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U.S. Naval Activities Spain

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### Leadership Corner



**Dr. Courtney Schonffeldt**  
Principal, Rota Middle High School

Recently, I was running errands in town, iced coffee in hand, sunglasses on, when I heard a loud “Hey, Dr. S!” I looked up to see a waving group of students across the plaza, excited, loud in that joyful teenage way, and laughing and joking with one another. It’s moments like that - unexpected, simple, and full of life - that make me feel like the luckiest principal in the world. I don’t just work in our school; I get to walk alongside young people as they grow into leaders, thinkers, and into the humans they’re meant to become.

And how lucky are we to be part of their story?

At Rota Middle High School, we don’t expect perfection. We expect progress, growth, belonging, and hard work. These things don’t just happen; they’re built, day by day, together.

This year, we’re proud to continue our mission: To Educate, Engage, and Empower military-connected students to succeed in a dynamic world. That mission guides everything we do, and this year, it’s grounded in three simple expectations: Be Ready. Be Responsible. Be Respectful.

Be Ready isn’t just about sharpened pencils and organized planners, though we love those too. It’s about showing up on time every day, with a mindset ready to learn and a heart open to growth. This year, we’re raising our expectations for tardiness

## Back to School, Forward Together: Be Ready, Be Responsible, Be Respectful

and attendance. We aren’t doing this because we love rules, but because every minute counts. When students are here, we can teach, support, and celebrate their progress.

Be Responsible means owning our choices, both the awesome ones and the not-so-awesome ones. We’re helping students take charge of their learning, their behavior, and their future. With high academic and behavioral expectations, we’re not asking for perfection. We’re asking for effort, honesty, and integrity. We will remain a cell phone-free school during the academic day. Students may bring phones, but they’ll remain tucked away from the first bell to the last. This protects learning time, encourages real connection, and helps students stay present.

Be Respectful is the heartbeat of our culture. It means caring for yourself, others, and the space around you. It means choosing kindness, listening with empathy, and treating our community with dignity. Middle and high school can be messy and magical, and we believe in creating a space where everyone belongs.

We are also continuing the traditions that make school fun: pep rallies, performances, spirit weeks, and sports. We are growing too, with more student leadership, stronger support systems, and new ways to connect learning with life.

To our families and community partners: thank you. Your support, your presence at events, and your encouragement matters more than you know. Our young people notice when you show up, and as a faculty, we do too. Our young people need us to guide them, set boundaries, ask hard questions, and celebrate the wins. When school and home partner together, kids thrive. Because raising strong, kind, capable humans takes all of us - and our Admirals are worth it.

We are Ready.  
We are Responsible.  
We are Respectful.  
We are Rota.  
Stay connected with what’s happening at Rota MHS.



## On The Front Cover



Lance Cpl. Damon Nelson, a Marine assigned to Fleet Anti-Terrorism Security Team Company Europe (FASTEUR), participates in fast rope training onboard Naval Station (NAVSTA) Rota, Spain, July 17, 2025. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Drace Wilson)

### Do You Like to Write or Take Photos?

The Coastline is always looking for guest writers and story ideas. Are you traveling some place fun, attending a sporting event, participating in a workshop or cooking class or leading special training in your office or community? If so, we want to hear from you! Please send story and photo submissions or story ideas to The Coastline at [rotacoastline@gmail.com](mailto:rotacoastline@gmail.com).

*Publication is subject to approval.*

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# Gerald R. Ford Carrier Strike Group and ESPS Canarias (F86) Transit Strait of Gibraltar

By Lt. Ian Temulty  
USS Gerald R. Ford

The United States’ newest and world’s largest aircraft carrier USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78), Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyers USS Winston S. Churchill (DDG 81) and USS Bainbridge (DDG 96), all assigned to Gerald R. Ford Carrier Strike Group (GRFCSG), transited the Strait of Gibraltar with Spanish Navy Santa Maria-class ESPS Canarias (F86), and fast combat support ship USNS Supply (T-AOE-6), July 19, 2025.

A credible and capable naval presence like this combined force increases maritime security, and highlights our shared commitment to fostering regional security and stability among partnered and allied nation naval militaries.

“This operational activity in the Strait of Gibraltar shows the solid commitment of Spain as a strong Ally in a key access point to the Mediterranean Sea,” said Cmdr. J. David Garcia, commanding officer of Canarias. “Both the U.S. Navy and the Spanish Navy are used to working

together, not only at sea, but also from the Rota Naval Base – the main U.S.-Spanish naval station in South Europe, that was set up back in the 1960s. From there, the defense of our common values has been broadly developed through a firm friendship, which makes us stronger together.”

Built on more than seven decades of partnership and experience, NATO is the strongest military alliance in history. Carrier strike groups like Gerald R. Ford’s showcase the inherent flexibility and scalability maritime forces provide to the combined force, while reinforcing the U.S. Navy’s ironclad commitment to the stability and security of the European theater.

“Our ship and crew has assumed the watch in U.S. 6th Fleet. Gerald R. Ford’s mission remains clear: maintain freedom of navigation in international waters for all nations,” said Capt. David Skarosi, commanding officer of Gerald R. Ford. “Our Sailors are excited to execute this mission and operate side-by-side with our Allies and partners throughout the

region.”

This combined straits transit is a visible demonstration of the U.S. and Spain’s ability to cooperate and integrate effectively – proof of the strong cohesion and trust between North American and European Allies.

Carrier Strike Group Twelve is on scheduled deployments in the U.S. 6th Fleet area of operations to support the

warfighting effectiveness, lethality, and readiness of U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa, and defend U.S., Allied and partner interests in the region. For more than 80 years, U.S. Naval Forces Europe-U.S. Naval Forces Africa has forged strategic relationships with our Allies and partners, leveraging a foundation of shared values to preserve security and stability.



The world’s largest aircraft carrier, USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78), transits the Strait of Gibraltar, July 17, 2025. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Jacob Mattingly)



The world’s largest aircraft carrier, USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78), Spanish Navy Santa Maria-class frigate ESPS Canarias (F86), fast combat support ship USNS Supply (T-AOE 6), and Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Winston S. Churchill (DDG 81), transit the Strait of Gibraltar, July 17, 2025. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Jacob Mattingly)



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# Health Promotions: Prescription Drug Misuse

By Devin Evans

Naval Hospital Rota, Health Promotions Department

Even before raising your hand to take the enlistment or commissioning oath or even making the decision to support our nation's Warriors as a Civil Servant, we all know that illegal drugs are not tolerated in the Armed Forces. Not only does drug abuse impact readiness, but it can also harm the lives of your shipmates, friends, and family.

But what about the medications that are prescribed to you by your medical provider? Misusing prescription drugs is dangerous, increases your risk of addiction, and can jeopardize your military career.

What is misuse? Misuse is taking a medicine in a way other than prescribed. Examples include taking a different dosage than what is labeled, using an alternative method to take the medication



- such as crushing a tablet into powder to be mixed into something else - or by taking a medication that is not prescribed to you. Commonly misused medications come in the form of opioids, stimulants, and central nervous system depressants.

Opioids are often used to combat pain but can trigger a euphoric sensation commonly referred to as a "high." It is the desire for this sensation that leads to misuse by taking more than the prescribed dosage or increasing how often the medication is taken in a day. There is great danger of overdose when opioids are not taken correctly.

Stimulant misuse comes from taking more than the prescribed dose which increases dependence of the substance. Once the prescription runs out and a refill is not available, unpleasant withdrawal symptoms may occur.

Misuse can also come from making the decision to discontinue a prescribed medication without first contacting your primary care provider. Central nervous

system depressants that assist with anxiety and sleep disorders require properly timed administration as prescribed. Abrupt decreases or stoppage of a medication could lead to severe physical and psychological reactions.

Service members are just as likely to misuse prescribed medications as the general population, but they face unique physical and mental stressors that can increase the likelihood of misuse. Service members with musculoskeletal injuries from training or duty related activities are often prescribed opioids to combat pain so that they may continue their service without interruption. Sometimes, these medications can be prescribed in high dosages over long periods of time and are often prescribed in different release versions which can increase the risk of misuse due to miscalculations.

Having a history of addiction to other substances such as alcohol or tobacco places a person at greater risk for misuse as well. Lastly, prescription misuse is more common among men and for persons between the ages of 18 and 25 which is a large population of active duty service members.

The best ways to avoid prescription drug misuse are:

- Only use medications that are prescribed to you.
- Do not share your medications with others.
- Follow the prescription directions.



- Be aware of side effects and possible interactions with other medications you are taking.

- Speak with your provider before stopping medication.

- Store medications in a safe place. Properly dispose of a medication if no longer prescribed or if the medication has expired.

Prescribed medications are beneficial and safe when taken as directed. Understanding why a medication is prescribed to you and only taking it as directed can help you avoid misuse of medication. If you think that a medication is not helping relieve your symptoms, talk to your healthcare provider who can evaluate your health concern and perhaps prescribe a different dose or a different medication. Always safely dispose of old or unused medications when no longer taking them to prevent misuse in the future.





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JEDA’S BARBERÍA: A NEW SPOT FOR MEN’S GROOMING JUST ONE MINUTE FROM THE ROTA BASE GATE

Right in the heart of Rota, and literally just one minute from the Naval Base gate, there’s a new place redefining what it means to get a haircut: Jeda’s Barbería. This barbershop blends old-school barbering tradition with a modern focus on customer experience.

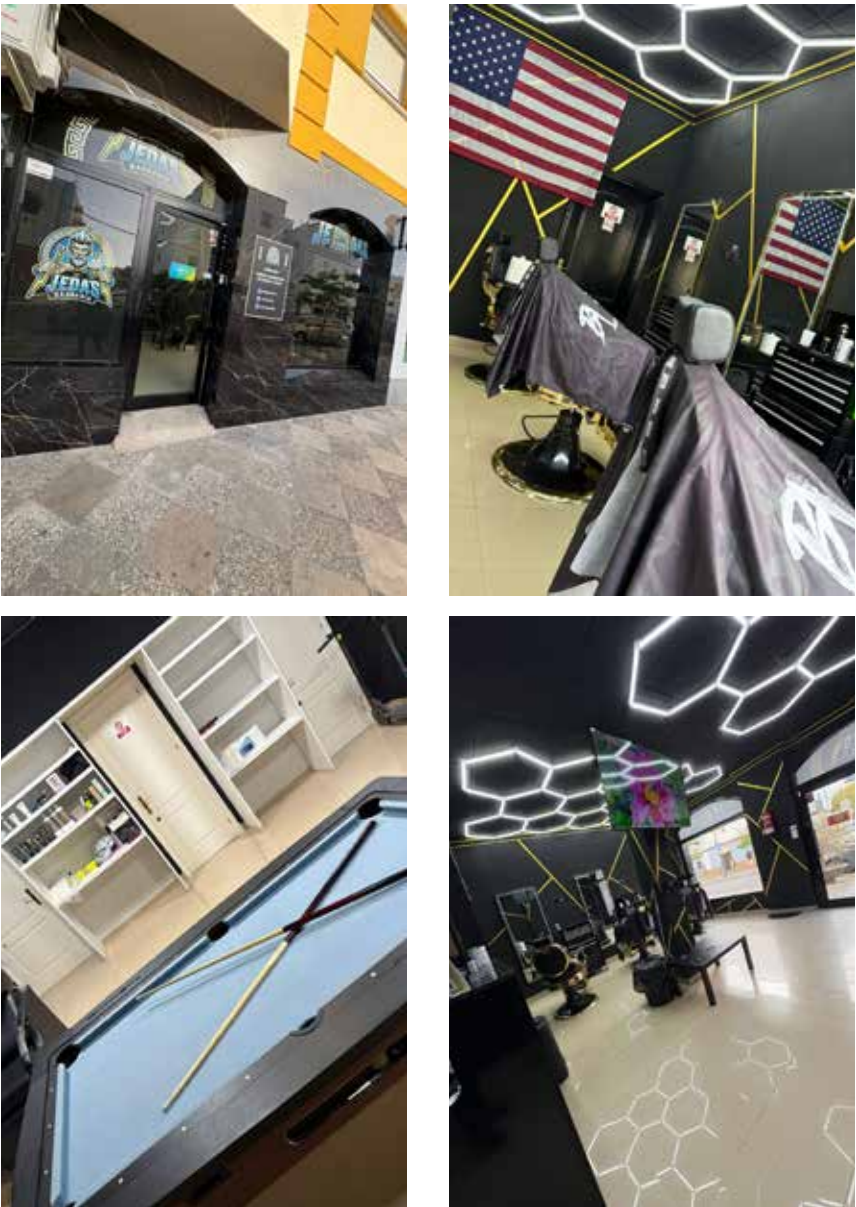
From the moment it opened, Jeda’s Barbería has stood out for its personalized approach to every service. Each cut, each beard trim, every detail is tailored to the client’s individual style and preferences. But this place goes way beyond haircuts, they offer beard contouring, eyebrow shaping with a razor, ear and nose waxing, special hair washes, and even skincare treatments.

What really sets the vibe apart is the atmosphere. While you wait, or even after your appointment, you can kick back and enjoy free billiards, turning a simple grooming session into a moment to relax. On top of that, the barbershop follows high cleaning and disinfection standards, something both locals and base personnel appreciate.

Conveniently located at 101 Calle Calvario, Rota, Jeda’s Barbería is more than just a nearby option, it’s becoming a go-to spot for premium grooming in the area.

For even more convenience, they’ve made booking super easy through their mobile app, accessible via the QR code featured in their ads and on social media: @jedas.barber on TikTok and Instagram, and Jeda’s Barbershop on Facebook.

With its mix of tradition, style, and proximity, Jeda’s Barbería is setting a new standard for men’s grooming in Rota, and it’s right next door to the base. Please see their ad in the paper for more information.





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# Commander, Navy Region Europe, Africa, Central Conducts Change of Command

By MC2 Matthew Nass

Navy Region Europe, Africa, Central Public Affairs

Rear Adm. Brad Rosen relieved Rear Adm. Brad Collins as Commander, Navy Region Europe, Africa, Central (CNREURAFCENT), July 17, 2025.

Collins assumed command of CNREURAFCENT in May 2022, leading the Navy's largest region and overseeing nine installations in seven countries spanning three combatant commands. He will assume duties as Commander, Navy Region Hawaii at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam.

During his tenure, Collins led several key initiatives to bolster warfighter readiness and installation support to deployed U.S. Navy, joint force, and allied operations throughout the region. His efforts included expansion of regional shore infrastructure and quality-of-life programs; oversight of installation support to non-combatant evacuation operations from Sudan and the U.S. withdrawal from Niger; readiness of facilities housing Aegis Ashore ballistic missile defense systems in Poland and Romania; and disaster relief support activities during wildfires in Greece and following earthquakes in Türkiye and Syria.

"I strongly believe that our shore units are operational units. They are the foundation from which the Navy generates readiness and capability, and we've seen that time and time again when called

upon in our area of responsibility," said Collins. "It has been the professional honor of a lifetime to work alongside the dedicated military, civilian, and host nation professionals who serve this dynamic region. I am incredibly proud of their unwavering commitment to supporting our warfighters and strengthening the relationships we share with our allies and partners."

Rosen, a native of Randolph, New Jersey, is a 1995 graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, and a 2005 graduate from Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government. He most recently served as Commander, Navy Region Southwest. Rosen has also served as Commanding Officer, Patrol Squadron (VP) 16 and Commanding Officer, Naval Station Norfolk.

"I am grateful to the EURAFCENT team for welcoming me to this critically important region," Rosen said. "I look forward to maintaining the momentum gained under the command of Rear Adm. Collins and the opportunity to continue the standard of excellence this region has set in the Navy Installation Command enterprise."

CNREURAFCENT provides mission-critical logistics and support to the warfighter, their families, and the fleet across seven countries, enabling U.S., allied, and partner nation forces to maintain security, stability, and freedom of navigation in the European, African, and Central Command areas of responsibility.



Rear Adm. Brad Rosen, pictured above, relieved Rear Adm. Brad Collins as Commander, Navy Region Europe, Africa, Central (CNREURAFCENT), July 17, 2025.

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# How to Beach Like a Local in Spain

*The contributors are co-founders of a seasoned agency committed to assisting expatriates with navigating Spanish culture and lifestyle. With extensive experience in translation, interpretation, and cultural coaching, they equip expats with the tools and knowledge necessary for a seamless integration into Spanish society.*



**By Brenda Navarro & Ellie McDonald**  
Contributing Community Members

New to the Spanish coast? First summer in Andalusia? Maybe you've already dipped a toe into local beach culture, or maybe you're still wondering where to find a decent spot to set up camp that doesn't involve a 15-minute hike from your car. Either way, welcome to beach season in Spain. It's fun, it's festive, and it comes with a few unwritten rules.

Whether you're a solo sunseeker, a weekend warrior with kids, or just trying to avoid the rookie mistakes that scream "I'm new here!" Here's what you need to know to beach like a local.

## Learn the Lingo: Vocabulary That'll Come in Handy

A few key Spanish beach terms that you'll hear (and need):

- Sombrilla – beach umbrella
- Nevera – cooler. Bonus points if it's full of ice, tinto de verano, and sandía!
- Chiringuito – beach bar or restaurant, usually casual, always fabulous
- Socorrista – lifeguard
- Many people bring their own shade, chairs, and food—especially at less developed beaches—so plan ahead.

## How Spanish Beaches Work: A Few Cultural Notes

One of the first things you'll notice is how relaxed beach life is here. People often spend the entire day by the sea—coming early, setting up umbrellas and chairs, bringing food from home, and staying through sunset.

- A few things to keep in mind:
- Lifeguards aren't everywhere. Some smaller or more natural beaches don't have socorristas, so keep an eye on flag warnings. Green means go, red means stay dry.
- Some beaches are clothing-optional.

This may be different from what you're used to, but it's part of Spain's long tradition of personal comfort and freedom at the beach. If you prefer a more traditional family setting, there are plenty of beaches with a fully dressed crowd, especially near towns and resorts.

- Bring your own setup. Unless you're headed to a beach with rental lounges, you'll want to pack a sombrilla, towels, and chairs to stay comfortable for the day.

## Parking and Arrival Times: Early Bird Gets the Spot

Parking can be one of the trickiest parts of beachgoing in high season. In July and August, coastal towns like Rota and El Puerto de Santa María swell with visitors from across Spain.

- Here are a few local strategies:
- Arrive early. Before 10 a.m. is ideal if you want a nearby parking spot.
- Weekdays are your friend. Weekends tend to be busiest.
- Be ready to walk. Sometimes the best beach days start with a little stroll. Comfortable sandals and a lightweight beach bag can make all the difference.

## Beach Etiquette: A Quick Refresher

Every culture has its unspoken beach rules. In Spain, the vibe is relaxed but respectful. Here are a few guidelines to help you blend in and enjoy the experience:

- Leave space. Set up your towel or umbrella a respectful distance from others, even when the beach gets crowded.
- Keep the volume down. Music is welcome, but headphones are appreciated.
- Mind the wind. Shake towels away from others to avoid an accidental sandstorm.
- Feeding seagulls is discouraged. They may be cute - until they invite their

- entire extended family.
- Be mindful when smoking. Many beaches now have smoke-free areas, and others rely on personal courtesy. If you smoke, try to find a spot away from families and non-smokers.
- Eating on the beach is common, and many locals bring full picnics. Just be sure to clean up and use the bins provided. Leaving no trace is the best souvenir.

## Best Beaches for Different Kinds of Days

For families: Beaches with calm waves, nearby "chiringuitos," and lifeguards on duty - like Playa de la Costilla in Rota or Valdelagrana in El Puerto - are ideal for kids and parents alike.

For quiet escapes: Seek out smaller coves or stretches between towns. Less crowded options can be found near Chipiona or in protected natural areas like the Parque Natural de la Breña.

For solo days or evening strolls: Urban beaches like Playa de la Muralla are great for catching the sunset, reading a book, or enjoying a peaceful walk.

## How to Blend In (and Feel Right at Home)

- It's totally okay to be new, but here are some easy tips if you're looking to blend in a bit:
- Trade in the extra-large beach towels with slogans for something simple and quick-drying.
- Skip the oversized speaker and opt



- for a playlist in your earbuds.
- Keep your beachwear casual but practical. Locals love breathable cotton, straw hats, and lots of sunscreen.
- Try local snacks! Grab a pack of "pipas," or sunflower seeds and order a "tinto de verano," at the nearest chiringuito.

## Final Word: Relax, Respect, and Enjoy the Rhythm

Spanish beach culture is about slowing down, embracing the moment, and enjoying the outdoors - whether that means swimming, napping, chatting with friends, or savoring an icy drink with your toes in the sand.

- If you bring a good attitude, a little curiosity, and maybe a fan for the midday heat, you'll fit right in.
- And if you're not sure how something works? Watch the locals. They've been doing this a long time - and they're pretty great at it.



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# EODMU EIGHT Holds Change of Command Ceremony

Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit (EODMU) EIGHT held a change of command ceremony in which Cmdr. Matthew Guido relieved Cmdr. John P. Kennedy as the commanding officer of the unit onboard Naval Station (NAVSTA) Rota, Spain, July 10, 2025.



Capt. Jeremy Wheat, Commander, Task Force (CTF) 68, center, presides over a change of command ceremony in which Cmdr. Matthew Guido, right, relieves Cmdr. John P. Kennedy as the commanding officer of Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit (EODMU) EIGHT onboard Naval Station (NAVSTA) Rota, Spain, July 10, 2025. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Drace Wilson)



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# Exercise Sea Breeze 25-2 Demonstrates Enhanced NATO Explosive Ordnance Disposal and Mine Countermeasures Capabilities in the UK

By Lt.j.g. Lacy Burkett

U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa/U.S. Sixth Fleet

Exercise Sea Breeze 25-2, hosted at Portland Port, United Kingdom, is underway, showcasing strengthened collaboration in explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) and mine countermeasures (MCM) between NATO Allies and partners. The exercise focuses on mentorship and tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTP) exchange, preparing a core group of nations for operations in the Black Sea region.

Led by Commander U.S. Sixth Fleet, the exercise brings together key units, including U.S. Navy EOD Mobile Unit EIGHT, providing remotely operated vehicles. Commander Task Force 66 is also contributing an Unmanned Surface Vessel (USV) to enhance the communication range of participating units.

“The primary objective of Sea Breeze 25-2 is information sharing and TTP exchange between Allies and partners within the NATO construct,” stated Lt. Andrew Lewis, CTG 68.1 Expeditionary Mine Countermeasure (ExMCM) company commander. “Each nation brings a unique set of capabilities to enable our combined ability to respond effectively to evolving threats in the undersea domain.”

This year’s exercise is taking place in Portland, United Kingdom, offering improved accessibility for partner nations whose MCM vessels are based in the UK. It also represents a significant advancement in USV integration, utilizing them as communication relay nodes to extend network range in challenging environments.

Currently, the exercise is focused on underwater MCM, employing Mark 18 family systems (UUVs) for initial surveys, followed by ROV inspection and finally diver intervention.



Exercise participants prepare their boats and gear to get underway for remotely operated vehicle training during Sea Breeze 2025-2. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st class Stephanie Butler)

The skills honed during Sea Breeze 25-2 are directly applicable to restoring safe navigation and commerce in the Black Sea region. Sea Breeze also helps prepare NATO Allies and partners for demining in the Black Sea in a post conflict era.

This year, Exercise Sea Breeze 2025 occurred in two iterations, Sea Breeze 25-1 and 25-2. The first iteration, Sea Breeze 25-1, was hosted by the Romanian Armed Forces at Smardan Range, Romania, June 1-20, 2025.

Since 1997, Exercise Sea Breeze has brought together Black Sea nations, NATO Allies and partners together to train and operate with NATO members in the pursuit of building increased capabilities. Exercise Sea Breeze 2025 is an annual multinational maritime exercise, involving sea, land, and air components co-hosted by the United States and Ukraine to enhance interoperability and capability among participating forces.



Petty Officer 2nd Class Ivan Ionkin, assigned to the Estonian Navy Sandown-class mine countermeasures (MCM) vessel ENS Sakala (M314), prepares a SeaFox for MCM training during Sea Breeze 25-2. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Alyssa Sperle)



The Ukrainian Navy Alkmaar-class mine countermeasures vessel Melitopol (M312), departs Portland Port, England in support of the at sea phase of Sea Breeze 2025-2. Sea Breeze is an annual maritime exercise aimed at building collective capability and agility to restore security and stability in the dynamic Black Sea. Sea Breeze 2025-2 is focused on mine countermeasure, explosive ordnance disposal, dive operations, and unmanned underwater vehicles. (U.S. Navy photo by Chief Mass Communication Specialist Joseph M. Buliavac)



# Sea Breeze 25-2 Concludes Showcasing Unified Mine Warfare Capabilities

By Lt. Gulianna Dunn

U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa/U.S. Sixth Fleet

Exercise Sea Breeze 25-2 officially concluded following two weeks of multinational mine countermeasure operations in the waters off the United Kingdom's southern coast July 11, 2025. Naval forces from 14 nations, including NATO allies and partners, demonstrated coordination and enhanced interoperability in a dynamic maritime environment.

From June 30 to July 11, participating forces from Bulgaria, Denmark, Estonia, France, Georgia, Greece, Latvia, Poland, Spain, Sweden, Türkiye, the United Kingdom, and the United States conducted joint mine hunting operations, dive and salvage missions, explosive ordnance disposal, and the deployment of cutting-edge robotic and autonomous systems (RAS).

The culminating demonstration showcased a unified application of these capabilities, reinforcing the collective strength and cohesion of participating nations in high-intensity, multi-domain scenarios.

"The U.S. Navy's mission is to keep the seas open. Mines restrict that. Our MCM force is small, so we rely heavily on partners and allies. These exercises ensure we can interoperate and conduct mine countermeasure operations together," said Capt. William Williams, the commodore of Mine Countermeasures Group 6.



Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Technicians assigned to EOD Mobile Unit 8 participate in a tactics, techniques, and procedures exchange during Sea Breeze 2025-2. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st class Stephanie Butler)

At the center of the exercise was a fully integrated, combined headquarters that executed advanced staff planning, targeting operations, and command-and-control across a coalition force. The inclusion of RAS, electronic warfare integration, and real-time situational awareness significantly expanded the participating nations' capacity to operate across domains.

This year, Exercise Sea Breeze 2025 occurred in two iterations, Sea

Breeze 25-1 and 25-2. The first iteration, Sea Breeze 25-1, was hosted by the Romanian Armed Forces at Smardan Range, Romania, June 1-20, 2025.

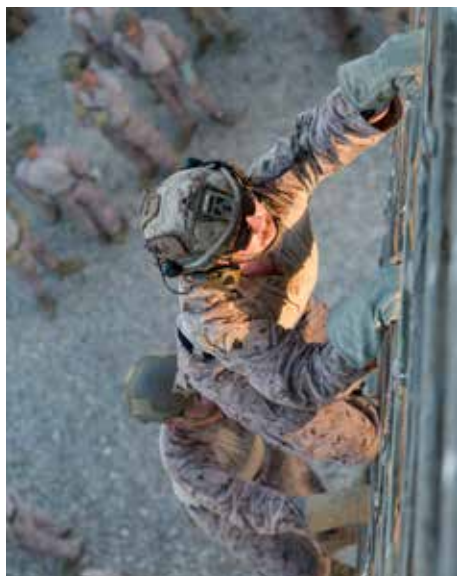
Since 1997, Exercise Sea Breeze has brought together Black Sea nations, NATO Allies and partners together to train and operate with NATO members in the pursuit of building increased capabilities. Exercise Sea Breeze 2025 is an annual multinational maritime exercise, involving sea, land, and air components co-hosted

by the United States and Ukraine to enhance interoperability and capability among participating forces.

Commander, U.S. 6th Fleet, headquartered in Naples, Italy, conducts the full spectrum of joint and naval operations, often in concert with allies, international partners, and other U.S. government departments and agencies to advance U.S. national interests, security, and stability in Europe and Africa.

## FASTEUR Marines Conduct Evening Fast Rope Training

Marines assigned to Fleet Anti-Terrorism Security Team Company Europe (FASTEUR) conducted fast rope training onboard Naval Station (NAVSTA) Rota, Spain, July 17, 2025.



Photos by MC1 Drace Wilson



# 521st AMOG Change of Command

The 521st Air Mobility Operations Group (AMOG) held a change of command in which Col. Lance Allred relinquished command to Col. Ryan Herman onboard Naval Station (NAVSTA) Rota, Spain, July 10, 2025. The Ceremony was overseen by Col. Jordan Norman, the 521st Air Mobility Operations Wing commander.



Col. Lance Allred, outgoing commander of 521st Air Mobility Operations Group, relinquishes the unit guide-on to Col. Jordan Norman, 521st Air Mobility Operations Wing commander, during a change of command ceremony onboard Naval Station (NAVSTA) Rota, Spain, July 10, 2025. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Jett Morgan)



Col. Ryan Herman, incoming commander of 521st Air Mobility Operations Group, receives the unit guide-on from Col. Jordan Norman, 521st Air Mobility Operations Wing commander, during a change of command ceremony onboard Naval Station (NAVSTA) Rota, Spain, July 10, 2025. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Jett Morgan)



## NAVY FAMILY OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM



The Navy Family Ombudsman Program is designed to provide better and faster communication between Navy families and Navy leadership. Navy commands and all deploying units, including the reserves have an Ombudsman, typically a spouse of one of the command's active duty members. **Ombudsmen** are official, appointed, liaisons between commanding officers and families. They can expedite communication between the command and families. In addition, Ombudsmen provide information on services, upcoming events, and/or help in crisis situations. **Air Force Key Spouses & Family Readiness Assistants** are similar to Ombudsmen, support service members, their families, and command leadership. Contact your command's representative to be added to their distribution list.

### Ombudsman Coordinator Monica Gonzalez 727-3232 (Monica.gonzalez26.naf@us.navy.mil)

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## Let's Eat!

By Pilar Ruiz



Have any comments or questions? We'd love to hear from you!  
You can email us as pilaraprendiendoacocinar@gmail.com.

### Urta A La Roteña – Sea Bream Cooked “Rota Style”

From July 31 to August 3, Rota celebrated “La Fiesta de la Urta”, The Urta Festival. This popular festival in Rota has been declared a national tourist attraction in Andalusia. Numerous tents were set up around a big stage, where different traditional performances took place. An “urta” - the common, savory rock fish found in these waters - cooking contest was held on the last day of the festival. Many chefs, both professional and amateur, took part in this competition to cook the best “Rota style” Urta and it was a great success.

So, now you have the chance to learn how to cook the famous traditional recipe from our city, Rota (Cadiz), well-known not only in Rota and the region but also all over Spain.

Other traditional recipes you can find in our local gastronomy are Rota-style Seabream Soup, a special stew called “Berza Roteña,” “Arranque Roteño,” or vegetable puree, and many more.

In times past, our gastronomy, as well as our local economy, was based primarily on nice, healthy ingredients. Things such as fish, seafood and produce such as tomatoes, green peppers, and pumpkins. Alongside the urta, these foods are still commonly seen in our dishes of today.



See "Recipe" Page 20

#### INGREDIENTS:

- 1 Sea bream/“urta” – 1 ½ kilo (~3 lb)
- 2 potatoes
- 2 big onions
- 3 cloves of garlic
- 1/2 kilo (1 lb) fresh, perfectly ripe tomatoes
- 3 green peppers
- 2 bay leaves

- \* 2 lemons
- \* 75 ml. (2.5 oz) extra virgin olive oil
- \* 75 ml. (2.5 oz) dry Sherry wine
- \* 125 ml. (4 oz) mineral water
- \* A small glass of cognac
- \* Ground black pepper
- \* Salt
- \* Chopped parsley

#### For the ground herbs, or “picada”

- \* 2 cloves of garlic
- \* Chopped parsley
- \* Salt
- \* Some Black pepper corns
- \* Some olive oil

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## Ana M. Izquierdo Arjona

Ana M. Izquierdo Arjona, from Rota, Spain, is currently the Support Services Specialist at the Naval Station (NAVSTA) Rota galley. Before that, she held jobs at the NEX's Spanish Gift Shop for 4 years and at the Car Care Center and ITV office for another 4 years.

"Mainly, I work behind the scenes to ensure both building and kitchen equipment is operational and meet safety standards," said Izquierdo Arjona. "I'm always listening to the cooks and food service worker's needs and making sure they have their tools in top condition so that they can work their magic in the kitchen. There is nothing more comforting than having a delicious meal ready after a hard day at work, and that's all thanks to them! For that reason, they truly deserve it all."

Alongside her main duties, Izquierdo Arjona serves as the departmental liaison for the other various NAVSTA Rota departments and other entities. In addition, she also assists the Food

Service Officer with translations and administrative work.

"Every day is different and I learn something new," stated Izquierdo Arjona. "It is a dynamic job."

Outside of work at the galley, Izquierdo Arjona enjoys beautiful sunsets on the beach and the small and simple moments with her family and friends.

"When I was a child, I listened to the radio searching for a music station and found AFN Rota Radio," said Izquierdo Arjona. "I listened carefully to the person talking in English, trying to understand something they were saying. Obviously I did not get anything at all back in those days, but I thought, 'one day I will understand what the radio is saying.' Now, here I am, working for this community. Who would have imagined?"

Izquierdo Arjona invites those who have the time and capability to come and experience the quality food prepared by the chefs at the galley!

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# Students Receive Navy Scholarship

**By Lt.j.g. Lacy Burkett**  
U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa/U.S. Sixth Fleet

The United States Navy Memorial is pleased to announce Hope Baxter of College Station, Texas and Olivia Bussey of Rota, Spain as the recipients of the 2025 Navy Memorial Scholarship. Each year, the U.S. Navy Memorial awards \$5,000 to the grandchildren of deceased Chief Petty Officers who demonstrate high academic achievement.

Hope Baxter recently graduated from A&M Consolidated High School and will be attending Rhodes College in the fall. Her paternal grandfather, Roger Gregory Baxter joined the Navy in 1968 and retired from the Naval Reserve in 1998 with the rank of Cryptologic Technician Technical Master Chief Petty Officer (CTTCM).

Olivia Bussey recently graduated from Rota High School and will be attending Arizona State University this year. Her

grandfather, Cornelius Johnson Bussey, served during the Vietnam War and retired in 1998 with the rank of Machinery Repairman Chief Petty Officer (MRC).

"This is the first year we've been able to award the Navy Memorial Scholarship to two outstanding recipients. Both Hope Baxter and Olivia Bussey demonstrated exceptional academic achievement, diverse extracurricular involvement, and received glowing recommendations from distinguished leaders in their communities. Their accomplishments are made even more impressive by the unique and inspiring paths they have each taken. We are proud to support their journeys and wish them the very best as they pursue their college education," said Command Master Chief Victor Smith, USN, Ret., the Director of the Delbert D. Black National Chief's Mess.

For more information, please contact Emily Oh at EOh@navymemorial.org.



Olivia Bussey



Hope Baxter

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# 725th Air Mobility Squadron Updates Motto for 60th Anniversary

By 725 AMS Public Affairs

The 725th Air Mobility Squadron recently celebrated their 60th anniversary by paying homage to their Andalucian home, updating the motto on their emblem to “By the Horns.”

The 725 AMS was established as the 625th Military Airlift Support Squadron at Torrejón Air Base on December 27, 1965. The unit relocated to Naval Station (NAVSTA) Rota in 1994 to partner more closely with the Navy. The previous motto, “Maintaining Freedom,” was established in 2010 as a play on words that referenced the large number of aircraft maintainers in the unit.

“Of the 200 Airmen in our squadron, nearly 150 of them are maintainers, from crew chiefs directly working the aircraft to specialists who fix electrical, hydraulic, and avionics issues, to backshop airmen who fabricate paneling, to Aerospace Ground Equipment craftsman who maintain our power carts and ladders,” said Lt. Col. Brad Seehawer, 725th Air Mobility Squadron Commander. “But maintenance is only one part of the 725th’s story. From the beginning we’ve also had command and control Airmen who assist planes as they arrive and depart, cyber Airmen who partner with the Naval Computer and Telecommunications

Area Master Station to provide an Air Force network enclave, and supply Airmen who run the only Forward Supply Location in the Air Force, stocking parts that frequently need to be replaced on the aircraft. With additional Airmen providing support for functions like Safety, Finance, Training, and Personnel, there’s a lot more going on in our squadron than just maintenance. We should have a motto that reflects that.”

The choice for the new motto was obvious, as “By the Horns” has been the unofficial rallying cry for years.

“It’s the perfect representation of how our Airmen ‘take the bull by the horns’ and respond to challenging Air Force missions such as the 2024 Niger retrograde, the 2023 start of the Israel-Hamas war, or the 2021 Operation Allies Refuge, all of which corresponded to dramatic increases in airflow transiting through NAVSTA Rota,” said Seehawer.

The 725 AMS is the largest Air Mobility Squadron in the European theater, providing fixed en route support to U.S. Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM) aircraft through Air Mobility Command’s Global Air Mobility Support System, part of USTRANSCOM’s Joint Deployment Distribution Enterprise. As the Department of Defense reprioritizes



resources towards the Pacific theater, some European locations are reducing in size or inactivating altogether, but the 725 AMS hasn’t seen the same kinds of reductions. With a longer runway and new C-5 hangar in the works, the theme at Rota has been one of growth.

“We’ve been the Gateway to the Mediterranean for 60 years, strategically located to access Europe, Africa, and the Middle East,” said Seehawer. “With the strong partnerships we have at NAVSTA Rota, we plan on being around for another 60 years.”

# U.S. Navy Deepens Regional Medical Collaboration with Cádiz Health System

By Lt. Cmdr. Alicia Sacks  
U.S. Naval Hospital Rota

In an era of increasingly complex global health and security challenges, strategic partnerships between military and civilian healthcare systems are no longer optional, they are essential. This reality was at the heart of a recent engagement between leadership from U.S. Naval Hospital (USNH) Rota and Hospital Universitario Puerta del Mar, one of southern Spain’s premier public medical centers.

Hospital Universitario Puerta del Mar, operated under the Andalusian Health Service (Servicio Andaluz de Salud), serves as a regional hub for complex care and advanced diagnostics. For U.S. military medical planners, it represents a

key node in the extended care network that supports readiness for warfighters and dependents stationed throughout southwestern Spain.

“Our presence in Europe depends on more than just facilities, it depends on trusted relationships with host-nation partners. We work within their established systems, aligning closely to integrate in a seamless, responsive way that enables us to meet our mission effectively,” said Capt. Michael Mercado, Director of USNH Rota.

The dialogue between institutions focused on interoperability: how to streamline referrals, coordinate specialty care, and ensure language and procedural alignment during both routine and emergent situations. Additionally, the teams explored opportunities for

simulation exercises and shared clinical education that would benefit both systems.

Mr. Jose Luis Guijarro, Managing Director of the Puerta del Mar – San Carlos University Hospital, underscored the value of sustained, bidirectional cooperation. “Our mission is to provide essential public health, but we recognize the broader regional role we play. Working closely with USNH Rota strengthens our own preparedness and deepens our ties with the international community.”

The engagement reflects a broader Defense Health Agency (DHA) objective in building sustainable partnerships with local and allied institutions to enhance collective readiness and resilience. In an environment where medical threats do not respect borders, the ability to operate fluidly within host-nation systems is a

strategic advantage.

Whether coordinating emergency response, managing complex referrals, or sharing innovations in care delivery, Hospital Universitario Puerta del Mar and USNH Rota continue to model how allied cooperation in healthcare can advance both mission success and community well-being.

Strategically positioned on the Iberian Peninsula, the hospital plays a critical role in defending, restoring, and elevating the health of warfighters and their families. USNH Rota provides ready, reliable care to 8,400 service members and their families.

For more information on USNH Rota and its mission, visit [www.rota.tricare.mil](http://www.rota.tricare.mil) (<http://www.rota.tricare.mil/>).



Capt. Michael Mercado, Director of U.S. Naval Hospital Rota, center, engages with staff during a tour of Hospital Universitario Puerta del Mar, focusing on enhancing collaborative healthcare efforts and reinforcing the vital partnership that supports warfighters and their families overseas. (U.S. Navy Photo Released by Lt. Cmdr. Alicia Sacks)



Capt. Michael Mercado, Director of U.S. Naval Hospital Rota, third from left, takes a group photo with staff during a tour of Hospital Universitario Puerta del Mar, focusing on enhancing collaborative healthcare efforts and reinforcing the vital partnership that supports warfighters and their families overseas. (U.S. Navy Photo Released by Lt. Cmdr. Alicia Sacks)



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# U.S. Naval Hospital Rota Receives Elimination of Surgical Smoke Award

By Lt. Cmdr. Alicia Sacks  
U.S. Naval Hospital Rota

U.S. Naval Hospital (USNH) Rota's Surgical Services team received the Association of periOperative Registered Nurses (AORN) Go Clear Award, becoming one of the first Military Treatment Facilities (MTFs) in the U.S. European Command (EUCOM) to achieve this national certification for eliminating surgical smoke in operating rooms.

The Go Clear Award recognizes USNH Rota's completion of AORN-mandated staff training, acquisition of smoke evacuation equipment, and a successful three-month audit of compliance and

performance. Surgical smoke, generated during procedures using energy-based instruments, poses documented risks to surgical teams, including respiratory issues, exposure to toxic chemicals, and long-term health complications. Eliminating this hazard enhances not only the clinical environment, but also the operational longevity of healthcare personnel.

"This initiative directly supports our mission to maintain a ready medical force," said Cmdr. Amber Neal, Main Operating Room Department Head. "By addressing a known occupational hazard, we've improved the safety of our workspaces and strengthened our

ability to provide uninterrupted care in any operational setting."

This milestone sets the standard for perioperative safety across the EUCOM theater and exemplifies how overseas MTFs can lead in implementing evidence-based practices that directly contribute to mission readiness and capability. These practices not only improve patient health outcomes, such as reducing surgical complications, shortening recovery times, and increasing patient satisfaction, but also enhance support for surgical teams through standardized protocols and better resource utilization.

By earning the Go Clear Award, USNH Rota reinforces the essential connection

between healthcare excellence and operational effectiveness by ensuring patients and medical professionals alike are protected, prepared, and mission-ready.

Strategically positioned on the Iberian Peninsula, the hospital plays a critical role in defending, restoring, and elevating the health of warfighters and their families. USNH Rota provides ready, reliable care to 8,400 service members and their families.

For more information on USNH Rota and its mission, visit [www.rota.tricare.mil](http://www.rota.tricare.mil).



U.S. Naval Hospital Rota Director Captain Michael Mercado, proudly presented the Association of periOperative Registered Nurses (AORN) Go Clear Award to the Surgical Services team, marking a historic achievement as one of the first Military Treatment Facilities (MTFs) in the U.S. European Command (EUCOM) to earn this prestigious national certification for eliminating surgical smoke in operating rooms. (U.S. Navy Photos Released by Lt. Cmdr. Alicia Sacks)

## Recipe Continued from page 15

### PREPARATION:

- We are going to start by preheating the oven at 180° C.
- We peel the potatoes, wash them and cut them into thick slices. We will place them on the tray where we will cook the fish. Add some salt and a splash of olive oil and cook them in the oven for approximately 10 minutes.
- Let's prepare the fish now. We can keep the head or take it away and use it to cook a nice broth. In our case, we will keep it. We add some salt and ground black pepper and keep aside.
- And now, we are going to prepare the stir-fry, or "sofrito," the base of every stew in Spain. Cut the onion and peppers into slices and then mince the garlic. Add it all into a frying pan with a couple of full spoons of olive oil and cook it for approximately 10 minutes over medium heat.
- Now it's time to peel and dice the tomatoes. Add them to the stir fry and continue cooking for 15 more minutes

- We take the tray with the cooked potatoes away from the oven, add the whole fish, and then cover with stir-fry.
- Now to prepare the ground herbs. We are going to use a mortar and pestle to grind all the ingredients. We will spread the ground herb mixture on fish to distribute the flavor. You'll see what great flavors the herbs will give to this dish. Add mineral water and the juice of one lemon afterward.
- Then we will add the olive oil, the black pepper corns and the dry Sherry wine and put the ground herbs in the oven for an hour.
- ive minutes before the fish finishes cooking, we will add the glass of cognac and some broth from the stew.
- Once it's done, remove the tray away from the oven and decorate it with lemon slices and some parsley.

And now you're ready to sit down at the table and enjoy this great dish that we are certain that you will love. Have a very nice month of August and enjoy this summer in Rota, Spain.

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# NAVAL STATION ROTA COMMUNITY RESOURCES

## ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS MEETINGS

**AA on base:** "Rota 213" meets Tuesday and Thursday, 1800-1900 (6-7pm) in person in the NAVSTA Rota Chapel (in the back). For meeting information, please contact Cynthia at +34 661 47 95 20 or Dean at +34 674 38 77 55.

**AA off base on Zoom:** "Rota Drydockers." Every Saturday, 1600 (4 pm) on Zoom only. For information on how to join the Zoom session, contact Cynthia at +34 661 47 95 20 or Joe G. via WhatsApp at: +34 603 84 15 59.

**AA in Rota in English:** "Rota to Recovery." Every Saturday, 1900-2000 (7-8pm) in person, Calle Bachiller, 11, Rota; parking is available near the marina. For information, please contact Cynthia at +34 661 47 95 20 or Dean at +34 674 38 77 55.

## AL-ANON MEETINGS

Have you been affected by another person's drinking? If so, please join us every Wednesday at 1600 (4 p.m.) at the base chapel nursery for an Al-Anon meeting. The only requirement for Al-Anon membership is that there be a problem of alcoholism in a relative or friend. For info on meetings, please contact Naydene at +34 669 09 7149.

## AMERICAN RED CROSS

Mon - Fri, 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Volunteers are welcome and encouraged to stop by the office and CPR courses are now being offered. Days and times of the courses will be posted on our FB page. For more information, call us during business hours at DSN 727-2333 or commercial, +34 956-82-2333, or visit our Facebook page, @RedCrossRota.

## AMERICAN RED CROSS EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS SERVICE

Red Cross Emergency Messages services operate 24/7. If you have a family emergency during business hours, call us immediately at DSN (314) 727-2333 or +34 956-82-2333. After hours or on weekends, our national call center can be reached at +1 (877) 272-7337. Messages can also be initiated online, at <https://www.redcross.org/military-emergency-communication.html>

## ROTA EDUCATION CENTER

Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University and University of Maryland Global Campus offices are open and able to assist you in reaching your education goals. The Rota Education Center is located on the first floor of the Community Services Building (Bldg. 3293).

## NAVY-MARINE CORPS RELIEF SOCIETY (NMCRS)

When you are having trouble meeting urgent financial needs, NMCRS may be able to provide an interest-free loan or grant. Through financial counseling, we will also help you plan for better financial stability. Our services are completely confidential. If you are approved for a loan or grant, you will receive funds immediately. There

is no application fee and the appointment is completely free. If you need \$1,000 or less, you may be eligible for our Quick Assist Loan.

## NMCRS Business Office

Monday-Friday; 8 a.m.- 4 p.m.

Office: DSN 727-1614 or +34 956-821-614

After Hours Duty Cell: +34 660 984 511

After Hours Emergency Assistance: +1 (877) 272-7337

Email: [rota@nmc.rs.org](mailto:rota@nmc.rs.org)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/nmc.rsrota](https://www.facebook.com/nmc.rsrota)

## NMCRS Thrift Shop

### Hours of Operation

Monday: 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Thursday: 3-6 p.m. (third Thursday / active duty + dependents only)

Third Saturday of month: 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

## NMCRS Casework and Classes

**Casework Appointment:** For active duty Navy, Marines, retirees, and dependents, the NMCRS can help you with financial relief. This can be used for emergency travel, basic living expenses (BLE), pet OCONUS, auto, household set up, and more.

**Budget for Baby Class:** Are you a new or prospective parent? Join us in-person to learn important budgeting skills for your new addition! Parents will learn about military pay fluctuations, baby expenses, consumer pressures targeting new parents, and entitlements available through government and private sources. This class is now open to both active duty and government civilian families. All participants will receive a layette and a handmade baby blanket. Families will also receive a \$50 Amazon gift card. To register, visit <http://linktr.ee/nmc.rsrota> and select the desired class and date.

**Command Classes:** We offer financial classes for groups and commands. Our caseworkers can come to you, or we can hold the classes in our classroom. Call or email our office to schedule one of these classes.

## UPCOMING NMCRS AND HOSPITAL MATERNAL PROGRAMS AND CLASSES:

The Visiting Nurse program includes home and virtual visits, classes, and community support groups for active duty, retirees, and their families. The Visiting Nurse provides health education, resource referral, and support for prenatal and postpartum, newborn care, breastfeeding, pediatric, adult, and geriatric health concerns.

## NMCRS: VOLUNTEER WITH US!

Are you interested in volunteering in the NMCRS office or Thrift Shop? We have several opportunities to grow your resume while contributing to our community! We also reimburse for childcare and mileage. Apply to volunteer online at <http://linktr.ee/nmc.rsrota> and join

us for a monthly volunteer orientation. NMCRS Rota is looking for blanket makers and Thrift Shop volunteers.

## PRESCHOOL SERVICES FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

Child Find for children three to five years of age is an ongoing outreach program that locates and identifies children who may have developmental delays or educational disabilities and need special services. If you have concerns regarding your child's development, please contact DSN 727-4185/4435 or commercial, +34 956-82-4185/4435.

## RETIRED ACTIVITIES OFFICE (RAO)

Fleet and Family Support Center, Tuesday and Thursday, 1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., by appointment only.

RAO serves as a link between the military retired community and other government agencies, such as Federal benefits Unit for Social Security and Defense Finance and Accounting Service, Veterans Administration (VA), and Office of Personal Management (OPM). RAO provides assistance to survivors regarding pensions and benefits and is a source for information about retiring and living in Spain.

## USO ROTA

The mission of the USO is to strengthen the well-being of America's military service members and their families. At USO Rota, we are dedicated to this mission by offering a variety of events and services—all free for active duty service members and their families.

Our center is conveniently located inside the Air Terminal and is open Monday through Friday, from 0830 to 1630. We invite you to join us for any of our events or stop by for a visit!

**Interested in giving back?** The USO is a fantastic organization for volunteering. To get started, fill out your volunteer profile at [VOLUNTEERS.USO.ORG](http://VOLUNTEERS.USO.ORG).

For all USO Rota events and more, follow "USO Rota" on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/USORota](https://www.facebook.com/USORota).

## WIC OVERSEAS

Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Overseas is a nutrition education and supplemental food program that aims to improve the overall health and wellness of families for active duty service members and their dependents, DoD civilian employees and their dependents, DoD contractors and their dependents. Basic nutrition and health screenings, drafts to be redeemed for nutritious foods, access to resources & tips that help you and your family lead healthier lives, healthier birth weights for babies, reduced anemia rates for children, breastfeeding support, breast pump loan program, breastfeeding/pumping room open to everyone. Call DSN 727-2921 or commercial, +34 956-82-2921, for more information.

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# Spouse Talk: The Gambler

By Ashley Leigh  
Contributing Community Member

Between 1980 to 1994, Kenny Rogers starred as Brady Hawkes in a series of Western movies called “The Gambler.” Out of that movie also came one of Rogers’ best-known songs as titled, “The Gambler.” With a catchy rhythm, Rogers sings about a mystery man who is on a “train bound for nowhere.” He strikes up a conversation with a fellow passenger whom he gives this tell-tale advice in exchange for whiskey, which also becomes the chorus to the song:

“You’ve got to know when to hold’em.  
Know when to fold’em.  
Know when to walk away.  
Know when to run.”

Although about a man who gambles and plays a risk at losing what he has, the deeper meaning is one in which we’ve all found ourselves. At some point we have to know when to stay in the game - hypothetically - or let the cards fall where they may, letting life play out the way it does. We need to know when to admit when we’re wrong and accept defeat when it happens. It’s advice that will never lose its value. Even if you play your chances and lose, the profit will always be there in the lesson that was learned.

When you find yourself in a situation where you can either go high, go low or really go home, weigh out the



consequences to each one of those options. Is it worth taking another hand at chance or should you let things lie? To be fair, we also place our own value on what is worth taking a chance on. For example, I will put up a fight all day long for my daughter. It doesn’t matter who I “hurt” along the way or how much might get “lost.” She is worth the cost. On the other side of that, I would rather not bother arguing with someone over politics. I absolutely have an opinion, but I also know that if I take the chance on the subject, then I run the risk of putting my foot in my mouth and that’s not what I’m looking for at this stage in life.

What do you find yourself willing to risk it all for? Hopefully it’s for something good. At the end of the song, the man on the train tells a story to the passenger about how he needs to know when to distinguish when to take a risk and what bridge is worth crossing. The Gambler takes the whiskey he was offered for the telling of his life advice via poker metaphors and dies in his sleep on the train leaving the listener to let this wisdom sink in.

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### 3. TAKE POLICE REPORT TO NCIS

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