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Dededo

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Tanguisson Beach File photo

Walk through history at Guam Museum

GUAM VISITORS BUREAU

Take a walk through Guam history by visiting the permanent exhibit at the Senator Antonio M. Palomo Guam Museum and Chamorro Educational Facility in Hagåtña. This 6,200 square foot gallery, located on the second floor of the Guam Museum, is the first of its kind on the island, featuring interactive, state-of-the-art technology and the most complete display of Guam's history and culture in the Chamorro language to date.

The exhibit is designed to educate and entertain audiences of varying ages, backgrounds, and languages. Over 300 curated artifacts, thousands of images, multiple audios, and short films have been carefully pieced together in seven different galleries to guide visitors through the historical, Chamorro narrative of Guam. Descriptive panels are written in English and Chamorro and are accompanied by QR codes that translate the text into

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Stupid human tricks major pet peeve

The Meat and Potatoes of Life

Lisa Smith Molinari



Our family's third Labrador retriever, a goofy guy named Gilligan, turned 1 year old last week. Suddenly, everyone's a dog expert, hell-bent on enriching me with their wealth of canine knowledge. People must see me struggling with rambunctious Gilly, and want to assert dominance, nipping, bossing and taking control.

Thankfully, no one has humped my leg yet.

Just last week, Gilly and I joined a new walking group outside the local recreation center. The congregating women noticed Gilly sniffing the bushes and raised their voices to an excited pitch. Gilly strained at his harness, wanting to flop his big paws onto the women's expensive coats, deposit yellow hairs all over their Lululemon pants and lick them right in the mouth.

"Gilly! Back!" I repeatedly tried to make him sit.

"Isn't he sweet!" they squealed, while Gilly wriggled to break free.

"He's turning 1, and he's a handful," I said, apologetically.

"Oh, but he's a puppy! You just need to be consistent," they advised.

I smiled and nodded my head with brows raised as if to say, "You're so wise," when my inner voice retorted, "Thanks for the expert advice, Captain Obvious."

"He'll go to Island Canine Academy for behavior training in a couple months," I explained. "Gilly's off to college!" I joked. "We've promised him a tiny lava lamp and a 'Lassie' poster for his crate at the Academy, isn't that right, buddy?"

No one laughed.

A short lady with a red hat that made her look like a gnome told me about her Westie named Charlie. "I trained him using treats. You should try that," Gnome said. My inner voice dripped sarcasm, "Eureka, Einstein! Treats to train dogs? Who knew! Thank you from the bottom of my ignoramus heart!"

Our walking group leader arrived, and we began the planned four-mile trek. The gaggle of women naturally settled into packs of two or three, while Gilly tugged, stopped, sniffed and yanked along with me.

I was between two packs when I heard, "Hey!" A thin woman wearing a hat with a humongous mauve pom-pom trotted to catch up with me, blurring breathlessly, "Get a gentle leader. It's the only thing that works for pulling dogs." I've been told by countless people that this or that collar/leash/harness is the only one that works. Prong, electric,

slip, martingale, harness — everyone and their brother's cousin's mother-in-law seemed to have an opinion for me. I tried to tell Pom-pom about my experiences with gentle leaders, but she just kept yammering.

POM-POM: "The gentle leader goes around the dog's—"

ME: "Yes, I know how it—"

POM-POM: "—snout, and it keeps them from—"

ME: "—works, because I used gentle leaders for our first—"

POM-POM: "—pulling. You need to get one, seriously."

ME: "—dog to stop his pulling."

Mercifully, Gilly dragged me toward a fat squirrel ahead, leaving Pom-pom behind. Another woman in an ice-blue beanie saw Gilly tugging me and chirped, "My sister has Golden retrievers, and she swears, 'If you can teach dogs to retrieve balls, you can teach them anything.'" My inner voice couldn't stay silent any longer.

"Your sister says that teaching a RETRIEVER to RETRIEVE is the key to dog training? She's a real genius, that one," I sassed Beanie.

Gilly stopped to sniff grass, and I heard Gnome call out, "Do you brush Gilligan's teeth?"

"Well, yes, but he's afraid of the —" I began, but like Pom-pom, Gnome's questions were merely rhetorical.

GNOME: "We brush Charlie's teeth every night, before he—"

ME: "—brush, but he likes the Peanut Butter dog toothpaste, so I—"

GNOME: "—goes to bed and says his prayers, and—"

ME: "—have to use a cloth next time."

GNOME: "—the vet says Charlie's teeth are perfect."


My inner voice quipped, "Who died and made you Cesar Millan?"

As we approached the rec center at the end of our trek, Gilly stopped abruptly, circled three times, then crouched to make "a deposit" on the grass in front of the bank. The women walked on, without noticing that I'd fallen behind the pack.

"Forget behavior school; I'll train you myself," I announced to Gilly while he concentrated. "Don't worry," I assured him, "we'll still get you that lava lamp."

Read more of Lisa Smith Molinari's columns at: themeatandpotatoesoflife.com and in Lisa's book, *The Meat and Potatoes of Life*: My True Lit Com

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‘Keeping people and our waters safe’

BY CWO SARA MUIR,
U.S. COAST GUARD FORCES MICRONESIA

SANTA RITA — In operations ensuring the safety and security of Guam’s maritime borders, U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam personnel successfully conducted security boarding on cruise ships MS Zuiderdam upon its arrival on Feb. 18, and MS Artania on Feb. 25.

These operations underscore the commitment of the U.S. Coast Guard to safeguarding the Port of Guam and the larger region’s maritime domain.

“The Sector Boarding Team’s operations are integral to our mission of protecting the maritime gateways to Guam and the surrounding region,” said Lt. Chelsea Garcia, the lead boarding officer for the evolution. “By checking a ship’s paperwork, getting to know the crew, and making sure all the right security steps are in place—and by teaming up with global efforts like the International Port Security Program—the SBT makes sure ships are following the strictest safety rules. It’s all about keeping the people and our waters safe while staying connected with the world.”

The SBT is crucial in maintaining maritime safety and security, especially at ports like Guam. Their actions, which include thorough inspections and compliance checks against international



In an operation ensuring the safety and security of Guam’s maritime borders, U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam Sector Boarding Team personnel prepare to conduct a security boarding on the MS Zuiderdam, a cruise ship operated by Holland America Line, on its arrival Feb. 18. Photo by Lt. j.g Whip Blacklaw, U.S. Coast Guard

standards such as the International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code, are designed to ensure that commercial vessels do not pose a threat to the port or national security.

The boarding of the MS Zuiderdam and the MS Artania represents the Coast Guard’s proactive approach to maritime security,

emphasizing the importance of vigilance and enforcement in maintaining a safe maritime environment. This operation also serves as a reminder of the strategic role Guam plays in the Pacific, acting as a hub for tourism and international maritime traffic.

As the second and third cruise ships respectively to visit Guam

in 2024, other federal and local authorities met their arrival with a traditional dockside welcome. They conducted official activities to allow passengers and crew to go ashore and the cruise ship team to conduct other necessary in-port business.

“The U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam team

remains dedicated to ensuring the safety and security of all maritime activities in its area of responsibility, contributing significantly to the region’s economic well-being and the security of our region,” said Capt. Nick Simmons, commander of U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam.

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Red Devils and Red Horses



STORY AND PHOTOS BY STAFF SGT. JOVAN BANKS,
8TH FIGHTER WING

KUNSAN AIR BASE – The 8th Civil Engineer Squadron participated in a 554th Red Horse Squadron-led rapid airfield damage repair training exercise at Kunsan Air Base Republic of Korea, Feb. 13, 2024. Airmen trained on core competencies that could be applied during contingency operations.

The 544th RHS traveled to Kunsan from Andersen Air Force Base, Guam to conduct the training exercise to allow Kunsan Airmen an opportunity to participate in training that is rarely given on the Korean Peninsula.

During the training, Red Horse airmen taught the Red Devils new procedures in rapid airfield damage repair, reverse osmosis water purification unit training, crash marking and emergency management tactics

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The crew of a Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron 25 take care of a 26-year-old Filipino mariner following a rescue from his vessel 100 nautical miles offshore March 2. Photos courtesy of U.S. Navy

Coast Guard, HSC-25 team up for rescue at sea

BY CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER SARA MUIR,
U.S. COAST GUARD FORCES MICRONESIA

SANTA RITA — In a display of interagency cooperation, a commercial mariner in urgent need of medical care was safely evacuated from his vessel 100 nautical miles offshore to Guam on March 2, 2024, thanks to the actions of the U.S. Coast Guard and the U.S. Navy's Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron 25 (HSC-25).

“Our collective efforts today, closely following another recent rescue, underscore our enduring commitment to mariner safety. The partnership between the U.S. Coast Guard, HSC-25, and local agencies like Guam Fire Rescue is pivotal in ensuring the well-being of those at sea,” said Cmdr. Ryan Crose, the case’s search and rescue mission coordinator at U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam. “Search and rescue is a priority mission for us, covering an expansive Search and Rescue Region of 1.9 million square miles. The only way to effectively cover such a vast area is through robust partnerships.”

Responders initiated the operation after a 26-year-old Filipino mariner aboard the 850-foot Liberian-flagged container ship Carmell 1, initially located 400 nautical miles northwest of Guam, exhibited severe abdominal issues. The U.S. Coast Guard's Joint



Coast Guard and HSC-25 worked together to rescue a mariner in urgent need of medical care.

Rescue Sub-Center in Guam was alerted on the afternoon of March 1 while the ship was en route to Vietnam. HSC-25 mobilized to assist following a recommendation for medical evacuation from the U.S. Coast Guard's duty flight surgeon in Alameda, California, and concurrence from HSC-25's flight surgeon in Guam.

An MH-60S Knighthawk helicopter crew from HSC-25 reached the Carmell 1 on the morning of March 2. The mariner was then airlifted from the ship in 17 mph winds and 10-foot seas and delivered to the capable hands of emergency medical responders from Guam Fire Rescue at Naval Hospital Guam. They further transported him to Guam Memorial Hospital, where he was in stable condition.

"The frequency of these medical

evacuations and search and rescue missions reiterates the unique capability and readiness of HSC-25. We are the sole maritime hoist-capable emergency aviation resource in this area, and our team's proficiency and commitment were once again proven today. It's our honor to serve the people of Guam and ensure the safety of mariners in these waters," said Cmdr. Neil Toohey, commanding officer of HSC-25.

The successful medical evacuation follows closely after a similar rescue operation on Feb. 9, where responders ensured a 37-year-old Filipino mariner aboard the 1,202-foot German-flagged container ship Antwerpen Express safely reached a higher level of medical care after exhibiting symptoms indicative of a stroke.

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GET TO KNOW GUAM

A VILLAGE PROFILE COURTESY OF GUAMPEDIA

Editor's Note: The U.S. territory of Guam is comprised of 19 villages, many with their own distinct character, history and points of interest. Stripes Guam and Guampedia have joined forces to present this weekly feature on each of them in the hopes that it will help our readers get out – and get to know – our gracious hosts. To learn more about Guam's people, history, culture and places, visit: guampedia.com

Dededo (Dededu)

.....Where things happen.....



A woman and her baby stand at the grave sites of U.S. military war dogs. In Dededo there is a cemetery that serves as the final resting place for at least 25 war dogs used during WWII to explore caves, detect mines and booby traps. Photo by National Park Services

BY MICHAEL R. CLEMENT, JR. AND
TANYA M. CHAMPACO MENDIOLA,
GUAMPEDIA

The origin of the village name Dededo, *Dedidu* in Chamorro, may come from the practice of measuring using fingers. The Spanish word for finger is “*dedo*.” It can be theorized that someone measured out the original village this way. Another possibility is that the word “*dededo*” is a version of the word “*dedeggo*,” which means “heel of the foot,” or that it comes from the word “*deggo*” which means to “walk on tiptoes.”

Village history

The history of Dededo is complicated, due to the fact that the boundaries of the village have changed considerably during the 20th century. During the Early American period, the northern half of present-day Dededo was the village of Machanao. Most of Machanao became Andersen Air Force Base and Naval Communications

Station. Now Machanao is no longer a village, but a section of Dededo. The pre-war village of Dededo extended further south to include what are now the villages of Tamuning-Tumon-Harmon, while the village center of old Dededo was located in present day Harmon between the two-story McDonald's and the San Miguel Brewery building.

Dededo began in the early 20th century as an area of widely spread ranches centered in what is now the Harmon Industrial Park. Among the agricultural products of the area were copra, timber, fruits, vegetables, and cattle. The village center, which included a Padre San Vitores School (opened in 1929) and Santa Barbara Church, was located in the vicinity of the present-day Harmon McDonald's Restaurant. Fishing also played an important role in the life of many Dededo residents, since the village was only a short bull cart or horseback ride from Tumon Bay. There were also two stores that served the community where residents could exchange farm produce, especially copra, for various goods. By 1941, at the outbreak of World War II, 1,529 people lived in Dededo and the surrounding ranch areas of Tumon and Tamuning.

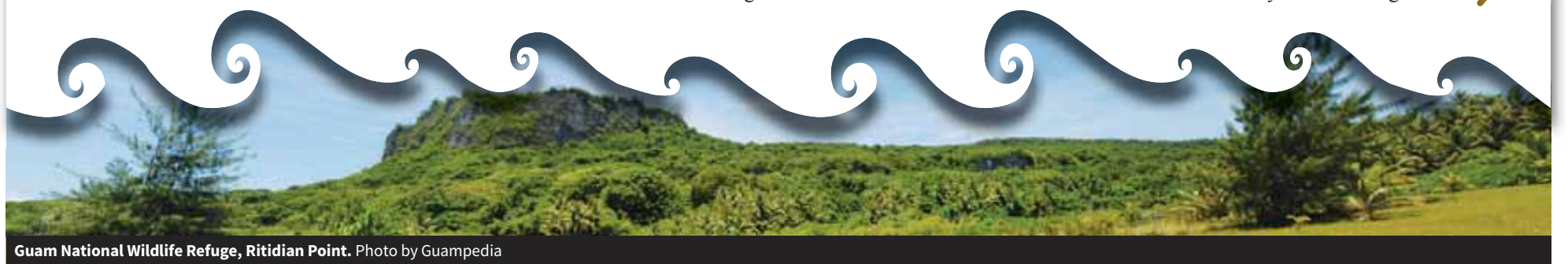


Surprisingly, the village of Dededo made it through World War II intact. Nevertheless, Dededo villagers soon learned that the village was to be bulldozed anyway for the construction of Harmon Field, an Air Force air field. In 1946, villagers began to move to the site of the new Dededo village about two and a half miles to the north in an area previously known as Ligan. The following year, the new Santa Barbara Church was built at the new Dededo village.

Throughout the 1950s, Dededo remained a tight-knit community — although people began to move away from agriculture, as employment became available at the surrounding military installations of the Naval Communications Station, Harmon Air Base, Naval Air Station, and Andersen Air Force Base. It was also during these years that Tagalog and Ilocano laborers were being housed at Camp Marbo, directly to the east of Dededo village. Some of these men went on to settle permanently in Dededo when their contracts expired.

Big changes came to Dededo again in November of 1962 and 1963 when typhoons Karen and Olive destroyed most houses in the village. The resulting federal disaster aid resulted in a economic revival and considerable immigration of workers to fill needs of the construction industry. The first major housing project in Dededo was the all-concrete 1,500 house Kaiser subdivision on Y Sengsong Street in the mid-1960s.

The next project completed in 1970 was the 1,500-unit Ligan Terrace subdivision. These modern houses attracted CHamorus from villages throughout the island as well as recently arrived Filipino families to settle permanently in Dededo. Since that time each decade has brought new housing subdivisions which are rapidly enclosing former areas of ranches and dense jungle, and this diverse community continues to grow. ↗





Points of interest



Santa Barbara School, Dededo village's only Catholic school, sits along the village square across from the public library, mayor's office, community center and church.
Photo by Tanya M.C. Mendiola, Guampedia

Institutions

Religious institutions

There are several religious organizations and institutions in the village including Santa Barbara Catholic Church, St. Andrew's Catholic Church (Korean), St. Paul's Assembly of God, Pacific Revival Center, Abundant Life Church, Guam First Church of the Nazarene, Iglesia Ni Cristo, Family Baptist Church, Baha'i Faith, and Korean Seventh-day Adventists.

Schools

Dededo has several public and private schools to accommodate the growing number of residents of the island's most populous village including Guam Public School System institutions: Astumbo Elementary School, Finegayan Elementary School, Juan M. Guerrero Elementary School, Maria A. Ulloa Elementary School, Wettengel Elementary School and Vicente S.A. Benavente Middle School; an Archdiocese of Guam school: Santa Barbara Catholic School; and two private Christian schools: St. Paul's Christian School and Pacific Christian Academy.

Over the past decade, several new Guam Department of Education schools have also been built in Dededo: Liguana Elementary School, Astumbo Middle School, and Okkodo High School.

Historical

Guam National Wildlife Refuge, Ritidian Point

The refuge covers 771 acres – 371 acres of coral reefs and 400 acres of land – owned by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The refuge also includes 22,456 acres of federally-possessed Guam lands in U.S. Air Force and Navy installations that are classified as refuge "overlay." It was established in 1993 and receives thousands of visitors annually.

The Ritidian Unit of Guam Refuge has a visitors center with an interactive display of Guam's birds, several of which are extinct because of the devastation caused by the brown tree snake, an introduced species. Groups can arrange for guided tours to get a taste of Guam's ancient past. The area was the site of an ancient Guam village and also has several coconut groves remaining from when the area was used during the copra trade. The area is also a popular spot for local families who want to have a weekend picnic or barbecue along the nearly pristine beach and its shores. It is also a favorite spot for fishermen as the area teems with marine life.

War Dog Cemetery

This cemetery is the gravesite for trained military dogs who participated in combat during World War II. The

This village at a glance

- **Population:** According to the 2010 US Census, Dededo has a population of 44,943.
- **Village officials:** Melissa B. Savares, Mayor, 2005-Present; Scott D. Duenas, Mayor, 2001-2005; Jose A. Rivera, Commissioner/Mayor, 1989-2001; Patricia S. Quinata, Commissioner, 1985-1989; Martin C. Benavente, Commissioner, 1981-1985; Jose M. Garrido, Commissioner, 1977-1981; Prospero C. Zamora, Commissioner, 1976-1977; Vicente S.A. Benavente, Commissioner, 1952-1976; Ramon S. San Agustin, Commissioner, 1944-1951; Hector Sgambelluri, Commissioner, 1941-1944; Juan Pangelinan, Commissioner, 1940-1941; Ignacio A. Santos, Commissioner, 1934-1940; Jose F. Lujan, Commissioner, 1932-1934; Peter John S. Benavente, Vice Mayor, 2017-Present; Andrew A. Benavente, Vice Mayor, 2005-2016; Melissa B. Savares, Vice Mayor, 2001-2005; Doris S. Palacios, Assistant Commissioner/Vice Mayor, 1989-2001; Patricia S. Quinata, Assistant Commissioner, 1981-1985; Martin C. Benavente, Assistant Commissioner, 1978-1981; Erwin F. Flauta, Assistant Commissioner, 1977-1978; Prospero C. Zamora, Assistant Commissioner, 1973-1976; Teresita B. Umagat, Assistant Commissioner, 1971-1974; Manuel M. Lujan, Assistant Commissioner, 1934-1941; Ignacio A. Santos, Assistant Commissioner, 1918-1934 (Courtesy of Konsehelon Mahot Guahan/the Mayor's Council of Guam.)
- **Village description:** Dededo is Guam's second largest and most populous village, encompassing thirty square miles of northwestern Guam. Most of Dededo is located on Guam's limestone plateau and sits above the Northern Aquifer, an important fresh water resource for the island as it provides for about 80 percent of Guam's drinking water. The main sections of this northern village lie on either side of Route 1, officially known as Marine Corps Drive, Guam's main thoroughfare. From a small pre-war farming community, Dededo has become a major commercial and residential center. The village is home to the Micronesia Mall, the largest shopping mall in the region, located at the corner of Route 1 and Route 16 (Army Corps Drive). Along Route 16, there are several small stores and other businesses that cater to the area's Filipino residents. Also along this strip is a two-

story McDonald's restaurant, and the gated Iglesia Ni Cristo Church. Along Fatima Road, off the highway, there are several vegetable stands selling local crop products.

Past the mall, going north there are several housing developments on either side of Route 1 built in the mid-1960s and throughout the 1970s. The cement homes are built close together and were all of the same design. Over the years, renovations were made to the original square design of several of the residences. Some homes expanded vertically while others grew horizontally utilizing the majority of space of the mostly quarter-acre property lots.

Near the Santa Barbara Catholic Church area is the Dededo Skate Park, a newer community installment with several obstacles, including cement ramps, hand rails, steps, and a bowl for skaters. The concrete skate park sits on land it shares with Lencho Park. The whole area fronts the highly-commuted Route 1.

Behind the park is the area known as "Dededo Village." It is the village square, where the mayor's office, community center, public library and Santa Barbara Catholic Church and school are located. This is not the original center of the village, which prior to World War II was located along today's Route 16, but after the war several Dededo residents relocated further north after the US military used their land to build an airfield, in present-day Harmon Industrial Park. Other families throughout the island also moved into Dededo after the war.

Past this area is the section of Kaiser, another housing development, situated along either side of Ysengsong Road. This area was built after the 1962 devastation of Typhoon Karen as a housing area for displaced residents. Further into Ysengsong are several other sections and newer housing developments.

There are several schools throughout the village, a soccer field, a waste transfer station, and a golf course. The village has two beaches off its shores. One is Tanguisson Beach, with its beautiful rock formations, in a secluded area located at the bottom of a narrow winding road. There one will find the beach park that shares its space with an island power plant. The other beach is in the area known as Ritidian. Most of this area has been declared a national wildlife refuge.



Shoppers walk through the Micronesia Mall center court. The mall is the largest in Micronesia and a major attraction for tourists and locals. Photo by Sheila Tyquingco, Guampedia

canine burial plots are marked with small headstones and a plaque.

Recreational

Coco Palm Resort

Coco Palm Resort, also known as Coco Palm Beach

Garden, is a privately owned resort located in a secluded area in Urunao. The area around the facilities is beautifully landscaped with tropical flowers and plants and because it is located along the beach, it gives guests a front-row seat of Guam's northwestern coastline.

Dededo Flea Market

The Dededo Flea Market has a new location, at the corner of Marine Corps Drive and West Santa Monica Avenue. On weekend mornings, the area is filled with canopies covering the variety of merchandise — from new to secondhand — as throngs of people crowd around in search of bargains.

Guam International Country Club

The Guam International Country Club is located just off Route 1, headed toward Yigo, and is an 18-hole golf course designed with the help of professional golfer Ayako Okamoto.

SEE GUAM ON PAGE 10

Did you know?

- **Traditional Chamorro place names:** Dededo's traditional Chamorro place names include: Liguana, Mogfog, Macheche, Finegayan, Ukudu, Isengsong, Gugagon, Ipaopao, Tanguisson, Hilaan, Haputo, Ague and Toguac. The place names of Machanao (pre-World War

II village) that are now part of Dededo village include Pugua, Mogua, Caiguat, Falcona, Urunao, Achae, Ritidian, Pajon, Alacunao, Tailalo and Machanao itself.

- **Village fiestas:** Dededo's Catholic residents celebrate two fiestas of patron saints: Santa Barbara's feast day is held during the first week of December and St. Andrew Kim feast day is on the first Saturday of July.

– Guampedia

GUAM: Lots of things to see and do

Points of interest



A skater takes advantage of the ramp at the Dededo Skate Park, a new addition (opened in 2007) to the recreational scene for the youth and adults alike. Photo by Tanya M.C. Mendiola, Guampedia

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

Dededo Skate Park

Built with the assistance of US Housing and Urban Development funds this skatepark measuring 11,000 square feet opened in November 2007. It has several obstacles including cement ramps, steps, hand rails, and a bowl for skaters to enjoy for free and off the streets.

Micronesia Mall and Theaters

Dededo is home to the Micronesia Mall, the largest shopping mall in Micronesia, located at the corner of Route 1 and Route 16 (Army Corps Drive).

The two-story mall boasts a department store, nearly fifty shops, an expo hall, a travel agency, the satellite area for the Guam Museum, hair salons, toy stores, movie theaters and about twenty eateries, fast food restaurants, a coffee shop, a specialty ice cream shop, a cookie shop next to a candy shop, an indoor amusement park and arcade, banks and a supermarket.

Sports facilities

Dededo is also the location of several sports-related facilities including the Guam Sports Complex, the Robbie Webber Soccer Field, and the Wettengel Rugby Field.

Starts Guam Golf Resort

The Starts Guam Gold Resort is located along Route 3A, NCS Guam. It has a 27-hole golf course and offers guests hotel amenities, a restaurant, a pool, restaurants and a spa.

Tanguisson Beach Park

The area of Tanguisson is located at the bottom of a cliff in Dededo. To get the beach area visitors will have to drive down a secluded narrow winding road. To the north, there are beautiful mushroom-shaped rock formations in the water. A popular hiking spot for locals and visitors is a fresh water sinkhole, called the Lost Pond, is located toward the northern end of the area. Nearby are the remnants of an ancient CHamoru village. Access to Lost Pond and the ancient CHamoru village is limited due to private property ownership, as of February 2019, according to Dededo Mayor Savares.



Santa Barbara Catholic Church towers in the middle of Dededo village. In 1947, the church was re-established in this area. Residents relocated the village center further north after a military airfield was built on land where they lived. Photo by Tanya M.C. Mendiola, Guampedia

See more of what Guam has to offer at:
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Arts and crafts at Gef Pa'go

GUAM VISITORS BUREAU

Staffed mainly by elder Chamorros who demonstrate traditional Chamorro arts, crafts, and cooking to visitors, Gef Pa'go Chamorro Cultural Village is modeled after a community from the 40s and 50s, when the Chamorro lifeways were more prevalently practiced. Gef Pa'go is maintained by the historic Inalahan Foundation in an effort to preserve local culture and pass down traditions to younger generations.

A visit to Gef Pa'go, located about halfway down the coastline of the southern Guamanian village Inarajan, will take you back to the time when ropes were handwoven from tree bark and hats and bowls were handmade from natural fibers.

Try your own weaving project

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■ **TEL:** 671-828-1671
■ **EMAIL:** info@gefpa'goguam.org

or make a batch of delectable coconut candy. Enjoy the smiles of the local schoolchildren who also flock to Gef Pa'go to reconnect with the history of their island's first people. However you choose to enjoy one-of-a-kind Gef Pa'go, the friendly historic preservationists here are eager to teach you and all who come about the "Chamorro spirit."

Near the entrance stands a dramatic statue of Chief Gadao, a powerful and well-respected leader who according to legend challenged a rival chief in a contest of strength. The two men climbed into a single canoe and began rowing furiously in opposite directions, breaking it in half.

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MUSEUM: Step back in time

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Japanese, Mandarin Chinese, and Korean. In Galleries 1, 2 and 3, the journey through time begins in the Queuing Room. Beyond the floor-to-ceiling mural of “Fo’na Creating the People of Guam”, is a gallery filled with local artwork, in various mediums, depicting notable eras from Guam’s history, culture, and society. A video of Governor Eddie Calvo greets visitors as they make their way through the artwork toward the Orientation Theater. The short film shown in the mini theater transports you instantly into ancient Chamorro past,

beginning with an animated creation story of Guam, and then transitions to live action, to show how the seafaring Chamorros came to settle on the island. Once the film ends, the doors to the second gallery open into an immersive exhibit of Guam’s ecosystem and how the earliest settlers interacted with it over time. Some of Guam’s oldest artifacts, including sling-stones, pottery sherds, and pounding stones are displayed. Gallery two transitions seamlessly into gallery three, which introduces the ancient Chamorro way of life with reproductions of the sakman (seafaring outrigger canoe), guma higai (pole-and-thatch

hut) and guma latte (latte house). In Galleries 4 through 7, Chamorro life on Guam takes its most striking turn with the arrival of the Spanish and then the Americans in the fourth gallery. Flashing timelines, an animated short film, paintings, artifacts, touch screens, and corresponding audio fill the space, detailing the start of modernism and Western influence on Chamorro culture and society. Gallery five introduces the devastation of World War II with artifacts, pictures, sets and sound effects, starting with the Japanese Occupation and finishing with the American Liberation of the island. In gallery six, sound booths

with the voices of war survivors tell personal and unforgettable stories of the Occupation and Liberation. This is also where a display of the effects of Sgt. Shoichi Yokoi, a Japanese soldier who hid in the jungle for 28 years after the war, can be viewed. Beginning in the sixth and ending in the seventh galleries, comes the commentary, artifacts, and census stations of postwar Guam’s economic, political and architectural reconstruction and population transition. Finally, a large, interactive touch screen with more information about Guam, and a changing gallery of locally-crafted 2D and 3D artwork conclude the exhibit.





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GUAM VISITORS BUREAU

Hafa Adai and welcome to the marine world of Guam, USA. Guam has the richest coral reef marine environment of any United States territory or state. Thriving with more than 1,000 fish species and over 400 kinds of corals and a diverse set of marine invertebrates. In short, Guam has what divers want through its offering of superb Pacific coral reef biodiversity.

But the submerged natural marvels are complimented by much more. Guam also has a rich historic past that includes shipwrecks and submerged remnants from the wars of WWII and WWI. There are even sites from the far past of the early trading days of Spain's gold-bearing Manila Galleons.

Guam's beautiful topside landscape extends into the sea. Volcanic in the south and limestone forest in the north, this unique geologic combination gives divers steep, dramatic drop-offs, coral gardens, sloping reefs and Cocos Island, a barrier reef island in the south.

The coastal areas are pocked with protected bays and coves that are great for snorkelers. Guam now has a series of marine preserves that can be easily accessed from shore for easy snorkeling.

The north provides limestone caves and swim-throughs. And, Guam's water is consistently warm and clear. Divers, snorkelers and beach lovers can enjoy Guam's marine world throughout the year.

Safe & Fun

Guam is by far one of the safest dive destinations in the world in terms of both security and health. As an American Territory, it has U.S. Coast Guard and Navy patrolled waters. Dive boats are all certified through the U.S. Coast Guard and local Guam agencies. All boats are required to carry oxygen and safety equipment. Guam has Navy and civilian recompression chambers for treatment of any possible diving accident.

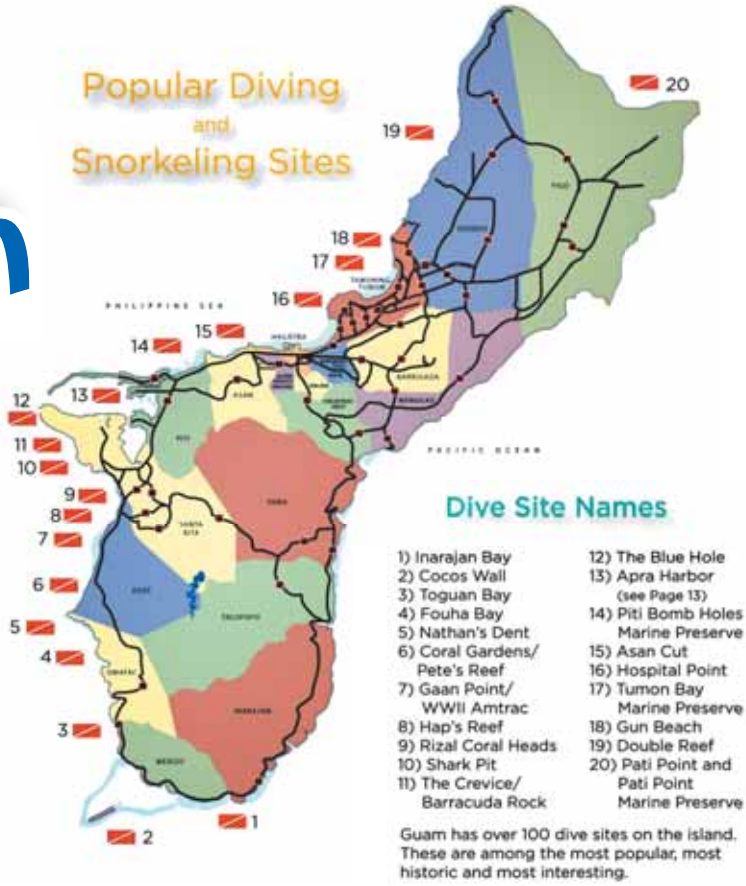
High standards are followed by the dive shops to ensure Guam retains its reputation as a safe, fun destination for those who want to enjoy the amazing sea.

Practicalities

Guam waters are 82-86F (28- 30C) degrees year 'round with normally excellent visibility. A lycra skin will suit most divers. Local divers use 1.5 – 2 mil wetsuits and only the acclimatized use 3 mil. Above water temperatures never get below 74F (at night) and never get above 90F (daytime).

Instruction: Guam also offers all levels of instruction from beginning open-water and one-day resort experience through advanced instructor training.

Technical diving is also taught on Guam with reef and wreck venues for in-water training on scuba and rebreather. PADI is the major certifying agency here.



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Toh-Lee

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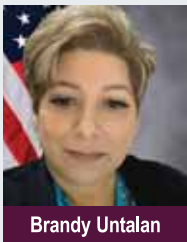
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Boonie Stomps Guam

INFORMATION PROVIDED BY
GUAM BOONIE STOMPERS



Mt. Jumullong-Manglo Loop

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:
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Crossword

by Margie E. Burke

ACROSS

1 "___ we forget"

5 Salon service, briefly

9 Water park feature

14 Initial chip

15 Fever with chills

16 Former Russian leader

17 Tech support caller

18 Not too bright

20 Palace figures

22 Intrepid

23 Macho dude

24 Luxury watchmaker

25 Of the Vatican

27 Storage medium

30 West African country

33 De Niro's "Goodfellas" co-star

36 Gardner of film

37 Payback seeker

39 Piece keeper?

41 Faddish disk of the '90s

42 Forest worker

44 Composes

45 Credit card motion

47 Washing machine cycle

49 Defame

52 Macaroni shape

56 Religious offering

58 Sandwich meat

59 Whip

61 Kind of tea

62 Baby-to-be

63 Landfill emanation

64 NASA scrub

65 Word with tooth or heart

66 Part of A.P.R.

67 Chew like a squirrel

DOWN

1 Bust a gut

2 Occur as a result

3 Pressing need?

4 Small turtle

5 Mountain route

6 Something that's bruisable

7 Mark who plays the Hulk

8 Taxi feature

9 Like some errors

10 Good as new

11 Review unfairly

12 No-win situations?

13 Stopping points

19 Stetson, e.g.

21 Paternity identifier

24 Terrier type

26 Court statement

28 Place to broil

29 Big name in candy

30 Navigator's aids

31 State confidently

32 Lay down the law?

34 "A League of ___ Own"

35 Conflicted

38 Part of G.O.A.T.

40 Grade school subject

43 1980s invasion site

46 Deadly epidemic

48 Deep blue

50 Zippo

51 Great sadness

53 Breakfast strip

54 Last Greek letter

55 Lehar operetta "The Merry ___"

56 Rubs out

57 "Black ___" (2021 Marvel movie)

58 Very dry

60 Day care candidate

Answers to Previous Crossword:

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

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Stripes Sports Trivia

SAY MY NAME! In a 2004 ALCS filled with many memorable moments, mine almost gets lost among "the bloody sock" and the fact that my Red Sox team became the first to win a series after trailing three games to none. After Kevin Millar drew a walk from Mariano Rivera, I pinch ran for him and soon pulled off what some now refer to as "the steal." Who am I?

Answer

Dave Roberts

SUDOKU

Difficulty: Medium

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

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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:

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

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GUAM EDITION

MARCH 18, 2024



Photos by Guam Customs and Quarantine Agency

Top, at least 118 Chinese nationals have entered or attempted to enter Guam illegally since 2022. Customs authorities also have seized more than a dozen small vessels associated with transporting Chinese nationals illegally.

Gateway to Guam

Chinese citizens seeking better economic opportunities pass through Saipan on their way to American territory **Page 2**

COVER STORY

Unlawful entries

Chinese citizens use Northern Marianas as illegal pathway to Guam, authorities say

By ALEX WILSON
Stars and Stripes

In early January, U.S. Navy, Coast Guard and Guam first responders hurried to a distress call from a 23-foot recreational boat taking on water on the seas 30 miles northwest of the island.

Six Chinese citizens were lifted aboard a Navy helicopter and their boat was left to founder in six-foot waves.

The rescued boaters were among a stream of Chinese citizens coming from Saipan and intent on seeking asylum on Guam or entering illegally to find work, according to U.S. Homeland Security and Guam customs officials.

The lure for Chinese to make the trip is a no-visa policy that permits them to enter Saipan, part of the Northern Mariana Islands, a U.S. commonwealth separate from Guam, and stay up to two weeks.

For Guam, ending that waiver is mired in a jurisdictional web of territorial and federal law. Illegal immigration to Guam, while not the cascade typical of the U.S.-Mexican border, presents risks of intelligence gathering at U.S. bases on the island, drug smuggling and cheap, undocumented labor, said Guam Customs and Quarantine spokeswoman Alana Chargualaf-Afaisen.

Since 2022, the agency has reported 118 unlawful or attempted unlawful entries by Chinese citizens, she told Stars and Stripes recently by email.

Entries peaked in 2022 with 85 cases, followed by 27 in 2023 and six so far this year, Chargualaf-Afaisen said.

They come to Guam, a U.S. territory, seeking jobs, according to a Homeland Security agent, although the island's first-term congressional delegate, Republican James Moylan, said he's concerned about more sinister motivations.

These migrants could be involved in drug or human trafficking, cybersecurity breaches or threats to national security, Moylan said by email.

"While we understand there are those who are entering the island to seek better opportunities for themselves and their families, when it comes to an ongoing migrant influx which has now spanned over a few years, there are certainly apprehensions when considering that bad actors could exist," Moylan wrote.

He offered no examples of anyone arrested or charged with any of those offenses.

'Economic' objectives

The Department of Homeland Security sees the situation as one



Guam Customs and Quarantine Agency

A Guam Customs and Quarantine agent speaks with Chinese nationals who allegedly tried to enter Guam illegally.

"It's not the same as if we encountered somebody that had just crossed the border from Mexico into the U.S."

John Tobon

Special agent in charge, Homeland Security Investigations, Honolulu

motivated more by employment or asylum than espionage, said Special Agent in Charge John Tobon of Homeland Security Investigations in Honolulu.

"What we have found is that their primary objective really is economic," he said by phone last month. "The one thing about all those individuals is that they are all vetted before they are admitted into Saipan."

They are checked there against "a whole host of government databases" before being allowed to travel, Tobon added.

"Once they're in Saipan, they may try to come over to Guam, but the overwhelming majority are really doing it for economic reasons," he said.

The Chinese passengers rescued Jan. 6 likely entered Saipan through the visa waiver program implemented by the Department of Homeland Security in 2009, said Col. Phil Taijeron, assistant chief for the agency's Special Enforcement Division. That case is still under investigation, Chargualaf-Afaisen said.

The program has been amended, at times allowing both Chinese and Russian citizens to enter Guam and the Northern Marianas. The waiver now applies only to Chinese citizens entering the Northern Marianas.

Homeland Security amended the program on Jan. 18 to require anyone using it to submit to an electronic travel authorization.

Previously, paper forms limited Customs and Border Protection's "ability to implement an essential part of its national security strategy" and vet people before they travel, according to a Jan. 18 Homeland Security assessment of the waiver program.

"That may have a positive impact down the road, and should help us curb some of these issues," Tobon said.

Once in Saipan, the commonwealth's capital and largest island, many file for asylum, but they potentially face waits longer than nine years, Taijeron said.

Chinese workers often turned to construction, primarily at the struggling, shuttered multimillion-dollar Imperial Pacific Re-

sort Hotel or casinos on the island, he said.

When construction work was disrupted by several typhoons, and the FBI raided the hotel's casino, Chinese workers were left to "seek dramatic measures," Taijeron said.

Those measures included intentionally getting arrested, which may move them up in the asylum lines. Federal agencies are aware of this, Taijeron said, and find ways to return them to the Northern Marianas or seek other legal action.

"Their other pursuit is to go to Guam where construction employment is better than in the [Northern Marianas]," he said. "Hence why they pay \$3,000 to \$6,000 per person to get some boat operator to deliver them to Guam illegally."

'Too vital'

The problem is exacerbated by legal complexities unique to Guam and the Northern Marianas. Each have their own governments and governors, as well as government agencies, including customs.

"It's not the same as if we encountered somebody that had just crossed the border from Mexico into the U.S.," Tobon said.

Traveling from Saipan to Guam, from one territory to another, is not considered crossing an international border.

With separate customs agencies comes differing policies as well, Tobon added, which is why Chinese citizens can travel to Saipan but not Guam through the visa waiver program. Those nuances make actively addressing the situation via legislation or agency programs more complicated, he said.

Tobon and Taijeron said their respective agencies are working with everyone involved to address the problem.

Moylan said he hopes to speak with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and that Congress will address the situation.

"We are requesting for more resources and manpower," he wrote. "Guam's importance from a national security perspective is too vital not to take this illegal migration issues at our shores too lightly."

But the complex nature of federal and territorial jurisdictions, for example, still poses problems, Tobon said.

"For the past 18 months, we've been working with Guam's customs, [the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands], the Department of Public Safety, CNMI's customs, the Coast Guard and the U.S. Attorney's Office," he said.

"It's not straightforward at all."

wilson.alex@stripes.com
@AlexMNWilson

MILITARY

Officer honored after record spaceflight

Colonel is awarded Army Astronaut Device after his 371 days in space

By MATTHEW ADAMS
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Army Col. Frank Rubio did not grow up thinking he would end up in space. It was something he gravitated to later in life.

“You kind of fall in love with the idea of, ‘Hey, I get to go out and explore space, do something really challenging and hard,’ ” he said. “[There are] few things where you can say my job represents humanity. And that’s a pretty powerful thing to be a part of.”

Rubio has been back on Earth for more than five months and recently received the Army Astronaut Device, making him only the third active-duty soldier authorized to wear it, according to the service.

“The biggest honor for me about this badge is that, to me, it is the ultimate team badge,” he said. “You absolutely cannot get to space on your own.”

Rubio was in space for 371 days, which set the U.S. record for longest continuous spaceflight when he landed Sept. 27.

Rubio graduated from West Point in 1998 and earned his doctorate of medicine from the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences in Bethesda, Md., in 2010. Prior to attending medical school, he served as a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter pilot and flew more than 1,100 hours, including more than 600 hours of combat time during deployments to Bosnia, Afghanistan and Iraq.



DEONTE ROWELL/U.S. Army

Army Col. Frank Rubio, a NASA astronaut, addresses the audience after receiving the Army Astronaut Device.

Prior to being selected by NASA as part of the 2017 Astronaut Candidate Class, Rubio was a surgeon for the 3rd Battalion with the 10th Special Forces Group at Fort Carson, Colo.

He spent two years training as an astronaut candidate to be a flight engineer and member of the Expedition Crew 68, according to his NASA biography.

Rubio, along with Russian cosmonauts Sergey Prokopyev and Dmitry Petelin, launched Sept. 21, 2022, on the Soyuz MS-22 spacecraft from the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan to the International Space Station. He and his crew mem-



BILL INGALLS/NASA

Expedition 69 NASA astronaut Frank Rubio is carried to a medical tent shortly after he and Roscosmos cosmonauts Dmitri Petelin and Sergey Prokopyev landed in their Soyuz MS-23 spacecraft near the town of Zhezkazgan, Kazakhstan, on Sept. 27.

bers were only supposed to be in space for six months. A coolant leak on the vessel required NASA and Russian space agency Roscosmos to send the three men a replacement spacecraft for their ride home, delaying the arrival of a new team of astronauts to relieve them.

During the mission, Rubio traveled more than 157 million miles, according to his NASA biography. He conducted three spacewalks, totaling more than 21 hours of space walking time.

“I will just say, clearly, we have an underachiever,” Army Secretary Christine Wormuth joked at a ceremony. “In all seriousness, Col. Rubio has a powerful U.S. Army story to tell. You are a stellar example of the Army’s core values and what it means to lead a life of service.”

Rubio told reporters after the ceremony that he will remain a part of NASA and hopes to fly again in the future.

“Just getting on a rocket and

being on 300 tons of rocket fuel is a pretty incredible feeling,” he said. “I got to fly with 28 other people in space. And given that there’s been a little over 600 human beings that have ever been to space, to fly with that many and get to know them on a personal level up there, that was a pretty unique experience and something that I’ll always treasure.”

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VA health coverage will expand for vets exposed to toxins

By LINDA F. HERSEY
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Millions of veterans exposed to hazardous substances during military service — from burn pits and sulfur fires to asbestos and firefighting foams — will become eligible for free or low-cost care at Department of Veterans Affairs health facilities, agency officials said recently.

Enrollment in VA health care opened March 5 to qualifying veterans from the Vietnam War, Gulf War, conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, the global war on terrorism, or any other combat zone after 9/11, the VA said.

Requirements are waived for veterans to first file a medical claim for disability compensation — and get the claim approved — to access health services at VA clinics, doctor’s offices, and hos-

pitals.

Copayments for medical treatments related to toxic exposures will be waived for new enrollees. Fees can range from \$15 to \$50 depending on the type of medical service.

Qualifying veterans are eligible for free or low-cost care for a range of health services, including primary care, surgeries, urgent care and emergency services.

VA health care coverage also extends to specialized care, such as cancer treatment and kidney dialysis.

“Bottom line, it’s now quicker and easier than ever for you to enroll,” said Terrance Hayes, VA press secretary. “You don’t need to be sick or file a claim to become eligible.”

With this new expansion, the administration of President Joe



ALFRED V. LOPEZ/U.S. Marines

Lance Cpl. Nathaniel Fink (left) and Lance Cpl. Garrett Camacho dispose of trash in a burn pit in Afghanistan in 2012.

Biden has opted to open sign-up for health care coverage to all eligible veterans rather than continuing phased-in enroll-

ments through 2032, he said.

The VA was unable to respond to questions about the reasons for the expansion now, its cost or

the funding source.

Veterans can enroll online at VA.gov/PACT. The VA will use available information in military records, including service dates and locations, to confirm eligibility.

“All you have to do is show that you served in one of the specified locations or operations — or participated in one of the activities that could have exposed you to hazards,” Hayes said.

Exposures span chemicals, radiation, air pollutants, nerve agents and other harmful substances, the VA said.

Veterans who were never deployed but were exposed to hazardous substances while training or on active duty in the U.S. also will be eligible to enroll.

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PACIFIC

'I love seeing the smile on their faces'

US Marines play games, visit with migrant children while in Thailand

BY ALEX WILSON
Stars and Stripes

PATTAYA, Thailand — Children clad in bright pink polo shirts laughed, danced and cheered during a visit from U.S. Marines taking a community-relations break from two weeks of Cobra Gold military drills.

Around a dozen members of the 15th Marine Expeditionary unit joined more than 40 kids at the Martin Brands Childcare center in Pattaya for local games and a dance competition in the courtyard. Upstairs, Marines did arts and crafts with the younger children.

"I love doing stuff like this — I try to get out and help or interact with the communities wherever I go. I did a lot of this when I was in Japan," Staff Sgt. Jimmy Sannon, a maintenance chief, told Stars and Stripes during the visit. "I love seeing the smile on their faces; that's what it is."

The day care visit was one of several community relations projects the Marines took on as part of Cobra Gold, the largest military exercise in mainland Asia, which recently drew to a close.

The day care students, many of them the children of migrant workers, come predominantly from neighboring Myanmar, Laos and Cambodia and are unable to enroll in Thai schools, said Peter Thorand, president of the Navy League of the United States — Siam Council.

At the Martin Brand center, the children are supervised and given Thai and English language lessons while their parents are away during the day, he said.

"I think when you see the result, the kids love it and it's a good experience for your people," Thorand said.

U.S. troops rarely interact with people from those three countries, he added.

Thailand, a comparatively prosperous country in the region, is a key destination for "migrants, displaced persons and asylum seekers," according to a United Nations report from 2019, the most recent on the country's migration trends.

Before the pandemic, migrants, especially from neighboring countries, were coming to Thailand in increasing numbers and constituted about 10%



PHOTOS BY ALEX WILSON/Stars and Stripes

U.S. Marines help serve lunch to children at the Martin Brands Childcare center in Pattaya, Thailand.



A U.S. Marine works on an art project with a student at Martin Brands Childcare center.

of the nation's labor force, the report states.

Thorand, a retired maintenance engineer from Vancouver, Canada, said he and the Siam Council have been involved in Cobra Gold community projects for decades. He said the projects not only benefit the community, they provide an opportunity for Cobra Gold participants to see the "real country."

"These community relations projects are maybe one of the most important things you guys can do," he said.

Many students have never interacted with Americans.

"You leave a lasting impression on the people," Thorand



Marines pass a soccer ball with children at a day care in Pattaya.

said.

The students also get a chance to practice their English, said Staff Sgt. Kyle Peterson, a utilities specialist with the 15th MEU. Some tried the teach Marines phrases in Thai during the arts-and-craft session, he said.

"Honestly, it's just really humbling how much they're willing to learn and how much effort they're actually putting into it here," he said.

"I think it's just as simple as it is; it's about being where you can be somebody's hero," Pe-

terson said. "It's not just painting butterflies, but just something as simple as going to play with them downstairs or painting pictures with them up here."

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MILITARY

New DOD prosecutors handle 2,600 cases

Court-martial charges for 13 offenses go to special counsels

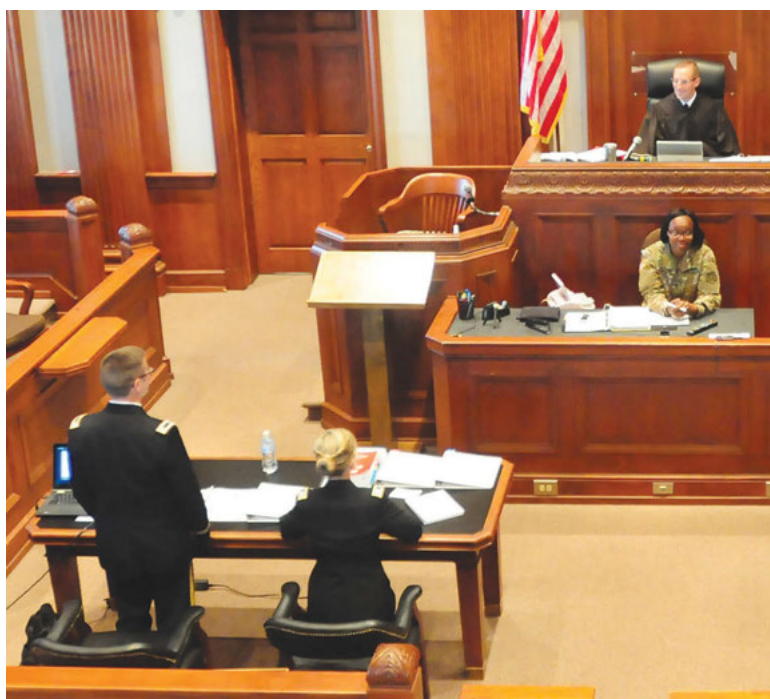
By GARY WARNER
Stars and Stripes

Four independent military prosecution offices created by Congress have invoked their authority in recent months to take the decision-making in 2,649 courts-martial from generals and admirals.

Under the new policy, which took effect Dec. 28, 162 specially trained attorneys serving in the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines would have the last say on bringing court-martial charges against defendants for 13 specific offenses under the Uniform Code of Military Justice, the military's legal statutes, the Pentagon said.

The crimes include murder, manslaughter, kidnapping, rape, certain sex crimes, crimes against children, intimidation such as stalking or retaliation, and the possession or distribution of pornographic or intimate images or other materials. Sexual harassment will become part of the jurisdiction of the counsels on Jan. 1, 2025. All other UCMJ violations remain under the authority of commanding officers.

Four special counsels have been created — one each for the Army, Navy, Marines and Air Force, which will also handle cases for the Space Force. The attorneys will be among the 2,000 staffers working for the four offices, according to the Penta-



KATHERINE DOWD/U.S. Army National Guard

A training exercise in August 2018 of the 167th Theater Sustainment Command Judge Advocate General at the Calhoun County Courthouse in Anniston, Ala.

gon.

Officials with each service's special trial counsel recently confirmed the number of cases investigated or prosecuted under the new policy. The Air Force said its counsel invoked court-martial authority in 970 cases. The Navy counsel took over 855 cases. The Army has moved 594 cases to its counsel. The Marines moved 239 cases.

Prior to the policy, commanding officers had great leeway on when to prosecute, who would sit on court-martial panels, and what the sentences would be, according to a Defense Department briefing in December.

Critics in Congress such as Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, D-N.Y., and

advocates for victims of sex crimes such as former Air Force prosecutor Don Christensen have said top military officers were not recommending charges in many sex abuse cases. In others, commanders were accused of reducing or negating punishments determined in courts-martial.

The new policy was supported by some lawmakers, such as Gillibrand, who had introduced legislation calling for special counsels more than a decade ago.

"It took a long time to pass my reforms, but finally, victims of sexual assault and other serious crimes have the independent, impartial justice system they deserve," she has said.

It also had backing from others,

including Sen. Joni Ernst, R-Iowa, who has said she was sexually harassed during her 23-year career in the Army, in which she rose to the rank of lieutenant colonel.

A majority in both chambers of Congress supported an end to command influence on courts-martial, according to an April 2021 report in *The New York Times*. The 2020 killing at Fort Cavazos, Texas, of Spc. Vanessa Guillen, whose reports of sexual harassment went uninvestigated prior to her death, drew national attention and helped spark the change. An internal Pentagon report cited by *The Times* said younger enlisted personnel did not trust their commands to fairly investigate complaints — a view that some Pentagon leaders said could undermine military retention and recruiting.

In January 2021, President Joe Biden ordered Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin to create a commission to review sexual assault in the military. The 13-member panel of civilian experts and former military leaders issued a report with 82 recommendations, including an end to command decisions in sex crime cases.

Austin endorsed the recommendations to create special prosecutors to handle sex crime cases, as did Biden. Congress passed the framework for what became the offices of special counsel in December 2021 and created training to staff the operations. Biden issued an executive order in July 2023 to amend the UCMJ to remove commanders from sex crime decisions.

"It's the most important reform to our military justice system since the creation of the Uniform

Code of Military Justice in 1950," Austin said in a statement in December.

Under the new policy, new cases involving the 13 selected crimes that are reported after Dec. 28 will automatically go to the new special counsels. However, the policy also allows the counsels to review cases already underway and assume the prosecution from the existing command.

At least one case involving the 13 offenses has already been tried under the new policy and led to a conviction, according to Michael McCaskill, communications director for the Army Office of Special Counsel, which is based in Quantico, Va.

Army Sgt. Antonio Robert Aden, 27, an active-duty soldier on Okinawa, was found guilty on Feb. 7 of rape and sexual assault of victims in California and South Korea, according to McCaskill. The case was originally charged by U.S. Army Japan.

Aden was sentenced to 20 years in prison, a dishonorable discharge, a reduction to the rank of private, and forfeiture of all pay and allowances.

Aside from the 13 crimes moved to the special counsels, all other UCMJ violations remain under the authority of commanding officers.

"Our office has been empowered to independently evaluate and prosecute cases based on the facts and evidence, free from outside influence," Col. Rob Rodrigues, acting lead special trial counsel for the Army, said Dec. 28 — the first day of the new policy.

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Navy introduces new enlisted specialty for robotics warfare

By COREY DICKSTEIN
Stars and Stripes

The Navy recently introduced a new enlisted specialty for sailors to operate and maintain current and future unmanned robotic weapons and vehicles.

The Navy established the new robotics warfare, or RW, rating for active-duty sailors who would be charged with planning and controlling robotic systems, which the service considers crucial to future warfighting, according to a Navy announcement. The message described the new specialty's founding as a "major milestone" in the service's work toward building a hybrid fleet of complementary manned and unmanned vessels and aircraft.

"This dedicated robotics rating

will accelerate development of deep expertise in rapidly advancing autonomous technologies," the message reads.

Service officials said it was not yet clear how many sailors would serve in the RW rating. The Navy said it would start as "a small and highly selective rating."

Though the new specialty will be open to all sailors ranked E-4 to E-9, the Navy announcement said most chosen for the new job would come with experience in unmanned vehicle divisions who have established robotics skills.

Those chosen for RW will join the new specialty after their current assignment is completed or when their current billet is converted to RW, according to a Navy fact sheet.

The Naval Education and Training Command is working to establish a training pipeline for future RW sailors, according to the fact sheet. The service expects to begin training recruits to serve as robotics warfare sailors by 2026.

The service intends to open up the specialty to Navy reservists at some time in the future, officials said.

Those seeking to join the RW community should submit applications through the Navy's Career Waypoints, or C-WAY, system as soon as possible because "applications will be processed as they are received," according to the service.

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JUEL FOSTER/U.S. Navy

A Flexrotor long-range robotic aircraft launches from the flight deck of the guided-missile destroyer USS McFaul during flight operations in the Gulf of Oman in July 23.

MILITARY

New port cranes sought on Guam

Island’s governor cites national security risks in seeking share of federal money

By JONATHAN SNYDER
Stars and Stripes

Guam Gov. Lou Leon Guerrero emphasized the island’s growing role in Indo-Pacific defense recently as she lobbied in Washington, D.C., for a share of federal money to replace aging cranes at Guam’s port.

President Joe Biden under an executive order Feb. 21 announced plans to improve cybersecurity at U.S. ports, citing threats to systems that provide ship navigation and cargo tracking. The administration had already apportioned \$20 billion alone to upgrade port infrastructure over five years.

The infrastructure initiative targets port cranes manufactured in China for replacement, also due to cybersecurity concerns. Among other measures, the initiative makes funds available to replace Chinese-made cranes in use at U.S. ports with U.S.-built cranes, according to a recent White House press release.

“Securing these cranes is imperative for our national security,” Guerrero said in a news release from spokeswoman Krystal Paco-San Agustin. “With the Biden Administration’s heightened concerns, securing funding

“If just one of those cranes goes out of service prior to replacement, it will delay the military buildup by four years.”

Rory J. Respicio
Port Authority of Guam
general manager

aligned with U.S. security policies to prevent reliance on China-manufactured equipment is crucial.”

The Port of Guam employs three used gantry cranes more than 40 years old that must be replaced in a few years, Rory J. Respicio, Port Authority of Guam general manager, said.

The cranes were made in Japan by Hitachi in the mid-1980s and relocated to Guam from the Port of Los Angeles, according to documents on the Port of Guam website.

However, components of the cranes, specifically the head blocks and wheel brakes, were



SARA MUIR/U.S. Coast Guard

The Port of Guam is the U.S. territory’s only deepwater port and receives about 90% of its imports.

made in China and installed during a 2008 refurbishment, Respicio said. The cranes came to Guam in 2012.

Ship-to-shore, or STS, gantry cranes are familiar sights that tower along the docks at commercial ports, where they’re used to load and unload intermodal containers.

The Port of Guam has applied for federal grants and loans and written the specifications for the replacement cranes it needs, Respicio said.

Guerrero used the military buildup on Guam — among them the creation of a new Marine Corps base, bolstering the Coast Guard presence and plans for a

ring of air defense missile sites — to make the territory’s case for funding new cranes, according to the release.

“The Port Authority of Guam is at a pivotal moment, with the acquisition of three new STS gantry cranes critical for sustaining its commercial and military operations,” the release said.

Three cranes can meet the forecasted demand for the Department of Defense buildup, Respicio said.

“But if just one of those cranes goes out of service prior to replacement, it will delay the military buildup by four years and if two of those old cranes go out of service, the Port would not be

able to meet commercial demand or the DOD mission,” he said.

In January, the Gantry 6 crane was out of service for nearly two days for repairs, according to Guam’s Pacific Daily News.

“We are pursuing every opportunity for the Department of Defense and the Department of Transportation Maritime Administration to become major benefactors in the Port’s acquisition of new cranes, as well as the replacement of yard equipment, and the rehabilitation of wharves and aging facilities,” Respicio said.

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Air Force streamlines uniform and grooming regulations

By JONATHAN SNYDER
Stars and Stripes

Neck tattoos are in, but shaved sides with a bun are out, according to the updated, clarified grooming and uniform regulations for airmen and guardians released recently by the Air Force.

The republished dress and personal appearance instruction, DAFI36-2903, consolidates

changes over several years “to simplify, clarify and amplify many changes for airmen and guardians,” according to an Air Force news release.

“Revisions were made over a number of years, but we felt the need to revisit the entire document to remove redundancies, out-of-date information and decrease subjectivity,” Lt. Gen. Caroline Miller, deputy chief of

staff for manpower, personnel and services, said in the release.

The 149-page guidelines apply equally to the Space Force.

Neck tattoos, according to the instruction, must not exceed 1 inch and must lie behind a vertical line extended from the ear orifices, according to the instruction. Tattoos may not show inappropriate “content,” including sexual references, gang

insignia and markings associated with extremist groups.

The instruction outlaws neon and other brightly colored nail polish for women, along with some hairstyles, including multiple buns, unnatural highlights and hair pulled into a bun with the head shaved on the sides.

Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force JoAnne Bass posted the updated guidance along with an easy-reference graphic on her official Facebook page and noted the “rewrite just dropped.”

“When it comes to standards, our Airmen need the best guidance we can offer,” she said in the news release.

“These changes and updates to the publication are meant to clarify professional military appearance and uniform standards across the Air Force and empower all Airmen to hold themselves, and others accountable,” Bass said.

Some items highlighted in the instruction are explained using

enhanced visuals, improved navigation and use clearer language, according to the release.

“We’ve reviewed the policy in whole to make certain we are communicating standards clearly, making it an easier tool for commanders, supervisors, Airmen and Guardians,” Miller said.

The updated instruction also provides guidance on the religious accommodation process, beverage consumption while walking in uniform and heritage morale patches on the flight duty uniform, among other topics.

“Part of being a Profession of Arms is embodying the higher set of standards that comes with serving our great nation,” Bass said in the release. “Accountability matters. Standards matter — and the ones we walk by, the ones we ignore, are the ones we accept.”

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