

IN BRIEF

PRESIDIO OF MONTEREY



July 2020

**Presidio welcomes new
garrison commander**

Chalk Walk for diversity

**Presidio and City of Monterey
celebrate 250 years as partners**



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The PoM InBrief is a command-authorized publication for the Monterey military community — published monthly by the Presidio of Monterey Public Affairs office.

We publish information of interest to members of our community — including all service members, military families, civilian personnel & veterans who access services at our installation.

Story ideas and submissions of original material are always welcome.

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Cover: Col. Varman Chhoeung, Presidio of Monterey’s garrison commander, speaks during his change of command ceremony, July 9. Photo by: Marcus Fichtl

Presidio welcomes new garrison commander



Col. Varman Chhoeung receives the garrison colors during a socially distanced change of command ceremony.

Marcus Fichtl
Presidio of Monterey

PRESIDIO OF MONTEREY, Calif. – The Presidio of Monterey welcomed Col. Varman Chhoeung as the new garrison commander during a change of command ceremony, July. 9.

Chhoeung replaced Col. Greg Ford, who is retiring after 24 years of military service, during a small, socially distanced ceremony at the Presidio's Weckerling Hall. The post's new commander said he will rely heavily on what he called the "unstoppable force" that is the garrison team.

"I have been a member of many great teams in the past and I know that this is an outstanding

team," Chhoeung remarked. "As you've provided outstanding support to the community in the past, I trust and empower you to continue to do the same."

Born in Cambodia and raised in Virginia, Chhoeung was commissioned at West Point in 1999 and began his career as an engineer with the 1st Armored Division in Germany. He later passed the Special Forces qualification course and has spent much of his career as a Green Beret in the jungles of the Philippines, the mountains of Afghanistan and the halls of the Pentagon. His most recent position before arriving at the Presidio was as U.S. Army Special Operation Command's operations officer.

Capt. Rich Wiley, Naval Support Activity Monterey's commander, who presented Ford the Legion of

Merit, called the outgoing garrison commander his friend and a humble servant to Monterey's military community.

"When you look at what defines a leader, [Ford] has all the traits," he said.

Before stepping away from the podium, Ford made sure to let everyone know Chhoeung was the best man for the job.

"He's a proven leader who will take the garrison to the next level," Ford said. "He and I worked together many years ago and the officer I served with then is even better now."

'Chalk Walk' builds Presidio community



Chalk Walk

Zack Frank
Presidio of Monterey

PRESIDIO OF MONTEREY, Calif. – While the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic limits in-person gatherings, service members were encouraged to write and draw with colorful chalk on the sidewalk outside the Combs Hall dining facility during their lunch break June 17. The Military Equal Opportunity (MEO) and Sexual Harassment Assault Response Prevention (SHARP) offices partnered to hold this ‘chalk walk’ in recognition of Army Heritage, LGBT Pride and Sexual Assault and Harassment Awareness and Prevention Months. The two hour event allowed participants to engage in a communal event while maintaining social distancing practices.

“We had been holding chalk walks in previous years as part of Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month. This year, it was one of the few activities that we could still hold, albeit in a modified way.” said Sgt. 1st Class Jeremiah Gwozdziwycz, Installation Lead Sexual Assault Response Coordinator.

Participants in face-masks took turns adding their messages and sketches to the concrete. Themes ranged from inspiring phrases written by DLI students in their target languages to pride symbols and statements about the importance of consent.

“I always have a good time drawing out super elaborate pictures for people to look at when they walk by.” said Airman 1st Class Kylie Kelly who drew a Disney princess saying ‘consent is key’.

“The current national climate is all about people having their voices heard and this was an avenue that could be used to do so,” said Sgt. 1st Class Joseph R. Benavidez, Installation Equal Opportunity Advisor. “When people can see what others are feeling, they will begin to see the world from a different perspective; perhaps then others can see how the military’s strength lies within the diversity we have



Service members at the Presidio of Monterey decorate the sidewalk during a ‘chalk walk’ in recognition of Army Heritage, LGBT Pride and Sexual Assault and Harassment Awareness and Prevention Months, June 17.

and how we harness that strength through equity and inclusion.”

As Defense Language Institute classes have moved to virtual instruction and students are told to avoid gathering in groups, community activities like the chalk walk have been rare opportunities to take part in a shared experience. It also allowed the MEO and SHARP offices to have face-to-face contact with the service members they support. However, even with the pandemic-related limitations their important work has continued through the online environment

Benavidez explained that the MEO office was also welcomed by the schoolhouses to meet with the students online, saying, “Those sessions provided us with an opportunity to engage directly with the students in the virtual format to discuss the command climate and address any EO-related issues that may be occurring.”

Sexual Assault and Harassment Awareness and Prevention Month is traditionally observed in April. But because the pandemic limited events the theme was combined with the chalk walk for the June observances of LGBT Pride Month and Army Heritage Month to make it more accessible to service members. This year’s focus on Army Heritage Month was on the 245th anniversary of the formation of the U.S. Army, which also occurred this week.

“Along with honoring the Equal Opportunity observances to highlight the multitude of contributions made to our nation by the many dedicated and diverse Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, Coast Guardsmen and Civilians as well as their Families, we also want to celebrate the birthdays of our various service components as these events occur.” said Gwozdziwycz.

Marine awarded for saving driver's life

Tammy Cario
Defense Language Institute

PRESIDIO OF MONTEREY, Calif. – A Marine with the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center was awarded for his heroic actions Thursday in a ceremony held at the Presidio of Monterey May 28, 2020.

The Marine Corps Detachment awarded Sgt. Christopher C. Ellis with the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal, an award reserved for a service member distinguished by heroic or meritorious achievement.

“This is an awesome occasion in the midst of these unprecedented times to recognize the heroic actions of a Marine,” said Lt. Col. Jason Schermerhorn, commanding officer of MCD, during the ceremony.

In January of 2019, Ellis was on his way to his language training at DLIFLC when he noticed a two-vehicle accident on the side of the road and stopped to check on those involved.

Upon assessing the vehicles, he found a woman, Vilma Perez, of Monterey, unconscious in the driver's seat of a crushed car that was billowing smoke. Ellis, along with the help of another fellow Good Samaritan, broke the window and pulled Perez to safety.

In explaining what he was thinking at the time, Ellis said, “I just knew decisions needed to be made and things needed to be done.”

Ellis and the Good Samaritan were able to get the unconscious Perez across to the other side of the road when the car became engulfed in flames.

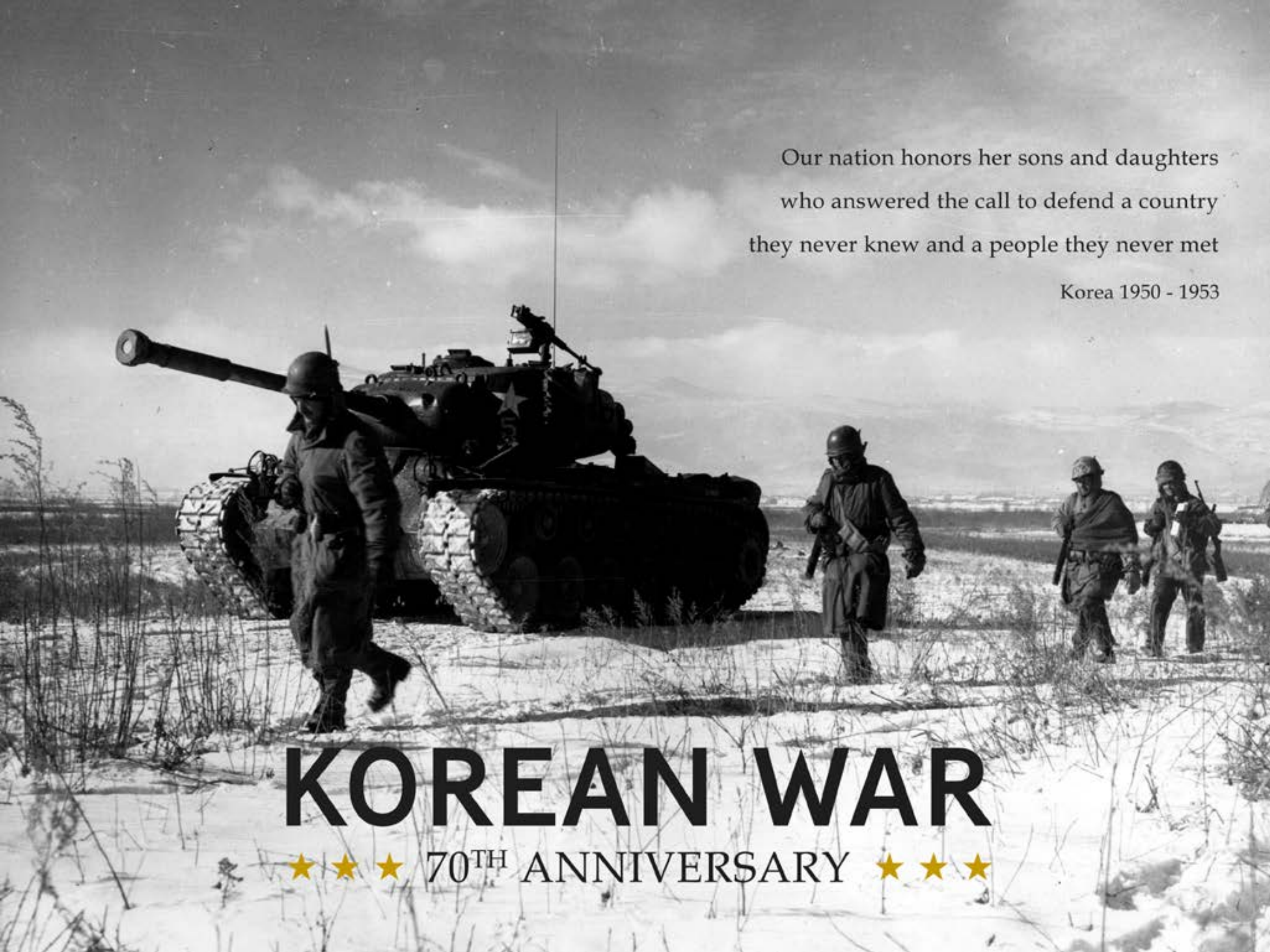
“The actions he took showed exactly the Corps values, especially courage,” Schermerhorn told the Marines. “He didn't just stand there, he took action.”



Marine Sgt. Christopher Ellis is presented the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal.



Sgt. Christopher Ellis salutes after receiving his award.

A black and white photograph of a tank and soldiers in a snowy field. The tank is a M4 Sherman, with a star emblem on its turret. A soldier in a helmet and winter coat is walking in the foreground to the left of the tank. Three other soldiers are walking in the background to the right. The ground is covered in snow and dry grass. The sky is cloudy.

Our nation honors her sons and daughters
who answered the call to defend a country
they never knew and a people they never met

Korea 1950 - 1953

KOREAN WAR

★ ★ ★ 70TH ANNIVERSARY ★ ★ ★

Marine detachment changes command

Natela Cutter
Defense Language Institute

PRESIDIO OF MONTEREY, Calif. – The Marine Corps Detachment at the Presidio of Monterey carried out a change of command June 12, in which Lt. Col. Jason Schermerhorn relinquished command to Lt. Col. Timothy Mayer, who will be taking charge of Marines studying a foreign language at the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center.

Using social distancing, some 300 Marines in formation with masks donned stood on Soldier Field during the ceremony, reminding participants and guests that the era of the COVID-19 pandemic has not subsided.

“Thank you for being here today! For some of us, today’s ceremony is the first large event we’ve attended since COVID-19 became a real threat,” said outgoing commander Schermerhorn.

Due to the pandemic, the presiding officer, Col. Derek Lane, commanding officer of the Marine Corps Communication-Electronics School headquartered in Twentynine Palms, California was not able to attend, but sent a letter.

“Your ability to also command, control, and take care of the Marines not only at DLI, but also at the Naval Postgraduate School, highlights your ability to lead an expansive, diverse command while ensuring mission accomplishment in every regard,” said Lane, in the letter read by Sgt. Ryan McGuinness. Schermerhorn assumed command of the Marine Corps Detachment, Monterey, in June of 2018. While thanking his own Marines and academic leadership for their hard work, Schermerhorn singled out DLIFLC Army leadership.

“I thank all of you for your commitment to the mission and all the service members,” said Schermerhorn. “One thing that really sticks with me is that Col. [Gary] Hausman and Command Sgt. Maj. [Thomas]



Lt. Col. Jason Schermerhorn receives an award for his service as the Marine Corps Detachment commander.

Donehue really look at our Marines as if they are their responsibility as much as a Soldier in the 229th [Military Intelligence Battalion],” he said.

“I am very fortunate to follow Lt. Col. Schermerhorn’s leadership and the positive forward momentum that this command has been taking,” said incoming commander Mayer, who served with Schermerhorn before.

“But for the Marines out there, we’ve got a lot of responsibilities and work to complete,” he said, adding that “There are challenging times ahead for our nation...and your role to our national defense is crucial.”

Mayer came to DLIFLC from the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit, North Carolina, where he

served as a senior ground intelligence officer. Mayer has most recently supported civilian authorities’ operations in Puerto Rico and worked as a part of an Africa crisis response team while stationed in Moron, Spain. His experience with deployment and tactical employment of ground reconnaissance units allows him a unique understanding of the Marine linguist.

Due to his successful leadership of Marines at DLIFLC, Marine officers attending the neighboring Naval Postgraduate School and two units at Naval Air Station Lemoore, Schermerhorn was selected to attend the Joint Advanced Warfighting School in Norfolk, Virginia.

Army turns 245



Army turns 245 in the time of COVID-19

Marcus Fichtl
Presidio of Monterey

PRESIDIO OF MONTEREY, Calif. – Life has changed for Soldiers during the COVID-19 pandemic, but the Army continues to move on as it turns 245-years-old June 14.

“This year, the United States Army pays tribute to 245 years of dedicated service to our Nation. While it is fitting that we pause to recognize the achievements and contributions of our Soldiers and their Families, Army Civilians, Veterans, and retirees, we acknowledge that this Army Birthday will take place during a profoundly challenging time for America,” Army Chief of Staff Gen. James McConville and Sergeant Major of the Army Michael Grinston said in a joint proclamation commemorating the birthday.

“Army Soldiers and civilians embody the Army Values of Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity, and Personal Courage and are committed to the mission. We thank our Soldiers and their families, Army civilians, veterans, and retirees for their extraordinary service and steadfast determination,” the proclamation continued.

Garrison Command Sgt. Maj. Robert Londers echoed the military’s top brass’ statement about how important it was to protect and celebrate the force.

“We’re not playing a short game, we’re playing a long game,” Londers said. “We need [our Soldiers] here, healthy and safe so they can learn their language, join our operating forces, do their job, and fight and win our nation’s wars.”

Londers, however, still wants troops on the base to take a moment to acknowledge the heritage of the



West Point cadets celebrate a socially distanced graduation ceremony.

Army that stretches from Gen. George Washington’s men surviving a harsh winter in Valley Forge, to Soldiers landing on the beaches of Normandy, to

the Soldiers today, patrolling the mountains of Afghanistan and the sands of Syria.

Londers who is celebrating his 23rd Army birthday said he looks back fondly on celebrations from his early career when he watched Vietnam vets cut the traditional Army birthday cake with his young peer fresh-out-basic by his side.

“We’re not playing a short, we’re playing a long game.”

Story continued next page

Birthday Cont.

In my early years we still had some Vietnam vets that were around,” he said. “That was pretty special seeing those guys still in service.”

It was those moments he said that helped him understand the Army as more than just a job but as a shared family that stretches, now, 245 years into the past.

“Just take a moment to celebrate their lives and careers of those who came before you,” he said.



Soldiers stand dressed in period and modern uniforms.



Soldiers socially distance themselves during physical training.



Soldiers practice room clearing while maintaining coverings over their faces.

Presidio and City of Monterey celebrate 250-year partnership

Joseph Kumzak
Presidio of Monterey

MONTEREY, Calif. – Col. Greg Ford, Presidio of Monterey former garrison commander, presented Mayor Clyde Roberson, City of Monterey, with a Patriotic Public Service Award to the City of Monterey for 250 years of partnership on June 8 at the Colton Hall Museum.

The City of Monterey and the Presidio have a long rich history together.

Captain Don Gaspar de Portola, a Spanish soldier, established the Presidio of Monterey June 3, 1770 to defend Monterey's port. It took about a year to erect the original fort.

The City of Monterey is the second oldest city in California after San Diego. Throughout its history, Monterey has been under the control of four countries: Spain, Argentina, Mexico and the United States.

In 1846 during the Mexican-American War, Commodore John D. Sloat, commander of the U.S. Navy's Pacific Squadron, raised the American flag at the Custom House and claimed California for the United States; a symbolic act for Monterey and the country.

The Presidio's mission has changed many times throughout its history, but in 1946 it welcomed the Army Language School to develop military linguists. The school's name was eventually changed to the Defense Language Institute in 1963. Native-speaking instructors from around the world move to Monterey to teach foreign languages to military students.

"The reason our partnership is so successful is because the City of Monterey has embraced our diversity," said Ford. "As we bring students here from across the nation and faculty from across the globe, the City of Monterey has provided a place where



Col. Greg Ford, Presidio of Monterey former garrison commander, presents Mayor Clyde Roberson, City of Monterey, with a Patriotic Public Service Award to the City of Monterey for 250 years of partnership on June 8 at the Colton Hall Museum.

diversity is embraced and cherished, and that's why Monterey is the Language Capital of the World."

Roberson said the City of Monterey values the military for the diversity it brings to the peninsula, and appreciates seeing the students and faculty enjoying the Monterey community.

"I am always so impressed when I see the young students and the staff ... how intelligent they are, how caring they are, and how much they appreciate our city," said Roberson. "There's a sense of family we have with the Defense Language Institute."

He added, "Monterey is truly the Language Capital of the world, but I like to think it's a place of diversity, welcome, and warmth."



The award presented to the city of Monterey.

A photograph showing three men in an office setting. Two men on the left and right are wearing U.S. Army camouflage uniforms and face masks, while the man in the center is wearing a suit and a blue face mask. They are all leaning over a table, signing documents with black markers. The man on the left is wearing a watch. The man on the right has "U.S. ARMY" visible on his uniform. A digital clock in the background shows "15:00".

Command team renews leadership pledge to position service members, professionals and their families for success.

2020 Army Emergency Relief campaign extended through July

Zack Frank
Presidio of Monterey

PRESIDIO OF MONTEREY, Calif. – While the annual Army Emergency Relief (AER) campaign kicked off in March, the COVID-19 outbreak sidelined those initial fundraising efforts. As a result, the 2020 AER campaign has been extended through July 31.

“AER supports Soldiers by providing zero interest loans and grants to active duty and retired Soldiers and their spouses in times of financial need,” said SFC Matthew Peterson, AER coordinator. “There are many different categories of assistance to include basic living allowances (rent, mortgage, and monthly bills), POV expenses (maintenance, repair, gas, and emergency purchase), some medical costs, and unforeseen emergencies.”

In recent years the participation at the Presidio of Monterey and Defense Language Institute has grown exponentially. In 2018, only 7 donations were recorded. Last year that number rose to 50 donations. Before the outbreak of COVID-19 the campaign’s efforts had resulted in over 100 donations.

“This year, we set out to reach that participation goal of 23% for POM, but we also set a modest dollar amount goal of \$6,500. With our campaign opening



During July the representatives for the AER campaign are planning to have tables out in high traffic areas like the commissary, exchange, and dining facilities to continue raising money for those experiencing financial hardship.

Peterson suggests those who wish to donate should, “...contact their AER Representative at the unit, or their drill sergeant.”

At the beginning of the month a joint letter was issued by Secretary of the Army Ryan D. McCarthy, Army Chief of Staff Gen. James C. McConville, and Sgt. Maj. of the Army Michael A. Grinston where they spoke about the importance of AER in maintaining mission readiness.

“Our primary focus remains the defense of our great Nation, while protecting and assisting the Army’s most valuable resource: our people. AER is there to support Soldiers and Army Families through this fight, and we will be there to support AER.”

The Army Emergency Relief program has been supporting Soldiers since 1942 with crucial financial assistance when needed the most. To learn more about how AER provides support during the COVID-19 pandemic, or to make donation online visit <https://www.armyemergencyrelief.org/>.



ceremony, we absolutely crushed that goal. We are currently sitting at about 17% participation and around \$13,000!” said Peterson.

Presidio PAO named Army's top Civilian Photographer of 2019



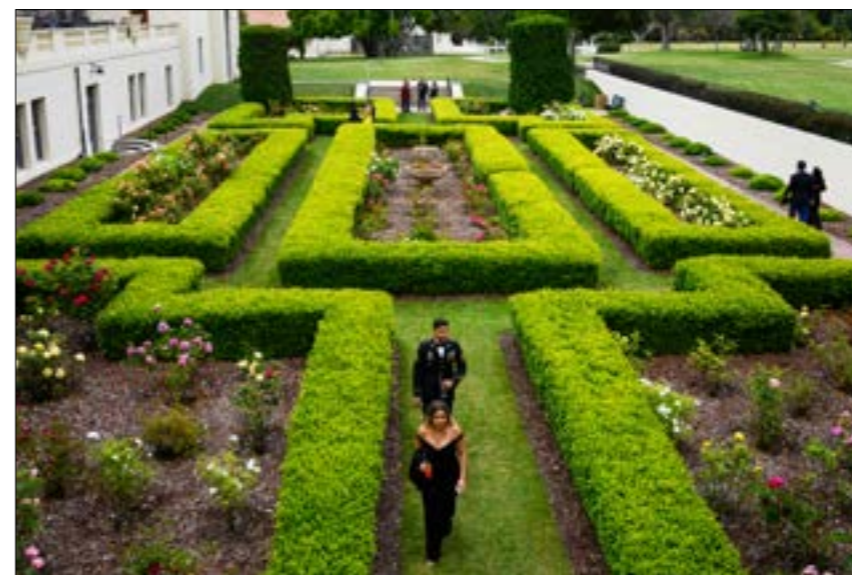
Photo by Joseph Kumzak

2019 Army Civilian Photographer of the Year Marcus Fichtl

Congratulations to Marcus Fichtl, our command information manager, for being named the Army's 2019 Civilian Photographer of the Year during the annual MG Keith L. Ware Army journalism competition. He beat out top DA civilian photographers representing major commands from across the globe.

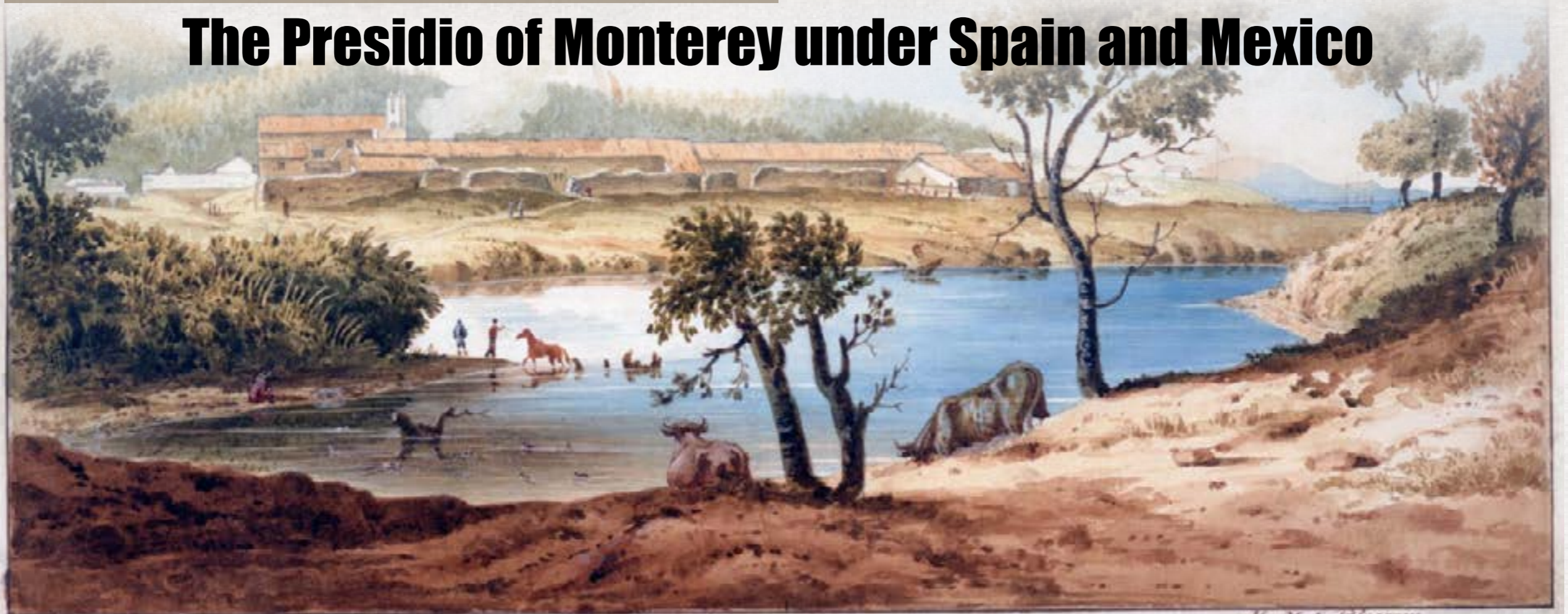
Marcus came to the Presidio of Monterey June 2019 after serving nine years as a combat correspondent for the U.S. Army. At the Presidio, he tells the story of garrison and the service members who train here — no matter where it takes him. He also builds and designs our monthly publication: The InBrief.

We look forward to another successful year of Army story telling from Marcus and the rest of the public affairs team in 2020.



Right: A sample of the photos submitted to the 2019 MG Keith L. Ware Army journalism competition.

The Presidio of Monterey under Spain and Mexico



The Presidio of Monterey as depicted by Mids. Richard Brydges Beechey, ca. 1826-27, of H.M.S. Blossom, seen in the bay. The Royal Presidio Chapel is shown on the far left of the fort while the Mexican flag flying on the hill beyond marks the position used by insurgents to attack the Presidio in 1836. Image courtesy of the Bancroft Library.

Cameron Binkley
Command Historian

This summer marks the 250th anniversary of the founding of Monterey and its presidio by Capt. Don Gaspar de Portolá of the army of Spain. By presidential directive, the modern U.S. Army installation was christened after the Royal Presidio of Monterey on August 30, 1904, to perpetuate the name of the old Spanish base.

Presidios were frontier fortifications designed to protect Spanish soldiers and to serve as administrative centers. Through its five presidios, Spain ruled all of Alta and Baja California from 1770

until Mexican independence, chief among them the one in Monterey, which served as the colonial capital.

Constructed on the shore of an estuary for tactical advantage but far enough inland to avoid naval fire, the Presidio was the scene of two military encounters. In 1818, the fort was burned during the Battle of Monterey after Argentine pirates attacked the port, forced the retreat of Spanish defenders, and looted the town. In deference to a common Catholic heritage, however, they left the Royal Presidio Chapel unharmed, which survives today as the oldest operating church on the West Coast and a National Historic Landmark.

Then, in 1836, Juan Baustista Alvarado led a coup supported by several Californios and a few Americans against Mexican rule. They fired a small cannon at the Presidio and so rattled Governor Nicolás Gutiérrez that he surrendered, allowing Alvarado to proclaim the independence of California. Negotiators later persuaded Alvarado to rejoin Mexico peacefully, but the confrontation demonstrated the Presidio's military ineffectiveness. Local inhabitants began carting off the fort's adobe bricks for reuse, an early example of recycling. By the time U.S. forces arrived to hoist the Stars and Stripes above Monterey on July 7, 1846, there was little left of the original Presidio, but its chapel and its name.

Remembering the Memorialized: Chamberlin



Memorialization #5

BG Harry Dwight Chamberlin c1885-1944

Chamberlin graduated from West Point in 1910. He served in World War I and World War II before becoming commanding general of Fort Ord, 1943-1944. He died during his tenure, almost one year to the day after he assumed command. The Chamberlin Library that carries his name was opened in 1970, although it shuttered its doors after the closure of Fort Ord in 1994. Today the building serves as a historical archive and home to the DLI Office of History.

Learn more about our Memorialized on our website:
<https://home.army.mil/monterey/index.php/about/memorialization>



News Briefs: **Army**

SMA takes to social media, addresses ACFT 2.0 concerns



WASHINGTON — A day after publishing the new Army Combat Fitness Test, or ACFT 2.0, Army leaders jumped on social media to directly answer questions about it, and how it may impact Soldiers during a virtual town hall Tuesday on Facebook.

More than 270,000 viewers from around the globe streamed the live event, as Sgt. Maj. of the Army Michael A. Grinston, along with a panel of Army leaders, took on questions submitted by Soldiers, in hopes to help them flesh out how this current implementation phase of the ACFT will affect them.

What's clear is that the ACFT will be the service's new fitness test of record Oct. 1, despite COVID-19 delays. Instead of stalling its long-planned target date, failures won't be counted until the Army publishes further guidance.

Click the tank to read more:

'Be About It': Provost marshal general sends message on racial division and civil unrest



WASHINGTON — As American citizens share their frustration over the racial divisions and call for police reform across the nation, the Army provost marshal general and his sergeant major delivered a video message to all military police on fostering a culture built on trust and acceptance.

The three-minute video, "Let's not just talk about it -- Let's BE ABOUT IT," by Maj. Gen. Kevin Vereen and Sgt. Maj. Larry Orvis Jr. was posted this week to social media platforms. The message was intended to reach the more than 34,000 MPs in the Army's three components and about 8,000 civilian personnel who support them, including Department of the Army civilian police, Army security guards and special agents.

Click the tank to read more:

Senior leaders celebrate Army's diversity over past 245 years



WASHINGTON — Army employees affected by the coronavirus pandemic will have the option of taking up to two weeks of emergency paid sick leave in addition to other paid leave entitlements.

The Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act, part of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, allows civilians across the Defense Department to take the emergency leave from April 1 through Dec. 31, provided that they meet certain conditions. The new emergency sick leave will be separate from the normal sick leave civilians accrue and can be taken without using accrued sick leave.

Click the tank to read more:

News Briefs **Air Force**

Misawa AB demonstrates combat readiness in first joint, bilateral elephant walk



MISAWA AIR BASE, Japan — Members of the 35th Fighter Wing completed a readiness exercise designed to validate the wing's ability to rapidly generate combat airpower at Misawa Air Base, June 23. The exercise culminated in a joint and bilateral "elephant walk" formation composed of 31 aircraft, demonstrating large-scale combat airpower local to Misawa AB.

"The goal of this exercise was to execute a short notice, agile combat execution-style deployment and generation," said Maj. Brannan Studley, 35th Fighter Wing director of wing inspections. "We learned a lot, refined our training, and demonstrated we're ready to fight, which is even more critical in the middle of COVID-19 operations."

[Click the jet to read more:](#)

AFLCMC acquires new Air Force handgun



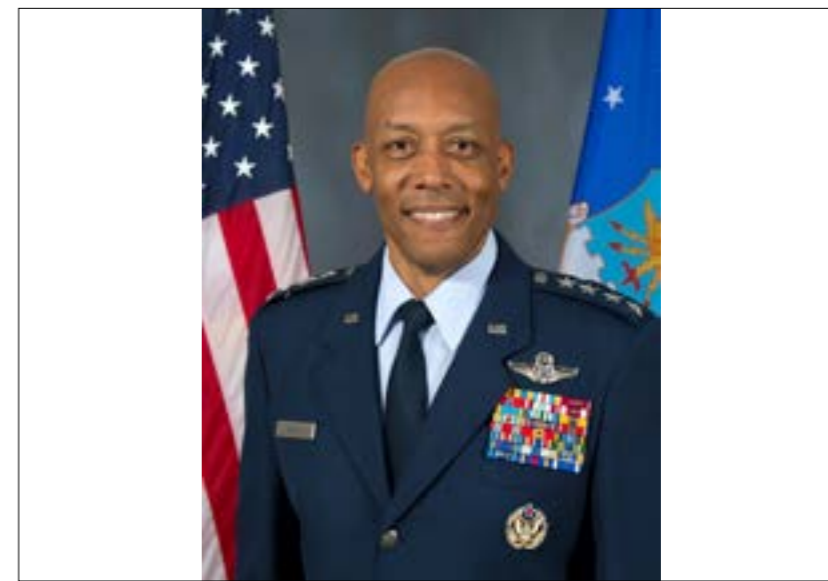
WRIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Ohio — Combat arms units across the Air Force are getting new and improved 9mm caliber handguns to replace the M9 pistols that have been in service since 1985.

The Air Force Life Cycle Management Center's Small Arms Program Office acquired approximately 125,000 M18s from Sig Sauer for \$22.1 million, and is making them available to Air Force organizations that have a handgun requirement.

"The Air Force bought the M9s back in the 1980s, and the design has not really changed since then," said Merrill Adkison, Small Arms Program Office senior logistics manager. "M9s are larger, heavier, all-metal pistols; whereas M18s are lighter polymer pistols with a more consistent trigger pull and adjustable grips for large and small hands."

[Click the jet to read more:](#)

Senate confirms Brown as 22nd Air Force chief of staff by unanimous vote



WASHINGTON — The U.S. Senate confirmed Gen. Charles Q. Brown Jr., June 9, to be the 22nd Air Force chief of staff, clearing the way for the decorated pilot and experienced commander to become the first African American in history to lead a branch of the U.S. military as its highest-ranking officer.

The vote was 98-0.

In advance of today's vote on his confirmation, Brown testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee during a hearing May 7. During the hearing, Brown pledged to ensure Air Force readiness to support the National Defense Strategy, if confirmed. "I am committed to the Air Force achieving irreversible momentum towards implementation of the National Defense Strategy and an integrated and more lethal joint force," Brown said.

[Click the jet to read more:](#)

News Briefs: Navy

161 days consecutively at sea, Dwight D. Eisenhower breaks U.S. Navy record



ARABIAN SEA — As of June 25, 2020, the aircraft carrier USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN 69) (Ike) and its escort ship, the guided-missile cruiser USS San Jacinto (CG 56), have been continuously at sea for 161 days, setting a new record for the U.S. Navy.

Both ships departed their homeport of Norfolk, Va., on Jan. 17, for the strike group's Composite Training Unit Exercise (COMPTUEX) and follow-on deployment to the U.S. 6th and 5th Fleet areas of operation.

Although Naval History and Heritage Command does not specifically track continuous days underway for naval vessels, it has two modern documented days-at-sea records, both of which are now broken.

[Click the ship to read more:](#)

Littoral combat ship USS Kansas City joins fleet



SAN DIEGO — The U.S. Navy commissioned Independence-variant littoral combat ship USS Kansas City (LCS 22) June 20.

The Navy commissioned Kansas City administratively via naval message, due to public health safety and restrictions of large public gatherings related to the coronavirus pandemic and transitioned the ship to normal operations. The Navy is looking at a future opportunity to commemorate the special event with the ship's sponsor, crew, and commissioning committee.

[Click the ship to read more:](#)

U.S. Navy navigates to 'new normal'



WASHINGTON — The Navy has incorporated lessons learned from the initial COVID-19 outbreaks onboard USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71) and USS Kidd (DDG 100) into guidance to sustain underway operations while fighting the virus during future outbreaks at sea.

Fleet surgeons, supported by a Navy Medicine scientific panel of medical researchers, public health experts and laboratory specialists, were able to confirm that Theodore Roosevelt Sailors whose diagnostic polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests remained positive ten days or more after the onset of their symptoms were no longer infectious. This, combined with other independent scientific reports of persistent viral shedding, led to a fleet-wide shift to a symptoms-based recovery strategy instead of one requiring PCR out-testing.

[Click the ship to read more:](#)

News Briefs: Marines

Marine Corps activates new battalion to fight in cyberspace



UNITED STATES — An impactful change to Marine Corps cyberspace and information technology modernization occurred on June 4, 2020, aboard Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, California, with the activation of 1st Network Battalion, which marked the beginning of the Marine Corps Enterprise Network Command and Control modernization implementation plan.

During the ceremony, Lt. Col. Juliet H. Calvin took command of the Marine Corps' newest battalion and made history as the first Marine to command a unit of this type, which will ensure a resilient network that enables mission execution in the face of persistent cyber threats.

[Click the EGA to read more:](#)

Futenma bike race marks first major sportin event to return during Covid-19



MCAS FUTENMA, OKINAWA, Japan — Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all sporting events were put on hold as a precautionary measure. As Okinawa marks more than 50 days COVID-19 free, events are being re-opened to the community. One of the first events to be opened was the Annual Futenma Bike Race hosted by Marine Corps Community Services.

“We do this race every year,” said Taryn Miller, an adult sports specialist with MCCS, “but this year we had to put a twist on it.”

The race took place in a time trial format so participants could maintain social distancing while racing. The CDC defines social distancing as keeping space between yourself and other people to reduce the spread of a disease.

[Click the EGA to read more:](#)

Secretary Braithwaite swears in as SECNAV



WASHINGTON — The Honorable Kenneth J. Braithwaite swore into the Department of the Navy as the 77th Secretary of the Navy at the Pentagon May 29.

At the ceremony, officiated by Defense Secretary Mark T. Esper, Braithwaite was joined by his family, the Chief of Naval Operations, and the Commandant of the Marine Corps.

“I am privileged to stand with the greatest Navy and Marine Corps the world has ever known in service to the people of America. Full steam ahead,” said Braithwaite.

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