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SIXTY-FIRST YEAR NO. 36
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 30, 2021

San Diego Navy/Marine Corps Dispatch www.armedforcesdispatch.com 619.280.2985
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SPREADING HOLIDAY CHEER TO SAILORS AT NAVAL HOSPITAL CAMP PENDLETON'S TOY & FOOD DRIVE

by Felicia Crosson
Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton

CAMP PENDLETON - Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton (NHCP) Pastoral Care Services and C.A.R.E.S. (Caring, Assistance, and Resources in Emergency/Everyday Situations) helped bring some holiday cheer to the Sailors at NHCP with an annual toy and food drive.

Each year, for the past 22 years, NHCP's Pastoral Care Services has partnered with C.A.R.E.S., a private organization that assists NHCP with a command donation program and a holiday season toy and food drive which benefits the junior enlisted families of NHCP.

The whole process begins in October, when Pastoral Care Services reaches out to NHCP chiefs mess to request names of Sailors who would benefit from the holiday donations. While Pastoral Care is gathering information on the families in need, C.A.R.E.S., which was founded by Vicki Miller, a staff member here partners with many organizations out in town including churches, retirement homes, local sheriff's department, and several small business.

Among those who donate to C.A.R.E.S. each year, NHCP's First Class Petty Officer Association provides donations they receive from their annual Adopt a Snowman Program. This program allows individuals to take a snowman off of one of



Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton's Pastoral Care Services and the Caring, Assistance, and Resources in Emergency/Everyday Situations program helped with holiday morale with a toy and food drive. (At right) Some of the many gifts that were donated this year along with volunteers (top, from left) Vicki Miller, founder of C.A.R.E.S., RP1 Heather Lane and HM1 Angelic Slaughter. Photo by Felicia Crosson

the Christmas trees throughout the hospital with information on age and gender of a child in need of a toy. All donations are given to C.A.R.E.S., who then partners with NHCP's Pastoral Care Services, allowing them to provide the donations to the junior Sailors at the hospital.

"I once was a single mom and I appreciated all the assistance I got during the tough times, especially holidays," said Miller, when asked why she continues to do this for NHCP each year. "I

want our staff to feel that no matter what, we care about them - good times and bad."

This year, the food and toy drive helped over 200 families on Camp Pendleton, 32 more than last year. The Pastoral Care Services, with the help of the First Class Petty Officer Association handed out the donations to the designated families on Monday, Dec. 20-21. Families with five or less members received a \$50 grocery gift cards and those with six or more family members

received \$100 grocery gift cards. Each family also received toys for the gender and age of their children. Tweens and Teens in each family received a \$50 gift card to shop with.

Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton provided a special thank you to Miller for her hard work and embodying the motto "Serving Those Who Serve."

She is making a significant impact on the lives of our Sailors by providing them necessities,



not only during the holidays but all year long. NHCP praised the First Class Petty Officer Association, Pastoral Care Services, and all of the many donors who helped make this possible this year. Without their caring hearts and volunteering spirits, this wouldn't have been possible.

COVID-19 isolation guidance shortened from 10 to 5 days

by José A. Álvarez, County of San Diego Communications Office

Most San Diegans who test positive for COVID-19 only have to isolate for five days, the County Health and Human Services Agency announced Dec. 28.

The County is now following the new guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention which decreased the isolation period from 10 to five days for most people with no symptoms but who test positive for COVID-19. The California Department of Public Health also aligns with this guidance.

In addition to isolating for five days, COVID-19 patients with no symptoms must wear a mask for an additional five days when around other people. Health care personnel may have different criteria.

"The County is following the CDC guidance because science shows the majority of SARS-CoV-2 transmission occurs early in the course of illness, typically 1-2 days prior to developing symptoms and the 2-3 days after," said Wilma J. Wooten, county public health officer. "People with no symptoms can leave isolation after that, provided they wear an appropriate mask to decrease the risk to others."

Visiting the MyTurn or coronavirus-sd.com websites.

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U.S. service members from patrol coastal ship *USS Typhoon (PC 5)* inventory an illicit shipment of weapons while aboard a stateless fishing vessel transiting international waters in the North Arabian Sea, Dec. 20. Official Navy photo

Navy seizes 1,400 assault rifles during illicit weapons interdiction

MANAMA, Bahrain - U.S. 5th Fleet ships seized approximately 1,400 AK-47 assault rifles and 226,600 rounds of ammunition from a stateless fishing vessel during a flag verification boarding in accordance with customary international law in the North Arabian Sea, Dec. 20.

U.S. Navy patrol coastal ships *USS Tempest (PC 2)* and *USS Typhoon (PC 5)* found the weapons during a search conducted by embarked U.S. Coast Guard personnel. The illicit weapons and ammunition were later transported to guided-missile destroyer *USS O'Kane (DDG 77)* where they await final disposition.

The stateless vessel was assessed to have originated in Iran and transited international waters along a route historically used to traffic weapons unlawfully to the Houthis in Yemen. The direct or indirect supply, sale or transfer of weapons to the Houthis violates U.N. Security Council Resolutions and U.S. sanctions.

The vessel's five crew members identified themselves as Yemeni nationals and will be returned to Yemen.

After removing the crew and illicit cargo, U.S. naval forces determined the stateless vessel was a hazard to navigation for commercial shipping and sank it.

U.S. naval forces regularly perform maritime security operations in the Middle East to ensure the free flow of legitimate trade and to disrupt the transport of illicit cargo that often funds terrorism and other unlawful activity. U.S. Navy warships operating in the U.S. 5th Fleet region have seized approximately 8,700 illicit weapons in 2021.

Guided-missile cruiser *USS Monterey (CG 61)* seized dozens of advanced Russian-made anti-tank guided missiles, thousands of Chinese Type 56 assault rifles, and hundreds of PKM machine guns, sniper rifles and rocket-propelled grenade launchers from a stateless vessel transiting the North Arabian Sea in May.

In February, guided-missile destroyer *USS Winston S. Churchill (DDG 81)* seized a cache of weapons off the coast of Somalia, including thousands of AK-47 assault rifles, light machine guns, heavy sniper rifles, rocket-propelled grenade launchers and crew served weapons. The inventory also included barrels, stocks, optical scopes and weapon systems.

The U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations encompasses approximately 2.5 million square miles of water area and includes the Arabian Gulf, Gulf of Oman, Red Sea, parts of the Indian Ocean and three critical choke points at the Strait of Hormuz, Suez Canal and Strait of Bab al Mandeb.

Total Navy Battle Force: 296 Ships underway

Deployed ships underway: 39
Non-deployed ships underway: 1
Total ships underway: 40



Meet the 2021 USO Service Members of the Year

by **Katie Lange**
DoD News

Nearly 2.3 million active-duty and Reserve personnel serve in the U.S. military. While most of those service members are outstanding at what they do, only a few are chosen to be their branch's USO Service Member of the Year.

Every year since 2003, one junior enlisted service member from each branch - E-5 or below - is nominated by command leadership to be honored for an act of valor. Whether it's saving the life of a comrade or stranger or leading during a critical moment, these men and women proved their commitment to helping others in times of need. In doing so, they embodied the values for which the armed forces stand.

"In displaying selflessness and bravery, these men and women have gone above and beyond the normal course of duty to be recognized as the USO's Service Members of the Year," said USO CEO and President J.D. Crouch II. "We are proud to honor their achievements and encourage all Americans to join us in doing the same."

This year's recipients are:

Army Sgt. Breanna J. Jessop
Jessop, of Myton, Utah, played a key role in the evacuation operations at Hamid Karzai

International Airport in Afghanistan this past August. When the 82nd Airborne Division was called to support the mission, Jessop became the noncommissioned officer in charge of the airport's chapel. Despite having limited to nonexistent resources, she used her ingenuity to ensure 4,000 members of the coalition force, including U.S. troops, had access to items used for basic hygiene.

Jessop also oversaw the orphanage that was formed as a result of the increase in unaccompanied minors being brought to the area, and she led the charge to help care for children ranging in age from 7 days to 17 years old. According to the USO, she protected their well-being and their dignity as human beings. Thanks to Jessop's devoted and selfless leadership efforts, more than 400 displaced children were protected from enemy attacks and the turmoil that unfolded during the operation.

Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Johnharley S. Delacruz

Delacruz is a hospital corpsman from Fountain Valley, Calif. He serves with Combat Logistics Battalion 15, 1st Marine Logistics Group, 1st Marine Expeditionary Force from Camp Pendleton.

On July 30, 2020, an amphibious assault vehicle began to sink off the coast of San Clemente Island during routine Marine

Corps training operations. Delacruz was on a rescue vehicle that went to the ship's aid, and he quickly jumped into action to help the Marines trapped inside. He helped save one life by giving a patient in distress multiple rounds of CPR, epinephrine and other intubation medications.

As Delacruz was helping evacuate the patient via helicopter, he noticed the injured Marine's eardrums had ruptured and his oxygen tank was depleting. Relying on his medical training, Delacruz protected the patient's airway, monitored vital signs and found IV access. Delacruz then covered the patient with his own body to ward off hypothermia. Thanks to his quick-thinking, the patient survived.

Marine Corps Sgt. Seth A Dewey

Dewey, of Hesperia, Mich., serves with the 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines, 1st Marine Division. During Operation Inherent Resolve in Iraq, Dewey was part of the Embassy Quick Reaction Force that led a team responsible for securing the U.S. Embassy Baghdad's compound perimeter. At that time, hostile militias in the region often targeted DOD and State Department personnel, so they were subject to several indirect fire and unmanned aerial systems attacks.

During one attack, Dewey

calmly passed along critical information that allowed the Embassy Operations Center to sound its shelter-in-place alarm in a timely manner. Thanks to his leadership, an aircraft was able to lift off from the embassy's helicopter pad unharmed, and a unit was able to take out an enemy drone. Dewey's squad also identified another enemy drone that was being used in conjunction with a rocket attack to target the embassy. According to the USO, Dewey's leadership and actions helped shape the rules of engagement for future units and security personnel.

Air Force Staff Sgt. Ryan T. Daggett

Daggett, of Greeley, Colo., serves at Kunsan Air Base in South Korea with the 8th Security Forces Squadron, but he earned this honor for an incident that unfolded at his previous duty station in the Azores island chain off the coast of Portugal.

Daggett was on a spiritual resiliency trip to Sao Miguel Island when he witnessed a three-vehicle crash involving nine people. Daggett quickly jumped in to help. After checking on some of the victims, he noticed an unresponsive victim trapped inside one vehicle. He pried open a disabled door, pulled the person from the vehicle and began critical first aid that ultimately saved the person's life.

see **USO**, page 8

Army

- Despite delay, 'mixed reality' goggle for Soldiers, Marines on schedule for 2022
- Army just weeks away from announcing umbrella COVID-19 vaccine it developed, report says

Navy

- Richard Marcinko, first commanding officer of SEAL Team Six, dies
- USS Milwaukee sidelined in Cuba following COVID-19 outbreak
- Navy advises Sailors to get COVID-19 vaccine booster shot
- Navy tests new drone, capable of fueling aircraft in flight, on USS George H.W. Bush

Marine Corps

- Officer who publicly demanded accountability discharged from the Marine Corps
- 'A little bit of justice': Families of Marines killed say pulling AAV is a small victory
- More Marines separated this holiday season for refusing COVID-19 vaccine



- Siblings born on Christmas Eve follow their father into Marine Corps Air Force
- Air Force is ready to retire four E-8C Joint

STARS jets in 2022

- Air Force dining facility is first to get salad-serving robot
- Labor, material shortages trim delivery of uniform apparel to newest Air Force members
- Air Force denies 2,100 vaccine exemption requests

Space Force

- Space Force issues \$32 million contract for prototype space-based sensor
- Elementary students speak to Space Force guardian

National Guard

- Oklahoma cites wrong COVID-19 vaccine mandate in Guard lawsuit, Biden administration says
- Colorado National Guard won't disclose whether troops are complying with COVID vaccine mandate

Coast Guard

- Coast Guard helicopter crew medevacs Carnival cruise ship passenger in Gulf of Mexico

Your Military

- Private military housing company pleads guilty to fraud



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Navy remains mum on details of NSA Naples lockdown

by Alison Bath
Stars and Stripes

NAPLES, Italy - Two weeks after reports of a possible active shooter triggered a lockdown at Naval Support Activity Naples and a search for a gunman, Navy officials have yet to explain what happened.

Nor has the base identified the man who was taken into custody as a "person of interest" in the Dec. 16 incident. It also hasn't said whether he is still in custody or will face any charges.

Investigators determined that the shots had come from an airsoft gun, and base police seized one from the man they apprehended.

Lt. Jamie Moroney, a base spokeswoman, declined to comment Dec. 29, citing the ongoing investigation. The Naval Criminal Investigative Service is handling the investigation, Moroney said.

An NCIS spokesman in Quantico, Va., Julio Burgos, confirmed Wednesday that agents had responded and

were investigating, but he refused further comment.

About 6 p.m. on Dec. 16, what sounded like gunfire was reported near the base's combined middle school and high school.

That caused a lockdown of the base's Gricignano di Aversa site while security forces searched for a man thought to be carrying an airsoft rifle.

About two hours later, the base said it had taken a man



Petty Officer 2nd Class Sean Chastain apprehends a suspect during an exercise near Naples on Jan. 25, 2021. NSA Naples went into lockdown Dec. 16 after gunfire was reported on base, and security took a man and an airsoft rifle into custody. Photo by Donovan K. Patubo/Navy

into custody and confiscated the weapon.

Personal weapons, including airsoft rifles, are prohibited on base, Moroney said earlier this month.

The Gricignano di Aversa site includes schools, housing, a commercial center, a hospital and a hotel. It is about 13 miles from the base's Capodichino site, which includes administrative and support services and is home to the U.S. 6th Fleet.



Advanced weapons elevators completed aboard USS Gerald R. Ford

WASHINGTON - The 11th and final Advanced Weapons Elevator aboard *Gerald R. Ford* aircraft carrier was turned over to the ship's crew on Dec. 22. AWEs on this first-of-class aircraft carrier operate using several advanced technologies including electromagnetic motors vice more labor intensive, hydraulic systems. The advanced technology enables fewer sailors to safely move ordnance from weapons magazines to the flight deck with unparalleled speed and agility. "This is a significant milestone for the Navy, ship, and her crew," said Rear Adm. James P. Downey, program executive officer for aircraft carriers. "With completion of this final AWE, we now have the entire system to operate and train with." Downey said the Navy-industry AWE team worked tirelessly both inport and at sea to complete the elevators to ensure the availability of needed materials and engineering expertise.

Destroyer Arleigh Burke completes inaugural forward-deployed patrol

NAVAL STATION ROTA, Spain - Destroyer USS *Arleigh Burke* returned here Dec. 23, completing her inaugural patrol as a member of the Navy's Forward Deployed Naval Forces-Europe (FDNF-E) and culminating in a successful year of operations. After 30 years based in Norfolk, Va., *Arleigh Burke* shifted homeports to Rota in April and joined Sixth Fleet, Destroyer Squadron 60. The destroyer began patrol in August and spent the last four months operating alongside NATO allies and partners throughout the Sixth Fleet area of responsibility. "In an especially challenging year punctuated by the COVID-19 pandemic, an international homeport shift, and its first Sixth Fleet patrol, USS *Arleigh Burke* overcame all odds to deliver American strength and resolve on demand, on time, every time," said the ship's commanding officer, Cmdr. Patrick Chapman, reflecting on the accomplishments of the past 12 months. - Story by Lt. j. g Robinson McMillan, USS *Arleigh Burke's* public affairs officer

Three Soldiers inducted into Pentagon's Hall of Heroes

WASHINGTON - Three Soldiers whose acts of bravery spanned over 12 years were inducted into the Pentagon's Hall of Heroes in a ceremony Dec. 17. DoD and the Army honored Medal of Honor recipients Sgt. 1st Class Christopher Celiz, an Army Ranger, Sgt. 1st Class Alwyn Cashe, an infantry platoon sergeant, and Master Sgt. Earl Plumlee, a Green Beret, at Conny Hall, Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall, Va. Secretary of the Army Christine E. Wormuth lauded the recipients for their dedication to their comrades and families. "Each of these incredible Soldiers and their families that we honor today, while from different parts of the country, different walks of life, and different religious faiths, represent what is best about our Army," Wormuth said. "The common thread that binds them is the love of their teammates and their love for their families." "We will strive every day to live up to their legacy," said Army Chief of Staff, Gen. James C. McConville.



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<https://www.midway.org/give-join/volunteers/volunteer-opportunities/>

Armed Forces Dispatch (619) 280-2985

Published by Western States Weeklies, Inc. 2604 B-280 El Camino Real, Carlsbad, CA 92008
E-mail: editor@navydispatch.com
Publisher.....Sarah Hagerty

The Dispatch is published weekly on Thursdays, by Western States Weeklies, Inc., as a commercial, free-enterprise newspaper. It does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Department of the Navy and is in no way associated with the Department of the Navy. The editorial objective of the Dispatch, however, is to promote support for a strong military presence. The opinions and views of writers whose materials appear herein are those of the writers and not the publishers. Appearance of advertising does not constitute endorsement by the Dispatch or Western States Weeklies, Inc. Consumers should make informed decisions when purchasing products and services, and when considering business opportunities, and research before investing. Subscription by mail is \$70 per year to CONUS or FPO address.

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Places of Worship

Bethany Lutheran Church
Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod
2051 Sunset Cliffs Blvd, Ocean Beach 92107
(Parking lot off the Alley - North of the building)
Worship 10:30am Sundays
Bible Class, Wednesdays 10am
(619)222-7291 LivingWaterSD7@gmail.com

Bayview Church
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6134 Pastor Timothy J. Winters St., San Diego 92114 (619) 262-8384
Sunday 6:45am, 8:30am, 11am Worship Service
Studies in Christian Living (formerly known as Sunday School) Tuesday & Thursday 6pm, Wednesday 5:30pm & Saturday 9am
www.bayviewbc.org info@bayviewbc.org

Canyon View Church of Christ
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Sunday Worship 10am
4292 Balboa Ave., San Diego, CA 92117 Email: cvoffice@canyonview.org
(Near corner of Balboa Ave & Clairemont Dr)
www.canyonview.org (858) 273-5140

Christ Community Church
Helping people love God and each other!
Services Onsite or Online Sundays 8:30 & 10:30am
Children's Ministries for All Kids!
Small Groups for Teens & Adults of All Ages!
9535 Kearny Villa Rd., Mira Mesa 92126; Located just off Miramar Rd. & I-15
www.gotoChrist.com or (858) 549-2479

First Baptist Church of Coronado
"Reach Up, Reach Out, Reach Our World"
Jim W. Baize, Pastor www.fbcoronado.com
Sunday Adult Bible Study 8:45am, Sunday Worship Service 10am
Meeting in person and online on YouTube or Facebook
FB: First Baptist Church of Coronado email: secretary@fbcoronado.com
445 C Ave., Coronado, CA 92118 (619) 435-6588

La Jolla Lutheran Church
"We Follow Jesus"
Sunday 9:30am Worship and Sunday School
Wednesday 6:30pm Bible Study
7111 La Jolla Blvd., La Jolla, CA 92037
(858) 454-6459
LaJollaLutheranChurch.com

Living Water Lutheran Church
Meeting at Green Flash Brewery Gathering Room
6550 Mira Mesa Blvd.
(Entrance Directly in back - off Sequence Dr.)
Worship 8:45am
(858)792-7691 LivingWaterSD7@gmail.com
Pastor: Rev. Steven Duescher

Mesa View Baptist Church
Dr. Darrow Perkins, Jr., Th.D. Pastor/Servant CW03, USMC (Ret.)
Seeking Sinners; Saving Souls; Strengthening Saints
Sunday School at 8:45am • Morning Worship at 10am
Wednesday Night Bible Study 7pm
13230 Pomerado Rd, Poway • 858-485-6110 • www.mesaview.org

Military Outreach Ministries Int'l Church
"Transforming the World, One Person at a Time"
Dr. Dennis Eley, Jr, Th.D., MBA dennis@militaryoutreachministries.org
Sunday Worship on Zoom
ID# (7259730232; Passcode 543563) at 12:30-1:30pm (PST)
Thirsty Thursday Bible Studies on Zoom from 7-8pm (PST)
Live Stream: 12:30-1:30pm on "Moministries" free church app

Resurrection Lutheran Church
A Small Place with a Big Heart!
Worship Service Sunday at 10:15 am. (please see website for details)
1111 Fifth Street - Coronado, CA 92118 - 619.435.1000
secretary@resurrectioncoronado.com - www.rl.church
<https://www.facebook.com/resurrectioncoronado/>
The Rev. Dr. Brian Oltman, Pastor

St. Luke's Lutheran Church
5150 Wilson Ave., La Mesa, CA 91942
Phone: (619) 463-6633
website: www.st-lukes-la-mesa.org
Worship: 9am
Pastor: Mark Menacher, PhD.
We thank you for your service!

Interpersonal Edge: Arrogance is the enemy of brilliance

by Dr. Daneen Skube,
Tribune Content Agency

Q: I work with several men that are always the smartest guy in the room. When we're problem solving it's impossible to get them to collaborate. These guys actually are smart but they seem emotionally stupid. How can I get them to realize that arrogance makes problem solving impossible?

A: You'll get your arrogant co-workers to see arrogance makes problem solving impossible if you shore up their fragile egos. People that seem arrogant may be smart intellectually but they see admitting they don't know anything as a sign of weakness.

When we study high intelligence in children we notice most bright kids are one-trial learners. They see a new skill once and master it. The trouble is many problems in life demand much more than one trial to figure out solutions.

People that have an inability to be vulnerable or ask for help tend to appear arrogant. Arrogance covers up the reality that none of us are always the smartest guy in the room. Even if we excel in one area there are people in every room that know more than us about something.

Industrial psychology studies tell us the best corporate environments foster "learning organizations." A learning organization is where employees are encouraged to make mistakes, expand skill sets, and are receptive to lifelong learning. Humility fosters a learning organization and arrogance makes this culture impossible.

Ironically as Americans we're often taught that appearing to have all the answers will make others look up to us. The truth is arrogance may appear to be self-confidence from far away. However, close up arrogant people fall apart especially when they face complex problems.

When dealing with arrogant co-workers praise their intelligence, skills, and competency and ask for their help in thinking together about issues. You may think it would be emotionally satisfying to tell your co-workers that they're wrong. However, if you threaten their ego you'll make your situation worse.

If you threaten arrogant people they'll dig in and the casualty will be your results. I know it may seem wrong to praise them but this makes them feel safe and they'll be more cooperative.

If you want to study an excellent example of emotional intelligence when facing arrogance you can review Dr. Anthony Fauci's response during the pandemic. Fauci refused to engage in power struggles and continued to work on finding solutions.

Interpersonal Edge



by
Dr.
Daneen
Skube

I tell my clients that we should look for humble people to be our teachers. Humility means we know how much we don't know, we're good at asking for help, and we realize we need other people to thrive. Humility means we make few bold declarative statements. We ask questions and listen more than we speak.

I also counsel clients that learning from other people's experience (OPE) is one of our greatest sources of wisdom and effectiveness. The other alternative is to learn from the school of hard knocks which always has

expensive tuition.

Realize also that you want to avoid an ego war with arrogant people. What they have no defense against is humility. If you let them know you need their help they can be quite useful.

Also realize to the extent you feel threatened by arrogant people you're not fighting with them. You're fighting an inner

battle wondering whether you are good enough. If you can walk away from this inner battle you'll have more freedom and peace in handling arrogance in others.

The more you focus on your results and effectiveness the less you will get engaged in the ego war of arrogant people. Let them be the smartest person in the room and let yourself be the one that gets brilliant results.

The last word(s)

Q: I have a co-worker that keeps making the same mistake and saying she is sorry. I feel like I should accept her apology but is there a way to know whether she will actually change?

A: Yes, ask for a specific behavioral plan rather than an apology. People cannot do better until they plan better.

Gaming connects American military members with loved ones

(StatePoint) For military members, video games are not just a fun way to unwind during downtime, they can provide much-needed stress relief and are an opportunity to connect with friends and family.

For these reasons, the United Service Organizations (USO) has focused part of its mission on providing military members with opportunities to connect and relax with video games. Many of these games require players to form collaborative relationships with other gamers, during which service members can discuss the challenges of their lives beyond the screen.

Beyond featuring dedicated gaming areas at a growing number of USO centers, the nonprofit hosts gaming events, including the "Operation Play it Forward" Streamathon, which took place over Veterans Day on the USO's Twitch channel, [twitch.tv/theuso](https://www.twitch.tv/theuso). Sponsored by USAA, Pratt and Whitney and GEICO Military, the second annual Streamathon was a 72-hour gaming experience, tripling 2020's 24-hour event.

Service members from around the world were joined by family, friends and special guests, including USO gaming ambassadors, entertainers and celebrities like Linkin Park's Mike Shinoda, Pittsburgh Steelers' Juju Smith-Schuster and Twitch streamer Tfue. As part of the Streamathon the "Battle of The Branches," presented by GEICO Military, featured service mem-

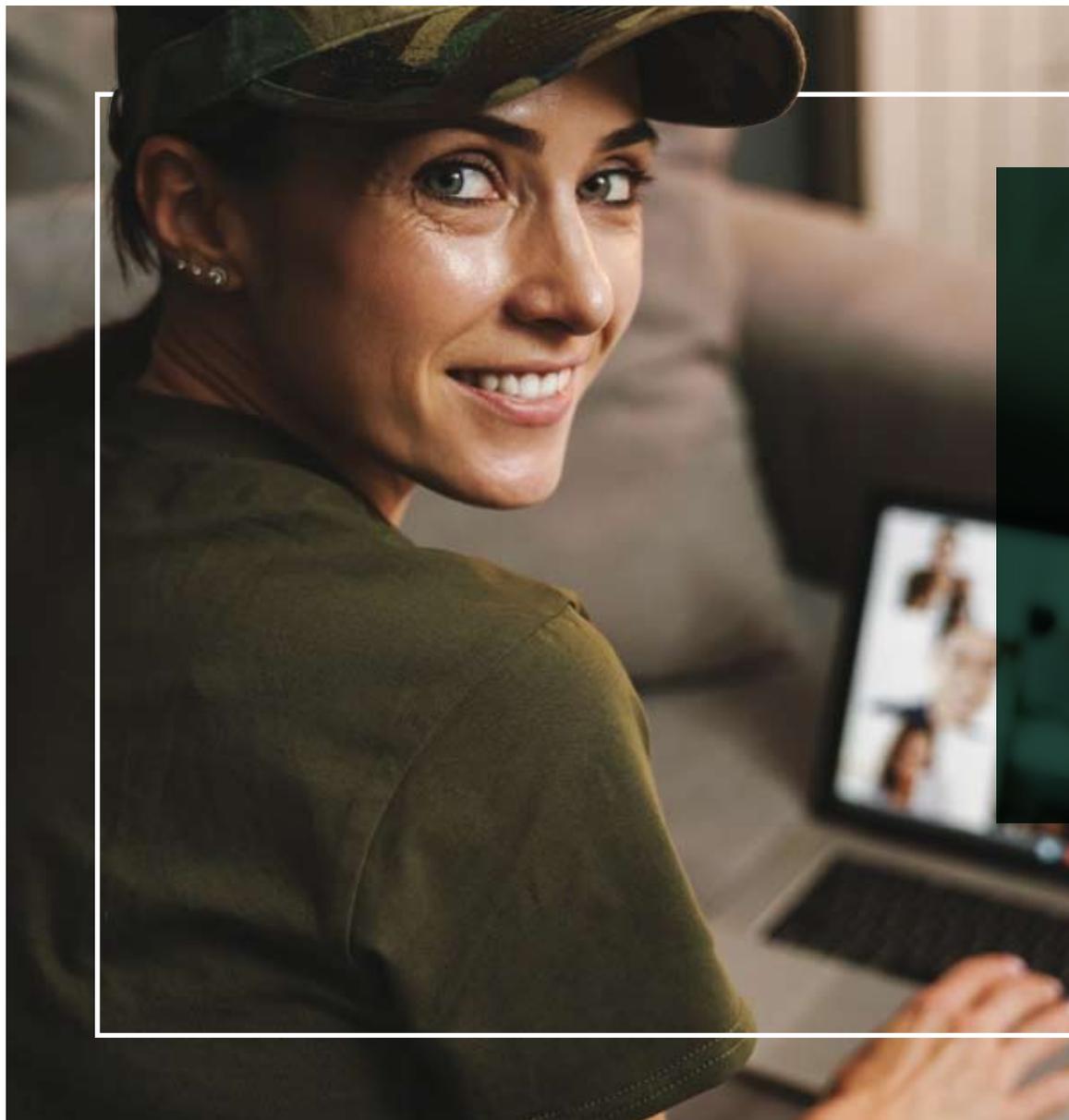
bers teaming up with top gamers to compete in "Call of Duty: Warzone."

"Members of the military community, military supporters, celebrities and fellow gamers connected with us during an exciting 72 hours of gaming with some of the most popular video games and creators out there right now," said Callum Fletcher, USO director of global gaming operations.

In recent years, the emergence of platforms such as Twitch and Discord has allowed service members to connect with their family and friends while deployed or serving in geographically separated locations.

Since the inception of its gaming program, the USO has hosted 90 events featuring USO gaming ambassadors, celebrity engagements and tournaments. In addition, the organization is planning to open more gaming centers in the months to come. With the support of Razer, gaming centers will soon be well-equipped at Marine Corps Base Quantico and Eglin Air Force Base.

To learn more about how the USO gaming program has evolved, visit [uso.org/gaming](https://www.uso.org/gaming). More information about USO entertainment programs can be found at [USO.org/MVP](https://www.uso.org/MVP). To join the USO Discord, head over to discord.gg/theuso.



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Seabees in the Indian Ocean, supporting Pacific Air Forces

by Builder Constructionman
Raheem Dayee
NMCB-5

DIEGO GARCIA, British Indian Ocean Territory - Navy Seabees assigned to Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 5 built two driveways for the Pacific Air Forces on board Naval Support Facility Diego Garcia.

The Seabees placed a paved driveway and installed bollards for one of PACAF's warehouses valued at approximately \$304,000.

"I'm excited to see our project progressing," said Steelworker 2nd Class Mariah Morgan. "It's nice to get back into the swing of things."

"It is so fun watching a first concrete placement for some of our newer guys on the [Detail site]," she said. "The pads looked great, and I'm excited for them to be used after we return to homeport."

The installation of bollards will improve the longevity of the PACAF facilities. The Seabees developed construction expertise while facilitating public relations and maintaining a global presence as a stand-in naval force.

The Seabees installed 16 bollards inside and outside of the PACAF warehouse and placed two pavement driveways.

"This project was a group effort and required a lot of long days and late hours to complete," said Lt. j.g. Matthew Vandenoemen. "I couldn't be more proud to be the officer in charge, and I'm sure everyone can return to homeport knowing that one of their projects will make a difference out here."

This project allows PACAF to increase its capability to maintain and pre-position various expeditionary pieces of engineering support equipment by improving the allowable working load of the area, allowing the service members to use larger CESE.

Port Hueneme-based NMCB-5 is deployed to the 7th Fleet area of operations, supporting a free and open Indo-Pacific, strengthening their network of alliances and partnerships, and providing general engineering and civil support to joint operational forces.

NMCB-5 has 13 detail sites deployed throughout the U.S. and Indo-Pacific area of operations.



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6 www.armedforcesdispatch.com THURSDAY, DECEMBER 30, 2021

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U.S. Marines with Force Reconnaissance Platoon, 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, egress from the bay after dive operations during MEU exercise on Kin Blue training area, Okinawa, Japan, Dec. 15, 2021. FRP conducted diving repetitions to maintain proficiency and currency as combatant divers. MEUEX is a pre-deployment training exercise that validates and reinforces the MEUs mission capabilities across all of the Marine subordinate elements. The 31st MEU, the Marine Corps only continuously forward-deployed MEU, provides a flexible and lethal force ready to perform a wide range of military operations as the premier crisis response force in the Indo-Pacific region. Photo by Cpl. Grace Gerlach.



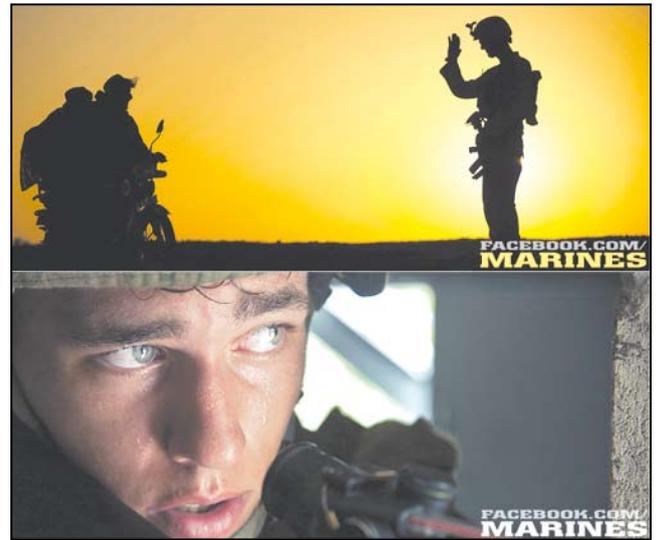
Teachers, students and staff stand for the presentation of colors during a ribbon cutting ceremony at Mary Fay Pendleton Elementary School on Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Dec. 13, 2021. The new campus has updated facilities and classrooms to enhance the learning environment for students. U.S. Marine Corps photo by Cpl. Andrew Cortez.

Cpl. William Morris and Cpl. John Labons, military working dog handlers with the Provost Marshal's Office, Security and Emergency Services Battalion aboard Camp Pendleton, lay a wreath for military working dogs during a Wreaths Across America wreath laying ceremony at the Valley Center Cemetery. Wreaths Across America organizes annual wreath laying ceremonies for veteran resting places at over 3,100 locations nationwide. Camp Pendleton sent handlers and their canine partners to honor past working dogs that served with the armed forces.



VALLEY CENTER, Calif.
Dec. 18, 2021

Marine Corps photo by Cpl. Drake Nickels



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Camp Pendleton Zero Dark Dirty Jan. 21

Lake O'Neill
Assemble for Zero Dark Dirty and test your skills. The course offers various obstacles and the challenge of running at night. Active duty and base patrons.
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•<https://www.mccscp.com/>•Online registration opens Dec 21, 9 a.m. Day-of registration available.
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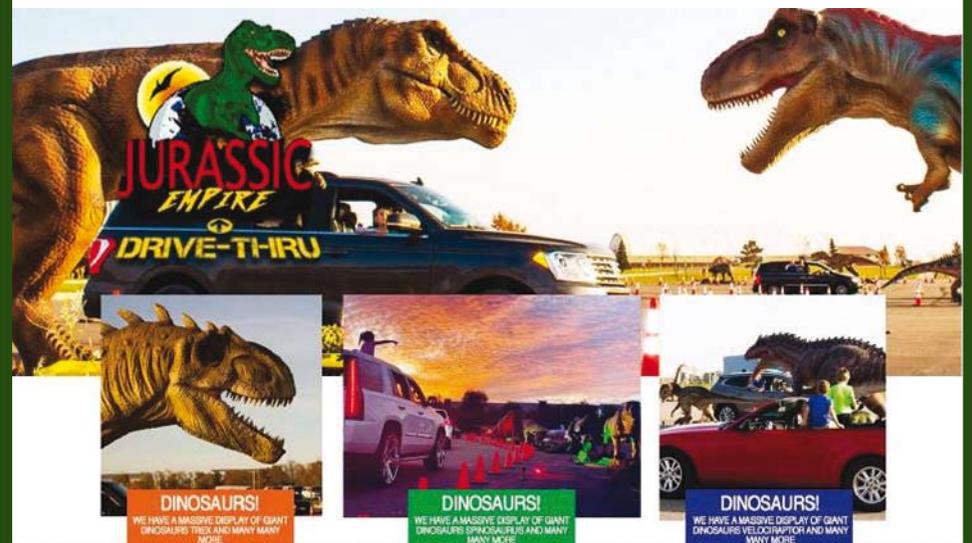
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Photo gallery



**USS TRIPOLI, at sea
Dec. 27**

Aviation Boatswain's Mate (Handling) 3rd Class Jeremy Murphy operates an aircraft elevator control panel in the hangar bay aboard *Tripoli* amphibious assault ship. Navy photo by MC2 Malcolm Kelley



**SAN DIEGO
Dec. 27, 2021**

Student athletes from the UCLA Bruins football team interact with a display of small arms on the flight deck of *USS Makin Island* amphibious assault ship. *Makin Island* hosted the UCLA and the North Carolina State Wolfpack football teams leading up to the Holiday Bowl. Photo by MC2 Ethan Jaymes Morrow



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USO Service Members of the Year



Staff Sgt. Daggett



Sgt. Jessop



Sgt. Luna



Sgt. Dewey (right)



Petty Officer Britton



Petty Officer Delacruz

USO

continued from page 3

It wasn't the first time Daggett had helped save a life. During a joint exercise a few years earlier, Daggett saved a fellow paratrooper who had become entangled in his parachute. Later, in 2019, Daggett was chosen as a member of the airborne team that would parachute into Normandy, France, as part of the 75th D-Day commemoration.

Army Sgt. Francisco Javier Luna, Massachusetts National Guard

Javier Luna is a police officer with the Springfield, Mass., Police Department. One chilly morning, Luna was on patrol when he received a 911 call to help an infant who had stopped breathing. Within minutes, Luna got to the scene to find a panicked mother and an unresponsive 3-month-old boy whose skin had turned blue.

Luna quickly started infant

CPR while waiting for emergency crews to arrive. After about three minutes, the boy regained consciousness and began breathing on his own. Luna's steady hand and leadership helped save the baby.

Coast Guard Petty Officer 3rd Class Gerrod J. Britton

On July 5, 2020, Britton, a boatswain's mate stationed at Morro Bay, Calif., was off-duty and driving when he saw a vehicle in front of him cross the median and crash into oncoming traffic. The Plattsmouth, Nebraska, native immediately stopped to help. He pulled two people to safety and went back for a third, who was severely injured and trapped underneath the vehicle as it began to catch fire.

Despite the increasing hazard, Britton and another bystander lifted the vehicle on its side

long enough for Britton to pull the unconscious man through a broken window. A few seconds later, the entire vehicle was engulfed in flames. Britton dragged the man to a safe area, gave him CPR and tried to control the bleeding from several injuries before emergency responders arrived. His courageous actions earned him the Coast Guard Commendation Medal.

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Sports Heroes Who Served: Author, runner, comedian, civil rights activist was also a Soldier

by David Vergun

Sports Heroes Who Served is a series that highlights the accomplishments of athletes who served in the U.S. military.

Dick Gregory led a full life: cross-country champion, Army veteran, presidential hopeful, prolific author, civil rights activist and comedian.

Gregory, born in St. Louis, Missouri, in 1932, had a penchant for running. In 1950, he won the Missouri state cross-country championship.

That helped earn him a track scholarship to Southern Illinois University, where he set school records as a half-miler and miler.

His studies and running were interrupted in 1954, when he was drafted into the Army. He served two years at Fort Hood, Texas; Fort Lee, Virginia; and Fort Chaffee, Arkansas.

Gregory got his start in comedy while serving in the Army, where he entered and won several talent shows.

After his Army service, he

moved to Chicago, where he began a career in comedy.

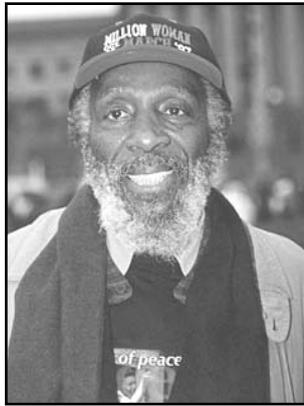
“Playboy” magazine editor Hugh Hefner hired him to perform comedy sketches at the Chicago Playboy Club in 1961.

Gregory was active in the civil rights movement. On October 7, 1963, he came to Selma, Alabama, and spoke for two hours on a public platform two days before the voter registration drive known as “Freedom Day,” Oct. 7, 1963.

In 1964, Gregory’s autobiography, “Nigger,” was published, and it has been so popular that it is still in print. He published 16 other books and appeared in many films and TV shows.

Beginning in 1965, Gregory became a vegetarian and fasting activist. His 1973 book, “Dick Gregory’s Natural Diet For Folks Who Eat: Cookin’ With Mother Nature,” told how fasting and going on a vegetarian diet leads to a dramatic weight loss.

Gregory was number 82 on Comedy Central’s list of the 100 Greatest Stand-ups of all time and had his own star on the St. Louis Walk of Fame.



Dick Gregory in the Million Women March in Philadelphia, 1997. Photo courtesy of John Mathew Smith

Gregory began his political career by a failed run against Richard J. Daley for mayor of Chicago in 1967.

Undeterred, he ran for president of the United States in 1968 as a write-in candidate of the Freedom and Peace Party, which had broken off from the Peace and Freedom Party. He garnered 47,097 votes.

As a peace activist, Gregory spoke at the Moratorium to End the War in Vietnam demonstration in Washington, D.C. in

1969. He was also an outspoken feminist and joined other activists in trying to get ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution.

In 1980, he traveled to Tehran, Iran, in an attempt to negotiate the release of U.S. hostages.

In 1984, he founded Health

Third report details VA’s continued efforts addressing COVID-19 pandemic

WASHINGTON - The Department of Veterans Affairs releases the third iteration of its Coronavirus Disease 2019 Response Report - Annex B addressing the pandemic from Jan. 1 through July 31.

This builds on the work captured in the department’s two previous reports, COVID-19 Response Plan and Annex A, which offer the public an inside look at the nation’s largest integrated health care system’s response to COVID-19.

“As we continue to address the pandemic and as new variants arise, it is clear that continuous learning and improvement are essential to a successful COVID-19 response,” said Deputy Under Secretary for Health Steven Lieberman. “We will continue to update this report to document our efforts so Veterans, doctors and the public can understand and learn from what we’ve discovered to better serve our Veterans and communities.”

Annex B captures and shares lessons learned from VA’s successes, challenges and experiences related to the pandemic, in the interest of shared approaches to national improvement in COVID-19 response efforts. It also presents updated findings and recommendations across broad coordinated efforts, including adaptations as the pandemic evolved. Notably the report details planned and executed a successful mass vaccination campaign that vaccinated over 2.5 million people while sustaining all other aspects of the pandemic response and vet health services.

Enterprises, Inc., a company that distributed weight-loss products. Through this company, Gregory endeavored to improve the life expectancy of African Americans, which he believed was being hindered by poor nutrition and drug and alcohol abuse.

In 2003, Gregory took on animal rights, in cooperation with People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals.

Gregory died from heart failure at a hospital in Washington, D.C., on Aug. 19, 2017, at the age of 84.

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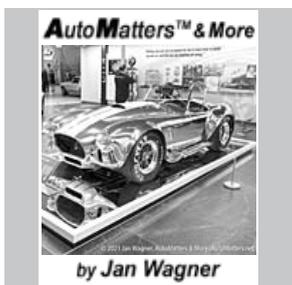
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Shelby at 60 ... the new museum ... the GT500KR

You could easily spend days here, with all there is to see and read. Private, docent-led tours of the Segerstrom are available for groups of 10 to 30, and it may be booked for special events. For more information about the Segerstrom Shelby Event Center, including their hours of operation so that you can see their wonderful collection for yourself, go to: <https://segerstromshelbyeventcenter.com>

Shelby American was founded by Carroll Shelby. “Sixty years ago, Shelby American and Ford Motor Company collaborated on their first car, the Shelby Cobra,” said Joe Conway, CEO of Shelby American.” To celebrate this 60th anniversary, Shelby American introduced the first of four new, significant vehicle programs.

The first of those is the third-generation Ford Shelby GT500KR — “King of the Road.” As the story goes, its regal name came about in 1968 shortly after Lee Iacocca, Ford Division General Manager, mentioned to Carroll Shelby that Chevrolet was about to name their new Corvette “King of the Road.” Carroll had always wanted to use that name already, so he checked with his lawyers, found out that the name was not yet taken and used it for his first-generation GT500KR. Powered by the new, 335 horsepower, 428 Cobra Jet V-8, it was equipped with a modified suspension, redesigned front- and rear-end, custom fiberglass hood, Cougar taillights, functional roll bar and wood-rimmed steering wheel — in both fastback and convertible versions.

In 2008, the second-generation collaboration between Ford and Shelby featured a supercharged V-8 that upped the horsepower to 540. It included a short-throw gear shifter, 3.73:1 performance rear axle ratio; unique wheels,

tires, suspension settings, stripes and badges; and a special composite hood with push-button hood pins.

Carrying on with the tradition, the third-generation “King of the Hill” Mustang is based on the 2020 – 2022 Ford Shelby GT500. Using that as a starting point (buyers must provide a 2020 – 2022 Shelby GT500 for the transformation), the new “King of the Hill” adds 140+ horsepower — for a truly grand total of 900+ on pump gas. Also added is a dry carbon fiber hood (which reduces the weight by 90 pounds) with functional, water-managed hood vents, including side vents that pull heat off of the exhaust manifold to help prevent heat soak. There are also new wheels, tires, suspension tuning (with more aggressive springs and Ford Performance sway bars), interior elements and badges.

Production will begin in the first quarter of 2022. The first production car will be auctioned at No Reserve, to benefit the Carroll Shelby Foundation and the Juvenile Diabetes Research Fund, on January 29, 2022, by the Barrett-Jackson Auction Company in Scottsdale, Arizona.

This will be an extremely limited production car, with only 60 manufactured per model year (180 total) available in the U.S., plus 45 overseas.

To learn more about the new, 900+ horsepower Shelby GT500 “King of the Road” and how to order one, visit <https://www.shelby.com/en-us/Vehicles/Shelby-GT500-KR>.

To see the most photos and the latest text, and to explore a wide variety of content dating back to 2002, visit [AutoMatters & More](https://www.shelby.com/en-us/Vehicles/Shelby-GT500-KR) at [AutoMatters.net](https://www.shelby.com/en-us/Vehicles/Shelby-GT500-KR). On the Home Page, search by title or topic, or click on the blue ‘years’ boxes. Copyright © 2021 by Jan Wagner – AutoMatters & More #723

The Meat & Potatoes of Life



by Lisa Smith Molinari

The travel mug’s worth of coffee I’d consumed that morning hit my bladder with the force of a runaway train, making me squirm in the commissary check out line. Grabbing items from my cart and tossing them onto the conveyor belt, I huffed rhythmically under my mask as if I was having birthing contractions until the urge passed.

It subsided long enough for me to get home, but struck again as I was carrying grocery bags in from the car. Although the bread got squished when I dropped bags in our front hallway, I made it to the bathroom with only minor spillage.

After doing a bit of “accident abatement” in the bathroom sink, I put on a fresh pair of undies and threw my spot-rinsed pants into the dryer. “No harm, no foul,” I thought, proud of my ability to adapt to life’s little challenges.

Pants-less, but still wearing socks and shoes, I descended the basement stairs to stash groceries into our second refrigerator. As I was loading potatoes into the crisper, the doorbell rang.

Oh geez.

Thankfully, I heard my husband,

Putting on ‘big girl pants’ in 2022

Francis, walk down our creaky staircase from his home office and open the door. “Hey John, c’mon in! You don’t mind dogs, do you?” Then I remembered - John was here to appraise our house ... including the basement. My eyes darted around the dank, subterranean space under our 125-year old home for a place to hide...

This was not the only time I’d found myself in a predicament due to my “droopy bladder.” Doctors at every military clinic where we had lived had told me that my bladder issues were the result of giving birth to three large babies, including two nine-pounders. Apparently, my bladder wasn’t where they used to be, and the doctors recommended surgery. But, who has time for surgery? Who will cook, clean, run errands, drive kids, walk dogs, shovel snow, and buy groceries at the commissary? As a long-time military spouse I was conditioned to believe that my job was to manage the household, without vacations or medical leave. It was part of the bargain I made when I married a career military man.

When Francis was active duty, I had to do what it took to manage our family, whether he was home or away. That meant that, if I got sick while he was deployed, and felt the urge to throw up while driving the kids in heavy traffic down I-264, I’d better reach around and grab that empty Big Gulp cup on the floor of the minivan, because I’d need to upchuck while taking the appropriate exit. (Yes, that really happened.) Subconsciously, I believed it would be selfish of me to turn away from the needs of my

family for a long period of time to address minor health issues, droopy bladders included.

After deciding against climbing into a dusty storage bin containing old Halloween decorations, I cleared my throat and called, “Francis? Honey? Could you come to the top of the basement stairs for just a sec?”

Francis looked down at me with initial shock, then giggled, knowingly. Using hand gestures and exaggerated facial expressions as if playing charades, I commanded him to get my pants from the dryer and throw them down to me before John the appraiser was traumatized by the sight of my bare, flaky winter legs topped by Warner briefs.

Disaster may have been averted, but the incident prompted me to self-reflect. Military spouses serve their families, which is honorable. They put aside careers, personal goals, and sometimes physical and mental health issues to manage the family while their spouse serves the country. But a time may come when they should make themselves a priority. We are conditioned to feel selfish if we put ourselves first, but we must strike a reasonable balance between our needs and our duty to our military family.

As I turned out the basement light, now fully clothed, a switch flipped in my thinking. In the New Year, I would make myself a priority. I won’t be left standing pants-less in the basement again — I will resolve to take care of myself now.

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MOVIES AT THE BASES

Movies & times subject to change. * Indicates last showing
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Naval Base Theater - NBSD,
619-556-5568, Bldg. 71
3465 Senn Rd.

FREE entry to the first 375 customers (per showing), no outside food, concessions will be available.

Thursday, Dec 30

6pm House of Gucci (R)

Saturday, Jan 1

1pm Encanto (PG)

3:30pm Ghostbusters: Afterlife (PG-13)

6:30pm Resident Evil: Raccoon City

Sunday, Jan 2

1pm Encanto (PG)

3:30pm Resident Evil: Raccoon City (R)

Friday, Jan 7

6pm West Side Story (2021) (PG-13)

Saturday, Jan 8

3pm Ghostbusters: Afterlife (PG-13)

Pendleton Theater and Training Center

Bldg 1330 Mainside (Across from Mainside Center)

Theater closed Jan 1

Saturday, Jan 8

1:30pm Ghostbusters: Afterlife (PG-13)

Bob Hope Theater 577-4143
MCAS Miramar Bldg 2242

Theater closed for holiday!

Friday, Jan 7

6pm House of Gucci (R)

9pm Resident Evil Raccoon City (R)

Saturday, Jan 8

3pm Encanto (PG)

6pm A Journal For Jordan (PG-13)

Lowry Theater - NASNI,
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Bldg. 650

Outside food and beverage are NOT permitted: Sales from the snack bar support the movie program.

Debit and credit cards accepted only

Friday, Dec 31

6pm Resident Evil: Raccoon City (R)

Saturday, Jan 1

3pm Journal For Jordan (PG-13)

6pm House of Gucci (R)

Sunday, Jan 2

1pm Encanto (PG)

4pm Resident Evil Raccoon City (R)

Updates: sandiego.navylifefsw.com

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- John Wick, for one
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- Legendary bird of prey
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- Rap sheet letters
- *Zip your lip!
- Lust or greed
- *And how!
- *Be the first to begin
- Hug
- Mom's mom
- Extended pd. away from work
- Notable period
- Commercial charge
- U.K. network
- *Party gifts container
- Coffee dispenser
- Invite for
- Aggregate
- Container cover
- Escape clauses
- Letters in alphabet soup
- *Act in desperation
- Retinal cells
- Fannie or Ginnie follower
- Silently understood
- Dismissal metaphor, with "the"
- Familiar slogan ... and what each answer to a starred clue is?
- A-lister
- Wind instruments
- Biter on a pooch
- Nonetheless
- Corporate jet maker
- Hide partner
- Down
- Frisbee, for one
- Befuddled
- Shoe with a strap that nearly encircles the ankle
- More smoke-filled
- FDR's successor
- German pronoun found in half of Munich?
- What we have here
- Highway divider
- Actress Seales of "Insecure"
- Opposing vote
- Emmy category
- Phoenix's 2019 Best Actor role
- Few and far between
- *At Last! singer James
- Hardly any
- Taiwanese PC maker
- Queen of Olympus
- Reel trouble
- Napoleon's 1814 place of exile
- Unruly crowds
- Tummy muscles
- Comprehensive
- Shallowest Great Lake
- Goals
- Rise, as prices
- Batter's job in a squeeze play
- Eros, in Rome
- Discard
- Husk-wrapped cantina food
- Something to update on Facebook
- Solemn vow
- *Whistle While You Work" septet
- Turkey topper
- *Chicago" showgirl Hart
- Highly skilled
- Splinter groups
- Understanding words
- Hardwood tree
- Ozone-depleting chemical
- Farm layer
- Free TV spot

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Military/Veterans Crisis Line
1-800-273-8255

Confidential chat at MilitaryCrisisLine.net or text 838255

EVENTS AROUND TOWN

Experience moving, breathing, massive dinosaurs from the comfort and safety of your own car

Announcing Jurassic Empire, the largest most realistic Dinosaur Drive-Thru Event ever seen in California! Two locations, this fun filled family event will be held at both the Otay Ranch Town Center Mall in Chula Vista & the Shoppes at Carlsbad Mall.

Drive through this prehistoric journey from the Jurassic all the way through the Ice Age periods and discover the Dinosaurs & Mammals that ruled the earth for more than 150 million years ago! The drive through exhibit features over 50, moving, breathing, giant life size ultra-realistic dinosaurs in their natural habitat. Keep a close out eye out and be extra careful as danger lies ahead as you drive by a massive T-Rex looking for its next meal. This Jurassic Themed Dinosaur event will stimulate your child's imagination for years to come.

Two Convenient Locations:

Otay Ranch Town Center, 2015 Birch Rd, Chula Vista, CA 91915

The Shoppes at Carlsbad, 2525 El Camino Real, Carlsbad, CA 92008

Dates: Dec. 31, Jan. 1 & 2, Jan. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15 & 16

Weekdays, Wed., Thur. & Frid: \$59 per car 1-7 persons, 8-14 persons \$85
Weekends & Holidays, Sat & Sun: \$69 per car 1-7 persons, 8-14 persons \$95
Buy tickets online only at www.JurassicEmpire.com

Thru Jan 2: **Snow N Glow Holiday Festival**. Select nights at Del Mar Fairgrounds. snownglow.com

Thru Jan 2: **Skating by the Sea** at Hotel Del Coronado. www.hoteldel.com/activities/skating

Thru Jan 2: **Jungle Bells** at San Diego Zoo, 9am-8pm. www.sandiegozoo.org/junglebells

Thru Jan 5: **Christmas Celebration at SeaWorld** San Diego.

Jan 1: New Year's Day 2022

Jan 1: **133rd Rose Parade** in Pasadena, 8am. www.toumamentofroses.com

Jan 1: **Del Mar Lifeguard Penguin Plunge** at City of Del Mar Beach Safety Center, 11am. www.visitdelmarvillage.com

Jan 1: **108th Rose Bowl Game** at Rose Bowl Stadium in Pasadena, 1pm. Watch on ESPN at 2pm. www.tournamentofroses.com

Jan 2: **LA Chargers vs. Denver Broncos** at SoFi Stadium, 1:05pm. www.chargers.com

Jan 2: **SD Sockers vs. Ontario Fury** at Pechanga Arena San Diego, 5:05pm. www.sdsockers.com

Jan 4: **LA Lakers vs. Sacramento Kings** at Staples Center, 7:30pm. www.nba.com/lakers

Jan 6: **The Simon and Garfunkel**

Story at Balboa Theatre, 7:30pm. www.sandiegoteatres.org

Jan 6-30: **The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time** at Lyceum Theatre. www.sdrep.org

Jan 7-8: **Winter Festival at Poway** Community Park poway.org

Jan 9: **Del Dios 50K, Half Marathon, 10K and 5K** at Lake Hodges. enduranceraceseries.com/del-dios

Jan 9: **LA Rams vs. San Francisco 49ers** at SoFi Stadium, 1:25pm. www.therams.com

Jan 15: **Kids Marathon Mile** at Legoland California Resort, 7:45am. www.carlsbadmarathon.com

Jan 15-16: **Monster Jam** at Petco Park www.monsterjam.com

Jan 16: **Carlsbad Marathon, Half Marathon, Surf Sun Run 5K**, and Double Down Challenge www.carlsbadmarathon.com

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Substance and Alcohol Rehabilitation Counselors: The steep road to helping others

by Dawn Grimes

Navy Medicine and Readiness
Training Command Guantanamo Bay

If you've ever met your command Substance & Alcohol Rehabilitation Program (SARP) counselor, you may not be aware of how arduous the path to helping others. Some may know that SARP counselors undergo a three-month training, but how many know SARP training has an average graduation rate of 30%?

Aviation Machinist Mate First Class Alberic Mareus knows. He is one of ten who graduated from his class in June 2018. Getting to that class was the last leg of a journey that took Mareus nearly a year or decades, depending on how you look at it.

Born in a small town outside of Port Au Prince Haiti, Mareus was raised largely by his grandparents. "My grandmother was an herbal doctor and midwife for the whole town, she was a teacher of natural medicine," Mareus explained.

"That's where I learned all the basics about plants and their effect on the central nervous system, and how they could play a part in healing addiction to substances."

When Mareus left Haiti for the United States in 2001, he spoke French, Haitian Creole, and Spanish. He learned English on his own and by 2004, at age 24, he spoke it well enough to join the US Navy. He hoped to travel and to become a law enforcement officer. "I found out when I was in boot camp that I could not go law enforcement because I was not yet a U.S. citizen, and it was not allowed." For two years after basic training, Mareus served as an undesignated Seaman within the Deck Department on board USS WASP LHD-1.

"When I completed the time requirement, I crossed rate to Aviation Machinist Mate because I was qualified for it, and it was my best option over painting the ship."

For the next dozen years,

Mareus fulfilled Aviation Machinist Mate's responsibilities in a variety of roles, including a four year assignment to the USS Wasp, four years with VAW-120, four years with VRC-40, and three years with NMRTC Portsmouth, VA. For the duration of these years, homeport was Virginia, except for the one year he served on Guard Duty with the Joint Task Force Guantanamo Bay (JTF-GTMO) in 2011. "In 2010 they were looking for volunteers to go to Iraq or Guantanamo Bay. So I volunteered and got selected."

After serving within the detention facility, Mareus once again returned to Virginia where he found himself taking personal and career inventory. "I was a Deacon in my church working with people who were in recovery for alcohol or drugs and with an outreach program for homeless and at-risk youth. I was also going to school for Public Health, and I realized it was time to match my Navy Career with the civilian work I was doing."

Mareus had the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (AS-VAB) score needed to apply, but this was just the beginning. He also needed to demonstrate his aptitude for English, show proof of taking English composition courses and write and submit a comprehensive essay. Having proven himself academically fit, Mareus, requested and received referral from a SARP counselor to attend a 30-day inpatient treatment OJT.

"At the end, the counselors assess your performance on how you have handled the experience, to see if you have in any way been reactive, due potentially to past trauma," Mareus explained. "The Navy wants to know how you do in a treatment environment because, if I'm carrying my own trauma, then I may have transference with someone else that has had a similar experience. I may react in a way that may not be in the patient's best interest."

Only after completing the OJT program, with the recommendation of experienced SARP counselors, was Mareus allowed to apply for the program. Still he had months more training to do. "As part of the application process, you have six months to attend all the self-help groups: NA-Narcotics Anonymous; AA - Alcoholics Anonymous; Overeaters; Sex Addiction Anonymous; Co-Dependent Anonymous; Gambling addiction self-help group and you must attend multiple meetings for all the groups."

Mareus completed the meetings every week while working his full-time job as an Aviation Machinist Mate First Class. "I was very fortunate; my command was very supportive, and they let me attend groups on Fridays."

Nearly a year after he'd made

enough to open-up and help me to understand so I can help them help themselves."

Mareus is under the supervision of Lt.j.g. Justen Bryant, a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, and US NMRTC GB Department Head for Behavioral Health. Bryant assesses individuals after Mareus has performed the Substance Use Disorder Screening to determine the diagnosis. Prior to Mareus' arrival, Bryant was responsible for all aspects of Substance Use Disorder and mental health therapy.

"If a ship is lost at sea, the lighthouse guides them to shore. In additions, the SARP counselor is that lighthouse. It's a vital and rewarding role that can have lasting generational change." Bryant said.

Mareus believes the work he is doing is an extension of the lessons his grandma taught him growing up. "I was raised to believe that if you can touch someone's heart, you can change their mind and that's where my caring aspect comes from." Mareus added, "I hope that people will take advantage of the resources available here on island and remove the stigma that is associated with seeking help. "Helping someone to help themselves so they can reach their full potential is my calling. I am not here to get them in trouble, I am here to help. The first step is to reach out and He will walk with you."

After working in the profession for three years, SARP Counselors can apply for and take an international certification exam recognized by 40 states, 14 countries and a dozen federal-level certification boards. Currently, the Certified Navy Alcohol and Drug Counselor community is undermanned. Sailors interested in exploring the program can find more information at the Navy Bureau of Medicine website at: <https://www.med.navy.mil/Navy-Medicine-Operational-Training-Command/Surface-Warfare-Medical-Institute/Navy-Drug-and-Alcohol-Counselor-School/>



Aviation Machinist Mate First Class Alberic Mareus is the Substance and Alcohol Rehabilitation Counselor for Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, doing what he feels called to do, although the path to helping others was not easy or straight. Photo by Dawn Grimes.

the decision to try, Mareus was selected to attend the 3-month Navy Drug Alcohol Addiction Counseling School (NDAACS) in San Diego. "70% drop out or are deselected after the first week, some end up seeking up help for themselves for past unresolved issues either childhood or adulthood," Mareus said. "When you're in an environment where you're with counselors who have been doing this for years, they know when you're BS'ing. This is a very intense training."

Mareus once again returned to Virginia, where he served as the SARP Counselor for Naval Hospital Portsmouth for three years before reporting for duty in the only other location he'd been to before, Guantanamo Bay. Now,

as the SARP Counselor assigned to Navy Medicine Readiness and Training Command, Mareus is responsible for providing treatment and education to all active-duty personnel on the installation. He will soon lead his first Prime for Life at Guantanamo Bay. It's an early intervention program formerly known as Impact, a 20-hours class over three days that takes place at the hospital.

Mareus emphasized that most often the individuals who are referred to him are dealing with more than the incident that usually precedes a referral. "I would describe the incident as the tip of the iceberg, besides what everyone has seen, what is beneath that's going on?" Mareus said. "I want to help the person feel comfortable

Social Security Matters

How do I apply for Social Security benefits?

Dear Rusty: I would like some advice concerning Social Security. In January I will be 62.5 years old. I was laid off two years ago and have not had a steady income since (though I still have bills to pay). I also did not qualify for unemployment. Therefore, what little I had for "retirement" is now gone. For this reason, I have been seriously considering applying for Social Security as soon as I'm able. I remember reading something that said I should begin the "paperwork" three months ahead of time. I'd like to begin that process, but don't know where to begin. Could you guide me to the right place?

Signed: Ready to Claim Benefits

Dear Ready to Claim: Sorry to hear of your loss of employment and your current financial struggle, but the Social Security benefits you earned from a lifetime of working are there for you. Here's what you need to know about applying for Social Security:

Since you are already 62 years of age, you can apply for your Social Security at any time now. The process is fairly simple, especially if you apply online, which you can do at www.ssa.gov. Just click on the "Retirement" icon and you'll see a link to the online application. You simply fill out the application, save it if you need more time to work on it, and later when you're done submit it online to Social Security. Before you do that, however, you'll need to create your personal "my Social Security" online account, which is easy to do at www.ssa.gov/myaccount. Once you have your online account set up you can fill out and submit the online application. Of course, you can also apply via telephone by calling either the national Social Security service center at 1.800.772.1213 or your local Social Security office to make an appointment to apply but applying online at www.ssa.gov is by far the most efficient way.

You can apply for your SS benefits up to 4 months before the month you wish your payments to start. On the application you will tell them which month you want your benefits to begin so you can apply before you want to start benefits. Since you're applying before your full retirement age of 66 years and 10 months, there are a couple of things to keep in mind:

- By claiming at age 62 ½ your benefit amount will be permanently reduced by about 29%. You only get your full benefits if you wait to claim until your full retirement age (FRA) which for you is 66 years and 10 months; claiming any earlier means a permanently reduced benefit.

- If you claim before your FRA and you return to work, you'll be subject to an "earnings test" which limits how much you can earn from working while collecting early SS benefits. The 2022 earnings limit is \$19,560 and if that is exceeded SS will take back \$1 for every \$2 you are over the limit (half of what you exceed the limit by). The earnings limit will apply until you reach your full retirement age, and the allowable earnings are more in the year you reach FRA.

Applying online for Social Security benefits is a reasonably easy process, and if you have even moderate computer skills you shouldn't be intimidated by the thought. But if you are, simply call Social Security and request an appointment to apply. They will walk you through the application process.



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