

DEOMI NEWS LINKS 14 APRIL 2023

HIGHLIGHTS

[The Army Increasingly Allows Soldiers Charged with Violent Crimes to Leave the Military Rather Than Face Trial](#) [Vianna Davila, Lexi Churchill, Ren Larson, and Davis Winkie, *The Texas Tribune* (Austin, Texas), 10 April 2023]

More than half of the 900 soldiers who were allowed to leave the country's largest military branch in the past decade rather than go to trial were accused of violent crimes, according to an analysis of roughly 8,000 Army courts-martial cases that reached arraignment. Choosing to handle such cases administratively instead of through the courts can have serious ramifications, experts told the news organizations. Some soldiers escape potential legal consequences: Those who may have been convicted of sexual assault won't have to register as sex offenders, and those who could have been found guilty of domestic abuse will not be subject to federal restrictions prohibiting them from owning firearms.

[Ben Ferencz, the last Nuremberg prosecutor, has died at the age of 103](#) [Nicholas Slayton, *Task & Purpose*, 9 April 2023]

The last surviving prosecutor from the Nuremberg trials in Germany is dead. Ben Ferencz, a World War II U.S. Army soldier and Harvard Law School graduate was only 27 when he successfully prosecuted Nazi commanders for their roles in crimes against humanity during the war. Ferencz was 103. The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum broke the news. Only recently out of the Army, Ferencz was the youngest member of the prosecution team of the subsequent Nuremberg trials in 1947. Despite his youth, at Nuremberg Ferencz was given the chief prosecution job in the case of 22 Nazis officers who commanded death squads that targeted Jews and minorities across Europe. It was his first trial.

[Diversity: Necessary for readiness or the bogeyman?](#) [Meghann Myers, *Military Times*, 10 April 2023]

For more than half a century, the U.S. military has fielded programs to promote a more cohesive workplace of people from different backgrounds, with the mantra that diverse backgrounds and experiences set America's force apart and make it the best in the world. Never have senior officials beat that drum more loudly than in recent years, as the number of American youth both qualified and interested in serving has fallen off a cliff, forcing the military services to tap into regions and demographics they've not traditionally focused on. But at the same time, a growing conservative movement is deriding diversity, equity and inclusion programs as overtaking national security priorities, or alienating troops who did not expect conversations about racial justice to figure into their military service and discouraging Americans from sending their children to the recruiters' office.

[Shining a light on the quiet heroes of the Holocaust](#) [Linda Lambiotte, *Army News Service*, 13 April 2023]

As millions of bystanders watched the crimes of the Holocaust unfold in city squares, schools, stores, workplaces and homes, a courageous few decided to risk it all to help those in need. Irena Sendler was one of those courageous heroes. She helped smuggle more than 2,500 children to safety, despite knowing what the consequences could be if the Nazis found out. She was later arrested, imprisoned and tortured for her actions. Sendler was a 29-year-old Polish social worker when World War II broke out. Her employment with the Welfare Department of the Warsaw municipality helped her gain access to the Warsaw ghetto where it was her job to inspect sanitary conditions. She saw this as an opportunity to help as many children as she could, escape.

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#) [\[DOD NEWS RELEASE\]](#)

CULTURE

[Army Renames Aviation Installation After Medal of Honor Recipient](#) [Drew F. Lawrence, *Military.com*, 10 April 2023]

Fort Rucker, the Army's aviation post located in Dale County, Alabama, is set to be renamed Fort Novosel on Monday, according to the service. The new name honors Chief Warrant Officer 4 Michael Novosel Sr., a Medal of Honor recipient who flew unguarded medical evacuation missions into heavily fortified enemy territory in Vietnam 15 times, saving the lives of 29 men.

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[Designated California license plates now honor women veterans](#) [KCAL News (Los Angeles, Calif.), 11 April 2023]

Inside an Old Glory star, shaded with the American flag is the silhouette of a female servicemember saluting—that's the decal for the new California license plate option for female veterans. One Costa Mesa veteran just got her new plate as an anniversary gift from her husband. Jane Dwong Killer's bright green minivan now honors her service and reminds people that veterans come in different shapes, sizes and genders. "When people think of veterans they don't really always think of women veterans and when they think of what a veteran looks like, they're even less likely to think of someone like me, an Asian American woman who's also a veteran," said Killer.

[DOD's highest-ranking trans official: "Ostracizing anybody" will hurt military readiness](#) [Lara Seligman, *Politico*, 9 April 2023]

Shawn Skelly was a Navy commander working to help fend off roadside bomb attacks when she came to a realization about herself—one that meant her career in the military was over. It was 2006, and "don't ask, don't tell," which permitted gay and lesbian Americans to serve in the military as long as they kept their sexual identity under wraps, was still in effect. Skelly had identified as a man up until that point and—now that she felt she could no longer do so—decided to retire from military service as soon as possible. Now she's back at the Pentagon, this time as a civilian.

[How Is Your Relationship? Defense Department Asks Military Couples to Weigh in](#) [Travis Tritten, *Military.com*, 12 April 2023]

Hundreds of thousands of military couples were asked by the Defense Department this week to weigh in on the quality and challenges they face in their relationships—and what the military could be doing better to help. A randomized survey, which includes some difficult questions about abuse, was sent out to 300,000 troops and 100,000 military spouses asking them to spend about 25 minutes describing their relationships. The effort, called the 2023 Survey on the Strengths and Challenges of Military Relationships, was ordered by Congress in a recent annual authorization bill to check in on the health of couples. It appears to be a companion to the biennial survey of spouses, which was [last released in February](#) and found sinking satisfaction rates.

[How this historically Black college gymnastics team made history](#) [Brandon Drenon, *BBC News*, 8 April 2023]

For decades, thousands of Black high school gymnasts have been faced with a difficult decision: either join a historically Black college or university (HBCU) or keep their gymnastics careers alive. HBCUs are cherished among Black Americans as a chance to join the legacy of the historical Black leaders who

once attended them, like Martin Luther King Jr. Many Black students say they also provide a safe environment, free of the racial hostility they can experience in spaces where they are in the minority. But for those who have spent their childhood devoted to gymnastics, HBCUs were never an option if they wanted to compete at the university level. Until now.

[Illustrated Anne Frank book removed by Florida school](#) [Mike Schneider, *The Associated Press*, 10 April 2023]

A high school along Florida's Atlantic Coast has removed a graphic novel based on the diary of Anne Frank after a leader of a conservative advocacy group challenged it, claiming it minimized the Holocaust. "Anne Frank's Diary: The Graphic Adaptation" was removed from a library at Vero Beach High School after a leader of Moms for Liberty in Indian River County raised an objection. The school's principal agreed with the objection, and the book was removed last month.

[Leak of military secrets on Discord marks a new step for social media](#) [Drew Harwell, *Stars and Stripes*, 13 April 2023]

They were the irreverent misfits of a military YouTube creator's fan forum who regrouped in a chatroom known as Thug Shaker Central. Now, they are linked to a devastating leak of U.S. intelligence: a set of highly classified documents exposing American espionage and secret assessments of the Ukraine war, some posted months ago in an unmoderated corner of the internet where anyone with an invite could see them. The leak highlights the challenge for the U.S. government in guarding the documents it shares with the roughly 3 million people with security clearances nationwide. Any of them can use a service like Discord anonymously, sharing records for their own personal purposes with little fear of company punishment or even review.

[\[UPDATE\]](#) [\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[Mickalene Thomas honors Pauli Murray in mosaic mural at Yale](#) [Nicholas Boston, *Gay City News* (New York, N.Y.), 5 April 2023]

On Monday, March 27, the visual artist Mickalene Thomas unveiled a mural she had been commissioned to design in honor of the civil rights attorney and Episcopal priest Pauli Murray (1910—1985) at a place where the two persons' lives converged: Yale University, in New Haven, Conn. Thomas, known for her collages and multi-layered paintings centering Black female characters, received her master's degree in fine arts in 2002 from Yale, where, 37 years earlier, in 1965, Murray had become the first African American woman to earn a doctorate in law. "Pauli was a trailblazer for civil rights and gender equity and I am so grateful to have had the privilege to depict her at the college named in her honor," Thomas said.

[Ojibwe woman makes history as North Dakota poet laureate](#) [Trisha Ahmed, *The Associated Press*, 7 April]

North Dakota lawmakers have appointed an Ojibwe woman as the state's poet laureate, making her the first Native American to hold this position in the state and increasing attention to her expertise on the [troubled history of Native American boarding schools](#). Denise Lajimodiere, a citizen of the Turtle Mountain Band in Belcourt, has written several award-winning books of poetry. She's considered a national expert on the history of Native American boarding schools and wrote an academic book called "Stringing Rosaries" in 2019 on the atrocities experienced by boarding school survivors.

[Space Force renames Greenland's Thule Air Base](#) [Sandra Edwin, *Space News*, 6 April 2023]

Thule Air Base, a U.S. military installation in Greenland where Space Force units conduct missile warning operations, has been renamed Pituffik Space Base. Chief of Space Operations Gen. B. Chance Saltzman at the renaming ceremony April 6 said the new name acknowledges the “rich cultural heritage of Greenland and its people and how important they are to the sustainment of this installation against the harsh environment north of the Arctic Circle.” Pituffik (pronounced bee-doo-FEEK) is the traditional Greenlandic name of the region where the base is located.

[Texas county weighs shutting down libraries to circumvent judge’s order overturning book ban](#) [Kayla Padilla, *Texas Public Radio*, 12 April 2023]

Llano County commissioners in the Texas Hill Country are weighing whether they will shut down their library system instead of complying with a federal judge’s order that they must return 17 banned books to the library shelves. The banned books, which include themes of LGBTQ+ identity and race, were removed last year without public input after Llano County officials declared them pornographic and sexually explicit. In 2022, the American Library Association reported 1,269 book challenges nationwide, the most since it started tracking them 20 years ago.

[What’s the origin of the long-ago Swahili civilization? Genes offer a revealing answer](#) [Joanne Silberner, *NPR*, 12 April 2023]

Chapurukha Kusimba grew up in western Kenya and is not Swahili, but he became fascinated by the thousand-year-old culture of the Swahili people, who live along the coast of eastern Africa and early on built cosmopolitan city-states. Through his 40-year career as an archaeological anthropologist, including stints at museums in the U.S. and Kenya, and professorships at several U.S. universities, the question dogged him: Were the earliest Swahili from the African continent, or did they migrate from somewhere else? The research shows that the Swahili civilization British colonizers encountered was not primarily foreign, as they believed. Nor was it primarily African, as has been more recently thought. The study uses DNA analysis to show that it’s a mix, as Swahili oral tradition has said for centuries.

[WWII “Six Triple Eight” postal unit triumphed under pressure](#) [Terrance Bell, *Army News Service*, 6 April 2023]

Upon their early 1945 arrival to Europe, Soldiers of the predominately Black 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion inherited a mail system in severe disarray—a fact made clear by more than 2 million backlogged letters, boxes and parcels stacked to the rafters in makeshift warehouses, far from their intended U.S. military recipients on the front lines. Members of the Six Triple Eight, as it was known, quickly became problem solvers. How could a fledgling mail operations unit rapidly develop the know-how and ability to move the mountains of backlogged mail—all while maintaining an unending flow of new mail? Further, how could they meet a six-month deadline to do it all, given their status as a self-contained unit that would need to overcome a host of logistical challenges and obstructive race and gender discrimination?

DISCRIMINATION

[Cisco still faces caste bias suit; engineers’ case dismissed](#) [Deepa Bharath, *The Associated Press*, 11 April 2023]

The California Civil Rights Department has voluntarily dismissed its case alleging caste discrimination against two Cisco engineers, while still keeping alive its litigation against the Silicon Valley tech giant. The two Cisco supervisors, Sundar Iyer and Ramana Kompella, were accused in the department’s

lawsuit of discriminating and harassing an employee on the basis of caste—a [division of people based on birth or descent](#). That case was dismissed by an order of the Santa Clara Superior County Court last week. The employee belonged to the Dalit community, a group that is at the bottom rung of the caste system which took root and evolved in India and elsewhere in the subcontinent.

[Class complaint of inequity for deaf Air Force employees moves forward](#) [Rachel S. Cohen, *Air Force Times*, 10 Apr 2023]

An equal-opportunity complaint alleging that the Air Force discriminated against its deaf and hard-of-hearing civilian employees will move forward as a class-action case, a federal appellate office ruled April 5. The decision is a win for Air Force employees who say the service failed to provide the tools they need at work, like American Sign Language interpreters, real-time captioning equipment and videophones. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission complaint could ultimately lead to a smoother process by which deaf and hard-of-hearing employees can obtain that help, and more accessibility features like closed captioning in training videos.

[The discrimination pushing LGBTQ workers to quit](#) [Vivian Ho, *BBC Worklife*, 6 March 2023]

In her 20s, RaShawn Hawkins went to work wearing an uncomfortable costume. Like many U.S. workplaces, her job had a dress code. But as a cisgender, queer woman who describes herself as “masculine of centre”—she feels more herself dressing in stereotypically male clothing—having to wear women’s blouses and pantsuits for eight hours a day wasn’t just uncomfortable. It felt wrong, she says, like she was erasing her own identity to masquerade as someone else. Many LGBTQ+ employees—[more than eight million in the U.S. workforce alone](#), according to some estimates—have had similar experiences of discomfort and conflict, whether through explicit workplace discrimination, or microaggressions—subtler, indirect actions that intentionally or unintentionally make marginalised groups feel hurt or even attacked.

[The Palm Springs Government Burned Down Their Neighborhood—Now They’re Seeking Reparations](#) [Leslie Berestein Rojas, *The LAist*, 10 April 2023]

In the 1950’s and ‘60s, Palm Springs’ Section 14 fell victim to a government operation to drive everyone off the land and raze the buildings to clear the way for more lucrative developments. Racist housing policies at the time restricted where families of color could live; Section 14 was a place where they could build and own homes. The dislocation effort picked up steam after 1959, when new laws made tribal land available for long-term leases of 99 years. Court-appointed conservators for the tribal land worked with the city to clear it. As people were evicted, their homes were torn down and burned, sometimes with their personal possessions still inside. Last year, former Section 14 residents—along with their descendants—filed a claim against Palm Springs, alleging the evictions were illegal and seeking damages; its attorney, Areva Martin, said their losses could exceed \$2 billion.

DIVERSITY

[After tragedy, U.S. Air Force probes English training for foreign pilots](#) [Rachel S. Cohen, *Air Force Times*, 13 April 2023]

Two years after a Japanese air force pilot and his American instructor died in a military jet crash in Alabama, officials are mulling whether a U.S.-run program that teaches English to foreign aviators is partly to blame. The incident has prompted U.S. Air Force leaders to take a closer look at the quality of the instruction they provide, and consider how to better accommodate foreign students. It has opened

fresh discussion of how much time and money the program needs to succeed. It has also highlighted a breakdown in communication between the Air Force-led Defense Language Institute's English Language Center here, the organizations that oversee it, pilot training units across the service, and the nations that send their students to Texas.

[AMA's first gay president to take over at tumultuous time](#) [Lindsay Tanner, *The Associated Press*, 9 April 2023]

The first openly gay person to lead the American Medical Association takes the reins at a fractious time for U.S. health care. Transgender patients and those seeking abortion care face restrictions in many places. The medical judgment of physicians is being overridden by state laws. Disinformation is rampant. And the nation isn't finished with COVID-19. Two years ago, the AMA won widespread praise for announcing a plan to dismantle structural racism within its ranks and the U.S. medical establishment. It has adopted policies that stress health equity and inclusiveness—moves that inspired critics to accuse it of “wokeness.” At 44, Ehrenfeld will be among the AMA's youngest presidents. He's also an anesthesiologist, Navy combat veteran and father of two young children.

[Former Afghan interpreter graduates from boot camp to become a Marine](#) [Jeff Schogol, *Task & Purpose*, 12 April 2023]

A former Afghan interpreter who served with the U.S. Marines in his home country has earned the title of Marine. Pfc. Aimal Taraki, who graduated from Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego on April 7, said he was inspired to join the Corps by his time working with the U.S. military in Afghanistan, [according to a Marine Corps news story](#). Taraki was born in Mazar-i-Sharif in 1994, when Afghanistan was in the midst of a civil war that brought the Taliban to power two years later. His family later fled to Pakistan, where he learned English. In 2016, Taraki decided to use the English language skills he developed in Pakistan to become an interpreter for the U.S. and other NATO troops. Two years later, he secured a visa that allowed him to come to the United States, where the rest of his family lives.

[NASA Asks How to Better Advance Equity Through its Spending Power](#) [Courtney Bubl , *Government Executive*, 10 April 2023]

The space agency wants to hear from the public about how it can better advance racial equity and support underserved communities with the billions of dollars in procurements and other forms of federal assistance it doles out each year. A [request for information from NASA](#) that will formally be published in the Federal Register on Tuesday will further President Biden executive orders on equity, issued in January 2021 and February 2023. The agency specifically wants to hear feedback on outreach, engagement and training; barrier analysis; and diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility for procurement, grants and cooperative agreements.

[Navy secretary: chaplain defined by “choice” to identify as gay](#) [Geoff Ziezulewicz and Kimberly Dozier, *Navy Times*, 11 April 2023]

*Navy Secretary Carlos Del Toro told an openly gay chaplain that homosexuality is a choice during an online town hall event that took place on Monday. A Navy official who requested anonymity to speak frankly about the encounter told *Navy Times* that Del Toro meant to say that a person revealing their sexuality and coming out is a choice. Del Toro's video answer came from a question Newell asked about making the Navy and the chaplain corps less homophobic. The Navy secretary thanked Newell for his courage in asking the question and noted that “homophobia is still very much present in many, many circles.”*

[Vernice “FlyGirl” Armour relates her experiences as U.S. military’s first Black woman combat pilot](#) [Jillian Atelsek, *The Frederick News-Post (Frederick County, Md.)*, 12 April 2023]

Two decades ago, Vernice Armour became the first Black woman to serve as a combat pilot in the U.S. military. She served two tours in Iraq, piloting an attack helicopter above the desert to protect her fellow Marines on the ground. But now, Armour goes by FlyGirl, and she’s taken off on a far different adventure: traveling the country as a speaker and consultant. “I don’t consider myself a motivational speaker—more inspirational leadership, if you will. I know it sounds like a small thing—and I’m jumping into it already—but motivation is the outside, and inspiration comes from the inside out. It’s kind of the difference between coffee and a shower. Inspiration is that internal fire.”

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

EXTREMISM

[Green Beret-turned-Oath Keeper with Jan. 6 ties sentenced to 7 years in Tampa case](#) [Mitch Perry, *The Florida Phoenix (Tallahassee, Fla.)*, 7 April 2023]

Jeremy Brown, a self-described Oath Keepers member and lauded 20-year U.S. Army Special Forces soldier, was sentenced on Friday in Tampa to more than seven years in federal prison on weapons charges related to a federal investigation into his alleged involvement in the Jan. 6 riot in the U.S. Capitol. The 48-year old Brown was found guilty in December by a federal jury on six of 10 counts related to possessing illegally registered guns, explosives, and a classified Defense Department document.

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

[Navy veteran who stormed Capitol gets 3 years on gun charges](#) [Matthew Barakat, *The Associated Press*, 13 April 2023]

A former Navy reservist who stormed the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, and expressed admiration for Adolf Hitler was sentenced Thursday to three years in prison on firearms charges. The sentence U.S. District Judge Michael Nachmanoff imposed for Hatchet Speed in federal court in Alexandria was just five months less than the term sought by federal prosecutors and much longer than the one-year term sought by Speed’s lawyers. Speed, 41, of McLean, is a military veteran who held top-secret clearances while working for a defense contractor.

HUMAN RELATIONS

[A career coach unlocks the secret to acing your job interview and combating anxiety](#) [Marielle Segarra, Clare Marie Schneider and Iman Young, *NPR*, 13 April 2023]

The biggest misconception about interviewing for a job, is that you need to pretend to be someone that you’re not, says Cynthia Pong, the founder and CEO of the career coaching and consulting firm [Embrace Change](#). Instead, she encourages folks to think about a job interview as a two-way experiment conducted to figure out if you’re a good fit for the role—and to see if the company and the role are a good fit for you. With that mindset, “you’re throwing the experiment if you go in with a fake version of yourself,” says Pong. To combat this tendency to overcompensate, Pong shares a helpful framework she picked up from the marketing world, which she calls “the composure triangle.”

[For Black social workers, anxiety and depression are on the rise](#) [Carmen Reese Foster, *The Conversation*, 10 April 2023]

As social workers, we are trained mental health professionals who prioritize social justice. But how do we cope when faced with the collective trauma of a global pandemic and the mental and emotional effects of racism? My research team conducted a [study](#) to assess social workers' symptoms of depression, anxiety, discrimination-related trauma and quality of life in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the systemic racism that led up to 2020. The results showed that there was a significant increase in depression and anxiety among the 113 Black social work professionals we surveyed.

[Journey into sleep. An illustrated tour of why scientists are finding that sleep matters more than we know.](#) [Nancy Lapid, Simon Scarr, Adolfo Arranz, Jackie Gu and Caitlin Gilbert, *Reuters*, 8 April 2023]

Doctors are increasingly waking up to the idea that getting enough sleep is crucial. In 2022, the [American Heart Association advised physicians](#) that asking patients how many hours they sleep is as important as checking their blood pressure, smoking status, diet and exercise habits. But many of us routinely force our bodies to fight sleep. We drink caffeinated beverages by day to stay alert and alcohol to wind down at night. Some of us work all night and sleep in daylight. At the same time, neuroscientists are realizing that the timing of our sleep may be just as important as the amount. We are beginning to understand how we might work with, rather than against, the rhythms of our bodies. For example, new research suggests these rhythms may play a role in patients' responses to cancer treatment.

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[The "New Normal" of Morale at Agencies](#) [Adam Butler and Ross Gianfortune, *Government Executive*, 11 April 2023] [PODCAST]

Recently, a prominent good government group released its first batch of rankings stemming from its analysis of the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey. The Partnership For Public Service found that some of the best performing agencies experienced a decline in employee morale in 2022 after a small uptick over the past few years. GovExec Daily's Adam Butler and Ross Gianfortune discussed the Partnership analysis, the new normal and the roller coaster of morale in the federal government.

[Why Gen Z workers are starting on the back foot](#) [Alex Christian, *BBC Worklife*, 10 April 2023]

In some ways, Gen Z employees are thriving in the new world of work. They've entered the workforce at a time when flexibility is commonplace, digital communication is ubiquitous and employees have the leverage to ask companies for what they want. At the same time, however, some experts are concerned that remote and hybrid work arrangements are already leaving some early-career workers behind. Many of these worries revolve around the absence of workplace intangibles: a lack of the casual conversations and informal observations that traditionally teach young employees how to act. Amid virtual settings, some experts believe entry-level workers are missing out on picking up vital cues that guide behaviour, collaboration and networking.

INTERNATIONAL

[Germany, France join EU proceedings against Hungary over anti-LGBT law](#) [Reuters, 6 April 2023]

Germany and France are joining the EU Commission's infringement proceedings against Hungary over its anti-LGBT law, a German government spokesperson said on Thursday. The European Commission referred Hungary to the Court of Justice of the EU in mid-2022 over the law banning the use of materials seen as promoting homosexuality and gender change in schools. The commission has said it

considers the law violates the EU's internal market rules, the fundamental rights of individuals and EU values.

[Germany launches plan to relax rigid family name system](#) [The Associated Press, 11 April 2023]

Germany's justice minister on Tuesday launched plans to relax the country's strict restrictions on family names—for example, allowing couples to take double-barreled surnames and pass them on to their children. The current system “is about as up-to-date as a coal stove and as flexible as concrete,” Justice Minister Marco Buschmann said in a statement as he published the draft legislation. As it stands, one partner in a married couple—but not both—can add the other partner's name to his or her surname, but their children can't carry both surnames. The reform will allow both partners to take on a double surname, with or without a hyphen, and for their children to take that name too.

[Thailand hopes for major splash in tourism during Songkran](#) [The Associated Press, 13 April 2023]

Hordes of revelers toted colorful water guns Thursday as Thailand kicked off its exuberant three-day Songkran festival at full blast for the first time since 2019, hoping for a significant boost in tourism after the industry was devastated by coronavirus travel restrictions. The New Year celebration's signature water fighting—a major draw for tourists—had been banned or discouraged since 2020 to curb the spread of the virus, and its full-scale return was widely promoted. In Bangkok alone, there are 40 designated spots this year for public water splashing, including the touristy Khao San Road where vendors hawked food, clothes and water-fighting gear in the scorching heat.

[This community in southern Mexico has defied the gender binary for generations](#) [Harmeet Kaur, CNN, 7 April 2023]

In the town of Juchitán de Zaragoza, located on the Isthmus of Tehuantepec in Mexico's southern state of Oaxaca, one variation of a local legend goes something like this. San Vicente Ferrer, the patron saint of Juchitán, was carrying three bags of seeds meant to be distributed around the world. The first contained male seeds, the second contained female seeds and a third bag contained a mixture of the two. But as San Vicente was passing through Juchitán, the third bag ruptured—and from it sprang the town's famed community of muxes. Muxes, a group long recognized within the indigenous Zapotec people of Mexico, are often referred to as a third gender. Embodying characteristics of both men and women, their existence challenges the gender binary that is so deeply entrenched in Western society.

[Uganda may impose some of the world's strictest anti-gay measures: “You're fearing for your life”](#)

[Kevin Baxter, *The Los Angeles Times*, 11 April 2023]

The 2023 Anti-Homosexuality Bill, passed on a 387-2 vote, would impose some of the world's strictest anti-gay measures—with punishments that include the death penalty—if it is signed into law by President Yoweri Museveni. An admission of being gay could result in a lengthy prison sentence, leaving many in this country's small but tightly knit gay community living in terror and considering fleeing. The law also criminalizes the failure to report people suspected of participating in gay sexual activity, putting friends, former partners—even supportive parents—at risk of going to jail for remaining silent.

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MISCELLANEOUS

[The Director of the Indian Health Service Would Get More Power Under A Bipartisan Proposal](#)

[Courtney Bubl , *Government Executive*, 11 April 2023]

A bipartisan pair of lawmakers want to elevate the role of the federal official in charge of healthcare for American Indians and Alaskan Natives to better serve those communities. Reps. Greg Stanton, D-Ariz., and David Joyce, R-Ohio, recently [introduced legislation](#) that would raise the job of the Indian Health Service director to that of an assistant secretary for Indian Health within the Health and Human Services Department. Since 2017, the Government Accountability Office has had [“improving federal management of programs that serve tribes and their members”](#) on its high-risk list.

[Female Afghan veterans work toward fresh start in Virginia](#) [Heather Rousseau, *The Roanoke Times* (Roanoke, Va.), 2 April 2023]

Sima Gul hiked the steep terrain of the Hindu Kush in Afghanistan, gripping an M4 carbine. Hours passed as she trudged alongside the U.S. military tracking down the Taliban in her homeland. It was but one episode in Gul’s six years as a member of the Afghan Female Tactical Platoon, a partner to U.S. Special Operations forces that served as a covert unit on combat missions against the Taliban. Two years later, in the middle of the night in a Blacksburg apartment on the other side of the world, Gul clutched a smartphone instead of a rifle, staying awake late at night talking on the phone to family that remains in Afghanistan. She worries about their safety and about her mother, who lost the use of her legs in an explosion at an airport after the Taliban regained control of the country in August 2021.

[REPRINT](#)]

[Harvard admits record number of Asian American students while Black and Latino admissions drop](#)

[Sakshi Venkatraman, *NBC News*, 4 April 2023]

Harvard University admitted a record number of Asian American students to its class of 2027, a move experts are wary of celebrating given the drop in admissions of most other minority groups. It comes as the Supreme Court continues deliberations on a lawsuit brought against Harvard by a right-wing group that alleges race-conscious admissions discriminate against White and Asian students. In a [breakdown of the incoming class released by the university](#) last week, Harvard revealed that 29.9% of admitted applicants are Asian American. It’s a 2.1% jump from last year’s number.

[Navajo Code Talker John Kinsel, Sr. turns 106](#) [Arizona Public Radio, 1 February 2023]

Navajo Code Talker John Kinsel, Sr. turned 106 over the weekend. He celebrated his birthday at his home in Lukachukai, Arizona. More than 400 Navajo Code Talkers served in World War II and helped win the war by using the Navajo language to create an unbreakable code for radio communication. Kinsel served during World War II in the 9th Marine Regiment, 3rd Marine Division from Oct. 1942 to Jan. 1946, taking part in the Battles of Guam and Iwo Jima. He was awarded the Purple Heart in 1989 for his service at Iwo Jima. This year marked the 80th anniversary of the creation of the Navajo Code Talkers. Three Code Talkers remain today—Kinsel, Thomas H. Begay, and Peter MacDonald Sr.

[Sailor’s killer to be removed from Arlington thanks to new law](#) [Hope Hodge Seck, *Military Times*, 12 April 2023]

After 30 years in a place of honor at Arlington National Cemetery, the remains of a former Navy lieutenant who kidnapped and murdered a sailor who rebuffed his attentions will be disinterred. Former Lt. Andrew Chabrol secured above-ground burial for himself in the nation’s most revered veterans’

cemetery while awaiting his execution by the Commonwealth of Virginia in 1993 for the murder of Petty Officer 2nd Class Melissa Harrington. At the time, the Navy simply did not have legal grounds for excluding him, since he'd completed his service honorably. But in early 2019, a small group of veterans, including her husband, spoke out, telling this reporter in a story for the *Washington Post* about the lasting trauma of Chabrol's crimes and how disturbed they were by his repose in Arlington.

[Stand-down at Navy base in Bahrain to increase awareness of expanded mental health services](#) [Alison Bath, *Stars and Stripes*, 12 April 2023]

U.S. troops deployed to Bahrain are taking part in a two-day stand-down as the Navy seeks to increase awareness of and access to mental health services at the strategic Middle East command. The event, which started Wednesday, includes information booths and presentations by mental health professionals and command leaders, among them Vice Adm. Brad Cooper, commander of U.S. Naval Forces Central Command/U.S. 5th Fleet. The involvement of Cooper and other leaders is vital in communicating the importance of mental health and demonstrating that the well-being of personnel is a priority for the command, said Cmdr. Timothy Hawkins, a spokesman for NAVCENT/U.S. 5th Fleet.

MISCONDUCT

[Texas governor seeks to pardon Army sergeant convicted of murder](#) [*The Associated Press*, 8 April 2023]

Texas Gov. Greg Abbott said Saturday that he is seeking to pardon a U.S. Army sergeant who was convicted of murder in the 2020 fatal shooting of an armed protester during nationwide protests against police violence and racial injustice. Abbott tweeted that because the state constitution limits him to a pardon only on a recommendation by the state Board of Pardons and Paroles he is asking the board to recommend a pardon and to expedite his request in order to pardon Sgt. Daniel Perry. Perry was convicted Friday by a Travis County jury of fatally shooting 28-year-old Garrett Foster during a protest in Austin. He faces up to life in prison when sentenced.

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

RACISM

[Officials Investigating Graffiti of Swastikas and Racial Slur at Air Force Base](#) [Thomas Novelly, *Military.com*, 11 April 2023]

*Officials at an Air Force base in North Dakota are investigating graffiti that included profanity, swastikas and a racial slur spray-painted on the garage doors of a base housing unit. Col. Dan Hoadley, commander of the 5th Bomb Wing at Minot, said that the installation has a zero-tolerance policy for vandalism and discrimination. "Let me be abundantly clear that Minot Air Force Base has a zero-tolerance policy for discrimination of any kind," Hoadley said in a statement provided to *Military.com*. "This type of behavior is abhorrent, unacceptable, and does not align with our Air Force core values."*

RELIGION

[Cubans seek solutions and solace in Santería amid crises](#) [*The Associated Press*, 10 April 2023]

While nearly 70% of Latin America's 670 million people consider themselves Catholic, in Cuba, Santería is the name of the game. A fusion of African religions and Catholicism, Santería was one of the

few religious practices to quietly endure through decades of prohibitions and stigma by the communist government. Now, as that stigma gradually fades and the country enters a moment of compounding economic, political and migratory crises, the religion is growing in popularity and expanding to new demographics. Santería was born as a form of quiet resistance among the island's Black communities. The religion dates back centuries to when Spanish colonists brought in hundreds of thousands of enslaved Africans.

[Poll: Among U.S. Latinos, Catholicism still largest faith](#) [Luis Andres Henao, *The Associated Press*, 13 April 2023]

Catholics remain the largest religious group among Latinos in the United States, but the number of Latinos who identify as religiously unaffiliated continues to grow. Those are among the key findings in a comprehensive [report released Thursday by the Pew Research Center](#) that surveyed 7,647 U.S. adults in Aug. 1-14 of last year.

[Why the U.S. census doesn't ask Americans about their religion](#) [Jeff Diamant and Rebecca Leppert, *Pew Research Center*, 12 April 2023]

Census forms in the United States don't ask about religion, but relatively few U.S. adults (25%) know this, [according to a Pew Research Center survey](#) conducted shortly before census forms were mailed out in 2020. Many critics have argued that making Americans identify their religion on a government form would go against long-held understandings of the separation between church and state. Some have worried that including such questions would deter people from filling out their census forms. Others, including heads of Jewish organizations in the U.S. in the decades after the Holocaust, expressed unease about the prospect of official counts of religious groups, fearing it could lead to antisemitism and allow for government tracking. Groups including Christian Scientists, some Baptist groups and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints also had objections.

SEXISM

[As a female gamer, here's how I tune out the trolls](#) [Tenzing Lhamo Dorjee, *The Washington Post*, 9 April 2023] [COMMENTARY]

Until a few years ago, I never had the chance to indulge in gaming as a hobby—unlike many of my friends who grew up playing on consoles and PCs. So when my husband helped me build my first gaming PC, it was not just an opportunity to get closer to him, but also a gateway to the world I had always wanted to explore. It has been both a blessing and a curse. It's a curse because my gaming skills are not on par compared with my husband and my friends who have been holding a controller all their lives. And it's a blessing because I never had to deal with the sheer amount of misogyny that strangers can spew behind their keyboards.

[Women are earning more money. But they're still picking up a heavier load at home.](#) [Andrea Hsu, *NPR*, 13 April 2023]

Even as their contributions to family incomes have grown in recent years, women in opposite-sex marriages are still doing more housework and caregiving than men, a [report](#) from the Pew Research Center has found. Moreover, in 2023, a majority of people believe society still values men's contributions at work more than their contributions at home, according to the report, which was based on three different national surveys. What Pew calls "egalitarian marriages" are on the rise. Last year,

29% of marriages were “egalitarian,” with husbands and wives each contributing roughly half of the couple’s combined earnings. That compares to little more than 10% in 1972.

VETERANS

[Veterans program shows way to reducing all homelessness](#) [Amanda Zhou, *The Seattle Times*, 12 April 2023]

More than a decade into a federal and local effort to house veterans, the program is one of the most successful examples of how to reduce homelessness across the country. This year, the federal government touted a double-digit drop in the number of homeless veterans in the past two years and a 55% drop across the U.S. since 2010, when then-President Barack Obama pledged to house veterans and Congress allocated millions in funding. Officials say the model, which builds on long-standing relationships with the federal VA, the local housing authorities and nonprofits, shows that with the right resources and coordination, consistently shrinking the number of homeless people is possible.