



Seeking truth about military teen resilience

BY LISA SMITH MOLINARI,
SPECIAL TO STARS AND STRIPES

“Military children are resilient!” If I’ve heard it once, I’ve heard it a thousand times. But as a Navy wife and mother of three, I’ve often wondered, were our kids truly resilient or was this just wishful thinking? Is there any proof of this alleged resilience? Is it possible that the frequent moves, deployments and unpredictability they experienced as adolescents negatively affected their mental well-being? Were they able to build personal foundations during their teen years that are strong enough to handle life’s stresses as adults?

When I had parenting questions over the years, I often turned to experts for advice. Before Google, I’d order books about best parenting practices, and in later years, I’d hit the internet to find studies, surveys, research papers and other information, especially during the teen years.

So, what do the experts say about whether military teens are resilient or not? Considering that there have been military children in the United States dating back to 1775 when the Second Continental Congress founded the Army to protect the 13 colonies, of course there must be lots of research about military adolescents’ resiliency, right?

Wrong. Apparently, two and a half centuries is not enough time to figure out whether military life

SEE RESILIENCE ON PAGE 14



Blood recipient pumps up donors

BY JONATHAN DAVIS,
MILITARY HEALTH SYSTEM

Vanessa Aguilar is the ASBP blood donor recruiter at US Navy Medicine Readiness and Training Command Guam Blood Donor Center (US NMRTCG BDC). Previously a phlebotomist in her hometown of San Diego, California, Aguilar shared that working with the Armed Services Blood Program (ASBP) enforced “the importance of being able to have blood stocked in hospitals.” The ASBP is the official blood program of the US military with a mission to supply quality blood products and support

to military healthcare operations worldwide.

Not only does Aguilar educate and motivate others to donate blood for the military community as her job, she is a regular donor herself. Beyond working with the ASBP and knowing how donations directly impact service members and their families around the globe, she related her firsthand account of what motivated her to begin donating years ago.

SEE RECIPIENT ON PAGE 2



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RECIPIENT: Not a job or donation, but a gift

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"I donate blood because it saved my life at 15 years of age. I was in an automobile accident in San Diego on June 20, 2013," said Aguilar. "I broke my femur, my head was injured, and I landed myself in a coma. As this occurred, I needed three blood transfusions: one at the scene, second upon arrival, and third during surgery."

Fortunately, she was able to make a recovery, and was grateful for the fire department that saved her life that night, along with the medical team at the hospital.

Aguilar shared that "I can only imagine not having a blood transfusion. This is why I donate blood; to give someone a second chance...I've come to realize that something bad doesn't have to happen to you in order for you to do something great for others, to see the impact it can give."

She has been donating blood since she was 18 and continues to 'keep on' saving lives. So far, her total donation volume is estimated to be over three gallons of whole blood donated.

"I try my best to donate when I have time and have mainly donated with civilian organizations until I learned about the ASBP," Aguilar related. "Now I donate with a primary focus for ASBP, our service members and beneficiaries."

US NMRTCG BDC Director Navy Lt. Apolinar Ortiz knows



firsthand about Aguilar's dedication, stating that "Vanessa puts so much love into her work and knowing her story I can see how she can encourage donors. This is not just a job or a donation to her, but a gift at a second chance to those like her."

As a committed blood donor with the ASBP, on staff as a blood recruiter and as one who has been

directly impacted with donations, Aguilar has some advice to share with those considering donating but who are not sure. Aguilar explains: "...helping others understand that blood donations save lives helps to overcome hesitation. If not that, just think about what if someone you love needed a transfusion...blood transfusion helps give someone a second chance."

The need for blood is constant and it is a critical tool to help people live, heal and 'keep on'. Every donation can help make that happen with donors and supporters like Aguilar. Keep on, Vanessa!

To find an ASBP blood drive or location near you, visit www.militarydonor.com today.

About the Armed Services Blood Program

Since 1962, the Armed Services Blood Program (ASBP) is the official blood program of the United States military. Our mission is to provide quality blood products and support to military health care operations worldwide; from the battlefield to the local hospital, whenever and wherever needed. The ASBP collects, processes, stores, transports, and distributes blood products to service members, their families, retirees and veterans in peace and war. In an ASBP Enterprise view – Military Health Affairs, Defense Health Agency, Service Blood Programs and Combatant Commands – we operate under common goals, metrics, procedures, and work together to shape the future.

The ASBP is one of four organizations tasked with providing a safe blood supply to the nation. Our program also works closely with our civilian counterparts in times of need to maximize the availability of this national treasure.



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LINEBACKER OF THE WEEK

Carly A. Macias

'Giving them all things to do and not feeling so remote'

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
AIRMAN 1ST CLASS ALLISON MARTIN,
U.S. AIR FORCE

ANDERSEN AIR FORCE BASE – Carly A. Macias, a community recreation manager with the 36th Force Support squadron, was recognized as the 36th Wing's Team Andersen Linebacker of the Week, at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, Aug. 24, 2022.

The Team Andersen Linebacker of the Week recognizes outstanding enlisted, officer, civilian and total force personnel who have had an impact on achieving Team Andersen's mission, vision and priorities.

Since April 22, 2022, Carly Macias executed six major community and special events taking place on Andersen. These events brought out a combined total of 4,800 people. The events provided professional entertainment, cultural education, recreational activities, life skill enhancement and relaxation. The events greatly improved the morale and quality of life of our military members and their families.

"The best part of my job I would have to say is the take away that the families and Airmen get from our programs, giving them all things to do and not feeling so remote out



Carly Macias receives the Linebacker of the Week Award from Brig. Gen. Paul R. Birch and Chief Master Sgt. Jose Ramon Jr.

here," said Macias.

One of many events put on by Macias, Tao Tao Guahan, increased the interaction between Team Andersen and Guam's rich heritage. The event featured educational activities showcasing traditional hunting, fishing, weaving and cooking demonstrations. Additionally, the CHamorro language and history was on full display through a singing and dancing performance. The

entire event provided mutual respect and built ties between the on and off-base community.

Another responsibility took on by Macias includes travel advising. She researched and informed customers on new protocols for traveling under current COVID-19 guidance. She also contacted four embassies to determine visa requirements and travel restrictions to mitigate issues. By doing this Macias saved customers

over \$30,000 in delays, testing and quarantine hotel fees.

Macias was vital to Andersen's Freedom Fest celebration. She proposed alternate locations increasing the fireworks vantage point, and enhancing entertainment for all spectators. She also redesigned the overall map of the new venue, streamlined flow of food tents, car show, rides and live entertainment for over 1,100 people in attendance.

Macias provided oversight and boosted patronage for several events and trips. She obtained \$2,500 in sponsorship dollars, decreasing out of pocket expenses for 50 Airmen.

Her work ethic and unit involvement sets the tone for her peers and Airmen to emulate. She constantly demonstrates the importance of leading people and improving the unit by facilitating squadron professional development seminars and mentoring sessions.

The term Linebacker is rooted deep within Team Andersen's history. Operation Linebacker II took place on Dec. 18, 1972, and was the largest number of heavy bomber strikes launched by the U.S. Air Force since the end of World War II. During the operation, B-52 H stratofortresses from Andersen flew round-the-clock bombing missions over North Vietnam to destroy major targets in Hanoi and Haiphong in an effort to bring the Democratic Republic of Vietnam back to negotiations.

The recipient will have the opportunity to sign a "Linebacker" football jersey that will be displayed in the Wing Headquarters building.

Way to go, Macias!

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A SPICE OF LIFE

Mangilao Donne Festival makes comeback on Guam

BY TAKAHIRO TAKIGUCHI,
STRIPES GUAM

Things to know

PERIOD: Sept. 16, 17 and 18
HOURS: Friday 5-9 p.m. Sat. and Sun. 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.
LOCATION: Mangilao Village, next to Santa Teresita Church on Route 10.
TEL: 671-734-216 (Mangilao Mayor's Office)
FACEBOOK: www.facebook.com/mangilaodonnefest/

The Mangilao Donne Festival returns Sept. 16-18 after two years of cancellation due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"I am excited, and I look forward to celebrating our annual festival," says Mangilao Mayor Allan Ungacta. "BIBA DONNE!"

Donne peppers (pronounced doe-nee) are very important to not only the Mangilao Village but also for the entire island. The peppers are an essential ingredient in many of Guam's favorite typical dishes.

"Donne is important to Guam and our people because we love to eat hot and spicy food," Ungacta said. "It is commonly used on our signature dish called 'Finadene' known as hot sauce."

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Photos courtesy of Mangilao Mayor's Office

Pepper up your health, whether it's green, red or yellow

Peppers provide a variety of flavors to enhance cooking. Great news: they may also be good for your health.

Enhance the flavor of your food by incorporating peppers into your meals. Adding hot peppers to chicken and fish improves the taste and limits the need for added fats or salt. Sweet peppers perk up salads, pasta, rice and meat, fish and poultry.

Peppers are also rich in phytochemicals

that appear to provide anti-inflammatory benefits. Preliminary research shows capsaicin may act as a blood thinner.

Hot peppers have the highest amount of capsaicin while sweet, green, red or yellow peppers have less. Whatever color you prefer, choose firm, shiny peppers for the best flavor.

– American Dietetic Association:
Your Link to Nutrition & Health

Finadene is Guam's signature spicy condiment without which no meal is complete. So, it is no wonder that Mangilao would be where locals can celebrate all things pika (Chamorro for 'hot') during annual September festival.

The festival was started in 2011 and was an opportunity for Mangilao farmers, whether professionals or hobbyists, to show off and sell their best peppers and pepper products.

"Since 2011, our village has successfully coordinated the event to promote the local farmers in the village, as well as help small businesses," Ungacta said.

Every year, the festival kept getting larger, he added, until, of course, the pandemic put a hold on this and many other island festivities.

After two years, Mangilao village will finally get its celebration back.

The three-day festivities will take place next to Santa Teresita Church on Route 10 and visitors can expect dozens of booths dedicated to all things done, including finadene, pika (hot-pepper jelly), barbecue, beverages, clothes, crafts and more.

The event will also feature carnival games and other activities perfect for the entire family and people



of all ages. Enjoy music at the event on the main stage, including cheerful music and dancing by Talent Box dancers, Joe Guam, Mix Plate Band, Taj, Isa i Isla-Ta, The Radiants, and other cultural performances.

The Donne Festival will also give attendees opportunities to try "yiyu-patku" aka CHamoru slinging – a signature weapon of the early Chamorro's, which is made of limestone, basalt, or fire-hardened clay and suspended from pandanus or coconut fiber slings. You can learn

how to use the traditional Chamoru weapon and participate in the competition scheduled for Sept. 18. You can join the Best Kadon Pika and Best Dinanche competitions to test your cooking skills, as well (register in advance at the Mangilao Mayor's Office).

It's been a while, so don't miss the opportunity to celebrate the delicious donne pepper in Mangilao!

Takiguchi.Takahiro@stripes.com



GSA in Guam



GSA Global Supply® is partnering with M80 Systems, a local small business, to serve civilian and military customers in Guam. M80 is now storing and delivering approximately 350 high-demand National Stock Number (NSN) items formerly stored in and shipped from the continental United States. The change reduces delivery time to a few days from weeks or months.

Customers can order using GSA websites (GSA Global Supply or GSA Advantage!®) or via existing customer logistics platforms (e.g., GCSS-Army). GSA's systems recognize the items stocked in Guam and fulfill orders locally. Other items will ship from the mainland. An electronic catalog is available.



Brandy Untalan

The new program does not replace existing retail stores managed by GSA at Andersen AFB and Naval Base Guam. Instead, the stores and new outlets are complementary. For more information, please contact your local GSA Customer Service Director, Brandy Untalan, at 671-333-4721 or brandy.untalan@gsa.gov.

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Finadenne' Denanche (Hot Pepper Paste)

Demise of true 'donne'

There are two main types of hot "donne," or peppers, native to Guam: "Donne'sali" with small, bright red and very pungent fruit and "donne' ti'au" a long, red and pungent pepper, according to Mari Marutani, a professor at the University of Guam's College of Natural and Applied Sciences.

"They belong to different genera. Donne'sali has long been harvested from the wild, it is also called the bonnie pepper. And donne' ti'au is mainly grown in the backyard garden," said Marutani. The first has been labeled "Guam super hot," while the second is "Guam regular hot."

"Guam super hot is very pungent, having Scoville heat unit of 4000-4250, while 'Guam regular hot' was reported to have an average of 3450," said Marutani. "However, unfortunately original specimens of both Guam super hot' and Guam regular hot have been lost and we will not be able to examine these specimens any longer."

Purebred native peppers may be hard to come by, but the varieties sold in markets and by roadside vendors on Guam today are rich and varied – with a "pika" (hot) punch that's all their own. It's a good thing, because according to Marutani folks around here need their peppers.

"Pacific islanders consider Capsicum spp. (species of hot peppers) as a must ingredient to add pungency to island cuisine," she said. "While we have many diseases and pests, hot Capsicum spp. can be grown year-round."

– Stripes Guam

On Guam a BBQ isn't a BBQ without hot pepper. It is a must-have condiment. There are many different types of finadenne' and one of those is finadenne' denanche' (hot pepper paste).

Guam's finadenne' denanche' is a blend of freshly ground hot peppers and seasoning. Other optional ingredients such as garlic, vinegar, lemon, eggplant, and a whole array of other items can also be added. Everyone has their own special blend and the varieties of finadenne' denanche' blends are countless as their creators.

Here is how I make mine....

First go to your hot pepper trees and pick all the semi and ripe hot peppers.

One of my hot pepper trees. This plant will get a whole lot bigger. ①

Once you have picked the hot peppers, you need to remove all the stems.

It is a tedious process. ②

I use hot peppers, garlic, apple cider vinegar, sea salt and a little garlic powder just in case I want it a little more garlicky.

Here is what I use. ③

Blend up the hot peppers with the 2 bulbs of garlic diced and 3/4 cup of apple cider vinegar. ④

Remove when pepper and garlic is blended into a paste.

You may have to blend the mixture in stages in order to complete the blending process as the mixture can be a little too thick for the blender to blend everything at one time.

Once you have completed the blending process, you can season it with 3 to 4 teaspoons of sea salt.

Taste the mixture to make sure the seasoning is suitable and adjust if needed. This is the fun part. Can you handle the taste test????

You should be left with about a quart of finadenne' denanche'.

You can use this to spice up just about anything. Even coat your favorite steak with it for a "real" peppered steak.

Hope you give this a try. I think you will get the hang of it and have this as an addition to your table fare. That is if it isn't too hot for you.

– bbqguam.blogspot.com



TIPS



Tabasco talk

How Guamanians like their hot sauce

Market Wholesale Distributors, Inc. took a survey of some of the most popular ways on island to consume America's favorite hot sauce. Here's what they came up with:

- Tabasco fried rice – You can't make the perfect fried rice without the dynamic duo: Hot and Spicy Spam and Tabasco.
- As an ingredient in barbecue marinade – used to marinate everything including chicken, beef, fish, sausage, pork, oysters, and more. (The basic marinade is soy sauce and lemon or vinegar with tons of onions, garlic, and black pepper. From there, everyone adds their own special ingredients and tabasco tops the list.)
- As an ingredient in kelaguen - A popular dish at fiestas and elsewhere that consist of meat, fish or seafood cooked entirely or in part in lemon or other citric juice.
- Tabasco with (canned) corned beef and cabbage – a much-lived local dish of corned beef stir fried with cabbage and a dash of Tabasco.

And why not ...



'Pika' power!

When it comes to spiciness, Guam doesn't mess around

Guam has perfected "pika" – Chamorro for that spicy red-hot kick. So prevalent is the penchant for pika here that the word can be found everywhere from Pika's Café (famed for its Chamorro-fusion food) to Pika Magazine ("A guide to spice up your life") to myriad of local recipes like "monnok kaden pika," or spicy chicken stew.

This island delights in "donne," or peppers, so much that it boasts its own indigenous boonie pepper, has more local dishes that use them than you can shake a stick at, and hosts an annual festival in honor of the almighty pepper. What's more, Guam has been the pride and proving grounds of a couple of big-name pika peddlers. In short, when it comes to spice, Guam is hot.

The real proof, however, lies in the aftertaste test, and the common condiment for

Guamanians comes with a kick. You can find hot sauces in every home, on every table, at every barbeque and in local restaurants, lunch boxes and even a purse or two. The island's signature dipping sauce – "finadene" (pronounced fin-ah-den-ee) – is a spicy homemade staple.

Just how much do Guamanians love hot spicy foods? Consider this: Guam placed No. 1 for per capita consumption of Tabasco hot sauce out of more than 165 countries at the 2013 Tabasco Brand Sales and Marketing Conference for the Asia-Pacific Region in Phuket, Thailand.

On average, Guamanians consume almost two 2-ounce bottles of Tabasco per person annually, according to Michelle Bengco, a sales director for Market Wholesale Distributors, Inc. which distributes the product on Guam. Mmainland America placed a distant second with a consumption per capita of just 0.75 ounces per person – five times less than Guam.

"If you ask anyone in Guam why they love tabasco the common answer is because it gives a kick on spice and flavor in any meal," said Bengco. "It is very common for Guamanians to carry along a small bottle of tabasco in their purses and have an emergency bottle in their cars.

"Chamorro's love hot and spicy flavors that are added on before eating, not during the process of cooking," he added. "Guam's fixation with Tabasco is believed to have started during Word War II when the Americans brought it over to Guam as a flavor kicker."

Guam's love of the world-renowned hot sauce may be rivalled only by its taste for Spam. It's something Tabasco and Spam took into account when they united to create a line of Hot & Spicy Spam products that bear the logos of both companies. Now sold worldwide, the product debuted right here, "where America's day begins" and came with a recipe for Spam fried rice from Guam-based Shirley's Coffee Shop, according to Bengco.

– Stripes Guam

TABASCO CHICKEN FRIED RICE

Ingredients

- Chicken breasts, cut into thin strips
- Soy sauce (or fish sauce)
- Olive oil
- Onion, chopped
- Garlic clove, finely chopped
- Egg, lightly beaten
- Sugar
- TABASCO® brand Garlic Pepper Sauce
- Rice, cooked
- Frozen green peas, thawed
- Scallions, chopped

Measure

- 3 ea.
- 2-3 Tbsp.
- 2 Tbsp.
- 1 ea.
- 2 ea.
- 1 ea.
- 1 Tbsp.
- 1 tsp.
- 3 cups
- 1 cup
- 4 ea.

Directions

1. Place chicken in a small bowl and toss with soy (or fish) sauce.
2. Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the oil and then the onions and cook 3 minutes. Add the garlic and cook another minute.
3. Add chicken, reserving the soy (or fish) sauce. Let the chicken cook until just starting to brown; then add the egg and cook for 30 seconds.
4. Add the reserved soy (or fish) sauce, sugar, TABASCO® Garlic Pepper Sauce and rice. Stir in the green peas and cook for 1 minute until the peas are heated through.
5. Stir in the scallions and serve with additional soy sauce.

– Tabasco Foodservice



Annie's Chamorro Kitchen www.annieschamorrokitchen.com

“My name is Annie. Food and I get along so well! Cooking and baking are more than a hobby for me – they’re a passion. I come from the beautiful island of Guam, U.S.A. The recipes you’ll find here are my creations, or those of my children, who are also budding foodies. I hope you like them. Drop me a comment or two to let me know how you like our island and other delicacies. Enjoy!”

– Army Lt. Col. (Ret.) Annette Merfalen



Spicy Crackers

Ingredients:

- 1 box saltine crackers
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 2 packages ranch dressing mix
- 6 tablespoons hot pepper flakes

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 250 degrees.
2. In a large shallow baking pan, spread out the saltine crackers.
3. Pour the oil over the crackers; toss gently to ensure each cracker is coated with oil.
4. Sprinkle the ranch dressing and pepper flakes over the oil-coated crackers. Mix gently (I use my hands to do this) to ensure there is seasoning and pepper on each crack.
5. Bake for 15 minutes then remove the pan from the oven. Leave the crackers on the pan to cool then place them in a resealable container to store.



Miso Donne' Dinanche (Miso Pepper Sauce)

Donne' Dinanche, or a hot pepper paste, has many variations. It can be made with just peppers and no other seasoning, or you can add other ingredients such as onions, garlic, coconut milk, vegetables, crab paste and lemon juice.

One variation that is quite popular – tasty too – adds miso paste to the mixture.

The resulting sauce – it's more like a thick paste – is a spicy, salty, savory mixture that goes perfectly with grilled meat (or any meat dish, really) and hot steamed white rice.

Give my easy recipe a try. If you like spicy condiments, you'll like this one. :)

These are some of the ingredients I used – a Japanese long purple eggplant (although any eggplant will do), yellow onions, fresh green beans, garlic (not pictured), lemon powder (not pictured) and ready-made Tinian donne' dinanche.

Ingredients:

- 1 large Japanese purple eggplant (or 2 medium)
- 1 small onion, finely diced
- 4 tablespoons chopped garlic
- 4 tablespoons coconut oil
- 1 cup fresh green beans, thinly sliced
- 1½ cups Japanese miso paste
- 3 tablespoons donne' dinanche (mashed hot chili peppers)
- 1 teaspoon lemon powder, optional

Directions:

1. Dice the eggplant into small pieces; place in a large frying pan. Add the onion, garlic and coconut oil to the pan. Sauté over medium-high heat until the onions are translucent and the eggplant softens, about 5-7



minutes. Stir occasionally to prevent the bottom from sticking to the pan and burning.

2. Add the beans to the pan; stir to combine. Cook another 5 minutes to soften the beans. Add an additional tablespoon of coconut oil if the mixture appears too dry and is sticking to the pan.
3. Add the miso paste; stir to combine. Mash the mixture slightly with the back of your cooking spoon.
4. Add the pepper paste to the pan then turn off the heat (ensure your cooking area is well-ventilated when you add the pepper).
5. Add lemon powder, to taste (optional).



Fina'denne' ~ Chamorro 'Special Sauce'



Chamorro Special Sauce – that's what my non-Chamorro friends call fina'denne', the literal translation of which means made with pepper or donne', the Chamorro word for hot chili pepper.

Fina'denne' is a staple in most Chamorro homes. It's served with most meals. Pour it over your freshly steamed rice or over your meat of choice. It's sure to enhance your dining pleasure. :)

There are many, many ways to prepare fina'denne'. Soy sauce is usually the main ingredient; however, depending on the type of dish being served, you may choose to use salt instead. For instance, I prefer a salt-based fina'denne' over grilled fish, but I love a soy sauce-based fina'denne' over fried fish.

The acidic ingredient is all up to you as well. You can use white vinegar, cider vinegar, coconut vinegar, lemon juice or lime juice...it's all up to you. My brother, for example, likes



Jollibee

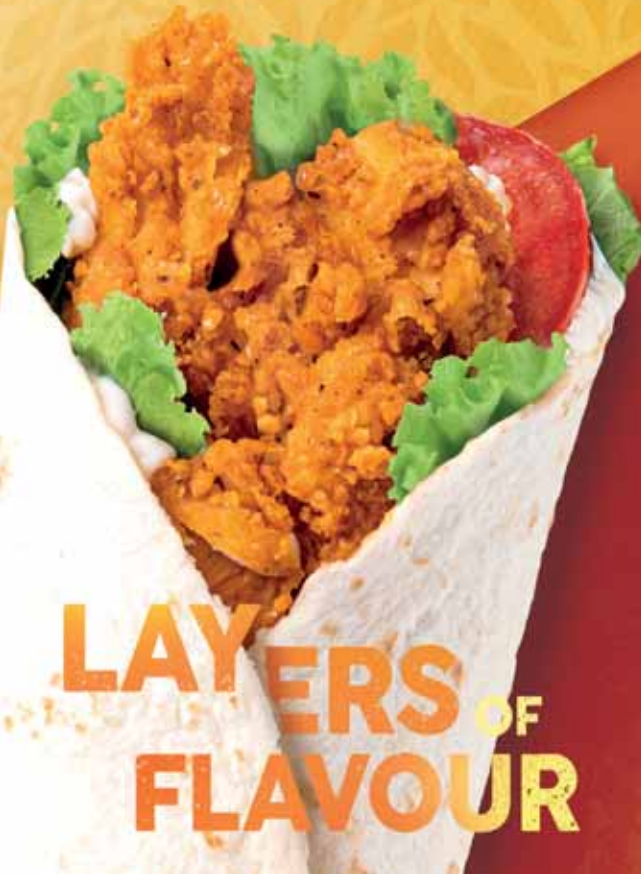
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only lemon or lime juice in his fina'denne'. I, on the other hand, like to vary the acid I use depending on what I'm eating. I mentioned fish above...I like a soy-lemon fina'denne' with fried fish, and either a salt-lemon or salt-white vinegar fina'denne' with grilled fish.

I also like using white vinegar when I add tomatoes to my fina'denne'. Tomatoes and vinegar pair really well, you know, like how a vinaigrette dressing goes great with a tomato salad. Be sure to taste as you go...you might like your fina'denne' more on the salty side, or you might prefer it a bit more sour (which is how I like it).

I like a 1:1 ratio of soy sauce to vinegar. My husband prefers his fina'denne' on the salty side, so when he makes it, he uses a 2:1 ratio of soy sauce to vinegar. In other words, if I were to make a cup of fina'denne', I'll use 1/2 cup soy sauce and 1/2 cup vinegar. My husband, on the other hand, will make his using 1/2 cup soy sauce and 1/4 cup vinegar.

Try making different varieties of fina'denne' and decide for yourself your personal preference. But by all means, give it a try. I'm sure you too will love it. :)

Ingredients:

- Soy sauce, to taste (you can substitute the soy sauce with salt)
- Vinegar, to taste (you can use any type of vinegar, or you can use lemon or lime juice)
- Optional ingredients:
- Green onions, as much as you like
- White onions, diced, as much as you like
- Hot chili peppers, as much as you can stand
- Cherry tomatoes, diced or sliced
- For this batch of fina'denne', I used:
- 1/2 cup soy sauce
- 1/2 cup vinegar
- 1 jalapeño pepper
- 2 Serrano chili peppers
- 4 stalks green onions
- 1/2 cup cherry tomatoes

Directions:

1. In a small bowl, mix together the soy sauce and vinegar (or lemon juice if you prefer).
2. I like adding hot green chili peppers to my fina'denne', charring them slightly. You don't have to char the peppers, but doing so brings out so



much more of the pepper's flavor. I grilled these peppers over the flame of my gas stove. Use a metal skewer to keep the peppers together; it also makes it easier to turn the peppers over to ensure even grilling. My mom and one of my sisters loves using the red, super-hot Thai peppers in their fina'denne'. Those are great too, but beware! Those suckers are MOUTH-ON-FIRE H-O-T!!!

3. Slice the peppers then add them to the bowl.
4. Add the onions. I used green onions here, but you can use white or yellow onions too.
5. Add the tomatoes.
6. Stir to combine.
7. Pour over your rice and meat and dig in! ENJOY! :)



For fina'denne' at your fingertips and ready when you want it, buy a plastic squeeze bottle and fill it with fina'denne', the liquid mixture only. Squeeze bottles are sold at most grocery stores, but I bought this one at our local Korean store. Add onions, tomatoes and peppers on the side when you're ready to serve up your meal.



Carolyn's Kådun Pika (Spicy Chicken)

Kådun pika is a spicy Chamorro chicken dish that's somewhat similar to chicken adobo. It's an easy dish to make — it takes only a few ingredients and a few simple steps and voila! — you'll have dinner served in no time.

Pika means "hot" or "spicy" in Chamorro. You can omit the hot chili peppers in this recipe, but then it won't be called Kådun Pika without



the "pika". :) I have one daughter who doesn't like anything spicy. I usually prepare this dish, omitting the peppers. When it's done, I separate a small bowlful for my daughter, then add the peppers to the rest of the pot.

The recipe below is my sister, Carolyn's. Give it a try. I think you'll like it. :)

Ingredients:

- 5 pounds chicken pieces
- 1 large onion, diced
- LOTS AND LOTS of garlic, as much as you like (or about 1/2 cup chopped garlic)
- 1/2 cup soy sauce (more or less to taste)
- 1/4 cup white vinegar
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- 2 tablespoons tabasco sauce
- 8 Thai chili peppers, chopped (more or less to taste)



Directions:

1. Rinse the chicken pieces; cut into smaller pieces if desired. Place the chicken in a large soup pot over medium heat.
2. Add the onions and garlic. Cook for 5-10 minutes or until the chicken is slightly browned.
3. Add the rest of the ingredients to the pot. Turn the heat down to medium-low. Simmer for about 30 minutes or until the chicken is cooked through. Taste, then adjust

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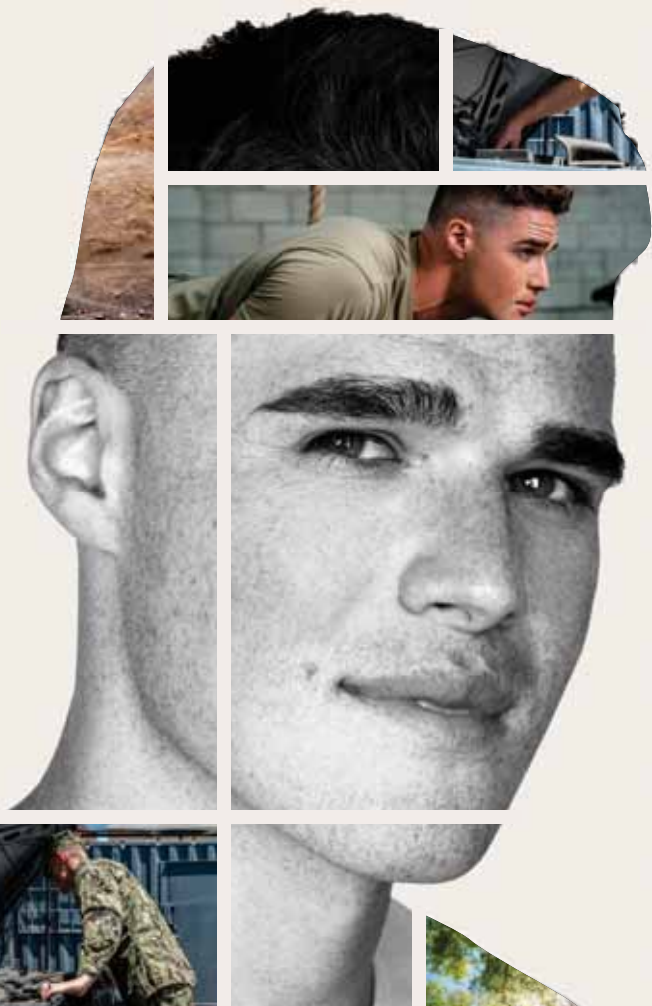
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RESILIENCE: No quick answers

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

helps or hurts our children.

In a 2013 paper titled “Resilience among Military Youth,” scientists dug up all the historical analysis on military children and realized, “the research is so thin, it’s hard to reach strong conclusions about which programs and policies would best help military-connected children thrive. Indeed, any inferences drawn must be taken with a grain of salt ...”

In a genuine effort to provide useful information, Blue Star Families (BSF) questioned parents about their older children’s happiness in their annual Military Lifestyle Surveys. The 2021 Survey report had good news: 59 percent of parents rated their adolescents as having either “good” or “excellent” mental-well being, averaging nearly 4.0 on a scale of 1.0 (Poor) to 5.0 (Excellent).

But wait just a minute. Not so fast.

While BSF was talking to the parents, the National Military Family Association (NMFA) went straight to the horse’s mouth and questioned the teens themselves, with alarming results. In NMFA’s 2021 and 2022 Military Teen Experience Surveys, more than 90 percent of adolescents scored as having “at risk” mental well-being in low to moderate ranges on the Warwick-Edinburg Mental Well-Being Scale (WEMWBS). Twenty-eight percent of respondents reported having low mental well-being and behavior that was indicative of depression. They “generally had difficulty thinking clearly and making up their

The Meat and Potatoes of Life

Lisa Smith Molinari



Photo courtesy of iStock

mind. They also rarely felt optimistic, did not often feel relaxed, and felt disconnected from others ...” Worse yet, too many of the teens reported thoughts of harming themselves and others.

Good grief! The results of the BSF and NMFA surveys couldn’t be more different. Will we ever know whether our military kids

are the resilient children everyone says they are?

Apparently we will. This fall, a landmark study will finally attempt to unravel the mystery of military teen resiliency. As part of the DoD-funded Millennial Cohort Study -- the largest population-based prospective health study in US military history with more than 200,000 participants -- health researchers will soon begin “SOAR,” the Study of Adolescent Resilience. They plan to reach out to 50,000 of the military study participants who have children between the ages of 11 and 17 to find out how military life experiences like moves and deployments affect adolescents’ psychosocial adjustment, physical health, academic achievement and educational goals and career aspirations.

This study is being done primarily because reliable research on military teens is lacking. “There is virtually no information on adolescents in these understudied groups,” stated Hope McMaster, the study’s principal investigator, in a recent interview with Military Times. By using a large study sample and following up with participants in 18-month intervals for many years, SOARS will avoid the discrepancies in previous research studies on military adolescents. The study is so lengthy, it won’t be completed until 2068.

We won’t get any quick answers to our questions, but it’s comforting for all current and future military parents to know, the truth about our children is finally on the horizon.

Read more of Lisa Smith Molinari’s columns at:

themeatandpotatoesoflife.com

and in Lisa’s book, *The Meat and Potatoes of Life: My True Lit Com*

Email: meatandpotatoesoflife@gmail.com

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



RIDER (black & white kitten)

Meet Rider. He is estimated to be about 9 weeks old. Rider is the more outgoing kitten in his litter. He loves exploring new toys, hiding in boxes or laying in the cat hammock. Rider loves the attention from the staff & volunteers. Rider would like nothing more than to go home with an awesome family.

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



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Boonie Stomps Guam

INFORMATION PROVIDED BY
GUAM BOONIE STOMPERS

September 17
Aguada

Very Difficult
5 miles

We traverse a long steep and grassy ridge in western Guam to a large and picturesque waterfall. There are several smaller falls and swimming spots along the way.
Bring: 4 quarts water, get wet shoes, gloves, sun screen, lunch and snacks, and camera. Bring a small blow up inner tube incase the water is deep we will drift down the river.
Special Conditions: Extensive walking in water, mud, slippery rocks, uphill climbs.
Parking Location: Google Maps or Apple Maps: 113.452903411944149, 144.7163409938642 (San Carlos Trailhead)

Aguada

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

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

For more information:
www.facebook.com/GuamBoonieStompersInc

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.

September 24
Madofan to Facpi Point

Very Difficult
5 miles

We hike down the southwestern savannah to a series of three large waterfalls on the Madofan River, then walk the beach to Facpi Point for spectacular views and head uphill through the jungle and up & out old jeep trails.
Bring: 4 quarts water, get wet shoes, gloves, sun screen, insect repellent, lunch and snacks
Special Conditions: Sword grass, steep hills, walking in water, mud, sword grass and steep slopes up, beach hike.
Parking Location: Google Maps or Apple Maps: 13.344444, 144.655484 (Side of the road)

Madofan

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Crossword

by Margie E. Burke

ACROSS

- Declines
- Pack away
- Bell sound
- Unappealing food
- Horne of "Stormy Weather"
- Pooh's passion
- Maneuverable, at sea
- Try the patience of
- Retailers' battle
- Gave out
- Liable to lose it
- Took for oneself
- Clear up
- Takes a load off
- Small bump
- Artificial bait
- Sis's sib
- Recluse
- Sadly sentimental
- WWII female
- Judi Dench title
- Spine-tingling
- Farm feed
- Walloped
- Project glowingly
- Rifle recoils
- Expressed out loud
- Tuna variety
- Hard to miss
- In a bit
- Performance place
- Trellis piece
- "Dent" anagram
- Bicycle part
- His partner
- Storm centers

DOWN

- Pharaoh's land
- Play loudly
- Bullwinkle foe
- Broad range
- Large amount
- Gas brand since 1902
- Hot, in Vegas
- Is no longer
- Treasure holder
- Belmont beasts
- Too low to hear
- Ration (out)
- Gave the once-over
- Smoker's accessory holder
- Peep protector
- Female gamete
- Save for later
- Field follower
- Big name in electronics
- MSNBC offering
- Like some exams
- Wearing medals
- Golden State motto
- Thompson of "Love Actually"
- Devote
- Fit to consume
- Sign of age
- Place for wine
- Stick-on
- NY's ____ Island
- Norwegian
- Puts in the mail
- Clothing closure
- Skedaddled
- "All ____ are off!"
- Blonde shade

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Answers to Previous Crossword:

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

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Answer *New York Yankees*

SUDOKU

Difficulty: Medium

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

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:

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

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SEPTEMBER 16, 2022



SETH ROBSON / Stars and Stripes

A Royal Australian Air Force plane passes a worksite at RAAF Tindal, Australia, earlier this month. Construction, funded by the U.S. and Australian governments, is underway in Australia's Northern Territory for facilities that will be used by the U.S. Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps.

Building a stronger bond

US military's footprint is expanding in northern Australia to meet a rising China

Page 2

COVER STORY

US grows Aussie footprint amid a rising China

By SETH ROBSON
Stars and Stripes

DARWIN, Australia — Red dust rises in Australia's Northern Territory as tractors churn the earth to build facilities for U.S. forces deployed to bolster a long-time ally threatened by China's rapid military buildup.

Major construction, funded by the U.S. and Australian governments, is underway in the northern port of Darwin, at Larrakeyah Defence Precinct and at Royal Australian Air Force Bases Darwin and Tindal for facilities that will be used by the U.S. Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps.

The facilities will support U.S. and Australian forces training to defend chains of small islands that would likely be an arena for any future conflict with China, according to former Australian defense secretary Ross Babbage.

The allies are learning to conduct dispersed operations and deploy anti-ship missiles to island chains in the Western Pacific "to make it extremely difficult and dangerous for Chinese operations in a crisis," including a conflict over Taiwan, he said by phone Sept. 7.

Australians are alarmed at Chinese efforts to gain influence among their South Pacific neighbors following a security pact, signed in April, with the Solomon Islands that many fear could lead to the establishment of a Chinese military base.

East of Darwin's central business district, 400 workers are building 11 massive tanks that will be able to store 80 million gallons of fuel, according to Crowley, a Florida-based fuel provider working under contract with the Defense Logistics Agency, according to the company's website. "Construction on all 11 tanks has commenced," the Northern Territory's government said in a statement Sept. 1. "The facility will be the largest of its kind in the Territory."

The \$181 million project, to be completed by September 2023, will provide U.S. defense operations in the region with military-grade fuel, the statement said.

Larrakeyah projects

On the west side of Darwin, at Larrakeyah Defence Precinct, work is underway on a \$317 million upgrade of facilities and a new 820-foot-long wharf and fuel farm, according to the Australian

Defence Department's website.

The new facilities, due to be complete in 2023, will support surface warships, submarines, mine hunters and hydrographic ships, the website states.

The base has been home to 100 U.S. Marines, deployed there the past six months as part of a 2,200-strong rotational force that has been training in the Northern Territory during the southern hemisphere's cooler months since 2012. The bulk of the force is at Robertson Barracks, an Australian army post about 12 miles to the east.

The Marines at Larrakeyah make up the rotational force's command element and live on base in modern, multistory apartments, each with its own bathroom and balcony.

The base displays old military equipment, including guns used to defend Darwin from Japanese air raids in World War II. The installation, which dates to 1932, was damaged in the bombing. The Marines work out in a well-equipped fitness center and on a grassy playing field nearby. They eat at the Australian navy dining facility and can enjoy an after-work beverage at a bar upstairs decorated with Vietnam War-era souvenirs.

The Marines played a rugby game against the Stray Cats, a local civilian team, on Sept. 11. The fixture commemorates a match between members of the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit deployed from Camp Pendleton, Calif., and local players that happened on the same date in 2001, shortly before the attack on the Twin Towers.

The Marines share Larrakeyah with 600 Australian sailors assigned to naval base HMAS Coonawarra. Larrakeyah is home to 11 Armidale-class patrol boats. Sailors there can haul the 171-foot-long vessels out of the water and into a massive shed for maintenance.

"They patrol an area from Christmas Island to Ashmore Reef (in the Indian Ocean) and the Timor Strait," a spokesman for the Australian Defence Department in the Northern Territory, Todd Fitzgerald, said during a base tour. "They're looking for anything that shouldn't be there like illegal fishing, human traffickers and drug shipments."

Pier improvements

The Australians are adding



JIMMIE D. PIKE / U.S. Air Force

U.S. airmen wait to board a C-130J Super Hercules at Royal Australian Air Force Base Tindal on Aug. 23. Construction is underway at Larrakeyah Defence Precinct and at Royal Australian Air Force Bases Darwin and Tindal for facilities that will be used by the U.S. Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps.



NOGA AMI-RAV/Stars and Stripes

larger, 262-foot-long offshore patrol vessels to their fleet with the first one to be launched later this year, Fitzgerald said.

The new wharf at Larrakeyah will allow Australia's 755-foot-long landing helicopter dock ships the HMAS Canberra and HMAS Adelaide, to make port calls, he said.

Similar-sized U.S. Navy amphibious assault ships will also be able to dock at the new pier, he said, meaning visiting U.S. Marines can disembark there, rather than at Darwin's civilian wharf where commercial berths must be booked in advance.

The base is on the opposite side of town to Fort Hill Wharf, where the U.S. Navy's dock landing ship USS Ashland made a port call in May. The wharf and other port facilities in Darwin are leased by Landbridge, the Australian subsidiary of a privately owned Chinese company that is reported to have links to China's

army.

Larrakeyah is also home to Australia's North-West Mobile Force, a unit made up of indigenous troops who conduct long-range reconnaissance and surveillance missions, Fitzgerald said.

The force keeps tabs on almost three quarters of a million square miles in northern Australia by visiting remote communities and airstrips to collect information, he said.

"When the Marines go into an area these guys will give them a low down on what's in there," he said.

Members of the unit can talk to people in remote communities in their own language and introduce Marines who might work near them, Fitzgerald said.

"If you have someone from North Force who says they are with them (the Marines) it can avoid a lot of potential problems," he said.

Air base upgrades

Australian air bases in the Northern Territory frequently used by visiting U.S. aircraft are also being improved.

At RAAF Darwin, for example, \$88.65 million worth of projects to build fuel tanks, expand the airfield and erect maintenance facilities are due for completion next year.

U.S. Air Force F-15 Eagles from the Okinawa-based 67th Fighter Squadron flew out of RAAF Darwin during the Pitch Black drills, a three-week exercise involving 2,500 personnel, more than 100 aircraft and 17 nations that ended Sept. 8.

A \$496 million project at RAAF Tindal, a 200-miles drive south of Darwin, will upgrade the airfield, increase aviation fuel storage, reinvest in aging base engineering services and provide additional accommodation for airmen, according to the Australian Defence Department's website.

A concurrent \$294 million project at the base will upgrade power, water and sewerage, the website states.

Heavy equipment was at work earlier this month at Tindal building new ramp space capable of accommodating American B-52 bombers. U.S. stealth fighters including Marine Corps F-36B Lightning IIs deployed from Iwakuni, Japan, and Air Force F-22 Raptors from Hawaii took off and landed near the worksite.

The Australian government will likely announce more initiatives in northern Australia before the year is over, Babbage said.

"There is a lot of space and scope for doing innovative things and big things," he said.

MILITARY

USAF Ospreys resume flights after pause

By JOSEPH DITZLER
AND KEISHI KOJA

Stars and Stripes

YOKOTA AIR BASE, Japan — A CV-22 Osprey from the 21st Special Operations Squadron clattered above western Tokyo again last week, signaling the tilt-rotor aircraft are back in service after 2½ weeks on the ground.

Air Force Special Operations Command lifted the stay on Osprey flights Sept. 9 without identifying a fix for the problem that grounded the fleet for a safety pause.

Lt. Gen. Jim Slife authorized Osprey crews to resume flights “with risk control mitigations in place,” according to a statement from Lt. Col. Rebecca Heyse, a spokeswoman for Air Force Special Operations Command.

The problem affecting the Osprey — a “hard clutch engagement” — is responsible for six in-flight incidents since 2017, including two in the past nine weeks. None resulted in injuries or fatalities, thanks to aircrews’ airmanship, according to Heyse in August.

The command is still in search of the “root cause” of hard clutch engagement but took steps during the safety stand-down to analyze and address the problem, according to Heyse’s recent email.

During the stand-down ordered by Slife on Aug. 16, Air Force maintenance crews inspected the drivetrains on the fleet of 52 Ospreys and compared the actual components against data in the Air Force information system, Heyse wrote.

“In the mid-term AFSOC is reviewing and analyzing data and considering replacing drivetrain components once they reach specific flight hours,” she wrote.

The clutch inside a gearbox that connects one of the CV-22’s two Rolls-Royce Liberty AE1107C engines to the propeller rotor is slipping for an unknown reason, Heyse said in August. In the event the clutch slips, it causes the aircraft to lurch as it re-engages.

Although the Osprey design allows it to



YASUO OSAKABE/U.S. Air Force

Air Force Special Operations Command returned Osprey flights to service after a 2½-week safety pause.

instantaneously compensate for the power disparity if one engine fails, the aircrew was required to land the tilt-rotor immediately.

Heyse’s announcement did not detail the risk-control measures she described but she told Defense News that pilots are instructed to pause for two seconds after lifting off to keep the clutch from slipping.

The brief hover is one of many techniques pilots may use to offset the clutch problem, according to an email to Stars and Stripes from 1st Lt. Danny Rangel, spokesman for Yokota Air Base.

“This technique allows for the aircrew to check aircraft performance prior to departure from a safe landing area,” he wrote.

Rangel said other guidelines include modified takeoff techniques, discussing with squadron leaders the appropriate

measures for reducing the risk of clutch problems in specific flight profiles and increased training in a flight simulator and on scenarios that involve hard clutch engagement, marginal flight power and aborted takeoffs.

During the stand-down, all CV-22 crews were briefed and met in working groups led by experts on the Osprey and the Joint Program Office, which manages the procurement, operation, maintenance and other tasks for the three branches flying the tilt-rotor aircraft, Heyse said. The meetings allowed air crews an opportunity to propose possible solutions to the hard clutch engagement problem or ways to manage it in flight, she wrote.

Air Force Ospreys often fly night missions to insert or extricate special operations troops, a different mission from

Marine and Navy aviators who fly larger fleets of Ospreys as troop carriers and materiel haulers.

The Marines continued to fly their Ospreys after the Air Force stand-down. Marine pilots are trained “to react with the appropriate emergency control measures should the issue arise during flight,” Marine spokesman Maj. Jim Stenger said by email last month. Marine Ospreys have logged more than 533,000 flight hours without a “single catastrophic event” caused by the clutch, Stenger wrote.

The Japan Ground Self-Defense Forces also flew its Ospreys, based at Camp Kisarazu in Chiba prefecture, for the first time since Aug. 9, a spokesman told Stars and Stripes by phone. He said the Self-Defense Force never ordered its nine Ospreys grounded but refrained from flying them during the stand-down.

Yoshikuni Watanabe, the mayor of nearby Kisarazu city, said on the city website that the Ministry of Defense approved further Osprey flights “and we asked them to fly safely.”

Japan’s Osprey pilots “will receive training and the clutches will be checked, after safeness is confirmed the flying of Ospreys will restart,” Defense Minister Hamada Yasukazu said at a news conference. He said the ministry considers it important to explain the situation to Kisarazu city.

A joint venture of Bell Helicopter and Boeing, the V-22 takes off and lands like a helicopter but flies like a fixed-wing plane.

At least 13 Marines have died in Osprey crashes since 2015, according to published accounts.

Four Marines died in March when a Marine Osprey crashed in Norway due to pilot error, according to the Marines. Another five were killed when an Osprey crashed in June in Southern California in an accident still under investigation.

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Ambassador: Philippines considers more base access for US military

By SETH ROBSON
Stars and Stripes

The United States and the Philippines are talking about increasing the number of military bases in the island nation that visiting American forces may use, according to the Philippine ambassador to the United States.

The talks on expanded base access were revealed by Ambassador Jose Manuel Romualdez in comments reported Sept. 5 by The Nikkei newspaper in Japan.

“Our military and the military of the United States are all looking into what are the possible areas,” he said.

A naval base may be included in the list of sites available to the U.S., Romualdez told the newspaper.

Facilities for visiting American forces were supposed to be built

on five Philippine military bases under the 2014 Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement. However, the only facility completed to date is a warehouse at Cesar Basa Air Base on Luzon.

The agreement also covers Antonio Bautista Air Base, Palawan; Benito Ebbed Air Base, Mactan; Cebu, Fort Magsaysay; Nuyve Ecija, and Lumbia Airport, Cagayan de Oro.

Asked when the base access plans might be implemented, Romualdez told Nikkei: “Hopefully, in the next three years, that we can have all of these areas that we have identified already.”

The U.S. Embassy in Manila did not provide Stars and Stripes a response to questions about the talks.

An unnamed Pentagon spokesperson quoted in the Nikkei report said the U.S. and the Phi-

lippines “hold regular discussions on deepening our enduring security alliance under the auspices of the Mutual Defense Treaty and multiple other agreements, including the 2014 Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement.”

The allies seek to enhance the posture of their alliance to address new and emerging challenges, the spokesperson said.

“We intend to continue to implement infrastructure projects at current EDCA locations and explore additional sites for further development,” the spokesperson said.

U.S. military planners focus on the Philippines as they consider dispersing their forces among small islands in the Western Pacific and size up the prospect of a conflict over Taiwan.

For example, members of the

Marine Corps’ newly formed 3rd Marine Littoral Regiment practiced the tactics of expeditionary advanced base operations during the annual Balikatan drills in the Philippines in April.

The U.S. in 2015 requested access to eight bases in the Philippines, including Subic Bay and Clark Air Base, according to Carlyle Thayer, an emeritus professor at the University of New South Wales and lecturer at the Australian Defence Force Academy.

Subic and Clark formed America’s largest overseas military community before both were damaged in the 1991 eruption of Mount Pinatubo and, soon after, returned to the Philippines.

Former Philippines President Rodrigo Duterte, whose six-year term ended in June, had threatened to withdraw from an agree-

ment that facilitates training by U.S. forces in his country, and he excluded Clark and Subic from the bases covered by the defense cooperation agreement, Thayer said in an email.

“U.S. access was always under the shadow of Duterte’s whims,” he said.

The Philippines’ new president, Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr., the son of the country’s late dictator who ruled from 1965-1986, “doesn’t have the anti-American chip on his shoulder that Duterte had,” Thayer said. “It is difficult to imagine the Philippines refusing a request from the U.S. for access if a major conflict broke out between China and the U.S. over Taiwan.”

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MILITARY

Goodbye, Little Debbie

Snack cakes to gradually disappear from commissary shelves worldwide

By KELLY AGEE
Stars and Stripes

Get them while you can because soon there will be no more Zebra Cakes, Swiss Rolls, Nutty Buddies, Fudge Rounds and Oatmeal Creme Pies.

When the remaining stock of Little Debbie snack items is gone, it's gone for good.

McKee Foods Corp. of Collegedale, Tenn., a family-owned bakery best known for its Little Debbie line, will no longer be providing its products to U.S. military bases at home and overseas.

The regulatory standards required of McKee Foods are too costly to continue supplying the Defense Commissary Agency and Navy Exchange Service, company spokesman Mike Gloekler told Stars and Stripes in an email.

Representatives of the commissary agency and exchange service were unavailable for comment.

The news did not go down well with Air Force Staff Sgt. Johnathan Garcia, 28, a laboratory technician for the 374th Medical Support Squadron at Yokota Air Base, Japan. He stockpiles Little Debbie treats for his shop, he told Stars and Stripes via Facebook Messenger.

"I buy Little Debbie snacks almost every other week," he said. "My department sells them in our sunshine fund to pay for morale activities and going away gatherings. I'm a little upset because there are really no equivalent products to buy off base while overseas and I really like my Zebra Cakes and Nutty Bars!"

McKee products have been sold in commissaries for many years and the company's



KELLY AGEE/Stars and Stripes

Little Debbie products were still available at the commissary on Yokota Air Base in western Tokyo last month.

"I'm a little upset because there are really no equivalent products to buy off base while overseas and I really like my Zebra Cakes and Nutty Bars!"

Air Force Staff Sgt. Johnathan Garcia

contract for overseas commissary sales has been in place since the 1990s, Gloekler said.

"As supporters of the men and women who serve the United States military this was a very difficult decision for us to make,"

he said.

"We believe in the mission of forward-deployed troops, and we understand the impact that the comforts of home have on morale. Perhaps some will see an opportuni-

ty to streamline federal contractor compliance."

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Navy vet builds, launches smartphone game inspired by life at sea

By JUAN KING
Stars and Stripes

When Christian Fager ended his naval career, he knew what path he would embark on next.

He created a smartphone game based on his six years as a Navy petty officer aboard guided-missile destroyers. Navy Xperience aims to amuse and entertain by putting the player in control of a sailor.

"I wanted to share some of my experiences, stories and challenges as a way to connect sailors who have gone through similar things," Fager, 36, of Cedar, Minn., told Stars and Stripes by email.

Navy Xperience can be found on Apple's iPad and iPhone platforms for \$4.99.

Fager has been hatching game ideas since age 8, he said, and at 17, he programmed an online Yu-Gi-Oh game based on a Japanese anime series using Microsoft Visual Basic software.

He said his job in the Navy was pushing the buttons that launched missiles, but in his free



Christian Fager

Navy veteran Christian Fager said his new smartphone game, Navy Xperience, was inspired by the hardships he went through aboard guided-missile destroyers at sea.

time Fager maintained his interest in creating video games, even collaborating with other sailors on ideas.

He also helped create about 15 Navy electronic applications. Though not active anymore, they included training materials, guides, quizzes and exam preparation.

One app calculated the sailor's basic allowance for housing, or BAH. The apps were available

on both Apple iPhone and Android platforms.

Today, Fager is pursuing a bachelor's in computer applications development at Metro State University.

In April, he began work on Navy Xperience, which was initially inspired by the hardships he experienced at sea.

Fager borrowed from his memories of serving aboard the USS Fitzgerald and USS Carney.

Sailors often find themselves performing mundane janitorial tasks aboard ship, and he incorporated that as a theme for Navy Xperience.

"Many of the game mechanics are exaggerated from events or emotions experienced while serving," he said.

In the game, the player engages in "tactical cleaning," joining with other sailors to tackle various challenges aboard a naval

vessel.

The characters also get "cranking," a Navy term for food-service tasks in the ship's galley or make inspections and take part in a line crossing ceremony, an old naval tradition attached to crossing the equator.

Some events are close to real life and others are exaggerated, Fager said. He also implemented a few games within the game that players encounter as they advance.

He said he had ideas about this game for years, but finally settled on the current form. Working mostly solo on the product, with a little help on music composition from his mother and using computer code from some of his past projects, he completed it Aug. 24.

He wants to improve the game with added challenges and is hoping it hits home with active-duty sailors.

"I am preparing an update as we speak, adding in a few small features and fixes I noticed," he said. "For future updates, I plan to wait for more feedback from players, to see what they think."

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MILITARY

Fulfilling a dream

Nigerian Olympic runner trades track spikes for Army boots, enlists as medic

By ROSE L. THAYER
Stars and Stripes

Noah Akwu had three lifetime dreams growing up in Nigeria. He wanted to run in the Olympics, to move to America and to serve in the military as a medic, just as his father and grandfather had.

A full scholarship to Middle Tennessee State University helped him realize his dream of living in the U.S. Then, in 2012 he made the Nigerian Olympic team. He ran the 200-meter race at the London Games, racing in the quarterfinals against Jamaica's gold medalist Usain Bolt.

His final dream became a reality this year when Akwu, 31, enlisted as a combat medic in the U.S. Army. Other occupations came with bonuses, but he chose instead to follow in his father's footsteps.

"It's like a family tree," he said. "When I enlisted, it was one of [my dad's] happiest days."

Already serving at the rank of specialist, Akwu will finish his advanced individual training at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston in Texas in October, then head north to Fort Hood. He hopes his wife, who is in a doctoral program back in Tennessee, will be able to join him.

"Spc. Akwu brings a higher level of maturity to our formation with a wealth of experiences that made him the man and soldier he



Akwu, left, had a track and field career that took him to the 2012 Olympic games in London, where he raced against Jamaican gold medalist Usain Bolt in the 200-meter quarterfinals.

is today," said Capt. Ryan O'Leary, commander of Akwu's unit, Alpha Company, 232nd Medical Battalion. "Overall, he's a phenomenal soldier and I look forward to seeing him finish strong in the course, alongside his fellow combat medics, and have a successful military career."

Training to become a soldier isn't that different from the running regimen he's been on since elementary school.

"To train at a professional level or a competitive level you have to be disciplined," he said. "So coming to the military, that really helps me — the discipline. Every day you have to show up."

Coming in already physically fit has helped, too. On his first Army Combat Fitness Test, Akwu scored around a 550 with the

sprint-drag-carry as his weakest event. So he hit the gym, strengthening his legs.

He made a near-perfect 599 on his second test, finishing the event in 1 minute, 23 seconds. Now his peers, many a decade younger than him, are asking for training tips in the gym.

"They were surprised," he said. "They thought I'm old. I said, 'Yeah, I still work out.'"

That surprise may also have come from Akwu's humility about his background. O'Leary only learned he had an Olympian in his unit after asking Akwu about his life during a group run.

"If I didn't ask, I'm not sure we would've ever found out. He's not one to brag about his experiences, and never brings it up unless someone asks him," O'Leary said.



Photos courtesy of Noah Akwu

Spc. Noah Akwu, 31, chose to join the U.S. Army as a combat medic because his father served in that role for the Nigerian army. He will graduate advanced individual training in October and move to Fort Hood, Texas.

"From our talk I learned that his father is a huge motivating factor in his life, along with his wife."

Once his medic training is complete, Akwu said he plans to apply for additional training to become a flight paramedic. He also started paperwork for U.S.

citizenship with hopes of becoming an officer someday.

"That's why I like the U.S. and the Army, too," he said. "They offer a lot of opportunities."

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National Defense Service Medal to go back on the shelf

By JUAN KING
Stars and Stripes

The National Defense Service Medal, most recently available to service members to signify duty during the war on terrorism, is heading once again for retirement.

Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin signed a memo terminating eligibility for the National Defense Service Medal on Aug. 30, the first anniversary of the last U.S. troops leaving Afghanistan.

The U.S. is no longer conduct-

ing large-scale combat operations rooted in the response to the 9/11 terror attacks on New York City, in Pennsylvania and at the Pentagon, according to the memo.

Any active-duty member was eligible for the award if they

served in the conflict between Sept. 11, 2001, and Dec. 31, according to federal regulations.

The medal's history starts in April 1953, when it was authorized for service members who saw duty from June 1950 to July 1954, the Korean War era. It was revived for the Vietnam era from 1961 to 1974, and Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm in the early 1990s.

Its retirement may signal an end to the war on terrorism, but the Pentagon chief spokesman declined to frame it as such when asked at a briefing earlier this month.

"Well, certainly, we want to recognize those who have supported and engaged in this operation," said Air Force Brig. Gen. Pat Ryder. "Certainly, over the last 20 years, a lot of



U.S. Air Force

Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin signed a memo terminating eligibility for the National Defense Service Medal.

men and women in the U.S. military have worked very hard to counter terrorism..."

The war on terrorism was the longest period for which service members were eligible for the medal.

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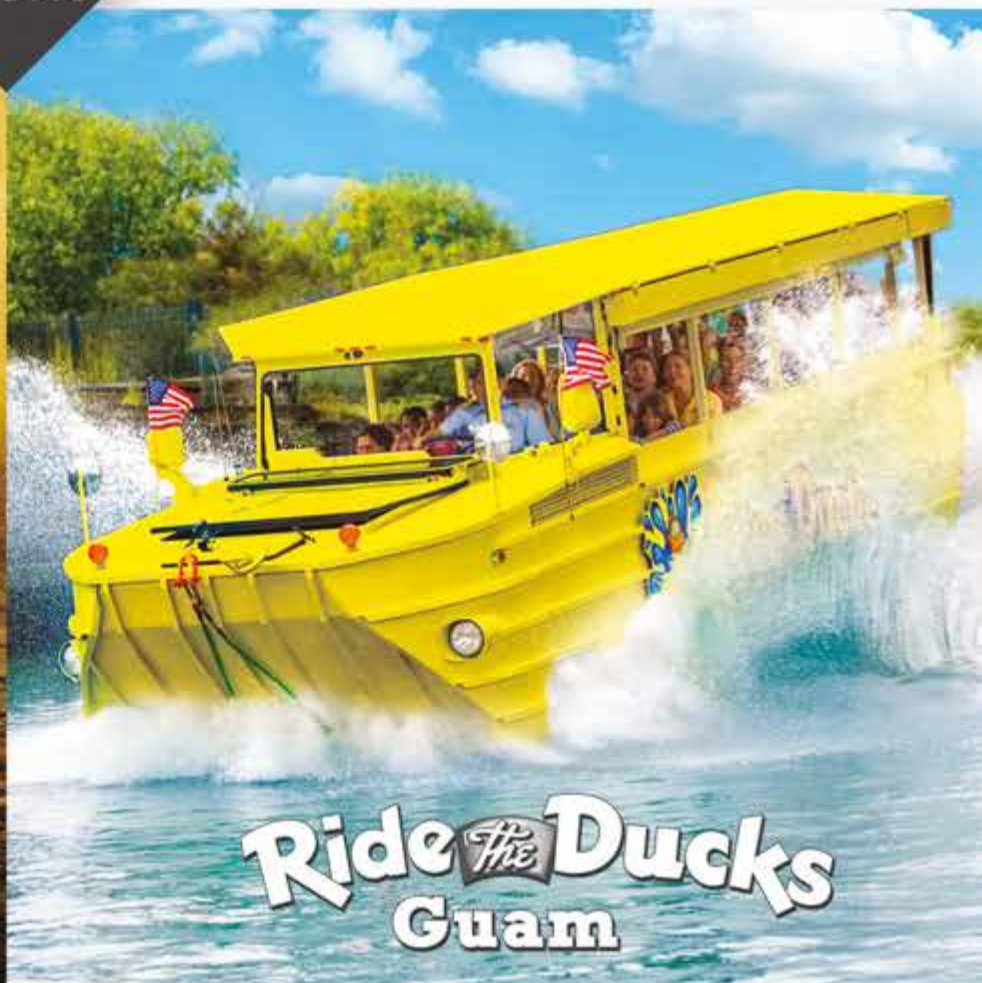


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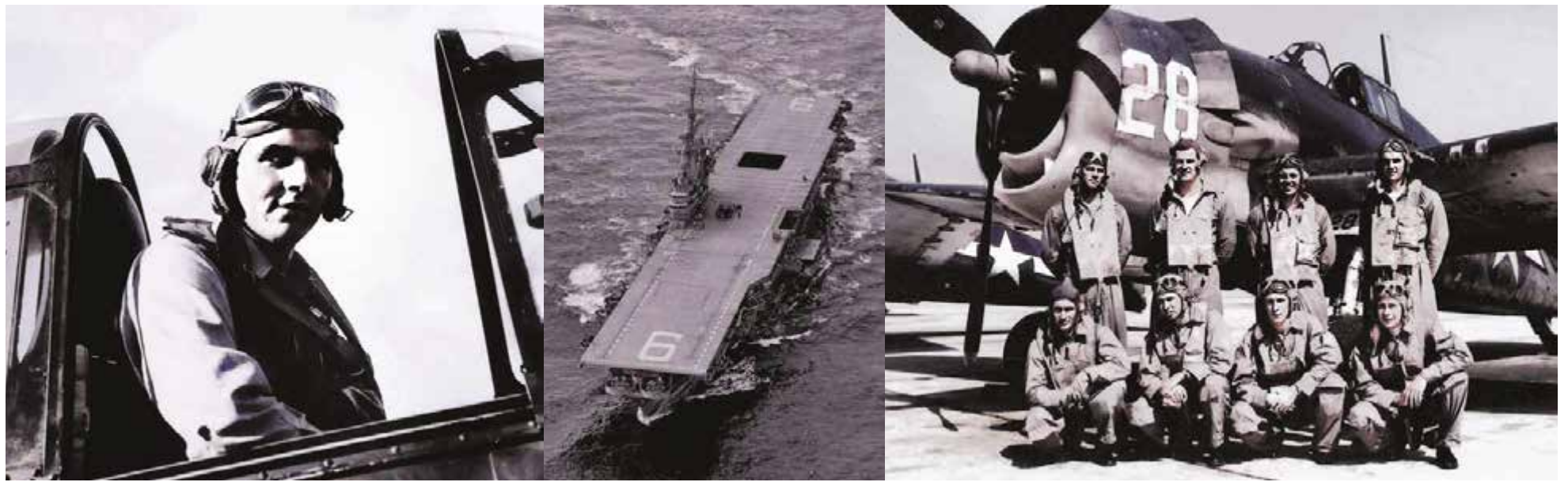
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This is the origin story of Enterprise, but the story of Jack Taylor's legacy as an American hero and a friend of the Marianas goes back to December 07, 1941—the attack on Pearl Harbor. Following this tragedy, Taylor left university to enlist in the United States Navy and would qualify as an aviation cadet.

Taylor became an F6F Hellcat fighter pilot and saw combat duty in the Pacific Theatre from the decks of the aircraft carriers USS Essex (CV-9) and USS Enterprise (CV-6) [for which he later named his company]. As part of Task Force 58, these carriers participated in most of the Navy's major battles in the Pacific during the last years of World War II, including the campaigns in the Marianas, Palau, Iwo Jima, Formosa, and the Philippines.

Upon the completion of his training, Ensign Jack Taylor was assigned to Carrier Air Group 15 (CAG-15 or VF-15), led by top Navy ace of all time, Commander David McCampbell. When Ensign Taylor joined the squadron aboard the USS Essex in late June 1944, the ship was anchored in Eniwetok for resupply.

Prior to Ensign Taylor's arrival, CAG-15 had already been operating in the Marianas for weeks, notably over the skies of Guam, Saipan, and Rota. When the USS Essex returned to the Marianas, with Ensign Taylor aboard, they continued operations over Guam and the surrounding islands in earnest just days before July 21, the planned date for the Guam beach landings.

Guam would not be declared secure until August 10, 1944, for which Ensign Taylor's squadron and many others played a pivotal role providing air support for the forces on the ground.

CAG-15, which sustained more than 50 percent casualties during its World War II service, was one of the most decorated combat units in the history of U.S. Naval aviation. Taylor was twice decorated with the Distinguished Flying Cross, and also received the Navy Air Medal. We will be forever grateful to Mr. Taylor and all those who served, honoring their sacrifices as we celebrate the 78th year of Guam's liberation, and with a special pride in the knowledge of our company's heritage. Biba!

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