

The Signature



**HAPPY BIRTHDAY,
CHIEFS!**

PAGES 6 -7

◆
**ALL IN TO END
CHILD ABUSE**

◆
**DANGERS OF
DISTRACTED DRIVING**

Happy Birthday

129 years of

leadership

Direct Line

Christopher McKibbin, NAS Sigonella School Liaison Officer

April is a month when we take a pause to reflect and recognize our military youth. These kids were not issued a sea bag. They often do not have control over where they move or what school they will attend. They see their lives turned upside-down with each PCS move. What we often forget is that they have emotions, feelings, and beliefs. They feel the closeness of community, family, and friends. They can feel the loneliness of being the new kid or the loss of being away from things of familiarity. They might be missing a beloved friend or a four-legged family member. They might be going through the repetition of trying to find a “new normal.”

A “new normal” is a term our military youth understood long before the COVID-19 pandemic. They deal with finding a “new normal” every time they relocate, every time a parent deploys, and every time they start a new school. They are the epitome of what it takes to thrive in a “new normal.”

Military families are transient; they relocate an average of every 2.9 years. Military kids on average attend six to nine schools by the time they graduate. Military kids fly before they learn to walk and get their passports before their driver’s licenses. Their hometowns aren’t on the map; they are the map.

As a School Liaison Officer (SLO), my main mission is to help families and students with all the transitions they face when leaving or arriving to Sigonella. The SLO is part of Child & Youth Education Services (CYES), which was established by Commander, Navy Installations Command (CNIC) to address the educational needs of military families that come with frequent transitions and extended deployments. CYES is a function of Child & Youth Programs (CYP) under Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR).

The Navy SLO is responsible for implementing all aspects of CYES and school-based programming. The SLO serves as the primary liaison for community schools, commanders, and military parents and wears many hats: advisor, communicator, advocate, and coordinator. The SLO is the face of the command to the educational community and the face of the educational community to the command.

The SLO has four primary customers – commanders, educators, parents, and community partners – and serves

as the subject matter expert and point of contact to each. The SLO core services are as follows:

School Transition Services

Assist families with school transfers and help ‘level the playing field’ for military children and youth.

Deployment Support

Connect educators with Navy deployment support system to inform them about cycles of deployment and tools available to assist in working with Navy children.

Command, School, Community Communications

Serve as subject matter experts for installation commanders on K-12 issues, helping to connect command, school and community resources.

Partnerships in Education (PIE)

Creates volunteer network of resources to support installation and community members who have vested interest in the success of all youth.

Home School Linkage and Support

Assist families by gathering and sharing information on home schooling issues, policies and legislation and help leverage CYP resources to support these families.

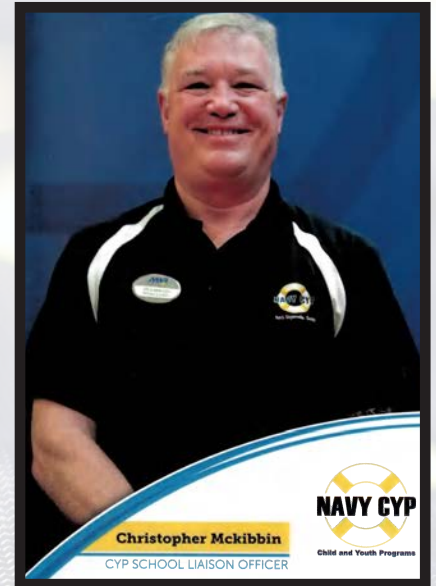
Special Needs System Navigation

Provide information on installation and community programs and services, make referrals to EFMP, and assist in navigating administrative systems within LEAs.

Post-Secondary Preparations

Leverage installation and school resources to provide graduating military students with access to post-secondary information and opportunities.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to me at christopher.mckibbin@eu.navy.mil or 624-3732.





U.S. Navy photo
by Mass Communication Specialist
2nd Class John Stratton

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ENERGY SAVING TIPS



1) You can improve your gas mileage by 1-2% by **using the manufacturer's recommended grade of motor oil**. Using 10W-30 motor oil in an engine designed to use 5W-30 can lower your gas mileage.

2) Help create shade on the sunny side of your house by **planting a tree or adding a retractable awning on a window**. Eliminating the heat and glare of the sun on the house will lower your cooling bills. A retractable awning will let in more sun on those cool days as well.

3) **Fill the basin when you shave** instead of keeping the water running. You'll use only 1 gallon of water instead of up to 15 gallons.

4) **Report lights left on when they are not needed to your base energy team**.

Automatic controls or a different type of lighting may fix the problem. If you can't find a light switch, report it!

THE SIGNATURE

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SIGONELLA

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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. All articles submitted by non-staff members will be considered contributing writers.

Our MilKids are priority one.

#AllInToEndChildAbuse

Learn how to be a champion for child safety through your Family Advocacy Program:

624-4291 or 095-56-4291

Learn more at MilitaryOneSource.mil/end-child-abuse.





In the Spotlight

Name: ABH3 Nuria Avalos

Command: NASSIG

Department: Dispatch

By Megan Mills, *NAS Sigonella Public Affairs*. Photo by MC3 Trinita Lersch, *NAS Sigonella Public Affairs*

The ability to take calls from people experiencing scary, complicated, and desperate circumstances requires extensive training paired with a calm, unflappable demeanor. Although Aviation Boatswain's Mate (Handling) 3rd Class Nuria Avalos is working outside of her rate as a dispatcher in Naval Air Station Sigonella's emergency operations center (EOC), she has risen to the task with outstanding skill and enthusiasm.

Originally from Fountain Valley, Calif., Avalos joined the Navy in 2015 and has served on USS Gerald R Ford (CVN78) and USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN71).

"I joined the military because I wanted to be part of something big, to challenge myself and help get the experience I need to find my own path," said Avalos. "I picked the Navy because I love the sea. The force of the sea is what stood out from every other branch."

Last year, her path took her to NAS Sigonella, where she joined the EOC as a dispatcher. Although it was not the job she planned for when she joined the Navy, she leaped at the chance to help people.

"From the beginning, Avalos was dedicated to learning everything she could about being a public safety communicator," said Kyrene Resel, lead emergency dispatcher. "She is always the first to answer the phone or the radio and to pitch in with whatever is needed. She handles emergency calls with compassion and professionalism."

Senior Chief Aviation Boatswain's Mate (Equipment) David Hooker, the leading chief petty officer of the EOC, agrees, "If I had a life threatening emergency and I called her, I know I would be in good hands."

In addition to her skill at handling emergency calls, Avalos has also made an impression on her co-workers with her bright outlook.

"No matter what, Avalos has a can-do, positive attitude, and she works tirelessly to ensure that everyone on the team feels valued," said Resel. "She is an incredible asset to our emergency dispatch center. Every day she goes above and beyond to take care of both internal and external customers, and our center wouldn't be what it is without her contributions."

Part of Avalos' attitude can be traced back to her high school days. When she ran track, her coach taught her a lesson that has influenced her to this day.

"When we had our race meets, our coach always said to push until the end. 'Pain is temporary, it's all in your head.' And of course, at the end of the race the pain was gone," Avalos recalled. "I live my life thinking of that."

However, her service in the military has had the strongest impact on her life.

"Serving the Navy means everything to me," said Avalos. "It has made me the person I am today."

In addition to excelling at her new job, Avalos spends her time in Sigonella hiking, playing video games, working out, and dancing. She has also taken the opportunity to travel.

"Everywhere I have been to in Europe has been amazing!" said Avalos. "My top as of now would be Rome and Florence, they're a must-see!" She also has advice for those who want to stay on the island. "Syracuse in Sicily is beautiful, and granita and brioche is a must-try!"

Informed, Attentive, and Supportive: Everyone Can Help End Child Abuse

Courtesy of CNIC and MilitaryOneSource.com

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month, and the Navy has a legacy of promoting healthy and resilient military families through a commitment to creating safe and nurturing environments for our children. Adults who are informed, attentive, and supportive make a nurturing environment possible, and as Navy community members, we all play a role.

Informed adults are aware of the developmental stages of children in general. They know what a toddler is physically capable of doing versus a pre-teen and then can modify their expectations. Informed adults also use resources to educate themselves and receive support in challenging times.

Attentive adults provide adequate supervision to children dependent on the child's maturity. They also notice and lovingly respond when the child is not feeling well, is hungry, or needs quality time.

Supportive adults are not only supportive to children's needs and growth, but also to other adults. They understand that raising children can be demanding and all parents need respite and assistance. They also know the community resources available to service members and their families.

As a Navy community, we are strongest when working as a team and using our core values in everyday decisions that we make.

The Fleet and Family Support Centers provide several professional services, free of cost, as a resource to our Navy community, including financial management, employment assistance, general counseling and parenting programs. All of these services help to create the enriching family life and community our military children deserve.

A Prevalent Problem

Child abuse and neglect in the U.S. and around the world is a serious and prevalent public health problem. An estimated one in four children have experienced abuse or neglect at some point in their lives. Child abuse and neglect is also preventable. Caring community members can help by recognizing the warning signs of abuse, as well as by sharing tips for safe parenting practices within their community.

Know the Signs

A child who is being abused or neglected may feel guilty, ashamed or confused. They may be afraid to tell someone, especially if the person harming them is a parent, sibling, other relative or a family friend. Learn the indicators of child abuse and neglect and how to teach your child about healthy body boundaries.

Children who seem afraid of their parents, older youth, an adult caregiver or a family friend may be experiencing abuse or neglect. Red flags may include when a child:

- Shows sudden changes in behavior or school performance
- Has not received help for physical or medical problems brought to the parents' attention

- Has learning difficulties, or trouble focusing, that cannot be attributed to specific physical or psychological causes
- Is always watchful, as though preparing for something bad to happen
- Seems to always lack adult supervision
- Has unexplained burns, bites, bruises, broken bones or black eyes
- Has fading bruises or other marks noticeable following an absence from school
- Seems frightened of their parent or caregiver and protests or cries when it is time to go home from a playdate, school or other activity
- Is abusive toward pets or other animals

How to Report Child Abuse or Neglect in Sigonella

Reporting child abuse only takes a minute, but it also takes courage and a commitment to keeping children healthy and safe. If you're concerned about a child or family, but aren't sure whether abuse is occurring, err on the side of safety.

Depending on the situation, you may report child abuse or neglect to one or more of the following organizations:

- 911 or military police: If you are a direct witness to violence or have reason to believe a child is in immediate danger, call 911 or 095-86-1911.
- Family Advocacy Program: If you suspect child abuse or neglect — call your NAS Sigonella's Family Advocacy Program at 624-4291
- FBI Cyber Tip Line for suspected online child sexual exploitation: If you have concerns a child is being exploited online, call the Cyber Tip Line, operated by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, at 800-843-5678.
- Other resources: You can also call or text the Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline at 800-422-4453.

For more information, visit the Fleet & Family Support Program website at https://www.cnic.navy.mil/ffr/family_readiness/fleet_and_family_support_program.html or Military OneSource at www.militaryonesource.mil/parenting.

The graphic features a blue background with white raindrops. On the left, a large blue circle contains the text 'APRIL IS National Child Abuse Prevention Month' and the hashtag '#ThrivingFamilies'. Below this are logos for 'Children's Bureau' and 'Child Welfare Information Gateway'. On the right, a blue umbrella is shown with rain falling around it. Above the umbrella, the text 'Risk Factors' is written, with 'Substance use' and 'Poverty' listed as examples. Below the umbrella, the text 'Protective Factors' is written, with 'Parental resilience', 'Nurturing and attachment', 'Knowledge of parenting and child development', 'Concrete support in times of need', 'Social connections', and 'Social-emotional competence of children' listed as examples. At the bottom of the umbrella, there is a silhouette of a family (two adults and a child) holding hands.

Happy Birthday, Chiefs!

The title of ‘Chief Petty Officer’ did not always exist in the U.S. Navy but those who hold that rank are an essential part of the branch with a role unlike in any other service. The chief petty officers were established to highlight esteemed experts in their rate who could provide mentorship to both junior enlisted and young officers.” CPO was established April 1, 1893. In the beginning, CPO only consisted of nine different rates: master-at-arms, boatswain’s mate, chef quartermaster, gunner’s mate, machinist, carpenter’s mate, yeoman, apothecary and band master. In 1958 an amendment to the Career Compensation Act of 1949 added the pay grades of senior chief and master chief and also created six new rating titles. Nowadays, we celebrate the CPO birthday with both reflection on its distinguished heritage and acts of service for junior Sailors.

To honor the 129th birthday of the CPO, Naval Air

Station Sigonella held multiple events leading up to the day itself. Monday, March 28, chiefs held a review of 1st class petty officer’s chief packages as they got ready for their chief boards. The following day, chiefs from the base got together and handed out coffee and treats to service members outside the barracks on NAS Sigonella. They helped hand out lunches for the USO as part of the weekly USO Tuesday Troop Lunch. On Wednesday, March 30, chiefs took part in a base beautification project to keep NAS Sigonella great. Then on Thursday, March 31, chiefs volunteered their time to hand out lunch to service members at Ristorante Bella Etna, the base galley. Finally, on April 1, 2022, a ceremony was held to celebrate the CPO birthday, during which a cake cutting was held involving the youngest chief, Chief Master-at-Arms Danielle Hinchliff, and oldest chief, Master Chief Avionics Technician Joy McGill, here on NAS Sigonella.



NAVY CHIEF, NAVY PRIDE



Photos by MC3 Trinita Lersch, MCI Kegan E. Kay, and MC3 Trey Hutcheson

Italian News

Good Friday Procession Returns to Pietraperzia After Pandemic Closures

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

As Italy ended its two-year state of emergency on March 31 and eased COVID-19 restrictions, Sicilian bishops decided to resume religious festivals in scaled-back fashion. Large gatherings and physical contact (hugging and shaking hands as a sign of peace during holy masses) will be discouraged, and devotees will be invited to follow safety protocols such as wearing face coverings and frequent hand washing. Bishops have also banned fireworks as a sign of respect for the people suffering from the war and humanitarian crisis in Ukraine.

Nevertheless, this decision was big news for worshipers in parishes across the island who had been hoping to celebrate one of the most important religious events of the year: the “Settimana Santa” (Holy Week), which usually involves street processions and ceremonies in most Sicilian towns.

Holy Week, lasting from Palm Sunday (April 10) to Easter Sunday (April 17th), is one of the most prominent events in the religious life of Sicily. Street processions featuring decorated religious floats, representing the Passion of Christ, are carried out across the island. Elaborate statues of Jesus and the Virgin Mary, which are mounted on top of the floats, are accompanied by penitents who mourn the Passion of Christ and rejoice for his resurrection.

These colorful and spectacular celebrations come straight from the Spanish Catholic traditions as Spaniards ruled Sicily from the 14th to the 18th century. These days, just as in Andalusia, processions featuring traditional costumes still show the intensity of the devotees’ mysticism.

Among the most heartfelt and spectacular Easter traditions is Good Friday in Pietraperzia. Good Friday commemorates the crucifixion and death of Jesus Christ, and Pietraperzia is a small historic town in the Enna province. This ancient tradition, which dates back to the 14th century, shows how deep-rooted religious beliefs are among its townspeople. According to legend, it is also “attended” by the souls of the deceased brotherhood members.

On the morning of Friday, April 15th, members of the Confraternita of Maria Santissima del Soccorso religious brotherhood will flock to the Chiesa del Carmine



After two years of pandemic-canceled religious festivals, the annual all-nightlong “Signuri di Li Fasci” Good Friday procession returns to Pietraperzia on April 15th featuring an elaborate and imposing float called “Fercolo,” a mournful Catholic observance remembering the events of The Passion of Jesus. (Photo by Pietraperzia Tourist Office)

(Church of the Carmine) to help prepare for the evening celebrations of the “Lu Signuri di li Fasci” (The Lord of the Bands). In the afternoon at 2:00 p.m., a 14th century life-sized crucifix will be taken from a small chapel where it is usually kept and placed in the center of the church for adoration. Amidst a surreal silence, devotees will pay their respects for the entire afternoon. Pilgrims will enter the church, make a small donation and get small red ribbons, called “Misureddi,” (little measures), which have the same proportions as the crucifix. Misureddi will then be blessed and tied around the arm as a sign of devotion.

Later at 6:00 p.m., confrati (confraternity members) will mount the crucifix and “Lu munnù” (a globe symbolizing the world) on top of a 28-foot cypress wood pole. This majestic post will then be placed in the middle of a wooden frame called “Vara.” After that, brotherhood members will complete this magnificent and elaborate float, called a “fercolo,” by tying the traditional “Fasci” to the upper part of the mast. Fasci are devotional strips of white linen cloth that are about 105 feet long and 16 inches wide and represent a “thank-you offering” for a

The Dangers of Distracted Driving

By MC3 Trinita Lersch, *NAS Sigonella Public Affairs*, Images from National Safety Council

According to Machinery Repairman 2nd Class Kyle Drummond, leading petty officer of the Naval Air Station Sigonella safety department, anything can be a distraction if you are not focused on your responsibilities as a driver.

“A good way to break down a distraction is ‘how’ it distracts you instead of ‘what’ distracts you,” said Drummond. “The way we do that is by categorizing the ways you can be distracted. You can be distracted visually by taking your eyes off of the road, manually by taking your hands off of the steering wheel, and cognitively by taking your mind off of driving.”

Specific to NAS Sigonella, the roads around Sicily are often different from the roads back in the United States.

“Potholes, no guard-rails, bumps or dips in the road, is there volcanic ash or is the road wet, blind corners, hills or slopes, oncoming vehicles and their speed... The list goes on, but they are all factors which, if not considered, could result in you being in or causing an accident,” said Drummond.

In addition to the differences in roads, Sicilians can have a different way of driving than Americans, and when Americans try to mimic them, it can be dangerous.

“I would say the biggest considerations for driving in Sicily would be driving habits, speed, and experience level

of the driver,” said Drummond. “It is easy to say ‘that’s how they drive’ to justify why we might drive the same way, but honestly it is an excuse for complacency and is massively irresponsible. That kind of mindset detracts from our safety and the safety of others. As an example, one of the most common and most dangerous practices on the road is passing or overtaking another vehicle. The amount of factors to consider before you even execute the action are numerous and time intensive, and the roads here are not all designed to allow for passing maneuvers.”

No matter the state of the roads, the types of drivers around you, or what is happening inside the car, when you are behind the wheel, it is your responsibility to be focused.

“Driving is a big responsibility, and our years of experience or level of confidence does not equate to being a good driver,” said Drummond. “What does are the actions you take out on the road. When you get in your vehicle and drive, you have a responsibility to everyone you might encounter, in or out of a vehicle. By distracting yourself, you are ignoring that responsibility. We can all be better drivers, but you are the only one who can make that happen. Create a routine, practice those skills, be mindful and stay focused. Ditch the distractions Sigonella.”

There are many ways you can limit distractions. Putting your phone out of reach or turning it on silent can limit the biggest distraction. Eating or drinking while driving is attention that needs to be focused on driving. Setting parameters to limit these actions before you drive is a good way to reduce distractions during driving.

“The idea is to have a routine that you can hold yourself accountable to in order to achieve consistent results, and to hone in on those good practices by doing the right thing even when nobody is watching,” said Drummond. “Practice mindfulness while you are driving and really understand what it is that you are doing. You will be a lot more aware of what is going on around you. We see examples of bad driving everyday but the only thing you can control is yourself and your vehicle. What are you doing to not be the kind of driver that endangers others?”

SO YOU THINK YOU CAN MULTITASK?

- Your brain can't process two things at once. It switches attention from one task to another.
- 96% of people think texting while driving is dangerous – yet 44% do it.
- Dangerous even when sitting at red lights or stop signs because it takes your brain some time to return its focus to the road.
- Voice-to-text is not safer – it may distract you longer than texting.

Additional text in the infographic: "Did I remember to feed the dog?", "Send text to Aunt Lisa", "No! Cancel!", "Sending text to Amoré Pizza".

Nothing is more important than getting to your destination safely. Use your phone and other technology only when you are safely parked.

Drivers on cell phones see just a fraction of their driving environment.

True for both handheld and hands-free use.

Paying for Itself and Helping the Environment Too

By Antonio Piluso, *NAS Sigonella Installation Energy Manager*

Among the many construction projects on Naval Air Station Sigonella, one type stands out for its unique funding system and benefits. On NAS I, many sites have undergone projects that will help the environment at no cost to the federal government thanks to a new funding vehicle called an energy savings performance contract (ESPC).

The construction completed in the parking lot in front of the Navy Exchange and Commissary is part of an energy-savings project with an equivalent construction cost of \$28 million; the word equivalent has been used intentionally because the U.S. Navy will not spend any capital funds for this project. Instead, the contractor pays the construction cost and will be reimbursed annually after proving the utility cost has been reduced at least as much as the payment due.

In other words, the contractor will be reimbursed only if the project provides the projected savings in utility costs, which is a win-win solution for both parties.

It is not the first ESPC project completed in Sigonella, but it is the largest so far and the first one where the construction contractor will be in charge for the future maintenance.

The contractor is working on four different tasks:

1. Interior and Exterior Lighting System

In recent years, several interior and exterior lights have been replaced with LED technology, which both saves electricity and improves light quality. The contractor will also replace 14 thousand interior lighting fixtures in 53 buildings in NAS I and NAS II, and almost every exterior light will be upgraded to this technology.

2. Remote Building Control

This technology is currently used to control and regulate the heating and cooling systems of 72 buildings, which provides significant savings. The contractor will improve and expand this existing monitoring system.

3. Electric Motors

Electric motors are mainly used in the heating and cooling systems of most of the buildings on NAS Sigonella, and their average efficiency is 85%. Although already very highly efficient, modern technology can achieve 95%. By replacing 80 electric motors with the newest technology, our installation will experience significant savings.

4. Photovoltaic Projects

The contractor will construct three new large photovoltaic systems in the following locations:

- On the roof of the NEX-DECA building in NAS I
- In the parking lot in front of the NEX-DECA building, creating a carport
- On the top floor of the parking garage building 555 in NAS II, creating a carport.

The total power installed will be almost two megawatt peak (MWp), the solar power measure to describe a unit's nominal power, and the equivalent of 25% of the electric power demand of NAS I and NAS II together.

Due to its magnitude, the photovoltaic project had a large impact for visitors to NAS I. Half of the parking lot next to Child Development Center building was closed for several months, along with parts of the parking lot in front of NEX-DECA building.

NAS Sigonella Public Works Department is driving this contract, and the Installation Energy Manager has been championing for this. We understand all the troubles folks in Sigonella faced every day because of all the road and parking lot closures and we are grateful for your patience. This project will pay for itself after construction, and thanks to your support, Sigonella will become one of the most energy efficient military base in the region.



New LED lights on the turf field on NAS II will provide energy savings for NAS Sigonella. Photo by Antonio Piluso.



How to Report Suspicious Activity

Contact Local Authorities

DESCRIBE

Who or **what** you saw

When you saw it

Where it occurred

Why it's suspicious

If you **see** something,
say something*

RESPECT. PROTECT. EMPOWER.

Sexual Assault Prevention & Response



"Italian News" cont'd from Page 8

miracle received. Several families in town own Fasci with their names embroidered in red. Devotees are allowed to tie them to the float on a rotational two-year basis in order to give a chance to everybody to participate in the festival.

Thousands of Pietrini (Pietraperzia townspeople) and tourists will crowd outside the church to see that huge religious float being hoisted at 8:00 p.m, which is probably one of the most important, touching and spectacular moments of the entire festival. The float turns from being an inanimate object into an elaborate and impressive "living machine" maneuvered by 100 believers as it makes its way through the town's narrow cobblestone streets (usually the number is 500, but the number was lowered to meet COVID-19 safety requirements). Devotees roll, unroll, pull and hold the devotional linen strips while others carry the heavy wooden support on their shoulders. All this requires

teamwork, precision and attention to perfectly balance this imposing float.

As a result, the float changes its shape as it proceeds, performing some rather delicate maneuvers, rotations and turns that create a dramatic and spectacular optical effect. It actually looks like the crucifix floating on top of a snow mountain!

Some Pietrini who immigrated to the United States call a relative to listen over the phone to the whispering of the bearers who say "Pietà e misericordia Signuri!" (God have Mercy and Pity on us!).

Two litters holding "L'Urna con il Cristo morto" (statues of dead Christ) and "L'Addolorata" (Our Lady of Sorrow) will accompany the float during the procession, which will continue through late night.

For more information about the festival and updated schedule details, visit <https://www.facebook.com/LuSignuridilifasci>

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Local Market



SAVE
THE
DATE



EGGSTRAVAGANZA

APRIL 16

10 am - 2 pm | Maritai Soccer Field

Egg hunt, Inflatables, kids activities, food, music and more!

Eligibility and Restrictions

This event is open to all DoD and NATO ID cardholders and their family members.
Mask and COVID-19 policies will follow the current base regulations in place on the day of the event, as set forth by NAS Sigonella.

GET MORE DETAILS ON
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