

The Signature

Signonella, Sicily

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Sept. 12, 2003



On Sept. 3, 1943 in the Sicilian town of Cassibile the Italy signed an armistice with the U.S. See page 12

VP-45 Pelicans arrive in Signonella

By Lt. j.g. Steven Seney
VP-45

If you've been paying attention around NAS Signonella recently, you may have noticed an abundance of new faces around. These faces belong to the Pelicans of Patrol Squadron 45, who recently arrived in Signonella for a six-month deployment, relieving the Fighting Tigers of VP-8 as the tenant Patrol Squadron at Naval Air Station Signonella.



The Pelicans began arriving at NASSIG from Naval Air Station Jacksonville, Fla., during the last week in July, after completing a highly successful Inter-Deployment Training Cycle (IDTC). The Pelicans, led by Commanding Officer, Will Fitzgerald, are deploying to NASSIG from Patrol and Reconnaissance Wing Eleven in Jacksonville to work with Commander Task Force Sixty Seven (CTF-67) in the Mediterranean AOR. The first of the Pelican's P-3C Orion aircraft began arriving at NASSIG on July 28. Aircraft then landed one by one, carrying most of the Pelican aircrews. The remaining Pelicans left on Aug. 4, via military VP-45, page 10

NEO Kits: Updating vital information helps prepare for Etna Eruptions

By AN Michelle Hartgraves
Staff Writer

Mt. Etna, the largest and most active volcano in Europe, looms in the distance. It fumes silently, waiting for the day to blow some steam and cause a little chaos. In the last two eruptions, the mountain has caused little damage compared to eruptions in the past. Still, the mountain rises high above Sicilian towns waiting for its chance to blow its top.

For Signonellans, the worst annoyance in the last eruptions may have been the sky pouring ash on everything in sight including ears, nose and exposed scalp. However, those annoyances might seem small compared to damage caused in a serious eruption.

NEO, page 8

Open for business

The new NAS I galley opened Sept. 4. Read all about it on page 11.



Photo by P/1st Sgt. Shaun

Today's Hometown Weather

Collegeville, PA



High 75° F - Low 57° F
Partly Cloudy

The brains behind the planes

By Lt. j.g. John Ferrari
Staff Writer

Ranging far out to sea, P-3C Orions are the Navy's eyes and ears in the sky – but the brains behind the planes are right here on NAS Signonella. From mission planning to debriefing and data analysis, Signonella's Tactical Support Center (TSC) guides the Navy's maritime patrol aircraft through every phase of their missions.

Designated a NATO Maritime Air Control Authority, the TSC also has the ability to support NATO aircraft, including the Italian Atlantic maritime patrol aircraft stationed here.

"Our primary job is to support the PATRONS," says Lt. Cmdr. Rick Therrien, the TSC's assistant officer in charge. Inside the TSC's imposing, windowless building across the street from the NASSIG flightline, TSC personnel send P-3Cs out, guide them through their patrols and analyze data collected during the flight.

Responsible for maritime patrol missions throughout the Mediterranean, the TSC's job begins with taskings from COMSIXTHFLEET. "We take the taskings and put them into briefings," says OS1 Thomas Epps. Working together, the TSC's planning, operations and intelligence departments condense the taskings, which run to hundreds of pages, into 30-minute briefings the flight crews carry with them. The TSC also notifies Signonella's Naval European Meteorology



Photo courtesy of TSC

Sailors tend to their duties in the operations center of the NAS Signonella Tactical Support Center. The TSC supports the Patrol Squadrons that rotate through Signonella and NATO aircraft.

and Oceanography Detachment to prepare weather briefings.

Once the P-3Cs are in the air, TSC's operations department takes over. "Our primary mission here is keeping planes from swapping paint," says operations watchstander Lt. Richard Green. "Safety is a very big component of what we do. We monitor [planes] until they're 'wheels on deck.'"

Back on the ground, the TSC's intelligence department leads the crews' debriefing. "We discuss what they [P-3C aircrews] saw and what they think they saw," explains IS2 Jesus Gallegos.

Data collected during the mission ends up in the TSC's analysis room. "This is where we compile all the data," explains Aviation Warfare Systems Operator 1st Class Joseph Booke. Using banks of

computer monitors and reams of printouts, Booke scrutinizes sonobuoy tapes for the telltale tracks of lurking submarines. Other AWs analyze electro-optical data collected by the P-3Cs. "I love what I do," says Booke. "It's all about submarines. TSC is geared for acoustic AWs like me ... I know this job like the back of my hand."

"Back in the Cold War, we were constantly flying ASW missions," says Booke. "Now we help other people" by providing digital images and other electro-optical data.

"The P-3C mission has evolved," Therrien concurs. "The number of ASW missions has diminished, but that is still our main focus." To compensate, the TSC and NASSIG's P-3Cs participate in more ASW exercises to maintain their proficiency in sub-hunting – including DOGFISH, NATO's largest annual ASW exercise. And the TSC is kept busy with a greater variety of missions. Maritime patrols are "less ASW-oriented and more ISR (intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance)-oriented," Therrien says.

TSC, page 10

"That was hardest I've ever worked in my life ... We had to rewrite the book on an hourly basis."

OS1 Thomas Epps

Many homes in Naval Air Station Signonella's Mineo housing complex were affected by a natural gas outage which lasted around a week. After starting off as a small problem, the outage came to affect half of the housing complex. After a lot of work, those involved were able to bring the...



Mineo gas back online

By JOSN Steve Weaver
Staff Writer

Recently, the United States experienced one of the most major utility outages in history. The electrical outage affected New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and many other areas. This outage crippled these areas until the problem was found and electricity was restored.

Many homes in Naval Air Station Signonella's Mineo housing complex experi-

enced an outage of their own when the natural gas that provides hot air to dry clothes, hot water, and hot meals was suddenly cut off and didn't return for some time.

The problem started small, towards the end of the week of Aug. 25. "We noticed there was a gas outage to the fire station over in Mineo," said Capt. Michael Blount, NASSIG Public Works Officer. "Our real estate division director was working with the owner (Pizzarotti) about the problem with the gas at the fire station." They con-

Mineo, page 10



Direct Line

Capt. T.L. Davison
NASSIG
Commanding Officer

Semper Gumby...always flexible.

That's what our residents at Mineo have been the past week and a half. As many of you know, there was a gas leak and some gas line problems in our housing area near Mineo. At first, we thought the scope of the leak was minimal and that it would affect only a small number of homes at most, but then it quickly spread like a wildfire to most of the homes in the complex.

Please read the Mineo gas story in this edition for a timeline of events that led to the leaks and problems. I hope that it will help layout to you what happened and why it happened the way it did.

I take this incident very seriously. The health, welfare and disruption of our Shipmates and their family's lives are very troubling to me. Sometimes circumstances beyond our control make it impossible to react in a timely manner. I feel that everyone who works here at NAS Sigonella, the tenant commands we support, the family members who live and play here, all need to feel that their concerns are heard and that their problems are worked on in a timely, yet safe manner.

Norman Vincent Peale said, "One way to become enthusiastic is to look for the plus sign. To make progress in any difficult situation, you have to start with what's right about it and build on that."

We are going through a lot of growing pains on both bases. The lack of parking, long lines at the gates, little inconveniences here and there, all contribute to these pains. We are growing at a rapid pace and our Public Works Officer, Capt. Mike Blount and our Resident Officer in Charge of Construction, Cmdr. Chris Kinsey, are working hard to ensure everything is done safely "to code" and that everything is done right. Someone once told me if it's 95% right, it's still wrong! We want to make things right!

Please be flexible. Everyone here is affected in one way or another with the disruptions of services, utilities, parking, grass-eating worms, etc.

Vince Lombardi, one of the best football coaches who ever coached the game, once said that individual commitment to a group effort is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, and a civilization work. We are all individuals that make this base work and ensure that we accomplish our mission.

We are a team and as the leader of the team, I want to make sure that your quality of life is the best it can be. Thank you for being as flexible as you have been. I couldn't ask you to do more.

The Pulse

Hazardous driving situations

Cmdr. Stanley Adams

The leading cause of death among Americans between the ages of one and 24 is motor vehicle crashes. And over 75 percent of the time, the factors contributing to crashes are related to driver error. There are upward of 400 to 500 car crashes involving the 7,000 US Service Members, their family members, and US government civilians in Sicily each year (the current average rate is two and one half accidents daily). There are cultural differences between how Americans understand the "rules of the road" and how driving is understood in Sicily.

It seems like people here in Sicily run "stop" signs all the time. How can I avoid an accident? By never assuming a driver will stop at a stop sign, you may avoid hitting a driver who pulls in front of you. There's little consolation in knowing an accident isn't your fault just because you had the right of way. Even though you were in the right, perhaps you could have actually avoided the collision simply by driving defensively. Ask yourself "what will I do if that guy pulls out in front of me?" Understand that Italians follow the "logical" choice. If they see no oncoming traffic, they may assume running a stop sign is okay. If you approach an intersection with a stop sign and a car is following you, look left, right, and left

again as you would in the United States, but consider that if you do stop at an otherwise empty intersection, you may get "rear-ended." Stop signs are treated in a similar manner to "yield" signs; therefore the local drivers are usually ready to give right of way (if you do run a stop sign and collide with a vehicle, you will likely be found at fault for the accident).

Cars seem to pull over in front of me for no reason. Can I do anything about that? Welcome to Sicily. You should assume that cars would in fact pull out in front of you. It is important not to "race" or "compete" with other vehicles; just drive defensively.

Is "right-of-way" understood here? Try to observe how Sicilian drivers observe right of way. Do not be surprised if, while driving down an "arterial" protected by stop signs, the car in front of you stops (don't rear end that car) to allow a car stopped at a side street to proceed (this is the "after you" style of driving). The car at the stop sign may have been waiting for a long while. While chivalrous, this behavior surprises American drivers. Do not "rear end" the car in front of you!

What kinds of road hazards are common in Sicily? Livestock (e.g., "geep") may be herded across the road, or you may encounter other stray animals. Other common hazards are bicycle races (or bicyclists in training), farm tractors, three-wheeled trucks, and construction equipment of every manner. You can expect other cars passing on blind hills and curves. Try to imagine road hazards around blind curves and adjust your speed accordingly.

Suppose another car is coming right at me what should I do? It is expected that you will shift towards the right shoulder if a car is passing at the worst possible moment. Right is often the right way. Try to escape to the right if possible. Almost anything is better than a head-on collision. Remember that if you move to the left, the oncoming driver might correct at the last minute and turn back in the direction you've just gone (also you will likely be found at fault for any accident). While you're moving to the right, blow your horn. And if you can't avoid a collision, brake firmly and steadily. Every mile per hour you slow down will reduce the damage.

What if I have an accident? A left turn signal means a left turn in America. In Sicily it can mean that the driver is saying "get out of my way, I am passing." If you have an accident get your car to a safe place (out of the roadway), if possible. Make sure you are safe. Call 095-86-1911.



CRIME STOPPER'S HOTLINE

624-6389

Sept. 2 - Sept. 7

The following incidents were reported and categorized as follows:

- Traffic accidents without injuries - 4
- Traffic accident with injuries - 6
- Car break-ins - 0
- DUI - 0
- DUI's 2003 - 37
- DUI's 2002 - 35

Commanding Officer
Capt. Timothy L. Davison

Public Affairs Officer
Lt. Steve Curry

The Signature editorial office is located at:
Naval Air Station Sigonella, Sicily
PSC 812 Box 3020
FPO AE 09627
Telephone: 095-86-5440; DSN 624-5440

Deputy Public Affairs Officer
Alberto Lunetta

Asst. Public Affairs Officer
JO1 Craig Coleman

Staff Writers
AN Michelle Hartgraves

Editor JONSN Steve Weaver
JO2 (SW) Brian Johnson

Suicide Prevention

From the Chief of Naval Personnel

We all can be pleased that the rate of suicide in the Navy is well below the national average, and we should work to reduce that further. Effective prevention programs require an all hands understanding of possible precursors to suicidal behavior, two-way communication, access to medical and mental health services, and a willingness to intervene on a shipmate's behalf.

Suicide is not limited to any gender, age, race or ethnic category, and, although there is no single indicator, a review of past cases does some insight into those Sailors most at risk. Those with relationship problems, history of depression, past suicidal threats or behaviors, pending military or civil legal proceedings, and abuse of alcohol or drugs merit our attention.

Friends and close associates are in the best position to recognize a

shipmate's vulnerability. The earliest signs of trouble most often occur away from work, while on leave or liberty, in barracks, berthing areas, or at home. Jokes, threats, or expressed desires about committing suicide should be taken seriously - far better to intervene now than to second-guess yourself at a memorial service later.

None of us are immune. The "Aid Life" Seven-Step Guideline provides practical responses to a possible suicide threat:

- A - Ask the person if they're thinking about suicide
 - I - Intervene immediately
 - D - Don't keep it a secret
 - L - Locate help
 - I - Inform your chain of command
 - F - Find someone to assist; don't leave the person alone
 - E - Expedite, get help right away
- All hands should be aware of local assistance resources, and the chain of command must ensure this information is readily available. Medical treatment facilities, Fleet and Family Support Centers chaplains, drug and alcohol advisors, substance abuse rehabilitation programs, mental health clinics, and emergency care centers are all poised and trained to help.

The video, "Suicide Awareness: Making the Critical Decision," (PIN: 806677), is included in the GMT program. Lesson Topic 2-2, Suicide Awareness, was shipped to command training officers May 1. Additional copies of the video can be ordered free of charge through the Defense Visual Information website at Http://DODIMAGERY.AFIS.OSD.MIL. Orders may be placed at the site through the Davis/Ditis search option. Choose the PIN/ICN search option and enter PIN 80667. Check with your command training officer, GMT program coordinator, or CMC to obtain the latest suicide prevention training materials release this past spring.

Navy launches pilot program to aide civilian career management

From Chief of Naval Personnel Public Affairs

WASHINGTON (NNS) — The Navy's ongoing efforts to better identify job skill requirements and the future development needs of its workforce will get a boost this fall when the Civilian Community Management Division launches the Safety Community, the first of 21 career communities.

Phase One of the community management development begins with core competency identification. Competencies are specific sets of knowledge, skills and abilities that allow people to perform successfully on the job. Knowledge of these competencies enables the Navy to provide civilians with detailed and validated information about how to succeed.

"Competency identification is the first, and perhaps most important, phase in workforce development and human capital planning," said Chief of Naval Personnel Vice Adm. Gerry Hoewing. "For us to provide a civilian worker with

a viable career path, we have to be able to list all the tasks associated with a given job, as well as skills needed to do those tasks. It's like drawing a roadmap to help workers determine how best to master their craft and how to develop their careers."

Using the same commercial software in place for analyzing Sailors' work, the civilian Safety community will launch a pilot program with the help of SkillsNet™ Corporation to identify job tasks, capture personal qualifications, and link certifications and qualifications to each civilian worker.

"I have long believed that we must take a corporate approach in developing our workforce of the future," said Hoewing. "We have made some very good progress, but using SkillsNet™ like this will really get us jump-started on tying their growth and development in with Sea Warrior. It's all part of a larger, more integrated way of looking at human resource management."

Sea Warrior is the Navy initiative

integrating active and Reserve manpower, personnel and training efforts.

Hoewing made civilian workforce issues a top priority when he became the 53rd Chief of Naval Personnel in October 2002. He supported a Civilian Community Management organization and the formation of 21 civilian communities. A Senior Executive Service member or Flag Officer leads each community. All Navy civilians, depending on their current job series, will be mapped to one of these Communities.

Identifying the competencies required by each of these communities, Hoewing says, is a critical first step.

Representatives of the Navy's civilian Safety community, led by Connie DeWitte, deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Safety, meet this week to begin planning for the pilot.

"This effort is the beginning of a new way of developing our talented civilian workforce," said Marcia Tremaine.

"Heroes For Our Time"

By Chaplain Phillip B. Creider, Command Chaplain



Recently, both Catania and Motta celebrated two heroes who have had a tremendous impact on their city's lives. Catania celebrated St. Agatha, a home-town lady, while Motta celebrated St. Anastasia.

Both Saints Agatha and Anastasia were young ladies who were so strongly committed to their values that they would rather give up everything else rather than weaken or compromise their beliefs.

Their core values were more important to them than easy living, or even life, itself. They were Christian martyrs in a pagan age.

Why do people today bother to remember and celebrate the lives of two people who lived who lived almost eighteen hundred years ago? It is because those ladies represent the best of what we are called to be: Strong, good, faithful, and courageous. They are heroes.

We should do same thing for ourselves today. Our Navy is full of honest-to-God heroes: John Paul Jones, John Barry, Edward Preble, Isaac Hull, Stephen Decatur, David Farragut, George Dewey, Chester

Nimitz, and William Halsey.

They were like us. They were Sailors. They achieved greatness by tenacity, honor, and sacrifice.

The problem is, hardly any of us knows anything about them. They are not part of our lives because they are not taught to us.

I propose that we look into our history and get to know the courageous men and women who made it and shaped it. I propose that the heroes of our Navy's history be regularly presented to us in Boot Camp, in OCS, in basic and advanced schools, in GMTs, and at Quarters. Make them part of our Navy Birthday celebrations and other key events.

When we don't know what people have done with their lives, especially under adverse or combat conditions, then we won't know what is possible for us when we face the same kind of adversity.

If we put these people before us, then when the times get rough, the temptations become very big, or when it's time to put steel down range, we can look back to the courage and stamina of those who went before us... and we can drive ourselves in order to become like them.

We need heroes. We need to know the heroes of our Navy's past so that we can become the heroes of our Navy's future.

NAS Sigonella Worship Opportunities

Catholic Mass
Saturday 5 p.m. Chapel (NAS II)
Sunday 9 a.m. Chapel (NAS I)
Sunday 9 a.m. in Italian 41st Stormo Chapel (NAS II)
Sunday 11 a.m. Community Center (Mineo)

Protestant Traditional Worship
Sunday 9 a.m. Chapel (NAS II)

Protestant Worship
Sunday 9 a.m. Community Center (Mineo)
Sunday 11 a.m. Chapel (NAS I)

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints
Sunday 1 p.m. Chapel (NAS I)

Church of Christ
Sunday 3:30 p.m. Chapel (NAS I)

Jewish Shabbat Service
Last Friday of the month 5 p.m. Chapel (NAS I)

Weekdays
Daily Catholic Mass 11:30 a.m. (NAS I & II Chapels)
Wednesday Protestant Bible Study 4:45 p.m. (NAS II Chapel)
For more details, call 624-4295 or 624-2947.

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NAVY NEWS

Naval coastal warfare reservists return from Middle East

By Lt. Cmdr. John Garofolo, Naval Coastal Warfare Group 1 Public Affairs

ASH SHUAYBAH, Kuwait (NNS) — Naval Coastal Warfare (NCW) Reserve forces recalled to active duty and deployed to Kuwait and Iraq in support of Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom, returned home when their eight-month deployment ended Aug. 23.

Harbor Defense Command Unit (HDCU) 114 from Los Angeles, Mobile Inshore Undersea Warfare Unit (MIUWU) 106 based in San Diego, and Inshore Boat Unit (IBU) 15 from Corpus Christi, Texas, will all return home early September, after providing anti-terrorism and force protection assets for U.S. and coalition maritime forces in the Persian Gulf.

"These units provided all of the port security and harbor defense for ships carrying more than 90 percent of the tanks, trucks, helicopters, ammunition and supplies for the forces that went to Iraq," said Capt. Mike Shatynski, commanding officer of HDCU 114 and Force security officer for the Port of Ash Shuaybah in Kuwait. "They did a remarkable job of protecting hundreds of ships and ensuring that not one life or piece of equipment was lost to hostile action."

The Port of Ash Shuaybah, the principal seaport of debarcation for coalition forces, is where the majority of these NCW forces were based. MIUWU 106 provided seaward surveillance capability and provided tactical control of the boat units operating in the port, which included IBU 15 and IBU 17 from San Diego, and U.S. Coast Guard Port Security Unit 309 from Port Clinton, Ohio.

Prior to the beginning of hostilities in March, the amount of supplies and equipment off-loaded at Ash Shuaybah exceeded the amount of war material brought into the region during the entire duration of Operation Desert Storm in 1990-91. Total military off-loads at the port included more than 150,000 trucks, tanks, helicopters and containers weighing in excess of 1 billion pounds.

"When we arrived in Kuwait, we hit the ground running," said Cmdr. Patrick Cooley, commanding officer of MIUWU 106. "The NCW operations tempo was unprecedented, and our people rose to the challenge."

During the war, the three units operated under command

of Commander, Naval Coastal Warfare Group 1, who was designated Commander, Task Group 51.9, and augmented by HDCU 114 and MIUWU 106 personnel. "The NCW forces operating in our second detachment provided a tremendous amount of talent and versatility," noted Capt. Allen Painter, commodore of the NCW forces operating in Southwest Asia.

While Sailors from MIUWU 106 and IBU 15 protected the Port of Ash Shuaybah for the duration of their eight-month deployment, HDCU 114 also provided security for Mohammad Al Ahmad Kuwait Naval Base.

Operating at Camp Patriot, HDCU 114 personnel were responsible for both seaward and landward security operations for the off-load of the largest amphibious force assembled since the Inchon landing during the Korean War. Personnel from HDCU 114 also participated in a two-month NCW mission to the southern Iraqi port of Umm Qasr, during the major combat operations phase of the war.

HDCU 114 provided planning for the protection of the Iraqi gas and oil platforms (GOPLATS), while vital communications relays between forces on the platforms, ships in the area and all Task Group operating locations were provided by HDCU 114 and MIUWU 106 personnel operating at both Ash Shuaybah and Kuwaiti Naval Base.

During the course of Operation Iraqi Freedom, these three units worked with Navy explosive ordnance disposal units, U.S. Coast Guard port security units, Kuwaiti Coast Guard and Navy ships, as well as U.S. Army troops, National Guard units, Marines, Naval Special Warfare units, Kuwaiti Ministers of Interior and Defense and civilian Port Authorities. The NCW force protection mission in Kuwait is expected to continue through 2004, so the three units' last official mission was the training of their replacements.

"When we deployed last December as Naval Coastal Warfare Group 1, Detachment 2 and first arrived at Camp Arifjan, we really had no idea that our units would end up participating in every major NCW operation of the war," said Shatynski. "It really is a testament to each of the units and their outstanding personnel that they were able to demonstrate their dedication, versatility and resourcefulness to get the job done."

U.S. medical personnel deploy to Africa for MEDFLAG 2003

From U.S. Naval Hospital Rota, Spain Public Affairs

ER-RACHIDIA, Morocco (NNS)—Approximately 100 U.S. military medical personnel will deploy to Morocco, Africa, Sept. 6, to conduct MEDFLAG 2003, a humanitarian relief operation and joint medical training with the Moroccan military.

The annual exercise rotates annually among African countries, providing direct humanitarian medical outreach to outlying communities, as well as providing real-world training opportunities for U.S. and host

nation medical personnel, thereby increasing interoperability between the medical forces.

MEDFLAG 2003 will be conducted in cooperation with the Moroccan military from Sept. 6-20, and is divided into three distinct phases. The first phase consists of medical training with Moroccan medical personnel in a variety of subject areas, including emergency medicine, triage, stabilization, evacuation, public affairs and disaster preparedness training.

During the second phase, Moroccan medical personnel will engage their disaster response

services in a real world mass casualty scenario exercise. Using the latest in medical make-up and latex injury reproductions, realistic casualties will be created to test Moroccan military medical response personnel and civilian medical teams. The disaster response teams will be mobilized to triage, stabilize, and evacuate the simulated casualties to local hospitals for advanced evaluation and treatment. A performance review will be conducted to assist in process improvement.

In the final phase, Moroccan and U.S. medical personnel will provide a wide range of on-

site medical and surgical services in outlying communities, to include general surgery, ophthalmology surgery, basic medical evaluation and treatment, preventive medicine treatment, dental screenings and treatment, optometry screenings, eyewear distribution and public health training. Approximately 2.5 million dollars in medicine and medical supplies will be used in the treatment of patients.

Naval Dental Center Naples, Italy; 464th U.S. Army Medical Company Landstuhl/Miesaw.

CNO serves as grand marshal at Mountain Dew Southern 500

By JOC Walter T. Ham IV, Chief of Naval Operations Public Affairs

DARLINGTON, S.C. (NNS) — "Gentlemen, start your engines!" shouted Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Adm. Vern Clark to start NASCAR's final Labor Day Weekend race in Darlington, S.C.

The CNO spoke these familiar words Aug. 31 to the delight of NASCAR fans, while serving as Grand Marshal during the nationally televised Winston Cup Series Mountain Dew Southern 500. Clark said he en-

joyed the opportunity to represent Sailors at such a high-visibility event.

"It's such a high honor for me to be here today, representing 470,000 active and Reserve Sailors, and also all of those thousands of men and women in the entire military representing you around the world, on the point, doing the nation's business," the CNO said.

Clark also watched the FitzBradshaw Racing team pit crew in action as the No. 14 Navy car, driven by Casey Atwood, raced to an impressive top 10 finish

Notice to all hands

Please be advised that the installation will be involved in several Force Protection exercises from Sept. 14 to 17. These exercises may involve various initiatives from different Force Protection measures. Please plan in advance for such events and expect the possibility of minor delays at the gates during this period. We will strive to have the least impact on the public during the duration of these exercises. However, we need to train and evaluate our first responders as realistically as possible. Be patient and cooperate with the security measures as they are put into place during this training event.

Report all suspicious activity to your Security Department at 624-5225. It is better to report something that doesn't seem right to you and be wrong, than not to report it and your feelings be right.

Split disbursements of settlements now mandatory for military travelers

By Sgt. 1st Class Doug Sample, American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON (NNS) — A new requirement under the 2003 National Defense Authorization Act has made it mandatory for military government travel card users to use the "split disbursement" option when filing temporary duty travel claims, according to a press release by the Defense Finance and Accounting Office in Indianapolis.

In split disbursement, the government pays the credit card vendor directly when a traveler uses the card and files a voucher for reimbursement, while additional money owed to the traveler goes to the traveler's bank account. Without split disbursement, the traveler receives the entire voucher settlement, and in turn pays the credit card bill.

Until the new policy took effect in April, military people could choose between split disbursement or receiving the entire settlement and paying the credit card bill themselves. Civilian federal workers still have that choice.

Split disbursement is seen as a way to pay the official travel card expenses quickly, and at a cost savings to cardholders, according to information on the DFAS Web site. The option eliminates the need to write out personal checks or pay for stamps to mail payments.

The change also affects partial and accrual payments for long-term temporary travel and local travel, if a government credit card is used.

According to the DFAS release, military travelers must now include all official expenses charged on the credit card in the split disbursement payment block of their travel settlement vouchers. These charges will be paid directly to the vendor—currently Bank of America—by DFAS.

The release states that supervisors, travel approving officials and reviewers must return to military travelers claims that do not accurately reflect charges that are to be paid to the credit card vendor. In addition, a reviewer's signature is required on the travel claim before it is sent to DFAS for payment. The reviewer must also sign off that the split disbursement option is included and the amount of the split disbursement is accurate, the release stated.

The move to make split disbursement mandatory for military travelers may be seen as a way to curb delinquencies in government credit card accounts held by military personnel. According to a General Accounting Office report in October 2002, military government cardholders were responsible for more than \$60 million in bad debt charged off by Bank of America earlier that year.

But DFAS spokesman Roger Still states on the Web site that overall, the number of DoD credit-card holders with delinquent accounts is a "small percentage" of the total population who have the card. He said in August about 1.7 percent of all DoD cardholders had delinquent accounts.

"So the bottom line is, more than 98 percent of DoD cardholders pay their bills on time, while the commercial sector regularly sees delinquency rates of about four percent," he explained.

News Briefs

Congratulations

Congratulations to Lt. Chris Artis for achieving another milestone in his career. Lt. Artis successfully completed the VP-45 instructor pilot syllabus on Sunday, Aug. 10. He now assumes a critical role in the training of junior pilots to be the next generation of Patrol Plane Commanders within VP-45.

PTO Meeting

The first PTO meeting is scheduled for Sept. 15 at 2:30 p.m. All are welcome to attend the meeting in room B25 in the Stephen Decatur High School. Come see how you can be a part of PTO this year.

New Pool Hours

The pools now have new hours. NAS I Pool is open from 2 to 6 p.m. on Tuesday and Thursday, from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays. The pool is closed on Monday, Wednesday and Friday; and will close for the season Sept. 29. The NAS II Pool is open from 6 to 8:30 a.m., Monday to Friday and closed on Saturday and Sunday. Winter hours start Sept. 29, from 6 to 8:30 a.m. and from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Mandatory Meeting

Anyone interested in attending the Italian school in Mineo, there will be a mandatory meeting at the Mineo Rec Center on Sept. 21 at 4 p.m. Application for registration and cost of transportation will be addressed. Call Kathy at 624-0696.

University of Phoenix

University of Phoenix has a Masters of Arts in Education starting this month. Call 624-2514 for additional information.

Community Flea Market

There will be a community flea market on Sept. 13 at the library. Time to be announced. The market is to raise funds for the Navy Ball. Donations will be accepted (furniture, clothing, knick-knacks, etc). Drop off points for donations are located at Maranai: Call Lt. Menke at 624-1468 (2303A), Mineo: Call ACC Randy Kleinschmidt at 335-758-9709 (1053A), 205 Housing: Call AC3 Chastity Kubic at 349-823-0744 (321A0, or at the ATC Building 50/control tower): Call FCC William Ball at 624-5903. Today is the last day for donations.

THE ENERGY BLOCK

Summer will soon be pushing to an end. Already the evenings and mornings are considerably cooler. With that note, we can start using our air conditioners less and begin opening our doors in anticipation of the fall. Now that the kids are back in school less lights will be needed which brings me to my second note, how to keep the kids involved.



Take them down to the library this week where there is an energy display available and they will learn the reason "Why doesn't the Sun burn out?" By Vicki Cobb. Or what about "Experimenting with Energy Conservation." By Robert Gardner.

Run to the shelf and discover "Natural and Energy Resources." By Eston T. White. Or read "The Science Book of Energy." By Neil Ardley. Learn why it is important to understand "Nuclear Renewal: Common Sense about Energy." By Richard Rhodes.

So become the lightning bug and see for yourself the information on "Air Alert Rescuing the Earth's Atmosphere." By Christina G. Miller. "And Eyewitness Science Energy." By Jack Challoner. Along with many other great books in the library this could lead us all into a much brighter future.



LET'S USE, NOT ABUSE



By Alberto Lunetta
Signature Staff

Italian News

Sicilian culture and lifestyle



Arancino Festival in Acicastello

Don't miss this mouth-watering food event running from Sept. 12 through 14 in Ficarazzi, a district of Acicastello. Every evening starting at 8:30 p.m., tasty *arancini* will be deep-fried in piazza Giovanni XXIII, the main square. A Sicilian specialty, *arancini* are deep-fried rice balls, flavored and colored with saffron and rolled in breadcrumbs, which are consumed as snacks. There are different types of arancini fillings currently available ranging from ground meat, cheese, spinach, salmon and even the *Nero de Seppia* (black squid ink). The festival also offers arts and crafts booths and entertainment.

Catania hosts Religious and Fish Festival

One of the most famous of Catania's festivals in honor of the Virgin Mary is the *Festa della Madonna di Ognina* (Feast of the Virgin Mary of Ognina), which takes place through Sept. 14, in the small harbor of Ognina.

In ancient times Ognina's harbor, which also gives its name to the lively district where it is situated, was actually a large and efficient port, a hub where flows of various goods and people used to converge. Tradition has it that Christian converts have been preaching in the port area, which today hosts a sanctuary dedicated to the Virgin Mary, since ancient times contributing to the spread of Christianity in the island.

The port used to be named "Port of Ulysses." According to legend, Ulysses stopped at this port on his way to Ithaca. The harbor also housed a temple dedicated to Goddess of war "Athena Longatis." In 1381, the port was partly filled by a lava eruption that significantly reduced its size but nevertheless created a beautiful small bay housing the present-day port.

The Ognina community annually venerates the Virgin Mary as the protector of fishermen and sailors. This devotion is rooted in some miracles that the Madonna has worked to protect the Ognina bay and its residents. According to tradition, one of the most extraordinary events occurred on March 26, 1933 when a violent sea storm threatened the gulf of Ognina. Part of the pier and some boats were damaged. The houses overlooking the coast were lapped against by 40 foot-tall waves. In order to avert the danger, local fishermen invoked Virgin Mary's help. They placed the statue of the Madonna on the church's square, after moving it from the altar of the Ognina's Sanctuary. Hours later, the sea calmed down.

Today, devotees still invoke the Virgin Mary in every sort of need and celebrate a yearly festival in her honor. The origin of the festival dates back to the 19th century. The residents of the area initially funded the festival. Money was



Photos courtesy of Catania Tourist Office

From Sept. 12 through 14, a spectacular religious festival to honor the Madonna di Ognina (Virgin Mary of Ognina) will be held in Catania in the fascinating harbor of Ognina. The festa features regattas, a fish festival, solemn High Masses, processions, and amazing fireworks.

collected and put into pottery moneyboxes, named *Caruseddi* that were later broken during a short ceremony held on the Friday preceding the actual festival celebrated on Sept. 8.

Recently, it was decided that each fisherman, instead of giving a donation would allocate half of his own weekly income, named *menza parti* to support the organization of the festival.

Originally, the festival featured a procession during which a statue depicting the Virgin Mary was brought in procession on a wooden carriage through the few practicable streets of Ognina district. But on Sept. 8, 1885, a fire broke out after the festival as some devotees left the candles lit on the wooden carriage to honor the Madonna. The wax melted and set both the statue and the carriage on fire. Thus, a new statue was needed to replace the damaged one. While a French monk

was carving this new statue in Paris, a wax sculpture depicting a newborn Virgin Mary (named *bambina* or girl child) was temporary displayed in the sanctuary. In 1889, a new statue, depicting the Virgin Mary holding baby Jesus was placed in the sanctuary.

The Sanctuary hosting this precious statue was erected in 1392. In a 16th century document a local notary named *Merlino*, wrote that the church had miraculously survived a big earthquake that destroyed the local area in 1542. *Merlino* also wrote that after the earthquake a group of prisoners were temporary locked up in the church since the prison was destroyed.

In 1676, historian *Giovanni Andrea Massa*, wrote that pilgrims from all over the world came to the Ognina Sanctuary to thank the Virgin Mary for the graces (healing or other miracles) she had granted them.

After a terrible earthquake in 1693, the church was rebuilt facing north. The church has three naves and features a magnificent bronze gate. In the 17th century, Giacomo Vignerio, a Raphael student, painted its interior.

Festival's schedule highlights

Today the festival opens with a regatta that will be held at 3:30 p.m. In the evening, a fish festival is held at 8:30 p.m. Fishermen set up food stands in piazza Ognina selling tasty fresh sardines, anchovies, squids, spoonbills and shrimps fried in olive oil. A music show beginning at 9 p.m. ends the first day of the festival.

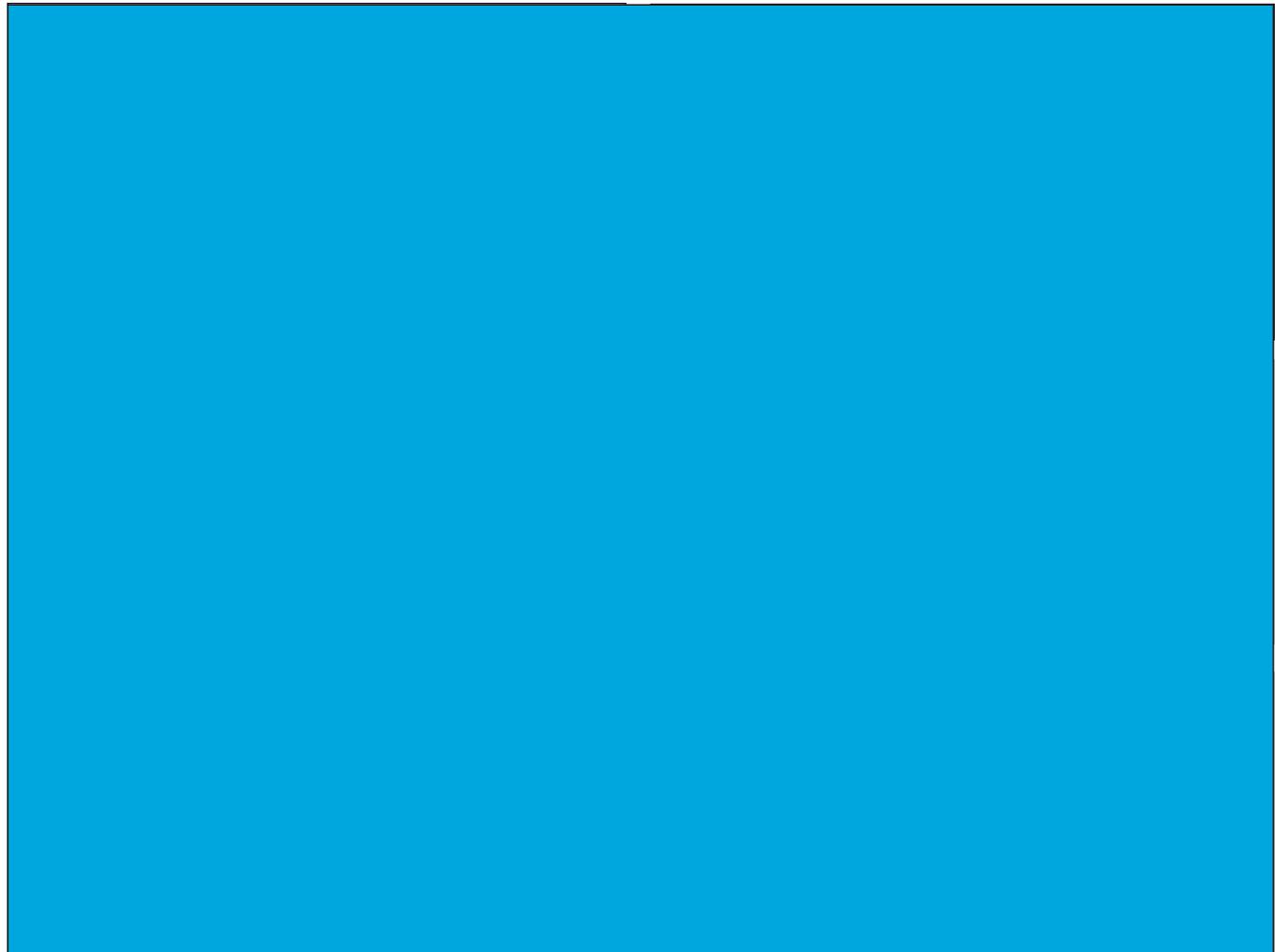
On Sept. 13, a sailing regatta is held from noon to 4 p.m. Later on, the Catania Archbishop celebrates a solemn High Mass in piazza Ognina at 5 p.m. Following the Mass, the *Processione della Madonna a mare* (the procession of the Virgin Mary at sea) begins among fireworks. The statue is placed on a boat and carried in procession along the gulf of Ognina. In the evening, an amazing fireworks and classic music show is held at 10:30 p.m. The show is performed in the between piazza Nettuno and the Foraneo pier.

On Sept. 14, the last day of the festival kicks off with a disabled swimming contest that will be held at 9:30 a.m.

In the afternoon, a holy mass is celebrated at 5 p.m. Following the Mass, the statue of the Virgin Mary is carried throughout the streets of the Ognina district. A firework show ends the festival at 11 p.m.

All events will take place in the Ognina district. For more information call the Italian speaking only Ognina Parish at 095-494241.

The port of Ognina is easy to reach. From the Catania Train Station take viale Africa. Once you get to piazza Europa turn right and drive for about a mile along the seafront until you reach a little port right before the overpass that leads toward Acicastello. The Ognina Church is located under the road.



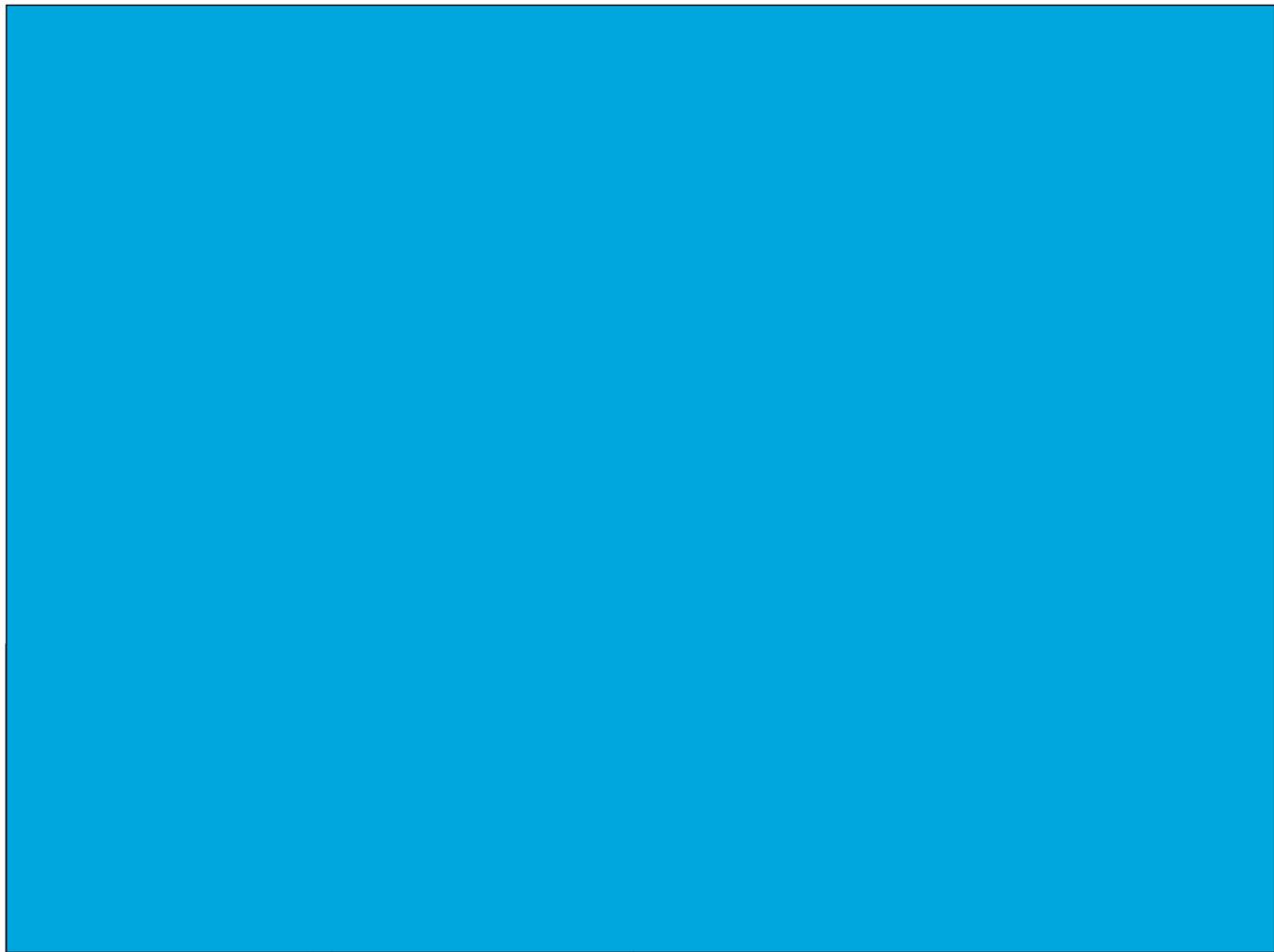


SUNDAY MONDAY TUESDAY WEDNESDAY THURSDAY FRIDAY SATURDAY

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

September

						12 Catania History ITT Call 624-4396	13 SDS Football First Home Game vs Alconbury 7 p.m.
14 Petralia Soprana & Agriturismo Farm ITT Call 624-4396	15 Youth Soccer Begins PTO Meeting 2:30 p.m. room B25	16 205 State Contest 4 p.m. prizes awarded 205 Youth Center	17	18 E-4 Exam 6:45 a.m. NAS II Gym	19 COMSTA Change of Command	20 Mt. Etna Horse Trek AU Call 624-4271	
21 Lipari Express ITT Call 624-4396	22 Ice Cream Cone Day free ice cream cone BLAST	23 Intramural Fall Volleyball NAS II Gym Captains Cup Event Call 624-2710	24 National Buy Nothing Day 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. free soda Take 5	25 University of the Philippines Concert Chorus 4 and 7 p.m. theatre Call 624-5271	26 PMOC Men's Retreat call the Chapel for more information	27 2-on-2 Sand Volleyball double elimination Caption Cups Event Call 624-2710	
29	29 NAS I Pool Closed	30	1 October	2 Catania History ITT Call 624-4396	3	4 Honey Tasting in St. Alfio ITT Call 624-4396	
5 Patti Shopping & Capo D'Orlando ITT Call 624-4396	6	7	8	9	10 Tunisa Trip until Oct. 13 ITT Call 624-4396	11 SDS Football vs. Brussels home game	



Word Find

Country Singers

P I W Y A R S D P B Q Y F G K C O A Z Z Q S J T B
 A E O B T W N L S M A I L L I W T S D Z T E Y E L
 S A W Y E R B R O W N R B W Q W E W C T N C E H A
 L N H R M S N R S V A T B I A H X A N R L L C C
 I N D L E D O U Z T E N U T L I N L I B E I R O K
 M N E Y T H O M S O N R T S T C F N M E F N O C H
 A H A L H Z G E M C S Y S L Q L G J J N H E W I A
 L H H L S I N M U N K R E T A S H E D A I S Y R W
 J L I K L O K C H N X Y E C R H B E O C B L A A K
 L W E M L L N B C U A K S G Y E S I L L I T S C H
 D L A N R K H R T D B A P W O R E T W A I N P O T
 D N E S R M X I E D R R I S X R U T I G M H A J I
 V W F B U A F D K N T L O K R T K S E N N R I Y E
 O A K D P T P E W A L B H O H Q K Z A H J F G O K
 S K L S E M I R W S Z M Z G K E P Q P G A O E S S
 Z A D A M T A O I K L L I H Y S Q L A K L R N G M
 U X C R B I K C L O D R Q A N G P B R G G G E D
 O M C L I A L X J O W T R S X J P M T S L H Y Z S
 Y A Y M C E M Z M R G J N E N R K Y O L A N G V D
 S S G O Z Y U A Q B W I A O K Q C V N P C J M Q I
 G E J G A D V B F E K E D Y G C E V A N S L A I F
 G A B N M G A A S T P F C X V A U E K N Y P R I F
 C W U Y J A F T A Z U N I P P I T T E F P H Y J E
 U V J I R R A L K R S J V H N F U H G J P A S D E
 D F Y H O D T J E F T P D Y S N I B B O R D Y S K

MCBRIDE
 MILSAP
 NELSON
 OSLIN
 OVERSTREET
 PAIGE
 PARNELL
 PARTON
 RASCAL FLATTS
 RAYE
 RICOCHET
 RIMES
 ROBBINS
 ROGERS
 SAWYER BROWN
 SEALS
 SHEDAISY
 THOMSON
 TILLIS
 TIPPIN
 TUBB
 TUCKER
 TWAIN
 TWITTY
 WHITLEY
 WILLIAMS
 WILLS
 WORLEY
 WRIGHT

ALABAMA
 ANDREWS
 ATKINS
 BLACKHAWK
 BROOKS
 BROOKS AND
 BYRD
 CAMPBELL
 CASH
 CLINE
 CYRUS
 DIFEE
 EVANS
 GILMAN
 HAYES
 HILL
 JENNINGS
 JONES
 KEITH
 KETCHUM
 LANG
 LEDOUZ
 LONESTAR

Shout

DoDDs students talk about what's happening in the community

New school year starts

AN Michelle Hartgraves
 Staff Writer

Sept. 3 marked the first day back to school for middle and high school students. Kindergarten students followed suit five days later. A new school year means one less year towards graduation for Stephen Decatur students, but also brings back the dreaded homework.

With this new year also comes new changes with initiative programs and extracurricular activities, according to Marge Lewallen, Middle and High School Principal.

"We are looking forward to all the new initiatives for the students," stated Lewallen. Those programs include the new video production classes that give students a chance to work side by side with AFN. Other programs are new journalism classes and an after school drama club for the school. There will also be a new language lab. Lewallen also hopes to get middle school students involved in the geography bee, which will run from September through January.

More space was another change for the school. When the new kindergarten building was built, the extra space was greatly needed because of the increase of students attending. Offices were moved to a bigger and more accessible place for both students and parents, teachers now have a larger lounge and there is more classroom space for new teachers.

The Mediterranean School District's theme for this year is "True North: Student Achievement". According to Lewallen, they are pushing student achievement greater this year with their theme "Math Matters" for Stephen Decatur. The theme was created to promote an increase in math knowledge.

"According to comments from students and teachers, so far, this school year has started off smoothly, and I expect the rest of the year to go the same... we have a lot of dedicated teachers to make that happen," Lewallen said.

School pictures

Pictures for 1st -12th grades will be next week, September 16 through 19, at the school. Be on the lookout for information coming home with your child on pricing and packages. School pictures are a fundraiser for the elementary PTO and the middle/high PTSA. Preschool, Kindergarten and Sure Start classes will have their pictures in October.

First PTO meeting

The first meeting of the PTO will be on Monday, September 15 at 2:30 p.m. in room B25. We hope many parents and teachers will attend so that we can discuss upcoming events. We are working on having the middle/high Honor Society provide childcare on the playground or in a classroom with a video for future meetings, but it is not yet in place. Elementary School T-Shirts will be on sale following the meeting.

Fri. Sept. 12

Winner takes all eight-ball tournament at JOX Sports bar at 8 p.m. All participants will automatically be entered in a drawing at the end of the month for a pool cue.

Sat. Sept. 13

Visit the Piazza Armerina Roman Villa with ITT. First visit the Imperial Villa del Casale and admire the magnificent mosaic pavements dating back to the 3rd century A.D. Then have lunch at Agriturismo Briscola. Call ITT at x4396/x4777 for more information.

Witness the harvest of the white wine grapes under way on this trip to the Avide Winery vineyards. You'll also enjoy lunch and wine tasting at this winery located in the area of Ragusa. This tour may be postponed to Sept. 20, depending on the harvest. Call ITT at x4396/x4777 for more information.

Sun. Sept. 14

Explore the enchanting Madonie Park and the medieval town of Petralia Soprana with ITT. Here is the perfect chance to experience traditional Sicilian culture as it is still lived in this small town. You'll also savor a delicious lunch at an agrituristic farm. Call ITT at x4396/x4777 for more information.

Mon. Sept. 15

It's BINGO night at Live Wire at 6:30 p.m. Cards go on sale at 5:30 p.m. Come early for a good seat. Cash prizes every week.

Tues. Sept. 16

Get out of your room and play some games. It's Liberty's Tournament Tuesday at 7 p.m. in the NAS I Barracks #170. Shoot some games of pool, it's free to play and win.

Weds. Sept. 17

Tired of singing in the shower? DJ Demon can help. Come by JOX Sports Bar at 6:30 p.m. for their Karaoke and All Request Night. Check out the songbook for the hottest tunes to sing along with.

Thurs. Sept. 18

Join the fun with a 9-ball Pool Tournament at 8 p.m. at JOX Sports Bar. Winner takes all. All participants will automatically be entered in a drawing at the end of the month for a pool cue. There is a fee to enter.

TRIVIA

The Cedar Point Amusement Park is located on Lake Erie in what Ohio city?
 What is New Zealand's highest mountain?
 How many "Triple Word Score" tiles are there on a standard Scrabble board?
 On Moh's scale of hardness, what is Orthoclase's hardness?
 What was Walter Payton nickname?

(Answers on page 10)

Movie Connection

AWIT's Theater Schedule

Friday, Sept. 12



5:30 p.m.
 Johnny English (PG) **



8 p.m.
 Bad Boys 2 (R)

Saturday, Sept. 13



1 p.m.
 How to Deal (PG-13)



3:30 p.m.
 Charlie's Angels 2: Full Throttle (PG-13)



6 p.m.
 Pirates of the Caribbean (PG-13)

Sunday, Sept. 14



1 p.m.
 Johnny English (PG)



3:30 p.m.
 LXG: League of Extraordinary Gentlemen (PG-13)



6 p.m.
 Bad Boys 2 (R)

Monday, Sept. 15



5:30 p.m.
 T3: Rise of the Machines (R)



8 p.m.
 Legally Blonde 2: Red, White and Blonde (PG-13)

Theater Closed Tuesdays

Wednesday, Sept. 17



5:30 p.m.
 Charlie's Angels 2: Full Throttle (PG-13)*



8 p.m.
 Pirates of the Caribbean (PG-13)

Thursday, Sept. 18



5:30 p.m.
 Johnny English (PG-13)



8 p.m.
 Bad Boys 2 (R)

Friday, Sept. 19



5:30 p.m.
 Lara Croft Tomb Raider: Cradle of Life (PG-13)



8 p.m.
 Gigli (R)

** Future Re-release ** Sneak Preview *Last Showing
 (All times and movies are subject to change. For more information on the schedule, call the movie hotline at

This Week on...

Mon. Sep 15 - Football: Cowboys vs. Gaints
 AFN Atlantic 2:00 AM

Tue. Sep 16 - Latin Grammy Awards
 AFN Atlantic 8:00 PM

Wed. Sep 17 - Fear Factor
 AFN Atlantic 8:00 PM

Thu. Sep 18 - Everybody Loves Raymond
 AFN Atlantic 7:00 PM

Fri. Sep 19 - Survivor: Pearl Island
 AFN Atlantic 7:00 PM

TUNE YOUR RADIO TO 106.0 ZFM 3 - 6 PM FOR THE ROCK SHOW

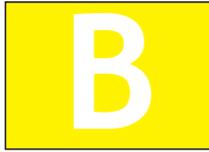
FOR LATEST NEWS HAPPENING IN THE COMMUNITY GO TO AFN SIGONELLA'S WEBSITE AT afneurope.net/sigonella/

Know your ABCs of force protection



Alpha

- The lowest level of force protection.
- There is a general threat of possible terrorist attack.
- Expect random vehicle checks and increased crime prevention measures.



Bravo

- The condition applies when an increased and more predictable threat of terrorist activity exists.
- This does not indicate the base is targeted.
- Expect to see closer inspections of vehicles, identification checks and increased manning of security forces at the gate.



Charlie

- Force condition Charlie applies when an incident occurs or intelligence is received indicating some form of terrorist activity against personnel and facilities is imminent such as surveillance or reports from local sources.
- When approaching the gate, expect multiple identification checks, increase of posts and security manning and more detailed vehicle checks.



Delta

- This condition applies in the immediate area where a terrorist attack has occurred or when intelligence has been received that terrorist action against a specific location or person is likely. THREATCON Delta is usually declared as a localized condition.
- Mandatory security measures are implemented.
- Only key and essential personnel will be allowed on base.
- Services will be greatly reduced or not available.
- Expect additional measures to delay and interrupt normal routines.



Antiterrorism brief for leave

MA1 Ben Johnson

With terrorist actions constantly changing threat levels around the world, it is not only a requirement (LAW NASSIGINST 3300.4A) but prudent to obtain an area specific brief prior to traveling outside of Italy.

There are basically two types of required briefs. The first is the annual Level I Antiterrorism/Force Protection (AT/FP) brief. All military, family members (14 and older), DoD employees, and local nationals employed by DoD in the NASSIG AOR are required to receive this brief. The best and easiest way to receive this brief is to log on at www.at-awareness.org <<mailto:johnsonb@nassig.sicily.navy.mil>>. He will enter your information into the AT/FP database.

The second type of brief is the Area Specific. This is for personnel traveling outside of Italy, to include the United States. This also includes sports team and MWR sponsored travel as well as regular leave. You must be current with your annual AT/FP brief to receive an area specific brief.

NEO from page 1

Since major eruptions can cause a variety of side effects, NASSIG Disaster Prep Department has an emergency plan for emergency situations.

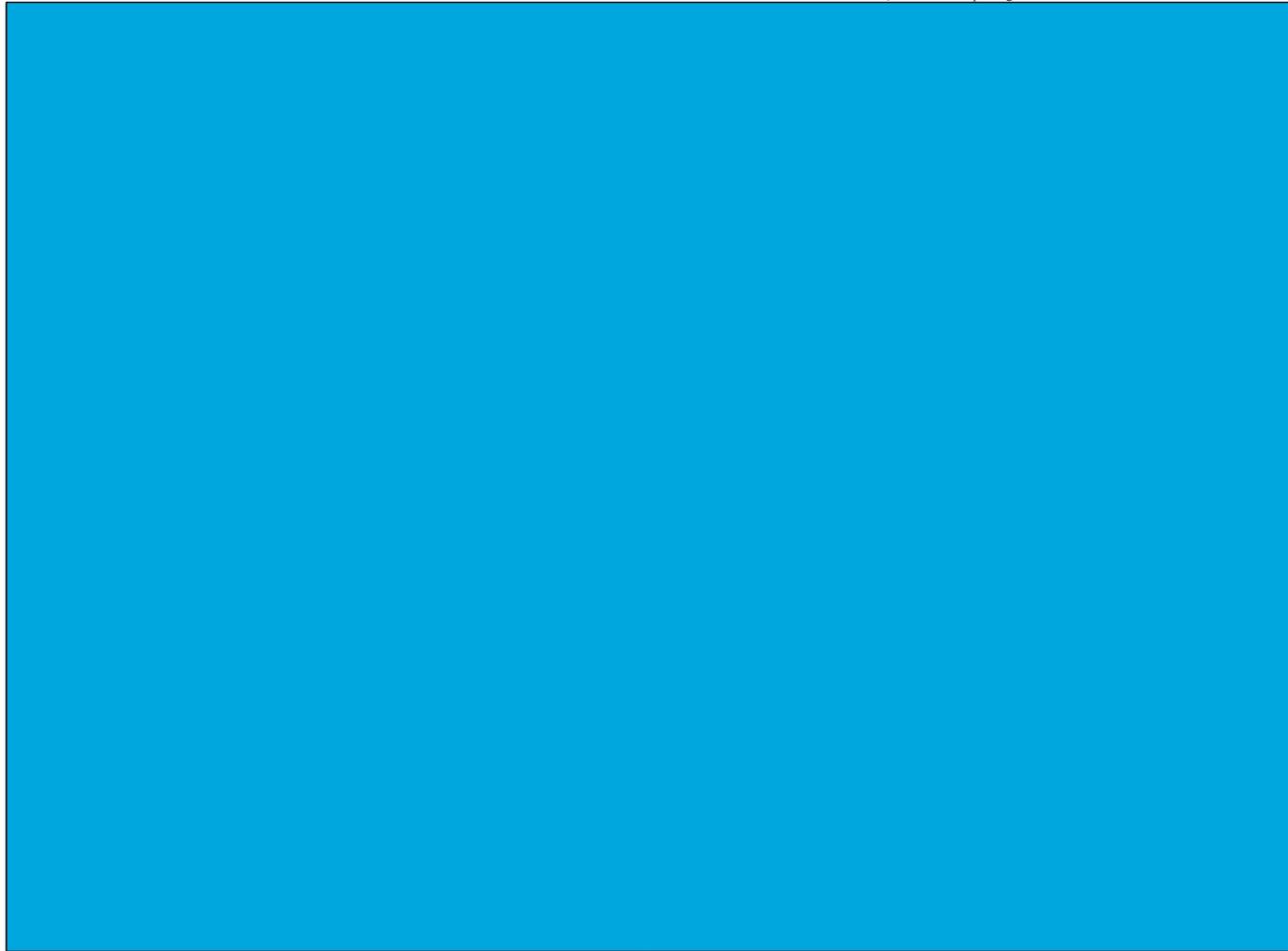
Non-combatant Evacuation Operation (NEO) packets are filled out by Service Members or DODD personnel during their indoctrination when they arrive on the island. NEO packets include copies of passports, Sojourner Permits, proof of insurance, household goods, birth certificates, power of attorney for single service members or DODD personnel, and 1337 Emergency Pay Voucher for dependents of single parents. People who live out in the economy, particularly if they live close to the mountain, should also have a road map with directions how to get to their house. "NEO representatives live in the economy and assist people to move to a closer heaven in case of an emergency," said BM1 Vincent Campbell, Disaster Preparation Leading Petty Officer.

Earthquakes are a side effect caused by volcanoes. Earthquakes related to volcanic activity can cause ground cracks and deformation, and damage to manmade structures.

Earthquakes can warn of an impending eruption so that people can be evacuated to safer areas. Being prepared and knowing how to prepare for emergency situations whether earthquakes or volcano eruptions is key to surviving emergency situations. However, according to Campbell, there is a rare possibility of major earthquakes or volcanic eruptions happening in the near future.

In case of an emergency, Campbell recommends people listen closely to the radio or television for updates. Public Works or the NEO representative will provide transportation to the NEO processing station, a temporary structure that can be set up anywhere. In serious cases the Rome Counselor will contact NASSIG and all Sigonellans will be activated. When eruptions do occur but offer no threat, dust masks will still be passed out and asthma sufferers should remain inside as much as possible.

In order to be prepared for all emergency situations Service Members and DODD personnel must make sure all information is updated in their NEO packages.



SPORTS

Navy sponsorship with NASCAR full speed for 2004

From Navy Recruiting Command Public Affairs

RICHMOND, Va. (NNS) — The Navy announced Sept. 5 that it will continue its partnership with NASCAR and the FitzBradshaw Racing Team for a full racing season in 2004.

The Navy announced its primary sponsorship with FitzBradshaw's Busch Series in May, sponsoring 11 races in 2003. With this contract renewal, the Navy will be primary sponsor for 34 races in the 2004 season.

"We have really enjoyed our relationship with NASCAR and the FitzBradshaw Team and are proud of the work we've done together," said Vice Adm. Gerry. Hoewing, Chief of Naval Personnel, who attended this week's Busch Series Funai 250 in Richmond. "We are very excited about the opportunity to continue that relationship with primary sponsorship next year."

The No. 14 Navy "Accelerate

Your Life" Chevrolet Monte Carlo is driven by Casey Atwood. Atwood picked up 134 points with his tenth place finish last week in Darlington, S.C., giving him a total of 736 points for his limited 2003 Busch Series season. After only seven races, he is 40th in the Busch Series driver standings.

NASCAR veteran Armando Fitz, and Pro Football Hall of Fame member and FOX broadcaster Terry Bradshaw are the team's co-owners. Fitz was also very pleased about the chance to continue working with the Navy.

"Being able to renew a sponsor and at a full-season is a compliment to the entire staff of FitzBradshaw Racing," stated co-owner Armando Fitz. "The No. 14 car has done well on and off the track. The program has been working for the Navy, and we're excited about where we can take it in 2004."

The racing and show vehicle haulers are used as traveling billboards emphasizing Navy Recruiting's slogan, "Accelerate Your Life."

NASSIG Tennis Championships



Photo by JOSSN Shaw Weaver



Photo by JOSSN Shaw Weaver



Photo by JOSSN Shaw Weaver

(Top) A Sailor from AIMD returns a serve from a Sailor from Ops. during women's singles action in the NAS Sigonella Tennis Championships held through September. Mezei defeated Garcia in straight sets in C-league action. (Left) A DoDDS teacher, stretches to return a volley from a member of Navy Federal during women's singles action.

The Lane

Captain's Cup biathlon / triathlon

Sept. 13 at 8:30 a.m. at the NAS II swimming pool. Pre-register at either fitness center. Register from 7:30 a.m. to 8 a.m. at the NAS II pool. There will be T-shirts and awards. Biathlon - swim 500 meters and run 5K (individual only.) Triathlon - swim 500 meters, bike 11.5 miles, and run 5K (individual or team.) Call either fitness center at x4483/x5243 for more information.

Intramural fall volleyball

Season begins Sept. 23. There will be a coaches meeting on Sept. 9 at 4 p.m. in the NAS II gym. Rosters are due at the meeting. All matches will be held at the NAS II gym. For more information, call x2710. This is a Captain's Cup event.

2-on-2 sand volleyball tournament

Sept 27 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Open division, double elimination. Sign up at NAS II gym. Call x2710 for more.

Naval Academy 2003 Schedule

Sept. 20	Eastern Michigan	1:30 p.m. ET
Sept. 27	at Rutgers	7 p.m. ET
Oct. 4	Air Force	1:30 p.m. ET
Oct. 11	at Vanderbilt	2 p.m. ET
Oct. 18	at Rice	4 p.m. ET
Oct. 25	Delaware	1:30 p.m. ET
Nov. 1	Tulane	1:30 p.m. ET
Nov. 8	at Notre Dame	2:30 p.m. ET
Nov. 22	Central Michigan	1:30 p.m. ET
Dec. 6	at Army	4 p.m. ET

C
M
A

VP-45 from page 1

airlift. The last planeload of Pelicans landed on Aug. 8, completing the squadron's move to NAS Sigonella.

Following an aggressive training cycle, including supporting VP-8 last March during Operation Iraqi Freedom, the Pelicans are ready to face and overcome any obstacle. By taking part in two joint task force exercises—one in December and the other in May—and in a composite training unit exercise, the Pelicans have well-equipped themselves for any mission that they may have to carry out. During this deployment, the highly trained men and women of VP-45 look forward to the many opportunities that will arise to test their training. From the Balkans to West Africa, from ASW, to surveillance to search and rescue, the Pelicans are ready to assume their role as part of our nation's forward deployed defense forces.

If you ask anyone from Jacksonville, they will agree that the Pelicans of VP-45 tend to stand out even when they are away from work. Whether it is through participation in intramural sports or com-



munity outreach programs, Pelicans shine at everything they do. The Pelicans will keep up their reputation over the next six months. Between now and February, the Pelicans will be easily identifiable by their deeds and the Pelican patch.

The Pelicans look forward to becoming an integral part of the NAS Sigonella family, just as they were part of the NAS Jacksonville family. The Pelicans would like to thank NAS Sigonella for a warm reception and to say we look forward to a great six months as part of your family.

PELICAN PRIDE.

TSC from page 1

The TSC's ISR capabilities were spotlighted during Operation Iraqi Freedom. "We were extremely busy," recalls Therrien. "That was a very fast-moving operation." During OIF, the number of flights supported by the TSC increased fourfold, from an average of three each day to more than 10.

"That was hardest I've ever worked in my life," says Epps, who deployed to Souda Bay during the operation. "We had to rewrite the book on an hourly basis," adapting missions to meet the changing tactical situation.

The number of flights is back down to pre-OIF levels, but the TSC's permanent detachment at Souda Bay still supports ISR flights for Operation Enduring Freedom. The center has also assisted permanent detachments in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo since the late '90s to support flights over the region. These detachments both support P-3C flights and provide direct liaison be-



tween the patrol aircraft and the units they are supporting, linking the Navy's eyes in the sky directly to the end user. Therrien can't go into details about the TSC's current taskings, but he can say this: "TSC is very, very busy."

Mineo from page 1

tacted a subcontractor who does work on gas lines. The contractor came out and found water in the line, possibly from condensation. "They came up with a fix," Blount said. "A fix in which you don't have to do any excavation." This fix included pumping something into the line so the water would burn away.

The problem then got worse, as more and more units in Mineo were affected. "By [Aug. 31] we started to get more and more homes in Mineo without gas," Blount said. "It was 24, then it was 48, then it was half the complex."

It was assumed that there must be a giant blockage somewhere within the gas line. "The gas lines are all underground, they're all underneath the road," Blount continued. "They were the first utility put in, so they're the deepest down. You just don't go in and start tearing it up."

The blockage could not be found initially, and since it was now affecting 200 units, it was obvious that it wasn't localized to the fire station. On Aug. 31 and Sept. 1, Pizzarotti, his gas subcontractor and members of NASSIG sat down and tried to figure out where the problem was occurring. "That's a gigantic complex out there, you can't just dig up the entire Mineo [housing complex] to find a gas leak," said Blount.

On input from the gas company, it was assumed that it had to be water in the lines that was causing the blockage. The major task, though, was finding where the problem was. "They pulled out all the construction drawings and determined where the gas line was the lowest, figuring that the water was going to collect in the lowest spot in the gas line," said Blount. "That's when they started on [Sept. 2] doing excavation...at the lowest spot."

Not just anyone can work on these gas lines. Neither the Public Works department nor the owner of the Mineo complex are qualified to do work on gas lines. "So [Pizzarotti] had to go out and hire the company that installed the distribution system in Mineo" Blount said. "[The contractor] was already working on a job, and were the only ones who could do the work." The company was working on another project in Sicily, and would be in Mineo to do the work on Wednesday, Sept. 3. "On Wednesday the gas company showed up and they pretty much worked until they had it fixed sometime Friday morning."

During this time they did three excavations and cut the gas lines. "This is where it's a little bit dangerous, there's highly volatile explosive gas in the line," said Blount. "They had to make sure the gas was cut off at the end of the lines, cut through the lines, get the gas out and then drain the water,

which was over 2,400 gallons." A new piece of pipe was put in and a tap was installed in the bottom in case the problem arises again. A manhole was then built around the whole system so workers can get to it. This was done in three separate areas in Mineo.

Around Sept. 4 or Sept. 5, they believed the problem was solved. "When they restored gas, there was still gas leaking out of the system," Blount said. The contractor working on the lines then found a spot that explained everything. "There was a water line and a gas line real close to each other," Blount continued, "and during the original construction seven to eight years ago, it wasn't properly put underground." Both of these lines, which are in a high traffic area, were compressed and broke. "We had water going from a water distribution line right into the gas line."

With this major problem fixed, the weekend of Sept. 6 came with another small outage. Blount said the weekend outage was due to the stress being put on the system during the repairs. "Anytime you stress any type of utility system by charging it, uncharging it, charging it, pressurizing it, unpressurizing it, you could develop more problems," he said. "By stressing the system on and off through all the repairs, we developed two other small breaks by homes that were fixed."

"We feel fairly confident now, because we pressurized the system and we're not losing any gas, that it's fixed," Blount said. "Now we're going to go back kind of redetermine why it happened and who's responsible. Then look forward and try to plan for a situation where if we have a problem like this again, what could we do to the system now that would make a faster fix."

"We need to find a way so that if we have a

problem again, we can isolate it without affecting everybody else," Blount continued. "That's the problem we ran into. It would be unfortunate for the few homes that we cut off, but it's a lot better than half the complex."

The problem took a while to fix due to the fact that only certain people could work on the lines, and only during the daylight hours. "Liquefied Petroleum Gas is a specialty, and only special firms work on it," Blount said. "I think a lot of people expected us to rally everybody together to go out there and work 24 hours a day to get it fixed. That's what we wanted to do, but we can't." Because gas is very volatile, the contractor would only work during the day to make sure mistakes didn't occur. "That was an issue because a lot of people wanted to know why they shut down at the end of the day. It's truly unfortunate, if was any other utility, Pizzarotti could have attacked it right away,"

said Blount.

Another problem that arose stemmed from Public Works not being able to work on the lines. "We don't own Mineo," said Capt. Tim Davison, NASSIG commanding officer during his September appearance on AFN's "Feedback." "The homes are leased from a private company...Pizzarotti. They own the buildings, roads, and utility systems...except the gas distribution network. The fact that they don't own the gas distribution network even further complicates the issue. We cannot do maintenance on their facilities."

Blount said the residents of Mineo had to put up with a lot. "I can tell the Mineo residents, the ones I talked to, were extremely patient and understanding," he said. "It's not fun going through a week without hot showers, without gas to cook with, and without hot air to dry your clothes."

Trivia Answers

- 1) Sandusky
- 2) Mount Cook
- 3) Eight
- 4) Six
- 5) Sweetness

Galley-Club open for business

JOSN Steve Weaver
Staff Writer

The old galley on NAS I of Naval Air Station Sigonella served its last meal on Sept. 3, closing the doors to the building used since 1959.

The new galley-club, part of the NAS I recapitalization, opened its doors on the morning of Sept. 4 and officially commenced operation with a ribbon cutting ceremony at 10 a.m.

The change to the new facility was marked with prizes for the last person to come through the old galley's doors, and the first person to come through the new galley's doors. Prizes were also given to patrons of the old galley throughout the day. The 100th, 200th, 300th, and 400th customers received movie tick-

ets and food and drink from the base theater.

The last customer of the day at the old galley, Breana Ball, daughter of FCC William Ball, won an ITT day trip for two. MASN James Carroll of Security was the first customer to step into the new galley and also won an ITT day trip for two.

The opening of the new galley marks an improvement not only for the NASSIG community, but also for the local nationals and Sailors working to create hot meals for the enjoyment of all. "The equipment is newer and everything is in an operable condition unlike some of the inoperable equipment at the old galley," said MSC (SW) Patrick Carter, Galley leading petty officer. "Here at the brand new galley they'll be able to use everything."

"[The new galley] has way better equipment and it's a nicer environment for the people and for us," said MSSA Lisa Foster. "There was a lot of equipment that was old at the old galley." Foster said the thing that most impressed her was the new equipment in the kitchen.

The new equipment, such as four new steam kettles, will give the Sailors and local nationals the tools they need to do their job. The new galley will also feature the use of gas, which the old galley lacked. "This galley will provide steam, electrical and gas," said Carter. "Gas cuts down on the cooking time...it heats up faster. With the gas, as soon as you hit the switch, it's ready to cook."

The new galley also has "more seating capacity, and more televisions so the customer can come in and enjoy the convenience of being able to watch TVs, which they were unable to do at the old galley," Carter said. Carter said another benefit of the new galley is the addition of a speed line that is separate from the main line. "The speed line has the same things the main line has, deep fat fryers, grills, steam tables, reach-in refrigerators, hot boxes," he said. "In the old galley, the speed line and the main line were the same line."

"In the E-7 and above areas, there's a projector for videos and PowerPoint presentations," said Carter. "They have desktop computers in there and access to electrical outlets. It's a very nice, very comfortable area." Foster said many people were talking about visiting the new galley before it opened. "We had a lot of people talking about when the opening of the new galley was," said Foster. "They were all waiting to see how it is. I think they're going to be excited because it's really nice. I think it's just a nicer place to eat."

Carter encourages the NASSIG community to come and eat at the new galley. "I think the reactions are going to be positive," Carter said. "It's more of a cafeteria style atmosphere. It provides a



Local National personnel at the old NAS I Galley get ready to serve the last meal in the building on Sept. 3.



A member from NASSIG security shakes hands with Capt. Tim Davison, NASSIG commanding officer, at the opening of the new Galley-Club. He was the first customer to eat at the galley and won an ITT

Photo by PR/2 Sam Shaan

pretty nice environment for all of our patrons to come in and just relax and enjoy their meal."

Navy offers women surgical alternative for treatment of fibroids

By OS2 Wendy Kahn, National Naval Medical Center Public Affairs

BETHESDA, Md. (NNS) — Women suffering from uterine fibroids no longer have to make a choice between pain and maintaining fertility.

Now, interventional radiologists at the National Naval Medical Center (NNMC) can treat non-cancerous growths that occur in the wall of the uterus with a procedure that doesn't involve a hysterectomy (removal of the uterus).

Some NNMC patients are now being treated using a procedure called uterine fibroid embolization (UFE). The procedure involves miniaturized tools such as catheters, or thin tubes. Doctors use imaging equipment, such as X-rays, computer tomography, magnetic resonance and ultrasound to perform the procedure, which decreases the size of the fibroids and makes UFE less invasive.

"With advances in radiologic imaging, and in the technology of catheters and devices, we can perform a wide variety of procedures," said Dr. Donald Miller, interventional radiologist at NNMC. "This includes embolization, in which we inject materials like coils or small particles to block abnormal blood vessels and to deprive tumors or arterial malformations of their blood supply, such as a fibroid tumor in the uterus."

Management of patients with uterine fibroids is in conjunction with NNMC's gynecologists. The gynecologist evaluates the patient before the interventional radiologist does the procedure.

"We want to make sure their problem is due to fibroids and not something else, and also that they are appropriate candidates for embolization," added Miller. "We review their imaging studies to determine whether they are likely to benefit from this procedure. Afterwards, we advise them of the various options available to them and explain the procedure."

The UFE procedure is performed while the patient is sedated, so she's still conscious, but feels

no pain. The interventional radiologist makes a small nick in the skin and inserts a catheter into an artery. The catheter is guided through the arterial system to the artery that supplies blood to one side of the uterus while the radiologist monitors the procedure using real-time X-ray imaging (fluoroscopy).

Tiny plastic or gelatin sponge particles are injected through the catheter into the uterine artery, where they block the blood supply to the fibroids. With the blood flow cut off, the fibroids will shrink and die. The process is then repeated on the other side of the uterus.

Miller pointed out that if fibroids are left untreated, the symptoms, which include heavy period and abdominal pain, do not go away. In fact, sometimes the symptoms can worsen because the fibroids continue to grow. There is also a very low risk that benign tumors can become cancerous.

"Fibroids can cause severe symptoms, and that's why we do interventions," he explained. "The procedure has about an 85 percent success rate. Fibroids can recur after embolization, although it's uncommon."

"Uterine embolization may not be the best approach for treatment in women who wish to become pregnant, because we do not know the long-term effect of UFE on fertility. However, there are women who have become pregnant after undergoing uterine embolization for fibroid treatment."

For women interested in preserving the possibility of having children, embolization or other treatment options may be a better choice.

In all cases, alternative choices are individually discussed with the patient and her gynecologist.



Members of the Italian Army color guard present arms during the wreath-laying ceremony on Sept. 6 at the site of the signing of the armistice between Italy and the Allies, which occurred on Sept. 3, 1943.

Ceremony honors Armistice with Italy



The Stephen Decatur NJROTC color guard consisting of Kristin Nagy, Laura Corey, Bobby Canipe, Natalie Felia, and Larkin Lader march through the streets of Cassibile, Sicily



Capt. Thom Dansak, NASSIG command chaplain, speaks with a local boy before the parade marking the 60th anniversary of the signing of the armistice between Italy and the Allies during World War II in Cassibile.





Story and photos by JOSN Steve Weaver
Staff Writer

It was July 29, 1943. General Eisenhower broadcast an offer of peace to the country of Italy. Benito Mussolini resigned just days before, leaving Pietro Badoglio, head of the Italian Army, to lead as prime minister.

Since the allied landings on in Gela and Siracusa, Sicily, on July 9 and 10, 1943, it took the Allies until August 17, 1943 to complete Operation Husky, when they took the Sicilian town of Messina. Sept. 3 is when the Allies would take the war to mainland Italy.

Sept. 3 is also the date when the process for peace would begin between Italy and the Allies. The Italian General Giuseppe Castellano, acting on behalf of Badoglio, and General Bedeli Smith, acting on behalf of Eisenhower, secretly signed a "Short Military Armistice" in Cassibile, Sicily. This included a clause for the immediate transfer of the Italian fleet and airplanes to places designated by the Allies for their disarmament. This was to remain secret.

It remained secret until Badoglio made the following radio announcement at 7:45 p.m. on September 8, 1943: "The Italian Government, recognizing the impossibility of continuing the uneven struggle against the overwhelming enemy power, with the intent of saving further and more serious calamities to the nation, has asked General Eisenhower, commander-in-chief of the Allied forces, for and armistice. The request has been accepted."

The town of Cassibile, outside the city of Siracusa, held a parade and memorial on Sept. 5, honoring the 60th anniversary of the signing of the armistice between Italy and the Allies.

The event began with a parade, which included members of Naval Air Station Sigonella, members of Stephen Decatur's Naval Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps (NJROTC) color guard, the Italian Army color guard and others. Many locals looked on as the Americans and Italians walked side by side through the streets.

After the parade, a memorial honoring those who served during the war, and recognizing this historic event, was held at the very site where the armistice was signed. A wreath, blessed by Father Vincenzo Marino, was placed on the monument marking this historic site. Marino

gave a speech during the ceremony remembering those who gave their lives in hopes of peace.

"Recalling their virtues of strength, courage and sacrifice," said Marino. "Grant, oh, father then this day on which the memory of those who died during the Second World War call to mind. That we may also contemplate and dedicate ourselves to the creation of a new world. A world where the plagues of terrorism, persecution and oppression will be defeated. In their place, there will be a world where all of humanity is free."

"It was very significant anniversary, and very moving as well," said Paolo Romano, Siracusa city counselor and initiator of this event. "Our aim is to try add more value everyday to this event...to make it more important." Romano said a museum is in the works to archive the struggle during the war in Sicily. "So that Cassibile will be a meeting point for all the experts and historians in contemporary history."

He was happy with the Americans participation in the event. "The attendance of the American delegation means a lot to us because [it symbolizes] a really a good kind of brotherhood, solidarity and cooperation with the host nation," Romano said.

The NJROTC color guard had a once in a lifetime experience participating in this event. "We're really glad that they picked us to be the color guard for this historical event," said Laura Corey, a member of the NJROTC color guard. "Even though we're NJROTC color guard, we're still pretty good. We're really happy that we were able to be a part of it."

Corey like the reactions their presence inspired in the locals. "When we were walking by, a lot of the Italians clapped for us," she said. "We even had a little Italian boy carry our flag covers. It was great representing the Americans."

"[The color guard] did outstanding, for not knowing what to expect along the parade route," said Marine Master Sgt. (ret.) Anel Montero, naval sciences and NJROTC instructor. "They represented the whole Sigonella community with pride."

"It makes me feel proud to have the opportunity to participate in this parade," said Montero. "[The Italians] reacted well to the American military personnel. They came up to talk to me, shook my hand and said 'good job.'"



Retired Marine Master Sgt. Anel Montero, an NJROTC instructor and drill master for the NJROTC color guard, is presented a token of appreciation for his participation in the ceremony by the president of the Cassibile War Veterans Association.



Father Vincenzo Marino blesses a wreath that was placed on the monument marking the spot where the armistice between Italy and the Allies was signed on Sept. 3, 1943.

