

THE SKYLINE



Volume 62, Number 5

<https://www.cnmc.navy.mil/meridian> ~ www.facebook.com/NASMeridian ~ Twitter: @nasmeridianms

March 7, 2024



~ Don't Forget ~

Turn your clock ahead one hour on Sunday, March 10!



~ Page 3 ~

MLT Dinner Theatre -- "Murder on the Menu"

News Bytes

~ Click here ~

Navy commander leads latest NASA space station mission

Get Connected



SCAN for NAS Meridian App



SCAN for City of Meridian App

Follow us on www.facebook.com/NASMeridian

Vanhoose named Military Citizen of the Year

From Staff Reports

Aviation Maintenance Administrationman 1st Class Christopher Vanhoose was selected as the recipient of the 2024 AC2 Whitney Powell Military Citizen of the Year award during a luncheon Feb. 27.

In 2013, the award was named in honor of Air Traffic Controller 2nd Class Whitney Powell, one of the Navy's brightest young Sailors who was well-known and extremely active in the community. Powell died in a car accident on Highway 39 North on Feb. 7, 2013.

Vanhoose was selected among the three nominees for the annual award which honors enlisted military members who dedicate much of their personal time to community service in the local community while they are stationed at NAS Meridian.

Petty Officer Vanhoose serves as a Naval Military Training Instructor and the SHIPMATES volunteer coordinator at Naval Technical Training Center Meridian.

He personally participated in many American Red Cross Blood Drives, the Vietnam Moving Wall Memorial event, Neshoba Central High School JROTC Drill Meet, the State Games of Mississippi, the Meridian Downtown History Walk and the Meridian Walk for Diabetes.

● Citizen, page 2



Photo by MC2 Molly Tice

Laura Carmichael, right, presents AZ1 Christopher Vanhoose with the 2024 AC2 Whitney Powell Military Citizen of the Year Award at a Luncheon, Feb. 27. The annual award honors enlisted military members who dedicate much of their personal time to community service in the local community while they are stationed at NAS Meridian.



Submitted photo

NAS Meridian Public Works Officer Damian Allen speaks to a group of business owners who attended the small business symposium in Philadelphia. The two-part symposium was hosted by MS APEX Accelerators and NAS Meridian PWD.

Public Works, Mississippi APEX Accelerator hosts small business symposium

From Staff Reports

Naval Air Station Meridian's Public Works Department (PWD) and Mississippi APEX Accelerator, a part of the Mississippi Development Authority, recently hosted a two-part small business symposium in Philadelphia, Miss.

The two-part workshop – held Jan. 30 and Feb. 21 – was designed to assist underserved businesses that are eligible for certain government solicitations.

"Outreach events, like this symposium, give local businesses an increased awareness of opportunities," said LCDR Damian Allen, Public Works Director. "And it gives the Navy a larger pool of small businesses available to contract to and increases economic development in East Central Mississippi."

The Philadelphia symposium was the second series of meetings, the first three-part symposium was held in Meridian in March, April and June 2023.

The workshop covered topics ranging from exploring contracting and subcontracting opportunities with the government, capabil-

ities briefings and understanding government process, and contracts and opportunities. There were over 50 small businesses registered for the event.

NAS Meridian PWD representatives were LCDR Allen, LT Oscar Solis, Facilities Engineering and Acquisition Division Director; Jason Clayton, Supervisory Contracting Specialist; and Lea Cook, Contracting Specialist. The APEX procurement advisor was Natalie Purvis.

"NAS Meridian PWD is committed to moving these outreach events to different counties within East Central Mississippi to spread information to local small businesses," LCDR Allen said.

The goal is to increase the number of defense and government industrial base ready businesses including: small disadvantaged businesses, historically underutilized business zones, service disabled veteran owned small businesses, women-owned small businesses and other underserved small businesses.

For more information or to schedule a symposium, email damian.r.allen2.mil@us.navy.mil.

Electrical Safety Training



Photo by Lauren Laboy

Approximately 20 employees from PWD Meridian attended an electrical safety training hosted by Southern Pine Electric Company. The training featured a live demonstration on a mobile trailer containing a fully functional electrical system consisting of transformers, overhead and underground power lines, meters, panels, fuses and fixtures. The electrical system was energized from a generator feeding a 7200 volt transformer allowing the safety manager to demonstrate actual arcs and faults. Visuals were given throughout the training emphasizing the dangers associated with electrical shock and arc flash burns.

Budget deal includes VA funding hike, firearm ownership protections

By Leo Shane III
Military Times

Veterans Affairs programs will see only a small boost in funding under the fiscal 2024 budget plan unveiled by congressional negotiators Sunday night, but overall department spending would jump about 8% compared to last year.

The plan — which lawmakers aim to bring to the House and Senate floor later this week — would total more than \$328 billion in appropriations for VA, another significant boost for a department which has seen steady growth for more than two decades.

In fiscal 2001, the entire VA budget amounted to \$48 billion in spending. Ten years ago, that total was \$153.9 billion, still less than half of the planned budget for this fiscal year.

[Read more, click here](#)

Eleven aviators earn 'Wings of Gold' in February pinning ceremony

There was a naval aviator designation ceremony Feb. 23 onboard Naval Air Station Meridian.

Eleven 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."



1STLT Spencer Almy



LTJG Thomas Beaudoin



LT Thomas Brownlee



LT Joseph Catterall



Capt. Jonas Di Pinto



1STLT Abed Ghozeil



LTJG Shawn Lee



1STLT Gabriel Lopez



ENS Raphael Marchand



1STLT Brian Smith



ENS Romain Vignol



Photo by MC2 Molly Tice

AZ1 Tina Marie Anthony, AZ1 Christopher Vanhooose and AC2 Ruby Wesby -- nominees for this year's Military Citizen of the Year -- pose for a group photo during a luncheon at Weidmann's. In 2023, military members contributed 2,848 hours to community service in the local area. This year's award was sponsored by the Mississippi Council of the Navy League, Navy Federal Credit Union, Twin States News and the EMBDC.

● **Citizen**

This year's nominees are:

Aviation Maintenance Administrationman 1st Class Tina Marie Anthony from Naval Air Technical Training Center. Petty Officer Anthony is the Leading Petty Officer of the NATTC Learning Site and a Course Supervisor ensuring both Sailors and Marines are prepared for the academic day. Petty Officer Anthony enjoys crocheting and knitting baby blankets for the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society program "Budget for Babies." During Thanksgiving, she assisted with coordinating students' transportation to the Fleet Reserve Association "Feed the Troops" event. She also volunteers with Northeast Lauderdale High Schools's JROTC Drill Inspections.

Aviation Maintenance Administrationman 1st Class Christopher Vanhooose from Naval Technical Training Center Meridian. Petty Officer Vanhooose serves

as a Naval Military Training Instructor and the SHIPMATES volunteer coordinator for the schoolhouse. He personally participated in many American Red Cross Blood Drives, the Vietnam Moving Wall Memorial event, Neshoba Central High School JROTC Drill Meet, the State Games of Mississippi, the Meridian Downtown History Walk and the Meridian Walk for Diabetes.

Air Traffic Controller 2nd Class Ruby Wesby from Naval Air Station Meridian. As an Air Traffic Controller, Petty Officer Wesby is responsible for the safe, orderly and expeditious flow of air traffic into and out of NAS Meridian's McCain Field. Petty Officer Wesby served as the air stations volunteer coordinator for off base events. She personally volunteered at the Annual 9/11 Stair Climb, Northeast Lauderdale Elementary May Day and the Summer Reading Kick off at the Meridian-Lauderdale County Public Library.

Golden Stick



Laura Carmichael, President of the Mississippi Council of the Navy League, left, presents 1STLT Spencer Almy with the Golden Stick award during a winging ceremony in the Chapel onboard NAS Meridian, Feb. 23. The Golden Stick is awarded to the student with the highest composite score during training.

Photo by MC2 Molly Tice

The Skyline ~ Naval Air Station Meridian, Miss.

Command Staff

Commanding Officer ~
CAPT Luke H. Davis
Executive Officer ~
CDR Jamie Epps
Command Master Chief ~
CMDCM Craig Johnson

Editorial Staff

Public Affairs Officer ~
Penny Randall
Public Affairs Specialist~
Adam Prince
Photographer~
MC2 Molly Tice

Hotlines & Helpful Numbers

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
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

This DoD newspaper is an authorized publication for members of the Department of Defense. Contents of The Skyline are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, or NAS Meridian, Mississippi. The editorial content of this publication is the responsibility of the NAS Meridian Public Affairs Office. The Skyline solicits news contributions from military and civilian sources. It reserves the right to edit material selected for dissemination. The deadline for material is 4:30 p.m. the Thursday before publication. Send submissions to: The Skyline, 255 Rosenbaum Ave., Suite 163, Public Affairs Office, Naval Air Station, Meridian, MS 39309-5003 or e-mail: penny.l.randall2.civ@us.navy.mil or adam.w.prince.civ@us.navy.mil. For more information, call (601) 679-2318 or (601) 679-2809. The appearance of any advertising in this publication, including inserts or supplements, does not constitute endorsement by the Department of Defense or NAS Meridian of products or services advertised. Everything advertised in this publication shall be made available for purchase, use or patronage without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, marital status, physical handicap, political affiliation, or any other non-merit factor of the purchaser, user or patron.

Local Happenings

MARCH

8: Blues Series – Benstrings and Par from Ferfect from 6-9 p.m. at Mississippi Arts + Entertainment Experience. Get ready for a soulful night at Maxie's Juke Joint Blues Series featuring the sensational Benstrings and Par from Ferfect. Call 601-581-1550, ext 35 or visit <https://www.msarts.org/events/blues-series-benstrings-and-par-from-ferferct/?occurrence=2024-03-08>

21-23: "Murder On the Menu" at Meridian Little Theatre. Three course meal and hilarious interactive play. Tickets are \$60 or \$55 with military discount and can be purchased online at <http://www.meridianlittletheatre.com/> or by calling the theatre at 601-482-6371.

30: Bunnies & Butterflies from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. at the Mississippi Children's Museum – Meridian. Hop into our fantastical backyard to interact with real bunnies, learn about the life cycle of butterflies, and discover how to plant a garden of your own. Visit <https://mschildrensmuseum.org/event/bunnies-butterflies-4/>

Area Happenings

MARCH

10: An Evening with John Cusack from 6-9 p.m. at Jemison Concert Hall, 1200 10th Ave S, Birmingham, AL. Join us for a special screening of the film Love and Mercy starring John Cusack followed by a live Q&A with the actor himself! Visit <https://www.alyssstephens.org/events/john-cusack/>

17: Jim Gaffigan at 4 p.m. at the Pensacola Bay Center, 201 E Gregory St, Pensacola, FL 32502. Visit <https://www.pensacolatheater.com/theaters/pensacola-bay-center/jim-gaffigan.php>

20: ZZ Top at 6:30 p.m. at the Brandon Amphitheater, 8190 Rock Way (Off, Boyce Thompson Dr, Brandon, MS. Visit <https://www.brandonamphitheater.com/events/>

21-24: Louisiana Crawfish Festival 2024 in New Orleans. Shrimp boats and oyster luggers fishing at bayous are part of Louisiana's heritage. For information, visit <https://rove.me/to/new-orleans/louisiana-crawfish-festival>

DOD exploring potential for Gaza humanitarian aid missions

The Defense Department is planning for potential additional humanitarian aid missions in Gaza following an initial airdrop of aid over the weekend.

On March 2, Air Force C-130 Hercules aircraft attached to U.S. Central Command partnered with Royal Jordanian Air Force C-130s to drop over 38,000 meals ready-to-eat to civilians along the Gaza coastline.

"These airdrops are part of a sustained effort to get more aid into Gaza, including by expanding flow of aid through land corridors and routes," Deputy Pentagon Press Secretary Sabrina

Singh told reporters during a meeting today with the Pentagon press corps.

On the topic of land corridors, Singh noted that between 30 and 120 trucks carrying aid have been able to enter Gaza daily over the past week, and Saturday's airdrops served as a "supplemental" effort to reach Palestinian civilians.

"It's certainly a priority of this administration to not only open those humanitarian corridors and allow aid to flow," said Singh, "but to [also] make sure the [aid] is getting to the people who need it the most."

-- By Matthew Olay, DOD News

[Read more, click here](#)

Pentagon Inspector General to assess Navy's suicide prevention efforts

The Pentagon's independent watchdog is looking into the Navy's efforts to prevent and respond to suicides, according to a project announcement posted Tuesday.

The review follows an internal Navy audit spurred by two clusters of suicides within the same command during 2022.

The project began in February, according to the announcement, and will assess whether the "Navy effectively took actions to prevent and respond to incidents of deaths by suicide, suicide attempts, and suicidal ideation among members of the Navy assigned to sea

duty or shore duty," according to the announcement.

It will include site visits to Norfolk Naval Air Station, Virginia; Naval Base San Diego, California; Naval Base Kitsap Bremerton, Washington; and Naval Station Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.

The Navy's suicide rate in 2022, the most recent year for which complete data is available, was 20.6-per-100,000, lower than the Army's 29-per-100,000 and the Marine Corps' 35-per-100,000, and just slightly above the Air Force's 19.7-per-100,000.

-- By Meghann Myers

[Read more, click here](#)

NMCB 11 Seabees complete Norwegian cold weather survival course

U.S. Navy Seabees assigned to Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 11 completed a cold weather survival training course in Sørli, Harstad in Norway, Feb. 22, 2024.

During the four-day exercise, the Ramsund Naval Base's Force Protection Company instructed the Seabees of NMCB 11's Nordic Detail on the basic survival skills they would need to know during their deployment in the Arctic Circle.

The cold-weather training focused on the essentials of basic survival in an arctic environment, training evolutions included arctic terrain navigation, arctic camp setup, drinking water preparation,

defensive position construction, and self-rescue from a simulated ice breakthrough.

"Winter operations demand patience, discipline, and a focus on every individual in the team working as one unit," said Lt. Mason Mullins, the officer in charge of NMCB 11's Nordic Detail. "Unit effectiveness and morale are highest when every Sailor has a job and is accountable for their role in ensuring the group's success and survivability."

The Nordic Detail Seabees will put their newly learned skills to use during their deployment to Ramsund Naval Base, Norway ...

-- From MC2 James S. Hong

[Read more, click here](#)

Sale... Or

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 \$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 tow-

ing 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

New! For Rent: 4 BD/2.5 BA home 3632 sq ft, just over 6 acres with workshop attached to 2-car carport. Owners will consider a lease of 12-36 months, and rent is negotiable the longer the term.

Call (601) 517-1707 or (601) 517-1707.

New! For Rent: 3BD /2BA home near North Hills. Spacious yard, concrete patio for gatherings, home gym and covered car garage. Rent \$1,100 per month. Call Jeremy at 601-410-8555.

For Rent: 3 BD/1.5 BA home 15 minutes from NAS at 4814 36th Ave. New refrigerator and 2-year old AC & furnace. Call Terrance at 469-318-9769.

For Rent: 3 BD/1.5 BA with another room used as a gym. All kitchen appliances included. Large backyard. Address 145 Skyland Drive, Meridian.

About 25 minutes to Navy Base. \$900 per month, with \$900 deposit. Available Aug. 1. No pets. Call 601-490-0849.

For Rent: 3BD/2BD home near Causeyville Road. Furnished in quiet neighborhood. \$900 per month. 954-895-5485, 601-692-4048 or 606-571-0820.

For Rent: Water front home in Dalewood. Spacious two-story home facing the Lake; great for fishing and relaxing. Remodeled kitchen and new appliances. Rent is \$1,800; please call 813-406-9687.

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.

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

For Sale: Husqvarna RZ 4623 Zero Turn Mower. 46 inch cut. \$900. Call 601-616-4242.

Nanny or caregiver services. Call Alice at

601-934-1866 or 601-679-8112. Has installation access; can take children to school and pick up and available days, nights and weekends.

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.

To submit an item to the "Sale...Or" column, email adam.w.prince.civ@us.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

Navy personnel leaders tie uptick in Sailor stress to manning shortfalls

By Heather Mongilio
USNI.org

It is a truth universally acknowledged by Navy leadership that the sea service has a manning problem, and a stress one.

The Navy missed its recruiting goal for enlisted sailors by approximately 7,000 sailors; its gap at sea among junior sailors is at 22,000. A recent report on the Navy's Health of the Force Survey found that two of every five enlisted sailors, up to E-6, reported experiencing severe or extreme stress.

Manning and stress are linked problems, human factors engineer John Cordle told USNI News. Manning levels at less than 100 percent mean more work for sailors. More work means cutting into sleep hours. Less sleep creates more stress, Cordle said, who added he was not speaking as a representative of the Navy.

The Navy is already a stressful place of employment, Cordle said. But the lack of sleep caused by manning shortages and extended deployments and maintenance periods raises stress levels. Stress at work also often fol-

lows sailors home, creating another avenue of tension.

It is not just the lack of bodies to fill positions, Rear Adm. Brett Mietus, director of the Navy Culture and Force Resilience Office, under the Office of the Chief of Naval Personnel, told USNI News in late February. The Navy also wants to make sure the right person is in each billet — the Navy's fit/fill metric.

"But it's kind of funny sometimes because people just believe that there's this huge pool of people sitting somewhere, we're just not providing them," Mietus said. "We don't have those people. And so it's about smartly allocating what we have and listening to fleet commanders on what they need, and doing so in a way that's respectful of our people."

The Navy acknowledges the stressful environment. Pilot programs such as deploying therapy dogs on ships and Expanded Operational Stress Control (E-OSC) as part of the sea service's culture of excellence are meant to help drive stress levels down, Cordle said.

The E-OSC is a congressionally mandated resilience program, Mietus said. The Navy is working to combine it with the service's warrior toughness program, he said.

The Navy is trying to give sailors the tools and skills necessary to handle increased stress.

"We look at our equipment that way," he said. "We just need to look at our people that way."

But even with the tools the Navy has, there are shortfalls, Cordle said. One area in which the Navy is consistently lacking is the number of mental health professionals. The Navy does not have enough people to help sailors who need mental health support, including from increased stress, Cordle said. This problem was highlighted in the Navy's investigation into a series of suicides among sailors assigned to USS George Washington (CVN-73), USNI News previously reported.

While the Navy survey found increased trust in leadership, especially in senior enlisted leaders, leadership can contribute to stress, Cordle said. It only takes one toxic leader to stress out sailors. Leaders also deal with stress from manning issues, home tensions and extended deployments. That cuts into their sleep, Cordle said.

And when people are tired and cranky, they may take it out on their teams, causing additional stress on those sailors.

[Read more, click here](#)

Navy considers accelerating promotion timeline for junior officers

By Diana Stancy
Military Times

The Navy is considering a policy change that would speed up the timeline for junior officer promotions as the service contemplates new ways to improve retention.

Whereas promotion to lieutenant j.g. previously occurred after 24 months of service, the Navy is now considering advancing officers to O-2 18 months after commissioning, according to Rear Adm. James Waters III, director of the Military Personnel Plans and Policy Division.

The ultimate goal is to usher in more officers to the ranks of lieutenant commander and above more quickly, Waters told reporters last month.

"We're doing that in recognition of the fact that we can impact officer pay, we can impact the time to those more senior ranks," Waters said. "It's part of our campaign to help officers see themselves as having the potential for a career earlier, and really try to impact officer retention. It's a way to do it without creating any new bonuses."

Navy officials stressed that the idea is only under consideration at the moment, and no policies have been formalized yet.

While an ensign with less than two years of experience typically earns just under \$94,000 each year with benefits, a lieutenant j.g. with less than two years of experience rakes in just under \$103,000 each year with benefits.

By the time an officer reaches promotion for lieutenant commander — usually as early as after six years of service — he or she would be eligible to earn over \$147,000 annually with benefits.

The effort is under consideration as the service contemplates different avenues to retain more officers. Altogether, the Navy ended Fiscal Year 2023 with a shortage of 2,366 officers across the active component force, according to the Navy's Health of the Force report published in February.

"To fully meet requirements, improvements to retention are needed," the Navy said in the document.

Still, numbers indicate roughly 40 percent of junior officers plan to remain in the service until retirement, according to the report. That's up from 35 percent ...

[Read more, click here](#)



Snack & Learn!
19th March, 2024
10am to 2pm

ARIAT 5.11 carhartt STREAMLIGHT

stop by the base store, have a snack, and learn what new products are available from Alpha ONEsource!

Manager: Rachel Dawn Waters
224 Allen Road
Meridian, Ms 39309
Phone: 601-679-3147
Fax: 601-679-8587

1 STORE SOLUTIONS
OPERATED BY SOUTH TEXAS LIGHTHOUSE FOR THE BLIND

Post Op perils; The strange case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde

In the Broadway musical version of Robert Louis Stevenson's 1886 novella, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, Dr. Jekyll has a romantic partner named Lisa,

who he marries near the end of the story. [Spoiler alert: Lisa becomes a victim of Mr. Hyde, who nearly strangles her at their wedding reception.]

Not only do I have the same name as Jekyll's ill-fated bride, I'm also romantically linked to someone with a dual personality — my husband, Francis. He's never tried to strangle me, thank goodness, but he sometimes morphs from a hard-working, retired Navy Captain, into someone else altogether.

Francis' Mr. Hyde is not violent or evil. To the contrary, he's a helpless, broken down man with a severe limp, who emits an endless series of moans and groans while hobbling around our house.

COLUMN



Molinari

Francis is in his 50s, but mysteriously, his alter ego has the physical capabilities of a man twenty years his senior. Francis' decrepit doppelgänger demands and feels entitled to frequent help from others. Namely, me.

To be fair, Francis's helpless twin reveals himself mostly when he is tired, sick or injured. Lately, Mr. Hyde has been overstaying his welcome.

Francis had knee replacement surgery eight weeks ago. During his brief hospital stay, he was Dr. Jekyll — charming and agreeable, enduring pain with a positive attitude. But as soon we crossed the threshold of our house, Mr. Hyde made his appearance.

"The anesthetic has worn off," he moaned, "I need ice!" During the first two weeks, Mr. Hyde required constant ministrations — pillows, ice packs, drinks, medication, TV clickers, books, blankets, snacks, help with this, that and the other. While managing my work and household responsibilities, I was Hyde's primary caregiver. Despite his reputation for dramatics, I knew he truly needed my assistance in those early days, and I was happy to help.

But soon, physical therapists showed up for home visits, and strange phenomena began occurring. When outsiders weren't around, Francis loudly verbal-

ized his pain. "Hee, hee, hee, ungh, oohph," Francis whimpered, grimacing histrionically while stooped over his crutches. The theatrical racket sounded vaguely similar to the Lamaze breathing method I was taught during my first pregnancy.

But as soon as the therapists set foot in our house, Francis' contractions seemed to stop. In an instant, he stood up straight, smoothed his furrowed brow, adopted a positive attitude, and stopped fussing. Mr. Hyde had taken his leave. Captain Molinari was back!

"Great work today, Francis. I'll see you Thursday," the therapist said while walking out the front door after a session. I waved good-bye, and as I closed the door, I turned to see Hyde, back again. Slouched and grimacing, he hee-ed, hoo-ed, and ungh-ed as if the baby's head was crowning.

"Ohhh, I'm gonna be really sore after that session," he grumbled.

In the weeks that followed, Francis continued to exhibit his dual personalities. Pessimistic Mr. Hyde presented himself only to close family and friends to garner maximum sympathy and assistance. Capable Captain Molinari took over during medical appointments and work calls, the epitome of strength and positivity.

"It's all about attention," said Marty, Francis' college buddy, when Francis noisily hobbled off to the bathroom during Marty's recent visit. Sensing my frustration, Marty felt the need to distill our situation down to one core human motivation — attention.

Marty was right. Ever since Francis grew up in a big Irish-Italian family with five kids, he's wanted more attention. Francis has worked hard, in the military and in the civilian workplace after retirement. Is it so much to ask for a little extra care every once in a while?

As much as I'd like to permanently evict Mr. Hyde, I get it. Attention-seeking was the reason I was elected 1984 Indiana High School Class Clown, after all. It's my primary motivation for being a writer, and it's what induced me to dance like an idiot during a recent drag queen show at a local bar.

As humans, we long to be seen, heard and fussed over. Naturally, social beings want positive recognition, because it's an indication of belonging. In our own ways, we all Hyde and seek.

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.



GUTTER BALL LEAGUE

REGISTRATION:
MARCH 1-27

LEAGUE BEGINS:
APRIL 3-MAY 29
WEDNESDAY NIGHTS AT 1800

To SIGN UP:
SCAN THE QR CODE OR
CALL (601) 679-2651





DRIVING RANGE
CALL (601) 679-2526



SPRING Fling

March 23 • 11:00 a.m.
Community Recreation Complex

There will be an Easter Egg Hunt, Tethered Hot Air Balloon Rides, Hamburgers, Hot dogs, Popcorn, Balloon Animals, Face Painting, and so much more! Everything is free! Just show up and have a blast!

- *pets are not allowed to attend events
- *Weather may prevent hot air balloon rides
- *Items are available while supplies last

SPONSORED BY:
FIRST COMMAND
Get Squared Away



TICKETS & TRAVEL
CALL (601) 679-2526



LIBERTY TRIP TO THE MISSISSIPPI ANIME FEST

March 9th 0900-1700



SIGN UP BEGINS MARCH 4TH AT LIBERTY'S FRONT DESK. THE VAN WILL DEPART FROM THE LIBERTY CENTER AT 0900 & RETURN BY 1700. ADMISSION IS \$25. SPACE IS LIMITED!!

NERF GUN WAR!

MARCH 14 • 1300 • FIELD BY SCHOOL AGE CARE CENTER

BATTLE IT OUT THIS SPRING BREAK! AT OUR NEARBY GUN WAYS MWR WILL SUPPLY NERF GUNS OR YOU CAN BRING YOUR OWN!



ST. PATTY'S DAY 5K FUN RUN

MARCH 14 • 1700 • FITNESS CENTER

A 5K event for all ages! Sign up the morning of the race! T-Shirts will be available to the first 40 participants! Top 3 male & female finishers will receive MWR Challenge coins!



SPONSORED BY:
FIRST COMMAND

Wreaths & Wine

March 20 • 1730
Community Recreation Complex

Learn how to make a wreath with your family and friends!

Scan the QR Code for more details

