



TALKING TÜRKİYE

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NEWSLETTER

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Serving Izmir Air Station, Türkiye



Members of the 425th Air Base Squadron and North Atlantic Treaty Organization as well as volunteers hand out children's books, coloring books, colored pencils, crayons and puzzles to more than 100 children at a local children's hospital during a community outreach Jan. 23, 2015.

425th ABS, NATO members reach out to local children's hospital

Commentary by Tanju Varlıklı

425th Air Base Squadron Host Nation Adviser

Service members from the 425th Air Base Squadron and North Atlantic Treaty Organization, along with local national volunteers from the Izmir civilian community, reached out to a children's hospital Jan. 23 in Izmir, Türkiye.

The volunteers handed out children's books, coloring books, colored pencils, crayons and puzzles to more than 100 children who were being treated for a variety of different medical reasons in wards that included oncology, pediatric surgery and the infectious diseases units.

"The visit was an uplifting occasion," said Capt. David Bresser, 425th ABS director of operations. "A lot of people volunteered their time to get this important

outreach program done. The visit was quite an occasion for the children as well as our community members." "The support received from Team Izmir members for this project has been phenomenal and overwhelming."

The community prepared for about a month for the outreach collecting more than 300 gift items that were delivered along with the donations made by the 425th ABS and NATO service members.

Upon arrival at the children's hospital, visitors were greeted with smiling faces in the hospital wards as they interacted with their guests. When the children opened their gifts and saw the gifts presented by military members, there was an inexplicable expression on their faces.

Many in attendance said they were moved by the importance of the outreach program, to be able to show the kids some caring love from the Izmir military and civilian community, and grateful to be part of such a rewarding experience.

"Several children, who were healthy enough to walk, followed the gift giving entourage through the hallways of the hospital spreading the cheer to other children," said Chaplain (Capt.) Jeremy Bastian, 425th ABS installation chaplain. "This was an extraordinary day and I am touched by the response of all who took the time to do this for these children. This is a memory I know will go with these service men and women who gave so generously for years to come wherever they are assigned around the globe. More importantly, it is something the children will always remember."

Izmir chapel thanks the Izmir community

(See commentary on Page 3)

Action Line



The Action Line is your direct link to me. I use the Action Line to help identify and address your concerns when normal command and agency channels haven't been able to resolve them. To submit an action line, e-mail: action.line@izmir.af.mil, or complete a form at NATO Building # 1 or the Izmir Hilton Hotel entry control point.

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Squadron announces best of 2014

The winners of the squadron's annual awards were announced recently. Winners are:



Airman of the Year:
Senior Airman
Steven Ferguson



NCO of the Year:
Tech. Sgt.
Matthias Blitz



SNCO of the Year:
Master Sgt.
Nathan Yeaworth



CGO of the Year:
Capt.
David Bresser



Civilian of the Year:
(Category I):
Yusuf Selnur



Civilian of the Year:
(Category II):
Tanju Varlıklı

Izmir chapel thanks the Izmir community

Commentary by Ch, Capt. Jeremy Bastian
425th Air Base Squadron Chaplain

“On Behalf of a Grateful Nation...”

These are the words which were carefully delivered by one of our non-commissioned officers to a widow of an Air Force retiree whose funeral we conducted last week. Since the NCO passed the tri-fold American flag and spoke those words in reverence, I have not stopped thinking about gratitude.

I have come to understand gratitude as an attitude of taking nothing in life for granted. Yet, the greatest lesson I have learned since arriving in Turkey is that I have indeed taken much in life for granted and my attitude was anything but gracious. As I have been humbled by life here, I have slowly realized my gratitude for some of the simplest things in life: family, friends and you.

I say you because the U.S. Air Force Chaplain Corps is only here because you decided to serve your country and without you, the chapel staff would not be here.

We are grateful for your service and what you do every day. Moreover, your support for the chapel and its mission at Izmir has gone beyond words.

Over the previous week, we hosted the United States Air Forces in Europe command chaplain, conducted a funeral service, performed a community service outreach to a children's hospital and held two worship services. We could not do these things without you and your support. You embody professionalism and it is an honor to serve with you.

As my gratitude continues to grow each day, I was compelled to write these words so that you would be able to know how your actions make a direct and significant impact on the lives of others around you.

In thinking about these things, I close by saying this; “On behalf of a grateful chapel staff, we say thank you for sacrifice to serve God and Country.”



Locals of Karşıyaka buy Simit from one of the Simit centers on the Lovers' Lane in Karşıyaka. Simit shops like this are popular throughout Izmir.

Simit Palaces

Story by Tanju Varlıklı

425th Air Base Squadron Host Nation Adviser

There is always a chance for a good breakfast in big cities like Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir. In Istanbul, one can enjoy their breakfast at Sultanahmet Square. Its vicinity is surrounded with little cafeterias in front of structures that are full of history. In Ankara, it is the Kızılay Square and in Izmir, it is the First Kordon, Pasaport, Alsancak, Konak and Karşıyaka districts.

Locals of Izmir, and especially the university students, prefer having breakfast at the “Simit Palaces” (called “Simit Sarayı” in Turkish) before, after or on their way to school. Those, who want to chat or have to wait for their friends, stop by at these big cafeterias. The “Simit Palaces” have become famous Turkish fast-food stops for many people – not only for breakfast, but for lunch as well. These places serve around 60 different types of products, mostly breads filled with chocolate, olive, crushed sesame seeds and many other fillings.

A healthy breakfast consisting of one Simit (called “Gevrek” in Izmir as well), which is a sesame bread favorite of locals, a piece of cheese, and a small glass of tea will not cost you more than three Turkish lira. Simit is a kind of ring-shaped short bread covered in sesame seeds sold in almost every district of Izmir, and is loved by many of the locals.

Afiyet olsun! Enjoy your meal!