

THE WIRE

A JTF Journal



Badgers Depart
New colors unfurled

Project almost complete
Cooper Field construction on track

Lead, learn, write

**Navy Senior Chief Petty Officer
Roberto J. Rondain**
JIG Supply Manager

Going through the chief petty officer induction, we were reminded that one of our primary jobs as a chief is to take care of our Troopers. But how do you do that? How can you be an inspiring leader and communicator – a manager par excellence?

Through our years in the service, we have seen people who just ooze with leadership qualities and managerial skills we aspire to have. We try to emulate their style and their demeanor and hopefully we get the same results. But sometimes we fall short of the standard we set. Does that mean that we fail in our mission?

Whoever we are as an individual, there is always something we can learn. My mentor, Senior Chief Petty Officer Ed Pagua, enlightened me in my quest. He taught me that if you want to really take care of your Troopers, help them get promoted. Putting money in their pocket is really where the rubber meets the road.

How many times have you seen Troopers, day-in and day-out, do outstanding work and still get left behind by their peers? They may be the epitome of sustained superior performance and still cannot advance for some reason beyond their control.

As leaders, this is where we come in. I believe one way we can help them is by learning how to write Trooper performance evaluations. We need to do our best to write evaluations that really benefit and describe junior Trooper performance accurately. It is the only thing that represents all the hard work they have completed. How many times have we heard ourselves groan when it is time to write an evaluation? We shouldn't, because it is one of the best ways we can really take care of our Troopers. Even new, inexperienced leaders developing their managerial skills, if they know how to write, can get their qualified Troopers promoted.

Recently, I sent evaluations through my chain of command, thinking that they were "the bomb" and might only need a little change – an apostrophe, a comma or a period here and there – but they came back better than what I wrote. I thought I already knew how to write. It's a good reminder that when we think we know everything and that we can't learn anymore from anybody, there is always somebody who will remind us of the constant need to learn.

Just like the famous words uttered by Edward Bulwer-Lytton, "The pen is mightier than the sword." ✦



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COVER:

Members of the 112th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment salute as the Wisconsin Badger flag is lowered from in front of the JTF PAO offices at Camp America.

U.S. Navy photo by Petty Officer 1st Class Josh Treadwell



The WIRE is the official news magazine of Joint Task Force Guantanamo. It is produced by the JTF Public Affairs Office to inform and educate the Troopers of JTF Guantanamo through news, features, command guidance, sports and entertainment. The WIRE seeks to provide maximum disclosure with minimum delay with regards to security, accuracy, propriety and policy. This DoD news magazine is an authorized publication for the members of the Department of Defense. Contents of The WIRE are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, or Joint Task Force Guantanamo. It is printed by the Document Automation & Production Service with a circulation of 1,000.



Army Brig. Gen. Rafael O'Ferrall, deputy commander of Joint Task Force Guantanamo speaks with Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Chelsea Cruz during a visit to Camp 4. O'Ferrall often visits Troopers in their work areas to show them support and ensure their needs are met.

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

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Understanding the needs of Troopers is important, but taking action and meeting the needs of Troopers is priceless. Army Brig. Gen. Rafael O'Ferrall, deputy commander of Joint Task Force Guantanamo, has embraced his role – and Troopers – while addressing much-needed changes in their work and living areas.

“We’ve created a great team with [JTF Commander, Navy] Rear Adm. [David M.] Thomas,” O'Ferrall said. “While we both look at the entire JTF operation and the importance of the mission, I have put personal emphasis on personnel, logistics and morale and welfare opportunities. That way we can reach out to everyone and touch the entire community of GTMO.”

“Throughout the two months I’ve been here, I have visited every work area and every camp to check on the morale and welfare of the Troopers,” said O'Ferrall. “I’ve participated in different community events held by the African-American association and Cuban-American association, as well as promotions and farewells.”

Keeping his finger on the pulse of the Troopers is important for O'Ferrall and he does that by talking to them and visiting them at their work areas.

“I talk to Troopers everywhere – at security points, at the NEX, during training exercises – I stop and have conversations with them,” O'Ferrall said.

Troopers have often been surprised by the General’s visits.

“I’ve had Troopers look at me twice or notice the rank, surprised that I’m there,” O'Ferrall said with a chuckle. “We’re human beings. We’re here to support them and to make our mission happen. Traditionally, a general officer will maintain his work in the office, but by meeting the Troopers, saying hello and listening to their needs, they can explain their situation, not only for themselves but for the community they live in.”

O'Ferrall explained that using the chain of command is

important, but emphasized that Troopers should be comfortable expressing their concerns.

“It’s a relief for them to be able to express their concerns so they don’t have to worry and can focus on their work,” he added.

During recent visits from Pentagon staff members and dignitaries, O'Ferrall received compliments about the service members who work at the JTF.

“The Troopers here are doing great work for America,” O'Ferrall said with a smile. “They are following the rules of engagement properly and are working the only way they know how – the right way.”

With the presidential order to close JTF Guantanamo, O'Ferrall mentioned the difference between the Joint Task Force closing and the Naval Station mission.

“The naval station will continue to do their business, and the JTF will maintain its posture,” he said. “By next year the JTF operation will be closed but until then we will continue to support and evaluate Troopers work conditions, living conditions and morale and welfare because it’s the right thing to do.”

One of the areas the general noted for enhancement was a Coast Guard area of operation, identifying some specific building maintenance and traffic flow considerations.

“We want them to have a safer environment to perform their jobs,” O'Ferrall said. “The Coast Guard, as well as the Army, Navy, Marines Corps and Air Force, is doing a great job for us – inside and outside the wire.”

In addition, enhancements will be made for the Troopers living in Camp America. The latrine and shower areas have been identified for revitalization.

O'Ferrall, along with JTF Senior Enlisted Leader Air Force Chief Master Sgt. Brian Schexnaydre, has been looking into the Morale, Welfare and Recreation program to help enhance JTF Troopers opportunities and experiences.

According to O'Ferrall, the Troopers here deserve the best. With his staff, he intends to accomplish that mission. ★

525th HHC gets new leadership

**Army Staff Sgt,
Blair Heusdens**

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Headquarters and Headquarters Company (HHC) of the 525th Military Police Battalion recently changed hands. Capt. Maxim A. Krekotnev took command from Capt. Juan A. Rodriguez in a ceremony February 27.

The company provides support to the 525th MP Battalion including logistics, finance, personnel and supply operations. The 525th is responsible, along with the Naval Expeditionary Guard Battalion, for ensuring the safe and humane care and custody of detained enemy combatants at Joint Task Force Guantanamo.

In his few weeks as commander, Krekotnev has been impressed by his Troopers' abilities and made to feel at ease in his position as their new commander.

"There are no tensions in this company," Krekotnev said. "It's a very comfortable working environment."

Helping him to get settled in are his company's non-commissioned officers (NCOs).

"My NCOs know their jobs very well," Krekotnev said. "I can trust them to accomplish the mission with little supervision."

Krekotnev plans to encourage his Troopers to volunteer and participate in community activities while they are stationed with the Joint Task Force.

"I want our Troops to work hard and play hard so they can enjoy themselves while they are here," Krekotnev said. ★



(Above) Army Capt. Maxim A. Krekotnev receives the company guidon for Headquarters and Headquarters Company (HHC), 525th Military Police Battalion, during a ceremony Feb. 27 at the Camp America Troopers' Chapel. Krekotnev took command of HHC from Army Capt. Juan A. Rodriguez. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Richard M. Wolff

(Right) Army Capt. Juan A. Rodriguez passes the 525th Military Police Battalion guidon to 1st Sgt. Rodney Sanchez during a change-of-command ceremony at the Camp America Trooper's Chapel, Feb. 27. Capt. Maxim A. Krekotnev relieved Rodriguez as the 525th MP Battalion Commander. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Richard M. Wolff





The 112th MPAD Departs JTF-GTMO

Members of the 112th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment pose for a photo at Joint Task Force Guantanamo. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Orlando Quintero

**Army Sgt.
Michael Baltz**

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

The 112th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment of the Wisconsin Army National Guard departs after a successful year-long tour at Joint Task Force Guantanamo.

The majority of the members of the MPAD will be returning to their homes in Wisconsin, while several will stay behind to support the Florida Army National Guard's 107th MPAD in the JTF mission.

"(The 112th MPAD) quickly assimilated to the mission and the environment here and have very successfully told the JTF story," Cdmr. Pauline Storum, the director of the JTF public affairs office, said. "These are wonderful service members. They have worked so hard over this year with tremendous results."

The 112th MPAD carried out several tasks in order to be successful during their deployment here.

"We aligned ourselves with the mission of the JTF," said Capt. Kim Kleiman, commander. "We had to ensure that our internal and our external audiences were informed, and that we maintained a level of transparency."

The public affairs unit was divided among three sections including command information, media relations and public information.

The command information section is responsible for *The Wire*, which is a weekly publication for the Troops at JTF. This section also is responsible for broadcast products, such as radio and video stories about the JTF which go to the Pentagon Channel, American Forces Network and other media outlets.

The media relations component of public affairs is responsible for coordinating tours for national and international media.

The public information office maintains the JTF Web site and provides photo support for retirements, reenlistments, awards and

other JTF mission requirements.

Even though the unit was divided into sections, they were able to work as a team, which was a huge part of the MPAD's success according to Kleiman.

The MPAD members are looking forward to going home, but will miss GTMO.

"I am excited to go home and see my wife and kids," said 1st Sgt. Jim Venske, the MPAD's senior non-commissioned officer. "On the other hand, I really enjoyed my job and having the ability to be here during this historic time."

Many soldiers plan to go home and give a flag that has been ceremoniously flown over the northeast gate to family members and school principals, while Venske is looking forward to having breakfast at Cracker Barrel.

The 19-member MPAD from Madison, Wis., will be leaving behind five members to continue to support the JTF mission. Staff Sgt. Emily Russell, Staff Sgt. Jim Wagner, Spc. Cody Black and Spc. Carlynn Knaack will continue to work for the public affairs office, while 1st Lt. Sarah Cleveland will become the J2 deputy director.

These members are staying for job security and love for the mission.

"I believe in the mission and love what I do here," Staff Sgt. Emily Russell, the assistant editor of *The Wire*, said. "I never imagined I'd enjoy being a journalist and assistant editor of a news publication as much as I do."

The current structure of the 112th MPAD was created in 2006. The unit had deployed to Bosnia in 1997 and a majority of their members deployed to Iraq in 2004. In the years following the deployments and prior to the 2006 formation, Wisconsin's MPAD was actually a 10-member detachment of the 139th MPAD, a split-state Wisconsin-Illinois unit. ☆



(Above) A contractor trowels gap filler as part of preparations for the track at the Cooper Sports Complex prior to “resurfacing”. It will re-open April 1 and will mark the end of the MWR project and completion of the sports complex. (Right) A contractor spreads the first layer of rubber on the track at the Cooper Sports Complex.



The final layer

**Army Sgt.
Michael Baltz**

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

The track at Cooper Sports Complex will be completed by April 1 as part of a Morale, Welfare and Recreation project that started 18 months ago.

“This provides a high-quality, well-designed facility that will last for years,” Craig Basel, the MWR director, said. “It is going to be beneficial to everyone.”

According to Basel, the reason the project is just now finishing is because after laying the concrete, there is a 45-day period the surface needs to dry, minimizing the chance of cracks. It takes about two weeks to pour the rubberized track, and about a week to stripe it.

This is a certified measured track and

represents a huge jump in quality in comparison to other available facilities. The new track will be used for running events, physical fitness tests, jogging and other Naval Station events. Biking and skate boarding on the track will be prohibited.

Clough, Harbor and Associates designed the track and Field Turf was the company that put it all together.

Field Turf built the Seattle Seahawks’ field, the Arizona Cardinals’ field and is currently working on Louisiana State University’s field.

“This is top of the line,” Basel said. “This is a very high-tech surface, professional track used at various major track and field events, including the Olympics.”

The surface is rubber and will be forgiving on the body. Runners will not have the pounding on their joints like they do on the streets, according to Basel.

“It is a project that I identified seven years ago. People were getting injured and it was dirty,” Basel said. “It is very exciting to see the whole thing come together and get completed.”

Basel hopes everyone can enjoy it, but also hopes everyone will assist in taking care of it. ★

Beaten, but not broken



**Army Sgt.
Carmen Gibson**

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

A well-written drama causes a surge of varying emotions. The audience laughs at the ice-breaking wise cracks of the comic relief, tears up at the car crash, hospital or funeral scenes, and identifies with at least one of the fully-developed characters.

When following this format, "Not Easily Broken" seems to really soar, but is unfortunately weighed down by the cheesy narration, nature slides and jarring 'moral of the story' realizations.

Adapted from the novel by best-selling author and pastor, Bishop T.D. Jakes, the film begins with a refreshing twist on an old concept: a squabbling married couple, Dave and Clarice Johnson, portrayed by Morris Chestnut and Taraji Henson, are trying to find a balance between being lovers and working as associates in the business of marriage. Stereotypical family roles are completely reversed with this couple. The unique quality is brought on by the premise of the strong black woman persona which seems to be one of the many underlying themes in the movie.

Clarice is a powerhouse of an antagonist/heroine, who transforms seamlessly in the film from money-hungry dominating career woman to loving and compassionate wife with newfound faith. Hen-pecked Dave, on the other hand, wins the audience over immediately with his caring heart and hopeless plight. Owning a struggling construction company, Dave primarily

spends his time coaching little league with his two best friends, woman-chasing Brock (Eddie Cibrian) and emotionally sensitive Tree (Kevin Hart).

While the homeboys help add to the tension and give the film an added dose of much-needed humor, their behavior is entirely over-the-top and out of sync with the overall tone. The same can also be said for the stock character of Clarice's friend and confidant, Michelle (Niecy Nash), which plays on every black woman stereotype and spouts a bunch of "hey girl" taglines.

Trouble for the Johnsons seems to grow after a terrible car accident leaves Clarice dependant on her brow-beaten and emotionally fed-up husband, and throws her man-hating single mother (Jenifer Lewis) into the mix. When Dave starts falling for his wife's physical therapist and becoming a role model for her young

son, further adulterating drama ensues.

Chesnut and Henson possess great chemistry and do their best to showcase the well-written and dynamic plot, but, Dave's monotone and cliché-riddled narration hinders any true grit that the movie boasts. It does, however, seem to tie in the appearance of religious morals that are beaten into the audience directly from a pulpit during the last 20 minutes. Dramatic slow-motion basketball scenes also seem to disrupt the momentum, but are pleasing enough to the eye that all is forgiven.

If he was shooting for an attractive, realistic drama, lesser-known director Bill Duke hits his mark, but if it's not being shown to a church congregation, it can come off a bit preachy. ☆

PG-13
100 Minutes

Rating: ★★☆☆☆



Volunteering in the community

■ Opportunities for Troopers to help others, earn recognition.

**Army Spc.
David McLean**

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Becoming a part of the GTMO volunteer community can not only improve the quality of life here, but can also help troopers earn military recognition for their actions.

“When I got here a little over a year ago, I found nothing in place for people who wanted to do volunteer service,” said Navy Ensign Ian H. Underwood, U.S. Naval Station Guantanamo Bay public works construction projects manager. “As this is the oldest overseas military base, there is plenty of stuff around that can afford to be fixed up or cleaned up. I saw the opportunity.”

Underwood and a group of volunteers run many different types of volunteer projects; from working at the Iguana Crossing, to supporting the elementary school, or making improvements on the monuments and open spaces here on the base.

“It is difficult because we are on a military base and it’s a small community,” said Underwood. “There aren’t any soup kitchens, homeless, or Habitat for Humanity.”

Despite the difficulty organizing projects, hours spent volunteering help improve the community and can even help your military career.

The Department of Defense created an award for all military members to be recognized for their selfless acts to the community. The Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal recognizes those members of the military who dedicate time to the local community, above and beyond the duties required as a member of the United States Armed Forces. The requirements for the award are outlined for each service branch, but all require sustained service to the civilian community that helps to show the military in a good light.

The DoD Manual of Military Decorations and Awards (DOD 1348.33-M) leaves the definition of volunteer service intentionally vague, allowing for a wide variety of activities and volunteer duties which would qualify a service member for the MOVSM.

U.S. Coast Guard Petty Officer Sheldon A. Harley and his group often take time out to do volunteer work with Underwood. They routinely work around the station in their Coast Guard T-shirts and do a wide array of work to include lighthouse and thrift store renovation, trash pickup, and tree removal.

“They have initiative and a caring for others – and that’s the biggest thing,” Harley said when asked about the impression a volunteer can make. “They are willing to take their own time to help somebody out.”

Along with personal satisfaction, there can be opportunities for advancement. The award comes with great honor for a recipient,



Coast Guard Lt. j.g. Jordan Hardenbergh shovels sand after Hurricanes Gustav, Hanna and Ike, Sept. 20, 2008. Hardenbergh enjoys volunteering in the community and is also working toward his Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal. -JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Staff Sgt. Emily Russell

and the possibility for promotion points. Much of the information for the award can be obtained through each Trooper’s chain of command within each branch’s policies including number of hours or types of service that qualify.

Reading books to school children, painting weathered buildings or doing other small things that make this a great place to live – the rewards and awards of volunteerism are easily within reach. ☆

Dr. Peter Tolson, director of conservation and research at the Toledo Zoo, hosted a reptile and amphibian show while visiting Guantanamo Bay, Feb 22. During the show, he invited residents of the base to touch the lizards, amphibians – and even a tarantula – as part of his public outreach program.



Conservation; an important mission

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

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

For some, the sight of snakes and lizards can be unsettling, yet, for others, it brings curiosity. For Dr. Peter Tolson and Candee Laine Ellsworth, the sight of these creatures brings excitement as they can count one more animal in their study.

Tolson, the director of conservation and research at the Toledo Zoo, in Ohio and Ellsworth, a conservation coordinator who works as Tolson's field assistant coordinating research projects for the zoo, study Cuban boas and Cuban rock iguanas, tracking their movements here and

understanding the habitat these animals live in.

"Our mission is to study the habitat use and home range of the Cuban boa," Tolson said. "It's very threatened in Cuba, but here at Guantanamo Bay, since the boas and the habitat are protected – it's an excellent place to study."

Tolson explained that big snakes here are more abundant than in the rest of Cuba. Beyond the Naval Station, they're killed for food or killed out of ignorance.

"They just don't exist in the numbers that they do here," he added, "so this is the perfect place to study them."

Tolson and Ellsworth work hand in hand with the Navy environmental department

offering their expertise and helping the Navy protect various areas of the base which are important for at-risk species.

"The Navy takes its stewardship role seriously," Tolson said. "Department of Defense facilities often contain large tracks of unspoiled land which are home to many at-risk species."

Here, the Cuban boas and the Cuban rock iguana – as well as several species of plants which are almost completely extinct – are protected within the gated community.

"Candee and I hunt snakes at night using a head-lamp," Tolson explained. "When we find them, we take them to the veterinary clinic where Army Veterinarian Capt. Stephanie Hall implants the snakes with radio transmitters we bring down here. Once they have the implant we can follow them with a radio receiver and directional antenna."

"Sometimes I come down a week before Peter and find all the snakes we have identified," Ellsworth said. "I locate them, and sometimes find new ones. Currently, we have 18 that we're tracking and we try to check each one every day, or every other day and gather the global positioning system data for it."

The data Tolson and Ellsworth collect is used to show the home range of the snake, detecting how often they frequent an area and how far they move.

"When we have enough data points we can establish a pattern of where they live," Tolson said. "With knowledge of plant life on the base, it's pretty easy to determine what types of habitat are most important to the snake. With that, we can do a lot to lessen – if not prevent – conflicts with the boas."

According to Tolson, both Joint Task Force and Naval Station Guantanamo Bay commanders are very amenable to working with him and the environmental department to prevent significant habitat loss. "The mission to protect animals is a secondary mission," he said. "But they are both very supportive."

There are six species of snakes, five species of amphibians and approximately 25 species of lizards on the base. Not all are endangered, but the iguana is in real trouble outside of the fence line according to Tolson.

"The [International Union for the Conservation of Nature] has estimated that Guantanamo has anywhere from five to eight percent of the total number of iguanas found in Cuba," he said. "You only have

See **B0A/12**

Rare species protected at Guantanamo

BOA from 11

to look at the small footprint of the base on the map of Cuba to realize what a significant role this base can play in the conservation of these animals.”

Public outreach is another important part of their mission.

“We enjoy interacting with the base residents and giving them some insight to the animals that share the base with them,” Ellsworth said. “I think if people become more familiar with the animals and interact with them, then they are more likely to be partners in conservation and understand the importance of preserving their habitat and having more respect for the animals.”

Tolson and Ellsworth hope that through public outreach, naval station residents will call base security at ext. 4105 or environmental at ext. 4493 to move an animal they feel threatened by – instead of harming or killing it. They also hope that residents realize the importance of not feeding the iguanas.

“It’s important to refrain from feeding



Candee Laine Ellsworth, conservation coordinator for the Toledo Zoo, holds a lizard for base residents to see during the reptile and amphibian show, Feb. 22. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Staff Sgt. Emily J. Russell

the iguanas,” Tolson said. “It’s mainly for the protection of our children. By feeding them, they learn not to fear human beings . . . and become highly aggressive with food. Several children have been injured because iguanas will grab their food and sometimes get their hand. It scares the kids.”

To find information that Tolson has published about his findings at Guantanamo Bay, go to www.toledozoo.org, or go to the Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southeast Web site at https://portal.navfac.navy.mil/portal/page/portal/navfac/NAVFAC_WW_PP/NAVFAC_SOUTHEAST_PP. ☆

Joint Task Force Vehicle Operations

Close to 95% of the JTF fleet of vehicles are Army contract vehicles. As such, until the Services authorize each Trooper to bring a vehicle, the rental fleet is authorized to be treated as a government provided “POV” within some strict guidelines. The use of alcohol or tobacco products in a government vehicle is prohibited. All drivers must possess a current and valid military driver’s license.

Preventive maintenance and cleanliness are a mandatory part of vehicle operation by all JTF personnel. Each vehicle assignee is responsible for upkeep, fluids, washing and cleaning the interior. All vehicles are inspected regularly to maintain the government value of the rental fleet.

To date, the JTF has revoked over 35 rights to drive privileges and at least three troopers have had to pay out of pocket for repairs or damages to government vehicles.



Proper use of government-provided vehicles is the responsibility of each individual.

For more information, see Policy Memo # 13, available on the intranet under resources, policies and regulations.

GTMO fishing show to air on ESPN2



George Poveromo's World of Saltwater Fishing on ESPN2 will feature the fishing in and around Naval Station Guantanamo Bay. The first of this two-episode series will air Sunday, March 15, at 7:30 a.m. The encore performance of that episode will air Saturday, March 21, at 6:30 a.m. Episode two will air Sunday, March 22, at 7:30 a.m., with the encore performance set for Saturday, March 28, at 6:30 a.m. - JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Staff Sgt. Emily J. Russell

Boots on the Ground

by Army Spc. April D. de Armas

What are your plans for rest and relaxation leave time?

Army Spc.
Carlos Garcia



"I want to take the family to Disneyworld and Universal Studios in Florida."

Army Sgt.
Hector de Jesus



"I am going home to Puerto Rico to see my family."

Navy Lt. j.g.
George Kraft



"I definately want to get some snorkeling and golf in for leave. Also I want to go see my parents in Holland, Mich."

Army Pfc.
Reynaldo Salgado



"I might go to Orlando, Florida, to see my mom."

Garbage in, garbage out!

**Army Capt.
Eric Bey**

525th MP Battalion Chaplain

Cursing in the military is probably as old as the military itself. We even have well known phrases like, "Cursing like a Sailor" to prove it – not that they have a monopoly on it – believe me.

Every service is marred by the language of its people. You may be surprised to know that it is actually a violation of the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

In the Bible, the book of James (the half brother of Jesus) says that if a man (or woman) can keep their tongue then they are perfect. He further explains that the tongue is a relatively small part of the body yet it makes great boasts. It is like a match. It is itself a very small and unimposing object but the fire that it can cause could cost lives and billions of dollars in damages.

In the not so distant past the practice of washing one's mouth out with soap was employed to stop the behavior and for a small amount of time it would work, but it did little to stop the behavior altogether. Perhaps you will be surprised to hear it, but I myself used to have an uncontrollable potty mouth! As I studied Scripture, I

quickly learned that it was displeasing to God and conviction came upon me to want to change. I studied more and I learned that quitting was not as easy

Lord showed me a garbage can one day and prodded me to attempt to get jewels or gold, silver or pearls from it. I knew that I couldn't for the simple reason that no one had put any of those things in it. He said, "That's how your speech and heart are connected as well." Once I got it, the

next step was for me to start putting what I wanted to come out of my mouth, into my heart. I wanted to be a man whose speech was tempered with grace and wisdom. I decided

that for every curse word that I said, I would put in several verses of Scripture.

It didn't take long for my speech to change and the only effort it took was to read some Scriptures after I caught myself saying a curse word. I even invited my friends in to hold me accountable. I cursed for a while more because it was already in me but it ebbed noticeably.

My favorite verses that helped me are: Proverbs 4:20-24 and Ephesians 4:29. If you are appalled at the things that come out of your mouth, perhaps it's time to do something about it. Knowing is half the battle and the character strength to want to change combined with knowing what to do about it is the other half. Start today and you'll be surprised at how fast you can change! ☆

as one might think. Try it and you will agree. Taming the tongue is harder than taming lions.

I learned through my study that the Bible says that it is out of the abundance of the heart that the mouth speaks. The



JTF CHAPEL SCHEDULED PROGRAMS

Catholic Mass

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

Wednesday: 11 a.m.
Spanish Mass

Protestant Worship

Sunday: 9 a.m.

Spanish Protestant Worship

Sunday: 11 a.m.

Bible Study

Sunday: 6 p.m.

Wednesday: 7 p.m.



From the Chesapeake to the Caribbean

From left, Coast Guard Cmdr. Steve Pope, Chief Petty Officer Paul Seitz, Petty Officer 1st Class Jarrett Swann, Chief Warrant Officer Monty Willaford, Petty Officer 3rd Class Ben Packett and Petty Officer 3rd Class Eric Epperly are all stationed at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay.

■ Small town bonds tie PSU Coasties

**Army Staff Sgt.
Blair Heusdens**

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

The Coast Guard, as one of the nation’s smallest services, is a tight-knit community of people who share a love of country and of the water. Not too far from the mainland, at a naval base on the island of Cuba, another small, tight-knit community exists. Within this community of Troopers, six Coasties share an even deeper bond, originating from the waters of the Chesapeake Bay.

Cmdr. Steve Pope, Chief Warrant Officer Monty Willaford, Chief Petty Officer Paul Seitz, Petty Officer 1st Class Jarrett Swann, Petty Officer 3rd Class Eric Epperly and Petty Officer 3rd Class Ben Packett—all members of the Fort Eustis-based Port Security Unit (PSU) 305, currently stationed at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, hail from the same area around the northern neck and middle peninsula of the Chesapeake Bay. A quiet, rural area dotted with small towns and friendly people, the region relies heavily on the surrounding water that runs through the Rappahannock, York and Potomac rivers into the bay.

“Though the area is made up of separate counties, the thread that ties them together is the local character and the water,” Pope, a Mathew’s County resident and the unit’s commander, said.

The men describe growing up in the region using phrases like, “low crime,”

to provide maritime antiterrorism force protection for the base and the surrounding waters as well as providing security during the military commissions process for Joint Task Force Guantanamo.

According to Pope, PSU 305 has a Mid-Atlantic, Southern culture based on the areas in Virginia and North Carolina where a large portion of the unit is from.

“Each unit has a personality based on its members,” Pope said.

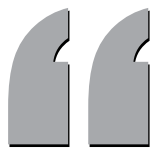
Because PSU 305 is primarily staffed with reservists, many of the

unit members previously drilled together. This common personality and background brings a familiarity to the unit, creating a closer bond among the Coasties as they do their day-to-day jobs.

“We find ourselves always talking about the area,” Swann said. “It’s nice to be able to relate to people who are close to your hometown.”

These small town bonds have helped the members of PSU 305 accomplish their mission smoothly in the three months they’ve been in country.

“There is a higher bond of dependability when you know who you’re dealing with,” Willaford said. “We share common traits because of our similar upbringing.”



Each unit has a personality based on its members.

– Cmdr. Steve Pope

“slow pace” and “a place where everybody knows everybody.” They share common experiences, references and acquaintances from the towns they call home. This is an area where these men have chosen to stay – to settle down and raise their families.

“When you grow up in an area like that, it’s easier to relate to each other,” said Packett, who lives in Lancaster County.

In an area known for its boatbuilding and recreational fishing, many of these men grew up working and playing in the water and naturally leaned toward the Coast Guard when choosing a branch of service.

“I grew up on the water and have always had a love for the water,” Seitz said.

The unit is stationed at Guantanamo Bay

Around the JTF



Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class Donald Kaufman looks through movies for sale at the Joint Task Force's Camp America Mini-Mart, March 5. -JTF Guantanamo photo by Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Richard M. Wolff



Coast Guard Petty Officer 3rd Class Domario Johnson tends to a "wounded" Marine during an underway MEDEVAC drill March 11. The mock injured were transported by Port Security Unit 305 to the Naval Hospital at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay where Navy corpsmen provided further medical care. -JTF Guantanamo photo by Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Richard M. Wolff



Army Pfc. Chris Hutchinson conducts area beautification on one of JTF GTMO's fields. -JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Pfc. Christopher Vann