TODAY IN U.S. MILITARY HISTORY

Today in US Military History

From The Center for American Military History

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January

Jan. 1

1929: Former World War I fighter pilot - and future Air Force Chief of Staff - Maj. Carl A. Spaatz and his modified Fokker C2-3 trimotor lift off for a record-setting flight that lasts 150 hours and 40 minutes. The *Question Mark* takes on 5,700 gallons of fuel from 43 in-flight refuelings as it flies back and forth between San Diego and Santa Monica, Calif.

1945: After two weeks of weather delays, the German *Luftwaffe* musters all available pilots and aircraft to execute their top-secret operation to wipe out Allied air forces and gain air superiority over France, Holland and Belgium. 120 Royal Air Force and 20 American warplanes are destroyed on the ground, but one-quarter of the German force - 200 aircraft - are lost, many of which to friendly fire. The last-ditch Operation "Bodenplatte" will be the *Luftwaffe's* final major strategic operation of the war.

1946: A solitary U.S. soldier registering American graves on Corregidor is interrupted by 20 Japanese soldiers waving a flag of surrender.

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- 3 March

The men had lived in a tunnel on the island and learned of Japan's surrender months before by spotting a newspaper while on a foraging mission.

1951: Haifa million Communist Chinese and North Korean troops launch a new offensive, hammering away at the UN forces falling back from the 38th Parallel. As the South Korean capital of Seoul is about to fall into enemy hands a second time, Gen. Douglas MacArthur informs the Japanese that they may have to rearm due to the threat. However, the overextended and exhausted communists break off the attack by month's end.

0 1962: U.S. Navy SEAL Teams "One" and "Two" are established. The special warfare operators, created for guerilla and counter-guerilla operations, are drawn from the ranks of the Navy's Underwater Demolition Teams. Team One is headquartered at Naval Amphibious Base (NAB) Coronado on the West Coast and Two at NAB Little Creek on the East Coast.

Jan. 2

1863: Union Maj. Gen. William S. Rosecrans' Army of the Cumberland narrowly defeats Confederate Gen. Braxton Bragg's Army of Tennessee in Murphysboro, Tenn. Losses were heavy: roughly one-third of the 42,000 Union and 35,000 Confederate soldiers are killed, wounded, or missing. In fact, casualty

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- 4 April
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percentages were higher during the Battle of Stones River than during any other engagement during the Civil War.

1942: In the Philippines, Manila falls to Japanese Lt. Gen. Masaharu Homma's 14th Army, as well as the naval base at Cavite and Clark Field.

1951: When enemy machine gun fire from an adjacent hill tears into Sgt. 1st Class Junior D. Edwards and his platoon near Changbong-ni, Edwards rushes the nest. He temporarily drives off the enemy gun crew until running out of ammunition and has to cross the killzone a second time for additional grenades. Upon returning, he kills the remaining crew, but another machine gun opens fire on his position. Racing through enemy fire again for more grenades, he manages to neutralize the second position. Edwards falls while making yet another assault against the enemy, and will posthumously be awarded the Medal of Honor.

1967: In just one day, Col. Robin Olds' 8th Tactical Fighter Wing - the "Wolfpack" - wipes out half of North Vietnam's MiG 21 fighter fleet in Operation "Bolo". Olds' advanced F-4C "Phantoms" tricked Communist intelligence into thinking the advanced fighters were just another easy target of F-105 "Thunderchief' fighter-bombers by flying at altitudes, speeds, routes, and using radio callsigns typical to the less maneuverable F-105s. When the MiGs flew into Olds' ambush, seven "Fishbeds" are shot down

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in 12 minutes. Col. Olds scores one of the victories, making him the only Air Force ace with kills in both World War II and Vietnam.

1994: In the skies over southern Iraq, the F-4G "Wild Weasel V" flies its last combat mission. During Operation "Desert Storm", the Wild Weasel crews took on the dangerous role of targeting Iraqi air defense networks, destroying some 200 sites.

Jan. 3

IP 1777: Capitalizing on his successful Christmas night crossing of the Delaware River followed by a pair of victories in two separate battles of Trenton (N.J.), Continental Army Gen. George Washington defeats a British force under Lt. Col. Charles Mawhood in the Battle of Princeton.

At one point during the battle, Washington - at the head of his advancing infantry - reportedly gallops through a thick haze of musket and artillery smoke, shouting: "Parade with me my brave fellows, we will have them soon!"

1861: Eight days before Alabama secedes from the Union, four companies of Alabama volunteers led by Col. John B. Todd capture Fort Morgan in Mobile Bay.

0 A **1944:** During a fighter sweep over Rabaul, New Guinea, Maj. George "Pappy" Boyington's F4U "Corsair" is shot down after the Marine aviator scores his 26th official victory - tying the total

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of famed World War I ace Capt. Eddie Rickenbacker. The former "Flying Tiger" and commander of VMF-214 will spend the remainder of the war - 20 months - in Japanese captivity and is awarded the Medal of Honor upon his repatriation.

Off the coast of New Jersey, the destroyer USS *Turner* (DD-648) suffers a series of explosions - possibly due to a German *U-boat* attack - and sinks, taking 15 officers and 123 men with her. A Coast Guard HNS-1 helicopter flown by Lt. Cmdr. Frank A. Erickson flies in life-saving plasma to the scene, marking the first time a helicopter is used in a rescue role.

1945: In preparation for invasions at Iwo Jima, Okinawa, and ultimately mainland Japan, Adm. Chester Nimitz is placed in command of all naval forces forces and Gen. Douglas MacArthur is charge of ground operations.

Meanwhile, the First Army attacks the Getmans as they retreat from the "bulge" in the Ardennes, as 1,100 bombers and 11 groups of fighter escorts hammer railroad and communication centers in western Germany.

Jan. 4

1847: The U.S. Government Ordnance Department orders 1,000 revolvers designed by Samuel. Colt and Texas Ranger Capt. Samuel H. Walker. The powerful firearm features a revolving cylinder that can effectively fire its

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six .44 bullets up to 100 yards. Historians would later say that Colt's invention altered the course of human history.

1910: *USS Michigan* (BB-27), America's first dreadnought battleship, is commissioned. The massive ship features eight 12-inch guns mounted in twin turrets, which are capable of sending an 870-1b. projectile over 11 miles away and could penetrate over 16 inches of armor.

1943: Off the coast of Munda Island, USS *Helena* (CL-50) shoots down a Japanese Type 99 Val bomber, marking the first kill using Variable Timing (proximity-fused) anti-aircraft shells.

1944: U.S. Army Air Force and Royal Air Force bombers begin dropping weapons and supplies to resistance fighters in France, Belgium, and Italy during Operation "Carpetbagger."

1951: The South Korean capital of Seoul falls into enemy hands for a second time.

1989: Two Libyan MiG-23 "Flogger" fighters approach two F-14 "Tomcats" from the carrier USS *John F. Kennedy* (CV-67) flying a combat air patrol mission over the Mediterranean Sea. The Tomcats engage and splash the MiGs in the first dogfight for the U.S. military since a 1981 engagement with Libya. Muammar Gaddafi claims that the U.S. Navy shot down unarmed reconnaissance planes, but gun camera footage shows the world that the fighters were armed with missiles.

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Jan. 5

/ **1781:** Commanding 1,600 British troops, the American turncoat - now a British brigadier general - Benedict Arnold captures and burns Richmond, Va.

1855: A landing party from the USS *Plymouth* skirmishes with Chinese forces near Canton during the Taiping Rebellion.

1861: After South Carolina secedes from the Union, Fort Sumter (in Charleston Harbor) is surrounded by Confederate forces and in need of supplies. The civilian merchant vessel *Star of the West* departs New York on this date for the besieged Federal troops with supplies and 250 reinforcements. Upon arriving four days later, shore batteries attack the vessel, forcing it to turn around. The standoff continues until April, when the first shots of the Civil War were fired at Fort Sumter.

1875: Cdr. Edward Lull (USN) leads an expedition to locate the best route for the Panama Canal.

1904: Marines arrive in Korea to defend the U.S. legation assembly at Seoul.

4 **1945:** Japanese pilots receive their first order to execute *kamikaze* suicide tactics. At Okinawa alone, 1,465 kamikaze pilots destroy at least 30 U.S. warships and kill 5,000 Americans.

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1951: 59 B-29 "Superforts" hammer Pyongyang with nearly 700 tons of bombs and the 18th Fighter-Bomber Group takes off from Suwon Air Base for the final time. The base is destroyed in the face of an advancing Chinese and North Korean military.

1967: U.S. and South Vietnamese Marines conduct a joint amphibious assault of the Mekong Delta. The goal of Operation "Deckhouse V" is to capture Viet Cong prisoners from the Thanh Phu Secret Zone, and it is the first time U.S. troops operate in the delta.

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1970: Staff Sgt. Franklin D. Miller

(http://www.victoryinstitute.net/blogs/utb/2000/01/franklin-d-miller-medal-of-honor-citation/) was leading a long range patrol of Special Forces soldiers and Montagnards in Laos when a booby trap wounded several members. A firefight ensued, wounding the entire patrol. Despite a serious chest wound, Miller is the last man standing and keeps up the fight for several hours,

- holding off repeated enemy assaults against their position. That evening, as he is about to exhaust his ammunition, a team arrives to relieve the Green Berets.

Miller would serve over six years in Southeast Asia. When asked by Richard Nixon upon awarding Miller the Medal of Honor, the president asks him where he wanted to be assigned next. Miller's answer: "Vietnam."

2002: Air Force C-17 cargo planes deliver materials at Guantanamo Bay Naval Base in Cuba so the "Seabees" can construct a detention facility for captured Al Qaeda and Taliban detainees.

Jan. 6

1777: Gen. George Washington sets up winter camp for the Continental Army in the hills surrounding Morristown, N.J.

1861: Florida militia forces seize the Union Apalachicola Arsenal, which is defended by only Ordnance Sergeant Edwin Powell and three laborers. Although hopelessly outnumbered, Powell was prepared to fight if ordered to hold and initially refuses to surrender the keys to the magazines or armory. But when the militia allows him to send a telegram to his command for instruction - and he receives no response - he reluctantly concedes.

1927: U.S. Marines return to Nicaragua to protect American lives and property.

1942: Pres. Franklin Roosevelt informs Congress that he is authorizing the largest armaments production in United States history: 8 million tons of shipping, 45,000 planes, and 45,000 tanks, and 20,000 anti-aircraft guns will roll off assembly lines within the year.

ik 1944: Brig. Gen. Frank Merrill is designated to lead the 5307th Composite Unit (provisional), a long-range penetration special operations unit, now popularly known as Merrill's Marauders. Of the 2,750 men to enter the unit at Burma, only two were not wounded or killed. Today's 75th Ranger Regiment is a descendant of Merrill's Marauders.

Medal of Honor: 44 years ago in South Vietnam, Army helicopter pilot Maj. Patrick H. Brady (http://www.victoryinstitute.net/blogs/utb/2000/01/patrick-h-brady-medal-of-honor-citation/) conducted multiple medical evacuation missions in dense fog and in the face of heavy enemy fire. Over the course of the day, he rescued 51 soldiers and 400 bullet holes were counted in the three helicopters he flew.

Jan. 8

1815: Maj. Gen. Andrew Jackson's army, which includes soldiers, sailors, Marines, pirates, a few freed slaves (the "Battalion of Free Men of Color"), Choctaw Indians, and militiamen from several states, defeat a numerically superior British amphibious force under the overall command of Vice Admiral Sir Alexander Cochrane in the Battle of New Orleans.

Though a decisive victory for the Americans, the battle takes place 15 days after the signing of the war-ending Treaty of Ghent. Communications being what they were in 1815, news of the treaty did not reach New Orleans until February.

1847: Thirty-two years to the day after Jackson's victory at New Orleans, a combined U.S. Army-Navy-Marine force under the joint command of Commodore Robert F. Stockton and Gen. Stephen W. Kearny (uncle of the future Union Army Gen. Philip Kearny) decisively defeat Mexican forces under the command of Gen. Jose Maria Flores in the Battle of San Gabriel, Calif.

At one point during the fighting, attacking American infantrymen are reportedly heard shouting, "New Orleans! New Orleans!" as a battle-cry tribute to Jackson's better-known victory. Within days, U.S. troops are in control of Los Angeles.

1967: 16,000 U.S. and 14,000 South Vietnamese troops enter the "Iron Triangle," a major Viet Cong stronghold near Saigon, on a massive search and destroy mission. The Viet Cong largely avoided contact with the large force,

withdrawing to Cambodia or hiding in tunnels. Operation "Cedar Falls" was the largest ground operation of the Vietnam War and marked the first time "tunnel rats" were used.

1973: An Air Force F-4D "Phantom" flown by Capt. Paul D. Howman and 1st Lt. Lawrence W. Kullman shoots down an enemy MiG - the last aerial victory of the Vietnam War.

2005: Southeast of Guam, the *Los Angeles-class* attack submarine USS *San Francisco* accidentally collides with an uncharted undersea mountain, causing extensive damage and nearly results in the loss of the nuclear-powered vessel. Crews manage to return the wounded sub to the surface, but 99 sailors are wounded and one sailor is killed.

Jan. 9

1861: Confederate coastal-artillery batteries — including a four-gun battery manned by cadets under the command of Maj. Peter F. Stevens of the Citadel (the Military College of South Carolina) — open fire on the U.S. commercial paddlesteamer *Star of the West* in Charleston harbor. The shots — the first of the American Civil War — repel the *Star*, forcing the ship to abort its mission of resupplying the besieged U.S. Army garrison at Fort Sumter.

That same day, Mississippi becomes the second state to secede from the Union.

Ai **1918:** Near the Mexican border, a group of Yaqui Indians open fire on "Buffalo Soldiers" of the U.S. Army's 10th Cavalry (before the U.S. Border Patrol's founding in 1924, the Army handled border security). After the brief firefight, the leader of the Yaqui lay dead and nine are captured in what is the last engagement of the "American Indian Wars."

1945: On the beaches of Luzon Island, 68,000 soldiers of Gen. Walter Krueger's Sixth Army storm ashore at Luzon Island. During the Battle of Lingayen Gulf, Japanese *kamikaze* pilots will sink 24 Allied warships and damage 67 with their desperate - and devastating - new tactic.

Act of Valor: On this day in 2012, U.S. Air Force Captain Blake 0. Luttrell earned the Silver Star for exceptionally valorous conduct in the face of the enemy of the United States as Joint Terminal Attack Controller, Task Force ONE PANTHER, Mazar E Sharif, Afghanistan, The Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force-Afghanistan, in support of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM. During a clearing operation on 9 January 2012, Captain Luttrell's partnered element of Afghan Commandos became overwhelmed by intense small arms fire from hardened insurgents fighting from fortified positions within caves. The initial engagement resulted in two Commando casualties, including one who died immediately from his wounds. Captain Luttrell maneuvered with his element through heavy enemy fire to recover the casualties. Captain Luttrell calmly identified enemy positions and provided precise terminal guidance to supporting air weapons teams to neutralize the enemy fortifications by multiple air-to-ground engagements as the assault force continued to advance. The element recovered the wounded commandos as enemy fire focused on the maneuvering assault force. Captain Luttrell continued to control air weapons team fires to neutralize enemy positions within the cave complex to cover the element. The devastating effect of the precision fires on the enemy created a momentary lull and enabled the assault force to move the casualties to a safe location for extraction. Captain Luttrell subsequently directed an inbound medical evacuation helicopter through arduous terrain to make a safe landing to evacuate the friendly casualties, and then returned to continue the assault. The assault force continued maneuvering on the enemy fortifications, and cleared a compound to take cover from intensifying enemy small arms fire to prepare for a final assault. When the Medic within his element became critically wounded while protecting the assault force and women and children found near the enemy position, Captain Luttrell deployed a smoke grenade into the main cave fortifications, returned fire, and courageously moved through continued incoming fire to assist his comrade. Captain Luttrell continued to engage the enemy from extremely close range as he assisted with moving his critically wounded teammate behind a covered position to begin medically treating him. Captain Luttrell again directed the medical evacuation helicopter to extract the critically wounded Medic, and immediately returned to continue the assault. Captain Luttrell quickly ensured all members of the assault force remained in covered

positions and immediately provided terminal guidance for a decisive, precision strike by supporting close air support platforms to neutralize the fortified enemy. The assault force subsequently repositioned reinforcement to assist with the assault to destroy the remaining enemy within the cave complex. Captain Luttrell courageously took the fight to the enemy in the face of extreme danger.

Jan. 11

1944: In the skies over Oschersleben, Germany, Maj. James H. Howard is leading a group of P-51 "Mustangs", escorting a formation of B-17 "Flying Fortress" heavy bombers. When Luftwaffe fighters intercept the group, Howard immediately shoots down a Messerschmitt Bf-110 long range fighter. Upon returning, he finds 30 German pilots attacking the bombers. Without any tactical advantage, he nonetheless single-handedly attacks the enemy planes, shooting down three, and damaging or possibly destroying three more.

Before the war, Howard was a naval aviator, but left the service to join the Claire Chennault's famed "Flying Tigers", where he shoots down six Japanese warplanes. Gen. Carl A. Spaatz presents Howard with the Medal of Honor to Howard in June.

1945: Near Bastogne, Belgium, Staff Sgt. Archer T. Gammon's platoon is advancing through the woods when it is targeted by a German_ machine gun position. Archer wades through waist-deep snow to attack the position, eliminating it with grenades. Now rid of the deadly obstacle, the platoon moves forward again, but runs into a hornet's nest of machine guns, infantry, and a tank. Despite hostile fire zeroing in on him, he again charges forward and eliminates another machine gun nest with grenades and closes within 25 yards of the vehicle while eliminating soldiers protecting their tank. Gammon's daring assault proves to be too much for the enemy armor, but as it fires a parting shot, an 88-mm shells scores a direct hit on the daring American staff sergeant. Gammon is posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

Also on this date, during the American invasion of Luzon Island in the Philippines, Capt. William A. Shomo was leading an armed reconnaissance mission of two P-51 "Mustangs". He and his wingman spotted a formation of Japanese fighters escorting a Mitsubishi G4M "Betty" bomber. Although outnumbered 13-2, the American aviators began the attack. Shomo shot down three fighters, then the bomber they were protecting. He will shoot down three more enemy fighters and his wingman, Lt. Paul Lipscomb, scores three. Shomo's seven victories give him the second-highest single mission tally for U.S. pilots in history, and he is awarded the Medal of Honor.

1969: While leading an armored convoy down a highway in Vietnam's Binh Long Province, 1st Lt. Harold A. Fritz's formation is ambushed. Surrounded on all sides and in danger of being overrun, Fritz — who had been wounded in the initial moments — disregards his injuries and heavy enemy fire, leaping from his vehicle to rally his men, directing them to reposition and shift their fire. As the battle wore on, a group of enemy soldiers closed in on the unit. Fritz, armed with just a pistol and bayonet, and some of his fellow men defeat the infiltrating force. Upon arrival of the relief force, Fritz again braves incoming fire to direct the unit. Today, Fritz is one of only 71 surviving Medal of Honor recipients.

Jan. 12

1945: Warplanes from the U.S. Navy's carrier Task Force 38 under the command of Vice Adm. John Sidney McCain Sr. (grandfather of Senator John S. McCain III), attack enemy convoys and bases along the coast of Japanese-held French Indochina (Vietnam) in the Battle of the South China Sea.

Codenamed Operation "Gratitude," the attacks are wildly successful. Despite rough seas and high winds from a dangerously close typhoon, Japanese bases at Saigon, Cape Saint Jacques (Vung Tau), Cam Ranh Bay, Qui Nhon, and Tourane Bay (Da Nang) are hit hard, resulting in the destruction of docks, barracks, weapons depots, hangars, and scores of Japanese seaplanes and other aircraft, as well as the sinking of more than 40 enemy ships.

1962: Ten miles west of Saigon, U.S. Army H-21 "flying banana" helicopters ferry South Vietnamese paratroopers into battle - the first major American combat operation in what will become the Vietnam War.

Also on this date, the U.S. military begins defoliation operations to deny the Viet Cong use of jungle cover for their movements. Over nine years, Operation "Ranch Hand pilots," whose motto was "Only you can prevent forests," would fly 19,000 sorties and drop an estimated 20 million gallons of defoliant. 10 percent of the vegetation in South Vietnam is destroyed.

1973: An F-4 "Phantom" flown by U.S. Navy Lieutenants Vic Kovaleski and Jim Wise splash a MiG-17, making it the Navy's final air-to-air kill and the last aerial-combat kill of the war.

V[5]1991: With President George H.W. Bush having already deployed 500,000 U.S. troops to the Persian Gulf, Congress passes an Authorization for Use of Military Force against Iraq. The opening shots of Operation "Desert Stone are just five days away.

Jan. 13

1865: U.S. soldiers, sailors, and Marines under the joint command of Maj. Gen. Alfred Howe Terry and Rear Adm. David Dixon Porter begin landing operations — in what will prove to be the largest American amphibious operation until World War II — aimed at seizing Fort Fisher, N.C., a Confederate stronghold near the port city of Wilmington. The fort — commanded by Confederate Gen. Braxton Bragg — will fall to Union forces within two days.

Jan. 15

1815: Like Andrew Jackson's victory at New Orleans earlier in the month, the Americans and British clash again before word that the War of 1812 is over can cross the ocean. The frigate USS *President,* under the command of Commodore Stephen Decatur, breaks out of the British blockade at New York

Harbor, but is soon intercepted by four British ships. *President* deals out significant damage to the frigate HMS *Endymion* but an outnumbered Decatur has to surrender the ship.

1943: The Pentagon, the headquarters for the Department of Defense and one of the world's largest office buildings, is dedicated. The famous five-sided concrete structure resembles an old star-shaped fortress from the gunpowder era, and houses some 23,000 employees. World War II began shortly after construction starts, and the design had to be altered to accommodate the shortage of materials such as steel.

That same day over the skies of Guadalcanal, Marine Corps aviator Capt. Joseph J. Foss shoots down three Japanese planes, bringing his total victories to 26. The top official Marine ace of World War II is awarded the Medal of Honor, tying top World War I ace Eddie Rickenbacker's tally in just 95 days.

1967: In Los Angeles, the Green Bay Packers defeat the Kansas City Chiefs 35-10 in the AFL-NFL World Championship Game - the first "Super Bowl." Among many other military veterans on the field are Green Bay Hall-of-Famers Ray Nitschke, Paul Hornung, and Boyd Dowler.

2009: A US Airways Airbus 320 flown by Chesley Sullenberger - a former F-4 fighter pilot and captain in the U.S. Air Force - runs into a flock of geese during takeoff, disabling the engines. Sullenberger skillfully ditches the plane in the Hudson River. All of the 150 passengers and five-person crew are safely rescued.

Jan. 16

1917: British intelligence intercepts a coded telegram from the German government requesting an alliance with Mexico if the U.S. enters World War I. In return for a Mexican attack on the United States, Germany would offer financial aid and assist Mexico in regaining Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona. The Mexicans decline, and the "Zimmermann Telegram" sparks outrage when published in U.S. papers, leading Congress to declare war on Germany in April.

1942: As U.S. and Philippine soldiers conduct a delaying action on Luzon
---- Island, 26th Cavalry Regiment troopers and their Philippine Scouts spot a detachment of Japanese troops approaching the town of Morong. Lt. Edwin P. Ramsey orders what becomes the last cavalry charge in U.S. military history, which surprises and scatters the enemy.

On Bataan, U.S. Army Sgt. Jose Calugas - a Philippine Scout - notices that one of the gun batteries have been disabled by enemy bombs and shelling, killing or wounding the gun's operators. Without orders, he charges across a 1,000-yard killzone, where he organizes a crew of men to get the cannon working again and begins returning fire. After being relieved, he returns to his normal post as mess sergeant. He is nominated for the Medal of Honor, but falls into enemy hands when the island is captured. The Japanese put Calugas on a work detail, and he secretly joins a guerilla unit and fights to liberate the Philippines. After the war, he is finally awarded the Medal of Honor and receives a commission.

1945: As the Red Army drives west through Poland and the *Wehrrnacht* is beaten back to its positions prior to their last-ditch Ardennes Offensive (the Battle of the Bulge), Adolf Hitler enters the underground bomb shelter and Nazi command post known as the Fithrerbunker. The German dictator will spend the rest of his life at the compound.

c 1991: When the UN deadline for Saddam Hussein to withdraw his military from Kuwait expires at midnight, hundreds of planes take off from U.S. carriers and from bases in Saudi Arabia, decimating Iraq's air force and air defense network. Operation "Desert Storm" - Saddam's "Mother of All Battles" - has begun.

Jan. 17

- 1781: Continental Army forces -- including infantry, cavalry, dragoons (horse-mounted infantry), and militia — under the command of Brig. Gen. Daniel Morgan, clash with a better-equipped, more-experienced force of

British Army regulars and Loyalists under the command of Lt. Col. Banastre "Bloody Ban" Tarleton in a sprawling pastureland known as Hannah's Cowpens in the South Carolina upcountry.

The Battle of Cowpens ends in a decisive victory for Morgan — who defeats Tarleton in a classic double-envelopment — and a near-irrevocable loss of men, equipment, and reputation for the infamous Tarleton and his "British Legion."

1966: A nuclear-equipped B-52 bomber flying an Operation "Chrome Dome" airborne alert mission off the coast of Spain collides with a KC-135 "Stratotanker" during refueling, destroying both planes. Four B28 thermonuclear weapons fall from the sky; three landing near the village of Palomares and one sinks in the Mediterranean Sea in what is one of the worst nuclear disasters in U.S. military history.

Two of the weapons' conventional charges went off upon impact, spreading small amounts of contamination, one lands largely intact, and after two-and-a-half months of searching, crews locate and recover the fourth device which had been sitting 2,850 feet below the surface. Navy Master Diver Carl Brashear - the Navy's first black diver - will lose his leg in the recovery operation and will later return to duty despite being an amputee. His incredible story is portrayed in the 2000 film *Men of Honor*, starring Cuba Gooding Jr. as Master Chief Petty Officer Brashear.

1991: A massive U.S. and coalition air campaign continues to pound the Iraq' air force and air defense systems, expanding the attacks to include Saddam Hussein's command and control infrastructure. Meanwhile, the dictator fires eight Soviet-built "Scud" ballistic missiles into Israel. Saddam sought to draw Israel into the campaign, which he hoped would split Arab nations from the coalition as they would be unlikely to fight alongside Israel. President George H.W. Bush convinces the Israelis not to enter the war and pledges to deploy U.S. Patriot surface-to-air missiles to protect against further attacks.

Jan. 18

t 1911: During the San Francisco Air Meet, exhibition pilot Eugene B. Ely lands his Curtiss Pusher Model "D" aircraft on the armored cruiser US S *Pennsylvania,* which had been fitted with a special 119-foot-long wooden platform with makeshift tailhook system. Ely's feat marks the first-ever airplane landing aboard a ship.

1945: In a speech to the House of Commons, British prime minister Winston Churchill recognizes the immense American sacrifice in the Battle of the Bulge. Possibly alluding to British general Bernard Montgomery's reluctance to engage, resulting in only 1,400 British casualties compared to well over 100,000 Americans, Churchill states "U.S. troops have done almost all the fighting, suffering losses equal to those of both sides at the Battler of Gettysburg."

Churchill adds, "This is undoubtedly the greatest American battle of the war and will, I believe, be regarded as an ever-famous American victory."

1951: Following their return to action after the breakout from the Chosin Reservoir, the First Marine Division begins mopping-up guerillas in the Pohang area of South Korea.

 # 1957: Three B-52 "Stratofortress" bombers, led by Maj. Gen. Archie J. Old Jr., land at March Air Force Base in California after completing a non-stop flight around the world. The 45-hour mission, codenamed Operation "Power Flite", includes three mid-air refuelings and a simulated bombing run in the Malay Peninsula, demonstrating to the world that the United States could put nuclear weapons on target anywhere in the world.

Jan. 19

1770: The little-known but historically significant Battle of Golden Hill erupts in New York City between members of the patriot organization "Sons of Liberty" and a contingent of British soldiers. The clash begins when the "Sons," whom the Redcoats had labeled as "the real enemies of society," — snatch a few of the King's men, who are cutting down wooden "liberty

poles" (symbols of resistance against British rule) which the Sons had erected. Redcoats from the nearby barracks respond, and a bayonet charge is ordered. Several are wounded on both sides, and one civilian is killed.

Less than seven weeks before the Boston Massacre, the Battle of Golden Hill is considered by some historians as the first armed clash of the American Revolution.

1862: In southern Kentucky, a Union force commanded by Brig. Gen. George H. Thomas hands the Confederates their first significant defeat of the Civil War in the Battle of Mill Springs - known to Southerners as the Battle of Fishing Creek.

Act of valor: On this day in 1967, A-4 "Skyhawk" pilot Capt. Michael J. Estocin (USN) earned the Distinguished Flying Cross during aerial combat over North Vietnam. His citation states: "As the leader of three Shrike-configured aircraft, Captain Estocin was responsible for providing warning, detection, and suppression of hostile surface-to-air missile activity directed at elements of the main strike group conducting a coordinated attack against the Dong Phong Thuong Railroad Bridge north of Thanh Hoa, North Vietnam. He lured the opposing missile sites to direct their fire toward his widely dispersed position by deploying the Shrike aircraft well ahead of the main strike group. During the course of the mission, Captain Estocin broadcast timely and accurate warning of enemy missile firings and personally took under fire two enemy missile site, destroying one and causing significant damage to the radar facilities of the other. He was subjected to heavy and accurate enemy anti-aircraft fire throughout the execution of these attacks. After exhausting his ordnance and at great personal peril, Captain Estocin remained on station to act as a lure in drawing any missile fire away from the remaining strike group. Only when assured that the main strike group was clear of the missile threat did Captain Estocin leave the hostile area."

In April, Estocin will earn the Medal of Honor (posthumously) for two daring attacks against enemy surface-to-air missile sites.

Jan. 20

1914: A naval aviation unit from Annapolis, Md. consisting of nine officers, 23 men, seven aircraft, portable hangars, and other gear, under Lieutenant J. H. Towers" arrives at Pensacola, Fla. aboard the battleship USS *Mississippi* and the bulk-cargo ship USS *Orion* to set up a flying school. The "Cradle of Naval Aviation" is born.

1944: The U.S. 5th Army, commanded by Lt. Gen. Mark Clark, reaches the Gustav Line and clashes with Getman forces near Monte Cassino, Italy. After four months of bloody fighting, the Allies will have the German Tenth Army, led by Field Marshall Albert Kesselring, on their heels and in danger of being surrounded.

4, **1968:** North Vietnamese Army tries - and fails - to overrun Marines patrolling hills surrounding the Combat Outpost Khe Sanh. The Battle of Khe Sanh begins, and for the next 77 days, the heavily outnumbered and besieged Marines fought off their attackers, shattering two enemy divisions.

Jan. 21

1903: The Militia Act of 1903 — also known as the "Dick Act" (Congressman and Maj. Gen. Charles Dick authored much of the legislation) — is passed, establishing federal standards and greater federal control over state militias, essentially creating the modern National Guard.

1918: 12 officers and 133 enlisted men from the 1st Aeronautical Company arrive for anti-submarine duty at Ponta Delgada, Azores. The unit was one of the first completely equipped American aviation units to serve overseas in World War I.

Jan. 22

1944: Allied forces, including the U.S. VI Corps under the command of Maj. Gen. John P. Lucas (of Lt. Gen. Mark Clark's Fifth Army), begin a series of landings along a stretch of western Italian coastline in the Anzio-Nettuno area. Codenamed "Operation Shingle", the Allies achieve complete surprise against — and encounter little initial resistance from — the Germans, but the landings kick off what will become one of the most grueling campaigns of World War IL

1946: Four months after dismantling the Office of Strategic Services, President Harry S. Truman creates the Central Intelligence Group, the predecessor to today's Central Intelligence Agency. Truman picks Rear Adm. Sidney Souers as the first Directer of Central Intelligence, presenting Souers with a black cloak, black hat, and a wooden dagger as he informs the new DCI of his duties.

ti) **1954:** First Lady Mamie Eisenhower breaks a bottle of champagne across the bow of USS *Nautilus* (SSN-571) in Groton, Connecticut, launching the world's first nuclear-powered submarine. The following year, *Nautilus* sets sail, breaking numerous sea-travel records, and becomes the first "ship" to cross the North Pole.

1968: With aerial photographs, ground reconnaissance reports, and a massive array of electronic sensors indicating that some 20,000 North Vietnamese Army soldiers surround the Khe Sanh Combat Base, Operation "Niagara", is underway. The massive air campaign, dubbed "the most concentrated application of aerial firepower in the history of warfare," will rain down nearly 100,000 tons of bombs - and eight times that amount of artillery shells - on the enemy. Meanwhile, transport planes ferry supplies to the besieged Marines in the largest aerial supply operation since the Berlin Airlift.

1969: Operation "Dewey Canyon", the Marine Corps' last major offensive of the Vietnam War, begins. Marines under the command of Col. Robert H. Barrow will spend 56 days clearing out the North Vietnamese Army's stronghold near the A Shau Valley.

Jan. 23

1870: Following the murder of a Montana rancher and his son, Col. Eugene Baker forms a band of infantry and cavalry, leaving Fort Ellis (near modem-day Bozeman) in search of the Blackfoot Indians responsible for the attack. Coming across a Blackfoot encampment, Baker orders his men to attack the camp, not caring if it was the correct group or not. The soldiers open fire, killing nearly 200 Blackfeet - mostly women and children. Those that survived the brutal attack were left to the sub-zero temperatures without shelter. The massacre sparks public outrage. President Ulysses S. Grant, wanting a "peace policy" with Native Americans, ends the Army's hopes of taking over Indian affairs by appointing civilian ministers instead.

1945: With the Soviet Army approaching, Grand Admiral Karl Donitz orders the evacuation German citizens and troops from East Prussia, Courland, and the Polish Corridor. With hundreds of merchant vessels and German warships transporting nearly a million civilians and 350,000 troops, Operation "Hannibal" was in fact three times larger than the famous British evacuation at Dunkirk in 1940.

1968: North Korean warships surround the intelligence-gathering ship USS *Pueblo* operating in international waters in the Sea of Japan and order the crew to surrender. The enemy opens fire on the unarmed vessel - by policy, the ship's armaments were kept below decks - and the ship is captured. One sailor is killed during the engagement, and Washington allows *Pueblo* to fall into enemy hands without a fight. The 82 surviving Americans will endure 11 months of brutal treatment before their release. Despite the fact that *Pueblo* is a museum ship in Pyongyang, she still remains on the Navy's commissioned roster.

Jan. 24

1961: When a nuclear-armed B-52 bomber from Seymour Johnson Air Force Base develops a fuel leak in its wing, the pilot flies over the ocean to vent the excess fuel before landing. However, the hole in the wing worsens

significantly during the flight. Before the plane can land, it begins to oscillate wildly, and the movements manage to trigger many of the bombs' redundant arming systems. The plane breaks up mid-air and three of the eight crew members perish. The weapons land north of Goldsboro, N.C., but fortunately, neither of the 3-plus megaton Mark 39 devices explode.

1985: The first all-military Space Shuttle crew blast off on a mission of which many details remains classified to this day. *Discovery's* crew are commander Ken Mattingly (USN), pilot Loren Shriver (USAF), and specialists Ellison Onizuka (USAF), Gary Payton (USAF), and James Buchli (USMC). All are former test pilots, and Buchli served as an infantry Platoon Commander during the Vietnam War before earning his pilots wings.

1991: Helicopters carry Navy SEALs from USS *Leftwich* (DD-984) and USS *Nicholas* (FFG-47) to the Kuwaiti island of Jazirat Qurah, where the operators engage in a battle with the occupying Iraqi military. Three enemy soldiers are killed and 51 are captured, liberating the island with no American losses.

1999: Navy F/A-18C "Hornet" aircraft fire the AFG-154A Joint Standoff Weapon against air defense targets in Iraq, the first use of the JSOW in combat. The GPS-guided gliding cluster bomb can precisely hit targets, blanketing a football-field-sized area with deadly munitions from up to 40 miles away.

Jan. 25

1787: Former Continental Army captain Daniel Shays leads a group of 2,000 American rebels on a raid against the Springfield (Mass.) armory, hoping to obtain rifles. 1,200 militia meet Shays' force, turning the attackers away by firing grapeshot into their ranks and killing four. Shays is tried and sentenced to be hanged, but the veteran of the Boston, Bunker Hill, Lexington, and Saratoga battles - who was wounded during the war and served five years without pay - is pardoned and given a pension instead.

1856: Marines and seamen from the sloop-of-war USS *Decatur* land at Seattle to protect settlers from an Indian attack. The Battle of Seattle lasted seven hours and the Indians suffered severe casualties, while only two settlers died.

17" **1939:** In a basement of New York City's Columbia University, scientists split the uranium atom for the first time. This newly discovered fission reaction will be harnessed and turned into atomic weapons in six years.

1960: A MIM-23 "Hawk" missile shoots down a MGR-1 "Honest John" nuclear-capable missile during tests, the first time a missile "kills" a ballistic missile. The Hawk is the predecessor to the modern-day "Patriot" missile system.

1995: Although the Cold War is over, Russia and the United States are the closest the two nations will come to all-out nuclear war when a Norwegian scientific research rocket launch makes Russian missile defense radar officials think that a U.S. submarine may have launched a nuclear "Trident" missile. The Russian military goes on full alert in preparation for war and an armed nuclear briefcase sits in front of Russian President Boris Yeltsin - just one step away from mutually assured destruction. Fortunately, radar shows the rocket traveling away from Russian airspace after a few minutes and the Russians stand down.

Jan. 26

1863: Following the Union general's disastrous defeat at the Battle of Fredericksburg in December and the failed "Mud March" on Richmond, President Abraham Lincoln relieves Maj. Gen. Ambrose Burnside from his command of the Army of the Potomac, appointing Joseph Hooker in his place.

1942: Elements of the 133rd Infantry Regiment land at Belfast Harbor in Northern Ireland - the first American troops to arrive in Europe. The soldiers begin establishing the "air bridge" between the United States and the United Kingdom.

1945: A 19-year-old second lieutenant named Audie Murphy orders his company to fall back to safety when they are attacked by German armor and infantry. Lt. Murphy remains behind to covers their withdrawal with his M-1 carbine and directs fire support on the Germans before manning a .50-cal. machine gun mounted on a burning tank destroyer. Murphy holds off wave after wave of enemy assaults, with multiple 88-mm rounds hitting his position. After an hour of being decimated by the one-man army, the Germans withdraw. Murphy then organizes his men and leads a counterattack.

For his daring actions, Audie Murphy is awarded the Medal of Honor, making him one of the highest decorated men in American military history.

1946: U.S. Army Air Forces colonel William H. Councill takes off from Daugherty Field (Long Beach, Calif.) in his Lockheed P-80 "Shooting Star" on the country's first transcontinental jet flight. Councill, a veteran of 130 missions in the southwest Pacific during World War II, reaches New York's La Guardia Airport in just 4 hours and 13 minutes.

1968: Reserve and National Guard units are mobilized following North Korea's capture of USS *Pueblo* and increased enemy activity in Vietnam. The Viet Cong's TET Offensive will kick off in less than a week.

Jan. 27

1837: U.S. soldiers and Marines under the command of Col. Archibald Henderson — a serving Marine Corps commandant — defeat a force of Seminole Indians in the running battle of Hatchee-Lustee Creek (Florida). For his actions, Henderson will receive a brevet promotion to brigadier general, becoming the Corps' first general officer.

1862: Pres. Abraham Lincoln issues the first of two war orders. The first, General War Order No. One, directs U.S. Army and Naval forces to move "against the insurgent forces [of the Southern states]." In four days, Lincoln will issue Special War Order No. One, calling for an expeditionary force to seize and hold "a point" along the railroad southwest of Manassas Junction.

1942: The submarine USS *Gudgeon* sinks a Japanese submarine — becoming the first American sub to send an enemy warship to the bottom during World War II. Gudgeon also becomes the first sub to patrol Japanese waters. She will go on to rack up more than a dozen kills. She will conduct rescue missions and special operations. But in 1944, on her 12th patrol, she mysteriously disappears with all hands.

1943: American bombers — specifically B-17 Flying Fortresses and B-24 Liberators — of the U.S. Eighth Air Force strike German U-boat facilities at Wilhelmshaven. The bombing raid is the first U.S. Army Air Forces mission over Germany.

Jan. 28

1915: Pres. Woodrow Wilson signs into law the congressionally approved merger of the "Life Saving" and "Revenue Cutter" services, thus establishing the U.S. Coast Guard. Still, the officially recognized birthday of the Coast , Guard is Aug. 4, 1790, the day Congress approved Treasury Secretary Alexander Hamilton's proposal to "build ten cutters to protect the new nation's revenue."

1945: The Eighth Air Force celebrates its third birthday by sending 1,006 B-24 and B-17 bombers and 249 P-51 escorts to Doitinund, Germany on Mission 809 -- a raid on marshaling yards, bridges and benzol plants, and other targets of opportunity. German air defenses shoot down seven B-24s and three B-17s, damage 464 bombers, and upon landing, another four bombers are damaged beyond repair. 16 airmen are killed, 31 wounded, and 106 missing in action.

By this time, the Mighty Eighth had flown more than 250,000 bomber and 210,000 fighter sorties, delivering well over half a million tons of bombs and destroying 13,000 enemy planes.

[9] **1966:** Marines hit the beaches of the South Vietnam's Quang Ngai province in the first amphibious landing since Korea. The Americans meet little resistance as they head inland, then move to cut off retreating North Vietnamese Army and Viet Cong forces.

'[6]) 1973: B-52s carried out their final combat sortie in Southeast Asia -- striking targets in South Vietnam. Operation ARC LIGHT had started in 1965.

1986: After nearly a week delays for weather and technical issues, Space Shuttle *Challenger* finally blasts off from the launch pad at Cape Canaveral, Fla., planning to put a satellite into orbit to study the approaching Halley's Comet. But 73 seconds into the flight, an o-ring on the Solid Rocket Booster fails, causing *Challenger* to explode.

Among the crew were Dick Scobee (Lt. Col., USAF) and Michael J. Smith (Capt., USN) both Vietnam combat veterans; Ellison Onizuka (Lt. Col., USAF), and Gregory Jarvis (former Capt., USAF). This tragic event marks the first time a manned American orbital mission fails. It will be two years before NASA launches another space shuttle mission.

Jan. 29

1863: Following a series of clashes between white settlers and the Shoshone Indians, Col. Patrick E. Connor's 3rd California Volunteer Infantry Regiment attacks a Shoshone encampment in Washington Territory (present day Utah-Idaho border). Hundreds of Shoshone and 21 Union soldiers are killed in the Battle (or massacre) of Bear River.

t 1943: As Task Force 18 brings American replacement troops to Guadalcanal, Japanese land-based torpedo bombers attack the flotilla, sinking the heavy cruiser USS *Chicago* (CA-29) and damaging a destroyer. The American warships withdraw after the Battle of Rennell Island - the last major naval engagement of the Guadalcanal campaign - opening the door for the Japanese evacuation of Guadalcanal.

1944: Maj. Gen. James H. "Jimmy" Doolittle's Eighth Air Force bombers and escorts take off from fields across England for their largest bombing mission of the war to that point. Over 800 B-17s and B-24s target the Gentian cities of Frankfurt and Ludwigshaven. 29 heavy bombers are lost and another five are shot up badly enough to be scrapped after limping back across the channel. 22 American airmen are killed and 299 are listed as missing in action, but the gunners and P-38 Lightning, P-47 Thunderbolt, and P-51 Mustang escort pilots claim over 150 German warplanes and damage dozens more.

1945: As crews load depth charges onto the cargo ship USS *Serpens* (AK-97) at port in Guadalcanal, an explosion obliterates most of *Serpens,* killing 196 Coast Guardsmen and 58 soldiers.

1991: (Featured image) Hoping to lure the U.S.-led Coalition into a major land battle, three divisions of Iraqi soldiers invade Saudi Arabia. After a brief clash with American reconnaissance troops manning observation posts along the Saudi-Kuwaiti border, the Iraqis take the port city of Khafji.

Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf decides that Arab forces will retake the captured Saudi town and over the next three days U.S. aircraft, artillery, Special Forces, and Marine Reconnaissance troops support the Saudi and Qatari military as they expel the Iraqi forces. An enemy surface-to-air missile clams an AC-130 gunship, while on the ground, 29 Americans are killed and two captured over the course of the Battle of Khafji -- the first ground engagement of Operation Desert Storm.

2002: During his State of the Union address, President George W. Bush names Iran, Iraq, and North Korea as the "Axis of Evil," claiming the three nations are state supporters of terrorism and either are actively pursuing or seek to obtain weapons of mass destruction.

Jan. 30

1862: The U.S. Navy's first ironclad ship, USS *Monitor,* is launched at Greenpoint, N.Y. Designed by Swedish engineer John Ericsson, the turreted gunship will make history in March when she trades shots with the Confederate ironclad *Virginia* (a vessel built from the previously scuttled USS *Merrimac)* in a duel that ends with a draw at Hampton Roads, Virginia.

1942: A formation of over 50 Japanese bombers target Singapore harbor -- unprotected by either fighters or anti-aircraft guns. Among the enemy bombardiers' targets is USS *Wakefield,* a former luxury ocean liner, until her conversion to a troop transport in 1941. *Wakefield* had just disembarked 20,000 British troops, destined to surrender in just two weeks when Singapore falls to the Japanese.

Five Coast Guardsmen perish during the attack -- the service's first casualties of World War II. After some quick repairs, *Wakefield* loads about 500 women and children fleeing the Japanese and carries them to Sri Lanka.

That same day, half a world away, the *Treasury-class* Coast Guard cutter USCGC *Alexander Hamilton* capsizes off the coast of Iceland after being torpedoed by the German submarine *U-132,* becoming the Coast Guard's first vessel lost during World War II. The torpedo blast and sinking takes 26 guardsmen to the bottom.

* **1944:** Just after midnight, two battalions of Col. William 0. Darby's Rangers march to the Italian town of Cistema, charged with sneaking behind enemy lines to seize and hold the town until the main assault force can wipe out the Germans. Planners are unaware, however, that the two battalions of elite soldiers will be going up against several fortified divisions of enemy infantry and armor.

The Rangers fight valiantly, but are cut down nearly to the last man by overwhelming numbers of well-prepared Germans. Of the nearly 800 men of the I st and 3rd Ranger Battalions, all but six are killed or captured in the Battle of Cisterna.

— **13 1945:** Dozens of miles behind Japanese lines, a P-61 Black Widow night fighter flies overhead, distracting enemy troops while 133 soldiers of the 6th Ranger Battalion and Alamo Scouts, along with over 200 Filipino guerrillas, crawl up to conduct a surprise attack on the Cabanatuan prison camp. Once the men were in position, they ambushed the guards, knocking out the camp's defenses within a few seconds.

As the soldiers evacuate the 500 Allied prisoners, the guerrillas hold off Japanese reinforcements attempting to cross the Cabu River. The raid is an astonishing success: between 500-1,000 Japanese troops are killed, four tanks are destroyed, and the camp is emptied while incurring only a handful of friendly casualties.

ci? In the Baltic Sea, the Soviet submarine *S-13* spots massive military transport ship MV *Wilhelm Gustloff as* it evacuates German sailors, civilians, and wounded soldiers from Eastern Europe. Three torpedoes strike *Gustloff* in her port side and the ship slips under the frigid waves, taking over 9,000 souls with her to the bottom - the largest loss of life at sea by a single ship in human history.

'[4]) Incidentally, *S-13* will sink another German evacuee-laden vessel 11 days later, claiming another 4,500 lives.

1968: (Featured image) At 2:45 in the morning, a 19-man Viet Cong suicide squad blows a hole in the wall of the U.S. Embassy at Saigon, managing to hold the courtyard for six hours until paratroopers can retake the compound. 10,000 North Vietnamese soldiers take the city of Hue, triggering a grueling house-to-house battle with U.S. and South Vietnamese soldiers. Meanwhile, virtually all of South Vietnam's major urban areas and bases are under attack.

The Vietnamese Tet Offensive — launched by over 70,000 jointly operating North Vietnamese and Viet Cong forces — has kicked off across South Vietnam. The Communists trade their typical guerilla tactics for a risky, more conventional strategy intended to weaken the government in Saigon and inspire a revolutionary uprising. Militarily speaking, the Communists are

shattered, with an estimated 50,000 killed, wounded or captured. But in the United States, the psychological effect of Tet playing out in the media drains the resolve of the American public.

Jan. 31

1865: Robert E. Lee is promoted to General-in-Chief of the Armies of the Confederate States. Lee is the only man to hold the prestigious rank during the Confederacy's brief existence.

1917: Kaiser Wilhelm orders the Imperial German Navy's fleet of 105 *U-boats* to resume their campaign of unrestricted submarine warfare, effectively causing the United States to enter World War I. No vessel civilian or naval - is safe, and war's end, German *U-boats* will have sent 5,000 ships to the bottom.

1945: U.S. Army Private Eddie Slovik is executed by firing squad near Sainte Marie-aux-Mines, France for abandoning his rifle company as he admits to being "too scared" for combat. Gen. Dwight Eisenhower had personally signed the execution order to discourage further desertions. To date, Slovik remains the only American shot for desertion since the Civil War.

1950: President Harry S. Truman announces a program that would create a theiiiionuclear weapon, many times more powerful than the atomic weapon the Soviet Union recently tested.

1971: A Saturn V rocket lifts off from Cape Canaveral, carrying Alan Shepard (USN), Stuart Roosa (USAF), and Edgar Mitchell (USN) on NASA's third manned mission to reach the lunar surface. The crew of Apollo 14 spend two days on the moon, and ten years after Shepard becomes the first American in space - he becomes the first person to hit a golf ball on the moon.

February

Feb. 1

1800: The frigate USS *Constellation* (the first of four so-named American warships) under the command of Capt. Thomas Truxtun defeats the French frigate *La Vengeance* under Capt. F.M. Pitot in a night battle lasting several hours. The engagement, fought during America's Quasi War with France, is — according to Truxtun — "as sharp an action as ever was fought between two frigates."

1862: Julia Ward Howe's poem "Battle Hymn of the Republic," which begins "Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord," is published in the *Atlantic Monthly*. It will become a Union Army ballad. Today, the ballad is a martial hymn sung in American military chapels worldwide and by descendents of Union and Confederate soldiers alike.

---- **1942:** Vice Adm. William Halsey Jr.'s Task Force 8 (USS *Enterprise)* hits Japanese facilities in the Marshall Islands, while Rear Adm. Jack Fletcher's Task Force 17 (USS *Yorktown)* attacks the Gilberts. Aircraft and naval artillery inflict moderate damage to the Japanese garrisons and sink several smaller vessels. The Marshalls-Gilberts Raids are the first American offensive operation against the Japanese during the war in the Pacific.

1944: Maj. Gen. Harry Schmidt's 4th Marine Division lands at Kwajalein Island and Roi-Namur. Of the 8,000 original Japanese defenders, only 300 are captured when the islands are secured after three days of combat.

1961: The "Minuteman I" intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) — the first three-staged, solid-fueled ICBM — is launched for the first time in a successful "all systems" test. The Boeing-manufactured missile can carry a 1.3 megaton thermonuclear warhead over 5,500 miles.

2003: The doomed Space Shuttle *Columbia* (STS-107) disintegrates upon reentering the earth's atmosphere, killing all seven crewmembers. Aboard are Col. Rick D. Husband (USAF), Cmdr. William C. McCool (USN), Lt. Col. Michael P. Anderson (USAF), Capt. David M. Brown (USN), Capt. Laurel Clark (USN), Israeli Air Force Col. Ilan Ramon, and Kalpana Chawla, a civilian mission specialist.

Feb. 2

1848: Representatives of the United States and Mexico sign the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, officially ending the Mexican-American War. According to the Library of Congress, the treaty "[extends] the boundaries of the United States by over 525,000 square miles. In addition to establishing the Rio Grande as the border between the two countries, the territory acquired by the U.S. included what will become the states of Texas, California, Nevada, Utah, most of New Mexico and Arizona, and parts of Colorado and Wyoming."

1901: Congress authorizes the establishment of the Army Nurse Corps under the Army Medical Department.

1943: The last remnants of Field Marshal Friedrich Paulus' encircled Sixth German Army surrender to the Soviets. Of the army's 250,000 men at the beginning of the Battle of Stalingrad, 147,000 are killed and 91,000 captured. Only 5,000 will survive the war and return to Germany.

1945: As the 124th Cavalry Regiment (incidentally, the U.S. Army's last remaining horse cavalry unit) battles to recapture the Burma Road, the troopers assault a 400-foot hill near Loi-Kang, Burma, that is heavily defended by Japanese soldiers. 1st Lt. Jack L. Knight spearheads the advance, singlehandedly taking out two machine gun nests and multiple bunkers. Knight was blinded, exhausted, and mortally wounded by a grenade, but still continued the charge as his men inflicted heavy casualties on the Japanese. For his charge at "Knight's Hill," he was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

Feb. 3

1801: The U.S. Senate ratifies the Mortefontaine treaty, officially ending the Quasi War with France.

1961: The U.S. Air Force's Strategic Air Command (SAC) launches its EC-135 flying command post — codenamed "Looking Glass" — in order to maintain seamless and secure command-and-control of U.S. nuclear forces in the event ground-based command-and-control is wiped out in a nuclear attack. "Looking Glass" aircraft will be airborne 24/7 for the next three decades. According to the U.S. Strategic Command (which replaced SAC): "On July 24, 1990, Looking Glass ceased continuous airborne alert, but remained on ground or airborne alert 24 hours a day."

Today, the U.S. Navy's E-6B Mercury is America's "Looking Glass."

Feb. 4

1779: Continental Navy Capt. John Paul Jones takes command of the former French frigate *Duc de Duras,* renaming her *Bonhomme Richard* (after Benjamin Franklin's pen name). It will be aboard the *Richard* — badly damaged and sinking during the famous battle in the North Sea with the Royal Navy frigate HMS *Serapis* on 23 September -- that Jones refuses a surrender demand, allegedly replying, "I have not yet begun to fight!" It has also been widely reported that when the Serapis' Captain Richard Pearson inquired as to whether or not Jones had lowered or struck his colors, Jones shouted back, "I may sink, but I'll be damned if I strike!"

Incidentally, *Bonhomme Richard* (the first of five so-named American warships) does sink. But not before Pearson himself surrenders (believed to be "the first time in naval history that colors are surrendered to a sinking ship"), and Jones transfers his flag to his newly captured prize, *Serapis.*

Jones is destined to become "the Father of the American Navy," though some argue that the title belongs to Commodore John Barry.

1787: Shays' Rebellion -- a short-lived Massachusetts uprising led by former Continental Army Capt. Daniel Shays, spawned by crippling taxes and an economic depression in the wake of the American Revolution -- is quashed by Massachusetts militia.

1942: After unloading ammunition for U.S. and Filipino forces for the Battle of Bataan, the submarine USS *Trout* (SS-202) requests ballast to replace the tonnage she dropped off. Supplies like concrete and sandbags are unavailable, and sailors instead load the sub with 38 tons of gold bullion and silver coins that had been emptied from Filipino banks. *Trout* fights her way out of the Philippines, sinking a Japanese freighter and patrol boat before they sail for Pearl Harbor.

1944: (Featured image) After three days of combat, Marines and soldiers of Maj. Gen. Holland M. "Howlin' Mad" Smith's V Amphibious Corps have secured Kwajalein Atoll. Only 300 of the 8,000 Japanese defenders are captured.

1945: The Big Three -- U.S. Pres. Franklin D. Roosevelt, British Prime
9 Minister Winston Churchill, and Soviet Premier Joseph Stalin -- meet at the Crimea Conference (best known as the Yalta Conference) to discuss among other points what was to become of soon-to-be conquered Germany and the nations the Nazis had previously defeated.

Feb. 5

1914: Austrian doctors examine a young Adolf Hitler, determining him unfit for service in the Austro-Hungarian military. Hitler will volunteer for the German army when war breaks out in August, serving in a reserve infantry regiment as a runner.

1918: U.S. Army Lt. Stephen W. Thompson, a member of the American 1st Aero Squadron, is invited by French aviators to fly in a French "Breguet" biplane bomber as a gunner on one of their missions. Thompson shoots down a Getman Albatross fighter over Saarbrucken, Germany, making him the first American in uniform to shoot down an enemy airplane.

Today, the U.S. Air Force's 1st Reconnaissance Squadron traces its lineage back to the 1st Aero Squadron.

1943: President Franklin **D.** Roosevelt awards Maj. Gen. Alexander A. Vandegrift the Medal of Honor for his role as commanding general of the 1st Marine Division during the Guadalcanal campaign.

1958: A F-86 "Sabre" collides with a B-47 "Stratojet" bomber piloted by Maj. Howard Richardson during a simulated combat exercise. The Sabre pilot ejects and the B-47's wings are severely damaged, forcing an emergency landing. Before the bomber can land safely, the crew jettisons the 7,600-lb. Mark 15 hydrogen bomb off the coast of Savannah, Ga. before landing at Hunter Air Force Base.

The Pentagon tells the public that the weapon's nuclear capsule was removed prior to the mission and therefore presents no threat.

Feb. 6

1787: Representatives of the French and U.S. governments sign the Treaty of Amity and Commerce and the Treaty of Alliance in Paris. France recognizes the United States as an independent nation and provides much-needed military aid.

1802: Congress authorizes President Thomas Jefferson to arm U.S. ships to defend against Barbary pirates in the Mediterranean.

1832: Marines and sailors aboard the USS *Potomac* (the first of five so-named ships) attack pirates from the village of Quallah Batoo, Sumatra (present-day Indonesia) following the massacre of a U.S. merchant vessel in February 1831.

1862: In northwestern Tennessee, a Union Naval flotilla commanded by Flag Officer (a temporary rank which soon is replaced by the grade of Commodore) Andrew H. Foote and a force commanded by Brig. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant converge upon Fort Henry. The plan is for Foote's warships and

Grant's troops to attack simultaneously, but heavy rains and water from the swollen Tennessee River force the Confederates to surrender the flooding fort to Foote before Grant can arrive. The capture of the poorly engineered Fort Henry is the first major Union victory of the Civil War.

1945: Army Air Force B-24 and B-29 bombers begin attacking Iwo Jima in preparation for the upcoming landing. Believing that the massive Naval and aerial bombardments have wiped out most of the island's defenders, Adm. Chester Nimitz says "Well, this will be easy. The Japanese will surrender Iwo Jima without a fight." What the American war planners don't know that the Japanese have dug some 11 miles of tunnels on the island, including an elaborate network of underground command centers and barracks, pill boxes, and bunkers.

1967: In North Vietnam's Mu Gia Pass, Airman Second Class Duane D. Hackney volunteers to be lowered from a HH-3E "Jolly Green Giant" rescue helicopter into the jungle - despite the presence of enemy forces - to locate a downed pilot. The Pararescueman comes up empty on the first attempt, but finds the pilot on a second sortie. During the flight home, the helicopter is hit by ant-aircraft fire. Hackney gives the pilot his own parachute, then looks for another for himself. Before Hackney can strap on the chute, the "Jolly Green" is hit again, forcing the crew to jump.

For his actions, Hackney becomes the first living recipient of the Air Force Cross. He will go on to become the highest awarded enlisted man in Air Force history, earning 28 decorations for combat valor.

Feb. 7

1943: The submarine USS *Growler* (SS-215) spots the supply ship *Hayasaki* and begins a nighttime battle. The Japanese ship turns to ram the sub and rakes *Growler's* bridge with machine gun fire, wounding the skipper, Commander Howard W. Gilmore.

Unable to get off the bridge, Gilmore orders the crew to "Take her down," sacrificing his life to save his men. For his actions, Gilmore is awarded the Medal of Honor - the first of seven sub commanders to earn the nation's top award for valor during World War II.

Meanwhile, the Imperial Japanese Navy completes Operation "Xe" - the evacuation of nearly 1,800 remaining troops from Guadalcanal. After six months of brutal fighting, nearly 15,000 Americans killed or wounded, and over 600 aircraft and dozens of ships lost, the island is now completely in American hands.

1965: North Vietnamese sappers attack the Camp Holloway helicopter base , killing eight, wounding over 100, and destroying over a dozen helicopters and planes. The attack prompts Pres. Lyndon Johnson to strike back by ordering the bombing of military targets along the de-militarized zone and in North Vietnam. However, the Soviet premier Alexei Kosygin is in Hanoi during the attacks, and the Soviet Union uses the timing of Johnson's retaliation as an opportunity to increase military aid to North Vietnam.

1984: Space Shuttle *Challenger* astronauts Bruce McCandless (Capt., USN) and Robert L. Stewart (Brig. Gen., USA) are the first humans to "walk" untethered in space, using nitrogen-powered Maimed Maneuvering Units. Stewart, a helicopter pilot with over 1,000 hours combat experience before joining NASA, becomes the first soldier to receive the Astronaut Badge.

Feb. 8

1862: A day after 10,000 soldiers under the command of Brig. Gen. Ambrose Burnside, supported by a flotilla of Union gunships, land at Roanoke Island (N.C.), the Confederates surrender the island's four forts and two batteries.

1910: William D. Boyce incorporates the Boy Scouts of America. Countless boys will cut their teeth as young adventurers in Boyce's scouting program before joining the military. When sub commander Eugene Fluckey - one of nine Medal of Honor recipients to earn the Boy Scouts' top distinction of

Eagle Scout - assembled a landing party to go ashore and destroy a Japanese train, he wanted former Boy Scouts to do the job, since they would be able to find their way back.

11 of the 12 humans to walk on the moon were Boy Scout alumni; and Neil Armstrong — the first — was an Eagle Scout.

1980: Following the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan, President Jimmy Carter (formerly a lieutenant in the Navy's submarine service) announces his intent to reinstate draft registration. Carter's decision comes just four years after Pres. Gerald Ford (Eagle Scout and Naval officer during World War II) ended mandatory draft registration.

1991: A Marine reconnaissance unit in occupied Kuwait gives the Iowa-class battleship USS *Wisconsin* (BB-64) her first call for fire support in nearly 50 years. The 16-in. guns fire 29 rounds at Iraqi artillery positions, infantry bunkers, and a mechanized unit.

Feb. 9

1799: In the Caribbean, the American frigate *Constellation* spots the larger and more heavily armed French frigate *L'Insurgente* and gives chase. After pursuing the French vessel through a storm, Capt. Thomas Truxtun - one of the first six Naval officers appointed by President George Washington - manages to force his counterpart into a clash that lasts over an hour, with *Constellation* inflicting heavy casualties and capturing the ship in the United States' first naval engagement since the end of the Revolutionary War.

1942: Gen. George Marshall (Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army), Gen. Henry "Hap" Arnold (Chief of Army Air Forces), Adm. Harold Stark (Chief of Naval Operations), and Adm. Ernest King (Commander in Chief, United States Fleet) meet to discuss better coordination between the Navy and War Departments - the first formal meeting of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS).

Today, the President of the United States appoints a chairman, vice-chairman, four service chiefs, and the head of the National Guard to JCS. Their mission is to advise the White House on military matters.

1965: In response to the Viet Cong attack on Camp Holloway two days before, President Lyndon Johnson orders the deployment of a Marine Corps surface-to-air missile battalion to Vietnam. The Marines, which will be stationed at Da Nang Air Base, are the first U.S. troops sent to Vietnam in a non-advisory capacity.

1972:173 years after *Constellation's* victory in the Caribbean, the *Kitty* Hawk-class aircraft carrier *Constellation* arrives off the coast of Vietnam. *Connie* (the fourth so-named vessel to serve the U.S. Navy) is one of three U.S. carriers operating in theater, until four more flattops are sent to Vietnam during the North Vietnam Army's Easter Offensive, which begins in March.

Feb. 12

1935: As the Navy's helium-filled rigid airship USS *Macon (ZRS-5)* flies through a storm, its tail fin and interior structural members are destroyed, puncturing the massive vessel's helium cells. The "flying aircraft carrier," which houses five Curtiss F9C-2 "Sparrowhawk" reconnaissance planes, crash-lands in the Pacific Ocean off the coast of Point Sur, Calif, and all but two of the airship's 76-man crew are saved.

The 785-ft. *Macon* and her sister ship *Akron* (which crashed in 1933) are the largest aircraft ever produced by the United States - just 20 feet shorter than the ill-fated *Hindenburg*, which will famously be lost in 1937. Incidentally, *Macon's* commanding officer, Lt. Cmdr. Herbert Wiley, was *Akron's* executive officer and one of only three men to survive that crash.

1947: The USS *Cusk* launches a KGW-1 "Loon" missile, which is a reverse-engineered German V-1 flying bomb, becoming the first U.S. submarine to fire a guided missile.

1991: The Pentagon announces that U.S. warplanes have flown 65,000 sorties during Operation DESERT STORM. The battleship USS *Missouri* (BB-63) fires 60 of its 16-in. projectiles in support of a combined-arms attack against Iraqi infantry, armor, artillery, and a command bunker in southern Kuwait.

Feb. 13

1861: When Chiracahua Apaches capture a 60-man force of 7th Infantry t soldiers in Arizona Territory, Col. Bernard J.D. Irwin, an assistant surgeon, volunteers to lead 14 soldiers on a daring 100-mile rescue mission. With no horses available, the men of the 1st Dragoons (today's 1st Cavalry Regiment) must start their journey on mules, and Irwin's force fight their way to the beleaguered soldiers and help break the siege.

While the Medal of Honor is not created until 1862, and Irwin isn't decorated until just before his retirement (as brigadier general) in 1894, his actions make him the first man to earn the Medal of Honor.

1917: Over Pensacola, Fla., Capt. Francis T. Evans (USMC) becomes the first aviator to perform a loop in a seaplane. His Curtiss N-9 stalls after the maneuver and Evans barely manages to save the plane before splashing into the Gulf of Mexico. The techniques he discovers while recovering from the stall are still used by pilots to this day. In 1936, Evans is awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for his feat, which the plane's manufacturers said was not possible.

1945: Over the next three days, 1,300 Royal Air Force and US Army Air Force heavy bombers drop 3,900 tons of bombs on Dresden, Germany, creating a firestorm that killed 25,000 Germans.

That same day in the Philippine Islands' Luzon Straight, the crew of the submarine USS *BaOsh (SS-310) sinks* RO-113 - *accomplishing the incredible feat of sinking three enemy subs in just 76 hours.*

1965: President Lyndon Johnson gives the go-ahead for Operation "Rolling Thunder," the bombing campaign to interdict the flow of Communist troops and supplies from North Vietnam. The first strikes will begin in just over two weeks and when the campaign finally ends in 1968, American warplanes will have dropped nearly 650,000 tons of munitions - at the cost of over 900 U.S. aircraft.

1968: In response to the TET Offensive, Pres. Johnson orders the deployment of 10,500 82d Airborne Division soldiers and a regimental landing team from the 5th Marine Division to Vietnam and discusses the possibility of calling up tens of thousands more Reservists and former service members in the event of a second Communist offensive.

2010: Helicopters bring wave after wave of American, Afghan, and other coalition forces into the Taliban stronghold of Marjah, in Afghanistan's Helmand Province. Some 15,000 troops will participate in the Battle of Marjah, and the city is not declared secure until December. 45 American service members will perish during the operation.

Feb. 14

1778: The Continental sloop-of-war *Ranger* (the first of 10 so-named American warships) under the command of Capt. John Paul Jones fires a 13-gun salute to French Adm. Toussaint-Guillaume Picquet de la Motte's fleet anchored in France's Quiberon Bay. The French return the salute with nine guns. It is the first time America's new flag — "the stars and stripes" — is officially recognized by a foreign power.

1814: The American frigate USS *Constitution*, commanded by Capt. David Porter, captures *Lovely Ann*, a British armed merchant vessel, and HMS *Pictou*, a Royal Navy schooner, within hours of each other. The crew of *"Old Ironsides"* will capture two more vessels over the next five days.

1912: *USS E-1* (SS-24), the U.S. Navy's first diesel-powered submarine, is commissioned in Groton, Connecticut. The sub is skippered by an almost 27-year-old Lt. Chester W. Nimitz, destined to become the famous five-star fleet admiral of World War II.

1945: As the destroyer USS *Fletcher* (DD-445) supports amphibious landings at Corregidor in the Philippines, a Japanese 6-in. coastal defense gun nails the ship's forecastle and ignites a fire in the Number 1 magazine. Knowing that he may only have seconds to extinguish the fire before it kills the ship, Water Tender Second Class Elmer C. Bigelow dives into the blazing compartment without the putting on breathing apparatus. He saves the ship, but at the cost of his life. For his actions, Bigelow is posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

1991: Air Force Captains Tim Bennett and Dan Bakke score the only air-to-air kill for the F-15E "Strike Eagle" of Operation DESERT STORM: when responding to a distress call from a Special Forces unit, the air crew spots a Iraqi Mil Mi-24 "Hind" helicopter unloading soldiers. They fire a 2,000-lb. laser-guided bomb at the gunship, and the resulting blast "shoots down" the helicopter, which was reportedly some 800 feet above the ground.

Feb. 15

1862: A week after Brig. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant and Flag Officer Andrew H. Foote capture Fort Henry, the combined force has besieged nearby Fort Donelson (Tenn.). The Confederate defenders manage to drive off Foote's gunboats, but are surrounded by Grant's soldiers. On this date, Brig. Gen. John B. Floyd attempts a breakout, hoping to open an escape route to Nashville. Grant's men drive the Confederates back to the fort, and the next day accepts the surrender of some 12,000 soldiers.

After his victories at Forts Henry and Donelson, Grant has given the North control of both the Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers in the first major victories for the Union. He earns the nickname "Unconditional Surrender" Grant and a promotion to major general.

. 1898: A terrific explosion rips through the bow of USS *Maine* anchored in Havana Harbor, Cuba. Within minutes, 260 U.S. sailors and Marines are dead.

Convinced that the explosion (the cause of which is still being debated) is the result of a mine or the work of Spanish saboteurs, American newspapers will demand vengeance. America will soon be at war with Spain.

1944: When the Fifth Air Force attack planes and bombers target the Papua New Guinea island of New Ireland, several planes are shot down. Lt. Nathan G. Gordon and his eight-man PBY "Catalina" seaplane crew are dispatched to rescue the downed airmen. Despite very rough seas and being targeted by heavy, close-range enemy fire, Gordon and his crew make multiple landings and pick up 15 officers and men.

Gordon is awarded the Medal of Honor and his crew are each awarded the Silver Star.

In Italy, 254 B-17 and B-25 bombers of the Twelfth Air Force destroy the centuries-old abbey atop Monte Cassino. Believing the Germans had been using the historic landmark as an observation post, General Sir Harold Alexander, the Commander-in-Chief of Allied Armies in Italy, had ordered its destruction. Although the Germans avoided using the site before the bombing, they did move into the ruins following its destruction.

After several bloody assaults on Monte Cassino, the Allies fmally prevail in May, but at the cost of well over 50,000 casualties.

Feb. 16

1804: U.S. Navy Lt. (future commodore) Stephen Decatur sails a captured Tripolitan ketch he renames USS *Intrepid* into the harbor at Tripoli. There, Decatur and a volunteer force of sailors and Marines board the frigate USS *Philadelphia* (the second of six so-named American warships), which had been previously captured by Tripolitan pirates. After a brief but violent close-quarters struggle — in which several pirates but no Americans are killed — Decatur orders the *Philadelphia* burned.

14 **1945:** 2,000 American paratroopers jump over the Philippines' "fortress
---- Corregidor" in one of the most difficult airborne operations of the war. For the next 11 days, the Americans will root out the enemy from a labyrinth of caves and tunnels and beat back multiple banzai attacks before wiping out almost all of the 6,500-man enemy garrison.

1953: Marine aviator - and future baseball Hall of Famer - Capt. Ted Williams crash-lands his crippled Marine Corps F9F "Panther" fighter at Suwon's K-13 airstrip. During a massive 200-plane raid on a troop encampment, Williams was hit by enemy ground fire which knocked out his instrument panel, landing gear, and hydraulic system; damaged his control surfaces; and set the plane on fire. Rather than eject, Williams brings the plane down on its belly and skids down the runway for over a mile before the mortally wounded plane comes to a stop.

Williams, often flying as the wingman for future Mercury astronaut John Glenn, walks away with just a sprained ankle and goes on to fly 38 more missions over Korea before returning to baseball for good (he also flew in the Pacific Theater during World War II).

Feb. 17

1864: The Confederate submarine H.L. Hunley sinks the Federal sloop-of-war USS *Housatonic* in Charleston (S.C.) harbor, becoming the first submarine in history to sink an enemy warship in action. It is a pyrrhic victory however: the submarine also sinking — either with its victim or soon after the attack — with the loss of all hands.

1865: Columbia, S.C. falls to Union Army forces under the command of Maj. Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman.

Feb. 18

1944: U.S. Marines land and quickly capture Engebi island, the first obstacle to seizing Eniwetok Atoll in the Marshalls. The following day, U.S. Army forces strike Eniwetok — a tougher fight — and soldiers and Marines seize the island in three days.

Feb. 19

1945: Following 74 days of aerial bombardment - the longest pre-invasion attacks of the war - two U.S. Marine divisions begin hitting the beach on Day One of the epic battle for Iwo Jima. Of the 21,000 Japanese diehards defending Iwo, all but around 200 are killed. Almost 7,000 Marines will lose their lives. Another 26,000 will be wounded.

Gunnery Sergeant John Basilone, who had earned the Medal of Honor on Guadalcanal, gives his life on this day. During the fierce two-month battle, 22 Marines will earn the nation's highest award for valor, along with five Navy Corpsmen and one Naval landing craft officer

Feb. 20

1942: Considered to be "one of the most daring, if not the most daring, single action in the history of combat aviation" at the time, Lt. Edward "Butch" O'Hare - flying a F4F "Wildcat" from the deck of the USS *Lexington* (CV-2) - single-handedly shoots down five Japanese Mitsubishi G4M "Betty" bombers and severely damages a sixth. O'Hare becomes the Navy's first ace of the war and is awarded the Medal of Honor.

1944: U.S. Army Air Forces and Britain's Royal Air Force begin Operation ARGUMENT, a massive thousand-plus bomber offensive aimed at destroying the German Air Force and Luftwaffe manufacturing facilities to achieve irreversible air superiority before the Normandy landings. Allied losses during the "Big Week" will be high. German losses will be staggering.

1962: Nearly five hours after blasting off from Cape Canaveral, Fla. in an Atlas LV-3B rocket, U.S. Marine Lt. Col. John H. Glenn Jr.'s *Friendship 7* splashes down in the Atlantic Ocean and is recovered by the destroyer USS *Noa.* Glenn has just become the first American to orbit the Earth - doing so three times during his historic spaceflight.

Prior to becoming one of the original "Mercury Seven" astronauts, Glenn flew over 50 combat missions in the F4U "Corsair" fighter during World War II and 90 missions in F9F "Panther" and F-86 "Sabre" jets during the Korean War, scoring three victories against enemy MiG-15s. As a military test pilot, Glenn flew the first-ever supersonic transcontinental flight, and at the age of 77, returned to space in 1998 aboard Space Shuttle *Discovery*, becoming the oldest person to fly in space.

2008: The guided-missile cruiser USS *Lake Erie* launches a modified SM-3 surface-to-air missile at a malfunctioned satellite that was about to re-enter Earth's atmosphere. Although designed to intercept ballistic missiles, the SM-3 hits the satellite, which was traveling at 17,500 miles per hour, some 130 miles above the Pacific Ocean.

Feb. 21

 # 1945: As Task Force 58's carrier-based planes fly close air support for the Marines fighting on Iwo Jima, Japanese *kamikaze* pilots target the flattops. One plane hits the escort carrier USS *Bismarck Sea* (CVE-95), igniting the ship's magazines. Once crews have nearly contained the blaze, another *kamikaze* slams into the ship and disables the firefighting system. *Bismarck Sea* is destroyed, killing 318 officers and men, and is the last American carrier sunk in the war. Japanese suicide tactics also damage USS *Saratoga* (CV-3), killing another 123.

On the killing fields of Iwo Jima, described to by one correspondent as a "nightmare in hell," Lt. Col. Justice M. Chambers, Capt. Robert H. Dunlap, Sgt. Ross F. Gray, Capt. Joseph J. McCarthy, and PFC Donald J. Ruhl will — each earn the Medal of Honor on this date.

1961: As the "Mercury Seven" astronauts begin their final phase of training, NASA selects Alan Shepard (USN), "Gus" Grissom (USAF), and John Glenn (USMC) as the pilots that will fly the United States' first missions to space.

1991: During Operation DESERT STORM, Marine Attack Squadron 331 begins flying the first-ever AV-8B "Harrier II" operations from a landing helicopter assault ship, the USS *Nassau* (LHA-4). During the campaign, Harrier pilots would fly 3,380 flights (243 by *Nassau* aviators) with the loss of five jets and two Marine pilots.

Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf will name the Harrier as one of the seven most valuable weapons systems of the war.

2001: At Nevada's Nellis Air Force Base, a General Atomics RQ-1 "Predator" busts a tank with an AGM-114 "Hellfire" missile during testing, marking the first armored kill by an unmanned aerial vehicle.

Feb. 22

1847: Although outnumbered more than three-to-one, Maj. Gen. Zachary Taylor 4,500-man force defeats Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna in the Battle of Buena Vista. During the engagement, an artillery battery led by Capt. Braxton Bragg - who goes on to become a Confederate general - plugs a gap in the American lines, and is instrumental in the victory.

Although historians call it a misquote, Taylor's order of "Give them a little more grape, Capt. Bragg," (meaning load the cannons with double the "grapeshot" used to cut down infantry charges) becomes a famous campaign slogan, helping carry Taylor to the White House and making a hero out of Bragg.

Commanding a regiment of Mississippi volunteers is Colonel Jefferson Davis, the former son-in-law of Gen. Taylor. Davis will be offered a commission as a brigadier general in the U.S. Army following the war, which he turns down. He does go on to a career in government, serving as a U.S. congressman, senator, and the Secretary of War.

1862: 15 years to the day after being wounded at Buena Vista, Jefferson Davis is inaugurated as the Confederacy's first official president. Davis had been serving as the provisional president.

A **1909:** Pres. Theodore Roosevelt's "Great White Fleet" — a four-squadron armada of white-painted warships manned by some 14,000 sailors and Marines — returns to Hampton Roads, Virginia after sailing around the world in a grand show of American Naval power.

4 **1942:** Pres. Franklin Roosevelt orders Gen. Douglas MacArthur, America's only general with experience fighting the Japanese, to leave the Philippines. MacArthur had previously informed his superiors that he would "share the fate of the garrison" at Corregidor. He delays the trip as long as possible, departing by PT boat on March 11.

1967: The U.S. Army's 173rd Airborne Brigade conducts the first and only mass parachute jump of the Vietnam War. The jump is but one element of the much broader airborne (primarily heliborne assault) and infantry "search and destroy" operation, Junction City. The operation will continue through May.

14 **1974:** Lt. J.G. Barbara Ann Allen Rainey pins on her wings, becoming the first female Naval aviator. Rainey is assigned to a transport squadron, flying C-1 "Trader" planes .In 1982, she will be killed in a crash while training a student pilot.

Feb. 23

1778: Baron Friedrich von Steuben, a Prussian Army officer — arguably the father of American drill instructors — arrives at Valley Forge with the task of whipping the Continental Army into shape.

1836: The advance elements of a 4,000-plus-man Mexican army under the command of Gen. Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna begin the siege of the isolated Texas Army garrison at the Alamo mission near (now part of present-day) San Antonio, Texas, during the Texas War of Independence.

The Alamo's approximately 200-man garrison will be wiped out nearly to a man when the Mexicans storm the mission on March 6.

1847: During the Mexican-American War, a Mexican army under Santa Anna launches a series of attacks against a numerically inferior U.S. Army force under the command of Gen. (and future president) Zachary Taylor near Buena Vista. Though surprised and outnumbered, the Americans beat back the Mexicans who are forced to withdraw with heavy losses.

1942: The Japanese submarine *1-17* surfaces off the Santa Barbara (Calif.) Coast and attacks the Ellwood Oil Field. The sub's 5.5-inch gun inflicts minimal damage, but the incident causes an invasion scare along the Pacific coast and leads to the internment of Japanese-American citizens.

1945: After several days of savage fighting, U.S. Marines capture the summit of Mt. Suribachi on Iwo Jima. Just after 10:30 a.m., a small flag is raised on Suribachi. But an officer orders a larger flag be hoisted so that it might be seen from the far end of the island.

1991: A Marine patrol engages a group of 12 Iraqi tanks, destroying four with t TOW missiles. The surviving tanks flee, but are targeted by artillery and air support. The Pentagon announces that by this date 1,685 Iraqi tanks, 925 alinored vehicles, and 1,450 artillery pieces have been destroyed.

In defiance of their mandate to withdraw from Kuwait within 24 hours, Iraq announces "We will never surrender. A lot of Americans will die." In one day, the ground campaign of Operation DESERT STORM will begin. And in just 100 hours, it will be over.

Feb. 24

1813: The sloop-of-war USS *Hornet* (the third of eight so-named American warships) under the command of Capt. James Lawrence sinks the Royal Navy brig HMS Peacock in a swift action in which Peacock's skipper, Capt. William Peake, is killed.

1991: At 4:00 a.m. the lead elements of the enormous coalition ground force — surges forward into Iraq and Kuwait aimed at ousting Saddam Hussein's army from Kuwait. President George H.W. Bush will order a ceasefire on the 28th. The 42-day "mother of all battles" (38 days for the initial air campaign and four days for the ground campaign) will end.

Feb. 25

1779: Following an arduous campaign through freezing floodwaters, a joint American-French force under Virginia militia Lt. Col. George Rogers Clark captures British-held Fort Sackville at Vincennes in the Illinois backcountry.

Feb. 26

1949: *Lucky Lady II,* a U.S. Air Force B-50 "Superfortress" bomber flown by Capt. James Gallagher and his 13-man crew, takes off from Fort Carswell (Tex.) on their first leg of the first-ever nonstop flight around the world. The flightcovers 23,452 miles in 94 hours and 1 minute, requiring mid-air refuelings over the Azores, Saudi Arabia, the Philippines, and Hawaii.

After Gallagher touches down, Air Force General Curtis LeMay announces that his Strategic Air Command bombers can reach "any place in the world that required the atomic bomb." Unfortunately one of the KB-29 tankers from Clark Field in the Philippines crashes after fueling the *Lady,* killing all 9 crewmembers.

1955: As North American Aviation test pilot Charles F. Smith tests an F-100 "Super Sabre" prior to the fighter's delivery to the Air Force, his controls freeze up, sending the fighter into a dive. Smith ejects at 777 miles per hour and becomes the first airman to punch out of a aircraft traveling at supersonic speeds (Mach 1.05). He is subjected to over 40 G's during violent deceleration, which destroys much of his parachute. The unconscious pilot lands in the Pacific Ocean, remarkably less than 100 yards from a former Naval rescue worker on his fishing boat. Smith will spend the next seven months in the hospital recovering.

1991: Although Saddam Hussein refers to it as a withdrawal and not a retreat, his forces are being routed in Kuwait by the American-led ground campaign - only in its third day. Far from being the "Mother of All Battles" that the Iraqi dictator predicted, 21 of his divisions are either destroyed or are no longer combat effective. Meanwhile, a Marine reconnaissance unit enters Kuwait City, the first American outfit to reach the Kuwaiti capital.

That evening, a large column of Iraqi Army vehicles heading north along Highway 80 are targeted by Marine A-6 "Intruder" aircraft. The attack planes hit the first and last vehicles, boxing in the column. Over the next ten hours, coalition aircraft hammer the hundreds of trapped vehicles, creating a swath of destruction known as the "Highway of Death."

Feb. 27

1942: A flotilla of 14 Dutch, British, Australian, and American ships suffers a disastrous defeat at the hands of a much-larger Japanese invasion force in the Battle of the Java Sea. 11 vessels are sunk and over 3,000 sailors are killed in the engagement.

Meanwhile, the seaplane tender USS *Langley* (AV-3) - America's first aircraft carrier - is sunk by Japanese land-based aircraft while ferrying P-40 "Warhawk" attack planes to Java.

1963: Test pilots from the Hughes Tool Company (Aviation Division) conduct the first test flight of their Model 369 prototype helicopter, which will become the OH-6 "Cayeuse" helicopter when it enters service with the Army in 1966. The light observation helicopter will soon see service in Vietnam, and the special operations/attack variants (IV11-1-6 and AH-6) are still flying to this day.

(t 1991: The 1st Marine Division captures Kuwait International Airport and the 2nd Marine Division has cut off any further egress routes from Kuwait City. 29 Iraqi combat divisions have either been destroyed or are combat ineffective, and 50,000 troops have surrendered to coalition forces. The Pentagon announces that after the massive tank Battles of 73 Easting and

Norfolk - which resulted in the loss of thousands of Iraqi tanks, armored vehicles, and artillery pieces - that Iraq's military is no longer a valid regional threat.

Although outnumbered two-to-one by a dug-in enemy, which was at the time the world's fourth-largest military, the U.S. military has devastated Saddam Hussein's forces, with only 28 U.S. troops killed in action and less than 100 wounded. At 9:00pm Eastern, President George H.W. Bush declares that "Kuwait is liberated. Iraq's army is defeated." At midnight, coalition forces begin a ceasefire.

Just 100 hours into the ground campaign and six weeks after the air campaign began, Operation DESERT STORM is over.

Feb. 28

1844: As the screw steamship USS *Princeton* carries President John Tyler, members of his Cabinet, and some 400 other guests on a demonstration cruise up the Potomac River, Capt. Robert F. Stockton fires the massive 12" gun, nicknamed "Peacemaker," which explodes. Shrapnel flies through the crowd killing seven onlookers, including Secretary of State Abel P. Upshur, Secretary of the Navy Thomas W. Gilmer.

1864: Brig. Gen. Hugh Judson Kilpatrick leads 3,500 Union cavalry troopers around Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee's flank and heads south towards Richmond (Va.). His mission is to free Union prisoners of war, but despite supporting raids to distract Lee's troops, including one by a detachment of cavalry led by Brig. Gen. George A. Custer, Kilpatrick finds the area too heavily defended and a detachment of his men are ambushed. Confederates doctor a captured set of orders taken from a dead Union officer to read that the Union men intended to burn Richmond and kill President Jefferson Davis and his Cabinet.

Rather than hang the captured Union troopers, Gen. Lee urges calm and contacts his counterpart Gen. Robert Meade under a flag of truce, who confirms the orders were merely to rescue POWs. 324 of Kilpatrick's soldiers are killed or wounded in the raid and another 1,000 are taken prisoner.

1893: The U.S. Navy launches its first "true battleship," USS *Indiana* (BB-1). The 350-foot-long vessel required a crew of 32 officers and 441 men, and featured two twin 13"/35 cal. Mark 1 guns, four twin 8"/35 cal. guns, and dozens of batteries of smaller calibers. *Indiana* was designed to be used in close proximity to the coasts, and quickly became obsolete after the Spanish-American War.

1994: Two pairs of U.S. Air Force F-16 "Fighting Falcons" conduct the first combat operation in NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) history, when the fighters engage a flight of Serbian Air Force attack aircraft on a bombing mission in the no-fly zone. Capt. Robert G. "Wilbur" Wright (whose wingman was Capt. Scott O'Grady - who is shot down and rescued the following year) shoots down three enemy aircraft, and Capt. Stephen L. "Yogi" Allen claims one.

March

March 1

rti 1942: Southwest of Newfoundland, Ensign William Tepuni, of Patrol Squadron 82 (VP-82), spots a German *U-boat.* He targets *U-656* with depth charges dropped from his Lockheed PBO-1 "Hudson" - the first sinking of a submarine by the United States during World War II.

1944: While hunting a Wolfpack of German subs in the North Atlantic at night, the *Cannon-class* destroyer escort USS *Bronstein* (DE-189) spots *U-709* on the surface, preparing to attack the American task force. *Bronstein* hits the sub several times with her guns, and together with her fellow destroyer escorts, sink the sub with depth charges.

Bronstein's crew then spots another *U-boat* with their sonar and quickly sends *U-603* to the bottom with more depth charges.

1954: The United States conducts its largest-ever nuclear weapons test, nicknamed "Castle Bravo," in the Bikini Atoll. In just one second, the blast creates a 4.5-mile-wide fireball and produces a mushroom cloud that rises nearly 25 miles high by 62 miles across. The 15 megaton explosion is 1,000 times more powerful than the bombs dropped on Japan nine years before.

2002: Operation ANACONDA, the first large-scale combat operation in Afghanistan since the Battle of Tora Bora, kicks off when a Navy SEAL reconnaissance team, aided by air support from an AC-130 gunship, destroys an enemy heavy machine gun position. The next day, the first of nearly 3,000 U.S. and Afghan allied troops are airlifted into the Shahi Kot Valley as the coalition battles to destroy Al Qaeda and Taliban fighters operating in the area. "Anaconda" marks the first time conventional U.S. forces are used in a combat operation in Afghanistan.

March 2

1942: 1st Lt. Ed Dyess, who would be one of the war's first flying aces had his records not been lost, leads a daring raid against Japanese supply depot at Subic Bay. With his P-40 fighter set up to fly as a dive bomber, Dyess destroys multiple buildings and destroys or damages numerous ships in three sorties.

Prior to the raid, Dyess led 20 of his fellow 21st Pursuit Squadron pilots on America's first amphibious landing of the war. The pilots landed on Luzon Island's Aglolomo Bay, wiping out an entrenched force of Japanese troops. Dyess will be captured in April, surviving the Bataan Death March to lead the only successful large-scale escape from Japanese captivity a year later. After his repatriation, he returns to flying, but dies during a training flight when he opts to stay in his flaming and crippled P-38 "Lightning" fighter to avoid civilian casualties on the ground. Texas' Dyess Air Force Base, home of the
---'- 7th Bomb Wing, is named after him.

1943: Elements of the U.S. Army Air Forces and Royal Australian Air Force intercept and all-but-destroy an entire Japanese troop-transport convoy in the Battle of the Bismarck Sea. Several enemy ships, scores of enemy aircraft, and thousands of enemy soldiers will be sent to the bottom.

1965: 100 American warplanes cross into North Vietnam, targeting an ammunition dump at Xom Bang. Six aircraft are shot down, five pilots are rescued and one is captured. Operation ROLLING THUNDER has begun.

Over the next three-and-a-half years, 864,000 tons of bombs fall on the Communist nation - more tonnage dropped than either the Korean War or the Pacific Theater of World War II. Nearly 1,000 U.S. planes are shot down during ROLLING THUNDER, with over 1,000 aircrew killed, wounded or captured. Unfortunately, tight political management by the Lyndon Johnson administration means the military isn't allowed to hit targets of strategic value.

Mar. 3

1776: 250 Continental Marines and sailors led by Marine Capt. Samuel Nicholas land at New Providence Island in the Bahamas, quickly capturing Fort Montague from the British in the first amphibious operation in American military history.

1815: The U.S. Congress authorizes American Naval action against the pirate state of Algiers.

1883: The U.S. Congress approves the creation of the "new Navy" with an authorization to build three "steel-protected cruisers" and a "steel dispatch boat." The authorization begins a steel-ship renaissance for the U.S. Navy.

a **1931:** The U.S. Congress adopts "The Star Spangled Banner" as the official national anthem.

Mar. 4

1944: B-17 Flying Fortresses of the U.S. Army Air Forces participate in the first daylight bombing raid over Berlin. A massive B-17 raid over the German capitol will follow in two days.

Mar. 5

1770: A contingent of armed British soldiers fire into a crowd of protesting colonists in what will become known as the Boston Massacre. Five colonists are killed. The soldiers, charged with murder, will contend the protestors were threatening them with rocks and clubs. The killings will spark public outrage, demands for the death penalty for the soldiers responsible, and draw America even closer toward revolution.

1946: During a speech near St. Louis, Mo., Former British prime minister Winston Churchill declares that an "iron curtain" has fallen across Europe. Behind it lie capitals now under the control or influence of the Kremlin. His message comes to a surprise to many Americans, who still considered the Soviet Union an ally after World War II. But with border fences and checkpoints going up from the Baltic to the Adriatic, the West comes to the realization that they are in a cold war with Moscow.

1953: While it is not clear whether brought on by natural causes or an assassination attempt, a cerebral hemorrhage claims the life of Soviet premier Joseph Stalin. Even without counting the 10-20 million Soviet military and civilian fatalities during World War II, more people died as a result of Stalin's rule than perhaps any ruler in human history. Tens of millions are said to have perished from his manufactured famines, political and military purges, massacres, assassinations, and the brutal Gulags.

1966: The "Ballad of the Green Berets" composed by U.S. Army Special Forces Staff Sergeant Barry Sadler and author Robin Moore hits the number-one spot on the Billboard Chart where it will remain for five weeks. Prior to joining the Green Berets and serving in Vietnam, Sadler began his military career in the Air Force.

1991: Iraq hands 15 American prisoners of war - including two female — soldiers - over to the Red Cross. Captured during Operation DESERT STORM, the U.S. service members endured brutal treatment and some were paraded on television. Nine had been listed as "Missing In Action" before their release.

Mar. 6

1836: Following a two-week siege, the Alamo — commanded by Lt. Col. William Barret Travis — falls to Mexican forces after the Texas garrison puts up one of the most heroic defenses in American military history. The garrison of nearly 200 volunteers is wiped out to a man.

1942: The U.S. Army Air School at Tuskegee, Ala. graduates its first class of black aviators. Among the six new military pilots is Capt. Benjamin 0. Davis Jr., who will go on to command the 99th Pursuit Squadron and later become the Air Force's first black general.

992 "Tuskegee Airmen" will earn their wings, flying 1,578 missions during World War II and shooting down 261 enemy aircraft.

1944: One day after sinking the American submarine USS *Grampus,* the Japanese destroyers *Murusame* and *Minegumo* are themselves sunk in the Battle of Blackett Straight. Rear Adm. Aaron S. Merrill's Task Force 68 use the Navy's new radar fire control system to target the enemy warships.

Over Europe, nearly 700 B-17 and B-24 bombers conduct a daylight raid against Berlin - the first major American mission against the Nazi regime's capital. 75 bombers are shot down.

1965: With Operation ROLLING THUNDER underway, the White House announces that 3,500 Marines will be deployed to South Vietnam to guard the air base at Da Nang. Task Force 76, consisting of the amphibious command ship USS *Mount McKinley,* attack transport USS *Henrico,* attack cargo ship

USS Union, and the amphibious transport dock USS *Vancouver* will land two battalions of the 9th Marine Expeditionary Brigade on the South Vietnamese beach in two days.

1990: An SR-71 "Blackbird" flown by Lt. Col. Ed Yeilding his reconnaissance systems officer, Lt. Col. J. T. Vida streak from Oxnard, Calif. to Washington D.C.'s Dulles Air Field in 1 hour and 8 minutes, a blistering 2,112.52 miles per hour. This record-setting flight is the last run for the Blackbird, which is headed to the Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum

March 7

V 1945: U.S. Army armored forces race to seize the strategically vital Ludendorff Bridge (also known as the Remagen bridge) before the Germans blow the structure. The Americans are successful, thus enabling the allies to establish a bridgehead on the enemy side of the Rhine River.

1961: Air Force Maj. Robert M. White's North American Aviation X-15 rocketplane breaks away from a B-52 "Stratofortress," streaking through the desert sky to a record of 2,905 miles per hour. White, a fighter jock in both World War II and the Korean War before becoming a test pilot, is the first man to fly Mach 4.

1966: Air Force and Navy pilots fly over 200 sorties against a North Vietnamese oil storage facility and a staging area - the most action American airmen have seen since Operation ROLLING THUNDER began just over a year ago.

1972: President Richard Nixon expands the range that U.S. warplanes are allowed to target North Vietnamese anti-aircraft sites to 120 miles north of the de-militarized zone. The 86 air raids flown against the Communists in just the first two months of 1972 equal the total number in 1971.

2003: Pres. George W. Bush delivers an ultimatum: "Saddam Hussein and his sons must leave Iraq within 48 hours." In less than two weeks, the U.S. military will invade Iraq.

Mar. 8

1930: A former private in the N.Y. National Guard's 104th Field Artillery Division, George Herman "Babe" Ruth, signs a two-year, $160,000 contract with the New York Yankees, becoming the highest paid player in baseball. Yankee general manager Ed Barrow predicts that "no one will ever be paid more than Ruth."

1941: Philadelphia Phillies pitcher Hugh Mulcahy becomes the first major league baseball player drafted into the military. He joins the 101st Field Artillery Battalion and is quickly discharged when the military cuts loose draftees over the age of 28 on Dec. 5. Two days later, the Japanese attack Pearl Harbor and Mulcahy - and thousands of other ballplayers - will trade their cleats for combat boots.

1943: A single PBY "Catalina" from Patrol Squadron 53 (VP-53) spots a surfaced German *U-boat* in the Caribbean. The sub's crew are too busy sunbathing to notice Lt. J.E. Dryden's plane bearing down on them, and his depth charges sink *U-156.*

1944: Allen Dulles, the Swiss Director for the Office of Strategic Services (the predecessor to today's CIA), begins secret negotiations with generals Heinrich von Veitinghoff of the *Wehrmacht* and Karl Wolff of the SS - hoping to secure the early surrender of German forces in Italy.

1965: The lead elements of 3rd Battalion, 9th Marines begin coming ashore at Da Nang, South Vietnam. Within hours, 1st Battalion, 3rd Marines will arrive aboard transport aircraft at the nearby airbase. The Marines of 3/9 and 1/3 — both part of the 9th Marine Expeditionary Brigade — are the first American ground-combat forces destined for offensive operations against the enemy in Southeast Asia.

1983: In a speech to the National Association of Evangelicals, President - and former cavalry officer - Ronald Reagan labels the Soviet Union an "evil empire."

1991: Just days after Saddam Hussein surrenders, the first planes carrying U.S. troops from the Persian Gulf begin arriving home.

Mar. 9

1847: Over 11,000 American soldiers and a company-sized (though referred to as a battalion) force of Marines under the overall command of U.S. Army Maj. Gen. Winfield Scott and "Home Squadron" Commodore David E. Conner begin landing at Collado Beach, Mexico, just south of Vera Cruz.

In what will prove to be "a model" for future amphibious operations, the landings are unprecedented: The largest American amphibious operation to date, conducted in less than five hours without a single loss of life. Though the landings are bloodless, grim fighting will continue in the Mexican-American War.

9 **1862:** In day-two of the now-famous Battle of Hampton Roads (Va.), the Confederate Navy's ironclad warship, CSS *Virginia* (built from the remains of the previously scuttled frigate USS *Merrimack)* and her Union rival, the also-ironclad USS *Monitor,* begin exchanging shots in history's first duel of ironclads.

Although *Virginia* destroyed the wooden ships USS *Congress* and USS *Cumberland* the previous day, she is unable to break the Union blockade. The battle ends in a draw with the new armored vessels inflicting marginal damage on one another before breaking off the fight.

1918: Capt. James Ely Miller, flying a borrowed French SPAD S.VII C.1 fighter, encounters a flight of four German aircraft and is shot down near Corbeny, France. The 95th Aero Squadron's commanding officer becomes the first American airman to perish in World War I.

1919: While anchored at Cuba's Guantanamo Bay, USS *Texas* becomes the first battleship to launch an airplane. Lt. Commander Edward 0. McDonnell, who earned the Medal of Honor during the Veracruz campaign in 1914, launches a Sopwith Camel from a special platform constructed atop the Number 2 turret. Soon, U.S. battleships will begin carrying their own aircraft for scouting and artillery spotting duties.

Mar. 10

1783: Three Royal Navy ships open fire on Continental Navy ships *Duc De Lauzun* and *Alliance* off the coast of Cape Canaveral, Florida, but are defeated in what became the last naval engagement of the American Revolution.

1945: Having taken off from bases in the Mariana Islands before midnight, 279 B-29 "Stratofortress" bombers, stripped of guns and other expendable equipment, arrive over Tokyo. 1,667 tons of incendiary devices fall on the city, sparking a firestorm that would consume more than 15 square miles. Nearly 100,000 are killed and a million are left homeless in the devastating blaze, making this the deadliest day in human history.

1967: "Pardo's push" Silver Stars

Mar. 11

1862: President Abraham Lincoln fires Gen. George B. McClellan from his post as general-in-chief due to McClellan's unwillingness to attack the Confederate army.

1918: Army Air Corps Lt. Paul Baer singlehandedly attacks seven German aircraft over Cerney-les-Reims, France, shooting down one. Baer's victory is the first for American pilots not serving in foreign air forces, and he is awarded the Air Corps' first Distinguished Service Cross. Baer would ultimately become an ace, with nine confirmed enemy aircraft shot down (seven unconfirmed) during World War I before being shot down himself and spending the rest of the war in a German prisoner of war camp.

1941: The United States becomes an "arsenal of democracy" when President Franklin D. Roosevelt signs the Lend-Lease Act. The program provided over $50 billion in funds, weapons, aircraft, and ships to allied nations.

1945: B-29 "Stratofortress" bombers conduct a strategic bombing campaign against mainland Japan. Within a week, Osaka, Kobe, and Nagoya go up in flames. 120,000 Japanese civilians die at the cost of only 20 B-29s.

1965: The U.S. Navy conducts the first patrols of Operation "Market Time." The blockade lasts eight-and-a-half years and effectively blocks enemy troops and supplies from reaching South Vietnam by sea.

Mar. 12

1942: President Franklin Roosevelt appoints Adm. Ernest J. King, currently serving as Commander-in-Chief of the U.S. Fleet, to also fill the role of Chief of Naval Operations (CNO). King fills the role left behind by Adm. Husband E. Kimmel, who was relieved from the position following the Pearl Harbor attack.

The Navy's top admiral previously served as a commander in surface, sub, and flattop fleets - and earned his aviator wings. Not long after becoming CNO, King writes Roosevelt to notify the president that he has reached the mandatory retirement age of 64. Roosevelt responds, "So what, old top?"

That same day, as a PT boat carries Gen. Douglas MacArthur to Mindanao, four American B-17 bombers set out to fly the general back to Australia. Three "Flying Fortresses" turn back due to mechanical problems - one crashed during the return trip - and the plane that lands is determined to be unsuitable for flying

1956: Aboard the aircraft carrier USS *Intrepid* (CVA-11), Attack Squadron 83 (VFA-83) sails to the Mediterranean Sea, marking the first time aircraft armed with air-to-air missiles deploy overseas. The aviators fly the F7U "Cutlass"

fighter and carry the AIM-7A "Sparrow" radar-guided missile. Primitive by today's standards, the Sparrow had a very low kill probability and will not be fired against an enemy aircraft until the Vietnam War.

That same day, the Air Force (officially) deploys its first "Century Series" fighter to Europe. The F-100 "Super Sabre" is the Air Force's first supersonic Air Force jet, and is destined to serve with the 45th Fighter Day Squadron out of Morocco. Unofficially, the Air Force secretly flew F-100s to West Germany in 1955 for high altitude photo reconnaissance over Eastern Bloc nations during Operation SLICK CHICK.

Mar. 13

1865: Desperate for manpower on the front lines, the Confederate government approves enlisting and arming slaves. Although Gen. Robert E. Lee requested that slaves who fought should be granted freedom, the bill did not allow such a provision. A few thousand slaves would go on to fight for the Confederacy; over 200,000 blacks fought for the Union.

1942: The U.S. Army establishes the "K-9 Corps" - training dogs to serve in sentry, scout, messenger, and mine detection duties during World War II. The Quartermaster Corps puts the dogs through an 8-12 week basic training at camps across the United States, weeding out the animals who can't handle the sound of gunfire or handle the military lifestyle. Starting with 32 breeds, the Army eventually cuts down the list to seven breeds: German Shepherds, Doberman Pinschers, Belgian Sheep Dogs, Siberian huskies, farm collies, Eskimo dogs, and Malamutes.

Some even serve on the front lines. The Japanese are said to have never attacked a patrol accompanied by a war dog. A German Shepherd named "Chips" serving with a military police company on Sicily attacked a German pillbox, forcing the occupants to surrender. Wounded in his attack, Chips was awarded Purple Heart and Silver Star.

1953: F-86 "Super Sabre" pilot Col. Royal N. "The King" Baker shoots down his 13th enemy fighter of the Korean War - the United States' top ace at the time. During World War II, Baker flew 272 missions (3.5 victories) in British "Spitfires" and P-47 "Thunderbolts." In 1968, Baker deployed to Southeast Asia as the chief of staff for plans with Military Assistance Command-Vietnam. He would fly every type of combat aircraft in theater during his 140 missions.

Baker was one of only a handful of pilots who flew operationally during World War II, Korea, and Vietnam.

1963: Two Soviet reconnaissance planes fly over Alaska on what is the first known Russian penetration of U.S. airspace.

Mar. 14

1945: A Royal Air Force Avro Lancaster bomber drops the first "Grand Slam" bomb, targeting a railway viaduct in Schildesche, Germany. After being released, the 22,000-1b. earthquake bomb would reach near-supersonic speeds, then penetrate several feet into the ground, destroying hardened targets like submarine pens or ruining the foundation underneath bridges - similar to modern-day "bunker buster" bombs.

The Grand Slam is so big that it remained the most powerful conventional (non-nuclear) air-dropped bomb until the U.S. Air Force dropped the 21,000-lb. "Mother of All Bombs" in Afghanistan in 2017.

That same day on Iwo Jima, Pvt. Franklin E Sigler leads his squad on an assault against a Japanese machine gun nest that had been holding up his company for several days. Sigler reaches the position first and neutralizes it with grenades. As additional enemy troops begin firing from tunnels and caves near his location, he keeps pressing the attack. Despite his own painful wounds and heavy incoming fire, Sigler carries three of his wounded Marines to safety before returning to the fight.

Pvt. Sigler will be awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions, as will fellow Marine, Pvt. George Philips, who leapt on an enemy grenade to shield his comrades from the deadly blast - sacrificing his life.

1951: For the second time during the Korean War, United Nations forces recapture the South Korean capital of Seoul - this time under the command of U.S. Army Gen. Matthew B. Ridgway.

1965: U.S. and South Vietnamese forces launch the second bombing wave of Operation ROLLING THUNDER, targeting facilities on Tiger Island, off the North Vietnamese coast, and the ammunition depot at Phu Qui, 100 miles south of Hanoi.

1995: Norman E. Thagard, a Marine fighter pilot that flew 163 combat missions during the Vietnam War before becoming an astronaut, blasts off from the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan becoming the first American cosmonaut. Capt. Thagard was a veteran of four Space Shuttle missions prior to his mission to the Soviet-built Mir Space Station.

Mar. 15

1781: British Army forces under the command of Lt. Gen. Charles Cornwallis march toward a pyrrhic victory over Continental Army and militia forces commanded by Maj. Gen. Nathaniel Greene at Guilford Courthouse (near present-day Greensboro), N.C. Once engaged, the two armies fight for less than two hours. Tactically, it ends in a victory for Cornwallis, who drives Greene's forces from the field. But British losses are heavy.

Cornwallis will purportedly say, "I never saw such fighting since God made me. The Americans fought like demons." When word of Guilford Courthouse reaches London, Parliamentarian Charles James Fox will declare: "Another such victory would ruin the British army!"

1916: As World War I rages in Europe, a U.S. Army expeditionary force under the command of Gen. John J. "Black Jack" Pershing crosses into Mexico in pursuit of the bandit, Pancho Villa. Though Villa will not be

captured (he will be assassinated in 1923), the expedition will serve as both a proving ground for new American weapons systems and a combat-campaign prep school for many of the officers and men destined for European fighting in 1918.

Accompanying the troops is the Army Signal Corps' 1st Aero Squadron, Capt. Benjamin D. Foulois commanding. The aviators, crew, and their Curtiss aircraft arrive by train in Columbus, N.M. and will begin flying reconnaissance missions tomorrow, becoming the first aviation unit in combat. Formed in 1913, the 1st Aero Squadron is the U.S. military's first aviation unit, and today (over 100 years later) remains in service as the 1st Reconnaissance Squadron.

1947: Ensign John W. Lee, Jr. joins the crew of the aircraft carrier USS *Kearsarge* (CV-33), becoming the first black commissioned officer to serve in the regular Navy.

1965: Army Chief of Staff Gen. Harold K. Johnson, a survivor of the Bataan Death March during World War II and a recipient of the Distinguished Service Cross in Korea, reports to President Lyndon Johnson after a visit to Vietnam that Operation ROLLING THUNDER is having little effect. Johnson recommends that a division of U.S. combat troops should be deployed, as well as four divisions from the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO). Nothing comes of his SEATO recommendation, but in May, Johnson sends the 173rd Airborne Brigade.

Mar. 16

1802: President Thomas Jefferson signs into law the establishment of a corps of engineers, which "shall be stationed at West Point in the State of New York and shall constitute a Military Academy." The United States Military Academy is born.

1916: A day after deploying to Columbus, N.M. as part of Gen. John J. Pershing's Punitive Expedition, Capt. Townsend F. Dodd and his observer, 1st Aero Squadron Commander Capt. Benjamin D. Foulois, fly across the Mexican border on the United States military's first reconnaissance flight over enemy territory.

1945: After 25 days of fighting described as a "nightmare in hell," Iwo Jima is declared secure. Japanese resistance will continue for several more days, but of the original 21,000 defenders, only about 200 are captured alive. After the battle for Iwo Jima, Adm. Chester Nimitz states, "By their victory, the 3rd, 4th and 5th Marine Divisions and other units of the Fifth Amphibious Corps have made an accounting to their country which only history will be able to value fully. Among the Americans serving on Iwo island, uncommon valor was a common virtue."

1966: Neil A. Armstrong (USN, ret.) and David R. Scott (USAF) rocket into space aboard Gemini VIII, conducting the first docking operation in space. Gemini VIII suffered NASA's first critical in-space system failure and had to abort the mission, splashing down safely in the Pacific Ocean instead of the planned site in the Atlantic. Since re-entry took place three days earlier than planned, Air Force Pararescuemen were flown to the landing site to attach the flotation collar to the capsule.

1984: The terrorist group Hezbollah captures CIA Beirut (Lebanon) station chief William F. Buckley on his way to work. The former Special Forces Lt. Col. and veteran of both the Korean and Vietnam Wars will spend 14 brutal months in captivity before dying. His remains are repatriated in 1991 and is given a funeral with full military honors at Arlington National Cemetery.

1988: When forces from Nicaragua's leftist government crossed into Honduras to strike Contra rebel targets, President Ronald Reagan deploys two battalions of the 82d Airborne Division and another two battalions of the 7th Light Infantry Division - 3,200 troops in total - to Honduras as a show of force. Once American troops begin landing, the Sandanistas withdraw.

Mar. 17

1776: After an 11-month siege by George Washington's Continental Army and the recent fortification of nearby Dorcester Heights with cannons captured from Fort Ticonderoga, Gen. Sir William Howe decides to evacuate the nearly 10,000 British troops garrisoned in Boston. The fleet of 120 ships carries the British and around 1,000 Loyalists to Nova Scotia.

The generals would face each other again in New York that July.

1973: The first U.S. prisoners of war are released from the infamous "Hanoi Hilton" prison camp in North Vietnam.

Mar. 18

1945: Some 1,250 American bombers and their fighter escorts roar toward Berlin in one of the U.S. Army Air Forces' "heaviest" bombing raids on the German capitol.

1945: Adm. Marc A. Mitscher's Fast Carrier "Task Force 58" begins a several-day series of attacks on Japanese bases at Kyushu, Honshu, and Shikoku in preparation for the forthcoming Okinawa campaign. The enemy will mount a counterattack, but with only moderate effect. Japanese losses of shore facilities, aircraft, and men will be heavy.

Mar. 19

1945: The aircraft carrier USS *Franklin* sails to within 50 miles of the Japanese mainland - closer than any U.S. carrier during World War II. A lone Japanese bomber slips through the flattop's defenses and hits *Franklin* with two armor-piercing bombs. The bombs detonate below the flight deck, igniting fires and devastating the ship. Around 800 sailors are killed and another 400 wounded - the highest casualties for a surviving ship during the war.

"Big Ben's" death toll would have been far higher were it not for men like Lt. (j.g.) Donald A. Gary, who earned the Medal of Honor when he located a blacked-out mess compartment holding 300 trapped sailors. Gary made repeated trips through the ship, guiding the men to (relative) safety.

1989: The jointly developed Bell-Boeing V-22 "Osprey" makes its maiden flight. The U.S. military's first tiltrotor aircraft will not enter service until 2007.

1992: Two F-15 "Eagles" intercept a pair of Russian Tu-95 "Bear" bombers near the Alaskan coast - the first such confrontation since the breakup of the Soviet Union.

2003: Acting on intelligence indicating Saddam Hussein was visiting his sons at a location called Dora Farms, a pair of F-117 "Nighthawk" stealth fighters level the compound with bunker buster bombs. Unfortunately, the dictator was not there. Meanwhile, U.S. ships and subs launch 40 cruise missiles at three targets in Baghdad, special operations forces knock out dozens of Iraqi observation posts along the border, and teams blow holes in the sand berms in preparation for the invasion. Operation IRAQI FREEDOM has begun.

March 20

1863: Confederate cavalry under the command of Kentucky raider, Brig. Gen. John Hunt Morgan, strikes a sizeable Union reconnaissance force under Col. Albert S. Hall at Vaught's Hill, Tennessee. Though outnumbered and surrounded, Hall's hilltop position enables the colonel to beat back a series of attacks until Morgan — learning that Hall is to be reinforced with additional U.S. troops from Murfreesboro — is forced to disengage.

1922: America's first aircraft carrier, USS *Langley(CV -1),* is commissioned at Norfolk, Virginia. Converted from the coaling ship USS *Jupiter* that supplied ships during World War I, the "Covered Wagon" will again see action as a seaplane tender during World War II. But she will be so badly damaged in an action off Java in 1942, her escorts will be forced to scuttle her.

1941: U.S. intelligence warns the Soviets of the possibility that Germany may invade the Soviet Union. In three months, the largest invasion force in history (nearly 4 million Germans) crosses into the Soviet Union, catching Joseph Stalin completely by surprise.

1942: U.S. Army Gen. Douglas MacArthur — ordered by President Franklin D. Roosevelt to leave his besieged soldiers in the Philippines (where their capture is inevitable) and make his way to Australia — delivers his famous "I shall return" speech at an Australian train station. MacArthur will return to the Philippines in Oct. 1944.

March 22

1820: Commodore Stephen Decatur — "America's Lord Nelson," the hero of Tripoli, and the author of the famous aphorism, "Our country, right or wrong" — is mortally wounded in a duel with Commodore James Barron near Bladensburg, Maryland.

In 1807, Barron commanded the frigate USS *Chesapeake,* which he surrendered to the British when HMS *Leopard* open fired on the unprepared American ship after Barron refused to let them search his ship for alleged British deserters. Decatur, the highly acclaimed veteran of two Barbary campaigns, the Quasi War with France, and the War of 1812, sat on the court of Barron's court-martial. Barron would be reinstated after five years, to the objections of his former subordinate Decatur.

Both men are wounded in the duel; Decatur would die hours later and in 19 years, Barron would become the Navy's top officer.

1947: President Harry S. Truman announces that his administration will conduct a loyalty evaluation to ensure that federal employees are not communist.

1956: A P2B-1S (the Navy's designation for a B-29 "Superfortress") experiences a runaway propeller while preparing to launch a Douglas rocketplane. The prop breaks away, causing serious damage to the

mothership, and the rocketplane has to abort its mission and glide to its landing site. Pilots Stanley Paul Butchart (a torpedo bomber pilot during World War II and NASA's chief test pilot) and Neil Armstrong (future Apollo 11 astronaut) manage to safely land the bomber using just one engine.

1968: After four years of leading Military Assistance Command-Vietnam, Gen. William Westmoreland is promoted to Army Chief of Staff The Army's most senior officer is replaced by his deputy, Gen. Creighton Abrams.

Before Vietnam, Westmoreland served in the European Theater in a field artillery battalion and commanded the 187th Regimental Combat Team during the Korean War. Abrams earned the Distinguished Service Cross twice as a tank commander during World War II.

March 23

gi 1775: In a speech before the House of Burgesses, future Virginia governor (and colonel of the 1st Virginia Regiment) Patrick Henry exclaims, "Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty or give me death!"

1776: As a force-multiplier for the fledgling Continental Navy, the Continental Congress authorizes the employment of privateers (privately owned and armed merchant ships) against "enemies of these United Colonies," specifically Great Britain, her commercial shipping, privately owned vessels, and ships of the Royal Navy.

1815: Though the War of 1812 has officially ended — communications being what they are in the early 19th century — the Royal Navy sloop-of-war HMS *Penguin* under the command of Capt. James Dickenson engages the sloop USS *Hornet* (the third of eight so-named American Navy ships) under Capt. James Biddle off the South Atlantic archipelago Tristan da Cunha. The fighting is quick and hot: Both captains are wounded; Dickenson mortally. HMS *Penguin* surrenders in less than one half hour.

1943: Elements of Germany's vaunted Afrika Korps clash with U.S. Army — forces led by Lt. Gen. George Patton near the oasis of El Guettar in Tunisia. The fighting marks the first time U.S. troops manage to defeat German armor.

1945: When the U.S. Third Army, the Second British Army, and the First Canadian Army cross the Rhine River Adolf Hitler orders a counterattack. However, the Fuhrer is advised that there are no longer any reserve troops available.

1965: A Titan II rocket blasts Gemini 3 astronauts Gus Grissom (USAF) and John Young (USN) into space on the first manned Gemini mission. The four-hour spaceflight is the first time a spacecraft makes an orbital maneuver and is the first time NASA sends two men into space.

1994: An Air Force F-16 "Falcon" collides with a C-130 "Hercules" while both aircraft attempt to land at Pope Air Force Base. The fighter pilots eject, and their crippled F-16 slams into an area where 82d Airborne paratroopers were preparing for a jump. A C-141 "Starlifter" is destroyed, 24 paratroopers are killed, and over 100 soldiers are wounded in the "All American" division's worst loss of life since World War II.

2003: Task Force Tarawa (2nd Marine Expeditionary Brigade) under the command of Brig. Gen. Richard F. Natonski attack — and will ultimately defeat — Iraqi forces in heavy fighting at An Nasiriyah.

Mar. 24

a 1945: Paratroopers of Maj. Gen. Matthew B. Ridgway's XVIII Airborne Corps — composed of the U.S. 17th Airborne "Thunder from Heaven" Division and their British 6th Airborne Division comrades — strike and seize key German positions on the enemy side of the Rhine River. The airborne assault is the last major parachute and gliderborne operation of World War II.

1959: Elvis Presley is sworn into the Army as a private. He would attend basic and advanced training at Fort Hood, Texas and later serve in Europe in the 3d Armored Division. He ultimately reached the rank of sergeant before

completing his two years of active duty service. Elvis was a jeep driver and reconnaissance scout, although he could also drive, load, and fire the M-48 Patton tank.

1986: After dictator Muammar Gaddhafi declares the entire Gulf of Sidra to be Libyan territorial waters, the U.S. Navy begins freedom of navigation operations. When the U.S. Sixth Fleet, consisting of three aircraft carriers and their air wings, as well as nearly two dozen cruisers, frigates, and destroyers ships cross Gaddhafi's so-called "Line of Death," Libyan warplanes and vessels begin challenging the Americans.

Things go poorly for the Libyans: after day's end, several patrol boats and corvettes are sunk or heavily damaged.

1999: NATO's bombing campaign against Slobodan Milosevic's Federal Republic of Yugoslavia begins. U.S. Air Force F-15 pilots Col. Cesar Rodriguez and Capt. Mike Shower each shoot down an enemy MiG-29 on the first night of combat operations.

NATO pilots will fly thousands of missions over the next few weeks of Operation ALLIED FORCE, which will mark the combat debut of Northrop Grumman's B-2 "Spirit" stealth bomber.

Mar. 25

13 **1863:** Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton presents six Union Army soldiers — members of Andrews' Raiders — with the first-ever Medals of Honor. Today, America recognizes all of its Medal of Honor recipients on National Medal of Honor Day — Mar. 25 (of each year) — the anniversary of the first presentations.

1864: Confederate cavalry under the command of Maj. Gen. (future Lt. Gen.) Nathan Bedford Forrest, "the wizard of the saddle," strike Union forces under Col. Stephen G. Hicks in the Battle of Paducah, Kentucky.

1915: While on maneuvers off the coast of Hawaii, USS *F-4* (SS-23) develops — a fatal leak, going down with the entire 21-man crew and becoming the first commissioned submarine lost at sea. When a fellow Navy diver becomes entangled during recovery operations on the sunken vessel in April, Chief Gunner's Mate Frank W. Crilley volunteers to rescue his comrade. Crilley's dive of 306 feet sets a world-record and he is awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions.

1999: F-15C "Eagle" pilot Capt. Jeffrey C.J. Hwang becomes the first airman to simultaneously engage and destroy two targets in aviation history when he uses AIM-120 AMRAAM missiles to shoot down two Serbian Air Force MiG-29s that were violating Bosnian airspace during Operation ALLIED FORCE.

March 26

1942: Rear Admiral John W. Wilcox, Jr.'s Task Force 39, consisting of the battleship USS *Washington,* aircraft carrier USS *Wasp,* the cruisers *Wichita* and *Tuscaloosa,* and eight destroyers depart for Britain, where they will join the Royal Navy's Home Fleet. The following day, Adm. Wilcox is swept overboard by high seas and drowns.

1944: 15 soldiers from Company D of the Office of Strategic Services' 2677th Special Reconnaissance Battalion, captured while attempting to sabotage rail lines some 250 miles behind enemy lines, are shot by German firing squad and dumped in a mass grave. The Americans were wearing Army uniforms and should have been treated as prisoners of war. The German officer that ordered the execution, Gen. Anton Dostler, is himself captured by the Americans and is executed by firing squad after a tribunal.

1945: Gen. George Patton dispatches a 300-man force on a secret mission to liberate a prisoner-of-war camp near Hammelburg, Germany. The mission behind enemy lines is a failure - dozens of tanks and vehicles are lost and only 35 men return, with the remaining would-be rescuers themselves becoming prisoners

The operation was surrounded in controversy as some believed Patton ordered the risky mission because his son-in-law John K. Waters, captured by the Germans in Tunisia, was interred at the camp. Waters will ultimately become a four-star general, commanding all Army forces in the Pacific 20 years after World War II.

6 1954: In the Bikini Atoll, the United States sets off a TX-17 thermonuclear device, which produces far more yield than designers had planned. At 11 megatons (instead of an estimated 3-5), the "Castle Bravo" test is the third-largest ever conducted by the United States. The prototype used on this date becomes the Mark 17 bomb, carried by the massive B-36 "Peacemaker" bomber, and is the first mass produced and air-deployed thermonuclear weapon in the U.S. arsenal.

Incidentally, the 10-engine B-36 made its first flight on this date in 1949.

1957: The Army Ballistic Missile Agency launches a Jupiter rocket carrying the Explorer 3 satellite. During its mission, Explorer 3 discovers the Van Allen radiation belts. In addition to carrying research payloads, the Jupiter rocket also serves as America's first nuclear-tipped medium range ballistic missile. It was developed by a team of former German scientists, led by Wernher von Braun.

Two years later - to the day - the Italy agrees to the deployment of two Jupiter ballistic missile squadrons. Italy will operate the missiles with U.S. personnel overseeing the nuclear warheads.

March 27

1794: President George Washington signs "An act to provide a naval armament" authorizing the construction of six frigates. In 1797 USS *United States* is the first ship to launch, followed by *Constellation, Constitution, Chesapeake, Congress, and President.*

1814: During the War of 1812, a force of 2,000 U.S. soldiers and some 600 Native American allies led by Brig. Gen. Andrew Jackson annihilate 1,000 Creek Indians in Mississippi Territory, which is present-day Central Alabama. Jackson's brutal victory in the Battle of Horseshoe Band brings an end the Creek War, handing over millions of acres of land to the United States.

1836: Days after Col. James Fannin and over 400 of his Texian Army soldiers surrender to the Mexicans during the Texas Revolution, Gen. Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna orders that the prisoners of war be executed by firing squad. Soldiers that survived the gunfire are finished off with knives and clubs, their bodies piled up and burned

1945: As the Soviet Red Army captures Danzig and the Anglo-American forces having crossed the Rhine River, Supreme Allied Commander Gen. Dwight Eisenhower writes Soviet premier Joseph Stalin to coordinate the final assault on Nazi Germany.

With Iwo Jima under American control, the 5th Marine Division ships out for Hawaii to prepare for the invasion of Japan. Of the three Marine divisions that fought on Iwo Jima, the "Spearhead" Division suffered the most casualties, but fortunately for these leathernecks, their fighting days are over.

1953: When the Marines launch a counterattack against entrenched communist forces at Outpost Reno, Corpsman Francis C. Hammond exposes himself to enemy fire to treat his wounded Marines for four exhausting hours, becoming critically wounded himself. When his unit was ordered to withdraw, Hammond remains behind to assist the incoming medics treat and evacuate the casualties, but is killed by an enemy mortar. For his actions, Hammond is posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

1964: Within moments after the Great Alaskan Earthquake - the second-strongest recorded quake in history - the U.S. military is on-hand to assist with recovery efforts. The magnitude 9.2 earthquake and its accompanying tsunami wave kills 139 Alaskans. Soldiers work quickly to restore communications with the lower 48 states while ships, planes, and vehicles rush in food and supplies.

1975: With the North Vietnamese Army bearing down on Da Nang Air Base, Air America, World Airways, and other air services are flying out refugees as fast as they can. On this date, the U.S. Navy begins a four-day evacuation that saves some 30,000 South Vietnamese from the communist invasion. The refugees are so desperate - including many panicked South Vietnamese soldiers - that they cling to the landing gear and air stairs as the planes take off.

1999: On the fourth night of Operation ALLIED FORCE, Lt. Col. Dale Zelko's F-117A "Nighthawk" stealth fighter is hit by a Yugoslavian Army surface-to-air missile after completing a bombing run over Belgrade. Zelko ejects from the seemingly invincible aircraft - the only time an F-117 is ever shot down - and is rescued eight hours later by a a combat search and rescue team.

March 28

1966: While serving as a corpsman with the 1st Battalion, 7th Marines in Quang Ngai Province, Petty Officer Robert R. Ingraham's platoon was hammered by automatic weapons fire from around 100 North Vietnamese soldiers. Over the next several hours, Ingraham disregarded heavy incoming fire and treated his fellow Marines, patching up wounds, distributing ammunition, all the while ignoring four bullet wounds he received during the battle - one of which was life-threatening.

For his selfless actions, Ingraham is awarded the Medal of Honor. Today he is one of only 71 surviving recipients of the nation's highest award for combat valor.

1973: After having flown out of South Vietnamese air bases for nearly 12 years, the last Pacific Air Force aircraft leaves South Vietnam. With the Paris Peace Accords putting an end to direct U.S. combat operations, the Republic of Vietnam Air Force is now on its own.

March 29

1911: After a series of disappointing firearm designs The U.S. Army selects Colt's Model of 1911 .45-cal pistol to become the service's new standard-issue sidearm. Designed by John Browning, the M1911 is destined to become the longest-serving pistol in military history, still carried on battlefields by

1973: The last official ground combat forces fly out of Vietnam.

March 30

1944: 450 American and British heavy bombers destroy thousands of buildings in historic downtown Sofia in the war's heaviest raid on the Bulgarian capital.

Meanwhile, the Royal Air Force's Bomber Command conducts what becomes its deadliest mission of the war during a strike on Nuremburg, Germany. 795 bombers set out on the mission and 95 are shot down or crash-land on the return trip. Some 700 airmen are missing and 160 of them end up in German prisoner of war camps.

During the Nuremburg raid, a Halifax bomber flown by captain Cyril J. Barton fell under attack by German fighters while enroute to the target. Barton manages to throw off the enemy fighters but not before they inflict heavy damage to his Halifax, causing three of his seven-man crew bail out. Despite not having a navigator, radio operator, or bombardier, Barton presses on to the objective and releases the bombs himself, then makes the return trip to England. The badly shot up plane runs out of fuel once they hit the coast, and Barton crash-lands - saving the crew, but at the cost of his life. For his actions, Barton is posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross, the British equivalent to our Medal of Honor.

1945: While the U.S. First Army begins their attack on Paderborn, Germany, the Soviet Red Army captures Danzig (in the north) and crosses into Occupied Austria (to the south).

1981: President Ronald Reagan is shot during an assassination attempt at the Washington D.C. Hilton Hotel. While the president lost half his blood and was in shock from the gunshot, the 70-year-old former cavalry officer makes a full recovery - thanks to his fitness and the quick actions of his Secret Service agents.

Jerry Parr, the agent who pushed Reagan into the presidential limousine and made the life-saving decision to reroute the motorcade to George Washington Hospital instead of the medical team waiting at the White House, was inspired to become a Secret Service agent by watching a film starring Ronald Reagan called *Code of the Secret Service* (1939). Also wounded in the attack is White House Press Secretary James Brady, District of Columbia police officer Thomas Delahanty, and Secret Service agent Timothy McCarthy.

April

Apr. 1

1945: In what was to become the largest amphibious landing in the Pacific Theater, the first of 50,000 U.S. troops land on the beaches of Okinawa. Although the Tenth Army quickly sweeps across southern portion of the island - capturing the Japanese airfields at Kadena and Yomitan within hours after landing. However, the 82-day campaign to secure Okinawa is so brutal (20,000 U.S. soldiers, sailors, and Marine combat deaths) that it is the last major operation of the war; Pres. Truman decides to end World War II with atomic weapons six weeks later.

April 2

1781: Off the coast of France, the frigate USS *Alliance* captures two British privateers - the brigs *Mars* and *Minerva* - off the coast of France. *Alliance's* skipper, Commodore John Barry, holds the distinction of being the first commissioned officer and the first flag officer of the U.S. Navy.

1865: After a siege lasting 292 days, Union forces under the command of Lt. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant break through the thin Confederate lines in the Third Battle of Petersburg (Va.). 4,000 Union soldiers are killed or wounded while the Confederate defenders lose 5,000 - including the death of corps commander Gen. A.P. Hill.

Following the Union victory, the road to the capital of Richmond is left open; Gen. Robert E. Lee's army march west while President Jefferson Davis and his government evacuate to Danville. Months of winter in the trenches have worn down Lee's troops, while Grant's army is gaining in strength. The Union will capture Richmond and the war is days from ending.

1944: The first B-29 bomber lands in Chakulia, India, destined to serve in the Twentieth Air Force upon its creation in three days. Initially conducting operations from bases in China, Burma, and India, the Twentieth will carry out the strategic bombing against Japanese targets.

1951: Two Grumman F9F-2B "Panthers" from Fighter Squadron 191 (VF-191) catapult from the deck of USS *Princeton* (CV-37) for an attack on a railroad bridge near Songjin, North Korea - marking the first time the Navy uses jet fighters in a bomber role.

1982: Argentina launches an amphibious invasion of the British-held Falkland Islands. Caught by surprise, the Royal Navy hastily assembles a task force and sails south. In ten weeks, the United Kingdom reclaims their territories, thanks to material support from the United States.

Apr. 3

1865: After four bloody years of fighting, Union troops march into the Confederate capital of Richmond, Va. The government had evacuated the city by rail the day before. Soldiers and citizens burned buildings set buildings on fire as they departed, and the conflagration will consume some 35 blocks of Richmond. It takes Union soldiers until the afternoon to contain the blaze.

The Civil War will be over in six days.

43 **1942:** Japan's 14th Army, led by Lt. Gen. Masaharu Homma, launches a major offensive against American and Filipino forces on the Bataan Peninsula. In six days, the 75,000 defenders, already weakened by starvation and disease, will have no choice but to surrender to the Japanese.

1946: Gen. Homma is convicted of nearly 50 counts of war crimes for his troops' treatment of prisoners in the Bataan Death March, and is shot by firing squad.

1965: In North Vietnam, Korean War ace Col. James Robinson "Robbie" Risner leads a group of 79 planes in an attack on the Thant] Hoa Bridge. Although Air Force pilots score numerous direct hits on the bridge, they only manage to halt traffic for a few hours. This mission marks the first of 871 unsuccessful sorties against the stubborn bridge, and also the first dogfight of the Vietnam War. Robinson will earn the Air Force Cross - the service's second-highest valor decoration - during the strike.

Meanwhile, the Air Force targets the vital Paul Doumer Bridge for the first time. The mile-long bridge is the only span across the Red River connecting Hanoi and Haiphong Harbor, also withstanding strike after strike and becomes a symbol of communist resistance to the U.S. bombing campaign. The famous Col. Robin Olds and four other pilots will earn the Air Force Cross on one mission against the heavily defended site in 1967.

Both bridges remain in operation until F-4 Phantoms knock them out with laser-guided bombs in 1972. The Doumer Bridge returns to full service a year later and remains in use today.

Elsewhere in southeast Asia, two B-57 Canberra bombers, supported by a C-130 flare ship, fly the first interdiction mission on the Ho Chi Minh Trail in southeastern Laos. Aircrews will fly over 100,000 sorties in the covert Operation STEEL TIGER in an attempt to stem the flow of Communist forces and materiel into South Vietnam through Laos.

1969: Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird introduces "Vietnamization," the Nixon Administration's plan to gradually withdraw U.S. combat forces while preparing the South Vietnamese to assume responsibility for the conflict, which had already cost over 30,000 American lives.

Medal of Honor: On this date in 1865 during the Battle of Namozine Church (Va.), 2nd Lt. Thomas W. Custer of the 6th Michigan Cavalry earns his first of two Medals of Honor. Serving alongside his older brother, Brig. Gen. George Armstrong Custer, Thomas captures the 2nd North Carolina Cavalry's regimental flag. Thomas capture another enemy flag in three days, becoming the Civil War's only double recipient of the Medal of Honor.

Interestingly, George Custer is the first Union soldier to capture an enemy flag, which he accomplishes while serving as Maj. Gen. George B. McClellan's aide-de-camp in 1862. George, Thomas, and younger brother Boston will all perish during the Battle of Little Bighorn in 1876.

April 4

1933: During a storm off the coast of New Jersey, the Navy's massive helium-filled airship USS *Akron* crashes into the ocean. 73 of the flying aircraft carrier's 76 crew members and passengers perish, mostly due to drowning and hypothermia. During the rescue operation the blimp, *J-3* goes down, killing two more sailors. As a result of the deadliest airship disaster in history, life preservers and life rafts are installed on the Navy's remaining airships.

Among the lost is airship advocate Rear Adm. William A. Moffett, who earned the Medal of Honor during the Veracruz Campaign before becoming the Navy's first Chief of the Bureau of Aeronautics. One of the three survivors is executive officer Lt. Cmdr. Herbert V. Wiley, who will go on to command *Akron's* sister ship USS *Macon*, which will crash in 1935, ending the Navy's rigid airship program.

1975: During the first flight of Operation BABYLIFT, an Air Force C-5 Galaxy transport loaded with orphans from Saigon hospital experiences an explosive decompression and attempts an emergency landing at nearby Tan

Son Nhat Airport. Captains Dennis W. Traynor, III and Tilford W. Harp fight to keep the plane airborne with only one aileron and the thrust of the engines. The C-5 crash-lands in a rice paddy short of the runway, killing 138 passengers.

Helicopters are unable to land in the soggy rice fields, and the crew has to carry survivors to rescue teams. 1st Lt. Regina C. Aune ignores a broken foot, leg, and back and carries some 80 babies to safety before finally collapsing. For her selfless efforts the Air Force makes Aune the first recipient of the Cheney Award, which is presented "for an act of valor, extreme fortitude or self-sacrifice in a humanitarian interest."

Pilots Traynor and Harp are awarded the Air Force Cross for what the commanding officer of Military Airlift Command calls "one of the greatest displays of airmanship I have ever heard related."

Over the next few months, Operations BABYLIFT and NEW LIFE evacuate over 100,000 Vietnamese and Cambodian refugees to Anderson Air Force Base in Guam, and then on to freedom in the United States.

April 5

1862: On the same ground where the Continental Army defeated Lord Cornwallis' Redcoats and secured American independence 81 years before, the Army of the Potomac - the largest army fielded in the United States to that point - clashes with Confederate forces at Yorktown (Va.). Although outnumbered significantly, Maj. Gen. John B. Magruder maneuvers his two divisions in such a way that tricks Union Maj. Gen. George McClellan into thinking that there are far more Confederates in the area than actually were.

A cautious McClellan orders his troops to dig trenches, beginning a month-long siege. By the time his massive artillery pieces and naval artillery are in place in May, the Confederates manage to slip away.

1911: The Army creates a provisional aero company in Fort Sam Houston, Texas, as part of the military buildup on the southern border to discourage Mexican revolutionaries. The outfit is commanded by Capt. Paul W. Beck, who is joined by 1st Lt. Benjamin Foulois, 2nd Lt. George E.M. Kelly, and 2nd Lt. John C. Walker, Jr.

Among the pioneer's many firsts, Foulois holds the distinction of being the United States' first military aviator, flying the airship "Army Dirigible No. 1" in 1908. All four pilots previously served as infantry officers before earning their wings.

1945: 18 U.S. divisions begin their attack on 370,000 encircled German soldiers in the Ruhr Pocket. With Nazi Germany on their last legs, much of the fighting force consists of old men (including many World War I veterans) with the Volksturm militia and boys of the Hitler Youth - so poorly supplied that many didn't even have weapons. While some units resist fanatically, most are captured.

Meanwhile, a German firing squad executes the former commandant of the Buchenwald concentration camp SS-Standartenfiihrer Karl-Otto Koch for heinous crimes and brutal treatment of prisoners.

1951: Corpsman Richard De Wert, serving with the 7th Marines in Korea, rushes through enemy fire to retrieve a wounded comrade. While wounded himself, De Wert refuses to stop to be treated and returns for another fallen Marine. Hit again, he braves incoming fire a third time, and on his fourth trip into the kill zone, the corpsman is mortally wounded.

For his actions, De Wert is posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor. The recently decommissioned frigate USS *De Wert* (FFG-45) was named in his honor.

1964: Retired general Douglas MacArthur passes away at Walter Reed Army Hospital in Washington, D.C.. The veteran of Mexican campaigns, both World Wars, and the Korean War is given a state funeral, and 150,000 will pay their respects at the Capitol.

Apr. 6

1862: As Lt. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant's 42,000-man force marches for the rail center of Corinth (Tenn.), they are intercepted and driven back by Confederate Gen. Albert Sidney Johnston's Army of Mississippi near Shiloh Church.

The fighting is desperate on both sides — described as "a murderous fistfight" — and the bloodiest battle to date in American military history. Confederate and Union casualties combined will exceed well over 23,000 in two days. The Confederates carry the first day, but Johnston becomes the highest-ranking officer for either side to be killed during the Civil War.

In the end, Grant wins the Battle of Shiloh (also known as the the Battle of Pittsburg Landing): stiff Union resolve and reinforcements determining the outcome.

1906: An expedition led by Cmdr. Robert Peary reaches the geographic North Pole. Peary leaves behind a note in a bottle stating; "I have this day hoisted the national ensign of the United States of America at this place [...] and have formally taken possession of the entire region, and adjacent, for and in the name of the President of the United States of America."

4 **1917:** After Germany resumes unrestricted submarine warfare on Allied (including U.S.) shipping and discovery of the "Zimmerman Telegram", proposing German alliance with Mexico if the U.S. enters World War I, Congress declares war on Germany.

1924: Four modified Douglas torpedo bombers known as the Douglas World Cruisers take off from Seattle on the first-ever circumnavigation of the globe by an airplane. 175 days later, two of the Army biplanes return to Seattle, having covered 26,345 miles in 363 hours of flying time.

1952: F-86 Sabre pilot Capt. Iven C. Kincheloe, Jr. of the 25th Fighter Interceptor Squadron kills his fifth enemy MiG, becoming the United States' tenth ace of the Korean War. Following the war, Kincheloe becomes a test

pilot and, in the seat of the Bell X-2 rocketplane, becomes the first human to fly above 100,000 feet - earning him the nickname "America's No. **1** Spaceman."

Were it not for his fatal F-104 Starfighter crash at Edwards Air Force Base in 1958, Kincheloe would very likely have become one of America's first astronauts. Along with future Apollo astronaut Neil Armstrong, Kincheloe had been selected for the Man in Space Soonest program - an Air Force idea to use a Thor ballistic missile to send a Bell X-15 rocketplane into space. However, the program was cancelled and would be replaced by Project Mercury.

1959: The Northrop "Snark" missile undergoes its first full-range test, with the 67-foot-long cruise missile hitting its target 5,000 miles downrange. Capable of carrying a three-megaton warhead, the missile will be fielded the following year. However with the advent of intercontinental ballistic missiles, President John F. Kennedy cancels the program in 1961. Due to navigational issues, many were surprised the missiles were placed in operation in the first place; so many crashed during training that the Caribbean was said to be "Snark-infested waters."

1965: President Lyndon Johnson's National Security Advisor McGeorge Bundy signs an order authorizing American combat troops to begin offensive operations in Vietnam. Prior to this order, soldiers and Marines were limited to defensive operations around air bases.

Apr. 7

Ak 1945: Carrier-based bombers and torpedo bombers from Adm. Marc Mitscher's Task Force 58 engage and sink the Japanese battleship *Yamato*, the largest battleship ever constructed. Only 280 of the 2,778 crew are rescued, making the attack the largest loss of life at sea of a single ship during World War II. In addition to the *Yamato*, a Japanese cruiser and four destroyers were also sunk at a cost of only 10 U.S. aircraft.

1979: The nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine USS *Ohio* (SSBN-- 726), the largest submarine built by the U.S. Navy, is launched at the Groton, Conn. shipyard.

Apr. 9

ti 1865: The war lost, Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee concludes, "There is nothing left for me to do, but to go and see Gen. [Ulysses S.] Grant, and I would rather die a thousand deaths."

Lee formally surrenders the Army of Northern Virginia to Grant at the home of Wilmer McLean in the village of Appomattox Court House, Virginia. Still-operating Confederate forces will surrender within months.

1918: The famed 94th "Hat in the Ring" Aero Squadron moves up to the Croix de Metz Aerodrome in France, becoming the first American aviation outfit to enter combat. In May, Lt. Douglas Campbell becomes the first American-trained pilot to earn "ace" status, and fellow squadron mate Lt. Eddie Rickenbacker - who will ultimately become America's top flying ace of World War I - scores his fifth victory in June.

1942: Having run out of food, ammunition, and supplies after months of fighting the Japanese, Maj. Gen. Edward P. King surrenders over 11,000 American and 60,000 Filipino forces under his command on Luzon Island to the Japanese. Immediately after the fall of Bataan, the Japanese begin bombarding Lt. Gen. Jonathan M. Wainwright and some 10,000 troops now isolated on the island fortress of Corregidor, who will manage to hold out for a month before they must surrender as well.

This day also marks the beginning of the brutal Bataan Death March. The sick, starving, and wounded prisoners march in extreme heat and humidity some 80-90 miles to a Japanese prison camp in the backcountry of Luzon.

Along the way, thousands of captives are beaten, raped, bayoneted, disemboweled, beheaded, or shot. Those too weak to keep up with the march — or who stop to relieve themselves — are summarily executed. All are

deprived of food and water. Fewer than 55,000 survive. Thousands more will not survive the prison camps or the so-called "hell ships" delivering them to labor facilities in Japan.

1959: NASA introduces the "Mercury Seven," the men chosen to become United States' first astronauts after an intensive selection process. Pres. Dwight Eisenhower directed that all would be drawn from the ranks of military test pilots. Out of the 500 applicants, NASA chose Scott Carpenter, Wally Schirra, and Alan Shepard from the Navy; Gordo Cooper, Gus Grissom, and Deke Slayton from the Air Force; and John Glenn from the Marine Corps.

2003: On televisions across the world, viewers watch the iconic footage of a statue of Saddam Hussein in Firdos Square being pulled down by a Marine armored recovery vehicle. After a three-week ground campaign, Baghdad has been captured by the U.S.-led Coalition.

Meanwhile, British forces have secured Basra - Iraq's second-largest city after two weeks of hard fighting, including the largest British tank battle since World War II.

Apr. 10

1778: The sloop-of-war USS *Ranger* sets sail from the port of Brest, France for action along the British and Irish coasts. Under command of her legendary captain John Paul Jones, the crew of *Ranger* raid ports and capture several prizes before returning to France.

1865: A day after surrendering his Army of Northern Virginia, Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee issues General Order No. 9 - his farewell address to his troops.

Lee writes, "You will take with you the satisfaction that proceeds from the consciousness of duty faithfully performed, and I earnestly pray that a merciful God will extend to you his blessing and protection. With an

unceasing admiration of your constancy and devotion to your Country, and a grateful remembrance of your kind and generous consideration for myself, I bid you an affectionate farewell."

As the Civil War comes to a close, Lee discourages his fellow officers from starting a guerilla war and becomes a symbol for reconciliation between northern and southern states. Four years after the two generals meet at Appomattox Courthouse, President Grant invites Lee to visit him at the White House.

1941: When Germany invades Denmark, Greenland - a Danish colony - asks for U.S. military protection. Over the course of World War II, the United States will operate numerous weather, navigation, air fields, and ports on the island.

9 **1963:** The submarine USS *Thresher* (SSN-593) sinks while performing deep-diving tests in the northern Atlantic, taking 129 sailors and shipyard personnel with her. *Thresher* is the first nuclear sub lost at sea and the event marks the largest loss of life in submarine history.

1972: B-52 bombers attack North Vietnamese SAM-2 sites near Vinh, the first deep-strike bombing mission since 1967.

*** 1994:** Two U.S. Air Force F-16 Fighting Falcons attack a Bosnian Serb command post after an attack on UN personnel. The strike is the first bombing operation in NATO history.

April 11

1918: 1st Aero Squadron pilots, equipped with the French Spad biplanes, perform the first American reconnaissance flight over enemy lines during World War I.

1945: At 3:15 p.m. a detachment of soldiers from the 9th Armored Infantry Battalion reach the front gates of Buchenwald concentration camp near Weimar, Germany. The emaciated prisoners give their American liberators a hero's welcome. The Nazis incarcerated over a quarter million people in one of Germany's first and largest camps, leading to some 56,000 deaths.

The SS manages to evacuate many of Buchenwald's prisoners before Patton's Third Army can reach the site. The prisoners left behind are in such a horrible state that many dozens continue to die each day after regaining their freedom. Nearby residents of Weimar are ordered to tour the site to "see for themselves the horror, brutality and human indecency."

1951: Pres. Harry Truman removes Gen. Douglas MacArthur from his position as Supreme Commander for the Allied Forces in South Korea for the esteemed general's repeated disrespect to the president. MacArthur's replacement is Gen. Matthew B. Ridgway, who had been serving under MacArthur as Commanding Officer of the Eighth Army.

Ridgway will move on to replace Gen. Dwight Eisenhower as head of NATO in 1952, and becomes the Army's top officer when he is named Chief of Staff the following year.

1966: The 1st Infantry Division clashes with the Viet Cong east of Saigon and rescue helicopters are dispatched to evacuate the casualties. Airman First Class William H. Pitsenbarger descends into the jungle to help hoist the wounded into the helicopter. When one of the choppers is hit by enemy ground fire and has to depart, the Pararescueman waves off his ride and remains with the soldiers.

Pitsenbarger helps treat the wounded and distributes ammunition from the dead, and when not dragging injured soldiers from withering fire that killed or wounded 80 percent of the unit, he returned fire. Pitsenbarger was killed during the assault and when he is found the next day, he is holding a rifle in one hand and a medical kit in the other. Pitsenbarger becomes the first enlisted airman to be awarded the Air Force Cross. His medal is upgraded to the Medal of Honor in 2000.

1970: At 13:13 NASA Time (1:13 p.m. Central), a Saturn V rocket blasts Capt. Jim Lovell (US Navy), Jack Swigert (former U.S. Air Force captain), and Fred Haise, Jr. (former Marine Corps/Air Force captain) into space from the Kennedy Space Center.

The famous Apollo 13 mission is plagued with disaster: three days before launch, Command Module Pilot - and former Naval aviator - Ken Mattingly is exposed to German measles and is replaced by Swigert, one of the rocket's engines shuts off two minutes early while carrying the crew into space, and in two days into their journey to the moon (on Apr. 13), an oxygen module explodes, aborting the mission.

Apr. 12

a **1861:** Confederate Brig. Gen. Pierre G.T. Beauregard's artillery forces — strategically positioned around Charleston harbor, S.C. — open fire on Union-held Fort Sumter (constructed atop shoals at the harbor entrance).

Unable to effectively return fire and with his position indefensible, Union Army Maj. Robert Anderson will surrender the fort and the garrison will be evacuated on the 14th.

The firing on Fort Sumter is considered to be the opening engagement of the Civil War. Technically it is; though shots were fired in January by militia batteries __ including a battery manned by cadets of the Citadel (the Military College of South Carolina) — on the U.S. commercial paddlesteamer "Star of the West" in Charleston harbor.

1862: Andrews' Raiders — an ad hoc Union Army commando force (22 Ohio Infantrymen led by civilian spy James J. Andrews) — commandeer a Confederate train at Big Shanty, Georgia during an operation aimed at disrupting the rail-line between Atlanta and Chattanooga.

Following a dramatic pursuit known today as "the Great Locomotive Chase," the raiders will be caught. Many will escape. Eight of them, including Andrews, will be convicted of espionage and executed.

Nineteen of the raiders will be awarded the Medal of Honor (many of them posthumously). Six will become the first-ever recipients of the Medal of Honor.

1911: Lt. Theodore Ellyson graduates the Glenn Curtiss Aviation Camp near San Diego, becoming Naval Aviator No. 1.

1945: Former World War I artillery officer Harry S. Truman becomes president when Franklin D. Roosevelt passes away from a cerebral hemorrhage in his Georgia home.

1961: Yuri Gargarin tells the control room "Let's go!" and his Vostok spacecraft launches the first human into space. The Soviet cosmonaut orbits the earth once and returns to a hero's welcome. The Soviet Union will have a leg up on the United States in the Space Race until John Glenn makes his orbital flight aboard "Friendship Seven" nearly a year later.

1975: Marines evacuate nearly 300 Americans and foreign nationals from Cambodia during Operation EAGLE PULL.

1981: 20 years after Gargarin became the first man in space, former Naval aviators John W. Young and Robert L. Crippen blast off on the first space shuttle mission. *Columbia* lands safely two days later at Edwards Air Force base after orbiting the earth 37 times.

1993: U.S. aircraft from air bases across Europe and the deck of the aircraft carrier USS *Theodore Roosevelt* begin enforcing NATO's no-fly zone over Bosnia during Operation DENY FLIGHT.

Apr. 13

1941: When Japan signs a five-year neutrality deal with the Soviet Union, President Franklin D. Roosevelt orders the Navy to scale back operations in the Atlantic, considering the possibility that resources would now be needed more in the Pacific.

The Soviet Union now has pacts with both of America's future enemies, but neither will have a lasting effect as the Red Army will be soon fighting both Germany and Japan.

'4 **1943:** Germany announces the discovery of a mass grave in Russia's Katyn Forest. Josef Stalin ordered Soviet security forces to execute over 20,000 Polish officers, soldiers, and officials. Russia would deny involvement in the massacre until 2010.

 # 1945: As Nazi SS troops race to evacuate prisoners of war from advancing American forces, over 1,000 Polish prisoners of war are herded into a barn at Gardelegen, Germany and the building is set on fire. Those that attempted to escape the blaze are shot. The 102nd Infantry Division reaches Gardelegen the next day, before the Nazis can destroy evidence of the massacre.

1953: CIA Director Allen Dulles authorizes Project MKUltra, the agency's secret experimental mind control program. The CIA sought to replicate and protect against communist mind control techniques used to interrogate U.S. troops during the Korean War. The controversial program was scaled back several times before shutting down completely in 1973.

1960: A Thor-Ablestar rocket launches the satellite Transit 1B into orbit and America's first global positioning system (GPS) is born. The Navy will use Transit satellites to guide its ballistic missile submarine fleet.

1970: "Houston, we've had a problem": Apollo 13 command module's oxygen tank explodes, knocking out the crew's supply of power, water, and the means to remove toxic gases. The moon landing is cancelled, and NASA works furiously to engineer a means to return Capt. Jim Lovell (US Navy), Jack Swigert (former U.S. Air Force captain), and Fred Haise, Jr. (former Marine Corps/Air Force captain) to earth.

Over the next four days, the astronauts endure 38-degree cabin temperatures, dehydration, and lack of sleep. Meanwhile NASA figures out how to conserve power, scrub carbon monoxide from the air, and formulates new navigation

procedures to overcome all the malfunctioning systems. Miraculously, Apollo 13 splashes down in the Pacific Ocean on April 17. The crew had lost over 30 pounds.

April 14

1918: Just days after the 94th "Hat in the Ring" Aero Squadron is sent to the front, two Nieuport 28 fighters flown by lieutenants Alan Winslow and Douglas Campbell lift off from the Gengoult Aerodrome (near Toul, France) on an alert sortie. Immediately after takeoff, the pilots shoot down two German warplanes over the airfield, and then land.

Winslow and Campbell have scored the first-ever victories for the American Air Service, and their instant action leads French onlookers to believe that America's flyboys are "super-human."

Apr. 15

1861: Following the capture of Fort Sumter by Confederate forces, Pres. Abraham Lincoln issues a proclamation calling for 75,000 volunteers (at the time, the Army consisted of just 16,000 men) to quell the rebellion.

Four years to the day later, Lincoln would die from John Wilkes Booth mortally wounding him with a gunshot to the back of the head at Ford's Theater.

1912: U.S. Navy scout cruisers USS *Chester* (CL-1) and USS *Salem* (CL-3) set out from Massachusetts to assist survivors of RMS *Titanic.*

1947: Former 761st "Black Panther" Tank Battalion platoon leader Jack R. "Jackie" Robinson becomes the first player to break Major League Baseball's "color barrier." While Robinson is hitless against Boston Braves hurler (and Naval aviator during World War II) Johnny Sain, the Brooklyn Dodgers' rookie first baseman scores after reaching first on an error and also drives in a run.

Robinson was recruited from the Negro Leagues by Branch Rickey, who commanded a chemical weapons unit that included fellow Hall of Famers Ty Cobb and Christy Mathewson during World War I. Rickey was looking not just for incredible black athletes, but one with "guts enough not to fight back" to racial animosity from players and fans.

1961: B-26B Invader bombers, painted by the CIA to resemble Cuban Air Force planes, attack Cuban airfields in preparation for the upcoming Bay of Pigs Invasion. Under cover of darkness, a diversionary landing of 164 Cuban exiles, supported by U.S. Navy destroyers, departs for Baracoa, Cuba but turns around due to militia activity on the coast.

That same day, USS *Bainbridge* (DLGN-25) - America's first nuclear-powered frigate - launches at Quincy, Mass. Together with the aircraft carrier *Enterprise* (CVN-65) and cruiser *Long Beach* (CGN-9), the three nuclear-powered ships would sail non-stop around the world in 1964, covering over 30,000 miles in 65 days.

1962: Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 362 deploys to the Mekong Delta, becoming the first operational Marine Corps unit to serve in Vietnam.

April 16

1898: Following the sinking of the USS *Maine* in Havana Harbor, the Secretary of the Navy orders Marine Corps commandant Maj. Gen. Charles Heywood to organize a battalion for duty in Cuba. Lt. Col. Robert W. Huntington will form the 1st Marine Battalion (Reinforced) out of Marines from across the East Coast, and in one week, the Leathernecks will board a banana boat and sail for Guantanamo Bay.

1916: The French Air Service establishes the *Escadrille Atnericaine* __ a group of volunteer American pilots flying for the French military. When Germany protests about naming the outfit after the supposedly neutral United States, the fighter squadron changes its name to *La Fayette Escadrille.*

Former U.S. Army rifleman - turned French Foreign Legionary and pilot - Gervais Raoul Lufbery becomes the outfit's first ace in October 1916. In 1918, *La Fayette Escadrille* will be absorbed into the 103rd Pursuit Squadron of the new U.S. Army Air Service.

1945: Before dawn, thousands of Soviet guns open fire on the entrenched German soldiers defending Seelow Heights while nearly one million Red Army soldiers begin their assault. The Battle for Berlin has begun.

The German defenders inflict staggering losses on the Soviets, but after three days of intense fighting, the last defensive line between Berlin and the Red Army has been wiped out. World War II will end in days.

1972: Former Naval aviators Kenn Mattingly, John Young, and Air Force fighter pilot Charles Duke lift off from Kennedy Space Center on the Apollo 16 mission. Their 11-day mission will be NASA's next-to-last manned mission to the moon.

1986: Several hours before dawn, U.S. Air Force and Navy warplanes roar into Libyan airspace and begin a series of airstrikes against military and terrorist targets. Code-named EL DORADO CANYON, the attacks are in retaliation for Libyan-leader Col. Muammar Qaddafi's direct involvement in terrorist attacks against Americans worldwide.

The U.S. operation is built around two primary strike groups: U.S. Air Force F-111 fighter-bombers based in the United Kingdom, and carrier-based A-6 Intruders, A-7 Corsairs, and F/A-18 Hornets from USS *America* and USS *Coral Sea* operating in the Mediterranean with F-14 Tomcats flying combat air patrol over the carriers.

April 17

/ **1847:** U.S. Army forces under the command of Gen. Winfield Scott outmaneuver, drive from a superior position, inflict heavy losses, and decisively defeat a numerically superior Mexican Army under Gen. Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna at Cerro Gordo.

1915: A month after the submarine USS *F-4* (SS-23) goes down with all hands off the Hawaiian coast, diver Chief Gunner's Mate William F. Loughman becomes tangled in the wreckage 306 feet below the surface during recovery operations. Fellow diver Frank W. Crilley dives down to Louhgman and frees his trapped teammate.

Crilley is awarded the Medal of Honor for his life saving actions, and will later be awarded the Navy Cross for the recovery of another submarine - USS *S-4* (SS-109) - in 1928.

1942: Deep in the western Pacific Ocean, a task force consisting of two aircraft carriers, three cruisers, and eight destroyers takes on their last load of fuel before carrying out their secret mission.

On the deck of USS *Hornet* (CV-8) sit 16 of Lt. Col. James H. Doolittle's specially modified B-25 Mitchell bombers. Rear Adm. William F. Halsey, Jr.'s flagship USS *Enterprise* (CV-6) provides protection for *Hornet* as her warplanes will be stored below decks until the B-25s take off for their famous raid on Tokyo. The ships, traveling under radio silence, are now just 1,000 miles away from their target.

1961: More than 1,500 CIA-trained and financed Cuban freedom fighters hit the beach along the Cuban coastline including the Bay of Pigs (Bahia de Cochinos), while nearly 180 "Free Cuba" paratroopers begin landing north of the beachhead. Their goal is to overthrow the communist regime of Fidel Castro, but the operation is doomed when locals fail to rise up and support the invasion and President Kennedy withholds the promised American air and naval gunfire support.

1970: A weary Apollo 13 crew splashes down safely in the South Pacific Ocean, just three miles away from their recovery ship USS *Iwo Jima* (LPH-2) - nothing short of a miracle for Capt. Jim Lovell (US Navy), Jack Swigert (former U.S. Air Force captain), and Fred Haise, Jr. (former Marine Corps/Air Force captain). NASA had to work furiously to devise new procedures on-the-fly to return the astronauts safely after an oxygen module exp des two days into the mission.

April 18

1775: Paul Revere and William Dawes begin their famous "midnight ride" from Boston to Lexington, Mass., where they link-up with Samuel Prescott, who rides on to Concord. All three are sounding the alarm — warning town leaders and alerting the militia — that nearly 1,000 British infantrymen, grenadiers, and Royal Marines are advancing from Boston.

6 **1942:** At 7:38 a.m. a Japanese patrol vessel spots the task force bearing Lt. Col. James H. "Jimmy" Doolittle and his raiders 650 miles east of Japan. The ship is sunk, but not before her crew can report the position of the American aircraft carriers. Their cover blown, sixteen specially modified B-25 Mitchell bombers have to launch from USS *Hornet* ten hours earlier than planned.

The crews will not have enough fuel to return to the carrier after the first raid against the Japanese mainland of World War II, so they have been instructed to strike Tokyo and other targets on Honshu, then fly to China and pray they'll find suitable landing sites or bail out.

The one-way mission will be successful, but all aircraft will be lost. Eleven airmen will be killed or captured. Doolittle will be awarded the Medal of Honor.

1943: Naval intelligence intercepts communications that give them the travel itinerary of Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto - the Commander-in-Chief of the Imperial Japanese Navy, who is touring bases in the South Pacific to boost morale after the United States handily defeats Japan at Guadalcanal.

A select group of pilots scramble from Guadalcanal on their secret mission - personally authorized by President Franklin Roosevelt. The P-38 Lightnings ambush Yamamoto's "Betty" bomber and its fighter escorts over Bougainville, killing Japan's top naval officer.

1945: As the Red Army smashes through Berlin's defenses, 300,000 soldiers in the Ruhr Pocket - mostly old men and young boys - surrender, bringing the total of German prisoners of war to 2 million. Meanwhile, the U.S. Ninth Army captures Magdeburg, while 1,000 British bombers turn the island naval fortress of Heligoland into a cratered moonscape.

Nazi Germany is on the ropes.

Across the globe, famed war correspondent Ernie Pyle is killed by a Japanese machine gun two days after landing with the 77th Infantry Division on le Shima, a small island northwest of Okinawa. President Harry Truman states, "No man in this war has so well told the story of the American fighting man as American fighting men wanted it told." Pyle is posthumously awarded the Purple Heart - rarely awarded to civilians.

1983: A Hezbollah suicide bomber crashes a truck carrying 2,000 lbs of explosives into the U.S. Embassy in Beirut, Lebanon, setting off a blast that kills 63 people. Among the fallen are 17 Americans, including the CIA's station chief Kenneth Haas, his deputy, the agency's regional director, and four service members.

Haas is replaced by former Army Special Forces officer William F. Buckley, who will be kidnapped and killed by Hezbollah the following year.

April 19

1775: An expedition of 700 British regulars under the command of Lt. Col. Frances Smith departs Boston to seize and destroy military stores of the Massachusetts Militia in Concord. At dawn, 70 militia members led by Capt. John Parker meet the British at Lexington, and the two sides briefly skirmish. The Americans withdraw and regroup, attacking the redcoats again at North Bridge with a much larger force, forcing the British to turn back towards Boston.

The American Revolution has begun.

1861: 86 years to the day after the "shot heard round the world," Massachusetts volunteers headed for Washington, D.C. are attacked by a secessionist mob in Baltimore. Four soldiers and eight rioters die in the opening shots of the American Civil War.

Meanwhile, Pres. Abraham Lincoln orders a Naval blockade of Confederate ports in South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Florida, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas. The blockade is extended to North Carolina and Virginia the following week.

1917: The Army-chartered transport ship SS *Mongolia* becomes the first vessel to challenge Germany's naval blockade of England. Fitted with three 6-in. guns manned by Naval crews, *Mongolia* drives off and damages - possibly sinking - a German U-boat in the United States' first Naval engagement since entering World War I.

1945: Following the most massive artillery, Naval gunfire and air bombardment of the Pacific War, U.S. soldiers and Marines of Lt. Gen. Simon Bolivar Bucker Jr.'s combined Tenth Army launch a coordinated ground assault against the dug-in Japanese defenders of the infamous Shuri Line on Okinawa.

In June, Buckner, the son of Confederate Gen. Simon Bolivar Buckner, becomes the highest-ranking U.S. officer killed in action during World War II. His replacement, Maj. Gen. Roy S. Geiger is the only Marine to ever command a field army.

1960: Grumman's A-6 "Intruder" makes its first flight. The Navy and Marine Corps relied heavily on the versatile all weather/night attack aircraft until the Intruder's retirement 1997, and the Marines still operate the EA-6B "Prowler" electronic warfare variant nearly 60 years later.

1961: Shortly after midnight, three pairs of B-26 Marauder bombers take off from a covert base in Nicaragua known as "Happy Valley" to provide air support to anti-Communist ground forces, now in their third day of fighting in

Bahia de Cochinos - the Bay of Pigs. The CIA bombers are painted in Cuban Air Force colors and crewed by volunteer Alabama Air National Guard members.

Two Marauders are shot down; Riley Shamburger, Wade C. Gray, Pete W. Ray, and Leo F. Baker are killed.

1967: Maj. Leo K. Thorsness, leading a flight of Air Force F-105 "Thunderchief' aircraft on a "Wild Weasel" mission in a heavily defended area around Hanoi, North Vietnam, destroys two surface-to-air missile sites. When one of his planes is hit and the crew has to eject, Thorsness circles the area to notify search and rescue crews of the downed airmen's location. Spotting an enemy MiG-17 in the area, he engages and kills the enemy fighter, and draws its wingmen off as he heads for fuel. After refueling, helicopter crews attempting to rescue Thorsness' teammates reported more enemy fighters in the area. He damages one MiG and drives the rest away from the area.

For his actions, Thorsness is awarded the Medal of Honor.

1989: The number two 16-inch turret on USS *Iowa* (BB-61) explodes during a live-fire exercise near Puerto Rico, killing 47 sailors.

Apr. 20

1861: Col. Robert E. Lee, considered for a top command by Gen. Winfield Scott (whom Lee served as a chief aide during the Mexican-American War), and having just rejected an offer of command in the Confederate Army, reluctantly resigns his commission in the U.S. Army following the secession of his home state of Virginia.

However, in three days Lee will take command of Virginia state forces — one of the first five generals appointed to the Confederate Army.

Meanwhile, Norfolk Navy Yard is abandoned and burned by Union forces to --- prevent the facility from falling into enemy hands after Virgnia's secession. The Confederates would do the same when they abandon the shipyard in May 1862.

1914: Following the arrest of U.S. sailors in Veracruz and the discovery of an illegal arms shipment from Germany to Gen. Victoriano Huerta's regime, Pres. Woodrow Wilson obtains Congress' approval to occupy the Mexican port. The following day, Marines and Naval "Bluejacket" infantry seize the port and, supported by Naval gunfire, take the town. Marines will remain in Veracruz until November.

This date also marks the first-ever combat deployment of a Naval aviation unit: Lt. John H. Towers, 1st Lt. Bernard L. Smith (USMC), and Ens. Godfrey deC. Chevalier, 12 enlisted support personnel, and three planes board the cruiser USS *Birmingham* and sail for Tampico.

1918: In the skies over France, German pilot Manfred von Richtofen — the infamous "Red Baron" — guns down two Sopwith Camels of the Royal Air Force's No. 3 Squadron within three minutes, scoring what will be his fmal two kills.

The next day, Richtofen (who began the war as a cavalry officer) is shot down and killed. The Australian fighter squadron credited with shooting the German ace down gives Richtofen a full military funeral. Over the course of the war, the Red Baron shoots down an incredible 80 planes — the most victories by any pilot in World War I.

1945: After five days of perhaps the most fierce urban combat of the war, the 7th Army captures Nuremberg. The Stars and Stripes are raised over Adolf Hitler Platz, the site of Nazi party rallies, on the Fiihrer's 56th birthday.

1947: U.S. Navy Capt. L.O. Fox accepts the surrender — in fact the last formal surrender of World War II — of Lt. Ei Yamaguchi and 26 Japanese soldiers and sailors on the island of Peleliu. After the Japanese holdouts attack the island's Marine Corps detachment in March, a Japanese admiral had to be flown in to convince Yamaguchi that the war had ended nearly two years ago.

2007: With U.S. military airlift assets stretched to the maximum, a Russian An-124 "Condor" lands at Moffett Air Field (Calif.) to transport the California Air National Guard's 129th Rescue Wing and their HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopters to Afghanistan.

Apr. 21

1777: British Army forces commanded by Gen. William Tryon begin burning the village of Danbury, Conn. Much of the town is destroyed before Continental forces can arrive several days later.

1836: Texas Army forces led by Gen. Sam Houston surprise and decisively defeat Gen. Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna's Mexican army in the Battle of San Jacinto. In 18 minutes, some 650 Mexicans lay dead while less than a dozen Texans are killed. The Mexican army surrenders and Texas secures its independence. Santa Anna is captured — hiding and dressed as a common soldier — the following day.

1898: Spain severs diplomatic relations with the United States and Pres. William McKinley orders the Naval blockade of Cuba, putting the United States on a war footing with Spain. The following day, the gunboat USS *Nashville* (PG-7) fires the first official shots of the war.

1940: U.S. Army Capt. Robert M. Losey becomes the first American casualty of World War II when he is killed by German bombing raid on a rail yard in Norway. Losey was attempting to evacuate U.S. personnel in the wake of the German invasion. Luftwaffe commander Hermann Goring would apologize for the incident.

1951: Two Marine Corps aviators, including World War II ace Capt. Phillip DeLong from the USS *Bataan* (CVL-29), splash three Yak fighters and damage another in the first dogfight with North Korean pilots.

Apr. 22

1863: Union cavalry troopers, led by Col. Benjamin Grierson, begin a two-week raid through Mississippi. Grierson's raiders cut the state's telegraph lines, destroy two train loads of Confederate ammunition, sabotage 50 miles of railroad, kill 100 and capture 500 Confederates - at the cost of three wounded, seven wounded, and 14 missing.

1915: German artillery near Gravenstafel, Belgium fires over 150 tons of chlorine gas on French forces, including French Colonial Moroccan and Algerian troops, in the first large-scale successful use of chemical weapons. Within moments, the toxic gas cloud inflicts about 6,000 casualties - including many of the German artillery troops. Some 2,000 Americans alone would die from chemical weapons during World War I, and the deadly new tactic inflicts half a million casualties by war's end.

41 **1942:** The Coordinator of Information (predecessor to the Office of Strategic Services, and ultimately, the CIA) activates Detachment 101 - a special operations unit in Burma. The group collected intelligence, destroyed bridges, derailed trains, captured or destroyed enemy vehicles, located targets for the 10th Air Force, rescued downed Allied airmen, and most importantly, recruited and trained over 10,000 native troops for a highly effective guerrilla campaign against Japanese Forces. Detachment 101 and its OSS teams became the prototype for modern-day Special Forces (Army Green Berets).

1944: American soldiers and Marines, supported by over 200 ships, land in New Guinea for Operations RECKLESS and PERSECUTION, beginning a three month battle that would claim the lives of 12,811 of the heavily outnumbered Japanese troops, compared to only 527 Americans.

1945: As Russian air force and artillery and bombard targets in central Berlin - with some explosions rocking the underground Fiihrerbunker command post - Adolf Hitler confides to his aides that the war is lost and declares suicide is his only option. The Fiihrer will kill himself in eight days.

1951: Chinese and North Korean forces, totalling some 700,000 soldiers, launch their Spring Offensive. The communist assault, which is the last all-out Chinese offensive of the war, inflicts heavy casualties on both sides but fails to accomplish the objective of capturing Seoul and driving UN forces off the peninsula.

2004: Pat Tillman, who left a multi-million dollar career in professional football to join the Army after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, is killed while on patrol in eastern Afghanistan. Pat and his brother Kevin (a minor-league baseball player in the Cleveland Indians organization before enlisting) served in both Iraq and Afghanistan with 2nd Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment.

2010: The U.S. Air Force's Boeing X-37B unmanned spacecraft, sitting on top of an Atlas V rocket, lifts off from Cape Canaveral, Fla. just before midnight on it's maiden flight. The orbital test vehicle circles the Earth once every 90 minutes, and after 224 days in space, the X-37 lands at Vandenberg Air Force Base (Calif.), becoming the first American spacecraft to land autonomously.

Apr. 23

1778: Capt. John Paul Jones, commanding the Continental sloop-of-war *Ranger*, leads a daring ship-to-shore raid on the British fortress at Whitehaven, England. Jones' sailors and Marines spike the enemy's guns, burn a few buildings, and set fire to a ship before withdrawing. The raid is the first on British soil by an American force.

1918: Near Saint-Gobain, France 1st Lt. Paul Baer of the 103rd Aero Squadron shoots down his fifth enemy aircraft, becoming the U.S. Army Air Service's first ace. Baer flew with the French *Escadrille Americaine* prior to

America's entry into World War II, and will ultimately claim nine confirmed victories (plus an additional seven unconfirmed) before being shot down himself and spending the rest of the war in a German prisoner of war camp.

Before becoming a pilot, Baer fought in Mexico under Gen. John J. Pershing's in the Punitive Expedition. He managed to escape German captivity but was captured quickly. He was awarded two Distinguished Service Crosses in addition to his numerous French decorations. After the war, he flew as a mercenary against Bolsheviks in Poland.

1945: A U.S. Navy PB4Y-2 Privateer of Patrol Bombing Squadron 109 (VPB-109) launches two Bat missiles against Japanese shipping at Balikpapan, Borneo. While both of the radar-guided homing missiles malfunction in their combat debut, Bats will send several Japanese ships to the bottom before the World War II ends.

1951: When his company's outpost is overrun by enemy forces in a fierce nighttime attack, Tech. Sgt. Harold E. Wilson ignores wounds in his head, shoulder, arm, and leg, resupplying his fellow Marines and coordinating his unit's defense with his company commander. Wounded again by a mortar blast, the platoon sergeant refuses medical assistance for himself and continues to support his men and treat the wounded. Despite being covered with serious wounds he stays in the fight until the last enemy assault has been defeated. He then walks a mile to the rear, but only after ensuring that all of his Marines are accounted for.

For his actions, Wilson is awarded the Medal of Honor. Prior to the battle, he served in the Pacific Theater of World War II, was wounded in the Chosin Reservoir, and would later serve in Vietnam.

Apr. 24

1781: A 2,500-man force of British and Hessian troops led by Gen. William Phillips lands at City Point (Va.). They are joined by the "American Legion," a militia outfit consisting of Loyalist deserters from the Continental Army and commanded by the famous turncoat Brig. Gen. Benedict Arnold.

The next morning, the combined force marches towards Petersburg, which is defended by Virginia militiamen under the command of Prussian Maj. Gen. Friederich Wilhelm von Steuben. After putting up several hours of fierce resistance, the outnumbered Americans disengage and Petersburg falls to the British.

V **1862:** Adm. David Farragut's squadron of 43 Union vessels fight past Confederate batteries at Forts Jackson and St. Philip in the Mississippi River at New Orleans and destroy most of the Confederate fleet upriver. The Union captures the crucial port city the following day - one of the worst setbacks for the Confederacy during the Civil War.

1942: With the Burma Road now cut off by the Japanese, the Allies have no choice but to airlift supplies and ammunition from India to China. On this date the first of what will soon be many B-29 bombers fly "over the hump" - the treacherous Himalayan Mountains.

Hundreds of aircraft will be lost over the 42-month airlift. Without navigational aids and fighting abominable and unpredictable weather, American airmen would deliver 650,000 tons of ammunition and supplies to nationalist Chinese forces and to American air bases in China.

In June, Army Air Force bombers will begin bombing the Japanese mainland from forward air bases in China, but the "India-China Ferry" aircraft must fly seven transport missions over the hump for just one bombing raid.

1951: When a wave of Chinese soldiers charged his machine gun position, Army Cpl. Hiroshi Miyamura told his crew to cover him as he fixed his bayonet and advanced into the enemy force, killing ten in hand to hand combat and scattering the attackers. Upon returning to his position, Miyamura ordered his men to withdraw as he manned the machine gun and covered their retreat. He killed some 50 communist fighters before running out of ammunition and becoming severely wounded. Miyamura's position was overrun and he would spend the next 28 months as a prisoner of war.

Miyamura would become the first Medal of Honor recipient whose citation was classified "Top Secret," out of fears for his safety. He would be publicly recognized upon his repatriation 28 months later.

1980: Following a string of glitches from missed deadlines to malfunctioning helicopters, a U.S. operation aimed at freeing American hostages in Iran is aborted at a remote staging area — code-named "Desert One" — some 200 miles from Tehran. As the rescue force begins to withdraw, one of the helicopters operating in night black-out conditions accidentally hovers into a C-130 transport aircraft. A terrific explosion follows, killing five U.S. airmen and three Marines.

Though an operational disaster, America's enemies will be stunned by the fact that such a mission in adverse conditions was nearly carried out so far from American shores. Moreover, the disaster will force military planners to ramp up and retool U.S. special operations forces, establishing a special warfare capability that is today the envy of foreign militaries worldwide.

1990: An Air Force C-130H "Hercules", flying 60 miles off the coast of Peru gathering intelligence on drug cartels is intercepted by two Peruvian Air Force Sukhoi Su-22 fighters. Despite being unarmed and flying above international waters, the planes open fire on the C-130, injuring six of the 14 crewmembers and killing Master Sgt. Joseph C. Beard, Jr.

Apr. 25

1846: When Maj. Gen. (and future president) Zachary Taylor receives reports that Mexican forces - seeking to reclaim Texas - have crossed the Rio Grande, he dispatches two companies of dragoons (mounted infantry) to investigate. The American soldiers are ambushed by some 1,600 Mexican soldiers and those not killed are taken prisoner.

The Mexican-American War has begun.

1914: Navy lieutenant (future vice admiral) Patrick N.L. Bellinger flies the first Naval combat mission when his AB-3 flying boat conducts reconnaissance of Veracruz and searches the Mexican harbor for mines. Bellinger also becomes the first American aviator to be fired upon by the enemy.

1915: Australian and New Zealand soldiers land on Turkey's Gallipoli Peninsula and face fierce resistance from Lt. Col. Mustafa Kamal's Turks. Kamal orders his defenders, horribly outnumbered and out of ammunition: "Men, I am not ordering you to attack. I am ordering you to die. In the time that it takes us to die, other forces and commanders can come and take our place."

After an eight months of fighting and 300,000 casualties, the Allies withdraw. Kamal, later known as Ataturk, will become Turkey's first president.

1944: When an Army Air Forces plane carrying wounded British soldiers goes down 100 miles behind Japanese lines in Burma, Lt. Carter Harmon conducts the first known military helicopter rescue. His YR-4B helicopter can carry only one passenger, so Hannon has to fly four trips to everyone back to safety.

1945: A U.S. Army reconnaissance patrol crosses the Elbe River and makes contact with a forward element of the Russian Guards. The German *Wehrmacht* is effectively split in two. Meanwhile, the Nazi occupation army in Italy surrenders and the last German troops in Finland evacuate.

World War II will be over in days.

1951: On the 36th anniversary of their ill-fated landing at Gallipoli, two battalions of Australian and New Zealand forces (along with U.S. and Canadian troops) repulse an assault by an entire Chinese division in the Battle of Kapyong. UN casualties are in the dozens, while over a thousand Chinese lay dead.

1960: The nuclear-powered submarine USS *Triton* (SSRN 586) arrives at the St. Peter and Paul rocks in the Atlantic Ocean, becoming the first vessel to cross the globe submerged. *Triton* traveled 26,723 nautical miles in only 60 days.

1967: 51 years to the day after Bellinger's first Naval combat mission, one of the two pilots to fly the U.S. military's first-ever combat mission passes away at Andrews Air Force Base. Maj. Gen. Benjamin D. Foulois began his service as an infantry officer, serving in both the Spanish-American War and Philippine-American wars.

He then went on to become one of America's aviation pioneers: the fist military pilot to teach himself to fly, the first Army dirigible pilot, and first military observer on a cross-country flight with Orville Wright before flying during the Pershing Expedition into Mexico and World War **I.**

Apr. 26

1777: 16-year-old Sybil Ludington — "the female Paul Revere" — begins her 40-mile, all-night ride across an isolated circuit of New York—Connecticut backcountry, warning villagers of a British attack on nearby Danbury, Connecticut.

1865: After three days of negotiations with Union Maj. Gen. William Sherman, Gen. Joseph Johnson surrenders the Army of Tennessee, along with the remaining Confederates in the Carolinas, Georgia, and Florida - nearly 90,000 troops - to Union Maj. Gen. William Sherman in the largest surrender of the war. Sherman supplies the Confederate soldiers with rations and orders food to be distributed to Southerners, in stark contrast to his "scorched earth" campaign.

That same day, Union cavalry troopers track down John Wilkes Booth - Pres. Abraham Lincoln's assassin - at a tobacco barn in Virginia. 12 days after shooting the president, the fugitive is himself shot and killed.

1945: Eighth Air Force fighter pilots raid over 40 Luftwaffe installations,

destroying an astounding 747 enemy aircraft in just one day.

1948: Test pilot (and former World War II ace) George Welch puts his North American YP-86 Saber jet into a dive and breaks the sound barrier - marking the first supersonic flight of a fighter aircraft.

An Army Air Corps pilot with 16 victories during World War II, Welch is one of only two airmen able to get airborne and engage Japanese aircraft during the attack on Pearl Harbor. He was recommended for the Medal of Honor for his actions on December 7th, but having taken off without orders, he only receives the Distinguished Flying Cross. Later serving as an instructor and test pilot for North American during the Korean War, he reportedly shot down several MiG-15 aircraft, but again did so against orders, so he did not receive credit for the kills. Welch will perish in a crash while performing tests on the F-100 in 1954.

1952: While performing night carrier operations off the coast of Newfoundland, the minesweeper USS *Hobson* (DD-464) collides with the aircraft carrier US S *Wasp* (CV-18). The minesweeper breaks in half and within five minutes, 176 sailors perish in one of the Navy's largest non-combat losses of life at sea.

1966: While escorting a flight of F-105 Thunderchiefs on a bombing mission near Hanoi, an F-4C Phantom flown by Maj. Paul J. Gilmore and 1st Lt. William T. Smith shoots down an enemy MiG-21 with Sidewinder missiles. The Soviet Union's newest fighter had only been in North Vietnam a few days before Air Force pilots scored their first kill on the "Fishbed."

1971: A Cessna 0-2 Skymaster forward air controller plane is shot down by an enemy surface-to-air missile over the heavily defended Ban Kari Pass, marking the first U.S. aircraft lost over Laos.

April 27

1805: Following an extremely difficult march across a 500-to-700-mile stretch of North African desert, a force of eight U.S. Marines, two Navy midshipmen, and band of Arab and Greek mercenaries commanded by U.S. Army officer William Eaton have reached the fortress at Derna (modern-day Libya) during the First Barbary War.

Supported by three warships (USS *Nautilus, USS Hornet,* and USS *Argus),* Eaton personally leads the two-and-a-half-hour assault on the fortress. One Marine is killed in action and another mortally wounded in the first U.S. land battle on foreign soil. The Battle of Derna also marks the first time the U.S. flag is raised over foreign soil.

Legend states that newly installed, pro-American pasha Hamet Karamanli was so impressed with Marine 1st Lt. Presley O'Bannon's leadership and heroics that he presents O'Bannon with a Mameluke sword. U.S. Marine officers today still carry the Mameluke sword, whereas Marine NCOs carry the traditional Naval infantry saber.

1813: Brig. Gen. Zebulon Pike's 1,800-man American infantry force lands west of the Canadian town of York (present-day Toronto). Supported by a 14-ship naval flotilla, the Americans inflict heavy losses on the outnumbered British regulars, Canadian militia, and Ojibwe warriors. The fort's magazine explodes during the battle, killing 38 Americans (including Pike) and wounding over 200. York is burned after the town's capture, enraging the British and inspiring them to retaliate by burning Washington, D.C. the next year.

*** 1865:** The overcrowded Mississippi River steamboat *Sultana,* carrying 2,400 Union soldiers just released from Confederate prison, explodes and sinks just north of Memphis. At least 1,500 soldiers perish in the greatest maritime disaster in U.S. history.

1953: As armistice negotiations begin, Gen. Mark Clark - the commander of UN forces in Korea - informs Communist pilots through shortwave radio broadcasts in Russian, Chinese, and Korean that defecting MiG-15 pilots would receive political asylum and $50,000 (the first defecting pilot would be

awarded $100,000) to fly an operational jet to South Korea. The Russian MiG-15 was considered to be superior to any Allied fighter at the time and had inflicted heavy casualties on Allied airmen.

Although no pilot took up the offer, Operation MOOLAH had the indirect effect of grounding MiG-15 sorties for several days - perhaps as Communist Party leaders investigated the loyalty of their pilots. And following Clark's broadcasts, there would be no more sightings of Russian pilots or aircraft, which were considerably better pilots than their Chinese or North Korean MiG counterparts.

1972: After an astounding 871 unsuccessful strike missions against North Vietnam's Thanh Hoa Bridge, F-4 Phantoms armed with Paveway I laser-guided bombs finally knock out the stubborn bridge, which had become a symbol of communist resistance against the United States.

Apr. 28

1907: A detachment of Marines from the gunboat USS *Paducah* (PG-18) land in Honduras to protect American nationals during a conflict with Nicaragua.

1944: As allied ships rehearse for the upcoming Normandy Invasion on the English coast, they come under fire by nine torpedo-armed German E-Boats in Lyme Bay. Two tank landing ships are sunk and one is damaged, killing 749 soldiers and sailors. Several ships went ahead with the landing, and unfortunately the British ships bombarding the beach - Gen. Dwight Eisenhower wanted live ammunition to prepare the troops for combat - continued to fire, not knowing the Americans are already hitting the beach, and some 300 additional soldiers are killed from friendly fire.

1965: A battalion of U.S. Marines land at Haina in the Dominican Republic to protect American nationals following the outbreak of civil war. In two days, Pres. Lyndon B. Johnson sends thousands of soldiers from the 82d Airborne and Marines from the 6th Marine Expeditionary Brigade to the island to prevent the nation from falling to communism.

1967: Boxing legend Muhammad Ali refuses to take the oath of enlistment after being drafted for service in the Armed Forces and is immediately stripped of his championship. It is three years before he is able to box again.

1970: Pres. Richard Nixon authorizes U.S. military incursions into Cambodia. While the country was officially neutral, Communist forces used Cambodia as a safe haven and staging area for cross-border operations into South Vietnam. While falling short of its major goals: eliminating a significant number of enemy troops or capturing their headquarters, troops capture a massive amount of weapons, ammunition, equipment, and supplies - so much so that after the incursion ends in July, Nixon declares the Cambodian campaign "the most successful military operation of the entire war."

April 30

1798: The U.S. Navy Department — parent company of the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps — is established.

1917: Maj. William "Billy" Mitchell, sitting in the observer seat on a French aircraft, becomes the first U.S. military officer to fly over German lines.

1943: The British submarine HMS *Seraph* drops a cadaver overboard off the coast of Spain, disguised as a British Royal Marine officer with documents suggesting an upcoming Allied invasion of Greece and Sardinia. German intelligence discovers the files and shift reinforcements. In two months, over 100,000 U.S. and British soldiers would hit the beaches at Sicily - the actual invasion target.

1945: With the Red Army almost at their doorstep, Germany orders the 9,000 Allied prisoners of war (including 7,000 Americans) at Germany's Stalag Luft I to evacuate. The men refuse. The senior officer negotiates with the German commander, who chooses to order his guards to evacuate, leaving the prisoners behind.

Some noteworthy American guests of Stalag Luft I include top American European Theater ace Francis S. "Gabby" Gabreski (who also becomes a jet ace in Korea), former "Doolittle Raider" Charles Ross Greening, and R.A. "Bob" Hoover, who escaped the prison and flew to freedom in an unguarded German fighter plane.

(Meanwhile, German leader Adolf Hitler commits suicide in his underground Berlin bunker. German Army forces will surrender to the Allies within days.

1962: The CIA's A-12 reconnaissance aircraft - the predecessor of the SR-71 Blackbird, a two-seat variant of the A-12 - makes its first official flight at the highly classified Groom Lake, Nev. test site (Area 51).

1970: Pres. Richard M. Nixon announces that U.S. troops would conduct operations in North Vietnamese-controlled areas of Cambodia.

May

May 1

V 1898: U.S. Navy Commodore George Dewey's Asiatic Squadron steams single file into Manila Bay and destroys the out-armored and out-gunned Spanish fleet in the Philippines. Despite the support of shore batteries, the Spanish lose all seven of their vessels and only six American sailors are wounded. The Spanish-American War will effectively end in August, and Spain will cede control of the islands to the United States.

1943: When his B-17 bomber is hit by German flak and Sgt. Maynard H. "Snuffy" Smith loses power in his ball turret gun, he climbs out to assist the other airmen. With a fire now burning in the fuselage, three of the crew had already bailed out. Smith treats two severely wounded comrades and begins fighting the fire that was melting holes in the aircraft.

For the next 90 minutes, Smith alternates between caring for the wounded, extinguishing the fire, and manning the .50 caliber guns against attacking German fighters. The plane makes it safely back to England, but breaks in half upon landing from the fire and 3,500 bullets and pieces of shrapnel. Smith is awarded the Medal of Honor.

1945: Eighth Air Force B-17s drop 700 tons of food over German-occupied Holland, whose residents are suffering from famine. The Germans told the Allies that their bombers would not be targeted so long as they remained within approved air corridors. Over the next week, Over the next week, Operation CHOW HOUND delivers 7,000 tons of food, bringing an end to the "Hunger Winter."

1951: AD "Skyraiders" conduct the only aerial torpedo attack of the Korean War, against the Hwacheon Dam.

1960: CIA pilot - and U.S. Air Force captain - Francis Gary Powers takes off from a military airbase in Pakistan on a secret reconnaissance overflight mission of the Soviet Union. His U-2 spy plane, flying some 70,000 feet above Russia, is hit by a surface-to-air missile. Powers ejects safely and is held in a Soviet prison until his famous exchange on a Berlin bridge nearly two years later.

2003: George W. Bush becomes the first president to make an arrested landing when the S-3 Viking dubbed "Navy One" touches down on the USS *Abraham Lincoln* (CVN-72) following its 10-month combat deployment. Bush delivers a speech on the deck of the aircraft carrier announcing the end of major combat operations in Iraq.

Although the insurgency would drag on for years, the 21-day conventional campaign against Saddam Hussein's Ba'athist regime is over.

May 2

1863: During day two of the Battle of Chancellorsville, Gen. Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson is shot by a Confederate sentry while performing a leaders-reconnaissance mission. Following the amputation of Jackson's shattered arm, Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee will lament, "He has lost his left arm, but I have lost my right arm."

The revered Jackson will die in eight days of pneumonia.

1945: Soldiers with the 82d Airborne and the 8th Infantry Division liberate the Wobbelin concentration camp in northern Germany. The Nazis allowed many of the 5,000 inmates to starve, and U.S. soldiers found 1,000 dead upon arrival.

The soldiers force nearby German townspeople to visit the camp and bury the dead. Conditions were so extreme at WObbelin that some of the inmates had resorted to cannibalism, and hundreds more would die after the camp's liberation.

That same day, Gen. Heinrich von Vietinghoff surrenders all *Wehrmacht* forces in Italy and the Red Army flies the Soviet flag over the Reichstag building. Berlin has fallen.

1946: When prisoners at Alcatraz riot - breaking into the prison armory and taking hostages - Marines from Treasure Island Naval Base assist in suppressing the riot.

1964: Two months prior to the Gulf of Tonkin incident, a North Vietnamese frogman plants an explosive charge on USNS *Card* - a reactivated World War II escort carrier ferrying helicopters and American soldiers to South Vietnam - as the ship sits at a dock in Saigon. The blast kills five civilian crew members and *Card* sinks. The vessel is patched, raised, and will return to service in December.

1999: Lt. Col. David Goldfein, commander of the U.S. Air Force's 555th — Fighter Squadron, becomes the second U.S. pilot shot down during Operation ALLIED FORCE. His F-16 fighter was shot down near Belgrade by a Serbian surface-to-air missile. Goldfein ejects safely and is soon recovered by a combat search and rescue team.

Goldfein is now the Air Force Chief of Staff - the service's top officer.

6 **2011:** After perhaps the largest manhunt in history, U.S. intelligence has finally tracked down Osama bin Laden - the founder of Al Qaeda. An elite team of "DEVGRU" Navy SEALs (formerly known as SEAL Team SIX) boards specially modified Black Hawk helicopters in Afghanistan, flying undetected through Pakis at_Luo bin Laden's secret compound in Abbottabad.

One helicopter crash lands at the compound, but no one is seriously injured. The SEALs assault the building and gun down the man responsible for the deaths of thousands of Americans nearly ten years ago.

May 3

1898: Following the Battle of Manila Bay, Marines from the cruisers USS *Baltimore* (C-3) and USS *Raleigh* (C-8) raise the Stars and Stripes for the first time in the Philippines over Cavite, the historical capital.

1923: 26 hours and 50 minutes after taking off in New York, Army Air Corps First Lieutenants Oakley Kelly and John Macready touch down at Rockwell Field, San Diego, becoming the first aviators to fly non-stop across the United States. The specially modified Fokker T-2 passenger plane averaged a blistering 92 mph.

1942: Off the Florida coast, two German *U-boats* each sink a cargo ship, killing a total of 23 sailors. *U-109* heads back to the German sub pens at Lorient, France after her attack and *U-564* will damage another two vessels over the next two days. The Royal Air Force will sink both subs the following year.

1943: Lt. Gen. Frank M. Andrews, the commander of all U.S. Forces in the European Theater, is killed when the B-24 Liberator bomber carrying the former cavalry trooper and pilot during World War I to Iceland on an inspection tour crashes. Andrews is replaced by generals Jacob Devers and ultimately Dwight Eisenhower.

The plane carrying Andrews was the first U.S. plane to complete 25 bombing missions. However since *Hot Stuff* crashed before returning to the States, the B-17 *Memphis Belle* will become more widely known - despite accomplishing their feat three and a half months later.

1946: Prosecution of 28 Japanese military and political leaders begin at the War Ministry Office in Tokyo. After two-and-a-half years, 25 of the 28 high-ranking officials (one is determined mentally unfit and two die during the trial) are found guilty of war crimes and crimes against humanity. Seven are executed, including the prime minister and Gen. Iwane Matsui, who oversaw the Japanese military's Rape of Nanking.

1951: The Senate Armed Services and Foreign Relations committees begin closed-session hearings into the dismissal of Gen. Douglas MacArthur. The five-star general served as Commander-in-Chief of the United Nations Command in Korea until being relieved of command in April for his insubordination and disrespect to President Harry Truman. MacArthur will retire after serving the country for 52 years.

1952: Air Force Lt. Col Joseph 0. Fletcher, piloting a C-47 with skis for landing gear - along with fellow USAF Lt. Col. William P. Benedict and scientist Dr. Albert P. Crary - become the first Americans to land at the geographic North Pole. That day, Crary becomes the first person to have stood on both the North and South Poles.

3,600 miles due south, Maj. Donald E. Adams and Capt. Robert T. Latshaw, Jr. each splash two enemy MiGs on this day, becoming the U.S. Air Force's 13th and 14th aces of the Korean War. Both pilots also flew during World War II and both would die in accidental plane crashes following the war.

1965: Lead elements of the 173rd Airborne Brigade depart Okinawa for South Vietnam, becoming the first Army ground combat units deployed in the Vietnam War. The "Sky Soldiers" will make the only major combat parachute jump of the war in February 1967 during Operation Junction City - the mission to locate the North Vietnamese political and military headquarters for South Vietnam.

1975: *USS Nimitz* (CVN-68) is commissioned at Naval Station Norfolk, Va. by President Gerald R. Ford. Although slightly shorter than the USS *Enterprise* (CVN-65), the new Nimitz Class carriers are the largest warships ever built - displacing over 100,000 tons.

Pres. Ford, who served as a Naval Reserve officer aboard an aircraft carrier in the Pacific Theater during World War II, states "Only in America can we build this machine; there's nothing else like it in the world."

May 4

1864: Lt. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant, general-in-chief of all Union forces, moves the Army of the Potomac out of their winter encampments and 100,000 Union soldiers cross the Rapidan River in Virginia, kicking off the campaign that will set the stage for the defeat of Gen. Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia.

Union losses in the Overland Campaign - the bloodiest in American history - are heavy, but Grant's troops are replaceable. Lee's are not.

1916: To avoid a diplomatic break with the United States, Germany announces it will abandon its policy of unrestricted submarine warfare. Rather than continuing to indiscriminately sink all vessels in the British Isles, German subs will only torpedo those found to carry war materials.

Germany will reverse course in less than a year, sparking America's entry into World War I on April 6, 1917.

1917: After a nine-day crossing of the Atlantic through stormy seas, a detachment of destroyers commanded by Cmdr. Joseph K. Taussig arrives at Queenstown, Ireland (now known as Cobh). The destroyers will assist convoy escorts against German U-Boats, which are sinking a staggering 600,000 tons of shipping per month.

1945: Germany's new president, Grand Admiral Karl DOnitz sends envoys to Gen. Sir Bernard Montgomery's headquarters - a carpeted tent in Liineburg Heath, Germany - and sign the unconditional surrender of German air, land, and sea forces in the Netherlands, Denmark, and northwest Germany.

Meanwhile as the fighting rages on at Okinawa, the Japanese 32nd Army attempts - and fails - to make an amphibious assault behind American lines. A frenzy of kamikaze attacks on U.S. Navy send two destroyers and two rocket-armed amphibious ships to the bottom. Numerous other vessels are damaged.

1968: As soldiers of the 7th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) brave intense sniper fire and charge uphill towards fortified enemy positions in Vietnam's infamous Vietnam's A Shau Valley, a soldier discovers an enemy claymore. Platoon Leader Douglas B. Fournet orders his men to take cover while he charges forward to disarm the mine. He unsheaths a knife and attempts to cut the wire used to detonate the device, but it explodes. Fournet shields his teammates from the blast with his body and he is posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions.

1970: After days of violent protests and rioting sparked by Pres. Nixon's decision to begin military incursion into Cambodia, Ohio National Guard units open fire on protestors at Kent State University. In 13 seconds, four students lay dead and nine more are wounded.

1999: An Air Force F-16CJ Fighting Falcon shoots down a Serbian Air Force MiG-29 marking the U.S. military's fifth and final air-to-air kill of the NATO campaign. American pilots will not shoot down another enemy aircraft until 2017. Meanwhile, an AH-64 Apache attack helicopter crashes in Albania, killing the pilot and gunner - the first NATO fatalities of Operation ALLIED FORCE.

May 5

1862: Disappointed in the lack of progress of Maj. Gen. George B. McClellan's Peninsula Campaign, President Abraham Lincoln departs for Hampton Roads, Va. on the Treasury Department revenue cutter *Miami* to personally oversee operations. Over five days, the president - a former militia rifle company commander - directs the bombardment of Confederate positions and lands to conduct reconnaissance of the area with Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton and Secretary of the Treasury Salmon P. Chase.

1864: The bloody albeit inconclusive Battle of the Wilderness (Virginia) opens between Union Army forces under the command of Lt. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant and Maj. Gen. George G. Meade, and Confederate forces under Gen. Robert E. Lee. Fighting is grim: Casualties will be heavy on both sides. Union and Confederate generals will be killed. Wounded and trapped soldiers will be burned alive by a battle-sparked woods fire. Within two days, Grant will disengage and advance toward Spotsylvania Courthouse.

1916: Two companies of Marines from the transport USS *Prairie* (AD-5) land at Santo Domingo, beginning the United States' eight-year occupation of the Dominican Republic. The leathernecks provide protection for the U.S. Legation and Consulate, and occupy the nearby Fort San Geronimo.

1917: Eugene J. Bullard becomes the first black combat aviator, earning his wings with the French Air Service. The Columbus, Ga. native's father came to America from the Caribbean island of Martinique and his mother was a Creek indian. Bullard fled to Europe to escape racism in the United States and joined the French Foreign Legion as a machine gunner, seeing action in the Somme, Champagne, and Verdun campaigns before being wounded. After recovering, he joined the air service and earned his pilot's license. The "Black Swallow of Death" would fly 20 combat missions for the French - claiming two aerial kills - before war's end. He volunteered for the infantry when Germany invaded France again in 1940 and was wounded.

1945: A Japanese balloon bomb explodes in Bly, Oregon, killing a pastor, his wife, and five Sunday schoolchildren on the way to a picnic. The Japanese sent over 9,000 of these incendiary devices into the jet stream, hoping some would land in America and the small explosives would start forest fires or cause casualties. A few hundred of the world's first "intercontinental weapon" were observed in the United States, going as far inland as Iowa and Michigan, but the only casualties are the one explosion in Bly. The highly technical devices use altimeters and valves to control the hydrogen-filled balloons during the three-day, 8,000-mile flight from the east coast of Japan's Honshu island.

1961: At 9:34 am, U.S. Navy Commander (future rear admiral) Alan B. Shepard Jr.'s Mercury-Redstone rocket blasts off from Cape Canaveral, Fla. Shepard becomes the first American in space as his "Freedom 7" capsule carries him 116 miles above the Earth's surface. NASA's first manned space flight tests the ability of humans to withstand the intense g-forces during liftoff and re-entry as Shepard encounters 11.6 g's as he plummets to the surface during his 15 minute flight.

May 6

1942: Lt. Gen. Jonathan Wainwright unconditionally surrenders all US forces in the Philippines to the Japanese.

May 7

1873: Marines from the USS *Pensacola* and USS *Tuscarora* land at the Bay of Columbia to protect American citizens and interests as local groups fight for control of the Panamanian government.

1915: Just off the coast of southern Ireland, the submarine U-20 spots the massive ocean liner RMS Lusitania, steaming from New York and hoping to sneak through Germany's blockade of the British Isles . The U-boat fires a single torpedo at the ship and Lusitania sinks in just 18 minutes, taking 1,198 people — including 128 Americans — with her to the bottom.

While the British government maintained for years that Lusitania was purely a passenger liner, the secondary explosions which caused the vessel to sink so quickly may have been from the tons of ammunition secretly being transported from an allegedly neutral United States. The sinking of Lusitania will be a major factor in the United States declaring war on Germany two years later.

1942: The Battle of the Coral Sea begins in earnest between Allied (primarily U.S.) Naval forces and the Japanese Navy.

The battle — the first fought between opposing ships beyond visual range — is largely a carrier-air fight, and will result in the loss or damage of several American ships, including the loss of USS *Lexington,* scores of destroyed planes and hundreds of sailors and Marines killed. The Japanese will also suffer serious losses.

According to the U.S. Naval Historical Center, the battle "was an operational and strategic defeat for [Japan], the first major check on the great offensive they had begun five months earlier at Pearl Harbor."

1945: At 2:41 a.m. at Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force in Rheims, France, German general Alfred Jodl signs the unconditional surrender of all German forces, one week after Adolf Hitler commits suicide in Hitler's Berlin Bunker.

After nearly six years of brutal fighting, World War II has finally ended in Europe.

is+ 1954: Vietnamese general Vo Nguyen Giap decisively defeats the French military in the Battle of Dien Bien Phu. The Americans had been providing military support to the French in their attempt to hold the colony — in order to maintain a coalition against the Soviet Union in Western Europe.

The French withdraw from Vietnam after Dien Bien Phu, leaving the problem to the United States — setting the stage for the Vietnam War.

1962: The submarine USS *Ethan Allen* (SSBN-608) launches the only nuclear-tipped ballistic missile ever fired by the United States. The Polaris missile blasts out of the submerged sub and flies 1,000 nautical miles before detonating in the air near Johnson Island in the South Pacific. The FRIGATE BIRD test is one of over 30 nuclear tests conducted by the U.S. military in 1962.

Medal of Honor: On this date in *1942*, Chief Water Tender Oscar V. Peterson leads a repair party on the oiler USS *Neosho* during the Battle of the Coral Sea. With no regard for his own safety, Peterson sacrifices himself to contain damage in an attempt to save the ship.

When his fellow Marines become pinned down in a valley by a Japanese machine gun during the Battle of Okinawa *(1945),* Private First Class Albert E. Schwab single-handedly charges and eliminates two machine gun positions with his flame thrower before he is killed by enemy fire.

May 8

1846: In the first major battle of the Mexican War, U.S. Army forces under the command of Gen. (and future president) Zachary Taylor decisively defeat Mexican forces under Gen. Mariano Arista in the Battle of Palo Alto (Texas). The Mexicans will retreat to a seemingly more defensible position at Resaca de la Palma the following day, but Taylor will pursue and beat them badly there too.

1864: Union Army forces under the command of Lt. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant and Confederate forces under Gen. Robert E. Lee clash in the Battle of Spotsylvania Courthouse. The outcome at Spotsylvania Courthouse will be inconclusive and the casualties terribly heavy. In less than two weeks, Grant will again break contact and continue his advance toward Richmond.

1904: U.S. Marines land at Tangier, Morocco to protect the Belgian legation.

1911: U.S. Navy Capt. Washington I. Chambers places an order for two A-1 Triad floatplanes from the Curtiss aircraft company. Thus, May 8 becomes the official birthday of Naval Aviation.

1945: V-E Day: The unconditional surrender of German forces signed by Gen. Alfred Jodl at the "little red schoolhouse" (supreme allied headquarters in Reims, France) the previous day becomes official. Although clashes between the Wehrmacht and the Red Army will continue for another day, Nazi Germany has laid down their arms.

After nearly six years of fighting, claiming tens of millions of lives in the largest and bloodiest conflict the world had ever seen, the war in Europe is over.

1970: During an armed reconnaissance mission near Ban Ban, Laos, an AC-119K Stinger gunship begins raining down fire on enemy vehicles with their 20mm cannons and 7.62mm miniguns. Six anti-aircraft vehicles strike back, hammering the orbiting gunship with deadly fire. Air Force pilot, Capt. Alan D. Milacek manages to muscle the nearly crippled plane out of a dive and limps the bird back to Udorn Air Force Base in Thailand.

The crew lands safely, which is an incredible feat considering that 15 feet of the right wing was blown off, including the control surfaces. For their actions, the 10-man crew is awarded the Mackay Trophy for "the most meritorious flight of 1970."

1972: Following a massive invasion of South Vietnam by the North Vietnamese Army, Pres. Richard M. Nixon authorizes Operation LINEBACKER I, ordering the mining of North Vietnamese ports and interdiction operations against the Ho Chi Minh Trail to stop the flow of weapons to the communists.

Medal of Honor: On this date in 1942, Lt. **John J. Powers** tells his fellow dive bombers as they prepare to climb into their planes to attack the Japanese aircraft carrier *Shokaku* during the Battle of the Coral Sea, "Remember, the folks back home are counting on us. I am going to get a hit if I have to lay it on their flight deck."

President Franklin D. Roosevelt will tell the nation during one of his fireside chats in September that Powers flew "through a wall of bursting anti-aircraft shells and swarms of enemy planes. He dived almost to the very deck of the enemy carrier, and did not release his bomb until he was sure of a direct hit."

"He was last seen attempting recovery from his dive at the extremely low altitude of two hundred feet," said the president, "amid a terrific barrage of shell and bomb fragments, and smoke and flame and debris from the stricken vessel. His own plane was destroyed by the explosion of his own bomb. But he had made good his promise to lay it on the flight deck.'"

SBD Dauntless scout pilot Lt. (junior grade) **William E. Hall** attacks and destroys three enemy warplanes during the Battle of the Coral Sea and is wounded during the dogfight. The previous day, Hall assisted in the sinking of the Japanese carrier Shoho.

Meanwhile aboard USS *Yorktown* (CV-5), Lt. **Milton E. Ricketts** (who graduated alongside Lt. Jones from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1935) is leading a damage control party while Japanese pilots target the aircraft carrier. An enemy bomb falls right next to Ricketts and his men, exploding one deck below them. The blast kills and wounds several of Ricketts' team and although mortally wounded himself, Ricketts charges a fire fighting hose and works to extinguish the blaze until he perishes.

On this date in 1945, acting squad leader Private First Class **Anthony L. Krotiak** and his soldiers are engaged in a firefight on Luzon Island's Balete Pass. When Krotiak spots an enemy grenade thrown into their trench, he knocks his squad mates out of the way, jams the grenade into the ground with the butt of his rifle, then shields them from the blast with his body. Krotiak will die within moments.

When Lance Corporal **Miguel Keith's** outnumbered platoon was engaged in South Vietnam's Quang Ngai Province during an early morning attack in 1970, the already-wounded Marine charged into heavy fire, raining down fire that downed three and chased off the remaining two enemy soldiers in their failed attempt to rush the American command post. An enemy grenade wounds him again, but he ignores his serious wounds and charges once more at a force of 25 men, killing several more with his machine gun and breaking off the attack. Keith is hit again after his second charge, this time fatally.

May 9

1865: After learning that General Robert E. Lee had surrendered the previous month, Confederate Lt. Gen. Nathan Bedford Forrest surrenders his men at Gainesville, Ala.. Forrest orders his men to "submit to the powers to be, and to aid in restoring peace and establishing law and order throughout the land."

The infamous cavalry officer, whom Union general William Tecumseh Sherman would refer to as "that devil Forrest," is considered one of the most brilliant tacticians of the Civil War; a remarkable feat considering he enlisted in the Confederate Army as a private with no prior military experience.

1926: Naval aviators Lt. Commander Richard E. Byrd and Chief Aviation Pilot Floyd Bennett take off from Spitsbergen, Norway and head north. In about eight hours, they will report that they have reached the North Pole, becoming the first men to do so by air.

Congress will award both men the Medal of Honor for their flight, which remains surrounded by controversy as Byrd is reported to have said that an oil leak in their Fokker Trimotor aircraft during the nearly 16-hour flight may have caused the explorers to turn around prematurely. However in three years, Commander Byrd will - without a doubt - fly over the South Pole.

1941: 40 Allied ships steam west across the Atlantic, right into the jaws of a waiting wolfpack of German U-boats. *U-//0* and *U-201* make a coordinated attack on the convoy, sinking three freighters. British escort vessels score hits

on both subs, sending *U-201* back to German pens for repair. *U-//0* is forced to surface, and the captain orders his crew to abandon ship as it appears the destroyer HMS *Bulldog* is preparing to ram the sub.

British sailors quickly seize the opportunity to board the fatally wounded submarine instead, grabbing the Enigma cipher machine and German code book. The British can now read the German Navy's traffic - a secret so closely guarded that the United States isn't informed until 1943.

1942: 47 Royal Air Force Spitfire fighters launch from the deck of the American aircraft carrier USS *Wasp* and head for the island of Malta. When Canadian Pilot Officer Jerrold A. "Jerry" Smith notices that the long-range fuel tank necessary for him to reach the Allied airfield fails after takeoff, he circles around and requests permission to land on the carrier. Not being equipped with a tailhook for an arrested landing, Smith skids to a stop just six feet from the edge of the deck - making the first-ever carrier landing with a Spitfire.

Landing signal officer David McCampbell awards Smith a set of Naval aviator wings for the feat. After *Wasp* is sunk in the Pacific, Lt. Cmdr. McCampbell forms Fighter Squadron 15 (VF-15) and goes on to become the top Navy ace of all time.

1997: 31 years after being shot down over Hanoi, former prisoner of war Douglas B. "Pete" Peterson returns - as the first Ambassador of the United States to the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. In 1966, Capt. Peterson was an Air Force F-4C Phantom II pilot on his 67th combat mission of the Vietnam War and would spend the next six-and-a-half years as a prisoner.

Upon taking office, Ambassador Peterson makes resolving the POW/MIA issue his top priority.

May 10

1775: The famous Vermont guerrilla force the "Green Mountain Boys", commanded by Col. Ethan Allen, and state militiamen led by Col. Benedict Arnold catch the British troops at Fort Ticonderoga (present-day Ticonderoga, N.Y.) by surprise. The Americans charge into the fort, chasing off the lone sentry and begin disarming the sleeping defenders.

When the British commander demands to know under what authority are the men entering, Allen replies, "The Great Jehovah and the Continental Congress!" The strategic fort is captured without a shot fired. The cannon and armaments are sent to Boston where they will be used to break the British siege.

1797: The 55-gun heavy frigate USS *United States* is launched at Philadelphia, becoming the first commissioned ship of the U.S. Navy. The warship will see action during the Quasi-War with France, the Barbary Wars (see entry below), and the War of 1812 before she is seized by Confederate forces in 1861 and re-christened CSS *United States.*

1801: Following Thomas Jefferson's inauguration, Yusuf Karamanly - the Pasha of Tripoli - demands tribute from the United States to prevent the Barbary pirates from continuing their practice of taking hostages and capturing ships. President Jefferson refuses, and the Pasha declares war.

1863: Eight days after he is mistakenly shot by Confederate sentries following the Battle of Chancellorsville (Va.), Gen. Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson dies from pneumonia.

1865: Union cavalry troopers capture Jefferson Davis, the president of the Confederate States of America, near Irwinville, Ga. Davis is charged with treason and held at Fort Monroe, Va. for two years until President Andrew Johnson pardons him on Christmas Day.

The federal government drops their case against Jefferson in 1869. Prior to the Civil War, Col. Davis served in the Mexican-American War and Pres. Polk offered him a promotion to brigadier general, which Davis refused. He would also serve as a U.S. Senator and the Secretary of War.

1960: The nuclear-powered radar picket submarine USS *Triton* (SSRN-586) returns to port after completing the first-ever completely submerged circumnavigation of the Earth. Skippered by Capt. Edward L. Beach Jr. — a Navy Cross recipient and best-selling author of "Run Silent, Run Deep" — *Triton* has followed a trek closely paralleling that of the first-ever global circumnavigation led by Portugese captain Ferdinand Magellan in the 16th century. The submarine covers the 26,723 nautical mile journey in just 60 days and 21 hours, averaging 19 knots.

1969: Soldiers of the 101st Airborne Division move into the A Shau Valley for what would become an intense ten-day battle against North Vietnamese Army on Hill 937 - dubbed "Hamburger Hill." The Americans charge up the steep slopes 11 times before dislodging the heavily fortified defenders.

Although the U.S. forces inflict heavy casualties on the communists and survivors retreat into Laos, the U.S. military abandons the hill - which is retaken by the NVA four weeks later.

Following Hamburger Hill, the White House instructs its military commanders to avoid engagements that result in large American casualties as public support is dwindling for the war.

1972: After President Richard Nixon authorizes Operation LINEBACKER I bombing campaign of North Vietnam, U.S. Navy fighters have their busiest day of the war, shooting down six enemy MiGs. F-4J Phantom pilot Lt. Randall H. "Duke" Cunningham and his radio intercept officer, Lt. (j.g.) William P. "Irish" Driscoll, score two victories becoming the only aces of the Vietnam War, and the only U.S. aviators to ever accomplish the feat using missiles.

The men are themselves shot down over enemy territory as they return to the carrier, and the military has to scramble to save their aces. Cunningham is one of America's most highly decorated pilots, receiving the Navy Cross, two Silver Stars, 15 Air Medals, and the Purple Heart.

Medal of Honor: On May 10, 1863, Maj. Byron M. Cutcheon of the 20th Michigan infantry leads a charge during the Battle of Horseshoe Bend (Ky.). By war's end, he will receive a brevet promotion to Brigadier General of volunteers, and later becomes a U.S. Congressman.

During the Battle of Spotsylvania Court House in 1864, Capt. Abraham Arnold of the 5th U.S. Cavalry leads a gallant charge against a numerically superior enemy which "extricated his command from a perilous position in which it had been ordered." Arnold will later serve during the Indian Wars and leads the 2d U.S. Division in Cuba during the Spanish-American War.

That same day at Laurel Hill, Va., Sgt. Moses A. Luce of the 4th Michigan Infantry charges forward in the face of an advancing enemy to rescue a wounded friend and comrade, Sgt. Asher LaFleur, carrying him to safety. The 3rd Vermont Infantry's Col. Thomas 0. Seaver - in command of three regiments - attacks and occupies Confederate defensive works under "galling" enemy fire. Both Seaver and Moses become lawyers following the Civil War.

In 1866, Seaman Richard Bates, Seaman Thomas Burke, and Captain of the Afterguard (a rank now called a petty officer) John Brown rescue two drowning sailors off the coast of Maine. Bates is a native of Wales, Brown hails from Denmark, and Burke is a former Irishman.

And as the fighting rages on Okinawa in 1945, Navy corpsman **William D. Halyburton Jr.** charges through a "merciless barrage" of mortar, machinegun and sniper fire to assist a wounded Marine. Halyburton shields his comrade with his body while treating the fallen Marine, sacrificing himself so his patient could live.

May 11

1846: Three days after Gen. Zachary Taylor's forces defeat the Mexican Army in the Battle of Palo Alto, Pres. James K. Polk tells Congress: "Mexico has passed the boundary of the United States, has invaded our territory and shed American blood upon American soil."

The Mexican-American War - already underway - is formally declared within two days.

1864: During the Battle of Yellow Tavern, Condederate Maj. Gen. J.E.B. Stuart is shot by a dismounted Union cavalry trooper north of Richmond, Va. "The greatest cavalry officer ever foaled in America" is mortally wounded and will die the next day.

1889: An Army wagon train leaves Fort Grant loaded with $28,000 (nearly the equivalent of one million dollars today) in gold and silver coins to pay U.S. troops stationed in Arizona Territory, guarded by a dozen Buffalo Soldiers from the 24th Infantry and 10th Cavalry regiments. A band of highwaymen ambush the convoy and manage to make off with the money following a 30-minute firefight that wounds eight soldiers.

Sgt. Benjamin Brown and Cpl. Isaiah Mays are awarded the Medal of Honor, and eight soldiers are decorated with the Certificate of Merit Medal - the second-highest award for valor. The money is never found.

1927: A young air mail pilot named Capt. Charles A. Lindbergh touches down at St. Louis' Lambert Field after a 14-hour flight from San Diego to pick up the custom-built Ryan NYP that will hopefully carry the U.S. Air Service Reserve Corps aviator across the Atlantic Ocean. The race to perform the first nonstop Transatlantic flight has already claimed the lives of three air crews: French Col. Rene Fonck (the all-time Allied "ace of aces"), the U.S. Navy's Lt. Stanton Wooster and Lt. Cmdr. Noel Davis, and French war heroes Capt. Charles Nungesser and Francois Coli.

After celebrating with his St. Louis financiers, the *Spirit of St. Louis* departs for New York, just nine days away from the historical flight that will make Lindbergh a national hero.

1943: 3,000 7th Infantry Division soldiers land at Attu Island in the Territory of Alaska's Aleutian Islands to repel Japanese troops that landed in June of 1942. After a month of fighting under harsh arctic conditions, the Americans

finish off the remaining Japanese in hand-to-hand combat after a last-ditch Bansai charge. The Battle of Attu is the only land combat on American soil during World War II.

1945: As U.S. soldiers launch another attack against Japanese forces on Okinawa's Shuri Line, Japanese pilot Kiyoshi Ogawa's specially modified Mitsubishi Zero fighter slips through anti-aircraft fire and drops a 550-1b. bomb on the USS *Bunker Hill* (CV-17) before slamming his aircraft into the flight deck, igniting a fuel fire and causing several explosions that kill some 400 sailors and takes Adm. Marc Mitscher's flagship out of the war.

1957: President Dwight D. Eisenhower announces that the United States will work with South Vietnam to ensure the peaceful unification of Vietnam and continue to provide support in their fight against communism. At this point, the Military Assistance Advisory Group serving in Vietnam consists of only 700 men.

1961: President John F. Kennedy approves the deployment of 400 Special Forces soldiers (Green Berets) and 100 CIA operatives to Vietnam to train South Vietnamese forces. The Green Berets have served as advisors in Vietnam since 1957, but on this day, Pres. Kennedy authorizes Americans to lead clandestine attacks against North Vietnam.

Medal of Honor: As U.S. Army private John R. McKinney rests following his watch, 100 Japanese troops sneak up on a three-man machine gun position at Luzon Island's Dingalan Bay on this day in 1945. McKinney receives a glancing head blow from a Japanese saber. He grabs a rifle and bludgeons the sword-weilding foe before turning his attention to the machine gun, which has been captured by ten enemy soldiers - and is about to be turned on the Americans.

McKinney fires as he charges the position, finishing off the remaining enemy with his rifle butt upon reaching the pit. As mortar and rifle fire hammers his position, he uses his rifle (the machine gun being rendered inoperable) to "cut

down waves of the fanatical enemy." When the smoke clears, 40 Japanese bodies litter the battlefield. McKinney - "the Pacific War's Audie Murphy" - has single-handedly carried the day.

That same day at Okinawa's "Zebra Hill," 1st Lt. Seymour W. Terry of the 382nd Infantry Regiment systematically destroys pillbox after pillbox with satchel charges and white phosphorous grenades, shooting those that survived. Each time his platoons are pinned down throughout the day, Terry advances on the position and destroys it, leaving in his formidable wake numerous enemy positions, multiple machine guns, and dozens of dead bodies before he is mortally wounded by an enemy mortar.

May 12

1780: Gen. Benjamin Lincoln, commanding American forces at Charleston, S.C., surrenders to Gen. Sir Henry Clinton after a six-week siege. Although the fall of Charleston and capture of thousands of Continental Army soldiers is the largest setback of the war for the Americans, British operations in the Southern colonies will quickly prove to be the undoing of the king's men in North America.

1864: Gen. Ulysses S. Grant orders his forces to assault the Confederate salient known as the "Mule Shoe" during the Battle of Spotsylvania Court House. 15,000 Union soldiers break through, but Gen. Robert E. Lee quickly plugs the gaps and the Confederates counterattack. Over the next 20 hours, the two sides engage in intense close combat - much of it hand-to-hand. The carnage at "Bloody Angle" is some of the most brutal fighting of the Civil War with 9,000 Union and 8,000 Confederate casualties in just one day.

1865: Although President Andrew Johnson proclaimed an end to the Civil War three days ago, a Union force led by Col. John S. Ford attacks Confederate forces in the Battle of Palmito Ranch, near Brownsville, Tex. The Confederates repulse the attack, killing four of the attacking Union soldiers and capturing over 100, at the cost of only a handful of wounded and captured themselves. The one-sided engagement is the last encounter between organized Union and Confederate troops in the war.

1942: The German U-boat *U-507* torpedoes the SS *Virginia* at the mouth of --- the Mississippi River, sinking the 10,000-ton tanker and killing 26 sailors. The German sub sinks nine ships in the Gulf of Mexico on its two-month patrol.

[4]+ **1943:** After his capture by the British, German Gen. Hans-Jurgen von Arnim surrenders his Army Group Africa to the Allies in Tunisia. Hundreds of thousands of Axis forces are taken prisoner and the war in North Africa is over.

1968: Joe M. Jackson Medal of Honor

1975: In what is considered to be the last official action of the Vietnam War, Khmer Rouge forces seize the merchant ship SS *Mayaguez* off the coast of Cambodia. During the rescue operation, Marines boarded and secured the *Mayaguez* - the first such operation since 1826 - and the 39 prisoners were released. 41 Marines and airmen died assaulting nearby Kaoh Tang island where the prisoners were mistakenly believed to be held.

May 14

1st Lt. Waugh Medal of Honor

May 15

1862: Cpl. John F. Mackie becomes the first Marine awarded the Medal of Honor when the he mans the mans the guns of the ironclad USS *Galena* after most of the Naval gun crew are killed or wounded during the Battle of Drewry's Bluff.

1864: As 9,000 Union troops led by Maj. Gen. Franz Sigel march into Virginia's Shenandoah Valley, Confederate Maj. Gen. John C. Breckenridge musters a defense force that includes cadets from the nearby Virginia Military Academy. The cadets are held in reserve, but when the Union breaks the Confederate lines, Breckenridge declares "Put the boys in... and may God

forgive me for the order." Within moments, 47 cadets are wounded and ten lay dead in the Battle of New Market. Sigel's men retreat after taking heavy casualties from the outnumbered defenders.

1918: Privates Henry Johnson and Needham Roberts of the all-black "Harlem Hellfighters" become the first American soldiers to be awarded the Croix de Guerre - France's highest decoration for military valor. When a German raiding party attacks their outpost and captures Roberts, Johnson fights back with grenades, gun fire, his rifle butt, knife, and fists, rescuing his fellow soldier and forcing the Germans to retreat. Johnson is wounded 21 times in the fight, but is not awarded the Purple Heart until 1996 - decades after his passing - and is finally awarded the Medal of Honor in 2015.

1963: U.S. Air Force Maj. (future Col.) Leroy Gordon "Gordo" Cooper, Jr. blasts off aboard "Faith 7", the final Mercury mission. Cooper will spend over 34 hours in space - circling the globe 22 times - before a short circuit kills the capsule's automated control system. Cooper has to use the constellations and his watch to manually fly the capsule back to Earth, splashing down just four miles from the recovery ship in the Pacific Ocean.

The former U.S. Marine private (serving in the Presidential Honor Guard in Washington, D.C.) ultimately was commissioned an Army second lieutenant, before his days as an Air Force fighter jock and test pilot.

May 16

1899: 22 U.S. Army scouts come across a group of some 600 Filipino rebels attempting to destroy a bridge during the Philippine Insurrection. While under heavy fire, the scouts charge across the bridge and rout the enemy force. The following day, the Americans cross the bridge and capture San Isidro, the capital of the insurrection. 15 scouts from the Battle of San Isidro are awarded the Medal of Honor.

1863: Maj. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant's Army of the Tennessee clashes with three Confederate divisions led by Lt. Gen. John C. Pemberton in the Battle of Champion Hill (Miss.). Pemberton's men take heavy casualties and have to retreat 20 miles to Vicksburg, where they will surrender to Grant after a 40-day siege.

1919: Eight years before Charles Lindbergh's famous crossing of the Atlantic, Lt. Cmdr. Albert C. "Puffy" Read and his crew of five depart Newfoundland on the first-ever transatlantic flight. Their Curtiss NC-4 flying boat will land in the Azores the following day and reaches Lisbon, Portugal seven days later.

1927: Although a peace treaty ended the Nicaraguan Civil War earlier in the month, a crowd of 75 Liberal rebels attack a platoon of U.S. Marines, led by Capt. Richard B. Buchanan. Two Marines - including Capt. Buchanan - are killed in the Battle of La Paz Centro. In a few days, the Marines will track down and kill General Cabulla, the man believed responsible for the attack.

1947: 101 B-29 Superfortress bombers conduct Strategic Air Command's first maximum-effort mission, making a mock mass bomber attack on New York.

1951: 150,000 communist soldiers cross the Soyang River and manage to push back UN forces on the eastern portion of the peninsula some 20 miles. The Chinese Spring Offensive - the last all-out offensive campaign for the Chinese in the Korean War - fails as the Eighth Army, led by new commander Lt. Gen. James Van Fleet, drives the communists back to the 38th Parallel, where the battle lines will remain largely static until the Armistice.

1968: In South Vietnam's Quang Tri Province, the North Vietnamese Army launches an attack against 3rd Battalion, 4th Marines. After having crossed enemy fire to reach a wounded Marine, Navy corpsman Don E. Ballard spots an enemy grenade that lands in the midst of Ballard, his patient, and four other Marines. Ballard leaps on the grenade, but fortunately for the Americans, the cheaply produced communist explosive fails to detonate.

Ballard calmly gets up and returns to his work - and will be awarded the Medal of Honor. On the 50th anniversary of his action, Ballard is one of only 71 surviving recipients.

May 17

1943: The crew of the B-17F Flying Fortress named *Memphis Belle* lands safely in England after a bombing raid on Lorient, France. Capt. Robert K Morgan's crew have completed their 25th mission of the war, a remarkable feat considering crews averaged between eight and 12 missions before being shot down. The *Memphis Belle* dropped 60 tons of bombs and her gunners shot down eight German fighters during her tour of duty. Although virtually every part of the plane is replaced at least once including both wings and nine engines - none of the crew are seriously injured. Morgan will fly another 26 missions against Japan in ha B-29 Superfortress.

75 years to the day after her final bombing run, a fully restored *Belle* is unveiled at the National Museum of the Air Force in Wright-Patterson Air Force Base.

1962: When communist Pathet Lao forces mass near the border during the Laotian Crisis, Thailand requests assistance from the United States. President John F. Kennedy deploys a 3,000-man Marine Expeditionary Brigade to Udorn, Thailand in a show of force.

1968: When Private First Class Robert C. Burke's company comes under heavy mortar, machine gun, rocket-propelled grenade, and rifle fire, the Marine grabs his machine gun and charges single-handedly against the large fortified enemy position. As Burke maneuvers from one position to another, suppressing enemy bunkers and neutralizing machine gun crews, his fellow Marines are able to move forward and evacuate their wounded. When his automatic weapon malfunctions, he picks up a weapon from a casualty and keeps firing. Once his machine gun is operational, he moves to an exposed position and pours heavy fire into the treeline, but will be mortally wounded.

1987: An Iraqi aircraft fires two Exocet anti-ship missiles at the frigate USS *Stark* (FFG-31) while on patrol in the Persian Gulf during the Iraq-Iran War. Both missiles hit the American warship, igniting a blaze that kills 37 sailors and injures 21.

May 18

[47] 1775: Future turncoat Col. Benedict Arnold leads a successful surprise attack against a British fort and the adjacent shipyards at St. Johns, Canada. Among Arnold's prizes is the British sloop HMS *George* which he renames "Enterprise," the first of eight so-named American Navy ships.

1846: Gen. Zachary Taylor's Army of Occupation captures the fortified city of Matamoros during the Mexican-American War.

1863: Union Army forces under the command of Maj. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant move against the city of Vicksburg, Mississippi. Vastly outnumbered Confederate forces under Lt. Gen. John Pemberton fall back on prepared defenses, and Pemberton's army is quickly surrounded. Grant strikes Pemberton's positions the following day hoping to destroy his army before it is properly positioned. Losses are heavy among the ranks of the assault forces.

The siege of Vicksburg, which will last until July 4, has begun.

1902: Marines from the gunboat USS *Ranger* land at Panama City to protect American citizens.

1916: Kiffin Rockwell, one of the first American volunteers for the Frech Air Service's *Escadrille Americaine*, overcomes engine troubles with his Nieuport fighter and shoots down a German plane over the Alsace battlefield - the first aerial victory by an American pilot during World War I.

When war broke out, Kiffin and brother Paul volunteered for the French Air Service, and joined the French Foreign Legion as infantry instead of waiting stateside for a response. Both brothers will be wounded in combat.

1945: On Okinawa, the Sixth Marine Division has captured most of Sugar Loaf Hill - a 50-ft. tall, 300-yard long, heavily fortified hill. It takes the Marines 11 bloody assaults to finally secure the terrain, and after 12 days, over 1,600 Marines lay dead and 7,400 are wounded.

1953: On his last day of combat, U.S. Air Force Capt. Joseph C. McConnell shoots down three enemy MiG-15 fighters. McConnell is the first American triple ace of the Korean War and his 16 victories are the most of any U.S. pilot (two Soviet Air Force pilots claim 22 kills). During World War II, McConnell flew 60 missions over Europe as a navigator on a B-24 Liberator bomber.

1969: A Saturn V rocket carrying Col. Thomas P. Stafford (USAF), Cmdr. John W. Young (USN), and Cmdr. Eugene A. "Gene" Cernan (USN) lifts off from the Kennedy Space Center. The Apollo 10 crew are the second to orbit the moon, conducting a "dress rehearsal" of the planned lunar landing two months later.

May 19

i' 1848: The Mexican government agrees to the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, officially ending the Mexican-American War and ceding over 500,000 square miles of territory to the United States. Over 1,500 Americans gave their lives in combat and another 10,000 died from illness during the two-year war.

All of present-day California is now United States territory, as is Nevada and Utah, most of Arizona, and portions of New Mexico, Colorado, and Wyoming.

1855: Marines from the screw frigate USS *Powhatan* land in Shanghai to protect American lives and property during the Taiping Rebellion.

1942: After evading capture by Japanese forces in China and returning safely to the United States, President Franklin D. Roosevelt awards Brig. Gen. James H. "Jimmy" Doolittle the Medal of Honor for leading the Doolittle Raid against Japan.

1944: The crew of destroyer escort USS *England* (DE-635) detects the Japanese submarine *1-16* as the vessel attempts to deliver supplies to enemy troops on Bougainville Island. *England's crew sinks the sub with Hedgehog mortars, scoring their first of a remarkable six Japanese submarine kills in 12 days.*

After sinking the most subs by any ship in history, Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Ernest J. King declares, "There'll always be a *England* in the United States Navy."

1960: Air Force Maj. (future Maj. Gen.) Robert M. White pilots his North American X-15 rocket-powered aircraft to an altitude of 108,000 feet (20.6 miles). Prior to becoming the first human to reach Machs 4, 5, and 6 (over 4,000 miles per hour), White flew combat missions in World War II and Korea, and would earn the Air Force Cross (the service's second-highest award for valor, behind the Medal of Honor) on one of his 70 missions over North Vietnam.

May 21

1927: Little-known Air Mail pilot and U.S. Air Service Reserve Corps captain Charles A. Lindbergh touches down at Paris' Le Bourget Aerodrome after his treacherous nonstop 33 1/2 hour flight over the Atlantic Ocean — a feat made even more remarkable considering Lindbergh made the flight using dead reckoning, since there were no navigational aids. 150,000 French citizens are on-hand to witness perhaps the most famous flight in history.

The race to perform the first nonstop Transatlantic flight had recently claimed the lives of three air crews: French Col. Rene Fonck (the all-time Allied "ace of aces"), the U.S. Navy's Lt. Stanton Wooster and Lt. Cmdr. Noel Davis, and French war heroes Capt. Charles Nungesser and Francois Coli.

1944: As the U.S. military prepares for the invasion of the Mariana Islands, a massive explosion wipes out six landing ships and crews work frantically for 24 hours to control the blaze. The government orders a press blackout of the

disaster. The event was classified and to this day, not much is known of the West Loch Disaster. 196 are killed and hundreds are wounded, but the actual number of casualties could be much higher.

1945: Desmond Doss becomes the only conscientious objector to earn the Medal of Honor. Already wounded four times and a two-time recipient of the Bronze Star with Valor device for actions on Guam and the Philippines, the medic had famously carried 75 wounded soldiers to safety on Hacksaw Ridge just days before. On this day during intense fighting on Okinawa's Shuri Line, Doss was hit badly and was in the process of being carted off the battlefield when he spots a more seriously injured solder. Doss crawls off the litter and instructs his fellow soldiers to treat the other soldier instead. He ties a rifle to his shattered arm and painfully crawls 300 yards to the aid station.

He will be awarded the Medal of Honor and his actions inspire the 2016 film *Hacksaw Ridge.*

1951: Private First Class Joseph C. Rodriguez engaged in a "whirlwind assault" against a fortified hostile force on a hill near Munye-ri, Korea. Taking fire from the front and left flank, Rodriguez charges up the rocky hill through heavy fire, knocking out machine guns and foxholes with grenades as he drives forward. When the dust settles, the enemy is broken and 15 bodies lay dead from his "whirlwind assault."

After he is awarded the Medal of Honor by Pres_ Harry S. Truman, Rodriguez remains in the Army. After serving in Vietnam, he retires as a colonel in 1980.

1957: 30 years to the day after Lindbergh's famous ride, Air Force major and Korean War jet ace Robbie Risner flies the same route taken by "Lucky Lindy." Risner's F-100 Super Sabre completes the trip in just 6 hours and 38 minutes, setting a transatlantic speed record.

1966: During an intense firefight that had claimed the lives of several of his fellow cavalry troopers, David C. Dolby's dying platoon leader ordered him to lead the unit's withdrawal. Dolby evacuates the wounded - carrying one to safety through enemy fire - and organizes covering fire. He neutralizes several

enemy machine guns with his rifle and then crawls forward to mark the positions of bunkers for air strikes. He remained in an exposed position to call in artillery support. For his selfless actions, Dolby is awarded the Medal of Honor and will return for four more tours in Vietnam.

1969: During a search-and-clear operation near South Vietnam's Tam Ky region, Spec. 4 Santiago J. Erevia charged forward through intense enemy fire from four bunkers pinned down his platoon. He crawls forward to the first position, killing the enemy with a grenade, and repeats the act on a second and third. Out of grenades, he moves to the last bunker, eliminating the last position with point-blank rifle fire. Erevia is awarded the Medal of Honor in 2014.

2003: U.S. forces capture Aziz Salih Nuhman - the "King of Diamonds" from the deck of most wanted Iraqis playing cards- in Baghdad, Iraq. Nuhman was one of Saddam Hussein's "dirty dozen," wanted for brutal murder and torture of Iraqis prior to the U.S. invasion. He will be returned to Iraq in 2011 and is executed.

May 22

1804: The "Corps of Discovery," a group of about four dozen Army volunteers led by Capt. Meriwether Lewis and 2nd Lt. William Clark, departs St. Charles, Mo. and heads west along the Missouri River, marking the official start of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. Altogether, the company will travel some 8,000 miles as they map and explore the recently acquired Louisiana Purchase and find a route to the Pacific Ocean for President Thomas Jefferson.

1863: During the Siege of Vicksburg (Miss.), Gen. Ulysses S. Grant orders an assault against the formidable Confederate heights. Although the Union soldiers knew there would be little chance of surviving the mission, twice as many volunteers (which had to be single) stepped forward than what was asked for. Following a massive four-hour bombardment by hundreds of
---. artillery pieces, the men of the so-called "Forlorn Hope Detatchment" charged forward with planks and ladders to defeat the moat and embankment wall.

The 150 volunteers are annihilated; half are killed in the four-hour battle. 502 Union soldiers are killed during Grant's assault on the Confederate positions, with another 2,550 wounded, and 147 missing with marginal losses to the defenders. 89 of the surviving "forlorn" storming party are awarded the Medal of Honor.

1912: The aviation arm of the U.S. Marine Corps is born with the arrival of 1st Lt. Alfred A. Cunningham at the Naval Aviation Camp, Annapolis, Maryland. There, Cunningham will begin his flight training, and with less than three hours of instruction, he will solo in a Wright Model B-1 biplane.

1944: With the Allies in the final preparation stages for the invasion of Normandy, the U.S. Eighth and Ninth Air Forces, supported by Royal Air Force warplanes and French resistance fighters begin Operation CHATANOOGA CHOO CHOO — a series of massive air attacks against Axis rail infrastructure. Over the next few days, the French skies were full of bombers which hammered the German railroads, marshaling yards, and vital bridges while fighter-bombers attacked rolling stock and destroyed hundreds of the irreplaceable locomotives.

The attacks devastated Nazi Germany's logistics in northern France and prove to the point that it takes several weeks to move units from Calais to defensive positions — far too late to stop the invasion force.

1945: As the threat of Cold War with the Soviets begins to materialize following the end the war in Europe, the U.S. military begins recruiting and evacuation of valuable German rocket scientists and their families. Some 1,600 scientists, technicians, and engineers begin work for the United States, most notably Wernher von Braun - the father of American rocket technology and space science.

1947: Two years to the day after Operation PAPERCLIP begins, the United States launches its first ballistic missile. The dismally inaccurate Corporal E, a primitive (by today's standards) guided missile capable of hitting targets 75 miles away with a conventional or tactical nuclear device, will not be fielded

until 1955. It will also become the first U.S. missile system marketed to foreign militaries and remains in service for U.S. troops stationed in Western Europe until 1964.

6 **1968:** The fast-attack submarine USS *Scorpion* (SSN-589) is mysteriously lost at sea several hundred miles off the Azores. All hands — 99 sailors — perish. *Scorpion* is the second American nuclear sub to sink, after USS *Thresher* (SSN-593) goes down in 1963.

May 23

1862: Confederate forces under the command of Maj. Gen. Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson strike, outmaneuver, and — with textbook coordination of infantry, cavalry, and artillery — decisively defeat Union Army forces under Col. John R. Kenly at Front Royal, Virginia.

1943: The most decorated battleship in the U.S. Navy, USS *New Jersey* (BB-62), is commissioned at Philadelphia. "The Big J" earned 19 battle stars and numerous other commendations during her 48 years of service, which covered actions in the Pacific Theater of World War II as Adm. William "Bull" Halsey's flagship, Korea, Lebanon, the Persian Gulf, and the only battleship to provide Naval artillery support during the Vietnam War.

1944: In Italy, W Corps at the Anzio Beachhead begin their breakout. Fighting is intense - the 3rd Infantry Division suffers nearly 1,000 casualties, the most by any American division in a single day of the entire war, and the German troops defending Cisterna are annihilated in house-to-house combat.

The breakout is a success. Rome will be in Allied hands in days.

1945: Gen. Dwight Eisenhower orders the arrest of German military and government leaders. Meanwhile, top SS commander Heinrich Himmler uses a hidden cyanide capsule to kill himself two days after being captured by the Soviet Army.

1967: U.S. congressman James Howard reads a letter sent from a Marine serving in Vietnam stating that most of the casualties in the Battle of Hill 881 were due to malfunctions with the unit's new M-16 rifle. The weapon is shorter and lighter than the M-14 it replaced earlier in the year as the U.S. military's standard service rifle, but does not come with adequate cleaning kit as the new rifle is billed as self-cleaning. Serial reports of dead soldiers and Marines found next to their malfunctioning M-16s anger the American public, until improvements to the rifle and ammunition make the weapon far more reliable.

50 years later, the M-16/M-4 platform remains the standard rifle of the U.S. military.

May 24

1818: Gen. (future U.S. pres.) Andrew Jackson and his expeditionary army march into Spanish-controlled Florida, easily capturing the Gulf-coastal town of Pensacola. Col. Jose Masot, the Spanish governor, retreats to nearby Fort San Carlos de Barrancas (originally built by the British as "the Royal Navy Redoubt") where he briefly puts up a token resistance — to save face — before hoisting the white flag there, too.

1861: Less than 24 hours after Virginia secedes from the Union, a regiment of zouave infantry consisting of volunteer fire fighters from New York City land at Alexandria and occupy the town. The regiment's commander (and personal friend of President Abraham Lincoln), Col. Elmer E. Ellsworth, becomes the first Union officer killed in the Civil War when he is shot while taking down a Confederate flag.

1939: A day after the submarine USS *Squalus* sinks during a series of test dives off the coast of Portsmouth, N.H., the submarine salvage ship USS *Falcon* arrives and begins rescue operations. Although 26 sailors drowned instantly when the submarine went down, divers use a newly designed rescue chamber to save the remaining 33 crewmembers. Four divers are awarded the

Medal of Honor for the world's first rescue of a submarine crew in deep water, and *Squalus* will be raised and recommissioned as USS *Sailfish* - seeing action in the Pacific Theater of World War II.

1943: One quarter of the German U-boat fleet is sent to the bottom in one month, thanks to breaking the new German Enigma radio code, modern radar, new long range patrol aircraft, aggressive tactics, and escort carriers. The *Kriegsmarine* is losing more ships than they are sinking. Adm. Karl DOnitz orders his U-boats to break off operations in the North Atlantic, declaring "We had lost the battle of the Atlantic."

German U-boats had sunk thousands of Allied ships, keeping millions of tons of war material off the battlefield, but the tide has turned.

1944: Sgt. Sylvester Antolak charges alone across 200 yards of flat, coverless terrain as the 3rd Infantry Division fights to expand the beachhead at Anzio. Antolak is hit multiple times and pins his weapon under his only remaining functional arm. Amazingly, he survives the charge, killing two Germans with his submachine gun and forces the remaining 10 to surrender. Rather than allow his wounds to be treated, he leads another charge against a German fortification and is killed - earning a posthumous Medal of Honor.

Meanwhile, fellow 15th Infantry Regiment soldier Pvt. James H. Mills covers his platoon's advance, moving from position to position while killing and capturing several Germans along the way. Realizing that an assault against the German strongpoint would result in heavy American losses, he volunteers to draw enemy fire on himself from an exposed position. His plan works; the Germans concentrate their guns on Mills while his fellow close in on the position, capturing 22 and taking the objective without a casualty. Mills is also awarded the Medal of Honor.

A third 15th Regiment soldier earned the Medal of Honor this day at Anzio (the outfit will conclude the war with 16 recipients, including Audie Murphy). Pvt. 1st Class Henry Schauer, armed with his Browning Automatic Rifle, braves fire from five enemy snipers concentrated on the exposed American and systematically kills each German marksman. Later that day, he ignores

enemy artillery and machine gun fire hammering his position, wiping out a German machine gun crew. The following day, the Germans try throwing a tank and machine gun at Schauer, but learn that not even armor can break his concentration as he dispatches another machine gun with deadly accuracy.

1962: U.S. Navy Lt. Cmdr. Malcolm "Scott" Carpenter orbits the earth three times in his "Aurora 7" space capsule, spending nearly four hours above the Earth's surface performing science experiments. When Carpenter accidentally bumps his hand against the cockpit wall, he discovers that the mysterious "fireflies" spotted by John Glenn during his orbital mission are in fact ice particles knocked loose from the capsule.

May 25

1942: Cmdr. Joseph Rochefort and his Station HYPO cryptanalysts have broken the Japanese Navy's main radio code, named JN-25b. When they discover Japan's planned assault at a facility codenamed "AF," they suspect the target is the U.S. base at Midway, and secretly instruct the radio operators to announce over radio that they suffered a breakdown of their water purification system, which Japanese intelligence intercepts. Japan falls for the trick and reports over JN-25b that AF is short on water.

The U.S. Navy now knows the location, date, and strength of the attack and sets a trap for the Japanese. On this day, two companies of Marine Raiders land on the remote island to reinforce the garrison while warplanes are deployed and submarines take up their patrol positions. The aircraft carrier USS *Yorktown,* damaged during the Battle of the Coral Sea and thought by the Japanese to be taken out of action, is undergoing frantic repairs as she sails for Midway.

1945: The Joint Chiefs of Staff meet in Washington and approve plans for Operation DOWNFALL - the invasion of Japan, which is set for November 1. Casualty estimates for the American-led invasion are in the millions. Meanwhile, 464 B-29 "Superfortress" heavy bombers target Tokyo, burning 16 square miles of the city.

1953: The North American F-100 "Super Sabre" makes its first flight, with test pilot George Welch pushing the jet to Mach 1.03. The sleek new warplane is the first Air Force fighter capable of reaching supersonic speeds at level flight. An Army Air Corps pilot with 16 victories during World War II, Welch is one of two pilots able to get airborne and engage Japanese aircraft during the attack on Pearl Harbor. He was recommended for the Medal of Honor for his actions on December 7th, but having taken off without orders, he only receives the Distinguished Flying Cross. While serving as an instructor and test pilot for North American during the Korean War, he reportedly shot down several MiG-15 aircraft, but again did so against orders, so he did not receive credit for the kills. Welch will perish in a crash while performing tests on the F-100 in 1954.

That same day, the specially built 11-inch gun nicknamed "Atomic Annie" fires a nuclear warhead 10,000 yards downrange as 3,200 soldiers and civilians are on hand to witness the United States' only nuclear artillery test. The projectile is similar in design and yield (15 kilotons) to the "Little Boy" dropped on Hiroshima.

1961: Less than a month after the first American blasts off into space, President John F. Kennedy declares his intention to put a man on the moon in less than ten years and asks Congress to make the space program a high priority. Although Kennedy does not live to see it, his dream comes true when Apollo 11 lifts off from the space center named in his honor on July 16, 1969.

1971: Maj. William E. Adams (U.S. Army) volunteers to fly his medevac helicopter to a beseiged fire base in Kontum Province to rescue three wounded soldiers. Adams flies through heavy ant-aircraft fire and lands so the casualties could be loaded. When he takes off, his helicopter is hammered by enemy fire and explodes, killing all aboard. Adams is posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

Adams' crew chief, Specialist 4 John W. Littleton was rescued by Adams the day before after being shot down in a crash that killed the pilot and a crewmember.

1973: Capt. Charles Conrad, Jr., Cmdr. Paul J. Weitz and Cmdr. Joseph P. Kerwin blast off aboard a Saturn IB rocket. The all-Navy crew are the first to visit the Skylab space station, already in orbit. The astronauts spend a record 28 days in space, making repairs and conducting science experiments until their successful recovery by USS *Ticonderoga* (CV-14) near San Diego.

May 26

1917: U.S. Army Gen. John J. "Black Jack" Pershing is named commander-in-chief of the American Expeditionary Force, which is destined for European combat the following year.

1942: The Northrop P-61 Black Widow night fighter makes its first flight. The twin-boom P-61 is the first aircraft to carry radar and the U.S. military's first night fighter. The warplane saw service in both the Atlantic and Pacific Theaters, and is widely believed to be credited with the last "kill" of an enemy aircraft in World War II, when a Japanese "Tojo" fighter pilot flies into the water while maneuvering to evade a Black Widow. Another P-61 pilot performed aerobatics over the Cabanatuan prison camp to distract Japanese soldiers while Rangers infiltrated the camp and rescued 500 American prisoners of war.

1958: Navy Hospital Corpsman 1st Class William R. Charette selects which remains of unidentifiable service members from World War II will be interred at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier from four identical caskets in a ceremony on the deck of the cruiser USS *Canberra* (CAG-2). Charette is the only enlisted sailor and recipient of the Medal of Honor still on active service. The "unknowns" were disinterred from cemeteries in Europe, Africa, Hawaii, and the Philippines.

1961: An Air Force B-58 Hustler bomber - the first operational bomber capable of sustaining Mach 2 - flies from New York to Paris in three hours and 19 minutes, setting a new record and averaging 1,386 miles per hour.

2008: Staff Sergeant Leroy A. Petry and his fellow Rangers come under enemy fire while attempting to capture a high-value Taliban target in Paktia Province, Afghanistan. Petry, already wounded in both legs by an enemy bullet, sees an enemy grenade land near his team's position and throws it back. But the grenade explodes just after being thrown, severing Petry's hand and spraying him with sharpnel. He applies a tourniquet and coordinates support for his soldiers on the radio. Petry will receive an advanced prosthetic hand and rejoin the Rangers, returning to Afghanistan for his eighth deployment before becoming the second living recipient of the Medal of Honor since the Vietnam War.

May 27

1967: *USS John F. Kennedy* (CV 67) — the last conventionally powered American aircraft carrier — is launched.

1998: When a Cessna passenger plane crashes 10,000 feet up in the mountains west of Anchorage, Alaska, an HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopter crew from the Air Force's 210th Rescue Squadron races to the scene. Over the next seven hours, the pilots fight high winds and zero-visibility conditions, looking for a spot to land. When a window appears in the clouds, the chopper lands and Pararescuemen extract the passengers from the wrecked aircraft.

For their heroic rescue, the crew of Air Force Rescue 470 are awarded the MacKay Trophy for the "most meritorious flight of the year."

May 28

1918: Lt. Gen. Robert Lee Bullard's soon-to-be-famous 1st Infantry Division ("the Big Red One") launches the first major attack by U.S. forces during World War I, capturing the French town of Cantigny from a far-more experienced German Eighteenth Army led by Gen. Oskar von Hutier.

Following a two-hour artillery bombardment, whistles are blown along the American trench lines, and soldiers from the division's 28th Infantry Regiment — destined to become known as the "Lions of Cantigny" — climb over the top and into the open. Supported by French aircraft, tanks, and mortar and flame-thrower teams — the Americans advance over a distance of 1,600 yards in three waves at marked intervals behind a creeping artillery barrage. Soon, the German lines are defeated and the town is in American hands.

The Germans — who, like so many others throughout history, had dismissed the Americans as not having the stomach for real fighting — develop a quick respect for their new foe.

1959: Two years before humans would reach space, two rhesus monkeys named Able and Baker blast off from Cape Canaveral aboard a Jupiter rocket, reaching a height of 360 miles above the earth. The monkeys splashed down safely in the Atlantic after traveling 1,700 miles in 16 minutes.

1980: The first female cadets graduate from the U.S. Military Academy (West Point), the Naval Academy, the Air Force Academy, and the Coast Guard Academy.

May 29

1780: British cavalry soldiers and Loyalists led by Lt. Col. Banastre Tarleton attack Abraham Buford's force of Continental Army soldiers near Lancaster, S.C.. As Buford raises the white flag, Tarleton's horse is shot and killed, trapping the British officer. His Radiers respond by ferociously attacking the Americans, killing over 100 and seriously wounding many more.

News of "Bloody Ban's" atrocity inspires many Americans to support the Revolution and "Tarleton's Quarter" (take no prisoners) becomes a rallying cry for Continental soldiers.

1781: Off the coast of Nova Scotia, the frigate USS *Alliance* engages two British sloops-of-war: HMS *Atalanta* and HMS *Trepassy. Alliance* was still in the process of repairing damage from by storms and the larger vessel was

hampered by a lack of wind. Capt. John Barry is seriously wounded by a blast of grapeshot and eventually has to be taken below decks to treat his wounds. When his executive officer asks Barry's permission to surrender, the famous skipper resumes command. The wind picks back up and after a series of devastating broadsides, both British vessels strike their colors.

Britain will offer Barry 100,000 pounds and command of any frigate to switch sides, but the "Father of the U.S. Navy" replies that he would refuse even if they offered him the entire British treasury and command of the Royal Navy.

4- **1944: USS** *Block Island* (CVE-21) becomes the only U.S. aircraft carrier sunk in the Atlantic when a German *U-boat* slips through the escort carrier's defensive screen and hits the flattop with two torpedoes. Only six sailors perish in the attack as 951 of *Block Islands* crew are rescued, but two of the six F4F Wildcat pilots in the air during the attack will survive after ditching when they fail to reach the Canary Islands. The hunter-killer group sinks *U-549* shortly after the sub fatally wounds the carrier.

That same day, Capt. William W. Galt of the 168th Infantry Regiment volunteers to personally lead his battalion after two failed attacks against German positions at Villa Crocetta in Italy. Standing exposed on the turret of a tank destroyer, Galt led the charge as he used his machine gun and g_ enades to kill some 40 Germans with grenades and his machine gun. Galt was mortally wounded by a German 88mm shell and was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

1951: Private First Class Whitt L. Moreland of 1st Battalion, 5th Marines volunteered to join a rifle platoon in an attack against an enemy-held hill near Kwagch'i-Dong, Korea. After capturing their first objective, Moreland led a group of Marines on an assault against an enemy bunker 400 yards away. When the communists attacked his party with a volley of grenades, Moreland kicked several grenades away, but slipped and fell while attempting to neutralize the last grenade. Realizing that he would not have enough time to safely get rid of the grenade, he rolled on top of it and shielded his comrades from the blast with his body. For his sacrifice, PFC Moreland was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

2002: FBI Director (and former Marine platoon commander) Robert Mueller acknowledges that his organization did not follow up on red-flag leads that may have prevented the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

May 30

1866: "Decoration Day" — the predecessor to Memorial Day — is first observed by order of U.S. Army Gen. John A. Logan, who designated the day "for the purpose of strewing with flowers or otherwise decorating the graves of comrades who died in defense of their country." Maj. Gen. (future U.S. pres.) James A. Garfield presides over ceremonies at Arlington Cemetery (the former estate of Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee), and approximately 5,000 participants decorate the graves of both Union and Confederate dead — about 20,000 of them — buried on the grounds.

1904: As seven warships of the European and South Atlantic squadrons sit anchored off the North African coast, Marines from the armored cruiser USS *Brooklyn* (ACR-3), commanded by Capt. John T. "Handsome Jack" Myers, land at Tangiers, Morocco to reinforce the guard force at the American Consulate. The outlaw Raisuli had captured Greek-American expatriate Ion Perdicaris, holding him for ransom, raising tensions between Raisuli and the Sultan.

1942: The B-17F "Flying Fortress" bomber makes its first flight. The Boeing B-17 entered service back in 1935, but the "F" model has several hundred improvements to the airframe. Over 3,000 are built.

That same day, the U.S. Army accepts delivery of the world's first production helicopter - the Sikorsky R-4. Designer Igor Sikorsky flew the R-4 over 700 miles in a record-setting cross-country trip from the factory in Connecticut to Wright Field (modern-day Wright-Patterson Air Force Base) in Dayton, Ohio. Pilots use the new aircraft to rescue several downed aircrews and sailors in addition to support roles during World War II.

And in the Pacific, Rear Adm. Frank J. Fletcher's Task Force 17 departs Pearl Harbor following 72 hours of frantic repairs to USS *Yorktown* (CV-5). Damaged in the Battle of the Coral Sea, original estimates said that *Yorktown* required months of repairs to place the warship back in full service. But the Navy needs all the flattops it can get for the upcoming battle at Midway, so the ships sail west (as crews continue their repairs) to join Rear Adm. Raymond A. Spruance's task force with *Enterprise* and *Hornet* already enroute .

1943: After a last-ditch bonsai charge led by Col. Yasuyo Yamasaki, resulting in fierce hand-to-hand fighting, U.S. and Canadian forces have secured the Alaskan island of Attu. Only 28 of the original 8,000-man Japanese occupation force are captured alive. There will be another amphibious landing at Kiska Island in August, but the troops fmd the island deserted. The brutally cold Aleutian Campaign is over.

May 31

1862: As Gen. George McClellan's Army of the Potomac attempts to cross the swollen Chickahominy River just east of Richmond, Va., Gen. Joseph Johnston's Confederate Army of Northern Virginia strikes. Over the next two days, the Union has inflicted 6,000 casualties and the Confederates 5,000 while both sides claim victory in the Battle of Seven Pines (or known as the Battle of Fair Oaks Station to Yankees), which was the bloodiest conflict since Shiloh two months before.

President Jefferson Davis replaces a wounded Johnson with Gen. Robert E. Lee (at the time serving as military advisor to the president), and McClellan is far more timid after seeing his dead and wounded soldiers and loses his initiative. Richmond is saved.

1900: While the bloody Chinese campaign against foreigners and Christians known as the Boxer Rebellion intensifies, Marines from the battleship USS *Oregon* (BB-3) and cruiser USS *Newark* (C-1) arrive at the Chinese capital of Peking (now Beijing) to protect American and foreign legations.

1943: As the Allied attack begins on the island of Pantelleria, halfway between Tunisia and Sicily, the 99th Pursuit Squadron - the first all-black fighter squadron of the U.S. military - arrives in Tunisia. In two days, the famed "Tuskegee Airmen" will fly their first combat mission, and some 11,000 Italian (and a few dozen German) troops will become the first force in history to surrender from air attacks alone. The 99th is commanded by Lt. Col. (future Gen.) Benjamin 0. Davis, Jr. Davis, who will go on to become the Air Force's first black general. His father Benjamin Sr. was the U.S. military's first black general.

1944: When German forces hit Pvt. Furman L. Smith's company near Lanuvio, Italy, wounding several soldiers, the outfit is ordered to fall back. Smith refuses to leave the casualties. He places the wounded in shell holes and holds his ground during the German counterattack. He is killed, but not before leaving a string of dead and wounded Germans. Smith is posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

1945: On Okinawa's "Hen Hill," PFC Clarence B. Craft launches an incredible one-man attack against Japanese defenders when his five-man reconnaissance force is wounded by grenades and pinned down. He exposes himself to intense enemy fire, shooting at anything that moves. Craft advances single-handedly up the hill, against defenses that previously beat back battalion-sized U.S. forces. Once he reaches the crest of the hill, his fellow soldiers advance, supplying him with cases of grenades and a satchel charge, which he used to seal off a cave containing an unknown number of enemies. Craft continued pumping rounds into Japanese soldiers, and silenced an enemy machine gun position. Dozens of Japanese soldiers die at the hands of Craft, and his charge against the critical position of Hen Hill leads to the collapse of the entire Japanese line.

1951: When a "numerically superior and fanatical hostile force, accompanied by heavy artillery, mortar, and machine gun fire" attacks Hill 420 near Wontong-Ni, Korea, the American platoon is forced to withdrwaw after expending their ammunition. A wounded Cpl. Rodolpho P. Hernandez of the 187th Regimental Combat Team remains behind, pumping deadly fire into the attackers. When his rifle becomes inoperable, Hernandez fixes his bayonet

and charges into the enemy, killing six before falling from grenade, bayonet, and gunshot wounds. His one-man attack stuns the enemy, enabling his fellow soldiers to counterattack and retake the position.

Cpl. Hernandez is so grievously wounded that the first medic to reach him thought he had died. He doesn't regain consciousness for an entire month, and Pres. Harry S. Truman awards him the the Medal of Honor in 1952.

1994: The United States announced that it is no longer "aiming" (preprogrammed computer targeting) nuclear weapons at Russian targets.

2014: Nearly five years after walking away from his post in eastern Afghanistan, the Taliban hands Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl over to a team of Delta Force operators. The former prisoner of war is exchanged for five high-ranking Taliban officials in a highly controversial deal between the U.S. government and the Afghan terrorist group. Soldiers from Bergdahl's unit state that six soldiers died attempting to locate the missing soldier, and numerous other deaths have been attributed to the reallocation of resources during the search for Bergdahl.

June

June 1

1779: Maj. Gen. Benedict Arnold's court martial begins in Philadelphia, but the trial is immediately postponed when Lt. Gen. Sir Henry Clinton captures Stony Point, N.Y.. The Americans did not know that Arnold had already contacted Clinton about switching sides, and in July he begins to give the British intelligence on troop locations and strength.

The disaffected American officer is charged with misconduct and will be cleared of all but two minor charges in December, and 12 months later Arnold becomes a British brigadier general.

1813: The frigate USS *Chesapeake* - one of the United States Navy's original six ships - clashes with British ship HMS *Shannon* outside Boston Harbor. After being mortally wounded by a sniper round *Chesapeake* captain James Lawrence's last words to his crew are "Tell the men to fire faster and [don't] give up the ship! Fight her till she sinks!" *Shannon's* crew boards and will capture *Chesapeake,* taking her crew prisoner, but Capt. Lawrence's famous final words live on today.

1861: At 3:00 in the morning, 1st Lt. Charles Henry Tomkins leads a scouting party of cavalry and dragoons to Fairfax Court House (Va.) to determine Confederate troop strength in the area. The Union soldiers and Confederate militia trade shots, and Tomkins is awarded the Medal of Honor for charging twice through enemy lines and borrowing a carbine from one of his soldiers to kill Capt. John Quincy Marr - the first Confederate soldier to be killed in action during the Civil War.

1864: The bloody battle of Cold Harbor opens in earnest between Union Army forces under the command of Lt. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant and Confederate forces under Gen. Robert E. Lee. Grant will launch a series of futile attacks over the next three days. Lee will defend and hold. Union losses will be staggering: 13,000 to the Confederacy's 2,500.

1918: At Belleau Wood, the site of an old French hunting preserve near Chateau-Thierry, Germans punch through the French lines, and American soldiers and Marines move up to fill the hole. When Marine Capt. Lloyd W. Williams arrives, he sees French troops withdrawing from battle. After being advised by a French officer to retreat, the Marine officer famously replies, "Retreat? Hell! We just got here!"

Williams will die during the battle, but the crack shooting and tenacious fighting of the Marines at Belleau Wood becomes legend and earns them the nickname "Teufelhunden" - devil dogs.

1944: Airships K-123 and K-130 of the U.S. Navy's Blimp Squadron Fourteen land at French Morocco following a 50-hour, 3,100 nautical mile flight from Naval Air Station, South Weymouth, Mass. - the first transatlantic flight of a non-rigid, lighter-than-air aircraft. The massive airships made two stops for fuel and maintenance in Newfoundland and the Azores.

1955: Air Force colonel Edward Lansdale arrives in Saigon. His official title is Assistant Air Attaché at the U.S. Embassy, but the former OSS agent is actually miming paramilitary operations against North Vietnam for the CIA.

1990: As the Cold War nears its end, Presidents George H.W. Bush and Mikhail Gorbachev sign a treaty banning the production of chemical weapons and reducing the two superpowers' stockpiles of the deadly weapons by 20 percent.

June 2

1865: Confederate Gen. Kirby Smith signs documents surrendering his 43,000-man Army of the Trans-Mississippi at Galveston, Tex. Although Smith is not the last Confederate officer to surrender to the Union, this ends all organized Southern military action in the war.

1942: As the U.S. Navy prepares for the upcoming Japanese invasion, Task Forces 16 and 17 merge 350 miles northeast of to the northeast of Midway Island, putting three aircraft carriers, eight cruisers, and 16 destroyers under the command of Rear Adm. Frank J. Fletcher. A picket line of 25 submarines waits for the Japanese. The Battle of Midway is less than 24 hours away.

1943: The "Tuskegee Airmen" of the 99th Pursuit Squadron fly their first combat mission against Axis forces on the island of Pantelleria, off the coast of Tunisia.

1969: At 3 a.m. off the coast of Vietnam, the Australian aircraft carrier HMS *Melbourne* runs into the destroyer USS *Frank E. Evans* (DD-754), cutting the American ship in half. The severed bow section sinks in less than five minutes

and takes 74 sailors with her. A series of errors and the absence of running lights due to preparations for flight operations places the American destroyer directly in the path of the much larger vessel.

1972: U.S. Air Force Gen. John W. Vogt, Jr. effectively shuts down the air war in Vietnam to rescue Capt. Roger Locher, an F-4 "Phantom" weapons systems officer shot down behind enemy lines in North Vietnam. Locher has evaded capture for 23 days - a record for downed airmen during the Vietnam War. Gen. Vogt diverts all available resources - 150 aircraft - from a planned strike against Hanoi and tasked them with the rescue mission. Planes bomb a nearby North Vietnamese airfield while Locher is located and rescued under heavy enemy fire.

Air Force captains Dale E. Stovall, flying the 1-1E1-53 "Jolly Green Giant" helicopter, and Ronald Smith, piloting the A-1H "Skyraider" attack plane receive the Air Force Cross (the nation's second-highest award for valor) for the deepest rescue into North Vietnam of the entire war. No aircraft are lost in the operation.

As aircrews work to extract Locher, F-4E pilot Maj. Phil Handley scores the only supersonic gun kill in history, flying 900 miles per hour when he shoots down an enemy MiG 19.

2014: The fast-attack *Virginia-class* submarine USS *Mississippi* (SSN-782) is commissioned at Pascagoula, Miss., 12 months ahead of schedule and $60 million under budget.

June 3

1942: The great Naval battle of Midway opens between U.S. Naval and air forces under the command of Adm. Chester W. Nimitz and Japanese forces under Adm. Isoroku Yamamoto, who had hoped to lure the U.S. Pacific Fleet into a great air-sea battle and destroy it.

Considered a turning point in the Pacific theater of operations, the Japanese fleet is intercepted near Midway atoll, engaged, and will be decisively defeated by Nimitz. The Americans will lose one carrier, USS *Yorktown,* but four Japanese carriers will be sent to the bottom. Perhaps more important than the loss of the Japanese flattops is the hundreds of irreplacable pilots and crew.

According to the U.S. Naval Historical Center: "[Midway] represents the strategic high water mark of Japan's Pacific Ocean war. Prior to this action, Japan possessed general naval superiority over the United States and could usually choose where and when to attack. After Midway, the two opposing fleets were essentially equals, and the United States soon took the offensive."

1965: Air Force astronauts Edward H. White II and James A. McDivitt blast off aboard Gemini IV. White will become the first American to "walk" in space - enjoying the experience so much that he had to be ordered to return. As he boarded the *Molly Brown* capsule White said, "I'm coming in... and it's the saddest moment of my life."

Lt. Col. White (U.S. Air Force) will perish during a fire that kills the entire Apollo 1 crew in 1967. McDivitt, a veteran of 145 combat missions as a fighter pilot during the Korean War, retires from the Air Force as a brigadier general after returning to space as a member of the Apollo 9 crew.

June 4

1919: U.S. Marines land in Costa Rica to protect American interests when the government is overthrown by a coup.

t 1934: USS *Ranger* (CV-4), the first U.S. ship designed from the keel-up as an aircraft carrier, is commissioned at Norfolk, Va. While she is too slow for service in the Pacific Theater, *Ranger* participated in the Operation TORCH landings in North Africa and attacked German shipping off the coast of Norway during Operation LEADER.

1942: During the great naval battle of Midway, a wave of TBM Devastator torpedo bombers attacks the Japanese carriers, their decks full of planes re-arming for another strike against the U.S. Naval base. While the ships' guns and fighter planes are focused on the Devastators - which are wiped out nearly to a man - American SBD Dauntless dive bombers hammer the flattops from above. The bombs and strafing runs cause massive destruction and by the end of the day, four of the six aircraft carriers that attacked Pearl Harbor just six months ago are now headed for the bottom of the Pacific Ocean.

A Japanese counter-attack mortally wounds the American carrier USS *Yorktown* (CV-5), which is abandoned and later finished off by a Japanese sub. The Battle of Midway becomes the high-water mark for the Japanese navy. After "the most stunning and decisive blow in the history of naval warfare," the United States switches to the offensive and doesn't look back.

Hundreds of pilots and sailors receive the Distinguished Service Cross and the Navy Cross (the second-highest awards for valor) but surprisingly only one will receive the Medal of Honor during Midway: Capt. Richard E. Fleming. When his squadron commander is shot down, Fleming takes over and drops his Vought SB2U Vindicator dive bomber to just 400 feet before releasing his bomb on an enemy warship. Despite 179 holes from enemy fighter and anti-aircraft artillery bullets in his plane collected during his dive, he escapes with minor injuries. He and his gunner, Pvt. 1st Class George A Toms are lost the next day when their plane is set on fire and crashes into the ocean while diving again to a perilously low altitude. Toms is awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross.

4 **1944:** A U.S. hunter-killer task force intercepts the German submarine *U-505* off the Cape Verde islands. The destroyer escorts hammer the sub with depth charges and anti-submarine mortars, forcing the U-boat to surface. After taking additional fire from automatic weapons and aircraft from the escort carrier USS *Guadalcanal* (CVE-60), skipper Harald Lange orders the crew to abandon the sub.

The task force picks the German sailors out of the water while a nine-man boarding party led by Lt. Albert L. David climbs down the hatch of the enemy sub, prepared to fight it out with a hostile crew and facing the possibility that the ship could explode any moment. Fortunately, they find the sub empty and are able to disarm the demolition charges while they capture the Enigma machine and its code books and save the sub from sinking. David is awarded the Medal of Honor for "the first successful boarding and capture of an enemy man-of-war on the high seas by the United States Navy since 1815."

It Meanwhile in Europe, the Caesar Line protecting Rome has fallen. Although Field Marshall Albert Kesselring's Tenth and Fourteenth Armies are in danger of encirclement as they fall back to the next line of defense, U.S. Lt. Gen. Mark W. Clark chooses to capture a now-undefended Rome - the first European capital to be liberated by the Allies.

1953: During the Battle of Pork Chop Hill, Private Charles H. Barker of the 17th Infantry Regiment and his fellow soldiers discover a group of Chinese soldiers digging emplacements on the side of the hill. The Americans lay down a base of fire while the outpost sends men to flank the enemy. A major firefight erupts, and when Barker and his men begin running low on ammunition, the soldiers have to withdraw back to their defensive lines. Barker volunteers to remain behind to cover his fellow soldiers and is last seen engaging in hand-to-hand combat with the communists. Barker is posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

June 5

ft **1794:** The first six officers of the new United States Navy receive their commissions: Captain John Barry (the first captain in the Continental Navy and considered the "father of the American Navy), Samuel Nicholson, Silas Talbot, Joshua Barney, Richard Dale, and Thomas Truxtun.

1917: The First Naval Aeronautical Detachment lands at Brest, France, becoming the first American military unit deployed for World War I. The Naval aviators, commanded by Lt. Kenneth Whiting, will conduct anti-

submarine patrols throughout the war. The service collier USS *Jupiter* that carried the detachment across the Atlantic will be converted to the United States' first aircraft carrier, USS *Langley* (CV-1) in 1920.

1943: A year after suffering a major blow at Midway, Adm. Isoroku Yamamoto is given a state funeral at Japan. At 1050, every Japanese citizen bows toward Tokyo to pay their respects for their fallen commander, who was ambushed over Bougainville two weeks ago by Army Air Force fighters during an inspection tour.

1944: As the sun sets on airfields across England, 13,328 American paratroopers with the 82d and 101st Airborne Divisions (along with nearly 8,000 British and Canadian paratroopers) board the C-47 transports and gliders that will carry them behind Nazi lines on "the Great Crusade." 1,000 British bombers pound German defenses at the beaches of Normandy while thousands of ships carrying some 130,000 Allied soldiers steam towards France After months of planning, Operation Overlord is fmally underway.

Earlier in the day, Lt. Col. Leon R. Vance led a diversionary bombing mission over Wimereaux, France. Anti-aircraft fire cripples his plane, killing the pilot and wounding Vance and several crew members. Despite only one engine still functioning, he regains control of the aircraft and continues to lead the formation as they successfully bomb the target. With the assistance of another airman, he applies a tourniquet to his leg and orders the crew to bail out of the fatally wounded bomber. When he learns that one of the airmen is too injured to bail, he ditches the aircraft in the English Channel to help give his comrade a fighting chance of survival. Vance is pinned in the cockpit as the bomber slips under the waves, but is blown clear of the bird by an explosion. Vance is awarded the Medal of Honor after being recovered by search-and-rescue crews.

Meanwhile, the B-29 "Superfortress" flies its first combat mission. Bombers flying out of airfields in India attack Japanese rail lines and other targets in Bangkok, Thailand.

1945: A day after the 4th and 29th Marines conduct an amphibious landing at Okinawa's Oruku Peninsula, Marines capture the airfield at Naha, while a typhoon with 115-mph winds damages nearly every ship at sea. Kamikaze attacks cripple the battleship USS *Mississippi* (BB-41) and the heavy cruiser USS *Louisville* (CA-28).

On Japan, 473 B-29 bombers drop some 3,000 tons of incendiary bombs on Kobe, destroying much of the city.

1948: A Northrop YB-49 "flying wing" experimental bomber crashes while conducting stall recovery tests at Muroc Air Force Base (now Edwards AFB - in honor of the YB-49's copilot, Capt. Glen Edwards), killing all five airmen on board. The advanced warplane program will be scrapped, but designer Jack Northrop's dream of a flying wing aircraft will become reality when Northrop's B-2 stealth bomber makes its first flight 51 years later.

1951: Benjamin F. Wilson served as an infantry officer during World War II before resigning his commission. He re-enlists as a private shortly after leaving the service volunteers for combat in Korea. When Master Sgt. Wilson's company is ordered to take the well-fortified Hell Hill, Wilson leads a bayonet charge that nets 27 dead Chinese soldiers. The enemy mounts a counterattack and Wilson makes a one-man charge that drives off the communists. The battlefield is littered with dead and wounded soldiers taken out by Wilson's rifle, bayonet, grenades, and entrenching tool.

Just four days after the actions that would earn him the Medal of Honor, Wilson ignores his wounds and conducts another valiant one-man charge when his unit is forced to seek cover during another assault on an enemy-held hill near Nodong-ni, Korea. Wilson is again recommended for the Medal of Honor, but since Army policy forbids awarding the prestigious honor to the same soldier more than once, he is awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.

1971: Special Forces Staff Sgt. Jon R. Cavaiani's platoon is attacked by a numerically superior enemy force at a camp in Vietnam. Cavaiani, acting as the platoon leader, delivers heavy fire on the enemy using a variety of weapons and when the decision is made to evacuate the camp, he organizes

the withdrawal by helicopter. The next morning, the enemy attacks again before helicopters can lift out the remaining defenders. Cavaiani mans a machine gun and orders his fellow soldiers to escape. After inflicting severe losses on the enemy soldiers, he is captured and spends the next two years in captivity. Upon his return to the States, the Irish-born Cavaiani is awarded the Medal of Honor.

June 6

1862: A Union flotilla decimates the Confederate fleet at Memphis, Tenn. and captures the city. Three Confederate vessels are rammed and sunk, and Yankee guns account for all but one of the defending "cottonclad" warships.

1918: Two battalions of Marines, led by Brig. Gen. James Harbord, advance against four German divisions in Belleau Wood, the site of an old French hunting preserve near Chateau-Thierry. The Marines face withering fire, with over 1,000 casualties in the first day of battle alone. In three weeks, the Marines drive out the Germans, but at a high cost; Enemy machine guns, artillery, and gas attacks inflict 10,000 American casualties. But the tenacity of the "Devil Dogs" at Belleau Wood becomes legend.

During the battle, Lt. (j.g.) Weedon E. Osborne - a medical officer attached to the 6th Marines - is killed by an enemy shell while carrying the wounded to safety. He is posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

Meanwhile, a wounded Gunnery Sgt. Ernest A. Janson (serving under the name of Charles Hoffman) and his fellow Marines are consolidating the ground they recently gained at Hill 142. The Germans attempt a counterattack, and when Janson spots 12 enemy soldiers making their way towards the Americans, he rushes forward, killing the leaders with his bayonet and scattering the remaining men. The Army and Navy both award Janson with the Medal of Honor.

1942: Commander-in-chief of the Combined Fleet Admiral Yamamoto Isoroku orders his fleet to withdraw from the Battle of Midway. Although the Americans have lost the carrier *Yorktown* and a destroyer, Japanese losses are

staggering: all four of the fleet's aircraft carriers (whose aircraft attacked Pearl Harbor six months ago) and a heavy cruiser are sent to the bottom. After a long string of defeats, the United States Navy has dealt Japan "the most stunning and decisive blow in the history of naval warfare."

1944: Just after 2 a.m., some 13,000 American and British paratroopers and glider troops begin landing behind enemy lines in France. 2,000 Allied aircraft bombard German positions in preparation of the invasion. And five hours later, nearly 150,000 American, British, and Canadian troops hit the beaches at Normandy. 1,200 warships and over 4,000 landing ships from eight different navies support the invasion. "Utah" Beach (VII Corps) and "Omaha" Beach (V Corps) are on the right flank. To the left are Gold, Juno, and Sword Beaches, which fall under British command. Losses are heavy for both sides and 4,414 American and Allied soldiers die on "D-Day" - the first day of the largest amphibious operation in history.

On Utah Beach, Pvt. Carlton W. Barrett, 1st Lt. Jimmie W. Montieth Jr., and Technician 5th Grade John J. Pinder Jr. are each awarded the Medal of Honor for valor. On Omaha Beach, World War I veteran and son of former president Theodore Roosevelt, Brig. Gen. Theodore Roosevelt Jr. also earns the Medal of Honor.

1957: Two Navy F-8U "Crusaders" and two A-3D "Skywarriors" launch from the deck of USS *Bon Homme Richard* (CVA 31) off the coast of California and fly to USS *Saratoga* (CVA 60), operating off Florida in the first transcontinental, carrier-to-carrier flight. The Crusaders land after three hours and 28 minutes, while the Skywarriors make the trip in four hours and one minute.

1964: Navy Lt. Charles F. Klusmann's RF-8A Crusader was hit for the second time in two days by communist anti-aircraft fire while flying an armed reconnaissance mission in Laos' Plain of Jars. Klussman was hit the day before and as his damaged plane burned for 20 minutes during the return trip to the deck of USS *Kitty Hawk.* On this day, however, he is forced to eject and is captured by enemy forces.

Rescue Combat Air Patrol aircraft launch as soon as the first fixed-wing aircraft lost in Southeast Asia goes down and nearby "Air America" helicopters stand by for the order to launch, but all assets are ordered to stand down. Klussman has been abandoned by his government. As word of the betrayal passes up the military's chain of command, Adm. Harry D. Felt phones Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, who confirms that Klussman is on his own. Felt demands to be put through to the President Lyndon Johnson, and finally gets authorization for the rescue mission.

By then, it is too late; two helicopters are turned around by heavy enemy fire, critically wounding the would-be rescuers. Klussman incredibly manages to escape in August - one of only a handful of downed airmen to slip out of captivity during what will become the Vietnam War.

June 7

9 **1830:** Following nearly four years at sea, the sloop of war USS *Vincennes* arrives at New York, becoming the first United States warship to circumnavigate the globe.

1912: At College Park, Md., U.S. Army Capt. Charles deForest Chandler - the first commander of the Army Signal Corps' Aeronautical Division - fires the first machine gun ever mounted to an aircraft. The plane is a Wright Model B flown by Lt. Roy C. Kirtland - the namesake of Kirtland Air Force Base. While The "Lewis Gun," designed by Col. Isaac N. Lewis is not picked up by the United States military, the weapon sees extensive service during World War I with both the British and French.

Meanwhile, Company A of the 1st Marines land at Santiago, Cuba (west of Guantanamo Bay) to assist in putting down the Negro Rebellion.

4 **1942:** Japan lands an invasion force and occupies the Alaskan islands of Attu and Kiska. 25 American soldiers are killed on Attu and the inhabitants of both islands are relocated and placed in internment. The attack was originally intended to be a diversion for the U.S. Navy during the Battle of Midway,

which by this time has been cancelled. Less than a year later, U.S. and Canadian troops will wipe out the Japanese occupying force nearly to a man.zoot-suits

1944: (D-Day Plus 1) Allied warplanes pound enemy armor and vehicles moving towards the beaches of Normandy. The 1st and 29th Infantry Divisions make slow progress expanding the beachhead at Omaha Beach, where casualties are heavier than all other sectors combined. On Utah Beach, the 4th Infantry Division begins linking up with the heavily scattered paratroopers (only ten percent landed in their drop zones) of the 82d and 101st Airborne Divisions. Three companies of 2d Battalion Rangers, which famously scaled the 100-ft. cliffs at Pointe du Hoc under fire the day before, have taken 50 percent casualties, with their commander Lt. Col. James Rudder having been shot twice. The isolated Rangers will endure numerous counterattacks by Germany's 914th Grenadier Regiment throughout the day and won't be relieved until D-Day Plus 2.

Meanwhile, construction begins on harbors that will deliver soldiers, vehicles, and materiel to the new Western Front.

1945: The Marines have isolated the Japanese defenders on Okinawa's Oruku Peninsula. As the Marines work to consolidate a newly-captured hill, Pvt. Robert M. McTureous spots enemy machine guns firing on stretcher bearers and loads up on grenades. He charges towards the enemy and devastates their position with grenades before dashing back to friendly lines for another one-man grenade attack. Six Japanese are dead and the position is disorganized, and by drawing all the enemy fire on himself, he permits the medics to focus on the wounded. McTureous is mortally wounded, however, and he crawls 200 yards to a position where corpsmen can collect him from a position of relative safely. He will die from his wounds days later and is posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

1951: When the enemy launches a "furious assault" that threatens to overrun an American command post near Pachi-Dong, Korea, Pvt. 1st Class Jack G. Hanson volunteers to stay behind to cover the platoon as they withdraw to a better position. His assistant machine gunner and three riflemen

accompanying him are wounded and crawl to safety, leaving Hanson to fend for himself When the Americans counterattack and reach Hanson's position, they find him with an empty machine gun, empty pistol, and a bloody machete. 22 dead communists are stacked around the fallen soldier, who is posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

1959: 100 miles east of Jacksonville, Fla., the *Balao-class* submarine USS *Barbero* (SSA-317) fires a Regulus cruise missile loaded with 3,000 pieces of mail towards the Naval Air Station at Mayport, Fla. 22 minutes later, the first-ever "missile mail" arrives.

1965: Gen. William Westmoreland requests - and eventually receives - 44 battalions of combat troops to Vietnam.

1968: When a company of communist soldiers opens fire on his platoon, Pvt. 1st Class Phil! G. McDonald volunteers to lead the wounded to an evacuation site. He destroys one automatic weapon with a grenade and the enemy focuses on McDonald's position. From an exposed position, he suppresses the hostile force with a borrowed machine gun. As he crawls forward to silence another machine gun that has pinned down his fellow soldiers, he is mortally wounded. McDonald will be posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

1970: As Staff Sgt. Robert C. Murray and his company search for an enemy mortar near Hiep Duc, South Vietnam, he trips a booby trap. Murray dives on the triggered grenade and shields his fellow soldiers from the blast. Murray is posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

A **2006:** A massive manhunt by special operations hunter-killer teams of Task Force 145 has fmally pinpointed the position of Al Qaeda in Iraq leader Abu Musab al-Zarqawi. As the "Sheikh of the Slaughterers" enters a safe house north of Baqubah, Iraq to meet with his fellow jihadists, the military quickly re-routes two nearby Air Force F-16s to the area to bring an end to the terrorist responsible for the brutal deaths of thousands of Iraqis. The lead F-16 drops two precision-guided 500-1b. bombs, leveling the target. Zarqawi, who had replaced Osama bin Laden and his right-hand man, Ayman al-Zawahiri, as Special Operations Command's most-wanted man, is fmally dead.

His terrorist group lives on, however, and will become the Islamic State.

June 8

1944: A second wave of troops land at Normandy while soldiers battle to link the Omaha and Utah beachheads. As the 29th Infantry Division attacks a strongly fortified enemy emplacement atop a hill overlooking Grandcamp. When artillery and armor support fails to take out the German position Tech. Sgt. Frank D. Peregory charges up the hill through machinegun fire and is able to reach the German trench lines. He attacks an enemy squad with grenades and his bayonet, killing eight and capturing three. As he maneuvers his way to the top, he forces another 32 to surrender and captures the machine guns.

Peregory is killed in action six days later and will be posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for his heroic actions on this day.

1945: Fred F. Lester, a Navy corpsman with the 1st Battalion, 22d Marines, spots a wounded Marine during a furious battle on Okinawa. Lester crawls through a barrage of machine guns, rifles, and grenades to aid his comrade, but is hit multiple times by enemy fire. Despite his own serious wounds, he pulls the Marine to safety and instructs men from his squad how to treat the casualty. Lester realizes that his own wounds are fatal and refuses treatment, and spends the last moments of his life guiding his men as they treat the wounded. Lester is posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

1966: During a test flight of the North American XB-70 "Valkyrie," an experimental six-engine bomber capable of flying at three times the speed of sound, an F-104 "Starfighter" chase plane collides with the Valkyrie, sending the bomber spiraling out of control and instantly killing the pilot of the chase plane, Joseph A. Walker - a former Army Air Force captain, fighter pilot during World War II, NASA chief test pilot, and the first U.S. civilian to fly high enough to be considered "spaceflight." The Valkyrie's pilot manages to eject, but the co-pilot is trapped inside the stricken warplane and crashes into the ground near Barstow, Calif. The Air Force backs out of the Valkyrie program shortly after the collision.

1967: As the Six-Day War between Israel and her Soviet-backed Arab neighbors begins its fourth day of combat, the "technical research ship" USS *Liberty* (AGTR-5) was slowly steaming back and forth north of the Sinai Peninsula as it gathered electronic intelligence for the National Security Agency. For reasons still unknown 51 years later, unmarked Israeli fighter jets appear and begin strafing the decks of the American-flagged ship, killing and wounding scores of Liberty's sailors. Those that survive the armor-piercing bullets are targeted by napalm bombs while Israeli torpedo boats blast a gaping hole in the side of the converted World War II freighter and systematically wipe out the life boats with their machine guns.

Upon hearing *Liberty'*s distress calls, the Navy's Sixth Fleet scrambles eight planes to rush to the defense of the stricken ship, but President Lyndon Johnson orders them to return to their carriers before they could arrive. Crews frantically work to save the vessel, which was nearly broken in half 34 sailors are killed and 171 wounded. *Liberty's* skipper Cmdr. William McGonagle receives the Medal of Honor for his actions in an atypical low-key private ceremony at a naval yard. His sailors are issued gag orders — threatened by their own government that if they talk of the incident, they will be thrown in prison, never to be heard from again.

Details surrounding the incident are still a tightly held secret, but Israel immediately apologizes for the incident — citing fog of war — and offers compensation to the sailors' families.

1991: Hundreds of thousands gather to see Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf lead a victory parade through Washington, D.C. following Operation Desert Storm. A flyover of F-117 stealth fighters kicks off the parade, while tanks and thousands of troops pass in front of Pres. George H.W. Bush and other officials.

1995: After nearly a week behind enemy lines after being shot down by a Bosnian-Serb surface-to-air missile, Air Force captain Scott O'Grady makes breaks radio silence and requests evacuation. The downed airman had been evading his would-be captors while searching for a location suitable to land rescue helicopters. Within moments, a 41-man specially trained Marine rescue

force from USS *Kearsarge* boards two CH-53 Super Stallion helicopters and, together with attack helicopters and some 40 other aircraft, chopper their way into Bosnia. On board one of the Super Stallions is the now-deceased Col. Martin R. Berndt, a former platoon commander during the Vietnam War who would not order his Marines to do anything that he wasn't willing to do himself. (Berndt passed away in 2011 after retiring as a lieutenant general.)

The team punches through heavy fog and lands in a small clearing, where they are greeted by a grateful but exhausted O'Grady, who has to be forcibly disarmed before boarding. The helicopters race back to the amphibious assault ship at treetop level, dodging enemy anti-aircraft fire and missiles along the way, but fortunately, no one is injured in the daring rescue mission.

June 9

1772: In what is considered to be the first naval engagement of the American Revolution, colonists led by Abraham Whipple and John Brown board and set fire to the British customs schooner HMS *Gaspee,* which has run aground off Warwick, R.I. while conducting ant-smuggling operations.

1942: Naval Reserve Lt. Cmdr. Lyndon B. Johnson - a U.S. congressman for Texas at the time - volunteered to observe an Army Air Force bombing raid on New Guinea. Johnson's plane turned around moments later under suspicious circumstances - some accounts say the B-26 came under enemy fire and others cite engine malfunction. Inexplicably, Johnson is awarded the Silver Star for "gallantry in action." The future president's own biographer stated that the award is "surely one of the most undeserved Silver Stars in history."

0 1943: After flying 25 missions over Europe, the B-17F "Flying Fortress" known as *Memphis Belle* is flying back to the United States for a publicity tour. The *Memphis Belle* is the second bomber to accomplish the full combat tour of 25 missions, after the B-24 "Liberator" *Hot Stuff accomplished* the feat some three months earlier. Today, the famous aircraft resides at the National Museum of the United States Air Force at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base.

1944: In Borneo's heavily patrolled Sibitu Passage, the Gato-class submarine USS *Harder* (SS-257) torpedoes and sinks *Tanikaze* - the third Japanese destroyer *Harder* sends to the bottom in four days, and scores a hit on another destroyer. *Tanikaze* sinks immediately, but when the sub surfaces moments later, the other destroyer has vanished as well. On June 10, *Harder* will spot a Japanese naval task force and fire torpedoes at another destroyer, heavily damaging or sinking that ship as well.

With four destroyers sunk and another heavily damaged or destroyed, *Harder's* highly productive fourth war patrol makes her one of the most famous submarines during World War II.

1945: On Okinawa, the 6th Marine Division has cut off and surrounded Japanese forces on the Oroku Peninsula, while the 1st Marine Division advances on Kunishi Ridge, one of the last Japanese strong points.

1959: *USS George Washington* (SSBN-598) is commissioned, becoming the world's first operational ballistic missile submarine. The "Georgefish" carried 16 Polaris A-1 missiles, which had a 1,000 nautical mile range and carried a 600 kiloton warhead.

June 11

1871: Rear Adm. John Rodgers' Asiatic Squadron lands 650 sailors and Marines on the Korean Peninsula. The force storms the Citadel, later known as Fort McKee, and after 15 minutes of fierce close combat, 243 Koreans lay dead and the American flag flies over the fortress.

1903: U.S. Military Academy cadet Douglas MacArthur graduates at the top of his class and receives his commission as a second lieutenant in the Engineer Corps. His father Arthur served as a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army and earned the Medal of Honor during the Civil War, and the MacArthurs own the distinction of being the first father and son to earn the Medal of Honor.

1909: Another famous West Pointer is commissioned: 2nd Lt. George S. Patton Jr., who becomes a cavalry trooper. "Old Blood and Guts" is the grandson of Col. George S. Patton and great-nephew of Lt. Col. Waller T. Patton — both of whom fought and died for the Confederacy.

1927: National hero and U.S. Air Service Reserve Corps captain Charles Lindbergh, along with his airplane "Spirit of St. Louis" arrives at Washington, D.C. and becomes the first person ever awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.

1944: America's last battleship, USS *Missouri* (BB-63), is commissioned. The "Mighty Mo" will see action during Iwo Jima and Okinawa before hosting the ceremony for the surrender of Japan. Following the Korean War she is mothballed, but returns to service in 1986 after modernization and serves during Operation DESERT STORM.

Meanwhile as the 101st Airborne Division battles to capture Carentan, France, Lt. Col. Robert G. Cole's battalion (3rd Battalion, 502nd Parachute Infantry Regiment) is pinned down by a massive barrage of Gelman rifle, machinegun, mortar, and artillery fire. After an hour of ceaseless enemy fire and casualties piling up, Cole leads a bayonet charge against the enemy fortifications. Although he is killed, his paratroopers ultimately capture a vital bridge across the Douvre River. Lt. Col. Cole is posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

1945: A day after helping save sailors from the sinking destroyer USS *William D. Porter* (DD-579), Lt. Richard M. McCool Jr. shoots down one Japanese kamikaze plane and damages a second before the plane slams into his landing support ship. Despite shrapnel wounds and burns, McCool organizes a firefighting party before rescuing sailors trapped in a burning compartment, carrying one man to safety. For his actions, McCool is awarded the Medal of Honor.

1953: In the early morning hours, a battalion-sized force of Chinese troops attacks and overruns an American outpost. With his company officers dead or wounded, Master Sgt. Ola L. Mize organizes a defense, dragged wounded to safety, and formed a patrol to fight the Chinese bunker to bunker — despite

having been hit by grenade and artillery blasts multiple times. Fighting for hours — hand-to-hand at times — Mize killed several dozen enemy soldiers with his carbine and many more by calling in American artillery fire.

Mize is awarded the Medal of Honor, and is only one of eight survivors of the 56 soldiers that manned Outpost Harry. Following the Korean War, Mize earns a commission and served multiple tours in Vietnam with the 5th Special Forces Group. He later founded the Combat Diver Qualification Course in Key West, Fla. and commanded the Special Forces School at Fort Bragg.

June 12

1775: British Gen. Thomas Gage declares that the city of Boston is under martial law until the colonists repay for the tea they destroyed during the Boston Tea Party. Gage will pardon all colonists who lay down their arms except Samuel Adams and John Hancock, who are to be hanged.

b Meanwhile, British ships arrive at Machiasport (present-day Machias, Maine) to commandeer a load of lumber for the construction of barracks during the colonists' Siege of Boston. 11 militia members, led by Jeremiah O'Brien, board the merchant ship *Unity* and engage the British armed sloop HMS *Margaretta.* After an hour of fighting, *Margaretta* is captured and the British flag is surrendered to the colonists for the first time. The U.S. Merchant Marine traces their roots to the Battle of Machias.

1862: Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee, the new commander of the Army of Northern Virginia, orders Brig. Gen. J.E.B. Stuart to investigate the Union army's right flank during the Peninsula Campaign. Stuart and his 1,200 troopers determine that the right flank is vulnerable, and with Union cavalry is in pursuit (led by Stuart's father-in-law, Brig. Gen. Philip St. George Cooke), Stuart and his men ride a 100-mile circle around Gen. George McClellan's 105,000-man Army of the Potomac - capturing soldiers, horses, and supplies. Four days later, Stuart arrives in Richmond to a hero's welcome.

1918: Eight pilots of the 96th Aero Squadron conduct the first-ever American bombing mission, attacking rail yards at Etain, France. Meanwhile, 2nd Lt. James H. Doolittle, who will go on to lead the Doolittle Raiders over Tokyo during World War II, is issued his pilot license.

1942: 24 years to the day after the first American bombing mission of World War I, American warplanes bomb Europe for the first time of World War II. Col. Harry A. Halverson leads a flight of 13 B-24 Liberator bombers from Libya 1,000 miles to the Axis oil fields at Ploesti, Romania. One plane has to turn back due to mechanical issues, and the bombers inflict minimal damage to the target. Crews land at Turkey (where they are interned), Iraq, and Syria.

1944 (D-Day Plus Six): Paratroopers of the 101st Airborne Division capture Carentan after three days of heavy urban combat, linking the Utah and Omaha beachheads. A third wave of troops and supplies land at the beaches of Normandy. Over 300,000 men, tens of thousands of vehicles, and hundreds of thousands of tons of materiel have hit the beach so far.

In the Pacific, airplanes from Adm. Marc Mitscher's Task Force 58, consisting of nine aircraft carriers and six light carriers, pound Japanese positions in the Marianas Islands in preparation for the upcoming invasions.

1952: When Pvt. 1st Class Henry Svehla and his fellow soldiers come under heavy enemy fire during a patrol mission, the platoon is quickly pinned down. Realizing the perilous situation he and his men faced, Svehla jumps to his feet and rushes through automatic weapon and small arms fire, firing and throwing grenades as he runs uphill. His men follow him as he inflicts heavy casualties, but he is hit by an enemy mortar. Refusing medical treatment, he continues forward until Svehla spots an enemy grenade that lands in close proximity to his fellow teammates. Svehla hurls himself on the grenade and is fatally wounded, earning him the Medal of Honor.

1987: "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall!"

Standing in front of Brandenburg Gate, President Ronald Reagan - a cavalry trooper prior to World War II and ultimately an Army Air Force officer in a motion picture unit - challenges his Soviet counterpart, Mikhail Gorbachev to tear down the Berlin Wall. In two years the wall does come down, signifying the end of the Cold War.

June 13

1777: Marquis de Lafayette lands in South Carolina, having crossed the Atlantic on a ship that the 19-year-old French officer purchased with his own money. He soon makes fast friends with Gen. George Washington and the Continental Congress, and is offered a commission as a major general.

1917: Taking off from bases in Belgium, German Gotha bombers target London for the first time. Hundreds of civilians are killed and the air raids would continue, virtually unopposed, for the next month.

1942: While patrolling a beach on New York's Long Island, Coast Guardsman John C. Cullen catches four German saboteurs posing as stranded fishermen. The Germans escape, but the leader turns himself in to the FBI - kicking off a two-week manhunt for the remaining Abwehr military intelligence operatives (all are American citizens born in Germany). The lid is blown off "Operation Pastorius," the German plot to sabotage strategic American targets. All of the agents are captured and six are executed.

1943: 76 B-17F Flying Fortress bombers set out to attack the U-boat pens at Kiel, Germany. 60 "Forts" hit the pens, and Luftwaffe aircraft knock 22 more out of the sky in the heaviest fighter attacks on the Eighth Air Force to date. While gunners claim at least 39 Gelman aircraft, 23 bombers are damaged one so critical that it is no longer operable. Three airmen are killed, 20 wounded, and 213 are missing in action. The costly raid will lead war planners to realize that the heavily armed B-17s can no longer defend themselves against German aircraft. Escort fighters will begin accompanying bombers into Europe.

1944: 27 years to the day after the first bombing raid on London, Germany's V-1 "buzz bombs" - the predecessor to today's cruise missile - make their combat debut when 11 are launched at targets in England. Over the course of the war, Germany launches over 10,000 V-ls at England and even more against Belgium, killing 15,000 and wounding over 30,000.

1968: Deep in the jungles of Laos 50 years ago, a Special Operations Group recon team is hit by a battalion-sized force of North Vietnamese Army shortly after insertion. Specialist Fifth Class John J. Kedenburg calls in tactical air support and radios for extraction while the SOG team, which was outnumbered by 50:1, attempts to break contact. They incredibly manage to fight their way to an extraction point intact, but one South Vietnamese soldier goes missing during the battle. When helicopters arrive with slings to pull out the operators, the missing soldier suddenly reappears.

Kedenburg gives up his rescue harness for the returning soldier and orders the last helicopter to leave. As his teammates leave the area, they watch Kedenburg killing communists before he calls in a final air strike on his own position. Another SOG team later fights their way in to recover their lost comrade, who is posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for sacrificing himself to save others.

1969: Laos' prime minister publicly announces that the United States has been bombing targets in Laos and will continue to do so as long as the Communists were using his country as an infiltration route into South Vietnam. B-52 bombers, prevented from bombing North Vietnam since 1968, have flown thousands of missions into Laos targeting the Ho Chi Minh Trail with 160,000 tons of bombs.

June 14

1) **1775:** Following the Battles of Lexington and Concord, the Second Continental Congress establishes the Continental Army. Ten rifle companies are formed: six from Pennsylvania, two from Maryland, and two from Virginia. The force is disbanded after the American Revolution, but in 1792,

President George Washington forms the Legion of the United States - the nation's first "professional" fighting force - renamed the United States Army in 1796.

1777: Congress formally declares the "Stars and Stripes" as the official flag of the thirteen United States. The declaration resolves that it consists of "thirteen stripes, alternate red and white; that the union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field, representing a new constellation."

1863: Days after bragging that he could hold the town of Winchester (Va.) against a Confederate force of any size, Maj. Gen. Robert H. Milroy's garrison is surrounded and defeated by a corps led by Maj. Gen. Richard S. Ewell. The Rebels capture 4,000 Union troops, hundreds of wagons and horses, and 23 artillery pieces at the cost of only some 250 casualties in the Second Battle of Winchester.

1918: During a German artillery barrage of explosive and gas shells, Marine Gunnery Sgt. Fred W. Stockton gives his gas mask to a wounded comrade, exposing himself to the deadly agent. Stockton will die eight days later from gas exposure. 20 years later, his former lieutenant during the Battle of Belleau Wood (Clifton B. Cates, who will become the 19th Commandant of the Marine Corps) and Barak Mattingly (the man Stockham saved), succeed in their efforts to award Stockham the Medal of Honor, and a destroyer is later named in his honor.

1940: The German Sixth Army capture the French capital of Paris unopposed. The Nazi flag will fly over the Arc de Triomphe for four years until Free French forces and the American 4th Infantry Division take the city back.

1944: 75 B-29 Superfortress heavy bombers take off from forward air bases in China, targeting the Imperial Iron and Steel Works at Yawata, Japan — the first bombing raid on the Japanese mainland since the Doolittle Raid over two years ago. The crews had loaded their bombs in India and flew to China before the raid. 107 tons of bombs are dropped on a blacked-out Yamata, and unfortunately only one bomb hits the target.

Across the globe in Italy, Staff Sgt. Homer L. Wise's platoon is held up by a German small-arms fire. Wise charges forward to carry a wounded soldier to friendly lines, then moves to an exposed position, killing two German soldiers and an officer armed with automatic weapons. As the battalion moves forward, they are halted again by a full frontal attack. Wise then moves ahead and takes out a German machinegun, then rushes to an exposed position atop a tank, restores its jammed mounted machine gun and rains down heavy fire on the enemy, enabling the battalion to capture its objective. Wise is awarded the Medal of Honor and retires as a first sergeant in 1966.

1945: While soldiers and Marines mop up Japanese resistance on Okinawa, the Joint Chiefs of Staff direct Gens. Douglas MacArthur, Omar Bradley, and Adm. Chester Nimitz to prepare plans to occupy Japan in case they suddenly surrender.

1952: Sgt. David B. Bleak of the 223rd Infantry Regiment volunteers to accompany a team on a mission to snatch an enemy soldier to gather intelligence. When the Americans are discovered, Bleak jumps into an enemy trench and kills two Chinese with his bare hands and eliminates another with his knife. Resuming the attack, he spots an enemy grenade fall near a comrade and shields his fellow soldier from the blast. As Bleak treats the wounded, he is shot himself, but still manages to carry a casualty to safety. But before he can reach a safe position, two enemy soldiers charge Bleak and his casualty, and he bashes their heads together. President Dwight Eisenhower awards him the Medal of Honor in 1953.

In the same vicinity, another 223rd Infantry Regiment soldier goes above and beyond the call of duty. Cpl. Clifton T. Speicher's squad is pinned down by enemy small-arms, machinegun, and mortar fire. Speicher had already been wounded in the attack, but charges forward against an enemy position. He is hit again as the communists rain fire on the American attacker, but he enters the bunker, killing two with his rifle and a third with his bayonet. The bunker is silenced and Speicher continues on to the top of the hill with his men. The Americans carry the day, but Speicher dies from his wounds and is posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

1954: Pres. Dwight D. Eisenhower, five-star general and Supreme Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Forces in Europe during World War II, signs the law adding the words "under God" to the Pledge of Allegiance.

1985: Hezbollah and Islamic Jihad terrorists hijack TWA Flight 847 after the Boeing 727 lifts off from Greece. Aboard is a team of Navy SeaBee underwater construction divers returning to the United States. The hijackers beat the American military passengers aboard the plane and, upon landing in Beirut, Steelworker Second Class Robert D. Stethem is tortured and murdered, his body dumped on the tarmac. The plane makes multiple trips between Beirut and Algiers, and the remaining hostages are released in groups.

Stethem's comrades spend the next 19 days in captivity. All survivors are awarded the Prisoner of War medal in 2015, and the Navy names a destroyer in Stethem's honor.

June 15

1775: John Adams of the Second Congressional Congress nominates George Washington, a fellow congressional delegate and veteran of the French and Indian Wars, to lead the newly formed Continental Army. Washington is unanimously elected.

1864: Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton signs an order setting aside 200 acres of Confederate General Robert E. Lee's estate as a cemetery for fallen Civil War soldiers. Today, Arlington National Cemetery is the final resting place to over 400,000 fallen military members.

1877: Former slave Henry 0. Flipper is the first black cadet to graduate from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. 2nd Lt. Flipper will lead the Buffalo Soldiers of the 10th Cavalry during the Apache Wars.

1944: Following a three-hour Naval and air bombardment, 8,000 Marines under the command of Maj. Gen. Holland M. "Howlin' Mad" Smith (a recipient of France's Croix de Guerre for his actions during the battle of

Belleau Wood in World War I), hit the beaches of Saipan. The Japanese war planners are caught by surprise, and by nightfall the 2d and 4th Marine Divisions have a beachhead spanning six miles and reaching inland nearly 1,500 yards. Japanese propaganda leads its people to believe that unspeakable acts await anyone unlucky enough to be captured by the U.S. military, and thousands of Japanese civilians will leap to their deaths from the cliffs of Saipan.

On July 7, some 3,000 Japanese troops charge forward in the largest banzai charge of the war, nearly wiping out two battalions of soldiers from the 27th Infantry Division. The Japanese defenders inflict 14,000 casualties on the Americans, but the island is declared secure on July 9.

1946: Three specially modified blue and gold Grumman F6F-5 "Hellcat" fighters perform a 15-minute aerial acrobatic performance over Jacksonville, Florida's Craig Field in the first public performance of the newly formed Navy Flight Demonstration Team. The "Blue Angels," as the team would come to be known, are led by Officer-in-Charge and World War II flying ace Lt. Cmdr. Roy M. "Butch" Voris. Chief of Naval Operations Chester Nimitz formed the team that April to boost morale, increase public interest in Naval aviation, demonstrate the capabilities of Naval air power, and increase support for a larger share of the shrinking military budget.

1952: After only two months in combat, hotshot Air Force F-86 Sabre pilot James F. Low scores his fifth MiG victory of the Korean War, becoming the 17th ace of the conflict and the first 2nd lieutenant to accomplish the feat. Low will eventually shoot down nine enemy warplanes, and will himself be shot down in 1968 and is taken prisoner during the Vietnam War.

1968: As a column of eight Navy transport boats from River Assault Division 152 load a company of infantry in a South Vietnamese canal, one of the vessels suffers a malfunction and is temporarily disabled. At the same time, Viet Cong guerillas open fire on the flotilla and threaten to destroy the stalled boat. Division commander Lt. Thomas G. Kelley orders his craft to form a protective circle around the boat while and places his own ship directly in the line of fire. An enemy rocket-propelled grenade impacts Kelley's ship,

spraying deadly shrapnel through the boat and severely wounding the skipper. Although unable to move or speak, he relays orders through a sailor and the Americans manage to repel the attack.

Kelley loses an eye, which should have disqualified him from further service, but he fights to remain in the Navy. He is awarded the Medal of Honor and retires as a captain in 1990 and is one of 72 surviving recipients of the nation's top award for combat valor.

June 16

1775: Under cover of darkness, a 1,200-man American force commanded by Col. William Prescott fortifies Breed's Hill, overlooking Boston.

1861: 9,000 Federal troops led by Brig. Gen. Henry W. Benham attempt to capture Charleston, S.C. in the Battle of Secessionville. Although the Confederate defenders are heavily outnumbered, the marshy terrain and fortifications spell disaster for Union. The problematic Benham had moved without orders, and is court-martialed following the battle.

1943: 94 Japanese warplanes set out to raid the Allied invasion force before it reaches the island of New Georgia in the Solomon Islands. American aircraft operating out of Guadalcanal's Henderson Field splash 93 out of 94 Japanese warplanes, while losing only six planes. Two tank landing ships are beached and only one cargo ship is damaged.

1944: One day after landing on Saipan, Marines repel Japanese counterattacks and capture Afetna Point and the town of Charan Karoa, linking the beachheads. Meanwhile, soldiers of the 27th Infantry Division come ashore and move to take Aslito airfield.

Across the Philippine Sea, American battleships shell targets at Guam in preparation for the invasion. However, the landings are postponed as the Japanese fleet is steaming for the Marianas with hopes of finally crushing the American fleet in a decisive battle.

1959: North Korean MiG 17s attack a Martin P4M "Mercator" reconnaissance aircraft in international waters, injuring the tail gunner and forcing the Navy spy plane to perform an emergency landing in Japan.

1965: Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara announces that in addition to the Marines and paratroopers of the 173rd Airborne Brigade recently deployed, the United States will send 21,000 more troops to Vietnam. McNamara also acknowledges that the military knew North Vietnam had been sending soldiers into South Vietnam prior to launching Operation Rolling Thunder, the politically managed bombing campaign on the North.

1992: After the first day of a summit in Washington, President George H.W. Bush and Russian president Boris Yeltsin announce that they have agreed to cut their countries' nuclear arsenals by two-thirds.

2003: Delta Force operators, along with British Special Air Service commandos, capture Lt. Gen. Abid Hamid Mahmud al-Tikriti - Saddam Hussein's right hand man. Mahmud was the fourth-most wanted man in Iraq, after Saddam and his sons Uday and Qusay,

June 18

0 1812: President James Madison approves an Act of Congress declaring that a state of war exists between the United States and Great Britain, launching the War of 1812.

1916: While flying an escort mission for observation planes, H. Clyde Balsley - one of the original pilots of the *Lafayette Escadrille* - becomes the first American to be shot down during World War I. A badly wounded Balsley manages to land and make his way back to friendly lines, but his hip injury will keep him from returning to the air.

4 **1950:** The Democratic People's Republic of Korea's Army crosses the 38th Parallel and invades South Korea, launching the Korean War.

1965: 30 B-52F Stratofortress bombers, each modified to carry nearly 30 tons of conventional ordinance, lift off from Guam's Andersen Air Force Base and begin the 2,500-mile journey to Vietnam. Unfortunately two bombers collide during the first combat mission of the B-52, killing eight crewmen. The target is a Viet Cong stronghold near Saigon, but by the time the bombs fall, the guerillas had moved out of the area.

After a year, B-52 crews have flown over 350 "Arc Light" missions, dropping over 70,000 tons of bombs on targets in Southeast Asia. And by this date in 1968, B-52 missions drastically increased to 25,000 with 630,000 tons of bombs dropped.

1981: At the restricted site of Tonopah Test Range (Nev.), Lockheed's F-117 Nighthawk stealth fighter takes to the skies for the first time. Former Naval aviator and Lockheed test pilot Harold "Hal" Farley is the lucky man at the controls. The Nighthawk remains a highly protected secret until its combat debut over Panama in 1989. In 2008 the Air Force retires the world's first stealth fighter, which was actually an attack plane as it carried no radar, afterburner, guns, or missiles.

June 19

1864: After pursuing the CSS *Alabama* for the last two years, Capt. John Winslow and the crew of USS *Kearsage* have finally trapped the Confederate screw sloop-of-war at the French port of Cherbourg. Capt. Raphael Semmes orders the "Stars and Bars" raised and sails his ship out to meet her unavoidable fate, and the vessel responsible for capturing and burning at least 55 American ships and taking 2,000 prisoners - without having lost a single man - is destroyed.

1888: Marines land at Korea, marching 25 miles to protect the Legation at Seoul.

1944: In the largest — and final — carrier-against-carrier conflict of the war, Adm. Raymond Spruance's Fifth Fleet decisively defeats the Japanese Mobile Fleet in the Battle of the Philippine Sea. In two days, three Japanese carriers

are sunk; two by submarines and one by air strikes. Meanwhile, American aviators inflict massively disproportionate losses - some 600 Japanese aircraft - in the "Great Marianas Turkey Shoot."

Lt. (j.g.) George R. Carr shoots down five, becoming an ace on his first combat mission for the United States (Can had flown previously with the Royal Canadian Air Force). Lt. (j.g.) Alex Vraciu shot down six Japanese warplanes in just eight minutes. Lt. Cmdr. David McCampbell splashes seven Japanese during two sorties. McCampbell will go on to become the top Navy ace of World War II, with 34 kills.

6 The loss of Japan's experienced naval pilots devastates the Japanese navy. The remaining Japanese carriers are effectively useless following the battle and pilots turn to kamikaze attacks.

As troops push further into France, the 9th Infantry Division reaches the west coast of the Cotentin Peninsula, isolating the German defenders at Cherbourgh (the port where CSS *Alabama* shoved off 80 years ago). Meanwhile, a massive storm in the English Channel destroys a pre-fabricated "Mulberry" harbor at Normandy's Utah Beach.

1945: As Japanese troops begin surrendering on Okinawa, four million turn out to cheer Gen. Dwight Eisenhower - the victorious Supreme Allied Commander in Europe - at a ticker-tape parade through New York City.

When Technical Sgt. John W. Meagher spots a Japanese soldier charging his tank during fighting at Okinawa, the soldier jumps off and rushes the enemy with his bayonet. He kills the explosive-armed opponent before the tank can be destroyed, but is knocked unconscious in the process. When Meagher comes to, he grabs a machinegun from the tank and begins a furious one-man assault. He braves incoming fire while dashing across the kill zone, destroying an enemy pillbox and killing its six occupants. Charging forward again, he reaches another position, and uses his now-empty gun to bash the Japanese machine gunners. Thanks to Meagher's attack, the enemy defense is broken and his platoon takes the objective. Sgt. Meagher is awarded the Medal of Honor.

1966: When members of 1st Lt. Ronald E. Ray's platoon are hit by a company of enemy soldiers in the Ia Drang Valley, Ray organizes a quick reaction force and makes his way to his soldiers. Ray spots an enemy position and destroys them with a grenade and rifle fire. When medics are evacuating a casualty, Ray silences another position that was targeting the Americans with another grenade. When an enemy grenade falls next to two soldiers fighting near Ray, he dives on the enemy grenade to shield his teammates. He survives the blast and is hit in the legs by enemy machinegun fire as he continues to lead his platoon, preventing its annihilation. Lt. Ray's tenacity and willingness to sacrifice himself for his men earns him the Medal of Honor.

1968: When an F-4 Phantom crew is shot down deep inside North Vietnam, Lt. (j.g.) Clyde E. Lassen takes off on a night mission to rescue the airmen. Lassen makes several attempts to extricate the Americans from the fire-swept landing zone, depending on flares to illuminate the hazardous, tree-covered hillside. When a flare goes out, his rotors strike a tree and he manages to keep his helicopter from crashing. Although his chopper is running dangerously low on fuel, he makes the decision to turn on his landing lights, giving enemy gunners an easy target. The airmen are able to board the helicopter, and Lassen flies them off to safety, landing on a destroyer with just five minutes of fuel remaining. Lassen is awarded the Medal of Honor.

1982: Hezbollah terrorists snatch the president of the American University in Beirut (and former OSS agent during World War II) David S. Dodge. Dodge, one of the first Americans taken hostage by the Iranian-backed terrorist organization, is later released. Replacing Dodge as president of the university is Malcolm Kerr, who is shot and killed by Islamic Jihad in 1985.

1985: Marxist guerrillas dressed as El Salvadoran soldiers kill four off-duty U.S. Marines, two U.S. citizens, and several others in San Salvador.

2003: Special operations forces of Task Force 20, supported by an Air Force AC-130 gunship engage a column of suspected high value targets as they attempt to flee to Syria. A gun battle erupts between the commandos and Syrian border guards, killing several Syrians.

June 20

1814: Construction begins on *Demologos*, the United States' first steam-powered warship. One year to the day later, *Demologos* completes her trials and will be delivered to the Navy the following year, and is renamed *Fulton* after the passing of her designer, Robert Fulton. The unique ship is intended to protect New York Harbor, but only sees one day of active service - giving President James Monroe a tour of New York.

1866: 100 Marines and sailors from the gunboat USS *Wachusett* land at New Chwang, China to arrest the leader of the bandits that assaulted the American Consul.

1898: While enroute to the Philippines, the cruiser USS *Charleston* arrives at the Spanish-held island of Guam. No one bothered to tell the neglected defenders that the United States and Spain were at war, and Guam is easily captured.

1913: As Ensign William D. Billingsley flies a Wright B-2 biplane over Annapolis, Md., he hits an air pocket that sends the biplane into a nosedive. The plane has no seatbelts, and Billingsley plummets 1,600 feet to his death, becoming the first fatality in Naval aviation. Towers catches a strut and rides out the free-fall until he successfully ditches in the river before the plane slams into the ground.

1934: Seven years before the attack on Pearl Harbor, Commander in Chief of the Asiatic Fleet Rear Adm. Frank Upham advises the Chief of Naval Operations that according to his analysis of Japanese radio traffic, "any attack by (Japan) would be made without previous declaration of war or intentional warning."

1941: The Department of War creates the United States Army Air Force, consolidating the Army's aviation assets into an autonomous command. Maj. Gen. Henry H. "Hap" Arnold - trained by the Wright Brothers and one of the world's first military pilots - leads the force as it swells from 12,000 aircraft in 1941 to a peak of nearly 80,000 during World War II.

1943: A PBY "Catalina" patrol aircraft operating near Iceland spots a German
---- U-boat, and drops a homing torpedo into the water - damaging the submarine. Allied aircraft sink 37 German and Japanese subs with the revolutionary "FIDO" torpedoes and damage 18. Nearly one out of every four FIDOs hit their target, and the weapon is so efficient that the military actually scales back its order.

June 21

1900: The Chinese empress Cixi formally declares war on foreign powers. 100,000 members of the nationalist "Righteous and Harmonious Fists" movement (nickamed the "Boxers" by the British) launch attacks against Christian and foreign targets in Peking's (modern-day Beijing) Legation Quarter. The siege lasts nearly two months before Western reinforcements arrive. Marine legend Dan Daly will earn his first of two Medals of Honor (one of only two men to accomplish the feat) when he single-handedly kills some 200 Boxers.

1916: During Gen. John J. Pershing's "Punitive Expedition" into Mexico to capture or kill Pancho Villa, Buffalo Soldiers of the 10th Cavalry Regiment clash with - and defeat - a Mexican Army force at Carrizal. The incident nearly puts the two countries on a war footing, but with the "War to End All War" raging across the Atlantic, tensions would soon dissipate.

0 1942: The Japanese submarine *1-25* surfaces at the mouth of the Columbia River, off the coast of Oregon, and targets Fort Stevens. The sub's gun inflicts virtually no damage, but the attack marks the only time that a stateside U.S. military installation is bombarded.

Halfway across the Pacific, a PBY Catalina from Patrol Squadron 24 (VP-24) rescue two downed aviators floating in the ocean, 360 miles north of Midway. The men have been drifting since their TBD Devastator torpedo bomber went down during the Battle of Midway 17 days ago.

1945: After 82 days of the bloodiest fighting during World War II, the last remaining Japanese resistance on Okinawa collapses. Gen. Mitsuru Ushijima, commander of the Japanese forces on the island, commits ritual suicide. The Battle of Okinawa is over. Over 100,000 Japanese soldiers perish and 12,500 American Marines, soldiers, and sailors are killed in combat. Kamikaze attacks account for the sinking of dozens of American ships.

1967: When a U.S. helicopter is shot down in South Vietnam's Binh Dinh Province, a platoon of 5th Cavalry Regiment troopers rushes to secure the site. Specialist 4th Class Carmel B. Harvey Jr.'s squad is hit on three sides by heavy enemy machinegun fire. When an enemy round hits and arms a grenade on Harvey's belt, he screams at the enemy and rushes the machine gun, but the grenade detonates just before he reaches the position. The explosion, which kills Harvey, stuns the communists and the pause in fire enables the wounded to escape the kill zone.

During the same engagement, Edgar M. McWethy Jr. rushes through a hail of bullets to treat the wounded. He provides care for the wounded platoon leader, enabling the officer to carry out his duties. McWethy moves to another casualty, and is hit three times in the process. While attempting to resuscitate his fellow soldier, the medic is hit a fourth - and final - time. Both Harvey and McWethy are posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

1969: Following two days of artillery attacks, a 600-man North Vietnamese Army force assaults the American combat base of Tay Ninh, 50 miles northwest of Saigon. After two days of fighting, the communist attack is repulsed; 196 NVA soldiers and ten Americans lay dead.

June 22

1807: Off the coast of Norfolk, Va., the British frigate HMS *Leopard* attacks the American vessel USS *Chesapeake,* forcing Commodore James Barron to surrender the ship after only managing to fire one shot. Four Americans are dead and 17 wounded in the attack, and the British board *Chesapeake,* taking

four British deserters. The British impress thousands of American sailors into their service during the Napoleonic War, but "Chesapeake-Leopard Affair" outrages the Americans and will lead to the War of 1812.

1813: Some 2,000 Royal Marines and British soldiers attempt to attack the American fortifications at Craney Island, guarding Hapton Roads, Va. But unlike the crew of the *Chesapeake* six years ago (which in fact, took place near the site of Craney Island), the defenders are prepared - and repel the invasion. The American guns inflict 200 casualties in one of the first engagements of the War of 1812.

1865: The Confederate commerce raider CSS *Shenandoah* fires the last shot of the Civil War - a warning shot at a U.S. whaling vessel in the Bering Straight. *Shenandoah* captured 38 ships and some 1,000 sailors during the Civil War, and becomes the only Confederate ship to circumnavigate the globe when it sails to England to surrender - marking the last time the Confederate colors are struck.

1884: After three years of being stranded by ice in the Canadian Arctic, a rescue expedition led by Cmdr. Winfield S. Schley finds Lt. Adolphus W. Greely and six of his men from the ill-fated Lady Franklin Bay Expedition. 16 of Greely's men had perished from hypothermia, starvation, drowning, and one man was ordered shot for repeatedly stealing food rations.

1898: The "Rough Riders" of the 1st United States Volunteer Cavalry, led by Col. Leonard Wood and Lt. Col. Theodore Roosevelt, begin landing at Daiquiri, Cuba during the Spanish-American War.

1900: Ordinary Seaman (seaman apprentice in today's Navy) William Search and a band of Americans attack and breach a Chinese fort, then turn the fort's guns on the defenders. On June 13, the USS *Newark* (C-1) sailor participated in a bayonet charge on 300 Imperial Chinese troops that broke off the enemy attack. A week later, Seach charged across open ground and cleaned out Chinese sniper nests. The following day, he was cited for defending American gun emplacements during a surprise sabre charge by enemy cavalry. For these actions, Seaman Seach was awarded the Medal of Honor.

1944: Following a preparatory airstrike, the U.S. VII Corps launches an assault against German forces at the French town of Cherbourg. The Allies meet stiff resistance at first, but 30,000 German defenders will surrender after a week of fighting. The Germans and Allies take heavy casualties - with both sides losing 8,000 soldiers killed in action or missing apiece.

1963: Four ballistic missile submarines are launched in one day - USS *Tecumseh* (SSBN-628), USS *Daniel Boone* (SSBN-629), USS *Flasher* (SSN-613), and USS *John Calhoun* (SSBN-630). The *James Madison-class* subs each carry 16 of the new Polaris A3 nuclear missiles, with a range of 2,500 nautical miles. The A3 carried three W-58 warheads with a yield of 200 kilotons apiece.

June 23

eg **1812:** Immediately after war is declared, a squadron of American ships led by Commodore John Rodgers sails to intercept a British convoy sailing from Jamaica. When the frigate HMS *Belvidera* is spotted, Rodgers personally aims and fires the first shot of the War of 1812 - the cannonball striking the British ship's rudder and penetrating the gun room.

1865: Confederate Brig. Gen. - and Cherokee chief - Stand Watie surrenders his First Indian Brigade of the Army of the Trans-Mississippi to Union forces in Oklahoma Territory, becoming the last general to surrender in the Civil War.

1923: Over the skies of San Diego, an Army Air Service DH-4 biplane flown by Capt. Lowell Smith tops off its fuel tanks from a hose attached to another DH-4, marking the world's first mid-air refueling operation.

1944: During one of the largest bombing missions of the war, 761 bombers of the 15th Air Force attack the oil fields at Ploesti, Romania.

When one of the B-17s on the raid is damaged by flak and has to drop out of formation, bombardier 2nd Lt. David R. Kingsley drops his bombs and goes to the back of the aircraft to administer first aid to the wounded tail gunner.

When another gunner is wounded by enemy aircraft, Kingsley attends to him as well. When the pilot orders the crew to abandon the plane before it explodes, Kingsley gives one of the wounded gunners his own parachute, sacrificing his life. His body is later discovered in the burned wreckage of the plane, and Kingsley is posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

1945: As the Sixth Army drives north to encircle the remaining Japanese forces on northern Luzon Island in the Philippines, paratroopers from the 11th Airborne Division perform their last combat jump of the war and cut off Gen. Tomoyuki Yamashita's Shobu Group's retreat.

1969: The Special Forces Camp at Ben Het in Vietnam's Central Highlands, eight miles east of the border with Laos and Cambodia, is cut off and besieged by North Vietnamese Army. Over the next several days B-52s fly 100 strikes while fighter-bombers, artillery, and helicopter gunships hammer the NVA until the Americans are relieved on July 2nd.

June 25

1864: Fighting at Petersburg (Va.) has reached a stalemate and Lt. Col. Henry Pleasants comes up with an idea. Soldiers of the 48th Pennsylvania Regiment - mostly coal miners before the war - begin construction of a 500-foot long underground shaft. Once the soldier-miners reach enemy trench line on July 30, they detonate the gunpowder and blow a hole in the Rebel trenches, instantly killing nearly 300 Confederate troops. Unfortunately for the Yankees, they are unable to quickly exploit the breach and Brig. Gen. William Mahone seals the hole and defeats the Union assault.

V 1876: In southeastern Montana Territory, Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer's 7th Cavalry Regiment squares off against thousands of allied Lakota and Cheyenne Indian warriors under the command of Crazy Horse and Chief Gall in the Battle of the Little Bighorn. The Americans are encircled and annihilated. Custer, his two brothers, a nephew, and a brother-in-law are among the 268 Americans killed in action.

"Custer's Last Stand" is the greatest defeat for the Americans during the Great

Plains War.

1942: Maj. Gen. Dwight Eisenhower arrives in London and is named Commander of U.S. Forces in Europe, despite having no combat experience in his 27-year career.

1943: As the United States military prepares for the upcoming invasion of Sicily, the Northwestern African Air Force launches its largest bombing raid to date, targeting Messina with 130 B-17 Flying Fortresses.

1946: Northrop's XB-35 flying wing makes its maiden flight. The heavy bomber prototype featured a massive 172-foot wingspan and could carry over 50,000 lbs. of ordinance - the equivalent of four B-29s or 10 B-17s - but the program is cancelled three years later.

1950: At 4:00 a.m. 10 divisions of North Korean soldiers cross the 38th Parallel into South Korea, kicking off the Korean War. The Communists roll over the fledgling Republic of Korea troops and drive their way towards the capital city of Seoul.

Within days, President Harry S. Truman authorizes Gen. Douglas MacArthur (Commander-in-Chief of Far East Command) to deploy troops. The ill-prepared American military sends Task Force Smith, a short-staffed battalion of infantry and an artillery battery to Pusan where the troops will attempt to hold up the North Koreans and buy time until additional forces can mount a counterattack.

1996: Hezbollah terrorists park a truck bomb next to an eight-story apartment building in Khobar, Saudi Arabia, and race away from the compound. The Khobar Towers housed U.S. airmen deployed to Saudi Arabia that enforced the southern no-fly zone over Iraq. Air Force security policeman Staff Sgt. Alfredo R. Guerrero spots the suspicious activity, then begins an evacuation of the towers, undoubtedly saving many lives, but the terrorists remotely detonate the 5,000 lbs. of plastic explosives, killing 19 U.S. airmen and wounding some 500.

The Khobar Towers attack was the deadliest terrorist attack on U.S. forces (at the time) since Hezbollah's 1983 attack in Beirut.

June 26

1862: Confederate forces led by Gen. Robert E. Lee launch a counteroffensive against Maj. Gen. George McClellan's Army of the Potomac. Although the outnumbered Confederates suffer heavy casualties and subordinates fail to execute Lee's plans, McClellan will ultimately withdraw from Richmond following the Battle of Mechanicsville - the first major engagement of the Seven Days Battles - and abandon the Peninsula Campaign.

1917: A convoy containing the first American Expeditionary Forces - members of the 5th Marine Regiment - land at the beaches of Saint-Nazaire France. The American troops will train for four months before entering combat. More than two million Americans will serve on the battlefields of Western Europe, and over 50,000 will lay down their lives in the "War to End All War."

1942: The Grumman F6F Hellcat - credited with the most aerial victories of any Allied naval aircraft during World War II - makes its first flight. Designed to compete with the agile Mitsubishi A6M Zero fighter, the Hellcat will come to dominate the skies over the Pacific. 34 Japanese warplanes are knocked out of the sky by top Navy ace and Medal of Honor recipient Capt. David McCampbell - one of an incredible 305 Hellcat aces in the war.

1944: Lt. Gen. Courtney Hodges' VII Corps captures the French port city of Cherbourg, taking the garrison commander Lt. General Karl-Wilhelm von Schlieben and the naval commander, Rear Admiral Walter Hennecke, prisoner.

A pocket of Germans still control the vital port facilities, and Coast Guard Lt. Cmdr. Quentin R. Walsh leads a 53-man naval reconnaissance unit through hostile fire and assaults the naval arsenal, capturing 400 Germans. His force

then moved to Fort Du Hornet where he received the surrender of another 350 Germans, and released 52 American paratroopers that had been taken prisoner. For his heroic actions, Walsh is awarded the Navy Cross.

The soon-to-be famous 442d Regimental Combat Team receives its baptism in fire near Suvento, Italy. When a company of Japanese-American "Nisei" soldiers reaches an enemy strongpoint, they are engaged by a deadly 88mm self-propelled gun, forcing the Americans to scatter and seek cover. Pvt. 1st Class Kiyoshi K. Muranaga's mortar squad is ordered to action, but the terrain is unsuitable to deploy the mortar and the squad leader tells his men to find cover as well.

Realizing the perilous situation his fellow soldiers face, Muranaga mans the mortar anyways, zeroing in on the armored vehicle. Muranaga single-handedly fires away in full view of the enemy, and his third shot impacts directly in front of the gun. Before he can put the 88 out of action with his fourth shot, the German crew kills him, and then abandons their vehicle. Muranaga has sacrificed his life for his comrades, and is posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

1945: The North American F-82 Twin Mustang - the last piston-engine aircraft built for the Air Force - makes its first flight. The long-range escort consists of two P-51 "Mustang" fuselages joined together by a center wing. Intended to escort B-29 bombing raids, World War II ends before the F-82 enters service, but Twin Mustangs are the first aircraft to see action in the Korean War. In 1947,Col. Robert E. Thacker set a record that still stands today by flying his F-82 5,000 miles nonstop (and without refueling) from Hawaii to New York in 14 hours and 32 minutes.

d 1948: When the Soviet Union cuts off West Berlin by sealing off highway and railroad routes, the U.S. Air Force begins the Berlin Airlift. American and other allied nations perfoiiii some 300,000 air-transport flights into West Berlin delivering an average of 5,000 tons of food, coal, and other essential items per day to the blockaded city until the Soviets relent a year later.

1950: A day after North Korean forces cross into South Korea, kicking off the Korean War, the destroyers USS *De Haven* (DD-727) and USS *Mansfield* (DD-728) evacuate 700 American and foreign nationals from Inchon.

1965: Gen. William Westmoreland is granted the authority to send American combat forces on offensive operations. Prior to this decision, U.S. forces primarily served in a defensive role at air bases and other installations.

June 27

1864: After two months of flanking maneuvers, driving Confederate Gen. Joseph E. Johnston's Confederate Army of Tennessee some 70 miles rearward, Maj. Gen. William T. Sherman launches a frontal assault at Kennesaw Mountain (near Marietta, Ga.). Casualties are heavy on both sides: 3,000 Union soldiers and 1,000 Confederates. Although Sherman's assault was unsuccessful, Maj. Gen. John M. Schofield's successful attack on Johnston's left flank forces the Confederates to withdraw again towards Atlanta.

1916: During the Dominican Republic civil war, the 4th Marines charge and defeat rebels with a bayonet attack.

1942: Gen. Henry H. "Hap" Arnold presents 23 "Doolittle Raiders" with the Distinguished Flying Cross at a ceremony in Washington, D.C.'s Bolling Field. A week later, another three crewmembers are awarded their medals at Walter Reed Army Hospital.

That same day, the FBI announces it has captured all eight of the German military intelligence operatives that had landed in New York and Florida to sabotage American strategic targets. Six are tried by military tribunal and executed by electric chair while the two agents that cooperated with investigators are eventually released by President Harry S. Truman in 1948.

1950: Two days after the communist invasion of South Korea by the Soviet-backed North, the United Nations Security Council approves a resolution to "repel the armed attack and to restore international peace and security in the area." Although 21 nations will provide support, the United States will send

the vast majority of troops to the conflict. On this day, President Truman authorizes Naval and air operations south of the 38th Parallel and dispatches the 7th Fleet to Taiwan to prevent hostilities from spreading elsewhere in Asia.

Meanwhile, F-82 Twin Mustang fighters score three kills against North Korean fighters attempting to intercept a flight of C-54 Skymaster aircraft evacuating personnel from Kimpo Air Field - the first air battle of the Korean War. Lt. William G. Hudson scores the first aerial victory of the war. Meanwhile, P-80C Shooting Star fighter-bombers knock four more Korean fighters out of the sky. Capt. Raymond E. Schillereff and Lt. Robert H. Dewald each shoot down an enemy plane while Lt. Robert E. Wayne claims a pair I1-10s in the Air Force's first-ever combat victories for jet-powered aircraft.

1993: After a foiled assassination attempt on former President George H.W. Bush in Kuwait, the cruiser USS *Chancellorsville* (CG-62) and destroyer USS *Peterson* (DD-969) launch 23 cruise missiles at the Iraqi Intelligence Service's command and control complex in Baghdad.

June 28

1776: The unfinished American garrison guarding Charleston harbor comes under attack by nine British ships under the command of Adm. Sir Peter Parker. The British attack the fort for 12-plus hours, but their cannonballs are no match for the palmetto log defenses of Fort Sullivan. In what has been described as the "first decisive victory of American forces over the British Navy" during the American Revolution, Col. William Moultrie and his South Carolina militiamen inflict heavy casualties on the Royal Navy forces and repel the assault.

1778: The Battle of Monmouth, N.J. is fought between Gen. George Washington's Continental Army (including the legendary Molly Pitcher) and British forces under Gen. Sir Henry Clinton. Though tactically inconclusive, the battle is a strategic victory for the Americans who prove they can go toe-to-toe with the British Army in a large pitched battle.

1814: 200 miles west of Plymouth, England, the sloop-of-war USS *Wasp* - the fifth of ten so-named vessels - engages HMS *Reindeer*. After 19 minutes of intense fire, with the Americans repulsing numerous attempts by the British to board their vessel, Master Commandant Johnston Blakely and his men devastate the British crew, killing the ship's captain, Commander William Manners, and 24 others. *Reindeer* is boarded, but is too heavily damaged to be taken as a prize and is burned.

1914: A Yugoslav nationalist named Gavrilo Princip assassinates Austrian Archduke Francis Ferdinand and his wife as they toured Sarajevo. One month later, Austria-Hungary will declare war on Serbia in response, which ultimately triggers World War I.

1919: Following six months of negotiations, the Treaty of Versailles is finally signed, formally ending World War I five years to the day after Archduke Ferdinand's assassination. The armistice of November 11, 1918 put an end to hostilities, but a state of war remained until the treaty. Germany is devastated - disarmed and forced to pay $31 billion in reparations (roughly the equivalent to nearly half a trillion dollars in 2017 dollars).

The U.S. Senate will not ratify a peace treaty with Germany until 1921. The "Carthaginian Peace" brought about by the Versailles Treaty will annihilate the German economy, leading to the rise of the Nazi Party - and ultimately World War II.

1950: As the South Korean capital of Seoul falls to the North Koreans, the first American combat forces - a 35-man anti-aircraft artillery unit - arrive in Korea. Gen. Douglas MacArthur, the newly appointed Commander of United Nations forces, also arrives in theater.

In the air, B-29 Superfortress and B-26 Marauder bombers conduct the first U.S. air strikes of the war, targeting rail and road traffic along the North Korean invasion routes.

1965: 3,000 soldiers of the 173rd Airborne Brigade assaults Viet Cong Zone D, some 20 miles northeast of Saigon in the first major offensive for U.S. forces in Vietnam.

June 29

1918: After the Bolsheviks seize power in Russia, 31 Marines from the armored cruiser USS *Brooklyn* (ACR-3) land at Vladivostok, Russia to guard the American Consulate and maintain stability in the Siberian port.

1927: Five weeks after Charles Lindbergh makes his famous flight across the Atlantic, an Atlantic-Fokker C-2 tri-motor aircraft touches down in Hawaii - completing the first transpacific flight from the United States to Hawaii. Numerous instrument failures force the crew, consisting of Army Air Corps first lieutenants Lester J. Maitland (pilot) and Albert F. Hegenberger (navigator), to rely on dead reckoning and celestial navigation. The men land safely at O'ahu's Wheeler Field, making the daring 2,500-mile trip in 25 hours and 50 minutes.

1950: At a press conference, President Harry S. Truman calls the American involvement in the Korean War a "police action,' adding that "We are not at war."

Meanwhile, 18 B-26 Marauder bombers of the Fifth Air Force strike targets at Heijo Airport near the North Korean capitol of Pyongyang, destroying 25 communist aircraft on the ground and another Yak fighter in the air. Also, the cruiser USS *Juneau* (CLAA-119) and detroyer USS *De Haven* (DD-727) engage in the first naval shore bombardment of the war, destroying enemy shore installations near Bokuko Ko. And Gen. Douglas MacArthur personally witnesses P-51 Mustang pilots knock several Yak fighters out of the sky over Suwon Airfield while he meets with South Korean president Syngman Rhee.

1966: American warplanes bomb the cities of Hanoi and Haiphong for the first time, striking oil facilities.

To the south, Sgt. Charles B. Morris of the 173rd Airborne Brigade spots signs of enemy presence and crawls forward alone to observe. An enemy machine gunner spots him and hits Morris in the chest, but he fires back with his rifle and kills the enemy gunner, then knocks out the remaining crew with grenades. After reaching friendly lines - but before he can receive treatment for his wound - Morris springs back to action the enemy mounts a large attack that turns into a fierce eight-hour battle.

The unit's medic was killed, so Morris has to treat his own wound. As he attempts to administer treatment to his wounded soldiers, Morris is hit again. He regains consciousness and continues to direct his troops and treat the wounded until his left hand is crippled by an enemy grenade blast. Morris hurls grenades at enemy soldiers, killing several, then moves forward with another soldier to silence an enemy machine gun that had set up to the Americans' rear. His comrade is killed, but Morris takes out the gun, despite only having one working hand. Not quite finished, he will put himself in the line of fire to drag the wounded to safety. For his incredible heroism, Sgt. Morris is awarded the Medal of Honor.

1968: During a large attack on his company's defensive position, Pvt. 1st Class Frank A. Herda and another soldier hold their ground against a charge by 30 Vietnamese sappers. Just after a grenade fired by Herda hits an enemy soldier ten feet away in the head, Herda spots an enemy grenade at his feet. He hurls himself on the grenade and absorbs the blast, grievously wounding himself but saving his comrades. Today, he is one of just 72 surviving Medal of Honor recipients.

1972: When an enemy formation masses to attack American troops near Quang Tri, South Vietnam, OV-10 Bronco pilot Capt. Steven L. Bennett and his observer request artillery support. When the request is denied due to the proximity of friendly forces, Bennett makes four strafing runs on the enemy and breaks off their attack. However, a surface-to-air missile hits the plane, giving the airmen little choice but to eject. When Bennett learns his observer's parachute is damaged, he decides to ditch the plane in the Gulf of Tonkin,

even though no Bronco pilot has survived a ditching. When the plane impacts the water, Bennett is trapped inside the damaged cockpit but his observer is rescued. Bennett is posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

it **2014:** The Islamic State (commonly referred to as ISIS) establishes itself as a global caliphate, naming Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi as its leader. The former Al Qaeda-linked terrorist group controls territory in Iraq and Syria, but after their declaration, now claim authority over all Muslims worldwide.

June 30

1815: While operating in the Sunda Straight, the American sloop-of-war USS *Peacock* spots the British cruiser HMS *Nautilus,* and orders the ship to strike her colors. When the captain refuses and informs American skipper Capt. Lewis Warrington that the war ended months ago, Warrington orders his men to open fire, inflicting over a dozen casualties on the British - the last naval action of the War of 1812. When he sees documentation confirming the war is over, Warrington orders the ship to be released and his crew help repair *Nautilus.*

1862: On day six of the Seven Days Battles, Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee orders a complex attack on Gen. George McClellan's retreating Army of the Potomac at Glendale, Va. Subordinates are unable to execute Lee's orders, and McClellan's troops are able to reach and fortify positions on Malvern Hill, from which they will inflict heavy casualties on Confederate forces the following day.

9 **1934:** The "Night of the Long Knives" - Adolf Hitler orders a purge of political opponents and members of the Nazi Party's own Sturmabteilung "Brownshirt" paramilitary organization. At least 85 are assassinated and over a thousand are arrested by Gestapo and Schutzstaffel (SS) troops, essentially giving Hitler absolute power.

1943: Gen. Douglas MacArthur begins Operation "Cartwheel," the Allied -----, campaign to seize the island of Rabaul from Japan. Soldiers and Marine Raiders land at numerous locations throughout the Solomon Islands. Ultimately, Allied planners decide to isolate and bypass Rabaul, beginning the "island hopping" policy.

1944: 6,000 German troops surrender at Cherbourg, ending resistance on France's Cotentin Peninsula.

4i 1945: After killing nearly 9,000 Japanese troops and capturing 2,900, mopping-up operations on Okinawa have ended.

1967: U.S. Air Force pilot Maj. Robert H. Lawrence, Jr. becomes the first black astronaut. Lawrence is selected for the Air Force's Manned Orbital Laboratory program, which will be cancelled when NASA realizes that unmanned satellites can perform the task. Lawrence will perish while giving flight instruction on an F-104 "Starfighter" in December and never makes it to space.

July

July 2

1863: The Battle of Gettysburg (Pa.) enters its second day. Col. Joshua L. Chamberlain's 20th Maine Volunteers occupy "Little Round Top" at the extreme left flank of the Union forces. With ammunition running low from repeated attacks by the 15th Regiment of Alabama, inflicted heavy casualties on the defenders, Chamberlain orders a bayonet charge. His men rush downhill, capturing over 100 soldiers. Chamberlain, who personally took a Confederate officer prisoner with his saber, is awarded the Medal of Honor.

Meanwhile on Cemetery Ridge, the 1st Minnesota Volunteers arrive just in time to plug a gap left by retreating Yankees. The Minnesotans conduct another bayonet charge, and by day's end only 47 of an original 262-man force are capable of fighting - one of the highest casualty rates of the war.

1937: World-famous aviator Amelia Earhart takes off from New Guinea and heads for the tiny coral atoll of Howland Island, over 22,000 miles into her around-the-world flight. The Coast Guard cutter USCGC *Itasca* was positioned near Howland to assist Earhart, and receives a transmission that her Lockheed Electra was running out of fuel. The Navy dispatches the battleship USS Colorado (BB-45), aircraft carrier USS *Lexington* CV-2), and PBY Catalinas from Hawaii (1,700 miles away) to join *Itasca* in the search, but they come up empty-handed.

1943: A flight of 16 B-25 Mitchell bombers, escorted by P-40 Warhawk fighters of the all-black 99th Pursuit Squadron, conducts a raid on Sicily. 1st Lt. Charles P. Hall becomes the first Tuskegee Airman to shoot down an Axis warplane - a Fw-190. Hall will fly 198 combat missions during World War II and is the recipient of the Distinguished Flying Cross, which incidentally, was created on this day in 1926.

July 3

1775: Gen. George Washington, the newly appointed commander-in-chief of the Continental Army, takes formal command of his troops in Cambridge, Mass.

1778: A force of 1,000 Loyalists and Iroquois warriors commanded by Col. John Butler attacks American fortifications and settlements in Pennsylvania's Wyoming Valley, killing some 360 militiamen and destroying 1,000 houses. Reportedly, women and children are also killed in Butler's "Wyoming massacre," and those that escape the slaughter will die of starvation and exposure.

1863: During the third - and final - day of the Battle of Gettysburg, Gen. Robert E. Lee orders three divisions of Lt. Gen. James Longstreet's Confederate soldiers across open ground to assault the Union position on Cemetery Ridge. Union fire shatters the rebels, inflicting thousands of casualties before the troops can return to the Confederate lines after the failed attack, which becomes known as "Pickett's Charge."

Fearing a Union counter-attack, Lee orders Maj. Gen. George Pickett to rally ------ what is left of his division, Pickett replies, "General, I have no division." After three days of fighting at Gettysburg, Lee abandons his invasion and retreats to Virginia. In terms of total casualties, Gettysburg is the deadliest battle of the Civil War with some 50,000 soldiers from both armies killed, wounded, or captured.

[a] **1898:** Rear Adm. William T. Sampson cables the Secretary of the Navy, John D. Long, declaring that the Atlantic Squadron has decisively defeated the Spanish Navy in the Battle of Santiago de Cuba, offering the captured fleet as a "Fourth of July present" to the nation. The Americans suffer only two casualties in the engagement, but Adm. Pascual Cervera's force of four armored cruisers and two destroyers is wiped out.

1950: Off the coast of Korea, carriers from both the United States and Britain begin combat operations against North Korea. F9F Panthers, AD Skyraiders, and F4U Corsairs launch from the deck of USS *Valley Forge* (CV-45) and strike the airfield at Pyongyang. The raid marks the first time the Panther and Skyraider see combat, and is the first-ever combat strike by a jet aircraft.

Lt. (j.g.) Leonard H. Plog and Ensign E. W. Brown of Fighter Squadron 51 (VF-51) each shoot down a Yak-9 fighter in the Navy's first victories of the Korean War.

1951: When a Marine Corsair flown by Capt. James V. Wilkins is shot down 35 miles southwest of Wonsan, Lt. (j.g) John K. Koelsch volunteers to rescue the downed aviator. Overcast conditions force Koelsch to fly very low and without fighter protection. His helicopter is hit by enemy fire during the search, and once Koelsch hoists Wilkins out and is in the process of flying back to friendly lines, the chopper is shot down.

Koelsch extricates fellow crewman George M. Neal and Wilkins from the wreckage and the Americans evade enemy soldiers for nine days before being captured. Neal and Wilkins survive their captivity, and Neal is awarded the

Navy Cross. The communists subject Koelsch to especially harsh treatment, from which he will not survive and he is awarded the Medal of Honor posthumously.

July 5

1814: On the banks of the Niagara River in Upper Canada (modem-day Ontario), The United States Army proves that they are capable of going toe-to-toe with the British. Wrongly believing that the American soldiers are militia - and therefore easily dispersed - British Gen. Phineas Rail orders his Redcoats to advance on Maj. Gen. Jacob Brown's Army of the North. The king's men are cut down and retreat to nearby Fort George after suffering heavy casualties in the Battle of Chippawa.

That same day, the sloop-of-war USS *Peacock* captures four British warships. *Peacock* will capture 20 British ships before participating in the last naval engagement during the War of 1812.

1859: Capt. N.C. Brooks, sailing aboard the bark *Gambia,* discovers the Midway Islands some 1,300 miles northwest of Hawaii. The island will become an important strategic base for the U.S. Navy and is the first offshore island claimed-by the United States.

1861: Federal troops led by Col. Franz Sigel skirmish with a Missouri State Guard force personally commanded by Governor Claiborne F. Jackson at Carthage (Mo.). Although better armed and more experienced than their counterparts, Sigel's men are outnumbered nearly six-to-one and withdraw from the field, ceding victory to the pro-Confederate state defense force in the first large-scale engagement of the Civil War.

1942: The submarine USS *Growler* (SS-215), skippered by Lt. Cmdr. Howard W. Gilmore, attacks three Japanese destroyers operating in Alaska's Aleutian Islands. She sinks *Arare* and severely damages two others, narrowly avoiding enemy torpedoes. For this engagement, Gilmore is awarded the first of his two Navy Crosses, and will later be awarded the Medal of Honor when he sacrifices his life to save his ship the following year.

1944: Lt. Col. Francis "Gabby" Gabreski shoots down his 28th - and final -- German warplane. Gabreski is the top American ace in the European Theater, but will spend the rest of the war as a German prisoner after being shot down later in the month. He will go on to score another 6.5 victories during the Korean War, becoming one of only seven American combat pilots to become an ace in two wars.

1945: After nearly 11 months of fighting - and some 80,000 American casualties - Gen. Douglas MacArthur announces that the Philippine Islands have been liberated.

1950: Two infantry companies and an artillery battery under the command of Lt. Col. Brad Smith set up a defensive line at Osan, hoping to hold off the communist advance long enough for American forces to land at Pusan. The Americans' obsolete anti-tank weapons are no match for the Soviet-built T-34 tanks, who quickly overrun the task force.

Task Force Smith manages to hold off two full divisions of enemy troops for
s several hours before retreating in the first clash of U.S. and North Korean forces. Only 185 of Smith's 520-man force return to friendly lines after the Battle of Osan.

Ju1y6

1911: Legendary aviation pioneer - and future five-star general - Henry H. "Hap" Arnold overcomes his fear of flight and receives his pilot's license, becoming one of the world's first military aviators.

1944: A month after the Normandy Invasion, Lt. Gen. George S. Patton fmally arrives in France. The Germans held Patton in such high regard that kept their 15th Army in Calais, thinking that would be the site where Patton's "phantom army" would be landing - the result of a successful Allied deception campaign. Patton's Third Army will form the extreme right flank of the march across France.

That same day in the United States, 2nd Lt. Jackie Robinson - famous for breaking Major League Baseball's "color barrier" in 1947 - refuses to move to the back of a bus. Military police meet Robinson at his stop, and investigators recommend a court martial. Although his commanding officer refuses to press charges, Robinson is transferred to another unit whose commander does pursue a court martial. His former unit, the 761st "Black Panther" tank battalion is sent to Europe, and Robinson will receive an honorable discharge.

1945: Marine Corps Maj. Gen. Keller E. Rockey, commanding the Third Amphibious Corps, accepts the surrender of 50,000 Japanese soldiers in northern China.

1947: Mikhail Kalashnikov's iconic AK-47 assault rifle goes into production in the Soviet Union. Seven decades later, the rugged AK-47 remains the weapon of choice for communist governments and paramilitary forces worldwide.

1951: Joseph Stalin announces that the Soviet Union has developed an atomic bomb.

1961: American president John F. Kennedy advises Americans to construct fallout shelters in case of nuclear war between the United States and Soviet Union.

1962: *USS Bainbridge* (DLGN-25), America's first nuclear-powered frigate, is commissioned. In two years, *Bainbridge* will join the nuclear-powered vessels, USS *Enterprise* and USS *Long Beach* for a two-month unrefueled cruise around the world.

July 7

1798: The "Quasi War" with France begins when Congress rescinds treaties with the revolutionary French government. Leading up to - and during - the two year undeclared war, 2,000 American merchant vessels are captured by French privateers. The U.S. Navy and Marine Corps, which had been

disbanded after the American Revolution, are both brought back into service, as is George Washington, whom President John Adams reinstates as Commander-in-Chief.

1846: Commodore John D. Sloat, commanding the Pacific Squadron during the Mexican-American War, lands at Monterrey and raises the flag over the Custom House, claiming California for the United States.

1941: Although the United States is still neutral at this stage of World War II, Marines from the Fifth Marine Defense Battalion and the Sixth Marine Regiment land at Reykjavik, relieving the British garrison on Iceland. Once America enters the war, the Marines are more than happy to hand their arctic base over to the Army, and sail for the warm waters of the Pacific.

1944: On Saipan, 3,000 Japanese troops conduct the largest banzai charge of the war, nearly wiping out two battalions of soldiers from the 105th Infantry Regiment in a 12-hour pitched battle. Although resistance will continue for weeks, Saipan is declared secure on July 9. The 30,0000-man Japanese garrison force is wiped out, but the Battle of Saipan is the costliest campaign in the Pacific War to date with over 12,000 American casualties - including (soon-to-be) famous actor Lee Marvin, then a Marine Corps private, who was twice wounded in the assault on Mount Tapochau.

During the battle, Marine Private First Class Harold C. Agerholm commandeers an abandoned ambulance and for three hours makes repeated trips through perilous enemy fire, rescuing 45 wounded Americans before he is mortally wounded by an enemy sniper. For his actions, Agerholm is awarded the Medal of Honor.

July 8

1942: The Gato-class submarine USS *Barb* (SS-220) is commissioned in Groton, Conn. The sub will conduct combat tours in both the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, and, according to Japanese records, is credited with sinking more tonnage than any other U.S. submarine. On July 22, 1945, a crew of

sailors from *Barb* land at Karafuto, Japan and place explosives that will destroy a train - the only land combat on Japanese home islands during the war.

July 10

1942: A PBY "Catalina" crew spots an intact Japanese A6M "Zero" fighter that crash-landed on the Alaskan island of Akutan. The fighter is salvaged and shipped to the United States, where test pilots will use the captured warplane to identify tactics that negate the formidable Zero's advantages. The newly developed F6F "Hellcat" is modified to take full advantage of the Zero's weaknesses discovered during tests, and Hellcat aviators will enjoy an impressive 13:1 kill ratio against Zeroes in the Pacific War.

0 1943: Just after midnight, 82d Airborne Division paratroopers perform their first combat jump behind enemy lines on the island of Sicily. That morning, over 100,000 American, British, and Canadian troops hit on the beach in one of the biggest airborne and amphibious invasions of the war. The Allied force captures the island after six weeks of fighting, but is unable to prevent the withdrawal of many of the Axis forces.

"Chips," a German Shepherd military police dog serving in Sicily with Company I, 30th Infantry Regiment, attacks a hidden German pillbox, forcing four enemy soldiers to surrender. Chips is wounded in the attack, but the canine will be awarded the Silver Star and Purple Heart by the 3rd Infantry Division's commander, Maj. Gen. Lucian Truscott.

Earlier that morning, as the American fleet prepares for the Sicily invasion, Ensign John H. Park spots a small fire aboard a landing ship that was loaded with ammunition and explosives. Fearing that the detonation of the craft could compromise the invasion, Parle rushes through the smoke towards the flames. Unable to put out the fire pot that threatened the dangerous cargo, he throws it overboard. Park perishes from smoke inhalation a week later and is awarded the Medal of Honor for his sacrifice.

1950: North Korean forces clash with soldiers of the U.S. 24th Infantry Division in the Battle of Chochiwon. Two days of airstrikes against the approaching armored column of North Korean vehicles and infantry had seriously weakened the attackers, but the Americans are outnumbered and have antiquated equipment, and are quickly routed. The battle marks the first engagement of American and North Korean tanks, and the light M24 "Chaffee" tank proves no match for the heavier armor and guns of the Soviet-built T-34. The Americans mount a counterattack, and successfully delay the communist force for three days, resorting to hand-to-hand fighting before having to withdraw.

July 11

1798: Having been disbanded after the end of the Revolutionary War 15 years ago, President John Adams reinstitutes the United States Marine Corps for the Quasi War with France.

1804: Vice President Aaron Burr and former Treasury Secretary Alexander Hamilton - both former distinguished field-grade officers in the Continental Army - engage in a duel at Weehawken, New Jersey. Hamilton reportedly fires first, but misses. Burr's shot hits Hamilton in the abdomen - mortally wounding George Washington's former aide-de-camp.

1864: A corps of Confederate soldiers led by Lt. Gen. Jubal A Early assaults Fort Stevens in Washington, D.C.. Pres. Abraham Lincoln, a former militia captain, personally observes the battle, and a surgeon standing next to the president is wounded by enemy fire. Early realizes that his invasion of the Union capital is not possible as the fort cannot be taken without heavy Confederate casualties and will withdraw the following day. After the engagement, the Confederate general tells one of his subordinates, "Major, we didn't take Washington but we scared Abe Lincoln like hell."

1941: President Franklin D. Roosevelt names William J. Donovan - a recipient of the Medal of Honor during World War I and the "Father of American Intelligence" - to the position of Coordinator of Information.

Donovan's agency will focus on intelligence and propaganda until it is split into the Office of War Information and the Office of Strategic Services - the predecessor to the Central Intelligence Agency.

1945: 2,100 Eighth Air Force heavy bombers begin redeploying from their bases in England to the Pacific Theater.

1953: Lt. Col. John F. Bolt, a Marine Corps F-86 pilot attached to an Air Force unit, scores his fifth victory during the Korean War, becoming the only Marine ace of the Korean War and, to this day, the Marines' only jet ace. Bolt, having shot down six enemy warplanes in both World War II and Korea, is also the only Marine to achieve ace status in two conflicts.

1969: When well-camouflaged enemy machine gun fortifications open fire on Specialist Gordon R. Roberts' platoon, pinning the Americans down, Roberts crawls towards the nearest bunker, then leaps to his feet and kills the occupants. Ignoring the bullets whizzing past him, he charges towards another bunker, but a burst of fire knocks Roberts' weapon from his hands. After obtaining another weapon from the battlefield, he continues forward and silences a second position. He then takes out a third bunker with grenades, then a fourth - despite being completely separated from his unit.

Roberts manages to link up with another company and helps drag wounded soldiers down the hill before returning to his unit. President Richard Nixon awards him the Medal of Honor in 1971. Roberts rejoins the Army after receiving a commission in 1991, retiring as a colonel in 2012.

July 12:

1862: President Abraham Lincoln signs a law creating the Medal of Honor the nation's highest decoration for valor. The award is presented to "such non-commissioned officers and privates as shall most distinguish themselves by their gallantry in action and other soldier-like qualities during the present insurrection." The Navy had established their version, the "Medal of Valor," six months previously. To date, 3,502 Americans have been awarded the Medal of Honor - roughly half of which were from the Civil War.

1916: In Pensacola Bay, Fla. the armored cruiser USS *North Carolina* (ACR-12) becomes the first naval vessel to carry and operate aircraft when aviation pioneer Lt. Godfrey de Chevalier launches his AB-3 flying boat from a catapult while the ship is underway.

1944: When three dug-in and camouflaged German machineguns pin down an American company, Sgt. Roy W. Harmon's orders his squad forward to neutralize the positions. German gunners are pouring "murderous" fire from behind haystacks, and left unchecked, will annihilate an entire platoon. When tracer rounds fail to ignite the haystacks, Harmon orders his men to stay put while he crawls forward alone.

Harmon reaches the first machinegun nest, setting it on fire with a white phosphorous grenade and shooting the escaping gunners with his submachine gun. Harmon moved towards the next position and was wounded before he took out the nest and its occupants with hand grenades. The approach to the third position was completely exposed and Harmon was wounded a second time as he closed in. At 20 yards away, he pops up to his knees to eliminate the last position with a grenade, but was cut down by close-range fire. Rising again to his knees, he hurls the grenade and dies. Harmon's grenade destroys the third - and final machinegun emplacement and saves an entire platoon. Sgt. Harmon is posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

1950: Elements of the 21st Infantry Regiment continue fighting delay operations against the advancing North Korean Army. Although the Americans are outgunned and outnumbered, they manage to hold off the enemy long enough for the establishment of the Pusan Perimeter. Col. Robert R. Martin, commanding officer of the 34th Infantry Regiment is posthumously awarded the first Distinguished Service Cross (the Army's second-highest decoration for valor) of the Korean War after he is killed while attacking a North Korean T-34 tank with a bazooka.

1993: 17 American AH-64 "Cobra" helicopters attack a safe house in Mogadishu, believing that the infamous Somali warlord Muhamad Farrah Aidid is present. Dozens of Somalis are killed, but the self-declared president is not among the dead. Four journalists attempting to cover the attack are stoned to death by an angry mob.

July 13

1861: Following their victory in the Battle of Rich Mountain in western Virginia two days ago, Union forces led by Maj. Gen. George B. McClellan catch the fleeing Confederates at Cheat River. Brig. Gen. Robert S. Garnett, commanding the Confederate troops, is killed, becoming the first general killed in the Civil War.

The victory at Corrick's Ford marks the high point of McClellan's career, as his inflated accomplishment makes him a national hero - he will become general-in-chief of the Union army - and sets in motion the creation of West Virginia.

1863: In New York City, residents kick off three days of violent riots against the draft - perhaps the worst riot in American history. Firemen are attacked and their equipment destroyed, and the outnumbered police officers can't control the huge crowd. Soldiers are ordered to New York City, many of whom fought days ago at Gettysburg, and by the time order is restored, 4,000 troops occupy the city. Hundreds of citizens are dead, thousands wounded, and dozens of buildings are burned.

1943: Allied and Japanese ships clash in the Solomon Islands during the Battle of Kolombangara. The force had just landed Marine Raiders on New Georgia and the Japanese intended to land reinforcements, but are driven off after a brief nighttime engagement. Heavy gunfire and torpedoes sink the Japanese light cruiser *Jintsu*, taking almost the entire crew with her. Japanese torpedoes sink the destroyer USS *Gwin* (DD-443), and heavily damage three other cruisers.

1985: Vice President - and former TBM "Avenger" torpedo bomber pilot during World War II - George H.W. Bush becomes Acting President for the Day when Pres. Ronald Reagan undergoes surgery.

2008: At 4a.m., over 100 Taliban fighters launch a coordinated assault against a joint American-Afghan patrol base in eastern Afghanistan. The remote outpost had just been established and its defenses had not yet been fully constructed, enabling the enemy to destroy the heavy U.S. weapons almost immediately. After four hours of close combat, the attackers are driven off with help from artillery and aircraft support. Nine American soldiers are killed and another 29 wounded in one of the Taliban's deadliest attacks of the war.

July 14

1918: Quentin Roosevelt, the youngest son of former president Theodore Roosevelt, is shot down and killed following a dogfight with German pilots. Despite the fallen aviator's proximity to the front lines, the Germans (who had a profound respect for Pres. Roosevelt) give him a funeral with full honors.

July 16

1861: Brig. Gen. Irvin McDowell's 35,000-man army departs Washington, D.C., marching to meet Gen. P.G.T. Beauregard's Confederate force assembled along Bull Run some 25 miles away. Just weeks ago, McDowell was a major and now leads the largest field army assembled in North America to that point.

1945: The atomic age dawns when man's first nuclear weapon is tested at Alamogordo Air Base, N.M. (present-day White Sands Missile Range). The shock wave from the 19-kiloton device, nicknamed "Gadget," could be felt 100 miles away and the mushroom cloud reached over six miles in the air.

Within hours of the Trinity test, the cruiser USS *Indianapolis* (CA-35) departs San Francisco on a top-secret mission. The un-escorted cruiser sprints across the Pacific at a record-setting pace, bound for Tinian. On board is the uranium and parts for the "Little Boy" weapon that will level Hiroshima on August 6.

1950: 30 critically wounded soldiers of the 19th Infantry Regiment, along with a medic and Chaplain Herman G. Fethoelter are cut off from escape by a North Korean roadblock. When the communist soldiers discover the unarmed men, Felhoelter orders the medic to escape and prays over the wounded until all remaining Americans are cut down by enemy machineguns.

1957: Six years before becoming the first American to orbit the earth, Maj. John Glenn (USMC) streaks across the country on the first supersonic transcontinental flight. Glenn, a combat veteran of both World War II and Korea, pilots his F8U-1 Crusader jet from California to New York in a record-setting 3 hours and 22 minutes. He averaged 725.55 mph, despite having to slow down for three mid-air refueling contacts with propeller-driven AJ-2 Savage tankers.

1969: Millions of Americans tune in to watch the Saturn V rocket carrying Apollo 11 astronauts Neil Armstrong (USN), Michael Collins (USAF), and "Buzz" Aldrin (also USAF) blast off from Kennedy Space Center on the first-ever mission to the moon's surface. The Apollo 11 crew orbit the earth one-and-a-half times before firing their rockets on a course for the moon that will take them three days.

July 17

1898: Spanish forces under the command of Gen. Jose Toral surrender Cuba to Gen. William R. Shaffer, practically ending Col. (and future president) Teddy Roosevelt's "splendid little war." In December, the Treaty of Paris puts an official end to the Spanish-American War.

1927: When Nicaraguan rebels attack the Marine garrison at Ocotal, Maj. Ross E. Rowell's Marine Corps DeHavilland DH-4 biplanes disperse the force with strafing runs - and the first use of dive bombing in support of ground

forces. The American occupation of Nicaragua will last another six years, but after Ocotal, rebels will never again make the mistake of mounting a large scale attack on U.S. forces.

1944: Two transport ships are destroyed - along with over 300 sailors and civilians killed and nearly 400 wounded - when ammunition being loaded aboard the ships at Port Chicago, Calif explodes. One vessel is so badly obliterated that no identifiable pieces can be found. The explosion was reportedly heard 200 miles away, and registered a 3.4 on the Richter scale.

1953: A Marine Corps R4Q "Packet" transport plane loses power after takeoff and crashes, killing 43 Naval ROTC students and crewmembers.

1975: The American Apollo spacecraft - manned by former Air Force pilots Thomas P. Stafford, Donald "Deke" Slayton, and Naval aviator Vance D. Brand - docks with the Soviet Soyuz capsule on the first joint spaceflight of the two nations. The crews spend two days together, sharing meals and conducting experiments on what becomes the last flight of the Apollo program. The space race is over.

1989: The Northrop B-2 "Spirit" stealth bomber takes off from Palmdale's Air Force Plant 42 on its first public flight. Former Air Force pilot Bruce Hinds is at the controls for the flight to Edwards Air Force Base.

July 18

tt 1863: At 7:45 p.m., Union soldiers led by Brig. Gen. Truman Seymore launch a second attack against Battery Wagner, in Charleston (S.C.) Harbor. Spearheading the attack is Col. Robert G. Shaw's all-black 54th Massachusetts Infantry Regiment (portrayed in the 1989 film GLORY). Shaw's regiment reaches the fortification walls, fighting hand-to-hand until they are driven back by devastating fire. The Confederates inflict 1,500 casualties on the attackers, killing several of the top Union officers, including Shaw. During the battle, Sgt. William H. Carney (featured image) becomes the first African-American soldier awarded the Medal of Honor.

1918: When Marine Corps Sgt. Matej Kocak's battalion is stopped by a German machinegun during the Meuse-Argonne Offensive, Kocak single-handedly advances on the enemy position. He charges forward under fire and drives off the Germans with his bayonet. Later that day, he organized a unit of French colonial soldiers and led a successful attack against another German machinegun emplacement. Kocak will die a few weeks after his heroic actions, but is posthumously awarded both the Army and Navy Medals of Honor.

Another Marine earned both versions of the Medal of Honor on this date. When an enemy machinegun position targets his unit, Gunnery Sgt. Louis Cukela crawls forward until he is behind the nest. He then springs up and charges the Germans, killing and driving off several with his bayonet. Using captured grenades, he kills or captures those that remained behind.

That same day near Belleau, France, a German machinegun opens up on Army Private First Class George Dilboy and his platoon leader as the Americans are conducting reconnaissance. Despite the position being only 100 yards away, Dilboy stands up and fires at the enemy gun crew, then moves through a wheat field until he is 25 yards away. He fires again, and is torn to pieces by the enemy gunners. Dilboy manages to silence the gun, but is killed in the process. For heroism and valor that American Expeditionary Force commander Gen. John J. Pershing refers to as "super-human," Dilboy is awarded the Medal of Honor.

Interestingly, all three Medal of Honor recipients are natives of the Central Powers: Kocak and Cukela are from Austria-Hungary (Slovakia and Croatia, respectively), and Dilboy is from the Ottoman Empire.

1943: (Featured image) Naval airship *K-34,* a K-class patrol blimp, spots the German U-boat *U-134* off the Florida coast. Under cover of darkness, the airship approaches the surfaced sub undetected, then opens fire with its .50-cal machine guns. But when it passes overhead and attempts to finish off the U-boat with depth charges, the ordinance fails to release. *U-134* shoots down the blimp, marking the only airship lost to combat during World War II. Nine of the ten crewmembers are rescued the following day.

1966: John W. Young, Naval aviator and veteran of the Korean War, and Air Force pilot Michael Collins blast off on Gemini 10 mission. The astronauts will perform a "space walk" and rendezvous with the abandoned Agena capsule left in orbit from Gemini 8.

July 19

1779: 1,000 Continental Marines and militiamen, including a 100-man artillery detachment commanded by Paul Revere, depart Boston, sailing to attack the British at Fort George (present-day Castine, Maine). The 44-ship Penobscot Expedition - the largest naval expedition of the Revolutionary War - proves to be a disastrous defeat for the Americans, as every vessel is either destroyed or captured by the British, and survivors of the failed attack must find their way back to Massachusetts with little to no supplies.

1863: The Confederate Army's "Great Raid of 1863" is dealt a serious blow in Ohio, where Union gunboats and pursuing cavalry attack Brig. Gen. John H. Morgan's handpicked cavalry force as they attempt to cross the swollen Ohio River. After covering some 1,000 miles in Northern territory, capturing and paroling some 6,000 Union soldiers, seizing supplies, destroying railroads and bridges, and spreading terror throughout the North, Morgan's weary force is trapped and hundreds are captured. Within days, most of the raiders are taken prisoner, including Morgan, who is sent to the Ohio State Penitentiary. But in November, Morgan and several of his officers will tunnel out of the prison and escape to safety.

1942: Adm. Karl DOnitz orders his U-boats to abandon their hunting grounds off the American coast; the institution of anti-submarine countermeasures, such as the convoy system, has put an end to the easy pickings of what German submariners referred to as the "Happy Time."

1943: As the Allies march across Sicily, 700 B-17 and B-24 bombers conduct a daylight bombing raid on Rome, the first time the "Eternal City" is targeted during World War II. Prime Minister Benito Mussolini, with his army on the brink of collapse, will be removed from power and arrested within a week.

1944: In New Guinea, enemy mortars and machineguns have pinned down a platoon of 112th Cavalry troopers. 2nd Lt. Dale E. Christensen orders his men to stay put while he crawls forward to pinpoint the enemy weapons and the best approaches of attack. Although enemy fire knocks Christensen's rifle from his hands, he continues his mission, locating five machinegun nests and wiping one out with his grenades. He then leads the charge which neutralizes ten machinegun positions and four mortars.

Three days before, he ordered his men to remain behind cover while he crawled forward and eliminated an enemy machinegun nest from 15 yards away. And in August, he is killed in action just two yards away from taking out yet another machinegun. For his actions, Christensen is posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

1953: Just days before the armistice ends combat between the United States and North Korea, Air Force Lt. Col. Vermont Garrison scores his 10th kill of the war, becoming a "double ace." Garrison flew for both Britain's Royal Air Force and the U.S. Army Air Force during World War II, with 7 victories in Europe. When war breaks out in Vietnam, the 51-year-old "Grey Eagle" will command the 405th Fighter Wing, flying 97 combat missions over Laos and Vietnam.

1963: NASA test pilot - and former Army Air Forces pilot during World War II - Joseph A. Walker flies his North American X-15 aircraft to an altitude of 66 miles, becoming the first civilian to fly in space.

July 20

1944: As Adolf Hitler meets with officials at his "Wolfs Lair" headquarters in East Prussia, a suitcase bomb planted by Col. Claus von Stauffenberg detonates, killing three German officers and wounding the Fiihrer. Stauffenberg and several fellow "Operation Valkyrie" conspirators are shot by firing squad within 24 hours, and the Gestapo will arrest and execute several thousand Germans (some having no connection to the plot whatsoever) in coming months.

In the Marianas Islands, Naval Underwater Demolition Teams (the predecessor to today's SEAL Teams) destroy obstacles on the beaches of Guam as aircraft and warships bombard enemy positions in preparation of the invasion.

1945: As the Manhattan Project scientists put the finishing touches on the atomic bomb, Army Air Force B-29 "Superfortress" crews begin flying multiple small-scale bombing raids against Japan, so the defenders would become accustomed to the sight of individual bombers.

1950: Following the Battle of Taejon, a truck containing several soldiers attempts to break through an enemy roadblock. Gunfire disables the vehicle, killing and wounding everyone except Sgt. George D. Libby. He takes cover in a nearby ditch, braving heavy enemy fire on two occasions to treat wounded soldiers and move them to cover. Libby stops a halftrack as it passes through the killzone and loads the wounded aboard. Since no one else could operate the vehicle, Libby placed himself between the driver and the enemy fire concentrated on the Americans, receiving several wounds. As the halftrack moved on, he loaded several more wounded soldiers until they met another enemy roadblock. Libby continued shielding the driver until he lost consciousness from his many wounds.

Sgt. Libby, a veteran of the European Theater of World War II, perishes from loss of blood and is awarded the Medal of Honor posthumously.

1960: The ballistic missile submarine USS *George Washington* (SSBN-598) conducts the first submerged launch of a Polaris missile. The missile hits the target over 1,000 miles away. The nuclear-tipped Polaris is capable of accurately delivering three 200 kiloton warheads 2,500 nautical miles downrange.

1969: Apollo 11 Astronaut Neil A. Armstrong — a U.S. Naval aviator who flew multiple combat missions over Korea, and was once shot down — takes "one small step," becoming the first human in history to walk on the surface of the moon.

Armstrong, who serves as Apollo 11 mission commander, is accompanied on the historic voyage by command module pilot Michael Collins, a U.S. Air Force fighter pilot who will become a major general in 1978, and lunar module pilot Edwin Eugene "Buzz" Aldrin (also an Air Force fighter pilot), who shot down two MiG-15 fighters over Korea.

1997: In honor of her 200th birthday, the USS *Constitution* - the world's oldest ship remaining in active service - sets sail for the first time in 116 years. "Old Ironsides" was one of the United States' original six frigates, and is the only warship in the U.S. Navy to have sunk an enemy vessel.

July 21

1823: U.S. Navy Midshipman and acting-lieutenant (future admiral) David Glasgow Farragut leads a raiding party of cutlass-armed sailors and Marines against a pirate base on Cape Cruz, Cuba. Farragut's men attack and destroy the pirate stronghold.

1861: In what the Union hoped, and generally believed, would be an overwhelming Union victory that would end the rebellion before it got started, Confederate Army forces under the command of Brig. Gen. Pierre G.T. Beauregard defeat and rout Union Army forces under Brig. Gen. Irvin McDowell during the First Battle of Bull Run, known to many Southerners as First Manassas. When the Confederates begin to waver under a heavy Union assault, the soon-to-be famous Brig. Gen. Thomas J. Jackson arrives with reinforcements, and on this day will earn the legendary nickname, "Stonewall."

1921: Army and Navy aircraft attack the former German battleship *Ostfriesland*, sinking the massive vessel and giving support to famed World War I aviator Brig. Gen. William "Billy" Mitchell's theory that dreadnought battleships could be easily sunk by planes and are taking up too much of the military budget.

1944: The 3rd Marine Division and 1st Provisional Marine Brigade storm the beaches of Guam, seeking to reclaim the American territory after its capture nearly three years ago. The Japanese defenders inflict heavy casualties, but the Marines secure the beachheads and are several thousand feet inland by nightfall. Soldiers from the 77th Infantry Division will wade ashore under heavy fire after the Marines. 18,000 Japanese soldiers are killed, and the island is declared secure on August 9.

1946: Lt. Cmdr. James Davidson, piloting the McDonnell XFD-1 "Phantom" aircraft, performs a series of takeoffs and landings on the deck of USS *Franklin D. Roosevelt* (CVB-42) - the first carrier flight operations of a jet aircraft.

1961: Former Air Force pilot and Korean War veteran Virgil I. "Gus" Grissom blasts off aboard his Redstone Rocket, becoming the second American in space. The astronaut's "Liberty Bell 7" capsule soars to a height of 100 nautical miles and flies for 15 minutes before splashing down in the Atlantic Ocean.

July 22

1943: Elements of Gen. George S. Patton Jr.'s 7th Army seize Palermo, Sicily.

July 23

On this day in 1950, the 8th Cavalry Regiment is falling back to the Pusan Perimeter during the opening days of America's involvement in the Korean War. The job of holding up the North Koreans goes to Cpl. Tibor Rubin, who over the next 24 hours, single-handedly fights-off overwhelming numbers of enemy, inflicting "staggering" casualties while his fellow troopers withdraw.

In October, Chinese forces hammer his unit and Rubin is captured. Almost every night during his captivity, Rubin sneaks out to gather food and supplies from enemy depots and gardens to assist his fellow captives. When offered the chance to be sent to his native Hungary, he refuses and will spend nearly three years as a prisoner of war. Dozens of American lives were saved due to Rubin, and in 2005 he is finally awarded the Medal of Honor.

75 years ago today on Dutch New Guinea's Noemfoor Island, Sgt. Ray E. Eubanks leads a squad against an enemy position that is devastating his company with machinegun, rifle, and mortar fire. Once the soldiers reach a spot 30 yards away from the enemy, Eubanks orders his men to keep firing at the position while he moves forward alone through the intensely fire-swept terrain. When he reaches a spot just 15 yards away, he opens fire with his automatic rifle, inflicting serious casualties on the Japanese defenders, but rendering his firearm useless in the process. Ignoring his wounds, he rushes forward and uses his broken gun as a club to kill four enemy soldiers before Eubanks is himself killed. For his actions, Sgt. Eubanks is awarded the Medal of Honor posthumously.

And on this day in 1970, the U.S. military decides to abandon Fire Support Base Ripcord after a brutal 23-day siege by the North Vietnamese Army. 75 soldiers are killed during the battle, including 1st Lt. Bob Kalsu, the only active NFL football player killed in action during the Vietnam War.

As the soldiers are evacuated, Lt. Col. Andre C. Lucas is working to extricate a wounded comrade from a burning helicopter. While enemy mortar fire and exploding ammunition add to the threat of the expanding blaze, Lucas orders the rest of his fellow rescuers to safety while he works to free the soldier by himself. Lucas is mortally wounded and posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for this action in addition to his previous acts of valor during the siege.

July 24

1897: A crowd of over 10,000 greets the black soldiers of the 25th Infantry Regiment's "Bicycle Corps" (featured image) as they ride into St. Louis' Forest Park, completing a 41-day, 1,900-mile trip from Fort Missoula, Montana.

1944: Thanks to a custom-built landing vehicle known as the "Doodlebug," specially modified to carry ladders that allows vehicles to scale rocky shorelines, the Fourth Marine Division avoids the heavily defended beaches on Tinian and catches the island's Japanese defenders off guard. By August 1, the island is secured and Seabees begin construction on the runways that the B-29s *Enola Gay* and *Bock's Car* will use to deliver the atomic bombs that bring World War II to an end.

1945: 600 aircraft from Task Force 38, commanded by Vice Adm. John S. McCain, and hundreds of B-29 "Superfortress" bombers attack mainland Japan. Five Japanese warships are destroyed and several more damaged in the raid.

Meanwhile, President Harry Truman authorizes the use of the new atomic weapon, and Gen. Henry H. "Hap" Arnold is presented with a list of potential targets. Truman informs his Soviet counterpart Joseph Stalin that America has developed such a weapon, but the Stalin has already learned this from spies within the Manhattan Project.

1950: A captured German V-2 rocket with a WAC Corporal missile fitted on top as a second stage blasts off from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station on Florida's Atlantic coast. "Bumper 8" traveled 200 miles downrange and reached a height of 10 miles in the first-ever launch from a facility that will soon begin sending men rockets -- and later, men -- into space.

1965: Soviet missile crews claim their first surface-to-air missile kill of the Vietnam War. Four F-4 Phantoms, flying escort for a bombing raid north of Hanoi, are targeted. Three jets are damaged and a Phantom flown by Capt. Richard P. Kiern and his weapons/systems officer Roscoe H. Fobair become

the first pilots shot down by a SAM. Fobair fails to eject and is killed in action, and his remains are repatriated in 2001. Kiern is captured and spends the next seven and a half years in captivity.

Before volunteering for service in Vietnam, Kiern served as a B-17 flight officer, and was shot down during his first mission in World War II, spending eight months as a prisoner of war in Nazi Germany. The Soviet Union has sent thousands of advisers to train the North Vietnamese to use the weapons, and for the next couple years, any American warplane downed by missiles are done so by Soviet missilemen. By war's end, SAMs account for 205 American aircraft.

1966: When Lance Corporal Richard A. Pittman learns of a company of Marines is taking heavy casualties near the De-Militarized Zone, he grabs a machinegun and several belts of ammunition and rushes to the firefight. Along the way he blows through an enemy force and wipes them out at point-blank range, then knocks out two more automatic weapons. Reaching the battle, Pittman sets up his machinegun in the face of a full-frontal assault by 30-40 enemy soldiers. He fires away until his weapon is destroyed, then obtains a submachine gun from a fallen enemy soldier and a pistol from a fellow Marine and kept up his defense until the Communist attack is shattered.

Pittman is awarded the Medal of Honor in 1968 and retires from the Marine Corps as a master sergeant 20 years later.

1969: The Apollo 11 mission comes to an end when the capsule containing Neil Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin, and Michael Collins splashes down in the Pacific Ocean and is recovered by a team of hand-picked Underwater Demolition Team swimmers. Soon, the astronauts (wearing biological isolation gear to protect Earth from possible lunar contamination) are transferred by helicopter to the aircraft carrier USS *Hornet,* where they will spend 21 days in isolation.

July 25

1814: Days after proving America's mettle against the British in the Battle of Chippawa, Maj. Gen. Jacob Brown again clashes with the King's Men in Upper Canada, near Niagara Falls. British artillery commands the high ground, but Americans capture the guns and the two armies engage in close combat throughout the evening with neither side able to gain a tactical advantage. The Battle of Lundy's Lane is one of the bloodiest engagements of the War of 1812, with both Brown and Brig. Gen. Winfield Scott (who would command the Union Army during the Civil War nearly 50 years later) receiving serious wounds.

1866: David Glasgow Farragut — best known for purportedly uttering the command, "Damn the torpedoes! Full speed ahead!" during the 1864 Battle of Mobile Bay, Alabama — is appointed to the rank of admiral (the first such rank in U.S. Naval history). Also, future American President Ulysses S. Grant becomes the first "full [four star] general" in the history of the U.S. Army.

1944: Thousands of Allied bombers begin a bombardment of German positions, kicking off Operation "Cobra" - the breakout of American, British, and Canadian forces in Normandy. Near Saint-Lo, a seriously wounded U.S. Army Capt. Matthew Urban limps out of the hospital and rejoins his armored company on the front lines. Urban dashes through German fire and takes command of a tank and leads the pinned-down element on an assault against the German armor. For his actions on this day, in addition to a series of other valorous events both before and after, Urban is awarded the Medal of Honor.

Days later, the 24-year-old captain will become a battalion commander (despite receiving additional wounds on multiple occasions - each time refusing evacuation) and the Allies will shatter the Germans, beginning a campaign of fast-moving maneuver warfare, driving the Wehrmacht back to Germany with a highly effective coordination of air power in support of ground forces.

1945: As a transport plane carrying the uranium destined for the *Little Boy* bomb flies towards Tinian, Gen. Carl Spaatz (commander of the Strategic Air Forces) is ordered to prepare for the upcoming atomic attacks - with the estimated target date of August 3rd.

1946: A 23-kiloton atomic bomb named *Helen of Bikini* detonates 90 feet underwater in the Bikini Atoll in one of the first nuclear tests since the attacks on Japan the previous year. One target ship is completely vaporized and numerous others, including the obsolete battleship USS *Arkansas,* are sunk or seriously damaged by the underwater shockwave.

1950: The Essex-class aircraft carrier USS *Boxer* (CV-21) crosses the Pacific in record time, delivering 145 P-51 "Mustangs", 1,000 Air Force crewmembers, and over 2,000 tons supplies for the Far East Air Force in Korea. *Boxer* departs Japan and Sets a new trans-Pacific record on the return trip, covering some 5,000 miles in just 7 days and 10 hours.

July 26

1861: Following the Union's defeat at Bull Run, President Abraham Lincoln summons Maj. Gen. George B. McClellan (thus far the only Union general with any degree of success) to Washington, D.C., and McClellan is appointed commander of the Military Division of the Potomac - charged with defending the nation's capital.

0 1941: Pres. Franklin D. Roosevelt recalls Douglas MacArthur from retirement, naming the former general Commander of U.S. Army Forces in the Far East. Roosevelt also freezes Japanese assets on this day and forbids the export of oil and other war materiel to Japan. Adm. Husband E. Kimmel, commander of the Pacific Fleet, orders bases to begin long-range patrols in the event of an aggressive Japanese response.

1945: The cruiser USS *Indianapolis* (CA-35) completes her top-secret, 5,000-mile cruise from San Francisco to Tinian, delivering parts and nuclear material for the *Little Boy* atomic weapon that will be dropped on Hiroshima. In just four days, an enemy submarine will sink the unescorted *Indianapolis* while she is headed to Leyte. Meanwhile, President Harry Truman advises Japan that if they do not surrender, they will face "prompt and utter destruction."

Meanwhile on Guam, Capt. Louis H. Wilson Jr. of the 2d Battalion, 9th Marines is tasked with taking a section of Fonte Hill. His company fights through 300 yards of "terrific" machinegun and rifle fire and secures the objective. Still under heavy enemy fire, Wilson organizes a night defense of the newly captured position and seeks medical attention after being wounded three times during the action. When the Japanese defenders launch a savage counterattack, Wilson rejoins his unit.

During the series of fanatical Japanese counterattacks that lasted 10 hours and at times came down to hand-to-hand combat, Wilson and his tenacious men held the line. After racing across fire-swept terrain to rescue a wounded Marine, Wilson organized a 17-man patrol to take a strategic slope. Heavy enemy mortar, machinegun, and rifle fire cut down 13 of his Marines, but Wilson and his men kept charging forward and captured the ground. When the fighting was over, 350 Japanese bodies littered the battlefield and the Marines had the high ground. Wilson, who will later serve in Vietnam before becoming the 26th Commandant of the Marine Corps, is awarded the Medal of Honor

1947: The National Security Act of 1947 — the law reorganizing the post-World War II national defense/intelligence structure of the United States — is passed, establishing the Department of Defense, the National Security Council, and the Central Intelligence Agency. The Act, which will become effective Sept. 18, is considered to be the most sweeping reorganization of the American defense structure since the establishment of the Department of the Navy in 1798.

1948: Pres. Truman signs Executive Order 9981, beginning desegregation the United States Armed Forces. The order met some resistance: Secretary of the Army Kenneth C. Royall, whom Pres. Franklin D. Roosevelt appointed to represent eight captured German saboteurs during their secret World War II tribunal (see 13 June's post), is forced into retirement for refusing to cooperate with the order and the process of integrating black troops across all branches of the military won't take full effect until the Eisenhower administration.

1954: Three days after a Cathay Pacific DC-4 passenger plane, enroute from Bangkok to Hong Kong, is shot down by the Chinese Air Force, a flight of two U.S. Navy AD "Skyraiders" search the area for survivors. The American planes are themselves engaged by two Chinese Lavochkin La-11 fighters, and the Skyraiders return fire - shooting down the communist aircraft.

July 27

1816: After freed slaves serving as Colonial British Marines attack and kill several American sailors stopping to fill their canteens near Negro Fort in Spanish Florida, Maj. Gen. (and future president) Andrew Jackson is granted permission to reduce the redoubt. Gunboat No. 154 fires one shot at Negro Fort, detonating the powder magazine and killing 300 defenders, becoming the deadliest cannon shot in U.S. military history. What few survivors remain are captured with no American military casualties.

1898: During the Spanish-American War, Marines land at Ponce and La Playa and capture the towns, raising the U.S. flag over Puerto Rico for the first time.

1909: 10,000 people, including President Howard Taft, gather to watch aviation pioneer Orville Wright fly himself and U.S. Army Lt. Frank P. Lahm above the Fort Myer, Virginia countryside for more than an hour in his now-famous Wright Flyer. The Army leadership is impressed enough that it takes delivery of its first Wright Flyer, "the world's first military airplane," within days.

g 1953: After three years of fighting in Korea, which kills over 50,000 Americans and millions of Chinese and Korean troops, an armistice is signed, ending hostilities in the Korean War at 2200 hours. At 2159, the cruiser USS *St. Paul* (CA-73) fires the last shot of the war, firing a shell signed by Rear Adm. Harry Sanders at an communist gun emplacement.

Meanwhile, Air Force Capt. Ralph S. Parr shoots down a Soviet Navy transport plane, making him a double ace (10 confirmed kills) and notching the last air-to-air victory of the war. Parr flew 641 combat missions during World War II, Korea, and Vietnam and is the only member of the Armed Forces to earn both the Distinguished Service Cross and the Air Force Cross.

The agreement establishes a De-Militarized Zone near the 38th Parallel and prisoners are exchanged, but to this day, North and South Korea are technically still at war. Dozens of Americans have been killed in clashes in the DMZ, with several U.S. aircraft and helicopters shot down since the armistice.

1965: Three days after Communist forces attack U.S. warplanes on a bombing raid northwest of Hanoi, 46 F-105 "Thunderchief' attack aircraft target the missile sites. The raid destroys one launcher, but five F-105s are shot down.

July 28

1779: 40 Continental Marines and Massachusetts Militia, including their leader, Marine Capt. John Welsh, are killed in the unsuccessful assault on Britain's Fort George at Penobscot Bay, Maine.

1914: One month after Gavrillo Princip assassinates Austria-Hungary's heir to the throne, the Archduke Francis Ferdinand, Austria-Hungary declares war on Serbia. Within days, a peaceful European continent will be transformed into a battlefield of never-before-seen scale of carnage when Germany, France, Russia, and the United Kingdom join the conflict. Dozens of other countries mobilize troops, and in four years, some 20 million people will perish in the "Great War."

1915: 340 Marines and sailors land at Port au Prince, Hayti, beginning an occupation that would last until 1934.

1918: Brig. Gen. John A. Lejeune assumes command of the 2d U.S. Army Division in France - becoming the second Marine to command an Army Division (Brig. Gen. Charles A. Doyen was the first).

1932: Following an unsuccessful attempt to remove "Bonus Army" marchers from the nation's capital by Washington, D.C. police, President Herbert Hoover orders Army Chief of Staff, Gen. Douglas A. MacArthur, to evict the protestors by force. Other notable officers participating were Majors George S. Patton (in command of tanks) and Dwight D. Eisenhower (junior aide to MacArthur).

1943: During the joint U.S. and British bombing campaign, Operation "Gomorrah", nearly 800 Royal Air Force bombers target Hamburg, Germany in a nighttime bombing raid. The concentrated incendiary bombing combined with warm and dry weather creates a literal firestorm; a 1,000ft-tall tornado of flame driving 150-mph winds consumes everything in its path. Eight square miles of Hamburg are incinerated, along with tens of thousands of Germans.

ti) **1945:** A B-25 "Mitchell" bomber, flying through thick fog over New York City, slams into the 79th floor of the Empire State Building, killing the plane's three crewmembers, 11 occupants and igniting a four-story blaze.

1965: Pres. Lyndon Johnson sends 50,000 troops to Vietnam, bringing the number to 125,000. To meet the requirements, monthly draft calls are increased from 17,000 to 35,000 - the highest since the Korean War.

July 29

1846: Sailors and Marines of USS *Cyane* seize San Diego, California, during the Mexican War.

July 30

1780: A force of 600 militiamen, led by Col. Isaac Shelby, surrounds Thicketty Fort (South Carolina) and demands that the Loyalists surrender. Despite having sufficient arms to repel the patriots, and a promise by garrison commander Capt. Patrick Moore to defend the fort to the last, the Loyalists surrender without firing a shot.

1864: In a special operation that proves disastrous for the initiators, Union Army troops under the command of Maj. Gen. Ambrose E. Burnside detonate a mine, blowing a huge hole (or crater) in the Confederate defenses at Petersburg, Virginia. Several units of Union soldiers charge in after the explosion, but each unit is beaten back with heavy losses by Confederates under Brig. Gen. William Mahone.

1909: Just days after a successful demonstration flight, the Army Signal Corps takes delivery of the "world's first military airplane," the Wright military flyer of 1909.

1918: Spearheading an American assault on German lines, Sgt. Richard W. O'Neill attacks a detachment of 25 enemy soldiers. He closes in and engages in fierce hand-to-hand combat. Though all of his troops are killed and he is wounded ten times, he continues on until he has to be evacuated. Before leaving the battle, he insists on reporting to the battalion commander on enemy locations and the disposition of friendly troops.

O'Neill is awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions, and when World War II breaks out, his former commander (and fellow Medal of Honor recipient) William Donovan hires O'Neill to work for him in the Office of Strategic Services (OSS).

1919: The USS *New Orleans* (CL-22) lands a Marine detachment in Tyutuke Bay, Siberia, in support of a White Russian attack on Bolshevik forces.

1941: The river gunboat USS *Tutuila* (PR-4) of the Yangtze Patrol becomes the first U.S. warship attacked during World War II when Japanese aircraft mistakenly bomb the vessel in Chunking, China.

1945: Shortly after completing its top-secret mission of delivering components of the atomic bomb destined for Hiroshima to Tinian Island, the cruiser USS *Indianapolis* is hit by two Japanese torpedoes, and slips beneath the waves in just 12 minutes, becoming the last U.S. ship sunk during World

g War II. The Navy is unaware of the sinking, so the sailors will spend the next three-and-a-half days in shark infested waters before they are spotted. Only 317 of the original 1,196 crewmembers survive.

1967: Fire erupts on the aircraft carrier USS *Forrestal* when a power surge in an F-4 Phantom launches a rocket into an A-4 Skyhawk's fuel tank. The flight deck is packed with planes ready for takeoff, loaded with fuel and ordinance, resulting in a conflagration and series of explosions that kills 134 sailors and destroys 21 aircraft.

July 31

4 1777: A month after arriving in the United States, the Marquis de Lafayette is commissioned "major general" in the Continental Army after offering to serve without pay. Lafayette will meet Gen. George Washington in five days, who is in Philadelphia to brief the Continental Congress on military affairs, then joins Washington's staff and the two become close friends.

1874: *USS Intrepid*, the world's first warship armed with self-propelled torpedoes, is commissioned.

1942: (Operation WATCHTOWER) As Army Air Forces aircraft begin their week-long preparatory bombardment, 16,000 Marines of Maj. Gen. Alexander Vandegrift's soon-to-be-famous First Marine Division board their landing craft and depart for the invasion of Guadalcanal - the first American offensive of World War II.

1943: As ten soldiers work to fill in a crater on a Sicilian road, the Americans come under machinegun fire from two enemy positions. Sgt. Gerry H. Kisters and his officer move forward to the first nest and captures the gun and its four operators. Then, Kisters closes in on the second gun - by himself. Although wounded five times during his approach, he kills three of the emplacement's occupants and captures the second machinegun.

For his actions, Kisters is awarded the Medal of Honor. As he is presented with the nation's top award, he is also awarded the Army's second highest medal, the Distinguished Service Cross (DSC), for actions during a May, 1943 battle in Tunisia. Kisters is the first American to be awarded both the Medal of Honor and the DSC during World War II.

That same day on New Georgia, Pvt. Rodger W. Young's men were ordered to fall back as the brass reorganized the defensive lines for the night. Suddenly, an enemy machinegun opens up on the soldiers, and Pvt. Young spots the gun through the foliage 75 yards away. Despite being wounded by the opening burst of fire, he he charges the enemy position as his fellow soldiers fall back. Wounded again on his approach, he reaches a distance where he can engage the enemy with grenades, but is finally cut down. Thanks to his sacrifice, Young's teammates escape without injury and several Japanese soldiers are neutralized. Young is posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

1944: "Boldly penetrating the screen of a heavily escorted convoy, Comdr. [Lawson P. "Red" Ramage, skipper of the submarine USS *Parche* (SS-384)] launched a perilous surface attack by delivering a crippling stern shot into a freighter and quickly following up with a series of bow and stern torpedoes to sink the leading tanker and damage the second one. Exposed by the light of bursting flares and bravely defiant of terrific shellfire passing close overhead, he struck again, sinking a transport by two forward reloads. In the mounting fury of fire from the damaged and sinking tanker, he calmly ordered his men below, remaining on the bridge to fight it out with an enemy now disorganized and confused. Swift to act as a fast transport closed in to ram, Comdr. Ramage daringly swung the stern of the speeding *Parche* as she crossed the bow of the onrushing ship, clearing by less than 50 feet but placing his submarine in a deadly crossfire from escorts on all sides and with the transport dead ahead. Undaunted, he sent 3 smashing "down the throat" bow shots to stop the target, then scored a killing hit as a climax to 46 minutes of violent action with the *Parche* and her valiant fighting company retiring victorious and unscathed."

Ramage, a two-time recipient of the Navy Cross, earned the Medal of Honor for his daring pre-dawn attack on the Japanese convoy. His crew was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation.

1945: Six days before the world's first atomic bomb falls on Hiroshima, the U.S. government warns Japan that eight cities will be destroyed if they refuse to surrender. In addition to the "Little Boy" and "Fat Man" devices, another "special weapon" will come on line by August 19, with three projected to be ready in August and another three in September.

1964: The U.S. Navy's all-nuclear Task Force One USS *Enterprise* (CVAN 65), USS *Long Beach* (CGN-9), and USS *Bainbridge* (DLGN-25) pass through the Straights of Gibraltar, beginning their 30,565-mile cruise around the world. Including port calls, the fleet crosses the globe - unrefueled - in just 65 days.

1971: Behind the wheel of NASA's Lunar Roving Vehicle, Apollo 15 astronaut and former Air Force test pilot David R. Scott becomes the first human to drive on the moon.

August

Aug. 1

1914: As France begins mobilization of its army, Germany crosses into neighboring Luxembourg and declares war against Russia.

1943: 177 B-24 Liberator bombers of the Ninth and (newly formed) Eighth Air Forces depart Libya to conduct a low-level strike the Axis oil fields at Ploiesti, Romania. A massive German air defense network inflicts heavy casualties on the Americans, shooting down 53 B-24s and damaging another 55. One bomber manages to limp back to the Benghazi air field with an incredible 365 bullet holes. Over 310 Americans are killed with over 200 captured or missing. Five raiders earn the Medals of Honor - the most ever awarded for a single mission.

In the Solomon Islands, the Japanese destroyer *Aragiri* rams the motor torpedo boat *PT-109.* Two sailors are killed by the nighttime collision. Lieutenant 'unior • rade Jot - .

swim over three miles to a nearby deserted island and are rescued days later. The future president is awarded the Purple Heart and the Navy and Marine Corps Medal for gallantry.

1944: Gen. George Patton's Third Army becomes operational and forms the right flank of the Allied force sweeping across France.

In the Pacific Theater, Maj. Gen. Harry Schmidt declares the island of Tinian secure after nine days of fighting. The "perfect amphibious operation" surprises and wipes out the 9,000-man Japanese garrison at the cost of less than 2,000 American casualties.

1945: Over 800 B-29 Superfortress bombers completely incinerate the industrial town of Toyama, Japan.

1955: The famous U-2 high-altitude reconnaissance aircraft accidentally makes its first-ever flight above Groom Lake (Area 51), Nevada. The first flight was planned for August 4, but 70-knot surface winds unexpectedly turns --4 the high-speed taxi test into a short flight.

1966: From an observation deck 28 floors above the University of Texas at Austin, former Marine Charles Whitman opens fire on targets of opportunity, killing 17 and wounding 31 people. His shooting spree goes on for 96 minutes before Whitman is shot dead by police.

40 **2005:** A six-man Marine sniper team is attacked and overrun by Iraqi insurgents near Haditha, Iraq. Days later, the Marines respond with Operation QUICK STRIKE to find those responsible for the attack and clear the area of enemy fighters in heavy urban combat.

Aug. 2

1776: Although the Continental Congress voted to establish "the thirteen united *[sic]* States of America" on July 2 and adopted Thomas Jefferson's draft of the Declaration of Independence two days later, congressional delegates sign the Declaration on this date. The most famous inscription belongs to John

Hancock, the president of Congress, who is said to have declared, "There, I guess King George will be able to read that without his spectacles," after adding his rather substantial signature.

1862: The brass approves the plan by Maj. Jonathan Letterman, Medical Director for the Army of the Potomac, to establish an ambulance corps. Letterman is considered the "Father of Battlefield Medicine" for revolutionizing the way casualties are handled; soldiers now had first aid stations at the regimental level where they could be treated and triaged. Those more seriously wounded could be sent - by ambulance - to field hospitals at the division and corps level.

During the Peninsula Campaign, one out of every three Army of the Potomac casualties would die prior to implementing Letterman's system. But after, just 2 percent of soldiers wounded Battle of Gettysburg died.

1909: After a successful demonstration for the military by Orville Wright, the Army Signal Corps purchases a Wright Flyer for $30,000 (the equivalent of $800,000 today). The two-seat "Signal Corps Airplane No. 1" will train America's first military pilots at College Park, Md. and Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio over the next two years - crashing several times - before it's retirement. Today, the legendary aircraft hangs in the Smithsonian Institution's National Air and Space Museum.

1934: Upon the death of German president Paul von Hindenberg, Chancellor Adolf Hitler begins his "thousand-year Reich," assuming full dictatorial powers as Reichsfiihrer. Also on this date, Hitler changes the military oath so that the Wehrmacht swears allegiance to him instead of Germany.

1944: Convoy HX 300, the largest convoy of World War II, safely crosses the Atlantic, bringing over 1 million tons of supplies to ports in the United Kingdom. 32 escort vessels protected the 155 cargo ships, and the formation spanned nine miles across and four miles long. Not a single ship was attacked by a Gelman submarine.

1950: As the North Korean Army bears down on the American and UN forces occupying the southern tip of the Korean Peninsula, the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade lands at Pusan and mans the Pusan Perimeter's left flank.

6, **1964:** The destroyer USS *Maddox* (DD-731), supporting South Vietnamese covert operations against the North in the Gulf of Tonkin, is attacked by three North Vietnamese torpedo boats in the Gulf of Tonkin Within days, Congress would pass the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, paving the way for full-scale conflict in Vietnam.

1990: At 2 a.m., several divisions of the Iraqi military's elite Republican Guards pour across the border into Kuwait, beginning a seven-month occupation of the neighboring state. The United States will lead a 35-nation coalition to liberate Kuwait in January.

Aug. 3

48 **1804:** During the First Barbary War, Commodore Edward Preble's Mediterranean Squadron begins his first bombardment of Tripoli Harbor. Commanding a division of ships is Stephen Decatur, the youngest sailor ever to be promoted to captain in U.S. Naval history. When Decatur's brother is killed while boarding a Tripolitan gunboat, Decatur hands over command of his ship and, along with a small crew, boards the enemy vessel and engages the much-larger force in fierce hand-to-hand combat. When the captain res•onsr.--

1943: As American, British, and Canadian troops drive across Sicily, Axis forces begin evacuating the island. While visiting soldiers awaiting evacuation at Nicosia, Gen. George S. Patton, commanding the Seventh Army, slaps a soldier suffering from battle fatigue and orders him back to the front lines. Gen. Dwight **D.** Eisenhower reprimands Patton for the incident and the legendary general will not command another combat force for 11 months.

® **1950:** Eight F4U-4B "Corsairs" of Marine Fighter Squadron (VMF) 214 take off from the deck of USS *Sicily* (CVE-118) and attack enemy installations at Chengu, marking the first Marine aviation sortie of the Korean War. During
- World War II, the "Black Sheep" of VMF-214 destroyed hundreds of Japanese aircraft, sank several vessels, and earned the Presidential Unit Citation under Medal of Honor recipient and former "Flying Tiger" Maj. Greg "Pappy" Boyington - the Marine Corps' top ace, with 28 aerial victories.

Congress initiates an involuntary recall of former enlisted soldiers, ordering 30,000 men to report for duty in September.

That same day in Southeast Asia, the first members of the U.S. Military Assistance Advisory Group members arrive in Saigon. The 35-man group will supervise the allocation of military aid to the French military in Vietnam, and later act as military trainers.

A **1958:** *USS Nautilus* ___ the world's first nuclear-powered submarine and the U.S. Navy's sixth so-named vessel — becomes the first "ship" to cross the North Pole.

Aug. 4

1790: Congress approves Treasury Secretary Alexander Hamilton's proposal to "build ten cutters to protect the new nation's revenue," establishing the Revenue Cutter Service — first of the predecessor services of the modern Coast Guard.

1846: Sailors and Marines from the USS *Congress* capture Santa Barbara, Calif. during the Mexican-American War.

1873: Lt. Col. George Custer and his 7th Cavalry Regiment engage the mighty Sioux warriors, led by Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse, for the first time. Three years later, Custer and 200 of his troopers will perish when they clash again with Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse at the Little Big Horn River.

1914: As Germany crosses into Belgium and declares war on the United Kingdom, President Woodrow Wilson announces that the United States shall remain neutral.

1944: The Army Air Force conducts its first mission of the top-secret program, Operation "Aphrodite." In theory, a pilot and co-pilot would fly the specially modified B-17 "baby" bomber towards the objective before parachuting from the aircraft, and another pilot in a nearby "mother ship" would use a television feed and remote control would drive the B-17 into the target. None of the flying bombs reached their targets - German V-1 rocket bases - as control issues led to multiple fatal crashes.

1950: At the southeastern tip of the Korean Peninsula, troops manning the -4 140-mile Pusan Perimeter halt the North Korean advance in the first major engagement of the Korean War. During the battle, a Sikorsky R-5 helicopter of the Air Force's 3rd Air Rescue Squadron evacuates PFC Claude C. Crest, Jr., marking the first time a wounded soldier is medevaced from the battlefield. Helicopters will fly out over 21,000 wounded troops by war's end.

1964: Less than 48 hours after North Vietnamese torpedo boats attacked the USS *Maddox*, the destroyer USS *Turner Joy* detects what appears to be - on radar - a small watercraft approaching the destroyer. For two-and-a-half hours, *Maddox* and *Turner Joy* - accompanied by aircraft from USS *Ticonderoga* -fire at the supposed targets.

In response, aircraft from the carriers *Ticonderoga* and *Constellation* attack North Vietnamese patrol boat bases and the oil storage facility at Vinh. Within days, Congress would pass the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, leading to full-scale conflict in Vietnam.

Aug. 6

1763: With Ottawa chief Pontiac laying siege to Fort Pitt (modem-day Pittsburgh), a force marches to the frontier fort to break the siege, consisting of Pennsylvania rangers and Scottish soldiers of the 42d Royal Highlanders - the famed "Black Watch." Allied natives ambush the relief force at a creek known as Bushy Run and a bloody two-day battle kicks off. Col. Henry Bouquet's men emerge victorious, routing the Indians - although at high cost to the Scottish/American troops - and lifting the siege at Fort Pitt.

Today's 111th Infantry Regiment traces its lineage to the Philadelphia "Associators" militia regiment (formed by Benjamin Franklin) that manned Fort Pitt. Each year at their "dining-in" banquet, an empty table setting is left in honor of the commander of the Black Watch. At least twice in the last 200-plus year tradition, the officer has been on hand to accept the honor.

1945: A lone B-29 bomber takes off from Tinian Island's North Field and heads out for a six-hour flight to Japan. Once the *Enola Gay* is over its target of Hiroshima, Col. Paul Tibbetts releases the bomb and dives to speed away from the device's powerful shock wave. 43 seconds later, the world's first atomic bomb detonates, killing between 80,000 and 140,000 Japanese instantly, and severely wounding another 100,000.

Although the United States demonstrated they now possess the ability to utterly annihilate entire cities, the Japanese government vows to fight on. Another atomic bomb will have to fall before Japan is brought to its knees.

2011: An enemy rocket-propelled grenade hits a CH-47 Chinook helicopter carrying a quick-reaction force of Navy SEALs flown in to augment a team of Rangers trying to kill or capture a senior Taliban leader. The helicopter crashes and all aboard are killed (33 passengers, five crew, and a working dog), making it the deadliest incident for the U.S. military during Operation Enduring Freedom.

The helicopter crew consisted of pilot, Chief Warrant Officer 5 David R. Carter (47, of Centennial, Colo.), Sgt. Alexander J. Bennett (24, of Tacoma, Wa.), Specialist Spencer C. Duncan (21, of Olathe, Kan.), Staff Sgt. Patrick D. Hamburger (30, of Grand Island, Neb.), and Chief Warrant Officer 2 Bryan J. Nichols (31 of Hays, Kan.).

The fallen SEALs include Petty Officers Darrick C. Benson (28, of Angwin, Calif.), Christopher G. Campbell (36, of Jacksonville, N.C.), Matthew D. Mason (37, of Kansas City, Mo.), Jesse D. Pittman (27, of Willits, Calif.), Nicholas P. Spehar (24, of St. Paul, Minn.), Jon T. Tumilson (35, of Rockford, Iowa), Aaron C. Vaughn (30, of Stuart, Fla.), and Jason R. Workman (32, of Blanding, Utah); Chief Petty Officers Brian R. Bill (31, of Stamford, Conn.), John W. Faas (31, of Minneapolis), Kevin A. Houston (35, of West Hyannisport, Mass.), Stephen M. Mills (35, of Fort Worth, Texas), Heath M. Robinson (34, of Detroit), and Robert J. Reeves (32, of Shreveport, La.); Senior Chief Petty Officer Thomas A. Ratzlaff (34, of Green Forest, Ark.), Master Chief Petty Officer Louis J. Langlais (44, of Santa Barbara, Calif.), and Lt. Cmdr. Jonas B. Kelsall (32, of Shreveport, La.).

Three airmen accompanied the SEALs: Combat Controller Staff Sgt. Andrew W. Harvell (26, of Long Beach, Calif.) along with Pararescuemen Tech. Sgt. John W. Brown (33, of Tallahassee, Fla.) and Tech. Sgt. Daniel L. Zerbe (28 of York, Pa.). The five special warfare support personnel included CPO Nicholas H. Null (30, of Washington, W.Va.), P01 Michael J. Strange (25, of Philadelphia), SCPO Kraig M. Vickers (36, of Kokomo, Hawaii), P01 Jared W. Day (28, of Taylorsville, Utah), P01 John Douangdara (25, of South Sioux City, Neb.) and his dog "Bart."

Also aboard were seven Afghan commandos and an Afghan interpreter.

Aug. 7

Today's post is in honor of Sgt. 1st Class Christopher J. Speer, who perished on this date in 2002 from wounds received when his reconnaissance patrol ---- was ambushed in Khost, Afghanistan on July 27. The 28-year-old Special

Forces medic from Albequerque, N.M. had just earned the Soldier's Medal for saving two wounded Afghan children from a minefield, and was serving with Special Operations Command.

1782: General George Washington establishes the Badge of Military Merit, America's first military decoration and perhaps the first-ever decoration awarded to common soldiers. A purple heart, made from a cloth badge, was issued for "instances of unusual gallantry in battle [...] extraordinary fidelity and essential service." Today's Purple Heart medal, awarded to service members killed or wounded in combat, traces its roots to Washington's Badge.

During World War II, the military ordered well over 1 million Purple Hearts in anticipation of a grisly invasion of Japan that, thanks to the atomic bombs, never happened. Purple Hearts awarded over the past 70-plus years into today are still drawn from the WWII stockpile.

1794: When farmers in Pennsylvania rebel against the tax on alcohol to repay war debts, President Washington invokes the Militia Act, calling up and federalizing state militias to help enforce the law. The president himself rides in front of the army, marking one of the only times a sitting U.S. president will lead troops in the field.

1917: At Bazhoces, France, Sgt. William Shemin hops out of his trench and crosses 150 yards of coverless, machinegun-swept ground to rescue fellow soldiers on three occasions. Once enemy fire knocks out all of his commissioned and senior non-commissioned officers, Shemin takes command of the platoon and leads them until he is taken out of action by shrapnel and a bullet to the head. He is originally awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, but 96 years later, the military upgrades to the Medal of Honor.

1942: The 1st Marine Division streams ashore on Japanese-held Guadalcanal in what was the first major ground combat operation by U.S. forces in World War II. On this day, Marines also land at - and quickly secure - Tulagi and other islands and atolls in the British Solomons. The Marines will slug it out

with the Japanese defenders for six months before securing Guadalcanal, using the captured islands as staging bases for the Allied campaign of island hopping through the Solomons.

1964: Congress overwhelmingly passes the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, enabling Pres. Lyndon Johnson to increase U.S. involvement in Vietnam - and eventually leading to full-scale war.

-41 **1990:** Pres. George H.W. Bush announces the "wholly defensive" Operation DESERT SHIELD following Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait, seeking to prevent the Iraqi dictator from entering Saudi Arabia and seizing control of most of the world's oil reserves. Two carrier battle groups are dispatched to the area, as well as the deployment of Air Force F-15s and F-16s, and the military buildup of over 500,000 troops begins.

Aug. 8

1863: Following his defeat at Gettysburg, General Robert E. Lee sends a letter of resignation to Confederate president Jefferson Davis. Davis refuses.

1918: 100 years ago today, ten Allied divisions and hundreds of tanks attack the Germans at Amiens, France, in the first battle of what will be known as the Hundred Days Offensive - a series of engagements that drive the Germans out of France and leads to the armistice. The Battle of Amiens signifies the end of trench warfare and the first large-scale use of tanks in combat. The Allies catch the German defenders by surprise and on this day alone, the Allies kill, wound, or capture 30,000 German soldiers. By its conclusion, the offensive will produce over two million Allied and German casualties.

6[1] **1942:** One day after hitting the beaches, Marines capture the unfinished Japanese airfield on Guadalcanal - later completed and renamed Henderson Field - and also secure the islands of Tulagi, Gavutu, and Tanambogo. That evening, a Japanese naval force catches the Allied fleet by surprise and hands the U.S. Navy one of its worst-ever defeats. Three American cruisers, one

Australian cruiser, and an American destroyer are sunk during the Battle of Savo Island, or as it was nicknamed by veterans as the Battle of the Five Sitting Ducks.

1944: As the Germans call off their offensive due to heavy armor losses inflicted by Allied aircraft, the U.S. 15th Army Corps captures Le Mans, France. South of Caen, the Canadians attempt to break through the German lines south of Caen. During this engagement, a Tiger tank commanded by the legendary SS-Hauptsturmfiihrer (captain) Micheal Wittinann's is destroyed, killing Germany's top tank ace.

1945: Two days after an American atomic bomb devastates Hiroshima, President Harry Truman informs Japan that they can expect additional nuclear attacks if they do not surrender. Meanwhile, American land- and carrier-based bombers continue to strike mainland Japan, and an opportunistic Soviet Union declares war — invading Manchuria just past midnight the following day.

- **1946:** Convair's B-36 Peacemaker - the world's first intercontinental bomber -- makes its first flight. The B-36's massive 230-ft. wingspan makes it the largest of any combat aircraft ever built, and the joint jet- and piston-powered aircraft could deliver its nuclear payload 10,000 miles unrefueled. The Peacemaker's tenure with Strategic Air Command only lasted until 1955, however, when it was replaced with the B-52 Stratofortress bomber still in use today.

Aug. 9

et **1945:** The second atomic bomb is dropped on Nagasaki, Japan.

Aug. 10

vi **1861:** Confederate troops led by Brig. Gen. Benjamin McCulloch and Maj. Gen. Sterling Price's Missouri State Guard clash with the Union's "Army of the West" in present-day Springfield, Mo.. The Confederates defeat the Army of the West, killing its commander, Brig. Gen. Nathaniel Lyon. The Union retreats to Rolla, giving the Confederates control over southwest Missouri.

Five soldiers earned the Medal of Honor at Wilson's Creek: Pvt. Nicholas Bouquet of the 1st Iowa Infantry, Cpl. Lorenzo D. Immell of the 2d U.S. Artillery, Maj. John M. Schofield of the 1st Missouri Infantry, 1st Lt. William M. Wherry of the 3rd U.S. Reserve Missouri Infantry, and 1st Lt. Clay H. Wood of the 11th U.S. Infantry.

'0 1864: As the 37,000-man Army of the Shenandoah approaches, led by newly appointed General Phillip Sheridan, Confederate Lt. Gen. Jubal Early abandons his positions at Winchester, Va.. Sheridan will drive the Confederates from the the Shenandoah Valley and destroy the crops, rendering the strategic invasion route useless to the Southerners.

1918: Sgt. James I. Mestrovitch, an ethnic Serb who emigrated to the United States in 1913, spots his wounded company commander lying in the middle of a killzone 30 yards past friendly lines. Mestrovitch leaves the cover of a stone wall and braves the machinegun and shell fire, throwing the officer on his back and crawling to safety, where he administers first aid and saves the man's life. For his actions, Sgt. Mestrovitch is awarded the Medal of Honor.

Mestrovitch will die from the Spanish flu just before the war ends, and a U.S. battleship will carry his remains to his hometown of Durasevici.

⁰ 1944: Although pockets of Japanese resistance remain on the island, Guam is declared secure. The Marines and soldiers of the III Amphibious Corps take 8,000 casualties during the battle to retake Guam, killing over 18,000 of the Japanese garrison force.

1945: Following the atomic strikes on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and as American warplanes continue to attack targets in Japan and Taiwan, the Emperor of Japan informs his War Council that he will "bear the unbearable" and agree to unconditional surrender. World War II will be over in a matter of days.

1967: President Lyndon B. Johnson authorizes the bombing of road and rail targets in the Hanoi-Haiphong area. Throughout Operation "Rolling Thunder", Washington prevented the military from targeting facilities that would significantly benefit the war effort, such as attacking North Vietnamese airfields or mining harbors.

1972: Soldiers of the 21st Infantry Regiment - the first American troops to fight in Korea, and the last combat unit in Vietnam - departs for the United States. Over 40,000 advisers and support personnel remain in country, but the departure marks the end of dedicated combat personnel in Vietnam.

Aug. 11

1945: While American planes continue hammering Japanese facilities, Secretary of State James Byrnes rejects the Japanese War Council's surrender terms, including the the Emperor would remain in power. The Allies' terms dictate that the Japanese people themselves would determine their own form of government and that the Emperor would be subject to the Supreme Allied Commander.

if 1949: President Harry Truman appoints Gen. Omar Bradley to the new position of Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Bradley advises that the post-World War II Army had been weakened to the point that it "could not fight its way out of a paper bag," but the Truman administration does not implement his recommendations. As a result, the United States military enters the Korean War significantly understaffed and with outdated equipment.

9 **1952:** In western Korea, the First Marine Division takes Hill 122 subsequently named "Bunker Hill" - and begins several days of bloody clashes with Chinese troops. The Marines, supported by tanks and and air strikes, repel numerous communist assaults and drive off the enemy. 48 of Col.
Walter F. Layer's men give their lives in defense of the hill, but inflict several thousand Chinese casualties.

1965: When deadly race riots break out across Los Angeles, the California National Guard deploys over 12,000 Guardsmen to the area to restore order.

1967: While on a patrol in South Vietnam's Quang Nam Province, Marine Lance Cpl. Roy M. Wheat accidentally steps on an enemy "Bouncing Betty" anti-personnel mine. When he hears the distinctive sound made by the triggered fuze, Wheat throws himself over the mine's location and absorbs the blast with his body. For his actions, Wheat is posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

Aug. 13

1812: Near Bermuda, the frigate USS *Essex* fires a devastating broadside at the British sloop HMS *Alert.* In just eight minutes, Capt. John Porter has captured the first warship of War of 1812. He permits Capt. T.L.P. Laugharne to sail to Newfoundland to unload his crew, then surrender *Alert* to the Americans at New York.

1918: Opha May Johnson takes the oath of enlistment, becoming the first female to enlist in the Marine Corps. After boot camp, Pvt. Johnson and 300 other females take office jobs and assist nurses, freeing the men they replace for front line duty.

1942: Maj. Gen. Eugene Raybold, commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, authorizes the first construction projects for the Development of Substitute Materials. Col. Leslie Groves, who will soon be named director, feels the title would draw too much attention and renames it to the Manhattan Project - the top-secret atomic weapons development program.

1952: During the Battle of Bunker Hill, Navy Corpsman John E. Kilmer ignores intense mortar, artillery, and sniper fire, moving from one wounded Marine to another and providing medical assistance. Although Kilmer himself is wounded by an enemy mortar fragment, he pulls himself to the next casualty. When an enemy barrage hammers his position, Kilmer covers the Marine with his body, and is mortally wounded. For his selfless actions, he is posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

1961: At midnight, East German troops close off the streets between Soviet and Western areas of Berlin. Crews begin tearing up the roads and installing barricades on this day, which was called *Stacheldrahtsonntag* - Barbed Wire Sunday. Soon, a "Berlin Wall" consisting of concrete walls, guard towers, dogs, and anti-vehicular emplacements will surround the city, keeping socialism in and democracy out.

Aug. 14

1900: After fighting their way 80 miles from the port of Tientsin, an eight-nation relief force (the United States, Japan, Russia, United Kingdom, Austria-Hungary, Germany, France, and Italy) arrives at the walls of Peking. A young Marine private named Dan Daly earns his first of two Medals of Honor during the battle by single-handedly holding off hundreds of Chinese soldiers. Meanwhile, U.S. Army Cpl. Calvin P. Titus (depicted above, holding flag) earns the Medal of Honor for volunteering to scale the city wall surrounding Peking. The troops break the siege, effectively bringing an end to the Boxer Rebellion.

In our nation's history, only two Marines earned the Medal of Honor for two seperate actions -- Dan Daly and Smedley Butler, both of whom fought at Peking. 18-year-old captain (having just received a brevet promotion for valor at Tientsin) Butler was wounded in this day's action, and would say that Daly was "The fightin'est Marine I ever knew.

1942: While ferrying P-38 Lightning fighters from Maine to England, Maj. John W. Weltman and 2nd Lt. Elza E. Shahan spot a German long-range reconnaissance plane gathering weather data and spotting convoys for the U-boats below. The pilots shoot down the Fw-200 Condor (sharing the credit), marking the first Army Air Force victory of World War II.

® **1945:** The night before the United States accepts the surrender of Japan, 754 B-29s and 169 fighters take off from the Marinanas Islands for the last
-----. bombing raid of the war, targeting the towns of Kumagaya, Isesaki, and the Akita-Aradi oil refinery.

Aug. 15

1934: The Marines depart Haiti, ending the United States' 19-year occupation of the Caribbean island.

1942: U.S. Navy destroyers finally manage to deliver the first load of supplies to Marines on Guadalcanal, who have been coping with limited rations and ammunition since landing nearly ten days ago.

Also on this day, Maj. Gen. Matthew Ridgway's 82d "All-American" Infantry Division is redesignated as the 82d Airborne Division, becoming the first airborne division in American military history. The division's first combat jumps will take place in Sicily and Italy the following year.

1943: 35,000 American and Canadian troops conduct an amphibious landing on the beaches of Kiska, Alaska - only to discover that the Japanese had abandoned the island weeks ago.

--t In the Solomon Islands, 6,500 soldiers of the 25th Infantry Division storm ashore on Vella Lavella. The islands will be captured in just under a month.

1944: Well over 100,000 American and French troops land on the French Riviera, easily driving the German defenders back and capturing several strategic ports. The soldiers move so quickly across across France that the supply trains can't keep up, and most of Southern France is liberated in four weeks.

On Cape Cavalaire's "Red Beach," Sgt. James P. Connor charges through a defense network of mines, mortars, 20-mm flak guns, machineguns, and snipers. When the German defenders take out both his platoon leader and platoon sergeant are killed, Connor takes command, despite being wounded in the landing. He personally eliminates two enemy snipers before being hit again, then pushes his men forward through "almost impregnable mortar concentrations."

Connor and his platoon drive forward to their objective: a group of buildings overlooking the beach that are home to several snipers and machinegun nests. Wounded a third time, Connor is unable to continue, but still orders his men from the prone position. Despite being reduced to one-third of their original strength, the platoon flanks the enemy and takes the objective. Seven Germans are killed, 40 captured, along with three machineguns. Sgt. Connor is awarded the Medal of Honor.

German ace Helmut Lennartz, flying the Messerschmidt 262 "Schwalbe", shoots down an American B-17 bomber - the first American warplane to be claimed by a jet fighter.

" **1945:** Emperor Hirohito, in his first-ever communication to the common Japanese people, announces via radio that Japan has unconditionally surrendered to the Allies. Not all of Japan is ready for the war to end, however: after hearing the emperor's speech, Adm. Matome Ugaki climbs into a dive bomber and conducts the last kamikaze raid of the war. The Japanese military leadership attempts a coup, unsuccessfully storming the palace, and will order submarines to continue the war. The Japanese Army also executes scores of Allied prisoners. But on September 2, the deadliest war in human history will officially come to an end on the deck of the battleship USS *Missouri*.

Aug. 16

1777: A force of militiamen from New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Vermont - led by Gen. John Stark - clash with a detachment of British General John Burgoyne's army in the Battle of Bennington (near present-day Bennington, Vt.). The Americans rout the British, and the amount of supplies captured during the engagement leads to Burgoyne's forthcoming defeat at Saratoga - which convinces the French to join the war.

1780: Following his successful campaign in the south, Lord Cornwallis engages Gen. Horatio Gates' force in Camden, S.C.. The Americans are annihilated, taking nearly 2,000 casualties in just one hour. The infamous

cavalry commander Col. Banastre Tarleton wrote that "rout and slaughter ensued in every quarter." Gates' defeat is so severe that the "Hero of Saratoga" will never again command troops in battle.

1918: 600 miles north of Moscow, American troops (Along with British, Australian, Canadian, and French allies) assist in capturing Archangel from Vladimir Lenin's Bolshevik forces. The war will end before the "Polar Bear Brigade" can reach the rear of the German lines and some 200 Americans never return from the little-known Russian expedition.

1940: Two years to the day after the first parachute jump, the Army stands up the 101st "Screaming Eagles" Airborne Division, commanded by Gen. Lee - the "Father of the U.S. Airborne." Lee declares that "the 101st has no history, but it has a rendezvous with destiny." Lee, who commanded an infantry company during World War I, drew up the plans for the airborne side of the Normandy Invasion, but had to sit out the operation after having a heart attack in February.

1942: Two years to the day after the first parachute jump, the Army stands up the 101st "Screaming Eagles" Airborne Division, commanded by Gen. Lee the "Father of the U.S. Airborne." Lee declares that "the 101st has no history, but it has a rendezvous with destiny."

1950: 98 B-29 bombers drop 800 tons of bombs on enemy troops concentrating near Waegwan, South Korea. This marks the largest use of bombers against ground forces since the Normandy invasion.

1954: Following the French defeat at Dien Bien Phu and the subsequent partitioning of French Indochina into North and South Vietnam, the U.S. Navy begins transporting hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese and French citizens fleeing the communist North to refugee centers in the South.

1960: After riding a balloon to an altitude of 102,800 feet, Capt. Joseph W. Kittinger, Jr. (USAF) steps out of the gondola and begins a four-and-a-half minute free-fall. Kittinger reached 714 miles per hour before his main chute

opened at 18,000 feet, setting records for speed and altitude on a parachute jump that stand for 52 years until Felix Baumgartner's jump in 2012 (Kittinger was his capsule communicator).

Kittinger served three tours in Vietnam, flying 483 combat missions in A-26 Invaders and F-4 Phantoms. Credited with shooting down an enemy MiG-21 before being shot down himself just four days before he was supposed to go home. Kittinger, by then the commander of the 555th Fighter Squadron, spends the next 11 months as a prisoner of war.

1972: U.S. fighter-bombers fly 664 air strikes against targets in North and South Vietnam while B-52s fly 35 missions in the busiest day of the year for American pilots and crew in Southeast Asia.

Aug. 17

6 **1861:** The Departments of Northeastern Virginia, Washington, and Shenandoah are merged into one outfit: the Army of the Potomac. Maj. Gen. George B. McClellan, the only Union general with any victories under his belt so far, will be its first commander.

1942: In the Marshall Islands, the submarines USS *Argonaut* and USS *Nautilus* unload 211 Marine Raiders who board rubber boats and head for Makin Island. Lt. Col. Evan Carlson's Raiders manage to make it ashore despite heavy surf and engine troubles, succeeding in wiping out most of the island's Japanese defenders, but fail to accomplish their objectives of taking prisoners and gaining intelligence. The raid on Makin Island, along with the raid on Tulagi earlier in the month, are considered the first use of special operations during World War II.

it That same day, B-17 bombers target Nazi-occupied Europe for the first time, hitting a railroad marshaling yard in Rouen, France. Piloting the lead bomber is Maj. Paul W. Tibbetts Jr., who will drop the atomic bomb on Hiroshima nearly three years later.

1943: The Eighth Air Force conducts a massive raid against a Messerschmidt aircraft factory and ball bearing production facilities in Germany. Of the 376 B-17s that flew, 96 are shot down and another 95 are unable to be used again. The factory is destroyed, and ball bearing production is significantly reduced.

[13] Meanwhile, as Axis troops evacuate the island, Lt. Gen. George Patton and his Seventh Army enter the Sicilian capital of Messina. Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery intended to relegate Patton's maligned force to protecting the British Eighth Army's flank and mop-up operations, but Patton's "Race to Messina" proved the mettle of American combat troops and restored prestige to his troops after the North African campaign.

1944: When enemy machinegun fire halts the progress of his company, Staff Sgt. Stanley Bender climbs to the top of a disabled tank to determine where the enemy positions are. For two minutes, he stands defiant while enemy bullets bounce off his makeshift observation platform. Spotting the machinegun nests on a knoll 200 yards away, he leads his squad through withering fire to an irrigation ditch. As his men provide cover fire, Bender calmly walks around to the rear of the first machinegun crew, avoiding both enemy and friendly fire, and dispatches the Germans with one burst of his weapon. He ignores incoming fire and knocks out a second position. His fellow soldiers rush the remaining enemy soldiers and capture the town of La Fonde, France. Thanks to Bender's incredible bravery, 37 German soldiers are dead, 26 captured along with two anti-tank guns, one town, and three intact bridges across the Maravenne River. Staff Sgt. Bender is awarded the Medal of Honor.

1946: A 37mm bullet fires the seat carrying First Sergeant Lawrence Lambert (U.S. Army Air Forces) out of the back of a P-61 "Black Widow" night fighter, making the veteran parachutist the first person to eject from an aircraft in flight. Automatic timers separate Lambert from his seat and deploy his parachute.

1952: When Pvt. First Class Robert E. Simanek and his fellow men of the 2d Battalion, 5th Marines are ambushed, an enemy grenade lands in their position. Simanek hurls himself on the grenade and shields his comrades from

the deadly blast. Incredibly, he survives the wounds and the following year is awarded the Medal of Honor by President Dwight Eisenhower, becoming the 36th Marine to earn the military's highest award during the Korean War to date. Today, Simanek is one of 72 living Medal of Honor recipients (only five remain from the Korean War).

Aug. 18

is **1940:** When Adolf Hitler authorizes Operation "Sea Lion" - the invasion of Britain - Luftwaffe commander Hermann Goring orders the German air force to destroy the Royal Air Force to establish air superiority. What ensues is one of the largest air battles in history as the Germans launch nearly 1,000 sorties across the English Channel.

While the RAF pilots score more aerial kills than their German counterparts (both sides lose dozens of warplanes), Lufwaffe pilots damage and destroy many British aircraft on the ground, and cause significant damage to facilities. This day marks the climax of the air battle, as more planes and pilots are lost on "The Hardest Day" than any other during the Battle of Britain.

1945: Although the war in the Pacific ended days ago with Emperor Hirohito accepting the unconditional surrender terms, Japanese anti-aircraft artillery engage a flight of American B-32 Dominator reconnaissance planes over Tokyo. 14 Japanese fighters take off to engage the Americans, killing Sgt. Anthony Marchione - the last American killed in action in World War II.

Meanwhile, thousands of Japanese soldiers surrender in formerly occupied areas of China, but Chinese communist troops attack the Japanese garrison at Hong Kong, hoping to take control of the strategic port city before the Chinese Nationalist government forces arrive.

Also, Soviet Union troops begin their occupation of Japan's Kurile Islands. Soviet and Japanese forces will fight for several days, and at war's end, the contested islands will end up in communist hands.

1959: A helicopter engine explodes during a test aboard the USS *Wasp* (CV-18), igniting a blaze that threatens the nuclear weapons being transported by the ship. The explosion and subesequent fire causes serious damage and several decks are flooded while crews race to contain the fire before the nuclear warheads are compromised. Fortunately, the fire is brought under control in 30 minutes.

1965: Over 5,000 Marines assault a Viet Cong regiment near Van Tuong, South Vietnam, in the first large-scale operation of U.S. forces in the Vietnam War. The Marines encircle the VC and inflict hundreds of casualties, but the remaining communist fighters manage to escape after several days of fighting.

1976: American soldiers attempting to cut down a tree blocking observation of the Korean Demilitarized Zone are attacked by North Korean soldiers. A North Korean officer crosses into South Korean territory, claiming that their leader Kim Il Sung planted the tree and his troops attack and kill Capt. Arthur Bonifas and Lt. Mark Barrett, who were armed only with axes.

Aug. 20

1910: 100 feet over New York City's Sheepshead Bay Race Track, Lt. Jacob E. Fickel becomes the world's first aerial gunner. Sitting in the biplane's passenger seat, with Glenn Curtiss at the controls, Fickel fires his Army Springfield .30-caliber rifle, demonstrating that a bullet can be fired from a moving aircraft without the recoil knocking the plane out of the sky.

Fickel goes on to command the Fourth Air Force during World War II and retires as a major general.

1912: After less than three hours of instruction, 1st Lt. Alfred A. Cunningham boards a Curtiss (yes, the famed aircraft designer that flew alongside Lt. Fickel two years ago) biplane and makes his first solo flight, becoming the Marine Corps' first aviator. A veteran of the Spanish-American War and several Caribbean campaigns, Cunningham deploys to the Western Front

during World War I where he observes aviation tactics - while over German lines - and formulates procedures for Marine aviators to use against enemy submarines and their bases.

1950: After over two weeks of fighting at Taegu, South Korea, an outnumbered UN force consisting of the American 1st Cavalry Division and the Republic of Korea's II Corps defeat five divisions of North Korean soldiers. The Pusan Perimeter still holds.

1953: Wernher von Braun watches as his Redstone rocket lifts off from Cape Canaveral (Fla.), becoming the United States' first ballistic missile. Redstone No. 1 - built using technology from Germany's V-2 rocket - flew for one minute and 20 seconds before it's engine shut down and the missile falls into the ocean. It will take some time before American rocket technology improves to where the target area is actually more dangerous than the launch pad.

1977: 24 years after the first Redstone launch, a Titan III-Centaur rocket blasts off (again, from Cape Canaveral) carrying the *Voyager 2* space probe. Not only have we advanced to the point of safely launching rockets, we can aim their payload with such a degree of accuracy that Voyager was able to fly by and study Jupiter, Saturn, Neptune, and Uranus. Over 40 years later, NASA is still communicating with the space probe, which is conducting research from about 11 billion miles away.

1998: U.S. Navy warships launch dozens of Tomahawk cruise missiles at a medical manufacturing plant in Sudan and terrorist training camps in Afghanistan. The attacks are a response to the al Qaeda bombings of U.S. Embassy buildings in Kenya and Tanzania earlier in the month.

Aug. 21

1918: When enemy fighters shoot down Ensign George M. Ludlow's Machhi M.5 seaplane off the Austria-Hungary coast, Charles H. Hammann lands beside him and rescues the downed aviator. Hamman's fighter is also damaged, and the winds high and seas choppy, but he manages to take off with Ludlow holding the struts behind him (the plane wasn't designed to carry

two pilots) and flies 65 miles across the Adriatic Sea to the air station at Porto ---- Cassini, Italy. The plane sinks from the weight of the extra passenger after landing but both aviators are safe.

Hammann, an enlisted pilot at the time, becomes the first Naval aviator awarded the Medal of Honor and commissioned as an ensign after his daring flight.

1942: On Guadalcanal, around 900 soldiers of Japan's 17th Army slam into about 2,500 Marines manning positions along Alligator Creek. Wave after wave of Japanese soldiers are cut down by the Marines, killing well over 700 attackers - including the Japanese commander - while inflicting nearly 100 percent casualties.

1944: The F8F-1 Bearcat - Grumman's last piston-powered fighter - makes its first flight. The warplane can fly faster and climb more quickly than the venerable "Hellcat", but enters service too late to see action in World War II. The Blue Angels will begin using the Bearcat for their demonstrations, and many Navy and Marine aviators - including Neil Armstrong - consider the agile warplane as their favorite.

1957: The Soviet Union launches the R-7 "Semyorka", the world's first intercontinental ballistic missile. The R-7 was capable of carrying a 3-ton nuclear warhead a distance of over 5,000 miles away.

1959: President Dwight D. Eisenhower signs an executive order granting statehood to the territory of Hawaii. That same day, retired U.S. Army captain Daniel Inouye begins his 53 year career in Congress. During World War II, Inouye served in the highly decorated *all-Nisei* 442d Regimental Combat Team. He lost his arm during a daring attack on German machine gun positions in Italy, in which the already wounded officer had to pry a live grenade from his severed hand and used it to destroy a bunker. For his actions, Inouye was awarded the Medal of Honor.

1965: A Titan II rocket blasts off from Cape Canaveral, carrying Gemini V astronauts Col. "Gordo" Cooper (USAF) and Lt. Cmdr. "Pete" Conrad (USN) into space to spend what Conrad refers to as "eight days in a garbage can." The long, cramped spaceflight marks the first time Americans set the endurance record for time in space.

1980: During a Western Pacific patrol, the nuclear-powered cruiser USS *Truxtun* (CGN-35) and the destroyer USS *Merrill* (DD-976) rescue over 100 Vietnamese refugees some 200 miles southeast of Saigon.

Aug. 22

1776: A force of over 20,000 Redcoats led by Gen. William Howe land on Long Island, N.Y.. Over the next few days the British will force the Americans to withdraw to New Jersey, and the British capture the vital port of New York City - which they hold for the duration of the war.

1863: The crew of Union steamer USS *Shokokon* spots the Confederate schooner *Alexander Cooper* in New Topsail Inlet on the North Carolina Coast (just south of present-day Camp Lejeune). A crew of sailors board a dinghy which they use to reach the rear of the Confederate camp guarding the ship, where Master-at-arms Robert T. Clifford sneaks ashore and counts the enemy. Although outnumbered three-to-one, Clifford leads a charge against the Rebels, who are routed and leave behind their ship and supplies. For his actions, Clifford is awarded the Medal of Honor.

1914: During the opening days of World War I, the world is introduced to a level of violence on a scale never before seen as the German army kills 27,000 French soldiers in one day at Ardennes and Charleroi. By month's end, the Battle of the Frontiers will account for over a quarter million French casualties - with 75,000 killed in action. Meanwhile, the French, British, and Belgian troops manage to inflict 200,000 casualties on German General Helmuth von Moltke's invasion force.

1942: Elements of Gen. Friedrich Paulus' Sixth Army begin arriving outside Stalingrad, beginning what would become perhaps the largest and deadliest engagement in human history - claiming some 2 million casualties over the course of the battle. The Sixth Army will be surrounded and wiped out after five brutal months of urban combat, and only 6,000 of the 107,000 prisoners will survive the war.

1945: As Japanese forces surrender across Asia, American aircraft drop several teams of French colonial administrators into French Indochina (present-day Vietnam). Having worked alongside Ho Chi Minh against the Japanese during World War II, the United States was originally supportive of Vietnamese independence, but will reluctantly have to side with the French during the Cold War.

1956: Chinese fighters engage a U.S. Navy P4M Mercator flying a nighttime patrol over international waters, killing all 16 crew members. During the Cold War, communist warplanes will shoot down several Mercator electronic surveillance aircraft.

Aug. 23

1942: While Japanese reinforcements depart Truk to join the fighting on Guadalcanal, American P-40 "Lightnings" with the 49th Fighter Group shoot down 15 Japanese fighters and bombers attempting to target the air base in Darwin, Australia.

1944: When Gen. George S. Patton's Third Army reaches the Seine River, Adolf Hitler orders Gen. Hans Speidel to destroy all bridges in Paris - which Speidel ignores, as well as another order days later to target Paris with V-1 buzz bombs and V-2 rockets. Speidel's garrison will surrender in two days and the 28th Infantry Division will parade through the streets of Paris, ending four years of Nazi occupation.

300 miles to the west in Brittany, Staff Sgt. Alvin P. Carrey spots an enemy machinegun nest 200 yards up a hill that is pinning down his soldiers. He grabs as many grenades as he can carry and has his soldiers cover him, then

crawls up the hill. Carrey shoots a German soldier on the way up, then begins hurling grenades at the enemy position - drawing the machine gunners' fire. Although mortally wounded, he still manages to hurl a grenade right on target, killing the crew and knocking their guns out. Carrey is posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

1950: Over 70,000 Army Reservists are ordered to report for duty during the Korean War.

1954: A Lockheed YC-130 prototype takes off for its first flight - a 61-minute trip from the Lockheed plant in Burbank, Calif, to Edwards Air Force Base. Designed to haul a tank and take off/land on short, primitive fields, the plane lifts off in just 800 feet. Once it becomes operational, the versatile C-130 Hercules can even make takeoffs and landings on an aircraft carrier without using the catapult or wires.

64 years after its first flight, the amazingly versatile combat transport plane remains in production, providing transportation, air assault, special operations, gunship, search and rescue, aerial refueling, aerial firefighting, and about any other capability you can think of to the United States Armed Forces. 70 other countries use the "Herc", which holds the distinction of the longest production run of a military aircraft in history.

1990: As American forces continue deployment to the Persian Gulf for Operation "Desert Shield", 46,000 Reservists are called up.

1996: Osama bin Laden issues his first *fatwa*, declaring war on the United States for, among other reasons, maintaining a military presence in Saudi Arabia. The founder of the terrorist group Al Qaeda's message isn't taken seriously until bombs kill over 200 people at American embassies in Tanzania and Kenya two years later.

Aug. 24

1814: Just ten miles northeast of Washington, D.C., British soldiers and Royal Marines clash with an American force of militia and a detachment of Marines and sailors in the Battle of Bladensburg. The professional British troops easily scatter the militia, but run into a wall when they square off against the Marines. In their first volley, the leathernecks destroy an entire company of the King's men then pursue their foe into a ravine.

Capt. Samuel Bacon, Quartermaster of the Marine Corps, said "I will tell you something now about the battle of Bladensburg. [...] The Marines are a dead shot." The bodies of 150 British soldiers covered the battlefield in front of the Marines' lines before the Americans are routed, leaving to road to the capital open in what is considered "the greatest disgrace ever dealt to American arms." Gen. Robert Ross' exhausted troops - several of which died during the battle from exhaustion after long marches - avenge the American destruction of Port Dover (in present-day Ontario) in May by setting fire to the Presidential Mansion (now called the White House), Capitol Building, and numerous other government and military facilities.

However, the British only hold Washington for one day before a massive storm blows through, severely damaging the British ships and causes the occupiers to abandon the area.

1912: The Navy's first electrically powered ship, USS *Jupiter* (AC-3) is launched. Ten years later, a flight deck is added to the 542-ft. vessel, and the renamed USS *Langley* becomes America's first aircraft carrier.

1942: Vice Adm. Frank J. Fletcher's Task Force 61 and a Japanese carrier division converge in the Solomon Islands as Japanese troops attempt to reinforce Guadalcanal. The Battle of the Eastern Solomons is fought entirely by aircraft; the Japanese inflict serious damage on USS *Enterprise* (CV-6), while the Americans sink several vessels, including the light carrier *Ryujo.*

Over Guadalcanal, Japanese warplanes clash with Army and Marine aircraft of the "Cactus Air Force," with Capt. Marion E. Carl in his F4F Wildcat scoring four of the day's ten Allied victories, becoming the Marine Corps' first ace.

1945: Just two days after being discharged from the service, Chief Petty Officer Bob Feller returns to Cleveland and is honored by a parade before pitching in his first major league game since becoming the first professional athlete to enlist in the Armed Forces during World War II. Despite losing nearly four years to his military service - Feller served aboard the battleship USS *Alabama* - the future Hall of Famer strikes out 12 batters and only allows four hits in the Indians 4-2 win over the Detroit Tigers.

1969: In Quang Tri Province, a team of 3rd Reconnaissance Battalion Marines are ambushed by machinegun and automatic weapon fire in the early morning hours. Lance Cpl. Richard A. Anderson is hit in both legs and knocked to the ground, where he takes up a prone position and pours suppressive fire into the enemy. He keeps up the attack, despite being wounded again. As a medic treats his wounds, Anderson spots an enemy grenade landing in their position. He rolls on top of the grenade and absorbs the deadly blast with his body, saving several nearby Marines.

Anderson is posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

Aug. 25

1921: Years after World War I ends, the United States and Germany finally sign a peace treaty. Meanwhile, coalmine workers attempting to unionize in West Virginia begin fighting with law enforcement and strike breakers in what becomes the largest insurrection since the Civil War. Over 1 million rounds are fired during the so-called "Battle of Blair Mountain" before hostilities come to an end once President Warren Harding authorizes the Army to intervene.

1941: Richard "Dick" Winters - the famous commander of the 101st Airborne Division's "Easy" Company - enlists in the Army, entering basic training at Camp Croft in South Carolina. Winters will soon be selected for Officer Candidate School, and go on to join Col. Robert Sink's 506th Parachute Infantry Regiment in 1942. Winters and his men jump into Sainte-Mere-
- Eglise on D-Day and that day will lead a daring attack on German 88mm guns

firing on Utah Beach. For his actions in the Brecourt Manor Assault, Gen. Omar Bradley awards Winters with the Distinguished Service Cross - the Army's second-highest award for valor.

ekr **1942:** The Japanese supply fleet carrying reinforcements and supplies for the garrison on Guadalcanal is turned back after taking heavy damage from American air- and land-based aircraft. Several warships are lost, along with hundreds of sailors, soldiers, and many irreplaceable pilots.

⁰ **1944:** The 2d Armored Division and 4th Infantry Division enter Paris, capturing the French capital from German troops. Garrison commander General Dietrich von Choltitz surrenders his remaining forces that afternoon, ending four years of Nazi occupation.

w 1945: While leading an intelligence operation for the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), Capt. John M. Birch (USAAF) is killed by Chinese communist soldiers. Birch's death is considered the first American casualty of the Cold War. During World War II, Birch assisted Brig. Gen. Jimmy Doolittle and his Raiders as they traveled across China, and Doolittle recommended that Col. Claire Chennault should commission the American missionary as an officer for the "Flying Tigers." Hoping to become a chaplain, Birch instead wound up as an intelligence officer for the OSS.

1950: As railroad workers prepare to strike during the Korean War, President Harry Truman issues an executive order stating that rail transport is "essential to the national defense and security of the Nation" and places the U.S. Army in charge of the critical infrastructure.

1967: The controversial Defense Secretary Robert McNamara states that the Operation "Rolling Thunder" bombing campaign has had little effect on North Vietnam's war-making capabilities. Although the military has dropped more bombs so far in the Vietnam War than it had during all of World War II, Pres. Lyndon Johnson's policy of dictating targets from Washington hamstrings his commanders, who would otherwise have been able to carry out the campaign by choosing targets that would permit them to accomplish their political objectives.

Aug. 26

1950: The 5th Regimental Combat Team (RCT) replaces the 34th Infantry Regiment which was utterly decimated by a series of delaying actions against the North Korean Army. Since only 184 soldiers remained out of the regiment's original strength of 1,898, surviving 34th Infantry soldiers are used to fill holes in other units and the regiment is reconstituted in Japan.

One of those 5th RCT soldiers is Master Sgt. Melvin 0. Handrich, who fought in the Aleutian Islands Campaign before becoming a paratrooper and fighting across Europe. When a force of enemy soldiers attempts to overrun Handrich's company, he leaves the relative safety of his position behind and moves forward, where he will spend the next eight hours directing mortar and artillery fire on the enemy.

When the hostile force makes another attempt to overrrun the American position, Handrich observes friendly soldiers attempting to withdraw. He crosses the fire-swept ground to rally them, and returns to his forward post. Refusing medical care or even to seek cover, the North Koreans eventually cut down Handrich. But when U.S. soldiers retake the ground, they count 70 dead enemy surrounding Handrich's body.

1957: Following the launch of the Soviet Union's R-7 Semyorka missile, state-run news agency TASS announces that the USSR has successfully tested a multi-stage intercontinental ballistic missile that could target "any place in the world."

1993: (Featured image) The hunt for Mohammad Farrah Aidid is on: the 75th Ranger Regiment's 3rd Battalion and operators from Special Forces Operational Detatchment-Delta deploy to Somalia to capture the warlord.

Aug. 27

1776: Five days after 15,000 British soldiers land on Long Island, Gen. William Howe's forces attack the Patriots garrisoned at Brooklyn Heights. Gen. George Washington's troops are flanked by the Redcoats during the first major battle of the Revolutionary War and suffer some 2,000 casualties before retreating to their redoubt at Brooklyn.

Rather than press the attack and smash the rebellion, Howe ordered his troops to prepare for a siege. However, in two days, the entire 10,000-man army slips through the Royal Navy stationed along the East River and evacuates (with their arms and supplies) to Manhattan. Washington is the last man to leave. While New York City falls into enemy hands, the patriots have survived to fight another day.

1918: U.S. and Mexican Army soldiers, along with militia and armed civilians, clash along the border between Nogales, Ariz. and Nogales, Mexico. A handful of U.S. soldiers are killed and over 100 Mexicans, but the battle is over when the Americans seize the high ground overlooking the two Nogales on the Mexican side.

Following the battle, a chain-link fence is installed, splitting the two towns and becoming the first permanent border fence between the United States and Mexico.

1945: B-29 bombers begin airdropping supplies to U.S. prisoners of war held in China.

1972: While U.S. aircraft execute the heaviest day of bombing in four years, leveling scores of barracks and targeting North Vietnamese rail lines to China, a four-ship formation enters Haiphong harbor at night and shells military targets. While the heavy cruiser *USS Newport News,* the guided-missile cruiser USS *Providence,* and the destroyers USS *Robison* and USS *Rowan* head back to sea, they spot four Soviet-built patrol boats in pursuit.

Naval gunfire and tactical air support sink three of the four vessels in what becomes one of the very few surface engagements of the Vietnam War.

Aug. 28

1862: One year after the Confederacy's "glorious but dear-bought victory" over the Union in the First Battle of Bull Run, the two (significantly larger) armies meet again on the same battleground. 70,000 soldiers of Union Maj. Gen. John Pope's Army of Virginia engage Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee's 50,000-man Army of Northern Virginia, resulting in heavy casualties on both sides. Maj. Gen. James Longstreet's five divisions (25,000 men) execute the largest mass assault of the war, smashing their opponents' left flank and forcing and the Union to once again withdraw.

09 **1944:** Army Air Force pilots Maj. Joseph Myers and 2nd Lt. Manford Croy, Jr., flying P-47 Thunderbolts, become the first fighter pilots to score a victory over a jet aircraft when they shoot down German pilot Hieronymus Lauer's Me 262.

Meanwhile, the First Army crosses the Marne River in France just days after the liberation of Paris, and to the south, the coastal towns of Marseilles and Toulon surrender to the Allies.

1945: An advance party of 150 soldiers - the first American troops to set foot in Japan - land at the naval airfield at Atsugi to prepare for the 11th Airborne Division's arrival in two days.

1952: Off the Korean coast, USS *Boxer* launches the first "guided missile" ever fired from an aircraft carrier - a radio-controlled F6F-5K Hellcat fighter fitted with 1,000-lb. bombs. A pilot controlled the drone, which was fitted with a TV camera, from a two-seat AD-2Q Skyraider. Of the six drones launched by *Boxer*, only one will reach its target.

1969: When Lance Cpl. Jose F. Jimenez's unit comes under heavy attack by North Vietnamese soldiers concealed in well camouflaged emplacements south of Da Nang, the Marine charges forward, neutralizing several enemy soldiers and taking an anti-aircraft gun out of action. Jimenez continues his attack, maneuvering to an enemy trench and wipes that position out as well in

the face of "vicious" enemy fire. Moving on to the next target, however,
---- Jimenez is mortally wounded and will be posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

1972: Air Force Capt. Richard S. Ritchie, flying a two-seat F-4D Phantom, shoots down a North Vietnamese MiG-21 fighter near Hanoi, becoming one of only two American pilot aces during the Vietnam War. His weapons systems officer, Capt. Charles B. DeBellevue finishes the war with six victories.

Also on this day, President Richard Nixon announces that the military draft will end by July of 1973.

Today's post is in honor of Sgt. Edgar E. Lopez of the 1st Battalion, 2d Marine Regiment, 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit, II Marine Expeditionary Force. On this day in 2004, the 27-year-old native of Los Angeles was killed by enemy action in Iraq's Babil Province.

Aug. 29

1861: Surrender of Cape Hatteras

1940: At Lawson Army Airfield (modern-day Fort Benning, Ga.), 1st Lt. William T. Ryder and his Parachute Test Platoon conduct the first mass parachute jump in U.S. military history.

Meanwhile, a delegation of British scientists begin sharing radar and other military technologies with the United States, hoping to secure assistance from the still-neutral nation.

1944: Four years after German conquerors marched through Paris' famous Arc de Triomphe, 15,000 American soldiers of the 28th Infantry Division parade down the newly-liberated capital's Champs-Elysées.

Meanwhile, a 21-man OSS force led by Lt. Cmdr. Frank Wisner parachutes into Romania, coordinating the rescue operation of well over 1,000 American prisoners of war.

-4, 1945: An American B-29 "Superfortress", carrying a load of humanitarian aid to Allied prisoners of war in Korea, is intercepted by Soviet Yak-9 fighters. The supposed allies attack the bomber, forcing 1st Lt. Joseph Queen's crew to bail out before the plane crashes. The air crew are rescued, and the incident marks one of the first international confrontations between the soon-to-be Cold War rivals.

Across the Sea of Japan, Allied occupation forces begin arriving in Japan, as well as the battleship USS *Missouri,* which will host the upcoming formal surrender ceremonies on Sept. 2. Gen. Douglas MacArthur is granted the authority to oversee the formation of a new Japanese government. Rather than disband the existing government, MacArthur rules through the emperor whom the Japanese people still view as divine - during Japan's transition to democracy.

1983: During the Lebanese Civil War, mortar crews target American positions, killing two Marines and wounding 14 - the first fatalities for the American peacekeeping force in Beirut. In less than two months, suicide bombers will target a barracks complex, killing nearly 300 U.S. and French peacekeepers, and leading to the eventual withdrawal of the Multinational Force in February.

Aug. 30

[6] **1776:** After a series of defeats by the British, Gen. George Washington's Continental Army conducts a strategic withdrawal of Long Island, sneaking 10,000 men and their equipment through British Adm. Richard Howe's picket force under cover of darkness. Gen. William Howe (yes, the Howes are brothers) sends a letter to Gen. George Washington seeking a peace conference. Washington rejects the offer, forwarding the message to Congress

instead. Diplomacy falls flat when the British refuse to recognize American independence on Sept. 11, and the British respond by capturing New York City four days later.

z3) **1862:** Near Lexington, Ky., Maj. Gen. Edmund Kirby Smith accomplishes the "nearest thing to a Cannae" (Hannibal's double envelopment of the Roman army - perhaps the greatest tactical achievement in military history) during the Civil War. The Confederates rout Maj. Gen. William "Bull" Nelson's inexperienced Union troops - capturing over 4,000 - in the Battle of Richmond.

1918: Southeast of Verdun, France, Gen. John J. Pershing's First Army moves into position at the Saint-Mihiel salient. Among Pershing's three U.S. (and one French) corps is Lt. Col. George S. Patton, Jr.'s newly formed 1st Provisional Tank Brigade, which will conduct the first tank warfare in American history in the upcoming Battle of Saint-Mihiel - the first independently-led American operation of World War I.

1943: When Marine 1st Lt. Kenneth A. Walsh's F4U Corsair develops engine trouble in the middle of a vital escort mission in the Solomon Islands, Walsh lands his aircraft at Munda and switches out with another ride, and quickly returns to the air to rendezvous with his package. While enroute, he spots a flight of 50 enemy Zero fighters and despite the incredible 50:1 odds, the Devil Dog attacks. Walsh's guns send four Japanese fighters down in flames before they knock the lone American out of the sky. Walsh makes a deadstick landing near Vella Lavella and is later recovered.

For his actions, Walsh is awarded the Medal of Honor. He finishes the war with 21 victories.

1958: When China threatens to invade Taiwan, President Dwight Eisenhower deploys the Navy's Seventh Fleet to the strait in addition to sending the Air Force's Composite Air Strike Force to the island. Secretly, the United States arms the Nationalist Chinese Air Force's American-made F-86 Sabres with

new AIM-9 Sidewinder missiles, which will prove devastating to communist MiG-15 and MiG-17 jets in coming days, deastroying nearly three dozen in air-to-air combat.

1963: After the United States and Soviet Union narrowly avoid war during the Cuban Missile Crisis, a "hot line" is installed between the Pentagon and Kremlin, providing the two nuclear-armed superpowers with instant communication in hopes of preventing another conflict. The U.S. sends "The quick brown fox jumped over the lazy dog's back 1234567890," and the Soviets respond with another message indicating all their teletype keys are functioning. The 10,000-mile secure cable connection still operates today, however it has been upgraded to a telephone system.

1983: Guion Bluford, a former Air Force F-4C Phantom II fighter pilot with 144 combat missions in Vietnam, becomes the first black astronaut in space when the Space Shuttle Challenger blasts off on its third mission. Accompanying Col. Bluford are Richard Truly (former F-8 Crusader aviator and retired Vice Admiral), Daniel Brandenstien (A-6 aviator with 192 combat missions and captain in the U.S. Navy), Dale Gardner (F-14 Tomcat pilot and Navy captain), and William Thornton (U.S. Air Force doctor).

g 1995: NATO begins its first bombing campaign, Operation DELIBERATE FORCE. American land- and carrier-based warplanes, along with aircraft from 14 other nations, drop over 1,000 precision-guided munitions on Bosnian Serb positions, and the operation marks the first combat action for the German Luftwaffe since the end of World War II 50 years earlier.

Aug. 31

1864: Two armies under the command of Maj. Gen. William T. Sherman engage Confederate Gen. John Bell Hood's vastly outnumbered Army of Tennessee just south of Atlanta. Despite brilliant fighting and generalship in the Battle of Jonesborough, the Confederates destroy a trainload of military supplies to prevent its capture by the Union and withdraw to Atlanta.

1916: Near Guillemont, France, a German artillery shell scores a direct hit on 2nd Lt. Henry A. "Harry" Butters, instantly killing the popular Royal Field Artillery officer. Butters, an American citizen that joined the British Army at the outbreak of World War I, was so reknowned that Winston Churchill (then a battalion commander with the Royal Scots Fusiliers) met with him and would write of Butters after his death. Butters' gravestone simply read "An American Citizen" - as he requested - and every soldier that could be spared attended his funeral.

1940: As war rages across Europe and Asia, President Franklin Roosevelt federalizes 60,000 National Guard soldiers.

1942: After a squadron of eight Japanese destroyers finally manages to squeeze through Guadalcanal's defensive ring and disembarks 1,000 Japanese troops the night before, the arriving force stages an attack on Henderson Field. Meanwhile, the Marine Corps' elite 1st Marine Raider Battalion and 1st Parachute Battalion arrive from Tulagi.

While four Marine Corps parachute operations are planned during the war, the highly trained Paramarines are never used for their intended purpose and will only be used in conventional roles. The Paramarines and Raiders - considered to be among America's first special operations units - will both be disbanded by war's end.

1943: The Navy commissions the destroyer escort USS *Harmon* - the first warship to be named after an African-American. While serving aboard the USS *San Francisco* (CA-36) during the Battle of the Solomon Islands, Mess Attendant First Class Leonard R. Harmon "deliberately exposed himself to hostile gunfire" to protect a medic providing care to wounded sailors, in addition to displaying unusual loyalty on behalf of the ship's injured executive officer. For his actions, Harmon was posthumously awarded the Navy Cross.

1950: Near midnight, as enemy mortar rounds hammer the American lines along the Naktung River, a force of 500 communist soldiers crosses the river under cover of fog and launches a fierce attack. When the infantry begin to withdraw, their supporting armored vehicles take up defensive positions to

cover the soldiers. Two American tanks are overrun, one is destroyed, and another retreats, leaving just one M-26 Pershing tank to hold off the enemy. Sgt. 1st Class Ernest R. Kouma, a veteran of the Battle of the Bulge and now a tank commander, and his crew are surrounded. For the next nine hours, they hold off repeated fanatical attacks. When the North Koreans get too close, Kouma hops out of the protection of his tank and mans the .50-caliber gun, showering the communists with deadly point-blank fire. Once the gun was empty, he switched to his pistol and used grenades to keep the enemy from overrunning his tank. As the exhausted soldiers withdraw to friendly lines, they first have to cross eight miles of hostile territory and take out three machinegun positions along the way.

Although he was suffering from serious wounds, Kouma began rearming and resupplying his tank, hoping to get back into the fight. He accounted for an incredible 250 dead enemy soldiers and the actions of Kouma and his crew enabled the infantry to reach defensive positions. Sgt. 1st Class Kouma is sent home and awarded the Medal of Honor.

1955: The Boeing KC-135 Stratotanker makes its first flight. The mid-air refueller was built to serve Strategic Air Command's B-52 fleet, but 63 years later it remains in service for the foreseeable future (not scheduled for replacement until 2040), and is one of six aircraft to serve the U.S. military for over 50 years.

September

Sept. 1

1925: As Cmdr. John Rodgers attempts a long-distance flight from California to Hawaii, his PN-9 flying boat runs out of fuel several hundred miles short of the goal. Rogers' four-man crew turns the airplane into a sailboat, and despite not having any food and very limited water, sails the remaining 450 miles to the island of Kauai. Although the plane did not reach its intended target, Rogers' flight still sets a record for flying a seaplane 1,992 miles non-stop.

1939: Three waves of Luftwaffe Ju 87 B "Stuka" dive bombers cross Germany's border with Poland at 4:40 a.m., destroying most of the defenseless town of Wielun. The sneak attack is the first combat action of Germany's invasion, which was preceded by a series of false flag operations intended to bolster support for a military campaign against its neighbor - launching what will become the deadliest conflict in human history.

That same day, Gen. George Marshall, aide-de-camp to Gen. John J. Pershing during World War I, is promoted to Chief of Staff. At the time, the United States has just the 19th-largest military in the world. Marshall would say, "The trouble with the Army was, there wasn't any Army, except in name only." In fact, he oversees a service consisting of just 174,000 soldiers, with 488 machineguns and only 40 tanks.

Marshall, labelled by Winston Churchill as "the organizer of victory," will oversee the greatest military buildup in American military history, growing his poorly-equipped force into an eight-million-man juggernaut, capable of defeating Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan simultaneously.

4 1942: 357 men and five officers of the 6th Naval Construction Battalion arrive in Guadalcanal - the first combat deployment of the legendary "Seabees."

1952: While airmen enjoyed the Labor Day holiday, a tornado hits Carswell Air Force Base, destroying two-thirds of the Air Force's B-36 bomber fleet.

1974: A SR-71 "Blackbird" flown by Air Force Maj. James V. Sullivan streaks from New York to London in 1 hour and 55 minutes, setting a record that still stands today. Despite having to slow down to take on fuel from a specially modified KC-135 tanker, the reconnaissance plane still averages a blistering Mach 2.27.

2005: Soldiers with the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment and the 82nd Airborne Division, along with soldiers from the Iraqi army, launch a mission to clear Al Qaeda fighters from the city of Tal Afar. Col. H.R. McMaster's force kills nearly 200 insurgents and captures hundreds more in the 17-day operation.

aft

Sep. 2

1944: An Avenger torpedo bomber - flown Lt. (junior grade) George H.W. Bush - is shot down by intense anti-aircraft fire after the planes attack Japanese positions on the island of Chichijima. The future president is the only crewmember of his stricken plane to survive, and is picked up by the submarine US S *Finback* after spending four hours floating in a liferaft.

1945: Japan surrenders to the United States on the deck of the battleship USS *Missouri*, anchored in Tokyo Bay.

Meanwhile in French Indochina, American military officers join Ho Chi Minh and General Vo Nguyen Giap for a celebration in Hanoi as Vietnam declares independence from French rule. American aircraft fly overhead while a Vietnamese band plays the "Star-Spangled Banner" to commemorate the event.

However, with President Franklin Roosevelt's passing and Joseph Stalin's "Iron Curtain" descending across Eastern Europe, the Harry S. Truman administration withdraws their backing of Asian nationalism in favor of the French in order to maintain an allied front of Western nations against the spreading threat of Communism. In 20 years, America will meet General Giap again - as enemies in a grueling war.

1958: An Air Force C-130 takes off from Incirlik Air Base in Turkey for a signals intelligence-gathering mission along the border with Soviet Armenia. The crew inadvertently stray off course and are intercepted by four MiG-17 fighters, which take turns shooting the unarmed reconnaissance plane. The C-130 crashes, killing all 17 aboard. When confronted, the Soviet Union says they found a wrecked plane and repatriates the remains of the plane's six crewmembers, but says nothing of the 11 Security Service airmen that were also aboard.

Sept. 3

1783: John Adams, John Jay, and Benjamin Franklin sign the Treaty of Paris,

ending the Revolutionary War.

Sept. 4

1812: In Indiana Territory (near modern-day Terre Haute), Capt. - and future president - Zachary Taylor and 50 soldiers defended Fort Harrison against an attack by 600 Native Americans. One Indian crawls up to the blockhouse and sets it on fire, threatening to burn down the outpost. However, the flames made it easier to see the attackers, and although sickness left the garrison with just 15 able-bodied soldiers at the time of the attack, Taylor's heavily outnumbered force defeats the attackers and hands the United States her first land victory during the War of 1812.

1862: Gen. Robert E. Lee's troops begin crossing the Potomac River into Maryland, kicking off the Confederacy's short-lived invasion of the north.

1886: Worn out after being relentlessly pursued by the U.S. Cavalry, the feared Apache leader Geronimo surrenders to the Army for the last time.

1941: While enroute to Iceland, the destroyer USS *Greer* (DD-145) spots a German submarine. Although the United States is not yet at war with Germany, the sub launches a torpedo at *Greer,* who responds by dropping depth charges, becoming the first U.S. warship to fire on - and receive fire from - a German vessel. President Franklin Roosevelt responds by issuing an order which states that from now on, American ships or planes will shoot any Axis vessels they come across.

1945: Wake Island's 2,200 surviving Japanese soldiers surrender. Rather than retake the island following ifs capture, the United States simply bypassed it and prevented its resupply. 1,300 Japanese on the island died over the course of the war, mostly due to starvation. The Japanese commander, Rear Adm. Shigematsu Sakaibara, will be tried for war crimes and executed for the massacre of nearly 100 U.S. prisoners of war following an air raid.

1957: Arkansas governor Orval Faubus deploys the National Guard to Little Rock to block nine black students from attending Central High School. Days later, President Dwight Eisenhower will federalize Faubus' troops and deploys the 101st Airborne Division to Little Rock to enforce desegregation.

1967: When two companies of Marines are ambushed in the Que Son Valley south of the de-militarized zone, the 1st Marine Division sweeps in to clear the area of hostiles. During the battle, Navy chaplain Lt. Vincent R. Capodanno leaves the command post to administer last rites to dying Marines and to aid the corpsmen. Although wounded himself, he refuses treatment and returns to his work. Capodanno is killed by machinegun fire as soon as he finishes dragging a wounded comrade to safety. Meanwhile, Sgt. Lawrence D. Peters ignores hostile fire raining down on his exposed position to pinpoit enemy locations and lead his Marines during the fierce battle. Both Capodanno and Peters are posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

Sept. 5

1781: The Royal Navy fleet commanded by Rear Admiral Sir Thomas Grave's Royal fleet clashes with Comte de Grasse's French armada at the entrance to the Chesapeake Bay. The navies fight each other at close range for two hours before the British disengage and sail for New York. The French victory traps Lt. Gen. Lord Corwallis' army at Yorktown, preventing their reinforcement or evacuation and ultimately contributing to Cornwallis' surrender in October.

1813: Off the coast of Maine, the brig USS *Enterprise* spots HMS *Boxer* and the two vessels begin maneuvering to attack. *Boxer's* captain Samuel Blyth declares "We are going to fight both ends and both sides of this ship as long as the ends and the sides hold together." Blyth is killed in the opening barrage, and in less than 30 minutes, his ship is wrecked. A mortally wounded Capt. William Burrows refuses to accept Blyth's sword and orders it sent back to the English captain's family. The two captains are buried side by side during an elaborate funeral in Portland.

1862: U.S. Ambassador to Great Britain, Charles F. Adams (the son of President John Quincy Adams and grandson of Pres. John Adams), informs the British government that sending ironclad warships to aid the Confederacy would lead to war.

1917: At Gouzeaucourt, France, an American engineer unit comes under enemy artillery fire, wounding Sgt. Matthew Calderwood and Pvt. William Branigan - the first U.S. casualties of World War I.

1939: As Germany fights its way across Poland, President Franklin Roosevelt issues two neutrality proclamations. While required to put in place an arms embargo by law, Roosevelt will soon ask Congress to remove the ban.

1944: While escorting a bombing mission to Stuttgart, Lt. William H. Lewis shoots down five Heinkel He-111 bombers taking off from GOppingen, Germany, becoming an ace in one mission. His flight of P-51 Mustangs would shoot down 16 bombers during the attack.

In Belgium, Pvt. 1st Class Gino J. Merli and his company are attacked by a numerically superior German force. Merli is surrounded, but covers the retreat of his fellow soldiers with his machinegun. His assistant gunner is dead and another eight soldiers from his section surrender when the Germans overtake his position. Merli plays dead, then opens fire on the Germans when they move on. They return to the machinegun position, but Merli fools them again. He stays at his post all night, and by morning had inflicted so many casualties that the Germans surrendered. 52 enemy bodies were found in Merli's killzone, with 19 directly in front of his machinegun. Merli was awarded the Medal of Honor.

1952: When a battalion of Chinese troops attacked a Marine outpost on Korea's "Bunker Hill," Pvt. 1st Class Alford L. McLaughlin rained down fire on the communists from two machineguns, which he fired from the hip. When the weapons would overheat, he would switch to his carbine and grenades. Although wounded and enduring painful bums from the hot barrels, he kept

up his stand and by battle's end, accounted for some 150 dead Chinese soldiers and another 50 wounded. For his actions, McLaughlin was awarded the Medal of Honor.

Sept. 6

1918: U.S. Navy railroad artillery crews conduct their first attack - a German rail center in Tergnier. The five massive 14"/50ca1 Mark 4 guns, normally mounted to a battleship, are transported by train and can hit targets well over 20 miles downrange.

1950: When their listening post near Satae-ri, Korea is targeted by enemy artillery, their commanding officer orders the soldiers to withdraw from their post to safety. Machinegunner Cpl. Benito Martinez and Pvt. 1st Class Paul G. Myatt remain behind to cover the retreat, despite numerous calls from the CO to abandon their post and turns down an offer of a force to rescue the surrounded Americans. Martinez knew the only way his fellow soldiers would survive was if he continues to provide covering fire. The men hold off the enemy assault until the machinegun's ammunition is expended. Martinez then withdraws to a destroyed bunker and continues to hammer the communists with his Browning Automatic Rifle and pistol.

After a "magnificent stand" lasting six hours, Martinez has enabled his fellow soldiers to retake the position, but does not survive. He is posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor and PFC Myatt is awarded the Silver Star.

1972: During the Olympic Games in Munich, Germany, Palestinian terrorists storm the apartment housing Israeli athletes, killing two and taking nine hostage. The terrorists demand the release of over 200 Israeli-held Palestinian prisoners, but the Israelis refuse to negotiate. Five terrorists - and all hostages - are killed when German police attempt to ambush the kidnappers at the airport as they attempted to fly to Cairo. The operation was financed by Mahmoud Abbas, who today serves as the chairman for the Palestinian Authority.

1976: Soviet Air Force pilot Lt. Viktor Belenko lands his brand-new MiG-25P "Foxbat" at Hakodate Airport in Japan and asks for political asylum in the United States. His request is granted and American officials begin analyzing what was believed to be at the time as perhaps the world's most advanced fighter. However, they learn that intelligence vastly overestimated the capabilities of the Foxbat. The fighter is returned to the Soviet Union in pieces.

Sept. 7

1776: Sgt. Ezra Lee silently makes his way down the Hudson River in an 8-ft. long submersible named *Turtle* towards British Adm. Richard Howe's flagship, HMS *Eagle,* anchored just south of Manhattan. Turning two hand cranks for propulsion, Lee reaches the ship but is unable to drill into the hull in order to attach a "torpedo." While Lee's attack is unsuccessful, the craft designed by inventor David Bushnell marks the first-ever submarine attack.

1864: As he prepares for his March to the Sea, Maj. Gen. William T. Sherman orders an evacuation of Atlanta. When the mayor protests, Sherman replies with "War is cruelty and you cannot refine it." Government and military facilities are destroyed, and the Union provides transportation south for the displaced residents.

1903: During a period of unrest, Marines from USS *Brooklyn* (ACR-3) land at Beirut (modern-day Lebanon) to protect U.S. citizens and the American University.

1940: 1,200 German bombers and escorts depart airfields in France and cross into English airspace. Instead of targeting Royal Air Force bases, the warplanes hit London's East End, marking the first day of the London Blitz. For 57 straight days, *Luftwaffe* pilots target the English capital, killing over 40,000. But the German air crews are unable to cripple England's war production or break the will of its people, and *Reichsmarschall* Hermann Goring will call off the campaign in 1941.

1942: Japan suffers one of its first setbacks of World War II when a battalion of elite Special Naval Landing Forces are forced to withdraw following their defeat by a numerically superior joint Australian-U.S. defense force at New Guinea's Milne Bay.

1950: After a month of combat, the 1st Marine Brigade (Provisional) is pulled from the lines and sent to Japan to join the 1st and 7th Marine Regiments for the upcoming amphibious invasion at Inchon.

1997: Lockheed Martin's F-22 Raptor, a fifth-generation stealth fighter billed as unmatched by "any known or projected fighter aircraft," makes its first flight. Only 187 of the $150 million Raptors are built before production ends.

2001: Four days before the 9/11 attacks, the State Department issues a warning to U.S. citizens worldwide of a possible "terrorist threat" from "extremist groups with links to Osama bin Laden's al Qaeda organization."

Sept. 8

1740: Some 800 volunteers from the American colonies board transports to take part in the disastrous British/American colonial expedition to capture the Spanish territory of Cartagena (modern-day Colombia).

1781: 2,000 Continental soldiers commanded by Maj. Gen. Nathanael Greene meet with Lt. Col. Alexander Stewart's 2,200-man force of British troops near present-day Eutawville, S.C.. Although both sides claim victory in the Battle of Eutaw Springs, the British must abandon much of their previously gained ground in the south.

1863: When the Union attempts an amphibious invasion in Texas to prevent the Mexican government from supplying the Confederacy, well-trained artillerymen at Fort Griffin blast the Union ships as they unsuccessfully attempt to navigate the shallow waters of the Sabine River. Two gunboats are captured and the Union suffers 200 casualties in one of the most one-sided engagements of the Civil War.

6 **1925:** As Destroyer Squadron 11 cruises from San Francisco to San Diego, several ships run aground at Honda Point. Unusually strong swells and currents from a massive earthquake in Japan, together with darkness and fog contribute to the largest loss of U.S. Navy ships during peacetime. Seven destroyers are destroyed, another two damaged, and 23 sailors die.

1939: Just days after Germany invades Poland, kicking off what will become World War H, President Franklin Roosevelt declares a national emergency - increasing the size of the Armed Forces - in part by recalling many retired enlisted troops and officers.

1942: The 1st Raider Battalion lands on Guadalcanal and begins operations to disrupt the Japanese advance by attacking supplies and a radio tower, despite orders to avoid contact.

0 **1943:** When Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower publicly announces Italy's surrender, the Nazis invade, beginning a bloody campaign to disarm their former ally and prevent Italy from falling into Allied hands. The next day, eight divisions of U.S. and British soldiers land at Salerno.

1945: U.S. troops land at Inchon to establish a military transitional government and to prevent further Soviet expansion in Korea. A month earlier, the Soviet Union violated an agreement not to declare war on Japan and had invaded Japanese-held Korea. Following Japan's surrender, the new country was split at the 38th Parallel with the Russians administering the north and the Americans, the south. Five years later, North Korea will invade the South, once both superpowers have left the peninsula, to reunite Korea under the flag of communism.

Sep. 9

e **1942:** The Japanese submarine I-25 surfaces off the Oregon coast, launching an El4Y "Glen" floatplane. Pilots Nobuo Fujita and Shoji Okuda drop their incendiary bombs in the Oregon forest, becoming the only pilots to bomb the continental United States.

1972: DeBellevue becomes an ace by shooting down two enemy fighters near Hanoi.

Sept. 10

1813: Along the shores of Lake Erie, Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry's squadron engages the Royal Navy in the Battle of Put-in-Bay. Perry's ship is so damaged that he boards an open lifeboat and transfers his flag to another ship in the face of heavy gunfire before resuming the fight. After defeating the British, he writes a brief report to Maj. Gen. (and future president) William Henry Harrison, commanding the Army of the Northwest: "We have met the enemy and they are ours. Two ships, two brigs, one schooner and one sloop."

1944: The First U.S. Army captures Luxembourg. After being conquered by the Germans during both world wars, the tiny nation removes strips neutrality from its constitution and becomes a founding member of NATO.

1945: Just eight days after the end of World War II, the aircraft carrier USS *Midway* (CV-41) is commissioned., becoming the largest ship in the world. *Midway* would hold the title of the world's largest ship for the next ten years, and her 1,001-foot flight deck would later be expanded from 2.8 to a whopping 4 acres. *Midway* aviators scored the first (June 17, 1965) and last (Jan. 12, 1973) victories of the Vietnam War. Later, she served as the flagship carrier during Operation DESERT STORM before retiring in 1992.

1950: When an enemy machinegun pins down his fellow 1st Cavalry troopers, Cpl. Gordon M. Craig and four other soldiers crawl forward to silence the enemy gun. When an enemy grenade lands in their position, Craig throws himself on the device to shield the others from the blast. Craig is killed, and posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

1951: A 3rd Air Rescue Squadron H-5 helicopter picks up Capt. Ward M. Millar, an F-80 pilot that had been shot down and held as a prisoner of war. Millar escaped after spending two months in captivity, and managed to evade his captors for three weeks, despite having broken both of his ankles when ejecting from his jet.

Sept. 11

1776: After the British capture Long Island, Continental Congressional delegates Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, and Edward Rutledge meet with British Adm. Lord Richard Howe for a peace conference at Staten Island. Hoping to bring a quick end to the conflict, King George granted Howe the authority to discuss peace terms, but not including the recognition of American independence. When Howe states that the loss of America would be like losing a brother, Franklin replies that "we will do our utmost endeavors to save your lordship that mortification."

1814: New York is saved from a possible invasion by British forces when Commodore Thomas MacDonough's squadron decisively defeats the British fleet led by Capt. George Downie in the Battle of Plattsburgh.

2001: As air controllers learn that several planes appear to have been hijacked, fighter jets are scrambled but do not arrive in time to disrupt a complex terrorist attack that kills 2,997 Americans and injures some 6,000. At 9:37a.m., a Boeing 757 flown by Al Qaeda terrorists slams into the Pentagon, killing 55 military personnel and 70 civilian employees. The area hit by the plane was undergoing renovations at the time of the attack, which meant only a few hundred of what would normally be around 5,000 occupants were endangered. Structural reinforcements and a sprinkler system had recently been added - in response to the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing - which increased survivability.

Although it is too late for the Pentagon, all U.S. military facilities worldwide are ordered to enter Force Protection Condition "Delta" - the highest level of readiness for a possible terrorist attack. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld increases the military alert level from DEFCON 5 (the lowest state of military preparedness) to DEFCON 3. Although the Russians would typically match the increase, President Vladimir Putin notifies George W. Bush that he would order his forces to stand down and denounces the terrorist attack. A report of a possible truck bomb attack targeting the North American Aerospace
— Command (NORAD) headquarters in the Cheyenne Mountain Complex leads

to the first time the facility closes its massive blast doors, which are designed to withstand a nuclear attack. NORAD now controls of all American air space as combat air patrols guarded the skies and enforced a nationwide no-fly-zone.

te 2012: Terrorists launch a coordinated assault on a U.S. government compound in Benghazi, Libya. Although the battle rages for hours, the military isn't permitted to mount any kind of effective response. Two CIA contractors Glen Doherty and Tyrone Woods - are killed, as well as foreign service officer Sean Smith and Ambassador Chris Stevens.

Sept. 12

1847: "From the halls of Montezuma..." Gen. Winfield Scott's army of Marines and soldiers begin their attack on the castle Chapultepec, sitting 200 feet above in Mexico City. During the battle, 90 percent of Marine commissioned and non-commissioned officers are killed by snipers, memorialized by the "blood stripe" on the Marine Corps' Dress Blue trousers. Participating in the engagement are many young officers - such as Ulysses S. Grant, Robert E. Lee, and Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson - who will face each other in the Civil War.

't11918: The Battle of Saint-Mihiel, the first and only U.S.-led and executed operation of World War I, begins when Gen. John J. Pershing's American Expeditionary Force attacks Gen. Johannes Georg von der Marwitz' Imperial German Army forces. Brig. Gen. William "Billy" Mitchell leads an armada of nearly 1,500 warplanes during the offensive - the largest air force assembled (at that point) in history. On the ground, artillery and tanks(commanded by Lt. Col. George Patton) join the infantry in devastating the German lines. In just three days, over 22,000 Germans are killed, wounded, or captured.

1942: 5,000 Japanese soldiers, supported by aircraft and naval artillery, begin a series of nighttime frontal assaults against the Marines defending Guadalcanal's Henderson Field. The defenders, many of whom are members of the elite 1st Raider and 1st Parachute Battalions, devastate Maj. Gen. Kiyotake Kawaguchi's force, despite nearly being overrun and resorting to hand-to-hand combat.

The Battle of Edson's Ridge is named after the Col. Merrit A. Edson, the commanding officer of the 1st Raider Battalion, who "was all over the place, encouraging, cajoling, and correcting as he continually exposed himself to enemy fire." For his actions during the battle, Edson was awarded the Medal of Honor.

'tk **1945:** Marine aviators of VMF-214 - the famed "Black Sheep Squadron" - are reunited with Col. Gregory "Pappy" Boyington at Naval Air Station Alameda following their former commanding officer's release after spending 20 months in captivity as a Japanese prisoner of war. After the reunion, Boyington heads for Washington, where he is to be awarded both the Medal of Honor and Navy Cross.

Sept. 13

1814: Unable to break the strong American defensive lines around Baltimore after a series of attacks, British troops return to their ships. Meanwhile, Vice Adm. Alexander Cochrane's fleet begins a 25-hour bombardment of Fort McHenry, which guards the entrance to Baltimore harbor. The ships fire their cannons and rockets at maximum range and are unable to inflict any serious damage.

4 American lawyer and amateur poet Francis Scott Key observes the attack while aboard a Royal Navy ship to secure the release of an American prisoner. Key is so moved by the nighttime bombardment and the sight of the American flag in the morning that he writes "Defence of Fort M'Elenry" on the back of an envelope, which will become the "Star-Spangled Banner." The song does not become our national anthem, however, until 1931.

1847: After Marines capture the castle Chapultepec, the Mexican capital is now in American hands. The Duke of Wellington, who defeated Napoleon in the Battle of Waterloo, will say that American Maj. Gen. Winfield Scott's brilliant campaign against Santa Anna's forces during the Mexican-American War is "unsurpassed in military annals," and names Scott the "greatest living general."

1906: As revolution threatens Cuban President Tomas Estrada Palma's government, six officers and 124 Marines and sailors disembark from USS *Denver* (C-14) to help restore order.

1943: At Salerno, German troops launch a counterattack that drives Allied forces back to the beach.

1944: Lt. Gen. Carl A. Spaatz, the commander of Strategic Air Forces in Europe, has convinced war planners that oil facilities must be the top bombing priority. For the third day in a row, massive raids consisting of hundreds of American bombers target German synthetic oil plants. *Luftwaffe* losses are heavy.

After Germany's defeat, Spaatz will take control of strategic bombing in the Pacific Theater, directing the atomic attacks. Gen. Dwight Eisenhower will refer to Spaatz and Gen. Omar Bradley as the two American generals with the greatest contributions to winning World War II.

1985: An F-15A Eagle flown by Maj. Wilbert D. "Doug" Pearson Jr. takes off from Edwards Air Force Base and performs a near-vertical "zoom" climb to 80,000 feet. Meanwhile, Pearson's Vought ASM-135A missile homes in on a U.S. satellite 330 miles above the earth's surface, traveling some 17,500 miles per hour. The anti-satellite missile automatically launches, and in moments, a kinetic warhead traveling at 15,000 miles per hour impacts the satellite in the missile's first test on a live target.

Sept. 14

1862: Maj. Gen. George McClellan's Army of the Potomac gets the better of Gen. Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia, which was divided amongst three passes through Maryland's Blue Ridge Mountains. The 23rd Ohio Regiment, commanded by Lt. Col. (and future president) Rutherford B. Hayes is the first to make contact with Lee's army. An enemy bullet shatters Hayes' arm as he leads a charge, and he has one of his men bandage the wound so he can stay in the fight. Another future president served under Hayes: his friend and protégé, commissary sergeant William McKinley.

After the Battle of South Mountain, Lee had considered abandoning his first invasion of the north as McClellan could have crushed the Confederate army if he pressed the attack. Instead, the timid McClellan stays put, ceding the initiative to his opponent. Instead of heading south, Lee concentrates his forces for what becomes the Battle of Antietam - the bloodiest battle in American history.

1901: 39 years - to the day - after facing heavy fire on the front lines of South Mountain, President William McKinley dies from a gunshot wound he received eight days ago from anarchist assassin Leon Czolgoszan. Vice President Theodore Roosevelt is sworn in as the 26th President of the United States. Before being named vice president, Roosevelt served as McKinley's Assistant Secretary to the Navy until USS Maine explodes in Havana, inspiring Roosevelt to form the 1st U.S. Volunteer Cavalry Regiment - the "Rough Riders."

McKinley was the last president with Civil War service (ultimately becoming a brevetted major) and the only one to fight as an enlisted soldier. Apart from Grover Cleveland's tenures in office, the nation was run by Civil War veterans from 1865 until 1901. The others were Andrew Johnson (Brig. Gen. and military governor of Tennessee), Gen. Ulysses S. Grant, Hayes (brevet Maj Gen.), Maj. Gen. James Garfield, Brig. Gen. Chester Arthur, and Benjamin Harrison (brevet Brig. Gen.).

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Following the McKinley assassination, Congress tasks the U.S. Secret Service with protecting the president.

1939: At the controls of his Vought-Sikorsky VS-300 prototype, Igor Sikorsky makes a 10-second tethered flight - the first successful flight of a single main rotor, single tail rotor helicopter.

1942: The 7th Marine Regiment departs Espiritu Santo to join the battle at Guadalcanal. Among the men are Sgts. John Basilone and Mitchell Paige - who both earn the Medal of Honor at Guadalcanal - and Marine legend Lt. Col. Lewis "Chesty" Puller.

1943: After a devastating German counterattack, over 2,000 paratroopers of the 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment jump into action at the beachhead at Salerno, Italy. Together with Naval gun battery support, every available bomber is summoned to Salerno and the German attack is devastated. Gen. Mark Clark's invasion, once in danger of being driven into the sea, is back on the offensive.

1944: Underwater Demolition Teams have cleared obstacles and Naval bombardment continues on the eve of the 1st Marine Division's landing at Peleliu. Maj. Gen. William Rupertus predicts that his Marines can secure the small island in just four days, but over 10,000 fortified Japanese defenders are prepared to dish out what will become "the bitterest battle of the war for the Marines."

2001: Congress passes the Authorization for Use of Military Force, granting President George W. Bush the ability to use all "necessary and appropriate force" against those who "planned, authorized, committed or aided" the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

The president authorizes the Pentagon to activate some 50,000 Reservists, and while touring Ground Zero, Bush proclaims "the people that knocked these buildings down will hear all of us soon."

Sept. 15

1776: Connecticut militia forces guarding New York City break into a panicked retreat following an hour of naval bombardment "so terrible and so incessant a roar of guns few even in the army and navy had ever heard before," enabling Adm. Lord Howe's fleet to land several thousand troops in New York City unopposed. Gen. George Washington and his army are nearly trapped, but manage to squeeze past the King's men and set up camp at Harlem Heights to the north. New York City will remain in British hands until the end of the war.

1862: Surrounded, out-gunned, and out-numbered, Col. Dixon S. Miles's 12,0000-man Union force surrenders to Maj. Gen. Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson following three days of fighting at Harper's Ferry, Va. (present-day West Virginia).

1942: While escorting troop transports carrying the 7th Marine Regiment to Guadalcanal, the aircraft carrier USS *Wasp* (CV-7) is hit by several torpedoes fired from a Japanese submarine. The torpedoes spark major fires below decks that detonate the gasoline and ammunition stores, and Captain Forrest P. Sherman orders the crew to abandon ship. All aircraft in the air during the attack divert to USS *Hornet,* but 193 of *Wasp's* sailors are dead and another 366 wounded.

1944: After five battleships hammer the small coral island of Peleliu with thousands of 14- and 16-inch rounds, and planes from 19 aircraft carriers drop over 1 million pounds of bombs, Rear Adm. Jesse Oldendorf believes he has run out of targets. However, the entrenched Japanese 14th Infantry Division is relatively unharmed and ready for the 1st Marine Division when they land. At 0832, Col. Lewis B. "Chesty" Puller and tens of thousands of Marines storm ashore, facing fierce resistance by the Japanese.

The 1st Marine Division will suffer 6,5000 casualties at Peleliu - a full one-third of its troops - before being relieved after a month of some of the bloodiest combat in Marine history. It will takes the Americans 73 days to capture the island.

1950: Six years to the day after landing at Peleliu, Chesty Puller and his 1st Marine Regiment are among 40,000 troops to hit the beaches at Inchon, where the UN invasion catches the North Koreans by surprise. Gen. Douglas MacArthur's landing is a brilliant success that turns the tide of the war.

Sept. 17

1862: The Battle of Antietam (Maryland) — the bloodiest single-day battle in American history — opens between Confederate Army forces under Gen. Robert E. Lee and Union Army forces under Maj. Gen. George B. McClellan. After 12 hours of fighting, some 23,000 Americans are dead, wounded, or missing.

Though a strategic victory for the Union, the battle will prove tactically inconclusive for both sides.

1908: 2,500 people gather at Fort Myer, Va. to watch Orville Wright demonstrate his Wright Flyer to the Army Signal Corps. One of the propellers breaks during the flight, sending the aircraft nose-first into the ground, severely wounding Wright and killing his passenger, Lt. Thomas E. Selfridge. Although Wright survived the first-ever fatal aircraft incident, he would spend the next seven weeks recovering in an Army hospital.

1916: At 11:00 a.m. over Villers-Pouich, France, a German Albatros D.II fighter closes in on a Royal Air Force scout bomber and shoots it out the sky. Former cavalry officer Manfred Albrecht Freiher von Richtofen - the soon-to-be-infamous Red Baron - has scored his first victory for the German *Luftstreitkrafte.* Although he is now known for his red Fokker triplane, Richtofen was in the seat of an Albatros biplane for most of his 84 kills.

1944: Operation Market Garden, an enormous Allied Airborne operation during World War II (in fact, the largest parachute operation in history), is launched to seize strategically vital bridges in German-occupied Holland.

After 10 days of fighting and many tactical successes, the operation will be deemed a strategic failure, and Allied forces will be ordered to withdraw.

1976: The cast of the television series *Star Trek* is on hand at Rockwell's Palmdale assembly plant to witness the rollout of the brand-new Space Shuttle Enterprise. Originally named *Constitution,* a massive letter-writing campaign by Star Trek fans convinced the White House to rename the first shuttle after fictional *Enterprise.*

Series creator Capt. Gene Roddenberry flew B-17s during World War II. James Doohan also flew, as an artillery observation pilot for the Royal Canadian artillery - after "Scotty" fought his way ashore Juno Beach during the Normandy Invasion. DeForest Kelley (Dr. "Bones" McCoy) enlisted in the Army Air Forces during World War II and served in a motion picture unit. Leonard Nimoy (Mr. Spock) spent part of his career acting in the Special Services during his enlistment with the Army Reserve. During World War II, George Takei (Mr. Sulu) and his family were interred at a camp for Japanese Americans in Arkansas. His cousin and aunt were among the dead in the atomic attack on Hiroshima.

Sept. 18

1862: A day after the bloody Battle of Antietam, Gen. George B. McClellan blows yet another opportunity to capture Gen. Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia, perhaps ending the Civil War. While Lee abandons his invasion of Maryland and turns south, McClellan allows the significantly outnumbered Confederates to withdraw to Virginia without pursuit.

1906: As revolution sweeps Cuba, the auxiliary cruiser USS *Dixie* (AD-1) disembarks a battalion of Marines at Cienfuegos to help protect American-owned plantations.

1941: In preparation for World War II, 19 divisions of soldiers - 400,000 troops - participate in a series of massive exercises in Louisiana. In addition to learning how to direct and supply such a large force, Gen. George Marshall's growing army is testing the effectiveness of combined-arms mechanized units that would be facing the German military and their (so-far) unstoppable blitzkrieg tactics.

26 soldiers will die during the maneuvers, but the Army gains experience that will prove invaluable during the upcoming war. Among those participating are future commanders Dwight Eisenhower, Omar Bradley, Mark Clark, and George Patton, who says "If you could take these tanks through Louisiana, you could take them through Hell."

1942: Over 4,000 Marines of the 7th Marine Regiment land at Guadalcanal and join the battle, along with much-needed supplies. Maj. Gen. Archer A. Vandegrift's men had dubbed the invasion "Operation Shoestring" as the Navy only managed to unload half of the supplies on Guadalcanal before departing. After suffering heavy casualties, the Marine 1st Parachute Battalion is pulled from the lines and sent to Espiritu Santo.

1944: During the drive across Europe, the 101st Airborne Division captures the Dutch city of Eindhoven and the Ninth Army captures Brest, France.

Two years after landing at Guadalcanal, the 7th Marines are fighting their way across the island of Peleliu. When a platoon of Marines is held up by concealed enemy positions on their left flank, Pvt. 1st Class Arthur J. Jackson moves forward through a barrage of heavy enemy fire. He reaches a pillbox containing 35 enemy soldiers, pinning them in with automatic weapons fire, then hurling white phosphorous grenades and explosive charges into the position, killing all of its occupants. He then turned his attention to two nearby positions, silencing them as well.

Although advancing alone and in the face of heavy fire, PFC Jackson continued on to wipe out a total of 12 positions and neutralized 50 enemy soldiers, contributing "essentially to the complete annihilation of the enemy in the southern sector of the island." PFC Jackson was awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions.

111 **1947:** The National Security Act of 1947 enacts sweeping reorganization of the Armed Forces and intelligence service structure. After 40 years of service as a component of the Army, the newly formed Air Force stands up as an independent branch of the military. The act creates a National Military Establishment - renamed the Department of Defense in 1949 - with the Army, Navy, and Air Force now under a unified command. Also established is the Joint Chiefs of Staff, which provides military advice to the president and the new Cabinet position of Secretary of Defense.

The act also establishes the Central Intelligence Agency - America's first peacetime intelligence service - and the National Security Council, which advises the president on matters of national security and foreign policy.

1948: The first delta-winged aircraft prototype - Convair's XF-92 - conducts its maiden flight. The cutting-edge design will pave the way for forthcoming platforms such as the F-102 Delta Dagger, F-106 Delta Dart, and the B-5 8 Hustler.

1968: In South Vietnam's Quang Nam Province, a group of Marines on patrol is ambushed by enemy forces, hitting Pvt. 1st Class DeWayne T. Williams in the back. Despite his serious wounds, Williams crawls forward to establish a forward firing position when an enemy grenade lands in the middle of the Marines. Williams spots the grenade and rolls on top of it, sacrificing himself to save his comrades and is posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

Sep. 19

1777: The Battle of Freeman's Farm — the first engagement in the Battle of Saratoga __ opens between Continental forces under the command of Gen. Horatio Gates and British forces under Gen. John "Gentleman Johnny" Burgoyne. The Brits carry the day, but suffer heavy losses.

& **1863:** On the border of Georgia and Tennessee, fighting begins in earnest between forces commanded by Maj. Gen. William Rosecrans and Gen. Braxton Bragg. After two days of fighting, the Confederate Army of Tennessee inflicts 18,000 casualties on the Army of the Cumberland, driving Rosecrans from the battlefield, but Union soldiers kill, wound, and capture 16,000 Confederates. After Gettysburg, the Battle of Chickamauga marks the second-highest casualty totals of the Civil War.

1864: Lt. Gen. Jubal Early's Army of Shenandoah and Maj. Gen. Philip Sheridan's Army of the Valley meet in Winchester, Va. - the third time Confederate and Union forces square off at that site. Sheridan manages to turn Early's left flank, leading to a Confederate retreat in what is considered perhaps the most crucial battle of the Shenandoah Valley Campaign.

Casualties are heavy for both sides, and among the many fallen senior officers is Confederate brigade commander Col. George S. Patton, Sr. - grandfather of the legendary Gen. George S. Patton, Jr.

1881: President James A. Garfield, who served as Rosecrans' chief of staff during the Battle of Chickamauga, finally succumbs to wounds suffered during an assassination attempt in July. Vice President Chester A. Arthur, formerly quartermaster general in the New York state militia, is sworn is as the 21st President of the United States.

0 1940: Two days after postponing Operation SEA LION - Hitler's planned invasion of the United Kingdom - British bombers target German invasion barges staged along the French coast. Germany has not been able to achieve its preconditions of air or naval superiority, and with over 200 of the 1900 barges now sunk, Hitler orders the remaining vessels dispersed and turns his sights on invading the Soviet Union.

1944: As the Allied drive across Europe slows due to the stretched supply lines, Gen. Courtney Hodges' First Army runs into *Generalfeldmarschall* Walter Model's forces at the border between Belgium and Germany. The Germans manage to scratch out a defensive victory, inflicting some 33,000 casualties in the three-month Battle of Hurtgen Forest - marking the longest battle in U.S. Army history.

Sep. 20

1777: British Maj. Gen. Charles Grey launches a daring nighttime attack on Brig. Gen. Anthony Wayne's Continental Army forces encamped near the Paoli Tavern near modern-day Malvern, Pa.. Grey orders his troops to only use bayonets, and has his men remove the flints from their rifles. The Redcoats catch the Americans completely by surprise, routing an entire division while only suffering 11 British casualties.

1797: The Continental Navy frigate *Constitution* is launched in Boston harbor. 220 years later, USS *Constitution* — known affectionately as "Old Ironsides" - is the "oldest ship in the American Navy," and continues serving

in the 21st century as a duly commissioned ship crewed by active-duty U.S. sailors and Naval officers in order to further public awareness of American Naval tradition.

1917: The 26th Infantry Division arrives at Saint-Nazaire, France, becoming the first division entirely organized in the United States to arrive in Europe for World War I. The National Guard soldiers immediately travel to Neufchateau, where they are trained by experienced French soldiers. The "Yankee" Division will spend 210 days in combat, with 1,587 killed in action and another 12,077 soldiers wounded.

1944: Just three days after landing, the 81st Infantry Division has eliminated most of the Japanese garrison on the island of Angaur. Once the island is secured, the 81st will join the 1st Marine Division in the bloody battle on Peleliu, only seven miles away.

1950: 12 Sikorsky HRS-1 "Chickasaw" helicopters of Marine Helicopter Squadron 161 (HMR-161) conduct the first combat landing of troops, landing over 200 Marines and their equipment on Hill 844 near Kansong, Korea.

Meanwhile, men of the 1st Battalion, 1st Marines charge up Hill 85, near Yongdungp'o. Leading the attack is 2nd Lt. Henry A. Commiskey Sr., running ahead of his Marines through heavy enemy machinegun and small-arms fire to reach the machinegun nest at the crest of the objective. Armed only with his pistol, he dispatches four enemy soldiers and grapples with a fifth until one of his Marines catches up and gives him another weapon to shoot the foe. Commiskey continues on to the next gun position, killing another two enemies and then rushes to the top of the hill, routing the enemy troops.

For his "valiant leadership and courageous fighting spirit," Commiskey is awarded the Medal of Honor.

1965: Near Ben Cat, South Vietnam, Sgt. Larry S. Pierce and his reconnaissance platoon are ambushed by an enemy force. They destroy the machinegun and rout the enemy. As the Americans pursue their fleeing opponents, they come across a land mine in a roadbed. Pierce jumps onto the

device as it detonates, saving the rest of his squad from being wiped out at the cost of his own life. For his sacrifice, Pierce is posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

4 **1984:** The Iranian-supported terrorist group Hezbollah carries out a suicide car bomb attack on the U.S. Embassy Annex building in East Beirut, Lebanon. The explosion kills 24 - including Chief Warrant Officer Kenneth V. Welch (USA) and Petty Officer 1st Class Michael Ray Wagner (USN) - and injures both the U.S. and British ambassadors.

2001: President George W. Bush addresses a joint session of Congress, announcing the newly proposed Department of Homeland Security and requesting a declaration of war in response to the 9/11 attacks just nine days ago. Bush states "Our war on terror begins with al Qaeda, but it does not end there. It will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped and defeated."

Sep. 21:

1780: After deliberately weakening the defenses of Fort Arnold (now known as West Point), Hudson River, and other areas under his command, Maj. Gen. Benedict Arnold gives the British the plans for the strategic fort. The Colonists will soon capture Maj. John Andre, Britian's top spy in the United States, foiling Arnold's plan to hand over West Point to the enemy. 22 years later, Fort Arnold becomes the U.S. Military Academy - now the Army's oldest continually operating post.

1939: With war breaking out in Europe, President Franklin D. Roosevelt asks Congress to relax neutrality laws - permitting the United States to arm belligerent nations.

1942: In Seattle, Boeing's massive B-29 Superfortress bomber makes its first flight. The new "Superfort" featured radar-controlled guns and could fly further, faster, and deliver more bombs than its predecessor, the B-17 Flying

Fortress. The B-29 will see its first combat in 1944, and will bring an end to World War II when the *Enola Gay* and *Bock's Car* drop atomic weapons on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

1956: Grumman test pilot Tom Attridge, at the controls of an Fl1F-1 Tiger aircraft flying over Long Island, tests the plane's ability to fire its guns at supersonic speeds. After firing, he accidentally flies into the bullets he had fired earlier from a higher altitude, mortally wounding the Tiger's jet engine. Attridge ejects safely after shooting himself down.

k **1961:** The 5th Special Forces Group is activated at Fort Bragg (N.C.). The "Green Berets" of 5th SFG will see extensive combat during the Vietnam War, as well as service in Operation Desert Storm and Somalia. In October, 2001, they are among the first U.S. forces to deploy to Afghanistan following the 9/11 attacks, where they would famously conduct the first American attack on horseback since World War II.

1988: U.S. forces protecting tankers in the Persian Gulf spot the Iranian vessel *Iran Ajr* laying mines in international waters. Helicopters halt the vessel with rocket and machine gun fire, and a team of Navy SEALs boards the ship. In April, the USS *Samuel B. Roberts* (FFG-58) strikes - and is nearly sunk by - a mine laid by the *Iran Ajr*, prompting the U.S. to retaliate against the Iranian fleet.

Operation EARNEST WILL is the largest convoy operation since World War II and marks the first tactical operation of the newly formed Special Operations Command - utilizing the Army's 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment, SEALs, and special boat units all working together.

Sept. 22

 # 1776: When Gen. George Washington asks for volunteers to go behind enemy lines and report on British troop movements in New York City. Capt. Nathan Hale is the only man to step forward. A fire devastates the city shortly after

falling into British hands, and Hale is one of some 200 Americans swept up in the aftermath. Legend states that before Hale is hung, he tells his audience that "My only regret is that I have but one life to lose for my country."

1927: One year after Gene "The Fighting Marine" Tunney defeats Jack Dempsey and becomes heavyweight champion, the two square off again in one of boxing's most famous matches. In what will be Dempsey's last fight, the former champ manages to knocks down Tunney - a veteran of World War I - for the first time in Tunney's career, but loses the rematch in a unanimous decision. The Fighting Marine, victorious in all but one of his professional matches, will retire after successfully defending his title following the second fight with Dempsey.

1950: Gen. Omar Bradley is promoted to General of the Army. Bradley is the ninth - and last - American officer to wear five stars. While serving as the first Chairman of the newly formed Joint Chiefs of Staff, Bradley will be instrumental in removing fellow five-star general Douglas MacArthur following his public clashes with the Truman Administration.

That same day in Korea, the Communists are in full-scale retreat after being outflanked by the landing at Inchon and the breakout of the Pusan Perimeter.

1975: President - and former Lt. Cmdr. in the Naval Reserve - Gerald Ford survives his second assassination attempt in 17 days when former Marine Oliver Sipple disrupts the attack by hitting the would-be assassin's gun arm before she can kill the president.

1980: Iraq invades without warning, launching the nearly eight-year Iran-Iraq War. The United States, the Soviet Union, and many other nations throw their weight behind Iraq. Saddam Hussein will kill tens of thousands of Iranians with chemical weapons, and both Iranian and Iraqi will hit American ships during the conflict.

2006: The Navy retires the Grumman F-14 "Tomcat" after 32 years of service. The iconic swept-wing interceptors provided air cover during the American evacuation of Saigon, shot down four Libyan Air Force fighters during the

1980s, dropped precision-guided munitions in the Iraq and Afghanistan campaigns, and saw action in virtually every conflict during their operational history.

Sep. 23

1779: The famous battle of the North Sea opens between Continental Navy frigate Bonhomme Richard under the command of Capt. John Paul Jones, and Royal Navy frigate HMS Serapis. When the British Captain Richard Pearson asks Jones whether he has struck his colors, Jones reportedly replies: "I have not yet begun to fight!"

The Bonhomme Richard does sink: But not before the British captain surrenders (believed to be "the first time in naval history that colors are surrendered to a sinking ship"), and Jones transfers his flag to his newly captured prize, Serapis.

Sep. 24

1780: Maj. Gen. Benedict Arnold learns that British spy Maj. John Andre has been captured, along with the evidence that would expose Arnold's secret plot to turn West Point over to the British. He flees to the nearby sloop HMS *Vulture,* which carries him to New York. Washington offered to exchange Andre for Arnold, but Gen. Henry Clinton refused. Andre is hanged and Arnold is commissioned as a brigadier general.

1918: U.S. Navy Ensign (future rear admiral) David S. Ingalls — on loan to the Royal Air Force and flying an RAF Sopwith Camel — shoots down enemy aircraft number five, becoming the first ace in U.S. Naval Aviation history, and the Navy's only ace of World War I. Over the course of the war Ingalls is awarded the Distinguished Service Cross from the United States, a Distinguished Flying Cross from Britain, and made a member of the French Foreign Legion. When America enters World War II, he rejoins the Navy and will command the Naval Air Station at Pearl Harbor.

1929: Lt. James L. "Jimmy" Doolittle boards his Consolidated NY-2 Husky at Long Island's Mitchel Field and buttons himself in to a completely blacked out cockpit. He becomes the first pilot to take off, fly, and land "blind" having to relying solely on the aircraft's (newly developed) instruments.

1942: Navy and Marine Dauntless dive bombers take off from Guadalcanal's Henderson Field and attack the Japanese destroyers *Umikaze* and *Kawakaze*, which are attempting a "Tokyo Express" resupply mission. The convoy has to turn back, and *Umikaze* is so damaged that she has to be towed to Truk for repairs.

I That same day, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers crews constructing the Alaska Highway from the north connect with those working from the south. The strategic highway - stretching some 1,700 miles through remote and rugged Canadian and Alaskan terrain - will not be usable by vehicles until the following year.

1957: Soldiers of the 101st Airborne Division land in Little Rock, Ark. for Operation ARKANSAS: ending segregationist governor Orval Fabus' three-week standoff which kept black students from attending Little Rock's Central High School. President Dwight Eisenhower also federalizes the entire Arkansas National Guard, taking control of the soldiers from Gov. Fabus.

1960: *USS Enterprise* (CVN 65), America's first nuclear-powered aircraft carrier (the eighth so-named vessel since 1775) is launched. At 1,123 feet, the "Big E" was the longest naval vessel ever built and was retired from service in 2012. Steel from CVN-65 will be used to build the next *Enterprise*, CVN-80, which is currently scheduled for launch in 2027.

Sep. 25

1775: A small force of American and Canadian militia led by Ethan Allen attempts to capture the British-held city of Montreal. British Gen. Guy Carleton quickly gathers a force of British regulars and Canadian militia,

scattering Allen's troops and capturing the hero of Fort Ticonderoga and former commander of Vermont's famed "Green Mountain Boys." Allen will remain a prisoner in England until his exchange in 1778.

That same day, Col. Benedict Arnold sets out with 1,000 men on a poorly planned expedition to Quebec. The trip takes far longer than anticipated, forcing the men to eat their shoes and other leather equipment to survive, and they are soundly defeated by the British once the weakened force reaches their objective in December.

1918: Former Indianapolis 500 driver - now Captain and commander of the Army Air Corps' 94th "Hat in the Ring" Aero Squadron - Eddie Rickenbacker becomes a double ace, singlehandedly attacking a flight of seven German warplanes and downing two. For his actions on this day, he will receive one of his nine Distinguished Service Crosses - later upgraded to the Medal of Honor. Rickenbacker's 26 aerial victories by war's end marks the most by any U.S. fighter pilot during World War I.

1950: Following the successful landing at Inchon and capture of Kimpo Airfield, soldiers and Marines cross the Han River and enter Seoul. The following day, Gen. Douglas MacArthur declares that his forces have recaptured the South Korean capital.

1957: U.S. Army paratroopers — members of the 101st Airborne Division — escort nine black students into Little Rock (Ark.) Central High School, ending racial segregation. Despite the U.S. Supreme Court declaring that racially segregated schools are unconstitutional, Governor Orval Faubus, a Democrat, had deployed the Arkansas National Guard to prevent the students from attending.

1993: A week before the Battle of Mogadishu, an American Blackhawk helicopter is shot down by a rocket-propelled grenade while on a patrol mission over the Somali capital. American and Pakistani units brave heavy enemy fire to secure the site and recover the three soldiers killed in the crash.

Sep.26

1777: Gen. Sir William Howe outmaneuvers Gen. George Washington's Continental Army and takes the American capital of Philadelphia. Historically, wars usually end when the capital city falls into enemy hands, but the American Revolution will continue for another six years.

ty **1918:** Though technically launched just before midnight on Sept. 25 with an intense artillery barrage, the Meuse-Argonne Offensive — the six-week long "greatest battle of World War I in which the Americans participated" — officially begins just before dawn when whistles are blown along the American trench-lines, and with fixed-bayonets, American soldiers climb over the top and begin their assault against the German lines. On this day alone, the Army awards eight soldiers with the Medal of Honor.

The battle, which begins with approximately 600,000 American soldiers and Marines, will see U.S. ranks swell to more than one million men. 26,277 Americans will be killed, another 95,786 wounded. But the campaign will end the war.

Meanwhile off the coast of Great Britain, a German U-boat sinks the Coast Guard cutter *Tampa* on convoy escort duty. *Tampa* takes 119 Coast Guardsmen and Navy sailors and 11 Royal Navy passengers with her to the bottom of the Bristol Channel - the greatest combat-related loss of life at sea for the Americans during World War I.

And in the skies, American pilots will shoot down 74 German aircraft and 15 balloons over the next six days.

1941: The Army officially establishes a permanent Military Police Corps. Although the Army never set aside a dedicated force until this date, the U.S. military had used soldiers for handling enemy prisoners of war, maintaining law and order, and route security for most of America's wars.

1945: U.S. Army Lt. Col. A. Peter Dewey, the chief of the Saigon Office of Special Services, is mistaken for a Frenchman and shot in the head by Viet Minh forces, making Dewey the first American killed by communists in Vietnam.

1983: Shortly after midnight, Moscow's early warning network reports the launch of an American intercontinental ballistic missile. Despite a period of high tensions between the U.S. and Soviet Union, Lt. Col. Stanislav Petrov realizes that it must be a glitch in the computer system since an American first strike would surely involve hundreds of missiles and does not initiate a retaliatory strike, as required by Soviet doctrine. Later, another the system reports the launch of another four missiles. This marks the closest the United States and Soviet Union come to accidental nuclear war.

Sept. 27

1860: During an insurrection on Panama, a landing party of Marines from the sloop-of-war USS *St. Mary's* land and take control of a railway station.

1918: Although his face has been shredded by an enemy grenade, 1st Lt. Deming Bronson charges across open ground with the men of Company H, 364th Infantry, capturing an enemy dugout. Later that afternoon (Sept. 26), Bronson takes an enemy bullet to the arm. Patched up by the medic and ordered to the rear, he returns to his men instead. He powers through shock and the intense pain of his wounds, and the following day, Bronson assists in the capture of Eclisfontaine, France. He then assists in knocking out an enemy machinegun position, killing the gunner himself When a heavy enemy artillery barrage forces the Americans to fall back, Bronson is hit again, wounded in both arms by an enemy high-explosive shell. A fellow officer pulls a profusely bleeding and faint Bronson to safety, and he remains with his fellow soldiers through the night, once again refusing to abandon the battle.

For his tremendously inspiring courage and sacrifice, Lt. Bronson is awarded the Medal of Honor. Three other soldiers earned the Medal of Honor on this ---- day: 1st Lt. William B. Turner of the 105th Infantry (posthumous), 27th

Division; Sgt. Reider Waaler of Company A, 105th Machine-Gun Battalion, 27th Division; and 2nd Lt. Albert E. Baesel of the 148th Infantry, 37th Division (posthumous).

1941: At Baltimore Harbor, President Franklin D. Roosevelt launches SS *Patrick Henry* - the first of what will be 2,710 "Liberty Ships." 13 more of the cost-effective and mass-produced cargo ships are launched this day, and the ships will carry millions of tons of supplies across the Atlantic during World War II.

1942: The Liberty Ship SS *Stephen Hopkins* becomes the only U.S. merchant ship to sink a vessel when she refuses to surrender to the German raider *Stieg. Hopkins* will slip under the waves, but not before her crews mortally wound *Stier* with their 4-in. gun. 15 of the ship's 58-man crew will survive 31 days at sea on an open lifeboat before reaching the shores of Brazil.

Stephen Hopkins' skipper, Capt. Paul Buck and the seaman that fired the shots that killed *Stier*, Merchant Marine Academy Cadet Edwin Joseph O'Hara, are both posthumously awarded the Merchant Marine Distinguished Service Medal - the Merchant Marine's equivalent to the Medal of Honor.

\/J Meanwhile, in the Pacific Theater, when three companies of Marines are surrounded by Japanese forces along Guadalcanal's Matanikau River, battalion commander Lt. Col. Lewis B. "Chesty" Puller assembles a rescue force to prevent the annihilation of his men. The destroyer USS *Ballard* (DD-627) bombards Japanese positions for 30 minutes while Coast Guard landing craft withdraw the Marines under heavy fire.

Signalman First Class Douglas A. Munro, leader of the Higgins boats, is killed while covering the evacuation - becoming the only Coast Guardsman awarded the Medal of Honor.

1944: As 39 B-24 "Liberator" bomber crews of the 445 Bomb Group attack Kessel, Germany, over 100 *Luftwaffe* fighters take to the skies to square off against the American attackers. In what becomes perhaps the worst disaster for the Army Air Forces during World War II, 25 Liberators are shot down in

Germany. Two of the crippled warplanes crash-land in France, one in Belgium, and another in England. Two bombers are forced to make emergency landings at alternate airstrips, and only four crews manage to return to Royal Air Force Station Tibenham.

1956: Over California's Mojave Desert, Capt. Miburn G "Mel" Apt (USAF) cuts loose from the B-50 "Superfortress" and his Bell X-2 rocket plane streaks past the chase planes. Apt becomes the first pilot to fly past Mach 3 (2,098 mph), but sadly Apt's tenure as the "Fastest Man Alive" is short lived. Just after setting the record, his plane loses control and breaks up, killing the test pilot.

6 **1991:** With the collapse of the Soviet Union bringing an end to the Cold War, President George H.W. Bush directs Strategic Air Command's bombers to stand down from nuclear alert for the first time since October, 1957. He also asks the Soviet Union to join the United States in eliminating tactical nuclear weapons and multiple-warhead intercontinental ballistic missiles.

Sept. 28

1781: Gen. George Washington leads a combined army of 8,000 Continentals, 7,800 French soldiers, and 3,100 Colonial militia out of Williamsburg (Va.) to the newly constructed trenches surrounding Lt. Gen. Lord Cornwallis' trapped British forces at Yorktown, beginning the siege that will effectively bring an end to the American Revolution.

1787: After putting the finishing touches on the Constitution of the United States, the Continental Congress sends copies out to the states for ratification.

1918: After two brutal days of fighting in the Argonne Forest, Maj. Oscar F. Miller of the 361st Infantry Regiment rushes to the front of his battalion and personally leads the formation across open ground against prepared enemy positions. Miller encourages his men as they face down withering machinegun fire and direct artillery. Miller is shot through the leg, but he continues

forward. Then he is shot through the arm. Still, he pushes his men forward. He is shot a third time, in the abdomen, and cheers his men forward and orders them to leave him behind.

Maj. Miller will die of his wounds and is one of three soldiers to earn the Medal of Honor on this day alone. The other two are 1st Lt. Dwite H. Schaffner of the 306th Infantry and Cpl. Freddie Stowers of the 371st Infantry.

***9 1924:** Two Douglas DT-2 biplanes land at Sand Point, Wash., completing the U.S. Army Air Service's 175-day, 27,553-mile journey, marking the first ever aerial circumnavigation of the globe.

1941: A day after the Imperial Japanese Navy changes their communication codes, officer-in-charge of Pearl Harbor's cryptology section Capt. Joseph J. Rochefort warns commanders that he believes the switch could indicate a major operation.

---- **1945:** Gen. Dwight Eisenhower relieves Gen. George Patton of his post as military governor in Bavaria following controversial statements about the de-nazification process. Next month, Eisenhower transfers Patton from his beloved Third Army to lead the Fifteenth Army, a relatively small staff responsible for compiling a history of the European War.

1964: The *Lafayette-class* ballistic missile submarine USS *Daniel Webster* departs Charleston (S.C.) Harbor, becoming the first ship to deploy with the new Polaris A3 missiles. The A3 carries three 200-kiloton warheads with a maximum range of 2,500 nautical miles. When the USS *Daniel Boone* joins the Pacific Fleet in December, American nuclear missiles can now target anywhere on the entire Eurasian landmass.

2001: President George W. Bush declares that American combat forces are in "hot pursuit" of those responsible for the 9/11 attacks, while the Pentagon adds that American and British special operations forces have deployed to Afghanistan.

--4/9 2012: Contrary to the Obama Administration's narrative that the deadly attack on the U.S. Consulate in Benghazi was a spontaneous protest over a YouTube video, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence announces that it was in fact a "deliberate and organized terrorist attack."

Sept. 29

1909: Construction begins on the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C. when President (and former commander of the "Rough Riders") Theodore Roosevelt lays the cornerstone. 81 years later - to the day - work on the church is completed when the "final finial" is placed with Pres. (and former World War II torpedo bomber pilot) George H.W. Bush in attendance.

1918: During the opening days of the Meuse-Argonne Offensive, a battalion of African-American soldiers serving under French command secures Sechault, France, but is quickly surrounded when the French units on their flanks retreat. German troops surround the "Hell Fighters from Harlem", as the Americans hold their ground through the night despite numerous assaults and artillery barrage that devastates the town.

Once relief arrives, the former members of the 15th New York Infantry have nearly exhausted their supplies, and have suffered 982 casualties. One officer receives the Medal of Honor, two soldiers will earn the Legion of Honor (France's highest award for valor), and another 100 are decorated for valor.

That same day, 2nd Lt. Frank Luke, Jr. takes to the skies on a voluntary patrol, shooting down four German observation balloons despite hot pursuit by eight enemy fighters. Luke exposes himself to additional ground fire when he strafes German troop positions, crippling his SPAD XIII warplane. The fate of America's second-leading ace of the war remained a mystery until after the armistice, when America learns that Luke pulled out his pistol after crash-landing and the wounded pilot fought off approaching German infantry until he was finally killed.

--- Luke, whom America's top ace Eddie Rickenbacker described as "the most daring aviator and greatest fighter pilot of the entire war," shot down an incredible 14 enemy aircraft in ten days - a feat surpassing all aviators during the war. Luke is posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor, and Arizona's Luke Air Force Base is named in his honor.

9 **1941:** Outside of Kiev, Ukraine, German SS troops massacre 33,371 Jews in just two days at the Bibi Yar ravine. The captives are driven from town, stripped, and forced to lay down on the pile of corpses when they are systematically shot in the back of the neck by a submachine gun.

1942: Three new U.S. fighter squadrons are formed, consisting of American pilots that had crossed into Canada to join the war in Europe. The aviators had previously flown for the Royal Air Force, under English squadron commanders, until rejoining the Army Air Forces.

1946: A Lockheed P2V "Neptune" patrol aircraft takes off from Perth, Australia for a non-stop, unrefueled flight to the United States. The *Truculent Turtle* manages to cover 11,235 miles, in 55 hours and 17 minutes - setting a record that will stand until 1962.

1990: The YF-22, predecessor for the F-22 "Raptor" makes its first flight. Although slower and less stealthy than Northrop's YF-23, the jointly produced Lockheed/Boeing/General Dynamics YF-22 is far more agile, and will soon win the Air Force's Advanced Tactical Fighter competition.

October

Oct. 1

1947: Former World War II ace George Welch climbs into the cockpit of his North American Aviation XF-86 for the maiden flight of the Sabre. When the Korean War breaks out, F-86 pilots will dominate the skies, with its pilots boasting a 10:1 kill ratio over the once-feared MiG-15s. Of the war's 40 American aces, all but one are Sabre pilots.

1951: The Air Force activates the 1st Pilotless Bomber Squadron at the Missile Test Center, which is now part of Cape Canaveral Air Force Station (Fla.). The squadron was armed with primitive cruise missiles (surface-to-surface) such as the Republic-Ford JB-2 - a copy of Nazi Germany's V-1 buzzbomb - and the B-61 Matador missile, an improved design which could be armed with a 40-kiloton nuclear warhead.

In less than three years, the unit is deployed to West Germany's Bitburg Air Base where it becomes the 1st Tactical Missile squadron - America's first operational missile unit.

1955: America's first "supercarrier," the USS *Forrestal* (CVA-59), is commissioned. *Forrestal,* with its angled flight deck and steam catapults, is the first flattop designed to operate jet aircraft.

Oct. 2

1942: Col. Laurence C. Craigie becomes the U.S. military's first official jet pilot when he takes off from Muroc Dry Lake (present-day Edwards Air Force Base) in the Bell XP-59. The day before, a Bell test pilot accidentally lifted off during a high-speed taxi test. Craigie will go on to command a fighter wing in North Africa, then becomes Vice Commander of the Far East Air Forces during the Korean War.

Oct. 3

1794: President George Washington calls on the governors of Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Virginia to mobilize troops to put down the Whiskey Rebellion. Washington himself will lead the army - the only time a sitting president commands troops in the field. Henry "Light Horse" Lee, veteran of the American Revolution and father of Confederate general Robert E. Lee will also lead troops, and also participating in the campaign is Pvt. Meriwether Lewis, of the Lewis and Clark Expedition.

4- **1912:** Four Marine battalions - including one led by Maj. Smedley Butler - converge and assault the fortress atop the 500-ft. Coyotepe Hill. Nicaraguan rebel commander Gen. Benjamin ZeledOn is killed during the battle, and the rebellion effectively ends once the Marines capture the city of LeOn in two days.

Butler, a veteran of the Boxer Rebellion, Banana Wars, Mexican Revolution, and World War I, is the only Marine in history to be awarded two Medal of Honors and the Marine Corps Brevet Medal.

1950: Major League Baseball rules that Philadelphia Phillies' 17-game winner Curt Simmons, whose National Guard unit had just been activated during the Korean War, would not be eligible to pitch in the World Series, despite the fact that he was on furlough. The Phillies were swept by a New York Yankee team managed by World War I veteran Casey Stengel (USN), and featuring Joe DiMaggio (USA), Whitey Ford (soon-to-be USA), Hank Bauer (USMC), Jerry Coleman (USMC), and Yogi Berra (USN).

---- **1962:** Cmdr. Walter M. "Wally" Schirra, Jr. (USN) becomes the fifth American in space when he orbits the earth six times in his *Sigma 7* capsule. After a nine-hour flight, he splashes down just half a mile from the recovery ship USS *Kearsarge* (CVS-33), joking that his target was the carrier's "number three elevator."

e **1993:** Special operations forces board several Army Black Hawk helicopters and set out to capture the Somali warlord Mohamed Farrah Aidid. The snatch-and-grab operation was supposed to take only one hour, but when a rocket-propelled-grenade takes out one of the helicopters, Operation GOTHIC SERPENT begins to spin out of control. As the vehicle convoy, originally intended to haul the captured leaders of the Habr Gidr clan, races through barricaded streets to establish a security perimeter around the first Black Hawk, another Black Hawk is shot down.

With resources stretched to the maximum and the vehicle convoy unable to ,reach the crash sites, Delta Force snipers Master Sgt. Gary I. Gordon and Sgt. 1st Class Randall D. Shughart volunteer to land and provide cover fire for the

second downed helicopter. Both are overrun and killed while protecting the four wounded crew members in the face of overwhelming numbers, and will be awarded the Medal of Honor posthumously.

Maj. Gen. William F. Garrison assembles a quick reaction force of 100 UN and 10th Mountain Division vehicles as the task force battles through the night. 19 American service members will be killed and 73 wounded during the intense urban combat of the Battle of Mogadishu. Chief Warrant Officer Michael J. Durant, one of the downed Black Hawk pilots, is captured and held as a prisoner for 11 days.

2010: 92 years after the end of World War I, Germany makes its last reparation payment demanded by the Treaty of Versailles.

Oct. 4

* 1777: A week after losing Philadelphia to the British, Gen. George Washington decides to surprise Gen. Sir William Howe's force encamped at Germantown (Pa.). 11,000 Continental troops and militia have marched 16 miles through the night, and begin their assault at 5:30 a.m.. Although initially successful, heavy fog, insufficiently trained troops, and stiff British resistance unravel Washington's coordinated assault and the attack falls apart. Washington's army suffers over 1,000 casualties and will have to spend the winter at Valley Forge.

1821: Lt. Robert F. Stockton, veteran of the War of 1812 who also fought the Barbary pirates, sets sail from Boston to interdict the African slave trade. Stockton will help establish the country of Liberia, where thousands of former American slaves and free blacks are resettled. He will capture several slave ships on this cruise, of which he writes, "I have great satisfaction in the reflection that I have procrastinated the slavery of some 800 Africans, and have broken off this horrible traffic to the northward of Cape Palmas for at least this season.

1822: Rutherford B. Hayes, the 19th President of the United States, is born in Delaware, Oh.. Despite having no military background, Hayes will be appointed Major in the 23rd Regiment of Ohio Volunteer Infantry. The talented officer will be wounded five times during the Civil War, ultimately reaching the rank of Brevet Major General. Also serving in the 23rd Regiment is Pvt. - and future Pres. - William McKinley.

1906: A Marine expeditionary force, under command of Lt. Col. Franklin J. Moses, sets sail for Cuba to restore law and order. The Marines are supplemented by a squadron of cavalry troopers of the llth Cavalry Regiment (today's llth Armored Cavalry "Blackhorse" Regiment).

1918: An explosion at the T. A. Gillespie Co. Shell Loading Plant in Sayreville, N.J. ignites a fire, leading to several more explosions that will last for three days. 300 buildings are destroyed, 100 people are killed, and hundreds are wounded. The plant is said to have on hand enough ammunition to supply the Western Front for six months. 12 Coast Guardsmen will be awarded the Navy Cross for their actions during the incident, and two will perish.

That same day, in Montrebeau Woods, France, a tank driven by Cpl. Harold W. Roberts of the Tank Corps' 344th Battalion slides into a shell hole while positioning his tank to provide cover for a disabled tank. The 10-foot shell hole is filled with water and only one of the tank's two occupants will be able to exit before the vehicle is flooded. Roberts tells his companion, "Well, only one of us can get out, and out you go." For saving his fellow soldier's life at the cost of his own, Cpl. Roberts is posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

1943: *USS Ranger* conducts the only American carrier operation in the northern Atlantic, when its Dauntless and Avenger crews attack a German convoy near Bod, Norway, sinking or damaging ten enemy vessels.

1944: After a heavy mortar barrage on Mt. Battaglia, Italy, Staff Sgt. Manuel Mendoza spots 200 enemy soldiers charging up the slope towards his 2osition. He grabs his Thompson submachine gun and empties his five

magazines into the charging force. He then switches to a carbine, exhausting that weapon's ammunition as well. He draws his pistol and shoots a soldier armed with a flame-thrower, just before the German can reach Mendoza's position. He then switches to a machinegun, pouring withering fire into the enemy and scattering them. When his gun jams, he switches to grenades and causes the enemy to begin fleeing. He charges after them, grabbing discarded weapons and capturing an enemy soldier. For single-handedly defeating a German counterattack, Staff Sgt. Mendoza is awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, which is upgraded to the Medal of Honor in 2014.

1985: The terrorist group Hezbollah announces that they have executed former CIA Beirut station chief William F. Buckley. Buckley, a former Special Forces Lt. Col. and veteran of both the Korean and Vietnam Wars, had been held captive for over 14 months.

Oct. 5

1813: British troops and Native American warriors led by Maj. Gen. Henry Proctor and Shawnee Chief Tecumseh are defeated by American Maj. Gen. Henry Harrison's men in the Battle of the Thames (Ontario, Canada). The outnumbered British troops are routed and Tecumseh's tribal confederation collapses when he and his war chief Roundhead are killed. Soon, control of contested tribal-held lands, in what was then-called Northwest Territory (Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, and the eastern part of Minnesota), would be ceded to the U.S. government.

1918: Sgt. Michael B. Ellis of the 28th Infantry Regiment single-handedly attacks a German machine gun nest near Exermount, France, killing two enemy soldiers and capturing 17. He then moves on to capture 27 more enemy troops and six machine guns. Two captured officers cough up the locations of four additional machine gun positions, and the "Sgt. York of St. Louis" takes them as well. In addition to numerous valor medals from foreign countries, Ellis is awarded the Medal of Honor.

1950: Just a few short weeks after the U.S. military had its back to the sea in the Pusan Perimeter, the tables have completely turned. Lt. Gen. Walton H. Walker's Eighth U.S. Army issues orders to cross the 38th Parallel into North Korea. The communist capital of Pyongyang will soon be in allied hands, but China has threatened to join the war if the United States invades North Korea.

1969: Lt. Eduardo Jimenez of the Cuban Air Force manages to fly his Mig-17 fighter undetected through the U.S. military's air defense network, landing at Homestead Air Force Base (near Miami, Fla.). Fortunately, Lt. Jimenez was defecting - especially since he was able to park his jet right next to Air Force One.

2013: Special operations forces conduct two simultaneous counterterrorism missions in Africa. In Baraawe, Somalia, SEAL Team Six/DEVGRU commandos swim ashore, hoping to snatch the Al Shabaab terrorist suspected in the deadly attack on a Nairobi, Kenya shopping mall the previous month, but are forced to abort the mission after an intense 20-minute firefight. Meanwhile in Libya, Special Forces Operational Detachment-Delta soldiers grab a high-value Al Qaeda target involved in the 1998 U.S. Embassy bombings.

Oct. 6

1777: Near what will soon become the United States Military Academy (West Point, N.Y.), British troops simultaneously attack - and defeat - Continental forces at Forts Clinton and Montgomery, and also destroy the chain that had been placed across the Hudson River to prevent British ships from sailing upriver. The engagement is sometimes called the Battle of the Clintons since the British troops are led by Gen. Sir Henry Clinton, and the garrisons are led by Gens. (and brothers) James Clinton and George Clinton - who is also the governor or New York.

1918: 500 men of the 77th "Metropolitan" Division under the command of Maj. Charles W. Whittlesey have been surrounded by German forces after the -- vrench and American units advancing on their flanks have been held up. With no communication other than carrier pigeons and no other means to send

supplies, 1st Lt. Harold E. "Dad" Goettler and 2nd Lt. Erwin R. Bleckley volunteer to fly through withering enemy fire to drop much-needed supplies to the "Lost Battalion" in a DH-4 "Liberty Plane." On their second trip, both airmen are killed, and will be posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor - America's highest award for combat valor.

Also killed while attempting to locate the force is Capt. Eddie Grant, the former leadoff hitter and third baseman for the Philadelphia Phillies. Grant was one of the first baseball players to join the Armed Forces during World War I. All but 194 members of the Lost Battalion are killed, wounded, or captured, and five 77th Division soldiers - including Whittlesey - will earn the Medal of Honor during the six-day engagement.

1942: Five battalions of Marines, supported a group of scout snipers, cross Guadalcanal's heavily defended Matanikau River and engage the Japanese. Col. Lewis B. "Chesty" Puller's battalion traps a Japanese battalion in a ravine, creating what he called a "machine for extermination," when heavy artillery, mortar fire, and small arms annihilates the enemy. The operation plays a major role in the American victory on Guadalcanal, when Japanese planners opt for an exhausting overland march for their major offensive against Lunga Point later in the month, instead of crossing the Matanikau.

1993: Three days after leading an assault at the Bakaara Market in the bloody Battle of Mogadishu, Delta Force's Sgt. 1st Class Matt Rierson is killed by enemy mortar fire at the Mogadishu airport. 12 other soldiers are wounded in the attack. Another two soldiers are wounded during a mission to reach one of the downed Black Hawks.

Oct. 7

' **1777:** Continental forces under the command of Gen. Horatio Gates decisively defeat British forces under Gen. John "Gentleman Johnny" Burgoyne in the Second Battle of Saratoga (also known as the Battle of Bemis Heights).

According to the National Parks Service, "This crucial American victory renewed patriots' hopes for independence, secured essential foreign recognition and support, and forever changed the face of the world."

But the war is far from over.

1780: Three years to the day after Second Saratoga, patriot militia forces armed with rifles, knives, and tomahawks decisively defeat musket-armed Loyalist militia under the command of British Army Maj. Patrick Ferguson (who will be killed in the fighting) in the bloody Battle of King's Mountain on the N.C.-S.C. border.

Among the patriots is John Crockett, father of Davy Crockett.

1918: Nearly two weeks into the Meuse-Argonne Offensive of World War I, the U.S. Army's 82nd Division (destined to become the famed 82nd Airborne Division) battles its way toward -- and successfully relieves -- the now famous "Lost Battalion" (combined elements of three battalions of the 77th Infantry Division, which had been surrounded during a German counterattack).

For days without blankets and overcoats, always running short of ammunition and medical supplies (the wounded often patched up with bloody bandages removed from the dead), and with little food and nearly no water; the "Lost Battalion" -- under the command of Maj. (future lieutenant colonel) Charles S. Whittlesey -- had refused to surrender. Responding to a German surrender-demand, Whittlesey allegedly replied, "Go to hell!" Some reports suggest he said, "Come and get us."

Whittlesey and two of his officers -- Captains George McMurtry and Nelson Holderman -- will receive the Medal of Honor.

1941: Although the United States has not yet entered the war, a German U-boat torpedoes USS *Kearny* (DD-432), killing 11 sailors - the first Naval casualties of World War II.

2001: Post 9/11 America goes on the offensive against terrorists when U.S. and allied forces launch a massive retaliatory air and naval strike against the Taliban and Osama bin Laden's Al Qaeda network in Afghanistan.

Oct. 8

1918: The day following the relief of the "Lost Battalion," Private First Class (future U.S. Army sergeant and future colonel in the Tennessee State Guard) Alvin C. York captures "the whole damned German Army."

In the action for which he will receive both the Medal of Honor and the French Croix de Guerre, York leads a seven-man team of doughboys against a strong enemy position. The team kills at least 25 Germans and captures four officers, 128 soldiers, and over 30 machineguns.

French Marshall Ferdinand Foch will tell York, "What you did was the greatest thing accomplished by any private soldier of all the armies of „Europe."

Oct. 9

1861: 1,000 Confederate soldiers land on Florida's Santa Rosa Island and assault Union-held Fort Pickens. The attackers withdraw after the federal guns inflict 90 casualties. Fort Pickens sits across the bay from Naval Air Station Pensacola - the birthplace of Naval aviation - and coastal defense guns were installed at the old fort during World War II.

1940: After USS *Nautilus* (SS-168) conducts a successful test, Secretary of the Navy William F. Knox approves a plan for 24 submarines to each carry 20,000 gallons of aviation gasoline for refueling seaplanes at sea.

1950: As the U.S. military crosses into North Korea, Pfc. Robert H. Young and his fellow troopers of the 1st Cavalry Division are spearheading an assault. Young is wounded once by an enemy barrage, but he refuses medical -¯-¯creatment and remains on the line. He is wounded a second time, and is awaiting treatment when the enemy threatens to surround the Americans.

Young rejoins the action and, from an exposed position, kills five enemy soldiers. He is hit a third time, but remains on the field - directing friendly tanks to destroy enemy gun positions. Young is hit by an enemy mortar blast while he is treating his fellow wounded soldiers, but despite his multiple grievous wounds, he instructs the medics to help the others first.

Pfc. Young will perish from his wounds on November 9, 1950, and is posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

1951: When a dug-in enemy position hammers his fellow soldiers during the battle for Heartbreak Ridge, Sgt. 1st Class Tony K. Burris charges and destroys the position with grenades - killing 15. The next day (Oct. 9), Burris is wounded by enemy machinegun fire while assaulting enemy positions on the next ridge. He continues his assault and is wounded a second time. He reaches the top of the ridge, then remains in an exposed position to draws enemy fire and pinpoint their location for a recoilless rifle team. When that position is destroyed, Burris continues on to the next ridge, killing the heavy machinegun crew's six members. He charges one more position, and is fatally cut down as he hurls his last grenade into the position, which destroys the enemy emplacement.

Burris is posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

1967: Che Guevara, co-founder of Fidel Castro's Communist regime, is executed by firing squad while leading a revolution in Bolivia. While the cold-blooded murderer and terrorist remains an icon to many Americans, many of his fans wouldn't exist had the Soviets left their ballistic missiles on Cuba: "If the nuclear missiles had remained," Che said, "we would have used them against the very heart of America, including New York City [...] We will march the path of victory even if it costs millions of atomic victims [...] We must keep our hatred alive and fan it to paroxysm."

Oct. 10

1845: Secretary of the Navy George Bancroft founds the Naval School in Annapolis, Md. - later renamed the U.S. Naval Academy. The nation's second-oldest service academy (the U.S. Military Academy was established by Thomas Jefferson in 1802) is built on the grounds of Fort Severn, which traces its roots to the American Revolution.

1944: Although assigned as a gunnery instructor and advised not to actively seek out combat, Maj. Richard I. Bong, America's all-time leading ace, volunteers for several missions between Oct. 10 and Nov. 11, shooting down eight Japanese warplanes from his P-38 Lightning fighter. For his actions during this period, Bong is awarded the Medal of Honor. After scoring his 40th victory, Bong is sent back to the states where he becomes a test pilot. He will perish just before the Japanese surrender, when his Lockheed P-80 Shooting Star jet fighter malfunctions and crashes in California.

1950: As the 1st Cavalry Division crosses the 38th Parallel near Kaesong, helicopter crews with the 3rd Air Rescue Squadron apply plasma to a rescued pilot for the first time as they return to base. During the Korean War, members of the Air Force's 3rd Air Rescue Group will rescue thousands of downed aviators.

1985: After Palestine Liberation Front (PLF) terrorists - part of KGB-trained terrorist Yasser Arafat's Palestinian Liberation Organization - take over the Italian-flagged cruise liner MS *Achille Lauro,* U.S. Navy F-14 Tomcats intercept their Boeing 737 getaway jet carrying the terrorists to Tunisia, forcing the jet to land at a NATO airbase on Sigonella, Sicily. Once on the ground, the terrorists are brought to custody following a five-hour jurisdictional standoff between an 80-man group of Delta Force and SEAL Team SIX commandos and hundreds of Italian military police.

The terrorists killed one of their hostages and threw his body overboard: wheelchair-bound American citizen Leon Klinghoffer, who flew as a navigator aboard B-24 Liberator bombers in the European Theater of World War II. After leaving Sigonella, PLF founder and the attack's ringleader Abu

Abbas flies to Italy and ultimately makes it to Iraq, where Saddam Hussein protects him from extradition to Italy. He is captured in 2003 by American forces and dies of natural causes in U.S. custody.

1994: In response to two Iraqi divisions massing on the Kuwaiti border, the Air Force deploys warplanes and begins ferrying thousands of soldiers and Marines to the Persian Gulf. Operation VIGILANT WARRIOR winds down by the end of the month when Saddam Hussein withdraws his forces.

Oct. 11

1910: Wright Brothers pilot Archibald Hoxsey crosses paths with President Theodore Roosevelt while at St. Louis during a cross-country flying exhibition and invites him for a ride. Roosevelt initially refuses, but his adventuresome spirit gets the best of him and he changes his mind. Roosevelt straps in and becomes the first president to fly.

1939: A letter written by Hungarian-born physicist Leo Szilard, and signed by Albert Einstein, reaches President Franklin D. Roosevelt, warning that the Germans could develop an atomic weapon and that the United States should begin their own nuclear research. Roosevelt quickly authorizes a committee on uranium, setting in motion what will eventually become the Manhattan Project.

1942: U.S. Naval forces under the command of Rear Admiral Norman Scott intercept a Japanese fleet, commanded by Rear Adm. Aritomo Goto, attempting to reinforce troops on Guadalcanal in the Battle of Cape Esperance. Fighting begins shortly before midnight off the northwest coast of the island when the Japanese are caught by surprise. The heavy cruiser *Furutaka* and destroyer *Fubuki* are sunk during the gun battle, and Adm. Goto is mortally wounded. Planes from Henderson Field strike the retreating Japanese fleet the next morning and sink two additional Japanese destroyers the following day. Japanese sailors who jumped overboard refuse to be rescued by American ships, instead consigning themselves to a horrifying ----leath in the shark-infested waters.

1945: Marines of the III Amphibious Corps land in China to assist in repatriating hundreds of thousands of Japanese and Koreans and to protect American lives and property. By the time the Marines depart China the following year, 35 have been killed and 43 wounded in clashes with Mao Zedong's Communist forces.

1961: President John F. Kennedy authorizes deployment of the Air Force's 4400th Combat Crew Training Squadron to South Vietnam to support the counterinsurgency effort against the Viet Cong. The airmen are equipped with World War II-era warplanes and conduct strikes against the communist supply lines and fly close air support missions in support of U.S. Special Forces and the South Vietnamese military.

1968: Astronauts Walter M. Schirra (Capt., USN), Donn F. Eisele (Col., USAF), and Walter Cunningham (Col. USMCR) blast off aboard Apollo 7. The crew, commanded by Schirra, would orbit the Earth for 11 days and transmit the first live television broadcasts from orbit.

1971: Marine legend Lt. Gen. Lewis B. "Chesty" Puller, the highest decorated Marine in history, passes away. Among his numerous decorations, Puller earned the nation's second-highest award for valor six times (five Navy Crosses and a Distinguished Service Cross) - second only to Capt. Eddie Rickenbacker, America's top flying ace of World War I. The 37-year veteran served in the Nicaraguan and Haitian campaigns, as well as World War II and the Korean War.

Oct. 12

1862: Confederate cavalry commander Gen. James Ewell Brown "J.E.B." Stuart completes his "second ride" around Union Gen. George B. McClellan's Army of the Potomac.

1870: Five years after surrendering his Army of Northern Virginia to Gen. Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox, Gen. Robert E. Lee passes away after suffering a stroke. The revered general served his country 44 years, fighting alongside Grant in the Mexican-American War, and against him in the Civil War.

1944: U.S. Army Air Force 1st Lt. Charles E. "Chuck" Yeager and his 357th Fighter Group surprise a flight of 22 Messerschmitt Bf-109 fighters near Hanover, Germany. Yeager's P-51D "Mustang", named *Glamorous Glenn II*, Yeager will score five of the group's eight victories - two without firing a shot - becoming an "ace in a day." Yeager finishes World War II with 11.5 kills, and will go on to fly 127 missions during the Vietnam War. The former Army private will retire a Brigadier General in 1975, but continues flying for the Air Force and NASA.

That same day, aircraft from seven U.S. aircraft carriers of Carrier Task Force 38 attack targets on Japanese-held Formosa (modern-day Taiwan).

1945: President (and former artillery officer during World War I) Harry S. Truman awards the Medal of Honor to Cpl. Desmond Doss for saving the lives of 75 wounded soldiers on Okinawa's Hacksaw Ridge. Since Doss was a conscientious objector, the Army made him a combat medic. Prior to his service on Okinawa, where Doss was wounded four times, he also saw action on Guam and the Philippines, where he earned two Bronze Stars with "V" for valor device.

1954: World War II ace, now chief test pilot for North American Aviation, George S. Welch dies when his F-100 "Super Sabre" disintegrates during testing. An Army Air Force pilot with 16 victories during World War II, Welch was one of two pilots able to get airborne and engage Japanese aircraft during the attack on Pearl Harbor. He was recommended for the Medal of Honor for his actions on December 7th, but having taken off without orders, he only receives the Distinguished Flying Cross. While serving as an instructor and test pilot for North American during the Korean War, he — reportedly shot down several MiG-15 aircraft, but again did so against orders, so he did not receive credit for the kills.

2000: While the destroyer USS *Cole* stops to refuel in Yemen, two suicide bombers ram an explosive-laden fiberglass boat into the warship, blowing a massive hole in the side of *Cole,* claiming the lives of 17 U.S. sailors and injures another 39.

Oct. 13

1775: "...[M]eeting in Philadelphia, the Continental Congress voted to fit out two sailing vessels, armed with ten carriage guns, as well as swivel guns, and manned by crews of eighty, and to send them out on a cruise of three months to intercept transports carrying munitions and stores to the British army in America." (from Naval History and Heritage Command)

The U.S. Navy is born.

Oct. 14

1777: After having been decisively defeated by Continental Army Gen. Horatio Gates at Second Saratoga, British Gen. John "Gentleman Johnny" Burgoyne surrenders his entire army, between 5,000 and 7,000 men.

1943: In what will become known as "Black Thursday," U.S. Army Air Force B-17 Flying Fortresses — elements of the famed 8th Air Force — attack the ball-bearing plants (critical to Germany's aviation industry) at the heavily defended Bavarian city of Schweinfurt. Though the raid is successful, scores of bombers — and more than 600 airmen — are lost.

1947: 45,000 feet over California's Mojave Desert, USAF test pilot Charles "Chuck" Yeager becomes the first human to break the sound barrier, piloting his Bell X-1 to Mach 1.07 - two days after breaking his ribs.

Oct. 15

1917: When a German submarine launches a torpedo at USS *Cassin* (DD-43) during an escort patrol, Gunner's Mate First Class Osmond Kelly Ingram realizes the torpedo will impact the destroyer's store of depth charges. Instead of remaining in a position of safety, he charges across the deck to the depth charges to jettison the stockpiled explosives that could sink his ship. Ingram is killed while trying to save *Cassin,* becoming the first U.S. sailor killed during World War I and is posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

1918: Near Landres-et-St. Georges, France, Lt. Col. William "Wild Bill" Donovan earns the Medal of Honor while leading his soldiers during an assault on strong German positions. Wounded in the leg by a burst of machinegun fire, Donovan refuses evacuation and remains in command until his unit is withdrawn. Donovan is named Coordinator of Information by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1941 and he will form the Office of Strategic Services the following year — the predecessor to today's Central Intelligence Agency.

1952: President Harry S. Truman authorizes a B-47 Stratojet reconnaissance overflight of the Soviet Union's Chukostky Peninsula (just across the Bering Strait from Alaska). The photos reveal Soviet staging areas for bombers that can now target much of the Continental United States.

Meanwhile, the U.S. Navy conducts a massive amphibious mock landing at Kojo, North Korea, featuring 100 ships and support from carrier aircraft. The Navy hopes to draw the Communist fighters out into the open, allowing Task Force 77 aviators to wipe out the exposed right flank, but but the enemy doesn't bite.

Oct. 16

1821: The schooner USS *Enterprise* (the third of 12 so-named Continental and U.S. Naval vessels) intercepts a flotilla of four ships led by the infamous Capt. Charles Gibbs as the pirates attack American and British-flagged ships in Cuban waters. Although outnumbered, Lt. Cmdr. John Kearney and his

crew quickly defeat the pirate force, and Gibbs escapes into the jungles of Cuba as three of his ships are burned. Gibbs will eventually be caught and is one of the last people executed for piracy in the United States.

1859: A small party of abolitionists, led by John Brown, occupies the military arsenal at Harper's Ferry (modem-day West Virginia), hoping to inspire a slave rebellion. However, Brown's hoped-for uprising does not take place and local militia force the rebels into a firehouse. A company of Marines under the command of Brevet Colonel Robert E. Lee is dispatched to the scene and after an unsuccessful attempt by Lt. J.E.B. Stuart to get Brown to surrender, the Marines assault the barricaded fire station and bring an end to the crisis.

1918: When all other members of his machine gun detachment are killed or wounded, Pvt. Thomas C. Neibaur foils an entire German counterattack by himself. Four enemy soldiers attempt to kill him at close quarters, but the wounded Neibaur manages to kill them, and captures another 11 with his pistol. For his actions, Pvt. Neibaur is awarded the Medal of Honor.

1942: As Japanese planes attack a ship unloading badly needed supplies for Guadalcanal's "Cactus Air Force", Lt. Col. Harold W. "Indian Joe" Bauer - dangerously low on fuel following a 600-mile ferry flight from Espirito Santo - single-handedly engages the enemy warplanes, shooting down one bomber, four fighters, and damaging another before running out of fuel. The commander of Marine Fighting Squadron 212 (VMF-212) is awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions.

1946: After nine months of trials, ten Nazi war criminals are executed by hanging, including top *Wehrmacht* officers Alfred Jodl, Wilhelm Keitel, and SS officer Ernst Kaltenbrunner. Also sentenced is former *Luftwaffe* boss (and World War I fighter ace) Hermann Goring, who committed suicide the night before his execution.

1956: The Pan American airliner *Clipper Sovereign Of The Skies* (a Boeing 377 "Stratocruiser", which is based off the B-29 "Superfortress" bomber) ,---,experiences failures in two of its four engines while in the middle of the Pacific Ocean on a around-the-world flight and has to ditch in the water. The

Coast Guard cutter USCGC *Pontchartrain* is only a half mile away from the crash site and rescues all passengers and crew before the plane slips under the waves after 20 minutes.

2002: Congress grants President George W. Bush the authority to use military force against Iraq, however the U.S.-led coalition will not invade Iraq until March of 2003.

Oct. 17

1918: Brig. Gen. William "Billy" Mitchell meets with American Expeditionary Force Commander Gen. John J. Pershing and floats the idea of dropping soldiers of the 1st Infantry Division behind enemy lines. Pershing approves the concept, but the war ends before paratroopers become a reality.

1922: Lt. Commander Virgil C. Griffm, piloting a Vought VE-7SF bi-winged fighter, makes the first-ever "official" takeoff from a U.S. Navy aircraft carrier, USS *Langley* - a coaling ship which had been converted into America's first aircraft carrier - in York River, Va.

Though Griffm is indeed the first man to takeoff from a "carrier", he is not the first to takeoff from a warship. That distinction belongs to Eugene B. Ely who took-off from a platform affixed to a cruiser in 1910.

1941: When a "wolfpack" of German U-boats attacks an allied convoy, overwhelming its Canadian escort ships, USS *Kearny* and three other American destroyers depart their base at Iceland and begin dropping depth charges. A German torpedo strikes *Kearny*, killing 11 sailors and injuring 22 - the first American casualties of World War II. Adolf Hitler will use the engagement as a reason for declaring war on the United States in December.

1944: The 6th Ranger Battalion lands on Dinagat, Homonhon, and Suluan and sweep the islands guarding the entrance of Leyte Gulf in preparation for Sixth Army's upcoming landing (Operation KING H).

1962: Light Photographic Squadron 62 (VFP-62) begins Operation BLUE MOON - low-level reconnaissance of suspected Soviet military installations on Cuba. Soon, pairs of RF-8A Crusader jets (featured image) will streak through Cuban airspace, avoiding enemy anti-aircraft fire while snapping photos of Soviet ballistic and tactical nuclear missile sites.

1986: Lt. Cmdr. Barry D. Gabler of VFP-206, the Navy's last photoreconnaissance squadron, makes the fmal catapult takeoff and carrier landing of an F-8 Crusader, aboard USS *America* (CV-66).

Oct. 18:

1775: A small British fleet commanded by Capt. Henry Mowat bombards the town of Falmouth, Mass. (modem-day Portland, Maine), setting most of the coastal settlement on fire with incendiary cannonballs. Mowat then sends a landing party ashore to destroy any buildings that were still standing, and the "Burning of Falmouth" will provide the inspiration for the Continental Congress to establish the Continental Navy.

1917: A convoy bearing the newly created 42d "Rainbow" Infantry Division sails from Hoboken, N.J. for France. The unit consists of federalized National Guard soldiers from 26 states and the District of Colombia, and its chief-of-staff is Col. (later, five-star general) Douglas MacArthur.

1942: Adolf Hitler issues his "Commando Order", stipulating that any captured Allied commandos - even if they are wearing uniforms - will be executed without trial. Numerous Office of Strategic Services (OSS) agents and Army Air Force pilots and crewmembers are killed because of the order, and German officers carrying out illegal executions under the Commando Order will be tried for war crimes during the Nuremberg Trials.

1943: After 11 months of intense training, the 29th Ranger Battalion (Provisional) is disbanded before the American commandos can participate in combat action. The Rangers return to their original units, bringing with them --advanced skills they can share with the regular troops, like penetrating deep nehind enemy lines, staging raids, and intelligence gathering.

1944: Following an hour-long enemy artillery barrage, Sgt. Max Thompson was working on evacuating casualties when he noticed that German troops had overrun a position held by his fellow soldiers. Thompson charges toward an unoccupied machinegun and works to stem the assault. He fires away until his weapon is destroyed by an enemy tank round. Alone and dazed from the blast, he grabs an automatic rifle and manages to halt and disperse some of the assaulting force. When his gun jams, Thompson picks up a rocket launcher and sets an enemy tank on fire. Later that evening, his squad was given the task of dislodging the few Germans that Thompson didn't run off with his one-man attack. He crawls to within 20 yards of a pillbox and attacks the occupants with grenades. Once they were aware of his position, the enemy poured heavy fire on Thompson. Although wounded by the bursts, he held his ground and continued raining grenades into the position until the Germans abandoned it.

For his incredible heroism, Sgt. Thompson is awarded the Medal of Honor.

1977: *USS Dwight D. Eisenhower* (CVN-69) is commissioned, becoming the United States' third nuclear-powered submarine.

1983: Two years after the project was revived by President Ronald Reagan, the Rockwell B-1B Lancer supersonic bomber makes its first flight. Originally envisioned in the 1960s to combine the speed of the B-58 Hustler and the payload of the B-52 Stratofortress, the B-1 had been cancelled in 1977 after just four swept-wing prototypes were built. Lancers, originally intended to carry nuclear payloads, would later be fitted for conventional weapons and will not see combat until the 1998 bombing of Iraq (Operation DESERT FOX). During the War on Terror, 40 percent of the munitions dropped during the Afghanistan campaign have been delivered by B-lBs.

Oct. 19

1781: British Gen. Charles Cornwallis formally surrenders 7,087 officers and men, 900 seamen, 144 cannons, 15 galleys, a frigate, and 30 transport ships to ·tn American and French force at Yorktown, Va., effectively ending the American Revolution.

1944: Two Interstate TDR assault drones are launched against Japanese gun emplacements on Ballale Island - one drone missing its target and another delivering two of its four 100-1b. bombs on the target. The TDR was a two-engine, unmanned airplane remotely controlled by a Grumman TBF "Avenger" via a television camera feed.

1950: Troopers with the 5th Cavalry Regiment enter Pyongyang, capturing the North Korean capitol. The following day, the 187th Regimental Combat Team will conduct two parachute drops north of the capitol to cut off retreating North Korean forces. The Communists will recapture Pyongyang on Dec. 5, after China joins the war.

t 1965: Two regiments of North Vietnamese soldiers begin a week-long siege on the Special Forces camp at Plei Me in South Vietnam's central highlands. The outnumbered defenders repel repeated attacks and eventually drive off the NVA forces. Following the battle, Gen. William Westmoreland orders the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) to find and defeat the forces that attacked Plei Me, which will result in the bloody Battle of Ia Drang.

1987: Following an Iranian missile attack on a merchant vessel, U.S. warships attack and destroy two Iranian oil platforms being used by the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps to attack shipping in the Persian Gulf.

2001: 200 Army Rangers parachute into - and quickly secure - an airfield southwest of Kandahar, Afghanistan, while special operation forces conduct other air-assault operations on several targets near Kandahar. These raids are the first known combat operations of the war in Afghanistan. In November, the captured airfield will become the first U.S. base in Afghanistan when Marines establish Camp RHINO.

Meanwhile, Spec. Jonn J. Edmunds and Pvt. 1st Class Kristofor T. Stonesifer become the first combat-related casualties in the War on Terror when the helicopter carrying them crashes in Pakistan.

--Oct. 20

1922: Lt. Harold R. Harris (Army Air Service) performs the world's first emergency parachute jump when the wings of his Loening PW-2A come apart during a simulated dogfight 2,500 feet over McCook Field. Harris bails out of his cockpit and after free-falling 2,000 feet, he lands safely in a garden in Dayton, Ohio.

1926: After a brutal murder of a post office truck driver, President Calvin Coolidge orders the Marine Corps to protect the mail delivery. 2,500 Marines of the 4th Marine Regiment, commanded by two-time Medal of Honor recipient Brig. Gen. Smedley D. Butler, serve as the "Western Mail Guards" until they return to their regular posts in 1927.

1944: Two-and-a-half years after Gen. Douglas MacArthur vows to return to the Philippines, MacArthur and some 130,000 soldiers of the Sixth Army land at Leyte Island. The island will be captured after 67 days of intense fighting, signaling the beginning of the end for the Japanese. The Japanese Army's 16th Division, which conducted the brutal Bataan Death March and held Leyte Island, is completely wiped out during the fighting.

1950: 2,860 soldiers of the 187th Regimental Combat Team jump from Air Force C-119 and C-47 transports on the first airborne operation of the Korean War. The paratroopers' mission is to drop north of the North Vietnamese capital of Pyongyang, trapping units attempting to escape the now UN-held capital, but by the time the 187th hits the ground, Communist forces have already slipped through.

1951: A day after having 83 pieces of shrapnel removed from his body, and still badly injured from bullet wounds received during six days of constant fighting, Master Sergeant Woodrow W. Keeble (USA) refuses to let medics keep him out of the fight. When his company is pinned down by enemy fire while assaulting Hill 765 near Sangsan-ni, Korea, the badly wounded veteran of the Guadalcanal campaign and now platoon sergeant courageously crawls forward alone and silences three machine gun positions with grenades and automatic rifle fire. Originally awarded the Distinguished Service Cross -

paperwork recommending him for the Medal of Honor kept getting lost - Keeble will be eventually awarded the Medal of Honor in 2008, 26 years after his passing.

Oct. 21

1917: Four months after arriving in France, U.S. soldiers get their first taste of combat on the front lines in France.

Oct. 22

1951: Operation BUSTER-JANGLE, a series of low-yield atomic weapons tests in the Nevada desert, begins with the "Able" shot. Some 6,500 troops are stationed just six miles away, witnessing the blast and then moving towards the detonation site to determine the effectiveness of fortifications and also provide data to scientists on the psychology of soldiers in the aftermath of atomic attacks.

1957: The U.S. military suffers its first casualties in Vietnam when a wave of terrorist attacks hits Military Assistance Advisory Group and U.S. Information Service installations in Saigon, injuring 13 advisors.

1962: After consulting with former president Dwight D. Eisenhower, John F. Kennedy announces that the Soviet Union had placed nuclear weapons in Cuba and the United States will establish a naval blockade around the island to prevent further offensive weapons from entering Cuba.

1968: The Apollo 7 capsule splashes down in the North Atlantic Ocean after the completing the first manned mission of the Apollo program. Capt. Walter M. Schirra, USN; Maj. Donn F. Eisele, USAF; and Maj. R. Walter Cunningham, USMC have spent 10 days in space testing the command/service module that would carry astronauts to the moon and back on future missions.

Oct. 23

1864: In Westport, Mo. (present-day Kansas City), Maj. Gen. Samuel R. Curtis' 22,000-man Army of the Border defeats a heavily outnumbered Confederate force commanded by Maj. Gen. Sterling Price in the largest battle fought west of the Mississippi River. The Union brings an end to Price's Missouri Expedition with his defeat in the "Gettysburg of the West," and Price retreats into Kansas. After the Battle of Westport, the border state of Missouri will remain under Union control for the rest of the Civil War.

1918: When a battalion commander needs to send a message to an endangered company on the front lines, he realizes sending a runner would be too hazardous due to heavy incoming fire. However, Pfc. Parker F. Dunn volunteers for the job and races through the fire-swept terrain toward the unit. He is hit once and gets up. He is hit again, and continues. Undaunted, Dunn carries on towards his objective, but is finished off by an enemy machinegun burst. He is posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

1942: On Guadalcanal, Imperial Japanese soldiers and tanks attempt to cross the Matanikau River, and are quickly defeated - signaling the beginning of the Battle for Henderson Field. For the next three days, the 1st Marine Division and the 164th Infantry Regiment, supported by the "Cactus Air Force", will shatter wave after wave of Japanese assaults on the ground and in the air. The battle marks the final major Japanese ground operation before they abandon the island.

1944: Three days after 100,000 U.S. troops land in the Philippines, the Battle of Leyte Gulf - the largest naval engagement during World War II - begins. On the first day, the submarines USS *Darter* and USS *Dace* attack Vice Adm. Takeo Kurita's Center Fleet, sinking two heavy cruisers (including Kurita's flagship) and damaging another. During the three-day battle, nearly 400 ships will square off, with Japan suffering crippling losses: four aircraft carriers, four battleships, and 21 cruisers and destroyers are sunk, along with the loss of 12,000 sailors and 300 planes. An increasingly desperate Japanese military ises *kamikaze* tactics for the first time during the battle.

Meanwhile in the Taiwan Straight, the submarine USS *Tang* - the most successful U.S. submarine ever - engages a convoy of Japanese transports, freighters, tankers, and their escorts. *Tang* sinks five ships and then escapes. The sub's skipper, Cmdr. Richard H. (Mane, will be awarded the Medal of Honor for the engagement.

1972: As peace talks with the North resume, Pres. Richard Nixon calls a halt to Operation LINEBACKER - the U.S bombing campaign in North Vietnam. In start contrast to Pres. Lyndon Johnson's tightly controlled Operation "Rolling Thunder", Nixon had granted the military much more latitude to carry out their mission, which put a serious dent in the Communist supply chain.

1983: A 2000-pound truck bomb explodes at the Marine Corps Barracks in Beirut, Lebanon, killing 220 Marines, 18 sailors, and three soldiers. The bombing would become known as "the bloodiest day in Marine Corps history since Iwo Jima." Moments later, another truck bomb hits the French barracks, killing 58. American troops will withdraw from Lebanon four months later.

Oct. 24

1742: After disease and poor management leads to the deaths of all but 600 of the 3,500-man 61st Regiment of Foot, the American expeditionary force is disbanded and returns to the colonies. "Gooch's Regiment", named after regimental commander - also the Governor of Virginia - Lt. Col. William Gooch, had been part of the ill-fated British expedition to capture the Spanish colony of Cartagena (present-day Colombia).

1944: On day two of the Battle of Leyte Gulf - the largest naval engagement of World War II - U.S. aircraft attack the Japanese fleet, sinking the battleship *Musashi* and damaging four others. A single Japanese dive bomber attacks the light carrier USS *Princeton* (CVL-23), igniting an internal blaze that will sink the ship with just one bomb.

In the air, Cmdr. David McCampbell and wingman Ens. Roy Rushing spot a flight of 60 Japanese planes and engage despite the outrageous odds. McCampbell shoots down nine warplanes, setting a single sortie record, and his partner claims six. After becoming the only U.S. aviator to claim "ace in a day" status twice, McCampbell lands his F6F Hellcat as it runs out of fuel and with only two bullets left. For his daring actions, the top Naval ace of the war is awarded the Medal of Honor.

In the Taiwan Straight, the submarine USS *Tang*, whose crew sank five Japanese ships in a single engagement the day before, fires another torpedo, which circles around and sinks *Tang*. The sub bottoms out in 180 feet of water, but nine crew members - including skipper Richard O'Kane - escape in the only known successful use of the Momsen rebreather.

/ **1951:** In the skies over Korea, 150 Russian MiG-15 fighters intercept a formation of B-29 bombers and 55 F-84 Thunderjet escorts. The Communists manage to shoot down four of the B-29s and one escort, but at least eight MiGs are lost in the largest air battle of the Korean War. The sortie will be the last daylight bombing raid for the B-29.

1953: Convair's chief test pilot Richard L. "Dick" Johnson takes off from Edwards Air Force Base in a YF-102 prototype, marking the first flight of the Delta Dagger. The interceptor carried the AIM-26 Nuclear Falcon missile, which was designed for use against Soviet bomber formations. President George W. Bush flew a "Duce" during his service as a pilot with the Texas Air National Guard.

But back to Johnson: Prior to his days as a test pilot, he flew 190 missions over North Africa and Italy in his P-47 Thunderbolt, then went on to become the second Air Force pilot to break the sound barrier. Johnson deployed to Korea where he was supposed to be supervising the installation of equipment on F-86 Sabre fighters, but was sent home after the Air Force discovered Johnson was flying unauthorized combat missions.

1954: President Dwight Eisenhower sends a letter to Prime Minister Ngo Dinh Diem, pledging direct support to the South Vietnamese government. Although United States assets have been in French Indochina since World War II, this date is considered the beginning of the U.S. commitment to South Vietnam.

Oct. 25

1812: The frigate USS *United States* under the command of Capt. (future commodore) Stephen Decatur — hero of Tripoli and said to be the U.S. Navy's own Lord Nelson — captures the Royal Navy frigate HMS *Macedonian* under the command of Capt. John Carden in a brisk fight several hundred miles off the Azores.

1925: The court martial of Col. William "Billy" Mitchell, America's chief aviation officer during World War I and considered to be the "Father of the U.S. Air Force", begins in Washington, D.C.. The outspoken Mitchell is charged with multiple counts of insubordination due to his criticism of Navy leadership for investing in battleships instead of aircraft carriers and the handling of numerous fatal aviation incidents. Maj. Gen. Douglas MacArthur, one of Mitchell's 12 judges, refers to his assignment as "one of the most distasteful orders I ever received."

1942: On Guadalcanal, Japanese forces launch a series of full-frontal assaults to retake Henderson Field. The defending Marines - led by Lt. Col. B. Lewis "Chesty" Puller - and soldiers kill upwards of 3,000 Japanese troops at the cost of only 80 Americans. Sgt. John Basilone (http://www.victoryinstitute.net/blogs/utb/1942/10/24/j ohn-basilone-medal-of-honor-citation/) became a Marine legend during the battle, fighting off wave after wave of Japanese soldiers for two days despite being incredibly outnumbered.

1944: During the Battle of Leyte Gulf, torpedoes from the destroyer USS *Melvin* (DD-680) sink the Japanese battleship *Fuso,* considered to be the 'largest warship to go down with all hands during World War II. Rear. Adm. Jesse Oldendorfs 7th Fleet Support Group, consisting of several battleships

sunk or damaged during Pearl Harbor, engage and sink the battleship *Yamashiro,* marking the last battleship-versus-battleship engagement in history. The escort carrier USS *St. Lo* (CVE-63) becomes the first major
4) warship to be sunk by Japanese kamikaze pilots. By war's end, kamikaze attacks would sink 34 U.S. ships.

Elsewhere in the gulf, three Japanese destroyers are sunk at the cost of one U.S. escort carrier, two destroyers, and a destroyer escort.

Aircraft from the U.S. 3rd Fleet, commanded by Adm. Bill Halsey, sink the Japanese aircraft carrier *Zuikaku,* the last surviving carrier that struck Pearl Harbor. Also headed for the bottom are two more light carriers and a destroyer. Two more ships - including another light carrier - are crippled. Later that day, naval gunfire and torpedoes will claim another Japanese light carrier, two destroyers, and a light cruiser. The Battle for Leyte Gulf is effectively over.

1950: Well over 200,000 Chinese Communist troops attack UN forces in their first assault of the Korean War. The Chinese force withdraws to the mountains and when they attack again one month later, they will drive the American-led force all the way back to the southern tip of the Korean peninsula.

1983: In the largest military operation since Vietnam, nearly 2,000 U.S. troops land on the tiny Caribbean island of Grenada to secure American citizens and topple the Marxist regime. On the first day of fighting, members of the 75th Ranger Regiment parachute into the Port Salines International Airport, allowing planes to deliver soldiers of the 82d Airborne Division. When a SEAL team determines that the beach is unsuitable for the planned amphibious invasion to capture Pearl Airport on the opposite side of the island, helicopters ferry Marines ashore and quickly secure their objective.

Oct. 26

1909: U.S. Army Lt. (future brig. gen.) Frederick Erastus Humphreys ---- becomes the first Army aviator to solo in a heavier-than-air craft — the Wright Flyer — following three hours of instruction by Wilbur Wright.

1922: Off Cape Henry, Va., Lt. Commander Godfrey Chevalier becomes the first aviator to land on a moving ship when his Aeromarine 39B biplane touches down on the deck of USS *Langley*.

1942: Japanese carrier-based aircraft sink the carrier USS *Hornet*, leaving only one operational American carrier in the Pacific. The Battle of Santa Cruz is a pyrrhic victory for the Japanese, however, as their carrier pilots were decimated in the attack and can no longer conduct attacks on U.S. forces at Guadalcanal.

On Guadalcanal, Platoon Sergeant Mitchell Paige fights off wave after wave of Japanese soldiers single-handedly, as all the Marines in his machine gun section are dead or wounded. Once reinforcements arrive, Paige leads a bayonet charge that drives off the enemy. For his actions, Paige is awarded the Medal of Honor and becomes a Marine legend.

1950: The First Marine Division lands at Wonsan, Korea and moves north toward the Yalu River. In a month, they will be attacked by 10 Chinese divisions and have to fight their way out of the Chosin Reservoir.

Meanwhile, Republic of Korean (South Korea) forces arrive at the Yalu River and learn that two entire Chinese Armies have already crossed into Korea.

1966: A magnesium parachute flare ignites aboard the aircraft carrier USS *Oriskany* (CV-34) off the coast of Vietnam, igniting the worst ship-board fire since World War II. 44 sailors perish in the blaze.

1968: An estimated four battalions of North Vietnamese soldiers attempt to overrun Fire Support Base Julie near the Cambodian border. Supported by dozens of B-52 strikes, the defenders manage to repel the attack.

Oct. 27

1864: In a daring nighttime commando raid, Lt. William B. Cushing, aboard a .--„torpedo-armed steam launch, slips past a Confederate schooner guarding the ironclad CSS *Albemarle*. Cushing detonates the spar torpedo, blowing a

massive hole in the warship, which had been dominating the Roanoke River. --- Although several of his crew are drowned and captured, Cushing and another sailor escape, leaving behind a destroyed ironclad.

1942: After several days of intense fighting, a shattered Japanese military abandons their offensive on Guadalcanal's Henderson Field. The Japanese will evacuate the island in February, and the Americans will turn Guadalcanal into a major base during the Solomon Islands campaign.

1954: Following in his father's pioneering footsteps, Brig. Gen. Benjamin 0. Davis, Jr. becomes the first black general in the U.S. Air Force. Benjamin 0. Davis, Sr., who served in the Spanish-American War, the Philippine-American War, and both World Wars, had been the first black man ever promoted to the rank of general in the United States Armed Forces. After becoming the first black pilot to ever solo in a U.S. Army Air Corps aircraft, the younger Davis commanded the 99th Pursuit Squadron - the famous "Tuskegee Airmen" - during World War II. He again saw combat when he deployed to Korea as Commander of the 51st Fighter-Interceptor Wing in 1953.

1962: Maj. Rudolph Anderson (USAF) becomes the only casualty from hostile fire during the Cuban Missile Crisis when a Soviet SA-2 surface-to-air missile shoots down his U-2 spy plane during a reconnaissance overflight of Cuba. Anderson will be posthumously awarded the Air Force Cross, the U.S. military's second-highest award for valor, after the Medal of Honor.

Oct. 28

1962: Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev "blinks," ordering the withdrawal of ballistic missiles from Cuba and putting an end to the Cuban Missile Crisis

Oct. 29

1814: The wooden floating battery *Demologos,* the first steam-powered warship, is launched at New York City.

1942: Decimated by combat losses, malnutrition, and tropical diseases, the first soldiers of the Japanese garrison begin departing Guadalcanal.

1944: Three 442d Regimental Combat Team soldiers earn the Medal of Honor near Biffontaine, France on this day. Technician 5th Grade James K. Okubo, Pvt. Barney F. Hajiro, and Pvt. George T. Sakato (click the links to read their citations).

The all-Nisei (second-generation Japanese-American citizens) 442d RCT holds the distinction of being the most decorated unit in United States Armed Forces history.

1998: 36 years after becoming the first American to orbit the earth, John Glenn (Col, USMC ret.) blasts off aboard Space Shuttle Discovery, becoming the oldest man in space at 77 years old. Glenn was the third member of Congress to fly in space. He was preceded by Senator Jake Gam, a former U.S. Navy and Utah Air National Guard aviator, and Congressman (future senator) Bill Nelson, who was an officer in the Army Reserve.

Oct. 30

1918: Famous World War I flying ace Capt. Eddie Rickenbacker shoots down his 26th - and final - enemy aircraft over Remonville, France.

. **1940:** The Royal Air Force's First Eagle Squadron, consisting of volunteer pilots from the United States, becomes operational. Thousands of Americans would apply, but only 244 were chosen for service during the early days of World War II.

1944: Pvt. Wilburn K. Ross (http://www.victoryinstitute.net/blogs/utb/1944/10/30/wilbum-k-ross-medal-of-honor-citation/) almost single-handedly fights off a German attack that devastated his company. Pvt. Ross killed or wounded dozens of enemy soldiers, forcing a retreat.

Meanwhile in the Philippines, the new tactic of *kamikaze* attacks become an increasing threat, with Japanese planes striking the aircraft carriers USS *Franklin* and USS *Belleau Wood*. Over 100 sailors are killed and the crippled flattops must sail back to the United States for repairs.

1954: The Defense Department announces that it has completed the process of eliminating racial segregation in the U.S. Armed Forces.

1961: On a remote island north of the Arctic Circle, a Soviet Air Force Tu-95 "Bear" bomber drops the *Tsar Bomba*, setting off the largest man-made explosion in human history. The 50-megaton device has ten times the explosive force of all conventional weapons dropped during World War II and was over 1,500 times stronger than the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombs. The blast is so powerful that windows are broken well over 500 miles away and the aircrew is only given a 50 percent chance of survival. A U.S. Air Force JKC-135A intelligence gathering plane on a secret mission to collect data on the blast is scorched by the heat wave and is removed from service after landing.

1963: 500 miles east of the Massachussetts coast, Lt. (future Rear Adm.) James H. Flately III makes his first of what will be 21 touch-and-go landings aboard USS *Forrestal* (CV-59) in a C-130 Hercules. The Navy is testing the massive C-130, which is not equipped with a tailhook, for supplying the flattop while at sea. Ultimately, Flately will make 29 full-stop landings, and his wingtips clear *Forrestal's* island by just 15 feet.

Oct. 31

1941: Although the United States has not yet entered the war, U.S. Naval vessels are serving as convoy escorts. When a German U-boat "wolfpack" attacks an Allied convoy near Iceland, the American destroyer USS *Reuben James* places itself between an incoming torpedo and an ammunition ship. The torpedo detonates the destroyer's magazine, blowing the *Reuben James* in half 115 sailors perish in the first sinking of a U.S. warship in World War II.

1943: Lt. Hugh D. O'Neill, flying at night in a specially modified F4U Corsair, shoots down a Japanese Betty bomber over Vella Lavella, scoring the first kill for the radar-equipped night fighters.

1966: While on a patrol mission of the Mekong Delta, two patrol boats of the "Brown Water Navy" are fired upon by Vietnamese sampans. When Petty Officer First Class James E. Williams gives chase, he discovers a hornet's nest of enemy activity in the isolated section of the delta. During a three-hour battle with enemy boats and fortifications, Williams and his crew, supported by helicopter gunships, destroy 65 vessels and kill hundreds of the enemy force. For his role in the engagement, the Navy's most-decorated sailor (having already received two Silver Stars and three Bronze Stars - all for valor - in addition to the Navy Cross) is awarded the Medal of Honor.

6 **1968:** Five days before the elections, Pres. Lyndon B. Johnson ends Operation "Rolling Thunder", the bombing campaign against North Vietnam. Over three-and-a-half years, 864,000 tons of bombs fell on the Communist nation more tonnage dropped than either the Korean War or the Pacific Theater of World War II. Nearly 1,000 U.S. planes are shot down during Rolling Thunder, with over 1,000 aircrew killed, wounded or captured. But despite the damage inflicted by the Americans, the North Vietnamese show they can take what Washington can dish out.

1971: Saigon begins releasing the first of around 3,000 Viet Cong prisoners of war. American POWs won't be released until Feb. 12, 1973.

1972: Two Navy SEAL advisors and their South Vietnamese naval commando counterparts on a reconnaissance mission realize they were accidentally inserted smack dab in the middle of thousands of North Vietnamese soldiers. As the team maneuvers back to the sea, they are compromised. Lt. Thomas Norris receives a massive facial wound, and a Vietnamese frogman tells Petty Officer Michael E. Thornton that Norris is dead. Instead of leaving his supposedly fallen officer behind (Norris was alive — barely — but unconscious), Thornton fights his way through a murderous field of fire to rescue Norris, then swam out to sea for four hours before being

rescued while holding two incapacitated teammates — even though Thornton himself had been wounded multiple times. Thornton will be awarded the Medal of Honor for his incredible lifesaving feat.

1976: The Air Force's E-3A Sentry airborne warning and control systems (AWACS) aircraft makes its first flight.

November

Nov. 1

1904: The new U.S. Army War College opens its doors to three majors and six captains, among them Capt. (future General of the Armies) John J. "Black Jack" Pershing.

1942: On Guadalcanal, a machine gun section led by Marine Cpl. Anthony Casamento (http://vvww.victoryinstitute.net/blogs/utb/1942/11/0[1]/anthony-casamento-medal-of-honor-citation/) is hit so badly during the fourth (and final) battle at the Matanikau River that all but Casamento were grievously wounded or killed. Despite his own wounds (he was hit 14 times during the engagement), Casamento single-handedly held his position and repelled numerous enemy attacks. Casamento will be awarded the Medal of Honor in 1980 after surviving eyewitnesses to his actions are found.

1943: The 3rd Marine Division, led by Gen. Allen H. Turnage, hits the beaches on Japanese-held Bougainville.

[6] **1944:** Japan launches the first of some 9,000 hydrogen-filled balloon bombs towards the U.S. and Canada. By war's end, only six Americans would be killed and a small amount of damage is inflicted by the bombs.

Meanwhile, the *Tokyo Rose,* a B-29 "Superfortress" modified for photo reconnaissance, makes the first U.S. flight over Tokyo since the Doolittle Raid in 1942.

1952: The U.S. tests the world's first hydrogen bomb, codenamed "Ivy Mike", at Eniwetok Atoll. The thermonuclear device, with a yield 1000 times greater than previous bombs, gave the United States a temporary leg up on the Soviet Union in the arms race. The blast digs a mile-wide, 150-ft. crater and literally wipes the small island of Elugelab off the face of the Earth.

1983: During Operation "Urgent Fury", 300 Marines from the 22nd Marine Amphibious Unit conduct an air and amphibious landing on the Caribbean island of Carriacou, 15 miles northeast of Grenada, in search of Cuban military forces.

Nov. 2

1783: Gen. George Washington delivers his "Farewell Address to the Army" near Princeton, N.J., in which he refers to the Continental Army as "one patriotic band of brothers."

----- **1861:** Pres. Abraham Lincoln removes Union Gen. John C. Fremont as commander of the Western Department, following Fremont's unilateral decision to declare martial law in the border state of Missouri and thus freeing all slaves.

1943: One day after the 3rd Marine Division lands at Bougainville, the cruisers and destroyers of Admiral Aaron S. "Tip" Merrill's Task Force 39 defeat Japanese naval forces attempting to attack the landing force in the Battle of Empress Bay. Two Japanese ships are sent to the bottom, with numerous enemy warships receiving heavy damage.

Meanwhile, in the skies over the nearby Japanese fortress of Rabaul, Maj. Raymond H. Wilkins (http://www.victoryinstitute.net/blogs/utb/1943/11/02/raymond-h-wilkins-medal-of-honor-citation/) , Commander of the Army Air Corps' 8th Bombing Squadron, led an attack against Japanese-held Rabaul. His bombs destroyed an enemy transport and destroyer, and although his plane was badly damaged and his bombs expended, Wilkins strafed a Japanese cruiser, sacrificing

himself by drawing their fire so his fellow pilots could escape the deadly air defenses. The raid sinks 30 of the 38 Japanese vessels anchored at Rabaul, and Wilkins will posthumously be awarded the Medal of Honor.

4)- 1944: Nearly 1,000 8th Air Force bombers conducts a massive strike against synthetic fuel facilities in Merseburg, Germany. The Americans shoot down 183 enemy fighters - including four jets - at the cost of 40 bombers and 28 fighters. By wars' end, the 8th Air Force has severely crippled the synthetic fuel production necessary for *Luftwaffe* jets.

1950: During a fanatical nighttime assault by enemy forces near Sudong, North Korea, Staff Sgt. Archie Van Winkle leads his outnumbered Marines through heavy fire and enables them to gain the upper hand. Despite a bullet rendering his arm useless and further wounds from an enemy grenade, Van Winkle rushes through hostile fire to rally his men, refusing evacuation and providing leadership until Van Winkle loses consciousness. The combat veteran of World War II will be awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions at Sudong, and will be decorated for valor 18 years later during the Battle of Khe Sanh in the Vietnam War.

1963: Unpopular South Vietnamese President Ngo Dinh Diem is assassinated following a U.S.-backed coup by the South Vietnamese army.

1967: Seeking to unite the country behind the war effort in Vietnam, Pres. Lyndon B. Johnson holds a secret meeting with a group of advisors referred to as "the Wise Men." The group, which includes General of the Army Omar Bradley, former Secretary of State Dean Acheson, and former Ambassador to South Vietnam Henry Cabot Lodge, determines that the military should issue more optimistic reports to influence more favorable press.

Nov. 3

1783: The Continental Army is disbanded following the signing of the Treaty of Paris. The role of the national defense force returns to state militias, save a ----- -egiment on the western frontier and an artillery battery at West Point, N.Y.

(which will soon become the U.S. Military Academy). These few "regular army" soldiers will become the Legion of the United States in 1792, and the U.S. Army in 1796.

1917: German forces attack a vastly-outnumbered U.S. unit near Artois, France, killing three and capturing 11, marking the first U.S. ground combat casualties of World War I.

1941: The Combined Japanese Fleet receives Top-Secret Order No. 1 - ordering the fleet to attack the U.S. naval base in Pearl Harbor as well as Malaya, the Dutch East Indies, and the Philippines.

1967: Seeking to wipe out an American brigade-sized force, the North Vietnamese Army begins the Battle of Dak To. The engagement will last for three weeks and was among the heaviest fighting seen in the Central Highlands. Soldiers of the 4th Infantry Division and 173rd Airborne Brigade inflict such heavy casualties on the Communists that three of the four brigades that participated in the battle were not able to participate in the Tet Offensive in January.

Nov. 4

1979: Iranian students loyal to Ayatollah Khomeini storm the U.S. embassy in Teheran, taking 90 hostages and holding them in captivity for 444 days.

Nov. 5

1862: Realizing an army led by Gen. George McClellan would never defeat Confederate forces, Pres. Abraham Lincoln removes the cautious Army of the Potomac commander, chosing Gen. Ambrose Burnside as his replacement. Two years and three days later, Lincoln would defeat McClellan - a Democrat - in the 1864 presidential election.

1915: Lt. Commander Henry Mustin catapults from the USS *North Carolina* n a Curtiss AB-2 flying boat, becoming the first American to make a catapult launch from a ship underway.

1917: U.S. Army Maj. (future Brig. Gen.) Theodore Roosevelt Jr. and his younger brother Lt. (future Lt. Col.) Archibald Roosevelt - both sons of former Pres. Theodore Roosevelt - lead the first American patrol into "No Man's Land" during World War I. "Archie" was wounded severely enough to merit a retirement with full disability, only to rejoin the Army during World War II. When an enemy grenade destroys the same knee wounded in the previous world war, Lt. Col. Roosevelt becomes the first person declared 100 percent disabled in two wars.

Theodore Jr. also rejoined the Army during World War II and earned the Medal of Honor while leading his troops at Utah Beach during the Invasion of Normandy. He died one month later of a heart attack. His brother Quentin left basic training and joined the British Army during World War I, transferring back to the U.S. military as a captain when the American Expeditionary Force arrived in Europe. He rejoined the British military during World War II, serving in Finland and Africa before being medically discharged. He would later serve as an Army intelligence officer in Alaska. The youngest Roosevelt
— son, Quentin, was a pursuit pilot and was shot down over enemy lines, becoming the only son of a U.S. president killed in combat. He and Theodore Jr. are buried side-by-side at the Normandy American Cemetery and Memorial near Colleville-sur-Mer, France.

w Meanwhile in the Atlantic, a torpedo fired by a German U-boat sinks the yacht USS *Alcedo*, which had been escorting a convoy to France. 21 sailors perish when the yacht becomes the first U.S. warship sunk during World War I.

1923: The submarine USS *SS-1* (SS-105) launches a Martin MS-1 seaplane, marking the first flight of a submarine-launched aircraft.

1966: When U.S. soldiers are pinned down by the Viet Cong (VC) near the Cambodian border, Capt. Robert F. Foley's "A" Company rushes to the battle to relieve their sister company. Pvt. 1st Class John F. Baker, Jr. (http://www.victoryinstitute.net/blogs/utb/1966/11/05/john-f-baker-jr-medal-of-honor-citation/) and another soldier take out two enemy bunkers. When his
---;omrade is mortally wounded, Baker spots four enemy snipers and eliminates all of them, then evacuates his fellow soldier. Returning to the front, he leads

several attacks on the enemy, killing several VC and silencing additional bunkers. After charging through the jungle with his machine gun to wipe out another bunker, Baker covers his unit's evacuation. In total, he rescued eight soldiers.

Meanwhile, the fire concentrated on Capt. Robert F. Foley (http://www.victoryinstitute.net/blogs/utb/1966/11/05/robert-f-foley-medal-of-honor-citation/) 's location is so intense that he loses two of his radio operators. Grabbing a machinegun from a wounded soldier, Foley charges forward - alone - to maintain the momentum of the attack and keeps firing until the wounded can be extracted. Once his men rally, he leads attacks against several machine gun positions, personally eliminating three, despite being wounded by an enemy grenade.

For their actions, Baker and Foley are both awarded the Medal of Honor.

1950: Gen. Douglas MacArthur begins a heavy air campaign against North Korean targets, including bridges over the Yalu River, violating orders from the Joint Chiefs of Staff that restricted operations within five miles of North Korea's border with China.

2009: U.S. Army Maj. Nidal Malik Hassan kills 13 and wounds another 29 soldiers and civilians at Fort Hood, Texas in the deadliest shooting on a U.S. military installation.

Nov. 6

1915: Lt. Cmdr. Henry C. Mustin's Curtiss Model AB-2 launches from the armored cruiser USS *North Carolina,* marking the world's first catapult launch from a ship.

1941: While searching for blockade runners in the Caribbean, the cruiser USS *Omaha* and destroyer USS *Somers* spot a cargo ship flying U.S. colors but behaving oddly and whose sailors looked "uniquely un-American." When —*Omaha* attempts to make contact, the ship's crew attempt to sabotage the vessel and a boarding crew is sent over. The captured ship turns out to be the

German *Odenwald*, transporting rubber and other supplies from Japan. The sailors from the boarding party are each awarded $3,000 as bounty from the seized cargo and everyone else involved receives two month's pay - the last time U.S. sailors will be awarded prize money.

tt 1942: The 2d Raider Battalion sets out on a month-long patrol to cut off Japanese forces attempting to escape encirclement at Guadalcanal's Koli Point. Over the next four weeks, Lt. Col. Evans Carlson's Raiders marched 150 miles through dense jungles, using their trademark guerilla tactics to kill 500 enemy troops in several engagements. Only 16 Marines died during the operation, but virtually the entire battalion suffered from tropical diseases that were said to be worse than combat.

1944: Capt. Charles Yeager becomes one of the first U.S. pilots to shoot down a Messerschmidt Me-262 jet fighter, scoring his victory as the warplane attempts to land on a German airfield.

During a three-day battle at Kommerscheidt, Germany, U.S. Army 1st Lt. Turney W. Leonard "repeatedly braved overwhelming enemy fire in advance of his platoon to direct the fire of his tank destroyer from exposed, dismounted positions. He went on lone reconnaissance missions to discover what opposition his men faced, and on 1 occasion, when fired upon by a hostile machinegun, advanced alone and eliminated the enemy emplacement with a hand grenade. When a strong German attack threatened to overrun friendly positions, he moved through withering artillery, mortar, and small arms fire, reorganized confused infantry units whose leaders had become casualties, and exhorted them to hold firm. Although wounded early in battle, he continued to direct fire from his advanced position until he was disabled by a high-explosive shell which shattered his arm, forcing him to withdraw. He was last seen at a medical aid station which was subsequently captured by the enemy."

Leonard reportedly asked to be concealed in a foxhole with a weapon as he did not want to be taken prisoner. For his actions, he was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

1945: Ensign Jake West's FR-1 Fireball, a combination piston- and jet-powered aircraft, touches down aboard the USS *Wake Island* (CVE-65), making him the first pilot to land a jet on an aircraft carrier. The feat wasn't intentional, however: the fighter's piston engine failed on final approach and West had to start the jet engine to land - catching the third (and final) arrestor wire.

The Navy equipped a squadron with Fireballs in 1945, but the landing gear wasn't strong enough to handle the harsh loads experienced during carrier landings and World War II ended before the FR-1 could participate in combat operations.

1950: After three attempts to dislodge well-fortified heavy enemy infantry through "a veritable hail of shattering hostile machine gun, grenade, and rifle fire," 2nd Lt. Robert D. Reem's rallied what was left of his platoon for a fourth assault up the hill. As he was issuing last-minute orders to his non-commissioned officers, Reem spotted an enemy grenade that landed amongst the Marines and unhesitatingly hurled himself on it, absorbing the deadly blast with his own body. For his heroic actions, Reem was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

1951: Near Vladivostok, two Soviet Air Force fighters engage and shoot down a U.S. Navy P2V-3 "Neptune" patrol bomber 18 miles from the Russian coast. All ten crew members are lost.

1967: Cmdr. Joseph P. Smolinski and copilot Cmdr. George A. Surovik fly their SP-5B "Marlin" flying boat over Naval Air Station North Island and splash down in San Diego Bay on the last-ever operation of a U.S. Navy seaplane.

Nov. 7

1811: At the confluence of the Wabash and Tippecanoe Rivers, William Henry Harrison's 1,000-man force of militia and regular infantry soldiers clash 'with American Indian warriors led by Tenskwatawa (known as "The Prophet"). Although outnumbered by the Americans, the Indians charge

multiple times into Harrison's lines, inflicting serious casualties on the defenders, but withdraw once the sun rises and Tecumseh's confederacy abandons the area. Harrison - destined to become a brigadier general during the War of 1812 and ultimately president of the United States — will forever be known as "the hero of Tippecanoe."

1861: A Naval force under Flag Officer Samuel F. DuPont boldly steams into Port Royal Sound (S.C.), and Union gunners pour heavy fire into Confederate-held Forts Walker and Beauregard. Marines and sailors land and occupy the forts, giving the Union a crucial supply base for their Naval blockade.

1863: Union forces under the command of Maj. Gen. John Sedgwick decisively defeat Confederate forces under Maj. Gen. Jubal Early in the Battle of Rappahannock Station (Va.). Though a "a complete and glorious victory" for the Union Army, Confederate Col. Walter Taylor will refer to the battle as "the saddest chapter in the history of this army ... miserable, miserable management."

In six months, Sedgwick will be shot and killed by a Confederate sharpshooter during the bloody Battle of Spotsylvania Court House.

1917: Eugene J. Bullard, an American flying for the French Air Service, becomes the first black pilot to shoot down an enemy aircraft. The "Black Swallow of Death" would fly 20 combat missions for the French - claiming two aerial kills - before war's end.

The Columbus, Ga. native's father came to America from the Caribbean island of Martinique and his mother was a Creek indian. Bullard fled to Europe to escape racism in the United States and joined the French Foreign Legion as a machine gunner, seeing action in the Somme, Champagne, and Verdun campaigns before being wounded. After recovering, he joined the air service and earned his pilot's license. He volunteered for the infantry when Germany invaded France again in 1940 and was wounded.

2007: When a friendly unit operating in Afghanistan calls for air support, an Air Force MQ-9A Reaper unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) responds to the firefight. The Reaper's operators, remotely piloting the vehicle from Creech Air Force Base in Nevada, drop 500-pound bombs on the enemy combatants, marking the first time bombs are dropped by a UAV in combat.

The Reaper can carry four AGM-114 Hellfire missiles and two precision-guided, 500-pound bombs and is larger, faster, and can carry 15 times the ordnance of the earlier MQ-1 Predator drones.

Nov. 8

1950: After completing a strafing run against enemy antiaircraft positions in his Lockheed P-80C "Shooting Star", Air Force 1st Lt. Russel J. Brown spots a formation of Soviet MiG-15 fighters. Brown claims one of the enemy warplanes, marking the world's first jet-on-jet victory.

— Nov. 9

1822: During an anti-piracy cruise in the Caribbean, the brig USS *Alligator* - the third of four so-named U.S. warships - intercepts a flotilla of American ships captured by pirates near Cuba. Lt. William H. Allen, *Alligator's* commanding officer, is mortally wounded when he and his sailors board the heavily-armed schooner *Revenge*, but his crew retakes all but one of the eight ships.

1906: Theodore Roosevelt boards the battleship USS *Louisiana* (BB-19) and heads south to inspect construction on the Panama Canal - marking the first foreign trip by a sitting U.S. president.

1942: U.S. troops advance on Oran, capturing 2,000 French soldiers after some hard fighting. Off the coast, Allied warships sink three French destroyers. Meanwhile to the east, German paratroopers land in Tunisia. And to the west, Maj. Gen. George Patton's soldiers fight to secure the beachhead
---- it Casablanca.

1944: Boeing's new long distance transport prototype makes its first flight. The new cargo plane is essentially a B-29 Superfortress heavy bomber, but with a significantly larger fuselage. The Stratofreighter enters service in 1947, participating in the Berlin Airlift, Korean War, and the Vietnam War. Most of the nearly 900 airframes are KC-97 aerial refuelers, but Strategic Air Command puts a few platforms into service as aerial command posts, while other C-97s serve with Aerospace Rescue and Recovery squadrons.

[6] **1950:** As Task Force 77 aircraft make their attack on the Yalu River bridges connecting Korea and China, Lt. Cmdr. William T. Amen engages a Soviet jet formation attempting to intercept the Americans and shoots down a MiG-15 with his F9F-2B "Panther". Amen, the commanding officer of Fighter Squadron 111 (VF-l11), becomes the first pilot to score a jet-on-jet kill (confirmed by both combatants) in aviation history.

That same day over Sinuiju, North Korea, RB-50 Superfortress tail gunner Cpl. Harry J. LaVene becomes the first aerial gunner to shoot down a MiG-15.

2001: During the Battle of Mazar-e-Sharif U.S. Army and Air Force special operations forces ride into combat on horseback - the first cavalry charge by the United States military since 1943. Hundreds of Taliban and al Qaeda fighters are killed during the battle and another 1,500 are captured or defect. Although war planners figured it would take months to capture the strategic city and its airfield, the Taliban withdraw the following day.

Nov. 10

1775: On this day 242 years ago, the Marine Corps is born. The Continental Congress decrees that two battalions of Marines be raised in Philadelphia, consisting of "good seamen, or so acquainted with maritime affairs as to be able to serve by sea when required; that they be enlisted and commissioned to

serve for and during the present war with Great Britain and the Colonies." Capt. Samuel Nicholas - commissioned just days before as the first Marine officer - sets up his recruiting headquarters at Tun Tavern.

1944: While anchored at Papua New Guinea, 3,800 tons of ammunition aboard the cargo ship USS *Mount Hood* explodes, obliterating the 350-man crew and destroying or damaging dozens of ships nearby. The destruction was so complete that apart from a 16-foot chunk of the hull found in a trench, no recognizable pieces of the 459-foot ship remained.

1949: The Sikorsky H-19 "Chickasaw" helicopter makes its first flight. The Army and Air Force will order dozens of the helicopters and use them for medical evacuation and rescue operations during the Korean War.

. 1959: *USS Triton* (SSRN-586), the largest, most powerful, and most expensive submarine of its age (thanks to two nuclear power plants) is commissioned. On her shakedown cruise "The Big T" becomes the first submarine to circumnavigate the globe without surfacing. Shortly after entering service as a radar picket vessel, the advent of early warning aircraft makes *Triton's* role obsolete and in 1969 *Triton* will be the first nuclear submarine to be decommissioned.

2001: U.S.-led coalition forces defeat Taliban forces in Mazar-e-Sharif, scoring the first major victory of the war in Afghanistan.

Nov. 11

1918: The armistice is signed, ending World War I.

Nov. 14

/) 1965: 450 soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry under the command of Lt. Col. Harold Moore are choppered in to assault the communist stronghold in the Ia Drang Valley. Upon landing, the unit is nearly overrun by three Thattalions (1,600 soldiers) of North Vietnamese regulars, resulting in hand-to-hand combat, but the soldiers hold out for two days before being relieved -

inflicting heavy casualties on the enemy. The Battle of the Ia Drang Valley is the first major battle between U.S. and NVA forces and one of the only set-piece battles of the Vietnam War.

Nov. 15

1942: Off Guadalcanal, the U.S. and Japanese fleets engage in one of only two battleship-on-battleship engagements of the Pacific War. While *Kirishima* hammers USS *South Dakota* in the early morning hours, USS *Washington* slips away undetected and maneuvers to near point-blank range, raking the Japanese battleship with devestating salvos. Japanese naval guns and torpedoes send three U.S. destroyers *(Walke, Preston,* and *Benham)* to the bottom of Ironbottom Sound, while U.S. warplanes destroy four troop transport ships carrying soldiers and badly needed supplies. The Allies have inflicted such heavy losses on the Japanese that they abandon the mission to retake Guadalcanal.

Injured in the attack on *South Dakota* is 12-year-old Seaman 1st Class Calvin L. Graham, who lied about his age that summer to join the Navy. Graham earns the Bronze Star with Combat "V" and the Purple Heart during the battle. When the government learns his actual age, Graham is thrown in the brig for three months, dishonorably discharged, and his medals are stripped. He enlists in the Marine Corps when he turns 17.

1950: "As a squad leader of the 3d Platoon [U.S. Army Pfc. Mack A. Jordan] was participating in a night attack on key terrain against a fanatical hostile force when the advance was halted by intense small-arms and automatic-weapons fire and a vicious barrage of handgrenades. Upon orders for the platoon to withdraw and reorganize, Pfc. Jordan voluntarily remained behind to provide covering fire. Crawling toward an enemy machine gun emplacement, he threw 3 grenades and neutralized the gun. He then rushed the position delivering a devastating hail of fire, killing several of the enemy and forcing the remainder to fall back to new positions. He courageously attempted to move forward to silence another machine gun but, before he could leave his position, the ruthless foe hurled explosives down the hill and

in the ensuing blast both legs were severed. Despite mortal wounds, he continued to deliver deadly fire and held off the assailants until the platoon returned."

Pfc. Jordan was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

1960: The U.S. Navy's first ballistic missile submarine, USS *George Washington* (SSBN-598) departs Charleston harbor (S.C.) harbor for its first deterrent patrol. Aboard are 16 Polaris A-1 missiles, which carry a one megaton nuclear warhead (nearly 70 times more powerful than the bomb dropped on Hiroshima 15 years before) that can strike targets over 1,000 miles away.

1966: After descending from a 266,000-foot climb, a North American X-15 rocket carrying U.S. Air Force Maj. Michael J. Adams enters a violent spin at Mach 5, killing the pilot. Adams had flown 49 combat missions during the Korean War before joining the X-15 program. Having crossed the 50-mile threshold, qualifying his last flight as a space flight, Adams is posthumously awarded astronaut wings.

2006: 82d Airborne soldiers begin what will be an intense 40-hour battle with heavily armed and well-disciplined insurgents in in Iraq's Diyala province. By the time the shooting stops, U.S. troops have destroyed an extensive network of trenches and capture a stockpile of ammunition and heavy weapons. 5th Squadron of the 73rd Cavalry Regiment earns the Presidential Unit Citation for their role in the Battle of Turki.

Nov. 16

1927: The United States Navy commissions its second-ever aircraft carrier, USS *Saratoga* (CV-3). Following her service during World War II, the flattop (which was originally designed to be a battlecruiser) is sunk during atomic weapons testing.

1944: Over 4,000 Allied warplanes hammer Nazi Germany with one of the heaviest bombardments of World War II prior to an advance by the 1st and 9th U.S. Armies.

4 2004: Nine days after launching Operation Phantom Fury — the Second Battle of Fallujah (Iraq) — U.S. Marines and soldiers (as well as a few British and Iraqi troops) begin the mopping-up phase of what has since been described as the most intense urban combat since the bloody battle for the Vietnamese city of Hue in 1968.

It is during the battle for Fallujah, that a radio transmission is intercepted by U.S. forces in which a panicking al-Qaeda insurgent is heard exclaiming to his chief: "We are fighting, but the Marines keep coming! We are shooting, but the Marines won't stop!"

Nov. 17

41917: The destroyers USS *Fanning* and USS *Nicholson* attack the German U-boat *U-58*, becoming the first ships to sink a submarine in US history.

Nov. 19

fet) 1863: Four months after the Battle of Gettysburg, President Abraham Lincoln addresses an audience with a brief speech honoring the fallen: "...we can not dedicate — we can not consecrate — we can not hallow — this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. ... we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain — that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom — and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

Lincoln's Gettysburg Address becomes one of the most famous speeches in American history.

1950: Maj. Gen. Oliver P. Smith's 1st Marine Division fights arctic temperatures dropping to —35 °F, moving slowly towards North Korea's Chosin Reservoir. Meanwhile, the Chinese 9th Corps Army closes in on the Americans from the north.

1967: During the Battle of Dak To, Chaplain (Maj.) Charles J. Watters, "with complete disregard for his safety, rushed forward to the line of contact. Unarmed and completely exposed, he moved among, as well as in front of the advancing troops, giving aid to the wounded, assisting in their evacuation, giving words of encouragement, and administering the last rites to the dying. When a wounded paratrooper was standing in shock in front of the assaulting forces, Chaplain Watters ran forward, picked the man up on his shoulders and carried him to safety. As the troopers battled to the first enemy entrenchment, Chaplain Watters ran through the intense enemy fire to the front of the entrenchment to aid a fallen comrade. A short time later, the paratroopers pulled back in preparation for a second assault. Chaplain Watters exposed himself to both friendly and enemy fire between the 2 forces in order to recover 2 wounded soldiers. Later, when the battalion was forced to pull back into a perimeter, Chaplain Watters noticed that several wounded soldiers were Lying outside the newly formed perimeter. Without hesitation and ignoring attempts to restrain him, Chaplain Watters left the perimeter three times in the face of small arms, automatic weapons, and mortar fire to carry and to assist the injured troopers to safety. Satisfied that all of the wounded were inside the perimeter, he began aiding the medics—applying field bandages to open wounds, obtaining and serving food and water, giving spiritual and mental strength and comfort. During his ministering, he moved out to the perimeter from position to position redistributing food and water, and tending to the needs of his men. Chaplain Watters was giving aid to the wounded when he himself was mortally wounded."

Chaplain Watters was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

1969: Apollo 12 astronauts Charles "Pete" Conrad Jr. (Cmdr., USN) and Alan L. Bean (Cmdr, USN) become the third and fourth humans to walk on the noon. Orbiting above in the command module is Richard F. Gordon Jr. (Cmdr., USN) The entire crew of Apollo 12 are former Naval aviators.

Nov. 20

1776: Having defeated the American garrison at Fort Washington, 5,000 British soldiers land at The Palisades and begin their New Jersey invasion. Gen. George Washington orders Fort Lee (directly across the Hudson River from Fort Washington) abandoned and the Continental Army retreats across the Hackensack River.

1918: The 369th Infantry Regiment receives the honor of becoming the first American unit to enter German territory for occupation duty. The famed "Hell Fighters from Harlem" fought with distinction under French command during World War I, spending more time in combat and suffering more casualties than any other American regiment during the war.

1943: A flotilla of over 100 warships, including 17 aircraft carriers and 12 battleships, hammers the Tarawa Atoll as the first of 35,000 Marines and soldiers land in the face of stiff Japanese resistance. Rear Adm. Keiji Shibasaki, in command of the defenders, stated that "a million men could not take Tarawa in a hundred years." In fact, it will only take 76 hours to secure the islands.

The fanatical defenders will fight almost to the last man in the first heavily opposed U.S. landing in the Pacific. Many of the American casualties were due to low tide conditions that forced Marines to wade hundreds of yards across jagged coral reefs - under withering fire - to reach the shore. The resulting losses inspired the creation of the Navy's Underwater Demolition Teams to provide critical hydrographic reconnaissance and destroy obstacles for amphibious landings - the birth of what will become today's SEAL Teams.

1944: The USS *Mississinewa* becomes the first victim of the Japanese *Kaiten* suicide submarine when the tanker is sunk in the Caroline Islands.

1945: The Nuremberg Trials begin when 24 high-ranking Nazi officials face charges in Nuremberg, Germany for atrocities committed during World War

1962: With assurances that the Soviet Union would remove their ballistic missiles from the island, President Kennedy lifts the naval blockade against Cuba, ending the Cuban Missile Crisis.

Nov. 21

4 1817: The First Seminole War begins when Gen. (and future president) Andrew Jackson leads forces into Spanish-held Florida to reclaim escaped slaves from Seminole tribal areas.

a 1943: *USS Nautilus* (SS-168) surfaces and disembarks Capt. James L. Jones and his Marine Amphibious Reconnaissance Company off the beaches of Abemama Atoll in the Gilbert Islands. The raiders board rubber rafts and paddle ashore under cover of darkness, spending the next several days wiping out the defenders and capturing the islands along with fire support from the sub. The Marine Corps' modern-day Force Reconnaissance companies trace their roots to Jones' team.

1947: Grumman's first jet fighter, the F9F "Panther" makes its first flight. The F9F will serve as the Navy and Marine Corps' primary jet fighter during the Korean War and will be flown by Hall of Fame baseball player Ted Williams (USMC) and Apollo 11 astronaut Neil Armstrong (USN).

1967: Gen. William Westmoreland, the commander of U.S. Military Assistance Command Vietnam, tells the American press that "I am absolutely certain that whereas in 1965 the enemy was winning, today he is certainly losing."

1 1970: Col. Arthur **D.** "Bull" Simons leads a 56-man rescue operation on the Son Tay POW camp, just 23 miles from Hanoi, North Vietnam. Although the prisoners had been relocated to another camp prior to the operation, the raid - involving over 100 aircraft from multiple services - was a tactical success. Dozens of enemy guards are killed during the brief engagement and the assault would serve in part as a model for the formation of Special Operations 'Command.

Nov. 22

1718: The Royal Navy locates Edward Teach, the notorious pirate known as "Blackbeard", off the coast of North Carolina. After two devastating broadsides from Blackbeard's ship *Adventure*, a boarding party led by Lt. Robert Maynard of HMS *Ranger* boards the pirate sloop and kills Blackbeard.

4 **1942:** After crushing the Romanians, the Soviet 4th Mechanized Corps and 4th Tank Corps meet at Kalach-na-Donu, surrounding the 250,000 men of Gen. Friedrich Paulus' 6th Army. The trapped Germans eventually surrender in what becomes perhaps the bloodiest battle in the history of warfare, with some two million casualties over the five-month engagement.

1963: President John F. Kennedy is assassinated by former Marine radar operator Lee Harvey Oswald while the presidential motorcade travels through Dallas, Texas. Oswald also seriously wounds Texas Governor John Connally in the attack. Both Kennedy and Connally served in the Navy during World — War II - Kennedy as a PT boat skipper and Connally as a fighter plane director aboard aircraft carriers.

1972: Although North Vietnam claimed that they had already shot down 19 B-52 bombers, this date marks the first time a "Stratofortress" falls victim to enemy surface-to-air missiles. Following their raid on Vinh, the crew bails out of the stricken bird over Thailand. 30 more B-52s will be destroyed by hostile fire during the remainder of the war.

4 **1988:** Northrop's B-2 "Spirit" stealth bomber is unveiled to an audience of government officials and press at Air Force Plant 42 in Palmdale, Calif.. The B-2 will not make its first flight until the following year and doesn't enter combat until Kosovo in 1999.

Nov. 23

1863: The battles of the Chattanooga campaign begin between newly appointed commander of the Western armies, Union Maj. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant, and Confederate Gen. Braxton Bragg.

Within days, Union Army forces will attack and capture Orchard Knob, Lookout Mountain, and the Confederate works on Missionary Ridge. The "Gateway to the Lower South" will open, and within a year, Union Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman will pass through the "gateway" enroute to Atlanta.

1943: Japanese-held Tarawa falls to American forces despite the boast of its defending commander, Rear Adm. Keiji Shibasaki, that "a million men could not take Tarawa in a hundred years." It takes several thousand Marines and about 76 hours to seize Tarawa.

Makin Atoll, 100 miles north of Tarawa, is also declared secure.

1944: The Seventh Army, commanded by Gen. Alexander Patch, captures Strasbourg, France.

1972: Peace talks between the US and North Vietnam secretly resume in Paris, but quickly reach an impasse.

Medal of Honor: On this date in 1944, near Moyenmoutier, France, 1st Lt. Edward A. Silk (http://www.victoryinstitute.net/blogs/utb/2000/11/edward-a-silk-medal-of-honor-citation/) single-handedly silenced a German machine-gun position that had halted his battalion.

Nov. 24

1863: Union forces scale the slopes of Lookout Mountain under cover of fog, capturing high ground and breaking the Confederate siege of Chattanooga, Tenn. Meanwhile, Maj. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant's Military Division of the Mississippi defeats Gen. Braxton Bragg's Army of Tennessee in the Battle of —Lookout Mountain. Three Union soldiers were awarded the Medal for actions in the engagement: Pvt. Peter Kappesser and 1st Sgt. Norman F. Potter (for

capturing Confederate Gen. Braxton Bragg's flag) and Sgt. John Kiggins (for waving colors to save the lives of troops being fired at by friendly artillery batteries — drawing concentrated enemy fire).

1943: The Japanese submarine *1-75* torpedoes the escort carrier USS *Liscome Bay* during the Battle of Makin Island, detonating the aircraft bomb magazine and engulfing the ship in flames. 23 minutes later, the carrier sinks, taking over 700 sailors and officers with her to the bottom. Among the dead are Rear Adm. Henry M. Mullinnix and Petty Officer Doris "Dorie" Miller, one of the "first U.S. heroes of Pearl Harbor, as the first black sailor ever awarded the Navy Cross.

1944: 111 U.S. B-29 bombers of the 73rd Bombardment Wing, flying out of Saipan, attack the Nakajima Aircraft engine plant near Tokyo in the first attack on the Japanese mainland since Doolittle's 1942 raid.

1950: Gen. Douglas MacArthur launches the "Home by Christmas" offensive against Chinese and North Korean forces. The attack meets heavy resistance and a Chinese counterattack would drive UN forces from North Korea by December.

1951: Near Kowang-San, Korea, Pvt. 1st Class Noah 0. Knight (http://wwvv.victoryinstitute.net/blogs/utb/2000/11/noah-o-knight-medal-of-honor-citation/) spots enemy soldiers entering a friendly position. Having previously exhausted his ammunition while stemming an enemy advance and causing heavy enemy casualties, Knight rushed the soldiers, neutralizing two with his rifle butt, but was mortally wounded when the third enemy soldier detonated his explosives. For his actions, he is posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

1963: Two days after assassinating Pres. John F. Kennedy, former Marine Lee Harvey Oswald is himself shot and killed by Jack Ruby - formerly a mechanic in the Army Air Forces, who served during World War II.

—Nov. 25

1783: Three months after the end of the Revolutionary War, the last British soldiers withdraw from New York City. British forces had held the city since 1776, and after its liberation, New York would become the first national capital under the Constitution.

1863: One day after capturing Lookout Mountain, Union forces under Gen. Ulysses S. Grant rout Gen. Braxton Bragg's Confederate Army of Tennessee on Missionary Ridge, breaking the Confederate siege of Chattanooga.

1864: The Confederate plot to burn New York City fails. Agents did manage to burn several hotels, but most of the fires either were contained quickly or failed to ignite. Robert Kennedy, a Confederate officer who escaped from a Union prisoner of war camp in Ohio, was the only operative to be caught.

1876: In Wyoming Territory, Army cavalry soldiers defeat Cheyenne warriors under chiefs Dull Knife and Little Wolf, effectively ending the Cheyenne's ability to wage war.

1941: Adm. Harold R. Stark, the Chief of Naval Operations, warns Adm. Husband E. Kimmel, commander of the Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor, that both President Roosevelt and Secretary of State Cordell Hull think a Japanese surprise attack is a distinct possibility. The next day, the Japanese task force sets sail for Pearl Harbor.

1943: Five US destroyers under the command of Capt. Arleigh Burke sink three Japanese destroyers while receiving no damage themselves in the Battle of Cape St. George in the Solomon Islands, marking the end of Japan's "Tokyo Express" resupply route in the South Pacific.

1943: Bombers from the US 14th Air Force, based in China, strike the Japanese-held island of Formosa (Taiwan) for the first time.

1944: Four US carriers are damaged in a mass kamikaze assault by Japanese aircraft as US warplanes sink two Japanese cruisers off Luzon.

1961: The world's first nuclear-powered carrier, the USS *Enterprise* (CVN-

65) is commissioned.

2001: US Marines of the 15th and 26 Marine Expeditionary Unit land near Kandahar, becoming the first major combat force in Afghanistan.

2001: CIA operative and former Marine Johnny Michael Spann becomes the first US combat death in Afghanistan when hundreds of Taliban prisoners in the makeshift prison near Mazar-I-Sharif revolt.

Medal of Honor: 1st Lt. Arthur MacArthur Jr., father of Gen. Douglas MacArthur, seizes "the colors of his regiment at a critical moment and planted them on the captured works on the crest of Missionary Ridge." The MacArthurs are the first father and son to be awarded the Medal of Honor. The only other pair is Theodore Roosevelt and Theodore Roosevelt, Jr.

Nov. 26

L 1789: Pres. George Washington issues a proclamation declaring 26 November "to be devoted by the People of these States to the service of that great and glorious Being, who is the beneficent Author of all the good that was, that is, or that will be." This marks the first designated Thanskgiving Day by the United States government.

1862: Maj. William H. Powell leads twenty troopers on a cavalry charge against a 500-man encampment at Sinking Creek Valley (Va.). The Union men capture 114 Confederates and 200 guns without losing a single man. Powell is awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions.

1941: After receiving an ultimatum from the US ordering Japan to vacate China or face further sanctions, the Japanese First Air Fleet, commanded by Adm. Chuichi Nagumo, departs for their attack on Pearl Harbor.

1943: Off the Algerian coast, a *Luftwaffe* Heinkel He 177A heavy bomber releases its Hs 293 radio-controlled glide bomb, which heads for the British — transport ship HMT *Rohna.* The bomb impacts the side of the ship, knocking

out electricity and setting *Rohna* ablaze. When the transport slips under the waves, she takes with her over 1000 American troops. The sinking of the *Rohna* remains the greatest loss of life at sea in the history of the U.S. Navy.

1950: Chinese forces launch a massive counterattack against US and South Korean forces, driving them south and putting an end to any hopes of a quick conclusion to the Korean War.

1970: When a six-man reconnaissance patrol of Green Berets under heavy enemy fire radios for extraction, U.S. Air Force 1st Lt. James P. Fleming lands his Uff,-1 helicopter - which was low on fuel - in the middle of the firefight scithat the Special Forces soldiers can be rescued. On their way to the chopper, the team shoots three Viet Cong just ten feet from Fleming's helicopter, which was running low on fuel. Fleming is awarded the Medal of Honor for his dramatic rescue.

Nov. 27

v 1817: Maj. Gen. Edmund P. Gaines dispatches soldiers to attack the Seminole camp at Fowltown, Fla., formally beginning the First Seminole War.

1868: Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer's Seventh Cavalry attacks a peaceful Cheyenne encampment near present-day Cheyenne, Okla. The Battle of Washita River — more of a massacre — would be the first substantial "victory" in the Indian Wars.

1909: Following the execution of two American mercenaries in Nicaragua, U.S. forces land in Bluefields to prepare for an invasion.

t 1942: Adm. Jean de Laborde orders the destruction of the French fleet anchored at Toulon, to avoid falling into German hands. Three battleships, six cruisers, 1 aircraft transport, 30 destroyers, and 16 submarines are sunk. Three submarines sail for Allied-controlled Algiers, and only one falls into Gelman hands.

1950: Near 1psok, Korea, Army Capt. Reginald B. Desiderio (http://www.victoryinstitute.net/blogs/utb/2000/11/capt-reginald-b-desiderio-medal-of-honor-citation/) charges into the enemy, inflicting heavy casualties before being killed himself by enemy fire. Prior to his one-man assault, which ultimately repelled the fanatical enemy attack, Desiderio had been wounded twice and refused evacuation. Desiderio's replacement as company commander, Capt. Lewis L. Millett (http://www.victoryinstitute.net/blogs/utb/2000/02/lewis-l-red-millett-medal-of-honor-citation/) , will also be awarded the Medal of Honor - for a historic bayonet charge in February.

1951: A "Nike" anti-aircraft missile shoots down a QB-17 "Flying Fortress" target drone over White Sands Missile Range, becoming the first successful surface-to-air missile test. The Army will begin putting Nike systems in the field in 1953.

1965: The Pentagon tells Pres. Lyndon B. Johnson that in order to have success in his military objectives, the troop commitment in Vietnam would have to be increased nearly four times - from 120,000 troops to 400,000.

Nov. 28

1864: Lt. Gen. James Longstreet's forces assault Union-held Fort Sanders. The defenders are well prepared: telegraph wire is strung up around the position - one of the first times in military history that wire is used as a defensive tool. Many Confederates break their ankles on the wires during the assault, and are picked off as they attempt to disentangle themselves. Those that don't become casualties from the wire are unable to climb over the frozen and near-vertical wall surrounding the fort. As a result of the disaster at Fort Sanders, Longstreet is forced to abandon his campaign to capture Knoxville.

1941: The aircraft carrier USS *Enterprise* (CV-6) departs Pearl Harbor to ferry F4F Wildcat fighters from Marine Fighter Squadron 211 (VMF-211) to Wake Island, thus saving the carrier from the coming Japanese attack.

1941: Adolf Hitler meets with Mohammad Amin al-Husayni, the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, and the two determine that Jews in the Middle East must be exterminated.

1942: The first Ford production B-24 Liberator rolls off the new production line in Ypsilanti, Mich. By war's end, the plant would turn out some 8,500 Liberators — and by June of 1944, at the incredible rate of one per hour.

1943: In Teheran, Iran, Franklin Roosevelt, Winston Churchill, and Joseph Stalin meet for the first time to plan a strategy to defeat Nazi Germany.

1950: Gen. Walton Walker, Commander of the Eighth Army, declares that his offensive is over. Gen. Douglas MacArthur informs the Joint Chiefs that "We face an entirely new war." Nearly half a million Chinese soldiers drive US forces before them.

Meanwhile, the Chinese launch a massive offensive intending to wipe out the First Marine Division. Three Marines from the 2d Battalion, Seventh Marines, First Marine Division - one in E Company (SSgt. Robert S. Kennemore (http://www.victoryinstitute.net/blogs/utb/2000/11/robert-s-kennemore-medal-of-honor-citation/)) and two in F Company (Capt. William E. Barber (http://www.victoryinstitute.net/blogs/utb/2000/11/william-e-barber-medal-of-honor-citation/) and Pvt. Hector A. Cafferata Jr. (http://www.victoryinstitute.net/blogs/utb/2000/11/hector-a-cafferata-jr)) will earn the Medal of Honor on this date.

Nov. 29

1760: Rogers' Rangers under the command of Massachusetts-born Maj. (future Lt. Col.) Robert Rogers capture Fort Detroit from the French. U.S. Army Rangers in the 20th and 21st centuries will trace their lineage to Rogers and his British Colonial irregulars. **1804:** Marine Corps 1st Lt. Presley O'Bannon, William Eaton, Navy Midshipman George Mann, and seven Marines land at Alexandria, Egypt with the intention of overthrowing the ruler of Tripoli. Five months - and 600 miles - later, the men would arrive in the port city of Derne and defeat the Bashaw's forces.

1890: At West Point, the visiting U.S. Naval Academy beats the U.S. Military Academy, 24-0, in the first-ever Army — Navy football game.

1929: U.S. Navy Commander Richard E. Byrd Jr. makes the first-ever flight over the South Pole. Byrd — a future rear admiral and recipient of the Medal of Honor for his 1926 flight over the North Pole — serves as navigator for the South Pole flight. His companions include pilot Bernt Balchen, radio operator Harold June, and photographer Ashley McKinley. The team crosses the Pole in a modified Ford tri-motor airplane.

lo **1941:** The Japanese decide that the terms issued by the United States are unacceptable and that Japan must go to war. Meanwhile, the passenger ship *Lurline* sends a radio signal that they have spotted Japanese fleet in the North Pacific, heading East.

.4i/ 1944: The submarine USS *Archerfish* sinks the Japanese carrier *Shinano,* the largest warship sunk by a submarine during World War II, off Honshu. In the Philippines, the battleship USS *Maryland* and two destroyers are heavily damaged by kamikaze attacks.

Meanwhile in France, for nearly two weeks SSgt. Andrew Miller (http://victoryinstitute.net/blogs/utb/2000/1[1]/[a]ndrew-miller-medal-of-honor-citation/) engages in a "series of heroic events," to include single-handedly silencing multiple machinegun positions; killing or wounding dozens of German soldiers, and capturing scores more. Then on Nov. 29 1944, SSgt. Miller's platoon was pinned down by German fire. He led a charge that smothered the Germans, but the attack cost Miller his life.

1952: Newly elected president - and former Gen. - Dwight Eisenhower fulfills his campaign promise of visiting Korea in hopes of ending the conflict. Upon taking office, President Eisenhower informs the Chinese that he would unleash Nationalist Chinese forces in Taiwan against Communist China unless peace negotiations progressed. An armistice was signed in July of 1953.

1968: Viet Cong High Command issues a directive to its forces to wage a new assault to "utterly destroy" US and South Vietnamese forces, specifically targeting the highly effective Phoenix counterinsurgency program.

December

Dec. 1

1779: During what is perhaps the worst winter of the century, Gen. George Washington's army establishes their winter camp at Morristown, N.J.

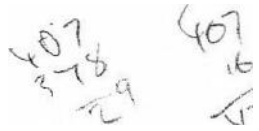
1918: The American Army of Occupation enters Germany. Rejecting the Treaty of Versailles, the United States technically remained in a state of war against the Germans until 1921 when a separate peace agreement was signed.

1921: Lt. Cmdr. Ralph F. Wood departs Norfolk, Va. in a blimp for Washington, D.C. in the first flight of a helium-filled aircraft.

1941: With the Japanese fleet secretly steaming towards Pearl Harbor, Japanese emperor Hirohito signs a declaration of war against the United States.

1941: The Civil Air Patrol is established. Originally intended for reconnaissance, civilian planes are eventually fitted with bombs and depth charges when German submarines begin attacking U.S. shipping on the east coast. During the war, CAP pilots would log half a million hours, spotting 173 submarines, hitting 10 and sinking two - at the cost of 64 pilots.

1943: The Teheran Conference between Franklin Roosevelt, Winston Churchill, and Joseph Stalin concludes. The three leaders agree on plans-to invade western Europe in May, 1944; to invade southern France; and that the Soviets would join the war against Japan once the Germans were defeated.



1943: The improved P-51D "Mustang" is sent into combat for the first time, during a fighter sweep over Belgium. By war's end the Mustang will shoot down nearly five thousand German planes - an incredible 19 enemy fighters per Mustang lost. The P-51D will also see service in the Pacific Theater, and later provide close air support for troops during the Korean War.

- **1949:** The Marine Corps' first helicopter squadron, frmx-1, is commissioned at Quantico, Va. Today, HMX-1 is tasked with transportation of the president, vice president, and other high-ranking military and government officials.

i 1950: Col. Allan MacLean's Regimental Combat Team 31 is annihilated by Chinese forces during the Battle of the Chosin Reservoir. Although enemy casualties are extremely heavy, over 1,000 U.S. soldiers are killed (to include Col. MacLean), freeze to death, or die in Chinese captivity. After the battle, only 385 of the task force's original 3,200 soldiers are fit for duty.

1969: The U.S. government holds its first draft lottery since 1942.

Dec. 4

1783: Nine days after the British evacuate New York City, Gen. George Washington bids farewell to his fellow Continental Army officers over a turtle feast at Fraunces Tavern. Washington tells them that "With a heart full of love and gratitude, I now take leave of you. I most devoutly wish that your latter days may be as prosperous and happy as your former ones have been glorious and honorable."

6 **1861:** Jefferson Davis is elected President of the Confederate States of America. Previously, Davis served as a junior officer in the U.S. Army following graduation from the U.S. Military Academy. During the Mexican-American War, he raised a volunteer infantry regiment and became its colonel. President James Polk will offer Davis a federal commission as brigadier general, which he will turn down.

1941: PBY "Catalina" patrols report that a flotilla of 30 transports at the Indochina (Vietnam) port of Cam Ranh Bay have disappeared. Marine Fighter Squadron 211, having just been delivered to Wake Island by the carrier USS *Enterprise* immediately begin their patrols, as the carrier returns to Hawaii. The Pearl Harbor attack schedule is dispatched to the Japanese submarine fleet, and a destroyer squadron sets out for the Japanese invasion of Guam.

1942: B-24 "Liberator" bombers of the 12th Air Force bomb Naples, marking the first time U.S. aircraft target Italy.

1950: While flying a search-and-destroy mission during the Battle of the Chosin Reservoir, Ensign Jesse L. Brown - the Navy's first black aviator - is shot down. His wingman, Lieutenant Junior Grade Thomas J. Hudner, Jr. crash-lands his Corsair and feverishly attempts to rescue the seriously injured Brown. A helicopter arrives to rescue the downed pilots, but the men are unable to extricate the mortally wounded Brown from the plane. For his actions, Hudner is awarded the Medal of Honor.

1965: A Titan H rocket carrying Lt. Cmdr. James Lovell (USN) and Mai Frank Borman (USAF) blasts off from Cape Canaveral. The *Gemini VII* crew will spend the next 14 days in space, doubling the amount of time humans, have spent in space - a record that will stand for the next five years.

Dec. 5

1941: *USS Lexington* (CV-2) departs Pearl Harbor loaded with Marine dive bombers destined for Midway Atoll, leaving no carriers at the base (USS *Enterprise* departed for Wake on Nov. 28). The mission saves the aircraft carrier from destruction in the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Meanwhile, Japanese submarines, having been informed of the Pearl Harbor attack timetables the day before, have surrounded the Hawaiian islands. And, prior to their surprise invasion of the Philippines, Japanese planes conduct reconnaissance flights of Luzon Island's coastline.

'**1943:** The Eighth Air Force conducts their first bombing mission against secret German V-1 and V-2 launch sites as part of Operation "Crossbow."

1945: A squadron of five Navy Avenger torpedo bombers departs Fort Lauderdale, Fla. for a flight over the so-called "Bermuda Triangle" in the Atlantic Ocean. Two hours later, the lead pilot radios that both of his compasses have malfunctioned and that their position is unknown, with other 4 planes reporting similar problems. Four hours after takeoff, a message is heard ordering pilots to prepare for ditching their aircraft. A rescue operation is launched, and a Mariner search-and-rescue aircraft is also lost. Hundreds of ships and planes are unable to find any trace of the men or aircraft.

1950: Pyongyang, Korea falls to the invading Chinese army. Meanwhile, the aircraft carrier USS *Princeton* (CV-37) arrives off the coast of Korea to provide air support to US troops retreating from Chinese forces.

1964: President Lyndon Johnson presents Army Capt. Roger H.C. Donlon (http://www.victoryinstitute.net/blogs/utb/2000/07/roger-h-c-donlon-medal-of-honor-citation) the first Medal of Honor of the Vietnam War in ceremonies at the White House. Capt. Donlon led a Green Beret team as they defended against a reinforced Viet Cong battalion near Laos on July 6, 1964.

Dec. 6

1846: Gen. Stephen Watts Kearney's U.S. Army of the West, accompanied by a small detachment of mounted rifle volunteers commanded by Marine Lt. Archibald Gillespie, attack Mexican "Californios" in the Battle of San Pasqual, near present-day San Diego. Both sides claimed victory and the engagement became one of the bloodiest of the Mexican-American War.

1917: A German U-boat torpedoes the destroyer USS *Jacob Jones* off the coast of England, which becomes the first U.S. destroyer to be sunk by a submarine.

1941: After an Australian scout plane spots a Japanese fleet near the Malayan Coast, the Allies presume that the Japanese plan to invade Thailand. However, British intelligence intercepts a radio signal warning to the Japanese fleet to be Thn full alert, prompting advisers to question whether the move is a diversion.

Meanwhile, Admiral Yamamoto tells his First Air Fleet "The rise or fall of the empire depends upon this battle. Everyone will do his duty with utmost efforts."

Also, the Japanese fleet departs Palau for the invasion of the Philippines.

1950: American forces — primarily leathernecks of the now-famous 1st Marine Division, a few American soldiers, and a handful of British commandos — begin their epic "fighting withdrawal" from Hagaru-ri to Koto-ri and on to Hamnung, during the breakout from the Chosin Reservoir, Korea. At Koto-ri, a few officers express concern that their vastly outnumbered, bloodied, freezing, near-starving columns might not survive the final trek to Hamnung.

As the UN orders communist forces to halt at the 38th Parallel, U.S. and Australian planes kill an estimated 2,500 enemy troops.

1961: The U.S. Air Force is authorized to begin combat operations in Vietnam - provided they carry a Vietnamese national with them for training purposes.

1967: When his company was attacked by a battalion-sized enemy force in South Vietnam's Bien Flea Province, U.S. Army chaplain, Capt. Charles J. Liteky (http ://www.victoryinstitute.net/blogs/utb/2000/12/charles-j-liteky/) moved multiple times through heavy enemy fire to deliver last rights to dying soldiers and aid to wounded soldiers. Despite incoming small arms and rocket fire, Liteky stood up multiple times in order to direct the incoming helicopters to the landing zone. During the engagement, he would carry 20 wounded soldiers to the landing zone for evacuation. For his actions, Liteky is awarded the Medal of Honor.

1968: The Navy launches Operation "Giant Slingshot" to interdict the flow of men and weapons flowing through the Mekong Delta from the Cambodian border.

---,Dec. 7

1917: Four U.S. battleships, USS *Delaware* (BB-28), USS *Florida* (BB-30), *New York* (BB-34), and USS *Wyoming* (BB-32) arrive in British waters and join the British Grand Fleet for service during World War I. That same day, the United States declares war on Austria-Hungary.

0 1941: At 3:57 a.m. the minesweeper USS *Condor* spots a periscope at the entrance to Pearl Harbor. The ship signals the nearby destroyer USS *Ward*, whose crew begins searching for the unidentified vessel. At 6:37 a.m., *Ward* spots the periscope as a two-man Japanese mini sub attempts to follow a U.S. cargo ship into the harbor and sinks the enemy warship - the first U.S. shots of World War II.

Having achieved total tactical and strategic surprise, Vice Adm. Chuichi Nagumo's 1st Air Fleet begins their attack on Pearl Harbor. The strike is conducted in two waves: The first wave of 183 enemy aircraft strikes just before 8:00 a.m. The second wave of 170 planes hits a little after 8:30 a.m.

Of the ships anchored at Pearl Harbor, five of the eight battleships, three destroyers, and seven other ships were either sunk or severely damaged. By day's end, 2,718 American sailors, 582 soldiers (including Army Air Forces personnel), 178 Marines, and 103 civilians will be dead, dying or wounded. Japanese losses were minimal: 30 planes, five minisubs, 65 killed, and one Japanese sailor captured. All but two of the battleships - *Arizona* and *Oklahoma* - are raised to fight again.

(4) Meanwhile, Japanese forces bomb Guam and Wake as destroyers and planes attack Midway. Other Japanese targets include Shanghai, Hong Kong, the Philippines, Thailand, Malaya, and the Dutch East Indies.

1942: *USS New Jersey* (BB-62), one of the world's largest battleships ever built, is launched. The "Big J" will serve a total of 21 years in the active fleet, seeing action in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam. In 1982 the Iowa-class battleship will put to sea once again after being modified to carry Tomahawk cruise missiles, and is decommissioned for the last time in 1991.

1943: At the Bernhardt defensive line in Italy, Lt. Gen. Mark Clark's Fifth

Army secures the Mignano Gap.

1944: Patton's Third Army crosses the Siegfried Line at Saarlautem.

In the Pacific, the 77th Infantry Division lands at Ormoc in the Philippines as one of the escort destroyers, USS *Ward* (the same ship that sunk the midget submarine three years ago at Pearl Harbor), is sunk by kamikaze attacks. Nearby, the USS *Mahan* is also sunk by kamikaze attacks.

1950: Air Force cargo planes drop eight "Treadway" bridge spans in the Funchilin Pass, enabling the First Marine Division to cross the most difficult natural obstacle on their breakout of the Chosin Reservoir.

1952: U.S. Air Force F-86 "Saber" pilots shoot down seven of 32 enemy aircraft - the highest tally of the Korean War.

1959: America's first operational ballistic missile, the PGM-17 "Thor", is successfully launched at Cape Canaveral, Fla.

1972: Apollo 17 launches for NASA's final lunar mission. Aboard are two U.S. Navy captains: Eugene A. Ceman and Ronald E. Evans, and Harrison H. Schmitt - a civilian geologist.

Dec. 8

1941: As Japanese warplanes continue to hammer Allied bases across Asia and the Pacific, President Franklin D. Roosevelt famously declares Dec. 7 as "a date which will live in infamy," asking Congress to declare war on Japan - which they will do in a matter of hours. The United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and numerous other governments also declare war on Japan.

Eyeing the destruction from USS *Enterprise* (CV-6) as the aircraft carrier steams into Pearl Harbor, he says that "Before we're through with 'em, the __Japanese language will be spoken only in hell."

Col. William W. Ashurst (USMC) is captured and surrenders his remaining "China Marines" will be held as prisoners until the end of the war. Also in China, USS *Wake* becomes the only U.S. warship to surrender during World War II, when the Japanese capture the river patrol gunboat and her crew by surprise while the ship is at anchor. A Japanese invasion fleet departs Kwajalein Atoll, and in three days will assault Wake Island.

In the Philippines, Japanese forces land at Bataan Island, as enemy air strikes take out roughly half of the American warplanes on Luzon Island.

Meanwhile, Adolf Hitler declares war on the United States, ordering his naval forces to begin attacking U.S. shipping. Although the Chinese have been fighting Japan for over four years, China formally declares war against Japan - and Germany - on this date.

1942: Considered "perhaps the greatest individual success of American PT boats during the war," eight PT boats engage - and turn around - a force of eight Japanese destroyers on a mission to supply soldiers on Guadalcanal

1965: 150 Air Force and Navy warplanes begin conducting the covert Operation "Tiger Hound", strikes against North Vietnamese Army infiltration routes along the Ho Chi Minh Trail in Laos. The campaign will continue until 1968, when it becomes part of Operation "Commando Hunt."

2012: Chief Petty Officer (SEAL) Edward C. Byers, Jr. earns the Medal of Honor during a mission to rescue an American doctor who had been captured in Afghanistan. His citation can be read here (http://vvww.victoryinstitute.net/blogs/utb/2012/12/08/edward-c-byers-jr-medal-of-honor-citation/) .

Dec. 9

1992: 1,800 U.S. Marines land on the beaches of Somalia to restore order to the war-torn country. Backed by the Marines, aid workers are soon able to — restore humanitarian aid to civilians.

Dec. 10

1941: When a Japanese submarine reports the sighting of the aircraft carrier USS Enterprise (CV-6) northeast of Hawaii, Japanese vessels still in the area are ordered to attack. Meanwhile, one of *Enterprise's* bombers spots the submarine *1-70* and drops a 1,000-1b. bomb, nearly missing the sub but knocking out its ability to submerge. Later another SBD Dauntless attacks *1-70,* sending the sub to the bottom - the first fleet submarine lost by the Japanese and the first to be sunk by aircraft during World War II.

Off the coast of Malaya, the British battleship HMS *Prince of Wales* and battle cruiser HMS *Repulse* become the first capital ships sunk solely by air power during the war, of which Winston Churchill would later say, "In all the war I never received a more direct shock. [...] There were no British or American capital ships in the Indian Ocean or the Pacific except the American survivors of Pearl Harbor who were hastening back to California. Over this vast expanse of waters Japan was supreme and we everywhere were weak and naked."

Over the Philippines, a PBY Catalina is attacked by three Japanese Mitsubishi A6M Zeros. Chief Boatswain Earl D. Payne shoots down one, marking the first (verified) air-to-air kill of a Japanese plane. Meanwhile, Capt. Henry T. Elrod shoots down a Mitsubishi G3M "Rikko" bomber over Wake Island - the first aerial victory for the Marine Corps. Elrod will soon earn the Medal of Honor for sinking a destroyer, and is killed on the ground while defending Wake.

t The Naval Governor of Guam, Capt. George J. McMillin (a veteran of the Dominican Republic occupation, Veracruz campaign, and two World Wars), surrenders the island when 7,000 Japanese land on the island and overwhelm its defenders.

Also on this day, the United States conducts its first heavy bombardment mission of the war, targeting Lt. Gen. Masaharu Homma's 14th Japanese krmy as they land on Luzon.

1954: At Holloman Air Force Base, Lt. Col. John P. Stapp straps into a rocket sled and blasts off to a speed of 632 miles per hour, becoming the "fastest man on earth." However, the more noteworthy of his ride was his sudden deceleration - experiencing 46.2 G's as he stopped. This test demonstrated the possibility of pilots to eject from supersonic aircraft.

Dec. 11

t 1941: The small American garrison on Wake - consisting of a few hundred Marines, sailors, and civilian contractors - repels a Japanese invasion force seeking to capture the island. As coastal defense guns hammer the incoming warships, sinking one destroyer and damaging several others, the island's four remaining F4F-3 "Wildcat" fighters take off to intercept a flight of Japanese warplanes. Despite being heavily outnumbered, Marine Capt. Henry T. Elrod will shoot down two aircraft before he and his fellow aviators set their sights on the Japanese ships. Elrod becomes the first pilot to sink a ship, when his bombs detonate the depth charges on *Kisaragi.* The destroyer goes down with
— all hands.

* That same day, Adolf Hitler declares war on the United States. Although Nazi Germany and Japan had signed an agreement stating that Germany would come to Japan's aid if they were attacked, Germany was under no such obligation since Japan was the aggressor. However, and with virtually no consultation with his staff, Hitler declares war against the United States anyways. Within hours, Congress responds with a unanimous declaration of war against Germany.

1954: The world's first "supercarrier", USS *Forrestal,* is launched. The conventionally powered aircraft carrier is the first U.S. flattop built with an angled flight deck and steam catapults, and is the first designed to operate jet aircraft. With an overall length of over 1,000 feet, *Forrestal' was the largest warship built at the time.*

1961: At Saigon harbor, the aviation transport ship USNS *Core* unloads 33 U.S. Army H-21C "Shawnee" helicopters, which are the first American helicopters deployed to Vietnam. The crews' mission will be to transport South Vietnamese soldiers into combat.

Dec. 12

1753: 21-year-old Virginia adjutant George Washington delivers an ultimatum for French forces to abandon Fort Le Boeuf (present-day Waterford, Penn.) as they were trespassing on British territory.

Lt. Christopher Gist, Washington's guide, would save the future president's life twice during on their trip through the Ohio Country.

1770: The British soldiers responsible for the Boston Massacre are acquitted. Future president John Adams is their lawyer.

1937: As the gunboat USS *Panay* and three Standard Oil tankers work to evacuate U.S. citizens and Standard Oil employees from Nanking, China, the vessels are attacked and sunk by the Japanese during the Second Sino-Japanese War.

1953: Maj. (future Maj. Gen.) Chuck Yeager pilots the Bell X-1A to Mach 2.44 (1648 mph), setting a speed record (for straight-wing aircraft on level flight) that still stands today. However, the X-1 tumbles out of control and falls some 50,000 feet in just over a minute. Yeager manages to recover and is able to land the aircraft.

1985: As members of the 101st Airborne Division return from Egypt following a peacekeeping mission, the DC-8 civilian airliner carrying them crashes shortly after takeoff, killing 248 soldiers. While officials state the cause of the incident is ice accumulation, Islamic Jihad - the Hezbollah-associated group that carried out the deadly attack on the Marine barracks in Beirut two years prior - declares that they brought down the plane.

1992: Less than a week after U.S. forces arrive in Somalia for a humanitarian aid mission, Marine Corps Cobra helicopter gunships destroy a Somali armed vehicle, marking the first combat action of Operation "Restore Hope."

Dec. 13

1636: The Massachusetts General Court in Salem orders the creation of a militia, requiring all able-bodied men between the ages of 16 and 60 join, to defend the colony if necessary. Three regiments are created: the North Regiment - today's 181st and 182nd Infantry Regiments; the East Regiment - today's 101st Engineer Battalion; and the South Regiment - today's 101st Field Artillery Regiment. The National Guard is born.

1918: The U.S. Army of Occupation crosses the Rhine and enters Germany.

1951: Air Force pilot George A. Davis Jr. (http://www.victoryinstitute.net/blogs/utb/2000/02/george-a-davis-jr-medal-of-honor-citation/) shoots down four MiG-15 jets, the largest one-day total of the Korean War. Davis was the war's first double ace (10 kills), shooting down a total of 14 Chinese, Korean, and Soviet jets (adding to seven Japanese planes shot down during World War II), but he would later become the only ace to be killed during the conflict and will be posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

t 1966: U.S. aircraft bomb the North Vietnamese capital of Hanoi and Haiphong harbor for the first time, targeting oil facilities.

1970: U.S. forces return from Cambodia, bringing an end to President Richard Nixon's limited incursion. Some 30,000 Americans and 50,000 South Vietnamese troops had been deployed, making the two-month mission the largest combat operation in the Vietnam War since 1967's "Junction City".

1974: Just north of Saigon, the North Vietnamese Army attacks Phuoc Long Province in a "test" attack. South Vietnamese resistance is ineffective and the United States does nothing. In coming weeks, North Vietnamese forces will capture Saigon and South Vietnam surrenders unconditionally.

2003: Some 600 members of the Fourth Infantry Division, along with special operators from Task Force 121, conduct a massive search for the deposed Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein when intelligence suggests he is hiding near his hometown of Tikrit. Operation "Red Dawn" is about to come up empty-handed, but with helicopters enroute to pick up the team, one of the operators discovers a "spider hole" hidden under a section of flooring, where Saddam had been hiding. Although armed with an AK-47 and a Glock handgun, he surrenders without a fight.

Dec. 14

1799: George Washington passes away at Mount Vernon. The former president and commander-in-chief of the Continental Army was 64.

1924: The battleship USS *Mississippi* (BB-41) launches a Martin MO-1 observation plane by using its forward turret as an explosive-powered catapult.

1941: While a Japanese sub shells the Hawaiian Islands, Vice Adm. Wilson Brown's Task Force 11 departs Pearl Harbor, attempting to divert the Japanese fleet from their attack on Wake Island. The fleet consists of the aircraft carrier USS *Lexington,* three cruisers, and nine destroyers.

1944: Congress creates the temporary, five-star grades of Fleet Admiral and General of the Army. Admirals William Leahy, Ernest King, and Chester Nimitz are promoted to the new rank within days, as are Generals George Marshall, Douglas MacArthur, Dwight Eisenhower, and the Army Air Force's Henry "Hap" Arnold (who in 1947 will become the only "General of the Air Force"). William Halsey, the United States' last fleet admiral, will pin on his fifth star on December 11, 1945. And during the Korean War, Gen. Omar Bradley becomes the last man promoted to the elite rank.

1961: President John F. Kennedy informs President Ngo Dinh Diem that the United States would increase military aid and expand our military ---- ,ommitment to South Vietnam. Upon their return from a fact-fmding mission, Gen. Maxwell D. Taylor and Special Assistant for National Security Affairs

Walt W. Rostow recommend that Kennedy send helicopters, aircraft, military advisors, and support personnel. They also suggested the secret deployment of 8,000 troops for combat operations. Kennedy will implement all but the combat forces.

1964: U.S. warplanes attack targets of opportunity in northern Laos in the first strikes of Pres. Lyndon B. Johnson's top-secret Operation "Barrel Roll". The air campaign is intended to interdict the flow of communist supplies along the Ho Chi Minh Trail, but also becomes a close air support campaign against Pathet Lao and North Vietnamese forces. Over time, neutral Laos will become the most heavily bombed country in the world.

1972: After Apollo 17 commander - and U.S. Navy captain - Eugene Ceman sets the unofficial lunar speed record at 11.2 mph on the Lunar Rover, Cernan becomes the last human to set foot on the moon.

Dec. 15

1862: Union Army Maj. Gen. Ambrose E. Burnside ends his disastrous series of frontal attacks against Gen. Robert E. Lee's well-entrenched Confederate forces along Marye's Heights during the Battle of Fredericksburg. It is during the battle that Lee — emotionally moved by the valor of the Federal Army, which, despite terrible losses, attacks his impregnable position time-and-again — says, "It is well that war is so terrible, lest we grow too fond of it."

1864: Gen. John Bell Hood's Confederate Army of Tennessee is routed in the Battle of Nashville by a Union army under command of Gen. George Thomas. After the battle, Hood's once formidable army would no longer be an effective fighting force.

0 1944: A plane carrying Maj. Glenn Miller, leader of the world-famous "Glenn Miller Orchestra" prior to World War H, disappears in bad weather over the English Channel. Miller volunteered for service and led the Army Air Force Band from 1942 until his disappearance.

Meanwhile, Lt. Gen. Alexander Patch's Seventh Army enters Germany.

1945: During the American occupation of Japan, Gen. Douglas MacArthur orders the end of Shintoism as the state religion, which viewed Emperor Hirohito as a divine authority.

1948: The Navy and State Department sign a memorandum establishing the Marine Security Guard program for U.S. embassies across the world.

1950: As UN forces withdraw south of the 38th Parallel, the F-86 "Sabre" makes its combat debut in Korea. Considered to be perhaps the best aircraft of the Korean War, F-86 pilots claimed nearly 800 MiG-15 kills during the conflict, at the cost of only 78 Sabres. In fact, all but one of the 41 United States aces during the Korean War were Sabre pilots.

1964: The AC-47, the Air Force's first gunship, makes its combat debut in Vietnam.

[11] **1965:** American bombers conduct their first major attack against North Vietnamese industrial targets, destroying a power plant north of Haiphong that supplied 15 percent of the country's electricity.

Meanwhile, Walter M. Schirra (USN) and Thomas P. Stafford (USAF) blast off aboard Gemini VI. The crew test rendezvous procedures in space with Gemini VII, which had already been in space for several days.

1967: During a firefight in South Vietnam's Binh Dinh province, Specialist Allen J. Lynch (http://www.victoryinstitute.net/blogs/utb/2000/12/allen-j-lynch-medal-of-honor-citation/) crosses a kill zone multiple times, killing numerous enemies, in order to carry three wounded comrades to safety. As his company withdraws from the numerically superior enemy, Lynch remains behind with the wounded - after crossing the kill zone several more times to carry the casualties to a safer location, and then single-handedly defends the position for two hours until another company mounts a counterattack and the men are evacuated.

1969: President Richard Nixon announces that 50,000 U.S. troops will be withdrawn from Vietnam.

Dec. 16

1944: A massive German Army force — composed of SS Panzer (SS armored units), Volksgrenadier (infantry), Panzergrenadier (armored infantry), and Fallschirmjager (paratroopers)___ burst through the snow-covered Ardennes Forest and smash headlong into the weakest stretch of the Allied frontlines in Belgium.

The attack — which will become known as the Battle of the Bulge (because of the temporary bulging salient the German thrust will create in the Allied lines) — is a last ditch gamble on the part of the Germans, a surprise counteroffensive aimed at cutting American and British forces in half; crossing the Meuse River; encircling, isolating, and destroying Allied armies west of the Meuse; and perhaps reaching the North Sea.

It is not to be.

Despite the initial shock along a 60-to-70-mile front — and a 50-mile-deep penetration — German forces will quickly find themselves running up against giants of men like Gen. Anthony McAuliffe's diehard paratroopers of the crack 101st Airborne Division, who — though surrounded, outnumbered, outgunned, freezing, and nearly starving to death — refuse to surrender the strategically vital highway hub at Bastogne.

The battle, which will last until Jan. 28, 1945, will prove to be the largest land battle in western Europe during World War II, and it will be a decisive American victory. But it will not be without heavy losses: 19,000 American soldiers will be killed out of 81,000 total U.S. casualties in five weeks.

Dec. 17

1903: Brothers Orville and Wilbur Wright pilot the first heavier than air machine. The Wright Flyer travels 120 feet in the air over the sand dunes of Kitty Hawk, N.C., staying aloft for 12 seconds. The aviators will make three nore flights that day. The modem aviation age is born.

1947: 44 years to the day after the Wright Brothers' first flight, the world's first swept-wing bomber makes its first flight - thanks in part to research captured from German scientists in World War II. The Boeing B-47 Stratojet becomes the cornerstone of the newly-formed Strategic Air Command until its retirement in 1965.

1947: Boeing's XB-47 prototype, the world's first swept-wing bomber, makes its first flight. The six-engine B-47 "Stratojet" will serve as Strategic Air Command's front line nuclear bomber from 1951 through 1965, staged at forward operating bases across the globe and on advanced alert at all times. While the B-47 never sees combat, three RB-47s (reconnaissance models) will be shot down by the Soviets during overflight missions in the 1950s and early 1960s.

Dec. 18:

1902: Pres. Theodore Roosevelt orders Adm. George Dewey to take the U.S. —North and South Atlantic Squadrons and sail to Venezuela, in order to prevent blockading European navies from waging war against Venezuela over unpaid debts.

1927: A day after a Coast Guard vessel accidentally rams - and sinks - the submarine USS *S-4* (SS-109) off Cape Cod, Navy divers are rushed to the scene. Chief Gunner's Mate Thomas Eadie learns by tapping on the hull that six sailors remain alive. When fellow diver Fred Michels attempts to attach a line pumping fresh air into the sub, which lies 100 feet below the surface, his own air line is fouled. Although exhausted from his previous dives - for which he will receive his second Navy Cross - Eadie quickly dives again and manages to save Michels after two hours of grueling work. Unfortunately, bad weather prevents the divers from saving the sub's sailors in time, but Eadie is awarded the Medal of Honor.

1944: In the Philippine Sea, Adm. William "Bull" Halsey's Task Force 38 sails directly into Typhoon "Cobra". The 100 mph-plus winds and high seas -- -'-,apsize and sink three destroyers, while heavily damaging a cruiser, five

aircraft carriers, and three destroyers. The deadly storm claims the lives of 790 U.S. sailors and destroys over 100 planes, leading to the creation of a Naval weather center and typhoon tracking center on Guam the following year.

Over China, nearly 300 B-29s Superfortress, B-24 Liberator, and B-25 Mitchell bombers - accompanied by P-51 Mustang escorts of the 14th Air Force - attack the Japanese Army's expeditionary base at Hankao, igniting supply fires that will burn for three days.

1965: Two days after the aircraft carrier USS *Wasp* recovers *Gemini VI* astronauts Walter M. Schirra (USN) and Thomas P. Stafford (USAF) in the first-ever televised landing of a spacecraft, the crew of *Gemini VII* - Frank Borman (USAF) and Jim Lovell (USN) - splash down safely in the Atlantic just 11 miles away from *Wasp.*

1972: On the first day of President Richard Nixon's Operation "Linebacker II" bombing campaign, an enemy MiG-21 "Fishbed" locks on to a B-52 following their bomb run and closes in. Tail gunner Staff Sergeant Samuel **0.** Turner opens fire with the bomber's quad .50-caliber machine guns, blasting the MiG out of the sky and scoring the first tail gun kill for the B-52. Turner is awarded the Silver Star for saving his crew and his bomber now sits on display at Fairchild Air Force Base in Washington.

Dec. 19

1777: 18 miles northwest of Philadelphia, Gen. George Washington's Continental Army establishes its winter camp at Valley Forge. 2,500 of the original force of 12,000 would not survive the winter thanks in part to harsh weather conditions, disease, supply shortages, and malnutrition. Over the winter, the Prussian drillmaster - later, Washington's Chief of Staff - Baron Friedrich von Steuben drills the Americans, greatly increasing their combat effectiveness and morale.

1862: Confederate cavalry under Brig. Gen. Nathan Bedford Forrest -- ¯iismantle the Mobile and Ohio railroad tracks around Jackson, Tenn., delaying Union Maj. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant's drive to Vicksburg.

1941: After the Battle of Moscow, Adolf Hitler fires Field Marshall Walther von Brauchitsch, the commander-in-chief of Nazi Germany's armed forces for their highly successful campaigns across most of Europe. Hitler appoints himself as von Brauchitsch's replacement.

1944: At the Siegfried Line in southern Germany, all members of Tech Sgt. Robert E. Gerstung (http://www.victoryinstitute.net/blogs/utb/2000/12/robert-e-gerstung-medal-of-honor-citation/) 's heavy machine gun squad are killed or wounded, Gerstung keeps his gun firing, braving eight hours of intense tank, artillery, and mortar fire. When he runs out of ammunition, he crosses crossed the killzone to retrieve more ammunition, and later, another weapon when his malfunctioned. When the order was given for the Americans to withdraw, Gerstung provided the only covering fire for the unit. He is awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions.

1972: After spending a record 75 hours on the moon's surface, Apollo 17 astronauts Eugene A. Cernan (Capt., USN and the last human to set foot on the moon), Ronald E. Evans (Capt., USN), and civilian geologist Harrison H. Schmitt splash down in the South Pacific, just four miles from the recovery ship USS *Ticonderoga.*

2000: The UN Security Council votes to impose sanctions on the Taliban in Afghanistan, directing them to close terrorist training camps and to hand over Osama bin Laden, who was suspected in attacks against United States embassies.

2001: Fires that had been burning for over three months under the rubble of the World Trade Center are finally declared to be extinguished.

2003: Libyan dictator Muammar Gaddafi halts his nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons programs after secret negotiations with the United States and Britain.

Dec. 20

4 **1860:** Delegates meeting in Charleston, S.C. unanimously adopt the ordinance to dissolve ties with the United States; South Carolina has become the first state to secede from the Union.

1941: Flying in support of the Nationalist Chinese in combat against the Japanese, the 1st American Volunteer Group - better known as the "Flying Tigers" - enters combat for the first time. Out of the ten Japanese bombers intercepted, nine are shot out of the sky by the AVG's P-40 "Warhawks". Thanks to innovative tactics skipper Claire Chennault learned from observing the more nimble Japanese fighters prior to America's entry in the war, Flying Tigers would rack up an incredible 296 victories during the 18 months of combat, while only losing 14 pilots.

Across the Pacific, the battleships USS *Pennsylvania, USS Maryland,* and USS *Tennessee* depart Pearl Harbor for a nine-day journey to shipyards on the West Coast to repair damage suffered during the Pearl Harbor attack.

1943: 30,000 feet over the North Sea, Staff Sgt. Forrest L. "Woody" Vosler (http://www.victoryinstitute.net/blogs/utb/2000/12/forrest-l-woody-vosler-medal-of-honor-citation/) 's B-17 is damaged and forced to leave the formation after a bombing raid on Bremen, Germany. Despite his own wounds, the radio operator left his station to man a machinegun when the tailgunner is wounded. Blinded by shrapnel, Vosler repairs his radio - by touch - in order to send a distress signal as the damaged plane was about to ditch in the frigid waters of the North Sea. For his lifesaving actions, Vosler receives a promotion and is awarded the Medal of Honor.

1989: Less than a week after Panamanian dictator Manuel Noriega declares that a state of war exists between his country and the United States, over 27,000 US troops and 300 aircraft invade Panama to protect American lives and overthrow Noriega. In two weeks, Noriega's Panama Defense Forces are defeated, the country has a new (democratically elected) president, and Noriega surrenders to the U.S. military.

1992: During Operation "Restore Hope", 300 American Marines and Belgian paratroopers hit the beaches of the Somalian port city of Kismayo in the first combined amphibious assault since the Vietnam War.

Dec. 21

1861: President Abraham Lincoln signs a bill creating a "Medal of Honor" for enlisted sailors and Marines who "distinguish themselves by their gallantry and other seamanlike qualities during the present war." The Army version of the medal is signed into law the following summer.

1866: In the biggest defeat on the Great Plains until Little Big Horn, Crazy Horse tricks Capt. William J. Fetterman into leading an ad hoc force outside the walls of Fort Phil Kearny, where the 78 soldiers and two civilian scouts are wiped out by approximately 2,000 Cheyenne and Sioux.

1943: Just days into her ninth war patrol, with one-quarter of skipper John A. ,Moore's crew having no combat experience, the submarine USS *Grayback* sinks its fourth Japanese ship in just three days.

1944: German troops from the 5th Panzer Army have surrounded the 101st Airborne at Bastogne, Belgium. Nearby, Pvt. Francis S. "Frank" Currey (http://www.victoryinstitute.net/blogs/utb/2000/12/francis-s-frank-currey-medal-of-honor-citation/) ignores heavy incoming fire, killing one German tank, disabling three others, and forcing an enemy unit to retreat after inflicting heavy casualties with an effective combination of fire from his automatic rifle, a bazooka, a halftrack, and anti-tank grenades. Five soldiers that had been pinned down for hours by enemy infantry and the now-empty tanks are able to escape. For his actions, Currey is awarded the Medal of Honor.

1945: Nearly one month after a vehicle accident that paralyzed him, Gen. George S. Patton dies of a pulmonary embolism in a military hospital in Heidelberg, Germany.

1950: Airmen from the Fifth Air Force conduct "Operation Kiddy Car," the evacuation of nearly 1,000 Korean War orphans to the island of Cheju-do to escape approaching communist forces.

1951: During Operation "Helicopter", medevac choppers land on the pad of USS *Consolation,* ferrying wounded from the battlefield directly to a hospital ship for the first time.

1968: Frank Borman (Col. USAF, ret.), James Lovell (Capt. USN, ret.), and William Anders (Maj. Gen. USAF, ret.) blast off aboard Apollo 8, becoming the first humans to leave Earth's orbit and on Christmas Eve, would become the first to orbit the moon.

Dec. 22

1775: The Continental Congress creates the Continental Navy. Esek Hopkins, Esq. is named commander-in-chief of the fleet, four captains are commissioned, as well as five first lieutenants (including future hero John Paul Jones), five second lieutenants, and three third lieutenants.

1864: Following his "March to the Sea" and just before his "March through the Carolinas," Union Army Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman presents the captured city of Savannah (Ga.) to Pres. Lincoln as a "Christmas gift."

The wire from Sherman to Lincoln reads; "I beg to present you, as a Christmas gift, the city of Savannah, with 150 heavy guns and plenty of ammunition, and also about 25,000 bales of cotton."

1941: Winston Churchill arrives in Washington, D.C. for the Arcadia Conference, the first military strategy summit between Pres. Franklin D. Roosevelt and the British Prime Minister.

Meanwhile, the first U.S. troops arrive at Australia. By 1943, a quarter of a million Americans will be stationed "down under."

1944: Having surrounded the 101st Airborne at Bastogne, Belgium, German General Heinrich Freiherr von Liittwitz issues a surrender ultimatum to Gen. Anthony C. McAuliffe, the acting commander for the 101st. Clement's one-word response: "NUTS!"

Despite being heavily outnumbered, the 101st was able to hold out until the 4th Armored Division relieved them on Dec. 26th. Meanwhile, German commanders recommend ending the Rundstedt Offensive (Battle of the Bulge) due to a lack of significant progress.

And on this day near Kalterherberg Germany, Tech. Sgt. Peter J. Dalessondro (http://www.victoryinstitute.net/blogs/utb/2000/12/peter-j-dalessondro-medal-of-honor-citation/) called in mortar strikes and used his rifle, grenades, and an acquired automatic weapon to save his unit from being completely routed by multiple overwhelming attacks. Dalessondro remains behind and is last heard calling for mortar strike on his own position as enemy troops surround and are poised to overtake him. For his selfless actions, he is posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

1950: Air Force F-86 Sabres shoot down six communist MiG-15 fighters without losing a single jet in the biggest dogfight of the Korean War.

Dec. 23

1783: Although Congress had granted him what amounted to dictatorial powers during the war, George Washington resigns his position as commander-in-chief of the Continental Army.

1814: One day before a peace treaty is signed which ends the War of 1812, a force of 2,000 Regular Army and militia, commanded by Maj. Gen. (and future president) Andrew Jackson, attacks and overruns 1,500 British troops on Villere's Plantation, Louisiana. The British are so disorganized that they are unable to launch their attack on New Orleans for several days. And when they do, it becomes one of the most lopsided victories in U.S. military history.

1941: After being repulsed by the American defenders during their first assault on Wake Atoll, Japanese air and land forces return and assault Wake, Wilkes, and Peale islands. After having endured 15 days of attacks and 12 hours of desperate fighting, U.S. forces finally surrender - but not until after they inflict heavy casualties on the landing force.

Also on this date, the C-47 "Skytrain" makes its first flight. Douglas Aircraft will stamp out 10,000 of the versatile "Gooney Birds" which will serve the U.S. Armed Forces for three decades: towing gliders and delivering paratroopers at Normandy, dropping supplies during the Berlin Airlift, and providing close air support over Vietnam.

1968: 82 crewmembers of the captured USS *Pueblo* walk across the "Bridge of No Return," ending 11 months of brutal captivity in North Korea.

2002: A General Atomics MQ-1 "Predator" drone and an Iraqi MiG-25 "Foxbat" engage each other in Iraq's "no-fly zone." The aircraft trade missiles, and the Iraqi fighter shoots down the Predator in the first-ever drone-versus-conventional-aircraft dogfight.

Dec. 24

1812: Delegates from the United States and Great Britain sign the Treaty of Ghent in modern-day Belgium, bringing an end to the War of 1812. News travels slowly, however, and two weeks after the signing, Maj. Gen. (and future president) Andrew Jackson defeats a British invasion force in the Battle New Orleans.

1943: 670 B-17s and B-24s from the Eighth Air Force conduct a bombing raid at German long-range rocket sites at Pas de Calais, France.

1944: The heavy cloud cover and winter weather which had been kept American warplanes grounded during the Battle of the Bulge finally breaks after a week. Nearly 3,000 heavy bombers and fighters of the Eighth Air —Force take off from England for the largest strike mission of the war to relieve she troops on the ground.

Brig. Gen. Frederick W. Castle, commanding the 3rd Combat Bomb Wing, assigns himself as co-pilot of the lead bomber for this vital mission. While enroute, his B-17 develops engine problems causing it to drop out of formation. Since the bomber was over allied-controlled Belgium, he decided not to jettison his load of bombs, which would help them regain speed and maneuverability, but risked the lives of those below. Castle's hobbled bomber makes an easy target for *Luftwaffe* Bf-109 fighters, whose repeated attacks set the bomber on fire and send it into a dive. Castle orders the men to bail out while he remains at the controls, and the plane explodes before he can parachute safely. Castle's sacrifice saves the lives of five of his nine crewmembers and Gen. Castle is posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

1950: An armada of ships and aircraft evacuate over 100,000 U.S. and South Korean troops, along with their equipment and 91,000 Korean refugees from the North Korean port of Hungnam, in what has become known by historians as the "greatest evacuation movement by sea in U.S. military history."

1972: A North Vietnamese Mig-21 Fishbed fighter closes in on the B-52 *Diamond Lil* while the bombers approach their target of a railyard at Thai Nguyen. Tail gunner Airman First Class Albert E. Moore fires three bursts of fire from the B-52's quad .50 cal machine guns, shooting down the MiG and scoring the last-ever tail gun kill - and saving his bomber crew. Today, the *Diamond Lil* is on display at the Air Force Academy with a red star painted on the rear of the plane commemorating Moore's victory.

Dec. 26

1776: After Gen. George Washington's famous crossing of the icy Delaware River the night before and a eight-mile forced march, 2,500 Continental Army soldiers and militia catch the Hessian (German mercenaries fighting for the British) garrison at Trenton, N.J. completely by surprise. Washington's force captures 900 soldiers along with weapons and supplies, incredibly without losing a single American soldier to combat. Lt. (and future president) James Madison is one of the few soldiers wounded during the battle.

1943: Following a naval and air bombardment, the 1st Marine Division lands at Cape Gloucester in their first combat operation since Guadalcanal. Dense jungles, horrible weather, and near-impassable mud welcomed the invaders, but the Marines "adapt, improvise, and overcome," capturing the island from the Japanese in just over a week.

1944: Elements of the U.S. 4th Armored Division — the spearhead of George [6] Patton's Third Army — break the German Army's siege of Bastogne relieving the paratroopers of the 101st Airborne Division. The grateful but proud Airborne soldiers insist they are only being "relieved," not "rescued."

1972: Under cover of darkness, approaching from different headings, and flying at different altitudes, seven waves of B-52s - 120 bombers total - attack Hanoi and Haiphong. After just 15 minutes, 8,000 bombs have pounded North Vietnamese targets; in the largest raid of Operation "Linebacker II", and the largest single combat launch in Strategic Air Command history.

That same day, Harry S. Truman passes away. The future president enlisted in the Missouri National Guard as an artilleryman prior to World War I, and would fight in Alsace and the Meuse-Argonne campaign. By war's end, Truman had been promoted to captain, and he remained in the Reserve Officer Corps - ultimately achieving the rank of colonel in 1938.

1998: A week after the four-day bombing and cruise missile attack against targets in Iraq known as Operation "Desert Fox", Saddam Hussein announces that his military will target U.S. and British aircraft patrolling the "no-fly zones". The dictator will offer up a $14,000 reward to anyone that shoots down an American plane, but the Iraqi military can't come through.

2006: Former president Gerald Ford passes away. After the Pearl Harbor attacks, Ford enlisted in the Navy. The former University of Michigan football star receives his commission, serving as a navigator, antiaircraft battery officer, and athletic officer aboard the light carrier USS *Monterrey* in the Pacific Theater. Lt. Commander Ford will remain on the inactive reserve list —until 1963.

Dec. 27

1846: Although heavily outnumbered, a force of Missouri militia led by Col. Alexander W. Doniphan called the "Doniphan Thousand" defeats the Mexican army at El Paso (Texas) and captures the city in one of the major battles of the Mexican-American War. By the time Doniphan and his men return to Missouri, they have undertaken what could be the longest military march (some 5,500 miles) since Alexander the Great.

1935: When a volcanic eruption threatens Hilo, Hawaii, Army Air Corps planes drop bombs in order to divert the lava flow.

1942: 2nd Lt. (future Maj.) Richard I. Bong, flying a P-38 Lighting over Buna, scores his first of 40 kills against Japanese aircraft. Bong will become the United States' top ace of World War II and is awarded the Medal of Honor.

1943: With railroad workers threatening a wartime strike, Pres. Franklin D. Roosevelt seizes the critical infrastructure, putting the railroads under the supervision of the War Department.

1 **1950:** Lt. Gen. Matthew B. Ridgway takes over as commander of the retreating 8th Army and immediately travels to the front lines, where he reorganizes the command structure and restores his men's morale. The Chinese offensive soon grinds to a halt and Ridgway will lead a counteroffensive in the spring.

1992: Lt. Col. Gary North shoots down an Iraqi MiG-25 in Iraq's southern no-fly zone with an AIM-120A missile, marking the first beyond-visual-range kill and the first combat air-to-air victory for the F-16 Falcon.

Dec. 28

1941: After the execution of civilian construction contractors who fought ---- qlongside the Marines on Wake Island until their capture by the Japanese, the Navy's Chief of Bureau of Yards and Docks, Rear Admiral Ben Moreell,

requests that Naval construction battalions be created. The teams would be capable of building anything, anywhere, under any conditions, at any time, and - if necessary - picking up weapons and fighting.

The famous Seabees have been born. In the Pacific Theater alone, they construct 111 major air fields, over 300 bases, and countless roads, bridges, and facilities. Just two years after their founding, Admiral Ernest King will write that "Your ingenuity and fortitude have become a legend in the naval service."

1944: In Belgium, the Allies begin gaining ground during their counter-offensive in the Battle of the Bulge. Against the advice of his generals, who believe that further progress is impossible, Adolf Hitler orders renewed offensives in the Ardennes and Alsace.

1982: 40 years after being launched, the Iowa-class battleship USS *New Jersey* (BB-62) is re-commissioned for the third - and final - time, after refitting the ship to carry Tomahawk cruise missiles. The "Big J" will finally be taken out of service following Operation "Desert Storm" in 1991.

1990: In preparation for "Desert Storm", the aircraft carriers USS *America* (CV-66) and USS *Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN-71) deploy from Norfolk, Va., joining USS *Ranger* (CV-61) and USS *Midway* (CV-41) in the Persian Gulf, and USS *John F. Kennedy* (CV-67) and USS *Saratoga* (CV-60) in the Red Sea.

Dec. 29

1778: British troops, commanded by Lt. Col. Archibald Campbell, assault a force of militia and Continental Army soldiers defending Savannah, Ga. The King's Men easily defeat Maj. Gen. Robert Howe's army, killing, capturing or wounding over 500. When the British gain control of the colony the following year, Campbell writes that he is "the first British officer to [take] a star and stripe from the flag of Congress."

1812: The USS *Constitution* defeats the British frigate HMS *Java* - the second of *Old Ironsides'* five victories - in a three-hour battle off the coast of Brazil. After *Java* is burned, the British admiralty orders their frigates never to engage American frigates in a one-on-one confrontation.

1862: Plans to capture Vicksburg, Tenn. - the last remaining Confederate stronghold on the Mississippi River - are thwarted when Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman's frontal assault across open ground against entrenched Confederate forces fails in the Battle of Chickasaw Bluffs.

1890: 7th Cavalry troops surround a Sioux encampment at Wounded Knee Creek (present-day South Dakota), attempting to disarm the Indians under Chief Big Foot. The soldiers attack when a shot is fired (it is not known who fired) and massacre over 150 Sioux, including many women and children. The Massacre at Wounded Knee is the last major engagement in the Plains Wars.

1943: The submarine USS *Silversides* (SS-236) sinks three Japanese cargo ships and damages a fourth off the Palau Islands.

0 1972: In what very well could be the last mass bomber formation in history, 60 B-52 bombers target the North Vietnamese capital of Hanoi. While the "Stratofortresses" are still in the air, the communists inform the White House that they are ready to return to the peace talks. Over the 11 days of the Operation "Linebacker II" bombing campaign, over 20,000 tons of ordinance hammered Hanoi and Haiphong, crippling their war production and supply chain, and the communists had shot most of their surface-to-air missiles. The signing of the Paris Peace Accords in January will effectively end U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War.

Dec. 30

1813: British troops burn Buffalo, N.Y.

[4] **1959:** The USS *George Washington,* America's first ballistic missile —submarine, is commissioned at Groton, Conn.

2006: Former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein is executed by hanging following a conviction by an Iraqi court for murdering 148 Shiites from Dujail after an unsuccessful 1982 assassination attempt.

Adapted (and abridged) in part from "This Week in US Military History" by W. Thomas Smith Jr. at Human Events.

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- This page was last modified on 15 November 2019, at 07:00.
- This page has been accessed 1,846,263 times.