Volume 60, Number 21

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October 13, 2022

News Bytes

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Social Security benefits to jump by 8.7% next year

~ Click here ~

Three Navy officers reprimanded in death of SEAL trainee

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NFL keeping watch on return of HBCUs to national prominence

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NASA asteroid strike results in big nudge

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Chapel hosts two Winging Ceremonies

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New events in area happenings



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Marine breaks Guiness world record

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Navy Ball 2022





Photos by Penny Randal

CAPT Robert Lanane, commodore, Training Air Wing ONE, is joined by PSSN Lauren Townsend, a member of the staff at Navy Reserve Center Meridian, to cut the traditional Navy Ball birthday cake. CAPT Lanane and PSSN Townsend were the oldest and youngest Sailors present at the ball. This year's theme was "On Watch 24-7 for 247 Years." RDML Andrew Mueller was the guest speaker for the event which was held at the Mississippi Arts + Entertainment Experience in downtown Meridian, Oct. 7.

Fire Prevention Week Oct 9-15



Photo by Penny Randall

Above: CAPT Brent Moore, NAS Meridian commanding officer, prepares to sign the Fire Prevention Week Proclamation as members of NAS Meridian Fire and Emergency Services look on. Fire Prevention Week is celebrated Oct. 9-15 and this year's theme is "Fire Won't Wait. Plan Your Escape."

Below: Sparky the Fire Dog high fives children at the Child Development Center during a Fire Prevention Week presentation by firefighters onboard NAS Meridian, Oct. 11.

Photo by Adam Prince





Newly opened NEX layaways will incur no fees

From NEXCOM Public Affairs

To assist with holiday purchases, NEX customers will not be charged a fee for any new layaways opened Oct. 1 – Nov. 9.

The NEX Layaway Policy allows for clothing, accessories, shoes and general merchandise to be placed on layaway for up to 90 days with equal payments required every 15 days until paid in full. Any single jewelry or watch item over \$500 may be put on layaway for 180 days with equal payments required every 15 days from creation until paid in full.

Computers, computer mon-

itors, computer software, software games, digital cameras, luxury shoe brands, "What Goes Around Comes Around" handbags, Luxe Gallery handbags, pre-owned Rolex watches as well as clearance and sale merchandise ending in .94, .96 and .97 are not permitted on layaway. Layaway cancellations will incur a \$5 charge.

Some NEX locations must limit the type or number of items permitted on layaway due to space constraints. Check with your local NEX for other specific details or visit mynavyexchange.com/nex/customer-service/store-policies.

NAS Meridian celebrates Domestic Violence Prevention Month



Photo by Adam Prince

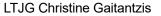
CAPT Brent Moore, NAS Meridian commanding officer, seated, is joined by representatives from NAS Meridian and various tenant commands during a proclamation signing ceremony in recognition of Domestic Violence Prevention Month in the administration building onboard NAS Meridian, Oct. 3.

Thirteen aviators earn 'Wings of Gold' in two pinning ceremonies

There were two naval aviator designation ceremonies, Sept. 30 and Oct. 7, onboard Naval Air Station Meridian.

Thirteen aviators received their "Wings of Gold" during these 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 Mark Green



LTJG Sean Lee



LTJG William Bryan



1STLT Maggie Chappell



LTJG Nathaniel Fox



LTJG Jonathan Mays



1STLT Rodi Popa



LTJG Jacob Ryan

Sept. 30 Golden Stick



Photo by Adam Prince

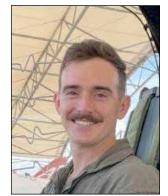
Roger Burke, left, President of the Mississippi Council of the Navy League, presents 1STLT Robert Sirks, Jr., with the Golden Stick award during a winging ceremony in the chapel onboard NAS Meridian, Sept. 30. The Golden Stick is presented to the student with the highest composite score during flight training.

Oct. 7 Golden Stick



Photo by Adam Prince

Laura Carmichael, left, representative from the Mississippi Council of the Navy League, presents LTJG Mark Green, with the Golden Stick award during a winging ceremony in the chapel onboard NAS Meridian, Oct. 7. The Golden Stick is presented to the student with the highest composite score during flight training.



1STLT Robert Sirks, Jr.



LTJG Charles Thurman



LTJG Chris Ventrano



LTJG Nicholas Williams

Admiral vists NMRTU



Photo by Adam Prince

Rear Adm. Matthew Case, right, Commander, Navy Medical Forces Atlantic talks with CDR Ed Brinston, officer-in-charge of Navy Medical Readiness and Training Unit, Meridian during a facility visit at the clinic onboard NAS Meridian, Oct. 6.

Energy Upgrades



Kline Gressett, Tyler Hagwood and Brad Freeman (electricians) convert T8 fluorescent lamps to LEDs in buildings around the installation; leading the way to meet the energy consumption reduction goals set forth by DoN Policy and for the "good" of mother earth.



$The \ Skyline$ ~ Naval Air Station Meridian, Miss.

Command Staff Commanding Officer ~ **CAPT Timothy B. Moore** Executive Officer ~ **CDR Jamie Epps** Command Master Chief ~ **CMDCM Craig Johnson**

Editorial Staff Public Affairs Officer ~ Penny Randall

Public Affairs Specialist~ Adam Prince

Hotlines & Helpful Numbers SAPR Victim Assistance: 601-604-303 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

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Local Happenings

OCTOBER

15: ACES presents: FEASTival on Fifth from 5-9 p.m. at Dumont Plaza. A cultural celebration of food. Participants will sample the favorite food of twenty countries, and be able to purchase servings of special treats from around the globe. Admission is \$15; contact markrd55@gmail.com for information.

22: Fall Festival from 4-6 p.m. at the 15th Street Baptist Church. Trunk or treat and games. Call 601-485-4113.

29: Holiday Extravaganza Gift Show from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. at Lauderdale County Agri Center. Largest gift show in the area with over 100 vendors. Call 601-480-1776.

NOVEMBER

4-5: Soule' Live Steam Festival from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. at the Soule Steam Feed Works. The 19th Annual Soulé Live Steam Festival gives visitors the opportunity to see how things were made in the early 20th century. Admission adults-\$10; child/student-free; call 601-693-9905.

5: Singing Brakeman Century Ride from 7 a.m.-5 p.m. at City Hall. Join the Jimmie Rodgers Foundation for the 2nd annual "Singing" Brakeman Century Ride" as we ride or race the beautiful countryside from Meridian to Philadelphia. Tickets are \$35 and up; call 601-938-7427.

Check these out!





U.S., UK Navies conduct unmanned exercise in Arabian Gulf

Naval forces from the United States and United Kingdom conducted a bilateral exercise in the Arabian Gulf, Oct. 7, which featured the use of unmanned systems and artificial intelligence to enhance maritime monitoring by crewed ships and operators ashore.

The one-day exercise, called Phantom Scope, occurred in international waters off the coast of Bahrain with forces from U.S. 5th Fleet and the UK Royal Navy. Three Saildrone Explorer unmanned surface vessels (USVs) participated alongside guided-missile destroyer USS Delbert D. Black (DDG 119), fast response cutter USCGC Robert Goldman (WPC 1142) and Royal Navy mine countermeasures vessels HMS Chiddingfold

(M37) and HMS Bangor (M109).

"Putting more eyes out on the water enhances our picture of the surrounding seas and enables us to position our crewed ships to react more rapidly," said Vice Adm. Brad Cooper, commander of U.S. Naval Forces Central Command, U.S. 5th Fleet and Combined Maritime

During the exercise, unmanned and artificial intelligence systems operated in conjunction with crewed ships and naval command centers ashore in Bahrain. Sensors from unmanned vessels were able to locate and identify training aides in the water and relay visual depictions to the command centers.

-- From U.S. Naval Forces Central Command

Read more, click here

Gerald R. Ford Carrier Strike Group departs for first deployment

The first-in-class aircraft carrier USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78), flagship of the Gerald R. Ford Carrier Strike Group (GRFCSG), departed from Naval Station Norfolk on its first deployment to conduct operations and training exercises alongside NATO allies and partners throughout the Atlantic Ocean, Oct. 4.

This deployment is an opportunity to further advance the operational capabilities of the Ford and demonstrate the advantages that Ford and Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 8 bring to the future of naval aviation, to the region and to our allies and partners," said Rear Adm. Greg Huffman, commander of Carrier Strike Group (CSG) 12. "Now more than ever, it is increasingly important for the United States Navy to reinforce our relationships with our allies and partners as we contribute to promote a peaceful, stable, and conflict-free Atlantic region."

Innovation and interoperability are the key focal points of the GRFCSG's deployment, allowing allied and partner nations to strengthen the collective defense of the Atlantic as well as to mature integration for future operations.

"USS Gerald R. Ford is going to sail on the high seas with our partners," said Capt. Paul Lanzilotta, Ford's commanding officer. "We want interoperability, we want interchangeability with our partners. Our NATO partners that are sailing with us - we're going to work with them every day, every night."

> -- From USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78) Public Affairs

Read more, click here

U.S. Coast Guard ship seizes \$48 million in drugs in Middle East

A U.S. Coast Guard fast response cutter seized an estimated \$48 million worth of drugs from a fishing vessel while patrolling the Gulf of Oman, Oct.

While operating in support of Combined Task Force (CTF) 150, USCGC Glen Harris (WPC 1144) seized 5,000 kilograms of hashish and 800 kilograms of methamphetamine as the fishing vessel transited international waters.

CTF 150, led by the Royal Saudi Navy, is one of four task forces under the Combined Maritime Forces (CMF), the world's largest multinational naval

partnership.

Glen Harris previously interdicted another fishing vessel Aug. 30 while patrolling the Gulf of Oman. The interdiction led to CTF 150 seizing 2,980 kilograms of hashish and 320 kilograms of amphetamine tablets worth \$20 mil-

This followed two earlier Glen Harris seizures of heroin, methamphetamine and amphetamine pills worth \$28 million in the same body of water in

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

Read more, click here

BOATS/CAMPERS/TRAILERS

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 \$16,800 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.

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 https://www.facebook.com/marketplace/ item/851262408853834/

For Sale: 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 vard. Convenient to shopping and base. \$139K. Call 601-513-3395 or 601-227-1870

MISCELL ANEOUS

Service for hire: Dixie Lawn LLC, lawn care in Meridian. Call 850-376-4499. Military owned com-

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



Photo by Cpl. Mitchell Austin

U.S. Marine Corps Cpl. Nahla Beard, an Air Traffic Controller with Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron, attempts a Guinness world record at Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, Japan. Cpl. Beard won the Guinness world record for most chest-to-ground burpees in one minute.

Marine air traffic controller achieves Guinness world record at MCAS Iwakuni

By Cpl. Mitchell Austin

Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, Japan

"Don't let your accomplishments define you. If you let one define you, then you will become that very thing forever. Always keep climbing for more," said U.S. Marine Corps Sgt. Nahla

Beard has been stationed at Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, Japan since 2019. Beard is of Iranian descent; her parents emigrated from Iran to the U.S. when they were in their 20's to start a new life in California.

She is now an Air Traffic Control supervisor with Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron who values physical fitness and is routinely setting new goals for herself and her fellow Ma-

"I wasn't always into physical fitness," said Beard. "Just basic levels that were required of me, but during my second year in the military I hurt my back pretty badly which took almost nine months to recover from. When I felt like I was back at a hundred percent, I really started getting into fitness so I would avoid getting injured again."

She started by putting more effort into aerobic physical training sessions that furthered her cardiovascular ability, with an emphasis on stretching afterward, which she says is something that some service members neglect from

"It's not all about running and doing max pull-ups" Beard said. "In my experience, people don't really take the time to have PTs that are dedicated to mobility and stretching."

When Beard was a corporal, she led her shop in a PT program where they worked on their mobility and stretching. In a few weeks' time, her Marines improved in their physical capabilities drastically and became significantly more proficient in their annual physical fitness evalu-

She continues to focus on her agility and aerobic drills in order to improve her abilities and her resilience to injury, driven by a desire to never be in a physical slump for a long period

Her motivation to stay free from injury eventually culminated in a desire to push herself to the apex of her abilities.

Read more, click here





Relationship rhumba with my Roomba

Before I sit down to write my column,

on my Roomba robot vacuum cleaner with my toe. It wakens and emits a series of beeps before backing off its docking station and fastidiously following my unspoken orders. There's something comforting about the

I tap the button

soft whirr of its motor rambling, bumping and pivoting around

my house.



COLUMN

My Roomba inevitably gets stuck under the buffet and calls out "Error!" for my assistance. After coming to its rescue, I plop onto our couch with a sense of security. "Things are being taken care of," I think to myself.

Moby, our yellow lab, disagrees. While sitting at my feet, he side-eyes the suspicious object traversing our foyer, sucking up tiny tumbleweeds of carpet fuzz, dirt, and dog hair. It soon enters the family room, making a beeline for my Birkenstocks. Just as I take a sip of my pumpkin spiced coffee, Moby leaps onto the couch beside me.

"Moby, it won't hurt you, you block head!" I exclaim, grimacing at the fresh stain on my cotton sweater.

If you don't own a robot vacuum cleaner, you probably find this scenario somewhat odd. You're probably wondering why any sane person would assign human personality traits to a simple household appliance. I may be crazy for forming an emotional relationship with my Roomba, but I am not alone.

Over 40 million people around the world have purchased Roomba robot vacuum cleaners since an MIT professor and two dweeby students invented them two decades ago, not to mention others who bought robot vacuums made by competitor brands. Researchers have found that human owners tend to personify their robot vacuums, assigning them as male or female (we believe our Roomba is nonbinary), giving them names (my favorites: Meryl Sweep, Rosie, Lurch, Optimus Grime, Vlad the Inhaler, Dirty Hairy, Alice and Dustbin Bieber), and forming emotional bonds (one owner even introduced his Roomba to his parents as his new girlfriend).

Roombas have made their way into

our hearts and pop culture, as evidenced by internet videos of Roombas terrifying dogs and transporting cats, and recurring "Parks and Recreation" sitcom character "DJ Roomba." However, many robots are portrayed as scary machines programmed to kill, like HAL, Terminator, and Ultron. No wonder there are disturbing internet posts of Roombas strapped with knives and chain saws, with captions like "Alexa, intruder alert, release the Roomba!"

Speaking of Alexa, Amazon's WiFiconnected smart speaker is not to be trusted. I refuse to upgrade my 600-series Roomba to a WiFi-capable model which can scan, map and memorize my home's interior layout and communicate with Alexa for optimal cleaning. My old school Roomba can't receive commands from our Alexa, which of course, prevents them from conspiring to kill me and conquer the human race. I'd much rather have my dim-witted Roomba bouncing blindly against my furniture and leaving swaths of dirty floors in its wake than risk robot world domination.

My phone, television, computer, microwave, refrigerator, thermostat, toothbrush and thermostat are WiFi connected, but unlike my Roomba, they can't move around the house. I certainly don't want my mobile Roomba to buddy up with Alexa, turn against me, and become a human battering ram.

"Police are looking into the mysterious death of housewife Lisa Molinari, who was found fatally pummeled on the kitchen floor of her home on Wednesday. No suspects have been named in the case; however, the medical examiner identified what appeared to be miniature tire marks on the victim's body. No witnesses have come forth to make statements, although it was reported that an Alexa device on the victim's kitchen windowsill emanated an evil snicker..."

As I sit on my couch tapping away at my laptop, I hear my Roomba emit a familiar sing-song tune, indicating that it has finished its task and returned obediently to its docking station. I'm not sure if my robot is good or evil, male or female, threatening or harmless, high tech or low budget. All I know is that it sucked up a helluva lotta dog hair while I wrote this column, and for that, I am grateful.

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

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

Library 679-2326 Rudders Pub & Grill 679-2780 CDC/CDH 679-2652 SAC 679-5252 679-2473 **School Liaison**

MWR Admin. 679-2551 **MWR Jobs Line** 679-2467

