

# THE WIRED

A JTF Journal

**Joint Medical Group reload**

Fresh Sailors for the mission

**Veteran's Day Weekend**

Softball and Barbecues



# Respect for all

**Army 1<sup>st</sup> Sgt.  
Jose Perez**

525<sup>th</sup> Military Police Battalion

First I want to give thanks to God for 24 years of service in the Puerto Rico National Guard.

I began my military career March 13, 1984 with Bravo Battery, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 162<sup>nd</sup> Field Artillery in Hato Rey, Puerto Rico. I served 20 years in that unit before being transferred to Alpha Battery of the same battalion. In 2003 I deployed to Vicenza, Italy, home of the 173<sup>rd</sup> Parachuting Brigade. And now I am in Guantánamo Bay, Cuba. I learned a lot in these two deployments and placed more emphasis on respect to the Soldier.

For me, respect is one of the most important things that a Trooper should develop as a leader. The seven Army values are important, but each leader may emphasize one value more than another. I place more emphasis on the value "Respect." During this deployment, the Soldiers in our unit – including officers and noncommissioned officers – all respect each other. I emphasize respect among our NCOs most of all.

Consideration goes along with respect – consideration to individual Soldiers in how we interact with them and our expectations for them. Consideration connects respect to the other Army values, such as "Honor." Honor helps each Soldier achieve his commitment to the unit and his country.

Soldiers must show respect to their superiors, but superiors can win respect by their professionalism. Leaders must provide the example to help Soldiers avoid mistakes and provide training and correction when mistakes are made.

On this deployment I have Soldiers who have known me for 10, 15 and 20 years in the National Guard. These Soldiers know my style and how I work with the unit. There is respect between myself and the officers of my unit. On some occasions I have differences of opinion with my captain, but we arrive at a decision that does not impact our respect for each other or the respect of our Troops.

God willing, we will complete this deployment without misfortune. It has been a year of considerable learning for all.

At present, our relatives in Puerto Rico have earned all our respect. Because of their sacrifice of being without loved ones while we serve here, they are the true heroes of the country.

I respect all the Soldiers with whom I work every day. We are proud to be part of the Joint Task Force mission at Guantánamo Bay "Up to the Hilt," as our unit motto says. 🇺🇸



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### COVER:

**Softballs sit ready to be used for the Veteran's Day co-ed softball tournament, held on the new softball field at Cooper Field Sports Complex, Nov. 3. The seven-team tournament was the first official tournament to be played on the new field. -JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Spc. Megan Burnham**



The WIRE is the official news magazine of Joint Task Force Guantanamo. It is produced by the JTF Public Affairs Office to inform and educate the Troopers of JTF Guantanamo through news, features, command guidance, sports and entertainment. The WIRE seeks to provide maximum disclosure with minimum delay with regards to security, accuracy, propriety and policy. This DoD news magazine is an authorized publication for the members of the Department of Defense. Contents of The WIRE are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, or Joint Task Force Guantanamo. It is printed by the Document Automation & Production Service with a circulation of 1000.

# New faces, same mission in JMG

**The Joint Medical Group of U.S. Naval Station Guantanamo Bay provides safe, humane and ethical medical care to detained enemy combatants.** - JTF Guantanamo file photo by Navy Petty Officer 1<sup>st</sup> Class Josh Treadwell

## **Army Spc. Megan Burnham**

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

The Joint Medical Group of U.S. Naval Station Guantanamo Bay is currently going through an organization reload as 95 percent of their staff finish their six-month tour and return to their home duty station.

“The outgoing group has performed in an exceptional manner, improving both the efficiency and quality of care provided here,” said Navy Capt. Bruce Meneley. “I feel that they have overcome every obstacle that they have been presented and fully succeeded in every aspect of their mission.”

The JMG staff provides 24/7 medical care including general surgical, dental care, preventive medicine, routine care, mental health services, specialty care, and mass casualty support. The staff also provides general and mental healthcare services to all JTF and active duty service members.

“The Guantanamo Naval Hospital provides a significant degree of staff support whom we refer to as ‘dual-hatters,’” said Meneley. “These members not only provide their various services to the patients at the Naval Hospital, but also to the detainees and staff of the JTF. This also includes the

commander of the JMG.”

The JMG is staffed primarily by U.S. Navy individual augmentees; however, it is also supported by members from the Army and the Air Force.

The mission of JMG is to provide safe, humane and ethical medical care to detained enemy combatants while also providing a comprehensive standard of care to all JTF staff.

“I feel the mission of the JMG contributes to the JTF mission in two very important ways,” said Meneley. “It allows the JTF to focus on their mission knowing that all their medical needs will be met. Additionally, it assures that the detainees receive the appropriate level of medical care enabling the JTF to focus on its mission here.”

As their replacements arrive in Guantanamo, many of them will be shipmates from the U.S. Naval Hospital Jacksonville, Fla. while others come from both stateside and overseas commands.

“I have every confidence that the incoming group will continue to exceed all expectations and overcome any obstacles that we are presented with,” said Meneley. “Although the JMG has performed in an exemplary manner, like any other unit or organization, there is always room for future improvement.” ☆



**The JMG pharmacy is well stocked to support medical care for detainees. If the pharmacy doesn't have a certain medicine in stock, the U.S. Naval Hospital Guantanamo supplies them with what is needed.** - JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Pfc. Carlynn Knaak



# Legal counsel for those in need

**Army Pfc.  
Eric Liesse**

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

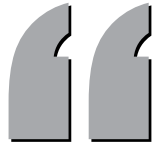
For Troopers deployed here to Joint Task Force Guantanamo, life didn't stop upon mobilization. Some Troopers still have mortgages to pay down, car loans to pay, taxes to file, or votes to cast. These issues can bring up legal questions and require guidance from learned legal professionals.

Thankfully, JTF's Staff Judge Advocate Office – one of the largest SJA offices in the military – has the personnel those troubled Troopers need. From guidance on the inner-workings of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA), to help with handling paperwork with a divorce, the legal assistance officials with the SJA can assist any JTF Trooper with a large array of issues.

"We can help on any type of issue [service members] may have on the civilian side," said Army Lt. Col. Alfred Perez, the SJA's chief of legal assistance.

"The purpose of [SJA legal counsel] is to allow the Troopers to focus on their mission, so they don't need to focus on their legal woes," said Navy Petty Officer 1<sup>st</sup> Class Jacob Richardson, the noncommissioned officer in charge of the Military Justice Office.

With the numerous Reservists and National Guardsmen serving the JTF, many issues the office sees are with civilian job situations and employers. These usually fall under the umbrella of issues covered by the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) and the SCRA, a 2003 expansion and revision



**"The purpose of [SJA legal counsel] is to allow the Trooper to focus on their mission, so they don't need to focus on their legal woes."**

**– Navy Petty Officer 1<sup>st</sup> Class  
Jacob Richardson**

over the Soldiers' and Sailors' Civil Relief Act of 1940.

The SCRA gives many benefits to deployed Troopers by postponing, lessening or eliminating an assortment of legal requirements at home to allow the Trooper to focus on the mission. It can lower current-standing loans to a 6-percent interest rate, dissolve a home or automotive lease, or even put a stay on civil court proceedings until after a deployment, among many other things.

"It offers many protections to service members while on active duty," said Perez.

However, utilizing the SCRA is not automatic in all cases. Perez said Troopers must present a "material effect for their ability to defend themselves" to put a stay on legal proceedings. This means the active duty orders must hinder their chance at a fair trial. Otherwise, the judge presiding over the case is not required to invoke the

SCRA to stay the proceedings.

Although the SCRA covers a large number of issues, discussing its legal options with Troopers is not the legal counsel's only job, Richardson said. SJA representatives also give monthly new comers' briefings on the services of the SJA for Troopers. It also helps other JTF commands by putting together basic presentations on legal counsel, gives Law of War briefings, and reviews unit policies drafted by any commander to verify "legal language."

Another main facet of the legal office is providing defense guidance and services to Troopers who are involved in judicial cases covered under the Uniform Code of Military Justice. However, it's not from the same people as general legal guidance would be.

"Since I work for the command, I wouldn't be able to provide defense services," said Perez. That is why Navy Lt. Geraldo Padilla, who serves as the Naval Station's officer-in-charge of Naval Legal Service Office and is the only defense lawyer for service members on Guantanamo, comes to JTF twice each week to provide legal defense counsel. This takes away any "conflict of interest" that representation from a member of the command would bring.

"[Lt. Padilla] does it out of courtesy. He's not obligated to do that. He's obligated to NAVSTA, not to JTF," said Richardson, stressing how helpful Padilla is.

There are many services the SJA offers to Troopers, running the entire spectrum of legal issues. The legal assistance office gives JTF Troopers the guidance they need to calm their legal woes. ♡

## JAG CORPS

JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL'S CORPS



# Leaders of today



Non-commissioned officers from the 525<sup>th</sup> raise their right hand and recite the NCO creed.

## Navy Petty Officer 2<sup>nd</sup> Class Jayme Pastoric JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Soldiers from the 525<sup>th</sup> Military Police Battalion were inducted into the Non-Commissioned Officers community Nov. 7, during a ceremony held at Joint Task Force Troopers' Chapel.

NCOs are charged with leading junior Soldiers into the future and setting a standard of excellence for others to follow.

"The job of being an NCO in the U.S. Army is without peer," said 525<sup>th</sup> Command Sgt. Maj. Gary Fowler. "Being a sergeant is the best job someone can have. I would rather be called an NCO than a CEO."

According to *American Military History*, an Army historical series, the tradition of commemorating the passing of a Soldier into an NCO can be traced to the army of Fredrick the Great. Frederick William II, King of the Prussian empire, is considered the best commander of the European Enlightenment. Before a Soldier could be recognized as a NCO, he was required to stand four watches, one every four days.

During the first watch, Soldiers with the rank of private appeared and claimed a gift of bread and brandy. The company NCOs came to the second watch to share beer and tobacco.

The company first sergeant reserved

his visit for the third watch, where he was presented a glass of wine and a piece of tobacco on a tin plate. It was during the fourth watch that the NCO figuratively crossed the time-honored line and became a NCO.

During the 525<sup>th</sup> M.P. ceremony the new NCOs raised their right hand and repeated the NCO creed as read by Fowler. The NCOs then marched on stage and organized into formation to begin their induction process.

Fowler presented the inductees with a signed copy of the NCO creed, the NCO charge and the NCO guide.

He shook their hands and gave them the challenge of carrying out the two most important missions they have: training and taking care of Soldiers.

"You are entering into a life of increased responsibilities, increased expectations, increased demands and late night and early morning phone calls," said Fowler. "You will find at times that every bone in your body will tell you to stay in bed and stay asleep, but that your mind and heart demand you get up and take care of your Soldiers."

During the ceremony Staff Sgt. Ingrid Ryan told the new NCOs the history behind the NCO creed.

The creed of the NCOs has served as a guiding document for NCOs since its

inception in 1973, though its concepts have always been a part of the corps.

Each major paragraph begins with three letters: N, C and O. These letters have inspired noncommissioned officers and have served as a compass to guide them down the right paths.

Today, our newest NCOs will affirm their commitment to the professionalism of our corps and become a part of the "backbone" of the Army, said Ryan.

Fowler gave the NCOs one last bit of advice: Never believe you have become all you can be, never stop learning, and never stop listening to your Soldiers.★



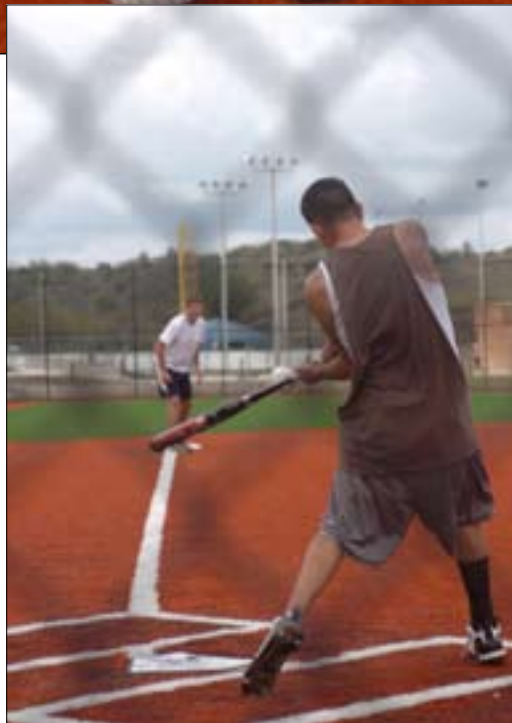
525<sup>th</sup> Command Sgt. Maj. Gary Fowler recites the NCO creed to new NCOs. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Spc. Erica Isaacson



# NAVSTA secures softball title



The winning team NAVSTA Security celebrates with a winning photo and trophy.



A Team Beef player hits the ball that brings his teammate at third home, adding another run. Team Beef beat the Vipers, but lost to NEGB later in the Veteran's Day co-ed softball tournament.

## Army Spc. Megan Burnham

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

On a day pestered by cloud cover and an occasional drop of rain from the edges of Hurricane Paloma, a crack of thunder from the winning home run ended the first softball tournament at the new Cooper Field Sports Complex at U.S. Naval Station Guantanamo Bay.

The NAVSTA Security team finished the tournament undefeated after a thrilling 15-14 victory against the GTMO Untouchables. Tied 14-14 in the bottom of the seventh inning, a home run by Matthew Harris won the first place trophy.

"I knew the Untouchables were going to be our best competition," said Heath Coulter of NAVSTA Security. "They are a great team and I look forward to playing them again."

Seven teams participated in the Veteran's Day co-ed softball tournament, which started at 10 a.m. on Saturday. The double-elimination tournament was played in one-pitch fashion, with games lasting approximately 30 minutes. Many enjoyed this style of tournament due to its fast-action pace and high level of intensity.

"The one pitch rule can be explained in three words," said Roxanne Gutierrez of team GTMO Untouchables. "Pressure is on!"

In one-pitch softball, each batter is given only a single pitch to try to get on base. If the pitch is not put into play, then the strike or foul ball means an out for the batter. When a ball is called, it is an immediate walk to first base. If the ball is put into play, then the game plays as normal.

There were fewer injuries from sliding into base as the playing field was artificial turf instead of coral-filled sand or gravel. After sliding, Shawn Swiatocha, a Trooper with the 474<sup>th</sup> Expeditionary Civil Engineering Squadron, compared to the feeling of getting a rug burn.

"This field is better than other fields because it is a lot slicker and you won't get slowed up with friction when sliding," said Swiatocha. "But you still need to be wearing long pants or tall socks."

The next opportunity to play on the new softball field is the upcoming Turkey Gobbler 1-Pitch softball tournament for both men's and women's divisions, Nov. 28 and 29. Sign-up deadline is 5 p.m. Nov. 24 at Denich Gym. For more information, contact Robert Neuman at ext. 2113. 🏠

# Pointless, funny, weird: True Coen



## Army Pfc. Eric Liesse

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Joel and Ethan Coen have had an odd career thus far. They did odd-ball dark comedies such as "The Big Lebowski," and Academy-Award winning crime thrillers such as "No Country for Old Men." Their latest outing - which they again wrote, directed and produced - fits right in the middle of this entertainingly weird spectrum.

"Burn After Reading" is about as weird and convoluted as one would expect and hope from the Coen Brothers. It boasts a high-profile ensemble cast with mega-stars George Clooney, John Malkovich, Tilda Swinton, Frances McDormand and Brad Pitt. Think "Ocean's Eleven" with more blood.

The movie kicks off when Malkovich's character, a high-up CIA analyst, storms out of his job. He leaves after being demoted for a drinking problem he doesn't see, to which he asserts that when compared to his Mormon boss, everyone has a drinking problem.

Malkovich attempts to tell his high-energy, pediatrician wife (Swinton), but she's far too busy pleasing company and cheating on him with womanizing Treasury Department agent (Clooney). Swinton is planning a divorce behind her husband's back, while Clooney spends his time running and getting followed by an ominous black sedan.

Malkovich, who already seems unstable, gets thrown over the edge when two unwitting Hardbodies Gym employees get their hands on sensitive CIA intelligence

with Malkovich's name all over it. McDormand plays a love-starved woman who believes she just needs a little plastic surgery to get herself reinvented enough to land a boyfriend, but needs the cash to cover them.

McDormand's ridiculous buddy-in-crime is Pitt in one of his flat-out funniest roles yet, though the role is rather small. When he is onscreen, his constant energy, neurotic nature and love for biking will have audience members doubled over laughing. Pitt plays well off McDormand, who is determined to get her money and does not hold back.

Like any good ensemble comedy, "Burn After Reading" has so many intertwining plot points that it sometimes feels convoluted. This almost helps the movie, however. Often, you will try to figure out exactly what is going on while it jumps from one character to the next. Yet, the confusion adds to the purecraziness of all the characters, making their quirks and half-planned ideas more interesting.

Another aspect of multi-plot stories like this is that

it has a few dry spots. Some scenes seem like filler that move the story without much humor involved. However, these are few and pass by quickly.

"Burn After Reading" is a dark, twisted, convoluted film that never really finishes or has a point. Yet, like a good episode of "Seinfeld," you'll laugh at the entire thing. ☆

**R**  
**1 hours, 37 minutes**

**Rating: ★★★★★☆**





# Ready...set...

JTF Guantanamo photos by Pfc. Eric Liesse

# Grill



The Beef



The Beef

With flavored smoke and meticulously lit fires filling their grills, participants of Morale, Welfare and Recreation's Veteran's Day Barbecue Competition used their most flavorful techniques to take home a winning trophy.

Five teams competed in five categories: best beef brisket, best pork ribs, best poultry, best fish and best booth presentation. Contestants arrived several hours before the 4:30 p.m. finish, some as early as before 11 a.m., to get their meats just perfect for the judges.

The winners in each category were:

- Beef brisket: "Still Smokin' in Texas"
- Pork ribs: "Still Smokin' in Texas"
- Best fish: "O'Kelly's Irish Pub team"
- Best poultry: "The Beef"
- Best overall area display: "The Beef"



Still Smokin' in Texas



O'Kelly's Irish Pub team





Army Sgt. 1st. Class Jorge Moreira teaches salsa dancing at the Cuban club on Friday nights. Salsa is a popular type of dance developed in New York City by Caribbean-Hispanic immigrants.

# Dance your Fridays away!

## Navy Petty Officer 3<sup>rd</sup> Class Benjamin Dennis

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

If you're looking to add some spice to your weekend, swing by the Windjammer for a dose of Latin flavor with an evening of authentic Hispanic dancing.

Every Friday night at 9 p.m. a Latin American dance class is held in the Windjammer ballroom, offering a variety of instruction in dances ranging from salsa to reggaeton. With a music selection of more than 20,000 songs, Army Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class Jorge Moreira keeps the dance floor busy with a variety of at least 100 songs a night. Moreira, along with Army Captains Monica Gomez and Lara Nunez, act as teachers and dance partners for beginners and more advanced participants.

"Dancing is a great way to meet people,

have fun and exercise," said Nunez. "I think everyone should try to learn at least one new skill while they are here at Gitmo."

"I like to play, dance and give beginners lessons of salsa because to me it is a way to promote my culture," explained Moreira. "I feel that by dancing I can connect with people who otherwise I never would have met. It brings us together."

Moreira's favorite style of dancing, salsa, is named for a type of Latin American music and dance developed in New York City in the 1970s with roots in Cuban and Dominican culture. It was then made popular by artists such as Tito Puente and Celia Cruz. Salsa, mambo, bachata and merengue, each find their roots in African, Spanish and Taino Indian influences. Salsa has become popular around the world from the Americas to Europe, Asia and Australia, often taking on different styles and forms

in each place.

Salsa involves three-count steps with mostly front to back motions. Merengue employs strong hip and fast-paced two-step movements, while bachata has a mellow tempo with side-to-side motions.

The class not only focuses on Caribbean music and influences, but Central and North American music such as Tejano, which originated in Texas and was made popular by singer Salina Quintanilla. Tejano is a faster-paced country western, Texas-Mexican style of music employing accordions and German polka mix to its Mexican roots.

"The teachers are patient. If you make a mistake you laugh and start up again," says Brig. Gen. Greg Zanetti, deputy commander of Joint Task Force Guantanamo Bay and recent dance student. "There's no reason to be embarrassed." ☆



# Follow the Leader



**Coast Guard Chief Warrant Officer Doug Van Oort, a Leadership and Management School instructor, talks with Troopers about leadership techniques and how to apply them.**



**Coast Guard Petty Officer 2<sup>nd</sup> Class Marc Slagle works with an inter-service team to build a tower out of Tinker Toys as part of a class exercise that helps Troopers to identify various alternative leadership strategies, effectiveness and mission success.**

## **Army Staff Sgt. Emily J. Russell**

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

At some point in a military service member's career, attending a professional development school becomes necessary in order to advance. However, advancement should not be the only motivating factor for self-improvement. As a leader or future leader, looking to those you lead and assessing your ability and skills as a leader and motivator can keep you tuned to the needs of your team.

Coast Guard Port Security Unit 307 held the Leadership and Management School last week as a training course for enlisted Troopers looking for self-improvement and advancement. The course, designed specifically for the Coast Guard and mandatory for rank advancement, was open to all service members and attended by members of the Coast Guard, Army, Air Force and Navy.

"This course is about getting your people to work hard for you," said Coast Guard Chief Warrant Officer Doug Van Oort, a LAMS instructor from the Leadership Development Center.

"There are various stages of group development and it's important for a leader to understand their role during each stage so they can effectively manage their people."

Realizing different people require different types of leadership and applying the appropriate style is strategic leadership – a key concept of the course. Troopers learn to assess the needs of the service member and determine whether they require motivation or additional instruction. Practical exercises throughout the course helped to demonstrate how various styles of leadership can affect a group of people.

"When a group of people know how to do a job and the leader stands over them telling them how to do it, [that] causes service members to lose motivation," said Van Oort. "It's a strategy mismatch."

"The Coast Guard is just like anywhere else – we want to hang on to good people," he continued. "Someone may enjoy doing their job, and love [their branch of service] but if their supervisor treats them poorly, they may get out [of the military]. We can improve supervision and retain good people."

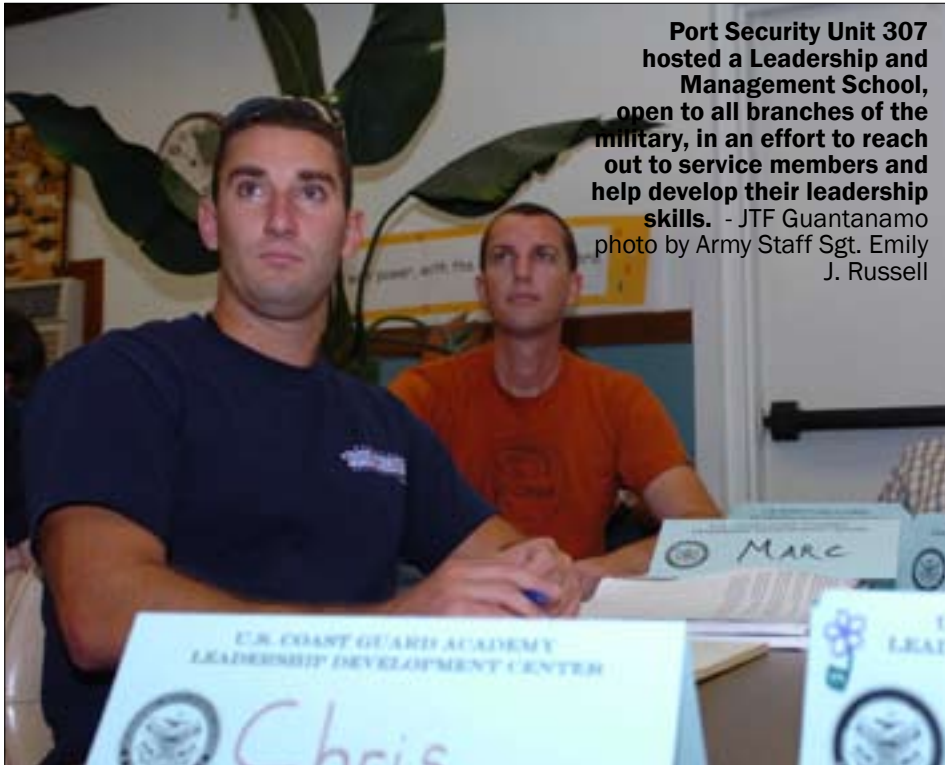
An exercise using Tinker Toys allowed Troopers to experience different forms of leadership. Each group received the Tinker Toys with various instructions, but with the same goal to achieve. The groups were then tasked to build a tower.

"We're trying to demonstrate the assessment of different leadership strategies

See **STRATEGIES/12**



# Applying innovation



**Port Security Unit 307 hosted a Leadership and Management School, open to all branches of the military, in an effort to reach out to service members and help develop their leadership skills.** - JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Staff Sgt. Emily J. Russell

## STRATEGIES from 11

used for different tasks,” said Coast Guard Chief Petty Officer Pam Robin, a LAMS instructor. “You wouldn’t use the same leadership style when defusing a bomb versus putting together Tinker Toys. This exercise helps [Troopers] see how using the wrong leadership strategy can have a negative impact upon team performance.”

Communication is another key element emphasized in this course. Knowing how to talk to Troopers, effectively communicate tasks or address behavioral issues is essential to team management.

“I learned how to communicate better with junior and senior service members as well as how to approach problems, assess member personalities and address issues they may have,” said Coast Guard Petty Officer 3<sup>rd</sup> Class Brian Jackson. “I can help prepare junior members to step up into supervisor positions, and hopefully help them personally and professionally with what I’ve learned in this class.”

“Being a leader doesn’t start at the top,” said Navy Petty Officer 3<sup>rd</sup> Class Cedric Davis. “This course should be offered to more junior members, I believe leadership should start at the lowest level possible. Everyone can be a leader.” ☆

## NEW WAY TO SMOKE

### TOUCH A BUTTON! LIGHTED CIGARETTES COME OUT OF MAGIC CASE

IMAGINE this! You take a beautiful case from your vest pocket! Automatically a cigarette and a flame appear. You puff... and a LIGHTED, ready-to-smoke cigarette is delivered right between your lips. Smokers crowd ‘round when you use it... they gaze in wonder... everyone of them wants a Magic Case...

But what they don’t know is that millions of Americans have health problems caused by smoking. Cigarette smoking and exposure to tobacco smoke cause an estimated average of 438,000 premature deaths each year in the United States. Of these premature deaths, about 40 percent are from cancer, 35 percent are from heart disease and stroke, and 25 percent are from lung disease. Smoking is the leading cause of premature, preventable death in this country.

**Prevention works!**

For more information, please email [safety@jftgmo.southcom.mil](mailto:safety@jftgmo.southcom.mil)

Information provided by The National Cancer Institute ([www.cancer.gov](http://www.cancer.gov))







## Make a hit!

A member from team “Exhibitionists” makes a hit during the Veteran’s Day softball tournament. Seven teams battled it out during the six-hour tournament to determine a winner. All teams earned the distinction of playing in the first tournament to be played at the new Cooper Field Sports Complex. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Spc. Megan Burnham

## Boots on the Ground

by Army Spc. Megan Burnham

What does Veteran’s Day mean to you?

Navy Petty Officer 3<sup>rd</sup>  
Class Ariel Jones-knuckle



“It’s my birthday and a day of remembrance”

Army 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Lino Milan



“It gives us the opportunity to protect and defend our freedom.”

Navy Petty Officer 1<sup>st</sup>  
Class Rebecca Provost



“It means remembering those who have made the ultimate sacrifice.”

Navy Seaman Johnathan  
Silva



“It means taking a day out of the year to remember those who have served in our military.”



# Here there be dragons

**Navy Lt. Cmdr.  
Clint Pickett**

JTF Command Chaplain

Some of the Navy types here at Guantanamo just might know that the command crest of the guided missile destroyer USS Arleigh Burke (DDG 51) includes a depiction of St. George, with his horse and his lance. But the rest of us may well be saying, “Who in the heck is St. George?”

A number of English, Greek and Russian Christians celebrate St. George’s Day each year. For most people, St. George is a shadowy figure from 1,800 years ago who, according to legend, fought and killed a dragon. The legend has it that the city of Silene in Libya was besieged by a fierce dragon. Now, instead of trying to destroy the dragon, the people of the city tried to appease the dragon with sheep and goats. Each day the dragon would come and take the hapless sheep or goat.

Instead of satisfying the dragon, the daily offerings only served to increase the size and appetite of the dragon. After all the concessions failed, the king decided to offer the princess – his own daughter – as a sacrifice. According to the legend, as the girl was awaiting her fate, St. George happened to be riding by, armed

with a lance and a short Roman sword. When the dragon showed up, St. George killed the dragon, and the life of the princess was spared.

As history, there are some difficulties with the story. Not least, what if there is no such thing as dragons? As an allegory, however, the story shows the lie that evil can be bought off through concessions. Satan thrives on compromise, as churches have discovered throughout history. I thought of British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain just before World War II, who hoped the concession of the Sudetenland to Hitler would lead to peace. But the concessions only emboldened Hitler.

Dragon or no, history suggests that St. George was an impressive figure. Born in Palestine, his father was a high-ranking officer in the Roman army at the time of Emperor Deocletian. George followed in his father’s footsteps and by the age of 21 had served in campaigns in Egypt and Persia. George finally became tribune of the Imperial Guard, which brought him into contact with the emperor.

Emperor Diocletian thought of himself as a god, and saw Christians as a threat to his ambitions. In a time of persecution, St. George set out on a mission to appeal for clemency on behalf of his fellow Christians. He had already resigned from the army because of the killings of Christians in Britain, many of them Roman soldiers. Without compassion, Diocletian had St. George tried and executed in 303 A.D.

While there is much we do not know about St. George, his name and his confession against idolatry and evil continue to inspire people today. Dragons that threaten our integrity and character do indeed exist, even here at Guantanamo Bay! The temptation to compromise and make concessions is very real in our lives and our personal relationships. May the example of St. George serve as an inspiration and encouragement in your life! ☆



**St. George Fighting the Dragon** by master painter and architect of the Italian High Renaissance, Raphael. (1505; Oil on wood)

## JTF CHAPEL SCHEDULED PROGRAMS

### Catholic Mass

**Sunday:** 7 a.m. Confession  
7:30 Mass

**Wednesday:** 11 a.m. Mass

### Protestant Worship

**Sunday:** 9 a.m.

**Spanish Protestant Worship**

**Sunday:** Noon



# Taking opportunities

**Army Staff Sgt.  
Gretel Sharpee**

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Imagine you had no choice in your job, you were told what you were going to do every day of your life, and you had no input. Imagine also that you and your wife were told how many children you could have, when you could have those children and where you were going to live.

For Americans this is hard to imagine because we wouldn't dare let anyone make those decisions for us. But for citizens of China, that is the normal way life carries on, and until Navy Petty Officer 1<sup>st</sup> Class Xiaoming Guo was 26, that was his life.

"If I had never been given the freedom to pick my job, I would have never missed not being able to," said Guo, a storekeeper currently supporting Joint Task Force Guantanamo's Commissions Support Group. "After I came to the U.S. though,

I immediately embraced the tremendous freedoms and endless opportunities which were offered to me."

Guo came to the U.S. with his wife in 1986 when he was 26 years old. He couldn't understand any English, "not even a simple sentence like, 'sign your name here.'" After staying with a friend of his family for the first eight days in country, Guo was dropped off at the U.S. International University with \$140 in his pocket.

A musician in China, Guo played music in exchange for room and board and English classes. Within a year Guo was able to pass the Test of English as a Foreign Language test, which allowed him to apply and be accepted into Coleman College. He was a student there until he received his Master's degree in Information Technology.

In 1996, Guo was working at San Diego State University as a library assistant when he saw a Navy Reserve recruiting event taking place on campus. After hearing

about the training, education and retirement benefits the Navy had to offer, Guo signed up, even though he was still a citizen of China.

"People in the service care for each other and look out for each other. You don't see that in the civilian world," said Guo. "[Being in the Navy] has been a great experience for me – I am grateful for everything."

Finally in 1999 Guo applied for U.S. citizenship. After six-to-eight months, his paperwork was approved and he participated in the swearing-in ceremony.

"While reading the pledge, my heart started pounding, there was a lump in my throat, my blood circulated very fast – I told myself it's worth it, all my effort paid off," said Guo, while recounting the memory.

He continued, "I'm very proud that I can serve in the military and have this opportunity to work in the Military Commissions office. We are making history here at Guantanamo Bay." ☆








**Navy Petty Officer 3<sup>rd</sup> Class Matthew Long, a steel worker with Naval Mobile Construction Battalion Four, cuts through a metal support of a bridge under construction here, Nov. 7.** – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Spc. Erica Isaacson



**Motorcycle-owning residents of Guantanamo Bay gathered Nov. 11 for a ride in honor of Veteran's Day.** – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Staff Sgt. Gretel Sharpee



**To ensure every Soldier who couldn't be present in the New Mexico unit photo felt included, Army Brig. Gen. Gregory Zanetti took the time for a photo with Spc. Brittany Valerio in his Dress Blues. In good spirit Valerio coined the general with a quarter.** – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Adam Bradley

**Around the**  
  
**JTF**