

# the primary loop

September 2021

Volume 2, Issue 12



**Ombudsman  
Appreciation  
Month**

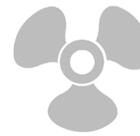
*Pages 4 - 6*

**Hispanic  
Heritage Month**

*Pages 8 - 9*



# SAILORS IN THE SPOTLIGHT



**EMFN  
Ashley Brehm**

**Hometown:**  
New Orleans.

**Why she joined:** To be able to provide for my family as well as gaining work experience. Also, to learn something new every day.

**Favorite part of the Navy:**

The people. I like getting to know people and learning new things from them.

**What are you looking forward to most in the fleet?** Being able to be constantly busy. I always like to do something, mostly solving problems. Also, traveling - I have never been outside of the U.S.

**Hobbies:**  
Reading, video games, playing with my two dogs.

**Hometown:**  
Palm Bay, Florida.

**Why he joined:**

I joined to provide myself and my family a great future.

**Favorite part of the Navy:**

All the friends I have made along the way make my experience very rewarding.

**What are you looking forward to most in the fleet?**

I am very excited to go out and see the world.

**Hobbies:**

Working on cars and scuba diving.



**MMFN  
Andrew Overbey**

**Hometown:** San Diego.

**Why he joined:**

I joined the Navy to carry on family lineage of Sailors - both my dad and grandfather served in the Navy - and to create better self-discipline.

**Favorite part of the Navy:**

My favorite part of the Navy is being a part of a culture of excellence that focuses on enhancing both the physical and mental aptitudes of its Sailors.

**What are you looking forward to most in the fleet?** I am most looking forward to traveling to foreign parts in the Asian-Pacific, specifically Japan and Australia.

**Hobbies:**

I enjoy power lifting, gaming and exploring local historical sites.



**ETSN  
Connor Fundak**

# CO's Corner

## What I Have Learned from COVID



America is an amazing country founded upon an amazing document: the Constitution. I love the military because despite our personal differences, we have all sworn to support and defend the Constitution against all enemies. If there is nothing else we can agree to, we agree to the base document that outlines the principles we live by. Implicitly we agree to the values of the Declaration of Independence: Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness. Our behavior of joining the military and living by the standards required to maintain a credible deterrent and the premier fighting force echo the words of our oath more than anything we could say or write.

In the face of our pandemic, our Navy continued to deploy, provide presence, and enforce stability and international norms. We adapted quickly and executed efficiently. This has come at a cost. Most of us joined the military to see the world. This aspect of the Navy was mostly removed. Port calls were limited to the ship or pier; deployments were extended with two week ROMs on the front end; and, a lot of travel was restricted. At home the celebrations of careers well performed, awards ceremonies, picnics, barbecues, graduations, religious services and even the act of singing, or ditties, were canceled. The fabric that makes us feel a part of something greater than ourselves was torn and in some cases shredded. We had to make decisions of visiting friends and families in a new light and horribly some of us had to watch as loved ones battled COVID alone. These costs should be stated and recognized.

However, with the brilliant, free minds of Americans, we developed mitigations to COVID, learned how to treat it and in record time, developed a vaccine. The team at NNPTC has seen value in the vaccine as 99% of us are vaccinated. We recognize that COVID comes at a cost and we are willing to do whatever it takes to stop the pandemic. We know that even though some of us may still get COVID, despite being vaccinated, that the implications on our health will be reduced and we will recover quickly. The freedoms we have supported by our service are clearly seen in our amazing pharmaceutical companies who developed this vaccine.

We gave up our values of liberty and the pursuit of happiness to mitigate COVID because we had to, because it was the right thing to do and that a lot was on the line, namely our other value of life. We now don't have to and we need to balance our values back out. Without liberty or happiness, what is life? Through the past two years, I've learned to not take for granted simple visits from friends, small awards ceremonies or working out in a gym. Small celebrations which before seemed routine are much more important to me. Above all else, I've come to value health more so than before COVID. This includes personal health and my effect on the health of others.

As we begin to conclude 2021, I ask that you think about the things you have learned and recognize the things you value. Please don't take for granted the fabric of freedom we have as Americans, the fragility of life or how large of an impact each of you have. We have responsibilities to the Constitution, our country and our fellow citizens. As Americans and Sailors, we have so much to be thankful for. We should take stock of what we have, not of what we don't have. As always, I am hopeful for our future, humbled by your achievements and proud to be a part of such a great team. I hope you enjoy this excellent edition of The Primary Loop.

# Providing Support to All Families

By MC3 Keyly Santizo

Photos courtesy of Heather Carvalho, Brettany Buetow and Jessica Holden

The military world can be vastly different from the civilian world. Active duty service members become accustomed to it during basic training and other day-to-day experiences, but often times their family members have not had such training and find themselves lost in the dark while trying to take care of things while their Sailor is away. Thankfully, there are key members at every command who can assist them with these needs.

Ombudsmen work as volunteer liaisons between commands and Sailors' families. Ombudsmen are trained to spread information both up and down the chain of command, including

official Department of the Navy and command information, command climate issues, local quality of life improvement opportunities and "good deals" around the community. Naval Nuclear



Jessica Holden, an NNPTC ombudsman, left, poses for a family portrait.



Heather Carvalho, an NNPTC ombudsman, takes a selfie with her husband.

Power Training Command (NNPTC) ombudsmen work with staff and student families to answer questions and provide resource referrals when a need arises.

September is Ombudsman Appreciation Month while Sept. 14 is Ombudsman Appreciation Day; a day for the Navy to show its appreciation to command ombudsmen for their volunteerism and dedication to supporting the Navy and its families.

“I decided to become an ombudsman because I wanted to help others with my time,” said Jessica Holden, an NNPTC ombudsman. “I’m a stay-at-home mom and wanted to keep it that way, but still wanted to fill my days with something meaningful.”

The ombudsmen at NNPTC work through networking and helping new families over the phone. They help provide new families with resources

to look for new jobs, daycare centers, events to make friends and vital information when loved ones are out at sea.

“[Ombudsmen] are important because without us, new families to a command can be left with no resources, no friends, job, etc.,” said Holden, from Hernando, Mississippi. “That’s where we come in; we have those resources, we have those connections.”

Ombudsmen can also provide resource referrals to Navy Marine Corps Relief Society (NMCRS), School Liaison Officer and Fleet and Family/Military Family Readiness (MFR).

“It’s important for the Navy to have ombudsmen because most of the things people come to us for don’t need to be brought to the command’s attention,” said Heather Carvalho, an NNPTC ombudsman and volunteer with NMCRS. “It can be stressful, especially for newer spouses, to speak up or ask questions if they think it’ll draw unwanted attention to the active duty spouse.”

Carvalho, from Honolulu, said she wanted to become an ombudsman because when her husband was new to the Navy she had to figure a lot of things out for herself while he was away and she struggled to get help from her ombudsman. She said she wanted to be the ombudsman she needed then for other spouses now.

The word “ombudsman” originated in Scandinavian countries and referred to safeguarding the rights of citizens. Today, the concept of the ombudsman is widely utilized in the fields of government, business and healthcare.

“Ombudsmen are here to help,” said Brettany Buetow, an NNPTC

ombudsman. “They volunteer their time to help make the lives of others easier. Our number one goal is to support the families and provide the best resources that fit [their] situation.”

Buetow, from Victorville, California, said she decided to become an ombudsman because she has been a military spouse for over 10 years and has been through a couple deployments, countless underways, and has gone through both shore duty and a sea tour. She said she has a good grasp on what the military life is about and she wanted to use her knowledge to help other Navy spouses and their families grow.

To become an ombudsman, one has to apply and then interview with the command master chief. Once accepted, the prospective ombudsman takes part in multiple training sessions to help best prepare for success.

Ombudsman training is thorough and continuous. It begins with ombudsman basic training that covers the Navy’s Family Ombudsman Program



Brettany Buetow, an NNPTC ombudsman, poses for a photo.

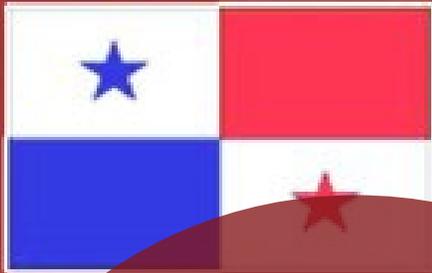
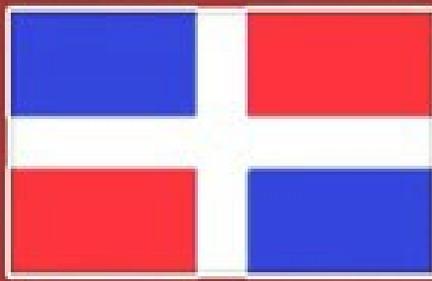
and the skills needed to do the job. Ombudsmen maintain and increase their knowledge and skills by attending advanced training offered by Fleet and Family Support Centers and local ombudsman assemblies.

NNPTC ombudsmen attend bi-weekly staff indoctrinations and weekly student indoctrinations, and even attend spouse nights. They also attend events and outreach opportunities put on by Military Family Readiness.

Anyone can call or text the ombudsmen. NNPTC’s current ombudsmen are Buetow, Carvalho and Holden. They can be reached via Facebook at Naval Nuclear Power Training Command Ombudsman, at [nnptcombudsman@gmail.com](mailto:nnptcombudsman@gmail.com) or by phone: Buetow: (843) 296-9426; Carvalho: (843) 252-5278; Holden: (843) 514-4948. Sailors can also request a meeting with an ombudsman.







Hispanic Heritage Month is an annual celebration of Hispanic communities. The event, which spans the month of September, highlights how those communities have influenced and shaped the United States.

# HISPA HERIT MON

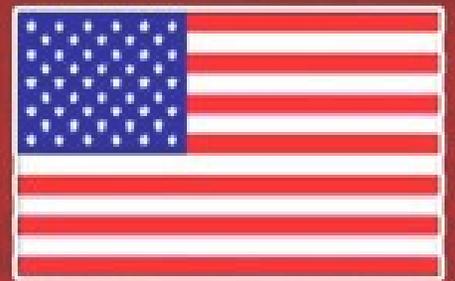


The term Hispanic or Latino (or the more recent term Latinx) refers to a person's culture or origin—regardless of race.



Hispanic Heritage Month actually began as a commemorative week when it was first introduced in June of 1968 by California Congressman George E. Brown.





ation of the history and culture of the U.S. Latinx and  
ns from September 15 to October 15, commemorates  
contributed to American society at large.

# HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

Hispanic Heritage Month coincides with the Independence Day celebrations of several Latin American nations. September 15 was chosen because it coincides with the Independence Day celebrations of five “Central American neighbors.”

In 1988, Senator Paul Simon submitted a bill that passed Congress and was signed into law by President Ronald Reagan on August 17, 1988. And on September 14, 1989, President George H.W. Bush became the first president to declare the 31-day period from September 15 to October 15 as National Hispanic Heritage Month.





**PHOTOS AROUND NNPTC**





# NFAS Class 2128-T Moors in the Record Books

By MC3 Keyly Santizo

Photos by MC1 William Phillips

Naval Nuclear Power training Command (NNPTC) Nuclear Field “A” school (NFAS) is known to be one of the toughest and most rigorous training schools in the Navy. All classes work hard to do well in class, but one recent class’ efforts landed them in the NNPTC record books.

NFAS Class 2128-T graduated on Sept. 17, with the second highest GPA for an electronics technician class (ET) in “A” school history.

“You kind of see it coming,” said Electronics Technician 1st Class William Whisenant, Class 2128-T’s section leading petty officer. “The biggest feeling you feel is like your class is on a tightrope and you don’t want to nudge them one way or another because you know they got where they are due to their own willpower, camaraderie, team commitment; so I didn’t want to come in here and change things up on them or force them to do something that’s going to be a detriment to them.”

ETs spend 24 weeks in classroom instruction and hands-on laboratory instruction. Courses include math, basic electricity, electronics fundamentals, and digital multiprocessors. At 17 weeks they continue with instrumentation and control equipment.

Whisenant, from Alexandria, Louisiana, said some complications throughout the course were the difficulties presented by COVID and the rollouts and roll-ins. Whisenant said it was a balancing act since they were tasked with indoctrinating almost all the Sailors that came into their team into the goal that they set. On the opposite end, Whisenant said they started with a small class - an advantage - but on top of that they all got along fairly well. He also said the instructors the class had were great



instructors for their courses and that was a huge aspect of their success.

Whisenant said there were times when the class had to sacrifice some weekend activities to study for a Monday exam, and they were rewarded for their commitment. He encouraged other SLPOs to empower their students and instill a sense of ownership in them in what they are doing.

Electronic Technician 3rd Class Antwand Howard scored the fourth highest individual GPA score in NNPTC history.

“It was a relief knowing I performed my job satisfactorily,” said Howard, from Tampa, Florida. “It says somewhere on a framed note in the classroom a longer version of ‘do your best’. That framed note says, essentially, to chase excellence. It’s an order that I vibe with.”

Howard said a few of the things that helped him get through his time in “A” school were overall culture and emotional investment of the class that served as a momentum to keep going; they were “in it to win it” and understand it. He said there were also occasional events which helped keep the group cohesive, such as movie nights, dinners out and bowling.

As advice to new students coming through the school Howard tells them:

“There are so many resources to tap here, from the people you may have met in boot camp, to the more structured ones such as Embedded Mental Health. Form a drive for yourself and use it as some sort of self-heating flame. Be a resource for others and introspect to learn your strengths. Leverage your strengths to better assist in the evolution of your community.”

Following NFAS graduation Sailors will go on to Nuclear Power School at NNPTC.





## The Nuke Variant

By Lt. Pete Canales

Sometimes we need a funny story, and for me a funny story to share that will help lighten a mood or brighten someone's day. Some stories are shared and the reader does not really understand why it is funny, almost as if it is an inside joke. The humor misses its mark. Hopefully this is not the case here. If anything, my hope is that my attempt to bring a smile to your face helps trigger a funny memory from your past whether or not this story makes you laugh.

As a preface, for my families of Sailors who read our Primary Loop who worry about their Sailor, no one was in danger in the story I am going to share based on actual events.

A couple of months ago, the exact date slips my mind, I noticed as I walked to work a commotion at the front door. This front door is mainly used by the staff. The commotion revolved around a young, and not very big, alligator at the front entrance to the school house.

Apparently, this alligator had been trying to gain entrance to our building for a while and our highly trained staff were doing their best to safely relocate this lost alligator to a surrounding more suitable to its nature. However, this is where my story, and humor, kicks in.

I had recently watched the Disney series "Loki". One of the later episodes depicts a variant of Loki (a variant in this show being one of many Loki's who are present in different dimensions or alternate universes) as an alligator wearing Loki's crown. The first thought that came to my mind upon seeing this small alligator was the image of Loki the alligator from the series, wearing the gold crown with two horns, and I wanted to laugh out loud. I also wanted to pick up the alligator like a little puppy dog, but I knew better.

I imagined this particular alligator variant of Loki as a Nuke student. Just what we need at our command, the "god of mischief" running around our campus learning all about our technology and then wreaking havoc in our fleet. Thankfully that is just my imagination running wild. What I did find amusing is that this alligator had been trying to gain entrance to our building for a few hours. This alligator obviously saw how much fun we have in our learning environment and wanted to be a part of the action. Or it really wanted to speak to the chaplain about stress, but I digress.

However, my mind kept going back to the Loki show and how in a complicated and stressful situation, this alligator variant of Loki provided comic relief. Many times in our stressful life we need comic relief, something to allow us to relax and laugh. Balancing when to add in comic relief requires tact, so please remember the following: "there is a right time and a right place. Is this the time and place?"

If you need help balancing life, or just want help adding a little bit of humor in your life, please reach out to your chaplain's office. We will do our best to help.

## Navy Establishes New Medal to Honor Fallen Civilians

From Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Ford Williams

WASHINGTON – Department of the Navy (DON) civilian employees who are killed or sustain serious injury through considerable personal sacrifice in the performance of their duties are now eligible to receive the Angela M. Houtz Medal for Fallen Civilians.

The award honors the fidelity and essential service of civilian employees who were killed or sustain serious injury in the performance of their official duties as a result of criminal act, natural disaster, terrorist act, or other circumstances as determined by the Secretary of the Navy (SECNAV).

“While Department of the Navy civilians may not be on the front lines, they do face many of the same dangers as our uniformed personnel because of where they work and what they do,” said Mr. Garry Newton, the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Civilian Personnel. “It was long past time to make it possible for commanders to fully recognize the service of all department personnel.”

The medal is named for Angela M. Houtz, a DON Intelligence Analyst, who perished during the terrorist attack on the Pentagon on September 11, 2001.

“The recognition the Navy is giving Angie by naming this medal in her honor is an unexpected and overwhelming gift to our family,” said Julie Shontere, Houtz’s mother. “Twenty years after she was killed - her presence is still being felt, her spirit and dedication still remembered, her contributions to the Navy as a civilian still recognized.”

Shontere said she and her husband Joe Shontere, Houtz’s father, were thankful to the Navy “and everyone involved in the process of establishing such a special remembrance of our incredible Angie.”

Houtz’s dedication to service



WASHINGTON (Sept. 10, 2021) An undated file photo of Angela M. Houtz, a Department of the Navy intelligence analyst killed in the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attack on the Pentagon. The Department of the Navy has named the civilian employees who are killed or sustain serious injury through considerable personal sacrifice in the performance of their duties are now eligible to receive the Angela M. Houtz Medal for Fallen Civilians.

and outstanding moral character are exemplified in a written note found in her desk which highlighted the way she lived her life:

- Always give 100%
- Listen.
- Care about each other as individuals.
- Be loyal.
- Do not tolerate sloppy, lazy or incomplete work.
- Support your boss. Think ahead.
- Remember your actions reflect on your office as a whole.
- Always strive to be of service. Reject an “it’s not my lane in the road” attitude.
- Work hard, play hard.
- Laugh.
- Be quick to praise.
- Be honest.

Houtz was one of several names recommended to Navy leadership by Naval History and Heritage Command Director, retired Rear Adm. Sam Cox, himself a former intelligence officer.

“Considered a ‘shipmate’ by her Navy co-workers, Ms. Houtz’s dedication to service and the Navy

makes her an appropriate namesake for this award,” said Cox. “I can attest to her reputation as an exceptionally dedicated and talented Intelligence analyst and civil servant, who displayed uncommon potential for senior leadership. She might one day have been a Deputy Director of Naval Intelligence.”



# NAVY PHOTOS



ARABIAN SEA (Sept. 14, 2021) Sailors assigned to the Wasp-class amphibious assault ship USS Iwo Jima (LHD 7) fight a simulated fire during a shipboard fire drill, Sept. 14, 2021. Iwo Jima is deployed to the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations in support of naval operations to ensure maritime stability and security in the Central Region, connecting the Mediterranean and Pacific through the western Indian Ocean and three strategic choke points. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Jessica Kibena)



ARABIAN SEA (Sept. 15, 2021) Marines and Sailors assigned to amphibious transport dock USS Portland (LPD 27), carry chains off Landing Craft, Air Cushion 33, in the well deck of Portland. Portland and the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit are deployed to the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations in support of naval operations to ensure maritime stability and security in the Central Region, connecting the Mediterranean and Pacific through the Western Indian Ocean and three strategic choke points. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Patrick Katz)

# Answer Key

## August Solution

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## the primary loop

### Commanding Officer

Capt. Scott J. McGinnis

### Executive Officer

Cmdr. Phil Jones

### Command Master Chief

EMNCM(SS) Derek G. Gruell

### Public Affairs Officer

Lt. Steven K. Reidel

### Assistant Public Affairs Officer

Lt. j.g. Bethany C. Fury

Lt. j.g. Stephan A. Munari

### Media Leading Petty Officer

MC1(SW/AW) Darren M. Moore

### Editors/Layout

MC3 Keyly Santizo

### Contributors

MC2(SW/AW/IW) Jessica Gomez

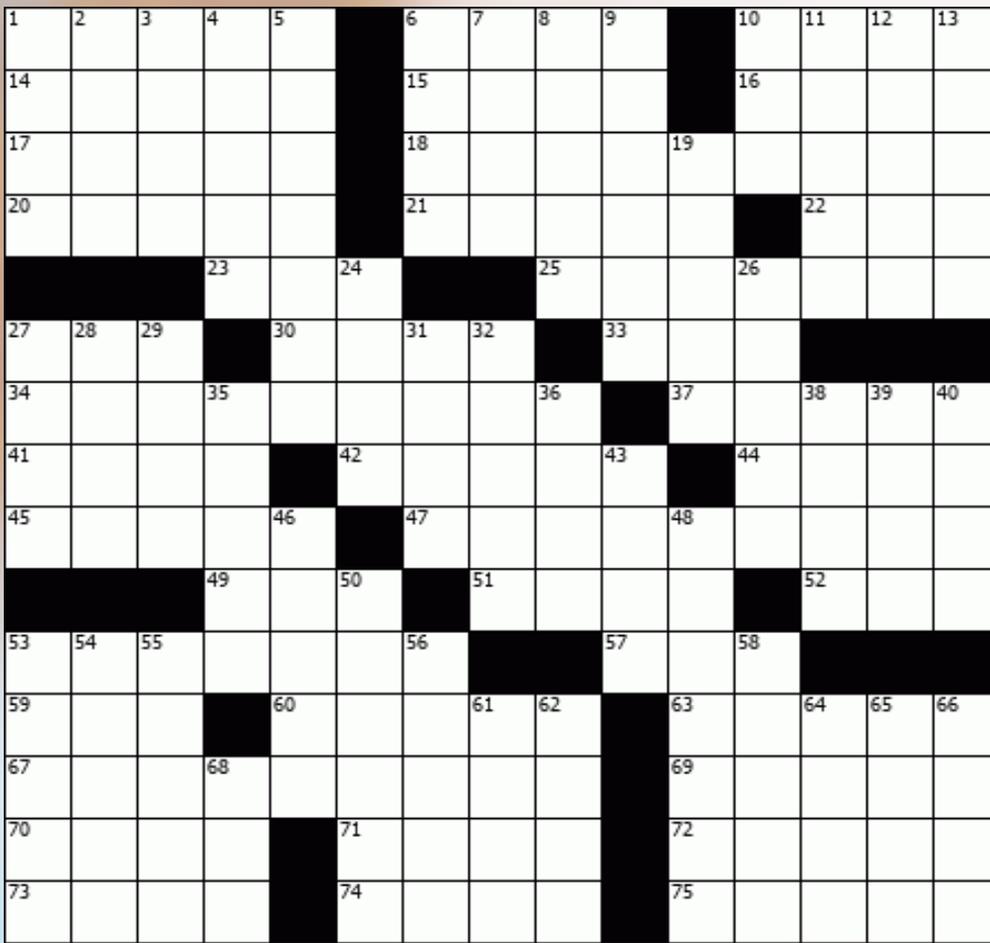
MC1(SW/AW) William Phillips

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*Contents herein are not the visions of, or endorsed by the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, the Department of the Navy or the Commanding Officer of Naval Nuclear Power Training Command.*

*Cover photo: Class 2128-T Sailors graduate Nuclear Field "A" school (NFAS) at Naval Nuclear Power Training Command (NNPTC). (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class William Phillips)*

# Game Corner



## Across

- 1. Vamoose!
- 6. Resorts
- 10. Cushions
- 14. Nile city
- 15. Shopping bag
- 16. Blue-pencil
- 17. Director Woody \_\_\_\_
- 18. Take turns
- 20. Lamb's sound
- 21. Capital of Idaho
- 22. School gp.
- 23. Pouch
- 25. \_\_\_\_ Hill (Congress locale)
- 27. Capone and Gore
- 30. Space agency (abbr.)
- 33. Triumphed
- 34. Hawaiian export
- 37. Florida seaport
- 41. Sinister
- 42. Exceed
- 44. Hurt
- 45. Railroad station
- 47. Felt sorry about
- 49. Tavern
- 51. Not imaginary
- 52. Effort
- 53. Matured
- 57. Racetrack circuit
- 59. WSW's opposite

## Down

- 60. Weird
- 63. Sample food
- 67. Claim
- 69. Potato state
- 70. Favorites
- 71. Indecent
- 72. Keyboard instrument
- 73. Quit
- 74. Significant times
- 75. Cozy retreats
- 1. Wound covering
- 2. Telephone
- 3. Aggravate
- 4. Regions
- 5. Idaho's neighbor
- 6. Pierce
- 7. Horseback sport
- 8. Storage spot
- 9. Playground feature
- 10. Writing implement
- 11. Adjust
- 12. Duplicate
- 13. Burglarize
- 19. Transplant
- 24. Guitar device
- 26. Not appropriate
- 27. Copied
- 28. Dwell
- 29. Cut

- 24. Guitar device
- 26. Not appropriate
- 27. Copied
- 28. Dwell
- 29. Cut
- 31. Goad
- 32. Change
- 35. Wed on the run
- 36. Brink
- 38. Damon or Dillon
- 39. Dock
- 40. Artist \_\_\_\_ Warhol
- 43. Exam type
- 46. Radio receiver
- 48. Ecstasy
- 50. Ladybug, e.g.
- 53. Gathers
- 54. Map detail
- 55. Green sauce
- 56. Not as wet
- 58. Pedro's father
- 61. Midwest state
- 62. Ceases
- 64. Wilts
- 65. Not this
- 66. Many years
- 68. Clairvoyant's letters

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