes is authorized by the Department of Defense; however, the content of the publication is unofficial, and is not to be considered the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. government. For more information, visit stripes.com.

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PACIFIC EDITION
THE STARS AND STRIPES
U. S. Armed Forces Daily In The Pacific Ocean Areas

STARS AND STRIPES MARKS

80
YEARS

OF DELIVERING
MILITARY NEWS
THAT MATTERS
ACROSS THE PACIFIC

By Joseph Ditzler, Aaron Kidd and Wyatt Olson
Stars and Stripes

TOKYO — For eight decades, Stars and Stripes reporters across the Pacific have covered wars, revolutions, natural disasters and the political changes that marked turning points for the United States and its military overseas.

As Philippine bureau chief for Stars and Stripes' Pacific edition in 1991, Susan Kreifels experienced firsthand the eruption of Mount Pinatubo, which hastened the U.S. exit from its military bases in the island nation.

"I kept thinking we'd be dug up one day just like the people in Pompeii," Kreifels said. She and her driver stuffed a car full of refugees in an Angeles City barrio in a blizzard of volcanic ash.

"This stranger pushed a crying baby through the window into my lap and disappeared," she said. "Can you understand the fear that would cause someone to give a baby to a stranger?"

The Philippine chapter marked just one in the long American experience in Asia. Just as journalists from Stars and Stripes witnessed that change, they have

been present for momentous events since May 14, 1945, when the first Pacific edition rolled off the press.

Born in the late stages of World War II in the Pacific, the "soldier's newspaper" lived up to its name. Its front pages brought the big-picture news to the troops in the field, while the inside pages told the stories of those same soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines.

From World War II, the occupation of Japan, the Korean War, Vietnam, the long wars around the fight against terrorist organizations down to the 2011 earthquake and tsunami in Japan, Stars and Stripes was present as events unfolded.

Brian Brooks, the former associate dean for the School of Journalism at the University of Missouri, spent two years as editor of Stripes' European edition. He also served as an Army public information officer during the late stages of the Vietnam War.

Brooks remembers troops in Vietnam and Bosnia emptying the racks of newly arrived Stars and Stripes newspapers and sharing them among themselves, six or eight to a paper.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4



Our front pages bring the big-picture news to the troops in the field, while the inside pages tell the stories of those same soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines.

The Pacific Stars of Stripes

Stars and Stripes was meant to be a GI's newspaper, so it should come as no surprise that many of the publication's standout journalists were active-duty service members. Stars and Stripes' Pacific staffers went on to work for "60 Minutes," draw for Marvel Comics and snap photos for Life magazine. Here's a sampling of the bureau's brightest stars, both civilian and military.



Shel Silverstein

Author, composer and cartoonist Shel Silverstein served as a draftee on Stars and Stripes' Pacific staff in the mid-1950s and said it was the catapult that launched him to success and wealth.

Silverstein wrote and illustrated such children's classics as "The Giving Tree" and "A Light in the Attic," but he was only an aspiring cartoonist when he arrived at the newspaper in 1953. He had never done any steady and serious cartooning until he began drawing daily panels about barracks life and field-soldiering.

"For a guy of my age and with my limited experience to suddenly have to turn out cartoons on a day-to-day deadline, the job was enormous," he told the newspaper in 1969. "It was a great opportunity for me, and I blossomed."

Silverstein became world famous for his cartoons, poetry and songs, such as the Grammy-winning "A Boy Named Sue" recorded by Johnny Cash. He recalled a Stars and Stripes cartoon that almost caused a collision with the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

Drawing a page of cartoons for April Fool's Day, he sketched a soldier holding out a mess kit with a slab of toast in it. A cook splashed dark matter over it, saying: "Today, it really is."

The managing editor, required to inspect all Silverstein cartoons before they were printed, called him over and asked, "Shel, what does this mean?"

"Well, you know, powdered milk, powdered eggs. Today it's the real thing. April Fool! Get it?"

That editor approved the cartoon. Many readers gasped over their breakfast on April Fool's Day. Or as one of Silverstein's contemporaries with the newspaper put it at the time: "That cartoon, shingle and all, flew in and out of the fan for several days."

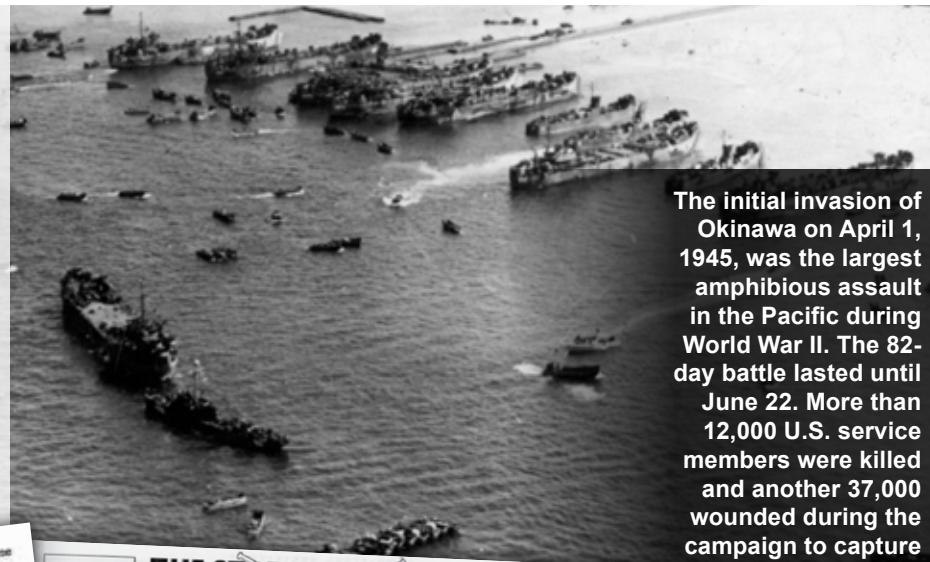
After leaving the Army, Silverstein struggled as a cartoonist until he heard about Hugh Hefner, who was putting together the first Playboy. Hefner hired Silverstein, who literally moved from ground floor to an executive suite in the Playboy Mansion.

Silverstein died of a heart attack in May 1999 in Key West, Fla. He was 68.

— Aaron Kidd/
Stars and Stripes



USS Indianapolis survivors are taken to a hospital following their rescue in early August 1945. Courtesy Naval History and Heritage Command



The initial invasion of Okinawa on April 1, 1945, was the largest amphibious assault in the Pacific during World War II. The 82-day battle lasted until June 22. More than 12,000 U.S. service members were killed and another 37,000 wounded during the campaign to capture the island, while about 90,000 Japanese troops were killed. U.S. Army



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

"The most important thing to me about Stars and Stripes is it is an example to the rest of the world of how open we are as a society in the United States," he said. "What other military in the world publishes a newspaper that the commanders don't control the content of? It's unheard of. I think it's a great example of press freedom and what we stand for as a country."

'Every Man's Role'

The first Stars and Stripes Pacific edition—eight pages—was produced in Honolulu, where the military newspaper shared office space with the Honolulu Advertiser and wire services with the Honolulu Star-Bulletin.

War news dominated the front but inside pages carried an array of features, sports and entertainment. The Brooklyn Dodgers were on an 11-game winning streak that month. Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall were about to wed, and actor Boris Karloff and playwright Moss Hart appeared with an "all-soldier cast and band" in a USO Camp Show on Saipan, only a year earlier a stage for vicious combat.

The war in Europe had concluded but the fight in the Pacific grinded on. Stars and Stripes told that story, often in tones that reflected the grim and callous nature of the 3 1/2-year-old conflict.

The United Press in that first edition reported a daylight raid on Nagoya, Japan, by 500 B-29 Superfortress bombers that dropped 3,500 tons of incendiaries—40 tons every minute for 90 minutes.

"A couple more like that and you can scratch that town off your list," the news service quoted Col. Carl Storrie of Denton, Texas, as saying.

Meanwhile, the fight for Okinawa was underway, and Stars and Stripes reporters were there. The writing reflected the tenor of the times. The Japanese enemy was routinely referred to in terms regarded today as offensive. Stories often focused on killing and survival.

Staff writers surveyed Pacific combat veterans for advice on fighting the Japanese that they'd share with Europe theater veterans expected to arrive for the final push on Japan.

Stars and Stripes staff writer Pfc. Bill Land profiled Staff Sgt. Jon Freeman of Arkansas, also known as "Killer" Freeman, who had single-handedly sent 27 enemy soldiers to their deaths during six weeks of combat in Leyte, Philippines.

Land's photograph of Freeman captured the image of an American fighting man in the final stages of the war. A cocked steel helmet shadows the right side of his face, a cigarette angles down from the corner of his mouth, his left eye focuses on something to his right. He cradles his rifle in his arms across his midsection. Three grenades hang on his field jacket on either side of his chest.

Killing the enemy was Freeman's hobby, according to a headline. "Shoot him from the belly up," was his advice to the newcomers.

Winning a 'Feverish Race'

The outlook changed on Aug. 6, 1945, although the page 1 story out of Washington, D.C., by United Press, in retrospect, left questions unanswered. An atomic bomb "with power equal to 20,000 tons of TNT," had been dropped on Japan.

The story identified Hiroshima as the targeted city and divulged that the U.S. had won a "feverish race" with German scientists to harness atomic power.

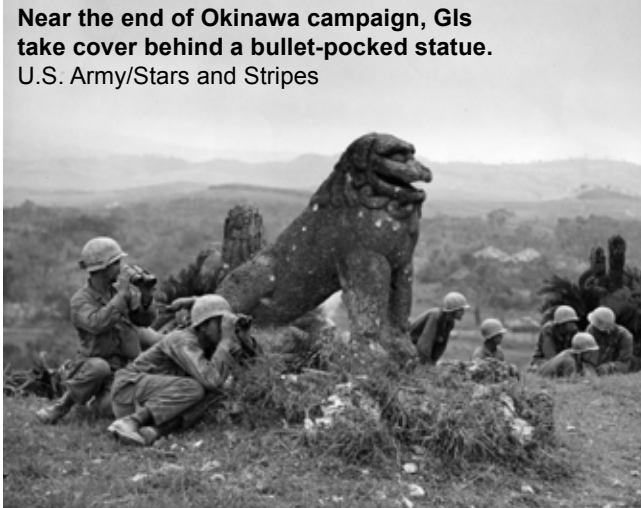
The front-page headline on Aug. 7, 1945, revealed more information and strode across six columns: "Report Atom Toll Heavy," with a smaller headline indicating the city was wrecked beyond Japan's ability to immediately comprehend.

A Stars and Stripes editor, Cpl. Anthony Kott, summed up news of the first atomic bombing. "The atom bomb continued

STARS AND STRIPES



Lt. Morris R. Jeppson, one of two weaponeers who armed the atomic bomb that was dropped on Hiroshima, is pictured before his first and only combat mission. Emma Brown/The Washington Post
Courtesy of National Museum of Nuclear Science and History



Near the end of Okinawa campaign, GIs take cover behind a bullet-pocked statue. U.S. Army/Stars and Stripes

More than 1,000 Marines were killed and more than 2,000 were wounded in the Battle of Tarawa, which took place Nov. 20-23, 1943, on Betio, a tiny island in the Pacific Ocean's Tarawa Atoll.



A massive column of billowing smoke, thousands of feet high, mushrooms over Nagasaki, Japan, after the United States dropped an atomic bomb on Aug. 9, 1945. A B-29 plane delivered the blast killing approximately 70,000 people, with thousands dying later of radiation effects.

to pale all other news into insignificance in the States," he wrote, "as the American public was heartened by prospects of a shorter war but was awed by the bomb's implications."

Two days later, news arrived of a second atomic bomb dropped on Nagasaki. Played just as prominently was word that Soviet troops had made their first moves against Japan. Both developments signaled the conflict's end.

A roundup of reports carried the headline, "Nagasaki Resembles Volcano Still Afire, Says Eyewitness."

A week passed before a banner headline on Tuesday, Aug. 14, 1945, in flowing typeface heralded "Peace" above the news: "The Pacific war ended Tuesday—1,347 days after the sneak attack on Pearl Harbor."

The first Stars and Stripes staffers to report from Japan's main islands did so from air and sea Aug. 28-29, 1945.

Cpl. Davis wrote from Okinawa of riding aboard one of the final B-24 bomber combat missions over Kyushu and Shikoku. Other than flying over what had been recently the enemy homeland, the flight was routine, he wrote. Davis looked

down mostly on rice paddies, terraced slopes and empty roads, he reported from the "recon mission."

Tech Sgt. Dick Koster wrote from the USS Gosselin on Aug. 29 that Japan's naval base at Yokosuka, today home of the U.S. 7th Fleet, looked "desolate and ghostly." He described the battleship Nagato, crippled by American air attacks; sunken or beached barges; and white flags dotting the hillsides marking gun emplacements.

With the war's end near, the news turned to the coming post-war economy and the nation's capacity to absorb the discharged veterans coming home to the labor force.

The American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars demanded improvements to Veterans Administration hospitals "to avert an imminent breakdown," the paper reported June 12, 1945.

A United Press report quoted a psychiatrist warning of the effects of combat on returning veterans. What today is called post-traumatic stress disorder would result in higher rates of alcohol abuse and alcoholism.

Less than four months later, Stars and Stripes started publishing from Tokyo. The first Pacific edition rolled off the presses of the Asahi Shimbun

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6



Tom Sutton

Long before artist Tom Sutton began contributing to Marvel Comics and the popular Warren Publishing series "Vampirella," he was sharpening his drawing pencil, and his skills, at Stars and Stripes' office in downtown Tokyo.

The Massachusetts native joined the Air Force in 1955 and was later stationed at a base near Osaka, Japan, before being assigned to the newspaper, where he created a daily strip titled "Johnny Craig," named after one of his favorite comic book artists.

The sci-fi comic took place in 2058 and followed a rocket pilot whose "quest to find a second Earth leads him into undreamed of dangers among the stars."

A story published in Stars and Stripes the day "Johnny Craig" debuted said the then-20-year-old Sutton got his start "earning soft drink and malt money by illustrating comics for Weird Science Fiction, Vault of Terror and Starman comic books for \$45 per eight-page story while his high school pals were still peddling newspapers for pennies."

According to "It Crept from the Tomb," a book on horror comics edited by Peter Normanton, Sutton's early work received praise from legendary artist Norman Rockwell.

While in high school in the late 1940s, Sutton took a correspondence art course and his assignments were graded by Charles Schulz, who was trying to get "Peanuts" off the ground at the time.

After leaving the Air Force and finishing college in New York, Sutton took his Stars and Stripes comics to Marvel, where they were reviewed by Stan Lee, co-creator of iconic characters like Spider-Man, X-Men and the Incredible Hulk.

"I think he was rather impressed by the fact that I had actually done a daily comic strip for two years," Sutton told The Comics Journal in 2001. "He just reached over and he pulled off this huge pile of blank paper. And he said, 'OK, do me a couple of Westerns and I'll see you next week. Have fun.' I remember that very well. 'Have fun.'"

Sutton, best known for his writing and illustration work on the popular "Vampirella" horror series, looked back fondly on his time with Stripes, which he called "my art school."

"I remember one of the first jobs I got was they wanted me to draw this temple and some GIs or something, and they tossed a couple of photographs on the drawing table, and they said, 'You've got 45 minutes! Forty-five minutes?'" he told The Comics Journal. "There were men there who had worked at Collier's, who had worked at Saturday Evening Post, who had worked on various other magazines, you understand what I'm saying? That was real. I don't think there is anything better than what we used to call on-the-job training or apprenticeship."

Sutton, who also worked under the pen names Sean Todd, TFS and Dementia, died of an apparent heart attack in May 2002. He was 65.

— Aaron Kidd/
Stars and Stripes



STARS AND STRIPES

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

on Oct. 3, 1945. The newsroom and other offices were several blocks away at the Nippon Times (now the Japan Times).

The newspaper remained there until 1952, when it moved to the Hardy Barracks compound, also in Tokyo, a former Japanese infantry base. In 1962, the paper relocated to a new structure on those grounds, the Akasaka Press Center, where its Pacific offices and printing press remain today.

'Korea At War'

Pacific Stars and Stripes delivers news as it happens. It did so June 25, 1950, when a page 1 headline declared "Korea At War" on the same day North Korean troops poured over the 38th parallel "with tremendous power at 5 a.m.," according to a wire report.

Several editions rolled off the press that day, and subsequent days, as events in Korea unfolded. The front page carried big-picture stories about the unfolding conflict posted mostly by civilian reporters for The Associated Press, United Press and International News Service.

Stars and Stripes staffers found the local angle in the conflict, whether frontline accounts of battle action; high-level meetings in Tokyo between Gen. Douglas MacArthur and government officials like John Foster Dulles, foreign policy adviser to the State Department; or rear-echelon events, like jazz singer Al Jolson performing in Tokyo for wounded soldiers.

The war news at first was grim as North Koreans cornered U.S. and South Korean forces inside the Pusan perimeter

from August until early September. While U.S. B-29 bombers lashed North Korean troops, allied units strengthened defensive positions.

MacArthur turned the tide by sending waves of Marines ashore Sept. 15 at the port city of Inchon, behind the North Korean lines and at the doorstep of Seoul. Wire services kept the troops abreast of the big picture.

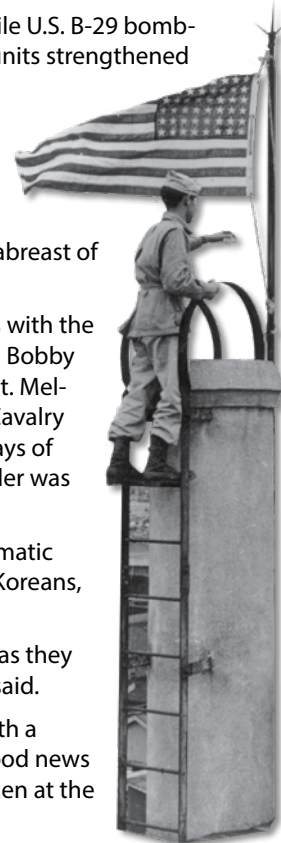
Meanwhile, Pacific edition reporters with the grunts reported action at the front. Cpl. Bobby Rushing wrote how medical officer Capt. Melbourne Chandler led a surrounded 1st Cavalry Division battalion to safety after four days of heavy fighting. The battalion commander was killed, leaving Chandler in command.

The unit came under tank and automatic weapons fire from the "Reds," or North Koreans, Chandler told Stars and Stripes.

"We couldn't move in any direction as they were firing right down our throats," he said.

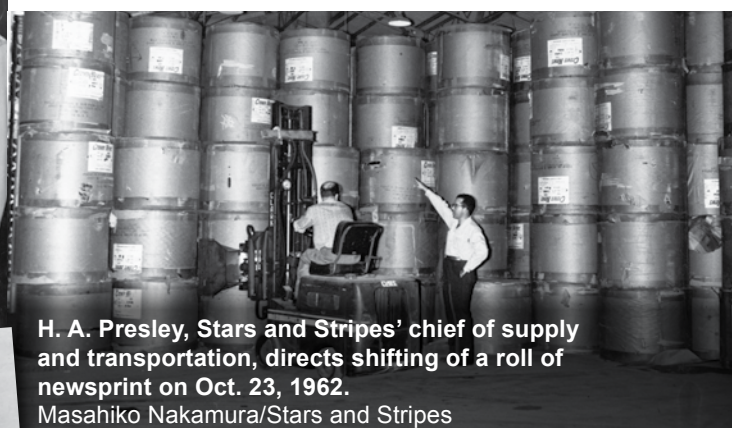
The same day, a front-page story with a three-deck headline delivered some good news from general headquarters in Tokyo: "Men at the Front Will Have Beer."

The northward push by the U.S. X Corps brought them to battle with forces sent by China to push the allies back into South Korea. They met at Chosin Reservoir in the final, cold months of 1950.



General L. L. Lemnitzer, the United Nations and Far East command-in-chief, presses a button to start Stars and Stripes' Goss press on July 28, 1956.

James Baumbarger/Stars and Stripes



H. A. Presley, Stars and Stripes' chief of supply and transportation, directs shifting of a roll of newsprint on Oct. 23, 1962.

Masahiko Nakamura/Stars and Stripes



Chaplain George E. Fort holds Sunday service for hospital patients on Oct. 31, 1957.

Harold Slate/Stars and Stripes

Members of 1st Republic of Korea Marine Brigade storm ashore on the Gimpo Peninsula, 40 miles northwest of Seoul, Sept. 21, 1961.

Kim Ki Sam/Stars and Stripes



Steve Kroft

Veteran broadcaster Steve Kroft, who retired from CBS-TV's "60 Minutes" in 2019 after three decades with the groundbreaking news program, began his journalism career with Stars and Stripes Pacific during the Vietnam War.

Kroft, 74, broke into news as a correspondent and photographer while serving in the Army in Vietnam.

"[Stars and Stripes] would be the thing that I really wanted to do, and I felt it was something that would show up on my résumé and that I would be proud to have on my résumé," he said in October 2018 at the Washington, D.C., premier of a documentary film on the newspaper, which he narrated.

Following his military service, Kroft earned a master's degree from Columbia Journalism School and worked for local television stations in Jacksonville, Fla., and Miami before joining CBS News in 1980.

He was transferred to New York in 1987 as principal correspondent for "West 57th," a news magazine that led to his assignment on "60 Minutes."

He won his first of five Peabody Awards for a 1990 critical look at how the military disciplined an experienced officer for a friendly fire incident. His interview with President-elect Barack Obama drew more than 25 million viewers in November 2008 and remains the largest "60 Minutes" audience since 1999.

Kroft was the longest-tenured reporter for "60 Minutes," which was created by fellow Stripes alumnus Don Hewitt and for years featured another, Andy Rooney.

His numerous citations include the Investigative Editors and Reporters Award, the George Polk and JFK Journalism Awards and a Lifetime Achievement Emmy Award.

— Stars and Stripes

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Stars and Stripes reporters with the Marines and Army units of X Corps filed delayed accounts of the battle that became U.S. military lore. Holding out against repeated assaults, U.S. troops battled their way out of the high, frozen plateau in December.

“Grace of God, Courage of GIs Enables Escape” was the headline on an account by Sgt. Connie Sellers with the Army’s 2nd Infantry Division that appeared Dec. 17, 1950. He wrote how Capt. Lincoln Wray led his 300 men from a death trap to eventual safety.

“By this time, we had walked for 16 hours and about 40 miles through rugged mountain ridges. The men were tired out, but determined not to be trapped and captured,” Master Sgt. Jerry Grafton said in Sellers’ account. “We by-passed the machine guns and kept going.”

Another account from the X Corps told how Army and Marine engineers repaired a tortured, impassable, 20-mile-long stretch of highway and gave allied troops an escape route from the Chosin Reservoir.

“Craters were filled, a vital bridge twice rebuilt after infiltrating enemy troops cut it and dozens of roadblocks of timber, brush and blasted vehicles cleared,” said the Stars and Stripes report.

The war raged across the Korean Peninsula nearly three more years. On Monday, July 27, 1953, the troops read in Stars and Stripes Pacific the news they’d long awaited: “Fighting Ends Tonight.”

Inside, Pfc. Tony Ricketti reported from Panmunjom, the village where documents were signed instituting an armistice that remains in place today.

“Even as the signing took place mortar rounds could be heard in the distance and American jets struck a bit further off,” Ricketti wrote that day.

A Golden Era

As the Korean War drew to a close, events in the French colony of Indochina in Southeast Asia set the stage for U.S. involvement there.

The Vietnam War, which for U.S. combat troops lasted from 1965 to 1973, ushered in what some regard as a golden era for the paper.

“They did really robust reporting from ‘67 to ‘69,” said Cindy Elmore, a journalism professor at East Carolina University who has published scholarly articles examining command influence and censorship of the newspaper.

During that period, the Pacific paper’s top editor was Col. Peter Sweers, a World War II veteran and Bronze Star recipient who held a bachelor’s degree in journalism.

“He was very supportive of freedom of the press and of treating Stripes just like any newspaper covering the Vietnam War,” said Elmore, a Stars and Stripes reporter in the late 1990s.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10



John Olson

Former Stars and Stripes Pacific combat photographer John Olson is known for his haunting images of the Vietnam War, particularly those taken during the bloody Tet Offensive and Battle of Hue in 1968.

“I was a highly motivated photojournalist,” he told the newspaper in 2018. “I’d been in Vietnam for a year, and if you are a combat photographer, you can’t fake it. The more dangerous the better, and I learned that the heaviest fighting was at Hue. So, I went to Hue.”

The powerful photographs Olson took as he followed the 1st Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment through Hue have often been credited with playing a role in America’s eventual withdrawal from the war.

“They were published in Stars and Stripes and also Life magazine,” said Olson of those images, which earned him the prestigious Robert Capa Gold Medal. The award is given by the Overseas Press Club of America for the “best published photographic reporting from abroad requiring exceptional courage and enterprise.”

The March 1968 issue of Life featured a six-page spread of Olson’s photos titled “The Battle that Regained and Ruined Hue.” After leaving the Army, he became the publication’s youngest-ever staff photographer.

“Like many veterans, I came back from Vietnam and I spent decades not talking about it,” he said. “But as we approached the 50th anniversary of the Tet Offensive and the Battle of Hue, I began to wonder what had happened to the young men I’d photographed.”

Olson was able to track down nearly a dozen of those Marines, interview them and capture their harrowing stories on tape.

“They told me about their time in Hue and how the years since Hue have affected their lives,” he said. “How the battle and the fighting—what impact it had on them.”

Olson eventually turned this personal project into an exhibit called “The Marines and Tet,” which ran at the Newseum in Washington, D.C., to mark the battle’s 50th anniversary in 2018.

The Washington Post described the exhibit’s centerpiece photo this way: “The picture—the most important he’s ever taken—shows a half dozen Marines sprawled atop a mud-crusted tank. One man’s arm and eye are bandaged. Blood coats another’s legs. In the foreground, a third man lays atop a wooden door his comrades used as a makeshift stretcher. His shirt has been ripped off because, in the center of his chest, is a bullet hole.”

Olson told the newspaper he had “next to no memory” of taking that photo. When he was asked how the Vietnam War had affected him, the photographer didn’t have an answer.

“I don’t have all that figured out yet,” he said.

— Stars and Stripes

Marines scale a mound of rubble as they fight their way into the NVA stronghold in the Citadel—the ancient imperial capital’s fortress—during the battle for Hue. John Olson/Stars and Stripes



Stars and Stripes photographer John Olson, far left, poses with other journalists behind their tent while covering the Vietnam War. John Olson/Stars and Stripes



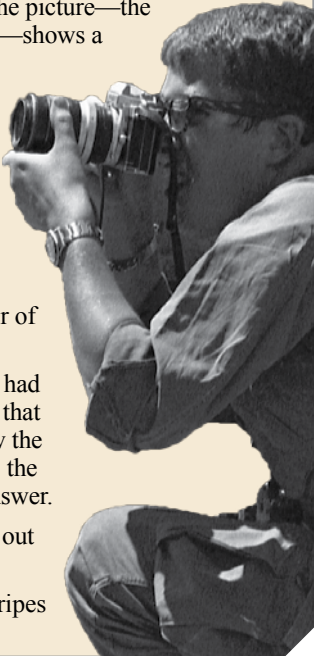
Truce Signed

Stars and Stripes

Fighting Ends Tonight

A squad leader with 3rd Brigade, 25th Infantry Division is treated for wounds during a firefight in South Vietnam, July 13, 1966. Gary Cooper/Stars and Stripes

Debbie Reynolds brings a bit of Hollywood to Korea as she sings for 5,000 soldiers who jammed the Seoul Military Post baseball field on May 28, 1955. Charles Taylor/Stars and Stripes



THE JAPANESE PERSPECTIVE

After wartime terror and defeat, a Japanese life is rebuilt around Stars and Stripes

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Toshi Cooper
James Kimber/Stars and Stripes

Editor's note: This article, originally published in August 2015, focuses on Toshi Tokunaga Cooper, who spent her teens in a world of air raids, shortages, death and at the end, the shock and humiliation of defeat. Over time, her life transformed as she went to work for the occupation forces and later for Stars and Stripes, where she built a career and met her husband. Now living in Delaware, Cooper recalls her own personal journey—part of Japan's transformation from bitter enemy to close ally of the United States.

By Seth Robson,
Stars and Stripes

TOKYO — Toshi Tokunaga Cooper and her coworkers listened on the radio as Emperor Hirohito announced Japan's surrender to the Allies on Aug. 15, 1945. It was the first time the Japanese public had heard his voice, and the news was devastating.

"We stood in the courtyard and listened to the emperor's speech and cried like hell," recalled Cooper.

After hearing of their nation's defeat, Cooper and several friends walked from Tokyo's Ebisu district to the Imperial Palace, where they wept and apologized to the emperor.

"We were very nationalistic," she said. "I heard later that some of the people around us had committed suicide."

The end came as a shock to the Japanese people, even if many had suspected the war was not going as well as it was spun by the government's propaganda machine. For many in reclusive Japan, America was a strange and distant place.

When news of the Pearl Harbor attack broke in December 1941, Cooper's father, a civilian contracting officer in the Imperial Japanese Navy, spread a big map of America on a table and compared it to Japan. Her father was fascinated by foreign things and spent time in London before the war. The family ate English breakfasts of toast, eggs and coffee on Sundays and celebrated Christmas, she said.

The start of the war meant she couldn't watch her favorite American movies. Tokyo cinemas stopped showing them and only screened German, Italian and Japanese films, she said.

Despite official efforts to put a positive spin on news from the front, it was hard to believe that Japan was winning—casualty lists were growing and rations were short. American

bombers pounded Tokyo, destroying entire neighborhoods near Cooper's home in Tokyo's Shibuya district. At times it seemed as if the bombs were dropping only a few yards away.

Some of Cooper's schoolmates were killed in the air raids.

"There were so many people who had a terrible time," she said.

Still, to a young person, the war seemed exciting.

"When a B-29 went down, we all clapped," she recalled.

Workmates at the navy yard in Shibuya, where Cooper was a supply clerk, would arrive each morning with captivating stories.

One woman said she left a pot full of raw rice when she fled to an air raid shelter. When she returned, heat from bombing had cooked the rice, Cooper said.

Her family had a bomb shelter in their backyard stocked with food and supplies. But after a heavy snowfall, the shelter flooded. When the family opened the shelter door during an air raid, they saw all their carefully stored supplies floating in deep water.

News of the atomic bombings at Hiroshima and Nagasaki was vague at first, Cooper said.

"The radio talked about a strong weapon being dropped," she said.

When Allied occupation troops arrived in Tokyo after the surrender, residents were scared. Tokyo was a battered city where black markets sprung up to meet the demands of hungry masses and exhausted soldiers returning from far-flung battlefields.

Australian soldiers set up camp near Cooper's house. There were rumors that they were abducting young girls, and families kept ropes ready so they could escape out the window if the soldiers came for them.

Cooper got a shock when she rode a train to the countryside to trade kimonos for food and felt the hands of a tall Australian lifting up the bag of rice on her back.

"I yelled in English: 'I'm not a street worker.' But he was just trying to help me carry the bag," she said.

Cooper's father was angry when she got a job in the Public Information Office at Allied headquarters, where Gen. Douglas MacArthur ruled Japan during the post-war occupation. He wanted her to get married. She argued that the job would help improve her English—a valuable skill in U.S.-occupied Japan—which she had learned at a Methodist high school.

Soon she was working as a linguist for American reporters. Her English was poor but

"WE WERE VERY NATIONALISTIC. I HEARD LATER THAT SOME OF THE PEOPLE AROUND US HAD COMMITTED SUICIDE."

— Toshi Tokunaga Cooper on Japan's defeat in World War II

good enough to do the job and earn her gifts such as bars of soap from the journalists.

When the chief of the news section at the PIO, Maj. Fred May, took command at Pacific Stars and Stripes in 1948, he invited Cooper to join as an assistant librarian.

Cooper started building contacts with Japanese officials whom she won over with cigarettes and chocolate from the exchange.

"There were few female Japanese journalists in those days, and they had a terrible time compared to the males," she said. "But I could do anything I wanted."

It wasn't long before Cooper was going on assignments as a translator. A memorable assignment involved tracking down Marilyn Monroe, paparazzi-style, when she visited Tokyo in 1954.

Stars and Stripes staked out Haneda Airport, where Monroe and her new husband, famed baseball player Joe DiMaggio, touched down, but there were so many people—"2,500 wild fans"—that the journalists decided to give up and "go get drunk," Cooper recalled.

"We started driving home, but I saw blonde hair in the car in front of us," she said. "I said: 'Let's follow!'"

The car traveled to a back entrance at the Imperial Hotel—avoiding 1,500 more fans

at the front—and out stepped Monroe. Stars and Stripes got the story and photo. Cooper got an autograph.

During the 1964 Tokyo Olympic Games, Cooper helped make posters of the U.S. military athletes who were participating. She moonlighted as a translator for some of the foreign reporters who attended the Games and received plenty of free tickets in return.

Cooper was the translator for Stars and Stripes reporter Army Cpl. Ernie Peeler for his interview with Princess Kazuko—elder sister to Japan's current emperor, Akihito. She was about to become the first member of Japan's imperial household to marry a commoner. Cooper said they had a tough time persuading the princess to smile for a photo.

Before the story could appear, Peeler left for Korea, where U.S. Forces were fighting to hold their own against a communist invasion. On July 28, 1950, he and another journalist, Ray Richards of the International News Service, were declared missing in action—perhaps killed by a tank shell that blew their Jeep off the road.

In 1970, she married fellow Stars and Stripes employee Gary M. Cooper and retired the following year.



This 1959 photo taken at Stars and Stripes' office in Tokyo shows librarian Toshi Tokunaga with artist Shel Silverstein on the bottom row. Pictured from left to right on the top row are admin assistant Michiko Shibata, photographer Neal Callahan, city editor Pat Carroll, entertainment editor Al Ricketts, artist Sanae Yamazaki and features writer Norm Sklarewitz. Shel Silverstein/Stars and Stripes



STARS AND STRIPES

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THE COST OF NEWS GATHERING

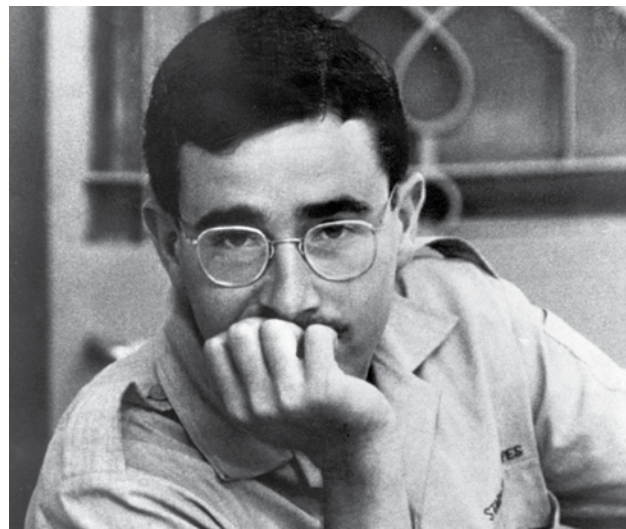
The following is an edited version of a column written by former Stars and Stripes senior reporter Hal Drake and published in October 1995.

Pacific Stars and Stripes has lost two reporters in two wars—one a 37-year-old veteran, the other a youngster only 24. I knew one only slightly and the other not at all.

I called the home of Ernie Peeler's son in California not long ago, wanting to know as much as he might remember about his dad—the reporter we lost in the hard and early days of the Korean War.

Gone before my time, he was a man I never knew, except by reputation and the quality of work I found in a few faded library clippings.

I learned Peeler had been an International News Service reporter and could believe that because of his neat, tight writing, the kind required by telegraphic news services. During World War II, he had worked in military information offices, which ideally qualified him for Stripes—a guy who knew the business from both ends of the telephone.



Paul Savanuck

He was good and he was gutsy, this Peeler—the kind of reporter who would stand fire to get his story, walking into enemy cylinders of every caliber millimeter.

Peeler and Hal Gamble were the first Pacific Stars and Stripes reporters sent to cover the war, which broke over the benign occupation life in Japan like a storm over a picnic. Within days, the two were of Tokyo and in Korea, reporting a difficult and confusing conflict.

Peeler took chances—a lot of chances. Good reporters always do, taking a soldier's chances to do a newsman's job.

So it was July 28, 1950, when he was declared missing in action—perhaps slain by an enemy tank that blew his Jeep off the road. Old-timers at Stripes told me of hopefully scanning POW lists provided by the Communists at Panmunjom. Ernest never turned up.

On the day he disappeared, Peeler was out of hostile range when he and Ray Richards, an International News Service correspondent, decided to head north, toward a broken, disorganized nonentity called the front, to get “just a little more” before they wrote their stories—a decision that can cost a reporter's life.

But the good ones do it.

There was another man I scarcely knew, and wish I had known better.

Two decades have gone by since the last shot in Saigon, but I can't forget the most hurtful happening of a long-ago war—the loss of Paul Savanuck.

Why can't I scrub my memory of a 24-year old kid I hardly touched hands with?

He was like a face on a passing streetcar or casual acquaintance at a bit party. A quiet kid—one of those who could sit in a crowded room for four hours without saying a word. Bespectacled and absently preoccupied, he was remindful of a student for the priesthood or rabbinate.

His constant expression was a thoughtful frown—the one he wore that day in early 1969 as I walked into the Pacific Stars and Stripes Saigon Bureau with colleague Al Kramer, sent from Tokyo to do a special supplement on the war.

The bureau of Vo Tanh Road was a bizarre place, manned by youngsters who lived in the age of Aquarius and Zumwalt. It showed. The walls were done over in psychedelic rainbow, along with pungent lyrics from the rock musical “Hair” and pinups that would have sent a chaplain into convulsive shock. Our people were called the Wild Bunch, and not without reason.

All except Paul Savanuck, who was a few days new to the bureau and had a discomfited look, like a chaplain's assistant who was trying to be one of the guys but still blanched at a dirty joke. As we met, all I got was a loose handshake and a mutter.

Oh no, I thought. Was this another anti-Vietnam draftee, not here to report the war but to protest it? The indiscriminate draft had dumped all manner of characters on us, and the last thing we needed was another Greenwich Village poet posing as a reporter.

I spoke these fears aloud, in private, to Dave Walsh, a Navy journalist attached to the bureau.

“No, Hal,” Dave assured me. “He's a shy sort, doesn't like to push himself. He's new here, hardly been around a week—just feeling his way around. Give him time. He'll open up.”

Bureau Chief Bill Collins told me Savanuck had volunteered for both Vietnam and Stripes, aggressively pounding on the door until Bill granted him a tryout and nodded him in. His diffident manner belied that. Again, I was told—give him time.

There was a drowsy afternoon we were all sitting around, with Savanuck right beside us but a hundred miles away under a canopy of mood. Mike Kopp, a bureau photographer, had a new Nikkormat and was trying it out on anybody who would hold still for five seconds. Savanuck was staring at our well-sized battle map.

“Hey, Paul,” Kopp said. “This way.”

Startled, Savanuck absently jerked around and put his chin on the heel of his hand, looking like that classic statue of The Thinker. We would have that, at least—a picture that caught perfectly the subtle and introspective character of Paul Savanuck.

A day or so later, he was gone, headed up country to cover the war.

Then came that gloomy morning.

There had been a rowdy party at the bureau the night before. Master Sgt. Bill Bradford, the first shirt, expressed bitter regret that a can of beer and the contents of a wastebasket has been flung into an overhead fan. He stood by, in a surly posture with his hands on his hips, while we meekly mopped up the mess. Lt. Col Sal Fede, the officer in charge, waling in with a stormfront over his face. Having just borne Bradford's wrath, we braced for Sal's.



Ernie Peeler

Sal walked over to Collins and spoke in a confidential tone that still carried: “Savanuck's dead. He bought it last night up at Quang Tri.”

There was more boozing that night, but it was morose and depressing. To Dave Walsh fell the stressful job of going up to a remote corner of the Marine base at Da Nang and walking under a sign that read: “In Reverence—Uncover.” Dave nodded as an attendant lifted a rubber wrapping from a still form.

Not long after, Dave was in Tokyo and he and I toured the Kanda district that abounds with bookstores. It also had the oldest beer hall in Tokyo, we and stopped to pay proper respect to a cultural landmark.

After a time, Dave looked absent and thoughtful much like Savanuck, and said: “Jesus, that was awful about Paul. If he'd just been around a little longer and gotten to know you and Kramer and all the guys, he'd have opened up. He was a nice kid.”

I wept a little, for somebody I hadn't known very well for very long.

I could never feel like Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Savanuck, but I still felt sadly deprived.



Maj. Gen. Ethan A. Chapman, chief of staff for U.S. Forces Japan, looks at a painting honoring Stars and Stripes correspondent Ernie Peeler on Feb. 8, 1964. Peeler was the first journalist reported missing in action during the Korean War.
Henry Magnuson / Stars and Stripes

Vernon Grant

Cartoonist and Army officer Vernon Grant had a unique ability to capture the soldier's perspective during the Vietnam War.

"One Vietnam veteran said to me, 'We had some terrible times in Vietnam, but we also laughed a lot,'" Grant's widow, Betsy Grant, told Stars and Stripes during a recent phone interview.

Grant's work "will make you laugh. His sense of humor was universal for all soldiers."

The youngest of five children in a family that immigrated to Massachusetts from Barbados, Grant was 23 when he joined the Army in 1958, with segregation still a dehumanizing force in the United States. Two years in, he was invited to enroll in the Infantry Officer Candidate Course at Fort Benning, Ga., and was commissioned a second lieutenant.

Grant made captain in 1966 and went to Vietnam a year later, where he commanded the Signal Security Force, 400 men guarding 23 communications sites scattered the length of Vietnam.

Between 1966 and 1969, Grant drew comics for Stars and Stripes, under the titles "Grant's Heroes," "A Grant Time in Japan" and "Grant's Grunts." They were biting and humorous but offered a window into the soldier's experience in Vietnam.

In one strip, a two-star general looks up at a man sitting on an elevated throne and say, "If you don't mind coming down, Colonel ... I'll give you my ten-minute thing on 'Command Modesty!'"

"He used exaggeration really well," Betsy Grant said.

Grant left the military in 1968, after 10 years of service. He enrolled in classes at Jesuit Sophia University, which had a campus in Tokyo. He wrote three books on Army life and one on Japan: a two-volume graphic novel "Adventures of Point-Man Palmer and his Girlfriend 'Invisible Peppermint,'" "Stand-By One!" and "A Monster is Loose!—in Tokyo."

He told reporters in 1977 that his popularity among front-line soldiers was a bit overwhelming.

"I became an institution for the U.S. GIs who sought comic relief from the danger of combat and the boredom of army life," he told the Cambridge Chronicle weekly in Massachusetts. "More soldiers read my books than any other cartoonist or writer in the front. I still get embarrassed when I meet someone on the street who recognizes me."

He suffered a heart attack on a run July 7, 2006, fell into a coma and died weeks later.

"His creations of the stories of 'Point-Man Palmer' and cartoons in the military field as well as his science fiction world of 'The Love Rangers' are his legacy," his widow wrote in her book.

Speaking with Stars and Stripes in 1972, Grant made his intentions abundantly clear. He just wanted to make people laugh.

"Translating life into humor is the biggest thing with me," he said at the time.

— Matthew M. Burke/Stars and Stripes



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

The newspaper also benefited from a wide swathe of talented draftees, some of whom had Ivy League degrees or actual journalism experience back in the States, Elmore said.

"We aggressively went out and covered stuff, and the military didn't much like that," said Robert Hoderne, a reporter and assistant editor at the Saigon bureau in the late 1960s.

Many would go on to illustrious journalism careers, such as Jack Fuller, who earned a Pulitzer Prize for editorial writing at the Chicago Tribune, and Steve Kroft, for 30 years a correspondent with "60 Minutes" before retiring in 2019.

"It's probably the best job I ever had," said John Olson, a staff photographer whose work quickly led to a position at the prestigious Life magazine.

A 19-year-old draftee longing to shoot photos for Stars and Stripes when he arrived in Vietnam in 1967, Olson commandeered a jeep and made an unauthorized trip to the newspaper's office in Saigon. The paper pulled some strings and took him aboard after he embellished the scope of a former mailroom job with United Press International.

The first combat assault he covered was Operation Billings in June 1967, where he talked himself onto the second

wave of helicopters heading to the landing zone—air shaking with artillery and a napalm inferno below.

Olson had brought his camera to a particularly hellacious two-week operation that took the lives of 57 Americans.

"But I didn't know any better," he said. "I thought this was just another day at work."

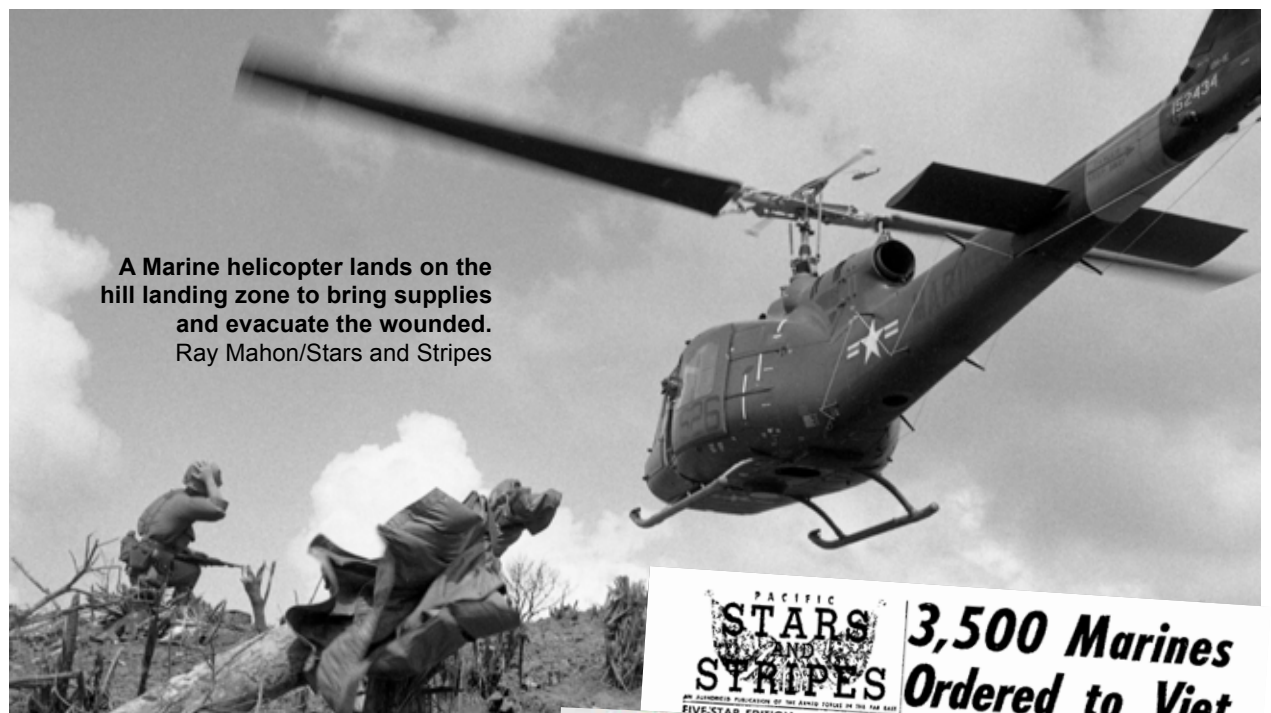
He would not see that kind of intensity again until the Battle of Hue in February 1968, one of the longest and bloodiest of the war. Marines waged an inch-by-inch assault to take the well-fortified Citadel from dug-in North Vietnamese troops.

"I went in there with, I think, 19 rolls of film, and I stayed until I shot every exposure I had," Olson said. "It was violent. It was upfront. It was personal."

Getting that film published in a timely manner was no small feat because unlike the wire services covering the war, Stars and Stripes had no in-country darkroom. Hoderne recalled how film had to be brought to Saigon and then put on one of two Boeing 737 planes chartered by Stars and Stripes that flew a Pacific circuit delivering newspapers printed in Tokyo.

"So, if we shot pictures on the field on Monday—if everything went just right—that film could be in Tokyo on Tuesday and be in Wednesday's paper," Hoderne said.

A Marine helicopter lands on the hill landing zone to bring supplies and evacuate the wounded.
Ray Mahon/Stars and Stripes



Marine Staff Sgt. Robert Thoms, also known as "Cajun Bob," leads his men in the Battle of Hue during the North Vietnamese Tet Offensive in 1968.
John Olson/Stars and Stripes

Gen. Douglas A. MacArthur, left, is greeted by Brig. Gen. Charles Morhouse, the 5th Air Force surgeon general, at Yokota Air Base, Japan, July 12, 1961.
Sandy Colton/Stars and Stripes



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"If you don't mind coming down, Colonel ... I'll give you my ten-minute thing on 'Command Modesty!'"



'A Hellish Nightmare'

The U.S. military's role in world events took a breather after the Vietnam War but history rolled on through civil unrest against authoritarian states in South Korea, Iran, the Philippines and elsewhere, places that presented new challenges to the United States.

Few nations experienced the scale of change that took place in the Philippines when a popular revolt in 1986 unseated President Ferdinand Marcos, a corrupt and authoritarian ruler who held sway in the island nation for 20 years.

Events following Marcos' departure and the election of Corazon Aquino had deep implications for the U.S. military presence there, symbolized primarily by Subic Naval Base and Clark Air Base.

Susan Kreifels worked from Clark as a Stars and Stripes bureau chief from 1987 to 1991—the first woman to hold such a position for the newspaper. Afterward, she moved to Tokyo, where she worked as Japan bureau chief for another four years.

"I always wanted to be a foreign correspondent," she said. "Stripes gave me that opportunity."

Before the Pinatubo eruption that changed the course of U.S.-Philippine relations, Kreifels covered a series of attacks that claimed 10 American lives. A group of communist insurgents, the New People's Army, killed several, including two airmen and a retired Air Force officer outside Clark in 1987 and an Army colonel in 1989.

For Kreifels, reporting on the series of politically motivated attacks was the most important story she covered in her 10 years with the newspaper.

"My editors and I felt we had a responsibility to let our military readers know the real dangers outside the

bases," she said, "and understand what was going on in the country."

A May 1990 article in the wake of two more airmen shot dead interviewed locals whose livelihoods depended on the American presence. Travel off Clark by members of its community was restricted.

A tricycle driver said his income was halved as a result. Another Filipino expressed hatred of the Americans. "We don't need the bases," he said.



Kreifels

Mother Nature soon obliged. Mount Pinatubo, which loomed over Clark, erupted June 12, 1991, after simmering and shaking since April. The explosion instantly disintegrated 900 feet of the summit and blanketed the surrounding area in ash and mud.

Kreifels wrote first-person accounts of the ongoing eruptions and their aftermath. Under a headline, "Scenes from a hellish nightmare," she reported June 17, from Angeles City: "It is difficult to describe the hellish nightmare that 40,000 troops, wives and children are now living in the Philippines. Ash and rocks are covering us, spewed from a volcano in our backyards."

The next day, still working her beat, Kreifels wrote of sleeplessness and the apocalyptic landscape in which the survivors felt somehow damned. She recalled meeting Air Force Staff Sgt. James Nelson and two other sergeants along a roadside in a broken-down Jeep.

"They gave me a wet, crumpled note to get their names to their commander," she wrote. "Fatigue and fear were on their faces as they tried to reach the evacuation site."

The Pinatubo eruption brought the curtain down on the U.S. presence at Clark and Subic Bay, but Stars and Stripes Pacific continues to cover the intersection of Philippine and U.S. military interests to this day.

'Don't Ask, Don't Tell'

Military campaigns in the Balkans and the Middle East dominated war planners and Washington, D.C., during the 1990s, and Stars and Stripes covered the Persian Gulf War and the conflict that engulfed the former nation of Yugoslavia. But the Pacific was no backwater in terms of military journalism.

On Nov. 2, 1992, a short item on page 6 of the Pacific edition identified a sailor from the USS Belleau Wood whom the Navy said was beaten to death by two shipmates in a park outside Sasebo Naval Base, Japan.

Rick Rogers, at the time an Army sergeant and Stripes reporter in Tokyo, was assigned to follow the story by an editor who had received a letter from others at Sasebo alleging the sailor, Seaman Allen Richard Schindler, was targeted because he was gay.

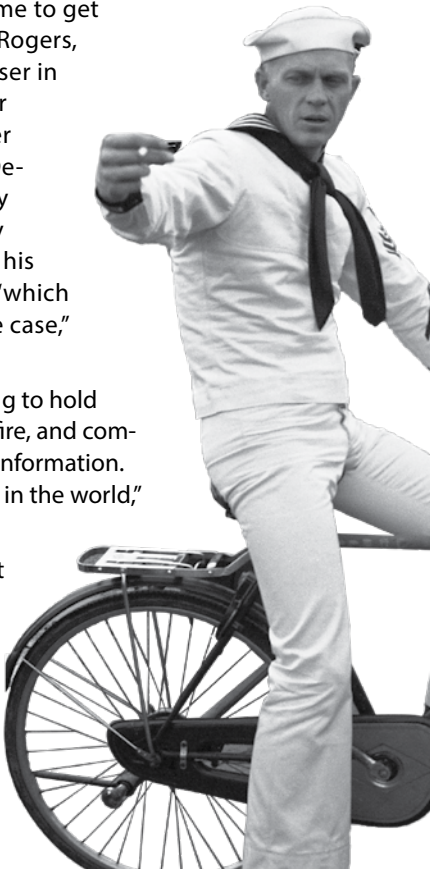
Being gay in the military is no longer a crime, but at the time a transitional policy, "don't ask, don't tell," was in effect.

"It took a long time to get that story out," said Rogers, now a financial adviser in San Diego. Schindler was killed in October 1992 but not until December did the Navy admit his death may have been linked to his being homosexual, "which turned out to be the case," Rogers said.

"I was an E-5 trying to hold admirals' feet to the fire, and commanders, to give up information. Not the easiest thing in the world," he said.

Rogers, who went on in civilian life to cover the military for newspapers in Virginia and California, said he learned two professional lessons as a Stars and Stripes military staffer.

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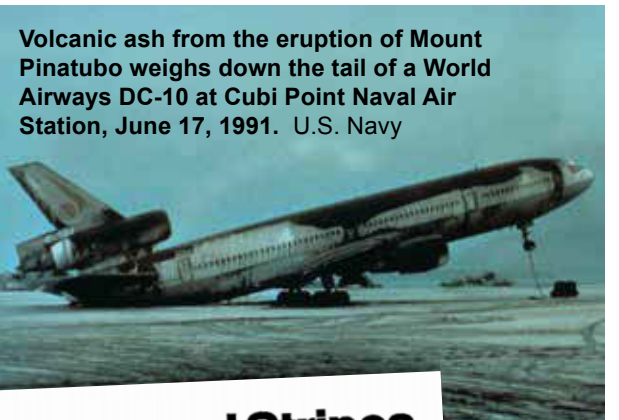


Andrew Headland Jr./Stars and Stripes

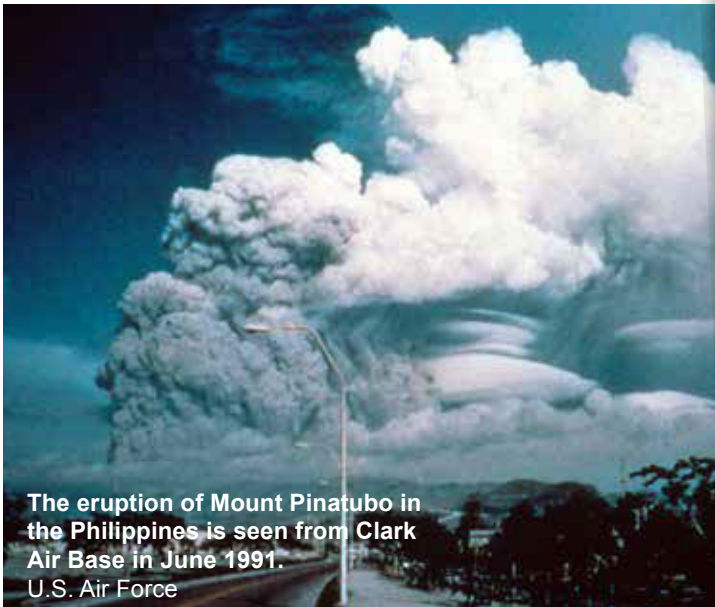
Katsuji Higa, 7 months, son of Mr. and Mrs. Eishin Higa, is a strong Pacific Stars and Stripes supporter. He holds S&S balloons passed out during the carnival fair on July 4, 1962. Stars and Stripes



Volcanic ash from the eruption of Mount Pinatubo weighs down the tail of a World Airways DC-10 at Cubi Point Naval Air Station, June 17, 1991. U.S. Navy



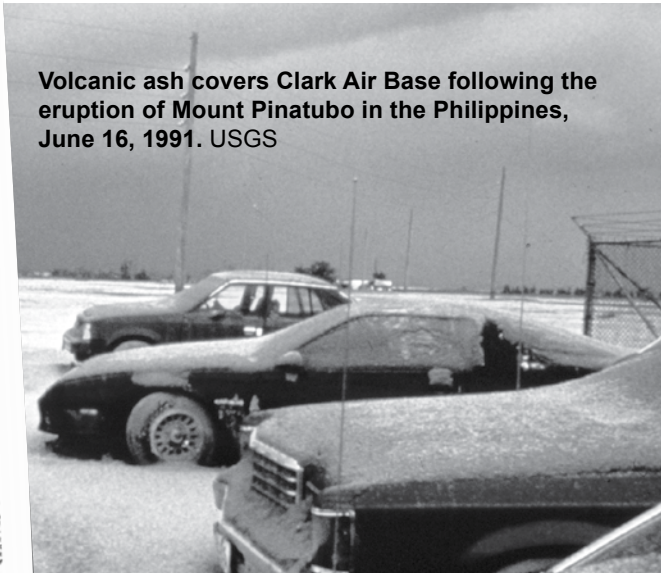
Philippines President Ferdinand Marcos accepts more than \$7 million worth of military aircraft from the United States during a ceremony at Basa Air Base on June 27, 1966. Juanito Pardico/Stars and Stripes



The eruption of Mount Pinatubo in the Philippines is seen from Clark Air Base in June 1991. U.S. Air Force



Volcanic ash covers Clark Air Base following the eruption of Mount Pinatubo in the Philippines, June 16, 1991. USGS



Hal Drake

During his nearly four decades with Stars and Stripes, Hal Drake covered everything from high-level summits and the release of POWs from Vietnam to Muhammad Ali and high school sports.

A native of Santa Monica, Calif., Drake served 10 months in the Korean War as an artilleryman, viewing up close the carnage on Heartbreak Ridge. He applied for one of a handful of reporting jobs at Stars and Stripes and joined the Pacific staff in July 1956.

Until his retirement on Dec. 31, 1995, Drake worked as a reporter, then later as senior writer and columnist. He traveled four times to Vietnam during the war, and later returned with freelance photographer Jim Bryant in April 1985 for the 10th anniversary of the end of the war.

He was at Clark Air Base, Philippines, in February 1973 to greet returning POWs released from Vietnam.

Every president, “Ford through Clinton—I think I got them all when they came over here,” Drake once said. He was equally comfortable quizzing rock musicians such as Rod Stewart about their choice of song lyrics.

“He managed to find the human element in everything he wrote. And he was always a gentleman in the process,” said former Pacific Stripes news editor Ron Rhodes.

Drake marched to his own drummer, his former co-workers said.

“Hal’s desk—a pile of thousands of papers nearly three feet tall—was the stuff of newspaper legend,” said former colleague Adam Johnston, who was assigned to Stripes from 1993-99 while in the Air Force.

Drake could often be seen wandering the newsroom twirling and eyeing an elongated band of wire called a whirligig.

“He was quirky, but always fun and always smart,” said Gerry Galipault, who worked in the Tokyo office from 1984-90. When working the whirligig, “you could tell his mind was working a mile a minute, thinking about what to write next, what to say. And he always said it beautifully.”

After leaving Stripes, Drake and his wife, Kaz, retired to the Gold Coast in Queensland, where they helped run an international student exchange program.

After a lengthy battle with stomach cancer, Drake died there in 2013 at age 83.

— Dave Ornauer/Stars and Stripes



Stars and Stripes journalist Hal Drake, left, helps lead a Korean orphan, who was adopted by an American couple, down a stairway at Tokyo International Airport in 1974. Hideyuki Mihashi/Stars and Stripes



Paratroopers from the 101st Airborne Division provide security at a helicopter landing zone in Hesarak, Afghanistan. Other U.S. forces raided the village earlier in the week on July 16, 2002. Joseph Giordano/Stars and Stripes

U.S. service members are silhouetted against the desert sun in Saudi Arabia during Operation Desert Shield, the preface to the Gulf War. Rob Jagodzinski/Stars and Stripes



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One, don't give up, "because then they win," he said. Two is do nothing untoward. Press the authorities, hold them accountable, but do it the right way. "You have to be 100% right on everything," he said.

Stars and Stripes provides a perspective no other medium can provide, Rogers said, adding it's the only source of news military service members, their families and others connected to the services have on some issues.

"It's not the type of information they're going to get elsewhere," he said.

The military hierarchy benefits from Stars and Stripes, though it often works to frustrate its coverage, Rogers said. The newspaper shines light on problems that can be resolved before they escalate into congressional inquiries. The newspaper, he said, is a kind of loyal opposition.

"I was never interested in tearing down the military. I think the military is an outstanding institution, in general," he said. "That doesn't mean it's a perfect institution. I saw my job as helping make things better."

'Sprung Into Action'

In early September 2001, Stars and Stripes Pacific reported on Defense Department plans to close military bases, a move that Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said was necessary to save money for other uses. Within a day that view suddenly seemed outdated.

The Sept. 11, 2001, edition, published while terrorist attacks on the U.S. were still the better part of a day away, led with a story about the trial of an Air Force staff sergeant for alleged rape. U.S. military bases around Tokyo braced for a typhoon and Marines pitched in to help fight a fire on a small island off Okinawa's coast.

Kathleen Guzda Struck, at the time Stars and Stripes Pacific's managing editor, was at home that evening in Tokyo watching TV when a bulletin appeared on-screen. A plane had struck the north tower of the World Trade Center in New York.



Marines and soldiers at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, check out a camel brought on to the base for entertainment. Camel rides—and photographs—were a popular attraction at the base. Joseph Giordano/Stars and Stripes



A battalion of Georgian soldiers trains at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center in Hohenfels, Germany, to be the nation's third battalion of combat troops to join the fight in Afghanistan on Feb. 25, 2011. Seth Robson/Stars and Stripes



“As I was sitting, watching it, the second plane went in,” she said.

The newsroom in the Akasaka Press Center that night was a beehive, Struck said. She arrived to find everyone at the paper had returned to start working on the story.

“People had just sprung into action, trying to figure out what’s going on,” she said. “The active-duty journalists were always amazing, incredibly well-trained. I loved working with them. Of course, the civilians were, too, but the active-duty staff probably understood on a different scale what was happening.”

From that day on, Pacific edition pages were filled with reports connected to America’s response, military and otherwise, to 9/11. The tone changed. Topics shifted from downsizing military facilities and a slumping economy to the movement of forces from the Pacific and questions of security for service members and their families.

Stripes surveyed its readers and gauged their sentiments, as well. In October 2001, a headline indicated U.S. military and civilians supported the U.S. strikes in Afghanistan in response to the 9/11 attacks. “America did ‘what we had to do,’” the headline said.

Meanwhile, Stars and Stripes journalists based in the Pacific were dispatched along with their colleagues from

other bureaus to cover the invasion of Afghanistan and, in 2003, the invasion of Iraq. Stars and Stripes had a head start in some ways but was caught unprepared in others.

“Not all of our Stripes journalists were accustomed to covering conflict and the [Department of Defense] was kind of scrambling to figure out what their role was, so for instance, that’s when embedding really started for all news outlets not just military,” Struck said.

Journalists from the civilian world were finding their way into the military environment that Stars and Stripes journalists know well. Their organizations—broadcast networks and big-city daily newspapers—could afford to train their employees for combat situations, including exposure to live fire or possible kidnapping.

But Stripes journalists knew their way around military bases and how to work with DOD personnel.

“One of the most amazing things about Stars and Stripes to me was, even though we were independent journalists, we all carried ID cards that would allow us onto any military installation,” Struck said. “So, while we’re walking through the gate trying to find Col. So-and-So or Lt. Col. So-and-So or whomever, our commercial colleagues were having to catch up.”

‘Lifted Out of the Sea’

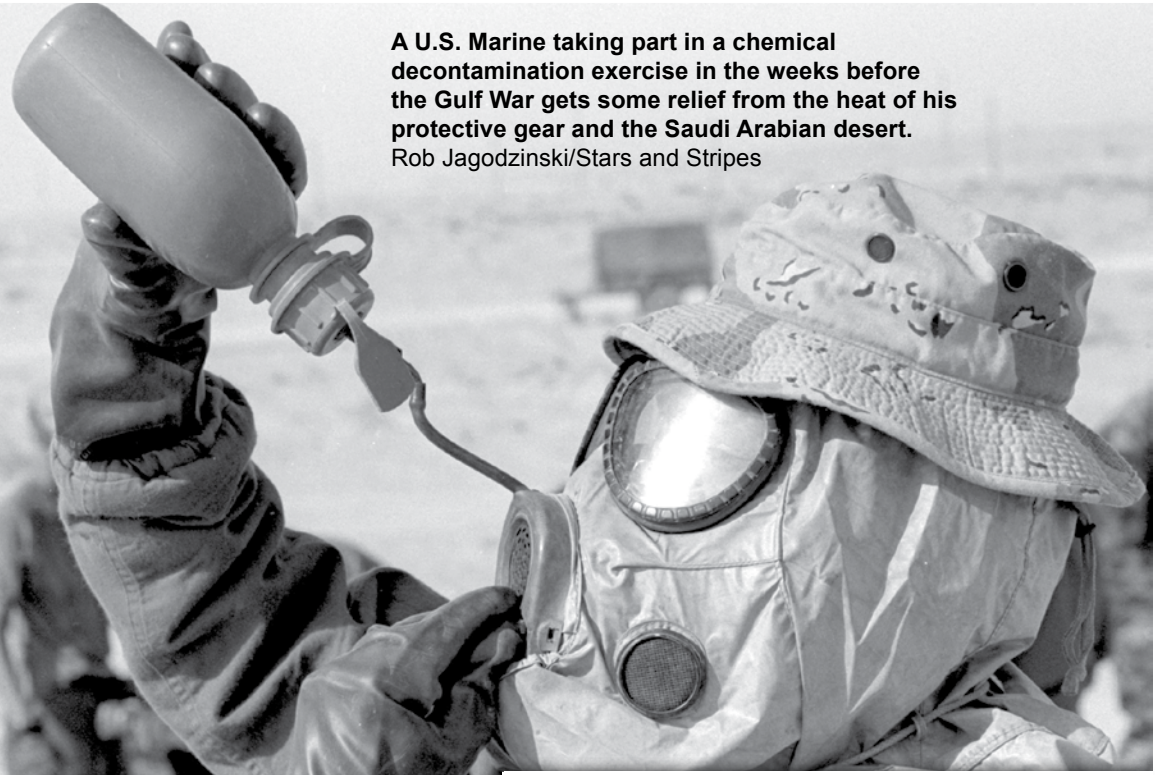
The new millennium only started with 9/11; it continued to present fresh challenges to Stars and Stripes Pacific. Natural disasters would figure prominently in the newspaper’s coverage. Reporters and photographers were dispatched to see firsthand how the U.S. military switched from combat mode to disaster relief.

In December 2004, a magnitude 9.1 earthquake off the island of Sumatra, Indonesia, gave rise to a devastating tsunami, 30 feet high in some places where it came ashore. The series of waves killed about 225,000 people, as many as 200,000 in Indonesia alone.

Stars and Stripes Pacific reporters documented the relief effort by U.S. military units stationed on the main islands of Japan and on Okinawa. From Yokota Air Base in western Tokyo, Air Force flight crews logged 2,500 hours and hauled 4 million pounds of humanitarian aid to affected areas in four countries, Stripes’ Vince Little reported in 2005.

Another Stripes journalist, Juliana Gittler, reported from Thailand on the work approximately 15,000 U.S. service members undertook to provide relief as well as rebuild some areas swept away by the tsunami.

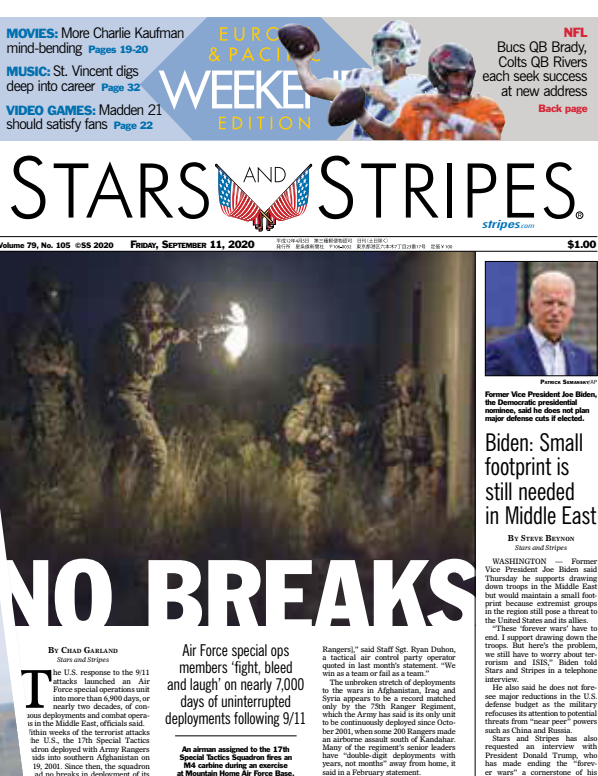
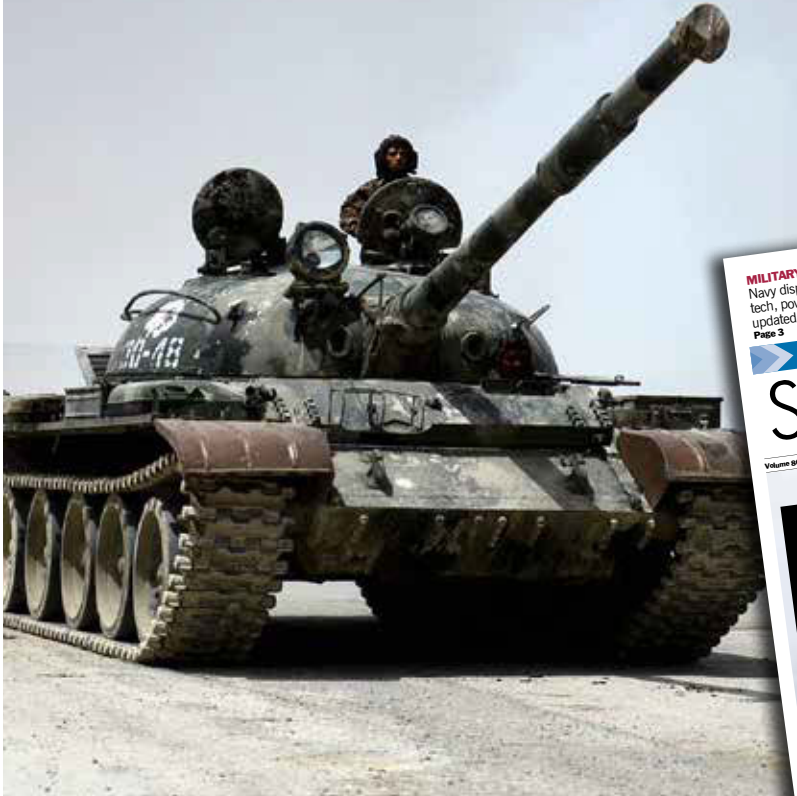
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Boys and girls in Afghanistan’s growing scouts program stand in formation on Sept. 8, 2016, waiting to begin a series of outdoor obstacle course activities as part of a camporee event, the first since the Soviet invasion in 1979. Chad Garland/Stars and Stripes

A U.S. Marine taking part in a chemical decontamination exercise in the weeks before the Gulf War gets some relief from the heat of his protective gear and the Saudi Arabian desert. Rob Jagodzinski/Stars and Stripes

Afghan National Army soldiers drive a Soviet-era tank during an exercise at their base in Kabul. The Afghan army has only one tank battalion, made up entirely of tanks provided by the Soviet Union to the old communist regime on July 2, 2014. Josh Smith/Stars and Stripes



Shelley Smith

Shelley Smith, now a correspondent for ESPN's SportsCenter, was hired by Stars and Stripes in late winter 1982, arriving in Tokyo to become the first full-time civilian woman staffer on the previously all-male sports desk.

It was a time when glue pots and blue pencils were on their way out, computers were taking over the business and cable news was in its infancy.

It was also an era when Stripes covered major national and international sports events in the Pacific, not just what happened on the bases.

"It was the most glorious of times and I still believe I did a service for our troops," Smith recently told the newspaper. "There was no CNN, no USA Today ... How else were they to find out if Duke beat North Carolina?"

Smith was one of the first reporters to greet Clemson's football team for the 1982 Mirage Bowl in Tokyo and question Tigers coach Danny Ford about the NCAA probation just handed his team. She also interviewed a young William "Refrigerator" Perry, who played for Clemson and went on to win a Super Bowl with the Chicago Bears.

"We had so much fun; we were so young and ready to take on the world," Smith said of her days at Stripes. "Our staff was so devoted. We traveled near and far to bring great stories to our readers."

After her time with Stripes, Smith joined the San Francisco Examiner and won a William Randolph Hearst Award in 1986 for her series on Title IX in the Bay Area.

In her early days with ESPN, which she joined in 1993, she won a Sports Emmy for her segment on Magic Johnson as part of an ESPN production on AIDS and athletes. She also worked for The Associated Press.

Smith has also authored two books, "Just Give Me the Damned Ball!" written with former NFL receiver Keyshawn Johnson, and "Games Girls Play: Lessons to Guiding and Understanding Young Female Athletes," written with sports psychologist Carolina Silby and released in 2000.

Smith is a breast-cancer survivor, and was named co-winner of the Sports Illustrated sports media Person of the Year award, along with the late Craig Sager, longtime NBA sideline reporter for Turner Network Television.

Smith also survived a stroke, suffered in May 2017 in the Golden State Warriors locker room after Game 1 of the NBA Western Conference finals, and updated her progress on her Twitter account.

— Dave Ornauer/
Stars and Stripes

Clemson coach: I'm glad it's over

By Shelley Smith



There's lots of talk here who are really disappointed. Ford said as he watched the team practice Thursday morning. But they'll get over it. Our young players will get over it and the coaches will get over it.

TOKYO — A former ESPN Field Reporter said for his "very special" with the Clemson Tigers, the national championship game, Clemson Tigers, but the coach said that he's glad the "what was going on over and done with and out of the picture."

"We've been under investigation for a long time and it's been really hard," Ford said. "But knowing (what was going on) was going to happen" was almost worth the "hanging" he said.

"It was the first time Ford had talked publicly about the violations and about the penalties — the suspension, the probation, the NCAA's decision to strip the Tigers of the 1982 national championship title in the 1982 Mirage Bowl."

Ford said most of the 40 infractions cited by the NCAA were "minor things," but admitted the Clemson coach was guilty of several "major violations." He also blamed other schools for reporting violations to ESPN's John

"I don't know what's right or wrong, or what the way is," he said. "The NCAA set up our side. I know they're going to be very hard on us, but they did what they thought was right."

Although many of the infractions reportedly were under the reign of Charlie Pell, now at Florida, Ford, who became head coach four years ago, said three players and two assistant coaches, now with the Tigers, had been disciplined.

See CLEMSON, Page 24

Texas rips
Texas A&M

—Page 24

Pacific Stars and Stripes

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"They carried food, drinking water and medical aid to remote locations, removed debris and helped to identify remains of people lost in the disaster," she wrote a month after the quake.

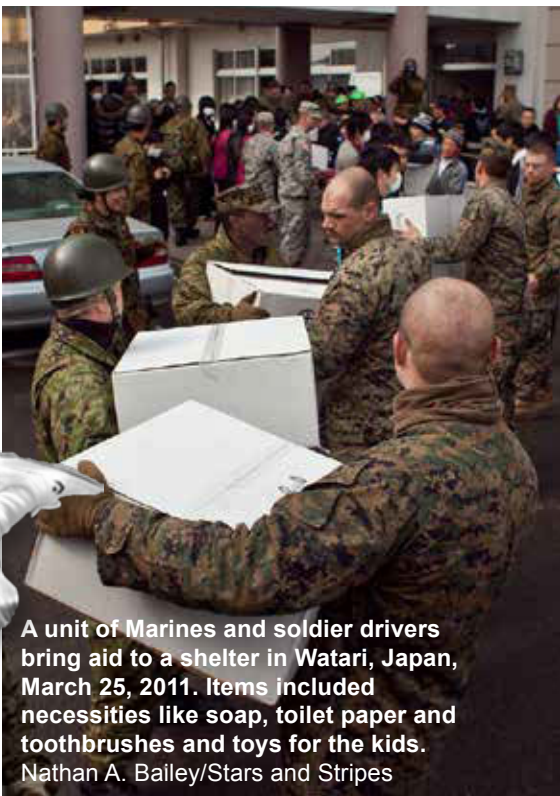
Six years later, reporters and photographers responded to another disaster, this time closer to their home away from home.

On March 11, 2011, a magnitude 9.0 temblor, the Great East Japan Earthquake, followed by a tsunami that came ashore 90 feet high in some places, crushed the Pacific coast of northeastern Japan.

The tsunami inundated an area up to six miles inland in places and when its waters swept back to sea it took 5 million tons of material and debris with it. Ultimately, as many as 20,000 people were declared dead or missing because of the combined disaster.

Complicating matters, the tsunami knocked out generators at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant, causing cooling systems to fail and precipitating a partial meltdown of the fuel core. Hydrogen gas in the outer containment buildings exploded, releasing radiation into the atmosphere. Seawater leaking from the plant became contaminated.

In response, the U.S. military launched a relief and reconstruction effort dubbed Operation Tomodachi that lasted six weeks and involved 24,500 service members at its most intense. Tomodachi is the Japanese word for friend.



A unit of Marines and soldier drivers bring aid to a shelter in Watari, Japan, March 25, 2011. Items included necessities like soap, toilet paper and toothbrushes and toys for the kids. Nathan A. Bailey/Stars and Stripes

Japan Air Self-Defense Force personnel at Chitose Air Base help load pallets of food and supplies onto a U.S. Air Force C-130H from Yokota Air Base during Operation Tomodachi. Grant Okubo/Stars and Stripes



Stars and Stripes rotated reporters and photographers in and out of the affected area during the operation. They documented not only the relief effort, but also the stories of survival told by dozens of Japanese citizens living in temporary shelters.

Veteran reporter Seth Robson had only recently arrived in Tokyo from his previous post in Germany when he saddled up with Nathan Bailey, a photographer and military staffer, and Elena Sugiyama, an English-speaking Japanese librarian who pitched in as a translator.

"I've been to half a dozen major disasters for Stripes and this was the biggest in terms of damage," Robson said. "My



Robson

first impression, it was amazing to see massive ships, including a container ship, lifted out of the sea, to see probably hundreds of cars just wrecked by the flood, even fishing boats and commercial boats in the street."

The reporting team set up shop in the city of Sendai, hard hit by the tsunami.

"We were living on MREs," Robson said. "There was a major aftershock, a really heavy quake, it actually killed people. I remember thinking I might run outside the house, but I remember thinking the other people might think I abandoned them."

Sugiyama logged about a month on reporting trips, going back and forth to the disaster zone.

"What we saw when we first got there was devastating," she said. "It was nothing that I even imagined."

Marines from Okinawa and Camp Fuji play rock, paper, scissors with children at an elementary school shelter in Ishinomaki, Japan, April 4, 2011. They delivered aid and helped clean up the school grounds after a devastating 9.0-magnitude earthquake and tsunami. Nathan A. Bailey/Stars and Stripes





Robson, Sugiyama and Bailey met a family doing its best to clean up its business, a small bar. What struck Sugiyama was how positive they were. Their attitude amid so much destruction touched an emotional chord.

“They were just doing what they had to do,” she said. “The more I think about it, I kind of choke up. That’s when I realized what I was getting into. I just can’t get emotional in front of these people, that’s not what they want to see.”



Sugiyama The hardest part of her experience was approaching a woman looking for her missing sister in a temporary morgue in a gymnasium. “I really didn’t want to do it,” she said, “but I knew that was my job, to do that. I forced myself to do that.” The woman didn’t find her sister, but Sugiyama gave her information on other sites where bodies were collected. The woman was grateful for that information, which gave Sugiyama some comfort knowing she’d helped in some way.

“It was a horrible thing that happened, but it was a great experience for me to be able to work with the journalists,” she said. “It gave me a better understanding of what Stars and Stripes is all about.”

Enduring Legacy

The newspaper faced an existential crisis in 2020, when budget cuts and a proposal to eliminate funding cast doubt on its future.

Public outcry, bipartisan support from lawmakers and the dedication of its staff ensured its survival. The episode highlighted the enduring importance of independent military journalism and Stars and Stripes’ vital role in informing service members around the world.

Meanwhile, a once-in-a-century pandemic crept across the world, complicating the U.S. military presence in the Indo-Pacific.

Stars and Stripes reporters rose to the challenge, documenting the military response and tense relations with host countries as COVID-19 claimed hundreds of lives and forced millions into seclusion.

Reporters brought readers an exclusive interview with a 23-year-old soldier at Camp Carroll, South Korea—the first U.S. service member infected with COVID-19 in February 2020.

The following month, they covered the first active-duty service member to die of the disease—a 41-year-old chief petty officer aboard the USS Theodore Roosevelt. The outbreak on the aircraft carrier, which was diverted to Guam, led to the removal of its skipper and the resignation of the Navy secretary.

As the pandemic subsided, Stars and Stripes reflected on lessons learned, exploring changes in relationships with America’s allies, adversaries and host countries, as well as the pandemic’s effects on the U.S. economy and military readiness.



Spc. Angel Ruszkiewicz, 21, a combat camera specialist from Milwaukee, Wis., reads a Stars and Stripes at the passenger terminal on a coalition base in Erbil, Iraq, on Monday, Dec. 23, 2019, before a flight to Syria. Chad Garland/Stars and Stripes



Military members stationed at Yokota Air Base play Magic the Gathering while wearing masks at the bases’s USO, Jan. 14, 2022. Kelly Agee/Stars and Stripes



A sign posted at the commissary on Yokota Air Base in Tokyo reminds shopper of the mandatory mask policy, Jan. 14, 2022. Kelly Agee/Stars and Stripes



Sailors and dependents from Naval Air Facility Atsugi donated thousands of pounds of goods to be delivered to those hit hardest by the massive earthquake and tsunami that devastated northeastern Japan on March 11, 2011. Erik Slavin/Stars and Stripes



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