



Veteran Owned Business
Hagatna / Tumon / Dededo / Mangilao
ORDER ONLINE
JAMAICANGRILL.COM

INSIDE INFO



**THE ARIZALA LEGACY
GROWS IN GUAM GUARD**
PAGE 2



**VETERAN DONATES
VIETNAM-ERA PHOTOS OF
MEDICAL OPS IN GUAM**
PAGE 4

ASK THE ATTORNEY

Getting most from
Office of Soldiers'
Counsel

PAGE 6



**WHAT MILITARY FAMILIES
GET WRONG ABOUT GUAM**
PAGE 12

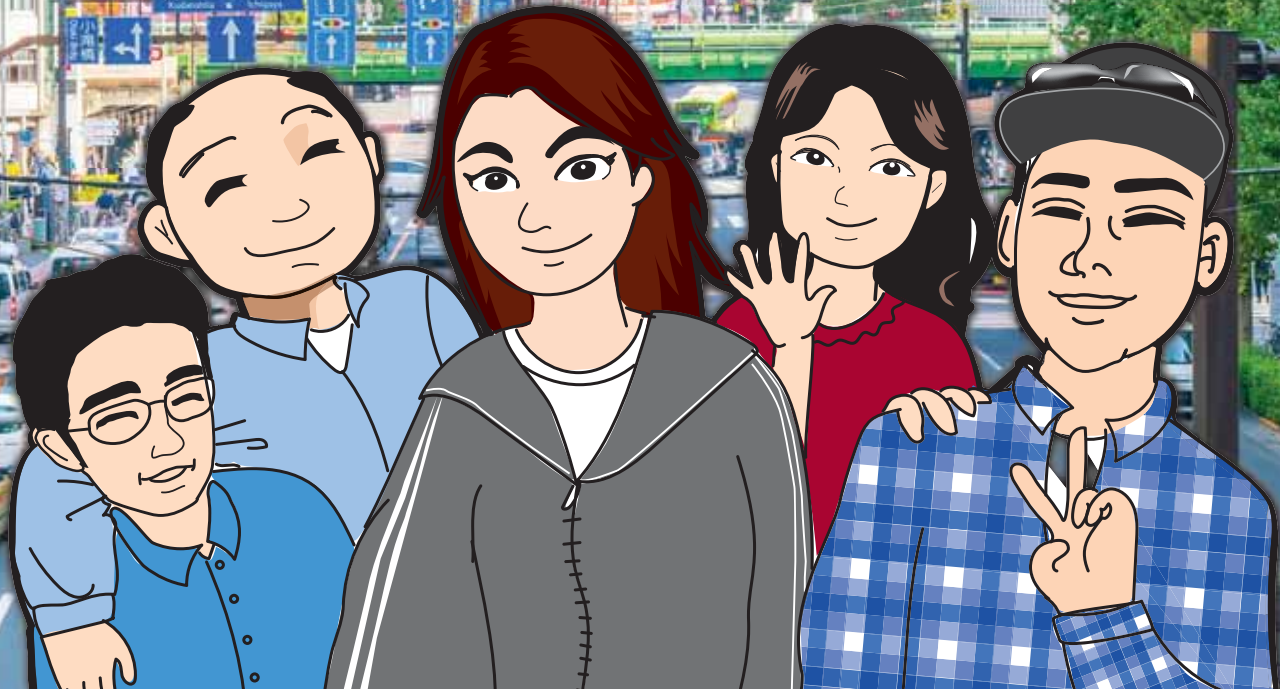


Part 1

SPECIAL PACKAGE

PAGES 8-11

EXPLORE WITH US



Our community products are geared toward giving you the tools to make the most of your time while stationed in the Pacific.

Whether you are in mainland Japan, Okinawa, Korea or Guam, we're going to help you get off base and explore. We'll help you find that tasty restaurant, eye-popping day trip or fun festival that really lets you dive into the local culture.

And don't worry, we'll take it step by step. We'll show you how to get on a train, bus or taxi. Or, if you are driving, we'll show you where and how to park. Seriously,

we're here to hold your hand, help you take some baby steps and then set you free, with the knowledge that if you ever get lost or are looking for some travel tips, destinations or anything else, all you need to do is pick up this paper, one of our magazines or special supplements, or click on one of our community websites or Facebook and Instagram pages to get all the free information you seek.

So how do we compile the thousands of stories that are at your fingertips? Well, besides partnering with dozens of outside organizations from around the world, we

also count on you, our military community, to submit stories. And you always come through! Hey, like we fond of saying, "We're going to make you famous!"

And then there's our team: writers Hyemin Lee (Korea), Shoji Kudaka (Okinawa), Takahiro Takiguchi and Luis Samayoa (mainland Japan) and their editor, Denisse Rauda (mainland Japan). Yes, that's an illustration of them on front page. And they love what they do. You see, for us to do our job properly, we go out and experience

SEE EXPLORE ON PAGE 8

NEW!
KFC
HONEY CHICKEN Festival
✓Sweet ✓Savory ✓Crunchy



STARS AND STRIPES

www.stripes.com

Laura Law

Chief Operating Officer

Lt. Col. Lucas Crouch

Commander

John Albaugh

Chief of Staff

Scott Foley

Revenue Director

Chris Verigan

Engagement Director

Marie Woods

Publishing and Media Design Director

Chris Carlson

Publishing and Media Design Manager

Eric Lee

Revenue Manager

Kentaro Shimura

Production Manager

Rie Miyoshi

Engagement Manager

Denisse Rauda

Publishing and Media Design Editor

Publishing and Media Design Writers

Shoji Kudaka Hyemin Lee

Luis Samayoa Takahiro Takiguchi

Layout Designers

Yuko Okazaki Kurema Tamura

Yurika Usui

Multimedia Consultants

Max Genao Doug Johnson

Hans Simpson Chae Pang Yi

Benjamin Yoo Gianni Youn

Robert Zuckerman

Graphic Designers

Kazumi Hasegawa Mamoru Inoue

Akira Kojima Yukiyo Oda

Yosuke Tsuji

Sales Support

Reina Asada Yeseul Kim

Dong Ju Lee Yoko Noro

Yusuke Sato Rina Takamatsu

Saori Tamanaha Toshie Yoshimizu

Mako Watanabe

Distributors

Joe Guzman

For feedback and inquiries,

contact CustomerHelp@stripes.com

To place an ad, call

DSN 315-229-3224 (Doug Johnson)

or 315-229-3174 (Eric Lee)

johnson.douglas@stripes.com

or lee.eric@stripes.com

FROM BOOTS TO BYTES

The Arizala legacy grows in Guam Guard

STORY AND PHOTO BY MARK SCOTT,
GUAM NATIONAL GUARD

T

he Guam National Guard enlisted its first Cyber Operations Specialist, as Maj. Arnold “Arnie” Arizala administered the Oath of Enlistment to his son Aidan at the Hagatna Recruiting Office Sept. 2, 2026.

The younger Arizala will head off to Basic Combat Training and Advanced Individual Training for a total of about a year. He will then return to the Guam National Guard as the organization’s first Cyber Operations Specialist tasked with protecting military networks, countering adversaries, and securing national security assets. He will join others in the Guard who are already performing these tasks as Information Technology Specialists, who are also trained in cyber operations.

“My dad’s been in the Guard ever since I was born, so I grew up in the environment,” said Arizala.

“He also provided us with an environment full of technology. So when I heard this position was available, I just thought it was the right time to join.”

When asked if he had any advice for his son prior to basic training, Maj. Arizala told his son to listen to his leaders, have thick skin, and move forward. But most importantly, to stay out of trouble.

“I’ve always encouraged my kids to enter the military – in particular the Guard,” said Maj. Arizala. “So this is great for Aidan and great for the family, as well as our island and country.”

As the newest Soldier in the Guam National Guard, Aidan Arizala said he was experiencing a mix of feelings, from nervousness to excitement.

“But I’m more on the excited side, because this is setting up my future with the life I want. I’m ready.”

ARIZALA

U.S. ARMY

ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

Maj. Arnold Arizala enlists his son, Aidan Arizala, into the Guam National Guard at the Hagatna Recruiting Office on Sept. 26.

Guam’s Fastest Home Internet.

671-688-CARE | docomopacific.com

All offers are available for active-duty service members and veterans residing in serviceable locations. 12-month contract is required for Internet plans. 24-month Internet contract is required for Fiber Internet. To receive 5Gig symmetrical speeds, a CAT6 wired connection is required. DOCOMO PACIFIC reserves the right to change promotional details and duration at any time. Additional installation fees and conditions may apply. While supplies last.

INTERNET

Internet Premium

250Mbps Download ↓
10Mbps Upload ↑

\$100/mo* Reg. \$110/mo.

Includes 1 SuperPod AC

Internet Extreme

500Mbps Download ↓
10Mbps Upload ↑

\$120/mo* Reg. \$135/mo.

Includes 2 SuperPod ACs

FIBER INTERNET

1 Visit docomopacific.com/shop/internet/fiber to see if your area is Fiber ready.

Fiber 1 Gig

1 Gig Download ↓
1 Gig Upload ↑

\$70/mo* for 24 months Reg. \$175/mo.

Fiber 2.5 GIG

2.5 GIG Download ↓
2.5 GIG Upload ↑

\$110/mo* for 24 months Reg. \$245/mo.

2 SuperPod 6Es included with any Fiber plan.

Fiber 5 GIG

5 GIG Download ↓
5 GIG Upload ↑

\$199/mo* for 24 months Reg. \$315/mo.

docomo pacific

Better Together

SAMSUNG

The all-new
Galaxy Z Fold8 Ultra | Fold8 | Flip8
Galaxy AI ✨



Now Available!

Get the Galaxy Z Fold8 Ultra, Fold8, or Flip8 from GTA.
Everyone gets our best deals with up to \$400 off when you sign up
for a LIVE unlimited plan.



Terms and Conditions apply. Offer good while supplies last. Available to new and existing customers who activate an eligible plan. Promotion rate and benefits are void by early termination unless customer is military with orders to PCS. Visit gta.net for more information.



Call us at
671-644-4482



Visit us at
www.gta.net



Veteran donates Vietnam-era photos of medical ops in Guam

BY PETTY OFFICER 2ND CLASS
ASHLI MARIE HEATON,
U.S. NAVAL HOSPITAL GUAM

A former hospital corpsman and retired warrant officer has donated a collection of historical photographs and memorabilia to U.S. Navy Medicine Readiness and Training Command Guam and U.S. Naval Hospital Guam, preserving a vital piece of Navy Medicine's medical legacy supporting military operations in the Pacific during the Vietnam War.

Retired Chief Warrant Officer 4 P. Eugene Jones discovered the collection of 35mm photographic slides and historical unit patches while sorting through personal belongings accumulated throughout his military career.

The photographs capture the raw reality of hospital operations between 1968 and 1969 at the former U.S. Naval Hospital Guam built in 1954 in Agana Heights, Guam. They show medical evacuation, patient care, and hospital staff at work. The donation also includes historical unit patches.

Jones has deep personal connection to USNH Guam. He first served as a hospital corpsman third class from 1970 to 1971. He returned 14 years later as a chief warrant officer 4, serving as a physician assistant from 1985 to 1987.

"During the Vietnam War, we received

patients on a regular basis via flights to Andersen Air Force Base," Jones wrote in a letter with the donation. "They were then bussed to the emergency room for triage and admission."

Throughout the war, USNH Guam played a critical role in the evacuation and treatment of wounded service members from Southeast Asia. The island's strategic location enabled Navy

medical personnel to provide lifesaving care to the injured warfighters arriving from combat zones, continuing a legacy of medical readiness and support that remains central to the command and the hospital's mission today.

The photographs provide a rare look at the daily grit of the Navy doctors, nurses, and corpsmen who cared for the warfighters.

By preserving artifacts and firsthand accounts of this history, the command honors the

previous generations of medical teams for their commitment to supporting the warfighters and maintaining the heritage of Navy Medicine in the Pacific.

The donation will become part of the Navy's historical collection and serve as a reminder of the role the command and USNH Guam has played in caring for the warfighters across decades of military operations.

The photographs capture the raw reality of hospital operations between 1968 and 1969 at the former U.S. Naval Hospital Guam built in 1954 in Agana Heights, Guam.



A former hospital corpsman and retired warrant officer has donated a collection of historical photographs and memorabilia to U.S. Navy Medicine Readiness and Training Command Guam and U.S. Naval Hospital Guam, preserving a vital piece of Navy Medicine's medical legacy supporting military operations in the Pacific during the Vietnam War.
Courtesy Photos

SUNDAY BRUNCH

Free flowing
mimosas &
draft beer!

TWO SEATINGS:
10AM-12PM
12:30PM-2:30PM

☎ 671-479-2652/3 🌐 mesklaguam.com f /MesklaGuam @meskla

Book your reservation at reservations@mesklaguam.com

130 E MARINE CORPS DRIVE, STE 103, HAGÅTÑA, GUAM, 96910

Global lift expertise. Local to Guam.



NCCCO Certified Operator

DENZAI
DENZAI America Inc.

671-647-5762/5763
inquiry.america@denzai.group
www.denzai.group



VINCE
JEWELERS

VOTED PIKA'S BEST JEWELRY STORE 2017-2025 | BEST LUXURY BRAND 2020, 2021, 2023-2025

AGANA SHOPPING CENTER
671.472.1888

EAST AGANA (MAIN BRANCH)
671.646.1688



GUAM PREMIER OUTLETS
671.649.9888

MICRONESIA MALL
671.633.8888

facebook/vincejewelers

store.vincejewelers.com

@vincejewelers



ASK THE ATTORNEY

Getting most from Office of Soldiers' Counsel



BY HEATHER TENNEY,
SPECIAL TO STARS AND STRIPES
Published: August 31, 2026

I'm an active-duty soldier in the Army going through disability retirement. Does the Army's recent policy update mean that I can only meet with an Office of Soldiers' Counsel lawyer once? Can I do anything to make sure I get the most out of my meeting with OSC?

This policy update came May 27, when the Army notified Judge Advocate Legal Services personnel that the Office of Soldiers' Counsel (OSC) would be scaling back the legal services it provides to those facing the Army Disability Evaluation System. Free legal assistance will no longer be available for:

- Non-active-duty Army Reserve and Army National Guard (including those with active-duty orders less than 30 days)
- Service members on the Temporary Disabled Retired List

As an active-duty soldier, OSC will continue providing you with limited legal help, but only after the Informal Physical Evaluation Board (IPEB). And after you receive an IPEB determination, your free legal services will be limited to a single consultation with OSC.

I don't know where you are in the process. An attorney can do the most good well before the IPEB stage. One consultation that late in the process may not be enough in complex or contested cases, especially if the assigned attorney lacks retirement board experience.

Getting the most out of your OSC retirement board consultation

Making sure you arrive at your meeting with OSC as prepared as possible is a very wise move.

- **Assess your goals:** You've likely already thought long and hard about your future and your career prospects. But it helps to be prepared to discuss your best-case scenario and how realistic it may be.
- **Assemble your documentation:** Gather any Medical Evaluation Board documentation, your Narrative Summary (NARSUM), relevant medical records, commander's statement, line-of-duty findings, proposed ratings, etc.
- **Organize your case:** Perfect information is only useful if you can find it. Organization will help you make the most of your time. Establish a clear timeline of events and connect any supporting evidence to that timeline. For example, if you incurred an eye injury at a particular time and have a medical report from that same period, make that connection clear. Connect the dots as best you can into a cohesive narrative.

What you should leave your OSC consult with

These are big asks for one consultation, but this is the level of information you should be aiming for:

- **A vision for a compelling case:** A clear, cohesive narrative supported by evidence is critical to securing your preferred outcome.

A good attorney should be able to clock any gaps in the narrative you brought to the table and guide you toward filling those gaps in a convincing way.

- **Understanding your options:** You should leave your consultation aware of the possible outcomes, and the consequences for any decisions you might make from this point forward. Clarify whether there are any items that require action on your part, or information that should be raised lest you compromise your case down the line.
- **What may still need review:** Realistically, the OSC will not be able to cover everything that needs covering. Get clarity on any points that still need addressing, and next steps for addressing them. Aim to leave your meeting equipped to handle errors or complications before they progress further. They will only become harder and harder to correct.
- **Recommendations for next steps:** The OSC attorney may recommend private counsel if your case is complex, or if key evidence was missing or incorrect at an earlier stage. If hiring a civilian lawyer is advised, you must move quickly. Your attorney can try to secure an extension and give you some more time, but there are no guarantees.

Get additional legal help if you can

Not everyone going through the disability board process strictly needs legal counsel. Straightforward cases with no contested facts,

no issues with the disability rating assigned, and no administrative errors or delays may be fine with just one or even no consults.

But retirement boards can get complicated — even by lawyer standards. Not all lawyers understand disability boards or have experience reviewing military medical records. Even military law attorneys without Army Disability Evaluation System experience are unlikely to know whether your NARSUM covers all of the secondary conditions that might impact your rating. There are attorneys who routinely handle these cases, however.

Service members who can afford to hire private counsel are advised to do so ASAP. For those who cannot, pro bono services are available, but are likely in even higher demand than usual. The American Bar Association, and state or local Bar Associations should connect you with an attorney willing to help. Note that some may require a referral from a JAG.

This article is for informational purposes only. Its content is not intended to constitute endorsement or legal advice, nor does it establish a client-lawyer relationship with Tully Rinckey PLLC or any of its affiliates.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Heather Tenney is a partner in Tully Rinckey PLLC's military law, federal employment and national security law practice groups, and currently serves as the primary attorney for consultation in these areas. She brought her skills as an advocate and negotiator to Tully Rinckey after serving with the U.S. Army's JAG Corps.



Open Daily: 11:00 AM - 2:00 PM
Located Tumon Bay Beach

FOR RESERVATIONS
T. (671) 649-7760
www.nanascasfegum.com
*Subject to 10% service charge

A LA CARTE DELIGHT
STARTING FROM \$15.00 o \$19.00
Choose from garlic Shrimp, Cajun Chicken, and Chef Tim's Signature Lunch Box and more...



\$70 (per person)
10% SERVICE CHARGE

PRIME RIB NIGHT

DINNER 5:00 PM - 9:00 PM | LOCATED IN HOTEL LOBBY

"Indulge in our exceptional Prime Rib experience, available every Monday through Wednesday evening. Savor the finest cuts expertly prepared and served in an elegant dining atmosphere, each tender bite promises a memorable midweek escape."

rootz
HILL'S GRILLHOUSE

Promo Ends : October 31, 2026

RESERVE YOUR TABLE TODAY!
DON'T MISS OUT!
T. 671 649-7760

www.rootzguam.com

STARTING AUGUST 7, 2026
EVERY FRIDAY & SATURDAY
6 PM - 9:15 PM

Celebrate the Night, Island Style - From sizzling BBQ to captivating fire dancers, every moment at Sails is crafted to delight.

SUNSET FLAMES & ISLAND RHYTHMS AT SAILS BBQ

CHAMORRO SAILS BBQ

RESERVE YOUR DINING EXPERIENCE AT
T. 671 649-7760
www.sailsbbqguam.com
*SUBJECT TO 10% SERVICE CHARGE
LOCATED TUMON BAY BEACH

SHOW STARTS AT SUNSET



1328 Pale San Vitores Rd., Tumon, Guam USA 96913

The power of casting aside uncertainty and showing up

“I’m not dropping you off here!” my husband Francis proclaimed from the driver’s seat of our minivan, rolling slowly by an aging bungalow with crumbling front steps and a rusty metal pipe handrail. The peeling front door led to an enclosed porch piled with junk and overgrown plants.

“But this is the right address, Honey. Stop so I can get out, or I’ll be late for my first meeting!” I ordered. I’d found the Newport Round Table Writer’s Group online, after our Navy family moved to Rhode Island. I’d been self-syndicating my weekly humor columns for about three years, and heard that writer’s groups can really help authors wanting to write books, so I submitted a request to join and was accepted.

Francis reluctantly parked the van at the curb, and I stepped out. “I’m waiting here until I see who comes to the door,” he said skeptically. I ascended the steep, icy concrete steps and knocked. Soon, a woman with long, red hair, ensconced in dark fabrics over a long black skirt, opened the door. I wondered if she was a Wiccan.

“Are you Lisa?” she inquired.

“Melinda, right?” I replied, mirroring her smile. I waved off Francis, who was peering intently through the windshield, and stepped inside.

Melinda led me through the cluttered porch to a low-lit sitting room, where group members sat in an imperfect circle on mismatched dining room chairs and upholstered furniture. Dusty, burgundy draperies hung heavily over the windows. Old lamps sat on various antique side tables, casting an amber glow on the cramped room. Everything was draped with fabric, just like Melinda. Pieces of fringed burgundy jacquard, damask and brocade hung over armrests, hassocks, seat cushions and lampshades.

The room felt heavy, as if the floor might collapse under us.

Melinda introduced me to the others, about seven in all, who were chatting familiarly with each other. I was offered the last free chair — an antique with a wobbly leg and a lumpy embroidered seat affixed with upholstery tacks.

Despite the cheap horror film set before me, I firmly believed that NRT Writer’s Group was legit. It had been active for almost 10 years, and many of its members were already

The Meat and Potatoes of Life

Lisa Smith Molinari



Find your people, pull up a wobbly chair and keep showing up — because sometimes the strangest places are where you’ll discover you’re right where you belong.

published authors. Melinda had sent me the extensive rules for each eight-week session. Writers signed up for reading slots each session, and agreed to give thoughtful critiques to others. NRT strictly adhered to “glass box critiquing” rules, which required authors to read 2,000-word excerpts aloud, then stay silent while others offered two-minute critiques.

On that first night while Kevin, a friendly engineer with thick white hair and too many political opinions, read an excerpt from his novel, I secretly surveyed the other writers, scribbling notes in my binder.

Over the next four years of NRT sessions in the crowded house on Bedlow Avenue, I also came to know: Matt, Melinda’s husband, a graphic novel

writer who hated excess commas; Babsi, a quirky designer, who was writing an exhaustive memoir; and her husband, Vlad, who wrote a cringe-worthy description of his shower routine. Nina, who wrote but refused to publish three entertaining novels, became my good friend. Eliza’s gilt-edged vanity novel featured a younger, prettier version of herself. In keeping with her Wiccan style, Melinda penned a popular ghost hunting book.

During my years in NRT, I read my columns about military and family life, read my weekly column pitch to Stars and Stripes and read the manuscript that would become my book.

Sure, there were tense moments when tempers were lost, tears were shed and writers stormed out. And after Melinda and Matt announced they were selling the house and moving to Europe, NRT officially disbanded.

Despite it all, I miss that ragtag, sometimes annoyingly self-indulgent group of writers, and those nights in the dusky, dusty house on Bedlow.

I learned that it’s possible to accomplish your dreams when you have a tribe willing to listen, critique and occasionally tell you that, yes, your comma placement really is terrible. Find your people, pull up a wobbly chair and keep showing up — because sometimes the strangest places are where you’ll discover you’re right where you belong.

Read more of Lisa Smith Molinari’s columns at:
themeatandpotatoesoflife.com

and in Lisa’s book, *The Meat and Potatoes of Life: My True Lit Com*
Email: meatandpotatoesoflife@gmail.com

All the travel. None of the baggage.



The card that rewards adventures, near and far.

4X
points on
all travel

3X
points on
dining

1X
points on
everything else

\$100
annual airline
credit

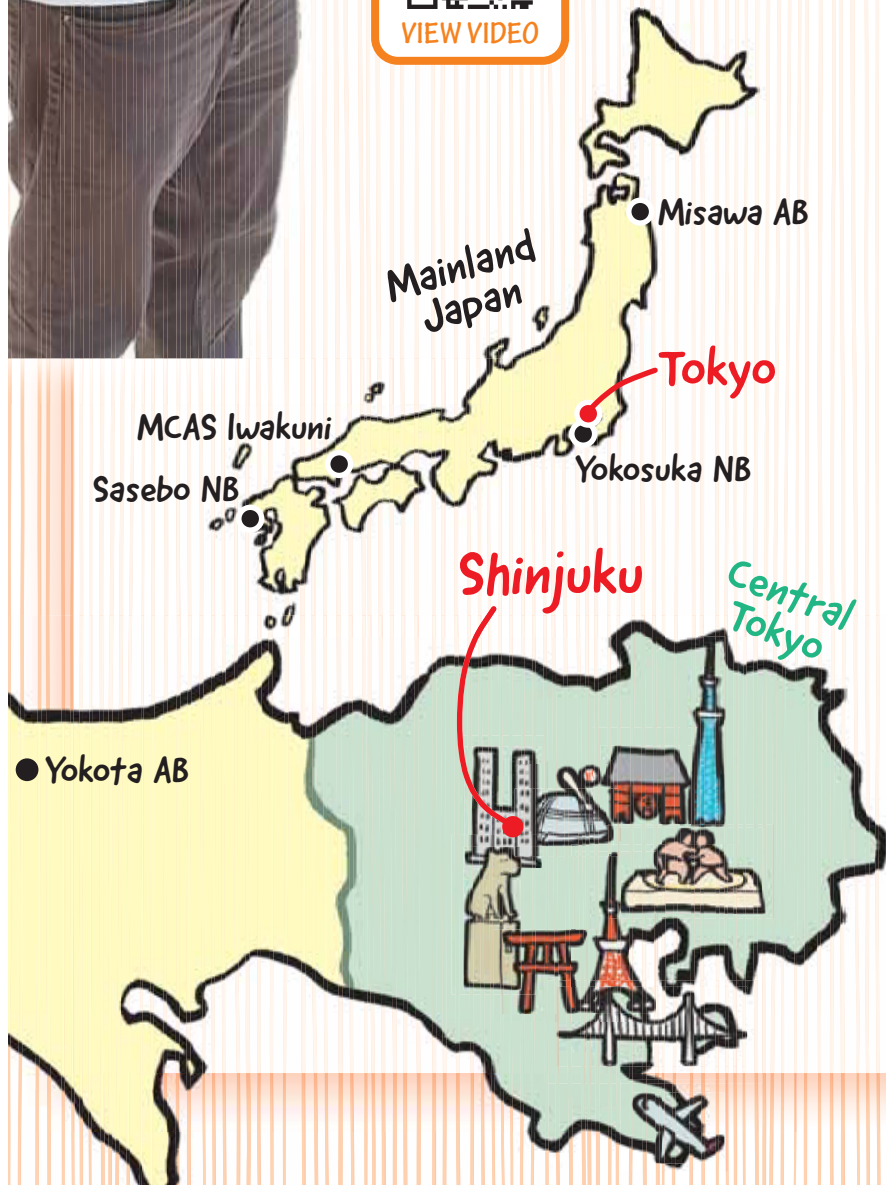
Flagship Premier Visa Signature® takes flight with 4X points on travel purchases and no booking portal required—plus, 3X points on dining and a \$100 annual airline credit.^{1,2}

Navy Federal is federally insured by NCUA. ¹Flagship Premier Visa Signature® Credit Cards earn 4 points for every \$1 of eligible purchases made on travel, 3 points for every \$1 of eligible purchases made at restaurants (dining), and 1 point for every \$1 of other eligible purchases. Eligible purchases are purchases for goods and services, minus returns and other credits. Eligible purchases do not include fees, interest charges, balance transfers, gambling, convenience checks, cash advances, or other cash-equivalents (e.g., money orders, gift cards, prepaid cards). Merchants are assigned codes by payment networks based on what they primarily sell. We rely on this information to identify travel and restaurant purchases. Travel is typically coded as airline, hotel, car rental, bus lines, taxis, cruise lines, time shares, parking, rideshare, and transit. A travel or restaurant purchase may only earn 1 point per dollar spent, depending on the code used to process the transaction. If the purchase is not identified as a travel or restaurant purchase, it will receive 1 point per dollar spent. For example, purchases made at restaurants within another establishment (e.g., casino, grocery store, event venue) may not be assigned a restaurant code, which means they will only receive 1 point per dollar spent. For more information, view the Program Description for the Flagship Premier Card at navyfederal.org/FlagshipPremier. ²Receive a \$100 statement credit each year after you spend a total of \$100 or more on eligible airline purchases using your Flagship Premier Visa Signature® Card. Your eligibility for the credit begins on the date your account is opened and renews each year on that date. This date appears in the Member Since field under My Profile in the Navy Federal Rewards Center. Any unused credit will not carry over to the next year. The \$100 spending requirement may be met through a single purchase or multiple purchases totaling at least \$100. Merchants are assigned codes by payment networks based on what a business primarily sells. Only purchases coded as airlines or air carriers qualify as eligible airline purchases and will count toward the required \$100 or more to earn the statement credit. Charter or private jet flights do not qualify. After the \$100 in eligible airline purchases posts to your account, it may take 6-8 weeks for the statement credit to appear. The statement credit may not be posted or may be reversed if the purchase(s) is/are canceled, modified, or returned. Your account must be open and not in default when the statement credit is scheduled to post to your account. Only the primary cardholder is eligible for this credit. Purchases made by authorized users do not count towards the \$100 spending requirement. Navy Federal may modify or end this offer at any time without notice. *Message and data rates may apply. Visit navyfederal.org for more information. © 2026 Navy Federal NFCU 14550 (8-26)



**NAVY
FEDERAL**
Credit Union

Scan* or get started at
navyfederal.org/FlagshipPremier



SHINJUKU

On the hunt for daytime fun in Tokyo's nightlife central

Shinjuku, a city known for its neon lights and nightlife, is filled with many seedy alleyways and people from all around the world trying to check out this red-light district. I always wondered if there was more to do here than just its well-documented night scene, so with my co-worker from Okinawa, Shoji, we took a daytime trip there.

My first thought when walking through the city in the light of day was how empty the walkway was. Perfect for introverted people like me.

For those into shopping, Takashimaya Mall, NewoMan and Lumine fit the bill. If you are searching for a luxury brand and don't want to deal with the crowds, coming to the city in the daytime is a great option.

We found it easy to watch the 3D Calico Cat billboard do its thing every 15 minutes on the big monitor outside the East Exit of Shinjuku Station and get a closeup view of Godzilla's head on the Kabukicho strip. In the evening, these areas are packed with people taking photos and videos.

We also enjoyed the fact that dining establishments are not packed like they are in the evening, allowing you to walk in and grab a table. We managed to try a delicious Taiwanese restaurant during our stop. No

wait and the food was great. We also had an absolute blast swinging the baseball bat in some batting cages and visiting Gyoen Park during our daytime visit to this night-life city.

Disclaimer: The night still lingers on in some places.

Although coming to Shinjuku in the daytime is relaxing – less crowds, no lines and space to roam freely – there is still some seediness lurking. There were times it reeked like the bathroom or something very pungent, but that can be expected in a red-light district.

The shop signs were much easier to examine in the day. Bars and clubs with the occasional love hotel in between. As a married man who no longer drinks, I have no interest in coming to these types of places. (Reminder: Under USFJ policy, entering off-limit establishments or paying for prostitution is against the rules for Military, Civilian contractors and dependents.)

Shoji and I set out to explore Shinjuku in search of things that didn't include drinking. We accomplished that mission and are excited to share our findings with you.

– Luis Samayoa

EXPLORE: We do it for you!

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

things first-hand so we can tell you about it, offer tips and give you directions. During a 5-day gathering at our headquarters in Tokyo, our writers, page designers and web team joined forces to brainstorm story ideas and discuss how to best display and tell the tales of our adventures.

And it was a week for them to do some team reporting. And what better way to do that than take a day trip? But unlike years' past when they hit the road to explore Kamakura, Enoshima, Yamanashi and Shizuoka, they decided to be city slickers and explore Tokyo, hopping on trains, buses and taxis, or just letting their legs do the work. When we planned the trip, we considered our Okinawan, Shoji, and what his tropical paradise-influenced take might be on city life, especially since he lived in Tokyo for a while decades ago. And, of course, we were also excited to get Hyemin's point of view on things as a Korean, just like she did two years ago during her

first trip to Japan.

To explore as much of the city as possible, Shoji and Luis paired up, as did Hiro and Hyemin. As for Denisse, she split her day between the two pairs.

The five of them, a motley crew from different generations, cultures, backgrounds and interests, hit the streets to explore Tokyo. In the next four editions, you'll read all about their excursions, what they learned, what they liked and what they would probably skip next time. So, sit down, and let our crew tell you about themselves and show you how to enjoy a day of window shopping, visiting temples, shrines and museums, hitting the batting cages (you need to work on your swing, Luis), touring a beer brewery (Hiro's favorite pastime), eating local cuisine, picture-taking, lots of walking ... and plenty of laughs. Yes, they have a tough job, but they do it for you.

– Chris Carlson,
Publishing and Media Design Manager



Hitting the batting cages

I've seen many anime shows where there's a batting cage scene, which has always fascinated me. I took my swings in the cages before when I was stationed in Korea, but strawberry soju kind of makes it a blur. I decided to give this very affordable and fun activity to try in Shinjuku sober to see what it's like.

I found two batting cages in the area, one is called Tokyo Batting Cage, which looks new on Google Maps and the other is the retro Shinjuku Batting Center. We decided to kick it old-school and visit Shinjuku Batting Center, a 15-minute walk from Shinjuku Station.

When Shoji and I arrived, we noticed a cool vending machine that sold Yakuza video game franchise items.

It was a bit on the pricey side, so I skipped it. If you are a fan of the franchise, you can buy merch here. But I was there for baseball, not souvenirs.

Walking in, everything had a retro-like feel to it. They had coin slot arcade games like Time Splitters 4 and Streetfighter.

Although all the games are in Japanese, the instructions

to use the batting cages are in English, so I quickly grabbed a cage to start getting my swings in. You will need to bring yen to exchange for 100-yen coins to play. Each cage has descriptions like the speed of the ball pitched or left-handed or right-handed. If the cage is empty, it's yours to grab. If not, you may have to wait in line or play some arcade games.

After depositing 400 yen into the machine to start, the baseballs started coming my way, one after another, so be prepared. To be honest, I was a bit worried at first because I'm a bit thrashed up physically by active duty, but this activity didn't really cause too much strain on Uncle Sam's property.

Shoji and I took turns swinging the bat and had a great time, even though we might have missed more balls than we connected on. As I was swinging, I kept focused on the ball and tried to forget about life's problems. It was a mental refresher and a cool experience to do sober. When I was in Korea, those drunk times in the batting cage didn't make the experience as memorable as it was today. Time flew by so quickly, yet it was incredibly fun.

To those who are in the city and don't fancy a drink, I would recommend coming down to the batting cages and swinging for the fences. It's easy to do and a great way to spend time in this red-light district.

– Luis Samayoa

Things to know

ADDRESS: Shinjuku Batting Center: 2-21-13 Kabukicho, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 160-0021, Tokyo Batting Cage: 2-34-5 Kabukicho, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 160-0021

HOURS: 10 a.m. - 4 a.m., 7 days a week

OTHER INFO: Paid parking is available nearby; taking the train is more ideal. They don't have an ATM, so bring yen.



SHINJUKU
BATTING
CENTER
WEBSITE

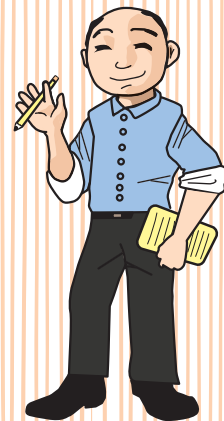
VIEW VIDEO

Denisse

I'm Denisse Rauda from El Paso, Texas, but now living in Tokyo. I have been with Stripes for 12 years. My interests include binge-watching TV shows, karaoke, tennis and exploring Tokyo. Nice to meet you!

Soy Denisse Rauda de El Paso, Texas, pero ahora vivo en Tokio. He trabajado en Stripes por doce años. Mis intereses incluyen maratones de series de televisión, karaoke, tenis y explorar Tokio. ¡Encantada de conocerle!

rauda.denisse@stripes.com



Hiro

I'm Takahiro Takiguchi from Yokosuka City in mainland Japan. I have been with Stripes for 13 years. My interests include food, drinks, travel and music. Nice to meet you!

神奈川県横須賀市在住の滝口隆弘です。星条旗新聞でのライター歴13年。趣味は旅行、食べ歩きに飲み歩き、それに音楽です。よろしくお願いします!

takiguchi.takahiro@stripes.com

Shoji

I'm Shoji Kudaka from Okinawa. I have been with Stripes for 10 years.

My interests include travel, sports, movies, photography, TV shows, cats and dogs. Nice to meet you!

沖縄県在住の久高将司です。ストライプスに在籍して10年になります。トラベル、スポーツ、映画、写真、テレビ、犬や猫に興味があります。よろしくお願いします!

kudaka.shoji@stripes.com



Hyemin

Hi, I'm Hyemin Lee, a Seoul native based in Pyeongtaek. I've been with Stripes for 4 years. I love sharing Korea's destinations, culture, history, local tips and fun things to know with the U.S. military community. Nice to meet you!

안녕하세요. 저는 이혜민입니다. 스타스앤스트라이프와 함께한 지는 4년 정도 됐어요. 미군 커뮤니티에 한국의 여행지, 문화, 역사, 현지 팁, 알아두면 재미있는 이야기들을 소개하는걸 좋아해요. 만나서 반가워요!

lee.hyemin@stripes.com

Luis

Hi, I'm Luis Samayoa, from San Diego, California. This is my 3rd and last year with Stars and Stripes as their military staffer. My interests are traveling, eating, exploring Japan and collecting souvenirs like Sake and Milk Bottles everywhere I go. Nice to meet you!

パグ・ライフ

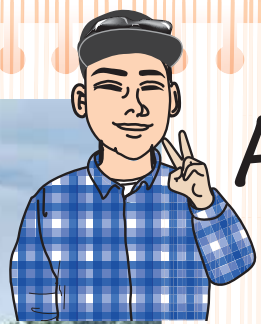
samayoa.luis@stripes.com



Illustrations by Yukiyo Oda

SEE MORE SHINJUKU
ON PAGE 10





A blissful escape at Shinjuku Gyoen National Park



You can spend the entire day in Shinjuku roaming the alleyways, or you can spend some time relaxing in the Gyoen National Garden surrounded by nature in this gigantic park a short walk from the Kabukicho district.

This garden is massive, covering over 145 acres (about 54 football fields), with plenty of open space to sit down and relax away from heavy crowds. It's about a 10-minute walk from the train station and quite easy to find once you place it on navigation. When Shoji and I arrived, we paid our admission fee of 500 yen each and proceeded to walk right in.

Just to throw it out there, there's a Starbucks in the East Area, in case you'd like a caffeine buzz with your dose of nature. We skipped the coffee because it was too hot and just went on a nice stroll.

The park was a great escape from Shinjuku's main strip. I enjoyed walking aimlessly as I took in the beautiful scenery. The park is large with multiple walking paths, so it's easy to get lost, which to me isn't a bad thing. But if you have reservations for an event or restaurant after visiting, make sure you know beforehand what exit you need to use.

There is a lot to see at this park and if you are on a time crunch like we were, you won't be able to see it all. But that's okay because we were able to relax and unwind a bit, get a view of the Taiwan Pavillion from a distance and cross the beautiful bridges in the upper pond on the park's east side.

There is plenty more to see, including the Old Imperial Rest House, Shinjuku Gyoen Museum, Formal Garden and the cherry blossom trees section. I recommend taking half a day to just lounge around and visit all the sections. It can make you forget about the hustle and bustle of work and big city life, even if just for a little bit.

I will admit coming by foot may not have been the best idea, but I have no regrets about visiting this park. I never really thought about what Tokyo had to offer since it only feels like skyscrapers and narrow roads. It's also great to see the pride Japan takes in maintaining their gardens and parks.

I plan on visiting this park again, but will take the train to the nearest entrance instead of walking. And I'll also stay a lot longer.

– Luis Samayoa



VIEW VIDEO



Near Shinjuku-Gyoemmae Station

■ Things to know

ADDRESS: 11 Naitomachi, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo, 160-0014

HOURS: Open daily from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Closed Mondays and Thursdays.

OTHER INFO: Payment can be made with yen, Suica or credit card. There is no parking available here, it's best to take the train when visiting.



WEBSITE



Speakin' Japanese

Let's go to Shinjuku!

Shinjuku is a big city with many spots to explore. Use the phrase below and have fun without getting lost!

“Shinjuku niwa dou ikeba iidesuka?”

= Do you know how to get to Shinjuku Station?
 (“niwa” = to; “dou” = how; “ikeba” = go/get there; iidesuka = should I ~)

“deguchi wa doko-desuka?” = Where is deguchi exit?
 (“deguchi” = exit; “wa” = a particle to indicate a subject; “doko-desuka?” = where is ~)

Pronunciation key: “A” is short (like “ah”); “E” is short (like “get”); “I” is short (like “it”); “O” is long (like “old”); “U” is long (like “tube”); and “AI” is a long “I” (like “hike”). Most words are pronounced with equal emphasis on each syllable, but “OU” is a long “O” with emphasis on that syllable.

“**Chuo/Higashi/Nishi/Minami Deguchi.**” = Central/East/West/South Exit.
 (“chuo” = center; “higashi” = east; “nishi” = west; “minami” = south)

“**Shinjuku atari wo sanpo surunoga yoidesu.**” = A stroll around Shinjuku Gyoen sounds nice.
 (“Atari” = around; “sanpo” = strolling/walking; “surunoga” = doing something; “yoidesu” = is good)

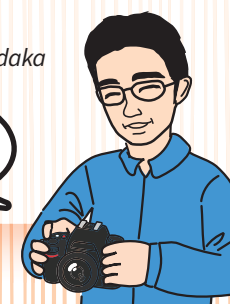
“**Onaka ga suite imasuka?**” = Are you hungry?
 (“onaka” = stomach; “ga” = a particle to indicate a subject; “suite iru/suite imasuka” = is empty/is empty?)

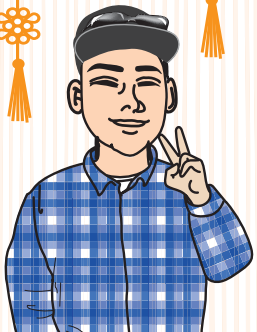
“**Resutoran wa doko desuka?**” = Where is the restaurant?
 (“resutoran” = restaurant; “wa” = a particle to indicate a subject; “doko desuka?” = where is?)

“**Kaimono wo shimasho.**” = Let's do some shopping.
 (“kaimono” = shopping; “wo” = a particle to indicate an object; “shimasho” = let's do)

– Shoji Kudaka

Time to learn a little Japanese!





Taking a break for Taiwanese food near Shinjuku Station

We arrived at Shinjuku Station at 11 a.m. and headed out to a small restaurant called Taiwan Ten Café. This café opens at 11:30 and there is no need to make a reservation, so coming on time or a bit after isn't an issue.

After we were seated, the server told us we could order through the QR code at the table or the LINE app on our phones. I tried the LINE app, but it was difficult since the menu was all in Japanese. Fortunately, ordering at the counter is also an option, so I went up and placed my order without hassle.

I picked the 3-piece shrimp dumplings, one beef noodle bowl and jasmine tea for 2,430 yen (about \$15). It was an affordable meal compared to the big city prices for similar meals in the big city.

It took a few minutes for my meal to arrive, so I sat just admiring this small restaurant and its aesthetics of bright red Taiwanese Lanterns, photos and designs. The music in the background was a bit of Japanese pop and the whole restaurant was just relaxing.

When my order arrived, I decided to try out the Taiwanese dumplings first and to my surprise, they

were absolutely amazing. Each bite was mouthful and the dumplings disappeared in minutes. The beef noodle broth was equally delicious. The broth, thick noodles and beef chunks were unique but towards the end, it started to get a bit heavy. For a day trip, I would recommend this but at the end of the day to just crash out with a full stomach.

All in all, I had a great time coming here. I like Taiwanese food and it's always a delight to grab a bite when I can. I would recommend this small restaurant since there is no reservation needed and it's affordable.

– Luis Samayoa



WEBSITE

■ Taiwan Ten Café

ADDRESS: 3-36-10 Shinjuku, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo, Ainz and Tulpe Shinjuku East Exit store, 2F
HOURS: 11 a.m - 8 p.m. 7 days a week.
OTHER INFO: Yen and card accepted.



Near Shinjuku Station Central East Exit



– Shoji Kudaka

Although my travel buddy Luis picked Taiwan Ten Café, I ended up quite liking it!

The café had a casual but slick design that reminded me of Gongcha the Taiwanese tapioca tea chain. Adorned with red lanterns and colorful illustrations, it had a fun interior.

Their menu items included beef noodle soup, braised pork rice, taro balls, and Taiwanese castella cakes.

I went with a boiled shrimp dumpling set for 1,180 yen (approx. \$7.28), which came with seven pieces of dumplings, almond jelly, and Chinese soup. The dumplings were quite hearty, with a whole piece of shrimp filling the dumpling wrappers. I also liked the delicate sweetness of the almond jelly and the tapioca pearls that were also in there. Washing down the big dumplings with mango juice (medium size for 620 yen) helped me recover from our long walk around Yanaka Ginza.



Near Shinjuku Station East Exit

■ 3D Cat Billboard

ADDRESS: 3-23-18 Cross Shinjuku Building 1F-2F, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 160-0022

■ Godzilla head

ADDRESS: 1 Chome-19-1 Kabukicho, Shinjuku City, Tokyo 160-0021



3D cat, iconic Godzilla landmarks a sight for sore eyes

I really was happy to finally have the chance to visit the iconic 3D Cat billboard and Godzilla head in Shinjuku. Before, I came at night with my wife, it was cool to see it then but the crowds of other tourists pushing, shoving and blocking the view kind of ruined the experience.

Coming in the afternoon for this day trip, you can stand by the walkway or afar and see the billboard monitor without any distractions. The 3D Calico Cat comes every 15 minutes, so if you come early or late, there is no need to push and shove. You can relax your feet from walking and just wait a little while.

At Kabukicho, the crowds were just the same as the billboard. There were a few people posing to take pictures on the



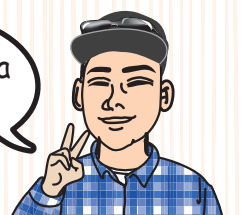
VIEW VIDEO

walkway but not as many compared to the night. We stopped by for a few minutes to look at both sites and not once did we have to squeeze through to get by.

If you have kids or family visiting and you don't want to stay out late to visit iconic spots, you can always stop by during the day when it's less crowded and go shopping or have some fun.

– Luis Samayoa

I saw Godzilla in Tokyo!



Check the next edition for Part 2: Yanaka Ginza!

What military families get wrong about Guam



Hosting a trivia night at Antigü Brewing.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY KATIE MCDONALD,
WWW.THEGUAMGUIDE.COM

When my husband told me we were moving to Guam, my first question (after where in the world is Guam?) was: what will our lives be like there? I worried about feeling bored, isolated, and plagued by island fever, and you probably share my fears. However, after over two years of island life, I can say that many of the assumptions military families make are, thankfully, wrong.

There's nothing to do besides the beach

While you're absolutely right that Guam has world-class snorkeling and diving opportunities, there are plenty of other ways to stay busy. I've participated in a book club and run club, attended and hosted trivia nights, have gone to farmers markets, night markets, and fiestas, participated in yoga classes, and volunteered with a few different organizations. Whether you're a gym rat or Pokémon card trader, you'll find events and groups that fit your passions.

Looking for something to do? Check out our Events Page to see what's happening around Guam.



EVENT

My kids will be stuck inside because of the heat and rain

You're right, Guam is hot, humid, and rainy, but there's so much for families to enjoy when the weather isn't great. From indoor playgrounds to the newly opened Gigo Arcade in the Village of Donki to the Guam Museum to art classes at Creative Indeed and bowling at Leo Palace, there's plenty to keep your kids (and you!) busy while in air conditioning. I recently met up with a friend and her kids at the Micronesia Mall while it was raining cats and dogs, and we had a fantastic time getting matcha and snacks (the food court takes you right back to your childhood!) and chatting while her kids enjoyed the indoor playground.



It's hard to make friends and I'll be lonely

Moving far from your friends and family is hard, but the Chamorro culture of hospitality makes it easier to feel like part of the community. Because of differing work schedules, my husband went to Christmas Eve Mass by himself while I was back in the States visiting family. His coworker saw that he was by himself and welcomed him to his family's home to enjoy dinner and hours of conversation. Similarly, when we attended our church's fiesta for the first time, a woman we had never met saw we were new and immediately made sure we felt welcomed. She stood with us on the food line and explained what the different dishes were and then invited us to sit with her. We chatted about her family, the upcoming pilgrimage she would attend, and my husband's work, and, before we knew it, over an hour had passed.

There's nowhere to shop for...



Peaches at Donki.

There may not be the big box stores you're used to in the States, but that doesn't mean there's not plenty of shopping opportunities in Guam! There's a mall and outlet mall, specialty stores, and plenty of local businesses that provide a wide range of items. The Village of Donki and Ross are two quintessential Guam shopping experiences you can't miss out on. The Village of Donki has become my favorite place to shop because there's always a new surprise. From the juiciest

SEE FAMILIES ON PAGE 14

To those who serve: You belong at USAA.

ALL RANKS | ALL BRANCHES | GUARD | RESERVE | VETERANS

Your mission may change over the years, but ours remains: supporting the military community with insurance, financial services and guidance you can trust.



Taking Care of
Our Own



Become
a member

Use of the term "member" or "membership" refers to membership in USAA Membership Services and does not convey any legal or ownership rights in USAA. Restrictions apply and are subject to change. Property and casualty insurance provided by United Services Automobile Association, San Antonio, Texas, and its affiliate property and casualty insurance companies is available only to persons eligible for P&C group membership. Each company has sole financial responsibility for its own products. Coverages subject to the terms and conditions of the policy. Learn about USAA's use of Artificial Intelligence at usaa.com/ai. © 2026 USAA 9070898.0926



SENIOR DISCOUNT (55+)
 EVERY MONDAY • 7 AM – 1 PM
 Get 5% OFF your total purchase at
 DON DON DONKI Guam.
*Must present a valid ID to avail discount. Does not apply to alcohol,
 tobacco products, and select promotional items.

MILITARY DISCOUNT
 EVERY WEDNESDAY • 9 AM – 9 PM
 Get 5% OFF your total purchase at
 DON DON DONKI Guam.
*Must present a valid ID to avail discount. Does not apply to alcohol,
 tobacco products, and select promotional items.



FOODHALL
 OPEN 10 AM – 10 PM DAILY
 Individual Store Hours May Vary

AVAILABLE FOR A LIMITED TIME!

FREE

CAN COOLER

Sep 28 - Oct 11

How to Claim:

Present your **Common Access Card (CAC)** and a same day **DON DON DONKI receipt** (any amount spent) to our **Customer Service Counter** to claim your Free Gift!

NOW IN STORE!

HALLOWEEN CANDY

FAMILIES: Make the most of it

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

most flavorful peaches I've ever had to adorable stuffed animals, there's always something that makes me smile. Plus, the store's addictive, ear-worm theme song has been continuously stuck in my head for two years.

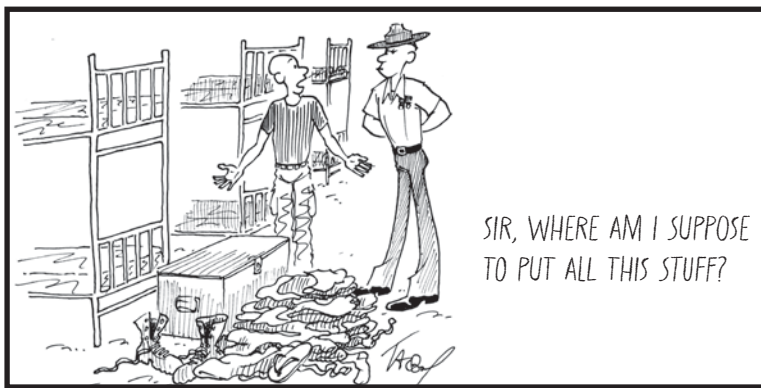
There's no seasons

Yes, you're right, Guam lives in an endless summer but that doesn't mean we don't celebrate the holidays. You can find pumpkin spice lattes in the fall, plenty of Christmas displays in the winter (doing a hotel lobby crawl is the best way to take it all in!), and can meet the Easter Bunny in the spring. Plus, you can add new events to your calendar like Liberation Day, the start of dry season, and Mes CHamoru.

While it's easy to make assumptions about island life, you'll often find yourself pleasantly surprised if you're willing to explore and embrace what Guam has to offer. Beautiful views, a slower pace, and a warm welcome await you, and the adventure is entirely what you'll make it.



Christmas parade float at Skinner Plaza.



– Daryl Talbot



SEPTEMBER HOTEL EVENTS

Come to Dragon Hill Lodge for our Festive Fall Line-up

WINEFEST	OKTOBERFEST
Saturday, September 12 2:00 PM – 5:00 PM Enjoy an afternoon of wine tasting paired with chef-prepared hors d'oeuvres as you discover new wines and expand your palate.	Saturday, September 19 4:00 PM – 10:00 PM Celebrate an evening of authentic Bavarian traditions featuring live music, delicious German cuisine, exciting games, and fun for the whole family.
HIGHLIGHTS - Wine Tastings - Chef-Prepared Hors d'oeuvres - Premium Wine Selection - Elegant Afternoon Experience	HIGHLIGHTS - Authentic Bavarian Cuisine - Live Music & Entertainment - Oktoberfest Games - Family Activities

VISIT OUR WEBSITE
WWW.DRAGONHILLLODGE.COM

LOCATION

Dragon Hill Lodge

US Army Garrison Yongsan Seoul, Republic of Korea



SCAN FOR MORE INFORMATION

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



AJ (cat)

AJ is a handsome 4-year-old gray tabby with a calm demeanor and plenty of love to share. He's the perfect age—past the kitten chaos but still playful and full of personality. AJ enjoys companionship and would love a home where he can relax, explore, and soak up affection. If you're looking for a loyal feline friend, AJ is ready to become your new best buddy.

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.



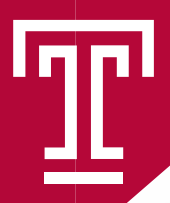
GREEN OLIZARD

Tiki Bar

10% OFF MILITARY I.D. OPEN MON-SAT 1900-LATE

TUMON

NO SHOES NO SHIRT NO WORRIES




Earn your American degree in Tokyo/Kyoto

Temple University
Japan Campus

Admissions Counseling Office
1-14-29 Taishido, Setagaya-ku, Tokyo 154-0004 Japan
✉ ac@tuj.temple.edu ☎ +81-3-5441-9800
🌐 www.tuj.ac.jp/ug

Stripes Guam is A Stars and Stripes Community Publication. This newspaper is authorized for publication by the Department of Defense for members of the military services overseas. However, the contents of Stripes Guam are unofficial, and are not to be considered as the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. government, including the Department of Defense or the U.S. Pacific Command. As a DOD newspaper, Stripes Guam may be distributed through official channels and use appropriated funds for distribution to remote and isolated locations where overseas DOD personnel are located. The appearance of advertising in this publication, including inserts or supplements, does not constitute endorsement of those products by the Department of Defense or Stars and Stripes. Products or services advertised in this publication shall be made available for purchase, use, or patronage without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, marital status, physical handicap, political affiliation, or any other nonmerit factor of the purchaser, user, or patron.



Boonie Stomps Guam

INFORMATION PROVIDED BY
GUAM BOONIE STOMPERS



Taguan

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

Every Saturday, Guam Boonie Stompers offers public hikes to a variety of destinations such as beaches, snorkeling sites, waterfalls, mountains, caves, latte sites, and World War II sites. We meet at the trailhead on Saturdays at 9 a.m. unless otherwise indicated. Directions to the trailhead will be posted on the Guam Boonie Stompers Inc Facebook page. The cost is \$5.00 for hikers over 13. Children must be accompanied by a responsible adult. Hike fees for active military and veterans are covered by Adaptive Adventures. Hikers should provide their own transportation. Guam's trails are not developed. Weather conditions can make the hikes more difficult than described. No reservations required.

For more information:
www.facebook.com/GuamBoonieStompers



Guam Boonie Stompers is a non-profit Guam corporation composed of volunteer leaders committed to leading hikes to and protecting the unique natural destinations on our island.

SCHEDULE 2026

Oct. 3 (Sat.)	Taguan (Medium) - Yigo
Oct. 10 (Sat.)	Ieygo Falls (Very, very Difficult) - Inalahan
Oct. 17 (Sat.)	Taleyfac Falls (Medium) - Hagat
Oct. 24 (Sat.)	Cetti 7- (Difficult) - Humatak
Oct. 31 (Sat.)	Ghost Cave Moonie Hike (Difficult) - Santa Rita, *Sunset @ 5:54PM, Meet Time 4:45PM, Go Time 5:15PM
Nov. 7 (Sat.)	Laguina Falls (Medium) - Yona



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

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

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

We are military veterans and have base access



Why PCS Used Car Lot?

✓ Veteran-owned & operated

✓ "No pressure" sales approach

Visit our website at www.pcsusedcarlotguam.com for the latest inventory



PCS USED CAR LOT

Find us on  

Largest selection of imported Japanese vehicles on island!

Crossword

by Margie E. Burke

ACROSS

1 Male deer

5 Hose shade

10 Czech or Serb

14 Entice

15 "Li'l" comics guy

16 "La Boheme" heroine

17 Tues., for Tuesday

18 Accounts

20 "Missing You" singer John

22 It may follow a dot

23 Colleague of Ketanji

24 Slow flow

26 Imparts

27 David of "CSI: Miami"

29 Twelfth Hebrew letter

31 Dump-truck filler

32 Dance move

33 Resort

36 Rabbit ears

38 Addict's accomplice

40 Wallace of "E.T."

41 Barnyard cacklers

43 Unbending

44 Cousin of a raccoon

45 Stew pieces

46 Drink accessory

49 Eager, so to speak

51 Windy City airport

52 Batman and Robin, e.g.

53 Labor leader Chavez

56 MDF, for one

59 Drive-_____

60 Flower with a bulb

61 Aquatic mammal

62 Burial chamber

63 Tallies

64 Michelob and Molson, e.g.

DOWN

1 Cole _____

2 Orchestral heavyweight

3 Act as a go-between

4 Writer Stein

5 Go for the bronze?

6 Taken _____

7 Opens, as a sleeping bag

8 Spread throughout

9 Memorable time

10 Lit up the room, maybe

11 Add pep to, with "up"

12 Change, as a bill

13 Some charge cards

19 Blessed with ESP

21 1950s president

25 Eye part

65 Online crafts shop

27 Iron follower

28 Top-notch

30 Upstanding guy

33 Goliath's undoing

34 Film legend Gregory

35 Word after martial or performing

37 Poison remedy

39 Clairol choice

42 Put into place

44 Affectionate touch

46 Vergara of "Modern Family"

47 Bronze finish?

48 Fanatical

50 Kitchen gadget

54 Battle needs

55 Like Dorothy's slippers

57 Go up and down

58 E.R. workers

Copyright 2026 by The Puzzle Syndicate

Answers to Previous Crossword:

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

ADVERTISE WITH STARS AND STRIPES

Market your business to the U.S. military community in Guam

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

STARS AND STRIPES

Community Publication

JANUARY 11 - JANUARY 17, 2013

FREE

Stripes Sports Trivia

Amid controversy, which team selected Bo Jackson with the No. 1 overall pick in 1986?

Answer

Tampa Bay Buccaneers

SUDOKU

Difficulty: Easy

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

Edited by Margie E. Burke

HOW TO SOLVE:

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

Answer to Previous Sudoku:

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

Copyright 2026 by The Puzzle Syndicate

Free shuttle service

The automotive matchmakers

Military discounts



GUAM CARMONY
(671) 878-2277

- Only dealership with used cars under 10k!
- Financing Available!
- Over 150 Cars in stock!
- Free Shuttle Service!
- Serving the community for over 10 years!
- Military Discounts!

www.guamcarmony.com
131 W Soledad Ave Hagåtña, 96910, Guam
(Across from Hagatna Boat Basin, next to Mosa's Joint restaurant)



THE VETERANS' CHOICE

PATRIOT CAR RENTAL

477-CARS
PATRIOTCARRENTAL.COM

Free shuttle service



Military Special

\$25 / day rentals
\$500 / month rentals

477-CARS (2277) 140 Hernan Cortez Ave Hagatna, GU 96932 across Agana boat basin next to Main Street bakery.



ISLAND DENTAL

WE WELCOME TRICARE!

CALL (671) 989-5999

Open on weekends! Open evenings on weekdays!



Island Dental



island.dental

Accepting All Major Insurances

Located in Dededo

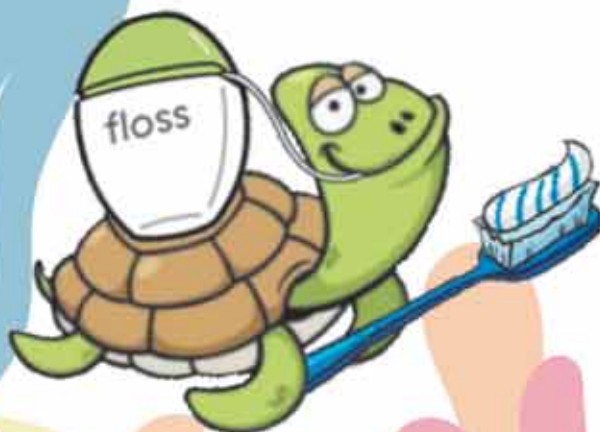
Next to American Grocery



**AMERICAN
GROCERY**

**AJISEN
RAMEN**

MARINE CORPS DRIVE



STARS AND STRIPES[®]

Volume 12 Edition 14 ©SS 2026

GUAM EDITION

stripes.com

SEPTEMBER 28, 2026

Too old and too few

Congressional report says Air Force's aging fighter fleet fell below required minimum number of jets **Page 2**



A U.S. Air Force F-16 Fighting Falcon takes off in U.S. Central Command's area of responsibility on April 18.

NOAH TANCER/U.S. Air Force

COVER STORY



SPENCER HANSON/U.S. Air Force

Air Force F-16 Fighting Falcons and F-35 Lightning IIs fly in support of Operation Tundra Merlin at Eielson Air Force Base, Alaska, on Aug. 6. The F-16, a “legacy” design, emphasizes speed and maneuverability. The F-35, a “fifth-generation” fighter, includes stealth capabilities.

Air Force fighter fleet too small, too old

Congressional report: New aircraft caught in industrial bottleneck

BY GARY WARNER
Stars and Stripes

The Air Force’s fighter jet fleet is too small and too old, with new aircraft deliveries caught in industrial bottlenecks. Meanwhile, Congress has mandated that the service keeps planes it says it no longer needs or wants, according to an annual congressional review.

The report from the nonpartisan Congressional Research Service, released Sept. 4, says the Air Force has failed to meet a mandate for a minimum number of fighter planes.

Air Force Secretary Troy Meink notified Congress on May 5 that the service had 1,098 fighters in its inventory, below the statutory requirement of 1,145 aircraft.

The report notes that, by some analysts’ counts, U.S. fighters could be outnumbered by modern aircraft in China, with that country producing up to 1,000 new Chengdu J-20 Weolong (“Mighty Dragon”) sixth-generation fighters by 2030.

The Air Force plans to accelerate aircraft purchases to reach a goal of 1,558 manned fighters by 2035.

“Potential considerations for Congress regarding the Air Force’s fighter force structure plans may include whether to support, oppose or modify the service’s goal,” the report said.

“The Department of the Air Force remains committed to transparency and close collaboration with Congress to attain the required fighter force structure and capabilities needed to execute the National Defense Strategy,” the Air Force said in a statement about the CRS report.

“We look forward to continuing this constructive dialogue with Capitol Hill to ensure our Airmen have the right mix of capabilities, both crewed and uncrewed, to meet future challenges.”

The Air Force “operates a heavily used and aging fleet, with an average aircraft age of 27.4 years,” the report said. In 1994, the overall Air Force fleet averaged 17.2 years old.

Older planes mean more maintenance. In 1995, the fighter availability rate was 72.9%. In 2024, availability dropped to 53.9%.

The Air Force is trying to get a younger fleet by working at both ends of the timeline. It wants to buy 100 more F-35A Lightning II aircraft by 2030, the latest “fifth generation” fighter, which includes stealth characteristics not found on older jets like the F-16 Fighting Falcon, which rely on speed and maneuverability.

The service also wants to buy up to 24 Boeing F-15EX Eagle II fighters by the end of 2027.

Between those purchases and the development of the F-47 Next Generation Air Dominance Fighter, the Air Force says it can hit its goal of 1,558 fighters by 2035.

The F-47 would be augmented with “loyal wingman” drones — officially called Collaborative Combat Aircraft. These unmanned aircraft would work in conjunction with manned planes.

According to fiscal year 2027 budget documents, the Air Force is seeking \$1.4 billion in research and development funds for the CCA program.

The Air Force and Congress



KAMILA DUL/U.S. Air Force

Air Force F-16 Fighting Falcons assigned to the Thunderbirds demonstration squadron perform an aerial maneuver during the New York Airshow in Orange County on Aug. 2. The Air Force wants to buy 100 more F-35As to replace the aging F-16s.

do not count uncrewed aircraft when totaling the future Air Force fighter fleet.

“Uncrewed collaborative combat aircraft enhance operation of, but not replace, manned fighter aircraft,” the report said.

The report said the F-47 is a central enabler for future high-end conflict. Still, details on future quantities, timelines and other specifics are in classified reports that can’t be publicly analyzed yet.

“According to FY2027 budget documents, the Air Force has requested \$5 billion in research, development, test, and evaluation (RDT&E) funding for the F-47 program,” the report said.

The report also noted that Congress should closely monitor the costs of the F-47.

“Advanced fighter aircraft development programs — such as the F-35 and the F-22 — ran behind schedule and over budget,” the report said. “How reliable are development timelines for the F-47? Is the Air Force incorporating any lessons learned from the F-35 and F-22 programs into the F-47 program?”

If so, which lessons?”

Challenges facing the Air Force include delays in delivering new aircraft, particularly the F-35A, caused in part by bottlenecks in production supply chains and spare-parts availability.

The Air Force also faces “readiness issues” such as a shortage of pilots and ground crew trained to work on aircraft.

Gen. James C. Slife stated in 2024 that the Air Force was 1,900 pilots short of the 19,136 the service said it needed for global requirements. The Air Force aims to produce about 1,500 pilots annually through the Undergraduate Pilot Training program.

The report suggests Congress ask for a full accounting of how many pilots would be needed if the Air Force’s request for 1,558 manned fighters by 2035 is approved.

The Air Force told researchers that another factor impacting the age and readiness of aircraft was congressional mandates to keep set numbers of specific aircraft flying — even if the service had

called for cuts or complete phase-out of some types.

A statute prohibits the Air Force from retiring F-22 Raptor aircraft or decreasing the inventory below 184 aircraft through Sept. 30, 2027, the report said. As of August, the Air Force had 185 F-22s.

Congress has also prohibited the Air Force from retiring more than 51 F-15E Eagle aircraft and states that no F-15E aircraft may be retired in fiscal year 2026. Limits are set through fiscal 2028.

The Air Force has also been slowed by Congress in efforts to phase out the A-10 Thunderbolt II, a ground-attack aircraft flown by some National Guard units. The Air Force has stopped training new A-10 pilots and closed its main domestic maintenance hub.

The report cites a July 2026 Congressional Budget Office report that the size and age issue should begin to reverse as new aircraft arrive at squadrons and older aircraft are phased out.

The average age of the Air Force fleet has “crested and will decline until the early 2030s.”



SHOP & EXCHANGE YOUR RECEIPTS NOW TO WIN BIG
AT OUR FINAL GRAND PRIZE DRAWING OF THE YEAR!

Enter & Win! BMW X1

MICRONESIA MALL
CENTER COURT | 2PM



SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2026

Exchange your Mall receipts to receive game cards for a chance to drive home a **brand new BMW X1** at our final grand prize drawing of the year! Ten runners-up will each receive a **\$350 Goodwind Travel gift certificate** for tickets to Philippine Airlines. **You must be present to win!** Plus, win thousands of instant prizes throughout the promotion. Visit the Game Booth in the Micronesia Mall Center Court to exchange receipts and start playing today.



MILITARY

Air Force names 'loyal wingman' drones

'Vengeance,' 'Fury' will fly with piloted fighters to boost firepower

By GARY WARNER
Stars and Stripes

The two new uncrewed Collaborative Combat Aircraft the Air Force hopes to fly operationally by the end of the decade recently were given official names by Air Force Secretary Troy Meink.

The General Atomics FQ-42 will be called "Vengeance," while the Anduril Industries FQ-44 will be called "Fury," Meink said. He announced the names during his keynote address at the Air & Space Forces Association's Air, Space & Cyber Conference in National Harbor, Md., on Sept. 14.

The Air Force plans to order 1,000 of the uncrewed aircraft, with 150 flying by the end of the decade and 500 by 2032.

In Air Force naming conventions, F stands for "fighter" and

Q for "unmanned" or drone. FQ aircraft are often called "fighter drones" and their role accompanying crewed aircraft is dubbed "loyal wingman."

The aircraft will fly alongside and support crewed aircraft such as the F-35A Lightning II and the future F-47 sixth-generation fighter, offering additional surveillance and defense to air crews in combat.

The fighter drones are designed to carry air-to-air missiles to give crewed aircraft additional firepower in air combat.

Meink praised the project for achieving its first flight 18 months after the contracts were announced.

The FQ-42 Vengeance first flew in August 2025, while the FQ-44 Fury flew two months later.



Photos from U.S. Air Force

The General Atomics FQ-42 "Vengeance" drone takes off.

Anduril posted video on X in July showing the FQ-44 Fury firing an inert AIM-120 Advanced Medium-Range Air-to-Air Missile, or AMRAAM, during flight testing at Edwards Air Force Base in California.

The AMRAAM is U.S. military's main beyond-visible-range air-to-air missile.



Anduril Industries' FQ-44 "Fury" fighter drone seen in a test flight.



U.S. Coast Guard

The crew of the Coast Guard's newest fast-response cutter, the Jeffrey Palazzo, poses aboard the vessel during its commissioning ceremony in New York City on Sept. 12.

Coast Guard commissions fifth fast-response cutter for Guam

By ALEX WILSON
Stars and Stripes

The Coast Guard commissioned another Guam-bound fast-response cutter that's slated to become the fifth vessel of its class assigned to the western-most U.S. territory.

The USCGC Jeffrey Palazzo, the Coast Guard's 63rd Sentinel-class fast-response cutter, entered service on Sept. 12 at the Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum in New York City, according to Coast Guard and Bollinger Shipyards.

The cutter is the second bound for Guam to be commissioned



Palazzo

Palazzo served eight years on active duty in the Coast Guard before joining the fire department in 1996 and continuing to serve as a Coast Guard reservist.

He responded to the World Trade Center with Staten Island's Rescue Company 5 and died along with 10 other members of the company.

this year, following the USCGC Vincent Danz, which arrived in late July.

The Myrtle Hazard, Oliver Henry and Frederick Hatch are also homeported there.

The 154-foot cutters conduct missions including search and rescue, port and border security and countering illegal activities at sea. They are replacing the Coast Guard's aging 110-foot patrol boats.

The Jeffrey Palazzo is named for a Coast Guard reservist and New York City firefighter who died responding to the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks.

The commissioning came one day after the attacks' 25th anniversary.

Palazzo served eight years on active duty in the Coast Guard before joining the fire department in 1996 and continuing to serve as a Coast Guard reservist.

He responded to the World Trade Center with Staten Island's Rescue Company 5 and died along with 10 other members of the company.

Air Force aims to put more bombers in sky

By CLAIRE JENQ
Stars and Stripes

The Air Force recently announced the "North Star Readiness Campaign," aimed at increasing the number of mission-ready strategic bombers.

The service hopes to solve logistical issues that have plagued the upkeep of its aging fleet of B-52 Stratofortress and B-1 Lancer bombers by ensuring a streamlined parts pipeline, as well as upgrading the bombers to last until the 2050s.

Air Force Global Strike Command has partnered with the Air Force Materiel Command and the Defense Logistics Agency to hold regular "aircraft-on-ground" meetings to identify any parts delays. The meetings have accelerated shipments from a week or more to as little as two to three days, the Air Force said in a news release Sept. 8.

"The North Star Readiness Campaign is our commitment to ensuring the warfighter has the nation's bomber force ready to go at a moment's notice," said Gen. S.L. Davis, commander of AFGSC.

Airmen, mechanics, DLA representatives and supply chain members are working together to identify any issues that could delay maintenance.

"For example, our Airmen built a localized playbook to optimize the phase maintenance process which drastically re-

duced maintenance timelines while strictly maintaining safety and security. They are the ones with the hands-on experience, and we would be remiss if we didn't leverage their expertise to drive these improvements," said Chief Master Sgt. Shane Anderson, the NSRC change management lead.

The Air Force said that the efforts have already produced results. Since the campaign was implemented, the number of mission-impacting part problems has decreased from more than 450 to around 160.

The Air Force currently operates 76 B-52s, according to the service's website.

The first modified version of the B-52 resulted in a fatal crash at Edwards Air Force Base in California that killed eight people in June. The Air Force said that the modernization efforts would continue while the crash is investigated.

In August, the Government Accountability Office released a report warning that the Air Force's plan to modernize its B-52 bombers with replacement engines before completing critical portions of developmental flight testing could lead to higher costs and project delays.

The service is projected to spend \$21 billion to modernize the engines, radar, weapons systems and communications, according to the report.

MILITARY

Report: Navy ignoring pilot brain health

Congress urged to force Pentagon to confront issue

BY SVETLANA SHKOLNIKOVA
Stars and Stripes

A House Oversight Committee subpanel in a report on Sept. 8 criticized the Navy for failing to examine whether the physical demands of flying its fighter jets can cause lasting brain injuries that contribute to mental health problems among aviators.

The investigation showed that the Navy did not take meaningful action to address the issue despite the suicides of three F/A-18 Super Hornet pilots several years ago and persistent concerns about the potential neurological effects of extreme flying.

“Despite internal warnings and external reporting, the Navy has not taken the steps necessary to determine whether it is systemically exposing its aviators to long-term brain injury,” stated the report, compiled by the panel’s military and foreign affairs subcommittee.

The committee’s Republican leadership — chairman James Comer, of Kentucky, and subcommittee chairman William Timmons, of South Carolina — said the Navy’s lack of thorough investigation was “concerning and a disservice to those who serve.”

Lawmakers launched a probe into the issue after The New York Times reported in 2024 about the potential cumulative



JARON WILLS /U.S. Navy

A sailor launches an F/A-18E Super Hornet from the flight deck of Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Nimitz in the Pacific Ocean. A House Oversight Committee subpanel report said the Navy is equipped to study long-term aviator brain health but has not done so.

toll of repeated catapult launches from aircraft carriers and other high-speed maneuvers on the brains of fighter crews.

The resulting committee report found that the Navy internally attributed mental health issues primarily to operational stress rather than neurological injury.

When Navy leadership questioned Navy medical experts on whether flying was causing brain injuries, the medical team said there was no evidence or research of the problem, so there was no need to investigate further, the report said.

The report also cites a 2024 memo by a Navy doctor and former pilot that sought to raise

the alarm about the issue but did not spur substantive action. After two former pilots died by suicide, the doctor conducted an independent study and surveyed 20 aviators, finding widespread mental health problems.

The memo was widely shared among Navy personnel, including by a Navy captain who emailed it to several admirals.

“Feedback from the bro-network is that this is a hot topic ... and it is affecting retention of our senior aviators,” the captain wrote. “These suicides, may, or may not be linked by common causes. But we will not know until we choose to study this problem with the same vigor we tackle other challenges in [the]

community.”

The committee report said the Navy and its vast research enterprise are well-equipped to study long-term aviator brain health but have not done so. The estimated cost of conducting such a study is \$3.9 million — about the cost of training one to two elite pilots.

“Given the Navy’s substantial investment in human capital, failing to allocate comparable resources to understanding risks and protecting that investment, particularly in terms of long-term health, is unfortunate,” the report stated.

The Navy responded to lawmaker scrutiny in April with a study of 8,500 active-duty naval

aviators. The study found no significant increase in diagnosed neurological conditions among aviators exposed to high gravitational forces, but it did not account for conditions that could emerge later in life.

“Critically, the study does not resolve whether repeated exposure to high-G forces and other stressors may result in cumulative or delayed neurological effects, underscoring the need for longitudinal research,” the committee report stated.

Naval aviators endure up to nine Gs of force during sharp, high-speed maneuvers, making their bodies and gear feel nine times their weight. High vertical G-forces rapidly pull blood away from the brain toward the lower extremities.

The report says Congress should step in to force the military to confront the issue. It recommends legislation that would require the Pentagon to study the long-term neurological risk to all aviators and establish a program focused on aviator brain and mental health.

It also recommends that the Pentagon reform medical policies to reduce the stigma around seeking mental health care, particularly among aviators who may avoid treatment for fear of losing their flight eligibility.

“Naval aviators who have potentially suffered from traumatic brain injuries and other neurological ailments deserve the ability to seek out healthcare without feeling ostracized or weak,” Comer and Timmons said in a statement.

Navy inks contract for unmanned carrier-based tanker

BY ALISON BATH
Stars and Stripes

The Navy reached a key aviation milestone this month, awarding a contract worth over half a billion dollars for construction of three aerial refueling drones designed to bolster its carrier air wings, officials said.

The \$562 million deal with Boeing includes three MQ-25A Stingray drones and advanced acquisition of components needed to support the unmanned aircraft, the service said in a statement Sept. 14.

The drones are intended to free up F/A-18 Super Hornet fighter jets for combat missions, according to the Navy’s statement.

The service hopes to use the MQ-25 in place of modified Super Hornet fighter jets typically used for midair refueling, according to a Congressional Re-

search Service report last month.

Earlier this year, USS Theodore Roosevelt became the first operational aircraft carrier compatible with the MQ-25, according to the report. Roosevelt is expected to deploy to the Middle East soon.

The MQ-25 is the world’s first fully integrated carrier-based unmanned aircraft.

It also is capable of intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, according to Boeing. Initial delivery is expected to begin in 2029, the Navy said.

The contract award marks a pivotal transition from development to reality, Capt. Daniel Fucito, unmanned carrier aviation program manager, said in the Navy statement.

The MQ-25 has been under development since 2016, part of a more than 25-year push by the Navy to develop multi-mission



U.S. Navy

The first painted MQ-25A Stingray sits on the ramp outside Boeing’s production facility in Mascoutah, Ill., on Aug. 31.

carrier-based unmanned combat drones, according to the Congressional Research Service report.

With a wingspan of 75 feet and a length of 51 feet, the drone would carry a fuel capacity of 14,000 pounds at a distance of 575 miles. That’s roughly the same as an F/A-18 but less than previous Navy tankers, the report said.

The Navy envisions an eventu-

al fleet of 76 MQ-25 drones, 67 of which would be operational.

The remaining ones would be used as test and development aircraft, according to the report.

The report raised questions about the Navy’s plan to begin limited production of the MQ-25 before fully completing testing and development could result in additional delays. How the service planned to manage that risk should be considered, the CRS

report stated.

Other concerns included cybersecurity testing of software for the drone and its ground control station, and management of technical issues discovered during testing and development, according to the report.

In May, acting Secretary of the Navy Hung Cao authorized moving the MQ-25 program from research, engineering and development into the production and deployment phase, the service said.

The benchmark approval allows for production of a small number of the drones used for final operational testing and initial fleet deployment.

“This will expand the operational reach of the air wing while preserving the service life of F/A-18E/Fs, improving readiness across the Super Hornet fleet,” the Navy statement said.

MILITARY

Meet the GOATS of wildfire prevention

Miramar Marines call in hundreds of four-legged reinforcements

By LYDIA GORDON
Stars and Stripes

Smokey Bear may say only you can prevent wildfires, but Marines in California had a different plan this month, calling in fire support from almost 500 four-legged reinforcements: goats.

Marine Corps Air Station Miramar launched a pilot program Sept. 15 that brought a 471-strong working party of nature's finest foraging machines to chomp its way through dry vegetation across a large portion of the base's training area.

The effort — dubbed Operation Goat Rope — marks the first time a U.S. military installation has used grazing animals as part of wildfire prevention efforts, according to base officials.

Over the next several weeks, the goats from Shepherdess Land and Livestock will graze on an initial sector of more than 600 acres of the base's explosive ordnance disposal training area before moving to other zones, base spokesman 1st Lt. Blake Starbuck said.

The goats are being used to clear dry brush from steep canyon areas that can be difficult for people or machinery to reach. The grazed areas are expected to create buffers that could slow the spread of a wildfire, according to a Marine Corps statement.

The livestock company has used goats and sheep since 2020 for targeted grazing to reduce wildfire risks and manage vegetation, according to its website.

"This nature-based initiative reduces wildfire hazards along the base perimeter, protects critical military infrastructure, and preserves sensitive native habitats without the emissions, soil disruption, or chemical runoff associated with traditional



PHOTOS BY SEFERINO GAMEZ/U.S. Marine Corps Air Station

Goats graze on vegetation behind a wire fence during Operation Goat Rope at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., on Sept. 15. Miramar partnered with Shepherdess Land and Livestock to bring over 400 goats to East Miramar to graze on vegetation and help reduce wildfire risk.

“The strategic fuel breaks created by this targeted grazing program slow a fire’s advance and lower the energy released.”

Joshua Allen
fire chief at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif.

mechanical clearing,” Starbuck said.

Brush and wildfires are a persistent concern on military training lands in Southern California, particularly during peak dry



Cole Bush, the founder of Shepherdess Land and Livestock, releases goats from an 18-wheeler.

seasons.

At Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, about 45 minutes north of Miramar, 101 wildfires



Marine Corps Sgt. Maj. Alejandro Garcia Jr. directs goats to the grazing area during Operation Goat Rope.

Brian Bowers, Guam Edition Editor

Scott Foley, Revenue Director

CONTACT US

633 3rd Street NW, Suite 500, Washington, D.C. 20001

Editorial: (202) 886-0005

Advertising: (202) 886-0014

Additional contact information: [stripes.com](https://www.stripes.com)

This publication is a compilation of stories from Stars and Stripes, the editorially independent newspaper authorized by the Department of Defense

for members of the military community.

The contents of Stars and Stripes are unofficial, and are not to be considered as the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. government, including the Defense Department or the military services. The Guam Edition of Stars and Stripes is published jointly by Stars and Stripes and this newspaper.

The appearance of advertising in this publication, including inserts or supplements, does not constitute endorsement by the Department of Defense or Stars and Stripes of the products or services advertised.

Products or services advertised in this publication shall be made available for purchase, use, or patronage without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, marital status, physical handicap, political affiliation, or any other nonmerit factor of the purchaser, user, or patron.

© Stars and Stripes, 2026

break out each year on average across the installation, much of which is undeveloped training land, according to a service release in August.

The goats are expected to remain in Miramar's training areas for about five to six weeks, Starbuck said.

He said the pilot program will also allow officials to measure the long-term effectiveness of targeted grazing and determine whether the approach could be used for future wildfire miti-

gation efforts.

Joshua Allen, the fire chief at Miramar, said in the statement that defensible space is the greatest asset in battling blazes in Southern California.

"The strategic fuel breaks created by this targeted grazing program slow a fire's advance and lower the energy released," Allen said. "This gives our fire-fighting crews the critical time and tactical advantage they need to suppress a blaze safely and effectively before it escalates."

AUTO SPOT

SCAN THE QR CODE TO SHOP GUAM'S BEST SELECTION OF USED VEHICLES

 #26M109A	2018 HYUNDAI ELANTRA NOW \$10,995 OR \$80 PER PAYCHECK	 #25P211	2018 MAZDA CX-5 SPORT NOW \$11,995 OR \$88 PER PAYCHECK	 #26P196	2017 MITSUBISHI LANCER ES NOW \$12,995 OR \$95 PER PAYCHECK
 #25G132C	2010 LEXUS RX 350 AWD NOW \$14,995 OR \$110 PER PAYCHECK	 #26P058	2015 HONDA FIT EX-L NOW \$14,995 OR \$110 PER PAYCHECK	 #26P209	2019 TOYOTA COROLLA NOW \$15,995 OR \$117 PER PAYCHECK
 #26P135	2021 MAZDA MAZDA3 NOW \$15,995 OR \$117 PER PAYCHECK	 #26G002A	2016 GMC TERRAIN NOW \$16,995 OR \$124 PER PAYCHECK	 #26C025A	2017 INFINITI QX50 NOW \$16,995 OR \$124 PER PAYCHECK
 #26P092	2022 KIA RIO S NOW \$16,995 OR \$124 PER PAYCHECK	 #26P182	2023 HYUNDAI VENUE NOW \$17,995 OR \$132 PER PAYCHECK	 #26C039	2022 MITSUBISHI OUTLANDER SPORT NOW \$18,995 OR \$139 PER PAYCHECK
 #26P218	2020 GMC CANYON NOW \$20,995 OR \$153 PER PAYCHECK	 #24C104	2020 BUICK ENVISION NOW \$21,995 OR \$161 PER PAYCHECK	 #25C025	2021 GMC ACADIA NOW \$23,995 OR \$175 PER PAYCHECK

*WITH APPROVED CREDIT. TERMS AND CONDITIONS MAY VARY. MONTHLY PAYMENTS ARE ONLY ESTIMATES DERIVED FROM THE VEHICLE PRICE AT A 72 MONTH TERM, 8.0% INTEREST AND 10% DOWN PAYMENT. SEE DEALER FOR DETAILS.

AUTO SPOT

671.478.AUTO (2886)
255 E. MARINE CORP DR, HAGATÑA

WWW.GUAMAUTOSPOT.COM

SCAN TO MAKE YOUR RESERVATION

DRIVE FURTHER

FOR AS LOW AS
\$35 A DAY
WITH FREE SHUTTLE SERVICE

BASIC INSURANCE IS NOT INCLUDED IN THE RENTAL PRICE. ALL OFFERS ARE SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY AND MAY CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE. FREE PICK-UP AND DROP-OFF AVAILABLE. SOME RESTRICTIONS MAY APPLY. FOR RESERVATIONS OR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CALL (671) 648-7498 OR EMAIL US AT CUSTOMER.SERVICE@SIXTGUAM.COM.

WE HAVE THE VEHICLES TO **FIT YOUR NEEDS**
GIVE US A CALL TO MAKE YOUR RESERVATION TODAY AT 671.648.7498



WOW!

JOLLY SPAGHETTI

Sweet Surprise!

\$6.25
A la carte