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Three new USPS commemorative stamps honoring the 250th anniversaries of the Army, Navy and Marine Corps were unveiled during a ceremony at Freedom Plaza in Washington, May 16. DOD Screenshot

USPS RECOGNIZES 250 YEARS OF ARMY, NAVY, MARINE CORPS WITH NEW STAMPS

by C. Todd Lopez
 DOD News

To commemorate the 250th anniversaries of the Army, Navy and Marine Corps, the U.S. Postal Service released a set of three new commemorative stamps that recognize each service's long-standing dedication to defending the nation.

The three stamps, each featuring the name of the military service, the service seal and the inscriptions "250 Years of Service," "Since 1775," and "Forever/USA," were revealed during a ceremony today at Freedom Plaza in Washington.

Jeffery A. Adams, USPS corporate communications vice president and Army veteran,

spoke about the importance of service during the event.

"Service isn't about a uniform. It's about impact. It's about showing up. It's about standing up when it matters the most," he said. "As we honor 250 years of military service ... we also recognize those who are serving right now all over the world and keeping our freedoms alive. I know many of you here are veterans yourselves, and maybe you're still serving, and for that, we thank you."

Adams said he hopes the new military-themed commemorative stamps will remind all Americans who use them of the importance of military service.

"[They are] reminders for

every American that freedom didn't come easy, and it doesn't stay unless we protect it," he said. "Let these stamps serve as a lasting symbol of courage, of commitment and of country."

Army Lt. Gen. Gregory J. Brady, Army inspector general, said while the new stamps are a significant commemoration, the Postal Service itself has considerable value to troop morale overall.

"Today's important commemoration should not close without recognizing the huge morale booster that the Postal Service has been to our military," he said. "Generations of military personnel serving in foreign lands, deployed — I can attest to this ... firsthand — they've always

cherished those two words when [their] first sergeant is coming in with that big bag. Those two words are 'mail call!' [It's] the high point of their months and years away from home. Mr. Postmaster General, Team USPS, thank you."

Navy Vice Adm. Michael Boyle, director of the Navy staff, pointed out the unique relationship between the Navy and the Postal Service — considering how many Sailors are not on land, but at sea.

"I want to thank the United States Postal Service for honoring this legacy with the release of the Armed Forces 250th Anniversary Forever Stamps," Boyle said. "I would also like

see **Stamps, page 2**

USS *Charleston* deploys to U.S. Northern Command AOR

U.S. Fleet Forces Command
 Public Affairs

Littoral combat ship USS *Charleston* departed Naval Base San Diego to support U.S. Northern Command southern border operations, May 20.

Charleston takes over duties previously carried out by guided-missile destroyer USS *Stockdale* and will conduct similar operations in support of USNORTHCOM's border security objectives.

Charleston's departure reinforces the Navy's role in the Department of Defense's coordinated effort in response to Presidential executive orders and directives. *Charleston's* sea-going capacity contributes to USNORTHCOM's ability to protect the United States' territorial integrity, sovereignty, and security, through a coordinated, multi-domain strategy.

Charleston will continue operations with an embarked U.S. Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment (LEDET). These Coast Guard teams bring specialized expertise in maritime interdiction, enabling the ship to address a range of challenges, from countering illegal activities to supporting humanitarian efforts and homeland security operations.

Charleston is homeported in San Diego as part of Littoral Combat Ship Squadron 1. Littoral combat ships are fast, optimally-manned, mission-tailored surface platforms that operate in near-shore and open-ocean environments, winning against 21st-century threats. LCS integrate with joint, combined, manned

and unmanned teams to support forward-presence, maritime security, sea control, and deterrence missions around the globe.

Now, while operating in the USNORTHCOM area of responsibility, the *Charleston* will respond to national priorities and a Presidential declaration emphasizing the military's role in securing U.S. borders. As the DoD's lead for implementing border-related executive orders, USNORTHCOM continues to support critical Department of Homeland Security capabilities gaps, with the *Charleston* marking a vital contribution to these efforts.

USFFC is responsible for manning, training, equipping and employing more than 125 ships, 1,000 aircraft, and 103,000 active-duty service members and government employees, and providing combat-ready forces forward to numbered fleets and combatant commanders around the globe in support of U.S. national interests.

USFFC also serves as the Navy's Service Component Commander to both USNORTHCOM and U.S. Strategic Command, providing naval forces in support of joint missions as Commander, Naval Forces Northern Command (NAVORTH) and Commander, Naval Forces Strategic Command (NAVSTRAT). USFFC is the Strategic Command Joint Force Maritime Component Commander (JFMCC STRAT) and executes Task Force Atlantic in coordination with U.S. Naval Forces Europe.

Camp Pendleton honored with award for installation excellence

Secretary of Defense Peter B. Hegseth recently recognized six recipients for outstanding and innovative efforts of the people who operate and maintain U.S. military installations. Included in the Commander in Chief's Annual Award for Installation Excellence was Camp Pendleton for its exemplary support of DoD missions. Other recipients included Army Garrison Fort Knox, Ky. and Vandenberg Space Force Base. Installations compete on how well they achieve the Department's objectives in several areas of installation management, including mission support, quality of life and unit morale, real property management, safety, health and security, communications, and public relations.

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Your Military

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Trump lauds cadets for choosing service, honor over civilian life



The graduating class of U.S. Military Academy cadets take the oath during the graduation ceremony at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, May 24, 2025. WQest Point photo

by David Vergun

"No task has ever been too tough for America's Army, and now that 250-year legacy of glory and pride belongs to you," President Donald J. Trump told more than 1,000 cadets while delivering the commencement address to the 2025 graduating class of the U.S. Military Academy in West Point, N.Y., May 24. "You are the greatest fighting force in the history of the world."

The president noted that each cadet on the field could have taken an easier path.

"You could have done anything you wanted. You could have gone anywhere. You could have gone to any school. ... , you chose a life of service," Trump said.

The president urged graduates to savor the moment, but warned against complacency.

"You can never rest on your laurels. You can never give up. You can have great moments," he said.

"Through every challenge and every battle, you'll stand strong, you'll work hard, you'll stay tough and you will fight, fight, fight and win, win, win," he added.

Highlighting the importance of innovation in modern warfare, Trump cited historical figures like Billy Mitchell, an early advocate for airpower, and former President Dwight D. Eisenhower, who was once nearly threatened with court martial as a young officer for promoting a new doctrine of tank warfare.

"You have to have the courage to take risks and do things differently," he said.

The president emphasized the need for forward-thinking leaders and innovators because the battlefield is changing rapidly in light of emerging threats, including hypersonic weapons and advanced drone warfare as demonstrated in the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

"We've never seen anything like it, and we're learning from it," Trump said of the latest warfare technology.

He also praised the class for its accomplishments, noting that nearly a third of the graduating cadets are children of veterans and that four cadets are Rhodes Scholars.

Last year, for the first time, Army lacrosse became the No. 1 ranked men's team in the entire country, he said.

In football, Army beat Navy



HANDMADE WITH LOVE Petty Officer 1st Class Adam Brown reads a card his family gave him upon his arrival at Naval Station Norfolk, Va., May 15, 2025, following a three-month deployment to the U.S. Southern Command area of responsibility aboard the USS Normandy. U.S. Navy photo by Petty Officer 1st Class Anderson W. Branch

in 2022 and 2023, with the help of quarterback Cadet Bryson Daily, also known as "Captain America," Trump said, inviting him to speak on the stage.

"At a time when other top college quarterbacks were thinking about going pro, Bryson's mind was on something else," Trump said. "As he told an interviewer earlier this year, 'I focused on my career as an infantry officer.' That's what he wants to do. So, Bryson, he did the right thing."

Stamps

continued from page 1

to thank the United States Postal Service for their partnership with the Navy, a partnership that has spanned nearly two-and-a-half centuries. You have well and faithfully delivered mail to ships on the far side of the world, always finding a way to keep people connected. No matter the distance. Letters and care packages from friends and family delivered to our deployed sailors at sea make an immense difference."

Marine Corps Lt. Gen. Paul J. Rock Jr., director of the Marine Corps staff, told event guests how the relationship between the U.S. military and the Postal Service has enhanced his military service.

"I still have letters that my wife wrote me when I was a

young first lieutenant overseas on my first shipboard deployment, and I cherish the pictures that came through the mail from my children the first time I went to war — precious memories made possible by the United States Postal Service," Rock said. "That connection remains strong to this day, and I thank the USPS for helping us share this great milestone with all Americans. These stamps will travel around the world and across our nation, carrying with them the message of patriotism, service and unwavering dedication."

On May 23, Vice President JD Vance delivered the commencement address to the 2025 graduating class of the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland.

Antonio Alcalá, an art director for USPS, designed the stamps. As forever stamps, these three military-themed stamps can always be used to send a 1-ounce first-class letter, regardless of the current price of first-class postage.

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Noem delivers Coast Guard Academy commencement address, announces new Coast Guard leadership and Force Design 2028

NEW LONDON, Conn. - Secretary of Homeland Security Kristi Noem announced Force Design 2028 (FD2028) May 21 during the Coast Guard Academy commencement ceremony.

This initiative provides a blueprint to transform the Coast Guard into a stronger, more ready and capable fighting force.

Speaking at the ceremony, Noem expressed respect for the Service and committed to advocating for funding support. Noem's FD2028 executive report outlines a vision for the Coast Guard's future.

"Now, more than ever, the American people need a strong and capable Coast Guard. The Coast Guard must not simply evolve. It must revolutionize how it functions and operates to ensure decisive advantage over adversaries. This requires a fundamental change. Force Design 2028 is the bold blueprint needed to drive urgent action and win."

- Secretary of Homeland Security Kristi Noem

Noem also announced President Donald J. Trump's nomination of Adm. Kevin E. Lunday to serve as the 28th commandant of

the Coast Guard. Lunday will continue serving as acting commandant until confirmed by the U.S. Senate.

The 28th commandant will lead the Coast Guard through a historic period of change. Under their leadership, we will establish the first Coast Guard service secretary and facilitate the implementation of FD2028. FD2028 will re-shape how the Coast Guard functions and operates to ensure decisive advantage over adversaries.

"Now is the time for fundamental change," said Lunday. "Secretary Noem has said that we must reinvigorate the Coast Guard or risk strategic failure. I am honored to lead our Coast Guard men and women in this historic effort to renew the service for the future."

FD2028 outlines several key initiatives and campaign areas:

***Establish a service secretary:** This initiative establishes a legislatively authorized, secretary of the Coast Guard nominated by the president and confirmed by the Senate.

***People:** Recognizing that

the workforce is at the core of the Service, FD2028 seeks to grow the Coast Guard's military workforce by at least 15,000 members by the end of fiscal year 2028 to restore readiness and support a growing fleet and new capabilities.

***Organizational Design:** FD2028 will reform the Coast Guard's organizational structure to become more effective, enabling a leaner, more agile and strategically focused Headquarters by streamlining processes and eliminating redundancies.

***Technology:** FD2028 will position the Coast Guard to become a leader in the adoption and use of advanced technology, human-machine teaming and data. Initiatives include creating Coastal Sentinel, a next-generation integrated sensor network leveraging artificial intelligence for unprecedented threat identification.

***Contracting and acquisitions:** This campaign aims to streamline C&A processes to better respond to emerging threats, strengthen industry coordination and prioritize speed and flexibility. The service will reform acquisition practices to deliver needed capabilities—including

icebreakers and unmanned systems—while managing risk.

FD2028 represents an opportunity at a critical moment in history to transform the Coast Guard. Within 30 days, the commandant will deliver an execution plan, followed by the commencement of a force posture and operational concepts campaign within 150 days, and the first of semiannual updates within 180 days.

"Force Design 2028 is the Coast Guard's way forward," said Lunday. "Under the leadership of Secretary Noem, we are moving out today to aggressively implement this transformational change."

Read the FD 2028 executive report at <https://www.uscg.mil/Leadership/Commandants-Initiatives/ForceDesign2028/>.

The Coast Guard is America's premier maritime law enforcement agency. It is part of the Department of Homeland Security and, at all times, a military service and part of the joint force defending the nation.

For over 234 years, the American people have depended on its missions and the unique value the Coast Guard provides to assure our economic prosperity and national security.

With its ships, aircraft, boats and nearly 55,000 military members and civilian employees, every day the Coast Guard: controls the U.S. border and maritime approaches; protects America's ports and waterways; conducts military

operations to defend the Nation; saves lives; enforces federal law; leads in national emergencies; and maintains the flow of maritime commerce to ensure America's economic prosperity.

More information about the Coast Guard can be found at www.uscg.mil. Follow @USCG on X and Instagram, like us on Facebook, subscribe on YouTube and follow LinkedIn — connect with us.

Chief of Navy Reserve announces 2024 Navy Reserve Sailor of the Year

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Vice Adm. Nancy Lacore, Chief of Navy Reserve and Commander, Navy Reserve Force, announced the selection of Air Traffic Controller 1st Class (AW/SW/IW) Stephanie Y. Ramirez as the 2024 Navy Reserve Sailor of the Year (RSOY), in a ceremony, May 16. Ramirez, representing Commander, Naval Surface Force Atlantic, and out of Navy Reserve Center Norfolk, was selected from a group of five finalists as the fiscal year 2024's top Reserve enlisted Sailors during a ceremony at the National Museum of the United States Navy. The finalists competed for the top honor of Reserve Sailor of the Year during their interview boards held on May 14 in the Nation's Capital. Ramirez will be recommended to the Chief of Naval Personnel for meritorious advancement to chief petty officer per OPNAVINST 1700.10P, Navy Sailor of the Year Program. "If I didn't have the right mentors and the right guidance, I wouldn't be here," said Ramirez, "I also have to credit my Sailors, because they challenge you and you learn from them — and ultimately, they're the ones who propel you."



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DOD expands online ID card capability to enhance benefits

by Army Maj. William Shinego, DOD News

To improve the quality of life for military and their families, the Defense Manpower Data Center has expanded its online uniformed services identification card issuance system to include overseas service members and dependents.

Online issuance and renewal of ID cards initially launched as a pilot program in 2023 to streamline the process and allow sponsors to remotely request cards online. The cards are printed by the Government Publishing Office and securely mailed to the recipients, eliminating the need for in-person visits to ID card facilities.

Shirley Bush, deputy program manager for the DMDC's Real-time Automated Personnel Identification System and Common Access Card program, highlighted the impact of the capability and said it has already reduced in-person ID card transactions by over 300,000 since its inception.

"From my own experience, this capability significantly improved my family's quality of life," said Bush, who served in the Army Signal Corps and remains a military spouse. "When my husband was stationed at Fort Knox, [Kentucky], and I was in Dallas, he was able to complete my USID card application online, and the card arrived at my home without the hassle of finding a local RAPIDS site."

Bush emphasized that feedback from users has been overwhelmingly positive, with 96 percent of participants rating the online system as valuable and efficient.

"As the deputy program manager, I'm proud to be part of a team that directly benefits my family and thousands of others," she said. "It's incredibly rewarding to see real-time impacts on our military community."

The recent expansion allows service members and dependents residing at Army, fleet, or State Department post office addresses overseas to use this convenience, further demonstrating DOD's commitment to modernization and efficiency, key goals emphasized by President Donald J. Trump and Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth.

Hegseth underscored this priority during a meeting with industrialist Elon Musk in March. "We ... [must] ... rapidly field emerging technologies [to] remain the strongest and most lethal force in the world," he said.

Any automated process that helps the warfighter focus on their core purpose — lethality — is welcome, and IDCO is doing its part, according to Bush. She noted that the system is not only helping families but the Defense Department as well.

"When service members are overseas, renewing an ID card often meant costly trips to central locations," said Bush. "By extending IDCO overseas, we've eliminated unnecessary travel, saving taxpayer resources and enhancing operational readiness."

Additional DoD units are approved to deploy to the Southern Border



U.S. Soldiers assigned to Joint Task Force-Southern Border move to a patrol base near Tucson, Ariz., May 11. U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Remoi Brown

from U.S. Northern Command Public Affairs
PETERSON SPACE FORCE BASE, Colo. — Approximately 1,115 service members were approved to deploy to the Southern Border in support of U.S. Northern Command to provide enhanced sustainment, engineering, medical, and operational capabilities as part of the Department of Defense's continued whole-of-government approach to gain full operational control of the southern border.

Approved elements include:

- ◆ Approximately 65 Joint Individual Augmentees from the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, and Air Force will augment Joint Task Force-Southern Border headquarters.
- ◆ Approximately 250 Soldiers from an Expeditionary Sustainment Command will coordinate logistics and manage sustainment requirements

across the area of operations.

- ◆ Approximately 140 Soldiers from a Quartermaster Field Feeding Company will provide field feeding support to deployed personnel operating in austere environments.
- ◆ Approximately 125 Soldiers from an Engineer Brigade Headquarters and 145 Soldiers from an Engineer Battalion will deliver engineering command and control and execute vertical and horizontal construction missions.
- ◆ Approximately 310 Soldiers from two Engineer Construction Companies will construct mobility routes, force protection infrastructure, and mission-critical facilities.
- ◆ Approximately 75 Soldiers from a Medical Area Support Company will provide force health protection to deployed personnel.
- ◆ Approximately five Airmen from an Air Force Logistics Support Element from Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida,



will coordinate rapid logistics and sustainment planning in support of mission requirements.

U.S. Northern Command is DoD's operational lead for the employment of U.S. military forces to carry out President Trump's Executive Orders on protecting the territorial integrity of the U.S. Joint Task Force-Southern Border. *Follow at <https://www.defense.gov/News/News-Stories/>*

Sailors assigned to the 'Swamp Foxes' of HSM 74, embarked on destroyer USS Gravelly, mount an M240B machine gun in an MH-60R Sea Hawk helicopter prior to a flight while supporting maritime homeland defense with a U.S. Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment. U.S. Navy photo by MC1 Ryan Williams

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NSWC Corona scientist paves the way in Navy, Marine Corps innovation

by **Danielle Ferrer**
Naval Surface Warfare
Center, Corona Division

Dr. Clinique Brundidge, rapid capabilities development pillar manager at Naval Surface Warfare Center (NSWC) Corona Division, has built a career defined by scientific excellence, leadership and a deep commitment to mentorship.

In current role leading advanced logistics solutions for the fleet, Brundidge continues to break new ground in science, technology and service. A native of Orlando, Fla., Brundidge grew up in Southfield, Mich., where a love of science and mathematics fueled her academic pursuits. She went on to earn a bachelor's degree in materials science and engineering from the University

of Michigan in 2006, followed by a doctorate in the same field in 2011.

"STEM always gave me the tools to ask big questions and solve complex problems," said Brundidge. "That curiosity never left me."

After earning her Ph.D., Brundidge joined the Naval Nuclear Laboratory in Pittsburgh, Penn., where she spent eight years developing advanced tools and processes for nuclear materials. Her work laid the foundation for a career that would soon expand into applied logistics and field-ready innovation.

In 2019, Brundidge joined NSWC Corona's Fallbrook Detachment as a lead materials scientist. Her expertise quickly elevated her to a leadership role,

and in 2023, she was named pillar manager for the command's Rapid Capabilities Development initiative.

In this role, she leads a team transforming Marine Corps logistics by leveraging additive or advanced manufacturing to meet urgent operational needs.

"Additive manufacturing offers a chance to innovate in real time," Brundidge said. "We're solving immediate problems for the warfighter, which is both exciting and rewarding."

One of her standout achievements involved producing a critical rocket motor component using additive manufacturing—a project that redefined how the Navy approaches supply chain resilience.

"That project sparked a revolution in how we think about supply chains," she said. "It's about solving problems now, not years down the line."

While Brundidge is recognized for her technical accomplishments, she's equally passionate about mentorship and creating pathways for future leaders in science, technology, engineering and math.

"Having mentors has been crucial to my success," she said. "I've had amazing advocates who've helped me grow and push forward."

Her advice to aspiring scientists and engineers is simple: stay focused and push boundaries.

"It's about finding innovative

solutions and believing in your purpose," she said. "The work we're doing has the potential to redefine manufacturing and logistics in warfighting for years to come."

As she continues to lead cutting-edge projects and inspire the next generation of innovators, Brundidge remains grounded in

her sense of mission.

"I often reflect on how I can contribute—both here at home and around the world," she said. "It's not just about individual success. It's about supporting America's Navy and building a legacy that uplifts others and drives innovation for the future."

Pacific Fleet announces FY '24 Sailors of the Year: Velikic and Hopkins

by **Chief Petty Officer Sean Weir**

HONOLULU – Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet, announced the FY 2024 Sailors of the Year (SOY) during a ceremony held, May 14, at the Ala Moana Hotel in Honolulu.

Hospital Corpsman 1st Class Andrew Velikic was selected as the Sea Sailor of the Year, and Aviation Structural Mechanic 1st Class Joseph Hopkins was selected as the Shore Sailor of the Year.

During the annual SOY week, nominees visited historic sites including the USS Arizona Memorial, Battleship Missouri Memorial, and Ford Island. POW/MIA Accounting Agency.

Adm. Steve Koehler, PACFLT commander, noted that "one of the main reasons I remain in the Navy is the opportunity to work with and be around our motivated Sailors. All of our SOY finalists embody Navy core values and set the Pacific Fleet standard of professionalism with their words and actions and these leaders daily make our Navy better."

U.S. Pacific Fleet Master Chief Don Davis and board members shared their experience

and encouragement with nominees. Many elements of the week centered around Adm. Koehler's Fleet Orders of Professionalism, Combat Readiness, Safety, Stewardship, and Teamwork.

"These Sailors are a true reflection of the Pacific Fleet's excellence," Davis said. "Their dedication was unmistakable, both in the way they carried themselves during the board and in their impressive packages submitted by their commands. This experience offered just a glimpse into the depth of their professionalism and commitment to service. Their stories are inspiring, and their leadership reaches far beyond their individual commands. They are leaders our Navy can be proud of. I am confident that they will continue to rise to every challenge placed before them."

Velikic, representing 1st Medical Battalion, 1st Marine Logistics Group, and Hopkins, representing Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 125, will be meritoriously promoted to chief petty officer as part of their selection as the Sea and Shore Sailors of the Year.

For a list of the finalists, go to <https://www.navy.mil/Press-Office/News-Stories/display-news/Article/4192248/fy-2024-us-pacific-fleet-sailors-of-the-year/>.

DOD's CIO looking for top-performer nominations

from **DOD Office of the Chief Information Officer**

The Defense Department's chief information officer is making an all-hands call for nominations for the annual DOD CIO awards program, now in its 25th year.

The program recognizes the top individual and team talent within the department's information technology community including communications, information technology and cybersecurity, spectrum management, position, navigation, timing and more.

Sam Kassem, DOD CIO awards program manager, said they would like to have as many nominees as possible to consider for awards this year.

"We are expanding the awards to our strategic and federal partners, and we strongly encourage them to apply," he said. "These key teammates can apply because of the critical role they play in strengthening, protecting and advancing the DOD IT enterprise."

Katie Arrington, who is performing the duties of the DOD CIO, highlighted the vital role IT professionals play in defending the nation during a recent podcast with the Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association.

"The cyber warriors are the ones when the adversary wants to come in, they're not going to launch a missile first," she said. "When Russia was going to invade Ukraine, they turned off the power first. So, the cyber warrior is the first line of defense we have in a non-kinetic war."

Air Force closing FY25 Selective Retention Bonus program

The Air Force is closing new applications for the fiscal year 2025 selective retention bonus program due to high retention rates and projected full execution of the program's budget. The Air Force opened the FY25 SRB program in December 2024 and is taking action to close the program to proactively manage the budget and ensure responsible stewardship of its resources.

Airmen whose Air Force Specialty Codes are included in the FY25 SRB list may reenlist or extend their enlistment to receive an SRB until the program closes on May 20, 2025. Those who have accepted an SRB prior to the close date will receive their full SRB bonus, including regular bonus payments for those opted into monthly installments.

Air Force-wide enlisted reten-

tion levels continue to meet and, in some AFSCs, exceed sustainment needs. These higher retention rates led to more Airmen using the SRB program, which is expected to utilize the entire budget for the program for FY25.

Due to exceptional enlisted retention and high SRB take rates in FY25, the Air Force has fully utilized the allocated SRB budget.

The SRB program serves as a retention tool, targeting experienced enlisted personnel in critical career fields. Additionally, specialties involving extensive initial skills training and stringent qualification requirements are considered for the SRB.

Affected Airmen should contact their local Military Personnel Flight with questions.

All across the department, Kassem said, IT teams and individuals are doing work to protect the nation, which merits recognition.

"Within the DOD and the federal workforce, IT teams are doing fantastic work, but they are also exceptionally busy," he said. "The department can't recognize the best performers unless they are nominated by their leadership. We ask for nominations to allow plenty of time for leaders to build award packages to get their top talent the recognition they have worked hard all year to earn."

The annual awards program recognizes the exceptional achievements of individuals or teams in delivering capabilities and management practices that advance warfighter lethality, readiness and network efficiency. The major functional area categories covered by the awards program are updated to reflect four technical priority areas:

Cybersecurity: Includes cryptographic modernization, zero trust, cybersecurity of the defense industrial base, cyber hygiene, cross-domain solutions, capability maturity model, and cyber innovations.

The information enterprise: Includes cloud innovation, network transport and optimization, software modernization/development security operations, coalition information sharing, defense business systems improvement and modernization, data center optimization and application rationalization, identity, credentialing and access management, and the special access programs IT ecosystem.

Command, control and communications: Includes C3; telecommunications; position, navigation and timing; 5G/6G/XG mobile networks; national leadership command capability; satellite communications/tactical data links/radio systems; public safety communications; and the electromagnetic spectrum.

Other IT areas: Includes financial and management audits that encompass cost savings and avoidance; IT and cyber budget; IT and communication accessibility; IT and the cyber workforce; industry and international engagements; time division multiplexing elimination; technical debt; and electronic records management.

Find out more at <https://www.defense.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/Article/4192001/>.



The USS Midway Museum is currently recruiting for docents, air craft restoration, ship restoration and safety volunteers. These assignments are a regular commitment of at least 6 months.

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First Augmented Reality Maintenance Systems operational on 5 ships

by Brian Varela

Sailors are a ship's first line of defense against system failures. But when the issue requires a subject matter expert, repairs have often had to wait until a technician could travel to the ship.

Enter ARMS, short for the Augmented Reality Maintenance System. ARMS enables sailors and Naval Surface Warfare Center, Port Hueneme Division (NSWC PHD) SMEs to instantly address system failures and eliminate the need for costly travel — and it's now installed aboard five Navy ships.

NSWC PHD's Augmented Reality Maintenance System (ARMS) team recently outfitted five ships in less than a week with the unique and fully operational remote viewing instruments.

The group installed the technology on destroyers USS *Curtis Wilbur*, USS *Lenah Sutcliffe Higbee*, USS *Gridley*, USS *Fitzgerald* and USS *Nimitz* aircraft carrier with support from Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR) and Naval Information Warfare Systems Command (NAVWAR). NSWC PHD electronics engineer Matthew Cole and computer scientist Nick



Fire Controlman 1st Class Donald Tran demonstrates the Augmented Reality Maintenance System aboard USS *Spruance* during a recent Combat Systems Assessment Team event at NSWC PHD. U.S. Navy photo

Bernstein led the effort between March 22 and 26.

"Sailors are by trade operators and maintainers of their warships," said NSWC PHD Commanding Officer Capt. Tony Holmes. "It's never a matter of if, but when, systems aboard a ship will require some sort of troubleshooting and/or corrective maintenance to keep them operating. If outside help is required to resolve an issue, and that issue can be resolved by over-the-shoulder assistance via ARMS, that is a good thing."

This remote assistance not only empowers Sailors to fix

problems quickly and keep their systems operating, he explained, it also saves time and money by averting the need for an SME to fly out to the ship for on board technical assistance.

"The biggest win in this case is that the Sailor fixed the problem, not the external SME," Holmes added. "ARMS capability goes to the heart of enabling Sailor self-sufficiency, and keeping our warships in the fight."

Prior to the recent installations, Bernstein — who is also the ARMS engineering lead — led a small NSWC PHD ARMS

team to conduct short technical demonstration installations aboard three ships. The group used AR hardware with the same NAVAIR-developed ARMS software, Bernstein said.

For the March installations, Bernstein and Cole worked with the internal and external ARMS team to equip the aircraft carrier and four guided-missile destroyers with the latest hardware and software to be used on their deployments.

"These are the first operational, useable ARMS installs," Bernstein said.

Augmented reality

ARMS is a remote viewing capability used to connect deployed sailors with subject matter experts (SMEs) at warfare centers, in Regional Maintenance Centers and other shore-side locations. Sailors wear a simplified AR headset that allows the SMEs to observe and troubleshoot any shipboard systems in real time by seeing and hearing from the sailor's point of view.

While wearing the headgear, the sailors can pull up technical manual excerpts, maintenance requirement cards, 3D images, design models or schematics to restore a system while the remote SMEs talk them through the process.

The team aims to use the technology to reduce the number of visits command personnel make to ships to provide them with technical assistance. ARMS can also reduce the length of time NSWC PHD personnel spend aboard by diagnosing issues in advance.

As a result, the fleet will receive faster support without waiting for technicians to arrive aboard.

"Now, we can send the right expert with the right tools out to

the ship, thereby saving time and money," Cole said.

Installation and test

The five-day installation in March marked the end of one Interim Authority to Test (IATT) and the beginning of another. The Navy conducts IATTs as a first step to check within a specified time period that a new system works and to gather feedback for upgrades.

The first IATT was scheduled to expire in March. However, NAVWAR Commander Rear Adm. Seiko Okano requested the original seven-month time frame to perform an operational ARMS capability be narrowed down to one month so the AR equipment could be installed aboard the five ships before they deployed from Naval Base San Diego, Bernstein said.

The vessels were ported simultaneously for a one-week period in San Diego, so the group had to work fast. The ARMS installation team — which included NSWC PHD and Naval Information Warfare Center Pacific SMEs — installed each system in less than a day while also training sailors.

During the current IATT, the

team will monitor ARMS usage and solicit feedback to improve its capabilities and handling ahead of the full Authority to Operate.

Gear changes

Throughout the first IATT, ARMS utilized an AR/mixed reality headset that had been used commercially for remote collaboration and training. After the product was discontinued in October, the ARMS system switched to AR smart glasses to retain the hands-free goal of ARMS.

The ARMS team is also looking at other potential headsets, including a 3D-printed alternative the command's Engineering Development Lab is developing, Cole said.

Since he first got involved with the program in fiscal year 2022, Bernstein has watched ARMS grow as it reached numerous milestones. He said he's excited to see ARMS maturing as it's fielded for operation aboard future ships.

"It's incredibly rewarding seeing this project transition to the fleet and stand on its own to support sailors and SMEs," Bernstein said.

IMPERIAL BEACH

Marine Corps Cpl. Collin York, an aerial work platform operator, with Task Force Sapper, twists



concertina wire along the southern border barrier near Imperial Beach May 16, 2025. Task Force Sapper is composed of 500 Marines from I Marine Expeditionary Force who have been tasked with engineering support to U.S. Northern Command with the emplacement of physical barriers on the Southern Border barrier to add additional security that will curtail illegal border crossings. U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Nataly Espitia

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NAVAL BASE POINT LOMA (May 15, 2025) (Above) Master Chief Machinist's Mate (Auxiliary) Mitchell Gatton, Los Angeles-class fast-attack submarine USS *Alexandria's* (SSN 757) chief of the boat, embraces his children as *Alexandria* returns here following a seven-month deployment to the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command area of responsibility.

Below: Family and friends watch as *Alexandria* pulls in. *Alexandria* is assigned to Commander, Submarine Squadron 11, home to four Los Angeles-class fast-attack submarines, which are capable of supporting various missions, including anti-submarine warfare, anti-ship warfare, strike warfare and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance. U.S. Navy photos by MC1 Tiarra Brown.



NBVC and NCG-1 break ground on first of its kind Port Damage Repair Training Facility

by Lt.j.g. Drew Verbis, Naval Base Ventura County

PORT HUENEME - Leaders from Naval Base Ventura County (NBVC) and Naval Construction Group (NCG) ONE broke ground on a first of its kind, Port Damage Repair Trainer (PDR T) Facility here May 19. "This new PDR T Facility will address a critical gap in training capability," said Cmdr. Joshua Baker, chief staff officer, NCG-1. "It will provide a realistic training environment for our force, replicating damage to key port infrastructure, such as piles, pile caps and bracing, decks, quay walls, fender systems, and mooring hardware."

The \$6.4M PDR T, a Department of Defense military construction project, includes a 2,580-SF single-story academic instruction and training material storage building, and five training modules, including a training tank for diving skills.

"This investment underscores our commitment to providing the very best training and resources to the men and women who serve our nation," said Capt. Angel Santiago, commodore, NCG-1. "The strategic importance of this facility cannot be overstated - by locating this training facility here in Port Hueneme, we are creating a vital nexus between UCT2, our naval mobile construction battalions, and NCG-1."

Port Hueneme is the only U.S. Navy-controlled deep-water harbor between San Diego Bay and Puget Sound providing critical unmanned sub and subsurface capabilities, combat systems assessments, underway replenishment training, logistics and Fleet sustainment.

"This state-of-the-art facility will provide our warfighters with a collaborative training space to enhance port operations and safety capabilities," said Capt. Daniel "DB" Brown, com-



Capt. Dan "DB" Brown, commander of Naval Base Ventura County, (second from left) leads staff officers as they break ground on a new Port Damage Repair Trainer Facility on board Port Hueneme. U.S. Navy photo by Lt.j.g. Drew Verbis

manding officer, NBVC. "This facility will support Navy and Joint Force operations, streamline repair processes and drive mission success."

NCG-1 is responsible for manning, training, equipping and deploying combat-ready Naval Construction Force units in support of combatant commanders and Navy component commanders. NBVC is major shore warfighting platform; providing sustained ready forces to deploy, fight, and win. Composed of three operating facilities - Point Mugu, Port Hueneme and San Nicolas Island and home of the Pacific Seabees.

(left) NAVAL BASE POINT LOMA (May 15, 2025) Cmdr. Christopher Rose, center, submarine *Alexandria's* commander, observes mooring operations as the boat returns to its homeport here following a 7-month deployment to the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command area of responsibility. *Alexandria* is assigned to Commander, Submarine Squadron 11. U.S. Navy photo by MC1 Aaron T. Smith.

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Enhancing India's maritime security

by Naval Information Warfare Center Pacific Public Affairs

SAN DIEGO - The Navy is strengthening maritime security in the Indo-Pacific region through a \$125 million initiative designed to enhance India's maritime domain awareness. Naval Information Warfare Center Pacific is playing a central role in the Indo-Pacific Maritime Domain Awareness program, a flagship effort under the U.S. Indo-Pacific Strategy.

The IPMDA initiative aims to improve maritime awareness and regional coordination by providing partner nations with unclassified maritime situational awareness tools and data. A core component of the case is SeaVision, a U.S. Navy-managed platform that aggregates Automatic Identification System (AIS) and other vessel tracking data to enable secure, real-time maritime monitoring, according to Robert Lendvay, NIWC Pacific Foreign Military Sales Case Manager supporting the Navy's International C4I Integration Program Office.



In this Aug. 26, 2021, Navy file photo, representatives of the Indian Navy are given a U.S. Navy ship's tour during exercise Malabar 2021.

Lendvay has spearheaded the effort since January 2023. The initiative also integrates commercial satellite-based radio frequency detection capabilities from HawkEye 360, enabling partner nations to detect and monitor vessels operating without transponders. Together, these tools create a multi-layered operational picture that significantly enhances India's ability to monitor its maritime domain and contribute to regional security objectives.

The program's inception began with a foundational meeting at NIWC Pacific in San Diego, where Lendvay, alongside the NIWC Pacific SeaVision Technical Assistance Field Team, hosted a high-level delegation from the Indian Navy and the Indian Ministry of External Affairs. This engagement was instrumental in defining the initial operational and technical requirements that laid the groundwork for the largest IPMDA-related case to date.

Over the course of two years, Lendvay led detailed coordination efforts across the U.S. Department of State, the Defense Security Cooperation Agency, Navy International Programs Office, and other interagency partners to ensure the program met U.S. releasability standards and foreign disclosure policies.

"These collaborative efforts ultimately resulted in the successful completion of the Congressional Notification process - a critical milestone," said Lendvay. "This authorizes the U.S. Government to offer new and improved capabilities to India in support of IPMDA. This approval not only affirms the strategic trust placed in India as a key Indo-Pacific partner but also reflects the growing defense ties between members of the Quad alliance: the United States, Japan, Australia, and India."

"This initiative is a testament to the strong partnership between the U.S. and India and our shared commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific," said John Smith, a NIWC Pacific employee. "By providing India with advanced maritime domain awareness tools, we are enhancing their ability to monitor their maritime domain and contribute to regional security."

NIWC Pacific and PMW 740 have played a central role in managing the program's development, working closely with commercial vendors and interagency stakeholders to define a technically sound and contractually executable acquisition strategy. The IPMDA initiative strengthens the region's ability to detect and deter threats and reinforces collective maritime security objectives.

A 50th anniversary celebration

Courtesy story

Naval Special Warfare Group ONE

SAN DIEGO -- Retired and active operators, civilians, and combat support representing warfighters from every era of American combat since the Vietnam War, reunited with former and current teammates on May 22 to celebrate a milestone - 50 years of Naval Special Warfare Group (NSWG) 1.

Established on April 1, 1975, NSWG-1 was created in response to a directive from Washington, D.C., instructing the Commander of Naval Surface Forces U.S. Pacific Fleet (now called U.S. Pacific Fleet) to establish a permanent home for the group at Naval Amphibious Base Coronado.



Adm. (Ret.) William McRaven, former commander, Naval Special Warfare Group 1, speaks during NSWG-1's 50th anniversary ceremony on May 22 at the Silver Strand Training Complex. U.S. Navy photo by MC1 Alex Perlman

"Having spent many years on both the active-duty side and in the private sector, I can say with utmost confidence that there is no other community like NSWG-1," said retired NSWG-1 Command Master Chief Jason Tuschen. "We demand excellence and uphold our values. Our organization's Operators, Sailors, and civilians prioritize selfless service, which makes NSWG-1 exceptional and contributes to its success - and what will keep the organization relevant for another 50 years."

Building on a legacy that began before 1962, Naval Special Warfare Group 1's 50th anniversary celebrates a half-century of continuous adaptation and unwavering commitment following President Kennedy's initial direction to establish the force.

"In the last 50 years, SEALs from NSWG-1 have fought in Vietnam, the Persian Gulf, Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, Somalia, Yemen, and the Philippines, said retired Admiral and former NSWG-1 Commander William McRaven. "While our weapons, boats, and teams have evolved, one constant remains: our people. The men and women of Group ONE are as professional, committed, and honorable today as they were in 1975."

NSWG-1's legacy builds on a rich history of naval special operations dating back to 1942, when the Amphibious Scouts and Raiders and the Naval Demolition Unit were formed to conduct critical missions during Operation Torch, the Allied invasion of North Africa. These units laid the foundation for the modern SEAL teams.

For 30 years following its inception, Naval Special Warfare built a reputation for unmatched strength, lethality, and quiet professionalism, expanding its global presence and capabilities. This legacy of excellence paved the way for the establishment of NSWG-1 in 1975 and continues to define the command today.

NSWG-1 is currently headquartered in San Diego, where a dedicated team of nearly 1,700 Sailors, government civilians, and industry partners who work across 11 program offices.

NSW provides maritime Special Operations Force capability to enable Joint Force lethality and survivability in denied and contested areas. This is achieved through focused development in Long-Range Fires, Maritime Kinetic Effects, and Maritime Non-Kinetic Effects, delivered primarily through O-5-led Maritime Special Operations Task Forces.



LCAC Marines with I Marine Expeditionary Force receive instructions on landing craft, air cushions operations at Camp Pendleton May 19, 2025. The 11th MEU partners with multiple Navy units for familiarization training aimed at sharpening amphibious capabilities and joint readiness. U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Aimee Jordan



UNDERWATER REUP Engineering Aide 2nd Class Samson Baker reenlisted for four years of service on May 23, 2025, while fully submerged inside a diver tank during an Underwater Construction Team (UCT) TWO demonstration on Day 1 of Los Angeles Fleet Week 2025. Naval Construction Group One is homeported in Pt. Hueneme, and leads and manages the overall capability and readiness of its Naval Construction Regiments, Naval Mobile Construction Battalions, Construction Battalion Maintenance Unit, and Underwater Construction Team. U.S. Navy photo by Lt. Cmdr. Lyndsi Gutierrez



SPARKS FLY Marines cut into a vehicle during a tactical recovery of aircraft and personnel course at Camp Pendleton May 16, 2025. U.S. Marine Corps photo by Sgt. Bryant Rodriguez

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It is never a good idea to leave your pet in the car when the sun is out in southern California. Now that our weather is warming up, don't leave your animal friends in the car. A foggy morning can clear quickly and endanger the health and well being of your pet.

SeaWorld San Diego's Summer Spectacular preview

The summer holiday season is almost upon us, and that means it is time for this year's special summertime entertainment at SeaWorld San Diego. They call it SeaWorld San Diego's Summer Spectacular and, as an annual pass member, I was invited to the pass member preview last week.

It was a jam-packed four hours of entertainment, beginning with the newly refreshed, education-focused, Orca Encounter, complete with new music and new video.

SeaWorld San Diego's works diligently with the Orcas is to help foster a deeper understanding of, and connection to, these magnificent animals, and to promote conservation. We learn that Orcas are the ocean's most powerful predators, with masterful hunting techniques and complex communication codes. The role of families is important to them, as is play. Here are some excerpts from the Orca Encounter presentation:

"It is up to us to protect and safeguard the lives of marine animals for future generations. Killer whales and all marine animals need us now more than ever. Our oceans are facing significant changes and it is up to all of us to ensure that they're healthy for years to come. The challenges oceans face can seem insurmountable but, when we work together, anything is possible."

"By properly disposing of trash and encouraging others to do the same, we can help prevent pollution from entering our world's oceans. It's a simple act, but one that has a significant impact. ... Be curious about the ocean and its inhabitants, while maintaining a safe and respectful distance away from them."

During the presentation, interactions between the pod of Orcas and their trainers demonstrate the playful, energetic nature of whales as they learn new things, spend time with their trainers and assist other

whales in learning new behaviors. We also gain insight into how the animal care specialists care for the whales.

A word of warning: people seated in the front rows will almost certainly get wet!

Before and after the presentations, you can enjoy the Orcas close-up, in the underwater viewing area, as they "swim, glide and play in the water right before your eyes."

Head on over to the Bayside Amphitheater for "Pirates Ahoy!"

AutoMatters™ & More by Jan Wagner



The Battle for Mermaid Cove" — an exciting, "swashbuckling adventure on the high seas," played out on-stage and in the waters of Mission Bay, complete with high-flying personal watercraft, an aerialist mermaid, fight scenes where pirates end up falling into the Bay, and spectacular pyrotechnics.

The stunts continue in the Nauticus Amphitheater with the all-new "BMX Blast!" — a high-energy stunt show "celebrating the history of extreme sports in Southern California." World-class, daring BMX riders perform such stunts as "tail whips, bar spins and back flips" as they launch off of ramps, accompanied by a live band cranking out "the pop-punk hits of the late nineties."

Little kids will enjoy the all-new "Rhythm of the Reef" parade.

While there, be sure to visit the immersive, new "Jewels of the

Sea: The Jellyfish Experience." This large, informative and fun exhibit is filled with amazing jellies, "creatures that have roamed the oceans since before the age of dinosaurs. Discover the mysteries behind their stings and explore the unique characteristics that distinguish moon jellies from sea nettles, and so much more."

For serious thrill seekers, SeaWorld San Diego also has a variety of roller coasters. Personally, I find some of them terrifying!

Since it was the Memorial Day weekend, we especially enjoyed the dazzling fireworks show, in the skies high above SeaWorld San Diego, accompanied by music. Then we ended our day with "a dazzling display of vibrant laser lights, set to an electrifying summer soundtrack" in front of the SeaWorld Store near the park gates.

All of this and much more is included in park admission, including general admission for the Summer Spectacular Concert Series at Bayside Amphitheater (June 21 to August 23, upgrading to reserved seating is also offered), "for an unforgettable musical journey featuring R&B, hip-hop and rap hits from the '90s and early 2000s. With the bay's scenic views as our stunning backdrop, this is the ultimate spot to move to the sounds that defined a generation."

For more information, visit the SeaWorld San Diego website at: <https://seaworld.com/san-diego>.

To explore a wide variety of content dating back to 2002, with the most photos and the latest text, visit "AutoMatters & More" at <https://automatters.net>. Search by title or topic in the Search Bar in the middle of the Home Page, or click on the blue 'years' boxes and browse. Copyright © 2025 by Jan Wagner - AutoMatters & More #884

The Meat & Potatoes of Life



by
Lisa
Smith
Molinari

"Should I have Oreos with my cappuccino?" I considered, settling into the well-appointed auto dealership lobby while my car was being serviced. I had several hours to wait, possibly the whole day, while they figured out my used Audi's latest issues, so I made myself comfortable.

Deciding against cookies and opting for the fruit salad breakfast I'd brought in my lunchbox, I made a mental note to sample (line my pockets with) the many free snacks and drinks generously offered to waiting customers later that afternoon.

My delighted eyes spotted Chex Mix, Rice Krispie Treats, Oreos, Lorna Doone shortbread cookies, Fig Newtons, Nutri-grain Bars, Quaker Oatmeal packets, Coke and Pepsi, apple and orange juice, ice and hot water dispensers, a variety of fancy teas, and a high-tech digital touch screen coffee machine from which flowed 14 delectable coffee concoctions with the mere tap of a fingertip.

With the first of many cappuccinos in hand, I found a chrome and wood stool at a modern high-top table, planning to relocate to a faux leather lounge chair in the afternoon. "I should work here more often," I thought, as I spread my electronics, paperwork, lunchbox, and other belongings out around me.

High-end auto dealership wait-

ing room snacks are a relatively new perk in my life — I'd bought a used Audi when my Toyota minivan gave up the ghost after 250,000 miles — but as a military spouse who'd spent nearly three decades dealing with my husband's Navy travel and deployment schedule, I was accustomed to spending time in waiting rooms.

"I'm sorry there are no loaners available today. Is your ride coming or will you be Ubering?" Rob, the agent had asked when I arrived at the Audi service center that morning.

"Oh, no," I said with a chuckle, pointing to the three stuffed bags I'd lugged with me. "I brought my laptop to do some writing, my iPad to check into the Karen Read trial, a cozy fleece jacket, and my lunch. Take as long as you need. Just don't disturb me during nap time," I joked, secretly serious.

The pouring rain outside further softened the 70s soft rock emanating from the sound system, and as I logged onto the free WiFi, my mind drifted back to the many waiting rooms of yesteryear.

When we were stationed in Norfolk and our son was developmentally delayed between the ages of three and ten, I spent so many weekdays in occupational, speech and physical therapists' waiting rooms, I mastered Highlights Magazine Hidden Pictures puzzles and balancing my checkbook to the cent.

When my first minivan — a hunter green Plymouth voyager so littered with ancient McDonalds fries, gummy bears, spent Gogurt tubes, and sticky Capri Sun straws,

it should have been condemned by the health department — was on the fritz, I used the cheapest Virginia Beach mechanic I could find. Not only were there no loaner cars, the "waiting room" was a hard chair just inside the grubby door of the establishment, and the only amenities were a filthy Mr. Coffee machine perched on a greasy 55 gallon drum and a bathroom that hadn't been cleaned since the Carter administration. So, instead of waiting, I hoofed it down the dangerous shoulder of route 246 in search of strip malls.

When we were stationed in Mayport, Florida and all three of our children were in braces at the same time, I had a favorite seat in the orthodontist's waiting room, where I spent countless hours cleaning out my purse, viewing home improvement shows on the television mounted in the corner, and watching kids sneeze on communal toys.

Seemingly eons were also spent filing nails while waiting on kids' piano lessons, tearing recipes out of women's magazines in dentists' offices, and sweating on steamy poolside benches during swim lessons at the Y.

"These cappuccinos are delicious," an Audi waiting room companion whispered to me sometime during my fourth hour.

"Right? So creamy!" I responded with shared joy over finding this secret paradise. And as I nibbled the foamy end of my dunked Oreo, I realized — we may wait forever for Beckett's elusive Godot, but I had most certainly arrived.

www.themeatandpotatoesoflife.com

Veterans News

California Department of Veterans Affairs offers variety of programs, services

California is home to nearly 1.6 million veterans. They range in age from World War II veterans in their 90's to "Millennials" from the current conflicts. Each generation has a different need and interest and each has a different way to learn about those services and benefits, but the one common element for all of you (and your family) is you stood up, put on the uniform and served in the U.S. Military. You are a veteran and because of that distinction you have earned benefits and services that will help you transition back to civilian life, or help you when you are finished with your civilian career and are now looking at retirement.

CalVet offers a variety of services to honorably discharged veterans from residency in one of our state Veterans Homes to helping you purchase a home through our Home Loan program. This department also advocates for veterans, providing information and representation before the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. There are many services, benefits and preferences provided to you by

the people of California as a way to honor your service... explore <https://www.calvet.ca.gov/calvet> programs and find out what you may have been missing.

CSAAVE

Eligible service members, veterans and dependents can receive GI Bill® benefits when attending college education and job training programs approved and monitored by the California State Approving Agency for Veterans Education (CSAAVE).

CalVet Home Loans

If you are a veteran and want a great home loan, then you need a CalVet Home Loan. You'll find the CalVet Loan will save you money and provide protection for your home and investment.

CalVet Veteran Homes

The Veterans Homes of California range in size from 60 residents on 20+ acre campuses to over 1,000 residents on a 500 acre campus. Each home offers a unique environment, levels of care, and a range of social activities.

CalVet Veterans Services

The Division of Veterans Services is responsible for administering a

number of special programs, benefits and services for California veterans and their families.

Calif. Transition Assistance Program (CalTAP)

California Transition Assistance Program (CalTAP) is a program designed to inform and connect veterans of all eras to their earned federal and state benefits as well as provide continued support and assistance as their needs change over time.

Calif. Veterans Registry

The California Veterans Registry is a permanent record of all California Veterans, past and present, who have served our nation since statehood was established in 1850. Each California veteran is entitled to the basic information.

Cemeteries and Burials

The Department of Veterans Affairs has adopted Sections 460 and 461 of Title 12 of the California Code of Regulations. These regulations establish the eligibility requirements for interment in a

state veterans cemetery

Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise Program

The Office of Small Business and DVBE assists small and disabled veteran businesses by providing certification assistance, participating in outreach events, and supporting businesses through advocacy.

Incarcerated Veterans

It is important justice-involved Veterans are familiar with what happens to VA benefits and benefits they are receiving, if they become incarcerated.

Jobs

State and federal employment assistance program, veterans preference programs, How-to-Get-a-State-Job tutorials, veteran-specific job sites, local job fairs and more.

LGBTQ Veterans

CalVet is committed to ensuring all Veterans have access to and receive the benefits they have earned without regard to sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sex, age, mental or physical disability.

ListServ

CalVet has divided California into eight regions each region is associated with its own email database. These databases are used to send out information pertaining to veteran events and programs in your local communities.

Minority Veterans

Minority Veterans Division promotes the use of VA benefits, programs, and services by minority and LGBT veterans. We advocate on behalf of minority and LGBT veterans by identifying gaps in services and making recommendations to improve services.

Veterans Benefit Enhancement Program (VBE)

The Veterans Benefit Enhancement program educates, counsels, and assists qualified veterans receiving Medi-Cal on the benefits of United States Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) health care enrollment.

Women Veterans

California is home to 185,269 women veterans. With California's women leading the nation in military service, it is imperative to acknowledge and address the needs of this growing demographic.

CALVET

THE CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF
VETERANS AFFAIRS

1,578,509

VETERAN POPULATION
(CA 2020)

\$ 8,494,955,000

HOME LOAN FUNDS ISSUED TO VETERANS
(SINCE 1921)

219,850

VETERANS DRIVER LICENSES / ID CARDS
(PROGRAM TO DATE)

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2002 YAMAHA ROADSTAR SILVERADO - 1600cc. Excellent condition, low miles, \$3600 or best offer. 619-370-6134.

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CORONADO - 1 BR apt. lovely, quiet, tv & internet included, laundry on-site. Terrace view to SD & bay. 1 years lease \$2800/mo. all utilities included 619-435-8738.

RENTALS APARTMENTS

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CORONADO - 2BR/1BA. 3rd room can be man cave or hobby room, access to garage. \$3800/mo. Call Jim 760-325-2220.

IMPERIAL BEACH - 2BR/1BA 600 sq ft. \$2500/mo. Washer/dryer hookups. Off street prkg. All new inside. Tenant pays gas, electric, trash disposal. 912 Florence. 619-575-1855.

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RENTALS COTTAGE

CORONADO - 2BR/1BA unfurnished cottage, nice backyd, storage shed, \$3800/mo. includes utilities & gardener. 1 dog ok. Contact via email: Laustin310@aol.com

RENTALS CONDOS

CORONADO - 3BR/2.5BA, 2 story, 2 off st prkg spaces, gated patio, hrdwd flrs, in-unit w/d. No pets/no smoking. Water, trash incld. Min 1 yr lease. Avail now. 805-469-6106 or contact maureenmm3@yahoo.com

RENTALS HOUSES

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RENTALS HOUSES

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Open 7 days a week 9am-7pm
Sales support veterans & their families

Veterans Crisis Line
Dial 988 then PRESS 1

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

THEME: ON BROADWAY

- ACROSS**
- Benatar and Morita
 - Certain tray contents
 - In custody
 - *Main character in "Shrek the Musical," based on 2001 flick
 - Soreness
 - Wore (2 words)
 - Street in Anytown, USA
 - Burn to a crisp
 - Opposite of alpha
 - *Musical with most Tony Awards, with The
 - Grape holder
 - Entertain
 - ___ Aviv
 - Unrhymed Japanese poem, pl.
 - Snakebirds
 - Opposite of hence
 - Shooting star
 - Milk's favorite cookie
 - Zoroaster follower
 - A Beagle bride
 - Mix-up
 - Type of cotton
 - *___ Lloyd Webber
 - Dog command
 - Inference of similarity
 - 4th letter of Hebrew alphabet
 - "But I heard him exclaim, ___ he drove out of sight..."
 - Pool table fabric
 - Altar location

- *Last year's Tony Award winner for Best Musical, with The
- Santa Anna's target
- To, archaic
- Small cave
- Cocaine-producing plant, pl.
- Diagnostic test
- Biblical Isaac's firstborn
- Not quite an adult
- Craggy peak
- Tear

DOWN

- Circumstance's partner
- Lab gel
- Domingo, Pavarotti and Carreras, e.g.
- "Where the Wild Things Are" author
- Plural of #13 Across
- Social media button
- Not his
- *Musical with most Tony nominations
- Barbara of "I Dream of Jeannie"
- *Private box
- Double helix-shaped structure
- Emile Zola's "J" ___!"
- What helicopter parents do
- Savory taste sensation
- Black gunk
- Tapa, alt. sp.
- "Encore!"
- ___ Jean, a.k.a. Marilyn Monroe
- Don't let this hit you on the way out
- Use the other end of a pencil
- Re-equip
- *Rodgers' and Hammerstein's "___ Pacific"
- *Award nickname, short for Antoinette
- Finish line
- *Arthur Miller's "Death of a ___"
- Swaziland native
- *___ of Aquarius," song from "Hair"
- a.k.a. the Wizard of Menlo Park
- Plural of #34 Across
- Late actor Heath
- Social dice game
- Rose oil
- Medicinal house plant
- Tempo
- Give a boot
- Gaelic
- Multicolored horse
- Wall support
- *Part of a play



Visit our military museums

The Veterans Museum at Balboa Park. The Veterans Museum and Memorial Center is a museum located in historic Balboa Park of San Diego, California. Founded in 1989, it is dedicated to create, maintain, and operate an institution to honor and perpetuate the memories of all men and women who have served in the Armed Forces of the United States of America. <http://www.veteranmuseum.org/>
Active duty military, Museum Member, Children under 12: Free
Veterans/Seniors: \$4 • Adults: \$5 • Student ID: \$2
2115 Park Blvd, San Diego (Balboa Park) • (619) 239-2300
Hours: Call for current hours (619) 239-2300

MCRD Command Museum & Historical Society. Museum focusing on Marine Corps history from the 19th century to today is also a research library. <https://www.mcrdmuseum.org/>
Free admission • The Pass and ID Center may issue day passes to visitors who wish to visit the museum and do not possess military ID-call (619) 524-4200 for information on base access.
1600 Hochmuth Ave, San Diego, 92140 • (619) 524-4426.
Hours: Mon 8am-3pm, Tue-Fri 8-4; Family day 8-5:45; Sat 10:30-5, • Closed Sunday

USS Midway Museum. The USS Midway Museum is a maritime museum located in downtown San Diego at Navy Pier. The museum consists of the aircraft carrier Midway. The ship houses an extensive collection of aircraft, many of which were built in So Cal.
FREE for children 3 & under and Active Duty military including reservists (w/valid ID). Adult \$39 (ages 13+). Youth \$26 (ages 4-12). Veterans (w/ID) \$26*Must show ID at entrance. Open daily 10-5, last admission 4pm. <https://www.midway.org/>

The Ranch House Complex at Camp Pendleton. Listed as the Santa Margarita Ranch House Nat'l Historic Site and as a California State Historical Landmark. Docent-led tours are available by appointment; masks required. Please email your request to: MCBCAMPEN_history@usmc.mil or phone (760)725-5758 The Camp Pendleton Historical Society is a 501(c)3 organization in support of the base's History and Museum's programs. Go to: www.camppendletonhistoricalsociety.org/ for information. Hours: Open daily 10am-5pm • Last admission at 4pm

Marine Corps Mechanized Museum Camp Pendleton. Managed under the auspices of Camp Pendleton's Museum Division Office, the collection of over 50 vehicles ranges from World War I to the first Gulf War. It includes Patton tanks, armored wheeled and tracked vehicles, trucks, jeeps and amphibious vehicles. When coming aboard Camp Pendleton, please ensure that you have a valid photo ID for every vehicle occupant along with current registration and proof of insurance. <https://www.themech.org/>
24194 Vandegrift Blvd, Oceanside, CA 92058. (760) 725-5758
Mon-Thur 8am-4pm, Fri 8am-1pm, Closed Saturday & Sunday

ROY'S SUDOKU

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| 1 | 6 | | | 3 | | | 7 | | |

MOVIES AT THE BASES

MOVIE SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE SO PLEASE CHECK THE WEB SITE DAY-OF TO MAKE SURE THE TITLE AND TIME ARE STILL CORRECT...

<https://sandiego.navalylifew.com/> select movies at dropdown menu on left
<https://miramar.usmc-mccs.org/dining-entertainment/movies>
<https://pendleton.usmc-mccs.org/dining-entertainment/theater>

NBSD and Lowry Theater Policy

- Outside food and beverage are NOT permitted: Sales from the snack bar support the movie program.
- These Theaters are cashless facilities. Debit and credit cards accepted only.

Premium Offerings

- Audiovisual assistive equipment available to customers at the front counter.
- Handicap seats and child booster seats are available.

Movie Rating System

G - General audiences ALL ages admitted.



PG - Parental guidance suggested some material may not be suitable for children.

PG-13 - Parents strongly cautioned some material may be inappropriate for children under 13.

R - Restricted under 17 requires accompanying parent or adult guardian.

NC-17 - No one 17 or under admitted.

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Health & Fitness

Military medical heroes honored for contributions to warfighters: Staff surgeon at NMCSO, OIC of Surface Medical Group-Pacific makes the cut

by Robert Hammer

Champions in military medicine were honored during the annual Henry Jackson Foundation's Heroes of Military Medicine awards ceremony held on May 8, 2025, at the Washington National Cathedral in Washington, D.C.

The awards recognized outstanding contributions by senior leaders, medical professionals, and civilians who distinguished themselves through excellence and dedication to advancing military medicine and enhancing the lives and health of our nation's wounded, ill, and injured service members, veterans, their families, and civilians, according to the foundation.

"The Military Health System is no doubt recognized as a world-class medical force," said Dr. Stephen Ferrara, Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs, in his opening remarks. "Medical readiness is combat readiness. This is not just a slogan—it is a reality. A force that is not medically ready is a force that is not mission ready. Taking care of our warfighters will always be our number one priority."

Medical professionals from the U.S. Army, U.S. Navy, U.S. Air Force, and U.S. Public Health Service received awards, as well as an ambassador and a civilian provider.

"There are many heroes in the Military Health System that take care of patients daily all over the world, support the readiness of the force, spend hours in research in many aspects of our systems too numerous to mention, and we have the opportunity to recognize the best of the best," said Ferrara.

U.S. Navy Honoree: U.S. Navy Capt. (Dr.) Matthew Tadlock

As a trauma and general surgeon with 23 years of active duty experience, Tadlock currently serves as the officer in charge, Surface Medical Group-Pacific, where



U.S. Navy Capt. (Dr.) Matthew Tadlock is presented the Hero of Military Medicine Award by U.S. Navy Rear Adm. Walter Brafford, commander, Naval Medical Forces Development Command, and Joseph Carvalho, president and CEO of the Henry M. Jackson Foundation for the Advancement of Military Medicine on May 8 at the Washington National Cathedral in Washington D.C. The annual Heroes of Military Medicine awards recognize outstanding contributions by senior leaders, medical professionals, and civilians working in the Department of Defense. Photo by Robert Hammer. Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs/Military Health System

he prepares fleet surgical teams for deployment on U.S. Navy amphibious assault ships.

Since 2021, he's led the Maritime Surgery Quality Improvement program, an initiative focused on tracking, improving, and standardizing all surgical care performed on U.S. combatant vessels. He is also an attending surgeon at Naval Medical Center San Diego and an associate professor of surgery through the Uniformed Services University.

U.S. Navy Rear Adm. Walter Brafford, commander, Naval Medical Forces Development Command, commended Tadlock, saying, "Under immense threat and pressure, often far from traditional medical facilities, Capt. Tadlock has relied not just on his own exceptional skills as a trauma and critical care specialist, but through his visionary leadership

in shaping the very landscape of how we prepare and sustain our operational medical teams."

"He doesn't just maintain the status quo; he forges a new path."

Tadlock thanked his family and fellow military medical professionals, saying, "Many of the accomplishments that led to this recognition, myself, or others, started at the grassroots level. To be recognized for being a part of these grassroots efforts and to see some of them become how we

do business is incredibly rewarding."

Other awardees include:

- U.S. Army Honoree: U.S. Army Col. (Dr.) Benjamin Donham
- U.S. Air Force Honoree: U.S. Air Force Col. (Dr.) Daniel Brown
- U.S. Public Health Service Honoree: USPHS Capt. (Dr.) John Iskander
- Civilian Provider Honoree: Dr. Troy Akers
- Ambassador Honoree: Sal Gonzalez

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SD County Fair Summer 'Pet-Tacular' coming June 11-July 6

Established in 1880, the San Diego County Fair now welcomes nearly one million guests each summer, making it the county's largest and longest-running annual event. The 2025 Fair will open June 11 through July 6, closed Mondays and Tuesdays, for a 20-day season. This year's theme celebrates pets and pet ownership—"Summer Pet-tacular!" The fair is cashless so bring a credit or debit card. There are cash to credit card machines available for a fee. Save money on admission by purchasing tickets in advance online. For more information, visit sdfair.com

This year's Fair will once again feature festivals each weekend that bring rich cultural, musical and social information and entertainment to fairgoers through dance, music, and more. Here is the full schedule of festivals:

- June 14: Asian Pacific Islander (Paddock)
- June 21: Native American Heritage Day (Arena)
- June 21: Out at the Fair (Paddock)
- June 28: Gospel Music Day at the Fair (Paddock)
- July 5: K-Pop Festival (Paddock)
- July 5: Bluegrass Music Day at the Fair (Avenue)

OUT & ABOUT

First Friday Art Walk, June 6, 5-8pm at Oceanside Library Community Center. Support our vibrant art community showcasing pop-up art galleries, custom jewelry, dance performances, live music and poetry. Event maps list the month's locations, art happenings and sponsors. After Dark Concert following the art walk from 8-9pm. 330 N Coast Hwy. www.oceansideartwalk.org

San Marcos Annual Trails Day, June 7, 8:30am. This year you can enjoy a 5-mile hike to Double Peak Park, a 5-mile bike ride around the Discovery trails, a leisurely, 1-mile interpretive walk and a 6-mile equestrian trot along the Ridgeline Trail. The event area and booths open at 8:30am with hikes starting shortly after that. Lakeview Park, 650 Foxhall Dr. 760-744-1050. www.sanmarcos.net

Giro di San Diego GranFondo, June 7, 7:15am-4pm. Celebration of cycling, food, and San Diego's North Inland region. The GIRO is famous for its challenging and picturesque routes, outstanding ride support, mouthwatering food both on and off the course, and a post-ride party! Ryan Park, Escondido. 858-668-1739. www.giroadisandiego.com

Sam Hinton Folk Festival, June 7, 10am-5pm at Old Poway Park. This wonderful outdoor event will feature musical performances, musical workshops, group jams and an open mic stage. A great variety of folk music will be offered including Bluegrass, Olde Time, Irish music, even kids' music. poway.org 858-668-4576.

2025 USA Surfing Championships, June 9-14 at Oceanside Harbor North Jetty. USA Surfing is the IOC-recognized National Governing Body for the sport of surfing in the USA. Surfing America is responsible for holding the USA Championships each year and for selecting the official USA Surf Team to compete internationally. Competition includes Adaptive, Longboard, SUP and Junior Teams. www.usasurfing.org

Race Across America, June 10 & 14 begins at Pier Amphitheater, 301 The Strand N, Oceanside. Each year, cyclists convene in Oceanside ready to prove themselves in Race Across America (RAAM), one of the most respected and longest running endurance sporting events in the world. RAAM racers bike 3000 miles across 13 states, climbing 170,000 vertical feet in no more than 12 (for solo riders) to nine days (for teams). Cheer on the competitors as they launch their epic sprint. Pier Amphitheater, 301 The Strand N, Oceanside. www.raamrace.org

Del Mar Village Summer Solstice, June 12, 5-8pm at Powerhouse Park. Celebrate the beginning of summer as only Del Mar knows how: with delicious food and drinks from award-winning Village restaurants, fun music, ocean views, and beachy, good vibes. 21+ event. www.visitdelmarvillage.com

Santee Summer Concert Series, June 12-August 14. Community of Santee Summer concerts and weekly Food Truck Rally every Thursday throughout the summer. www.cityofsanteeca.gov/our-community/city-special-events

Carlsbad Lagoon Row in the Dark, June 13, 7-10pm at California Watersports in Carlsbad. \$49 for a three hour glow-in-the-dark themed adventure on a paddleboard, kayak or aquacycle. Join us at the Carlsbad Lagoon and enjoy live music around the campfire, beach games and memories that will last a lifetime! carlsbadlagoon.com

VANC Annual Car Show, June 14, 9am-2pm at Veterans Association of North County. We'll be featuring all sorts of extraordinary cars, trucks, and vehicles. Enjoy live music, fun and a great time. All years, makes and models are welcome and trophies will be given to The Best in several categories. There will be a pancake breakfast at 8am for registrants. Breakfast, lunch and drinks are available for purchase. 1617 Mission Ave, Oceanside. www.vanc.me

Summer Fun on the 101, June 14. Encinitas' most epic music festival and is free and open to the whole community! leucadia101.com/
Balboa Park Twilight Concerts, June 17-August 28. For more than 39 years, Twilight's live music under the stars at Spreckles Organ Pavilion has been delighting visitors. Performances every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. <https://balboapark.org/twilight-concerts/>

JUNE 1-15, 2025 www.armeforcesdispatch.com 11

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AMVETS is a 501c3 non-profit organization that generates revenue for our mission to help the American veteran community. Every purchase made in our store gives AMVETS the ability to positively impact a veteran that needs support in our community!



Your Local USO Wants You!

Volunteers are our greatest asset and the backbone of the USO. Whether helping a Sailor or Marine with a connecting flight, distributing a Care Package, serving snacks with a smile, providing local information, or “welcoming home” ships and troops from deployment, volunteers are vital to the success of the USO’s mission.

While the duties of a volunteer may vary, the goal is always the same – to improve the quality of life of service members, boost their morale, and serve as the link between service members and the American people.

Ready to apply to be a USO San Diego volunteer?

Visit <https://volunteers.uso.org/>

- On the right side see “Interested in volunteering?”
- Click red “Register Here” button
- Navigate to your area
- Finally, select the USO San Diego center nearest to you!

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