

The Signature



**CHIEF PETTY OFFICER
PINNING**

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**IMPACTS OF DOMESTIC
VIOLENCE ON CHILDREN**

— ◆ —
**SICILIANS TO CELEBRATE
THE “DAY OF THE DEAD”**

NATO Ships Integrate With USS George H. W. Bush Carrier Strike Group for Secretary General Visit

ADRIATIC SEA – Ships from the Standing NATO Maritime Group Two (SNMG2) fulfilled security duties known as “screen defense”, for the visit of NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg to aircraft carrier USS George H. W. Bush in the Adriatic Sea on Tuesday, 25 October 22. It was part of the Vigilance Activity Exercise NEPTUNE STRIKE, and tested the maritime group’s ability to align in a protective screen formation around the carrier, to provide air, surface and subsurface defense at sea.

Formation defense is a capability, which requires ships - in this case from six different nations - to work together, providing coordinated defense across multiple domains. The maritime group demonstrated peak interoperability and interchangeability, effectively securing Secretary General Stoltenberg’s visit to the US aircraft carrier George H. W. Bush.

“This is what interoperability looks like,” said U.S. Navy Rear Adm. Scott Sciretta, Commander, SNMG2. “Our ability to combine one nation’s combatants and safely execute maritime operations with an international task group such as our own exemplifies our capability to be modular and inter-changeable.

“We’ve stressed and practiced this throughout all of our international exercises and vigilance activities. We’re always building and enhancing our capabilities and that’s what increases our readiness and lethality. That’s what makes us ready to fight, and ready to win.”

SNMG2 along with its flagship, Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Forrest Sherman (DDG 98), Alvaro de Bazan-

class guided-missile frigate ESPS Cristobal Colon (F 105), Aquitaine-class frigate FS Provence (D 652), Turkish frigate TCG Gemlik (F 492), Rhön-class tanker FGS Spessart (A 1442) and Daring-class air-defense destroyer HMS Defender (D 36) took part in the formation defense and tactical maneuvers with ships from the George H. W. Bush Carrier Strike Group (GHWB-CSG).

As a NATO task group, SNMG2 prioritizes its mandate to enhance the collective readiness, responsiveness, deployable readiness, integration and interoperability of its forces. Its focus is on deterrence and defense against all adversaries in the maritime domain, upholding freedom of navigation, securing maritime trade routes and protecting the main lines of communication.

SNMG2 is a multinational integrated task group that projects a constant and visible reminder of the Alliance’s solidarity and cohesion afloat. This continuous maritime capability performs a wide range of tasks, including exercises and real-world operations in periods of crisis and conflict.



BREAST CANCER AWARENESS & VETERAN'S DAY



THE SIGNATURE

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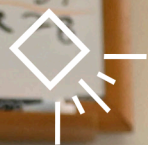
BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

OCT  BER

COVER PHOTO: Patrick has his covered placed by his wife, Jennifer, and his father, Chief Engineman (ret.) Phil Patrick, during a chief pinning ceremony held on Naval Air Station Sigonella, Oct. 21 2022. The purpose of the ceremony is to celebrate the time-honored transition of a petty officer 1st class into a chief petty officer but is undertaken by all E-6 from all branches at the command eligible to advance to E-7. NAS Sigonella's strategic location enables U.S., allied, and partner nation forces to deploy and respond as required, ensuring security and stability in Europe, Africa and Central Command. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Kegan E. Kay)

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



In the Spotlight

Name: MRFN Timothy M. Rector
Command: NAS Sigonella
Department: Safety

By MC3 Trinitii Lersch, *NAS Sigonella Public Affairs*

Machinery Repairman Fireman Timothy Rector from Nottingham, Pa. joined the Navy in October 2020 for a few reasons. The most significant reason was his uncle; a fellow Sailor with whom he shared many traits. Rector's other reasons were the traveling opportunities as well as being unsure what he wanted to do in regards to schooling.

"I chose machinery repairman because I enjoyed making things," said Rector. "I used to make my own guitars."

Rector is currently working at the Naval Air Station Sigonella Safety Department as the assistant safety representative since November 2021. As an MR, he is working out of rate and with NAS Sigonella being his first command, he is taking any opportunity he can to stay competitive in his rate.

"I have reached out to the other MRs on this base," said Rector. "I am scheduled to talk with an MR at the Aircraft Intermediate Maintenance Department about the possibility of receiving some in-rate training."

Even though he is not doing what he expected, Rector has still enjoyed being stationed at NAS Sigonella and his time here in Sicily.

Rector's daily duties involve giving traffic safety briefs every Tuesdays and Thursdays at the indoctrination class for all NAS Sigonella Sailors, deployed VP squadrons, 39 tenant commands attached to base and all eligible family members. Rector also helps facilitate the motorcycle safety courses in helping riders get certified and assists with the Enterprise Safety Application Management System (ESAMS) in creating profiles for new check-ins. ESAMS is used to manage Navy safety and health programs. His collateral duties are building manager, mail orderly, alternate fire marshal, and alternate transportation representative for his department. He is also in the diversity committee for the command.

For Rector the most difficult part of his job is the public speaking aspect.

"The most challenging part of my job is talking for two hours," said Rector. "I had no prior public speaking experience and it can be still a little nerve-racking at times."

Rector is currently not planning on staying in the Navy for the full 20 years. He is thinking about staying in for one more contract and then getting out to go to school.

"I want to get out and go to college," said Rector. "Maybe start up a small business in the future."

Rector is not yet eligible to start Tuition Assistance; it is required to have 3 years of service to apply. He plans on taking courses when he is able but he does not know what for yet.

Rector's hobbies include traveling, snowboarding, reading, watching movies and playing guitar. He has traveled to London, Prague, Florence, Rome and Cinque Terre. His favorite place he has visited is Florence because of the views. Rector plans on making the most of the time he has left and definitely exploring more of Europe.



Sigonella CDC Earns High Marks in NAEYC Accreditation

By Megan Mills

The Sigonella Child Development Center (CDC) received accreditation through the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the culmination of a rigorous process that ensures that child care facilities meet stringent standards.

"It's definitely a relief to see everyone's hard work pay off," said Adam D'Amico, the Sigonella Child and Youth Programs (CYP) director. "Going through NAEYC helps to show that we're not just a daycare; we provide quality programming and support the social, emotional, and physical development of the children."

In order to earn accreditation, staff at the CDC spent months compiling thorough portfolios to demonstrate that they met or exceeded standards in ten areas: relationships; curriculum; teaching; assessment of child progress; staff competencies, preparation, and support; families; community relationships; physical environment; and leadership and management.

"Only 3 or 4 of our staff had ever gone through the NAEYC accreditation process," said D'Amico. "It was a nice opportunity for all of the staff to work together, whether through creating the portfolios or checking each other's classrooms. Everyone banded together

to make sure everyone felt ready."

In addition to the portfolios, an inspector visited the CDC in June to observe multiple classrooms.

"I wasn't too worried because I knew we were doing everything we should be doing and our staff are really great, but it was a little bit like having stage fright," said Marcy Burmeister, the lead teacher for the pre-toddlers room. "You're doing the same job you always do, but having someone watch you intently can make you nervous."

According to Desiree Goss, the CYP assistant director, that nervousness didn't show. "The inspector commented on how calm and well prepared the staff were. They've seen many people get so nervous that they mess up, but all of our staff were perfect."

Overall, thanks to their hard work, the Sigonella CDC earned a 98% pass rate.

"We had many late nights and Saturday, because you can't work on it during the day with the kids around, especially when we were at 60% staffing," said D'Amico. "We had a lot of support from our chain of command to get overtime to make it happen."

This is the first time the Sigonella CDC



has been through the process since the COVID-19 pandemic caused changes throughout the base and in childcare programs around the world.

"We had to get very creative to meet some of the standards," said Goss. "Families and relationships are very important, so we had to purposely plan ways for parents to come in and participate while still meeting COVID restrictions. NAEYC also wants to see that kids are going on field trips in their community, but we couldn't take the kids anywhere, so we had the fire department come visit instead."

While earning this accreditation is an achievement, the staff at the Sigonella CDC aren't going to rest on their laurels.

"For the most part, we get these great reviews because we're already doing what we should be doing, but it never hurts to look for ways we can improve," said Burmeister. "The accreditation is a testimony to all the staff members here who are able to be flexible and constantly trying new things every single day."

She added, "Even now, we're reviewing what NAEYC said about us and seeing what ways we can improve for the next time."



NASSIG CHIEF PETTY OFFICER PINNING CEREMONY





Italian News

Sicilians to Celebrate the “Day of the Dead”

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

No, this is not a horror movie and it is not even the Italian version of Halloween. November 2 is a celebration honoring departed ancestors and relatives. It is a special day in Italy, a holiday marking the celebration of dead souls. It is called “Giorno dei Morti” (Day of the Dead or All Souls’ Day; Sicilians call it *Jornu di li morti*).

The departed continue to “live” and return annually to visit their loved ones. To children, it feels like Christmas time since they get a gift on the morning of November 2.

I still vividly remember, when I was a kid, the excitement that drove me to search every corner of the house looking for the presents that my dead grandfather had left for me over the night. I knew his spirit was still around and I was sure that he had magically sneaked into my house the night before to bring me my favorite toys and sweets.

I also recall my disappointment when I realized, as I grew older, that the “regali” (gifts) were actually brought by my parents. I know that, to some, the idea of the spirits of the dead paying a “holiday visit” to people’s homes might sound spooky and macabre but it is all a matter of perspective. Usually, the concept of afterlife raises rational fears and concerns, conjuring up images of dead people, ghosts, witches or even the devil. The “Giorno dei Morti” is indeed a special day. The belief underlying this celebration is that the spirits of the dead return to earth on this day to be with their families and loved ones to eat, drink and be merry and relive the good memories.

Italian novelist and playwright Giovanni Verga vividly describes this tradition in one of his famous novels, “On the ‘Day of the Dead,’ walking on tiptoes, mothers put toys and sweets in the tiny shoes of their children while they are dreaming of long lines of white ghosts carrying glittering presents. Smiling young girls try on, in front of the mirror, the earrings or the brooch they were given by their fiancées.”

Historic chronicles also confirm this tradition. Giacinto Farina, a priest of the last century, wrote that, in the past, Sicilian children used to leave their shoes on the windowsills in the hope that their dead relatives would place gifts for them.

Superstitions say that dead relatives “turn themselves into ants” so they can enter easily into the homes to fill the baskets and the socks prepared by the kids with gifts. Sicilian cultural anthropologist Giuseppe Pitre tells more details about this tradition, “On the night between November 1 and 2, the departed leave their scary dwelling and go to elegant stores in town to steal toys, new clothes and sweets. It is an ‘innocent stealing’ that is aimed at donating gifts to children that have been behaving during the year.”

The Day of Dead is actually an ancient festivity and has pagan origins that are rooted in the changing cycle of natural renewal. The return of the departed souls marked the beginning of the new agriculture cycle that was intended to celebrate the continuity of life. By giving presents to their children on behalf of the ancestors, parents keep the “affective bond” between the departed and the living alive. Doing so, children won’t be looking at their deceased relatives as a scaring entity of the afterlife but as good souls that look after them from heaven.

This holiday is similar to the *El Día de los Muertos*, a traditional Spanish and Mexican celebration and this is due to the fact that Sicily was under the Spanish rule for about 200 years. Catholic families gather to make a pilgrimage to the cemeteries and spiritually reunite with their beloved ones.

In Catholic tradition, the “Giorno dei Morti,” is a day on which believers gather with their family members to make a pilgrimage to the cemeteries where their relatives lie waiting for the Day of Resurrection. According to some historians,



If you have a sweet tooth, the Sicilian Day of the Dead celebration honoring the ones who passed away, will be your favorite time! Rame di Napoli cookies are among the most popular treats. You will find them in any pasticceria (pastry shops) and panifici (bakeries) during this time of the year. (Photo by Alberto Lunetta)

early Christians created this religious celebration that blended elements from the Holy Scriptures with pagan traditions.

Over the past few years, the Day of Dead has been often opposed to Halloween, raising concern among some groups of Catholics who fear that the latter might overshadow this ancient religious celebration. Halloween parties are annually organized across the country in discos and clubs.

Traditional Sweets

In Sicily, as it happens for every holiday and festival, special cakes made into symbolic shapes are prepared for the Day of Dead. The traditional “*così ruci*” (sweets) include “*Frutta Martorana*” (Martorana fruits), a confection of almond paste made into the shape of different fruits, “*N’zuddi*” (almond cookies), cocoa-based cookies (“*Rame di Napoli*,” “*Totò*” and “*Bersaglieri*”), “*Ossa di morti*,” (bones of the dead) crunchy cookies that were once shaped as skulls, phalanges (finger bones). They’re made by white dough that contrasts with the dark base where the sugar darkened close to the pan during baking and “*Pupi ri zuccaru*” or puppets of boiled sugar.

Catania Day of the Dead Fair

Many customs are associated with All Souls Day’s celebration. It is also traditional to set up a “*Fiera dei Morti*” (All Souls Day’s Fair). This year the *fiera* should be set up in the San Giuseppe La Rena former fruit and vegetables market (Ex Mercato Ortofrutticolo) near the Catania airport. The fair, which is usually open from 9 a.m. until midnight, will run from October 28th through November 3rd features 200 booths selling a variety of items such as rugs, furniture, shoes, clothing, arts and crafts, antiques, food and more. Traffic will be restricted in the fair area. Parking spaces will be set up in the adjoining streets and will be limited. Car pooling and parking far from the festival area is strongly recommended.

Impacts of Domestic Violence on Children

By Hillary Herrington, *NAS Sigonella Fleet and Family Support Center*

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month (DVAM). During DVAM, survivors of abuse, communities, and allied professionals unite in the purpose of increasing awareness of domestic violence (DV) and the impacts it leaves on victims and loved ones in hopes of creating progress and change to end the DV epidemic. As part of the DVAM Campaign, the New Parent Support Program would like to discuss the impact of DV on children and what indicators may be present when assessing if a child has been exposed to DV.

Children need a safe and secure home, free from violence and adversity, and parents that love them and protect them from harm. They need to have a sense of stability and routine so when things go wrong in the outside world, their home is a place of comfort, support and protection.

Unfortunately, for many children, home is far from a safe haven. In homes where DV occurs, children are considered the hidden victims. An estimated five million children in the United States witness DV every year. Children living in homes with DV are at a higher risk of being victims of child abuse and neglect. Studies have shown that children who witness DV are more likely to repeat the cycle of abuse in adulthood, either as victims or as perpetrators, and are also more likely to commit violent crimes. DV exposure in childhood has also been linked to significant mental health problems later in life, including substance abuse and suicidality.

Just witnessing DV may cause children to suffer short-term and long-term physical, mental and emotional problems. Exposure to DV is considered an adverse childhood experience (ACE) and can cause toxic stress (extended or prolonged stress) which may have severe, lifelong consequences. Toxic stress from ACEs can negatively influence brain development, immune systems, and stress-response systems. These changes may affect attention, decision-making, and learning neuro pathways in the brain and can potentially alter children's DNA structure and cause premature aging.

Exposure to DV effects children differently across age groups. Here are some things to look for at different developmental ages.

Newborn to Age 5:

- Sleep and/or eating disruptions
- Withdrawal and lack of responsiveness
- Intense or pronounced separation anxiety
- Inconsolable crying
- Developmental regression or loss of acquired skills
- Intense anxiety, worries, and/or new fears
- Increased aggression and/or impulsive behaviors

Ages 6 to 11:

- Nightmares and sleep disturbances
- Aggression and difficulty with peer relationships
- Difficulty concentrating and completing tasks at school

- Withdrawal and/or emotional numbing
- School avoidance and/or truancy

Ages 12 to 18:

- Antisocial behavior
- School failure
- Impulsive and reckless behavior, such as skipping school, substance abuse, running away, or involvement in violent or abusive dating relationships
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Withdrawal

Children exposed to violence in the home are denied their right to a safe and stable home environment, and many suffer silently with little to no support. These children need trusted adults to turn to for help and comfort, and services that will help them to cope with their experiences. Far more must be done to protect these children and to prevent DV from happening in the first place. Become a part of the movement to end DV by knowing the signs of abuse and learn about resources in your area to help victims of DV.

If you or someone you know needs help, please contact the Sigonella Fleet & Family Support Center at DSN 624-4291 or COMM 095-56-4291. For after-hours assistance, contact Dispatch at 624-5225 or 095-86-5225. For emergencies, call 624-1911 or 095-56/86-1911.

The Family Advocacy Program (FAP) helps individuals, couples and families develop healthy relationship skills and address common relationship and parenting challenges during every stage of life. The New Parent Support Program (NPS) is a voluntary, secondary prevention program that provides parents with individualized support, while strengthening parenting knowledge and skills. NPS offers a variety of services for families who are expectant or new parents and empowers families to meet the challenges of military life as they adjust to their new roles as parents.

For more information on NPS and FAP, contact the Fleet & Family Support Center by calling the numbers listed above or stop by our office on NAS 1 in Building 319. FFSC is open Monday through Friday from 0730 to 1600.



NAS SIGONELLA AUTUMNFEST 2022



Seasonal Influenza Shot Exercise



Bravo Zulus

BZ to Fleet and Family

Fleet and family support provide amazing classes and continuous support to service members and their families. I just completed the CFS training and I can't say enough good things about the program and the phenomenal contribution provided by the presenter Agata Carnazza. It was a long week with so much to learn and Agata is not just incredibly knowledgeable, she was able to involve the class and keeps us focused while learning so much. This is a very important program to support Sailors and couldn't be taught by a more qualified person than Agata.

BZ to Security

I would just like to recognize Giusy Messina for being so helpful and knowledgeable during such a stressful process. She remained professional yet personable. Thank you to everyone else in the office as well.

BZ to FES

Last night at approx. 2100, the fire alarms went off in the unit next to ours at Marinai Family Housing. FES quickly responded to the call and were able to reset the fire alarms to turn them off. Chief Baumgarder's team was quick, efficient, and highly professional. The main reason for this comment though is to thank Chief Baumgarder and his team for what they did afterwards. Chief gave my 2 year old son the opportunity to get a full tour of the fire truck at 2200. Instead of just wrapping up and leaving, him and his team were actively engaged in making this a positive experience for my son who proceeded to be awake for the next hour talking only about the firemen and the fire trucks. Chief Baumgarder and his team went completely above and beyond last night and I am truly appreciative of their dedication to the mission and to the community. BRAVO ZULU CHIEF AND FES!!!



BRETT KISSEL & GABRIELLA ROSE



NOVEMBER 20

Doors open at 5 pm for Line Dancing
Concert begins at 6 pm
Outside Jox Pub on NAS II | FREE

GOOD TIMES, FRONT AND CENTER



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