Volume 63, Number 20

Wings Over Meridian Air Show: March 28-29, 2026!

October 2, 2025

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NAS Meridian hosts Bells Across America for Fallen Service Members





Fleet and Family Support Center hosted the Bells Across America for Fallen Service Members ceremony at the Naval Reserve Center onboard NAS Meridian, Sept. 25. Bells Across America is a Navy Gold Star Program event that "ensures families of the fallen know their loved ones are remembered". During the ceremony names are called out and a bell is rung in tribute of the fallen. The parents of 2nd Lt Anthony Scardino, Army National Guard and native of Mississippi, were in attendance alongside



NAS staff and students.







Twelve aviators earn Wings of Gold in September ceremony

From Staff Reports

There was a naval aviator designation ceremony September 26 onboard Naval Air Station Meridian. Three aviators received their "Wings of Gold" during the ceremony.

The naval aviator designation ceremony 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 $_{
m the}$ rigorous of demands aerial combat and carrier operations earning each the title of "Naval Aviator" and the right to wear the coveted "Wings of Gold."

Ensign Theo Stanislas Anicet. French Navy, selected for E-2's and underwent Multi-Service Training Christi, Corpus Texas before training in Meridian. He carrier qualified in the T-45C on board the USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75) on September 19. Ensign Anicet completed Advanced Jet Flight Training with Training Squadron Seven.

Ensign Mikaël Beaumont, French

Navy, is a graduate of the Tristan Corbière Aeronautical School where he received a Associate's Degree Aeronautical in Maintenance. During Primary Flight Training. Ensign Beaumont was named to the Commodore's List. While in Advanced Jet Flight Training, he earned four Navy "E's" for bombing accuracy. He carrier qualified in the T-45C on board the USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75) on September 19. Ensign Beaumont completed Advanced Flight Training with Training Squadron Seven.

LTJG Courtney Julia Breen, USN, is a graduate of the Unites States Naval Academy, where she received a Bachelor of Science degree with distinction in Operations Research. LTJG Breen selected for E-2's and underwent Multi-Service Training Corpus Christi, Texas, before training in Meridian. LTJG Breen will continue training in Norfolk, Virgina, where she will learn to fly the E-2 Hawkeye. She carrier qualified in the T-45C on board the USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75) on September 20. LTJG Breen completed Advanced Jet Flight Training with Training Squadron Nine.

LT Manuel Cervera, Spanish Navy, is a graduate of the Spanish Naval Academy, where he received a degree in Mechanical Engineering. In the Fleet, LT Cervera was stationed on board the F-83 Frigate "Numancia". While on board the "Numanica, he deployed to the Horn of Africa as part of EUNAVFOR Operations Atalanta to contribute to Maritime Security in the Western Indian Ocean and the Red Sea. In 2023, LT Cervera was selected for Naval Aviation Training and began his Primary Flight Training at NAS Whiting Field with Training Squadron Three. During Advanced Jet Flight Training, he earned two Navy "E" for bombing accuracy. LT Cervera completed Advanced Flight Training with Training Squadron Nine.

LT Richard Thomas Fetter, USN, is a graduate of the Virginia Military Institute, where he received a Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering. LT Fetter is also a graduate of the Naval Post graduate School, where he received a Master of Science in Operations

Research. LT Fetter selected for E-2's and underwent Multi-Service Training in Corpus Christi before training in Meridian. He carrier qualified in the T-45C on board the USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75) on September 19. LT Fetter completed Advanced Jet Flight Training with Training Squadron Seven.

LTJG Jack Avery House, USN, is a graduate of University of Kansas, where he received a Bachelor of Science degree in Aerospace Engineering Physics. LTJG House selected for E-2's and underwent Multi-Service Training in Corpus Christi, before training in Meridian. He carrier qualified in the T-45C on board the USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75) on September 19. LTJG House completed Advanced Jet Flight Training with Training Squadron Seven.

Ensign Hugo Le Rolland, French Navy, was named to the Commodore's List during Primary Flight Training. While in Advanced Jet Flight Training, he earned four Navy "E's" for bombing accuracy. He carrier qualified in the T-45C on board the USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75) on

September 19. Ensign Le Rolland completed Advanced Jet Flight Training with Training Squadron Seven.

LTJG Benjamin Henry Luke, USN, graduate of is a University the Michigan, Ann Arbor, where he received a Bachelor of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering. LTJGLuke selected for E-2's and underwent Multi-Service Training in Corpus Christi, before training in Meridian. He carrier Qualified in the T-45C on oard the USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75) on September 20. LTJG Luke completed Advanced Jet Flight Training with Training Squadron Seven.

LTJG Patrick John O'looney, USN, is a graduate of the University of South Carolina, where he received a Bachelor of Science degree in Economics. LTJG O'Looney selected for E-2's and underwent Multi-Service Training in Corpus Christi,

• Winging, page 3

Golden Stick Award



Photo by MC2 Molly Tice

Mississippi Council of the Navy League President Joe Mercado has the honor of presenting the Golden Stick award to ENS Hugo Le Rolland, French Navy, during a winging ceremony in the chapel onboard NAS Meridian, September 26. The Golden Stick is awarded to the student with the highest composite score during training and sponsored by the Mississippi Council of the Navy League.



Anicet



Beaumont



Breen



Cervera



Fetter



House



Le Rolland



Luke



O'Looney



Rankin



Santos



Scully

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LOCAL HAPPENINGS

Oct. 2-5: Meridian Little Theatre presents "The Wizard of Oz". A magical journey perfect for the whole family. Join Dorothy, the Scarecrow, the Tin Man and the Cowardly Lion as they discover courage, friendship and the true meaning of home in this colorful, music-filled adventure that reminds us to appreciate our community. Shows are at 7 p.m. except the Sunday Oct. 5 show is a matinee at 2 p.m. For information, click https://www.onthestage.tickets/show/meridian-little-theatre/67f303846eebd40f57a98424 or call the Box Office at 482-6371.

Oct 3 from 6-9 pm.: Full Moon on 5th at 2211 5th Street, downtown Meridian - Featuring the band "Mojohand", lots of food trucks and fun for kids.

Oct. 4 from 8 a.m.-6 p.m.: Inaugural Plein Air & Urban Sketchers Festival in Downtown Meridian. Art is not what you see, but what you make others see. – Edward Degas "Plein-air" painting is painting in the "open air." Often the artist is painting landscapes. ACES is proud to launch the Inaugural Plein Air & Urban Sketchers Festival in downtown Meridian. Artists can register at https://www.acesmeridian.org/event-details/inaugural-plein-air-urban-sketchers-festival

Oct. 4 from 8 a.m.-noon: Earth's Bounty at The MAX, Downtown Meridian, 2155 Front Street. This seasonal festival features the freshest farmer's market produce, locally made products, plants, and more: kids' activities, live music, and special demonstrations throughout the season. Earth's Bounty is held the first Saturday of each month, April-November.

Oct. 7 from 5-8 p.m.: The Night Market at The MAX, Downtown Meridian, 2155 Front Street. Discover a captivating fusion of culture and creativity at the Night Market, hosted by The MAX – the Mississippi Arts + Entertainment Experience. As the sun sets, the market comes alive with local artistry, live music, and a tempting array of flavors from local food vendors.

Oct. 9 from 5-8 p.m.: Experience Art Gallery Crawl Downtown Meridian. Get ready for the vibrant arts scene of Mississippi's Queen City at the Downtown Meridian Art Crawl! This self-guided tour invites you to explore a curated selection of downtown galleries and art-supporting businesses. Pick up your official crawl card at the Meridian Museum of Art (628 25th Ave) to begin your artistic journey.

Oct. 11 from 8-10 a.m.: Mornin' Cars Cafe' @ Soule' was created to bring automobile and truck enthusiasts together at one of America's most interesting museums...Soule' Steam Museum. This FREE event will allow you to show off your car or truck...restored, survivor, hotrodded or a work in progress. Individuals and car clubs are welcome to participate. Come share a cup of coffee with us! This event is planned for the second Saturday of each month, March through October. Plenty of parking is available on the 18th Avenue grassy lot and along 4th Street. Call the Museum at 601-693-9905 or email soulelivesteam@comcast.net for more information.

Oct. 15 at 6:30 p.m.: FREE Screening of "Sinners" at The Temple Theater (Presented by The MAX). Set in Mississippi, sharing Mississippi stories and showcasing Mississippi talent, Sinners is the 2025 hit thriller that follows twin brothers in Clarksdale who've returned home to open a juke joint. The movie intertwines historical drama, social commentary, and horror with a Mississippi soundtrack that can't be beat. Join us at the historic Temple Theater for the Performing Arts (2320 8th St) for a free screening, then come to The MAX on Thursday, October 16, at 6:30 pm for a panel conversation. Sinners is rated R for strong bloody violence, sexual content, and language. Parental guidance is strongly suggested. Presented in partnership with Film Mississippi, Mississippi Film Society, Mississippi Humanities Council, and Downtown Meridian.

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.

Winging

before training in Meridian. He carrier qualified in the T-45C on board the USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75) on September 19. LTJG O'Looney completed Advanced Jet Flight Training with Training Squadron Seven.

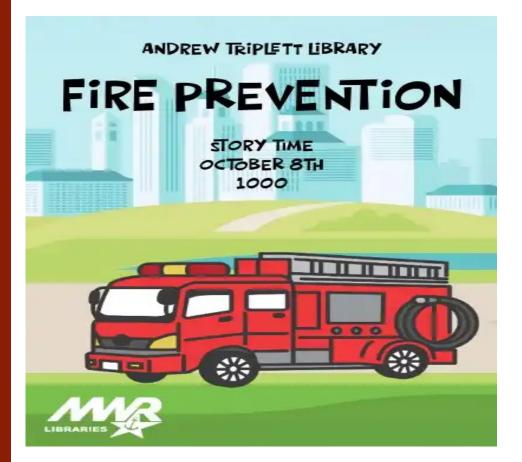
LTJG Paul David Rankin Iii, USN, is a graduate of Old Dominion University, where he received a Bachelor of Science degree in Computer Science. LTJG Rankin selected for E-2's and underwent Multi-Service Training in Corpus Christi, before training Meridian. LTJG Rankin will continue training in Norfolk, where he will learn to fly the E-2 Hawkeye. He carrier qualified in the T-45C on board the USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75) on September 20.

LTJG Rankin completed Advanced Jet Flight Training with Training Squadron Nine.

LTJavier Santos Garcia, Spanish Navy, is a graduate of the University of Alcala, where he received a degree in Computer Engineering. LT Santos Garcia is also a graduate of the Spanish Naval Academy, joining the Spanish Navy through the OCS program. In the Fleet, LT Santos Garcia was stationed at Naval Station Rota, on board the F-84 Frigate "Reina Sofia". While on board the "Reina Sofia", he deployed in support of EUNAVFOR Operations Atalanta to contribute to Maritime Security in the Western Indian Ocean and the Red Sea. In 2023, LT Santos Garcia was selected for Naval Aviation Training and began his Primary Flight Training at NAS

Whiting Field with Training Squadron Six. During Advanced Jet Flight Training, he earned four Navy "E" for bombing accuracy. LT Santos Garcia completed Advanced Jet Flight Training with Training Squadron Nine.

LTJG Cristen Carolyn Scully, USN, is a graduate of Pennsylvania State University, where she received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science. LTJG Scully selected for E-2's and underwent Multi-Service Training in Corpus Christi before training in Meridian. She carrier qualified in the T-45C on board the USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75) on September 19. LTJG Scully completed Advanced Jet Flight Training with Training Squadron Seven.



Sale... Or

HOMES/APARTMENTS

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 applianc-

es. 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 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

Pentagon awards contract for newest F-35s

By Stephen Losey navvtimes.com

The Pentagon on Monday awarded LockheedMartin a \$12.5 billion contract for nearly 300 of the newest F-35 Joint Strike Fighters.

The U.S. Navy said in a statement the contract modification will definitize $148\ \text{F-}35\text{s}$ from the 18th lot of the jets and add scope for the production and delivery of another 148 fighters in lot 19.

Monday's announcement builds on another lot 18 and 19 contract announcement from December 2024 worth \$11.8 billion. It brings the total to about \$24.3 billion.

Lockheed Martin will primarily build these jets at its Fort Worth, Texas, factory, and the company said it would start delivering them next year. The per-jet price increase will be less than the rate of inflation, Lockheed said.

"The F-35 Lot 18-19 contract represents

continued confidence in the most affordable and capable fighter aircraft in production today," Chauncey McIntosh, Lockheed's vice president and general manager of the F-35 program, said in a statement. "We are proud to support our customers and further solidify the F-35's role in enabling peace through strength." Twelve nations, including the United States, South Korea and Israel, now fly the more than 1,230 F-35s that are in service.

The Pentagon's contract announcements Monday also included a \$101 million cost-plus-fixed-fee deal to buy F-35 parts in advance that might face shortages diminished manufacturing sources.

Another contract to Lockheed, worth \$137 million, would pay for engineering changes to lot 17 of the F-35, as well as seek to reverse diminishing manufacturing sources.

The Pentagon also awarded Lockheed an \$11.6 million contract to redesign a



Two U.S. Air Force F-35A Lightning II's from the 48th Fighter Wing at RAF Lakenheath, fly alongside a KC-135 Stratotanker from the 100th Air Refueling Wing after receiving fuel over the North Sea, Sept. 4, 2025.

CLICK HERE FOR MORE

U.S. Navy to christen future USS Louis H. Wilson Jr.

From navy.mil

BATH, Maine - The U.S. Navy will christen the future USS Louis H. Wilson Jr. (DDG 126), during a ceremony at General Dynamics Bath Iron Works (BIW) on Saturday, September 27, at 10:30 a.m. (EST).BATH, Maine

The U.S. Navy will christen the future USS Louis H. Wilson Jr. (DDG 126), during a ceremony at General Dynamics Bath Iron Works (BIW) on Saturday, September 27, at 10:30 a.m. (EST). The principal address will be delivered by Commandant of the Marine Corps, Gen. Eric Smith; Additional speakers include Governor of Maine, Janet Mills; U.S. Senator of Maine Angus King; Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development, and Acquisition, Jason Potter; Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Integration of Capabilities and Resources, Vice Adm. Brad Skillman; Medal of Honor Recipient, Col. Harvey C. Barnum, Jr.; and President of General Dynamics Bath Iron Works, Chuck Krugh.

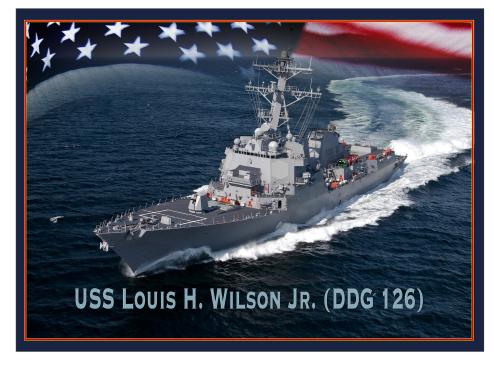
In a time-honored tradition, ship sponsors Janet Wilson Taylor, daughter of the namesake and Susan J. Rabern, former Assistant Secretary of the Navy for

Financial Management and Comptroller, will christen the ship by breaking a bottle of sparkling wine across the bow.

The ship is named after Gen. Louis Hugh Wilson Jr., a World War II and Vietnam War veteran who was awarded the Medal of Honor for his heroism during the Battle of Guam. Following his service in Vietnam, he served as the 26th Commandant of the Marine Corps from 1975 to 1979.

The christening of DDG 126 symbolizes the Navy's 250-year commitment to innovation and maritime dominance. From seabed to space, the Navy delivers power for peace - always ready to fight and win. This milestone marks the Navy's enduring legacy and commitment to shaping the future of maritime power.

Arleigh Burke-class Flight III destroyers feature the AN/SPY-6(V)1 Air and Missile Defense Radar and incorporate upgrades to the electrical power and cooling capacity plus additional associated changes to provide enhanced warfighting capability to the fleet. Future destroyers Harvey C. Barnum Jr. (DDG 124), Patrick Gallagher (DDG 127), William Charette (DDG 130), Quentin Walsh (DDG 132), John E. Kilmer (DDG 134), Richard G. Lugar (DDG 136), and J. William Middendorf (DDG 138) are also in production at BIW.



A graphic representation of the future USS Louis H. Wilson Jr. (DDG 126).

CLICK HERE FOR MORE

George E. Hardy, One of the Last Surviving Tuskegee Airmen, Dies at 100

From The National WWII Museum

The National WWII Museum and dear friend George Hardy, who passed away this week at age 100. Hardy was one of the last surviving members of the trailblazing Tuskegee Airmen.

Hardy's passing was announced Friday by the Tuskegee Airmen, Inc. National Office.

"His legacy is one of courage, resilience, tremendous skill and against perseverance racism, prejudice, and other evils," the organization wrote in the announcement. "We are forever grateful for his sacrifice and will hold dear to his memory."

Hardy was born in 1925 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, the second-oldest child of seven. When the Japanese forces attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, Hardy remembered being upstairs doing homework when he heard the radio broadcast of the Eagles football game being interrupted to share the

His older brother had joined the US Navy in June and was serving as mourns the loss of WWII veteran a cook on a destroyer in the North Atlantic. In 1943, after turning 17 years old, Hardy initially wanted to ioin the Navy to be with his brother. but his father refused to sign the necessary papers due to racial barriers in military roles.

Hardy later joined the US Army Air Forces, completing the Aviation Cadet Training Program at Tuskegee Army Air Field in 1944. Trained as a single-engine pilot and commissioned as a Second Lieutenant, Hardy deployed in early 1945 to Italy joining the African American 99th Fighter Squadron, 332nd Fighter Group. He flew 21 combat missions over Germany and occupied Europe piloting P-51 Mustang aircraft, often escorting heavy bombers. The Tuskegee Airmen, Inc. National Office said that Hardy was "the youngest Red Tail fighter pilot at 19 to fly his first combat sortie over Europe."

In his oral history interview with the Museum in 2014, Hardy recalled one mission where his plane was struck by small arms fire during a strafing run. He said he knew his plane was hit when he saw a flash of light coming through the cockpit floor, which was usually dark.

"What happened was something came through and splintered the aluminum on one side of the plane," he recalled. "And light started coming through on my feet."

Such hits could be dangerous, and Hardy recalled that "we lost a number of people on strafing missions.

Following World War II, Hardy flew 45 combat missions during the Korean War and 70 during the Vietnam War. He also earned a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering and a master's in systems engineering at the US Air Force Institute of Technology in Dayton, Ohio, and worked on the Department of Defense's first worldwide military telephone system. Hardy retired from the US



FFSC Hours

Mon-Thurs-0800=1630

Fife 0700=1530

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





FFSC Events

FFSC showed support for Fireman/EMT and Law **Enforcement Suicide Awareness Day's to base fire** and law enforcement personnel by delivering popcorn bags and information cards. Throughout October Fleet and Family will host educational workshops, information tables, and outreach events to promote healthy relationships, empower survivors, and ensure all service members and families know where to turn to for help. Be on the look out for Purple Thursdays - wear purple to show your support for survivors and your committment to ending domestic violence.





Follow these programs to see updates!

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