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Vietnam “Ace” visits TW-1



Left, CDR Bill “Willie” Driscoll, USN, (Ret.), a Radar Intercept Officer in Vietnam flying in F-4’s, speaks to student aviators and instructor pilots at Training Air Wing One, May 15. His military resume includes over 170 combat missions and four years as a flight instructor at TOPGUN. Right: Driscoll joins CAPT Juston Kuch, right, commodore of Training Air Wing One, LCDR Sean Waldron and CDR Adam Cowan, commanding officer of VT-86, who flew the jet in from NAS Pensacola. The T-45 Goshawk’s paint scheme is in a replica of an F-4.

Photo by Penny Randall

FRCSE Establishes New T-45 Repair Capability

By Ashley Sherman

Fleet Readiness Center Southeast

In November 2024, Fleet Readiness Center Southeast (FRCSE) stood up repair capability for a T-45 Goshawk service life extension program (SLEP) production line supporting the Naval Undergraduate Flight Training Systems Program Office (PMA-273).

FRCSE expects the first SLEP wing swap and full aircraft SLEP in June 2025, only 13 months after the Navy identified the requirement in May 2024. Usually, this process takes upward of two years.

Currently, the command has one fuselage and three wings on deck, with each wing SLEP expected to take 4,000 working hours and each fuselage to take 24,000. The command expects to ramp up to work on 12 aircraft simultaneously by 2028 and the work to continue through the 2030s.

“The point of the service life extension program is to extend the flyable hours on the T-45 aircraft,” said Jeff Cavanaugh, FRCSE’s F-5 production line lead. “Right now, those hours are being reached at a faster rate than anticipated. The Goshawk is important because pilots receive their carrier qualification on this airframe, which must be completed before a pilot can fly any other carrier-capable fighter.”

PMA-273 called on the command for this workload because of its proven track record establishing rapid repair capability to deliver

●T-45, page 4



Photo by Toiete Jackson

Kristopher Williams (left) and Jeffrey Zumwalde, sheet metal mechanics at Fleet Readiness Center Southeast, perform service life extension program upgrades on a T-45 Goshawk wing. The T-45 jet aircraft is used for intermediate and advanced portions of the Navy/Marine Corps pilot training program.

Gold Star Remembrance Month

By Stephanie Hunter

Navy Gold Star Program Analyst

Every year, thousands of military personnel make selfless sacrifices to defend our country and protect the freedoms we hold dear. The strong and patriotic families of those who serve understand the importance of this commitment, standing alongside the men and women who serve so valiantly.

As a nation, we support and thank these brave individuals for their service, but our support should not end there. Each year, we lose hundreds of service members, whether through suicide, combat, training accidents, illness, or even homicide. In 2024 alone, the Navy lost 182 active-duty Sailors, leaving behind loved ones—the Gold Star families.

We have a duty to care for our Gold Star families and honor the legacies of their fallen heroes. This proud nation takes a moment every year at the end of May to remember, the fallen for Memorial Day, which is why through out the month of May, the Navy Gold Star Program emphasizes

●Gold Star, page 3



CULTURE AND FORCE RESILIENCE

April 21, 2025 - June 30, 2025

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CNRSE Wins the DoD Promoting Excellence in Prevention Award

By Jacob Sippel
Commander, Navy Region Southeast

The United States Department of Defense Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPRO) awards for 2025 have been announced, and this year's winner for the category Promoting Excellence in Prevention is Commander Navy Region Southeast Integrated Primary Prevention Workforce Team.

This team consists of Tina Vaughn-Wardle, Jodi Arden, Alan Muriera, Roselyn Perez, Earl Murray, Raymond Charest, Brendon Frecka, and Marcus Williams.

The Promoting Excellence in Prevention Award is an annual award from the Department of Defense Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office that recognizes individuals or groups who have made significant contributions to preventing sexual assault. This award, presented to those from each military service and their reserve components, acknowledges efforts that have positively impacted sexual assault prevention efforts on installations, in deployed environments, or within reserve components.

CNRSE Integrated Primary Prevention Workforce (IPPW), comprised of staff from Naval Air Station Corpus Christi, Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Fort Worth, Naval Air Station Pensacola, Naval Air Station Jacksonville, Naval Station Mayport, and Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay are building prevention capacity within the U.S. Navy to optimize warfighter resilience and mission readiness by enhancing the well-being of the Total Force and preventing harmful behaviors.

“CNRSE IPPW is more than just personnel assigned to installations — it is a dynamic and evolving workforce,” said Tina Vaughn-Wardle, Region Integrated Prevention Coordinator. “Our team is forging connections across installation and geographic boundaries to build a Community of Practice (COP) — a prevention network dedicated to sharing knowledge, solving problems, and driving innovation.”

One of these innovations involves the collaboration on and adaptation of SHIELD (Sailors Honoring Integrity, Empowerment, and Leadership Development), a sexual assault prevention program. SHIELD was just awarded the DOD Excellence in Prevention Award because of its aim to address risk fac-



tors associated with destructive behaviors such as sexual assault, harassment, and relationship violence, while also building confidence, connection, resilience, and leadership. SHIELD focuses on equipping male Sailors with leadership and healthy relationship skills, to foster safe and supportive environments to prevent sexual assault and its contributing factors, empowering male Sailors as active and empowered bystanders.

"The success of CNRSE IPPW is built on collaboration: working hand-in-hand with Navy leaders, Sailors, fellow IPPW colleagues, CNIC, OPNAV, DON OFR, and the researchers who developed this initiative using more than 25 years of research," explains Vaughn-Wardle. "Together, we are not only building prevention programs but also forging lasting partnerships and strengthening the Navy's prevention capacity."

The United States Department of Defense Sexual Assault Prevention and Response award recipients and their contributions are published each year to facilitate the sharing of information and enhance opportunities to further SAPRO's mission to promote military readiness, to provide unparalleled warfighter support, advocacy, and recovery assistance – anytime, anywhere, by eliminating sexual assault and ensuring excellence in prevention efforts.

Navy Region Southeast manages and oversees shore installation management support and execution for 18 installations within the Southeastern United States, including Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

Realistic Simulation Sharpens Expeditionary Medicine Readiness

**By Petty Officer 2nd
Class Moira Esquivel
Naval Expeditionary Medicine
Warfighter Development Center**

Naval Expeditionary Medicine Warfighter Development Center (NEMWDC) is elevating Expeditionary Medicine (EXMED) readiness through a highly realistic training environment, employing cutting-edge moulage, immersive battle effects, and advanced high-fidelity simulation.

EXMED platforms that include Expeditionary Medical Facilities, Expeditionary Resuscitative Surgical Systems (ERSS) and En-Route Care Systems (ERCS) undergo comprehensive training at NEMWDC to refine their skills and prepare them to deliver life-saving damage control resuscitation and damage control surgery in the most challenging conditions. These training events replicate the stress and complexity of real-world trauma care in an austere environment that challenges the clinical precision and mental readiness of each EXMED team.

Lt. Joshua Grimes, physician assistant with ERSS 7, said the integration of the hyper-realistic simulation elevated the training during a recent ERSS course. "The simulation with a real person in a cut suit allowed for a dynamic interaction and feedback. That integration was impressive."

Before the first simulated casualty reaches the triage point, hours of meticulous preparation occur behind the scenes. A trained moulage team crafts realistic injuries



Photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Moira Esquivel

Construction Electrician 1st Class Jason Gomes (right) and Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Abigail Dunlap (left) moulage technician and lead construction electrician instructor at Naval Expeditionary Medicine Warfighter Development Center (NEMWDC), put a flak vest onto a high-fidelity manikin during an Expeditionary Resuscitative Surgical System course at NEMWDC, Apr. 14. The realistic wounds and outfits help immerse students in combat medical simulations and reinforce rapid trauma assessment skills.

using silicone prosthetics, artificial blood, and specialized makeup techniques to simulate gunshot wounds, blast injuries, burns, and amputations, mirroring battlefield trauma patterns.

Role-players are also trained to simulate physiological and behavioral responses—ranging from arterial bleeds and altered breathing to shock and hysteria—forcing corpsmen and medical officers to assess and react under pressure.

"Realistic" moulage makes a big difference in medical simulations because it helps trainees react as if the injuries were real," said Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Abigail Dunlap, a member of the moulage team. "It creates

a sense of urgency and emotional engagement, which helps them stay focused and make quick decisions under pressure. For military medical personnel, this kind of training is essential—it builds confidence, improves recognition of injury types, and better prepares them for real-life emergencies.”

Through their combined efforts, the moulage team ensures that training environments are immersive, challenging, and capable of preparing EXMED teams for the operational realities they will face in the field.

To enhance real-world simulation, NEMWDC will regularly utilize operational support elements to provide integration with roles of care.

— READ MORE, CLICK HERE

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LOCAL HAPPENINGS

MAY:

15-18: Jimmie Rodgers Festival - The week-long festival features live music every night of the week with performances by St. Paul & the Broken Bones, Daniel Houze, and Sister Sadie. Other events include: the musical history seminar, outdoor festival, talent competition, golf tournament and the NOLA-style Gospel Brunch. **Located in Downtown Meridian.** [Click here for tickets, entries, & info.](#)

15-18: MS & AL Antique Alley - Enjoy the southern route along scenic US Highway 11 from Meridian, Mississippi to Bristol, Virginia for more than 500 miles of yard sales and antiques! Explore charming historic communities and downtown districts through East Mississippi & West Alabama as you begin the stretch of five states. **Located along US Highway 11 & 80.** [Click here for tickets, entries, & info.](#)

17: Armed Forces Day Freedom 5K, 8-11 a.m. - Come Run or Walk in honor of Meridian and East Mississippi's HEROES and PATRIOTS! Run/Walk - \$25, Fun Run - \$20, Military/Veterans/First Responders, \$20. **Location: The Grove at Bonita Lakes Park – Meridian.** [Click here for tickets, entries, & info.](#)

22: Dailey & Vincent, 7:30 p.m. - Jamie Dailey and Darrin Vincent represent the quintessential blend of all-American music, fusing country, bluegrass, and gospel into performances that make folks feel right at home. **Located in Downtown Meridian at the MSU Riley Center.** [Click here for tickets, entries, & info.](#)

24: East Mississippi Veterans Memorial Park Memorial Day Ceremony, 11 a.m. - Congressman Michael Guest will be the guest speaker, and the Garden Clubs of Mississippi will dedicate a Blue Star Memorial Marker during the ceremony. The public is invited to attend. **Located at the Veteran's Park on Highway 11, Near Meridian Regional Airport.**

26: Memorial Day Tribute, 10 a.m. - Keynote speaker is CDR Matthew Peden, Commanding Officer, Navy Reserve Center Meridian. **Located at 500 Constitution Ave, Meridian, MS.** (In the event of bad weather, the ceremony will take place on the 3rd floor of City Hall.)

JUNE:

5: Mingle at the Museum, 6-9 p.m. - Adults 21 and up are invited to the museum for a lively, carnival night event featuring live music, festive fair food, games, amazing prizes, incredible photo ops, and more! **Located at the Meridian Children's Museum.** [Click here for tickets, entries, & info.](#)

AREA HAPPENINGS

MAY:

31: Rick Springfield Concert, 7:30 p.m. - Concert features performances by John Waite, Wang Chung, and John Cafferty. **Located at the Brandon Ampitheater in Brandon, MS.** [Click here for tickets, entries, & info.](#)

31-01 June: Iron City Comic Con, 10 a.m.- 5 p.m. - Iron City Comic Convention is a two-day event and will bring together a diverse list of guests, vendors, artists, and fan groups, in an affordable, family-friendly environment. **Located at the Birmingham-Jefferson Convention Center in Birmingham, AL.** [Click here for tickets, entries, & info.](#)

JUNE:

3: Metallica M72 World Tour - Rock legends and special guests Pantera and Suicidal Tendencies will take over Atlanta for an epic night. **Located at the Mercedes Benz Stadium in Atlanta, GA.** [Click here for tickets, entries, & info.](#)

06: Hank Williams Jr. Concert, 6:30 p.m. - Concert features performances by the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band. **Located at the Brandon Ampitheater in Brandon, MS.** [Click here for tickets, entries, & info.](#)

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Submitted photo

LTJG Lowell Smith of Training Air Wing One and AZC Eric Hanely of Naval Air Technical Training Center (NATTC) recently introduced 23 Sailors who are currently students at the NATTC Schoolhouse studying Aviation Administration Maintenance to the T-45C “Goshawk” aircraft. The T-45C Goshawk is a tandem-seat, carrier capable, jet trainer whose mission is to train Navy and Marine Corps pilots onboard NAS Meridian.

● **Gold Star**

education within both the military and local communities about what it means to be a Gold Star Survivor. We also provide opportunities for Survivors to participate in events that pay tribute to the Fallen and offer them a chance to connect with others who share similar experiences While no amount of

gratitude can fully repay the debt owed to our lost heroes, we can recognize their service and sacrifice by helping their families preserve their memories. Regardless of the military service, cause, location, or circumstances of the loss, surviving family members deserve our recognition and deepest respect. When you see someone wearing

the Gold Star or Next-of-Kin Lapel Pin, please take a moment to acknowledge their sacrifice. Behind every pin, there are stories of fallen service members and strong Survivors who continue to carry on their legacy. For more information about the Navy Gold Star Program, please visit www.facebook.com/navygold

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For Sale: 3 BD/3 BA, 2,804sqft home in Collinsville. Upstairs is a large bonus room that can be used as a 4th bedroom or recreational space. 1 acre of land. House is WL school District. Low interest rate assumable VA loan. Asking \$399,000. For additional info please txt or call 601-479-0888

For Rent: 2 BD/1 BA, 600 sq. ft. Rent is \$1275/Month with a \$1275 Security Deposit. Rent includes an 8x11 Storage Unit, In Unit Stackable Washer/Dryer, granite countertops and Stainless Steel appliances.Pets are negotiable. No Smoking.

For Rent: 3 BD/2 BA, 1100 Sq. Ft. Rent is \$1425/Month with a \$1425 Security Deposit. Rent includes an 8x11 Storage Unit, In Unit Stackable Washer/Dryer, granite countertops and Stainless Steel appliances.Pets are negotiable. No Smoking.

For Rent: 2 BD/1 BA unfurnished home in North Hills. Available May/June. Call 601-504-5415.

For Rent: 3 BR/2 BA

home in a quiet family neighborhood comes with all appliances (incl. W/D), and is convenient to NAS Meridian, schools, shopping, activities and major employers in the area. Recently updated with all new floors and paint, several new appliances, ceiling fans and 2-inch blinds throughout. The open, split floor plan has large rooms and features a bright and airy sunroom for relaxing. Outside, there's a large fenced yard with patio and an attached 2-car garage with keypad entry. All electric with central AC/heat. Contact Leslie Turner, 601-527-4670 to view. See Zillow listing for more information and to submit applications. Rent \$1,750 per month.

For Rent: Water front home in Dalewood Shores located at 8992 Lake Flora Dr. Lauderdale, MS. Spacious two-story home facing the Lake; great for fishing and relaxing. Remodeled kitchen and new appliances. Rent is \$2,000; please call 813-406-9687.

For Rent: 1BD/1 BA furnished apartment. Has day room, kitchenette, washer

and dryer, smart tv's, central heat and air conditioning. Very clean and private, good location. \$1200/month includes utilities and wifi. No Pets. Text or call 601-527-4098.

For Sale: 3 BD/4 BA home with 2965 sq ft of lake view home in beautiful, gated Lake Eddins in Pachuta. Entertainer's kitchen with huge eat at bar. Brick floors in main living areas, all new floor covering in remaining areas, total remodel. Gorgeous brick w/natural cypress home, 2 car garage w/bonus room. Asking \$299,900. Will include additional lot on water for fishing/boat storage w/asking price. Call 601-720-1420.

For Rent: 1 BD/1 BA. Entire House in North Hills District. Listed on AIRBNB or can book direct. Daily or weekly rates plus cleaning fees. Contact: 601-504-5415.

MISCELLANEOUS

Event Space for Rent: Deer Creek Banquet Hall. 6000 sq. ft. indoor with 1600 sq. ft. outdoor spaces for rent for gatherings and events. Call Reginald at 251-455-1559.

Listings in the “Sale...Or” column are free!

Submission deadline is the Wednesday prior to production.

Email information to nasmeridianpao@gmail.com

NAS Meridian Celebrates Nurses Week with Blessing of the Hands



Photo by Evelyn Reese
NAS Meridian Command Chaplain, LCDR Carl Scroggs gives a “Blessing of the Hands” prayer to our nurses at the Navy Medicine Readiness and Training Unit at our base clinic, May 8. We celebrate National Nurses Week, May 6-12 and recognize the invaluable contributions of nurses worldwide and especially those that are dedicated to our Sailors and Marines.

Harris Honored with Meritorious Civilian Service Award

From Staff Reports

Lisa Harris, retired contracting officer from the Public Works Department (PWD) onboard Naval Air Station Meridian, was awarded the prestigious Meritorious Civilian Service Award by Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command Southeast (NAVFAC SE), May 2, 2025. The award, presented by NAS Commanding Officer CAPT Luke Davis, recognizes Harris for her outstanding and dedicated service as Supervisory Contract Specialist from October 2002 through March 2023. During her tenure, she provided exceptional leadership and oversight of NAS Meridian’s acquisition program, executing an impressive 2,238 contract actions totaling more than \$261 million in value. In March 2023, Mrs. Harris was reassigned to PWD Mayport but continued to support



Photo by Penny Randall
CAPT Luke Davis, NAS Meridian Commanding Officer, presents Lisa Harris, retired Public Works Supervisory Contract Specialist, with the Meritorious Civilian Service Award, May 2. Harris served 35 years in the federal service and executed 2,238 contract actions totaling more than \$261 million in value.

the Meridian team remotely until her retirement in December 2024, marking the end of an incredible 35-year federal civilian career. The ceremony was attended by the NAS Triad, Public Works Officer, family, friends, and colleagues, all of whom

gathered to honor Harris’ unwavering dedication and impact on the command and its mission. Her legacy of excellence, leadership, and commitment to federal service leaves an enduring mark on NAVFAC SE and the entire NAS Meridian community.

●T-45

warfighting readiness. Since the Goshawk is the primary Navy and Marine Corps tandem-seat jet trainer, the tasking came with urgency. After getting the initial call for the new work, the FRCSE team immediately began preparation, but the process presented challenges including aircraft movement, tooling and equipment obstacles. “Fortunately, we had access to a stricken aircraft that we were permitted to use as a mock for proposed engineering repairs,” said James Bock, an FRCSE business development office structural and mechanical component lead. “However, we needed to make the aircraft mobile to transport it on public roads to our facility, which involved many logistical challenges. It was vital because having the fuselage onsite allowed us to create shoring that made concurrent work possible.” Further, FRCSE artisans use standard customary units for their tooling, but the T-45 was built using metric measurements. “Outside of moving the aircraft from Cecil Field, the first challenge was identifying the type of tooling we needed,” said Cavanaugh.

“We’ve created metric kits to use while we build up our comprehensive toolboxes.” Understanding the challenges, tight timeline and complexity of the SLEP tasking, the team realized it was necessary to divide the initial depot capability (IDC) into phases. “To provide the most positive impact back to the fleet, we came up with an incremental approach,” said Bock. “During phase one, or IDC, we trucked in three wings and performed SLEP on all three to get ahead of the process. With a backlog of wings, it’s easier to transition to IDC phase two, which allows aircraft to fly into FRCSE and swap their wings with ones that have already undergone SLEP. Finally, we have full depot capability, where we will see aircraft getting the full scope of SLEP work.” To perform the majority of the work on the T-45 wing, the command had to obtain a flip jig—a piece of equipment that allows the artisans to work on the wing’s underside. The jig turns over, or flips, the approximately 2,000-pound wing so that artisans can conduct the repairs safely and ergonomically. After the jig was acquired, personnel underwent train-

ing and certification to effectively and safely operate it. “The majority of the work on the wing is done on the bottom, so being able to acquire the flip jig, or the device we use to flip the wing, was vital so that artisans don’t have to conduct this work over their heads or upside-down,” said Cavanaugh. “Our T-45 team’s ability to urgently answer the Navy’s call without compromising quality is a testament to their commitment and expertise,” said Capt. Mike Windom, FRCSE commanding officer. “This accomplishment highlights not only their resolve, but also FRCSE’s commitment to getting capability into the hands of warfighters faster.” Fleet Readiness Center Southeast (FRCSE) is Northeast Florida and Southeast Georgia’s largest maintenance, repair, overhaul and technical services provider, employing approximately 5,000 civilian, military and contract workers. The organization serves as an integral part of the greater U.S. Navy, Naval Air Systems Command, and Commander, Fleet Readiness Centers by maintaining the combat airpower for America’s military forces.

CFAS Sailor Saves a Life

By Petty Officer 1st Class
Kristen Yarber
Commander, Fleet Activities
Sasebo

Crises can happen at any time, as one Sasebo-based Sailor learned recently. While no one can plan for the unexpected, they can be prepared for it. Because of this, the U.S. Navy focuses intensely on training Sailors for any situation. The service prides itself on the motto “always ready,” a slogan recited ad nauseam in basic training. After months of chanting the phrase while learning skills such as CPR, firefighting, and basic lifesaving skills, the sentiment eventually becomes second nature. During their time in service, Sailors train to prepare for situations like shipboard fires, lethal injuries, flooding, and other emergencies they may encounter. Fortunately, some Sailors never use these skills in real-world scenarios. Others may put their skills to the test once or twice in their careers. Though, a few find themselves in scenarios where life-saving skills are desperately needed. “It seemed like a normal day,” recalled Master-at-Arms 1st Class Guillermo Gutierrez, assigned to the security department at Commander, Fleet Activities Sasebo (CFAS). “Until there was a member from [another ship] who had screamed for help.” However, this was anything but a normal day. CFAS was in the midst of hosting its annual Fleet Friendship Day, an open-base event celebrating the friendship and partnership between the U.S. Navy,



Photo by MC1 Kristen Yarber
Master-at-Arms 1st Class Guillermo Gutierrez, assigned to Commander, Fleet Activities Sasebo (CFAS) security department, poses for a portrait in Sasebo, Japan, April 22, 2025. Guillermo was recently awarded a Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal for reviving an infant during Sasebo Fleet Friendship Day on April 5.

Japanese Self-Defense Force (JSDF), and the local Japanese community. Festivalgoers were busy touring ships, enjoying live music, and sampling different food when the unthinkable happened. “I saw a mother holding her child limp in her arms,” Gutierrez said. “I reacted and assisted as best as I could.” He began to perform CPR on the infant, monitoring the child’s condition until emergency medical services (EMS) arrived on scene. After a few moments, the child responded to the life-saving measures. Shortly after, EMS and the fire department arrived and took charge of the situation. The child made a full recovery. “That’s what I’m here for,” Gutierrez said. “That’s what we’re all here for, and I’m just glad that I was able to assist.” CFAS Commander Capt. Michael Fontaine awarded Gutierrez a Navy Achievement Medal (NAM) for his efforts. Despite his accolade, Gutierrez remained humble and stressed the incredible teamwork involved in the entire ordeal. Master-at-Arms 1st Class Chantese Moore, assigned to the forward-deployed amphibious assault ship USS

America (LHA 6), was the one who recognized the situation and initially called out for help. The CFAS security, EMS, and fire department all responded effectively and efficiently. The entire scenario was a textbook example of the base’s first responders working together as a team. “We’re always ready,” said Gutierrez. “Not only in the operational aspect, but every Sailor in the military. I do think the military trains us to be ready for all those things, and it’s not a rate-specific mindset to always be willing to help.” Gutierrez mentioned this was not the first time he had to perform life-saving measures while in the military. He has had to use his training on several occasions. One such instance was with his own son. “One day he seized up and was turning blue,” he said. “I just did what I thought I should know how to do until help arrived.” Since he was home alone with his son, he was the resuscitator, 911 caller, and father all at once. Many may have panicked, but Gutierrez’s devotion to preparedness overshadowed his fear. Thanks to his quick actions, his son survived.

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