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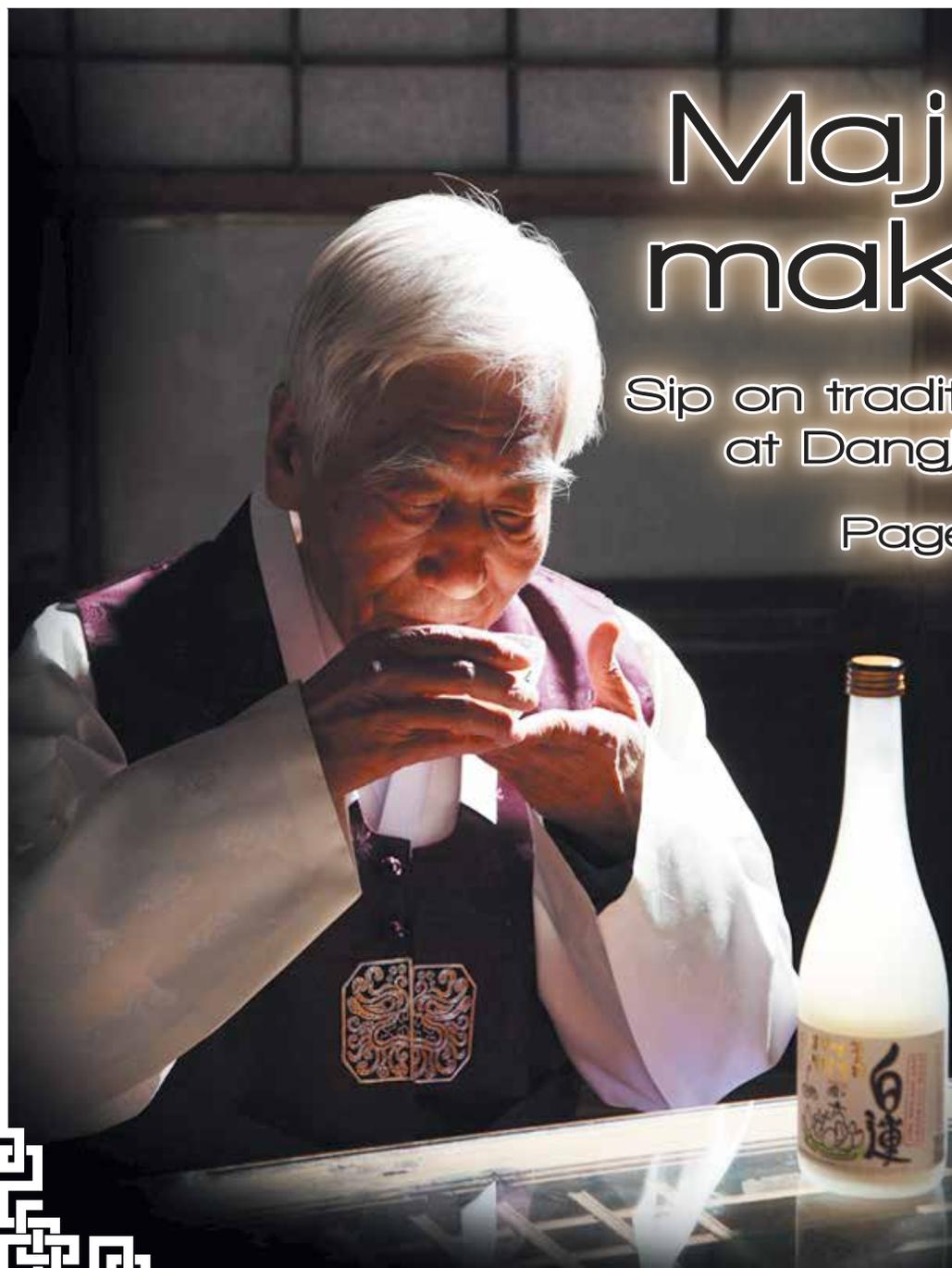
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Photo deadline: Jan. 15



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Majestic makgeolli

Sip on traditional rice wine at Dangjin brewery

Page 12-14

Photo courtesy of Shinpyeong Brewery



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Loungin' in luxury

6 international hotels to try

Page 8-9

Photo courtesy of Haps Korea Magazine



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Halloween photo contest winners

This year's Halloween photos submitted by Stripes' readers were amazing! We had many submissions and many votes, so there can only be three winners. This year, Bryant Bellamy from Sasebo won the \$50 prize; Yolanda Santos and her family from Guam won the \$30 prize in the group costume category; and, Cassandra Chavez's son Aiden Murillo from Yokota Air Base won the \$20 prize in the individual category. Check out their submissions as well as some other honorable mentions below. And, don't forget to follow us at [Facebook.com/StripesPacific](https://www.facebook.com/StripesPacific) for more great contests like this!



Carmelle Fuentes



Marisol Navarro Martin from Sasebo



Lisa Hall from Korea

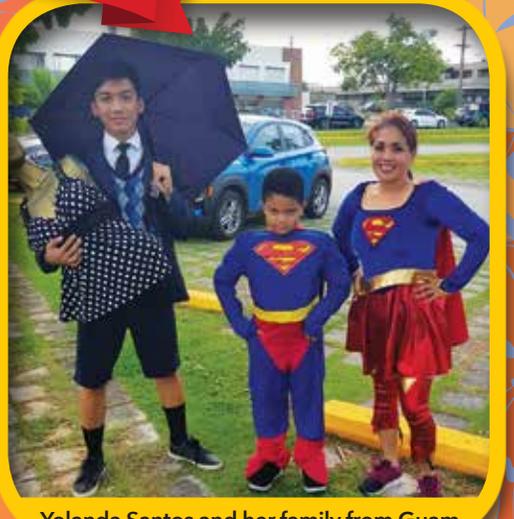


Winners

Cassandra Chavez's son Aiden Murillo from Yokota Air Base



Bryant Bellamy from Sasebo



Yolanda Santos and her family from Guam

PALAU



© Kevin Davidson

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Preserving Pacific history

Stripes librarian retires after 40 years among the archives

BY SETH ROBSON,
STARS AND STRIPES
Published: November 13, 2019

TOKYO — Thousands of newspapers dating back to 1945, countless clippings of old stories and half a million priceless photographs fill a room that Norio Muroi has tended for the past four decades.

Stars and Stripes' library in Tokyo preserves the stories and heroics of countless service members from World War II and the Korean and Vietnam wars alongside records of newsworthy events on American bases in the Far East over the past 75 years.

Muroi, 65, who retires Friday, has worked in the newspaper's library for more than half of that timespan.

A tailor's son from Otawara in Tochigi prefecture, Muroi in 1977 was studying economics at Hosei University in Tokyo when he started as a Stars and Stripes copyboy, he recalled during a recent tour of the library at Hardy Barracks, the newspaper's Pacific headquarters in the Japanese capital.

"It was rare to see American people so much in those days and to have an opportunity to talk with native speakers," he said of his first days on the job, when he was eager to practice the English he'd learned at school.

Just steps from the nightlife hub of Roppongi, Hardy Barracks was a hive of activity. Dozens of U.S. military and civilian staff and 180 Japanese worked to publish hundreds of thousands of newspapers each day for service members on the main islands of Japan, Okinawa, Korea and other parts of the Pacific such as the Philippines, Vietnam, Taiwan and Guam.

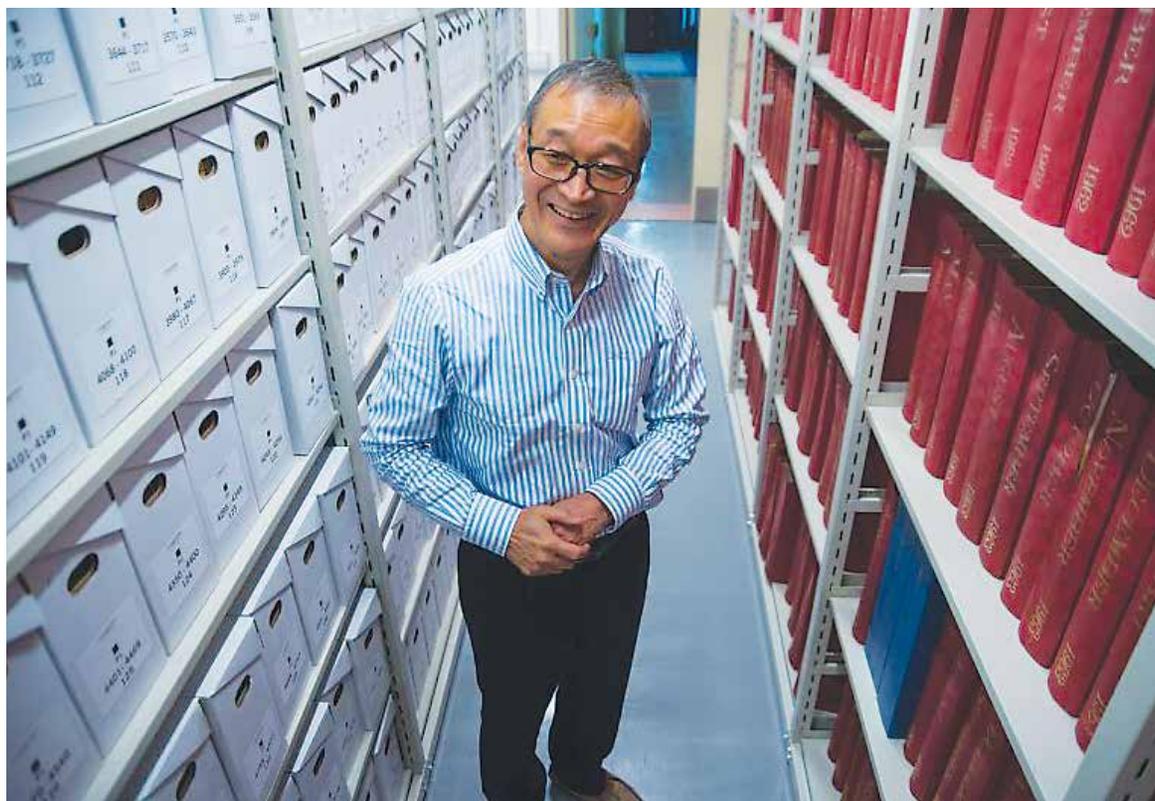
It was an era before online news or Google searches, when printed newspapers provided a vital link to home for troops stationed overseas.

"We were like tennis ball boys," Muroi said of the copyboys, who spent mornings rushing about the newsroom carrying story drafts and messages to editors. The youngsters burned plenty of calories and looked forward to a free Coke from the sports editor at the end of each shift, he recalled.

Full-time librarian

In 1979, he started full time in the library, which had a chief and four Japanese employees. Two kept track of photographs and two were assigned to cut up 10 newspapers each day and sort the clippings into categories that could be researched for future stories.

Known today as the Toshi



Norio Muroi began working for Stars and Stripes' Tokyo office as a copy boy in 1977 and began working in the library in 1979. Photos by Theron Godbold, Stars and Stripes



Boxes filled with photographs, newspaper clippings and other materials line the walls of Stars and Stripes Pacific's library at Hardy Barracks in Tokyo.

Cooper Library, it holds at least 250,000 clippings that are stored in envelopes and filed so they can be searched by subject, such as notable figures, military units and campaigns.

But Muroi didn't spend his entire career among the archives. Some of his most memorable experiences involved serving as an interpreter for journalists in the field.

In February 1982, he and the

other librarians acting as temporary linguists joined reporters rushing to a fire at the Hotel New Japan that, ultimately, claimed 32 lives not far from the Sanno Hotel, a U.S. military property.

The following day, Muroi was back in the field as an interpreter after a Japan Air Lines pilot intentionally crashed a DC-8 airliner at Haneda Airport, killing 24 people, he said.

Another memorable linguist

assignment involved a ride in a Kodak blimp over Tokyo.

"I even got to sit in the pilot's seat," he said. "That's a rare experience."

Plenty of famous faces, including Michael Jackson, Billy Joel and Rihanna, have passed through Hardy Barracks during Muroi's tenure.

Two of the most memorable stars he met on the job were folk musician John Denver and baseball Hall of Famer Joe DiMaggio, Muroi said, proudly showing off photographs of his 1992

encounter with Joltin' Joe. He met the Yankee legend while helping a sports reporter cover the U.S.-Japan baseball series at the now-demolished Korakuen Stadium.

Valuable resources

The library that he's handing off to his successor, Akiko Takamizawa, is a recently renovated, state-of-the-art facility that features constant temperature and humidity control.

It stores hundreds of large, red volumes that contain original Stars and Stripes newspapers sorted by month all the way back to 1945, and countless clippings and old photographs preserved in hundreds of white boxes on metal racks.

The library has about 500,000 photographs taken by Stars and Stripes staff or sourced from news agencies or U.S. military service branches over the years, Muroi said.

He opened a box of photographs and found black-and-white prints of images taken during the Vietnam War by Gary Cooper, an enlisted Stars and Stripes reporter who eventually married the library's namesake, longtime librarian Toshi Cooper.

One of those photos shows a wounded soldier getting aid from a couple of buddies on the battlefield. The print, like hundreds of thousands of others in the library, is coded to allow librarians to track negatives stored at the Stars and Stripes Europe library in Kaiserslautern, Germany. The libraries are gradually digitizing those negatives for posterity.

The library isn't just a valuable resource for working journalists. Muroi's work also involves tracking down old stories and photographs for veterans or those whose friends or relatives have appeared in Stars and Stripes over the years.

For example, his research skills came in handy when a woman contacted the newspaper in December 2017 looking for old photographs of her father, Gordon Windhorn, who played professional baseball in Japan in the 1960s. The family's own photographs from that time were destroyed in a fire, Muroi said.

He tracked down images of Windhorn in the library along with other photos held by the Foreign Correspondents' Club of Japan and the Baseball Hall of Fame Museum in Tokyo and sent them to the family.

Muroi said he's had plenty of useful advice over the years from Toshi Cooper, who served as librarian from 1948 to 1971. Now chairwoman emeritus of the Stars and Stripes Association, which organizes

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reunions of former employees, Cooper described Muroi as the ideal newspaper librarian.

“He has everything it takes to be the perfect research librarian,” she said. “He is studious, calm and steady, curious, patient, selfless, a good listener, devoted and above all that, he loves Stars and Stripes.”

Importance of preservation

Muroi vividly remembers the library shaking during the massive magnitude 9.0 earthquake that devastated Japan in March 2011.

One of Stars and Stripes’ initial reports on the disaster says the shaking tipped over a television, knocked a clock off the wall and scattered the contents of filing cabinets in the newsroom.

The quake triggered a tsunami that caused a meltdown at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant and claimed nearly 16,000 lives. At the library, the

quake caused water leaks but no damage to the archives. However, the building still has cracks in its walls.

Preserving Stars and Stripes’ archives and other documents in the building is important, Muroi added.

“No matter how digital technology expands in the future the original is coming from here,” he said.

Muroi plans to stay in Tokyo after retirement and spend time hiking with his wife, Yoshiko. The couple’s first trip will be to a Japanese hot spring, he said.

Muroi said what he’ll miss most after leaving the library is access to the old newspapers.

“When I’m retired it will be hard to see the newspapers page by page,” he said. “That’s the part I’ll miss the most.”

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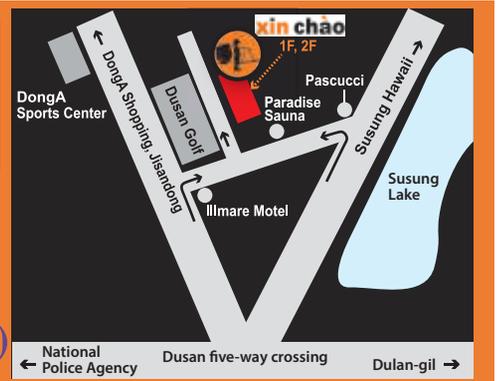


Stars and Stripes Pacific librarian Norio Muroi looks through the newspaper’s archives.



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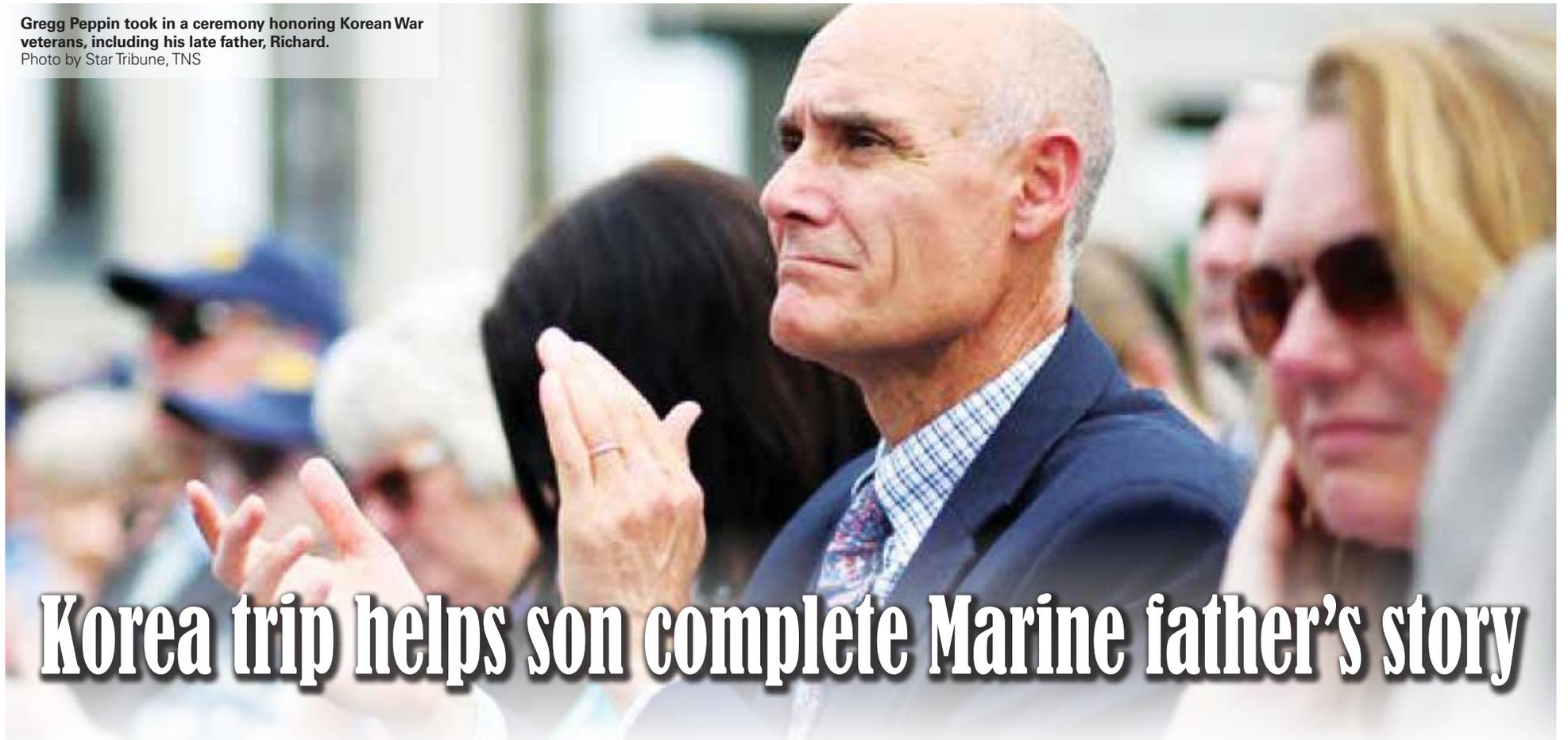
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Gregg Peppin took in a ceremony honoring Korean War veterans, including his late father, Richard. Photo by Star Tribune, TNS



Korea trip helps son complete Marine father's story

BY REID FORGRAVE, STARTRIBUNE

MINNEAPOLIS, Minn. — Gregg Peppin knew his father, Richard, had seen awful stuff when he fought in the Korean War. The 18-year-old Minnesota Marine was only in the country for a month, but it was an awful month. He landed in

Incheon — a coastal city adjacent to Seoul and about 200 miles from the North Korean border — in November 1950, just as China was entering the conflict. He soon found himself in the Battle of Chosin Reservoir, a brutal 17-day battle that saw the harshest weather and highest number of casualties of the war.

The elder Peppin was injured when a munitions depot exploded during the United Nations retreat. He served out the remainder of his four years of service with an honor guard in Washington, D.C.

Growing up in Golden Valley, Gregg Peppin only heard bits and pieces of his father's Korea experience. "When I asked my

mom about it, she said, 'Your dad saw a lot of dead people,' Peppin recalled. Snapshots of the horrors of war would occasionally slip out. The five kids knew dad never slept well, but they never connected it to post-traumatic stress disorder. Once, Peppin's father looked at his granddaughter and said she was the same age as a young

girl in Korea whose arm was blown off. And that was pretty much all he ever said.

"He didn't talk about the war — just didn't talk about it," Peppin said.

Still, Peppin knew Korea shaped his father. After his father retired as CEO for a company that manufactures maintenance



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equipment for railroads, Peppin — a longtime Republican strategist in Minnesota — heard the Minnesota Department of Transportation had special license plates for Korean War veterans. He knew his dad wouldn't put the plate on his car, so Peppin got an unofficial sample plate for him.

Months later, Peppin found the Korean War license plate buried in a closet in his dad's garage behind a stack of wood-working magazines.

"I took that as if he was trying to put this part of his life out of his mind," Peppin said.

But Peppin could never get his father's Korean War service out of his own mind. The 58-year-old wanted to connect with his dad's unreachable past. That desire only strengthened after his dad died in 2013. A couple of years ago, he was at a pancake breakfast at Mary Queen of Peace Catholic Church in Rogers when a Korean War veteran named Norb Zahler told him of a trip he'd just taken back to the country he'd fought a war in nearly 70 years before. The veteran trips, which are subsidized by the South Korean government, are also open to family of Korean War veterans, Zahler told him. Peppin called up a friend, Randy Gilbert of Wayzata, whose father served in the Air Force during the Korean War, and who also didn't

talk about his service.

A month ago, Peppin and Gilbert and their wives, Joyce and D'Ann, flew halfway across the world for a week, touring the country their fathers helped keep free of communism. Two buses shuttled 40 veterans and their families all around South Korea. They arrived from across the United States; Peppin and Gilbert were the only Minnesotans.

They toured the War Memorial of Korea museum in Seoul. The Korean Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs put on a dinner and ceremony, attended by 7,000 Koreans and the top American general, where the veterans and their families were presented with Ambassador of Peace medals from the South Korean government.

"For me, it was to go where he went and just shut my eyes and think, 'What was war like in 1950, and what did my dad experience?'" Peppin said.

Added Gilbert: "All I learned about the Korean War was one paragraph in eight-grade social studies and watching M*A*S*H*."

The week in South Korea helped both men fill in holes from their fathers' lives. It's a hole plenty of Americans have about this era. Korea is often considered America's "forgotten war," tucked between World War II, which was fought by "the Greatest Generation,"

"For me, it was to go where he went and just shut my eyes and think, 'What was war like in 1950, and what did my dad experience?'"

— Gregg Peppin

and the politicized and controversial Vietnam War. Korea was America's and the western world's first major military response to the spread of communism, and was one of the foundations of the Cold War.

It was an emotional experience when Peppin sat at the ceremony, which included honoring a half-dozen living veterans who served with his father at the Battle of Chosin Reservoir. Peppin imagined his father, who had part of his left leg amputated late in life due to multiple sclerosis, being wheeled up there with the other veterans.

"I knew [that] when they played that national anthem,"

Peppin said, "he would have stood on one leg for that flag."

Gilbert, too, was deeply moved. At the ceremony, a 90-year-old veteran turned to Gilbert and said, "Your father would be really proud of you."

Fred Lash of Military Historical Tours Inc., which administers the Revisit Korea Program, clarified its mission: "It's just to pay back and say thanks to Americans for saving their you-know-whats in the 1950s," he said. "Otherwise, they'd be just like [North Korean capital] Pyongyang."

The trip was an opportunity for the two friends to reminisce about their fathers. Back in Washington, Peppin's dad met, and later married, Peppin's mother, who was raised in Virginia and was working at the time in J. Edgar Hoover's FBI office. They moved back to Minnesota, where Peppin's father worked his way up from a laborer in the taconite mines to CEO.

Gilbert's father, who signed up for the military before he turned 16, served for 20 years in the Air Force before becoming a meat cutter. He taught his four children to chop wood and use tools, took Randy hunting and, when Randy bagged his first deer, handed him a knife so he could field dress it on his own. "You're going to learn," Gilbert recalled his father telling him.

"He wanted to make certain I knew how to do all the things he did. He was my best friend."

The trip also served as a reaffirmation of American goodness in this divided and confusing time, Gilbert said. Things were simpler back then: There was communism, or there was capitalism. The Soviet Union and China, or the free and democratic West. When North Korea attacked South Korea, the United Nations — led by the United States — defended free people and stopped the flow of communism. A simple equation. Revisiting this time period was, for these two Minnesotans, a reaffirmation of America's goodness.

The most emotional part of the trip was seeing the glint in veterans' eyes, Gilbert said. At times it seemed like the men were 18 again. Other times, it seemed like they'd finally come to terms with what that war nearly seven decades ago had accomplished.

"They were told it would be 100 years before South Korea got back to any semblance of prosperity," Gilbert said. "These guys are looking at it like, 'We helped make this.' And they were so proud. It was like the scene from 'Saving Private Ryan,' when the guy is dying, and Private Ryan says, 'Make this worth it.'"

"And these guys made it worth it."



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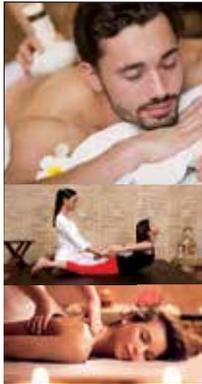
HAPS KOREA MAGAZINE

With the year-end holiday season coming up, Small Luxury Hotels of the World is pleased to introduce six new members to its exclusive collection of independent luxury boutique hotels.



From a private hill retreat in Bali, a sophisticated eco-hotel hidden in the forest, a Zen-hideaway nestled in the wetland to an ex-hunting lodge fit for the royals, there is something to suit the tastes of all independently-minded travelers.

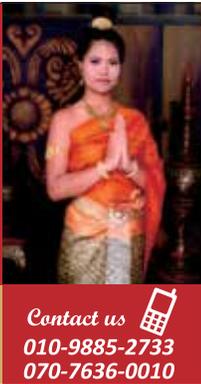
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Le Coucou Meribel, Meribel, France
55 rooms from EUR583 per night

Opening on 12th December, Le Coucou Meribel is part of a new luxury collection of five-star boutique hotels owned by fashion and property entrepreneurs the Parien-te family. Perched along the slopes in Meribel at the foot of the Rond-Point des Pistes, the elegant ski-in/ski-out hotel overlooks the entire valley. With its traditional chalet styling, the mountain-side hotel spread over 12,000 square meters offers a chic and relaxed take on mountain living with cheeky nods to cuckoos – the mischievous bird from which it borrows its name, including a

feature wall in the BeefBar restaurant adorned with an entire collection of old cuckoo clocks. Young guests are not forgotten either — the hotel’s Petit VIP Kids Club and Teens Lab designed by Sophie Jacquemin, a specialist in captivating children, leads the way in the design of fun and educational activities for kids and teens. Think customized creative workshops, interacting with an imaginary yeti and funny monsters, and creating their first glass of mocktail.

Insider Tip: Book one of the four-bedroom chalets to enjoy a kitchen, games corner and TV room, private swimming pool and spa, a ski-in/ski-out room and outstanding views from the lounge.



Hidden Hills Villas, Uluwatu, Bali, Indonesia
7 rooms from USD180 per night

Located in the stunning hills of Uluwatu, Hidden Hills Villas is a luxurious retreat blessed with great views of the Indian Ocean. The resort is the perfect getaway for travellers who value discretion and total bliss – there are no common areas and everything is provided in the comfort of the villa by a dedicated butler. Guests here won’t find set mealtimes, a main restaurant or loungers lining the pool.

Instead, chefs grill just-caught fish in the villas, while a personal butler will serve cooked-to-order breakfast or a mixologist-made cocktail — whenever and wherever the guest fancies. Each of the seven villas (from one to five bedrooms) has its own distinct personality, taking inspiration from different cultures around the world which makes staying at Hidden Hills Villas a different experience each time.

Insider Tip: Be sure to catch the mesmerizing sunset at the world-famous Uluwatu temple which is just a short drive away and can be arranged by the butler.



Arima Hotel, San Sebastián, Basque Country, Spain
69 rooms from EUR175 per night

Hidden among the trees in the Miramón Forest, Arima embodies “the new luxury” — boasting ultra-low energy consumption as the greenest lodging by far around San Sebastian. From clean energy systems, sulfate-free toiletries to a menu inspired by locally-grown ingredients at veggie-based fine dining restaurant Misura, the hotel sets a new benchmark in terms of environmental and social responsibility, as evinced by its rigorously audited Passivhaus qualification — a leading global authority for the reduction of the ecological footprint of buildings. In fact, 77 percent of Arima

Hotel’s energy needs are fulfilled from aerothermal and geothermal power. The interior details are Scandi and Zen: soft indie music playing in the stylishly lit hallways; floor to ceiling windows casting the Nordic-style furniture in a gorgeous light. The hotel is also perfectly located for exploring the best sights and cities of the Basque region. Bilbao and Pamplona are easily reachable within an hour, as are Saint Jean de Luz and Biarritz in France.

Insider Tip: During summer, the rooftop infinity-edged pool commanding a majestic view over the canopy of the Miramón forest is not to be missed. Year-round, go hiking or cycling in the forest or explore San Sebastián’s many Michelin-starred restaurants, but we recommend the local pintxos bars serving txakoli, the local white wine, with traditional Basque snacks.




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Muh Shouu Xixi Hotel, Hangzhou, China

43 rooms from USD294 per night

Muh Shouu Xixi Hotel is a hotel that blends harmoniously with its surroundings — nestled near the southwest part of Xixi National Wetland Park, its overall design concept is a combination of the wetland scenery and artistic inspiration from Chinese landscape paintings.

Owned and designed by GOA Architects, one of the most prominent architectural firms in China, the hotel combines five buildings to create a

congenial, open architectural design that is in constant dialogue with its surroundings.

The use of natural materials such as like recycled wood, rusted steel, and water-faced marble underline the structure’s sustainable concept, beautifully complementing the 200 native trees in the area which includes a 100 year-old persimmon tree. From the bedrooms to the beautifully-designed restaurant which advocate organic and locally cultivated food and ingredients, glass walls and open spaces



frame the stunning views, providing guests who walk into the hotel with a “slow life journey away from the hustle and

bustle”.

Insider Tip: By request, professional teachers from the Taiji temple can help guests

exercise their body and mind, and experience the charm of Jiangnan on the private docks at the hotel.

Ovolo Central, Mid-Levels, Hong Kong

41 rooms from HKD2,200 per night

Ovolo Central on Arbuthnot Road unveils a transformation including exterior façade, new social spaces, reception and rooms following a total overhaul.

The boutique designer hotel in the heart of Hong Kong’s Central Business District pays tribute to the fun and playful atmosphere of Central, featuring an array of unique and edgy design elements and channels a modern, funky aesthetic replete with custom artworks, edgy fabrics and design accents riffing on the city’s east-meets-west heritage.

Ovolo Central also boasts an



exceptional flagship food and beverage offering from VEDA, Hong Kong’s first vegetarian hotel restaurant spearheaded by celebrated vegetarian chef Hetty McKinnon.

The restaurant’s innovative “High Chai” – with a keen balance of health and indulgence

– makes the perfect afternoon tea experience.

Insider Tip: Book its Radio Suite, designed by award-winning firm ALT-254, which spans the entire top floor of the hotel measuring 700 sq ft and features an unbeatable view and a sleek, modern design.

Great Fosters, Berkshire, United Kingdom

42 rooms from GBP198 per night

Set within 50 acres of beautifully landscaped gardens and parkland, Great Fosters is a regal sight to behold, boasting impressive Saxon-moated gardens and a guest list over its 400-year history that includes Queen Elizabeth I (whose crest still hangs above the front door), King Henry VIII and Charlie Chaplin. Perfectly positioned for visitors to Windsor (especially after Harry and Meghan’s wedding at Windsor Castle in 2018),

the 16th-century royal hunting lodge is a perfect way to unwind and experience the royal treatment after a day trip. The stately Grade One listed main house carries all the hallmarks of contemporary comfort while retaining its unique heritage. Guests are welcome to fill their stay with as much — or as little — activity as they desire, from summer picnics, a dip in the heated outdoor pool with original 1920s bathing boxes and crisp winter walks around the Great Fosters estate, to a game of traditional croquet. With chef Tony Parkin helming Michelin star and 4AA Rosette restaurant The Tudor

Room, as well as the hotel’s very own Great Fosters’ Gin, guests are also in for a gastronomic treat.

Insider Tip: For a special occasion, opt for one of its historic suites/rooms bedecked in jewels such as 17th-century Flemish tapestries (Tapestry Suite) and elaborate Italian Rococo furniture with oversized bathtub for dive-right-in pampering (Italian Room). Furry companions are not forgotten either — they have dog-friendly rooms complete with a Dog Guide on the best spots to visit with your four-legged friend.

KOREA RESTAURANT GUIDE

Daegu	Osan Air Base
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * VIETNAMESE RICE NOODLE (PHO) * * STEAMBOAT * * SPRING ROLL * * SPECIAL VIETNAMESE VEGETARIAN ROLL * * TOMYAMKUNG * * PAT THAI (THAI FRIED RICE NOODLE) * * PAT PONG CURRY * (THAI STYLE CURRY WITH PRAWN OR CRAB) 	<p style="font-weight: bold; color: white; font-size: 1.2em;">OSAN AB</p> <p style="color: white; font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.5em;">2</p> <p style="color: white; font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em;">TIBA 2-for-1 Chickens</p> <p style="color: white; font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em;">Call 15 min. early for Fresh Pick up</p> <p style="color: white; font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.5em;">031-668-2993</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em; color: white;">Best flavor for Americans, All chickens A++ Products</p>
<div style="display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> <div> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em; color: #e67e22;">xin chào</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em; color: #e67e22;">Vietnamese & Asian Family Restaurant</p> </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; margin-top: 5px;"> </div> <div style="font-size: 0.8em; margin-top: 5px;"> <p>ADD: 20-6, SUSEONGMOT 6-GIL, SUSEONG-GU, DAEGU</p> <p>TEL: 053-765-6544</p> </div>	

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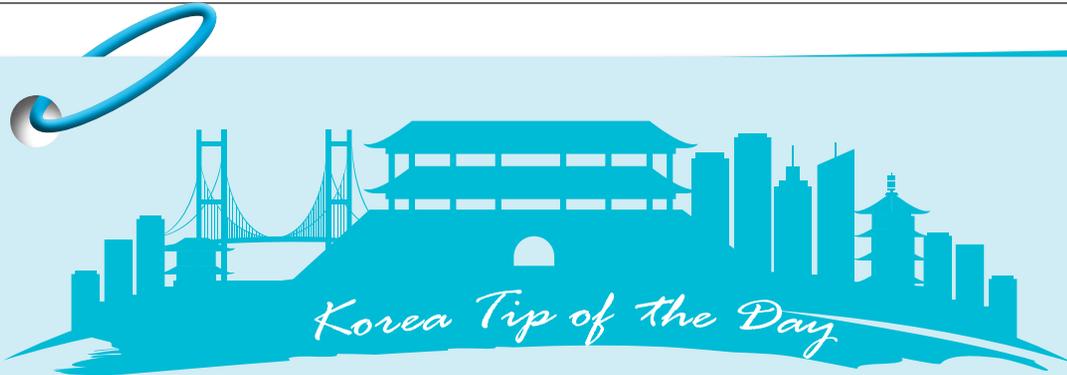
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Garbage bag rules relaxed

BY CHIHON KIM,
STRIPES KOREA

If you've been here a while, you know that garbage disposal is a little different in South Korea than it is in the States. Here, you must

purchase special garbage bags specific to the district in which you reside or else your garbage will not be picked up that week.

A new rule, however, is allowing residents to use any garbage bag regardless of the region. This is to cut down in waste from moving district to district and having to purchase new bags.

The rule, which took effect in September, also means you can now buy standard garbage bags at any convenience

store or chain supermarket wherever you shop.

While you're getting your standard trash bags, don't forget to pick up bags exclusively for food waste. These are required and the cost for the bags vary by district. Not all food waste can go in these bags since this waste is used for

fodder and fertilizer.

These are foods that should not go into the food disposal bags: Eggshells, crustacean shells (crawfish, crab, lobster, etc), clamshells, seeds (peach, apricot stones), rind of veggies (garlic, onion, ginger), rind of fruits (watermelon, pineapple), shell of nuts, animal bones (beef, pork, chicken, etc), fish bones, tea-leaf, clamshells, animal bones (beef, pork, chicken, etc).

No need to remember all of these items. If you think an animal can eat it, then it more than likely should go in the food waste bag.

For more information on garbage disposal visit <https://www.pyeongtaek.go.kr/en/contents.do?mId=0203020000>
kim.chihon@stripes.com



Trip talk!

Speakin' Korean

- Do you have standard waste garbage bags? il-ban sseu-le-gi bong-tu iss-eo-yo?
- Do you have food waste garbage bags? Eum-sik-mul

sseu-le-gi bong-tu iss-eo-yo?

- How many bags do you need? Myeot-jang pi-ryo-ha-se-yo?
- I would like to have (ten) bags. (Yeol)-jang ju-se-yo. (Five: Tasot, Thirty: Seo-reun)
- What (liter) size bag do you

need? Myeot ri-teo-jja-ri pi-ryo-ha-se-yo?

- I would like to have (10) liter-sized garbage bags. (Sip)-ri-teo-jja-ri-ro ju-se-yo. (Five: O, Twenty: isip)
- ChiHon Kim

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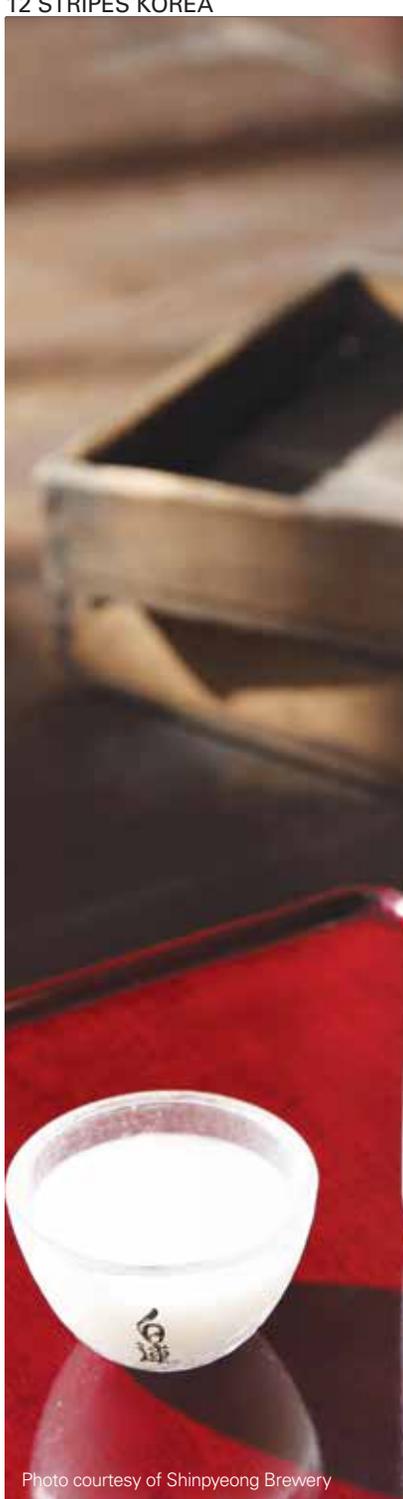


Photo courtesy of Sinpyeong Brewery

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
CHIHON KIM,
STRIPES KOREA

Makgeolli has a deep history in Korea as a farmer's tonic meant to give them energy to continue their hard day's work.

The rice wine is also pretty inexpensive and, thus, hit its peak in the 70s and 80s as an affordable libation. Soon, however, the alcoholic beverage with a milky consistency which once assuaged Korean's hunger and sorrow, was replaced by soju and beers as the country entered the Industrial Age.

Recently, the drink is experiencing a bit of a revival due to clever marketing as a health tonic. In an effort to keep the pace of the rise of makgeolli, even the Korean government is taking notice, offering support for brewers in different regions who are producing the liquor and thus helping to reduce the stigma of old and low-grade alcohol it once had.

One of these brewers is the Sinpyeong Brewery in Dangjin on the south shore of Bay of Asan. Established in 1933, Sinpyeong Brewery is the city's only dedicated traditional brewery and is run by Kim Dong-gyo and his father, Kim Yong-se, a designated Korean liquor brewing grandmaster.

As a family business spanning three generations, the brewery uses high-quality rice produced on the fertile granary as the key ingredient for the brewing of the rice wine. They have kept their own brewing skills and heritage despite the downturn during the Japanese colonial rule and the industrialization period, which saw a departure in the market away from makgeolli towards imported wines and beer.

Visitors to Sinpyeong Brewery can get a hands-on brewing experience for parties of 15 people or more. This tour includes brewing rice wine, a makgeolli sommelier course, making distilled water, making a pancake with yeast, and more.

I recently visited this place, which is filled with aroma of makgeolli, with a few friends. When we arrived, an old wooden fermentation

bucket taller than me overwhelmed us. Though the rustic giant bucket from Japan is no longer used, the wear on this thing made its long history obvious.

Since my group didn't meet the 15 person-minimum for liquor brewing, we instead enjoyed a tasting. Sinpyeong brews four different variations of the rice wine, yet they all have a distinct white lotus fragrance unique to this brewery.

Among the four, the first liquor we tasted was Snow (1,200 won or about \$1.03) with an alcohol content of about 6 percent in a white plastic bottle. Though it's an entry-level of makgeolli, Snow was once served at a celebratory dinner party hosted at the Blue House, South Korea's presidential residence. Snow has a crisp texture and was surprisingly clean like its name with a sweet after-taste.

The Misty (ABV 7%) which is high-grade makgeolli (3,500 won), has a deeper flavor than Snow and a very mellow texture. It had a great, slightly tangy sparkling flavor which I really liked. Others thought it was great, too, as it won the grand prize in the Korea traditional competitive exhibition in 2014.

They also have a pasteurized version of Misty, which contains no gas-forming yeast, making it less heavy for export. The feeling of refreshment is a bit weak due to the lack of carbonic acid, but it can be stored for up to one year. Misty is a good offering as a gift considering the regular makgeolli is highly perishable, is sensitive to temperatures and has a short shelf life.

The finale of our tasting was Baekryeon Margeunsul (ABV 12%), a real alcohol lover's rice wine. The brewery's prolonged fermentation and elaborate filtration process give this liquor a heavy flavor and adds to the depth at the same time.

During the tasting, my mind kept thinking about kimchi. Makgeolli is made of rice, so banchan, Korean side dishes of rice, kimchi and other appetizers, also makes for a good pairing.

Makgeolli is a great refreshment after a long days' work, especially in the heat of the summer. Head over with some friends to Sinpyeong and learn about this traditional Korean liquor. And, hey, don't forget to say, "gun bae!" (cheers!).

kim.chihon@stripes.com



Photo courtesy of Sinpyeong Brewery

Photo courtesy of Shinpyeong Brewery

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us at
every

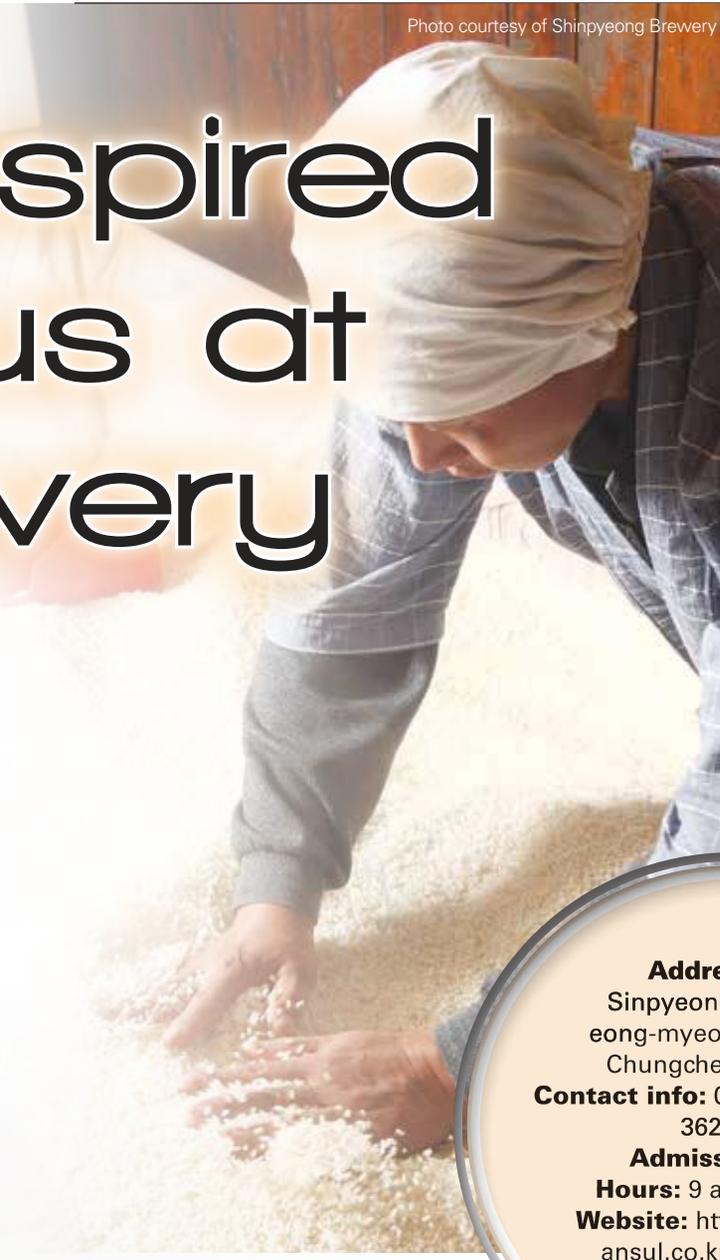


Photo courtesy of Shinpyeong Brewery

Address: 813,
Sinpyeong-ro, Sinpyeong-myeon, Dangjin-si,
Chungcheongnam-do
Contact info: 041-363-9063, 041-362-6080
Admission: Free
Hours: 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Website: <http://www.koreansul.co.kr/shop/main/index.php>



Photo courtesy of Shinpyeong Brewery



See Dangjin
on Page 14

AMI Art museum

Near Sinpyeong Brewery, the tiny AMI Art museum is a must-see repurposed school building with many great photo ops sure to please your Instagram followers.

I've seen many photos of this privately-owned art gallery on social media, so I decided to stop in. The corridor, with colorful art hanging from the ceiling, is especially popular online, so make sure to snap a pic.

The building served as the rural town's school until its closure in 1993, but then was redeveloped by a couple of installation artists. The building became an experimental museum, hosting humanities and art classes for locals, and even a permanent exhibition space.

Much of the building's style was preserved, including the classroom and small schoolyard out front. Walk through the building's old classrooms for a look at the many artworks on display. When I was there, a group of people were taking an art class, while outside many visitors were busy posing for photos.

Behind the museum, a nice and cozy café serves hot coffee and a variety of delicious sweets. After you enjoy the coffee, stop by the old Korean-style house.

According to the museum's webpage, the old house is used as lodging for residing artists. For me, the shabby house looked too old to live in, but it is another picturesque spot with its old items like stacked rice bowl and traditional household items.

Experience some of the local art scene while in Dangjin. This is just the type of spot to get some great pics and spend some time exploring with friends.

Address: 53-4 Sinsung-myeon South Road, Dangjin, Chungnam
Entrance fee: Adult 5000won/ Children aged 2 years and above, Military servicemen 3000won
Hours: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Contact info: 041-353-1555
Website: <http://www.amiart.co.kr>



DANGJIN: Try local fresh water snails

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13



Ureongibaksa Restaurant

Though I thought the local specialty of Dangjin would be seafood since the area is adjacent to the western ocean, the delicacy in this small city is actually freshwater snail.

Why is freshwater snail the specialty of Dangjin? Thanks to the fertile and wide farming land in the area, the freshwater snail is in abundance and is the preferred ingredient for soybean paste stew instead of clams, shrimp or meat.

In 1970, workers at a big construction site near the Sapgyocheon Seawall in Dangjin had a taste of this special dish, and gradually its popularity spread throughout the country. Now it is the most representative food of Dangjin.

Located just a 5-minute drive from the Sin-

pyeong Brewery, Ureongibaksa, specializing in freshwater snail, is drawing foodies wanting to get a taste of this delicacy for themselves.

Though their signature menu item is Ssam-bap (leaf wraps and rice), which comes with rice, steamed freshwater snails, ssamjang (sauce made of doenjang, gochujang, sesame oil and greens) and fresh veggies, I chose the Doenjang-jjigae (7,000 won, or about \$6.05) for lunch. Of course, this traditional stew also had lots of tasty freshwater snails.

The Doenjang-jjigae was not salty or spicy and had a savory flavor. This stew was delicious. If you're looking for something new to try, Ureongibaksa is the place to go!

Address: 499-1 Doseong-ri, Sinpyeong-myeon, Dangjin-si, Chungcheongnam-do
Hours: 6:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. (winter season), 6 a.m. to 8 p.m.
Contact info: 041-353-1555

Drink and talk!

Speakin' Korean

- **Do you drink?** Sul masil jul aseyo? masil su i-sseo-yo
- **How much do you drink?** Ju-ryang-i eo-tteo-ke doe-se-yo? ■ **I'm a big drinker.** Jeo-neun sul jal ma-syeo-yo.
- **I don't touch alcohol.** Jeo-neun su-reul mot ma-syeo-yo. ■ **Let's go for drinks sometime.** Eonje sul hanjan haeyo.
- **I'm a light drinker.** Jeo-neun su-reul jal motae-yo. ■ **Let's have a drink this evening.** O-neul jeo-nyeo-ge sul hanjan ha-sil-lae-yo?
- **I'm not much of a drinker.** Jeo-neun sul jal motae-yo. ■ **How about a drink after work?** Toe-geun-ha-go han-jan ha-neun-geon eot-tae-yo?
- **I'm a moderate drinker.** Jeo-neun jeok-dang-hi ■ **What is your favorite alcoholic drink?** Eotteon sul joa-ha-se-yo?



Photo courtesy of Shinpyeong Brewery

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Romance Live Performance / Making Heart lantern / Wish Tree / Eating Baked Sweet Potato Chestnuts
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Photo courtesy of Guacamole

Guacamole serves up tasty Mexican food

Address: 92, Anjeongsunhwan-ro 222beon-gil, Paengseong-eup, Pyeongtaek-si
Hours: 11 a.m to 10 p.m. (Last order 9:30 p.m.)
Contact info: 031-657-9998
Website: <https://www.facebook.com/guacamolehumphreys/>

STORY AND PHOTOS BY CHIHON KIM, STRIPES KOREA

Tucked away down Anjeong Rodeo Street, a bright green building may have caught your eye.

Resembling a staple food found on nearly every Mexican restaurant's table, this green building is home to Guacamole, a Mexican restaurant. This is Guacamole's second location, which recently opened outside of Camp Humphreys Dongchang-ri gate.

Compared to the location near Anjeong-ri gate, this one has a spacious parking lot, making it a convenient stop to grab a good bite to eat. Both restaurants serve up familiar favorites like tacos, quesadillas, and burritos.

As I entered, a polite server greeted me and offered me some suggestions for lunch as this was my first time at the restaurant. At first glance, the restaurant has a casual ambiance with its Mexican-inspired décor, but I could see it also being a good place to bring a date for a nice dinner.

Their menu offers many options to explore and different variations of your favorites, like fajita quesadillas or a fajita burrito. Just pick the chicken, pork or beef filling and Guacamole fix you up tacos, enchiladas or burritos and more. They also have a side menu with nachos, Mexican-style pizza and other tasty delights. For families, the kid's menu has chicken tenders, pepperoni pizza and plain rice and beans.

With my server's assistance, I chose the beef chimichanga (14,900 won about \$13) and a refreshing horchata drink (4,000 won). Horchata is a traditional Mexican drink made of rice milk and water sweetened with cinnamon. The creamy drink was so refreshing! If you've never had it, I recommend you give it a try.

While I was enjoying the horchata, my enormous chimichanga topped with cheddar cheese, sour cream, salsa and cilantro arrived! All of its delicious ingredients were wrapped perfectly into a yummy, fluffy and warm flour tortilla.

The tangy tomato and light bean sauce stimulated all of my taste buds. The melted cheese and other fillings melted in my mouth like butter. It was so good and probably the most filling meal I've had all year.

I don't frequently order dessert, but I am so glad I took Guacamole chef Julio Guzmán's suggestion to try the Mousse de Mole, a new addition to the menu. This mousse was served in a small portion perfect for one person. It had a light, nutty flavor and the consistency was smooth.

Another patron there when I visited also tried the delicious dessert and was glad he did

"Though this is my first time at this restaurant, I'm happy with my choice. The food was a superb and the soft dessert, Mousse de Mole, was delightful!" said

Maj. Fernando Benedetti.

Benedetti said he'd be back to try other items from the menu.

Guacamole also offers a vast selection of margaritas, beer, Aguas de sabor (fruit-flavored waters) and soft drinks. Grab your friends and gulp down the stockpiles of refreshing drinks with a Mexican twist.

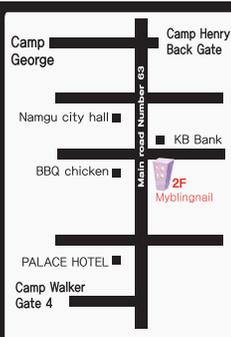
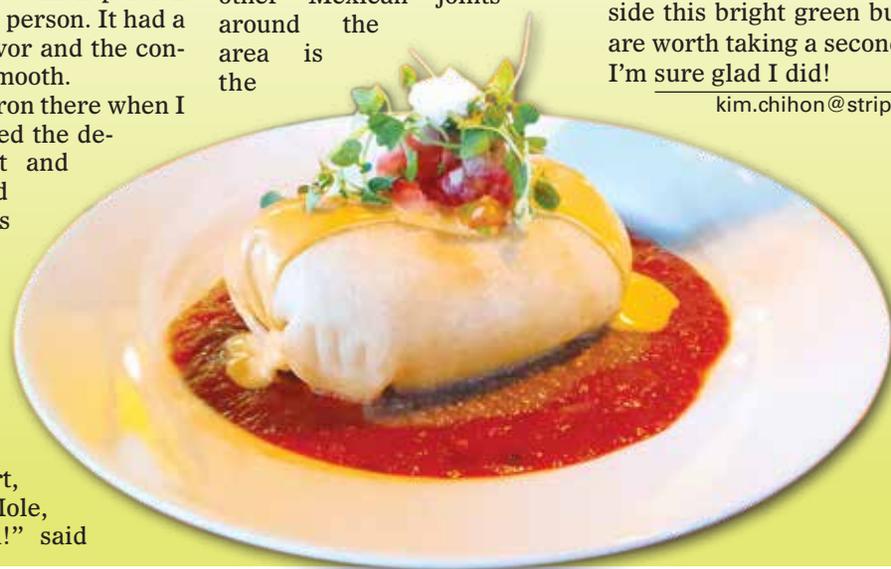
Guzmán, the chef at Guacamole when I visited, said what separates the restaurant from other Mexican joints around the area is the

cooking staff.

"We know how to cook [Mexican dishes] and we know what [Mexican food] should really taste like," Guzmán said. "We're trying to focus on preserving the authentic flavor of Mexican food and also preparing various traditional dishes like mole."

This will definitely not be the last time I visit Guacamole. The quality of the food, the vast menu, and the friendly staff inside this bright green building are worth taking a second look. I'm sure glad I did!

kim.chihon@stripes.com



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Bowl to the rhythm at B'avenue

B'avenue in Jamsil is a rock bowling alley, also known as atomic or cosmic bowling, where you can enjoy booming music while you knock over some pins. In addition to bowling, it offers a wide selection of imported beers as well as other entertainment amenities such as coin-operated karaoke machines, board games, and darts. With all the fun and music in the air, B'avenue is just the place for you and your friends to feel alive.

ADDRESS: B1F, Winners Officetel, 663, Baekjegobun-ro, Songpa-gu, Seoul
DIRECTIONS: Sports Complex Station (Seoul Subway Line 2, 9), Exit 9 → Walk for approx. 1 min towards Sports Complex Intersection → Cross the street and turn right
OPERATING HOURS: 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.
FEES: Bowling (1 game) 5,500 won per person / Shoes rental 2,500 won
FACEBOOK: www.facebook.com/bavenueseoul (Korean only)
NEARBY ATTRACTIONS: Jamsil Hangang Park, Lotte World, Lotte World Tower & Mall, Seoul Sports Complex
INQUIRIES: +82-2-414-0725 (Korean only)



Have a blast with indoor activities, rain or shine!

KOREA TOURISM ORGANIZATION

Travelers often encounter unanticipated events, especially in the form of adverse weather. Days of planning can go unrewarded due to sudden rain, snow, heat, cold, and even typhoons. If an unexpected weather condition is about to ruin your day, save yourself from the hassles of weather

with indoor activities! Seoul is packed with indoor entertainment facilities such as archery and shooting ranges, bowling alleys, massage cafés, VR gaming centers, and even places where you can relieve stress by smashing objects. Read on to discover our top picks for fun indoor attractions found at Hongdae, Jongno, and Jamsil, places that provide convenient access to bus terminals and train stations!

Relax and recharge at Dingguru



All travelers will agree that energy is essential to fully enjoy their trip. Getting a decent rest at your accommodation is probably best, but if that's not an option, take a short break at a unique café devoted to relaxation. Dingguru, located right next to Gyeongbokgung Palace, may seem just like any other ordinary café with its list of drinks and dessert menus at first glance. But on the side of the café is a separate area where you'll find luxurious massage chairs. Dingguru also provides a small hand massage device for those who feel a full-body massage chair is a bit too much. Rest your body and mind at café Dingguru to enhance your travel experience.

ADDRESS: 3F, 137, Sajik-ro, Jongno-gu, Seoul
DIRECTIONS: Gyeongbokgung Station (Seoul Subway Line 3), Exit 4 → Walk for approx. 2 min towards Gyeongbokgung Palace
OPERATING HOURS: 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. (Closed Tuesdays)
FEES: Massage chair 10 min 4,000 won / Massage chair 30 min 6,000 won / Massage chair 60 min 10,000 won / Americano 4,500 won / Yogurt smoothie 6,500 won / Waffle 5,000 won
 - Massage chair use comes with a drink
NEARBY ATTRACTIONS: Gyeongbokgung Palace, Gwanghwamun Square, Sajik Park, National Museum of Korean Contemporary History, Daerim Art Museum
BLOG: blog.naver.com/dinggurulc (Korean only)
INQUIRIES: +82-70-8285-5862 (Korean only)



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Shoot your stress away at **Real Shot**

Real Shot is a great place to hang out if you want get rid of your stress by focusing your mind. Located in the Street of Youth near Jonggak Station, Real Shot is equipped with a shooting and an archery range. Concentrate all your senses on the target as you pull the bowstring and all your stress and worries will be forgotten the moment you hit the bull's eye. Next to the archery range is the shooting range, where you can choose from



handguns to rifles. There's no need to worry if this is your first time to shoot with a bow and arrow or a gun; after a few rounds of practice, you'll feel like you're ready to compete at the Olympics!



ADDRESS: 3F 10, Jong-ro 12-gil, Jongno-gu, Seoul
DIRECTIONS: Jonggak Station (Seoul Subway Line 1), Exit 10 → Walk straight and take the first right → Walk for approx. 1 min and look to your right
OPERATING HOURS: Monday-Thursday 12 p.m. - 11 p.m. / Friday-Saturday 12 p.m. - 1:30 a.m.(next day) /Sunday 11 a.m. - 11 p.m.
FEES: Sniper rifle (20 bullets) 4,000 won / Archery (12 arrows) 5,000 won / Silver package 9,000 won / Gold package (not available Friday-Sunday & public holidays) 10,000 won / Diamond special, rifle (100 bullets) 15,000 won
NEARBY ATTRACTIONS: Bosingak Belfry, Cheonggyecheon Stream & Cheonggye Plaza, Gwanghwamun Square, Tapgol Park, Insa-dong
INQUIRIES: +82-70-4115-0070 (Korean only)

Warp to another dimension at **VRIZ VR**

Step into the world of virtual reality at Vrizz VR, a VR gaming center in Jamsil. As soon as you fasten on the VR headset, your mind will trick you into believing that you've warped into a different dimension. Challenge yourself to fetch a bell from the edge of a wooden plank atop a skyscraper or slice as many donuts as you can within the given time using a set of swords. There's also a multi-room for multi-player games. The actual gaming room in the real world may feel quite small, but the VR headset will open doors to a whole new reality.



ADDRESS: 2F, Huimang Bldg., 45, Baekjegobun-ro 7-gil, Songpa-gu, Seoul
DIRECTIONS: Jamsilsaena Station (Seoul Subway Line 2), Exit 3 → Turn right and walk straight for approx. 1 min → Turn right and walk for approx. 2 min and look to your right
OPERATING HOURS: Weekends 12 p.m. - 12 a.m.
FEES:
 - Single room (1 person / 1 hr): Weekdays (2 - 6 p.m.) 10,000 won / Weekends (12 - 11 p.m.) & evenings (6 - 11 p.m.) 19,900 won /
 - Multi-room (2 people / 1 hr): Weekdays 20,000 won / Weekends & evenings 39,800 won
NEARBY ATTRACTIONS: Jamsil Hangang Park, Lotte World, Lotte World Tower & Mall, Seoul Sports Complex
INQUIRIES: +82-70-5030-6111 (Korean only)

Refreshing aquarium café, **Aquaqu Cafe**

If you feel as gloomy as the weather, head to Aquaqu Café. As soon as you step inside, you will be overwhelmed by the cool and refreshing atmosphere. This aqua-themed café not only has its interior designed to resemble an aquarium, but it also features large fish tanks containing a variety of fish, including saltwater fish, tropical fish, and even sharks. Signature menus include blue ocean latte and their homemade ice cream, gelato kkobugi. The blue ocean latte is served in colorful layers that look like the beach while the gelato kkobugi is especially popular for its adorable turtle-like appearance. Take advantage of this opportunity to enjoy sweet delights surrounded by aquatic friends.

ADDRESS: 116, Eoulmadang-ro, Mapo-gu, Seoul
DIRECTIONS: Hongik Univ. Station (Seoul Subway Line 2), Exit 9 → Walk for approx. 5 min towards Hongdae Fashion Street
OPERATING HOURS: Weekdays 12:30 p.m. - 11:30 p.m. / Weekends 12:30 p.m. - 11 p.m.
SIGNATURE MENUS: Gelato kkobugi 6,000 won / Americano (hot) 4,500 won, (iced) 5,000 won / Blue ocean latte 6,000 won
NEARBY ATTRACTIONS: KT&G Sangsangmadang Hongdae, Gyeongui Line Forest Park, Hongdae Fashion Street
FACEBOOK: www.facebook.com/홍대-아쿠아카페-1275914259140617/ (Korean only)
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A Gem of the Philippines PALAWAN

STORY AND PHOTOS BY ANGELICA SLATER,
GROOVE KOREA MAGAZINE

Cebu and Boracay are two of the 7,000 islands in the Philippines that the rest of the world rave about as iconic holiday destinations. However, an emerging destination characterized by exclusivity, pristine clear waters, and white sandy beaches is the islands of Palawan. Palawan is a hidden yet evolving travel destination suitable for anyone, and here are the reasons why.

The province of Palawan is an archipelago consisting of various islands that each have their own identity. With that being said, although there is a variety of choices to pick from when it comes to deciding on the perfect resort for your relaxing vacation, El Nido Resorts have a selection of four islands to satisfy your needs: Pangulasian Island, Lagen Island, Miniloc Island, and Apulit Island. With the types of accommodation and activities differing on all islands, El Nido Resorts stay loyal to the theme of sustainability and being an eco-friendly environment. Depending on what suits you the best when it comes to your ideal holiday on the islands of Palawan, one of El Nido's islands will for sure be able

to give you the holiday you've been searching for.

Fortunately for me, I was able to experience first-hand Eco-Luxury on Pangulasian Island and the Eco-Sanctuary on Lagen Island. Flying to Palawan is no hassle when choosing El Nido due to their chartered flights operated by Airswift that are available six times a day. Once you land at Palawan, you are met with a

warm welcome from the El Nido staff and tour guides as you continue on to your chosen island. As you sit tight at the port and enjoy some snacks in the city of Lio, it's only a matter of moments until you are off on a boat setting across the ocean to reach your final destination. The tide at the time of your arrival determines what route you take. Just be sure to hold onto your hat and sunglasses to ensure they don't fall off! As you slowly make your way to the coast

of your island, you're distracted by the beauty of your surroundings. Upon disembarking, you are welcomed by the friendly staff of the El Nido Resort, who offer ice-cold drinks to quench your thirst after the relatively hot journey.

After the warm welcome, you are directed to the front desk to check-in, after which a member of the El Nido staff will brief you on the resort's eco-friendly environment. They ensure that they provide you with items (a bag) to contain all plastics and trash that may be harmful to the island. They emphasize the necessity of keeping your trash to yourself and leaving it in the ocean or surroundings, especially when out during leisure activities. Alongside these instructions, they hand you an A3 piece of paper with drawings of wildlife that can be found all over the island. You are instructed to take note of whether you come across the animals during your visit to add to their research and stay up to date.

After your briefing is over, it's all under your control. Depending on what time you arrive on your island, you can decide what activity you want to begin with. However, may I suggest enjoying and relaxing in your own room/villa, exploring the resort, and trying out the incredible food that

groovekorea.com





El Nido has to offer, especially their fruit shakes. As you stroll around the resort, don't forget to be on the lookout for nature and wildlife and to be sure to mark it down on your data sheet!

With several activities available right off the coast of your resort, I suggest the iconic island-hopping adventure, which allows you to discover the lagoon and island attractions of Palawan. It also allows you to meet fellow adventurers and further explore the sister islands of Palawan. With a set departure in the morning, remember to wear a swimsuit, pack your sunglasses, and lather on the sunblock to protect yourself from the Philippine sun. Enjoy the boat ride to the lagoons and cliffs of the Palawan islands. Then prepare to grab a partner and kayak your way to the cliffs to discover the true beauty within. Don't forget to watch your head! Pay attention to the sky-high cliffs and the colorful fish visible in the clear water with different shades of blue. Be sure to take those Instagram worthy images that most likely need no editing required. Just don't drop your phone in the water. After you've discovered the secret holes and entryways of the cliffs, make your way

back to your boat and enjoy a dip in the beautiful water next to where your boat is docked. Take a moment to absorb nature's true beautiful creations.

Finally, as you make your way back, your captain will make a detour where you will get a panoramic view of the famous lagoons of Palawan, giving you the

opportunity to capture more Insta-worthy moments. By now, after all the photos and the "gasp-ing in awe" moments, you have safely reached the resort, where I recommend taking a quick siesta before you decide what activity you want to complete next.

Even with just a few hours to spare, a variety of activities are available to

you off the island. If you're intrigued about the other islands of El Nido Resorts, then book a morning trip to one of the sister islands and enjoy the different activities they have to offer there. Also, enjoy lunch with different scenery. At Miniloc, do you fancy snorkeling with jackfish? Or, going for a dive with stingrays at Lagen? Even take a yacht out to the ocean. Or, paddleboard your way just off the coast. The El Nido resorts make everything simple and easy for you when it comes to accommodating your needs. With a large variety of water sports, there are also activities to satisfy others not so fond of sand in their toes. Go for a morning hike up to the island's peak to watch the sunrise, or if you're not a morning person, book the afternoon hike to watch the sunset.

Booking and enjoying a holiday has never been easier when traveling to Palawan. You are able to enjoy firsthand what nature has to offer and have the opportunity to take a break from the bustling city life. You are taken care of by all the friendly El Nido staff and wake up to exclusivity and beauty. So convince your family and friends to take a trip down to the islands of the Philippines and enjoy the secret island gem of Palawan.

Bucheon Aiins World - World Nightview Fantasy Lighting Festival



DATE: Until Dec. 31
LOCATION: Aiins World
INTRODUCTION:

Aiins World, a miniature theme park, hosts the "World Nightview Fantasy Lighting Festival." Located in Bucheon-si, Gyeonggi-do, the theme park is easily accessible via public transportation as the nearest subway station is Samsan Gymnasium (Seoul Subway Line 7), making it an ideal destination to visit during the late evenings, after meal time.

TRANSPORTATION:
Subway
 Samsan Stadium Station (Seoul Subway Line 7), Exit 4 or 5.
 Walk pass the Korea Manhwa Museum and continue walking straight for about 300m to arrive at Aiins World.



Bus
 Bus No. 53, 59-1, 558 (Get off at Main Gate of Aiins World Bus Stop.)
HOMEPAGE: www.aiinsworld.com (Korean only)

Animal & Heart Village Light Festival at Ansan Starlight Village Photo Land



DATE: Until Dec. 31
LOCATION: Starlight Village Photo Land
INTRODUCTION:

Starlight Village Photo Land provides a beautiful and romantic light festival all year round in the theme of Animal & Heart Villages. The Animal Village is decorated with displays of over 200 animals from owls, cranes and swans to elephants, giraffes, lions, pandas and more. Set off on a wild safari adventure with your family or loved ones to create special memories. In Heart Village, lovebirds will enjoy the romantic atmosphere decorated with hundreds of hearts. Photo themes include a lovely wedding and a propose zone.

TRANSPORTATION:
Bus
 Jungang Station (Seoul Subway Line 4), Exit 1.
 Take Bus No. 5601 and get off at Ansan Cheongmundang Entrance Bus Stop. The village is across the street approx. 200m back.
HOMEPAGE: www.ansanstar.net (Korean only)

HAPPENINGS OFF BASE

FESTIVALS

Iksan E-World Starlight Festival



DATE: Until Mar. 1, 2020
LOCATION: Areas of E-World and 83 Tower
INTRODUCTION:

E-World Starlight Festival is held with ten million lights in a large area around E-World and 83 Tower. Hot-air balloons, roses, and mask light decorations and other events are available at this carnival-like festival. The events start at night and large characteristic trees are decorated along the 200-meter long Light Road, as well as a Umbrella Road, Carnival Road, and photo zone by 1,000 lights. Also, 10,000 LED roses cover the proposal stairs, creating a romantic and special ambience. This festival is beloved by young couples as part of a night dating course.

TRANSPORTATION:
Subway
 Duryu Station (Daegu Subway Line 2), Exit 15.
 Turn left and walk straight for approx. 330 m.
 Cross the street to E-World.
HOMEPAGE: www.eworld.kr (Korean only)



Herb Island Light Festival



DATE: Until Apr. 30, 2020
LOCATION: Pocheon Herb Island
INTRODUCTION:
 Herb Island Lighting Festival features a romantic ambience created by splendid lighting displays. It is

comprised of a pink wish tunnel, sparkling buildings, Santa Village, photo zone and other twinkling places for visitors to enjoy.

TRANSPORTATION:
Bus
 Take an express bus to Pocheon Intercity Bus Terminal.
 Take Bus No. 57 bound for Sinbuk Oncheon (Sinbuk Hot spring) at the local bus stop outside the bus terminal. Get off at Samjeong-ri and go straight on Samcheong-gil Street to arrive at Herb Island.
OR
 Soyosan Station (Seoul Subway Line 1). Take Bus 57, and get off at Samjeong-ri.
 Go straight on Samcheong-gil Street to arrive at Herb Island.
HOMEPAGE: www.herbisland.co.kr (Korean, English, Chinese)



Boseong Tea Plantation Light Festival



DATE: Nov. 29 - Jan. 5, 2020
LOCATION: Areas of Korea Tea Culture Park
INTRODUCTION:
 Boseong Tea Plantation Light Festival will light up the green tea fields at Korea Tea Culture Park and Yulpo Beach (Solbat Beach). The Boseong Green Tea Plantation Light Festival, continues its reputation as an enjoyable festival for all ages, that represents the southern province.

TRANSPORTATION:
Bus
 - From Seoul Central City Bus Terminal, take an express bus to Boseong Terminal.
Korea Tea Culture Park
 - From Boseong Bus Terminal, walk to Boseong Terminal Bus Stop across the street.
 - Take local bus bound for Gunhak and get off at Daehan Dawon Bus Stop.
 - Walk approx. 75m to Korea Tea Culture Park.
Yulpo Beach
 - From Boseong Bus Terminal, walk to

Boseong Terminal Bus Stop across the street.
 - Take local bus bound for Gunhak and get off at Yulpo Bus Stop.
 - Walk approx. 255m to Yulpo Beach.
HOMEPAGE: www.boseong.go.kr (Korean, English, Japanese, Chinese)

Seoul Design Festival



DATE: Dec. 4 - Dec. 8
LOCATION: COEX Hall C (3F)
INTRODUCTION:
 Seoul Design Festival features a design-specialized exhibition managed by the monthly [DESIGN]. The festival has been playing a role as a messenger in the design field for 40 years. With the number of design-related exhibitions having increased since the first event in 2002, Seoul Design Festival has built a distinguished exhibition composition centered on designers, not like others that feature an exhibition collecting design products at one place.
TRANSPORTATION:
Subway
 Samseong Station (Seoul Subway Line 2), Exit 5 or 6.
 COEX is directly connected to the station.
Bus
 (bound for Samseong Station)
 Blue: 361, 362, 730, 301
 Green: 3417, 3414, 3217, 3218
HOMEPAGE: seoul.designfestival.co.kr (Korean only)

Lighting Festival at The Garden of Morning Calm



DATE: Dec. 6 - Mar. 22, 2020
LOCATION: Main gardens
INTRODUCTION:
 Held at the Garden of Morning Calm, the Lighting Festival is the biggest festival of lights in Korea, covering 100 thousand pyeong illuminated by 30,000 lights. The gleaming lights add a festive glow to the garden during the winter season. The main gardens are Hakyung Garden, Hometown House Garden, Bonsai Garden, Moonlight Garden, Sky Path and Garden of Eden, with colorful lights adorning the trees. In the event of inclement weather, lights may be turned off for safety.
TRANSPORTATION:
Bus
 From Sangbong Bus Terminal or Dong Seoul Bus Terminal take a bus bound for Cheongpyeong Bus Terminal.
OR,
 Take bus No. 1330 at Cheongnyangni Transfer Center (in front of Lotte Department Store).
 Get off at the Cheongpyeong Bus Terminal.
 From Cheongpyeong Terminal, take a bus bound for The Garden of Morning

Calm.
Subway
 Cheongpyeong Station (Gyeongchun Line), Exit 1.
 Go left until you reach the 3-way intersection and turn right. Continue straight toward the Cheongpyeong Catholic Church. Pass by Cheongpyeong Elementary School, turn left, and you will see the Cheongpyeong Bus Terminal. From the terminal, take a bus bound for The Garden of Morning Calm. Alternatively, take the Gapyeong City Tour Bus.
HOME PAGE: www.morningcalm.co.kr (Korean, English, Japanese, Chinese)



Busan Christmas Tree Festival



DATE: Dec. 15 - Jan. 5, 2020
LOCATION: Performance stage in front of the main Christmas tree
INTRODUCTION:
 The Busan Christmas Tree Festival, Busan's annual winter event, is annually held along the streets of Gwangbok-ro in Jung-gu district in Busan. Fabulous LED lights, concerts, a giant Christmas tree, street



performances, and other events make the event all the more festive.
TRANSPORTATION:
Subway
 Nampo Station (Busan Subway Line 1), Exit 1.
 Walk ahead for about 165m and take a right at Gudeok-ro.
 Take a left at the 2nd alley, continue for about 71m and turn right at the first alley.
 Go straight for 67m until you see the Gwangbok-ro area.
Bus
 Take Bus 8, 15, 17, 26, 27, 30, 41, 58-1, 61, 70, 71, 103, 113, 126, 134, 139, or 1003 and get off at Nampo Station.
HOME PAGE: bctf.kr (Korean only)



Homigot Sunrise Festival

DATE: Dec. 31 - Jan. 1, 2020
LOCATION: Homigot Sunrise Square
INTRODUCTION:
 Homigot Village, the main venue of the Homigot Sunrise Festival, is located on the easternmost point of the Korean Peninsula. Located in the furthest east of the Korean peninsula, Homigot Village means 'a village on a tiger's tail' and is also the location where one can witness the first sunrise in Korea.
 The festival includes local cultural performances, a New Year celebratory event, fire show, sunrise concert and other diverse performances. Visitors may sample free tteokguk, a traditional New Year's Day dish, during the special event of 'Serving tteokguk for 10,000'. Other events such as kite-flying and launching hope balloons with wishes attached will provide enjoyable moments to reflect on the previous year and create new year resolutions.
TRANSPORTATION:
 From Pohang Intercity Bus Terminal, take Bus 200 and get off at Guryongpo. From Guryongpo, transfer to a bus bound for Homigot.
HOME PAGE: phcf.or.kr (Korean only)



DATE: Jan. 3 - Jan. 5, 2020
LOCATION: Area of Yeongdong Gymnasium
INTRODUCTION:
 Yeongdong is the largest fruit-producing center in Korea; it is even known as the Holy Land of Fruit, and during the Yeongdong Dried Persimmons Festival, fruit producers and customers alike gather to celebrate one of the region's most famous fruits.
TRANSPORTATION:
Bus
 Take a bus from Dong Seoul Bus Terminal to Yeongdong.
Train
 Take a train from Seoul Station to Yeongdong Station.
Taxi
 Approx. 8 min from Yeongdong Bus Terminal.
 Approx. 7 min from Yeongdong Station.
HOME PAGE: www.ydft.kr (Korean, English, Japanese, Chinese)



Seoul Salon Du Chocolat

DATE: Jan. 10 - Jan. 12, 2020
LOCATION: COEX Hall B
INTRODUCTION:
 Since its start in France in 1994, Salon du Chocolat has taken place in 20 cities in 11 countries. Taking place at COEX, this chocolate expo is a must-attend event for chocolatiers, patissiers, ice cream makers, growers, chocolate-producing countries, manufacturers of raw cocoa, and producers of other chocolate-related products.

TRANSPORTATION:
Subway
 Samseong Station (Seoul Subway Line 2), Exit 5 or 6.
HOME PAGE: www.salonduchocolat.kr (Korean, English)



Yeongju Korea Seonbi Culture Festival

DATE: May 1 - May 4, 2020
LOCATION: Seonbichon Village & Areas of Seocheon Stream
INTRODUCTION:
 The Yeongju Seonbi Culture Festival takes place from early to mid May every year at the Seonbichon Village and Korean Seonbi Culture Training Center in Sunheung-myeon, Yeongju-si. Yeongju Seonbi Culture Festival promotes Korea's moral culture through ideology of Seonbi. You will be able to restore your personal character with the knowledge of Seonbi's basic values.
TRANSPORTATION:
Intercity/Express Bus
 From Dong Seoul Bus Terminal, take an intercity bus bound for Yeongju. From Gangnam Express Bus Terminal, take an express bus bound for Yeonju.
Bus
 From Yeongju Bus Terminal, take Bus 53 bound for Sosuseowon Confucian Academy.
HOME PAGE: seonbi.yctf.or.kr (Korean only)



NOTE: Festival dates and info subject to change.
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Concerts

Music festivals

2019 Monster M Festival
 Seoul, Dec. 21, 5 p.m., Dec. 22, 4 p.m., Sejong University Convention Center, 88,000 won (1-day Pass), 121,000 won (2-day Pass).

Count Down Seoul 2020
 Seoul, Dec. 31, 11 p.m., Times Square, 77,000 won.

Concerts

E-Sens
 Seoul, Nov. 30, 7 p.m., Ilsan Kintex 1 Hall 5B, 66,000 won.

Paul Kim
 Daegu, Nov. 30 & Dec. 14, 6 p.m., Dec. 1, 5 p.m., Daegu EXCO 5floor; Busan, Dec. 7, 6 p.m., KBS Busan Hall; Daegu, Dec. 14, 6 p.m., EXCO Convention Hall; Cheonan, Dec. 21, 6 p.m., Cheonan Arts Center; Daejeon, Dec. 24, 7:30 p.m., International Cultural Center; Chungnam National University; Jeonju, Dec. 28, 6 p.m., Sori Arts Center of Jeollabuk-do; Gwangju, Dec. 31, 7:30 p.m., Gwangju Culture & Arts Center, 99,000-110,000 won.

Kim Nam Gil
 Seoul, Dec. 8, 5 p.m., Kyung-Hee University Grand Peace Palace, 44,000-55,000-77,000 won.

Yangpa
 Seoul, Dec. 13, 8 p.m., Dec. 14, 6 p.m., Olympic Park K-Art Hall, 110,000 won.

Kim Jae Hwan
 Seoul, Dec. 14 & 15, 6 p.m., Jamsil Arena, 99,000-110,000 won.

Gift
 Seoul, Dec. 14, 7 p.m., Dec. 15, 6 p.m., EwhaWomans University Samsung Hall, 77,000 won.

Target
 Seoul, Dec. 15, 5 p.m., Mpot Hall, 33,000 won.

Psy
 Seoul, Dec. 20, 21, 22 & 24, 11:42 p.m., KSPO DOME (Olympic Gymnastics Arena), 121,000-132,000-143,000-165,000 won.

Kim Feel
 Seoul, Dec. 20, 8 p.m., Dec. 21, 6 p.m., Dec. 22, 5 p.m., Yonsei University 100th Anniversary Memorial Hall, 110,000 won.

Peppertones
 Seoul, Dec. 21 & 22, 6 p.m., Dec. 23 & 24, 8 p.m., Dec. 25, 5 p.m., Olympic Park K-Art Hall, 99,000 won.

J.Y. Park
 Daegu, Dec. 21, 6 p.m., EXCO Convention Hall; Busan, Dec. 25, 5 p.m., Sajik Gymnasium; Seoul, Dec. 28, 6 p.m., Dec. 29, 5 p.m., Dec. 31, 9:30 p.m., Olympic Park Olympic Hall, 99,000-110,000-132,000-154,000 won.

Lee Seung Chul
 Seoul, Dec. 21, 6 p.m., Dec. 22, 5 p.m., Coex Hall D; Daegu, Dec. 31, 8 p.m., Daegu EXCO, 77,000-99,000-121,000-154,000 won.

Wheesung
 Seoul, Dec. 21, 7 p.m., Dec. 22, 6 p.m., Yonsei University Grand Hall; Changwon, Dec. 24, 8 p.m., KBS Changwon Hall; Busan, Dec. 25, 5 p.m., BEXCO Auditorium; Daegu, Dec. 28, 7 p.m., Exco Auditorium, 99,000-110,000-121,000 won.

K-Will
 Seoul, Dec. 22, 6 p.m., Dec. 23 & 24, 8 p.m., Dec. 25, 6 p.m., Jangchung Arena, 99,000-121,000-132,000 won; Busan, Dec. 30 & 31, 8 p.m., BEXCO Auditorium; Daejeon, Jan. 4 & 5, 6 p.m., Daejeon Convention Center; Gwangju, Jan. 11 & 12, 6 p.m., Kim Dae Jung Convention Center; Daegu, Jan. 18 & 19, 6 p.m., EXCO Convention Hall; Seongnam, Feb. 1 & 2, 6 p.m., Seongnam Arts Center; Opera House; Suwon, Feb. 8 & 9, 6 p.m., Kyunghee University International Campus Seonseung Hall, 88,000-99,000-121,000-132,000 won.

Youn Ha
 Seoul, Dec. 24, 8 p.m., Dec. 25, 5 p.m., Ewha Womans University Grand Hall, 88,000-99,000-110,000 won.

Super Band Top3 Concert
 Busan, Dec. 25, 6 p.m., Busan BEXCO 1st Exhibition Hall; Seoul, Dec. 28, 6 p.m., Dec. 29, 5 p.m., 99,000-110,000-121,000 won.

Seo In Guk
 Seoul, Dec. 28, 6 p.m., Kwangwoon University Munhwa Building, 99,000-110,000-121,000 won.

Jun Hyo Seong
 Seoul, Dec. 28, 6 p.m., Sungshin Women's Univ. Woonjung Green Campus Grand Hall, 55,000 won.

Hyukoh
 Seoul, Feb. 8, 6 p.m., Feb. 9, 5 p.m., Blue Square IMarket Hall, 99,000 won.

Beatbox to World 2020
 Seoul, Feb. 22, 5 p.m., Feb. 23, 9 p.m., Muv Hall, 30,000 won (2-day Ticket).

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 Microneedling skin Rejuvenation
 Massage
 www.sisaketbodyrejuvenation.com

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Stripes Sports Trivia

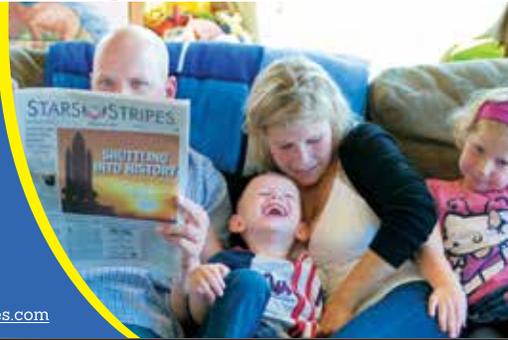
Who was the first player, after a record-breaking season in which he led his team to an NBA-record 73 wins and set an individual record of 402 three-pointers (smashing his own previous league record of 286 set the year before), in NBA history to be elected league MVP by a unanimous vote?

Answer

Golden State Warriors guard Stephen Curry

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DID YOU KNOW?

Koreans, both North and South, speak and write the Hangeul or Hangul language. It consists of 14 consonants and 10 vowels, and the alphabet can be combined into various syllables.

Hangul of the week **발바닥**
balbadak (sole)

Language Lesson

I'm sorry.
Joe-song-hab-ni-da,
or
Mi-ahn-ham-ni-da.

Crossword

by Margie E. Burke

ACROSS

- Hook for large fish
- Like some cycles
- Played for a sap
- Superfruit berry
- Battery terminal
- Hot rock
- Runner's sore spot
- Measure up
- Coat-of-arms system
- Purpose
- Doom's partner
- Poker stake
- Type of fever or break
- Roundabout
- Decided upon
- Clarence was one in a classic holiday film
- Down in the dumps
- Major defeat
- Curl one's lip
- Lunch place
- Late columnist Landers
- Bake in a shallow dish
- Audition tapes
- Olympic winner
- Stir up, as trouble
- Brood
- Communion plate
- Fill, as a tenant
- Half of PG
- Erroneous warning
- Fairy follower
- Chimney channel
- Dentist's request
- Flatten, in a way
- Iditarod racer
- Steer away
- "The ___ have it"

DOWN

- Deep cut
- Pain in the neck
- Fun house setting
- Adam Lambert was one, in 2009
- Pomeranian, for one
- Relieve of weapons
- Like a busybody
- Infomercials, e.g.
- String around a finger
- Northern Ireland province
- Fill beyond full
- Type of keel
- Bull's-eye hitter
- "___ we meet again"
- Like Silver's rider
- Sandler film, "___ Management"
- "Beat it!"
- Conversation piece?
- Smiling, perhaps
- Dairyman, e.g.
- Anagram for "spare"
- "Tip" or "rip" finish
- Poker action
- Sleuth's find
- Breathe hard
- Skin soother
- Periscope part
- Make stuff up

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Answers to Previous Crossword:

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

SUDOKU

Edited by Margie E. Burke

Difficulty: Medium

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

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

Answers to Previous Sudoku:

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

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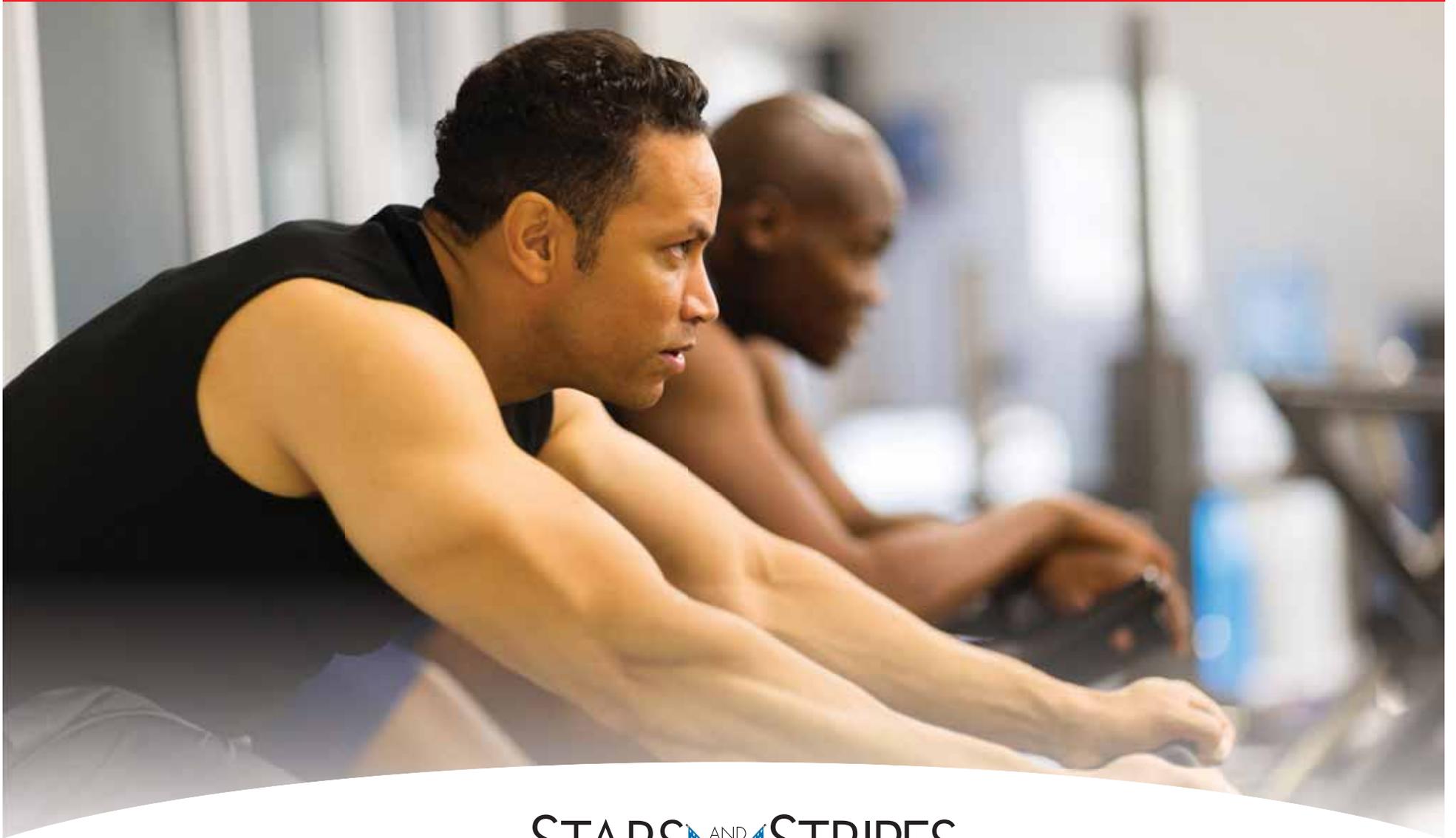
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Korea Healthy Living Guide

- Understanding male behavior
- Spotlight on military suicide crisis
- Suicide rate complicated, but solutions shouldn't be



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Mental Notes with Hilary Valdez

Understanding male behavior

BY HILARY VALDEZ,
STRIPES KOREA

Three types of guys: **Hunks** (Guys who work out), **Chunks** (Guys who don't work out and watch TV while eating cheeseburgers and drinking beer) and **Drunks** (Functional alcoholics and chronic drinkers).

What makes it difficult to be a guy? What is male pain? What are male fears? What is masculinity? Men face many issues including depression, anxiety, anger, substance abuse, and post-traumatic stress.

Understanding different male energies means exploring the social and psychological dynamics of growing up male. Men fight a lifetime of old school messages and impossible expectations: Be a man, boys don't cry, compete, don't be emotionally vulnerable, keep things to yourself, men don't back down, men have no emotions, and men are emotionally restrictive.

For some men, these messages are troublesome. Society buys into these myths and on the outside, so do men. But internally, these conflicting emotions of who they're expected to be versus how they feel, eat them up. Conflicted men are depressed men: the worse the conflict, the deeper the depression. The more a guy identifies with traditional male stereotypes, the worse the conflict.

Take an emotional leadership role and clarify basic beliefs about yourself. Conduct a psychological autopsy and collect emotional evidence on what you learned to become a man. Men worry about their masculinity and masculine image. Guys who suffer most are the rocks or Mr. Rigid-types who maintain a narrowly-defined and traditional idea about masculinity. We are all products of our respective generations and who we were as children often defines who we are now.

The symbols of manliness from generations past don't fit

the new millennium. Changes in gender roles are shifting in the workplace and at home. Many men are under-employed and more women are in the workforce, and for some, it is an awkward adjustment.

Role shifting affects a man's self-esteem and self-concept. Any threat to his aggressive, competitive nature, or loss of social status or reduced status, is a risk for depression. As a result, guys go out drinking or hunting or work more. A better approach is asking for feedback from friends you trust. If three people are saying the same thing, you might want to consider it.

Growth choices are difficult to make because it means a shift in lifestyle. Our inner emotions find ways to be expressed, but men worry about not being tough enough. They

are reluctant to be transparent.

What to do? First, take a serious inventory of your strengths and what needs to be strengthened. Is it time for a mental tune-up? Do you need a minor or a major tune-up? Change your self-defeating habits. If you think or say something negative, say two positive statements. Don't let situations dictate your behavior. Expand your comfort zone. Uproot outdated values, beliefs, and ideas. Make an action plan for self-improvement. What do you need to change? What interventions or resources do you need to use? When should interventions start?

Instant Insight: "I will change only who I can today: myself."



Hilary Valdez is a retiree living in Japan. He is an experienced Mental Health professional and Resiliency Trainer. Valdez is a former Marine and has worked with the military most of his career and most recently worked at Camp Zama as a Master Resiliency Trainer. Valdez now has a private practice and publishes books on social and psychological issues. His books are available on Amazon and for Kindle. Learn more about Valdez and contact him at www.hilaryvaldez.com or at InstantInsights@hotmail.com

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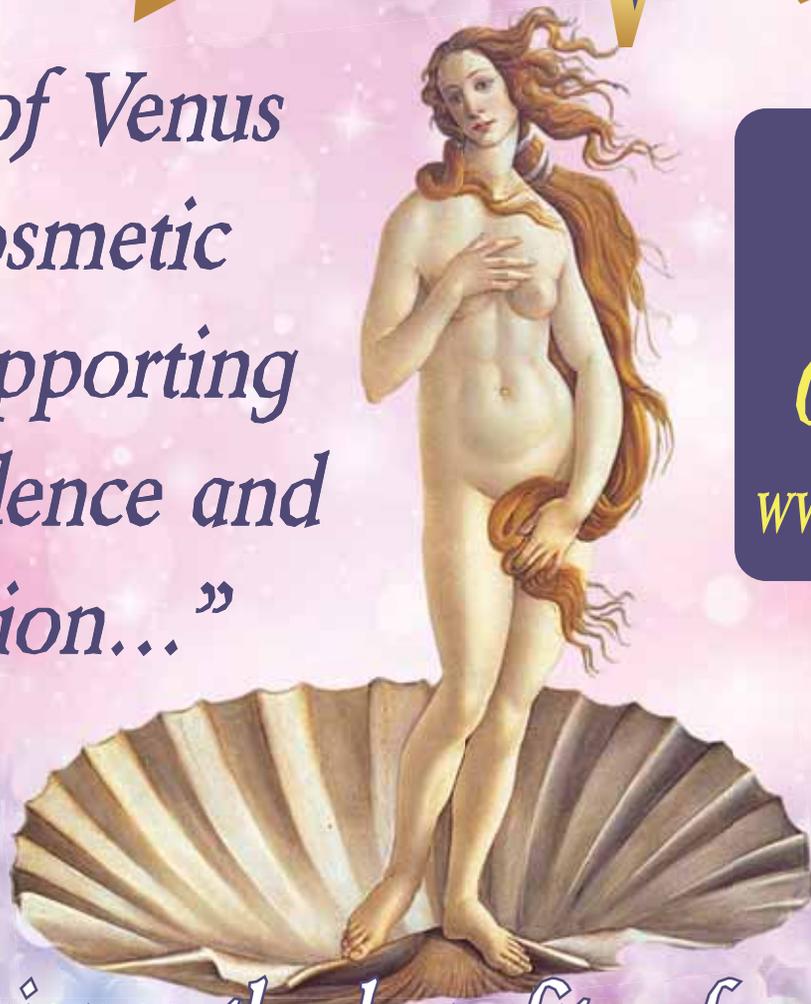
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SOLDIER DEATHS IN KOREA SPOTLIGHT SUICIDE CRISIS

BY KIM GAMEL,
STARS AND STRIPES
Published: November 11, 2019

SCAMP HUMPHREYS
pc. Zachary Moore was drifting into and out of consciousness as the ambulance raced him to a South Korean hospital after he tried to kill himself.

“Call my mom, call my mom,” the 23-year-old signal support systems specialist asked his friend, a fellow soldier.

Thousands of miles away in Florida, Jeanette Nazario answered the phone.

“I was notified by his battle buddies that he was in the hospital in critical condition, then they notified me when he was in stable condition,” she recalled.

She became hopeful after a translator at the hospital said tests showed her son had not suffered any brain damage. But eventually his heart failed.

“I was gearing up to take care of my son the rest of his life. I was just in mommy mode. I was like, ‘Let me just get him back,’” she said. “And that’s when I got a knock on the door and they told me he had passed.”

Moore died Aug. 2, 2017, hours after he was taken to St. Mary’s Hospital in Uijeongbu from his barracks at Camp Hovey.

He was one of at least nine 2nd Infantry Division soldiers — ages 18 to 32 — who died by suicide in nearly three years, from May 2016 to April 2019.

Stars and Stripes obtained the manner of death of eight of those soldiers from the Army’s Criminal Investigation Command.

A family attorney confirmed separately that Pvt. Courtney Shields killed herself on April 26 while she was home on leave. CID referred questions about her case to local authorities.

The number is not necessarily indicative of a trend, and suicide permeates all aspects of society. But it provides a grim snapshot of an unprecedented crisis in the military that has grown despite a concerted push and more than \$1 billion to stop it.

“The number of suicides we’ve had is definitely concerning,” said Capt. Joseph Dragonetti, the 2nd ID’s psychiatrist. “Those are all lives lost and families that have had huge tragedies.”

Deadlier than combat

David Rudd, a former military psychologist and suicide expert, said the armed forces need to develop a better understanding of the effectiveness of suicide prevention efforts, and to come up with a more strategic and coordinated approach.

“We’ve been at war for almost 18 years now,” said Rudd, president of the University of Memphis. “That means we’ve been in a sustained, high operational tempo for almost two decades in the military, and that’s

difficult to manage.”

He stressed the need for thorough mental health screening in recruiting efforts and subsequently offering treatment as soon as problems are identified.

“They have laxated a little bit on previous mental health issues in the military and that certainly, I think, elevated some of the risk and some of the concerns,” he said.

The Pentagon reported that 541 service members died by suicide last year, up from 511 in 2017 and 482 in 2016, according to a report released in September.

Suicide rates for active-duty troops, which specialists say more accurately reflect trends, increased from 18.5 to 24.8 per 100,000 service members from 2013 to 2018.

Service members who die by suicide are mostly male, white and under the age of 30, said Karin Orvis, director of the Defense Suicide Prevention Office.

The New York Times reported this month that suicide has been deadlier than combat for the military, citing congressional testimony from Rand Corp. researcher Terri Tanielian that more than 45,000 veterans or service members have killed themselves in the past six years.

“That is more than 20 deaths a day — in other words more suicides each year than the total American military deaths in Afghanistan and Iraq,” the Times reported.

Soldier’s struggle

Moore was stationed with the 9th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, in South Korea, where the military isn’t fighting but is constantly on alert and in training mode due to the threat from North Korea.

When asked specific questions, the division, based in Fort Hood, Texas, said it could not address the circumstances of Moore’s death due to privacy concerns.

“The Army is a family that does its best to prepare soldiers for challenging situations in combat, and also

in daily life,” division spokesman. “Suicide is a challenge our 1st C continues to battle, but the Army to assist soldiers who need help.”

Those include periodic health readiness processing that includes ers who can help soldiers address needs.

The unit also has counselors a mental health counsel.

“Most importantly, unit leaders countless hours together and serve who need assistance,” he said.

Nazario, a 47-year-old catering believes her son’s death could have been

He should not have been deployed for depression, she said in a video.

She said she had to file a Freedom obtain her son’s death certificate investigation.

Moore had expressed concern a by his superiors he would have a South Korea and was given a mento despite his reservations, she sa

His unit began its nine-month 2017, less than a year after Moore and briefly went AWOL while at F

Nazario said her son began re Hood incident and was still on an left for South Korea.

“They put him in the most high had behavioral health issues,” she out but stressed out.”

Nazario said her son had chan consuming an entire bottle of his a

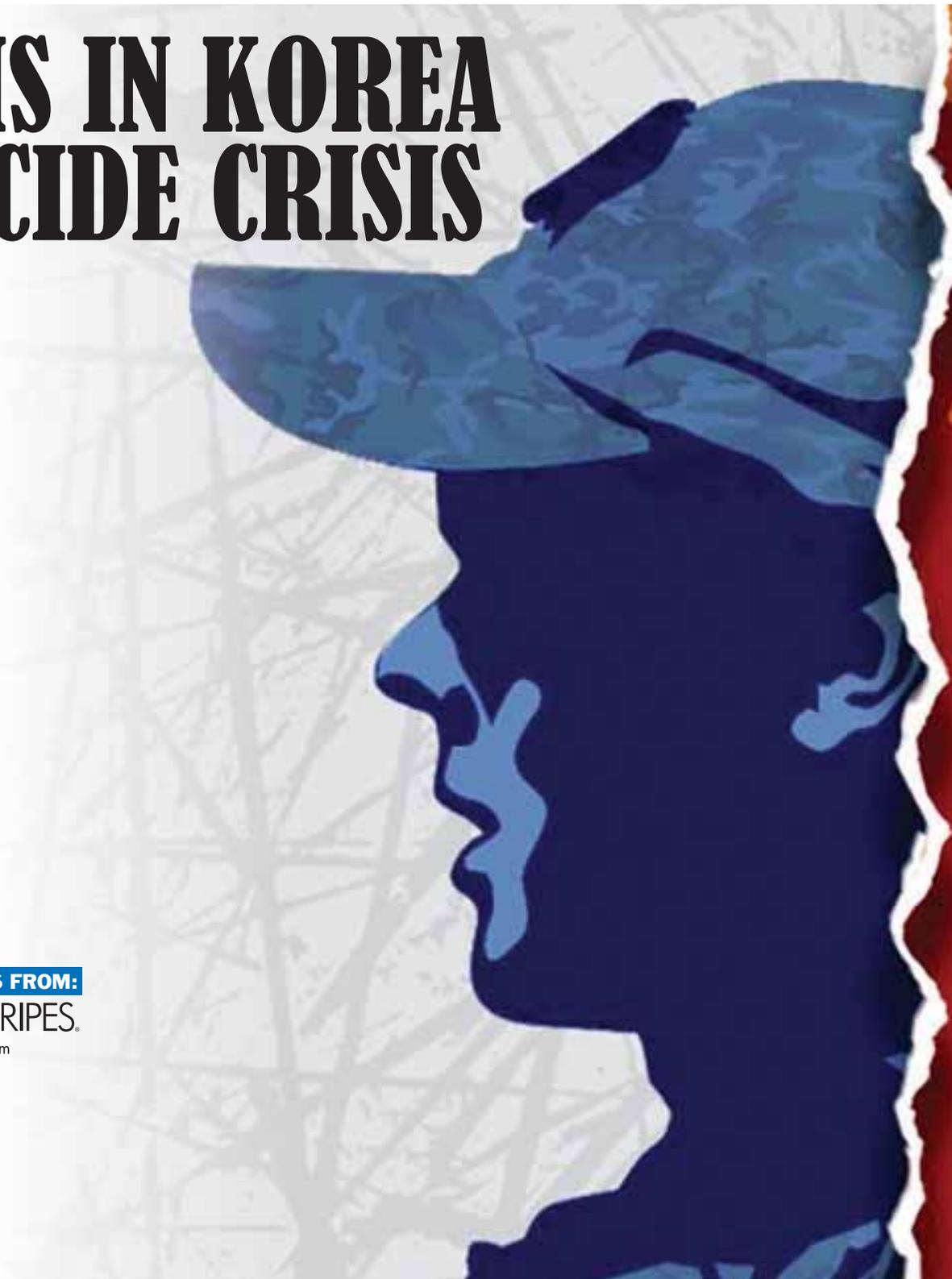


Sgt. 1st Class William Smith
Photo by Kim Gamel, Stars and Stripes

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“We need a cultural change. Behavioral health care is not really monitored. It’s a one-size-fits-all mentality and that can even go further in my son’s case. They deployed him because they needed to have a body count to be deployed ... but he ended up coming back in a body bag.”

*- Jeanette Nazario,
Mother of Spc. Zachary Moore*

Illustration by Andrea Villari, Stars and Stripes

in Lt. Col. Chris Brautigam said. Cavalry Division and Army family has several mechanisms designed

assessments and pre-deployment meetings with health care providers their medical and mental health

and chaplains to provide discreet

s and soldier battle buddies spend e as a support mechanism for those

g server from Clermont, Fla., be- been prevented.

ayed because he was being treated interview.

dom of Information Act request to and other information about the

about his condition but was assured ccess to behavioral health care in al health waiver permitting him to id.

rotation in South Korea in June had suffered a mental breakdown ort Hood.

ceiving treatment after the Fort ti-depression medication when he

h-stress position knowing that he e said, “so not only was he burned

ged his mind about suicide after anti-depression medication on Aug.

1, 2017, but he didn’t get the care he needed to survive.

“He sent out red flags to everyone,” Nazario said. “He let them know exactly what he took.”

Problems included a lack of urgency when he notified the duty desk in his barracks that he had consumed the pills and a language barrier with the South Korean ambulance crew, she said, citing witnesses.

“It took almost 30 minutes to convince them to take my son in the ambulance because they didn’t know why they were taking him,” she said, adding that he began losing consciousness in the ambulance.

Nazario, who met with military officials to discuss her son’s case last year, believes the cause of death for her son should be changed to accidental suicide.

“I acknowledge he did take the bottle. He did. But he also tried to live, and that is so important — that my son tried to live,” she said.

Warning signs

Nazario has been vocal in her criticism of the military’s handling of her son’s case in large part because she wants to see reforms aimed at preventing others from following suit.

“We need a cultural change,” she said. “Behavioral health care is not really monitored. It’s a one-size-fits-all mentality and that can even go further in my son’s case. They deployed him because they needed to have a body count to be deployed ... but he ended up coming back in a body bag.”

Experts stress that suicide can be prevented and urge people to watch for warning signs that include previous attempts, talk about dying, withdrawal from social interactions and feelings of hopelessness.

Top risk factors include access to firearms, relationship problems and administrative or legal problems. Recommendations for helping somebody who may be suicidal include being direct, nonjudgmental, and willing to listen, and seek help, according to the Defense Suicide Prevention Office.

The soldiers who died while serving with the 2nd ID in South

Korea were from different units and backgrounds.

Shields was the youngest, at 18. She was a signal support systems specialist from Bryans Road, Md., who initially thrived after arriving in South Korea to work with the Special Troops Battalion, 2nd ID Sustainment Brigade.

“She was a valued member of the Dragon team that could brighten up any room with her infectious smile,” battalion commander Lt. Col. Jeremiah Pope, said at the time of her death.

But Shields appears to have suffered some trauma during her field work, according to Tamara Miller, a lawyer and retired Air Force officer who is representing the family.

“That’s when Courtney’s mental state really appeared to decline precipitously,” Miller said, adding she’s satisfied with the military’s investigation so far but hopes it will be expanded. “We’re trying to urge the Army to look into the possibility of a sexual assault having occurred.”

Shields also told her mother that she had sought medical care for her depression, but her job requirements interfered with her ability to keep appointments, Miller said.

Pfc. Adrienne Barillas, 22, was a water purification specialist from Texas who grew up in the Central American nation of Belize. South Korea was her first assignment in the Army.

Barillas, who died on Sept. 23, 2018, at Camp Humphreys, was remembered at a memorial service for her warm smile and cooking skills.

Sgt. Adam David Wright, 32, a multiple launch rocket system gunner from Beebe, Ark., died Nov. 11, 2018, at Camp Casey. Wright had been an officer in the National Guard but resigned his commission to become an active-duty soldier because he wanted to serve America in a foreign country.

Pfc. Travis Walklin, 21, of Silver Springs, Nev., died May 3, 2016, at Camp Carroll after he was found unresponsive outside a barracks building. He was assigned to the Sustainment Brigade.

Sgt. Jacqueline M. Anderson, 26, who died July 31, 2016, at her off-base apartment in Dongducheon. Anderson, of Leesville, La., shared the apartment with her husband, Sgt. Carl Anderson. They were assigned to the 210th Field Artillery Brigade.

Sgt. Kenneth W. Morris, 32, who died Nov. 13, 2016, at Camp Hovey. He had enlisted in the Army at 18 as a food-service specialist and had served in Iraq, according to his obituary.

“SGT Morris was known as the funny guy that everyone could count on to give them a hand or a laugh,” it said, adding that the only thing he loved more than working on his car was “caring for his three children.”

Sgt. Marcos John S. Aguon, 28, a 1st Armored Division soldier who joined the Army in his hometown of Talofoto, Guam, died Nov. 4, 2018, at Camp Hovey. He was a cannon crew member with the Fort Bliss, Texas-based 3rd Armored Brigade Combat Team, which had rotated to South Korea the previous month.

Raising awareness

The military has taken steps to improve awareness about suicide prevention and to remove the perceived stigma that seeking help may adversely affect chances for promotion or security clearances. Chaplains and leaders at all levels have increased outreach.

“The foundation of prevention is soldier-to-soldier and leader-soldier engagement,” 2nd Infantry Division spokesman Lt. Col. Martyn Crighton said, adding that the personal interaction reduces isolation and increases the chances for early intervention if needed.

This past summer, the 2nd ID opened the new Warrior Behavioral Health clinic in Building 7315 in the center of the motor pool on Camp Humphreys to improve accessibility. It’s also solely focused on care for active-duty soldiers, which provides important mission understanding and scheduling flexibility.

Previously, troops had to go to facilities across the base or to Seoul. There’s a similar facility at Camp Casey, where the 210th Field Artillery Brigade and other soldiers are based near the border with North Korea.

Dragonetti, the 2nd ID psychiatrist, said soldiers face the same major risk factors as the general population but have additional challenges.

“One of the big ones would be that we’re on the other side of the world from most people we know,” he said during an August interview at Camp Humphreys.

“The stigma for behavioral health is decreasing, and we’re really actively trying to break down those barriers. We’re trying to make ourselves less scary.”

Pervasive problem

The problem is not unique to the military. Suicide rates in the United States have been on the rise, with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reporting a 33% increase from 1999 to 2017.

Officials say the suicide rate among most military populations, when adjusted for age and gender, is comparable to civilian rates.

“I wish I could tell you we have an answer to prevent further, future suicides in the Armed Services. We don’t,” Defense Secretary Mark Esper told reporters in September.

“I believe we have the means and the resources to get ahead of this and do better than our civilian counterparts,” he said. “We just can’t let these great, young Americans take their lives because of

SUICIDE: ‘First, help the soldier’

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

financial pressure or relationship challenges, or whatever comes up. We need to help them.”

Elsbeth Cameron Ritchie, a retired colonel who served as a psychiatrist for the 2nd ID in South Korea in 1990 and was later the Army’s top psychiatrist, agrees.

“It has been a problem for a long time, and they have tried everything,” said Ritchie, who participated in several task forces on the subject before retiring from the military in 2010.

“It’s not higher in the military, but it should be lower,” she said of the suicide rate. “The reason for that is that everybody in the military is employed; they have health care; they have jobs; they often have a mission and a sense of purpose.”

Ritchie, chair of psychiatry at Medstar Washington Hospital Center, noted the problem is complicated by relatively easy access to firearms and a military culture that values toughness.

“Leaders certainly get a lot of training on not singling out people and suicide prevention, but how that translates in the hyper-masculine world among the troops in the field does vary from unit to unit,” she said.

Successful intervention

That training paid off in a recent case involving a young 2nd ID soldier who was on his first overseas assignment for the Army.

Pfc. Austin Farrell, 22, was struggling with his supervisors last year, and his personal life was shattered when his fiancée broke up with him long distance.

Feeling lonely and isolated, the Titusville, Fla., native started having

suicidal thoughts.

Sgt. 1st Class William Smith listened to other non-commissioned officers discussing Farrell’s case after concern was raised. Smith, who spent his childhood in and out of foster homes, decided he could help.

“I was told the soldier was really depressed and thinking of doing some harm to himself,” Smith, 52, told Stars and Stripes. “Basically, I just stepped up and said, ‘Let me work with him.’ ”

The Tallahassee, Fla., native had Farrell moved into his section at the headquarters battalion and began escorting the soldier to the behavioral health unit at the former military hospital in Seoul.

He also developed a friendship with Farrell by talking about things they had in common.

“By doing that he was able to share a side of his life with me,” Smith said. “He started opening up a little bit. His attitude started changing.”

Farrell said he had been frustrated by supervisors in his previous unit and felt increasingly isolated from his family.

“The leadership started talking down to soldiers,” he said. “A lot of it was that I felt like I was useless, and I felt alone. I thought I would be alone for the rest of my life.”

Farrell credited Smith with helping to turn the situation around, saying he had been on the brink of being discharged from the Army before overcoming his behavioral health concerns.

“He had a lot of hard choices in his life too,” Farrell said. “He showed me that it’s not always a dark side ... you always have to look towards the brighter part.”

Smith’s advice to others trying to help a service member?

“First help the soldier, get the soldier back to normal,” he said. “Then he can be an asset, and that just makes us a better section.”

If you or someone you know may be considering suicide, contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255 (1-800-273-TALK) in the United States. Press 1 for the veterans and military crisis lines. You can also text 838255.

In South Korea, you can reach that number by calling 050-3337-4673, press 1, or DSN 118. The 2nd Infantry Division also provides a list of advice and resources. DSN 911 is the general on-post emergency number. You can call 119 for emergencies elsewhere in South Korea. For more information, visit the Veterans’ Crisis Line.

In Europe, you can call 00800 1273 8255 or DSN 118. In Afghanistan, you can call 00 1 800 273 8255 or DSN 111.

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Photo by Jeanette Nazario

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Suicide rate complicated, but solutions shouldn't be

Last month, another U.S. military veteran took his own life on a Veteran's Administration campus. This is the sixth veteran suicide in the public areas of Florida's Bay Pines VA facility in the last six years. This latest incident is also part of the ever-growing rate of veteran suicides each year, and part of a nationwide increase in suicides among all adults.

Is the increase in veteran suicides a direct result of the surge in the country's overall adult suicide rate? Unfortunately, it's not that simple.

The suicide rates announced in the latest Veterans' Administration report are the result of a complex evaluation of age, gender, finances, U.S. population increase, veteran population decrease, military duty status, treatment status, changes in study criteria and other variables. The rising veteran suicide rates must be analyzed in context with so many other factors, it's almost impossible to draw meaningful conclusions from the data.

Despite efforts to address the crisis — President Donald Trump signed an executive order in 2018 allowing all veterans to receive mental health care during the high-risk first year after separation, and an interagency task force was

established in March to tackle the issue — 17 "Title 38 Veterans" and four active-duty, reserve and guard members still kill themselves every day.

In news stories about the rash of veteran suicides on VA campuses across the U.S., experts postulated that suicide victims blame the VA. Eric Caine, director of the Injury Control Research Center for Suicide Prevention at the University of Rochester, told the Washington Post after a series of VA parking lot suicides last year, "These suicides are sentinel events. It's very important for the VA to recognize that the place of a suicide can have great meaning. There is a real moral imperative and invitation here to take a close inspection of the quality of services at the facility level."

Caine's theory might be a desperate attempt to simplify the veteran suicide conundrum; however, veterans themselves pointed fingers at the VA before pointing weapons at themselves.

"I dared to dream again. Then you showed me the door faster than last night's garbage," posted Army veteran John Toombs in 2016 before hanging himself outside the Murfreesboro, Tenn., VA hospital, where he had been kicked out of treatment for not following

The Meat and Potatoes of Life

Lisa Smith Molinari



Is the increase in veteran suicides a direct result of the surge in the country's overall adult suicide rate? Unfortunately, it's not that simple.

instructions.

Two years later, investigators found a suicide note near the uniformed body of Marine Colonel Jim Turner outside Florida's Bay Pines VA facility. "I bet if you look at the 22 suicides a day you will see VA screwed up in 90%," Turner wrote before turning a rifle on himself.

The following April, three more veterans killed themselves

at VA campuses. One victim shot himself in the crowded lobby of a Texas VA outpatient clinic, which was seen by most as an obvious message.

Despite the blame some have placed squarely on the VA, there are no easy answers. In fact, figures show that the rate of suicide in VA medical centers is lower than in the private sector. After the VA made prevention

its top clinical priority, the rate of suicide in VA hospitals has dropped more than 80 percent and 419 of 466 suicide attempts in 2019 on VA campuses were stopped.

However, of the 17 veterans who kill themselves every day, an average of 10.4 don't use VHA services at all.

So far, promising improvements in VA care have not resulted in progress in the overall crisis. No matter how many experts weigh in, no matter how many task forces are created, no matter how many variables are studied, no matter how many veterans kill themselves on VA campuses, no one can make any sense of this complex trend.

Instead of putting any more resources toward unraveling the impossible tangle of causes and variables, perhaps the government should fund simple, common-sense preventative measures: Standardize VA quality control and bring low-rated facilities up to par. Institute more outreach to at-risk veterans who do not use VHA. Give VA staff better training in suicide prevention strategies.

It might not be that simple, but it's time to stop trying, and simply start doing.

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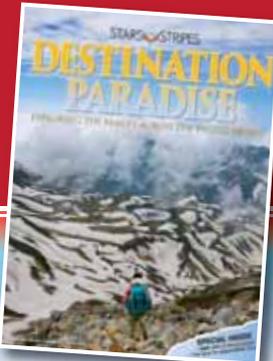
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