Volume 61, Number 9

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April 27, 2023

ON BASE

VT-7 Change of Command:

CDR Greg Enzinger will turn over command of VT-7 to CDR Bradley Thompson during a ceremony in the hangar onboard NAS Meridian, April 28 at 10 a.m.



Enzinger



Thompson

Fleet and Family Fun Day:

April 29 at 10 a.m. in the field next to Fleet and Family Support Center. Food, face painting, bounce houses, music and more. Call 601-679-2360.

WHAT'S INSIDE

~ page 2 ~

LTJG Dorsey earns Golden Stick

~ page 3 ~

New events in area happenings

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NAS Meridian to take part in HURREX/CG-23

From Staff Reports

Commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command (US-FFC) and Commander, Navy Installations Command (CNIC) will conduct their annual two-week hurricane preparedness, disaster response and recovery exercise, Hurricane Exercise/Citadel Gale (HUR-REX/CG-23) 2023, April 24 – May 5.

NAS Meridian will participate in the exercise.

"Our Sailors and their families are our top priority and hurricane preparedness isn't just vital to ensuring their safety, it's vital to maintain combat readiness and continue operations even under the most severe weather conditions," said Adm. Daryl Caudle, Commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command. "In coordination with our partners ashore, this exercise will strengthen our collective response for the upcoming Atlantic hurricane season."

HURREX/CG 2023 is designed to train and enhance shore and afloat commands destructive weather preparedness and recovery plans prior to the onset of hurricane season. The exercise also creates opportunities for fleet and installation teams to practice their external coordination processes, strengthening relationships with local/state authorities and partners so that the Navy is ready to support during what has been predicted to be an active 2023 hurricane season.



"This exercise provides an important opportunity to practice inter-agency coordination in a controlled environment so that response protocols and procedures can be smoothly executed in the event of a damaging hurricane," said Vice Adm. Yancy B. Lindsey, Commander, Navy Installations Command. "This is also an opportune time for Sailors and their families to consider their personal readiness – make sure they have an emergency plan, a kit with enough essentials for three days and are familiar with what Navy emergency resources could be available to

them."

The first week of HURREX/CG 23 will simulate storm systems developing along the U.S. Atlantic coast and in the Gulf of Mexico, which will engage fleet and shore commands to rehearse heavy weather response procedures. The storms' notional increasing intensity will drive simulated ship sorties, aircraft evacuation, personnel accountability procedures, and ensure that Navy personnel are operationally prepared for the upcoming hurricane season.

● Hurrex, page 4

MSU Volunteer Student of the Year



Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Jung Tai was honored as the Distance Student Volunteer of the Year by Mississippi State University at the Student Leadership and Community **Engagement Awards Ceremony in Starkville,** April 18. Tai is a member of the staff at Navy Medicine Readiness and Training Unit onboard NAS Meridian. The program honors and celebrates the outstanding accomplishments of students, faculty and staff of Mississippi State University. The Distance Student Volunteer of the Year award requires at least 100 volunteer hours completed within the academic year and good academic standing. Tai also received the Individual Excellence Award for completing more than 100 hours of volunteer service while a student on campus. Tai is completing her Masters of **Business Administration Degree at the** university.

Submitted photo









Volunteers from around the installation participate in an Earth Day clean up onboard NAS Meridian, April 20. Earth Day is an annual celebration that honors the achievements of the environmental movement and raises awareness of the need to protect Earths natural resources for future generations. The first Earth Day was held April 22, 1970.

Submitted photos

'Wings of Gold' ceremonies in April

There were two naval aviator designation ceremonies - April 14 and April 21 -- onboard Naval Air Station Meridian.

Six naval aviators received their "Wings of Gold" during the ceremonies. 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 Raymond Benitez



LTJG Scott Dormer



LTJG Christopher Dorsey



LTJG Andrew Elgin



1STLT Scott Hornick



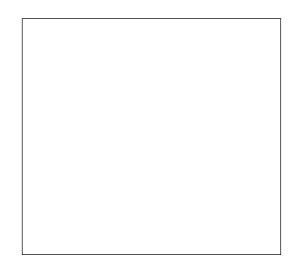
Golden Stick

Roger Burke left, President of the Mississippi Council of the Navy League presents LTJG Christopher Dorsey, with the Golden Stick award during a winging ceremony in the chapel onboard NAS Meridian, April 21. The Golden Stick is presented to the student with the highest composite score during flight training.



Ensign Ulysee Walker

NAS Meridian Sailors of the Quarter



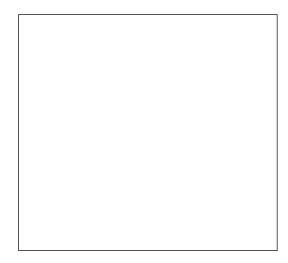
MA1 Calvin Green

Sailor of the Quarter Security/MWD Kennel Master



AC2 Ruby Wesby

Junior Sailor of the Quarter Air Operations



MA3 Jalen Wilson

Blue Jacket of the Quarter Security



Erby Carter

Senior Civilian of the Quarter Air Operations

NAS Meridian Civilians of the Quarter





Sammie Pierce

Junior Civilian of the Quarter Fire & Emergency Services

The Skyline ~ Naval Air Station Meridian, Miss.

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Local Happenings

28: Petals and Prosecco at Merrehope from 5-9 p.m. at Merrehope. Demonstration & reception with Dr. Jim DelPrince Horticulture Specialist with MSU Extension and leader of the Master Floral Designer Program. Tickets are \$40; limited seating available; call 601-483-8439.

5: Full Moon on Fifth from 6-9 p.m. on 5th Street from 22nd to 23rd Avenue in downtown Meridian. This laid back event has great food, live music, and a revolving showcase of local art talent. Alcoholic beverages are available, no outside beverages allowed. Free to the public.

6: Rose Hill Storytelling Conference from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at the Soule Steam Feed Works. Come enjoy a unique event for all Mississippians. Keynote speaker: Terrence Roberts; registration deadline is May 1. Admission is \$25; call 601-479-2483.

13: State Games of Mississippi Youth Slow-Pitch Softball begins at 9 a.m. at the Northeast Softball Complex, 730 Newell Road in Meridian. Entry Fee: \$230 - Maximum of 15 players & 2 coaches, \$175 - 6U T-ball. Registration deadline is Tuesday, May 9. Visit our website for more information - stategamesofms.org or call 601-482-

16: The Beach Boys at 7:30 p.m. at the MSU Riley Center. For more than 60 years, The Beach Boys have spread musical sunshine. Ticket information coming soon; call 601-483-9810.

29: Memorial Day Tribute at the Lauderdale County Court House, 500 Constitution Ave., Meridian, MS 39301 at 10 a.m. The keynote speaker is Col. Cynthia Smith, 186th Air Refueling Wing, Key Field.

Awards Quarters



Sailors and civilians pose for a group photo during an awards ceremony at the Air Operations building onboard NAS Meridian, April 20. Awards included Civilians of the Quarter and flag letters of commendation.

Ships arrive at Fort Lauderdale for 2023 Fleet Week

For the next week, Southeast Florida residents will have the opportunity to see and tour Navy and U.S. Coast Guard ships as the 32nd Fleet Week Port Everglades kicks into gear.

U.S. Navy destroyer, USS Cole (DDG 67), a ship commissioned in 1996 in Fort Lauderdale, was the first to arrive followed by the amphibious dock ship USS New York (LPD 21), expeditionary fast transport USNS Newport (T-EPF-12) and the fast attack submarine USS Indiana (SSN 789) early, Sunday morning, April 23. USCGC William Flores (WPC-1103) will arrive Monday.

Reservations were taken to tour the ships and more than 9,000 slots were filled in advance of the arrival for Monday through Satur-

The Navy Band will perform at more than 15 venues across the city including performing the national anthem for the Florida Panthers playoff game April 23 and the Miami Marlins Friday, April 28.

"We look forward to being in Port Everglades to spend time with the outstanding citizens of South Florida," said Rear Adm. Tom Williams, commander, Expeditionary Strike Group TWO. "We are proud to be able show the community our ships as well as the outstanding Sailors, Marines, Coast Guardsmen and Merchant Mariners who make our Naval Service - Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard and Military Sealift Command - the very best in the world."

In addition to the ships; equipment displays, Marine and Navy recruiting information and Navy environmental programs will be available for visitors to see as they wait for their

> -- From Jay Cope, Navy Region Southeast Public Affairs

Read more, click here

U.S. Navy, JMSDF conduct training torpedo exercise in Japanese waters

Aircrews from the "Saberhawks" of Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron (HSM) 77 conducted anti-submarine warfare (ASW) torpedo training in Sagami Bay, April 13.

This training was the second time the U.S. Navy launched an inert training torpedo with Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) into Japanese waters.

Prior to last year's event, every torpedo exercise conducted by a forward-deployed squadron was conducted in San Diego. The benefit of this particular ASW exercise is that the forward-deployed squadron was able to practice within the region they operate in, while also strengthening bilateral capabilities between the U.S. Navy and JMSDF. The aim is for this exercise to continue an annual event.

"HSM-77 is proud to take part in high-end warfighting integration efforts with our JMS-DF counterparts," said Lt. Cmdr. Eric Hodina, HSM-77 operations officer. "These exercises allow us to improve our coordinated-ASW proficiency and enhance joint-warfighting ca-

The exercise involved an inert torpedo being launched from an MH-60R Seahawk, attached to HSM-77.

The torpedo was recovered by a small boat team from the JMSDF Futami-class research ship JS Wakasa (AGS 5104). An SH-60K, assigned to JMSDF Air Development Squadron (VX-51), provided range clearance and translated the communications.

-- From MC2 Askia Collins

Read more, click here

USS Nimitz records 350,000th arrested landing

USS Nimitz (CVN 68), the oldest-serving U.S commissioned aircraft carrier in the world, successfully completed its 350,000th arrested aircraft landing while sailing in the South China Sea, a milestone nearly 48 years in the making.

Nimitz is the first active U.S. Navy carrier in the Fleet to reach this milestone. USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN 69) has the next highest total of arrested landings at 326,600.

Capt. Craig Sicola, commanding officer of Nimitz, and Cmdr. Luke Edwards, commanding officer of the "Fighting Redcocks" of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 22, piloted the landing in an F/A-18F Super Hornet from VFA 22 on the morning of April 22nd.

"I am honored and humbled to land this historic milestone for our ship. I dedicate this landing to the countless naval aviators who have flown before me, and it is a privilege to further the proud tradition of service that this distinguished aircraft carrier embodies," said Sicola. "To the shipyard maintenance teams who put in countless hours to prepare this warship for sea, to the thousands of dedicated Sailors on board who sacrifice for their country, and to the families back home who support us along the way - 'teamwork is a tradition' on Nimitz and we could not have accomplished this mission without the steadfast commitment to this historic ship."

As first in its class, Nimitz is the namesake for all Nimitz-class aircraft carriers in the Fleet. Over the decades, tens of thousands of Sailors have embarked on Nimitz to fulfill missions around the globe. Since commissioning nearly 50 years ago, Nimitz has sailed 30 deployments and served in countless operations and missions.

-- Courtesy Story, USS Nimitz (CVN 68)

Read more, click here

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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.

Travel Trailer. Sleeps 4 with 1 queen bed/2 bunks.

Easy to tow at 3,575 lbs; 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 2018 Mallard M185 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: 2 BD/1 1/2 BA 1100 square foot home in Dalewood with main lake access. Asking \$1300 a month. Email: rosscandeloproperties@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 601-917-8594.4.

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: 2BA/1BA on

the water at Dalewood \$600 per month. Call 601-683-6038.

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

MISCELLANEOUS

New! 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 Perfect Lawn LLC, lawn care in Meridian. Call 850-376-4499. Military owned company.

To submit an item to the "Sale...Or" column. e-mail 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

U.S. forces evacuate Americans from Khartoum embassy

By Jim Garamone

DoD News, Defense Media Activity

U.S. forces evacuated just under 100 American staff of the U.S. Embassy in Khartoum, Sudan recently, U.S. government officials

President Joe Biden gave the order to evacuate the embassy from the embattled country. A small number of allied diplomats were also evacuated, State Department officials said in a telephonic news conference.

The Defense Department had deployed troops and capabilities to Djibouti just in case there was an order to evacuate the embassy in Khartoum, said Army Lt. Gen. Douglas A. Sims II, the Joint Staff's director of operations. "[Yesterday], the U.S. military evacuated those personnel in support of the State Department closing operations at the Embassy in Khartoum," Sims said. "[Yesterday] at 9 a.m. Eastern, a contingent of U.S. forces lifted off from Djibouti and landed in Ethiopia. The aircraft — including three MH-47 Chinooks refueled in Ethiopia before flying approximately three hours to Khartoum.

'The evacuation was conducted in one movement via rotary wing," Sims continued. "The operation was fast and clean, with service members spending less than an hour on the ground in Khartoum. As we speak, the evacuees are safe and secure."

Sims said there were just over 100 special operations personnel

"I am proud of the extraordinary commitment of our embassy staff, who performed their duties with courage and professionalism and embodied America's friendship and connection with the people of Sudan."

President Joe Biden

conducting the operation. The U.S. Marine Embassy guards were

"I am proud of the extraordinary commitment of our embassy staff, who performed their duties with courage and professionalism and embodied America's friendship and connection with the people of Sudan," Biden said in a written release. "I am grateful for the unmatched skill of our service members who successfully brought them

Biden also thanked the governments of Djibouti, Ethiopia and Saudi Arabia who aided the U.S. evacuation operation.

Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III said the evacuation was under command of U.S. Africa Command and conducted in close coordination with the U.S. State Department. "I'm proud of our extraordinary service members who executed and supported this operation with outstanding precision and professionalism," he said.

Christopher Maier, the assistant secretary of defense for special operations and low-intensity warfare, praised the Marines who protected and defended the embassy during the past week. "Our Marines who protect many of our embassies overseas do not often get the credit they deserve," he said. "Their courage under duress represents America as its best again in this instance."

There are still American citizens in Sudan. "In the coming days, we will continue to work with the State Department to help American citizens who may want to leave Sudan," Maier said. "One of those ways is to potentially make the overland routes out of Sudan potentially more viable. So, DOD is at present considering actions that may include use of intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities to be able to observe routes and detect threats."

U.S. Marine Corps activates second F-35C squadron

2nd Lt. Andrew Baez

3rd Marine Aircraft Wing

Third Marine Aircraft Wing reactivated Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 311, an F-35C Lightning II squadron, at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, California, April 14, 2023. VMFA-311 is the U.S. Marine Corps' second F-35C squadron. The F-35C is a land and/or carrier-based platform boasting long-range flight and high weapons payload capabilities. Formerly VMA-311, the Tomcats have made their mark on Marine Corps aviation for decades, and now will continue their legacy.

Notable Tomcats veterans include Ted Williams and John Glenn. Ted Williams left a Major League Baseball career for service in World War II and Korea, and later was inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame. John Glenn was a distinguished fighter pilot in World War II and Korea, who later became an astronaut and public servant.

Third MAW Commanding General Maj. Gen. Bradford J. Gering is also a Tomcat. "Having twice served in VMA-311, the Tomcats hold a special place in my heart," Gering said. "We are extremely excited to add another F-35C squadron to 3rd MAW. The range and operational flexibility that VMFA-311 will bring to I Marine Expeditionary Force is impressive and adds to our warfighting capacity in every domain."

The Marine Corps is undergoing a key transition to the F-35 to maintain its advantage in future conflicts, thereby deactivating VMA-311 on Oct. 15, 2020. The reactivation of VMFA-311 marks the transition for the squadron to the F-35C Lightning II, which brings its unique capabilities to 3rd MAW as a long-range compliment to their existing aviation assets.

"The F-35C brings a long-range fighter/attack platform with the most advanced stealth and sensor capabilities in the Marine Corps," said Lt. Col. Michael P. Fisher, the commanding officer of VMFA-311. "The Harrier was a great weapon that served the Marine Corps well and has been replaced with a more advanced and capable platform. The F-35 was designed for the near-term and

The reactivation supports the 2022 Marine Corps Aviation Plan, which outlines ongoing modernization efforts across Marine aviation. The plan prioritizes readiness, reinforces the importance of flying from the sea, and refocuses on manpower, support to logistics and modern capabilities.

"We are taking an aggressive approach to build capabilities that will move, sustain, and support the individual Marine while making the force more lethal, effective, and survivable," said then-Deputy Commandant for Aviation Lt. Gen. Mark R. Wise in the 2022 plan.

The Tomcats, a notable squadron of "firsts" for Marine Corps aviation, originally commissioned in 1942 as Marine Attack Squadron 311 as a at Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, North Carolina, where it first deployed in support of the World War II island hopping campaign.

The squadron led the way for Marine Corps aviation in many groundbreaking events: it was the first Marine squadron to use fighter aircraft for dive bombing missions, flew the first Marine combat mission with jets in 1950 during the Korean War, was the first Marine squadron to employ the AV-8B Harrier in combat during Operation Desert Shield, the first to fly combat missions in Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom, and participated in the first combat sortie of Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003.

"This reactivation is not about the aircraft, it's about the people," said Col. Shannon M. Brown, commander of Marine Aircraft Group 11. "Looking at what this squadron did over the years is impressive considering its 13 Navy Unit Commendations. The Tomcats are all about fighting and winning and now this legacy is entrusted to Lt. Col. Fisher."

"We will never forget where we came from," Fisher said in his remarks. "Let's make history."

The second week of the exercise reviews the Navy's actions for recovery from major weather events, which includes simulating the stand up of Emergency Family Assistance Center (EFAC), accounting for personnel, lifting evacuation orders, reopening installations, conducting damage assessments, and supporting federal response, if called upon to do

Measures have been taken to minimize disruptions within local communities and to normal base operations. However, there may be times when the exercise causes increased traffic around bases or delays in base access.

Please contact the NAS Meridian Emergency Operations Center at 601-679-3750 for any questions or con-



Expect the unexpected when you're expecting

April is the start of spring, a time of birth, growth and renewal. Fittingly, it's also the

month of my first child's birth, so it takes me back 28 years ago, when I couldn't wait to become a mother. Don't worry, I

won't bore you with the tedious details. Everyone thinks their childbirth story is unique, but most of these narratives are the same standard story with five basic parts: The Labor Starts Part, The Going to the Hospital Part, The Agonizing

COLUMN

Molinari

Pain Part, The Pain Meds Demand or Refusal Part, and The Birth in Excruciating Detail Part.

After listening to many of these chronicles, I'd rather endure another episiotomy than hear another one.

Back in the day, I surely annoyed my friends with tedious tales of the births of my three children, but I've since learned to keep those

memories private. When the topic does come up in conversation, I take a discriminating approach, only telling the snippets with sure-fire entertainment value.

Now that the topic has been broached, I'll relay a few extraordinarily embarrassing moments during my first pregnancy, when I was determined to do everything by the book — literally. I religiously read "What to Expect When You're Expecting," meticulously recording my weight, circumference, mood swings and gas bubbles in the journal.

Around the 35th week, I'd read that my obstetrician would examine me to make sure that I could breastfeed my newborn. But at my scheduled visit with Doc Walker, an oldfashioned obstetrician who'd seen it all before, he didn't even mention it. After the standard tummy palpitations, he patted me on the knee, and started to leave the room.

"But wait!" I blurted, "What about the nipple check?!"

With a smirk, he turned and said, "Have you been reading that book again?"

Over the next few weeks, my gullibility persisted. We attended childbirth classes to learn how to hee-hee-hoo our way through the perfect Lamaze birth. One night, the topic was circumcision. The crunchy California nurses

described a heinous, painful, unnecessary procedure.

At my next appointment, I asked Doc Walker, "Is it barbaric for me to expect our baby to endure circumcision?"

With his characteristic smirk, Doc Walker calmly replied, "Do you realize that the birth canal squeezes newborn babies so hard, they come out with their heads shaped like cones? Circumcision is a cake walk compared to that." Was that supposed to make me feel better?

Soon, I was in the throes of labor at the ritzy Pebble Beach hospital near the Naval Post Graduate School in Monterey, California, our second duty station as a married military couple. Francis and I had attended birthing classes together, and he assured me he was ready to be my supportive partner in the birth.

But by the seventh hour of contractions, he was getting bored, and I was getting delirious.

An orderly brought an unexpectedly tastylooking dinner tray into my room; however, I was forbidden to eat solids in case surgery was needed. Francis graciously "jumped on the grenade" and scarfed the meal himself in the recliner by my bed. Besides, I was delirious.

Francis was just finishing the carrot cake, when a ginger-haired, young nurse walked in to check the monitors. Our forgotten camcorder had been running from a tripod in the corner of the room, and unfortunately, it recorded Francis flirting with the red-head while I labored in my hospital bed, still delirious.

"So, where do folks like you hang out around here?" Francis was recorded schmoozing on the left side of the screen. The nurse could be seen smiling while describing the local bar scene.

On the right side of the recording, I looked unconscious. The "bum-bum" of the heart monitor began to beat faster, and my eyes blinked open. Grimacing in pain, I huffed and puffed through waves of contractions, my hand maintaining a white-knuckle-death grip on the

Simultaneously, on the left of the screen, the red-head threw her head back, laughing at something witty Francis had said. Unbeknownst to them, I was delirious.

Despite these unexpected moments of humiliation and delirium 28 years ago; I delivered a beautiful baby boy, which thankfully, was exactly what we'd been expecting all along. 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.



NAS Meridian, MS • Morale, Welfare and Recreation

Facility Phone Numbers

Fitness Center 679-2379 679-3760 **Liberty Center** Tickets 679-3773 McCain Rec Center 679-2651 Equipment Rental 679-2609

679-2326 Library Rudders Pub & Grill 679-2780 CDC/CDH 679-2652 SAC 679-5252 **School Liaison** 679-2473 MWR Admin. 679-2551 **MWR Jobs Line** 679-2467















