



On Base

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NAS Meridian Announces 2026 Air Show



Photo by MC2 Molly Tice

CAPT Luke Davis, commanding officer of NAS Meridian, makes the official announcement of the "Wings Over Meridian" Air Show set for March 28-29, 2026. The U.S. Navy's elite flight demonstration team will once again grace the skies over Lauderdale County. The last air show was in 2011. Nearly 15 years later, in 2026 NAS Meridian will also mark its 65th Anniversary and the 80th anniversary of The Blue Angels.

NAS, Key Field sign MOU



Photo by MC2 Molly Tice

CAPT Luke Davis and Col Cindy Smith signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between NAS Meridian and the 186th Air Refueling Wing of the Mississippi National Guard based at Key Field, Dec. 13. The MOU facilitates the coordination of training opportunities onboard NAS Meridian that provide the 186th ARW Civil Engineering Squadron personnel with additional opportunities to fulfill training requirements involving electrical, heating, ventilation, air conditioning, pipefitting, plumbing and carpentry disciplines, while providing NAS Meridian's Public Works Department with additional capability to execute facility maintenance projects on the installation.

Jimmy Carter and a Call to Action: Reflections on a Lifetime of Public Service

By John Hughel
Oregon National Guard Public Affairs Office

Landing at the Portland Air National Guard Base on May 22, 1980, just four days after the massive eruption of Mount St. Helens in Southwest Washington, President Jimmy Carter arrived to personally survey the destruction of one of the greatest volcanic events ever recorded in North America. When the weather cleared the following day, President Carter, along with other federal and state officials, boarded a Marine helicopter and conducted a lengthy aerial examination over the Skamania County blast area; while also touring other impacted areas along the Columbia and Cowlitz Rivers.

"It is a horrible looking site. I don't know if there is anything like it in the world," he said, speaking briefly with a group of reporters after landing later at the Kelso-Longview Airport, Washington. "There's nothing left but massive piles of mud and what used to be mountains... "There's no way, I mean, to describe it. It's an unbelievable sight."

As for many around the nation, I included (having graduated High School the day before the eruption), who watched the images on television throughout that week - we're left stunned by the 'moon-like landscape' of grayish ash, flattened trees, and swollen rivers.

Now, as the nation pauses to pay tribute to the life of the 39th President of the United States with his passing on December 29, 2024 at the age 100, as his legacy of civic, military, and humanitarian service; which resonated to communities and nations

► **President Carter, page 4**

Aviators Earn 'Wings of Gold' in December Winging Ceremony

From Staff Reports

There was a naval aviator designation ceremony December 20 onboard Naval Air Station Meridian.

Ten 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 Luke Louis Ackerman, USN, is a 2022 graduate of the United States Naval Academy, where he received a Bachelor of Science degree in Aerospace Engineering. During Primary Flight Training, LTJG Ackerman was named to the Commodore's List. While in Advanced Jet Flight Training, he earned four Navy "E" for bombing accuracy. LTJG Ackerman completed Advanced Jet Flight Training with Training Squadron Nine.

LTJG Jacob Dean Asher, USN, is a 2021 graduate of Yale University, where he received a Bachelor of Science degree in Economics. While in Advanced Jet Flight Training, he earned three Navy "E's" for bombing accuracy. LTJG Asher completed Advanced Jet Flight Training with Training Squadron Nine.

LTJG Cody Michael Collins, USN, is a 2021 graduate of Auburn University, where he received a Bachelor of Science degree in Aviation Management. During Advanced Jet Flight Training, he earned three Navy "E's" for bombing accuracy. LTJG Collins completed Advanced Jet Flight Training with Training Squadron Nine.

LTJG Thomas Arthur Curry, USN, is a 2019 graduate of the United States Merchant Marine Academy, where he received a Bachelor of Science degree in Marine Engineering Systems. While in Advanced Jet Flight Training he earned three Navy "E's"



LTJG Luke Ackerman



LTJG Jacob Asher



LTJG Cody Collins



LTJG Thomas Curry



LTJG Riley Domler



LTJG Mitchel Hooper



LTJG Nathan Hull



LTJG Matthew Jones



LTJG Daniel Kuneli



LTJG Parker Maloney

for bombing accuracy. LTJG Curry completed Advanced Jet Flight Training with Training Squadron Nine.

LTJG Riley Robert Domler Hunter, USN, is a 2021 graduate of the United States Naval Academy, where he received a Bachelor of Science degree in Quantitative Economics with Honors. During Advanced Jet Flight Training, he earned three Navy "E's" for bombing accuracy. LTJG Domler completed Advanced Jet Flight Training with Training Squadron Nine.

LTJG Mitchel Eliot Hooper, USN, is a 2018 graduate of San Diego State University, where he received a Bachelor of Arts degree in International Security. While he was in Advanced Jet Flight Training, he earned four Navy "E's" for bombing accuracy. LTJG Hooper completed Advanced Jet Flight Training with Training Squadron Nine.

LTJG Nathan Michael Joseph, USN, is a 2020 graduate of Montana State University, where he received a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Management. LTJG Hull graduated at the top of his class for Primary Flight Training. During Advanced Jet Flight Training, he earned four Navy "E's" for bombing accuracy. LTJG Hull completed Advanced Jet Flight Training with Training Squadron Nine.

LTJG Matthew Blake

Jones, USN, is a 2021 graduate of the United States Naval Academy, where he received a Bachelor of Science degree in Aerospace Engineering. LTJG Jones is also a 2022 graduate of the Naval Postgraduate School, where he received a Master of Science degree in Aerospace Engineering. While in Advanced Jet Flight Training, he earned four Navy "E's" for bombing accuracy. LTJG Jones completed Advanced Jet Flight Training with Training Squadron Nine.

LTJG Daniel Ray Kunell, USN, is a 2021 graduate of the United States Air Force Academy, where he received a Bachelor of Science degree in GeoSpace Science. During Advanced Jet Flight Training, he earned three Navy "E's" for bombing accuracy. LTJG Kuneli completed Advanced Jet Flight Training with Training Squadron Nine.

LTJG Parker Stewart Maloney, USN, is a 2018 graduate of the University of Mississippi, where he received a Bachelor of Business Administration degree in Management and Entrepreneurship. During Advanced Jet Flight Training, he earned three Navy "E's" for bombing accuracy. LTJG Maloney completed Advanced Jet Flight Training with Training Squadron Nine.

Golden Stick Award



Photo by Evelyn Adams

Mississippi Council of the Navy League Representative Laura Carmichael has the honor of presenting the Golden Stick award to LTJG Cody Collins during a winging ceremony in the chapel onboard NAS Meridian, Dec. 20. The Golden Stick is awarded to the student with the highest composite score during training and sponsored by the Mississippi Council of the Navy League.



The Skyline ~ Naval Air Station Meridian, Miss.

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LOCAL HAPPENINGS

JANUARY:

10: An Evening of Jazz at the MAX, 6 - 7 p.m. - Join us for a captivating night of jazz with Rodrick D. Fox, a multitasking musician, and Dr. Pam Confer, an award winning jazz singer. Cash bar. \$20 for non-members & free for members. **Located in Downtown Meridian, MS.** [Click here for tickets, entries, & info.](#)

16 - 17: Alice in Wonderland Jr. - Watch talented kids bring the story of Alice Wonderland to life on stage! **Located at the Meridian Little Theatre in Meridian, MS.** [Click here for tickets, entries, & info.](#)

18: Tom's Elton Tribute, 7 - 11 p.m. - The world's number one Elton John tribute band are coming to play all the hits by Elton John. **Located at the Temple Theater in Downtown Meridian, MS.** [Click here for tickets, entries, & info.](#)

31: Old Crow Medicine Show, 7:30 p.m. - In more than a quarter century of making music, Old Crow Medicine Show has established itself as America's most beloved old-time string band. Its signature song, "Wagon Wheel," is one of the most widely sung folk songs in history. **Located at the MSU Riley Center in Downtown Meridian, MS.** [Click here for tickets, entries, & info.](#)

FEBRUARY:

1: Echoes of Excellence, 6 & 8:30 p.m. - Immerse yourself in an unforgettable fusion of flavors and melodies, paying homage to the diversity and resilience of Black history. Indulge your senses with a curated selection of culinary delights and drinks, as we honor the profound legacy of Black culture through music and community. **Located at the Copeland Center in Meridian, MS** [Click here for tickets, entries, & info.](#)

AREA HAPPENINGS

JANUARY:

10: Candlelight: Neo-Soul Favorites ft. Songs by Prince, Childish Gambino, & More, 8:30 - 9:45 p.m. - Candlelight concerts bring the magic of a live, multi-sensory musical experience to awe-inspiring locations like never seen before in Jackson. Get your tickets now to discover the music of Neo-Soul Favorites ft. Songs by Prince, Childish Gambino, & More at Old Capitol Museum under the gentle glow of candlelight. **Located in Jackson, MS.** [Click here for tickets, entries, & info.](#)

25: Steve Martin & Martin Short: The Dukes of Funnytown!, 8 p.m. - Steve Martin and Martin Short's The Dukes of Funnytown! is a show that redefines the form in unexpected and profound ways, from two of the funniest, most influential and acclaimed talents of the past century. Their humor is often subversive, but it is always a joyous self-deprecating romp from two comedy masters driven to make each other laugh as much as the audience. **Located at the Orpheum Theater in Memphis, TN.** [Click here for tickets, entries, & info.](#)

FEBRUARY:

18 - March 2: Hamilton - Watch the epic saga that follows the rise of Founding Father Alexander Hamilton as he fights for honor, love, and a legacy that would shape the course of a nation. **Located at the Orpheum Theater in Memphis, TN** [Click here for tickets, entries, & info.](#)

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Bravo Zulu Chief Glover!



Photo by Evelyn Adams

Congratulations! Chief Amanda Glover reenlists in the U.S. Navy for another four years onboard NAS Meridian, Dec. 23.

COMMAND PATCH SALE

Cash, card or
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Located in the Public Affairs Office
Bldg 255 Ste 163

\$10



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Sale... Or

HOMES/APARTMENTS

NEW! For Sale: 2BD/1 BA home located in Poplar Springs. 1154 square footage heated and cooled with additional 800 sq ft of basement. Screened in porch, new dishwasher, and new flooring in the kitchen. Looking to get 90k and for someone to take over our VA loan (2.5% interest rate). Please contact Riley Pfeiffer at (919) 909-6651

NEW! For Rent: 1BD/1 BA furnished apartment. Has day room, kitchenette, washer and dryer, smart tv's, central heat and air conditioning. Very clean and private, good location. \$1200/month includes utilities and wifi. No Pets. Text or call 601-527-4098.

For Sale: 3 BD/2 BA home. 1,496 square foot heated and cooled. 200 square foot utility room/pantry. Poplar Springs Elementary school district. Huge fenced back yard and storage building. New roof Dec 2012. New AC April 2017 and remains under warranty until 2027. Around the

corner from Northcrest church (North Hills). Asking \$150,000 but there are a few little cosmetic things that could be done so will take \$125,000 as is. Contact Jared or Felicia Monsour at (601) 938-4810 or (601) 934-0931

For Sale: 3 BD/4 BA home with 2965 sq ft of lake view home in beautiful, gated Lake Eddins in Pachuta. Entertainer's kitchen with huge eat at bar. Brick floors in main living areas, all new floor covering in remaining areas, total remodel. Gorgeous brick w/natural cypress home, 2 car garage w/bonus room. Asking \$299,900. Will include additional lot on water for fishing/boat storage w/asking price. Call 601-720-1420.

For Rent: 3BD/ 2BA house offers beautiful lake views, perfect for fishing and relaxing by the water. This house has recently been remodeled. Monthly Rent: \$1,500. Deposit: \$1,000. Additional Fees: Dalewood Rent-er Privileges Fees. Please contact Carlos at 601-604-9986.

For Rent: 1 BD/1 BA. Entire House in North Hills District. Listed on AIRBNB or can book direct. Daily or Weekly rates plus cleaning fees. Contact: 601-504-5415

For Rent: 3 BD/2 BA, only 5 mins from main gate of NAS Meridian. Nice size private yard / garbage and water provided. Pets permitted with deposit. \$1,150 a month. Contact 601-480-1324.

For Rent: 3 BD/1.5 BA home 15 minutes from NAS at 4814 36th Ave. New refrigerator and 2-year old AC & furnace. Call Terrance at 469-318-9769.

MISCELLANEOUS

Nanny or caregiver services. Call Alice at 601-934-1866 or 601-679-8112. Has installation access; can take children to school and pick up and available days, nights and weekends.

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.

Listings in the "Sale...Or" column are free!
Submission deadline is the Wednesday prior to production.
Email information to nasmeridianpao@gmail.com

Command Quarters



Photo by Evelyn Adams

Congratulation's to those who received awards at Command Quarters, Dec. 19.



► President Carter

throughout the world, touched our own region over 44 years ago. He was the nation's oldest living President. 'There is nothing like this in the world'

In the weeks leading up to the eruption at 8:32 a.m. on May 18, 1980, the nation's attention had already been focused on the seismic activities of the mountain. By this time, the Oregon Army National Guard's 1042nd Military Intelligence (M.I.) Company (later reorganized as the 641st M.I. Battalion), were already flying, photographing and mapping reconnaissance missions, utilizing their OV-1 Mohawk aircraft as the bulging mountain with more frequent earthquakes had been intensifying since mid-March.

On the morning of the eruption, Mohawks were already in the air over S.W. Washington, as it was also a drill weekend for the unit. Ironically members of the Washington Army National Guard were conducting their own annual training, as aviation crews in Yakima could bear witness to the devastating flank collapse, avalanche, and explosion – were quick to respond, conducting search and rescue operations around the blast zone. National Guard members would be activated to help support the area's recovery and clean-up operations for several months to follow. President Carter would later call these actions, "perhaps the National Guard's finest peacetime response."

The eruption of Mt. St. Helens was a significant historical incident – not only to the Pacific Northwest, but to the nation as a whole with ash covering nearly a dozen states. The devastation encompassed over 150 square miles and was the largest environmental disaster since the Dust Bowl of the 1930's. President Carter also announced during his visit, a federal disaster area declaration, and met with hundreds of evacuated residents at the Longview Middle School, Washington, having escaped the volcano's

26 megaton force. The massive wall of debris and choking ash killed 57 people and caused nearly \$1.1 billion in property damage, while hindering the ports along the Columbia River basin.

Prior to his election to the nation's highest office, James Earl Carter, Jr., graduated from the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis, Maryland in 1946, and to date, is the only president to have attended the U.S. Naval Academy. Within days of his graduation, he married Rosalynn Smith, having known since his childhood growing up in Plains, Georgia. The couple were married for more than 77 years at the time of her passing on Nov. 19, 2023 at the age 96, and together had four children.

When receiving their first duty stations, newly graduating midshipmen had to draw lots to determine their choice of assignments. Ensign Carter's number was near the bottom and he would be assigned to the oldest navy ship in operation, the USS Wyoming, a battleship first commissioned in 1912. Within a year, he would be re-assigned to the USS Mississippi working as an Engineering officer, and subsequently was given a choice to advance to a specialized career in either intelligence, the naval air force, or submarines.

After being selected for the submarine program, he began the demanding training in New London, Connecticut in 1948. In his autobiography, "A Full Life, Reflections at Ninety," Carter recounted the dangers and distinctive perils of submarine duty.

"Although some enlisted men could concentrate almost exclusively on their own fields of responsibility as engine men, electricians, torpedo experts, boatswains, quartermasters, gunners or operators of navigation and fire control equipment, every officer was expected to master all of these disciplines... we knew one mistake could endanger everyone aboard." Lieutenant Carter, now working in the emerging



Courtesy Photo

Midshipman James Earl Carter Jr., graduated from the Naval Academy in 1946 with distinction and was assigned to the USS Wyoming (E-AG 17) as an ensign.

nuclear submarine program under Admiral Hyman Rickover, was being groomed as an engineering officer aboard the USS (SSN-575) Seawolf, just the Navy's second nuclear submarine. In December of 1952, the Chalk Water nuclear reactor northwest of Ottawa, Canada, experienced a partial meltdown to the NRX reactor core when fuel rods began to overheat after a dual mechanical and operator error.

The Navy sent Carter and his crew to Chalk Water to repair the reactor, which required it to be shut down. They built an identical replica of the reactor on an adjacent tennis court to precisely run through the repair procedures, due to the maximum time humans could be exposed to the levels of radiation present in the damaged area. Each member of the 22 member team could only be lowered into the reactor for 90-second periods to clean up and repair the site. Carter himself was lowered into the building to work on the reactor casing. When the mission was finally complete with no loss of life, the group was tested routinely for the

long-term health effects.

"They let us [crew members] get probably a thousand times more radiation than they would now," Carter said, reflecting on the incident during an interview with CNN in 2008. "We were fairly well-instructed then on what nuclear power was, but for about six months after that, I had radioactivity in my urine."

Carter's extensive knowledge and personal experience of nuclear reactors would later come into play when he became president. On March 28, 1979, an accident at the Three Mile Island, unit 2 reactor, near Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, led to the partial core meltdown similar to the Chalk Water incident. President Carter ordered phone lines set-up between the White House, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Pennsylvania State House, in Harrisburg, helping support early response actions, then the president personally toured the site five days later on April 1, boosting public confidence in the ongoing clean-up operations.

Oldest Living Survivor of the Attack on Pearl Harbor Dies at 105



Courtesy Photo

Warren Upton sits for a portrait with his daughter Barbara Upton on Nov. 26, 2021.

By Audrey McAvoey
The Associated Press

Warren Upton, the oldest living survivor of the 1941 Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and the last remaining survivor of the USS Utah, has died. He was 105.

Upton died Wednesday at a hospital in Los Gatos, California, after suffering a bout of pneumonia, said Kathleen Farley, the California state chair of the Sons and Daughters of Pearl Harbor Survivors. The Utah, a battleship, was moored at Pearl Harbor when Japanese planes began bombing the Hawaii naval base in the early hours of Dec. 7, 1941, in an attack that propelled the U.S. into World War II.

Upton told The Associated Press in 2020 that he had been getting ready to shave when he felt the first torpedo hit the Utah. He recalled that no one on board

knew what made the ship shake. Then, the second torpedo hit and the ship began to list and capsize.

The then-22-year-old swam ashore to Ford Island, where he jumped in a trench to avoid Japanese planes strafing the area. He stayed for about 30 minutes until a truck came and took him to safety.

Upton said he didn't mind talking about what happened during the attack. Instead, what upset him was that he kept losing shipmates over the years. By 2020, there were only three crew members of the Utah still alive, including himself.

There were an estimated 87,000 military personnel on Oahu on the day of the attack, according to military historian J. Michael Wenger. After Upton's death, there are only 15 still alive.

[Read more, click here](#)

N9 Nook

Fleet and Family Thanks Participants in December Events!



Courtesy Photos

Thank you to all who donated cookies for the Cookies for Sailors event! Approximately 175 cookie bags were made and distributed to Sailor and Marine students! You truly made their day with your generosity! Thank you, Chaplain Scroggs, for instructing two self-defense classes in December! Also, thank you to Chief Graham for his assistance in the hand-to-hand demonstrations. We can't wait for more events in the future!

**SONNY MONTGOMERY
FITNESS CENTER**

Winter 5K

**JANUARY 11TH
0800**

REGISTRATION ON SITE
TOP 3 MALE AND FEMALE FINISHERS
RECEIVE AN MWR COIN
T-SHIRTS FOR
ALL PARTICIPANTS

FFSC JAN-MAR 2025 SCHEDULE

JAN **STALKING AWARENESS & FAP MONTH**
FAMILY EMPLOYMENT READINESS MONTH
FINANCIAL WELLNESS MONTH

RESUME WRITING WORKSHOP **JAN 21**
Located at The Fleet and Family Support Center, BLDG 405
Classroom 1, 8:30am

JAN 21 **VISION BOARD PARTY**
Located at The Fleet and Family Support Center, BLDG 405
Classroom 1, 1:30pm (1330)

NAVIGATING USA JOBS **JAN 14**
Located at The Fleet and Family Support Center, BLDG 405

JAN 28 **SPONSORSHIP TRAINING**
Located at The Fleet and Family Support Center, BLDG 405

WOMEN'S SELF DEFENSE CLASS **FEB 1&8**
Feb 1st - Ages 12-16. Feb 8th - Ages 16 and up. Anyone under 18 years of age, must be accompanied by an adult. Classes start at 9:15am until 10:45am at the gym.

FEB 3-7 **TAP CLASS**
CAPSTONE to follow on Feb 20TH
Located at The Fleet and Family Support Center, BLDG 405

COMMAND FINANCIAL SPECIALIST TRAINING **MAR 10-14**
Located at The Fleet and Family Support Center, BLDG 405

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