

IN PRESIDIO OF MONTEREY BRIEF

October/November 2020



Chay dining facility memorialized

A very Presidio Halloween

Great Depression era art

Presidio opens fire station

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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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Be here tomorrow!

Kevin Hines, who survived jumping off the Golden Gate Bridge, speaks with service members at the Price Fitness Center Field.

Marcus Fichtl

Presidio of Monterey

PRESIDIO OF MONTEREY, Calif. – . – Kevin Hines, who survived an attempt at his own life when he jumped off the Golden Gate Bridge twenty years ago, spoke for the third year at the Presidio of Monterey, Oct. 27.

As in years past, he spoke of surviving the jump, fighting for his mental health and teaching others about “being here tomorrow.” But this year he added a second day where he sat out on the Price Fitness Center field and had a more intimate question-answer session.

229th Battalion Commander Lt. Col. Matthew Upperman set the stage for why Hines’ visit was more important now than ever.

“We’re dealing with some tough times right now, and life with COVID is hard,” said 229th Battalion

Commander Lt. Col. Matthew Upperman. “Suicide is up 40 percent across the military this year.”

The session began with a question about how to maintain mental resilience during a pandemic with social distancing.

Hines answered by saying that first the service members needed to realize they are only physically distanced – not socially.

“I would say the most important thing to do during stressful times like COVID is to engage with other people,” he said. “Even though we are physically distanced; we still have to socially connect. Reach out to three to five people on a weekly basis... it will help your mental health as well as theirs.”

Throughout the hour multiple Soldiers spoke about their suicidal thoughts and even attempts.

Hines called those Soldiers brave for telling their

“truth” in front of their peers and the world, and told them when they’re hurting they need be “real and blunt,” about the pain.

“Reach out to friends, peers and leadership, and tell them: ‘I need help now. I can’t do this alone. I need you to get my back.’” I think this frank approach is the best approach. You need to be your authentic self and tell the truth,” he said.

During his talk, Hines answered questions on healthy habits, where to get help and who to contact -- but most importantly, he told the thousand-strong audience, “suicide is never the answer” and pointed to his shirt and the mantra he lives by “be here tomorrow.”

Upperman echoed those sentiments.

“We want to ensure nobody here, today, becomes a statistic,” he said. “You’re all important and we need you.”

Firefighters find new home on POM after 65-year absence

Joseph Kumzak
Presidio of Monterey

PRESIDIO OF MOTNEREY, Calif. — Army firefighters can once again call the Presidio of Monterey home after a 65-year absence.

On Aug. 1, the City of Monterey Fire Department handed the torch of protecting the military installation back to the Presidio of Monterey Fire Department.

In 1955, the Army laid off hundreds of civilian employees who worked on the Monterey peninsula, which left the Presidio short of firefighters. With limited options available, the Army turned to the City of Monterey for help.

Major Gen. Robert B. McClure, Fort Ord commanding general at the time, negotiated an agreement with the city to provide fire protection services to the Presidio and its residents. The Army agreed to pay the city \$32k per year to provide the services -- a \$25k cost savings to the Army.

Since then, the City of Monterey Fire Department protected PoM service members and residents by standing ready and responding to emergencies on the Presidio.

When the old fire station closed, the building was repurposed, so the biggest challenge of opening the station this year was finding a suitable building.

The command team found a temporary solution with the Eisenhower house, a historic home on PoM that normally serves as a holiday rental. The permanent station will be in building 220, and is expected to be finished in about a year.

Garrison commander, Col. Varman Chhoeung, said having a fire station on the installation will better protect service members and their families because firefighters are closer and will be able to respond to emergencies more quickly.



The new temporary post fire station seen at the Presidio of Monterey.

“If we have a fire on the presidio, I am confident in PoM FDs ability to respond and put the fire out before it spreads and causes further damage. Reducing damage and protecting lives is all about response time,” Chhoeung said.

Ramon Rivera, assistant chief of operations, agreed “We have done time trials, and we can reach anywhere on PoM within a five minute response time,” he said.

Rivera said the transition was relatively smooth because both the garrison and city partners supported the effort. Rivera said the transition was relatively smooth because both the garrison and city partners supported the effort. He added, they did not have to hire new firefighters or purchase much equipment because they already had most of the resources at the Ord Military Community station.

“Most of the equipment ... the engine, firefighting gear, etc. was already here. We just took one company and moved them to PoM,” Rivera said. “We had to purchase some small things like EMS bags, wall lockers and cookware.”

PoM firefighters initiated self-help projects to improve life at the station by building furniture and décor.

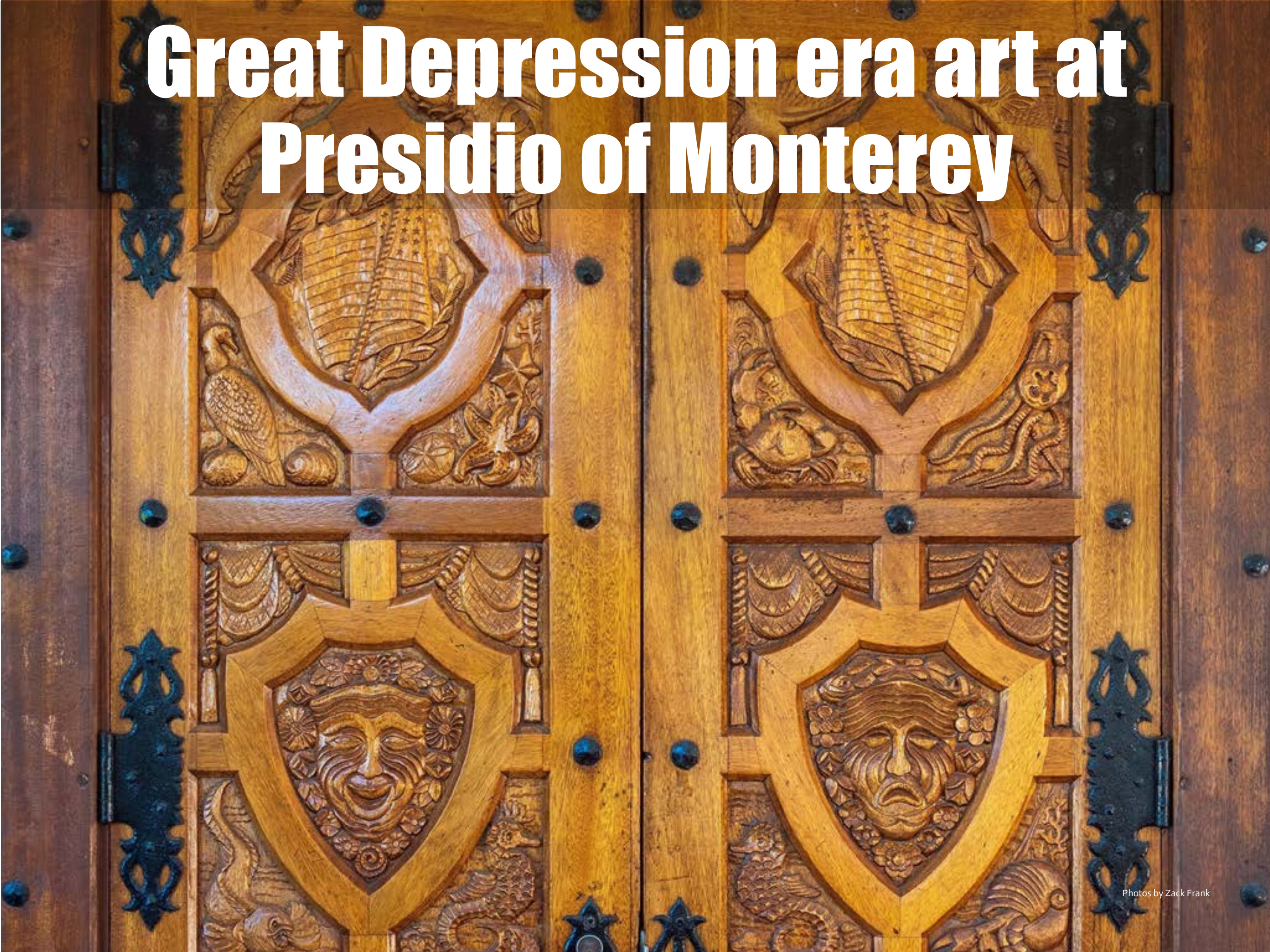
“When we have some downtime we’re working on projects around the station ... firefighters always like getting their fingers dirty,” said Capt. Shawn Benjamin, one of two station captains.

When not making their new home a better place to live, they spend time driving the base and walking through buildings.

“We have been getting ourselves familiar with the roads, the buildings, Huckleberry Hill, and all the areas, so we know where and how to respond,” Benjamin said.

He added, “I think we will be an asset to the command and the community -- we will be able to better support PoM functions and events for community outreach.”

Great Depression era art at Presidio of Monterey



Photos by Zack Frank

Great Depression era art

Zack Frank
Presidio of Monterey

PRESIDIO OF MONTEREY, Calif. — The Presidio of Monterey has undergone several distinct periods of change. One of the most active periods occurred during the Great Depression of the 1930’s. From 1934 to 1936 various federal agencies made extensive alterations to Soldier Field and the adjacent buildings and landscape. Heading up these efforts were the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) and Works Progress Administration (WPA).

In an effort to move the United States out of the depression, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s ‘New Deal’ policies created several agencies meant to employ out of work Americans. The agencies are often referred to as the ‘alphabet agencies’ due to the extensive use of their shorthand abbreviations.

“The main job (of the CCC) was to put Americans to work on conservation projects in the forests and National Parks, but they also ended up on military bases,” said Cameron Binkley, Defense Language Institute’s command historian. “(The WPA) was focused more on technical projects.”

The most prominent features of today’s Soldier Field are the result of 1930’s efforts. The concrete bleachers along Stilwell Ave were laid at this time. The formerly sloping Soldier Field was leveled to eliminate its natural incline and retaining walls were added along its borders. Both of these alterations have gone largely unchanged for over 80 years.

A recent brush clearing effort uncovered a unique section of the retaining wall along the base of Serra Ave where abalone shells were embedded by workers directly into the concrete. The sunrise once again shimmers off the mother-of-pearl shells as it did when the walls were first constructed.



The Presidio of Monterey seen from above in the 1930s.

Surrounding Soldier Field are rows of former barracks buildings which predate the depression, but received substantial structural changes to their originally raised wooden designs. The men who originally constructed the barracks and the Quartermaster who oversaw the project had constructed similar buildings while deployed in the Philippines.

“It was a standard Army architecture modified in the Philippines, then further modified here,” said Binkley,

The depression-era workers added stone basements and concrete foundations to make these provisional structures permanent and more structurally sound.

Not all of the projects were strictly functional. Many agencies funded arts projects that also impacted

the post. In California the State Emergency Relief Administration (SERA) was responsible for the distribution of federal and state funds to improve conditions and beautify the state.

“The state gave some money to put artists to work in California and the (command leadership) here at the time found out about it and wanted to get in on It.” said Binkley.

The original assembly hall, now the post theater, had its interior walls adorned with paintings of the coats of arms of Army units that had been stationed at the Presidio. Similar artworks were added to the interior of Lewis Hall, the period home of the Outdoor Recreation Center, depicting sports figures and murals of Army life.

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Depression CONT

The exterior of the theater was also altered with the addition of a portico on the front of the Spanish inspired building, in order to match the front of Lewis Hall. As part of the SERA arts project, hand-carved doors were added featuring military emblems, images of coastal wildlife, and classical theater symbolism. The door was the work of artist Carlos Ayala, who period accounts refer to as an ‘Aztec’, or of Mayan descent.

Unfortunately, at some point prior to the 1960’s much of the art was removed in order to modify the buildings.

“By that time, the mid-sixties, everything was gone,” with the exception of the intricately carved theater doors, noted Binkley. “The doors (are) the only thing that survives of the WPA art.”

As the depression was coming to an end and World War II was emerging on the world stage the public works agencies moved their focus from the Presidio of Monterey to Fort Ord. This period is referred to as ‘mobilization’.

Camps were constructed across Fort Ord and many of the buildings that remain today were built in the early 1940’s. Among those that still exist are the General Stilwell Community Center, former post chapel and Martinez Hall, the former headquarters of the post.

“They built a series of mess halls and latrines that were in the California Mission style.” said Binkley, but in addition to the obvious structural additions to Fort Ord, “They cleared a lot of brush out of the way. They did roadwork, utility underground installation, ditches... They did a lot of that manual labor work on a vast scale.”

During World War II these New Deal agencies were phased out and left military bases by 1943. Following the closure of Fort Ord, many structures



Today's Marines using some of the work built during the Great Depression.



Alphabet agency emblems built into the Soldier Field wall.

of the era eventually fell into disrepair. New housing projects such as those in East Garrison have led to the demolition of many decaying CCC and WPS constructions. However, some of these 1940’s buildings were saved for their historic significance in partnership with developers, and are in the process of becoming interpretive history sites.

“They couldn’t build the houses without rehabilitating those structures, so they are protected and preserved.” said Binkley.

Other World War II era structures across Ord Military Community have been repurposed for community



Abalone shells built into the wall at Soldier Field.



Artwork seen inside the post theater.

services and offices. One prominent example is Martinez Hall which is now home to the Veterans Transition Center.

While many of the remaining structures are visible across the Presidio of Monterey and former Fort Ord, the human element of the depression can also be seen if you know where to look. The personal touches like the abalone shells embedded in the concrete walls along Soldier Field, and the often overlooked badges and insignias for the CCC, WPA, SERA, and other alphabet agencies can still be discovered on many of their construction projects.

Energy resilience gives us the power to win

Zack Frank
Presidio of Monterey

PRESIDIO OF MONTEREY, Calif. — October is Energy Action Month, and while the month is coming to a close, conserving water and electricity is a year-round effort. The Army’s Energy and Water Management Program has the aim of ensuring the availability, quality and security of energy and water without degrading the environment, mission readiness, or the well-being of service members.

“The environment affects everything we do – the Army mission, global warming, being comfortable at work,” said Richard Thorne, Energy Manager for the Presidio of Monterey. “By reducing energy usage, the world as a whole is a better place.”

Several projects are currently in progress to improve energy and water resiliency on post, but also reduce operating costs. The largest ongoing energy project is an LED lighting retrofit of fifty buildings that is expected to save \$320,000 annually. A separate update of the heating, ventilation and air conditioning controls at the Ord Military Community PX will improve the comfort of that space and save another \$8,000 annually in energy costs.

Thorne said they plan to add “...over 50 electrical meters to the Army Metering Data Management System that allows monitoring of 50 buildings’ energy usage and tracking.”

These new meters will allow the Energy and Utilities Branch of the Department of Public Works to monitor power utilization in real-time and seek ways of lowering inefficiencies and overall cost.

One recent improvement in water conservation has already substantially altered the amount of water used on the installation. After replacing an old, malfunctioning irrigation controller at Soldier Field, roughly 8,000 gallons of water have been saved per



Solar panels installed on top of the Price Fitness Center.

day, 6 days a week. Monitoring and replacing old or malfunctioning equipment like this has a big impact

These types of improvements are commonplace for the Energy and Utilities Branch. A few months ago their office was informed that the lights around the post flag pole were always on during daylight hours. With one change to the timing controls, the command will save hundreds of dollars each year.

Thorne is happy to say that water and electric utilization and associated costs are on a downward trend, “[The Presidio of Monterey is] going in the right direction. However, there is so much more to be done.”

While many of the actions taken by the Energy and Utilities Branch are large-scale solutions, every bit helps. They offered a few simple things we all can do to save electricity and water. Consider turning off lights when not in use and think about whether you really need the lights on or could open the curtains or blinds instead. Another recommendation is to turn off the faucet when brushing your teeth.

“A typical faucet provides about 2 gallons every minute. Brushing your teeth takes about 1 minute, that’s 2 gallons a day or 730 gallons in a year!” said Thorne.

Upcoming items on the Presidio of Monterey energy agenda include replacing older florescent lights, air handler units that don’t operate efficiently, and pumps that operate 24/7 unnecessarily as well as adding new energy efficient lighting for parking lots and new solar panels for Price Fitness Center.

As stated in the opening quotes of a message from the Department of Army dated 20 Aug 2020, “The Army is the largest consumer of electricity in the federal government, spending more than \$1 Billion annually on installation energy. Installations support the full spectrum of Army missions, from industrial bases to training, mobilizing and deploying soldiers – installations are increasingly connected to the fight and require reliable access to energy and water. The Army is aggressively focused on installation energy resilience and efficiency initiatives.”

Firefighter finds new home at Presidio FD



Presidio of Monterey Firefighter/EMT Andrea Kiser poses in front of a fire engine at the Ord Military Community fire station.

Joseph Kumzak
Presidio of Monterey

PRESIDIO OF MONTEREY, Calif. — When Andrea Kiser, a firefighter/EMT, joined the Presidio of Monterey Fire Department in May, she fulfilled her dream of moving to Monterey, and took another step in her beloved career.

Kiser started pursuing a career in the fire service in high school, and applied for her first firefighter job when she was just 18 years old.

“I always wanted to help people,” Kiser said. “I didn’t see myself sitting behind a desk every day — I’m definitely not the dress-up-in-heels every day type of girl.”

She got her first taste of the profession in a high school fire science course. One of three females in

the 50-person class — she was the only female to complete the course.

Kiser started weight training in high school to prepare for the physical challenges of being a firefighter.

“I was trained by some old-school bodybuilders to help me build the strength that I needed,” she said. “When I started at the academy, I already had a good

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Home CONT

base from the weight training. I just had to increase my endurance.”

After graduating high school, she went on to San Joaquin Delta College in California’s Central Valley where she earned a spot in the SJDC firefighter academy.

Her strength caught the attention of the academy’s fire chief when she successfully deployed and raised a ladder -- known as ladder throwing.

“Me and one other female threw the ladder the first time we tried. The fire chief of the academy came out and said you’re the first females we have ever seen throw the ladder the first time,” Kiser said. “The ladder throwing was the hardest to get my head wrapped around. I’m not as tall as most people and the upper body is different, strength wise, than men.”

After graduating the six-month fire academy, Kiser landed her first job with the Woodbridge Fire Department, 20 miles north of Stockton, California, ten days after 9/11 in 2001.

She worked at Woodbridge FD for five years before moving to the Defense Logistics Agency, San Joaquin Fire Department where she worked for 13 years.

“As a woman, I know I’m a rarity in the fire service — especially in the federal system. I was the only female in all of DLA in their four departments,” she said.

According to a 2018 National Fire Protection Association report, only 8% of firefighters in the United States are female.

Kiser said she always wanted to live in the Monterey area, and was elated when the PoM FD selected her for the position.

“I have always wanted to work in Monterey — I fell in love with this area as a kid. We used to do family vacations here. It took me longer than I hoped, but I’m here and I’m staying,” she said.

She added, “I feel like I belong here [PoM FD] the most. This is what I grew up knowing the fire service to be. I am ecstatic to be here -- I couldn’t be happier.”

“We are a tight-knit team and a tight-knit family here, and we hire people based on their merit and look past everything else,” said Col. Varman Chhoeung, Presidio of Monterey commander. “Andrea is well trained with years of experience, and is an integrated member of our team.”

Chhoeung added, “The military has been at the forefront of leading the charge in diversity ... at the end of the day it’s about you being able to do your job.”

PoM firefighters said Kiser has been a valuable team member since her first day on the job.

“Andrea hit the ground running,” said PoM firefighter Lt. Kythe Stillwell. “From a life saved with CPR to working on the River Fire, she is a true asset to our department.”

Kiser said she would like to see more female firefighters in the profession.

“I hope more females are not afraid to get into this field,” she said. “It’s hard and it’s challenging, but I think that’s what makes us better people ... is challenging yourself every day.”

Kiser’s advice to women who want to become firefighters is to lift weights and focus on strength training.

“You need to build a strong physical body and you need to be mentally and emotionally strong,” she said.

“If your heart is set on it then there’s nothing that can stop you, but your heart has to be all in,” she said. “Even on its bad days it’s rewarding. I get to help others -- how can that not be rewarding? It’s just a fun job.”

PT



Good for you!



Good for me!



Oohrah Marines!

A very Presidio Halloween

Marcus Fichtl
Presidio of Monterey

PRESIDIO OF MONTEREY, Calif. — Hundreds of ghosts, ghouls and all things that go bump in the night made their way to Soldier Field this Halloween for the 229th Military Intelligence Battalion’s annual Trunk-or-Treat.

Soldiers dressed as vampires enforced mask usage and trick-or-treaters stayed six feet apart at all times during the festivities.

“This year’s safe and socially distanced Trunk-or-Treat has been important,” said 229th MI Bn., Commander Lt. Col. Matthew Upperman. “We’ve been battling COVID this year. Life has been disrupted not just for service members on the Presidio but family members as well. Tonight’s event gave our community something to look forward to, and something that smacked of normalcy.”

Unlike years past where Trunk or Treat was just a handful of cars on Soldier Field, this year saw another row of spookily decorated vehicles on the upper parking lot as the other services joined the Army for the night’s event. Many of the battalion’s companies held carnival games on the field, while food trucks provided a slightly more nutritious alternative to the night’s sugary treats.

The highlight of the event was a haunted graveyard behind the post chapel, which dared the young and old alike to brave a gauntlet of horrors and frights.

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Photos by Marcus Fichtl

Halloween CONT

Pfc. Nissan Bradley, a French linguist at the Defense Language Institute assigned to Company A, and her four-year-old daughter Leilani said they loved the haunted graveyard and and, of course, the never-ending amounts of candy.

“I want to do it again, I want to get scared again!” Leilani shouted moments after exiting the graveyard.

Ending the night was the announcement of the Trunk-or-Treat winner, which this year went to Company D. Their haunted mausoleum won over the joint-service judges.

“This is the last living structure in an old cemetery,” said Spc. Bryan Roukie, a Japanese linguist who dressed as a self-described flamboyant vampire. “The grave with all the legends and lore in town that you have to visit on a dare to join the in crowd -- it’s also the last place you’ll visit alive.”

He said his team of Soldiers and family members worked together to “come up with this beautiful structure.”

Roukie, who hasn’t stepped foot in a classroom since arriving to the Presidio in March, said it was healthy to see each other “face-to-face” safely again and enjoy Halloween.

He said the moment that will stay with him after tonight’s event was when his team’s trunk scared a little girl.

“She hid behind her mom and screamed to go home,” Roukie said. “I felt so bad I actually crouched down beside her and gave her a little talk about courage. I told her Halloween is to face your fears and not to be afraid of them.”



Parent and kid team up to pop balloons on Soldier Field.



A sign reminds Trunk-or-Treaters to wear their masks



A trunk-or-treater jumps from a fright in the haunted graveyard.



A Soldier wins a carnival game during trunk-or-treat.



Company D, winners of the “best trunk” pose for a photo.



The Presidio Police Department hands out candy at Soldier Field.



Chay dining facility memorialized



Photos by Marcus Fichtl

Chay dining facility memorialized

Marcus Fichtl
Presidio of Monterey

PRESIDIO OF MONTEREY, Calif. — The name Chay rang out once more at the Presidio of Monterey as the post opened and memorialized the Staff Sgt. Kyu H. Chay dining facility, Oct. 28.

The \$30 million, state-of-the-art facility will feed 1300 aspiring linguists every meal in its 26,500 square foot building. It replaces the aging Combs dining facility.

“Today we’re here to honor the life and legacy of a DLIFLC trained linguist, Staff Sgt. Kyu H. Chay,” Garrison Commander Col. Varman Chhoeung said of the fallen Arabic linguist and Defense Language Institute alum, who died 14 years ago. “It is fitting that we do so on the anniversary — to the day—Kyu made the ultimate sacrifice in Oruzgan, Afghanistan.

Chhoeung began the ceremony by listing off the names of various commanders and then listed the names: George Bolio, Lee Belas, Shannon Kent; former service members who gave their lives for their country and whose names are etched onto the buildings and roads of the Presidio.

“The first list has the names you should not remember... commanders come and go,” he said. “The second list, they are the legacies for which this garrison is built upon; they are the heroes who make us proud to put this uniform on everyday. They are the ones we must remember.”

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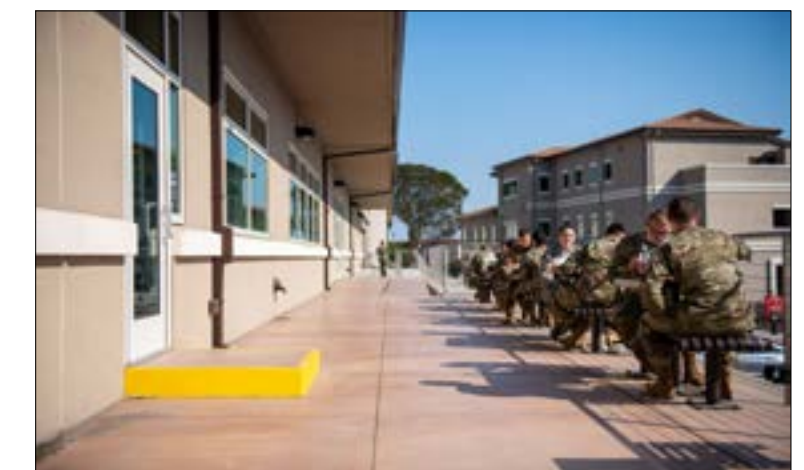


Photos by Marcus Fichtl

Garrison Commander Col. Varman Chhoeung, Jason Chay and Cathy Chay observe a memorialization ceremony honoring Staff Sgt. Kyu Chay.



Jason Chay unveils the plaque depicting his father



Service members enjoy their first meal at the Chay DFAC.

Chay CONT

In attendance were Chay’s wife, Cathy, and son, Jason. Jason, along with Chhoeung and DLI Commandant Gary Hausman, unveiled the plaque officially memorializing the building.

“It was a big honor to unveil the plaque,” said Jason, who was born in Monterey, while his father was studying Arabic at DLI. “It makes me especially happy that this will be a very popular facility and I hope that his plaque will be seen by a lot of people.”

“The second list, they are the legacies for which this garrison is built upon; they are the heroes who make us proud to put this uniform on everyday. They are the ones we must remember.”

Jason said it was very important to stand next to his mom who raised him and his sister after Chay’s death. He added while personal details of his father have sadly become hazier over the years, being around those who knew him, has helped fill in his memories.

“I lost my dad when I was very young, but details from the hundreds of friends who have reached out to us over the years tell me of the amazing person he must have been,” he said



Soldiers, Company B, 229th Military Intelligence Battalion, raise the Gold Star flag over the Presidio of Monterey.

First Sgt. Kenneth Day, the senior enlisted leader, Military Intelligence Company, 3rd Special Forces group out of Fort Bragg, North Carolina, along with his four-person team, attended the ceremony to represent Chay’s old unit and U.S. Army Special Operations.

“We save lives, we point the spear in the right direction, and we take pride in it.”

While he never met Chay personally, he joined Chay’s former team at the 3rd Special Forces group shortly after his death and followed him from the training room to battlefields overseas.

“It’s surreal coming into the team room the first time as a young Soldier, and seeing a picture of Staff Sgt. Chay on the wall, and now being here to support this event as the last standing guy from 3rd Group,” said Day

He said combat linguists like Chay, himself and many of the others who have walked the halls of the Presidio and DLI are a priceless asset to the military.

“We save lives, we point the spear in the right direction, and we take pride in it,” he said.

Before walking into the Chay DFAC to enjoy the inaugural meal of prime rib and lobster tail, the hundred in the ceremony’s attendance passed by the Chay plaque for the first time — the first hundred of what will be hundreds of thousands.

“520 thousand times a year someone will walk through this entrance and see Kyu, and remember Kyu as a Soldier, a man, a brother, a husband and a father,” said Chhoeung.

FROM THE HISTORIAN

The Presidio of Monterey’s First Firefighters



An Army trooper backs a Mack-built fire engine into the first fire station of the Presidio of Monterey, date unknown. Photo courtesy of the California Room, Monterey Public Library.

Cameron Binkley
Command Historian

Recently, the U.S. Army Garrison assigned a fire-fighting unit to the Presidio of Monterey, re-establishing a capability absent for sixty-five years. The new unit is staffed by civilian firefighters from the Presidio of Monterey fire station located in Seaside on the former Fort Ord.

The earliest Presidio firefighters, of course, were soldiers. Fighting fires was every man’s duty in an emergency. Fire hydrants and hand-drawn trailers sporting coiled fire hoses were scattered around the cantonment, whose many wooden barracks, storehouses, and officer’s quarters were highly

susceptible to fire. Not until World War I, however, did the Army organize fire companies, scaling these to the size of the post.

To organize a fire company, the senior commander chose a fire marshal who then drafted the needed soldiers from units of the camp. In Monterey, commanders of the 76th Field Artillery often had this duty before 1940. At various times, hundreds of men were pressed into fire service, typically to fight wildfires. Occasionally, Army soldiers deployed to support municipal firefighters beleaguered by urban conflagrations. The Army named the Presidio’s Pvt. George Bolio Road after an 11th Cavalry trooper who died fighting an oil fire in Monterey.

The first fire station at the Presidio appeared in 1918 along with smaller hook and ladder sheds. The station was modest in size – at 700 square feet, it could only hold four men and a single fire engine. In 1943, the Army built a three-bay fire station at the road junction just below the old “Buffalo Soldier Barracks.” That structure was a mass-produced mobilization-era building.

On-post fire service ended when the Army contracted the City of Monterey for fire-fighting support in 1955. The fire station was later converted into a youth center. Today, the Army still deploys uniformed firefighters for a variety of purposes, but most bases rely upon Army civilian firefighters, including - once again - the Presidio.

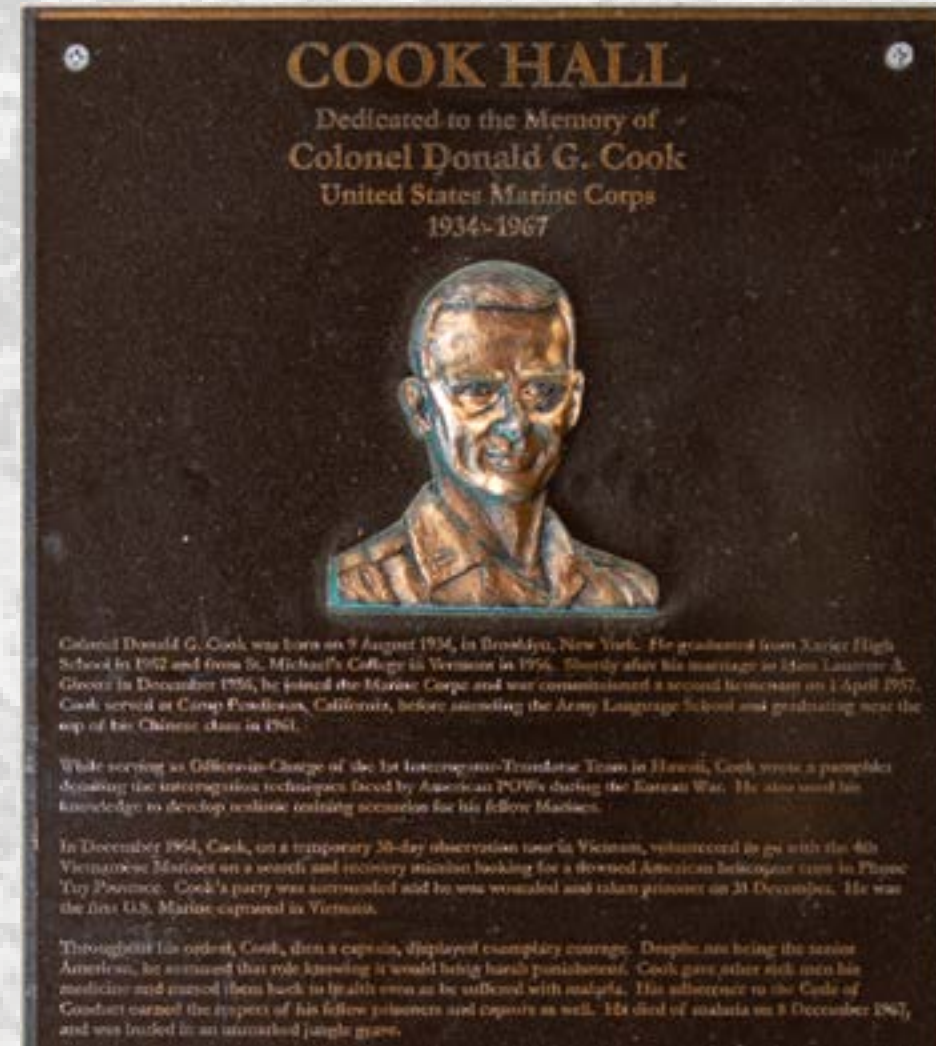
Remembering the Memorialized: Cook

Memorialization #8

Col. Donald G. Cook, 1934-1967

Col. Cook was born in Brooklyn, New York and enlisted in the United States Marine Corps, before being sent to Quantico, Virginia to become an officer. In 1960, he attended Army Language School in Monterey, California, where he studied Chinese and graduated near the top of his class.

He was sent to Vietnam in late 1964, where he served as an advisor to the Vietnamese Marine Division until he was wounded and captured by the Viet Cong. He was the first Marine POW in Vietnam, held as a prisoner of war from December 31, 1964 until his death from malaria at age 33, in 1967. He was posthumously promoted from Captain to Colonel.



On February 26, 1980 he was officially declared dead and the Medal of Honor was presented to his wife by the Secretary of the Navy. Although his body was never recovered, his official memorial stone can be found in Arlington National Cemetery, Memorial Section MI Lot 110.

To learn more about the men and women memorialized at the Presidio of Monterey, Defense Language Institute and former Fort Ord visit the memorialization page on our website:

<https://home.army.mil/monterey/index.php/about/memorialization>

News Briefs: Army

Army announces 2020 top Soldier, noncommissioned officer



ARLINGTON, Va. — After being pushed to their physical and mental limits, a Special Forces Soldier and a combat medic were named winners of this year's Best Warrior Competition during a virtual event Tuesday hosted by the force's top enlisted leader.

Following a gauntlet of tests leading to the announcement, Sgt. 1st Class Alexander Berger, assigned to 2nd Battalion, 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne) at Fort Carson, Colorado, and Sgt. James Akinola, who represented U.S. Army Medical Command and is stationed at Fort Jackson, South Carolina, secured the top honors.

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'The time is now' to transform the Army, says CSA



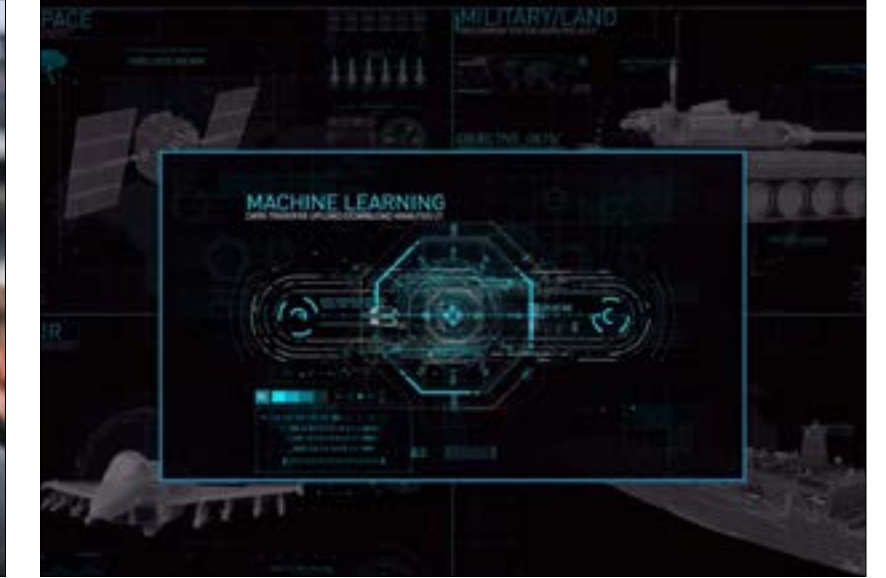
ARLINGTON, Va. — Not only are people the Army's No. 1 priority but, according to its top officer, they will also play a critical role in transforming the Army as it moves into the future.

"The time is now to transform how we take care of our people, our doctrine, our organizations, our training, our equipment, and how we compete around the world," Chief of Staff of the Army Gen. James C. McConville said Wednesday during the Association of the U.S. Army Annual Meeting and Exposition.

It was McConville's second time speaking at the meeting's Eisenhower presentation. However, unlike previous years, there was no large in-person turnout. Also, no high-tech weapons or vehicles on display nearby.

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AI software prototype expedites Army sensor, shooter capabilities



WASHINGTON — The Army continues to refine and evaluate an artificial intelligence software prototype for Army intelligence that is designed to quickly identify threats through a range of battlefield data and satellite imagery.

"Prometheus" is a machine learning capability designed to recognize potential threats and provide targeting coordinates through the rapid analysis of intelligence information, said William Nelson, director of the Assured Position, Navigation and Timing Cross-Functional Team.

The prototype software will integrate with the Army's Tactical Intelligence Targeting Access Node, or TITAN, Nelson said during this year's Association of the U.S. Army Annual Meeting and Exposition on Oct. 15.

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News Briefs **Air Force**

Michigan Air National Guard supports California wildfire response



BATTLE CREEK, Mich. — Members of the 110th Operations Group at Battle Creek Air National Guard Base volunteered to assist firefighters battling the California wildfires that began in late August. This year alone, more than four million acres have burned in California, leaving families and communities in ruins.

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, or Cal Fire, manages fire protection and stewardship of more than 31 million acres of California’s privately-owned wildlands. Approximately 12,000 firefighters are on the ground battling the California wildfires. Cal Fire is receiving support from above with the first of its kind domestic MQ-9 Reaper mission.

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Next-generation helmets keep Defenders lethal, ready



JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO-LACKLAND, Texas — The Air Force Security Forces Center is delivering the next generation of ballistic helmets to security forces units as part of its effort to standardize and modernize Defender equipment across the Air Force.

The helmets will replace the Advanced Combat Helmet, which security forces Airmen had to modify and outfit with bulky additions to accomplish different mission sets, said Master Sgt. Markus Nelson, an AFSFC individual equipment manager.

“Defenders perform a variety of duties around the globe, anything from guarding bases in combat environments to protecting nuclear armament,” he said.

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SNCOA graduates first Space Force members



MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, Ala. — Air University’s Senior Noncommissioned Officer Academy recently graduated its first Space Force members Sept. 25.

Master Sgt. Jeffrey Roberts and Master Sgt. Robert Yarnes are only two of the more than 2,000 organic space operators in officer and enlisted Air Force specialty codes who began transferring Sept. 1, but the first from the SNCOA. Roberts is currently the superintendent of the National Security Space Institute at Peterson-Schriever Garrison, Colorado and Yarnes is the current division manager at Joint Task Force-Space Defense at Schriever Air Force Base, Colorado.

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News Briefs: **Navy**

Navy Approves Alternate Rank Tabs for Type III Work Uniform



WASHINGTON — The Navy has authorized Sailors the option to wear the black Cold Weather Parka (CWP) sleeve-style rank insignia with the Navy Working Uniform Type III (NWU Type III) in non-tactical environments.

Effective immediately, the change was announced Oct. 29 in NAVADMIN 292/20. It allows wearing of the black CWP rank insignia with the NWU Type III parka and shirt as well as with the black fleece liner for all ranks, E-4 through O-10.

The black tab is not authorized in tactical environments, or where training requires complete camouflage protection, the message said.

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A Seaman to Admiral Story



WASHINGTON — Being a U.S. Navy admiral wasn’t even on Matthew J. Burns’ radar when he graduated from high school in the mid-1980s.

The New Jersey native tried college for a semester, but quickly realized he did not have either the study habits or self-discipline to succeed, so he turned to the military with the help of his brother, who was already an enlisted Navy SEAL.

In the past 32 years, Burns has gone from being a Navy recruit to Navy SEAL, rising to first class petty officer, to making the jump to the wardroom in 1995.

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Navy, Marine Corps reach ‘Unprecedented Milestone’



WASHINGTON — For the first time in recorded naval aviation history, the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps closed out the previous fiscal year without a single aviation-related fatality in either service.

Even though U.S. Naval Aviation began in 1910, historical recordkeeping on mishaps – including aviation-related fatalities – did not begin until 1922, meaning this is the first time in nearly a century – and most likely the first time ever, that the services achieved this milestone.

“After 98 years of recorded aviation history, this unprecedented milestone serves as testimony to the Naval Aviation Enterprise’s tireless commitment toward fostering a safety culture of excellence,” said Rear Adm. F.R. “Lucky” Luchtman, Naval Safety Center (NAVSAFECEN) commander.

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News Briefs: Marines

TOYS FOR TOTS COMMENCES IN GUAM AND CNMI



DEDED0, Guam — Marine Corps Base Camp Blaz officially began the Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots campaign in Guam and the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands. Now starting the campaign’s eleventh year on Guam and sixth year in the CNMI, this week Marines from MCB Camp Blaz delivered toy collection boxes to participating organizations and businesses.

Last year over 8,100 toys were collected on Guam and more than 2,100 in the CNMI, all going to over 5,300 children in Guam, Saipan, Rota and Tinian. While Toys for Tots is coordinated and organized by the Marine Corps, the ultimate success depends on the support of the local community and the generosity of the people who donate toys.

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MCLB BARSTOW FIREFIGHTER JOINS BATTLE DURING RECORD CALIFORNIA FIRE SEASON



BARSTOW, Calif. — A firefighter from Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow’s Fire and Emergency Services has been working one of the largest fires currently burning in California this fire season.

“Firefighter Kevin Crandell is currently assigned to work the Lake Napa Unit Lightning Complex,” Deputy Fire Chief Ryan Tworek said. “He has been there since August 22 and is due back this week.”

When the term “complex” is added to a fire, that means that two or more fires in the same general area are under the same incident command, Tworek stated.

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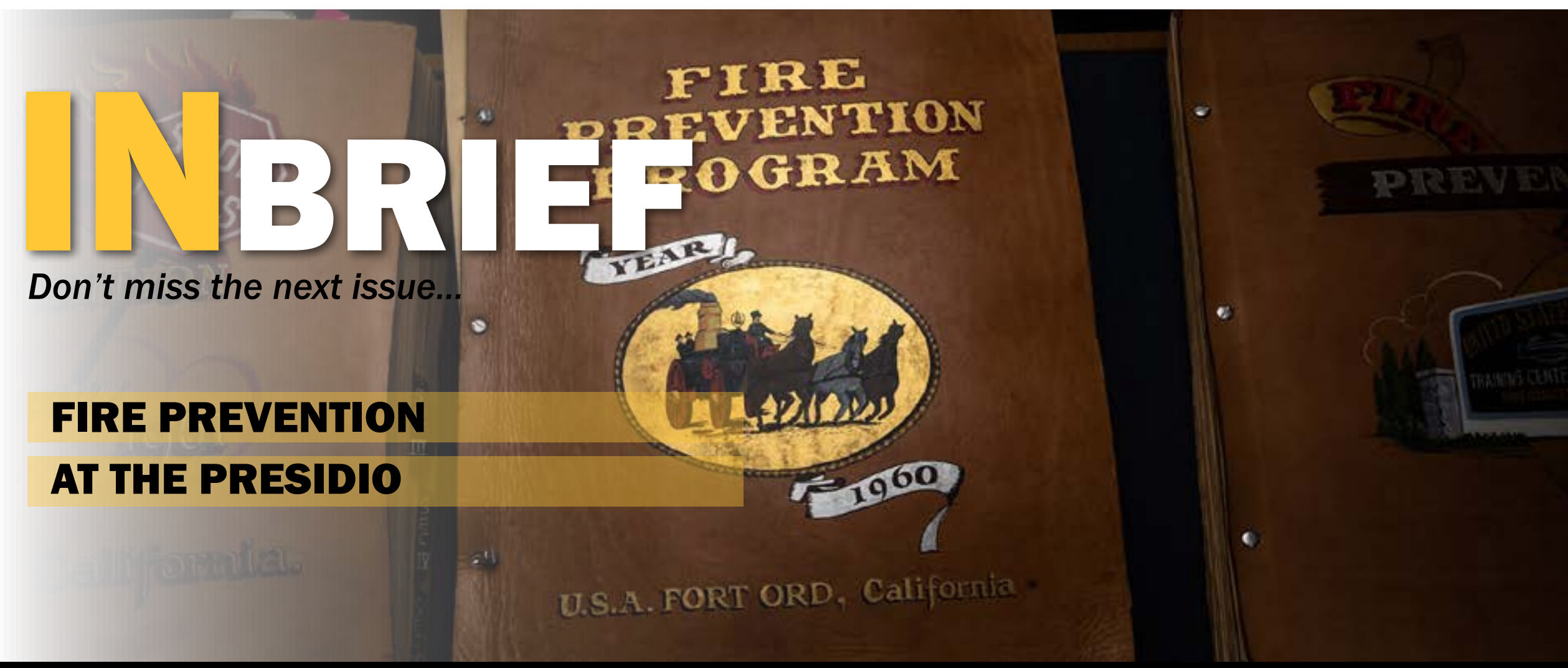
MAKING HISTORY WITH VMM-163: SQUADRON DEPLOYS OCEANOGRAPHIC SENSORS



MIRAMAR, Calif. — The Marine Corps continuously works toward enhancing their operational capabilities while performing amphibious operations to save lives and ensure mission success. For the first time ever, Marines with Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 163, Marine Aircraft Group 16, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, launched four oceanographic sensors from MV-22B Ospreys into the Pacific Ocean as part of Trident Warrior 20. By deploying these sensors, Marines were able to capture critical information about features that increase battlespace awareness.

“The ability to deploy these sensors from the MV-22 is important because it provides a unique capability for a new type of aircraft,” said Steven Jayne, a senior scientist with Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution.

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New Family-Life Chaplain



BOSS in COVID



Marine Birthday

