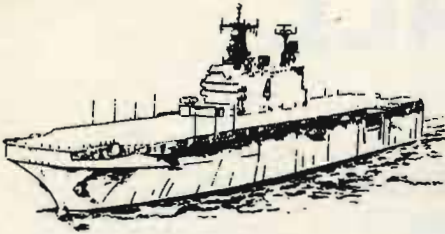


USS NASSAU (LHA-4)

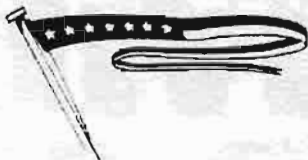


Vol. I Issue 4
1 Feb. 1980

FAMILY GRAM



CAPTAIN'S CALL



COMMANDING OFFICER
U.S.S. NASSAU (LHA-4)
FLEET POST OFFICE
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 09501

28 January 1980

Dear Families and Friends of NASSAU,

In the months since our last Familygram many important events have taken place on board NASSAU, many of which are depicted on these pages.

The singular item that stands out consistently is the superb individual professional performance of our NASSAU sailors which collectively adds up to a team effort second to none. NASSAU has rapidly earned a fleet reputation for excellence and you can be as justifiably proud of your NASSAU crew as I am.

We have had many visitors on board and I encourage all of you to visit and tour the ship if you have the opportunity to do so.

In closing I would ask you not to forget the importance of a letter of encouragement from home. Also, NASSAU's chain of command is ready to assist in any way. Don't hesitate to ask.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "William A. Kearns, Jr.", written in dark ink.

William A. Kearns, Jr.
Captain, U.S. Navy

REINFORCEX "79"

Or . . . Do you want to liven-up a dull day?

"Liven-up turned out to be an understatement as things onboard NASSAU quickly went into a furious period of outfitting the ship for extended operations.

President Carter had decided to reinforce the U.S. Naval Base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba (GTMO) with a battalion of Marines in response to the presence of Soviet troops in Cuba. NASSAU had been chosen as flagship for the exercise.

The next few days were incredibly hectic as the NASSAU crew worked at an exhausting pace loading supplies and preparing the ship for her mission.

Once prepped, NASSAU sailed for Morehead City, North Carolina to pick up a battalion of United States Marines, their gear and a squadron of helicopters.

In a two day operation NASSAU took on over 1600 Marines, tons of gear, and twenty-six helos without a single casualty to men or machines.

After taking on the Marine Battalion, their equipment and helicopters, NASSAU headed for Cuba.

In Cuba the hectic pace increased even more as a seemingly never ending stream of helicopters and landing craft carried Marines and equipment ashore. For two days sailors and Marines worked to offload NASSAU's cargo.

With the landing completed, NASSAU returned to Norfolk for two weeks to rest and prepare for a return to GTMO.

The ship returned to GTMO, picked up the Marines and their equipment, still without an injury to man or machine, left Moorehead City and returned to Norfolk.

#

During the month of December 1979, NASSAU played host to the Commander Amphibious Group TWO, Rear Admiral Warren C. Hamm and his staff. While on board Admiral Hamm praised the professionalism and hard work of the NASSAU crew.

#

SPOUSE OF THE YEAR

A NASSAU wife was recently named "Outstanding Military Spouse of the Year" for her activities with the Association for Retarded Citizens, active participation in her church, and her overall concern in helping others.

The award, which was given by the Clay County, Florida Chamber of Commerce Military Affairs Committee, went to Mrs. Chris Himchak, wife of LCDR William Himchak, NASSAU Communications Officer, during a luncheon held in Orange Park, FL.

Her activities include teaching deaf, mentally retarded and blind children to swim and also teaching arts and crafts to the mentally retarded.

Mrs. Himchak also spends two hours a week learning sign language so that she can better communicate with deaf children.

Her hobbies include: gourmet Chinese cooking, needlepoint, and reading.

The Himchaks have three children: Cathy, 13; Billy, 11; and Michael, 8. They live in Orange Park, FL.



Master Chief Hastings lends a hand loading stores.



LCDR Payne supervises action on the pier.



Crewmembers help load a pallet transporter.



A 10K forklift brings on stores.



Flight Deck firefighter adjusts his gear.



Marines work out in the Troop Acclimation room.



A fire party stands by on the Flight Deck.



(left) Early morning Flight Deck preparations.



(right) An LCU ties up in the Well Deck.



Master Sergeant R.A. Bunting



Master Sergeant L.J. Caldwell



FTC Z.K. Calles

235 years of good conduct were recognized recently on the NASSAU as four Marines and twenty Sailors received good conduct awards ranging from their first to their seventh.

Master Sergeant Robert A. Bunting received his seventh Marine Corps certificate of good conduct representing twenty-one years of exemplary behavior.

MS1 A.E. Venturoso and AD1 J.E. Washington received their fifth Navy good conduct awards, each having twenty years of good conduct.

Others receiving good conduct awards are:

ABH1 T.P. Bagley	4th award
FTC Z.K. Calles	3rd "
AG1 J.D. Easterling	3rd "
SK1 J.V. Sciortino	3rd "
MS2 R.P. Ramirez	2nd "
MS2 R.L. Cole	2nd "
BT1 T.J. Creameans	2nd "
BM2 E.R. Smith	2nd "
EW2 Compton	1st "
HT1 L.B. Doss	1st "
ET2 D. Ford	1st "
EN2 H. Rivera	1st "
GMG2 R.L. Slater	1st "
ET2 A.C. Neihelisel	1st "

Master Sergeant E.R. Ouellette	6th certificate
Master Sergeant L.J. Caldwell	6th " " "
Sergeant J.S. Copeland	2nd " " "

AG1 J.D. Easterling



BM2 E.R. Smith



MS2 R.P. Ramirez



Congratulations and well done to DP2 Michael A. McElfresh, USS NASSAU Sailor of the Quarter.



Five Data Systems Technicians reenlisted on the second of November for a combined total of 30 years and over \$47,000 in bonuses in a first on the USS NASSAU (LHA 4).

The group reenlistment was the first Navy reenlistment of any type on the NASSAU and it occurred while the ship was participating in the GTMO REINFORCEX '79.

DS2 James E. Stolze, DS3 Alvin R. Abbott, DS3 Walter M. Albritton, DS3 Roger W. Wilber, and DS3 Mark A. Watson, all reenlisted for six years each under the STAR program for guaranteed assignment to the Land Based TSC System Maintenance School. The four DS3's were also advanced to Petty Officer Second Class.

All five sailors are plank-owners on the NASSAU and were reenlisting for the first time.



NASSAU Wives recently inaugurated their four officers. Left to right are: Terri Rhodes - Vice President, Gail Heather - Secretary, Captain Kearns, Theresa Coffield - Treasurer, and Brenda Brown - President.

Congratulations and well done to the following NASSAU crewmen who were advanced to the rates listed below:
AMS1 Ronald C. Jensen, HM3 Jon E. Butts, ABH2 Scott W. Miles, QM1 David Reece, EN2 Richard James, ASM3 Mitchell D. Langston, SH1 Henry Rasque, EN3 Mark Young, FTG2 Curtis R. Wood, GMG3 Harland J. Titus, DS2 James E. Stolze, OS3 Janck L. Conklin, FTG2 Stanley R. Brown, EM2 Ronald S. Badgett, EMC Allen E. Rhodes, MM2 Harry Barnett, EM3 Stephen G. Coppola, SM2 Richard Stanley, ABF3 Melbourne Phipps, OS3 Mark R. Brunner, GMG3 Johnny Birdwell, SM3 John Reeves, III, IC1 David R. Meshinski, DP2 Michael A. McElfresh, ABH3 Joseph R. Kospiah, Jr., EN2 James E. Brandt, and FTM2 James P. Becker.

The USS NASSAU (LHA 4) recognized her first sailor of the quarter recently in a ceremony which took place while the ship was observing the Navy's 204th birthday.

Data Processing Petty Officer Second Class Michael Alan McElfresh was the first NASSAU sailor honored in this manner for his outstanding achievements during the NASSAU's first three months in commission.

Petty Officer McElfresh hails from Tallahassee, Florida, where he attended Leon High School. After graduating in 1974 he went on to spend a year at Florida State University followed by two years at Memphis State University.

He joined the Navy on the 19th of January 1976 and went on to attend Data Processing A School, his duties include: Key punch Supervisor, Data Processing Shift Supervisor, and Damage Control Petty Officer.

This story is one which should relieve many a worrying mother among our readers. The USS NASSAU's Enlisted Dining Facility was recently nominated for the Navy's highest food service award.

The NASSAU's nomination was based on a number of factors including: quality of food, variety, nutritional value, and cleanliness of the mess decks among others. Only three ships are nominated in each category out of all the ships in the Atlantic Fleet.

The Ney Award nomination is indicative of the hard work being done by the officers and men of the NASSAU food service division.

#

The mess decks on the NASSAU, besides being clean are also more attractive now, thanks to the work of a Third Class Mess Specialist turned artist.

Mess Specialist Petty Officer Third Class Francis J. Morrow has been spending his spare time decorating the mess deck walls with various paintings of the sea. His work includes a painting of the NASSAU as it looked during operations at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

Petty Officer Morrow normally works in the NASSAU Bake Shop where he keeps his artistic talents sharp by decorating the many cakes served at meals.



Aplain Young checks out the menu while dependents go through the chow line.

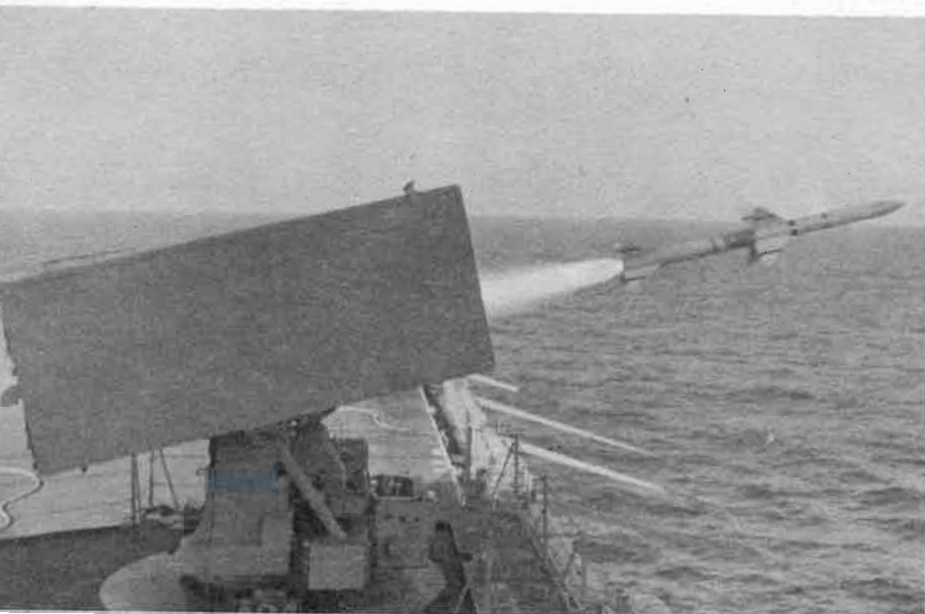


A guest chooses from the salad bar.

Two very special holidays have occurred in the past few months. The NAS-SAU Enlisted Dining Facility (EDF) did its part in making the holidays special by turning out some very fancy and filling meals for the crew and their guests.



Christmas dinner on the NASSAU.



While underway for Damage Control Training NASSAU fired her first missile from the Basic Point Defense Missile System. The missile shot was right on target as was the NASSAU photographer who managed to get this shot.

A few months ago the U.S. Navy celebrated Hispanic American Heritage Week (Sept. 10-16). In connection with the observance, an essay contest was held by the Naval Base's Human Relations Office.

A young fireman onboard NASSAU named Eddie Cruz entered the contest, put his pride in his heritage down on paper, and won the essay contest.

His essay was short, simple, and effective and we'd like to share it with you.

"Hispanic Heritage - We have Been Recognized"

The Hispanic Heritage has come a long way and I am proud to be a part of such a mighty and great heritage.

It dates back to the era of Spanish dominance in 1400 A.D.. That was a time when the drive for the spread of the Hispanic culture, morals, and ideas began.

With the strength of their Spanish Navy they sailed the seas. They discovered and conquered many lands. Christening them in the name of the everlasting strength of their Hispanic Heritage. They did this with the hope that one day, in the future, their actions to be remembered, as Hispanics, would not be forgotten and that their great heritage would continue on with time, life, and eternity.

Some lands, they conquered were: Puerto Rico, Cuba, Brazil, etc. . . . The Hispanic influence was so strong, so powerful, so domineering in these countries, that it completely obliterated any trace of the old customs which belonged to these countries.

Their new Hispanic customs consisted of the following: A completely different sound of music. The music's tempo was faster than the music of its time but pleasant to the ear. It has rhythm and beat, soul and spirit, it truly described what the Hispanic heritage was all about, and how strongly the people felt about their heritage. Not only was their music different, but the food of a Hispanic person was also different. The food consisted of lots of spices. It gave the food a unique taste. A taste that was recognized by all people as one invented by the Hispanic people. This was another great contribution to the Hispanic heritage. The most important customs of the Hispanic heritage were the customs of courting. In other words the rules and regulations of courting. When a young lady and a young man decided they were interested in pursuing a steady relationship between them, the young man would have to talk to the father (head of the house) about his intentions with his daughter. After a long discussion, the father would decide if the young man would be allowed to see his daughter. In this case the word "see" meant just that, no touching would be permitted until marriage took place.

These customs stayed with the Hispanic people when the Hispanic people started immigrating into the United States they were faced with a different way of living, but because of their strong belief in their Hispanic heritage, they changed very little in their ways of living. They still ate the same foods, listened to the same music, and only lessened the strictness of their courting rules.

It's been a long time since the Hispanic heritage began, but as you see, we the hispanic people still have those spicy foods, fast beat music, and rules and regulations of dating. In reality nothing much of our heritage has changed. The only thing that has changed is that our tie with our Hispanic heritage has gotten stronger. This is why I must say:

"I am proud, in fact I am very proud, to be affiliated, associated and connected in anyway, form or matter with the Hispanic heritage", and I am even prouder to say, "That all that our Hispanic ancestors have struggled to perserve the Hispanic heritage has not been in vain, for we are now not only recognized as Hispanics, but we are also being recog- as Hispanic Americans".

Thank you,
Eddie Cruz



During the past few months NASSAU has played host to some very important visitors. Pictured left is Commander Amphibious Group TWO, Rear Admiral Warren C. Hamm; on the right is the Danish Minister of Defense, General Knud Joergensen.

Even with all the sophisticated equipment used on NASSAU there is still the need for good old-fashioned seamanship. In the pictures below NASSAU practices handing the "Bos'n's Chair" with the USS TRUCKEE (AOR 147).





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