

# THE BEACON

U.S. Naval Support Activity Souda Bay, Greece

December 2020







# The Beacon

Warfighting First, Operate Forward, Be Ready

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Story submissions must be routed through tenant command or departmental senior leadership.  
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The NSA SB Galley Team created this beautiful ice sculpture as a decoration for this year's Thanksgiving celebration.  
Photo by Kostas Fantaousakis, Public Affairs.

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Word on the Street:  
What is your spirit animal?

**Front Cover:** Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Ryan Ruple and Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Jacob Vernier got in the holiday spirit as they dressed up as elves and decorated a Christmas tree in the Liberty Center. Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Kelly M. Agee, Public Affairs.

**The Parting Shot:** Decorating a Karavaki, which is Greek for small boat, is a holiday tradition that is still preferred by many Greeks instead of, or in addition to, the modern European tradition of decorating a Christmas tree. When fishermen returned at Christmas after a long time at sea, their wives would celebrate by decorating small wooden boats as a way of saying Welcome Home. Photo by Carolyn Jackson, Public Affairs.



# Triad Corner



## Team Souda,

Hello Team Souda!

For the past three years, I have been working with you and your predecessors at our mission to support the Fleet, Fighter and Family. I stand in awe of our success over these years, especially this past year as we fought together through the challenges of the pandemic to sustain operations. 2020 will be long remembered as a year of great challenge and loss around the world. But for all of us on Team Souda, we will also remember that we pulled together and celebrated our teamwork, supported our troubled shipmates, and persevered to accomplish every mission assigned, while also stretching our capabilities and supporting many units and operations that were pushed out of other locations. This daily reminder of your commitment to our nation continues to inspire me and make me incredibly thankful to be your Executive Officer. I am particularly grateful for the support of your families and friends, as they have carried us all through this challenging time and taken up the slack in our lines. I ask that you take the time to let them know you appreciate their support as well.

As with many other events of 2020, COVID-19 and the necessary precautions to prevent its spread mean that these holidays will likely be very different than our hoped-for traditions. Remember that new

experiences often generate profound joys, but you must be open to them and engaged in your community to find them. For inspiration, look no further than the article on page 14 written by our own Denise P. from the Fleet and Family Support Center. She offers us creative ways to look at our circumstances and keep the 'happy' in our holidays.

Although for many of us this is a joyous time, this season can also be lonely, especially when we are away from family. It is too early to know if the nation-wide lockdown will be lifted for us to gather together for the holidays, but I want to be sure that you know that there is a place for you in the Team Souda family. We are here for each other in good times and during the difficult times – always. Never forget how valued you are to NSA Souda Bay, to your families and to your community – and me! It is because of YOU and your investment in Team Souda that this base thrives. If you see someone who appears to be lost, lonely or depressed, please take action by getting personally involved and show them the warmth of the season.

I want to leave you with a perspective that has guided my efforts here. Onboard USS TARAWA (LHA 1) as the Flight Deck Officer some years ago, I had the

privilege to oversee another exceptional team, this one of Aviation Boatswain's Mates, each one with unique responsibilities. From the "blue shirts" running chocks and chains, to "yellow shirts" directing all operations for a given aircraft, to the "red shirts" of the Crash and Salvage crew, all of us worked for the Aircraft Handler and the Air Boss, accountable to the ship's Captain for every last detail. It regularly frustrated me that my entire daily routine was spent on one of the Sailors having a bad day or some other issue. It could be anything from a Sailor missing breakfast, to a missing tool, or a full blown in-flight emergency – it didn't seem to matter how big or small the original problem was, the end result was flight operations ground to a halt and had to be reset – painfully. One night after the cycle was complete, my Senior Chief explained this to me. He said (paraphrasing):

'L-T, everyone here has a job. Each job has to get done so the whole thing can work. When someone doesn't do their job, things break down and we all pay that price. But that only explains the failures. To explain success you have to look at it in another way: The flight deck doesn't need a bunch of jobs getting done, it needs a team working together towards a common goal. Each Sailor has their place in the team. It is a team that can execute the mission, do each job, and look after each Sailor, all at once – because the load is shared and so the gaps are covered. Your team out there can do this; a bunch of people just doing their jobs cannot.'

It is not only the excellent work each of you does but, even more importantly, how well we work together as Team Souda that enables NSA Souda Bay to deliver on our mission. As we remember our personal blessings this season, I want to take a moment to remember how truly fortunate our country is to have you – the remarkable men and women who serve so courageously and so selflessly. Thank you for all your efforts in contributing to safety, security and prosperity around the world.

Every one of you, Sailor, civilian and Greek alike, are critical members of Team Souda Bay, each bringing their own talents and challenges, but all working together as a team. Always remember this: Do your part; Support your team; Don't hesitate to call out a problem or a difficult truth, but be kind and patient with each other. Share your successes as well as your challenges with each other.

It remains the greatest of privileges to have served with you and when I retire next year I will remember Team Souda and my time here as one of the greatest experiences in my Navy career. On behalf of CAPT Facundo and CMDCM McDonough, you have our sincerest appreciation for your dedicated service and our warmest wishes for a joyous holiday and a Happy New Year.

~XO

## HOLIDAY MAIL-BY DATES

Send cards and packages by these dates to ensure the timely delivery of your holiday wishes by December 25:

SERVICE	MAIL-BY-DATE
Priority Mail	Dec. 11
First-Class Mail - Letters and Cards	Dec. 11





# Around NSA Souda Bay

## Reenlistments

Photo by MC2 Kelly Agee, Public Affairs

**M**aster-at-Arms 3rd Class Damian Villa receives his Certificate of Reenlistment from Chief Warrant Officer 3 Gary Groesbeck, security officer, during his reenlistment ceremony Nov. 4 at the Harbor Security Office. Villa, a native of Waterford, Calif., has been in the Navy for 4 years and at NSA Souda Bay for 10 months. He reenlisted for three more years.



Villa is a coxswain assigned to the Harbor Security Unit, performing surveillance at the Marathi NATO Pier Facility.

He said that he enjoys training fellow Harbor Security Unit Sailors to become coxswains. “I also love being near the water, it is the best place to be,” he said.

Photo by MC2 Kelly Agee, Public Affairs



filed for all aircraft so they can transit efficiently and safely.

Collier enjoys the variety of tasks within his job and said, “At Souda Bay you never know what you are going to get. Every day brings a different challenge. We also get to work as a team to complete different missions that we are tasked. In the end we all get together to make sure the missions are always executed successfully and safely.”

Photo by MC2 Kelly Agee, Public Affairs



**M**aster-at-Arms 3rd Class Jossette Salinas received her Plaque of Reenlistment from Chief Warrant Officer 3 Gary Groesbeck, security officer, during her Nov. 13 reenlistment ceremony at the Marathi NATO Pier Facility. Salinas, a native of Dallas, has been in the Navy for 3 years and at NSA Souda Bay for 4 months. She reenlisted for 3 more years.

Salinas ensures U.S. assets are secure at the Marathi NATO Pier Facility by manning NSA Souda Bay's checkpoints at the pier.

Salinas enjoys keeping Team Souda safe and said, “It feels good to be able to provide protection for the base.”

Photo by Kostas Fantaousakis, Public Affairs

**M**aster-at-Arms 2nd Class Davon Brown receives his Plaque of Reenlistment from Chief Warrant Officer 3 Gary Groesbeck, security officer, during his Nov. 17 reenlistment. Brown, a native of Gary, Ind., has been in the Navy 4 years and 6 months and at NSA Souda Bay for 11 months. He reenlisted for 2 more years.

Brown, a member of the Security Department, makes sure the base is protected every day by checking identification cards at the front gate and performing roving patrols around NSA Souda Bay.

Brown said he enjoys the responsibility of his job and the authority of ensuring everyone follows the rules. “We are all military so we are held to a higher standard. So, we keep a fair standard across the board and correct military members no matter what their rank is.”





# Reenlistments

Photo by MC2 Kelly Agee, Public Affairs

Master-at-Arms 2nd Class Damion Childers recites the Oath of Reenlistment given by Lt. Michael Spoke, command chaplain, during his Nov. 19 reenlistment at the Chapel. Childers, a native of Tuscaloosa, Ala., has been in the Navy 8 years and at NSA Souda Bay for 11 months. He reenlisted for 4 more years.

Childers, a member of the Security Department, keeps order and discipline on the base, conducts foot patrols and checks identification cards at the front gate.

Childers said he enjoys meeting new people. “I think of myself as a people person. I like meeting new people at the gate or when I am on foot patrol. I enjoy talking to them and getting to know them.”



Photo by MC2 Kelly Agee, Public Affairs



Air Traffic Controller 2nd Class Chais Nelson recites his Oath of Reenlistment given by Lt. Michael Spoke, command chaplain, during his reenlistment ceremony Nov. 23 in front of Bldg. 1. Nelson, a native of Blackfoot, Idaho, has been in the Navy for 4 years and at NSA Souda Bay for 1 year. He reenlisted for 6 more years.

Nelson is a member of the Air Operations Department and helps file flight plans and coordinates with the aircrew or flight planners for incoming and outgoing aircraft so they can arrive and depart safety from NSA Souda Bay.

Nelson said his favorite thing about his job is getting the opportunity to work with different kinds of people. “I like the diversity between working with the Greek representatives and working with a lot of other departments around the airfield.”

# Small Craft Insignia Pinning Ceremony

Photos by Senior Chief Master-at-Arms Benjamin Ames



Capt. Rafael C. Facundo pinned Master-at-Arms 1st Class Sean Hiller and Master-at-Arms 3rd Class Bailey Pugh in a Small Craft Insignia pinning ceremony Nov. 30 in Bldg. 1.

Sailors must have achieved a high level of excellence and proficiency in small boat operations to receive the insignia. The Small Craft Insignia, commonly known as the Small Craft Pin signifies that the wearer is fully competent in the areas of navigation, communication, engineering, weapons and tactical operations.



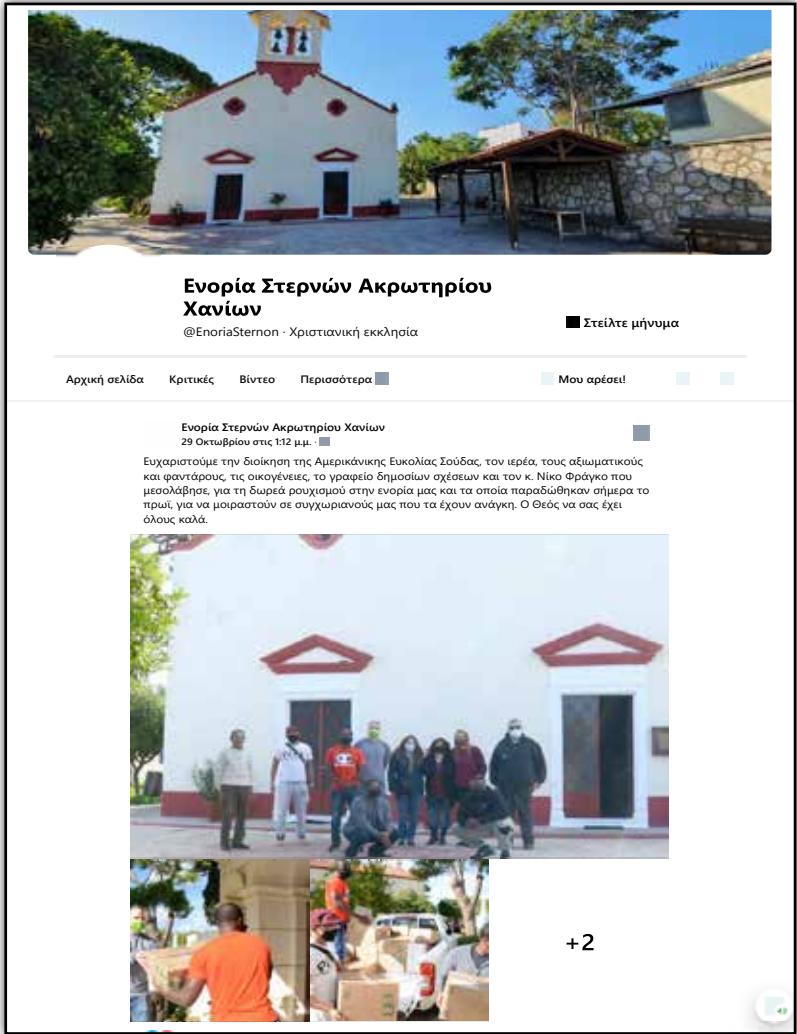
# USS Hershel Williams Arrives at Marathi

Photos by MC2 Kelly Agee, Public Affairs



The Expeditionary Sea Base USS Hershel “Woody” Williams (ESB 4) arrives at the Marathi NATO Pier Facility Nov. 16. Williams made a routine logistics stop while on a regularly scheduled deployment to the U.S. Naval Forces Africa area of responsibility.

# Community Outreach



Following a community outreach event on Oct. 29, the Greek Orthodox church dedicated to the Annunciation of Mary in Sternes, Akrotiri, posted this message on their official Facebook page thanking volunteers for the delivery of gift donations:

“We would like to thank the NSA Souda Bay command, the officers and service members, the families, the Public Affairs Office and Mr. Nikos Fragos who was the liaison, for the delivery of clothing donations to our church. These were delivered this morning, to share with our fellow citizens in need. May God bless you all.”

Photo by Kostas Fantaousakis, Public Affairs

Volunteers from NSA Souda Bay's Coalition of Sailors Against Destructive Decisions delivered food and clothing donations to the Mouzouras Cultural Association on Nov. 25. Donations were collected in Thanksgiving-themed baskets during the month of November and the event was coordinated by CSADD and NSA Souda Bay's Chapel.





Around NSA Souda Bay

# National American Indian Heritage Month

Photos by Kostas Fantaousakis, Public Affairs



Members of NSA Souda Bay's Command Multicultural Association pose for a photo as they cut the cake before a special meal in honor of National American Indian Heritage Month at the Galley on Nov. 17. Pictured from left to right: Master-at-Arms 2nd Class Luis Reynosoluna, committee member; Master-at-Arms 1st Class Casey Voelker, president; and Yeoman 1st Class Brande McLane, vice president.

## Holiday Books & Movies

Photos by MC2 Kelly Agee, Public Affairs



Morale, Welfare and Recreation's Library is offering a selection of holiday books and movies to get Team Souda into the holiday spirit. The Library provides a wide variety of books, DVDs, magazines and newspapers, as well as computer access, free Internet, fax and copying services.

For more information, visit them in Building 62, next to the Liberty Center, or by calling 266-1491 or 28210-21491.



## NSA Souda Bay Counseling Resources

Feeling overwhelmed or confused about dealing with COVID-19? If you need someone to talk to, there are several counseling options to assist with the stress and related issues:

### Local Resources:

- Fleet and Family Support Center: +30 694-043-1174
- Chaplain: +30 694-043-1151
- Behavioral Health, US Naval Hospital (Naples): +39-335-875-8113

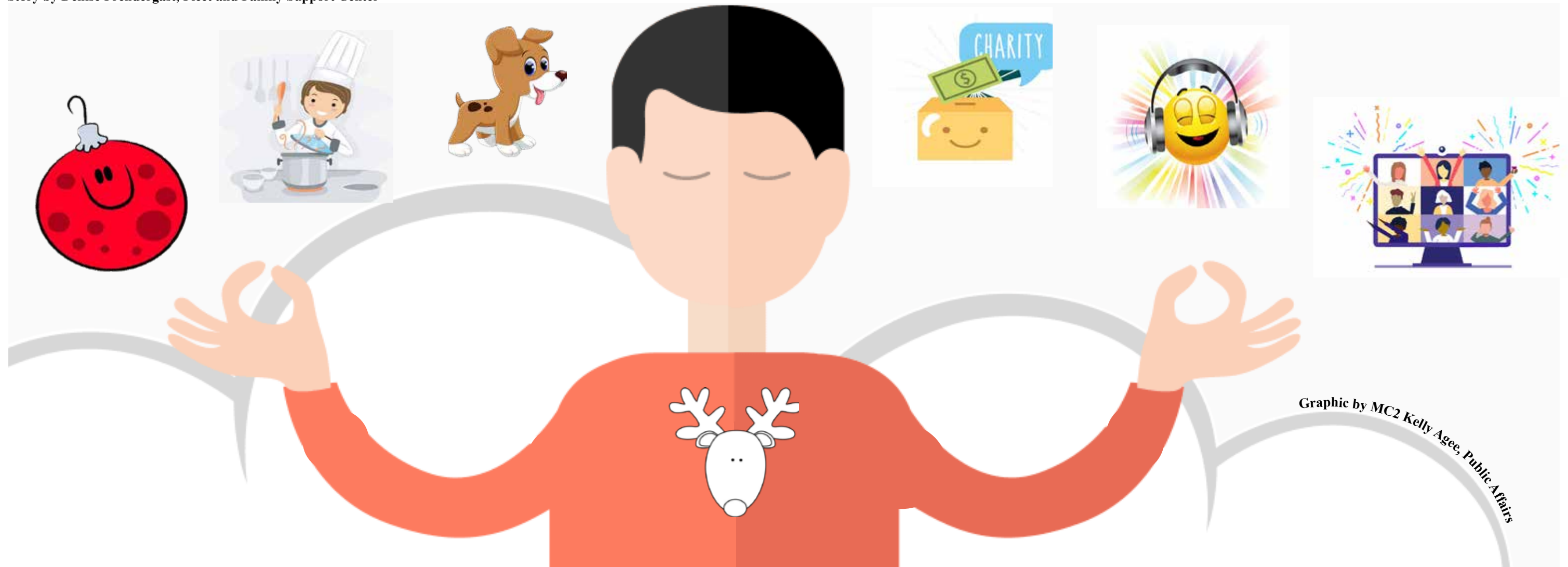
### Military OneSource

- Military Crisis Line: 800-273-8255 (press 1)
- Military OneSource 24/7 toll-free number: 1-800-342-9647
- Military OneSource collect number: 001-703-253-7599
- Online chat from phone: Text 838255
- Online chat: <https://livechat.militaryonesourceconnect.org/chat>
- Website: <https://www.militaryonesource.mil/health-wellness/mental-health/mental-health-resources>



# Handling Holiday Stress in the Time of COVID

Story by Denise Prendergast, Fleet and Family Support Center



Ah the holidays: good food, great friends and lots of celebration. The holidays hold special memories for each of us. The holidays can also be a very stressful and difficult time for some people. This year will present its own set of challenges for the holiday season. Many people will not get the opportunity to visit their families or take the holiday trips they had planned; it is important to make a plan to stay healthy and connected. It is even more important during the current restrictions that we take a proactive role in connecting and managing our stress.

In order to do this you may need to be creative. Using Zoom or other social media platforms, you can enjoy a virtual holiday celebration with your family at home. Yes, the time change is a hassle but well worth it to share a laugh or a memory. Plan a pot luck or holiday

party at your command and share stories about your family and holiday traditions. Decorate your house and office and watch holiday movies with families on a watch party.

There is a tendency for us to focus on the things we are missing and feel a sense of loss. But we can also take some time to remember the things we are free of. Holidays do bring an increased amount of stress and pressure in the best of times. This year you won't have to worry about holiday traffic jams, long lines at the stores and crowded parking lots. Snow storms won't leave you stranded at the airport. There won't be any political or other arguments and old family feuds rearing their heads. It is OK to celebrate the things that you won't miss and take advantage of having a holiday that is free from some of the regular trappings.

You can try a new holiday recipe and no one can complain if it doesn't turn out OK. You can listen to whatever holiday music you like, or not. Think of the money you can save. Focusing on the positive does wonders for our mood and our stress level.

Even with social distancing measures there are still activities you can enjoy throughout the season on base. MWR has opportunities for all different interests, even though you'll be participating in smaller groups. If you have an interest that you don't see listed, please feel free to suggest it to MWR, FFSC or to Chaplain Spoke; we are always looking for good ideas.

Try to develop a practice of gratitude and mindfulness. Look for ways to help and be involved in the community. That is a great way to beat the winter blues and make a better holiday for someone in need.

Donate to the food drive or the toy drive, adopt a pet or sponsor a family in need. Do something for someone at work who is feeling particularly alone. Reach out to a new person and make them feel welcome; you could end up with a friend for life.

It is important to allow yourself to feel what you are feeling, and acknowledge the difficulty of this year. It is normal to feel sad or to feel lonely at times. However, if you find yourself unable to find motivation or enjoyment in things that normally bring you joy, please reach out to us at FFSC or to the Chaplain. We are here to help everyone at Team Souda make the most of what we have this year.

You can reach the team at FFSC by calling 266-1690 and you can reach Chaplain Spoke at 266-1204.



## Antonija Hibic



**General Manager  
Navy Gateway Inns & Suites**

Antonija Hibic managed military lodging properties in Chicago, California, Maryland, and Virginia before moving to Crete in July 2019. She said she loves taking care of the lodging needs of Team Souda's transient personnel.

### How did you get started in hotel management?

Back in 2009 I started as the housekeeping supervisor at the Navy Lodge in Great Lakes, Ill. In 2011 I was a finalist for the Employee of the Year for the Navy Lodge program. The first property that I got as the (general manager) was in 2015 and that was at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, a 955-room property.

### How has the COVID-19 pandemic affected your operations?

Navy Gateway Inns & Suites has always maintained high cleaning standards. During the pandemic, additional measures have been put in place for the safety of both our staff and visiting guests. We have installed sneeze guards at our front desk, and have provided our team with the necessary PPE (personal protective equipment) as recommended. The chemicals that we utilize for cleaning and

sanitation of our guest rooms and common areas are CDC recommended. Additional cleaning measures have also been implemented to mitigate the spread of germs and bacteria, such as more frequent cleaning of our high traffic areas, door handles and such.

### What is your favorite story from your time here at NSA Souda Bay?

We were at the morning meeting and the guy that's briefing, he's telling what ships are coming and what ships are leaving. So then he says that the ship that's incoming is just pulling in at Marathi and he mentioned my son's ship's name. I was shocked! I was like, "Can you repeat it? Can you just say the ship name?" And he looked at me, "Yeah, they are at Marathi right now." I was so excited! I wasn't able to control my emotions and I yelled, "My son's ship is here!" I had an amazing three days

him and so that's something that I will never forget.

### What do you like to do outside the office?

I got lucky. When I got to Souda – somebody had dumped a cute little puppy in a friend's yard. I went to meet her and the moment we saw each other we fell in love and we (have been) together since then. So I like to spend my time with her, her name is Nera. She's little and cute – no more than 20 pounds and she's already 16 months old.

### Is there anything you want Team Souda to know?

I am really happy I decided to come here and I've met great people. I really enjoy knowing the culture of the Greeks and I love the food – and you can see it! (Another) thing is I have never worked with a contractor (staff) before, but I got lucky because I have the best team that I could get from the contract!

## Boatswain's Mate 3rd Class Tesdaun Troyquash



**Port Operations Department**

Boatswain's Mate 3rd Class Tesdaun Troyquash, from Hampton, Va., said he joined the Navy to travel the world. He has been in the Navy for five years and three months and at NSA Souda Bay for a year and six months. He currently works in the Port Operations department where he helps with boat reports, conducts boatswain's mate training and places booms around ships.

### What do you do day-to-day as a boatswain's mate?

Mondays are the busiest days. We have to go down to Marathi and do the boat reports, we check them to make sure that they are accurate and that the boats don't have any discrepancies and are running properly ... we also have to clean the boats in the pier. When it is slow we conduct boatswain's mate training ... we go over anchoring, mooring, towing, dealing with lines and teach how to tie knots ... mainly the square knots and bowline knots since those are the knots we use while performing evolutions such as tying up to fenders and booms. On days when a ship comes in we go out in our boats and we put an orange boom around

the ship and secure it, making sure that if the ship spills oil that it will be contained.

### Why did you choose to be a boatswain's mate?

I wanted to be able to drive the ship, be a crane operator and perform weld deck operations.

### What is your favorite thing about your job?

I like getting to work with local nationals ... it is interesting to learn about their culture, also they have been teaching me Greek. We work with them when we have ship movements, some of them help with the pulling in of a ship and some of them help with putting the boom around the ship. They are really helpful.

### Any advice for people wanting to pursue BM as a rate?

Don't rush with your qualifications, take your time learning all you need to know about it before moving on to the next one. If you rush, and then get tasked with heading an evolution and you don't fully understand what needs to be done, someone could get hurt.

### What do you do during your off time?

I like to play video games. I own a PlayStation, Xbox and a Nintendo Switch. My favorite type of games are RPGs (role-playing games), sports and fighting games. I play Warzone online a lot, it is challenging because you are playing against other people and it is cross platform game, so you are playing against PC users as well. But, it is fun because you can do it from the comfort of your own home.

## Sotiris "Sam" Kagadis



**Supervisor  
Emergency Dispatch Center**

Sam Kagadis moved from Australia to Greece when he was 35 years old to be closer to his family and became a Team Souda member working at the Navy Exchange. In 2004, he started as a dispatcher in the Emergency Dispatch Center; he is now the dispatch supervisor and said the biggest pleasure he gets is from providing the best service they can when somebody calls asking for help.

### What is a typical day for you at the Emergency Dispatch Center?

My normal day in dispatch is I get the reports from the calls for services. I make sure that the customer service is there. If it's not, we'll come with training methods on how we can improve to be better. Our dispatchers will monitor a few thousand alarms, a few thousand radio transmissions, a few thousand telephone calls. And all these alarms and calls and radio transmissions go through them to make sure there is anything else we can do to help out – it's not me making the decisions. I'll sit down with the dispatcher and say, "Hey, what do you think we could do better over here?" And I'll get their suggestions.

### What has been a highlight of your career?

Two years ago when we went through FEP (Final Evaluation Problem) we had the deputy emergency management officer (visit) ... and he inspected us and he had me for four days in my office and he went through everything. I am 56 years old and I have never been inspected like that in my life! The scoring was 100% – best in the Navy – that was the biggest highlight of my career.

### What do you like to do outside the office?

Because I like looking after people I'm a member of the National Guard, so I do a lot of volunteer work. I'm a blood donor. I clean up the beaches. In the neighborhood where I live

I teach the young kids about earthquakes. I like getting onto my computer and talking via Skype to my friends in Australia. And I do enjoy conversations with my dad (who lives in Athens). We analyze things. We analyze history, the future, the current situation ... that keeps him happy because he's got a friend next to him and it keeps me happy because I get to see my dad ... who I see as my friend.

### What do you want Team Souda to know about Dispatch?

If somebody is scared to dial 9-1-1 ask them to look at the phone very carefully. They will notice the phone does not have teeth, so it's not going to bite you. Just pick it up, dial 9-1-1 even if it's by accident. Let us know and say, "Hey, it's an accident." We don't mind saying good morning to somebody once in a while.



# Holiday Traditions in Greece

Story by Kostas Fantaousakis, Public Affairs. Photos via Wikipedia.com

Greece is a country where traditions and customs are a part of everyday life. For Greeks the Christmas season runs from Christmas Day, on December 25, through Epiphany, on January 6.

Christmas is known as “Christougena” (Χριστούγεννα) and people wish Merry Christmas to each other by saying “Kala Christougenna” (Καλά Χριστούγεννα). The name day of “Manolis” (Emanuel, Manos or Emanuela), is also celebrated on Christmas Day, and friends and relatives will stop by to wish them “many happy returns” or “Hronia Pola!” (χρόνια πολλά).

Food plays a large role in the holiday in Greece, just as in the United States. “Melomakarona” (μελομακάρονα) are semolina, cinnamon, and clove cookies drenched in honey. These cookies are enjoyed during Christmas, while “kourambiedes” (κουραμπιέδες), a cookie made with rosewater and butter and sprinkled with powdered sugar, are served on New Year’s Day.

In an older Crete tradition, each family raised a hog, called “hiros” (χοίρος) which was slaughtered on Christmas Eve and served as the main dish the next day. The custom of eating turkey for Christmas dinner arrived in Europe in the early 1800s, although some families do still enjoy pork as part of their holiday fare.



Melomakarona (left) and kourampiedes (right) are the usual treats during Christmas holidays in Greece.



Boats are commonly decorated with lights for the Christmas season in Greece.

Although many Greek families now follow the popular tradition of decorating a Christmas tree, the original Greek custom involves decorating a model ship. When many Greeks were working as seamen and would return during Christmas after a long time at sea, their wives would celebrate by decorating small wooden boats as a way of saying welcome home.

In another variation of this tradition, children would go door to door singing “kalanda” (Christmas carols) and carrying small wooden boats, either illuminated to light the way or with enough space to store treats given to them by the residents after they sang the carols.



Caroling remains an important tradition in Greece. Children go caroling on Christmas Eve, New Year’s Day and for the Epiphany. They go door to door, knocking and waking up the residents; it is good luck if the carolers wake you. The resident is asked, “Na ta poume?” This can be translated into “shall we say them?” meaning “shall we sing to you?” After the positive answer the children start singing. A couple of minutes later the wish of “Hronia Polla!” brings the carols to an end. While the reward in older times used to be cookies, sweets or fruits, today most people give a small amount of money. Thus every household is prepared with a pile of coins ready to give to the children.

Unlike the western tradition, presents are opened in Greece on New Year’s Day, which is known as “Protochronia.” This is because the first day of January is also St. Basil’s Day, who is Father Christmas in Greece. He brings presents on January 1st, when his name day is celebrated, unlike other European traditions, where Saint Nicholas arrives bearing gifts on Christmas Eve.

According to the traditional story, St. Basil (from the city of Caesarea) once called on the citizens to raise a ransom payment to stop the siege of the city. Each resident gave whatever they had in gold and jewelry. When the ransom was raised, the enemy was so embarrassed by the act of collective giving that he called off the siege without collecting payment. St. Basil was then tasked with returning the unpaid ransom, but had no way of knowing which items belonged to which family. So he baked all of the jewelry into loaves of bread and distributed the loaves to the city, and by a miracle each citizen received their exact share.

It is traditional on St. Basil’s Day to serve “vasilopita” (βασιλόπιτα), a special cake with a lucky coin called a “flouri” (φλουρί) baked inside. The head of the household serves the cake by first crossing the cake with his knife, and then cutting the first slice for God, then the next for the baby Christ, followed by the “Panayia” (Virgin Mary). The next slice is for the household and after that a piece is sliced for each member of the family starting with the eldest. Finding the “flouri” in your piece of cake means good luck will follow you all the forthcoming year.



An Orthodox priest throws a cross into the sea during Epiphany.

January 6, Epiphany, is known in Greece as “Theofania” (Vision of God) or Fota (Lights).

The first sanctification of the Epiphany (The Enlightenment) takes place in church on the eve of the holiday. Afterward, the priest goes from house to house holding a cross and a basil branch. As he walks through each house, he uses the basil to sprinkle (bless) all the areas of the home with holy water. Families also bring some holy water back home for their members to drink as a blessing.

On January 6, a long procession is formed and follows whatever road leads to a body of water – the sea, a river or even a reservoir. In front of the procession are the cherub icons, followed by the priests, then dignitaries, and all the people. In larger cities, the procession becomes more elaborate with the addition of music and military contingents.

At the end of the sanctification ceremony a priest throws a cross into the water, thus blessing the waters. Those who dare – mostly the younger people of the village – jump in the usually icy water and compete to retrieve the cross. The person who brings the cross up to the surface will enjoy good luck and health for the entire year.



# Preparing for a Festive Feast

Story & Photos by MC2 Kelly Agee, Public Affairs



Allan Greer, the head cook, prepares a cornucopia in preparation for Thursday's Thanksgiving meal.

NSA Souda Bay's Food Service team worked hard this year preparing the Thanksgiving feast. During the COVID-19 pandemic it is hard for everyone to be able to visit and celebrate the holidays with family back home. This was Food Service's way of giving back to Team Souda.

"For some Sailors and civilians this is the first time (during the holidays) to be (away) from their friends and family back home," said Chief Warrant Officer 3 Van Vergara, food service officer. "My top priority is to uplift the morale of Team Souda. Lifting morale is big this time around because of the (COVID-19) pandemic. It takes a lot of preparation, coordination and teamwork to have a successful Thanksgiving meal."

Things were a little different for this year's Thanksgiving meal due to COVID-19 restrictions, but the Galley team ensured everyone's safety by implementing social distancing during the meal. The

dining room's maximum capacity was cut in half, making it possible for patrons to maintain 6 feet of separation while enjoying their meals. Patrons also had the option of taking a Thanksgiving meal to go if they chose not to dine in.

Decorations placed in the Galley spruced up the festive meal. Cornucopias, a classic Thanksgiving symbol, gave the Galley a magic touch this year.

Allan Greer, the head cook, created four cornucopias that were displayed in the Galley during the meal. He started creating them by forming chicken wire into the shape, then made a basic dough consisting of flour, water and eggs. After that he made sure the dough was hard but not too breadly. Then he put it in the refrigerator for a couple of hours until it was firm. He then cut the dough into strips and placed it around the chicken wire, starting with the large end. His final step was adding a special braided design to make it look more festive.

The star dish of the dinner was the Thanksgiving turkey prepared by Maria Ganiadsou, assistant manager and cook. Ganiadsou said it was a culture shock when she arrived at NSA Souda Bay nine years ago and cooked her first Thanksgiving meal.

"I didn't know anything about Thanksgiving cooking," said Ganiadsou. "I was working in a hotel and the Greek food is so different from (American) food. But I liked it because it is something new for me ... It's interesting, I learned a lot of new things about new foods."

Thanasis Anagnostopoulos, assistant manager and

cook, designed the cake. First he sketched the design to get an idea of what materials he needed. A day before, he baked the cake and masked it, which is putting a thin coat of icing over the sides and top of the cake to prevent crumbs from getting into the final layer of icing. Finally, he added a 3D design he made to the top of the cake.

"It is a very special day ... I don't want to make a cake like we did with any other celebration – It is a special day and there needs to be a special cake," he said.

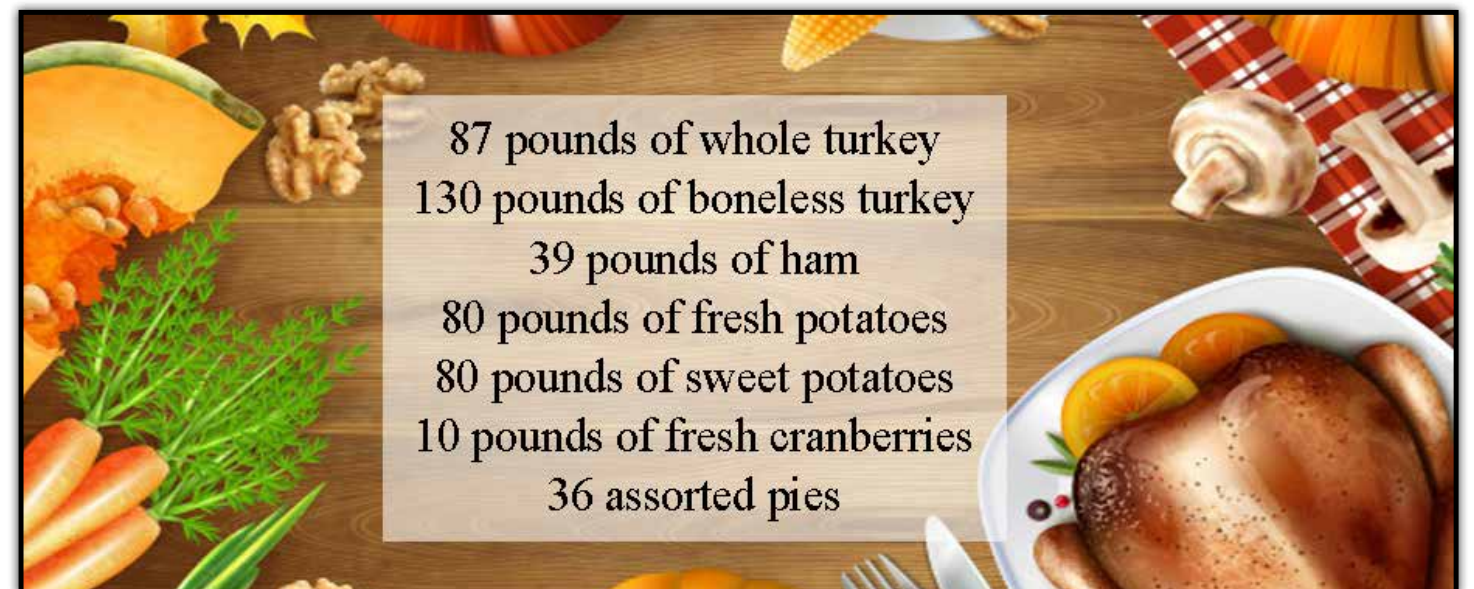


Maria Ganiadsou, assistant manager and cook, prepares the turkey.



Thanasis Anagnostopoulos, assistant manager and cook, masks the cake.

## The Thanksgiving Feast





# Happy Thanksgiving Team Souda!

Photos by Kostas Fantaousakis, Public Affairs







“Wolf, because they are independent.”

Tatiana Aparecida Diamantara  
Navy Exchange



“Lion, they seem to be scary on the outside but they are really softies on the inside.”



Abie Pace  
Navy Federal Credit Union



“Owl, they are wise, independent, mysterious and unpredictable.”



Master-at-Arms 2nd Class  
Brittany Adkins  
Security

“Bear, I am a nurturer by nature and I don’t play when it comes to my cubs (children).”

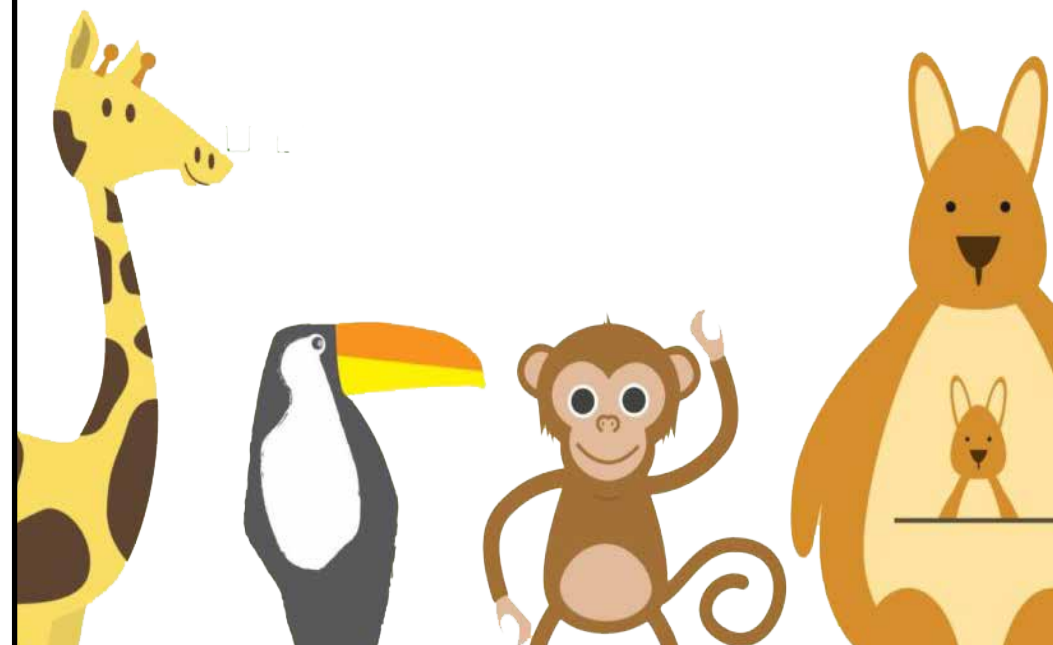


Aviation Ordnanceman 2nd Class  
Terri Polite  
Navy Munitions Command

## Word on the Street

What is your spirit animal and why?

by MC2 Kelly Agee, Public Affairs



Master-at-Arms Seaman  
Aubrie Dalton  
Harbor Security

“Bumble Bee, I’m very close with my family. I love my mom (the Queen) and I consider myself to be a queen. Also, I’m always buzzin’ around.”







“Lion, because of my strength, I’m a leader and I take care of my pack.”

Tech. Sgt. Steven Yates  
95th Reconnaissance Squadron



“Black bear, they are always on a mission and can be very fierce.”



Stavros Kopasis  
Argonaut Fleet Recreation  
Center



“Fox, I’m incisive and I dive head first into problems sometimes.”



Mike Barnett  
Auto Skills Center



“Cat, because they are independent, lovers of personal space and are very intuitive.”

Master-at-Arms 1st Class  
Ikeya Williams  
Harbor Security



Despina Koutsoumani  
Housing

“Horse, because they are free spirits but are also obedient ... Also, they are very good companions.”



Yeoman 1st Class  
Robert Watson  
Admin

“Dog, they are loyal, even when mistreated ... they also have a wandering spirit as well ... I’m gonna run around the neighborhood but I know home is home.”








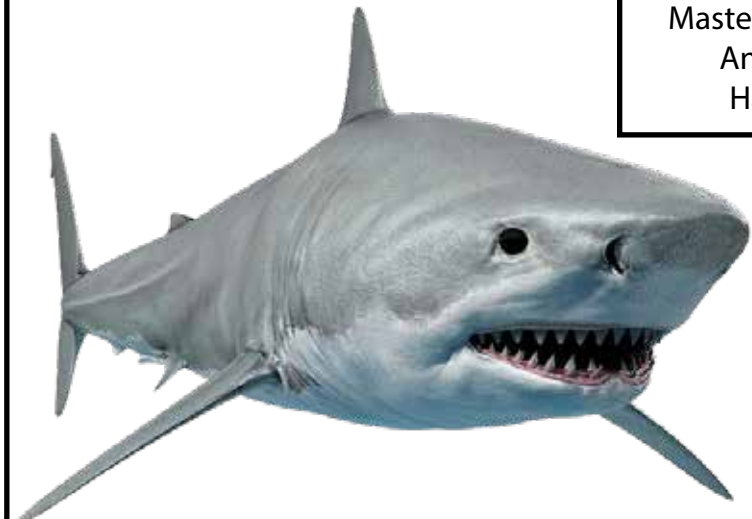
“Meerkat, because my friend and I call each other Timon (me) and Pumbaa from the Lion King.”



Utilitiesman Constructionman  
Ryan Sanders  
Public Works


“Shark, I’m a great swimmer and tenacious in the water.”






Master-at-Arms 1st Class  
Anthony Dodson  
Harbor Security

“Elephant, because they are protective, helpful and gentle creatures.”





Denise Prendergast  
Fleet and Family Support Center



“A dog because I am loyal.”



Vic Christodoulakis  
Argonaut



“Ram, they like establishing their boundaries.”



Calli Cavros  
Navy Exchange



“A sheep because I’m more of a follower, whenever someone leads me I put my full trust in them.”



Religious Program Specialist 2nd Class  
Adjo Awoudja  
Religious Ministries



# The Parting Shot...

