

# The Signature



**FIGHTING FOR THE  
RIGHTS OF ALL**

PAGES 6-7

**CELEBRATING  
JUNETEENTH**

◆  
**U.S. NMRTC HOLDS  
RETIREMENT FOR CMC &  
CHANGE OF COMMAND**



## Direct Line

# Chief of Naval Operations Visits Kiel to attend BALTOPS, Meets with Navy and Government Leaders

By Chief Petty Officer Amanda Gray, *Chief of Naval Operations*

Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Adm. Mike Gilday traveled to Kiel, Germany, June 15-18, for the conclusion of BALTOPS 22.

In its 51st iteration, BALTOPS is an annual coordinated exercise that reinforces interoperability with Allies and partners and provides collective maritime security in the Baltic Sea.

Gilday visited the guided-missile destroyer USS Porter (DDG 78) at sea during the final days of the exercise.

“Our Sailors are our asymmetric advantage against any threat,” said Gilday. “Watching the incredible multi-domain coordination with our international partners, and seeing Sailors in action is always inspiring.”

This year, fourteen NATO allies, two NATO partner nations (Finland and Sweden), more than 45 ships, 75 aircraft, and approximately 7,000 personnel participated in BALTOPS 22.

“The United States’ strong defense relationships with our Northern European Allies and partners constitute our greatest strategic advantage in the region,” said Gilday. “BALTOPS achieves a multitude of objectives by demonstrating NATO interoperability, interchangeability, and readiness.”

He added that naval forces are participating in this exercise and are focused on interoperability with Sweden and Finland, as well as the other allied nations of NATO. “We are trained, proficient and ready, BALTOPS demonstrates just that and our commitment to defending NATO is ironclad.”

While in Kiel, Gilday met with Vice Adm. Jan Kaack, Chief of the German Navy, as well as Vice Adm. Frank Lenski, Vice Chief of the German Navy, to discuss operational areas of mutual interest, NATO operations, and Transatlantic security.

“I sincerely welcome the continued commitment of the US Navy in Europe. Since 1972, the BALTOPS exercise has been taking place in the Baltic Sea under US leadership - this year for the 51st time,” said Lenski. “Our ties with the US Navy are strong and will remain so because the Baltic Sea is part of NATO’s northern flank. It is our vital interest to guarantee freedom and security in this area.”



Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Mike Gilday meets with Chief of the German Navy Vice Adm. Jan C. Kaack, aboard the German training ship Gorch Fock during BALTOPS22. BALTOPS 22 is the premier maritime-focused exercise in the Baltic Region. The exercise, led by U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa, and executed by Naval Striking and Support Forces NATO, provides a unique training opportunity to strengthen combined response capabilities critical to preserving freedom of navigation and security in the Baltic Sea. (U.S. Navy photo by Cmdr. Courtney Hillson/Released)

Lenski added, “And today I am standing here together with Admiral Gilday and Vice Admiral Black to back up NATO’s promise: ‘One for all - all for one’.”

The trip culminated with a BALTOPS reception aboard the U.S. Sixth Fleet flagship USS Mount Whitney (LCC 20), where Gilday met with U.S. and foreign naval leadership, as well as members of the local community.

U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa and U.S. Sixth Fleet maintains regular rotational forces that operate in the theater throughout the year. These forces include: Forward Deployed Naval Forces guided-missile destroyers, P-8A Poseidon maritime patrol aircraft; construction and expeditionary personnel; and Military Sealift Command USNS ships that provide a wide array of support and capability to our forces at sea.

This was Gilday’s first visit to Germany.

Earlier this week, he visited Iceland where he met with senior Icelandic officials, U.S. Sailors and Italian service members, all working together to ensure regional security and stability.

# CELEBRATING JUNETEENTH

By MC2 Carson Davis, *All Hands Magazine*

June 19, also known as Juneteenth, was a date written into history. The Emancipation Proclamation was declared on January 1, 1863, by President Abraham Lincoln. However, slaves in Galveston, Texas, were not notified of the declaration until June 19, 1865. As a result, African Americans observe Juneteenth as the day the last slave was freed. Petty Officer 1st Class Dominic McNeil, an instructor and a member of the Equal Opportunity Committee at the Defense Information School (DINFOS), compares Juneteenth to our nation's Independence Day.

"We have July 4, the Independence Day in our nation, but during that day, African Americans, or Black Americans, were not 100% free. Juneteenth is a celebration."

Federal recognition of Juneteenth was signed into law just last year on June 17, 2021, furthering the commemoration of African American strides in our democracy since the implementation of Martin Luther King Day in 1983.

Seaman Heaven Brown, an admin clerk for Strike Fighter Squadron 154 (VFA-154) "The Black Knights," thinks that federal recognition of Juneteenth is a step in the right direction for the military. "I feel like it's a good thing for Blacks in the service to be able to rejoice in our culture. The history of Black Americans in this country is damaging; the recognition of our freedom is just as important as our nation's."

Knowing U.S. history and the roots of Juneteenth strengthens its impact on our military. Brown said it could benefit service members to learn more about the new federal holiday.

"Making it an actual federal holiday gives people the opportunity to educate themselves," said Brown. "What people had to go through to make this day, what my ancestors had to go through to give this opportunity to us, and to understand the severity of how things were."

To understand the gravity of Juneteenth, and what it means to be a Black American throughout history and in America today, we must look back to our past to better all our futures.

"I think it's vital for all Americans to understand the history of Black Americans because it's a big fight for us to be recognized as contributors to society," said McNeil. "The contributions they make to the advancements of our nation, and for other ethnicities to recognize Juneteenth, helps improve relations, both racially and culturally, as a country."

The recognition and pride associated with the disestablishment of power over African Americans and the historic mark of their independence, helps right the wrongs of America's past.

"We've been fighting for freedom and equality for all different races, genders, and ethnicities for years and recognizing it is in the right direction," said McNeil. "The government has decided to understand the struggles in this country and try to right some of the wrongs that were bestowed upon us. As far as the Navy goes, it's important to recognize our contributions to the Navy and the history of Black Americans in the Navy, it's a great thing."

Righting the wrongs of the past and federally recognizing equality for all Americans and service members by implementing holidays such as Juneteenth further amplifies our cohesiveness as a country.

As service members, our duty comes first, but to build and maintain an effective fighting force, we must consider everyone. We are made up of every ethnicity that the United States of America has to offer and being transparent with each other is needed to maintain an effective military.

"Have more conversations, understand the beginnings, and just step back and look at perspective," said McNeil. "Change, culture, environment, and the tensions that flare up during these conversations is key to understanding where they're coming from and that we might not always agree."

These conversations are sparked by recognizing holidays like Juneteenth and Martin Luther King Day. Having conversations centered around rights, whether civil or ethical, and recognizing all people in our country is the right thing to do.

"If you're raised in a certain way of doing things and you're used to it, that's where your morals come from, as people, we try to understand it," said Brown. "But if we cannot be open-minded with each other how are we ever going to be able to fight for each other?"

Service members overcome adversity daily, whether it's haze gray and underway or boots on the ground. The last thing they should have to worry about is the color of their skin affecting how they fight for their country. Historical changes like a federally recognized Juneteenth are significant to not only service members but to the United States of America as a whole.

## THE SIGNATURE

U.S. NAVAL AIR STATION  
SIGONELLA

**Commanding Officer**  
Capt. Aaron Shoemaker

**Executive Officer**  
Cmdr. Ronald Cappellini

**Command Master Chief**  
CMDCM Anna Wood

### EDITORIAL

**Public Affairs Officer**  
Lt. Drake Greer  
[drake.greer@eu.navy.mil](mailto:drake.greer@eu.navy.mil)

**Assistant Public Affairs Officer**  
Megan Mills  
[megan.mills@eu.navy.mil](mailto:megan.mills@eu.navy.mil)

**Public Affairs LPO**  
MC1 Kegan Kay  
[kegan.kay@eu.navy.mil](mailto:kegan.kay@eu.navy.mil)

**Community Relations Officer**  
Dott. Alberto Lunetta  
[alberto.lunetta.it@eu.navy.mil](mailto:alberto.lunetta.it@eu.navy.mil)

### PAO Staff Writers \ Photographers

MC1 Joshua Coté  
[joshua.m.cote@eu.navy.mil](mailto:joshua.m.cote@eu.navy.mil)

MC3 Triniti Lersch  
[triniti.lersch@eu.navy.mil](mailto:triniti.lersch@eu.navy.mil)

### CONTACT US

Naval Air Station Sigonella, Sicily  
[thesig@eu.navy.mil](mailto:thesig@eu.navy.mil)  
DSN 624-5440; 095-86-5440  
PSC 812 Box 7, FPO, AE 09627-0001

Cover photo: Capt. Aaron Shoemaker, Naval Air Station Sigonella commanding officer, cuts a cake with Ristorante Bella Etna galley patrons in honor of Pride Month on NAS Sigonella, June 16, 2022. (photo by MC3 Class Triniti Lersch)

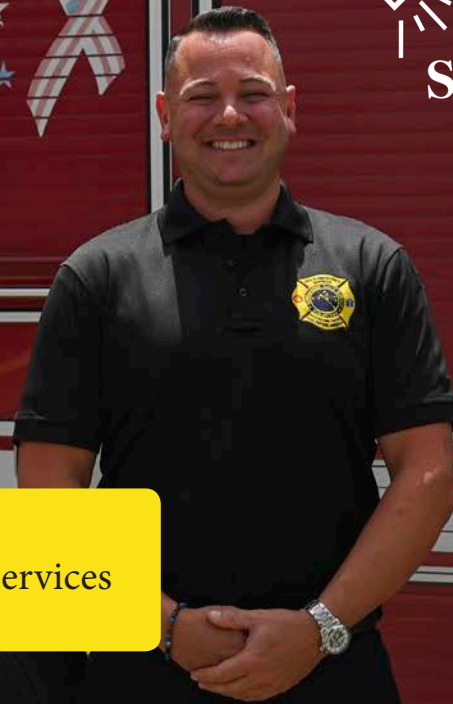
This newspaper is an authorized publication for members of the military services overseas. Contents of The Signature are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense (DoD), or the U.S. Navy.

Editorial submissions are welcomed from all Naval Air Station Sigonella departments, divisions and tenant commands. **Editorial submissions** should be sent to the Public Affairs Office via [thesig@eu.navy.mil](mailto:thesig@eu.navy.mil). All articles submitted by non-staff members will be considered contributing writers.





PROTECTING  
THOSE WHO  
DEFEND  
AMERICA



**Name:** Michael Balliet

**Command:** NAS Sigonella Fire & Emergency Services

**Department:** Fire Prevention Division

By MC3 Triniti Lersch, *NAS Sigonella Public Affairs*

From a young age, Michael Balliet looked up to his grandfather, a fire chief in California, and wanted to follow in his footsteps as a firefighter.

Balliet is from Fort Collins, Colo. and has been in federal firefighting jobs for the past 19 years.

“I worked with the Air Force where I started my career as a GS-3, Department of Interior on a hot shoot crew, and the last six years with the Navy,” said Balliet. “My goal is to become a regional fire chief where I can support multiple fire departments across the region in guidance, training, problem solving and mentorship.”

Currently, Balliet is the assistant fire chief of Fire & Emergency Services on Naval Air Station Sigonella, where he arrived in October 2021. This is his first time working overseas. His daily duties include being the health & safety officer for three operation shifts and 87 personnel, overseeing the NAS Sigonella Fire Prevention Division, reviewing new project plans for Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command Public Works, working with the fire protection engineer, overseeing the inspection, testing and maintenance of fire protection/detection systems for multiple tenants, and continuously educating personnel aboard NAS Sigonella on fire safety practices.

His many duties sum up his favorite quote, ‘no one ever paid to see a man juggle one ball,’ which for him means firefighters never have just one job, they take on many tasks through the day. In this case, he also fills the current void as NAS Sigonella Operations department’s senior fire officer for responding to emergencies and mitigating incidents.

“Working in a fire department with civilians, local

nationals, and military is challenging and rewarding,” said Balliet, “Especially the diversity and daily challenges to meet the vision, mission, and goals of installation and region guidance.”

Balliet was nominated and awarded the title of Senior Civilian of the First Quarter.

“Chief Michael Balliet is one of the most professional, knowledgeable, and dignified individual I’ve met and worked with over the past 40 years,” said William J. Casey Jr, Navy Region Europe, Africa, Central (EURAFCENT) Region Fire Chief. “He possesses a mastery of all functional areas of fire protection. He continually inspires others with his work ethic and tremendous dedication to teamwork. He is willing to share his knowledge with all interested in learning new programs. His outstanding leadership and flawless delivery of emergency services has ensured mission success for NASSIG Fire and Emergency Services.”

“Chief Balliet single-handedly sets a new benchmark of excellence,” said NAS Sigonella Fire Chief Samuel R. Feltner. “Upon his arrival to present day, he’s simultaneously performed as health & safety officer and fire prevention chief, two positions vital to the organization and the installation’s ability to support the mission across the Mediterranean. Since his arrival he was appointed as a Government Purchase Card holder, installation training team leader, and commander’s inspection program team lead, all while balancing day-to-day operational voids. His ability knows no bounds, he is consistently recruited to assist external organizations with procurement methods.”

“I am very happy to know that my hard work is noticed,” said Balliet.





# NMRTC Sigonella CMC Retires

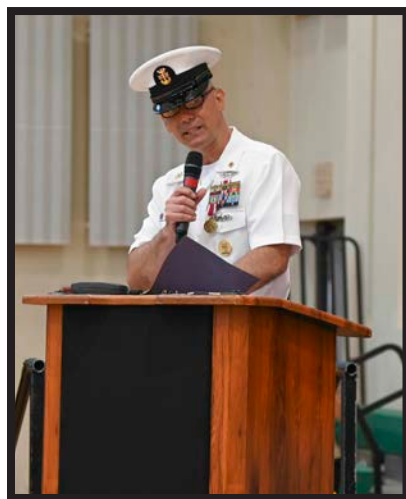
By U.S. Navy Medicine and Readiness Training Command Public Affairs

U.S. Navy Medicine and Readiness Training Command Sigonella celebrated Master Chief Petty Officer Albert Wood's retirement aboard Naval Air Station Sigonella on June 3, 2022

Master Chief Petty Officer Albert Wood naval career began 30 years ago when he joined as a reservist in April 1992. A native of Olongapo City, Philippines, he completed recruit training in San Diego, Calif. as a Honorman Recruit. In 1993, he converted to active duty and reported to Naval Hospital Corpus Christi, Texas for his first assignment.

He then attended Surgical Technologist "C" School at Naval School of Health Sciences, Bethesda, Md. where he graduated top of his class. His career has taken him to many different parts of the globe including Japan, Croatia, Iraq, and eventually Italy. His service culminated as the Command Master Chief for U.S. Navy Medicine Readiness and Training Command Sigonella.

The retirement ceremony was attended by family members and many whom came to celebrate Master Chief Wood's service in the U.S. Navy.





# Fighting

By MC1 Kegan Kay, *NAS Sigonella Public Affairs*

June has been designated as LGBTQ+ Pride Month and this September will mark 11 years since the repeal of Department of Defense's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy which allowed service members and DoD civilian to serve openly and acknowledge their sexual orientation.

"The diversity of the United States is unquestionably one of our greatest strengths. Many here today have fought hard battles to overcome bigotry and be treated with dignity and respect that is due to every human being," said Deputy Defense Secretary Kathleen Hicks during the 11th LGBTQ+ Pride Ceremony held at the Pentagon.

June was first recognized as Pride Month in 1999 to honor the 1969 Stonewall riots in Manhattan, New York. The Stonewall riots marked a poignant point for the gay liberation movement in the United States.

Since 1969, the U.S. has seen many changes regarding civil rights. The rights of the LGBTQ+ community especially have seen strides towards more equality, yet there is still a long way to go.

Out of the 50 U.S. states, only 21 have laws to protect people from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity in employment, housing and public accommodations.

It was only as recent as 2003 in the Supreme Court case *Lawrence v. Texas* that resulted in a nationwide decriminalization of homosexual relations and in 2015 *Obergefell v. Hodges* that legally recognized same-sex marriage across the nation.

Unfortunately, the U.S. isn't the only country where people are currently battling for their civil rights.

Lele Russo, a lawyer based in Catania, specializes in LGBTQ+ issues for the "protection, respect and promotion of differences." Russo is not only active in fighting for the rights of others, but as a transgender man, fighting for his own rights within Italian law.

In comparison to the U.S., Italy falls behind in acknowledging the rights of LGBTQ+ community and a lot of attempts to garner civil rights have been shut down due to both religious and political reasons.

Russo explained that same-sex marriage is not legal but that they have civil unions instead. When it comes to families, gay couples are not allowed to adopt and surrogacy is illegal in Italy. Therefore, many couples go abroad to the U.S. or Canada to get a surrogate.

However, even upon return to Italy, the law only recognizes 'the biological', the parent who shares DNA with the child, as the legal parent.

For Russo to even pick up his own children from school, he must have a legal waiver, like a power of attorney, to do so.





# for the Rights of All

Furthermore, in the event of the legal parent's death, the other parent has no rights to the child.

"There have been some court verdicts that recognize what they call 'the intentional parents' but they are still trying to break through this because there is no law that protects same-sex couples," explained Russo.

However, this course of legal action only works when the child is older to prove that the other parent is already taking care of the child. Therefore it hasn't been applicable to newborns and infants.

"The problem is that even if the judge rules in your favor, the adoption is only for the individual parents, not for the relatives," said Russo. "If something happens to both parents, only the 'the biological' parent's relatives will have legal guardianship over the child. There are no rights to the relatives of the other parent. However, if the 'the biological' passes but the other parent does not, this means that 'the biological' relatives can claim the child, despite the other parent still being alive.

Yet for a couple in which one partner transitions to a different sex, they are protected more than a same-sex couple. Once the transgender individual completes their transition with legal paperwork to confirm their new sex, under Italian law, they would be afforded the same rights as a heterosexual couple to include adoption and marriage.

There are three primary legal objectives that the LGBTQ+ community would like to see come into effect within Italian law:

The first is equal marriage rights for same-sex couples and heterosexual couples. Second, the possibility of adoption for a single parent or a gay couple. Third is to reform the law regarding transgender and homosexuality being considered illness and that it becomes just an orientation to align with the World Health Organizations' revocation on May 17, 1990, regarding homosexuality 'being a disease, disturbance, or a perversion.'

Another important piece of legislation that they are trying to pass is the Zan bill, a proposed anti-phobia law that was proposed by Alessandro Zan, a member of the parliament for the center-left Democratic Party.

"Basically it's a proposal law that will make discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity a crime in Italy in response to an exponential rise in the number of acts of violence towards gay and transgender people," said Russo.

Unfortunately, the bill was rejected in November 2001 by the right-leaning party, with Catholic influences, as they fought the idea of creating an awareness day in school, claiming it could corrupt the children.

These are just a few of the large battles that Russo and other civil rights lawyers are currently fighting.

In addition to his legal work, Russo is a councilor member of Arcigay Pegaso Catania, serving as the Head of the Legal and Rights Area as well as the head of the transgender groups to include those who consider themselves nonbinary.

According to the arcigay.it website, "Arcigay is a national reality and consists of 73 affiliated association and local committees. Together, we collaborate to promote and convey all over the country our values, turning them into actual activities and initiatives in favor of the LBGT+ community."

May of this year, Arcigay Pegaso Catania and Azienda Sanitaria Provinciale (ASP) Catania signed a memorandum of understanding that NewsSicilia reported "intend to promote greater awareness, in the professional community and on the territory, on the issues of fundamental human rights; and to carry out constant training and refresher courses, aimed at healthcare personnel, aimed at creating precision medicine courses that take into account the specific needs of screening, prevention, diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation of LGBT people."

"For example, when we are talking about HIV, usually only men are addressed, but we are also trying to encourage prevention for women; like the use of a dental barrier, which no one usually talks about," stated Russo. "They talk about prevention with use of condoms. They don't talk about prevention between homosexual women, yet two women can get AIDS."

In the Catania/ San. Giorgio area, ASP created what is called a special division, only for those who are on the transgender path. They have Dr. Mario Vettri, who specializes in hormone treatment, leading psychologists and a team of experts.

Arcigay Catania is a safe haven that anyone can come to for help with legal, medical, and counseling needs. They also have many specialized groups that focus on only discussing specific issues such as a group for women, a group for youth and a group for transgender & nonbinary, which Russo is in charge of. Despite the multiple different specific purposes, these groups all cooperate and interact with each other.

"It used to be called Gay Pride but it's now called Pride, because this is a common fight for human rights that we all fight together," said Russo. "We are all intertwined among each other, so we are all together trying to fight for our civil rights."

Russo encourages everyone to not be afraid of the patriarchal society and what they think, and that to the youth to seek help because there's a lot of organization that can help them to get their rights. Don't be afraid to ask for help.

"If you don't come out, and tell who you are, then there is no way to be the star in your own life," stated Russo. "We ourselves have to fight for our rights. Nobody else is going to fight for your rights. So it's very important to come out if you want change."

While June is the designated Pride Month, Arcigay holds Pride events throughout Italy and Sicily from June through September.

Catania Pride will be held June 28 through July 2, which will include Pride Village held at Le Ciminiere exhibition center. The village will include band performances, art exhibitions, presentation of LGBTQ+ books and movie screenings, and friendly debates. The event will end with a parade then a closing party on the July 2nd.



# Italian News

## St. Paul's Festival returns to Palazzolo Acreide after a two-year break (28- 30 June)

By Dr. Alberto Lunetta, *NAS Sigonella Public Affairs*

Devotion and folklore will be back in full swing in Palazzolo Acreide on June 28th and 29th as massive crowds will be rejoicing in the streets for the traditional Festa di San Paolo (St. Paul Feast) after a two-year hiatus.

Palazzolo, a pearl of the Sicilian Baroque, is a small town nestled among the hills of the Siracusa province. It is one of the eight towns in Southeastern Sicily, also including Caltagirone, Militello Val di Catania, Catania, Modica, Noto, Ragusa and Scicli, which were inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2002 for providing “outstanding testimony to the exuberant genius of late Baroque art and architecture.” According to UNESCO, these cities were all rebuilt after 1693 on or beside towns existing during the earthquake, which took place that year. “They represent a considerable collective undertaking, successfully carried out at a high level of architectural and artistic achievement. Keeping within the late Baroque style of the day, they also depict distinctive innovations in town planning and urban building,” UNESCO said.

Every year on June 28 and 29, thousands of pilgrims gather at the Church of San Paolo to honor their beloved celestial patron. St. Paul is depicted as a bearded man holding a sword pointing upward in one hand and a book from which a snake hangs downwards in the other. He is considered a protector from snake and tarantula bites and scorpion stings.

Father Gianni Tabacco, the parish priest of the Saint Paul Basilica, said the Covid-19 pandemic has forced people to review their priorities and rediscover the essentials of our faith. He also noted that festivities in honor of the Apostle St. Paul, Patron of our City, are “a path to rebirth and a splendid kaleidoscope of suggestions leading to the encounter with the Lord Jesus who conquered the heart of St. Paul and made him available for martyrdom.” He eventually encouraged devotees to bring the saint again among homes and squares as well as broad their horizons “...to meet Christ in compassion, tenderness, consolation, help, proximity and forgiveness.”

According to tradition, St. Paul was bit by a viper, but the venom had no effect on him because of his supernatural powers. “San Paulu, maccia d’addauru, spina puncenti, nun muzzicari a mia e mancu a la genti” (St. Paul, laurel tree, stinging thorn, don’t bite neither me nor other



The Feast of San Paolo, honoring the Palazzolo Acreide patron saint, is typically held every year featuring holy masses, processions, fireworks, live music as well as arts and crafts. (Photo by Peppe Nitto)

people). This invocation, which was said to protect against those deadly bites, was given to devotees in return for offerings to St. Paul by the “Ciarauli” who, according to legend, were shamans with supernatural healing powers. Typically born on the night between Jan. 24 and 25 (the night of St. Paul’s conversion), they were believed to heal the poisonous bites with saliva and prayers. According to popular credulity, Ciarauli had also physical birthmarks on their body (bumps with tarantula or snakes’ shapes under their tongue or on their arms) which would “prove” their predestinated supernatural calling.

Tradition holds that Ciarauli attended St. Paul festivals to collect the “dedicated gifts” which devotees had promised to give to St. Paul to thank him for a miracle. Ciarauli were skilled in snake handling techniques which they used to impress pilgrims. St. Paul is also invoked for good crops and for the healing of children affected by hernias.

During the festival, devotees also buy the traditional “Cudduri di San Paulu,” (elaborate votive ring-shaped bread) which is offered to relatives and friends for good luck.

The St. Paul festival, which is also celebrated in several neighboring towns such as Buccheri, Buscemi, Ferla, Cassaro, Giarratana, Monterosso, Canicattini and Solarino, is the main religious event in Palazzolo. Over







# U.S. NMRTC Holds Change of Command Ceremony

By Lt. Cmdr. Nhu Do, *USNMRTC Sigonella*

U.S. Navy Medicine and Readiness Training Command Sigonella held a change of command ceremony aboard the installation June 15.

Capt. Jean Fisak relieved Capt. Denise Gechas as Commanding Officer, U.S. Navy Medicine and Readiness Training Command during a Change of Command ceremony onboard NAS Sigonella (Aeroporto Aeronautica Militare di Sigonella) on Wednesday, June 15th, 2022.

Rear Adm. Darin Via, commander, Navy Medical Forces Atlantic (NMFL) was in attendance and praised Gechas for her dedication throughout her tenure.

“While your mission is difficult, you succeed every day. Like I said, you can and you do. Today we are here to commend you and your leadership over the past few years.”

The keynote speaker, Ms. Juliet Beyler, Executive Director, U.S. Naval Forces Europe and Africa commended Gechas on her successful tour as commanding officer. She highlighted the command’s

various accomplishments to include the successful navigation of the ongoing global pandemic and operational support during Operation Allies Refuge last summer.

Gechas thanked her staff and tenant command leaders to include all the active duty service members, local nationals and civilian employees who play a vital role in ensuring the mission is met every day.

“I consider myself the luckiest CO ever to have served with you both. Thank you for sharing the weight of command and responsibility. Together with our amazing staff spanning three COCOMS and two numbered Fleets, we really made a difference. Thank you.”

Fisak said she looked forward to leading the command and working with all the staff in Sigonella, Souda Bay, Bahrain and tenant commands.

“I’m very much looking forward to working with you and excited to meet the entire team as well as your families. Today I would like to take the opportunity to say thank you.”







## CataniaPride Village Program

Great Amphitheater Area

**Tuesday, June 28**

**5 p.m.**

Let's get Drag - workshop on Drag art by Sovrinity Drag Beauty

**7 p.m.**

Presentation of the book "Vite Negate" (FVE, 2021) with the author Franco Buffoni. Presented by Dario Accolla and Rosa Maria Di Natale

**9 p.m.**

Opening Party

DJ set: Luminhertz

Drag Show: Sovrinity Drag Beauty

**Wednesday, June 29**

**5 p.m.**

"Towards the procession!" - Labels creation workshop for Catania Pride 2022

**7 p.m.**

Presentation of the book "The changing language" (Eris, 2021) with the author Manuela Manera. Moderated by Emanuele Liotta

**8:30 p.m.**

Screening of the documentary film "A man must be strong" (by Ilaria Ciavattini and Elsi Perino)

With Lele Russo

**10 p.m.**

Live band: RedCarpet

**Thursday, June 30**

**5 p.m.**

Telling parity: workshop for children by Dr. Tiziana Squillaci in collaboration with Rainbow Families in Sicily

**5:30 p.m.**

Tango Queer lesson with Ivan Giuliano and Giulia Lombardo

**7 p.m.**

Presentation of the book "Four men and a star" (Rizzoli, 2022) with the authors Christian De Florio and Carlo Tumino ("Dad by choice"). Moderated by Vera Navarra. Readings by Egle Doria

**9 p.m.**

DJ set: Kama

**Friday, July 1**

**5:30 p.m.**

Tango Queer lesson with Ivan Giuliano and Giulia Lombardo

**7 p.m.**

Debate "Is heterosexuality" normal?" "Critical looks and dominant orientation" with Elvira Adamo, Giuseppe Burgio, Luisa Chiarandà, Lorenzo Gasparrini. They present Dario Accolla and Vera Navarra

**8 p.m.**

Screening of the film "Anne +" with Gin Finocchiaro, Voice Actor

**10 p.m.**

Live Fabio Guglielmino and Manfredi D'Aleo

**Saturday, July 2**

**10 p.m.**

Pride Night! - Closing Party

### "Italian News" cont'd from Page 8

the centuries, St. Paul became more popular than St. Sebastian, the other protector considered a "minor" patron saint who is celebrated on Aug. 10 by only one town's district. Supporters of St. Paul are called "Sampaulari" while the ones upholding St. Sebastian are named as "Sammastianari."

#### Festival Highlights

Tuesday, June 28: "Giro di Galà" (parade with horses, flag throwers, Giarratana drummers to be accompanied by the Palazzolo and Buscemi town bands- 6:30 p.m.); "A Sciuta Ra Cammira" (Public unveiling ceremony of the 16th century statue depicting the venerated saint and the Holy Relic - 8:30 p.m. San Paolo Church); Qbeta concert (10 p.m. piazza Nigro); Fireworks shows (midnight by the Saint Paul Churchyard).

Wednesday, June 29: Blessing of animals and bread (9 a.m.); Solemn Holy Mass (11 a.m.); "Sciuta" (The float with the decorated statue of St. Paul placed on top and the relics if the saint are carried in procession by devotees screaming "Viva San Paulu patronu!" (Long live St. Paul the patron!) throughout the town historic center among firecrackers, fireworks and colored ribbons called "Nzareddi"; Blessing of the babies is also performed -1 p.m.); Solemn Holy Mass (7 p.m.); Evening procession (8:30 p.m.); Musical show (10 p.m.); Spectacular grand finale with fireworks (midnight). For more information and directions visit <https://www.facebook.com/FestaSanPaoloApostoloPATRONOdiPalazzoloAcreide>





# COLOR RUN



# REGATTA RACE

# CORNHOLE



# FOOD & BEVERAGES

PRESENTING SPONSOR

USAA®

FOR MORE DETAILS VISIT:  
[NAVYMWRSIGONELLA.COM/RED-WHITE-BOOM](http://NAVYMWRSIGONELLA.COM/RED-WHITE-BOOM)

**JULY 2**  
SATURDAY  
**NAS I**

4-10 PM  
UP TO 5 SPONSORED GUESTS



# LIVE MUSIC



# FIREWORKS

SILVER SPONSOR

