



The Knox County Joint Veterans Council Honor Guard is looking for **volunteers!!!**

The Knox County Joint Veterans Council is located at the Knox County Veterans Service Office located at 105 E Chestnut St. Mount Vernon, Ohio. The post conducts regular meetings on the third Thursday of each month. The meeting time is 7:00 P.M. **Contact Eddie Stage @**

740-504-1597 if you are interested in volunteering.



They stand guard silently, vigilantly through whatever Mother Nature dares throw at them. They do so with great pride to honor one of their own. For them, honoring a fallen brother-in-arms is compensation enough.

For the families of the deceased veteran, they are the ever-watchful sentinels, and their selfless act is a much-appreciated tribute.

Picnic Time !!!

The annual Knox County Veterans Picnic date and time has been changed due to scheduling conflicts beyond our control!

The 2024 picnic will be on SUNDAY, August 11th at noon at the Schornmeier Event Center.

Our long running practice of holding this event on Saturday had to be adjusted for this year and this year only.

Please help us share the information about this change. This is still the weekend of the Mount Vernon Music & Arts Festival.



Space Force takes 'holistic' approach to keeping guardians in shape

Although you likely won't see them squatting or powerlifting outside Earth's atmosphere, members of the newest military service, just like troops across the soil- and water-bound armed forces, are still expected to remain in shape.

Considering that Space Force personnel may spend more time tracking satellites, space debris and hostile missiles than engaging in physical combat, the service is encouraging its guardians to take a more holistic health approach.

"It's a more comprehensive and malleable approach to overall health and wellness, to include physical fitness and public health and prevention," Christine Heit, a Space Force Headquarters holistic health approach lead, said in a recent release.

In the years since its creation in 2019, Space Force has taken steps to ensure guardians maintain certain standards while also enforcing a well-rounded attitude toward fitness.

Guardians in the service must adhere to body composition program standards, which were updated last year.

"To assess body composition, the Space Force uses waist-to-height ratio," Carl Sheppard, U.S. Space Force Headquarters holistic health and senior human performance advisor, said in the release. "What we know from scientific literature is that excess abdominal fat, especially when it is stored deeper in the abdomen next to our organs, is a much more significant indicator for the risk of acquiring obesity-related preventable disease and injury, than body fat percentage alone," he added.

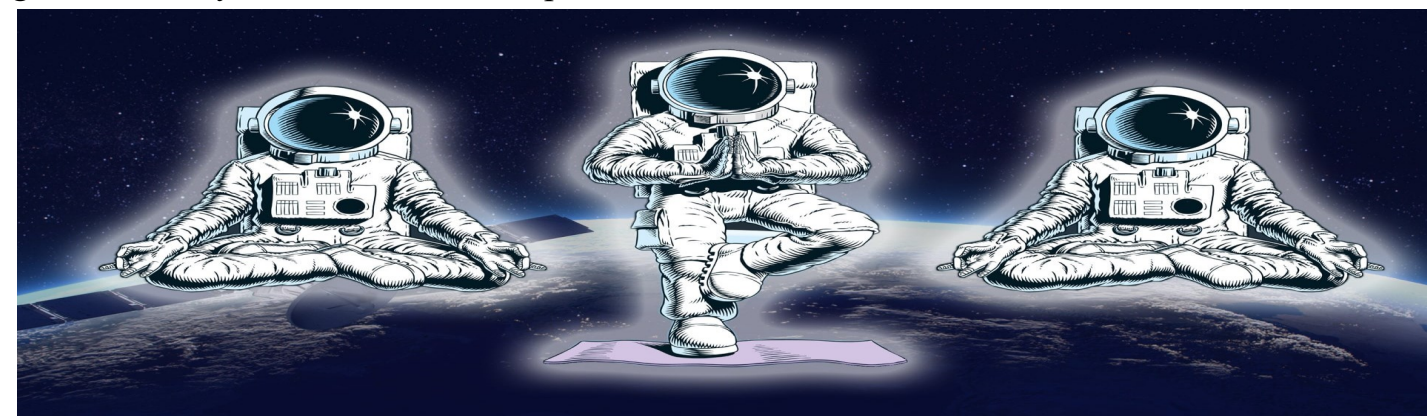
The service is also implementing "Guardian Resilience Teams" at each of its bases that will employ a host of staff meant to assist troops on their wellness journeys, including certified strength and conditioning specialists, licensed mental health care providers and physical therapists.

There are also plans for a virtual team to help geographically separated units and remote guardians. "The purpose of the Guardian Resilience Teams is to make sure U.S. Space Force service members have the kind of support they need not just to be physically fit ... but also, mentally and emotionally ready to perform at the highest level," John Hofman, a certified strength and conditioning specialist at Los Angeles Air Force Base, said in the release.

The Air Force Research Laboratory began a two-year study in 2023 to assess the use of wearable fitness devices that measure the physical activity of guardians.

"Our guardians need to be mentally and physically ready to meet the unique demands of Space," Dr. Tim Stearns, a member of the Los Angeles Air Force Base Guardian resiliency team, said in the release.

"A physically stronger guardian is a more resilient guardian, and a resilient guardian is a guardian ready to dominate in the Space Domain and in life."



Navy exonerates 256 Black sailors unjustly punished in 1944 after a deadly California port explosion

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. Navy has exonerated 256 Black sailors who were found to be unjustly punished in 1944 following a horrific port explosion that killed hundreds of service members and exposed racist double standards among the then-segregated ranks.

On July 17, 1944, munitions being loaded onto a cargo ship detonated, causing secondary blasts that ignited 5,000 tons (4,535 metric tonnes) of explosives at Port Chicago naval weapons station near San Francisco. The explosion killed 320 sailors and civilians, nearly 75% of whom were Black, and injured another 400 personnel. Surviving Black sailors had to pick up the human remains and clear the blast site while white officers were granted leave to recuperate. The pier was a critical ammunition supply site for forces in the Pacific during World War II, and the job of loading those ships was left primarily to Black enlisted sailors overseen by white officers.

Before the explosion, the Black sailors working the dock had expressed concerns about the loading operations. Shortly after the blast, they were ordered to return to loading ships even though no changes had been made to improve their safety. The sailors refused, saying they needed training on how to more safely handle the bombs before they returned. What followed affected the rest of their lives, including punishments that kept them from receiving honorable discharges even as the vast majority returned to work at the pier under immense pressure and served throughout the war. Fifty sailors who held fast to their demands for safety and training were tried as a group on charges of conspiracy to commit mutiny and were convicted and sent to prison.

The whole episode was unjust, and none of the sailors received the legal due process they were owed, Navy Secretary Carlos Del Toro said in an interview with The Associated Press. It was “a horrific situation for those Black sailors that remained,” Del Toro said. The Navy’s office of general counsel reviewed the military judicial proceedings used to punish the sailors and found “there were so many inconsistencies and so many legal violations that came to the forefront,” he said. Thurgood Marshall, who was then a defense attorney for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, defended the 50 sailors who were convicted of mutiny. Marshall went on to become the first Black justice on the Supreme Court.

On Wednesday, the 80th anniversary of the Port Chicago disaster, Del Toro signed paperwork officially clearing the sailors, who are now deceased. Del Toro handed the first pen to Thurgood Marshall Jr., the late justice's son. The exonerations “are deeply moving,” Marshall Jr. said. “They, of course, are all gone, and that's a painful aspect of it. But so many fought for so long for that kind of fairness and recognition.” President Joe Biden said the decision to exonerate is “righting a historic wrong.” In the appeal of their courts martial convictions, then-NAACP attorney Marshall wrote that “justice can only be done in this case by a complete reversal of findings,” Biden said in a statement. “With this action, we are answering that call.”

The events have stung surviving family members for decades, but an earlier effort in the 1990s to pardon the sailors fell short. Two additional sailors were previously cleared — one was found mentally incompetent to stand trial, and one was cleared on insufficient evidence. Wednesday’s action goes beyond a pardon and vacates the military judicial proceedings carried out in 1944 against all of the men. “This decision clears their names and restores their honor and acknowledges the courage that they displayed in the face of immense danger,” Del Toro said.

The racism that the Black sailors faced reflected the military’s views at the time — ranks were segregated, and the Navy had only reluctantly opened some positions it considered less desirable to Black service members. The official court of inquiry looking into why the explosion occurred cleared all the white officers and praised them for the “great effort” they had to exert to run the dock. It left open the suggestion that the Black sailors were to blame for the accident. Del Toro’s action converts the discharges to honorable unless there were other circumstances surrounding them. After the Navy upgrades the discharges, surviving family members can work with the Department of Veterans Affairs on past benefits that may be owed, the Navy said.

Pictures of the Month



An NH90 NATO helicopter prepares for night operations aboard the Dutch Ship HNLMS Tromp during Rim of the Pacific in the Pacific Ocean, July 13, 2024.



Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Elena Ramirez signals an air-cushioned landing craft as it enters the well deck of the USS Somerset during Exercise Rim of the Pacific in the Pacific Ocean, July 18, 2024.