

the Wire

“ HONOR BOUND TO DEFEND FREEDOM ”

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Joint Task Force Guantanamo: Then and Now

By Army Sgt. Erin P. Viola

The first week of January marks the one-year anniversary of U.S. Southern Command Joint Task Force operations at Guantanamo Bay. Many changes for the better have occurred here since the first rotation of troops landed on January 6, 2002 in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Several Joint Operation organizational changes occurred during the past year. Joint Task Force-160 stood up in January 2002 to run detainee operations. Joint Task Force 170 stood up in March of 2002 to carry out interrogation operations. Eventually the two task forces were merged into the one streamlined operation we know now as Joint Task Force-Guantanamo. Maj. Gen. Geoffrey Miller took charge of JTF-Guantanamo in November 2002 and will be with the operation for the next two years.

As the detainees were moved from



Air Force Staff Sgt. Dominic Hauser
U.S. service members of the Joint Task Force 160 and Joint Task Force 170 disassemble tents of Freedom Heights, the home to the military police units that were tasked to handle the Camp X-Ray detainees in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, July 31, 2002.

Camp X-Ray to Camp Delta April 2002, troops moved from Freedom Heights to Camp America and Camp Bulkeley. Those who have been here since March 2002 can attest that the quality of life here has improved greatly. For starters, food, shelter and off-duty activities for the troops have evolved significantly over the past

year.

When the first troops arrived they ate three squares a day, but they were of the Meal Ready-to-Eat kind, and dining facilities were in the open air and under the hot Caribbean sun. Now, troops can get three hearty meals a day at the nicely air-conditioned Seaside Galley in Camp America. “In the beginning, we were serving about 300 MREs a day and now we serve over 4,000 hot meals a day,” said Navy Lt. Cmdr. James Bowman, a food service officer who has been

here for just about a year.

Living conditions for the troops are much better. Freedom Heights, was located just outside the detention facility of Camp X-Ray, and served as the original living quarters that housed the military

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JTF-Guantanamo Commander
Army Maj. Gen. Geoffrey D. Miller

Message from Maj. Gen. Geoffrey D. Miller

Happy birthday Joint Task Force Guantanamo. Our mission to help win the global war on terrorism began one year ago this month when the first detainees arrived at Camp X-Ray. We lived in tents with no air conditioning, ate in the field and communicated with family and loved ones by very limited email or telephone capabilities. The conditions were challenging and the mission was done well.

Today we have transformed the Joint Task Force. Camp Delta has been constructed to detain a number of our nation's enemies. It is manned with some of the Army's best military police leaders and soldiers in the Joint Detention Operations Group -the JDOG. Our critical interrogation mission is gaining additional momentum fueled by the troopers of the Joint Interrogations Group (JIG). Our team is supported by our NAVBASE teammates and med-

ical professionals who support and care for the JTF. We have the right people to sustain mission excellence - our commitment to winning is a way of life.

Our JTF leadership is dedicated to improving the quality of life for our troopers. Today we have better billets, will remain focused on improving our dining facilities, and provide quality fitness and morale, welfare and recreation facilities. This effort is a work in progress and a mission essential task for us.

The leaders and troopers of the JTF have done an exceptional job - we are rigged for success. It will take the continued commitment of each trooper to improve how we are helping the nation win the war on terrorism. Look at what you can do to help us get better every day. Know that you are making a difference. We are proud of you. Honor Bound

OPSEC Corner

"As part of my Joint Task Force Guantanamo OPSEC Program Manager responsibilities, I have to conduct OPSEC in-briefings for newly arriving service members to the Pearl of the Antilles. I usually get many chuckles when I use that name, but I get big laughs when I use some others I can't mention that describe our Caribbean paradise. The majority of incoming personnel have never been here, but they know what we do. They are amazed at the weather, the scenery, and the wildlife. They know our mission alright,

however, the in-briefing is designed to place them in right operational frame of mind. It's easy to forget that we are conducting a vital and real world mission that is important, critical, and, at times, dangerous. In my briefings, I explain the importance of OPSEC, how to report incidents, explain the JTF OPSEC program, and conduct a general discussion of our adversaries' intent and capabilities. To close out the briefing, I remind service members that although our mission is set in a tropical atmosphere with palm trees, ocean views

and breezes, and scuba diving, we have to train, perform, and execute that very mission to standard and with a determination to protect our operation. Don't become an OPSEC violator because you have become complacent. Stay focused on your individual piece of this mission and collectively we'll accomplish it. Now is not the time to compromise our delicate work."

"Think OPSEC"

Call x5029 for incident reporting

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"Si vis pacem,
para bellum-
Let him who desires
peace, prepare for
war."

Flavius Vegetius, (375 AD),
Roman military strategist

Chaplain's Corner

**By CH (Lt. Col.) Raymond Bucon,
JTF-Guantanamo Deputy Chaplain**

A first sergeant was speaking on the phone with his father who told him he was proud of his son's efforts. The father said: "I want you to realize that your entire family is behind you and making daily sacrifices in your absence. All of us have had our lives changed because you are away. You need to be the best soldier you can, take advantage of all the opportunities afforded you, and return home to us a better person than when you left. We love you, son. And miss you very much."

Each of our lives has been changed dramatically since deploying on this mission. And as our mission continues, our daily schedules will continue to change. Sometimes this seems unfair. We just get things figured out, become secure in doing our job, establish a little comfort-zone, and

then the inevitable change comes along and we have to start over again figuring, securing, and establishing. What a pain change is!

Then I think about those I left behind at home and how their workload has increased because I'm here. Their responsibilities have become larger. They have to cope with unfamiliar things without my assistance. They worry more about me than I worry about myself. The change for them is a lot more dramatic and significant than it is for me.

I can best honor what my loved ones are going through by heeding the advice of the father in the above story and doing the best job I can while on active duty at Guantanamo Bay. Also, I can view change as a vehicle to grow spiritually and discover new dimensions of the God who lives within.

This Week in History:

Jan. 16, 1991

The Persian Gulf War begins

At midnight in Iraq, the United Nations deadline for the Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait expires, and the Pentagon prepares to commence offensive operations to forcibly eject Iraq from its five-month occupation of its oil-rich neighbor.

At 4:30 p.m. EST, the first fighter aircraft were launched from Saudi Arabia and off U.S. and British aircraft carriers in the Persian Gulf on bombing missions over Iraq.

All evening, aircraft from the U.S.-led military coalition pounded targets in and around Baghdad as the world watched the events transpire in television footage transmitted live via satellite from Baghdad and elsewhere.

At 7 p.m., Operation Desert Storm, the code-name for the massive U.S.-led offensive against Iraq, was formally announced at the White House.

The operation was conducted by an international coalition under the command of U.S. General Norman Schwarzkopf and featured forces from 32 nations, including Britain, Egypt, France, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait.

During the next six weeks, the allied

force engaged in a massive air war against Iraq's military and civil infrastructure, and encountered little effective resistance from the Iraqi air force or air defenses.

Iraqi ground forces were helpless during this stage of the war, and Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein's only significant retaliatory measure was the launching of SCUD missile attacks against Israel and Saudi Arabia.

Saddam hoped that the missile attacks would provoke Israel to enter the conflict, thus dissolving Arab support of the war. At the request of the United States, however, Israel remained out of the war.

On February 24, a massive coalition ground offensive began, and Iraq's outdated and poorly supplied armed forces were rapidly overwhelmed. Kuwait was liberated in less than four days, and a majority of Iraq's armed forces surrendered, retreated into Iraq, or were destroyed. On February 28, President George Bush declared a cease-fire, and Iraq pledged to honor future coalition and U.N. peace terms. One hundred and twenty-five American soldiers were killed in the Persian Gulf War, with another 21 regarded as missing in action.

(From HistoryChannel.com)

Worship Services

Catholic

Main Chapel

Daily	6:30 a.m.	Mass Cobre Chapel
Weds	5 p.m.	R.C.I.A. Cobre Chapel
Friday	5 p.m.	Rosary
Sat	4:30 p.m.	Reconciliation
	5:30 p.m.	Mass
Sun	9 a.m.	Mass

Camp America

Sun	10:45 a.m.	Mass Wooden Chapel
	5 p.m.	Mass Wooden Chapel

Protestant

Main Chapel

Weds	7 p.m.	Men's Bible Study*
Thurs	7:15 p.m.	Youth Fellowship*
Sun	9:30 a.m.	Adult Bible Study
	11 a.m.	Service
	6:30 p.m.	Bible Study*
	7:30 a.m.	Praise and Worship Service

* Fellowship Hall located in Chapel Complex

Camp America

Weds	7 p.m.	Service
Sun	9 a.m.	Service White Tent
	6 p.m.	Service

Islamic

Fri	1 p.m.	Classroom 12 Chapel
Complex		

Jewish

Fri	8 p.m.	Fellowship Hall
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Camp America Church Bus schedule:

Sun.	8 a.m.	Windward Loop
	8:15 a.m.	Tierra Kay

The bus will return immediately following worship.

Important Notice: Command Climate Survey

The Command Climate Survey is the Joint Task Force Guantanamo commander's tool to assess the morale and welfare of the command. It is important the survey is not viewed as a simple sensing session but as a means to assist in developing action plans to address concerns.

Survey forms will be distributed to JTF Guantanamo section heads and unit commanders Friday, Jan. 10, 2003. The forms consist of 24 questions with provision made for write-in comments. The survey is anonymous and therefore you should be as honest

as logically possible. To ensure confidentiality, envelopes will accompany survey forms. Forms should be completed by all JTF Guantanamo personnel, sealed in the envelopes provided and returned by Friday, January 24. Collection boxes will be located in the galleys, Camp America Chaplain's Office, CDC and JTF Headquarters. Forms will be collected by the Inspector General. Results of the survey and command comment and response on issue or questions raised will be published in upcoming issues of The Wire.

Camp America Joint Aid Station treats troops

By Army Sgt. Erin Viola

You are on deployment in a fairly remote location on a Caribbean island. You've got an extreme case of the sniffles. Your roommate has a pulled muscle and can't work out today. A co-worker stepped in a hole and twisted his ankle. Someone else you know has a severe bite on his arm and it is swelling up. Where can they go for help? What can they do? Go home? No! But they can go to the Joint Aid Station at Camp America.

The JAS at Camp America opened in June of 2002. It runs 24 hours a day, seven days a week and operates much like a family practice clinic, offering a triage area, and two exam rooms, according to Army National Guard 2nd Lt. Wesley Grieve, executive officer of the JAS, from Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 116th Infantry Regiment.

Serving troops from both Camp America and Camp Bulkeley, the clinic also has air conditioning, telephones and computers that are linked to the Navy Hospital. While the JAS is part of Joint Task Force-Guantanamo, it falls under the guidance of the Navy Hospital.

"On an average day, we get about 15 to 20 people in here," said Spc. Nina Paquette, a medic with the 300th Military Police Company. Lately the most common reasons for visitors to the JAS have been for flu shots, sprained ankles, sprained wrists and allergies, according to Paquette. "We do also get a lot of patients who have had bug bites, which can be cause for concern," said Paquette. Scratching the bites can cause a very strong strain of bacteria that is very resistant to antibiotics which is

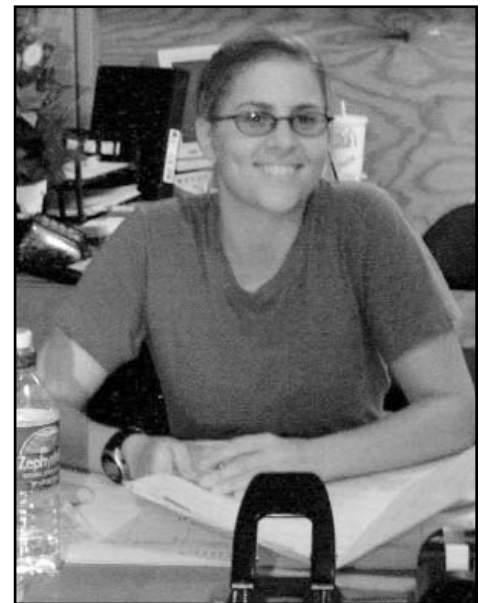
basically like a flesh eating virus said Paquette.

Part of the beauty of the JAS is that it serves as a great example of how highly skilled and motivated service members from different branches can work together towards one common goal – taking care of the troops.

"We are primarily working with the Navy personnel. We have the opportunity to learn their roles and responsibilities and also interact with them. We are incorporating training programs where we have an opportunity to rotate through the Naval hospital, giving our troops an opportunity to get more hands on experience in both the clinic and the emergency room," said Army Sgt. 1st Class Michael Hoye of the 300th Military Police Company, and the noncommissioned officer-in-charge of the JAS.

The ability to put their skills to practice serves as a great motivational tool for those working in the clinic. "It is very exciting to work here. Of course there is the whole sadness of being away from my son, but everybody goes through that. So I look on the positive side. I finally get to do what I'm suppose to be doing in the military, which is be a medic. Being on this deployment, I get to experience something totally new in my military career that I've never experienced before."

Hoye, who has been in the Army for 26 years, said that while it is tough to be away from his wife and children, this deployment has given him the opportunity to attain some of his personal and professional goals. "The ability to run a health-care facility has always been an aspiration and this is a fulfillment of a lifetime. Even



Army Sgt. Erin P. Viola

Everyone who visits the Joint Aid Station at Camp America will be greeted by Army Spc. Nina Paquette, a medic with the 300th Military Police Company, who prepares the patient's charts and escorts them to triage.

though I'm not an owner, I am a manager and it's always been something in the back of my mind that I've wanted to do," said Hoye.

Plans are in place to open an aid station at Tierra Kay, sometime in January, which will be much like the aid station at Windward Loop. Additionally, the JAS at Camp America will soon include a nutritionist and a physical therapist.

The mission of the JAS is to not only provide healthcare to the troops, but to bring that healthcare as close to the troops as possible. Hoye explained, "We are here. We are always open. We are right around the corner from where the troops live."

Post office delivers good news to Camp America

By Army Spc. Lisa L. Gordon

Many Joint Task Force service members stationed at Guantanamo Bay know the excitement and anticipation of receiving a little orange card from the post office. It might just be a small piece of paper, but it contains the promise of a package or a letter just waiting to be picked up and opened by its recipient. Knowing firsthand how much happiness a package or letter can bring a person, service members frequently use the post office to send things home to friends and family. For JTF service members living at Camp America, using the post office just got easier.

Last week, the 806th Postal Detachment opened up a new post office in Camp America. The fully operational post office is centrally located in building A3201. Spc. Andrew Rios of the 806th Postal Detachment said, "we provide everything a normal finance post office would: registered, insured, certified, and return receipt mail. We also receive parcels, sell stamps and boxes, help people wrap packages, and mail packages out." There is a drop box located outside of the new post office and plans are in the works to put drop boxes at Camp Bulkeley and Tierra Kay.

According to Sgt. Karlos Padilla, non-commissioned officer-in-charge of the Camp America Post Office, the project of opening a post office in Camp America was initiated by Sgt. 1st Class Fernando Ramos. "We came down here to check out the soldiers working at Camp Delta and we found that there are a lot of soldiers that don't have means of getting to the main post office. Sgt. 1st Class Ramos thought it would be a good idea to put one here to help the soldiers out here at Camp America," said Padilla. The post office was initially a 12 man barracks room that was converted into a post office in only a few short days.

Sgt. Padilla said getting the establishment of the post office went smoothly because of the detachment's training and experience. "On drill weekends we trained for what we came over here to do. We do postal training, we do field training, and I think all of our drill weekends paid off. We know how to set up from scratch, we know what a deployment's about, and we know how to run a post office. We have a good unit," said Padilla.

The new post office is open to everyone and is open Monday through Friday from



Army Spc. Lisa L. Gordon

Army Spc. Andrew Rios and Army Sgt. Karlos Padilla process packages at the new post office at Camp America.

11:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Drop in to mail a package, a letter, or just ask a question about the new operation. Who knows... send a package out today and you just might receive your own little orange card tomorrow.



What's up, Doc?

Performance enhancing supplements may be life endangering (Part II)

Editor's note: This is the final of a two-part column concerning the use of ephedra products.

**By Navy Lt. Greg Francisco
Internist, U.S. Naval Hospital**

Last week this column reviewed the adverse effects of ephedra, and statistics showing its potential for harm.

The safe dose of ephedra is not clear. However, it is becoming apparent that the combination of ephedra and caffeine or aspirin worsens the adverse effects of the supplements. Most of today's products carry one or both of these combinations.

How do products with such poor track records continue to sell billions? Several reasons. For starters, U.S. law prevents the Food and Drug Administration from regulating diet and herbal related products unless they are proven to be unsafe. Since it

is only voluntary for these companies to report their adverse events, there is scant information on the total problem.

To make matters worse, the dose of ephedra on the bottle may be far from the actual dose ingested. One recent review found that 11 out of 20 products either failed to list the dose of ephedra or listed a dose that was at least 20 percent different than the actual amount.

It appears times may be changing. Recently, Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy Thompson called for a government sponsored review of all the scientific data to date on ephedra. The FDA is hoping that this will lead to tighter regulations. The National Collegiate Athletic Association, International Olympic Committee, and even the National Football League have all banned the use of ephedra containing products.

How about the military? At the request

of the Navy Bureau of Medicine and Surgery, the Navy Exchange has removed all ephedra containing products from their shelves.

Here, their side effects can be exacerbated by dehydration, which is a common result of the tropical heat. Several physicians at the Naval Hospital feel that ephedra has contributed to a variety of problems seen in the emergency room, including heat exhaustion and kidney stones.

The primary concern of the Naval Hospital is the health of our soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines, and Coastguardsmen. There are many ways to stay in shape on this base, but we urge you to avoid using ephedra containing products.

Service members have maintained physical fitness for years without them, don't let a seemingly quick fix lead to a premature end to your military career. Charlie Papa !!



Photo courtesy of JTF Archive

Religious services being held outside during the early days of Joint Task Force Guantanamo, Feb. 11, 2002.



DoD Photo by Marine Sgt. Joshua Higgins

The U.S. flag is hoisted up by Cpl. Dustin S. Bray, Cpl. D. Austin Quehl, and Cpl. David J. Docimo, Jr., Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 2d Marine Regiment, for the first time Feb. 18 over Freedom Heights, the hilltop "tent city" that houses soldiers and Marines who guard Camp X-Ray, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

Then & Now...

From page 1.

police, Marines, infantry, and some other service members. The troops lived in tents and used make-shift showers with no hot water. Troops used porta-potties as latrine facilities. But things got better and troops moved into SEAhuts at Camp America and Camp Bulkeley. Hot showers, laundry, and workout facilities became part of the living community landscape. Soon more living quarters upgrades were added in the form of panel buildings that were erected at Camp America North, just across from Camp America. Later, Kvaerner renovated the family housing facilities of Tierra Kay and many troops moved into those living quarters, freeing up some of the SEAhuts for storage and office space.

Kvaerner also made renovations at the Windward Loop housing area. "When I got here, I was expecting to be in the SEAhuts with cots, about 40 of us living in there. But instead they took me to Winward Loop. I was so excited. I got a bed, a washer and dryer, and a kitchen. It was more than I could have hoped for," said Marine Lance Cpl. Virginia Ingham, who has been deployed here since March 2002.

Morale Welfare and Recreation also played a key role in improving the quality of life for the troops of Camp America and Camp Bulkely. MWR SEAhuts were set at both camps where troops have access to the internet so they can keep in touch with their family members via email. They can go to these areas to relax on their off duty time, kick back, watch television, and play board games. Additionally, troops have access to more phone lines and can make three 15-minute morale calls each week.

Other great things that have happened this year include the Jimmy Buffett concert that took place in December. It took nine months to coordinate said Bowman, but it was worth it and really increased troop morale.

One thing to keep in mind, advises Navy Lt. Cmdr. Phil



DoD Photo by Navy Chief Petty Officer Gabe Puella

U.S. Navy Seabees from NMCB 3 sawing wood for Joint Interview Facility, under construction at Camp X-Ray, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, Jan. 20, 2002.

Emanuel, assistant plans officer, and reservist with U.S. Atlantic Fleet JTF Headquarters Detachment 100, is to stay physically active in your off-duty time. Emanuel has been here since March 2002. "MWR has done a fantastic job as far as keeping individuals busy. There are a lot of opportunities to go to the "O" club or sit down at the Tiki Bar and bend your elbow every night. But I made an effort to do something that was going to benefit me either physically or mentally. So I participated in the sports leagues and did a lot of running on the side. I also ran with the Hash House Harriers," said Emanuel. Since his deployment here, Emanuel has lost 30 pounds.

From two commands to one ... from MREs in the hot sun to hot meals in an air-conditioned, state-of-the-art tent structure ... from living in tents and having cold showers to SEAhuts and hot water ... it's all part of making this operation the best it can be.



Photo courtesy of JTF Archive

Walls, bunks and floors added a little more comfort for JTF personnel, moving from 'Freedom Heights' to Camp America.



Photo courtesy of JTF Archive

The old Naval Fleet Hospital, located in Camp X-Ray, is almost completed during the first phase of JTF 160, Jan. 21, 2002.



Photo courtesy of JTF Archive

With the construction of more and more SEA huts, Camp America began to take shape into what it has become now, Jan. 20, 2002.



Photo by Navy Chief Petty Officer Gabe Puello

Camp X-Ray, under construction prior to arrival of first detainees, Jan 11. Guantanamo Bay, Cuba..

Keeping JTF's wheels turning on time

By Army Spc. Alan Knesek

It is no small task keeping over 400 vehicles in good running condition, and making sure that when a vehicle does break down, it gets fixed and back on the road as soon as possible. For the service members that work at the J4 maintenance motorpool, located at the base of Marine Hill, this is a typical day at work.

With service members from the 300th Military Police Co., 785th Military Police Co., 438th Military Police Co., 240th Military Police Co., Navy and Air Force working alongside one another, this motorpool is a prime example of services and units coming together to accomplish the Joint Task Force mission.

"Since we have been here, things have improved. That's all I want, to come in here and do a job. If I can make it slightly better, then I'm doing my job," said Sgt. 1st Class Phillip Bader, 300th MP Co., acting officer-in-charge of the motorpool.

With more than 100 vehicles on average



Army Spc. Delaney T. Jackson

Army Spc. Kevin Porter, 300th MP Co., tightens lug nuts on a five ton vehicle which came in for routine maintenance.

processed through the motorpool every week, the service members' jobs are never done. There is always a flat tire somewhere or an oil change that needs to be done. With team work, jobs get done quicker and the vehicles get back on the road sooner.

"Every vehicle we try to get out as quick as possible," said Spc. Mario Veliz, 300th MP Co., light-wheel vehicle

mechanic. "If we weren't here, other people wouldn't be able to get back and forth where they need to go, supplies wouldn't get where they need to go."

According to Sgt. 1st Class Bader, "The hardest part about this job is waiting for parts." As far as getting anything done, there's nothing they can't do on a vehicle if parts are available, he added. During their first week here, the team replaced two transmissions within 24 hours.

"The people here make this place run the best," said Bader.

"We've got people with different experiences and different fields. When something comes in, you can see all the mechanics jump, they want to work together and take whatever it is and get the job done," said Bader. There are service members from numerous Army units and Air Force personnel working together in the motorpool, supporting JTF, Kvaerner, and Navy vehicles.

Man on the Street

Compiled by Army Spc. Alan Knesek and Army Spc. Delaney T. Jackson

This week's question:

How do you think the quality of life could be improved here?



Army Spc. Daniel Druchniak, 300th MP Co.

"More organized sports like baseball, basketball and football would be nice, something where all the services can get together and have fun."



Army Spc. Nicholas Davis, JTF Guantanamo

"They need to get more cable boxes in. They ran out and we can only have one in our house until they get more."



Navy Seaman Kenya Banks, JTF Guantanamo

"They need to change the buses, they never go through my neighborhood and it seems like they are always on their own schedule."



Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Dena Hatcher, JTF Guantanamo

"They need to change the phone systems down here, it costs too much to go through LCN. Maybe if they offered AT&T and other agencies to go through it would keep cost down."



Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class Sharon Dexnikker, Security

"A few more activities for single sailors and soldiers to get together would be nice. Something for us to all get together."

Under the Guantanamo Sea

By Army Spc. Lisa L. Gordon

Joint Task Force service members stationed at Guantanamo Bay play an important role in America's war on terrorism. Our jobs are often stressful, the hours long, and the days can sometimes seem to drag. Despite all this, JTF service members continue to do their best, proud to contribute to the mission in any way possible. There are those times though, when service members find themselves with some time off and are left to answer the ever popular question, "What should I do?" For service members looking to unwind and get close to nature, scuba diving may be the answer.

Getting certified to scuba dive is a surprisingly simple procedure that starts off with a trip to Guantanamo Bay's Dive Shop, located next door to the Navy Exchange on Sherman Avenue. There are various levels of scuba certification, but novice divers start out with open water certification. Service members can register for the class at the dive shop for \$195, which includes the class itself, use of the instructor's gear (regulator, tank, weights, air, etc.), and a certification card. Students taking the class must provide a mask, fins, snorkel, and boots, all of which can be rented or purchased at the dive shop. The class is approximately two weeks long and

begins with a classroom orientation to diving terms and equipment. The class then moves to the pool at Marine Hill where students get into the water to practice using the equipment.

The pool sessions begin slowly and the instructors take measures to ensure that all students feel comfortable with the equipment. Jessie Keenan, store manager of the dive shop said, "The first pool session they want to make sure everybody can get over the basics.

Some people have a couple of fears they need to work through. The students do everything in the pool first and then they move on to open water dives." After successfully completing five to six classes in the pool and four open water dives, students receive a lifetime certification card that allows them to dive to a maximum depth of 60 feet.

Base regulations require soldiers to always dive with a buddy and Keenan asks that soldiers respect Cuba's underwater habitat and wildlife.

Diving can be a great way for hard-working JTF service members to relax and let go of built up stress. When you're underwater "You can't hear anything except your own breathing and the sound of your regulator. Everything's kind of muffled. It's quiet and it's relaxing ...

there's no one talking to you or asking you questions.

Even though you're with a buddy, you're just by yourself, and you're looking at nice things," said Keenan. She also said that students have been able to see underwater wildlife such as turtles, stingrays, and porcupine fish during the open water dives.

Some of the participants of the class are using it not only as a means of personal relaxation, but a way of building friendships and spending down time with fellow service members. Sgt. Brit Rodgers of the 132nd Military Police Company is currently taking the open water certification with 14 fellow MPs. Some of the soldiers in the group are planning on moving up the ranks of scuba certification after completing the open water class. Rodgers seems pleased to be able to take advantage of the opportunities afforded to the service members lucky enough to be stationed at Guantanamo Bay and said, "They say Cuba is one of the most beautiful places to dive so I thought I'd experience it first hand. It's a great opportunity to come down here and get started. Not many people can say they've been certified in Cuba, so I think it's a neat experience." Soldiers with any questions about taking a dive class can stop by or call the dive shop at 5336.



Army Spc. Lisa L. Gordon

Army Sgt. Brit Rodgers of the 132nd Military Police Company purchases dive equipment at Guantanamo Bay's Dive Shop from Army Spc. Darby Darbe of the 35th Aviation Brigade. Sgt. Rodgers will be getting his open water scuba certification this week.



Army Spc. Lisa L. Gordon

Joint Task Force service members practice using scuba equipment during a confined water class at the Marine Hill pool.

JTF "improves 500 percent"

Army Spc. George Allen

U.S. troops have had the mission of maintaining the detainee facilities here for a year now. One of the few soldiers who has been here the whole time is Army Spc. G.

G volunteered to come here, after 9/11. "I signed up (for the Army) to get experience in my field," said G, "with a degree, straight out of college ... in my field, you can't find a job."

G has been in the Army for five years, and like many other soldiers with her job, had little opportunity to put her expertise to work.

So, when G had a permanent change of station (PCS) after Sept. 11, she wasted no time in pursuing the opportunity Guantanamo Bay presented. On 9/11 "they put us on lockdown for four days, so all we could do was sit and watch CNN ... we didn't know whether we were going to be sent somewhere right then, but we were all excited. Then, when I PCS-ed ... I showed up on Jan. 10, or 11, and I met my sergeant major. It was a Friday night. I shook his hand and said, 'Alright sergeant major, send me somewhere.' He said, 'O.K., don't unpack.'"

G was on a plane to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba a week later.

Things have changed a lot since G arrived here – task force organiza-

tion, living conditions, logistics, and even morale welfare and recreation.

Upon arrival last year, G and other members of the Joint Interrogation Group (JIG) spent about two and half months as part of Joint Task Force 160, before being split off into JTF 170. They had only "a building to work in and two cars. In the beginning, the commander of the JIF, the Joint Interrogation Facility, rode the bus to work, a Marine Lt. Colonel ..."

"The base support in the beginning was amazing ... Captain Buehn (Commander Naval Base) even told the people if you see a guy walking down the street in the middle of the day, and he's pouring with sweat, pick him up, give him a ride," said G.

Overall, quality of life has "improved 500 percent," said G. At one time "the only place you could go on the entire island (to check email) was the library where they had three computers, and a 15 minute limit, or the Liberty Center, which is where the Marines were always hanging out, so you'd wait for two hours to get on for 15 minutes." Also, "MWR is getting better, the Marina's stocking up on stuff, and the movies are getting a little better ... more recent. Fun things are happening more often now, as far as Jimmy Buffett and other (entertainment) coming down."

"It is the soldier, not the reporter,
who has given us the freedom of the press.
It is the soldier, not the poet,
who has given us the freedom of speech.
It is the soldier, not the campus organizer,
who gives us the freedom to demonstrate.
It is the soldier who salutes the flag,
who serves beneath the flag,
and whose coffin is draped by the flag,
who allows the protester to burn the flag."

Sgt. Dennis Edward O'Brien, U.S. Marine Corps

Movie Schedule

Camp Bulkeley

Fri., Jan. 10

8 p.m. *Crouching Tiger; Hidden Dragon*
PG13 - 120 min

10 p.m. *3000 Miles to Graceland*
R - 120 min

Sat., Jan. 11

8 p.m. *Art of War*
R - 117 min

10 p.m. *Bad Boys*
R - 106 min

Sun., Jan. 12

8 p.m. *15 Minutes*
R - 120 min

Mon., Jan. 13

8 p.m. *Blade Runner*
R - 117 min

Tues., Jan. 14

8 p.m. *Body Heat*
R - 113 min

Wed., Jan. 15

8 p.m. *Broken Arrow*
R - 108 min

Thurs., Jan. 16

8 p.m. and 10 p.m.
Chain of Command
R - 95 min

Downtown Lyceum

Fri., Jan. 10

7 p.m. *The Ring*
PG13 - 99 min

9 p.m. *Abandon*
PG13 - 99 min

Sat., Jan. 11

7 p.m. *Brown Sugar*
PG13 - 108 min

9 p.m. *Ghost Ship*
R - 91 min

Sun., Jan. 12

7 p.m. *Harry Potter 2*
PG - 179 min

Mon., Jan. 13

7 p.m. *Maid in Manhattan*
PG13 - 106 min

Tues., Jan. 14

7 p.m. *Lord of the Ring: Two Towers*
PG13 - 179 min

Wed., Jan. 15

7 p.m. *Punch Drunk Love*
R - 87 min

Thurs., Jan. 16

7 p.m. *I Spy*
PG13 - 102 min

Recycle!

Recycling bins are located near trash dumpsters at Camp Amercia, Camp Bulkeley, and all JTF housing.

Recycle all plastics, glass and metal, no separation needed.

Military police, a different kind of family

By Army Spc. Lisa L. Gordon

It means a lot to be a soldier. Part of being a soldier means being on a team where each and every member is valued as much as the next, and where being a "buddy" to another soldier means so much more than just watching someone's back. Joint Task Force soldiers stationed at Guantanamo Bay, many of whom are on their first deployment, are getting a chance to put their dedication to the Army and their fellow soldiers to the test. The soldiers of the 438th Military Police Company are one such group.

No military occupational specialty is easy, but being a military police officer has its own unique set of challenges and difficulties. Many of JTF Guantanamo's MPs have found that their mission here is different than the mission they have been carrying out back at their home station in the United States. Spc. Daniel Lees of the 438th MP Co. said the most difficult aspect of his job here is being flexible. "The biggest challenge is adapting to all the changes that come at us all the time. There's schedule changes and changes in policy that go on at work; day to day, it's a constant adjustment," said Lees. While the ability to be adaptable is key to being a soldier, habitual changes in both work and life outside of work can be stressful.

Despite the stress and difficulties that come their way, the soldiers of the 438th MP

Co. have learned to not only watch out for each other, but to rely on each other. Pfc. Erin Jarrett described the company as a "family" and said, "everybody is easy to get along with. They share things with you and nobody really holds back. If I get frustrated I just start talking to whoever's listening and eventually I just feel better". What appears to distinguish the 438th MP Co. is the manner in which they take care of each other. Their commitment to each other, both as soldiers and as individuals, has made it easier for the group to function and carry out the mission. Lees said, "If we have any gripes or complaints we can seek each other out and have absolutely no fear of opening our minds to each other. We look out for each other. At the same time, we work really well together."

Teamwork and close bonds among soldiers were developing before the MPs ever set foot on Guantanamo Bay. During their mobilization training at Fort Dix, the soldiers did extensive drills and practiced scenarios that would prepare them for everything and anything they might encounter once inside Camp Delta. Lees said the soldiers received first-rate training and upon arrival on the island, they were well prepared to carry out their mission. The soldiers know their role in the war on terrorism, they know how to carry out their mission, and they know that they can count on each other no matter what.

The positive feedback about the nature of the mission of the 438th MP Co. was illustrated by Lees when he said, "When I think about the purpose of being here... it's to make sure that things like September 11 don't happen again. Our job here is to take care of the detainees while information is being gathered from them. As long as I can do that I know I'll feel a lot safer when I'm back home; when my family and I get on an airplane, or we go to a sporting event, or a concert. I feel confident that our country is doing something to make sure that we're safe at home." Until he is able to make it back home to his wife and young son, Lees will continue to rely on the "family" he's found in the 438th Military Police Company.



Army Spc. Lisa L. Gordon

Pfc. Erin Jarrett and Spc. Daniel Lees of the 438th Military Police Company before leaving for work at Camp Delta.



Army Spc. Delaney T. Jackson

Deputy IG gets sworn in

Joint Task Force Commander, Maj. Gen. Geoffrey Miller, left, swears in Army Maj. Rod Faulk, as new Deputy Inspector General of JTF Guantanamo. Faulk formerly of the 300th MP Brigade will now assist Navy Cmdr. Greg Thompson, principal IG of Joint Task Force Guantanamo.

15 Minutes of Fame...

with Spc. David Brainard, NBC specialist

785th MP Battalion

NBC Specialist: Setting the Standards

Interview by

Spc. Alan L. Knesek

Q: Tell me about your job here?

A: I fill the battalion NBC spot for the 785th MPs.

Q: What made you want to join the Army?

A: Basically I wanted to serve my country.

Q: Ok, now what about home do you miss the most?

A: Spending time with my family, girlfriend, and my puppies.

Q: What is the first thing you're going to do when you get home?

A: I'm going to go visit everyone in my family and get stuffed with food.

Q: How did you get the job that you do now?

A: I have always been interested in law enforcement, and with this job I actually get to do some good.

Q: What have you learned while working here?

A: Our unit has a lot of correction officers and law enforcement officers in it and with that we pull together a lot. There is a lot of experience that is passed down.

Q: Where else have you been stationed or deployed to?

A: I have never been stationed anywhere, besides two weeks training in Grafenwoer Germany.

Q: Tell me about the training did you do there?



Photo By Spc. Alan L. Knesek

Spc. David Brainard, 785th NBC specialist, stands in front of the 785th Battalion HQ in Camp America.

A: I learned a lot about NBC at a Battalion level, and that is what has made my job here that much easier.

Q: What has been your greatest accomplishment in the military?

A: The greatest accomplishment would be getting here and getting things going well. We've met every standard and exceeded it.

Q: How has your Army experiences benefited your civilian life?

A: The military training has helped me get better jobs and helped me be

squared away and reliable. People know they can count on me to get the job done.

Q: Tell me about what you do in the civilian side?

A: I am a corrections officer.

Q: So, what have you done here during your off time?

A: I've gone snorkeling and fishing. I have tried to go to a different beach every time I go, so far I have been to Windmill, Cable and a few more.

Q: What have you been doing here?

A: Actually I have been saving my money for college here. I am going to get my basic stuff out of the way so I can get my bachelor's degree in criminal justice when I get home.

Q: What do you think about being stationed here?

A: It's great, the weather is nice, and I am working with my unit, we work together and then go out and have a good time. We take care of what we need to do, and that's great.

Q: What makes your job so important for the military?

A: As an NBC specialist, our job is to make sure that we protect the soldiers, make sure they are trained correctly. Basically when it comes down to a chemical environment we are there to save as many lives as we can.

As a military police officer we are there to maintain order, and we set the example that should be followed. I think my unit sets that example and exceeds it.