

# THE SKYLINE



Volume 60, Number 7

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March 31, 2022

## CNRSE Admiral visits NAS Meridian; recognizes NAS Sailors



Photos by MC1 Krystina Coffey

Left: RDML Wesley McCall, Commander, Navy Region Southeast, left, gives thanks to Aviation Boatswain's Mate (Equipment) 3rd Class Payton Cetrulo during an awards ceremony in the lobby of the Administration building March 22. Right: CDR Michael Saylor, left, Training Air Wing (TW-1) One Innovation Lead, briefs McCall on a Project Corsair simulator during a tour of TW-1 spaces.

### What's Inside

~ page 2 ~

Winging

~ page 3 ~

New events in the community calendar

~ page 5 ~

Easter Egg Hunt. April 9 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.



~ page 4 ~

TRICARE authorizes temporary prescription refill waivers for 12 Mississippi counties

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## MWD Demo



Naval Air Station Meridian Military Working Dog Team of MA2 Kyle Shields and MWD Laci, MA3 Matthew Kornegay and MWD Daryl, and MASN Ariel Urban with MWD Dona presented a demonstration for the Leadership Lauderdale Youth class March 23 in downtown Meridian. Thank you to the East Mississippi Business Development Corp. for asking us to showcase our team and talk about the various careers the US Navy offers.

Photos by Penny Randall

## Chief of Naval Air Training announces 2021 training excellence awards

VT-7, VT-9 aviators among awardees

Story by Anne Owens  
Chief of Naval Air Training

Chief of Naval Air Training (CNATRA) announced the recipients of the 2021 Training Excellence Awards for outstanding achievements and mission support throughout all Training Air Wings, squadrons, flight instructors, student naval aviators and flight surgeons.

"The recipients of these awards have shown an exceptional drive for excellence and have delivered on the highest standards of training," said CNATRA Rear Adm. Robert Westendorff. "They are consistently focused on our mission. They inspire us and raise the bar for our standards of performance. I am honored to announce our awardees and am proud of each one."

The CNATRA Training Excellence Awards recognize exceptional individual achievement as well as primary and advanced training squadrons that exceeded mission goals while maintaining the highest standards of safety and professionalism. The "Rangers" of Training Squadron (VT) 28 in Corpus Christi, Texas, received the CNATRA Training Excellence Award (primary squadron). The "Hellions" of Helicopter Training Squadron (HT) 28 in Whiting Field, Florida, received the CNATRA Training Excellence Award (advanced squadron) and the Vice Adm. Robert Goldthwaite Training Excellence Award for the top overall Naval Air Training Command squadron.

The "Stingrays" of VT-35 in Corpus Christi received the CNATRA Squadron Augmentation Unit (SAU) Award for achievements in flight training as a Navy Reserve unit.

CNATRA recognized the following individuals for their contributions as flight instructors: Flight Instructor of the Year - Lt. Chaun Chang, with HT-28; Reserve Component Flight Instructor of the Year - Lt. Cmdr. Matthew Roberts, with the "Wildcats" of VT-10 in Pensacola; George M. Skurla Naval Flight Officer Instructor of the Year - Lt. Alvaro Merino, with the "Warbucks" of VT-4 in Pensacola.

● CNATRA, page 2

# Nine aviators earn 'Wings of Gold' in February pinning ceremony

There was a naval aviator designation ceremony Feb. 25 onboard Naval Air Station Meridian.

Nine 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 Cody Bennett



ENS Matthieu Gontier



LTJG Brent Guthrie



LTJG Jaroslaw Jozwik



LTJG Andrew Klassen



LTJG Terrence Lawrence



LTJG Harrison Lund



LTJG Christa Robinson



1STLT Robert White

### • CNATRA

The Orville Wright Achievement Award, sponsored by the Daedalian Foundation, recognizes the students who achieved the highest grade average for a six month period. The January to June recipient was Lt. j.g. Andrew Brown, who earned his wings at HT-28 and the July to December recipient was Marine 1st Lt. Jordan M. Anderson, who winged with the "Eightballers" of HT-8.

The McCampbell and Foss Awards, sponsored by the American Fighter Aces Association, are awarded to graduates who excelled in the Air Combat Maneuvering stage during flight training. CNATRA selected Lt. j.g. Hunter C. Koltes who winged with the "Redhawks" of VT-21, and Marine 1st Lt. Alex Robertson, who winged with "Eagles" of VT-7, for the awards, respectively.

CNATRA named Lt. j.g. Brooke Houle, who winged with the "Sabrehawks" of VT-86 in Pensacola, Florida, the Outstanding Female Flight Student Graduate for 2021. This award recognizes the Naval Air Training Command female flight student with the highest grade average and is sponsored by the National Society, Daughters of the American Colonists.

CNATRA selected Lt. j.g. Carter Olson, who winged with VT-21, as the recipient of the Britannia Award, sponsored by the British Royal Navy. The Britannia Award is presented to the student naval aviator earn-

ing the highest overall weapons score and performance in advanced strike training.

The Rear Adm. Thurston James Memorial Award is presented to the Naval Flight Officer who achieves the highest overall flight and academic grades. CNATRA selected Ensign Brandon Chall, who winged at VT-4.

The Reserve Officer Association Selected Reserve Junior Officer of the Year is Lt. Cmdr. Alex Therre, VT-4. The Association of the United States Navy Selected Reserve Junior Officer of the Year is Lt. Cmdr. Colby Grelle, with the "Tigers" of VT-9. The Association of the United States Navy Full Time Support Junior Officer of the Year is Lt. Cmdr. Kenneth Dalton, VT-35.

CNATRA's awards program also recognizes individuals who have made significant contributions to the mission outside the cockpit. Lt. John Curnes, Training Wing Four, is named CNATRA Flight Surgeon of the Year. Lt. Asher Frankfurt, with the "Golden Eagles" of VT-22, is named Landing Signal Officer of the Year. The LSO of the Year Award is sponsored by the Tailhook Association.

CNATRA, headquartered aboard Naval Air Station Corpus Christi, Texas, safely trains the world's finest combat quality naval aviation professionals, delivering them to our naval forces at the right time, in the right quantity, with the right skills, at the right cost.



**April 2<sup>ND</sup> & 3<sup>RD</sup>**  
**Saturday 10-5**  
**Sunday 1-5**  
 Mississippi Industrial Heritage Museum  
*home of historic*  
**Soulé Steam Works**  
 1808 4th Street  
 Meridian, Mississippi

A family-friendly celebration of invention, creativity and resourcefulness that celebrates the "Maker" movement.



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 makerfairemeridian@comcast.net  
 601-693-9905





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<p><b>The Skyline</b> ~ Naval Air Station Meridian, Miss.</p> <p><u>Command Staff</u>                  Commanding Officer ~ <b>CAPT Timothy B. Moore</b>                  Executive Officer ~ <b>CDR Jamie Epps</b>                  Command Master Chief ~ <b>CMDCM Craig Johnson</b></p>	<p><u>Editorial Staff</u>                  Public Affairs Officer ~ Penny Randall                  Public Affairs Specialist ~ Adam Prince                  Staff Writer/Photographer ~ MC1 Krystina Coffey</p>	<p><u>Hotlines &amp; Helpful Numbers</u>                  SAPR Victim Assistance: 601-604-3037                  SAPR Civilian Victim Assistance: 601-486-3122                  SARC: 601-481-4274                  SAFE Helpline: 877-995-5247                  Suicide Hotline: 800-273-8255                  Military OneSource: 800-342-9647                  CEAP (DoN Civilian): 844-366-2327                  EAP (NAF Civilian): 800-932-0034                  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</p>
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## Local Happenings

### APRIL

**2-3: Maker Faire Meridian** Saturday from 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; Sunday from 1-5 p.m. at the Soule Steam Feed Works. Maker Faire Meridian is a family-friendly event that gives everyone an opportunity for conversations with Makers — crafters, educators, tinkerers, engineers, authors, artists, inventors and entrepreneurs. Call 601-693-9905.

**9: Gospel Comes Home** at 7 p.m. at the MSU Riley Center. Gospel Comes Home, featuring Dove & Grammy award-winning vocalists Reggie & Ladye Love Smith will be a wonderful way to start your Easter holiday celebrations. For ticket information, call 601-696-2200.

**9: Trash & Treasure Sale benefiting Meridian's historic home Merrehope** from 7 a.m.-2 p.m. at 1000 14th Street (former Tinnin Lighting/Carpet), Meridian. No clothing or shoes. Come shop with us and help historic Merrehope & The FW Williams home at the same time. No early birds, please. Cash ONLY. 601-483-8439.

**10: Beethoven Lives Upstairs & Family FunFest** at 3 p.m. at the MSU Riley Center and the MAEX for Family FunFest. Beethoven Lives Upstairs, a theatrical symphony concert, and an imaginative way to introduce young audiences to the life and music of Beethoven. For ticket information, call 601-696-2200.

**20: An American In Paris: The Musical** at 7:30 p.m. at the MSU Riley Center. The musical features the music of the legendary composer-lyricist team George and Ira Gershwin. The 2015 Broadway production won four Tony Awards. Tickets range from \$48-\$100; call 601-696-2200.

## Navy Exchange and Marine Corps Exchange customers can support Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society

By **Kristine M. Sturkie**  
NEXCOM Public Affairs

Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society (NMCRS) by purchasing a \$5 benefit ticket at select NEX and MCX locations and online at myNavyExchange.com April 3 – May 7.

The purchase of the \$5 benefit ticket entitles customers to \$5 off as well as a 5% discount applied to a one time in-store purchase from May 1 - 7.

The discounts are good on regular, sale and clearance merchandise. Some exclusions apply.

Customers can also purchase the benefit ticket online at myNavyExchange.com.

Once purchased, customers will receive an email with a coupon code for 5% off along with an additional \$5 off coupon for any online purchase made May 1 - 10. Some exclusions apply.

In 2021, NMCRS assisted over 34,800 clients with \$29.5 million in assistance.

NMCRS offers visiting nurses, budgeting for baby, thrift shops, financial education and educational assistance programs to Sailors, Marines and their families.

As one NMCRS client commented, "I never imagined I would need help when I donated in the past, but I'm so thankful to have NMCRS."

Since 2011, NEX and MCX patrons have donated over \$4.5 million to NMCRS.

## Secretary Del Toro completes first visit to Europe

Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro traveled to Europe March 14 – 22 to visit forward deployed Sailors and Marines and meet with foreign dignitaries to emphasize his guiding principles to include strengthening maritime dominance, empowering our people, and strengthening strategic relationships with Allies and partners.

Secretary Del Toro's trip included stops in Madrid, Sigonella, Rome, Rota, and London as well as an underway embark aboard the USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75) currently deployed in the U.S. Sixth Fleet area of operations.

"Our NATO Alliance has never been stronger and never been more important than it is

today," Secretary Del Toro said while aboard the Truman. "Our forward deployed Sailors and Marines are the always present anchor of the most powerful alliance the world has ever seen – rooted in common values, respect for the rules-based international order, and constant vigilance."

Aboard USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75), Del Toro observed tri-carrier operations conducted with Italian carrier ITS Conte di Cavour (CVH 550) and French carrier FS Charles de Gaulle (R-91) Task Force 473 and discussed naval operations in the region with Adm. Robert Burke, Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa.

-- From Office of the Secretary of the Navy

[Read more, click here](#)

## Installation safety upholding highest standards

In the Navy, safety is just as important on land as it is at sea. Parts and people are continuously moving, and keeping those movements safe is a priority for Commander, Navy Installations Command (CNIC).

CNIC is the Base Operating Support (BOS) Shore Integrator of Safety services across the Navy, meaning it is in charge of ensuring that safety procedures across the Navy's shore enterprise are held to effective, stringent standards.

To develop and implement those standards, CNIC is using American National Standard for Occupational Health concepts as part of its shore enterprise Safety Management System (SMS).

"The Safety Management System is a tool that is designed to be a living representation of the safety program at work," said Odie Smith, CNIC's Safety and Occupational Health specialist. "The Installation Safety Council consists of key players from around the base who

come together on a routine basis to discuss hazards and help recommend abatement and mitigation priorities for the chair, the installation commander, to approve or raise to a higher level."

The SMS framework consists of an iterative continuous improvement cycle, four pillars, and minimum fundamental elements that underpin those pillars.

Plan: Define the problem, collect relevant data and ascertain the problem's root cause.

Do: Develop and implement a solution; decide upon a measurement to gauge its effectiveness.

Check: Confirm the results through before-and-after data comparison.

Act: Document the results, inform others about process changes and make recommendations to readdress continuous process improvements for the problem in the next Plan, Do, Check, Act (PCDA) cycle.

-- From Lt. Clara Navarro,  
CNIC Public Affairs

[Read more, click here](#)

## U.S. and Israeli Navy begin Exercise Intrinsic Defender

U.S. 5th Fleet and the Israeli Navy kicked off a 10-day maritime exercise March 27 that will take place in and off the coast of Israel. Intrinsic Defender is a bilateral exercise between U.S. and Israeli naval forces. The exercise focuses on maritime security operations, explosive ordnance disposal, health topics and unmanned systems integration.

More than 300 U.S. personnel are participating, including a U.S. Navy explosive ordnance disposal dive team, U.S. Coast Guard maritime engagement team, and global health engagement team. U.S. Navy guided-missile destroyer USS Cole (DDG 67), dry cargo ship USNS Wally Schirra (T-AKE 8) and various unmanned vessels are also scheduled to participate in the exercise.

"USS Cole looks forward to partnering

with the Israeli Navy during the exercise," said Cmdr. Jim Welsch, Cole's commanding officer. "Working with our partners allows us to strengthen our bonds and increase our interoperability. This exercise will allow us to fortify our continued partnership in the region."

Cole has been operating in the U.S. 5th Fleet region since Jan. 4 in support of maritime security and stability.

The U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations encompasses nearly 2.5 million square miles of water area and includes the Arabian Gulf, Gulf of Oman, Red Sea, parts of the Indian Ocean and three critical choke points at the Strait of Hormuz, Suez Canal and Bab al-Mandeb.

-- From NAVCENT/U.S.  
5th Fleet Public Affairs

[Read more, click here](#)

## Sale... Or

### BOATS/CAMPERS/TRAILERS

**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.

### HOMES/APARTMENTS

**For Rent:** 3BD 2BA home with 1 car garage,

all new appliances and flooring. 13 miles from NAS. Rent \$1200, security deposit will be half of 1st month rent. Move in ready June 1st. Call 757-589-2174.

**For Rent:** Lake Cabin near NAS Meridian. 1 BD/1 BA; \$700 month. Unfurnished. More info and photos can be viewed at: <https://www.facebook.com/marketplace/item/851262408853834/>

**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. Pets allowed. Pet deposit \$300. \$1,300 rent per month. Call 973-876-5006.

**For Rent:** 2BA/1BA on the water at Dalewood \$600 per month. Call 601-683-6038.

### MISCELLANEOUS

**For Sale By Owner:** 3BD/3BA brick home with sunroom, large fenced in yard. Convenient to shop-

ping and base. \$139K. Call 601-513-3395 or 601-227-1870.

**For Sale:** Office desk with file cabinets and hutch. Item retails for well over \$1000; selling it for \$300 (or best offer). Please contact LtCol Topping at 858-736-5812.

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. To include your announcement, email [adam.prince@navy.mil](mailto:adam.prince@navy.mil)

# TRICARE authorizes temporary prescription refill waivers for 12 Mississippi counties due to March 22 severe weather

From Staff Reports

The Defense Health Agency (DHA) announced that TRICARE beneficiaries in 12 Mississippi counties may receive emergency prescription refills now through April 2nd due to the tornado.

The counties impacted are Adams, Attala, Clay, Copiah, Hinds, Holmes, Jefferson, Kemper, Madison, Smith, Warren, and Yazoo.

To receive an emergency refill of prescription medications, TRICARE beneficiaries should take their prescription bottle to any TRICARE retail network pharmacy. If the bottle is unavailable or the label is damaged or missing, beneficiaries should contact Express Scripts or their retail network pharmacy for assistance.

To find a network pharmacy, beneficiaries may call Express Scripts at 1-877-363-1303.

They may also search the network pharmacy locator at <https://militaryrx.express-scripts.com/find-pharmacy>.

If possible, visit the pharmacy where the prescription was filled. Prescriptions filled by a retail chain may be filled at another store in that chain. If the provider is available, beneficiaries can call in a new prescription to any network pharmacy.

As a reminder, TRICARE beneficiaries, other than active duty service members, may receive urgent care from any TRICARE-authorized urgent care center or provider and do not need a referral. This allows beneficiaries to seek non emergency care for illnesses or injuries if their primary care provider is unavailable because of emergencies.

Beneficiaries are advised to visit <https://militaryrx.express-scripts.com/notices/weather/state-emergency-alert-mississippi-tornado> for updates.

## End of COVID may bring major turbulence for US health care

By Ricardo Alonzo-Zaldivar  
DoD News

When the end of the COVID-19 pandemic comes, it could create major disruptions for a cumbersome U.S. health care system made more generous, flexible and up-to-date technologically through a raft of temporary emergency measures.

Winding down those policies could begin as early as the summer. That could force an estimated 15 million Medicaid recipients to find new sources of coverage, require congressional action to preserve broad telehealth access for Medicare enrollees, and scramble special COVID-19 rules and payment policies for hospitals, doctors and insurers. There are also questions about how emergency use approvals for COVID-19 treatments will be handled.

The array of issues is tied to the coronavirus public health emergency first declared more than two years ago and periodically renewed since then. It's set to end April 16 and the expectation is that the Biden administration will extend it through mid-July. Some would like a longer off-ramp.

Transitions don't bode well for the complex U.S. health care system, with its mix of private and government insurance and its labyrinth of policies and procedures. Health care chaos, if it breaks out, could create midterm election headaches for Democrats and Republicans alike.

"The flexibilities granted through the public health emergency have helped people stay covered and get access to care, so moving forward the key question is how to build on what has been a success and not lose ground," said Juliette Cubanski, a Medicare expert with the nonpartisan Kaiser Family Foundation, who has been researching potential consequences of winding down the pandemic emergency.

### MEDICAID CHURN

Medicaid, the state-federal health insurance program for low-income people, is covering about 79 million people, a record partly due to the pandemic.

But the nonpartisan Urban Institute think tank estimates that about 15 million people could lose Medicaid when the public health emergency ends, at a rate of at least 1 million per month.

**"We are at the strongest point in our history and we are going make sure that we hold on to the coverage gains."**

— CMS Administrator Chiquita Brooks-LaSure.

Congress increased federal Medicaid payments to states because of COVID-19, but it also required states to keep people on the rolls during the health emergency. In normal times states routinely disenroll Medicaid recipients whose incomes rise beyond certain levels, or for other life changes affecting eligibility. That process will switch on again when the emergency ends, and some states are eager to move forward.

Virtually all of those losing Medicaid are expected to be eligible for some other source of coverage, either through employers, the Affordable Care Act or — for kids — the Children's Health Insurance Program.

But that's not going to happen automatically, said Matthew Buettgens, lead researcher on the Urban Institute study. Cost and lack of awareness about options could get in the way.

People dropped from Medicaid may not realize they can pick up taxpayer-subsidized ACA coverage. Medicaid is usually free, so people offered workplace insurance could find the premiums too high.

"This is an unprecedented situation," said Buettgens. "The uncertainty is real."

The federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, or CMS, is advising states to take it slow and connect Medicaid recipients who are disenrolled with other potential coverage. The agency will keep an eye on states' accuracy in making eligibility decisions. Biden officials want coverage

shifts, not losses.

"We are focused making sure we hold on to the gains in coverage we have made under the Biden-Harris administration," said CMS Administrator Chiquita Brooks-LaSure. "We are at the strongest point in our history and we are going make sure that we hold on to the coverage gains."

ACA coverage — or "Obamacare" — is an option for many who would lose Medicaid. But it will be less affordable if congressional Democrats fail to extend generous financial assistance called for in President Joe Biden's social legislation. Democrats stalling the bill would face blame.

Republicans in mostly Southern states that have refused to expand Medicaid are also vulnerable. In those states, it can be very difficult for low-income adults to get coverage and more people could wind up uninsured.

State Medicaid officials don't want to be the scapegoats. "Medicaid has done its job," said Matt Salo, head of the National Association of Medicaid Directors. "We have looked out for physical, mental and behavioral health needs. As we come out of this emergency, we are supposed to right-size the program."

### TELEHEALTH STATIC

Millions of Americans discovered telehealth in 2020 when coronavirus shutdowns led to the suspension of routine medical consultations. In-person visits are again the norm, but telehealth has shown its usefulness and gained broader acceptance.

The end of the public health emergency would jeopardize telehealth access for millions enrolled in traditional Medicare. Restrictions predating COVID-19 limit telehealth mainly to rural residents, in part to mitigate against health care fraud. Congress has given itself 151 days after the end of the public health emergency to come up with new rules. "If there are no changes to the law after that, most Medicare beneficiaries will lose access to coverage for telehealth," the Kaiser Foundation's Cubanski said.

A major exception applies to enrollees in private Medicare Advantage plans, which generally do cover telehealth. However, nearly 6 in 10 Medicare enrollees are in the traditional fee-for-service program.

[Read more, click here](#)

## 'Sick' Fantasies of a military mom

For many years while my navy husband, Francis, was on active duty, I was a frustrated housewife. I was fulfilled by my role as nurturer of our family, but I must confess, I had a dark, bitter side that fantasized about a different life.

These were not normal fantasies about being a rich socialite or a world-renown author or a super-model. These were "sick" fantasies.

It all started when I realized that there was no end in sight. No end to dirty socks, crumbs, dog hair, car pools, homework, soap scum, grocery shopping. My daily tasks as a military spouse and mother of three were not only completely devoid of mental stimulation, they were never done ... never.

### COLUMN



Molinari

No sooner would I wipe a glob of toothpaste from inside the kids' sink, when another one would appear. Dust particles descended stealthily through the air every second of the day, making a mockery of my weekly furniture polishing. I swore the dirty laundry was breeding in its baskets just to spite me. If I had a nickel for every time I thought the house was clean, and then watched a tumbleweed of dog hair blow across the floor, I'd be that rich socialite.

I realized that I was on a never-ending treadmill of mind-numbingly boring and mundane daily chores. Even vacations didn't bring relief because our family trips were a lot of work. "Sheesh, I need a vacation from our vacation," I'd say to myself afterward.

Then one day, most likely while wiping spaghetti sauce splatter off the inside of the microwave for the umpteenth time, my mind began to wander. Somewhere in the dark recesses of my brain, a wicked thought was hatched.

What if, just what if, I sustained some kind of non-life-threatening injury or illness that would require me to be in the hospital, or at least in bed, for a couple of weeks? My eyes

widened at the exciting thought of mandatory bed rest, three squares a day, and my family forced to fend for itself.

But, what kind of non-life-threatening injury or illness? Perhaps a large can of tomato sauce could fall from the pantry, striking me in the head and causing amnesia for which I would need close monitoring in the hospital? Nah, too far-fetched. Maybe I could trip on one of the kids' scooters in the driveway and break a hip? Nah, too painful. What if I got a bad batch of wrinkle cream from the drug store and my skin fell off? Nah, too disfiguring.

This little "what if" game became its own welcome escape from my daily grind. I had fun trying to come up with the perfect fantasy involving temporary injury, paralysis, illness or disease — Oh, what a treat! — that might grant me a brief reprieve from the endless monotony of my responsibilities as a military wife and mother.

Now, our young adult children are on their own or in college, and as an empty nester, my need to escape endless housework is not as urgent as it was when they were under our roof. Sure, there are still many days when I'd rather

chew my own arm off than empty the dishwasher again. However, life is just not as challenging as it used to be. But as my luck would have it, my ultimate fantasy refused to become a reality until last week, when I checked into the hospital for scheduled foot surgery.

I had always envisioned an overnight hospital stay, but I was home from my outpatient surgery by mid-afternoon. It was sweet that the kids came to the house to check on me, but that also meant more mouths to feed. Francis had promised to handle dinner, but by 6:30 p.m. that night, I was calling for take-out. After a few days of trying to live out a disappointing version of my carefully curated dream, I eventually gave up and got back to my daily grind, with the assistance of a clunky splint boot that screams, "I had bunion surgery!"

I still have hope that my sick fantasies will come true one day. A girl can dream.

Lisa Smith Molinari's self syndicated columns appear on her blog, [www.themeatandpotatoesoflife.com](http://www.themeatandpotatoesoflife.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).



# NAS Meridian, MS • Morale, Welfare and Recreation

## Facility Phone Numbers

Fitness Center	679-2379	Library	679-2326	MWR Admin.	679-2551
Liberty Center	679-3760	Rudders Pub & Grill	679-2780	MWR Jobs Line	679-2467
Tickets	679-3773	CDC/CDH	679-2652		
McCain Rec Center	679-2651	SAC	679-5252		
Equipment Rental	679-2609	School Liaison	679-2473		



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**POOL TOURNAMENT**  
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WINNER WILL RECEIVE A PRIZE!

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**BOOK CLUB**  
APRIL 12 • 1400-1500 • LIBRARY

WE'LL DISCUSS *CALLER GIFT* BY JANET DAILEY AT THIS MONTH'S MEETING OF THE LIBRARY'S BOOK CLUB. CALL (601) 679-2326 OR EMAIL [NASMER.LIBRARY.FCT@NAVY.MIL](mailto:NASMER.LIBRARY.FCT@NAVY.MIL) FOR ACCESS.  
THE BOOK CLUB MEETS ON THE SECOND TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH.

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**CORNHOLE TOURNAMENT**  
APRIL 16 • 1100 • OUTDOOR PAVILION BY RUDDERS

GO HEAD-TO-HEAD AS TEAMS OF TWO IN A ROUND ROBIN TOURNAMENT. TOP THREE TEAMS WILL RECEIVE AWARDS. ACO RULES WILL BE USED.

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