



CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC



U.S. Navy photo

U.S. Marines Sgt. Austin Loppe, left, and Lance Cpl. Colton Flach pose for a photo in front of USNS Comfort (T-AH 20) while in New York supporting the response to the coronavirus pandemic.

MARINES HELP SAVE PATIENTS BOUND FOR USNS COMFORT

By Brock Vergakis
Navy Region Mid-Atlantic Public Affairs

NEW YORK

U.S. Marine Sgt. Austin Loppe had just started his shift providing security for Military Sealift Command hospital ship USNS Comfort (T-AH-20) on April 7 when he got an urgent call over the radio shortly before

midnight.

A local hospital was undergoing an emergency evacuation and was sending patients in 10 ambulances to the Comfort all at once.

Medical staff aboard the Norfolk-based ship are treating trauma, emergency and urgent care patients without regard to their

COVID-19 status to help relieve local hospitals that have become overwhelmed with patients because of the coronavirus pandemic.

On a busy night, the Comfort might receive one ambulance every 30 minutes. But there was no precedent for so many ambulances arriving at the same time.

It was up to Loppe and his fellow Marines at the Pier 90 security checkpoint in lower Manhattan to quickly screen each ambulance and manage traffic on the pier so Navy medical staff could bring the patients aboard and start treating them there.

But as one ambulance after another arrived, the Navy-Marine Corps team was confronted with a major problem. The con-

dition of the patient in the fourth ambulance in line was rapidly deteriorating and the patient's oxygen tank was running dangerously low.

Loppe's Marines at the checkpoint halted the flow of traffic onto and off the pier so the ambulance could safely maneuver ahead of the others as fast as possible and get the patient into the hands of Navy medical staff a half-mile away down the pier.

Their quick thinking and action likely saved about 15 minutes of time and the patient's life.

"Us being infantry Marines, we're all trained in Combat Lifesaver/Tactical Com-

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U.S. Navy photo

A file photo of the U.S. Naval Academy taken Oct. 21, 2015.

USNA cancels all public Commissioning Week 2020 events

From Chief of Naval Personnel Public Affairs

WASHINGTON

The U.S. Naval Academy has announced the cancellation of all Commissioning Week 2020 public events due to the coronavirus pandemic.

"This was a very difficult decision to come to," said 63rd Superintendent Vice Adm. Sean Buck, "but due to the national impact of the coronavirus, I have canceled our traditional Commissioning Week public events in order to safeguard the health

and welfare of the entire Naval Academy family and local community, which has been my number one strategic priority since the onset of this pandemic."

The USNA graduation and commissioning ceremony will now be conducted virtually.

"I still intend to accomplish my second strategic priority, which is to graduate and commission each member of the Class of 2020," Buck said. "My team is diligently

» See **USNA | A7**

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These days, we have a new enemy to deal with. It's COVID-19, known to us all as the coronavirus—a silent enemy invading quickly, threatening our security and way of life in ways we never imagined.

»See **B4**



Commander announces Sailors of the Year

Commander, U.S. Fleet Forces (USFF) Command, announced the 2019 USFF Fleet Sea and Shore Sailors of the Year (SOY), April 10.

»See **B1**

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MC2 Adelola Tinubu

An MH-60S Seahawk assigned to the "Night Dippers" of Helicopter Sea Squadron (HSC) 5, brings supplies to the Military Sealift Command hospital ship USNS Comfort (T-AH). Comfort cares for trauma, emergency and urgent care patients without regard to their COVID-19 status. Comfort is working with the Javits New York Medical Station as an integrated system to relieve the New York City medical system, in support of U.S. Northern Command's Defense Support of Civil Authorities as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

USNS Comfort receives critical supplies in support of NYC COVID-19 response

By MC1 Scott Bigley
USNS Comfort (T-AH 20) Public Affairs

NEW YORK

Medical care providers aboard Military Sealift Command hospital ship USNS Comfort (T-AH 20) received critical supplies in support of COVID-19 response efforts in New York City, April 8.

The supplies included powered, air-purifying respirators that are vital to protecting the Comfort health care team who are treating COVID-19 cases, as well as other patients aboard the ship.

"It provides an extra level of protection for our health care team that are at the highest risk for exposure to contagions," said Cmdr. Todd Morris, director of the department for medical services. "It is a full face mask device that provides complete respiratory isolation from the surrounding environment, with a tube con-



MC2 Sara Eshleman

Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Vernon Thomas, right, tests for a proper seal on respiratory protective equipment by administering a saccharine mist for Hospitalman David Zamarripa to detect during a fit test aboard the Military Sealift Command hospital ship USNS Comfort (T-AH 20) while the ship is in New York City in support of the nation COVID-19 response efforts.

nected to a filtration system that is worn on the belt."

The acquisition of these protective devices is another way that Comfort is ensuring mission capabilities, while also protecting its patients and crew. The supplies were delivered by an MH-60S Seahawk, assigned to the "Nightdippers" of Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron FIVE (HSC- 5) stationed onboard Naval Sta-

tion Norfolk.

"The safety of patients and crew aboard Comfort is our highest priority," said Capt. Joseph O'Brien, mission commander, Task Force New York City. "We use full personal protection equipment precautions in accordance with CDC recommendations. We are receiving these items now due to the shift in patient acceptance and to ensure we maintain

safety of all aboard Comfort."

Comfort cares for trauma, emergency and urgent care patients without regard for their COVID-19 status. Comfort is working with the Javits New York Medical Station as an integrated system to relieve New York City hospitals in support of the U.S. Northern Command's Defense Support of Civil Authorities in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Navy authorizes retiring officers to stay until December

By MC1 Mark D. Faram
Chief of Naval Personnel Public Affairs

WASHINGTON

The Navy is offering active-duty and full-time support officers, currently on active duty who are slated to retire on or before Dec. 1, 2020, to remain on active duty but in a retired status until the end of the year.

The offer is part of the Navy's plans to

mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, while helping the service maintain operational, Sailor and family readiness.

According to NAVADMIN 105/20, released April 9, officers in the rank of captain or below, who must retire due to statutory requirements between now and Dec. 1, can submit a request to serve longer under a provision known as "retire/retain."

Those who are required by law to retire

because of statutory age limits, years of commissioned or active service or for failures of selection to the next rank may be eligible, if already retirement eligible.

The officer would still retire on their scheduled date but would then continue to serve with active-duty pay and entitlements until Dec. 31, unless they request an earlier date.

Officers approved for retention under this program will remain in their current rank and stay at their current command. They will not be eligible for a Permanent Change of Station move.

To allow for the necessary processing and review, requests must be received at Navy

Personnel Command prior to the officer's retirement date and in all cases no later than July 1.

Due to the need to ensure health of the force, there are no limits on the number of retired officers authorized to be retained in an active status and the time requirements for submitting a request have been waived.

Complete details are available in NAVADMIN 105/20 and MILPERSMAN 1811-010 Retention on or recall to Active-Duty in a Retired Status.

The latest DoD policies can be found at: <https://www.defense.gov/explore/spotlight/coronavirus>.

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Staff Sgt. Jordan E. Gilbert/
A U.S. Sailor with 3rd Medical Battalion, 3rd Marine Logistics Group, tests a USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71) Sailor for symptoms of COVID-19, on Naval Base Guam, Guam, April 8, 2020. Theodore Roosevelt is currently docked at Naval Base Guam where Sailors from the ship are practicing social distancing and following other guidelines from the CDC, U.S. Navy and the Governor of Guam as part of COVID-19 mitigation effort during a scheduled deployment to the Indo-Pacific.

3rd Marine Logistics Group supports USS Theodore Roosevelt

By 1st Lt. Tori Sharpe
3rd Marine Logistics Group Public Affairs

NAVAL BASE GUAM

A team of medical professionals assigned to 3rd Medical Battalion, 3rd Marine Logistics Group, III Marine Expeditionary Force deployed to Guam in order to augment the COVID-19 response efforts by USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71). Approximately 230 Sailors and Marines arrived in Guam throughout the first weeks of April and are supporting Theodore Roosevelt’s onboard medical staff in assessing, managing and treating the symptoms of COVID-19 cases while the ship is in

port. “As a Maritime Force, we need to work together as a Navy and Marine Corps team to stop the spread of COVID-19 in order to remain a ready force in the region,” said U.S. Marine Corps Brig. Gen. Keith D. Reventlow, 3rd Marine Logistics Group Commanding General. “Soon after receiving the request for support, we rapidly deployed a team of highly skilled medical professionals to augment Theodore Roosevelt’s existing capabilities with manpower and resources to effectively assist with COVID-19 cases. Our combined efforts to combat the virus and protect the health of our force will allow us to continue our

mission in Indo-Pacific theater.” The team adds to the professional medical care already available aboard Theodore Roosevelt, including more than 70 embarked officers and corpsmen and a team from the Biological Defense Research Directorate, Fort Detrick, Maryland, which has been on board Theodore Roosevelt conducting early-warning surveillance testing for Sailors who present with influenza-like symptoms. The 3rd Medical Battalion, based in Okinawa, Japan, maintains a deployable force ready to intervene to support natural disasters, humanitarian assistance and various other missions. After receiving official no-

tice of the mission to support Theodore Roosevelt, the joint Navy and Marine Corps team was ready to deploy within 48 hours. “The rapid response by the 3rd MLG was incredible,” said Rear Adm. Stu Baker, commander, Carrier Strike Group Nine. “Their footprint ashore will ensure our Sailors off ship are well cared for.” Although Theodore Roosevelt recently conducted joint exercises with the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, this deployment marks the first time the ship and the 3rd Marine Logistics Group have worked together in recent years. The medical team, which is based at Naval Base Guam, will comply with all quarantine requirements set forth by Governor Leon Guerrero and will only be travelling to conduct critical official business on military installations. Theodore Roosevelt is currently on a scheduled deployment to the Indo-Pacific and pulled in to Guam on March 27.

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POP



MC3 Jacob Bergh
Sailors assigned to the amphibious assault ship USS Makin Island (LHD 8) review charts in the combat information center. Makin Island is conducting routine operations in the eastern Pacific.

Leadership tips in challenging times

By MC1 Mark D. Faram
Chief of Naval Personnel Public Affairs

WASHINGTON

These days, we have a new enemy to deal with. It's COVID-19, known to us all as the coronavirus – a silent enemy invading quickly, threatening our security and way of life in ways we never imagined.

These are challenging times that are testing not only our capability to do our mission but our capability to lead people in times of crisis.

“You don't manage people, you manage things,” said the late Rear Adm. Grace Hopper, a Navy information systems pioneer who stayed on active duty until age 79. “You lead people.”

With that in mind, as leaders it's important to keep some fundamental principles in mind.

STAY CONNECTED

Connecting with others helps prevent people from feeling isolated and alone. Have regular phone or virtual meetings to

provide structure and stability while strengthening your team's sense of community and shared purpose.

Consider keeping a constant dialog with group texts or video chat. Check in regularly with all team members but don't forget to check in with your own leaders.

SHARE INFORMATION

Regularly sharing information establishes communication and trust with your team and is a key part of keeping everyone connected.

Whether in meetings or not, stay updated on the latest developments in your command and be prepared to communicate where your team fits into the picture.

As often as possible, keep your team updated. Encourage questions and when you don't know something, promise and deliver answers as quickly as possible.

Always remember that regular communication creates trust with your team. A communication vacuum does the opposite.

RECOGNIZE LIMITS AND NORMALIZE STRESS

We are operating in uncharted waters these days and that can be stressful on individuals and groups. Too much stress can diminish your team's ability to process complex information and perform.

Remember there are individual differences in how people cope with stress, so don't be afraid to talk about it and encourage your teams to talk about their stress, if necessary.

Don't be afraid to step back and take a breath and encourage your teams to do the same.

BUILD PHYSICAL AND MENTAL RESILIENCE

When working from home it is easy to forgo normal routines since we are no longer kept to a regular schedule and don't have the mental transition period that usually comes with the daily commute.

Keeping a regular routine for eating,

sleeping and exercising can help people feel a little closer to normal. When people take care of themselves physically and mentally, they can handle stress better.

CONTROL THE CONTROLLABLE

Reduce stress and save energy by focusing efforts on what can be controlled and accepting what cannot. Simply put, know when to fight and when to let go.

Encourage your team members to identify what they can control and, in any situation, encourage things like deep breathing and mindfulness when things start to feel out of control.

SEIZE THE MOMENT

Responding in times of crisis and helping determine the outcome is what teams live for. Leaders can reframe this moment in time as an opportunity for the entire team to contribute to the shared mission of finding solutions for tough problems.

Remind your team of the importance of the mission at hand. Vocally acknowledge that everyone has an essential role to play, no matter their rank.

TAKE THE LONG VIEW

Though no one wants bad things to happen, being part of the response when the chips are down is why many join the military or choose public service. Capitalize on that fact.

Pace yourself and your team for a marathon, as no one knows how long this battle will take. Using the long view will help to manage the expectations of yourself and your team.

You can visit the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research at <https://www.wrair.army.mil/>.

A link to their handy “Leadership Checklist” is can be found at https://www.wrair.army.mil/sites/default/files/2020-03/Covid-19_Leadership_and_Stress_WRAIR.pdf

The latest DoD coronavirus policies can be found at: <https://www.defense.gov/explore/spotlight/coronavirus>.

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MC2 Kelsey J. Hockenberger
A Sailor assigned to Commander, Submarine Squadron Fifteen delivers food to hotel rooms designated for Sailors assigned to the aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71). Theodore Roosevelt Sailors were moved to local hotels in an effort to implement an aggressive mitigation strategy to minimize the spread of COVID-19 and protect the health of the Sailors.

Meal allowance rules modified for Sailors restricted to government quarters

By MC1 Mark D. Faram
Chief of Naval Personnel Public Affairs

WASHINGTON

The Navy has modified allowance rules for Sailors in a restriction of movement (ROM) status on base in order to receive Navy-provided meals without losing their pre-existing subsistence allowance. The approval is outlined in an April 7 memorandum from Vice Adm. John B. Nowell, the Navy’s top uniformed personnel officer. The memo was crafted to ensure that those who were in command-directed isolation were not penalized with pay deductions, even if they received meals free of charge. Installation commanding officers are given approval authority to grant meals to those in a ROM status based on the guidance in the memo. The temporary exception applies to both officers and enlisted who are already being paid full BAS but find themselves under restriction of movement in govern-

ment quarters. Under normal circumstances, the DOD’s pay rules require service members being paid BAS to pay for government provided meals “out of pocket” or have their BAS reduced, accordingly. Units confined to protect the health of our personnel and their families or to assure essential mission function capability and not specifically for health-related ROM, must request approval from the Director, Military Personnel Plans and Policy (OPNAV N13) to provide subsistence-in-kind without deducting Sailors’ BAS. Sailors and commands seeking guidance on allowances can refer to the DoD Financial Management Regulations available at https://comptroller.defense.gov/Portals/45/documents/fmr/archive/07aarch/07a_25arch.pdf. The latest DoD policies relating to COVID-19 can be found at: <https://www.defense.gov/explore/spotlight/coronavirus>.

NEX creates new program to bring the store to a Sailor’s door

By Kristine Sturkie
Navy Exchange Service Command Public Affairs

VIRGINIA BEACH

The Navy Exchange Service Command’s (NEXCOM) NEX Downrange Program was originally created overseas to support troops who are forward-deployed without access to a NEX. But due to the impact of the COVID-19 crisis, the program has transformed into a quarantine support program to support service members who have either been placed on restriction of movement (ROM) by their commands or aboard a ship in port overseas and unable to disembark. As of Apr. 9, the NEX Downrange Program, or now also known as the NEX Quarantine Support Program, has been adopted by over 20 NEX locations around the world and filled approximately 3,000 orders in a little over a week. The program will continue to expand to other NEX locations where there is a need.

At most NEX locations, service members can submit an order and pay for their merchandise via a secure encrypted internet site. The customer receives an email acknowledging the order and an estimated time the order will be delivered or will be available for pick up by the Sailor’s command. Customers can purchase a variety of items from the NEX including food, non-alcoholic beverages, electronics, personal hygiene, health and comfort items, sports nutrition and cleaning supplies. Due to social distancing guidelines, all orders are delivered or picked up without coming into close contact with the associate or customer. “NEXCOM’s sole mission is to support our Navy, our Sailors and their families, especially in times of crisis,” said Greg Thomas, Senior Vice President, NEXCOM Operations. “Now more than ever our command must get creative and dig deep to support our service members, and this program does just that! For everyone’s safety and well-being, these men and women can’t come to a store... so we’re bringing the store to them!” NEX locations that are providing the downrange or quarantine support program include Bahrain; Guam; Djibouti; Jebel Ali, Dubai; Guantanamo Bay, Cuba; Naples, Italy; NEX Jacksonville, Key West, Orlando and Pensacola, Fla.; NEX Newport, R.I.; NEX Great Lakes, Ill.; NEX San Diego; NEX Norfolk, Little Creek and Oceana, Va.; NEX Bremerton and Everett, Wash.;

NEX Pearl Harbor and NEX New London, Conn. At NEX Bahrain, its downrange program has evolved into a Ship Support Program to provide Sailors who are unable to disembark from ships in port at Naval Support Activity Bahrain. Prior to a ship’s arrival, the NEX receives and fills any merchandise orders and delivers them portside. To date, NEX Bahrain has filled 67 ship orders and 331 orders for Sailors residing in the barracks. NEX Guam implemented its version of the program to support Sailors placed on ROM and within the first 24-hours of the program’s inception, filled over 60 orders. Last week the NEX Guam general manager received a note stating, “I cannot tell you how much of a force multiplier you and the NEX team have been. Every time you’ve been asked to assist, you and the team not only accepted the challenge you exceeded all expectations with speed and agility. You have, once again, proved that your NEX Guam team is more than a brick and mortar store. Team NEX Guam’s efforts have made immediate and positive impact on the crew and this community.” Stateside, NEX Great Lakes, Ill., at Navy Recruit Training Command is currently utilizing the program to support all new recruits who have been placed on ROM, and since the beginning of April has filled nearly 1,000 orders. At NEX San Diego where ROM Sailors are located all around the installation, they have adapted the program to provide a wide range of food delivery services and an online order system where their command representatives are able to also pick up items at the QMart. NEX New London, Conn., recently started its program for those students at the U.S. Naval Submarine School placed on quarantine, and has so far received over 30 orders. Additionally, NEX Pearl Harbor opened up its program on Apr. 6, and in three days, 25 orders were been placed, totaling nearly \$2,000. The NEX Downrange and Quarantine Support Program continue to be shaped and molded based on a particular installation’s need. Customers interested in finding out more information on this program should contact their local NEX. NEXCOM’s six business lines have been industrious and determined to get Sailors and their families what they need in this ever-changing COVID-19 crisis.

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MC3 Kaysee Lohmann
Aircrew Survival Equipmentman Airman Paula Guanco, from Kissimmee, Florida, makes medical-grade cloth face masks in accordance with CDC guidelines aboard the aircraft carrier USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75) in the Mediterranean Sea April 4.

U.S. Navy aircraft carriers, squadrons producing fabric face coverings to safeguard personnel

From Commander, Naval Air Force Atlantic Public Affairs

NORFOLK

Sailors assigned aboard U.S. Navy aircraft carriers and squadrons are combining forces to produce fabric face coverings to safeguard their shipmates.

The idea to produce these fabric face coverings was spearheaded by Commander, Naval Air Force Atlantic (CNAL) Force Surgeon Capt. Kimberly Toone.

Toone, a graduate of the University of Florida, College of Medicine, saw media coverage of her alma mater coordinating the voluntary production of face coverings for health care workers to help reduce the backlog of vital resources. The masks are in production aboard aircraft carriers and squadrons as an initial protective measure until other face masks are made available.

The material being used to create the fabric face coverings is made of medical grade material that is used to wrap surgical sets for use in the carrier’s operating room and has the ability to block aerosols and droplets, including water, bacteria and other particles.

“While the masks that the Sailors will be making are not a replacement for, or an equivalent to N95 respirators they do provide that protective barrier for our Sailors,” said Toone. “I’m excited about this process as it highlights the connection between my medical school family and my Navy family at a time when it is so important for all of us to work together.”

The requirement for fabric face coverings

was mandated by the U.S. Navy on April 5 for all military, Navy civilian and contractors as well as family members while on DoD property, installations and facilities when maintaining proper social distancing between people isn’t possible.

Sailors aboard USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN 69), USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72), USS George Washington (CVN 73), USS John C. Stennis (CVN 74), USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75), USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77), and USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78), led by aircrew survival equipmentman, have started to make fabric face coverings for their crews.

Some of the primary duties associated with a Navy aircrew survival equipmentman include maintaining and repairing parachutes, search and rescue equipment, and flight clothing—duties that often include sewing.

Aircrew Survival Equipmentman 2nd Class Bianca Taylor, of Fitzgerald, Georgia, assigned to the John C. Stennis, is one of several Sailors sewing masks for her fellow Sailors aboard her ship.

“It feels great to have an impact on the Sailors during this time, to keep them protected,” said Taylor.

Aircrew Survival Equipmentman Airman Devonta Drum, of Raleigh, North Carolina, also assigned to the John C. Stennis said helping his fellow Sailors is exactly why he enlisted into the U.S. Navy.

“This is actually what I signed up for, honestly it’s what I’m here for, and I’m honored to be in this position to do this and help out my fellow brothers in arms,” said Drum. “There’s more to it than us protecting

ourselves, it’s for us protecting civilians as well. It’s overall what we are here for. This is what we do as the Navy in general. We protect and serve our country; this is part of our job no matter what.”

The fabric face coverings will initially go to watchstanders in various departments on board the ship and then given to all Sailors assigned. Currently, Stennis is outputting 30 per day, with an expected increase to nearly 50 a day by next week. The Sailors have created an assembly line; while several sew, others are cutting fabric and putting the pieces and parts together to aid in creating the fabric face coverings as quickly as possible.

Capt. Jeff Chown, director, Aviation Materiel Readiness at CNAL coordinated the production of fabric face coverings for all aircraft carriers and squadrons assigned on the East Coast, and provided the guidance for counterparts at Commander, Naval Air Forces and their respective aircraft carriers and squadrons on the West Coast both deployed and in port.

“I am very proud of the efforts by the maintenance officers and their Aircraft Intermediate Maintenance Department teams aboard our aircraft carriers here in Norfolk and around the fleet,” said Chown. “Their willingness to lean forward in this effort provides key resources that are needed on aircraft carriers and flight lines and allows our Sailors to focus on mission accomplishment.”

Harry S. Truman Maintenance Officer, Cmdr. Andres Pico, of Colorado Springs, Colorado, discussed the impact his depart-

ment will have on the crew as they continue to produce the fabric face coverings.

“AIMD often works on equipment critical to safety of flight and the lives of aircrew. It’s a great feeling to extend that service to the crew,” said Pico, who added that applying the skills of his Sailors to contribute to the larger overall mission is important.

“When we’re faced with a common enemy of all humanity, it’s natural and essential that we band together as one and use our unique training and talents to combat this scourge in every way possible. With a dedicated all-hands effort we can stave off this virus and continue to keep us and our ship ready,” said Pico.

Department of Navy guidance for face coverings must meet the following requirements:

- Fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face and allow breathing without restriction; cover the face only from nose to chin; must secure in place with ties or ear loops; and any cloth mask must have multiple layers of fabric.

The guidance by the U.S. Navy follows voluntary guidelines issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on April 3 that advises people to wear cloth or fabric face coverings over their nose and mouth in public settings such as grocery stores and pharmacies, both to protect themselves and others.

The CDC said these recommended coverings are not surgical masks or N95 respirators, which are in short supply and need to be reserved for health care workers. The level of protection that N95 respirators provide is generally not necessary for the general public. The CDC continues to stress the importance of maintaining 6 feet of social distancing.

Directions to make your own face coverings can be found on the CDC website at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html> The latest DoD policies can be found at: <https://www.defense.gov/explore/spotlight/coronavirus>.

NNSY works to safeguard employee safety and health during COVID-19 pandemic

By Michael Brayshaw
Norfolk Naval Shipyard Public Affairs

PORTSMOUTH, VA.

The priorities of minimizing the spread while maximizing the mission do not need to be in conflict with one another at Norfolk Naval Shipyard (NNSY).

“So by minimize spread, you’ll be adhering to the six feet social distancing rules, supplying gloves and masks, as well as thoroughly cleaning all surfaces? If not, then you are not minimizing spread, you are part of the problem by continuing to spread the virus,” wrote one person on NNSY’s Facebook page April 2.

NNSY leadership is working to demonstrate all of those protective actions are being performed in America’s Shipyard, along with many more to safeguard the health and safety of the workforce during the national emergency caused by COVID-19. Recent initiatives on the shipyard waterfront include implementing facemasks and face shields on jobs requiring multiple people, establishing several designated cleaning times throughout the day, more effectively fanning out the workforce across all three shifts, and installing handwashing stations at the piers and dry docks.

“These important actions show employee safety, health and well-being are our top priority while we continue to meet the mission,” said NNSY Operations Officer, Captain Jip Mosman. “Not only will multiple shifts help with social distancing,

they also provide flexibility to some of our shipyard parents while their children are out of school. Dedicated cleaning crews, along with every one of us cleaning as we go throughout the day, no matter what shift we are on or where we are located, will help prevent the spread of COVID-19 inside the shipyard. We must all work as a team to keep our shipyard virus free.”

Shipyard leadership and project teams have reengineered jobs whenever possible to practice social distancing while still conducting critical work. In the cases that is not feasible and employees are within six feet of each other for prolonged periods, face masks and face shields will be used. COVID-19 specific Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) has been distributed to NNSY’s USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77), USS Wyoming (SSBN 742) and USS San Francisco (SSN 701) projects, with personnel being briefed on effective usage.

Protecting the safety and health of shipyard project teams on the piers and dry docks is further benefitted by several new handwashing stations with foot pump faucets along the waterfront. Per guidance from the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention, handwashing is more effective than using hand sanitizer, which prompted attaining and installing these stations in close proximity to brows and project trailers. These stations will be serviced several times a week to replenish water, soap, and paper towels. John Schmeckenbecher, NNSY Port Operations Installation Pro-



Daniel DeAngelis
Among the many safety and health initiatives at Norfolk Naval Shipyard to protect employee safety and health during the COVID-19 pandemic, random health measures such as temperature screening have been implemented.

gram Director, said the handwashing stations are strategically located next to the projects and are similar to ones found at a carnival. “They don’t take up much space, they are standalone and don’t take any power,” he said. “We put them where they are convenient for people to use.”

Random Health Measures have also begun at the shipyard, with ongoing spot checks throughout the installation where qualified personnel take employee temperatures and ask questions to ensure workforce members are not currently exhibiting any COVID-19 symptoms.

Naval Facilities, Public Works Department Portsmouth, is currently coordinating expanded cleaning services at NNSY to include treating high-touch objects and locations with cleaning products effective

at killing COVID-19.

These are the latest in continued efforts safeguarding employee safety and health, a movement that began in March with NNSY assembling and distributing cleaning kits and producing hand sanitizer for the workforce so cleaning products would be readily available.

“During this challenging time, shipyard leadership is doing everything in its power to ensure a safe work environment, protecting the safety and health of our co-workers, Ship’s Force, and all those within America’s Shipyard,” said Shipyard Commander Captain Kai Torkelson. “This is just the start, and there are more steps to come. It’s not going to be a sprint, it’s going to be a marathon, and we have to keep up that endurance.”



MC1 Scott Bigley

U.S. Army Lt. Col. John Falzone, a pharmacist aboard the Military Sealift Command hospital ship USNS Comfort (T-AH 20), verifies a patient's prescription. Comfort cares for trauma, emergency and urgent care patients without regard for their COVID-19 status. Comfort is working with the Javits New York Medical Station as an integrated system to relieve the New York City medical system, in support of the U.S. Northern Command's Defense Support of Civil Authorities as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Army Reservists double Comfort's pharmacy capacity

By MCC Gary Keen
USNS Comfort (T-AH 20) Public Affairs

NEW YORK

Pharmacists from the U.S. Army Reserve joined the medical team aboard the Military Sealift Command hospital ship USNS Comfort (T-AH 20) nearly doubling the pharmaceutical support available to the people of New York City and local health officials in response to the nation's COVID-19 outbreak, April 13.

Comfort is taking patients, regardless of their COVID status, in an effort to relieve pressure from hospitals that are near capacity.

The pharmacists aboard the ship, now five in number, ensure that the Comfort's medical staff is able to administer lifesaving medications to its patients and crew.

"During previous missions we have had six or more pharmacists onboard and the mission was much more limited in scope, treating more routine issues," said U.S. Navy Reserve Lt. Diana Cowell, a pharmacist

on board Comfort, from Operational Health Support Unit, Pensacola, Fla. "Our new Army teammates both have acute care experience; they have dealt with ICU populations before. We'll be able to enhance patient care we are providing to our patients."

U. S. Army Reserve Lt. Col. John Falzone works at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, and is attached to the 865th Combat Support Hospital, Utica, New York. U. S. Army Reserve Capt. Benjamin Yun, attached to the 804th Medical Brigade, Forest Park, Georgia embarked along with Falzone to arrive aboard Comfort on April 11.

"We literally doubled their capacity in one day," said Falzone. "They had three pharmacists working 24/7 for nearly two weeks straight. When the call went out that they need some in-patient pharmacists we had just arrived at the Javits Center and we both stepped up to help."

Falzone attests that this is his fourth deployment since his first during Operation

Desert Storm and described the difficulty leaving his family behind.

"Everyone back home is worried about us, but we are more worried about how they are doing," said Falzone. "When your country calls upon you to serve, you serve."

Yun shares Falzone's concerns as well as his dedication to serving a greater good.

"This is a very unique medical mission and probably the first mission that the medical brigade has had a lead role in," said Yun. "While I never thought I would embark aboard a U.S. Navy vessel, I wanted the opportunity to serve my country and the people of New York City; I am dedicated to do my very best."

Regarding the differences in service between the Army and Navy, Yun and Falzone agree that the Comfort medical staff has made their transition seamless.

"It has been a very easy transition because the Navy staff has been great and very professional," said Yun. "The only struggle is the communication issues due to the lack of

the universal electronic healthcare system that I am used to using in a civilian job."

Falzone expresses similar sentiments, stating that, "It is more of the old-school tactics of hand-writing prescriptions and going back to paper charting, which is where I came from, but it is a newer experience for some of the younger members of the team."

The Comfort is comprised of Sailors from around the fleet and civil service mariners from Military Sealift Command with unique capabilities to provide urgent medical support services.

"We appreciate the support from US Army's 804th Medical Brigade for sending two pharmacists to support operations aboard Comfort" said Capt. Patrick Amersbach, commanding officer of the Comfort's Military Treatment Facility. "This will increase our pharmaceutical capacity as we continue to support the people of New York City, treating patients regardless of their COVID status."

Comfort cares for trauma, emergency and urgent care patients without regard for their COVID-19 status. Comfort is working with the Javits New York Medical Station as an integrated system to relieve the New York City medical system, in support of the U.S. Northern Command's Defense Support of Civil Authorities as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

COMFORT I Marines at Pier 90 security checkpoint used quick thinking to save patients

Continued from A1

bat Casualty Care," Loppe said. "You need oxygen to survive. And even just going a couple minutes without oxygen, the human brain starts losing function and having permanent brain damage for life. So that wasn't something that myself or any of my Marines were willing to let happen to an American citizen. So we knew right away that we needed to get them linked up with the medical team as quickly as possible."

That wasn't the only life Loppe's Marines

helped save that night, either. About 10 minutes later, another patient toward the back of the ambulance line was running low on oxygen, too.

Once again, the Marines hustled to get the person in most desperate need of medical care to the head of the line as fast as they could.

"To be able to help New York and Americans in general is pretty awesome," said Loppe, who is from Mingo Junction, Ohio.

As the security team worked to prioritize entry for the patients in most dire need, they realized other patients in ambulances could also be running low on oxygen. Navy medical staff provided extra oxygen tanks to the Marines who then ran several hundred meters down the pier to the security checkpoint so the Marines could then run them to the ambulances, giving each patient a better chance of survival.

Lance Cpl. Colton Flach, from Green

Camp, Ohio, was one of the Marines on the pier that night.

He said the ability of the Marines, Navy and New York police to work seamlessly together helped save lives.

"They're with us 24-7 on post," Flach said. "And the moment that we had got that call, I knew that I could count on them to be able to do whatever I needed them to do, and we would do whatever we could to help them as well to get these patients the medical attention that they needed as fast as possible."

The infantry company the Marines providing security for the Comfort belong to is based at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina and had been training for an overseas deployment when they received orders to go support the Comfort in New York.

Marine Capt. Peter Hofinga is from Rhinebeck, New York and is the company commander of the Marines providing secu-

urity for the Comfort. He said he was proud of how quickly his Marines adapted to a new challenge and helped his fellow New Yorkers.

"It's kind of hard to put in words. It's immensely humbling to observe the Marines and actions that small-unit leaders are making, rapid decisions on their own without any sort of tasking or supervision," he said. "Despite the fact that this is not really in their typical task group, or what they trained to do, they are able to operate within that friction and chaos to help both the Navy-Marine Corps team overall as well as New York City residents."

USNS Comfort is currently working with the Javits New York Medical Station in Manhattan as an integrated system to relieve New York City's medical system in support of U.S. Northern Command's Defense Support of Civil Authorities as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

USNA I Graduation and commissioning ceremony will now be virtual

Continued from A1

planning on how, when, and where this special event will occur. It won't, unfortunately, be the traditional event we've all grown accustomed to witness. The Class of 2020 has worked tirelessly for nearly four years for this milestone — I believe we owe it to them to exhaust all efforts in our decision-making and planning process to make this special for them, within the guidelines we're operating under."

Other traditional class milestone events, such as the Herndon Climb and Ring Dance,

are postponed until social distancing protocols will permit large-scale events.

"There are certain rites of passage unique to the Naval Academy that every graduate reflects positively upon and thus helps to define and strengthen the Naval Academy experience," said Commandant of Midshipmen Capt. T.R. Buchanan. "Even if not held this May, our midshipmen still deserve the opportunity to enjoy those milestone events."

Separately, Naval Service Training Command (NSTC) announced April 10 the cancellation of all in-person commissioning ceremonies and related events at its Naval ROTC units around the country due to the coronavirus pandemic.

"I regret that this was necessary," said Rear Adm. Jamie Sands, NSTC Commander. "But having groups of midshipmen and their families, many of whom are already

away from their schools due to the virus, travel and gather together is not worth the risk to the welfare of them and our communities, which remains a priority for not just NROTC, but the Navy as a whole."

NROTC midshipmen who would have participated in the ceremonies will still commission, with virtual events coordinated directly by their units.

In the Naval Academy's storied 175-year history, there have been 26 early graduation and commissioning ceremonies in order to support several war efforts (Civil, Spanish-American, and World Wars I and II). At the end of the Civil War, half the class of 1865 graduated early, in November 1864 in Newport, Rhode Island, and the other half graduated late, in September 1865, when the school was moved back to Annapolis. In 1907, three separate ceremonies were held — two early, one on time. In 1917, Congress

authorized the Naval Academy to reduce its four-year program to three; the Class of 1917 was graduated early on March 29, and three months later, the Class of 1918 was graduated on June 28, 1917.

The NROTC program is supported by Rear Adm. Jamie Sands, NSTC commander, and his headquarters staff at Naval Station Great Lakes, Illinois. NROTC was established to develop midshipmen mentally, morally and physically. The program also imbues in them the highest ideals of duty, loyalty and Navy core values in order to commission college graduates as Navy and Marine Corps officers who possess a basic professional background, are motivated toward careers in the Naval service and have a potential for future development in mind and character so as to assume the highest responsibilities of command, citizenship and government.



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SAILOR OF THE YEAR**

Navy Career Counselor 1st Class

Rebecca Beck

Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 106

Congratulations!

**2019 FLEET SEA
SAILOR OF THE YEAR**

Aviation Structural Mechanic 1st Class

Carolina Berrio

Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 81



Bobbie A. Camp

A social media graphic optimized for Facebook on Commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command announcement for the 2019 Fleet Sea and Shore Sailors of the Year. Navy Career Counselor 1st Class Rebecca Beck of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 106, from Maryville, Tennessee, is the Shore Sailor of the Year, and Aviation Structural Mechanic 1st Class Carolina Berrio of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 81, from Armenia, Columbia, is the 2019 Sea Sailor of the Year. Berrio, the Sea Sailor, will be automatically advanced to chief petty officer, while Beck, the Shore Sailor, will compete as a finalist for the Chief of Naval Operations Shore Sailor of the Year.

U.S. Fleet Forces commander announces 2019 Fleet Sea, Shore Sailors of the Year

By **MC1 Theodore Green**
Commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command Public Affairs

NORFOLK

Commander, U.S. Fleet Forces (USFF) Command, announced the 2019 USFF Fleet Sea and Shore Sailors of the Year (SOY), April 10.

Adm. Christopher W. Grady named Aviation Structural Mechanic 1st Class Carolina Berrio of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 81, from Armenia, Columbia, as the 2019 Sea Sailor of the Year and Navy

Career Counselor 1st Class Rebecca Beck of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 106, from Maryville, Tennessee, as the Shore Sailor of the Year.

"It is our duty to ensure that our Sailors understand that they are truly the center of the universe and the most valuable asset in the world's most adaptable and capable naval force," said Grady. "All of the Sailor of the Year candidates serve as role models for our Sailors and represent the United States Navy's best of the best. Their hard

work, toughness, and dedication deserves to be recognized and I am honored to do so."

This year, Grady congratulated the awardees over the phone as Sailors worldwide work to combat COVID-19.

The first week of April is traditionally the time of year when SOY finalists come together in Norfolk for leadership, heritage, and team building events, followed by the boarding and selection process. Those plans were altered due to COVID-19 miti-

gation efforts, which were adjusted to support travel restrictions and social distancing guidelines.

Sailor of the Year recognition moved forward in the safest way possible.

"As a nation, we are working our way through this COVID-19 pandemic together," said Naval Surface Forces Atlantic Force Master Chief Kevin M. Goodrich. "Our USFF leadership team – specifically Adm. Grady and Fleet Master Chief O'Rawe – helped find a safe way to keep the SOY process on track, enabling us to recognize our best Sailors' efforts over the last year.

See **SAILORS** | **B7**



MC2 Ryan Seelbach

Sailors assigned to USS Gerald R. Ford's (CVN 78) air department, prepare an F/A-18F Super Hornet, attached to the "Gladiators" of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 106, to launch off Ford's flight deck during flight operations March 29, 2020.

Readying Fleet Aviators: Ford prepares pilots for deployment

By **MC1 Jeff Troutman**
USS Gerald R. Ford Public Affairs

ATLANTIC OCEAN

The aircraft carrier USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78) concluded its first-ever Fleet Replacement Squadron (FRS) carrier qualifications (CQ) for Naval aviators while underway in the Atlantic Ocean, April 4.

The mission of the FRS is to train pilots, naval flight officers and maintainers on the specific front-line aircraft they have been assigned to fly. Some pilots

may be training for current and upcoming deployments, where they will relieve currently-deployed pilots serving in fleet squadrons. Ford is currently the only carrier operating on the East Coast available to qualify pilots.

The CQ included both day and night flight operations, and required the ship and her crew of more than 2,600 Sailors to work in unison with Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 106 and Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron (VAW) 120 around the

See **FORD** | **B7**

Tiptoeing around the Class of COVID-19

By Lisa Smith Molinari

“Mom! We’re out of avocados!” my 22-year-old daughter, Anna, bellowed. “And where are the goat cheese crumbles?!”

People all over the globe are covering their faces and hands before entering grocery stores to buy life-sustaining food staples for their families sheltering at home, only to find them sparsely stocked. But in Anna’s world, being out of avocados is an emergency.

A month ago, I picked Anna up from Syracuse University, where she is a senior fashion design major, because the school had shut down due to the coronavirus crisis. I was looking forward to the five-hour drive home with her, catching up and joking around.

But she was in a mood. I listened to my audio book. She texted friends, ate trail mix, and slept.

At home, the rest of the family and I tiptoed around Anna and her mood. Previous history had taught us that normally playful, entertaining, vivacious and talented Anna, could turn into a selfish, entitled, narcissistic, prima donna at a moment’s notice. As a kid, she had milked her victimhood as the middle child, so we knew global pandemic had given her a new reason to feel sorry for herself.

Admittedly, she was getting daily emails from her school containing very bad news, so

we kept our distance.

“My Senior Fashion Show was canceled! I’ve been working on my collection for two years! I won’t have photos for my portfolio!” she wailed. “My friends had so many fun things planned for our senior spring! Now we’ll never see each other again!” she moaned. “Graduation is postponed! It won’t be the same! I wanted a party!” she barked. “Fashion industry sales are predicted to drop 30 percent! Internships and jobs openings are being canceled! What am I gonna do?!” she bellyached. “Who ate my turmeric quinoa bowl! You know gluten gives me inflammation! And how many times do I have to ask — can someone please buy oat milk?! Ugh!” she blared.

When we weren’t hiding, we cautiously teased Anna, nicknaming her “Pandanna” to signal that our otherwise lovable family member was temporarily under the influence of her own inflated sense of importance during the pandemic.

Our tiptoeing continued for three weeks while we sheltered at home, until the tension finally reached its peak. While delivering folded stacks of laundry to bedrooms, I found Anna and her sister, Lilly, locked in a circular argument. Something about “never want to hang out” and “always on your phone” and “literally a thousand times” and “so selfish” and a lot of that adjective that rhymes with

“itchy.”

“Lilly, Anna is under a lot of pressure and needs her space. Anna, even though you are stressed about graduation and your future, it doesn’t give you the right to be [that adjective that rhymes with “itchy”] to your family,” I said.

The next day, Anna was in the kitchen making a salad for our family dinner. This rare act — preparing food for more than just herself — showed that she was making an effort to be nice. As the rest of the family sidled past each other between the sink, refrigerator, and cabinets to set the table, Anna sliced radishes and cucumbers in silence.

Then, I realized that she was crying.

“What is it, honey?” I asked, setting the forks on the island and reaching for her arms.

Fat, glossy tears tumbled down Anna’s cheeks. “It all happened so fast. If I had known what I was going to miss, I would have made the best of my senior year before the virus outbreak. But it’s too late, we’re never going back to school. I might not find a job. It’s all so hard to accept.”

I hugged my daughter, said it would be okay, and told her she would have to use her unique imagination to create alternative experiences.

Pandanna wasn’t throwing another selfish tantrum. This was Anna, overwhelmed with the genuine sense of loss that has been earned by every 2020 graduate — the Class of COVID-19. Certainly, these young men and women are talented enough, resourceful enough, and strong enough to overcome this challenge. But there’s no tiptoeing around it — they’ve all earned the right to cry.

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Get familiar with your emergency and urgent care options

From Tricare

During the COVID-19 crisis, you may have more questions than usual about where to seek care or even the level of care you need. Now is the time to learn the difference between emergency and urgent care, and the rules for your TRICARE health plan. That way, you can get the appropriate treatment you need.

IS THIS AN EMERGENCY?

If you reasonably think you have an emergency, whether it’s related to COVID-19 or not, go to the nearest emergency room. Click to close The hospital department that provides emergency services to patients who need immediate medical attention. or call 911. An emergency threatens life, limb, or eyesight. Some examples include severe bleeding, chest pain, broken bones, or difficulty breathing. Other types of emergencies include maternity and psychiatric. If you develop COVID-19 emergency warning signs, get medical attention immediately. Be sure to let the emergency room or 911 dispatcher know if you believe you have COVID-19.

Emergency warning signs for someone with COVID-19 include:

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion or inability to arouse
- Bluish lips or face

“While a cough or sore throat may feel scary right now, these symptoms alone don’t generally require a trip to the emergency room,” said Dr. John Kugler, director of the Clinical Support Division at the Defense Health Agency. “An emergency is when your life, limb, or eyesight is threatened. If you reasonably believe you’re having an emergency, don’t hesitate to seek medical attention right away. If it’s not an emergency, you have other options.”

TRICARE covers emergency care. If you have a TRICARE Prime plan, you want to get in touch with your primary care manager or regional contractor within 24 hours, or the next business day after you receive care. If overseas and you need help, go to the closest emergency care facility or call the Medical Assistance number for your area.

WHEN DO I CONSIDER URGENT CARE?

Urgent care might be an option for you if you don’t reasonably believe you have an emergency. Typically, urgent care is when you need care 24 hours before it becomes an emergency. Examples might include a cut without much blood that needs stitches or a sprained ankle. Most TRICARE beneficiaries can visit an urgent care center whenever needed, but you should follow the urgent care rules for your plan.

When possible, visit a TRICARE network

provider or a TRICARE-authorized (network or non-network) urgent care center to avoid additional out-of-pocket costs. If you’re a family member or retiree and get urgent care from a non-network provider outside of a TRICARE-authorized urgent care center, you’ll have to pay point-of-service cost-shares. Check with your urgent care provider before going in person. There may be new processes in place because of COVID-19. Let them know if you believe you have COVID-19.

Active duty service members (ADSMs) enrolled in TRICARE Prime or TRICARE Overseas Program Prime should contact their military hospitals and clinics for urgent care. To seek civilian urgent care, ADSMs need a referral.

SHOULD I CALL THE MILITARY HEALTH SYSTEM (MHS) NURSE ADVICE LINE?

If you aren’t clear whether your nonemergency injury or illness requires urgent care, you can contact the MHS Nurse Advice Line 24/7. Nurses can help you if you’re uncertain about the care you need. They can also help direct people who may have COVID-19 to the appropriate care. If you’re in the U.S., Guam, or Puerto Rico, call 1-800-874-2273 and choose option 1. You can find other country-specific numbers on the website.

If you’re enrolled in the US Family Health Plan (USFHP), you can’t use the MHS Nurse Advice Line. You must use the USFHP 24/7 Nurse Advice Line. Remember that you can also contact your health care provider for medical advice.

Use this information to help you get the appropriate care you need in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. Stay safe and take command of your health.

Sign up for email alerts, and keep up with TRICARE and COVID-19 updates.

Little Creek/Fort Story	(757) 462-7563
Newport News	(757) 688-6289
Norfolk/Portsmouth	(757) 444-2102
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MC3 Nathan Beard

The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Roosevelt (DDG 80) departs Naval Station Mayport to commence its homeport shift to Naval Station Rota, Spain, March 21, 2020. Roosevelt will replace USS Carney (DDG 64) as one of four forward deployed naval forces (FDNF) in Spain. Named in honor of President Franklin D. Roosevelt and his wife Eleanor, Roosevelt will be the first Flight IIA Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer stationed in Rota, providing the ability to deploy with two embarked Lamps MK III MH-60B Sea Hawk helicopters.

USS Roosevelt arrives in 6th Fleet

From U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa/U.S. 6th Fleet Public Affairs

NAPLES, ITALY

Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Roosevelt (DDG 80) is conducting operations in U.S. 6th Fleet in support of maritime security operations.

Roosevelt, named after the 32nd President Franklin D. Roosevelt and his wife Eleanor, is the first Flight IIA Forward Deployed Naval Forces-Europe (FDNF-E) destroyer and, following a regional patrol, will complete her homeport shift to Rota, Spain.

“Roosevelt is trained and ready to execute the FDNF-E mission set and shift homeports to Rota,” said Cmdr. Matthew Molmer,

Roosevelt’s commanding officer. “Our professional crew will continue the legacy of ships assigned to 6th Fleet.”

Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron (HSM 48) Det 7 ‘Mayport Mules’ embarked on Roosevelt, which is the first FDNF-E destroyer capable of deploying with organic Lamps MK III MH-60 helicopters.

Roosevelt will replace USS Carney (DDG 64) in the first of several scheduled homeport shifts to occur in support of the U.S. Navy’s long-range plan to gradually rotate the four Rota-based destroyers.

“The arrival of Roosevelt is a tangible demonstration of our continued commitment to operate forward in support of our national security interests,” said Vice Adm. Lisa Franchetti, commander, U.S. 6th Fleet. “Our

forward deployed destroyers out of Rota, Spain conduct the full range of maritime operations and provide unwavering support to our allies and partners across the region.”

Prior to transiting the Atlantic, Roosevelt took a variety of coronavirus-related precautions to ensure the crew arrived in the European theater safe and healthy.

With a newly configured baseline 9 Aegis weapon system, Roosevelt brings the U.S. Navy’s stop-of-the-line capabilities to the U.S. European Phased Adaptive Approach and NATO’s robust integrated air missile defense (IAMD) architecture. Roosevelt will support these missions, while patrolling the waters surrounding Europe and Africa, ensuring freedom of navigation in critical waterways.

Roosevelt will seamlessly integrate into

the U.S. 6th Fleet mission, as the ship and crew are already familiar with our regional partners and allies. In 2019, Roosevelt participated in Exercise Formidable Shield, conducting an SM-3 engagement with a simulated ballistic missile target, while concurrently engaging ‘Firejet’ test targets with SM-2 missiles.

Last June, the ship also visited Chebourg, France to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of the D-Day landings in Normandy. The success of D-Day demonstrated the impact a strong unified alliance can have; Roosevelt is forward deployed to reinforce that strong alliance, supporting maritime security and stability.

CTF 65 and DESRON 60, headquartered in Rota, Spain, oversee the forward-deployed ships in U.S. 6th Fleet’s area of operation in support of regional allies and partners, as well as U.S. national security interests in Europe and Africa.



MCSN Jomark Almazan

The amphibious assault ship USS America (LHA 6) launches an F-35B Lightning II assigned to the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, Marine Medium Tiltrotor (VMM) 265 (Reinforced) while sailing in formation with the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force JS Akebono (DD 108). America, flagship of the America Expeditionary Strike Group, 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit team, is operating in the U.S. 7th Fleet area of operations to enhance interoperability with allies and partners and serve as a ready response force to defend peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region.

America, Akebono sail together in East China Sea

From USS America Public Affairs

EAST CHINA SEA

Amphibious assault ship USS America (LHA 6), with the embarked 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit joined Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) Murasame class destroyer JS Akebono (DD 108) for a series of collaborative events while sailing in the Philippine Sea and East China Sea, April 9-11.

Operating together for the first time, America and Akebono conducted bilateral communications exercises and division tactics designed to enhance interoperability between the two navies and emphasize the importance of com-

munications and coordination while operating underway.

“We are excited to be sailing alongside our Japanese friends and teammates in the East China Sea, just as our team aboard USS Gabrielle Giffords did in the Andaman Sea last week,” said Rear Adm. Fred Kacher, commander, Expeditionary Strike Group 7. “In these challenging times, it is deeply important that we continue to come together as allies and partners in this incredibly vital region of the world.”

America and Akebono demonstrated warfighting readiness during a replenishment-at-sea, April 11. The two ships connected fuel lines and conducted underway replenishment with the Military Sealift Command fleet replenish-

ment oiler USNS John Ericsson (T-AO 194) strengthening the impact of sustained operational readiness for both maritime services.

“Our operations with the crew of the JS Akebono make us better shipmates and ensure both the U.S. Navy and JMSDF maintain our warfighting readiness at the highest levels,” said Kacher

JS Akebono is deployed to the East China Sea to maintain regional security and stability.

“We could show our skill and capability through this exercise,” said Cmdr. Kobayashi Seitaro, commanding officer of JS Akebono. “I am convinced that Japan-U.S. relationship and interoperability is enhanced more strongly.”

Cohesive operations with partners and allies like these allow the U.S. Navy to operate with other navies by conducting exercises beyond the beach and into international sea lanes. Furthermore, it offers the Sailors with

tangible situations to practice their everyday watchstanding capabilities and communication skills with foreign vessels.

“The America ESG and JMSDF have maintained superior cooperative ability since America’s forward deployment to the region,” said Capt. Richard Lebron, Amphibious Squadron 11 Commodore. “The importance of providing a versatile and mission-ready strike group to the region cannot be overstated. America continues to provide steadfast support and interoperability with the JMSDF and other allies and partners.”

U.S. 7th Fleet conducts forward-deployed naval operations in support of U.S. national interests in the Indo-Pacific area of operations. As the U.S. Navy’s largest numbered fleet, 7th Fleet interacts with 35 other maritime nations to build partnerships that foster maritime security, promote stability, and prevent conflict.

FORWARD-DEPLOYED PRESENCE



Two U.S. 6th Fleet Forward-Deployed Naval Forces-Europe destroyers and a P-8A Poseidon maritime patrol aircraft are operating simultaneously in different major European Seas April 13, 2020.

USS Donald Cook (DDG 75) is underway in the Baltic Sea conducting operations with our partner nations to ensure regional stability.



USS Porter (DDG 78) is underway in the Black Sea conducting maritime security operations.

A P-8A Poseidon assigned to Patrol Squadron 4 based out of Sigonella, Italy, is conducting an intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance mission in the Mediterranean Sea.



MC2 Jonathan Nelson

Graphic depicting the forward-deployed presence of U.S. Navy forces in Europe.

U.S. 6th Fleet: Ready, vigilant, on watch

From U.S. 6th Fleet Public Affairs

MEDITERRANEAN SEA

Two U.S. 6th Fleet Forward-Deployed Naval Forces-Europe (FDFNE) destroyers and a P-8A Poseidon Maritime Patrol Aircraft are operating simultaneously in different major European Seas, April 13.

Rota-based Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyers USS Porter (DDG 78) and USS Donald Cook (DDG 75) are operating in the Black and Baltic Seas, respectively, while a P-8A Poseidon, assigned to Patrol Squadron (VP) 4 and based out of Sigonella, Italy, is operating in the Mediterranean Sea.

These forward-deployed crews have taken appropriate coronavirus-related precautions to ensure they remain

healthy throughout their operations in European waters.

“U.S. 6th Fleet remains at sea, ensuring maritime security and demonstrating our continued ability to operate in concert with allies and partners across the European theater,” said Vice Adm. Lisa Franchetti, commander, U.S. 6th Fleet (C6F).

Donald Cook entered the Baltic Sea, April 11, after participating in the U.K Submarine Command Course, where their team honed her anti-submarine warfare capabilities in the Atlantic.

Porter began its northbound international straits transit to the Black Sea, April 13, to conduct maritime security operations and enhance regional maritime stability, combined readiness, and naval capability with our NATO allies and partners in the region.

“It is important during this time,

where we take all the necessary precautions to prevent the further spread of the coronavirus, that we also maintain our presence, readiness, training, and interoperability with our partners and allies,” said Capt. Joe Gagliano, commander, Destroyer Squadron 60, from his Rota, Spain headquarters.

P-8A Poseidon Maritime Patrol aircraft supported U.S. interests, and our partners and allies through coordinated intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance flights in the Mediterranean, April 13.

“CTF 67 aircrews and staff have adjusted to a new normal that balances our operations to conform with physical distancing while remaining vigilant to potential threats across Europe and Africa,” said Capt. Bill Pennington, commander, Task Force 67, based in Sigonella, Italy.

While in the Baltic, Donald Cook will participate with European allies in maritime operations, which allow the U.S. Navy to continue refining skills with partner nations while ensuring it keeps crews safe in the face of COVID 19.

Porter’s Black Sea operations mark the second time a U.S. Navy warship been in the Black Sea since the beginning of 2020. USS Ross (DDG 71) visited the Black Sea in February, where they operated with Turkey, Ro-

mania, and Bulgaria and conducted a port visit in Bulgaria.

The U.S. Navy routinely operates in the Black Sea consistent with international law, including the Montreux Convention.

The U.S. Navy and partner efforts in the Mediterranean are crucial to maritime security and economic prosperity, with 21 coastal nations bordering the sea. Forces deployed throughout the region, including those assigned to U.S. naval bases in Naples, Souda Bay, Sigonella, and Rota work continuously with partners and allies in support of three combatant commanders to conduct routine and contingency operations.

“Ninety percent of the world’s trade volume travels via maritime routes, so it is vitally important that all nations have access to the global commons,” said Franchetti. “The men and women forward deployed in the 6thFleet area of operations remain ready to ensure security and stability throughout the region.”

U.S. 6th Fleet, headquartered in Naples, Italy, conducts the full spectrum of joint and naval operations, often in concert with allied and inter-agency partners, in order to advance U.S. national interests and security and stability in Europe and Africa.

NCIS: Sailors, Marines, civilians beware of card-cracking scams

From Naval Criminal Investigative Service Public Affairs

QUANTICO, VA.

NCIS has recently observed increased reporting from service members facing severe financial losses after falling victims to card-cracking scams initiated via social media with promises of getting out of debt and making extra money.

There are two primary methods used to establish contact with potential vic-

tims. One version involves a social media post or message sent by a purported debt consolidator or business owner to lure service members into responding; the other involves the service member receiving a friend request from a person who presumably shares many friends in common. After establishing contact, the service member receives a message from the scammer offering grant money as a “thank you” for their service or offering to pay money for their “debt relief.”

Both methods involve requesting the service member provide online bank account login information; service members may also be asked to answer security questions established through

their online bank account. Victims have reported that after the money is deposited directly into their accounts, the scammer then asks the victim to send a portion of the money via wire or cash to a third party. Victims then discover that loans have been opened in their name with the same financial institution. Any attempts to further contact the scammer are unsuccessful, leaving the victim to pay off the loan.

NCIS urges service members to never provide bank account login information or personally identifiable details to anyone. Reputable financial institutions and organizations will not contact you and request personally identifiable information.

If you suspect you’ve been targeted with this scam:

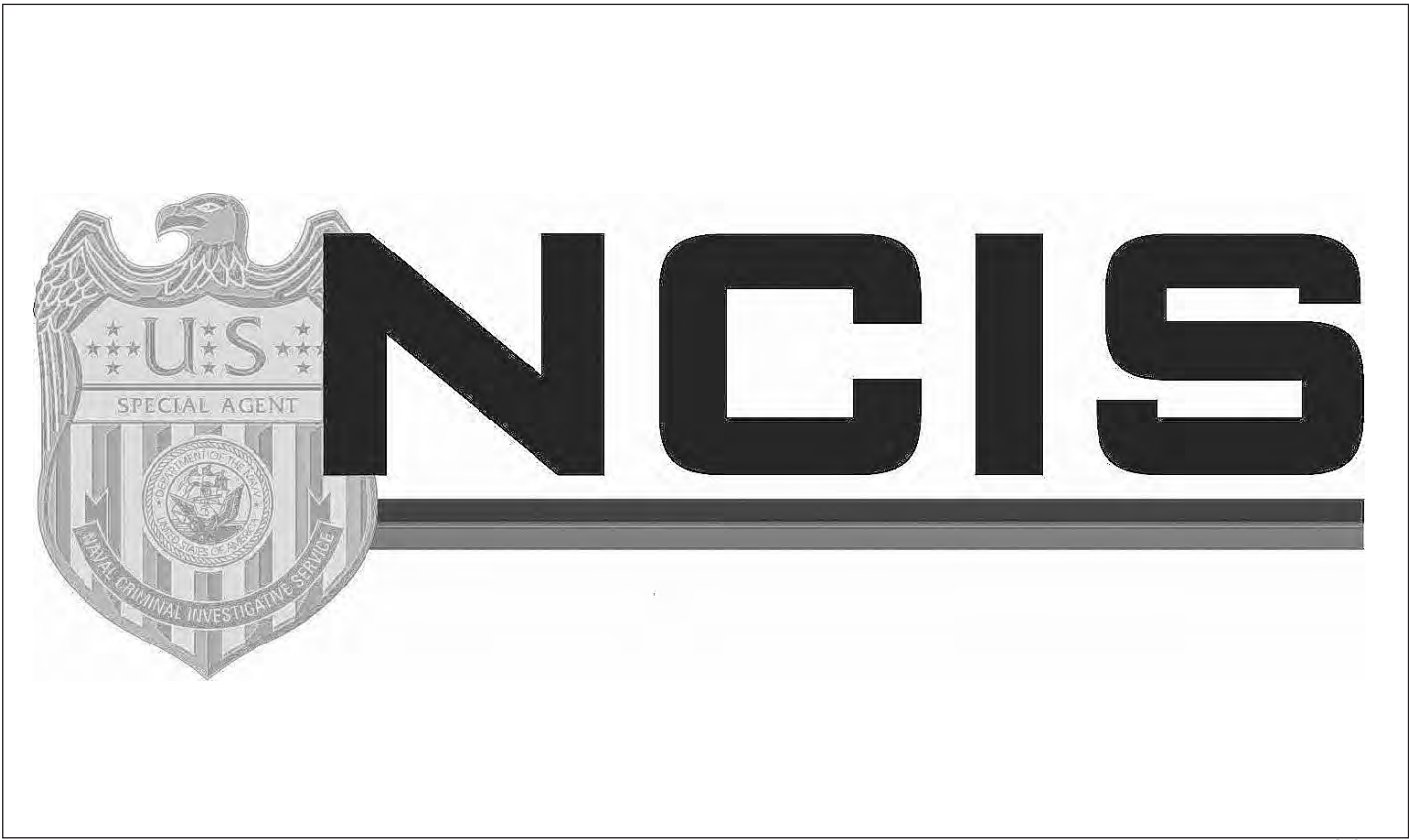
Immediately discontinue correspondence with the suspected scammer.

Notify your bank or financial institution and attempt to have your accounts locked.

Change all account passwords and seek additional security steps by your financial institution.

Consider a credit lock through one or all three of the major credit bureaus (Equifax, Experian, and Transunion).

Notify your respective command, NCIS office, and/or respective law enforcement authorities. You may submit tips to NCIS using the NCIS Tips app or at www.ncis.navy.mil.



NCIS Logo

Harry S. Truman Strike Group conducts sustainment underway

From U.S. 2nd Fleet Public Affairs

NORFOLK

The Harry S. Truman Carrier Strike Group (HSTCSG) remains at sea in the Western Atlantic as a certified carrier strike group force ready for tasking in order to protect the crew from the risks posed by COVID-19, following their successful deployment to the U.S. 5th and 6th Fleet areas of operation.

The Navy is taking this measure to maintain the strike group’s warfighting capability while ensuring the safety of the crew. The demand for naval assets remains high. Therefore, keeping HSTCSG at sea in U.S. 2nd Fleet as it remains in the sustainment

phase of OFRP allows the ship to maintain a high level of readiness for a potential rapid surge or forward deployment, providing options to the national command authority during this global COVID-19 pandemic.

“The ship is entering a period in which it needs to be ready to respond and deploy at any time,” said Vice Adm. Andrew Lewis, commander U.S. 2nd Fleet. “Normally we can do that pierside, but in the face of COVID-19, we need to protect our most valuable asset, our people, by keeping the ship out to sea.”

The Navy will continue to evaluate this dynamic situation and will provide an update to the crew and their families in approximately three weeks.

“After completing a successful deployment we would love nothing more than to be reunited with our friends and families,” said Rear Admiral Andrew Loiselle, commander of Carrier Strike Group 8. “We recognize that these are unique circumstances and the responsible thing to do is to ensure we are able to answer our nation’s call while ensuring the health and safety of our Sailors. We thank you for your continued love and support as we remain focused on this important mission.”

The HSTCSG is an example of how U.S. naval forces are inherently flexible and provide presence and capabilities when and where needed. The ships within the strike group remain ready to respond to emergent tasking around the globe, providing critically needed capabilities for emerging crises.

“The ship is entering a period in which it needs to be ready to respond and deploy at any time,”

The ship is entering a period in which it needs to be ready to respond and deploy at any time,”

Vice Adm. Andrew Lewis

C2F exercises operational authorities over assigned ships, aircraft, and landing forces on the East Coast and the Atlantic.

Bataan ARG/26th MEU stay mission ready during pandemic

By Lt. Seth Koenig
USS Bataan (LHD 5) Public Affairs

ARABIAN SEA

The Sailors and Marines of the Bataan Amphibious Ready Group (ARG) and embarked 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit are taking additional precautions while deployed at sea to stay healthy and mission ready in the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations.

“The Bataan ARG and 26th MEU team is taking significant steps to remain a flexible, adaptive and persistent force in this region during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic,” said Capt. Lance Leshner, Commodore of the ARG. “We are a fully capable crisis response team for our nation. We are inspired by the strength of our families, who are enduring this pandemic back home, and in their honor, we stand strong and ready for any mission our country gives us.”

In addition to the flagship amphibious assault ship USS Bataan (LHD 5), the amphibious ready group also includes the amphibious transport dock ship

USS New York (LPD 21) and the dock landing ship USS Oak Hill (LSD 51). There are about 4,000 Sailors and Marines combined in the ARG/MEU.

“As a forward deployed crisis response force, we must remain mission ready at all times,” said Col. Trevor Hall, commanding officer of the 26th MEU. “Force protection measures against COVID-19 infection are paramount to our mission and ability to provide stability in the region.”

Among the measures implemented aboard one or more ARG ships to reduce the risk of virus transmission are: The addition of a second daily shipwide cleaning, with a focus on applying disinfectant to commonly touched surfaces, such as door knobs and computer keyboards; the employment of food service personnel to distribute silverware, napkins and condiments, to reduce the number of people touching those items; the careful limitation and screening of any personnel coming to or departing ARG ships; vigilant hand washing and sanitizing; and social distancing among Sailors and Marines when practical or necessary.

“Our response to COVID-19 has been made most effective by our thorough Navy-Marine Corps integration,” said Cmdr. Arriel Atienza, officer in charge of the embarked Fleet Surgical Team 4 and Commander, Amphibious Task Force surgeon. “Through open cooperation and constant communication, our blue-green team keeps a close watch on the most current epidemiological and theater guidance. Our commanders have the information they need to implement every necessary precaution, keeping our Sailors and Marines as healthy as possible.”

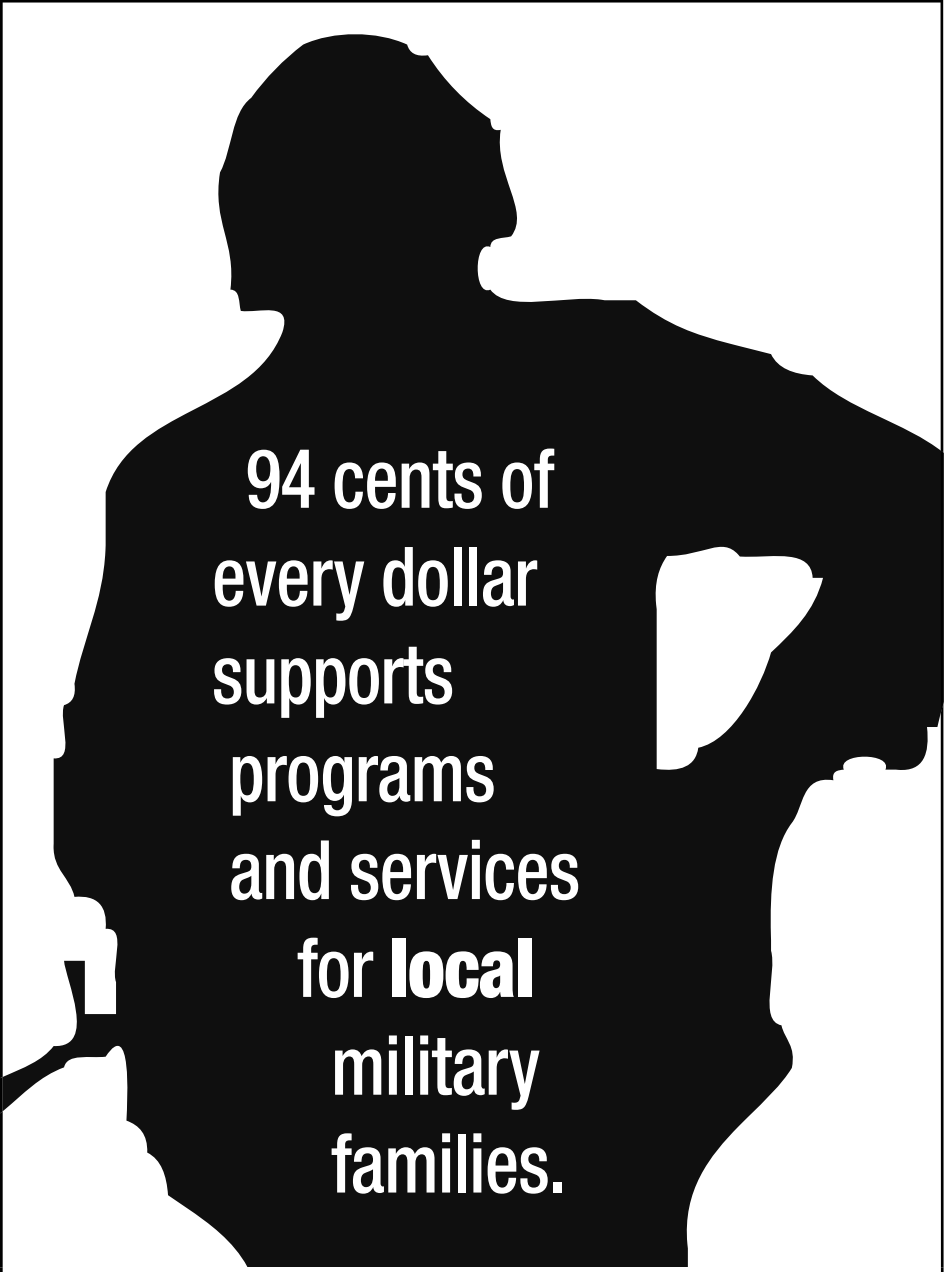
There have been no diagnosed cases of COVID-19 among Bataan ARG or 26th MEU personnel to date.

The ARG and MEU are operating in the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations in support of maritime security operations to reassure allies and partners and preserve the freedom of navigation and the free flow of commerce in the region.

The U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations encompasses about 2.5 million square miles of water area and includes the Arabian Gulf, Red Sea, Gulf of Oman, Gulf of Aden, Arabian Sea and parts of the Indian Ocean. The expanse includes 20 nations and three critical choke points for global commerce, at the Strait of Hormuz, the Suez Canal and strait of Bab al Mandeb at the southern tip of Yemen.

“We are a fully capable crisis response team for our nation. We are inspired by the strength of our families, who are enduring this pandemic back home, and in their honor, we stand strong and ready for any mission our country gives us.”

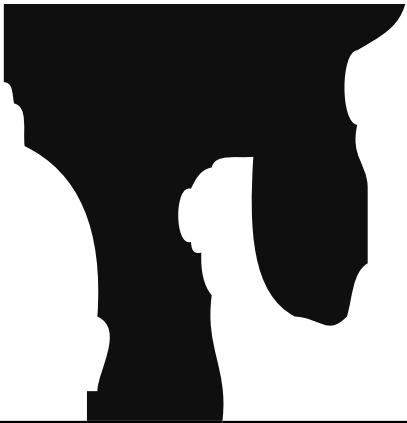
Capt. Lance Leshner

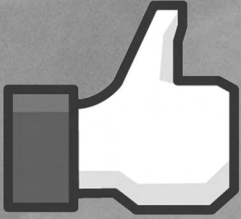


94 cents of every dollar supports programs and services for local military families.



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ET3 Christopher Paredes/
Navy Military Training Instructor (NMTI) Chief Machinist's Mate Kevin Livingston, leading chief petty officer of Fleet Quality Assurance (FQA) Division at Training Support Center (TSC) Great Lakes, prepares for the bi-monthly inspection of the USS Porter barracks Oct. 31. NMTI's provide guidance to their Sailors so they may meet their training mission while at TSC.

Fleet Quality Assurance top priority at Training Support Center

By Brian Walsh
Training Support Center Public Affairs

GREAT LAKES, ILL.

Training Support Center (TSC) Great Lakes has realigned and changed the name of its Assist, Train and Instruct (ATI) office.

The ATI office within the command is now known as Fleet Quality Assurance (FQA) and has moved from the student control department (N3) to the training department (N7).

Basic functions of FQA are not dissimilar than the responsibilities of the ATI office. The major difference will be its role performing in N7.

“Fleet Quality Assurance will ensure consistent enforcement of command policies and military standards demonstrated by Navy Military Training Instructors

throughout Training Support Center,” said Navy Military Training Instructor (NMTI) Senior Chief Electronics Technician Tamika C. Williams, staff training officer for TSC. “This puts the office in a unique position to identify alignment issues between TSC processes that extend beyond the student control department.”

FQA will visit student barracks to advise, inspect, train, and evaluate staff and students on accepted military training procedures and best practices. The office will now have the ability to share information with all appropriate stakeholders, to enhance communication and teamwork among staff assigned at TSC and learning sites.

“Our responsibility is to monitor the quality of student military training to ensure training meets the standards prescribed by higher authority,” said NMTI

Chief Machinist's Mate Kevin Livingston, FQA leading chief petty officer for TSC. “We then provide weekly status reports to Operations Department Head and the appropriate Fleet officer in charge or leading chief petty officer, along with recommendations to correct deficiencies.”

The responsibilities of FQA are to evaluate program areas and compile assessment data for chain of command to review. Different items of evaluation include; military conduct, execution of daily and weekly routines, ship quarterdeck smartness and professionalism, compliance with safety procedures, general uniform appearance and student performance records.

FQA also is responsible for ship and student recognition programs and works with student coordinators and learning site staff to monitor student status and issues.

“Through our evaluations we can develop ‘best practices’ and ‘lessons learned’ to share command wide,” Livingston said. “We can also ensure the military, teamwork and motivational aspects of training are emphasized through the command.”

Other assistance that can be provided by FQA would be to additionally train personnel whose performance is not within standards.

“This ‘whole approach is all about being consistent with everything we do, and overall improvement of our day-to-day operations across 17 ships/barracks housing 5,000 Sailors,” said TSC Commanding Officer Capt. David Dwyer. “We will regularly within TSC GL’s plan, develop, and maintain administrative documentation necessary for the execution and observing of our military training and high standards. This new approach allows us to continue to uphold the highest standards of good order, discipline, watchstanding, cleanliness, and professionalism towards maintaining and operating our barracks. We have already seen positive gains in overall cleanliness in our barracks, and the overall training of our staff and Sailors.”

Message from Acting Secretary of the Navy James E. McPherson

By Acting Secretary of the Navy, James E. McPherson

WASHINGTON

To all of our Sailors, Marines, Civilians, and Military Families,

I am honored to return to the Navy-Marine Corps Team as your Acting Secretary.

From my years as an officer in the United States Navy, and my prior service as an enlisted Soldier in the United States Army, I am keenly aware of the sacrifices you make, and the dedication you show, every day in service to our Nation. Thank you for your dedicated service. I look forward to serving alongside you.

Today, with the extraordinary challenges posed by COVID-19, and the continual threats we face in a changing global security environment, our Nation needs you more than ever. Throughout this crisis, Sailors, Marines, and Civilians have stepped forward to protect the American people and our force. From New York to New Orleans, Los Angeles to Dallas, Maine to Guam, you have responded to the medical, logistics, engineering, and security requirements of our homeland during this time of need. And through



U.S. Navy photo/

it all, you have maintained the watch around the world.

Alongside Admiral Gilday and General Berger, we will maximize the resources and capability of the Department of the Navy to faithfully execute the priorities established by Secretary Esper in response to the COVID-19 crisis: Protect our people, maintain warfighting readiness, and fully support the whole of government/whole of nation response to protect the American people.

You are the reason I am extremely confident that we will make mission. Many of you – our active and reserve shipmates – are closing the margin and saving lives through countless and selfless acts of individual initiative and collective teamwork. I am proud of you – our Nation is proud of you. For as long as I have the privilege of serving as your Acting Secretary, I will do everything in my power to support your efforts and safety, and the safety and well-being of your families.

Working together and remaining ever vigilant of the rocks and shoals before us, I know we will help bring our Nation through the present challenge and all that may follow. It is what the Navy and Marine Corps have always done, and will always do, as long as there are people like you maintaining the watch.

Sincerely,
James E. McPherson
Secretary of the Navy (Acting)

SAILORS | Sailor of the Year program established in 1972

Continued from B1

“While it is appropriate for many Americans to significantly adjust their work routines to help mitigate the spread of the virus, our Sailors and Marines must remain committed to the defense of the nation and that commitment requires them to continue generating, developing and employing our naval forces. Honoring and recognizing that effort is important,” explained Goodrich.

Although Berrio and Beck were not called up on a stage to receive their recognition, the honor of the award was in no way diminished.

“I feel very humbled by the whole process,” said Berrio. “Getting the call today from Adm. Grady — I just, I don’t even know what to say really. The support that everybody gives you, the way that people who don’t even know you approach you

and congratulate you, it’s amazing. You become that person that represents everybody. You just want to do your best. I’m proud to represent my community.”

Beck echoed the same sentiments, and gave her advice on how to reach this career landmark.

“I don’t even know how to put this in words,” said Beck. “I have no idea how to convey all of the emotions that are running through my head right now. I’ve had a little bit of everything in my career, but I never thought about giving anything but my best. I think that’s what we should all be expecting from any of our Sailors. If we’re coming to work every day and we’re giving our best then we’re going to succeed. You may not see it until a couple of years down the road, but you’re going to succeed if you’re going in and you’re giving your best every single day.”

Berrio, the Sea SOY, will automatically advance to chief petty officer, while Beck, the Shore SOY, will compete for the Chief of Naval Operations Shore Sailor of the Year.

“The competition was robust and reflects the high caliber of Sailors serving through-

out the area of responsibility,” said USFF Fleet Master Chief Rick O’Rawe. “It is an honor to serve with such incredibly talented Sailors. Each of these warfighters truly represent the technical competence, leadership and initiative that exemplifies our profession of arms.”

The Sailor of the Year program was established in 1972 by CNO Adm. Elmo Zumwalt and Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy John Whittet to recognize high-performing E-4 through E-6 Sailors across the fleet. The intent of the competition is to recognize individual Sailors who best represent the ideals of the professional Sailor and the Navy. Initially only Atlantic and Pacific Fleet Sailors on sea duty were recognized. Within 10 years, however, the SOY program was expanded to include shore duty and Navy Reserve Sailors.

FINALISTS FOR FLEET SEA SAILOR OF THE YEAR:

- Interior Communications Electrician 1st Class Travis Free, USNS Comfort (T-AH 20)
- Information Technology Specialist 1st Class Krystal Landrovediaz, U.S. Naval

Forces Europe Detachment Maritime Ashore Support Team

- Boatswain’s Mate 1st Class Derek Rish, USS Monterey (CG 61)
- Aerographer’s Mate 1st Class Ciera Meadows, Naval Oceanographic Special Warfare Detachment — San Diego
- Navy Diver 1st Class Thomas Gerace, Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit (MDSU) 2
- Hospital Corpsman 1st Class Matthew Thompson, USS West Virginia (SSBN 736)

FINALISTS FOR FLEET SHORE SAILOR OF THE YEAR:

- Gunner’s Mate 1st Class Colbee Barrett, Navy Munitions Command Atlantic Detachment Sigonella
- Cryptologic Technician Collection 1st Class Edward Banks, Navy Information Warfare Training Group Norfolk
- Information Technology Specialist 1st Class Christopher Manley, Naval Surface Forces Atlantic
- Utilitiesman 1st Class Jesse Eder, Naval Construction Group (NCG) 21S1 Marisol Besson, Undersea Warfighting Development Center San Diego



MC3 Brett Walker
An E-2D Advanced Hawkeye, attached to the "Greyhawks" of Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron (VAW) 120, performs a "touch and go" on USS Gerald R. Ford's (CVN 78) flight deck during flight operations April 2, 2020. Ford is underway in the Atlantic Ocean conducting carrier qualifications.

FORD | Integration with the Ford team has been seamless

Continued from B1

clock to help the squadron pilots successfully complete the final stages of their training.

“Our integration with the Ford team has been seamless; it’s been fantastic,” said Cmdr. Dan Catlin, commanding officer of VFA-106. “There were a lot of unknowns coming into this, because this is the first time that Ford has done a CQ, but this is a phenomenal crew of people. They’re performing as if they just came back off a full deployment.”

During carrier qualifications, an FRS pilot must develop and hone the demanding skills needed to take off and land fixed-wing aircraft on an aircraft carrier, performing many tests for the first time, including landing on a ship at night, relying on the systems and personnel on the ship to safely guide them to the flight deck.

“For the first time ever this ship conducted carrier qualifications for two fleet replacement squadrons and generated readiness for the fleet,” said Capt. J. J. Cummings, Ford’s commanding officer. “Our crew has trained hard for two years to prepare for this underway, and it was inspiring to watch their motivation, enthusiasm and straight stick professionalism. The crew knows that many of these aviators will be headed right out to deployed squadrons and that makes them extremely proud.”

In order for FRS pilots to qualify and advance into a fleet squadron, the pilot must successfully complete two “touch and go’s” with 10 day landings and two



MC2 Ryan Seelbach
An F/A-18F Super Hornet, attached to the "Gladiators" of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 106, performs a touch-and-go on the flight deck of USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78) during flight operations March 27, 2020. Ford is currently underway in the Atlantic Ocean conducting carrier qualifications.

‘touch and go’s” with six night landings aboard an aircraft carrier. On Ford, they found a crew that was eager to assist them in achieving that most critical set of steps.

“I’ve been on the flight deck of a lot of aircraft carriers in my career, and I’ve never seen a crew better than this crew on the Ford,” said Lt. Cmdr. Matt Deppen, from Skokie, Illinois, the head Landing Signal Officer on the East Coast, assigned to Commander, Naval Air Force Atlantic.

Deppen is responsible for the qualifica-

tion of every Category 1 pilot (newly winged aviators transitioning from one type aircraft to another) from VFA-106 and VAW-120, and has flown on 10 different aircraft carriers.

“[The Ford crew] has blown me away, from the actual air department, to the crew up in the tower down to the actual flight deck itself, everyone has been unbelievably phenomenal. It shows that they’ve put in a lot of hard work and they’ve been training very hard, and they’ve all done an

unbelievable job during this underway.”

Fourteen pilots qualified from VFA-106 and another 13 qualified from VAW-120 during the CQ period. The squadrons registered a combined 425 catapults (launches) and 495 traps (arrested landings) during their time aboard Ford.

Gerald R. Ford is a first-in-class aircraft carrier and the first new aircraft carrier designed in more than 40 years. Ford is underway conducting an independent steaming event in the Atlantic Ocean.

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YOU ARE LIVING THROUGH HISTORY RIGHT NOW

2020 COVID-19 TIME CAPSULE

PERSONAL:



Three things I am most excited to do when this is over:

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____

Who do you personally know who has been negatively impacted by the virus? How were they impacted?

What occasions did you celebrate during this time?



What TV showed you binge watched?

What activities have you been doing?

Any new found hobbies?

What has been the biggest change?

What has been the biggest challenge?

COMMUNITY:



#ISTAYATHOME
AND FIGHT CORONAVIRUS

Who are you staying at home with?

How often do you leave your house? Where are you going?

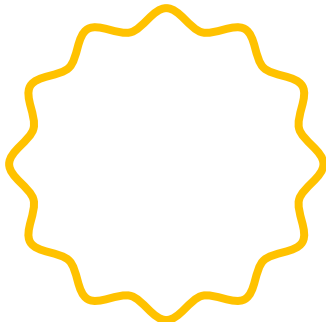
How often do you go to the store?



How are you staying connected to friends and family?

THE ECONOMY:

Days spent at home?

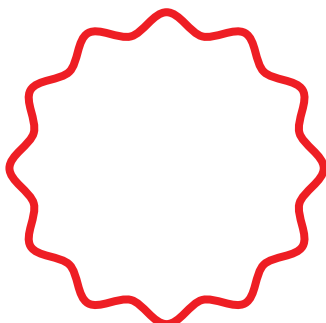


What businesses/job roles are considered essential?

What is your job?



If you aren't essential, how long were you out of work or working remotely?





Navy Petty Officer Third Class Jamika Jones

Navy Office of Community Outreach/

Suffolk native supports nation’s COVID-19 response on American soil

By Lt. Eileen Suarez
Navy Public Affairs Support Element - West

DALLAS
Navy Petty Officer Third Class Jamika Jones, a native of Suffolk, Va., is serving in Dallas as part of the Department of Defense’s response to COVID-19, which is being led by U.S. Northern Command. Normally, Jones serves as a hospital corpsman, who is responsible for testing patients for allergies. She is working with local health authorities as part of the whole-of-government approach to support the community need. “Protecting the American people and preventing the spread of COVID-19 is our main mission in Dallas,” said Capt. Chad Roe, commanding officer of the

Expeditionary Medical Facility-M, which is Jones’s unit. “EMF-M brings a team of highly trained medical professionals who are ready to help the City of Dallas flatten the curve while maintaining the health of our Sailors a priority.” The unit is an integral part of the approximately 8,000 service members from the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, and Air Force, including active duty and reserve component service members, in the U.S. Army North-led Joint Forces Land Component Command who are assisting state and local governments across the continental United States in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. “It is an all hands on deck type of situation,” said Jones. “We can provide

the extra help and extra hands by seeing COVID patients or seeing overflow of patients, which is a great help to the community.” “I think this is a huge responsibility, but at the same time, I played my part in it as I could and I was able to help someone, help the city of Dallas, FEMA, everyone as a whole,” said Jones. “A lot of people can’t say that they did that and had such a huge impact to the community.” The U.S. Navy’s EMFs are designed to receive patients from forward medical facilities or directly from combat areas in order to provide full resuscitation and emergency stabilizing surgery. The personnel manning reflects that mission, a

“ It is an all hands on deck type of situation. We can provide the extra help and extra hands by seeing COVID patients or seeing overflow of patients, which is a great help to the community.

Jamika Jones

full complement that includes 447 physicians, nurses and other medical professionals, enough to care for 150 patients 24 hours a day on a rotating shift schedule.

VSO launches new online initiative with free access to music education videos

From Virginia Symphony Orchestra

HAMPTON ROADS
The VSO announced today a new online initiative expanding free access to educational and enrichment programming. Called the Music Learning Lab, the initiative is designed to serve all ages and levels for playing ability – including pre-kindergarten through university students. The initial release announced today of more than 20 videos will feature the professional musicians of the VSO in short segments about everything from introducing young children to the instruments of a symphony orchestra to addressing more advanced level musical skill-building, including playing technique through virtual master classes. The Music Learning Lab comes in response to the need for new specialized online content as teachers and students adjust to the new realities of virtual learning. “Outstanding!” according to Danielle F. Roby, Senior Coordinator of Music Education and Theater for Norfolk Public Schools. “My deep appreciation to the VSO for the wonderful support to our music programs!” The Virginia Symphony’s Music Learning Lab is supported in part by the Cook Foundation. The initial release announced today includes the launch of three series or groups of related subject matter, with more planned for the future: **Virtual Petting Zoo:** This first video series will introduce students in kindergarten through fifth grade to all the instruments of the orchestra. Students will learn about how



VSO Music Learning Lab – Virtual Petting Zoo: Violin

Courtesy photo/

each instrument makes sound, how they are made, and how they are used within the symphony. Each video will have a companion worksheet that reviews what was covered in each video and aligns with Virginia Standards of Learning. **Technique Tips:** This series will cover a variety of beginner and advanced techniques for middle and high school students at a range of playing abilities. This provides an opportunity for students to hear hidden secrets from VSO musicians on how to improve their playing technique. Each technique was chosen by the musicians based on what they think is the most important skill for students of their instrument to practice. **Into the Spotlight:** For advanced high school and university students getting ready to “step into the spotlight,” this series will provide advice from the pros - their tips and tricks will shed some light on how to tackle challenges and become a more confident musician. These virtual masterclasses on

special topics cover overcoming performance anxiety, preparing for auditions, orchestral etiquette, bringing the notes on the page to life, and more! A variety of other video series will be developed for future release. The videos and accompanying materials will be available on the VSO YouTube page, as well as at virginiasymphony.org/learninglab. As the region’s most celebrated musical, educational and entrepreneurial arts organization, the Virginia Symphony Orchestra continues to challenge expectations and push the boundaries of what an American orchestra can be as it approaches its 100th anniversary season next fall. At the heart of the VSO’s narrative is innovation. In 1991 the VSO made a very bold move in appointing the gifted young American conductor JoAnn Falletta as its music director. Since then, the orchestra has received national attention for its unique

mission serving a home area of 1.7 million across the diverse communities of southeastern Virginia. Through appearances at the Kennedy Center and Carnegie Hall and commitment to adventurous programming, the VSO and its musicians have been highlighted in the media including The New York Times, The Washington Post, National Public Radio and BBC Worldwide News. As the largest arts performing organization in southeastern Virginia, the VSO and VSO Chorus present more than 150 concerts and events to educate, enlighten and entertain more than 100,000 residents and visitors each year. Recent innovations include health and wellness programs, including interactive therapeutic experiences for people living with Alzheimer’s and dementia. As it approaches its Centennial year, the Orchestra and its legions of fans look forward with anticipation as the VSO conducts a worldwide search for its next music director.

Food & Drink



iStockphoto

For healthier eating, grill more

By StatePoint Media

Planning to follow a trendy diet like keto or simply want to eat right? There’s good news – grilling can be a great option for you to kickstart eating healthier. Indeed, the American Heart Association recommends it.

“Grilling is a year-round way of life, bringing together family and friends,” says Jeff Thiessen, president of Pit Boss Grills. “Luckily, those watching their diets can still get healthy foods with the fun and flavor of a backyard barbecue.”

Use these tips to make healthier meals prepared on the grill:

- Let your spices do the heavy lifting: You can add exciting and bold flavor to any recipe using seasoning mixtures. Spice up foods like veggies or lean meats with seasoned rubs or marinades for amazing flavor without all the calories.
- Eat fresher: Round out recipes by including fresh vegetables. For the best flavor and highest nutritional value, look for locally-grown produce. Vegetables make an excellent addition to any meal as grilled kabobs or chopped up and tossed in your favorite chili.

Healthy Hawaiian Pulled Pork

Ingredients:

- 2 cups aloe leaf juice
- 1 teaspoon coriander, ground
- 2 teaspoons cracked pepper
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- Dash of salt
- 4-6 garlic cloves
- 1 3-inch ginger, fresh
- 1-2 limes
- 4 cups no sodium added chicken bone broth
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 4 teaspoons paprika
- 6-8 pounds pork shoulder/butt
- 1/2 sweet onion
- 2 packets Truvia
- 2 tablespoons Truvia Nectar

Directions:

1. Set grill to “smoke.” Once the pot catches, turn the grill up to 300 degrees F. Make sure your flame broiler is closed, you’ll want to use indirect heat.
2. Add spices to a bowl. Set aside.
3. Grate ginger into a separate “wet ingredients” bowl. Mince garlic cloves and dice onions into the same bowl. Juice limes and add chicken bone broth, aloe leaf juice, Truvia and Truvia Nectar. Mix and set bowl aside.
4. Add the oil to your Pit Boss Cast Iron Roasting Pan and coat the bottom and sides. Place pork inside.
5. Coat pork with dry rub.
6. Pour wet ingredients around the pork. Cover with lid and set on the grill.
7. Check every couple hours, basting if needed. When internal temperature reaches 195 degrees F (after 6-8 hours), it should easily start to pull apart. Don’t pull apart the whole shoulder yet.
8. Remove roasting pan from grill and set aside for 1 hour. Remove lid to help speed cooling.
9. Once cooled, shred pork into a separate bowl, removing fat. If adding marinade for additional flavor, skim fat off the top and discard.
10. Pair with fresh grilled veggies, delicious fruit or make tacos or salads, and voila!

- Be versatile: A healthy diet is a versatile diet. Look for a grill offering multiple cooking options, including baking, roasting and smoking, such as Pit Boss Grills. Their 8-in-1 versatile grills allow you to do it all with one-of-a-kind hardwood flavor.
- Try it yourself: For a delicious spin on a favorite bar-

becue classic, try this Healthy Hawaiian Pulled Pork, right from the Pit Boss playbook.

To shop grills, as well as find cooking tips, grilling resources and additional recipes, visit pitboss-grills.com.

By following the keys to healthy grilling, you can create guilt-free meals.



Good Housekeeping

This easy pasta recipe is the perfect pick for big families.

By Good Housekeeping

Pasta night is key for many a family dinner, so we insist on adding this flavorful and light chicken bolognese to the menu tonight. Instead of a hearty marinara sauce, this simple pasta dish with ground chicken gets tossed in white wine and chicken broth and flavored with plenty of lemon zest and spicy red pepper flakes. Our white chicken bolognese is sure to be a hit with the whole family and is best served with lots of crusty bread to soak up all of the luscious sauce. Plus, it only takes 20 minutes to make, deeming it the ultimate springtime weeknight dinner. So get a pot of water on the stove, dinner is minutes away.

White Chicken Bolognese

Ingredients

- 12 oz. mezze rigatoni
- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, pressed
- 1 lb. ground chicken
- 1/2 tsp. red pepper flakes
- Kosher salt and pepper
- 1/2 c. dry white wine
- 1/2 c. low-sodium chicken broth
- 1 tbsp. finely grated lemon zest
- 1/2 c. finely grated Parmesan, plus more for serving
- 3/4 c. flat-leaf parsley, chopped
- 1 tbsp. tarragon, chopped
- 1/4 c. chopped chives
- 2 tbsp. cold unsalted butter (optional)

Directions

1. Cook pasta per package directions. Reserve 1 cup pasta water, then drain pasta and return to pot.
2. Meanwhile, heat oil in large skillet on medium. Add garlic and cook, stirring, until it starts to sizzle, about 1 minute.
3. Add chicken, season with red pepper flakes and 1/2 tsp each salt and pepper, and cook, breaking up into very tiny pieces, until nearly cooked through, 4 to 5 minutes. Add wine and simmer until nearly evaporated, about 2 minutes.
4. Add broth and toss to combine, then bring to a simmer. Fold in lemon zest, Parmesan, and herbs. Remove from heat and add butter if using, stirring and tossing until melted.
5. Toss with rigatoni and 1/2 cup reserved pasta water, adding more if pasta seems dry. Top with additional Parmesan if desired.

Health



Naval Hospital Jacksonville's Specialty Referral Office enables patients to schedule specialty referrals onsite before leaving the hospital.

Petty Officer 1st Class Jacob Sippel

inTransition teams up with the Veterans Crisis Line to support service members in crisis

By Nick Polizzi, Ph.D. and Matthew Lowery LCSW

In response to an increased volume of calls to the Veterans Crisis Line (VCL) since the outbreak of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19), inTransition is partnering with the VCL to coordinate certain types of care for active duty service members.

The inTransition program is a worldwide Department of Defense (DoD) program which offers specialized coaching and assistance to active duty service members and veterans as they transfer between providers and healthcare systems. The VCL is a program run by the Department of Veterans Affairs that utilizes phone, text, and online chat to connect service members and veterans in crisis to appropriate responders who can best help in that crisis moment. Both pro-

grams are free, confidential, and available 24/7 to all service members and veterans. Both programs share an overarching goal of connecting military members to care, and now they'll leverage what they do best to better serve those who've served our great nation.

Beginning this week, the inTransition program and the VCL are combining efforts to provide improved, comprehensive support for service members. inTransition will now work closely with the VCL to connect callers with follow-up treatment after receiving crisis care at a military or civilian emergency department.

How will inTransition follow-up services after crisis care work?

When active duty service members in crisis contact the VCL, the staff will coordinate

emergency care at local emergency rooms, both at military medical treatment facilities and non-DoD community hospitals. In this new collaboration, the VCL now will also inform the caller about the inTransition program and that he or she will be referred to the program and will receive a follow-up call upon his or her release from the hospital. The VCL responder will determine the most appropriate timing and coordination for completing the referral to the inTransition program, as part of the joint effort to maintain continuity of care following discharge. After the referral for emergency care is completed, inTransition will use their established process to follow-up with the military member and encourage his or her voluntary enrollment in the program. Once enrolled, the military member will be assigned an

inTransition coach, who will arrange coaching calls to assist in connecting the member with a provider for continued care.

Coaches with the inTransition program will then facilitate follow-on care with military medical treatment facilities and other community resources. Coaches will also follow up with service members to ensure that they made it to their appointment. Military medical treatment facilities will likely see an increase in coordinated referrals from inTransition as the programs implement this partnership.

Why is this collaboration so important?

This collaboration between inTransition and the VCL will enhance continuity of care, and maintain positive contact from the moment of the initial VCL call, through the hospital discharge, to the connection with a gaining provider. This carefully coordinated follow-through and teamwork helps ensure that any service member or veteran who wants mental health support can receive it from start to finish.

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StatePoint

5 tips on how to combat loneliness during social distancing

By StatePoint

As a result of the coronavirus pandemic, many people are staying in their homes to help prevent the spread of the disease. Feeling lonely from time to time is natural, but this unprecedented time of social distancing could lead to increased loneliness.

There are some easy ways to feel connected to others, even when you aren't seeing them in person. Consider these tips from Dr. Doug Nemecek, Cigna chief medical officer for behavioral health.

Use technology... but not too much. Social media is a favorite and easy way to stay connected to family and friends, but too much use can leave you feeling lonely.

Cigna's 2020 U.S. Loneliness Index found that 72 percent of very heavy social media users identify themselves as lonely. Balance technology use with disconnecting and taking time for yourself. Use real-time interactions with others, like video chats, to build meaningful connections and limit time spent passively scrolling social media. Read a book, take a walk or do a puzzle after screen time. It may help you feel more connected when you spend time online.

Join a virtual club or group. There are plenty of resources available to find virtual book clubs, craft communities or even fitness challenges. You can start a new hobby, learn a skill or find others who are interested in the same things as you, remotely. Once

the guidelines for social distancing are lifted, you'll have new friends you can meet in person.

Spend time outdoors. Simply leaving your house to take a jog around your neighborhood or to walk your dog a few blocks could improve your spirits, refreshing you for the next time you virtually connect with others.

Ask those you reach out to how they're really doing. How you connect with those in your network makes a significant difference in how lonely you feel. People tend to feel less lonely when connecting on a deeper level. Cigna's study found that those who do not feel they have close relationships that give them emotional security and

well-being have an average loneliness score of nearly 15 points higher than those that do. When video chatting with friends, ask them for their most honest response when you ask how they're doing. Everyone will likely feel better for it.

Rethink working hours. We spend approximately 90,000 hours at work over our lifetime, so how we spend that time will play an important role in how we feel overall. Improving your work-life balance and connecting with colleagues can reduce loneliness. Your employer may also benefit from you feeling less lonely. Lonely employees are less productive, produce lower quality work and miss more days of work. So, talk to your boss about slight changes you can make to how you spend your working hours. This could help you feel less lonely and benefit your company.

Being unable to spend time with others in-person will likely cause many of us to feel lonely, but there are ways to help lessen those feelings during this challenging time.

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126 Deep pit
127 Sun — -sen
128 "— Hope" (old ABC soap)
129 Build, as a building

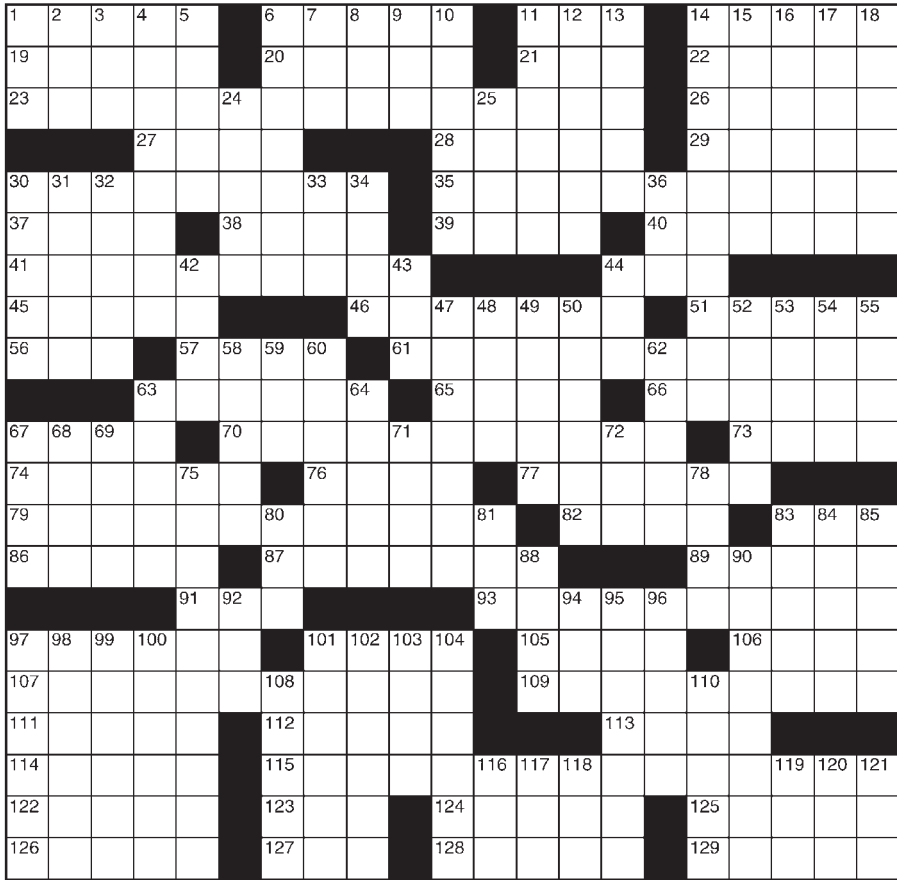
DOWN

- 1 Paving gunk
2 Prefix with car or warrior
3 Unruly throng
4 District police station
5 How right turns are often allowed
6 Mosaic tile
7 DDE's forerunner

- 8 Lunched, e.g.
9 It's east of Calif.
10 Painter Georgia O'—
11 It's removed for a fill-up
12 Total number
13 Capital of Belarus
14 Pheasants' cousins
15 1980s video game
16 Despite the fact that
17 "Clever comeback!"
18 Florida keys, e.g.
24 The Lone Ranger's companion
25 Par for the course
30 Hindu prince
31 Mobil rival
32 Settle the tab
33 Boozing sort
34 Fr. ladies with haloes
36 Early 20th-cen. conflict
42 Architect
43 "Stop talking!"
44 IRS ID
47 More like a hoarse voice

- 48 High on the draft list
49 Online folks
50 Grow dim
52 Financial tipster Suze
53 Bears, in Buenos Aires
54 Faxed, say
55 Prefix with spore
58 Response to "Who's there?"
59 See 125-Across
60 Dentists
62 Houses for students
63 Music style
64 Skier Phil
67 Women's links org.
68 Steinhauer who wrote the 2009 bestseller "The Tourist"
69 Antique cars
71 "— Nagla"
72 Sooner than
75 Nasty bits of dirt
78 Nebraska
80 Ill-bred guy
81 Barbecue spice mix
83 Beijing's land

- 84 Judge's seat
85 Epic tales
88 Cotton deseeders
90 Less chubby
92 Ontario's capital, on scoreboards
94 Grassland
95 Resident maids
96 Wholly
97 Melon type
98 Place to sculpt in school, say
99 Dependable
100 English river
101 "Blaze" actress
102 Tennis shoe hole
103 Israel's flag carrier
104 12th grader
108 Bride's property
110 Nick of "Cape Fear"
116 — old way
117 Actress
118 Gained
119 Firefighter's tool
120 Freddie —
121 Onetime jet-set jet



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last week's answers



Sudoku

	7		5			2		
		2		6			4	
9					1			3
7					6	9		
		3	8				2	
	4			5				7
	6		7				1	
		8		1		3		
2					5			8

CryptoQuip

This is a simple substitution cipher in which each letter used stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Solution is accomplished by trial and error.

Clue: **O** equals **P**

ZC UTJ OXJOWX YBX GXNYUZVQ UDX

RXBZUI JC UDXBRJIUYUI, TJSWG ZU

NX Y DXYUXG YBQSRXVU?

Last week's CryptoQuip answer

If someone is in favor of red root vegetables, I reckon he might get called a beetnik.

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base_information/religious_services](http://www.flagshipnews.com/base_information/religious_services)

2	8	4	5	1	7	6	3	9
7	6	1	9	4	3	5	2	8
3	5	9	2	8	6	4	1	7
8	1	7	3	9	4	2	5	6
9	4	5	6	2	8	1	7	3
6	2	3	1	7	5	9	8	4
5	9	8	4	3	2	7	6	1
4	3	6	7	5	1	8	9	2
1	7	2	8	6	9	3	4	5

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