

Military, Law, and more ...

Defense Sec. Hegseth commemorates 81st Anniversary of D-Day in France with ‘Greatest Generation’ that first ‘Made America Great!’

By Defense.gov

June 9, 2025- Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth attended events to mark the 81st anniversary of the Allied invasion of Normandy, France, on June 6, 2025, delivering a speech at the Normandy American Cemetery in Colleville-sur-Mer and working out with troops assigned to the U.S. Army 75th Ranger Regiment.

The Secretary participated in physical training with 75th Ranger Regiment soldiers on Omaha Beach, then met with veterans and their families at the cemetery in Colleville-sur-Mer.

Commonly referred to as D-Day, the 1944 invasion — which would prove to be the turning point in the European theater and ultimately lead to the Allies' victory on the Western Front — saw roughly 160,000 troops crossing the English Channel, with more than 2 million Allied troops in France just three months later. Acknowledging a small group of surviving D-Day veterans at the ceremony, Hegseth spoke of that generation's fortitude.



Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth shakes hands with World War II veterans who greeted him enthusiastically. Also, Sec. Hegseth delivered remarks during D-Day Remembrance Ceremony at Utah Beach. (Photo/Courtesy: DOD)

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In his remarks during the International D-Day Remembrance Ceremony at Utah Beach, Hegseth said:

What motivates a man to do such a thing? I think it's love. Not just love for your country, or love for a cause, but love for one another, which, when you ask those men, they remember the man on the right and on their left. They remember the nurse that cared for them. They remember those that rest here who we honor today, who we will never forget."

National Coalition of Black Veteran Organizations to Partner with National Park Service for 1st Annual Freedom Day Festival at Camp Nelson National Monument on June 21. See article on sports-Military 2 . Also, see below for more details.

Navy Acting Master’s Mate Thomas Harding of the Civil War gets Medal of Honor ... from sports-Military 2

Union blockage of the South. On June 9, 1864, the Dacotah was off the coast of Beaufort, North Carolina, when a nearby ship's boiler exploded. Harding and some of his crewmates were tasked with rowing a small boat out to the damaged ship to try and rescue some of the sailors and collect its cargo. On the way, however, the boat started taking on water, and its acting master's mate, Jarvis Farrar, couldn't swim. According to Harding's Medal of Honor citation, he refused to let Farrar drown as the boat sank. The 5-foot-6-inch Harding reportedly said, "If we are swamped, sir, I shall carry you to the beach or I will never go there myself." Harding tried his best to save Farrar, but he didn't succeed. Harding was the only man in the boat who tried to save the officer — actions his superiors thought were admirable and worthy of appreciation. About three weeks after the incident, Harding was appointed as the Dacotah's new acting master's mate. He was then transferred to the USS Massasoit in August 1864 before being dismissed from service about four months later.

On Dec. 21, 1864, six months after Harding's heroic actions, it was announced that he would receive the newly minted Medal of Honor — the nation's highest medal for valor, which had been approved for sailors through legislation signed into law by

President Abraham Lincoln. It's likely Harding never received the honor. Information from an 1866 issue of the United States Army and Navy Journal showed that his medal went unclaimed. According to a 1989 Hartford Courant newspaper article, he was never presented with the medal. After leaving service, Harding lived for many years, moving to Cheyenne, Wyoming, around 1890 to work as a lamplighter for the Union Pacific Railroad, according to the Laramie Republican, a newspaper published in Wyoming. Harding died Dec. 15, 1911, in Cheyenne. He is buried in Greenhill Cemetery in Laramie. In July 2017, Harding was honored by veterans who commissioned and placed a new Medal of Honor grave marker where his previous marker stood. Harding's Medal of Honor is stored at the Naval History and Heritage Command at the Washington Navy Yard. It is part of a large collection of Medals of Honor given to the command in 1957 due to a variety of factors, including recipients who were unable to be located or who were deceased, and the Navy couldn't find their next of kin.

This article is part of a weekly series called "Medal of Honor Monday," in which we highlight one of the more than 3,500 Medal of Honor recipients who have received the U.S. military's highest medal for valor.

Camp Nelson National Monument

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

6614 Danville Rd
Nicholasville, KY 40356

1st Annual Freedom Day Festival

Saturday, June 21, 2025
10:00 am to 4:00 pm

The National Park Service (NPS) and our partners invite you to the 1st Annual Freedom Day Festival at Camp Nelson National Monument. The event celebrates the establishment of the Brigadier General Charles Young Memorial Historical Corridor.

Ranger Programs

Food Truck

Arts & Crafts

Speaker Ed Hamilton

Public Shuttle from Louisville

Kentucky Center For African American Heritage

Free to Public

Live Music

Kid Activities

Kentucky Center For African American Heritage

1701 West Muhammad Ali Boulevard
Louisville, KY 40203

Secure Parking Begins: 8:00 am EST
Shuttle Departure: 8:30 am EST
Shuttle Return: 4:00 pm EST

To register for a seat/ seats on the Louisville Shuttle to Camp Nelson National Monument, please contact:
JoAnn Orr, Women's Liaison for NABVETS
The National Association of Black Veterans
orrja@yahoo.com

FedEx St. Jude Championship Offers Special Tickets to Military Service Members. Visit FedExChampionship.com

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