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NAS Meridian hosts MLK Ceremony



Photos by Penny Randall

NAS Meridian Multi-Cultural Committee hosted the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Commemorative Service in the chapel, Jan. 17. The guest speaker was Bishop LaBaron Hedgemon, who is the author of "Funding Your Kingdom Vision" and senior pastor of Freedom Rock Cathedral in Meridian. The program also included singing of "Lift Every Voice and Sing" and a video presentation of noted African Americans in the U.S. Navy.

Statement by Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III on Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Seventy-five years ago this year, President Truman signed an executive order banning segregation in the U.S. Armed Forces. And nearly 60 years ago, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. delivered his immortal "I Have a Dream" speech on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial.

Today, the United States has the strongest fighting force in history. Our diverse, formidable, 21st-century military shows how much progress America has made toward Dr. King's vision of full citizenship for all Americans. We are proud and thankful for every patriot in our extraordinary, all-volunteer force. Our ranks are comprised of Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, Guardians, and DoD civilians from all walks of life, representing every color, gender, ethnicity, and creed from across our great nation.

These American warriors protect our country every hour of every day and defend U.S. interests around the globe. Today's U.S. military is simply the finest, most combat-capable fighting force that the world has ever known.

Dr. King's call to action still reminds us that the great American experiment of democracy, freedom, and equal rights requires us all to come together in a spirit of citizenship and service. Yet as a nation, we also know we still have much more to do to ensure equal rights, liberty, and justice for all.

As Dr. King famously said, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." As we commemorate this year's Martin Luther King Jr. holiday, I encourage all of us to reflect on how far we've come, but also on the important work that we have left to do.

Military spouses can now apply for 'game changing' employment program

By Karen Jowers
Military Times

More than 500 military spouses have registered for a new paid fellowship program, applying to be placed with civilian companies seeking full-time employees.

The Military Spouse Career Accelerator Pilot program is free to employers, and spouses will be paid by the Defense Department during their 12-week fellowships.

It's open to spouses of currently serving members of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force and Space Force, to include active, reserve and National Guard components. Spouses can find information about how to apply at the Military OneSource Spouse Ed-

"Military spouses have made it clear that meaningful employment is essential to their quality of life."

— Patricia Montes Barron,
Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense
for Military Community and Family Policy

ucation and Career Opportunities website. MySECO has a variety of resources and programs to help spouses.

DoD officials announced the launch of the three-year pilot program Thursday, but registration opened for military spouses on Dec. 23.

More than 800 spouses have initiated the first step of the registration process; of those, 500 have completed the registration, said DoD spokesman Army Maj. Charlie Dietz.

Military spouses typically move every two, three or four years, and their unemployment rate hovers around 21%, much higher than in the civilian community.

● Spouses, page 2

U.S., partners find success in mission to defeat ISIS

By C. Todd Lopez
DoD News, Defense Media Activity

Last year, U.S. Central Command conducted 313 operations in Iraq and Syria as part of the mission to defeat the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, also known as ISIS. More than 95% of those operations were in partnership with either the Iraqi Security Force or the Syrian Democratic Forces.

As a result, nearly 700 ISIS fighters were killed and another 374 were detained. No U.S. service members were killed as part of the efforts.

"This really speaks to the profes-

sionalism of our men and women in uniform and also the enduring commitment of the United States—from the strategic all the way down to the tactical level—to completing this fight," said Dana Stroul, the deputy assistant secretary of defense for the Middle East.

During a conference call Wednesday, Stroul told journalists the mission to defeat ISIS in Iraq and Syria remains a key priority of the national defense strategy, and it's one senior leaders in Washington follow closely. She also said that, despite successes, ISIS remains a threat.

● Syria, page 2



Photo by Army Sgt. Julio Hernandez

Soldiers with the U.S. Army fire an M777 Howitzer during an operational rehearsal exercise at Mission Support Site Conoco, Syria.



Photo by Lance Cpl. Manuel Alvarado

A Japanese Self-Defense Force CH-47 helicopter landing aboard amphibious assault ship USS America, during operation Noble Fusion in the Philippine Sea. The 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit regularly conducts training exercises with the Japanese Self-Defense Force to strengthen the capabilities of the U.S.-Japan Alliance.

U.S. and Japanese leaders chart path to strengthen 'cornerstone' alliance

By Jim Garamone

DoD News, Defense Media Activity

U.S. and Japanese security officials have announced a series of initiatives that will strengthen the alliance between the two nations and help guarantee a free and open Indo-Pacific.

Commonly called the 2+2 talks, U.S. officials reiterated the alliance with Japan is the "cornerstone" for security in the region. The talks further deepen an already close relationship, occurring as China becomes more assertive, Russia has invaded a sovereign nation and North Korea is developing nuclear weapons and the means to deliver them.

The talks are in advance of Friday's meeting between President Joe Biden and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida at the White House.

Both Austin and Blinken expressed unqualified support for the decisions manifested in Japan's new national security strategy, national defense strategy and their decision to increase defense spending. "There is clear strategic alignment between the visions of President Biden and Prime Minister Kishida," Austin said. "It is a shared commitment to uphold the rules-based international order and to strengthen resilient partnerships around the globe. And the essential U.S.-Japan alliance is at the center of these efforts."

The security and defense leaders also made a historic alliance decision to optimize American force posture in Japan "by forward-stationing more versatile, mobile and resilient capabilities," Austin said. "These actions will bolster deterrence in the region and allow us to defend Japan and its people more effectively."

Given the increasing complexity of the security

environment in the Indo-Pacific, "we've decided that the 12th Artillery Regiment would remain in Japan and be reorganized into the 12th Marine Littoral Regiment by 2025," Austin said. "We will equip this new formation with advanced intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance as well as anti-ship and transportation capabilities that are relevant to the current and future threat environments."

This is a new type of Marine formation that is nimble, quick and suited for the vast distances of the region. There are approximately 50,000 American service members based in Japan today. The regiment will consist of between 1,800 and 2,000 Marines but will not increase the overall U.S. presence in the nation. DOD officials said that the unit will receive the new Navy/Marine Expeditionary Ship Interdiction System, or NMESIS, as it is called.

The officials discussed the temporary deployment of an American MQ-9 Uncrewed Aerial Vehicle unit to Kanoya Air Base in southern Japan to increase presence over the East China Sea.

"We also discussed updating our alliances, roles and missions so that Japan can more actively contribute to regional security alongside the United States and other like-minded partners," Austin said. "In our meeting today, we strongly endorsed Japan's decision to acquire a counterstrike capability, and we affirm that close coordination on employing this capability will strengthen the US-Japan alliance."

The officials also determined that an attack "to, from or within space" could lead to the invocation of Article V of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty. This is part of the treaty being updated to reflect current trends: In 2019, the U.S. and Japan included cyber as a military domain that would be covered under Article V.

[Read more, click here](#)

● Syria

One advantage the U.S. has against ISIS is the relationships it has, not just with Iraq and the Syrian Democratic Forces, but also with partners around the world. Stroul said a recent trip to Finland to discuss the state of the fight against ISIS, demonstrated this.

"What was striking to me is the enduring commitment not only of the United States, but of our European partners, as well as New Zealand, Australia and others," she said. "Our partners across the world recognize the importance of this mission, recognize that ISIS still remains a threat, and are committed to this coalition."

Also of value are the advancements made by Iraq since the U.S. transitioned a year ago to an advise, assist, enable and intelligence-sharing mission there, said Army Maj. Gen. Matthew McFarlane, commander of Combined Joint Task Force-Operation Inherent Resolve. He said the U.S. continues to retain a presence in Iraq, at the invitation of the Iraqi government.

"In Iraq, things continue to improve in terms of their ability to demonstrate and actually execute independent operations as they're building capabilities, capacity and competence towards gaining an independent ability to conduct enduring operations, sustainable, enduring operations against ISIS," he said.

The general said much has changed in Iraq since the last time he was in the country in 2005. Baghdad, he said, is "alive and awake and illuminated at night," and the Iraqi military is engaged in operations that are part of the "Defeat ISIS" mission in Iraq, as well as providing security for the Arabian Gulf Cup soccer tournament being held Jan. 6-19 in Iraq for the first time in 44 years.

"So, [there is] progress and continued room to grow and build the capacity and capability, but [also a] very capable force," he said.

Stroul said the U.S. also remains committed to the D-ISIS mission in Syria, in partnership with the Syrian Democratic Forces.

"Not only are U.S. forces continuing to prosecute unilateral operations against ISIS, but we maintain a robust pace of partnered operations with the SDF, who are the only combat-credible, capable and committed partner present in northeast Syria today willing to join us in this fight," she said.

Of importance are the number of ISIS detainees—as many as 10,000—who are in the custody of Syrian Democratic Forces in northeast Syria.

"We know that ISIS continues to have its eyes on these detainees and sees them as the path to reconstituting and resurging across the Middle East, which is why we must stay the course [and] continue to work with the coalition in supporting the SDF to maintain custody of these detainees in a secure and humane manner."

● Spouses

Companies interested in applying to participate can learn more and sign up on the Hiring Our Heroes website, in partnership with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation. Through Dec. 31, 25 employers had registered to participate in the pilot program, Dietz said.

DoD officials expect the first cohort of spouses will be placed with participating employers this month. The pilot program will run for three years and applications will be accepted throughout those three years. Employers can also apply to participate on a rolling basis throughout the length of the program.

Spouses who are accepted will participate in a 12-week paid fellowship program with training and mentoring. They'll be placed with host companies that match their location, education and work experience, employer needs and other factors.

The goal is for the companies to directly hire the spouse. While there is no guarantee of future employment, the fellowship gives spouses the chance to show their skills and learn new ones.

The program "is a game changer for career-ready military spouses," said Patricia Montes Barron, deputy assistant secretary of defense for military community and family policy, in an announcement. "The department has partnered with Hiring our Heroes to provide robust and meaningful fellowship placement that could lead to full-time employment."

"Military spouses have made it clear that meaningful employment is essential to their quality of life," she said. "We hope this program provides them a strong start to solid employment opportunities."

The new program benefits employers by giving them early access to a highly skilled and educated work force, officials stated in their announcement.



The Skyline ~ Naval Air Station Meridian, Miss.

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SAPR Victim Assistance: 601-604-3037
SAPR Civilian Victim Assistance: 601-486-3122
SARC: 601-481-4274
SAFE Helpline: 877-995-5247
Suicide Hotline: 800-273-8255
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Chaplain: 601-604-2015
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Local Happenings

JANUARY

21: A Night with MCC Baseball at 7 p.m. at MSU Meridian Kahlmus Auditorium. Join us for a "Hot Stove" discussion with former Eagles, now NCAA Division 1 head baseball coaches. Individual tickets are \$50; and includes dinner and is open seating. You can also purchase an entire table for \$500 and get preferred seating, sponsorship sign and MCC gifts. E-mail chollad1@meridiancc.edu for information.

21: The Temptations & the Four Tops at 7:30 p.m. at the MSU Riley Center. Soul music royalty will grace the stage when The Temptations and The Four Tops showcase their staggering treasuries of classic American songs. For information, Call 601-696-2200.

27: Dinner Theatre @ The Threefoot Hotel at 6 p.m. at the Threefoot Hotel. Join us for a unique dinner curated by The Threefoot Hotel's Executive Chef, combined with an intimate private concert featuring Rockefeller Center's Michael Andrew & Sweden's Queen of Swing, Gunhild Carling. Seating is limited to the first 54 patrons. Tickets are \$150 per person. Call 601-693-2224 for reservations.

FEBRUARY

4: St. Paul & The Broken Bones at 8 p.m. at the MSU Riley Center. Paul Janeway's impassioned vocals drive the eight-piece band, still based in their hometown of Birmingham, Alabama. They drew their original inspiration from classic soul. Tickets to be announced; call 601-696-2200.

9: Jane Austen's Pride & Prejudice at 7:30 p.m. at the MSU Riley Center. Join us for an evening with the Aquila Theatre group. Tickets are \$20 adults, \$10 students; call 601-483-9810.

17: Masquerade at Merrehope from 6-8 p.m. at Merrehope. You'll enjoy live entertainment, the very best King Cakes ever, party fare . . . plus some fun Merrehope Mardi Gras surprises. It's BYOB with a \$10 admission at the door. Throw some beads around your neck, dress all out in Mardi Gras attire or come as you are. For information, call 601-483-8439.

18: Meridian Mardi Gras from noon- 6 p.m. at City Hall. Join us downtown event featuring parades, delicious food vendors, amazing bands, and MORE! Free to the public. Contact annagrace@mitchellcompanies.com.

25: Dr. Seuss' Silly Birthday Celebration from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. at the Mississippi Children's Museum – Meridian. Free to members, tickets are \$10, call 601-512-0270.

U.S., Bahrain launch annual maritime security exercise

Military personnel from the United States and the Kingdom of Bahrain began a 10-day naval exercise Jan. 15 in and off the coast of Bahrain.

Exercise Neon Defender is an annual bilateral training event that enhances collaboration and interoperability among the Bahrain Defence Force, Ministry of Interior and U.S. Naval Forces Central Command (NAVCENT). NAVCENT is headquartered in Manama, Bahrain.

"We are very excited to begin the new year training side by side with the Kingdom of Bahrain, a longstanding, strategic partner," said Vice Adm. Brad Cooper, commander of NAVCENT and U.S. 5th Fleet. Cooper also leads the Com-

bined Maritime Forces and the International Maritime Security Construct, two U.S.-led international naval coalitions hosted in Bahrain.

"Each year, our mutual commitment to regional maritime security and stability strengthens and expands, and this year is no different," said Cooper. "This is a great start to meaningful bilateral cooperation we will demonstrate together in 2023."

The exercise will focus on maritime operations, installation defense, expeditionary operations, tactical combat, medical response and search and rescue training.

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

[Read more, click here](#)

USS Forrest Sherman returns to Norfolk after NATO deployment

The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Forrest Sherman (DDG 98) returned to Naval Station Norfolk from deployment, Dec. 22.

Forrest Sherman's return to homeport marks the completion of a six-month deployment as the flagship for Standing NATO Maritime Group (SNMG) 2, commanded by Rear Adm. Scott Sciretta. As the flagship, Forrest Sherman led a multinational maritime group in operations throughout the Mediterranean Sea, ensuring security and stability in the region while supporting deterrence and defense of NATO territory. The ship conducted five multi-national exercises with NATO Allies and partners.

The crew traveled more than 37,000 nautical miles, safely navigated several

strait transits, conducted 36 sea and anchor evolutions, 570 hours of flight operations, one anchoring evolution, and 21 replenishments-at-sea, 15 of which were with allied oilers.

"This year presented extraordinary challenges and incredible opportunities for the Forrest Sherman crew," said Cmdr. Lawrence Heyworth IV, commanding officer of Forrest Sherman. "The primary mission of Standing NATO Maritime Group 2 is to provide NATO with an immediate operational response capability while enhancing and improving our interoperability and interchangeability with our NATO Allies and partners."

-- From Commander, U.S. 2nd Fleet

[Read more, click here](#)

NSW Forces wrap up SOF Engagement with Indian navy marine commandos

Naval Special Warfare forces deployed to U.S. Special Operations Command Pacific concluded a joint combined training exercise with the Indian Navy Marine Commando Force on Dec. 22.

The three-week exchange built upon the two forces' collective maritime capabilities and long-standing relationship.

"We are committed to operationalizing the U.S.-India partnership through enhanced information sharing, regional security cooperation, integrated deterrence and cooperation in new domains,"

said the senior team leader of the U.S. Naval Special Warfare unit. "This exercise provides us the opportunity of a common understanding of a shared working environment at sea through practical hands-on scenarios as a combined team."

The exercise included tactical training with weapons, close-quarter combat drills, military free fall evolutions, helicopter insertions, and maritime boat operations.

-- From PO1 Alex Smedegard

[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 mili-

tary 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.

New! 2012 VW Jetta Turbo diesel, Auto trans, 118-K Miles. Asking \$5,500; call 601-479-1456.

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

New! For Sale: 3BD/2BA Home with 2,560 sq. ft. Sits on 1 & 1/2 lots on dead end with privacy woods on 3 sides. Asking \$180,000. Contact: lucindawnichols@gmail.com, call 601-527-7829 or 601-917-6145.

New! 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.

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 shop-

ping 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.w.prince.civ@us.navy.mil



Photo by Sgt. Kealihilokaikeikio De Los

British Royal Marine Cpl. Charlie Walker, a GD training corporal with 43 Commando Fleet Protection Group Royal Marines, conducts a weapon familiarization test for U.S. Marines with Marine Corps Security Force Regiment on the C8 assault rifle during Tartan Eagle phase II, Otterburn Training Camp, Europe.

Tactics and training across the Atlantic

By Sgt. Kealihilokaikeikio De Los Santos
Marine Forces Command

Cpl Charlie Walker, a general duties corporal with the 43 commando fleet protection group Royal Marines training office, trained and oversaw U.S. Marines with Marine Corps Security Force Regiment during the cold two weeks of exercise Tartan Eagle 2022. As a corporal with 43 Cdo RM, it is his duty to assist and conduct training to the British Royal Marine Commandos as well as partnered forces.

“Training can vary from the jobs I have to do. With 43 Commando, it’s to protect the nuclear deterrence of the United Kingdom. Their role is primarily to support and maintain that, and they need to keep a high level of quality for their skill sets: fieldcraft, close-quarters-battle, vehicle maneuvers, etc.”

43 Cdo is part of 3 Commando Brigade, the United Kingdom’s high-readiness expeditionary amphibious force that divert, disrupt, delay, or destroy an enemy’s military potential before it can be used effectively against friendly forces across the Middle East, Africa, and the Caribbean. 43 Cdo works not only with the U.S. Marine Corps but with the Ministry Of Defence Police, the Atomic Weapons Establishment, and U.S. Coast Guard to name a few. 43 Cdo RM specialists are capable of warfighting in unique and complex terrain such as urban, mari-

time, and industrial environments.

“For exercise Tartan Eagle, I help the United States Marines train together, learn from each other, and help each other develop the Fleet Anti-terrorism Security Teams experience in a European environment. Giving them the opportunity to train in different countries and climates from what they are used to. There’s a lot of guys here from the desert it sounds like, and not quite used to the cold and wet. Gives them a different perspective on ‘soldiering’ then they might be used to as a FAST platoon member.”

U.S. Marines assigned with a FAST platoon have to be an active enlisted infantry Marine. FAST teams guard high-value naval installations, vessels, and nuclear weapons. Whilst expected to train for close-quarters battle and embassy reinforcement operations, these infantry Marines don’t engage in many typical training exercises associated with a majority of Marine Corps infantry. Fieldcraft, patrolling, and long-distance firing ranges are all infantry specific skill sets that 43 Cdo RM assists with training for the duration of Exercise Tartan Eagle.

The first week is a field firing package, starting out with simple static shooting, battle sight zeroing, and finding natural points of aim. on your squad level, trying to use your tactics, helping give advice on potential tactics that you can learn from us and vice versa.”

[Read more, click here](#)

AC1 Senten Reenlistment



Photo by Adam Prince

CDR Jamie Epps, left, NAS Meridian Executive Officer, presents a certificate of reenlistment to AC1 Colin Senten during a ceremony in the lobby of the Administration building onboard NAS Meridian, Jan. 17. Senten reenlisted for six years.



Can military kids cope with future uncertainty?

“So, Anna, what are your resolutions for 2023?” I asked my 24-year-old daughter while driving her back to New York City after her visit home.

“I didn’t really make resolutions,” she replied curtly. I knew this wasn’t true. Anna was impishly making me work for conversation. She’d likely made several very specific and elaborate resolutions for 2023. She’d always been a planner. As a child, she would fill small spiral notebooks with scribbled to do lists, garment sketches, redecorating plans, you name it. I’d squirreled every notebook away in her memory boxes, revisiting them every so often.

“How to make money this summer: 1. Sell my old Barbies; 2. Make lemonade; 3. Special errands,” one page read.

COLUMN



Molinari

“Rules for Secret Club House,” another read, penned by my diplomatic but bossy middle child, who had appointed herself the leader. Her rules included, “Don’t say bad things,” “Don’t be a litterbug,” “Always be happy,” and “Don’t disobey the leader.” My memories of Anna’s “Ideas for Secret Club House” list elicited a crystal vision of Anna with messy hair zipping around our cul-de-sac on her scooter: “1. Makeovers; 2. Ripstick/bike/rollerskates; 3. Music video; 4. Race downhill on bike; 5. Walk around with crazy sunglasses on.”

While rolling down I-95 in Connecticut, I tried a different approach. “Do you have goals for your fashion brand?” Anna couldn’t resist talking about her work in sustainable fashion design, so that question got her talking. She told me about brand deals, events and projects she had coming up. But when I asked, “Where do you see yourself in five years?” she clammed up again.

With her head down, she said quietly, “I don’t like talking about the future. The unknown stresses me out.”

I was hit with a sudden smack of déjà vu. Her younger sister, Lilly, had said the same thing a few years ago when

we were helping her deal with panic disorder during her first year of college. “I hate thinking about the future!” she would cry. Lilly lived happily in the moment, focusing on the fixed people, places and things she could manage. She never made to do lists and hated keeping calendars. College forced her to look into the deep, dark abyss of the future. Unable to cope, she transferred to nursing school where she could plan her future in manageable bites, moving from CNA to RN, to BSN and beyond.

We sat silent for a while, my car inching forward slowly in traffic due to an accident ahead. Anna’s head slumped back. She’d fallen asleep.

I tried to make sense of the realization that live-in-the-moment-Lilly wasn’t our only child to fear the unknown future. Anna, our strict planner, control freak and driven workaholic, did too. But why?

I remembered an entry from Anna’s first day of sixth grade after we’d been stationed overseas: “Being in middle school is not always fun like it sounds. On the first day, I got on the bus at 7:00 a.m. only with one friend. I could hear the loud noises and cussing of the older kids in the back. I felt scared - was I go-

ing to turn into them?”

A few pages later, Anna tried to control what lies ahead: “Every night, I pray that everybody would make the right choices. Life scares me, so do a lot of the people in it. ... I’m not going to let other people control my life, it’s mine. I’m going to do the right things and will protect myself and the people close to my heart.”

It made sense — military children develop anxious feelings when bombarded repeatedly with unknowns. I couldn’t help but wonder, did I buy into the widespread belief that “military children are resilient” when I should have better protected our kids?

“Anna,” I nudged my napping daughter awake, “we’re almost in the city.” She peered out the window at the Manhattan skyline and smiled, visibly excited to resume her young life. With pride, I realized, whether our children manage their lives day by day or list by list, they have learned to create their own destinies.

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	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


RACQUETBALL

Registration:
January 23 - February 3


Leagues begin:
February 6th & 7th

Scan QR Code to sign up or
call 601- 679- 3384 for more info





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Trivia Night

January 26 ♦ 1700 ♦ Rudders

Show off your thinking skills &
join us for a night filled with
trivia! Drinks will be available for
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January 22nd 1300 Liberty Center



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Days of School
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Join us on January 25th at
10am at the
Library to celebrate the
100th Day of School!



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JANUARY 2- MARCH 1 AT THE FITNESS CENTER

SHRED IS A MONTH LONG WEIGHT LOSS COMPETITION, WITH PRIZES AWARDED TO THE MALE AND FEMALE PARTICIPANTS WHO LOSE THE GREATEST PERCENTAGE OF WEIGHT/BODY FAT. TO PARTICIPATE, SIGN UP AT THE FITNESS CENTER AND PERFORM AN INTRODUCTORY WEIGH-IN. ADDITIONAL WEIGH-INS WILL BE PERFORMED ON A WEEKLY BASIS.



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