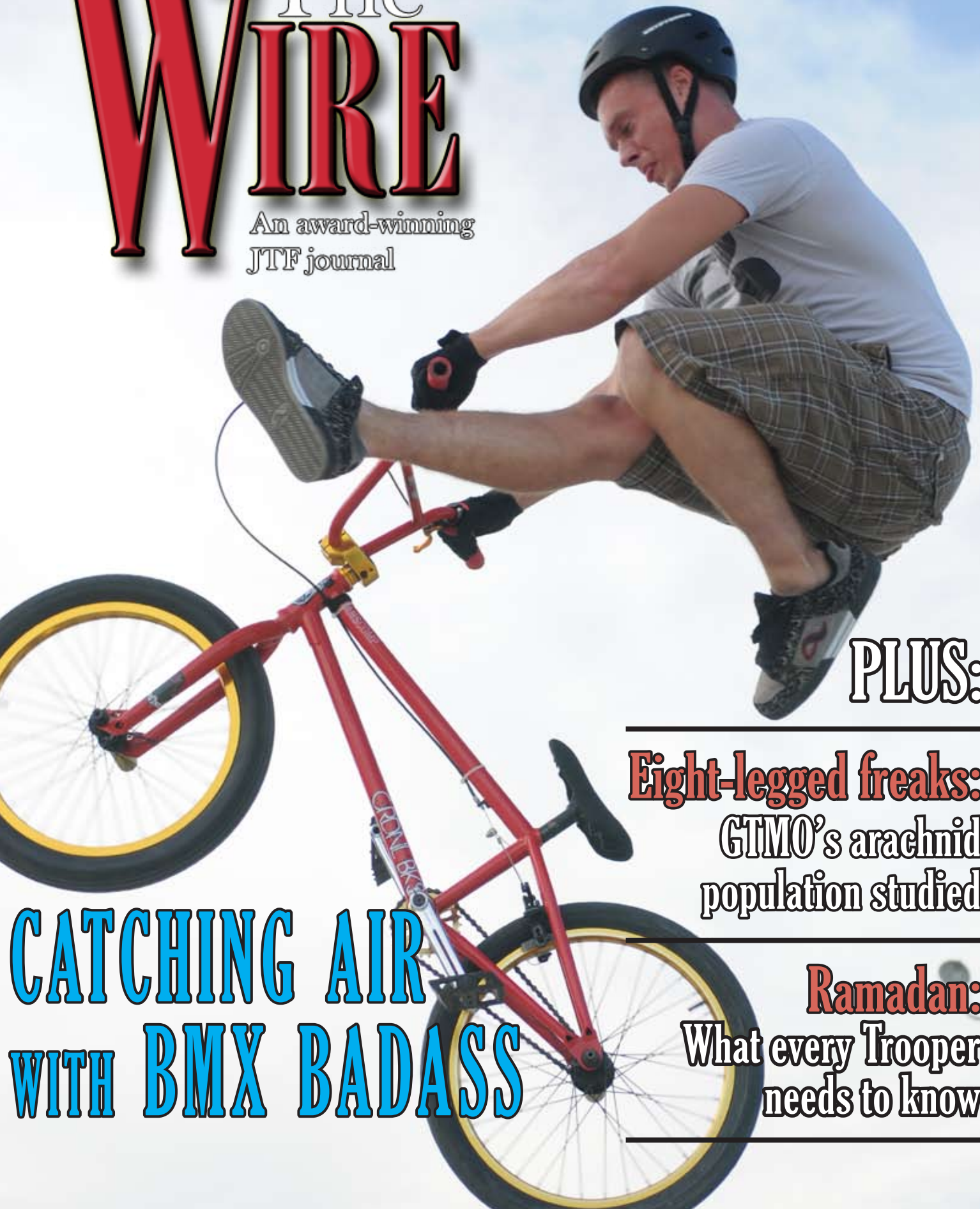


W^{The} WIRE

An award-winning
JTF journal



PLUS:

Eight-legged freaks:
GTMO's arachnid
population studied

Ramadan:
What every Trooper
needs to know

**CATCHING AIR
WITH BMX BADASS**

COMMANDER'S CORNER

JTF Troopers,

As we continue to research and provide answers to your questions raised during the all hands call, I encourage each of you to continue to ask questions and push forth your thoughts and ideas through your chain of command. You can also reach out to me through the Commander's suggestion at the Kittery Cafe and Seaside Galley or at commandersquestions@jtfgtmo.southcom.mil.

Question: Are we ever going to be tax free here in GTMO?

Answer: Per Department of Defense (DoD) Instruction 1340.25, to qualify as a tax exclusion zone, a given area must be designated either a (1) combat zone (CZ) by the President in an executive order, (2) qualified hazardous duty area (QHDA) by Congress, or (3) an area in direct support of military operations in a CZ or QHDA by the Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness. While JTF Troopers qualify for imminent danger pay, our area of operations does not presently qualify for the CZTE. Nevertheless, we are in the process of requesting designation as an area in direct support of military operations in a QHDA. Bear in mind that this is a lengthy process and approval is not guaranteed. We will keep you informed as more information becomes available. The DoD Instruction is available at <http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/134025p.pdf>.

Question: Can the policy be changed to allow service members on 9-month orders to take R&R leave?

Answer: We are presently reviewing the JTF's R&R leave program with SOUTHCOM in light of the recent onset of 9-month orders. We will keep you informed on our request for an exception to this policy. In the meantime, Troopers on orders for at least 365 days remain eligible for up to 15 days of chargeable R&R leave. Troopers are also authorized a second R&R leave period if they extend for 365 days. The JTF Leave and Pass policy is available on the JTF Intranet at <https://intranet/j1/leave/Leave%20Policy.pdf>.

Follow-up: I mentioned last week that the NEX general manager



was exploring our request to discount the rental rate for their older vehicles. Beginning August 1st, the NEX will lower the daily rental rate for their older vehicles by an additional 20% -- or from \$30 to \$24 per day. Of note, the NEX previously lowered their rates in October 2010 by roughly 12% -- or from \$34 to \$30 per day.

Thank you for your time. Honor bound!

JTF Guantanamo

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COVER: Yeoman 3rd Class David Gates performs tricks at the skate park next to Denich Gym, Thursday. See inside for a feature interview with Gates about his adrenaline-charged hobby. - photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Maddelin Angebrand

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 regard 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 Defense Logistics Agency Document Services with a circulation of 1,200.

Trooper to Trooper

featuring

Sgt. Maj. Rivers Jacques JTF Housing Facility Manager

"Respect your fellow human being, treat them fairly, disagree with them honestly, enjoy their friendship, explore your thoughts about one another candidly, work together for a common goal and help one another achieve it."

– Bill Bradley, TV commentator

It has truly amazed me just how diverse Joint Task Force Guantanamo is. First, we take all five branches of our armed forces, DoD civilians and other support personnel and bring them together under a single banner focused on a common goal. Second, we ask people from all walks of life, cultural backgrounds, personalities and experiences to live, eat, work and play together. Bringing all of these unique individuals together working toward a common goal is not an easy undertaking. It requires commitment, dedication, discipline and loyalty on the part of each individual. I have seen when we have disagreed with each other and refused to admit we were wrong or even apologize. But I have also seen individuals put aside their differences in a collaborative effort toward achieving our collective mission objectives.

This to me is what teamwork is all about – putting our differences aside and working together toward a common goal. Collaboration, cooperation and leadership are the essential ingredients required for any team to be successful. For many of us our time on Guantanamo Bay is now drawing to an end. For others it has just begun.

I would ask those of you departing soon to always reflect on this unique team you were a part of. Cherish the friendships we fostered, the life experiences we gained and the history we made. For those of you who recently arrived, remember your time here is short and the team is only as strong as you make it. I, for one, have come to understand just how unique a team we are. The saying



"One team, one fight" is a motto that exemplifies who the JTF-GTMO team truly is. The relationships and experiences I gained here will always be a part of my personal and professional life.



KEEP WORK AT WORK! USE OPSEC!

OPSEC ALERT

Keep work at the workplace.

Do you have a notebook in your pocket that has information about work? Things like watch rotations, important phone numbers or people to notify in the event of an emergency? How about a copy of our standard operating procedures? This information is important to know and studying it can help you to remember. But this information is sensitive and could be used by an adversary, so it's better to read at work and commit it to memory rather than write it down or take a copy with you. The less information you take from the workplace, the less likely it could end up in a trash can, dumpster or be disclosed to people without the need to know. Use OPSEC and keep sensitive work documents at the workplace.

News from the Bay

Stories and reporting by Mass Communication Specialist
2nd Class Maddelin Angebrand

Women's running group at Cooper Field Sundays

Looking for a running partner? Well, look no further than the new and now forming women's running group.

Made up of volunteer runners who enjoy the benefits of running, this group will meet at 7 a.m. every Sunday starting August at Cooper Field.

The club requires no obligations or commitment - just show up to run or walk with other Troopers.

For more information, contact Jen Norton at x2157.

New to GTMO- stand-up paddleboarding sport

Stand-up paddleboarding is on its way to Guantanamo Bay thanks to Morale, Welfare and Recreation's Outdoor Recreation Department.

SUP'ing is popular in warm coastal climates and resorts, gaining recognition as celebrities sample the sport, and cross-over athletes are training with it.

"We can't wait for them to arrive!" said MWR's Outdoor Recreation Coordinator Cory Geiger. "SUP'ing is a great complete body workout and is very easy to learn. Within one hour you can become very comfortable in the water on your board."

The sport has been spotted around the globe, in places with easy access to safe waters, as well as in surfing lineups.

"GTMO is perfect for the sport - smooth, clear water in the mornings will allow SUP'ers to see much deeper than when kayaking due to the higher point of view," Geiger explained.

Laird Hamilton, the most accomplished big wave surfer in the world, and Dave Kalama re-introduced the ancient sport of paddleboarding to the modern water sports world.

For more information about the equipment arrival, contact Geiger at x2345.

Country music night every Saturday at Windjammer

Venture out on a Saturday night and you might hear the echoes of a favorite country song. The sound is likely coming from the Windjammer where Country Night takes center stage, every Saturday from 8 p.m. to 12 a.m.

Joint Task Force's very own Trooper, Intelligence Specialist 3rd Class Cody Kretschmer, is the man behind the music, taking requests and introducing new songs.

"Patrons of country night usually walk away with one of two experiences," said Kretschmer. "Either the atmosphere or sounds of their hometown, or the excitement of trying something completely new."

Kretschmer plays a mixture of hits and older classics, offering an opportunity for Troopers to try the two-step or country swing dances.

"This allows people to loosen up and socialize in a fun environment," he added.

For more information, call x75503.

If MWR could bring one band to the Island who would it be?



"Metallica would be awesome. They're the only band that can truly rock in Fidel's backyard."

Army Staff Sgt.
Tim Brooks



"I'm a huge Ozzie fan. Ozzie Osbourne is the man. I think everyone on the island would come to see him."

Machinist Mate 1st Class
Christopher Coleman



"I like Don Omar; he's a famous Spanish singer. He is great."

Spc.
Diego Torres



"I would probably have to go with Young Money. If you ask enough people who they would want, that's probably who they would say too."

Army Sgt.
Rachael Allen

Boots on the Ground

TROOPER FOCUS

Army Sgt. Roy Vasel



Spc. Meredith Vincent

At 42 years old, Sgt. Roy Vasel is not your typical “buck” sergeant.

The lead purchasing agent for J4, Vasel only recently was promoted to sergeant after only two years in the Army Reserves. And despite his impressive career trajectory, this was not what he had in mind when he signed up.

“My original plan was to be an officer,” said Vasel. “I came in as an E4 thinking I would switch when I got to my home unit. But I was deployed as soon as I got out of AIT!”

As one of only four people in his specific chain of command, much of the responsibility of supplies and purchasing requests lies on Vasel’s shoulders. When Troopers and shops need something not typically found in the supply warehouse, the request falls to him.

“All supplies that are not stocked in the warehouse and cannot be ordered through the standard Army system, I purchase,” Vasel explained. “I support everybody from J1 to the chaplain [office].”

“He’s a team player and communicates well with the warehouse and customers,” said Staff Sgt. Dion Herrera, J4 warehouse administration chief. “He has a good attitude, is highly active and motivated in his job.”

Because of the nature of Joint Task Force Guantanamo, Vasel said many requests are unique, resulting in a specific challenge the newly minted sergeant has proved himself worthy of.

Promoted on April 1st of this year, Vasel has already noticed a change in his responsibilities.

“Expectations are a little higher,” he admitted.

Herrera said he is impressed with Vasel’s ability to guide his customers through the

ins and outs of purchasing.

“Sergeant Vasel’s leadership has been excellent in helping others here,” Herrera continued. “He is also responsible for over 2.6 million dollars in purchases for the camps.”

What would inspire a 40-year-old husband and father to drastically change his and his family’s future by joining the Army?

“I was looking for a career change,” Vasel recalled. “I had been out of work, and – to be brutally honest – the Army recruiter was the only one who called me back.”

Looking back, Vasel realizes how much his chosen path has changed his life.

“Overall, I’m glad I did it,” he said. “I wanted to do it when I was much younger. Who would’ve thought at 40 I would’ve gone to basic training in the Army. It’s kind of crazy.”

Although it put a lurch in his commissioning ambitions, deploying to Guantanamo Bay hasn’t been all bad, Vasel said. He and his group, the 336th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion out of Phoenix, Ariz., has found something the west doesn’t offer much of.

“We fish a lot,” offered Vasel. “I also scuba because the fishing’s been a bit slow lately. But since we’ve been here, we’ve been on the water all the time.”

With little time left on his deployment, Vasel is taking advantage of all the leisure activities he can. But he’s also looking toward his future off the island. While still contemplating becoming an officer, he’s also a candidate for a full-time position with the Active Guard and Reserve program.

Regardless of what he decides to do

Bullet Bio

Time in service: 2 years

Hobbies: fishing, scuba diving

Pet peeves: when people don’t take initiative to figure things out on their own

Next goal: become an officer

Advice to junior Troopers:
“Don’t count on other people to do it for you. Take charge and do it yourself.”

afterward, the lasting impression of Guantanamo Bay has left its mark. What will he miss most about the island?

“Probably scuba,” he chuckled. “That ain’t happening much back in Arizona.”



Army Reserve Maj. Sam Mum, attached to Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit 6 Detachment from Mayport, Fla., gives scale to the crater at the Guantanamo Naval Station EOD Range, Thursday.

EOD blows away extra ammunition

Story and photo by Army Sgt. Mathieu Perry

July 20.

Three Sailors with the Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit 6 Detachment from Mayport, Fla. blew up more than 3,000 pounds of explosives and ammunition on Naval Station Guantanamo,

“Our mission was to support the US Navy in reducing the amount of explosives with untraceable elements in them,” said Senior Chief Explosive Ordnance Disposal Technician Jeff Moleski, senior enlisted leader attached to EOD MU 6 Det.

The EOD team is the Navy’s regional response unit. Their area of responsibility is from Jacksonville, Fla. to Guantanamo Bay and Puerto Rico.

Navy Lt. Mike Simmons, EOD MU 6 Det. operations officer, said rather than shipping the explosives back to the states, the group was directed to dispose of them locally.

“Today’s goal was to safely get rid of the explosives,” said Simmons. “It wasn’t cost efficient to ship it when you figure in all the required hazardous materials certifications, customs fees and drivers or pilots needed to get it into port and to its final destination.”

Mike Hope, inventory management specialist, said the life span of ordnance depends on its type.

“Ammunition has a shelf life of anywhere from 18 months to somewhere around our lifespan,” said Hope.

Hope said the ammunition had met its shelf life and was under a directive to be destroyed since it lacked taggants.

Taggants are chemical markers introduced to the materials during the manufacturing process. These identifiers remain even after the ammunition has been expended and helps in identification of the maker.

The two main safety risks are falling debris in the fallout area and a grass fire at the range, said Hope.

The Naval Station roller will carry more information concerning the next ordnance disposal dates and times.

Ninth month in Islamic lunar calendar approaches

Tradition teaches Muslims self-discipline, self-control

Story by Sgt. First Class Benjamin Cossel

The ninth month of the Islamic Calendar is nearly upon us – Ramadan. During this time, Muslims around the world refrain from eating or drinking from sun up to sun down.

Joint Task Force Guantanamo cultural advisor, Zak, who declined to give his last name for security reasons, explained because the Islamic calendar is based upon lunar cycles, from year-to-year, the exact start of Ramadan changes. Zak said Ramadan should begin on or near August 1.

“Ramadan helps strengthen a Muslim’s will and teaches patience and spirituality,” he said.

Zak added the inner reflection during the time of fasting also teaches Muslims to practice self-discipline, self-

control, sacrifice and empathy for those less fortunate, thus encouraging acts of generosity and charity.

Of particular focus for the JTF, Zak explained during the month of Ramadan, detainees in the camps might be slightly more irritable as they go without food or drink the entire day.

“I would expect things to be a little more quiet during the day and for there to be more activity during the night shift,” Zak said.

Taking into account their sensitive diet during the period, food preparation during the month has been altered. In addition to serving breakfast before sunrise, Zak explained the traditional fast-breaking meal of a date with honey will be served at sunset along with a midnight meal.

“But we don’t make anyone fast,” Zak pointed out. “We don’t say – ‘It’s Ramadan, there’s no lunch meal today.’ If a detainee wants their lunch meal, it will be served.”

Zak said it will be easy to identify

detainees who are fasting and those who are not. “If they’re drinking water during the day, they’re not fasting.”

Leading up to the month of Ramadan, Zak spent countless hours training the guard force and leadership about the tradition - what individuals can expect and how they should act during the holy month.

“I’ve been really impressed with the guards,” Zak said. “They really want to learn as much as they can – how they should conduct themselves and how they can protect themselves.”

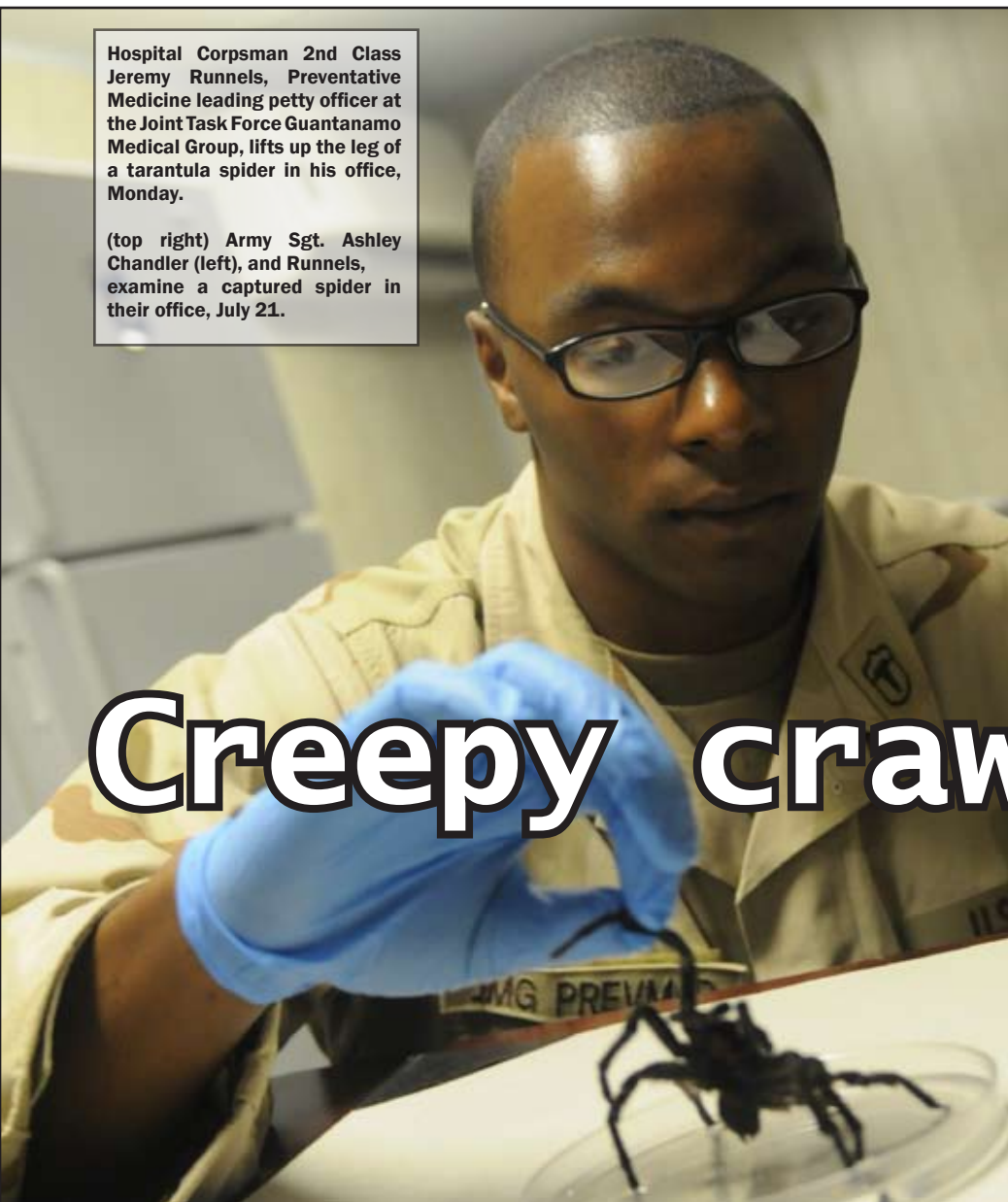
Acknowledging detainees could become more irritable during fasting times, Zak said he didn’t expect any significant increase of activity toward the guards.

Following Ramadan, Muslims celebrate the end of the fasting period during the holiday of Eid ul-Fitr. Traditionally, Eid is marked with grand celebrations and donations of food to the poor.

Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Jeremy Runnels, Preventative Medicine leading petty officer at the Joint Task Force Guantanamo Medical Group, lifts up the leg of a tarantula spider in his office, Monday.

(top right) Army Sgt. Ashley Chandler (left), and Runnels, examine a captured spider in their office, July 21.

Creepy crawlers



Story and photos by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Joe Ebaló

Troopers at Guantanamo Bay met up after dark last week to stalk and capture one of the island's night-crawling, indigenous creatures. Not the banana rat or the iguanas – they were looking for big, hairy spiders.

Two Sailors and a Soldier stationed with the Joint Task Force Guantanamo Medical Group walked the streets of the base hunting down tarantula spiders, July 20.

The group collected the spiders for the Preventative Medicine Department in an effort to find out more about the creatures and if they are harmful to the Guantanamo Bay community.

"In the last two weeks I started noticing them crawling around in the streets everywhere after dark," said Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Jeremy Runnels, Preventative Medicine leading petty officer. "I talked to my co-workers and chain of command about it and

we decided to go out there and get some tarantulas in the name of science, hopefully to benefit GTMO Troopers."

Normally, Preventative Medicine is tasked with missions like testing for drinking water quality or conducting inspections on base eating facilities. This mission had to be handled a little bit differently than what they are used to.

"I don't like spiders, so this wasn't the easiest thing for me to do," Runnels said. "[But] it's better for us to be proactive and find out if they are any danger to us."

To maintain cleanliness, preventative health technicians wore gloves and used Tupperware and Ziploc bags with punctured breathing holes to catch and hold the captured spiders.

"It was definitely a little bit scary and creepy," said Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Joe Patty, a JMG physical therapy technician. "They were hairy and about the size of an adult hand when spread out. It's not

something I would ever do in my department, but I volunteered and I'm glad I did because it was fun."

At the end of the night, the Troopers came back to the office with four tarantulas to study. Their findings will be processed and verified by the military medical community and will be released when completed.

"One of the strongest tools we have in Preventative Medicine is public education," said Capt. Matthew Perry, JMG officer-in-charge. "By providing proactive and relevant information on common and uncommon things that are likely to cause injury or illness, we can empower our community to make safe and healthy decisions."

Perry said he could not be more proud of his Troopers for taking the initiative and following up on the unique opportunity.

"I am amazed by the great work my team of Sailors and Soldiers do each day to support the mission of the JTF," he beamed. "I am honored to be their OIC."

Blood, sweat &



no Fear

Story and photo by Mass Communication Specialist
2nd Class Maddelin Angebrand



Whether for the Naval Station or Joint Task Force Guantanamo, manual labor is how Seabees get the job done. It's nothing new for a Seabee to dig, hammer and sweat all in the same day. This is especially true for the Troopers attached to Navy Mobile Construction Battalion 28.

For more than a month, NMCB 28 has been building a brand new restroom facility at Windmill Beach to replace the older, smaller building.

"We're expanding it and putting in a bigger facility," said Construction Electrician 1st Class Sammy Hill. "It can also accommodate handicap people."

Hill, a Reservist with 17 years in the Navy, said the job isn't the tough part - it's the challenges faced along the way.

The assignment seemed simple at first - tear down the old building and erect a new one. It didn't turn out quite that easy.

"The biggest challenge is that mountain," explained Equipment Operator 3rd Class Jon Guillemagudelo. "The old building came flush with it, so we actually had to carve a large chunk out."

Breaking into the rock ledge required tools NMCB 28 didn't have, so they turned to the Army and Air Force engineers to borrow the gear.

"A lot of the equipment on Guantanamo Bay will have issues if you don't use it often and service it," Hill expanded. "The hoses have a tendency to break; the

fittings - if they're made out of steel - will corrode and leak."

Hill added the heat and salt in the air from the ocean also take their toll on the heavy equipment. As the crew leader for the project, Hill must ensure the job runs smoothly regardless of these challenges.

"I make sure I have enough material to keep my guys busy, make my deadlines on the project schedule and make sure we are doing what we are supposed to per day and per week to get things done in a timely fashion," said Hill.

Getting things done on time means working together as a team, something Guillemagudelo sees in his fellow Seabees daily and said it's what keeps him motivated.

"I like it," he shared. "We go through a lot together. It's kind of like a brotherhood and it's cool because you get close with these people."

Due to the equipment and other challenges on this project, the partially complete restroom will be turned over to the incoming Seabees, said Hill.

"We got our footers in," said Hill. "The plumbing is going in today and we're pouring the concrete on Monday and from there it's just the walls, ceiling and fixtures."

The finished facility, expected to open in early August, will include handicap accessibility, more space and separate male and female entrances.

Utilitiesman 2nd Class Tracy Troxell and Utilitiesman 2nd Class Sam Neal, both attached to Navy Mobile Construction Battalion 28, measure a pipe while installing plumbing for a new restroom facility at Windmill Beach on Guantanamo Bay, July 21.



Adrenaline Junkies

online bike

Yeoman 3rd Class David Gates completes a 360 degree turn jump while practicing tricks at the skate park next to Denich Gym, July 21. Gates works in the JTF escorts department and spends his free time perfecting jumps on his bike.

Most people don't discover their passion until late in life.

Some, however, are like Yeoman 3rd Class David Gates and find theirs at age seven.

Gates, known to his friends as "Bill," remembers being a young boy watching the big kids ride their bikes in a sand pit not far from his house in Browns Mills, N.J.

Intrigued and wanting to learn more, he started out with a dirt bike – perfect for trail riding. Despite being covered with bumps and bruises at the end of each ride, he kept practicing and the thrill of every jump, to this day, keeps him begging for another set.



Yeoman 3rd Class David Gates rides his bike performing various tricks at the skate park next to Denich Gym, Thursday. Gates, a husband and father, has been riding since he was seven years old.



“I never thought I would break a bone - I thought I was invincible. Now, I go up to something and, if it seems sketchy, I give it deep thought.”

A set is a term riders use combining a jump and a landing. Gates says he and his buddies built their own sets – carving, packing and digging dirt to create perfect jumps and smooth landings.

“It was always a gathering,” Gates says, describing his group of friends. “We were a team, but not in competition. We rode everywhere together and would pay our parents to take us to different parks across the states – they never took the money, but took us to the parks!”

Gates says the toughest part about riding is learning when to give up on completing a trick about to go wrong.

“You hit a jump and think, ‘will I have to bail? Can I throw a spin or trick?’” he says. “That’s the thrill.”

In order to get that adrenaline fix, fear is set aside and critical analysis takes over.

“You gotta think of the worst outcome,” stresses Gates. “Like when I broke my collar bone, I never thought I would break a bone - I thought I was invincible. Now, I go up to something, and if it seems sketchy I give it deep thought and give it a try or practice run, just to see how it’s going to go.”

Gates’ ability to think outside the box is also apparent in his everyday work says, Aviation Electronics Technician 1st Class John Riggs, Gates’ supervisor.

“He’s one of the hard chargers,” Riggs explains. “He originally came to us and volunteered to help out with the detainee movements. During a two-week visit, he completed his Escort qualification, which wasn’t a requirement for him.”

From then on, Gates jumped right into training new escort personnel.

“That is one of the things that I admire about him,” shares Riggs. “He will help others whenever he can, and he’s not afraid to step up and take on new tasks.”

Riggs, also Gates’ roommate, says he’s always receiving parts for his bike and working on it outside – another aspect of Gate’s desire to learn and grow not only in his work, but also in his passion for riding.

For Gates, it took many mistakes to develop his sixth sense for the bike – the ability to know when a trick is going bad before it actually happens. He can feel the slightest bump in any terrain setting his tire off just a smidge, or a ridge in a platform throwing his body weight to one side a bit – all signs of a near crash landing.

These are Gates’ thoughts as he lunges his weight into the pedals of his bike and glides to the ramp’s edge performing a 360 degree turn at the bike’s highest point in the air just before jetting back down the ramp into a smooth landing.

Each mental calculation amounts to split seconds of time and ultimately determines his survival. The dangerous nature of his hobby is always a concern for his family.

“My wife hates it,” says Gates, who married his high school sweetheart. “She doesn’t want to see me get hurt.”

When at home, Gate’s wife bites her nails as he rides while his son, (and his biggest fan) enthusiastically cheers, “Do it again, Daddy!”

“If I’m riding my bike and he sees me through a window or if he’s outside and he hears my back rim spinning, he’ll try looking around for me,” Gates says. “He’ll come up and try running with me.”

Gates would like his son to follow in his footsteps and plans to get him a bike soon. He hopes it will keep the youngster away from bad influences.

As he pursues his Navy career, Gates plans to keep riding. When not working, he’s at the skate park perfecting new tricks and jumps. Even after 17 years, Gates still chases the thrill of his passion.

“It definitely takes a lot out of you,” says Gates. “But it keeps me fit and I get an adrenaline rush from it.”



ON THE DECK

Navy steams into Los Angeles to celebrate Navy Week

By Chief Mass Communication Specialist Steve Johnson

LOS ANGELES – The U.S. Navy - America’s “Away Team” - came home to Los Angeles this week to celebrate the inaugural Los Angeles Navy Week 2011.

USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72), USS Princeton (CG 59), USS Chafee (DDG 90), and USS Champion (MCM 4) pulled into the Port of Los Angeles.

Rear Adm. Troy M. Shoemaker, commander, Carrier Strike Group 9, said the visiting ships and Navy personnel were eager to interact with the people of Southern California.

“We’re excited to be here in Los Angeles to participate in Navy Week exercises,” Shoemaker said. “We’re looking forward to showing the people

here how much pride we have in our Navy and what we do in defense of our country.”

Since 90 percent of international trade travels by sea, Shoemaker said the visit to L.A. would highlight two complementary aspects that make the United States great.

“The L.A.-Long Beach port is one of the biggest in the world,” said Shoemaker. “It’s an incredibly important part of America’s economy, and the Navy ensures sea lanes remain secure, open and free for trade and travel.”

While in Los Angeles, Sailors will take part in a variety of Southern California activities, including attending Los Angeles Dodgers baseball games, and visiting Disneyland

and Knott’s Berry Farm.

In addition to enjoying the California sunshine, Sailors are also scheduled to participate in community relations projects, such as building houses for local residents in cooperation with Habitat for Humanity.

Capt. John D. Alexander, Lincoln’s commanding officer, expects Lincoln Sailors will make a favorable impression on the people of L.A.

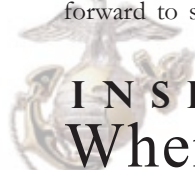
“We have some incredibly talented and hard-working personnel serving aboard this ship,” Alexander said. “Every day, our Sailors positively contribute to the American way of life by serving in this great organization. No matter how remarkable the people of Southern California find

our ships, they’ll be even more impressed by the pride and professionalism of our people.”

Also participating in L.A. Navy Week 2011 are Carrier Air Wing 2, and personnel from Carrier Strike Group 9, Maritime Expeditionary Security Group 31, Maritime Expeditionary Security Squadron 3, and Explosive Ordnance Disposal Unit 1.

The Abraham Lincoln Carrier Strike Group is in Los Angeles between at-sea training and certification periods ahead of a deployment scheduled for the end of the year.

For more information and a schedule of L.A. Navy Week 2011 events, visit www.navyweek.org/losangeles2011.



INSIDE THE JAR

Where the Marines and antelope play - down range

By Cpl. Jad Sleiman, Marine Forces Reserve

GRAHAMSTOWN, South Africa – Just about every night around dusk, two opponents meet in the open fog.

“They back up about 50 feet, and then they head butt,” explained Staff Sgt. Jeremiah Hurley, ammunition chief with Ammo Company, Greenville, S.C. “That’s our entertainment out here.”

They don’t have TV, or electricity for that matter, but they do have the fights.

Well past a pock-marked dirt road impassible in anything without four-wheel drive, at the end of what can’t be considered a road at all, is the work place of Hurley and his Marines.

The ammo supply point, little more than a series of storage containers stitched together with camouflage tarps, is a gray-brown speck swallowed up by the hilly green expanse of the 6th South African Infantry Battalion Field Training Area. There they pass out rounds to the approximately 600 Marines and South African

National Defense Force soldiers training together as part of an annual bi-lateral military exercise and humanitarian mission – Exercise Shared Accord 2011.

The blesbok, a type of brownish-red, horned antelope, roam free across the training area and routinely lock horns this time of year. The ASP, it seems, was built on a battlefield.

“It’s basically so that the stronger ones have the mate and the territory and the weaker ones get kicked out,” said SANDF Armor Lt. Col. Chris Putter.

The lighter, more agile springbok, prominently displayed on the South African National Rugby Team’s flag, are also commonly seen. Together, the two species number in the hundreds in and around the training area.

“On all of our ranges there is game and we have to protect them,” explained Chief Warrant Officer J. J. Kemp, sergeant major of the 4-3 SA Brigade.

Wild animals like the antelope manage to thrive in

and around SA training areas, despite the constant gunfire and explosions, because the SA run constant anti-poaching patrols and follow strict environmental rules, Kemp explained.

Most every SA army unit has an officer or senior enlisted tasked as the environmental manager and individual troops are issued environmental conduct cards upon entering different training areas.

“It is a soldier’s responsibility to protect the environment,” Kemp added.

Cpl. Tim Dean, a fire direction controller with D Company, 4th Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, stays a horizon away from the ammo point in one of the dozens of camouflage or olive-drab two-man tents that dot the camp stretched out behind the units’ row of Light Armored Vehicles.

Two of his fire watch Marines remember seeing a string of springbok attempt to jump the wire fence a hundred yards out from the tents in the dead

of night. The first two made it over fine, they said, while the third ran full tilt into the fence before backing up and trying again, remembering to jump and successfully joining the others.

“They jump over it like it’s nothing,” said Dean, motioning to the 8-foot fence behind him.

The springbok get plenty of practice during the South African spring and summer months when they bounce around in apparent celebration of their new offspring.

“They’re just showing off,” laughed Kemp.

The training area is also home to warthogs and jackals. It even hosts monkeys known in the Afrikaans language as “blue monkeys” because of their distinctly colored genitals. None number as high as the antelope, and none come as close to the Marines.

“One of the things we have all been struck by is how bold and unafraid these animals are,” said Dean. “They kind of look at you like, ‘what are you doing here?’ like we’re the ones imposing.”

French government honors Special Forces Soldiers

By Army Staff Sgt. Jim Greenhill

WASHINGTON – They are men used to seeing their deeds pass as unrecognized as their battlefield movements, but Monday one active-duty and five National Guard Special Forces Soldiers took the limelight here to receive a French award roughly equivalent to the Silver Star.

The six were honored with the Croix de la Valeur Militaire in a private ceremony at the French Ambassador's Residence attended by senior leaders including Army Gen. Martin Dempsey, the Army chief of staff nominated to be the next chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Maj. Gen. Timothy Kadavy, deputy director of the Army National Guard.

"I am deeply honored to pay tribute to six most outstanding American Soldiers from the United States Army and the Army National Guard who distinguished themselves while fighting the Taliban and Al Qaida elements in Afghanistan," said French Ambassador François Delattre.

"Through their outstanding bravery and engagement in combat, they fought at the risk of their own lives to assist French Soldiers, their brothers in arms, who experienced a barrage of fire from the enemy."

The five National Guard Soldiers supported a French regiment executing a mission in and around the Uzbein Valley in Afghanistan in 2009. The active-duty Soldier was recognized for similarly heroic action in the same region a year earlier.

"They were trying to get at the French operating in the valley," said Army National Guard Capt. Thomas Harper, one of the awardees. "We prevented that from happening, allowing them to conduct their mission."

Created in 1956 by the French government to reward extraordinary deeds of bravery carried out as part of security and law enforcement operations, the Croix de la Valeur Militaire – or French Cross of Military Valor – is one of the most respected decorations in the French military, Delattre said.

Those recognized Monday are:

– Active-duty Army Maj. Richard Nessel of the 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne).

"Your courage honors you as well as your country. Your exemplary service deserves to be commended," Delattre told him.

– Army National Guard Capt. Thomas Harper, Master Sgt. David Nuemer, Sgt. 1st Class Ryan Ahern, Staff Sgt. Casey Roberts and Sgt. Ryan Meister.

"You demonstrated the highest military qualities and sense of duty," Delattre told them. "You distinguished yourselves. Your outstanding



French Ambassador François Delattre awards the Croix de la Valeur Militaire, roughly equivalent to the Silver Star, to Army National Guard Sgt. Ryan Meister during a private ceremony at the French ambassador's residence in Washington, D.C., Monday.

conduct alongside French forces, your remarkable bravery in the face of danger in the combat zone, and your superb combatant qualities deserve to be commended."

"It's a huge honor for all of us," said Harper, a traditional Guard member who has been on Active Duty most of the last decade and was joined Monday by his parents and sisters. "They're completely overwhelmed. We don't normally look for this kind of recognition. I don't think they've ever even been to one of my military school graduations."

The recognition of the Guard members reflects the Guard's contributions to the total force, Dempsey said.

"The last three award ceremonies I've been to happen to have been National Guard Soldiers," he said. "We're really one Army. It's a signal that, as we go forward in a new fiscal environment, we have to maintain faith with all three components of our Army -- active, Guard and Reserve."

"It's a great credit to the young men and women who serve," he said. "I couldn't be more proud of our Army in general, but tonight is a night for five of these six Soldiers in particular who happen to be National Guard."

ON THE WING

Air Force vice chief testifies on force readiness

By Mitch Gettle

WASHINGTON – The Air Force vice chief of staff provided a total force readiness update to the House Armed Services Committee's Subcommittee on Readiness Tuesday.

"I'm pleased to report that America's Air Force continues to provide the nation with unmatched global vigilance, reach and power as a part of this joint and coalition team," Gen. Philip Breedlove said. "The Air Force remains a mission-focused and prepared force, an increasingly difficult task, given 20 years of constant deployed combat operations dating all the way back to Operation Desert Storm."

"Our enduring commitment to readiness in the joint fight is evidenced by the 40,000 American Airmen deployed to 285 locations around the globe," Breedlove said. "Of this group, nearly 28,000 are on a continually rotating basis to directly contribute to operations in U.S. Central Command, including 10,000 airmen in Afghanistan."

Additionally, 57,000 Airmen stationed in overseas locations provide capabilities in direct support of combatant commands, he added.

The operations tempo for many Airmen, based on the ratio of time spent deployed and the time spent at home station, is stretching some career fields to their limits, Breedlove said.

"Sixteen of our enlisted specialties and six of our officer specialties are well below the 1-to-1 acceptable minimum (ratio)," Breedlove said.

The Air Force's aircraft inventory remains ready, Breedlove said, although extensive use in contingency operations is testing the aging fleet.

"The mobility air forces are in good shape," the general said. "Our modernization and recapitalization efforts, most notably with the KC-46, remain on track."

Due to rapidly accumulating flight hours and delays in modernization and recapitalization efforts, Breedlove described the combat air forces' readiness level as "adequate."

Harry Potter

AND THE DEATHLY HALLOWS - PART 2



Sp. Meredith Vincent

In the seven months I have been writing reviews for you, never before have I written about a movie, character or story that means as much to me as Harry Potter does. I'll lay it right out on the table – I am a Harry Potter nerd, through and through. I've read the books – most of them not twice but three times. I've stood for hours in numerous lines, waiting for midnight premiers of the fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh films. And I've cried – yes, cried! – at almost every movie. For over a decade, I have loved the characters born of J.K. Rowling's imagination and watching this movie is almost the equivalent of saying goodbye to dear and beloved friends. Mock if you must, I am impervious to your judgments!

The record-breaking "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part Two" is proof that I am not the minority. Beating 007 himself to become the most profitable franchise in history, and besting "The Dark Knight" for the biggest weekend debut, the story of the Boy Who Lived has become a culture-shaping phenomenon. Even haters can't deny they don't know what a Muggle is. Not since George Lucas took the Millennium Falcon out for a spin has a movie saga touched the hearts and minds of so many fans in so many ways. And while Harry Potter may forever be thought of as a "kids" movie, those of us in the know, know better.

It's remarkable, really, that in the process of adapting Rowling's masterpiece to film,



so many things went right. Beginning with the casting of Daniel Radcliffe as Harry and ending with the sure and steady directing of David Yates, the series matured and developed as rapidly as its audience. The eighth and final film is the most heartbreaking, vivid and ultimately satisfying of them all and rightfully so. Just as the ads and posters cruelly remind us: It All Ends. SOB!

So where to begin? Most importantly, it should be noted how beautifully the three leads -- Radcliffe, Emma Watson and Rupert Grint -- have grown and blossomed under the shadow of the most successful movie series of all time. How is it possible that not a one of them pulled a Lohan? Grint, with his naturally red hair and sheepishly rakish

grin, was always a pitch perfect Ron. Loyal, a bit dim and always quick with the one-liners, Ron is the ultimate wing man -- a bro without the "bro"-ness.

Watson, amazingly, under the glare of fame, became the anti-Britney. Poised and graceful, she took Hermione from a bossy, know-it-all little girl to the wise and selfless young woman who quickly became the heart and moral compass of the entire series. Even more so than Harry, I would argue, Hermione is the glue that holds not only her two best friends together in the face of certain disaster, but also the entire story.

Which leads us to Harry. Radcliffe was

see MOVIES, page 19

	29 FRI.	30 SAT.	31 SUN.	01 MON.	02 TUES.	03 WED.	04 THURS.
Downtown Lyceum	The Conspirator (PG-13) 8 p.m. Jumping the Broom (PG-13) 10 p.m. *last showing*	Captain America (PG-13) 8 p.m. Harry Potter & the Deathly Hallows: Part 2 (PG-13) 10 p.m.	Judy Moody (PG) 8 p.m.	Bridesmaids (R) 8 p.m. *last showing*	No movie: Join us at the National Night Out 6 p.m. - 9 p.m.	Transformers: Dark of the Moon (PG-13) 8 p.m.	Kung Fu Panda 2 (PG) 8 p.m.
	Judy Moody (PG) 8 p.m. Bridesmaids (R) 10 p.m. *last showing*	The Conspirator (PG-13) 8 p.m. Jumping the Broom (PG-13) 10 p.m. *last showing*	Harry Potter & the Deathly Hallows: Part 2 (PG-13) 8 p.m.	Captain America (PG-13) 8 p.m.	Transformers: Dark of the Moon (PG-13) 8 p.m.	X-Men: First Class (PG-13) 8 p.m.	Zookeeper (PG-13) 8 p.m.

Call MWR at ext. 2010 for more information.

Movie Hotline - call 4880.

Congress passes critical GI Bill fixes

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Just days before the start of the fall semester, Congress has approved a host of changes to the way GI Bill benefits will be paid in an effort to prevent thousands of veterans from facing a steep drop in tuition payouts.

The measure, passed by a 424-0 vote in the House on Tuesday, would guarantee that student veterans enrolled in classes will receive at least as much tuition funding from the education benefit next semester as they did last semester. The president is expected to sign the bill into law in coming days.

On Aug. 1, changes approved by Congress last fall will set the maximum yearly tuition for students attending private or out-of-state colleges at \$17,500. In-state tuition for veterans is covered fully by the post-9/11 GI Bill and will not be affected.

The private college payout changes will mean thousands more annually for most veterans, but they'll hurt students from seven states where the reimbursement rates were higher than the \$17,500 cap.

Students from a number of high-priced private colleges petitioned Congress in recent months to grandfather them in at their old rates until graduation, to ensure they didn't face new student loan payments to finish their degrees.

The bill passed Tuesday, dubbed the "GI Bill Fairness Act," will do that, but only for students at private colleges. That should help about 6,000 students who meet that criteria, but not a few

thousand fewer who are attending out-of-state public universities.

Tom Tarantino, senior legislative associate at Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, said his group is still concerned about that population and the potential debt they could face, but "Congress should get credit for getting this far when it's clear there isn't the mood for new spending."

The initial estimate for the tuition fixes was about \$50 million, although that figure assumed more than 6,000 veterans would have been affected.

In a statement, House Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman Jeff Miller, R-Fla., said by approving the fixes, lawmakers are "keeping our promise to America's student veterans ... enabling them to stay in the school of their choice."

Officials from the Department of Veterans Affairs had said earlier that changes the tuition payout rules this late in the summer could throw the entire GI Bill processing system into disarray, potential disrupting payouts to the nearly 800,000 student receiving the benefit.

However, VA officials backed off that stance in recent days, instead saying that it will likely only slow delivery of benefits for the few thousand affected veterans.

Tarantino said his group will continue to push for additional fixes to the tuition payouts, but they are also hopeful that schools will step in this fall with tuition assistance packages to keep those veterans in class.

Washington wrangles over debt as deadline approaches

Voice of America News

U.S. President Barack Obama, his Democratic Party allies in Congress and opposition Republicans are still haggling over competing plans to raise the government borrowing limit as an August 2 deadline draws closer. Without an agreement, Washington could default on some of its obligations.

Uncertainty caused by the bitter partisan debate and the lack of apparent progress toward a compromise have worried investors. That is why many stock markets have declined and the value of "safe-haven" investments like gold and the Swiss Franc have hit record highs against the U.S. dollar.

Experts say rival plans put forward by House Republicans and Senate Democrats will cut expenses less than the plans' authors first thought.

The non-partisan Congressional Budget Office (CBO) says a plan by Senate Majority

Leader Harry Reid, a Democrat, to cut \$2.7 trillion over 10 years, overstates savings by \$500 billion. Reid says Republicans should embrace his plan because it is a compromise that incorporates many spending cuts Republicans have supported and does not include tax increases they strongly oppose.

White House Chief of Staff William Daley says he is confident the United States will not default on its debt. He told television interviewers that there are a lot of debt reduction plans on the table and everyone is stressed as the August 2 deadline approaches. But he said that, in the end, Congress will do what is right.



House Speaker John Boehner of Ohio, at podium, accompanied by members of the House Republican leadership, speaks during a news conference on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. July 26.

- photo by AP

UN begins food airlifts to Somalia

Voice of America News

The U.N. World Food Program has begun emergency airlifts of food to the drought-stricken Horn of Africa.

A WFP official has confirmed to VOA that the first plane, carrying more than 14 tons of food, landed Wednesday in the Somali capital, Mogadishu.

This is believed to be the first airlift of food to Somalia since the U.N. declared a famine in two southern regions of the country last week.

Additional aid flights are expected to go this week to eastern Ethiopia and northern Kenya, near the Somali border.

The airlifts were due to begin Tuesday but were delayed by what the WFP described as logistical problems in Kenya.

U.N. officials have said more than 11 million people in the Horn of Africa are in need of emergency aid.

The U.N. is holding a donor's conference Wednesday in the Kenyan capital Nairobi, with the goal of raising up to \$1.6 billion to combat the famine over the next 12 months.

In an interview with VOA Tuesday, WFP Director Josette Sheeran described Somalia as the epicenter of the crisis. She said one-third of the population there is facing starvation.

Sheeran, who visited Mogadishu last week, and said she had spoke to one woman who lost three children during a desperate walk to the capital, trying to find food.

On Tuesday, the U.N. refugee agency said 100,000 Somalis have arrived at Mogadishu-area camps in the past two months, and continue to come at a rate of 1,000 per day.

Thousands more are streaming across the border to camps in Kenya and Ethiopia. On Wednesday, the U.N. Children's Fund said it aims to vaccinate over 300,000 children in Kenya to prevent new outbreaks of disease.

U.N. access to southern Somalia — where the U.N. formally declared a famine last week — has been hampered by the militant Islamist group al-Shabab. The group controls large sections of the region and has denied that a famine is taking place, dismissing international assistance as political interference.

Close encounters: The alien concept of embracing diversity

Hospitalman Edward Jones

If a big, horrible alien landed a spaceship near you, and walked into your work space holding what appeared to be a weapon, what would you do? Would you run? Would you be afraid? Would you want to harm it?

Hopefully, none of the above. It may be a good idea to get to know this alien creature first. You never know, it could have come from another planet to provide us with a cure for cancer, or maybe even fix our economy. Often times, when people choose to dislike or ignore others simply because they are different, they miss out on great friendships, opportunities, or insightful information.

Well okay, if a big alien walked into your office, maybe you would run. The unfortunate reality is, there could be people you serve with in your unit being alienated every day because you don't see eye-to-eye, share the same views or because you don't understand them. Misunderstanding is a product of miscommunication and miscommunication in a unit causes chaos and tension in the workplace.

In order to form a successful team it is vital to have group cohesion. "One team, one fight," right? The difficulty in developing a strong cohesive group is sometimes related to personal differences among Troopers. In our diverse military you are expected to work side-by-side with people of different cultural backgrounds and beliefs. This can cause conflicts as we may not always see eye-to-eye.

"The norm" is measured by society or

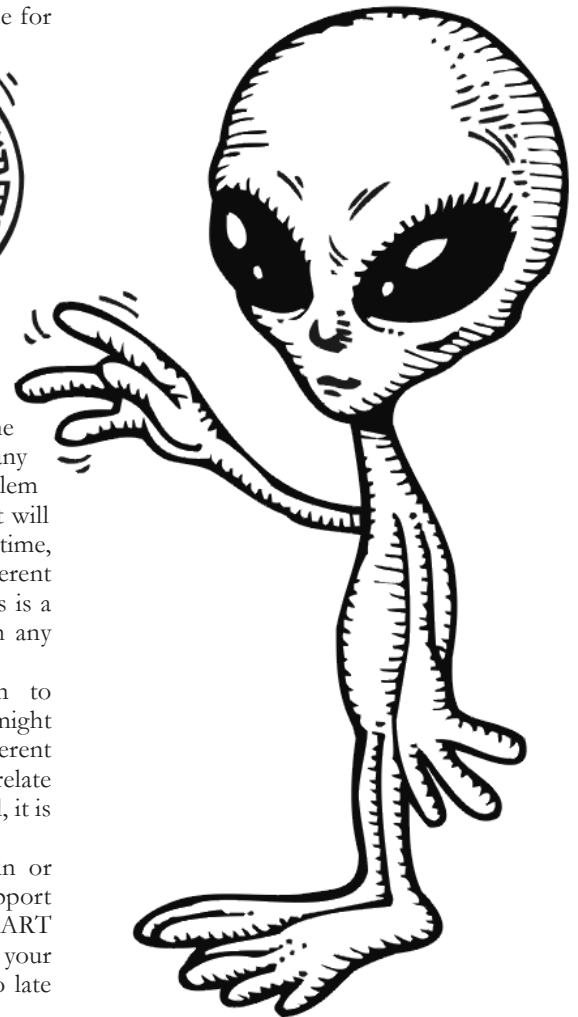
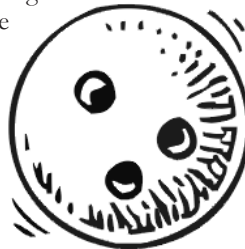
a culture that surrounds a person. What is the norm for you may not be the same for everyone. Although

some believe diversity is a weakness, it is actually one of the many strengths of our military.

Diversity provides us with a unique perspective and new ideas. With diversity, different opinions are voiced and beneficial changes made. Different thought processes allow the team to approach issues from many different angles, thus increasing problem solving as a whole. Realistically, a unit will not be in perfect harmony all the time, but the ability to unite people of different backgrounds around shared principles is a common language necessary to reach any goal.

So embrace diversity and learn to understand who you serve with. You might find that you are really not that different from your battle buddy. Until we can relate to one another on a basic, human level, it is difficult to coexist.

If you're struggling with fitting in or adjusting to this new atmosphere, support is just a phone call away. Contact JSMART at x3566. You can also reach out to your chaplain or leadership. It is never too late to seek support and guidance.



GTMO Religious Services

Daily Catholic Mass

Tues. - Fri. 5:30 p.m.

Main Chapel

Vigil Mass

Saturday 5 p.m.

Main Chapel

Mass

Sunday 9 a.m.

Main Chapel

Catholic Mass

Saturday 5:30 p.m.

Troopers' Chapel

Protestant Worship

Sunday 9 a.m.

Troopers' Chapel

Islamic Service

Friday 1:15 p.m.

Room C

Jewish Service

Friday 7 p.m.

Chapel Annex

LDS Service

Sunday 10 a.m.

Room A

Seventh Day Adventist

Saturday 11 a.m.

Room B

Iglesia Ni Christo

Sunday 5:30 a.m.

Room A

Pentecostal Gospel

Sunday 8 a.m. & 5 p.m.

Room D

Liturgical Service

Sunday 10 a.m.

Room B

Church of the Sacred Well

Call x2323 for information

General Protestant

Sunday 11 a.m.

Main Chapel

United Jamaican

Fellowship

Sunday 11 a.m.

Sanctuary B

Gospel Service

Sunday 1 p.m.

Main Chapel

GTMO Bay Christian Fellowship

Sunday 6 p.m.

Main Chapel

merely 11 years old when he was first cast as the boy wizard. Now 22, he clearly is in control of his performance, giving Harry the deft and determination to take the battle right to his arch enemy, Lord Voldemort.

And what an enemy! Ever since his first appearance as He Who Shall Not Be Named in "The Prisoner of Azkaban," Ralph Fiennes has literally made my skin crawl. With an impressive make-up job effectively erasing his nose to create the likeness of a snake, Fiennes' ability to bring Voldemort to life is chilling and exciting at the same time.

The biggest reason to not dismiss these movies as simple child's play is the caliber of actors willing to do smaller, supporting parts. The decision to cast only British actors has always been a respectful nod to the film's literary roots, and it has most certainly paid off. This movie is owned by two epic scenes featuring veteran actresses Maggie Smith and Julie Walters. After laboring for the first seven movies

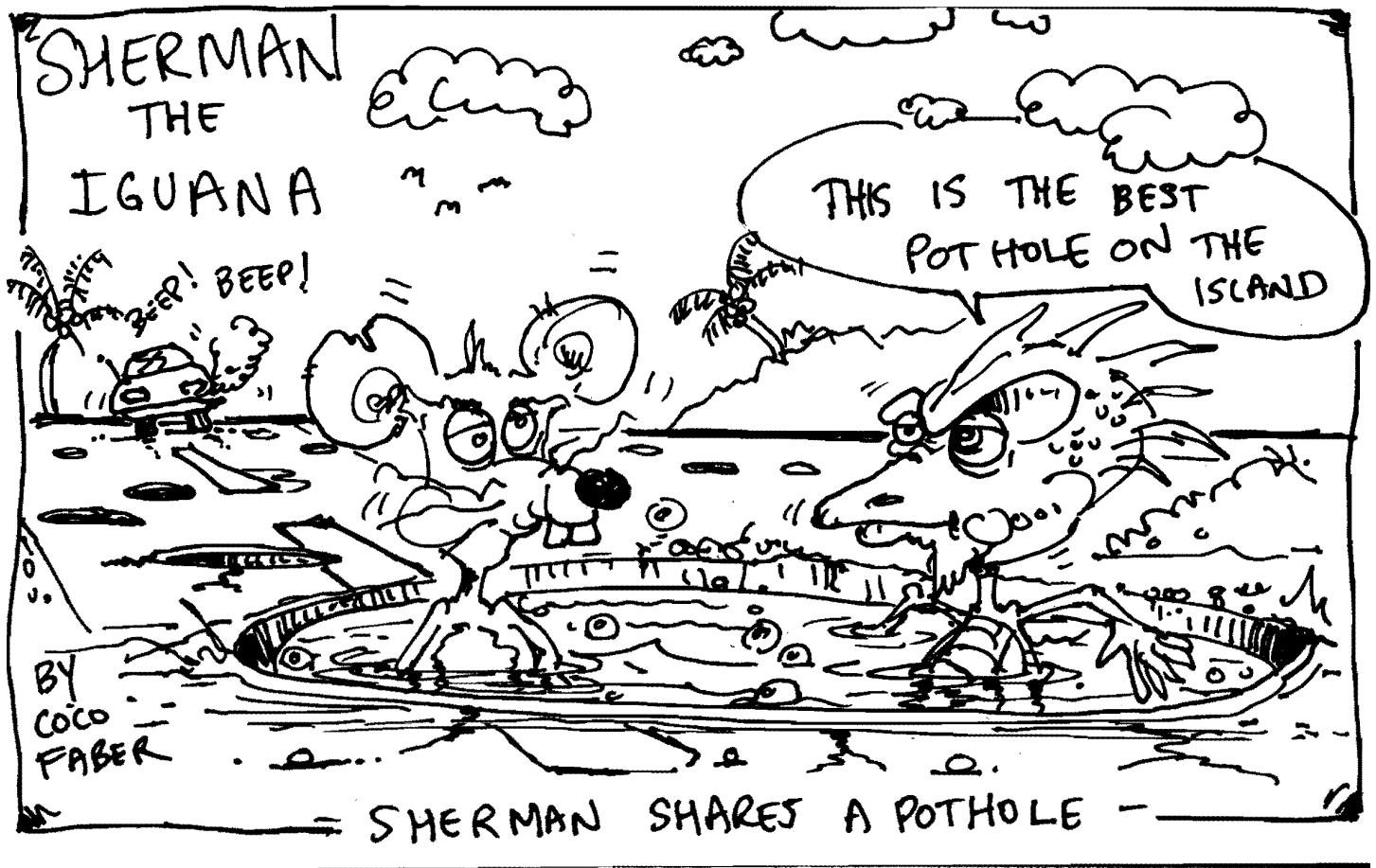
as Dumbledore's loyal number two, Smith, as Professor Minerva McGonagall, has her moment of brilliance squaring off against the shifty Professor Snape (we'll get to Alan Rickman in a minute). And in the best line of the series, Julie Walters, as the lovable Molly Weasley, unleashes the mama bear on Bellatrix (Helena Bonham Carter). "Not my daughter, you bitch!" It's impossible not to cheer out loud.

Fittingly, "Part Two" is in many ways a reunion of past Potter characters. Everybody's back to say goodbye. The aforementioned Rickman finally gets to shed his demons. Matthew Lewis brings out the action hero in perpetual sadsack Neville Longbottom. Even David Bradley's Argus Finch manages to get a chuckle-worthy scene.

Many Potter fans will be crying foul at some of the changes from the book. To those "true believers," I say 'Get over it.' There are always bound to be nixed subplots, scene relocations and different perspectives. Ever since visionary Alfonso

Cuaron took over the directing reins for the third film, "Prisoner of Azkaban," the series has made a knowing effort to place Rowling's story in the hands of true artists. This means instead of creating a cookie cutter version of the books, the directors used their own creative resources to add depth and realism to the story. In bringing a fresh outlook to Harry's journeys, some sacrifices had to be made. I, for one, am ok with the result. The lasting themes of love, friendship and loyalty are still profound, as are the potential political undertones.

It's been ten years since young Harry Potter first graced our movie screens. Think of everything that has happened in your life in the last ten years. Think of the things you have seen, the friendships you've formed, the lives you've touched. This series has been a ten-year investment for legions of devoted fans, myself among them. "Part Two" does not disappoint. If anything, it's a bittersweet two hours, because once the credits roll, it really is The End.



The JTF At Shutter Speed



GOT AIM?

Marine Lance Cpl. Christopher Stevens, from Marine Corps Security Forces, Company C, 5th Platoon, demonstrates aiming his M203 grenade launcher down range during a simulated attack at Grenadillo Gun Range, Tuesday. - photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Kitho Park



BEEF ROAST A PIG

Air Force 1st Sgt. Darrick Hildebrandt with the Base Emergency Engineers Force roasts a pig during a change of command celebration, Wednesday. - photo by Sgt. Mathieu Perry



DEEP DIVING

Navy Diver 1st Class Justin Porretti (left) attached to Naval Station Guantanamo Navy Dive Locker waits for a signal to begin his dive of the day, July 20. - photo by Sgt. Mathieu Perry



PAINT BALLIN'

A team of Troopers take to the paintball course Saturday, as part of a teambuilding exercise. - photo by Sgt. Mathieu Perry