

Holiday Hours:

Commissary
 Nov. 21-23: 10 a.m.-7 p.m.
 Nov. 24: Closed
 Nov 25: 10 a.m.-7 p.m.

NEX Main
 Nov. 23: 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
 Nov. 24: Closed
 Nov 25: 7 a.m.-6 p.m.
 Nov 26-27: 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m.

Mini
 Nov. 21-23: 10 a.m.-7 p.m.
 Nov. 24: Closed
 Nov 25: 7 a.m.-7 p.m.
 Nov 26-27: 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m.

Galley
 Nov. 24: 4-7 p.m.
 (Open for all who live and work on the base. Cost is \$10.05.)

News Bytes

~ Click here ~
Environmental groups sue DOT over Mississippi road project

~ Click here ~
NASA capsule buzzes moon, last big step before lunar orbit

~ Click here ~
Parts of NY dig out after potentially 'historic' snowfall

~ Click here ~
Strong quake topples houses in Indonesia's Java; 62 dead

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'Devotion': Story of Mississippi's own Ensign Jesse L. Brown, the Navy's first Black aviator

By James Barber
 Military.com

"Devotion" is a big deal, mostly because it's the first big-budget studio movie about the Korean War since Gregory Peck starred in "Pork Chop Hill" in 1959. It's also a big deal because it's the first Navy aviation movie to be released in the wake of "Top Gun: Maverick," and the filmmakers successfully adopted many of the filming techniques that made that Tom Cruise movie such a thrill.

Director JD Dillard and his crew experienced a far greater degree of difficulty on "Devotion" because they did their aerial filming with some of the few Korean War-era vintage aircraft that are still able to fly. That's because the old planes are harder to maintain than their newer counterparts, and most of them have only a few more years in the air at best.

"Devotion" tells the story of the friendship between Ensign Jesse L. Brown, the first Black Navy aviator, and Lt. Thomas Hudner Jr., a Naval Academy graduate who became Brown's wingman. The aviators saw combat in the Korean War, flying Corsairs to provide air support for Marines fighting in the Battle of Chosin Reservoir in December 1950.

Hudner was awarded the Medal of Honor for his attempts to save a fellow aviator during the battle and spent the rest of his life honoring those who were lost during it. Brown is played by Jonathan Majors and Hudner by Glen Powell. Both men give powerful performances that honor the memories of the two aviators.

JD Dillard is the son of Bruce Dillard, a Naval aviator who was the second Black member of the Blue Angels and JD grew up around planes and military culture. There may have been no other person more qualified to make a movie about the Navy's first Black aviator than JD Dillard.

To celebrate the release of the movie, the Blue Angels invited JD for a fly-along at Naval Air Station Pensacola.

● **Devotion, page 4**



DoD photo by U.S. Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Alexander Kubitzka
 Director J.D. Dillard, Leading Actor Glen Powell, and other select cast and crew from the movie "Devotion" tour the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., Nov. 18.



U.S. Navy Photo
 Ensign Jesse L. Brown

"Devotion, an aerial war epic based on the best-selling book by Adam Makos, tells the inspirational true story of two elite U.S. Navy fighter pilots who helped turn the tide in the most brutal battle in the Korean War: Ensign Jesse Brown and his friend, LT Tom Hudner. Their heroic sacrifices would ultimately make them the Navy's most celebrated wingmen."

— Sony Pictures

Thanksgiving Feast



Photo by Penny Randall

The NAS Meridian Chapel will distribute 15 Thanksgiving meals including a turkey and several sides to military families this holiday week. The food was provided by Lauderdale Baptist Association.

Marine Corps Birthday



Photo by Penny Randall

Staff and students from Marine Aviation Training Support Squadron ONE onboard NAS Meridian celebrated the 247th Birthday of the U.S. Marine Corps with a cake cutting, Nov. 10. 1stSgt Leopoldo Bernardo, the oldest Marine present, and Pvt. Patrick McPeters, the youngest Marine present, were given the honors of the first piece of cake.

Eight aviators earn ‘Wings of Gold’ in November pinning ceremony

There was a naval aviator designation ceremony Nov. 18 onboard Naval Air Station Meridian.

Eight 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.”



LT Valentin Chivallier



LTJG James Davis



LTJG Susan Johnson



ENS Gildas Perrot

Golden Stick



Photo by Adam Prince

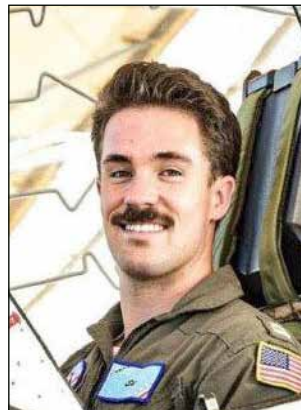
Roger Burke, left, President of the Mississippi Council of the Navy League presents ENS Gildas Perrot, with the Golden Stick award during a winging ceremony in the chapel onboard NAS Meridian, Nov. 18. The Golden Stick is presented to the student with the highest composite score during flight training.



LTJG Shawn Picciott



LT Cory Provence



LT Christian Stiker



LTJG Thomas Wickum

Awards Quarters



Photo by Penny Randall

NAS Meridian Awards Quarters was held in the lobby of Air Operations, Nov. 10. Those receiving awards included: Michael Phillips, Surnell Hines, Wendy Tullos, MA1 Darius Cummings, MAC Craig Palmer, AC2 Veronica Suarez Aviles, AC3 Riley Pfeiffer, ACCS Kathleen Arcan and ABHC Kenisone Leoso.

DOD survey asks participants to weigh in on Exceptional Family Member Program

By C. Todd Lopez

DoD News, Defense Media Activity

For the first time, the Defense Department will offer those enrolled in the Exceptional Family Member Program, also called EFMP, an opportunity to provide detailed input about their experiences. Feedback will be used to improve how the program provides services to participating families.

“It’s pretty exciting because it’s the first official DOD survey about EFMP,” said Jennifer Wong, a program analyst with the Defense Department’s Office of Special Needs. “It’s a phenomenal chance for families who are enrolled in the program to be heard directly at the DOD policy level.”

About 105,000 active-duty service members are part of the EFMP, which provides support to families with children or adult dependents who have special medical or educational needs.

Every service member with a family member enrolled in EFMP is eligible to take the survey, Wong said. Service members will receive an announcement e-mail containing a unique ticket number.

Service members with a ticket number will be directed to go to www.dodsurveys.mil and enter the ticket number to take the survey. It’s expected that those emails will be sent out on or after November 17, 2022.

According to Wong, EFMP ensures that, among other things, special needs are taken into consideration when a military family is moved to a new duty assignment.

[Read more, click here](#)

NPC updates retirement and separation procedures

By Chief Petty Officer Jason Perry
Navy Personnel Command

Navy Personnel Command recently updated timelines and procedures for submitting separation and retirement packages to make the process both smooth and timely.

Released Nov. 2, MILPERSMAN 1900-015 outlines what is required of both Sailors, their commands and the Transaction Service Centers.

Separation packages must be submitted no less than 60 days before the actual separation date or the start of terminal leave or permissive temporary duty, such as Skillbridge, whichever is earliest. Command Pay and Personnel Administrators can submit packages to TSC Norfolk as early as 5-9 months prior to a Sailor’s separation or retirement.

Meeting this timeline allows many actions, from completing the separation orders and issuing the DD-214 Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty, to

processing final and retirement pay and benefits, as applicable.

If a DD-214 is not finalized – that is, reviewed and approved by the Sailor – 14 calendar days prior to the Sailor’s detachment, TSC personnel may finalize the document by marking it “Signature Unattainable.” Doing this does not negatively impact the Sailor nor invalidate the DD-214.

Some things to keep in mind: Make sure the effective date (date of actual separation/retirement from naval service) is correct; ensure all key supporting documents are complete and accurate; and not allowing secondary required KSDs, such as medical and dental endorsements or command checkout sheets, to delay package submission.

The Command Pay and Personnel Administrator submitting the package can annotate in the Enterprise Customer Relationship Management software which documents are not yet available and an estimated completion date, if available.

The Skyline ~ Naval Air Station Meridian, Miss.

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SAFE Helpline: 877-995-5247
Suicide Hotline: 800-273-8255
Military OneSource: 800-342-9647
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FFSC Meridian: 601-679-2360
Chaplain: 601-604-2015
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Local Happenings

NOVEMBER

25: Full Moon on Fifth from 6-9 p.m. on 5th Street from 22nd to 23rd Avenue. Join the Arts and Community Events Society for a magical night in downtown Meridian. String lights and two giant illuminated moons set the mood for a unique block party that you don't want to miss. Alcoholic beverages are available, no outside beverages allowed.

27: Advent Wreath Making at Merrehope from 1-4 p.m. Make your own advent wreath. All ages are invited to participate. Tickets are \$10 (does not include tour.) Call 601-483-8439.

DECEMBER

1-31: Merrehope Trees of Christmas Mondays-Saturdays from 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; Sundays 1-4 p.m. at Merrehope. Enjoy the Christmas spirit as you tour these beautiful historical homes and see over 50 exquisitely decorated trees and holiday exhibits. Tickets are \$15 for adults; \$10 for seniors, military and students; call 601-483-8439.

6: MAXCreates: Ornaments from 5:30-7 p.m. at the Mississippi Arts + Entertainment Experience. Youth ages 10-15 are invited to these monthly art-based workshops. Join us to develop friendships, explore new art forms, and learn more about Mississippi artists. Free program. Registration required. Call 601-581-1550 ext 23.

9: Emmylou Harris at 7:30 p.m. at the MSU Riley Center. Few artists have achieved such honesty or revealed such maturity in their writing. Harris continues to share the hard-earned wisdom that comes with getting older. And, as always, she continues to resolutely look ahead. Call 601-696-2200.



Navy lays keel for future USS Arkansas

Senior Navy leaders, members of Congress, and shipbuilders gathered at Newport News Shipyard (NNSY) today to attend a keel-laying ceremony for the future Virginia-class submarine USS Arkansas (SSN 800), Nov. 19.

SSN 800 will be the fifth naval vessel to bear the name Arkansas. The original Arkansas was a Civil War-era screw steamer.

In 1902 an Arkansas-class monitor, one of the last monitors in the U.S. Navy, was commissioned with the same name. The third Arkansas, a Wyoming-class battleship, was commissioned in 1912. The fourth, which saw service from 1980 until 1998, was a Virginia-class nuclear-powered guided missile cruiser.

"Today is a momentous occasion. Not just for the shipbuilders who will pour their considerable skills into building this submarine, but also for the Sailors who will deploy aboard Arkansas and patrol the ocean's depths in service of

our nation and our way of life," said Rear Adm. Jon Rucker, Program Executive Office, Attack Submarines. "Virginia-class submarines, such as Arkansas, and their dedicated crews will ensure our Navy remains ready to deter maritime aggression, maintain freedom of the seas, and defend our country and allies well into the future."

The submarine's sponsors are the six women of the Little Rock Nine – Dr. Melba Pattillo Beals, Elizabeth Eckford, Gloria Ray Karlmark, Carlotta Walls Lanier, Minnijean Brown Trickey, and Thelma Mothershed Wair.

In a 1954 landmark decision, the Supreme Court ruled racial segregation of schools as unconstitutional. Three years later, nine African-American children were the first people of color to attend Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas, a previously all-white campus.

-- From Team Submarine Public Affairs

[Read more, click here](#)

Carrier Strike Group 5 concludes Keen Sword 23

Carrier Strike Group (CSG) 5 Sailors along with Japan Self-Defense Forces (JSDF) and Joint force U.S. military personnel, conclude Keen Sword 2023 (KS23), a biennial joint/bi-lateral field training exercise, around the waters of Japan, Nov. 18.

KS23 was designed to enhance Japan-U.S. readiness and interoperability while strengthening the bi-lateral relationship and demonstrating U.S. resolve to support the security interests of Allies and partners in the region. Keen Sword does so by providing militaries opportunities to train across a variety of mission areas in realistic scenarios, enhancing readiness, interoperability, and building credible deterrence.

Participating Navy units included the embarked staffs of CSG 5, Carrier Air Wing Five (CVW 5), and Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 15 along with the

aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76), guided-missile cruiser USS Chancellorsville (CG 62), and guided-missile destroyer USS Benfold (DDG 65).

U.S. Navy and Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) worked together on several anti-submarine warfare (ASW) and surface gunnery events designed to advance joint tactics between the Pacific partners.

"As Allies working together we demonstrate our collective resolve in facing shared maritime challenges," said Rear Adm. Michael Donnelly, commander CSG 5, Task Force (CTF) 70. "While this exercise has benefitted us tactically and professionally, it also is a powerful symbol of the strength of a force all committed to the same ideals that keep this region secure and stable."

-- From Petty Officer 2nd Class Askia Collins

[Read more, click here](#)

U.S. Naval Forces intercept explosive material bound for Yemen

U.S. 5th Fleet intercepted a fishing vessel in the Gulf of Oman smuggling lethal aid, including a large quantity of explosive material, from Iran to Yemen.

U.S. Coast Guard ship USCGC John Scheuerman (WPC 1146) and guided-missile destroyer USS The Sullivans (DDG 68) interdicted the vessel as it transited international waters. Patrol

coastal ship USS Hurricane (PC 3) and Navy explosive ordnance disposal technicians from U.S. 5th Fleet's Task Force 56 also assisted during a weeklong effort to fully search the vessel and verify the type of material found.

-- From U.S. Naval Forces Central Command Public Affairs

[Read more, click here](#)

Sale... Or

BOATS/CAMPERS/TRAILERS

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

2018 Mallard M185 Travel Trailer. Sleeps 4 with 1 queen bed/2 bunks.

Easy to tow at 3,575 lbs; only selling because military member is moving overseas. Great living quarters with lake view. Hooked up and ready to live in, including cables, hoses, plus the \$500 towing kit. Asking \$17,000. Call 360-434-3035.

AUTOMOBILES, ETC.

2018 Subaru Outback 2.5 limited, 12k miles; Subaru safety features and warranties included.

Asking \$29k. Call 601-480-5100.

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

HOMES/APARTMENTS

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

home with washer/dryer, wifi, lawn service and water included. \$1500/month. Call 601-917-8594.

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

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

Call 973-876-5006.

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

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

MISCELLANEOUS

Service for hire: Dixie 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 Wednesday prior to publication.

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

● Devotion

Any movie fan can list dozens of films about World War II or the Vietnam War without much thought, but Korean War movies are few and far between. Dillard suggested a reason for that.

"It's sandwiched between two very loud wars. When you have a war like World War II, which is fully the same generation, but the lines of good and bad, ally and foe are just so much more clear," he said. "With the Korean War, you're starting a very different type of warfare and a very different political environment. There's a lot more gray, so it makes sense why history leans heavier on World War II. But Jesse and Tom's story was certainly one that just felt so unbelievable and needed to be shared with more people."

While "Devotion" is most definitely a war movie, the filmmakers really wanted to focus on character and the relationship between Jesse Brown and Tom Hudner. Dillard said, "Devotion is, of course, by definition, a war film. But in terms of the layering of the story, it was always more important that the war was the backdrop to the story of these two men and the folks around them."

"We would joke a lot that we wanted it to be more 'Shawshank Redemption' than 'Saving Private Ryan,' in that the fundamental drama of the film is the relationship between Jesse and Tom set against this backdrop of an inescapable conflict for them."

While Dillard said the relationship between Jesse and Tom is the heart of the film, I'd argue that its portrayal of the relationship between Jesse and his wife Daisy, is at least as central to the movie as Brown's friendship with Hudner.

Dillard agrees, and said his own experience as a military kid informed that part of the movie. "There's sort of an unfortunate adage, you hear it when you start the process of making a movie about service members," he said. "People tell you, 'If you need to get more action, just cut the family stuff.' The team on this film knew that we could never do that. To cut the family aspect out of this movie would cut the heart out of it."

The personal stories of Jesse Brown, his family, Tom Hudner and the other men who flew as part of their VF-32 unit are reason enough to see the movie. You can enjoy and be inspired by Brown and Hudner's story without really thinking about the details of how that story made it to the screen.

If you're interested in all the gritty details of how JD Dillard and the movie's crew managed to get vintage Korean War-era planes into the air and give audiences a real chance to see what the actual aviators experienced during the conflict, keep reading. We're about to dig deep into the movie making process.

But before we go there, let's fill everyone in on the difference between "in camera," "practical" and CGI. When a filmmaker talks about "in camera," they are saying that the camera captured an image of something that was happening in physical reality. Part of what was so magical about "Top Gun: Maverick" is how much of the flying footage was actual planes flying in the air. "Devotion" adopted many of the same techniques to capture vintage planes in the air.

"Practical" effects are images that are created to be captured by the camera. You can think of a squib explod-

Just my thoughts ...

By **Carnell "Dusty" Payton**
Public Works Division, NAS Meridian

I am sure that my day begins like so many of my co-workers and others that work onboard Naval Air Station Meridian, with the basic four -- wake up, drive, work, home, and finally sleep! Well, the other night as I sat in my bed flipping channels in an attempt to find something boring enough to put me to sleep, a movie advertisement popped up on the TV screen. It began by showing an African American Navy pilot zooming through the sky shooting down enemy planes! Wow, what an opening now that I am engrossed with this ad I was determined to watch it until the end of the movie trailer premier to find out the name of this movie!

Then over the TV screen pops up "DEVOTION" -- the true story of the first African American Naval Aviator Ensign Jesse L. Brown, as I sat in my bed I knew that I had seen that name somewhere on base but at that moment, it escaped my memory, then snap I recalled where! That's the name affixed to our newly named aircraft hangar building 2!

So, now my curiosity level is at an all-time high I had to know more about this person, what did he do? How does his story end? Like so many of us I too have ridden aimlessly by the hangar without a thought about that "name" on the building. Although there's a monument in a very prominent spot in front of the building it never dawned on me to make time to learn about the story of this first black aviator and the sacrifices he made during his service.

Once I learned more about the story surrounding Ensign Jesse L. Brown, I was in total awe! It wasn't just the fact that he was born nearby and raised in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, or his relentless drive to earn his wings, no all of that was in fact a great story, but what truly moved me was his genuine friendship with his wingman, Lt. Thomas Hudner who happened to be white. Their "DEVOTION" to each other was special! Now, I will not give away the movie but of course, in today's society that wouldn't mean much however during the turbulent 1950s, it was a big deal. Lt. Hudner and Ensign Brown's "DEVOTION" to their friendship and one another both as shipmates, wingmen, and friends moved me deeply.

It made me take a step back and say "Wow" how could I be so oblivious to such dedication and history right in front of my face? As a veteran I understand the grind and sacrifices our military members make every day, but I also felt compelled to speak out to my fellow shipmates about the importance of learning the history that surrounds us every day you never know what kind of interesting story lies ahead.

So, the next time your walk past a monument, or you're curious why a building is named after a particular service member, make the effort to learn more, I did and I am better for the knowledge and will definitely be more appreciative of those sacrifices as I conduct business at the Ensign Jesse L. Brown Memorial Hangar.

ing fake blood in a movie shootout as a practical effect. Filmmakers also use the term interchangeably with "in camera" sometimes, and that's what JD will be doing here.

Finally CGI is computer-generated imagery. Most of the action in a Marvel movie was created inside computers after actors were filmed in front of a green screen that allows techs to paint in the background later. There are some CGI effects in "Devotion," but they're used to flesh out backgrounds and create additional planes in a squadron. The planes near the front of the frame are almost always real.

Dillard feels that his childhood experiences watching movies with his father were a huge influence on his work. "I have more than 30 years of movie watching with my dad sitting next to me leaning over and saying, 'That's not how those planes move. It's not what it looks like, it's not what it feels like,'" said Dillard. "When I came on board, one of the first things that I wanted to do was establish that we had to put as much of this in camera as possible. We had to shoot as much of this for real as we can, because the audience is smart."

"The folks that really care about aviation and this era are going to know. The first thing we did was try to source the aircraft. Since these planes are 70 to 80 years old, if not older in certain cases, finding them is difficult," he said. "I'm not positive but I think there are like 12-ish Corsairs still flying. At the height of production, we had six of them."

Dillard described the way they mapped out the aerial scenes, and the experience sounds a lot like what you did when playing with model planes as a kid. "It's a slow, meticulous process of first rehearsing first with planes on a stick with an iPhone to set the shots," said Dillard. "Okay, these planes are going to do this. It's like when you're 13, making zoom noises with your mouth as they're banking out."

"Then you essentially edit the sequence to map out the storytelling. That escalates to a 3D rendering of your backyard playground version of the scene," he continued. "Then we give those rough 3D renderings to Kevin LaRosa, our aerial coordinator, and his team. Then, shot by shot, we look at it. 'Okay, so we've got two planes and the left Corsair hard banks and the cameras are going to pan with that plane.'"

"One by one, they fly to altitude chasing the Corsairs, and a jet that has a camera mounted on the nose, and we shoot those scenes and check them off. It's a really insane and meticulous and tedious process, but it does give you the sense of being there with them," Dillard enthused.

"One thing I learned on 'Devotion' is that 'in camera' is not just a practical approach. I also think that it's an aesthetic. I want to say there are close to 1,100 visual effects shots in the film, so it's not to say that there are no CGI in 'Devotion,' but I think that you can approach the film with an aesthetic of 'in camera' where it's okay to realize that the camera's only going to do what cameras can do. You can make the action happening closest to camera practical. Where there's less fidelity and you can't quite see as well, the action can be CG. There's a way to build and shoot and light things to be motivated by an 'in camera' aesthetic, even if, in actuality, you are using visual effects."

Holiday musings: Turkey soup and other hazards

I never buy a Thanksgiving turkey that feeds my family. I buy one so big, it could feed the entire neighborhood. When a ten-pounder will do, I buy twenty. When twenty pounds is enough for Thanksgiving dinner, sandwiches and a casserole or two, I select a gargantuan bird that barely fits in the oven.

My motivation is not gluttony, but rather, a need to be resourceful. As a military spouse, I've always enjoyed the challenge of making my family happy within our limited military budget. Other than one awful mud-splattered camping trip, a few bizarre pre-PCS meals, and the time my daughter broke her arm on a questionable playset I procured for free from our neighbors, my efforts to creatively satisfy my family inside the bounds of our modest resources were generally a smashing success.

COLUMN



Molinari

However, there was one Thanksgiving several years ago when leftover turkey became hazardous to my health.

It was Monday morning after Thanksgiving, and I'd just dropped my husband, Francis, at the airport for TDY to Bahrain. I wondered what to make the kids for dinner. In the four days since Thanksgiving, I'd already cooked leftover turkey tetrazzini, turkey pot pie, and turkey enchiladas. They'd begun to complain, but I still had turkey bones and meat in our fridge.

Waste not want not.

However, it was a busy Monday. I had to walk the dog, get a mammogram, swing by the commissary, do laundry, iron dress shirts, start my column, return emails, balance the checkbook, take a shower and try to look human — all before my three-o'clock school pick up. I decided I had less than five minutes to throw a pot of turkey soup together before heading out to my 9:30 am mammogram appointment.

I chopped onions and carrots in flash, sautéing them in a pan alongside the pot of simmering turkey bones. Next, I plopped four celery ribs down and began slicing. I was coming to the end of the bunch when, shshshwing!

The very tip of my thumb lay neatly on the cutting board.

Slow-motion, controlled panic ensued. My uncut hand grabbed the severed cap of flesh and placed it back on the tip of my thumb, albeit crooked, and unraveled paper towels to wrap my bleeding appendage. I flicked the stove off, grabbed my purse, and jumped into my minivan, mumbling, "it's gonna be fine, it's gonna be fine, it's gonna be fine."

"Hi, I'm here for a mammogram [nervous laughter] ... you're never going to believe this [nervous laughter] ... I just cut the tip of my thumb clean off," I jabbered to the lady behind the clinic check-in desk. Despite her look of utter apathy, the woman said a doctor would check out my thumb after my mammogram.

As the adage goes, you learn something new every day. On this particular day, I learned that it's nearly impossible to unhook your own bra strap with one hand. Like an awkward boy on prom night, I managed the task just before the technician came in to squash my bits and pieces between two glass plates. After several painfully humiliating images were procured, I was free to dress and attend to my bleeding thumb.

With only one of the three hooks of

my bra strap precariously fastened, I thanked the doctor for seeing me on the fly, then waited at immunizations for a tetanus shot. Four hours after entering the clinic doors, I left with an injection Band-Aid, wilted mammories, a cartoonishly-bandaged thumb, and a completely neglected To Do list.

Despite the chaos, I finished preparing the soup back at home, needing it more than ever. At dinnertime, I ladled the hot elixir into bowls, careful not to slosh broth onto my bandages, and placed them on our table with oyster crackers. The kids and I inhaled the salty steam in silence, blowing gently on spoonfuls.

"I can't believe you made soup from the rest of the turkey with all that craziness going on today, Mom," my compassionate child said with a slurp. "Mmmm," she murmured, "not bad, Mom."

In the grand scheme of things, she was right, it was not bad at all.

Lisa Smith Molinari's self syndicated columns appear on her blog, www.themeatandpotatoesofflife.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	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		

CAPTAIN'S CUP

★ ★ ★ BASKETBALL ★ ★ ★

REGISTRATION:
Dec 5, 2022 - Dec 23, 2022

LEAGUE PLAY:
Begins Jan 9, 2023
(Mondays & Thursdays @ 1730)




Register via IMLeagues
or Contact Kristen Tibbetts @ (601) 679-3384
for additional information




SKET RANGE
CALL (601) 679-2526




'Tis the Season Event

Annual Parade and Drop-in

DECEMBER 3 • 1000-1300 • HOUSING & McCAIN REC CENTER

SANTA WILL JOIN US FOR A CHRISTMAS PARADE THROUGH BASE HOUSING AT 1000. THE HOLIDAY DROP-IN AT THE McCAIN RECREATION CENTER WILL START AT 1100 WITH REINDEER GAMES (BOWLING & PUTT-PUTT), AN ALL DAY CHRISTMAS MOVIE MARATHON AND ARTS & CRAFTS. PHOTO OPPORTUNITIES WITH SANTA WILL BE AVAILABLE THE McCAIN RECREATION CENTER. TREES FOR TROOPS' CHRISTMAS TREES WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY PERSONNEL AND DEPENDENTS WHILE SUPPLIES LAST (MUST SHOW ID).





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Driving Range
CALL (601) 679-2526






MAKE A SNOWFLAKE
STORY TIME AT THE LIBRARY
NOVEMBER 30 • 1000



NAVYMWRMERIDIAN.COM

LETTERS TO SANTA
STORY TIME AT THE LIBRARY
DECEMBER 7 • 1000





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RUN RUDOLPH RUN
5K/1MI FUN RUN

DECEMBER 10 • 0800 • FITNESS CENTER PARKING LOT

THIS RUN IS OPEN TO ALL ACTIVE DUTY PERSONNEL, RETIREES, RESERVISTS, DOD CIVILIANS, THEIR DEPENDENTS AND GUESTS, AND CONTRACTORS WORKING FULL TIME ON THE INSTALLATION.

THE FIRST 40 REGISTERED PARTICIPANTS WILL RECEIVE A FREE RACE DAY T-SHIRT.

REGISTER AT THE FITNESS CENTER OR AT THE EVENT. CALL (601) 679-2379 FOR MORE INFORMATION.






CANDY LAND
CHRISTMAS PARTY
DECEMBER 9 • 1830 • LIBERTY CENTER

JOIN US FOR REFRESHMENTS, GAMES, MUSIC AND PRIZES!



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