

W¹The WIRE

An award-winning
JTF journal

Pig Bowl

525's at it again

Natural disasters
Personal encounters

Need to keep your job?
ESGR can help

Filter rocks GTMO

SGT. MAJ. SCOTT SMITH

SERGEANT MAJOR, JTF GUANTANAMO

Semper Paratus. "Always Ready." This is the motto of the United States Coast Guard. It is a motto that they live by due to the primary nature of their mission. We at the Joint Task Force Guantanamo got a taste of that mission following the events leading up to the preparation for, and experience of Tropical Storm Isaac. For those of you who have gone through hurricanes or typhoons in the past, you know the capacity of destruction that can be caused by a storm of this magnitude. Others here at Guantanamo Bay may have felt slightly let down because the preparation for this storm far outweighed the actual destructive force displayed by Isaac. However, we must always remember that complacency and a false sense of security are enemies we must fight after events such as those we experienced several weekends ago. This especially holds true when the event does not quite live up to all the preparation. But being "always ready" is how we must continue in our daily lives in order to complete the mission assigned and take care of our Troopers.

It does not matter that you have been in the military for one year or 30 years; we have all gone through various types of training. From entry level training such as boot camp or basic training to military occupational specialty (MOS) school and on to career progression schools, we have all received instruction on how to stay alive, complete our mission, and lead those under our charge. The experiences that we have gained help to build and maintain our confidence so that we are able to react in a combat

environment. We train so that we are better prepared for a myriad of different missions that we may be involved in – we carry gas masks in theater, we wear body armor, and we receive preventive medical treatment so that we are able to adapt to the environment that we may be exposed to. Getting ready for a major storm that has the potential to degrade the ability to complete our mission and put the troops in harm's way unnecessarily is what we do as service members.

For several days following the aftermath of the storm it was not unusual to hear sarcastic remarks in reference to the "big storm" not following through with the force predicted. It is this complacency that needs to be of concern to all levels of leadership. All it takes is a look back at some recent storms that have threatened the United States to see that not taking things seriously has dangerous consequences.

When Hurricane Irene threatened the East Coast and Hurricanes Katrina and Rita threatened the Gulf Coast, many people followed elected officials' guidance to evacuate potentially dangerous areas. Many others chose

to ignore that advice and "ride out" the storm. As I'm sure you saw from the news coverage, some of those people later regretted their decision. Our role is to ensure the safety of our personnel and our mission. Risking either of those by not doing the necessary storm preparations isn't worth the gamble.

As always, continue to take care of each other and do the right thing, even when no one is looking.

The experiences that we have gained help to build and maintain our confidence so that we are able to react in a combat environment.



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Safe Ride!

Out drinking? Thinking about driving? Put the keys down! Save your life, the lives of others, and your career.
Call 84913/84781.

Display good Mule or Gator etiquette!

How would you like to receive a smile and a friendly wave from other drivers?

Practice good etiquette when driving a Gator or Mule. Pull over for faster-moving vehicles and you will receive a friendly wave. Consideration of others on GTMO roadways is part of defensive driving. Do your part!

Before you pull over, make sure you aren't going to hit an iguana!

Navy advancement exams

Navy-wide advancement exams are this month! The E-5 exam is scheduled for Thursday at the Windjammer Ballroom. The doors open at 6:30 a.m. and will be closed at 7. Remember your CAC and name tape!

Register your POV!

Attention all POV owners! In accordance with Naval Station GTMO Instruction 11200.1B, all POV owners are REQUIRED to register their POVs.

Outdoor Recreation at the Marina

Come down to the Marina Sept. 15 at 8 a.m. for a free guided hike, or Sept. 16 for a guided kayak trip. Register by 3 p.m. Sept. 14. There is also a guided bike trip Sept. 23 at 8 a.m. Register by 3 p.m. Sept. 21.

On Sep. 30, MWR will host the MWR/NEX Customer Appreciation Fishing Derby from 7 a.m.-12 p.m. Registration is free, but act fast and register before Sept. 26! Prizes will be awarded for the longest male and female snook, barracuda, and shark.

For more information, call the Marina at 2345.

Don't get eaten alive!

As the bites on my legs can attest, all the rain we've been having has created ideal mosquito breeding conditions.

If you'd like to see fewer mosquitoes, drain as much standing water as you can, turn over unused containers that can collect water, and do not disturb any mosquito trapping equipment that might be in use.

You can also avoid being outdoors at dawn and dusk, wear pants and long-sleeved shirts, and use insect repellent containing DEET.

Mosquitoes can leave more than itchiness. They are also vectors for West Nile virus. If you experience headaches, body aches, and have numerous bites, call 72944. Your health could depend on it!



Learn to read music!

Want to learn what all of those weird arcane symbols on sheet music mean? There's a class for that!

An eight-week basic music theory for adults class begins Sept. 14 at the W.T. Sampson High School band room. Class runs from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. and costs \$120.

Register today at the Child Development Center to secure your seat.

For more information, call 77302.

Enrich yourself!

CLEP and DSST testing have returned. You can earn college credit for free! Register at www.ccis.edu/guantanamo.

The next test is Sept. 25 from 6-8 p.m. October tests are scheduled for Oct. 13 and 18 from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. and Oct. 23 from 6-8 p.m.

For more information, call 75555.

Cultural food festival

Treat your palate to different flavors from around the world at the GTMO Cultural Food Festival tomorrow at the NEX Atrium from 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

Red Cross closed

The American Red Cross office will be closed until Monday. Red Cross messages can still be sent to 1-877-272-7337.

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

Trooper to Trooper

Steeped in tradition

CHIEF PETTY OFFICER DUANE KING

J6 SPECTRUM MANAGER

Tradition has always been one of the key speeches that we have all received in the military from the day we join. You might wonder why something that happened 20 years, 50 years, or 200 years ago really affects your life today. Our lives are completely different, the mission is not the same, and we have nothing in common with a person who lived 100 years ago: these are some of the things we may hear. As much as things have changed though, tradition is what has driven you to where you are today. How do you know where to go if you do not remember where you came from?

Very few things are done for the first time in the history of our services. The reason we perform some of these tasks is due to the tradition behind them. Some will be for ceremonial reasons and others are found to be the best way to complete the task at hand. Either way, they are there to drill into you the service that you provide to your country.

Tradition can teach you things from the past to ensure the knowledge is passed down from generation to generation. In the Navy we have items like the "Crossing the Line" ceremony. Many people look at that and see events that they just do not understand. However, in the past, in the sailing days, getting from one point to another was not the

easiest thing. Crossing from one hemisphere to another was an important part of Sailors' careers to show that they had done things others may never do. While that is primarily a Navy tradition, other services have similar events.

As many have seen, being a chief petty officer is steeped in tradition. Several years ago when I learned that I was selected, I was thrown into a new world of procedures and privileges. During the approximately six weeks of training and indoctrination into the chief petty officer ranks, you learn many things that have been passed down for decades on the ways to act and duties that you will now perform. In the last several weeks of August and the next few of September people have been seeing the chiefs training the new chief selects. Whether it is PT in the morning, fundraising events, or community support at night and the weekends, this is my opportunity, along with all other chiefs, to give the guidance along with the tradition that had been passed to us.

While my insight has been primarily with the Navy with a little view into some of the event of the Marine Corps, all services have some form of tradition that is passed from generation to generation. So whenever you wonder why we do events of tradition in the military, remember that you are performing the same actions that people in your service



have been doing for years. It is a bonding event that people outside of the service might not know about or even understand. It will bring you closer together as a unit and will give you memories for the future.

BOOTS ON THE GROUND

What was your favorite cartoon as a kid?



"My favorite was Looney Tunes."

Master-at-Arms 2nd Class
Andrew Rowberry



"My favorite was Jem. I even named my dog after her!"

Staff Sgt.
Chinon Thome



"The Incredible Hulk. He's my idol."

Spc.
Danny Aoun



"Woody Woodpecker!"

Spc.
Juan Morales

House-buying saga continues

By Sgt. 1st Class Jerome Grant

In Issue 38 of "The Wire," Sgt. 1st Class Kryn Westhoven gave some timely advice regarding the decision making process of whether or not to purchase a home and some advice on securing financing if you do buy a home.

Well, let me tell you, if you are deployed and your spouse finds that dream home while you're away, there are a few extra steps you need to take in order to close the deal. I know because my wife just closed on our new home on Aug. 15, and it involved a lot of phone calls, scanned documents, and waiting.

My wife and I had been browsing for a new house for about two years when this deployment started. She continued to casually look after I left for Guantanamo Bay, and one day when I called home she said, "I took the kids to look at a house today. When we walked in the front door, it felt like we came home."

And so the house buying saga began.

First we looked at our finances and decided that with significantly less than 20 percent of the asking price as down payment, a Veteran's Administration (VA) loan was the way to go. We made an offer on the house, which was accepted on the condition that we get a VA loan.

Then I went to the Department of Veterans Affairs home loan website at <http://www.benefits.va.gov/homeloans/> and applied for a certificate of eligibility (COE). Once I got it, about a week later, I filled out the initial VA loan application with my lender and provided a copy of the COE.

Although I had left my wife with an official general power of attorney (POA), the various agents involved with the purchase process, including the realtors and title company, wanted a power of attorney specifically



for the purchase of a home and all associated activities. To accomplish this I visited Navy Lt. Courtney Gordon-Tennant at the Naval Legal Services Office who hooked me up with the proper document in less than 15 minutes. I scanned the document to the lender and mailed the original to my wife.

Other documents that were necessary to make this all happen after the preliminary loan application included: 30 days of pay stubs for my wife and my most recent leave and earnings statement; two years of W2s; and a litany of purchase-related documents like the fully executed purchase agreement and various inspections.

Even though my wife had the POA, I still needed to sign certain documents with the lender and scan them for email. And there were a lot of phone calls to make, coordinating documents traded between parties (make sure to have a full phone card when you do your calls).

Depending on your credit history, you may be required to provide explanations of a late payment or multiple inquiries on your credit. But since you followed the advice in Westhoven's story, you probably already took care of that stuff.

Near the end of the process, my command had to get involved to provide proof of current service and, then on closing day, had to send a memorandum stating that I was indeed alive and well and deployed to Guantanamo.

The whole process took almost three months to complete once we made the offer. So if you are deployed when you decide to buy your home, you'll need to be patient and have patient people working with you through the whole process.

Stay with it, don't get discouraged, and maybe you too can return from deployment to a new home of record. Assuming your spouse tells you the new address.

PROTECT YOUR INFO!

ALERT CYBER CRIME IS REAL

Cyber criminals are out there. In 2010 there were over 300,000 cases reported to the Internet Crime Complaint Center. Internet scams and identity theft were two of the top three crimes reported. California and Florida are the two States with the highest reports of cyber crime. Beware of websites offering "Free Samples" if you pay shipping costs, or people from foreign countries offering a reward if you wire them money. There are also scams

Guard force to work force

After 40 years, ESGR is out front in the job search

By Sgt. 1st Class Kryn Westhoven

For more than four decades, volunteers and staff on the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) state committees have worked to educate employers. That outreach to business and civic leaders now includes a focus on hiring of veterans.

Less than a year ago, ESGR unveiled Hero 2 Hired (H2H) as part of the organization's Employment Initiative Program (EIP). This moved ESGR from ensuring the job of a deployed service member is there when they return home to actively addressing the unique needs of reserve component members in the job market.

"ESGR is fully engaged and now is given a purpose to interact with employers," said Tammy Cartagena, a New Jersey ESGR Program Support Technician.

For nearly 40 years ESGR would recognize supportive workplaces with awards and get bosses to sign a statement of support. The interaction would end there.

"Now we have strong relationships with many employers all wanting to hire a service member," added Cartagena.

With unemployment highest among younger veterans, the EIP uses a high-tech approach at the h2h.jobs website. Funded through the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Project, this Department of Defense site pulls job listings from across the nation.

Along with the position openings, job seekers can use career exploration tools and education and training resources on H2H.jobs.

"It also automatically changes your military occupation code into civilian language and matches a service member to positions they are qualified for," said Cartagena. "The more information that a service member provides, the more jobs that will become available to them."

H2H.jobs is more than classified ads in cyberspace where reserve component service members can post a resume. The site provides networking opportunities along with Facebook and mobile apps for smart phones.

Besides the more impersonal web-based service, ESGR offers what they refer to as "high-touch approach" employment events where reservists can learn of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce's "Hiring Our Heroes" or similar hiring fairs. The goal of H2H is to help military-friendly companies find citizen warriors who have the right

training and skills.

On the 40th anniversary, ESGR National Chair James G. Rebholz said in a statement, "Employers have met the last decade's unprecedented demands on our military with an equal measure of dedication and endurance. In short, employers are an essential component of our national security equation."

The underlying work of ESGR remains the same: to develop and maintain employer relations for National Guard and Reserve service members. Now ESGR is trying to add those serving to the nation's employment rolls.

Editor's Note: Sgt. 1st Class Kryn Westhoven is a volunteer on the New Jersey State Committee for ESGR.

De-Mobilization Checklist:

WHEN YOU RETURN: In order to ensure a smooth transition back to work, you need to communicate with your employer. You have rights and responsibilities under USERRA. In order to be eligible for reinstatement following your service:

1. You must provide prior notice to your employer that you will be absent from your employment due to military service. Notice should be given as early as you have information of your departure.
2. You must leave your place of employment for the purpose of performing military service.
3. You must serve under honorable conditions for USERRA to apply.
4. You must not be absent for more than five cumulative years from any one employer, performing military service (with some exceptions).
5. You must report back to work following your service in a timely fashion.

You must apply for reemployment or report back to work within the following guidelines:

1 – 30 days of service: Report to work the next scheduled work day.

31 – 180 days of service: Apply within 14 days after completion of service.

181+ days of service: Apply within 90 days after completion of service.

It is recommended you present the appropriate supervisor and Human Resources (HR) representative with a copy of your discharge/separation order. If you were gone for more than 30 days and your employer requests proof of your service, you must provide it, once it is available.

Following is a checklist of suggested items to do or check into upon your return:

- Accumulation of seniority.
- Reinstatement of health insurance, dental and vision plans without waiting periods for you and any dependents.
- Update beneficiaries and family information.
- Resolve pay and compensation issues.
- Review Thrift Savings Plan, 401K or other pension plans and determine if and how make up contributions will be made. Share your plans with your employer.
- Review retirement and life insurance benefits.
- Determine if training or retraining of job skills is necessary and share this with your employer.
- Expect protection against discrimination and harassment.
- Update personal data – address, telephone numbers, and email address.
- Keep a record of names, dates, and a brief summary of your conversations with your employer.
- To thank your employer and supervisor for their support and cooperation, nominate them for a "Patriot Award" at www.esgr.mil, select "Award Your Employer," and fill out the form.

This checklist contains suggested actions to do or consider doing prior to service, all actions are not required to gain or maintain USERRA protections. For more information on Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) and USERRA go to www.ESGR.mil.



Rear Adm. Smith says...
YOU'RE NEXT!

– It's flu season, and vaccinations are required for military personnel. Vaccinations are also available free of charge for GTMO civilians and contractors.

– Flu shot or flu mist? Depends on your age, allergies and other health conditions. Contact medical for more information.

– Contact your chain of command for vaccination times and location.

Battle at the Bay

Story and Photos By Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Brian Jeffries



The 525th Military Police Battalion is a hardworking group of Soldiers, but that doesn't hinder them from having fun during their down time. On Saturday, in the middle of Labor Day weekend, the 314th Military Police Company took the crown as champion of the latest iteration of the Pig Bowl. From eight in the morning until noon, teams representing each company in the battalion played in a soccer tournament, hoping for a shot at the trophy and the bragging rights.

The last game that ended the tournament was the 189th MP Co. against the 314th MP Co. It was a hard-fought game and very competitive; but in the end the 314th was too much, winning by a score of 2-1.

Everyone can't win obviously, but it's about more than winning and losing during the Pig Bowl.

"It is a chance for everyone to get out and have a good time with the people we work with," said Spc. Brandon Daniels. Daniels competed with Headquarters and Headquarters Company (HHC).

Each battalion had its own set of jubilant fans, urging their respective teams to victory. Perhaps the loudest of the cheers came from the 193rd MP Co.'s section in the crowd. This motivation probably came because before this tournament, they were the two-time defending champions of the Pig Bowl.

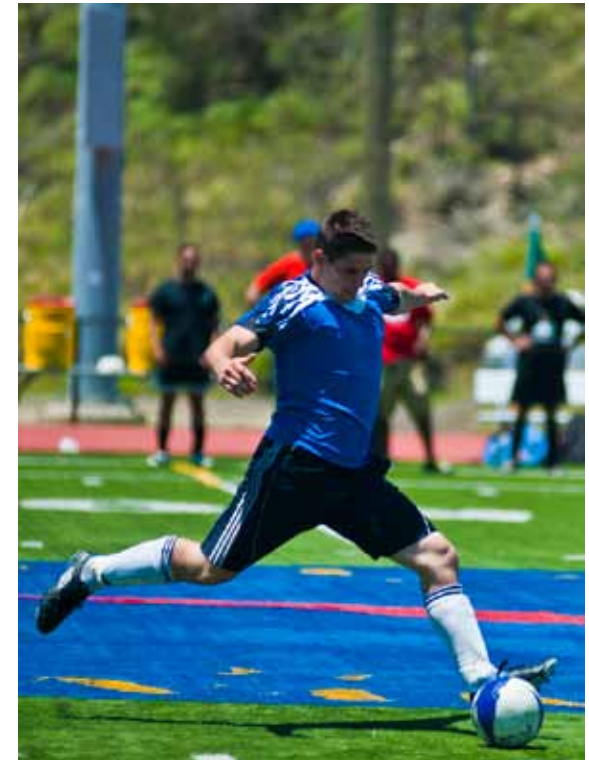
their battalion, as well as bump shoulders with others that they normally don't see because of where they work and the hours," Daniels said in reference to how good the tournament was for him. He also added that he believes everyone gets a little bit closer because of these tournaments, and it promotes esprit de corps.

After the tournament concluded, there was a trophy presentation. All of the companies gathered in a horseshoe formation. Lt. Col. Darcy Overbey, commanding officer of the 525th MP Bn. then presented the 314th with the trophy to the applause of all the participants.

The next battalion tournament is scheduled for December, when each team will have the chance to assemble a basketball team and vie for the trophy once more. Don't miss an opportunity to support and be a part of the action.

Action on the field and on the sidelines led to a very festive event for the 525th MP Bn.

"The tournament gave everyone a chance to compete with





Jeremy

Cpl. Risner



NO FAILURE ZONE

Trooper Focus



Story and photos by
Mass Communication Spc. Brian Jeffries

One of Tim Duncan's philosophies to life given to him by his mom was, "good, better, best, never let it rest, until your good is your better, and your better is your best." This saying can be interpreted many ways, but you could say that it means to consistently practice something and never accept where you are; strive for excellence. If everyone in the world followed this motto then the planet would be a better place. There are people you meet however that seemingly do follow this credo. These people are all very similar to U.S. Marine Corps Cpl. Jeremy Risner.

Risner's unswerving commitment to his duties separates him from the pack and allows him to accomplish his overall goals. He aims to get better at his job and be as good a leader as he can, all the while being a great a man overall.

Risner has set these goals for himself since being in the Marine Corps. He admits that he wasn't always the most motivated or goal-oriented person but the Marines have set him on, what he believes to be, the right path. He originally joined to get out of his small town in Ohio, but he gained so much more.

"I just didn't want to get old in my town like so many people around me, I knew there was more for me," Risner said.

Now Risner has been in the Marines for two and a half years and has never looked backed. Though he deployed to Afghanistan for 12 months before coming here to Cuba and is scheduled for another tour in Afghanistan next year, Risner remains upbeat and motivated to complete his mission each day. Risner believes that there will always be challenges when in the armed forces, but if you remain positive, you can get through anything.

"I always like to make the best of a situation," Risner said referring to how he remains positive on his time away from the States.

He also added that no matter what, the

good days always outweigh the bad, and he has no regrets about his decision to join the Marines.

Risner's Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) is a forward radio operator. Out in the field he would be primarily in charge of establishing communications through radio



frequencies. Though Risner says a lot of guys get out of the Marines because of the job, he admits he probably will not.

"I believe in the mission, and during any deployment you need communication," Risner said. "You take fire or need to report something; you have to talk to someone. I make sure that is possible."

Since returning from Afghanistan, the mission for Risner has changed slightly. He made corporal (E-4) and has had to accept the responsibilities that the rank holds. He has welcomed the chance to be a non-commissioned officer (NCO) in the Marine

Corps. Marine NCOs start at E-4. This is a big difference between other branches since the NCO title isn't typically given until E-5. Risner admits that he didn't have a lot of chances to lead back stateside but has been given an amazing opportunity here.

"There were so many corporals at my unit, but here I'm the [non-commissioned officer in charge] of my shop and I'm in charge of two other Marines," Risner said.

Risner is constantly looking for that next mission to tackle, never letting up. His line supervisor, Marine Staff Sgt. Daniel Gibbons, describes Risner in one word: hungry.

"I choose this word as a double meaning," Gibbons said. "Cpl. Risner can eat nonstop all day long, for starters. He eats at least two plates at chow and always grabs dessert after yet he gains no weight. The other is that he is hungry in his attitude towards work. Even before he got here, he was hungry for the chance at an NCOIC billet and a chance to prove himself as a Marine NCO."

Staying motivated and striving for excellence are wonderful traits to have, and Risner says he owes it all to the Marine Corps.

Another aspect of life that Risner strives for is to be a great man. He just wants to be somebody that people can look up to. This notion coincides with his ambition to be a good leader. He enjoys being ahead of "the game"

so to speak. He looks forward to settling down with his girlfriend and even has three different retirement accounts.

Leading others, striving for success, a serious relationship, and retirement accounts. Some might say it's a lot for a 22-year-old, but not Risner. He believes he is right on track and all his hard work and dedication will make life that much easier for him in the future.

Risner's lifestyle is a lot like that old motto. "Good, better, best, never let it rest, until your good is your better, and your better is your best."



Hurricane Isaac

By Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class
Brett Custer

While Hurricane Isaac grounded me to my Cuzco for a few days, I escaped reality in the pages of a great book. “Dead Zero,” by Stephen Hunter, was my first encounter with the critically acclaimed author’s fiction series following the life of ex-Marine Corps sniper Bob Lee Swagger. The action packed paragraphs kept me thoroughly entertained while the rain opened fire on my metal roof.

A few years ago, after approximately 25 viewings, I discovered that one of my all-time favorite movies – “Shooter” starring Mark

Wahlberg, was based on Stephen Hunter’s novels. Following this discovery, I told myself that I needed to partake in the series. However, I rarely find the time to read anything other than assigned text in my civilian life, so when it came time to pick up any of the stories, I opted to hang out with my old friend procrastination instead.

When the word came out that we were going to be on lock down during Isaac, I beelined over to the MWR library to browse their decent selection. Using the Dewey Decimal System, I rapidly located the selection of Stephen Hunter books. After a brief period of judging books by their covers, I settled upon “Dead Zero.” Let me tell you, I was far from disappointed with my selection.

The action-packed plot of this thriller

contained elements including, but not limited to, Marine Corps snipers, Predator drones, corrupt government contractor assassins, CIA conspiracies, Afghani terrorists, F.B.I. teams, and even a missile-heavy presidential assassination attempt. The vivid and seemingly accurate descriptions made it extremely easy to conjure up an amazing action flick in my mind.

Though Hurricane Isaac didn’t hit Guantanamo Bay quite as hard as expected, it did give me the opportunity to catch up on some reading. After the first two chapters of “Dead Zero,” I was on Amazon ordering two more novels from the series. I truly had a hard time putting the book down. So all in all, I would have to say my Cuzco confinement was rather productive.

Blackout 2003

By Army Sgt. Dani White

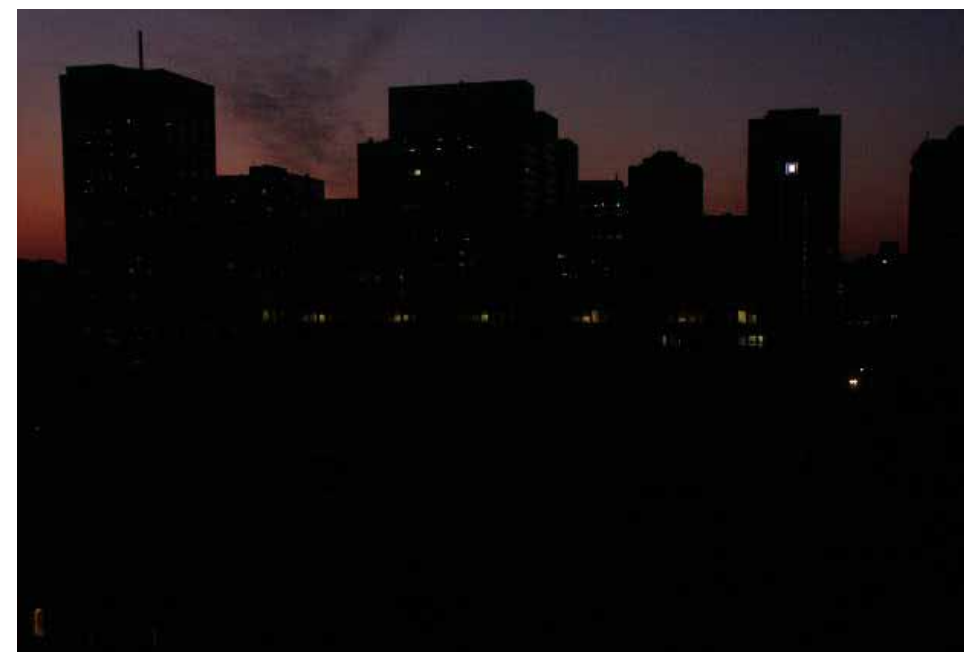
When living in a big city you can always hear the constant flow of traffic, planes flying overhead and music blasting out of cars. That came to an abrupt end in 2003 when America had one of its worst blackouts in history. Metro Detroit became eerily quiet when the city didn’t have electricity.

I was home from college visiting my family in Lincoln Park, Mich. It was late afternoon when I noticed that we didn’t have power. My family called my stepdad on the cell phone; we learned that the whole city was dead, and that the power outage went all the way to Canada and New York.

We called my mom, grandmother and siblings to check up on them; then we made a mad rush getting things together.

After we finished, my mom, grandmother and sister finally made it home safely. We all sat on the front porch and talked about everything that was going on in the area. That was when we noticed people started coming out of their houses.

No one had a reason to stay indoors. Without their televisions, they couldn’t watch their shows and play video games. Computers couldn’t be used for surfing or



chatting on the Internet.

It was as if we stepped back in time. The neighborhood kids came out to play games that I loved to play growing up; like hide and go seek. Teens rode their bikes. Neighbors even started to talk to each other, sharing information and available supplies.

That night we did something we haven’t done as a family since I was in tenth grade. We sat outside while my stepdad grilled

dinner and played board games, having conversations about everything and nothing.

Even though the blackout lasted for a couple days, we were able to come together as a family and a neighborhood and make the most of the situation.

It was creepy how the noise of the city had come to an end, but the way that the area came to life kind of makes me wish that we had a blackout every now and then.

Hurricane Irene

By Army Sgt. Landis Andrews

Aug. 2011 brought Hurricane Irene ripping up the East Coast. This Category 3 hurricane was responsible for 56 deaths and her winds topped 121 miles per hour. That’s more than double what Isaac did to Guantanamo Bay. Whole cities in northern New Jersey were flooded and families were evacuated from their homes and into local schools and gyms.

As a member of the Public Affairs Office for the New Jersey National Guard, I was dispatched to help cover some of the preparation and evacuation efforts of Guard members around the state as well as documenting the damage done by Irene.

New Jersey was in a state of emergency; roads were closed and everywhere you turned power lines were down. Even while driving a Humvee, it was extremely difficult to get to the appropriate places.

I was en route to the site of some major flooding when I encountered... some major flooding. There was a crowd of people out of their cars and they were watching the water get higher and higher above the bridge. When they heard the rumble of my large military vehicle, the crowd parted as if to allow my passage through the rushing, overloaded river.

I hopped out of the Humvee to measure up the water flow with the fording capability of my truck. Having just gotten out of a



powerful vehicle, people started assuming I was there to single-handedly stop the flooding. A little girl even asked her mother, “Is the Army man going to take us to the other side?”

After sizing up the deluge I decided it wouldn’t be smart to try driving through it. However, the people still wanted to see me bully my way through the water. I told them that I shouldn’t do it and the whole crowd was disappointed in me. They held on to hope, because when I jumped back in the

vehicle, they continued clear a path to the water. When I started making my K-turn, all of their hopes, and heads, dropped, and I felt like I let the people down.

I lost my chance to be the hero, but I also avoided a bad decision. But, not everyone else had the sense that I had. If you want to see what it looks like to underestimate flood waters, do a YouTube search for “New Jersey National Guard flood,” and click on the first link to see what was going on in the place I was trying to go.

Hurricane Floyd: an obituary for my Atari

By Army 1st Lt. Amelia Thatcher

It was a day of woe, a day of broken dreams. It was the day Hurricane Floyd swept through the Northeast and dumped two feet of water in the basement, toppled a large tree down the road, took out power in my neighborhood for nearly a week, and drowned a relic of my childhood. The Atari 2600, a retro treasure and entertainment staple through my youth, expired in that flooded basement Sept. 17, 1999. It died as it lived – taken for granted by children of the ‘90s, appreciated only after death.

This particular Atari 2600 was colloquially known as the “Darth Vader,” given its all-black (as opposed to very ‘80s fake wood-paneled) appearance. Its crown jewels were such classics as Frogger, Pac-Man, Air Sea Battle, Galaga, Space Invaders, and Moon Patrol. The time and place of its exact acquisition by the Thatcher household is long forgotten, but I suspect it was a yard sale find.

Indeed, we probably haggled over a \$10 price tag, even for a package deal of the system, two controllers, and a dozen games. But that \$10 was worth every stingy penny.

Our unfinished, spidery basement – the Atari’s home and eventual grave – was the default childhood playroom in a rather small house. My brother and I grew up with Legos, Beanie Babies, Matchbox cars, yard sale-scrounged My Little Pony and Transformers; and later a ping-pong table, often rendered ineffective due to the very low ceiling. But the life and death of the Atari always hung over the cobwebs as a constant reminder of the satisfactory cheapness we were accustomed to, along with a side dish of “this is why we can’t have nice things.”

The Atari 2600 was more than a video



game system. It personified a simple, frugal way of life. It was a thing of old-timey beauty to me, a humble dinosaur, in a scornful sea of privileged rich kids and their Nintendo 64s. For those who joyfully antique themselves, the loss of such a material item is one to be mourned. Even if that item put us on the road to carpal tunnel.

What type of learner are you?

By Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Andrew Schultz



With Navy advancement exams quickly approaching, a lot of Sailors are starting to think about the future. We all have our preferences as far as studying goes. Some of us like to simply read the instructions; others like to make flashcards or study in a group setting. Whether you are a visual, auditory or kinesthetic learner, it is important to understand what kind of learning style works best for you. Some lucky dogs do well without even looking at their bibliography, but not all of us are lucky enough to scrape by without some effort. So for the rest of us, we continue to learn in the ways that help us remember the material. Here are some suggestions to help you find out what kind of learning style might just advance you to the next level in your career.

Auditory learners make up approximately 30 percent of the population. You may be an auditory learner if you like to talk and study in a group environment. Enjoying listening to music while you study may also indicate you are an auditory learner. If you are distracted by uncontrolled, unpredictable background noise like a bus passing by or a noisy weed whacker, you may prefer this style of learning. While you study, you may want to read out loud or have somebody read the material to you. You can get audio tapes and listen to them while you are on your way to work or at the gym. Participating in a group discussion before independent study will also help you retain the material. The most important thing to remember about this learning style is that you learn by hearing. Anything you can do to receive the information in this way will help you remember.

Visual learners make up around 65 percent of the population. This is the most preferred

way of learning. If you are an organized person and like to read, easily notice details, and have trouble following verbal directions, you may be a visual learner. To retain information more efficiently you can use flashcards, graphs and whiteboards. If you're a visual learner, I'd encourage you to read the material. If you are trying something new, you should witness a demonstration before trying it yourself. I'd also suggest acronyms, as visual learners tend to see patterns in words while learning. This being said, it is important to understanding root words and their meanings. Visual learners should remember that they perform best when they learn by seeing.

Kinesthetic learners consist of about only 5 percent of the population. This is the least common style of learning. Individuals who tend to move around a lot, take frequent breaks while studying, and do not spend extended periods of time reading may be kinesthetic learners. If you find that this describes you, you can try studying for short periods of time

throughout the day. Distractibility tends to be high in this group of learners, so puzzles and games are also encouraged. Making yourself comfortable is recommended for all learning, but this is especially true for kinesthetic learners. Minimizing distractions, to include background noise such as a TV, is also recommended. Kinesthetic learners learn by doing, so repetition is very important.

Knowing what type of learning style describes you can help you form efficient and comprehensive study habits. It is important to know that you may fall into one of these categories, but you could have characteristics from two or more of these groups of learners. You can prefer to read the material but at the same time enjoy listening to music while doing so. Everyone learns a little differently, and it is important to continue to try new ways to study and figure out which habits best help you perform. As always, before taking an exam, get plenty of sleep and eat a healthy breakfast. Good luck!

ONLY AT GTMO by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Brett Custer



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Movie Review

R
105 min.

By Pvt. Loren Cook

There is a fairly reliable timetable for movie releases: there will be romantic comedies released in February into the spring; a few scary movies will be released in January for some reason, even though the rest of the year's horror flicks will be released in October while the nation's psyche turns to Halloween; and feel-good "Oscar-bait" movies are held in reserve until December, usually in the last week of the year, in hopes of remaining fresh in the hearts and minds of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences when they make the nominations for that year's Academy Awards.

Movie studios know, however, that the youth of the nation seek relief from the oppressive summer heat by spending several hours in the air-conditioned comfort of the cinema, and summer is therefore the domain of the summer blockbuster: big-budget action movies high on gunfire and explosions and sometimes low on character development or coherent plot.

We've already seen most of the summer blockbuster movies at GTMO, and what a crop it was, including, as it did, a hugely-budgeted movie based on a board game, of all things, two superhero movies of above-average quality, a remake of a summer blockbuster from 22 years ago, a sequel to a movie about action figures from the '80s (not yet shown at GTMO), and the comedy event of the season, starring a living teddy bear.

Now we're coming to the tail end of the blockbuster season, and it's time for the also-rans. And with such a promising introduction, it's time for my review of "Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter."

It's a movie title that promises a campy B-grade action/comedy/horror movie, and that's what I came into the film expecting. I didn't expect an award-winning biopic of the 16th President; I just expected a good time.

The movie proposes that the first Republican president was leading a secret identity his whole life as a hunter of undead bloodsuckers who had infiltrated our society and used the slave trade to ensure a steady supply of unwilling bodies from which to drain the blood that sustained their unholy existence.

Hmm, sounds good so far. That sounds like a great time! Sadly, the filmmakers didn't share my vision of a campy good time when they made their film.

The movie begins in Indiana in 1818. Young Abraham Lincoln intervenes when he sees a slave boy being beaten, and the overseer beats both of them. His father defends him, and is fired by plantation owner Jack Barts (Marton Csokas, "The Debt"). Unfortunately, Mr. Lincoln was paying a debt to Barts with his labor, but Barts chillingly informs him that there are other ways to pay.

That night, Barts creeps into the Lincoln family's log cabin and bites Abe's mother, who falls ill and dies the next day. Abe is told that Barts poisoned her.

Nine years later, young Abraham is now a man (Benjamin Walker, "Flags of our Fathers") and attempts to kill Barts in revenge. During Lincoln's bungled murder attempt, Barts reveals himself as a vampire. Only the timely intervention of Sturges (Dominic Cooper, "Captain America: The First Avenger"), a stranger whom Lincoln met earlier that night, saves the future President from an unwanted bloodletting.

Sturges reveals himself to be a vampire

hunter and offers to teach Lincoln the tricks of the trade. Abe accepts, and one training montage/exposition dump and ten movie years later, we join Honest Abe in Springfield, Illinois, where he finds a job as a shopkeeper, studies law textbooks in preparation for a future career as a lawyer, and meets Mary Todd (Mary Elizabeth Winstead, "The Thing"), the future Mrs. Lincoln, in between killing the city's vampires for Sturges.

Abe begins courting Ms. Todd, in defiance of one of Sturges's rules forbidding close relationships. Lincoln finally gets the assignment he's been longing for and kills Barts amid a herd of stampeding horses in a well-done scene that perhaps borrows a bit too much from Zack Snyder.

With his dying breath (Wait, do vampires breathe?) Barts tells Lincoln a secret about Sturges I saw from a mile away, and Lincoln finds and confronts him about it. Disappointed in his mentor, Lincoln is about to hang up his axe when his friend Will Johnson (Anthony Mackie, "Man on a Ledge), the now-freed slave he defended as a boy, is kidnapped by head vampire Adam (Rufus Sewell, "Amazing Grace") to use as a bargaining chip. Lincoln journeys to Adam's New Orleans plantation and rescues Will, although the two barely survive.

Lincoln finally "puts away childish things" and gives up vampire hunting in favor of a law and political career, eventually winning the 1860 presidential election. As we all know from history class, seven southern states, frightened that Lincoln might infringe on their "right" to treat other humans as property, then seceded from the U.S., formed the Confederate States of America, and attacked

Movie cont. on page 19

Movie from page 18

a U.S. fort in Charleston's harbor for the dire crime of attempting to resupply its garrison.

Lincoln asks for volunteers to help put the rebellion down, angering four more southern-sympathizing states enough that they join the Confederates, and America's deadliest war begins. I could go on and on about the historic Civil War, but it wouldn't be terribly relevant to this movie. Instead, I will say that the movie offers us a "unique" view of how the turning point of the Civil

War came to be, and leave it at that.

"Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter," did a bait and switch, at least for me. On the surface, it gave us exactly what it said it would. It was a movie about Abraham Lincoln hunting vampires. The problem with this movie is one of tone. As I said, I expected a campy good time, but this movie took itself seriously instead, and falls flat on its face.

For that matter, it deviated highly from Seth Grahame-Smith's ("Pride, Prejudice, and Zombies") book. I haven't read the

book, but I did read a plot synopsis, and I found far more character motivation than Zack-Snyderesque action scenes or armies of Confederate vampires. Had the movie been a straight adaptation of the book, the serious atmosphere of the movie could have been warranted.

I don't mind mindless action movies, biopics, extremely offensive comedies, or period dramas. But this movie couldn't decide what it wanted to be, tried to be all of them instead, and failed.

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NAVSTA
Main Chapel

Daily Catholic Mass
Tues.-Fri. 5:30 p.m.

Vigil Mass
Saturday 5 p.m.

Mass
Sunday 9 a.m.

Spanish-language Mass
Sunday 4:35 p.m.

General Protestant
Sunday 11 a.m.

Gospel Service
Sunday 1 p.m.

Christian Fellowship
Sunday 6 p.m.

Chapel Annexes

Protestant Communion
Sunday 9:30 a.m.
Room B

Pentecostal Gospel
Sunday 8 a.m. & 5 p.m.
Room D

LDS Service
Sunday 10 a.m.
Room A

Islamic Service
Friday 1 p.m.
Room C

GTMO Religious
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Chapel
Protestant Worship
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NEX Trailer :03 :23 :43
Camp Delta 2 :06 :26 :46
KB 373 :10 :30 :50
TK 4 :12 :32 :52
JAS :13 :33 :53
TK 3 :14 :34 :54
TK 2 :15 :35 :55
TK 1 :16 :36 :56
West Iguana :18 :38 :58
Windjammer / Gym :21 :41 :01
Gold Hill Galley :24 :44 :04
NEX :26 :46 :16
96 Man Camp :31 :51 :11
NEX :33 :53 :13
Gold Hill Galley :37 :57 :17
Windjammer / Gym :36 :56 :16
West Iguana :39 :59 :19
TK 1 :40 :00 :20
TK 2 :43 :03 :23
TK 3 :45 :05 :25
TK 4 :47 :07 :27
KB 373 :50 :10 :30
Camp Delta 1 :54 :14 :32
IOF :54 :14 :34
NEX Trailer :57 :17 :37
Gazebo :58 :18 :38
Camp America :00 :20 :40

	7 FRI	8 SAT	9 SUN	10 MON	11 TUE	12 WED	13 THU
Downtown Lyceum	Madea's Witness Protection (NEW) (PG-13) 8 p.m. People Like Us (PG-13) 10 p.m.	Seeking a Friend for the End of the World (NEW) (R) 8 p.m. Magic Mike (R) 10 p.m.	Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter (R) 8 p.m.	Ted (Last Showing) (R) 8 p.m.	Brave (Last Showing) (PG) 8 p.m.	Bourne Legacy (PG-13) 8 p.m.	The Campaign (R) 8 p.m.
Camp Bukeley	Seeking a Friend for the End of the World (NEW) (R) 8 p.m. Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter (R) 10 p.m.	Madea's Witness Protection (NEW) (PG-13) 8 p.m. People Like Us (PG-13) 10 p.m.	Expendables 2 (R) 8 p.m.	Magic Mike (R) 8 p.m.	Ted (Last Showing) (R) 8 p.m.	The Campaign (R) 8 p.m.	Bourne Legacy (PG-13) 8 p.m.

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