

## [NEWTTHISWEEK]

Los Angeles is under siege by Mother Nature in **Sharknado**. List price: \$14.93.



Return to Sanctuary and Tristram 20 years after the Prime Evils were banished in **Diablo III**, the first new game in the "Diablo" franchise in nearly 11 years. List price: \$60 for PC, PS3 and Xbox 360.



## EYE-POPPING TOUR

Visitors who attend the Battleship New Jersey's monthly adult twilight tours see the adults-only side of sailors' lives, such as a 5-by-5-foot painting of a Navy boiler man posing, as the curator says, with two "anatomically correct" women, one of many risqué artworks tucked away in the 887-foot ship. Guests see photos of a Playboy bunny perched on the barrel of a big deck gun and hear stories of lewd hazing rituals and even murder. Tour-goers must be at least 21 years old and are offered an adult beverage at the end. [www.battleshipnewjersey.org](http://www.battleshipnewjersey.org)

## [DEAL OF THE WEEK]

The online photo digitization website ScanMyPhotos.com is launching a new program to give rush delivery to orders sent from APO and FPO addresses free of additional charge. The company urges military families in particular to get old photos scanned to protect against loss in a move or even just to email to loved ones serving overseas as a morale boost. [www.scanmyphotos.com](http://www.scanmyphotos.com)

## GEARSCOUT

The **Fred & Friends Doomed Skull** is based on the legendary Mayan Skull of Doom, said to possess terrible power sufficient to raise the dead and start an apocalypse. As far as we can tell, it holds about 2 ounces and will start a conversation. Made from hand-blown borosilicate glass, these are no short-lived novelty items. \$10 each, [www.fredandfriends.com](http://www.fredandfriends.com)



# Approaching takeoff

## YouTube airman's new country single has "Swagger"

By Ken Perrotte

Air National Guard Tech. Sgt. Angie Johnson has had a busy couple of years since becoming a YouTube phenomenon in 2011. The candid video of her singing Adele's mega-hit "Rolling in the Deep," accompanied by the Missouri Air National Guard band Sidewinder, has logged more than 3.3 million views and "changed my life," she tells OFF-duty.

One viewer was Carson Daly, host of the hit show "The Voice." He arranged for her to appear on Season 2, where she was coached by Cee Lo Green.

Johnson launched a summer 2012 creative fundraising project on the Kickstarter website, hoping to raise \$30,000 to recruit a top-quality producer and musicians to work with her in a recording studio. She raised more than \$36,000. Soon after, she signed a recording contract with Sony Music Nashville. Things began to fall into place.

The first single from her four-song EP "Sing for You" is "Swagger," her own catchy, upbeat composition. The title song, also her own composition, is an emotionally powerful acoustic ballad that tells the story of a combat survivor coping with seeing a battle buddy killed.

"'Swagger' has a bit of a rock feel to it, with a pop edge," she says. "There's a little bit of banjo in the background. It's kind of where country music is right now. I was excited about it when I wrote it and felt that people



ALAN MATTHEWS

**Air National Guard Tech. Sgt. Angie Johnson became a YouTube sensation and later competed on "The Voice." Her new country single is "Swagger."**

would attach to it. It's just a fun song."

Johnson recently opened a show for Martina McBride and has concert dates lining up through the fall, and she was named Artist of the Month for July by NRA Country, a charity effort by the gun organization. As a military member familiar with firearms and shooting, Johnson thought she was a good fit and called it a "great opportunity."

Originally an active-duty intelligence analyst, her decidedly musical military career began in 2002, when she became part of the Tops in Blue group that tours the world, putting on shows at installations.

She then became part of the Air Force Reserve band based at Robins Air Force Base, Ga. On her website ([www.officialangie-johnson.com](http://www.officialangie-johnson.com)), she declares that she's "at home in combat boots or stilettos, baiting a hook or singing an aria, having filet mignon or fillet of catfish."

Her career Air Force father, a Kentucky native, met her mother, a Japanese base exchange employee, while stationed at Kadena Air Base, Japan. With a written wink, she notes, "I'm what you would call Kentuckanese."

The rock-tinged songs and bluesy-country delivery seem to be natural fits in the current scheme of country music. One song Johnson wrote that's not on the EP, but posted on her website, is called "Outlaw Spirit."

The lyrics give a nod to her parents, and she says she tried in the song to channel the best of the old outlaw country singers, from Waylon Jennings to Merle Haggard.

She says she doesn't know where she got her singing voice. Her parents and aunts and uncles aren't musical, but their kids are.

"I've got quite a few cousins who sing, play instruments," she says. "It's really weird. It's like it skipped a generation."

Johnson says her military ambitions are in a transition. Her Missouri-based unit was deactivated, so she's been looking for an Air National Guard or Reserve unit — with a band — near Nashville, Tenn., where she has lived since separating from active duty in 2006.

With 13 years of service behind her, Johnson wants to continue her military career, but the key will be finding a unit that will provide the flexibility to let her pursue her civilian music career.

"If I can do both, I'll try to serve as long as I can," she says.

Her plan is to be on the road as much as possible, promoting her new music and, hopefully, getting radio play with her first single.

"I hope people like it, come to the shows and we can keep it going," she says. Follow her on Twitter — @angiejohnson — or on Facebook and or her website. □

Ken Perrotte is a Military Times outdoors writer.



NRA COUNTRY