

NEWS

BYTES

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Beloved monarch butterflies now listed as endangered

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CNATRA holds change of command

By Anne Owens
Chief of Naval Air Training
Public Affairs

Rear Adm. Richard Brophy Jr. relieved Rear Adm. Robert D. Westendorff as Chief of Naval Air Training (CNATRA) during a ceremony onboard USS Lexington (CV 16) in Corpus Christi Texas, July 19.

Commander, U.S. Naval Air Forces Vice Adm. Kenneth Whitesell served as the presiding officer and guest speaker. He took a moment to acknowledge the venue of the ceremony and its historical significance to naval aviation.

"This is a huge year for us with the Centennial of U.S. Navy Aircraft Carriers from 1922-2022 and there's no more better place for us to be than USS Lexington," said Whitesell. "She was reportedly sunk four times throughout her namesake history and earned her nickname of 'Blue Ghost' because she kept coming back battle after battle. She put on

full display the capabilities of an aircraft carrier, and its primary weapons system: the carrier air wing."

Whitesell went on to commend Westendorff for his leadership and accomplishments as CNATRA.

"There is no naval aviation enterprise without CNATRA. They shape the nation's best and brightest young men and women into world class naval aviators," said Whitesell. "Our naval aviators, naval flight officers, air vehicle operators and naval aircrewmembers operate the world's most advanced aviation platforms with skill and expertise. They make it so we can support our partners and allies when they need us and keep conflict far away from the shores of our great nation. Rob's leadership has played a tremendous role in CNATRA's success, from incorporating the latest in advanced technology to caring for the health and welfare of an immense cadre throughout the global pandemic."

● CNATRA, page 2



Photo by Anne Owens

Rear Adm. Robert Westendorff, left, congratulates Rear Adm. Richard Brophy after relinquishing command as Chief of Naval Air Training, July 19. Commander, Naval Air Forces Vice Adm. Kenneth Whitesell, center, served as guest speaker and oversaw the transfer of command. The ceremony was held aboard USS Lexington Museum on the Bay in Corpus Christi, Texas. CNATRA safely trains the world's finest combat quality naval aviation professionals, delivering them to our naval forces at the right time in the right quantity with the right skills at the right cost.

MATSS-1 welcomes new executive officer



O'Connor

From Staff Reports

First Lt Grant O'Connor enlisted in the United States Marine Corps Reserves in May 2015 as a Supply Administration and Operations Specialist. He reported to H&HS Company, 1st Battalion, 24th Marines, where he would spend the duration of his enlistment. While there, he participated in Integrated Training Exercise in 29 Palms and Operation African Lion in Morocco.

In May 2018, he graduated from Michigan State University with a Bachelor's of Science in Food Industry Management from Michigan State University. He was commissioned as a second lieutenant. He completed The Basic School in April 2019 and reported to Aviation Supply Officer Basic Qualification Course in Milton, Florida.

He was subsequently designated as an

Aviation Supply Officer and reported to Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron (MALS) 29, Marine Corps Air Station New River, North Carolina, where he served as the Warehouse Management Division OIC. He was promoted to first lieutenant in June of 2020.

In November 2020, First Lt. O'Connor was selected to serve as the Legal Officer and Adjutant of MALS-29. In November 2021 he returned to the Aviation Supply Department to serve as the Customer Support Branch and Operations Management Division OIC.

In July 2022, First Lt. O'Connor reported to Marine Aviation Training Support Group 23 to serve as the Executive Officer for Marine Aviation Training Support Squadron 1.

His personal awards include the Navy Commendation Medal and Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal.

First woman selected for Blue Angels 2023 show season

By PO1 Robert Baldock
Navy Flight Demonstration Squadron

The U.S. Navy Flight Demonstration Squadron, the Blue Angels, selected six new officers to join the team for the 2023 air show season.

The squadron selected two F/A-18E/F Super Hornet pilots, an events coordinator, a C-130J Super Hercules pilot, an aviation maintenance officer, and a flight surgeon to replace outgoing team members.

Among those team members selected this year is the squadron's first woman F/A-18E/F demonstration pilot. For over 55 years, hundreds of women have served with the Blue Angels representing the very best of the Navy and Marine Corps. Come the start of the 2023 show season, these six selectees will join the ranks of the U.S. Navy's

most elite aviation officers, ground support officers, and enlisted maintenance personnel already serving on the team.

"We had an overwhelming number of applicants from all over the globe this year," said Capt. Brian Kesselring, commanding officer and flight leader of the Blue Angels. "We look forward to training our fantastic new team members, passing on the torch, and watching the incredible things this team will accomplish in 2023."

The selected 2023 officers include:

F/A-18E/F Demonstration Pilots:

-Lt. Cmdr. Thomas Zimmerman, of Baltimore, Md., is currently assigned to the "Red Rippers" of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 11. He graduated from the United States Naval Academy in 2009.

● Blue Angels, page 2

Blue Angels
2023 OFFICER SELECTIONS

- LCDR THOMAS ZIMMERMAN**
F/A-18 E/F DEMONSTRATION PILOT
- LT AMANDA LEE**
F/A-18 E/F DEMONSTRATION PILOT
- LCDR BRIAN VAUGHT**
EVENTS COORDINATOR
- CAPT SAMUEL PETKO**
C-130J DEMONSTRATION PILOT
- LCDR GREG JONES**
MAINTENANCE OFFICER
- LT PHILIPPE WARREN**
FLIGHT SURGEON

Public Works hard at work on NAS Meridian



Photo by JP Beaudouin

Robert “Jake” Bond, environmental specialist for Public Works, personally verifies shipping labels before pickup and regularly interfaces with Regulators to keep our installation in compliance. Hazardous material disposal can have huge impacts on the installation and its mission. NAS Meridian qualifies as a large quantity generator due to the many processes involved on base.



Submitted photo

FMD Director Scott Sherman conducts a visual inspection along with customer reps on each high risk area with unsupported masonry blocks — even removing immediate hazards (block fragments) in the process as part of FY22 Structural Inspection Program.



Photo by Lauren Laboy

Heavy equipment mechanics Dennis Wilson and Justin Watt — both new to NAVFAC — recently completed back log work orders for scheduled maintenance on installation fire trucks.

● Blue Angels

-Lt. Amanda Lee, of Mounds View, Minn., is currently assigned to the “Gladiators” of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 106. She graduated from Old Dominion University in 2013.

Events Coordinator:

- Lt. Cmdr. Brian Vaught, of Englewood, Colo., is a naval flight officer currently assigned to the Naval School of Aviation Safety. He graduated from the University of Colorado in 2008.

C-130 Demonstration Pilot:

-Marine Corps Capt. Samuel Petko, of Osceola, Ind., is a KC-130J Hercules pilot currently assigned to the “Sumos” of Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron (VMGR) 152. He graduated from Indiana University in 2014.

Maintenance Officer:

- Lt. Cmdr. Greg Jones, of Cary, N.C., is an aviation maintenance officer currently assigned to

Pre-Commissioning Unit John F. Kennedy (CVN 79). He graduated from Elon University in 2008.

Flight Surgeon:

-Lt. Philippe Warren, of Williamsburg, Va. is a flight surgeon currently assigned to the “Fighting Griffins” of Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron (VMM) 266. He graduated from the University of Virginia in 2014.

New team members will report to the squadron in September for a two-month turnover period. Upon completion of the 2022 show season, which concludes in November with the Blue Angels Homecoming Air Show at NAS Pensacola, the team will embark on a rigorous five-month training program at NAS Pensacola and Naval Air Facility El Centro, Calif.

The mission of the Blue Angels is to showcase the teamwork and professionalism of the United States Navy and Marine Corps through flight demonstrations and community outreach while in-spiring a culture of excellence and service to country.

● CNATRA

Westendorff, a native of Paola, Kansas, took command of CNATRA in June 2020. During his tenure, 3,337 naval aviators, 764 naval flight officers, and 539 flight surgeons earned their Wings of Gold.

Under his command, the first student naval aviators graduated and entered the fleet as winged CMV-22 Osprey pilots. His team developed Project Avenger, which revolutionized aviation training by using immersive technology and customized learning methods. This program enables students to train at a pace optimal for their individual ability, reducing training time and increased pilot capability with no reduction in the quality of training.

“From morning until evening, I consistently think of how to improve naval aviation as we train the finest generation of naval aviation professionals to take our place and assume the watch going forward,” said Westendorff. “This is the greatest one-star job in the United States Navy and I am truly going to miss this place.”

Westendorff is an F-14 A/B, F/A-18, and E/A-18G pilot with more than 3,800 flight hours, 900 carrier-arrested landings onboard multiple different aircraft carriers. Prior to assuming command of CNATRA, he served as the chief of staff for Commander, Naval Air

Forces. He is scheduled to transfer to U.S. Fleet Forces Command in Norfolk, Virginia, where he will serve as the fleet readiness officer.

“CNATRA is in a better place today than it was two years ago, and I am one hundred percent confident that CNATRA will be in a better place when Adm. Brophy is standing on this stage next,” said Westendorff. “There is no other mission in the United States Navy more important than CNATRA’s: to train that next generation. I am fully convinced that we are currently training a future giant or two that we will someday tell great tales about and quote in our future speeches.”

The ceremony concluded with the reading of orders at which point Brophy assumed the role of Chief of Naval Air Training and all duties, burdens, and privileges associated with the position.

Brophy, a native of Carmel, California, takes over as CNATRA after serving as the commanding officer of Carrier Strike Group (CSG) Four. A designated naval aviator, his operational assignments include tours with Strike Fighter Squadrons (VFA) 105 and VFA-81 as both a weapons and tactics officer and department head, as well as VFA-115 and Carrier Air Wing (VAW) Nine as the commanding officer.

Brophy is a graduate of the prestigious Navy Strike Fighter Tactics instructor course, better known as TOPGUN. He has accumulated more than 4,000 flight hours and over 1,000 carrier-arrested landings in various jet aircraft.

“We are entering into a complex and dynamic security environment,” said Brophy. “CNATRA’s mission produces naval aviators in order for them to be where it matters when it matters. This mission is not insignificant. This is accomplished with 665 aircraft logging 270,000 hours, 23 percent of the combined USN/USMC flight hours.”

“Rear Adm. Westendorff, you’ve left me a well-oiled machine, focused appropriately on all the keys to succeed in our mission. I look forward to working with your strong team and to furthering the many positive initiatives. CNATRA is well-positioned to train our naval aviators to meet the challenges of our future. I am humbled and honored to lead CNATRA. This is the job of a lifetime.”

CNATRA, headquartered in Corpus Christi, safely trains the world’s finest combat quality naval aviation professionals, delivering them to our naval forces at the right time in the right quantity with the right skills at the right cost.



<h3>The Skyline ~ Naval Air Station Meridian, Miss.</h3>		<h4>Hotlines & Helpful Numbers</h4> <p>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 CEAP (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</p>	<p>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.randall@navy.mil or adam.prince@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.</p>
<p>Command Staff Commanding Officer ~ CAPT Timothy B. Moore Executive Officer ~ CDR Jamie Epps Command Master Chief ~ CMDCM Craig Johnson</p>	<p>Editorial Staff Public Affairs Officer ~ Penny Randall Public Affairs Specialist~ Adam Prince</p>		

Local Happenings

JULY

23: Boz Scaggs at 7:30 p.m. at the MSU Riley Center. It's appropriate that Boz Scaggs' new album is *Out of the Blues*, since the blues is what first sparked his five-decade musical career. Tickets range from \$55 to \$125; call 601-696-2200.

30: CowKids Youth Rodeo All day event at the Lauderdale County Agri-Center. Cowkids Youth Rodeo is a ministry based, non profit organization set out to provide youth with the best opportunity to transform into responsible adults through participating in the sport of rodeo, and all it has to offer at an affordable cost. fees vary; contact cowkidsyouthrodeo@gmail.com.

AUGUST

5: Moonlight Run from 7-11 p.m. at Northeast Park in Meridian. Kid's Fun Run 8 p.m.; 5K Run 8:15 p.m.; 2 Mile Walk 8:20 p.m. Register Online: <https://time2run.raceentry.com/meridian-moonlight-run/race-information>. Make checks payable to: City of Meridian. Mail to: Meridian Parks & Recreation Attn: Moonlight Run, P.O. Box 1430, Meridian, MS 39302. Fees range from \$20-25; call 601-485-1802.

14-16: "Into the Woods" from 2-5 p.m. at the Meridian Little Theatre. Meridian Little Theatre's teen division FRONT & CENTER will perform Stephen Sondheim's magical "Into the Woods." This epic adventure musical incorporates plots and characters of several Brothers Grimm fairy tales and features music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim and a book by James Lapine. Tickets are \$15 adults, \$12 students; call 601-482-6371.

19: MS Congress AQHA Intro. Show & Open Horse Show at 5 p.m. at the Lauderdale County Agri-Center. This is an open horse show that is put on annually and is AQHA and APHA approved but open to all breeds. Contact Magen Allen at 228-860-3682 or Christi Hall at 601-613-5135 for more info.

MQ-9 makes its debut at RIMPAC SINKEX 2022

The first-ever use of a U.S. Air Force MQ-9A Reaper, a remotely piloted aircraft, during a Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) 2022 sinking exercise (SINKEX), July 12.

Participating in the SINKEX provided an opportunity for units from Australia, Canada, Malaysia and the U.S. to test weapons and systems in a simulated environment, working against opposing forces and eventually culminating in the explosion of a decommissioned naval vessel and marked a significant development in maritime warfighting capability.

The presence of the MQ-9As at the world's largest international maritime exercise provides an opportunity for combined and joint-force collaboration.

"They need us and we need them," said U.S. Air National Guard Capt. Phillip West,

the RIMPAC MQ-9 maritime force integration lead. "That's where RIMPAC comes into play."

He said the Air Force and the Navy speak different languages, each using their own distinct jargon. Working together on exercises like RIMPAC and the SINKEX promotes smooth communication between the branches. This ensures sharpened combat readiness, increased strategic impact, and strengthened deterrence efforts by providing tactical proficiency to MQ-9A aircrews.

"Participation in the RIMPAC exercise is helping us evolve," said Col. Steven Beattie, 49th Operations Group commander. "We're developing maritime and Pacific (area of responsibility) expertise for our aircrew, maintenance, and support personnel."

-- From Airman 1st Class Ariel OShea

[Read more, click here](#)

New 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline offers easier option for emergency care

A new 988 telephone number became operational July 16, designated as the new three-digit dialing code that routes callers to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline.

A new 988 telephone number became operational July 16, designated as the new three-digit dialing code that routes callers to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline.

The Lifeline provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, across the United States.

When people call, text, or chat 988, they will be connected to trained counselors who are part of the existing National Suicide Prevention Lifeline network.

Trained counselors will listen and work to understand how their problems affect them, provide support, and connect them to necessary resources.

The current Lifeline phone number (1-800-273-8255) will always remain available to people in emotional distress or suicidal crisis.

-- From US Navy

[Read more, click here](#)

Chief of Navy Reserve announces i3 Waypoints 2022 winner

Vice Adm. John B. Mustin, Chief of Navy Reserve and Commander, Navy Reserve Force announced Lt. Cmdr. Jonathan Calhoun's "Leveraging Mobile Technology to Streamline Mobilization" as the winning entry of the inaugural i3 Waypoints in a streaming broadcast July 14.

Calhoun, a Selected Reserve member attached to U.S. Fleet Forces Command Maritime Operations Center (N3 FCC) in Norfolk, Va., initially thought of his idea during a mobilization exercise where he realized shifting many of the mobilization requirements to a secure mobile platform would make the process faster and more efficient for both Sailors and Navy Reserve Center staff.

"In this era of strategic competition, we must be ready on day one," said Calhoun. "Empowering Sailors to use their mobile device to complete a significant portion of pre-mobilization requirements will improve the overall experience for the modern-day Sailor

and save critical time during mass mobilizations to get warfighting-ready Sailors on station faster."

The envisioned mobile application could reduce duplicative administrative requirements for both members and mobilization staff, save critical time by auto-populating data fields across multiple documents, provide real-time transparency and progress status for members and leadership throughout the process, and enable clear and customizable views and reports.

Additionally, the app could remove the difficulties some Reserve members have accessing CAC-enabled sites outside an NMCI environment and would "ensure our ability to mass mobilize, predictably, at scale, and with seamless administration activation workflows" as outlined in the Navy Reserve Fighting Instructions 2022.

-- From Navy Reserve Force Public Affairs

[Read more, click here](#)



Sale... Or

BOATS/CAMPERS/TRAILERS

2018 Mallard M185 Travel Trailer. Sleeps 4 with 1 queen bed/2 bunks. Easy to tow at 3,575 lbs; only selling because military member is moving overseas. Great living quarters with lake view. Hooked up and ready to live in, including cables, hoses, plus the \$500 towing kit. Asking \$17,000. Call 360-434-3035.

AUTOMOBILES, ETC.

2018 Subaru Outback 2.5 limited, 12k miles; Subaru safety features and warranties included. Asking \$29k. Call 601-480-5100.

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

HOMES/APARTMENTS

New! For Rent: 1BD/1BA furnished apartment; 12 minutes from the base. Perfect for single Sailors. \$500 per month. Call 601-480-1601.

For Rent: 3BD/2BA home with 1 car garage, all new appliances and flooring. 13 miles from NAS. Rent \$1200, security deposit will be half of 1st month

rent. Move in ready June 1st. Call 757-589-2174.

For Rent: Lake Cabin near NAS Meridian. 1 BD/1 BA; \$700 month. Unfurnished. More info and photos can be viewed at: <https://www.facebook.com/marketplace/item/851262408853834/>

For Rent: 2BD/1.5BA single family home in Dalewood - fully renovated. Pets allowed. Pet deposit \$300. \$1,300 rent

per month. Call 973-876-5006.

For Rent: 2BA/1BA on the water at Dalewood \$600 per month. Call 601-683-6038.

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

New! Service for Hire: Dixie Perfect 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 Thursday 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

Program aims to prepare service members for military stressors

By Jim Garamone

DoD News, Defense Media Activity

Life in the military is no bed of roses, but the services are putting in place an innovative program designed to give service members new tools to handle the stress of military life.

The program aims to help service members be physically and mentally ready to handle the challenges of military service.

The company and the program are known universally as O2X, which stands for Optimize to the X, with X being the goal. The company was founded by special operations veterans, first responders and elite athletes, said Adam La Reau, a co-founder and managing partner of O2X.

"We implement human performance programs, performance optimization programs into the tactical community," said La Reau, who was a Navy SEAL. "We tackle occupational challenges within these tactical communities, things like sleep disruption, mental health, physical aspects, injuries — essentially, the things that impact the readiness, resilience, and sometimes even the retention of these units ... or DOD as a whole."

In the Navy, the emphasis on human performance came from a study following the 2017 crashes of the USS Fitzgerald and USS John S. McCain. The crashes killed 17 sailors. The study found the crews were overtaxed, fatigued and stressed.

The service turned to O2X to look at these human factors and develop a program to address some of these specific problems within the surface warfare community. "We bring on-site specialists that come with a program and a methodology," La Reau said in an interview. "We do skills-based training and education.



Photo by MC3 Jason Waite

Alyssa Olsen, a yoga instructor from O2X (Optimize to the X), leads sailors from the USS Manchester's Blue Crew as part of a study of crew readiness, endurance and watch-standing, also known as CREW, at Naval Base San Diego.

The education is ... pretty critical for people to be self-aware about their own individual performance."

The company has tested the program with crews aboard the USS Manchester, a littoral combat ship based in San Diego. They're getting ready to expand the program to work with the crews of the destroyer USS Preble (DDG-88) and the littoral combat ships USS Mobile and USS Gabby Giffords beginning this month.

The company is based in Scituate, Massachusetts, and works with DOD components

and fire and police departments around the nation.

The program treats service members like elite athletes. Elite athletes receive training not just to perform a physical feat, but to have the mental toughness and resilience to perform under pressure, La Reau said. Elite athletes follow a training regimen to ensure they have the right foods, the right amount of sleep, the right exercise regimen and the determination and willingness to follow the regimen. "The question we always ask is how do we give people the skill sets in order to perse-

vere through challenges and emerge not only successful, but stronger," he said.

The company tailors each program to the situation. They're quite aware that what may work for an officer at a police department would not help a sailor aboard a destroyer. La Reau said the company has hundreds of specialists to teach personnel and to serve as "reach-back" assets for those deployed.

The program requires buy-in from the commanders and a commitment to ensure there is every effort to let service members participate no matter where they are. "The program has to be portable," LaReau said. "It has to adapt to the changing situations people find themselves in, whether they are deployed, on a ship at sea, or in a shipyard undergoing maintenance."

The company has another contract with the Massachusetts National Guard, and that also illustrates the need for an adaptable program. Guardsmen, of course, are from all over the state and have civilian jobs in addition to their military duties. O2X tailored the program for the 5,500 members of the Guard and had the staff to "scale" the effort.

To really capitalize on the program, it needs to be part of every training event starting at entry level training and progressing through the ranks of both enlisted and officer ranks, La Reau said.

"We need to look at human performance as a program, not as a choose your own adventure," he said. "You have to understand performance and all the factors that can affect you. Sustainment training needs to continue for the duration of your career. Truthfully, science changes, things adapt, people find better ways, and our operating environment will continue to adapt and change."

Beat the Heat

Drink plenty of water • Avoid caffeine
Protect yourself from the sun • Use sunscreen
Try to keep cool • Wear light clothing
Watch for signs of heat stroke

Husband's double standard revealed at Twin Hills Motel

COLUMN

The drive to Maine was long, so we didn't arrive until well after dark. "I think this is it," my husband, Francis, said pulling onto a gravel driveway off of lonely Highway 1. A nearby sign read "Twin Hills Motel," which was a row of outdated pastel cottages, with bugs orbiting their porch lights.

"There's ours, Number Six," Francis said, approaching the powder blue one on the end. But a car was parked outside and the living room lights were ablaze.

Francis left our car to knock on Number Six's door. I envisioned several scenarios. A fistfight. The motel owner absconding with our reservation money. Us sleeping in our car on the side of Highway 1, which didn't seem half bad considering our sketchy circumstances.

Francis wrapped his fist on the cottage door



Molinari

until it opened, releasing a puff of smoke. The occupants, a young man and his girlfriend, were obviously partaking in a newly-legal activity that rendered them easygoing and, thankfully, non-violent. Francis chatted with them while dialing the motel owner, who explained that there was another "Number Six" cottage on the other end of the gravel drive. This made about as much sense as the gnome statue at the base of the Twin Hills Motel sign, but we followed his instructions nonetheless.

We'd come to Maine for a friend's birthday party, which would be held the next afternoon. I'd been excited to get away from home without the kids for a little weekend adventure with my husband, just the two of us, and I'd packed a bottle of wine and some cheese for our Friday night.

Adventures were harder to come by now that Francis was retired from the Navy. For 28 years on active duty, he traveled often for his military job to far flung places like Japan, Italy, Spain, England, Norway, Columbia, Chile, Korea, Botswana, Hawaii, Alaska and more. When he was home, I was our family travel planner, finding charming yet affordable places for us to stay, eat, and visit while stationed stateside and overseas. This weekend in Maine had been

Francis' idea, so he'd offered to book the trip himself.

Francis cussed under his breath while repeatedly punching a code into the keypad lock on Number Six cottage, the second one that is. While he fiddled, I noted the mismatched plastic porch chairs and a hanging pot containing dying, leggy petunias. On the fifth try, a green light blinked and I lunged for the door knob, shouting, "Now! Open it, now!"

Francis reached inside and clicked a switch. A bare halogen bulb on the room's primary colored ceiling fan garishly illuminated a living-dining-kitchen space decorated with dumpy brown curtains and sparse, mismatched furniture. We wheeled our suitcases in and shut the door.

Silently glancing around, I felt queasy. Was it the long drive? Had I inhaled a whiff of that smoke? What was wrong with me? I poked my head into the bedroom, which housed a sagging bed topped with flat pillows. A digital alarm clock perpetually blinked "12:00" in red.

My uncharacteristic silence made Francis nervous. He fumbled through our bags to find the wine, and opened cabinets in search of glasses. There, he found an eclectic mix of

kitchen items, no two the same. He poured our Cabernet into two vessels. For me, a mug adorned with candy canes. For him, a jelly jar.

Peering into my mug, anger as red as the blinking alarm clock display, began to surface. I thought of all the texts and photos Francis had sent me during his years in the Navy from exotic locations and luxury hotel rooms, all made possible because his spouse was home with the kids. He had worked hard in the Navy and deserved to stay in nice places. But what about me? By the time I'd finished my wine, I was ready to let him have it.

I don't quite recall what I said, but Francis got the gist. And then we had a good laugh about the ugly ceiling fan and our wine glasses. Our Motel had twin hills and two Number Six cottages, but Francis would no longer have a double standard.

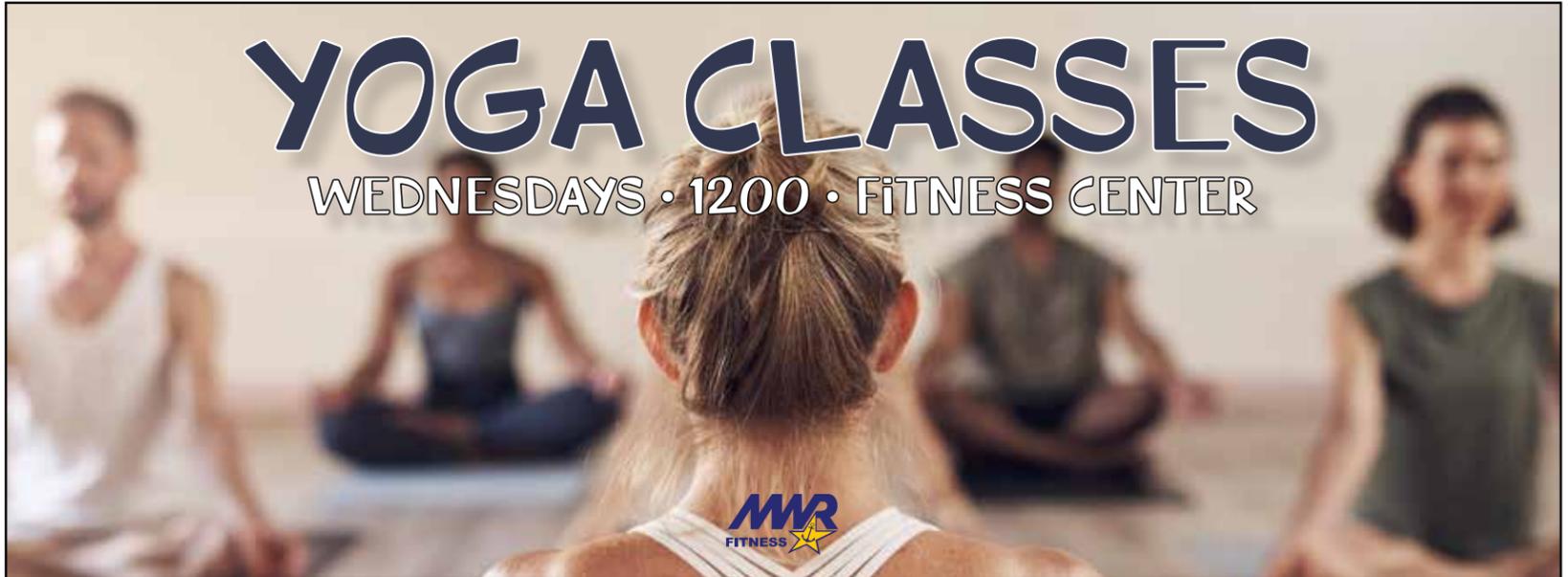
Lisa Smith Molinari's self syndicated columns appear on her blog, www.themeatandpotatoesoflife.com and she recently co-authored *Stories Around the Table: Laughter, Wisdom, and Strength in Military Life* Follow Lisa@MolinariWrites.com.



NAS Meridian, MS • Morale, Welfare and Recreation

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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		



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JULY 23 • 1030 • ARCHERY RANGE (BEHIND RUDDERS)

THIS TOURNAMENT WILL BE DIVIDED INTO AGE GROUPS: CLUB (UNDER 12), YOUTH (12-14), YOUNG ADULT (15-17), ADULT (18-40), SENIOR (40-50), SILVER SENIOR (50-60) AND MASTER SENIOR (70+). PARTICIPANTS UNDER THE AGE OF 18 MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY A GUARDIAN.

THE TOURNAMENT WILL BEGIN AT NOON. SHOOTERS SHOULD REPORT TO THE MCCAIN RECREATION CENTER 30 MINUTES TO SIGN IN. ALL SAFE PRACTICES AND PROPER ETIQUETTE MUST BE OBSERVED. PERSONAL BAGS & ARROWS (CROSSBOWS ARE NOT ALLOWED) AND 10/PERSON WHEN RENTING FROM MWR.

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INDOOR VOLLEYBALL
CAPTAIN'S CUP LEAGUE

WEDNESDAY NIGHTS • 1700

GAMES BEGIN AUGUST 10th

REGISTER BETWEEN JULY 25th - AUGUST 5th
CALL (601) 679-3384 OR SEE THE FRONT DESK ATTENDANT AT THE FITNESS CENTER

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AT THE LIBERTY CENTER

AUGUST 5 (1900): POOL & AUGUST 26 (ALL DAY): PING-PONG

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AUGUST 11 • 1100 • LIBRARY

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