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 KOREA

Community Publication

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Stars and Stripes marks historic anniversary in the Pacific

Special 16-page pullout inside

CELEBRATING MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME

When I was a kid I always called the house I lived in, home. Growing up I have realized that my family is my home. My family is the most treasured thing I have at the moment, and it will forever stay that way. I used to have a home before and then I lost it. That's when I realized nothing is permanent, but family will always be there. I matured and realized that no matter what someone can go through or how down they are in life,

there,s still a place they can call home, whether they know it or not. When I was at my lowest, I could go to my parents and siblings and tell them about things they could help me with. No matter where I am, I will always know where my home is. My home, my family is and will always be, one call, one text, one word away and they will be there when I need them. We all need someone to go to when everything is at an all time low.

We need to appreciate what we have now instead of when it,s gone. You need to enjoy everything while it lasts, because you can,t have something forever. As I said, the only thing that is ever close to being permanent is family or for others friends as well. We all have a home, we just need to find it, and maybe you have already found it.

— Kaleb Myer, 9th Grade,
 Osan Middle High School

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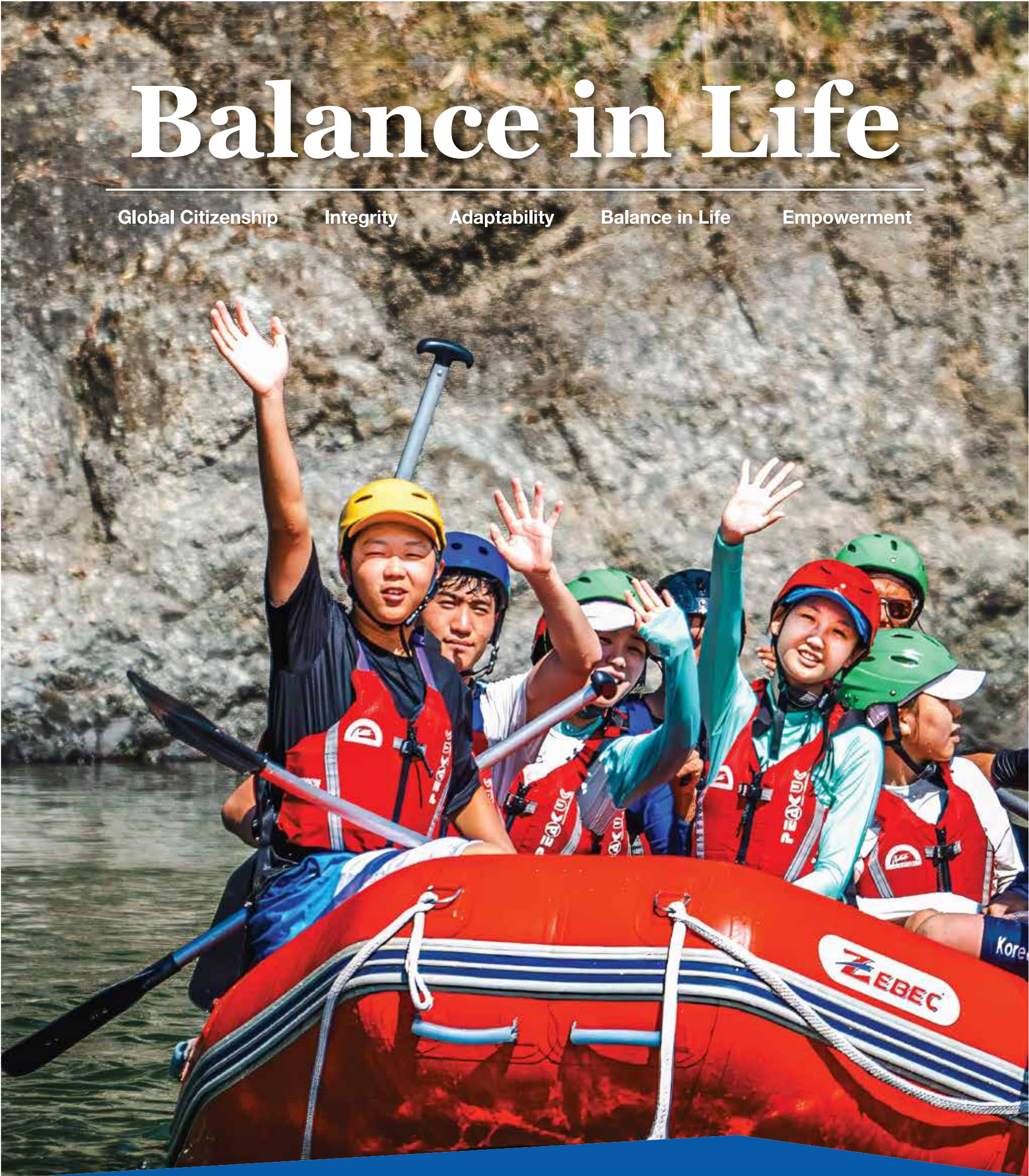


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CELEBRATING MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

Humphreys Central Elementary School

Kindergarten • Ms. Brinn



Name: Gregson

Humphreys Central Elementary School, ROK
Ms. Brinn's Kindergarten Class 2024-2025



I am Gregson. I am a military child.
My dad is in the Air Force.

Name: Smith


Humphreys Central Elementary School, ROK
Ms. Brinn's Kindergarten Class 2024-2025



I am happy for my dad because he has me
and he is safe. My dad is in the Air Force.
I like being a military child.

Name: Garbod


Humphreys Central Elementary School, ROK
Ms. Brinn's Kindergarten Class 2024-2025



I have a lot of military friends. When I am
done being at school my dad brings
me to his job.

Name: Haus


Humphreys Central Elementary School, ROK
Ms. Brinn's Kindergarten Class 2024-2025



I am a proud military child. I had to move to
Washington. I had to leave my dad at Gregson. I was
sad. Then we moved to Korea. I am now happy. I am
proud of my dad protecting the country.

Name: Lebas


Humphreys Central Elementary School, ROK
Ms. Brinn's Kindergarten Class 2024-2025



My daddy is a marine in the Army.
I am a military child. I'm proud
of my dad. I love my dad.

Name: Hahn

Humphreys Central Elementary School, ROK
Ms. Brinn's Kindergarten Class 2024-2025



I like being a military child. My
Mom is in the army. I am
proud of her.

Name: Penelope


Humphreys Central Elementary School, ROK
Ms. Brinn's Kindergarten Class 2024-2025



I'm a Military child. I feel sad
because he goes away but I'm happy
to be safe. My dad is in the
Military. I'm proud of him.

Name: Phynky


Humphreys Central Elementary School, ROK
Ms. Brinn's Kindergarten Class 2024-2025



My dad flies for the coast guard.
I am a happy military child.
I am proud of my dad.

Name: Mind


Humphreys Central Elementary School, ROK
Ms. Brinn's Kindergarten Class 2024-2025



My dad works in the military. I am
a military child. He said when he is away

Name: Sonjho

Humphreys Central Elementary School, ROK
Ms. Brinn's Kindergarten Class 2024-2025



I am happy because we go to school with my dad.
The military kids. My dad teaches military kids to

Name: Zakaria

Humphreys Central Elementary School, ROK
Ms. Brinn's Kindergarten Class 2024-2025



I'm not easy to wave at my daddy when he
leaves. Some times it's hard being a military child. I
miss you.

Name: Samuel


Humphreys Central Elementary School, ROK
Ms. Brinn's Kindergarten Class 2024-2025



I am a military child.
I am proud of my
parent.

Name: Zakein

Humphreys Central Elementary School, ROK
Ms. Brinn's Kindergarten Class 2024-2025



I like being a military child. I am happy my
mom helps me. I am proud of my mom.

Name: Adelgen

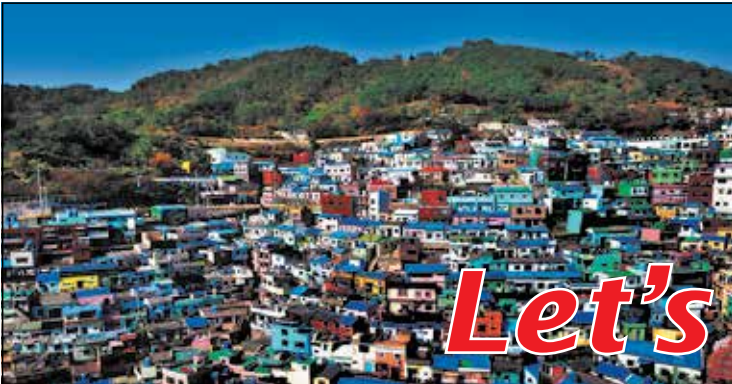
Humphreys Central Elementary School, ROK
Ms. Brinn's Kindergarten Class 2024-2025



I feel proud being a military child because my
Dad gets to learn. He flies helicopters.



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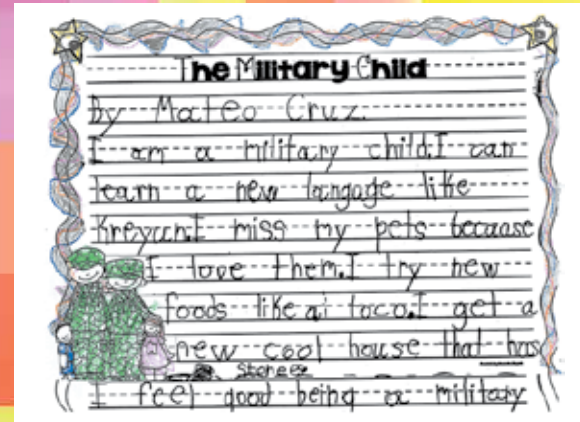
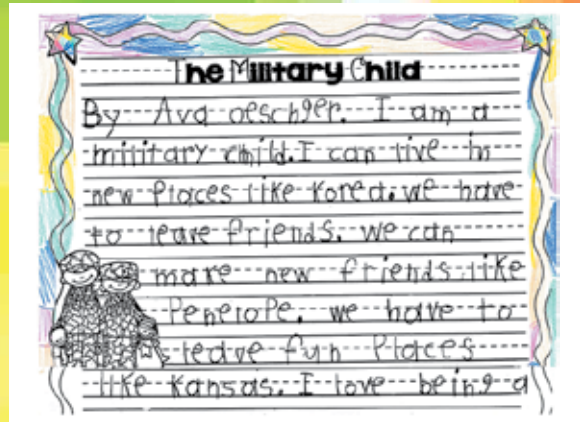
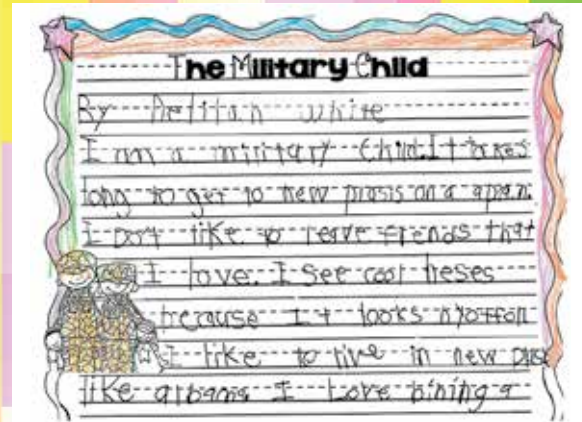
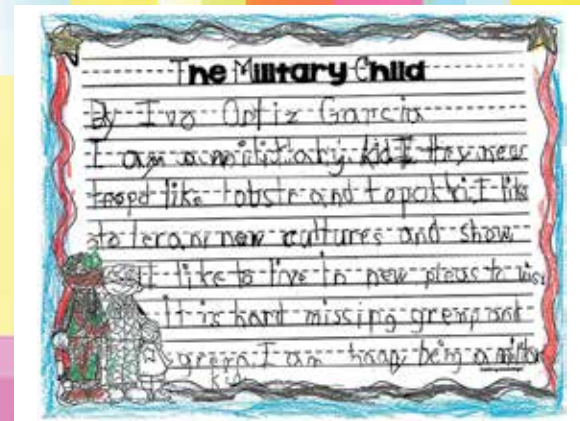
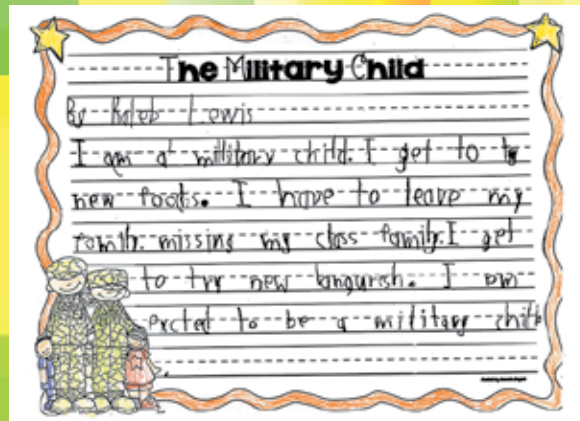
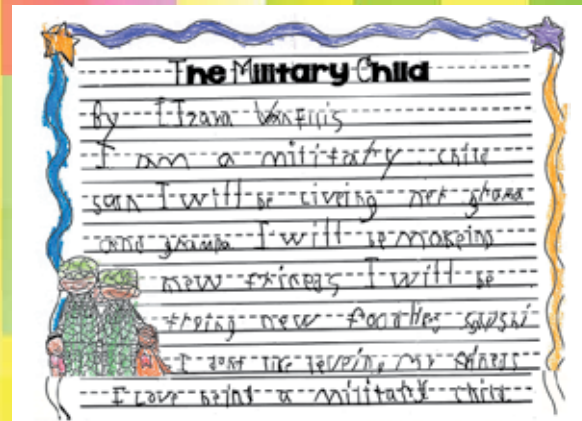
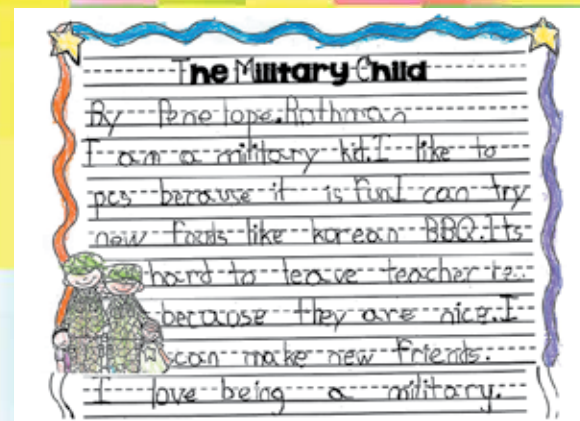
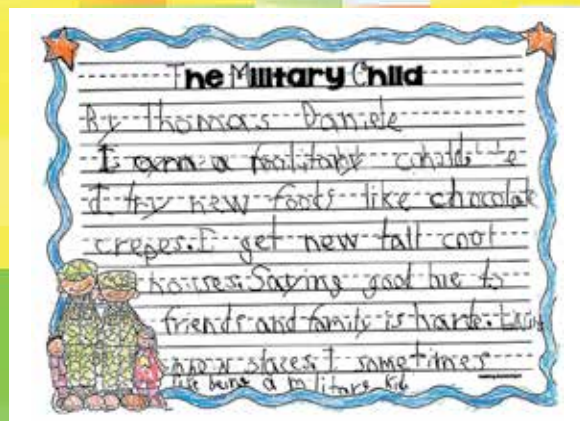
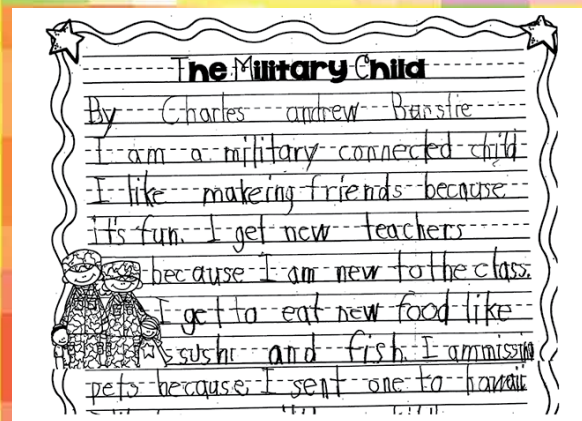
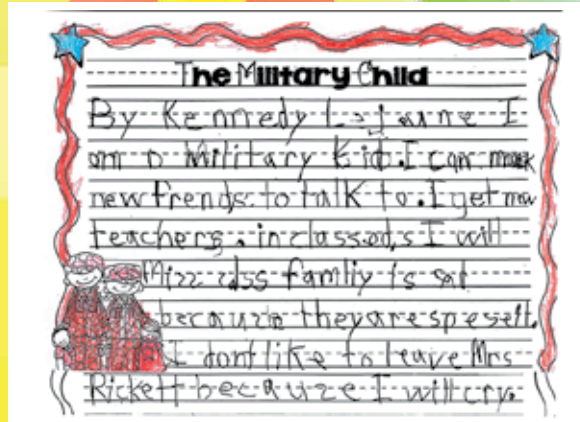
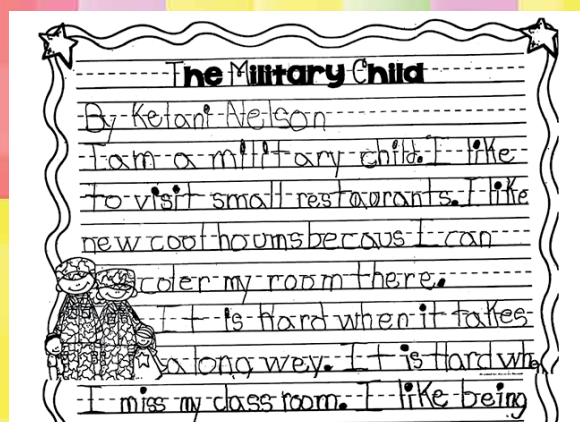
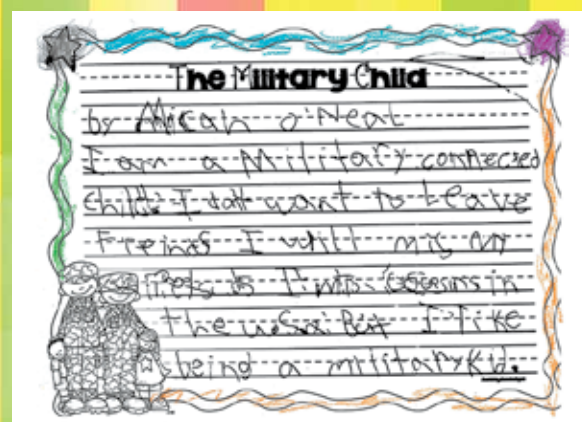
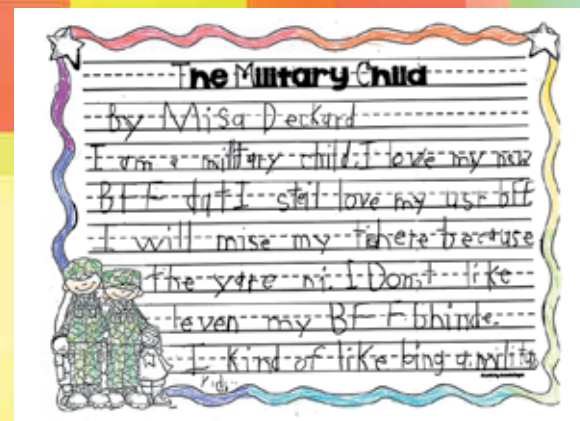
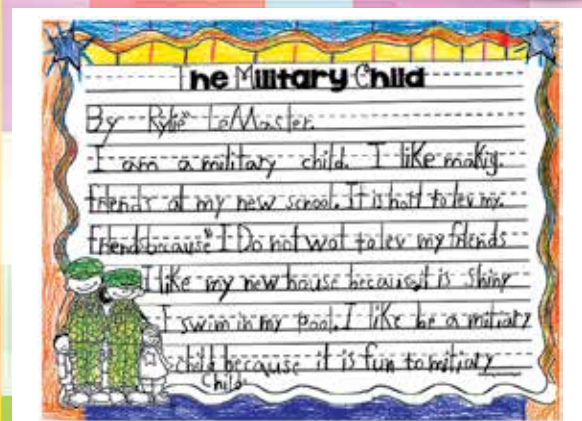




CELEBRATING MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

Humphreys Central Elementary School

1st Grade • Mrs. Rickett



2nd Grade • Mrs. Colon



Hi my name is Margaret Belon
The first thing about being a
military child is making new
friends around the world. My
favorite experience was being
food. My favorite place to
Germany I felt a little sad.

But I make new friends by being
near. In Germany we went to a big
jumping pit in the park and it was so
much fun. Also it had foodtrucks
and a lot of stuff. When my dad
is away I feel sad I wish people
knew that being a military
child can be fun.

My name is Giovanni. I taught my
relative thing about being a military child is
that I lived in Korea for 5 years and I still in
Korea, also I learned from some people and
not be afraid and there are lots of issues
or they said and I always being a soldier
and I have but now maybe because it is a

I must be here to watch movie every
I should be sad because no going to for
who we share and friends I will be happy
because will get new year and new friends

My name is Helen Hughes. My dad is in the military. I'm being a military child because I got to move places I have never seen. As a military child I have lived in Virginia, West Virginia, Alabama, and Colorado. I moved to South Korea five weeks ago. When I moved I felt sad.

I made three friends. A fun time was when I lost my sister ABC. When my dad is at duty, I go to school. I wish people knew that being a military child.....

Hello my name is Joshua
Moosman. The best thing about
 being a military child is that
 because I get to have a
 lot of love from the colours
of Kansas and now here in
Rotterdam, my favorite place.

was hurt because my friend
Elle was the first person
it went to my house and
my bedroom is nice and
big when my dad is away I
feel calm because I don't
hate it with people that
there being a military rule

Cat how that you get to
Go oh vacation.

MY name is Isabella Row.
The best thing about being a
Mitsubishi child is I can make
new friends when I move to a
different country or state.
When my dad is away I feel
sad. When I move to Korea

I was really surprised I met
all my old friends on a Saturday. I
went to a big festival, and had there
been any, and there was a man
four or five years. I wish people
were that happy and I wish they
were the same good!

Hi I'm Christina Brown My father
told me about being a military
child is we get to move to different
places any one British Brown
in the military but its
kind of sad when he leaves
a long time but he comes back

I like the nice garden, make new friends but some times it's too hot, you don't have to sing in it, get on horse. My favorite place is to go to the art section. Korea and O.K. space is very interesting. And it's pretty fun in general. I wish people knew how it was.

when space dust or matter goes
for long moments of time

Hello my name is, Auri lin Tohtin
 The best thing about being a
 Military child is that your mom
 or dad can protect you better
 and keep you safe. I've
 lived in Korea, Colorado, Florida
 then back to Korea. When

we moved to Korea I was just 6 years old and missed my friends a lot. We went to a hotel while we were looking for a home. my mom got some strawberries and it was strawberry sisen when me and my mom and dad ate the strawberries it was like

The best strawberry I ever
taste. In Colorado I went to
many cut door places and
including my house. I also
painted, went to swimming pools
and lot's of other stuff. When my
dad is away I don't stop
calling my dad. I always call

my dad in the morning and then night, and in the afternoon only if I really miss my dad. I'd want to call my dad. I wish people knew that being a Military child can be sometimes upsetting because you can miss your mom or

dad a lot and want to see
them right away but after a
few days or weeks you
will see them again.

[illegible]

100 Years with me I will have been
 living a military life. I am now 100 years old.
 "Living a Military Life"

Oh hi I didn't see you there
anyways my version is Finzi
Plocher my dad Bernard
Plocher is in the military
My favorite place I live
was California in my
first time in California

I am not when my dad goes away for training and deployment. Finally, I wish people never that even though you move to new places you can be friends but you can still keep in contact with them for example me and my friend

I know I used to be best friend but
in 7/023 we missed that
after a little bit I knew I
to be my person. Now you
heard a preview of my entire
my life.

[illegible]

Saw the when I were saw where I for
 from when he saw I when I for from
 I see when how can with a what

I am Connor I kind of like being a military child because you have move in time. After you move you have to make new friends, I don't like making new friends. My favorite place to move is San Antonio, TX.

those three probably a 5% chance you get rid of it. also feel bad when my dad has to work at night. I don't like moving because I don't like telling on people. I wish people knew that being a voluntary child can be good and sometimes

Hello my name is Walter Enrique. The coolest thing about being a military child is moving places and meet new people. Play games going to the fair. My favorite place was Kansas because I try new foods visiting places.

and going to new school. I wish
to be like what being a military
child can be very fun.

Hello I am Shawn Yu. The reason that I like being a visiting child is that me and my family can go somewhere new. Also, I could be trying more fun experiences. I've living in California. My favorite place was my house where we make for Korea. I felt nothing. I

I don't really do anything to make my friend. When my dad is gone, I'm missing that I was with my dad. I wish people knew that my dad did so many things.

He is son Nathaniel Stauffer the best
 part about being a military child is being the
 senior from the new who joined our school. My
 favorite place was Korea because I met
 most of my friends here. We had a good
 time living here and the food was really
 good. When my dad is away I feel sad.

but I feel when I see him again I
with people for a long time
can help people in this world

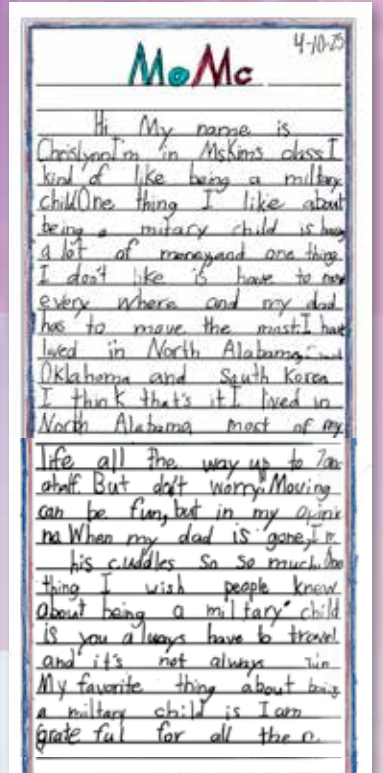
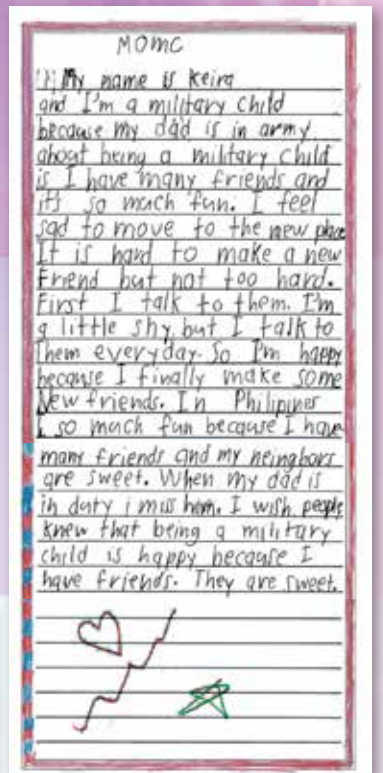
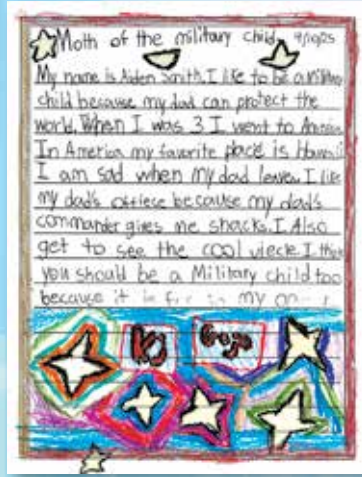
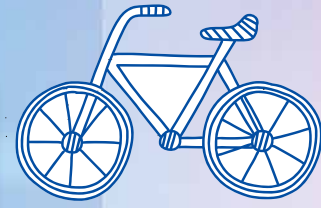
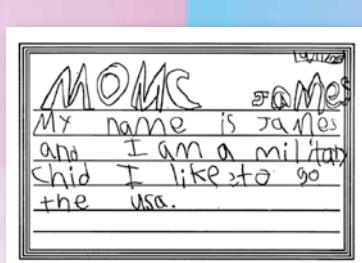
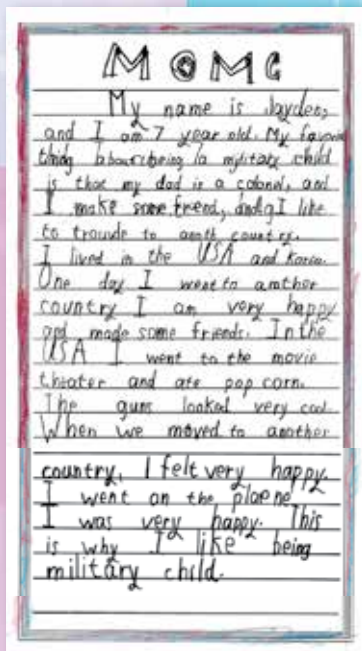
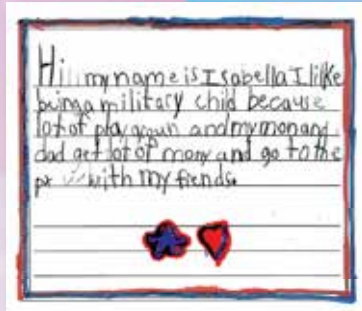
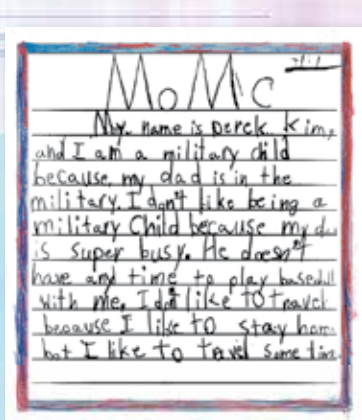
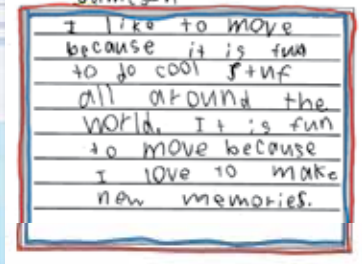
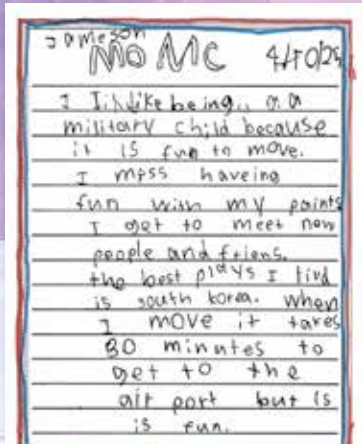
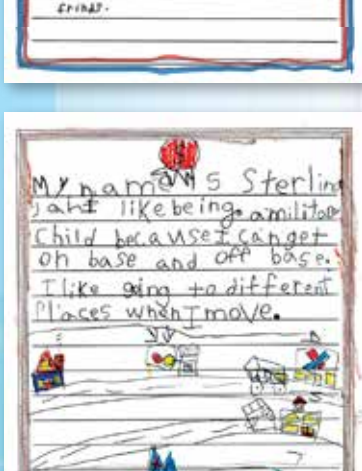
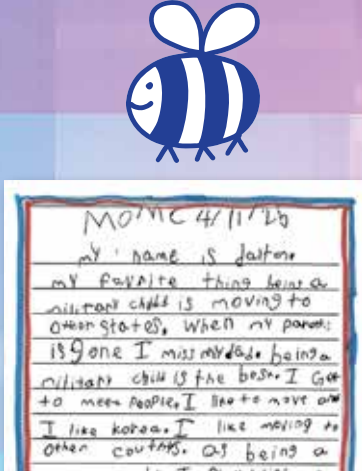
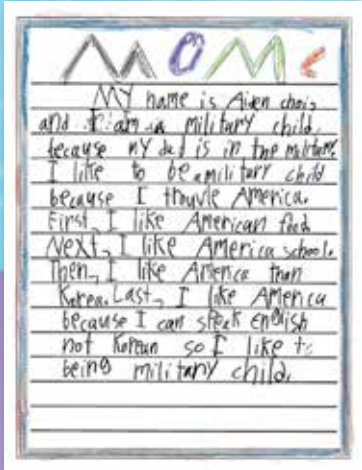
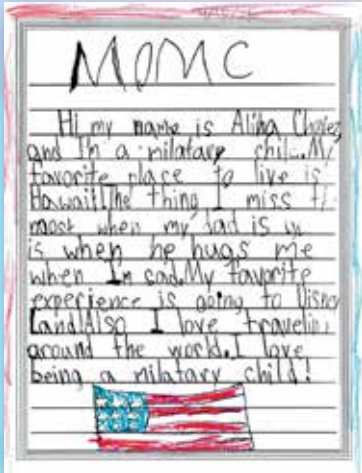
Hi My Name is Alondra and I am 8 years old. The best thing about being a military child is Celebrate the Military child. When my Dad is away I miss him. My favorite thing is Family. In Texas I had friends.

My house wife my family always
try to wish people know that
military child care services
to the Army.

CELEBRATING MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

Humphreys Central Elementary School

2nd Grade • Ms. Kim



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CELEBRATING MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

Humphreys Central Elementary School

3rd Grade • Ms. Shim

Life of a Military Child
By Tyannah Warthen

When I was two years old, my mom was in El Paso, Texas and she was working there. I am so proud of my mom because she has been in the army for fourteen years now. Being a military child is awesome, because you can go to many different places like South Korea. My childhood place is Oklahoma. Being a military child is awesome so then you can learn different languages like Korean and new words like "Gam-sa ham-ni-da" or "An-nyeong ha se yo!"

A Military Child Who Explores the World
By Shan Bayani

Once there was a girl named Shan. She had to go to a country named Korea, but she made true friends in the Philippines. She didn't want to leave her friends named Collin, Jenny, and Rizzabelle, but she wanted to go to Korea SOOOOOOOO BAD to explore new things! She had to leave her friends, so she had a long flight.

Her mom said, "Are you okay?" but Shan said, "Yeah... it's just hard to leave your friends in your country and get to make more and more. But what if they forget about me?" Shan said.

But Shan's mom said, "No, they will not forget about you. At least you get to make more and more and more—I promise," Shan's mom said.

And when Shan went to school, she was really nervous if nobody would like her. But when she went into the gate... SHE MADE NEW FRIENDS!!! And she was really happy but sad, because she still missed her friends—and they were true friends. Their names were Penelope (short for Penny), Lana Elago, Rasha Serrano, and Bella Bartie...

So usually, you leave your friends in your country and make more friends in another country. "That's sad, I know... but you get used to it sometimes. But it's sad, Mom."

And her mom said, "That's a good thing, because you get to meet more. It's because that's the way life goes, Shan."

And Shan believed her mom... and walked through the door with her new friends.

Life of a Military Child
By Roselia Newton

Let me tell you a story of a little girl. Once, there was a girl named Rosie. Her dad was gone for a long time every day. She did not get to see her dad often, and they had to move a lot, so she also did not get to see her old friends because she had to move. But she also gets to make new friends.

She has overcome her challenges of not being able to see her dad a lot and not seeing her friends, even though she tries to stay calm...and she does stay calm. She works hard to be a military child.

The really hard part is... it is hard being a military child.

The end!

My Story of a Military Child
By Riker Troy

When I was in Hawaii, my mom told me we were moving to Korea. I was sad knowing that I would lose some friends. I thought Korea was a hot place, but we all know it's not. I like when my dad gives me gifts.

One time in 2020, my dad was gone for a long time. I missed him a lot, and I dislocated my bone one time. If you read this until now, good job.

Why it is good and bad being a military child: your dad or mom is in the military, which is big, it helps a lot, and is very good. It is good because you get to go to new places, but you lose friends though you get new ones, maybe better ones. The bad part is losing friends and not seeing your dad or mom for a long time. The fun part is you get to spend time with friends and family.

Fast forward, now I am in Korea. The flight was 18 hours long. My mom was my only hope of talking to Korean people. I thought my friends would forget about me, but I can only

call one and only on the weekends because Korea is 18 hours ahead of U.S. time. I made new friends in school. Then my mom gave birth to my baby sister.

But there were a lot of mean people—like, a lot—which is a problem. Every time I told my mom, the mean people would act like I did something bad, which is another problem with being a military child.

This is the end. I hope you enjoyed reading this. Have a great day.

Life of a Military Child
By Rasha Serrano

Being a military child is both rewarding and sometimes hurtful. Let me show you!

Being a military child can be very exciting but at times it can be very sad. The exciting part is, I can see different Countries and learn about their way of life and see how life in their country really is. I can also meet new and exciting friends. Being a military child also helped me be adaptable. I used to be very shy and quiet but because of all the places that I've been to I've learned that there is nothing to be afraid of.

I have the opportunity to live in Korea. I have also visited many other countries. I have been to Japan, Thailand and the Philippines. I really enjoy being able to travel around the world as a military child.

The sad part about being a military child is having to leave your friends and classmates. Sometimes they have to leave while I am still here. But with Social Media, we still keep in touch but it's not the same as being together.

But with the happiness and sadness that comes with being a military child, I am proud to call myself a "Military Child".

What Being a Military Child Means to Me
By Penelope Contreras

My mom told me that we were going to move to South Korea when I was in first grade during summer break. Then my mom said we were pushing it back to the middle of third grade. Finally, when I turned third grade, we packed all our stuff. We rode the plane for 16 hours and then moved from Florida to Korea. Then I met my friend Rosie. On the second day, I was friends with Shan and Lana E. We were BFFs. We talk at lunch and talk about our little siblings being so sassy and very mean to us.

I like living in Korea because I like their noodles and the convenience store. I like eating pizza. I like going to places.

Being a military child means... you can make new friends. Being a military child means... you have to move to different places, and you can barely see your parents.

What Being a Military Child Means to Me
By Olivia Liu

I will feel sad because I will go to a new place where I don't know anybody and won't get to see my friends for a long time. On the other hand, because I am a military child, I love to explore new places and make new friends. I also love learning new languages. In fact, I'm learning multiple languages. I know how to speak Chinese, Spanish, English, and now I'm learning Korean. I have challenges but I love all the great things being a military child. This is my life as a military child.

Being a Military Child
By Luka Castillo

When I was younger, my dad left to see our new house in South Korea. My dad was gone for 4 weeks! When

the 4 weeks were over, the next day he was home. We gave him a big hug and told him, "We missed you so much!" He had to leave again for deployment for two years.

Later, Mom showed us papers saying we were moving to South Korea, and we were so happy for the move. We stopped going to school. A month passed. It took two plane rides and a total of four days to finally come to South Korea. We took a taxi to get to our house. We were so happy to see our house and neighbors.

Being a military child can mean you won't get to see your dad for a while, but it's special because you get to travel to a new place.

LIFE OF A MILITARY CHILD!
By Lana Queen

Life of a military child can pose both challenges and advantages. My name is Lana Queen and I am a third grader in Humphreys Central Elementary School. To start off my story, the life of a military child means you get to meet lots of people. Because I am a military child, I got to travel abroad and was able to meet good friends like my best friend Bernidett who is so kind.

Another thing I look forward to as a military child is settling in to new places and learning new languages like Spanish or Korean. That's what the life of a military child can be like. Sometimes learning a new language can be super fun and you get to learn things about that new place while living and experiencing their cultures.

In the end, you have to leave people that you love dearly and things that are special to you. For instance, being a military child can also mean that you have to frequently move overseas like moving from one country to the next. Being a military child can pose both challenges and advantages but I hope you all get to enjoy the fun experiences and the learning time.

-THE END!

Being a Military Child
By Lana Elago

Have you ever had a happy reunion before? Well... I'll tell you when I had a happy reunion.

"Creek"—someone opened the door. "Oh, Mom doesn't come home for another hour... at least she came early!" I walked in to give her a big hug, but it wasn't Mom. It was my dad! He came back from deployment. I gave him a big, big hug!

After that, my mom came home, and she also gave my dad a big hug, and we all went to dinner together.

Like this, being a military child can sometimes mean saying goodbye to parents, but on a positive note, you can look forward to a happy reunion. Being a military child is sometimes hard, but there is some fun stuff that is good—like learning new languages and eating new foods!

Exploring The World
By Kailea Marcia

Once there was a girl named Kailea. She moved to Korea, and her flight was so long! It was her first time in Korea. Everyone was saying "annyeonghaseyo" and "gamsahamnida," and she did not know what they were saying. It was weird for her, but she liked it because it was funny! She also heard a Korean speaker talking over the speaker. They went on a Korean bus and had a long drive! Kailea saw the ocean and also saw a lot of boats! Kailea and her family were about to go on the bridge. Kailea said, "Wow, this is a nice view!" Kailea was amazed by the sunset

and the color of the bridge!

Then they stopped at a hotel, and Kailea's dad went to check if it was okay—and it was! Soon they started to explore the hotel. Then they got a house, then got their stuff, and it was the first day of school, so they went to school and learned! Then Kailea made friends! Next, she said why she liked Korea is that you can make friends and learn languages and even Korean culture! Kailea got to explore a lot! She got to explore the mall, the pancake house, and off base, where a lot of markets are! They had so much fun exploring! They also got to eat Korean food. It was so yummy! And it was their first time exploring! Kailea also heard some songs, and she danced to them, and it was so funny!

Last, being a military child can be fun and scary, but the most important thing is that you can explore the world—just like me! Thanks to the Army, we all get to explore and be military children!

The Perks and Challenges of a Military Child
By Johnathan Chu

When I was young a big challenge of being a military child was moving and not having people in your life. Challenges are hard but a perk is seeing everyone smile when someone returns from a long day of work and traveling. I came to Korea because the army sent us here. Being a military child isn't always rosy as it may seem. Seeing your loved ones move away and saying goodbye to our friends can be hard. There are a lot of challenges to being a military child but not all challenges are bad. A real challenge that happened to me was when we had to move away. It is sad when you're young. But I never knew this because I was that young kid. My dad opened the door and said we're moving away a week before I had to say goodbye to all my friends and family then it was time to go.

So now I'm gonna talk about the good challenges of being a military child and these are just bad challenges looked at in a different way. Like moving, seeing the world and trying new food. Your parents going away you get a little quiet time. These things depend on how you look at them. So being a military child means sometimes there are challenges but most people can overcome it.

What Being A Military Child Means to Me
By Isabella June Bartie

I love to see my 12 year old brother's face when my dad comes home from deployment. That same year, my mom told me we were moving. I was so excited to go to a new place, explore, and try new food. We moved to Arizona and a week later I heard a big bang! It was a tornado and my dad was not there. We were so scared.

I was 7 years old when my mom told me we were moving to Korea. At first, I was so sad. But the next day, we were going through security, we boarded the plane, and the next thing I knew, we were in Korea. It was hard to make friends and to settle in at first, but I made new friends.

Being a military child is special to me because I love making new friends. It is hard, but I push through it.

Life as a Military Child
By Ayden Alvarez

When I was in New Jersey, my mom and dad really wanted to go to Korea, but instead we went to Virginia. Ever since my mom and dad told me we were going to Korea, I did not think much of it. But when I arrived, I have been loving it since. Thanks to my parents, I'm a military child.

Also, in my opinion, I love being a military child. I think it is also really special, and I really, really like being a military child. Life as a military child is really fun. For example, just say you are on a trip and you're going to Disneyland, and you go on a ride—that's just an example.

And if you are reading this, sometimes you will lose people, and sometimes you will be friends with new people. After all, being a military child is really, really fun, and I think if you guys are a military child, I think you will live your best life.



This is what being a military child feels like

By Aquiles Cortes Estevez

In Germany, my mom told me we were leaving in 9 days to go to Korea. I already thought that I would miss Germany a lot because of my friends, and I knew that if I left, they would miss me too. It is hard to move, but that is what makes you a special military child. I know it is really hard to move, but when you get used to a new place, it feels even more special.

This is another way it feels to be a military child. When my mom said that my dad was getting ready to leave Germany to move to Korea, I knew I would miss my friends and family. Also, my dad would have no time to spend with me and my sister. However, as I mentioned before, being a military child can still feel special—especially when you meet a new and kind friend who helps you with math, ELA, or when you're hurt and need help. I know it's really hard, but when you get used to it, you can become kind and happy again.

When you are a military child, you have to settle into new places, and sometimes the Army or military forces your dad to stay or leave, like what happened to me. Sometimes you have to stay behind. It might feel sad, but you can also feel happy. These are some of the real experiences and feelings of a military child.

Military Child

By Alonna Lee Thomas Loui

One year ago, I had to leave the United States of America and boarded a plane to Korea. I was so scared that I said "Mom, I am scared what if I don't make friends?" but I made friends Rosie and Kaliea and Mahlan at a new school. I love Korea because I made new friends. My dad is in the military and I am a military child. I love the military at my dad's work because it is very fun and I'm proud of my dad. He is the best. I love military life and my family. My family loves the military.

Being a Military Child

By Harrison Feldner

When I moved to Korea, I had to take a really long plane ride. It felt like it took forever to get there. When we finally arrived, I was so tired that I went straight to sleep in our new house.

The next morning was my first day of school. I didn't know anyone, and I felt nervous and a little scared. Everything was new—new teachers, new classmates, and even new lunch food! But I tried my best, and by the end of the day, I had already made a few friends. When I got home, I told my parents all about it.

After school, my friends and I played outside. We played hide and seek, tag, and cops and robbers. We laughed and ran around until it was time to go home. I had so much fun, and I was glad that I had made friends so quickly.

Being a military child means going through challenges which may be hard but you can work through them and work hard.

I am a Military Child!

By Manlani Mack Farris

Six years ago, there was a kid named Mahlani and her dad was in the military, so she would cry. She was sad because she didn't get to see her dad very often. She only got to see her dad for one week, and then he would have to leave for work.

One day, everything changed. She found out that she was moving to Washington to live with her dad! She was excited that she was going to make new friends, but at the same time, she was sad to lose her old friends. She thought she was going to be super sad, but apparently, she made new friends quickly, and she was so happy.

But in 2024, she found out that she was moving to Korea. She was so happy she was going to make new friends, but she was worried about the plane ride. She knew it was going to be a long ride, and in fact, it took 12 hours. She fell asleep for half of the time, but she apparently made it to the new country!

Now she is 9 years old, happy, and strong!

You may be wondering who that girl named Mahlani is. This is the special story of my life as a military child. Being a military child means being hardworking and facing challenges. You don't get to see your dad that much, only once a week. However, you are a military child so you can be happy and strong just like dad!

CELEBRATING MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

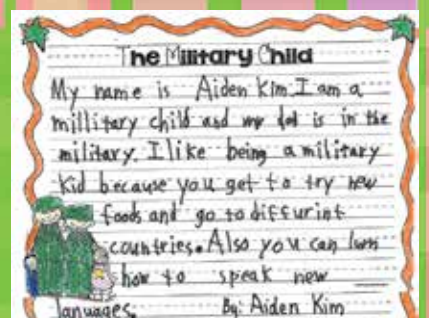
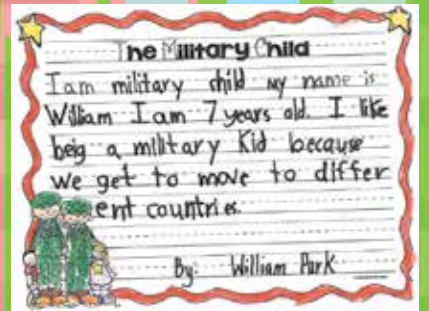
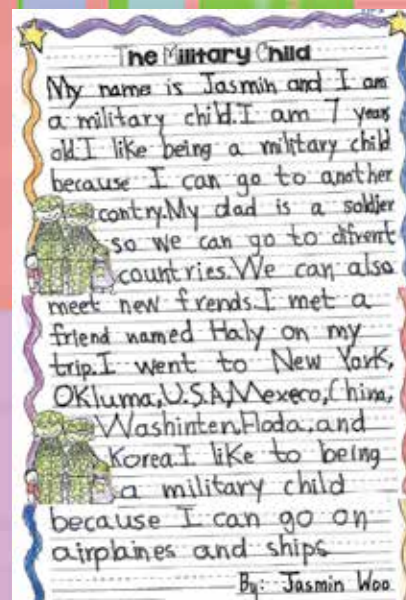
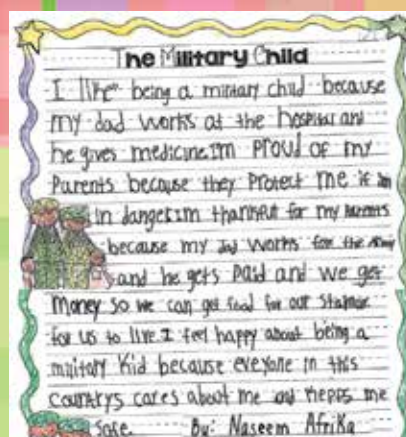
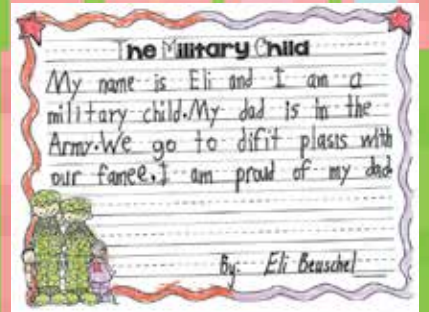
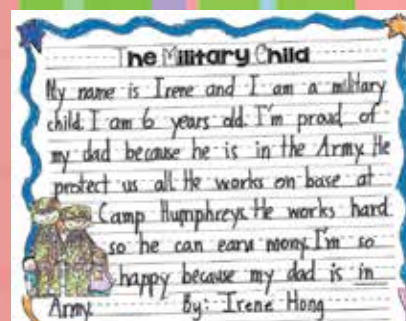
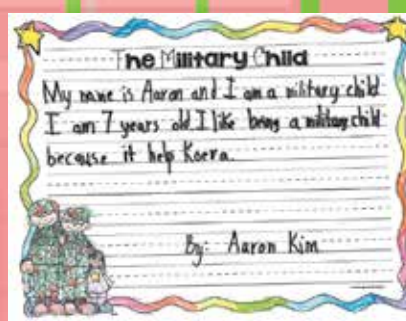
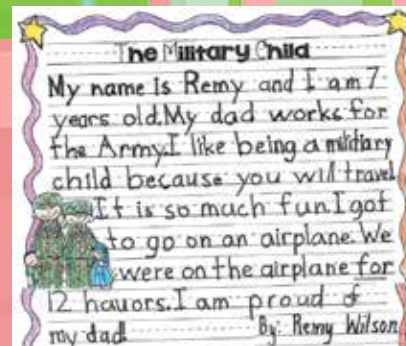
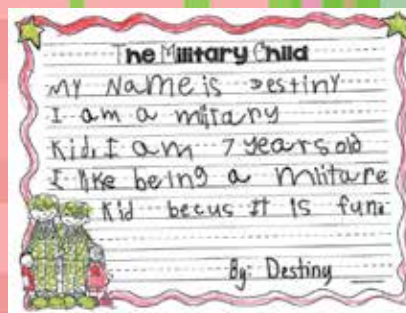
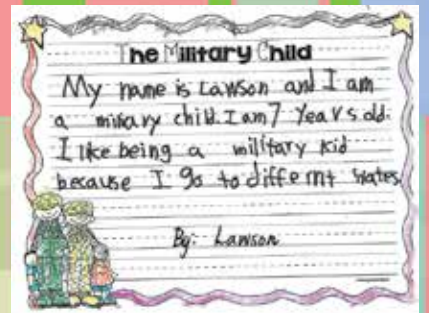
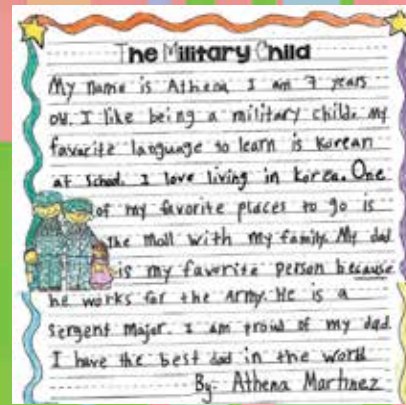
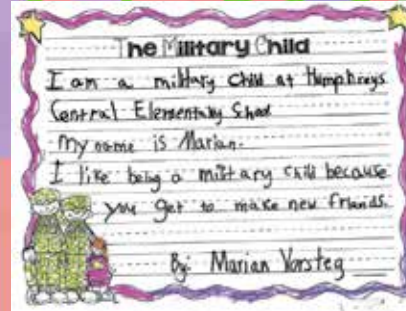
Humphreys Central Elementary School

1st Grade • Ms. Gray



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Celebrating Month of the Military Child

HUMPHREYS WEST ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

3rd Grade • Mrs. Craft

STARS & STRIPES

Mrs. Craft's 3rd grade students can write opinion essays on their lives as military-connected children.

STARS & STRIPES Grade 3, Humphreys West Elementary School
Camp Humphreys, South Korea

"Military Connected Child"
By: Adam Key

Life is good as a military connected child. To begin, I'm proud of my dad because he is in the military. Next, it is sad that your friends got to move to other countries, and they have to say goodbye and give you a hug. Lastly, when you're at lunch on one of those days, you can go to military lunch and enjoy your lunch. This is why life is interesting as a military connected child.

STARS & STRIPES Grade 3, Humphreys West Elementary School
Camp Humphreys, South Korea

"Being a Military Kid is Fun and Sad"
By: Alex Bailey

Life is fun and sad as a military connected kid. You can make new friends, but you might need to move away from friends. It's fun to travel around the world, for example Hawaii, Vietnam and Thailand. I have one sister, age 12, and my dad is in the military. That's why I like being a military connected kid.

STARS & STRIPES Grade 3, Humphreys West Elementary School
Camp Humphreys, South Korea

"The Military"
By: Amelia Engle

I do and don't like being a military child. The positive is you get to see new friends. You know you have 100% a better life. And you get to try new things. You get freedom. The negative is you are separated. You move away from people that are special to you. They get deployed. You don't want to change. You are separated with fear. You are scared if they don't make it home. It is scary and lonely. You have to say goodbye. And that is why I kind of like the military.

STARS & STRIPES Grade 3, Humphreys West Elementary School
Camp Humphreys, South Korea

"Life as a Military Child"
By: Cora Black

As a military child I enjoy moving, trying new foods, and learning new languages. But it can also be hard leaving friends behind. For example, when I was leaving Germany I had to say bye to my friend Maya. It was very sad, but now I have new friends. In Germany they also had my favorite food (other than my mom's food): schnitzel! That is why I think it can be fun but challenging.

STARS & STRIPES Grade 3, Humphreys West Elementary School
Camp Humphreys, South Korea

"Being a Military Child"
By: Bennett Arbogast

Life as a military child is the best life you can get. I like being a military child because I like to travel around the world. Second, it is hard when you have to leave friends or they leave you. Third, as a military child I like learning new languages, for example Italian and Korean. I love being a military child.

STARS & STRIPES Grade 3, Humphreys West Elementary School
Camp Humphreys, South Korea

"All About Being a Military Child"
By: Brielle Perez

I do and I do not like being a military child because my dad gets deployed. One time he was away for a year. There is some good to it, like I get to travel all around the world. And I get to learn about the places that I get to travel to. And thanks to my dad I met all my amazing friends here in Korea. That is my life as a military child.

STARS & STRIPES Grade 3, Humphreys West Elementary School
Camp Humphreys, South Korea

"About being a Military Child"
By: Gavin Sulco

I like being a military child. To start, I can make new friends and travel all around the world. Also, learning new languages and tasting new foods is fun. Also, I could go to new schools. That's why I love being a military child.

STARS & STRIPES Grade 3, Humphreys West Elementary School
Camp Humphreys, South Korea

"My Life as a Military Child"
By: Jaycee Hodge

I like and don't like being a military child because it's sad, embarrassing, happy, exciting and fun. First, it's sad because your friends might have to move away and you have no one to play with. Next, it's embarrassing because you may not have friends and some people might laugh at you. Then, it's happy because you can meet new friends to play with. Also, life as a military child is exciting because you can go to new places. Lastly, it's fun because you can try new foods and you can travel around the world and get military discounts and your parents make really good money. And this is why I like and don't like being a military child.

STARS & STRIPES Grade 3, Humphreys West Elementary School
Camp Humphreys, South Korea

"What is it like to be a military child?"
By: Jacob Ramos

Hi, my name is Jacob and I would like to tell you about my life as a military connected child. First, when I became a military child it changed my life around. For example, I always needed to stay outside base but when my mom was in the military I could go on base. It changed my life where I got to see new stuff. When I got to go to the airport I got to see new places. This is why I like to be a military child because I get to travel to new places.

STARS & STRIPES Grade 3, Humphreys West Elementary School
Camp Humphreys, South Korea

"What I like being a Military Connected Child"
By: Jarren Reyes

I like being a military connected child because it is fun, awesome, and cool. It is fun because you get to visit the world! For example, North America. It is so awesome there. Next, I think it is awesome because we get to taste new foods. Another example, potato on a stick. Some people never tried it because they've never been to that place before. Finally, it's cool being a military connected child because we get some military discounts. Maryland and some other countries or states have military discounts. This is why I like being a military connected child.

STARS & STRIPES Grade 3, Humphreys West Elementary School
Camp Humphreys, South Korea

"How It Feels to be a Military Child"
By: Lily Truong

In my opinion, being a military child is good and bad at the same time. What's good about it is that you get to make new friends and eat new food and of course you can travel the world. And in Korea you can learn a new language like Korean, Japanese, Russian and more. But the bad is that you get separated from friends. And moving is very hard like you sleep on the floor and eat on the floor. And parent deployment is scary and stressful because what if they get hurt or can't fly back. You get worried a lot when they get deployed. You need to buy more things and you need to buy the ticket for the plane and that is expensive and nobody likes to spend money. Even though there are a lot of challenges, it is still great to be a military child.

STARS & STRIPES Grade 3, Humphreys West Elementary School
Camp Humphreys, South Korea

"My Life as a Military Child"
By: Isabella Miller

Hi, my name is Isabella Miller and I would like to tell you about my life as a military connected child. First, when you move you get to try new foods. Secondly, you get to have military discounts. Thirdly, you learn new languages. So that's why I wanted to tell you about my life as a military child!

STARS & STRIPES Grade 3, Humphreys West Elementary School
Camp Humphreys, South Korea

"Why a Military Child is the Best"
By: Liam Allred

I like to be a military child because I like to fly around the world. I used to live in Germany and now I live in South Korea. Moving around the world is sad because you are moving away from your friends. You can taste other foods like oysters. That's why I think being a military child is the best and the worst.

STARS & STRIPES Grade 3, Humphreys West Elementary School
Camp Humphreys, South Korea

"Military Kid"
By: Anteres Daeho Thompson

I like to be a military connected kid. First, it's cool because the military people are nice after moving. Making new friends at new school is fun. The military is kind when they work there. Life is hard as a military-connected child. I also think it's cool visiting friends around the world. I have friends in Korea, Japan, America and other places. One challenge is moving away from friends. It's sad because I will miss them and will not see them.





STEP BOLDLY INTO THE NEW YEAR.

BMW MILITARY SALES



BMW Yongsan Showroom

- Gate #8 (Blackhawk Village)
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- Gate #13
- Towards Ichon Station
- Hangang Middle School
- BMW Yongsan
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- Seobingo Station
- Bangpo Bridge

BMW Pyeongtaek Showroom

- LG Best Shop
- S-Oil
- BMW Pyeongtaek
- Paengseong Children's Park
- Drive Thru Gate
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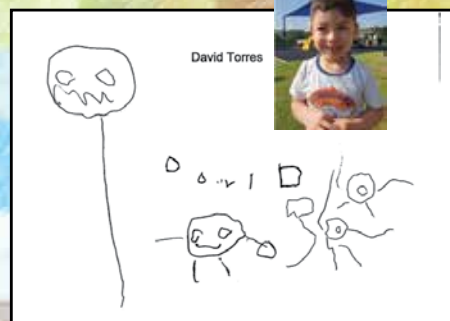
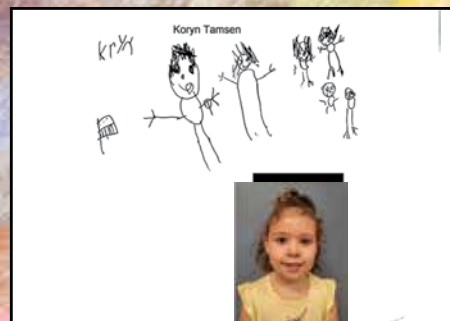
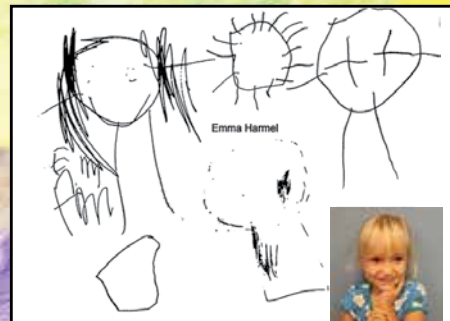
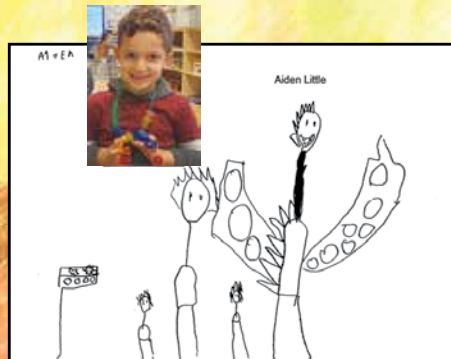
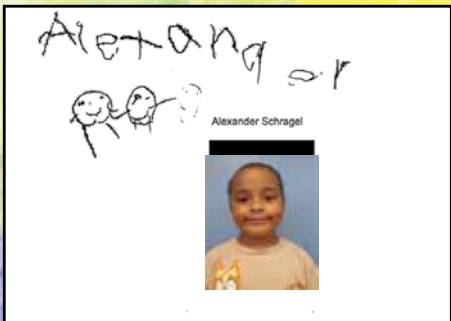
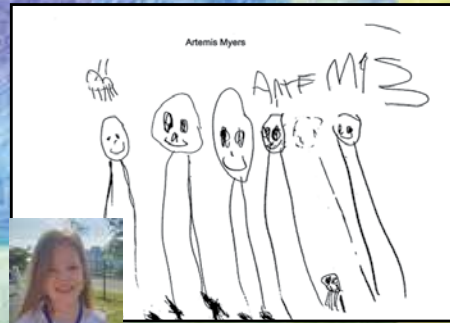
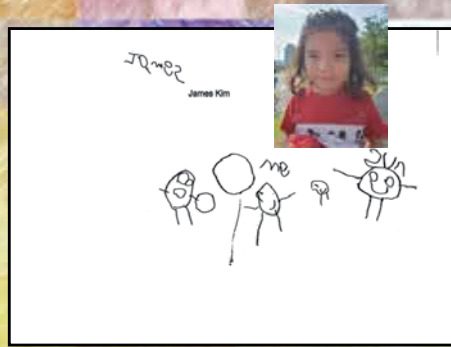
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CELEBRATING MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

Osan Elementary School

UPK • Ms. Zeihan



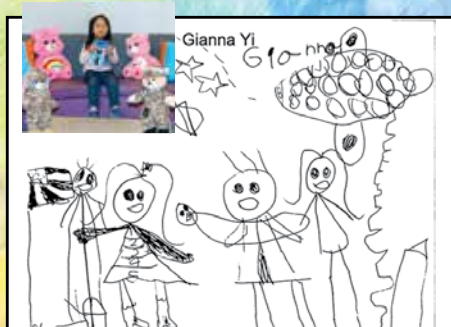
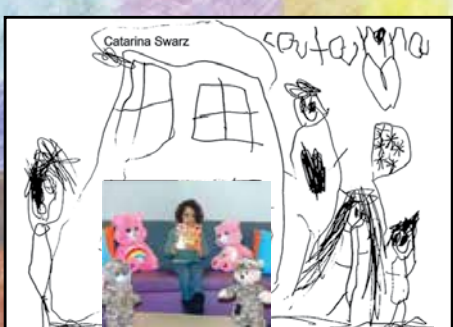
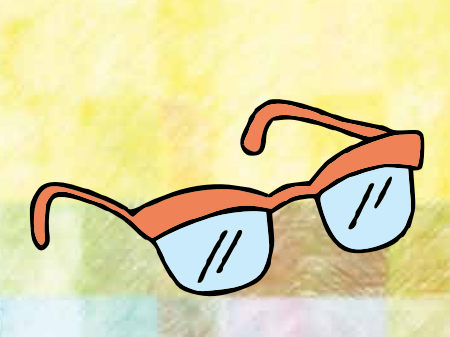
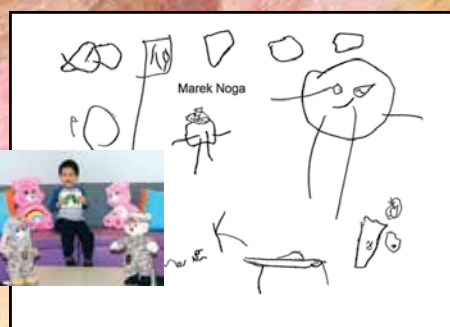
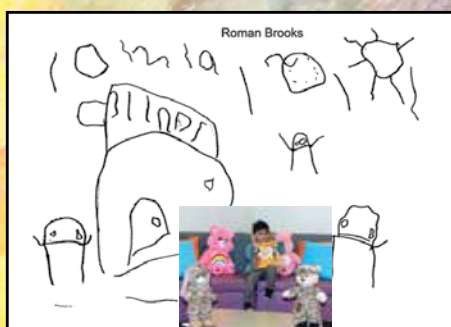
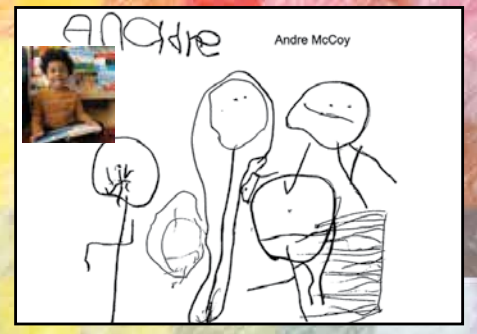
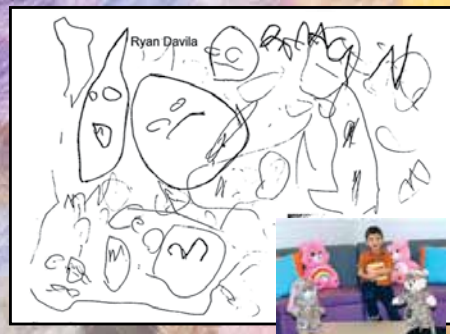
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CELEBRATING MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

Osan Elementary School

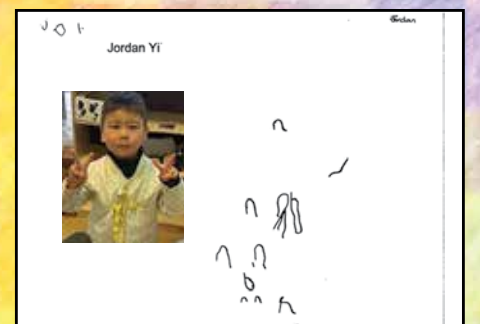
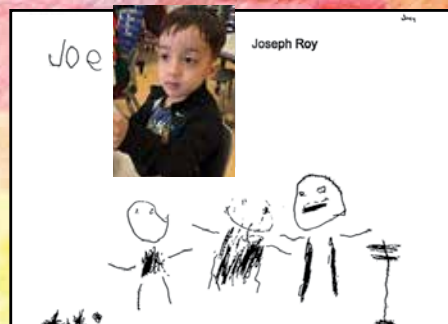
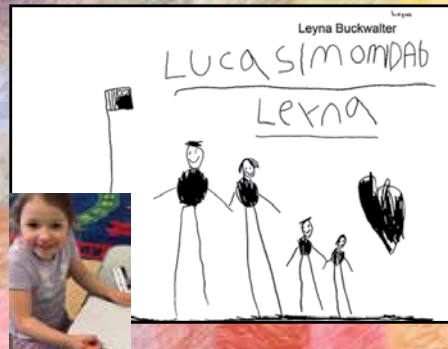
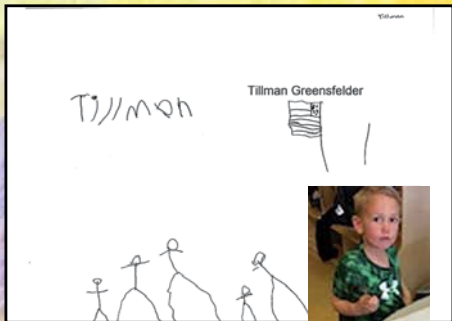
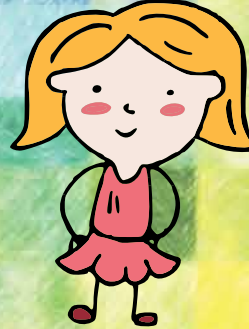
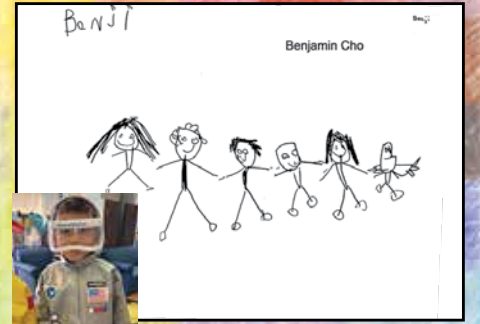
UPK • Ms. Morales



CELEBRATING MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

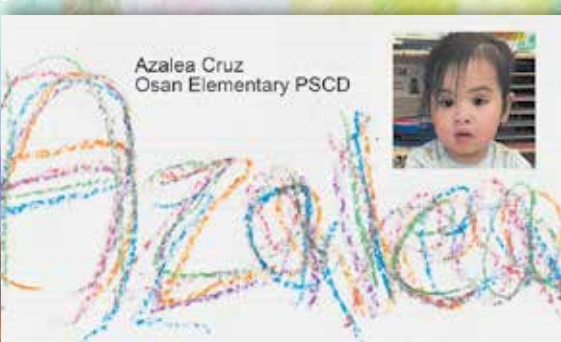
Osan Elementary School

UPK • Ms. Haynes



PSCD • Ms. Bledsoe

Kindergarten



Michelle Smerk

Celebrating Month of the Military Child

DAEGU ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

2nd-5th Grades Art class • Dr. Wesley-Evans

2nd Grade • Ms. Cabbagestalk



Evelyn Reardon, 2nd Grade



Harris Lee, 2nd Grade



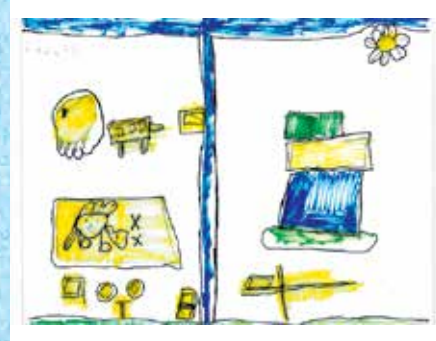
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Daniel Kim, 2nd Grade



Bishop Brown, 2nd Grade



Fabian Howell Mateo, 2nd Grade

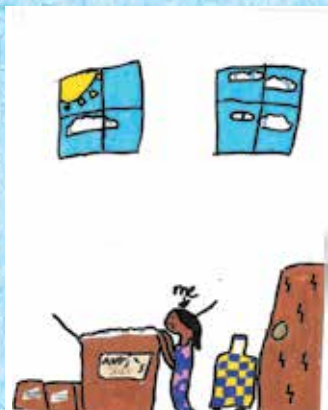


Daniel Kim, 2nd Grade

3rd Grade • Ms. Tyler



Michael Bush, 3rd Grade



Avri Sutton, 3rd Grade



Trevor Oliver, 3rd Grade



Ellie Cho, 3rd Grade



Silus Williams, 3rd Grade



Jeremiah Philippe, 3rd Grade



Gianna Bocalbos, 3rd Grade



Matthew Thompson, 3rd Grade

3rd Grade • Ms. Marks



Caleb Tedtaotao, 3rd Grade

SEE MORE FROM DR. WESLEY-EVANS'S ART CLASS
ON PAGES 16-17



Malik J., 3rd Grade

4th Grade • Ms. Lentz

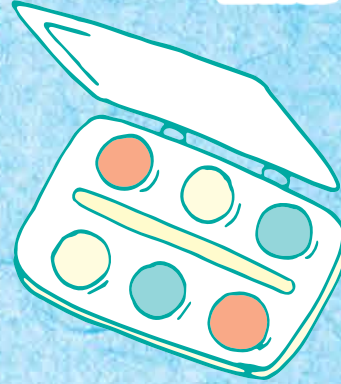


Maralynn, 4th Grade



Elijah Gonzalez, 4th Grade

DAEGU ELEMENTARY
2nd-5th Grades Art contest



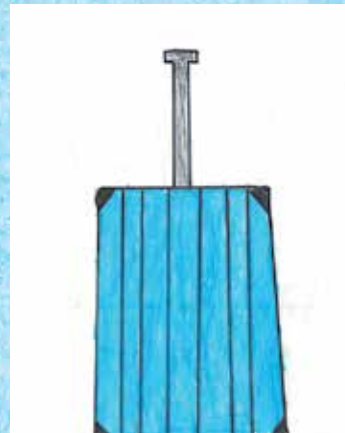
4th Grade • Mr. Cruz



Kyla Anade, 4th Grade



Aisley Yoon, 4th Grade



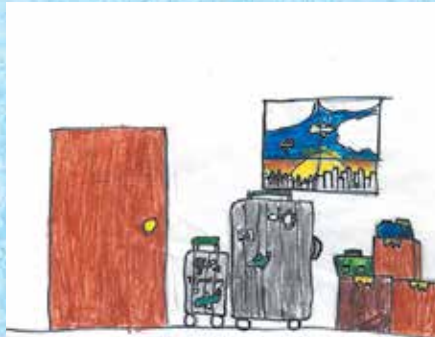
Jonathan Van, II, 4th Grade



Aubrey Smith, 4th Grade



Jeriah Arcala, 4th Grade



Braidyn Verde, 4th Grade



Matthew Mitchel, 4th Grade



Jamie Robinson, 4th Grade



Amirah Dongmo, 4th Grade



Leo O'Hara, 4th Grade



Anthony Kirnon, 4th Grade



Gabe Puccini, 4th Grade



Audrielle Caneda, 4th Grade



Easton McDonald, 4th Grade



Cerenity Caruth, 4th Grade



Jonathan Van, II, 4th Grade



Elizabeth, 4th Grade



Evie, 4th Grade



Anabelle, 4th Grade



Cayla, 4th Grade

NTARY SCHOOL

Class • Dr. Wesley-Evans

5th Grade • Ms. Uliasz



Jordan Park, 5th Grade



Eth Orrantia, 5th Grade



Thompson, 5th Grade



elle Narvaiz, 5th Grade



den Gragg, 5th Grade



Travis Seo, 5th Grade



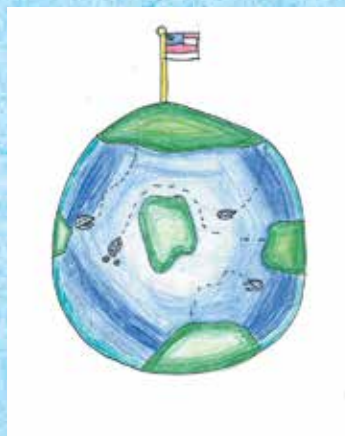
Christopher Mitchel, 5th Grade



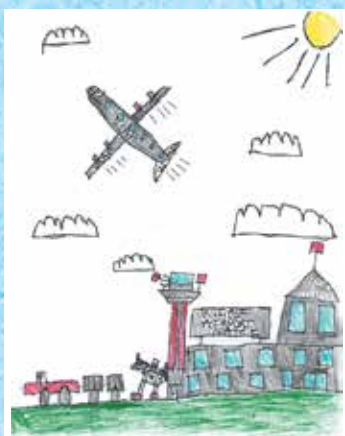
Ellery Wagner, 5th Grade



Jenevieve Iriarte, 5th Grade



Donna Baik, 5th Grade



Caeden Greenwood, 5th Grade



Angel Trujillo, 5th Grade



Raizo Horton, 5th Grade



Alexis Berido, 5th Grade



Louisa Burson, 5th Grade



Johann Park, 5th Grade



Emily Kim, 5th Grade



Allie Moctezuma, 5th Grade



Alayna Hayes, 5th Grade



Evan Riley, 5th Grade



Samir Santiago, 5th Grade



Thaddeus Kim, 5th Grade



Chan Perez, 5th Grade

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Humphreys Middle School

5th Grade • Ms. Monroe

CELEBRATING MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

"Who"

Who can stand tall and always save the day?
Who has moved many times in just a few years?
Who has had to make new friends after a move?
Who has to leave behind some of their favorite things?
Who gets to see new cultures?
Who gets to learn how to be resilient and always gets to shine?
Who gets to always try new foods every single time?
Who gets to learn new languages every single move?
Who gets to go explore the world and enjoy cool new things?
Who gets to learn how to be brave even when their parent has to say goodbye?...

A military kid does!

See, our lives aren't all that bad! We just have to adjust and be ourselves during the times that just feel hard for us!

– Chloe

For me, being a military child is fine. I've moved 6 times, about to be 7, so I'm completely used to it. The first time I moved was when I was less than a year old, so I've been doing it for about my whole life.

– Bennett

Life in Camp Humphreys

I wake up in the morning and get ready for school. I bike with friends to school when it's sunny, and ride in a car when it's raining. After school I go outside when I come back from school or do homework. On the weekend I do a lot of things, but I especially go out to buy 'things'. But, everything can be a new adventure or experience.

– Aiden L.

Being a military child means moving around often, meeting new people, and learning new cultures.

I was born here in Korea while my mom was supporting the military. My mom raised me while working as an engineer. When I was 4 years old I moved to Texas with my brother and mom. However, moving to the states made it so that I couldn't be near or live with my dad. This did not bother the 4 year old me. I enjoyed living in the states and my dad would visit during a long break period. I was able to adapt easily and make friends in my new school. I also learned English almost instantly after attending school without much help. I stayed in America until I had to move back to Korea. I didn't really miss my friends that much because I was only around 6-7 years old. I was able to adapt just as well as when I first moved to the United States. 4 years later, I am still in Humphreys doing fine in school. I am grateful that

I got to move back to where my dad lives and meet new people.

– Aiden J.

Soldiers, all you did for us I like what you do for us. It helps us live and keeps us safe. It is what you do best. It is scary but it protects us to be safe. We appreciate what you do to help the world save all the kids all over the world. All kids appreciate all the things you do for us to be safe.

– Eliam

The Story Of What It's Like To Be A Military Child

I am a military child. We move every 2 years and I always miss my friends. They are all so good the ones I make but at least I get memories with them and we can always befriend each other on a game console so it's ok but it still sucks that we move all the time. Even though I make so many friends which is great I wish I didn't cause I always end up not seeing them again and only talking to them and then they end up not talking again and then I feel sad cause I don't get to talk to them and they were my best friends. I also love being in the military because I get to talk to new people all the time but anyway my parents also love it cause my mom just loves looking for houses which is funny.

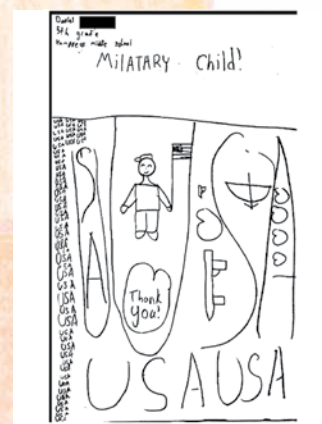
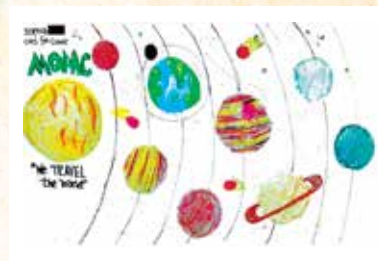
– Javan

My life as a Military child

It's fun being a military child because we got to go to a lot of places like Virginia, Korea, and Seattle. As we were moving it was hard because I missed my friends and family PCSing. PCSing is fun and sad at the same time because it will be nice to move to a different place but at the same time it is weird because you don't know the place. But you just need a little support. I think that the place with the best stuff is Korea. It is also hard because you have to change schools and you don't know anyone at the school, but once you start to know the school better you can start to make new friends. But when I first started here at Camp Humphreys Middle school for 5th grade I started to make friends with my classmates on the same day of the first day of school and right now I have more friends than 4th grade, but I'm going to be sad when Summer break comes and we don't see each other for a little while. But we will see each other again after the break. I think that the hardest part is some stuff.

So when you PCS if you get scared you just remember that even if you move and change houses you will be with the same people that you love. This is the story of my life as a Military child. (MoMC)

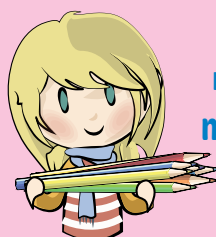
– Jaecy



Military Child Poem

New Schools, New Friends, a distant Place,
Ahead that hold a Steady Pace. They wave goodbye,
they say hello with courage only I could know.

By:
Kira



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Humphreys Middle School

5th Grade • Mrs. Leighton

Being a military child, life is hard. My family has moved a lot. I moved to five different places. And when I was 5-7, I did not know why we moved a lot. When I had to leave all my friends and all my family, I was very sad. And when I moved here to Korea, I had no idea what to do. How could I make friends? How could I do anything if I had no friends? And all my friends back in the US were very different then here in Korea. When I wanted to call people at 5pm for example it would be 3am for the people in the US. And I had to call all my friends and family late at night. And when I got used to being here in Korea and seeing new people in my class or in my building, I helped all those people who were new here. And I became their friend. I did not want those people to do the exact same thing I did when I first moved here. For example, what I did when I first moved here to Korea. I just stayed home all day and did nothing. I did not want those people to do the exact same thing I did. Now I play outside and even joined Girl Scouts. And other people as military people have to move away from their family and when you make new friends, those friends have to move away because they are also military children. And that is my life as a military child.

– Kingslee Mooar

Tomorrow

I'm waiting for tomorrow
To see if I have to go,
Far far away from the place I call home
Away from the ocean and away from the sea
Away from the place that was so dear to me
Where the world just stopped so I could say goodbye,
But kept going so I could say hi to the new
People I was bound to meet
To the new base and to a new school
To the new friends that I hope to grow close to
So I'll wait for tomorrow and remember to hold strong
Because I know tomorrow is today

– Lilliana Theresa Rivers

Hello, my name is Alijah Conley. I was born in Colorado on May 3, 2014, and I am 10 years of age. My life is pretty normal . . . FOR A MILITARY CHILD, you see what I did there. So yeah, my life is not normal compared to the other 99.53% of children in the USA who are non-military children. I've moved to many different places in my 10 years of life in including Tennessee, Texas, South Korea, Georgia, and Memphis. I'm currently living in South Korea and going on my 3rd year. I'm moving to San Antonio in July. I should stay there for about 5 years. I'm excited mostly for Chick-fil-A. Just kidding, but I am

excited for Chick-fil-A! I'm mostly excited for the basketball opportunities there are going to be. I'm currently doing CYS and Humphreys Hoops Club. I've done CYS recently and went 7-0. I went undefeated and won MVP at a game at Humphreys Hoops Club. I made new friends when I moved, but sadly, I had to move; there's a cost when you're a military child. I think moving isn't that bad, it's always opening new opportunities. Like I've been to every country in the eastern islands of Asia except Singapore and Cambodia at the time of me writing this. I also have great friends here in South Korea. It helps that I'm on a base, so most people here are American. Overall, all being a military child isn't that bad, although the costs, you make new friends in new places.

– Alijah Conley

Hi, my name is Andrew. I also get called AJ for my nickname. I was born in New Jersey and then moved to Alabama a few years later. I stayed there till I was about 6-7. I went to parks and had BBQ's then I moved to Texas stayed there then I went on a trip to New Jersey to visit my cousins. I went back to Texas. It was like 4-3 years. I turned 10 years old. We started to clean our house to go to Korea. A few months later it was all clean. We then went back to New Jersey then went to Dallas Texas to go to Korea. We then landed in Korea. 13-14 hours later we made it to our house then 1 year later I'm here.

– Andrew Watson

My name is Anna Marie Smith. I am 11 years old, and I go to HMS. I will tell you about the good things and the bad things about being a military child. Some good things about being a military child is that I can explore new places. There are some bad things about being a military child, such as having to say goodbye to my friends, but I get to meet more friends along the way. I have made so many amazing friends and said goodbye to so many amazing friends. But that is just the way of being a military child, I love being a military child!

– Anna M. Smith

My name is Benjamin Walker Carlisle. I have 2 brothers and 2 sisters and am deaf in one ear. I am in fifth grade. I was born in Fort Riley, Kansas, where I started my life as a military child. At that time, I did not realize the experiences that came with being the child of two military workers. I now realize that being a military child gives me opportunities to travel, and I get to go to places that other kids dream of going to. Being a military child has its pros and cons, but it is exciting.

CELEBRATING MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD



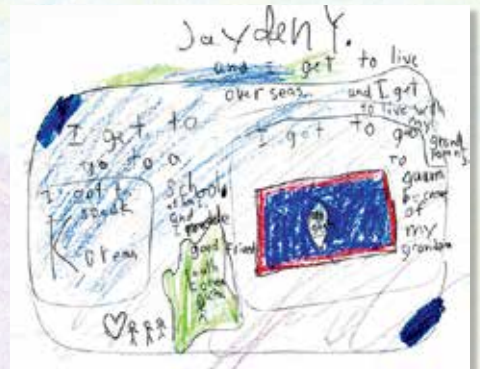
Alex Choi



Jayden Zambrana Torres



Gregory Schon



Right now, I am in South Korea. I like the culture and food, and it is one of the safest places on earth. Korea is kind of a war, but it is still safe. Right now, now in my 7th year in Korea. I am in the school and have good friends, like my best friend, Alijah Conley. He helps me when I am sad or mad. He plays basketball with me and is in my class. My mom is a W-3, and my dad is an E-6.

– Benjamin Carlisle

Hello, my name is Grant. I am in 5th grade at Humphrey's Middle School. Today I will tell you about my life as a military child. When I was born in 2014, I lived in Hawaii and turned one there. Shortly after my sister was born, we had to move. We moved to Texas after Hawaii, I don't remember much so it won't be much detail. I remember that for Halloween we carved pumpkins. After Texas, we moved to Kentucky where I stayed there for 3 years and first started school (technically I did pre-k in Texas but let's just say I started in Kentucky) I went to kindergarten for year one and was homeschooled for 1st grade for year two for year three I don't remember what I did. I moved to Germany after Kentucky and went to Kaiserslautern Elementary School for 2nd and 3rd grade. But this time I lived off base for the first time for some reason. Now I live in Korea and go to Humphrey's Middle School, and I am in 5th grade.

– Grant Kim

I moved all around the United States because of my active-duty father. Because of that, I left many friends behind and kept moving schools. Although I have to move around, I am proud of my father, who serves our country. That is why I think being a military-connected child is great.

– Henry Lewandowski

My name is Declan, and I am in 5th grade at Humphreys Middle School. I am here to say what it is like to be a military child. After we moved from Michigan, I had no friends, which was a big challenge because I was shy. It was hard for me to make new friends, so I didn't play outside, and when school started, I was alone for a while, but on the second day of school, I met a friend, and after that, I wasn't alone. After that, I started to understand the honor of being a military child. This is what it was like for me to be a military brat.

– Declan Williams

Friends: I have made so many friends while living in different states and countries. I have met good people and bad people. Good people influenced me to be a good person and the bad people showed me what to not do and that helped me grow as a person.

Family: Being a military child has helped grow my family. Like all the challenges we have to face, we face together. Everyone in my family is their own person and that is amazing. We have an awesome family relationship, and I am so happy to be in the family I am in! Moving has grown my family mentally and physically and no matter what we will always have each other.

Adventures: I am so happy to be a military child because I get to see new monuments, museums, cultures, countries, and so many other things. New Beginnings: Even though I might leave friends behind, in the next place I go I can meet new people and have a new beginning to be a new me and go to new places with new things. A lot of new but I will never forget the old because memories are the best thing about being a military child!

– Addison Morgan

My name is Aila, and I am in 5th grade at Humphreys Middle School, and I will tell you about my thoughts and experiences about being a military connected child. So, my mom said that she had a surprise for me and my brother. We were excited to hear what it was! So, we all sat at the table, and she said that we are moving to South Korea! My brother did not want to move, and I did not want to as well, but I thought of the good side and the bad side. The good side is we get to see the other side of the world that you might not have seen before. And you get to meet new friends! Like I met a girl named Emma at the end of 3rd grade and she is my best friend and has been in my class in 3rd, 4th, and now 5th grade. But it is hard to move and being friends with military or military connected children. Military connected children constantly move, and it is hard to keep in touch. In addition, it is hard because I have family where I was born (Virginia) I won't be able to see

them often like when I lived in Virginia. There are plenty of good sides. So don't worry about the negatives! Just focus on the positives!!!

– Aila Manalac

Hi, my name is Emma Abraham and today I will be talking about my time as a Military Brat. Being a military brat helps you make a lot of memories and brings you closer together with the people you're with. People assume that it's scary, and they're right because things happen. I have been to a lot of places because my dad works before I was even born. We would play games and watch movies until my brothers got home. I loved to hang out with my three brothers because they took care of my and played with me. I know my dad loves me even when he works and when I was a baby, I was given a doll that had army clothing on it and had a picture of my dad because as time flew by, he got even more busy. He was very busy to the point where he had to leave for deployment so he can get better, so he went to Europe, and we didn't know how long he was going to be there. One day he told us he was going to be there for 9 months! I was very sad because I was about 3. It was very hard, but I had my doll, and he would call us every single day while he could. Now we live in South Korea, and I have a lot of friends like my BFF Victoria. Love you dad.

– Emma Abraham

My name is Milenna Ramos-Colon, and I will be talking about my Military Child life. My life been hard because there are good things and bad things one of the bad thing are my dad left for 50 days and it was hard for me but I got through it but there are still good things like Leila, Chelsea they been there for my highs and my lows but it is amazing. It is fun being a Military Child because you get to support your Military parents. For me my dad is in the Military, so I support him. I was born on August, 29, 2014 in Germany and my dad and mom were both born in Bayamon, Puerto Rico so that's my life of being a Military Child.

– Milenna Ramos-Colon



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Humphreys Middle School

5th Grade

I Am

I am smart at subjects like math
I wonder if I'm smart
I hear people talking like friends
and family
I see a truck driving down the road
I want to be good at basketball
I am a son from a military connected family

I pretend to be super good at things
I feel smoothness at the table I'm
sitting at
I touch the table that I'm sitting at
I laugh when something is funny and
hilarious

I cry when something is sad and not
funny
I am a son from a military connected
family

I understand that I'm super good at
math
I say words that are English and other
languages
I dream of being super good at bas-
ketball
I try to practise basketball a lot
I hope that I can become great at
basketball
I am a son from a military connected
family

– Aiden Auna

I Am Lucy Arbogast

I am a soccer player, a friend, and a
hard worker
I wonder About the new things that
are being made around me
I hear The music that brings me up
and gets me ready for the day
I see Me, my family, my friends, and
people around me
I want To play soccer for the profes-
sional teams in the Olympics
I am A daughter from a military family

I pretend That I am the best soccer
player in the world
I feel Kindness and love coming to me
from my friends and family
I touch The yummy gummy worms I
have bought
I laugh When my dad says something

super funny

I cry When something happens or I
get a very bad grade
I am a daughter from a military family

I understand What happens in life and
if I want something I need to work as
hard as I can to get it.
I say That people can be kind and lov-
ing or people can be complete bullies
I dream That everyone will stop judg-
ing each other just because they are
different

I try My hardest when I am playing
sports and my different activities
I hope That when I grow up I can be
a soccer player and be a 4.0 student
when I grow up
I am a daughter from a military family

– Lucy Arbogast

I am poem

I am : a 5 grade student
I wonder: if my my grades are this
quarter
I hear all of the student talking at lunch
I see my friends and other people help
each other
I want to be jet pilot when I grow up
I am: a son from a military family

I pretend:to be a teacher like Mrs.
McCluskey
I feel:happy because we will have 11
days for Spring Break
I touch:my computer, pencil, note-
books, and chairs at school
I laugh:at funny things like jokes
I cry:when I get into trouble
I am:a son from a military family

I understand:A Lot of languages
I say:be happy and help people
I dream:Too invented something that
help people
I try:to envision something that help
people
I hope:I can be brave :

I am:a son from a military family
– Shakir Fida

I Am

I am fun artistic and pretty
I wonder when I will move to
Japan

I hear my mom cooking delicious
dinner
I see my handsome tall older brother
playing basketball
I want to be more aesthetic with
the my stuff and have more pink
I am a daughter of a military
family

I pretend to have a little and
older sister
I feel my family hugging me when
I make all A's
I touch the wet grass after it rains
I laugh when my dad makes funny
jokes
I cry when I fail something
I am a daughter of a military family

I understand that I am not perfect
but I try my best
I say nice stuff but sometimes mean
stuff because I am not perfect
I dream of being a choreographer
I try being nice most of the time
I hope I become really successful
I am a daughter of a military family
– Alina Sakura Galloway

I Am

I am a student, child, and a smart
person,
I wonder if ghosts are real or not
as I crawl in bed,
I hear kids playing joyfully as I arrive
home from school,
I see an amazing world that I am a
part of and will see more of in the
future,
I want Lego that will satisfy me no
matter what or how I feel,
I am a son from a military family.

I pretend that I am in a different
world where it is all made of cookies,
I feel the paper in the books that I
read into the night,
I touch the red juicy apple as I pre-
pare to take a bite,
I laugh as my friends and I tell jokes
about the things in life,
I cry When I have to say good by to a
place I once called home,
I am a son from a military family.

I understand that my dad has to go
places alone sometimes and we can-
not come with him,
I say the things that I need to say for
each day to the people that I meet,
I dream that I could fly high above
the sky and clouds as I look down
upon the city,
I try new things that interest me like a
new kind of food,
I hope that we can go back to Hawaii
where all my former friends are,
I am a son from a military family.
– Benjamin Silva

I Am

I am a ten year old boy who likes
video games.
I wonder how I can get better at
foursquare.
I hear my mom cooking and changing
the baby's diaper.
I see a lot of work at school and at
home.
I want a new Nintendo Switch for my
birthday.
I am a son of a military family.

I pretend to like superheroes for my
sister.
I feel like a bad kid.
I touch grass and lots of other things.
I laugh when my sister does funny

CELEBRATING MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

things.
I cry when I get grounded for some-
thing.
I am a son of a military family.

I understand not to be dumb.
I say I'm like a bad kid.
I dream of a new Nintendo Switch for
my birthday.
I try to be liked by kids.
I hope for a new Nintendo Switch for
my birthday.
I am a son of a military family.
– Ryder

I Am

I am Kind and nice
I wonder why life is so hard
I hear that you should love life
I see that some people do not like life
I want life to be easy for all
I am a daughter of a military family

I pretend all have hope when they
do not
I feel the world cuoned be at peace
I touch me sisters and my brother and
say all will be ok
I laugh when my sisters and brother
do something funny
I cry when i am sad
I am a daughter of a military family
– Anaïs Frazier

I Am

I am A friend, model, student,
learner, human, and a kind person
I wonder why the sun shines so
bright like me
I hear my sister asking to snuggle
I see the sunset at night from my
window
I want to solve global warming and
world hunger
I am a daughter from a military
family

I pretend to be my favorite animals
I feel sad in my hardships
I touch the books i love and hate
I worry about my friends when their
sad
I cry from drama and pain
I am a daughter from a military family

I understand why my pain shows
I say what is needed to
I dream of being a veterinarian
I try to get straight a's at school
I hope that i can have fun when i'm
older
I am a daughter from a military
– Makenna Balough

I Am

I am Marcus, a student from the
5th grade
I wonder if this world would be-
come more conservative and secure
I hear early rises break an empty
silence on the city streets
I see the first of the market vendors
sell fresh fruit on the sidewalk
I want to cherish many memories in
this beautiful country
I am the son from a military family

I pretend that I am a soldier, fighting
through life's challenges
I feel the cold water on the beach as it
brushes my toes
I touch the hard, stone wall as I walk
through the streets of Seoul
I laugh as my brothers argue about
who gets the remote controller first
I cry as I watch my grandparents go
to a better place, one by one
I am a son from a military family

I understand that my life will always
never be perfect
I say that I wish to become a better
person, every day
I dream that I can cherish life to its
fullest
I try to be the best student I can pos-
sibly be in the classroom
I hope that the world starts to under-
stand about life and its imperfections
I am a son from a military family
– Marcus Davis

'I Am' Poem

I am very hungry.
I wonder why I am so hungry.
I hear my tummy rumbling be-
cause I am so hungry.
I see a way that I could get
food (Pizza Hut / Burger
King).
I want pizza!
I am a son from a
military family.

I pretend like I am
not hungry.
I feel like I will always
be hungry.
I touch grass. (1)
I laugh when I am bad at Mario Kart.
(2)
I cry when I am bullied at school.
I am a son from a military family.

I understand why I don't have a
phone yet. (3)
I say that I am still hungry when in
reality I have eaten 15 slices of pizza.
I dream of a 5,397 course meal of...
pizza.
I try not to eat more than
100,000,000,000 calories a day of
pizza.
I hope that when I grow up I will run
my own pizza factory.
I am a son from a military family.

(1) To 'Touch grass' is an internet
meme used largely in gaming com-
munities as a way of saying to 'get
a life' or 'spend more time outside'
instead of being on TikTok, playing
on Fortnite, texting friends, etc.
(2) Slightly contradicting the previous
line.
(3) Understanding is a much different
thing from agreeing...
– Sterling Ovalle-Ricks

I Am

I am nice, kind, and funny.
I wonder where I'm going to col-
lege.
I hear the conversations around me.
I see the people who are nice to me.
I want to be a good person when I'm
older.
I am a son from a family connected to
the military.

I pretend I can jump really high.
I feel happy at school.
I touch the four square ball.
I laugh at the jokes people tell me.
I cry when I'm sad or mad
I am a son from a family connected to
the military.

I understand the jokes people say to
me.
I say I'm smart
I dream of being a soccer player.
I try to be loving.
I hope to be a good person.
I am a son from a family connected to
the military.
– Bennett Huang

The Mystery Bird

There was a bird, I heard.
I heard it from my friend, the nerd.
No-body saw it till today.
Can people hear it at the break of day?
A simple peep is never to be heard,
Not from just the mystery bird.
– Tynek Evans

6th Grade



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Home Is Where I Belong

By Alexiane Baker

Home is a place where I was put to get a chance to feel the emotions of joy, sadness, and anger. It's where I became the person I am now, and my best memories were made. A place I can always feel belonged.

Home is a place where I can mostly express myself without openly presenting through the entire world. I find joy in coming home to greet my brother who I am grateful to have most and next my mom who provides me after school snacks. Home would be considered a role I've named for the things I love, which would be another example of lying down after a long day or chatting with a friend. Home can stretch out to any place filled with delight, it could be a feeling from school hanging with friends or great peers from around the world.

When I think of home, I think of the scent of cooking made by my mom in the kitchen, the relief of lying in bed. The people who make it so worthy of being cherished, regardless of if it's my family or pets, possibly friends as well, are the ones to make home feel complete. It's the small moments, conversations at the dinner table, laughter shared over inside jokes, and simple quiet times spent together. Home is also a collection of little things that bring me comfort.

It's about the emotions linked to it, the experiences that shape who I am. These experiences might not seem like much, but it's a place where I can be myself without hesitation, surrounded by familiar people and memories I've shared with. Anyone could be considered family; it had nothing to do with just being related but the feeling of sharing moments and relationships. No matter what happens outside its walls, home is the one and only place where I can feel safe and content.

Home is not just the place I live in, but a part of who I am. It was where I've been raised and grown to learn. The people and experiences were what summed up the feeling of home with love. It is filled with warmth, enjoyment and a sense of belonging that cannot be replaced.

What Makes a Home?

By Aidan Beaton

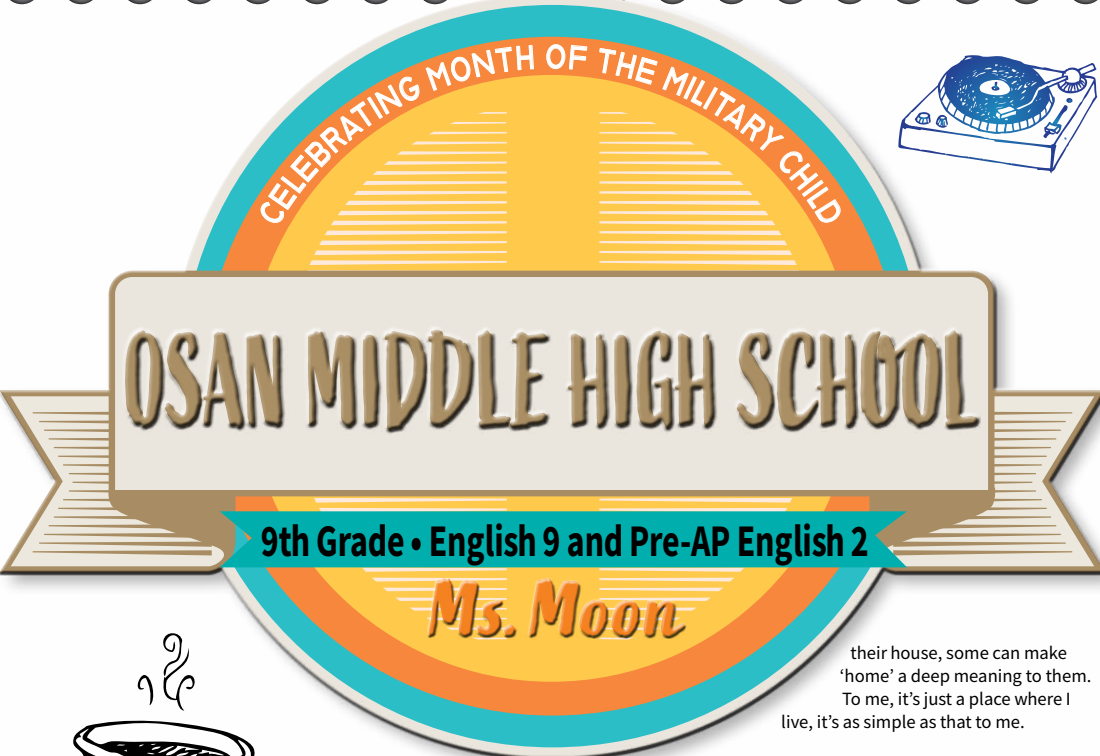
To me, home isn't a known place. There is no clear definition of home, as I have no place I would call home. I would consider home to be somewhere that makes a person happy in most or all ways. It could involve the layout of the home, its geographic location, or the social environment. To call a place home, I think it needs to fulfill all of the conditions outlined above.

Part of why a place could be home is its location. If you have a strong relationship with your family, your home might be somewhere close to them. If you have good memories of an area, that place could be an excellent spot to look for a home. Considering where other things in relation to the home are is important as well. The best home should have easy access to other locations. A home may be perfect inside, but it won't be a nice home unless the outside works for you as well.

The inside of a home also matters. A house could be in the best place in the world, but it won't matter if the house itself is not good. A home should be the right size and shape for you. If there are multiple people, a home needs to accommodate all of them. A home should also be easy to move around in. If a home can't be happily lived in, it's probably not a good home.

The final part of what makes somewhere home is the people. Neighbors, friends, and family are central aspects of what makes a house into a home. If the neighbors are loud or rude, it can make it uncomfortable to live there. It's also important to like anyone who shares the home with you, or it could quickly turn into a much less happy place. For it to be a home, the people are just as if not more important than the physical parts of a home.

Because I've never considered a specific place to be home, I decided to think and write about what would make somewhere become home for me. Where a home is located determines where someone could go or who they could visit. The inside of a home makes it comfortable. The people around or in a home influence how happy a home is. A home is different for all people,



but this is how I would decide if somewhere was home. *** Intentionally impersonal

Home, Casa, Heim, 집, 家

By Anthoney Canizales

Home, Casa, Heim, 집, 家 all these words have the same thing in common, the meaning. All of the words mean Home, but what is a home. To me a home is somewhere that you go to no matter what. A place to be in at all times. Someone may have multiple homes at the same time, someone may change homes, but the meaning of a home should always stay the same.

A home should have a personality. When I walk through them, I want to know which personality that has a cozy and friendly personality is always the best. Visiting and staying in a friendly home almost feels like home but everyone has their own unique home. So every home has a unique personality. If I walk into a home and see many kitchen utensils and ingredients the home is a chef, if there is paint and painting utensils along with musical instruments the home is an artist.

In my home there is life and passion. But my home never stays in one place. My home is on the move for adventures and experiences. One day it's in Oklahoma, the other in Germany.

Houses Stand, Homes Stand-Not

By Natalia Cannistra

A house is limited to a building like an apartment or a flat. A home can be anywhere, as it refers more to the place and the feeling, rather than the structure. For instance, you could live in the most ramshackle like home, yet it would still be a home. However, you cannot call yourself living under a tree as living in a house. The similar words have different meanings. I've had many homes and lived in many houses.

My house now is a cluttered apartment with the sights to the apartment complex below. Despite the curtains almost never being opened in the other places of my house, I like to open mine. As I look down on trees which I normally look up to, I feel like a stranger to nature. Seeing freshly bloomed flowers face to face gives much more of a thrill than barely seeing them from so high up. The apartments that surround mine block much of the sky, making me blind to the beauty above. All I see when I stare straight ahead is tan colored paint with windows and curtains. Yet, when I take the elevator down, I see the detail and wonder of nature. Home is where I find

beauty in it. In my house, I see only beauty in what lies in my room or in my family. To me, none of the houses that I have lived in were able to execute the true beauty of the outside world. However, traveling to different places with sights of greenery and wildlife make me much happier, in a way, to say nature is what I feel as a place called home. I feel sad when I can no longer see the stars, only the brightly lit lights of human invention.

To be a human means to be the smartest species with the capability of understanding the world as we evolve further and further, yet I feel as if each time we understand more, we understand less. We look ahead at all sorts of ideas, but we never look behind to see what we have destroyed. Everyone's home is the earth, but soon we may not have a place to call home. Only a house.

What is Home to me?

By Alexia Clemons

Home to me is where I can feel safe, encouraged, comfortable, or happy. Home is where I don't have to worry about being uncomfortable, or unsafe. I feel at home with my family. That would be home to me. I feel like home should be a place to feel comfortable to be yourself or do something your heart desires. Home is where I can come to when I feel exhausted and need to rest and cool down, or when I feel stressed and need to calm down. I can be angry and frustrated at home and cool down or fix it. I like coming home and seeing my little dog come up to me wanting my attention, or my cat meowing at me because she wants to get in my room. I want to be happy in my home. I can't call a place home when I'm unhappy or upset about it all the time. I could still be upset or unhappy at home sometimes. Though I don't think it's a home when I'm unhappy all the time. If I'm unhappy all the time, then that isn't home for me.

A home is where I feel safe and not constantly paranoid or think something bad is about to happen to me. Being in a place like that would be exhausting constantly having to worry. That isn't home. Home is where I'm safe, comfortable, happy, and feel good about myself. That is home to me.

A Place that I Call Home is Just a Place Where I Live

By Alyson Clemons

To me, a place I call home is just a place where I live with my family, and have my items and belongings. In that home, whether it's an apartment, a house, or anything else where you can stay.

Does 'home' have a deep meaning to me? No, it doesn't. People can and do have something else that is their home, and what makes it feel like their home, people have different opinions, of the word 'home' some say they don't have a home, whether it's a place to stay, or because they are moving so much, that they don't stay in one place, and even if they don't feel like they have a home, because of their problems at

A Place Called Home

By Audriana Crist

What is "home"? Home can mean many different things. It can be a place, a memory, or even something strange like a person. Home is a place where you can feel safe and loved. A place where you can grow. "Home" is different for everyone.

To me, I have many homes and yet none all at the same time. With moving around so often I never stay in one place long enough to call home. Sure I've lived in a house that most call home but it just never quite felt like my home. Once I lived in a 3-story house in the beautiful countryside. I made tons of memories there, and even more friends. I remember having these neighbors who would give us candy. I loved them like they were my family.

The house itself I could never call home. It was the people and the memories that made it home. I know if I go back it wouldn't feel the same. Sure, the house is still standing and the memories would still be there but everything that made it home is gone now.

Where I Belong: Life at Osan Air Base

By Branden Ferguson

Home isn't just a place, it's a feeling. And my home is here, Osan. Home is the atmosphere of the days, and the friends and family who make it special. Home will always be tied to Osan Air Base in South Korea, where I've spent seven years of my life. Even though I've spent years in different parts of the world, Osan has shaped who I am in ways I didn't realize until I moved away two years ago. Now that I've moved back to my home, I finally realize who I am and what Osan has made me into. I realized when I moved away from home that no matter where I go, a part of me was left in Osan that I could not bring with me elsewhere.

Osan is more than just a military base, it is its own little world. My earliest memories are waking up to the distant roars of the jets and falling asleep to the quiet hum of the city beyond the gates. Summers were hot and humid, full of life. Kids raced around the playgrounds and families filled the parks. Winters had a kind of magical feeling to them, with crisp air, soft snowfall, and the warmth of tiny local restaurants right outside the base. No matter how many times I walk the same path, there's always a comforting feeling to this day.

But what really makes Osan Home isn't just the place, it is the people. In a military community, everyone understands what it's like to move, to say goodbye, and to make the most of the time we have together. Friends aren't just friends, they're like family, because we all share this experience. We celebrate everything together, from big milestones to the small things, like getting through a tough week or even a

personal best in sports. It's the people here that make Osan Air Base feel more than where I just live. This is where I belong. It is my home. It's where I belong, home.

I understand that one day, I'll have to leave Osan AB, just like everyone else. Leaving home is a strange thought. It is hard to imagine waking up somewhere else, in a place without the same familiar sounds, smells, and faces. But I also know that home isn't just a single place, it's the experiences and lessons you learn through it. No matter where I go, Osan will always be a part of me. I know I'll always carry home with me, no matter where life takes me next.

A Place Called Home

By Lucas Harman

To me, home is my family. I move a lot so I don't have a place as my home. I always have my family with me no matter where I move. I can always be myself with my family.

As a military brat, I move around a lot. I haven't lived anywhere for longer than four years. Even when I was younger, so I don't remember it very well. I haven't lived anywhere long enough for me to consider any place home. So for me home isn't a place.

No matter where I move I have had my family with me. When I move to a new base I don't know anyone, but I always have my family. For example, if I don't have anyone to sit with at lunch I can sit with my siblings.

I can always be myself around my family. There are some people that you have to act differently around and you can't express your opinions. They might stop associating with you or treat you differently. With my family I don't have to worry about that. I can express my opinions freely without worrying about repercussions.

For me home isn't a place. I move a lot and therefore don't consider a place home. However, I always have my family with me. I can always be myself with my family. For me my family is my home.

WH Drive

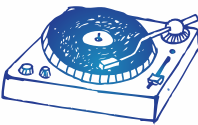
By Kyle Helphinstine

Ever since I was a young child, I have always had one place I called home: Damascus, Oregon. Being a military child and moving around every year or two, my family never owned or established a place as our specific home. But what I call home is the home of my elderly Romanian grandparents in Oregon. Located east of Portland, the only stationary house I ever called home remains.

1999 is the year when my Dad graduated from the University of Portland ROTC and married my Mom. Eleven years later, I was born in Las Vegas. From then on, almost every summer and holiday we spent away from my military home was in Damascus. Being a military child and constantly moving never really affected me. Most people are shocked by the amount of moving my family does and frequently inquire about how my sister and I do it; my response is that "I was born into it." That is one reason, but everyone needs stability in their life, and that was SE Wooded Hills Drive for me.

Oregon always felt like home, a place that I was always familiar with. Down the road from my grandparents' house, at the bottom of their hill, is my uncle's house with his five kids. I have countless memories of playing, boating, fishing, and road-tripping with these cousins. Their close proximity and constant appearance on our trips to Oregon made my grandparents' house feel even more like home. The constant baking and kinship of my mom's extended family made the house even sweeter.

My grandparents and my Mom lived in Romania until 1988, the year before my Grandpa fled to America, escaping Ceaușescu's regime. My grandparents made a life for themselves in Portland.. It wasn't until the early 2000s that my grandparents built SE Wooded Hills Dr.



SEE MORE FROM MS. MOON'S CLASS ON PAGE 22

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 21

Going from having nothing to owning a nice house in the woods surrounding Portland was definitely life-changing for them. I still notice the tendencies they learned as kids growing up in Soviet Union occupied Romania, and I love them for it. They are never short of stories and love — and of spoiling my sister and me. They always made sure to tell us that their home was our home, and that was the final reassurance that their home was my home.

Even though I moved constantly, my Grandparents' wooden abode was always my true home. It was the one place that stayed the same, filled with family, love, and memories. My grandparents built a life there, turning it into a symbol of stability for me. No matter where I go, I know home is where my family is - in Damascus, Oregon.

Comfort

By Yebin Hwang

Ever since I was younger, I was never used to sleeping alone in my bedroom. It never felt safe, even in the mornings. I always felt like I needed someone around, or else something bad would happen to me. Whenever I had to sleep alone, I would put my blankets over my head, praying that nothing would get me. However, now my bedroom is the place where I feel most comforted and safe.

Even though my bedroom being a place where I feel most safe and comforted may sound banal, it doesn't feel that way to me. Just a few years ago, I hated being in my room. It felt like I was separated from my family, and I just wanted to get out. It wasn't as if there was nothing to do in my room either—in my mind, my bedroom was simply a place to sleep. However, as my days started feeling longer, I found myself spending more than half the day in my room without even realizing it. A place that once filled me with fear became a space that brings me comfort and allows me to recharge both socially and physically. At first, it felt strange to spend so much time in my room, but now, I stay there for most of the day on weekends. Even though it may sound cliché, I truly enjoy the time I spend in my bedroom, where I can be alone and unbothered.

Over time, my bedroom has changed from a place of fear to a place where I feel safe and at peace. What once felt lonely and unwelcoming has now become my own personal space, where I can relax, think, and regain my energy. It's no longer just a place to sleep, it's where I feel the most comfortable. No matter how stressful life gets, I know my room will always be a place where I can find comfort.

Family Home

By Ethan Kim

Home is my family. I firmly believe a family forms a home. It's a place that consists of the memories and hardships I have experienced. A home is somewhere you can depend on when I'm feeling blue. The walls of my home protect me, ready to take on anybody or anything. My home never lets me down, even on a rainy day.

Family is home to me because of the environment. Whether it's to gather for meals, celebrate milestones, or simply enjoy each other's company, these moments bring joy and laughter. Family creates lifelong memories, which I believe are crucial for a home.

I can always rely on my family, no matter the circumstances. Their unwavering support and unconditional love provide me with an invaluable sense of security. Whether I'm facing trouble at school or celebrating moments of joy, I know that my home is always there for me. It is a firm foundation of my life.

The strong walls of my home protect me from the outside world. They stand firm against any danger. On rainy days, when the wind blows hard and the sky is gray, my home keeps me safe and warm. Inside, I feel secure, surrounded by comforting memories and laughter. My home is the one thing in my life I can depend on.

My family is the strong walls that form what I call a home. Their unwavering support and unconditional love provide me with a sense of security that is invaluable. Whether I'm facing trouble at school or celebrating moments of joy, it is the one thing in my life I can depend on. I know that my home is always there for me no matter what.

Home Is Where the Air Force Sends Us

By Brianna Lowe

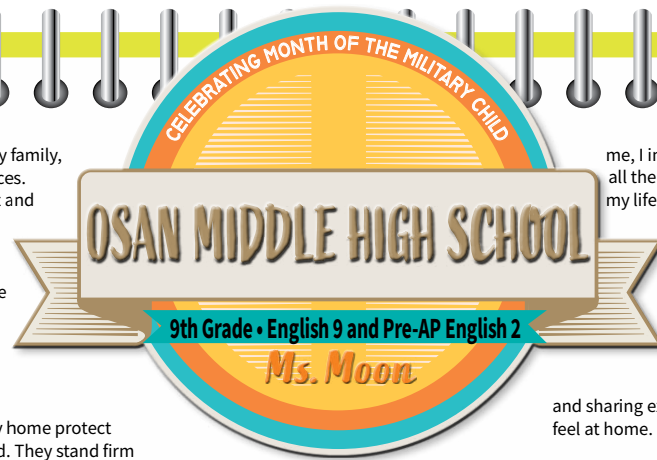
I don't have a traditional home - I've learned to carry pieces everywhere with me, finding home in people, not the place. A traditional home is where you're brought home from the hospital, where a door frame marks your height, or memories of a childhood bedroom linger. I have a unique home, one that will always resonate with me. A home isn't just a place - it's a collection of emotions, moments, and memories that shape who we are. My home changes and evolves. It is a sanctuary I feel safe in. The reigning point is that a home, my home, is an environment engulfed in warmth, love, and comfort that holds a special place in my heart.

The most prevalent aspect of a home is the people that reside in it. It is people who you connect with, who you love, and cherish. First, a home is created for you, the foundations are laid out. However, as you grow older you can choose who you have in your home. Family and friends are what create the environment. For me, I have a strong connection with my family. They are what make my home. Not all the physical homes I resided in were magnificent, however they were special to me because of the people who lived there.

You can feel when a home has truly been established. You can feel a shift in reality. From the warmth that surrounds you, the lighter air, and the familiar scents that linger. All five of your senses react in a positive way that makes you smile when you enter. That environment can travel with you wherever you go. However, not all homes are formed effortlessly; they require time and effort to develop. To achieve this environment, my family and I have dinner together and converse about our day. Additionally, we have movie night every Friday. When the sun sets, we all relax with the knowledge of the upcoming weekend. These simple activities and many more build a home environment. Through shared memories, a simple residence transforms a true home.

A home is a place at the end of the day where you can relax in and out the stress of the day behind. It is a place of sanctuary and solitude. The four walls give me reassurance and protect me from the dangers of the outside. I felt this sense of safety most vividly during a snow string in Texas. The street felt abandoned with no lights and we were stuck with the icy roads. I curled up in a blanket and drank hot chocolate feeling content despite the present catastrophe. I felt safe and protected. Similar moments occurred in each place I've lived, always resulting in the same feeling of safety.

The Air Force sends my family and me across the world. We don't know what lies ahead. However, we can be assured with the knowledge that at each house we have a home. By continuing to make memories, maintaining a close connection with my family, and finding safety in each house, I can be assured of a home wherever I go. It will be a home that takes place in your heart and will be one you don't forget.



A Place Called Home

By Penelope Pattee-Dudley

My father joined the Air Force when I was two years old. I learned quickly just what it meant to be a military child. I found myself living in military bases, and moving to live in a new place every couple of years. For a while, I thought this was normal for everyone, having grown up in this setting with other children in the same boat. I grew older, and through things like books and movies, I realized most people stay in one town their whole lives. Their definition of 'home' was starkly different from mine. I found it to be common that other families live near their grandparents, and grow up with the same friends their whole lives. Rather, I have little puzzle piece-memories that make up the picture of what I call home. My home extends past the foundations of any building, and exceeds any physical dimension. My home lives within my mind, in the smells and sounds and people of the past.

In the first few years my Dad was a part of the military, I lived in Virginia. This is where I was born, and where the rest of my extended family lives. I was just a baby when my family lived there. I don't remember our house, but I frequently visit for the holidays to see my grandparents and cousins. Every time December rolls around, I think of warm Christmas nights full of family.

Some of my earliest memories are when I lived in Mississippi as a kid. Around this time, my siblings and I were very close. I remember playing tag and running around in the long hallway that linked the kitchen and living room with my younger sister. I also remember my first day of school, the day we got my two dogs, and the day we brought my brother home from the hospital when he was born.

I was about 5 years old when I moved from Mississippi to Alaska. By this time, I was old enough to make friends at school and in my neighborhood. We were all children, and we saw each other as playmates in the light of our innocence. Oddly enough, the snow is not what I think of first when I recall the 4 years I spent in Anchorage. More accurately, I think of the feeling of excitement associated with the smell of melting snow and crisp spring air, or the feeling of gravel beneath my feet, and the odd plastic smell of a trampoline in the hot sun.

I moved to the humble city Mons, in Belgium, in the year 2019. It was certainly different from Alaska in a lot of ways, especially in the difference in climate, humidity, and culture. By this time, I was used to acclimating to a new place. In the first year I lived there, I was terribly sad to leave my old friends. For me, this is one of the biggest downsides to moving so constantly, even now. Eventually, I did move on from my sadness, but I still think fondly of my childhood companions and the chapter of my life they come from.

In Mons, I met some of my best friends. I knew them through the end of elementary school and most of middle school. Because we were so close during very developmental (and frankly, difficult) times, the bond between us was stronger than most. I was a bit too old to enjoy playing outdoors, so evocations of my time spent in Belgium focus more on the feeling of comfort around the people I love and navigating the world with a more mature mindset as I entered my teenage years.

When I think of what home means to

me, I immediately reflect back on all the people who were a part of my life. Whether it's my family, my childhood friends, or the people surrounding me in my everyday life. I think of a collection of various memories in different points in time, in the forms of smells or faces. When I'm in a place where I'm loved and sharing experiences with my peers, I feel at home.

A Place Called Home

By Micaela Pickle

To many people, home means different things. To me, I consider my home Japan. Japan is where my place of home is. It is where I grew up and learned many things about the world and myself.

I am half Japanese, grew up in Japan, and lived there for half of my life. My close relatives—like my Grandma, cousins, aunt, uncle—and some of my closest friends live there. Those people are very important to me and they make me feel happy and “at home.” Japan is where the people I care about the most live. Perhaps this close familiar tie is why I feel that Japan is my home.

My favorite places to go to are in Japan. My favorite place is my Grandma's house. My Grandma's house gives me a nostalgic feeling and brings me many memories where I spent time with my family. One of my favorite air bases, Yokota Air Base, is in Japan. It is my favorite base I lived in because I have many friends there and it brings me so many memories because of my long time living there. If I had to choose an air base to live forever it would be Yokota. My grandma's house was also close to the base, so I was able to see her very often. I also love to go on the train in Japan and go to places like Shinjuku.

Japan feels at home because when I think of it I can think of many memories I made there. I think about the park that was by my house where I had a lot of fun with my neighbors and friends. I also learned many things in Japan. I learned ballet which is something I did for about 6 years. I also swam. I enjoyed swimming. I miss my lessons a lot.

Japan is a very special place to me that makes me feel like I'm where I'm supposed to be. I have many more reasons why that place is special to me, but those are some of the main reasons why I love Japan.

Home is Where the Mat Is

By Logan Seen

The place that holds my memories, good and bad, is the place that is my home. Countless hours in the gym, on the mat or in a singlet with the people I had called my coaches and teammates. Home is something that I can always count on to change up the mood of the day.

Many may say that a home is the place that was able to keep them safe, feed them, and a place to relax in, a place that rarely ever changed. In my house, it was the mat where I learned to “take a shot” or the shoes that were so snug it fit like a sock. That's the home I love. Hours of running laps or the thousands of times I can hear the word “Crossface!” come from the coach's corner. The “Good job!” after every match and every “Nice try!” after I've lost.

Every single uncomfortable singlet I could try on is what I am able to call home. The countless times in practice where all I was waiting for was the time for Coach to call the water break and all of the embarrassing barefoot practices when I forgot my wrestling shoes. The memories I have made from my home that they call a sport, both good and bad, have shaped me not only with my physique, but also with the way I can carry myself and the way my philosophy has changed.

The home that has a scent of foam, rubber and sweat is the scent of home that I can call the scent of hard work. Daily practices and hundreds of hours of mat time is what I can call my house. The hours of bus rides with my teammates where we would pull pranks on whoever fell asleep first. The celebratory screams that we would say when we would win against a team we thought we couldn't

beat and the screams of anger we would have when we lost to a team we could easily beat.

Home is the wrestling mat that always can motivate me and give me something to look forward to after school. Home is the weight room where I am able to better condition myself for the season coming up. And home is the memories I have made with my teammates that I can cheer for and help improve each other.

Safe Haven

By Leo Tamez

I believe a home means many things. In terms of many things I am talking about the fact that you can walk home or get driven home knowing that when you arrive at the destination, you can see your parents and tell them you love them. In other parts of the world, some may believe that their homes are a jail cell or whatever as if some may not have loving parents or anything at home that pleases them. A home does not need to be somewhere where you have family members or somewhere where there are a lot of people. It matters where you feel safe and relaxed.

Many military kids can relate that a home does not matter of where your house is but of where your parents lay. Our parents are the key source of how we made ourselves and chose what a home is. I have moved many times house to house, brick to brick without knowing that we were moving instead of taking a vacation when I was younger. In Alabama, 2010 I lived in a medium-sized town named “Montgomery,” which was pretty special to me as if I was raised there from my young ages to my middle childhood. My house was pretty big and was also right next to my friend's house, who at the time was extremely wealthy at that time. Our houses were right next to each other, so whenever I would wander outside and arrive at a house, I would know I would be safe as if their home and my home were both safe havens that were and were located right next to each other as stated again.

After a few years of living in Alabama, I would constantly be moving as if right after Alabama I would move to Germany then after maybe 2 or 3 years I would move to California then right after that I would move to Kansas for 2 years. I can definitely say that Kansas is where I definitely enjoyed my home the most. In those 2 years of staying there, I have many memories of my parents and friends at my home having fun. Yes, I understand that a home isn't all about fun, but when reminiscing about your past life and homes, you would automatically think of all the memories.

In summary, many can state that a home is where you don't need to worry about where it is, but about who is there in a certain place. I can assume that many people have a place called home while others may not but can also assume many don't. I believe that a home is where you rest and lay but also where your family members stay, but it is also to preference or just how your life is.

Home Beyond Walls

By Susie Walsh

I've never lived in the same place for more than a few years, yet somehow, I've always known exactly where home is. Home to me is my family, the people I surround myself with, and the service I do for others. My home is beyond a physical house, but a sense of belonging and purpose that comes from the connections I made and the impact I have on those around me.

From the moment I was born, I've learned that home isn't defined by walls or a fixed address. A big part of what I call home is the people who support and love me. Growing up as a military child, my family became my constant in a world of change. Whether we were stationed across the country or overseas, the comfort of my parents' voices and my brother's laughter was what made each place feel like home. It was never about where we lived, but who we lived with. In the places we went such as Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates with the blazing sun and unlimited dunes or South Korea with the snow capped mountains and the high towers, my family was the only constant source of comfort I could rely on. They



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→ reminded me that home is more than a physical place, it's the love and connection shared between the people who matter most.

Even though my family is a big part of the place I call home, they can't be everywhere. In places like schools and sports, the people I surround myself with can change one's entire perspective on what they are doing. School can be draining especially in a foreign place with foreign kids. The kids may not be fond of you because you aren't "normal," which can make school a very hated place. However, the people I surround myself with can change that. Good friends can feel like a straight light in a world full of swirling darkness. The light can guide you to a better place where you are happier. When going through major changes, such as moving to a foreign country, your friends can help you through those changes. Like showing you to the good "kofta" places and guiding you to the "kiosks." Friends may not always be constant, but they are a step towards adaptation. They can help you feel comfortable and confident in your own skin even if others around you are very different.

Home can be separate from the people you know, it can also be a feeling. There are big moments in my life that changed me to be a better person. One of these moments was my service trip to Kenya, East Africa. In Kenya, I vaccinated goats, built elephant deterring fences, and helped local African schools around me. I painted walls, filled water tanks, and made bricks to further the expansion of the school. When I did these things, at first, I felt exhausted. I pondered things like, "Why am I doing this?" But by the second half/end of the trip, I had a feeling of fulfillment and enlightenment. This was because I had realized how blessed I was to have all my resources. I had a big, functioning house that was fully air conditioned. My mother drove me to school. I went to an expensive school with lots of technology, able to compete in sports, had a phone, etc. I had so many more opportunities and resources than the people I was helping, yet, they seemed so happy despite the broken down school, sandy field, and very hot weather. I had played with the local kids at the schools and they had given me lots of notes and hugs. They showed me their culture and their games and at every activity they never seemed upset. They were always happy, ready to show me something new. Once I finally realized it, I greatly wanted to help in any way I could. They showed me that I don't need fancy things to feel happy, and I realized that making others' lives better made me feel a sense of joy. This was a very different experience for me and it unlocked a whole new way to feel joy and a new sense of wanting to help others. Helping others can make a place feel like home.

No matter where I go and what I do, my home will always have a place in my heart. I don't have to come back to a physical place to feel a sense of belonging, I can feel it when calling my family, making new friends, or even helping an old lady cross the street. At the end of the day, home is not the place where I unlock the door with my jangling keys. It's beyond walls, always there, and waiting for me.

A Place Called Home

By Luke Young

Home to me is wherever my family is. This may seem like something people just say, but don't actually mean, but this sentence is one of the truest words ever spoken. If your parents didn't love you, it wouldn't be a home. If your siblings hated you, it wouldn't be a home. The family makes a house a home, not the house itself.

Because a family is what first makes a home a home. When you first come into this world, your family is in your home. But after some time, the house just turns into a house, and your family turns into your home. My family is my home because they have been with me throughout my life, through hardships, issues, and arguments.

Home should be a place where you feel accepted and comfortable and where it's easy to talk to other family members. All three of those descriptions describe what a family is. My family makes sure that they are easy to talk to with me and make sure that I am comfortable. Comfort is one of the key parts of loving someone, if you change when you're around people you can never

really care for those people. It's the people who like the real you that you should truly care for.

When your family is always with you throughout your life, you get accustomed to coming home to the people you love most, and if you don't do that then it's not a home. Me and my family have had some rough patches but they still love me and vice versa. Life throws curveballs at you many times, but the one thing you should always count on is a home with people who love you and accept you.

My family is my home no matter where they are or my relationship with them, they are the foundation of my life and to my parents, I will be forever indebted to them. They should always be the one thing you can count on when going through hardships. Your loved ones are what makes a home a home, and if your loved ones aren't there, then it isn't a true home.

Home: A New Definition

By Kean Barzaga

In a dictionary, a home is defined as a place of residence, where you lay down your roots. But home is way more than that, home isn't a physical place, but is the people that you feel loved and connected with. "Home is where the heart is." This quote perfectly summarizes this idea, stating that home is where you feel valued.

I feel valued by the people I care for, who can make me smile and laugh. Those people make me lose my sense of time, making me wish that the day would last just a little longer. My definition of a home goes beyond that of a house, its walls extend far throughout the globe. These people are the walls that support the roof, that keep me safe and warm. These walls are in Florida, Okinawa, Germany, Missouri, and everywhere else. Your home is different from your house, it's where you grow and learn about yourself, supporting you like a foundation.

Like a foundation, this home is what creates you, the building blocks of your personality. Each brick is placed from your experiences or other people, good or bad.

Unlike a house, however, each brick is replaceable. When new memories form or life lessons are learned, you can remove the negativity from your home. Not all homes are perfect; some people's homes are nicer than others, but that's beautiful in a way, having all these unique and distinctive personalities. But like all houses, a home can be destroyed.

Do you know that moment when you feel like your whole world is ablaze? Like when a friend moves away or you make a fatal mistake in a sports match? Those realizations can destroy your home's foundation, but that doesn't mean you can't mend those broken pieces. Even when the walls around you fall, you can rebuild your home, better or worse, it just depends on how you react. Unlike a house, a home is never truly lost, pieces of it will always remain with you no matter what, they're memories of your experiences and adventures.

My memories are home, and I'll carry them in my heart. All the memories I've shared, laughing with friends, learning lessons, plotting shenanigans, and sharing hardships, will always be part of my home, and I will cherish them, even if these people move away. As a military kid, I've learned that making connections is more important. It helps make the moments you experience more surreal, even though your time with people is limited. In the end, home isn't where you are, but it's who you're with and the adventures you've made.

The word "home" is truly complex, and its definition goes far deeper emotionally than first seen. Sometimes words don't capture the real meaning of an idea, as a home isn't just a place, it's a place where you build your foundation. It's a place of belonging, where you feel warmth and enjoy being yourself. It's built of the memories of your life experiences, lessons, and joys, it's where you feel understood. And most of

all, it's where the people that you associate with are, no matter where they are in the world. That's the concept of home.

Home the Dynamic Feeling

By Armour Boland

Home is a feeling. For many people, that feeling may be tied to a place, a certain tract of land where their family house stands, but then you realize that that statement contradicts itself. The place is not the home. Home is not a physical thing, it's often a feeling tied to a place, to a people. However these ties are not permanent and instead are ever shifting and changing.

I have lived in many places throughout my life, from the eastern seaboard to East Asia but not much in between. I had scaled Tokyo Tower at 8, and it probably caused my fear of heights. I fled from Hurricane Irma at 10 and I, along with many others, underwent the challenges of Covid-19 at 12. These events all occurred across my many different "homes". When I lived in Tokyo, when I enjoyed the sun in Tampa, and when I explored the creek in Dayton. And now I believe these places were my home at least for a moment. They shaped me in many ways, but they have one thing a true home lacks. Connection.

Along the way, I had made many friends and connections. But each time I moved used to mean an end to those connections, no words, not even a text could be sent. And that's okay. And though friends come and go, one connection in my life has remained, despite the highs and lows that comes with moving. This constant source has been my family in a rural Pennsylvania town. This town is called Franklin, a place of great importance to me and my family. But not because of the location itself, but the familial history tied to it. It's the place where my Mom grew up, where she and my Dad met, where many of my holidays have been spent. It is a place where my Grandma lived her entire life. And, of course, there's a house tied to that life in Franklin. The house was built

by my grandparents, then my uncle eventually bought it. It is and has been a core meeting place for my family and family friends. We've had Christmases, Easter, but especially Thanksgiving at that home. Each time I go there, I can remember a thousand memories I've made. It's where many family members first met me, it's where my Grandma used to sling us whipped cream on Thanksgiving. It's where I have always been when family is in need or even just to visit those we hold dear.

So what is home to me? So far my home has been my family, the structure of a house that my grandparents grew and cared for. But that's not all, my home may not be there forever. That feeling of ease and comfort can be built anywhere. The thing that makes that feeling of "home" special, is the experiences it takes to make a place "home." It includes the good, the bad, the mundane. It may take weeks, months, most likely years to build. However, my home is what I make it. And for now I'd say this small family town in Pennsylvania is as "home" to me as it can get.

My Home Is My Special Place

By Danika Bradney

My home is a special place to me. Home is where I spend time with my family members and where I grew up. I experienced a lot of things at home.

Home is the place I miss when I'm not there. I have special feelings for my home. Whenever I'm not at home, I start to wish that I never even left, because it takes me around 5-10 minutes for me to start wishing I was back home. Wherever I go, even if it's a party, event, a hangout with friends, the store and other places, there's a high chance I could be wishing to go home right at that moment. If there were places that I wouldn't mind staying at instead of being home, I would probably be almost anywhere as long as I'm with close friends. This is different from just being at a hangout from friends because they're not

my close friends. Therefore, I don't have a very strong connection with those people and I'm just normally used to being with my close friends. That doesn't mean that I don't enjoy being with my friends that aren't my close friends, it just means that I usually have more in common with my close friends so I can talk to them about anything.

Home is the place where I can be in the presence of my family. Being home with my family keeps me safe and where I feel comfortable. I don't talk to my family every second of the day when I'm at home, but I still like that I'm home with people I know and trust well. I have specific things I talk about with my family sometimes, like with my mom we would talk about if we want to go shop somewhere like at the mall. I also have a pet cat that's around 9 months old, and he is always home sleeping, running around, or whining. I love having a cat because then I won't be completely alone when I get home from school, even though all he does is sleep.

Home helped me to develop the kind of person that I am. Things that I have in my home could lead to me forming new hobbies, which could change the type of person that I am. Even though I said that home developed who I was, there were other things that developed the kind of person I was too. If you ever had a very close friend that you would always be with and people would even see you with that person every time in the day, then over time, you could eventually start getting into more similar hobbies as them. I have a very close friend who I'm always with during school and even out of school sometimes. As I hang out with them, because they are like a similar meaning of home to me as well. I haven't known them for over 5+ years, but I still have full trust in them. I would pick to work with them in anything, I would choose to hangout with them almost anytime, and other things I would do with them. I enjoy being with people that share similar interests as me.

To sum everything up, being at home is always the best choice for me. When I move away to get my own apartment or house, it won't mean that the place I move into is nothing special. It will still have almost everything I need. As long as I still have a home, then my feelings for it will never change. Home makes me feel at peace and it's my special place.

My Mom, My Home

By Janiyah Medina

Home has never been just four walls and a roof to me it has always been my mom.

No matter where I am in the world as long as she is there I feel safe, loved, and at peace. Her presence alone makes any space feel familiar, and her voice has a way of calming my heart. No matter how chaotic life gets. When I'm lost, she guides me when I'm struggling, she lifts me up and when I feel alone she reminds me that I never truly am. Her hugs are warmth on my coldest days, her laughter is the soundtrack of my happiest moments and her love is the foundation that has shaped me into who I am today.

She has been my safe space since the day I was born and no matter how far I go or how much time passes she will always be home to me. Home isn't just a place it's the person who makes you feel like you belong and for me, that person will always be my Mom.

My Special Place Where I Belong

By Kanato Nozuki

Home is a special place where I was raised. This place is where I learned how to talk and walk from when I was born. Home is where you belong with your family and have a good quality time with your loved one, whether it be a friend or family. I believe that home is a place where you think you belong. It doesn't matter where you are from if that place where you called home feels right.

Home is an environment, and home is a place where your family cooks together and spends every last minute with them. Home is a place where my people talk to me in my native language. It is a place that makes me feel happy every time I visit there. For me a special place where I was born is an experience because it is such

a small place but has a lot of things to do with your family. This place is special to me because it holds a lot of memories and the laughter of my family.

This place holds memories where every street or corner brings me back to the familiar face and brings me a sense of comfort and laughter. But I know that I always come home.

A Place Called Home

By Alivia Murphy

I think anything can make someone feel at home, whether it's a place, a thing, a feeling, and so on. It can be anything you want or feel you're most attached and comfortable with. It's not always just the place where you live, it could be

Personally, my belongings make me feel at home. Everything that I own is my home. Decorations, furniture, small trinkets I've collected over the years, etc, are all examples of things that comfort me. Knowing that something is mine brings me joy.

One reason is because as a military child who moves almost every two years, none of the homes I've lived in stand out to me, but I can keep all of the things I've gathered over the years in every room I stay in, so I'll always feel that same sense of belonging.

I also think objects make my room feel like home because I keep everything I've ever loved in my room, and that makes it feel special. Even if I've gotten rid of things, they were still in my room at some point, which means I loved them at some point. My favorite books, merch from bands I like, video games that would be my entire personality for a month, figurines from various forms of media, to name a few. It's not limited to objects either, people, as well. If you're close to me, you've been in my room, such as any friends or family.

In conclusion, my belongings and things that I love make me feel at home because it grounds me, knowing that I own something.

A Place Called Home

By Charlotte Ng

Home isn't just a building you live in, it can also be a person. To me, home is also where the people you love are. I have several different homes because my family doesn't just live in one area. Not only this but being part of a military family means that it's rare to stay in one place for more than two to four years. A home means so many things, but to me, it's always a place I want to go to.

I have several homes, but my favorite home is my best friend, Bella. She is my comfort person and has always been by me since we became friends. As a military child, leaving is always difficult, but you always find out who your real friends are after you move. You can always go home, and Bella always stays in contact with me even though we haven't seen each other in a while. Home is also a place that I trust to go to and she's the one I can call if I ever need anything.

Another one of my homes is in Rocklin, California. It's the place where I have lived most of my life. I call it home because I know it well, including the town and the people. I've moved to the same place in California twice, so growing up there quickly made it a place where I feel safe. Some of my family members live in California, so it brings my family together even more when we're together.

This leads to my other home, my family. These people have watched me grow since the day I was born. I wouldn't be who I am without them, because they are the people I see and talk to every day. They are part of my daily environment, and they influence and have taught me so much. Homes can be big or small, from a state to a person. These homes are meaningful and they have had a big impact on my life. It's always hard to leave a house, but there's always time or a way to go back home somehow.

SEE MORE FROM
MS. MOON'S CLASS
ON PAGE 24

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 23

Home: Person, Place, or Thing?
By Matthew Patterson

What does it mean when people say, “Home is where the heart is,”? Where is our heart? Does it have to be in a place? For someone who’s lived in one house for most of his life, maybe. But does this mean that home has to be in a set place? What about people who move a lot, people who’ve never found themselves tied down to one place, physically or emotionally? Then what would home be? A person maybe? A thing? We all know what a house is, but what is a home?

For me, my home is my family. As a military kid, I’ve never stayed tied down to one town, city, or state, for more than three years. I move all the time, but the people I move with are what really matters to me. My wonderful mother, who cooks and cares for me all the time, someone I’ve become attached to. My little brother, an ex-cute big headed brat, with a forehead that stretches for miles, and likes to act like he’s too cool around his friends to have a big brother, or be a little brother (I still love him though.) And my dad, who has no hair. These people who I’ve been with my entire life, are who I would answer with, if asked “What is home to you?”

As to why these people are so important to me? As to why they are who I’d describe as home? That is for a multitude of reasons, but to name the first, it’d be how they’re the only constant in my life. The place in which I live is ever changing, and so is everything else about my life. One thing I don’t like is unpredictability, randomness. I know this is something people don’t think about, including me (since this thought only came to me for the essay,) but waking up to the same people every morning, and sleeping in the same house to the same people every night, is something that gives me a sense of safety and satisfaction.

Now that I’m listing off my reasons, the second as to why my family is so important to me, is that they’re the only people I can truly unwind around. When I’m in public, I am always guarded, I have to be aware of everything I do, say, and how I look. Even if I’m with really close friends, I’ll always have my guard up to a degree. Only when I’m alone with my family can I kick back, relax, and not care about my appearance in the slightest. Only when I’m with my family can I wear the ugliest outfit imaginable, and have my hair look like a pinecone. I can lay down on all the furniture, not caring about sitting like a normal human being. I can burp as loud as a whale without caring, and stuff myself full of food. Only because I naturally trust that my family cares as little as I do. This is the true son they raised, so if they complain about it, I’d probably turn it back on them.

My third reason is much shorter, and doesn’t deserve an entire paragraph to itself. It is simply that at the end of the day, they are who I come home to. Whether I’m living in Japan, Delaware, Texas, South Korea, or whatever random country we’re in, at the end of the day, I come home to them. Nobody else but them. And so in conclusion, and yes I’m merging the third reason’s paragraph and the conclusion paragraph, because as I said, the third reason isn’t worthy of a whole paragraph, NOT that I wouldn’t be able to make five sentences about it. As I was saying, in conclusion, I have lived in many houses, and will live in many more. I have met many people, and I’ve left behind even more. I will continue to make friends, and I will continue to leave them behind, because that is the life of a military child. But I will be fine, because as long as I have a family to return to, to unwind around, and to trust, I will be at home.

Home

By Oliver Phares

Let’s first talk about this “Home”. Home defines an area for where you belong. Home is a place where you physically and mentally feel that you belong here. A place where you can feel safe and trust those around you. And my home is

here in South Korea. It is a place where I can express myself freely and enjoy the culture and traditions here.

South Korea is the place I was born and was raised. I believe that South Korea is my home because my mother is South Korean and my father is American. Making me half Korean and half American. It just makes me feel unique and different from other Americans by being half Korean. My relatives live here also. Because South Korea is a small country compared to the US, it is easier to travel long distances. Korea also has an outstanding language. Korean may be a hard language to speak, but it’s pretty amazing to speak it.

I have incredibly close friends that I’d love to hang out with. The food in Korea is very good and I personally love ramen and Korean spicy rice cakes. Most of my neighbors are nice and people that locally live here have warming hearts.

Without the air quality being terrible sometimes, it’s a country I’d love to live in. I absolutely love PC cafes in South Korea. You can practically live there and you get to play games at a low price (usually around 1,000 won). The convenience stores here are very similar to Japan; they’re more advanced than most countries.

The food here is mouth watering. There are many spicy foods in South Korea and people love the foods also. I like South Korea better than the USA. Korea is an easier place to live in than the USA. My home is a place where many people love to travel. Seoul is one of my favorite places in the world. It is a place with 10 million people. Many people live in South Korea, including me. And I plan to live here until I graduate. I love Korea.

Home Is Not a Place, But a Feeling

By Ilea Serrano

For most people home is a place, a house, a city, or even a country. It’s where they grew up, where they made memories and where they feel a sense of belonging. But for me, home could never be tied to a place. I lived in the UK for 5 years, Japan for four, and Korea for 5. Each place has been a part of my life but ultimately just a place. How can I call just one place home when I have never stayed in one place long enough to form a deep connection? Whenever I start to feel settled, I move again. My surroundings are always changing and I’ve never belonged to one place.

But through all these moves, one thing always stayed the same, my family. No matter where we lived, they were always with me. They were the only constant thing in my life, the one unchanging thing. While houses, schools, and friends have come and gone, my family has always been by my side. No matter where I go or how many times I move I know I can always come back to them. They are my home.

Because of this I’ve come to see that home is not about a physical location. It’s not

about the country I live in, the language I speak or the people that I surround myself with. Instead home is about the people who make me feel safe, loved, and supported. My family gives me a sense of stability that a place house never could.

They are my anchor keeping me grounded even when everything around me is changing. When I think of home I don’t think of a house or city I see the people who have always been there for me no matter where we are.

Some people may assume that moving so much is difficult, and in some ways they are right. It can be hard to have to say goodbye to friends, adapt to new cultures, and to start over in a new place. But I also get to see the whole world, and learn new things. I get to meet all kinds of different people from all different backgrounds and learn to adapt to new situations. Most importantly I learned that a house is not a home, home is the people inside of it.

While I may never be able to call just one place home, I have something much

better, family. They will always be there for me through every beginning, every move. No matter what, where, or when they always remind me that I am not alone. As long as I have them I will always have somewhere to belong.

Memories

By Josai Sibilly

What is home? That’s a simple, yet weirdly complex question. On one hand, you could just say that home is where you live, and that would be the end of it. But, for most people, it’s not that easy. Home could be where you were raised, where you feel the safest, even your bathroom could technically be your home. There’s so many possibilities. For me, home isn’t a physical place, but rather a mental one. Home, for me at least, is the memories that I possess.

Life doesn’t always go your way. There’s bound to be twists and turns. There may be sudden stops along the way, a change in direction, or even an upside down part. Life can be a roller coaster. But home is the exception. No matter what kind of day I have, good, bad, great, terrible, my memories stay intact. Home doesn’t change. It’s like the roller coaster train, the carriage. Sure, the tracks may not always be steady, but the train is with you every step of the way.

Opinions change. Here’s an example. Say that a baby is born. Of course, everyone thinks it’s cute and everything. “What a wonderful baby boy!” “He has a bright future, I’m sure!” And then that boy grows up and becomes Hitler. Your opinion just changed from “He’s great!” to “What a deranged man!”. Your opinions on things will change, whether you want them to or not. It’s just part of life. However, there are many things that your opinion on won’t change, as well. Home is one of those. I will always be able to look at home positively. Those are my memories, memories of joy, memories of discovery. There isn’t much negative to say about home.

While we’re on the topic of looking at home positively, there is a question that some might ask: “What if my memories of ‘home’ aren’t positive?” My answer: “Then it’s not your home.” When categorizing home, you shouldn’t have any doubts. You should be able to visit it, whether it’s your childhood home, your memories, the favorite place of the person you love, whatever it may be, and just say “I’m home.” If you have a thought that it might not be your home, then it probably isn’t.

Let’s go back to the main question. “What is home?” The answer to that question, after everything I said, is that it’s whatever you want it to be. Whether a house, a town, or a feeling. You don’t even need to have an answer! But for me, my home is simply a memory. I can remember it like it was yesterday.

A Place Called Home

By Dwayne Singson

Home to me is a place where I feel the happiest like being loved, laughing, and spending time with friends and family. When I think of home I don’t think of a building with walls and a roof, there is more than that. Playing with friends and being with my family is where I laugh a lot and is the most enjoyable place I can be at. The place I call home is Okinawa Japan, where my family had the best days we’ve ever experienced. Why this place is called my home is because the memories my friends have had together playing outside, whether it’s playing basketball, hide and seek, or trading cards. Everyday after school we would have a place to meet up with each other after school which was a park, then we would decide as a group what we wanted to play. Most of the time we would have a basketball

tournament going on that lasted for a couple days and we would always play so competitively.

Another reason why I call this place home is because of the places my family has experienced, like going to the beach, camping, and going far out in the forest to take a walk. One of my favorite memories in Okinawa was my 12th Birthday when I got a PS5, basketball cards, and went shopping at the mall with my friends. Every summer it would reach around the 70s and 80s and we would set up a slip n slide down a hill and have a sprinkler on our trampoline to relieve the heat. The last reason why I call Okinawa home is because of all the basketball camps I had and the exposure of going off base for a special training. I had always loved playing basketball, I have been playing since I was 7 years old. Why I loved playing basketball so much is because I can meet new people and make friends and just think it’s fun to play. From all the memories of living there for 7-8 years, this is the story of why I call Okinawa home.

My Forever Home

By Losaline Ulukivaiola

Home is a place where I can feel surrounded by good vibes and people, loved, and comforted all around. Home is a place where no matter what happens, there will be my safe spot. Home is a place where I feel like I can be free to be myself and not put on a façade. At home, I receive such a cozy and warm feeling in my heart because of the love that I feel from being there. To me, the quote “Home is where the heart is” is definitely true because of what I have experienced with my “home”.

My home is Alaska. Alaska is what I call my home since I have most of my family there. My family always surrounds me with good vibes and I always have a good time with them. Even if I could just sit in silence with my family, it would still be a good time. My family also makes me feel safe and loved. I grew up in Alaska and I’ve never felt like I was in danger. I’m so grateful for that. Though there are some areas where crime is high, I’m grateful my family has kept me from ever being near those kinds of situations. I’m very grateful that God had blessed my Mom to be stationed in Alaska because then I probably would have never grown up with my cousins and made the strong bond we have now.

When I’m at home, I feel no judgement. I’m thankful to have been born into a family that will support me no matter what I do. I never have to be “fake” at home. At school, I put on a façade since I don’t want to be there. But at home, I can be myself and not care what others think toward me because I know my family at home loves me.

The memories that I have made there will always stay within my heart. All the laughs, and cries I’ve had in Alaska I cherish so much and wish I could relive any of those moments. I love all the memories I’ve made, and I’m so happy to have made them. I’m sure I’ve lived there the longest out of everywhere I’ve lived, which was 5 years. And in those five years I have lived outside of Alaska, I now have more reasons to call that place home.

Home is a place where you never want to leave, and if you do, you’ll always want to be back. When I realized my family and I were moving from Alaska, I was very sad. Alaska was a place I did not want to leave from since I say I was raised there. I’m pretty sure I only say that since I’ve lived there the longest. I didn’t want to say goodbye to my friends and family. And now that we have moved from Alaska to South Korea, I want so badly to return to Alaska.

When I think of Alaska, I remember the barbecues me and my family would have, the many McDonalds trips we would make, the huge amount of snow that never gave us snow days for some reason, and just all the sweet memories I’ve made. Something I miss about Alaska is the midnight sun. The sun would never go down until two in the morning. Then just two hours later, the sun would rise at four in the morning. I miss it so much. I miss being able to hang out with my cousins almost everyday and

Alaska is and always will be my “Home”. It’s the place where I feel comforted and supported always by my loved ones.

Where is My Home?

By Myles Vasquez

There are plenty of places that I can consider to be my “home.” But there is one place in particular that is closer to my heart than any other place I have lived. That place is Georgia. There are plenty of reasons why this place is home to me. One of these reasons is that this place is where all of my best friends reside. I’ve made plenty of memories with them.

Georgia is home to me because countless of my friends live and go to school there. These people are my closest friends, and I miss them every day in Korea. I still talk to these people every single day, but it’s not the same as when I am home in Georgia. I would do anything to go back to see my friends. I made a lot of good memories with them.

Another reason why Georgia is considered home for me is because of all the memories I made during my short stay there. I was out almost every day doing something, whether it was hanging out with my friends or not. These are the only memories that I remember vividly, and I would do anything to go back. The people helped me stay out of trouble and kept me on a path that led me to good things. The beautiful memories I made are something that I can’t recreate.

Beautiful is a great way to describe Georgia in general. Georgia has a very diverse scenery. Wherever you go, there is always a different landscape and I love Georgia for that. One thing that benefited from the beautiful scenery was the golf courses. One of the most famous golf courses in the world is located in Augusta, Georgia. Georgia’s proximity to other states is also good.

Overall, Georgia is home to me. Georgia is home to some of the best memories ever. It is a beautiful place and I would go back in a heartbeat. I hope I can go back someday to visit my friends.

My Memories, My Home

By Evangeline Ventura

They say we’re like dandelions because we are “strong” “can grow anywhere, have seeds everywhere”. I want to leave I can’t grow here. My seed has fallen into a small crack surrounded by cement. No water no sun no. holding myself up by the roots once nourished by love and exhilaration. My roots, my memories, they’re all I rely on. They’re all that is holding me up. The wind can blow my seed and force me to grow somewhere else I’ll grow into something I’ll never understand. But please do not pull me out from my roots My roots, my memories—my home.

The Place I Call Home

By Spencer Winston

Home to me is a place where I have lived and enjoyed. A place where I grew up in, and always look back to and think about. A place where there is a good community with good people who I shared adventure with. Home is where I made memories, good and bad. Somewhere where I had many adventures and can share the stories and experiences I had with other people. Massachusetts is that place for me.

This place is home to me because of the area it was in. There are a lot of cool things to do and look at. This area is where America started and gained independence. Exploring New England was a really fun thing to do. So when school was over and the weekend was about to begin we would go exploring. When my family was just starting we lived in this area. Me and a lot of my siblings were born while we lived in Maryland. My mom also grew up in Rhode Island for part of her life. My family eventually moved to Massachusetts. When we would go exploring we went to a lot of places that my family used

→ to live. One time we went back to Maryland and I saw where I used to live and my birth place. We also went to Rhode Island and saw the mansions that my mom used to cater for. My family also went on a lot of hikes and camping occasionally. Especially in the Fall. The leaves were so colorful and the area would light up with many shades of orange, red, and yellow. The smell of apples and cider lingered in the air. The mossy trees and woods were also really fun to go camping in during the summer. There were many places close by to go experience things.

The base that I lived on also made this place feel like home. The house that I lived in was really, really nice. It was one of the best houses that I lived in out of all of the other places I lived. We also had a willow tree behind our house, it would provide a lot of shade and it was fun to hear the leaves rustling as a cool breeze blew by. Further behind the house was a parking garage and behind that was a park. There were also a lot of open areas surrounding the park. When I was younger I would play four square at the garage and games at the park. The primary and middle school were part of the same building and it was only a two minute walk from my house. The base was also fairly small so everything was within biking distance, which was really nice. The base was also part of the minuteman trail, and it was fun to go on the trail and be a couple minutes from home.

The people and community were another thing that really made Massachusetts feel like home. Me and my brother would meet up with our friends in the morning and walk to school with them. After school we would also walk home together. When all of my homework was done or if I had no plans over the weekend, I would go biking. Biking in New England is really fun and something I did all the time. I would meet up with my friends and then we would just bike all over base. Sometimes we would bike over a bridge crossing a creek and through fields and empty parking lots, until we got to the skatepark. We would also occasionally bike to the commissary and buy snacks, and come home to eat them.

To me, this is what makes a place home. A place where I made many memories, good and bad, but I learned from them. A place where the house was good and the area was amazing. Somewhere where I made friends and met good people. Home is where I had adventures and good experiences that I will never forget. This is why I call Massachusetts home.

My Home

By Nazlee Butalina

Home to me is a place where I grew up and became the person I am today. It is a place where I was happy, sad, and mad. It is a place where I was having fun with my family and friends. A home is a place where I am comfortable and safe. My home is one of the most important things to me, a place where all of my memories are. I'm not always happy but there are so many times where I laughed a lot and had so much fun. It is a place where I can go wherever school stresses me out and I just want to rest.

Home to me is a place where all of my amazing friends and family have made memories with me. It is where me and my friends have fun watching movies and tv shows, having sleepovers, singing, and eating together. My best friends, Sunny and Princess, have been living with us for a year and they have made our house even more wonderful. Everytime I spend time with them it feels like they're my sisters and we do get into fights like siblings. They are family to me and them living in our house has made it even better. The people inside my house are always willing to listen to me rant about my problems and they can't really judge. I call my friends, gossiping about other people but they don't really mind because they do it too.

Home to me is a place where I can escape the problems of the outside world. It is a place where I can reflect and think about what I have done or what I should do in the future. It is a place where I can plan for the future and where people will support and help me. Whenever I come across a problem, someone in the house will always be there to help me. Which is why I love being home. Home is an important place for me and my family and friends.

Back to the Old House

By Starlene Escalona

Hawaii holds a special place in my heart. It isn't just a place to me, it's a home filled with memories and genuine connections. Living there, I formed the strongest bonds with my best friends that I now consider family. To me, home is also my family, the ones I love most. Even though we are miles and miles away, they are the people I love and mourn for when I want to be in a place called home. The warmth of the Aloha spirit evolved around me. This spirit created a place where my friendships thrived. Unfortunately, this lovely spirit can't be found elsewhere.

The memories I created in my old house are engraved in my mind. From living room game nights, movie nights and beach days, every moment I cherish completely. My family and I grew up in that house, we all grew older and closer together. The friendly and familiar sights of that island, my neighborhood, and my high school gave me comfort and safety letting me to be my true self. You can consider home as what makes you happy, safe, and comfortable. I can still remember the warmth of the sun on my face, hearing the waves crash, the wind whistling in my ear and how it always made me feel at ease.

Overall, what I consider home is what makes me happy. Hawaii is more than just a place, it's somewhere I found a sense of belonging. The connections I made with my best friends and the memories I have at my old house are pleasures I carry with me. Home is the love that surrounded me making Hawaii not just a place, but a home and a main part of my life.

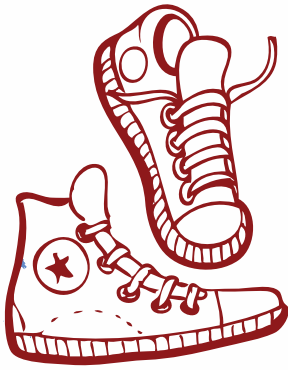
The Texas Home of a Military Girl

By Sadie Green

A military girl doesn't have a home if you think about it. Yes, we have a house to live in and a school we go to and all of these wonderful things, but we don't get to really grow up in a place. We have got to make friends and make memories and stuff like that. Thankfully for me, I have a home even though I don't have any place where I'm from. I still count my home as Texas. Canton, Texas, to be exact. I have most of my family there. They are all from the same place and every single person, blood or not, is still family no matter what they are and forever will be family to me. Someone asks me where I'm from. I will always and have said Canton Texas even though I have never lived there, but I say I'm from there because it's my home even though I have never lived there. Texas is my home because of my family. Canton is a fairly small town and I love that not many people live there. It's big and open. It's a very gorgeous town with many animals and lovely grass that's never dead. Flowers are always blooming, very sunny and hot most of the time. It just feels right when I'm there.

I could choose to live there for the rest of my life, I definitely would, and I would never complain because it's my home and it makes me feel safe and happy. It's my safe space where I can just roam around and be happy and free. The people there are the kindest too. Most people aren't the greatest, but in a small town like Canton everyone is so kind to each other, and it's great to see a community thrive like that, and I enjoy every second of it. I wouldn't give up for the world.

Texas food is another thing that makes me feel at home when I'm not. Some



examples are chicken fried steak or my personal favorite brisket, and it will have a special place in my heart. I love a lot of things about where I'm from and even though I wasn't born there or ever lived there, it's still my home and I intend to keep saying that. Texas is one of the things I love the most. I would choose that over any expensive thing ever or any nice tasty sweets because Texas is so dear to me because it's my home, it's where I'm from, and it's who I am. I don't need all these fancy places to live or fancy clothes. All I need is my cowgirl hat and boots and to be in Texas because, to me, Texas is home, and it will be forever. In conclusion, my home is Canton, Texas, whether of my family blood or not, my family is there and even though I'm not there, it's my home. It's my hometown either way, because I've never found the appeal of being from anywhere but Texas. I adore Texas and forever will because Texas is my home.

A Place Called Home

By Robert Griffis

Where do I call home? I think of Home to be a place where you can enjoy memories, A place where I can go to if I need help with something. My homes are in Florida and Georgia. These are the places that I can call home, where I grew up.

The place that I call home is Florida and Georgia, because these places are where I had good memories and I had moments that you can't replay somewhere else. I know I can't speak for everybody because some memories are where your home is, some are where your family is. I think my home is these two places because it's where I had good memories and it's where my family is. That is why I can call these places my home. For some other people it's where you can go when you need help, then for others it's where you were born. For some that is where the home is.

Why I call these places home, the reason is memories, family and faith. I can't speak for everyone but that is the reason for me. It's where I have friends that understand me. The feeling that you have people that understand you is a great feeling, home is a place that you want to return to. For my Mom her home is England because she has friends and she enjoys the culture and that is where family is for her. And for my Dad it's Gainesville Because that is where his family is, that is where home is. There are some reasons why certain places could be your home for you.

The third reason why this place is home for me. The last reason why I think this place is home is because I can wear something and not get weird looks. And that is a reason for me, but for others it can be the way people dress, it's something you understand, it's something that you can remember. There is a home for everyone. This is why I think these places are my home.

My Person

By Zeva Ioane

When someone mentions the word home, most people think of walls and a roof over your head. Some think of where they were raised or wherever their family is. I believe home is a singular person. The someone you go to when all you want to do is be alone, but being alone with them is perfectly fine. There are always times when I'm sad, angry, and just emotional in general. Sometimes I feel like the world is going to end, or I wish that time would stop just for me. Note to self, it doesn't stop for you or anyone, and the only thing that helps me is him.

It doesn't matter who your person is or what gender they are, when you're with them, you'll feel warm. It's a kind of warmth that feels like a drug. A drug you can't imagine how you would live life without. Like if you take it away, the world might as well burn because now nothing else seems to matter. They feel comfortable like your bed on a school morning, or a cloud couch at midnight. Or when you come home from a long day and nothing sounds better than lying in their arms.

With them your brain turns off completely. You don't have a worry in the world and all you can do is just relax. You feel a different type of safety. A kind of safety that with them, you feel invincible. Nothing in the world could ever touch you because they're here. The stress and anxiety you feel over anything just disappears into thin air. My person is all I ever think about. In every daily activity, no matter what it is, he's going through my brain. Not in a distracting and can't focus way, but a calm and supporting way.

You trust them. Trust with your life and even the lives of your family. They are open, genuine, and are always there for you in the ways they can be. When they open up and give out their thoughts and beliefs, it's an amazing feeling. It'll make you feel like you're more than just another person in their life. They make me want to better myself because they deserve the world and everything it has to offer. I feel like I take better care of myself because of him. I want to be a good person and do great things for myself, because he should have a person that he can rely on too.

I believe everybody should get a chance to experience having a "person." The one you click with right off the bat. For some it takes a while to find them and others not so much. Mine is very special to me and I want to take care of him like he takes care of me. He's a dream you never want to end, and when it does have to end for part-time you will feel a type of homesick I can't explain.

Home is where the heart is!

By Allison Junglas

To me, home is where you're surrounded by where your loved ones everyday, getting to see my parents everyday, my sisters, my dog, and most of all home where the heart is wrapped in loving memories.

My first reason on the meaning of home to me is being able to see people I love everyday, like my dad, mom, sisters, and my dog Ginger. My dad is more than just a parent, he is my safe space, I feel like I can open up to him about anything. He is truly the best dad I can ask for. We also play some games on the tv together. My mom because she makes me laugh. My sister because we watch movies together, and when we would go out to the SED we would eat at McDonald's, we did some karaoke, and go to Dais. It was so much fun. I love her so much I would never trade her for anything in this world. My other sister as well because I love her and I would never trade anything for anything in the world. And lastly, my dog Ginger because she made me laugh all the time when I was at my lowest. She was also there for me during rough times that I was personally going through. She is truly the best dog I could ever ask for. I love her so much.

My second reason on what home means to me is, friends because they are the best for if you are having a rough day. I have a friend who moved, but she and I still remain in contact. I call her on the weekends sometimes and we play Roblox. It's a massive highlight of my day when it happens because we are always making each other laugh at such random things. I see her as family, because she helped get through and was there for me during some dark times in my life that I was personally dealing with.

My third reason on what home means to me is smelling my mother's cooking every night for dinner. She makes loompia which is my favorite along with the lumpia sauce I dip it in. It tastes amazing. But the best part of her cooking is that she makes it with love, and a nice side of fuzzy heartwarming memories. I truly love my mother's cooking.

Home means much more to me than just a place where I eat, sleep, and repeat. Home is a place that I go to when I'm going through something and I need a loved

one to rely on. Family is everything to me. They've helped me more times than I can count. And never fail to make me happy. Home for me is also having friends that I can count on, make me laugh, and make me happy, and that I look forward to playing Roblox with everyday.

What is home to you?

By Isaac Koo

Home is a place where you can feel less stressed and relaxed, where you can believe you're safe, and where you can share experiences. You can share experiences of a day, week, month, or any long period with friends and family. For me, this place is South Korea. I have lived there for my whole life. Not only am I fully Korean, but I have met people mostly from Korea. They help me feel relaxed and safe in Korea.

I feel that most people I have met have been from Korea. Friends, families, or relatives have all mostly been met from Korea. I have been fully Korean by blood and ethnicity. Friends and family comfort and relax me in this place. There are many places that you wouldn't be able to call beautiful but there are also many places that are beautiful in Korea. They mostly show support or discipline for my actions helping me relax against stress.

I believe Korea is a very peaceful place. There are many stresses caused in many views of Korea, but I try to show that Korea could be a place of peace. While South Korea and North Korea have a huge beef against each other, South Korea tries to develop into a peaceful place. There may be many people against each other but I believe that Korea will develop into a peaceful country.

As I have stated before, I have been living in Korea for my whole life. My ethnicity by blood is 100% Korean, but I had United States citizenship during my living life. I feel that being a Korean makes me feel that I can communicate with other Koreans or anyone in Korea more comfortably. People may not feel the comfort I feel but I want to make this place a place where everyone can feel comfort.

In conclusion, I feel that South Korea is a place where I feel "home". Korea is a place where I feel safe, peaceful, relaxed, and comfortable. Many people may not feel the same way but I feel that I can make Korea a place where people or friends can feel comfortable. I have been in Korea my Korea through my whole life which led to me making friends and having family here. Even though I have a United States citizenship, I have a Korean ethnicity. Many Korean people believe that I am not American and are very surprised when I tell them. Lastly, I feel that Korea is a place where I feel most relaxed, and comfortable, and can be called a home for me.

The Place I Call Home

By Leilany Lopez

What is the place that you call home? This is a question that I get asked a lot being a military kid. The place that pops into mind immediately after getting asked this question is the area around Harker Heights, Texas. I've moved to different places only around 4 to 5 times but the place that stuck with me the most is Harker Heights. I've lived in that area the longest and many of my friends that I grew up with live there. Most of my memories and experiences took place in Texas as well.

For me, my home is more than just where I live currently, but it's where I've felt the most happy; where I made the most experiences that shaped who I am today. In Harker Heights, I had four other family-friends that I would play with all the time. We were all around the same age and during get-togethers that would happen very often, we normally spent the entire time goofing around. Harker Heights was also where I spent most of my life. Because of this I know how to navigate around that area pretty well.

I didn't realize how much I had missed

SEE MORE FROM
MS. MOON'S CLASS
ON PAGE 26

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 25

living in Texas until I visited over the summer. I was able to see the old neighborhood that I grew up in and I also got to reunite with my friends. We all laughed and played around together like we did four years ago and it made me feel very content. I was also able to go around and visit places that I hadn't been to in so long. So much had changed, yet it still felt like home. When I visited, I was also able to reunite with my friend from elementary school and we went to hang out together which brought back memories of when we were eight.

It doesn't matter where I am right now, because I will always consider Harker Heights my home. I may not have noticed how much I missed everything until I visited; but I know that all those memories and experiences will stay with me wherever I go.

My Changing Home

By Drake McGarry

As a military child, I rarely stayed in one place for long. Every two to three years, we would pack up and relocate to a new house. This experience taught me that home isn't defined by a specific location or structure; it's something I create wherever I go. I genuinely enjoy discovering new places and experiencing new things. For me, moving was simply another opportunity to explore the world. One of the highlights of my journey was living on an island! Therefore, I don't view moving as a negative experience. Transitioning from old homes to new ones feels natural to me.

The places I have lived throughout my life represent distinct chapters that have shaped who I am. Each relocation marks the beginning of a new Chapter in my life. I was born in Nebraska, where I spent my early years. My journey then took me to Colorado, the setting where I began my education, marking the onset of another significant chapter. Afterward, I moved to Oklahoma and Texas, where I completed elementary school. I started middle school in Okinawa, Japan—my first experience living overseas. There, I formed many lasting friendships. I completed middle school and then began high school at Osan Air Base, South Korea, which is now my current home.

However, all the homes I have lived in have a few things in common. For one thing, I must sleep at the place for it to be considered home. I also eat at home. If I can't eat at the place I stay, I won't consider it to be my home. My home is always my family's home as well. I have always lived with my family and shall keep doing so until I leave for college.

I know that people don't share my home view, and some people prefer to stay in one place, and none of them are wrong. But my experiences have shaped my worldview, and they will continue to do so. To conclude this document on my definition of a home, my home now may not be forever, but wherever I go, I will always end up back at home.

A Place Called Home

By Alexander Smith

To me a home is somewhere I can go anytime. Somewhere I can stay and be safe. Somewhere I can rely on. I know my home won't leave me. One place that's home to me is the beautiful state of Colorado.

I've lived in Colorado for a little over 4 years and have gotten very familiar with the environment. It's the first time I've gone to a school in America and it was a completely different environment compared to Dodea schools. In my opinion, American schools are better than Dodea schools by a landslide. Especially the schools in Colorado and the town I lived in. I have many friends that live here, friends I can trust and go to for help. Most of my family is here from my mom and dad side so I can always have someone to go to. Colorado was the last time I saw my brother after he moved to go to college. I really miss him and hope I see him again soon. I'm going to miss a lot from Colorado. I really hope I'll be able to visit there again.

I grew so familiar with the trees, roads, mountains, even the colors of the grass.

Colorado is a very safe and beautiful state. There are so many opportunities in Colorado and so much to do.

A major reason why I view Colorado as a home is I have a sense of belonging when I'm here, I feel comfortable, and I feel that I truly belong here.

I was born in Colorado and stayed there for the first year of my life which is where I learned how to walk. I also learned how to ski here, and I found my favorite hobby, Fishing. I love fishing. During the summer I would go every single day. I had to haul all my gear on a bike and pedal for 20 minutes to get to my spot but it was always worth it. I also learned how to golf while I was here and thankfully I lived very close to an amazing golf course. At night me and my friend would jump in the creeks with flashlights and find thousands of golf balls.

Colorado is the place where I've had the most enjoyment out of all the places I've lived. It allowed me to feel the most alive and free, with many activities and opportunities. I've created some great friendships and memories here that I will never forget.

I learned so much about who I am while living here. I became very familiar and emotionally attached to this state.

I was so lucky to live in Colorado and I recommend that everyone should visit Colorado Colorado and experience what it has to offer from the diverse culture to the Rocky mountains. This is why Colorado is my home, and no matter where life takes me, it will always be a part of who I am.

A Place Called Home

By Lilliana Strickland

Home can be different for everyone. It can be a person, a house, or a specific place. I think that home is just somewhere that you have support, or someone who gives you support. Home is someone that always welcomes you and helps you when you need it. It's somewhere that you have your best memories. It's somewhere that all your favorite people are, whether it's family or friends.

To me, my home is my favorite people. As a military child I don't know where my home would be because I move around so often. I never really got close to my family in the states because I have always lived so far away from them, so I don't know a specific place that I can call home. If I had to choose somewhere to call my home, it would be in Colorado. This is because I remember going and visiting family there when I was very young. I remember spending so much time there and being very sad when it was time to go home. I remember playing with my siblings all the time and I remember feeling so safe. I could also consider this being my home because I share so many memories with my siblings there. My sisters are 2 of the most important people to me.

I also think that a person can be someone's home. For me, all my favorite people and the important people in my life would be my home. Since most of the friends I've made throughout my life have been

Dodea students, I don't have a specific place that I could call my home. I could consider these people my home because they're always there to look out for me. I know that if I ever need them, they'll be there. If they ever need me, I'll be there for them too. I could also consider them my home because they make me feel comfortable and safe, just like a home should. Sometime's a house isn't always home. Many people grow up with bad memories in a household, even if it's a childhood house, they may not consider that they're home because they were never given the love and support that you need in a home.

In conclusion, a home is somewhere where you have support and unconditional love. It's somewhere you can always go back to with open arms.

OSAN MIDDLE HIGH SCHOOL

9th Grade • English 9 and Pre-AP English 2

Ms. Moon

A Place Called Home

By Davian Villanueva

There are a lot of definitions for the word home. Some could mean a place where they are living. Some could mean something different. Some people might say their home is where they feel the most comfortable. For me my home is wherever my family or friends are.

If home is only a place where you live, that would be hard to decide especially because I am a military child, I have lived in a lot of places. This is why I define home as a place where you can be yourself. A place where you are the most comfortable, whether it's by yourself in your room or a place where you can be with people. I view my family and friends as family because that's where I feel the most comfortable to be around. The people who I grew up with and spend time with that's where my home is. Wherever I can be around family and friends.

The reason for my family and friends being home is very simple. My family is very close together for being as big as it is. We are very family oriented on my mom and dad's sides of the family. For the reason why my friends are also my home is because I view most of my friends as family too. I think this is because I am from Guam. Since Guam is a very small island I view people who I am really close to as a family. My parents think that way too. Like in New Mexico we had these Chamorro neighbors right in front of us, one day my Uncle Kin saw the Guam symbol in my car and came to our houses. That's how us and them started becoming family. We would hang out at each other's houses. It was overall a good time being with each other, and being with my family.

As you can tell I like being around people especially if they are friends or family. Even if we don't do anything together, just having them in the room with me makes me feel comfortable. Whether it's a big or small event being around family and friends is the time I feel the most at home.

My home is wherever my family and friends are. Whether if they are in Guam, Asia, or the US wherever my family is, that is where I feel the most comfortable. Being around people at a big or small event makes me feel good and where I feel at home.

Returning Home

By Nami Woolsey

Home is not just where you live and stay, it is an extension of your life. Home is where you make memories whether it be good or bad. The walls that make what is home to me are the only walls that have seen me grow up over many years.

Some people may call a home the place you go back to every day, but a home is more than that. A home to me is the place that I feel the most relaxed in, the place that fills my mind with memories. The small house located in a little town in Japan is home to me.

Although I don't live there, the moment I step past the front door I feel a sense of nostalgia. Walking onto the floorboards of that house makes me think of the times I walked on that floor coming home from the local elementary school. Around seven in the morning, walking outside with my little yellow hat and meeting up with my group to go to school. I find these memories wandering into my mind every time I pass the cracked pavement of the sidewalks near the house.

Going to the local elementary school on the hot summer days saturates a large part of my childhood memories, and this house only echoes these recollections.

Moving from place to place, going from one state to another, and even to another country, I've lived in more than five

houses. With each house that came grew a connection, but these would eventually be lost as I put the definition of home to a new place. This cycle repeats itself with every destination that comes, but the bond I felt with my grandparents' house only grew thicker. Summer always signified the moving season, packing up all my belongings and wondering if I would miss this location in my next. But I also waited for summer to go to Japan. Going to Japan over the summer was like a bridge, missing the memories I made on the left side and wondering what was beyond the trees on the right. Staying at my grandparent's house provided reassurance to me that I would always have a house to return to and watch seemingly get smaller but in reality, I was only growing up.

After moving to Korea, going to Japan became a mere two-hour flight compared to the eight to twelve-hour flights from many of the previous places I've lived. This short flight convinced my family to go several more times than usual. It was odd to go to my grandparents' house when there were no leaves on the trees, no cicadas ringing, and how I still had assignments to turn in and tests to study for. After staying there multiple times across the school year, going to Mom's hometown became more like a rest stop or a checkpoint. I look forward to staying at my grandparents' house because many of my worries are left behind in the house I live in.

Going home doesn't have to mean going back to the structure you go to every day, coming back from school or the mall. It can mean going back to the place that is filled with memories of your childhood and the place that feels like the warmest hug out of all.

The Ever-Moving Home

By Derek Ybay

Will you live in the same house forever? Maybe you'll move out once or twice to go to college or to leave your parents house. Depending on work or family, you'll move around a couple more times. Not DODEA kids. Due to our parents' jobs, most DODEA kids move around every 2-3 years. That means most DODEA kids will move to around 4-6 schools before graduation. For that reason, I can't name a singular place as my home. Instead, the people I call home will always be my closest friends and family.

You may be confused. "Derek, a home is a place." or "Derek, that's so corny." might be a couple thoughts that went through your mind. Let's first dive into what I think a home even is. For me, a home is where I can be 100% honest and I don't have to worry about public appearance or any sort of manners. A home is where I'll always feel my safest and my best. With that being said, let's continue with my other points.

As I mentioned before, DODEA kids move around a lot, including me. By the time this essay is written, I have moved six times, and in a month, I'll move for the seventh time. Although half of these PCSs have been to Korea, I've gone to different schools each time. Since I've lived in so many homes, I think that my houses have been too inconsistent to call my home.

Following that thought, although my home hasn't been consistent what has been has been my friends. No matter where I move I'll always be able to talk to them. Whether I'm in Korea or Germany, I'll always be able to text my friends. I put my faith and my trust into my friends, so with them I feel safe and I can be honest. That brings me back to what I said earlier, which also helps explain why my friends are what I call my home.

I think a house and a home are 2 different things. A house is just where I live, while a home is where I feel like I can rest without a worry in the world. Maybe this might be corny, but my friends are my true home.

Home to Me

By Maya Brown

To be honest, sometimes it doesn't feel like I have a home. As a military child, I have to move around a lot. I have had to leave many places where I have felt at home, but home doesn't have to be a singular place. For me, it's the people, like my family, friends, and community that make a home.

A home is a place where you can always come back to, where you feel like yourself, and where you feel happy. This "home" I'm talking about is my family and friends. Since I have moved around a lot, I have been able to meet new people and experience new things. However, I don't feel like I ever have had a singular home because I have had many! But the people around me are my home. My family and friends have always been at my side. They have been there to experience those new things with me. And those experiences make me, well, me!

There are certain places where I don't feel like I belong, or I don't feel like I'm myself, like when I feel super stressed, or nervous. There are places or things that make me not feel that way, like my hobbies. My hobbies make me who I am and they make me happy, like a home does! An example of this is music. Since I was very young, I have always remembered hearing music all around me. Music, like my family, brings me joy. I know I can always express myself when I play, too. This is important to me because there aren't a lot of places in my life I could express myself. Like at school I don't want to embarrass myself, or do something wrong. But when I'm home, with my family who I feel comfortable with, I know I can be myself without being judged. And that's how music makes me feel. Whenever I'm playing the piano, singing, or maybe just listening to music, I feel at peace, or calm. Music is a really big part of who I am, much like how my family is a big part of me. This is what a home is: it is a place of happiness where you can be yourself in places you can't.

Having my "home" allows me to have my own safe harbour. So having your own home established can be a foundation to help you do hard things, like going out in the world and facing challenges. Having this can help me to know I always have something to come back to that can help me get back up again and keep moving forward. This is obviously different for everybody. For some, it's a physical structure. For me, a home is both emotional and physical.

My home is where my loved ones are, and where I feel like myself. Without it, I don't know where my home would be.

My place of Memories

By Daniel Chun

Home is more than just a place, it's a big part of my life. My loud apartment is in a lively neighborhood. The living room is where I connect with friends for game nights and movies, filled with unique decor and posters in my room.

My bedroom is a peaceful getaway, perfect for gaming and relaxing. The small balcony is my outdoor escape with potted plants that bring a touch of nature. Whether I'm enjoying playing on my phone or playing with my siblings, it's a great spot to recharge.

This apartment is full of love and memories, a place that keeps me grounded. No matter where life takes me, it will always be a special place in my heart. The fresh air when I open the balcony and the beautiful view outside makes me happy. If the weather is nice I go out for a walk and relax on the benches near the playground.

When the sun starts to set my family gathers at the table where we eat dinner and have conversations. After a while I go to my room and relax or play with my toys in the room, and after a few minutes I get ready for bed and brush my teeth and go to sleep. This happens again every day at my peaceful apartment.

Where I Call Home

By Grace Creel

The place I call home, Memphis, Tennessee, the place that practically formed me into who and what I am today. A place where I

→ was born, molded, and physically grown. I wouldn't say I've been all over, but I've been almost all around Memphis. It's also home because of all the people there that I know, friends and family.

Although the place I call home is known for its terrible things, mostly crime related things, it still doesn't make it not home for me, it will forever be home to me. I had to leave the place I call home behind, it was hard, considering that I was leaving a lot of good people behind, like my family, my friends, and my loved one. I was also leaving a lot of memories behind. The place I call home, it was hard to sometimes call it home, but it was, for those reasons. It was what kept me going in Memphis.

Leaving home was hard, but moving here to Korea was harder. I wasn't used to this kind of stuff, mainly the lifestyle of things here, I had never moved overseas before. It was scary, all I wanted to do was go back home and stay there. Eventually though, I learned the ways of living like this, and got used to it. It was hard to move away, it really was, I do miss all those people from home. But I know that I will never lose them, I still have them by my side in this journey. I still talk to these people actually.

Besides the fact of leaving family and friends behind, I've lost a lot too. It was all for good reason though. I learned that they weren't good people, so I guess I can say it was good to leave those people behind back home. Overall, leaving home was hard, I cried almost every night once I left, all I wanted was to go back, I thought I could never come to like the place I live at now. But, it has grown on me, although I miss home, and still want to go back, I like it here too.

I call Memphis my home, but I can also call this place, Korea, home too. But forever, for me, will Memphis, Tennessee be my home, in my heart, mind, and flow. This is why I call it home, because of everything I've been through there. This is where I call home, Memphis, Tennessee.

The Home of a Military Child

By Crew Flatau

As a military child, home is a complex idea, home means more than just a physical structure where you live. Home means comfort, belonging, and memories that fill the towns in which we once lived. It's where I used to live, it's where places I would go hang out with friends and family exist. Home means to me the warmth of restaurant meals, time with friends, and daily routines. However, because I am a military child I have more than just one physical home. So I will explain why several places can be considered my home.

The first place I consider home is my birthplace Pensacola, Florida. It's where I grew up as an individual. It's where I used to climb up trees with my friends, where the beach resides which we would flee to during long hot summer days. It's where simple places like Publix exist where I would beg to go nearly every day just to get a free cookie. Pensacola is where some of the best seafood restaurants exist and we would get to go and just sit and enjoy our meal at the beach. It's where our nice small house in the corner of The Stables is. The same house where I would run around in the backyard or jump on the trampoline. This is why I consider Pensacola, Florida as a home to me.

The second place I consider home is the small town of Glenelg, Maryland. This is where I would go sledding and play football during heavy snow days. Where I would play sports all season long with my best friend. Glenelg is where we would go to our campfire and make smores while looking at the stars. Where I would run down the stairs to the basement to watch football games with my dad nearly every weekend. It's where I would beg to be able to go to my friend's house every single weekend. Glenelg is home as it is where me and my friends would run throughout our backyard playing football, playing with Nerf guns, playing tag, etc. This is why I consider Glenelg, Maryland as a home to me.

The last place I consider home is Summerlin, Nevada. Summerlin is where I first got a dog that I would take on many walks throughout the town. Where I would go swimming in our pool nearly every day to escape the heat. It's where I would wake up early with my dad to go on walks throughout Red Rock Park. Summerlin is where I

would run around our neighborhood playing football and other games in the streets with my friends. Where I would stay up late hanging out with my friends on weekends. Summerlin is where me and my friends would walk to our local park. It's where I would go in front of our garage and sell shaved ice during hot summer days. Where I got to go to many football games and the NFL draft with my family and friends. It's where I got to skip school to go to the Pro Bowl and got my jersey signed by Russell Wilson. This is why I consider Summerlin, Nevada as a home to me.

Altogether, home is a much more complex idea for a military child. As many places can be considered home as we have to move very often. That's why home to me is more than just a building where I live, it's areas that I lived in where I have many memories with friends and family and a place where I'm always welcome. This is why home is a place full of memories with friends and family who constantly surround me.

Home to Me and the Reason I Became Who I Am

By Jayce Godwin

Home to me is somewhere I feel safe, where my family and supporters are, where I change as a person, and also where I create great memories. I want home to be something everything I love is. Home doesn't have to be in one place. You also don't want your home to be something you hate. It also shouldn't be something you don't tell people about since it is how you grew up and became the person you did. Home should be something you are proud to talk to other people about. No one should have to hide where they came from. Home can be anywhere.

A reason I call this my home is because I want to feel safe where I am. I believe the environment around someone affects who they become as a person. An environment can be the people around you or the place around you. If I am in a "bad environment," then I don't know what kind of person I would become. I wouldn't want to tell people about how bad my home was. You want a "safe environment," so you can grow up to be the best person you can be.

Another reason why I call this my home is because home is somewhere my family and supporters are. Without "them," I would not be the person I am. Your family also influences how you grow up. My family inspires me to be the best I can be. You should be happy when talking about your family and supporters.

The last reason why I call this my home is because home is where you make all of your memories. Those memories are how you remember your home and what you take with you when you are going to leave home. Without those memories you will forget home and how you become the person you are. Those memories will also make you a happier person when thinking about happier times. These memories could be spending time with family or having fun with friends.

All these reasons are why this is home to me. A place where I feel safe, where my family and supporters are, where I change as a person, and also where I create great memories. No one should have to hide where they came from. People should be proud of where they came from because your home influenced the person you are today. Home doesn't have to be a place, but somewhere or something you can say influenced the person you are today.

What is Called Home?

By Noah Hong

To me what is called home is my family and cousins. My family and cousins are home to me because when I am not feeling well or sad, my family and cousins are willing to help and check up on me to see if I am doing well.

Additionally, my family and cousins are home to me because they are willing to help entertain me by hanging out with me, with all of us playing games or going out to other places. My family and cousins are home to me because they are very supportive and kind towards me, wishing to spend time with me to make me happy. My family and cousins are home to me because they are always grateful whenever I visit them or when they visit me, making me feel grateful to have nice cousins.

My family and cousins are home to me because they welcome us into their house when we go visit them, even willing to feed us and let us stay at their house. Furthermore, "my family and cousins are home to me because they go out of their way to give me money every time we see each other during "meet-ups" and holidays. Family and cousins are home to me because they help encourage me to open and just be myself.

Relative's and family are home to me because they are willing to travel and spend money just to visit us. Another reason why my family and cousins are home to me is because they spend money to buy me and my family gifts on holidays and birthdays. My family members and relatives are home to me because they are willing to forgive me personally if I accidentally make a mistake or break something. Lastly, "my family and cousins are home to me because they donate clothing, toys, and games to myself, making me happy."

Taking a Part of Home With Me

By Katie Lee

Home isn't a place but where we get our experience. It is what makes us who we are today, and it is where we feel safe and comforted. Home is where we learn how we should display ourselves among the crowd. I've lived in Korea and America for around the same time. America is where I feel most comfortable and the memories of it are what I take with me. Korea is my culture and nationality that I would like to grow passionate about as I grow up.

Home is a feeling of familiarity, it can be anything such as family, friends, culture, or a physical house. Home for me is where I reminisce about most, where I think of my fondest memories who formed me into how I am now. America is the base of when I think of home and I take a little part of home with me in my memories. When I remember riding down the streets of my neighborhood, reconnecting with family who lived in America, and how I met some of my closest friends. Those are all experiences that I like to bring with me and think of it as home.

People's actions reflect on their homes, it is where they learn how to act. I've lived in Korea for the earlier years of my life. I was born in Virginia. I still went to an American school, even after moving away from Virginia but I still embraced Korean traditions during it. I was about 9 years old when I moved to America. It was much different than Korea, of course, but I didn't let that take away my heritage from me. I still participated in Korean traditions and shared them with those who were curious. Korea is where I learned how to behave socially, and Korea's culture is the piece of home I still hold onto.

There are many things you can take for it to be home, it doesn't always have to be a physical object, but a thought. Every time you feel a sense of familiarity, that's the feeling of home you experience. Everyone has a different form of home, but there is always something they can bring with them, even if they don't realize it. Taking a part of home is something we all do.

My Home

By Matthew Lynch

When I think of home I remember where I lived in California. My family also feels the same way as I do and talk about how they missed their home. Even though I live somewhere else that house still feels like my home and that is the only place I had many memories.

The reason this place feels like home to me is because I lived in that house for over ten years. I grew up there with my family. I was there often but whenever I was gone and came back, it still felt like a comfortable place to come back to because I was familiar and where I knew many people.

Another reason is the memories I have. Since I lived with family and many friends I had many great moments and memories. A lot of the things I learned were from that place and also mistakes that I learned from.

The third reason is because of family and friends. I lived in a small town so a lot of time was spent with friends that I grew up with and trusted. There was also a family nearby to talk to and to get help from.

Home is a place where you have the most memories and feel comfortable in. Growing up there made me who I am today and I still remember the time I lived there. Even though I do not live at "home," I will always remember it and understand that it made me who I am.

A Place Called Home

By Ezra Matagolai

Some people say their home is the place where they live. "The house on the corner of 22nd street with the bright red paint and big oak tree", but to me it can't be as simple as the building I live in. Home isn't something physical, instead it's more like shared feelings and memories you make as you grow up. Home is less of the warm bed you sleep in or the clean bathroom you shower in, it's much more. It's not just a house built from bricks and wood, but it's a sense of comfort and security that you share with those around you, that truly create a foundation for something you can call "home"

I believe that "home" is a feeling, something that makes you feel comfortable, like where you're meant to be. It's knowing that, no matter what, you'll always have a loving family, or friends you can both laugh and cry with. It's all these moments, both good and bad, that make a person feel right at home. Home is about familiarity and comfort. Having the knowledge that no matter where you are, at any time of the day, you'll still have a place to call home. It lies within the connections you have with people and the memories of past those places.

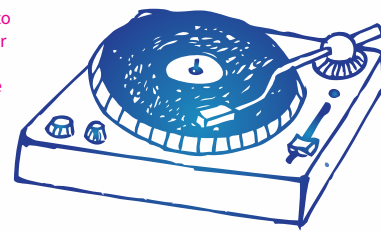
A house might be where you live but it doesn't make it your home. Home is the warm feeling of familiarity, security, and the genuine happiness you receive when you're with people or surrounded by the memories of the people you love. It can definitely exist in a physical place, somewhere where you can come back to at the end of the day. But it's the history and connections that gives that place the true feeling of home. This is exactly why I believe that home is less of place, it's more of a feeling

A Place Called Home

By Izzy McKibban

"Home" is a hard word to define being a military brat. Military children move around from place to place every one to two years. I've had eight different houses that protect me from the outside weather. Eight different neighborhoods to live and play in and eight different sets of neighbors with different attitudes. I've been back and forth around the world many times. There is only one place I return to when there is an emergency. The place where I go back to visit family. This is also the place I travel to most. The state of California is where my parents grew up, and now I call it "home."

I've never lived in California before. All of my family members live in San Francisco and southern California. My parents grew up in southern California, just a block away from each other. My sister and I were born just one state over in Las Vegas, Nevada. On birthdays, holidays, and family gatherings, we would always go to California. We would either travel by car or plane at any chance we get to go to California. Visiting my family was the best part of the trip. I love seeing the smiles pop up on their faces when I get to see them again. Telling my grandparents about my accomplishments in school or extracurricular activities. Seeing cousins who never left the country before and telling them all about our adventures in Asia and Europe. These



memories will live with me forever.

Every time we go to California, we also go to our favorite places. Mexican restaurants, my grandparents' friend's house, and my grandparent's house are our favorite dinner spots. Downtown Delmar, Irvine Plaza, and the Fashion Island in Newport Beach are our favorite places to shop. The beach, different colleges, and my parent's old houses are my favorite sites to visit. I love seeing where my parents used to live and hearing about how they grew up. Of course, they grew up very different from me and my sister. I love going to stores where I am able to buy my favorite things. These places always bring back many fun memories.

The weather in California is the same thing every day of the year. It's always sunny and beautiful outside, which already makes me feel good. I always go down to the beach at least 10 times during my stay. The hot sand gets between my toes and all over my things at the beach. The cold Pacific water always hits my legs as the waves crash. The sun shining down on me somehow leads to a sunburn, even with sunscreen on. Being jealous of the surfers surfing while I boogie board. It's the best feeling in the world. I let go of my problems and focus on myself when I go to California. My problems are hundreds of miles away. And can be dealt with once I return to the base I'm living at.

In my whole life, I've lived in 8 different places around the world, outside of the United States overseas. I've never lived in California, only visited the state often. But if I add up all the days, weeks, and months, it would be way more than two years. Two years is the longest time I've ever lived in one place due to my Dad's job. Although my family had eight homes and moved in fourteen years, the state of California will always be "home" to me.

My Home

By Duante Price

My home to me is somewhere I can go and see friends and family and be myself around them. That is why my home is Arizona; this is where most of my family and friends are. I haven't seen most of my family in about 3 and a half years and I do miss them and the Circle K I used to be able to walk to and get some chips or a.

A reason why Arizona is home to me is that that is where my sister, grandma, brother, and my 3 nephews are I haven't seen them since the summer of last year but I'll be able to see one of my nephews soon I haven't been able to see my grandma in a long time and she's my favorite but I haven't been able to see them in a solid 9 months.

The reason I said Arizona is home is because in most of my time being alive I have spent most of my time in Arizona in total I think I lived there for 7 years. And it was some of my best memories except for COVID-19. But other than that it was good like my birthday, Christmas, Thanksgiving, and The 4th Of July.

I also loved Arizona because that is where I met some of my first friends. Some of them are still there and some aren't, but most of them still do because their parents aren't in the Air Force or Military. I haven't seen them in a while but if I do go to visit I would most definitely go to visit them.

And this is why I say Arizona is my home. This is where most of my memories are where I took my first steps and most importantly where my family is.

Check out more
military children stories at
militarychild.stripes.com

More Than Just a Place

By Alicia Chun

When people think of home, they usually imagine a house, a place with walls, a roof and a cozy bed. But to me, home isn't just a physical space, it's the feeling of being safe, comfortable and understood. It is where I can be myself without worrying about being judged. Sometimes, that's my actual house, but other times, it's the people I'm with.

My family is a big part of what makes a place feel like home. No matter how stressful my day is, I know I can come home and have my family there to support me. Even when we argue, I know that they'll always be there for me. The same goes for my closest friends, with them, I don't have to pretend to be someone I'm not. We joke around, talk about random things, and help each other through tough times. That feeling of connection is what makes them my home, even if we're just hanging out at school or texting late at night.

At the end of the day, home isn't just about where you are, it's about who you're with. A house can feel empty without the right people, but even the most ordinary places can feel like home when you're surrounded by those who truly care about you and love you for who you are.

The Court of Memories

By Artleandro P. Clemons

Basketball is like my home. When I play, everything else disappears. It's just me, the ball, and the game.

I fell in love with basketball in my hometown, Tagum City (in the Philippines). My friends and I spent hours playing, doing silly things, and having real fun without phones. We met up after school, excited to play on the nearest court.

We played until it got dark, laughing and enjoying ourselves. We didn't care about winning or losing; it was all about being together and having fun.

Basketball helped me make friends in the Philippines. My friends and I taught each other new skills, supported each other, and spent a lot of time together. They saw me experience my heartbreaks, and I saw theirs. We shared our sad times and cheered each other up.

My friends and I celebrated our victories and comforted each other in our losses. Those moments made us stronger and closer. The court was where we learned life lessons together.

These moments in Tagum City taught me the true meaning of friendship. Even now, when I play basketball, I remember those days. It reminds me of simpler times and what really matters.

Basketball is my home because it connects me to those memories and the people I shared the memories with. It's a constant in a changing world, reminding me of my roots and the joy of the game.

By Alicia Ford

Home means many different things to me. Home to me are the people around me, the places I have been to, and things I love to do like play the saxophone. When I have my home I can see the vision I have with my future.

The people in my life are one of the three most important things that make up my home. My mom, my two sisters, and my brother are the main part of my home along with my God family and my friends. These people are home to me because they have helped me through life, especially this year and last. My mom helped me when I was upset and when I felt like I'm at my lowest. These past two years were the worst years of my life especially with my grandma passing away and I couldn't go see her because I was still in Korea at the time. Then when I came back home in the summer my Dad was very distant towards me and my sisters but he has been like this for a while but my mom tried making my summer a great summer and she helps me when I need to talk to someone and she has also made my stay in Korea very fun and I feel more comfortable being here. My brother is a part of my home because even though we do have problems with each other sometimes we still like to have fun and talk. He can tell when I am upset and when I am not feeling like myself. He likes to check on me when I have been in my room too long. He is an amazing person and so kind to others but has a big attitude sometimes, but I still love him. I love my god family because even though we don't see each other every

Words from the Teacher

For many military children and children of parents who work in highly mobile positions, the word "home" can have a loaded meaning and stir intense feelings. These children often follow their parents on various assignments around the globe, often always being "the new kid" in a new place. Yet, our children are incredibly resilient and unique. They manage to build a sense of home in unfamiliar places and create a sense of what is normal around them. Despite their circumstances that require moving every few years, my students are normal teenagers who are funny, perceptive, intelligent, while still imperfect just like other teenagers one would find in the continental U.S. or elsewhere in the world. As a former third culture kid who also moved to different nations as an adolescent, I can empathize with my students' different feelings and reactions to the word "home" and what it means. I asked my students at Osan Middle High School to write a few words about what "home" was to them. Here are the responses I received from students in my English 11 class.

- Ms. Moon

your meals, feel loved and secure. But you see, home to me is also where I'm defined, my culture, my ethnicity, where I'm from, what makes me a person. You know what my home is now? That's right, my home is my precious land in Puerto Rico. An island in the Caribbean Sea, having Cuba and the Dominican Republic as neighbors.

Puerto Rico or known as Borinquen, is a small island, yes but it can get lively and rowdy. This land can have bustling towns and busy cities! From the cobbled grey stoned streets to the black tar streets, as the people move from point A to point B. The blue skies could be filled with clouds or a flock of birds every now and then. The clear beaches shine in all their glory as the sunlight reflects the waters on the sand that's underwater. The beautiful rainforests bloom with a vibrant green as they color the landscapes of this land. The caverns can be filled with wildlife.

Once the sun rises in my precious land, you hear the calls of the roosters in these urban neighborhoods as they wake up the whole street. Waking you up to a whole new day and starting as it does its duty. As the streets light up and begin to get busy with cars and people trying to go on about their daily lives, so do the beaches. But this liveliness can last until dawn. Yet in some other parts when the moon begins to shine upon the dark, the city lights glimmer and shine as artificial stars.

You see how lovely it is in Borinquen, isn't it? It is such a wonderful place just like any other that's important to oneself. Many people have their special and treasured home. But when the noise dies down and the city lights provide this strange, serene comfort as it grows quiet. As the waves of the beaches sway in a slow gentle rhythm with the wind, the nocturnal animals wake singing lullabies to the people just like our little amphibian friend here, El Coqui. Indicating that the land has gone to rest awaiting a new day to get busy yet again.

What is Home?

By Carter Frederick

Home is the place I sleep comfortably and safely,
Home is the place I rest,
Home is the place I want to stay,
Home is the place I have family near,
Home is not tied to one place, but many,
Yet none as well.
Home is more than a place,
Home is a feeling,
Home is diverse, yet the same.
Home is physical, while also naught,
Home is detailed, while bare,
Home is empty, yet full.
Home is different among peers,
While to you it's not.
Your home may seem different to another,
But to you it's more.
Home is a special thing,
Which others may not see or think.
We all know what it is,
While we also know naught.
It holds a special place.
If asked what it is you know.
Home is Home.

Borinquen My Precious Land and Home

By Yauris Garcia Colon

It is true that home doesn't have to be materialistic, but it can be a feeling. Home is where you feel safe, enjoy

CELEBRATING MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

OSAN MIDDLE HIGH SCHOOL

11th Grade • English 11

Ms. Moon

I used to think that your home is just a house. A place to live even. After moving so much, I thought that I had no home. That I was just tumbleweed in the desert. Moving here to Korea however, I realized that it was going to be the last time I moved in my childhood. I wanted to enjoy Korea as much as I could because, who in the US can say they lived in Korea. The only issue I had when I first moved was "What is my home?"

My hometown in Texas is very small. Stereotypical small, countryside town. Everyone knows each other and has plenty of backroads to joyride a quad bike all day. I was born there, my parents were born there, and most of my family have lived there for most (if not all) their lives. I used to think that this town was my home. It was the only place that was always there. It was the only place we were able to go and visit often. However, moving here to Korea made it to where we cannot easily visit there anymore. Then I thought. What was a place that never left my side?

I always wondered until one day I thought outside the box. "The place that never leaves my side is the place that is near my side." As a military child, I moved a lot more than most people. The word "Home" to people means a place where they are welcomed. A place where they live. Maybe even where they work. The only issue is that you can't have multiple homes. It's like saying you can't have multiple things you love. You can love as many things as you want, but at the end of the day you still hold one above the others. That is why my home isn't a house or a town. It is the place around me, where I am, and myself. "Home is where thou art."

By Jared Hightower

place I call home is where I really call home is a place where I can really bond with my family and somewhere I can see myself and them grow. I would say I never got a chance to call a place home since I haven't gotten the chance to live somewhere for more than 4-5 years even though that is a third of my life time. I will say the closest thing to home for me was when I lived in Misawa, Japan. The overall experience I had there was probably the most awakening I've had in life overall. When I mean waking, I mean maturing and realizing my high school years had just started and I didn't have much time left as a kid. It really took me until the start of my junior year to realize I needed to wake up.

Memories I get to make in an area where I can live for a while is another way of me calling home. Those are ones I don't ever forget, and I get to keep with me until the day I leave the feet of this earth. Being a military child it is hard to call a place home knowing you can't really say you grew up somewhere. It's like saying you're going to have that one friend for the rest of your life knowing that they come and go. It sucks that you really have that one friend that has been there since day one and you lose them once you or they move, and it just tears you apart. Another place I could call home was when I was stationed in Fort Detrick Maryland. I would like to call this place home because I really spent most of my time growing up there, only because it was a short move from Missouri where I was before, and I was close to my recently passing Grandpa. This topic gets emotional for me, but I would

like to bring it up. My grandpa has been there since Day 1 for me. I was with him almost every week and we just grew a bond undetachable. He really was one of the main people who showed me hard work and dedication and to what is needed, what is done and what to do right in life. This recent summer we went back to Arkansas to finish building our house and we were able to visit him, as hard as it was to see him in the position where he can barely move. It was also the first time we had lived in Maryland. The day before we were flying out, we all had just woken up and got a call from my aunt saying he wasn't breathing.

That was probably the hardest day I have ever had to go through not just for me but my dad. Having to see him be that emotional was tough on all of us and the sad part is my brother Jacek doesn't even know. We finished off our last day there building up the house and securing it and on back to Korea to the Philippines we go. A quote I have gone by since that very day is "Take advantage of the time that people give you without taking advantage of the people giving you time." To conclude this, a place I call home is where memories that are never forgotten are made.

By Madelyn K

SEE MORE FROM MS. MOON'S CLASS ON PAGE 30



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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 28

The Heart of Home
By Belldandy Lamb

Home is often defined as a physical space, a permanent place where a person feels a sense of belonging. It is typically viewed as a location filled with cherished memories and personal significance. However, this is a concept foreign to me. Growing up in a constantly moving family, I struggled to grasp what home truly meant. My life was a whirlwind of transitions, and the idea of a stable, memorable environment seemed like an unattainable dream.

As a child, I felt angry and frustrated. I longed for that feeling of home that everyone around me seemed to have. I wanted a space that was uniquely mine, filled with familiar sights, sounds, and smells. I envisioned a cozy room decorated with personal touches, a sanctuary where I could belong. Yet, with every move, I found myself carrying nothing but a backpack, always ready to leave. How could I hope to have a home when my life's only constant is changed?

However, the more I grew, the more I realized how wrong my view was. Yes, home can be physical, but it is also emotional. It is a feeling beyond walls and roofs. A home is built on relationships and experiences shared with loved ones, regardless of where life takes you. A home is woven into interactions with family and friends. The laughter shared over meals, the late-night conversations, and the breakdowns filled with support. Each new location is an opportunity to create memories and even deeper bonds. These are the threads that connect me to my belief of home and led me to realize I could build a home in my heart.

My family is my true home, and I felt that sense of belonging since day one; I only needed to recognize it. The support, love, and comfort we have are what makes any place feel special. Whether we are in an apartment in one city or a house in another, home lives within us, not the walls that surround us. It is in memory. I remember my father's laughter as he helped me learn

to ride my bike, his hands steadying me as I wobbled, the world blurring around me. "You can do it," he encouraged and as I found my balance, exhilaration filled my heart—a floor sturdy and firm, woven from the threads of support. I remember sitting cross-legged in the living room, my mother's voice soft and stern as she read each vocabulary word to me. When I stumbled over letters, her patient corrections guided me. When I won second place in the spelling bee, her smiling face ignited in me a love for learning—a roof woven from the threads of love. I remember late-night giggles, whispering secrets under the covers, and sharing dreams of the future. My sister, my partner-in-crime, and my fiercest bully. She painted my world with laughter and mischief—a wall woven from the threads of comfort.

Home is a concept that goes beyond physical. Home belongs to you. While I may not have had a traditional home filled with years of memories in one location, I embrace the idea that home is where the heart is. Ultimately, it is not the place that defines my home. It is the scent of my mother's cooking through the air, the sound of my father's encouraging words, and the warmth of my sister's laugh. Those pieces of life, woven together, become my sanctuary. My home is not a physical space; it is an emotion, a poem written in the ink of love. No matter where life takes me, I carry my home within me, alive and beating.

Finding Home in People, Not Places
By Evallie Strickland

Home, for me, is not a specific place. As a military child, I am constantly moving, leaving behind the places I've grown accustomed to just as they start to feel familiar. Every time I begin to settle in, I must start over again. Over the years, I've realized that home isn't a house, a city, or even a country, it's the sense of comfort and familiarity I find in the people around me.

My sisters and the friends I make along the way are what truly feel like home. My sisters have been there since day one, providing a constant source of stability, and

my friends, both old and new, create a sense of belonging even if we haven't known each other for long. Through shared experiences, we form bonds that make each new place feel a little less unfamiliar. That is what home means to me: not a location, but the people who make me feel safe and understood.

A Place Called Home
By Zachary C. Taylor

My home is in the deep south of the U.S.A. The second largest state in the nation, a fact that I boasted with pride when I was younger for some reason. A lot of my time was spent at my grandparents' houses when we lived there. I barely remember the house or apartment my parents were renting, probably because I had to stay with Nayna and Boppy or Mimi and Papa while mom and dad were at work. Nayna is my mom's mom, but Boppy isn't related to me by blood, but he's my grandpa, nonetheless. Nayna had remarried after my blood grandfather died of cancer, and I never got to meet him. Mimi and Papa are my dad's mom and dad, respectively.

My cousin lives with Mimi and Papa. Both of his parents and a brother were dead by the time he was 15 and he had nowhere else to go, so he's been there for a few years now. He struggled in school a bit, but now he's currently in college. He's a role model for me, he showed me that no matter how low your life is right now, you can always bounce back. Granted, I don't know a lot about his relationship with his parents. I remember someone saying that he had a good relationship with his dad and brother, but I don't know about his mother. That's secondary information, though, I never really heard about them from my cousin himself. Fair enough.

My grandparents have had the same houses as I can remember. Mimi and Papa have a log house in a forested area. The neighborhood is a little bit on the sketchy side – There were a group of teens who'd shoot guns in the backyard of the house in front of my grandparent's place and drive off when the police came. Nayna and Boppy's house, according to my Mom, was also a bad

place. I hadn't heard of anything happening there, and I'd go out with my friends occasionally and we never saw anything bad.

I've lived in a lot of places. The dry heat of Sonoran Arizona, eccentric California, corporate South Korea, but none has my heart as much as Texas, as awfully flawed as it is.

The Place that Feels Like Home
By Noe Vasquez

My home is more than just a place; it's where I feel safe and surrounded by the people I love. It's where my Mom, Dad, and my brothers live, and where we create fun and loving memories every day. From opening gifts on Christmas or eating Thanksgiving dinner with them or even simple things, such as watching a movie.

My home is filled with loving and caring people and fun heartfelt traditions that make it special every day. Even when I'm having a bad day, I know I have home to look forward to.

Okinawa: The home in my heart
By Maya Williams

Out of all the places I've lived, I would choose Okinawa, Japan, as my home. It's such an amazing place with beautiful beaches, a lot of culture, and a friendly community. The mix of nice scenery and good food makes it stand out to me. Okinawa has left a huge mark on my life, and I truly love everything it has to offer.

Okinawa feels like home to me because it's where I created most of my core and life-changing memories. The time I had there shaped who I am today, and the connections I made with people and the culture have left a lasting impact on my life. Each moment spent in Okinawa holds a special place in my heart.

It's the longest place I've ever lived in. This connection to the island has given me a sense of belonging and familiarity. The memories I've created there and the experiences I've had have all contributed to my deep appreciation for Okinawa, making it feel like a true home.

Okinawa is a laid-back island, and I feel like it really fits my goal with the flow

personality. The relaxed vibe of the island allows me to embrace life without too much stress, and I love how the pace of life here encourages a more easy going lifestyle. This resonates with me and makes it feel like the perfect place to call home.

In conclusion, Okinawa holds a special place in my heart as my home due to the countless memories I created there, the significant amount of time I spent living on the island, and the sense of belonging it provides me with. These reasons come together to form a connection that makes Okinawa a part of who I am.

By Nysean Shorter

Home, what is home, is it something of origin, or something that makes you feel warm or safe? Is it a person or an object that holds great value to oneself? Is it a feeling of being comforted by warm thoughts or things that bring joy? Home is a concept, but also a reality that can change with a single flip of a coin. Home is so broad, and yet, not everybody knows what the word home truly means.

Home to me is something that has different meanings depending on how one sees it. First off, home isn't a place for me because moving around at an early stage in my life was kind of strange. I have lived in California, Virginia, Ohio, Tennessee, and most recently Washington. Well, now I am in South Korea. That's just how life is as I know. So, what home means to me is the people and they don't have to be blood-related to them to make a place feel like home.

Home is that loving feeling of people you spend your time with or the relationships that are built because of the feeling of comfort. Another place where I feel like its home is due to the different styles of art. Art is a place where you can hide away or express your feelings without having to say anything. One of many art forms that feels like home is music. Music calms my body and has the feeling of a nice, cooked meal that is cooked by my grandmother. It gives you the feeling of sitting on your couch while eating cereal and watching cartoons on the TV.



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Stripes Sports Trivia

Considered by many to be one of the greatest to ever play, which soccer player won his first World Cup in 2022?

Answer
Lionel Messi



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DID YOU KNOW?

South Korea's constitution guarantees freedom of religion, so public displays of worship and religious activity are common not just in churches or temples, but even in subway stations or on the street. While most Koreans don't affiliate with any religion, 20% are Protestant Christians, 17% are Buddhist, and 6% are Catholic. Christianity, though not traditional, is considered the country's primary religion with numerous Protestant churches scattered across the country. Historically, Buddhism was the national religion for over a thousand years, followed by Confucianism during the Joseon Dynasty. Today, Buddhism, Confucianism, and Shamanism still shape Korean culture.



Hangul of the week

종교
Jong-gyo (Religion)

Language Lesson

Do you have a religion?

Jong-gyo-ga itnayo?
(종교가 있나요?)

Crossword

by Margie E. Burke

ACROSS

1 Kind of blocker

5 Like the Sahara

9 Rolex rival

14 Hollywood's Ken or Lena

15 Playing with a full deck

16 Plant root

17 Draws a bead on

18 Wavering

20 Cheap ship accommodations

22 Youth's inn

23 Inventor Nikola

24 Gas guzzler

26 Enduring

28 Large vases

32 Longtime CBS News host Charles

34 Of the stars

36 Holiday guests, often

37 Petal-plucker's word

39 Nada

40 Langley group

41 Ordering option

44 Mouth-watering

46 Texter's "seize the day"

47 Key element (var.)

49 "Streetcar" cry

51 Laundry pairs

54 "Dust in the Wind" group

57 Jolie of film

59 Juice drink brand

61 Guinness and others

62 Hit heavily

63 Culture medium

64 Herbal brews

65 Studly guys

66 Nevada city

67 Whirlpool-like current

2 Cream of the crop

3 Striking clock, e.g.

4 San _____, California

5 Qatar's continent

6 Yogi's nemesis

7 Hits the tab key, say

8 Wallace of "E.T."

9 Hunter of myth

10 Spa staffer

11 Make revisions to

12 _____ and take

13 Figure skating jump

19 Immature

21 Quimby of kid-lit

25 Profit

27 Like argon or radon

29 Made peace

30 Hair removal brand

31 Kill, as a dragon

32 Rubber-stamp

33 Farm building

35 Run out

38 IM sign-off

42 Russian horseman

43 Swell

45 Break, as a rule

48 Biblical promised land

50 Army vehicles

52 Work with dough

53 Fresh

54 Former N.Y.C. mayor

55 Civil rights org.

56 Sign-making substance

58 Greek sandwich

60 Golfer's goal

Answers to Previous Crossword:

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

SUDOKU

Difficulty: Easy

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

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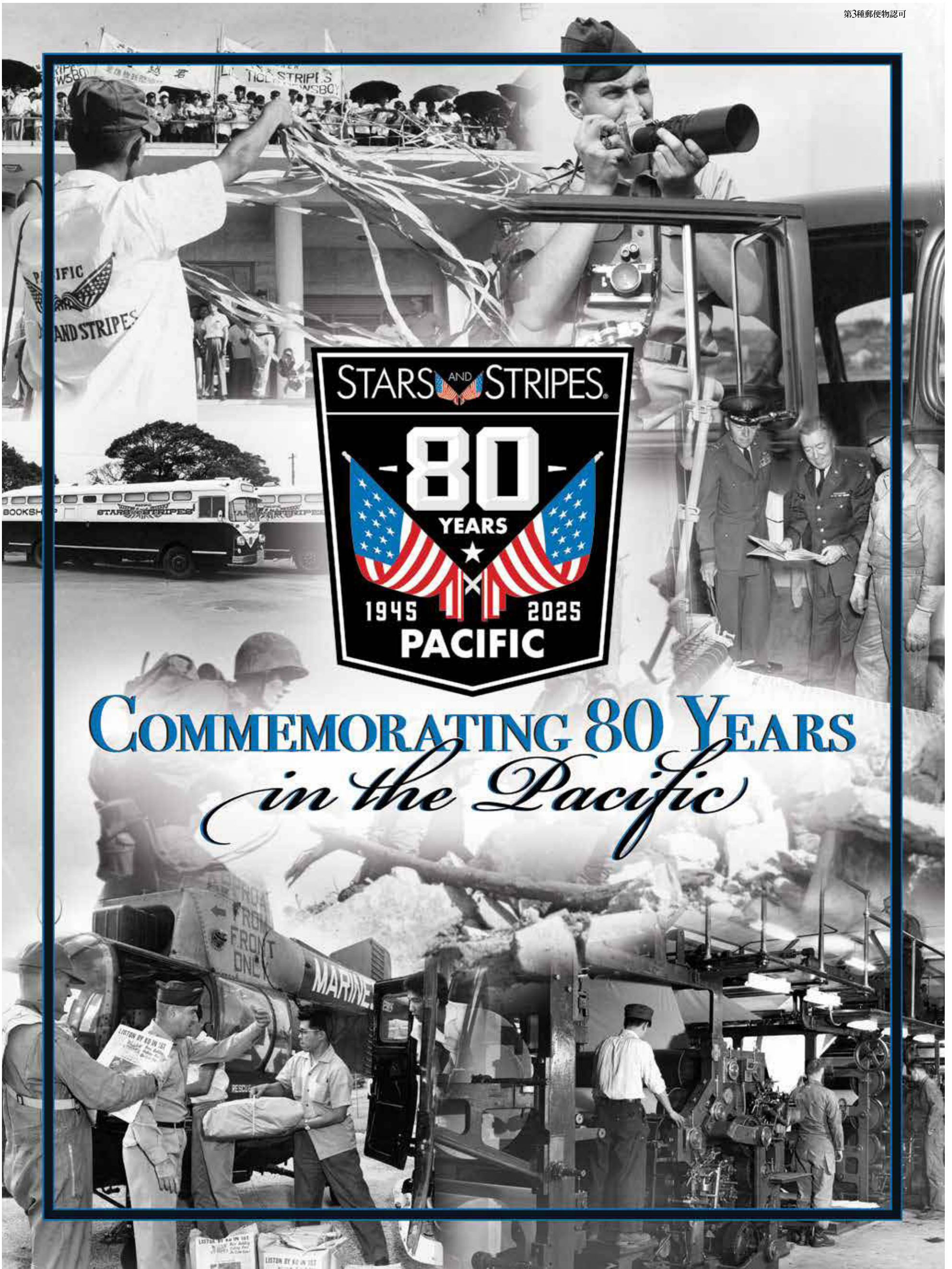
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On May 14, 1945, Stars and Stripes published its first newspaper in the Pacific. To commemorate 80 years serving the military community in the theater, we're taking a look back at Stripes history through the writing and photography of a dedicated staff spanning generations. Stars and Stripes has proudly supported the Pacific military community since the beginning and will continue to serve the troops and families at the heart of our work.

Check out more of our history at



www.80.stripes.com

More than eight decades ago, as the world reeled from the devastating attack on Pearl Harbor, the United States entered a war that would reshape history. Amid the turmoil of the Pacific theater, Stars and Stripes emerged as a vital source of information, reporting the battles, the hardships, and the triumphs of American service members.

Today, as we mark the 80th anniversary of Stars and Stripes Pacific, we celebrate a legacy of dedication to truth, service, and the enduring bond between the U.S. military and the region it has helped shape and the commitment to those who served.

From the fiery days of World War II to the Cold War standoff in Korea, from the Vietnam War to the long fight against terrorism, Stars and Stripes has been the eyes and ears of those who serve. Our journalists have embedded with troops, walked the streets of post-war Japan, and documented the changing face of U.S. military strategy across the Indo-Pacific.

Through it all, our mission has remained the same: to report the facts, give voice to the men and women in uniform, and help their families understand the sacrifices they make.

The Indo-Pacific of today is a vastly different place than it was in 1945. Nations that once stood as bitter enemies are now steadfast



Toshi Tokunaga, Arthur Millholland and his wife compare tabloid size from 1951 to current size in 1963. Stars and Stripes

allies, bound by shared interests and a common commitment. American military families have spent generations calling this region home, forging friendships and deep cultural ties.

Yet, the need for a strong U.S. presence endures. China's rise, North Korea's nuclear ambitions, and other regional security challenges demand continued vigilance, partnership, and commitment to maintaining peace and stability.

As much as the military's role has evolved, so too has Stars and Stripes. We have embraced new technologies, expanded our storytelling through digital platforms, and adapted to the changing ways service members consume news.

But one principal has never changed: our commitment to independent journalism. In a world where information is often weaponized, Stars and

Stripes remains a trusted source, standing apart from the military commands while standing beside those who wear the uniform.

To all Stars and Stripes staff members who have contributed to this mission over the years—this anniversary is yours.

To our loyal readers—whether in the barracks, aboard a Navy ship, or at home with loved ones—thank you for allowing us to tell your stories. Your experience inspire us, and your sacrifices humble us.

And to the men and women who continue to serve in the Indo-Pacific, know that Stars and Stripes will be there, as it always has been, to record history as it unfolds.

Here's to 80 years of reporting with courage and integrity. And here's to the future—wherever the next story takes us.

In a world where information is often weaponized, Stars and Stripes remains a trusted source, standing apart from the military commands while standing beside those who wear the uniform.



Stars and Stripes' Tokyo office circa 1965.



Max D. Lederer Jr.

The publisher of Stars and Stripes news media organization was appointed in 2007 after holding various positions with Stars and Stripes since 1992 including chief operating officer, general counsel and general manager of Europe operations. Before his employment with Stars and Stripes, Lederer served as a U.S. Army judge advocate with assignment in Europe and South Korea, and Fort Ord, Calif., and Fort Sill, Okla. During his time with the Army, he was Airborne-qualified. He also deployed with 2nd Armored Division (Forward) to operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm to liberate Kuwait in 1990-91. He received his Juris Doctor degree from the University of Richmond law school in Virginia and Bachelor of Arts from Marshall University in West Virginia.

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STARS AND STRIPES MARKS

80 YEARS

OF DELIVERING
MILITARY NEWS
THAT MATTERS
ACROSS THE PACIFIC

*By Joseph Ditzler, Aaron Kidd and Wyatt Olson
Stars and Stripes*

TOKYO — For eight decades, Stars and Stripes reporters across the Pacific have covered wars, revolutions, natural disasters and the political changes that marked turning points for the United States and its military overseas.

As Philippine bureau chief for Stars and Stripes' Pacific edition in 1991, Susan Kreifels experienced firsthand the eruption of Mount Pinatubo, which hastened the U.S. exit from its military bases in the island nation.

"I kept thinking we'd be dug up one day just like the people in Pompeii," Kreifels said. She and her driver stuffed a car full of refugees in an Angeles City barrio in a blizzard of volcanic ash.

"This stranger pushed a crying baby through the window into my lap and disappeared," she said. "Can you understand the fear that would cause someone to give a baby to a stranger?"

The Philippine chapter marked just one in the long American experience in Asia. Just as journalists from Stars and Stripes witnessed that change, they have

been present for momentous events since May 14, 1945, when the first Pacific edition rolled off the press.

Born in the late stages of World War II in the Pacific, the “soldier’s newspaper” lived up to its name. Its front pages brought the big-picture news to the troops in the field, while the inside pages told the stories of those same soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines.

From World War II, the occupation of Japan, the Korean War, Vietnam, the long wars around the fight against terrorist organizations down to the 2011 earthquake and tsunami in Japan, Stars and Stripes was present as events unfolded.

Brian Brooks, the former associate dean for the School of Journalism at the University of Missouri, spent two years as editor of *Stripes'* European edition. He also served as an Army public information officer during the late stages of the Vietnam War.

Brooks remembers troops in Vietnam and Bosnia emptying the racks of newly arrived Stars and Stripes newspapers and sharing them among themselves, six or eight to a paper.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4



Our front pages bring the big-picture news to the troops in the field, while the inside pages tell the stories of those same soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines.

The Pacific Stars of Stripes

Stars and Stripes was meant to be a GI's newspaper, so it should come as no surprise that many of the publication's standout journalists were active-duty service members. Stars and Stripes' Pacific staffers went on to work for "60 Minutes," draw for Marvel Comics and snap photos for Life magazine. Here's a sampling of the bureau's brightest stars, both civilian and military.



Shel Silverstein

Author, composer and cartoonist Shel Silverstein served as a draftee on Stars and Stripes' Pacific staff in the mid-1950s and said it was the catapult that launched him to success and wealth.

Silverstein wrote and illustrated such children's classics as "The Giving Tree" and "A Light in the Attic," but he was only an aspiring cartoonist when he arrived at the newspaper in 1953. He had never done any steady and serious cartooning until he began drawing daily panels about barracks life and field-soldiering.

"For a guy of my age and with my limited experience to suddenly have to turn out cartoons on a day-to-day deadline, the job was enormous," he told the newspaper in 1969. "It was a great opportunity for me, and I blossomed."

Silverstein became world famous for his cartoons, poetry and songs, such as the Grammy-winning "A Boy Named Sue" recorded by Johnny Cash. He recalled a Stars and Stripes cartoon that almost caused a collision with the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

Drawing a page of cartoons for April Fool's Day, he sketched a soldier holding out a mess kit with a slab of toast in it. A cook splashed dark matter over it, saying: "Today, it really is."

The managing editor, required to inspect all Silverstein cartoons before they were printed, called him over and asked, "Shel, what does this mean?"

"Well, you know, powdered milk, powdered eggs. Today it's the real thing. April Fool! Get it?"

That editor approved the cartoon. Many readers gasped over their breakfast on April Fool's Day. Or as one of Silverstein's contemporaries with the newspaper put it at the time: "That cartoon, shingle and all, flew in and out of the fan for several days."

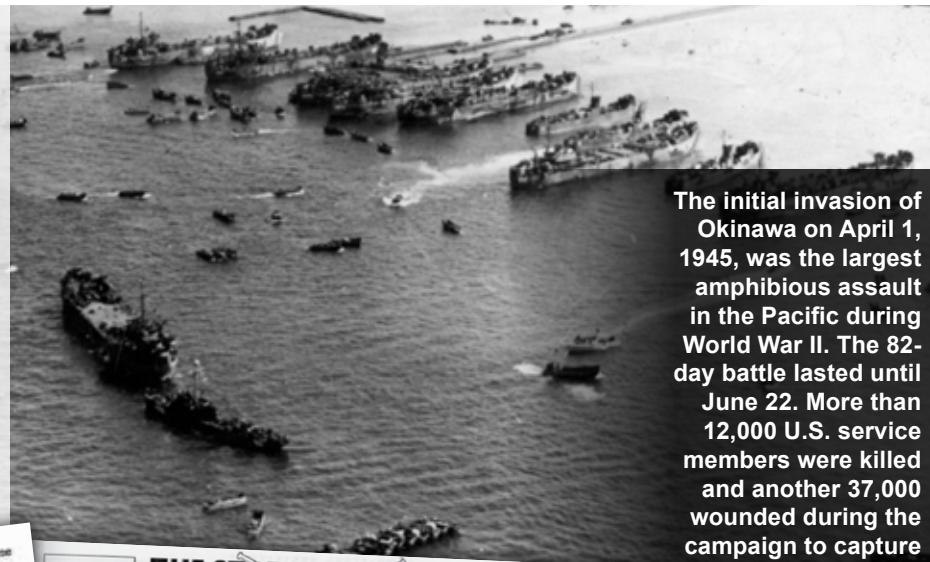
After leaving the Army, Silverstein struggled as a cartoonist until he heard about Hugh Hefner, who was putting together the first Playboy. Hefner hired Silverstein, who literally moved from ground floor to an executive suite in the Playboy Mansion.

Silverstein died of a heart attack in May 1999 in Key West, Fla. He was 68.

— Aaron Kidd/
Stars and Stripes



USS Indianapolis survivors are taken to a hospital following their rescue in early August 1945. Courtesy Naval History and Heritage Command



The initial invasion of Okinawa on April 1, 1945, was the largest amphibious assault in the Pacific during World War II. The 82-day battle lasted until June 22. More than 12,000 U.S. service members were killed and another 37,000 wounded during the campaign to capture the island, while about 90,000 Japanese troops were killed. U.S. Army



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

"The most important thing to me about Stars and Stripes is it is an example to the rest of the world of how open we are as a society in the United States," he said. "What other military in the world publishes a newspaper that the commanders don't control the content of? It's unheard of. I think it's a great example of press freedom and what we stand for as a country."

'Every Man's Role'

The first Stars and Stripes Pacific edition—eight pages—was produced in Honolulu, where the military newspaper shared office space with the Honolulu Advertiser and wire services with the Honolulu Star-Bulletin.

War news dominated the front but inside pages carried an array of features, sports and entertainment. The Brooklyn Dodgers were on an 11-game winning streak that month. Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall were about to wed, and actor Boris Karloff and playwright Moss Hart appeared with an "all-soldier cast and band" in a USO Camp Show on Saipan, only a year earlier a stage for vicious combat.

The war in Europe had concluded but the fight in the Pacific grinded on. Stars and Stripes told that story, often in tones that reflected the grim and callous nature of the 3 1/2-year-old conflict.

The United Press in that first edition reported a daylight raid on Nagoya, Japan, by 500 B-29 Superfortress bombers that dropped 3,500 tons of incendiaries—40 tons every minute for 90 minutes.

"A couple more like that and you can scratch that town off your list," the news service quoted Col. Carl Storrie of Denton, Texas, as saying.

Meanwhile, the fight for Okinawa was underway, and Stars and Stripes reporters were there. The writing reflected the tenor of the times. The Japanese enemy was routinely referred to in terms regarded today as offensive. Stories often focused on killing and survival.

Staff writers surveyed Pacific combat veterans for advice on fighting the Japanese that they'd share with Europe theater veterans expected to arrive for the final push on Japan.

Stars and Stripes staff writer Pfc. Bill Land profiled Staff Sgt. Jon Freeman of Arkansas, also known as "Killer" Freeman, who had single-handedly sent 27 enemy soldiers to their deaths during six weeks of combat in Leyte, Philippines.

Land's photograph of Freeman captured the image of an American fighting man in the final stages of the war. A cocked steel helmet shadows the right side of his face, a cigarette angles down from the corner of his mouth, his left eye focuses on something to his right. He cradles his rifle in his arms across his midsection. Three grenades hang on his field jacket on either side of his chest.

Killing the enemy was Freeman's hobby, according to a headline. "Shoot him from the belly up," was his advice to the newcomers.

Winning a 'Feverish Race'

The outlook changed on Aug. 6, 1945, although the page 1 story out of Washington, D.C., by United Press, in retrospect, left questions unanswered. An atomic bomb "with power equal to 20,000 tons of TNT," had been dropped on Japan.

The story identified Hiroshima as the targeted city and divulged that the U.S. had won a "feverish race" with German scientists to harness atomic power.

The front-page headline on Aug. 7, 1945, revealed more information and strode across six columns: "Report Atom Toll Heavy," with a smaller headline indicating the city was wrecked beyond Japan's ability to immediately comprehend.

A Stars and Stripes editor, Cpl. Anthony Kott, summed up news of the first atomic bombing. "The atom bomb continued

STARS AND STRIPES



Lt. Morris R. Jeppson, one of two weaponeers who armed the atomic bomb that was dropped on Hiroshima, is pictured before his first and only combat mission. Emma Brown/The Washington Post
Courtesy of National Museum of Nuclear Science and History



Near the end of Okinawa campaign, GIs take cover behind a bullet-pocked statue. U.S. Army/Stars and Stripes



More than 1,000 Marines were killed and more than 2,000 were wounded in the Battle of Tarawa, which took place Nov. 20-23, 1943, on Betio, a tiny island in the Pacific Ocean's Tarawa Atoll.



A massive column of billowing smoke, thousands of feet high, mushrooms over Nagasaki, Japan, after the United States dropped an atomic bomb on Aug. 9, 1945. A B-29 plane delivered the blast killing approximately 70,000 people, with thousands dying later of radiation effects.



to pale all other news into insignificance in the States," he wrote, "as the American public was heartened by prospects of a shorter war but was awed by the bomb's implications."

Two days later, news arrived of a second atomic bomb dropped on Nagasaki. Played just as prominently was word that Soviet troops had made their first moves against Japan. Both developments signaled the conflict's end.

A roundup of reports carried the headline, "Nagasaki Resembles Volcano Still Afire, Says Eyewitness."

A week passed before a banner headline on Tuesday, Aug. 14, 1945, in flowing typeface heralded "Peace" above the news: "The Pacific war ended Tuesday—1,347 days after the sneak attack on Pearl Harbor."

The first Stars and Stripes staffers to report from Japan's main islands did so from air and sea Aug. 28-29, 1945.

Cpl. Davis wrote from Okinawa of riding aboard one of the final B-24 bomber combat missions over Kyushu and Shikoku. Other than flying over what had been recently the enemy homeland, the flight was routine, he wrote. Davis looked

down mostly on rice paddies, terraced slopes and empty roads, he reported from the "recon mission."

Tech Sgt. Dick Koster wrote from the USS Gosselin on Aug. 29 that Japan's naval base at Yokosuka, today home of the U.S. 7th Fleet, looked "desolate and ghostly." He described the battleship Nagato, crippled by American air attacks; sunken or beached barges; and white flags dotting the hillsides marking gun emplacements.

With the war's end near, the news turned to the coming post-war economy and the nation's capacity to absorb the discharged veterans coming home to the labor force.

The American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars demanded improvements to Veterans Administration hospitals "to avert an imminent breakdown," the paper reported June 12, 1945.

A United Press report quoted a psychiatrist warning of the effects of combat on returning veterans. What today is called post-traumatic stress disorder would result in higher rates of alcohol abuse and alcoholism.

Less than four months later, Stars and Stripes started publishing from Tokyo. The first Pacific edition rolled off the presses of the Asahi Shimbun

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6



Tom Sutton

Long before artist Tom Sutton began contributing to Marvel Comics and the popular Warren Publishing series "Vampirella," he was sharpening his drawing pencil, and his skills, at Stars and Stripes' office in downtown Tokyo.

The Massachusetts native joined the Air Force in 1955 and was later stationed at a base near Osaka, Japan, before being assigned to the newspaper, where he created a daily strip titled "Johnny Craig," named after one of his favorite comic book artists.

The sci-fi comic took place in 2058 and followed a rocket pilot whose "quest to find a second Earth leads him into undreamed of dangers among the stars."

A story published in Stars and Stripes the day "Johnny Craig" debuted said the then-20-year-old Sutton got his start "earning soft drink and malt money by illustrating comics for Weird Science Fiction, Vault of Terror and Starman comic books for \$45 per eight-page story while his high school pals were still peddling newspapers for pennies."

According to "It Crept from the Tomb," a book on horror comics edited by Peter Normanton, Sutton's early work received praise from legendary artist Norman Rockwell.

While in high school in the late 1940s, Sutton took a correspondence art course and his assignments were graded by Charles Schulz, who was trying to get "Peanuts" off the ground at the time.

After leaving the Air Force and finishing college in New York, Sutton took his Stars and Stripes comics to Marvel, where they were reviewed by Stan Lee, co-creator of iconic characters like Spider-Man, X-Men and the Incredible Hulk.

"I think he was rather impressed by the fact that I had actually done a daily comic strip for two years," Sutton told The Comics Journal in 2001. "He just reached over and he pulled off this huge pile of blank paper. And he said, 'OK, do me a couple of Westerns and I'll see you next week. Have fun.' I remember that very well. 'Have fun.'"

Sutton, best known for his writing and illustration work on the popular "Vampirella" horror series, looked back fondly on his time with Stripes, which he called "my art school."

"I remember one of the first jobs I got was they wanted me to draw this temple and some GIs or something, and they tossed a couple of photographs on the drawing table, and they said, 'You've got 45 minutes! Forty-five minutes?'" he told The Comics Journal. "There were men there who had worked at Collier's, who had worked at Saturday Evening Post, who had worked on various other magazines, you understand what I'm saying? That was real. I don't think there is anything better than what we used to call on-the-job training or apprenticeship."

Sutton, who also worked under the pen names Sean Todd, TFS and Dementia, died of an apparent heart attack in May 2002. He was 65.

— Aaron Kidd/
Stars and Stripes



STARS AND STRIPES

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

on Oct. 3, 1945. The newsroom and other offices were several blocks away at the Nippon Times (now the Japan Times).

The newspaper remained there until 1952, when it moved to the Hardy Barracks compound, also in Tokyo, a former Japanese infantry base. In 1962, the paper relocated to a new structure on those grounds, the Akasaka Press Center, where its Pacific offices and printing press remain today.

'Korea At War'

Pacific Stars and Stripes delivers news as it happens. It did so June 25, 1950, when a page 1 headline declared "Korea At War" on the same day North Korean troops poured over the 38th parallel "with tremendous power at 5 a.m.," according to a wire report.

Several editions rolled off the press that day, and subsequent days, as events in Korea unfolded. The front page carried big-picture stories about the unfolding conflict posted mostly by civilian reporters for The Associated Press, United Press and International News Service.

Stars and Stripes staffers found the local angle in the conflict, whether frontline accounts of battle action; high-level meetings in Tokyo between Gen. Douglas MacArthur and government officials like John Foster Dulles, foreign policy adviser to the State Department; or rear-echelon events, like jazz singer Al Jolson performing in Tokyo for wounded soldiers.

The war news at first was grim as North Koreans cornered U.S. and South Korean forces inside the Pusan perimeter

from August until early September. While U.S. B-29 bombers lashed North Korean troops, allied units strengthened defensive positions.

MacArthur turned the tide by sending waves of Marines ashore Sept. 15 at the port city of Inchon, behind the North Korean lines and at the doorstep of Seoul. Wire services kept the troops abreast of the big picture.

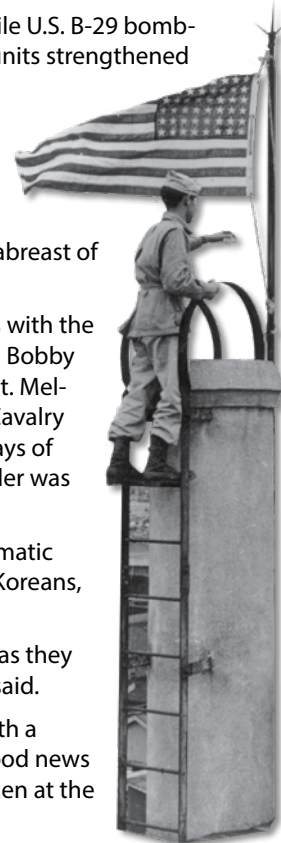
Meanwhile, Pacific edition reporters with the grunts reported action at the front. Cpl. Bobby Rushing wrote how medical officer Capt. Melbourne Chandler led a surrounded 1st Cavalry Division battalion to safety after four days of heavy fighting. The battalion commander was killed, leaving Chandler in command.

The unit came under tank and automatic weapons fire from the "Reds," or North Koreans, Chandler told Stars and Stripes.

"We couldn't move in any direction as they were firing right down our throats," he said.

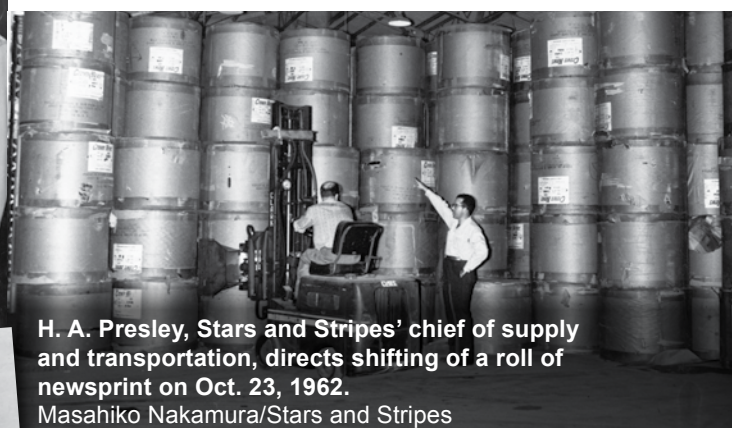
The same day, a front-page story with a three-deck headline delivered some good news from general headquarters in Tokyo: "Men at the Front Will Have Beer."

The northward push by the U.S. X Corps brought them to battle with forces sent by China to push the allies back into South Korea. They met at Chosin Reservoir in the final, cold months of 1950.



General L. L. Lemnitzer, the United Nations and Far East command-in-chief, presses a button to start Stars and Stripes' Goss press on July 28, 1956.

James Baumbarger/Stars and Stripes



H. A. Presley, Stars and Stripes' chief of supply and transportation, directs shifting of a roll of newsprint on Oct. 23, 1962.

Masahiko Nakamura/Stars and Stripes



Chaplain George E. Fort holds Sunday service for hospital patients on Oct. 31, 1957.

Harold Slate/Stars and Stripes

Members of 1st Republic of Korea Marine Brigade storm ashore on the Gimpo Peninsula, 40 miles northwest of Seoul, Sept. 21, 1961.

Kim Ki Sam/Stars and Stripes



Steve Kroft

Veteran broadcaster Steve Kroft, who retired from CBS-TV's "60 Minutes" in 2019 after three decades with the groundbreaking news program, began his journalism career with Stars and Stripes Pacific during the Vietnam War.

Kroft, 74, broke into news as a correspondent and photographer while serving in the Army in Vietnam.

"[Stars and Stripes] would be the thing that I really wanted to do, and I felt it was something that would show up on my résumé and that I would be proud to have on my résumé," he said in October 2018 at the Washington, D.C., premier of a documentary film on the newspaper, which he narrated.

Following his military service, Kroft earned a master's degree from Columbia Journalism School and worked for local television stations in Jacksonville, Fla., and Miami before joining CBS News in 1980.

He was transferred to New York in 1987 as principal correspondent for "West 57th," a news magazine that led to his assignment on "60 Minutes."

He won his first of five Peabody Awards for a 1990 critical look at how the military disciplined an experienced officer for a friendly fire incident. His interview with President-elect Barack Obama drew more than 25 million viewers in November 2008 and remains the largest "60 Minutes" audience since 1999.

Kroft was the longest-tenured reporter for "60 Minutes," which was created by fellow Stripes alumnus Don Hewitt and for years featured another, Andy Rooney.

His numerous citations include the Investigative Editors and Reporters Award, the George Polk and JFK Journalism Awards and a Lifetime Achievement Emmy Award.

— Stars and Stripes

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Stars and Stripes reporters with the Marines and Army units of X Corps filed delayed accounts of the battle that became U.S. military lore. Holding out against repeated assaults, U.S. troops battled their way out of the high, frozen plateau in December.

“Grace of God, Courage of GIs Enables Escape” was the headline on an account by Sgt. Connie Sellers with the Army’s 2nd Infantry Division that appeared Dec. 17, 1950. He wrote how Capt. Lincoln Wray led his 300 men from a death trap to eventual safety.

“By this time, we had walked for 16 hours and about 40 miles through rugged mountain ridges. The men were tired out, but determined not to be trapped and captured,” Master Sgt. Jerry Grafton said in Sellers’ account. “We by-passed the machine guns and kept going.”

Another account from the X Corps told how Army and Marine engineers repaired a tortured, impassable, 20-mile-long stretch of highway and gave allied troops an escape route from the Chosin Reservoir.

“Craters were filled, a vital bridge twice rebuilt after infiltrating enemy troops cut it and dozens of roadblocks of timber, brush and blasted vehicles cleared,” said the Stars and Stripes report.

The war raged across the Korean Peninsula nearly three more years. On Monday, July 27, 1953, the troops read in Stars and Stripes Pacific the news they’d long awaited: “Fighting Ends Tonight.”

Inside, Pfc. Tony Ricketti reported from Panmunjom, the village where documents were signed instituting an armistice that remains in place today.

“Even as the signing took place mortar rounds could be heard in the distance and American jets struck a bit further off,” Ricketti wrote that day.

A Golden Era

As the Korean War drew to a close, events in the French colony of Indochina in Southeast Asia set the stage for U.S. involvement there.

The Vietnam War, which for U.S. combat troops lasted from 1965 to 1973, ushered in what some regard as a golden era for the paper.

“They did really robust reporting from ‘67 to ‘69,” said Cindy Elmore, a journalism professor at East Carolina University who has published scholarly articles examining command influence and censorship of the newspaper.

During that period, the Pacific paper’s top editor was Col. Peter Sweers, a World War II veteran and Bronze Star recipient who held a bachelor’s degree in journalism.

“He was very supportive of freedom of the press and of treating Stripes just like any newspaper covering the Vietnam War,” said Elmore, a Stars and Stripes reporter in the late 1990s.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10



John Olson

Former Stars and Stripes Pacific combat photographer John Olson is known for his haunting images of the Vietnam War, particularly those taken during the bloody Tet Offensive and Battle of Hue in 1968.

“I was a highly motivated photojournalist,” he told the newspaper in 2018. “I’d been in Vietnam for a year, and if you are a combat photographer, you can’t fake it. The more dangerous the better, and I learned that the heaviest fighting was at Hue. So, I went to Hue.”

The powerful photographs Olson took as he followed the 1st Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment through Hue have often been credited with playing a role in America’s eventual withdrawal from the war.

“They were published in Stars and Stripes and also Life magazine,” said Olson of those images, which earned him the prestigious Robert Capa Gold Medal. The award is given by the Overseas Press Club of America for the “best published photographic reporting from abroad requiring exceptional courage and enterprise.”

The March 1968 issue of Life featured a six-page spread of Olson’s photos titled “The Battle that Regained and Ruined Hue.” After leaving the Army, he became the publication’s youngest-ever staff photographer.

“Like many veterans, I came back from Vietnam and I spent decades not talking about it,” he said. “But as we approached the 50th anniversary of the Tet Offensive and the Battle of Hue, I began to wonder what had happened to the young men I’d photographed.”

Olson was able to track down nearly a dozen of those Marines, interview them and capture their harrowing stories on tape.

“They told me about their time in Hue and how the years since Hue have affected their lives,” he said. “How the battle and the fighting—what impact it had on them.”

Olson eventually turned this personal project into an exhibit called “The Marines and Tet,” which ran at the Newseum in Washington, D.C., to mark the battle’s 50th anniversary in 2018.

The Washington Post described the exhibit’s centerpiece photo this way: “The picture—the most important he’s ever taken—shows a half dozen Marines sprawled atop a mud-crust tank. One man’s arm and eye are bandaged. Blood coats another’s legs. In the foreground, a third man lays atop a wooden door his comrades used as a makeshift stretcher. His shirt has been ripped off because, in the center of his chest, is a bullet hole.”

Olson told the newspaper he had “next to no memory” of taking that photo. When he was asked how the Vietnam War had affected him, the photographer didn’t have an answer.

“I don’t have all that figured out yet,” he said.

— Stars and Stripes

Marines scale a mound of rubble as they fight their way into the NVA stronghold in the Citadel—the ancient imperial capital’s fortress—during the battle for Hue. John Olson/Stars and Stripes



Stars and Stripes photographer John Olson, far left, poses with other journalists behind their tent while covering the Vietnam War. John Olson/Stars and Stripes



Truce Signed

Stars and Stripes

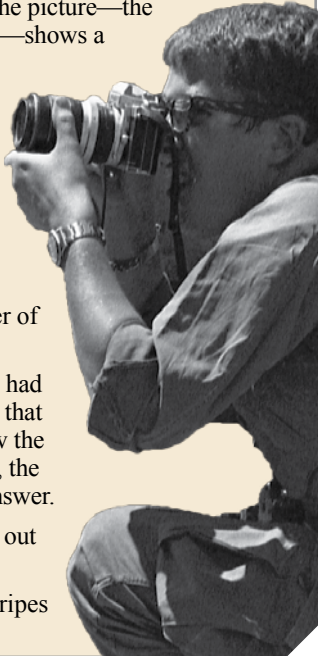
Fighting Ends Tonight

Clark S. Taylor

Not End

A squad leader with 3rd Brigade, 25th Infantry Division is treated for wounds during a firefight in South Vietnam, July 13, 1966. Gary Cooper/Stars and Stripes

Debbie Reynolds brings a bit of Hollywood to Korea as she sings for 5,000 soldiers who jammed the Seoul Military Post baseball field on May 28, 1955. Charles Taylor/Stars and Stripes



THE JAPANESE PERSPECTIVE

After wartime terror and defeat, a Japanese life is rebuilt around Stars and Stripes

www.80.stripes.com

Toshi Cooper
James Kimber/Stars and Stripes

Editor's note: This article, originally published in August 2015, focuses on Toshi Tokunaga Cooper, who spent her teens in a world of air raids, shortages, death and at the end, the shock and humiliation of defeat. Over time, her life transformed as she went to work for the occupation forces and later for Stars and Stripes, where she built a career and met her husband. Now living in Delaware, Cooper recalls her own personal journey—part of Japan's transformation from bitter enemy to close ally of the United States.

By Seth Robson,
Stars and Stripes

TOKYO — Toshi Tokunaga Cooper and her coworkers listened on the radio as Emperor Hirohito announced Japan's surrender to the Allies on Aug. 15, 1945. It was the first time the Japanese public had heard his voice, and the news was devastating.

"We stood in the courtyard and listened to the emperor's speech and cried like hell," recalled Cooper.

After hearing of their nation's defeat, Cooper and several friends walked from Tokyo's Ebisu district to the Imperial Palace, where they wept and apologized to the emperor.

"We were very nationalistic," she said. "I heard later that some of the people around us had committed suicide."

The end came as a shock to the Japanese people, even if many had suspected the war was not going as well as it was spun by the government's propaganda machine. For many in reclusive Japan, America was a strange and distant place.

When news of the Pearl Harbor attack broke in December 1941, Cooper's father, a civilian contracting officer in the Imperial Japanese Navy, spread a big map of America on a table and compared it to Japan. Her father was fascinated by foreign things and spent time in London before the war. The family ate English breakfasts of toast, eggs and coffee on Sundays and celebrated Christmas, she said.

The start of the war meant she couldn't watch her favorite American movies. Tokyo cinemas stopped showing them and only screened German, Italian and Japanese films, she said.

Despite official efforts to put a positive spin on news from the front, it was hard to believe that Japan was winning—casualty lists were growing and rations were short. American

bombers pounded Tokyo, destroying entire neighborhoods near Cooper's home in Tokyo's Shibuya district. At times it seemed as if the bombs were dropping only a few yards away.

Some of Cooper's schoolmates were killed in the air raids.

"There were so many people who had a terrible time," she said.

Still, to a young person, the war seemed exciting.

"When a B-29 went down, we all clapped," she recalled.

Workmates at the navy yard in Shibuya, where Cooper was a supply clerk, would arrive each morning with captivating stories.

One woman said she left a pot full of raw rice when she fled to an air raid shelter. When she returned, heat from bombing had cooked the rice, Cooper said.

Her family had a bomb shelter in their backyard stocked with food and supplies. But after a heavy snowfall, the shelter flooded. When the family opened the shelter door during an air raid, they saw all their carefully stored supplies floating in deep water.

News of the atomic bombings at Hiroshima and Nagasaki was vague at first, Cooper said.

"The radio talked about a strong weapon being dropped," she said.

When Allied occupation troops arrived in Tokyo after the surrender, residents were scared. Tokyo was a battered city where black markets sprung up to meet the demands of hungry masses and exhausted soldiers returning from far-flung battlefields.

Australian soldiers set up camp near Cooper's house. There were rumors that they were abducting young girls, and families kept ropes ready so they could escape out the window if the soldiers came for them.

Cooper got a shock when she rode a train to the countryside to trade kimonos for food and felt the hands of a tall Australian lifting up the bag of rice on her back.

"I yelled in English: 'I'm not a street worker.' But he was just trying to help me carry the bag," she said.

Cooper's father was angry when she got a job in the Public Information Office at Allied headquarters, where Gen. Douglas MacArthur ruled Japan during the post-war occupation. He wanted her to get married. She argued that the job would help improve her English—a valuable skill in U.S.-occupied Japan—which she had learned at a Methodist high school.

Soon she was working as a linguist for American reporters. Her English was poor but

"WE WERE VERY NATIONALISTIC. I HEARD LATER THAT SOME OF THE PEOPLE AROUND US HAD COMMITTED SUICIDE."

— Toshi Tokunaga Cooper on Japan's defeat in World War II

good enough to do the job and earn her gifts such as bars of soap from the journalists.

When the chief of the news section at the PIO, Maj. Fred May, took command at Pacific Stars and Stripes in 1948, he invited Cooper to join as an assistant librarian.

Cooper started building contacts with Japanese officials whom she won over with cigarettes and chocolate from the exchange.

"There were few female Japanese journalists in those days, and they had a terrible time compared to the males," she said. "But I could do anything I wanted."

It wasn't long before Cooper was going on assignments as a translator. A memorable assignment involved tracking down Marilyn Monroe, paparazzi-style, when she visited Tokyo in 1954.

Stars and Stripes staked out Haneda Airport, where Monroe and her new husband, famed baseball player Joe DiMaggio, touched down, but there were so many people—"2,500 wild fans"—that the journalists decided to give up and "go get drunk," Cooper recalled.

"We started driving home, but I saw blonde hair in the car in front of us," she said. "I said: 'Let's follow!'"

The car traveled to a back entrance at the Imperial Hotel—avoiding 1,500 more fans

at the front—and out stepped Monroe. Stars and Stripes got the story and photo. Cooper got an autograph.

During the 1964 Tokyo Olympic Games, Cooper helped make posters of the U.S. military athletes who were participating. She moonlighted as a translator for some of the foreign reporters who attended the Games and received plenty of free tickets in return.

Cooper was the translator for Stars and Stripes reporter Army Cpl. Ernie Peeler for his interview with Princess Kazuko—elder sister to Japan's current emperor, Akihito. She was about to become the first member of Japan's imperial household to marry a commoner. Cooper said they had a tough time persuading the princess to smile for a photo.

Before the story could appear, Peeler left for Korea, where U.S. Forces were fighting to hold their own against a communist invasion. On July 28, 1950, he and another journalist, Ray Richards of the International News Service, were declared missing in action—perhaps killed by a tank shell that blew their Jeep off the road.

In 1970, she married fellow Stars and Stripes employee Gary M. Cooper and retired the following year.



This 1959 photo taken at Stars and Stripes' office in Tokyo shows librarian Toshi Tokunaga with artist Shel Silverstein on the bottom row. Pictured from left to right on the top row are admin assistant Michiko Shibata, photographer Neal Callahan, city editor Pat Carroll, entertainment editor Al Ricketts, artist Sanae Yamazaki and features writer Norm Sklarewitz. Shel Silverstein/Stars and Stripes



STARS AND STRIPES

UNOFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF UNITED STATES FORCES, FAR EAST

EXTRA! EXTRA!
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THE COST OF NEWS GATHERING

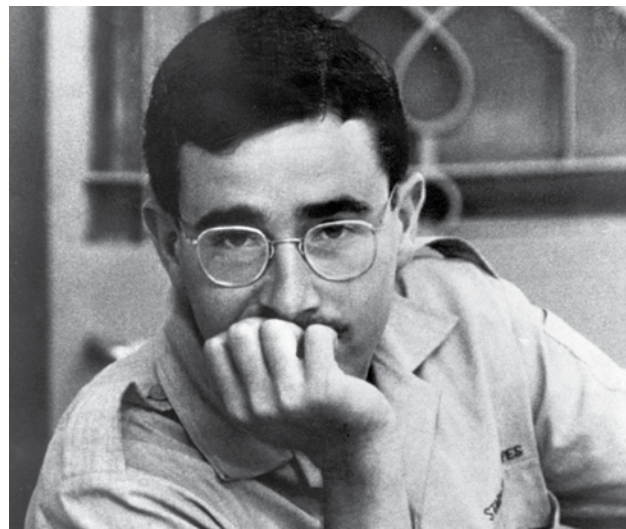
The following is an edited version of a column written by former Stars and Stripes senior reporter Hal Drake and published in October 1995.

Pacific Stars and Stripes has lost two reporters in two wars—one a 37-year-old veteran, the other a youngster only 24. I knew one only slightly and the other not at all.

I called the home of Ernie Peeler's son in California not long ago, wanting to know as much as he might remember about his dad—the reporter we lost in the hard and early days of the Korean War.

Gone before my time, he was a man I never knew, except by reputation and the quality of work I found in a few faded library clippings.

I learned Peeler had been an International News Service reporter and could believe that because of his neat, tight writing, the kind required by telegraphic news services. During World War II, he had worked in military information offices, which ideally qualified him for Stripes—a guy who knew the business from both ends of the telephone.



Paul Savanuck

He was good and he was gutsy, this Peeler—the kind of reporter who would stand fire to get his story, walking into enemy cylinders of every caliber millimeter.

Peeler and Hal Gamble were the first Pacific Stars and Stripes reporters sent to cover the war, which broke over the benign occupation life in Japan like a storm over a picnic. Within days, the two were of Tokyo and in Korea, reporting a difficult and confusing conflict.

Peeler took chances—a lot of chances. Good reporters always do, taking a soldier's chances to do a newsman's job.

So it was July 28, 1950, when he was declared missing in action—perhaps slain by an enemy tank that blew his Jeep off the road. Old-timers at Stripes told me of hopefully scanning POW lists provided by the Communists at Panmunjom. Ernest never turned up.

On the day he disappeared, Peeler was out of hostile range when he and Ray Richards, an International News Service correspondent, decided to head north, toward a broken, disorganized nonentity called the front, to get “just a little more” before they wrote their stories—a decision that can cost a reporter's life.

But the good ones do it.

There was another man I scarcely knew, and wish I had known better.

Two decades have gone by since the last shot in Saigon, but I can't forget the most hurtful happening of a long-ago war—the loss of Paul Savanuck.

Why can't I scrub my memory of a 24-year old kid I hardly touched hands with?

He was like a face on a passing streetcar or casual acquaintance at a bit party. A quiet kid—one of those who could sit in a crowded room for four hours without saying a word. Bespectacled and absently preoccupied, he was remindful of a student for the priesthood or rabbinate.

His constant expression was a thoughtful frown—the one he wore that day in early 1969 as I walked into the Pacific Stars and Stripes Saigon Bureau with colleague Al Kramer, sent from Tokyo to do a special supplement on the war.

The bureau of Vo Tanh Road was a bizarre place, manned by youngsters who lived in the age of Aquarius and Zumwalt. It showed. The walls were done over in psychedelic rainbow, along with pungent lyrics from the rock musical “Hair” and pinups that would have sent a chaplain into convulsive shock. Our people were called the Wild Bunch, and not without reason.

All except Paul Savanuck, who was a few days new to the bureau and had a discomfited look, like a chaplain's assistant who was trying to be one of the guys but still blanched at a dirty joke. As we met, all I got was a loose handshake and a mutter.

Oh no, I thought. Was this another anti-Vietnam draftee, not here to report the war but to protest it? The indiscriminate draft had dumped all manner of characters on us, and the last thing we needed was another Greenwich Village poet posing as a reporter.

I spoke these fears aloud, in private, to Dave Walsh, a Navy journalist attached to the bureau.

“No, Hal,” Dave assured me. “He's a shy sort, doesn't like to push himself. He's new here, hardly been around a week—just feeling his way around. Give him time. He'll open up.”

Bureau Chief Bill Collins told me Savanuck had volunteered for both Vietnam and Stripes, aggressively pounding on the door until Bill granted him a tryout and nodded him in. His diffident manner belied that. Again, I was told—give him time.

There was a drowsy afternoon we were all sitting around, with Savanuck right beside us but a hundred miles away under a canopy of mood. Mike Kopp, a bureau photographer, had a new Nikkormat and was trying it out on anybody who would hold still for five seconds. Savanuck was staring at our well-sized battle map.

“Hey, Paul,” Kopp said. “This way.”

Startled, Savanuck absently jerked around and put his chin on the heel of his hand, looking like that classic statue of The Thinker. We would have that, at least—a picture that caught perfectly the subtle and introspective character of Paul Savanuck.

A day or so later, he was gone, headed up country to cover the war.

Then came that gloomy morning.

There had been a rowdy party at the bureau the night before. Master Sgt. Bill Bradford, the first shirt, expressed bitter regret that a can of beer and the contents of a wastebasket has been flung into an overhead fan. He stood by, in a surly posture with his hands on his hips, while we meekly mopped up the mess. Lt. Col Sal Fede, the officer in charge, waling in with a stormfront over his face. Having just borne Bradford's wrath, we braced for Sal's.



Ernie Peeler

Sal walked over to Collins and spoke in a confidential tone that still carried: “Savanuck's dead. He bought it last night up at Quang Tri.”

There was more boozing that night, but it was morose and depressing. To Dave Walsh fell the stressful job of going up to a remote corner of the Marine base at Da Nang and walking under a sign that read: “In Reverence—Uncover.” Dave nodded as an attendant lifted a rubber wrapping from a still form.

Not long after, Dave was in Tokyo and he and I toured the Kanda district that abounds with bookstores. It also had the oldest beer hall in Tokyo, we and stopped to pay proper respect to a cultural landmark.

After a time, Dave looked absent and thoughtful much like Savanuck, and said: “Jesus, that was awful about Paul. If he'd just been around a little longer and gotten to know you and Kramer and all the guys, he'd have opened up. He was a nice kid.”

I wept a little, for somebody I hadn't known very well for very long.

I could never feel like Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Savanuck, but I still felt sadly deprived.



Maj. Gen. Ethan A. Chapman, chief of staff for U.S. Forces Japan, looks at a painting honoring Stars and Stripes correspondent Ernie Peeler on Feb. 8, 1964. Peeler was the first journalist reported missing in action during the Korean War.
Henry Magnuson / Stars and Stripes

Vernon Grant

Cartoonist and Army officer Vernon Grant had a unique ability to capture the soldier's perspective during the Vietnam War.

"One Vietnam veteran said to me, 'We had some terrible times in Vietnam, but we also laughed a lot,'" Grant's widow, Betsy Grant, told Stars and Stripes during a recent phone interview.

Grant's work "will make you laugh. His sense of humor was universal for all soldiers."

The youngest of five children in a family that immigrated to Massachusetts from Barbados, Grant was 23 when he joined the Army in 1958, with segregation still a dehumanizing force in the United States. Two years in, he was invited to enroll in the Infantry Officer Candidate Course at Fort Benning, Ga., and was commissioned a second lieutenant.

Grant made captain in 1966 and went to Vietnam a year later, where he commanded the Signal Security Force, 400 men guarding 23 communications sites scattered the length of Vietnam.

Between 1966 and 1969, Grant drew comics for Stars and Stripes, under the titles "Grant's Heroes," "A Grant Time in Japan" and "Grant's Grunts." They were biting and humorous but offered a window into the soldier's experience in Vietnam.

In one strip, a two-star general looks up at a man sitting on an elevated throne and say, "If you don't mind coming down, Colonel ... I'll give you my ten-minute thing on 'Command Modesty!'"

"He used exaggeration really well," Betsy Grant said.

Grant left the military in 1968, after 10 years of service. He enrolled in classes at Jesuit Sophia University, which had a campus in Tokyo. He wrote three books on Army life and one on Japan: a two-volume graphic novel "Adventures of Point-Man Palmer and his Girlfriend 'Invisible Peppermint,'" "Stand-By One!" and "A Monster is Loose!—in Tokyo."

He told reporters in 1977 that his popularity among front-line soldiers was a bit overwhelming.

"I became an institution for the U.S. GIs who sought comic relief from the danger of combat and the boredom of army life," he told the Cambridge Chronicle weekly in Massachusetts. "More soldiers read my books than any other cartoonist or writer in the front. I still get embarrassed when I meet someone on the street who recognizes me."

He suffered a heart attack on a run July 7, 2006, fell into a coma and died weeks later.

"His creations of the stories of 'Point-Man Palmer' and cartoons in the military field as well as his science fiction world of 'The Love Rangers' are his legacy," his widow wrote in her book.

Speaking with Stars and Stripes in 1972, Grant made his intentions abundantly clear. He just wanted to make people laugh.

"Translating life into humor is the biggest thing with me," he said at the time.

— Matthew M. Burke/Stars and Stripes



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

The newspaper also benefited from a wide swathe of talented draftees, some of whom had Ivy League degrees or actual journalism experience back in the States, Elmore said.

"We aggressively went out and covered stuff, and the military didn't much like that," said Robert Hoderne, a reporter and assistant editor at the Saigon bureau in the late 1960s.

Many would go on to illustrious journalism careers, such as Jack Fuller, who earned a Pulitzer Prize for editorial writing at the Chicago Tribune, and Steve Kroft, for 30 years a correspondent with "60 Minutes" before retiring in 2019.

"It's probably the best job I ever had," said John Olson, a staff photographer whose work quickly led to a position at the prestigious Life magazine.

A 19-year-old draftee longing to shoot photos for Stars and Stripes when he arrived in Vietnam in 1967, Olson commandeered a jeep and made an unauthorized trip to the newspaper's office in Saigon. The paper pulled some strings and took him aboard after he embellished the scope of a former mailroom job with United Press International.

The first combat assault he covered was Operation Billings in June 1967, where he talked himself onto the second

wave of helicopters heading to the landing zone—air shaking with artillery and a napalm inferno below.

Olson had brought his camera to a particularly hellacious two-week operation that took the lives of 57 Americans.

"But I didn't know any better," he said. "I thought this was just another day at work."

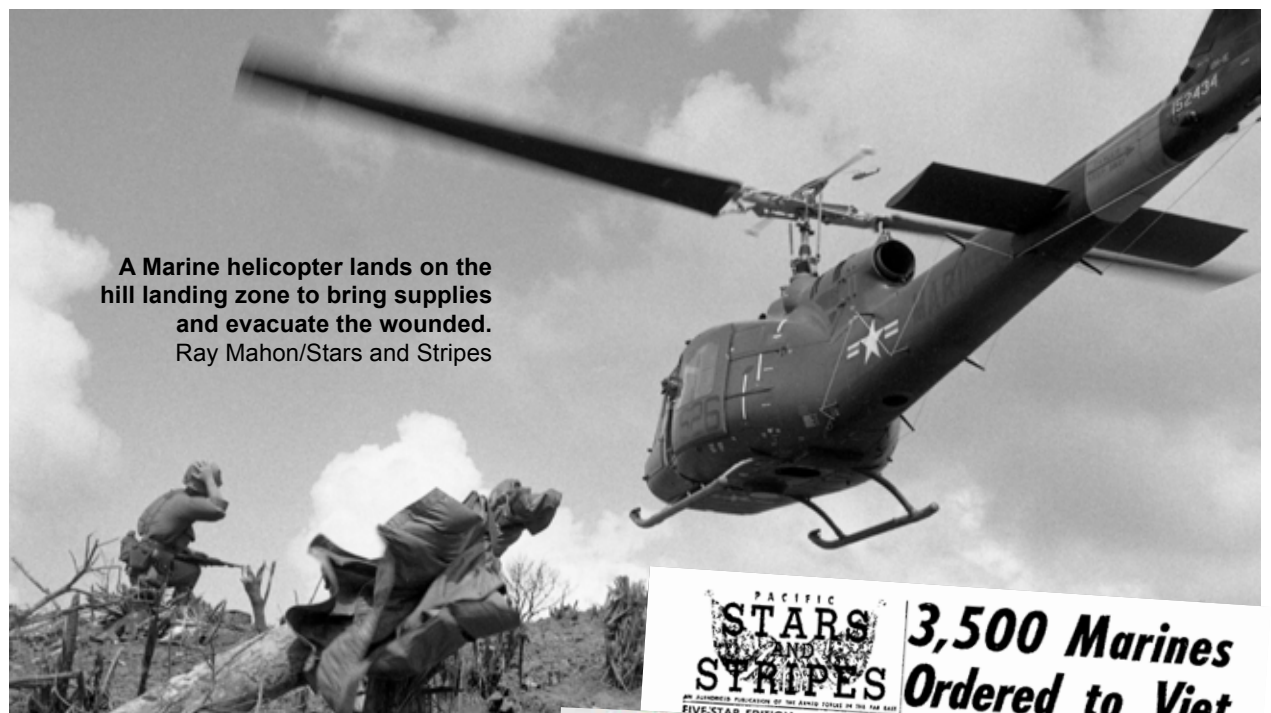
He would not see that kind of intensity again until the Battle of Hue in February 1968, one of the longest and bloodiest of the war. Marines waged an inch-by-inch assault to take the well-fortified Citadel from dug-in North Vietnamese troops.

"I went in there with, I think, 19 rolls of film, and I stayed until I shot every exposure I had," Olson said. "It was violent. It was upfront. It was personal."

Getting that film published in a timely manner was no small feat because unlike the wire services covering the war, Stars and Stripes had no in-country darkroom. Hoderne recalled how film had to be brought to Saigon and then put on one of two Boeing 737 planes chartered by Stars and Stripes that flew a Pacific circuit delivering newspapers printed in Tokyo.

"So, if we shot pictures on the field on Monday—if everything went just right—that film could be in Tokyo on Tuesday and be in Wednesday's paper," Hoderne said.

A Marine helicopter lands on the hill landing zone to bring supplies and evacuate the wounded.
Ray Mahon/Stars and Stripes



Marine Staff Sgt. Robert Thoms, also known as "Cajun Bob," leads his men in the Battle of Hue during the North Vietnamese Tet Offensive in 1968.
John Olson/Stars and Stripes

Gen. Douglas A. MacArthur, left, is greeted by Brig. Gen. Charles Morhouse, the 5th Air Force surgeon general, at Yokota Air Base, Japan, July 12, 1961.
Sandy Colton/Stars and Stripes



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"If you don't mind coming down, Colonel ... I'll give you my ten-minute thing on 'Command Modesty!'"



‘A Hellish Nightmare’

The U.S. military's role in world events took a breather after the Vietnam War but history rolled on through civil unrest against authoritarian states in South Korea, Iran, the Philippines and elsewhere, places that presented new challenges to the United States.

Few nations experienced the scale of change that took place in the Philippines when a popular revolt in 1986 unseated President Ferdinand Marcos, a corrupt and authoritarian ruler who held sway in the island nation for 20 years.

Events following Marcos' departure and the election of Corazon Aquino had deep implications for the U.S. military presence there, symbolized primarily by Subic Naval Base and Clark Air Base.



Aquino/AP Photo

Susan Kreifels worked from Clark as a Stars and Stripes bureau chief from 1987 to 1991—the first woman to hold

such a position for the newspaper. Afterward, she moved to Tokyo, where she worked as Japan bureau chief for another four years.

"I always wanted to be a foreign correspondent," she said. "Stripes gave me that opportunity."

Before the Pinatubo eruption that changed the course of U.S.-Philippine relations, Kreifels covered a series of attacks that claimed 10 American lives. A group of communist insurgents, the New People's Army, killed several, including two airmen and a retired Air Force officer outside Clark in 1987 and an Army colonel in 1989.

For Kreifels, reporting on the series of politically motivated attacks was the most important story she covered in her 10 years with the newspaper.

"My editors and I felt we had a responsibility to let our military readers know the real dangers outside the

bases," she said, "and understand what was going on in the country."

A May 1990 article in the wake of two more airmen shot dead interviewed locals whose livelihoods depended on the American presence. Travel off Clark by members of its community was restricted.

A tricycle driver said his income was halved as a result. Another Filipino expressed hatred of the Americans. "We don't need the bases," he said.



Kreifels

Mother Nature soon obliged. Mount Pinatubo, which loomed over Clark, erupted June 12, 1991, after simmering and shaking since April. The explosion instantly disintegrated 900 feet of the summit and blanketed the surrounding area in ash and mud.

Kreifels wrote first-person accounts of the ongoing eruptions and their aftermath. Under a headline, "Scenes from a hellish nightmare," she reported June 17, from Angeles City: "It is difficult to describe the hellish nightmare that 40,000 troops, wives and children are now living in the Philippines. Ash and rocks are covering us, spewed from a volcano in our backyards."

The next day, still working her beat, Kreifels wrote of sleeplessness and the apocalyptic landscape in which the survivors felt somehow damned. She recalled meeting Air Force Staff Sgt. James Nelson and two other sergeants along a roadside in a broken-down Jeep.

"They gave me a wet, crumpled note to get their names to their commander," she wrote. "Fatigue and fear were on their faces as they tried to reach the evacuation site."

The Pinatubo eruption brought the curtain down on the U.S. presence at Clark and Subic Bay, but Stars and Stripes Pacific continues to cover the intersection of Philippine and U.S. military interests to this day.

‘Don't Ask, Don't Tell’

Military campaigns in the Balkans and the Middle East dominated war planners and Washington, D.C., during the 1990s, and Stars and Stripes covered the Persian Gulf War and the conflict that engulfed the former nation of Yugoslavia. But the Pacific was no backwater in terms of military journalism.

On Nov. 2, 1992, a short item on page 6 of the Pacific edition identified a sailor from the USS Belleau Wood whom the Navy said was beaten to death by two shipmates in a park outside Sasebo Naval Base, Japan.

Rick Rogers, at the time an Army sergeant and Stripes reporter in Tokyo, was assigned to follow the story by an editor who had received a letter from others at Sasebo alleging the sailor, Seaman Allen Richard Schindler, was targeted because he was gay.

Being gay in the military is no longer a crime, but at the time a transitional policy, "don't ask, don't tell," was in effect.

"It took a long time to get that story out," said Rogers, now a financial adviser in San Diego. Schindler was killed in October 1992 but not until December did the Navy admit his death may have been linked to his being homosexual, "which turned out to be the case," Rogers said.

"I was an E-5 trying to hold admirals' feet to the fire, and commanders, to give up information. Not the easiest thing in the world," he said.

Rogers, who went on in civilian life to cover the military for newspapers in Virginia and California, said he learned two professional lessons as a Stars and Stripes military staffer.

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Andrew Headland Jr./Stars and Stripes

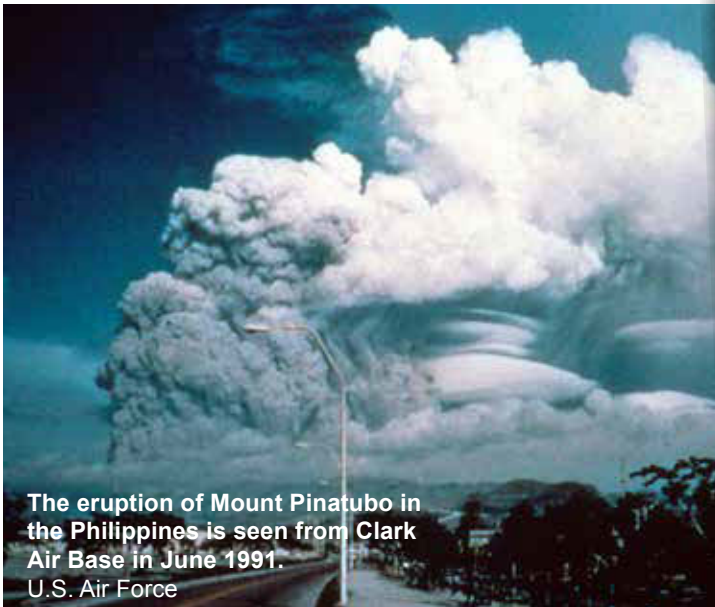
Katsuji Higa, 7 months, son of Mr. and Mrs. Eishin Higa, is a strong Pacific Stars and Stripes supporter. He holds S&S balloons passed out during the carnival fair on July 4, 1962. Stars and Stripes



Volcanic ash from the eruption of Mount Pinatubo weighs down the tail of a World Airways DC-10 at Cubi Point Naval Air Station, June 17, 1991. U.S. Navy



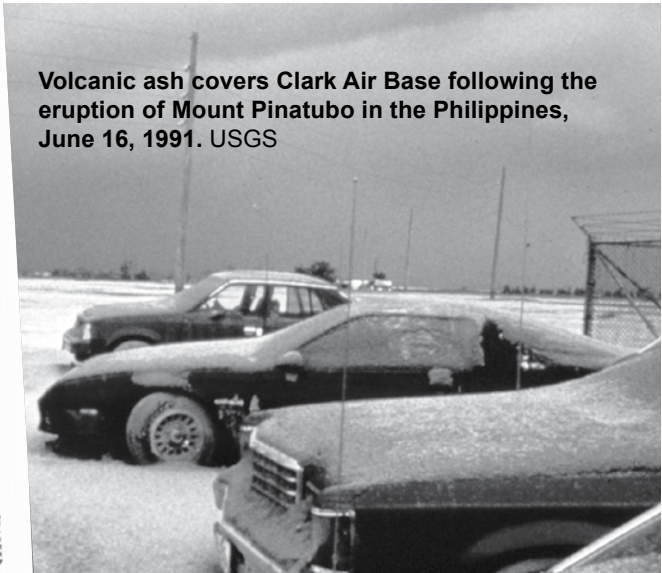
Philippines President Ferdinand Marcos accepts more than \$7 million worth of military aircraft from the United States during a ceremony at Basa Air Base on June 27, 1966. Juanito Pardico/Stars and Stripes



The eruption of Mount Pinatubo in the Philippines is seen from Clark Air Base in June 1991. U.S. Air Force



Volcanic ash covers Clark Air Base following the eruption of Mount Pinatubo in the Philippines, June 16, 1991. USGS



Hal Drake

During his nearly four decades with Stars and Stripes, Hal Drake covered everything from high-level summits and the release of POWs from Vietnam to Muhammad Ali and high school sports.

A native of Santa Monica, Calif., Drake served 10 months in the Korean War as an artilleryman, viewing up close the carnage on Heartbreak Ridge. He applied for one of a handful of reporting jobs at Stars and Stripes and joined the Pacific staff in July 1956.

Until his retirement on Dec. 31, 1995, Drake worked as a reporter, then later as senior writer and columnist. He traveled four times to Vietnam during the war, and later returned with freelance photographer Jim Bryant in April 1985 for the 10th anniversary of the end of the war.

He was at Clark Air Base, Philippines, in February 1973 to greet returning POWs released from Vietnam.

Every president, “Ford through Clinton—I think I got them all when they came over here,” Drake once said. He was equally comfortable quizzing rock musicians such as Rod Stewart about their choice of song lyrics.

“He managed to find the human element in everything he wrote. And he was always a gentleman in the process,” said former Pacific Stripes news editor Ron Rhodes.

Drake marched to his own drummer, his former co-workers said.

“Hal’s desk—a pile of thousands of papers nearly three feet tall—was the stuff of newspaper legend,” said former colleague Adam Johnston, who was assigned to Stripes from 1993-99 while in the Air Force.

Drake could often be seen wandering the newsroom twirling and eyeing an elongated band of wire called a whirligig.

“He was quirky, but always fun and always smart,” said Gerry Galipault, who worked in the Tokyo office from 1984-90. When working the whirligig, “you could tell his mind was working a mile a minute, thinking about what to write next, what to say. And he always said it beautifully.”

After leaving Stripes, Drake and his wife, Kaz, retired to the Gold Coast in Queensland, where they helped run an international student exchange program.

After a lengthy battle with stomach cancer, Drake died there in 2013 at age 83.

— Dave Ornauer/Stars and Stripes



Stars and Stripes journalist Hal Drake, left, helps lead a Korean orphan, who was adopted by an American couple, down a stairway at Tokyo International Airport in 1974. Hideyuki Mihashi/Stars and Stripes



Paratroopers from the 101st Airborne Division provide security at a helicopter landing zone in Hesarak, Afghanistan. Other U.S. forces raided the village earlier in the week on July 16, 2002. Joseph Giordano/Stars and Stripes

U.S. service members are silhouetted against the desert sun in Saudi Arabia during Operation Desert Shield, the preface to the Gulf War. Rob Jagodzinski/Stars and Stripes



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

One, don't give up, "because then they win," he said. Two is do nothing untoward. Press the authorities, hold them accountable, but do it the right way. "You have to be 100% right on everything," he said.

Stars and Stripes provides a perspective no other medium can provide, Rogers said, adding it's the only source of news military service members, their families and others connected to the services have on some issues.

"It's not the type of information they're going to get elsewhere," he said.

The military hierarchy benefits from Stars and Stripes, though it often works to frustrate its coverage, Rogers said. The newspaper shines light on problems that can be resolved before they escalate into congressional inquiries. The newspaper, he said, is a kind of loyal opposition.

"I was never interested in tearing down the military. I think the military is an outstanding institution, in general," he said. "That doesn't mean it's a perfect institution. I saw my job as helping make things better."

'Sprung Into Action'

In early September 2001, Stars and Stripes Pacific reported on Defense Department plans to close military bases, a move that Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said was necessary to save money for other uses. Within a day that view suddenly seemed outdated.

The Sept. 11, 2001, edition, published while terrorist attacks on the U.S. were still the better part of a day away, led with a story about the trial of an Air Force staff sergeant for alleged rape. U.S. military bases around Tokyo braced for a typhoon and Marines pitched in to help fight a fire on a small island off Okinawa's coast.

Kathleen Guzda Struck, at the time Stars and Stripes Pacific's managing editor, was at home that evening in Tokyo watching TV when a bulletin appeared on-screen. A plane had struck the north tower of the World Trade Center in New York.



Marines and soldiers at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, check out a camel brought on to the base for entertainment. Camel rides—and photographs—were a popular attraction at the base. Joseph Giordano/Stars and Stripes



A battalion of Georgian soldiers trains at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center in Hohenfels, Germany, to be the nation's third battalion of combat troops to join the fight in Afghanistan on Feb. 25, 2011. Seth Robson/Stars and Stripes



“As I was sitting, watching it, the second plane went in,” she said.

The newsroom in the Akasaka Press Center that night was a beehive, Struck said. She arrived to find everyone at the paper had returned to start working on the story.

“People had just sprung into action, trying to figure out what’s going on,” she said. “The active-duty journalists were always amazing, incredibly well-trained. I loved working with them. Of course, the civilians were, too, but the active-duty staff probably understood on a different scale what was happening.”

From that day on, Pacific edition pages were filled with reports connected to America’s response, military and otherwise, to 9/11. The tone changed. Topics shifted from downsizing military facilities and a slumping economy to the movement of forces from the Pacific and questions of security for service members and their families.

Stripes surveyed its readers and gauged their sentiments, as well. In October 2001, a headline indicated U.S. military and civilians supported the U.S. strikes in Afghanistan in response to the 9/11 attacks. “America did ‘what we had to do,’” the headline said.

Meanwhile, Stars and Stripes journalists based in the Pacific were dispatched along with their colleagues from

other bureaus to cover the invasion of Afghanistan and, in 2003, the invasion of Iraq. Stars and Stripes had a head start in some ways but was caught unprepared in others.

“Not all of our Stripes journalists were accustomed to covering conflict and the [Department of Defense] was kind of scrambling to figure out what their role was, so for instance, that’s when embedding really started for all news outlets not just military,” Struck said.

Journalists from the civilian world were finding their way into the military environment that Stars and Stripes journalists know well. Their organizations—broadcast networks and big-city daily newspapers—could afford to train their employees for combat situations, including exposure to live fire or possible kidnapping.

But Stripes journalists knew their way around military bases and how to work with DOD personnel.

“One of the most amazing things about Stars and Stripes to me was, even though we were independent journalists, we all carried ID cards that would allow us onto any military installation,” Struck said. “So, while we’re walking through the gate trying to find Col. So-and-So or Lt. Col. So-and-So or whomever, our commercial colleagues were having to catch up.”

‘Lifted Out of the Sea’

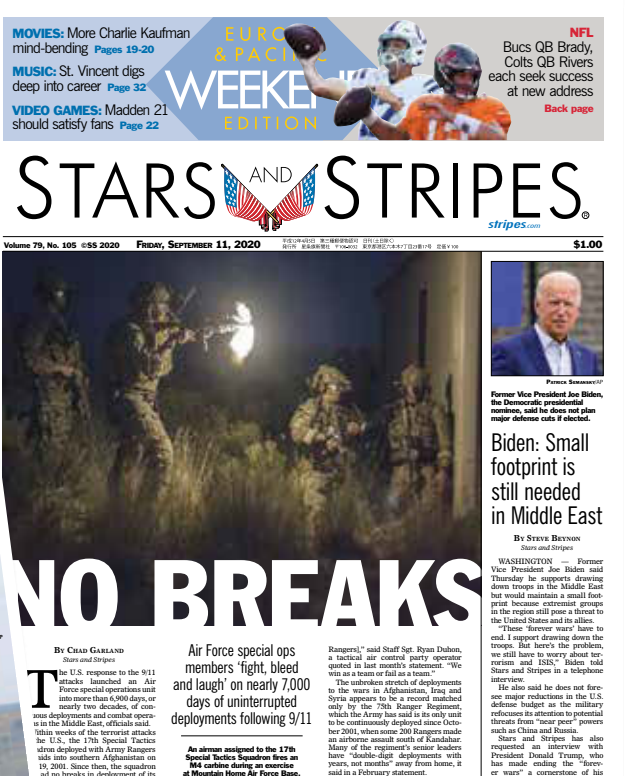
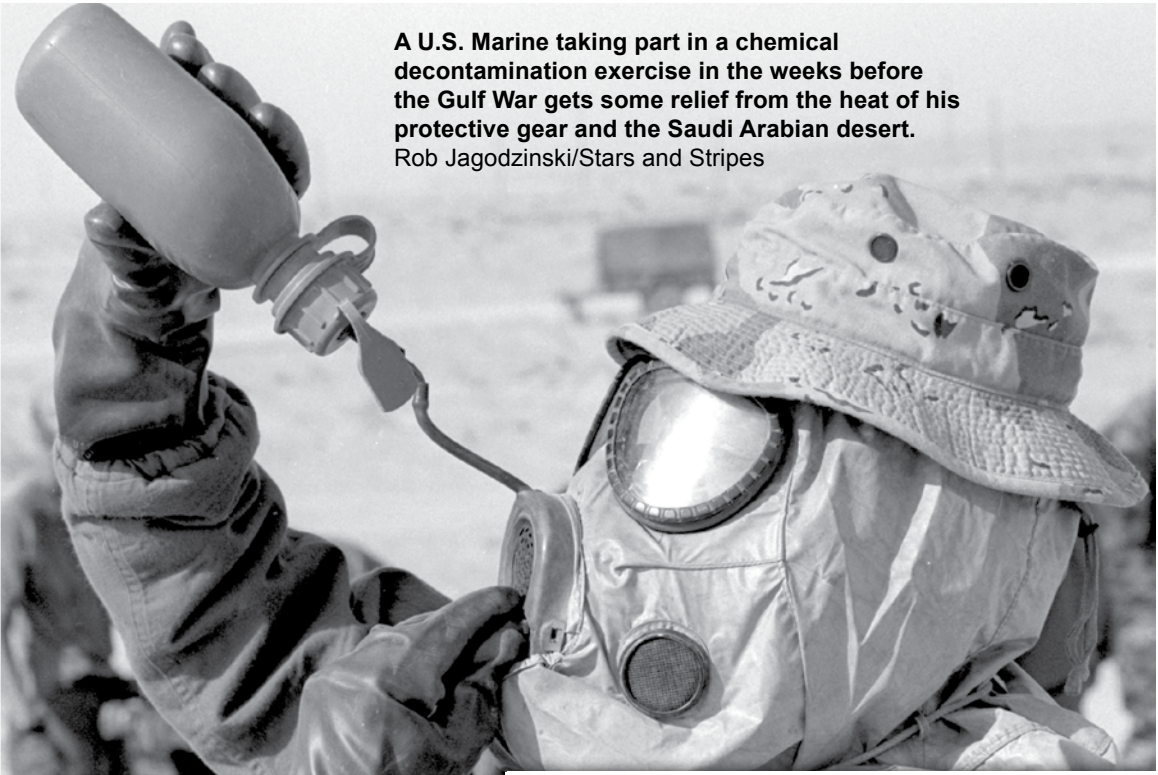
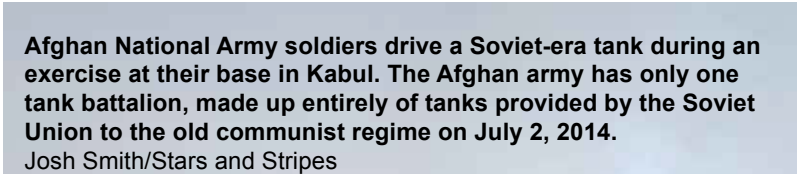
The new millennium only started with 9/11; it continued to present fresh challenges to Stars and Stripes Pacific. Natural disasters would figure prominently in the newspaper’s coverage. Reporters and photographers were dispatched to see firsthand how the U.S. military switched from combat mode to disaster relief.

In December 2004, a magnitude 9.1 earthquake off the island of Sumatra, Indonesia, gave rise to a devastating tsunami, 30 feet high in some places where it came ashore. The series of waves killed about 225,000 people, as many as 200,000 in Indonesia alone.

Stars and Stripes Pacific reporters documented the relief effort by U.S. military units stationed on the main islands of Japan and on Okinawa. From Yokota Air Base in western Tokyo, Air Force flight crews logged 2,500 hours and hauled 4 million pounds of humanitarian aid to affected areas in four countries, Stripes’ Vince Little reported in 2005.

Another Stripes journalist, Juliana Gittler, reported from Thailand on the work approximately 15,000 U.S. service members undertook to provide relief as well as rebuild some areas swept away by the tsunami.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14





Robson, Sugiyama and Bailey met a family doing its best to clean up its business, a small bar. What struck Sugiyama was how positive they were. Their attitude amid so much destruction touched an emotional chord.

“They were just doing what they had to do,” she said. “The more I think about it, I kind of choke up. That’s when I realized what I was getting into. I just can’t get emotional in front of these people, that’s not what they want to see.”



Sugiyama The hardest part of her experience was approaching a woman looking for her missing sister in a temporary morgue in a gymnasium. “I really didn’t want to do it,” she said, “but I knew that was my job, to do that. I forced myself to do that.” The woman didn’t find her sister, but Sugiyama gave her information on other sites where bodies were collected. The woman was grateful for that information, which gave Sugiyama some comfort knowing she’d helped in some way.

“It was a horrible thing that happened, but it was a great experience for me to be able to work with the journalists,” she said. “It gave me a better understanding of what Stars and Stripes is all about.”

Enduring Legacy

The newspaper faced an existential crisis in 2020, when budget cuts and a proposal to eliminate funding cast doubt on its future.

Public outcry, bipartisan support from lawmakers and the dedication of its staff ensured its survival. The episode highlighted the enduring importance of independent military journalism and Stars and Stripes’ vital role in informing service members around the world.

Meanwhile, a once-in-a-century pandemic crept across the world, complicating the U.S. military presence in the Indo-Pacific.

Stars and Stripes reporters rose to the challenge, documenting the military response and tense relations with host countries as COVID-19 claimed hundreds of lives and forced millions into seclusion.

Reporters brought readers an exclusive interview with a 23-year-old soldier at Camp Carroll, South Korea—the first U.S. service member infected with COVID-19 in February 2020.

The following month, they covered the first active-duty service member to die of the disease—a 41-year-old chief petty officer aboard the USS Theodore Roosevelt. The outbreak on the aircraft carrier, which was diverted to Guam, led to the removal of its skipper and the resignation of the Navy secretary.

As the pandemic subsided, Stars and Stripes reflected on lessons learned, exploring changes in relationships with America’s allies, adversaries and host countries, as well as the pandemic’s effects on the U.S. economy and military readiness.



Spc. Angel Ruszkiewicz, 21, a combat camera specialist from Milwaukee, Wis., reads a Stars and Stripes at the passenger terminal on a coalition base in Erbil, Iraq, on Monday, Dec. 23, 2019, before a flight to Syria. Chad Garland/Stars and Stripes



Military members stationed at Yokota Air Base play Magic the Gathering while wearing masks at the bases’s USO, Jan. 14, 2022. Kelly Agee/Stars and Stripes



A sign posted at the commissary on Yokota Air Base in Tokyo reminds shopper of the mandatory mask policy, Jan. 14, 2022. Kelly Agee/Stars and Stripes



Sailors and dependents from Naval Air Facility Atsugi donated thousands of pounds of goods to be delivered to those hit hardest by the massive earthquake and tsunami that devastated northeastern Japan on March 11, 2011. Erik Slavin/Stars and Stripes



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