A moment of silence
Veterans Day 2011
Denich Gym holds Turkey Trot

G. J. Denich Gym will be hosting a Turkey Trot on Thanksgiving morning at 8 a.m.

The trot will consist of a 10K run. Participants can register in advance or sign up on the day of the Turkey Trot. First 150 people to register will receive a T-shirt.

For more information call 2113 or 77202.

For the Holidays: Tree Decorating at the NEX

The NEX encourages all commands and organizations to claim a tree to decorate for the holidays. There are no rules to follow; just claim a tree and decorate. The trees need to be claimed and decorated by Nov. 23. Trees will be back-lodged on Nov. 26 for the most original, most holiday feel, and most “Guantanamo.” For more information or to sign up call Mark Good at 74358.

New JPC Hours

Joint Personnel Center will now be open from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Customer service hours will be from 8 a.m.-3 p.m. For more information call 8100.

Men’s Basketball Playoffs

The final rounds of the men’s basketball playoff will be held at Denich Gym tonight. The first game starts at 7 p.m. and the second game starts at 8 p.m.

The winner of those two games will face off Monday. In this double elimination format, if one of the two teams wins the first two games in the championship matchup, a second and final game will be played on Tuesday at 8 p.m. at Denich Gym.

Remote Control Car Racing at Denich Gym

Guantanamo Bay Liberty will hold its first remote control (RC) car races at Denich Gym Friday at 6 p.m. There will be timed laps with four cars racing on the track at a time. Don’t worry about owning an RC; Liberty will be providing cars to use. Competitors can bring their own RC cars if they want. Soda and water will be provided and there will be prizes for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place.

For more information or to sign up in advance contact Guantanamo Bay Liberty at 2010.

Revised Officer’s Club Policy

Beginning Jan. 1, non-direct hired D-D employees are required to present an Officer’s Club Privilege Card to access Rick’s Lounge.

For more information call Maggie Latte, 6489. To obtain a request form e-mail Marjorie.Lattee@usnbgtm.navy.mil.
Command Master Chief Jason Wallis
Navy Expeditionary Guard Battalion

The word mentor is defined as a trusted counselor or guide. To serve as a mentor, the idea of mentorship for most of us in the military defines a process which needs to work for both the mentor and the mentoree. At various points in our lives, we all identify and seek to learn from, and often emulate, our mentors. They become models for the development of proper problem solving and decision-making techniques; the demonstration of technical skills; developing interpersonal abilities; and providing personal guidance. Mentors and the idea of mentorship have taken on increased awareness in the military today, particularly among junior personnel who are dropped suddenly into new and unfamiliar roles and face the challenge of high expectations, information overload, and little time to learn to become master of all tasks.

The stumbling block in many mentoring relationships is in defining exactly what mentorship means to the individuals involved. The interpretation of mentorship is largely subjective, so the process and contents of this activity need to be defined at its inception for it to be effective for both parties. If there is no open communication between mentors and mentorees, expectations could be set unrealistically on both sides of the relationship, so that frustrations could mount, performance may be affected, and, inevitably, many of the relationships might dissolve unnecessarily.

People with one or more areas which they feel require further development or improved problem solving abilities should be encouraged to identify these areas openly; they should not be perceived as weaknesses to hide and somehow try to correct or improve on their own, but as areas that once developed and refined will help the joint task force to achieve its goals. It is conceivable that some personnel, particularly those lacking confidence, may be seeking some continuity of the training environment, where they received reinforcement and observation on most things they did in the schoolhouse. Others who are extremely independent from the beginning simply need to know that the voice of assistance is but a level of responsibility and challenge for them will be, and who individual or multiple mentors are and when they will be accessible for questions, conversation, and hands on guidance, if necessary.

While mentorship is an ongoing process, it should taper off in its intensity and, therefore, is not an endless process.

The goal of any mentorship should be to create an environment that allows everyone to progress as rapidly as possible along the learning curve and mature at their job.

New personnel are generally pleased to have the terms of their mentorship defined, as those requiring more intensive mentorship levels of responsibility and challenge for them will be, and who individual or multiple mentors are and when they will be accessible for questions, conversation, and hands on guidance, if necessary.

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Basketball playoffs return to Denich Championship game Monday

By Armys Sgt. Luella Andrews

The morale, Welfare and Recreation men's basketball regular season schedule is over and the playoffs are in full swing at Guantanamo Bay's Denich Gym. "The Shotza" took the top spot of the regular season. This accomplishment earned the team a first round bye, meaning they skip the regular season. This accomplishment earned the team a first round bye, meaning they skip the regular season. This accomplishment earned the team a first round bye, meaning they skip the regular season. This accomplishment earned the team a first round bye, meaning they skip the regular season. This accomplishment earned the team a first round bye, meaning they skip

"The Shotza, say that doesn't mean they will have an easy ride to the finals. "The biggest thing that can stop us is ourselves," Hinton said, "Teamwork is the main thing we have to focus on." Hinton added there is another team in the same situation. "Vigilant Warriors are the same way," the forward said. "They can go far if they just play together." Staff Sgt. Ryan Jordan, a center for the "Vigilant Warriors," passes out of trouble during the team's first round victory over "You Don't Want None." See more playoff action Friday and Monday nights at Denich Gym. -photo by Army Sgt. Saul Rosa

PROTECT YOUR INFO!
OPSEC ALERT

Thanksgiving OPSEC

The Thanksgiving holiday is traditionally a time when three things happen: traveling, eating and shopping! Two of these things need special attention (eating isn’t one of them); While traveling, or making plans for leave and travel, remember to use OPSEC to protect your plans and sensitive information (travel dates, leave papers, passport number, military I.D., etc). When shopping in a store or online make sure to use only reputable online sites and be careful when you give your credit card numbers and expiration dates. Identity theft and credit fraud always spike this time of year. Be safe and enjoy the Thanksgiving season. USE OPSEC!

"Vigilant Warriors" gives some insight into the team work factor.

"We try to play and practice as a team as much as we can, but sometimes it’s tough because we are made up of three different units that work on all different shifts."

The 525th Military Police Battalion is comprised of the 198th, 193rd and the 107th Military Police Companies. Soldiers from all three companies play on the same team, and don’t let unit rivalry get in the way of teamwork on the court.

“As soldiers, we are taught to learn, adapt and overcome obstacles,” Jordan said. “We have learned to play with each other because everyone has a natural feel for the game of basketball.”

As the playoffs heat up, so does the atmosphere in Denich Gym. The first game of the playoffs, which pit “Lights Out” against “GTMO...We Have A Problem,” was a loud and exciting affair. The two teams treated the boisterous fans to a nail biter that came down to the final seconds of the game.

The on-court tension was palpable and the people in the bleachers cheered and gasped with every tide-turning play. The group of faithfuls that attend the “Vigilant Warriors” showdown add a new element to the playoff aura. Warriors fans emulate the Cameron Crazies, Duke University fans, who outlandishly dress in painted shirts. They organize cheers and try to affect the outcome of the game. They have free throw cheers for the Warriors and well-timed jeers when the opposition is at the foul line.

“The Shotza” is a loud and exciting affair. "Lights Out" against "GTMO...We Have A Problem," was a loud and exciting affair. The two teams treated the boisterous fans to a nail biter that came down to the final seconds of the game.

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Though her position with Camp America as a lead petty officer is demanding, Personnel Spec. 2nd Class Angela Smalls meets the demands of her job by staying focused and ever-vigilant for time sensitive issues.

Smalls is always thinking about “the big picture” in every task she oversees. In the administrative section, she processes leave requests, evaluations and awards on a regular basis. She is also her unit’s Information Technology Officer and processes computer issues and other related requests.

“There’s no day-to-day (routine),” said Smalls. “We just work to make life easier for our people so they don’t have to come in on their off time to get stuff done.”

Smalls’ diligence in these matters doesn’t go unnoticed.

“(Smalls) is a dedicated professional,” Master-at-Arms 1st Class Alexander Bates said. “She’s a hard worker and one of my top Sailors. She’s on top of her game as far as organization and paperwork and making sure people get the things they need when they need them. She holds the Navy core values of “honor, courage and commitment” to her heart.”

Between the multi-tasking, Smalls has been able to enjoy a few diversions from her duties since her January arrival at Joint Task Force Guantanamo.

“I’ve snorkeled a few times,” she said. “I don’t go alone. I met a lot of interesting people. Even with the turnover, I made more friends than I thought I would at this place.”

Smalls is nearing the completion of her bachelor’s degree, and graduating would enable to consider pursuing another career.

“I’d like to get started in nursing school,” she said. “I want to continue in the Navy, but I’m also looking forward to doing something else.”

Guantanamo has been just one stop in Smalls’ 11-year-long Navy journey. Along the way, she found many opportunities for professional growth, making contacts and global travel. She urges others to seek the same goals.

“I’ve been really lucky,” she said. “I’ve been everywhere. It’s been nice.”

They were awarded for their integrity and upholding the military values. They serve silently and are focused on the mission. They are Semper Paratus. They are the United States Coast Guard Maritime Safety and Security Team Boston and they are handing over the helm to USCG MSST San Diego.

During the past week, MSST Boston worked alongside MSST San Diego and familiarize the new team with the MSST’s unique mission at Guantanamo Bay.

“The big thing for the Coast Guard is making sure we all train the right way and we all train the same way,” added Petty Officer 1st Class Thomas Cliffard.

Cliffard, a boatswain’s mate, praised his unit’s successor.

“The Coast Guard is big into standardizing everything, so I know what San Diego is capable of and what they are going to do,” he said.

MSSTs are a rapid response force able to deploy nationwide in response to threats or natural disasters. They usually defend strategic shipping, high interest vessels, and critical infrastructure, but they also provide security to high profile individuals and events such as the Superbowl.

Coast Guard Cmdr. Eric Cooper the commanding officer of Joint Task Force Guantanamo Security Detachment and MSST San Diego, explained that his team were ready for this new challenge.

“The great thing about these teams is that we’re really adaptable, so on the water this is something we do day in and day out,” said Cooper. “We were able to train ahead of time to make sure we are bringing the Joint Task Force the right compliment to support the mission.”

Although it is understood the mission comes first, Cliffard suggested the new team invest their free time in taking advantage of everything Guantanamo Bay offers.

“It’s going to be tough; they’re going to be here during holiday seasons,” said Cliffard. “But keep your heads up, keep the mission focused and enjoy yourselves while you’re down here.”

With MSST Boston leaving behind a successful tour, it will be up to MSST San Diego to maintain that momentum.

“I just think our mantra in this community of specialized forces is quiet professionalism,” said Cooper. “It’s just going out and getting the job done and supporting the commander with everything he needs and I think that’s what you’ll see from us and what you’ll see from the Coast Guard.”
Comedian and actress Caroline Rhea performed a stand-up set for a packed crowd in Downtown Lyceum on Thursday night, the eve of Veterans Day. It did not take long for her to find out this island is not what she expected – it reminded her of the Andy Griffith Show.

“I thought it was going to be this tiny place with good guys over here and bad guys over there,” Rhea said. “But this place looks like Mayberry, with some weird, serious, non-Mayberry noises.”

During her set, she talked about some of the differences of life on Guantanamo Bay.

“I went to KFC yesterday and they told me they were out of chicken,” she complained. “Out of chicken? They told me, ‘It’s on the barge.’ I guess you’re just Kentucky Fried today.”

Another part of the island experience new to Rhea are the $10,000 speed bumps.

“There’s no other place in the world where you have $10,000 speed bumps,” she said. “At the same time, they could be defending the country and build a house, because everyone has 45 jobs here.”

Rhea noticed an abundance of gratitude.

“It makes us very appreciative of what they do,” the aviation warfare systems operator said. “They always tell us, ‘thank you for doing what you do,’ but it really is a reciprocal effect for them to come do this for us and it makes us feel good.”

Rhea is thankful for the people on this island who answer the call of duty to such an extent.

“I hope I acknowledged the troops enough to say thank you and let them know that this is truly an honor,” she said. “It’s sort of like my way of writing a thank you note – to do a stand-up show.”

Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Les Paquiao has seen Rhea’s stand-up twice and returns the thanks.

“Whenever they come here, they always say thank you. We’re like Canadians who can’t get through the door without saying, ‘After you.’”

The night ended with Rhea showing her thanks, again, by taking pictures and signing autographs for satisfied fans. She put her John Hancock on cards, wine bottles, dollar bills and even the shirts on people’s backs.

“I feel like we’re in Canada – everyone is saying thank you,” she said. “Thank you? No thank you. We’re like Canadians who can’t get through the door without saying, ‘After you.’”

For 50 years, the Combined Federal Campaign has raised hundreds of millions of dollars for charitable organizations across the United States and around the world. Just last year, CFC coordinators raised $291.5 million in support of hundreds of charities and foundations.

As part of the CFC-Overseas portion of the overall campaign, Joint Task Force Guantanamo’s goal is to raise $30,000. In 2010, the JTF raised more than $25,000.

“You have a chance to give back to the community,” said Air Force Master Sgt. James Reeves.

Rhea is thankful for the people on this island who answer the call of duty to such an extent.
Troopers, veterans and families alike all came together Friday to honor servicemembers from the past and present, at Naval Station Guantanamo’s Veterans Day ceremony.

The event was held at the installation’s historic Marine Hill-area parade field, and was hosted by the Marine Corps Security Forces Company’s Honor Guard.

“We honor the best America has to offer: the men and women in uniform who answered, and continue to answer the call when their nation needs them,” said keynote speaker Marine Maj. Winston Tierney, commanding officer of the MCSFC. “They have fought unhesitatingly for their country, that others might know freedom.”

Veterans represent a multitude of cultures and have completed a variety of amazing missions together. Servicemembers come from every background and walk of life, as ordinary people coming together to make extraordinary things come to pass.

“As I woke this morning, I felt particularly humbled and a bit overwhelmed,” Tierney said. “I look out in the audience today and I see the faces of men and women whose stories I am familiar with and whose accomplishments amaze me.”

Tierney’s own combat experience in Iraq helped him underscore the importance of recognizing young veterans and those who were wounded in battle.

“We are currently at war, and I know it is inevitable,” he said. “But I am still always surprised when I see a young person with scars, or worse, amputations; the visible signs of their service.”

A 92-year-old tradition, Americans give their respect not only to veterans, but their families as well. Tierney thanked the local civilian population for their support and shared sacrifice.

“We owe you, your families, and your loved ones a debt of gratitude for putting our great nation first in your lives, above yourselves,” he said. “I cannot think of a greater display of courage and commitment.”
To what extent would a trooper go to support a brother- or sister-in-arms? Two sisters were separated by hundreds of miles of land and sea, but a promise brought an Army staff sergeant to Guantanamo Bay to be there to pin you on, said Kelly. “I feel matter where you are in the world I’m going to be there to pin you on.”

Within the military, bonds are made and a sister as a 31 Echo, an internment/resettlement specialist, but after looking into the human intelligence collector military occupational specialty she decided that it was her true calling. “It was a good decision. The Air Force is very well-known for how well they treat people and everything, but the Army has its own traditions,” said Rebecca. “We have the best of both worlds now. I can tell my Army stories; she’ll tell her Air Force stories and it works out well.”

Within the military, bonds are made that push troopers to go to the ends of the earth for their brother and sisters-in-arms. In the case of the Abbott sisters, the distance for Rebecca to pin on Kelly’s new rank was only a few hundred miles and an ocean.

Through the military, the Abbott sisters have forged a link beyond even their family ties. “I can’t talk to my other sister the way I can talk to her,” Kelly said.

Below: Air Force Master Sgt. Kelly Abbott’s promotion ceremony (former special agent) her sister Rebecca. photo by Army Sgt. Saul Rosa

There when needed: Native Americans answer call of duty

By Col. (Ret.) Gene Karten

Air War College

MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, Ala. – Native Americans serving in the military have long been part of one of the largest per-capita ethnic groups in the professions of arms. Young Native Americans have answered and continue to answer the nation’s call of duty for many reasons. Some see it as a rite of passage, while others have been taught service, sacrifice and courage are virtues of value. The Native Americans serving today carry on a time-honored tradition, one continued from the time of the first settlers on this continent to the ongoing wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. “My people honored me as a warrior,” said a Vietnam veteran who is from the Kiowa tribe, according to Naval History and Heritage Command. “We had a feast and my parents and grandparents thanked everyone who prayed for my safe return. We had a special (dance) and I remember, as we circled the drum, I got a feeling of pride. I felt good inside because that’s the way Kiowa people (tell) you that you’ve done well.”

They have always been there; they were in the ranks of the military even before we were a country. In the early days of our nation they were our eyes and ears, serving as scouts and guides. The last Indian scout retired from the Army in 1947 at Fort Huachuca, Ariz., according to Naval History and Heritage Command. Native Americans served in the War of 1812 and as auxiliary troops during the Civil War. Ely Parker, a Seneca Indian, wrote the terms for Gen. Robert E. Lee’s surrender at Appomattox Court House on April 9, 1865.

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C O A S T T O C O A S T

USCG trains on oil spill equipment

By Staff Sgt. Jan Greenhill
National Guard Bureau

WASHINGTON – On Veteran’s Day comes word of the confirmation of a new director for the Army National Guard, Army Reserve, and the Army National Guard Bureau. The testament for which the Joint Chiefs were joined by Air Force Gen. Craig McKinley, the chief of the National Guard Bureau, was on the matter of whether the CNGB should join the JCS. Senators confirmed Ingram during a brief break after they had reached quorum. Ingram, who also was confirmed for appointment to the rank of lieutenant general on Thursday, will succeed Army Maj. Gen. Raymond Carpenter, who has served as acting director of the Army National Guard for 29 months since his appointment by McKinley on May 29, 2009, following the retirement of Army Lt. Gen. Clyde Vaughn. Ingram will be the 19th director and the third three-star general to fill the position. The first was Army Lt. Gen. Roger Schugel, who served in the role from 1999 until his 2005 retirement. Prior to Schugel, the director was a major general, except for a period in the 1960s when there were then three-star generals. The first director was Army Maj. Gen. Raymond Fleming, from 1948 to 1950.

But coalition forces have been met with little confrontation, Finneman said. “I think the fact that we were able to get in without any little nuisance and establish our patrol bases is only going to lead to positive relations with the local population,” Finneman said.

Finneman said much of the Wing’s operations in support for Eastern Storm now comes from AH-64 Harrier attack jets, and UH-1 Huey and AH-1W Super Cobra helicopters watching overland.

“While we’re able to fly and support in any way [the ground combat element had asked us to],” Finneman said, “I believe the flexibility to meet the challenges of the ground combat element has been key. We had a very well-synchronized aviation plan.”

Capt. Joseph Fry, an AH-1W Super Cobra pilot with Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 267, recently flew one such mission. Fry, a native of Jacksonville, Ill., said that over the summer he had flown a few missions into Iraq on which Operation Red Dawn was focused. “Almost overnight, the cavalry turned into a support role,” said a Marine-controlled cognoscenti, Fry, adding that his recent mission was completely uneventful.

Close air support protects coalition, defeats Taliban attack

By Staff Sgt. John Wright
45th Air Expeditionary Wing Public Affairs

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan – F-15E Strike Eagles from the 335th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron and F-16 Fighting Falcons from the 121st EFS dropped more than 9,000 pounds of munitions through severe weather on enemy forces trying to overrun Patrola district in Paktika province, Afghanistan, Nov. 8.

“According to reports, up to 70 Taliban were killed while being attacked with COP Margah in a large scale coordinated attack. Coalition forces were first alerted to the attack when rocket-propelled grenades began to hit the camp. Shelling and other heavy gunfire forced the camp from multiple positions using small arms and RPG fire,” Staff Sgt. Seth Penza, a joint terminal attack controller with the 817th Expeditionary Air Support Operations Squadron, was responsible for calling in close air support when the fighting began. He employed weapons from Navy F-18s, who were already overhead and immediately requested a F-15E with a “Viper flight” of F-16s from Bagram Airfield.

“We requested the Dudes and Vipers because I needed a lot of ordnance and fast,” Penza said. “RPGs had already hit inside the COP and we were getting serious. There was a large enemy force moving towards us from multiple positions, and we were taking a heavy amount of enemy fire. Maj. Todd Dyer, a 335th EFS F-15E pilot, was the flight lead in “Dude 2.”

“We were able to employ precision weapons through the weather, which is one of the benefits of having GPS weapons,” Dyer said. “After the Dude flight dropped their first two sets of munitions, Penza identified enemy personnel in an open area advancing on the COP and called for a 500-pound weapon that eliminated the target.”

“My number one mission is to do everything I can to ensure zero coalition casualties and eliminate as many insurgents as possible,” Penza said. “Where Dude flight dropped the F-15E, it accomplished the ground commander’s intent, which makes me feel good.”

Capt. DeShane Greaser, an infantry officer with COP Margah, said close air support was critical to the joint fight that day. “The initial bombs dropped effectively changed the insurgent’s minds about continuing the attack,” Greaser said. The first bombs dropped had an even more significant impact, according to Greaser who was at first apparent, according to Penza.

“There was a vehicle-home improvised explosive device heading to the COP, and the first bombs hit, we got reports that the enemy said, ‘We’re turning around, there are jets overhead,’” Penza said. Pena said hearing fighters overhead provided the ground commanders with tremendous comfort.

At the end of the day, ground forces and close air support assets worked together to kill between 50 and 60 insurgents while sustaining no Coalition or civilian casualties.
Obama: Asia-Pacific region top priority; proposes six-month Marine rotations to Australia

WASHINGTON — Democrats and Republicans rallied on a rare patch of common ground Wednesday and Congress approved legislation helping government contractors and unemployed veterans, finally giving President Barack Obama the chance to sign the first piece of his $447 billion jobs bill into law.

The House sent the bill to the White House by an overwhelming 422-0, six days after the Senate passed it 95-0.

Panetta, Dempsey: U.S.-Iraq partnership will continue

WASHINGTON — Iraq and its forces are prepared to cope with the security challenges they will face after U.S. forces withdraw, Defense Department leaders told Congress today.

Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta and Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, described their views on those challenges in testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee.

"Today, thanks to innumerable sacrifices from all involved, Iraq is governing itself," Panetta said. "It's a sovereign nation. It's an emerging source of stability in a vital part of the world."

The secretary said the United States seeks to continue a relationship with Iraq based on mutual respect and interests.

With the State Department set to lead U.S. efforts in Iraq after troops withdraw by Dec. 31, a structure remains that allows the United States to continue assisting the Iraqi government, Panetta said.

The secretary said countering extremism, reducing internal friction and closing gaps in government, Panetta said. Most of the time, we adapt to these challenges without much difficulty. But in certain stressful situations, there are pressures of deployment that may be coupled with difficulty adjusting to separation from family and friends, depression can result.

Depression is an indiscriminate condition that can affect anyone, regardless of age, sex, ethnicity, or social standing. It is a significant health concern across the world and within the military. Most of us feel sad or lonely at times. Feeling this way is a normal reaction to loss, life’s struggles, or an injured self-esteem. But when these feelings become overwhelming and last for long periods of time, they can indicate clinical depression and keep you from leading a healthy, active life.

Classical symptoms of depression include a loss of focus and concentration, harsh self-criticism, and general feelings of being physically drained with no motivation to do even the simplest activities.

Feeling the pressure of deployment bearing down upon you, have you lost interest in activities that once pleased you? Have you lost interest in activities you once considered entertaining? Find yourself drinking or smoking more than you did prior to arrival in Cuba? Do you no longer view your job or service as being important? Are you sleeping more or less than you normally do? Is your mood consistently negative, pessimistic, or irritable? If so, depression may be setting in.

Deployment places a wide variety of stressors upon service members. Most of the time, we adapt to these challenges without much difficulty. But in certain stressful situations, there are pressures of deployment that may be coupled with difficulty adjusting to separation from family and friends, depression can result.

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Physical symptoms of depression are not only personally incapacitating but can be recognized in other people as well. There are signs to look for personally or for friends you suspect might be depressed.

Excessive weight loss or gain, perpetual fatigue, and insomnia are just a few symptoms that might be present. Other classical symptoms of depression include a loss of focus and concentration, harsh self-criticism, and general feelings of being physically drained with no motivation to do even the simplest activities (which, in extreme cases, can include basic hygiene). Sometimes, our bodies can develop symptoms of depression in the absence of obvious emotional distress. Frequent headaches, muscle pains, digestive problems, and flu-like symptoms can be indicators of someone suffering from depression.

Emotional symptoms are the most obvious that you may experience personally and the hardest to detect in others. Feelings of pervasive sadness, inadequacy, hopelessness and helplessness are the most common. If you feel guilty for no reason and “emotionally drained” most days, you might be depressed.

Suicide threats and attempts are an extreme manifestation of depression, but there is always an alternative. Although improving a depressed mood can be difficult, a number of strategies exist that can be used to lessen its symptoms. As the old saying goes, “a healthy body is a healthy mind.” Maintaining an exercise routine, a proper diet, regular sleeping patterns, and avoiding excessive drinking have the benefit of not only preserving physical health but mitigating mood, as well.

JSMART offers comprehensive mental health services to meet the needs of military personnel stationed and deployed to Joint Task Force Guantanamo. Should you feel that you require assistance in addressing your mood or any other issue which may be affecting you, JSMART is located next to the Chaplain’s office and near the 525th Military Police Battalion headquarters. The pasture is open in the clinic Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. and the 24-hour duty cell phone will always be manned at extension 3566.

Fulfill your obligations. Doing your duty means more than carrying out your assigned tasks. Duty means being able to accomplish tasks as part of a team. The work of the Joint Task Force is a complex combination of missions, tasks and responsibilities — all in constant motion. Our work entails building one assignment onto another. You fulfill your obligations as a part of your unit every time you resist the temptation to take “shortcuts” that might undermine the integrity of the final product.

Value of the Week: Duty

Mind, Body & Spirit

Deployment and depression

Recognizing the signs in yourself and others

Voice of America

Former Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta is sworn in after being administered the oath of office by Chair of the Senate Armed Services Committee Carl Levin. Panetta was sworn in Tuesday, Dec. 27, for a 2nd term as the nation's Defense Secretary.

With the war in Iraq drawing to a close, the United States is seeking to maintain a Pacific commitment to help ensure stability in the region. The Obama administration has proposed sending six-month tours of Marines to the Pacific region.

Obama: Asia-Pacific region top priority

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Presidential Task Force Study

Final report: Afghanistan and Pakistan

Commission’s recommendations would support an ongoing military presence. The president halted the military drawdown.

The commission urged a “steady and significant” drawdown to 20,000 to 30,000 troops in 2012.

The report’s recommendations on a U.S. presence in Afghanistan were similar to those of the National Intelligence Council.

The U.S. will maintain U.S. forces on Australian soil.

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“Puss in Boots” is an animated delight chronicling the adventures of Puss in Boots before his encounter with Shrek in “Shrek 2” (2004). This particular “yarn” is the backstory on how Puss came to don his hat, saber, boots and his status as a crusading outlaw with a heart of gold.

Actor Antonio Banderas repurposes his popular role as the voice of Puss. This time, director Chris Miller tones down the adult overtones and risqué humor present in the “Shrek” pictures. “Puss in Boots” is more of a straightforward family adventure. It is also somewhat less of a comedy than the “Shrek” films, relying more on the story and great visuals. I suspect a few edits to this PG rated fare would bring it into the G rated realm.

This highly colorful tale (or “tail”) opens with Puss encountering the certain doom of a night’s mischievousness. He’s on a quest to find magic beans he has been looking for since kittenhood, which in turn will lead him to a great kingdom in the clouds ripe for plunder. This leads him to an amusing confrontation with the deviant Jack and Jill (Billy Bob Thornton and Amy Sedaris) who have the beans in their possession, and a new rival known as Kitty Softpaws (Selma Hayek) who has an agenda all her own.

It’s not long before we meet Humpty Alexander Dumpty (Zach Galifianakis) and learn of the bitter childhood connection between Humpty Dumpty and Puss in Boots. At their last encounter many years ago, an altercation stemmed in one “having had a great fall” (as you may have heard) and the banishment of Puss from the town of El Ricardo, resulting in the subsequent origin of a wrongfully-accused swashbuckling champion of good although his paws might be “a little sticky” from time-to-time.

“Puss in Boots” has fun with the characters, always keeping the atmosphere cheerful. A prime example of this is the dance-off between Puss and Kitty at the feline-only dance-club named “The (G)litter Box” (where the G in the neon lettering is always on the frite) complete with a musical number that is fresh, upbeat and engaging with a multitude of interesting visual gags ensuing in the background. This sequence is custom designed to keep viewers dialed-in and smiling.

The “Puss in Boots” story presented here is entirely its own creation. It bears no real ties to the original seventeenth century “Puss in Boots” fairy tale by Charles Perrault. The only commonality between the two is the name, physical characteristics and personality of Puss. Beyond that, the film studio behind this picture, DreamWorks SKG, took extensive creative liberties with the material and decided to have fun with not one, but multiple fairy tales and assorted fairy tale characters to create a fresh movie for today’s audiences for mass consumption. It works.

Though not as original as the first two “Shrek” pictures, which pioneered the way for this movie, and a multitude of other “sophisticated” animated fare that has dominated multiplexes the last decade, “Puss in Boots” delivers the goods. It’s a fun, light-hearted time at the movies. Nothing more and nothing less.
Coast Guard Maritime Safety and Security Team - Boston said farewell Nov. 14 to Joint Task Force Guantanamo and handed off their post to MSST - San Diego.

Background: Gamenowinink Lodge #555 rehabilitated the old Boy Scout Camp near the Villamar housing section, with the help of Joint Task Force volunteers and the 474th ECES Prime BEEF. Much of the campground, including this bridge, had previously been overgrown to the point of impassable.