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STARS AND STRIPES

Community Publication

# GUAM

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## Not a loner after all – just a military spouse

Prior to writing this column, I had never taken a test like Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, which has been used for decades in the military and other organizations to assess personality. I had always assumed I was an introvert, because over the course of 23 years as a Navy spouse, I spent so much time by myself. I mistakenly thought my loner personality was the

reason why it was difficult to make friends every time we PCSed.

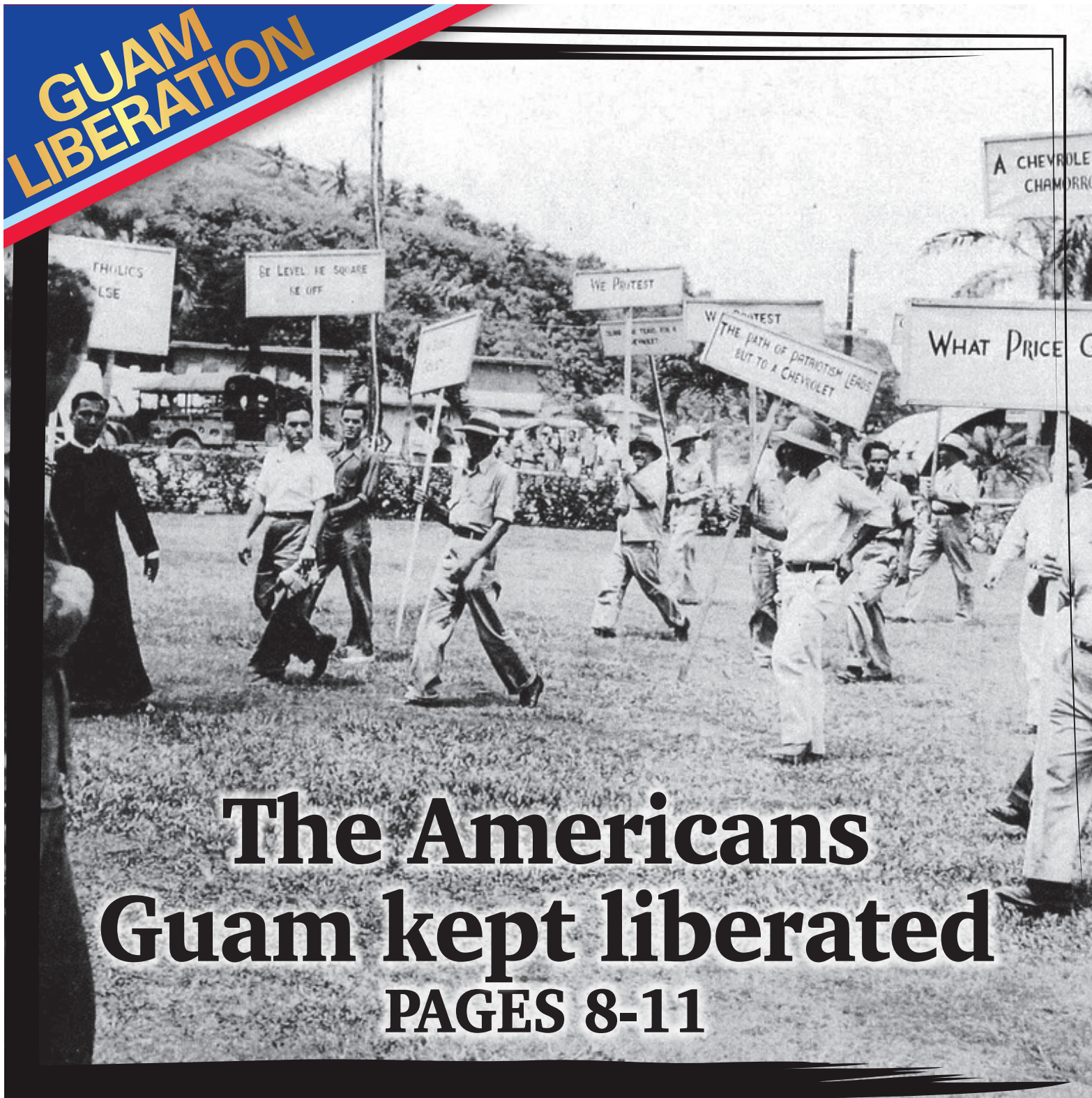
Turns out, I was wrong.  
(That is, if you believe the results of the free Myers-Briggs knockoff test I took online today because I was too cheap to spend \$49.95 on the real thing.)

According to the test results, I'm 68%

SEE SPOUSE ON PAGE 2

'There is instant camaraderie among military families, but finding friendship chemistry with other spouses can be hit or miss.'

## GUAM LIBERATION



## The Americans Guam kept liberated

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**SPOUSE:** Persistence, sincere effort, thick skin

**CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1**

extroverted. Huh ... I guess I don't actually prefer to be alone after all. The free preliminary report ("more detailed results are only a click and a credit card payment away!") indicated that I intuitively seek out people, cooperation, friendships and social support.

Then why on Earth did I spend so much flipping time alone as a military spouse?

About three years into our marriage, my husband Francis, a young intelligence officer, was stationed overseas at sleepy RAF Molesworth, England. The U.S. military families living on base thrived socially, but we thought living on the economy would maximize our cultural experience. We moved into a house built in 1863 in the village of Ramsey, where our neighbors were polite and reserved, as the English tend to be.

While Francis stood long watches, I spent my days with our infant son, strolling to the village bakery, the butcher, the playground, the duck pond and Sainsbury's. The sun began to set at 4 p.m. at that latitude. Waiting for Francis to get home was agony. I craved adult

# The Meat and Potatoes of Life

## Lisa Smith Molinari



contact so much, it hurt. When he was late coming home, I'd get so mad, I'd strap our baby into the stroller and walk the village streets in the dark, muttering to myself, "Let's see how HE likes it alone in that old house."

Even after making some friends, our remote location dictated that my days were endured without much contact with other adults. For three years, I became slave to my own solitary routines, mastering meal preparation, planning travel, researching and implementing home therapies for our son after he was diagnosed with autism.

By the time we moved to Virginia Beach, Va., I'd become accustomed to being alone. I managed to make new friends, but I maintained a fairly

solitary daily routine throughout Francis' many shore duties, deployments and travel assignments.

We moved overseas again in 2008, and again I had to make new friends. Our very social neighborhood on Patch Barracks had shared patios and a huge playground. Why was it so hard? Could I make new friends in my 40s? What was wrong with me?

Rather than face the challenge, I decided that I was a loner. That explained everything and gave me the excuse I needed to stop trying. To make matters worse, I started writing while we were stationed in Germany. While the other military spouses got to know each other on our shared patios, I was cooped up in our apartment, tapping away at the keys

of my computer.

During subsequent tours in Florida and Rhode Island, I continued to use the loner excuse to avoid the difficult task of making new friends.

Essentially, I spent most of my adult life believing mistakenly that I was an introvert when the real problem was that I was just a military spouse. The reality is that finding new friends after each PCS move is not easy. There is instant camaraderie among military families, but finding friendship chemistry with other spouses can be hit or miss. It takes persistence, sincere effort and a thick skin.

Somehow, I found friends at every duty station. Karen, Cindi and Di in California. Navarre, Jean, and Mabel in England. Natalie, Suz, Tina, and my bunco girls in Virginia. Erin and the patio crowd in Germany. Muffin and Tara in Florida. The whole gang in Rhode Island.

The knockoff personality test has confirmed the truth: I was never a loner, and I needed all of you all along.

Read more of Lisa Smith Molinari's  
columns at:  
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Airmen assigned to the 736th Security Forces Squadron participate in a simulated live fire scenario, conducting close quarters and urban combat training.

# 'Manpower is always in high demand'

STORY AND PHOTOS BY  
2ND LT RYAN BRADLEY,  
36TH WING

**ANDERSEN AIR FORCE BASE** — The 736th Security Forces Squadron (SFS) has officially relocated to Northwest Field. Prior to the move, the squadron was split, with the Squadron HQ and the Contingency Response section operating on Main Base and the Commando Warrior section at Northwest Field.

This move had been talked about for years, and with the hard work of the Defenders, it has finally come to fruition. The 36th Security Forces (SF), responsible for base security, will utilize the building previously occupied by 736th.

Northwest Field is home to the Commando Warrior Pacific Regional Training Center. This

training center provides a plethora of equipment and training facilities for the entire 736th and to over 1000 airmen each year. Commando Warrior is a Pacific Regional Training Center that provides sustainment training for all Defenders. Sustainment training is broken up into four tiers, and consists of mounted, dismounted and urban operations over a span of two weeks, providing basic to advanced levels of instruction.

Commando Warrior instructors were instrumental in re-vamping a six-day lead in track for military working dog sustainment training, which has been adopted at all SF Readiness Training Centers. They also conduct Subject Matter Expert exchanges known as Pacific Defender outreach with foreign partners. Pacific Defender

outreach is a mobile training team that provides specific training to nations in the Pacific, providing an opportunity for security forces personnel from various nations to exchange tactics, techniques, and procedures through demonstrations and hands-on exercises. These exercises build partnerships on a grand scale that showcase foreign partners and U.S. military relations with fundamental cooperation in order to counter threats within the region.

With the Contingency Response portion of the squadron moving to Northwest Field, it will now be located with the Commando Warrior section; therefore, increasing both operational readiness and capacity. The Contingency Response section provides first-in force protection for the 36th Contingency

Response Group during air base openings, contingency and humanitarian assistance operations throughout the world with focus on the Indo-Pacific Command theater.

"Having the ability to co-locate the 736th was an extremely valuable opportunity," said U.S. Air Force Major Ryan Kiggins, 736th SFS commander. "Even though the squadron incorporates two different mission sets, being able to house all the members in one location not only provides better command and control within the unit, but enables these great Defenders to mutually support each other and strengthen the capabilities of the squadron. With a smaller unit, manpower is always in high demand."

Ease of communications, increased facility capabilities and

a consolidation of efforts have allowed the 736th to seamlessly integrate into their new home. The move allows the 736th to focus on mission priorities. 736th Defenders train on static defense, integrated base defense operations, mounted and dismounted tactics, weapons, combatives and a variety of other skillsets.

"Being able to employ our combat capability in the most effective way possible, for both Contingency Response and Commando Warrior mission sets, permits the focus on multiple fronts," said Kiggins. "The Defenders of the 736th SFS know that we are not playing a game of checkers, but we are playing a game of chess. We must ensure long-term success and mission effectiveness for the future."

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# NMCB-3 Seabees relieve NMCB-5 on Guam

STORY AND PHOTO BY EO2 MONICA CERVANTES,  
U.S. Navy

SANTA RITA — U.S. Navy Seabees from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 3 assumed authority of Naval Construction Force tasking in Guam following a relief in place/transfer of authority from NMCB-5 to NMCB-3 on board Camp Covington in Santa Rita, Guam, June 29.

NMCB-5's Detail Guam wrapped up an extended deployment due to the unforeseen Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, which created a delay in efforts to return home due to stringent local, national, and international protective travel restrictions starting in late March.

Travel restrictions were revisited in late May and NMCB-3 was given permission to deploy. After complementing one 14-day restriction of movement (ROM) period prior to deployment in the U.S. and another ROM period upon arrival in Guam, NMCB-3 was ready to begin a detailed turnover process leading up to the RIP/TOA.

The RIP/TOA marks the official start of NMCB-3 beginning their mission within the Indo-Pacific Region.

"Our mission in Guam is to maintain healthy, ambitious, and combat-ready Seabees while we execute general engineering tasking of the highest quality for the tenants aboard Naval Base Guam," said Lt. Phillip Moncayo, NMCB-3's Detail Guam officer-in-charge. "Through this tasking, we will be showcasing our battalion's ability to execute construction capabilities by delivering safe, quality construction projects, as well as



enhancing and perfecting our technical skills that make us the world's premier expeditionary construction force."

NMCB-5 turned over three projects and the expeditionary asphalt batch plant on board Naval Base Guam. Operating an asphalt batch plant allows the Seabees to manufacture their own asphalt material as well as the ability to transport the plant to support projects at different locations in the future. NMCB-3 has been tasked with three additional projects for this deployment and will work with the U.S. Air force's 554th Red Horse squadron.

Difficulties posed by ongoing COVID-19 mitigation efforts are not lost on NMCB-3, but the Seabees are confident

they can still achieve mission success.

"NMCB-3 being the relief in place battalion during COVID-19 has its difficulties, and there are many unique challenges with leading Detail Guam," said Moncayo. "I believe the most challenging aspect about our deployment will be how we handle and deal with the COVID-19 pandemic and maintaining a COVID-19 free workforce. By maintaining our expectations of all our Seabees, we can be safe while carrying out our primary mission."

Builder 1st Class William Corrigan, a project supervisor assigned to NMCB-3's Detail Guam, said safety throughout this deployment is his number one priority. He will be overseeing three projects: the

completion of an explosive ordnance disposal storage facility, installation of new sidewalks, and completion of a U.S. Coast Guard pavilion.

"My overall goals this deployment is to finish the projects in a safe manner, completing the projects with quality work and to continue the legacy of Seabees in the Pacific," said Corrigan.

After finally overcoming an uncommon turnover, Builder 2nd Class Micaela Tennant, a project crew leader assigned to NMCB-3's Detail Guam, is excited for the prospect of interoperability by working hand-in-hand with an Air Force unit.

"I am most excited to be able to work with Red Horse," said Tennant. "I'm ready to gain and share my knowledge with the team to work better between branches and learn each other's traits and best practices."

According to Moncayo, his Detail has a clear vision for mission success, which rests on completing high-quality construction projects while maintaining a healthy force and contributing to the Seabee legacy.

"Our ultimate goal is for our Seabees to take pride in the quality of their work and return home to their loved ones healthy and free of COVID-19," said Moncayo. "By delivering safe, quality projects, we will leave a lasting impression on the island, not just through structural integrity, but more importantly, our heritage and tradition that the Seabees have been carrying forward since World War II. Maintaining a COVID-19 free workforce will demonstrate our discipline and desire to cooperate with our hosts to mitigate the spread of this disease."

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# CARTOONS IN STARS AND STRIPES

Editor's note: Check out our 75th anniversary site to view Bill Mauldin's Up Front cartoons.

BY CORD A. SCOTT,  
UMGC KOREA

One of the items synonymous with newspapers is cartoons. The idea of cartoons illustrated by, and for the entertainment of, troops has been around for a considerable time. For American servicemen, the paper that was most often associated with these specific cartoons was Stars and Stripes. While there is uncertainty concerning the future of the paper due to governmental funding in 2020, the history of the cartoonists from Stars and Stripes is substantial, and has lasted well past their time illustrating while in the service.

The modern newspaper of Stars and Stripes originated on Feb 7, 1918. The main cartoonist hired by the paper was USMC private Abian "Wally" Wallgren. His work appeared on page seven of the eight-page paper, published each Friday until the end of June 1919. His cartoons often centered on the quips and gripes of the doughboys in the trenches. While some of the later cartoons were simply reproductions of earlier ones, most of the illustrations served as a way to delve into the mindset of the US soldier. From his thoughts on the ever present lice and rats in the trenches (not to mention what to do with them for sport) to the adaptive nature of troops being sent to Siberia in 1918 to monitor the Russian revolution, the cartoons served to inform and entertain.

When the paper ceased publication in June in 1919, the idea of informing the troops shifted to local base publications. When the US was again in war after Pearl Harbor in December 1941, the newspaper restarted, albeit mostly in Europe. The most famous of all Stars and Stripes cartoonists was Bill Mauldin. His feature Up Front, featuring two "dog-faces" Willie and Joe, noted the conditions of the Italian front, the cold, the poor food and the general danger involved. For a "cartoon", his work was



Bill Mauldin, a cartoonist famous for his gritty, yet still humorous depictions of World War II, as seen during the war. Photo courtesy of UMGK Korea

## COMMENTARY

important as it allowed the enlisted to laugh at the conditions on the front, as well as gripe about things that bothered them, such as Mauldin's famous cartoon noting the 1,000 mile detour due to Patton's orders of decorum for uniforms while in a combat zone. Mauldin won his first Pulitzer for his work in Stars and Stripes for his cartoon that showed exhausted US troops and German PoWs with a caption "Fresh, spirited American troops, flushed with victory, are bringing in thousands of hungry, ragged, battle-weary prisoners."

In addition, there were cartoonists that made light the issues at the front. One was Dave Breger, who was the creator of "G.I. Joe". Another creator was Dick Wingert who was the only cartoonist to draw dead soldiers of any sort, in the series "Hubert". Another famous cartoonist who had a career before the war was Milton Caniff, who initially wrote Terry and the Pirates. By World War II, Caniff, who was ineligible to serve, drew a cartoon specifically for the enlisted troops, entitled "Miss Lace". Provocatively drawn, the character would not date any officers, but was always willing to

accommodate the enlisted troops for dancing or conversation. This cartoon ran in various camp papers through the Camp Newspaper Service.

As the war ended, Stars and Stripes started publication in the Pacific, and

therefore, cartoons focused on the occupation in Japan following the cessation of combat. One of the more prolific cartoonists at this time was Bill Hume, known for his series "Babysan" on how the US sailors in the Tokyo area often interest in Japanese culture, through interaction with women. Hume was stationed near Yokosuka, and his work yielded not only cartoons for Stripes, but also yielded two books as well.

It was logical that as US troops were committed to the Korean peninsula in 1950 to thwart communist advances, that Stripes also produced cartoons. Many of these cartoons emulated Bill Mauldin's style, but also tried to be specific towards each branch of service. Among these cartoonists was

a man who gained favor later on for his children's work: Shel Silverstein.

By the time of Vietnam, there were additional cartoonists in Stripes, among which included Will Eisner (the creator of the Spirit, as well as PS Magazine for the US Army over 30 years!). Another cartoonist who illustrated the events in Vietnam was Vernon Grant, who also reproduced cartoons for the Japanese market. Grant was popular with the troops and drew cartoons for Stripes.

As new forms of entertainment emerged, the need for cartoonists abated. Stripes has continued to incorporate cartoons, now entirely as syndicated strips from US papers. There is also a Sunday comics section, which features a drawing of Mauldin but as an advertisement asking about comics for the paper going forward. The lineage of cartoonists continues to this day, with current artists like Max Uriarte and Basil Zaviski, who produced cartoons that centered on military life or themes. While Stripes may be in doubt, their work and observations on life in the military continue to entertain, inform, and vent.



About the author: Cord A. Scott has a Doctorate in American History from Loyola University Chicago and currently serves as a Professor of history for the University of Maryland Global Campus in Asia. He is the author of Comics and Conflict, as well as Four Colour Combat. He has written for several encyclopedias, academic journals such as the International Journal of Comic Art, the Journal of Popular Culture, the Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society, and is in several books on aspects of cultural history. His most recent work is on US military cartoons in WWI, which was published in the Journal of War, Literature and the Arts. He resides in South Korea.



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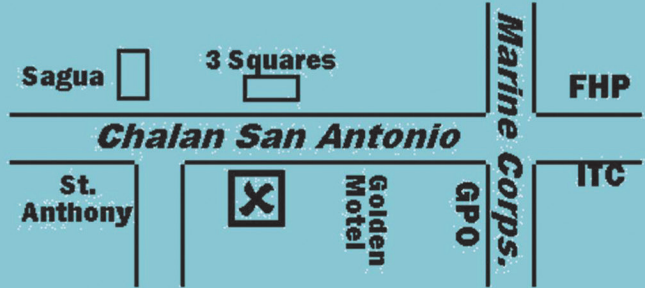


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# GUAM LIBERATION

Antonio Artero situated Tweed in a cave on an isolated cliff overlooking the ocean, in October 1942. Photo courtesy of National Park Services



Antonio Artero took Tweed to a cave on a cliff overlooking the ocean in October 1942. Photo courtesy of Micronesia Area Research Center

## The Americans Guam kept liberated

BY LEO BABAUTA,  
GUAMPEDIA

When the Japanese invaded Guam in December 1941, six Americans were able to escape capture as they fled inland into hiding: L.L. Krump and C.B. Johnson of the U.S.S. Penguin; and A. Yabolonsky, Al J. Tyson, L.W. Jones and Tweed of the Communications Office in Hagåtña.

The morning of the Japanese invasion, Tweed and Al Tyson, along with Chamorro Navyman Vicente Guevara who worked at the Communications Office, headed up San Ramon Hill to Sinajana in Tweed's car while avoiding Japanese fire. Guevara got off in Ordot to join his family while Tweed and Tyson went on to Yona, abandoned the car and headed into the jungle.

There they were helped by Yona farmer Francisco Ogo, and Tweed and Tyson met the four other Americans in hiding on the farm of another Yona farmer, Manuel Aguon. They were able to stay there for several days, with several Chamorros visiting them in the jungle and bringing them food, water and other supplies.

Tweed and the five other American refugees believed the American forces would rescue Guam from the Japanese within a matter of six weeks at the most, and figured they could hold out in hiding for that long. It would be more than two and a half years before American forces returned.

### AIDED BY CHAMORROS

Soon so many Chamorros knew about the Americans' hiding spot that the Japanese authorities caught wind of the information. They organized a search party of up to 200 Chamorros, forming a long line to comb the search area as Japanese troops marched behind them. However, the Americans easily escaped the search party as the Chamorros deliberately made so much noise the Americans could hear them from a distance.

The Japanese came close to finding the Americans by forcing bits of information out of Chamorros by torture, but the Americans barely missed capture and decided to split up as it would be easier to move in stealth in small groups than in one large group.

Tweed and Tyson left the other four. Manuel Aguon, who had helped the six fugitives at his ranch, was arrested and tortured by the Japanese, but refused to divulge any information. His brother, Vicente, met up with Tweed and Tyson, who at this point were growing weary of hiding and considered turning themselves in. Vicente Aguon, however, told them that he learned that it was too late to turn them-



Agueda Johnston, far right, is shown here with George Tweed after World War II. She was in contact with Tweed during the Japanese occupation while he was hiding from the Japanese. Photo courtesy of Johnston Family Collection, Micronesia Area Research Center

selves in – the Japanese were planning on killing them no matter what.

Tweed and Tyson soon after split up themselves. Tweed went to the ranch of Juan Cruz, an acquaintance, and stayed there for several days. There he received a .45 caliber pistol from Hagåtña businessman Joaquin Limtiaco.

Tweed then lived for several days in a cave on the property of Manuel Cruz in Yona, where he received food from many Chamorros who risked being caught by the Japanese. While there, Tweed received a radio and a generator from two Chamorros, and used news from the radio to compile a typed one-page version of The Guam Eagle, the Navy newspaper, over the next four months. He made five copies and circulated them among Chamorros. One of the Chamorros who helped circulate this copy of The Guam Eagle, Ben Pangelinan, was nearly caught while showing a copy to others at the home of Joaquin Limtiaco in Hagåtña. The Japanese raided Limtiaco's home, and Pangelinan, who had helped the six American refugees by supplying

them with clothes and other necessary goods, escaped capture by flushing the newspaper down the toilet.

During the rest of his time in hiding, Tweed was aided by many Chamorros, including several he came to count as close friends. He moved around the island, hiding on the property of a number of people.

### THE LONG SEARCH

In Upper Tumon, he was helped by brothers Juan and Joaquin Flores, who were among many who fed him, including future senator Tomas Tanaka, Mrs. T. De-

jima, and local businessmen and brothers Felix and Jose Torres. The Flores brothers were later arrested and tortured when the Japanese suspected them of hiding Tweed, but they never gave away his location.

Tweed was also aided by Joaquin Limtiaco, who had taken him to the Flores brothers' property. When the brothers were being tortured, Limtiaco took Tweed to Chalan Pago to Jesus Reyes, a pre-war agriculture instructor. Reyes took Tweed to stay with the Santos family in Ta'i, and one of the Santos sons, Wen Santos, became Tweed's "most trusted friend" in Tweed's words, because he never let on that he knew Tweed's whereabouts during the war.

Tweed later moved to Toto, at the ranch of Jose Lujan, with the help of Tommy Tanaka. Not long after, when Lujan met a man who asked to meet the American, Tweed moved back in with Wen Santos in Ta'i.

During his stay with Jose Lujan in Toto, Tweed heard rumors that the Japanese had captured and killed three Americans. He later confirmed from Agueda Johnston, through his friend Wen Santos, that the Japanese had found Jones, Yablosnsky, and Krump in Manenggon and beheaded them.

With the capture of the first three Americans, the Japanese intensified their search for the remaining three: Tweed, Johnson and Tyson. A large number of Chamorros in the central part of the island were accused and tortured for several weeks, and during this time Tweed decided to move once again. Wen Santos moved him to a cave in Fadian and told no one, but finally had to tell the owner of the property (Francisco Pangelinan of the Abin family) because people began to get suspicious when Wen would bring food to Tweed. Pangelinan relieved Wen of this duty to avoid suspicion.

Not long after, Tweed narrowly avoided

escape from a Japanese search party with the help of a coded message from Perez. With the help of his friend Joaquin Flores and a retired Navyman, Juan Pangelinan, Tweed went north to the home of Antonio Artero, son of Don Pascual, a Spanish businessman who was one of Guam's largest landholders. It was here that Tweed would hide until the Americans returned a year and a half later.

### ARTERO'S YIGO RANCH

With the approval of his father, Antonio Artero took Tweed to a cave on a cliff overlooking the ocean, in October 1942. Three days after arriving at the cave, Tweed received the news from Artero that the two other remaining Americans, Tyson and Johnston, were caught and killed by the Japanese only two miles from where he was hiding.

Tweed was now the lone American holdout. Artero supplied him with food and other necessities, and except for one trip that he took to Barrigada to look for his radio, Tweed remained in that hiding spot until his rescue on July 10, 1944. Japanese search parties continued to search for him every day the entire time he was in hiding. And while many Chamorros were tortured during this search, only a few people knew of his actual whereabouts, thanks to Artero's discretion – he told his father, his wife, and his brother Jose, but no other family members or friends.

### RESCUED

Just a few days before the Marines landed in Asan and Agat on July 21, 1944, Japanese authorities sent Joaquin Limtiaco, Tweed's friend to fetch Artero or any member of his family, and Limtiaco brought along Juan Flores. They found Artero at his ranch in what is now known as the NCS area of Dededo, and told Artero that the Japanese knew he was helping Tweed and wanted to punish him. Artero and his family decided to hide until the Americans recaptured the island, and Limtiaco went back to the Japanese authorities in Agaña Heights and reported that Artero and his family had left their ranch.

Artero and his wife and eight children hid in Tweed's cave, but Tweed had gone, leaving behind a note that said that a destroyer was sending a boat to take him on board.

Tweed had made two signal flags himself, and earlier, when he saw two American destroyers off the northwestern coast of Guam, he grabbed the signal flags and a pocket mirror, climbed to the top of a cliff, and signaled one of the boats. He sent them messages, giving them information about Japanese guns at Adelup Point, and asking them to take him aboard. Within five minutes, a boat dropped into the water next to the destroyer, and Tweed left the note for





# The influential voice of Beatrice Perez Emsley

BY SAMANTHA MARLEY BARNETT,  
GUAMPEDIA

**B**eatrice Perez Emsley (1929-1995) is best remembered as a survivor of the Japanese Occupation on Guam during World War II, and subsequently, as the voice of fellow Chamorro survivors with her powerful testimonies for the Guam War Reparations Commission in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Her experience of brutality and survival at the hands of the Japanese revealed the atrocities suffered by the Chamorro population and brought national and international attention to the issue of compensation for Chamorro survivors.

Born Beatrice Flores Perez on 16 December 1929, Emsley was raised in Yigo, Guam, and was twelve years old when the Japanese occupation began on 10 December 1941. Under Japanese military rule, life for many Chamorros had become difficult and uncertain. Emsley lived at her family's ranch in Tai, Mangilao (where Father Duenas Memorial School now stands), along with her uncle, Balduero T. Peredo, who worked at the Naval Hospital. In 1944, at the age of fourteen, Emsley worked as a house girl to Japanese soldiers for one month. She was paid thirty yen for her services.

The events Emsley described in her testimonies before the War Reparations Commission began in July 1944, just a few days before the American invasion that liberated Guam from Japanese rule. Emsley's uncle was missing during the Japanese census of the ranch, where three other families also were seeking shelter. An officer threatened to have the families killed if Peredo was not found immediately. Emsley, whose mother had just given birth to a baby girl, volunteered to search for her uncle. She was given a signed paper of permission from the Japanese officer in order to pass security stations throughout Hagåtña.

By this time, Hagåtña largely had been abandoned as residents had relocated to their lanchos (ranches) or were hiding in the island's jungles. Emsley bowed repeatedly toward Japanese soldiers and was finally chased away when she showed them her pass. She broke through thick jungle foliage, calling for Peredo, even searching a foxhole her mother thought her uncle might be hiding. Finally, she heard the sounds of his breathing.

Emsley found her uncle lying in a trench. He had fallen and badly wounded his leg. He was filthy and his leg was infected, leaving him unable to walk. Emsley pleaded with Peredo to attempt the walk back to the ranch. Peredo, however, insisted he could not, even if his niece dragged him. The minutes lost persuading Peredo to return with her placed the young girl and her uncle in a precarious position as the Japanese did not want any Chamorros to be in the area while they were preparing for

battle with the Americans.

## Attempted beheading

Within minutes of finding Peredo, Emsley heard the stomping footsteps of Japanese soldiers marching in Hagåtña. Suddenly, some of the soldiers pushed through the jungle, and she and her uncle were discovered. Emsley presented the soldiers with her permission pass, but the paper that once granted safety was pushed aside. The Japanese accused Emsley and her uncle of knowing the American Navy radioman George Tweed, the only American soldier who was able to remain hidden from Japanese forces and survive during the Japanese occupation. In spite of Emsley and Peredo's arguments that they had never known Tweed, the two were taken by the soldiers toward San Ramon Hill, below where the Government House stands today, amid flares and bombing by American planes. When the flares had passed, they were forced into one of three tunnels cut into the hillside below where the Archbishop's residence is currently located.

There Emsley discovered other Chamorros assembled by Japanese soldiers. She saw a group of seven men, among them Juan Cabrara, age sixteen. Later, they were joined by a group of three young women who were crying as the soldiers pushed them into the tunnel. For two days without food and water, the group of Chamorros were held against their will.

As the night waned and daylight approached the interrogation wore steadily on. The Japanese repeatedly accused the group of lying and slapped the Chamorros across their faces, even after the Chamorros agreed with the untrue accusations.

At dawn, the Japanese officers demanded the group line up and stand before a string of Japanese soldiers, dressed in full uniform and armed with bayonets. An officer divided the men and women into two groups. The men were led off into the jungle with the soldiers, while the women were ordered to wait and remain standing in a straight line. Before the men were led away, Emsley's uncle reached out and pulled at her, but the two were forced apart by the soldiers.

In her formal testimony before the US Congress on 27 May 1993, Emsley recounted what happened next:

*"All us four girls hear is like somebody chopping down the forest, and moaning for God, for mother, and I'm dying, and all that. Since then, Mr. Chairman, I didn't have any feeling. I'm standing there like I'm just out in a cloud. So then after they finish and everything is quiet, they [the soldiers] come back and went by us and they all*

**SEE EMSLEY ON PAGE 10**



Young Beatrice Perez Emsley. Photo courtesy of Guampedia Foundation

Artero and headed down the cliff to the beach to his rescue.

He had spent thirty-one months in hiding in the jungles of Guam.

## CONTROVERSY

When Tweed first heard about the torture of people suspected by the Japanese of knowing the whereabouts of the Americans, early on in the war, he considered turning himself in to save further punishment of the Chamorros. He told this to Agueda I. Johnston, the Chamorro educator and the island's most respected woman, during a get-together at her ranch in mid-1942. Tweed reported in his book that Johnston told him not to turn himself in because he was a symbol of hope to the Chamorros.

Later in the war, as more people were tortured because of him, Johnston pleaded

with Tweed to turn himself in, but he ignored her plea. Japanese Catholic priest Father Komatsu also wrote a letter asking Tweed to give himself up, and several copies were distributed, although it is not known whether Tweed actually saw the letter. Komatsu promised, in the letter, that Tweed would not be killed by the Japanese but would be treated well as a prisoner. He added:

*"As a priest, I ask you in the name of the natives here, to give yourself up and thus relieve the suffering and anguish of the Chamorros."*

One of the most celebrated Chamorros to help Tweed was Father Jesus Baza Duenas. While Tweed was being rescued by the Americans at Urunao, Duenas was being brutalized by the Japanese in Inarajan for a number of crimes, among them helping

Tweed. Duenas was another of the war's heroes, and was beheaded at the end of the war at Ta'i in Mangilao along with Vicente Baza and Juan (Mali) Pangelinan who were also suspected of helping Tweed. To this day, Father Duenas is seen as a martyr by most Chamorros.

The question of whether Tweed should have turned himself in to save the suffering and deaths of Chamorros was a controversy for most of the war, as well as after the war.

## POST WORLD WAR II

Tweed survived the war and was promoted in rank, later retiring from the Navy. Not long after leaving Guam, Tweed published a book entitled, "Robinson Crusoe, USN" that recounted his time in refuge on Guam.

He returned to Guam in 1945, bringing a

Chevrolet sedan as a gift to Artero as a gift from the president of General Motors.

On arriving on Guam, however, Tweed was greeted by protesters (the first ever such protest on Guam), denouncing him for controversial statements he had written in his book.

In a newspaper interview at the time, Limtiaco explained why he and other Chamorros were willing to undergo torture to aid and protect Tweed:

*"Tweed was a symbol of the United States which was fighting in the war for a great cause. We were determined to fight, too, in our own way, and to die if necessary."*

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# EMSLEY: Buried alive with bodies

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

*have a bloody uniform. Their rifle and everything are all [covered in] blood."*

Emsley then witnessed the Japanese soldiers execute the other Chamorro women. In her words from the 1993 testimony:

*"They finally start calling Diana Guerrero, the oldest woman, who walked up to this officer, and the only thing I seen, and it start to get blurr[y], was he cut this front and start sawing off her breast. Then the sister next to her came running up to try to help. They do just everything they can with what they got. And the third one was Toni, because I was the youngest and the last. They march her up, and the only thing they did is sliced down her stomach and everything come out. When it comes to me, when they took me out, I was walking in air. As soon as they let go of me, I fall down to the ground."*

The Japanese officer's attention focused on Emsley. After briefly questioning her, the officer pushed her head down and he hit the back of her neck with his bayonet. Emsley fainted from the impact as the bayonet cut through her neck muscles. The gash from the bayonet was four inches deep. The Japanese officers then pushed her into



Beatrice Perez Emsley's scarred neck. Photos courtesy of Guampedia Foundation

a nearby hole they had dug as a grave. Emsley's body fell on top of the other women.

## Buried alive

When Emsley awoke she found herself buried with the bodies of those executed before her eyes. Phasing in and out of consciousness, Emsley began trying to dig herself out. At one point, she recalled Toni, still alive, moaning beside her asking for water. The two managed to drink something wet on

the ground nearby. Emsley passed out again and when she awoke, Toni had already died.

Emsley crawled out of the dirt grave during daylight, after the Japanese had left the scene and hidden themselves. She stumbled away from the area, half crawling when she was conscious and fainting after she had exhausted her limited energy supply. She went to where she had heard the other Chamorro men and recognized her uncle's wounded leg because of the filthy pants

he had been wearing. As she described in the 1993 statement:

*"I don't know where I'm going. I don't know what happened to me. I don't know nothing. I just keep going."*

Time passed for Emsley. Making her way through the jungle she spotted a ranch and began approaching it. She hid when she heard Japanese soldiers already at the ranch removing whatever they could find. When the soldiers finally left, Emsley went around the other side of the building and found Juan Cabrara, who had also survived the attempted execution. Cabrara had suffered five deep bayonet wounds. Emsley called to the boy and asked if he had food or water. Cabrara called her to him and he gave her some coconut to eat. Together, the two continued to search for food, drinking swamp water to quench their thirst. At Cabrara's urging, they made their way to a house in Hagåtña where Cabrara knew his mother had left some rice and salted fish.

As the teenagers struggled along in search of help and medicine, they looked at the remains of the old Naval Hospital but could not find anything. Meanwhile, Emsley had developed a high fever and chills.

At the Hagåtña house, Cabrara began to prepare rice, leaving Emsley to watch it cook while he went out. Cabrara returned running, having



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→ encountered some Japanese soldiers and was now being chased by them. As Cabrara escaped the soldiers, a dog started to chase his pursuers. Reaching the house, he grabbed Emsley and the two ran to the back of the destroyed chapel in the San Antonio district, waiting quietly until the barking sounds stopped.

Emsley and Cabrara then made the long trek toward Manenggon where other Chamorros had been taken to a concentration camp set up by the Japanese. They found an abandoned ranch and were elated to discover six large drums of rainwater, as well as star apples and bananas. The two ate until, as Emsley recalled, she got a stomach ache. They set off again to search for their families and came across an abandoned house where they stayed for a few days.

The two were eventually found by one of Emsley's uncles and another man who had left the Manenggon camp to search for food they had hidden away from the Japanese. Emsley's uncle, however, did not recognize her at first. He brought the two teenagers with him to Yona where they met up with soldiers of the Third Marine Division, part of the invading American forces. The Americans, however, were unable to treat her or Cabrara's wounds because of the fighting. The three Chamorros then made their way back to the Manenggon camp. After sneaking the teenagers into the camp, Emsley and Cabrara were finally able to receive medical care.

Two Chamorro nurses cleaned the survivors' wounds for the first time. Emsley recounted that she felt

**Emsley crawled out of the dirt grave during daylight, after the Japanese had left the scene and hidden themselves.**

maggots moving across the gash on her neck and that she guessed these maggots had eaten away some infection from her injuries. When American soldiers finally entered the concentration camp, Emsley was taken down the long trail to Asan where she was cleaned up and received more medical treatment for her wounds aboard one of the US ships.

#### Life after the War

Like other war survivors, Emsley focused on trying to pick up the pieces of her life and survive the devastating aftermath and reconstruction of the island. She attended school for a while, but could not continue as she had been too traumatized.

She eventually married Charles Emsley, a former private in the US Army. Together they had ten children, including Karen Emsley Guerrero. In spite of the trauma she had suffered, Guerrero recalled her mother's

forgiveness towards the Japanese officers and soldiers responsible for her attempted beheading:

*"She always told us, 'In order to be forgiven, you must learn to forgive.'"*

Emsley became an influential community leader because of her emotional and candid War Reparations testimony in front of the US Congress. She spoke about her experiences openly, despite the tendency among other Chamorro elders to keep quiet about stories that reveal the harsher side of their lives during the Occupation.

Emsley died on 6 August 1995 at the age of sixty-five. She was honored with a state funeral attended by various local senators, military and Japanese officials.

Over one hundred mourners were lead in prayer. Emsley was buried at the Guam Veterans Cemetery.

#### A symbol of Chamorro strength and resilience

Beatrice Emsley often is seen as embodying the Chamorro people's suffering during the Japanese Occupation; she has been named the "symbol of Chamorro strength and resilience," among other titles, by the media. The symbol, however, belies the broken woman who suffered from this experience the rest of her life.

Emsley struggled with a lifelong nervous disorder as a result of her near death and the violence she witnessed. She never did go back to school and relied on her mother to teach her how to manage her household. Interviewers constantly noted the detached way in

which Emsley processed words when recounting her story. For example, Howard Handleman, while writing for the July 1964 issue of the Pacific Profile, wrote about Emsley: "The girl showed no emotion as she talked. Her almond eyes show neither a reflection of the terror that was past nor a hint of happiness (.....)."

Emsley relayed her memories in a factual manner, recalling the names of people and friends she saw tortured, while her face remained a stoic mask. A reporter noted in a 1952 article in the Guam Daily News: "Beatrice tells her story to a Daily News reporter in a flat voice without emotion. Tonelessly she continues."

This was an essential part of Emsley's psychology – her defense tactic for surviving war atrocities and relaying her story. Emsley apparently built a wall between her present self and her memories.

But her experience as a survivor and as an advocate for war reparations for the Chamorro people remains her contribution to Guam history and its people. Her closing words of her 1993 testimony captures the conflicted feelings of so many Chamorro survivors – grateful for the American liberation, loyal to the American nation, but wanting to be acknowledged for their suffering and sacrifice: "All I am trying to ask Chairman Ron de Lugo – Recognize us, please. We are American."

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# Let's cook like a Chamorro

GUAM VISITORS BUREAU



People say it's called tinaktak because of the "taktak" sound of the knife on your cutting board as you chop the meat super thin! If you've ever wanted to know how to make it, here's a recipe along with a side dish of gollai áppan lemmi from local chef and restaurant owner Lenny Fejeran.

## Tinaktak Antigu

### Ingredients:

- 1/2 onion
- 1 clove chopped Garlic
- Teaspoon of oil or oxtail fat
- 1/2 pound of beef shank
- 1/2 pound of oxtail
- 2 cups coconut milk
- 2 ounces pickled bittermelon
- 2 local cherry tomatoes
- 1 small eggplant
- 1 teaspoon salt and 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/4 cup long beans
- 1/2 squeeze of lemon

### Directions:

1. Cook meat for 3 hours until tender and falling off the bone. Chop the meat thinly
2. Sauté oil or oxtail fat, onion, and garlic on high heat
3. Add meat
4. Add coconut milk
5. Add pickled bitter melon (See below for recipe)

6. Add local cherry tomatoes
7. Add eggplant
8. Simmer on medium heat
9. Add salt and black pepper
10. Simmer down for 30 minutes on medium low heat
11. Add long beans
12. Cook for 5 minutes then turn heat off
13. Add lemon

### Directions



### How to make salted and/or pickled bittermelon:

The trick is to salt it twice!

1. Salt it for 30 minutes
2. Strain and rinse
3. Salt it again for another hour
4. You can pickle it but you can add it into the tinaktak after you salt it as well!



## Gollai Áppan Lemmai

### Ingredients:

- 1 medium sized lemmi
- 2 quarts coconut milk

### Kâdu

Open Monday to Friday from 10:30am to 8pm and Saturdays 11 a.m. to 8 p.m.

### Directions:

1. Skin lemmi, cut the middle part out, and chop
2. Add coconut milk on medium high heat
3. When it comes to a boil, put it down to medium low
4. Simmer down for 15 minutes or until soft and milk is reduced



### Directions



## Tiao Kelaguen

Cooked without heat, kelaguen is a signature dish of Chamorro cuisine that uses a combination of lemon juice, salt, and hot peppers to "cook" chopped fish, seafood, or meat.

Chicken kelaguen is the most common variety of kelaguen and is a staple at fiestas, in restaurants, and is even sold as a snack in convenience stores.

In this video, Proa Restaurant Chef de Cuisine Ryan Chiguina shows us how to Cook Like a Chamorro and prepare tiao (juvenile goatfish) kelaguen using simple, fresh ingredients.

### Ingredients:

- 1/2 yellow onion, diced
- 1/2 cup grated fresh coconut
- 2 stalks green onion, chopped
- 1/2 cup fresh lemon juice
- 1/2 teaspoon lemon power
- 3 lbs tiao (juvenile goatfish) Tiao can be substituted with ahi tuna, mackerel, salmon, or shrimp
- 2 hot peppers, chopped salt to taste

### Directions:

1. Debone the tiao by first pulling the head from the body. Next, starting from the belly, pull the bone away from the body.
2. Rinse the fish in water to clean.
3. Chop the tiao and combine with all other ingredients.
4. Keep chilled and serve with flour or corn titiyas.



### Proa

With locations in Tumon and Hagåtña, Proa Restaurant and Patisserie welcomes guests to enjoy a memorable 'Hafa Adai' dining experience through its hand crafted Pacific-rim styled menu and fresh made-to-order daily specials served with local hospitality and flair.

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## Chicken Chalakiles

We're excited to bring you a new Cook Like a Chamorro recipe! In this step-by-step video, Chef Peter Duenas from Meskla Chamoru Fusion Bistro shows us how to Cook Like a Chamorro and prepare a pot of chicken chalakiles, a popular Chamorro comfort soup that is easy to make from a simple list of ingredients.

### Ingredients:

- 1 onion, diced
- 4 to 5 garlic cloves, chopped
- 2 lbs boneless skinless chicken, cut into small pieces
- 4 cups achote water (soak seeds overnight or use achote powder)
- 6 cups water
- Red chili peppers, finely chopped and to your heat preference
- 2 tbsp vinegar
- 2 cups ground toasted rice (first toast the rice in a pan, then grind the toasted rice in a blender or food processor)
- Salt and pepper, to taste

### Directions:

1. In a large soup pot, sauté the onion and garlic in cooking oil.
2. Add the chicken and sauté. Season with salt and pepper.
3. Add the achote water and regular water and bring to a boil.
4. When it begins to boil, add the red pepper and vinegar.
5. Add the toasted rice and let simmer for 10-15 minutes. The soup will thicken.
6. Serve in a bowl and top with green onion.

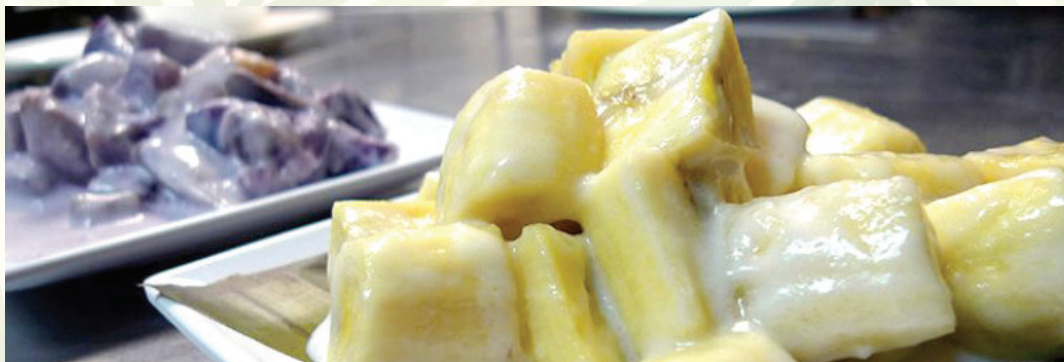
### Options:

You can use chicken broth instead of water, and you can also stir in a cup of coconut milk as the last step. Some versions of chalakiles add crabmeat and vegetables. Have fun experimenting!

### Meskla Chamoru Fusion Bistro

Meskla Chamoru Fusion Bistro is located in Hagåtña, the Capitol of Guam. Corporate Executive Chef and Owner Peter Duenas, a classically trained chef who worked in renown restaurants, hotels, and resort chains for over 25 years, opened Meskla in March 2009 - the first 'Chamoru fusion bistro' of its kind. In the Chamorro language, the word "meskla" means "to mix" or "mixture." At Meskla, you can expect to enjoy island hospitality at its finest and a true taste of modern Chamoru Cuisine...a taste of local home traditions but with a fusion of flavors and style. Visit Meskla's Facebook page at facebook.com/MesklaGuam and follow @Meskla on Instagram.

### Directions



## Gollai Áppan

In this edition of Cook Like a Chamorro, Chef Gary Cruz of Matua's Bar & Grill shows viewers how to make Gollai Áppan sweet potato and banana. Later in the video Chef Gary gets creative and transforms traditional gollai áppan into a modern dessert.

Gollai áppan is a method of boiling starchy foods such as taro or breadfruit in coconut milk. "Gollai" is the Chamorro for word "vegetable" and "áppan" means "to dry up; to evaporate."

### Ingredients (gollai áppan sweet potato or banana):

- 1-1/2 cups of sweet potato or cooking banana, peeled and chopped into bite-sized pieces (You can also use regular sweet banana)
- 1 cup fresh or canned coconut milk
- 1 tbsp sugar
- 1/4 tsp salt

### Directions:

Simply combine all ingredients in a medium saucepan and heat over medium-high. Simmer 3 to 5 minutes or until the sweet potato/cooking banana is soft.

Watch our Cook Like a Chamorro video to see how Chef Gary uses traditional gollai áppan to create sweet potato pie and banana turnover.

**Matua's Bar & Grill** offers a daily Chamorro lunch buffet and is located in the ITC Building in Tamuning. You can learn more about this new Chamorro restaurant on Facebook (MatuasBarandGrillGUAM) and on Instagram @matua.bar.grill).

### Directions



## Boonie Stomps Guam

INFORMATION PROVIDED BY  
GUAM BOONIE STOMPERS

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 9:00 AM in the Center Court of Chamorro Village in Hagatna. The cost is \$5.00 for hikers over 17. Children must be accompanied by a responsible adult. Hikers should provide their own transportation. Guam's trails are not developed. Weather conditions can make the hikes more difficult than described. No reservations required.

**For more information:**  
www.facebook.com/GuamBoonieStompersInc or call 787-4238.



Mt. Alifan

<b>July 25</b>	<i>Difficult</i>
<b>Invasion Hike to Tony's Falls</b>	<i>4 hours for 2 miles</i>
<b>Tony's Falls Only</b>	<i>Easy</i>
	<i>1 hour for .5 miles</i>

The Invasion hike retraces the trail of the US 3rd Marines from Asan Beach up the hills and cliffs to Nimitz Hill and the Asan Bay Overlook Memorial. We then hike the open ridge down to Tony's Falls for jumping and swimming. The Tony's Falls Only hike takes a short trail directly to the falls and is perfect for small children and novice hikers.

**Bring:** 3 quarts water, get wet shoes, gloves, swim suit, sun screen, insect repellent, snacks.

**Special conditions:** Sword grass, steep hills.

<b>August 1</b>	<i>Medium/Difficult</i>
<b>Mt Alifan Battlefield/Lookout</b>	<i>3 hours for 1 mile</i>

We visit the Southern battlefield from the Liberation of Guam in 1944 on the slopes of Mt. Alifan. We will visit foxholes, fighting trenches, gun positions, tunnels, and caves, all the while enjoying the great view. The adventurous can continue on to the mountaintop lookout, with fantastic views.

**Bring:** 1 or 3 quarts water, flashlight, gloves, sun screen, insect repellent, lunch, and camera.

**Special conditions:** Low sword grass, crawling in tunnels, mosquitoes, uphill climbs.

<b>August 8</b>	<i>Medium</i>
<b>Tinago Falls</b>	<i>3 hours for 3 miles</i>

We trek to a great scenic area on Guam, a series of waterfalls and cascades in the southeast. There is something for everyone to enjoy, from tiny tots playing in the cascades or to jumping, waterfall showers, and a rock slide for the more adventurous. There's even a hammock for the more sedate.

**Bring:** 2 quarts water, hiking shoes, gloves, swim suit, sun screen, insect repellent, lunch, and camera.

**Special conditions:**

Possible mud, a short steep section.

### Stomp Tips:

- 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) When hiking, lots of little snacks are better than one big meal.
- 5) Always carry a well stocked personal first aid kit.
- 6) Carry a couple of extra shoelaces in your first aid kit. They have many uses.
- 7) Always bring a small flashlight in case you get lost, or delayed. Save your phone battery for calls.
- 8) Do not hike alone and let someone know where you are going and your return time.

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# COMICS CORNER



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

**Elsa**  
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**Femal**

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

## NEW HOURS

TUES-THURS 5PM - 10PM  
FRIDAY 5PM - 12AM  
SATURDAY 5PM - 12AM  
SUNDAY & MONDAY CLOSED

TUM'N. GU



# Find treasure with geocaching

BY RACHEL KERSEY,  
STRIPES GUAM

Childhood is often filled with dreams of adventures in faraway places and quests for hidden treasure. Unfortunately, as we age, we learn to put away juvenile dreams and bury innocent imaginations in favor of reality. But geocaching is bringing fantasy to life for kids and adults alike, and new technology is making it easier than ever!

## What is geocaching?

Geocaching is a real-life treasure hunt using a GPS or a GPS-enabled device, such as a smartphone or smartwatch. Simply enter in the coordinates and follow the device to a location where some sort of box or capsule is strategically hidden. Inside is a present, token or message. The finder is welcome to either leave the item in the box for the next person, or take it and replace it with another small token or present for whoever comes behind him. It's an adventurous gift exchange!

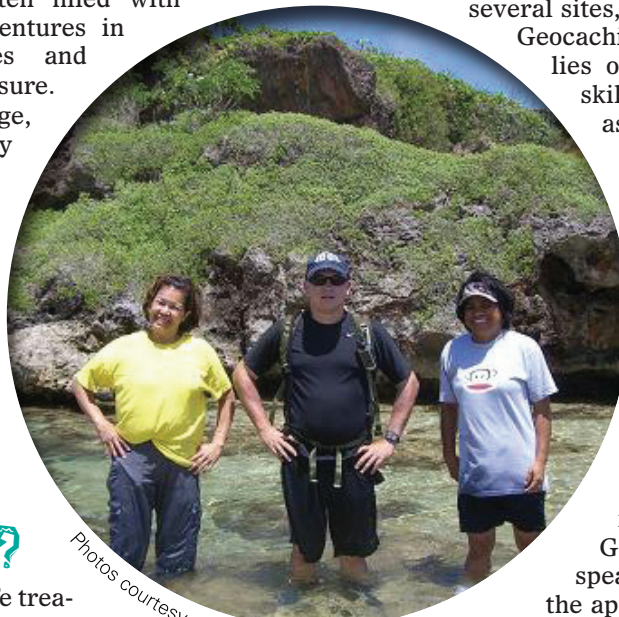
To get started, you will need to know where geocaching trails are. There are several great sites to find geocaching trails. For a great review of several sites, visit Top Ten Reviews. Geocaching is enjoyed by families of small kids and even skilled climbers or hikers, as the hikes are rated by skill and accessibility. Therefore they can be super easy or extremely challenging.

## Apps

Several apps can also connect your smartphone's GPS with geocaching coordinates. Here are some of the highest rated:

**Geocaching by Groundspeak:** Rated four stars, the app is great for beginners and offers 18 different types of geocaches. You can also share your adventure with others by logging a "Found it!"

■ **CACHESENSE:** One of the best parts of this app is its ability to sync with your Geocaching.com account. This simplifies the entire process and gives geocachers options on which app's interface they prefer. It comes with a map, list of locations, compass, databases, list of recent finds and a personal profile.



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CacheSense is great for the weekend cacher as well as the hardcore geocacher.

**C:GEO:** This free app doesn't use the Geocaching.com interface, so if you don't have a Geocaching.com premium membership, you won't be limited by the restrictions placed on standard members. In addition, there is a service called Go 4 Cache which allows users to see the locations of other c:geo users. However, this app does have fewer features than the more expensive apps, but it's fine for those who are new to the activity.

**LOOKING4CACHE PRO:** Looking4Cache Pro is capable of operating multiple accounts, which allows geocaching teams to log their finds simultaneously. If you recently converted from Android to iPhone, you will find that this app eases the transition as it is very similar to Android apps in terms of flexibility and functionality.



**GEOCACHING BUDDY:** Geocaching Buddy is a handy little app that remembers every clue found, calculates new routes, and can even remember where you parked so you can return to your car after finding the cache. You can post a log and a photo, create a photo album, and even back-up your information via email. If you'd like to see how it works, you can watch the demo on YouTube or on the Geocaching Buddy support website.

**MAALOO GEOCACHING:** This app is great for newbies and pros alike. It has features to help users make notes and chart their progress. And, both online and offline access to several maps plus a transparent compass can make navigation much simpler. Geocaches can also be filtered by difficulty, terrain, type, owner and name.

### Treasures on Guam

There are a few hundred on Guam, according to [guamgeocachers.com](http://guamgeocachers.com), and there are about 30 such caches located on Saipan and some on Rota and Tinian, too.

**GEOCACHING PLUS:** This app is very popular among Windows Phone users and works well with Geocaching.com as well as Garmin. With a 4.5 star rating, Geocaching Plus improves your geocaching experience by allowing you to view caches on a live map, see details of the cache like its description, logbook, and photos, and pin caches to your desktop. The icons are also more modern, which makes for a more aesthetically pleasing experience. This app is well liked for its accuracy, simplicity and expediency.



## Memories with STARS AND STRIPES Pacific

Share your Memories with Stars and Stripes Pacific!

Your photos/stories will appear on the Stars and Stripes Pacific 75th Anniversary Website, [75.stripes.com](http://75.stripes.com).



## Stripes Sports Trivia

Every sport has those records that are just plain astonishing. Numbers that every time you see them, you wonder how it was possible for a player to accomplish that once, and as far as breaking it? No chance. The NFL record for sacks in a single game is seven. Yes, seven sacks, one guy. Which Hall of Fame linebacker, who was tragically killed after a car crash in 2000, holds this untouchable record?

Answer

Derrick Thomas

## SUDOKU

Difficulty: Easy

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

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.

Answers to Previous Sudoku:

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

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## Crossword

by Margie E. Burke

### ACROSS

- Down in the dumps
- Acted like
- Loses color
- Litter's littlest
- Quaker's "you"
- Say "y'all," say
- Math computation
- Youngster
- Firing place
- Many May babies
- Wrongdoing
- Olympic lake in NY
- Atlantic
- Small night bird
- Materials for Renoir
- Like some music
- Web developer's concern
- Kind of sign
- Playfully shy
- Acrobat's attire
- Phone's ABC
- Anagram for "ruse"
- Caesar's hello
- Perfume sampler
- Superfluous
- Ball VIP
- no evil
- Figure out
- Field laborer of old
- Maine capital
- Color of honey
- Right on the map?
- Diving bird
- Get a whiff of
- Smart-
- Surrounded by
- Astronaut Ride
- Kin's partner
- Count (on)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14				15				16				
17				18				19				
20				21			22	23				
		24				25		26				
27	28				29		30			31	32	33
34				35		36			37			
38				39		40			41		42	
43			44		45			46		47		
48				49			50		51			
			52			53		54				
55	56	57			58		59				60	61
62					63	64			65			
66					67				68			
69					70				71			

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- Fishing item
- Out of work
- Amazon, e.g.
- Room at the top?
- Prefix with "therapy"
- Comics shriek
- Consider to be
- Iran, once
- Finder of a magic lamp
- Place to wait
- Result of honing
- Farmer's purchase
- Birth-related
- BMW, e.g.
- Swell, as the abdomen
- Come to pass
- Which person's?
- Shepherd's locale
- Annoying
- Spa handout
- Siesta sound
- Hard to lift
- In vitro items
- Fix, as software
- Monroe's co-star in "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes"
- Worldly
- Almost
- Child's china
- Like Rembrandt
- Mountain route
- Austen heroine
- Son of Adam
- Boat-building wood
- Work hard
- Opie's dad
- Frazier foe

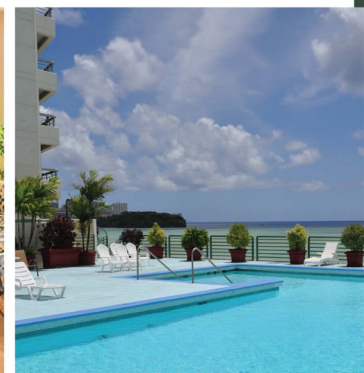
### Answers to Previous Crossword:

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



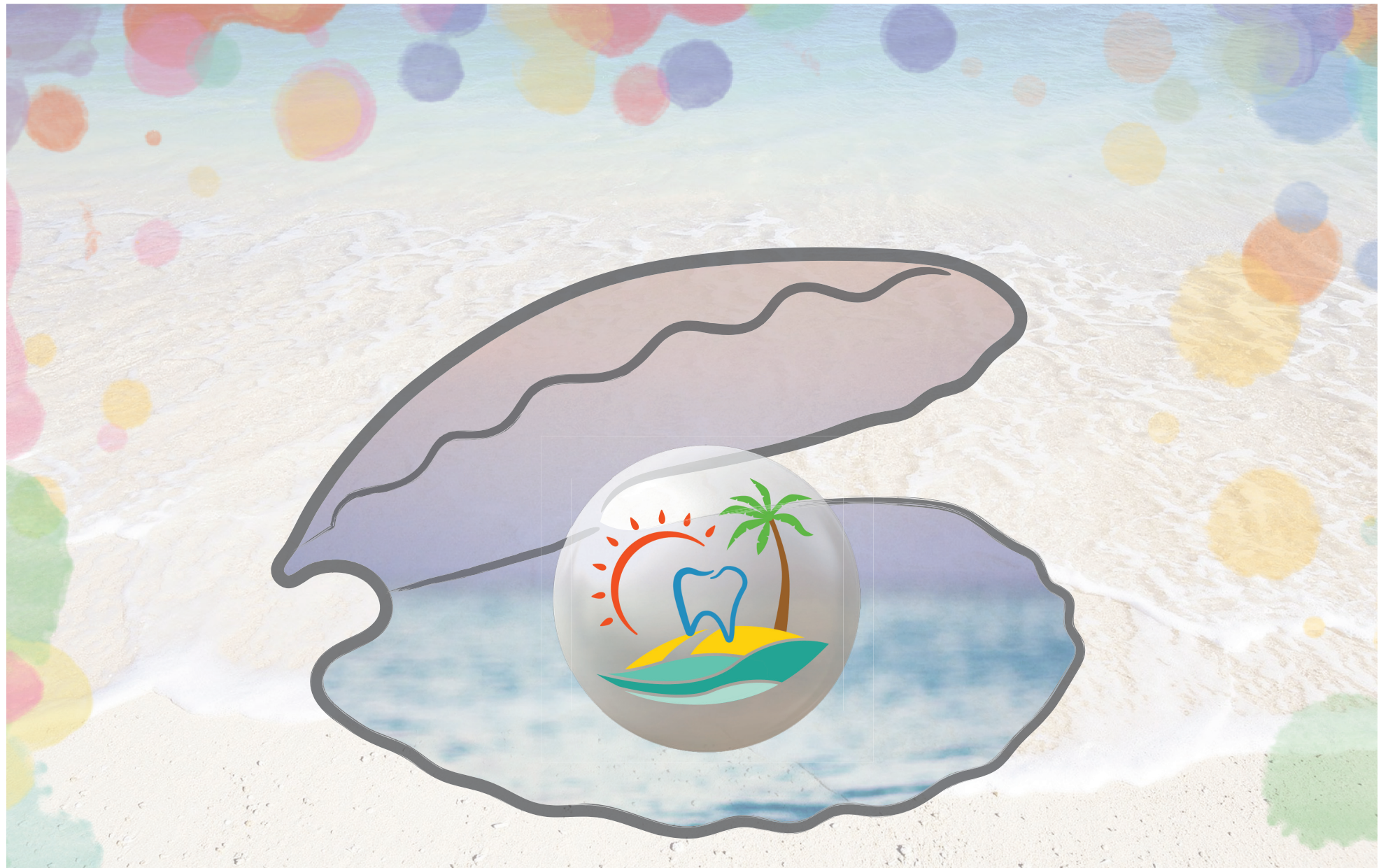
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GUAM EDITION

FRIDAY, JULY 24, 2020



## Ready to go in harm's way

Long-derided littoral combat ships flex their muscles in Pacific

Page 2

Lt. Mary Browning, assigned to the littoral combat ship USS Gabrielle Giffords, monitors the ship's radar while standing watch on the bridge July 2 in the South China Sea. Once criticized for their cost and light armaments, the ships are proving to be valuable in small ports and congested sea lanes that are problematic for larger ships.

BRENTON POYSER/U.S. Navy



## COVER STORY

# Littoral combat ships prove their mettle during deployment

By SETH ROBSON  
*Stars and Stripes*

TOKYO — A standoff this spring between China and Malaysia in the South China Sea was a chance for the U.S. Navy's littoral combat ships to prove their mettle.

The USS Gabrielle Giffords and the USS Montgomery helped stave off Chinese intimidation of a Malaysian-contracted drillship — the West Capella — during April and May in disputed waters near Borneo.

The high-tech vessels were part of U.S. efforts to maintain a monthlong presence near the drillship, which had been approached by a flotilla of Chinese coast guard and paramilitary vessels.

A few years ago, lightly armed and experimental littoral combat ships might not have been trusted for such a high-profile standoff.

"The story of this ship is one that makes me ashamed and embarrassed, as a former Navy person and as a person who's responsible to the taxpayers of my state," the late Arizona Sen. John McCain said of the vessels in 2010.

The ships were criticized for their cost, lighter armament and lower survivability standard than some larger ships. The first LCS's — the USS Freedom and USS Independence — had an expected price tag of about \$220 million but came in at \$637 million and \$704 million, respectively, according to The Baltimore Sun.

A decade later, the Navy says it has tweaked the vessels' design and honed the way it operates them during rotational deployments.

The Montgomery, for example, completed a 12-month rotation to Singapore and returned to its homeport of San Diego last month, Capt. Ann McCann, commodore of Destroyer Squadron 7, said in a statement emailed to Stars and Stripes on June 19.

The ship made numerous port calls and participated in the first maritime drill between the U.S. and the Association of South East Asian Nations alongside seven foreign navies, she said.

The Gabrielle Giffords is still on its maiden rotational deployment to Singapore, she said.

Since arriving in September, the ship has drilled with various foreign navies and participated in the Pacific Griffin exercise near Guam in October. Pacific Griffin, which included multiple live-fire missile drills, is the U.S. and Singapore's most complex naval exercise to date, McCann said.

"Both ships have also conducted specific freedom of navigation operations to include in vicinity of the Spratly Islands," she said,

referring to contested territory that China has been militarizing in recent years.

## Made by Austal

The Montgomery and the Gabrielle Giffords were built by Australian-owned shipbuilder Austal USA.

The company has delivered its ships on budget and on schedule for several years, Austal's customer affairs and business development director, Lawrence Ryder, said in a telephone interview June 8.

Austal has delivered 11 out of 19 contracted littoral combat ships with more on the way, he said. Lockheed Martin has delivered a dozen of 16 littoral combat ships it has contracted to build for the Navy.

"The Navy likes operating them," Ryder said. "They have done very well in freedom-of-navigation operations."

The ships' offensive capabilities have been boosted with organic weapons suites, including surface-to-surface, over-the-horizon naval strike missiles, he added.

"They can get somewhere fast, launch their missiles and reposition," he said.

The Navy can't afford to buy as many large ships as it needs, Ryder added.

"The alternative is to buy more small ships that give you a distributed force," he said, adding that the ships were never meant to replace destroyers but rather to free them up for other missions.

Littoral combat ships are fast and agile surface combatants, optimized for operating in shallow water as well as open ocean, McCann said.

"Mission packages allow for a tailored capability to meet specific mission needs, and provide flexibility for a wide array of missions," she said.

The Gabrielle Giffords is similar in size to ships operated by many other countries' navies and coast guards, making it easier to train, work alongside and build relationships with them, McCann said.

The ship deployed with the Naval Strike Missile and MQ-8B Fire Scout vertical takeoff drones.

"Those capabilities greatly increase both the [littoral combat ship's] and U.S. Navy's lethality and capability," she said.

Littoral combat ships' ability to operate in shallow water provides a significant tactical advantage and access to vital choke points and ports where larger warships are unable to go, she said.

## Congested areas

There are more than 50,000 islands between the Philippines



PHOTOS BY BRENTON POYSER/U.S. Navy

An MH-60S Seahawk helicopter prepares to land on the flight deck of the littoral combat ship USS Gabrielle Giffords in the South China Sea last month. "They can get somewhere fast, launch their missiles and reposition," said Lawrence Ryder, an official with shipbuilder Austal USA.



Sailors assigned to Independence-variant littoral combat ship USS Gabrielle Giffords stand watch on the bridge June 18.

and Sri Lanka with shallow water and small ports limiting traditional ship operations and access, McCann said.

"In that arc, less than fifty ports are accessible to larger ships, including destroyers," she said.

The littoral combat ships, with a top speed of more than 50 mph and a draft of less than 13 feet, are ideal for operations in dynamic and congested sea lanes, straits and archipelagos of South and Southeast Asia, she said.

The difficulty of navigating the waters was illustrated by the collision of the guided-missile destroyer USS John S. McCain with a Liberian-flagged tanker, the Alnic MC, in the Strait of Malacca near Singapore on Aug. 21, 2017.

Littoral combat ships' ability to dock in smaller ports makes it easy to conduct maintenance on the go, when required, McCann said.

The Navy has improved the way it operates the vessels over

the years.

"We have optimized our logistics and maintenance methods based on lessons learned from previous [littoral combat ship] deployments," she said.

The Navy has added a maintenance team to provide 24/7 support for deployed ships in Singapore, McCann said.

"[Logistics Group Western Pacific] is able to provide the right maintenance, at the right time, and in the right port, enabling the [littoral combat ship] platform to meet tasking," she said.

The Navy has streamlined the way it crews the ships with sailors rotating every four to five months. When they're not on the ship, crews train with other vessels or simulators back in San Diego, she said.

## Naval Strike Missile

The Gabrielle Giffords was the first deployed littoral combat ship to successfully launch a Naval Strike Missile when it fired one

during Pacific Griffin, she said.

The missile greatly increases the ships' lethality, McCann said.

"This precision strike weapon can find and destroy enemy ships at distances up to 100 nautical miles away, flies at sea-skimming altitude, has terrain-following capability and uses an advanced seeker for precise targeting in challenging conditions," she said.

The ships also have the 57-mm MK 110 medium-caliber gun, which can engage known surface threats, McCann said.

They carry the MH-60S Seahawk helicopter equipped with the AGM-114N Hellfire missile. The Fire Scout drones can laser designate targets for the missiles, she said.

"Within the Indo-Pacific, in the coming years, we look forward to welcoming multiple rotationally deployed littoral combat ships to the region," she said.

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## MILITARY

# Sailors share Navy bias stories with new task force

By CAITLIN M. KENNEY  
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — Before Lt. Destini Henderson was nominated for the U.S. Naval Academy, she experienced her first barrier to her military career from her own congressman.

“I remember meeting with my congressional representative in Huntsville, Texas — that’s where I graduated from high school. And he made it pretty clear that he did not believe that I belonged in the Naval Academy. So my very first barrier was from my hometown,” she said.

Henderson, of the US Naval Academy Minority Association, was one of several sailors to speak about her experiences with racism and sexism as a Black woman in the Navy during the first roundtable discussion with the leadership of a new task force that aims to address disruptive bias.

Task Force One Navy was established June 29 to recommend reforms in nine key areas, including recruiting, promotion, health care and military justice. Its creation follows other Defense Department efforts to address diversity in the military in response to the national dialogue over the past month about systemic racism in the United States and police brutality.

The task force members are officers, enlisted personnel and civilians. It is led by Rear Adm. Alvin Holsey, an African American. Force Master Chief Huben Phillips, an African American, is the deputy, and the civilian adviser is Jane Roberts, who is Hispanic. All three listened to sailors’ stories during the discussion.

The leaders heard from sailors about racism, sexism and homophobia in the Navy and their recommendations for changes the task force could explore.

Henderson told the task force to assume that there are barriers everywhere for minorities. She described how her peers at the Naval Academy heckled her when she put her long hair into cornrows. And how the lack of representation at flight school meant she was one of two Black students to graduate.

Henderson was also “the only one that people could turn to” when sailors had questions or wanted to debate race and women’s issues.

“Those are things that maybe people don’t see as barriers, but it definitely loaded up my plate a lot more than it needed to be. And a lot more than my counterparts — white male counterparts, white female counterparts — had to deal with for sure,” she said.

Henderson said she wanted to see the task force work on providing education about the history of minorities in the Navy and acknowledgement of their service.

“I think education could absolutely go a long way. I remember taking naval history at the Naval Academy, but I didn’t hear anything about minorities in

the military, in naval history or anything like that,” she said.

Lt. Cmdr. Rolando Machado, of the Association of Naval Services Officers and a Naval Academy graduate, described his experiences as a Hispanic man who could not fully express his true self during his Navy career.

Machado said he was raised in Miami and grew up in an environment where Hispanics were the majority. When he arrived at the Naval Academy where Hispanics are not the majority, he said he felt like “a fish out of water” and was not prepared for how the culture there would impact him.

“Going to the Naval Academy I realized I couldn’t quite be as passionate or excited or loud as I was in Miami, because that was perceived differently. It was perceived negatively,” he said.

The experiences at the academy pushed him to start trying to figure out his Navy leadership style while also expressing himself, he said.

Machado spoke about the time he was berated by a chief petty officer for speaking Spanish with other sailors during a deployment, and that it was implied he was being un-American. He said it made him believe that expressing himself too much would “diminish” his ability to lead.

Another time, a sailor told him



MICHAEL E. WAGONER/U.S. Navy

**The creation of Task Force One Navy follows other Defense Department efforts to address diversity in the military.**

that he was “not even Hispanic” because he did not listen to Spanish music or speak Spanish, which is untrue. That experience also made him realize he could not stop being himself.

“I cannot change who I am to lead, I have to figure out how I lead using my style, but within the service. That’s a long time, three years in the Navy to start figuring that out. I’m already behind the power curve,” he said.

Sailors want to be able to talk openly about these issues early in their careers, Machado told the task force. “Our culture within the Navy is a Navy culture, and the assimilation does have to occur to Navy culture. And accordingly, Navy culture needs to acclimatize itself to our diversity,” he said.

Yeoman 1st Class Julius Leaks told the task force’s leadership

that if the Navy is going to train sailors on the inclusion of sex, religion or race, “we first have to teach empathy.”

“I think if the Navy focuses on teaching empathy ... sailors can learn or get a sense of how other sailors feel in their shoes,” he said.

Yeoman 2nd Class Thomas Mahoney, who has faced discrimination for being part of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender community, agreed with Leaks, adding that the Navy should teach all people to be more empathic when they join the service.

“Try to come up with an altruistic approach that takes into account everybody and has the utmost consideration of whatever is going to be taught ... things that will emphasize humanity, because at the end of the day, that’s what we are, we’re human,” Mahoney told the task force leaders.

The first report from the task force will be submitted to Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Mike Gilday by the end of July, and a final report is due by December.

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Twitter: @caitlinmkenney

Lt. Destini Henderson

**“I think education could absolutely go a long way. I remember taking naval history at the Naval Academy, but I didn’t hear anything about minorities in the military, in naval history or anything like that.”**

## Group sues VA over alleged use of toxic herbicides on Guam

By SETH ROBSON  
*Stars and Stripes*

Veterans who say troops were exposed to harmful chemicals on Guam, including the Vietnam-era defoliant Agent Orange, are suing the government.

Military Veterans Advocacy, a Louisiana-based group, filed suit against Secretary of Veterans Affairs Robert Wilkie in a Washington court July 10 seeking a review of his decision not to issue the rules that would help veterans’ claims for herbicide exposure on Guam, the group said in a statement Monday.

In its lawsuit the group decries the decision, outlined in a May 12 letter signed by Paul Lawrence, the VA’s undersecretary for benefits, that conceded the use of commercial herbicides on Guam.

The letter stated that “despite the presence of chemical components similar to tactical herbicides, injuries resulting from commercial herbicides were not compensable,” the lawsuit states.

The VA went on to dismiss the presence

of tactical herbicides on Guam, because of a lack of shipping documentation, the lawsuit states.

The advocacy group’s chairman, former Navy commander John Wells, in the statement said the goal is to force the government to address toxic exposure of troops in the Pacific.

“We have definitive proof of the presence of dioxin and other toxic chemicals on Guam 40 years after the last known use,” he said. “We also have affidavits, that we have provided the VA, from personnel who sprayed the herbicide.”

A report released May 11 by the National Veterans Legal Services Program and the Veterans Legal Services Clinic at Yale Law School states veterans who served on Guam between 1962 and 1975 meet the legal standard for exposure and may have valid claims to service-related disabilities.

However, the VA disputed the report’s findings in a May 19 email to Stars and Stripes.

“There is no evidence agent orange

was ever used on Guam,” wrote VA press secretary Christina Noel.

VA spokesman Randal Noller said in an email that the agency doesn’t comment on pending litigation.

“However, VA encourages all Veterans who feel their military service has affected their health to submit a claim, which will be adjudicated on a case-by-case basis and based on all relevant evidence, as well as any materials submitted by the Veteran,” he said.

The advocacy group cited another recent report prepared for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency that analyzed soil samples taken in October 2019. According to the statement, the report noted: “It is probable that TCDD dioxin congener concentrations detected in soils are associated with chlorinated herbicides.”

The soil samples were taken at locations identified by former Military Veterans Advocacy board member Brian Moyer, who also founded the Agent Orange Survivors of Guam group. Moyer served as a Marine on Guam and remembers the

spraying, according to the statement.

Agent Orange is an herbicide that was widely used during the Vietnam War that has been linked to cancer, birth defects and other illnesses.

The advocacy group’s executive director, former Air Force officer Rob Maness, who also served on Guam, said in the statement: “It is a shame that veterans have to fight for their benefits when the vast weight of the evidence indicates exposure. The VA’s denial was simply irrational.”

Wells, who along with Moyer has advocated in Congress and with the VA to provide coverage, predicted that the court would be sympathetic to the veterans.

“Unfortunately, the VA has a well-deserved reputation of delaying and denying claims until the veteran dies,” Wells said. “Hopefully the court will force them to do their job.”

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## MILITARY

# B-1 bombers deploy to Guam amid drills in South China Sea

By WYATT OLSON  
Stars and Stripes

The Air Force deployed two B-1B bombers to Guam last week as the Navy continued its dual-aircraft carrier operations in the contested South China Sea.

Both services described the operations as routine, but they follow a recent U.S. State Department announcement explicitly embracing a 2016 decision by an international tribunal that rejected China's claim of sovereignty over certain reefs and isles in the South China Sea.

The pair of Lancer bombers — from the 37th Expeditionary Bomb Squadron, 28th Wing at Ellsworth Air Force Base, S.D. — will conduct bilateral bomber task force operations out of Andersen Air Force Base, the Air Force said in a statement.

They will train with allies, partner nations and other U.S. services. The deployment also supports “strategic deterrence missions to reinforce the rules-based international order in the region,” the Air Force said.

About 170 airmen also deployed from Ellsworth to Guam in support of the bomber mission, according to the statement.

The Air Force did not disclose the intended length of the deployment.

Before arriving on Guam, the bombers conducted intercept training over the Sea of Japan with F-15J fighter jets belonging to the Japanese Air Self-Defense Force, the Air Force said.

B-1s were last deployed to Guam in May when they flew in from Dyess Air Force Base, Texas.

Meanwhile, the more than 12,000 sailors and Marines aboard the vessels of the USS Nimitz and USS Ronald Reagan

carrier strike groups continued training July 17 in the South China Sea, where they have been operating since early July.

China conducted drills July 1-5 near the sea's Paracel Islands, which both China and Vietnam claim as their own.

The Pentagon issued a statement at the time calling China's actions “counterproductive to efforts at easing tensions and maintaining stability” in the sea.

The current operations by the Nimitz and Reagan strike groups “continue to demonstrate operational commitment to allies and partners in the region, providing combatant commanders with significant operational flexibility if needed in response to regional situations,” the Navy said in a statement.

“Nimitz and Reagan Carrier Strike Groups are operating in the South China Sea, wherever international law allows, to reinforce our commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific, a rules based international order, and to our allies and partners in the region,” Rear Adm. Jim Kirk, commander of Nimitz Carrier Strike Group, said in the statement.

The tactical drills focus on the groups' offensive and defensive capabilities, the statement said.

“These carrier strike groups incorporate the capabilities of embarked fixed and rotary wing aircraft, Aegis guided-missile cruisers and destroyers, and attack submarines,” the statement said. “This opportunity for two carrier strike groups to train and operate together in the region provides combatant commanders with significant operational flexibility and capabilities that only the U.S. Navy can bring.”

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CHRISTINA BENNETT/U.S. Air Force

Two B-1B Lancers conduct a flyover before landing at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, on July 17.



PHOTOS BY NORMAN LLAMAS/Stars and Stripes

Staff Sgt. Enrique Salas, the Combat Arms Instructor for the 31st Security Forces Squadron at Aviano Air Base, Italy, instructs airmen on the proper engagement of their weapons, prior to a marksmanship qualification session with M4 carbines and the M18 handgun.

## Air Force tests new service pistol at Aviano Air Base

By NORMAN LLAMAS  
Stars and Stripes

AVIANO AIR BASE, Italy — Airmen gave high marks to the Air Force's new service pistol, the SIG Sauer M18, which they've been training with at this base in northern Italy since last month.

The M18 is “more modern, easier to use and easier to understand for an inexperienced shooter” than the M9 Beretta, which has been in service for 30 years, said Capt. Taylor Buraczewski, officer in charge of supply and logistics for the 31st Security Forces Squadron.

It also has “a much lighter and crisper trigger and ... balances much better than the old M9,” Buraczewski said, calling the 9 mm M18 “an amazing evolution for us as a career field.”

The M18 was chosen as the Air Force's new service pistol as part of the Reconstitute Defender Initiative, a program that aims to modernize and improve weapon systems, according to previous reports from the Air Force Small Arms Program Office.

With small, medium or large handgrips, the M18 can be customized to individual shooters, and because it's made of polymer, not metal, it's lighter than the M9.

“I really like it,” said Senior Airman Jaclyn R. Edwards, a monitoring facility operator assigned to the 31st SFS. “It fires ... much smoother than the M9, maybe due to the fact that the M18 lacks a double safety pull.”

Staff Sgt. Brandee Hahn, a combat arms instructor assigned to the 31st SFS, said the pistol “fits better in airmen's hands, it's more tactical and it just fits our needs better than the M9.”

Although many airmen at Aviano were full of praise for the M18, the Pentagon had some reservations before fielding the weapon.

Testing conducted in 2017 found that the M18 could fire accidentally if dropped and sometimes ejected a live round along with a spent cartridge case during normal use, said a report released in January 2018 by the Pentagon's Office of the Director, Operational Test and Evaluation.

SIG Sauer fixed the problems before shipping the guns to the military, media reports said.

Airmen training with the pistol identified other issues, including that the M18 lacks a visual aid on the safety lever, to let users know if it's “on safe or in the fire position,” said Staff Sgt. Enrique Salas, a



Senior Airman Jaclyn R. Edwards, a monitoring facility operator with the 31st Security Forces Squadron at Aviano Air Base, Italy, reloads her M18 service pistol during a marksmanship qualification session July 14.

combat arms instructor with the 31st SFS.

Its predecessor indicated the safety was off with a red mark, but “with the M18, you have to remember that ‘up’ is safe and ‘down’ is to fire,” he said.

The M18 also “tends to pull a little to the left,” he added, but overall he rated it as “way better than the M9, and it's easier to teach how to fire it.”

The Army was the first service to use the M18 and its sister handgun, the M17, starting in 2017. Today, each U.S. military service uses the pistols.

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## MILITARY

# ‘We are all angry’

## After death of Spc. Vanessa Guillen, female veterans take action to stop discrimination in the military

By ROSE L. THAYER  
*Stars and Stripes*

AUSTIN, Texas — No justice, no enlistment.

That’s the call from a group of female veterans in the wake of the slaying of Fort Hood soldier Spc. Vanessa Guillen, whose remains were found mutilated and buried at the hands of another soldier miles from the central Texas base where she served.

Guillen, 20, was killed April 22 during the workday in an arms room at the base. Her body was moved in a plastic box from the base and hidden near a river more than 20 miles away, according to federal court documents. One suspect, a fellow soldier, is dead, and another is in federal custody. Her remains were found June 30 and confirmed as hers by the Army on July 6.

“We are all angry and we all want to see change,” said Stephanie Gattas, a Navy veteran in San Antonio.

Gattas joined a group of 20 female veterans to write a letter outlining demands to improve the “systematic failures” that they claim led to a military in which victims of sexual harassment are afraid to report other service members and an Army in which a soldier can be murdered on base and it takes more than two months to solve the crime.

“It is our job as women veterans to support our sister in arms at this time. Although her death was tragic, it’s leading to change,” Gattas said. “This is in the name of all those men and women who have not been able to come forward and detail their sexual assault. This is for the women of the past who’ve been murdered and raped who have not been able to tell their story. For all those women and men who are still not accounted for.”

The women want an enlistment boycott until their demands are met. They are calling “for young Americans to refuse to enlist or accept a commission into any branch of the armed forces until these demands are met and the systemic problems with sexual assault and sexual harassment in military culture are effectively addressed,” according to the letter.

The demands, which match those made by Guillen’s family, include a congressional investigation into the circumstances of Guillen’s disappearance and the firing of the soldier’s entire chain of command, including the Fort Hood commander. They also want the sprawling Army base to be closed. More than 36,000 service members are assigned to the base, according to its public affairs office.

“For over two months, the disturbing circumstances surrounding Spc. Guillen’s disappearance and the environment of sexual harassment she endured in her unit prior to her murder have gripped the attention of various communities across the country and incited a resounding need for the utmost accountability and attention,” according to the letter,



GODOFREDO A. VASQUEZ, HOUSTON CHRONICLE/AP

**Juan Cruz, the boyfriend of soldier Vanessa Guillen, kneels in front of a mural honoring her July 5 in Houston.**

which is addressed to Defense Secretary Mark Esper, Army Secretary Ryan McCarthy and leadership in Congress.

Gattas said she knows the demands and the descriptions of gender and racial discrimination in the letter are controversial.

“We have to remove ourselves from our comfort to see change. We can’t move the needle forward if we don’t talk about it,” she said.

More than 3,000 female veterans have signed the letter since it was released online July 4. The group continues to collect signatures and will send the letter after they have vetted each woman’s military service, said retired Marine Corps Staff Sgt. Tristeza Ordex-Ramirez, another veteran behind the letter.

### Service of Latinas

The League of United Latin American Citizens, known as LULAC, has made a similar call to boycott military enlistment. Domingo Garcia, national president of the group, issued “a predator alert for families” and he said they should not allow their “daughters to enlist in the Army, since we see they cannot be protected.”

“I encourage every young girl out there who’s thought about joining the military to stand up and say, ‘You will not have me until [Guillen] gets justice,’” Ordex-Ramirez said.

It’s a call she said she doesn’t make lightly, because she is proud of her service and the life that it created for her. Similar to

Guillen, she is the daughter of Mexican immigrants.

“Growing up, we worked in the fields,” said Ordex-Ramirez, who lives in Orlando, Fla. “That’s what my family did. I would see these older Mexicans out there picking berries in the freaking heat in the middle of the summer and it broke my heart.”

It was then that she decided she had to do something in her life to pull her family out of poverty and provide for her parents. So she enlisted in the Marines.

Hispanic women who join the military are more likely than other groups to use the resources afforded them through military service to move themselves from poverty into the middle class, said Harry Franqui-Rivera, an associate professor of history at Bloomfield College in New Jersey. An Army veteran, his research includes Hispanic military service.

“I think it’s really important to understand that Latinas, they actually move up through the ranks faster than Latino males,” he said. “Even those that go through the Reserve or National Guard path, they improve their socioeconomic [standing] substantially.”

Though that service isn’t without a price.

“I have interviewed veterans from different wars. The majority of them say they experienced racism mostly because of accented English or having trouble speaking in English,” Franqui-Rivera said, noting he also experienced racism in the Army. “All say it was difficult to

navigate a different culture. Not just the military, but a military that is also white.”

About 16% of soldiers in the active-duty Army identify as Hispanic, according to a 2019 report by the service on its demographics. About 15% of soldiers are women.

### System fails victims

Ordex-Ramirez said when she reported her own sexual harassment in the Marine Corps, she had to tell her story over and over to white men. The first man, her gunnery sergeant, said, “Maybe you shouldn’t look so good.”

“That is not a proper response,” Ordex-Ramirez said. “That experience made me not ever want to say anything again.”

The boycott is a “good way of recognizing, ‘You need us. We’ve been serving and we need to be protected,’” Franqui-Rivera said.

Once the Army responds positively, he said he believes LULAC will go back to supporting military service.

The women behind the letter agree.

“We are going to witness a very pivotal turn in history for everything being brought to the forefront today,” said Gattas, who has worked with victims of military sexual trauma through the nonprofit that she founded, the Pink Berets. She’s been disheartened during the years to see women who’ve fought for decades to change the systemic issues of the military that allow for sexual harassment to continue in the

ranks. But Gattas said she’s hopeful that this is the moment for change.

Despite years of increased training and awareness campaigns for the military’s Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention Program, the Pentagon reported there were 7,825 sexual assault reports involving service members as victims or subjects in 2019. That was a 3% rise from the previous year. The military received 1,021 formal sexual harassment complaints, a 10% increase from 2018, according to the Pentagon report on the subject released in April.

Some credit for the increase is given to victim confidence in reporting, military officials have said. But results of the most recent Defense Department Workplace and Gender Relations Survey of Active Duty Members showed the estimated prevalence of sexual assault rose in the Army to 6,500 soldiers in 2018, compared to 5,200 estimated in 2016. Because the report is conducted every other year, the increase cited in the 2019 report can’t be characterized as an increase in assaults, according to the Pentagon.

Fort Hood commanders and investigators with the Army Criminal Investigation Command maintain they have found no credible evidence to link Guillen’s death with sexual harassment. Vanessa Guillen’s family said the soldier told her mother and sister that she faced sexual harassment in her unit.

**SEE PAGE 6**



## MILITARY

# Family seeks answers in death of airman

By ROSE L. THAYER  
*Stars and Stripes*

AUSTIN, Texas — It's been more than a month since Airman 1st Class Natasha Aposhian was killed at Grand Forks Air Force Base, N.D., and her parents said they are still struggling to understand why the service hasn't provided them answers.

"I'm devastated. I don't know how people go on," Megan Aposhian, the airman's mother, said from her home outside of Phoenix. "I don't think I'll ever heal from this, but I want answers. I want to know [what happened] as if I was there. I want to know what happened to my daughter."

The Air Force has only said Natasha, 21, died of a gunshot wound in a base dormitory at about 4:30 a.m. June 1 and Airman 1st Class Julian Carlos Torres, 20, also died in the incident. Officials have not released his cause of death and they have not said who shot Natasha.

Linda Card, a spokeswoman for the Air Force Office of Special Investigations, said that she cannot provide any information beyond what was released in June. The investigation remains open, she said.

Natasha's parents said they are frustrated. They want people to know what happened to their daughter and they want to know why the Air Force won't officially confirm how their daughter was killed.

Megan Aposhian said investigators have told her privately that Torres shot her daughter, then shot himself in the head. She and Natasha's father, Brian Murray, believe this was an act of domestic violence because their daughter had told Torres the day prior to her killing that she did not want to date him any longer.

"I just want to know these answers: What kind of gun was it? How did he get the gun? Where was my baby shot? Did she die at the first bullet?" Megan Aposhian said. "This is my baby. We were best friends."

Murray added: "I understand the investigation is pending.



Courtesy of Megan Aposhian

**Airman 1st Class Natasha Aposhian and her mother, Megan Aposhian.**

It's been six weeks now and it's pretty evident that it's a murder-suicide."

Megan Aposhian said she also wants a copy of the autopsy, but the Air Force will not release it to her. She knows nothing will change the fact that Natasha, the second oldest of her four children, is gone. She knows the information will not change the fact that her two youngest children, ages 9 and 10, will never be the same.

"We're ruined," she said.

## Fears of reporting

In the wake of the disappearance and killing of Army Spc. Vanessa Guillen at Fort Hood, Texas, Natasha Aposhian's parents said they hope the calls for investigations and reform can provide answers in their daughter's case as well. Guillen went missing April 22 from an arms room at Fort Hood. Her remains were found miles from the base more than two months later. She

was killed by fellow soldier, Spc. Aaron Robinson, according to court documents.

During the search for Guillen and since her remains were found June 30, her family has been critical of Fort Hood and Army commanders and the manner in which the investigation was conducted by Army Criminal Investigation Command. Among their requests in the wake of Guillen's death, her family has asked Congress to review the investigation and the military's sexual harassment and assault program.

"We want the same reforms that Vanessa Guillen's family is asking for. The military has a major issue with domestic violence and sexual violence," Murray said. "There should be places where they feel safe to go to. I think that was part of the problem with my daughter as well. She's one who wouldn't want to get anyone in trouble. She was fearful of this guy, but probably afraid to go to [a] supervisor because of the fallout."

While she said she feared her daughter could be sent to combat, Megan Aposhian never imagined Natasha wouldn't be safe on a stateside base.

The choice to serve came to Natasha Aposhian as she was feeling restless attending college in Tucson. She enlisted in December as an aircraft parts store apprentice because in military service "she knew where her path was going to lead her," Murray said. "For her, it was something where she felt like she had a purpose."

The last time she talked to her dad on May 31, Murray said they spoke through video chat. During the conversation, Natasha told him she had ended her relationship with Torres.

The two airmen had gone out a few times over the course of a couple weeks, Megan Aposhian said. But her daughter told her that she was afraid of him and he'd used misogynistic language to refer to her on social media.

"She said, 'I'm afraid he's going to kill me, Mom. I feel like I need to get an order of protec-

tion,'" Megan Aposhian said. "She did express that she was afraid of him and thought he was going to shoot her. I don't know why."

On May 31, Natasha told a friend she was going to go to her leadership, but she changed her mind because Torres had been nice when she delivered the breakup news to him, Megan Aposhian said.

By sunrise, she was dead.

## Fraternity culture

Natasha Aposhian's parents worked with Arizona state Rep. Cesar Chavez, a Democrat from Phoenix.

"Everybody is tackling it at different directions," Chavez said, noting the approaches, mostly from Congress and veteran and Hispanic groups, calling for different investigations and reviews into the death of Guillen from federal agencies outside of military.

"I would like to see a sudden change or change within this year that would end the fraternity culture that exists within the U.S. military. 'If something happens to you, we don't speak because we don't tattletale on each other,'" he said. "It's not right for anybody. If I can accomplish anything beyond trying to get some justice for the Aposhian and Guillen families, it is that."

Chavez took his initiative to the National Hispanic Caucus of State Legislators, which sent a letter on behalf of its 430 members to ask Air Force Secretary Barbara Barrett and Army Secretary Ryan McCarthy to "address the continued lack of safety experienced by female enlisted service members." The letter also was sent to the House and Senate Armed Services Committees.

New Mexico state Sen. Daniel Ivey-Soto, a Democrat from Albuquerque who serves as the caucus president, wrote the letter. He said local and state officials walk a fine line of holding the military accountable while welcoming the presence of bases in their states. But after reading

about Aposhian and Guillen, he said the American people need more than commitments from the military. They need change.

## A readiness issue

In closing the first paragraph of the letter, Ivey-Soto wrote the two cases demonstrate a continuing culture where "enlisted women — especially enlisted women of color — have more to fear from those with whom they serve than from this nation's enemies."

The reality of that sentence makes him angry, he said. On the surface, it might appear as a women's issue. But to put it only in that category "is to do a disservice to our nation," Ivey-Soto said.

"This is a readiness issue. This is a military cohesiveness issue. That's where I think we can broaden the conversation. I think both conversations are necessary," he said. "We need to make sure that we have a military that part of its readiness is people trusting the folks that they are deployed with."

Natasha Aposhian's parents believe holding the Air Force accountable will create a better, safer military for everyone, Murray said.

"We still support our military and our service men and women. Obviously, we want the Air Force higher-ups to answer for what has happened and to be truthful. Because we want that, that doesn't mean we love our troops any less," he said.

Megan Aposhian said she also believes if Natasha were alive and had seen a fellow airman die from a similar fate as she did, she would want to create change.

Murray has asked anyone with information about his daughter's case to email him at justicefortasha@gmail.com. He's also created a GoFundMe page to raise money for the legal fees associated with their advocacy in Natasha's case. It is available at <https://www.gofundme.com/f/justicefornatasha>.

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To have an effective program that tackles sexual harassment and assault, there needs to be continuous evaluation and process improvement, said Nikki R. Wooten, an associate professor at the University of South Carolina College of Social Work and lieutenant colonel in the Army Reserve. Her research work focuses on military behavioral health services and racial and gender differences.

"As a static program, SHARP will not be effective in the long term. As technology advances and the Army adapts to changing units, soldiers and social environments, SHARP must be adapted to remain military-relevant and effective," she said. "Hopefully, the Guillen case will result in the U.S. Army developing better methods of SHARP reporting that protects confidentiality and encourages reporting, which could include SHARP reporting mechanisms outside of the chain

of command at the installation and unit levels and perhaps at [the Defense Department] level."

Sometimes it's not just a fear of reprisal that keeps a soldier from reporting harassment, but the possible perception of betraying the Army family, Wooten said. For junior enlisted soldiers, the Army offers a sense of belonging and security they might not have experienced prior to military service.

"In military units, loyalty and emotional bonds are strong and intense and the sense of purpose to something greater than oneself is unlike any other life experience," Wooten said. "Just like in families of origin, when negative behaviors are perpetrated upon the young and/or lower ranking, the perception may be that there is less incentive to report and/or betray the familial group for fear of losing their support and approval."

## #IAmVanessaGuillen

The demands within the female veterans' letter are bolstered by the hundreds of veterans who have taken to social media through the #IAmVanessaGuillen campaign to share their own stories of sexual harassment and assault while serving in the military.

The stories lay bare women's experiences with unwanted sexual advances, inappropriate comments, disregarded reports to their chain of command, rape, assault and male service members entering their barracks rooms unannounced. The posts come from women of all ages, ranks and backgrounds.

The Service Women's Action Network has also called on its members to "harness this momentum to demand institutional changes within our military."

"Vanessa's disappearance highlights a multitude of systemic problems within the

military's culture and the military justice system," according to a letter sent by the organization to its community.

Among its recommendations on how to generate change, was a call to contact the Senate and House Armed Services committees to request an independent investigation into the handling of Guillen's disappearance, full accountability of any military leaders found negligent in their handling of the case, and to pass the Military Justice Improvement Act, which replaces the role of the commander with a trained prosecutor when it comes to determining whether to charge a service member with a crime.

"I want other young Latinas like me to [say], 'I want to serve my country and give everything,'" Ordex-Ramirez said. "I want that for them. But it's not going to happen unless this family gets justice."

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## MILITARY

# ‘West Point is failing’

## Recent graduates reveal racist incidents at academy

By COREY DICKSTEIN  
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — Recent U.S. Military Academy graduates implored leaders at the West Point, N.Y., institution to strongly condemn racism and institute a zero-tolerance policy in a letter that revealed some of them were victims of racist acts while attending the school.

In the June 25 letter to West Point and Army leaders, nine graduates of the academy from 2018 and 2019, including the top ranking cadets and graduates from both classes, condemned racism at their alma mater and urged leaders to introduce a curriculum meant to address race and diversity directly. The now-Army lieutenants, in a 40-page policy proposal included with their letter, documented such racist incidents including a noose left on a Black cadet's dormitory desk “as a joke” by a white roommate, a top cadet leader's photo altered to portray her as a monkey, and reports by dozens of Black cadets subjected to racial slurs by their classmates in recent years.

“West Point has demonstrated an inability to meaningfully discuss race and a tendency to silence such conversations when grassroots efforts attempt to start them,” the West Point graduates wrote in the letter that has been distributed via social media. “Not only should we be concerned that West Point graduates arrive at their units unprepared to have conversations about race, we should also be concerned that West Point's inability to do so means that it is far easier for racist beliefs to be maintained through the academy, to the extent that West Point graduates are tying nooses and joking they be used on their Black peers.”

The policy proposal calls for West Point leaders to take specific steps to address “systemic racism [which] continues to exist at West Point,” and for the institution to teach anti-racism and provide space specifically for minority cadets on the campus.

“By failing in these areas, West Point ultimately fails to produce leaders of character equipped to lead diverse organizations,” they wrote. “In other words, West Point is failing to accomplish its mission.”

The authors ask that West Point leaders take a stronger public stance against racism, voice support for the Black Lives Matter movement, investigate any racial disparities in its disciplinary system, hire a full-time diversity chairperson, and publish 20 years of climate surveys that detail issues cadets report anonymously about their units.

They also called on the removal of Confederate-linked images on the campus, including honors erected in recent decades that list the names of West Point graduates who joined the Confederate cause. The policy proposal would strip West Point of “names, monuments and art honoring or venerating Confederate figures,” including a dormitory named for Gen. Robert E. Lee and artwork depicting Lee and Gen. Pierre Gustave Toutant-Beauregard, both West Point graduates.

The proposal also calls for a commission to study whether to “contextualize or remove” other symbols or depictions of “slavery, the Confederacy, and white supremacy” at West Point.

Army Lt. Gen. Darryl Williams, the West Point superintendent, denied last month to USA Today that systemic racism exists at the academy. Williams, a 1983 West Point graduate, became the school's



BRANDON O'CONNER/U.S. Army

The U.S. Military Academy at West Point held its graduation and commissioning ceremony for the Class of 2020 on The Plain in West Point, N.Y., on June 13.

**‘West Point ultimately fails to produce leaders of character equipped to lead diverse organizations. In other words, West Point is failing to accomplish its mission.’**

### Letter to West Point and Army leaders

first black superintendent in 2018.

West Point officials said that academy leaders had received the letter and policy proposal and the school's inspector general had begun a “comprehensive review of all matters involving race at the academy.”

“The academy expects all cadets to be treated with dignity and respect. We take seriously all forms of racial inequality that marginalize or devalue members of our team,” said Lt. Col. Christopher Ophardt, West Point spokesman. “West Point does not accept, condone, or promote racism.”

But the authors of the letter — who include white and Black alumni — argued Black cadets' assertions of racist incidents went ignored and that, in at least some cases, Blacks faced harsher punishment for minor violations than their white peers.

Army 1st Lt. Simone Askew, one of the authors, detailed an act of racism that she faced just after she was named the first Black, female top cadet in West Point's history in Fall 2017. Askew wrote she came back to her dorm room one evening to find a photo of her altered with a monkey over her face.

“Though I was aware of the historical precedence of portraying Black people as monkeys, I wondered if the depiction suggested something deeper about my leadership,” she wrote in the policy proposal.

“Racing through my mind were all the presentations and conversations that I had given in the past 14 days as First Captain

and whether I had made any mistakes. This self-interrogation fueled in me a paralyzing fear.”

Askew, a Rhodes scholar, wrote the incident left her feeling she could make no mistakes in her leadership. During her senior year, Askew was regularly made available by the academy for high-profile media engagements. She wrote her experience with racism led her to question what support West Point was providing other minority cadets who were not being “paraded by the academy as a model to follow.”

Another West Point graduate wrote in the policy that the academy failed to ready her to respond to civil unrest that spread throughout all 50 states in recent weeks after the May 25 killing of a handcuffed Black man by Minneapolis police.

“In the days following the killing of George Floyd and the resulting protests, I realized just how unprepared I was to have conversations about this with my soldiers,” wrote 2nd Lt. Ashley Salgado, a 2019 graduate from Puerto Rico and co-author of the proposal. “I had received plenty of instruction on how to brief an operations order or how to occupy a patrol base but West Point failed to train me on how to have important conversations about race within a diverse Army.”

The policy proposal's authors wrote they took inspiration from the “Black manifesto” penned in 1971 by Black West Point

cadets who successfully stopped a proposal by former President Richard Nixon to build a new Confederate monument at the institution.

They also wrote the proposal was meant as a quick response to a request issued last month by Defense Secretary Mark Esper for service members to provide his office actionable proposals to address racial injustice within the military.

Their proposal came as the Army has signaled it is open to a conversation aimed at renaming 10 of its southern installations named for Confederate generals. Legislative proposals introduced in both chambers of Congress aim to strip those post of those names, but President Donald Trump has threatened to veto any measure that would force such changes.

Meanwhile, Pentagon leaders have signaled they could soon issue an across-the-board ban on the display of the Confederate battle flag on military installations, ships and other sites. The Marine Corps earlier this year issued such a ban and the Navy is in the process of implementing its own. Army leaders said last month that they were working with Esper's office on the issue, but would not immediately implement their own unilateral ban on Confederate imagery.

The West Point graduates wrote their policy proposal was a “call to action” and “now is the time for action.”

“To be sure, West Point has come a long way,” Askew wrote in the proposal. “Nevertheless, the reverence that West Point holds for racist figures is antithetical to the claims it makes about the next generation of Army leaders... If Black lives really do matter to the military — then that should be known. And, if they do, then that ought to be undoubtedly clear, as well.”

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MILITARY

# Professor researches nanofiber body armor

By J.P. LAWRENCE  
*Stars and Stripes*

Seven years of Harvard University research into bulletproof armor began with a simple question of how to protect soldiers' private parts from blast wounds.

The problem inspired Harvard professor Kit Parker, a veteran of four tours in Afghanistan, to begin research that led to the development of a lightweight nanofiber material that can stop both bullets and burns.

"I try to do one science project for each thing that pissed me off in the war," said Parker, whose research on a new nanofiber material was published in the scientific journal *Matter* earlier this month.

The bioengineering and applied physics professor and Army Reserve lieutenant colonel has done work on traumatic brain injuries, lab-made meat and a robotic stingray that was part of a quest to build an artificial heart.

In 2013, knowing that mines and roadside bombs have left hundreds of troops with penis and testicle injuries, he began work to develop body armor so light it could fit in a soldier's underwear.

Modern body armor is bulky, with multiple materials layered together, due to the difficulty of making a material that can protect against both projectiles and intense heat at the same time, Parker said in a phone call.

Typical bullet-stopping materials such as Kevlar are made with grid-like molecular structures, while those that block



GRANT GONZALEZ/Harvard University

Cadets at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point tested a new nanofiber body armor material by observing whether it would protect a small gelatin astronaut figure from the heat of a blowtorch heater.

**‘I try to do one science project for each thing that pissed me off in the war.’**

**Kit Parker**  
Harvard professor

intense heat, such as Nomex, are fluffy with molecules more spread out.

But the Harvard researchers aimed to cut weight by creating a single material that could do both jobs at once. They used microscopic strands of Kevlar fibers, gathered like tiny bundles of spaghetti and arranged in a loose, unwoven network.

"It's mostly air with a scaffolding," Parker said.

The "long" fibers can stretch to stop the force of a bullet in its tracks, while air in the fabric's pores absorbs intense heat

— 20 times more than traditional materials, researchers said.

To test it, West Point cadets placed a blowtorch with a heater attachment beside a small gelatin astronaut figure.

The figure melted in minutes without any protection, and another body armor material, Twaron, protected him for 17 minutes, but the new nanofiber kept him cool and un-melted after 30 minutes.

Army researchers in Natick, Mass., who shot BB-like projectiles at the new lightweight material found that it stops projectiles about equally as well as heavi-

er stuff used in traditional body armor.

The Army's Combat Capabilities Development Command Soldier Center in Natick will next attempt to replicate the Harvard team's manufacturing techniques and conduct further research, a spokesman said via email.

Parker, who jokes that his lab has more combat experience than most infantry platoons, thinks it could one day be used in soldiers' facemasks or underwear.

West Point professor Col. John Burpo, an Iraq War veteran wounded in an improvised bomb blast and one of several combat veterans who took part in Parker's research, hopes it will save lives one day.

"Experiences with getting banged around overseas certainly served as motivation," Burpo said in a phone call.

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# Air Force pilot resumes flying after electrocution

By CHAD GARLAND  
*Stars and Stripes*

Lt. Col. Jonathan Kassebaum returned to the skies for the first time this month since an accidental electrocution in his backyard pool just over eight months ago caused his heart to stop for 12 minutes.

Kassebaum, an F-15 Eagle pilot in the Florida Air National

Guard's Jacksonville-based 125th Fighter Wing, was working on a rewiring project at his home on Oct. 25, when he heard his dog in distress in the pool, the wing said in a statement.

Not realizing that a ground wire had been severed and the pool water had become electrified through a light fixture, Kassebaum went in to rescue the dog, he said in a November

Facebook post.

After helping the dog out of the pool, he grabbed a stainless steel handrail to get out himself, becoming the electrical ground and a conduit for the charge.

Incapable of moving from below the waist, he was able to whisper to his daughter to switch off the breaker when she came outside to see what was going on, he said.



Kassebaum

She got help from a work crew that happened to arrive at the house two hours early for a separate project, the family told News4Jax in

underwater.

As the workers tried to resuscitate him, he was bright purple, Juliet said on TV.

A police officer arrived and administered CPR for seven minutes, Kassebaum told the local TV news. An ambulance crew was able to get his heart beating again, he said.

A sequence of five "miracles" allowed him to survive the incident, said Kassebaum, who is also a preacher at a local church, in the November Facebook post.

If just one hadn't happened, he said, "I wouldn't be here."

The dog, a female Australian shepherd named Phoenix, probably felt only slight shocks, he said.

Kassebaum, who is the commander of the 125th Operations Support Flight, flew July 6, the 125th Fighter Wing said.

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