

News Bytes

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NASMeridian

Installation fuel facility gets much needed upgrade

From Staff Reports

Naval Air Station Meridian's Fuel Facility recently received an upgrade to replace an aging Oil Water Separator installed in 1961. The project was five years in the making and is now complete with a complete removal and replacement of the Oil/Water Separator system and extension of the Mobile Refueler parking apron to allow ample parking distances between Mobile Refuelers and the Fuels Operations building.

This newly installed Oil Water Separator will significantly increase the operational capability of the fuel facility to properly discharge rain water and contain any oily liquid or fuel spillage in a 10,000 gallon underground holding tank. This state-of-the-art system will have a long lasting impact to help prevent an environmental event that could cause harm to the environment, wildlife, and a costly cleanup.

From beginning to end the upgrade took 12 months to complete and more than 1,000 labor hours. The lead contractor for this project was assisted by several subcontractors. The planning and execution of this project was a combined effort of NAS Meridian's Public Works Department, regional coordinators, and the fuels facility team.



Submitted photo
The new oil water separator will increase the operational capacity of the fuel facility onboard NAS Meridian.



[Read more, click here](#)

The 2022 focal point—Black health and wellness—resonates for many, given the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the racial disparities in health care that were illuminated. Lectures and activities will highlight what's being done, and what needs to be done, to foster good health and wellbeing, both physically and mentally, in the Black community.

Observances during the month will honor Black health pioneers in Western medicine—such as Daniel Hale Williams, a renowned cardiologist who performed the world's first successful heart surgery in 1893, and Rebecca Lee Crumpler, who in 1864 became the first Black woman in the U.S. to receive a medical degree.

SECNAV increases secondary caregiver leave

By MC2 Rebekah Watkins
Chief of Naval Personnel Public Affairs

Sailors will now have more time to spend with their family after the birth or adoption of a child as the Department of the Navy increased its maximum Secondary Caregiver Leave (SCL) to 21 days. The Secretary of the Navy, The Honorable Carlos Del Toro, authorized the extension on Feb. 11, 2022.

"Navy is dedicated to supporting our new parents, and we fully understand that our families are as much a part of our service as our Sailors," said Vice Adm. John B. Nowell, Jr. the chief of naval personnel.

Nowell said, "This change, effective Feb. 11, is an interim solution while we await more significant changes anticipated as part of NDAA-22. While we wait, we will work with the Department of Defense to update regulations and modify our E-Leave system to reflect the change."

NAVADMIN 037/22 released Feb. 14 announced the policy change.

This policy change aligns secondary caregiver leave duration in the Navy and Marine Corps with that in the Army and Air Force. The extension to three weeks comes in advance of an increase to twelve weeks authorized in the recently enacted NDAA, which will become effective at the end of 2022.

● Caregiver, page 2

Congress establishes USNCC; Grants conditional degree-granting authority

From CMC Xander Gamble
US Navy

The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2022 signed into law Dec. 27, 2021, establishes the United States Naval Community College.

The NDAA also grants the USNCC authority to grant degrees under the condition that these degrees are accredited by a civilian academic credentialing authority.

"We are very excited to have achieved this milestone after all the work our team has put into developing a quality institution and program for our Sailors, Marines, and Coast Guardsmen," said Randi R. Cosentino, Ed.D., president of the USNCC. "With this, we can continue to work towards the accreditation aspect of our school."

Currently, the men and women of the Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard who attend the USNCC will have their degrees accredited and granted by the USNCC's contracted partner institutions through an established consortium agreement. For example, the students pursuing an associate of arts with interdisciplinary courses focused in Military Studies will have their degree granted by Arizona State University, which is the institution contracted to teach the majority of the courses for that degree program. ASU

was selected October 1 as the first institution to participate in the USNCC's current pilot program.

Achieving accreditation is a multi-year, complex process towards which the USNCC has already begun working with the Middle States Commission on Higher Education.

"The USNCC will be seeking accreditation through the MSCHE specifically because of its extensive experience with other military institutions – the US Naval Academy, US Military Academy, US Army War College, US Merchant Marine Academy – and is familiar with the unique funding and oversight structures necessitated by being a part of the federal government," said Bob Kozloski, chief of staff for the USNCC.

Part of the accreditation process includes a review of the courses taught by the applying college. The USNCC began January 10, 2022, piloting its first course, Naval Studies 101 – Introduction to Naval Ethics and Leadership, with 127 students from the Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard.

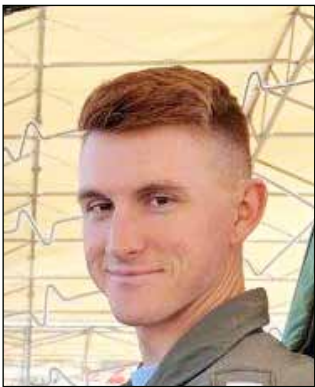
This group of students will pilot all five courses the USNCC intends to offer over the course of the year. These five courses comprise the USNCC's Naval Studies Certificate, which will be the core of every degree program the USNCC offers.

● USNCC, page 2

Two aviators earn ‘Wings of Gold’ in February ceremony

There was a naval aviator designation ceremony Feb. 11 onboard Naval Air Station Meridian.

Two 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.”



LTJG Chris Armstrong



LTJG Dallas Burke



AP Photo by Seth Wenig

A woman looks over shelves, some of which are empty, at a Walmart store in Teterboro, N.J., on Jan. 12, 2022. The Justice Department is launching a new initiative aimed at identifying companies that exploit supply chain disruptions in the U.S. to make increased profits in violation of federal antitrust laws.

Justice Dept. to take on exploitation of supply chain

By Michael Balsamo
AP News

The Justice Department is launching a new initiative aimed at identifying companies that exploit supply chain disruptions in the U.S. to make increased profits in violation of federal antitrust laws.

The program, being unveiled Thursday by the Justice Department’s antitrust division and the FBI, comes amid ongoing supply chain struggles and labor shortages in the U.S. that have plagued retailers since the coronavirus pandemic began.

Justice Department lawyers worry that companies may “seek to exploit supply chain disruptions for their own illicit gain,” the department said. And, if that’s the case, the Justice Department and the FBI will prosecute antitrust violations they uncov-

er, the department says.

Those violations could include agreements between individuals and businesses to fix prices or wages or to rig bids, prosecutors say.

The U.S. government also has formed a working group focused on supply chain collusion — meant to share intelligence and detect global schemes — with officials in several other countries, including the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand and Canada.

“Temporary supply chain disruptions should not be allowed to conceal illegal conduct,” said Assistant Attorney General Jonathan Kanter, who runs the Justice Department’s antitrust division. “The Antitrust Division will not allow companies to collude in order to overcharge consumers under the guise of supply chain disruptions.”



Golden Stick



Photo by Adam Prince

CDR Greg Enzinger, commanding officer of Training Squadron SEVEN, presents LTJG Dallas Burke, USN, with the Golden Stick Award. The award is sponsored by the Mississippi Council of the Navy League and is awarded to the top aviator of each class.

● **USNCC**

“The course is off to a great start with students from all over the globe taking part in it from their locations on base and afloat,” said Chuck Cushman, Ph.D., dean of academic programs for the USNCC. “We are learning how best to support our students as they access the course, do their assignments, and communicate with each other and their faculty members.”

The first naval studies course provides students with the foundational knowledge to assist them in understanding their role as a member of the U.S. military. This is done through the use of a moral deliberation road map which includes moral deliberation, moral excellence, and the just war tradition.

This course also provides a deeper knowledge of the ethical demands of combat and a basic understanding and contemporary thought on the theoretical complexities inherent in military service.

As each of the naval studies courses are built with the intention of aligning with a comparable course at the other colleges in the USNCC’s consortium, the Naval Ethics and Leadership course is intended to align with an introductory-level Philosophy course.

“We are most lethal when we are trained and educated,” said Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps Troy E. Black. “The U.S. Naval Community College provides our warfighters not only with the education to be a capable decision-maker on the battlefield, but also an accomplished decision-maker for our American society.”

Active duty enlisted Sailors, Marines, and Coast Guardsmen interested in participating in the USNCC’s pilot program can fill out an application on the USNCC website, www.usncc.edu.

● **Caregiver**

The Navy’s Parental Leave Program details are covered in MILPERSMAN article 1050-415 and are being updated to reflect the increase. Parental leave is “non-chargeable,” meaning it does not count against a member’s earned leave balance.

SCL is only for Sailors properly designated in their service records as secondary caregivers.

The leave is authorized once either a Qualifying Birth Event (QBE) or Qualifying Adoption (QA) has happened. Steps necessary for Sailors and commands to ensure the member qualifies for the leave are also outlined in the MILPERSMAN article.

Sailors with a QBE or QA who have not yet taken their authorized Parental Leave as the Feb. 11 effective date qualify to take up to the new 21-day maximum with the approval of their chain of command.

Parental leave must be taken within a year of the QBE or QA.

Those Sailors who have already taken their parental leave won’t be eligible for additional non-chargeable leave under this program.

Complete details are available in NAVADMIN 037/22, and MILPERSMAN article 1050-415.

The Skyline ~ Naval Air Station Meridian, Miss.

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Local Happenings

FEBRUARY

19-20: Battle of the Texas Hospital from 6 a.m.-11 p.m. Saturday and 7 a.m.-5 p.m. Sunday at Archusa Creek Water Park in Quitman, Miss. Reenactments, beauty pageant, vendors and more. Call 601-549-1969 or visit www.quitmanbattle.com.

22: 75th Annual Pancake Jubilee from 6:30 a.m.-7 p.m. at the Temple Theater Ballroom. The event will include take-out service and sit down eating if you like. We will be serving pancakes & sausage with butter and syrup. Tickets are \$5 in advance and \$6 at the door. You can purchase tickets online at <http://www.dtoc.org/pancake-jubilee/> or email contactus@dtoc.org.

25: Masquerade at Merrehope from 6-8 p.m. at Merrehope. Live entertainment, King Cakes, along with light party fare; plus a few Merrehope Mardi Gras surprises. Tickets are \$10 at the door; call 601-483-8439.

26: Dr. Seuss' Silly Birthday Celebration from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. at the Mississippi Children's Museum - Meridian. Indoor activities: Imagination Library, Cat in the Hat top hats, Oh, the Places You'll Go hot air balloon craft and Oobleck making with Algix. Outdoor activities: Bubbles, games and face painting. Tickets \$10; call 601-981-5469.

MARCH

5: Redd Hot Steam at Soule' at 6-9 p.m. at the Soule Steam Feed Works. Experience a night under the stars strolling along the hidden cobblestone alleyways of Meridian's historic Soule' Steam Works while enjoying exquisite cocktails and small bites. Tickets are \$35 single/\$60 couples; call 601-693-2224.

10: Brown Bag Lunch Performance: Irish Step Dancing from 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Mississippi Arts + Entertainment Experience. Catherine Bishop leads this educational talk about Irish dance with a demonstration by performers from St. Andrew's Episcopal School. Free and open to the public; call 601-581-1550.

26: 5th Annual Allie Cat Run & Festival from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. at City Hall Lawn. Join the 5K run; 2 mile run/walk and kids fun run. All proceeds benefit MORA, Allie Carruth Scholarship and Allie Carruth Grant. For info, visit <http://time2run.net>.

26: MCM-Meridian's 1st Birthday! from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. at the Mississippi Children's Museum - Meridian. Come celebrate our first birthday. Tickets are \$10; call 601-512-0278.

APRIL

2-3: Maker Faire Meridian from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. at the Soule Steam Feed Works. Maker Faire Meridian is a family-friendly event that gives everyone an opportunity for conversations with Makers — crafters, educators, tinkerers, hobbyists, engineers, artists, students, inventors and entrepreneurs. Call 601-693-9905.

Air wing of the future strengthens joint force during Indo-Pacific exercise

The USS Abraham Lincoln Carrier Strike Group (ABECSG) participated in Exercise Noble Fusion, a joint and combined naval expeditionary exercise including multiple elements of the U.S. Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force, alongside the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force, in support of a free and open Indo-Pacific, Feb. 3-7.

"Integrating the elements of the dual-MEU/ARG team with the power of the carrier strike group, joint elements and our Japanese counterparts in a distributed exercise demonstrates our ability to command and control lethal forces in contested areas, create strategic advantage and integrated deterrence," said Col. Michael Brennan, operations officer, Combined Task Force 79.

This exercise marks the first time that ABECSG has operated alongside two Marine Expeditionary Units (MEU)/Amphibious Ready Groups (ARG) including the first Marine squadron to deploy the F-35C Lightning II.

The "Black Knights" of Marine Fighter Attack Squadron (VMFA) 314 provided air support of simulated long-range maritime strikes during amphibious exercises in the Philippine Sea. VMFA-314 uniquely provides ABECSG and naval expeditionary forces the opportunity to refine its integrated naval power while leveraging the complementary strengths of the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps.

-- From Ensign Gabriel Wahl, USS Abraham Lincoln Public Affairs

[Read more, click here](#)

Health advisory lifted for Red Hill housing

The Hawaii Department of Health (DOH) amended the health advisory for Red Hill Housing (Zone I1) today, signifying water in this zone is safe to drink. This is the first of the 19 affected zones on the Navy Water System to have the health advisory lifted. The DOH amendment is located here.

The lifting of the health advisory by DOH follows a conditions-based, iterative process, developed by the Interagency Drinking Water System Team (IDWST), to flush, sample, and test drinking water at both the distribution system and home/non-residential building levels.

This process, detailed in the approved Drinking Water Sampling Plan, also includes several stages of data validation by the IDWST, composed of representatives from the Navy, Army, the DOH and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, before final DOH review and approval.

"Today is an important milestone as the first of 19 neighborhoods is restored to safe drinking water standards. We truly appreciate our residents' patience and the hard work of both the DOH and EPA in this effort," said Rear Adm. Blake Converse, deputy commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet. "We are grateful for the continued collaboration among our service component partners and the agencies in our Interagency Drinking Water Systems Team to establish a recovery approach that was grounded in hard science and a comprehensive water testing regimen. We will continue to pursue the goal of restoring every neighborhood to safe drinking water standards in a safe and efficient manner."

-- From US Navy

[Read more, click here](#)

Carl Vinson Carrier Strike Group returns home

The Carl Vinson Carrier Strike Group returned to San Diego, marking the end of an eight-month deployment to U.S. 3rd and 7th Fleets areas of operation, Feb. 14.

After an accelerated departure from San Diego, the Carl Vinson CSG supported integrated operations in the Hawaiian Islands operating area with the U.S. Marine Corps, Air Force and Coast Guard as part of the Defense Department's ongoing presence in the Indo-Pacific region. They continued into the western Pacific demonstrating U.S. commitment to partnerships and alliances in the region while upholding a free and open Indo-Pacific.

"The tireless dedication and professionalism of our Sailors, through a global pandemic, challenging operational tempo, and sacrificed time away from family, is truly humbling," said Capt. P. Scott Miller, commanding officer of Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70), the strike group's flagship. "Their efforts have demonstrated flexibility and resiliency and ensured mission success in every task. They have directly supported a free and open Indo-Pacific and have underscored our Navy's readiness, strength, and lethality."

-- From U.S. 3rd Fleet 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: 3BD 2BA home with 1 car ga-

rage, 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: 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. 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.

MISCELLANEOUS

For Sale By Owner: 3BD/3BA brick home with sunroom, larged fenced in yard. Convenient to shop-

ping and base. \$139K. Call 601-513-3395 or 601-227-1870.

For Sale: Office desk with file cabinets and hutch. Item retails for well over \$1000; selling it for \$300 (or best offer). Please contact LtCol Topping at 858-736-5812.

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

More U.S. troops to deploy to Europe; Guardsmen reassigned out of Ukraine

By Jim Garamone
DoD News, Defense Media Activity

Another 3,000 troops from the 82nd Airborne Division will move to Europe in the coming days, and Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III is temporarily repositioning 160 troops training Ukraine’s military out of the country. Soldiers exit aircraft.

The moves come in the face of further signs of Russian escalation on its borders with Ukraine, said Jake Sullivan, President Joe Biden’s National Security Advisor. Sullivan spoke at the White House, yesterday.

“As we’ve said before, we are in the window when an invasion could begin at any time should [Russian President] Vladimir Putin decide to order it,” the national security advisor said. Sullivan said this new invasion of Ukraine — Russia invaded the country in 2014 and illegally annexed Crimea — could come at any time.”

Sullivan said the United States is ready no matter which decision Putin makes. The United States will negotiate if the Russian leader so chooses, or “we are also ready to respond decisively, alongside those allies and partners, should Russia choose to take military action,” he said.

The response to a Russian invasion would include severe economic sanctions, with similar packages imposed by the European Union, the United Kingdom, Canada and other countries, Sullivan said. “It would also include changes to NATO and American force posture along the eastern flank of NATO, and it would include continued



Photo by Army Spc. Joshua Cowden

Soldiers of the XVIII Airborne Corps arrive in Wiesbaden, Germany, in support of NATO allies, Feb. 4.

support to Ukraine,” he said.

A total of 160 members of the Florida National Guard have been deployed to Ukraine since late November training and advising and mentoring Ukrainian armed forces. The troops, assigned to the 53rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, are part of the Joint Multinational Training Group-Ukraine.

“They are departing Ukraine and will reposition elsewhere in Europe,” Pentagon Press Secretary John F. Kirby said in a written statement Saturday. “The secretary made this decision out of an abundance of caution — with the safety and security of our personnel foremost in mind — and informed by the State Department’s guidance on U.S. personnel in Ukraine.”

Yesterday, a senior defense official confirmed that another 3,000 soldiers from the 82nd Airborne Division based at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, will deploy to Europe. “This second tranche of airborne soldiers will join in Poland the first tranche of 1,700 soldiers and key enablers that Secretary Austin ordered there on February 2nd,” said the senior defense official speaking on background. “Nearly two-thirds of this first tranche has already arrived. They are commanded by Army Maj. Gen. Christopher Donahue.” Deployment of 300 members of the 18th Airborne Corps headquarters element to Germany has been completed, the official said. That element is led by Army Lt. Gen. Michael Kurilla.

“All told, these 5,000 additional personnel comprise a highly mobile and flexible force, capable of multiple missions,” the official said. “They are being deployed to reassure our NATO allies, deter any potential aggression against NATO’s eastern flank, train with host-nation forces and contribute to a wide range of contingencies. They will report to Air Force Gen. Tod Wolters, the commander of U.S. European Command.”

[Read more, click here](#)

Pentagon exhibit honors military contributions of African Americans

From DoD News

African Americans have served valiantly in military service, from the colonial times to present day. Their service has been honored with a Pentagon exhibit that showcases their triumphs and struggles, as well as the injustices committed against them.

The exhibit, spanning a corridor of the Pentagon, is titled “If We Must Fight: African Americans in Defense of Our Nation.” President Joe Biden visited the corridor last year, shortly after becoming president.

The corridor honors the “long history of Black Americans fighting for this country, even when their contributions were not always recognized or honored appropriately,” the president said at the time.

The exhibit tells the story in the broader political, social, cultural and economic context, explains the curator of the exhibit, and subject matter expert, retired Army Col. Krewasky A. Salter, PhD.

Showing the whole story, the tragedies and the triumphs, gives the viewer [an] important context into the larger question of “why,” he said.

“I want people when they go through the corridor. . . to get a comprehensive story and hopefully, they will be inspired,” Salter said. “And also, not only see that African

Americans have served and always served but so did all people of different races and ethnic groups and women throughout history.”

The exhibit includes modern-day milestones with the first black commander-in-chief, President Barack Obama; and the first black chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Army Gen. Colin L. Powell, who also went on to become the first black U.S. secretary of state.

Current Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III is featured in a photo when he was an Army general overseeing military operations in theater with then-Lt. Gen. Vincent K. Brooks and Lt. Gen. Dennis L. Via. These are all powerful examples of the incredible contributions of African Americans in military service to the nation, says project manager retired Army Col. Norvel “Rock” Dillard.

This rich and accomplished history includes men, women, civilians and families, he adds.

It includes the free and enslaved who fought in the colonial wars and the American Revolution; the black Union regiments that fought for their own freedom in the Civil War; the courageous and ground-breaking service of African Americans in World War I, World War II and the Korean and Vietnam Wars. The Buffalo soldiers; the Tuskegee Airmen; the Montford

Point Marines; the Navy’s first commissioned black officers, known as the ‘Golden Thirteen’; Medal of Honor recipients; and the African American women who served in World War II in Navy WAVES, Coast Guard SPARS and the Women’s Army Auxiliary Corps, later the Women’s Army Corps, are all featured.

But as African Americans made incredible achievements, and fought valiantly in wars, they faced terrible injustices and their own freedom was not fully realized, Dillard said. The exhibit shows the tragedies of slavery, Jim Crow racism, segregated military units and the harsh and unequal treatment of blacks in America.

The exhibit is extremely powerful because it tells the whole story in context of American history, according to the chief historian with the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Erin R. Mahan, PhD.

It is meant to show the truth and make people uncomfortable, she said, adding, “it’s that connection that makes the corridor more relatable and ultimately more meaningful, in my view.”

The corridor was done in consultation with the historians of all the military services, according to exhibit designer, Kelly Guerrero with the Office of the Secretary of Defense Graphics Office.

[Read more, click here](#)

Working out a time to workout

“Did these shrink?” I mutter to myself, while stuffing the relevant bits and pieces into my spandex pants. I had resolved to drop a few excess pounds after the holidays, and putting on workout clothes was half the battle.

“Now I have to exercise today,” I proclaim before trudging to the kitchen for coffee.

After feeding the dog, I sit down at our kitchen island to sip my coffee and thumb through Instagram on my phone, fully intending to drive to the base gym and lift weights. An hour later, I’ve made it into our driveway, but I can’t help but notice how messy the interior of my car was. With a loud “tsk” I decide that it is imperative for me to Shop Vac the car before going to the gym.

COLUMN



Molinari

There’s something about a Shop Vacs, leaf blowers and a power washers. Once I get one going, I can’t seem to put the thing down. It’s exhilarating to cleanse one’s life of debris and clutter, and I never seem to want that feeling to end.

Two hours later, I have not only vacuumed the car, but I’ve also sucked the cobwebs out of the shed, the sand off the porch, the dog hair off the living room floor, the peanuts from under the couch cushions, and the crumbs out of the utensil drawers.

I breathe a huge sigh of cleansed relief, and then notice the time. “Criminy!” I blurt, “I still need to exercise!” I decide to save the weight lifting for tomorrow, and just get a power walk in. That is, right after I hit the bathroom.

My middle-aged bladder no longer cooperates. I used to be able to “hold it” forever like some kind of sub-Saharan camel. But once I hit my forties, my bladder got fed up and took my urethra hostage. Essentially, when the urge strikes, I’d better hit the porcelain throne within a minute or two, or my bladder will open the release valve on my own little Hoover Dam.

While doing my business, I notice an interesting article on space exploration in the latest National Geographic ...

With a resounding flush, I emerge from the bathroom with an empty bladder and a brain full of newfound information on space exploration, scatology, airborne microbes, and Ecuadorian parakeets. “Fascinating...” I mutter while tying up the string on my workout pants.

The clock dictates that it’s on the early side of lunchtime. I can’t go on a power walk with an empty stomach, of course. Ever a multi-tasker, I eat a turkey sandwich and half-a-bag of kettle cooked potato chips while checking e-mails on our computer.

Computers can be evil. Just like I can’t just buy just one thing at Target, I find it nearly impossible to just “check e-mail” on our computer. Somehow, tabs get opened, links get clicked, and next thing you know, I’ve told someone what I ate for lunch on Facebook, bid on a set of vintage Pyrex nesting bowls on Ebay, and watched three You Tube videos of babies laughing at stuff.

A couple hours later, I’m ready for

that walk, but decide I’d better fluff and fold the laundry real quick so the shirts won’t wrinkle. Since folding laundry is about as entertaining as watching paint dry, I turn the TV on for a little background noise.

I must say, those shows about hoarders are riveting. It’s like a train wreck – it’s awful and tragic, but you can’t stop watching.

An hour later, I try to go on my walk, but I have to defrost the pork chops, I have to load the dishwasher, I have to scratch the dog’s belly, I have to watch that hilarious rerun of “The Office.”

At 11:00 pm, my husband wakes me on the couch to follow him to our bed. My workout clothes are quite cozy, so in a “Flashdance”-inspired move, I remove my sports bra and climb into bed. “My workout clothes will already be on when I wake up in the morning,” I think to myself before dropping off to sleep, “so I’ll have to exercise tomorrow, for sure.” 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.com.



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		

