





## Commissary and Chapel Food Donations



Photos by MC2 Molly Tice  
The Commissary and Chapel collected and dispursed 50 bags of donated non-perishables to famlies on base as part of “Hunger Has No Season 2025”.

● **VT-7**  
He deployed across the globe aboard USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76), USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70), and USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72) and supported Operations NEW DAWN, ENDURING FREEDOM, and FREEDOM'S SENTINEL in Iraq and Afghanistan. Leaving California in early 2020, CDR Kellner participated in a cross-service tour with the 83rd Fighter Weapons Squadron at Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida, and ran the Naval Weapons System Evaluation Program, conducting live-fire missile shoots with numerous U.S. Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force fighter squadrons as they prepared to deploy. Following selection for command, he moved to NAS Meridian and reported to Training Wing One in the summer of 2023 to begin training in the T-45C Goshawk as an instructor pilot. He became the Executive Officer of VT-7 in July 2024.

CDR Kellner has accumulated over 3,100 flight hours, 18 combat missions, and 571 arrested landings on different aircraft carriers. His awards include the Meritorious Service Medal, Air Force Aerial Achievement Medal, Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal, Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal and various service and unit awards. Additionally, he earned a Master of Science in Human Systems Integration from the Naval Postgraduate School. VT-7 flies the T-45C Goshawk and trains students in the fundamentals of Naval strike aviation, preparing them to earn their “Wings of Gold.” The Eagles conducted local flight operations in Meridian, as well as four carrier qualification detachments, five weapons detachments, and two additional training detachments in locations such as El Centro, California and Jacksonville and Key West, Florida.



Photo by MC2 Molly Tice  
The colors are paraded during the Training Squadron Seven Change of Command ceremony held at the hangar on board NAS Meridian, November 21.

## Congratulations, Awardees!



Photos by MC2 Molly Tice  
Awardees stand for a photo after Command Quarters at Lakeside onboard NAS Meridian, Nov. 20.



Photos by MC2 Molly Tice  
Awardees stand for a photo after Command Quarters at Air Ops onboard NAS Meridian, Nov. 25.

### The Skyline ~ Naval Air Station Meridian, Miss.

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SAPR Victim Assistance: 601-604-3037  
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SARC: 601-481-4274  
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Suicide Hotline: 800-273-8255  
Military OneSource: 800-342-9647  
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EEO (GS): 904-542-2802

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# LOCAL HAPPENINGS

Nov. 22 - Jan. 4: Winter Wonderland. During the holiday season, the Mississippi Children's Museum – Meridian transforms into a magical Winter Wonderland! Bring the whole family for festive crafts, reindeer workshops, and plenty of seasonal fun. Go sock skating in the Snowflake Village exhibit, write your very own letter to Santa, and enjoy a visit with Santa himself!

Nov. 23 - Dec 31: Trees of Christmas at Merrehope. Monday-Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Sunday from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Adults \$15, Military & Senior Citizens \$10, Students \$5. Experience the Wonder at the 57th Annual Trees of Christmas at Merrehope, where 70 stunning trees and exhibits transform the historic 20-room mansion into an elaborate holiday showcase. With each room uniquely styled by talented designers, visitors are immersed in a world of creativity, beauty, and holiday spirit. Experience the Wonder through ever-changing, thoughtfully curated displays that draw thousands of guests from across Mississippi, the United States, and around the world.

Nov. 27 from 4 p.m. to 10 p.m. – Lazy Acres in Lights! Experience the most amazing interactive Christmas light display in the south. Take a 17-minute wagon ride through Christmas light scenes, visit Santa in the Barn, Stomp the lights at Dancer's Disco Deck, and play on our giant jumping pillows. New for 2025 is Santa's South Pole Workshop, a 5,000 square foot indoor Christmas village. Be sure to savor the flavors from Mrs. Claus' kitchen and take home a timeless treasure from Mississippi's largest selection of personalized ornaments in our gift shop.

Dec. 2 at 6 p.m. - Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony at Meridian's City Hall Lawn, 1860 24th Avenue. Join the City of Meridian as we illuminate our stunning 34-foot Christmas tree, creating a magical atmosphere filled with festive cheer and community spirit!

Dec 4-7: A Christmas Carol, the Musical. Join Meridian Little for a heartwarming retelling of Charles Dickens' beloved classic. Filled with festive music, lively performances and a powerful message of hope and generosity, this family-friendly production brings our community together to reflect on what truly matters: kindness, connection, and the spirit of giving.

Dec. 5 from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. – Christmas and Cocktails. Join us for a festive evening of cheer at Boxcar inside The Threefoot Hotel. Sip on holiday-inspired cocktails, savor seasonal small bites, and soak in the merry atmosphere as we celebrate the magic of Christmas together. This exclusive ticketed event will feature creative cocktails crafted by our bartenders, festive music, and the perfect backdrop for a holiday night out with friends. Dress in your holiday best, bring your Christmas spirit, and let's toast to the most wonderful time of the year at Christmas & Cocktails at Boxcar.Limited tickets available.

Dec. 5 -7 - Christmas in Dixie PBHA/Open Horse Show will be held at Lauderdale County Agri-Center. All breeds welcome. 8 judge split combined. Additional activities include stall decorating, ugly sweaters, dog races, and more. Check Facebook for class list and fee information.

Dec. 6 at 5 p.m. - Christmas Parade through Downtown. Get ready for a festive evening of family fun at the City's annual Christmas Parade! Grab your friends and family and head downtown to experience the Christmas magic!

Dec. 6 at 11 a.m., 12:30 p.m., and 2 p.m. – Tinsel & Tea. Step into a winter wonderland at Tinsel and Tea, the most magical event of the season! Join us in the beautiful, historic Threefoot Hotel for a festive Christmas tea party perfect for the whole family. Enjoy delicious small bites, specialty tea, warm cocoa for the little ones, and mimosas for the adults. The highlight of the day will be a special visit from Santa Claus, who will be there to hear Christmas wishes and take photos!

This information is provided for informational purposes only. The Department of the Navy does not approve, endorse, or authorize these entities or their products/services.





# TURKEY Deals Await!

from  
**49¢** /lb  
Effective  
Nov. 11 – Dec. 1, 2025



commissaries.com



Valid on Shady Brook Farms and Honeysuckle whole frozen turkeys in CONUS, AK, HI, GU, and PR. Select Butterball turkeys are .97¢/lb at all locations. No limits or minimum purchase. Discount applied at checkout. Limited time only, while supplies last.

# Sale... Or

## HOMES/APARTMENTS

**For Sale by Owner:** Located in Rainbow Lakes on the main lake, two-story, 3 BD, 2 ½ BA, 3,500 sq ft home with large double garage. Fireplace with gas logs upstairs and downstairs. Lots of storage space in the attic, basement kitchenette, boathouse, gazebo, seawall and deck. All appliances and large generator remain. Call 601-917-7568.

**For Rent:** 3 BD/2 BA. West Lauderdale School District. No HUD, Renter is responsible for all utilities, 1 year lease, \$1700 a month, \$1700 deposit. Contact 662-694-1696

**For Rent:** 2 BD/1 BA, 600 sq. ft. Rent is \$1275/Month with a \$1275 Security Deposit. Rent includes an 8x11 Storage Unit, In Unit Stackable Washer/Dryer, granite countertops and Stainless Steel appliances. Pets are negotiable. No Smoking. Contact Rhonda at 601-488-1963

**For Rent:** 3 BD/2 BA, 1100 Sq. Ft. Rent is \$1425/Month with a

\$1425 Security Deposit. Rent includes an 8x11 Storage Unit, In Unit Stackable Washer/Dryer, granite countertops and Stainless Steel appliances. Pets are negotiable. No Smoking. Contact Rhonda at 601-488-1963

**For Rent:** 2 BD/1 BA unfurnished home in North Hills. Available May/June. Call 601-504-5415.

**For Rent:** 3 BR/2 BA home in a quiet family neighborhood comes with all appliances (incl. W/D), and is convenient to NAS Meridian, schools, shopping, activities and major employers in the area. Outside, there's a large fenced yard with patio and an attached 2-car garage with keypad entry. All electric with central AC/heat. Contact Leslie Turner, 601-527-4670 to view. See Zillow listing for more information and to submit applications. Rent \$1,750 per month.

**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 Sale:** 2275 sq ft 3BR/2 BA with attached 2 car garage built in 1996 on appx 1.15 acres. New roof and fresh paint in August 25. Seperate 25x30 detached garage. Covered front porch. Nice covered back patio with new ceiling fans. Located 5 miles to Clarkdale school, 5 miles from I-20 and a 20-25 minute drive to NAS. Contact: Marsha Boyken 601-917-3900 Hours

**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.

## MISCELLANEOUS

**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



# Amid China’s warship expansion, Navy’s top military officer touts sailor-first focus

By Annalisa Burgos  
Hawaii News Now

HONOLULU (HawaiiNewsNow) - The U.S. Navy’s top military officer is in Honolulu, wrapping up a 10-day tour of the Asia-Pacific. Adm. Daryl Caudle, chief of naval operations, visited U.S. bases in Japan, South Korea, Guam, and Hawaii, meeting with sailors and allies. He also toured South Korean and Japanese shipbuilding facilities, part of a strategy to expand the U.S. Navy’s industrial capacity as Beijing rolls out more advanced warships, including a new aircraft carrier. Caudle toured the barracks at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam Friday morning and talked with sailors about their living conditions. Faced with ongoing threats from China, North Korea and Russia in the region, Caudle believes a “sailor-first” approach is critical to ensuring resilient and combat-ready forces. “The quality of service, quality of life, quality of work, the way we actually build them, so they’re masters of their craft, is so important to the concepts of operations, so that we are the most lethal Navy every single day, until we get where our capacity

is back to where it should be,” he said. This as the Navy struggles to modernize an aging fleet and infrastructure, and America’s ability to build and maintain ships falls far short of the competition. “The trajectory of those threats and their emergent technologies and capabilities continue to grow at staggering paces. So we have to sustain our ability to keep up with that,” Caudle said. “We’re behind in shipbuilding, where that’s atrophied over decades in the United States, and it’s such an important part of our global presence here, our logistics here, our ability to defend ourselves and have the deterrence mechanism necessary.” “We just can’t overmatch with just size and capacity anymore. So our schemes of maneuver, how we counter target, how we do our targeting, how we do long range precision, lethal effects,” Caudle added. Changes are underway, but will take years. In the meantime, the Navy is working with shipbuilders in South Korea and potentially Japan to reduce bottlenecks and fill in some of the gaps.

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE](#)



Photo by MCCS Elliot Fabrizio  
**Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Daryl Caudle and Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy John Perryman conduct an all hands call with Sailors at the Bloch Arena, Joint Base Pearl Harbor Hickam, Hawaii, Nov. 20, 2025. This visit marks the final stop on Caudle’s regional trip, which also includes Guam, Hawaii, and South Korea.**

## New bill seeks to exempt military pay from federal income tax

By Anastasia Obis  
Federal News Network

Two lawmakers want to fully exempt military compensation from federal income tax — a move that would deliver a significant pay boost for service members and mark one of the most sweeping tax changes for the military community. The legislation, dubbed the Service Members Tax Relief Act, seeks to eliminate federal income tax on all active-duty and reserve pay, including enlistment, retention and education bonuses and all special and incentive pays. The measure would go well beyond previous tax-exemption proposals, which largely focus on bonuses or specialty pays. In May, for example, a bipartisan group of lawmakers introduced the BONUS act, which would amend a section of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to explicitly exempt all military bonuses from federal income tax. “The bill builds on existing tax exclusions for certain military benefits and responds to long-standing concerns raised by troops, families and advocates who believe those who serve should not be taxed on the bonuses they earn in service

to our country,” Rep. Jen Kiggans (R-Va.), the sponsor of the BONUS act, said at the time. Similarly, the No Tax on Bonuses Act, introduced in April, seeks to exclude service members’ enlistment and reenlistment bonuses from gross income. Currently, service members deployed to combat zones receive tax-free income. In addition, most allowances that make up a significant portion of a service member’s total compensation, including basic allowance for housing and basic allowance for subsistence are tax-exempt. Veterans’ disability compensation is also exempt from federal income taxes. Together, these exemptions amount to roughly \$30 billion a year in foregone federal income tax revenue each year. Sen. Pete Ricketts (R-Neb.) and Rep. Abe Hamadeh (R-Ariz.), who introduced the Service Members Tax Relief act this week, are also sponsoring the Tax Cuts for Veterans Act of 2025, a measure that would amend Section 122 of the Internal Revenue Code to exclude all military retirement pay and veterans’ benefits from federal income taxes. This includes all retired and retainer pay under Titles 10

and 14, as well as all VA monthly benefits, including disability compensation and survivor payments covered under Titles 37 and 38. The two measures stand apart from prior proposals, as no recent bill has attempted a tax exemption of this scope. “It is pretty sweeping... and it’s potentially a very expensive proposal. Now, there’s a reason why Congress has, on a bipartisan basis, provided these existing tax exclusions for military and veterans benefits — there’s a wide bipartisan appreciation for the fact that if you served our country, put your life and put your body on the line — you’re receiving benefits that you deserve for that service...I think any proposal that costs tens of billions of dollars per year, Congress is going to scrutinize,” Andrew Lautz, director of tax policy at the Bipartisan Policy Center, told Federal News Network. It is unclear what strategy the sponsors plan to pursue — standalone bills often face political hurdles, and lawmakers frequently try to attach such proposals to larger legislative packages like the annual National Defense Authorization Act to increase their chances. “These bills are fiscally conservative in

that they offer relief through the tax code instead of new spending. It is a win-win; the exemption instantly improves take-home pay, while helping with recruitment and retention, which in turn keeps our war fighters strong,” Hamadeh said. Lautz pushed back on the idea that the bills are “fiscally conservative,” arguing that a dollar of a tax cut that isn’t offset adds to the deficit just as much as a dollar of new spending that isn’t paid for. “If you’ve got \$100 billion spending program or the \$100 billion tax cut, and you’re not paying for that — that is not fiscally responsible. Now, Republican lawmakers have shown a preference for cutting taxes over increasing government spending, and Democrats vice versa, that is an unmistakable trend. But in terms of the fiscally responsible approach here, I think the message we’ve sent to both parties is that if you’re going to have a large tax cut or you’re going to have a large spending increase, you should pay for it with offsetting either spending cuts or tax increases,” Lautz said.

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE](#)

## After 84 years, USS Arizona’s unknowns may soon be identified

By Claire Barrett  
Navy Times

Since Japanese aircraft sank the USS Arizona during the Dec. 7, 1941, surprise attack on Pearl Harbor, the battleship has remained in place under water, the watery gravesite to more than 900 sailors entombed within. The U.S. Navy, as with other sunken ships in the harbor, considers those entombed beneath the ship’s hull to be in their final resting place. The battleship suffered more loss of life than any American ship during the attack, its 1,177 dead comprising nearly half the 2,403 killed at Pearl Harbor. Of the ship’s dead, 277 of its sailors and Marines are buried in Honolulu’s National Memorial of the Pacific. The identity of 86 of those men remain unknown to this day. However, this past week the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency announced that it “will seek exhumation of dozens of unknowns from the Pearl Harbor attack once an advocacy group is confirmed to have reached the required mark in its genealogy work,” Stars & Stripes first reported. The issue was first raised in February

2021 when Kelly McKeague, the director of the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency, was asked during a Facebook Live meeting when the agency would disinter them. McKeague stated at the time that it didn’t make “pragmatic sense” to identify them. Rear Adm. Darius Banaji, the agency’s deputy director, also reported that the Navy has no plans to disinter the remains and try to identify them because there is insufficient documentation. Unlike the USS Oklahoma, where 388 previously unidentified sailors and Marines were disinterred from that same cemetery and identified in 2015, Banaji told The Associated Press in 2021 that the military has files on just half of those missing from the Arizona. That number was once again halved when it came to medical records. The Navy has the dental records for only 130 men who were aboard the Arizona. Some documents are believed to have been destroyed with the battleship. Others may have been lost in a 1973 fire at a military personnel records office, according to the AP.

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE](#)



Photo by Mengshin Lin  
**The USS Arizona Memorial is seen before a ceremony to mark the 83rd anniversary of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Dec. 7, 2024.**



**FFSC Hours:**  
**Mon.-Thurs.:**  
**0800-1630**  
**Fri.:**  
**0700-1530**

# N9 Nook

Check here to see the latest news with  
**Fleet & Family, Child and Youth Programs, & MWR!**

December -

25 Days of Holiday Spirit

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Notes
Letters to Santa Start Dec 1!	Christmas Tree Decorating Contest Begins	Gingerbread House Decorating Contest @ Liberty**	Join the fun, don't be late - deck your office, decorate! story Time @ Library	**Cookie Class @ Liberty	Tree Lighting	Breakfast with Santa @ Rudders	<b>Christmas Tree Decorating Contest:</b> Enter for a chance to win a \$25 Commissary gift card! Take a photo of your Christmas Tree and post it to our Social Media! Winner will be announced on Dec. 19th.
Take a ride or stroll so bright, to see the Christmas lights tonight!	Door Decorating Contest Starts @ Liberty**	Find a friend & come along, time to groove to Santa's songs!	sparkle bright, shine merrily - don your festive jewelry! story Time @ Library	Treat yourself it's quite the thrill, hot chocolate's made to warm and fill!	*NAS Meridian Holiday Party @ Lakeside Liberty Holiday Party**	Sleigh the day, self care's here to stay!	<b>Holiday Spirit Contest:</b> Enter to win a \$25 Commissary gift card! all you have to do is show the most Holiday spirit! Join in on as much fun as this calendar provides, and post your pics on our social media page! The person who posts the most, wins! Winner announced on Dec 29th.
Do a good deed and give where there is a need!	Last Day to Send Your Letter to Santa!	Cookies for Sailors Drop Off	Cookies for Sailors Delivery	Red and green, full of glee, an elf is what you'll be!	Winner Announced of the Christmas Tree Decorating Contest	Spread all the Christmas cheer, by telling a kind thing to hear!	
Share the cheer and leave your best Holiday memory here!	Why dress in fortune and fame, when you can dress like a candy cane!	No one's better, OWN that ugly sweater!	Christmas Eve!!!	Christmas Day!!	Santa's gone the morning's done, now enjoy the treasures won!	The season is through, it's time for you - to rest, relax, refresh anew!	
Out with the old, in with the fun! What's your resolution everyone????	Winner Announced of the Holiday Spirit Contest	Book Swap @ Housing Community Center	Gear Up For New Years! story Time @ Library	2026			

Questions about this calendar? Call/Email Kase at 601-679-2360 or kase.d.mcneils.na@us.navy.mil

\*NAS Meridian Holiday Party is Restricted to NAS Meridian Staff Only

\*\*Liberty events are open to single and unaccompanied active duty military personnel only

Instagram Facebook

Christmas Tree Decorating Contest

From Dec. 1st until Dec. 18th

To Enter:  
Take a photo of your decorated tree and post it to the FFSC social media pages!  
\*Scan the QR Codes to Post\*

Winner Announced on December 19th!

TWO CHANCES TO WIN A \$25 COMMISSARY GIFT CARD!!!

Join in on as much fun as the FFSC Holiday Calendar has to offer! Take pictures of your Holiday Spirit and post them in the comments of that day's prompt post! We look forward to seeing everyone enjoy the holiday festivities!  
\*Scan the QR Codes to Post\*

Winner Announced on December 29th!

Holiday Spirit Contest

From Dec. 1st until Dec. 28th

MWR GROUP EXERCISE SCHEDULE					NOFFS
All classes are FREE to authorized patrons. For more information call 601.679.2379.					Many Operational Fitness and Training Systems
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	
		5:05 Ruck Jenni			
9:15 HIIT Jenni	9:15 Lower Body Strength Jenni	9:05 HIIT Jenni	9:05 Upper Body Strength Jenni	9:05 FIT Friday (NOFFS Endurance Station) Jenni	
1:00 Circuit Training Jenni			11:00 Total Body Jenni		
	12:00 YOGA Ryan				NOFFS & COMMAND PT SESSIONS AVAILABLE BY APPOINTMENT

HIIT is a workout that consist of short energy burst followed by quick recovery

Total Body Strength: a workout that works lower and upper body and core

Lower/Upper Body Strength: workouts that use dumbbells, machines and free weights to increase muscle strength

Circuit Training: a workout that consist of multiple workout stations that are rotated through during the workout

FFSC Virtual Clinical Counseling

CONNECT to GET CARE

The Fleet and Family Support Center (FFSC) now provides in-person and virtual clinical counseling! Sailors and families can access virtual clinical counseling from the privacy of their own homes. Virtual clinical counseling is a nonmedical, clinical, short-term solution-focused service. It is available to individuals, couples and families.

To schedule an appointment, call 1-855-205-6749. If calling outside of regular business hours, leave a message. Your call will be returned within one business day.

www.ffsp.navy.mil

The Center

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