

COASTLINE

April 9, 2026 / Volume 36, Issue 06

U.S. Naval Activities Spain



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FFSC Rota: Fostering a Thriving Community to Enhance Mission Readiness

Leadership Corner



Laura Davis
Fleet and Family Support Center
Site Director

A spirit of unwavering support and passion for helping others is the driving force behind the Fleet and Family Support Center (FFSC) at Naval Station (NAVSTA) Rota. This dedication is at the heart of the center's mission to enhance military readiness by ensuring every service member and their family has the resources they need to thrive.

I am incredibly proud of our team of caring professionals. Everyone here is passionate about helping the Rota community,

and we strive to create a supportive, welcoming spirit for everyone who walks through our doors.

That welcoming spirit is crucial, as the FFSC believes that a supported family is the key to a focused military force. When service members are confident their families are cared for, their ability to concentrate on complex and demanding duties increases significantly. From the first day in uniform to the transition back to civilian life, the FFSC acts as a steadfast partner, offering tailored programs for every milestone and challenge.

This April, the FFSC is leading the charge for two important community-wide campaigns: Child Abuse Prevention and Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention. As you navigate the base, you will notice prominent displays of blue and teal ribbons and decorations provided by our Counseling and Advocacy Program and our Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program. These colors are powerful symbols: blue for child abuse prevention and teal for sexual assault awareness and prevention, serving as a visual reminder of our shared responsibility to build a safe and protective community.

The dedicated FFSC teams are bringing this message to the forefront through creative outreach. You can hear them on AFN radio, see them on T.V., and meet them at awareness tables across the installation.

We encourage every member of our community to engage with these initiatives. Your awareness and participation are crucial in building a safer, more supportive environment for everyone.

The support is also becoming more convenient. The team is excited to announce that a new FFSC location will be opening soon at Fleet Landing, bringing their services even closer to the piers!

To learn more about the programs offered or to get involved, please contact the Fleet and Family Support Center.

Phone: +34 956 82 3232 or DSN 727-3232

Location: Community Support Building 3293, Naval Station Rota, Spain

Facebook: FFSC Rota Spain

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On The Front Cover



Ensign John DeNunzio, assigned to Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Roosevelt (DDG 80), embraces his spouse and child during the ship's return to Naval Station (NAVSTA) Rota, Spain, March 27, 2026. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Jett Morgan)

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.

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Pharmacy Essentials: What You Need to Know



- 1. How often does the pharmacy order medications, and how long does delivery take?**
 - The pharmacy orders medications weekly and monitors supply daily. Due to our overseas location, deliveries typically take 14 business days to arrive. Unforeseen supply chain issues, including weather or transportation delays, may impact this timeline.
- 2. What happens if my medication is on backorder or unavailable?**
 - Sometimes medications are on backorder or are otherwise unavailable for refill. If this happens, we will work with you and your provider to try and achieve the best outcome possible. For medications that treat chronic health concerns (e.g., diabetes, high blood pressure, infections), the pharmacy will work with your provider to find a suitable alternative to ensure your treatment continues uninterrupted.
 - In some cases, we may recommend filling your prescription in a host-nation pharmacy. In those instances, our pharmacy will help you navigate obtaining your prescription at a Spanish pharmacy. Please check with your insurance provider in advance to confirm reimbursement eligibility.
- 3. Are any medications currently in short supply?**
 - Yes. The manufacturer may say that there is not a national shortage of GLP-1 medications, especially Zepbound; however, the demand far outweighs the supply. We are competing with other pharmacies for the medication. The pharmacy gets allocated a number of units per week set by the vendor or manufacturer. We appreciate your patience as we work to refill our supply.
- 4. Is there a waitlist for GLP-1 medications?**
 - Yes. GLP-1 medications are waitlisted. You will receive an "Out of Stock" form with an email address to check your status. Please send an email in 14 days to request a status update.
- 5. Is Express Scripts (Home Delivery) still available?**
 - Yes, Express Scripts is a great option that can ship to APO/FPO/DPO addresses and to U.S. embassy/consulate addresses overseas.
 - Note: Refrigerated medications and pressurized devices (inhalers) cannot be shipped to APO/FPO/DPO addresses.
- 6. How much medication can I refill or stock up on?**
 - While TRICARE does regulate the amount of medication prescribed at one time, we recommend speaking with your provider about the possibility of increasing your medication supply, in most circumstances we are limited to filling to a 90-day supply.

Pharmacy Essentials: What You Need to Know



- 7. Do controlled substances take longer to receive?**
 - Yes. Controlled substances (e.g., Concerta, Adderall, Ativan, Xanax, Ambien, opiates) require significantly more time because they require additional clearances from customs.
 - To avoid running out of your medications, contact the Pharmacy to request a refill 14 days before your last dose.
 - 8. Can I request an early refill?**
 - You can check the Medication Refill tab in the MHS Genesis Patient Portal to see when your prescription is ready for refill. Typically, most medications can be refilled when you've used 75% of your supply, while controlled substances are restricted to refill after using 90% of your supply. Please contact the pharmacy if you have questions.
 - 9. Can I fill my U.S. Naval Hospital Rota prescriptions at Spanish community pharmacies?**
 - Yes, but you'll need to take extra steps to do so.
 - You will need:
 - A Spanish-licensed physician's prescription. A local Rota physician can rewrite your prescription for a fee.
 - Your military Identification/Common Access Card (CAC).
 - You'll pay the full amount for your medication when you pick it up from the pharmacy, and then you can submit a reimbursement claim to International SOS.
 - The quickest and most convenient way to submit a claim is through the Express Scripts website. Go to the Express Scripts website and log in to your account. If you don't have an account, you will need to register.
 - Please stop by the Tricare Office in the hospital to get more detailed instructions.
- Please ensure your contact information is up to date in MHS GENESIS. For assistance with updating your information, please go to Patient Administration, located at E033/E034.**
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ARMED FORCES ENTERTAINMENT

USS Roosevelt (DDG 80) returns to Rota

By Ensign Gabrielle Shultz
USS Roosevelt (DDG 80)

The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Roosevelt (DDG 80) returned to Naval Station Rota, Spain upon successful completion of the ship's eighth Forward-Deployed Naval Forces-Europe (FDNF-E) patrol, March 27, 2026.

USS Roosevelt departed for patrol on September 16, 2025 to conduct naval operations in support of U.S. interests.

After six and a half months demonstrating unparalleled resilience, lethality, and honor while operating in the U.S. 5th Fleet and U.S. 6th Fleet areas of operations, sailors onboard USS

Roosevelt received a warm welcome on the pier from loving friends and family members.

"This is the right team for the job," said Cmdr. Jared Carlson, commander of USS Roosevelt. "I was honored to lead such an extraordinary crew through every challenging evolution and through such a legendary patrol."

USS Roosevelt is one of five U.S. Navy destroyers homeported in Rota, Spain, and assigned to Commander, Task Force 65/Destroyer Squadron 60 in support of NATO's Integrated Air and Missile Defence architecture. These FDNF-E ships have the flexibility to operate throughout the waters of Europe

and Africa, from the Cape of Good Hope to the Arctic Circle, demonstrating their mastery of the maritime domain.

U.S. 6th Fleet, headquartered in Naples, Italy, conducts the full spectrum of joint and naval operations, often in concert with allied and interagency partners, in order to advance U.S. national interests and security and stability in Europe and Africa.



Photos by Amber Courtney-Duncan, Christina Brewer, and Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Jett Morgan



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Make space for Headspace: Wealth of mindfulness features available to Rota Sailors

By Lt. Cmdr. Gregory Regts
Navy Medicine and Readiness Training
Command Rota

As part of a new Chief of Naval Operations pilot program, Naval Station (NAVSTA) Rota has been chosen as one of four overseas bases to offer active-duty Navy personnel and up to five family members, ages 13 and up, free, confidential access to the Headspace mental wellness app. While the app has seemingly endless content for a range of practices to support mental and emotional health, its most powerful and beneficial aspect may be its mindfulness training content.

Sharpen your edge: how mindfulness boosts performance

In the high-stakes environment of Naval operations, maintaining peak performance isn't just about physical readiness; it's about mental fortitude. A regular mindfulness practice can be a powerful tool to enhance your focus, productivity, and relationships, giving you

the edge you need to excel in all areas of your life.

Enhanced focus and productivity

Mindfulness is the practice of being present in the moment, which can significantly improve your ability to concentrate and reduce distractions. This heightened awareness translates to increased productivity, whether you're on duty or at home. Studies have shown that even short periods of mindfulness meditation can lead to measurable improvements in attention and a reduction in mind-wandering. By training your mind to stay in the present, you can tackle tasks with greater efficiency and clarity. A more focused mind is less prone to errors, which can be critical in a fast-paced work environment.

Stronger relationships and emotional regulation

The benefits of mindfulness extend beyond individual performance to your interactions with others. By cultivating self-awareness, you can better

understand and manage your own emotions, leading to more positive and effective communication. This emotional regulation is key to building stronger relationships with your colleagues, family, and friends. Mindfulness can foster empathy and compassion, allowing for more harmonious and collaborative teamwork. A regular practice can help you navigate conflicts with a calmer and more level-headed approach, leading to healthier resolutions.

Reduced stress and improved wellbeing

One of the most well-documented benefits of mindfulness is its ability to reduce perceived stress. By learning to observe your thoughts and feelings without judgment, you can lessen their power over you. This can lead to a significant decrease in stress and anxiety, and an overall improvement in your mental and physical health. Many who practice mindfulness report better sleep, increased energy, and a greater sense

of well-being.

Getting started with mindfulness

Incorporating mindfulness into your daily routine can be simple. You can start with just a few minutes of focused breathing each day by using the "Learn the Basics of Meditation" course. There are also many guided meditations and exercises available to help you begin your practice that can be specific to your area of need. The key is to be consistent and patient with yourself as you develop this new skill. With a regular mindfulness practice, you can unlock your full potential and thrive.

To enroll and gain your free access, scan the QR code or go to <https://work.headspace.com/usnavy/join>. You can sign up using your credentials as an active duty Sailor to verify your eligibility, select your location, and begin your journey to strengthen your mind and to fortify your inner foundation to better face adversity with focus, courage, and clarity. After that, share up to five accounts with your family.

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LOCAL GASTRONOMY FUSED WITH OTHER CULTURES

PUBLISHER'S CORNER

Mangiarte: Italian Tradition with a Family Story in Rota

Mangiarte is the result of a lifetime devoted to Italian cuisine. Behind this project is the journey of its founder, who has been dedicated to creating authentic Italian dishes since her teenage years, turning her passion into a way of life.

Over the years, this dedication led to several restaurants, most notably the one in Costa Ballena, which opened in 2001 and remained active for more than two decades until its closure in 2024. Following this chapter, Mangiarte was born as a natural evolution of her experience and commitment to Italian gastronomy.

Located in Rota, the new establishment focuses on traditional cuisine prepared to order, inspired by the well-known cucina della mamma. Its menu features a wide variety of pasta —more than 30 options— along with Roman-style pinsas and focaccia, with the aim of representing Italy's culinary diversity from north to south.

Complementing this offering is a carefully selected range of Italian wines, designed to pair with each dish and enhance the overall dining experience.

Beyond its culinary proposal, Mangiarte presents itself as a welcoming space where guests can feel at home. The open kitchen, visible from the dining area, allows visitors to appreciate the preparation process and the care devoted to every dish.

It is a small establishment, thoughtfully designed and deeply rooted in Italian culinary tradition, aiming to transport guests to cities such as Rome, Florence, Naples, and Milan through its aromas and flavors. See their ad for more info.



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Underwater Construction Team One, Spanish Navy Conduct Bilateral Dive Exchange

Story by Chief Mass Communication Specialist Justin Stumberg
22nd Naval Construction Regiment

U.S. Navy Seabee divers assigned to Underwater Construction Team (UCT) One, Construction Dive Detachment Charlie (CDD/C) conducted a bilateral dive exchange with Spanish Navy divers in Cartagena, Spain, from March 18 to March 26, 2026, advancing maritime infrastructure assessment capabilities in support of U.S. 6th Fleet objectives.

The engagement, conducted under the U.S.–Spain Bilateral Training and Exercise Conference (BTEC) framework, will pair UCT One Sailors with divers from the Spanish Navy’s Centro de Buceo de la Armada and Escuela Militar de Buceo at Naval Station La Algameca.

“This exchange is designed to build technical interoperability while developing a shared understanding of port infrastructure conditions and expeditionary diving capabilities,” said



Lt.j.g. Alice Morgan, CDD/C officer in charge. “Working side by side with Spanish Navy divers strengthens our collective ability to operate across the maritime domain.”

During the exchange, U.S. and Spanish divers conducted classroom instruction, safety and emergency procedure reviews, SCUBA and surface-supplied diving operations, underwater inspections, remotely operated vehicle operations, and hydrographic survey training. The training also included bilateral Level I and Level II waterfront facility inspections to collect hydrographic and engineering data that informs future sustainment and construction planning.

“Port infrastructure is what lets the fleet move and fight,” said Senior Chief Constructionman Estephan Lopez, CDD/B assistant officer in charge and

Master Diver. “By getting eyes and hands on these facilities alongside the Spanish Navy, we’re helping set conditions for future operations while sharpening our own expeditionary skills.”

The engagement supports NATO maritime readiness by advancing Spain’s underwater inspection and construction capability while enabling U.S. Navy planners to assess seaport of debarkation infrastructure critical to freedom of maneuver and logistics support in the Mediterranean region.

Spain’s strategic location at the gateway to the Mediterranean Sea makes it a key NATO ally for maritime security and power projection into Europe, Africa, and the Middle East. The dive exchange builds on a long-standing U.S.–Spain defense relationship and sets conditions for future cooperative

construction projects and multinational exercises.

UCT One is a specialized unit within the Naval Construction Force that provides expeditionary underwater construction, military diving, and maritime engineering capabilities in support of naval, joint, and combined operations worldwide.

22nd NCR, headquartered in Rota, Spain, commands naval construction forces for Navy Expeditionary Combat Forces Europe-Africa/Task Force 68, supporting U.S., allied, and partner interests across the U.S. 6th Fleet area of operations.

Task Force 68 (CTF 68) is a component of the U.S. 6th Fleet and commands all Naval Expeditionary Combat Forces in the U.S. European Command and U.S. Africa Command areas of responsibility. These expeditionary forces provide maritime engineering and combat support capabilities in remote, austere, and complex environments.



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MWR holds annual Eggspllosion Event

Photos by Amber Courtney-Duncan
NAVSTA Rota MWR

Naval Station (NAVSTA) Rota Morale, Welfare, & Recreation (MWR) held Eggspllosion 2026 for service members, civilians, and their families to celebrate the beginning of spring on April 4, 2026.

Attendees had plenty of activities to partake in during the event, including rock climbing, inflatables, concession stands, and an egg hunt for the children!




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U.S. Ambassador to Spain and Andorra visits NAVSTA Rota

Photos by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Drace Wilson
NAVSTA Rota Public Affairs

U.S. Ambassador to Spain and Andorra Benjamín León Jr. visited Naval Station (NAVSTA) Rota, Spain on March

19, 2026. León had the opportunity to meet with leadership and Sailors from across the installation. He even had the opportunity to fly an MH-60R helicopter belonging to the "Griffins" of Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron (HSM) 79.



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Rota Middle High School NJROTC participates in annual drill competition

By Jayden Friend

Rota Middle High School NJROTC



The Rota Middle High School's Navy Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps (NJROTC) unit recently returned from its annual drill competition, which was hosted by Naples, Italy.

Cadets from several overseas NJROTC programs came together for the event, including teams from Naples, Sigonella, and Aviano. The competition created an atmosphere that was both competitive and supportive, giving cadets the opportunity to demonstrate their

discipline, teamwork, and leadership skills while also building connections with students from other bases.

Representing our Rota Middle High School was a drill team made up of 20 dedicated members. 14 of those team members were drill-proficient students who had spent plenty of time preparing through regular practices. They were also supported by three volunteers, including the Senior Naval Science Instructor Chief Warrant Officer Patton.

The competition was divided into five main categories: Marksmanship, academics, uniform composition, drill performance, and physical training. Each category included multiple sub-events in order to test a wide range of skills, from endurance and precision to naval knowledge and attention to detail. Cadets had to perform well both individually and as part of their team.

Through their combined effort, the Rota Middle High School drill team achieved first place overall in the competition. The team also placed first in the sit-ups and uniform inspection sub-categories, highlighting both their physical fitness and their commitment to maintaining professional standards.

Emi Cruz, the Executive Officer of the Rota-based NJROTC cadets, took first place in the sit-ups event, showing outstanding endurance and preparation. Cadet Jonathan Valenzuela earned first place in uniform inspection, demonstrating impressive attention to detail. Beyond



the various victories, the competition gave cadets the chance to learn from one another and strengthen friendships among their very own team.

For the Rota Middle High School NJROTC program, the trip reinforced

values such as leadership, perseverance, and teamwork. Their success in Naples reflects the dedication and effort of every cadet involved and stands as an accomplishment for the entire Rota Middle High School unit.



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CREDO Rota: Building resiliency, strength, and connection across the community

By Angel Lopez
NAVSTA Rota Chapel

For more than five decades, the Navy's Chaplain Religious Enrichment Development Operation - better known as CREDO - has been a cornerstone of personal growth and relational wellness

across the fleet. Established during the Vietnam War-era to help service members navigate the stresses of military life, CREDO has evolved into a globally trusted program offering tools for resilience, communication, and emotional well-being.



At Naval Station (NAVSTA) Rota, the CREDO team continues that legacy by providing evidence-based training and transformative retreat experiences for service members, families, and the wider military community. The focus is simple but powerful: resiliency. In a world where stress can accumulate quickly, CREDO reminds us that resilience is not just a skill - it's a lifeline. And as we often say, optimism is a force multiplier. When people believe in their ability to adapt and overcome, they do.

Training Opportunities for the Rota Community

CREDO Rota offers a range of professional and personal development programs designed to strengthen individuals and teams:

- **safeTALK**: A practical workshop that builds confidence in recognizing and responding to individuals with thoughts of suicide.

- **ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training)**: A two-day, internationally recognized intervention training for those who want to feel prepared to help in a crisis.

- **Four Lenses**: A personality-based communication and teamwork course that helps groups understand differences and work more effectively together.

- **MBTI (Myers-Briggs Type Indicator)**: A widely used assessment that enhances self-awareness, leadership development, and interpersonal communication.

These offerings are available throughout the year and can be scheduled for commands, departments, or community groups.

facilitated by a trained member of the CREDO team.

Women's Retreat

May 8 - May 10, 2026

A reflective, empowering weekend focused on identity, balance, and personal growth.

Marriage Enrichment Retreat

June 26 - June 28, 2026

A fun, interactive experience designed to strengthen communication, deepen connection, and renew commitment.

Men's Resiliency Retreat

July 24 - July 26, 2026

A weekend dedicated to building mental, emotional, and spiritual resilience in a supportive environment.

Family Enrichment Retreat

Sept. 18 - Sept. 20, 2026

A family-focused getaway that strengthens bonds, improves communication, and creates lasting memories.

CREDO Rota remains committed to supporting the well-being of every Sailor, Marine, family member, and civilian in our community. Whether through a workshop, a retreat, or a simple conversation, CREDO stands ready to help you build resilience, find meaning, and thrive.

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The Evolution of the Navy SAPR Program: Shaping the Future

By Nieachia Wherry
Civilian Victim Advocate, Fleet and Family Support Center

As we observe Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month (SAAPM), we unite to break the silence and speak up for generations to come. Progress is not a single event, but a persistent, ongoing process. The Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) program has been an established pillar of support for over three decades, yet it remains a work in progress growing, adapting, and refining itself to better serve those who serve.

Our history is a story of voices

The evolution of SAPR didn't develop due to silence; it happened because people spoke up. In 1990, the Navy Women's Study group became a trailblazer in identifying barriers to recruitment and retention. Their work led to the Navy becoming the first service with a dedicated, funded program to address sexual assault.

Change often comes from difficult moments. In 1991, the incidents from the Tailhook Symposium intensified the urgency for reform due to the misconduct during this event. This led to mandated training for all military and civilian staff. By 2005, a major shift happened. The Department of Defense (DOD) wanted to put the power back in the hands of survivors by introducing two distinct reporting paths, those being restricted and unrestricted reporting. Restricted

Reporting enables individuals to remain confidential, while receiving support and treatment without initiating an official investigation. Unrestricted Reporting allows individuals to receive full services and could trigger an official investigation and command notification.

In the past, survivors didn't have anyone to represent and advise them of the legal process associated with a sexual assault report. In 2013, the Victims' Legal Counsel (VLC) was established to ensure survivors had a lawyer to protect their rights in court. SAPR continued to grow, and in 2019 the CATCH program launched. The CATCH program allowed the Department of Defense to identify patterns of serial sexual assaults across different bases and branches of service. Survivors can voluntarily opt into the CATCH program. These milestones are more than policy, they are evidence of a system that is constantly learning, transforming and growing stronger because of the courage of survivors.

To our survivors and advocates

To the survivors and advocates who have walked this long often invisible path: We see you. We see the person behind the courage and the bravery it took to believe that things could be better. Because you refused to sit silent, you built a bridge for others to cross. You have turned your hardest chapters into a map for someone else's healing.

If no one told you today: Your voice matters. It has the power to break the

silence and gives permission to others who are suffering in silence. Your voice can also bring to light where the system is failing. Thank you for trusting us with your stories. We are listening and we are evolving together. Thank you for shaping the Navy of tomorrow.

Anchor point of Care

According to the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ), sexual assault is defined as intentional sexual contact

characterized by use of force, threats, intimidation or abuse of authority or when the victim does not or cannot consent.

If you ever need support, the Rota SAPR team is available to you 24/7:

- Uniform Victim Advocate (UVA): +34 646-407-871
- Civilian Victim Advocate (CVA): +34 616-866-750
- Installation Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC): +34 679-480-545



Naval Station (NAVSTA) Rota leadership pose for a photo alongside Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) team members with the signed proclamation recognizing April as Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month onboard Naval Station (NAVSTA) Rota, Spain, April 7, 2026. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Jett Morgan)

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Colorectal Cancer Awareness

From Devin Evans
Health Promotions Coordinator, U.S. Naval Hospital Rota

Cancer is not a topic that people like to bring up. For many, it conjures up ideas about terminal illness or hits close to home when recalling a loved one or even yourself being confronted with cancer. The other challenging part about cancer is that there are so many different types that can affect our lives.

March focused on colorectal cancer awareness. Colorectal cancer is the third most common cancer worldwide, accounting for approximately 10% of all cancer cases. It is the second leading cause of cancer-related deaths worldwide.

So, you may be thinking “who is affected by this type of cancer?” It predominantly affects individuals aged 50 and above, though there is a rising burden among adults ranging from 30 to 50-years-old in some geographical settings.

Common symptoms include chronic diarrhea or constipation, blood in stool, abdominal pain, unexplained weight loss, fatigue and low iron levels, but unfortunately many people have no symptoms in the early stages.

When it comes to our health, we want to be proactive and live a healthy lifestyle to avoid future health conditions. With colorectal cancer, there are several lifestyle factors that can contribute to the development of it.

Some of the largest risks that could lead to colorectal cancer are high intake of processed meats and low intake of fruits and vegetables. A sedentary lifestyle, obesity, smoking, and increased alcohol consumption.

Luckily, we can be proactive and make changes to our lifestyle if we are not already living in that manner. Look for dietary options that put more emphasis on lean unprocessed proteins while incorporating a wide variety of fruits and vegetables for a balanced plate. Making physical fitness a priority and a daily occurrence as the best way to avoid obesity while increasing your readiness and resiliency. Additionally, eliminating tobacco products and decreasing or even avoiding alcohol consumption in your life altogether is a great decision.

Lastly, be sure to connect with your Primary Care medical provider to receive the most up-to-date information and to find out if and when you should be screened for colorectal cancer. Early detection and diagnosis can reduce delays in care if it is discovered. Your medical provider will be able to discuss screening options with you so that you may take the best course of action.

Start today by making health lifestyle changes and be sure to speak with a medical professional to continue to live the best and healthiest life possible.

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Christina Cobb

Christina Cobb is Naval Station (NAVSTA) Rota's Installation Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC), working out of the Fleet and Family Support Center (FFSC) on base.


Cobb grew up in a military family and has spent time growing up all over the world. Out of all of the locations she's been to, she ultimately claims Misawa, Japan as her hometown. Cobb also has 19 years of experience working alongside the military, holding roles as the executive assistant to the Naval Hospital Corps School's commanding officer, a FFSC emergency case manager aboard Naval Station Great Lakes, and as the SARC of Naval Station Guantanamo Bay and Naval Support Activity Singapore before her current role as NAVSTA Rota's SARC.

"I serve as the primary point of contact for adult sexual assault," stated Cobb. "Additionally, I coordinate with command leadership and investigative agencies to ensure a trauma-informed response, oversee victim advocates, and conduct sexual assault prevention and response trainings."

Cobb explained that she really enjoys being able to provide guidance to sexual assault survivors and mentorship to the civilian and uniformed victim advocates who support them. She further explains that it's incredibly rewarding building a team where everyone feels equipped, valued, and resilient enough to continue providing for those who are truly in need of assistance.

"When a survivor walks through my door, they are often carrying fear, confusion, and uncertainty, and they trust me to help them understand their options, connect them to resources and show them they don't have to navigate this alone," Cobb noted. "I feel honored to be able to walk alongside them on their journey." She also stressed that if anyone is ever confused on what their options are or need guidance from a confidential source that they can always come see her or a civilian victim advocate!

Outside of work, Cobb enjoys traveling with her family and giving her children opportunities to immerse themselves in different cultures to help see the world from a different perspective!




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Who was the “Queen of Hearts?”

By Patricia Rios
NAVSTA Rota Retired Activities Office

The audience in the Rota Navy Inn’s Cadiz Room in February was delighted to learn who the “Queen of Hearts” was.

Liana Romero Swirski Vaughn, wife of retired Lt. Cmdr. Ken Vaughn of Chipiona, introduced her mother as an unknown but extremely effective triple agent spy for Germany, Britain and Spain in the Gibraltar area during WWII.

The British Security Service MI5 knew her by her actions under the code name “Queen of Hearts,” but her true identity, Larissa Swirski, was only revealed when their files began to be declassified in batches in April 2000.

Larissa was a real-life Russian aristocrat who was born in Odessa, Ukraine in 1910. She was related to the Romanov family and had to flee to Berlin during the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. She later moved to Paris and became a noted photographer. She met and married Spanish Naval Officer, Manuel Romero Hume, who was later assigned to Ceuta on the Bay of Gibraltar during WWII. Larissa, who spoke 6 languages, was initially recruited to spy for Nazi Germany, but later switched to spying for British allies and Spain after she was convinced of Nazi genocide. She carried out innumerable reconnaissance missions, sometimes accompanied by her 11-year-old daughter Liana to not raise suspicion. She became a key but unacknowledged figure in British

Intelligence. It has been said that she was the inspiration for British author, Ian Fleming’s James Bond-girl, Vesper Lynd, in his first novel Casino Royale published in 1953, since he used his wartime experiences as a member of the Naval Intelligence Division, as well as people he met during his work, to provide plot elements.

Larissa’s fascinating story is the subject of a 2022 documentary and recent book titled Queen of Hearts, co-authored by her daughter, Liana Romero Swirski, and investigative journalist/author Wayne Jamison of Rota. They detail her life from fleeing Russia, conducting life threatening espionage as a triple spy in and around Gibraltar during WWII, to her death in Seville on May 13, 1977.



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U.S. Navy opens new expeditionary maintenance facility at Camp Mitchell

Story and photos by Chief Mass Communication Specialist Justin Stumberg
22nd Naval Construction Regiment

U.S. Navy leaders, Sailors, and civilian partners marked the completion of a new expeditionary maintenance facility (EMF) during a ribbon-cutting ceremony at Camp Mitchell onboard Naval Station (NAVSTA) Rota, Spain, March 23, 2026.

This project, led by NAVSTA Rota's Resident Officer in Charge of Construction (ROICC) in coordination with the 22nd Naval Construction Regiment (NCR), delivers modern vehicle, boat, and equipment maintenance capabilities in direct support of Naval Mobile Construction Battalion and Underwater Construction Team assets operating across Europe and Africa.

"This facility is about readiness at the deckplate level," said Capt. Allen Willey, 22NCR commodore. "By providing our Seabees and divers with a purpose-built maintenance space, we're directly improving their ability to sustain

equipment, respond faster, and remain mission-ready in support of fleet and combatant commander requirements."

The \$25.9 million military construction project was awarded in December 2021 and reached beneficial occupancy in December 2025. The facility replaces several aging, end-of-life buildings and consolidates maintenance and administrative functions into a single, modern structure designed specifically for expeditionary engineering forces.

"This was a complex, multi-year effort that required close coordination between installation leadership, engineers, and operational stakeholders," said Lt. Cmdr. Joshua Owens, assigned to the NAVSTA Rota ROICC. "The end result is a facility that will support the mission and our Sailors for decades to come."

The new EMF includes vehicle and boat maintenance bays, administrative spaces, and support areas tailored to the operational needs of forward-deployed Seabees and Navy divers. The project also involved demolition of obsolete facilities and renovations to nearby buildings to accommodate displaced operations.

"Today's ceremony marks a direct investment in the people that comprise our fleet and win our nation's wars," said Naval Station Rota Commanding Officer Capt. Charles Chmielak, addressing the assembled NAVSTA Rota Public Works Seabees in attendance. "By delivering this facility, you are ensuring our expeditionary warfighters have the quality of service and operational support they need to remain the most lethal and globally dominant maritime force."

Naval Station Rota's strategic position at the gateway to the Mediterranean Sea makes it a critical hub for U.S. and NATO maritime operations. Infrastructure investments such as the Expeditionary Maintenance Facility enhance the installation's ability to support maritime security, logistics, and power projection in support of U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa and U.S. 6th Fleet.

22NCR commands naval construction forces for Navy Expeditionary Forces Europe-Africa/Task Force 68 across the U.S. 6th Fleet area of operations to defend U.S., Allied, and partner interests.



22nd Naval Construction Regiment Commodore Capt. Allen Willey delivers remarks during a ribbon-cutting ceremony for a new expeditionary maintenance facility at Camp Mitchell onboard NAVSTA Rota, Spain, March 23, 2026.





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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).

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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.

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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.

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Fleet and Family Support Center, Tuesday and Thursday, 1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., by appointment only, +34 956 82 3232.

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 Personnel 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.

For all USO Rota events and more, follow "USO Rota" on Facebook at www.facebook.com/USORota.

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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 - She Said What?!

By Ashley Leigh
Contributing Community Writer

Recently, I was watching a Hallmark movie (don't judge, I know you secretly like them too). It was the same typical storyline of girl needs. Insert a semi handsome man who comes to her rescue and there's your storyline. How the story ends isn't important. What caught my attention, though, was one detail that played out like an act straight from our spouse community.

The scenario begins with the main female character going on a scenic cruise down the Amazon River (Hallmark must be really hurting for storylines). She's sitting in a lounge chair, reading a book, and minding her own business. Another female passenger sits down next to her, grabs her book out of her hand, gives her binoculars and immediately starts asking her very personal questions. Mind you, she is on this adventure by herself and this other passenger has no association with our main character. Immediately, I said out loud, "Well, that was brazen." But wait a minute! Haven't we as spouses all done the exact same thing?

We're in line at the Nex waiting to check out and begin conversing with the person(s) next to us. One thing leads to another and now, not only do you know where they came from, how long they've been here, who their primary PCM is, and what street they live on, but they've also become your child's emergency contact. What looks forward and maybe a little

rude to those outside our military bubble is everyday business to us.

Getting personal and feeling comfortable with answering some of those questions is a byproduct of what happens when we frequently move. We're forced to make new friends and associations. So, what do we do? We chat. We get personal and we self-indulge with random strangers in hopes that they will be our next friend. I for one am here for it.

It makes us relatable when we have something more in common than our spouses' career. A few months ago, I drove my daughter's ballet instructor to the airport, and during that drive, we discovered we had very similar upbringings which unlocked a level of friendship we otherwise would have never known had we not had one of those overly-personal conversations.

Having a Hallmark moment helps to create a more personal connection with one another. In the end, we're all living in the same scenario. We're away from family, our spouse is either deployed or always at work, we may or may not have kids, and everyone is exhausted. Chances are you have something in common with another spouse. Being kind, friendly, and maybe a little personal connects us in some way. Let's do our best to make some of those Hallmark moments.

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USS Gonzalez (DDG 66) Sailors volunteer at women's shelter

By Alejandra Tirapu Lucero
Naval Station Rota Public Affairs

A few days in port and a desire to leave a positive impact in the local community always lead to a Community Relations (COMREL) event.

Sailors from visiting ships use their time in foreign countries to connect with the community that hosts them, and we saw that recently when the USS Gonzalez (DDG 66) visited Naval Station (NAVSTA) Rota. Even though they were in port for a very short period of time, Lt. j.g. Nathan Winters, the Chaplain aboard USS Gonzalez (DDG 66), did not want to miss the opportunity to coordinate a COMREL engagement for his command and contacted NAVSTA Rota Public Affairs to organize a volunteering event in a women's shelter.

"COMREL engagements give our

Sailors the opportunity to step outside the routine of operations and connect with people in a meaningful way," said Chaplain Winters. "Even in a short time, serving at the women's shelter reminded us that our mission is not only about what we accomplish at sea, but also about how we care for others. These moments reflect the heart of service—grounded in faith, compassion, and a commitment to make a lasting difference."

These events would not be possible without the support and encouragement by the command's leadership.

"I'm proud of the USS Gonzalez Sailors who, after traveling over 3,000 miles across the Atlantic Ocean, selflessly put others first during this port call," stated Cmdr. Mike Schenk, USS Gonzalez (DDG 66) Commanding Officer. "They embody the ship's motto of "Beyond the Call" through their commitment and service, not only in defense of our nation, but also in uplifting the people and places that make the mission possible."

COMREL engagements allow Sailors to serve in ways that extend beyond operational duties, fostering meaningful connections with local communities and those in need. These moments of service reinforce the deeper purpose behind military life: Demonstrating compassion, humility, and faith in action. Through these efforts, Sailors are reminded that their impact is not only measured in mission success, but in the lives they touch.





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The Quintessential Passover Seder... Spanish-Style

By Lt. Daniel Ehrlich
Naval Station Rota Public Affairs

The snap of matzah, the tinkling laughter of children, the sound of a minyan singing – all sounds that could be heard in the Naval Station (NAVSTA) Rota Chapel's Fellowship Hall on April 1. Around 25 Jewish members of the Rota community, including Jewish Roteñas, gathered together to break matzah, sing prayers, and celebrate the start of the Passover holiday with the symbolic seder dinner.

This was the first seder I was able to attend in a few years, mainly due to operational conflicts. It did not disappoint. In fact, the Rota seder reminded me of childhood seders I would attend at

Congregation Adat Reyim in Springfield, Virginia, but much less stuffy and long-winded. I like those qualities, which is why I declare it the quintessential seder... but not without its quirks!

Upon arrival at the Fellowship Hall, I was greeted by smiles and the smells of brisket and matzo ball soup. My synagogue growing up would never think to have any additional food besides the six symbolic foods required on the seder plate. We welcomed community members and guests alike. A family assigned to the NATO Joint Warfare Center in Stavanger, Norway visited the installation during their spring break holiday specifically to join in the festivities. It was truly a conglomeration of communities, backgrounds, and jobs, but we all had one thing in common – we all are Jewish.

The seder started late, as is customary in not only Spain, but Jewish culture as well. The seder opened with the traditional prayers, as Jews do all around the world. Then we began the celebration of the seder plate, starting with the dipping of bitter herbs, also known as maror, into the salt water. This signified the bitterness of the slavery of the Israelites in the Old Testament and the tears they wept. Now, if you think that I am about to go into a full breakdown of the Haggadah, the Passover-specific prayer book, you'd be wrong. This is where our seder diverts.

The blessing of the wine was next, and I was pleased to enjoy a Kosher tinto from La Mancha. Now, when Amanda Gipson,

the Rota Jewish community leader (the community doesn't have a rabbi), said that we would be doing the Reader's Digest version of seder, I initially didn't believe her. But, lo and behold, within a few moments we were halfway through the Haggadah and skipped a few seder plate items. In my conservative Northern Virginia synagogue, this would have been heresy; but, in Spain, it felt just right.

We joined in a fun Passover skit with masks, read through some fun family-friendly stories in the Haggadah to break down the Plagues and the flight of the Israelites. Within a few moments of being hidden, the children had found the finely knit afikomen bags, holding the missing piece of traditional unleavened bread, known as matzah, eaten during Passover. Then, the eating began. The potluck was an enjoyable mix of Passover classics, including matzo ball soup, with modern Jewish cooking, such as melt-in-your-mouth brisket. The seder dinner conversations even had their own Spanish twist, as members of the community spoke about upcoming trips to Europe and of the Feria season between bites of delicious food.

With the sun just starting to hit the horizon, we began to wrap up this non-traditional, convivial seder with a couple of final prayers. I was raised in an Ashkenazi Jewish synagogue, which mainly features traditions from Eastern European Jewish people. In Spain and much of North Africa, Sephardic Judaism



is the name of the game. While there are only slight differences in religious interpretation between the two sects, the primary differences come in how religious observances are conducted. One of the primary differences was the language of one of the prayers: Ladino. Ladino is a Sephardic Jewish language, mixing elements of Hebrew with Castilian Spanish. The Jews of several hundred years ago in this very land would use Ladino to sing their prayers. In that moment, I felt reconnected with my people of the past.

The Rota Jewish community is an absurd concept in a foreign land with a tiny Jewish population, but it feels warm, welcoming, and just traditional enough to bring you closer to a higher power without feeling overly stuffy. So, drop on in if you ever want to experience one of these exciting events. You can find out more on the Rota Jewish Community Facebook page or just stop by the Naval Station Rota Chapel to get in touch. Either way, you're in for a great time... Spanish-style!



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Naval Hospital Rota first in Europe to deliver computer-assisted hip, knee replacement

By **Cmdr. Brian Barlow**
U.S. Naval Hospital Rota

U.S. Naval Hospital (USNH) Rota has become the first military treatment facility in the Defense Health Network–Europe to perform computer-assisted hip and knee replacement surgery, marking a significant milestone in advancing musculoskeletal readiness for service members stationed overseas.

“Computer-assisted navigation allows us to tailor implant positioning to each patient’s unique anatomy with a level of precision we couldn’t achieve with traditional instrumentation alone,” said Cmdr. Brian Barlow, assigned to Navy Medicine Readiness and Training Command (NMRTC) Rota, who works at the hospital as an orthopedic surgeon. “That accuracy translates directly into better joint function, reduced pain, and a faster return to activity for our patients.”

The hospital launched its total joint replacement program in February 2025, becoming the first Defense Health Agency medical treatment outside the continental United States facility to perform hip and knee arthroplasty. By enhancing surgical precision and consistency, the technology supports improved joint function, durability, and recovery for patients.

Since the program began, more than 25 patients from across Europe have received joint replacement surgery at USNH Rota. By helping warfighters regain mobility and supporting military families living overseas, the arthroplasty service line plays an important role in improving both readiness and overall resilience.

For active-duty service members, this level of care directly supports readiness. Chronic hip and knee pain can make it difficult to run, climb ladders, stand watch, carry gear, and meet physical standards. Joint replacement helps restore mobility, relieve pain, and return service members to full mission capability while reducing the need to travel outside the region for care.

For military families, having access to specialized orthopedic care in Europe means less disruption, quicker recovery, and stronger, more stable households, all of which contribute to overall force readiness.

This capability also strengthens medical readiness. At NMRTC Rota, surgeons, nurses, and surgical technicians are



Cmdr. Brian Barlow, an orthopedic surgeon assigned to Navy Medicine and Training Command Rota, left, performs a computer-assisted knee replacement procedure with his surgical team at Naval Hospital Rota, Spain, using navigation technology to enhance precision and support warfighter readiness. (U.S. Navy Photo Taken by Lt. Cmdr. Jonathan Phillips)



gaining real, hands-on experience with advanced technology and modern joint replacement techniques. That experience keeps their skills sharp, builds confidence, and ensures they are ready to provide high-quality care, whether at home or in operational environments.

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.

NMRTC Rota serves as a force multiplier in Navy Medicine’s strategic global medical support mission throughout Europe, Africa, and the Middle East while also supporting operational readiness and maintaining a strategic repository of expertise at Naval Hospital Rota on the Iberian Peninsula.

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