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CDC sets new rules for arriving canines to prevent dog rabies returning to U.S.

by Kelly Agee, Stars and Stripes

The U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention is setting new rules for dogs coming into the United States to prevent the spread of rabies.

Dogs in military families or that belong to Defense Department civilians are not exempt, CDC spokesman Dave Daigle told *Stars and Stripes* via e-mail July 2. However, military veterinarians are qualified to get eligible canines ready and to issue the necessary paperwork, according to the CDC.

According to the new regulations, the dog must be healthy upon arrival, at least 6 months of age and microchipped. They must be vaccinated and have the necessary veterinary documents, along with a CDC Dog Import Form receipt, according to the CDC's website.

The cost to microchip a dog ranges from \$25 to \$60 depending on the device and veterinarian, according to Pawlicy, a pet insurance market place. Dog vaccinations typically cost between \$20 and \$50 each; the rabies vaccine costs \$23 to \$27. The CDC import form is free.

"The CDC is updating its dog regulation to protect the health and safety of people and animals and prevent the re-introduction of dog rabies to the United States," Daigle said.



Air Force Tech. Sgt. Nicholas Lande and Senior Airman Michael Omana unload pets from the Patriot Express at Royal Air Force Mildenhall, England, in May 2023. U.S. Air Force photo by Anthony Hetlage

Dog rabies was eliminated in the United States in 2007, but unvaccinated canines can still contract the disease from rabid wildlife such as raccoons, skunks or bats, he said.

These rules apply to dogs that

left the U.S. and are returning regardless of the country they are coming from.

Continue reading this story at <https://www.stripes.com/theaters/us/2024-07-04/dogs-rabies-united-states-cdc-14388810.html>.

Air Force completes first 45-hour nonstop KC-46 flight around the world

MCCONNELL AIR FORCE BASE, Kan. - A 22nd Air Refueling Wing KC-46A Pegasus executed the world's first nonstop, Pegasus westbound circumnavigation endurance flight, called Project Magellan, June 29-July 1, starting and finishing here. This flight was the latest Maximum Endurance Operation for the KC-46A Pegasus, Air Mobility Command's newest tanker aircraft. Overall, MEOs extend aircraft missions in both time and aircrew, to enable greater capabilities and greater reach over greater distances. In doing so, MEOs enable Air Mobility Command to surge personnel, supplies and aircraft to sustain initial operations and project and connect the Joint Force, anywhere in the world. The foundation of Rapid Global Mobility is fuel, provided by tankers.

MARINE CORPS REVIVES IN-DEMAND ATTACK HELICOPTER UNIT SCRAPPED IN 2022

by Caitlyn Burchett
 Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON - An ongoing need for attack helicopter squadrons led the Marine Corps to revive a unit last week, less than two years after it was deactivated, service officials said.

The Marine Corps bid farewell to its Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 269, known as the "Gunrunners," in December 2022 as part of a service-wide overhaul. But the farewell was

not so final, lasting just 18 months.

The squadron, which is part of North Carolina-based II Marine Aircraft Wing, was reactivated July 1 after the Marine Corps conducted an analysis on force management. The analysis found there was a need for an additional attack helicopter squadron on the East Coast to support the II Marine Expeditionary Force, one of three Marine air-ground task forces meant to deploy over-

seas in response to conflict and crises. The second expeditionary force is based at MCAS New River, and the first and third are at Camp Pendleton and Okinawa, Japan, respectively.

"With persistent demand for light attack and utility aviation support, the [light attack helicopter] remains effective in crisis response and contingency missions while proving exceptional relevance in a peer-adversary maritime conflict," said Cath-

leen Close, spokesperson for Marine Corps Combat Development and Integration.

Operating the AH-1Z "Viper" attack helicopter and the UH-1Y "Venom" utility helicopter, the squadron will resume providing the Marines air-ground task force with offensive air and utility support, and armed escorts.

"It was a decidedly somber day when HMLA-269 deactivated. That was certainly reversed today," Col. David Fitzsimmons,

commanding officer of Marine Aircraft Group 29, said during the reactivation ceremony.

The service divested in the North Carolina-based squadron, as well as Camp Pendleton's Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 469, as part of Force Design 2030, an effort to modernize the Marine Corps force and better allocate service resources. The initiative has seen the Marines get rid of hundreds of tanks and cut back on towed

cannon artillery and significant numbers of helicopter units.

The aim is to reconstitute the service to counter China in the western Pacific more effectively in the years to come.

"While this capability has a certain amount of relevance to crisis and contingency missions which we must still be prepared to execute, it is operationally unsuitable for our highest-priority maritime challenges and

see **Helicopter**, page 7

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Two Civil War soldiers receive Medal of Honor, inducted into Hall of Heroes

by C. Todd Lopez
DOD News

President Joe Biden posthumously presented the Medal of Honor July 3 to two soldiers for their actions hijacking the Confederate railroad April 12, 1862.

Then, on July 4, Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III inducted Pvts. Philip G. Shadrach and George D. Wilson into the Pentagon's Hall of Heroes - where the names of all service members who receive the Medal of Honor are enshrined.

"The very first recipients of the Medal of Honor were a small band known as Andrews' Raiders, named for a spy for the Union Army, James Andrews, who led one of the most daring operations in the entire Civil War," Biden said during the White House ceremony. "Two soldiers ... died because of that operation but never received this recognition. Today, we right that wrong. Today, they finally receive the recognition they deserve."

During the Hall of Heroes ceremony, Austin described both men as being well-liked by their peers and eager to volunteer to help their nation.

"One comrade remembered that Pvt. Shadrach was 'solidly built, merry and reckless, with



President Joe Biden, right, posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor to Civil War Army Pvt. George D. Wilson during a ceremony at the White House, July 3, 2024. Wilson's great-great granddaughter Theresa Chandler, center, received the medal on his behalf. To the left is Gerald Taylor, the great-great nephew of Army Pvt. Philip G. Shadrach, who also received the medal. DOD screen capture

an inexhaustible store of good nature.' Yet his brothers in arms could count on him, as one said, to 'sacrifice anything for a friend,'" Austin said.

"Other soldiers said that Pvt. Wilson was 'tall and spare, with high cheekbones [and] sharp gray eyes.' His battle buddies felt from him 'a greatness of soul which sympathized intensely with our struggle for national life.'"

In April 1862, Shadrach and Wilson, both part of the 2nd Ohio Volunteer Infantry, agreed to join Andrews' Raiders. Led by

Andrews, a civilian, the Raiders initially included 22 soldiers and two civilians.

They planned to execute a mission that has come to be called The Great Locomotive Chase — a clandestine mission to travel undercover through enemy territory into Georgia, steal a locomotive, and then use it to travel north to Chattanooga, Tennessee, a city Union soldiers planned to capture.

Along the train journey, Biden said, "they would destroy enemy bridges, railroad tracks, telegraph lines, disrupting commu-

nication and vital supply lines, sabotaging the railroad that the Confederate army used to move troops.

"All of that would make the Union capture of Chattanooga much more likely," he said. "And that would [also] cut off the Confederate army from both the Ohio and Mississippi river valleys. A huge ... strategic victory that could bring the war to a swift end."

Beginning April 7, the group departed on foot from their location near Shelbyville, Tennessee, to travel to Chattanooga, where they planned to catch a train southbound to Marietta, Georgia. During this initial part of the mission, two soldiers were captured by Confederate forces, leaving only 20 soldiers and two civilians to continue on.

By April 11, the Raiders reached Chattanooga and in the late afternoon boarded a southbound train headed for Georgia. By midnight they'd reached Marietta, where they spent the night.

On the morning of April 12, the group awoke and boarded another train, this time northbound, back to Chattanooga. Two soldiers, however, didn't make it aboard and were left behind.

During its trip northbound, the train paused at a stop called Big Shanty to allow passengers to eat breakfast. It was here the Raiders took control of the train's engine, called The General.

"Quickly and quietly, they detached three boxcars and a locomotive, hopped in, and began moving at full speed north to Tennessee," Biden said.

Biden said the weather made their task difficult, as did the presence of other trains on the track that they hadn't expected. All of this slowed down the pace of their mission.

"By then, Confederate forces were in hot pursuit, but George and Philip and the rest of the Raiders didn't quit," Biden said. "They kept going nearly for seven hours, destroying as much track as they could along the way and cutting as many telegraph wires as they could."

The Raiders did damage to Confederate communications — destroying rail and telegraph lines. The engine ran out of steam just north of Ringgold, Georgia, about 18 miles south of Chattanooga. It was there the group was disbanded and given orders to evade capture.

Eventually, however, Confederate forces captured every man who had been on the train,

as well as the two soldiers left behind in Marietta. Eight of those men, including Shadrach, Wilson and both civilians, were executed as prisoners of war.

"Pvt. Shadrach and Pvt. Wilson were among the first to be captured, and a Confederate military court sentenced them to hang," Austin said.

Pvt. Shadrach told his fellow prisoners that he sought comfort in his faith," Austin recounted.

Pvt. Wilson's thoughts also turned to his trust in God and to his belief in America. One account says that Wilson was surrounded by a scowling crowd, but he spoke to them while standing under the gallows. Pvt. Wilson told that angry crowd that they would yet see the time when the old union would be restored and when its flag would wave over them again — and he was right.

"Nearly a year after the Andrews Raid, Secretary of War Edwin Stanton welcomed the surviving Raiders to Washington, and he presented them with a newly created award for valor, making them the first U.S. service members to receive the Medal of Honor," Austin said.

While the two civilians in the group were not eligible for **see MOH, page 9**

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Hurricane Hunters fly Beryl

by Jessica L. Kendziorak
403rd Wing Public Affairs

ST. CROIX, U.S. Virgin Islands (AFNS) - The 53rd Weather Reconnaissance Squadron, a component of the Air Force Reserve's 403rd Wing at Keesler Air Force Base, has been working around-the-clock flying data-gathering missions into Hurricane Beryl, the first major hurricane of what's predicted to be a very active season.

The National Hurricane Center, with the Chief Aerial Reconnaissance Coordination All Hurricanes, tasked the Hurricane Hunters with flying Beryl June 30 out of here, said Lt. Col. Jeffrey Mitchell, 53rd WRS, assistant director of operations.

"We have flown five missions into Beryl," Mitchell said. "The latest pass into Beryl put it at a Category 5, with 165 mile per hour sustained winds."

On June 29, Beryl became the strongest hurricane to develop this early in Atlantic with winds of 75 mph just 24 hours after the system was first

formed as a tropical depression over the Atlantic Ocean.

The WC-130J Super Hercules aircrews flew the quickly developing system that became Hurricane Beryl, now a Category 5 storm. According to the NHC, the eyewall of Beryl moving through the southern Windward Islands and is expected to remain a powerful hurricane as it moves across the Caribbean Sea later this week.

The NHC also announced that a hurricane warning has been issued for Jamaica, where hurricane conditions are expected on July 3, with a hurricane watch in effect for the Cayman Islands. Other areas of interest in Belize, the Yucatan Peninsula, Cuba, and the remainder of the southwestern

Gulf of Mexico should monitor its progress.

The 53rd WRS' mission is unique to the Department of



Members of the Air Force Reserve Hurricane Hunters flew through the eye of Hurricane Beryl, July 2, 2024. U.S. Air Force courtesy photo

Defense as they are the only unit that flies into tropical weather events for the purpose of data collection.

"Our purpose during hurricane season is to collect and quality check the data in storm environments before sending it, in-flight, to forecasters to

inject into models and to try and pinpoint the true center of a storm," Mitchell said. "We're often flying in data sparse regions, so being in a storm for as long as possible closes the gap of information that satellites may not be able to determine."

To support the National Hurricane Operations Plan and the National Winter Season Operations Plan, the squadron has 10 WC-130J aircraft modified with specialized pallets for the weather officer and a dropsonde operator, a stepped frequency microwave radiometer attached to the copilot side wing, and two external fuel tanks. A standard aircrew consists of two pilots, a navigator, an ARWO and a loadmaster.

The AFR Hurricane Hunters are scheduled to continue to fly Beryl until it makes landfall.

USS *Hershel 'Woody' Williams* skipper relieved of duties

NAPLES, Italy – Vice Adm. Thomas E. Ishee, Commander, U.S. 6th Fleet / Commander, Task Force Six, relieved Capt. Lenard C. Mitchell as the commanding officer of USS *Hershel 'Woody' Williams* (ESB 4), due to a loss of confidence in his ability to command. Capt. Mitchell served as commanding officer of the Gold Crew since Nov. 20, 2022.

The relief occurred as a result of an investigation into the soft grounding of *Hershel 'Woody' Williams* near the port of Libreville, Gabon on May 9, 2024. While the investigation is still open, sufficient findings of fact emerged during the investigation to warrant the relief of the commanding officer.

The Navy holds commanding officers to the highest standard and takes action to hold them accountable when those standards are not met. Naval leaders are entrusted with significant responsibilities to their Sailors and their ships.

Mitchell will be temporarily assigned to Commander, Naval Surface Forces Atlantic. Capt. Michael Concannon will assume duties as interim commanding officer on board *Hershel 'Woody' Williams*. There is no impact to the command's mission or schedule due to the relief.

Hershel 'Woody' Williams, a Lewis B. Puller-class expeditionary mobile base is currently forward deployed to U.S. Naval Forces Africa.

Ships Underway

Total Battle Force	Deployed	Underway
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U.S. to expand control of land sales to foreigners near 56 additional military sites

U.S. Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States, or CFIUS, is an interagency committee authorized to review certain transactions involving foreign investment in the United States and certain real estate transactions by foreign persons, in order to determine the effect of such transactions on the national security of the U.S.

The U.S. Treasury released information this week that would expand a Treasury committee's jurisdiction to review land sales near U.S. military sites where foreigners are the buyers.

New Treasury rulemaking would expand the U.S. Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States' powers to review land sales near 56 additional military sites, bringing the overall number to 227 military sites.

ing the overall number to 227 military sites.

A 2018 law granted the committee authority to review real estate transactions near sensitive sites across the U.S.

CFIUS is a little-known but powerful government committee tasked with investigating corporate deals for national security concerns that holds power to force companies to change ownership structures or divest completely from the U.S.

It's made up of members from the State, Justice, Energy and Commerce departments among others.

The July 8 rulemaking announcement comes after President Joe Biden in May issued

a divestment order blocking a Chinese-backed cryptocurrency mining firm from owning land near a Wyoming nuclear missile base, calling its proximity to the base a "national security risk."

Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen said in a statement that the Biden administration is "committed to using our strong investment screening tool to defend America's national security, including actions that protect military installations from external threats."

In May 2023, rulemaking

began to give CFIUS the power to review land sales near military bases after controversy arose over plans by the Fufeng Group to build a \$700 million wet corn milling plant about 12 miles from the Grand Forks Air Force Base, which houses air and space operations.

The proposed rule will be open for public comment for 30 days.

The U.S. has already issued major new tariffs on electric vehicles, semiconductors, solar equipment and medical supplies imported from China.



Early Bird Briefs DoD's morning round-up of the day's most important military and defense-industry stories, compiled by Jonathan Lehrfeld. Please send news tips and suggestions to earlybird@defensenews.com.

Army

- This 41-year-old Soldier graduated Army basic training after a 20-year break
- Army comes ashore in NATO's High North
- Shachnow Lane: Fort Liberty road renamed after Special Forces legend, Holocaust survivor
- Army Reserve captain receives Soldier's Medal for stopping an armed robbery outside Fort Cavazos

Navy

- Navy picks a full-size amphib for high-profile sinking exercise
- Carrier strike group commander who oversaw 'unprecedented' Red Sea battle says the U.S. Navy needs to make sure it's ready for a drone fight
- Ike CSG crew receives Combat Action Ribbon for Red Sea fight

Marine Corps

- Marines want to shut down sea lines of communication in a Pacific fight, CMC Smith says
- Castles are the Marine Corps Air Station's latest defense tactic; it's not what you think

Air Force

- Parents of Airman killed in his home by sheriff's deputy worry he won't be charged

Space Force

- CSO sports new mess dress look, but Space Force says design not finalized

National Guard

- 800 gallons of hazardous firefighting foam spilled at Guard hangar
- Corrections officers union asks Gov. Whitmer to deploy National Guard due to staffing shortages in Michigan prisons

Your Military

- Army garrisons, Air Force base in Germany ease force protection alerts



DUSTY TRAINING | A Marine with 4th Marine Division carries a litter to a simulated casualty while executing a motorized operations course during Integrated Training Exercise 4-24 at Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center, Twentynine Palms June 23. U.S. Marine Corps photo by Sgt. Ethan M. LeBlanc

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Air Force increases number of 'extremely demanding' jobs receiving bonus pay

by Jonathan Snyder
Stars and Stripes

More job specialties considered "extremely demanding" by the Air Force and Space Force will be eligible starting in October for special duty assignment pay, and more of it.

The Air Force approved 78 enlisted job specialties, an increase of eight over this year, for special duty assignment pay, or SDAP, in fiscal year 2025, which starts Oct. 1, according to an Air Force news release June 24.

Guardians working in 22 different job specialties will receive the pay bump, the release said. The Air Force is expanding the eligible career fields partly as an incentive tool, Air Force spokeswoman Lt. Col. Erika Yepsen told *Stars and Stripes* by e-mail on June 28.

"SDAP is used to encourage enlisted members to qualify for and volunteer to serve in, or remain in, designated positions with duties that are extremely difficult, or carry an unusual degree of responsibility, when compared to typical jobs of members of the same grade level," she said.

Eligible Airmen and Guardians may receive a range of SDAP from \$75 per month to \$450 per month, Yepsen said. The Air Force in March listed basic military training instructors, combat controllers, pararescue operators, command chief master sergeants and first sergeants as some of the positions eligible this year for the extra pay.

The added pay incentive recognizes enlisted personnel for duties that require demanding personal effort to ensure successful mission accomplishment, Yepsen said. Those duties also require "a greater degree of responsibility or difficulty" beyond what is normally expected for an airman's grade and experience, she said.

These duties also require special qualifications, rigorous screening or special schooling, she said. The Air Force has also lengthened its SDAP review period from every year to every four years, according to the release.

The change is intended to stabilize individual airmen and guardians' budgets and the Air Force's own budget when it projects its annual costs, according to the release. The Air Force expects



Air Force pararescuemen secure the landing area after being lowered from a HH-60 Pave Hawk during a November 2012 mission in Afghanistan. U.S. Air Force photo by Jonathan Snyder

the number of airmen receiving SDAP will decline along with the amount paid out, according to its fiscal year 2025 budget estimate.

The service estimates 30,134 personnel will receive SDAP in fiscal 2025 for a total of \$91.2 million. The service in the current fiscal year budgeted \$95.2

million in SDAP pay for 30,904 personnel. This year, the Air Force "focused on identifying personnel in extremely demanding positions with unusually challenging responsibilities using a defensible scoring methodology and made decisions agnostic of budgetary funding constraints," the release states.



As part of the MyNavy HR Team, Naval Education and Training Command (NETC) is the largest shore command in the Navy with more than 24,000 military and staff personnel at more than 1,640 subordinate activities, sites, districts, stations, and detachments throughout the world. As the owner of the Force Development pillar within MyNavy HR, NETC recruits, trains and delivers those who serve our nation, taking them from "street to fleet" by transforming civilians into highly skilled, operational, and combat ready warfighters.

We owe the fleet the very best in recruitment and training delivery. To provide the best in an increasingly competitive talent market, Navy Recruiting interacts daily with more than 10,000 civilians interested in potential careers with the Navy. On any given day, roughly 37,000 Sailors are learning at one of 251 NETC training sites, all while the Navy is modernizing with emerging technology and new concepts.

The Human Resources Services Center is the connection for Sailors and their families to MyNavy HR pay and personnel support. HRSC provides direct support through a tiered-service delivery model that combines the 24/7 availability of the helpful HRSC Call Center staff (tier 1) with the extensive tier 2 and tier 3 experts across the MyNavy HR enterprise.

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Naval Special Warfare, submarine squadron display fleet lethality

by Petty Officer 1st Class Alex Perlman and Petty Officer 1st Class Alex Smedegard
PACIFIC OCEAN - West Coast-based Naval Special Warfare (NSW) operators participated in fleet interoperability training off the coast of Southern California in late June, focusing on increasing warfighting capabilities in the maritime domain.

The training involved aircraft from Commander, U.S. Naval Air Forces and Los Angeles-class attack submarine USS *Greenville* (SSN 772), assigned to Commander Submarine Squadron 11 (CSS-11).

"This training opportunity provided the submarine warfighters aboard USS *Greenville* the opportunity to practice a unique capability," said Capt. Kenneth Douglas, Commander, Submarine Squadron 11. "Expanding joint interoperability capabilities effectively demonstrates our asymmetric advantage on and under the world's oceans and I look forward to continued training events with our Naval Special Warfare operators."

During the training, Naval Special Warfare (NSW) operators performed a military freefall and conducted an airborne drop of combat rubber raiding crafts (CRRC) off the coast of Southern California. Following this, the NSW operators rendezvoused with *Greenville* at a designated location before returning to shore.

"Undertaking an operation of this caliber highlights the indispensable role that NSW and the submarine force play within the joint force," said Capt. Blake L. Chaney, commander, Naval Special Warfare Group 1. "By synchronizing our operations, activities and investments, we not only bolster fleet lethality but also provide substantial value in securing access to either denied or contested areas."

Engaging in ongoing training with Naval Special Warfare and Commander Submarine Squadron 11, ensures that the U.S. Naval force is well-prepared to tackle the challenges of a dynamic and competitive maritime environment.

CSS-11 is home to five 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. Naval Special Warfare is the nation's elite maritime special operations force, uniquely positioned to extend the Fleet's reach and gain and maintain access for the Joint Force in competition and conflict.

USS Fort Worth conducts command turnover ceremony



Cmdr. Dana Canby, center, incoming skipper of USS *Fort Worth*, is piped ashore during a change of command on board the ship. U.S. Navy photo by MC1 Vance Hand

SAN DIEGO - Cmdr. Alfonza White was relieved by Cmdr. Dana Canby as commanding officer of littoral combat ship USS *Fort Worth* (LCS 3) at Naval Base San Diego June 28. Capt. Douglas Meagher, commodore, Littoral Combat Ship Squadron 1, was the presiding officer of the ceremony.

During White's time in command, *Fort Worth* had zero un-

planned losses, and maintained focus on team building and maintaining morale. "Today's ceremony isn't about me, today is about the crew and their efforts to support not just the ship but each other," said White. "I will remember each and every one of you, and I look forward to what you will accomplish in the future. This is the best crew I have ever gotten serve with, and no matter the challenge I know

they are up to the task."

"It's a huge honor to be in command of *Fort Worth*," said Canby. "Cmdr. White, Lt. Cmdr. Smith, it was apparent on my very first day of turnover that you've built a high performing team that cares for this ship, cares for one another, and is eager to get *Fort Worth* underway and executing any and every mission."

Honoring military spouses: Past, present, and future

by 1st Lt. Jorin Hollenbeak
Camp Pendleton

CORONADO - The League of Wives dedicated a memorial to honor the accomplishments and community service of military spouses at a ceremony here late last month.

The memorial dedication ceremony paid homage to Sybil Stockdale, a military spouse whose husband was taken as a prisoner of war during the Vietnam conflict, and all military spouses who have supported their families while their husbands were overseas.

"It's my great honor to recognize these 'foremothers' of military family advocacy," said Christina Bagaglio, League of Wives co-chair and Navy vet-

eran and spouse. "Though they didn't set out to transform the role of the military spouse on a broad level, their brave actions left the military families who followed in their footsteps a powerful legacy."

The League of Wives honors the work that military spouses have done "behind the scenes" throughout history. The memorial statue was crafted by artists Christopher Slatoff and Elisabeth Frederickson Pollnow and is a 360-degree, life sized bronze sculpture featuring Sybil Stockdale and three other unidentifiable women.

The unidentifiable women depicted in the statue symbolize the history of military spouses and stand next to a gap that represents

a place for the accomplishments of future spouses.

The City of Coronado worked hand-in-hand with the League of Wives over the course of multiple years to make the memorial a reality.

"This sculpture represents the fact that the military family and the military spouse serve too. They're part of the whole military experience," said Stockdale.

Today, Southern California communities are committed to honoring past, present, and future military spouses through spousal appreciation events, support groups, advocacy, and programs aimed at helping military spouses through their military service.

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A Marine Corps AH-1Z Viper, assigned to Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron (HMLA) 269, taxis for the squadron's final flight at Marine Corps Air Station New River, N.C., Nov. 7, 2022. This was the last flight for HMLA-269, which is deactivating in accordance with Force Design 2030. HMLA-269 is a subordinate unit of 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing, the aviation combat element of II Marine Expeditionary Force. U.S. Marine Corps photo by Servante Cobra

Helicopter

continued from page 1

cess to our needs with the divestment of three infantry battalions," Gen. David Berger, the then-commandant of the Marine Corps, wrote in a 2020 version of Force Design 2030. Berger has since retired.

Months before the squadrons were deactivated, Berger's design concept came under scrutiny from retired generals who were concerned the Marine Corps could be putting at risk its traditional role of performing global crisis response operations by divesting armor and reducing the size of its battalions.

Retired Lt. Gen. Paul Van Riper wrote in a March 2022

that the Corps was sacrificing its combined arms capability to support maritime denial and control campaigns with anti-ship missiles.

"It will be a force shorn of all its tanks and 76 percent of its cannon artillery, and with 41 percent fewer Marines in its infantry battalions," Van Riper wrote. "To make the situation even worse, there will be 33 percent fewer aircraft available to support riflemen on the ground."

The initiative, which began six years ago, is continuously being analyzed and incremental changes are made based on improvements in U.S. capabilities and enemy capabilities, according to Close. Squadron 269's

FORT HUNTER LIGGETT



STORM CROW: Airmen prepare to build tents during Storm Crow at Fort Hunter Liggett in California, June 24. The exercise is designed to demonstrate readiness to conduct air base opening missions in contested environments. U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Scott Warner

revival, she said, represents such a change.

"We are a force composed of highly capable tactical units that can perform combined arms operations at all echelons, enabled by organic air and logistics, that can execute the complex missions defined by our emerging concepts in any potential theater," Close said. "This remains our overall aim point for Force Design, and this adjustment to [II Marine Aircraft

Wing] reflects our continued efforts to modernize."

The squadron is now one of two active-duty light attack helicopter squadrons operating out of North Carolina. Additionally, there is a Reserve squadron based out of Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst in New Jersey and another at Camp Pendleton. Four more active-duty light attack helicopter squadrons are at Camp Pendleton.



U.S. Marine Corps Brig. Gen. Jason G. Woodworth, right, outgoing commanding general passes the colors to Brig. Gen. Nick I. Brown, left, incoming commanding general of Marine Corps Installations West Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton during a change of command ceremony at MCB Camp Pendleton, June 27. USMC photo by Lance Cpl. Mhecaela Watts

Marine Corps Installations West welcomes new commanding general

Brig. Gen. Jason G. Woodworth relinquished command of Marine Corps Installations West Marine Camp Pendleton to Brig. Gen. Nick I. Brown during a ceremony here June 27. "None of the bases and stations operate as an island in and of themselves," said Maj. Gen. David W. Maxwell, the commanding general of Marine Corps Installations Command, speaking to all in attendance, emphasizing the importance of community. He continued, "In fact, most Marines live in the communities, and our kids go to school in the communities." Maxwell, reflecting on the importance of the relationship between MCIWEST and the community stated, "we don't win without you," emphasizing the importance of community to mission success at home and deployed. After thanking Maxwell, Woodworth stated, "we defend the ideals of this nation. . . installations protect the force, and the families of those that go forward and do that mission." Speaking directly to Brown, Woodworth continued, "I never cease to be amazed by the quality and capability of our young men and women that are standing here represented behind me. It is truly a quiet calling."

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AT THE FAIR Marine Corps Pfc. Bruno, the Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego mascot, and musicians with Marine Band San Diego, participate in the Independence Day parade at the San Diego County Fair in San Diego, July 4, 2024. U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Eric Valerio



TEAMWORK Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Apprentice Eliora Sims, left, and Culinary Specialist 2nd Class Jacob Munoz load stores aboard amphibious assault carrier *Tripoli* during a working party in San Diego, July 1, 2024. U.S. Navy photo by MCSA Paul LeClair

Bias for action: Marine saves motorcyclist's life

by 1st Lt. Madison Walls
3rd Marine Aircraft Wing
NAS NORTH ISLAND - Marine Corps Gunnery Sgt. Christopher Goad has what Marines call a "bias for action."

Goad is the powerline division chief at Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 314, Marine Aircraft Group 11, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, and president of the VMFA-314 motorcycle club. He has spent his 14-year career on busy airfields and aircraft carrier flight decks, including his current assignment with VMFA-314 aboard aircraft carrier *Abraham Lincoln*.

"Situational awareness on the flight deck is paramount," Goad said. "We tell these Marines to constantly look left, look right. Every two seconds. Because one second could mean your life."

Goad's vigilance paid off on April 21 when he saved a fellow motorcyclist's life while on a group motorcycle ride with the San Diego Chapter of Marine Riders Iwo Jima.

While riding along Route 76 near Julian, an inexperienced rider misjudged an uphill right turn and was struck by an oncoming vehicle. The group turned around and found the SUV reversing from on top of the injured rider. Goad parked his motorcycle and called 911 as he made his way to the injured rider.

One rider assessed the injured's

consciousness while Goad and another quickly triaged the injured rider. Goad applied a tourniquet above the rider's knee using a belt. Then, noticing another rupture in the injured rider's leg, he applied a second tourniquet from the first aid kit in his motorcycle.

Emergency room staff stated that Goad's tourniquet application prevented blood loss that would have been fatal to the injured rider if not promptly and properly applied.

For his heroism, Goad was awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal during a ceremony at the VMFA-314 hangar on July 1.

"Gunnery Sgt. Goad embodied a bias for action and acted when others chose the role of bystander," said Lt. Col. Jeffrey Davis, commanding officer of VMFA-314. "He saved someone's life, and his actions are a testament to his character and leadership."

When asked about his mindset during the event, Goad said, "I think it comes down to instinct. I'm very aware of my surroundings; I've also learned hesitating at the wrong moment could mean life or death."

According to National Highway Traffic Safety Administration data, California has more motorcyclists than any other state and more than 800,000 registered motorcycles. While motorcycles

FLEET WEEK SAN DIEGO ANNOUNCES SCHEDULE FOR 2024

Fleet Week San Diego schedule of events will run from Nov. 1-11, 2024. A variety of events will be available to the public on Broadway Pier from Nov. 8-11. The only Fleet Week event scheduled outside the November time frame is the Active Duty Golf Tournament which will be held on Sept. 20 at the Sycuan Golf resort.



SAN DIEGO - The San Diego Fleet Week Foundation has scheduled 10 separate events during the 23rd Annual Fleet Week San Diego Celebration that honors and thanks the men and women of the Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard.

In addition to ship tours and military displays, this year's schedule includes special 'STEM themed' tours for San Diego area students, a military family day, the SDSU Fleet Football Classic, Veterans Day boat parade, and a post-parade concert. Other events planned include an MRE Cooking Contest, a luncheon event at the San Diego Zoo and a Breakfast event aboard USS Midway Museum.

Unscheduled events are an athletic competition between active-duty Sailors, Marines, Coastguardsmen and San Diego First responders, and a series of performances by Navy and Marine Corps Bands at various locations in San Diego. The complete schedule follows:

- Enlisted Recognition Luncheon, Nov. 1, San Diego Zoo
- Military/Veterans Appreciation Concert, Nov. 1, Balboa Park
- Student STEM Days, Nov. 6-8, Broadway Pier
- Fleet Week SDMAC Breakfast, Nov. 6, Midway Museum
- Ship Tours/Military Displays, Nov. 8-11, Broadway Pier
- SDSU Fleet Week Football Classic (Aztecs vs. New Mexico), Nov. 8, Snapdragon Stadium
- Military Family Day, Nov. 10, Broadway Pier
- MRE Cooking Contest, Nov. 10, Broadway Pier
- Veterans Day Boat Parade, Nov. 11, San Diego Bay
- Post Parade Concert, Nov. 11, Broadway Pier

made up 3.5 percent of all registered vehicles in the U.S. in 2021, they comprised 14 percent of motor vehicle related fatalities that year.

As an avid motorcyclist and president of the VMFA-314 motorcycle club, Goad is dedicated to riding safely.

"Riding motorcycles is a perishable skill, just like getting back into airplanes," Goad said. Goad's decisive action, vigilance and commitment to safety extends to his role as powerline chief. "I want to give [my Marines] the best example of a division chief that I can."

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Launched in 1931, the Amerigo Vespucci is an historic sailing ship and training vessel of the Italian Navy. Described as “the most beautiful ship in the world,” it serves several important roles.

It is a training vessel, which teaches cadets traditional naval and seafaring skills of the past century. It also serves as an “ambassador of UNESCO and UNICEF, inspiring international cooperation and aiming to strengthen ties with Italy’s allies and Italian neighborhoods across the world. Additionally, the Amerigo Vespucci is equipped with systems aimed at protecting the environment. The ship collaborates with institutes that work to support the marine environment and represents a unique opportunity for scientific research on marine life conservation.” You can learn more about the ship here: <https://tourvespucci.it/en/the-ship/>.

From July 3 to 8, it was docked at Berth 46 of the Port of Los Angeles. On shore was an exhibition pavilion — the Villaggio Italia, with free programs; several large exhibit buildings containing curated, museum quality exhibits; a shop and an Italian restaurant (several years ago, I also covered Red Bull Global Rallycross here). The world tour generates tremendous good will among Italy and the host countries. Over several days in July, high-ranking Italian and US military and other government officials participated in ceremonies.

An outdoor concert late Saturday

The most beautiful ship in the world - Amerigo Vespucci World Tour

afternoon and evening, with a tribute to the late Ennio Morricone — famous Italian composer, musician and conductor (they played his famous theme song from Clint Eastwood’s “A Fistful of Dollars), videos on the big screen, a Saturday night drone show.

Unfortunately, I missed what unfortunately turned out to be the only one of three day’s scheduled flyovers by the Italian Air Force’s “Frece Tricolori” aerobatic flyover, with their famous tri-colored smoke Saturday’s and Monday’s flyovers were cancelled, so their only flyover was when the LA tour opened.

Initially I had planned to go there just to cover the event for “AutoMatters & More,” but then I was also hired to help photograph the event and deliver the photos immediately thereafter, for posting on their social media.

On Monday I was shooting (from within the roped-off VIP area) closing ceremonies that included speeches by dignitaries, and a concert by the Italian Carabinieri (military police) and U.S. Navy bands, as well as the ship’s departure.

The Italians sure know how to throw a party. Monday night, after the Amerigo Vespucci and all of the visitors had left, an awesome after-party was held for the large number of people who worked the event, including several of the Carabinieri band members.

The full Italian buffet of absolutely delicious food was continually refilled. I am certain that was the same selection of food that I’m certain had been consumed by appreciative customers in the restaurant during the event. I had

spaghetti, ravioli, salads, pizza and, for dessert, two gelatos! The bar was also open and very well attended.

The rows of seats used for the Saturday ceremonies and the videos had been removed to create a large outdoor dance area. High-energy songs (many with foreign language vocals) was enthusiastically programmed by a DJ who was really into his performance.

My Italian hosts were incredible. They made me feel very welcome. At the end of the second day, they surprised me with a wonderful hardcover “coffee table book” entitled “Frece Tricolori — The Art Of Aerobatic Flying,” since I had not been able to see and photograph their cancelled flyovers. It was an unexpected and totally appreciated “Thank You” gift that I had privately admired several times in the event’s shop. As if that wasn’t enough, they also told me that they will keep me in mind for future photo shoots. Additional travel might be in my future!

Many photos will be posted soon on the “AutoMatters & More” website. If you look closely at the photos of the ship as it is about to depart, you will see cadets on the ship’s rigging, with the sails unfurled, at the departure ceremony. There is also photography of the ship as it passes by a lighthouse in the distance.

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.

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The Meat & Potatoes of Life



by
Lisa
Smith
Molinari

During the summer after our first child, Hayden, graduated from high school (his third in four years as a military brat), I had a sneaking suspicion that he’d been abducted by aliens. Strange creatures from a far off land had lured him to their institution, garbing him in their apparel and claiming him as their own.

To make matters worse, our son went with them willingly.

Even worse than that, my husband and I agreed, through a complex combination of loans, financial aid, the GI Bill and possibly human sacrifice, to pay these aliens more than \$64,000 a year to keep him.

No, we hadn’t fallen prey to a Vulcan mind warp. The Galactic Empire hadn’t injected us with the RNA brainwashing virus. We hadn’t been hypnotized by Sleestaks. We merely took Hayden to his college’s summer orientation weekend.

When we arrived at Hayden’s chosen university — Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI) in Upstate New York — the institution’s seemingly friendly staff separated us from our son immediately, whisking him off with the other starry-eyed newcomers to “start a memorable and important time in their academic and professional journeys.”

We knew that they were really intending to erase Hayden’s memory. Eighteen years of our hard work, down the drain.

College orientation and other alien mind tricks

In order to placate the dazed and confused parents, they pumped us full of coffee, plied us with shiny new pens, and herded us around to “informative sessions” such as “Letting Go” and “Money Matters” in a suspiciously space ship-shaped building they referred to as “EMPAC” — The Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center.

While the parents were locked in the EMPAC mothership with the institution’s leaders, our children were off playing “ice breaker” games with legions of seemingly bubbly upperclassmen dressed in matching college t-shirts and well-worn sneakers that could use a sprinkle of odor-absorbing baking soda. The incoming freshmen were encouraged to become “independent,” i.e., to make all decisions without involving their parents other than to send them the bills.

RPI’s leaders tried to allay our fears, characterizing the terrifying experience of handing over our flesh and blood to complete strangers as a “normal rite of passage.” They told us not to be concerned, because our children would have all sorts of “advisors” to guide them. There would be Student Orientation Advisors, Resident Advisors, Academic Advisors, Graduate

Assistants, Learning Assistants and Peer Tutors. But all we were thinking was, “Yeah sure that’s terrific, but who’s going to tell him to wear his retainer?”

They said our kids would be well-nourished with a variety of meal plans ranging from the “unlimited access” plan, otherwise known as the “Fast-track-to-morbid-obesity” plan, to the “custom plan”, commonly referred to as the “Go-broke-on-take-out-after-you-expend-your-

dining-hall-allotment” plan. Rest assured, they told us, the students would never go hungry thanks to an impossibly confusing supplemental system of “flex dollars” and “student advantage dollars” which could be used to buy an endless array of well-balanced meals (READ: pizza, chocolate milk, and potato chips) all over campus, 24/7.

They paraded a series of experts from the health clinic and campus security before us, telling us that, without our adult children’s express consents, we were not permitted to know if they got arrested, or pregnant. And lastly, we were informed that we had no right to access our children’s grades, despite the fact that we had to take second mortgages on our homes to pay their tuition.

Finally, we were released into the blinding sunlight to find our newly-indoctrinated children milling about the quad with suspiciously authentic-looking smiles on their faces. Then, in order to squeeze every last dollar from our increasingly shallow pockets, we were funneled through the campus bookstore, where we bought Hayden a lanyard with a hook large enough to hold his student ID, his military ID, his room key, his bike lock key, his asthma inhaler, a bottle of hand sanitizer, a stick of lip balm, a thumb drive, and — most importantly — a framed eight-by-ten photograph of me, his mother.

Six short weeks later, we surrendered our son to the alien academic institution for good, and hoped that Hayden would heed the words of one well-known Extra-Terrestrial and always remember to “Phone home.”

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Veterans News

VA awards \$26.8M in grants to support legal services for vets experiencing or at risk for homelessness

WASHINGTON - On July 1, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs announced it will award \$26.8 million in legal services grants to a total of 108 public and non-profit organizations, all with the goal of increasing access to legal services for eligible veterans experiencing or at risk for homelessness.

Ending veteran homelessness is a top priority for VA and for the Biden-Harris Administration. These grant funds, made available as part of VA’s Legal Services for Homeless Veterans

and Veterans At-Risk for Homelessness Grant Program, more than double the total dollars and mark a 37 percent increase in grantees over last year’s inaugural grant cycle.

“Every veteran deserves access to safe, affordable and permanent housing, and we know that legal support is among the most needed services by veterans experiencing or at risk for homelessness,” said VA Secretary Denis McDonough. “Through these grants, we’re working hard to ensure veterans’

unique civil legal needs are met and drive towards our ultimate goal of ending homelessness for all veterans and their families.”

This grant program is enabled by the Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of 2020 and ensures at least 10 percent of funding supports the provision of legal services for women veterans. Individual grant awards are up to \$300,000 for a 14-month grant cycle starting Aug. 1, 2024. Grant recipients will deliver a variety of legal services to vets:

- Providing representation in landlord-tenant disputes to prevent eviction.
- Assisting with court proceedings for child support, custody, or estate planning.
- Helping veterans obtain benefits like disability compensation.
- Defending veterans in criminal cases that can prolong or increase their risk of homelessness, such as outstanding warrants, fines, and driver’s license

revocation.

- Upgrading characterization of discharges or dismissals of former members of the Armed Forces.

Legal services are one way VA is working to eliminate Veteran homelessness and meet the goal of placing at least 41,000 Veterans experiencing homelessness into permanent housing this year. Thanks in part to VA’s efforts, the number of Veterans experiencing homelessness has

fallen by nearly 5 percent since early 2020 and by more than 52 percent since 2010. The department has also expanded access to health care for homeless Veterans and called for a moratorium on foreclosures for Veterans with VA-guaranteed loans.

Refer to <https://news.va.gov/press-room/va-awards-26-8m-in-grants-to-support-legal-services-for-veterans-experiencing-or-at-risk-for-homelessness/>.

MOH continued from page 2

the Medal of Honor, the soldiers were. Shadrach and Wilson, however, were never recommended for the medal.

“Their heroic deeds went unacknowledged for over a century. But time did not erase their valor,” Biden said during the White House ceremony.

While inducting them into the Hall of Heroes, Austin said, “Today, more than 160 years later, we complete that arc of history, and we link the first recipients of the Medal of Honor to the

newest recipients of the Medal of Honor.”

Austin said the names of Shadrach and Wilson would finally join those of their fellow Raiders.

“The names of Pvt. Philip Shadrach and Pvt. George Wilson will be inscribed forever in the Hall of Heroes alongside their fellow Raiders,” Austin said. “Their medals are new, yet their bravery is eternal. On this Independence Day, their story reminds us of the American patriots who risked everything for our freedom and for our union and for our future

of liberty under law. Their story doesn’t just inspire us, it challenges us. So we are not just here to honor their sacrifice, we are here to live up to their example.”

Descendants of the two soldiers were on hand at both the White House and Pentagon ceremonies to represent them.

At the White House ceremony, Shadrach’s great-great nephew Gerald Taylor received the medal on his behalf. Receiving the medal on behalf of Wilson was his great-great granddaughter Theresa Chandler.

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About our military healthcare workers



On June 28, NHCP conducted the Graduate Medical Education Graduation Ceremony for the following programs: Family Medicine; Sports Medicine; General Practice Dentistry; and Advanced Education in General Dentistry. Congratulations to all of the graduates and best of luck in your future assignments!!



NMRTC Camp Pendleton participated in the recent 28th Annual Oceanside Independence Day Parade. Our Sailors had a great time interacting with the community while celebrating the 248th birthday of our great nation. Thank you to all of the Sailors who volunteered to participate and thank you to everyone who came out to enjoy the parade!



Capt. Elizabeth Adriano, NMCS's Director, presented the Commander's Cup award for the third quarter of fiscal year 2024 to the hospital's Branch Medical Clinic Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, July 1. BMC MCAS Miramar was awarded the Commander's Cup for exhibiting outstanding performance and excellent customer service. The Navy Surgeon General's Navy Medicine Culture of Excellence Policy Statements Memorandum outlines how commands will "create & maintain a culture that promotes respect, dignity & trust for every single person by every single person." The hospital's Commander's Cup recognizes our staff for outstanding customer service performance that creates & maintains the Culture of Excellence. Our team of skilled professionals are our most important resource. Patients are our focus. Success is judged by those we serve! Bravo zulu to the leaders and staff of the BMC MCAS Miramar!

ARMED SERVICES YMCA CAMP PENDLETON
STRENGTHENING OUR MILITARY FAMILY™

WHO WE ARE
The mission of the Armed Services YMCA Camp Pendleton is to enhance the lives of military members and their families in spirit, mind, and body through programs relevant to unique challenges of military life. For the past 81 years, our goal has been to strengthen military families who work or reside on Camp Pendleton.

OUR CORE PROGRAMS

<p>FISHER CHILDREN'S CENTER Offers accessible, accredited, quality and affordable childcare for young children to help prepare them for future success.</p> <p>CAMP HERO Encourages healthy living and provides outdoor activities and social bonding opportunities for military children.</p> <p>HOLIDAY SUPPORT Toy giveaways and financial assistance for active duty service members and their families during the holidays.</p>	<p>OPERATION LITTLE LEARNERS An interactive parent and child education program that offers parents and their preschoolers an opportunity to learn and grow.</p> <p>OPERATION KID COMFORT Custom, hand-made quilts to help children cope with the separation of a parent's deployment.</p> <p>SOI RECREATION CENTER Open on the weekends, this recreation space provides a place for School of Infantry students to relax and recharge.</p>	<p>OPERATION HERO A no-cost after school program designed to help military kids who may be struggling with change get back on track at home and in school.</p> <p>SERVICE EVENTS Support military families through dances, giveaways, and community events.</p> <p>FOOD DISTRIBUTION & FINANCIAL SUPPORT Assistance with food, diapers, gas, and other necessities through monthly distributions, a food pantry, and emergency commissary and gas cards.</p>
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Health & Fitness

USTRANSCOM: Delivering care to warfighters, bringing heroes

by Iain Page

U.S. Transportation Command

The Defense Department's patient movement system ensures the expedited transport and en route medical care of service members — anywhere, any time.

U.S. Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM), headquartered at Scott Air Force Base, Illinois, is at the heart of this global system, providing the logistical and medical expertise necessary to sustain America's injured and ill warfighters.

Within USTRANSCOM are three Theater-Specific Patient Movement Requirements Centers (TPMRC) -- TPMRC-Americas (TPMRC-A), based in Illinois; TPMRC-East (TPMRC-E), based in Germany; and TPMRC-West (TPMRC-W), based in Hawaii.

Navy Chief Petty Officer Garrett Banner, a TPMRC-A superintendent, said USTRANSCOM's mission as the Defense Department's single manager for global patient movement is vital to ensuring warfighters receive the care they need.

"[We] regulate the movement of patients by air, sea and land," Banner said. "This oversight allows us to manage the entire patient movement process effectively, ensuring continuous care from the point of injury to the medical treatment facility."

The patient movement system comprises several interdependent functions, including specialized Aeromedical Evacuation and Critical Care Air Transport Teams

capable of providing intensive care while airborne and numerous patient distribution hubs worldwide that support this life-saving mission.

The overall process begins with a medical authority initiating a patient movement request through the USTRANSCOM Regulating and Command and Control Evacuation System (TRAC2ES).

Anthony Ross, Defense Health Agency liaison officer at USTRANSCOM, said, "TRAC2ES provides [us] intrinsic visibility, supports retrospective analysis, and ensures that a patient's medical record flows from the point of generation back through the system."

The appropriate TPMRC then receives and validates the request. During this validation process, a flight surgeon assesses if the individual is fit for fixed-wing transport. If cleared, the flight surgeon ensures the availability of an attending physician and a hospital bed at the destination. They also address flight specifics, including altitude restrictions, patient positioning, and special equipment needs.

Additionally, the servicing TPMRC coordinates further support, such as en route care and ground transportation to the receiving medical treatment facility.

Air Force Col. Christopher Backus, USTRANSCOM command surgeon, stated stressing and testing the patient movement process is essential to ensuring readiness and to improving it. One way is through exercises like

Ultimate Caduceus, which brings DOD and interagency partners together to practice patient movement in a controlled setting.

"Ultimate Caduceus provides an invaluable opportunity to test our systems and procedures, ensuring we are prepared for actual missions," Backus said. "This allows us to experiment, try new things, and add value to the mission from both the operator and higher headquarters standpoint."

Planned and hosted by USTRANSCOM, Ultimate Caduceus 2024 began June 10, with a focus on intra-theater patient movement within the Indo-Pacific region, inter-theater movement back to the continental United States, and subsequent patient distribution within the continental United States.

Banner added that Ultimate Caduceus provides them with a benchmark on how well the aeromedical evacuation system works under pressure.

"This exercise is a stress test to see what we are currently capable of handling and provides insight on opportunities to enhance readiness in areas of diminished capacity," Banner said. "Additionally, on the individual service member level, it serves as an introduction to the [aeromedical evacuation] system that some members of the joint warfighter team may not have yet experienced in their career."

Backus noted that Ultimate Caduceus shows the world what America's premier medical professionals can do and "the lengths we'll go to ensure our warfighters receive the care they need and bring them home."



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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- Camp Pendleton USO Center**
- San Diego MEPS Center**
- Special Events**



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