

# THE SKYLINE

Celebrating  
**55**  
Years of  
Training  
Excellence

Volume 54, Number 15

<https://www.cnic.navy.mil/meridian> ~ [www.facebook.com/NASMeridian](https://www.facebook.com/NASMeridian) ~ Twitter: @nasmeridianms

July 21, 2016

## On Base...

### ✓ Family Movie Night

Aug. 20 at Bernath Field. Gates open at 7 p.m.; show starts at dark. Free hot dogs and bottled water (while supplies last.)

### ✓ Parent's Night Out

July 29 from 6-10 p.m. at CDC and SAC. Call 601-679-2625.

### ✓ Catch a movie

Nightly at 7 p.m. at the McCain Rec Center and Liberty Center.

### ✓ Friends of Bill AA Meeting will occur

every Wednesday at the NAS Meridian Chapel at 7 p.m. These are "open" meetings and available to anyone with base access.

For information, contact the Chapel at 601-679-3635 or HM1 Bobbi Coleman-Johnson at 601-679-2209.

### ✓ Meridian Commissary offers "Early Bird Hours"

Self-service checkout lanes will be open during this time for limited checkout of 20 items or fewer. Early Bird Hours: Tuesdays-Fridays at 9:30 a.m.; Saturdays at 8:30 a.m.

## A Day in Naval History

### July 21

**1918** - During World War I, German submarine (U 156) surfaces and fires on U.S. tugboat, Perth Amboy, and four barges, three miles off Nauset Beach, Cape Cod, Mass.

**1944** - Following landing on Guam Asan-Adelup Beach-head, Pfc. Luther Skaggs, Jr., takes command of his squad, leading his men to a position to provide fire support for the Marine assault. Severely wounded that night when Japanese forces counter-attack, he fights on for many hours, until enemy opposition was suppressed. For his "conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity" on this occasion, Skaggs was awarded the Medal of Honor.

**1946** - In the first U.S. test of adaptability of jet aircraft to shipboard operations, an XFD 1 Phantom piloted by Lt. Cmdr. James Davidson makes landings and takeoffs without catapults from USS Franklin D. Roosevelt (CVB 42).

--www.history.navy.mil

"The Skyline" is a Russell Egnor Navy Media Award recipient for Best Metro Newspaper

# GALLEY DEDICATED



Photos by MC2 Chris Liaghat

Joe Fernandez, left, representative of JCon Construction; Lamar McDonald, Meridian Military Team; Bill Jones, galley manager; Capt. Scott Bunnay, commanding officer of NAS Meridian; John Wheat, brother of Medal of Honor awardee Roy M. Wheat; Lt. Cmdr. Jamal Parker, public works director; and Lt. Josh Ross, FEAD director; are pictured after a ribbon cutting ceremony for the new Lance Cpl. Roy M. Wheat Galley on board NAS Meridian, July 14.



Above left: John Wheat, brother of Lance Cpl. Roy M. Wheat, and his granddaughters pose in front of the memorial wall. The ceremony also marked the 55th anniversary of the commissioning of NAS Meridian. Above right: Lt. Col. Stephen Shivers speaks with Major Mitch Grey, commanding officer of Marine Aviation Training Support Squadron One. Shivers, the guest speaker for the ceremony, nominated Lance Cpl. Roy M. Wheat for the Medal of Honor. Below: Capt. Scott Bunnay honors Vietnam veterans during the dedication ceremony.



"I've got a Marine out here that I think ought to be put in for the Medal of Honor; little did I know that I would spend the next 50 years of my life thinking about that day."

Lt. Col. Stephen Shivers, USMC, Retired  
Lance Cpl. Wheat's platoon sergeant in Vietnam



Photos by MC2 Chris Liaghat

## NAS Meridian celebrates 55th anniversary

### For NAS Meridian Public Affairs

Naval Air Station Meridian celebrated the 55th anniversary of its commissioning with a special ribbon cutting for the new \$10.1 million Lance Cpl. Roy M. Wheat Galley.

"NAS Meridian marked another milestone on July 14 as we celebrated our 55th anniversary," Capt. Scott Bunnay, commanding officer of NAS Meridian. "We look forward to continuing to train the best Navy, Marine Corps, and international Naval Aviators and the finest enlisted Sailors and Marines. Maintaining our outstanding partnership with the community is the best way to assure future success. Our Sailors and Marines are thrilled to volunteer in the local area while stationed here. They return with inspiring stories of their time spent

among the citizens of Meridian, always benefitting from time well spent with our neighbors and friends."

The galley is named in honor of U.S. Marine Lance Cpl. Roy M. Wheat, a native of Moselle, Miss., and Medal of Honor recipient who was killed in Vietnam. Wheat's family; several members of his platoon from Vietnam; and members of the Marine Corps League from Meridian and Hattiesburg attended the ribbon cutting ceremony.

Special guest was retired Lt. Col. Stephen Shivers, Wheat's platoon sergeant, who nominated him for the Medal of Honor.

Shivers shared his memories of Wheat during their time together in Vietnam; including the events that led to Wheat's death.

● Galley, page 3

## Look Inside



~ Page 3 ~  
Lance Cpl. Roy M. Wheat; galley ceremony



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More than just a summer job on board NAS Meridian



~ Page 10 ~  
Blue Angels announce 2017 officers

## Photo of Week



Photo by MC1 Jason Noble

Sailors aboard the guided-missile cruiser USS Princeton (CG 59) fire an RGM-84 Harpoon anti-ship missile during an international sinking exercise, or SINKEX, for Rim of the Pacific 2016. Twenty-six nations, more than 40 ships and submarines, more than 200 aircraft, and 25,000 personnel are participating in RIMPAC from June 30 to Aug. 4, in and around the Hawaiian Islands and Southern California. The world's largest international maritime exercise, RIMPAC provides a unique training opportunity that helps participants foster and sustain the cooperative relationships that are critical to ensuring the safety of sea lanes and security on the world's oceans. RIMPAC 2016 is the 25th exercise in the series that began in 1971.

## NAS Meridian welcomes new school liaison officer



Photo by MC2 Chris Liaghat

Anita Lee is NAS Meridian's new school liaison officer.

By Adam Prince  
NAS Meridian Public Affairs

NAS Meridian has a new face working for military families. Anita Lee, NAS Meridian's school liaison officer, recently came on board determined to make a positive impact on our community.

Lee's primary purpose is to help families respond to the educational complexities of transition and deployment.

"I look forward to my new role as school liaison officer and welcome the opportunity to participate in our local educational teams," Lee said.

"As a former educator, I understand that change is a common theme in education. It is critical that I stay abreast of changes that may affect students in every school setting. I believe that my time in schools will prove priceless as I navigate the systems that effect education in Mississippi."

If you're new to the NAS Meridian area, and have school-aged children, Lee is here to assist you.

"I expect to positively impact the transition experience of our military families

and area education systems by serving as a knowledgeable and resourceful liaison to parents, commanders, and schools."

She strives to assure parents that she shares their vision to maximize educational opportunity and academic success for all military children.

"I consider it an honor to be part of the NAS Meridian installation serving as a member of the Child and Youth Programs organization," she said.

"I look forward to meeting our military families and invite you to call me for any school related questions or concerns. My best wishes go out to you for a wonderful new school year!"

She's equipped with comprehensive academic information and services to assure optimal opportunities for every school-aged child; with a focus in the following areas: school transition services; deployment support; special education system assistance; command, school; community resource; home school link/support; Partnerships in Education network support; and post-secondary preparations.

Lee can be reached at 601-679-2473.

## Area Happenings

### JULY

**25: Scoot McQuaig and the Tomcats** from 9 p.m.-1 a.m. at the Brickhaus, in downtown Meridian. Admission is \$5; for information, call 601-490-5242.

**29: Hwy 80 Songwriters Fest** from 7-11:30 p.m. at Weidmann's, Brickhaus and ECHO Downtown. The Hwy 80 Songwriters Fest aims to expand the songwriter's platform and territory; provide education in the songwriting craft for songwriters of all ages and levels of expertise; build and support the creative economy in West Alabama and East Mississippi; and to ignite the public's understanding and appreciation for songwriters and their craft. For information, call 601-880-1089.

**30: Hamasa Shrine Shrimp Boil** starts at 10 a.m. at the Hamasa Shrine P-nut Shed in Marion. All you can eat boiled shrimp \$30; boiled shrimp by the pound at market price; adult plates of boiled or fried shrimp \$10; and children's plates boiled or fried \$5. Potatoes and corn included -- so bring the whole family. All you can eat and by the pound boiled shrimp are pre-order only. For information, call 601-644-0362.

### AUGUST

**6: Little River Band** at 7:30 p.m. at the MSU Riley Center. Pre-show party starts at 6 p.m. Tickets: \$55 and \$49. For information, call 601-696-2200.

### ONGOING

**Earth's Bounty** is held the first Saturday of the month from 7 a.m.-1 p.m. at Singing Brakeman Park until November.

**Farmers Market** held every third Saturday of the month from 7 a.m.-1 p.m. at Singing Brakeman Park until November. Don't miss the free samples and fresh fruits and vegetables from the vendors. For information, call Ronnie at 601-604-2892.

**City of Meridian Flag and Tackle Football Registration** weekdays through Aug. 13 at Highland Park office. For information, contact Aleasha Jordan at 601-485-1802 or email at aleashajordan@yahoo.com. Fees: Flag \$55; Tackle \$60.

**City of Meridian Cheer Registration** weekdays through Aug. 13 at Highland Park office. For information, contact Aleasha Jordan at 601-485-1802 or email aleashajordan@meridianms.org. Fees: \$70 which includes uniform.

**MOPS (Mothers of Preschoolers)** group provides emotional, spiritual and practical support to mothers of preschoolers. Expectant mothers and mothers of preschoolers are invited to the meetings on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month from 9:30-11:30 a.m., at Fifteenth Avenue Baptist Church. Child care provided for ages newborn to five. Visit us on Facebook at Fifteenth Avenue MOPS for meeting details or call 757-574-2557. Fees: Free for first meeting, only \$50 a year to become a member. Military discounts available.

**Fleet Reserve Association local FRA branch** holds monthly meetings the last Sunday of every month at 2 p.m. For more information visit FRA Branch 264 on Facebook or 8874 Hwy 39 North, Meridian. Open Monday-Wednesday 2-7 p.m.; Thursdays 2-10 p.m.; Friday 2 p.m.-1 a.m.; Saturday noon-1 a.m.; and open at noon on Sundays. Thursday Ladies Nite begins at 7 p.m.; and Saturday Karaoke Nite begins at 8 p.m. Free billiards and shuffleboard.

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•••••  
**“Give Parents a Break”**  
**“Parents Night Out”**  
**July 29 from 6-10 p.m.**  
**“Give Parents a Break” is a free**  
**program for military families!**  
**“Parents Night Out” is for others, such as**  
**DoD civilians, and is \$16 per child.**  
**Registration is required, please call**  
**601-679-2652 for more information.**  
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## The Skyline ~ Naval Air Station Meridian, Miss.

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SAPR Victim Assistance: 601-604-3037
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SARC: 601-481-4274
SAFE Helpline: 877-995-5247
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FFSC Meridian: 601-679-2360
Chaplain: 601-604-2015
NMCRS Duty Cell: 601-604-2206
EEO (NAF): 866-295-0328
EEO (GS): 904-542-2802

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# Lance Cpl. Roy M. Wheat

Mississippi native and Medal of Honor recipient



Wheat enlisted in the U.S. United States Marine Corps in Jackson, Miss., in September 1966. He arrived in Vietnam in March 1967, and was assigned duty as a rifleman with Company K, 3rd Battalion, 7th Marines, 1st Marine Division.

His unit participated in numerous combat operations, including Operation Desoto in the Duc Pho District, Quang Ngai Province, and Operations Webster, Arizona, Butler and Gem in Quang Nam Province. He was promoted to lance corporal in June 1967.

On August 11, 1967, Wheat and two other Marines were assigned to provide security for a Navy construction battalion crane and crew operating along Liberty Road in Dien Ban District, Quang Nam Province. After setting up in the tree line adjacent to the work site, Wheat searched the surrounding area for guerrilla fighters.

He had returned to within 10 feet (3.0 m) of the security post when he triggered a well-concealed bounding mine.

Hearing the distinctive hiss of the mine's fuse, Wheat shouted a warning to his two fellow Marines and then threw himself on the device, smothering its blast with his body. He was killed in the ensuing explosion.

For this act, he was awarded the Medal of Honor. Wheat was buried at Eastabuchie Cemetery in Eastabuchie, Miss. His name can be found on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial on Panel 24E, Row 101.

—From NAS Meridian Public Affairs

● Galley

“The events of that one day culminated in an action in Vietnam that placed him (Wheat) among our greatest war heroes. He had a consistent pattern of caring for his men; caring for them and looking out for them,” Shivers said.

Shivers cited several instances where Wheat's actions saved other Marines from injury or death – including an incident in which Wheat used his own body to shield his fellow Marines from an explosion; an explosion that put him out of action for several weeks.

Shivers remarked several times about Wheat: “He always had that Mississippi smile.”

Lance Cpl. Wheat's Medal of Honor was donated, by the Wheat family, and is displayed with his other medals in the new galley.

The original galley is one of the few buildings that remain from 1961 when the installation was commissioned and Capt. W.F Krantz received the golden key to air station. Senior Mississippi U.S. Senator John C. Stennis was the guest speaker for the ceremony that opened the \$60 million base. NAS Meridian's replacement value is now \$832 million. A recent economic impact study showed the NAS Meridian contributed \$430 million to the yearly economy.

The new 21,500 square-foot building is a state-of-the-art energy efficient facility that is certified Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) -- which is a system of design that involved incorporating design initiatives in seven categories includes sustainable sites, water efficiency, energy and atmosphere, materials and resources, indoor environment quality, and innovation and design process. Energy consumption reduction for this building will provide a minimum of 30 percent energy savings in accordance with Energy Policy Act of 2005 and the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007. This project will provide Anti-Terrorism/Force Protection (ATFP) features and comply with ATFP regulations and physical security in accordance with Department of Defense minimum anti-terrorism measures.

The galley is scheduled to open for service to base military personnel in a few weeks.



Photo by MC2 Chris Liaghat

John Wheat, center, gathers with members of his brother's platoon in Vietnam for a picture in front of the memorial wall in the new Galley. The new galley is due to open for service to Sailors and Marines in a few weeks.

## Meritoriously promoted



Photo by MC2 Chris Liaghat

NAS Meridian Command Master Chief Jonas Carter, left, removes a petty officer second class crow from Aviation Boatswain's Mate (Equipment) 1st Class Emmanuel Motosho's uniform at command quarters in the Air Operations building, July 8. Motosho was meritoriously promoted to petty officer first class by NAS Meridian Commanding Officer Capt. Scott Bunney.

## Monthly awards quarters



Photo by MC2 Chris Liaghat

Sailors and civilians receive awards during the monthly command quarters, June 23. During the ceremony, two Sailors were frocked to the next paygrade and five Sailors were awarded Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medals.

## Amador Reenlistment



Photo by MC2 Chris Liaghat

Chief Aviation Boatswain's Mate (Handling) Hector Amador, left, receives his reenlistment certificate from Administration Officer Lt. Cmdr. Quitman Ward during a ceremony in the administration building, July 14.

## Touissant Reenlistment



Photo by MC2 Chris Liaghat

Aviation Boatswain's Mate (Equipment) 1st Class James Touissant, left, receives his reenlistment certificate from Administration Officer Lt. Cmdr. Quitman Ward during a reenlistment ceremony in the Air Operations building, July 8.

# A summer job that turned out to be so much more

By Olivia Martin

NAS Meridian Summer Intern

When I found out my summer job would be an internship at Naval Air Station Meridian, I had no idea the amazing opportunities awaiting me.

On July 10, I left Meridian with eight other people, heading for one of the coolest business trips -- EVER!!

First stop NAS Norfolk, Vir., we are all loaded onto a Carrier Onboard Delivery (COD) aircraft. After two hours flying I hear, "Here we go! Here we go!" shouted by the two aviators in the cockpit. I was about to make my first arrested landing aboard the USS George Washington in the Pacific Ocean.

I took one last deep breath to calm my racing heart when we suddenly came to an abrupt stop. Upon arrival, the distinguished visitors, including myself, were rushed inside and down many flights of stairs to the in port cabin where we were warmly greeted by the commanding officer, public affairs officer and several other staff members. We were served light refreshments before we started extensively touring the aircraft carrier.

First impressions are always important, and my first impression of the "GW" was awe-inspiring, but nothing could prepare me for the first stop on our tour -- the flight deck. After a safety brief and meeting the crew members, we were escorted to the deck where we were able to stand within

feet of the catapult launching Navy jets. The jet fuel was extremely hot and was not the best smelling. The ship was moving fairly fast, so there was a constant breeze that helped with the jet fuel smell.

We each hurriedly reached for our phones and cameras to video the astounding process. Switching back and forth between the two catapults, we were able to watch jets take off and land catching the arresting gear cable, as well as a few doing touch and goes.

So many moving parts, so many people with dozens of different colored shirts -- which I learned designates their job on the flight deck -- it was simply awesome to watch.

Our next stop would be the bridge, where we were able to take pictures, and we were informed about the different responsibilities each Sailor has to keep the ship in motion. We were each given the option to drive the ship, and my personal favorite -- sit in the captain's chair. Having the best view on the ship, we were able to see oil rigs and ships in the distance, and straight ahead we were able to view the jets being catapulted off the ship into the bright blue sky.

From there we travelled around to the many sections of the ship, one of which was referred to as flight deck control. This room in particular had a model of the flight deck that was made to scale. The "Handler," the officer in charge of this section, tracked the

movement of the jets on what looked like an Ouija Board -- with scale size jets and people.

Next we were taken to the wardroom for an impressive dinner with the captain. I was able to chat with Sailors from Mississippi and other individuals with common interests. The dinner was fabulous, especially the rolls! To end the evening we scrambled up many flights of stairs to Vulture's Row where we were able to observe flight operations as we watched the beautiful sunset.

Although the sun had set, we still had a few places to visit before we were left at our rooms. Talking to the pilots, visiting the hangar bay where the jets are stored, and the fantail which was located at the back of the ship -- all made an adventurous and tiring day.

To our advantage they were not doing flight ops through the night, so we slept with only some "noise." But as the day ended and shifts changed, so did the atmosphere of the ship... it went to sleep with the Sailors who had worked probably 12 hours that day... the red lighting inside the ship glowed like Christmas tree lights.

Before long the ship was woken up by a whistle sounding over the announcement system. We were up early for our last day of touring. For breakfast we ate on the enlisted mess deck. We had a variety of choices and were again accompanied by Mississippi

Sailors.

After sharing stories and laughing, we began the sightseeing for the day. Frist stop was medical where we spoke with the team and received a tour of the department which included the intensive care unit and the surgery room. While the doctors were talking about the procedures and processes they can do aboard the ship, a few of the individuals in our group began to weigh themselves on the scale. In doing so, one of the men stepped onto the scales and started to maneuver the gauges unaware of the added weight by another man. The man on the scales, confused, started looking around to see that everyone in the room was watching his reaction to what the scale read -- over 250 pounds. Everyone started to laugh and bashfully the man stepped off of the scales.

Our next stop was dental where we also received a tour and spoke with the crew. With not much time left before departure, we visited the ships store and then enjoyed a delightful lunch in the chief's mess. From there we took one last climb to Vulture's Row where we made our last videos of the "cat shot" before we were actually able to experience it.

Lastly we went back to the CO's in port cabin to say farewell to our newly made friends and enjoyed peanut butter cookies. We all exchanged our goodbyes, and now it was time to be catapulted off of the ship.



Submitted Photo

Olivia Martin, right, takes her turn navigating the USS George Washington during a distinguished visitor tour, July 11. Martin is a summer intern in the public affairs office on board NAS Meridian.

Once again we heard the familiar shout, "Here we go! Here we go!" I tightly gripped the 5-point harness that held me snugly in my seat and we were blasted off of the ship and into the air.

The trip to the USS George Washington and working at NAS Meridian has definitely been an experience of a lifetime, and I will certainly take these memories and life lessons

with me on my next adventure in life.

Olivia Martin is a student at Mississippi State University in Starkville. She is a graduate of Enterprise High School and the daughter of Darron and Robin Martin. Olivia was hired through Commander, Navy Installations Command Summer Internship Program which provides hands on experience for college-age students.

## The middle aged woman and the sea; sounds fishy

Thanks to a guy named Big Victor, I'm finally free of years of bitter resentment. No, I didn't put a hit out on anyone -- although, Big Victor did seem like he'd be up for that kind of thing -- I simply went fishing.

Ever since I can remember, I've idealized fishing. As an awkward kid, I would search the neighborhood gutters for the slightest trickle of a creek. I'd fashion a fishing pole out of a stick, string, and a safety pin. I'd pack a canteen of lemonade and a little snack -- Oatmeal Cream Pies were tasty and doubled as decent bait.

To me, catching fish was secondary to experiencing a classic summer past time -- leaning against a shady tree on the edge of a river, jeans rolled up, bare toes dipped in cool water, waiting patiently for a nibble while communing with nature.

Fortunately, I had an active imagination, because my childhood fishing trips mostly took place in a drainage ditch under Route 286 and the only thing I ever caught was a bacterial infection. My family was not into fishing, so other than a few fruitless tries with a rental pole from a pier while on vacation, the opportunity to go on a real fishing trip never presented itself.

That is, until the summer of 1978, when my parents arranged to go off-shore fishing. They invited my grandfather, aunt, uncle, cousin and brother ... surely this was my big chance! "Lisa, you're staying at home with the dog," I was told. A tiny

spark of resentment ignited deep inside.

In the summer of 1990, I was at school studying for my law exams, and called to find out how my family's summer vacation was going. "We're eating the tuna your brother caught today on our deep sea fishing trip!" I was told, and the embers glowed red.

In 1995, a couple years after marrying my Navy husband, Francis, we were living on Fort Ord, just outside of Monterey, California, and the opportunity to go salmon fishing came up. "Nope, you're eight months pregnant," I was told, and steam rose from my ears.

In 1998 while stationed in Norfolk, Virginia, there was a bachelor party fishing trip ("No women allowed") and in 2012 while stationed in Mayport, Florida, a fishing trip with guys from work ("Who will watch the kids?") Before I knew it, the spark of resentment had flared into a raging wildfire.

But recently, in a strange twist of irony, the chance I'd been waiting for came among the vast urban sprawl of Los Angeles, California. While visiting family there, Francis' brother, Chris, proposed a five-hour off shore fishing trip.

"FISHING?" I blurted, "SERIOUSLY? ME, TOO?!" I may not have been an intended invitee, but at that point, Chris had no choice.

We boarded the boat in Marina Del Ray, looking like idiot tourists with our fanny packs, sunscreens noses, and a cooler with enough snacks and drinks to sustain us for a month. The hulking hispanic deck boss, "Big Victor," carried a knife, a gaffing hook, a large gold chain, about 150 excess pounds, and a look on his face that said, "I eat idiot tourists for lunch."

After finding a good spot among the whale watchers and the oil tankers, the



Submitted Photo

Molinari during her fishing trip to Marina Del Ray, Calif.

crew flung chum over our heads while we set our lines. Four and a half hours later, we thought Francis had finally caught the big one. His hands shook as he strained to pull in what was surely a 40-pound yellowtail.

"It's kelp," Big Victor said, and used his gaffing hook to retrieve Francis' mangled line.

I knew I'd be coming home from my first real fishing trip empty handed, but it didn't matter. The sun on my face, the spritz of chum flying overhead, the bubbles of a cold beverage, and the satisfaction of baiting my own hook had fulfilled my childhood dreams.

"Fish on!" I yelled excitedly, just as

we were about to haul anchor. "Is it big enough to keep?" I whispered to Big Victor.

He nodded his massive head, and with a swipe of his knife, I had two tiny fish fillets to contribute to dinner. I stepped off the boat that day, grateful for my first real fishing trip ...

... and that there was plenty of spaghetti at home.

A 21-year Navy spouse, Lisa Smith Molinari and her family are currently stationed in Newport, R.I. Her self-syndicated columns appear on her blog, [www.themeadpotatoesofflife.com](http://www.themeadpotatoesofflife.com) and she recently co-authored Stories Around the Table: Laughter, Wisdom, and Strength in Military Life Follow [Lisa@MolinariWrites.com](mailto:Lisa@MolinariWrites.com).

**The Veterans of Foreign Wars Scholarship contest is open to all middle school and high school students. Themes this year are: Middle School "The America I Believe In" High School: "My Responsibility to America."**

**Deadline is Nov. 1. Contact VFW Post 12124 at 601 282-5866 for more information.**

**Applications can be found at <http://www.vfw.org/Youth/>**

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**Pvt. Austin Rickman**  
MATSS-1 Student  
Hometown: Cuero, Texas

Pvt. Austin Rickman enjoys fishing for relaxation and football as a contact sport. Rickman joined the Marine Corps on Aug. 18 to do something positive with his life.

Rickman's most memorable experience has been Marine Combat Training (MCT), because he enjoys field operations training.

After graduating military occupational specialty school, Rickman would like to be part of a Marine expeditionary unit.

He also hopes to one day be stationed in Yuma, Ariz. because it's close to his home state, Texas.

The person Rickman admires most is his uncle, U.S. Army Sgt. Jeffrey Molands for inspiring him to join.

Rickman is currently enrolled in the Marine Aviation Supply Specialist Course at MATSS-1.

# OORAH!



**Pfc. Jeron Stafford**  
MATSS-1 Student  
Hometown: Brooklyn, N.Y.

Pfc. Jeron Stafford enjoys basketball, running, and tennis because he loves to stay active and physically fit.

Stafford joined the Marine Corps on Dec. 7. He said he joined to become a better person and earn something in his life for the first time.

Boot camp was a very memorable experience for Stafford. He feels that it helped him become a better leader and he appreciates the feeling of belonging to a team.

Stafford hopes to make rank after graduating so he can mentor junior Marines.

The person that inspires Stafford to keep pushing is Gunnery Sgt. Van Lebron. He taught Stafford to never let adversity keep him down and to use those experiences as ammunition to make himself a better Marine.

## Marine recon and Air Force special operations hone humanitarian skills

By Cpl. Natalie Dillon  
3rd Marine Expeditionary Force

When disaster strikes, most people observe from the outside. They cringe, they pity, they pray.

However, some brave men and women choose not to be casual observers. They are the volunteer force who responds to emergencies, like Force Reconnaissance Marines with III Marine Expeditionary Force and Special Tactics Airmen with 353rd Special Operations Group, Air Force Special Operations Command.

As part of Rim of the Pacific 2016, these specially trained Marines and Airmen teamed up during a humanitarian assistance and disaster response exercise, July 8-9, to ensure they are ready to respond when confronted with the next calamity.

The mission began after sunset, in the chilly hills of the Pohakuloa Training Area. Under the cover of darkness, a team of Reconnaissance Marines with full combat loads crammed themselves into sports utility vehicles. Load-bearing vests bristled with magazines of 5.56 mm rounds and packs bulged with supplies to sustain the Marines for multiple nights at altitudes of more than 6,000 feet above sea level. The ve-

hicles sped along a lonesome dirt road, kicking up dust.

Finally, the tactical operations center radioed a two-minute warning to the team leader, indicating that they needed to be at their reconnaissance point, ready to debark the vehicles. When the vehicles ground to a halt, the Marines clambered out, lowering their night vision goggles to eye level and peering out at the eerie green landscape. They stealthily plodded a hilly course through gristly scrub brush, gathering information about the landscape throughout the night and passing it to the team of Special Tactics Airmen. In the morning, the Airmen would use this information to determine the best way of reaching those who required aid.

Marine Capt. Joshua Winters, platoon commander of 2nd Platoon, Force Reconnaissance Company, III MEF, said his Marines embedded 24 hours before the Airmen insertion to provide the Air Force Special Operations Forces with critical information to mitigate risk during the operation. As part of the exercise, Marines from other units training at Pohakuloa Training Area role-played as victims.

Using the intelligence gathered by III MEF, the Air Force

mission commander decided the best option of recovering the simulated victims would be to infiltrate by high-altitude, low-opening airborne jumps. Eighteen Special Tactics Airmen infiltrated the affected area and immediately moved to the disaster location. One team would travel 25 kilometers by all-terrain vehicles to take control of a remote airfield, while the other team concurrently patrolled by foot through rugged, rocky terrain to recover and provide emergency medical assistance to victims of the disaster. If medical assistance was not needed, the teams called for material aid to be brought to victims.

Once the team of Special Tactics Airmen took control of the airfield, they were able to provide quick recovery efforts of victims affected by the catastrophe by establishing an austere airfield, opening a forward area refueling point and providing critical air traffic control duties for aircraft in the area.

In addition, the rotary wing aircraft were then able to insert the Special Tactics Airmen into the most critically affected areas, providing an air-enabled line of supply to those in need.

Within nine hours of taking control of the air assets at Brad-



Photo by 2nd Lt. Jaclyn Pienkowski

**A combat controller from the 320th Special Tactics Squadron clears a UH-60 Blackhawk for takeoff during a humanitarian assistance and disaster response as part of Rim of the Pacific 2016, at Pohakuloa Training Area, Hawaii.**

shaw Army Airfield, the teams of Special Tactics Airmen had rescued and provided relief to 75 victims and delivered more than 1,500 pounds of aid.

As a role player, Marine Pfc. Jason Murillo, an intelligence specialist with 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron 3, III MEF said the relief teams communicated well with each other and with the simulated victims.

"They came in, they knew what they were doing, and they

treated and removed us from the situation pretty quickly," Murillo said.

RIMPAC has provided III MEF and Special Tactics Airmen from the 353rd SOG an opportunity to showcase their partnership and the benefits of having an ongoing relationship between conventional forces and SOF.

"The relationship that we've built with Air Force Special Operations helps us carry out missions like this more effectively," said Winters.

### CAMP PENDALTON, CALIFORNIA



Photo by Danny Gonzalez

**Marines with 1st Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion pull a High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle during Highlanders' Night at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif.**

### WASHINGTON, D.C.



Photo by Cpl. Chi Nguyen

**The United States Marine Drum and Bugle Corps performs during the Evening Parade at Marine Barracks Washington, D.C. The hosting official was Lt. Gen. Kenneth McKenzie Jr., director, J-5, Strategic Plans and Policy, Joint Staff.**

## Safety & Energy Efficiency is Our Duty

### Ceiling fan savings

Ceiling fans are considered the most effective of these types of fans, because they effectively circulate the air in a room to create a draft throughout the room. If you use air conditioning, a ceiling fan will allow you to raise the thermostat setting about 4°F with no reduction in comfort. In temperate climates, or during moderately hot weather, ceiling fans may allow you to avoid using your air conditioner altogether. Install a fan in each room that needs to be cooled during hot weather. Turn off ceiling fans when you leave a room; fans cool people, not rooms, by creating a wind chill effect.

Ceiling fans are only appropriate in rooms with ceilings at least eight feet high. Fans work best when the blades are seven to nine feet above the floor and 10 to 12 inches below the ceiling. Fans should be installed so their blades are no closer than eight inches from the ceiling and 18 inches from the walls. Larger ceiling fans can move more air than smaller fans. A 36- or 44-inch diameter fan will cool rooms up to 225 square feet, while fans that are 52 inches or more should be used in larger rooms. Multiple fans work best in rooms longer than 18 feet. Small- and medium-sized fans will provide efficient cooling in a 6-foot diameter area, while larger fans are effective up to 10 feet. A more expensive fan that operates quietly and smoothly will probably offer more trouble-free service than cheaper units. Check the noise ratings, and, if possible, listen to your fan in operation before you buy it.

When buying ceiling fans, look for the ENERGY STAR® label. Fans that earn the label move air 20% more efficiently, on average, than standard models.

From Energy.gov

### Danger: Heat illness

As the summer is in full swing, we all need to be sure we take care of one another. Heat illnesses can become very dangerous if not taken seriously. Follow these tips below to ensure everyone stays safe.

1. Know how to recognize the three most common types of heat-related illness: heat stroke, heat exhaustion, and heat cramps.
2. Heat strokes are the most severe, and can be fatal. Symptoms include a temperature to as high as 105 degrees: hot, red and dry skin; a rapid, week pulse; and rapid, shallow breathing.
3. As first aid for heat stroke, call 9-1-1 immediately. Wrap damp sheets around the victim and start fanning them. Wrap cool packs in a cloth and place them on the victim's wrists and ankles, in the

- armpits and on the neck.
4. Victims of heat exhaustion will have a normal temperature, but will have other symptoms: cool, moist, pale skin; heavy sweating; headache, nausea or vomiting and dizziness.
5. Heat cramps are muscular pains and spasms that result from intense exertion. Cramps most often attack the abdomen and legs.

6. To avoid heat illnesses:

- Wear light weight, light-colored clothing,
- Drinking plenty of water,
- Take regular breaks,
- Eating small meals.

**HYDRATE! HYDRATE! HYDRATE!**

If you have any questions, please contact the NAS Meridian Fire Department at 601-679-2589.





# MWR Sports

Naval Air Station Meridian

Captain's Cup  
**Beach Volleyball Tournament**  
Thursday, August 4 • 5pm  
Register Online at [www.navy.mwrmeridian.com](http://www.navy.mwrmeridian.com)

Captain's Cup  
**Ultimate Frisbee**  
Registration: Aug. 8 - Sept. 5  
Season Begins Sept. 13  
Matches will be played on Tuesdays  
Players need to register online @ [www.navy.mwrmeridian.com](http://www.navy.mwrmeridian.com)

**MWR Bench Press Competition**  
Saturday, Aug. 27, 2016  
Mandatory Weigh In 10am  
Competition Starts 11am  
Registration Begins August 1, 2016

**Captain's Cup Soccer Standings**

	Total Wins	Total Losses	Total Forfeits
NTTC	4	0	0
MATSS-1	0	0	0
TW-1	2	1	0
Medical	0	4	0
Field Support	2	0	0
Goslings	0	4	0

## Upcoming at The Fitness Center

To sign up for Captain's Cup sports, please go to [navymwrmeridian.com](http://navymwrmeridian.com).

- Under the Fitness tab, Click on:
1. Intramural Sports then
  2. Click appropriate link, The Team Captain(s) will need to enter Names, emails and phone numbers for everyone on the team.

## 3 Certified Personal Trainers Available Free of Charge

Call (601) 679-2379 for additional information

Get Prizes for doing cardio. **100 Mile Club**  
100 miles T-Shirt  
500 miles Ball Cap  
1,000 miles Gym Bag  
Track your progress at the Fitness Center! **Are You A Member?**

**July Group Exercise Schedule is available at the Sonny Montgomery Fitness Center or online at [NavyMWRMeridian.com](http://NavyMWRMeridian.com)**

**Punta Creek Challenge**  
**Mountain Bike Race**  
Saturday, July 23 • 9am  
Registration Open June 6 - July 22  
Register online @ [www.navy.mwrmeridian.com](http://www.navy.mwrmeridian.com) or by calling (601) 679-2526

## Naval Personnel Command encourages Sailors to update NSIPS

By Gene H. Hughes

Naval Personnel Command Public Affairs

Naval Personnel Command (NPC) is always working to provide better customer service to Sailors. There are times when Sailors need important news and information while on temporary duty, leave, or between duty stations.

To avoid delays during these times, it's important for Sailors to have their accurate work and home email address and phone numbers updated in the Navy Standard Integrated Personnel System (NSIPS).

"Sailors need to make sure all their addresses are correct," said Jerry Sides, Personnel Support Detachment Memphis.

"With many of the new self-service initiatives we're rolling out in NSIPS, having an accurate email address on file is critical," said Ann Stewart, NPC assistant commander for Pay and Personnel Management. "That piece of information can provide the link that we need to get in touch with people about their pay or personnel support. We are finding it very

useful in helping people who have permanent change of station orders and are in the process of traveling from one duty station to the next."

Update your personal email address and phone numbers in NSIPS to make sure you don't miss critical information about your career or during times when you may be out of the official line of communications.

Log on to your personal NSIPS account at <http://nsipsprod.nmci.navy.mil/>. Click on "View Personnel Information," then on "Address and Phone." All you have to do then is to update your phone and email address and click "Save."

"We can send Sailors information that is useful for filing travel claims when they complete their PCS process and we can follow up with them to make sure they are getting their claims filed in a timely manner," said Stewart.

The mission of NPC is to support the needs of the Navy by providing the fleet with the right person in the right place at the right time. Manning the fleet with ready Sailors.

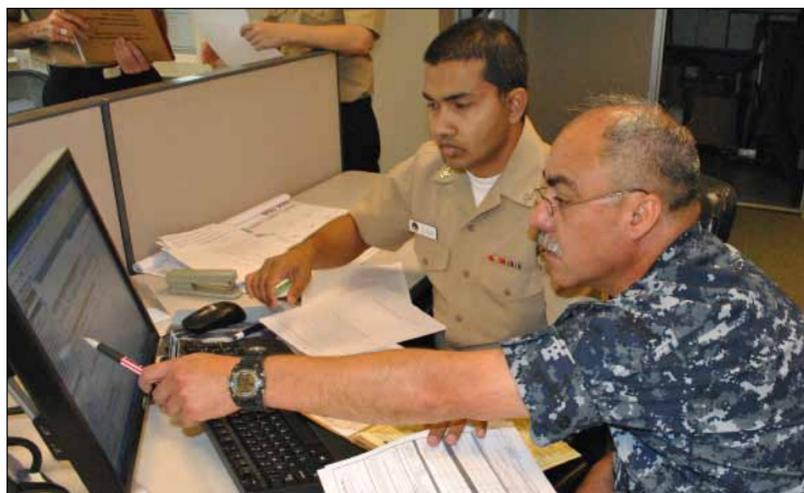


Photo by MCCA Maria R. Escamilla

Chief Hospital Corpsman Hugo A. Castellanos, right, a Reserve Component member assigned to Operational Health Support Unit, Dallas, Detachment F, works with Personnel Specialist 3rd Class Mukarram Hossain, manpower clerk at Navy Operational Support Center Fort Worth, as they review Castellano's Electronic Service Record (ESR) data in the Navy Standard Integrated Personnel System (NSIPS). Image edited for security purposes.

**IT'S HOT OUTSIDE!** STAY COOL. STAY HYDRATED. STAY INFORMED.

- Drink plenty of water and don't wait until you're thirsty to drink.
- Drink from two to four cups of water every hour when you exercise or work outdoors.
- Avoid alcohol or liquids containing large amounts of sugar.

[www.cdc.gov/nceh/extremeheat](http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/extremeheat) CDC

## Sale... Or

### BOATS/CAMPERS/TRAILERS

**1983 McGregor Sailboat**, 22', 10 HP outboard, all rigging and hardware, custom built trailer. \$4,000. Call 601-513-6374.

**1996 Ragin Cajun Bass Boat**, 200hp Mariner, Loran depth finder and a GPS/depth finder duel livewells mortar guide trolling motor. Runs great and fast. \$4,500. Seats in good condition. Call Clint 601-479-7043.

**2006 Fleetwood Discovery 39 ft. 3 slide, Cat Diesel, motor home.** New tires & A/C, "fully equipped," original owners, non-smokers. Serious Inquiries Only. Will e-mail pictures, full information or set appointment to see RV call 601-479-6145.

### MOTORCYCLES/GEAR/ATV

**2010 Honda Sabre** very direct drive, less than 10k miles. Sale includes trailer ready cover and two sets of keys. Asking \$8K (negotiable). Serious inquiries only. Call 301-919-7972.

**1984 Honda NightHawk** very good condition \$1,000. Call Greg at 601-490-3835.

**2004 Honda TRX450R** four wheeler \$2600, **2005 Honda TRX250EX** four wheeler \$1600, **2002 Yamaha TTR-125L** dirt bike \$800, and **2006 KTM 250SX-F** dirt bike \$2200. All in good shape ready to go. Overseas move forcing sale. Make offer ready to deal! Call Ben at 843-597-4221.

### AUTOMOBILES, ETC.

**New! 2007 Malibu** New tires, 68k miles, very good condition \$6,000. Call Greg

601-490-3835

**2006 Corvette** 52k miles unique color and accessories. Asking \$23,000. Call 850-797-9462.

**2004 Saturn Ion** 56k miles looks great drives and rides like new \$4,000. Call Greg at 601-490-3835.

**2006 Saturn Ion** 52k miles looks great drives like new 5,000. Call Greg at 601-490-3835.

**1991 Corvette Coupe**, white, red leather interior, 6-speed manual, ZR-1 wheels with extra wheel and tire, two tops. 89k miles. Call 601-917-9181.

**2008 Jeep Liberty**, 75k miles, 4-wheel drive, automatic, has a roof rack and a tow hitch, as well as skylight. V6, 3.7 liter, 4-spd w/over-drive. \$13,000, negotiable. Call 434-604-0428. Text for photos or Carfax report.

### HOMES/APARTMENTS

**New! For Rent:** 2 BD/2 BA historic home on Poplar Springs Drive in Meridian. New appliances, wood blinds, washer/dryer hookup. Pet friendly and nice neighborhood. Asking \$945/month with deposit. Call or text 601-917-4134.

**For Sale:** 4BD/4BA home -- includes guest house. 2017 sq. ft. remodeled (interior/main home) in 2010. Poplar Springs School District -- currently rents for \$550/month. 2714 45th Street, Meridian. Asking \$196,000. Call Matt at 601-527-2741

**For Rent:** 4BD/2BA in West Lauderdale school district. All New paint, all new carpet & tile flooring. Brand new farmhouse style kitchen with open floor plan. Call 601-934-9161.

**For Sale:** Home in the

Meridian downtown area, 2 story, approximately 2800 sf, 3 BD/2 BA. Call John at 228-380-1139.

**For Sale:** 4BD/2 full BA, very quiet settled neighborhood, Poplar Springs School District - Meridian. Asking \$90,000 as is and will accept serious offers. Contact Betty-alford@outlook.com or 601-527-5244.

**For Rent:** 4 BD/3 BA located home on Windmill Drive about 10 minutes from NAS. Split bedroom plan with two master bedrooms. \$1300 a month/\$1300 deposit. Call 601-227-1493. Family or multiple single individuals will be accepted.

**For Sale:** 3 BD/2 BA, 1500 sq. ft. brick home with carport and outbuildings. Additional carport and plenty of room to build on adjacent lot. Located at 3678 North Lake Dr.

across from Little Beach. Call 870-223-3197.

**For Sale by Owner:** 3 BD/2 BA, 2100 square feet living area, 900 square feet basement. 3 acres of land. Call 601-490-0692 before 7 p.m. for details.

**For Sale:** 3 BD ranch-style home on 1.3 acres, finished basement. \$89,000 Call Bill at 601-681-6609 or 601-481-5124.

### MISCELLANEOUS

**8x8 barn-wood porch** asking \$125. Call 601-679-2010.

To submit an item to the "Sale...Or" column, e-mail [adam.prince@navy.mil](mailto:adam.prince@navy.mil). Deadline is the Thursday prior to publication.

Listings in the "Sale...Or" column are free for anyone who works at NAS Meridian. You can purchase an ad for a business or organization in "The Skyline," by calling The Meridian Star at 601-693-1551 -- ask for Elizabeth or email: [advertising@themeridianstar.com](mailto:advertising@themeridianstar.com)

# District one supervisor visits NAS Meridian

By Adam Prince  
NAS Meridian Public Affairs

Jonathan Wells, district one supervisor, Lauderdale County, recently visited NAS Meridian.

"Supervisors are our partners in the counties. We depend on the supervisors to help us protect the mission by helping direct incompatible development toward other areas using noise and accident potential areas that we have given them," said Jim Copeland, NAS Meridian community planning and liaison officer.

While the county has not passed an ordinance to update the 1992 and 1995 ordinances, Copeland expects a new ordinance to follow the Joint Land Use Study (JLUS) now underway. The JLUS helps to marshal all the facts, develop a plan, and implement it.

Wells wanted to make sure he had all the information he could get to best serve the citizens in his district.

"Typically, we invite all the supervisors to come at once, but Mr. Wells asked

to come after having gone to the aircraft carrier to see the local side of the story."

Copeland works closely with county and city officials to maintain a close working relationship.

"Normally, we visit the landing runway to see touch-and-goes up close and spend time on the big picture in the control tower pointing out departures and landing patterns, and how air traffic controllers work," Copeland said. "We also want the supervisors to experience what the pattern is like for residents in the community - hear the noise on Fred Clayton Road or Terry Road."

Mr. Wells' district includes the Fred Clayton Road area. He has talked door-to-door with the residents. He is an avid bicyclist and rides with the local club all through this area.

"The mission, and why we fly the way we do, was something we wanted to add to his knowledge base -- so he can make informed decisions," Copeland added.

Wells stressed the importance of getting as much information as he could to

best service his district.

"I wanted to get a better understanding of the work and purpose of what we are trying to accomplish in relationships and communication with NAS, the land owners, and Lauderdale County," Wells said.

"After living in this area for nearly 25 years, I enjoyed getting to see what operations looked like just on the other side of those trees. I also have a better understanding why it is important to have a plan and communicate that plan with all the parties involved in and around NAS. That is a win for everyone."

"NAS has a monumental impact not just on district one, but the entire region. It is one of our major economic lifelines. That is why Mr. Copeland, and his work with the JLUS study, is so important to Lauderdale County," Wells added. "Our continued partnership is vital to our success on both sides of the spectrum; both for NAS and the city and county."



Wells

## DoD Safe Helpline offers specialized support to sexual assault victims

By Amaani Lyle  
Defense Media Activity

At first glance, the wall of multicolored adhesive notes could be routine reminders or phone messages common in a busy work center in this high-rise office space here.

But this is no typical workplace, and the notes are anything but ordinary.

Scrawled on the notes are simple yet profound messages of thanks for hope, support and help with facing one of the most underreported crimes in the United States and a challenge within the U.S. armed forces: sexual assault.

Staff at the Department of Defense Safe Helpline recently spoke with DoD News to discuss how they provide 24/7 anonymous, live, one-on-one crisis intervention, support, information and resources to members of the DoD community who have been affected by sexual assault.

Launched in February 2011, the Safe Helpline serves as DoD's sole sexual assault hotline and is operated by the DoD Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office, or SAPRO, through a contract with the Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network, known as RAINN, the nation's largest anti-sexual violence organization.

Since 2011, more than 60,000 survivors, family members, colleagues and others have reached out to Safe Helpline for support, and in more than 1 million instances, people have accessed information and resources through the Safe Helpline website.

From its inception, RAINN has joined forces with DoD SAPRO, the military services, the National Guard Bureau, the Coast Guard, and the Labor and Veterans Affairs departments to guide the continued development of Safe Helpline services. In addition to the telephone helpline, the online helpline and "Info by Text," Safe Helpline services also include transitioning service member support, an enhanced website featuring a refined sexual assault resource search tool, a self-care mobile app and an online secure group chat service called the Safe HelpRoom.

"It's a hard thing when you first disclose a sexual assault, [and] creating this space so that members of the DoD community can do that really enables them to get the help that they need," Berkowitz said.

The initial disclosure has a critical impact on a survivor's path to healing, he said. "Having a place where there are trained, compassionate people who can provide a positive first response can make all the difference," he added. "Sometimes

they don't even have the words to describe what has happened to them and they need a safe environment to talk that through."

This can be especially true for male survivors, as stereotypes and stigmas can make reporting even more difficult.

"There's a sense of shame, self-blame and fear of being judged when talking about a sexual assault, and all of those are amplified in cases with male survivors," said Denise Usher, a Safe Helpline shift manager. "We know the reality of sexual assault is that the scenarios in which they're perpetrated can vary. Sexual assault is about consent, and has nothing to do with somebody's masculinity. Perpetrators are just very adept at figuring out how to commit assaults."

Liz Blanc, DoD SAPRO victim assistance program analyst and Safe Helpline operations manager, described the Safe Helpline as a "vital, victim-centered" resource.

"A user can be assured that the individual on the other end of the line has [his or her] sole interest in mind," Blanc said. "There is no such thing as a typical call or chat, because every caller, every situation, is different. The Safe Helpline staff is trained to build the trust and rapport needed to get every individual user the help he or she needs."

Irene Jacobs, a Safe Helpline staffer, said safety and reliability are what can make the ultimate difference to a caller.

"Knowing that I am often the first person that [a survivor] discloses the incident to gives me a great sense of duty to connect them to the best resources possible," Jacobs said. "Using the crisis intervention skills and best practices I learned in training, I am able to help them understand their options in terms of reporting and the next steps they want to take. For example, if a survivor feels ready, Safe Helpline staff can connect them to a local sexual assault response coordinator or [sexual assault prevention and response] victim advocate to make a report and access follow-on care and services."

The Safe Helpline aims to continually improve its services to meet the needs of sexual assault survivors, and the staff takes great care to ensure day-to-day quality assurance with every call and online chat.

"Because we are anonymous and confidential, we do not record or maintain transcripts of any of our calls or chats," Usher said. "Therefore, in order to provide quality control and quality assurance, we do real-time supervision. This ensures that anyone using the Safe Helpline is getting all the right resources and support."

### Self-Care Mobile App Raises Bar

Sometimes ensuring users get the right resources means having to create their own, as in the case of the DoD Safe Helpline self-care mobile app. The Safe Helpline staff observed that users sought a way to deal with sexual assault-related insomnia, anxiety, flashbacks and other challenges while on the go.

"While there were prevention and safety apps, there were none that existed specifically tailored for military sexual assault survivors to help them connect to resources and manage the short- and long-term effects of sexual assault," Berkowitz said. "So we saw that as a gap in meeting the needs of victims."

In response, the DoD Safe Helpline self-care mobile app was introduced in 2012 allowing users to create personalized self-care plans and access exercises from their mobile phones. The app features informative resources for active duty, National Guard, reserve, Coast Guard and transitioning service members, and shares information about the effects of sexual assault, prevention, and recovery.

Another resource that survivors often requested was a way to connect with others who had also experienced sexual assault.

"The research has always shown that connecting to other survivors is an incredibly powerful aid in the recovery process," Berkowitz explained. Still, he acknowledged that when doing preliminary research about existing chat rooms and online forums, he and the Safe Helpline team discovered survivors would often turn to unmoderated chat rooms and online forums that couldn't meet their needs. "There were a lot of chat rooms and other types of public message boards

where we saw survivors putting themselves out there and being exposed to negative comments and bad information," he said.

The Safe HelpRoom began 2013 as an online chatroom where survivors of sexual assault in the military can connect with and support one another in a moderated, secure environment. Like the telephone hotline, online helpline and Info by Text services, the Safe HelpRoom is also available 24/7.

"Some people come to the Safe Helpline just minutes after they are assaulted, but some come years later," Berkowitz said. "We want to be a place where people are always comfortable reaching out; we want to make sure that the help we offer is what they're looking for and that it supports their recovery. This means continuing to innovate and develop new resources that support the needs of survivors."

While the collaboration between DoD SAPRO, RAINN, and the military services has yielded significant improvements in care for military members, Blanc and Berkowitz said they hope the need for the effort will one day subside.

"DoD has taken great strides to address the problem of sexual assault. I'm optimistic that those will continue and that over time we will be able to reduce the number of sexual assaults," Berkowitz said. "Until that point, we are working hard to make the Safe Helpline a source of confidential, anonymous help - a resource that people trust."

Members of the DoD community who have been affected by sexual assault can access 24/7, secure, confidential, anonymous support through the DoD Safe Helpline at <https://safehelpline.org>, or by calling (877) 995-5247.

DoD  
**Safe Helpline**  
.....  
Sexual Assault Support for the DoD Community  
[safehelpline.org](https://safehelpline.org) | 877-995-5247



# IT'S YOUR TURN...

This week we asked, "What would you like to do before the end of summer?"

By MC2 Chris Liaghat



**LSSN Jimmy Stewart**  
NTTC student

"I'd like to graduate at the top of my class before the end of summer."



**LSSN Taryn Eaton**  
NTTC student

"I would like to go camping before the end of summer."



**LSSN Rachel Moss**  
NTTC student

"I want to be a third class petty officer before the end of summer."



**LSSR Andrew Valovich**  
NTTC student

"I'd like to go fishing and get a tattoo before the end of summer."



**LSSN Nicole Junod**  
NTTC student

"Before the end of summer I'd like to walk in the grass barefoot!"

## Fleet & Family Support Center

### Building intimacy in relationships

One of the building blocks of a strong relationship is intimacy. Intimacy is more than just sex. It is a feeling of warmth or closeness that is based on trust, respect and friendship. You can strengthen your relationship by making intimacy a top priority.

This means showing your affection and friendship every day instead of waiting for Valentine's Day or other special occasions. Staying close may take extra effort if you and your partner have very busy lives or a lot of work and family responsibilities. But there are many ways to build intimacy. If you keep strengthening your friendship, and building on your shared trust and respect, you can maintain an intimate relationship without neglecting your other responsibilities.

Building intimacy begins with knowing yourself and knowing your partner. A strong relationship meets the needs of both members of the couple. And in order to meet each other's needs, you have to know what they are. This can be challenging partly because people's needs change over time. You and your partner may have different needs now than you did when you met. Or your needs may have stayed the same, but your lives may have changed in ways that make your needs harder to meet. You may have put your friendship – and intimacy – on the back burner because of pressures at work or at home.

If this has happened, you may want to take these steps to grow close again: think about what's most important to you; be honest about your physical, emotional, social, and other needs.

Do you want to feel respected and appreciated? To be able to share your deepest thoughts and feelings? To have more physical contact (including gestures like holding hands or giving hugs)? If you identify and even write down your needs, you'll be better able to communicate them clearly and work with your partner to find ways to meet them.

Try to get a better sense of your partner's needs, too. When you were first getting to know your partner, you probably spent a lot of time trying to understand her needs and values. After a while, you might have assumed you knew these well. But her needs and values may have changed. So you may want to ask some open-ended questions that would help to clarify them. How have her needs changed since you've been together? What could you do to meet her needs better? Your partner may be more open to your suggestions for building intimacy if you show her you want to meet her needs, too.

Talk about how you feel about the time you spend together. Is it enough? Do you wish it were a higher priority for your partner? Does your partner wish it were a higher priority for you? Are you communicating clearly and honestly about the things that bother you? Or are you still seething in silence about something that happened weeks, months, or maybe even years ago? Sometimes, to achieve more intimacy, you need to put all the issues on the table and explore the steps you could take to bring the two of you into more harmony.

Ask for what you want. Couples sometimes think their partner should know their needs and are disappointed when their needs are not met. But most people aren't mind readers. Tell your partner what you need, and why it is important to you. Don't assume she knows what you want because you've explained it before. She may have forgotten or misunderstood, or may assume your needs have changed. If you have trouble talking about your needs, consider writing them down. This will also make it easier for your partner to remember what you said.

Be specific. If you'd like to have more intimacy in your relationship, explain what this means to you. Would you like to hear "I love you" more often? Hold hands when you're watching TV or a movie? Have 15 or 20 minutes a day of private conversation? The more specific you are, the more help you will give your partner in understanding and responding to your needs. Talk about intimacy concerns before a crisis occurs. If you put off talking about a concern about intimacy, a small issue may turn into a larger one. Bring up your concerns when both of you are feeling calm and relaxed, not when you're arguing about something else. If a subject seems very difficult for your partner, don't push too hard the first time you bring it up. Instead, back off and return to it later, after she's had time to think about what you've said.

Be willing to take emotional risks. To have more intimacy, you may need to make yourself emotionally vulnerable, or talk about subjects that are difficult or painful. This is a way of giving your partner permission to bring up things that may be hard for her to talk about, too. Be willing to be the first one to bring up a subject that might at first be uncomfortable for both of you.

Accept that it's normal to disagree about some things. Having an intimate relationship doesn't mean that you'll always be happy and never argue. In fact, the opposite is true. A strong relationship has room for

disagreements.

Differences of opinion won't damage the relationship if you work them out with love and respect instead of anger or resentment. Keep in mind that your feelings of intimacy will vary. There's a normal ebb and flow to intimate relationships. It's important to respect each other's need for togetherness and for time each of you may need alone.

Most couples feel closer to each other at certain times than others -- for example, after a joyful or sad event, such as the birth of a child or the loss of a family member. This is a natural part of sharing your life with someone else. But if you feel distant from your partner much more often than you feel close, it's important to ask yourself why. A lack of intimacy may reflect a deeper problem in a relationship. If you aren't sure what it is, you may want to talk to a marriage therapist or counselor who can help you clarify your concerns and look for solutions.

Good communication can help you achieve more intimacy in a relationship. It's important to talk about what you love, admire, and appreciate about your partner, not just what you wish would change. This sends the message that you value your relationship and want to strengthen it. If you feel unsure of how to express the closeness you feel, you might try saying:

- "I feel so close to you when..."
- "I was so proud of you when..."
- "I appreciated it when you..."
- "You are so precious to me because..."
- "You make me feel so valued and cherished when..."
- "One of my most wonderful memories of you is..."
- "One of the best times we've ever had together was..."
- "Every day is fun with you because..."
- "Every day I admire you..."

Intimacy grows out of the small things you do every day, such as taking time to say "I love you" or to give your partner a hug when he gets home from work. Here are some ways to build intimacy into a busy schedule. Plan easy ways to spend time together. Some couples set aside one night each week or month as a "date night." If your life is very busy, you may want to put your dates with your partner on your calendar. This may not seem romantic, but it can be fun to anticipate your special time together. If you can't fit this into your budget or schedule, explore alternatives. Could you meet for lunch or coffee during the work day? Go for a walk during a child's sports event? Rent a movie you both loved when you first saw it?

Share mutual interests. Think about activities that you both enjoy and want to share together. You may rediscover some shared interests that drew you together in the first place.

Enjoy some activities that allow you to touch each other. Research has shown that both physical and emotional benefits can result from gestures as simple as hand-holding or stroking someone else's arm in a comforting way. You may be able to get some of these benefits by cuddling while watching TV or taking up an activity that allows you and your partner to touch each other regularly, such as a couples dancing class.

Ask your partner how his/her day was and really listen. Show him that you care about his day by giving him your full attention. Avoid interrupting, changing the subject or finishing his sentences for him. If you're rushing out the door, or in the middle of a crisis, make a statement such as, "What you're saying is very important to me. I'd like to hear more about it as soon I get back so I can really focus on you." Follow up by asking him to tell you more as soon as you can.

Stay in touch. Both of you may feel closer if you make if you make quick calls to touch base during the work day. These calls can also give you a sense of continuity and remind you that your relationship is a top priority. E-mail can be another great way to stay in touch during the day if your organization permits it.

Create rituals. A study in the Journal of Family Psychology found that rituals -- traditions with a strong emotional component -- can strengthen family relationships and lead to a greater feeling of well-being. They can also help you grow closer as a couple. It doesn't matter what your rituals are as long as they have meaning for both of you.

You might go for a walk together in the evening, always spend a few minutes talking before bed, or say a prayer together in the morning. You might also create weekly or special-occasion rituals, such as dancing to your favorite song in the living room after the children have gone to bed on Saturday night or on the anniversary of the day you met.

Finally, keep in mind that creating intimacy takes time, effort, and commitment. You may find it helpful to think of intimacy as a living thing, like a lovely flowering tree that you grow from a seed. The tree may not blossom right away. But if you stay patient, and provide the care it needs to thrive, it can provide a lifetime of joy.

-- From FFSC Staff

## FFSC Briefs

To register for any of the following workshops, please call the FFSC at 601-679-2360. The class may not be presented if no one registers, so make sure you call if you're interested! Can't make the scheduled time? Call anyway - the workshop facilitator may be able to work with you one-on-one, give you materials, or let you know when the class will be offered again. All classes held at FFSC (Building 405) unless otherwise noted

### Boots to Business (Entrepreneurship):

July 25-26 from 8 a.m.-3 p.m.

This two-day entrepreneurial class, taught by a SBA Representative/SBA Resource Partner will educate participants on business fundamentals and guide them through an initial feasibility analysis of their business concept. Open to spouses.

### Transition GPS Capstone

Aug. 2 from 9:30-10:30 a.m.

Ninety days before their separation from military service, service members will participate in a CAPSTONE event, which will verify that transitioning service members completed the Transition GPS curriculum and achieved Career Readiness Standards. In addition, through the CAPSTONE event, all service members will be offered a 'warm handover' to appropriate government agencies and organizations that will be able to provide them continued benefits, services, and support as veterans. See your command career counselor for more information.

### IA Spouse Discussion Group

Aug. 2 from 11 a.m.-noon.

FFSC hosts this IA Spouse Discussion Group over coffee (or tea). Join other military spouses to talk about the challenges of IA deployment, share survival tips, discuss the impact of deployment on children, remind one another about the benefits of deployment, or just kick back & chat!

### Welcome Aboard

Aug. 4 from 8 a.m.-2 p.m.

FFSC welcomes you to Meridian by providing current information and policies regarding NAS. Topics covered will include: Navy career choices, FFSC services, Suicide Prevention, Medical, Dental, Exceptional Family Member (EFM) Program, TRI-CARE, vehicle registration, on- & off-base driving regulations, legal services, community services, Chapel & other religious services, MWR, things to do at NAS & in Meridian, and more!

### Troops to Teachers: "Transition to Teaching" Seminar

Aug. 9 from 10:30 a.m.-noon

This briefing will cover eligibility and registration for the DoD TTT program. It will address funding and counseling services given by TTT state offices. The need for public school teachers will be addressed. Considerations and individual preparations for becoming a public school teacher will be discussed in depth. It will include gaining teaching experience and requirements for teacher certification.



### Interested in Starting a Business?

The curriculum provides valuable assistance to Servicemembers and Spouses exploring business ownership or other self-employment opportunities by leading them through the key steps for evaluating business concepts and providing the foundational knowledge required to develop a business plan.

**Monday, July 25 & Tuesday, July 26**  
**0800 - 1500**

Location: NAS Meridian, Fleet and Family Support Center  
405 Rosenbaum Avenue  
NAS Meridian, Meridian, MS 39309

To Register: Call 601-679-2360

Sponsored by: NAS Meridian Fleet and Family Support Center  
MSU Small Business Development Center (SBDC)  
MSU Veterans Business Outreach Center (VBOC)



# Vice President Biden visits Stennis

By Ensign Davis Anderson  
USS Stennis Public Affairs

Vice President Joe Biden visited Sailors aboard USS John C. Stennis (CVN 74) July 14, while the ship and John C. Stennis Strike Group (JCSSG) were participating in the 2016 Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) maritime exercise.

The visit, which occurred just one day before the six-month mark of JCSSG's current deployment, gave Biden an opportunity to thank the crew, Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 9, and embarked Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 21 and strike group staffs for the work they have done operating in the U.S. 7th Fleet area of operations and specifically the South China Sea.

"I am humbled and I am honored to be here with you today," said Biden. "On behalf of everyone back at home, Thanks."

Biden added that the importance of JCSSG's deployment could not be understated and the Sailors have helped demon-

strate everyone's right to operate on the oceans of the world.

"Without us, the rest of the world would be in a very different place," said Biden. "That's what makes you so incredible -- your devotion to duty."

During his time aboard, Biden ate lunch with Sailors who hailed from his home state of Delaware.

"It was very humbling," said Master-at-Arms 1st Class Jeffrey Davenport, from Seaford, Delaware. "We talked a lot about Delaware. I didn't want to talk politics with him, because he was here to have a good time and see the ship and the Sailors. What I took away was the realization that even though he is higher ranking, he is just a person, and relating to him on that level was very enlightening."

Biden also watched flight operations during his stay and spoke with leaders from the ship and strike group.

"The vice president's visit highlights the importance of this strike group's operations while deployed



Photo by MC3 Luke Moyer

**Vice President Joe Biden visits Sailors in the hangar bay aboard USS John C. Stennis (CVN 74) during the Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) maritime exercise. Twenty-six nations, more than 40 ships and submarines, more than 200 aircraft and 25,000 personnel are participating in RIMPAC from June 30 to Aug. 4, in and around the Hawaiian Islands and Southern California. RIMPAC provides a unique training opportunity that helps participants foster and sustain the cooperative relationships.**

to the Western Pacific," said Rear Adm. Marcus A. Hitchcock, JCSSG commander. "It was an honor to welcome him aboard

while participating in the Rim of the Pacific exercise with so many partner navies."

CVW-9 consists of

Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 14, Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron (HSM) 71, Airborne Early Warn-

ing Squadron (VAW) 112, Electronic Attack Squadron (VAQ) 133 and Strike Fighter Squadrons (VFA) 14, 41, 97 and 151.

## Blue Angels announce 2017 officers

U.S. Navy Flight Demonstration Squadron, the Blue Angels, announced officers selected for the 2017 air show season, July 16.

The squadron selected three F/A-18 demonstration pilots, events coordinator, C-130 demonstration pilot, flight surgeon, supply officer, and administration officer to join a previously selected executive officer on the 2017 team.

Each officer was recommended for selection by Chief of Naval Air Training Rear Adm. Dell Bull, and ultimately approved by Chief of Naval Air Forces Vice Adm. Mike Shoemaker, for final selection to the 2017 Blue Angels team.

Many highly qualified Navy and Marine Corps officers submit applications to join the Blue Angels each year.

"It is such a privilege to have so many talented officers apply to be part of the Blue Angels tradition of showcasing the Navy and Marine Corps to the American public," said Cmdr. Ryan Bernacchi, flight leader and commanding officer of the 2016 team. "I am inspired by all of those who applied this year and we have an exceptional group to add to next year's team."

The Blue Angels select "finalists" to interview at the team's home base of Naval Air Station (NAS) Pensacola, Fla., during the week of the Pensacola Beach Air Show each year. The team makes selections at the conclusion of that week.

"We were extremely fortunate to have so many qualified and motivated applicants apply for the team," said Lt. Matt Suyderhoud, right wing pilot and applications officer for the 2017 team selection. "I am excited to see what next year's team will be able to accomplish."

### The newly selected 2017 officers include:

**F/A-18 Demonstration Pilots:**  
✓ Navy Lt. Brandon Hempler, 32, of Wamego, Kansas, is an F/A-18 Super Hornet pilot currently assigned to Training Squadron (VT) 22, the "Golden Eagles," at NAS Kingsville, Texas. He is a 2007 graduate of Kansas State University, Salina, Kan.  
✓ Navy Lt. Damon Kroes, 34, of Fremont, California, is an F/A-18 Hornet instructor pilot currently assigned to Marine Fighter Attack Training Squadron (VMFAT) 101, the "Sharpshooters," at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif. He is a 2006 graduate of San Diego State University, San Diego.  
✓ Navy Lt. Nate Scott, 31, of Danville, Calif., is an F/A-18 Hornet instructor pilot currently assigned to Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 106, the "Gladiators," at NAS Oceana, Virginia. He is a 2007 graduate of the University of Southern California, Los Angeles.

**Events Coordinator:**  
✓ Navy Lt. Dave Steppe, 31, of Birmingham, Ala., is an EA-18G Growler naval flight officer currently assigned to Electronic Attack Squadron (VAQ) 129, the "Vikings," at NAS Whidbey Island, Washington. He is a 2008 graduate of Auburn University, Auburn, Ala.

**C-130 Demonstration Pilot:**  
✓ Marine Capt. Kyle Maschner, 33, of Scottsdale, Ariz., is a KC-130 Hercules pilot currently assigned to 1st Marine Aircraft Wing in Okinawa, Japan. He

is a 2006 graduate of Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff, Ariz.

### Flight Surgeon:

✓ Navy Lt. Juan Guerra, 31, of Ocala, Florida, is a flight surgeon currently assigned to Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 106, the "Gladiators," at NAS Oceana, Va. He is a 2011 graduate of the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences School of Medicine, Bethesda, Md.

### Supply Officer:

✓ Navy Lt. Bryan Pace, 32, of Fitzwilliam, N. H., is a supply officer currently assigned to Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 101, the "Grim Reapers," at Eglin Air Force Base, Fla. He is a 2010 graduate of the University of Massachusetts Amherst, Amherst, Mass.

### Administration Officer:

✓ Navy Lt. j.g. Timothy Hawkins, 37, of Scranton, Penn., is an administrative officer currently assigned to Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 143, the "Pukin' Dogs," at NAS Oceana, Virginia. He was commissioned through the Limited Duty Officer Program in 2013.

### Pre-selected to join, or returning to, the 2017 team was:

**Commanding Officer, Flight Leader:**  
✓ Navy Cmdr. Ryan Bernacchi, 43, of Los Altos, Calif.

### Executive Officer:

✓ Navy Cmdr. Matt Kaslik, 43, of The Woodlands, Texas.

### F/A-18 Demonstration Pilots:

✓ Navy Lt. Lance Benson, 33, of McPherson, Kan.  
✓ Navy Lt. Tyler Davies, 34, of Kenesaw, Ga.  
✓ Navy Cmdr. Frank Weisser, 38, of Atlanta.

### C-130 Demonstration Pilots:

✓ Marine Maj. Mark Hamilton, 38, of Becker, Minn.  
✓ Marine Maj. Mark Montgomery, 37, of Cartersville, Ga.

### Maintenance Officer:

✓ Navy Lt. Samuel Rose, 36, of Whitehouse, Texas.

### Public Affairs Officer:

✓ Navy Lt. Joe Hontz, 38, of Longmont, Colo.

The mission of the Blue Angels is to showcase the pride and professionalism of the United States Navy and Marine Corps by inspiring a culture of excellence and service to country through flight demonstrations and community outreach.

At the end of World War II, Adm. Chester W. Nimitz, the Chief of Naval Operations, ordered the formation of a flight demonstration team to keep the public interested in Naval Aviation. The Blue Angels performed their first flight demonstration less than a year later in June 1946 at their home base, Naval Air Station (NAS) Jacksonville, Fla.

For more information, contact Blue Angels Public Affairs at (850)452-3955 or bapao@navy.mil.

--From Blue Angels Public Affairs



Photo by MC1 Andrea Perez

**U.S. Navy Flight Demonstration Squadron, the Blue Angels, pilots fly in formation over the United States Naval Academy 2016 Graduation Day and Commissioning Ceremony in Annapolis, Md.**

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