Volume 61, Number 13

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June 22, 2023

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Multiple tornadoes leave 1 dead, 2 dozen injured in Mississippi

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U.S., India rapidly expand their military cooperation

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U.S., UK Navies respond to merchant vessel distress call in **Strait of Hormuz**

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'Yellowstone' creator **Taylor Sheridan to** launch military spy series

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awmakers float program to unite service dogs to vets

By Leo Shane III Military Times

Lawmakers on Wednesday unveiled a new proposal to use community grants to pair service dogs with struggling veterans, in the hopes the companionship will help solve a host of transition difficulties.

The bipartisan Service Dogs Assisting Veterans (SAVES) Act comes two years after Congress approved similar legislation that advocates say proved too limited to connect canines and veterans. The new legislation would set aside \$10 million annually for nonprofit groups who have trained the dogs and handlers to work with veterans seeking their services.

"This bill will allow more veterans who are struggling with the invisible wounds of war to receive service dogs that could ultimately save their lives," Sen. Thom Tillis, R-N.C., a member of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee and one of the sponsors of the measure, said in a statement.



Airman 1st Class Audrey Chappell/Air National Guard

A service dog visits with military members and their families. New legislation would set aside \$10 million annually for nonprofit groups who have trained the dogs and handlers to work with veterans seeking their services.

"We must repay the debt to the men and women who served our country.'

Under the plan — which still must survive Senate and House debate before becoming law the Department of Veterans Affairs would administer the new program, which echoes past service dog efforts managed through

the Department of Defense.

Groups who are accredited to train and work with service dogs could apply for grants to cover the costs of preparing the canines, preparing the veterans, and providing ongoing support to both after they are matched.

Past research from the Department of Veterans Affairs has shown that service dogs can help reduce the frequency and severity of PTSD symptoms among veterans. In 2021, lawmakers approved plans for a five-year pilot program to provide canine training to veterans diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder in an effort to provide alternative treatments for individuals suffering from that condition.

But advocacy groups say the rules governing that legislation were severely limiting, and thus far have linked only a small number of veterans and dogs. The new proposal looks to push the idea further, using existing infrastructure in the community to help push the efforts ahead.

"Service dogs have a proven track record of providing lifesaving assistance to veterans," said Carl Cricco, CEO of the nonprofit K9s For Warriors. "The SAVES Act will ultimately put more service dogs in the hands of veterans in critical need, allowing them to regain their independence and reintegrate into civilian life."

Civilian achieves challenging certification at water plant

From Staff Reports

Merrilu Hurtt, a Utility System Operator with Naval Air Station Meridian's Water Plant, recently achieved her goal of earning a Class B Operator's License. Hurtt is one of four operators at the NAS Meridian water plant who hold this license.

"The certification is a difficult endeavor; requiring book knowledge and great deal of common sense," said William D. Chisolm, Hurtt's supervisor and NAS Meridian Water Plant Operator. "The math required is difficult and the basic experience required to earn this certificate requires commitment and dedication."

Hurtt was required to work for a year under a certified operator before she could assume any duties as a water operator or take the test. She is then required to work full

time under a certified operator for two additional years before she can be fully qualified and operate the plant on her own.

"The certification was more difficult than I expected," Hurtt said. "Especially trying to complete training during the pandemic. All the training and testing had to be completed online due to COVID restrictions. For someone who suffers from testing anxiety, the test was the most difficult part for me, but with the continuous uplifting of friends and family and numerous prayers the Lord seen me through the storm."

Hurtt was hired as a plumber in 2018; moved up to pipefitter in early 2020; and she started cross-training for the Utility System Operator in November 2020.

• Water, page 2



Photo by Adam Prince

Merrilu Hurtt operates a backwash control board during a routine water filtering at the water treatment plant onboard NAS Meridian, June 7. The water treatment plant is the sole source of potable water for NAS Meridian.

US Coast Guard bringing in more ships for Titan submersible search

By Patrick Whittle and Holly Ramer

The Associated Press

Rescuers on Wednesday rushed more ships and vessels to the area where a submersible disappeared on its way to the Titanic wreckage site, hoping underwater sounds they detected for a second straight day might help narrow their search in an increasingly urgent mission.

The full scope of the search was twice the size of Connecticut in waters 2 1/2 miles deep, said Captain Jamie Frederick of the First Coast Guard District, who noted that authorities are still holding out hope of saving the five passengers onboard the Titan.

"This is a search and rescue mission, 100%," he said. "... We'll continue to put every available asset that we have in an effort to find the Titan and the crew members."

But even those who expressed optimism

warned that many obstacles remain: from pinpointing the vessel's location, to reaching it with rescue equipment, to bringing it to the surface — assuming it's still intact. And all that has to happen before the passengers' oxygen supply runs out, which some have estimated might happen as early as Thursday

The area of the North Atlantic where the Titan went missing on Sunday is prone to fog and stormy conditions, making it an extremely challenging environment to conduct a search-and-rescue mission, said Donald Murphy, an oceanographer who served as chief scientist of the Coast Guard's International Ice Patrol. The lost submersible could be as deep as about 12,500 feet (3,800 meters) below the surface near the watery tomb of the Titanic.

In this image released by Action Aviation, the submersible Titan is prepared for a dive into a remote area of the Atlantic Ocean on an expedition to the Titanic on Sunday, June 18, 2023.

Meanwhile, newly uncovered allegations suggest there had been significant warnings made about vessel safety during the submersible's development.

Frederick said while the sounds that have been detected offered a chance to narrow the search, their exact location and source hasn't yet been determined.

'We don't know what they are, to be frank," he said.

Retired Navy Capt. Carl Hartsfield, now the director of the Woods Hole Oceanographic Systems Laboratory, said the sounds have been described as "banging noises," but he warned that search crews "have to put the whole picture together in context and they have to eliminate potential manmade sources other than the Titan."

Read more, click here

Twelve aviators earn 'Wings of Gold' in June pinning ceremony

There was a naval aviator designation ceremony June 16 onboard Naval Air Station Meridian.

Twelve aviators received their "Wings of Gold" during the ceremony. The naval aviator designation ceremony is not prescribed specifically by U.S. Navy regulations, but has emerged as an honored product of the rich heritage of naval tradition. It marks the culmination of nearly two years of specialized training, which has prepared these officers for the rigorous demands of aerial combat and carrier operations — earning each the title of "Naval Aviator" and the right to wear the coveted "Wings of Gold."



LTJG Olivia Den Besten



LTJG Tyler Grant



LT Rafael Guerra



1STLT Matthew Heldt



1STLT Paul Huemme



LT Gavin O'Donnell



LTJG Richard Pokorski



LTJG Skylar Richardson



LTJG Julian Torres



LTJG David Wiseman



1STLT Jeffrey Zajkowski



LTJG Jessie Zapata

Water

"I would come in first thing in the morning learn to take the daily chemical samples (readings), then back to the plumbing shop to do daily routine work," she added.

Following that, she was offered an internship at the water plant due to a staff member retiring. She would have the opportunity to train further in the daily work and monthly state-required sampling and

routine maintenance.

The water treatment plant onboard NAS Meridian is the sole source of potable water for the installation having the ability to treat one millions gallons per day. The Water Plant currently holds a 5-star rating with the Mississippi Department of Health and operates under the provisions and rules of the Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974.

Golden Stick



Photo by Adam Prince

Roger Burke, President of the Mississippi Council of the Navy League, left, presents LTJG Tyler Grant with the Golden Stick award during a winging ceremony in the Chapel onboard NAS Meridian, June 16. The Golden Stick is awarded to the student with the highest composite score during training.

Awards Quarters



Photo by Adam Princ

NAS Meridian Sailors pose for a group photo during an awards ceremony at the Air Operations building onboard NAS Meridian, June 15.



$The \ Skyline \ \hbox{$\sim$ Naval Air Station Meridian, Miss.}$

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Local Happenings

JULY

13: Distinguished Young Women of MS from 7-9 p.m. at the Evangel Temple. Contact Susan Keith at susanms@distingushedyw. org.

27: An Evening with Smokey Robinson at 7:30 p.m. at the MSU Riley Center. Smokey Robinson has profoundly impacted American culture. He has won a Grammy Legend Award and Lifetime Achievement Award, a National Medal of Arts, Kennedy Center Honors, many other accolades. Contact Penny Kemp at penny@ leadingedges.net or call 601-483-9810.

29: Harry Potter's Birthday from 10 a.m.- 3 p.m. at the Mississippi Children's Museum - Meridian. Join us at the museum to celebrate Harry Potter's birthday! Festivities will include potion making, wizard training, muggle art, wizard chess and herbology class. Costumes are encouraged! Call 601-581-1550, ext 35.

Area Happenings

5: Alicia Keys: Keys to the summer tour at FedExForum, 191 Beale Street Memphis, TN 38103. https://www.memphistravel.com/ events/music/alicia-keys-keys-summer-tour.

21-23: World Deer Expo at the BJCC, 2100 Richard Arrington Jr Blvd N Birmingham, AL 35203. Friday: 3-9 p.m.; Saturday: 10 a.m.-9 p.m.; Sunday: 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Call 205-678-4141 or email info@worlddeerexpo.com.

23: Lynyrd Skynyrd & ZZ Top: The Sharp Dressed Simple Man Tour from 6:30-11:30 p.m. at the Ameris Bank Amphitheatre, Alpharetta, GA 30009. Call 404-733-5010.



VCNO visits Forge software factory

Vice Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Lisa Franchetti, visited the Forge software factory in Riverdale, Maryland, to highlight the work being done to ensure the Navy can deliver advanced capabilities to the fleet, June 16.

The Forge is operated by the Program Executive Office Integrated Warfare Systems (PEO IWS) and is a digital transformation effort that delivers combat capability to the fleet in order to outpace adversaries in support of the Chief of Naval Operations' Navigation Plan

"This visit to the Forge software factory gave me the opportunity to meet our team working at the cutting edge and witness the remarkable work being done here," said Franchetti. "The Navy's ability to leverage advanced software systems is critical for maintaining our technological edge and ensuring mission

During the visit, Franchetti met with Forge leadership, key personnel and technical experts involved in the development of software solutions for the surface fleet. Franchetti saw first-hand how the Forge team is delivering updates to integrated combat systems across the fleet and are pivoting cultural, business and technical processes to allow rapid deployment and proliferation of capabil-

"Through close collaboration with industry partners and leveraging the expertise of our talented workforce, we can accelerate the development and deployment of advanced software systems that enhance our maritime operations and Navy lethality," said Franchetti.

-- From Vice Chief of Naval Operations Public Affairs

Read more, click here

NATO practices JPR during BALTOPS 23

In BALTOPS 23, the dynamic nature of Personnel Recovery is mitigated by relentless practice - five events, ranging from stranded-at-sea helicopter rescues to Tactical Recovery of Aircraft and Personnel, or TRAP, on the beachfront.

The central tenant of Personnel Recovery (PR) is preparing for the moment a Soldier, Sailor, Marine or Airman is isolated from their unit, in a combat or contentious scenario. This can be anything from a pilot who's shot down above the Baltic Sea, to special forces stranded behind enemy lines - with adversaries actively trying to harm the recovery target and PR team flying to the rescue. It's a general term for a wide variety of recoveries, but it boils down to a simple statement – no one left behind.

Easy to say, harder to execute. The nature of modern combat means allied forces will never know when, how, or where a recovery scenario will kick off.

In BALTOPS 23, the dynamic nature of PR is mitigated by relentless practice five events, ranging from stranded-atsea helicopter rescues to Tactical Recovery of Aircraft and Personnel, or TRAP, on the beachfront.

There are two main aspects to PR: prevention and preparation. Prevention is relatively self-explanatory – mitigate and eliminate the risk of isolation and capture when feasible, and plan ahead. Preparation is the more dynamic side of

On an individual basis, service members expected to be in potential-isolating scenarios attend PR courses, like Survival, Evasion, Resistance and Escape (SERE). Pilots, special forces, and ground forces are given training on how to keep themselves safe, and escape a combat scenario to somewhere they can be recovered.

-- From U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa

Read more, click here

Enhancing spiritual readiness across NATO

Throughout exercise Baltic Operations 2023 (BALTOPS 23), Allied and Partner nations operated alongside more than just land, air, and sea forces - they implemented, trained, and strengthened their spiritual corps as well.

In preparation for the exercise, 14 chaplains representing eight nations met aboard the USS Mount Whitney for the Pre-Sail Chaplain Conference, focused on interoperability concepts, exercise events, logistical coordination, and shared competencies and protocols.

During the actual exercise, 19 chaplains from eleven nations on eleven ships supported their own naval personnel, and participated in chaplain interoperability events.

During the two-week long exercises, the chaplains engaged Sailors in ten different events. These engagements, ranging from two hours to two or more days, introduced different national chaplains with a diverse set of religions and backgrounds, ranging from Humanism to Protestantism.

-- From U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa

Read more, click here

Sale... (

BOATS/CAMPERS/TRAILERS

New Price 21 foot -2021 Jayco Travel Camper. Like new; beige & walnut interior and mattress kept in original plastic. Selling to upgrade to larger size - Price is \$15,000 some accessories included. To view or request pics please contact: Gary 601-575-5062.

2018 Mallard M185 Travel Trailer. Sleeps 4 with 1 queen bed/2 bunks. Easy to tow at 3,575 lbs; only selling because military member is moving overseas. Great living

quarters with lake view. Hooked up and ready to live in, including cables, hoses, plus the \$500 towing kit. Asking \$17,000. Call 360-434-3035.

AUTOMOBILES, ETC.

2018 Subaru Outback 2.5 limited, 12k miles; Subaru safety features and warranties included. Asking \$29k. Call 601-480-5100.

2017 Dodge Challenger, grey with racing stripe. \$24k. Call 601-880-3237.

New! For Rent: Water front home in Dalewood. Spacious two-story home facing the Lake; great for fishing and relaxing. Remodeled kitchen and new appliances. Rent is \$2,000; please call 813-406-9687.

For Sale: 3BD/2BA Home with 2,560 sq. ft. Sits on 1 & 1/2 lots on dead end with privacy woods on 3 sides. Asking \$180,000. Contact: lucindawnichols@gmail. com, call 601-527-7829 or 601-917-6145.

For Rent: 2 BD/1 1/2 BA 1100 square foot home in Dalewood with main lake access. Asking \$1300 a month. Email: rosscande-

loproperties@gmail.com for information..

For Rent: Lake Cabin near NAS Meridian. 1 BD/1 BA; \$700 month. Unfurnished.

For Rent: 3BD, 2BA home with washer/dryer, wifi, lawn service and water included. \$1500/month. Call 601-917-8594.

For Rent: 3BD/2BA private gated home with 2-car garage in West Lauderdale; 15 minutes from the base. Call 601-737-4569 or 601-934-0739.

For Rent: 2BD/1.5BA Home at 3702 Rollins Dr, Lauderdale in Dalewood. 2136 sq ft on a .29 acres lot. Beautiful newly renovated single family home. Call 973-876-5006.

For Rent: 2BD/1.5BA single family home in Dalewood - fully renovated. Fenced in back yard with boat slip & pier. Pets allowed. Pet deposit \$300. \$1,300 rent per month. Call 973-876-5006.

For Sale By Owner: 3BD/3BA brick home with sunroom, large fenced in yard. Convenient to shopping and base. \$139K. Call 601-513-3395 or 601-227-1870.

Event Space for Rent:

Deer Creek Banquet Hall. 6000 sq. ft. indoor with 1600 sq. ft. outdoor spaces for rent for gatherings and events. Call Reginald at 251-455-1559.

Service for hire: Dixie Lawn LLC, lawn care in Meridian. Call 850-376-4499. Military owned com-

To submit an item to the "Sale...Or" column, e-mail adam.prince@ navy.mil. Deadline is the Wednesday prior to publication.

Listings in the "Sale...Or" column are free for anyone who works at NAS Meridian. To include your announcement, email adam.w.prince.civ@us.navy.mil

Photos by MC2 Molly Crawford

CDR Jamie Epps, left, NAS Meridian executive officer, poses for a photo with Chief Erik Norman and his family after a reenlistment ceremony in the Air Operations building onboard NAS Meridian, June 16.

Watkins EOT



CAPT Brent Moore, right, NAS Meridian commanding officer, presents NC1 Lorraine Watkins with an end of tour award during a ceremony in the Administration building onboard NAS Meridian, June 13

Cummings Reenlistment



MA1 Darius Cummings recites the oath of enlistment during a ceremony in the Administration building onboard NAS Meridian, June 20. LTJG Ashlee South, NAS Meridian security officer, was the reenlistment officer.

DOD committed to ethical use of Artificial Intelligence

By Joseph Clark

DoD News, Defense Media Activity

The Defense Department is prioritizing ethical considerations and collaboration in its approach to developing and fielding military applications of artificial intelligence, a top Pentagon technology official said today.

Michael C. Horowitz, the director of the emerging capabilities policy office in the office of the undersecretary of defense for policy, underscored the U.S.' commitment to leading the international conversation surrounding artificial intelligence during a panel discussion in Washington on setting rules and expectations for emerging technologies in national security.

Underpinning this commitment, Horowitz said, is a comprehensive set of policy decisions within DOD that governs the development and fielding of autonomous weapon systems, ethical artificial intelligence strategy, and the development of responsible artificial intelligence strategy and pathways.

U.S. leadership, in codifying these principles, is now driving responsible artificial intelligence policy formulation among international partners, he said.

"If you look at NATO's ethical AI principles, for example, they're very similar to the Defense Department's ethical AI principles and that's not that's not an accident," Horowitz said. "It reflects in many ways the sort of common values and perspective on how we're thinking about... when we would want to use AI and how.'

He said U.S. also led on the international stage by issuing its Political Declaration of Responsible Military use of Artificial Intelligence and Autonomy in February.

"That's a set of strong norms that lay out principles of what responsible use looks like that we're now working to bring other countries on board to endorse since we think that bringing the international community together on this issue, that there is a lot of possibility for cooperation and we want to encourage the rest of the world to take these issues as seriously as the department has," Horowitz said. "And in looking at our allies and partners, we're really encouraged by that."

That commitment to the responsible development of artificial intelligence, and its transparency concerning the development of policy surrounding emerging technologies, is also how the U.S. has distinguished itself from its global competitors, he said.

He said all DOD policy surrounding artificial intelligence and emerging technology is publicly available.

That's in contrast to some of the competitors of the United States who are a lot less transparent in what their policies are concerning the development and use of artificial intelligence and autonomous systems, including autonomous weapons systems," Horowitz said. "And we think that there's a real distinction there."

Read more, click here



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Outdoor Safety

- **If you can hear** thunder, you are within striking distance of lightning. Look for shelter inside a home, large building, or a hard-topped vehicle right
- Do not go under trees for shelter. There is no place outside that is safe during a thundersto
- Wait at least 30 minutes after hearing the last clap of thunder before leaving your shelter
- Stay away from windows and doors. Stay off
- There is no safe place outside. Places with only a roof on sports fields, golf courses, and picnic areas are not safe during a lightning storm. Small sheds
- If a person is struck by lightning, call 9-1-1 Get medical help right away

Indoor Safety

Turn off computers. Stay off corded phones, computers and other things that put you in direct contact with electricity or plumbing. You can use a cell or cordless phone

Do not wash your hands. bathe, shower, do laundry, or





Your Logo

from any rain.

Milspouse's lifelong fishing dreams become unexpected reality

It all started when I was twelve. My family left me and my cousin alone at our rental vacation house while our parents, older siblings, and grandfather had the

adventure of a <u>COLUMN</u> lifetime aboard a charter fishing boat off the Outer Banks of North Carolina, catching dozens of bluefish in Atlantic waters. They arrived home that night with their plentiful catch. Sunburned, they sipped icy beverages on the cottage porch, recounting stories from their char-



Molinari

On the cusp of adolescence, I was sick of being told I was too young for adventure. I envisioned all that I'd missed: Ropes tossed off sun washed docks. Boats rumbling past pelicans atop pylons. Engines roaring to life. Mountainous wakes of teal water forming behind sterns. Parades of cawing gulls following, hopeful

for discarded bits of bait. Boats motoring toward the rising sun, deep water and game fish waiting to be caught.

"They'd better take me next time," I gritted my teeth.

However, my opportunity never came. In my late 20s, I married a Navy Intel guy who not only hated fishing, he didn't even like the taste of fish. Ironically, he was invited on many charter boat trips. Of course, I was never asked to come along, relegated to live out my fishing adventures from docks and piers, catching only a few lousy blue crabs while on vacation.

As a military spouse, I've been accustomed to being a team player, but the older I become, the more determined I am to make my dreams a reality. So last month, I booked my own Cape Hatteras charter fishing trip for myself and five other women.

"We can still do it Monday," the Captain texted the day before our charter, "but it won't be very pretty." I wasn't sure what "pretty" meant in the context of ocean fishing, but I was too excited to be deterred. We — myself, my elderly mother, my two daughters, my best friend, and my friend's daughter — left early for the

two-hour drive from our beach cottage to Cape Hatteras. We brought a stocked cooler and a playlist of fun songs related to the ocean like "Come Sail Away" by Styx, "Cool Change" by Little River Band, and "Southern Cross" by Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young.

Having booked a half-day near-shore fishing trip, I expected a casual cruise along the shoreline, stopping occasionally to put our poles in the water, enjoying music, drinks and sandwiches on the way. But about an hour after leaving the marina on The Albatross III, a 1958 classic fishing boat, we passed through Hatteras Inlet into surprisingly rough waters. I looked to the Captain to reassure us.

"See how the water changes color out there?" he pointed to the horizon, but all I could see was whitecaps. "Out there, we'll follow fish along the ebb tide," he said. To me, the Ebb Tide was a dingy motor lodge in Kitty Hawk, but I had no choice but to trust our captain's expertise.

For another hour, the boat rolled between huge swells, spraying us until were were soaked. My daughter Lilly was the first to succumb, heaving miserably into a fishy-smelling five gallon pail. I was next, hurling out of a starboard window. A

rouge wave catapulted my friend Patrice violently onto the deck. Shortly thereafter, her daughter up-chucked over the port side. My daughter Anna clung to the flybridge ladder, afraid to move.

All the while, the Captain was calling "GOT-EEM-AWN" to the first mate, indicating that fish were on the four lines trailing in the humongous waves. This left my 80-year-old mother, the only woman capable of reeling fish in, which she did, over and over again from the ancient Rockaway chair mounted in the center of the deck, wearing a polka-dot shirt, white capri pants, and pink lipstick.

When we finally made it back to the marina, we had a cooler full of Spanish Mackerel, some bumps and burns, and an incredible story to tell. "I have to admit," the Captain said, "it was blowing a little harder than I'd expected."

I had to admit, the charter fishing trip wasn't what I'd expected either, but the adventure was certainly worth the wait.

Lisa Smith Molinari's self syndicated columns appear on her blog, www.themeatandpotatoesoflife.com and she recently co-authored Stories Around the Table: Laughter, Wisdom, and Strength in Military Life Follow Lisa@MolinariWrites.



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