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Dates:

- **1st September:** Slovakian Flag Raising— evening reception
- **7th September:** Labor Day
- **15th September:** Meet & Greet with the COS
- **21st September:** Welcome Coffee for Newcomers & Sponsors
- **29th September** Reservations Deadline for October Coffee Morning

Dear Friends



After a long break and a lovely summer vacation, it is with renewed strength and energy that I would like to invite you all to start the second cycle of the 2009 SOPC activities. Summer has such a positive effect on our souls and minds; it was lots of fun and I am sure that we will all make the upcoming season just as pleasant.

First things first. To all the ladies who have just joined the SOPC and are settling down in the Hampton Roads area, I want to welcome you to our club. I need not go into details of what the SOPC does; over time by reading the newsletters and the information posted on our website and talking to other members, you will soon grasp the noble tasks that the SOPC undertakes throughout the year.

To all the members, those who have been with us and those who have just arrived, I would please ask you to spread the word about our club. The SOPC is only as successful as the members it has to help undertake it's invaluable and numerous functions. It is easy to be part of our club. Just fill in the form available at our website (<http://www.sopc.us/>) with your spouse's billet and mess number. The more, the merrier.

I would also like to wish all the newcomers a wonderful stay in the company of your loved ones and friends. Among many joyful and pleasant things you will do here, the activities within the SOPC are indeed a unique opportunity to interact with a very diverse, multinational and colourful array of cultures. I encourage you to take advantage of this circumstance and allow it to give you a better insight and understanding of other nationalities recognizing their differences which, all together, make it a most interesting and rewarding experience.

On a final note and again, please continue to participate in our events to support our foster children and other charities.

Love, Anabela.
SOPC Chairperson

AN INVITATION TO ALL NEWCOMERS.

The SOPC would like to invite all newly arrived Officers' Spouses to a

NEWCOMERS' WELCOME COFFEE

in the

HQ SACT Mess

NATO Headquarters, Norfolk Naval Base

on

Monday 21st September, 9.30am till 11.30am.

ARE YOU SPONSORING A NEW FAMILY?

This is a great opportunity to introduce your friends to the SOPC .

THIS EVENT IS OPEN TO ALL NEWCOMERS, THEIR SPONSORS, NLR SPOUSES, SOPC COMMITTEE MEMBERS, CLUB REPRESENTATIVES & OMBUDSMEN.

To make your reservation, e-mail reservations@sopc.us It's very easy! Don't forget to let us know your nationality.

This event is free but we do need attendance numbers.

If you wish to join on the day, you will need your *spouses mess number*.

Reservations must be made by 6th September.

HQ SACT GROWS OVER THE SUMMER

Since the end of May this year, a staggering 131 new NATO service personnel have arrived in the Norfolk area. Although many have left as their postings come to a natural end, this is an unusually high number. The HQ SACT Manpower department tells us that this is due to an increased number of French service men and women, as France's presence within Headquarters SACT grows. The SOPC would like to extend a warm welcome to the new families and wish them all the best during their stay in Virginia.

SOPC Club Sign Up October 7th

From 10am till 12 noon. Join us for a relaxed “coffee morning” and see what is available to make your stay in the USA social, productive and fun!

Princess Anne Country Club,
3800 Pacific Ave,
Virginia Beach 23451

MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS AT:
reservations@sopc.us

RESERVATIONS must be received by Tuesday 29th September

Send your check for \$10, payable to SOPC to: SOPC, 840 Five Point Road, Virginia Beach VA

SOPC CLUBS:

MOMS & TODDLERS	QUILTING
TEEN EVENTS	MUSIC 4 FUN
VOLUNTEER GARDENING	BOOK CLUB
TENNIS	NATO BRIDGE CLUB
SCRAPBOOKING	BUNCO
SPANISH CONVERSATION	ENGLISH CONVERSATION
MAH JONG	FRENCH CONVERSATION
	BOWLING (see page 5 for details)
	INTERNATIONAL COOKING

LEGALLY SPEAKING!

Kathy Bair and Emma Hart from the Legal Affairs Department have been assisting HQ SACT personnel and their families through the ups and downs of moving to the USA for many years. With so many new NATO families having recently arrived, this month they are highlighting the most common problems newcomers have and how to overcome them.



As many of you are aware, Legal Affairs representatives provide individualized legal and personal transition assistance on a **walk-in basis 0930 to 1100** daily, and other times by appointment. These services are available to dependents as well as HQ personnel.



We have had many new arrivals this year, as well as many departures, both of which present requirements for legal assistance. The three most common problems experienced by new families, along with our solutions to assist those individuals, are:

- (1) **Not taking advantage of existing Headquarters' resources—including people!** Spouses are invited to participate in Legal Affairs' portion of the Orientation Program offered weekly throughout the summer and bi-weekly in the Fall. You do not have to be accompanied by your spouse to participate—contact Legal Affairs representatives for the next date and time and to arrange escort if your spouse is on travel. The *Legal Affairs Handbook for Personnel* is an excellent resource of lessons learned, presented in a question and answer format, which is available in hard copy from Legal Affairs and also at www.act.nato.int; "What is ACT", "Newcomers". We welcome suggestions to improve this publication as it is designed to assist you!
- (2) **Lack of understanding of healthcare benefits, reimbursement requirements and the TRICARE Standard programme.** We suggest you meet with a Health Benefits Advisor (HBA) at a local military treatment facility (MTF), or attend the next Healthcare Brief provided by a HBA in the HQ SACT Staff Mess at 1300 on Tuesday, 15 September 2009. The healthcare brief will be the last brief provided at the "Chief of Staff Meet and Greet" scheduled from 1000 to 1400! Information regarding the COS' Meet and Greet can be found in this newsletter [on page 5](#) . Information regarding healthcare benefits and general information can also be found in the *Legal Affairs Handbook for Personnel* mentioned above, and also directly from Legal Affairs' representatives.
- (3) **Lack of understanding and preparation when dealing with US and Virginia state agencies (such as, Department of Motor Vehicles, Social Security Administration, etc.).** The bureaucracy and different requirements can be frustrating especially during the first few months of arrival. We are here to assist personnel and dependents in understanding the requirements and preparing documentation prior to visiting these offices.

Remember to manage your, and your family members', expectations! We often meet with personnel and family members who are struggling to adapt to the different cultures, customs, and obligations thrust upon them by the US system. Give yourself time to adapt to the US way of life, be proactive in educating yourself and enjoy your time in Hampton Roads. Please feel free to contact us with any questions: Kathy Bair (Kathy.Bair@act.nato.int; 757 747 3640) or Emma Hart (Emma.Hart@act.nato.int; 757 747 3228).

MEET & GREET WITH THE CHIEF OF STAFF

Staff members and their families are invited to meet and chat with Vice Admiral Cooling, HQ SACT Chief of Staff on

Tuesday September 15th
From 10am – 11am

And later to attend informative presentations on vital issues such as

TRICARE Healthcare: All aspects including an invaluable question & answer session
Healthcare SMEs: Health/shot requirements for school age students & family healthcare.
Disastrous Weather Brief – Security Awareness Brief

And for light relief a **Healthy Dish Contest**. Bring your Healthy Main Course, Snack or Dessert along with the recipe and then join in the taste test and voting!

Event Agenda

1000 – 1100 Meet & Greet with the Chief of Staff	1000 – 1230 Healthy Dish & Recipe contest
1100 – 1115 Disastrous Weather Brief	1120 – 1130 Security Awareness Brief
1100 – 1500 Conversation with Healthcare SMEs	1300 – 1400 Healthcare Brief

For more information on the day's events, please contact:
the Legal Assistance team on 1 757 747 3228 /3640 or the
Staff Training Team on 1 757 747 3343 / 3772

Club Name: Bowling

What we do: run a league of 12 teams with either 3 or 4 members per team. It is a 33 week league from September to May and each team bowls against every other team 3 times.

When we meet: Tuesday mornings from 0915hrs to 1200hrs

Where we meet: Little Creek Bowling Center, Little Creek Amphibious Naval Base, Shore Drive, Virginia Beach, VA 23531

Essential information for new members: We will be taking new members from September. Please sign up at the SOPC sign up meeting in September. NO EXPERIENCE IS REQUIRED. This is a FUN CLUB with ladies from almost every NATO country. There is always a prizing giving in June at the end of the season with prizes for best and worst teams as well as awards for a lot of other unusual things!! This is an excellent way to improve your English while having fun.

The funniest moment in the last

year: Silly hat meeting—see the picture! Just one of the many crazy ideas we have!



Contact: bowling@sopc.us

The above article was first published in the
May issue of the SOPC Newsletter

BOWLING CLUB IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Because the bowling league lasts for 33 weeks (Thanksgiving, Christmas and Spring Break excluded) the first meeting will be on **15th September—before the official SOPC Club Sign Up.**

Bowling costs \$8 per weekly session. This covers weekly costs and end of season prize money. You can pay monthly or annually.

So be QUICK

E-mail: bowling@sopc.us

Are you a newcomer and haven't joined the SOPC yet? Just explain when you e-mail and we can work it out!!!

OUR SOPC CHILDREN

The SOPC sponsors 4 children from India, Bolivia, Sri Lanka and the Philippines. These children have so little and now, thanks to all of you who purchase raffle tickets at events and support the SOPC, their lives may be a little better. So each time you are asked to buy a ticket at our monthly luncheons, think of "our children" and what those few dollars mean to them and their families. Karen Beetz, the SOPC Charities Coordinator has written the following report about **Prakash Damor**, his life, family, environment and development.

Prakash Damor from India



"My name is Prakash and I am living with my family in India. I am 6 years old and I am going to the primary school where I just learned how to write. My mother and father are both peasant farmers and me, I am the 'sandwich-child' between 2 brothers and 2 sisters!"



This is my mother with 3 of my siblings & me

1.) Where Prakash lives:

Prakash lives in the area of **Udaipur/Kotra** in the western part of India. He shares life with his family in a house made of mud and sticks with a tile and slate roof. The villages of this area consist mainly of scattered houses, sometimes spread over several miles of hilly terrain and are often divided into hamlets according to tribe and caste. These houses are decorated with traditional patterns.



The families live in a single room and use a verandah outside for cooking, eating and sleeping. Mother is the first to rise and prepares breakfast for the whole family. Then the rest of them rise, bathe, eat and prepare for the day. Usually they eat 'dal' (lentils), 'roti' (flatbread made from wheat or corn) and chillies. They only have vegetables although they are expensive and generally have to be brought from the markets several miles away. Prakash's family obtains water all year round from rivers, streams or springs, less than 1 mile away.

2.) Livelihoods:

Like Prakash's parents, the majority of families are involved in agriculture, most of which is rain fed and, therefore, highly dependent on the amount and timing of rainfall. Most of the land is not irrigated and farmers have to cultivate their land more than once in a year. Returns from agriculture are very low and most farmers are barely able to meet their own family's basic food needs. Almost all families rear some animals for their meat, milk and draught power.



3.) Social life:



Women generally have a particularly subordinate role in social and political processes: they are excluded from caste Panchayats (traditional form of local government) and have little say in household or community decision-making. While life can be difficult for everyone it is often much harder for women and children.

Prakash's **school** is about 45 minutes away from home. This region is characterized by a low education status in terms of adult literacy. This problem is made worse by the poor quality of education available in rural areas. Not only does this increase the rate at which children drop-out but it also means that children don't learn much in school.



The region is also characterized by a poor **health status** with high morbidity and infant death rates. For Prakash the nearest health facility is about 2 hours away. Fortunately - as I can see from his reports - Prakash and his family have been healthy and haven't suffered from any serious illness. Furthermore Prakash has had all his basic vaccinations.



4.) Traditional clothing:

Father and grandfather wear '*dhoti*' (a long sheet wrapped around the waist to form loose trousers), '*kurta*' (a cotton shirt) and a '*pagri*' (a turban). The mothers wear '*ghagra*' (long skirt), '*choli*' (a blouse) and '*chundri*' (a large, light shawl) and silver jewellery. The young girls wear colourful frocks and '*ghagra*' while the boys wear shorts and loose shirts. They mostly run around barefoot.

5.) Projects:

Although the circumstances in the Prakash's country aren't always perfect, we appreciate that in his direct area families are now participating in or benefiting from:

- | | |
|--|---|
| Training for community health workers | Scholarships for school children |
| Improvement or construction of dams | Provision and installation of grain mills |
| Activities to raise awareness on children's rights among children, parents and adults. | |

Club of the Month

INTERNATIONAL COOKING CLUB INTERNATIONAL COOKING CLUB



Last season saw for the first time, the International Cooking Club. It is a group of about 10 ladies, enrolled at the beginning of the SOPC activities in September, coming from different countries and willing to share cooking skills and experience, and taste new dishes. The club meets every other Friday (11.30am - 1.00pm) in a different place hosted by one of the members; every member has to host the club at least one time during the season and has to

demonstrate how to make a traditional recipe from her country. During the meetings, there is a very friendly and nice atmosphere as different cultures and traditions get together. The club also represents a great opportunity for everyone to make new friends. Last year we were able to taste many different recipes from countries such as Argentina, Belgium, Chile, France, Italy, Spain and The Netherlands. The initiative, taken by Luana the club's leader, has been a great success; all the ladies were very happy and grateful to each other for the fun and the exciting environment they had been experiencing. The last meeting, held at the end of May and at-



tended of Mrs Zappata our SOPC President, was a great success as everybody can see from the pictures. Each member prepared a favorite traditional recipe and all the dishes were displayed together on a very rich table. The final speech, read by Luana, concluded the season wishing all the best to the leaving ladies and saying "see you next year" to the others. To ensure that as many countries and traditions as possible can be represented within the club, not more than two members will be enrolled from the same nation in the upcoming season.



See you there and Enjoy your lunch!!!

Club leader: Luana Minniti Simone, e-mail address: cookingclub@sopc.us

LABOR DAY IN THE USA

Monday September 7th 2009 is Labor Day! Most people have the day off work, creating a 3 day weekend. Family and friends are barbequing in the back yard, fireworks are being set off and everyone seems to be going "football mad" –American Football of course. So what is this traditional American holiday and what is its history? This is what "Wikipedia" has to say about it.

Labor Day is a United States federal holiday observed on the first Monday in September (on September 7 in 2009). The holiday originated in 1882 as the Central Labor Union of New York City sought to create "a day off for the working citizens." Congress made Labor Day a federal holiday on June 28, 1894, two months after the May Day Riots of 1894. All 50 U.S. states have made Labor Day a state holiday.

Traditionally, Labor Day is celebrated by most Americans as the symbolic end of the summer.

Labor Day has been celebrated on the first Monday in September in the United States since the 1880s. The form for the celebration of Labor Day was outlined in the first proposal of the holiday: A street parade to exhibit to the public "the strength and esprit de corps of the trade and labor organizations," followed by a festival for the workers and their families. This became the pattern for Labor Day celebrations. Speeches by prominent men and women were introduced later, as more emphasis was placed upon the economic and civil significance of the holiday. Still later, by a resolution of the American Federation of Labor convention of 1909, the Sunday proceeding Labor Day was adopted as Labor Sunday and dedicated to the spiritual and educational aspects of the labor movement.

Today, Labor Day is often regarded as a day of rest and parades. Speeches or political demonstrations are more low-key than May 1 Labor Day celebrations in most countries, although events held by labor organizations often feature political themes and appearances by candidates for office, especially in election years. Forms of celebration include picnics, barbecues, fireworks displays, water sports, and public art events. Families with school-age children take it as the last chance to travel before the end of summer. Some teenagers and young adults view it as the last weekend for parties before returning to school. However, of late, schools have begun well before Labor Day, as early as July 24 in many urban districts, including major southern cities in the United States such as Atlanta, Miami, and Los Angeles. In addition, Labor Day marks the beginning of the NFL and college football seasons. The NCAA usually plays their first games the week before Labor Day, with the NFL traditionally playing their first game the Thursday following Labor Day.

So now that you are living in the USA, enjoy the history, the culture and the celebrations.

HAPPY LABOR DAY!

IT'S ALL IN THE TEAMWORK

In April this year, the SOPC monthly luncheon was hosted by Croatia who entertained, educated and fed us with great style and aplomb. It may come as a surprise then, to find out that Croatia have one of the smaller contingents at HQ SACT, which just goes to prove that great things can be achieved when we all work together.

Here are the traditional Croatian recipes for the delicious food we all enjoyed.

Appetizer:

Cottage Cheese with Green Onions & Boiled Eggs

Ingredients:

- 2 green onions, chopped fine
- 5 tbsp cottage cheese
- 1 hard-boiled egg (chopped)
- ¼ tsp salt



Instructions:

In a bowl, mix together the cottage cheese, chopped green onion, chopped egg and salt. Serve with rolls.

Main Dish:

Grilled Lamb Chops

Ingredients:

- 4 lamb chops
- ¼ cup olive oil
- 3 tbsp lemon juice
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- ½ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp oregano
- ¼ tsp basil
- 1/8 tsp pepper



Instructions

Place chops in shallow dish. Combine oil, lemon and seasonings. Pour over lamb chops, Marinate in refrigerator overnight, turning once. Grill, timing for personal taste. Heat marinade in a pan. Pour over chops before serving.

Side Dish:

Asparagus and Potatoes

Ingredients:

- 500g asparagus spears
- Juice of ½ a lemon
- 4 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 225g small new potatoes, boiled and cut into quarters lengthwise & tossed in a little olive oil.



Instructions:

Clean the asparagus and trim any white ends. Peel if necessary. Bring a large pan of salted water to the boil, drop in the asparagus and blanch 1-3 minutes until tender. Drain and immerse in very

cold water to prevent further cooking. This leaves the asparagus white green. Mix the lemon juice and olive oil together with the sea salt and black pepper. Add the boiled potatoes. Serve with grilled lamb chops.

Dessert

Apple Pie:

Ingredients:

- 6 small or 4 large apples
- 225g all purpose flour
- Pinch of salt
- 110g cold margarine or cold butter (or half of each)
- Cold water
- At least 85g sugar or sugar substitute. (The amount of sugar is determined by how sweet the apples are).
- ¾ teaspoon ground cinnamon (optional)
- One egg
- A teaspoon baking powder



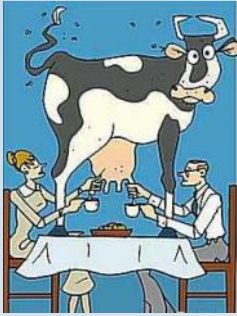
Instructions:

To make the pie dough, combine the flour and butter or margarine. Add a pinch of salt and 25g of sugar. Using your hands rub the ingredients together until it resembles bread crumbs. Add 2 tbsp of water. Now gently mix the water into the powdered mix until a paste is formed. Knead the dough until the consistency is smooth. Roll it into a ball, wrap it in film and let it rest in refrigerator for about 1 hr. Get your favorite pan. Using a rolling pin roll about 2/3 of the dough. Lift the dough gently and flop it over the pie pan. Spread the filling on dough. Roll out rest of the dough and gently flop it over to cover the filled pie dish.

Bake in a pre-heated oven of 230°C or 430°F for approx. ½ hour.

For the Filling, mix peeled, grated apples with some sugar. Adding cinnamon is an option.

The search for the
Best Breakfast in Hampton Roads
has begun!



It's time for you to take your appetite, your taste buds, and your reporter's notepad out to work and help us decide where to find the best "All American Big Breakfast".

Just answer the following questions and then write your honest opinion about the restaurant (or restaurants) you have visited. E-mail your report to newsletter@sopc.us by Monday 21st September and we will publish it in next month's review.

What restaurant did you visit?

Where is it?

What did you order?

On a scale of 1 – 5 (1 being terrible and 5 being fantastic), how did it taste?

On a scale of 1 – 5 (1 being terrible and 5 being fantastic), how was the coffee?

On a scale of 1 – 5 (1 being terrible and 5 being fantastic), what was the service like?

Did you have pancakes? And if so, on a scale of 1 – 5 (1 being terrible and 5 being fantastic) what were they like?

How much did your breakfast cost?

In 50 - 100 words, what was your overall impression of this restaurant?

WHAT SHALL WE REVIEW NEXT?

Would you like to know the best kennels, veterinary hospital or stables?

What about the best place to buy international food?

And Cars! Where would you recommend or NOT recommend buying a car from?

WE WANT YOUR OPINIONS.

E-mail your ideas for future reviews to: newsletter@sopc.us

SOPC LUNCH SCHEDULE

Date	Host Country	Reservations and Payment to be received by
7th October 2009	Club Sign Up Coffee Morning	29th September 2009 (See page 3)
4th November 2009	Italy	27th October 2009
2nd December 2009	The Netherlands	24th November 2010
13th January 2010	Canada	5th January 2010
10th February 2010	Germany	2nd February 2010
10th March 2010	Host Country Needed	2nd March 2010
14th April 2010 to be confirmed	Host Country Needed	6th April 2010
12th May 2010	Host Country Needed	4th May 2010

PRINCESS ANNE COUNTRY CLUB, 3800 PACIFIC AVENUE, VIRGINIA BEACH, VA

Lunch Cost: \$20

Check in: 10:30am / Start time 11:30am

Make your reservation at: reservations@sopc.us and send your cheque for \$20, made payable to “SOPC” to SOPC, 840 Five Point Road, Virginia Beach, VA 23454

You can check the “Am I Attending?” list on the website to ensure that your reservation has been made.

Please let the reservation team know if this is your last luncheon.

For more information on luncheon guidelines and procedures, please check the website: www.sopc.us

Write On!

We are always looking for interesting articles to publish in our newsletter. Don't worry about the English being perfect—We can sort that out. But we need your enthusiasm, your initiative and most importantly, your point of view. So get writing, snap a photograph or two and send it to newsletter@sopc.us. Just make sure it gets to us by the 20th of the Month.

Comments? Suggestions? Please e-mail us at the above address or write to: SOPC,
3752 Surry Road, Virginia Beach, VA 23455.

Thank you for your support
Elana & Maura
Your Newsletter Editors

