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2021-12-06

Weekly Media Report - November 30 - December 6, 2021

Naval Postgraduate School (U.S.)

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NPS IN THE NEWS

Weekly Media Report – November 30 - December 6, 2021

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COMMUNITY:

[Ann Rondeau, Guest Commentary: Celebrating 70 years of the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey](#)

(Monterey Herald 3 Dec 21) ... Ann Rondeau

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UPCOMING NEWS & EVENTS:

December 6-10: [Navy Senior Leader Seminar \(NSLS\)](#)

December 7: [Defense Energy Seminar](#)

December 7: [Fall Quarter Awards](#)

December 9: [Women in Computing](#)

December 17: [Fall Quarter Graduation](#)

December 25: Christmas Day (Federal Holiday)

December 26: International Report Date

December 27: Reporting Date

December 31: New Years Day (Federal Holiday)



COMMUNITY:

Ann Rondeau, Guest Commentary: Celebrating 70 years of the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey

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Thank you, Monterey!

On behalf of the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS), I want to thank the entire Monterey community as we celebrate our 70th anniversary here on the Peninsula.

NPS' origins can be traced back to 1909, when then-Secretary of the Navy George von L. Meyer established the school of marine engineering at the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis, Maryland, which in 1919 became the Naval Postgraduate School. As the program grew with the technical complexity of the Naval services through World War II, it was not long until the NPS needed a home of its own.

In 1945, Congress passed legislation to make the school a fully-accredited, degree-granting graduate institution. Two years later, Congress authorized the purchase of the Hotel Del Monte and 627 acres of surrounding land for use as an independent campus for the school. In December 1951, the coast-to-coast move involved 500 students, about 100 faculty and staff and thousands of pounds of books and research equipment.

As NPS proudly celebrates our 70th anniversary in Monterey, impressively, our time together has produced more than 60,000 alumni, including thousands of international officers from hundreds of countries; more than 40 astronauts (the most of any graduate institution); and total student engagement in 2020 reached more than 16,000 through our traditional degree-granting programs, certificates, workshops, executive education and professional development.

NPS is a defense-focused graduate university offering advanced education in fields of study core to naval-unique needs, the U.S. Armed Forces and international partners. The Monterey Peninsula has been a vital component to our success, in location and in partnership. Our proximity to the Silicon Valley, other distinguished universities and agencies such as the Fleet Numerical Meteorology and Oceanography Center and the Naval Research Laboratory strengthen our research and master's and doctoral degree programs, while collaboration with the Defense Language Institute enables us to jointly educate military officers who spend time in Monterey at both schools and then represent the U.S. around the world. Cutting-edge graduate education depends upon cutting-edge graduate research led by expert faculty.

Throughout the years, landmark discoveries in the areas of robotics and unmanned systems, autonomy and cyber security, maritime logistics and operations, artificial intelligence, modeling and simulation, enabled NPS students and faculty to apply results to solve operational problems. Many NPS graduates have gone on to lead our military, government and businesses in the highest positions with honor and integrity forged in part by their NPS experience. In fact, current Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro was a 1989 graduate of NPS' Space Systems Engineering program.

Ongoing support from local leadership committed to empowering NPS led to important collaborations in such areas as information technology, connecting several Department of Defense facilities on the Peninsula with advanced internet capabilities, and sparking the Monterey Peninsula Department of Defense Net and its ongoing council. Years of partnership, visionary leadership and commitment to our national defense continue today from current local, regional and national leaders who have helped to make NPS the leading institution it is while making faculty, staff and students feel welcome and proud to call Monterey home.

Throughout the years, we have endeavored to return that hospitality and support through local internships and community events such as our STEM Discovery Day (coming on May 13, 2022), the Memorial Day Concert on the Lawn series, International Day, and many others have provided us with opportunities to welcome you to our campus and students we look forward to doing more as COVID-19 conditions improve.

We are part of the many neighborhoods across the Monterey Peninsula in Seaside, Del Rey Oaks, Marina, Pacific Grove, Carmel and beyond ... eagerly volunteering in your schools, coaching athletics,



tutoring children and much more. NPS students support a wide range of social, educational, artistic, religious and charitable organizations. For many NPS students, who are mid-career, the Monterey area is an opportunity to reconnect with family, while challenging themselves academically and professionally. We often hear from graduates that NPS was not just a favorite tour of duty, but personally transformational — that’s been called the “magic of NPS.”

A big part of the secret to our magic is Monterey. NPS’ success is Monterey’s success, and one that we share wholly and humbly with all the area communities that have embraced and supported us for 70 years. We look forward to the next 70 years defending our nation, together!

[Ann Rondeau, Guest Commentary: Celebrating 70 years of the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey – Monterey Herald](#)

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RESEARCH:

NPS Student-Professor Team Connects Research to Marines in the Field

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This past Summer, a Marine infantry officer and a cryptographer from the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) journeyed to Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, California, where I Marine Expeditionary Force (I MEF) was holding the Pacific Sentry 2021 field exercise. Their mission ... to pilot an idea.

The team, consisting of NPS student U.S. Marine Corps Capt. Christian Thiessen and Dr. Britta Hale, an assistant professor in the NPS Department of Computer Science, would integrate with the I MEF team; in doing so, they would demonstrate how a two-week NPS embed could both dramatically increase shared awareness between NPS researchers and practitioners in the field and mitigate the persistent challenge of NPS students’ time spent away from the fleet for their studies.

Their pilot program, dubbed the NPS-Fleet Engagement Program, places NPS students and faculty "in situ" with operational units across the force with the ultimate goal of deepening awareness, trust and collaboration between the fleet and NPS.

“By visiting with Sailors and Marines aboard their ships or submarines, on the flight line or in the field, we ensure that NPS truly understands their challenges or shortfalls, and that we understand them in the context and reality of ongoing missions and operations,” noted Col. Randy Pugh, Senior Marine Corps Representative and Associate Dean of Research at NPS. “Faculty-student teams conducting assessments or capturing statements of need at sea or in the field are highly-visible examples of NPS’ commitment to providing exactly the education and applied research the fleet and fleet Marine forces need now as well as in the future.”

The NPS-Fleet Engagement Program grew out of NPS’ existing ‘Industry Internship’ program, which enables students to participate in a weeklong exchange with commercial and federal entities during each academic quarter’s Thesis Week.

While partnering with industry is extremely beneficial for students in gaining first-hand, topical insight into how commercial companies develop cutting-edge technologies and how they do business, Thiessen saw an opportunity to take this a step further. Expanding the concept, he thought, could also substantially meet emerging research needs of the Navy and Marine Corps’ principal stakeholders. At the same time, NPS students are provided an opportunity to refresh perishable operational experience while simultaneously examining challenges through a broader lens of identifying sustainable solutions for the fleet. For NPS faculty, it’s a rare chance to immerse themselves in a tactical operations setting that their students experience regularly.

“There’s a significant gap spent away from the fleet when we come to NPS,” Thiessen explained. “For example, as a Marine officer, I have my two years here and then I have three years [through a



utilization tour] at my next duty station. As a result, a lot of people are removed from their primary occupational specialty for anywhere from three to five years.

“The NPS-Fleet Engagement Program started as a way to address that challenge while giving students operational experience and to keep them tethered to the fleet while also sending a signal that NPS is conducting relevant research to address the operational problems that the fleet needs,” Thiessen said.

When the subject came up in a conversation with a professor, Dr. Britta Hale, she also saw in it the potential to directly connect NPS researchers with the end users of the technologies NPS was researching.

Normally, a wide chasm separates the “research demand” and “research supply,” spanning a broad chain of program managers, military officers as well as industry executives and marketers before actually reaching the people who initially registered the need and who will ultimately use the technology.

“The NPS-Fleet Engagement Program can shortcut this entirely and close this gap,” Hale said. “With it, you are taking researchers right to the problems and the very users who have them. We get to see directly what’s going on and it is often much more than what’s on the surface.

“In that respect, we can go straight to addressing the issue,” she continued. “So the ultimate goal then is that you get technology and new ideas that are extremely useful to the people who are the end users.”

This was precisely what the team accomplished at Pendleton.

Thiessen and Hale initially met up with I MEF’s recently established MEF Information Group, where they observed information warfare operations in practice. They then met with the Force Fire and Effects Coordination Center, the Marine Corps Tactical Systems Support Activity, 3rd Fleet, Navy Installations Command, the Naval Information Warfare Center – Pacific, as well as several industry representatives.

“We were all over the place in a few weeks, and it turned out to be a really great experience talking to people that I had no exposure to previously,” Thiessen said. “I’m an infantry officer by trade, and it’s a pretty well-defined profession because we’ve been doing it for a while now, so stepping into this role was really eye-opening. Information operations is a rapidly changing environment that the Marine Corps, the Navy and the entire DOD are still trying to define.”

“We had excellent conversations with these different groups while we were down there,” Hale added. “There are a number of research projects that actually sprung up directly, and Captain Thiessen brought back numerous topics to share with other students.”

Observing the Marines in action allowed them to identify challenge points in real time.

Networking in the field, for example, can be a complex affair, especially for a very large unit distributed over wide areas. Setting up relays, getting large files to transfer to the right place at the right time, and security of the system all present ample opportunities for things to go sideways.

Having eyes on the process enabled the team to identify potential snags and suggest solutions or even ways to improve the network, Hale noted.

“Once you see it in practice you can say ‘oh, that’s what you’re dealing with; we’ve got a solution for that,’” she said. “It’s not until you actually see that trouble point that you can address it that way. Perhaps all it takes is a small change to the program that could be solved in a couple of days with the researcher.”

A direct connection with forces in the field in this manner also has the potential to go a long way in keeping NPS students’ operational experience from “fading,” according to Thiessen. This directly meets the Marine Corps’ talent management goal set forth in the 38th Commandant’s Planning Guidance of retaining high-performance Marines, especially those that are “inclined to learn, think and innovate.”

To facilitate the program, the NPS-Fleet Engagement Program will be managed within the Naval Warfare Studies Institute (NWSI), with a Marine officer or senior non-commissioned officer formally detailed to serve as program coordinator.

“NPS is completely committed to supporting the development of concepts and capabilities that will ensure the Navy-Marine Corps team remains the most capable fighting force in the world,” Pugh said. “Through the NPS Fleet Engagement Program we will have regular and meaningful contact with the fleet and fleet Marine forces and we will be constantly alongside Marines and Sailors as they innovate and experiment with new ideas on how to fight and new weapons, systems, and networks with which to fight.

“NPS is privileged to support front line units as they work to accomplish this difficult task,” he added.



[NPS Student-Professor Team Connects Research to Marines in the Field > United States Navy > News-Stories](#)

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FACULTY:

Naval Postgraduate School associate professor to make ‘Jeopardy’ debut

(Monterey Herald 29 Nov 21) ... Tess Kenny

It’s 7 p.m. and Sam Buttrey has just turned on the television as a familiar tune filters through his speakers. Standing straight up, he turns his full attention to the screen of clues with a pseudo buzzer — really the spring-loaded gizmo that holds toilet paper rolls — under his thumb and at the ready.

For the past few months, this has been the typical weeknight for the Naval Postgraduate School associate professor as he prepared for his “Jeopardy” debut in the quiz show’s first-ever Professor’s Tournament, which is set to air starting Monday, Dec. 6 and continue through next week.

Having grown up on “Jeopardy” jargon, and an avid watcher of the program to this day, the experience realized an aspiration Buttrey has long hoped would go beyond his living room.

“It was just a bunch of smart people having the time of their lives,” he said, reminiscing on his appearance that was taped back in October. “I’m just really grateful I got a chance to be there.”

Buttrey remembers watching “Jeopardy” as a kid at his grandmother’s house, where he and his brothers would often visit back in the ‘60s. First enamored with Art Fleming’s black-and-white iteration of the 57-year-old show and pretty much every version since, Buttrey described walking onto the set he has spent years picturing at home as nothing short of “wild.”

Even the news that he would appear on the program proved to be a surreal experience for the NPS professors of 25 years.

“It felt like a dream,” he said. “(My wife and I) were on vacation in Puerto Vallarta when we got the call, and we just couldn’t believe it.”

Sam Buttrey and his wife, Elinda Hardy, were quick to jump to disbelief, as both had applied to compete on “Jeopardy” — coming close but not close enough — on several occasions. This time, however, circumstances seemed to be in Buttrey’s favor.

In a typical year, the process for applying to Jeopardy takes place in two stages: an online test to qualify followed by an in-person meeting at a local hotel to screen for potential contestants’ telegenic qualities, Buttrey explained. With COVID-19 precautions in place, the process, though similar, happened primarily on Zoom, where telegenic qualities were tested 9 to 12 virtual applicants at a time.

During his callback, Buttrey let it slip that he was a professor at NPS. Not long after, he received an invitation to be one of 15 professors featured in the “Jeopardy” Professors Tournament, a three-round affair pitting educators from institutions across the country against one another.

Apart from the chance to compete, the invitation from “Jeopardy” also covered travel and hotel expenses, perks usual contestants aren’t offered. Buttrey explained everyday participants must pay their own way to play, but being a part of the Professor’s Tournament allotted some extra attention.

Each professor competing in next week’s tournament will even go home with a base prize of \$5,000 rather than the customary \$1,000 granted to anyone who makes it on air.

But Buttrey said he would have played for free. Describing the experience as not only bonding between him and other professors, but also eye-opening to topics he hadn’t really taken an interest in before preparing for the wide range of clues on “Jeopardy,” Buttrey left feeling lucky.

“You get to enjoy something that’s unlike anything else,” he said. “It’s a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.”



Buttrey's quarterfinal appearance on the "Jeopardy" Professors Tournament will air Wednesday, Dec.

8.

[Naval Postgraduate School associate professor to make 'Jeopardy' debut – Monterey Herald](#)

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Moderate Dems signal major changes to U.S. oil, gas drilling

(National Journal 1 Dec 21) ... Brian Dabbs

House Democrats backed new royalties and other fees on oil and gas production in the Build Back Better Act. Now Senate Democrats will have to sign off.

The Florida Republican leading the charge to reclaim the Senate recently called high inflation a "gold mine" for his party's electoral aspirations.

Now Republicans are hoping Democratic budget-reconciliation plans to curtail oil and gas production will boost their chances even further.

"I think it hurts the poorest families in this country. They have to make a choice: Are they going to fill up their car or are they going to put food on the table?" Sen. Rick Scott, chair of the National Republican Senatorial Committee, told National Journal. "What they're doing, causing the poorest families in this country not to be able to survive, is actually ... it's evil."

Most Democrats are unfazed by the energy attacks launched by Scott and other Republicans. Progressives are charging full speed ahead on the Build Back Better bill's myriad climate provisions, led by a range of clean energy tax incentives and investments like a Civilian Climate Corps.

And while moderates like Sens. Joe Manchin and Jon Tester are expressing concern about a fee on methane emission, the House-passed increase in royalty rates the federal government charges on oil and gas extracted from public land, along with other new drilling fees, have so far flown under the radar.

"I don't know if it can pass the Senate, but I can tell you that taxpayers need to get a fair return on investment because your public lands are owned by the taxpayer," Tester told National Journal after speaking to a rally with other moderate members organized by the League of Conservation Voters. "I think it's reasonable to take a look at it."

Retail gasoline prices nationwide are up more than 50 percent from a year ago, according to the American Automobile Association. But on Wednesday, the benchmark U.S. oil price was trading just above \$65 per barrel, marking a precipitous decline from the 2021 high-water point a month ago.

The Energy Department is planning to release 50 million barrels of crude oil, a move to help bring down prices. Meanwhile, the Omicron variant of the virus that causes COVID-19 is threatening to suppress global demand, which is likely to bring retail prices down further. President Biden is also pushing the Federal Trade Commission to investigate price manipulation, arguing that decreased wholesale prices are trickling down to the pump.

Manchin, the regular spoiler on Democratic climate plans, met Tuesday with Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer and top Senate Republican Mitch McConnell to discuss energy, among other things. "Adjustments need to be made" on existing rates, Manchin said Wednesday. A 50-50 Senate means every Democrat needs to get behind the reconciliation bill for it to pass.

The oil-and-gas-leasing language in the House-passed bill would bump up royalties for production on federal land from 12.5 to 18.75 percent and set a floor of 14 percent for offshore production. The legislation tasks the Interior Department with revising bonding requirements and levies a number of other fees on the fossil-fuel industry, including a new \$15-per-acre fee for plots of land in the lower 48 states that industry "nominates" for potential leasing.

Kathleen Sgamma, president of the fossil-fuel association Western Energy Alliance, said the provisions would upend U.S. oil and gas production.

"If that bill, as it passed in the House, is actually passed as is and signed by the president, it ends development on federal lands. Period. There's no way anybody could acquire a new lease under all the terms in that legislation," Sgamma said. "I don't know of anybody who's going to nominate a single acre



of federal lands for \$15 an acre to go to sale where they may lose during the bidding. That's a showstopper right there."

The Bureau of Land Management, an Interior Department agency, typically tees up lease sales on federal lands multiple times a year. A major 1.7-million-acre offshore sale, which the administration said was required by a recent Louisiana court ruling, took place this month. But the administration is pushing onshore lease sales into 2022.

Some global-energy experts say that's hitting American consumers.

"The main factor why we're relatively in a higher band of the global oil price is that, if you look at pre-COVID oil production, every major producer has gone back to the pre-COVID level except for the United States. The missing barrels are American barrels," said the Atlantic Council's **Brenda Shaffer**.

"The last thing you want to do when you want to lower gasoline prices is to clamp down on the U.S. industry on so many levels. All it's going to do is deter investment from going back into the U.S. oil patch," she said. "That doesn't help the environment. It doesn't help climate because all it means is that producers in the Middle East and Russia are going to sell more."

The Energy Department says September U.S. crude production was down more than 15 percent, or 2.2 million barrels a day, compared to November 2019 totals. The oil-and-gas industry says fiscal 2021 approvals for permits to drill dropped after Biden took office. Still, the totals are the most since fiscal 2008, according to BLM statistics.

Nearly a quarter of national carbon emissions are produced on federal lands and waters, the U.S. Geological Survey said in 2018. And climate activists are livid with the administration for continuing to lease U.S. land and waters for drilling. The Interior Department issued recommendations—not announcements of new drilling proposals—in a heavily-anticipated report released the day after Thanksgiving. Friends of the Earth, an environmental group, is protesting the lease sales outside the White House over the coming days.

Some environmental researchers say the royalty increase will have a minimal impact on overall U.S. oil and gas output. More than three-quarters of total production comes from private and state land insulated from the reconciliation language, according to Laura Zachary, managing director at Apogee Economics and Policy and a consultant for The Wilderness Society.

"These fiscal reforms will only impact a sliver of the roughly 5 percent of U.S. oil production that comes from onshore federal public lands because the new fiscal terms will only apply to newly issued leases," Zachary said in an email.

[Moderate Dems signal major changes to U.S. oil, gas drilling \(nationaljournal.com\)](https://www.nationaljournal.com/moderate-dems-signal-major-changes-to-u.s.-oil-gas-drilling-2021-12-21)

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ALUMNI:

Retired Navy Capt. to Speak at Ceremony

(TNOnline 4 Dec 21)

Retired Capt. Neil C. Stubits, a 1978 graduate of Lehighon High School, is the speaker at the Lehighon United Veterans Organization program Tuesday.

He received his commission through the officer candidate program in 1983 after graduating from Lehigh University in 1982 with a degree in chemical engineering.

Stubits entered the Strategic Weapons Officer community, and in 1984 reported to the submarine USS James K. Polk, as assistant weapons officer and weapons officer.

Stubits attended the **Naval Postgraduate School** in Monterey, California, where he received a master's degree in mechanical engineering and a mechanical engineers degree. He was accepted into the engineering duty officer program.

He served at Charleston Naval Shipyard; Supervisor of Shipbuilding, Conversion and Repair in Groton, Connecticut, and Naval Submarine Support Facility. He was assigned to Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard and Intermediate Maintenance Facility in 1988.



In 2006, Stubits took command of Naval Surface Warfare Center, Indian Head Division, Indian Head, Maryland, a command with more than 1,250 personnel supporting explosive and energetic material programs. Stubits was recognized by the National Safety Council in 2009 as a Top Ten CEO.

He retired after 27 years of active duty in February 2010 and went to Patrona Corp., a defense contractor that supports submarine programs. He has held positions of chief operating officer, vice president of Operations and vice president of Business Development. He is now a part-time senior financial analyst for the firm.

Stubits returned to Lehighton with his wife, Terri, in 2016. They have been married for 32 years.

[Retired Navy capt. to speak at ceremony – Times News Online \(tnonline.com\)](#)

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