

# ARMED FORCES DISPATCH



San Diego Navy/Marine Corps Dispatch

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Serving active duty and retired military personnel, veterans and civil service employees

MAY 1-15, 2025



**THIS KISS, THIS KISS** An Air National Guardsman returns to loved ones in South Burlington, Vt., from deployment to Okinawa, Japan, April 22, 2025. U.S. National Guard photo by Chief Master Sgt. Rob Trubia

## SECDEF orders review of medical standards for military enlistment

by Army Maj. Wes Shinego

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth signed a memorandum on April 24 directing a comprehensive review of medical conditions that disqualify individuals from joining the military.

The memo, addressed to senior Pentagon leadership, ensures recruits meet the high physical and mental standards required for service. This initiative responds to concerns about current medical waiver policies and their impact on military readiness, prompting a 30-day evaluation to refine enlistment criteria.

Titled "Review of Medical Conditions Disqualifying for Accession into the Military," the memo targets Department of Defense Instruction 6130.03, Volume 1, which outlines medical standards for enlistment, appointment or induction. It notes that waivers are currently permitted for conditions such as schizophrenia, paraphilic disorders, congestive heart failure and chronic oxygen use.

Hegseth emphasized that while the desire to serve is admirable, individuals with such conditions are often unable to complete initial training or their first term of service, potentially compromising mission success and the safety of service members.

"Applicants for military service ... must be physically and mentally able to perform their duties under the harshest of conditions without risk to themselves or others," he said in a video posted on Defense Department social media accounts.

The memo tasks the undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness with identifying conditions that should be ineligible for waivers and those requiring approval from a military department secretary. Proposed updates to the instruction will be submitted for the secretary's approval within 30 days.

In his recorded statement, Hegseth spoke about the memo's intent. He highlighted the need for "clear, high, and uncompromising medical and mental standards" to ensure readiness.

"Service members need to be medically ready to fight," he said, underscoring the goal to align standards with operational demands.

The reason for the review is rooted in recent trends and research. Data shows a rise in medical waivers, with approximately 17 percent of 2022 recruits receiving them, which is up from 12 percent in 2013, according to a DOD inspector general review. <https://www.defense.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/Article/4166636/>

## WHY SUPPORTING U.S. MILITARY MEMBERS MATTERS

(StatePoint) Military Appreciation Month, celebrated in May, is the perfect time to show service members they are valued and appreciated for the sacrifices they make every day.

According to advocates, individual actions, no matter how big or small, strengthen service members in the challenges they face each day, showing them they matter to the people they protect.

Military Appreciation Month was designated by Congress in 1999. Although the entire month of May is dedicated to honoring past and present military members and their families, there are several holidays throughout the month that honor specific service members and other members of the military community, including Military Spouse Appreciation Day on May 9, Mother's Day on May 11, Armed Forces Day on May 17 and Memorial Day on May 26.

take on unique challenges from which all Americans benefit.

Since 1941, the USO has been the leading nonprofit dedicated to strengthening the well-being of the people serving in America's military and their families.

The USO goes where service members go throughout their time in uniform and beyond, providing support through a wide range of programs, including care packages, entertainment, military spouse and youth programming and a canine program.

Given their decades of expertise on the subject, the USO is offering Americans ideas for how to best celebrate the people

Every May, Military Appreciation Month reminds us of the men and women who serve in our military. While there often are public events, real appreciation is deeper - it's about understanding, connection and action. Less than 1 percent of Americans serve in the military, and they

see **USO**, page 3



**This Military Appreciation Month, consider discovering the many hands-on ways you can show your support and gratitude for U.S. service members all year long.** Courtesy photo

## MILITARY APPRECIATION MONTH

**San Diego GI Film Festival returns for 10th year, May 7-9, with films honoring service member and veteran stories**

Over the last decade, the film festival has become a trusted destination where service members and veterans feel their stories are honored and truthfully represented, fostering understanding, respect, and community in the San Diego region through the power of authentic military storytelling and cinema. Each year, the festival showcases a diverse selection of films that highlight not only service members and veterans but also caregivers, spouses, and children—emphasizing that military service is a family commitment. [GIFilmFestivalSD.org](http://GIFilmFestivalSD.org)

**Read more about it on page 11**

**Oceanside's 'Operation Appreciation' will celebrate military on Armed Forces Day**

Oceanside is gearing up for its annual Armed Forces Day Operation Appreciation. On Saturday, May 17, the Oceanside Chamber will bring the community together to provide a day of recognition for active-duty military stationed on Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton and nearby military bases.

**Read more about it on page 11**

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# Pentagon opens doors to the new generation for 'Bring Your Child to Work Day'

by C. Todd Lopez  
DOD News

The defense secretary welcomed more than 8,300 children of Pentagon employees April 24 during "Bring Your Child to Work Day."

The event was designed to help children experience the workforce and showcase different roles within the Defense Department.

During a mock press briefing in the afternoon where children had the chance to become reporters for the day, Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs Sean Parnell talked with more than 60 of those children about what the Pentagon is and what their parents do there for the nation.

"Their mission is to protect our country [and] ensure global security — which involves a lot of crazy and complicated things — but it's all about making your life better and ensur-

ing that you live in a country that's free," Parnell said. "You see them go to work every single day, but today, you get a unique opportunity to see what goes on behind the scenes. The work they do requires incredible dedication and skill. It's something to really be proud of. You should all be very, very proud of your parents."

Both Parnell and Pentagon Press Secretary Kingsley Wilson hosted mock briefings and answered questions from children about the history of the Pentagon building, the department's mission and how Pentagon leaders work with capable allies and partners.

Wilson reminded the children of the importance of their parent's work.

"You might not think about it often, but your parents are involved in something really special here at the DOD," she



**Isaac Peugh, with Program Executive Office Soldier, demonstrates the Integrated Visual Augmentation System to Finley, 9, during the "Bring Your Child to Work Day" event at the Pentagon, April 24. DoD photo by C. Todd Lopez**

said. "They work super hard every single day, long hours, to keep people safe and to protect our country. And they're part of a global team doing some awesome, amazing things."

Pentagon tour guides provided tours to over 1,000 guests throughout the day. Wilson

encouraged the little visitors to explore the building with their parents.

"Walk throughout the hallway, see all of the awesome stuff we have to offer, learn something new, and use this opportunity firsthand to see what your parents do when they

leave home and come to the office every day," she said.

In the Pentagon courtyard, all five services within DOD, along with the Coast Guard, provided opportunities for children to learn more about the department. There were displays of robots used in explosive ordnance disposal, night vision equipment, drones, and various other displays involving STEM education.

John Freeman and Isaac Peugh, both with Program Executive Office Soldier out of Fort Belvoir, Virginia, manned a booth in the Pentagon courtyard where they demonstrated an integrated visual augmentation system being developed for the Army.

"What we're working with right here is a [helmet] system that has numerous arrays of sensors on a heads-up display that enables situational awareness and communications,"

Freeman said. "You're able to see where your teammates are within the battlefield. You're able to communicate and create mission packages and plan routes."

Peugh said more than 400 kids came, though many seemed more interested in trying on the high-tech equipment than asking about it.

"We didn't get too many questions, just there's a lot of oohs and aahs from the kids," he said.

The PEO Soldier booth had a constant flow of kids — considering most of the equipment was wearable.

"I think it's safe to say that our station was one of the more popular ones," he said. "The kids were getting to put on augmented reality, night vision and thermal systems."

New technology, like what was on display from the Army, might be more commonplace for the young people who marveled at it in the Pentagon than for some of the older soldiers in the Army right now, Peugh said.

"The buttons that we have here, there's only a few buttons, to make sure that soldiers aren't overwhelmed with information, buttons or programs," he said.

"It's all very simple, very intuitive. And by the time these kids are coming in the Army and joining the close-combat force and wearing these things, there will be no issues with the user interface."

"Bring Your Child to Work Day" is an annual event designed to help children experience the workforce and showcase different roles within the Defense Department. This year's event theme was "For a New Generation," and the goal was to inspire children to explore future career paths, provide exposure to military and civilian roles, and teach them about the nation's defense community.

## Modernizing the IT backbone: Air Force's commitment to critical infrastructure

ALEXANDRIA, Va. - Department of the Air Force senior leaders from across the IT and acquisitions community emphasized the importance of investing in critical infrastructure and information systems across Air and Space Force installations.

They highlighted the need for robust networks, information technology architecture and command and control (C2) systems at the base level as essential components to maintain combat readiness and resilience in an era of renewed threats from geopolitical adversaries.

Air Force Chief Information Officer Venice Goodwine articulated how outdated IT systems impact operational effectiveness, as failing to upgrade these systems leads to increased maintenance costs and system downtime — risks that impact daily operations and training.

"As CIO, my role includes advocating to modernize information technology at our Air and Space Force installations — enter-

prise systems that need to be able to communicate with each other. Strategic readiness hinges on systems that are both interoperable and secure. To do this, we need to constantly invest in upgrading our critical IT infrastructure," said Goodwine.

The consequences of underfunding these initiatives often go unnoticed, at least initially, but the need to consistently make these investments was essential, explained Goodwine.

"Leaders might say, 'Oh, the network worked fine today; I was able to send emails, make phone calls, join a VTC and the planes still took off.' I understand that perspective and it can be challenging to convey the urgency. However, as technology advances, our adversaries are actively seeking vulnerabilities within our infrastructure and C2 systems. It's crucial to remain vigilant in our investments to ensure we are always ready to fight tonight."

Goodwine further emphasized

that the Department's corporate decision for addressing these infrastructure needs was through the Base Infrastructure Modernization program, or BIM, an extension of the Department's successful Enterprise IT as a Service roll-out, which aims to provide specialized contract support for several functions currently found in base Communications Squadrons and units.

"By contracting out non-military IT functions, we ensure that the new equipment is consistent with industry best practices and can be implemented more quickly than a piecemeal approach. Working with our acquisitions partners, BIM-provided systems provide baked-in cybersecurity features and adhere to a standardized risk framework," she said.

"As the Air Force and Space Force change the way they organize, train and equip, we want to give them the ability to free-up highly skilled cyberspace and IT-related military manpower at bases to perform inherently

military tasks, like Cyber Ops or Warfighter Communications as part of a Deployable Combat Wing," said Glen Townsend, senior materiel leader for the DAF's Enterprise IT and Data Transport Division.

"The BIM 'as a service' model will focus on providing capabilities that do not necessarily need to be performed by military personnel, while allowing each command the option of prioritizing personnel for mission critical roles," said Townsend.

"BIM is not a one-size fits all model. We fully expect that the size, location and mission of our installations will drive the extent to which industry will be tasked to execute and/or augment existing airmen in operating the base area network. Decisions will be made based on their risk tolerance and specific mission needs."

Townsend and his team work together with the Department's Enterprise Information Technology Director, Dr. Keith Hardiman,

and his staff. They collaborate to execute BIM on behalf of the Department's IT Enterprise, after receiving base prioritization from both the Air Force and Space Force.

"BIM refers to the comprehensive process of upgrading, modernizing and optimizing base area networks that reside at every Air and Space Force installation. Investing in BIM is key to creating base and network resiliency, which becomes increasingly important as we continue to posture ourselves for the newest geopolitical challenges our Nation faces," said Hardiman.

Modernizing IT infrastructure is not merely about maintaining operational systems but includes ensuring the DAF is prepared for future conflicts. Although the uncertainties regarding the overall cost and timeline remain, they are outweighed by the strategic necessity of these upgrades, said Hardiman.

<https://www.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/416172/>

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## Fighter jet, towing tractor on *Harry S. Truman* fall overboard, one Sailor injured

by Caitlyn Burchett  
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON - A Sailor was injured when a fighter jet and a towing tractor on USS *Harry S. Truman* fell overboard as the aircraft carrier made a "hard turn" while operating in the Red Sea, defense officials said April 28.

Sailors were towing an F/A-18E Super Hornet in the hangar bay April 28 when the crew "lost control of the aircraft," the Navy said. The carrier made a "hard turn," according to a defense official who spoke on condition

of anonymity. The maneuver, the official said, was a contributing factor in the loss of the jet and towing tractor. One Sailor sustained a minor injury in the incident.

Fighter jets are routinely towed across the hangar deck to park them for flight operations or other work. It is unclear whether there will be an effort to recover the jet, which costs about \$60 million, according to wire service reports.

"Sailors towing the aircraft took immediate action to move clear of the aircraft before it fell

overboard," the Navy said.

No one else was injured and all personnel have been accounted for.

The fighter jet was assigned

rier strike group and embarked air wing remain fully mission capable," the Navy said.

The incident is under investigation and marks the second time in recent months that *Truman*

fired on and hit the F/A-18 Super Hornet as it was flying off the carrier. The jet was responding to incoming one-way aerial attack drones and anti-ship cruise missiles threatening U.S. forces in the Red Sea.

*Truman* was also recently involved in a collision with a merchant ship. The aircraft carrier and merchant ship collided Feb. 12 while operating near Egypt's Port Said.

The carrier sustained damage to a line handling space, its fantail and a platform above a storage space. The exterior walls of two storage rooms and a maintenance space also were included in initial damage assessments.

Repairs and a thorough evalu-

ation of *Truman's* hull, which was penetrated well above the waterline on its right back end, required a week stay at Souda Bay. Those repairs included removing damaged pieces of metal and installing weatherproofing bulkheads, which are interior vertical walls that form compartments in a ship.

A little more than a week after the collision, the service fired Capt. Dave Snowden, *Truman's* commanding officer, citing a loss of confidence in his ability to command.

Capt. Chris Hill, commanding officer of aircraft carrier USS *Dwight D. Eisenhower*, was named *Truman's* interim commander. Hill has served as *Truman's* interim commander since the collision.



**A Sailor taxis an F/A-18E Super Hornet fighter jet attached to Strike Fighter Squadron 136 aboard aircraft carrier USS *Harry S. Truman* in the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility in December 2024. U.S. Navy photo**

to Strike Fighter Squadron 136 and deployed to the Red Sea as part of *Truman's* air wing, which is responsible for defending maritime shipping from Houthi drones and missiles. The jet was part of an air wing made of nine squadrons.

"The *Harry S. Truman* car-

rier has lost a Super Hornet in the Red Sea.

Two Navy aviators had to be rescued in December after the fighter jet that they were flying was shot down in an apparent "friendly fire" incident. Cruiser USS *Gettysburg*, part of the *Truman* strike group, mistakenly

### USO

continued from page 1

who serve during Military Appreciation Month:

Send a Message of Support: The USO is collecting 2 million messages of support this year to honor the more than 2 million people serving in the U.S. military and their families. Send a message now at [USO.org/2MillionMessages](http://USO.org/2MillionMessages).

Show Your Support With a USO T-Shirt: The USO's annual t-shirt campaign, launched in late April, is a way to show

support for service members and the USO's programs. To order a t-shirt, visit [USO.org](http://USO.org).

Become a USO volunteer: More than 20,000 USO volunteers contributed 1.2 million hours last year. Whether you're welcoming service members and their families at the airport, assembling care packages, or offering a helping hand at a USO location or event, your time and involvement can make a lasting impact on service members and their families. To learn more and sign up to volunteer, visit [uso.org/volunteer](http://uso.org/volunteer).



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**Top 5**

- \*Trump asks Supreme Court to let transgender military ban take effect
- \*Navy suspends search for missing *Nimitz* sailor
- \*More than two-thirds of reserve troops are overweight: Report
- \*Hegseth reportedly had unsecured internet line in office for Signal
- \*Everything is on the table': Army eyeing expansion of privatized barracks

**Army**

- \*Army names new hypersonic missile 'Dark Eagle'
- \*Milestone B delay for Bradley replacement competition will not impact fielding, Army says
- \*Soldier pleads guilty to killing taxi driver as he attempted to desert from Army
- \*Sergeant who preyed on women in Fort Cavazos barracks sentenced to life in prison

**Navy**

- \*Navy finally finds something the LCS is good at: Stopping drug smuggling
- \*Navy cancels 56-year-old international Seapower Symposium due to 'unavailable funding'
- \*Guided-missile destroyer makes Navy's second trip of year through Taiwan Strait
- \*After 2 years, Navy sees successes with pre-boot camp prep course

**Marine Corps**

- \*Marine Corps initiates deployment of new 'digital transformation teams'
- \*Okinawa-based Marines could move into new barracks on Guam this summer

**Air Force**

- \*North Korea lashes out at Air Force's 'Swan of Death' bomber deployment in Japan
- \*Air Force officer sees options for 'cheaper,' less 'exquisite' CCA drone wingmen
- \*F-35s from Utah arrive for rotational deployment at Okinawa air base
- \*F-47 6th generation fighter future force size questions emerge
- \*USAF doubles down on more F-16 fighters near North Korea
- \*VP Vance pours out praise and beer during Ramstein Air Base stopover

**Your Military**

- \*48 hours with Marines and Soldiers on the U.S. southern border
- \*Experimental civilian plane crashes at Virginia military base
- \*Intel Soldiers deploying to borders as military increases role in Trump immigration push

**Space Force defines path to space superiority in first Warfighting framework**



The Space Force releases its Space Warfighting framework, outlining its vision for achieving and maintaining space superiority while ensuring the long-term safety and sustainability of the space domain. U.S. Air Force graphic

ARLINGTON, Va. - The Space Force released its Space Warfighting framework recently, outlining the service's vision for achieving and maintaining space superiority while ensuring the long-term safety and sustainability of the space domain.

The document underscores the critical importance of space superiority as a joint force priority, recognizing it as an essential element for the success of military operations across all domains.

"It's the formative purpose of the Space Force to achieve space superiority - to ensure freedom of movement in space for our forces while denying the same to our adversaries," said Chief of Space Operations Gen. Chance Saltzman. "We must be prepared to employ capabilities for offensive and defensive purposes to deter and, if necessary, defeat aggressors that threaten our vital national interests."

The framework establishes a common lexicon for counterspace ops, detailing a range of responsible offensive and defensive actions Guardians may employ to maintain control of space and ensure the success of the Joint Force.

Counterspace operations will be executed across three primary mission areas: orbital warfare, electromagnetic warfare and cyberspace warfare. At the direction of combatant commanders, Guardians may conduct counterspace operations including terrestrial strike, orbital strike, space link interdiction and active and passive space defense.

"This document builds on the Military Space Operations terms of reference and Space Force Doctrine Document 1 to increase U.S. lethality and deter would-be aggressors in space," said Lt. Gen. Shawn Bratton, a deputy chief of Space Operations. "We developed Space Warfighting to expand on the tenets of Competitive Endurance and the Space Force Truths. With Space Warfighting, we establish the counterspace framework necessary for Guardians to achieve space superiority, a precondition for Joint Force success."

Space Warfighting marks a significant step forward in solidifying the Space Force as a warfighting service and integral part of the Joint and Combined Force, highlighting the essential role of space superiority for national security.

**MONTHLY OBSERVANCES, HOLIDAYS AND QUIRKY DAYS: MAY**

Adopt A Horse Month	Chip Your Pet Month	Go Fetch! Food Drive for Homeless Animals Month	Detection & Prevention Mental Health Month
ALS Awareness Month	Clap 4 Health Month	Haitian Heritage Month	Military Appreciation Month
American Cheese Month	Clean Air Month	Heal the Children Month	Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month
America's Wetlands Month	Creative Beginnings Month	Healthy Vision Month	Mystery Month
Apraxia Awareness Month	Cystic Fibrosis Awareness	Home Schooling Awareness	Nat'l Allergy/Asthma Awareness Month
Aramanth Month	Drum Month	Huntington's Disease Awareness Month	Nat'l Arthritis Awareness
Asian American, Native	Family Reunion Month	Int'l Audit Month	Nat'l Barbeque Month
Hawaiian & Pacific Islander	Family Wellness Month	Int'l Business	Nat'l Better Hearing
Heritage Month	Fibromyalgia Education and Awareness Month	Image Improvement Month	Nat'l Bike Month
Asthma Awareness Month	Food Allergy Action Month	Int'l Civility Awareness	Nat'l Brain Tumor Awareness
Awareness of Medical	Freedom Shrine Month	Inherited Retinal Disease (IRD) Genetic Testing Month	Nat'l Chamber Music Month
Orphans Month	Gardening for Wildlife Month	Int'l Mediterranean Diet	Nat'l Child Passenger Safety Technician Month
Better Hearing & Speech	Get Caught Reading Month	Int'l Victorious Woman	Nat'l Electrical Safety Month
Better Sleep Month	Gifts From The Garden	Jewish-American Heritage	Nat'l Foster Care Month
Bladder Cancer Awareness	Global Civility Awareness	Latino Books Month	Nat'l Good Car Keeping
Borderline Personality Disorder Month	Global Employee Health and Fitness Month	Lupus Awareness Month	Nat'l Hamburger Month
Brain Tumor Awareness	Global Health and Fitness	Melanoma/Skin Cancer	
Building Safety Month	Global Youth Traffic Safety		
Celiac Awareness Month			

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# Career and Education

## MARINES ENTITLED TO REENLISTMENT BONUS WON'T GET THAT MONEY UNTIL OCT. 1 AT THE EARLIEST

by Lydia Gordon  
Stars and Stripes

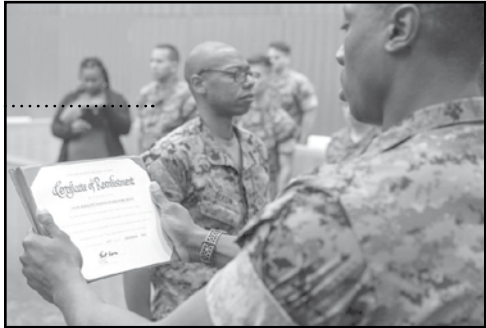
Marines who extend their military careers now will have to wait to get retention bonuses they might be eligible for rather than receiving them upon signing a new contract, according to a recent Marine Corps administrative message.

Payments under the Selective Retention Bonus Program will now be made on a funding-available basis with Oct. 1 the first possible date, Headquarters Marine Corps said in the April 15 message.

The change is intended "to enhance career stability and retention efforts," Maj. Jacoby Getty, a spokesperson for Marine Corps

Manpower and Reserve Affairs said in a statement April 24.

The retention bonus payout revision follows reports in recent years that Marines and other service members across the Defense Department



**Marine Corps Staff Sgt. Marcellous Dixon reenlists in the courtroom of Camp Blaz, Guam, Dec. 27, 2024. Marines receiving bonuses for reenlisting this year will have to wait until next fiscal year to receive their incentive payment, which will be issued on a funding-available basis, according to a recent service message. U.S. Marine Corps photo by Ryan Little**

ment have faced delays in bonus payments because of Congress' failure to pass timely budgets.

With the change, Selective

Retention Bonus Program funds will be issued no later than Sept. 30, 2026, aligning with the completion of the Marine's current contract instead of at the time of reenlistment as in the past, according to the message.

Marines who do not receive their bonus as scheduled will be allowed to request separation within 90 days of the end of fiscal year 2026, the message noted.

Eligibility for this year's program applies to Marines in selected occupations who reenlist on or after April 16 and whose current contracts end between Oct. 1, 2025, and Sept. 30, 2026.

The Selective Retention Bonus Program is updated annually to identify enlisted job fields that qualify for financial incentives based on where the Corps most critically needs to retain experienced personnel.

A variety of factors determine which Marines might be eligible for bonuses — and how much those bonuses might be — including the amount of manning in specific career fields, time in service and rank.

In the same message, the Corps also announced the continued suspension of the Broken Service Selective Retention

Bonus Program for a second straight year.

That program was designed to provide an incentive for Marines who left the service for fewer than four years to return to ac-

tive-duty status.

A key reason for the continued suspension is the program's initial success in luring a large number of Marines back into the service, Military.com reported last year.

### --- GLIMPSE OF HISTORY ---

**Failed Iran hostage rescue continues to teach lessons 45 years later**



**Wreckage of a Navy RH-53D helicopter is in front of an abandoned Navy RH-53D helicopter, at the site in the Iran desert where a hostage rescue attempt by the U.S. military was made, April 24, 1980. Courtesy of Bahram Mohammadifard**

Following Operation Eagle Claw, the 1980 Iran hostage rescue attempt, significant lessons were learned, including the need for the creation of a U.S. Special Operations Command and improved joint training, planning and execution. ...

<https://www.defense.gov/News/Feature-Stories/Story/Article/4166790/>

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# Local Military

## USS Midway Foundation receives \$3M grant for Freedom Park at Burnham Navy Pier

by Elizabeth Ireland  
Times of San Diego  
The USS Midway Foundation has been awarded a

\$3 million grant from the James M. Cox Foundation to support development of Freedom Park at Burnham

Navy Pier, including the creation of the Barbara Cox Promenade.

Located at the west end of the pier, the Promenade will feature a multi-figure bronze monument honoring military service members and their families, it was announced late in April at a check presentation ceremony.

Central to the display will be a statue of Barbara Cox, who christened USS Midway in 1945 as a young Navy widow.

“Barbara Cox represented the sacrifice of so many military families,” said Midway Foundation President Laura White. “She went on to live a life of service, through the company and her own ethos. It’s truly an honor to have her story, and the Cox partnership, represented in Freedom Park.”

Freedom Park, set to become the largest veterans memorial park on the

West Coast, will offer visitors a mix of waterfront beauty, immersive storytelling and interactive exhibits to honor America’s military history.

“Freedom Park at Burnham Navy Pier is more than just a new public space — it’s a landmark that honors our veterans, tells the story of service and sacrifice and reinforces San Diego’s identity as a proud military town,” Mayor Todd Gloria said.

In honor of National Volunteer Month, 65 Cox Communications employees also participated in a yellow ribbon-tying activity aboard the USS Midway Museum, commemorating the 50th anniversary of Operation Frequent Wind.

With this latest gift, Cox Communications’ total support for the USS Midway now approaches \$5 million, reflecting a 15-year partnership that includes funding for educational programs and employee volunteer efforts.

## Coast Guard offloads more than \$214 million worth of illegal cocaine in San Diego

SAN DIEGO - The crew of Coast Guard Cutter *Kimball* (WMSL 756) offloaded approximately 18,898 pounds of cocaine, with an estimated value of more than \$214.3 million, on April 24 here.

The offload is a result of six separate suspected drug smuggling vessel interdictions or events off the coasts of Mexico and Central and South America by *Kimball* and Coast Guard Cutter *Forward* during the months of February through April.

Multiple U.S. agencies, including the Departments of Defense, Justice, and Homeland Security, collaborate in the effort to combat transnational organized crime. The Coast Guard, Navy, Customs and Border Protection, FBI, Drug Enforcement Administration, and Immigration and Customs Enforcement, along with allied and international partner agencies, all play a role in counter-narcotic operations.

The fight against drug cartels in the Eastern Pacific Ocean requires unity of effort in all phases, from detection, monitoring and interdictions to criminal prosecutions by international partners and U.S. Attorneys’ Offices in districts across the nation. The law enforcement phase of counter-smuggling operations in the Eastern Pacific Ocean is conducted under the authority of the Eleventh Coast Guard District, headquartered in Alameda, California. The interdictions, including the actual boardings, are led and conducted by members of the U.S. Coast Guard. The Coast Guard continues to increase operations to interdict, seize, and disrupt transshipment of cocaine and other bulk illicit drugs by sea. These drugs fuel and enable cartels and Transnational Criminal Organizations to produce and traffic illegal fentanyl threatening the U.S.

*Kimball* is one of two legend-class national security cutters homeported in Honolulu. *Kimball*’s crew can operate in the most demanding open ocean environments, and the vast approaches of the Southern Pacific, where significant narcotics trafficking occurs.



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## Women's rights activist honored with ship's christening

by Sarah Cannon

SAN DIEGO - Military Sealift Command's newest fleet replenishment oiler USNS Sojourner Truth (T-AO 210) was christened during a ceremony at the General Dynamics NASSCO shipyard here April 27.

The event was attended by Dr. Brett A. Seidle, performing the duties of the Under Secretary of the Navy; Vice Adm. John F. G. Wade, commander, U.S. 3rd Fleet; Capt. Micah Murphy, commander, Military Sealift Command Pacific; executives and employees of NASSCO San Diego; and the descendants of Sojourner Truth.

The ship honors Sojourner Truth, an escaped slave who became an American abolitionist and activist for African-American civil rights, women's rights, and alcohol temperance.

"We reserve the naming of our ships for special places, historic events and great people who represent the best among us, and who's distinguished contributions are worthy of our remembrances for generations to come," said Seidel. "In that vein, Sojourner Truth was a natural choice to be memorialized with a ship bearing her name."

The official christening moment happened when the ship's sponsor, Barbara Allen, the sixth-generation granddaughter of Sojourner Truth, broke a bottle of champagne over the ship's bow with the words, "For the United States of America, I christen you the USNS Sojourner Truth. May God bless this ship and all who sail on her." Following the christening moment, the ship blew her horns and slid down the rails, amid a fanfare of music from the Navy Band Southwest and a shower of red, white and blue streamers.

The 746-foot Truth is the sixth ship of the John Lewis fleet replenishment oiler class. Truth has the ability to carry 162,000 barrels of diesel ship fuel,



aviation fuel and dry stores cargo. The John Lewis class is built with double hulls to protect against oil spills and strengthened cargo and ballast tanks and will be equipped with a basic self-defense capability. The Lewis-class of oilers

**Sojourner Truth (1797-1883) was an African American evangelist, abolitionist, women's rights activist, author who was born into slavery. Courtesy photo**

will replace the current Kaiser Class fleet replenishment oilers as they age out of the MSC fleet.

Refer to <https://www.navy.mil/Press-Office/News-Stories/Article/4167323/>.



**RETURN TO ACTION** Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth reenlists Medal of Honor recipient Marine Corps Sgt. Dakota Meyer in the Hall of Heroes at the Pentagon, April 17, 2025. U.S. Navy photo by Petty Officer 1st Class Alexander Kubitzka

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# At southern border, defense secretary visits newly created National Defense Area

by C. Todd Lopez, DOD News  
Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth visited the newly created New Mexico National Defense Area recently to meet with service members assigned to Joint Task Force Southern Border.

“This is Department of Defense property,” Hegseth said. “Any illegal [attempt] to enter that zone is entering a military base — a federally protected area. You will be detained. You will be interdicted by U.S. troops and border patrol working together.”

Hegseth held a sign in English and Spanish indicating the property’s protected status. The signs state that the area is under U.S. military jurisdiction and warn that trespassers will be detained.

## SeaWorld honors Military Appreciation Month with free park admission to military

SeaWorld honors Military Appreciation Month with free one-day admission for U.S. military veterans and up to three guests. Veterans can register for this offer now through May 11 and have until July 6 to visit the parks with their free tickets. Active-duty military and their guests continue to enjoy one-day complimentary admission all year long. The offers are part of the Waves of Honor program, a longstanding partnership saluting active-duty military members, veterans and their families by offering special pricing and promotions throughout the year. For more than 20 years, the company has provided complimentary park access to members of the military. “We’re incredibly grateful to all members of our military for their commitment and dedication to serving our country,” said Marc Swanson, CEO of United Parks & Resorts. Learn more at [www.WavesofHonor.com](http://www.WavesofHonor.com).

“You’ve got signs like this one all across the border wall facing into Mexico — clear English, clear Spanish,” he said.

Millions of people crossed the U.S.-Mexico border over the past four years, Hegseth said. Since January, the department has stepped up efforts to curb illegal crossings.

Initial deployments earlier this year included 1,600 active-duty Marines and Soldiers joining the 2,500 reservists who had already been mobilized.

In early March, the department sent a Stryker brigade combat team and a general support aviation battalion to the southwestern border to accelerate President Donald J. Trump’s

directive to bolster military support in securing the border.

Those units were equipped with wheeled vehicles and aviation assets to support mobility and surveillance. In late March,

Initial deployments earlier this year included 1,600 active-duty Marines and Soldiers joining the 2,500 reservists who had already been mobilized.

<https://www.defense.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/Article/4166835/>

service members assigned to JTF-SB were authorized to conduct patrols — a shift from the previously static role of detection and monitoring. Last week, the Defense Department assumed jurisdiction from the Department of the Interior over 109,651 acres of federal land along the U.S.-Mexico border.

The area was officially designated the “New Mexico National Defense Area,” April 18, 2025, following a general order signed by the Secretary of the Army to make that NDA part of the existing Fort Huachuca, an Army installation in nearby Arizona. According to the DOI, the agreement for the land transfer is three years.

## LOCAL MILITARY IMAGES

**OVERHEAD ADVENTURE**  
(April 25, 2025)  
**Fleet Readiness Center Southwest has been repairing military aircraft for over 105 years. Here, Brandon Rosete and Jaron Fackler repair an F/A-18 Aileron.**



The Aileron controls the aircraft roll, helping it to bank left or right. Rosete and Fackler are ensuring the men and women of the Navy and Marine Corps have the tools they need to deliver lethality to any and all foes. They are the backbone of readiness. Photo by Michael A. Furlano



**MCRD SAN DIEGO (March 25, 2025)**  
**Marine Corps recruit with Kilo Company, 3rd Recruit Training Battalion, participates in close-order drill here. Close-order drill is conducted and practiced to move units from one place to another in a standard, orderly manner. U.S. Marine Corps photo by Vivian Martinez-Reyes**



**SAN DIEGO (April 18, 2025)**  
**Rear Adm. Seiko Okano, commander, Naval Information Warfare Systems Command (NAVWAR), takes a group selfie with the Sailor of the Year (SOY) nominees during the FY-24 NAVWAR SOY ceremony. The U.S. Navy SOY program was established in 1972 by Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Elmo Zumwalt to recognize top-performing Sailors who exemplify both professional excellence and personal commitment. NAVWAR SOY nominees represent different commands which include NAVWAR Headquarters, Naval Information Warfare Center (NIWC) Pacific, NIWC Atlantic, and NAVWAR Space Field Activity. U.S. Navy photo by Ramon Go**

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The transfer of jurisdiction and the creation of the NMNDA was directed by the president as a way to strengthen the authority of service members already participating in border control efforts as part of JTF-SB.

Troops have been working alongside Customs and Border Protection since January to seal the southern border. However, the kind of work they can do there has been limited by federal law. While service members could assist in identifying border crossers, for instance, only CBP personnel could apprehend them.

But now, federal troops participating in JTF-SB, and who are operating on the NMNDA, can temporarily detain trespassers until an appropriate law enforcement entity can assume custody.

Service members can now also conduct cursory searches of trespassers to ensure the safety of U.S. service members and DOD property, conduct crowd control measures as necessary, and provide emergency medical support to trespassers to prevent the loss of life, limb or eyesight.

“Through these enhanced authorities, U.S. Northern Command will ensure those who illegally trespass in the New Mexico National Defense Area are handed over to Customs and Border Protection or our other law enforcement partners,” said Air Force Gen. Gregory Guillot, Northcom commander. “Joint Task Force Southern Border will conduct enhanced detection and monitoring, which will include vehicle and foot patrols, rotary wing and fixed surveillance site operations.”

Getting control of the border was at the top of the president’s to-do list on the day he took office. Hours after his inauguration, he signed a document declaring a national emergency at the southern border and said America’s sovereignty was under attack.

“Our southern border is overrun by cartels, criminal gangs, known terrorists, human traffickers, smugglers, unvetted military-age males from foreign adversaries, and illicit narcotics that harm Americans,” the president wrote.

In the same document, the president said the Department of Homeland Security and the U.S. armed forces must seal the border. Within days of that order, U.S. troops were already heading down south to carry out the president’s directives. Today, Northcom directed JTF-SB to carry out that mission alongside CBP.

“For too long, our southern border was poorly equipped and understaffed, and our warfighters were restricted from doing their jobs,” Hegseth said.

Advertorial

## Why Do Servicemembers Resist Getting Help for their Addiction? Because We Train Them To

by Jay Wylie

As a 22-year Naval Veteran, and much of it spent in command of a warship, believe me, I understand what it means to put your own needs below the needs of your company, your mission, and your country.

The “warrior ethos” that is ingrained into all of us during basic training and then throughout our years of service rewards sacrifice.

But what if this warrior ethos causes us to make decisions that unknowingly endanger our company, our families, and our country? This is the case when it comes to the sinister and baffling disease of addiction.

Addiction, once considered a moral failing, is now universally recognized as medical condition that is treatable, just like diabetes or hypertension.

Addiction is progressive, and only gets worse when it does not receive the treatment it needs. The shame and stigma associated with struggling with a substance abuse problem is based on outdated beliefs about willpower. Unfortunately, the structure of the military and its emphasis on discipline heightens the stigma for a vulnerable population of young people who are coping with extreme stress and highly traumatic events.

It’s a recipe for addiction, and it’s simple math that between 10 and 20% of our nation’s servicemembers will struggle with substance use at some point.

### Help is Available (and No One Has to Know)

The outpatient drug rehab program that I work for, Confidential Recovery, just celebrated 10 years of helping men and women get sober and stay that way in San Diego, and many of those

people are, like myself, veterans.

Just this year we got clearance to accept TRICARE insurance and treat active-duty military members and their families. It was a logical step given our program’s excellent track record with veterans.

Active-duty service members can contact Confidential Recovery directly, and their privacy is protected by HIPAA laws, so they do not have to disclose their drug treatment to the military (note: there are potential exceptions to this, contact Confidential Recovery, or visit the Confidential Recovery website for the full disclosure).

### What is Outpatient Drug Rehab Really Like?

Outpatient drug & alcohol rehabilitation is a manageable commitment that fits in with most people’s schedule. It’s 3 days per week, and 3 hours per session, for a total of 9 hours per week.

Confidential Recovery utilizes a “social model,” which features group therapy, but includes individual counseling as well. Confidential Recovery offers day & night meetings, including weekends, and some sessions can be attended remotely (via Telehealth).

### What if I Want More Info or to Get Started?

To get more information or to get started with treatment, contact Confidential Recovery directly at (619) 452-1200 for a private and complimentary assessment of your situation. It may expedite the process to have your TRICARE details ready. For more information you can visit the Confidential Recovery website at: <https://www.confidentialrecovery.com/>



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## NASCAR - please come back to Southern California

year the CLASH moved far away, to Bowman Gray Stadium in Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

Consequently, 2025 is the first year that there will not be a race with NASCAR Cup Series cars and drivers in Southern California.

Major league racing is arguably more popular than ever in Southern California. This year's Acura Grand Prix of Long Beach had huge, enthusiastic crowds. The support for the top tier of professional auto racing is alive and well here, so NASCAR — why have you abandoned us?

Way back on February 5, 2022, I covered a NASCAR press conference prior to the first of the three "Busch Light CLASH at the Coliseum" non-points races (see AutoMatters & More 728: <https://automatters.net/gutsy-busch-light-clash-at-the-coliseum-revs-up-a-large-new-audience-for-nascar/>). Speaking to us at that press conference was Dave Allen, the President of Auto Club Speedway at the time. He was asked about NASCAR's plans for construction of a short track on the site of the superspeedway, following its demolition. Here is what he told us:

"We're still working on plans (for the short track) and they all haven't come together yet. Once they do, you know we'll hopefully get 'em approved and get a timeframe to go out to the public with that. Our goal is to provide the best racing we possibly can and have that for a real long time here in Southern California. Once we know that we'll come out with it and let everybody know."

NASCAR, we listened to you and believed you. The "Busch Light CLASH at the Coliseum" proved that you have a large and growing fan

base here in Southern California, as we cheered for NASCAR racing on your crazy, improbable, temporary paved race track inside the historic LA Coliseum.

We have been patient, as we try our best to satisfy our desire for NASCAR stock car racing by watching it on TV or by traveling to far away racetracks to see and experience the racing in-person. When will the short track that you promised us be built, on the hallowed grounds of what was once Roger Penske's Southern California's California Speedway, and later Auto Club Speedway?

On March 10, as reported by Kevin Baxter on yahoo!sports, Dave Allen, NASCAR's West Region president, spoke before the "Shriners Children's 500" NASCAR Cup Series race at Phoenix Raceway and said:

"The market is extremely important to NASCAR, so we're not abandoning the market. What we don't have is a firm timeline yet. There's some things within the sport that need to get sorted before we can make some strategic decisions as it relates to what we're going to build. We're going to do something. I just don't know what and when yet."

NASCAR, please come back to Southern California like you said you would.

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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## My hips don't swing, but my belly does

This week, another 8-week session of the fitness classes I've been taking for two years started up. I've already skipped the first class using a mild case of spring sniffles as my excuse. Military spouses get used to constant change, so I often get bored with my exercise routine and need to spice things up.

Back when we were stationed in Florida and I was tired of power walking on the beach (ridiculous, I know), a friend convinced me to try a Zumba class at the base gym. A veteran of the step aerobics craze, I figured, "How hard could it be?"

I'd seen advertisements: Span-dexed people writhing to Latin, Caribbean and tribal beats, promising you could "party yourself into shape." It made exercise look like a wild night out in Tijuana, so I was intrigued.

Expecting the Zumba class to be packed with hard bodies that would send me into a tailspin of self-loathing, I was relieved to find a comforting mix of people with their share of jiggy bits. Our instructor, who resembled a middle-aged mom like me, gave a short introduction. I didn't bother listening. It's just dancing ... how difficult could it be?

Then I remembered that my Navy husband and I have been botching the Electric Slide at every military ball, holiday party, and wedding reception since our own in 1993. Same goes for the Cha Cha Slide, the Macarena, and the Cupid Shuffle. Call us choreographically challenged, we couldn't Whip, Nae Nae, or Stanky Leg if our lives depended on it.

The instructor played catchy Latin music, and despite my dancing deficits, I kick-ball-changed, single-single-doubled, and body rolled like I'd been doing it all my life. But after fifteen minutes, she announced that our "warm up" was finished. The real Zumba instructor was on her way.

What?

In walked a sinewy woman garbed in Cher's skin-tight black spandex with Tina Turner's spiky hair, Beyonce's muscular thighs, Pamela Anderson's generous bust, and Charro's rolling Rrrrrr's. Suddenly, driving African beats blared. Using only facial expres-

## The Meat & Potatoes of Life



by  
Lisa  
Smith  
Molinari

sions and pantomime, the Zumba instructor ordered us to rhythmically flail our arms while in a semi-squat position.

A few minutes later we were commanded to rotate our hips in complete circles while pumping our hands out in front of us. I discovered that I could rotate my hips counter clockwise, but when asked to go in the opposite direction, I could only jerk from side to side. I wondered, is this due to the magnetism of the earth's poles? Perhaps, like toilet bowl water, I swirl one way in the Northern Hemisphere and would have to travel south of the equator to rotate my hips in the other direction?

Halfway through the class, we moved on to salsa, something I'd at least heard of and enjoyed with chips and guacamole. I tried to mimic our limber instructor as she swiveled across the room, but all I could muster were awkward hops, misplaced kick-ball-changes, and inappropriate pelvic thrusts.

We moved on to merengue, which for me, was a lesson in how to sprain one's ankle. I prayed it would all be over soon.

Somewhere between Brazilian samba and Columbian cumbia, our instructor started jumping three feet into the air. Like lemmings, we followed. Happy to have a dance move I could finally understand, I leapt like a gazelle. But then I remembered—I'm almost fifty and have given birth to three large babies. My innards might drop out onto the floor at any moment.

Thankfully, the jumping ended before my uterus broke loose, and we began our final dance—a Bollywood bellydance. I thought our leader was putting us through a cruel endurance test when she demanded that we get into a deep plie squat while holding our arms out in ninety-degree angles like King Tut. Just as my quads were about to snap, she began to twist her torso back and forth, rising like a cobra from a basket.

I left the gym feeling exhausted and somewhat humiliated. Obviously, my northern European genes had rendered me unable to perform the sexy writhing Zumba moves correctly. But at least I could be proud that, somehow, my belly kept perfect time to the beat.

## Veterans News

# Medal of Honor Spotlight: Navy Capt. Michael Estocin

by Katie Lange  
DOD News

Navy Capt. Michael John Estocin flew many perilous missions in the early days of the Vietnam War, and a close call in April 1967 didn't dissuade him from returning to the skies for combat. While he never came home from his last mission, he posthumously received the Medal of Honor for his bravery and devotion.

Estocin was born April 27, 1931, in Turtle Creek, Penn., to Michael and Mary Estocin. He grew up with four sisters and two brothers.

After high school, Estocin attended Slippery Rock State Teachers College, now Slippery Rock University, graduating in 1954. He then joined the Naval Aviation Cadet program, which started to increase the number of available military pilots following World War II, and earned his wings in 1955.

Estocin's first assignment

was with Attack Squadron 56 at Naval Air Station Miramar, which included a deployment on aircraft carrier USS Bon Homme Richard. He then served with two training squadrons before a stint aboard carrier USS Ranger that ended in June 1965. Later that year, Estocin was assigned to Attack Squadron 192, known as the "Golden Dragons." With them, he deployed to Vietnam on Bon Homme Richard, then again on USS Ticonderoga in 1967 after he'd attained the rank of lieutenant commander.

On April 20, 1967, Estocin led two other aircraft in a coordinated strike against two thermal power plants in Haiphong, North Vietnam. During the mission, he notified leaders of the positions of surface-to-air missiles — known as SAMs — protecting the plants. Estocin then destroyed three of them.

At one point, after his A-4 Skyhawk was hit by an exploding missile, Estocin ignored intense antiaircraft fire, flew back into the target area and used anti-



**Lt. Cmdr. Michael J. Estocin circa 1964. Estocin posthumously received the Medal of Honor for actions he took in April 1967 over the skies of North Vietnam. Submitted photo**

radar homing missiles to finish off his targets. Afterward, he had less than five minutes of fuel remaining. Thankfully, a refueling tanker was nearby and was able to begin in-flight refueling, which kept him in the air for more than 100 miles.

When Estocin came within three miles of the Ticonderoga, he detached from the tanker and, knowing he didn't have enough fuel for a second approach, expertly carried out a fiery landing on the carrier.

Estocin suffered burns during the landing, but a week later, he convinced his superiors he was OK to fly despite his injuries. On April 26, 1967, he went on another mission to Haiphong to strike more vital fuel facilities. Estocin and another pilot were sent ahead of a bombing squadron to neutralize enemy SAM sites.

The mission at the power plant went off without incident, but on the way back to safety, Estocin spotted an active SAM site that launched a missile that exploded near him, seriously damaging his aircraft. The burning plane went into a barrel roll before Estocin was able to recover.

According to a Veterans Affairs Department profile of Estocin, the second pilot, Navy

Cmdr. John Nichols, followed Estocin's aircraft and radioed for help. Estocin didn't respond to radio calls, and Nichols noted he could see Estocin motionless in the cockpit with his head bent slightly forward. Soon after, Estocin's aircraft crashed, with no evidence that he'd parachuted to safety before hitting the ground.

Estocin was initially presumed dead, but intelligence later suggested he may have survived and was taken prisoner. However, when all U.S. prisoners of war were released from Vietnamese custody in 1973, Estocin was not one of them.

According to the VA, a 1993 committee investigating missing Vietnam POWs determined that Estocin likely died when his aircraft crashed. North Vietnamese officials also insisted they had no record of him ever being held.

His remains have not been recovered.

Estocin's courage and devo-

tion were not forgotten. On Feb. 27, 1978, his widow, Quay Marie Estocin, and their three daughters received the Medal of Honor on his behalf during a ceremony at the Pentagon. Estocin was also posthumously promoted to captain.

In 1981, the guided-missile frigate USS Estocin was commissioned and served the Navy for more than two decades. In 2002, a highway interchange in western Pennsylvania, near where Estocin grew up, was named in his honor.

The Captain Michael J. Estocin Award is presented annually to the best strike-fighter squadron in recognition of outstanding achievements in naval aviation. Estocin's alma mater, Slippery Rock University, offers a memorial scholarship in his name to incoming freshmen.

A memorial marker honors Estocin at Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery in San Diego.

# CLASSIFIED ADS

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To place your ad, please call our Classified Advertising Department at (619) 280-2985.

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"For what it's worth, it's never too late to be whoever you want to be. I hope you live a life you're proud of, and if you find you're not, I hope you have the strength to start over."

— F. Scott Fitzgerald

### HELP - VOLUNTEER

**USO** Volunteers are the heart of the USO — become one today! Join our team and support local military service members and their families in your community. <https://www.uso.org/take-action/volunteer>

**USS Midway Museum** is recruiting volunteers for docents, air craft restoration, ship restoration and safety. [www.midway.org/give-join/volunteers/volunteer-opportunities/](http://www.midway.org/give-join/volunteers/volunteer-opportunities/)

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Western casual, family-oriented ranch. We have roomy 12x48 or 12x24 corrals and provide a veterinarian recommended diet twice daily.  
**760.840.0187**

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40,000 clothing items & 10,000 miscellaneous items on our floor daily!

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Just east of I-5  
(760) 286-8880  
Open 7 days a week 9am-7pm  
Sales support veterans & their families

**Veterans Crisis Line**  
Dial 988 then  
PRESS 1

# CROSSWORD PUZZLE

### Across

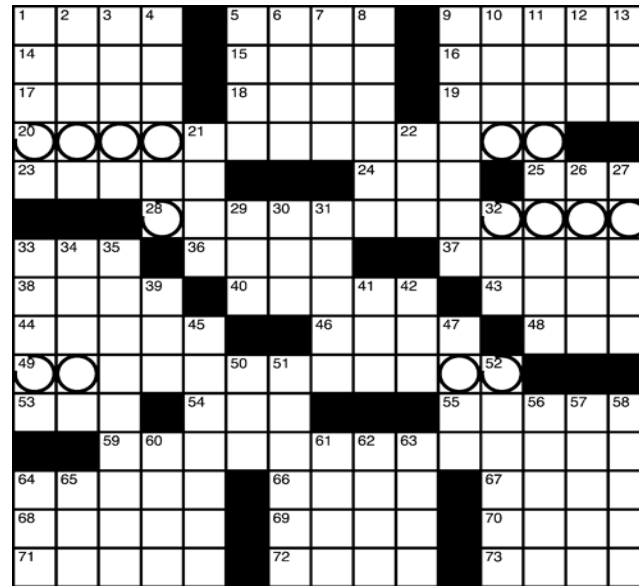
- Potentially insensitive, briefly
- Police
- ABBA's "\_\_\_ Mia!"
- Vidal's Breckinridge
- Pequod captain
- Native Nebraskans
- Plenty
- Islamic branch
- Transports by truck
- Winding, hilly thoroughfares
- Gandhi's land
- Like oysters on the half shell
- French water
- Not kid around
- IV amounts
- List-shortening abbr.
- Italics feature
- Walter White shaved his off
- In contention (for)
- On the house
- AimZe of "La Dolce Vita"
- Dmitri's dissent
- In low spirits
- Traitorous spies
- Driver's license info
- Wayside stop
- One-up
- Halloween discards, and what the three sets of circles represent?
- "Dallas" surname
- Solid precipitation
- Backside in a fall?
- Long-shot rags-to-riches enabler
- Ices, mob-style
- Girl in a Salinger story
- Enter on a laptop
- Italian eight
- Sweetheart

### Down

- Savory taste first identified in Tokyo

### Across

- \_\_\_ as a peacock
- Tabby stimulant
- JosZ's house
- "Fancy meeting you here!"
- "No \_\_\_, no gain"
- Mail pizza chain
- Goth hairstyles
- Opposite of 17-Across
- Headpiece for kids in Mickey's TV club
- Filmmaker Brooks
- Biblical beast of burden
- Yarn
- Boating blade
- Sleep concern
- "AC—mo est \_\_\_?"
- Dune buggy, briefly
- "We did it!"
- Throw wildly
- North Pole toymaker
- "Hanging" problems in the 2000 election
- Algonquin transport
- lowa port on the Lewis and Clark Trail
- Coax (out), as a genie
- "Science Guy" Bill
- Title for DDE
- Fictional language spoken by Sheldon and Leonard on "The Big Bang Theory"
- Sporty car roof
- Wind up
- Slangy "Movin' right along ..."
- Had a late meal
- Not long-winded
- Daytime soap, e.g.
- Big name in blenders
- Opposed to
- Float like a feather in the breeze
- Breakup
- "Let me add ..."
- Yellowstone grazers
- Misery



### CATERING

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WHEN YOU'RE BUSY SERVING YOUR COUNTRY,  
WE ARE HERE TO SERVE YOU.



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Just east of I-5  
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Open 7 days a week 9am-7pm  
Sales support veterans & their families

### VOLUNTEER

#### BECOME A USO VOLUNTEER

Volunteers are our greatest asset and the backbone of the USO. Help improve the quality of life of service members & boost their morale.  
<https://volunteers.uso.org>

## ROY'S SUDOKU

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## 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.navylifew.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.



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8	6	9	9	1	8	2	7	2
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MYRA	A	H	A	B	O	T	O	E	S			
ALOT	S	H	I	A	H	A	U	L	S			
MOUNT	A	I	N	R	O	A	O	S				
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# Military Appreciation Month

## GI Film Festival San Diego celebrates 10 years of showcasing films that honor military service members and veterans

**16 films will screen over three days – May 7-9, 2025**

This year, the GI Film Festival San Diego commemorates a decade of presenting films for, by and about military service members and veterans. The 10th annual military-themed film festival returns May 7-9, 2025 at the Museum of Photographic Arts at the San Diego Museum of Art (MOPA @ SDMA) in Balboa Park.

Over the last decade, the film festival has become a trusted destination where service members and veterans feel their stories are honored and truthfully represented, fostering understanding, respect, and community in the San Diego region through the power of authentic military storytelling and cinema. Each year, the festival showcases a diverse selection of films that highlight not only service members and veterans but also caregivers, spouses, and children—emphasizing that military service is a family commitment.

Since 2015, the military-themed film festival has presented over 238 films created by international, U.S., and San Diego County filmmakers, drawing in diverse audiences totaling more than 13,000

### Mt. Soledad National Veterans Memorial event supports 35th annual cross country motorcycle ride 'Run For The Wall'

*Run For The Wall (RFTW) 35th Anniversary/End of the Vietnam War 50th Anniversary*

Saturday, May 10, 2025 at 1p.m. – Super hero wings return to Mt. Soledad National Veterans Memorial to support the Run For The Wall 35th Anniversary and the 50th Anniversary of the End of the Vietnam War. RFTW is an annual motorcycle ride from California to Washington D.C. Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall to honor veterans and call for an accounting of Prisoners of War (POW) and Missing In Action (MIA). The inaugural RFTW took place in San Diego, CA, May 1989, led by U.S. Marine Corps veteran, James “Gunny” Gregory to bring awareness of the POW/MIA dilemma. Today, the RFTW is the largest and longest organized motorcycle ride of its kind in the world.

The Honor Wings will be displayed at Mt. Soledad. The impressive super hero steel wings are comprised of dog tag “feathers” that represent the MIA from the Vietnam War (1573 at present). Each dog tag is embossed with the name of the MIA veteran, branch of service, location last seen and date of disappearance—similar to the POW/MIA memorial bracelets concerned citizens wore during the Vietnam War in hopes of their return. The POW/MIA Wings is an art piece based on the wings



that belong to the super heroine character LT Williams in the story Purple Foxes United. The historical fiction story was inspired by the Son Tay raid, the most daring mission executed to save Prisoners of War. Many of the characters are based on legends of carrier aviation and Honor Flight San Diego alumni veterans.

Local WWII child Prisoner of War, Tom Crosby (91) will convey his support and share his POW experience, then ride in a motorcycle escort to Ontario, CA to meet the main group of riders for the official RFTW cross-country kick-off. Tom and his family of five were held captive for 37 months shortly after the Japanese entered Manila. “I’m so honored to participate in this event in support of the Run For The Wall as it is a tremendous undertaking the riders commit to each year to ensure the Prisoners of War and Missing In Action are never forgotten. May God be with them,” stated Tom Crosby.

“I can’t believe it’s been 10 years since we brought the GI Film Festival to San Diego,” says Jodi Cilley, founder and president, Film Consortium San Diego. “While much has changed since the inaugural festival, our mission remains the same, which is to honor service member and veteran stories and

guests. Additionally, throughout its history in D.C. and San Diego, the GI Film Festival has welcomed notable personalities, including documentarians Ken Burns and Ric Burns, General (Ret.) Richard Myers, former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; the late US Senator John McCain, actors Gary Sinise, Glenn Close, Matthew Marsden, Lou Diamond Phillips, Joe Mantegna, George Takei, and Jeffrey Wright.

bring together military allies, civilians, and cinema-lovers under one roof to learn what it really means to serve. I’m proud to say that we have built a strong community that celebrates authentic military storytelling and provides a space for service members and veterans to share their experiences, talents and love for filmmaking.”

### Three days of films that recognize, reveal, and remember service members and veterans

This year’s lineup features 16 films that showcase stories from WWII, the Vietnam War, the Global War on Terror, the fall of Afghanistan, and training in peacetime. Themes also include deported veterans, post-traumatic stress (PTS), the impact of service on families, spouses and children, as well as mental health. Notably, the festival includes a film about the Montford Point Marines, the first African American men to serve in the U.S. Marine Corps, who not only transcended enemy lines but also overcame barriers of racial segregation (“Triumph Over Prejudice: The Montford Point Marines”). Another film explores how Hollywood’s leading filmmakers contributed to America’s victory through their heroic service in the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) Field Photographic Branch (“Filming Under Fire: John Ford’s OSS Field Photo Branch”). Additionally, this year’s Opening Night film, “SHEEPDOG,” is a narrative feature that follows decorated U.S. Army combat veteran Calvin Cole on his journey to trauma recovery. Every year, the GI Film Festival San Diego also showcases films by military service members on non-military themes, and this year’s selection includes films on vampires, LGBTQIA+ stories, and mental health within the Pacific Islander community.

Of the 16 films, three are feature-length, 13 are shorts, and five have a San Diego connection. Seven films were made by or feature service members or veterans, three are student films, and five were directed by women. There are also three returning filmmakers, including Devin and Jeanne Scott who participated in the GI Film Festival San Diego in 2015, 2017, 2019, 2021, 2022 and 2024, and Daniel Bernardi who participated in the 2023 festival.

Each year, the films selected for the GI Film Festival San Diego reveal the struggles, triumphs, and experiences of service members,

veterans, and their loved ones, as well as highlight lived experiences rather than institutional narratives or civilian interpretations of war typically seen on the big screen. By challenging preconceptions about service and offering multidimensional portrayals of veterans, service members, caregivers and families, the GI Film Festival San Diego provides a platform for filmmakers of all backgrounds and skill levels to present their unique stories through the cinematic arts.

### A film festival that provides a trusted space for authentic military storytelling

Since its inception, the festival has successfully bridged the military-civilian gap by creating greater awareness of what it means to serve to help audiences

better understand the true military experience.

In addition to film screenings, the festival hosts panel discussions with filmmakers, actors, documentary subjects and subject-matter experts after each screening. These discussions give audience members an opportunity to ask questions, and reinforce the festival’s mission to expand the definition of service, break down stereotypes and highlight the breadth of experiences within the military community.

From the beginning, the GI Film Festival San Diego has provided a space for audiences and filmmakers to connect, fostering a sense of shared understanding and camaraderie. This camaraderie, familiar to service members and veterans alike, serves as a poignant

reminder that while at the GI Film Festival San Diego they are not alone.

### Ways to attend the three-day festival

The film screenings at the GI Film Festival San Diego are open to all at our online box office. Attendees can secure their tickets for individual screenings or multi-ticket packs to attend multiple screenings. Tickets for most screenings will start at \$15 each, or \$10 for military, veterans and KPBS members. Because some films may cover sensitive topics, organizers recommend screening guests to be at least 18 years of age.

For up-to-date information on the 2025 film festival, how to attend and ways to get involved, visit [GIFilmFestivalSD.org](http://GIFilmFestivalSD.org).



### Oceanside Chamber invites military and community to celebrate Armed Forces Day on May 17 at annual pier-side event

Oceanside is gearing up for its annual Armed Forces Day Operation Appreciation. Created by the Chamber of Commerce in 2002, Operation appreciation is a heartfelt event dedicated to honoring and celebrating our military’s brave men and women.

On Saturday, May 17, 2025, the Oceanside Chamber will bring the community together to provide a day of recognition for active-duty military stationed on Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton and nearby military bases.

Thousands of active-duty military and their families will be treated to a day of free food, entertainment, and a fun zone for kids. This event will be held at the Junior Seau Pier Amphitheater. Free parking is available in both the Civic Center Parking Structure and the Transit Center parking structure.

The fun begins at 11am with an opening ceremony and lasts until 4pm. Numerous dignitaries including Congressman Mike Levin, Assemblymember Laurie Davies, Supervisor Jim Desmond and Mayor Esther Sanchez are expected to take the stage to welcome the servicemembers. The day features a variety of activities, including a children’s fun zone, live music, and free food provided exclusively for

### Free fun-zone and food for active duty military with ID!

active-duty military members and their families. Our major food and beverage sponsors include Buffalo Wild Wings, Pick Up Stix, Jersey Mikes, Frazier

Farms, Ocean’s Eleven Casino, and Urbane Cafe.

All Active-duty military and their dependents must bring an Active-duty military ID Card for fun zone activities and a free lunch. This event is open to the public, and food and fun zone tickets are available for purchase.



LOCAL | NATIONAL | PREMIERES | PANEL DISCUSSIONS | FILMMAKER AWARDS



**GI FILM FESTIVAL**  
**SAN DIEGO**  
 May 7-9, 2025  
 GET YOUR TICKETS NOW  
[GIFilmFestivalSD.org](http://GIFilmFestivalSD.org)

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SCAN AND GET YOUR TICKETS NOW




**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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