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2020

KEEPING TRUE TO YOUR  
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# Sailors use every inch of space aboard Key West

STORY AND PHOTOS BY  
PO2 KELSEY HOCKENBERGER,  
COMMANDER, SUBMARINE SQUADRON 15

SANTA RITA – Sailors from the Los Angeles-class fast attack submarine USS Key West prepared for their next mission by transferring supplies on the pier at Naval Base Guam, January 3.

The supply transfer consisted of food that will sustain over

150 sailors for three meals a day lasting over 90 days in the ocean depths.

“Planning for this evolution is extremely important to the mission and readiness of our submarines,” said Lt. Cmdr. Dave Dyal, the Submarine Squadron Fifteen supply officer. “This is what gives us the ability to create a self-sustaining submarine that will

navigate the depths of the ocean without the need to surface.”

Months ahead of a deployment or underway, the ship’s culinary specialists plan how to feed the entire crew.

“To sustain the crew of a submarine with the intent of rarely surfacing, we need to coordinate

SEE SPACE ON PAGE 4

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# SPACE: No nook or cranny is left open

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

every meal, snack and drink that each Sailor will consume," said Chief Culinary Specialist Donta Allen, from Mobile, Ala. "We don't have the luxury of a replenishment-at-sea to receive more goods, so we have to plan and coordinate what meals we will make and how we can store them in such a small place."

No nook or cranny is left open on the submarine. The chefs aboard the submarine utilize almost every space on the boat to store the food.

"If parts aren't going in the space, then the food is," said Culinary Specialist 1st Class Samuel Lewis, from Beaufort, N.C., assigned to the Key



Left: Fire Control Technician 2nd Class Bryan Cooper (left) passes a can of food to Yeoman Seaman Janeal Green during an onload of provisions. Right: Culinary Specialist 1st Class Samuel Lewis stores food in the dry storage compartment.



West. "We hang bags of food in the engine room to storing our shortening in the sonar spaces. It's all about utilizing

every space on a submarine" During a course of a two day loadout, thousands of pounds of food and supplies

will make its way aboard the submarine.

"This evolution takes hours and hours of getting the food

**"It's all about utilizing every space on a submarine."**

-CS1 Samuel Lewis

from the pier to the boat and from the box to its storage area," said Allen. "After it's loaded onto the boat, we inventory our supplies once biweekly to ensure we are always on schedule to continue our operations at sea."



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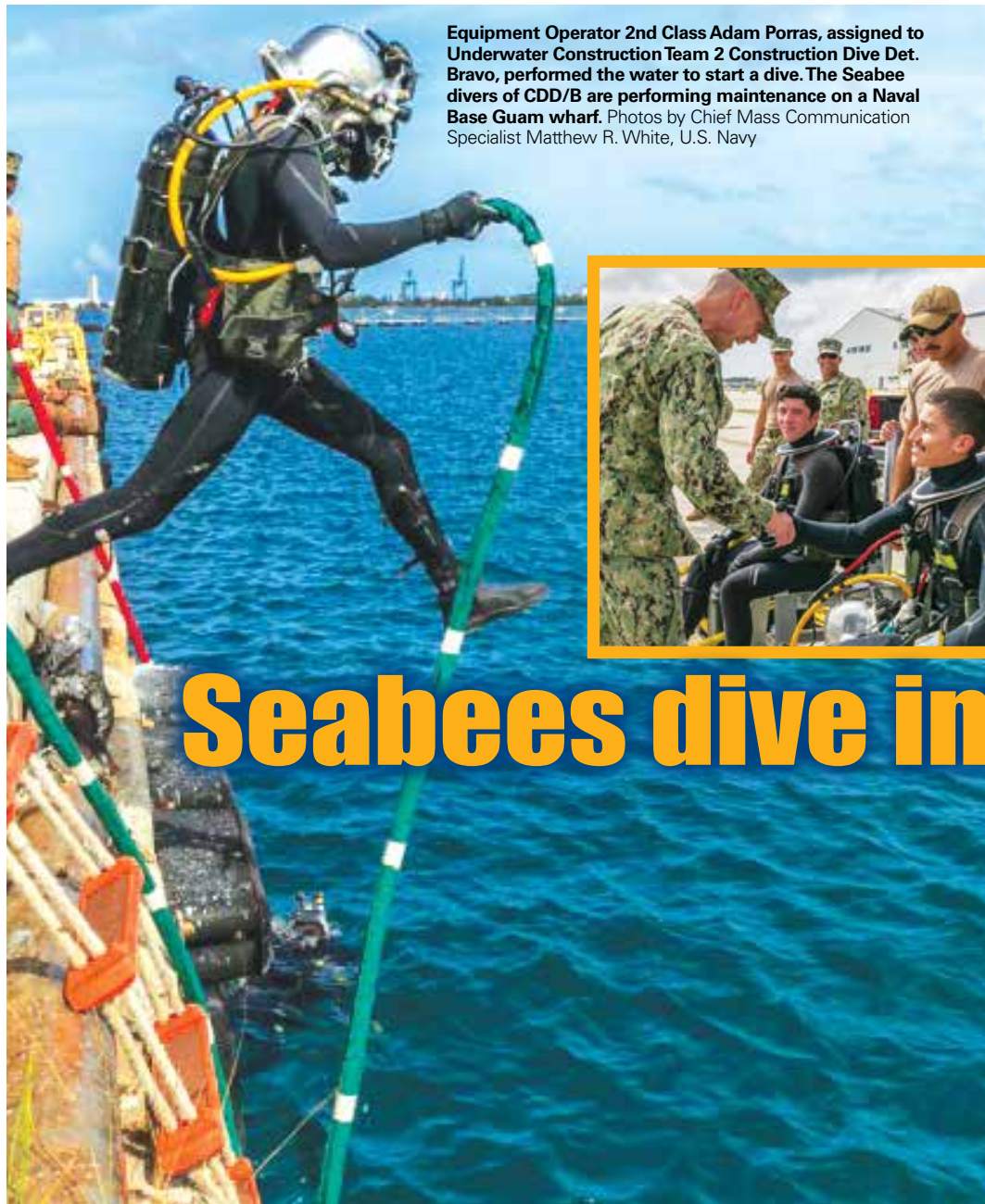
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Equipment Operator 2nd Class Adam Porras, assigned to Underwater Construction Team 2 Construction Dive Det. Bravo, performed the water to start a dive. The Seabee divers of CDD/B are performing maintenance on a Naval Base Guam wharf. Photos by Chief Mass Communication Specialist Matthew R. White, U.S. Navy



Capt. Steve Stasick, commodore, 30th Naval Construction Regiment, views the progress of the divers.



Stasick presents his coin to Equipment Operator 2nd Class Adam Porras for the work he performed during Underwater Construction Team 2 Construction Dive Det. Bravo's deployment throughout the Indo-Pacific region.

# Seabees dive into maintenance



Utilitiesman 2nd Class Joseph Maddox conducts a leak check on Porras to ensure all connections are secure prior to beginning a dive.

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# Chef cooks for the future

PHOTOS BY MC2 KELSEY J. HOCKENBERGER, U.S. NAVY

Chief Culinary Specialist Mike Halavin Commander, Submarine Squadron Fifteen food service officer, taste tests a modified Texas tortilla soup recipe in the kitchen at CSS-15. Halavin prepared the recipe, modified to incorporate freeze dried chicken, to test the soup for a submission to improve recipes and boost morale in the Navy.



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# Ways to keep your New Year's

GUAM VISITORS BUREAU

**H**appy New Year! It's 2020 now, which means yet another set of resolutions. Depending on the individual, it also means another year of struggling not to break that resolution. Did you find yourself constantly breaking that diet? Promised yourself last year to work out more but only picked up a pair of dumbbells three times throughout 2019? We've all been there. Here are a few ways to keep that healthy grind going while staying true to your new year's resolution!

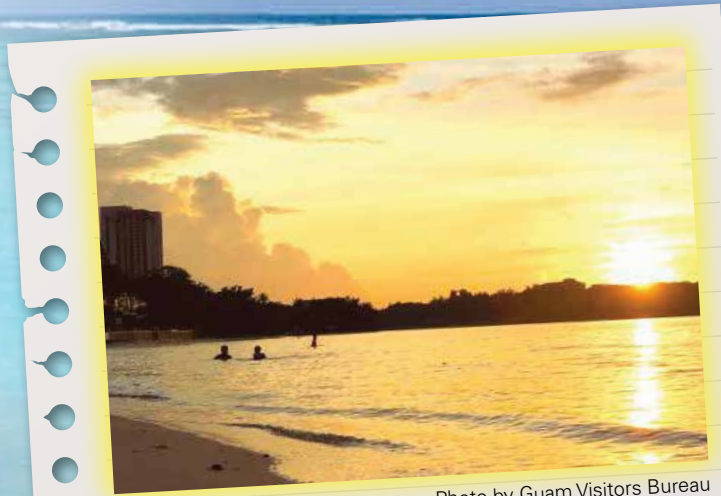


Photo by Guam Visitors Bureau

## 1. Jogging with a view!

Sometimes gym memberships can be a bit out of budget, especially if all you want is just to get a bit of cardio in. Instead of confining yourself to a treadmill, take a run or jog through Tumon! Listed as a popular outdoor running spot on island, you can run alongside Pale San Vitores Road passing by The Plaza and many restaurants. Another option is jogging beachside! With several opportunities to catch Guam's amazing sunsets, you'll be sure to want to keep up this healthy habit.

## 2. Trade in fast food for a healthier option

As we may know, Guam offers many dining options from Wendy's to Jollibee. Plus, everyone enjoys fast food. On a day to day basis, it is definitely easier to grab a quick burger and fries. However, there are healthier options worth the extra bit of money. Dieting has definitely gained traction and you don't have to switch that McDonald's visit for a luau at Tamuning or Agana Heights. Both establishments offer healthier options that are good for you and your wallet. Prefer a more fruity snack as a quick pick-me-up? Cafe's acai bowls located in Guam's capital city offer healthier options are sure to help you maintain your diet.

- **Simply Food:**  
<http://www.simplyfoodguam.com/>
- **Heavenly Veggies:**  
<http://heavenlyveggies.com/>
- **Mighty Purple Cafe:**  
<https://www.mightypurplecafe.com/>



# The tradition of breaking my New Year's resolution

*Writer's Note: I originally wrote this story three years ago. I updated it a bit, but one thing remains: I continue to break my New Year's resolution. You can drink on that.*

BY TAKAHIRO TAKIGUCHI,  
STRIPES GUAM

**A**s an old Japanese saying goes, "The whole year's plans are made on New Year's Day." That's because many Japanese make New Year's resolutions on the first day of the year, just like Americans.

I am no exception. I make a New Year's resolution every year. I've done it almost as many years as I have been around (57).

My dear wife's ceaseless unsolicited advice not drink too much, along with results from my annual physicals, have prompted my New Year's resolution to be quitting or cutting back on drinking – every year for the past decade or two.

Too much drinking during customary "bonenkai" year-end parties always leaves me hung over, fueling plans every new year to quit drinking sake – that quintessential Japanese adult beverage that we also call "Nihonshu" (which literally means "Japanese liquor"). Although I am a Roman Catholic, after

attending church with my wife and daughter for Midnight Mass on New Year's Day, I usually drop by a local Shinto shrine to make my New Year's resolution. It's a long-held Japanese tradition followed by Shinto believers and non-believers alike.

So I always feel delighted on New Year's Eve, giddy with anticipation – and no small amount of Nihonshu – that I'll begin keeping my resolution the next day.

Then morning comes.

The following morning is "Oshogatsu," or New Year's Day. And what self-respecting Japanese guy would snub the customary "toso," a traditional sip of New Year's sake on this special morning to kill off the evils that can bring bad luck to the coming year.

Is there a little "hair of the dog" involved? Perhaps. But I have been observing this great Japanese tradition without a fail since I was 3-years-old.

OK. I'll admit it has also become my tradition to drink an entire bottle of tasty sake throughout the day on this auspicious occasion – just to ensure my New Year's resolution gets that extra kick.

Anyway, on the second day of the Japanese custom dictates, we visit family, relatives and neighbors to give New Year's greetings. And I can't resist to enjoy another bottle of sake with them to celebrate the new year. It would be a shame not to. This is time-honored tradition.

On the third day, we meet more friends for New Year's greetings and – yep, you guessed it – we drink with them as well. By the time Jan. 3 rolls around, I find that my resolution has already gone by the way. It only makes sense to save it for the next year.

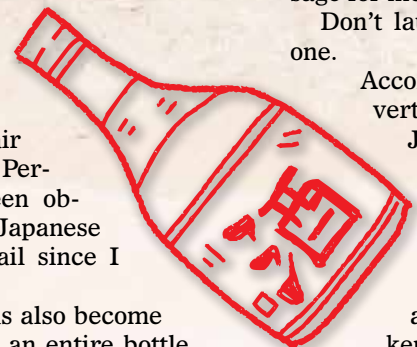
This is an annual resolution ritual for me.

Don't laugh. Turns out I'm not alone.

According to a survey by Oshida Advertising agency, 85 percent of Japanese ages 20-69 vowing to keep their New Year's resolution by Jan. 15.

In general, it is not easy for us to keep New Year's resolutions. In fact, there are statistics around that I know who have broken their New Year's resolution. So, how can I beat the odds and keep my resolution?

Designate a witness and a pre-determined





# New Year's resolutions



Photo by Guam Visitors Bureau

## d for s!

drive-through dining options from a good fiesta on special occasions. ... we do often forget that there are money.

and popularity these days, so why lunch provided by Simply Food in ... provide vegetarian and our tummy!

ck-me-up? Try out Mighty Purple of Hagåtña! These healthier food resolution!



Photo by Guam Visitors Bureau

## 3. Go hiking

Lace up those hiking shoes, throw on that cap and head to the great outdoors! We live on a tropical island that fortunately provides us with scenic terrains to explore. Take a trip down south and tackle Mount Lam Lam in Umatac or take a dip after hiking to Priest's Pools in Merizo. Visit the Hiking section under "Things to Do: Adventures" page on our website to learn about the Guam Boonie Stompers and their meeting times for boonie stomping!

Click here to visit **Guam Boonie Stompers:** <https://www.visitguam.com/things-to-do/adventures/hiking/>

# y resolution

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penalty for breaking the resolution. At least that is what some say works. But I haven't seen much success with this method either.

When I was in my 20s, some of my friends used to call me and ask me to act as a witness for their resolutions.

"I will definitely give up smoking," one of my friends once told me. "If I break my resolution and you catch me smoking, just remind me and I will have to buy you lunch."

A few weeks later, I found him smoking. When I reminded him, he smiled and kept puffing away.

"I decided to quit smoking on New Year's Day according to the lunar calendar," he said of the movable date that occurs about a month after Jan. 1 (Jan. 25 in 2020).

Needless to say, he didn't quit smoking then either. And I never got my lunch.

Riki Natsume, an online advice columnist, suggests that the key to success is to simplify and specify your resolutions. For example, instead of vowing to "cut back" on the



amount of sake you drink, commit to drinking no more than "two cans of beer a day." Or set Mondays and Tuesdays as "drink-free days."

It made sense to me.

So now I have a plan of action for my 2020 New Year's resolution: I'm making Wednesdays my alcohol-free days next year.

Wait. ...

Next year, Jan. 1 is a Friday. OK, Mondays. Starting next year, Mondays will be my drink-free days – well, except for when I have the day off or it's a holiday. (Did I mention that many Japanese holidays fall on Mondays?)

Anyway, I am confident I can pull off this New Year's next year!

With you readers as my witnesses, I am looking forward to making this resolution on New Year's Day with all earnestness before the altar. But not in church; heavens no!

I'll just stop by the Shinto shrine on my way home – just in case.

[takiguchi.takahiro@stripes.com](mailto:takiguchi.takahiro@stripes.com)

# The Meat and Potatoes of Life

Lisa Smith Molinari



## Glowing up in 2020

I find that the optimal time for one to muster motivation for self-improvement is right after one has polished off an entire pint of ice cream.

"Okay, that's it!" I recently belted to my college-aged daughters after tossing an empty carton into the kitchen trash can. "I'm dead serious this time — In 2020, I am finally going to become my best self!" I wasn't exactly sure what that entailed, but the pint of ice cream had triggered an all-too-familiar level of personal disgust that I had experienced many times before. The mudslide of rocky road sloshing in my stomach had brought me to rock bottom, and I was ready for something new. Not a new ice cream flavor, but a new path. A new way of doing things. A new attitude.

A new and improved me.

"I don't care if I'm fifty-three years old!" I ranted, dropping my spoon into the sink with a clank.

"I'm finally going to learn portion control, for criminy's sake. And ... and also ... I'm going to stop staying up so late, I'm not gonna bite my nails anymore, I'm going to take my vitamins, I'm going to stay organized," I counted dramatically on each of my sticky fingers. "I'm not going to make excuses, and I'm gonna do things right, once and for all!"

"Glow up, Mom," my daughter Anna said from her seat at the kitchen island, nonchalantly smirking at her sister. She and Lilly were accustomed to my hormonal mood swings. They stared blankly at the countertop television as if I made such dramatic proclamations every day.

"Wait. What do you mean 'glow up?'" I asked, stopping in front of Anna. She craned her neck to see her show around me, and responded without looking, "You know, Mom — you do you, be confident, don't let anyone get you down."

"Hmm," I thought for a minute, "I like that ... Yeah, that's exactly what I'm going to do. I'm going to glow up in 2020!"

Mildly amused, my daughters egged me on with woots and fist pumps, their eyes only temporarily deviating from their reruns.

"Giddyup, Big Mamma!"

"Go on wit ya bad self!"

"Pop off, sis!"

"No cap!"

I had no idea what Anna and Lilly were shouting at me, but apparently, they were offering modern colloquial phrases of support and encouragement. And I knew I would need all the help I could get.

Despite the fact that self-discipline had never been my strong suit, that afternoon in the kitchen with my daughters, I felt a true sense of determination to change. As a middle-aged woman, I knew I would need to buck the "old dog" stereotype. Could I learn new tricks at my age?

I reminded myself that I had spent 23 years as a Navy wife and mother of three — I had tackled challenges before. Deployments, loneliness, career challenges, managing the household alone, trying to make new friends, 11 moves, financial worries, military retirement, feelings of isolation, longing for the comfort of military culture.

Memories of our military life seemed to woot and fist pump at me, just as my daughters had.

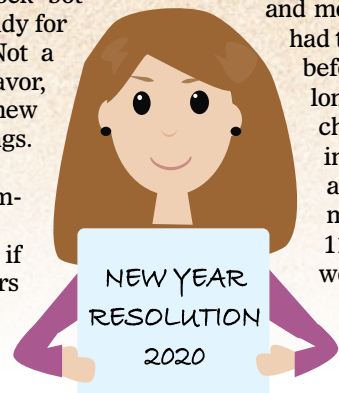
My determination to succeed at self-improvement seemed more real than ever before. But I was still facing at least a week of seasonal festivities, houseguests, chaos and clutter. I knew I would need to put some safeguards in place to minimize the risk that my motivation would wither and die like our Christmas tree.

First, I Googled the term to make sure my girls weren't punking me. To them, nothing was more hilarious than to hear their middle-aged mother misuse modern phrases. To my relief, the pop culture blogs confirmed that "glow up" was generally defined as "a personal transformation" that includes "increased self confidence" and "a positive change in one's lifestyle."

Perfect. Next, I made a call to the base gym to book personal training sessions, listed my 2020 goals in a new organizational calendar and painted my nails.

"Glow up, Big Mamma," I told myself, confident that in 2020, I would do whatever I set my mind to.

Read more of Lisa Smith Molinari's columns at: [themeatandpotatoesoflife.com](http://themeatandpotatoesoflife.com)  
Email: [meatandpotatoesoflife@gmail.com](mailto:meatandpotatoesoflife@gmail.com)





# Maintaining constant vigilance

## How to travel safely amid civil unrest in Hong Kong

STORY AND PHOTOS BY ANDREA SACHS,  
THE WASHINGTON POST

**H**ong Kong, I changed for you. Instead of bolting out of the hotel upon my arrival, leaving the day open to chance, I sat in my guest room figuring out how to avoid surprises. I checked the websites and apps of the U.S. Consulate in Hong Kong, the Mass Transit Railway, GovHK and Telegram, an encrypted messaging service. I read the most recent report from International SOS, a risk assessment firm. On my way out, I consulted with the reception desk about any security issues. And on the street, surrounded by “Free Hong Kong” graffiti and vandalized guardrails, I kept my antenna up, listening for any rumblings of discontent. I am typically an observant traveler, but in Hong Kong, I became vigilant.

For anyone visiting a city or country seized by protests, this is what you do. You stay informed. You remain alert. You cast a sideways glance at happenstance. You can still explore with abandon, just not on the protest route.

“Planning your trip around protests can be more stressful than necessary, but if you can move around and avoid them, it’s not as dangerous,” said Matthew Bradley, regional security director for

the Americas at International SOS. “You just need to be super flexible and willing to go with the flow.”

In terms of civil unrest, the world map has become a game of whack-a-mole, with many of the moles popping up in concert. This year, citizens have demonstrated in the United Kingdom, Ecuador, Chile, Peru, Bolivia, Colombia, Haiti, Russia, Zimbabwe, the Czech Republic, India, Egypt, Tunisia and Indonesia, among three dozen or so countries.

“This is definitely the age of mass protests,” said Samuel Brannen, a senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. “There is not a region or place in the world that isn’t experiencing them.”

Brannen said the trend started about a decade ago, with the Arab Spring, and “has ticked up in intensity globally.” Protesters’ activities are rarely isolated and self-contained; they spill into everyday life, affecting residents and travelers alike. Strikes shut down transit systems, and marches consume neighborhoods and popular thoroughfares. Officials barricade streets, including those in front of hotels and tourist attractions, and businesses alter their hours, forcing visitors to rejigger their itineraries. During



Graffiti on a bridge near the Observation Wheel on Hong Kong Island reminds pedestrians of the protesters’ five demands.



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→ standoffs between protesters and law enforcement, visitors have to lie low until the tension subsides. But once calm returns, they can pick up the sightseeing where they left off.

To be sure, these disruptions are not pleasant, especially when you crave a soothing vacation. But (safely) witnessing a defining moment in a country's history can provide unparalleled insights into a culture and a deeper understanding of its people and their passions.

"Culturally, it's not insensitive to visit," said Bradley. "You can experience their pursuit of democracy."

**Do your research**

As protests proliferate around the world, more travelers will have to face this tough question: Should you visit a destination experiencing unrest?

For the answer, you need to dig a little. Start with the travel advisories issued by government agencies, such as the U.S. State Department. For multiple perspectives, David Clapworthy, an Asia sales manager with Audley Travel, reads the warnings compiled by several countries, including the United States, the United Kingdom and Canada. He steers his customers away from high-risk places, such as Bolivia, a Level 4 in the U.S. grading system. "Do not travel to Bolivia due to civil unrest," the agency states without ambiguity. The countries that fall in the middle — neither

safe nor dangerous — are more challenging. Chile, Zimbabwe, France and Ecuador are all Level 2 countries. For these destinations, the agency urges travelers to "exercise increased caution." Not the most helpful advice if you don't know why you are raising your cautionary bar.

So fill in the blanks. Familiarize yourself with the issues that ignited the protests as well as the participants' demands and the government's response. Common grievances include inequality (Chile), higher taxes (France, Ecuador), suppression of freedoms (Hong Kong), corruption (Malta, Russia), election fraud (Bolivia) and unjust treatment of minority groups (India). Understanding the nature of the protests is equally important: Are they localized or widespread, sporadic or consistent? In most cases, the protesters will direct their ire at the government and law enforcement, not tourists. But sometimes visitors get scooped up in the net.

Bradley urges travelers to hold off on travel if the uprisings restrict movement and cause a shortage of resources, such as food and fuel. Also take heed if either side of the struggle resorts to violence.

Thomas Carothers, an international democracy expert with the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, said countries with politically closed systems and a low tolerance for opposing views, such as Russia and Egypt, might more quickly employ



Before the protests in Hong Kong, visitors jockeyed for space on the Sky Terrace 428, a viewing platform on Victoria Peak. Six months later, the crowds have disappeared.

harsh tactics to silence protesters. He said innocent bystanders are more at risk when a brutal response is premeditated rather than a spontaneous response to a volatile situation. In addition, protests with a clear strategy and an organized base usually adhere to a peaceful course of action. Movements without a central core can devolve into chaos, with groups splintering off and adopting more extreme behaviors.

And finally, find a local source — a relative, an old college roommate, a Facebook friend — who lives in the destination or recently visited it and can provide a first-person narrative. I also emailed my hotel and asked about the situation. A half-hour later, I received a reassuring reply from

the assistant reservation supervisor at the Luxe Manor in Kowloon: "We believe Hong Kong is safe to travel at this stage. Our team will be very happy to assist you and to provide you with the most updated information during your guest stay."

He was right. At check-in, the front desk attendant gave me intel about an upcoming protest on Hong Kong Island.

**Fewer tourists**

"It's the worst time to visit," said Michael Tsang, founder of Hong Kong Free Tours, "and the best time to visit."

The best and the worst occupy two sides of the same coin. The protests have caused a sharp drop in tourism: The Hong Kong

Tourism Board reported a 43% decrease in arrivals in October compared with the same time last year. Airlines have reduced passenger capacity through early next year; in September, United indefinitely suspended service from Chicago. Hotels are scrambling for guests, with even the most luxurious properties offering discounts and perks. At Lan Kwai Fong Hotel at Kau U Fong, a boutique hotel with a Michelin-starred Cantonese restaurant, I paid less than \$100 a night and received a free bottle of red wine, a fruit plate and a 2 p.m. check-out. The rate at the Luxe Manor was not much more. I felt like my hotel stays were more of a charitable donation than a business transaction.





I was last in Hong Kong three years ago, and my memory is of crowds, lines and escalating frustration. At Victoria Peak, the ride to the mountaintop took hours because of long lines to buy a ticket, board the tram and reach the Sky Terrace 428. At the top, throngs of people body-blocked the harbor view. Selfie sticks chopped up the sunset-glazed sky. I gazed at the skyline through the screen of a stranger's smartphone. On this visit, I walked right up to the ticket window and straight onto the tram. No obstacles impeded my vista.


Hong Kong law requires organizers to obtain a permit to protest, so I knew exactly where and when the events would occur


**SEE SAFETY ON PAGE 13**

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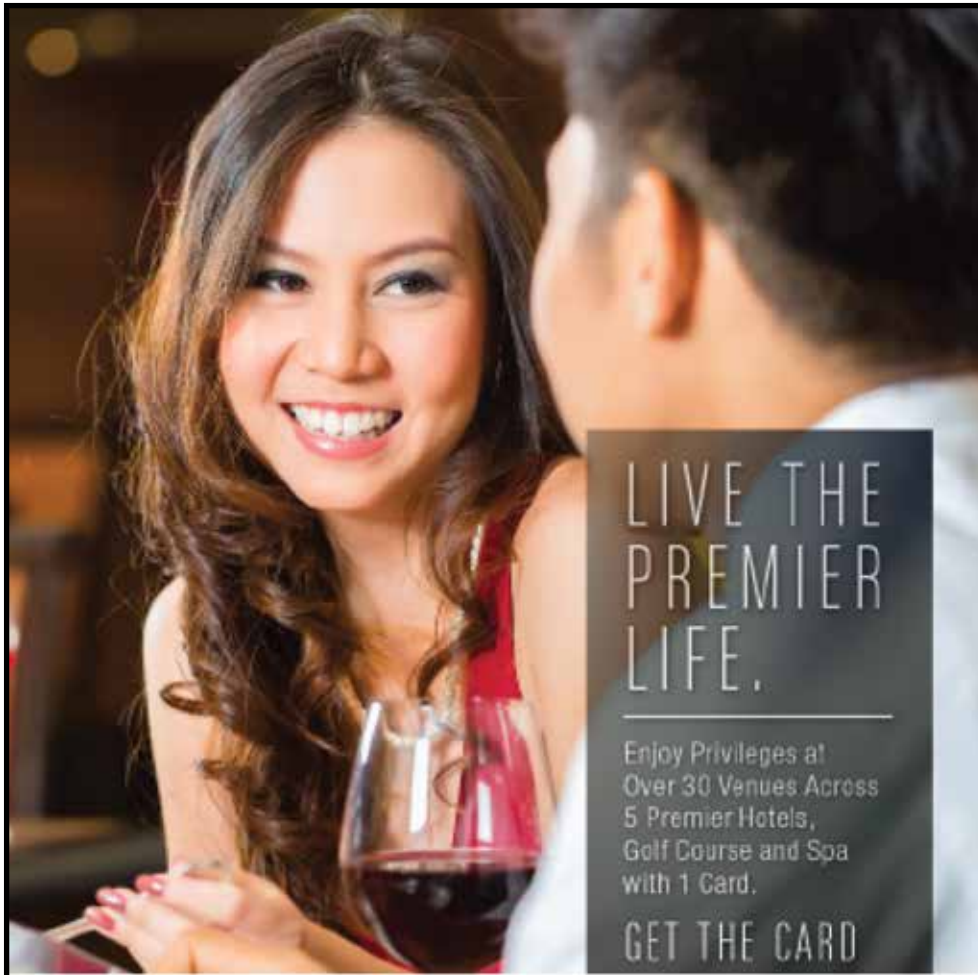
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# SAFETY: Be aware of surroundings

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

during my visit. Security experts recommend that tourists steer clear of protest sites and take flight if they notice a large group of people amassing. But curiosity is a powerful drug.

On my first night, I headed down to the water's edge to watch the Symphony of Lights, a laser and sound show featuring more than 40 illuminated buildings on both sides of Victoria Harbor. I plotted a route that would skirt the Observation Wheel and cut through an anti-tear-gas rally. Hundreds of attendees sat on the ground and listened to speakers address the police's use of tear gas and explain the effects of the toxins. The crowd was quiet and respectful. After the light spectacle, I circled back to the rally. A girl in a school uniform knelt on the sidewalk and spray-painted "Ideas are bulletproof" in English and Cantonese, a quote from the movie "V for Vendetta." On another patch of sidewalk, she scrawled "12.8." I knew that date well.

## Observing the unrest

Hong Kong Free Tours started offering its Protest Tour in October, soon after the government banned protesters from wearing masks. The last tour, in November, did not go well. The two participants, plus Michael, who was guiding, were exposed to tear gas. Michael suspended the excursion before tiptoeing back onto the streets a few weeks ago. The Dec. 8 march organized by Civil Human Rights Front

marked his official return.

Seven of us from around the world — Sweden, China, the Netherlands, Israel, Singapore and Wisconsin — met at the starting point in Victoria Park on Causeway Bay. With our predominantly Western faces and light-colored clothes, we stood out among the black-outfitted Hong-kongers pouring out of the metro station. Many of them gripped umbrellas, but not for protection from inclement weather. Michael introduced himself and half-jokingly told us he didn't want to know our names or personal details. He explained that we were not protesting; we were on a tour in a protest, which is why we could wear masks. (The law has a few exceptions and loopholes.) Even so, I declined one of the medical masks a woman was handing out.

Michael played back the events that sparked the June protests: In February 2018, a Hong Kong teenager killed his girlfriend during a vacation in Taiwan. A year later, the Hong Kong government proposed a law that would allow Taiwan and China the right to extradite its citizens. Hong-kongers, suspicious of China's judicial system, revolted. Legislators withdrew the initiative, but the protesters didn't disband. They added four more demands and forged onward.

"Five demands, not one less," Michael said, echoing a common slogan.

Before setting off, he reminded us of protest etiquette: no photos of law enforcement or protesters' faces. ("Where's Waldo?"-like

crowd shots were acceptable.) Also, if someone raises their umbrella, don't poke your head under it and investigate; the person might be attending to a private matter, such as scribbling a message on a wall.

We walked at a steady pace, with no cars or package-laden pedestrians blocking the route that officials had closed to traffic. Individuals with bullhorns or commanding voices led call-and-response chants. We hit a logjam by the Sogo department store. The crowd parted for a woman pushing a baby stroller. Umbrellas shot open like inverted primroses as several people noticed shifty activity on a balcony above. Someone in the front broke out in song. All of the voices joined in "Glory to Hong Kong," the unofficial anthem of the movement.

The protest ended at Chater Garden in the Central district, but Michael dismissed our group before the finishing line. The event, which drew more than 800,000 supporters, had been peaceful, but violence could still erupt.

"Use this experience today to tell people what Hong Kong is really like," he said in his parting words. "Hopefully, one day this will end."

After the tour, we grabbed a drink at Landmark, a nearby luxury mall. Young Hong-kongers drank overpriced coffee, their eyes locked on their gadgets. They resembled typical youth frittering away a Sunday, if not for the umbrellas they were carrying on a cloudless night.



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<b>Jan. 18</b> <b>La Sa Fua River</b>	<i>Hard Medium</i> 4 hours for 3 miles
--	---

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**Special conditions:** Steeps slope down, slippery rocks, walking in water a short rope climb, and a fairly long hike.

<b>Jan. 25</b> <b>Cross Island Hike</b>	<i>Very Difficult</i> 6 hours for 6 miles
<b>Tarzan Falls Only</b>	<i>Medium</i> 3 hours for 2 miles

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**Special conditions (Medium):** short steep slopes, mud, slippery trail.

**Special conditions (Very Difficult):** Sword grass, long very steep slopes, walking in water, little shade, and a very long hike.

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**Stomp Tip:**

- 1) Alcohol and hiking do not mix.
- 2) Do not bring beverages with caffeine on hikes.
- 3) Bring plenty of water with you on hikes.
- 4) Do not hike alone and let someone know where you are going and your return time.
- 5) Always carry a well stocked personal first aid kit.
- 6) When hiking, lots of little snacks are better than one big meal
- 7) Always bring a small flashlight in case you get lost, or delayed. Save your phone battery for calls.

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The Maldives is a lovely spot for a honeymoon, when couples are physically and financially ready to go on theirs. Photo by TNS

# A delayed honeymoon could mean a more gratifying trip

BY ELIZABETH KIEFER, THE WASHINGTON POST

Last November, when my now-husband and I got married, we registered for contributions to our honeymoon. “Where are you going?” everyone wanted to know. We didn’t have an answer. Between all the time, money and energy that went into the ceremony and reception, travel plans were on the back burner. And we’re not alone. Once again, the definition of a “honeymoon” seems to be changing.

The word “honeymoon” dates to the fifth century, when wedded couples would drink mead (sweet wine) during the first month, or moon, of marriage. In Victorian England, it meant visiting family and friends who couldn’t attend the wedding. Only later would the meaning evolve into a romantic holiday for two.

But while it was once de rigueur for the happy couple to depart right after the reception, delayed honeymoons are increasingly common, according to wedding industry experts and insiders. According to honeymoon trend data from the industry platform WeddingWire, couples who report leaving one to two days after the wedding have declined by 13% since 2015.

When you consider both wedding and travel

trends, it often makes sense to delay a honeymoon.

Lindsay Landman, a wedding and event planner based in New York City, attributes the shift to the evolution of wedding timetables. “It used to be that you got married on a Saturday, had your ceremony and reception, and then everyone went on their merry way,” says Landman. “Now it’s very infrequent for a wedding to be a one-day affair.” Today’s celebrations often unfold over the course of an entire weekend, with welcome drinks the night before, activities the day of the ceremony and brunch the day after. By the time it’s all over, couples might need some time to decompress before jetting off on a honeymoon.

The rise of the destination wedding has played a role, too. “The number one reason people say they want to do a destination is that they want to be able to spend time with people,” says Landman. The result is a group vacation that culminates with “I do,” a trip that precludes many couples from immediately embarking on another voyage.

Destination weddings not only require additional expenses but additional vacation days. “You can’t just leave your job on a Thursday evening. Now, you have to leave on a Tuesday night,” says Landman. “Even if you’re

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not flying, you're packing up and doing a mini-vacation for the wedding itself."

Delaying a honeymoon makes sense from a travel planning perspective, as well. Stephanie Park is the co-founder of Journy, an online millennial-focused travel agency that provides users with personalized itineraries. "We either see people who are planning honeymoons really, really early, or they've already been married for a while, and now they have the free time to devote to planning the perfect trip," says Park.

And she means perfect. "With honeymoons, most times it's a once in a lifetime experience, you've saved up all this money for your wedding and your honeymoon," says Park. "It's a lot of pressure to put on a single trip. You do need the time to plan." And if you see travel as the competitive sport it has become on social media, you might feel the compulsion not just to design a never-to-be-forgotten trip for two, but to curate a vacation that will make your Instagram followers envious.

Other couples also need to recover financially before they can take a dream trip. According to the most recent data from wedding site the Knot, the national average cost of a wedding in 2018 was \$29,200; of a honeymoon, \$5,342. "Some people need a little breathing room to recoup and reinvest," says Landman. And waiting allows them to make use of a honeymoon fund. Couples can register on sites such as Journy, Honeyfund and others.

There are more intangible benefits. Delaying helps anticipation, as well as finances, grow.

"Doing it six months, a year, even 18 months later gives you something to look forward to," says Rachel Sussman, a therapist who specializes in marriage and relationships.

Planning the trip and traveling together is also good for your marriage, Sussman adds. She recommends that people planning a honeymoon - or really any vacation - make time to really talk about what they want from that trip, down to the way they expect to spend the days. "People really need to have that conversation and get on the same page," she says. "Do you want to see every site there is? Do you want to relax and sleep in? Talk to each other and figure that out before you go."

But don't let the opportunity to go somewhere slip away, because traveling together has benefits. "We all have a tendency to get caught up in our daily routine," Sussman says. "Sometimes you can get into a rut and it can feel mundane. Just being together is a way to connect, and it doesn't need to be a big fancy trip. It could be an Airbnb in your own city in a

different neighborhood.

And even if it isn't the perfect vacation, that can be good for the marriage, too. "If you end up with a bad experience, it's good to have to figure out how to handle that together. What if one of you gets sick? What if there's a problem?" she says. "It's a little microcosm of your relationship and a good way to use your skills together; being outside of your comfort zone together is a good thing."

There are more intangible benefits. Delaying helps anticipation, as well as finances, grow.



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**The Weekly Crossword** by Margie E. Burke

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ACROSS

1 Come across as  
5 Trailer's place  
9 Legend maker  
14 Moneyed one  
15 Comply with  
16 Food on a stick  
17 Kind of ID  
18 Hearty laugh  
19 Came up  
20 Schwarzenegger role in 1984  
23 \_\_\_ to rest  
24 Joystick wielder  
25 Be theatrical  
27 Improvise a speech  
29 "The Black \_\_\_" (2006 film)  
32 One in charge  
34 Edifice  
38 Hospital unit  
39 Sundae topping  
41 Salon goo  
42 \_\_\_ Cup, in yachting  
44 Setting for Disney's "The Aristocats"  
46 Step off  
48 Came to  
49 Shade of black  
51 Track competitor  
53 Hindu wrap  
54 Bargain hunter's stop  
59 Birdbrain  
61 Au \_\_\_  
62 Skip over  
63 Cotton thread  
64 Something to build on  
65 Tousle, as hair  
66 Marketing tactic  
67 Ultimatum word  
68 Catch sight of

DOWN

4 Ariel, for one  
5 Greene of "Bonanza"  
6 On the train  
7 Bicycle part  
8 Newbie  
9 Alias preceder  
10 Four in a Focus, say  
11 Vessel featured in the 1957 film "The Enemy Below"  
12 Iconic riveter  
13 Still sleeping  
21 Dolt  
22 Type of pitcher  
26 Waterwheel's channel  
27 Jessica of "Fantastic Four"  
28 Regard  
30 Embarrass  
31 Droning sound  
33 Del Mar activity  
35 Complete idiot  
36 Violin part

37 Merriment  
38 Cleaning need  
39 Filled pasta  
40 More than cool  
41 Personality features  
42 Two make a diameter  
43 Develop  
44 See eye to eye  
45 River sediment  
46 Abbey area  
47 Pool table part  
48 Speak like Sylvester  
49 Crafty e-tailer  
50 Gymnast's goal

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**Stripes Sports Trivia**

**SAY MY NAME!** After my fourth-string quarterback gig didn't work out so well, I decided it was time for a career change and began working at a local grocery store for \$5.50 an hour. Eventually, I returned to quarterbackin' and worked my way back into the NFL. After some tears were shed, I figured things out, went to three Super Bowls and put together a Hall of Fame resume – grocery store stocker and all. Who am I?

**Answer** Kurt Warner

**SUDOKU** Edited by Margie E. Burke  
Difficulty: Medium

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

Answers to Last Week's Sudoku:

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

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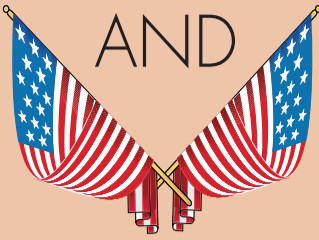
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GUAM EDITION

FRIDAY, JANUARY 17, 2020

## Unmoved by the findings

IG says military should get tough on companies for late, lost, damaged deliveries of household goods Page 2



A mover packs a truck in Kaiserslautern, Germany. According to an Inspector General investigation, almost half of military household-goods shipments arrive late and 20% are damaged.



## COVER STORY

# IG: Problems plague military household moves

By JOHN VANDIVER  
Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — Nearly half of military household goods shipments arrive late and one in five are damaged in transit or lost, an audit by the Defense Department Inspector General has found.

Some Defense Department personnel, meanwhile, may be venting their frustration with what they say are poor moving services by filing wildly inflated damage estimates, the audit suggested.

One person filed a claim of \$1 million for a busted trash can and another tried to claim \$1 trillion for unspecified damages, the IG report said. Both claims were denied.

The IG made many recommendations on how the military can improve moving services, which have vexed service members for years.

The IG reviewed 9,852 shipments handled by four joint shipping offices in 2018 to determine the extent of problems with household goods shipments and whether proper actions were taken when goods were damaged, lost or arrived late during a move.

More than 4,000 of those shipments, or 41%, didn't arrive by the agreed-upon delivery date, the audit found. The delays were caused by problems with scheduling and equipment at the moving companies, the IG said.

Those late deliveries alone cost the military \$33.1 million, the IG said.

"Additionally, moving companies did not provide an explanation for delivering some of the shipments after the delivery date," the IG said.

That meant DOD personnel and their families had the hassle of filing claims for lodging, food, rental and other costs, the IG reported.

At least one claim was filed in 21% of all domestic household goods shipments, the IG said.

A review of 311 of those shipments found that the moving companies resolved 94% of the claims for around \$8.4 million. Forty claims remained unresolved because they weren't filed through the proper channels, the IG said.

The Defense Department is the largest customer in the personal property shipping industry, representing about 15% of all domestic and international moves, the IG said. U.S. Transportation Command is in charge of administering the military's household moves.

The IG suggested issuing warnings or letters of suspension to moving companies within 14 days of a missed delivery date. Warning letters would impact moving company ratings, which determine what future shipments will be offered, it said.

The IG also urged TRANSCOM to contact personnel who failed to complete a customer satisfaction survey within one month of receiving their ship-



KAREN A. IWAMOTO/Oahu Publications

**1st Lt. Kathryn Bailey, a Blackhawk pilot with the 2nd Battalion, 25th Aviation Regiment, 25th Combat Aviation Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, supervises the delivery and unpacking of her household items May 11 on Wheeler Army Airfield in Honolulu. An IG report found that nearly half of military household goods shipments arrive late.**

## 1 in 5

Military household-goods shipments lost or damaged, according to an audit by the Department of Defense Inspector General.

## \$33.1M

Amount late deliveries from four joint shipping offices cost the military in 2018.

ment of household goods, and help members file inconvenience claims with moving companies within 14 days of a missed delivery date.

In addition, TRANSCOM should review all household goods claims that are more than 60 days old and contact claimants to review shipment status, the IG recommended.

The audit was prompted by an online petition, which had been signed by 107,000 people as of October, calling for moving companies to be held accountable for losses and damages incurred during the military move process, the report said.

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Oz SUGUITAN/USTRANSCOM/PA

**A moving contractor loads a truck with a service member's household goods in 2018. The Defense Department Inspector General made many recommendations on how the military can improve moving services.**



## MILITARY

# Wing upgrades for Warthogs near completion

By MATTHEW KEELER  
Stars and Stripes

OSAN AIR BASE, South Korea — All but one of nearly two dozen Air Force A-10 Thunderbolt IIs in South Korea have completed wing upgrades that should extend the service life of the close combat support jet well into the 2030s.

The new wings are designed to last up to 10,000 flight hours without a major inspection. The upgrade includes a new wiring harness created for easier wing removal and is designed to reduce the chance of damaging the wing during the process.

“Most of our airplanes [at Osan] have between 9,000 to 12,000 airframe hours. They are old, but this upgrade is helping us to keep going. I wouldn’t be surprised to see some of the airplanes go 16,000 hours,” Senior Master Sgt. Dustin Schwartz, lead production superintendent for the 25th Aircraft Maintenance Unit, 51st Fighter Wing, told Stars and Stripes.

“As 8,000 hours approached the Air Force started to realize the wings were cracking,” he added. “These wings were not designed to go this far.”

In 2007, Boeing Co. was awarded \$1.1 billion under the Enhanced Wing Assembly replacement program to manufacture 173 sets of wings to replace the original components, which were designed for 8,000 flight hours. In August, the Defense Department awarded the company a second contract for an indefinite number of wings with a ceiling of \$999 million through 2030, according to Boeing’s website.

Korean Air Lines, the coun-

**‘Having Korean Air Lines here on the peninsula do our upgrades is huge because, one, we don’t lose the time and effort trying to fly an airplane from here to Utah.’**

Senior Master Sgt.  
Dustin Schwartz

try’s largest commercial airline, under contract has completed 10 of 11 wing upgrades for Osan’s A-10s, which are also known as Warthogs. The final aircraft is expected to be completed in early spring.

The remaining jets were flown to Hill Air Force Base, Utah, for the installation and have since returned to South Korea.

Most of the Air Force’s A-10s had their new wings installed and flight tested at Hill. For Osan’s 51st Fighter Wing, getting all of its Warthogs to Utah for the upgrades meant several days and a vast amount of manpower.

“Having Korean Air Lines here on the peninsula do our upgrades is huge because, one, we don’t lose the time and effort trying to fly an airplane from here to Utah,” Schwartz said. “These guys are good at what they do — every jet that they have turned for us has been really good. Having them here helps us keep our jets in the fight here.”

The 45-year-old A-10 has



MATTHEW KEELER/Stars and Stripes

A technician sits in the cockpit of an A-10 Thunderbolt II while testing the aircraft’s new wings at Hill Air Force Base, Utah, in June.

proven its value and continues to garner the support of many politicians in Washington.

In late June, following his meeting with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, President Donald Trump commented briefly on his support for the A-10 while speaking to service members at Osan.

“I’ve got more people asking us to keep the Warthog. We are going to keep them as long as we can,” Trump said. “People love them. Sen. Martha McSally flew Warthogs, and every time I see her, she says please don’t let the Warthog go, it’s just a very great machine.”

The Arizona Republican’s efforts contributed to the Air Force awarding the new contract to Boeing, according to a statement on McSally’s website.

“As a former A-10 pilot and commander of an A-10 squadron in combat, I know how critical the Warthog is to our military’s success in the air and on the ground,” she said in the statement. “Our troops rely on the



ALEX LLOYD/U.S. Air Force

A 51st Fighter Wing A-10 Thunderbolt II with new wings from the Enhanced Wing Assembly program is parked inside a hangar at Osan Air Base, South Korea, on Jan. 8.

A-10’s outstanding and unique ability to provide close air support and combat search and rescue. The A-10 was specifically designed for these types of

missions, so having it in the fight can make the difference between lives lost and lives saved.”

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## New leather jackets coming for Navy’s surface warfare officers

By CAITLIN M. KENNEY  
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON—Navy surface warfare officers will soon be issued new leather jackets to wear and show their expertise and create a sense of pride.

The new jacket is similar to the famous aviation bomber jacket and is “meant to build esprit de corps” and symbolize the “tactical warfighter expertise” of being a qualified surface warfare officer, the Navy said in an announcement Thursday.

The jacket will be available starting in June.

“The surface warfare community has a long-standing history



WOODY S. PASCHALL/U.S. Navy

Wearing a leather jacket similar to those now being made available to Navy surface warfare officers, Vice Adm. Richard A. Brown, Commander, Naval Surface Forces, delivers the keynote address at a symposium on board Naval Base San Diego in August.

of excellence and an uniquely identifiable item is one way to signify the outstanding achievement and professionalism of our surface warfare officers,” Vice Adm. Richard Brown, commander of Naval Surface Forces, said in the announcement. “Those who wear the jacket will be easily identified as a part of a long lineage of professional ship drivers and maritime warfighters.”

The jacket is black leather and features knitted cuffs and waistband, a pointed collar and will be fully lined. It also has two front pockets with flaps and a Velcro name tape patch on the left side.

Surface warfare officers will

primarily wear the jacket while at sea with their at-sea uniforms, according to the Navy. They can be worn when officers are ashore as an optional outer jacket but only with the service uniform.

Active, Reserve, and full-time support officers who have earned the surface warfare officer qualification will be allowed to wear the jacket. Officers who later move to a different job specialty outside of surface warfare can still wear the jacket and can also wear it when they leave the Navy.

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## MILITARY

# Review: JAG corps must address culture, ethics

By CAITLIN M. KENNEY  
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — Navy and Marine Corps lawyers have failed to learn from past mistakes and many display a lack of basic ethics in their approach to cases, according to a review of the services' judge advocate general corps released Jan. 10.

The review, which Navy leaders billed as the largest probe of its JAG corps ever conducted, blasted a lack of a professional culture within that corps. The probe was launched in the wake of a string of problems within the Navy's legal community culminating with the chaotic, and ultimately, unsuccessful, prosecution during the summer of Navy SEAL Eddie Gallagher on war crimes.

However, officials cited cases stretching back to 2015 as reasons why the Navy's legal systems needed inspection. In August, the review was expanded to include the Marine Corps' JAG corps.

The review was conducted by a panel of experts, who were advised to focus on critical areas within the JAG corps, including its culture, organizational structure and unlawful command influence. The Navy and Marine Corps are now establishing oversight teams to make certain that the recommendations in the review are implemented, service leaders said.

The panel found the Navy needs to "embrace a learning culture" in which there is self-assessment and feedback on lessons learned. They also found the Navy and Marine

Corps' professional responsibility programs "lack regular, structured training" and need to build on relationships with other legal communities and foster professional interaction.

The culture of the legal profession in the Navy and Marine Corps is the "top priority to get after," said Adm. Robert Burke, the vice chief of naval operations.

Now-retired Adm. John Richardson, the former chief of naval operations, ordered the review Aug. 1, which was endorsed and later expanded by then-Navy Secretary Richard Spencer.

The former top Navy officials called for the review following the high-profile acquittal of Gallagher, a chief petty officer, on charges that included the murder of a young, detained enemy fighter, and a series of other embarrassing episodes in the Navy's legal community in recent years.

The Gallagher case had the lead prosecutor, Navy Cmdr. Christopher Czaplak, booted from the case just days before trial after he was caught working with Naval Criminal Investigative Service officials to attempt to track illegally emails of Gallagher's defense team and a journalist covering the case. During the trial, the prosecution's star witness, another SEAL, reversed his testimony and claimed to have killed the detained enemy fighter. The SEAL had been granted immunity and he did not face legal repercussions for his testimony.

President Donald Trump, long a vocal supporter of Gallagher, ordered the Navy to revoke awards doled out to prosecutors for their work on the case. Later, Trump restored the SEAL's

rank, which was reduced as punishment for his lone conviction of posing for a photograph with a deceased enemy's body. Trump also ordered the Navy to allow Gallagher to retire with his trident pin — a symbol of his position within the SEALs — instead of conducting a review of his status in the elite force. Spencer would be forced from his position as the Navy's top civilian soon after Trump's order, but he blasted the president's handling of the case in a letter acknowledging his termination.

Gallagher's case was not the only embarrassing mark on the Navy JAG corps in recent years. Navy officials cited the handling of a 2015 case against another SEAL in its call for a probe. That case against SEAL Senior Chief Petty Officer Keith Barry saw the military's highest appellate court throw out a rape conviction on a count of unlawful command influence. The court charged the Navy's top lawyer at the time, then-Vice Adm. James Crawford, had illegally intervened in the case by pressuring other Navy officials to uphold Barry's conviction despite doubts about his guilt.

In another high-profile case, Richardson and another admiral were dismissed from their roles in the case against the former commander of a ship that was involved in a deadly collision with a commercial vessel. Ultimately, charges including negligent homicide were dismissed in 2019 against then-Cmdr. Bryce Benson, the commander of the USS Fitzgerald when it collided with a container ship off Japan's coast in 2017, killing seven U.S. sailors.



GREGORY BULL/AP

**The case involving Navy Special Operations Chief Edward Gallagher prompted a review of Navy and Marine Corps judge advocate generals.**

Navy and Marine Corps lawyers have to establish a culture in which they all learn from mistakes — including those high-profile cases — to ensure they are not repeated, Burke said Friday.

"To instill the culture you got to establish the processes to repeat it and then just make it a way of life," he said.

That includes training and education and establishing principles for the legal community including behavior and valuing a learning culture.

Marine Corps Maj. Gen. Gregg Olson, the assistant deputy commandant for plans, policies and operations, is also looking to make the Marine Corps a "culture of learning" and will look at how to refresh the training and education for Marine attorneys as they move from one job to the next.

"We do a very good job in some of our communities of refreshing people as they return to their duties perhaps after they've been away. Aviators, for instance, would go back through a refreshing syllabus as they came back to the cockpit from a tour outside the cockpit. We recognize there's some potential parallels for our lawyers," Olson said.

Another area of concern highlighted is the lack of resources of the military JAG community in the Navy and Marine Corps. They found issues with the case management and court reporting systems to be inefficient and in some cases ineffective. Staff shortages was also a problem with the Navy as they suffer from "inaccurate manpower requirements, as well as skill sets and development paths that do not meet Navy needs," according to the review.

Burke said he will be meeting with members of the JAG corps to discuss the findings in the review.

"My message to the JAG Corps is that we have talented judge advocates in the Navy and they're doing great work and providing excellent legal service to our sailors and their families and the commanders that they serve," he said. "That said, as a team, we've got some things that we can work on to get better. And we'll put our heads to it, and we'll make those structural changes and those process changes."

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## Study finds brain injuries in combat linked to PTSD

By WYATT OLSON  
*Stars and Stripes*

Service members who suffered moderate to severe traumatic brain injury in combat have significantly higher incidence of mental health disorders in following years as compared to warfighters who sustained other traumatic injuries, a study found.

The study, published in the current issue of the journal *Military Medicine*, examined almost 5,000 cases of traumatic injury experienced by Marines, soldiers, airmen and sailors during combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan from February 2002 to February 2011.

Among the study's findings is a clear relationship between moderate and severe brain injury and a greater risk for post-traumatic stress disorder, a link that contradicts a theory posited by some previous researchers.

Traumatic brain injury has been the scourge of U.S. combatants during the extended war on terrorism, particularly the decade after the September 2001 World Trade Center attack. Improvised explo-

sive devices were the weapon of choice by enemy guerrilla fighters in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Improvements in body armor and medical treatment saved the lives of many blast victims who would have died in earlier conflicts. By 2010, 7,832 warfighters had survived severe traumatic brain injury, the study said.

The new research compared two groups — one that sustained moderate to severe brain injury, the other experiencing general, critical injury — and looked for associations with anxiety and mood disorders, adjustment reactions, schizophrenia and other psychotic disorders, cognitive disorders, and post-traumatic stress disorder, or PTSD.

The study found that most of these patients, 70.6%, were diagnosed with at least one of those five mental health conditions during multiyear follow-up periods.

That is "considerably higher" than the 42% found in a much smaller 2012 study, "even though our mental health diagnoses were defined more narrowly," the study said.

However, patients who suffered traumatic brain injury were at "consistently greater" risk for diagnosis of those five conditions than the group of patients suffering general trauma, the study found.

"If you have severe TBI, you are at risk of having something undesirable," said David Chin, the study's co-author and a professor at the School of Public Health and Health Sciences, University of Massachusetts-Amherst.

Previous studies found links between mild and moderate traumatic brain injury and adverse mental health outcomes in combat veterans, but such research was usually limited to examining only a one-year post-injury period and primarily focused on PTSD and loss of mental function from physical injury.

The new study includes patients from all four service branches and examines mental health outcomes over longer periods of time, a median length of just over four years.

Chin said the study likely underestimates mental health outcomes for a few reasons.

Health records were available for care provided within a Defense Department health care facility or tied to the DOD's Tricare system. Encounters with health care providers outside that were not available for the analysis, he said.

The culture of underreporting mental health issues among service members likely skews the data, he said.

Finally, an examination using longer follow-up periods would probably reveal more mental health diagnoses, he said.

"I think this illustrates that we just don't have enough information to really get at how big the problem of mental health care actually is for these patients," he said.

The study's findings contradict a hypothesis by earlier investigators theorizing that patients with moderate and severe traumatic brain injury could not develop PTSD because impaired consciousness confers a sort of "amnesiac effect" that precludes "encoding" the memories necessary for PTSD development, Chin said.

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## PACIFIC

# Civilian's death in S. Korea highlights challenges

By **KIM GAMEL**  
AND **YOO KYONG CHANG**  
*Stars and Stripes*

SEOUL, South Korea — An Alabama couple was locked in a web of bureaucracy as they fought for a week to retrieve their son's body after he died Jan. 2 in a South Korean hospital, leaving a \$24,000 bill for his care.

Gregory Allen, 31, a civilian employee at the Child Development Center on the Army's Yongsan Garrison, died during open-heart surgery after he arrived Dec. 30 at Soon Chun Hyang University hospital in Seoul in a disoriented state.

Allen's parents flew to Seoul as soon as they heard Gregory had fallen ill and found him on Jan. 1 in the intensive care unit. The official cause of death was pulmonary embolism, his parents said.

"We were shocked," said his father, Leroy Allen Jr., a retired soldier from Madison, Ala., who had served in South Korea.

He and his wife, Margie, had little time to grieve. They said hospital officials handed them the bill and demanded payment before Gregory's body would be released.

They gave the hospital \$3,000 but didn't have the rest. Gregory Allen's insurance policy covered 80% of the cost, but it took time to process the claim.

"This was like 3 o'clock in the morning and they're asking me for \$21,000," Gregory's father told Stars and Stripes in an interview. "Now they're charging 90,000 won (about \$80) every day that he's sitting in that freezer in that hospital until that \$21,000 is paid off."

He said it was also a fight to obtain a copy of Gregory's death certificate, which was needed to file the insurance claim.

A senior hospital official denied the body was held for payment, saying the process was slowed by a weekend and the need to complete administrative paperwork.

He said the parents and their representatives "never ever told our hospital 'please turn his body over to us.'"

The insurance money had been deposited and other issues had been resolved by Jan. 8, he said.

The Defense Department's mortuary affairs team confirmed it collected the body, although it was unclear when it would be flown home.

Gregory Allen was "groggy and semi-conscious" when he showed up at the emergency room on Dec. 30, the hospital official said, speaking on condition of



Allen family

**Gregory Allen, 31, was a child and youth program assistant at the Child Development Center on Yongsan Garrison in Seoul, South Korea.**

anonymity. Allen also kept saying that he wanted to go to the U.S. military hospital but ended up at Soon Chun Hyang, which is near Yongsan. The hospital at Yongsan garrison has been closed due to relocation of the base personnel.

South Koreans are usually covered by a national insurance plan, but foreigners without local coverage must pay up front and file a claim to be reimbursed.

The case underscores the health care challenges facing Americans who work for the Defense Department but remained in Seoul after most troops and those who work with them moved south to the newly expanded Camp Humphreys.

The U.S. military's Brian Allgood Army Community Hospital on Yongsan

closed in November, handing the reins to a namesake facility at Humphreys and leaving many employees largely dependent on the South Korean health care system.

Many local hospitals have international departments that provide translation and other services for foreigners, but few can process claims for American insurance companies, requiring patients to pay up front, then file for reimbursement.

Military officials have held town hall-style meetings and circulated telephone numbers to inform the Yongsan community about health care options, but confusion can still occur with translation issues and misunderstandings.

A friend started a GoFundMe page that

## In case of emergency

Emergency contact information provided by Yongsan Garrison, which is now considered a TRICARE remote site. Nearby military medical care is available at the K-16 base near Yongsan, Camp Casey, Osan Air Base and Camp Humphreys.

**Cellphone number for Yongsan Fire Department:** 0503-323-9111

**DSN:** 911

**Local emergency number:** 119

The Brian Allgood Army Community Hospital at Humphreys also has an app that provides emergency numbers, information about South Korean hospitals and other information.

has raised more than \$9,000 to help the Allen family with expenses.

"We're overwhelmed with the amount of help that we're getting with this financial burden that was thrown on us at the last minute," his father said.

Gregory Allen was a child and youth program assistant at the child care facility on Yongsan, a sprawling Army base that is closing.

He had been connected to the base since his own childhood, having graduated from the now-defunct Seoul American High School while his father was stationed on Yongsan.

The family returned to the United States in 2014, but the younger Allen returned to South Korea to work at the Child Development Center in 2016.

"Greg was a big guy and he did a lot of weightlifting and things like that, but he was so gentle with the children," said facility director Tamar Taylor. "Somehow he could gather all the children around and they would just come to him. Even the parents say that he was one of the best caregivers and teachers that they had."

Gregory Allen was in South Korea under the status of forces agreement that governs the relationship between South Korea and U.S. forces, dependents and civilian employees stationed there.

But, his father said, he was a nonappropriated fund employee and didn't enjoy the same benefits as soldiers.

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## Tokyo: No evidence US caused groundwater contamination

By **SETH ROBSON**  
AND **HANA KUSUMOTO**  
*Stars and Stripes*

YOKOTA AIR BASE, Japan — Contaminated groundwater was detected near the home of U.S. Forces Japan in western Tokyo, but officials found no evidence the pollutants came from inside the base, a Tokyo Metropolitan Government official said Jan. 8.

Perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) and perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) — synthetic chemicals found in firefighting foam and other products — were detected in two wells near the base during a survey from December 2018 to January 2019, said Aya Kono, an official with the Tokyo Metropolitan Government's Bureau of

Social Welfare and Public Health.

The contamination was about 19 times the level set by a U.S. drinking water health advisory, the Asahi newspaper reported Monday. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency recommends limiting the combined presence of PFOS and PFOA in water to 70 parts per trillion, according to a factsheet on the agency's website.

Surveyors checked water for PFOS and PFOA at 61 sites in western Tokyo, including spots near Yokota in the cities of Fussa, Tachikawa, Akishima and Musashimurayama, after reports that firefighting foam had leaked on the base between 2010 and 2017, Kono said.

However, she said determining the origin of the pollution is difficult since those

compounds are widely used and underground water flows are complex.

The wells where the chemicals were detected do not supply drinking water, she added.

"We couldn't draw a conclusion that it was or was not caused by Yokota Air Base," Kono said, noting that pollution was also detected in six other places that were not close to the base.

Tokyo officials hope to receive more details from the base to be able to determine the pollution source, said the metropolitan government's director of military facilities relations, Jun Sakurai.

U.S. forces in Japan haven't used aqueous firefighting foam in training since 2016, said 374th Airlift Wing spokeswoman Kaori Matsukasa.

The chemicals found in the wells have been used for years in a variety of products such as carpets, clothing and paper packaging for food and cookware to make them oil- and water-repellent, she added.

"U.S. Forces rigorously manage the stored firefighting foam within U.S. facilities and areas, including Yokota Air Base," she said.

U.S. officials on Okinawa reported "minimal to no impact" on the environment from the release of firefighting foam at Marine Corps Air Station Futenma when auxiliary power in an aircraft hangar was inadvertently switched on Dec. 5.

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## MILITARY

# 3 Silver Stars among medals for Green Berets

BY CHAD GARLAND  
*Stars and Stripes*

Dozens of Green Berets received valor awards, including three Silver Star medals, in a ceremony recently meant to highlight the bravery and dedication that members of 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne) showed during a recent Afghanistan deployment.

In addition to the trio of Silver Stars — the military's third-highest personal award for combat bravery — officials also presented seven Bronze Stars with V device for valor and 17 Army Commendation medals with V device for valor. The 27 valor awards were presented during a Jan. 9 ceremony at Eglin Air Force Base, Fla., officials said.

"This is a reminder that even in the modern age, warfare is still about courage under fire," said Col. Steven M. Marks, deputy commander of 1st Special Forces Command (Airborne), in a 7th Group statement. Marks presented the medals at Eglin's Liberty Chapel.

The unit's soldiers also earned 21 Purple Hearts during the combat zone deployment, a 1st Special Forces Command (Airborne) spokesman told Stars and Stripes.

The decorations were awarded to the soldiers of 7th Group's 2nd Battalion for actions during a six-month deployment in late 2018.

The Bronze Star is for acts of heroism of a lesser degree than the Silver Star, which is awarded for acts of gallantry of a higher degree than those meriting any other U.S. combat decoration except the Medal of Honor or service crosses. The Army Commendation medal ranks below the Bronze Star.

Four Green Berets who had earned additional valor awards — two Bronze Stars and two Army Commendation medals — were absent. Twenty-six soldiers earned valor awards, with five of them earning two valor awards



Two valor awards are pinned to the uniform of a soldier during a ceremony.

and six earning both an award for valor and the Purple Heart for being wounded in action.

"The valor we are recognizing today happened at the most tactical level — face to face fighting, close quarters combat, hand grenade-range," Marks said.

The 7th Group statement did not provide details of the specific acts that were recognized, which occurred during a war that has largely faded from public view during which most offensive operations are carried out by shadowy commando units.

A relative few U.S. troops, typically special operations forces, have gone into combat or served on the front lines in Afghanistan since 2014, often as part of unilateral or joint operations with their Afghan counterparts during separate U.S. counterterrorism mission.

During 2nd Battalion's deployment from September 2018 to February 2019, some 14,000 U.S. troops were deployed to the country, most as part of a NATO mission training, advising and assisting Afghan security forces for battling a Taliban insurgency against the Kabul government.

The Special Forces battalion was tasked with operations to help shore up stability during parliamentary elections and try to gain momentum as part of an effort to bring the Taliban to the negotiating table, the statement



PHOTOS BY JOSE VARGAS/U.S. Army

Deputy Commander Col. Steven M. Marks salutes a 2nd Battalion, 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne) soldier Jan. 9, during a ceremony at the chapel on Eglin Air Force Base, Fla., after presenting him a medal for valorous acts during the battalion's recent deployment to Afghanistan.



Soldiers stand at an awards inside the chapel at Florida's Eglin Air Force Base.

said.

A nearly yearlong series U.S.-Taliban peace talks began in the final month of the battalion's deployment. In the time since, the

on-again, off-again discussions have progressed further than previous attempts to negotiate a peaceful resolution to America's longest war, now in its 19th year.

Shortly before the battalion deployed, Taliban militants stormed the capital of Ghazni province, forcing Afghan and U.S. special operations troops, aided by coalition air support, to rush in to repel the attack. Nine Americans were medically evacuated from that battle, Time Magazine reported.

However, 2nd Battalion's efforts helped prevent enemy forces from seriously threatening or capturing any provincial capital during its deployment, 7th Group's statement said.

Battalion commander Lt. Col. Edward, J. Sanford also recognized the sacrifice of the soldiers' families at the ceremony, the statement said.

The unit was supported by elements from 3rd Special Forces Group (Airborne) and the Fort Campbell, Ky.-based 717th Ordnance Company.

The valor medals underscore the importance of "having the mental sharpness to operate with expertise in the worst of times," Marks said. "And taking action to protect your brother, your team and your partners."

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HONDA	RIDGELINE	2013	50170	5FPYK1F28DB017753	BLUE	\$17,995	AUTOMATIC
TOYOTA	SIENNA	2015	47516	5TDKK3DC2FS681552	BLUE	\$15,995	AUTOMATIC
FORD	EXPLORER SPORT TRAC	2010	39445	1FMEU2DE2AUA21739	BLACK	\$14,995	AUTOMATIC
LEXUS	LS 460 L	2010	49696	JTHGL1EF8A5039561	RED	\$14,995	AUTOMATIC
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TOYOTA	RAV4	2015	41569	JTMZFREV2FJ035057	BLACK	\$13,495	AUTOMATIC
NISSAN	XTERRA	2014	33217	5N1AN0NU7EN804531	SILVER	\$13,495	AUTOMATIC
NISSAN	FRONTIER KING CAB	2014	55949	1N6BDOCT3EN706826	BLACK	\$12,995	AUTOMATIC
INFINITI	FX35	2009	61789	JNRAS18W59M151306	COPPER	\$12,995	AUTOMATIC
DODGE	RAM 1500 QUAD CAB	2010	53014	1D7RB1GK4AS196440	SILVER	\$11,995	AUTOMATIC
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BMW	X5	2007	55000	5UXFE43587LY82391	BLACK	\$10,995	AUTOMATIC
HYUNDAI	ELANTRA	2015	53615	KMHDH4AE4FU371784	BLUE	\$9,995	AUTOMATIC
HYUNDAI	ELANTRA	2014	72269	KMHD35LH5EU164198	RED	\$9,995	AUTOMATIC
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DODGE	DAKOTA CREW CAB	2008	70363	1D7HE28K58S580546	SILVER	\$8,995	AUTOMATIC
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DODGE	DURANGO	2008	138903	1D8HD38K38F109559	RED	\$6,495	AUTOMATIC
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CADILLAC	DEVILLE	1994	100000+	1G6KD52BXRU215824	WHITE	\$495	AUTOMATIC

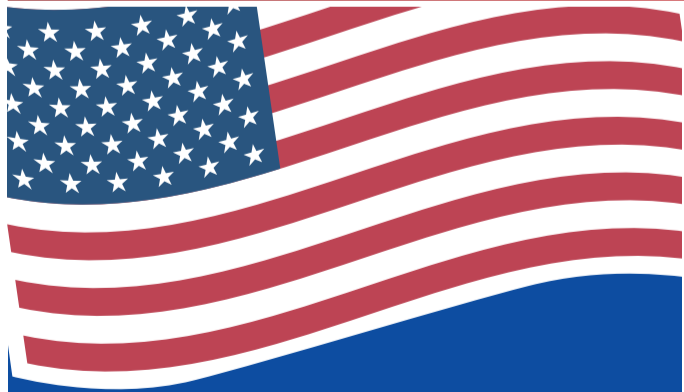
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