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STARS AND STRIPES

Community Publication

# OKINAWA

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**Special 16-page pullout inside**

**Special 8-page pullout inside!**

## Celebrating Month of the Military Child

### He was my best friend

By Connor Mcbee, 12th Grade  
 Kubasaki High School

**M**y name is Tucker, and I am sixteen years old. My life has always been in motion, packing up and leaving behind homes, friends, and memories as my family moves from one place to

another. That's just the reality of being a military child. I've learned to accept change, to expect goodbyes, and to keep moving forward. But nothing could have prepared me for the moment I had to say goodbye to my brother, Josh. Unlike the other goodbyes in my life, this one was permanent. Josh was fifteen when he passed away. He had

been battling severe illnesses for as long as I could remember, but I never let myself believe he wouldn't make it. He was my younger brother, only by a year. He was the strongest person I knew, not just because of how he fought through his sickness,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 20

**Read more military children stories inside**

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# Celebrating Month of the Military Child

## Bob Hope Elementary School


1st Grade / Ms. Caldwell

Name: Rick




I am brave I am a military child! It is difficult saying bye to your friends. Seeing new things! I am proud of myself for being brave! I can do many things!

Name: Elianna



Being a military child can be fun but also scary it is to go away from home. Being a military child can be fun but also scary it is to go away from home.


Name: Henry Stapleton



We bloom everywhere

Being a military child can be fun. It is difficult leaving your friends & moving to somewhere new. I like meeting new people & seeing new things. I am proud because I'm brave. I love being a military child!

Name: Eleanor



Being a military child takes me to many places. It is difficult saying good bye to friends. It can be fun making new friends! I am proud to be a military child! Being a military child can be tough but fun.

See more on Page 4



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# Celebrating Month of the Military Child

## Bob Hope Elementary School


1st Grade / Ms. Caldwell

Name: Miriam




Being a military child can be fun! It is difficult to leave friends I know. A Military child is good because our parents are helpful and so are we. I am proud of myself because I am brave when I move. I love being a military child.

Name: Isabella




A military child is brave. It is difficult saying goodbye to friends. It is good to make new friends. I'm proud of my self. I like being a military child.

Name: Ava S



Being a military child can be fun. It is rough moving. Life can be difficult. Being a military child can be fun! It is rough moving to a place new. Life can be difficult. I say I am proud of my dad!

Name: Myler 75




I like being a military child. It can be difficult moving new places sometimes. It is good to explore new places. I am proud of my family! I am very fun!

Name: Elta



Being a military child can be fun saying goodbye to friends making new friends. I am proud of my dad! I love a military child.

Name: Bridget




Being a military child is fun. It is difficult saying goodbye to friends and family and teachers. It is good making new friends and teachers. I am proud of being a military child because I am special! I like being a military child!

Name: Kiera



I love my family! I am thankful to be a child. It can be moving to a new place. I am proud of being good and myself!

Name: Mia Marchi




When I moved here to Okinawa what was good was my Birthday trip to Hawaii. I am proud of doing the monkey bars by myself. Moving to new places is fun!

Name: Ace




I am proud to be a military child. It is difficult saying goodbye. I like trying new places and making new friends. I am proud of both my parents!

Name: Maverick K



Being a military child can be fun. I'm proud of myself for being kind! Being good is fun! Being a military child can be fun! It is difficult to have fun in a new place sometimes. I am thankful to be a military child!

Name: Warren




Being a military child can be fun. Being a military child can be difficult when my dad leaves. I like when I move to a new place. I am proud my daddy works for the military! I like being a military child! My new

Name: Shanee



Being a military child can be fun! It can be saying goodbye to teachers. It is making new friends. I am because I'm brave. I like being a military child.

Name: Mason 23H



Being a military child means you are brave as a military child. It is difficult when you have to move away from your friends and family. I am proud of going to new places. I like to be a military child.

Name: Ross



It is difficult to say goodbye. I am good at being a military child. I am proud because I am strong.

Check out more military children stories at

[militarychild.stripes.com](http://militarychild.stripes.com)



# Celebrating Month of the Military Child

## Bob Hope Elementary School


1st Grade / Ms. Horikoshi



I Am A Military Child  
This is my life as a military child.  
It is difficult to go to school.  
I like to go to school.  
I am proud of my dad.  
Do you want to be a military child?




I Am A Military Child  
This is my life as a military child.  
It is difficult to go on a plane.  
I am proud of a lot of friends.  
They are so nice. This is my life of a military child.




I Am A Military Child  
This is my life as a military child.  
It is difficult to be a new student.  
I am proud of my dad who works hard.  
That was all about being a military child.




I Am A Military Child  
This is my life as a military child.  
It is difficult to say bye to friends.  
I am proud of my mom and dad because they work hard.  
That was all about my life as a military child.



I Am A Military Child  
This is me and I'm a military child.  
It is difficult to move.  
I am proud of my dad who works hard.  
Do you want to be a military child?




I Am A Military Child  
This is my life as a military child.  
It is difficult making new friends.  
I am proud of my dad who works hard.  
That was all about my life as a military child.



I Am A Military Child  
This is my life as a military child.  
It is difficult to say goodbye to my dad.  
I am proud of my mom and dad who are great.  
That was all about my life as a military child.



I Am A Military Child  
This is my life as a military child.  
It is difficult to go on a long flight.  
I am proud of my family.  
That was all about my life as a military child.




I Am A Military Child  
This is my life as a military child.  
It is difficult to be in a plane.  
I am proud of my family.  
Do you want to be a military child?



This is about military child life.  
It is difficult to help new friends.  
I am proud of my family.  
Do you want to be a military child?



This is my life as a military child.  
It is difficult to leave my house and friends.  
I am proud of going to new places.  
This is my military child life.  
By: Olivia Browne  
1st grade



I Am A Military Child  
This is my life as a military child.  
It is difficult to say bye to my mom and dad.  
I am proud of my mom and dad who work hard.  
That was all about my life as a military child.



I Am A Military Child  
This is my life as a military child.  
It is difficult to move.  
I am proud of my dad who works hard.  
That was all about my life as a military child.




I Am A Military Child  
This is my life as a military child.  
It is difficult to say bye to my friends.  
I am proud of my family.  
Do you want to be a military child?



I Am A Military Child  
This is my life as a military child.  
It is difficult to say goodbye to my house.  
I am proud of my dad who works hard.  
This is my military child life.



I Am A Military Child  
This is my life as a military child.  
It is difficult to say good bye to my dad.  
I am proud of my dad who works hard for our country.  
That was all about my life as a military child.



I Am A Military Child  
This is my life as a military child.  
It is difficult to go to school.  
I am proud of my dad who works hard.  
That was all about my life as a military child.


Check out more military children stories at [militarychild.stripes.com](http://militarychild.stripes.com)



# Celebrating Month of the Military Child


## Bob Hope Elementary School

1st Grade / Ms. Nelson




I Am A Military Child  
By: Beckham

This is my life as a military child. It can be difficult to say goodbye to my best friends. It is good because I get to go to a new school. I am proud of making new friends like Allison. I am proud that dad helps. This is my military child life.



I Am A Military Child  
By: Amariyah Karkhanza

This is my life as a military child. It can be difficult to say good by to my friends because it is sad. But it is good because I get my own room! I am proud because my dad works makes us move to some where for 3 years. That was all about my life as a military child.




I am a military-connected child. It is difficult to get to school on base because we have to drive for. It is good to live in Okinawa. I am proud of my dad's work because he helps the military. I like being a military-connected child.

by: Averi




I Am A military child  
By: Charlotte Paul-Feather Nelson

This is my life as a military child. It is difficult when Daddy goes. I say goodbye. It is good because I get to make. Daily breakfast in bed. I am proud to meet my school friends. I am proud of Daddy for loving us. This is my military child life.




I Am A Military Child  
By: Scar Nelson

This is my life as a military child. It can be difficult to leave home. It is good to set up our new home. I am proud of my mom because my mom makes food. This is all but my life as a military child.




I Am A Military Child  
By: Chloe Dyer

This is my life as a military child. It can be difficult to say goodbye to my teachers when we move. It is good because I get to explore new places. I am proud of my new friend and my dad and Mom. I am proud. That was all about my life as a military child.




I Am A Military child  
By: Evlyn Peters

This is my life as a military child. It is difficult to say bye to my best friend. It is good when you meet new friends and new teachers. I am proud that when I move back to the US I'll see my family. That is all about being a military child.



This is my life as a military child!  
It is difficult to move a lot but it is good because I make friends. I am proud of my being a Military Child. I am proud that dad works hard! That was all about being a military child.

By: John M



I Am A Military Child  
By: Charlotte Paul-Feather Nelson

This is my life as a military child. It can be difficult to say goodbye to my friends when friends have to leave. It is good because we get to travel & explore. I am proud of being a military child. That was all about a military child life.




I am a military-connected child. It is difficult to say bye to friends. It is good to live together with my family. I am proud of my family because they work hard. I like being a military-connected child.

By: Ro Karkhanza




I Am A Military child. This is my life as a military child. It is difficult to move. It is good to have a good time. I am proud because dad helps us.



I Am A Military-connected Child  
By: Timmy Wood

This is my life as a military-connected child. It is difficult to say good bye to your best friends. It is good because you get to see new places. I am proud of my dad because he worked hard. Do you want to be a military-connected child?




Hi I am a Military child. It can be difficult to say bye to dad when he leaves. It is good because it's fun to be one. I am proud of my dad because he helps us be good. That was all about being a Military child.

By: Mason



I Am A Military Child  
By: Rigel Garsgeu

This is my life as a military child. It can be difficult to introduce me to new people when I move. It is good to make new friends though! I am proud of my dad because he works hard! Do you want to be a military child?



I Am A Military child  
By: Nash Scaphone

This is my life as a military child. It is difficult to say goodbye to your best friends because I like to play with them. It is good because you get to do new things like going to restaurants. I am proud that I get to try new foods. I am proud of dad for working hard in the military. That was all about my life as a military child.



I Am A Military child  
By: Samuel Landholt

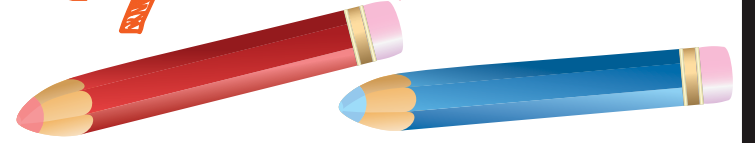
My sibling is a military child too. It is difficult to see a new house. It is good to make friends and to have fun with my new home. I am proud because my dad helps me. This is my 1st and only military child life.



# Celebrating Month of the Military Child

## Bob Hope Elementary School

3rd Grade / Miss Ianigan



- Amira Kankienza



- Brilani French



- Chloe Moriyama



- Ethan Peters



- Ethan Rivera



- Grayson Brown



- Julia Hicks



- Kiichi Morris



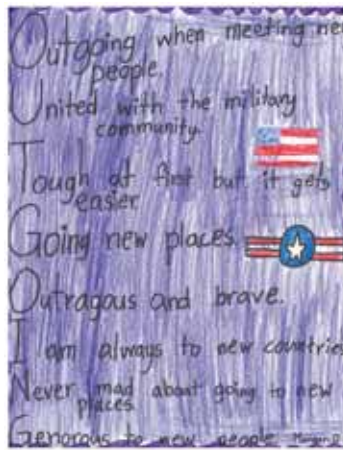
- Leo Gonzales



- Logan Dean



- Maverick Diller



- Morgan Dasovic



- Nolan Chilson



- Oliver Lukianczyk



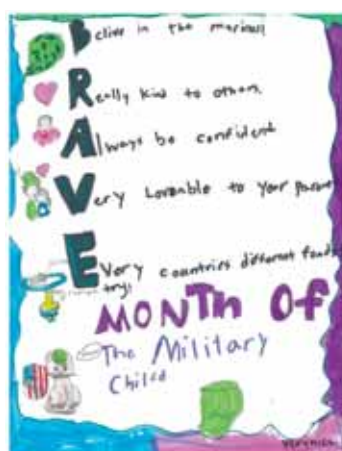
- Reagan Hoang



- Sonia Howell



- Stella Pinochi



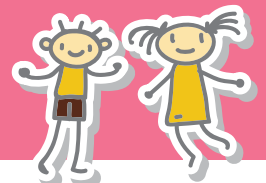
- Veronica Perez



- Vivienne King

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stories at

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# Celebrating Month of the Military Child

## Bob Hope Elementary School

5th Grade / Ms. Gagnon



*By Patia Potato*  
My dad gets back from deployment  
After months and months away  
We wrote and colored on postcards  
It really made his day

We fly around the world  
Meeting new friends  
We learn new cultures  
We hope it doesn't end

Being a military child comes with independence and strength  
We are always moving  
And leaving new friends  
Being a military child is not just a thing

We are always moving  
And leaving friends  
Being a military kid is not just a "thing"

*By Magdalene Galle*  
It's not easy, but we can get through it together!  
Living around the world  
I wish I could stay, not move away!  
Traveling to new places  
Airplane rides every year  
Reliving history by visiting old landmarks  
Year by year, I'm making more and more friends!

Crossing the world  
Happy Military child month!  
I miss my old home, and everyone I knew!  
Living in interesting places  
Different people, different faces  
Road trips  
Even in the most crazy places I've been to, I know where my heart lies.  
In Lawson.  
New places to see

Military children, I am a military kid, Like every military kid, I have to move, Trying to fit in new places, And leaving friends behind is... Really hard, Yet, we military kids can adjust to the new environment, Kids like me whom have military parent (s), I have to leave family, Don't give up on trying to make new friends when you move to new environments.

Moving as a Military child Poem

*By: Owynnever, 5th grade Bob Hope Elementary School*

*By Leonidas*  
Moving away from friends  
It is sad to move away from friends  
Like and subscribe if relatable  
Like i said it is sad to move away  
Again we make new friends  
Together we can be very happy  
Again we have to move  
Really sad to move from places  
Yes it's sad to move

April the month of the military child and my experience *by Kayla Pichler*

• April is the month of the military child. Being a military child is that of a child with a family member that is part of the military. The military is also part of the government so, one of your family is part of the government. The national flower for the month of the military child is the dandelion. The national color for the month of the military child is purple. In some schools, every Friday they do purple up. That means they have to wear purple every day. In conclusion, that is why april is the month of the military child. My experience of being a military child is great. My dad always works on the weekdays, sometimes on the weekends but, sometimes, he goes on business trips for weeks and months. The longest business trip he had was two months. After the two month trip, he wanted to plan a one year trip. And also, I have lots of friends during the experience.

Moving to different places

I have to start all over every time.  
I have to start a new school.  
I have to live in a hotel for up to a month.  
I have to live without Wi-Fi and other comforts.  
I have to go on a long flight to new locations.  
I have to learn a new culture to feel at home.  
I have to live in a new house and can't always bring everything.

Moving to different places is very challenging.

By Alexander Weis

As long as i live i have faith in God  
I believe he has a path  
My life starred with possibilities  
Prancing through the alley  
I have a special ability  
Swiftly sprinting through rain and snow  
"I go, i go, swifter than an arrow in a tartar's bow"  
I go, i go, across the globe  
And if you DARE mock my family's mark you shall face my mighty heart  
- Eliana Powers <3  
Quote by William Shakespeare

5th Grade / Ms. Sellers

By Ethan Whitefield

Military kid

moving around  
meeting new friends  
traveling to new places  
seeing new things  
meeting new people  
lots of things to see  
lots of things to do  
lots of things to learn  
lots of things to experience  
lots of things to love  
lots of things to live for

By Charles

Who moves but never stays.  
We often move in so many ways.  
We can travel by boat, car, or plane, it doesn't matter.  
But when we move far, far away it is often a clutter.  
It is so rare to be this kind of child, we get to see so many places.  
Our parents are so very important to us and this world.  
The new friends we make and new places we see are 10x more valuable than expensive gifts.  
For us it is okay to feel sad and blue.  
But wherever we go, people want to be friends with us too!

By Chloe Love

Hello! Hello everybody! We are small but mighty! You may think we are just children, but we can show you where to go by a million.

We are smart, we are brave and we love to see new things! If you don't know who we are, we are the military children who can go through anything!

We are like the butterfly. Our wings guide us to touch the sky. We go everywhere to many places where there is snow or maybe some tropical shows!

We don't own the world, but we own our homes which is many places that you may go!

Family, friends, and even pets. States and countries... Yes! I have 7 siblings. They are the best but sometimes they can be pests. 3 ferrets. (my favorite pets) Sakura, Stinky, and Gus.

Best friends don't last forever. Just memories which for me is enough.  
You might see the people you love go, but just remember that you might see them once more.

Growing up as a Military Child  
a sonnet by Kalina A. Minei, grade 5 Bob Hope Elementary

Growing up as a Military Child,  
Sometimes, it's sad.  
But, we should be glad.  
Because you can go to new places,  
And see new faces,  
Of new friends at a new school,  
And relatives- it's cool!

Sometimes, it could be wild,  
I know that, too.  
But hey, don't feel blue.  
Look on the bright side!  
Your friends are waiting for you, on the slide!  
So, let's cheer up,  
And don't forget to purple up!

-Kalina, 5th Grade, Bob Hope Elementary School

*By Kirito Cantu*  
My time will shine when it is time.  
I can believe in myself.  
Lots of places to go.  
I will stay confident.  
There is a destiny waiting for me.  
And I will be independent.  
Ready for anything.  
You and I can do anything if we dream it.

Can't stop me.  
How I can help other people.  
I am smart.  
Let go of fears that I had.  
Do the people I know go through the same thing?

*By Kian Duenas*  
Some of our uniforms are green.  
We are always seen.  
We will do whatever it means.  
We are not always clean.  
Some of us are teens.  
We use lots of different machines.  
We are forced to eat our peas.  
We also are forced to eat our beans.  
We have some good genes.  
I eat pizza.  
What am I?

*By Kai Gonzales*  
When we moved from washington  
All of us were sad  
Still though we moved  
Here we are happy  
In okinawa we go to the beach  
No downsides to living here  
Getting to the beach only takes a 3 minute drive  
Though it's still sad sometimes we are still happy  
On most weekends we go to the beach  
Next we will probably go to australia.





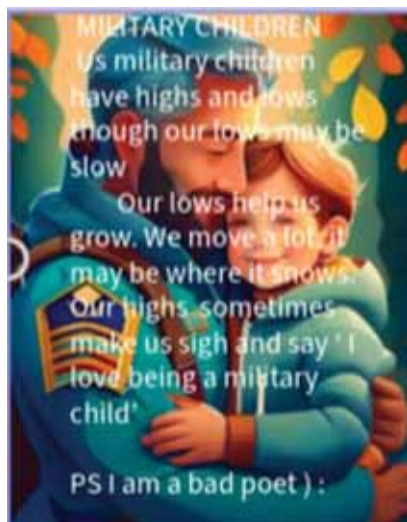
# Celebrating Month of the Military Child

# Bob Hope Elementary School

5th Grade / Ms. Sellers

*By Kate Foerster*

- M**oving all the time
- I**ndividually leaving
- L**only when deployed
- I**ntacate planning
- T**rusty companions
- A**nxiety creeps
- R**uining plans
- Y**elling and fights
- L**osing friends
- I**nteresting places
- F**lying in planes
- E**xploring the world



By Lukas Hoy

*By Eliana*

Fun and laughter filled the room when I left I couldn't see you  
Around, around just like fun, I miss you, you miss me yet you  
are my friend that I hope to see again.

**In the past it was fun but now we are separated it can't be undone.**

**One and One just like fun, thank you so much for all the puns!**

**Brown paper packaging tied up with strings.**

**Friends and Family are my favorite things!**

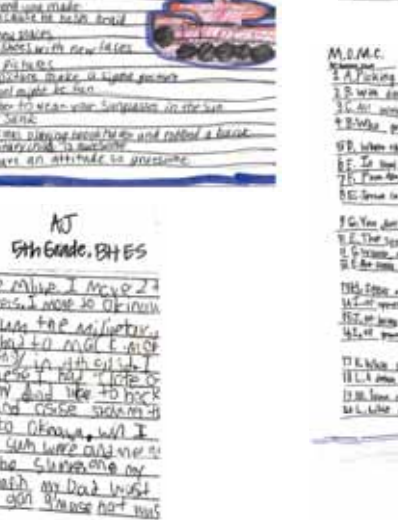
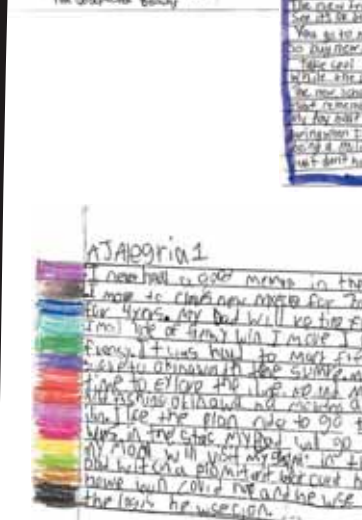
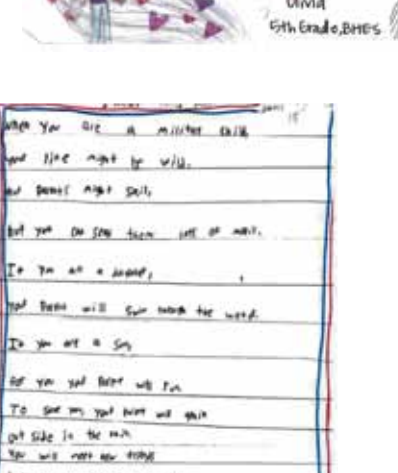
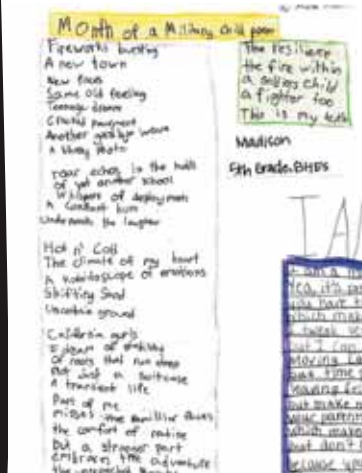
## Being a Military Child isn't that bad when you experience struggles

**Just remember your the funniest friend can't wait any longer to see you again!**

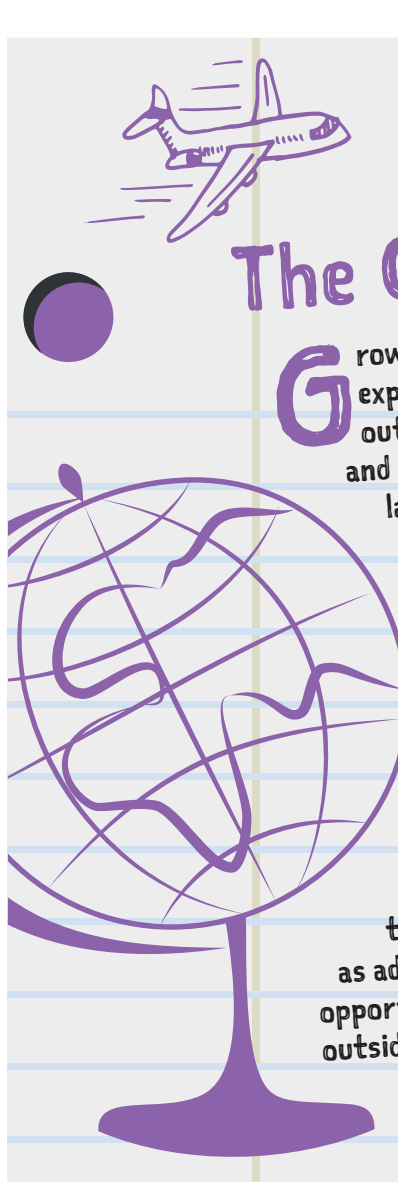
— 5th Grade / Ms. Carney



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military children stories at  
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Celebrating  
Month of the  
Military Child

# The Challenging Life of a Military Child

Growing up as a military child comes with unique experiences that profoundly shape one’s identity and outlook on life. The reality of constant relocations and parental deployments creates a complex emotional landscape. This essay explores the challenges faced by military children, including military brats, the ways they adapt, and the lifelong skills they develop.

One significant challenge is the frequent relocation; military families move every two or three years. For a young person, this means continuously leaving behind friends and familiar surroundings. The emotional toll can be heavy, often accompanied by mixed feelings of excitement and dread during each move. However, these experiences teach valuable social skills, such as adaptability and resilience. Each new school offers opportunities to navigate different social dynamics and step outside of comfort zones, fostering friendships that often span the globe.

Moreover, the unpredictability of a parent’s deployment adds another layer of complexity to a military child’s life. The emotional strain of separation can be profound, leading to feelings of loneliness or anxiety. Routines, such as texting and scheduling video calls, become crucial for maintaining connections during difficult periods. These experiences foster empathy and a deep understanding of the sacrifices made by service members and their families, instilling a sense of pride in the commitment to service.

Despite these challenges, being a military child cultivates resilience and strength. We learn to embrace change, adapt, and articulate our feelings, contributing to personal growth. This lifestyle encourages independence and self-sufficiency, as military children develop valuable skills for managing uncertainty and change. Ultimately, the experiences faced shape individuals who can tackle life’s difficulties with determination and grace, equipped with a unique perspective on the world that few others experience.

– Autumn Cantu, 7th Grade  
Ryukyu Middle School



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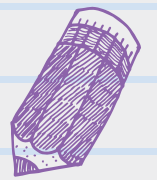
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## Military Child


Im saying goodbye, once again  
Just like I always did back then.  
Sometimes I cry, sometimes I beg  
“When will this all end?”

I’m moving back and forth,  
and south to north  
New faces greet me at the airport.  
Im then at a new school,town, and place  
And there’s people glancing at my face.

I call,text and I write  
Holding on to friendships to keep  
them bright.  
Some respond and some don’t  
So I just look at the tv  
and press the remote.

My dad is packing up the bicycles,tricycles,  
and motorcycles  
Realizing this is the same cycle.  
Im then on a plane, with my parents  
trying to explain  
I have no home but just places to gain.

– Eva Tamayo, 8th Grade  
Kadena Middle School



Check out more  
military children stories at:  
[militarychild.stripes.com](http://militarychild.stripes.com)



## CELEBRATING MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

## KADENA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

## 2nd Grade / Mrs. McKoy

Name: Talida Grade: 2nd

**STRENGTH AND COURAGE OFF THE GRID! YOU KNOW WHO I AM? I'M A MILITARY KID!**

Draw a picture about what makes being a military kid so special.

Being a military kid is so special because I get to see my dad when he comes home. I also get to see my mom when she comes home. I love my family and I love my country.

Talida Allyn  
2nd Grade  
Kadena Elementary  
Okinawa, Japan

Name: Gabriel Grade: 2nd

**STRENGTH AND COURAGE OFF THE GRID! YOU KNOW WHO I AM? I'M A MILITARY KID!**

Draw a picture about what makes being a military kid so special.

Being a military kid is so special because my dad works on the earth and Okinawa, Japan, so we don't have to worry about the world.

Gabriel Auguste  
2nd Grade  
Kadena Elementary  
Okinawa, Japan

Name: Ella Grade: 2nd

**STRENGTH AND COURAGE OFF THE GRID! YOU KNOW WHO I AM? I'M A MILITARY KID!**

Draw a picture about what makes being a military kid so special.

What makes me being a military child is special because the military and my dad keeps me safe.

Ella Cate  
2nd Grade  
Kadena Elementary  
Okinawa, Japan

Name: Mila Dawson Grade: 2nd

**STRENGTH AND COURAGE OFF THE GRID! YOU KNOW WHO I AM? I'M A MILITARY KID!**

Draw a picture about what makes being a military kid so special.

Being a military kid is so special because I tried new food all over the world.

Mila Dawson  
2nd Grade  
Kadena Elementary  
Okinawa, Japan

Name: Makenzie Grade: 2nd

**STRENGTH AND COURAGE OFF THE GRID! YOU KNOW WHO I AM? I'M A MILITARY KID!**

Draw a picture about what makes being a military kid so special.

I am special because a military kid is the best because you can go anywhere you want to go. You can make lots of friends.

Makenzie Dolan  
2nd Grade  
Kadena Elementary  
Okinawa, Japan

Name: Stella Grade: 2nd

**STRENGTH AND COURAGE OFF THE GRID! YOU KNOW WHO I AM? I'M A MILITARY KID!**

Draw a picture about what makes being a military kid so special.

I'm special being a military kid because I meet new friends. I travel all over the world and go place to place. I go to new schools and I eat new foods.

Stella Fletcher  
2nd Grade  
Kadena Elementary  
Okinawa, Japan

Name: Brantley Grade: 2nd

**STRENGTH AND COURAGE OFF THE GRID! YOU KNOW WHO I AM? I'M A MILITARY KID!**

Draw a picture about what makes being a military kid so special.

I am special because I am unique and I am loved. I am also special because I get to travel the world. I like to travel to Japan and I like to eat chicken and rice from Japan.

Brantley Hernandez  
2nd Grade  
Kadena Elementary  
Okinawa, Japan

Name: River Grade: 2nd

**STRENGTH AND COURAGE OFF THE GRID! YOU KNOW WHO I AM? I'M A MILITARY KID!**

Draw a picture about what makes being a military kid so special.

Being a military kid is so special because I get to meet new friends. I go to new schools and I eat new foods. I like to travel to Japan and I like to eat chicken and rice from Japan.

River Phoenix Hedges  
2nd Grade  
Kadena Elementary  
Okinawa, Japan

Name: Nathaniel Grade: 2nd

**STRENGTH AND COURAGE OFF THE GRID! YOU KNOW WHO I AM? I'M A MILITARY KID!**

Draw a picture about what makes being a military kid so special.

Being a military kid is so special because my dad works in the military. I'm also special because I have strength and I have two parents who love me.

Nathaniel Jacques  
2nd Grade  
Kadena Elementary  
Okinawa, Japan

Name: Thomas Grade: 2nd

**STRENGTH AND COURAGE OFF THE GRID! YOU KNOW WHO I AM? I'M A MILITARY KID!**

Draw a picture about what makes being a military kid so special.

Being a military child is so special because my dad keeps me safe, and I get to travel. My favorite place to travel is Japan, because I like the food.

Thomas Meier  
2nd Grade  
Kadena Elementary  
Okinawa, Japan

Name: Frank Grade: 2nd

**STRENGTH AND COURAGE OFF THE GRID! YOU KNOW WHO I AM? I'M A MILITARY KID!**

Draw a picture about what makes being a military kid so special.

Being a military kid is so special because it will save the world. I am a special kid because I am a military kid. I like to travel to Japan and I like to eat chicken and rice from Japan.

Frank Palmer  
2nd Grade  
Kadena Elementary  
Okinawa, Japan

Name: Seliah Grade: 2nd

**STRENGTH AND COURAGE OFF THE GRID! YOU KNOW WHO I AM? I'M A MILITARY KID!**

Draw a picture about what makes being a military kid so special.

Being a military kid is good because my dad was in the military once. My dad came back home and I cried happily running to him.

Seliah Joe Ferguson  
2nd Grade  
Kadena Elementary  
Okinawa, Japan

Name: Shayla Grade: 2nd

**STRENGTH AND COURAGE OFF THE GRID! YOU KNOW WHO I AM? I'M A MILITARY KID!**

Draw a picture about what makes being a military kid so special.

Being a military kid is so special because I love my dad. I am in the military and I love my dad. I get new things and I love my dad. I love my dad and I love my country.

Shayla Rickburg  
2nd Grade  
Kadena Elementary  
Okinawa, Japan

Name: Skylar Grade: 2nd

**STRENGTH AND COURAGE OFF THE GRID! YOU KNOW WHO I AM? I'M A MILITARY KID!**

Draw a picture about what makes being a military kid so special.

Being a military kid is so special because I get to go on fun adventures. I get to discover new places. My favorite place is hanging out with my family. My favorite place I've gone to is South Dakota because I got to play in the snow. I had so much fun.

Skylar Robinson  
2nd Grade  
Kadena Elementary  
Okinawa, Japan

Name: Michael Grade: 2nd

**STRENGTH AND COURAGE OFF THE GRID! YOU KNOW WHO I AM? I'M A MILITARY KID!**

Draw a picture about what makes being a military kid so special.

A military kid is special because they go to the place to the flag and put their hand on the chest.

Michael Talbot  
2nd Grade  
Kadena Elementary  
Okinawa, Japan

Name: Christoff Grade: 2nd

**STRENGTH AND COURAGE OFF THE GRID! YOU KNOW WHO I AM? I'M A MILITARY KID!**

Draw a picture about what makes being a military kid so special.

Being a military kid is so special because I get to go to the place to the flag and put their hand on the chest.

Christoff Word  
2nd Grade  
Kadena Elementary  
Okinawa, Japan







# OF THE MILITARY CHILD NTARY SCHOOL

## n and Mrs. Montgomery

is ok because they will be back  
ether again.

Jackson  
n a military child my whole life.  
s that we can meet new people.  
e we go but because of the  
e, and sometimes moving is so  
ur goodbyes. I like when we  
ages. I know a good amount of  
on. Sometimes I'm upset where  
ful too. It is a blessing to see  
ause not all kids get to see it.  
people who help the military.  
stuff, be happy about it, not  
happy you guys can be a part

a Jacques  
y child, other times I don't. It's  
ause my family and I have to  
have to move away from my  
ad and make me feel I will never  
aveling because I get to meet  
w house and new teacher.  
because my family and I get to  
is so much fun. I get to go  
nce with my dad. Then, I would  
ad works in the military. I  
ad stays up late at work and  
SAC. I also don't like when my  
comes back the next midnight.  
e away from him. I sometimes  
d miss him.

ya Kern  
ough a whole bunch of  
est challenge for all military  
ate to that problem because  
r friends. For example, I have  
Okinawa when I was 6 months  
d to move to South Carolina.  
er and yet again we moved but  
we moved to Hawaii for about  
ck to Virginia. Then we moved  
summer of 2023 and then  
ess than a year and back to  
despite always moving, being a  
g to move to new places.  
States Army and has been  
ught in Baghdad Iraq. He  
ch is basically a firework that  
stead of pretty stuff coming  
n all forms. My Uncle was a  
going no matter what.

ail Lester  
amazing. It's an opportunity  
culture that surrounds us.  
nity to see what other things  
ee. But like all things there's  
e that being a military child is  
you smash something, every  
friend that you love, but  
until it's recycled. And you the  
ll you come back from your  
me you love and miss. It leaves  
never leaves. Because when  
you leave the friends you made  
g away is not all bad it can also  
nities for children's future and  
exciting things. The big hole in  
y the great opportunities here  
know what things you get to  
eam of being in Japan, but we  
wonders of Okinawa while  
ause our parents sacrificed a  
ot just for us.

is Marfa  
ometimes, sometimes not. It is  
But also, I have to say goodbye  
ool and go to a new one. But I

get to make new friends. And some of my new friends would  
have to move. But it is also fun because I get to go to festivals.  
As a military child I don't really go on vacation. When I travel  
somewhere else, we stay there for 3 years.

By Penelope Martinez

I have been a military child my whole life and, yes, it's been  
hard moving to a different place every four years but I've  
gotten used to it. The thing that I hate about leaving Japan  
is my friends. I have so many friends that I'm going to miss.  
I really don't want to leave but we have to because we have  
orders. And I know I'm going to make the same amount of  
friends and it will be easier talking to people because everyone  
doesn't speak Japanese. I'm excited but also sad. I got to try  
new experiences and learn a different language and I love  
Japanese culture. It's so cool. I'm moving on and my dad is  
retiring in 4 years so this move will be my last stop, it could be  
our forever home or we could go explore new places but what  
I'm most excited about is what the future holds for me.

By Evelyn McLemore

I'm a military child. It can be very hard being a military child.  
But it can also kinda be fun. Here are some reasons it can  
be fun. Well first of all, you get to be stationed in different  
parts of the world. Like Japan for example. But I hate it when  
my dad gets deployed. One time, he missed my birthday, my  
brother's birthday, my parents' anniversary, and Christmas.  
He sent presents for me, my brother and my mom. Luckily,  
he got to come back home in the middle of his deployment  
to visit us for a few weeks. We spent Christmas with my  
grandparents that year and we also called my dad. Being a  
military child is hard. It can be hard to adapt to new schools  
and make new friends. But here's two tips, when you move  
to a different school, you can brag about the amazing places  
you've been and you can also get a doll that has a picture  
of your mom or dad. You can also learn new languages like  
Japanese.

By Daniel Montes

When being born as a military child, sometimes life could be  
hard and scary but you can adapt to it. When we were  
stationed here, we left everything behind, my friends, school,  
and some of my closest family members. It can be scary but  
you also might meet new friends. If I never moved here, I would  
have not met my friends, or tried other food or found my real  
self.

My parents put me in a school called KDES and a few  
days later, I made some friends, I made many friends along  
the way. I've been a military kid for 2 years now. I moved here  
in April of 2022. I've been eating many foods like sushi,  
ramen, miso soup and curry. I didn't start watching anime till  
December 2022. My first anime was Attack on Titans, it's  
a good beginner anime. My life is now different because I have  
different friends, meet new people, and try many different  
foods.

By Harper Nguyen

I'm a Military child. There's some pros and cons about being  
a Military child, I like being a Military child because I get  
to travel to many other places. Before I came to Okinawa,  
I was in Washington State. After about 3 years I moved to  
Okinawa. It took some time getting used to, but now I love this  
place a lot.

One thing I don't really like about being a Military child is  
moving places, like if I really love a place I'm living in and I have  
a lot of friends and stuff like that, we move every 3 years. It's  
great to be a Military child because you get to have friends  
from all around the world and you get to see the differences  
from one place to another. You also can try different foods in  
places too. Though, after I move away from somewhere I do  
really miss all my old friends but I will get their contact so we  
could still stay in touch. It's also really cool that you can tell  
people all the places you've been to as well.

By Audrina Paackard

Being a military child may seem exciting, but it can be hard  
sometimes. The best part is you can visit new places and  
live there for a couple years. But the worst part is you are  
always changing schools, so you have to leave all the friends  
you made there. Also, you may live next to family for some  
years, then you could live in a whole different country. But  
when you move, you can make new friends and eat new foods  
in that area. Some may be good and some may be gross. You

can also learn new languages. But you may not live there long  
enough to learn how to speak the language fully. That is what  
being a military child is like.

By Gunner Pyeatt

I'm a military child. Being a military child makes you have  
things that other kids don't get. Even though being a  
military child sounds great, we do have some disadvantages  
too.

There are a lot of advantages to being a military child. For  
example, we have the choice of living on a military base. This  
means that we live in a safer place. Also, a big advantage is  
going to a DoDEA school.

There are some disadvantages too. For example, instead  
of living in a place for a long time like most kids do, you're  
moving all the time. This is a disadvantage because you're  
always moving away from your friends and the people that  
you got used to living with. And being the new kid is not fun  
because you have to get used to new people again. And trust  
me, moving across to the whole other side of the world away  
from your best friend is sad. I think being a military kid is  
awesome but also sad.

By Micah Rabine

I, as a military child, have been one for 11 years. It always  
feels like the world has blessed you when your parents in the  
military come back after deployment. Sometimes people who  
are military children, can have difficulties having one parent,  
or even sleeping. Which is one of the many side effects I faced.  
But you can have a wonderful time with your siblings and  
your one parent that you have. And you can calm down and  
relax when there are only a few days left. But it is good to be  
a military child most of your life and be grateful you are. And  
we are strong together as one, and you can also leave the  
negativity.

By Andres Ramirez

I'm a proud military child of a hard-working military worker,  
loving mother and family. I learned life is not all happy  
and easy, but hardworking and sometimes, even tears. Yes,  
there will always be times of trial and tribulation but there  
will always have a time for joy and cheer. There will always  
be a time for smiles and laughter. And from my personal  
experience, even though I moved from Iwakuni, in Mainland  
Japan which I had lived for 7 of my 10 years in life, I have  
still found friends, and joy in Okinawa Japan where I have  
lived for 3 years and am about to move away in the summer.  
My dad has been deployed many times and one time, for 9  
months. Thankfully he does not need to be deployed anymore  
but that doesn't change that other people have yet to be  
deployed. But when they do come home, it's one of the most  
satisfying and heartwarming moments of your life. The  
Military Child is a strong, hopeful, smart, fearless, loving, and  
courageous kid.

By Emma Robinson

When I was in North Carolina my life was ok. I usually  
played outside with my friend. We didn't get a lot of  
snow. Only like an inch of snow. My mom got orders to go to  
Okinawa for 3 years. So, we packed all of our stuff and took  
a plane ride to Okinawa. Luckily one of my mom's friends  
drove us to our new house. After a few days passed we finally  
got our stuff. Then I got settled. When summer ended, I had to  
go to my new school. I was really nervous at first but it wasn't  
that bad after all.

Being a military kid is fun and sometimes stressful or  
sad because you get to go to so many places but you have  
to switch schools and leave your friends. I get to learn many  
different languages and culture. I also get to make so many  
new friends. I get to go to places that I've never heard of.  
When me and my family got here, I didn't even know that there  
was a place called Cat Cafe. Being a military kid has its ups  
and downs but it's still pretty awesome!

By Laila Shreve

When I was just four years old, my dad joined the military.  
I lived with my grandma, grandpa, and aunt back then. I  
remembered when my dad went to basic training for a long  
time. I had to watch his long curly hair get clipped with a pair  
of scissors until it was short. And how he had written letters  
to my mom for the months he was gone. Then when my dad  
got back from basic training I moved from Texas to Spokane.  
I went to Washington by car. The hardest part was seeing my

grandma, grandpa, and aunt for the last time before moving.

When I moved there, I made a friend and then more. My  
friends and I grew up together. But then I had the horrifying  
news that I had to move again, but this time to Okinawa. I  
knew I would probably never see my friends, and that I would  
only be able to visit my grandparents once a year, but I  
couldn't do anything about it.

The only thing I could do was cry, and try to spend the  
most time with my friends as possible. It's really hard being a  
military child. But you get to make new friends. And explore  
new places that some kids don't even get to go to. As a  
military child I am proud of myself, and other military kids  
should be proud of themselves too.

By Jayce Smalls

Being a military child is fun. You get to go to different places  
and do lots of fun stuff. I have been to lots of countries  
and states. I have made many different friends. Being a  
military child can also be hard sometimes. When I move, I  
leave some of my friends behind. I have to make new friends  
when I move. Sometimes my dad has to leave to go to different  
countries and states for his job. I have been in Okinawa for  
the past seven years. I have gone to lots of different places in  
Okinawa. I have gone to lots of restaurants and playgrounds.  
I go to lots of fun places.

My mom works a lot so sometimes I only see her in  
the morning. Being a military child can be fun because you get  
to travel around the world. I like traveling the world so I can  
learn different languages. I like being a military child.

By Emery Vang

My life as a military child is hard because we would have  
to stay in that country for three years, and constantly  
move around the world after three years. We would sometimes  
extend our years in the country. When we have to move to a  
different country, we would pack up and our family would say  
goodbye to our friends. But we would always find new friends  
later on in the future. We would learn about the country's  
laws, rules, and culture like how we did in Okinawa, Japan.  
My family members would sometimes come to Okinawa to  
experience what it's like in Okinawa. They mostly come during  
spring break, winter break, and summer break. When they  
are here, we would go to exciting places like Pineapple Park,  
Pareo city, and American village.

When we move to a different country we would stay in a  
hotel until they are done setting the furniture into the house  
for us to use. Then, when our stuff comes to our house, they  
would take the furniture we borrowed and put our stuff into  
the house. When our family members come to Okinawa, we  
would take them to different places to explore. Okinawa is a  
fun place to explore.

By Carmen Warkooz

I have been a military child for as long as I can remember.  
The sad thing about being a military child is you need to  
move about 2 or 3 years. I hate leaving my friends behind.  
It is always hard but the good thing is I have never been to  
Japan. I'm so excited to see and try lots of new things. The  
thing I want to do most is scuba diving. I really want to do that  
because I love swimming and seeing all the different kinds of  
animals, sharks, coral, fish, you name it. And sometimes my  
dad has to deploy. I hate that too. Sometimes he can deploy  
for 2 years, it's just what the military wants him to do. I love  
being a military child!

By Yelina Weeks-Campos

I have been here for 9 months. My dad works in the military.  
Sometimes he works really late but sometimes he gets off  
early. He even works on weekends. He works really hard. My  
dad also works at home. He fixes my mom's car and his car.  
When he gets home, he cooks and plays with us. My family has  
been in Japan for about 4 years and 9 months. We have only  
stayed in one place for 3 years.

My feelings as a military child are sad because my dad  
is mostly busy so we don't get to play with him so much. But  
when we do we have lots of fun. My mom has a job too so they  
are both busy. But I have so much fun when I'm at home helping  
out by cleaning the house or if my parents are home, I help take  
care of my baby sister while they work on the computer or  
paperwork. I love my dad and mom.

By Parker Xiong

I am a military child. Something I do not like that happens a  
lot is that I have to move a lot and it feels like I have to just  
restart a part of my life, and when friends move away too. At  
least when I move, I get to meet new people. I get a new school,  
just like a fresh start if the place I was before wasn't good, like  
if school is too far from home, or school is too long. Anyways,  
I always make great memories at every place I move to.

One of my favorite places I have moved to is California.  
When I leave a place behind, I get flashbacks of all the  
memories I have made there. Every place I move to has given  
me a different feeling wherever I am. This just says that as a  
military child, when you move to a new place, it's like there is  
always a place for you and your family in the world.



# Killin Elementary School

3rd Grade  
Mr. Vallis and Mrs. Whittington

## Being a Military Child Has Its Ups and Downs To It

By Kellen Whittington

Imagine this, your back is on a towel, sand between your feet, seagulls are squawking, sea waters rushing and splashing, and when you open your eyes you see the clear blue sky. This is just another weekend for me. Being a military child has its ups and downs to it. I'm going to start with the ups. One is I get to travel the world and one place is Japan, eating new food like sushi, seaweed, crab. However, I have to leave my family. Being a military child has its ups and downs to it however it isn't all that bad.

I'm going to start with the ups. One is I get to travel the world and one place is Japan. You also can eat new food like sushi, seaweed, and crab. However the bad part is you have to leave your family and friends. One place I got to go to was Rome. We went to the Coliseum, Trevi Fountain, the Spanish Steps where my brother hurt his bottom. In Japan I have been to the Aquarium, Cherry Blossom festival, and Universal Studios where I got my second Harry Potter wand. I went to Harry Potter in England and Caught some golden snitches with my family. That is why being a military child is awesome, because you get to travel the world.

My second reason it's awesome to be a military child is you get to try new food. My first favorite food is sushi. My second favorite is shrimp nigiri. My second favorite food is shrimp tempura. I don't like having to take out the shell though. My third favorite food is muscles. I first had them in Italy. These are my favorite foods and another reason why being a military child is awesome.

The downside of being a military child is you have to leave your family sometimes. For example, I had to leave my friends Ashton and Aiden when we left Italy. When we left Italy I had to leave my friend Julio. These are three reasons that are the downside of being a military child because you have to leave family and friends.

So this is why being a military child has its ups and downs but it's mostly good. You get to travel to places like England. Also you can eat new food like sushi, seaweed, and crab. However, the bad part is you have to leave family and friends. This is why I like being a military child. I hope you liked my reasons.

## BEING A MILITARY CHILD

By Alex Ahn

Imagine eating Okinawa soba sitting on a relaxing Beach side. You might think that is a vacation. But for me it's just another Sunday. In my opinion being a military child is fun and exciting, but sometimes very sad. First of all you get to meet new people, you get advantages, but you have to move a lot. If you are still not yet convinced keep reading!

The first reason why it's good being a military child is because you get to meet new people. For example when you meet new people you could learn new cultures! In Maryland, I learned about Indian culture from my friend Abeer. Another reason why it's good meeting new people is because they might play your favorite video game two! Finally it's good meeting new people because who knows maybe they might become your BFF. If you want to learn more, keep reading.

My second reason why being a military child is fun is because it gives you advantages. Such as you get to live on base which makes me feel safe. One reason is because when you live on base you get to meet a bunch of people. Another reason why being a military child gives you advantages is because when you live on base you can feel safe because there are guards. Finally another reason why being a military child is good living on base is because you get to go to the park in just a couple of blocks. Keep reading if you want to learn more.

Being a military child is good but sometimes challenging because when you move you could have to say goodbye to your bff. Another example for saying goodbye is when I was in Alabama I also had to say goodbye to my friends. Finally another example of saying goodbye is when I was in Okinawa, when I was 3 years old. Next is my conclusion.

Well there you have it, those are some of the reasons why I like being a military child. You get to meet new people like when I'm at a beer and learn about Indian culture, and you get advantages such as living on base, but sometimes it's sad cuz you have to say goodbye to your bffs.

## Charlie Military Child Experience

By Charlie Anderson

One day I was at Yakiniku eating delicious meat. The meat was sizzling right in front of my eyes. The meat smells charred and crispy. Yakiniku is amazing! In my opinion being a military child is super awesome. You get to learn new cultures, meet new people and food you get

to play baseball but it can be hard moving away from friends and family. If you want to learn more of my story, keep reading.

The first reason why in my opinion being a military child is super awesome is that you get to learn about new cultures. I'm on a Japanese baseball team. I have to speak Japanese. For example, I can say in Japanese what position I am going to play. At Yakiniku My favorite food is meat. It's delicious. Finally you get to try new foods. My favorite Japanese food place to eat is yakiniku. Yakiniku is when you cook meat on a grill. This is why being a military child is super awesome.

The second reason why being a military child is the best is because in Japan I get to be on a Japanese baseball team. It's the best thing ever. Our team is called the Beto Dragon. It's not a MCCS team, it's a forever season. I made lots of friends. 3 of them had a sleepover before. My coaches are really nice this year but my old one wasn't this year. My coaches Let Me Pitch I am the best picture on the team. I feel really fast and accurate. These are just a few reasons why I love my team.

But it can also be hard moving if you have to leave good friends and make new friends. For example my friend Theo was 7 years old and he left. I really miss him that much. He gave me all his toys he did not pack. I am really sad that he left. But when people leave,

new people come. So I make friends really easily in my neighborhood. I have five friends. This is why moving is the hard part of being a military child.

As you can see, being a military child is a super amazing and challenging child. I get to learn new cultures like Japanese and I get to play for the Beto Dragons Baseball team which is amazing but it can be hard moving. Like moving from North Carolina to Japan when I was four. These are all my reasons why I love being a military child.

## Being A Military Child

By Riley Barrett

Boom! The fireworks explode as I'm looking out the window, but this is just another weekend being a military child! I believe being a military child is great and sometimes difficult. As a military child you can travel and meet new people, but sometimes you have to leave friends and family. If you don't yet think being a military child is awesome, then keep reading to find out why.

The first reason why being a military child is great is because you can make new friends. One reason is I met three new friends when I first got here and talked and played Sports. Another reason is when I get into my house I meet more friends. The last reason is I made new friends at a pirate ship park.

The second reason why being a military child is great is because you can travel. One example is I can go to the Dino Park on naha. Another example is I traveled from Florida all the way to Okinawa, Japan. The last example is I traveled from my house to the aquarium in Nago.

But sometimes it can be difficult to be a military child. My first reason is I had to leave my friends I made in Pre-K. The second reason is I had to leave my grandparents. Now I can only see them once a year. My last reason is it took me a month to make friends in first grade then I had to move to 2nd grade. That is why I think being a military child is a little difficult.

I believe being a military child is great and sometimes difficult you get to travel to places like Okinawa Naha to see Dino Park you can also meet new people like Oliver. Finally it could be difficult to leave friends and family. I hope my writing has helped you see how great it is to be a military child.

## Why I think being a military child is awesome

By Oliver Bernard

Did you ever want to take a 2-hour trip to a dream vacation well in Okinawa? You can! I think being a military child is awesome! I think being a military child is awesome because you get to travel, you can get to meet new people and it is also challenging because you have to move. If you still think that being a military child isn't awesome now just keep reading!

I think that it is amazing because you get to travel the world! I like it because you get to go to unique places, like Okuma. And in Japan you have a dream vacation almost a mile away from home! That is why I think it is amazing because you get to travel the world!

I think it is challenging because you have to think about what to bring with you and what you want to leave behind. And also you need to say goodbye to old friends. And you also have to say goodbye to your old school. That is why I think it is challenging because you have to move.

I think that being a military child is awesome because you get to meet new people. I have met new people like Zoey at school. I met new friends like Josh in my neighborhood. I met new people like Zoe at book club! That is why I think being a military child is awesome because you get to meet new people!

So there you have it, being a military child is awesome, amazing and challenging. It is amazing because you get to travel the world, it is awesome because you get to meet new people and it is a challenge because you have to move. I hope you got to understand that being a military child can be challenging but it still can be awesome and amazing!

## Why Being a Military Child is Super Awesome and Tough

By Everett Beske

Just imagine walking through Tokyo, the biggest city in the world hearing cars fly down the streets. Well that is possible if you're a military child! From my point of view being a military child is awesome but it can also be tough. As a military child you can visit places like Tokyo and you get to meet new people but it's tough because you have to PCS away from your friends and family. If you don't believe me just read my writing and I'll prove you wrong!

## CELEBRATING MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

The first reason being a military child is super awesome and tough is because I love traveling and seeing different places and adventuring around the world! For example last year I traveled to South Korea and went to the city Seoul. It was awesome! Another example is last February I went to Okuma for 3 days. It was amazing. My final example is last year around Christmas time I went to Osaka Universal Studios. I rode a lot of cool rides. These are just a few examples of where I got to go as a military child.

The second reason I think being a military child is awesome and tough is because you get to meet new people. One example is when I came to Eck and I met my second and third grade teachers. Their names are Mr Vallis Ms Whittington Miss Pagan and Miss Bodkin. Another example is in second grade I met Jason he is a great friend he is funny and kind too. The last example is in third grade. I met Donovan. Donovan is funny and good at lacrosse. These are some of the examples of the friends I've met.

The last reason being a child is awesome and tough is you have to leave friends. For example, I had to leave Zuri. Zuri was one of my best friends. Zuri was cool, kind and funny. Another example is, I had to leave Oliver another one of my best friends Oliver was funny and kind. The last example is I had to leave Mat'eo. Mat'eo is funny kind and fun. These are some of the people I had to leave behind.

After reading my essay now you know why being a military child is awesome and tough. You can visit places like South Korea, Tokyo and Osaka. You can also meet new people like Jason and Donovan. But the downside is when you have to PCS you have to leave all of your friends and family now you know why being a military child is awesome and tough I hope someday you can travel like a military child!

## What It's Like Being a Military Child

By Elaina Bevilacqua

Have you ever spoken different languages like Spanish or Japanese? Those are just two examples because you get to learn a lot of cultures when you live aboard. I believe that being a military child is terrific but sometimes difficult. Being a military child means to get to meet new people, you get to learn new cultures, but you have to leave family and friends behind. This is why I think being a military child is terrific but sometimes difficult.

My first reason why I like being a military child is because I get to meet new people. For example when I moved here I met a lot of people and became friends with them. Another example is that when my brother was younger he had friends in the US but moved and made more friends. For my last example when you move you leave family and friends behind but you get to meet new people. This is part of why I like being a military child.

The second reason why I like being a military child is because I get to learn new cultures. My first example is that when you travel it can be fun to learn a language like Japanese. My second example is that it can also be fun to learn how to play games of a different culture, like how Japanese kids play tug of war. My last example is that it can be fun to learn New Traditions like the Cherry Blossom Festival. This is part of why I like being a military child.

The third reason is that it can be hard to leave family and friends behind. For example, when you move and leave friends it's possible that you won't see them again. My second example is about my grandparents. When we moved to Okinawa I was very young and I only got to see my grandparents once. But it's not all bad because like I said in reason one you can always make new friends. This is the last part of why I like being a military child.

This is why I like being a military child but I also think that it can sometimes be challenging. You get to meet new people like how my brother made friends when we moved to Okinawa. You also get to learn new cultures like the Cherry Blossom Festival. But it can be challenging like how I had to leave my grandparents in the United States. I hope you enjoyed reading my writing. Here's a question: have you ever been a military child?

## Being a military child is awesome

By Lucas Corredor

Have you ever traveled to Singapore I have it's so cool in Singapore I coconut water but I didn't like it I stayed the night Hotel I would have rated five stars! Being a Military child is cool but sometimes challenging. If You want to know why being a military child is cool, keep reading!!!

My first reason is that you get to travel a lot of the time. It's also really fun! For example when I was seven I traveled from New Jersey to Okinawa on the other side of the world! Also I traveled to Tokyo Singapore Thailand and Universal Studios and a lot more. It's exotic! When I was in Universal Studios I went on this roller coaster that had loops and went upside down! Now you can probably see why I like being a military child. Let me tell you some more!

My second reason is you get to meet new people and build new relationships. When I moved here I met a friend named Benson. He is a really good friend and I'm still friends with him now. He is a really good friend! Another person I met is Josiah. He is so funny he is the class clown and he's a good wrestler. Last but not least Mateo is a good friend. We play Roblox too. He's so addicted to Fortnite! Don't stop reading. I have more to tell you!

Being a military child can also be challenging because you have to leave friends and family! For example, when I was 7 I moved from New Jersey to Okinawa Japan. I was sad I left my best friend and made a new one Benson and also I'm not very good at making friends. This is why being a military child is fun and challenging.

There you go now you know why being a military child is cool but challenging you get to travel to places like Tokyo New Jersey Okinawa Singapore and a lot more you also get to build new relationships and get to meet new friends like my friend Benson but it's also a little challenging because you leave friends and family I had to leave my grandparents I hope you like my essay and you are special even if you're not a military child! Bye!

## Millie's opinion on being a military child

By Millie Coulston

“Is everyone packed and ready to go?” my mom asked. “We are going to be late,” my dad said. “I don't even know where we are going,” I mumbled. “We are going to THAILAND,” my family



## CELEBRATING MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

→ yelled! Have YOU been anywhere like Thailand? In my opinion, being a military child is unique, fun and exciting.

My first reason why being a military child is unique, fun and exciting is because you get to travel to exotic places. For example, I went to Thailand over the winter break and I got to take a picture with a monkey. My friend got to hold a baby tiger! Another example is when I went to Korea I got to get my ears pierced! and I tried a really yummy Korean corn dog! Finally, when I went to Tokyo I got to do the soba eating challenge and I got to see Taylor Swift at her concert and Olivia Rodrigo and Disneyland. That is why I think being a military child is unique, fun and exciting.

My second reason why being a military child is unique, fun and exciting is because you get to meet new people. For example at school me and a mamasan are in a gift giving war. Another example is I have a lot of Japanese baby friends that I go on adventures with. Finally I had a Japanese baby friend that lived in my neighborhood and we would jump on the trampoline together. That's why I think being a military child is unique, fun and exciting.

The third reason why being a military child is unique, fun and exciting is because you get to eat new foods. For example, I got to try shrimp tempura, now it's my favorite food! Another example is I got to try so many sobas and ramens. My favorite is Okinawa soba. Finally I got to try a Japanese candy called "ramune", which is my favorite candy. It melts in my mouth and tastes like soda. That's why I think being a military child is unique, fun and exciting.

There you have it! Now you know about all my military child experiences. You get to travel to places like Tokyo, Thailand and Korea. You also get to meet new people like my Japanese baby friends. Finally you get to eat new food like shrimp tempura, lomoni and soba. I hope you liked reading about being a military child.

### Being a Military Child in my Point of View

By Lilly Dingle

Imagine seeing a giant creature with 6 ft long legs. Guess what? I've seen them. And if I was never a military child I probably wouldn't travel to Okinawa and go to that aquarium and see crab spiders. I believe that being a military child has both the good and the bad. These are the three reasons I think being a military child has the good and the bad. First, sometimes you have to leave your friends, but it's also good because you get to see sights and eat new yummy foods. Keep reading my essay to see how Military Children live.

One of the reasons why I think that being a military child is sad is because you have to leave your friends when you move. For example, when I moved from Maryland I had to leave a lot of my friends like Anita and Alex. Also it is hard to stay in touch, when it is daytime in Japan, it is night time in Maryland. Finally you have to work hard to stay friends with people when you move. This is a reason why being a military child is hard.

A reason why I think it is good being a military child is because you get to travel. There is a great park by Arah where you can go. It is in the shape of a pirate ship. It is a cool, and fun place. There is also an aquarium, actually more than one on Okinawa. The name of the aquarium is Churumi, you can see these giant creatures called crab spiders! They are cool but if you saw one in the ocean while you're swimming it would be creepy. Those are some examples of the fun places you can travel to in Okinawa while being a Military Child.

Another reason I think being a military child is good is because of the food you get to try. An example of a food you can try in Okinawa is Lawson chicken nuggets. Yum yum! Another example of a food in Okinawa is onigiri. I like the plain ones, just rice, seaweed and salt. One more example of a food is sashimi. I like salmon sashimi. I hope you learned about some new foods!

That is why I think being a military child is good, but can sometimes be sad. You can go to places like Churumi aquarium and see crab spiders, you may have to leave friends like Alex and Anita, and you can try yummy foods like Lawson chicken nuggets. And if you still don't believe me about military children read someone else's essay! I hope you enjoyed my essay and learned something new!

### What it feels like to be a military child

By Penny Dingle

It was a 5-day weekend and you're walking around outside when your mom says "Time to go to American village", you get in the car, and suddenly you're there. You see all of the fancy stores and freeze. In my opinion being a military child feels great, and similar to children who are not in the military. I'm going to show you three reasons why being a military child feels great, and similar to children that are not in the military. My first reason is you get to go back to the place you came from, the second reason is you still get to go to school for a long time, and the third reason is you get to see different styles of things. Read more to see all the details of being a military child!

The first reason why being a military child feels normal is because you get to move back to the place you came from. For example at the end of the school year I get to move back to Maryland, Maryland is the place I came from. It feels like home. Another example is I'm moving at the end of the school year back to Maryland, and I'll get to see my friends there. I miss Fiona very much. Finally, moving to Okinawa has been fun but it's nice to know that I'll get to go back home. Maybe, when I get back I will compare Maryland and Okinawa. This is a reason why being a military child is normal.

My second reason being a military child feels normal is because you still get to go to a school for a long time. For example, the last place I was in the same school named RCV for 2 years. Another example is last year I was in a different school for a year. Named Zuckeran. Another example is I've been here at ECK for almost a year too. This is a reason why being a military child feels normal.

One of my reasons it's awesome is because you get to see different styles of food, clothes, stores, and more. For example here I went to a place that sells candy and everything was different. Another example is American village, it has a whole different style than American stores. One more example is me and my family went to a festival and there were all tents and games that you do to win prizes. And that's why being a military child

is awesome.

And that's why being a military child feels great, and similar to the children who are not in the military. We get to move back to the place you came from like me going back to Maryland. You get to go to a school for a long time like our RCV. You get to see different styles of stuff like American village. I hope my writing has made you realize how lucky you are to be a military child if you are one!

### Being A Military Child

By Brendan Edwards

Imagine standing outside in the warm sun, feeling the sun on your skin. In my opinion it's just another day but for some people that's a VACATION! Being a military child is fun but also hard. It's cool to travel and to meet new people, but it's hard to leave friends and family. That's just the start, keep reading to find out more!

Being a military child is great because you get to travel. You get to travel to lots of places like Okinawa, Florida, California, and Maryland. It is cool to go to Universal in Japan because they have lots of cool rides to go on like the Jurassic Park ride and the Space Mountain ride. It is also cool to go to Okuma because they have beaches, mini golf, and lots of yummy food. That is one good thing about being a military child.

In my opinion, it is amazing to meet new people. It's cool to meet new people because you might not know what you have in common. Someone I've met is my friend named Jason. He's nice, funny and he is a good goalie. Another person I've met is Kayden. He is cool and good at soccer. That is why I like to be a military child.

Being a military child is also hard because you have to leave people. I think it is hard to leave people because they might be good friends like I had to leave my friends and it was hard. It is also hard to leave family because you'll love them and you might live far away. In my opinion, it was very challenging to leave my friends and family because they were great friends and family. I really did not want to leave but I faced the challenge. That's why it's hard to be a military child.

There you have it! Even though being a military child is hard like when you have to leave people, it is still amazing to travel and meet new people! You get to travel to places like Tokyo and Universal! You also will get to meet new people like Jason and Kayden! But it is challenging to leave people. I hope you liked my writing and remember if you are a military child you are very special.

### My Opinion on Being a Military Child

By James Jones

Do you ever think about how people feel about being a military child? My opinion on being a Military child is super good, but there are some challenges. As a military child you get to travel, meet new people, and sometimes you have to leave friends and family.

The first reason it is super good is because you get to travel, for example I've been to the Philippines I've been to a church in the Philippines. For the second example I've been to an Aquarium where you get to see sharks and stingrays. For the third example, I've been to a World War II museum. That's why I think it is super good to be a military child.

For the second reason it is super good it is because you get to meet new people. For example when I joined ECK I met my new teacher Ms. Sparatta. For the second example, when I joined third grade I met my new teacher Mr. Vallis. For my third example, when I was in third grade I met my new friend Alex. That's why I think it is super good to be a military child.

The third reason it is challenging is because you have to leave friends and family. For example I had to leave my dogs when I had to move to Okinawa. My dog was named Bluey and he was super fast. Another example is when I had to leave my friend Christian we used to play basketball in tag together. A third example is when I had to leave my teachers. My first grade teacher was very nice. This is why I think it is super good to be a military child but also challenging.

So there you have it! In spite of challenges like leaving friends and family in my opinion being a Military child is super good. You get to travel to places like the Philippines, meet new people like Alex and Mr Vallis, but it can be challenging like when I had to leave my dogs. I hope my writing has helped you see just how super good Military kids are and if you are a Military child that is super good too!

### The Ups and Downs of Being a Military Child

By Joel Key

Imagine you're looking at the toys and also games and then you find a game and a toy that you can only find when you're a military child living in Okinawa. Being a military child has its ups and downs and here is why everyone. You get to make new friends and buy games and toys and ride lots of airplanes especially to get to Okinawa. Now let me tell you more about each reason.

It's great being a military child because you get to make new friends and buy games and toys specifically from where you traveled. Making friends is great because friends are kind, caring and helpful. Buying toys specifically from other places is fun because toys are very cool, insane and very fun for design purposes. And that's why I think it's great being a military child!

But it's also challenging being a military child and here's why. It's challenging because you have to go to new schools like when I first got to Eck it was scary and I had a mental breakdown. It's also challenging because you have to move home and then get used to the new house! At first my new house was scary because roaches came out of its ground. Finally leaving your friends is the hardest because friends are very kind, caring and supportive. And that's why I think it's challenging being a military child.

But now back to the great stuff about being a military child. It's the airplanes because it's so cool to watch them flying into the air! It's also cool because being in the sky is amazing! I love looking at the birds! And for my final reason, I love how fast it zooms up and down which makes you fly around a little bit. And that's why I love airplanes and being a military child.

So there you have it in spite of the challenges like moving and leaving friends, being a military child is still great no matter what. You get to get toys and games from where you travel. Also it's challenging because you

have to leave friends, homes and schools. But you get to go on airplanes to travel around the world! Well, I hope my writing helped you learn how great it is to be a military child!

### Military Children Are Strong

By Josiah Kinney

Imagine going to Fukuoka! In Fukuoka they have very fresh fish and Fukuoka is very beautiful! And my opinion is that being a military child is epic, unique and really great. Being a military child is great! Being a military child can be challenging sometimes because you leave friends and family. Third reason it is great is because I get to meet new people. This is why being a military child is epic, unique and great.

The reason why I think it is epic is because I get to travel to new places. The first place that I traveled to was Tokyo and there were so many people. The second place I traveled to Fukuoka was cold! I saw snow for the first time! The third place I travel to is Hiroshima and it was great it was destroyed. That is why being a military child is epic!

The second reason I like being a military child is because I get to meet new people. The first friend I met was Liam. He was very funny. The second friend I met was Kai. He is really smart. The third friend I met was Riley. He knows about dinosaurs. This is why I like being a military child!

Sometimes it is challenging but it is still nice to be a military child. The first reason it is challenging is because I have to leave family and friends. The second reason it is challenging is because I have to meet new people and it is challenging sometimes. The third reason why it's challenging is because you have to leave the food you really like. This is all the reasons being a military child is sometimes challenged.

As you can see military kids have lots of experience but in my opinion being a military child is epic, unique and really great. You get to travel to Hiroshima and I got to see what the atomic bomb did to Hiroshima. It was impressive. It is sometimes challenging because you leave friends and family but it is sometimes good because you meet new people like my friends. If you want to learn more read more! I hope you liked reading this!

### Being A Military Child : The Best Thing in the World

By Isabelle Lima

Imagine biting into fresh sushi for lunch. For you, it might be a once in a lifetime experience, but for me it's just another normal day of being a military child. I think being a military child is fun but also difficult. You get to try new foods and cultures but it is difficult when leaving friends and family. If you aren't convinced yet, keep reading!

My first reason is all the new food you get to eat. For example, when I tried Sushi which is marinated rice with toppings like seafood or egg. Another example is when I tried Okinawa soba, a chewy type of noodle in a broth. Finally when I tried fami-chicki, a fried chicken only found in Familymart.

My second reason why being a military child is fun is because you get to learn new cultures. For example when I learned about oni, which is an evil spirit. Another example is when I learned about Korak. I thought it was funny that they eat cucumbers. Finally, being a military child is fun because I love to learn about mythology. That's only a couple of things I've learned about Okinawa.

But it can also be difficult to leave friends and family. For example when I had to leave my cousins I used to go on vacation and play with action figures with them. Another example is leaving my preschool friends. It was sad. Finally I have to leave the house I lived in. It was made out of bright red brown bricks and it had two floors unlike the apartment I live in now. But there are way more good things about being a military child than bad.

That's why I think being a military child is fun but difficult. You'll get to eat food like sushi and learn about Japanese mythology but it can be difficult like when I had to leave my cousins. I hope you are convinced that being a military child is fun but difficult.

### Being A Military Child

By Charlie Lopez

Have you ever been to Osaka or historical sites and Hiroshima? You might have been there if you were a military child. Now listen about my exciting Adventures of being a military child. In my opinion being a military child is cool, and amazing in my opinion being a military child is the best because you get to travel, eat new food, and to make new people. If you're still not excited about being a military child then keep reading about my exciting Adventure Time about being a military child.

The first reason is why being a military child is the best because you get to travel. For example, when I was five I moved from Florida to Okinawa and it was long but also cool. I went to Rome and I saw the Coliseum and had amazing Pizza. Finally I went to Chicago, Illinois and saw family and had amazing tamales from my grandma. These are the few amazing facts about me being a military child.

The second reason why being a military child is the best it's because you get to eat new foods and meet new people. For example, when I was six I ate sushi for the first time and it was great. My favorite is salmon also. My other example is when I was six also and I met new people from Kinser I never met before. My last example is when I met and ate these new foods and I learned about the culture. These are a few more awesome parts of being a military child.

My third reason why being a military child is the best it's because you can conquer fears and help people in need. Why bring a military child is the best because you can help people in need or sick. I gave my mom medicine when she was sick. Another example of why being a military child is the best it's because you can conquer fears. I conquered the fear of being alone and being afraid of the dark.

For my last example, being a military child is the best because you can help and be brave and strong in wrestling so I can protect myself. I think being a military child is the best because she can be good, kind and strong.

You reach the end of my paper in spite of leaving friends and family. I believe being a military child is the best thing in the world, you get to travel

SEE MORE FROM MR. VALLIS AND  
MRS. WHITTINGTON'S CLASS ON PAGE 16







## CELEBRATING MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

→ brains. It was so delicious! And I went to the beach and I had food that was made out of shark, but it was very good. And I hope to try them again someday. That's why it's hard to leave food behind but that's what you have to do as a Military child.

So there you have it! Despite challenges like leaving food behind, in my opinion I think it's the best opportunity in the world! Did you get to meet new people like new friends? You can see cool places like Maine but sometimes it's challenging when you have to leave delicious food behind! I hope my writing has made you think if your military child YOU are very special and there's nobody like YOU!!!

### I Believe That Being A Military Child Is Fascinating And Fun

By Nicolas Rodriguez

I believe being a military child is fascinating and fun. One reason is that you get to play sports and meet new friends. My second reason why it's fascinating is because you get to travel. My third reason for why being a military child is fun and fascinating is you get to try new foods. That is why it is fascinating and fun.

The first reason I believe being a military child is fascinating and fun is you get to play sports and meet friends. My first example is doing a new sport. Playing a new sport could be very fun because you could learn about the new sports rules. My second example is that you get to learn about new sports. I learned about volleyball. My third example of why it is fascinating is you get to meet new friends. Meeting new friends could be very fun a lot of times. That is why I believe being a military child is fascinating and fun.

The second reason why I like being a military child is because you get to travel. For example, I went to Sephora and it was super duper cool so we have to have a lot of warm clothes on to use. For my second example I went all the way to Taiwan and we had to go on a train to get to the places that we wanted to go. My third example: I went to Jacksonville when I was 2 years old and we lived there for 5 years then we had to leave and we had to come here to Okinawa. That is why traveling is fun and sad.

The third reason why being a military child is fascinating and fun is that you get to try new food. It's fun to try new food because you could try foods that you've never tried in your life. An example of a new food I've tried is Yakimiku! if you have never tried it you need to! It's me cooked on the grill and it's delicious. Another example of trying new foods is going to restaurants like Jolly pasta, Chili's, and McDonald's. They are super yummy.

That is why eating new food is fascinating and fun. imagine eating hot crispy beef cooked on a grill that's on a table. Yakimiku and it's delicious. I believe being a military child is fascinating and fun. as a military show you get to eat new food, meet new people, and going to different places. If you want to find out more about military children, keep reading my essay!

### Military Child

By Donovan Selter

Imagine you're snorkeling and you see a bunch of cool fish, well this is just a normal day of a military child. I think being a military child is unique, awesome and sometimes challenging. As a military child you get to travel, live on a military base, and sometimes you have to leave family and friends. If you don't think being a military child is super awesome then you should keep reading.

One reason why being a military child is awesome is because you get to travel. For example, when I was one I moved from San Diego, California to New Hampshire. Another example is that I get to travel to Guam to see my dad because he's been deployed there for 3 months. My final example is once I traveled to Cambodia and got to see Angkor Wat. These are a few reasons why being a military child is awesome.

Another reason why being a military child is challenging is because you have to leave friends and family behind. For example when I was five I had to move to Iwakuni Japan and I had to leave my best friend behind. Another example is when I was 7 my best friend moved away. My last example is when I was eight I had to move away from all my friends and family. Those are some reasons why being a military child is challenging.

An awesome thing about being a Military child is you get to live on a military base. One reason why living on a military base is awesome is because it's really safe. For example I can run around all day without telling my mom. Another reason why living on a military base is awesome it's because you have a lot of freedom. For example I can go to the store by myself. My final reason why living on a military base is awesome is because you get to go to the skatepark. At the skatepark I do tricks on my scooter. These are some reasons why being a military child is awesome.

So There you have it! Although it can be challenging, in my opinion, being a military child is awesome. You get to travel, like when I traveled to Cambodia. You also get to live on a military base, and go to the skate park. Sometimes you have to leave family and friends, like when I was 8 I had to move away from all my friends. I Hope my writing helped you learn what being a military child is like. And if you are a military child too I hope you can relate to that!

### Military Child

By Kai Tagachi

Num num num I'm at my favorite restaurant Coco's Curry I'm eating curry with chicken and sausage and it tastes like heaven I believe that a military child is amazing you get to travel To a lot of places you get to eat though this is foods like pretty and you get to make awesome friends if you want to learn all about places to travel yummy foods and awesome friends keep reading my paper.

The first reason I believe that military child is amazing is you get to travel to lots of places. I like Osaka because there is an amusement park that is named Universal Studio. I went there with my dad. It was fun. I got to go to North Carolina and I got to visit my cousin and her cat. There is also a street named kokosai. My favorite place in Kokosai is the toy store. I went there a bunch of times. These are some reasons why being a military child is awesome.

The second reason is being a military child is good because you get to eat different food. I think being a military child is good because soba is a good food to eat and Okinawa. I think being a military child is great because Curry is a good and you can go to Coco's Curry. I think being a military child

is also good because of the type of noodles. These are some reasons why being a military child is awesome.

The third reason is you can make new friends in first grade. I met Liam. Liam is a kind soul and he's always cares about me. In second grade I made JJ. JJ knows Japanese like me and he always plays with me. And in second grade I met Silas, who is a funny guy. These are some reasons why being a military child is awesome.

Now you know that you have read my paper. I hope you know why I believe that being a military child is awesome. you get to travel to a lot of places like Osaka, you get to eat delicious foods like Coco's Curry, and you get to make awesome friends like Liam. So now you know what being a military child is like. I hope you can get to be like me!

### What it feels like to be a military child

By Joy Tiggs

Have you ever been to Okinawa? Well that might just be one of the places you go if you're a military child. I believe being a military child is exciting and hard. The reasons why it is exciting is you get to travel and try new foods. The reason why it is hard if you have to leave family and friends. If you want to learn about being a Military child keep reading!

The first reason being a military child is exciting is that you get to travel. First, since I am a military child I got to go to the states all over America including Alabama, New York and Maryland. Next, since I am a military child, I got to go to Tokyo Disneyland in other places in Tokyo. Finally, since I am a military child I got to go see lots of different places like the zoo and see lots of different animals. These are some of the reasons why being a military child is exciting.

The second reason why being a military child is exciting is you get to try new foods. First, since I am a military child I get to go to cool food places like a buffet. It has all different types of foods. Next, since I am in Okinawa I get to try a food named Ramen. You can have it with all different toppings. My favorite Ramen place is Volcano Ramen. Lastly, since I'm a military child I get to try food from all over the world. That is why being a military child is exciting.

Being a military child is hard because you have to leave your family and friends. First, before I moved to Okinawa I spent lots of time with my friends and family, but I still miss them so much. Next I still made friends in Okinawa but I really miss my old friends. Before I moved to Okinawa I saw my grandparents almost once a year and now I see my grandparents almost every 2 years. And that is why being a military child is hard.

So there you have it! Besides challenges like leaving friends and family in my opinion, being a military child is one of the best experiences in the world! You get to travel to places like Tokyo. You also get to try new foods like ramen! Finally it can be hard like when I had to leave my grandparents. I hope my writing has helped you see just how special military kids are, and if YOU are a military child reading this I hope you know how special YOU are!

### Being a Military Child

By Avry Trott

Imagine sitting on a chair at the beach hearing the waves crashing on the sand. In my opinion, being a military child is awesome but also challenging. As a military child, you get to go to new places, find new toys, but you also have to move a lot. If YOU are one of the people that think being a military child is bad, read my paper so I can change your mind.

The first reason why being a military child is awesome is because you can see new places. For example, you can go to Tokyo Japan where there is a Disneyland. Disneyland has tons of rides, shops and a place where you can get a Disney themed box and fill it with all different types of popcorn. Another example is, you can go to Kyushu and smell smoke in the countryside, go see the hot springs and go Geocaching! Also, you can go to Okuma Beach where you can sleep in a cabin or you can go camping! On weekends, there is a buffet in the morning and there is also a pizza place! These are just a few examples of the new places you can see when you are a military child.

The second reason why being a military child is awesome is because you can find new toys! For example, when you're in Japan, you will find tons of Sanrio characters like Cinnamon Roll, Pom Pom Pudding, Pochacco and tons more! Another example is, when you're in Hawaii, you will find tons of shops that have bathing suits, floaties, and surfboards! Also, when you're in Okinawa, Japan, at American Village, there are 28 shops, including a Christmas shop that is there the whole year! That is why I think being a military child helps you find so many new toys.

But it is also challenging being a military child because you have to move. One example of why moving is hard is because you have to leave all the things you know. Things like your house, or apartment. Another example of why it is hard to move is because you might never see your friends again! Also, you will have to sell your bed sometimes! I have to sell my bed when I leave Japan! That is why it is challenging to move.

After I have read, I hope you now think being a military child is awesome, but also challenging sometimes. You get to see new places like Tokyo. You get to find new toys, like Sanrio characters. But you also have to move away and sell your bed even if you really like it! I hope you changed your mind about being a military child and LEARNED A LOT!

### Being a military child

By Silas Niko Vallis

Imagine you're on a beautiful tropical island lush and green and you can go there anytime! For me that's a normal day! Being a military child is fantastic but challenging. I like the food and going to ECK but I don't like it when my friends leave here. But if you want to know more about being a military child, keep reading!

The first reason I like being a military child is because I like all of the different foods. One example of a different food is one of the amazing foods you can find in Okinawa- it's udon. It's Delicious the white noodles with the soup is amazing. Another example is onigiri or rice balls. The rice and all of the flavors are fantastic! My favorite flavor is salmon. The third example is sushi. I like the egg one especially the cold egg tastes amazing! That's why I like eating all of the different types of food as a military child

The second reason I like being a military child is I get to go to ECK. The first reason I like going to ECK is because of all of the materials we are

so lucky to have at ECK like white boards desks and big neighborhood and community spaces. The second reason I like going to ECK is that we get smarter from ECK. This year I learned multiplication and division. The third reason I like going to ECK is because I get to meet new friends and one of my friends is Maedyn. And that's why I liked going to ECK as a military child.

Being a military child can also be challenging because your friends have to leave sometimes. It can be challenging because I don't like when my friends leave. It's hard to see them again. Second reason I don't like when my friends leave is that you can never go play with them again. The final reason I don't like when my friends leave is because you can never talk to them again. That's why being a military child can be hard.

So that's my opinion! Even though it's hard sometimes I think being a military child is fantastic. You get to go try new foods like udon. You also get to go to ECK and have material that most schools don't have. But sometimes it can be hard when your friends move and you can't play with them ever again. So what do you think about being a military child? Would you want to be one?

### Being A Military Child is Amazing!

By Vida Wehrl

Have you ever been to Nebraska or Thailand? In Thailand you can go to the aquarium there. You can see elephants and go to the park in Thailand. From my point of view I believe being a military child is amazing. As a military child you get to eat new foods, meet new people, and travel. If you don't think being a military child is amazing then keep reading!

My first reason why I like being a military child is because I like to eat Japanese food. I love to go to sushi, go round, and get Ramen, tuna and corn sushi, shrimp sushi, egg sushi with Spam, and tempura. I know how to use chopsticks. Another example is that I like Japanese Curry and onigiri. I really love it! Another example is that I like going to Yakimiku with my family. That is why I like trying and eating Japanese food!

The second reason why being a military child is amazing is because you get to meet new people. For example I have a friend named Isabelle and one named Elaina. Isabelle is nice and a great friend. Elaina is kind and also a great friend. Another reason why meeting new people is amazing is because I met my teachers, Mr Vallis and Mrs Whittington. Mr Vallis loves foursquare and the guitar. Mr Vallis is very nice. Mrs Whittington loves books and is very nice. Another reason why meeting new people is amazing is because I have a friend named Lily and one named Rosalyn. Lily likes to play with me and is kind to me and my sister. That is why meeting new people is amazing.

My third reason why being a military child is amazing is because you get to travel to fun places. For example, I have been to Thailand so many times. I have been to the aquarium in Thailand and I have a grandma, grandpa and Aunt who live there. Another example is that I have been to Fukuoka for winter break and I went to Fukuoka Tower. Finally, I went to Nebraska to visit my other grandma and grandpa and my aunt for the summer. I went to the Nebraska zoo and the Botanical Gardens.

That is why being a military child is fun and you get to travel so much! Now that you have read my paper you know why I like to be a military child. You get to eat foods like sushi and ramen. You also get to meet new people like Mr Vallis and Mrs. Whittington. Finally, you get to travel to places like Thailand and Nebraska! I hope you can see why being a military child is super duper amazing!

### A Military Child

By Annabelle Wong

Have you ever been to a pineapple Park? It's an amazing place on Okinawa Island. In my opinion being a military child is awesome and cool. You get to travel, meet new people and try new food. Go to the next page to see how cool being a military child is.

The first reason I think being a military child is awesome and cool is because you get to travel. I had to leave Chesapeake, Virginia and ride the plane to Okinawa. Before we flew to Okinawa we stopped by my grandma's house in Chicago. Another example is that I got to see different parks in Okinawa like Dino Park. Finally it is nice to be in Okinawa. Maybe someday I will get to travel to Disneyland in Tokyo. These are just a few of the beautiful places I get to see as a military child.

The second reason I think being a military child is awesome and cool is that you get to meet new people. When I moved here to Okinawa I moved to a new house and my neighbors ran out to be friends. I have also had friends at school. Maedyn, Silas, and Kellen are my school friends. I have met amazing teachers. That's why it is awesome and cool being a military child in Okinawa. They all help me with my work. I have also met the nice people of Okinawa. These are some of the people that I have met as a military child.

The third reason is being a military child is awesome and cool because you get to try new food. My favorite food is Sushi and I really like Hamma sushi here in Okinawa. I've also been to Virginia. When I lived there me and my family liked to go eat at Chili's. I really liked the mac and cheese. I really enjoyed the food and different ice creams at Family Mart. They also have good snacks. These are some of the different types of foods that I have had so far as a military child.

In my opinion being a military child is awesome and cool. It is awesome and cool because you get to travel, meet new people and try new food. That's why it is fantastic being a military child. I get to experience different cultures and try new food. I love being a Military child!!!



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# Zukeran Elementary School

5th Grade  
Ms. Bassil

By Alexis

**H**i, my name is Alexis. I am 11 years old, and I am a military child. Being a military child is both fun and difficult. But don't worry, I'll make sure to tell you all about it.

I have lived in many parts of California for most of my life, and now I currently live in Okinawa. When I found out I was moving to Okinawa I was excited but sad that I had to leave my best friend.

One thing I like about being a military child is that I travel a lot. On long breaks or vacations, we take the opportunity to travel. Another thing I like about being a military child is you can make many friends while moving. Going to different schools means you can make more different friends!

However, this isn't always the case. Being a military child also comes with challenges. One difficult thing I face as a military child is that I have to leave my friends behind while moving. Making friends is fun, but the part that makes me sad is that I eventually have to leave them. Another challenge I face as a military child is that my dad leaves very often.

In conclusion, some advice to take is that you should always keep in touch with the friends you make along the way when moving. This way, you can text or call them to check on how they are doing and how the place you used to live has changed.

By Amelia

**H**i, my name is Amelia. I am 11 years old, and I am going to tell you all about my life as a military child.

As a military child I haven't been anywhere, but soon, I will go to South Carolina. Right now, I live in Okinawa with my two older brothers, one little brother, my parents and two dogs and three birds. Okinawa is great. They have a lot of sushi and fun places like TeamLab. Another place that is great is Mainland Japan, they have Disneyland.

There are good and bad parts of being a military child (mostly good). One good thing is you get to meet new people in new places. It is going to be my first time in America and South Carolina. I am so excited but scared at the same time, but I know I will have a good time.

For advice, when you move somewhere, make the most of it, because you might never go back there again. That is my life as a military child.

By Analysisia

**H**ello, my name is Analysisia, but everyone calls me Nani. I am 11 years old. I have 12 siblings, two dogs and a cat. Today I'm going to talk about the pros and cons of being a military child.

First let me tell you about where I have lived. I have lived in Tennessee, Okinawa, and Pensacola. I have also traveled to Taiwan, Dominican Republic, and China. I'm going to France for a birthday trip.

There are a lot of pros of being a military child

so here are a few. You get amazing gifts from all around the world when your parents are deployed. You can make new friends and meet people who have the same struggles as you. When we first moved to Okinawa, I was so happy that I was able to experience a new culture and food.

There are also some cons to being a military child. You don't get to see your family for years on end and you can't go to places like Target or Walmart. One con for me was leaving behind all of the friends I had made and my house. I even had a meltdown when we got on the plane because I was not able to see my friends ever again.

At the end of the day, there are both pros and cons to being a military child. Before I wrap this up, some advice I want to give for other kids is just be happy where you are and be happy that you are able to go to school and meet new friends.

By Christopher

**H**i, my name is Christopher, I'm a military child and I am 10 years old. I'm going to tell you about my life.

Some places I've lived are Texas, West Virginia, California and Okinawa. Places I've visited are Thailand, Taiwan, Legoland, Disney World, Disneyland and Tokyo. I'll tell you what it was like in Thailand. In my opinion, you should visit Thailand because the sea food is so good. You should also visit Taiwan. That is where boba was originally created, so I decided to try it, and it was delicious.

Some of the reasons why I love being a military child is because you get to fly to other countries and try new food, buy new toys, and make new friends, even though you have to say goodbye after 3 years. My advice would be to try to make friends and be nice, and keep a happy face.

By Claire

**H**i, my name is Claire. I am 11 years old, and I am a military child. I have no sisters, but I have 5 brothers and my mom and dad. My oldest brother is Alex, he is 13 years old. I am the second oldest.

I have lived in Canton for 3+ years. In Canton, I had a best friend, her name was Sofia. I used to go to all her parties, and we were neighbors. She was 2 years older. Her dad used to teach softball, and I was on their team for 3 years. That's how I got so good at softball. I was really sad that I had to move.

Some of the other advantages of being a military child is that you get to go to new places. You'll get to learn new cultures and languages. You can also take showers as long as you want because you get free water and electricity. There are some challenges too.

Some of the challenges can be moving and learning new languages. Those things can be hard. If I were to give you some advice to help you get through those challenges, I would say to join a sport or club to make new friends. So, as you can see, being a military kid can be super hard but it is worth it.

By Colin

**H**i, my name is Colin. I am 10 and about to turn 11 years old and I'm a military child. I'll be telling you about my life as a military child.

Right now, I live in Okinawa, Japan. I have only lived here for 5 months. I came from Florida, but I was born in New Jersey. I've been to a lot of places

like Washington, North Carolina, Virginia, Florida, and the Philippines. I loved living in Florida the most because it gives me beach vibes and I had an amazing school over there.

The good thing about being a military child is that you can go on fun road trips with your family like Disney World, Legoland, and Universal. You can also make new friends from all over the world. And maybe sometimes you can celebrate your dad getting promoted.

There are also some cons of being a military child, like moving to other places and leaving your friends behind. Also, your mom/dad going on deployment and leaving you for about 1 year.

My advice for you is to cherish these moments and to get your friends or their parents phone numbers so you can keep in touch. I hope you take this advice for the hard challenges along the way.

By Daniella

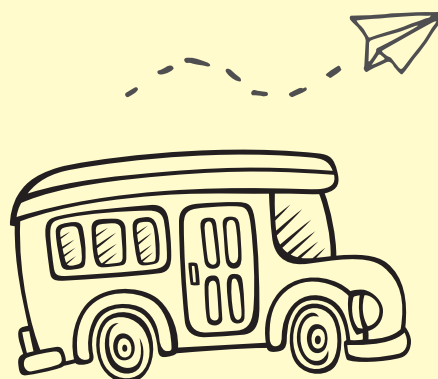
**H**i my name is Daniella, I am 10 years old and I am a military child. I am going to tell you all about being a military child.

First I'll tell you where I have been. I have lived in California, mainland Japan, and Okinawa! My favorite place was California because I got to adventure in the neighborhood.

I like being a military child because I get to see and live in many places. I even got to learn some Japanese words! When I lived in California I lived near a big pool and made many cookies.

There were some challenges, I had to leave California and my friends in California, but I got to see other people and make new friends!

So the last thing I have to say is, do not run in the tall grass in Okinawa (you might or will get bitten by a habu/snake).



By Dove

**H**i my name is Dove. I am 10 years old and I am a military connected child. I am going to tell you about my life and family as a military connected child.

I have traveled to Kentucky, Michigan, California, Maine, Okinawa, and when I leave Okinawa I will go to Maine again. I love traveling to new places and experiencing new cultures. My favorite place I have lived was Maine because of its nature and snow. One time when my family was traveling (by car) to Maine from California we got to see Mount Rushmore.

One of my favorite things to do is experience new food and cultures. Some of the foods I have had are taco rice (which is delicious), wagyu beef, and very tall shaved ice.

One of the things I don't like is car rides. I have 6 siblings and it is always cramped and they are annoying. The only good thing was that I got to switch seats with my sister in the quiet car.

Advice I would give to others would be to

make new friends and experience new cultures, languages, and food.

By Easton

**H**i my name is Easton. I am 11 years old and I am a military child. I have 2 dogs and a sister. I am going to tell you about my life as a military child.

I have traveled to so many places. I am living in Okinawa right now. I have lived in both North and South Carolina.

The good thing about being a military child is all the amazing places you get to visit. The hard part about being a military child is moving away from friends and family. My advice to other military kids is to join clubs to make more friends.

By Felix

**H**i, my name is Felix, I'm 10 years old, and I'm a military child. I'm going to tell you what it's like to be a military child.

Being a military child means you live in a lot of places. I've lived in Virginia, Hawaii, Florida, and Japan in that order.

Being a military child, I have had a lot of experiences, celebrations, and highlights. In Hawaii, I went to a fun hotel a bunch of times. In Florida, I went to amusement parks all the time. In Japan, we do a million trips to so many fun places. When my dad got promoted to Lt. Col we had a big party and took pictures on the beach in Florida. Some experiences I've had are traveling to Universal in Japan and Orlando, Disneyland in Orlando and Japan, Busch Gardens in Florida, Mt. Vernon in Virginia, and whale watching in Japan.

There are some negatives too. When I lived in Virginia we could drive to New York where my family lives. In Florida, we could take a 1 hour plane ride to Sag Harbor, New York. In Japan, we are 13 or 14 hours ahead of New York. In Hawaii, we were 5 hours behind New York. It was tough calling them because of the time difference. Sometimes, my dad gets deployed and I can't see him for some time.

Some advice is when you move, make new friends. This is basically what life is like as a military child, it's interesting.

By Gavin

**H**i my name is Gavin! I am 10 years old and I am a military child. I am going to tell you all about my life as a military child.

I am living in Japan. I have been to Pineapple Park and a cat cafe. Places I have lived are Germany, California, and Massachusetts. Those places are very cold and I have a lot of friends that I can play with there.

The good things in Japan are making new friends and there is food like ramen and I really like it. Also the fresh wind is calming, I just feel the wind and then I feel sleepy.

The hard thing about being a military child is when I have to leave my friends behind. The challenges are, my dad leaves for work for a long time and I feel alone.

It is hard to move but it will be okay. You can make the best of it, you can hug someone that you know, and you can miss them.

By Joseph

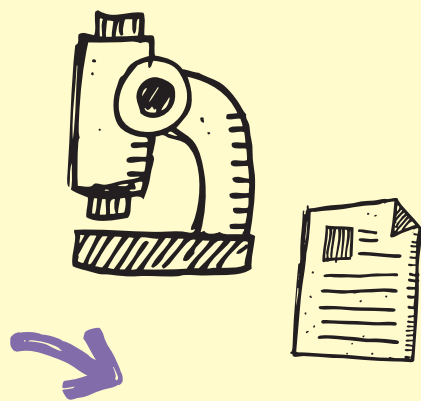
**H**i, my name is Joey. I am 10 years old and I'm a military child. I am going to tell you about my life as a military child.

CELEBRATING MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

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# Zukeran Elementary School



I was born in California but I am from Oregon. I have also lived in Virginia and I'm currently in Okinawa. My favorite place that I have lived in is Virginia.

One thing you can expect as a military child is getting to pin your dad's badges when he gets promoted. Another thing you can expect is going to fun places like Universal Studios, Legoland, and Disneyland. You can also visit new places.

One of the worst things about being a military child is having to move away from your friends and your family. Some advice for military kids is make good friends and keep in touch with them.

By Joshua

**H**i my name is Joshua. I am 11 years old and I am a military child and I'm going to tell you about my life as a military child.

I live in Okinawa and I've lived in Virginia, Florida, and Hawaii. I'm moving to California and I was born in Hawaii and I miss living in Virginia because my siblings and my dog had to stay behind.

The best thing about living in Okinawa is the yen rate. I like the yen rate because yen is cheaper than U.S. money. A good thing about moving is that you can make friends like how I made a friend named Robert.

Some bad things about moving is that when you have to move and you have to leave your friends and sometimes you have to leave your pet like a dog or cat. When I moved I had to leave my dog behind. My advice is to join school clubs or after school groups to make new friends.

By Kayla

**H**i my name is Kayla. I am 10 years old and I am a military child. I am going to tell you all about my life as a military child.

I live in Okinawa, Japan and I was born in New York. I have been to California, Florida, Texas and Jamaica.

The good thing about being a military child is that you get to travel and visit fun places. Some places I've been to are Universal Studios, Disney World, Dream works and more. You also get to celebrate new holidays and learn new languages.

When you are a military child, you have to travel a lot and you have to leave the places and people you love. So you have to go to new schools and make new friends about every three years. My advice to you is to learn new languages and try to make as many friends as you can.

By Kenneth

**H**i my name is Kenny and I am 11 years old and I have an 8 year old sister. I live in Okinawa, Japan.

I like being a military child because I can move

to new places and make new friends. Yes, it can be hard to make new friends but you can always keep in touch with them.

You can also have new and fun experiences and try new foods, that's one of my most favorite parts about moving to new places.

Moving to new places can be fun, so if you're moving don't feel down because you don't know what type of fun journey is ahead.

By Logan

**H**i my name is Logan! I am 10 years old and I am a military child. I am going to tell you about what it is like being a military child.

I have lived in many places. The most recent places are Maine, Massachusetts, and Okinawa. I have also traveled to places such as Taiwan, Tokyo, and Washington.

Some advantages of being a military child are, trying new foods like sushi, getting protection, and making good friends.

There are some negatives about being a military child such as, moving away from your friends or your family. It is hard to move away from your friends and family but you will make new friends and get to travel to new places.

Here's some advice for other military kids, keep trying and I promise you things will get better. Another thing, keep learning!

By Melisza

**H**ello my name is Meli. I am 10 years old and I am a military child. I am going to tell you about my life as a military child.

I live in Japan and I've also lived in California. I've actually known some of my friends for 7 years. But sadly they moved to Germany. Now I want to go to Germany because my friends are there and it gets to 10 degrees Fahrenheit. So cold. I love the snow!

A good thing about being a military child is that I've had about 100 friends. Some experiences of mine are visiting Universal Studios, Disney World, Tokyo Disneyland, and Disneyland. My favorite place was Tokyo Disneyland.

Some challenges I've faced as a military child are leaving my friends and family behind. One time here in Japan, we had a forest in our backyard and our cat ran away. But we got new cats. Their names are Freddie and Andrew. Andrew is a tuxedo cat. Freddie is a striped cat. Here is some advice, be a happy, brave and kind kid. Thanks for reading my essay.

By Michael

**H**i my name is Michael. I am 11 years old and I am a military child. I am going to tell you about my life as a military child.

I have lived in so many places like California, Virginia, Chicago, and now Okinawa. My favorite place I have lived is Okinawa. Okinawa is my favorite place because the food is so good.

The good thing about moving is you get to meet new friends and get to go to different places. But the challenges are you have to leave your friends and family behind.

Some fun experiences I have had as a military child are snowboarding and going to amusement parks like Disney World. I went to a Japanese arcade for my birthday. It is also fun to learn about new cultures. Some of my favorite times are when I go on road trips with my mom.

Some advice I have for you is to get contact information for your family and friends. You can ask for their number or their mom or dad's number. As you can see, being a military child has some ups and downs.

By Nora

**H**i my name is Nora. I am 10 years old and I'm a military child. I will tell you all about my life as a military child.

Right now I live in Okinawa, Japan but I have lived in many other places such as Mainland Japan, Florida, and North Carolina. When I was in Florida, I was in an off base school. Everyone thought I lived in China and spoke Chinese, but I was from Japan and spoke Japanese.

Some of my favorite things about being a military child is adventuring the world and learning about where I live. I also love going to my dad's promotions. His most recent one was when he got promoted to I.D.C. I'm still not sure what it stands for. I was wearing a dress (I never do) and my mom was too and my dad was in his dress blues. I can't remember what my older brother was wearing though.

Even if it is fun, there are a lot of challenges. The main one is moving away from my family and friends, another big one is making new friends. These challenges are hard but I manage to get through them.

My advice is to be yourself to find your true friends and they will stick with you through thick and thin.

By Parker

**H**i my name is Parker. I am 11 years old and I am a military child. I am going to tell you what it is like to be a military child and the pros and cons of it.

I have lived in so many different places. I have gone from North Carolina to Virginia to California, back to the same neighborhood in Virginia, and then to Okinawa. I have also visited so many different places such as Vietnam, Tipai and Hawaii. It has been a huge journey traveling to each and every place but me and my family made it.

There are some cons about being a military child like when your parents leave on deployment and don't come back for like a billion years. Also another hard thing is leaving your closest friends and not being able to see them. Another hard thing is moving away from your home and not going back.

There are some good things about being a military child such as, you are able to make lots of friends. You're also able to visit so many cool new places like new countries and different parts of a country. You're also able to visit friends and family a lot, even when you're super far away from them.

There are a lot of ups and downs to being a military child but my advice is make a lot of new friends every place you move, and make the most of every single place you move to.

By Riley

**H**ello my name is Riley. I'm 11 years old and I'm a military child. I'm here to tell you about my life as a military child.

I'm living in Okinawa at this moment but soon I'm moving to Idaho. I have lived in so many places like Las Vegas, North California, New York, Okinawa, and Georgia. One of my favorite places

is Georgia. I love Georgia because it has great weather most of the time and there's frogs.

The best part of being a military child is trying new cultures and new things. Japan's culture is really cool. There are things like darumas and shisha dogs. Also, a great thing is my dad is retiring. He's been in the military for 19 years so we're going to have a big party and have fun. Your parents might also have promotions. It's so cool to be a military child.

Being a military child is not always the best. There's negative things like moving away or parents going on deployment. But, you can do it. Sometimes it's tough. You may move away from friends but you can make new friends.

Here's some advice, you move a lot so try to make new friends or join clubs so you can fit in and not be lonely.

By Winnie

**H**i my name is Winnie and I am a military child. I think being a military child is great because we get to move to new places but we lose our old friends. It's okay though because we make new friends. Have you ever wondered what it would be like to be a military child?

Being a military child means that you lose friends but you also make new friends. You move a lot but you still get to meet new people. It's hard to lose old friends but you can still call or text them. You could also write letters to them. Moving to new schools is hard.

The good thing about being a military child is that you go and explore new places. I have been to California, Iowa, and Okinawa. I have met a lot of people and made friends with them. It's scary going to a new school but it is also nice because you can see if you know anyone in your class. It's nice living in Okinawa because it's so pretty here. I'm glad I moved here.

When I was younger I used to go to my dad's work and play on my switch. Me and my sister would play school together and eat lunch. We would spin in the chair and also draw on the white board or do math..

If you're a military child, you can do anything! Keep trying because even if you move, you'll meet new people and make friends.

By Zachary

**H**i, my name is Zachary. I am 10 years old. I am a military child. I am going to tell you all about my life as a military child.

Some places I have lived or visited are Virginia, New York, Okinawa, Japan, Sabo, Michigan, Taiwan, Ohio, and Atlanta. One place I would go again is Taiwan because the food there is really good. One place I would not visit again is Ohio because there was a power outage.

Things I like about being a military child are going to places you have never been before like going to Legoland. Something you can celebrate as a military child is getting to skip school and put a pin on your mom or dad.



## CELEBRATING MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

Check out more military children stories at [militarychild.stripes.com](http://militarychild.stripes.com)



12th Grade, B1  
Ms. Cassandra

Celebrating Month of the Military Child

# Kubasaki High School

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

but because he never let it define him. Even on his worst days, when the pain was unbearable and his body betrayed him, he would still find a way to crack a joke or tease me about something stupid. He was my best friend.

We were stationed overseas when it happened. I don't remember much about that day, just the feeling of my chest caving in when my parents told me. It didn't seem real. It still doesn't. The hardest part wasn't just losing Josh, but knowing we couldn't bring him home. Our family had always planned for him to be buried back in the States, where the rest of our relatives were, where he belonged. But being stationed so far away, we didn't have that option. Instead, we had to cremate him.

That decision shattered me. I wanted so badly to give him a place to rest, a spot where we could visit him, where he could be surrounded by family, not trapped in an urn on a shelf in a house that wasn't even permanent. Every time we moved, we had to take him with us, packing him up like another piece of luggage. It didn't feel right. He deserved more.

Josh isn't just ashes in a container; he's a person, my brother. And yet, he has to wait, just like I do, to go back home. Every time I look at that urn, I feel like I've failed him. I know it wasn't my choice, I know there was nothing I could have done, but that doesn't make it any easier.

Losing Josh changed everything for me. Moving around was already hard, but now every new house feels emptier, every new place more unfamiliar. There's no escaping the grief, no way to leave it behind like an old address. I've lost count of how many times I've had to say goodbye in my life, but this one; the one that mattered most; I never got to say it the way I wanted.

People don't talk enough about how hard it is to be a military kid. Sure, we get to see different parts of the world, experience new cultures, and meet new people. But no one talks about what happens when we lose someone. No one tells you how hard it is to grieve when you're constantly moving and when you can't go back to the places that held your memories. Josh's whole life existed in different homes, different schools, different hospitals. And now, even in death, he has no real place to rest.

I tell myself that one day, we'll finally go back. One day, Josh will be with the rest of our family, and I will too. Until then, I carry him with me; not just in the urn that sits in our house, but in every memory, every joke he ever told, every part of me that still feels his presence.

That's why it's tough being a military child. It's not just about leaving places behind; it's about leaving people behind too. And sometimes, like with Josh, you never get to bring them home the way they deserve.

By Nicole Smith

The military is a wise choice,  
Many rejoice with the notion of a strong voice  
Military is a long term ride,  
It takes time to create a strong mind

But what of those who were passive?  
Who had a massive change

Every two, every three, every five years  
Never getting the chance to plant their feet  
They feel the want to stay and form roots  
But they can never get too comfortable

Because their seeds keep being pushed around from the waves

Welcome to being a military child  
New faces and exciting new scenery  
Stuck with never getting to know who they belong to  
Unable to know the shortcuts of winding roads  
Always known as the new kid in town

Welcome to being a military child  
You can learn more about different cultures  
Forever unable to understand your own fully  
It's an experience that you can't get anywhere else  
One that you can't feel alright staying in a place for too long  
An uncertainty when you're forced to change your home  
Because you've outgrown the opportunity

Unless you decide to trek it yourself

A cycle that recycles itself and gets you nowhere  
yet everywhere at the same time

The military is a wise choice,  
To help those who have no voice

But what of those who didn't have the option?  
Those that were stuck in the concoction of always worrying  
about safety  
But were ultimately forgotten despite their close vicinities

Welcome to being a military child.

By Brianna Ridgway

Being a military child is such a unique experience. There are so many pros and cons to it. I moved so many times that I couldn't imagine what life outside of being a military child is like. Staying in one home to grow up in has always been a dream, but I never considered how lucky I am to meet the people I've met and see the places I've seen. I am content with my life as a military child because even though I've fallen into many different states of emotions the outlook on my life is still amazing. I have switched schools 13 different times, one of which I came back to, lived in three different states, and three different countries. I am incredibly grateful for that, but at the same time I crave having the opportunity to have a "forever friend" by my side or a childhood home. It's a difficult lifestyle to live by and I can go on and on about the good and the bad, but that's life and it's introduced me to many different things that a civilian child wouldn't be introduced to. Our experiences are different and sometimes difficult, but it's acknowledged so we know we're not alone.

significantly. I learned how to connect with people as well as find a place to call home. I easily adapted to the world and people around me, and it has filled me with a positive mind set that leaves me forever appreciative of being a military brat.

By Decker Baum

packing up the house  
time for another new start  
Where will I go next?

Saying my goodbyes  
Promising to keep in touch  
Another move away

By Elijah Graichen

Always moving, never still,  
New towns, new schools, a test of will.  
Friends we make, then say goodbye,  
Under ever changing skies.  
Pride and strength, we learn to be,  
Home is where our hearts are free.  
Through every change, we stand tall,  
A life of duty worth it all.

By Frank Persampieri

Old friends lost away  
Continents separate us  
New friends where I stay

By Ha'ani Sablan

Being a military child is exciting but also complicated. I've been to three different places throughout my life. Born in California, moved to Hawaii when I was around four years old, moved back to California until I was eleven years old, and lastly moved to Okinawa when I was turning twelve years old. I have experienced different cultures and met new people. I've been in Okinawa for about eight years and living here has been different. I gain and lose friends at least every year I've been here. The best part about being stationed here is that I have a lot of family stationed here as well. Everywhere I've been, there was always family I was growing up with. Since I have grown up to be a military child it's normal to me. I'm grateful for my dad providing and going into the military because of me.

## Teen Take

By Carlos Cadet

Routine changes quickly, forcing you to adapt  
Emotions are always all over the place especially during deployments

Sacrifices are being made for a better future  
Independence is a tool to get through most challenges faced  
Love for family stays strong, even when miles apart  
Incredible experiences come with PCS'  
Empathy is a great tool acquired especially when moving to new places.

New beginnings happen often  
Tough times make tough individuals

By Jacy Fisk

Now my friends move here  
Make band, play heavy music  
Then my friends move away

By Jason Glade

A military child "Brat" is the child of a full time service member in the military. To be a military child means the three S's. Selfness, care for others as well as family. Service, providing for others without anything in return. Sacrifice, Giving up something I value for a greater good. What I learned by being a military child is to have respect for others and never settle in one place because you are most likely going to move.

By Jack Bopp

Being a military child is pretty good,  
Everyone says its a "sacrifice,"  
But I think they are misunderstood,  
It's actually a real life paradise.

Sure, you end up moving a lot,  
And you may feel torn at the heart,





# celebrating Month of the Military Child



Whether its overseas or not,  
It gives you the opportunity for a fresh restart.

New faces, new friends, new adventures to chase,  
New sights, new smells, new cultures,  
Every place holds a new, special space,  
New rhythms, new foods, new ways to nurture.  
Each journey is a story we're eager to embrace.

Though sometimes the goodbyes can be hard,  
You learn resilience, your heart grows scarred.  
But with each goodbye, there's a new hello,  
In this life, there's always somewhere to go.

By Jorge DeLaRosa

Jorge

Funny, unique, and adaptable  
Who enjoys watching Jake Paul and listening to music  
Who is able to adapt to new countries  
Who feels happy when he eats brownies  
Who wonders what it's going to be like in 2025  
Who fears no man  
Who cares about his family  
Who dreams of doing a backflip on the moon

By Jackson Nicolas

Everyone thinks its fun and amazing,  
Until you see your dad leave while you're just gazing.  
Military child is the title I own,  
But the struggles I have to condone.

I lived all over, here and there.  
I've lived almost everywhere.

I've seen people I love,  
I've seen people I hate.  
The life of a military child is not so great.  
I say goodbye to almost everyone I meet,  
This life has me beat.

But I have grown to the man I am today,  
I have grown from everything I learned on the way.

I hope to see everyone I lost.  
But I would trade this experience at any cost.  
It made me better than I was before.  
Made me better at my core.

By Mia Patino

New home a different base,  
Shared bonds of moving, changing  
Adventure starts now.

By Mikaela Reyno

Growing up around military kids has always been difficult because there have been numerous occasions where I became really good friends with someone and they would move shortly after. I struggled to make long lasting friendships because after experiencing many close friends moving away, I was scared to find new people, afraid they would leave also. I created a mentality that I don't need people to make me happy which made me distance myself from others. Despite being scared of losing my friends, once I climbed out of that shell and socialized more, I met new people whom I connected to. They became my best friends and came to know the deepest parts of me. Through this experience I learned that I cannot control the things happening around me, but to not let that change or control my actions. I must thrive in change. I must learn to love myself and to be okay with being alone by learning that I shouldn't rely on others to bring me joy. This doesn't change the fact that it is hard losing friends because they move away, but it taught me to open up to new opportunities and new people. If we continue to do this we will soon find those few individuals who stick around forever, regardless of distance.

By Natalia Velasco

Growing up, one of the main things we care about is making friends. Making sure we have someone to eat with at

lunch, play with at recess, and sit next to in class. It's a goal every child has to make friends. When you're younger just having the same color water bottle or having the smallest conversation automatically makes you best friends, it was easy coming with that is being a military child you come and go as the years goes by and when you're older there is a lot more that comes to the process, people take into consideration how you look, how you act, if you're attractive enough to be around, if you're fit enough, and if you act the way they do and only listen to the way they think. It doesn't matter if you have the same favorite color. You're lucky in highschool if you meet friends you can call your family. Some people don't get so lucky. They don't get into the "popular group" or barely make friends at all and it takes a toll on who you are. But it doesn't matter, people come and go just like you will and some people don't end up being who you think you are. Growing up I realized it's better to have 1 real friend who will stick by your side no matter what than to be in a group of friends who don't actually care about you.

By Reighlyn Kissick

"Where are you from?" What does that question mean? Does it mean where I was born? Where I lived last? Where I lived the longest? Where I liked living the most? Where the rest of my family lives? Where I remember living first? It is such a simple yet difficult question for kids like me. There are all these places. All these places where I don't necessarily fit in but don't necessarily stick out. And quite honestly I don't know where I am from. But if I had to give an answer, it would be from somewhere in between.

By Sin Tunstall

Having friends for two years  
is something a military child fears.  
They make a friend today  
half of them are gay.  
A long term friendship no one hears.

By Skyler Olson

Being a military child is interesting. I had lived in Maryland my entire life and whenever I moved, I only moved twenty minutes away from my old house. That was how my life had been up until 2019 when my mom and my step dad got married. A year after they got married, in the summer of 2020 we got orders to Okinawa, Japan. I was terrified. I was about to be in 8th grade and I had been at the same schools my entire life, going to middle school with the same people I've known since kindergarten. We were planning to leave in February 2021. I had to pick up and leave everything I had ever known. It was really hard to get used to moving and meeting new people, these people were used to moving around their whole life and making new friends easily. I was the opposite, I didn't make friends until 9th grade. Those friends became the closest people to me very fast. I'm a senior now and only 2 of my friends from freshman year are still here. Having people I'm so close with moving all the time and knowing I will probably never see them again is extremely hard. It's been 4 years and I'm still not used to being a military child and I don't think I ever will get used to it.

By Naomi Mahal Baumgartner

Civilian Life?  
What is that?  
What is a home?  
A house made of bricks? A place where both....  
What is are siblings but a built in friend,  
What is a A place (home)  
What is a (language)  
What is a  
What is a  
- Confinement  
- Bad wifi  
- Restricted access  
- Uhh..  
- Small school budget  
- Diversity multiple fields  
- Language learning opportunities

What is a forever home?  
My forever home is forever moving,  
From San Francisco to Japan to Italy then Africa.  
What is a friend?

What do you mean you've all grown up together? My friends change every 3 years, my background, my scenery, one moment you're enjoying the humid weather and togutchi beach the next you're going skiing in Moose Meadow Alaska.

What is it like to be a civilian?  
Growing up with kids  
you've known since kindergarten.

Hey, I'm the new kid.

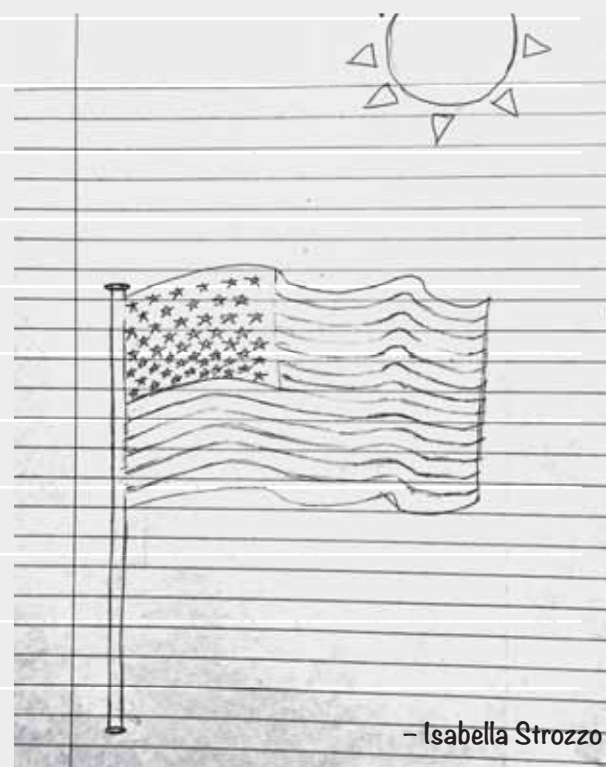
By Jaida Koweh

Being a military child means being there for your friend's birthdays,  
But missing family reunions.  
It means learning the meaning of life with your close family  
But missing life lessons with your extended family.  
It means finally having having you chosen family,  
Just for them to be ripped from you, leaving you cold and empty,

Being a military child is about learning how to let go.  
It's about being strong when everyone else is sobbing.  
It's about being happy when you realize you.....



- Jyania Darsan



- Isabella Strozso



3rd Grade  
Dr. Pablo Ramos Jr.

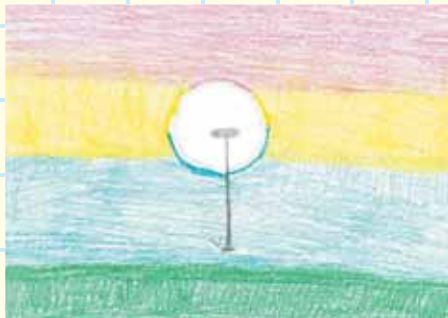
# Kinser Elementary School

CELEBRATING MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD



I am a military child, and if you didn't know dandelions represent military children. It's hard being a military child but it's also fun because you get to go to places other people don't and you can meet new friends. The hard part is that you have to leave friends and things you love. I used to live in California, the part I lived in was the Bay area. I could visit my Grandparents that lived in Redding, California with my dog Rocky and there dog was Frip. Then I move here to Okinawa. I have met some really good friends, like Lillian and Sophia. I have a friendship bracelet with Lillian but not with Sophia, I wish I did have friendship bracelet with Sophia.

- Adaline



One time in North Carolina I got Student of the Month. My mom missed it but I didn't think too much about it. At the time my dad was deployed for six months. Two days later my mom actually came, and we had chicken and fries. Then my mom said, "Make space for him!" My sister and I looked behind us and it was my dad! I cried and so did my sister. He hugged both of us and my friends started to look at me. This all took place at my school.

- Alicia



Being a military child is crazy because you get to go around the world and make friends all over the place. You can travel to many different countries all around the world and if you are old enough you could go to the shooting range. I'm in Japan right now and did you know Neko is cat in Japanese? It's really cool but we get scared when our Moms or Dads go on deployment. My brother and I don't know if our Mom or Dad will come back from deployment but military children are strong, adaptable, and very accepting of others differences. And also if we learn some more languages we could use code words.

- Antonio



My dad was in the military. I didn't like when he had to be away. Loving him is my top priority. I love him so much. Then one day, my dad retired. Army was the branch he served in. Riding in my dad's car is always fun. You know what? Is your dad in the military too?

- Braulio



My dad is in the military. It is hard to deal with how my dad is deployed. Life would not be the same without him. I will love him always. The military can always help my dad. Always be kind. Remember to never count on the military. You should always trust the military.

- Carter



I like being a military child because we sometimes get a discount when we go shopping. It feels special to save money at stores or restaurants. What I don't really like about being a military child is that we have to move a lot, and I have to leave my friends behind. It's hard to say goodbye to people I care about and start over at a new school. I also like visiting different places and seeing new things, but I don't like the moving part. Packing everything up and traveling can be stressful and tiring. If we are moving to America, the plane ride is really long and I don't like sitting for that much time. Sometimes I get bored or feel uncomfortable. That is why I like and don't like being a military child.

- Doulos



My dad is in the military. One time my dad had to go for a month when he got in the car I was already sad and after a couple of days I was wondering if my dad was ok, but my dog was also wondering where my dad was. When I went to school I didn't want to be talked to so we have an app, it is called Kinser ZOR and it said what mood you are in and every day I pressed blue because I was sad but people didn't notice. It is hard to let go of something and on the day my dad was coming home I could not go to sleep because I was so excited and in the morning I saw. My dad and hugged him and for a week I was happy to see my dad again.

- Charlotte



My dad is in the military. I used to live in Texas but now I live in Okinawa. Living in Okinawa is fun and I'm glad I get to live here. Try and try again, and you'll get better at it. The playground is great. I love going there. Raina is my friend and we have fun together. You might be in the military one day too. Home is awesome. I love the playground. Remember to eat healthy food.

- Leena



Being a military child is cool but it can be hard. It's hard because your parent or parents are in the military and sometimes they go on deployment for 13 weeks and I was sad I didn't show it. When my dad came home I hugged him tight and he also hugged me back. Not too long ago my dad came back from deployment but, this time he was on a ship he was gone for 2 weeks. I wasn't too sad but, I started getting sad but my mom cheered me up. She knew I missed him. When he came back he showed me videos when he was on the ship and the boat was rocking so it looked like there was a ghost.

- Iris



This was the day I had to leave the U.S. I was very sad because I didn't want to leave my home, my friends, or my family. My dog flew in the bottom of the plane, and we flew at the top of the plane. I missed him while we were flying, but I was happy to see him again when we landed. To sum it up, being a military child has been pretty good. I've gotten to travel to new places, meet new people, and learn new things. Sometimes it's hard to say goodbye, but I'm proud of my family and all the adventures we've had.

- John



In Virginia at school every Thursday you would wear a purple shirt and the reason why I liked wearing purple shirts is because it made me feel happy because the teachers would wear it too. Because we are military kids. The reason why we are military kids is because our parents are in the military. That's why we are military kids, but if our parents get out of the military we are still military kids.

- Raina



When my Pa goes away, my love stays the same. He goes for a long time but he's still mine. Goodbyes are hard but I grow strong. I am a military child.

- Michael



On Foster when I was one my dad had to go on deployment. I did not want him to go but he had to go on the ship. A few months later he came back. I was happy my dad was and my mom was happy.

- Pedro



Once my dad got deployed two years in a row. What was even worse is that he had to miss both my 8th and 9th birthdays! I still cry about it to this day. He didn't just go to the same country, he went to the exact same place both times!

- Henry



We are made strong. We don't know where we belong. But we are always moving every where and always we make new friends. But we always leave some friends behind as we move from place to place. Sometimes it is like a race. Military kids never know where there journey leads. We know how to make friends. But we never know when our journey will end.

- Sophia



# Stripes Sports Trivia

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

**Answer**  
*Lionel Messi*

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### DID YOU KNOW?

Japanese manga has quickly become a popular comic genre worldwide, but long before Sailor Moon, Pokemon and ONE PIECE, a different art form was used for storytelling in the country. Ukiyo-e, literally translated to "paintings of the floating world," dates back to the Edo Period (1603-1867) uses woodblock prints and paintings to capture portraits of kabuki actors, sumo wrestlers, travel scenes and landscapes. The art was simple and produced at a relatively low cost, allowing for it to be purchased and appreciated by many.

### Kanji of the week

馬 駅  
Eki [Station]

### Language Lesson

Nice to meet you.

Hajimemashite.

### Crossword

by Margie E. Burke

**ACROSS**

1 Kind of blocker  
5 Like the Sahara  
9 Rolex rival  
14 Hollywood's Ken or Lena  
15 Playing with a full deck  
16 Plant root  
17 Draws a bead on  
18 Wavering  
20 Cheap ship accommodations  
22 Youth's inn  
23 Inventor Nikola  
24 Gas guzzler  
26 Enduring  
28 Large vases  
32 Longtime CBS News host Charles  
34 Of the stars  
36 Holiday guests, often  
37 Petal-plucker's word  
39 Nada  
40 Langley group  
41 Ordering option  
44 Mouth-watering  
46 Texter's "seize the day"  
47 Key element (var.)  
49 "Streetcar" cry  
51 Laundry pairs  
54 "Dust in the Wind" group  
57 Jolie of film  
59 Juice drink brand  
61 Guinness and others  
62 Hit heavily  
63 Culture medium  
64 Herbal brews  
65 Studly guys  
66 Nevada city  
67 Whirlpool-like current

**DOWN**

1 Talk big

2 Cream of the crop  
3 Striking clock, e.g.  
4 San \_\_\_\_\_, California  
5 Qatar's continent  
6 Yogi's nemesis  
7 Hits the tab key, say  
8 Wallace of "E.T."  
9 Hunter of myth  
10 Spa staffer  
11 Make revisions to  
12 \_\_\_\_\_ and take  
13 Figure skating jump  
19 Immature  
21 Quimby of kid-lit  
25 Profit  
27 Like argon or radon  
29 Made peace  
30 Hair removal brand  
31 Kill, as a dragon  
32 Rubber-stamp

22 Youth's inn  
23 Inventor Nikola  
24 Gas guzzler  
26 Enduring  
28 Large vases  
32 Longtime CBS News host Charles  
34 Of the stars  
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30 Hair removal brand  
31 Kill, as a dragon  
32 Rubber-stamp

33 Farm building  
35 Run out  
38 IM sign-off  
42 Russian horseman  
43 Swell  
45 Break, as a rule  
48 Biblical promised land  
50 Army vehicles

52 Work with dough  
53 Fresh  
54 Former N.Y.C. mayor  
55 Civil rights org.  
56 Sign-making substance  
58 Greek sandwich  
60 Golfer's goal

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### Answers to Previous Crossword:

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

### SUDOKU

Difficulty: Easy

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

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Edited by Margie E. Burke

### HOW TO SOLVE:

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

Answer to Previous Sudoku:

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

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STARS  AND STRIPES<sup>®</sup>

# A Taste of Okinawa

The 3 'R's to good eating –  
Restaurants,  
Reviews & Recipes

**8-page pullout**



# My faves Japanese and Okinawan ice cream treats

STORY AND PHOTOS BY SHOJI KUDAKA,  
STRIPE OKINAWA

**G**rowing up in Okinawa, ice cream bars and popsicles were my go-to sweets during hot summer days.

While a double scoop or a soft serve was a special treat, a cold sweet on a stick offered a regular comfort food I could easily turn to whenever I needed a quick and (cheap) sugar rush.

All I had to do was to make a quick run to the drug store just 100 feet away from my home with a 100-yen coin in hand. Another bonus was the possibility of winning another ice cream. Some popsicle brands stamp some sticks with the word “あたり” (bingo). If you’re lucky and your popsicle stick has the stamp, you win another popsicle.

It wasn’t only the icy treats’ sugar flavors that made me happy, but also the fun of knowing that I could win another. I was always anxious to get to the popsicle stick to see if it was a winner. (This “get one, win one” rule is still carried on by some brands today.)

More than four decades later, ice cream bars and popsicles continue to be very popular in Okinawa. At supermarket stores and convenience stores, I still see the same brands that I bought at that local drugstore. Of course, many new brands have also been introduced to offer more variety.

Listed below are some of the ice cream bars and popsicles that I like. Most of them have been around for a long time and might make Okinawans nostalgic.

Why not give them a try and satisfy your craving for cool sweets and test your luck?

\*Prices vary depending upon each store. The numbers listed for the items below are what I saw at a local supermarket. In 2025, just like many other items, ice cream bar and popsicle prices have had a 10-20% price hike.”

## ■ 1. Homerun bar (400 yen plus tax for a box with 10 bars)

According to Nihon Ice Cream Kyokai (Japan Ice Cream Association), this was the first ice cream bar to introduce the “あたり (bingo)” rule by mixing bars with printed words such as “grand slam,” “homerun” and “hit.”

Since its launch back in 1960, its popularity still holds today. This bar comes in different flavors like vanilla, chocolate, chocolate chip, strawberry, soda, and orange.

## ■ 2. GariGarikun (74 yen plus tax)

This is arguably the most famous popsicle brand in Japan now. The brand name means “Mr. GariGari” or “GariGari boy,” which reminds consumers of the crunching sound when they eat a popsicle. It is also the name of its mascot, a cartoon boy with a big whopping mouth.

According to GariGarikun Archive, this character is an elementary school kid from Fukaya City in Saitama prefecture. He can turn into “ShariShari kun,” which probably refers to melting ice.

Since it went on sale in 1980, this has been loved by many kids and adults alike. GariGarikun comes in various flavors, including “energy drink,” “cola,” grapefruit,” “melon soda,” etc. But my favorite is the most basic blue ramune soda flavor.



1. HOMERUN BAR



2. GARIGARIKUN



3. BIG SUIKA BAR



4. YAMBARU KUINA



5. AMERICAN CRUNCH



6. WHITE



7. BLUE SEAL POLAR BEAR



8. SODA 7



9 ANPANMAN ICE BAR

## ■ 3. Big Suika Bar (120 yen plus tax)

“Suika” means watermelon in Japanese. As its name suggests, this popsicle looks exactly like a slice of the sweet summer melon. Its top portion is a red triangle, like real flesh, which includes watermelon juice, while the bottom portion is colored green, simulating the skin. To give complete the look, chocolate chips replicate the seeds.

Much like GariGarikun, this unique popsicle has its own mascot. “Suikabaman” is a hippopotamus superhero with a watermelon mask. “Kaba” means “hippopotamus.”

## ■ 4. Yambaru Kuina chocolate flavor (100 yen plus tax)

This is a local popsicle you can buy in Okinawa. If you’re expecting a popsicle in the shape of the indigenous bird, don’t be disappointed. Though it’s shaped like a regular popsicle, the simple flavor of Yambaru Kuina’s chocolate offering is nice. More importantly, some portion of the sale goes to the preservation of yambaru birds. Delicious ice cream and environmental preservation make this bar a win-win.

## ■ 5. American Crunch (110 yen plus tax)

American Crunch has been around Okinawan a long time. The treat features vanilla ice cream coated with crunch biscuits and chocolate. The crispy texture of the biscuits and smooth ice cream go well together. There is a version with chocolate ice cream inside as well. This ice cream keeps the winning “あたり” tradition alive, so make sure to check your popsicle stick after devouring.

## ■ 6. White (100 yen plus tax)

This was my favorite when I was a kid, and it still is. White’s sweet milky taste never failed to make me feel happy when I was in need of a pick-me-up. This is a textbook example of “shinpuru daga akinai,” or simple it may seem, it never gets outdated. Almost 40 years after I first tried this, I still keep coming back to this milky flavor.

## ■ 7. Blue Seal Polar Bear (158 yen plus tax)

Another all-time Okinawan favorite, this ice cream bar wrapped in silver paper is related to the childhood memory of many locals on the island. The ensemble of vanilla ice cream and cocoa cookies can be addictive. Beware when you try one.

## ■ 8. Soda 7 (65 yen plus tax)

To me, this is the quintessential Okinawan popsicle. Much like White, this is a very simple and ordinary popsicle with a soda flavor. Priced at about 50 yen (approx. \$0.36 cents), Soda 7 saved me so many times when I had only 10-yen coins in my pocket.

## ■ 9 Anpanman Ice Bar (100 yen plus tax)

Anpanman is a popular Japanese cartoon superhero with a face made from red beans. So, you may be surprised to hear that the Anpanman Ice Bar is exclusive to Okinawa.

Since it went on sale in 1990, this milk-flavored popsicle with chocolate sauce hidden inside has been making many kids on the island smile just like the cartoon Anpanman did with his bread face.

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# A Taste of Okinawa

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Time: 11:00-22:00 (Last order 21:00)  
Cash Only(\$/¥)

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Offering authentic Japanese and Okinawan cuisine at a reasonable price, Gen was recognized in Stripes' Best of the Pacific 2013 as the best restaurant to experience the local culture on Okinawa. Owner and Head Chef Naoki Tsukayama highly recommends the "Fish Garlic Butter Combo," a popular dish among American customers. Tsukayama and his staff make you feel at home, so stop by and enjoy a delicious meal. Gen is located across from Camp Foster's fire station. Just look for shi-shi dogs on a traditional Okinawan tile roof outside Foster's Fire Station Gate.

**RESTAURANT INFO**





# Makin' Mochi Donuts

STORY AND PHOTOS BY ELEONORA BADELLINO,  
BYFOOD

**M**ochi donuts are sweets made from glutinous rice flour, famous in Japan (and elsewhere) for their soft and pleasantly chewy texture, described by the Japanese onomatopoeia mochi-mochi.

You can easily purchase them in Japanese bakeries and supermarkets, where they can be found in the classic donut form (ring-shaped, with a hole cut out from the center), as a large puff filled with cream or anko, or made up of several little balls forming a circle.

This latter version is very reminiscent of the pon de ring, donuts sold by the large company Mister Donut all over the world. But unlike Mister Donut's pon de ring recipe, which creates their mochi-mochi texture by using tapioca flour, mochi donuts often use shirataamako (glutinous rice flour) instead.

Previously, we've brought you a versatile mochi ice cream recipe as well as a mochi cake recipe, and today we're bringing you another modern variation of the Japanese chewy rice cake! In this recipe, I decided to make mochi donuts in their most famous form, inspired by Mr. Donut's pon de ring, and glaze them at the end with sweet icings inspired by Japanese confectionery: matcha, kinako (toasted soybean powder), and yuzu.

To make the best mochi donuts, texture plays an important role. Part of their softness is due to the cooking process, which involves deep-frying them in oil at around 170 degrees Celsius (approximately 240 degrees Fahrenheit). The temperature of the oil plays an important role as it will ensure that the outer surface does not burn, and that the inside of the donut is cooked to perfection.

In addition, the cooking time is also crucial for the formation of the donut. To allow the balls to bind together during baking, place them on baking paper and then in the hot oil. After a few minutes, the paper will peel away from the dough, which will keep cooking and bind together. All

you have to do is remove the paper from the oil and continue cooking your donuts.

## Mochi Donut Ingredients

Makes about 5 donuts

- 100g shirataamako (3.5oz)
- 200g velvety tofu (7oz)
- 100g cake flour (3.5oz)
- 50g caster sugar (1.8oz)
- 5g baking powder (1 tsp)



### Preparation

In a bowl, put the velvety tofu (without draining it; I recommend smashing it through a colander to make it creamier and easier to mix) and the shirataamako and mix well. Add the flour, sugar, and baking powder, and mix further.



### Shaping Pon de Ring style Mochi Donuts

Once the dough is ready, it's time to shape the little balls. I divided the dough into 8 equal parts, and further divided each slice in half to obtain several balls of similar size.



To be more precise, I weighed them (each ball was about 8 g).



Now, make a circle with 8 balls close together (make sure they are well attached or they will split during baking). Do this by placing the balls on squares of baking paper.



### Frying the Mochi Donuts

Take a small saucepan and heat the oil over medium heat until it reaches 170°C.

Fry the donuts for about

6 minutes (3 minutes per side) and take them out once they are golden brown.

Place on a wire rack and drain off the excess oil.



## White chocolate matcha glaze

Matcha is now an ingredient that is readily available all over the world. It is a distinctive element of Japanese cuisine, and as such, its use in desserts is a must!

Did you know that there are two different versions of matcha depending on its use?

**Ceremonial Matcha:** Higher quality matcha, as it is the result of only one harvest per year from the "virgin" leaves of the highest part of the tea plant. The result is matcha with a delicate taste and fine nuances in flavor.

**Culinary Matcha:** The result of several harvests throughout the year from the lower leaves on the plant. The result is matcha with strong flavors, slightly more bitter, and able to stand out when mixed with other ingredients.

Before buying matcha, think about how you will use it, and always take a look at the packaging!

### Ingredients

- For 5 donuts
- 120g white chocolate (4.2oz)
  - 1 tbsp matcha powder

### Directions

While the donuts are cooling, break up the white chocolate in a bowl and cook it in the microwave for 2-3 intervals of 30 seconds each. At each interval, remove and stir with a teaspoon.

Once melted, sprinkle in the spoonful of matcha and mix everything together.

Dip the donut in the chocolate, and shake off the excess chocolate. Then, place it on a cooling rack.

Leave to dry and serve.



## Yuzu juice glaze

Yuzu is a symbol of the arrival of the cold season here in Japan, and between the months of November and January, it is celebrated in many forms. Yuzu is a citrus fruit that tastes very much like a mix between an orange and a grapefruit.

The largest producer of yuzu in Japan has for years been Kochi prefecture, particularly Kitagawa Village. But given its popularity, cultivation now extends throughout the country.

With the coming of winter, supermarket shelves and sweet shop windows in Japan are lined with yuzu-themed products; from alcoholic beverages to savory snacks, seasonings for meat and vegetables, and even desserts!

### Ingredients

- For 5 donuts
- 130g icing sugar (1 cup)
- 2 tablespoons of yuzu juice
- Yuzu peel for decoration, grated

### Directions

While the donuts are cooling, mix together the sugar and yuzu juice until smooth.

Dip the donuts in the glaze, place on a wire rack to remove excess, and sprinkle with grated yuzu peel.

Allow to dry and serve.



## Kinako powder coating

Kinako (literally "yellow powder") refers to soybeans that are roasted and ground into a tasty flour, used mainly in Japanese pastries (like kinako mochi and warabi mochi).

The taste and smell of kinako is similar to that of roasted hazelnuts; quite nutty. It is often mixed with sugar and then used as a topping for various desserts including mochi and, in more modern times, even fried bread!

### Ingredients

- 1 cup brown sugar (7.1 oz)
- 2 cups of kinako powder (16 oz)
- Bowl of lukewarm water

### Directions

While the donuts are cooling, combine the kinako powder and sugar in a bowl and mix.

Prepare a separate bowl with lukewarm water and proceed in the following order: dip the donuts in the lukewarm water and then in the kinako mixture. Make sure that all the edges are completely covered with powder, and serve.

*byFood is a platform for food events in Tokyo, with over 80 experiences to choose from and a fantastic resource for learning about Japan's thriving food culture! What's more, byFood runs a charitable outreach program, the Food for Happiness Project, which donates 10 meals to children in Cambodia for each person who books a food event through our platform!*

**How Long Can a Mochi Donut Stay Good?**

Once cooked, cooled, and decorated; you can cover them in plastic wrap and store them in the refrigerator. It is advisable to eat them within 2-3 days.

If you want to keep them for a longer time: Once cooked and cooled (without frosting or filling), put them in a bag, separating them from each other with layers of parchment paper so they don't stick. Press down on the bag to remove excess air and create a vacuum, and place them in the freezer. Frozen, they will keep for more than a month.



# Pancake lovers rejoice!

## Try this Okinawan crepe recipe today!



STORY AND PHOTOS BY SHOJI KUDAKA,  
STRIPES OKINAWA

Chinpin is an Okinawan sweet often described as a pancake or crepe flavored with brown sugar.

According to Jitsuyou Ryukyu Ryori, a textbook on Okinawan cuisine, this sweet used to be a special treat made to celebrate Yukkanuhi, a seasonal festival marked on May 4 or May 5 of the lunar calendar.

Today, you can have chinpin year-round at local cafes with a cup of tea or coffee. It's really easy to make and doesn't require special ingredients you don't already have in your kitchen.

The recipe for chinpin calls for brown sugar, which gives it a delicate and restrained sweetness different from traditional pancakes and crepes made with regular granulated white sugar.

Adding to the sweetness is the brown sugar syrup topping which will not ruin the taste of the treat itself. So, let's dig in and try this Okinawan delight!

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### INGREDIENTS (for approx. eight cakes)

#### FOR CHINPIN CREPE/PANCAKE

- Flour (approx. 600cc)
- Baking powder (a small spoonful)
- Salt (a little)
- Brown sugar (Crushed and powdered, 500cc)
- Water (600cc)
- Egg whites of one egg

#### FOR BROWN SUGAR SYRUP

- Water (100cc)
- Powdered brown sugar (50g)

### RECIPE

#### FOR CHINPIN CREPE/PANCAKE

1. Crush and powder brown sugar.
2. Pour the powdered brown sugar and an egg white in a pot and mix in water. Smooth out clumps with a whisk.
3. Heat the pot on a stove with moderate heat while constantly whisking the mixture.
4. If the mixture starts to boil, stop stirring and continue heating the pot for about five minutes more until the brown sugar melts in the pot.
5. With a strainer, remove the foam that collects at the top. (If you have a larger strainer, you can carefully pour the hot mixture into a bowl instead.)



6. Let the mixture cool.
7. Sift flour and baking powder into a separate bowl.
8. Pour the cooled mixture into the bowl and add salt.
9. Whisk the mixture and let it sit for about 10 minutes with a wet towel covering the bowl.



10. In a pan, pour a little mixture as you would a crepe or pancake. Use oil or non-stick spray so the cakes do not stick to the pan.



11. As it starts to cook, make sure to roll your crepes.



\* Ingredients (especially the brown sugar) can be adjusted to your preference.

#### FOR BROWN SUGAR SYRUP

1. Pour 100cc of water and 50cc of powdered brown sugar in a pot stirring until the sugar dissolves. Let the ingredients reach a boil.
2. Once the ingredients start to thicken into a syrup, it is time to top your chinpin!



VIEW  
VIDEO!



Bon  
appetite!







# SPICE UP DINNERTIME WITH OKINAWA TACO RICE RECIPE

STORY AND PHOTOS BY SHOJI KUDAKA,  
STRIPES OKINAWA

If you ask me, taco rice is the kind of food that is hard not to like. Since it was invented in 1984 by Matsuo Gibo, who owned fast-food joint Parlor Senri near Camp Hansen, taco rice has grown to be one of the most beloved tastes of Okinawa.

The genius of making tacos heartier by replacing taco shells with rice has become a hit not only among locals, but also tourists.

While I would like taco rice for a quick and light lunch, I did not think of it as a treat. Fried ground meat, onion, tomato, lettuce, and cheese served on rice didn't seem quite special to me. However, a recipe changed my opinion.

Recently, I tried making a taco rice recipe I found on Orion Beer's website. The local beer company described the recipe as a "spicy taco rice for adults," and the photo on the website showed a delicious plate served with a glass of beer on the side.

Luckily, this recipe was straightforward and easy to follow. But there was one key lesson for me: Chili powder can make a huge difference. No sooner had I begun mixing fried meat with the red condiment than my mouth watered. As the fried meat was served on rice along with tomato, cheese, lettuce, and lemon, I knew already that I was going to love it.

The taco rice tasted as spicy as advertised. So, I washed it down with a glass of non-alcoholic beer since I still had work to do. However, with this "adult" taco rice, alcohol was not needed to compliment an already delicious, satisfying meal.

kudaka.shoji@stripes.com

## SPICY TACO RICE

(Based on a recipe by Orion Beer)

- INGREDIENTS
- Ingredients (for two persons)
  - Ground beef and pork (150g)
  - Onion (half a ball)
  - Garlic (half a clove)
  - Chili powder (15 cc or less)
  - Black pepper (as much as you wish)
  - Olive oil (7.5 cc)
  - Ketchup (30 cc)
  - Medium thick sauce or Tonkatsu sauce (7.5 cc)
  - Salt (two fingertip pinches)
  - Cherry tomatoes (6 to 7, to be sliced in half or in four pieces)
  - Any cheese you prefer (50 g)
  - Lettuce (2 to 3 leaves, to be cut into fine strips)
  - Rice (for 2 persons)
- \*For the topping, add sliced lemon, avocado, and spicy sauce depending upon your liking.

★★ Make sure to dry off your lettuce with a paper towel first. Fry onions, ground beef and pork until they are cooked down and low on moisture, as this will give you a concentrated and crisp flavor.

- DIRECTIONS
- 1 Fry chopped onion with olive oil in a pan. Once the onion becomes soft, add garlic, ground beef, and pork before further frying the mixture.
  - 2 When the ground beef and pork are cooked enough, add chili powder to add aroma.
  - 3 Add ketchup, medium thick sauce (tonkatsu sauce), and salt before frying the mixture until it becomes dry. Finish it up by adding black pepper.




- 2 When the ground beef and pork are cooked enough, add chili powder to add aroma.



- 4 Serve up rice and a plate and top it with the fried mixture and other toppings such as sliced cherry tomatoes, cheese, and lettuce.



- 5 Meshiagare (Bon appetit)!





### Tasty food, great drinks, fun events at Sidelines

Est. 2012, Sidelines is a family-owned, upscale sports themed restaurant. Our menu offers delicious home-made Classic American Food, Vegan dishes, kids' options and fantastic weekly Specials. Try our Fish & Chips and Creamy Homemade Cheesecake, both undoubtedly the best in Okinawa. Join us for Trivia Tuesday, Wednesday's Humpday Super-Specials, Tourney Thursdays, Friday's Happy Hour, Weekend Bottomless Mimosas & to watch Live Sporting Events on our 20 indoor & outdoor TVs! You'll love our unrivalled service, full bar, ample outdoor seating, and the fabulous Ocean View from our upstairs bar! Visit us soon and become part of the Sidelines Family!



RESTAURANT INFO

# A Taste of Okinawa





Gushikawa  
Main City  
Branch



Naha  
Main Place  
Branch



Urasoe  
West Coast  
Parco City  
Branch





### Stone-oven-baked pizza, pasta, spare ribs and more

Have you heard of Pizzeria MARINO, renowned for our delicious cuisine in Okinawa? At Pizzeria MARINO, you can savor a wide variety of dishes, including stone-oven-baked pizzas, pasta, cheese fondue, and spare ribs. Our freshly baked pizzas are a must-try, offering a unique and irresistible flavor that you won't find anywhere else. Treat yourself to one of our set menus and choose your favorite pizza and pasta combination for an unforgettable dining experience. At Pizzeria MARINO, we're here to give you a taste of home that will leave your tastes begging for more. We can't wait to serve you!

RESTAURANT INFO





### Wafutei serving up delicious traditional Japanese cuisine

Enjoy the taste of Japan at Wafutei, with 20 locations across Okinawa! Our diverse menu, featuring sushi, tempura, yakiniku and tonkatsu, satisfies a wide range of palates. Perfect for families, friends and groups - everyone can find their favorite dish. Experience the flavor and quality loved by both Americans and Japanese at all our convenient San-A shopping mall locations. Visit our website for detailed menu and location information. Your genuine Japanese culinary experience awaits just around the corner! Let the caring and talented staffs at our Wafutei locations show you what Japanese cuisine is all about!

RESTAURANT INFO



### 和風亭 Wafutei



# A Taste of Okinawa





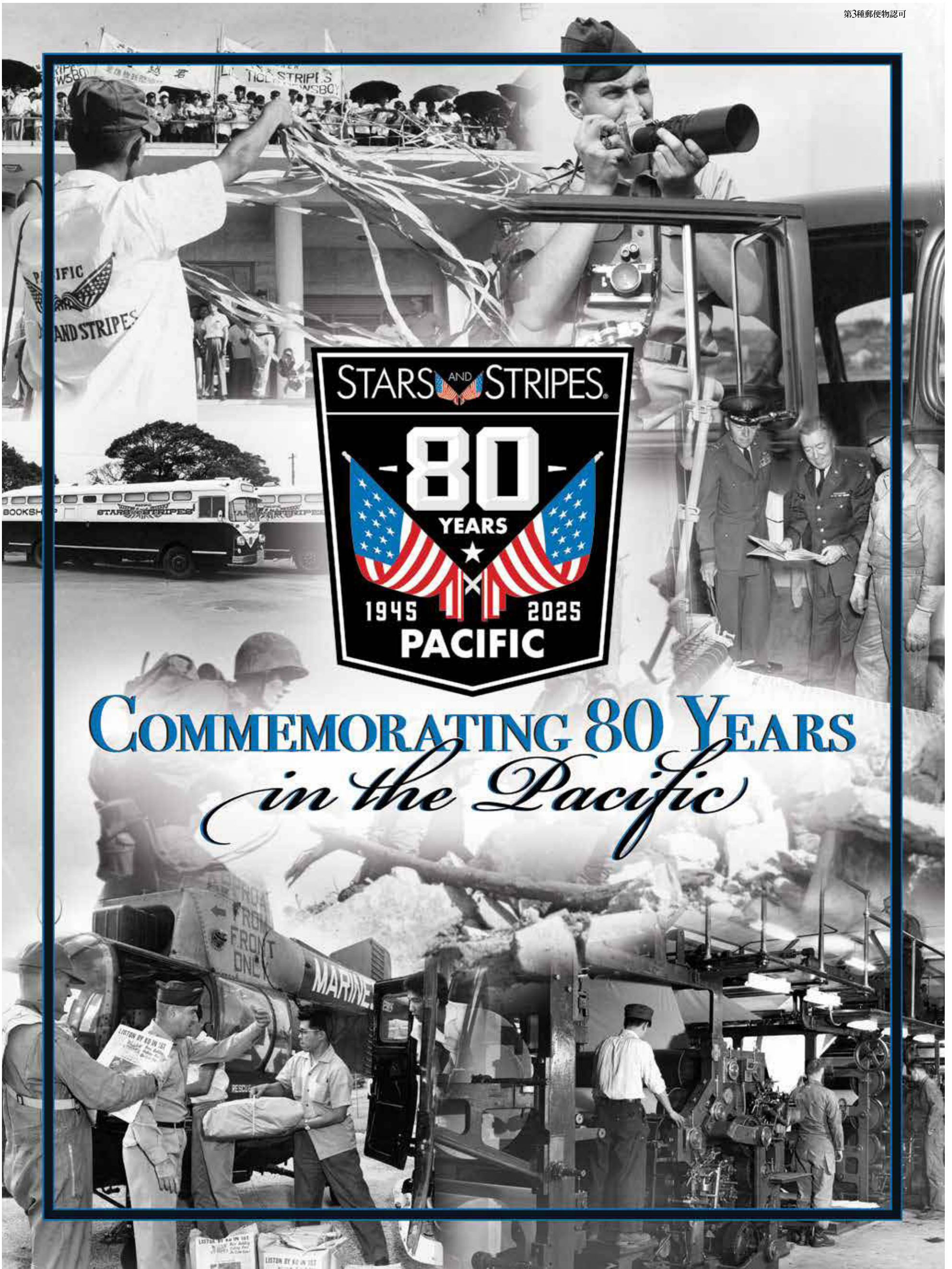


### Osaka Ohsho serves tasty Chinese dishes on Okinawa

If you are search of a variety of delicious Chinese cuisine on Okinawa, look no further that Osaka Ohsho. Indulge in our signature gyoza, flavorful fried rice, and savory mabo tofu. Our crispy, juicy dumplings are irresistible! Enjoy high-quality Chinese dishes in a casual setting at reasonable prices. Don't miss our popular lunch specials featuring our tasty gyoza sets. Our staff is ready to show you why people say the best Chinese cuisine on Okinawa is served at Osaka Ohsho! So, stop by and let us take care of you and your taste buds!

RESTAURANT INFO





# COMMEMORATING 80 YEARS *in the Pacific*





# PROUDLY SERVING THOSE WHO SERVE FOR 80 YEARS



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

Check out more of our history at



[www.80.stripes.com](http://www.80.stripes.com)

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Stars and Stripes' Tokyo office circa 1965.



**Max D. Lederer Jr.**

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

**STARS AND STRIPES** is the editorially independent daily newspaper serving the U.S. military community worldwide. Stars and Stripes is authorized by the Department of Defense; however, the content of the publication is unofficial, and is not to be considered the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. government. For more information, visit [stripes.com](http://stripes.com).

#### 80TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION STAFF

**Max D. Lederer Jr.** Publisher  
**Laura Law** Chief Operating Officer  
**Lt. Col. Marci Hoffman** Pacific Commander  
**Aaron Kidd** Pacific Bureau Chief  
**Akiko Takamizawa** Librarian  
**Catharine Giordano** Supervisory Archivist  
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**Douglas Gillam** Layout and Design

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Logo designer  
Yuka Takahashi





## STARS AND STRIPES MARKS

# 80 YEARS

*OF DELIVERING*  
**MILITARY NEWS**  
**THAT MATTERS**  
*ACROSS THE PACIFIC*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**



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



## The Pacific Stars of Stripes

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



## Shel Silverstein

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

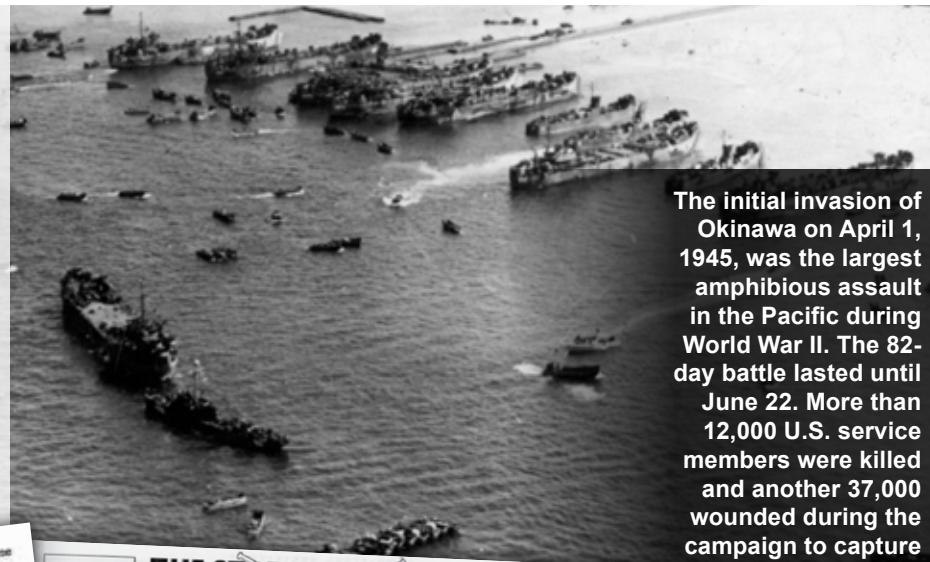
After leaving the Army, Silverstein struggled as a cartoonist until he heard about Hugh Hefner, who was putting together the first Playboy. Hefner hired Silverstein, who literally moved from ground floor to an executive suite in the Playboy Mansion.

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

— Aaron Kidd/  
Stars and Stripes



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



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



### CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

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

## 'Every Man's Role'

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Winning a 'Feverish Race'

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

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

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

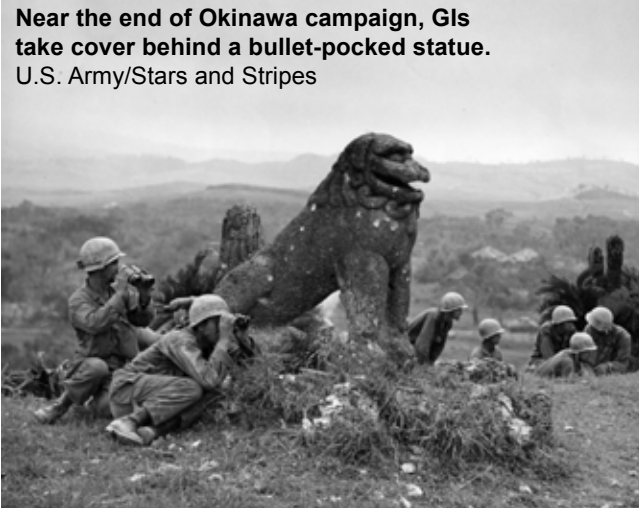
A Stars and Stripes editor, Cpl. Anthony Kott, summed up news of the first atomic bombing. "The atom bomb continued



STARS AND STRIPES



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



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



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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6



Tom Sutton

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

— Aaron Kidd/  
Stars and Stripes





# STARS AND STRIPES

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

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

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

## 'Korea At War'

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

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

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

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

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

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

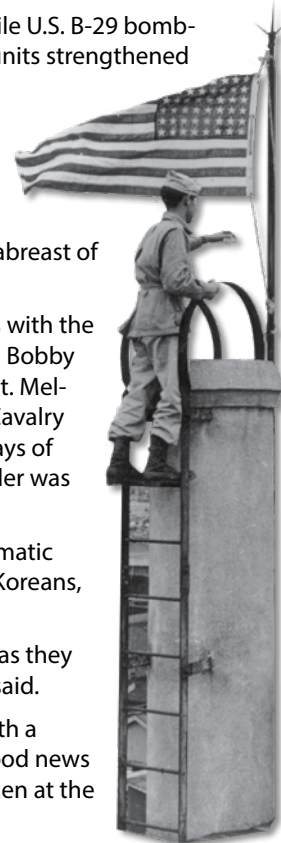
Meanwhile, Pacific edition reporters with the grunts reported action at the front. Cpl. Bobby Rushing wrote how medical officer Capt. Melbourne Chandler led a surrounded 1st Cavalry Division battalion to safety after four days of heavy fighting. The battalion commander was killed, leaving Chandler in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

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

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

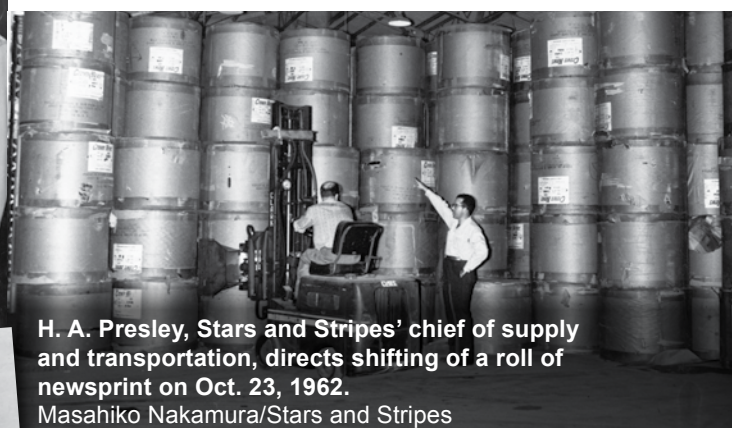
The same day, a front-page story with a three-deck headline delivered some good news from general headquarters in Tokyo: "Men at the Front Will Have Beer."

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



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

James Baumbarger/Stars and Stripes



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

Masahiko Nakamura/Stars and Stripes



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

Harold Slate/Stars and Stripes

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

Kim Ki Sam/Stars and Stripes



## Steve Kroft

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

— Stars and Stripes

Check out more of our history at



www.80.stripes.com





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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### A Golden Era

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

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

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

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

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

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10



## John Olson

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

— Stars and Stripes

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



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



**Truce Signed**

Stars and Stripes

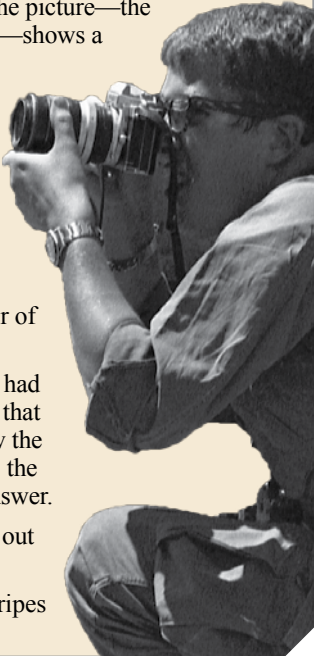
**Fighting Ends Tonight**

Clark S. Taylor

Not End

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

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





# THE JAPANESE PERSPECTIVE

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

www.80.stripes.com

Toshi Cooper  
James Kimber/Stars and Stripes

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

By Seth Robson,  
Stars and Stripes

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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





# STARS AND STRIPES

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**Vol. 80**  
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## THE COST OF NEWS GATHERING

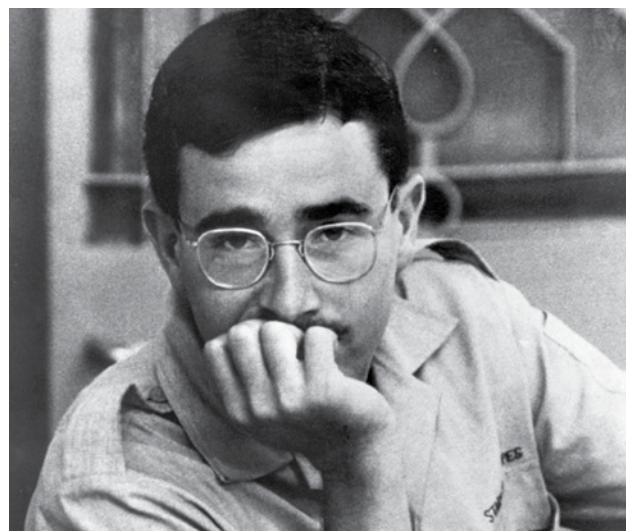
The following is an edited version of a column written by former Stars and Stripes senior reporter Hal Drake and published in October 1995.

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

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

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

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



**Paul Savanuck**

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

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

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

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

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

But the good ones do it.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

“Hey, Paul,” Kopp said. “This way.”

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

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

Then came that gloomy morning.

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



**Ernie Peeler**

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

There was more boozing that night, but it was morose and depressing. To Dave Walsh fell the stressful job of going up to a remote corner of the Marine base at Da Nang and walking under a sign that read: “In Reverence—Uncover.” Dave nodded as an attendant lifted a rubber wrapping from a still form.

Not long after, Dave was in Tokyo and he and I toured the Kanda district that abounds with bookstores. It also had the oldest beer hall in Tokyo, we and stopped to pay proper respect to a cultural landmark.

After a time, Dave looked absent and thoughtful much like Savanuck, and said: “Jesus, that was awful about Paul. If he'd just been around a little longer and gotten to know you and Kramer and all the guys, he'd have opened up. He was a nice kid.”

I wept a little, for somebody I hadn't known very well for very long.

I could never feel like Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Savanuck, but I still felt sadly deprived.



**Maj. Gen. Ethan A. Chapman, chief of staff for U.S. Forces Japan, looks at a painting honoring Stars and Stripes correspondent Ernie Peeler on Feb. 8, 1964. Peeler was the first journalist reported missing in action during the Korean War.**  
Henry Magnuson / Stars and Stripes



## Vernon Grant

Cartoonist and Army officer Vernon Grant had a unique ability to capture the soldier's perspective during the Vietnam War.

"One Vietnam veteran said to me, 'We had some terrible times in Vietnam, but we also laughed a lot,'" Grant's widow, Betsy Grant, told Stars and Stripes during a recent phone interview.

Grant's work "will make you laugh. His sense of humor was universal for all soldiers."

The youngest of five children in a family that immigrated to Massachusetts from Barbados, Grant was 23 when he joined the Army in 1958, with segregation still a dehumanizing force in the United States. Two years in, he was invited to enroll in the Infantry Officer Candidate Course at Fort Benning, Ga., and was commissioned a second lieutenant.

Grant made captain in 1966 and went to Vietnam a year later, where he commanded the Signal Security Force, 400 men guarding 23 communications sites scattered the length of Vietnam.

Between 1966 and 1969, Grant drew comics for Stars and Stripes, under the titles "Grant's Heroes," "A Grant Time in Japan" and "Grant's Grunts." They were biting and humorous but offered a window into the soldier's experience in Vietnam.

In one strip, a two-star general looks up at a man sitting on an elevated throne and say, "If you don't mind coming down, Colonel ... I'll give you my ten-minute thing on 'Command Modesty!'"

"He used exaggeration really well," Betsy Grant said.

Grant left the military in 1968, after 10 years of service. He enrolled in classes at Jesuit Sophia University, which had a campus in Tokyo. He wrote three books on Army life and one on Japan: a two-volume graphic novel "Adventures of Point-Man Palmer and his Girlfriend 'Invisible Peppermint,'" "Stand-By One!" and "A Monster is Loose!—in Tokyo."

He told reporters in 1977 that his popularity among front-line soldiers was a bit overwhelming.

"I became an institution for the U.S. GIs who sought comic relief from the danger of combat and the boredom of army life," he told the Cambridge Chronicle weekly in Massachusetts. "More soldiers read my books than any other cartoonist or writer in the front. I still get embarrassed when I meet someone on the street who recognizes me."

He suffered a heart attack on a run July 7, 2006, fell into a coma and died weeks later.

"His creations of the stories of 'Point-Man Palmer' and cartoons in the military field as well as his science fiction world of 'The Love Rangers' are his legacy," his widow wrote in her book.

Speaking with Stars and Stripes in 1972, Grant made his intentions abundantly clear. He just wanted to make people laugh.

"Translating life into humor is the biggest thing with me," he said at the time.

— Matthew M. Burke/Stars and Stripes



### CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

The newspaper also benefited from a wide swathe of talented draftees, some of whom had Ivy League degrees or actual journalism experience back in the States, Elmore said.

"We aggressively went out and covered stuff, and the military didn't much like that," said Robert Hoderne, a reporter and assistant editor at the Saigon bureau in the late 1960s.

Many would go on to illustrious journalism careers, such as Jack Fuller, who earned a Pulitzer Prize for editorial writing at the Chicago Tribune, and Steve Kroft, for 30 years a correspondent with "60 Minutes" before retiring in 2019.

"It's probably the best job I ever had," said John Olson, a staff photographer whose work quickly led to a position at the prestigious Life magazine.

A 19-year-old draftee longing to shoot photos for Stars and Stripes when he arrived in Vietnam in 1967, Olson commandeered a jeep and made an unauthorized trip to the newspaper's office in Saigon. The paper pulled some strings and took him aboard after he embellished the scope of a former mailroom job with United Press International.

The first combat assault he covered was Operation Billings in June 1967, where he talked himself onto the second

wave of helicopters heading to the landing zone—air shaking with artillery and a napalm inferno below.

Olson had brought his camera to a particularly hellacious two-week operation that took the lives of 57 Americans.

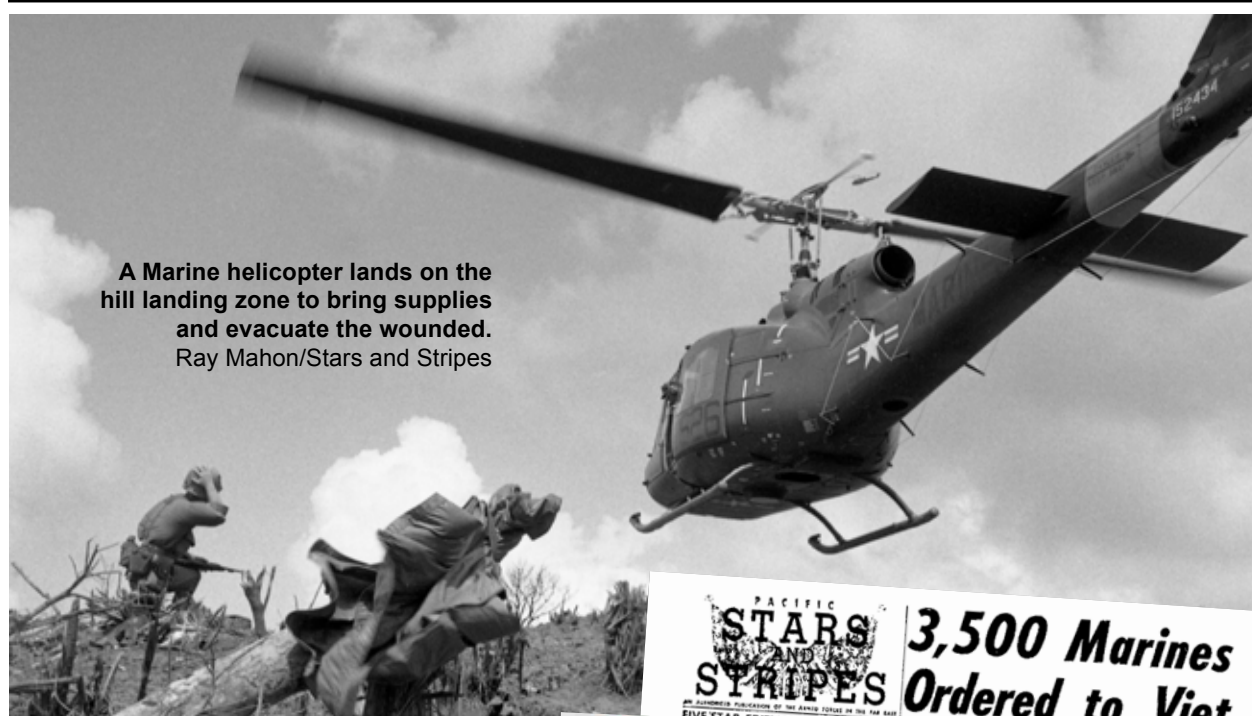
"But I didn't know any better," he said. "I thought this was just another day at work."

He would not see that kind of intensity again until the Battle of Hue in February 1968, one of the longest and bloodiest of the war. Marines waged an inch-by-inch assault to take the well-fortified Citadel from dug-in North Vietnamese troops.

"I went in there with, I think, 19 rolls of film, and I stayed until I shot every exposure I had," Olson said. "It was violent. It was upfront. It was personal."

Getting that film published in a timely manner was no small feat because unlike the wire services covering the war, Stars and Stripes had no in-country darkroom. Hoderne recalled how film had to be brought to Saigon and then put on one of two Boeing 737 planes chartered by Stars and Stripes that flew a Pacific circuit delivering newspapers printed in Tokyo.

"So, if we shot pictures on the field on Monday—if everything went just right—that film could be in Tokyo on Tuesday and be in Wednesday's paper," Hoderne said.



**A Marine helicopter lands on the hill landing zone to bring supplies and evacuate the wounded.**  
Ray Mahon/Stars and Stripes

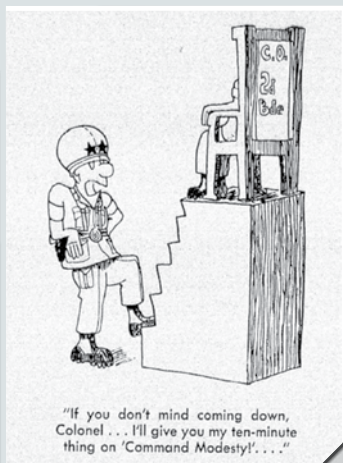


**Marine Staff Sgt. Robert Thoms, also known as "Cajun Bob," leads his men in the Battle of Hue during the North Vietnamese Tet Offensive in 1968.**  
John Olson/Stars and Stripes

**Gen. Douglas A. MacArthur, left, is greeted by Brig. Gen. Charles Morhouse, the 5th Air Force surgeon general, at Yokota Air Base, Japan, July 12, 1961.**  
Sandy Colton/Stars and Stripes



"... BATTALION SEZ WE'RE TRAPPED! ... WE HAVE ENEMY REGIMENTS TO THE NORTH, EAST, AND WEST—AND THE DIVISION EQUIPMENT INSPECTION TEAM TO THE SOUTH!!!"



"If you don't mind coming down, Colonel ... I'll give you my ten-minute thing on 'Command Modesty!'"





## 'A Hellish Nightmare'

The U.S. military's role in world events took a breather after the Vietnam War but history rolled on through civil unrest against authoritarian states in South Korea, Iran, the Philippines and elsewhere, places that presented new challenges to the United States.

Few nations experienced the scale of change that took place in the Philippines when a popular revolt in 1986 unseated President Ferdinand Marcos, a corrupt and authoritarian ruler who held sway in the island nation for 20 years.

Events following Marcos' departure and the election of Corazon Aquino had deep implications for the U.S. military presence there, symbolized primarily by Subic Naval Base and Clark Air Base.



Aquino/AP Photo

Susan Kreifels worked from Clark as a Stars and Stripes bureau chief from 1987 to 1991—the first woman to hold

such a position for the newspaper. Afterward, she moved to Tokyo, where she worked as Japan bureau chief for another four years.

"I always wanted to be a foreign correspondent," she said. "Stripes gave me that opportunity."

Before the Pinatubo eruption that changed the course of U.S.-Philippine relations, Kreifels covered a series of attacks that claimed 10 American lives. A group of communist insurgents, the New People's Army, killed several, including two airmen and a retired Air Force officer outside Clark in 1987 and an Army colonel in 1989.

For Kreifels, reporting on the series of politically motivated attacks was the most important story she covered in her 10 years with the newspaper.

"My editors and I felt we had a responsibility to let our military readers know the real dangers outside the

bases," she said, "and understand what was going on in the country."

A May 1990 article in the wake of two more airmen shot dead interviewed locals whose livelihoods depended on the American presence. Travel off Clark by members of its community was restricted.

A tricycle driver said his income was halved as a result. Another Filipino expressed hatred of the Americans. "We don't need the bases," he said.



Kreifels

Mother Nature soon obliged. Mount Pinatubo, which loomed over Clark, erupted June 12, 1991, after simmering and shaking since April. The explosion instantly disintegrated 900 feet of the summit and blanketed the surrounding area in ash and mud.

Kreifels wrote first-person accounts of the ongoing eruptions and their aftermath. Under a headline, "Scenes from a hellish nightmare," she reported June 17, from Angeles City: "It is difficult to describe the hellish nightmare that 40,000 troops, wives and children are now living in the Philippines. Ash and rocks are covering us, spewed from a volcano in our backyards."

The next day, still working her beat, Kreifels wrote of sleeplessness and the apocalyptic landscape in which the survivors felt somehow damned. She recalled meeting Air Force Staff Sgt. James Nelson and two other sergeants along a roadside in a broken-down Jeep.

"They gave me a wet, crumpled note to get their names to their commander," she wrote. "Fatigue and fear were on their faces as they tried to reach the evacuation site."

The Pinatubo eruption brought the curtain down on the U.S. presence at Clark and Subic Bay, but Stars and Stripes Pacific continues to cover the intersection of Philippine and U.S. military interests to this day.

## 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell'

Military campaigns in the Balkans and the Middle East dominated war planners and Washington, D.C., during the 1990s, and Stars and Stripes covered the Persian Gulf War and the conflict that engulfed the former nation of Yugoslavia. But the Pacific was no backwater in terms of military journalism.

On Nov. 2, 1992, a short item on page 6 of the Pacific edition identified a sailor from the USS Belleau Wood whom the Navy said was beaten to death by two shipmates in a park outside Sasebo Naval Base, Japan.

Rick Rogers, at the time an Army sergeant and Stripes reporter in Tokyo, was assigned to follow the story by an editor who had received a letter from others at Sasebo alleging the sailor, Seaman Allen Richard Schindler, was targeted because he was gay.

Being gay in the military is no longer a crime, but at the time a transitional policy, "don't ask, don't tell," was in effect.

"It took a long time to get that story out," said Rogers, now a financial adviser in San Diego. Schindler was killed in October 1992 but not until December did the Navy admit his death may have been linked to his being homosexual, "which turned out to be the case," Rogers said.

"I was an E-5 trying to hold admirals' feet to the fire, and commanders, to give up information. Not the easiest thing in the world," he said.

Rogers, who went on in civilian life to cover the military for newspapers in Virginia and California, said he learned two professional lessons as a Stars and Stripes military staffer.

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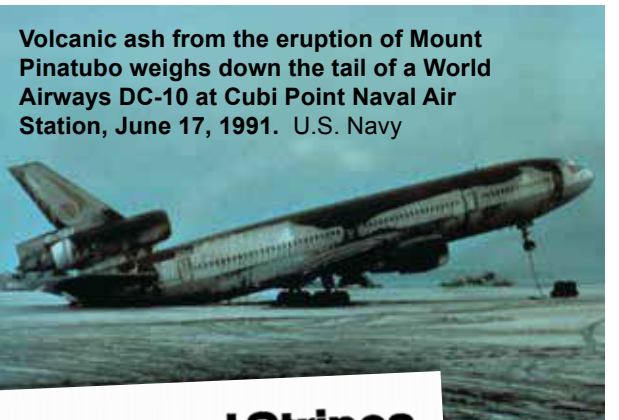


Andrew Headland Jr./Stars and Stripes

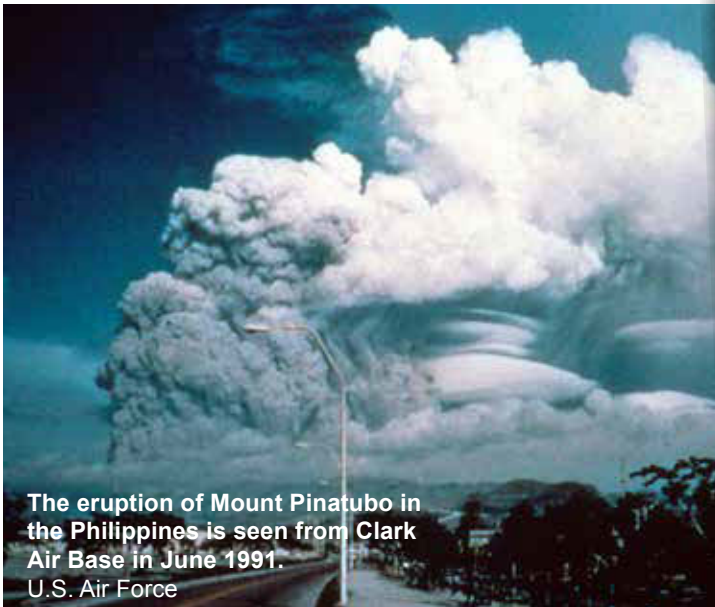
Katsuji Higa, 7 months, son of Mr. and Mrs. Eishin Higa, is a strong Pacific Stars and Stripes supporter. He holds S&S balloons passed out during the carnival fair on July 4, 1962. Stars and Stripes



Volcanic ash from the eruption of Mount Pinatubo weighs down the tail of a World Airways DC-10 at Cubi Point Naval Air Station, June 17, 1991. U.S. Navy



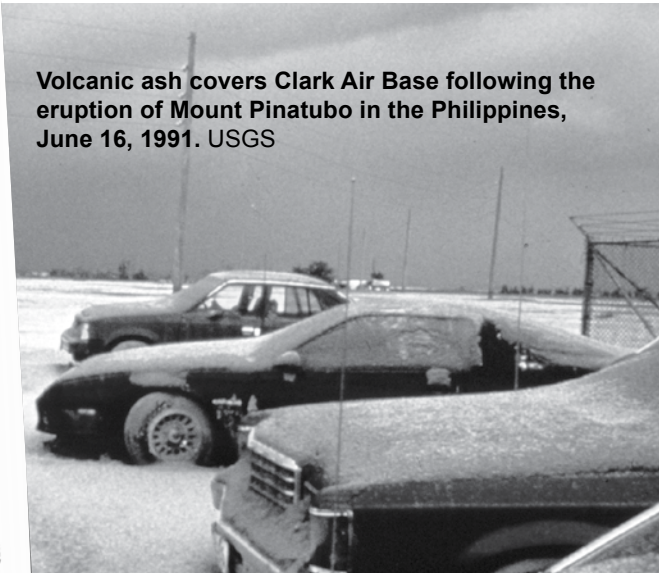
Philippines President Ferdinand Marcos accepts more than \$7 million worth of military aircraft from the United States during a ceremony at Basa Air Base on June 27, 1966. Juanito Pardico/Stars and Stripes



The eruption of Mount Pinatubo in the Philippines is seen from Clark Air Base in June 1991. U.S. Air Force



Volcanic ash covers Clark Air Base following the eruption of Mount Pinatubo in the Philippines, June 16, 1991. USGS





# Hal Drake

During his nearly four decades with Stars and Stripes, Hal Drake covered everything from high-level summits and the release of POWs from Vietnam to Muhammad Ali and high school sports.

A native of Santa Monica, Calif., Drake served 10 months in the Korean War as an artilleryman, viewing up close the carnage on Heartbreak Ridge. He applied for one of a handful of reporting jobs at Stars and Stripes and joined the Pacific staff in July 1956.

Until his retirement on Dec. 31, 1995, Drake worked as a reporter, then later as senior writer and columnist. He traveled four times to Vietnam during the war, and later returned with freelance photographer Jim Bryant in April 1985 for the 10th anniversary of the end of the war.

He was at Clark Air Base, Philippines, in February 1973 to greet returning POWs released from Vietnam.

Every president, “Ford through Clinton—I think I got them all when they came over here,” Drake once said. He was equally comfortable quizzing rock musicians such as Rod Stewart about their choice of song lyrics.

“He managed to find the human element in everything he wrote. And he was always a gentleman in the process,” said former Pacific Stripes news editor Ron Rhodes.

Drake marched to his own drummer, his former co-workers said.

“Hal’s desk—a pile of thousands of papers nearly three feet tall—was the stuff of newspaper legend,” said former colleague Adam Johnston, who was assigned to Stripes from 1993-99 while in the Air Force.

Drake could often be seen wandering the newsroom twirling and eyeing an elongated band of wire called a whirligig.

“He was quirky, but always fun and always smart,” said Gerry Galipault, who worked in the Tokyo office from 1984-90. When working the whirligig, “you could tell his mind was working a mile a minute, thinking about what to write next, what to say. And he always said it beautifully.”

After leaving Stripes, Drake and his wife, Kaz, retired to the Gold Coast in Queensland, where they helped run an international student exchange program.

After a lengthy battle with stomach cancer, Drake died there in 2013 at age 83.

— Dave Ornauer/Stars and Stripes



Stars and Stripes journalist Hal Drake, left, helps lead a Korean orphan, who was adopted by an American couple, down a stairway at Tokyo International Airport in 1974. Hideyuki Mihashi/Stars and Stripes



Paratroopers from the 101st Airborne Division provide security at a helicopter landing zone in Hesarak, Afghanistan. Other U.S. forces raided the village earlier in the week on July 16, 2002. Joseph Giordano/Stars and Stripes

U.S. service members are silhouetted against the desert sun in Saudi Arabia during Operation Desert Shield, the preface to the Gulf War. Rob Jagodzinski/Stars and Stripes



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One, don't give up, “because then they win,” he said. Two is do nothing untoward. Press the authorities, hold them accountable, but do it the right way. “You have to be 100% right on everything,” he said.

Stars and Stripes provides a perspective no other medium can provide, Rogers said, adding it's the only source of news military service members, their families and others connected to the services have on some issues.

“It's not the type of information they're going to get elsewhere,” he said.

The military hierarchy benefits from Stars and Stripes, though it often works to frustrate its coverage, Rogers said. The newspaper shines light on problems that can be resolved before they escalate into congressional inquiries. The newspaper, he said, is a kind of loyal opposition.

“I was never interested in tearing down the military. I think the military is an outstanding institution, in general,” he said. “That doesn't mean it's a perfect institution. I saw my job as helping make things better.”

## ‘Sprung Into Action’

In early September 2001, Stars and Stripes Pacific reported on Defense Department plans to close military bases, a move that Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said was necessary to save money for other uses. Within a day that view suddenly seemed outdated.

The Sept. 11, 2001, edition, published while terrorist attacks on the U.S. were still the better part of a day away, led with a story about the trial of an Air Force staff sergeant for alleged rape. U.S. military bases around Tokyo braced for a typhoon and Marines pitched in to help fight a fire on a small island off Okinawa's coast.

Kathleen Guzda Struck, at the time Stars and Stripes Pacific's managing editor, was at home that evening in Tokyo watching TV when a bulletin appeared on-screen. A plane had struck the north tower of the World Trade Center in New York.



Marines and soldiers at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, check out a camel brought on to the base for entertainment. Camel rides—and photographs—were a popular attraction at the base. Joseph Giordano/Stars and Stripes



A battalion of Georgian soldiers trains at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center in Hohenfels, Germany, to be the nation's third battalion of combat troops to join the fight in Afghanistan on Feb. 25, 2011. Seth Robson/Stars and Stripes





“As I was sitting, watching it, the second plane went in,” she said.

The newsroom in the Akasaka Press Center that night was a beehive, Struck said. She arrived to find everyone at the paper had returned to start working on the story.

“People had just sprung into action, trying to figure out what’s going on,” she said. “The active-duty journalists were always amazing, incredibly well-trained. I loved working with them. Of course, the civilians were, too, but the active-duty staff probably understood on a different scale what was happening.”

From that day on, Pacific edition pages were filled with reports connected to America’s response, military and otherwise, to 9/11. The tone changed. Topics shifted from downsizing military facilities and a slumping economy to the movement of forces from the Pacific and questions of security for service members and their families.

Stripes surveyed its readers and gauged their sentiments, as well. In October 2001, a headline indicated U.S. military and civilians supported the U.S. strikes in Afghanistan in response to the 9/11 attacks. “America did ‘what we had to do,’” the headline said.

Meanwhile, Stars and Stripes journalists based in the Pacific were dispatched along with their colleagues from

other bureaus to cover the invasion of Afghanistan and, in 2003, the invasion of Iraq. Stars and Stripes had a head start in some ways but was caught unprepared in others.

“Not all of our Stripes journalists were accustomed to covering conflict and the [Department of Defense] was kind of scrambling to figure out what their role was, so for instance, that’s when embedding really started for all news outlets not just military,” Struck said.

Journalists from the civilian world were finding their way into the military environment that Stars and Stripes journalists know well. Their organizations—broadcast networks and big-city daily newspapers—could afford to train their employees for combat situations, including exposure to live fire or possible kidnapping.

But Stripes journalists knew their way around military bases and how to work with DOD personnel.

“One of the most amazing things about Stars and Stripes to me was, even though we were independent journalists, we all carried ID cards that would allow us onto any military installation,” Struck said. “So, while we’re walking through the gate trying to find Col. So-and-So or Lt. Col. So-and-So or whomever, our commercial colleagues were having to catch up.”

### ‘Lifted Out of the Sea’

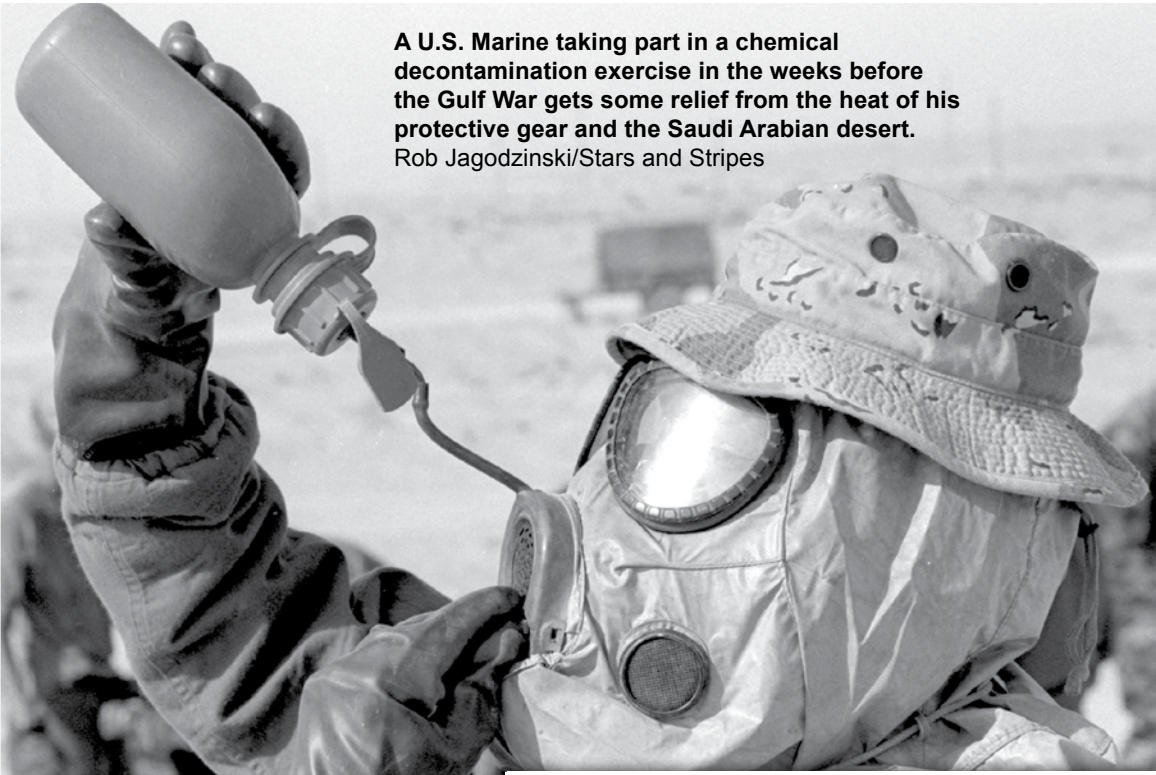
The new millennium only started with 9/11; it continued to present fresh challenges to Stars and Stripes Pacific. Natural disasters would figure prominently in the newspaper’s coverage. Reporters and photographers were dispatched to see firsthand how the U.S. military switched from combat mode to disaster relief.

In December 2004, a magnitude 9.1 earthquake off the island of Sumatra, Indonesia, gave rise to a devastating tsunami, 30 feet high in some places where it came ashore. The series of waves killed about 225,000 people, as many as 200,000 in Indonesia alone.

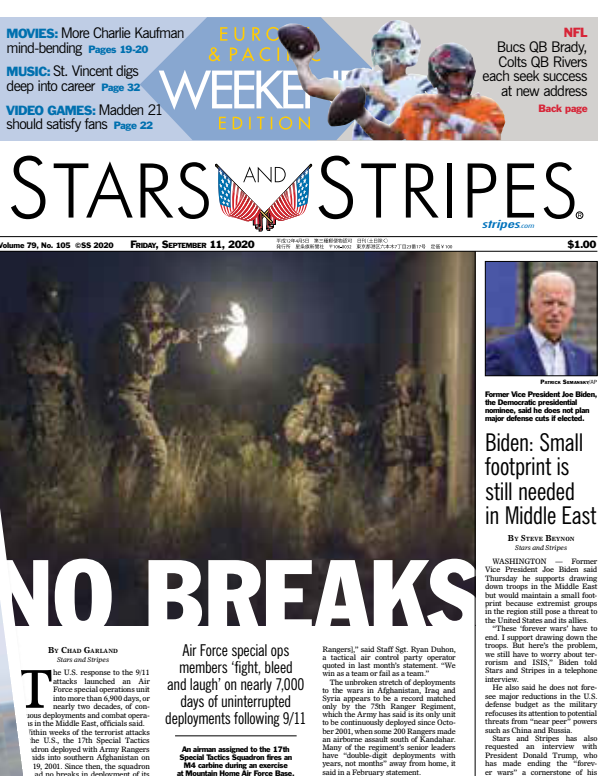
Stars and Stripes Pacific reporters documented the relief effort by U.S. military units stationed on the main islands of Japan and on Okinawa. From Yokota Air Base in western Tokyo, Air Force flight crews logged 2,500 hours and hauled 4 million pounds of humanitarian aid to affected areas in four countries, Stripes’ Vince Little reported in 2005.

Another Stripes journalist, Juliana Gittler, reported from Thailand on the work approximately 15,000 U.S. service members undertook to provide relief as well as rebuild some areas swept away by the tsunami.

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Afghan National Army soldiers drive a Soviet-era tank during an exercise at their base in Kabul. The Afghan army has only one tank battalion, made up entirely of tanks provided by the Soviet Union to the old communist regime on July 2, 2014. Josh Smith/Stars and Stripes











Robson, Sugiyama and Bailey met a family doing its best to clean up its business, a small bar. What struck Sugiyama was how positive they were. Their attitude amid so much destruction touched an emotional chord.

“They were just doing what they had to do,” she said. “The more I think about it, I kind of choke up. That’s when I realized what I was getting into. I just can’t get emotional in front of these people, that’s not what they want to see.”



**Sugiyama** The hardest part of her experience was approaching a woman looking for her missing sister in a temporary morgue in a gymnasium. “I really didn’t want to do it,” she said, “but I knew that was my job, to do that. I forced myself to do that.” The woman didn’t find her sister, but Sugiyama gave her information on other sites where bodies were collected. The woman was grateful for that information, which gave Sugiyama some comfort knowing she’d helped in some way.

“It was a horrible thing that happened, but it was a great experience for me to be able to work with the journalists,” she said. “It gave me a better understanding of what Stars and Stripes is all about.”

Enduring Legacy

The newspaper faced an existential crisis in 2020, when budget cuts and a proposal to eliminate funding cast doubt on its future.

Public outcry, bipartisan support from lawmakers and the dedication of its staff ensured its survival. The episode highlighted the enduring importance of independent military journalism and Stars and Stripes’ vital role in informing service members around the world.

Meanwhile, a once-in-a-century pandemic crept across the world, complicating the U.S. military presence in the Indo-Pacific.

Stars and Stripes reporters rose to the challenge, documenting the military response and tense relations with host countries as COVID-19 claimed hundreds of lives and forced millions into seclusion.

Reporters brought readers an exclusive interview with a 23-year-old soldier at Camp Carroll, South Korea—the first U.S. service member infected with COVID-19 in February 2020.

The following month, they covered the first active-duty service member to die of the disease—a 41-year-old chief petty officer aboard the USS Theodore Roosevelt. The outbreak on the aircraft carrier, which was diverted to Guam, led to the removal of its skipper and the resignation of the Navy secretary.

As the pandemic subsided, Stars and Stripes reflected on lessons learned, exploring changes in relationships with America’s allies, adversaries and host countries, as well as the pandemic’s effects on the U.S. economy and military readiness.



Spc. Angel Ruszkiewicz, 21, a combat camera specialist from Milwaukee, Wis., reads a Stars and Stripes at the passenger terminal on a coalition base in Erbil, Iraq, on Monday, Dec. 23, 2019, before a flight to Syria. Chad Garland/Stars and Stripes



Military members stationed at Yokota Air Base play Magic the Gathering while wearing masks at the bases’s USO, Jan. 14, 2022. Kelly Agee/Stars and Stripes



A sign posted at the commissary on Yokota Air Base in Tokyo reminds shopper of the mandatory mask policy, Jan. 14, 2022. Kelly Agee/Stars and Stripes



Sailors and dependents from Naval Air Facility Atsugi donated thousands of pounds of goods to be delivered to those hit hardest by the massive earthquake and tsunami that devastated northeastern Japan on March 11, 2011. Erik Slavin/Stars and Stripes



**MILITARY**

**Lawmakers urge Esper to restore Stripes funding**

By WYATT OLSON

A group of House lawmakers expressed “strong opposition” to a planned funding cut for Stars and Stripes in a Wednesday letter to Defense Secretary Mark Esper.

“Beyond serving as a reminder of how the journalists at Stars and Stripes provide over 1 million daily readers with unfettered news and perspective free of institutional bias,” and Wednesday’s letter, signed by 10 U.S. representatives, all of whom are Democrats, including Rep. Jason Crow, D-Colo., a former U.S. Army Ranger, Rep. Ruben Gallego, D-Ariz., who served as an infantry Marine, and Rep. Adam Schiff, D-Calif.

Pentagon officials, in a memo sent to Stars and Stripes’ leaders last month, ordered the news organization to stop publishing “in all forms” by Sept. 30, the end of fiscal year 2020. They were also told to submit a plan by Sept. 15 for closing the organization by January.

Esper proposed in his February budget submission for fiscal year 2021 to end about \$15.5 million in funding for Stars and Stripes, telling reporters at the time the savings would fund “higher-priority issues” like purchasing modern weapons.

Wednesday’s letter is the latest expression of support for Stars and Stripes, which operates with partial support from the Defense Department. The rest of its budget comes from advertising and subscriptions.

On Friday, President Donald Trump tweeted that funding for the news organization would not be cut “under my watch.” Days later, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., tweeted “We are pleased that the President has since committed to fully funding Stars and Stripes, though we note that there has been no

for the military community since the Civil War. I’m glad President Trump has committed that his administration will keep funding it.”

Last week, a group of 15 Republican and Democratic senators wrote a letter to Esper, urging him to reverse his decision to zero out Stars and Stripes’ budget. Sen. Lindsey Graham, a Republican and Air Force veteran, sent his own letter to the defense secretary last month, asking that Stars and Stripes continue to receive support.

“We are pleased that the President has since committed to fully funding Stars and Stripes, though we note that there has been no

House lawmakers already have approved two bills that would provide funding for Stars and Stripes in fiscal year 2021. The bills now must be reconciled with the Senate.

House-passed versions of the fiscal year 2021 National Defense Authorization Act and the Department of Defense Appropriations Act each include \$15.5 million for Stars and Stripes. The NDAA sets annual Pentagon policy and authorizes spending priorities, while the appropriations bill funds the department.

The Senate-passed version of the NDAA did not authorize funding for the news organization. The Senate Appropriations Committee has yet to consider its version of the annual appropriations bill and it has not scheduled hearings to draft that legislation.

“The experience of military service brings unique concerns that sometimes only the journalists with Stars and Stripes have the understanding and direct access required to address,” the Wednesday letter said. “To meet the challenges of serving an audience stationed across the globe, including in combat zones, Stars and Stripes maintains thirteen international printing centers across three continents. No matter how far from home a service member may be stationed, they can be assured that they are still within the global reach of Stars and Stripes.”

Others to sign the letter were André D. Carson, D-Ind.; Elaine Luria, D-Va.; Seth Moulton, D-Mass., a Marine Corps veteran; Jimmy Panetta, D-Calif., a Navy veteran; Jamie Raskin, D-Md.; Abigail Spanberger, D-Va.; and Lori Trahan, D-Mass.

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