

Issue 114

May 2024

A Bradenton Florida Native
Serves Aboard Ralph Johnson

Memorial Day,
Why We Remember

From Cabo Verde to Japan and
Everywhere in Between



Table of Contents

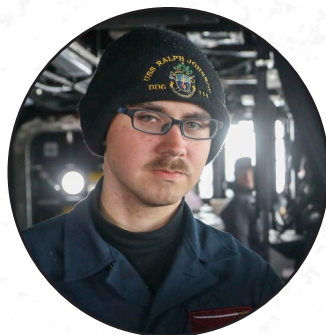


Memorial Day Aboard the Ralph Johnson

Private First Class Ralph Johnson's story and what it means to us on Memorial Day.

Seaman Ethan Goelz, A Bradenton, Florida Native

Ethan Goelz, a native of Bradenton, Florida, shares his experience in the Navy and how he got to where he is today.



From Cabo Verde to Japan and Everywhere in Between

Josienne De Pina Dias, from Praia, Cabo Verde, Tells us about her life from early childhood to now.



Leadership

CO Cmdr. Isaia Infante

XO Cmdr. Robert Clarkson

CMC Master Chief Matthew Ross

Public Affairs

Ens. Mikhail Hunstad

ISC Henry Wendelin

MC1 Jamaal Liddell

MCSN Trevor Hale

Things to Know

Admin Notes

E3 and below evaluations are due 15 June to admin.

All awards, evaluations and transfer packages are due to admin 60 days in advance.

Chief Petty Officer evaluations are due to CMC by 15 July.

As of July 1, 2024, all E-1 to E-4 advancements will be based on time-in-service.

E-1 to E-2: 9 Months TIS

E-2 to E-3: 18 Months TIS

E-3 to E-4: 30 Months TIS

The media team is actively seeking out sailors who have a story to tell. If you are interested in being featured in the next Issue 114 please reach out to MCSN Hale at trevor.hale@ddg114.navy.mil to discuss setting up an interview.

VIPER Team

Viper Team is looking for additional members
Contact ISC or MC1 for detail



Congratulations to our Spring Cycle 2024 Advancees.

Petty Officer 1st Class

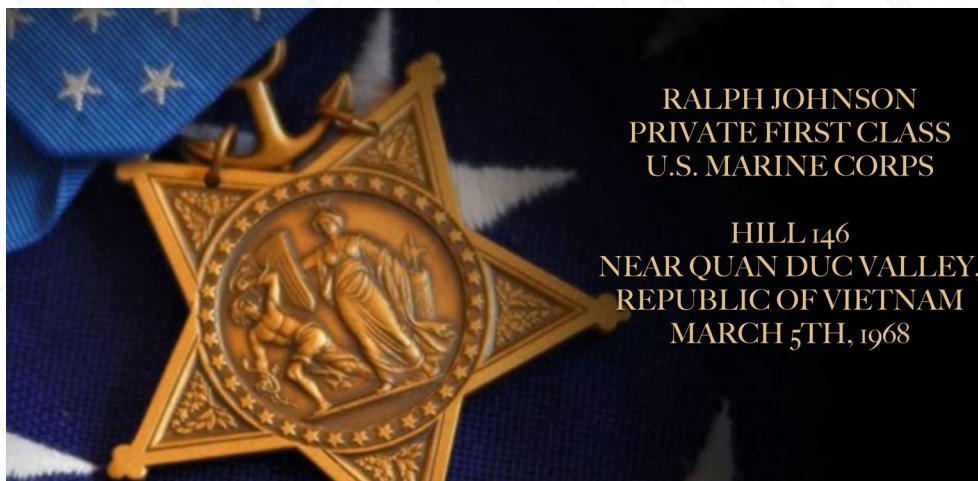
AT1 Michael Browningkoelper	STG1 Elizabeth Choban
HT1 Dylan Elfrink	YN1 Brandon Scott
GSM1 Deandra Scaver	OS1 William Squires

Petty Officer 2nd Class

CS2 Paul Avignone	YN2 Jeremy Bistline
MM2 Georges Belfort	PS2 Kyle Corbin
FCA2 Brendon Creek	MM2 Markchristopher Doniza
GSE2 Duncan Drysdale	FCA2 Tyler Gowing
GM2 Aaron Hawkins	STG2 Leighton Heathman
GM2 Robert Mora	AE2 Joseph Chen
GM2 Austin Roby	OS2 Taj Scott
BM2 Justin Stafford	FCA2 Peyton Smrekar
FCA2 Cynthia Tuell	

Petty Officer 3rd Class

OS3 Irwin Espinalogando	GM3 Naomi Taylor
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**RALPH JOHNSON
PRIVATE FIRST CLASS
U.S. MARINE CORPS**

**HILL 146
NEAR QUAN DUC VALLEY,
REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM
MARCH 5TH, 1968**

Why We Remember

Story by MCI Jamaal Liddell

Few national holidays hold as much significance as the celebration of Memorial Day.

The origin of Memorial Day dates back to 1868, roughly three years after the end of the Civil War, which claimed more lives than any other conflict in United States history.

Called by a different name, “Decoration Day” evolved into what is now known and observed as Memorial Day, commemorating our brothers and sisters who died serving our country.

Our ship’s namesake, Private First Class Ralph Johnson was born on January 11th, 1949 in Charleston, South Carolina.

He originally enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps Reserves out of Oakland, California on March 23rd, 1967 at the age of 18, and later discharged to swap to active duty the same year.

PFC Ralph Johnson arrived in the Republic of Vietnam in January 1968, serving as a reconnaissance scout with Company A,

1st Reconnaissance Battalion, 1st Marine Division.

On March 5th, 1968, only two months after arriving in Vietnam, Johnson was part of a 15-man reconnaissance patrol manning an observation post on Hill 146, deep in enemy-controlled territory.

In the early morning hours, Johnson’s patrol was attacked by a much larger hostile force. While occupying a fighting-hole with two other Marines, a grenade landed in the hole.

Johnson shielded his fellow Marines from the grenade blast with his body, absorbing the impact and saving the life of one Marine, at the cost of his own.

These actions prevented his sector of the patrol from being overrun by hostile forces, and earning him our Nation’s highest honor, the Medal of Honor.

There’s a common saying – “Freedom isn’t Free”. It’s earned and maintained by those who chose to walk the same path that we walk now. As we remember our fallen brothers and sisters on this Memorial Day, we should all look towards the future to carry on the tradition of honor and sacrifice and never forget those who came before.

Navy Community Outreach

Story by MCSN Trevor Hale

Ethan Goelz, a native of Bradenton, Florida, graduated from Braden River High-School in March, 2023. He went on to join the United States Navy only a few months later, swearing in on June 28, 2023.

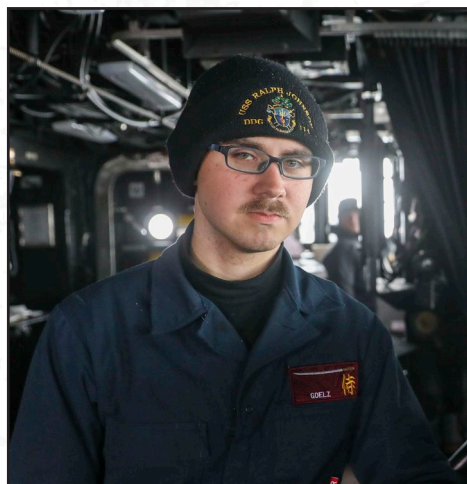
“Joining the military was something that I had planned years prior to joining. I had been talking with Navy recruiters since my junior year planning the early stages of my career,” said Goelz.

He decided to join under the Professional Apprenticeship Career Track (PACT), a program offered by the Navy to offer new sailors a chance to see what different rates do before deciding what path to choose, because he was unsure of what he wanted to do in the Navy.

“I figured that being undesignated in the Navy would give me a good chance to try some of the different things that you can do in the Navy before picking my rate,” said Goelz. “It can be tough at times being undesignated, but I think the experience before choosing my job will be worth it.”

After graduating from the Recruit Training Command, Goelz was assigned to the USS Ralph Johnson in Yokosuka, Japan.

“I was really hoping to get assigned to a destroyer when I signed up because I



had heard that the communities on them are very close-knit. It's been really great here so far because our command is so supportive of everything we do and they make sure that everyone is taken care of,” said Goelz.

Since Goelz arrived to Japan, he has been enjoying the food and travelling to different areas of the country.

“It can be tough at times being undesignated but I think the experience before choosing my job will be worth it.”

“It feels like everywhere you go in Japan has its own special thing that makes it great,” said Goelz. “I love having the opportunity to explore

all of these new places and getting to have these experiences.”

In the future, Goelz hopes to become either a Religious Program Specialist or an Operations Specialist.

“I’m still unsure of what route I want to take but I figure either OS or RP seem like good routes for me,” said Goelz.

Top Photos – MC1 Liddell



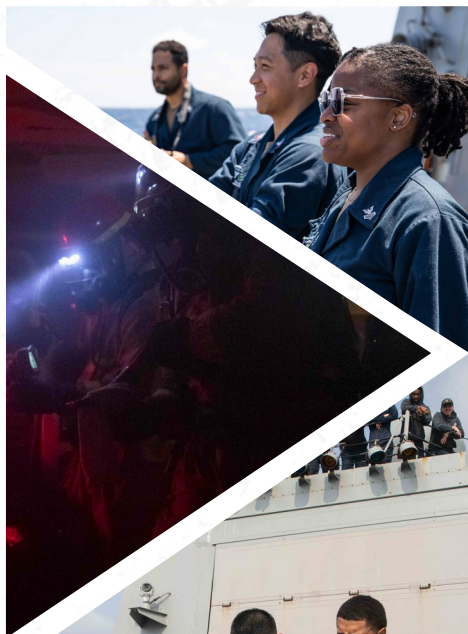
Top Photos – MCSN Hale



Top Photos – MC1 Liddell



Top Photos – MCSN Hale





From Cabo Verde to Japan and Everywhere in Between

Story by Seaman Trevor Hale

Walking the streets of Praia to her grandma's house, Josienne De Pina Dias crossed through the busy marketplace in her town. The smells of fried foods, handmade candies and the competing aromas of the local restaurants never failed to bring joy to her face. The bustling marketplace eventually started to calm as De Pina Dias would get closer to her grandma's home. Approaching the small house sandwiched between the larger buildings, she would smell her grandmother's food before she arrived at the door.

"I never saw myself joining the military," said De Pina Dias. "I was terrified of it, then I started doing some research and thought maybe the Navy was the best option for

Reminiscing about her family, she remembers her home, her grandmother's cooking and the beautiful beaches.

"I really miss my grandma's food, playing outside, the beaches and the parties with my family," said De Pina Dias.

When she turned 10, she immigrated to Portugal with her family who moved there for better education and employment opportunities. De

Pina Dias lived there for around six years, while her mother and younger brother moved to Paris, France. In Portugal, she focused on her education and taking advantage of the opportunities afforded to her by her parents. When she turned 16,

she moved to Paris with her mother and younger brother.

Retail Specialist Seaman Josienne De Pina Dias gives us the story of her early years, growing up as a youth in Praia, Cabo Verde, where she spent the first 10 years of her life, and her transition into a member of the world's greatest Navy.

"I missed my mom and little brother a lot," said De Pina Dias. "I had only been able to see my younger brother a few times since he was born, so the opportunity to get to know him was really great."

Upon arriving in Paris, she immediately enrolled into French language classes. During her time there, she had the opportunity to experience the culture, developing a fondness for the language, architecture and overall mood of the city, describing it as very calm and peaceful. After a year and a half, she moved back with her father, who was now living in Brockton, Massachusetts.



"The image of America outside the states is very different from what it is inside the states," said De Pina Dias. "All I knew about it was what I saw in movies, so it was very exciting for me."

De Pina Dias was encouraged to join the Navy by a former coworker who enlisted in the Cryptologic field. What really sold her on the idea was the education, housing and travel benefits. In Brockton, she finished high school, graduating in 2021 and joining the Navy in March of that year.

"I never saw myself joining the military," said De Pina Dias. "I was terrified of it, then I started doing some research and thought maybe the Navy was the best option for me."

De Pina Dias enlisted as a Retail Specialist on the recommendation from her recruiters. After graduating bootcamp, she went to Ascension School, where she learned how to maintain storerooms, operate ships laundry and ensure the crew's needs are taken care of. After completion of her training, she was assigned to the USS Ralph Johnson, forward-deployed in Yokosuka, Japan.

"I feel like I was meant to be stationed here," said De Pina Dias. "It was out of reality for me being in Japan. If anyone asked me before the Navy if I thought I would live in Japan, I would have said there was no chance at all."

She learned how to excel at her job under the

guidance of her mentor Retail Specialist 1st Class Edwin Johnson. He showed her around the ship during her first days aboard the Ralph Johnson, teaching her the best ways to meet the needs of the crew. He continues to act as a mentor to De Pina Dias, even after departing the ship.

"He was always there," said De Pina Dias. "I still talk to him, and he gives me advice when I need it."

De Pina Dias has experienced many new things during her time aboard the ship. She had the opportunity to do a swim call in the middle of the ocean, visit several new countries like Singapore and South Korea and receive the Blue Jacket of the Year award.

"It just happened," said De Pina Dias. "Everything was so new and I was learning a lot. My leadership told me the day before the Blue Jacket of the Quarter board that I would be going. I was nervous that I would mess up, but I did my best and I won. That got me to the Blue Jacket of the Year board."

She is coming up on her reenlistment window and plans on applying for shore duty orders to Spain so she can easily take trips to see her family and friends around the world.

"Spain is close to everyone I have to see," said De Pina Dias. "My family is all over the world and it would be so much easier to visit them from Spain than anywhere else."

From a little girl in Praia walking to her grandma's house, to a Sailor finding her way around the world, Josienne De Pina Dias exemplifies the diverse origins and backgrounds of Sailors in the United States Navy.

Ralph Johnson is forward deployed and assigned to Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 15, the Navy's largest DESRON and the U.S. 7th fleet's principal surface force.





Operations Specialist 2nd Class Jazmin Rodriguez, from Ontario, California, performs duties as a phone-talker during a replenishment-at-sea aboard the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Ralph Johnson (DDG 114) in the North Pacific Ocean, May 25. Ralph Johnson is forward deployed and assigned to Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 15, the Navy's largest DESRON and the U.S. 7th fleet's principal surface force. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Trevor Hale)



USS Ralph Johnson
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