R e a d i n g b i n g o

When was the last time you go for a reading bingo? Elementary school? The MWR Liberty program is offering a Reading Bingo event to promote reading. The contest is open to adults and teens and begins Dec. 1st. For more information call 4760 or pick up your reading Bingo card at the library today. Start reading and winning prizes.

B r u n c h w i t h S a n t a

How would you like to have brunch with Santa? One last chance to tell him what you want on your Christmas list. The Bayview Club is hosting Brunch with Santa on Sunday, Dec. 9th. Brunch is from 11am to 2pm, and Santa will be there from 11am to 1pm. This event is open to all hands. Don’t forget your camera!

M o t o r c y c l e c o u r s e

Ever want to learn how to ride a motorcycle? Maybe it seems dangerous or too difficult. The Motorcycle Basic Rider Safety Course makes learning to ride easy. They offer the Motorcycle Basic Rider Safety Course. The next scheduled course begins Dec. 12th through the 13th. The class is open to military or DOD personnel only. For more information on the course, contact the Safety Office at 4526 or 4655.

A n e w w a y t o b o w l

Want to liven up your bowling experience? Come out and enjoy all-new Cosmic Lights bowling at Maplehead Lanes Bowling Center every Friday and Saturday night from 9 to 11:30 p.m. The scene features new cosmic lights and sound system, and attendees can request music on four new big screens. The $13 cost includes two and a half hours of bowling and a shoe rental.

C o o k i n g c l a s s

The MWR Liberty program is offering a free Hanukkah cooking class at the CBQ kitchen. The class will be held Tuesday, Dec. 11th and starts at 4:30pm. This class is for unaccompanied service members.

C o m m a n d C o r n e r

Capt. W. Andrew Docherty
Chief of Staff Joint Task Force Guantanamo

I have truly been an honor serving as Joint Task Force Guantanamo’s Chief of Staff for the past nine months, and I have definitely grown professionally from having served beside such a talented and diverse group of professionals.

The experience of working with our multi-service, multi-discipline, military and civilian force has taught me about much more than our mission areas of detention operations, intelligence collection, and military commissions. It has also taught me about the wide diversity of cultures within the different services and about the many similarities in the way we lead, the way we execute the mission, and the way we work together to take care of our personnel. Whether active duty, Reserve, or National Guard, our leaders all know “what right looks like,” and I believe they are continually doing everything in their power to ensure that we’re doing things right every day.

Doing the right thing isn’t always easy, and the leadership team we’ve been blessed to work for has always recognized this. They’ve always been willing to do whatever it takes to overcome obstacles and navigate a path to a solution from which we can look back with pride, knowing that we did the right thing.

Brunch with Santa

How would you like to have brunch with Santa? One last chance to tell him what you want on your Christmas list. The Bayview Club is hosting Brunch with Santa on Sunday, Dec. 9th. Brunch is from 11am to 2pm, and Santa will be there from 11am to 1pm. This event is open to all hands. Don’t forget your camera!

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With a weekend filled with early Christmas preparations, a glow-in-the-dark parade and a life-sized Nativity display, Naval Station Guantanamo Bay was rocking it out, which means no movie time until Monday night.

It was all good though, I still enjoyed myself around Santa Claus. However, my joy really came when I got off work Monday, and my anticipation increased as the clock drew near 7 p.m. My eagerness was hung on the expected performance of a notable actor who was well known for his comedic impersonations as a loudmouth, hold-a-gun-in-her-purse character name Madea. He is also known for directing movies, such as “Dirty Girl,” “Madea’s Witness Protection.”

This actor/director/writer/producer, Tyler Perry, wiped off his lipstick and mask, took off his Madea costume and put down his director’s hat to play the role of an intelligent, or add some action.

On the other hand, I thought Pacino (“Michael Fox,” “TV series,” “Space”), the all-time Thug, was over the top. You knew he had an agenda in the beginning, but if you look at him, you’ll see how he tells a story to the viewers. You can see where he is going and what he’s thinking. Pacino is a perfect combination, body language and voice. I truly believe he knew that he had gone through a strict diet and workout routine to gain muscle and lose some pounds.

Tyler Perry’s character was cool as well, but I think the director was a little too soft in the beginning. Perry’s character had a lot of bodyfat,但 let me know how he is able to play the role, I can see it even though I am not the biggest fan of his. I think he put a lot into his character to make him more interesting. The film was a little disappointing for me, but I will say it is better than I thought it would be.

The movie just makes a complete turn around, and it actually makes me really good. It was worth the wait. I wanted to know if he was kind of like the main protagonist, or not. I was a little disappointed with the movie, but it was good enough to watch. I think the best thing is that the movie doesn’t end like other movies, it ends like a play, where you keep wondering about the next scene. Perry’s character was cool as well, but I think the director made him too simple. I mean, I understand that he is a smart detective, but make him more interesting.

Overall, I thought the movie was good, but not good enough. So much could have been done to enhance the character, Alex Cross, from the beginning. I didn’t know whether to look at Perry or the video! Overall, I thought the movie was good, but not good enough. So much could have been done to enhance the character, Alex Cross, from the beginning of the film all the way to the end. I don’t recommend you see it just so you can see a different and I believe, the best thing is that Tyler Perry just give the movie some time to progress and you might actually enjoy it.

I give this movie two and a half stars.
When asked to describe Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, people might answer sunny, fun, or unique. How many would think diverse? Naval Station Guantanamo Bay boasts a diverse population of Soldiers, Airmen, Marines, Sailors and Coast Guardsmen.

"Everywhere you look in the JTF [Joint Task Force] and the NAVSTA you see diversity in the services," said Army Brig. Gen James Lettko, the Joint Task Force Guantanamo deputy commander. "If you look closer, there is even more diversity in cultures among the service members."

Another part of the diverse life here in GTMO is the food selection. One can find quite a variety of foods to eat here. There's the Jerk House serving Jamaican food, the Bayview providing Mongolian night, O'Kelly's serving a variety of American and Irish food, and of course, there are always the galleys. But for many, no amount of restaurants can compare to a home-cooked meal.

GTMO residents got the chance to enjoy a good home-cooked meal Friday evening. The National Guard Birthday Committee hosted a Latino food tasting on Friday at the Windward Loop housing area. The committee is headed by Lettko, himself a member of the New York National Guard, and the other heads of the National Guard units. The food tasting itself was run by Army Capt. Josué Flores of the 191st Regional Support Group, a part of the Puerto Rico National Guard.

The image that comes to mind of a food tasting is somewhere in a fancy restaurant with small portions. But in true GTMO style, things are done here differently: food tasting here turned into more of a small block party. A portion of Windward Loop was closed off with traffic cones and lined with tables and chairs. Alongside the house was a variety of boilers and grills, all being used for the meal served Friday night. The garage was open and lit up with black lights with Latino music pouring out.

Among the foods served Friday night were chicken, pork, several kinds of rice, a variety of desserts, pink beans, and sangria. "The food is from all different cultures," Flores said.

For those who have never been to an actual Latino party, the food tasting was very much like a family party, complete with hosts making sure everyone had a full plate.

"In the Latino community, everything is around food and friends," Flores said. "That's what we are trying to do today. We just want people to enjoy themselves."

Fundraising can sometimes be tedious and boring, but everyone at this fundraiser enjoyed themselves. This is the second Latino food tasting held here at GTMO. Food tastings are all fundraisers to help raise money for the National Guard birthday celebration. The National Guard birthday celebration is planned for Dec. 21 at Phillips Dive Park.

"I've been here going on 14 months," Lettko said. "I've been to every ball they hold and thought there ought to be a National Guard Ball."

Instead of a National Guard birthday ball, the committee has decided to just have a regular birthday celebration. While it may be a little bit more informal, it would be a more relaxed environment where people can have fun.

People tend to forget that the National Guard is the oldest component of the military. The National Guard may not be the forefront of the image of the armed services, but it's still one of the key elements. The National Guard is the foundation for the active Army and for all the other services.

"Everyone talks about how old their service is, but the National Guard is the oldest," Lettko said.

People of all ranks were present at the food tasting from officers to lower enlisted, families to unaccompanied, service members and civilians. Tickets cost $10 for adults and five dollars for children. The Latino food tasting was an all hands event, and so will the National Guard birthday. The National Guard will be celebrating its 367th birthday.

"This food tasting is a great event to have," Petty Officer 2nd Class Delcon Ferguson said. "It gets people out having fun no matter what their rank."
With Nathan Stoops strumming the fiddle and Benji Harris strumming the guitar, Scarletta lead singer Aubrey Collins belts out a song from the country band's self-titled party that broke out during the band's rendition of the classic 1980s rock song “Footloose.” The up-and-coming country band closed out a night that included a Christmas

Scarletta lead singer Aubrey Collins twirls a young fan around on the stage at the Downtown Lyceum Sunday night while other audience members join them in a dance

T

n was a dance party going on at the Downtown Lyceum Sunday night — except this time, instead of a new movie playing out on the stage.

First, it was a country two-step during a rendition of the Garth Brooks hit “Callin’

Baron Rouge” as a couple from the audience hopped up on the platform and showed off their moves.

Then, the dance party went full swing as more members of the audience jumped up on stage and got “Footloose” while the band hung out a version of the classic 1980s rock song.

Finally, the party turned into a showcase of line dancing as the band played one of their own songs, “Just Dance,” while the crowd on the platform formed two lines and started their stuff.

That was just one scene, but the jamming and dancing continued on throughout much of the hour-and-a-half-long set as Scarletta, an up-and-coming country band out of Nashville, performed for the Troopers of Naval Station Guantanamo Bay.

The band, headed by lead singer Aubrey

Collins, guitarist Benji Harris and fiddler Nathan Stoops, came to GTMO to provide some entertainment and appreciation for the Troopers as they prepare to close out what has been a breakthrough year for them.

Scarletta released its self-titled first album and saw the first single, “Right Here, Right Now” rise from number 152 to number 24 on the country charts; the highest ranking for an unsigned country act this year. The band appears set for more success as it gets ready to release its second single, “Island Fever,” early next year.

Then the band members traveled to GTMO to help Troopers get into the holiday spirit, headlining a show that also featured the W.T. Sampson High School band and various popular groups.

“Everyone’s been super nice. It’s been pretty good,” Harris said Friday of the band’s experience at GTMO. “You hear so much about Guantanamo Bay, but most of it is rumors and stuff that’s not exactly true.

A lot of those rumors were dispelled today ... it’s like a little self-contained town. I didn’t know what to expect.”

The whole show was supposed to take place Saturday night, but Mother Nature thought otherwise and rained throughout Saturday afternoon and evening forcing organizers to push all of the events back a day.

While the paradegoers and performances were put off, Collins, Harris and Stoops brought their show to O’Kelly’s Irish Pub and gave Troopers there a preview of what to expect on Sunday with a 45-minute acoustic set.

As they played their own songs from the band’s album, the trio was also mixed in some covers of legendary artists such as Garth Brooks, Brooks & Dunn, Michael Jackson and Linda Ronstadt.

That pattern continued on the stage at the

lycean with the addition of drummer Heath Ledbetter and bassist Nathan Gehri. Besides introducing more songs from their album, the band members added a few more covers to the playlist and ended the set with Lynyrd Skynyrd’s “Sweet Home Alabama” as their encore performance.

All the while, the band continuously introduced the Troopers for their services, especially around the holidays. While Stoops toured Iraq as a member of country star Aaron Tippin’s band, the other members of Scarletta found themselves performing on a military installation for the first time.

“It’s been an honor for us to do it,” Harris said. “You guys work so hard, and you sacrifice so much for us to be able to do what we do. For us to be able to give back just a little bit, it’s the least we could do.”

For Collins, the visit to GTMO was an opportunity to perform at GTMO, the band’s style.

A woman in uniform said she was support to join him and Harris, she thought he was trying to ask her out on a date. When she realized he wasn’t, she quickly accepted the invitation to turn the duo into a trio.

“Next thing I know, we’re still together. That was three years ago — my longest relationship ever,” she said. “They’re great guys and they’re my brothers. They look out for me ... We have family harmonies, even though I’m no relation to these boys at all.

While all three have influences in the country and classic rock genres, Stoops also has a background in classical music as a violinist and mixes his experience with modern sounds to create his contribution to the band’s style.

Combined with Collins’ powerful vocals and his own rock ‘n’ roll guitar licks, Harris said the band produces something different than their contemporaries, and it is that distinction that he believes will set them apart and bring them success.

“It’s definitely a unique sound that I hadn’t heard before. That’s why I like being in this band,” he said. “It’s tough to label us ... It’s still up and coming and we’re kind of covers three or four different genres and molds it together into this new sound. That’s why I think it’s going to work.”

Before Scarletta made its way to GTMO, the band was touring around the country and playing on the Midwest and southern United States.

While they performed at the International Country Music Fest in Zurich, Switzerland, and played with Uncle Kracker, Sister Hazel, Thompson Square and Colt Ford, the band has mostly shined on its own and worked hard to establish itself in local honky-tonks and dance halls.

The trend of small-time venues will continue into next year for the band that seems to be on the verge of big-time success. Scarletta is booked for shows through March as the band performs on its own and keeps striving for the top.

While the members dream of platinum albums and sold-out concerts, Harris said working hard and carrying it this way — as opposed to appearing on American Idol and similar shows — will make them appreciate success more when it finally comes.

“I feel like that’s the legit way to do it, even though it takes a little longer,” he said. “Work and earn it. Even though it takes longer and it’s harder work, we’re paying our dues.”

The arrival of success may not take that much longer, according to the members of Scarletta, who feel the pace at the top of country music is just around the corner.

“We really feel like the ball is rolling,” Harris said. “We’re just hanging on for dear life on the ride. The boulder’s rolling down the hill.”
The floats are coming! The floats are coming, accompanied by Santa Claus, his helpers, and a myriad of residents and service members of all ages here at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay Sunday evening.

The holiday spirit was in full effect Sunday evening, with the kick off of the Morale, Welfare, and Recreation annual Christmas Parade and tree lighting.

The already highly anticipated event created more excitement with an unscheduled rain delay, which pushed the start date back by one day. No biggie for GTMO residents, who patiently waited and lined both sides of the street of Sherman Avenue from the parade's start point to its ultimate destination - the Downtown Lyceum.

Parade float line-ups began at 3 p.m. Sunday afternoon, coordinated by volunteers and MWR personnel. Sleighs, trucks, humvees - oh my! Each vehicle was prepped out for the holiday season, covered with Christmas lights, decorations, wreaths, and greetings of season tides.

Two hours before the scheduled start time of the parade, excitement was abuzz. "This is great for the kids, for us too, but definitely to get that excited holiday feel for the kids is the most important thing," said Barbara Stein, mother of two and GTMO resident.

Delighted, young faces were definitely abundant Sunday evening, with many of the parade participants made up of students from the W.T. Sampson Elementary School and High School, as well as the GTMO Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts.

Before the scheduled start time of 5 p.m., prime real estate in front of the big Christmas tree on Sherman Avenue, was staked out. Onlookers brought their folding chairs and cameras ready to take in the Christmas spectacular here at GTMO.

As the sun started to set behind the crowd, the tune of 'Jingle Bells' could be heard coming from around the corner. The music preceded the lights that were emitted from the upcoming entourage of floats.

Right before the floats hit the corner, the GTMO Christmas tree on the hill and decoration were suddenly lit. The magnificence in its beauty was complemented by the landscape of looking at the tree from atop the hill. Someone say photo op?

Vehicle after vehicle of Christmas lit glory slowly rolled down the street, full of residents dressed in appropriate Christmas attire (Santa hats, mainly) and screaming "Merry Christmas!" to all along the route. Holiday cheers were not the only thing being shared with the crowd, as parade participants showered the street lines with candy. Yes, delicious, plentiful candy, a double treat for the kids watching.

From onlooker to parade participant, the look of joy could not be hidden. "The rain couldn't hold this back. We all were so looking forward to this, and you can see why," said Teresa Bryar, parade onlooker.

Some of the most popular floats were those that carried the big man himself, Santa Claus, the lit golf car with Frosty the Snowman strapped to the top, and the GTMO fire truck with mascot Sparky.

The parade and Christmas tree lighting was just the start to the event-filled evening. With the final destination set at the Downtown Lyceum, GTMO residents were set for more holiday fun and entertainment. The parade floats transformed the Lyceum parking lot into a bright center of attraction with pictures being taken next to them and music belting from its speakers.

A long line caught the attention of most children - the line leading to the lap of Santa Claus, who was situated in a big red chair under a tent surrounded by gifts and lovely helpers. Parents waited in line to have their kids get to sit on Santa's lap and tell him what they wanted for Christmas.

Other residents filled the seats of the Lyceum ready to be entertained by a concert put on by the students of W.T. Sampson school and eventually put into a groove by the musical stylings of the band Scarletta.

The GTMO community came out Sunday evening and was not let down with a fun, warming and enjoyable holiday night for all.
Electronics Technician
2nd Class Reuben Contreras

Story and photos by Spc. Raechel Haynes

Electronics technician 2nd Class Reuben Contreras conducts regular maintenance and preventative maintenance on the Coast Guard boats in Naval Station Guantanamo Bay.

He’s Wadsworth Longfellow once said, “Ability is of little account without opportunity.”

Coast Guard Petty Officer 2nd Class Reuben Contreras had the ability and talent, and he found the opportunity to use them in the Coast Guard. Contreras is a member of the Coast Guard Reserve deployed here at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay. He has been a member of the Coast Guard for nearly 10 years, four years on active duty and nearly six in the Reserves. Contreras has been taking opportunities from a young age. “My father worked in a Honda factory, so I grew up working on Hondas,” Contreras said. “I’ve always had a high mechanical inclination. I used to take my toys apart and put them all back together again.”

Once he had learned about Hondas and their engines, he began to branch out into different kinds of engines. He said the concept is basically the same once you know what the parts look like. During his job at an airport, he worked on helicopters, and now with the Coast Guard he lends a hand with the boat engines.

“Learning an engine takes time,” Contreras said. “If you take it all at once, it’s like drinking from a fire hose. It is better to take one piece at a time.”

Contreras is listed as an electronics technician, but he is really a jack-of-all-trades, doing whatever is asked and even some work that isn’t asked of him.

“We don’t have an electrician’s mate in the unit so I am the de facto electrician’s mate,” Contreras said. “I also help out with engine repairs and maintenance. I help out with some of the construction too. I’m like a human Swiss army knife.”

Contreras is known for his can-do attitude and always seeks opportunities to help out. Instead of focusing on just repair, Contreras embraces the “proactive is better than reactive” frame of mind. Given that he works in the Port Security Unit, keeping the boats in good condition is a key part of the job. Contreras focuses on preventative maintenance as well as his regular duties.

“By having this keen eye, he is able to limit the malfunctions to our boats,” Senior Chief Petty Officer Jeffrey Christensen said. “He is always on the lookout for corrosion, which is the number one cause of break downs on electronic devices.”

This same attitude and work ethic carries over into his civilian job on an offshore oil rig. “I am a maintenance specialist O3, but I’m relieving as an instrumentation electrical technician,” Contreras said. “So I fix all the stuff, generators, calibration, safety systems, everything.”

However, Contreras didn’t always want to be “Mr. Fix-It.” Contreras grew up watching films like Top Gun and Iron Eagle, which led to his wanting to become a fighter pilot. Unfortunately, when he was told he would always need glasses, his dreams of being a pilot took a nosedive. Rather than let that stop him, he pursued other opportunities.

“I’ve done a variety of different jobs,” Contreras said. “I’ve worked at an airport, golf course, Sports Chalet, Aerie, and Snow Summit Ski Resort. I joined the Coast Guard because I thought I needed a ‘big boy’ job and it seemed like a great fit for me. Being in the military and specifically the Coast Guard has opened so many doors for me.”

He credits getting his civilian job to the Coast Guard. During the application and interview process his experience in the military was viewed favorably for his future with the company.

While Contreras is planning for the future, he has reflected on the changes that have happened in the last year. “My grandmother inspired me, and she just recently passed away,” Contreras shared. “Just found out I’m going to be a dad, so that’s another big change.”

Contreras is using his time here in GTMO to plan for his life when he returns home. He still finds time, however, to enjoy GTMO life with his teammates.

“The variety of recreational activities is awesome,” Contreras said. “I’ve taken the scuba class, we go snorkeiling, fishing, and have cookouts. But I miss the snow. This is going to be my longest summer ever.”

There is certainly plenty to keep a person busy in GTMO, and Contreras plans to take advantage of the opportunities offered here.

Contreras stressed the importance of taking opportunities and advancing your skills. You never know when any one of those skills might be needed. Rather than not using his mechanical skills, Contreras volunteers them where there is a need. Through his proactive outlook he has earned the respect of those around him.

“He’s a great team player and well liked by his coworkers,” Christensen said. “He’s an excellent ET and loves to keep the boats in tip top shape.”

Contreras is known for his can-do attitude and always seeks opportunities to help out. Instead of focusing on just repair,
Feature

As one Trooper goes up in the ranks, his leadership tactics may change according to his duties whether that Trooper is enlisted or an officer. It is safe to say that one may not see a sergeant major or a lieutenant colonel in the trenches, so to speak, but giving commands from a battle intellectual standpoint.

However, on Nov. 27, right here at Joint Task Force Guantanamo, leaders like Lt. Col. Darcy L. Overbey, battalion commander for the 525th Military Police Battalion, and Sgt. Maj. Michael L. Baker, sergeant major for the 525th, led their Soldiers from the front and did so with oleoresin capsicum (OC) in their face during an OC confidence course.

“I’ve listened to a few pros that have gone through it before and they say it’s the worst pain ever,” Overbey said minutes before the confidence course. “I’m not sure what to expect. Next month makes 19 years as an MP officer and I have not gone through it.”

With others Soldiers possibly thinking the same thing, Overbey, Baker and their 525th Troopers all waited inside for their safety brief with mixed emotional expressions on their faces.

Overbey and Baker sure did set an example as they practiced their unarmed self-defense while the instructors demonstrated the take-down moves that make up the course. The OC training finally began, and Overbey was the first up to lead her Troopers. The instructors sprayed her in the face, and she went through the course slowly but rock steady, taking down her obstacles as her Troopers encouraged her.

“She motivated me,” Spc. Shanna Chastain said while standing by her husband Sgt. Jason Chastain. “Me and my husband, she motivated us.”

Just as Overbey finished her course, Baker was right behind her, pumped and ready to go through it.

Unlike Overbey, this was no initiation for Baker.

“This is my fourth time going through this,” Baker said. “Once you do level 1, you usually don’t have to do it again. However, I’m doing this today to support the commander and to lead from the front for the Soldiers.”

Baker’s selfless service brought forth nothing but enthusiasm from his Soldiers waiting their turn.

“Seeing my battalion commander go through and our sergeant major, who I know is at level 1, I’m motivated, I’m motivated, because I wouldn’t go through level 1 again,” Spc. Chastain said, laughing.

Realizing how rarely senior non-commissioned officers go through training such as the OC confidence course, Baker said he hopes he lives to be an example to all sergeant majors.

And like a great sergeant major, Baker encouraged Overbey, his battalion commander, and the rest of the Soldiers who were detoxing after they went through the course.

Overbey said it was a great course and highly recommends the training.

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The Chastains are both with the 189th Military Police Company and were both waiting for their turn to go through the course.

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“I have a greater appreciation of what Soldiers do,” Overbey said.

Her Soldiers appreciate her as well.

“That shows some serious leadership. She cares about her Soldiers … She knows what we’re going through, and she’s not going to talk the talk, she’s going to walk the walk,” Spc. Chastain said.
The Wire

involved with it.

years, and this is the fifth year she has been

tree lighting has been held for more than 12

ager for the GTMO Navy Exchange, said the

mances by the W.T. Sampson High School

ceremony. The ceremony featured perfor-

I

Bay after the big tree was lit during the base's annual command-sponsored Christmas tree lighting

Onlookers check out the smaller trees decorated by various groups on Naval Station Guantanamo

The lights were officially turned on on

Christmas carols as Santa Claus himself rolled

The W.T. Sampson Elementary School sec-

songs together and also performed separately. The W.T. Sampson Elementary School sec-

children, the band and chorus played some

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NEX holiday with tree kicks off season annual lighting

I'm beginning to look a lot like Christmas at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, especially now that the big tree in the atrium of the Navy Exchange, and all of the smaller trees and dec-

navigation and routines by a number of children's groups.

Elizabeth Finn, operations service man-

Army Sgt. Jonathan Mentietto

features performances by the W.T. Sampson High School band and chorus and songs and routines by a number of children's groups.

The lights were officially turned on on Nov. 24 at the conclusion of GTMO's annual command-sponsored Christmas tree lighting ceremony. The ceremony featured perfor-

The ceremony always takes place

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If you see something, say something

CHIEF BOATSWAIN’S MATE PAUL KEOUGH
PORT SECURITY UNIT 311

Several years ago, my ship docked out-of-board of another ship, forcing me to cross that ship’s deck to get to the pier. Since we were docked, I placed my wed- ding ring back on its respective finger and went to depart the pier. Due to the dif- ference in deck heights and the lack of a brow between our ships, I opted to lean out, grab the overhang of the other ship’s main deck, and swing over onto its main deck. As I released my grip, a burr of metal caught under my wedding ring and my body weight caused an avulsion of my finger at the joint (that’s medical speak for severing the finger completely off!).

While at the hospital the following day, one of the corpsmen quizzed me on my assigned unit and then informed me that I had been transferred off the ship 12 days prior to the accident. Now don’t get me wrong, I was responsible for the injury, but as I look back on that day, I can’t help but think to myself “What if?”

What if I had been notified of my trans- fer prior to the accident? I bet I would still have my finger. What if someone told me that my method of crossing from one ship to another was risky and suggested a differ- ent option? I probably wouldn’t be sporting the cool prosthetic finger issued to me by Uncle Sam.

As I ponder those and many other questions, I think of the Department of Homeland Security’s anti-terrorism slogan, “If you see something, say something.” We should never miss the point or another, and their friend didn’t say some- thing or intervene? Even some of the most mundane or seemingly minor problems can yield significant damage if not corrected. Take, for example, seeing debris in the roadway – if not reported and cleared, it poses a risk to other traffic that might swerve to avoid it and then strike another vehicle. Another situation we all face is when a co-worker or acquaintance exceeds their limit but continues to drink only to end up being arrested. The list of circum- stances goes on and on, limited only by your imagination. We have proba- bly all heard someone at some point or another, when reflecting on an accident, injury, or a misconduct incident, say, “I wish I had said something!” We should never miss the opportunity to step up and voice our con- cerns. It should be in our nature, as military men and women, to take action and prevent any undue harm to a person’s health, career, or their reputation. It is just as simple as that slogan, “If you see something, say something!”
2012 Marina Boat Parade

December 8, 2012
MWR Marina
Parade starts at 6:15 pm
Parade Route: Captain’s house to Admirals house and back (2 or 3 loops around)

WANT TO PARTICIPATE?
Decorate your boat or rent one from the Marina.
Decorating starts at noon on Dec. 8.

FREE TO ENTER
Open to all ages with a valid boaters license

Cocoa and cookies after the parade

FMI, call 2345

Call Marina to rent generators/inverters
MWR will not provide lights/decorations