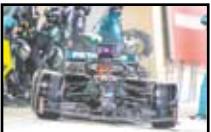


AutoMatters & More

George Russell's extraordinary Mercedes Formula 1 debut.

See page 9

Crossword & Sudoku

Test your brain power with our cortex of fun. Puzzlin' clue of the week: North-of-the-border gas.

See page 11

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National Guard Birthday Dec. 13

SIXTIETH YEAR NO. 33
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2020

ARMY-NAVY GAME SET FOR SATURDAY, DEC. 12



GAME TO BE PLAYED
AT WEST POINT



ESPN College GameDay will be at the Army-Navy Game presented by USAA for the seventh-straight season, but this time on the campus of West Point as the game is set for Saturday, Dec. 12, at noon. The game will be televised by CBS.

WEST POINT, N.Y. - Army Director of Athletics Mike Buddie and Naval Academy Director of Athletics Chet Gladchuk announced that the 121st playing of the Army-Navy Game presented by USAA will be played at West Point, Dec. 12.

The game is being moved from Philadelphia due to attendance limits placed on outdoor events in the state of Pennsylvania that wouldn't allow the entire Corps of Cadets and Brigade of Midshipmen to attend. As the designated home team in 2020, Army West Point will host the 121st iteration at historic Michie Stadium.

"We want to thank the City of Philadelphia, the Eagles and all involved in the planning for their efforts to navigate this historic game in the current COVID-19

climate," said Buddie. "We're excited about this historic opportunity to host Navy and the Brigade inside the gates of West Point for the first time since 1943."

It marks the first time the rivalry game has been played at a home site since World War II when Annapolis hosted the 1942 game and West Point the 1943 game. The two schools also rotated hosting the first four games from 1890-1893.

"The health and welfare of Cadets and Midshipmen is the number one priority," said Lt. Gen. Darryl A. Williams, superintendent of the USMA. "Hosting the Army-Navy Game on West Point will be the safest way for the Cadets and Midshipmen to experience the game."

NAVY RECOMMENDS FIRST WOMAN TO COMMAND AIRCRAFT CARRIER

by Caitlin Doornbos,
Stars and Stripes

The Navy for the first time has recommended a woman for command of a U.S. aircraft carrier, Naval Air Forces spokesman Cmdr. Zachary Harrell said Dec. 9.

Capt. Amy Bauernschmidt, a former Navy helicopter pilot and commander of an amphibious transport dock, is one of six Navy captains recommended for carrier command by the Aviation Major Command Board on Nov. 21. The others are Colin Day,

Gavin Duff, Brent Gaut, David Pollard and Craig Sicola.

The Navy has not yet assigned Bauernschmidt or her colleagues to a carrier, Harrell said. They will be eligible for command in fiscal year 2022.

The board was directed to consider officers' "breadth of experience to include major staff and joint duty assignments" in selecting those they wished to recommend, according to the Nov. 9 Navy order.

The Navy has 11 aircraft carriers, all nuclear powered and



the largest warships afloat, according to Navy.mil. Including their air wings, each carries a crew of about 5,000 and 60-75 aircraft.

Bauernschmidt (shown above,

as CO of USS *San Diego*) in August 2016 became the first female executive officer of an aircraft carrier, USS *Abraham Lincoln*. Most recently, she commanded amphibious transport dock USS *San Diego* from November 2019 until October.

A 1994 Naval Academy graduate, Bauernschmidt was commissioned about two months after the first women ever to serve aboard combat ships received their orders, according to her Navy biography. Congress lifted the ban on women serving

in such roles the year before.

"That law absolutely changed my life," Bauernschmidt told CBS News on Nov. 12, 2018. "We were the first class that graduated knowing and feeling honored with the privilege to be able to go serve along the rest of our comrades in combat."

A native of Milwaukee, Wis., she became a naval aviator in 1996 and spent her early career deployed in the Northern Arabian Gulf with Helicopter Anti-Submarine Squadron Light

45 aboard the destroyer USS John Young, according to her biography.

She later served as an instructor pilot, department head and executive officer of several helicopter squadrons. She has more than 3,000 flight hours.

Bauernschmidt in 2013 also served as senior military adviser to the State Department Office of Global Women's Issues, "enhancing women's peace and security through worldwide initiatives," according to her biography.



In this file photo from Sept. 16, 2015 Gen. Lloyd Austin III, then-commander of the U.S. Central Command, testifies at a Senate Committee on Armed Services hearing. President-elect Joe Biden will nominate now-retired Gen. Austin to be secretary of defense. Stars and Stripes photo by Carlos Bongioanni

NEWS IN BRIEF

House passes \$740 billion defense bill, Senate to vote in coming days ...

The House voted Tuesday to approve a \$740.5 billion defense spending bill as the Senate prepares to vote on the same legislation that President Donald Trump has threatened to veto.

House members passed the 2021 National Defense Authorization Act, which sets funding and policy priorities for the Pentagon, by a 335-78 vote, which is enough support to reach the two-thirds majority needed to override a veto.

"Today, the House sent a strong, bipartisan message to the American people: Our service members and our national security are more important than politics," said Rep. Adam Smith, D-Wash., the chairman of the House Armed Services Committee. "The House has proven we are capable of legislating and reaching compromise that results in good policy outcomes."

The Senate is set to vote on the bill in the coming days. The bill would then go to President Donald Trump for him to sign it into law. Trump has made repeated threats to veto the NDAA after Congress declined to cater to his wishes with the legislation.

Retired CENTCOM general picked by Biden to serve as defense secretary, reports say

by Corey Dickstein,
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON - Retired Army Gen. Lloyd Austin, a former commander for U.S. Central Command, will be nominated to serve as President-elect Joe Biden's defense secretary, according to news reports Dec. 7.

Austin, 67, would become the first Black Pentagon leader if he is confirmed by the Senate. But his nomination would require Congress to grant a rarely issued waiver of the requirement that defense secretaries be at least seven years removed from military service. Austin retired in 2016.

Biden offered Austin the job on Sunday, The Associated Press reported, citing four unnamed sources. Biden told reporters Monday that he expected to make an official announcement about the defense secretary job on Friday.

Austin's name only surfaced as a candidate last week, as former Pentagon policy chief Michèle Flournoy, long-ex-

pected to be Biden's Pentagon pick, faced increased opposition from the Democratic Party's left wing over her ties to the defense industry and hawkish positions on conflicts in Afghanistan and Libya during her time in former President Barack Obama's administration.

As defense secretary, Austin would bring with him more than 40 years of experience in uniform. He worked closely with Biden when the president-elect was vice president and the Obama administration's point person for Iraq, where Austin has extensive experience, including as the U.S. top commander there.

A U.S. Military Academy at West Point, N.Y., graduate in 1975, Austin commanded infantry units from platoons up and led soldiers in combat in Iraq and Afghanistan. As a general, he commanded the 10th Mountain Division, the XVIII Airborne Corps and, in September 2010, Obama entrusted him with overseeing the U.S. pullout of some 50,000 troops from Iraq. Despite recommending against the full withdrawal, according

to a 2016 Washington Post story, Austin led the efforts to leave Iraq by December 2011, and was one of the last American service members to exit that country, at that time.

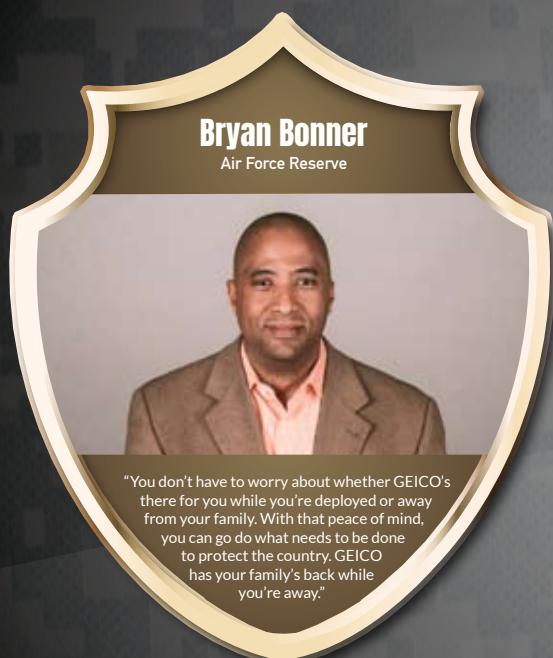
Earlier in Iraq, Austin was honored for valor as a one-star, receiving a Silver Star — the nation's third highest medal for battlefield heroics — for actions while leading 3rd Infantry Division troops in their charge toward Baghdad during the 2003 invasion. At the end of Austin's career, after briefly serving as the Army vice chief of staff in 2012, he led CENTCOM, overseeing all U.S. military forces and operations throughout the Middle East and Afghanistan.

He was at the helm of CENTCOM as the Islamic State group emerged amid civil war in Syria and tore across the eastern portions of that country and into western and northern Iraq in 2014, capturing a mass of land roughly the size of the United Kingdom. He then oversaw the early portions of the U.S. military's role in targeting ISIS, initially with airstrikes, and then

see Austin, page 4

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Airman to receive second-highest military medal for heroism in Afghanistan

by Phillip Walter,
Stars and Stripes

KABUL, Afghanistan - A special tactics airman will receive one of the nation's highest military medals for risking his life to protect more than 150 American and local troops in Afghanistan, the Air Force announced.

Staff Sgt. Alaxey Germanovich, a combat controller with the 26th Special Tactics Squadron, 24th Special Operations Wing, Air Force Special Operations Command, will be presented with the Air Force Cross at a ceremony at Cannon Air Force Base, N.M., on Dec. 10, the wing said Dec. 5 in a statement.

In 2017, Germanovich repeatedly exposed himself to enemy fire while coordinating close airstrikes after a combined operation of Army Special Forces and Afghan commandos in eastern Nangarhar province was ambushed, the statement said.

Aquilino to command Indo-Pacific Com-

Acting Secretary of Defense Christopher C. Miller announced Dec. 3 that the president has nominated Adm. John C. Aquilino for reappointment to the rank of admiral, and assignment as commander, U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, Pearl Harbor. Aquilino is currently serving as commander, Pacific Fleet.



Air Force Staff Sgt. Alaxey Germanovich will be awarded one of the nation's highest medals for gallantry. Air Force photo

helicopter landing zone while directing close air support."

Germanovich's actions are credited with saving the lives of more than 150 American and Afghan troops involved in the operation and for helping destroy nearly a dozen enemy fighting positions during the eight-hour battle. Army Staff Sgt. Mark De Alencar was killed

that day - the first U.S. fatality in Afghanistan in 2017.

Nangarhar province was the

deadliest place in the world for American combat troops in 2017. Many operations in the province involving the U.S. targeted the local Islamic State affiliate, which established a foothold there a couple years prior.

Germanovich, who graduated from Boiling Spring High School in South Carolina in 2010, has previously been awarded the Bronze Star and Purple Heart.

He'll become the 12th special tactics airman to receive the Air Force cross since 9/11, the service said.

The medal is surpassed only by the Medal of Honor and is given to airmen who display extraordinary heroism while fighting enemies of the United States.

Army

- Two men found dead at Fort Bragg identified as USASOC master sergeant and Army veteran
- Autopsy: Fort Bragg soldier found dead in North Carolina was decapitated
- NDAA: Conference cuts new Army tech, pluses up old
- Army Pacific chief nominated for top U.S. Forces Korea post, reports say

Navy

- Citing littoral combat ship failures, Congress pushes the Navy to get FFG(X) right
- Report: Skipper tried to quarantine crew for 28 days on their ship before a weeklong underway
- Growler jet noise loud enough to reach orca pods even 100 feet underwater, new research shows
- Navy pushes ahead with plans to stand up another numbered fleet in the Indo-Pacific
- USS Sioux City returns home after exercises, drug interdictions
- Submarine funding restored in final version of defense bill

Air Force

- In-flight emergency forces B-52 to divert to Fairford during bomber mission to Europe
- Westover Air Reserve Base getting new \$43M hangar to service massive C-5 planes
- Some Air Force bases postponing fitness tests until April as coronavirus spreads
- After months of ignoring her sexual harassment complaints, Misawa command finally transfers airman off base

Marine Corps

- Marine Corps cancels CFT for calendar year over COVID concerns
- First F-35C squadron ready to deploy on carriers
- Marines training for harsh winter warfare in Norway also have to deal with different military terms'
- Tank Marines get the chance to leave the Corps early as units shut down
- Marines conclude cold-weather exercise in Norway

Space Force

- Space Force won't be forced to use Navy ranks, lawmakers decide



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Ultra-low cost simulation program augments pilot training

by David Vergun
DOD News

A simulation program that can be installed on ordinary computers and laptops - the Joint Immersive Training System, or JTS - is currently being used to support pilot training.

Traditionally, pilot flight instruction involves a combination of simulators and actual flying, said Air Force Lt. Col. Eric Frahm, a program manager for the Defense Innovation Unit.

However, a shortage of pilots throughout the Defense Department has limited the number of flight instructors who can give one-on-one training, he said. Also, it is cost prohibitive to build more simulators because each one costs about as much as an actual aircraft.

While JTS isn't meant to re-

place simulators or real-time flight training, it promises to augment existing systems and accelerate the pace of training, significantly reducing the cost to train new pilots, Frahm said.

The software powering JTS uses virtual reality, artificial intelligence and machine learning and commercial items, he said. Controls similar to joysticks are plugged into the system using ordinary USB connections.

Students can take the laptops home and train on them at their own pace or use them at work. A variant of JTS that is more sophisticated features a specialized gaming chair and realistic flight controls that mimic a cockpit, he said.

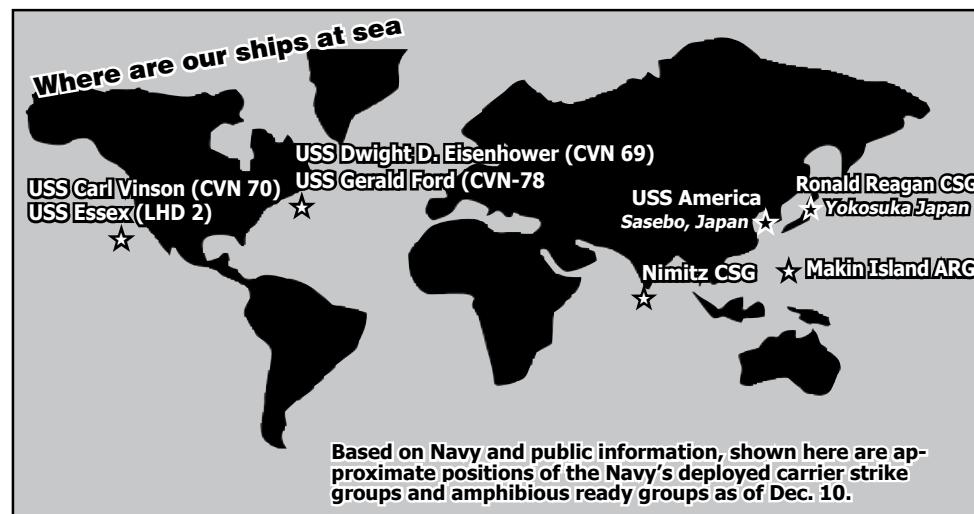
The AI-powered software enables students to practice flying on their own without an instruc-

tor present. However, JTS can also be used with an instructor who is virtually present, and that instructor could monitor a number of students simultaneously, potentially saving flight instructor man-hours.

"What we're trying to do is change the instruction from a teacher-centered model to more of a learner-centered training model," he said.

DIU aided the Air Force's effort to produce JTS by partnering with industry, he said. "We partnered with four different companies. Each brought a component of the broader technology that we needed to create this device and the surrounding ecosystem that will support it."

Continue reading this story at <https://www.defense.gov/Explore/News/Article/>.



Austin

continued from page 2
as U.S. troops returned to Iraq to train and advise Iraqi forces to fight the new terrorist threat. He also oversaw early American attempts to train Syrian rebels to fight ISIS.

Austin has been retired from the military for less than five years, giving him an extra hurdle to overcome for confirmation as defense secretary.

Like Jim Mattis, President Donald Trump's first defense secretary, Austin would need Congress to approve a waiver for him to serve as the Defense Department's top civilian, because law requires retired officers wait seven years before assuming top civilian Pentagon jobs.

That 1947 law was intended

to ensure civilian control of the military. It has been granted only twice, with Mattis and George Marshall, a former five-star Army general who received one in 1950 to serve as defense secretary for former President Harry Truman during the Korean War.

Mattis, who like Austin retired from the military after leading CENTCOM, was easily granted the waiver and confirmed 98-1 by the Senate just hours after Trump was sworn into office Jan. 20, 2017.

It is not clear whether such a waiver would be as easily granted for Austin, as some members of Congress signaled during Mattis' confirmation process they were unlikely to repeat that action. Among them, Sen. Jack Reed of Rhode Island, the ranking Democrat

on the Senate Armed Services Committee, who said such a waiver should only be granted "once in a generation" and vowed not to support another.

Rep. Elissa Slotkin, D-Mich., a former CIA analyst and top Pentagon official under Obama, took to Twitter on Tuesday and wrote while she has "deep respect" for Austin, having another retired general in a civilian role "just feels off."

"The job of secretary of defense is purpose-built to ensure civilian oversight of the military," she wrote. "That is why it requires a waiver from the House and Senate to put a recently retired military officer in the job."

Rep. Don Bacon, R-Neb., a retired Air Force brigadier general, said he plans to support a waiver for Austin to serve as the next Pentagon leader.

"It does not bother me to have a retired general be the secretary of defense. He is retired, so he's now a civilian. It's still civilian control of the military... I think Gen. Austin will bring 41 years of experience into the Pentagon. I think that's very good," Bacon said Tuesday on C-SPAN.

Refer to <https://www.stripes.com/news/us> for this and other stories.

Total Navy Battle Force: 296 Ships underway

Deployed ships underway: 49

Non-deployed ships underway: 4

Total ships underway: 53

Ships Deployed by Fleet

Fleet Forces:	0	3rd Fleet:	1
4th Fleet:	6	5th Fleet:	20
6th Fleet:	16	7th Fleet:	57
Total:			100

Veterans News

Minority vets to receive priority for coronavirus vaccine

by Nikki Wentling,
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON - Black, Hispanic and Native American veterans will be given priority for receiving coronavirus vaccines once they become available, according to a document published Dec. 8 by the VA.

Race and ethnicity, as well as veterans' ages and existing health conditions, will be taken into consideration by the VA when determining who should be vaccinated first. According to VA data, Black, Hispanic and Native American vets are disproportionately affected by the virus, reflecting trends across the broader population.

Black veterans account for 16 percent of coronavirus cases across the VA system and 22

percent of deaths, despite comprising only 12 percent of the overall population of vets in the U.S. About 77 percent of the overall veteran population is white, according to VA data. White vets account for 60 percent of coronavirus cases and 61 percent of deaths.

"We're ... considering the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on racial and ethnicity minority groups as we plan for how to offer COVID-19 vaccines to veterans," the VA wrote in the document Tuesday.

Britain became the first nation to start a mass vaccination campaign to combat the coronavirus. The country approved a Pfizer vaccine, which is under consideration by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. The

FDA could approve the vaccine as soon as this weekend.

As soon as the FDA authorizes a vaccine, the VA will receive a limited amount, the department said. The agency will first make the vaccines available to its front-line health care staff. The VA operates the largest health care system in the country, with more than 350,000 health care workers.

The agency did not specify how many of them would be first in line to be vaccinated.

Vaccines will also go to veterans based on their risk of spreading the virus or becoming severely ill from it. In addition to Black, Hispanic and Native American veterans, those at higher risk include elderly veterans, veterans living in group living facilities or those with health problems, such as cancer, diabetes or heart disease.

As more vaccines become available, the department will administer them to all VA patients who want one, the department said. About 9 million veterans are enrolled in VA health care.

The VA said the vaccine will be free to VA patients and will not require a copayment. The vaccine will be available only at certain VA medical centers to start, and not administered at the department's community-based outpatient clinics, the document states.

Social Security Matters: Claiming at 62

by Russell Gloor

Dear Rusty: I'm looking for information about retiring and starting my Social Security very soon at age 62. I'm not sure if I want to do it because I'm not sure if I can. Can you help me figure this out? Signed: Hesitant

Dear Hesitant: I know it can be daunting trying to figure out whether and when to claim your Social Security benefits. I'll give you some of the basics:

First, you should know that if you claim your benefits at age 62, your benefit amount will be considerably reduced from what it would be if you waited longer to claim. At 62, your benefit will be about 28 percent less than it would be at your full retirement age which, for you is 66 years and 8 months. Your benefit will continue to grow by a fraction of a percentage point each month you wait, until it reaches 100 percent at your FRA. You can choose to delay even longer than your FRA, and your benefit will continue to grow up to age 70 when you reach your maximum benefit amount. For you, that maximum at age 70 would be about 28 percent more than you would get at your FRA and about 75 percent more than you would get at age 62. There is a considerable financial advantage to waiting to claim.

If you continue working, and you claim at age 62 (or at any age before your FRA), you'll be subject to Social Security's "earnings test," which limits how much you can earn before they take back some of your benefits. Starting at age 62 and continuing until the year you attain FRA, there will be an annual limit to your earnings (the 2021 limit is \$18,960) and, if you exceed that, SS will take back benefits equal to \$1 for every \$2 you are over the limit. That could mean you will go some number of months without receiving benefits until Social Security recovers what you owe because you exceeded the earnings

limit. Of course, if you fully retire from work now that is not a concern, but it may influence a future decision to return to work. Social Security's earnings limit no longer applies after you reach your full retirement age.

Your marital status also comes into play. If you are married, and your benefit as a spouse will be more than your personal benefit will be, then there are some special considerations which might affect your claiming decision. Generally, if your spousal benefit will be more than your own benefit (from your lifetime work record), and your husband isn't yet collecting benefits, it's often wise to claim your own earlier and take the larger spouse benefit later. Of course, if you're not married you need only be concerned about your personal benefit from your own lifetime earnings record and waiting for a larger life-long benefit, if possible, is often the most prudent choice.

Those are the basic things you should consider when trying to decide when to claim your benefits. But your need for the money now, plus your health and life expectancy are also key to your decision. If you need the money earlier to make ends meet, and you won't be severely affected by the earnings limit, then claiming early can be your most prudent choice. Or, if you are not enjoying good health and have reason to believe that you won't live at least until today's average age for a woman (about 87), then that also suggests claiming early. But, if you are working and don't really need the money, and you are in good health and expect to live to a ripe old age, then waiting longer to claim a higher benefit is usually a better strategy.

The reality is that everyone's personal situation is different and there is no single answer to the question of when to claim Social Security. I hope the above gives you at least a starting point for your decision.

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Navy adds new functionality to safety mishap reporting system

by Stephanie Slater,
Naval Safety Center

The Navy will add a new event supervisor reporting functionality to its safety mishap reporting system with the release of Risk Management Information (RMI) Streamlined Incident Reporting Two (SIR-2) on Dec. 10.

A new event supervisor reporting functionality will be added to the safety mishap reporting system with the release of Risk Management Information (RMI) Streamlined Incident Reporting Two (SIR-2) on Dec. 10.

The event supervisor reporting role allows users to enter an event as a supervisor report, which is an abbreviated version of the investigation module found in SIR. Safety personnel then review these reports for further investigation and completion of mishap reporting in SIR.

In preparation for this second launch, the Naval Safety Center now provides virtual RMI user administration and SIR familiarization training through Dec. 17. All safety professionals, safety

specialists and collateral duty safety professionals are strongly encouraged to attend.

The interactive sessions are four hours in length and scheduled across multiple time zones.



Topics include SIR account access, accounts management, entering mishaps and recommendations, message approval process, memorandum of final evaluation and the newly added supervisors' report module. NAVSAFECEN will record these sessions and place one in the RMI resource section of its website once all sessions finish.

The Navy and Marine Corps began using RMI SIR to report safety events on Aug. 31. RMI SIR provides a single, easy to use point of data entry for

safety professionals. Unlike older legacy systems such as the Web-Enabled Safety System, users can quickly and easily input data, which reduces the chance for error.

Mishap data entered into RMI provides relevant information for identifying and managing risk, enabling NAVSAFECEN to foster a safety culture of excellence that encourages risk management, problem-solving and proactive thinking. By identifying leading indicators of mishaps and hazards to mitigate risk, and performing objective analysis of this data, NAVSAFECEN can deliver safety lessons learned in support of its mandate to preserve readiness and save lives.

Below is the online training session schedule follows below:

Dec. 15, 3 p.m. to 7 p.m.
Dec. 16, 3 p.m. to 7 p.m.
Dec. 17, 4-8 a.m.

Access training through Adobe Connect using the following URL: http://navsafeetc.adobe-connect.com/RMI_Training. Log in as a guest.

INTERPERSONAL EDGE: Aptitude beats attitude when it comes to self-improvement

by Dr. Daneen Skube,

Tribune Content Agency

Q: I start Monday wanting to be patient, gracious, and effective with people and end each day wanting to smack co-workers. How do you train your executive coaching and corporate clients to translate good intentions into effective actions?

A: Good intentions are indeed the cobblestones on the road to hell. What creates change isn't attitude but aptitude. Advanced interpersonal skills are the technology of persuasion, success, and results. No positive attitude in the world can fix a problem without the aptitude and tools.

We've been told that if you smile the world will smile with you but this is a lie. If you smile, use blaming words, and alienate the people you work with no one will be smiling or helping you.

We've also heard that a positive attitude is the only armor we need in a cruel, and uncaring world. The truth is the world will crush most positive attitudes quickly if the individual is lacking in people skills.

People skills are not rocket science. If you graduated from high school, you have the capacity to learn interpersonal skills. If you're motivated to find a good teacher then tools like advanced paraphrasing, using "I" language,

negotiation skills, or conflict resolution skills can be yours.

Evaluate your potential teacher carefully. Engaging in decades of their own growth, a solid academic background in psychology, humility, intense curiosity, seeing you as a fellow traveler not a "patient," and possessing minimal ego are all important. A history of overcoming intense adversities yet still thriving is also an asset as it proves what they are doing works.

People skills are challenging to learn from books alone. When I wrote my book, "Interpersonal Edge," I realized if someone only reads my book the application of the tools will not be optimal. My clients, ironically, loved reading it. When I asked why they told me that after practicing these tools for years it was helpful to see my tools written down.

We have to use interpersonal skills live so it's helpful to find an actual person where you can receive coaching and practice in real time either in person or remotely. A good teacher should be able to improve your strategies, suggest narratives, and point out what to avoid and what to emphasize. Anyone that just asks you what you think and only paraphrases you will not help much.

To get good help you have to ask yourself if you are willing to be uncomfortable, acknowledge where you can improve, and be receptive

that you are worth having an advocate. In thirty years I've found a key difference between people whose lives have transformed in working with me and people I couldn't help was whether my client thought he or she was worth helping.

An example of the difference between attitude and aptitude is when I started writing my column for the Seattle Times. They just had a famous effectiveness expert come to do training. This "expert" told them to have an attitude of good listening...and then gave them zero training in how. When I proposed launching a column to teach skills the business editor was delighted to add my column. I found out employees at the Seattle Times often cut out my advice and put it on other people's desks.

Start your New Year's resolutions early by deciding 2021 will be the year you ditch attitude and focus on developing a broad toolkit of aptitude in graciously, effectively and persuasively managing yourself and others. Aptitude is a gift that will keep giving whereas attitude will fade before lunch.

Daneen Skube is an executive coach, trainer, therapist and speaker. She's the author of "Interpersonal Edge: Breakthrough Tools for Talking to Anyone, Anywhere, About Anything." Contact her at www.interpersonaledge.com.

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3RD MARINE AIRCRAFT WING ADVANCES AIR SUPERIORITY WITH F-35C

by 1st Lt. Charles Allen

MCAS MIRAMAR - In a time characterized by rapidly evolving tactics and modernized equipment, the Marine Corps has taken the next step in maintaining air superiority as Marine Fighter Attack Squadron (VMFA) 314 declares their initial operational capability (IOC) for the F-35C Lightning II.

Initial operational capability declaration marks a significant accomplishment for 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing (MAW), enabling VMFA-314 to deploy the F-35C onto aircraft carriers where they will be able to support combat operations anywhere in the world.

"The F-35 is an expeditionary platform that extends the reach of our Marines and machines, and increases our ability to support joint and allied partners at a moment's notice," said Maj. Gen. Christopher Mahoney, 3rd MAW commanding general. "By effectively employing the F-35, MAGTF [Marine Air-Ground Task Force] commanders have the potential to dominate our adversaries in a joint battlespace, in the air and out at sea."

Having the most advanced stealth fighter jets the world has ever seen is only the beginning. A strategic and tactical understanding of how to operate and properly maintain the F-35 and its advanced capabilities is essential to its employment in an increasingly non-permissive maritime domain.

To receive this qualification, squadrons must meet the Headquarters Marine Corps standards, which define the minimum number of trained Marines, mission ready aircraft and trained pilots needed in order for a squadron to become IOC complete.

"Our maintenance department was critical to the success of IOC. In addition to accepting and inspecting the multiple aircraft that arrived throughout the year, the Marines maintained a

The F-35's ability to combine



Marine Fighter Attack Squadron (VMFA) 314 declares their initial operational capability for the F-35C Lightning II, having met the standards set forth by Headquarters Marine Corps. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Juan Anaya

high level of aircraft readiness," said Lt. Col. Duncan French, VMFA-314 executive officer. "Those mission capable aircraft allowed the pilots to train in the appropriate missions required of IOC, as well as contributed towards the readiness metrics of IOC."

"VMFA-314's declaration of IOC is a significant milestone not only for 3rd MAW but also the Marine Corps," said French. "VMFA-314 is the first F-35C squadron in the Marine Corps. The F-35C's unique capabilities, compared to the F-35B and legacy aircraft, provide the Marine Corps with a complementary in-

see F-35C, next page

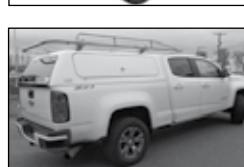
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Lance Cpl. Dominic McCarron, an MV-22 Osprey crew chief with Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 164 (Reinforced), power washes the wing of an MV-22 during corrosion control maintenance aboard Makin Island amphibious assault ship. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Mackenzie Binion



TWENTYNINE PALMS, CALIF.
Nov. 19, 2020

Marines utilize M50 gas masks during a chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear defense training exercise at the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Therese Edwards

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Winners of artificial intelligence challenge announced

by Kara McDermott

Naval Information Warfare Systems Command (NAWWAR) announced the winners of its second annual prize challenge in the Artificial Intelligence Applications to Autonomous Cybersecurity Challenge (AI ATAC) series Dec. 7.

The winner of the challenge and the \$500,000 prize was FireEye. Its FireEye Network Security with SmartVision had the best performance based on

criteria focused on artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) technologies that detect adversarial campaigns by monitoring network-observable behaviors or by analysis of data collected across an enterprise.

Managed by Program Executive Office (PEO) for Command, Control, Communications, Computers and Intelligence (C4I) and Space System's Cyber Security Program Office (PMW 130), AI ATAC explored adversarial

campaign detection using state-of-the-art AI and ML at the network layer. The challenge called for white papers describing network-based security technologies and the corresponding tool for evaluation.

"We are constantly looking for innovative ways to reduce barriers to delivering warfighting capability," said Rear Adm. Kurt

Range, focused on how much of an adversarial campaign, defined as a sequence of events toward an exploitative goal, the challenge participant's technologies could accurately uncover.

Scoring was based on the estimated cost to an enterprise while using this technology for a given period. The score integrated how much of each campaign was

“**We're constantly looking for innovative ways to reduce barriers to delivering warfighting capability. Prize challenges allows us to bring new folks to the table to solve tough technical challenges with a fresh perspective.**”

Rear Adm. Kurt Rothenhaus

Brendan Walsh, VMFA-314 commanding officer. "The successful transition of the Black Knights to the F-35C culminating in this IOC declaration is a testament to the squadron's distinguished legacy of pioneering new aircraft."

The capability to employ the F-35 alongside 3rd MAW's other capabilities further enables support of fleet Marines and joint and allied partners preserves 3rd MAW's ability to dominate the battlespace for the MAGTF and joint commanders.

3rd MAW continues to "Fix, Fly, and Fight" as the Marine Corps' largest aircraft wing and remains combat-ready, deployable on short notice, and lethal when called into action.

Evaluation, using ORNL's Cybersecurity Operations Research

detected, the time to detect, the number of true and false alerts into a simulation of attack costs, labor costs and resource costs. The winning submission was the one with the lowest computed total cost.

"I continue to be amazed at both the high quality and quantity of entries into this challenge series," said John T. Armantrout, PMW 130 program manager. "Our industry partners are coming to the table with some breakthrough capabilities, and we are gaining great insight on the latest tools available. Congratulations

to FireEye for taking home the prize in this challenge – their entry hit it out of the park.

"I'd also like to recognize the fantastic work by my colleague Mike Karlstrom as the lead for these challenges; it is no small task to complete one of these challenges."

This was the second AI ATAC prize challenge conducted by NAWWAR enterprise. The first challenge launched in July 2019 and announced the winners in March 2020. FireEye also came

out on top for that challenge, which explored the capability for endpoint security products to incorporate AI and ML models to detect and defeat indicators of compromise from various advanced malware strains.

While the winner was the same for both challenges, sponsoring AI ATAC allowed the command to gather important insight and participation from various other nontraditional defense vendors, teams and individuals.

DoD: COVID-19 vaccine distribution plan

Department of Defense announced Dec. 9 its deliberate and phased plan to distribute and administer initial and subsequent allocations of the COVID-19 vaccine.

DOD plans to administer its initial allocation of 43,875 doses to CONUS and OCONUS populations of DoD uniformed service members, both active and Selected Reserve components.

The two key considerations that inform the Department's plan are: 1) who will receive the vaccine; and 2) where the DOD can most effectively receive and administer the vaccine.

Distribution will be conducted

in phases. Due to limited availability of initial vaccine doses, the first phase will distribute and administer vaccines at select locations. Initial distribution sites were selected by the DOD's COVID Task Force from sites recommended by the military services and Coast Guard, to best support criteria.

Initial vaccination sites in the continental United States include Naval Medical Center San Diego and Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton.

The Meat & Potatoes of Life



by
Lisa
Smith
Molinari

"My lower back started hurting again," I told my new primary care doctor at the base clinic, who appeared to be about twelve years old. My last PCM was also female, but a little closer to my age. The one before that was a nurse practitioner, and the three before that were middle-aged men.

Each time the Navy assigns me a new PCM, which happens frequently, I have to explain myself all over again. Once, my PCM changed a week before my pap smear appointment, and I didn't know it until I was sitting in the examining room in a paper gown. He walked in, told me to put my feet in the stirrups and to "scooch down to the end of the table."

Military dependents get used to these cringe-worthy moments in our healthcare. Due to our mobile lifestyles, we become accustomed to changing everything from hair stylists to churches to pizza joints to schools to dentists to mechanics. Why would our experience with medical doctors be any different?

"My back started hurting a few years ago," I explained to the young PCM I'd been assigned, "and Dr... what was her name? She sent me for physical therapy. It worked. Well, until now."

The rack or the rocking chair

After giving me a blank stare which seemed to say, "Cry me a river," my new PCM sent me for a fresh x-ray.

"Mild to moderate degenerative arthritis," she told me, but all I heard was, "Go find a rocking chair and some tapioca pudding, because you're officially ancient." I was referred for another round of physical therapy sessions.

Although I knew the PT would help to alleviate my back pain, memories of my last round of physical therapy convinced me that it could wait until after the holidays.

"Now, pull your right knee up to your left ear," my previous physical therapist had told me in all seriousness three years ago. I had to look out the window to see if any pigs were flying by.

I had envisioned myself being gently guided through therapeutic motions intended to heal my stiffened spine, but no one bothered to tell me that I would have to break a sweat, not to mention turn myself into a human pretzel.

Every PT session followed the same general routine: Before I had the chance to get into a good People Magazine article in the waiting area, I was greeted by one of the therapists and brought into the cheerful PT suite with its colorful work out equipment, entertaining background music, happy houseplants, and padded tables.

Although I would have preferred to nod off on a padded table while enjoying the music, I was always

asked to warm up on a treadmill, followed by rolling my under-stretched thighs repeatedly over a foam cylinder on the floor. Piece of cake, or so I thought. Who knew that the harmless limbering exercise would elicit visions of being strapped to "the rack" by Medieval King Longshanks?

I was then allowed to lounge on one of the padded tables, which would have been lovely, if it were not for the dog leash I had used to pull my extremities into positions that made me look like a Cirque du Soleil reject covered in an unlady-like sheen of sweat.

While the therapist cleaned the table, I had to endure a final mélange of strengthening exercises. Isometric lunges, step ups, wall squats and something affectionately referred to as "monster walks" — pacing back and forth across the room in front of everyone, legs splayed out in a semi-squat with a giant rubber band around my thighs.

When my ordeal was over, I would grab my belongings from the patient cubbies, and bid my assigned therapist adieu, promising to do my homework. I never committed the therapists' names to memory and often wondered if they were all descendants of Emperor Caligula.

Despite the painful memories of my last PT sessions, I am fully confident that my next physical therapist will teach me to touch my knee to my ear again, and that my back will feel better for it.

No need to buy that rocking chair just yet.

AutoMatters™ & More



by Jan Wagner

In a season impaired by the global, deadly coronavirus pandemic, George Russell's Mercedes F1 debut will surely be remembered as one of the best drives in Formula 1's storied history, in what has surprisingly become one of its most memorable seasons ever.

Due to COVID-19, several F1 races were cancelled and replaced — sometimes at tracks that were unfamiliar to drivers and uniquely challenging: Haas F1's Romain Grosjean miraculously escaped from a horrific, fiery crash through a barricade at high speed that tore his car in half; and there were several last-minute driver and crew member replacements, due to positive COVID-19 tests. Only days before the Sakhir Grand Prix, 2020 F1 Champion Lewis Hamilton suffered that fate, ending his 265-race streak of successive F1 Grand Prix starts.

At 2 a.m. on Tuesday, Mercedes F1's team boss Toto Wolff gave British driver George Russell 'the call,' inviting him to drive Lewis' Mercedes. In recent years, Russell had won the GP3 Championship (2017) and the FIA Formula 2 Championship (2018), but in two years as a Williams F1 driver George has languished out of the points due to an uncompetitive car. However, thanks to his exceptional driving skill, he has been wringing the best from that car, outqualifying his Williams teammate in every race.

At Mercedes, Russell would have to quickly learn how to drive a very different, championship-winning car,

George Russell's extraordinary Mercedes Formula 1 debut

with barely any track time. Additionally, the Mercedes has minimal space in the cockpit, designed to just barely accommodate the physical size of its assigned driver. Russell is four inches taller than Hamilton and wears size 11 shoes. Since there would be insufficient time to change the car, Russell would somehow need to squeeze into it as is, uncomfortably wearing shoes a size too small.

Using his remarkable driving skill and Mercedes' expert guidance, Russell got up to speed quickly. In Saturday qualifying, he was only 0.026 of a second behind Bottas, who has driven the Mercedes F1 car all season long — a huge competitive advantage over Russell.

Despite still being somewhat unfamiliar with the Mercedes (during the race he called on the radio for reminders about settings) and not fitting into it well (he hit his knees and scraped his knuckles), George's driving was truly masterful from start to finish. In a race series where near-perfect starting positions are difficult to successfully accomplish by even the most experienced drivers, Russell — who began the race in the second position, had a brilliant, flawless start off-the-line. He passed teammate Bottas by the first turn and quickly pulled out a significant lead, as Bottas struggled. Two of Russell's other likely strong competitors — Ferrari's Charles Leclerc and Red Bull's Max Verstappen — crashed out of the race in the first lap.

This much is certain: it's no longer if George Russell will become a Mercedes F1 driver, but when.

To see photos, visit www.drivetribe.com, click on the magnifying glass, select "POSTS" and enter "AutoMatters & More #670" in their search bar. Send your comments to AutoMatters@gmail.com. Copyright © 2020 by Jan Wagner — AutoMatters & More #670

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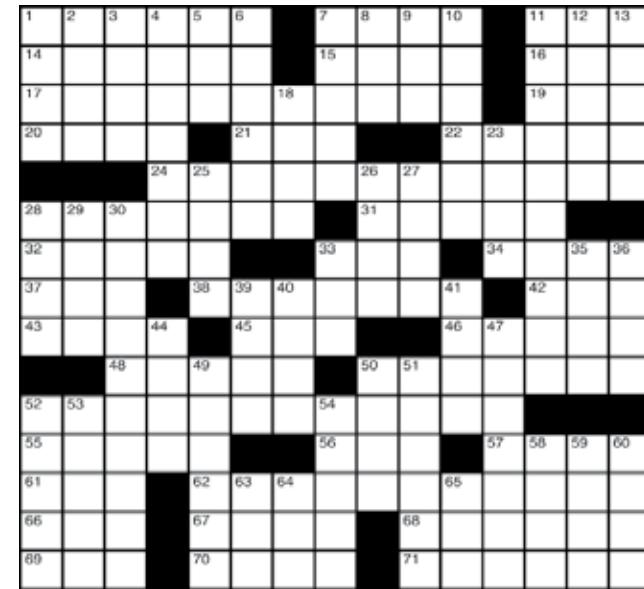
Crossword Puzzle

Across

- 1 Mid-size Nissan
- 7 Ammo sold in rolls
- 11 By way of
- 14 Like many arcade games
- 15 Helter-skelter
- 16 Mantra syllables
- 17 What Dr. Frankenstein kept at his bar?
- 19 Fiddle player of rhyme
- 20 North-of-the-border gas
- 21 Zany trio member
- 22 "See if __"
- 24 Sass from a therapist?
- 28 "SNL" castmate of Gilda and Jane
- 31 It "hath charms to soothe a savage breast"
- 32 Oak fruit
- 33 Marine mammal group
- 34 Bed foundation?
- 37 Specimen for 23-Down
- 38 Uncle Buck, perhaps?
- 42 Broadcasting pioneer
- 43 Religious offshoot
- 45 Meddle
- 46 City near the Golden Spike
- 48 Veronica of "Hill Street Blues"
- 50 Spurred on
- 52 Dracula's haul in the poker game?
- 55 Orchestras tune to them
- 56 One of Venus de Milo's two that are conspicuous for their absence
- 57 Drink brand with a lizard logo
- 61 Leave in ruins
- 62 Big cat's belly?
- 66 Take advantage of
- 67 Parrot
- 68 Tater Tots maker
- 69 Sniggler's quarry
- 70 It may be cracked open
- 71 Sweat inducer

Down

- 1 Highest point
- 2 Restrooms for blokes
- 3 Metal containers
- 4 To such an extent
- 5 Bon __
- 6 So-called missing links
- 7 Checked out before a heist
- 8 GP's gp.
- 9 D.C. figure
- 10 Knitter's supply
- 11 They help one speak one's mind
- 12 Japanese porcelain
- 13 __ in the right direction
- 18 Scoundrel
- 23 Forensic TV episodes
- 25 Melon feature
- 26 Reassurance after a fall
- 27 A4 automaker
- 28 Youths
- 29 Teen malady
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- 35 Cold drink brand
- 36 Come down
- 39 Letters near zero
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- 44 Scotch roll
- 47 Hangman player, e.g.
- 49 Took for a ride
- 50 First razor with a pivoting head
- 51 Force (through)
- 52 Popularity
- 53 Treat badly
- 54 Flavor
- 58 Andy's catfishing partner
- 59 Beefcake features
- 60 Flight deck data, briefly
- 63 Prefix with conscious
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- 65 R&B group __ Hill



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Operation Warp Speed leaders say 20M COVID-19 vaccines may be available this month

by Terri Moon Cronk

Health and Human Services Secretary Alex M. Azar II said that key officials with Operation Warp Speed report that 20 million doses of the COVID-19 vaccine could be distributed this month.

Azar was joined for a media briefing by Army Gen. Gustave F. Perna, chief operating officer of OWS, and Dr. Moncef Slaoui, chief advisor to OWS.

"We are planning to be ready when [an emergency-use authorization by the Food and Drug Administration] is approved; and when the EUA decision comes [through], distribution to the American people becomes immediate within 24 hours. That's our goal. That's what we're striving for," Perna said.

According to published reports, the drug maker Moderna announced encouraging results from a study of its COVID-19 vaccine on Nov. 30, noting that complete data from the large-scale study showed its COVID-19 vaccine to be 94.1% effective. The drug manufacturer said it has applied to the FDA to authorize the vaccine for emergency use, while two other companies also have filed emergency-use authorization applications with the FDA.

"On top of that, more OWS-supported candidates are well on their way in that final phase of clinical trials," Azar said. "[The] FDA has scheduled a meeting of its vaccine advisory committee

ASYMCA brings holiday cheer to military children

On Dec. 9 the Armed Services YMCA San Diego provided toys to 1,000 military children to brighten their holiday. The drive-through event at the Murphy Canyon Chapel was modified to follow safe COVID-19 protocol.

"Many of our military families struggle this time of year" Tim Ney, Executive Director of the San Diego Armed Services YMCA, "We are extremely grateful that we can provide support to our military families during this holiday season."

About Operation Holiday Joy

The Armed Services YMCA's 31st Annual Operation Holiday Joy Program supports military families during the holiday season. This event provides two toys per child for 1,000 military children with an emphasis on serving the junior enlisted population. A special thank you for the generous support of Cox Communications, Northrop Grumman, Morgan Stanley, OMBAC, Toyota, GEICO Military, USAA, Veterans United, A-1 Storage, Jerome's Furniture, Toys for Tots and more.

to review the Moderna vaccine on December 17 following their meeting on the Pfizer vaccine on December 10. We also learned this morning that the United Kingdom has granted authorization to the Pfizer vaccine," he added.

If all goes well, the secretary said, OWS can make its first shipments of the vaccine to states this month.

"Of course, we're all eager to have enough supply to vaccinate every American who wants it. And because of Operation Warp Speed, we expect to be at that point in the spring," Azar said.

Having substantial quantities of a safe and effective vaccine that's been authorized by FDA before the end of the year is a remarkable achievement, the secretary said, adding that the vaccine will start saving lives very soon. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's advisory committee on immunization practices has issued recommendations to OWS leadership on how vaccines can be effectively and equitably distributed.

These recommendations will now be used by states to develop the best prioritization system for their residents, Azar said.

"As we approach the vaccine rollout, we're also continuing to expand access to treatments for COVID-19," he said, adding that, as of this week, OWS has distributed more than 157,000 patient courses of two authorized antibody products across the United States and allocated a total of 205,000 courses for delivery to states.

OWS wants to encourage all



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Deputy Director for Infectious Diseases Dr. Jay Butler, right, touches elbows with Dr. Moncef Slaoui, Operation Warp Speed chief advisor, as Army Gen. Gustave F. Perna, chief operating officer of OWS, looks on during their visit to Atlanta, Nov. 12, 2020. Photo by Lauren Bishop, CDC.

Americans to spread the word about the availability of COVID-19 treatments, Azar said. "Vaccines will only bring this pandemic to an end if enough Americans choose to take these vaccines.

We now have highly promising efficacy data that I believe many Americans are encouraged by and excited about."

Azar also pleaded with those who have recovered from COVID-19 within the last three months to donate plasma.

"We need you to donate plasma," he said, noting that more than a quarter-million courses of convalescent plasma have been used on Americans to help prevent severe consequences from the deadly virus. He encouraged potential plasma donors to contact

their local American Red Cross or blood bank or go to coronavirus.gov for more information.

Slaoui emphasized that it's important for all Americans who get the Moderna or the Pfizer vaccine to come back three or four weeks after their initial vaccine to get their second dose in order to complete the immunization schedule.

Fortunately, he added, the investments OWS has made in scaling up allows OWS to feel confident that it will be able to distribute 20 million vaccines in December, followed by 60 million doses in January, and 100 million doses by February.

"So between mid-December and the end of February, we will have potentially immunized 100 million people, which is really

more or less the size of the significant at-risk population," comprising the elderly, health care workers and firstline workers, Slaoui said.

Perna said OWS has provided 64 jurisdictions—which comprises 50 states, eight territories and six mega cities--plus five federal agencies -- with their allocations of the vaccines that are going to be available this month.

Azar encouraged Americans to talk to their health care providers and visit the CDC website to learn more about the vaccines being developed and the processes they've gone through.

"These vaccine products will

Research study: Bacteria treatment improves children's eczema

Children with a skin disease called eczema benefited from an experimental treatment with live bacteria.

The treatment improved skin symptoms in children as young as three years old.

Eczema can cause dry, itchy skin and rashes. Studies have shown that germs on the skin, like bacteria, may play a role in the condition. People with eczema often have a different balance of bacteria than those with healthy skin.

Researchers tested live bacteria as a treatment for eczema. They used bacteria found naturally on the skin called Roseomonas mucosa.

Twenty children were enrolled in the study. Their ages ranged from three to 16 years. A solution with the live bacteria was sprayed onto their skin where they had a patch of eczema. It was applied twice weekly for three months.

Then, every other day for another month.

Almost all of the children showed more than 50% improvement in their symptoms after the treatment. Most needed less medicine to manage the condition. They also reported less itching and a better quality of life.

The scientists found improvements in the skin's ability to seal in moisture. The treatment also helped keep out substances that can cause allergic reactions.

"Most children in the study experienced substantial improvements in their skin and overall wellbeing following R. mucosa therapy. Encouragingly, the bacteria stayed on the skin and continued to provide benefit after therapy stopped," says NIH researcher Dr. Ian Myles, who led the study.

The treatment is now being further studied in a larger group of children, as well as adults.

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