

# THE WIRE

A JTF Journal



**Preparation**

Before you go to the board

**Then and Now**

Third time around for PSU 305

# Troopers first

**Air Force Chief Master Sgt.  
Brian T. Schexnaydre**  
JTF Command Chief Master Sgt.

Throughout my career I have been to many locations and worked under several commands. I have seen different types of management techniques. Some were more effective than others. However, one thing that never changes is the fact that we are nothing without the Troopers who work for us. For that reason, it is imperative that we take care of our troops to the best of our abilities, while bearing in mind that we are a professional military.

We must treat everyone equally, and stay away from the “Brother-in-Law” or “Good Ole Boy Systems.” This is truer now than ever before, since we are working more and more as a joint force. One thing that is consistent with all of our uniforms is U.S. – We all work for the same cause, and that is “Preservation of Freedom within the United States of America.”

What is good for one should be good for all, regardless of branch of service. When we start taking care of people differently, or on an individual basis, we as senior leaders lose all integrity and set ourselves up for failure. We have no more control. To that end, we must start with getting to know our Troopers on a personal and professional level. Is their family life okay? Are they financially stable? Do they need special care for dependents while deployed? Are there things that we may not be providing that might be critical to their mission needs? From there we must know what steps are needed to assist them in resolving their needs. Do we send them to see a chaplain or to the legal office? It may be that we need to have one of their personal friends work with them. The list could go on and on, but until we know what their needs really are, we are not doing them any justice.

Now that we have ensured their personal needs are being met, we must periodically follow up, to ensure that whatever has been implemented continues to work for them. Furthermore, we must keep our people gainfully employed, while at the same time ensuring that they have ownership in what they do. Micromanagement is a bad word when we are talking about taking care of our people. We train them so we can trust them. If we can not trust their abilities, we either have failed on our part in getting them ready to step up to the plate, or we are just not being effective managers.

We must always recognize our people for positive performance – something as small as a pat on the back can go a long way. Show your support to them, and the results will come two-fold, if not more. Without showing your support, you’re almost guaranteed failure. All of this said, I want to express my personal thanks for the opportunity to sit in as the acting Command Master Chief until the incoming Command Master Chief arrives in mid-March. Rest assured that while filling this position, my main interest is fulfilling your needs to the best of my ability, within the lines of professional and military protocol. ✪



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### COVER:

**Air Force Senior Airman Nathan Ansell and Master Sgt. Daryl Smith make repairs on a generator in Camp Justice, Feb. 3. Both are members of the 130<sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing, Civil Engineering Squadron, that will staff the 474<sup>th</sup> Expeditionary Civil Engineering Squadron.** – JTF Guantanamo photo by Navy Petty Officer 1<sup>st</sup> Class Richard M. Wolff



The WIRE is the official news magazine of Joint Task Force Guantanamo. It is produced by the JTF Public Affairs Office to inform and educate the Troopers of JTF Guantanamo through news, features, command guidance, sports and entertainment. The WIRE seeks to provide maximum disclosure with minimum delay with regards to security, accuracy, propriety and policy. This DoD news magazine is an authorized publication for the members of the Department of Defense. Contents of The WIRE are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, or Joint Task Force Guantanamo. It is printed by the Document Automation & Production Service with a circulation of 1000.



# Doing it all

Members of the 474<sup>th</sup> Expeditionary Civil Engineering Squadron pause from daily operations for a group photo by the Camp Justice sign. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Spc. Carlynn Knaak

## Army Staff Sgt. Gretel Sharpee

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

“We’ve been busy,” said Air Force Lt. Col. Gregory Walters when asked what his unit, the 474<sup>th</sup> Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron, has been up to since arriving at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay last August.

“Busy” might be an understatement when considering what this squadron of Air Guard members from North Carolina and Louisiana has accomplished.

From burying more than 2,000 feet of high-voltage electric cable, assisting in

Migrant Operation exercises and supplying the Expeditionary Legal Complex with an uninterrupted power supply, the 474<sup>th</sup> ECES used the skills of each of their Airmen to accomplish the mission.

“These guys outperformed any expectation I had for them,” Walters said.

One of the main missions of the 474<sup>th</sup> was supplying and maintaining the basic needs of Camp Justice and the ELC. This included security measures, water and electricity availability and many other behind-the-scenes operations.

“One big issue was the courtroom dropping power during commissions,” said Air Force Maj. Bobby Walston, operations officer. “A new system had to be installed, which was a big project for our electricians.”

“Planning, execution and communication for our projects, as well as staying two-to-three steps ahead, has been

a challenge,” continued Walston.

Not only does the 474<sup>th</sup> provide utility support for the commissions, they also assist in establishing security measures. A secure area was built into Courtroom 2 to view proceedings. Also, hundreds of feet of concrete barricades were installed as a force protection measure.

“We take a lot of pride in the things we take care of. The [Airmen] take ownership of the projects and we encourage that,” Walston said.

Providing security to the Commissions Support Group is an important facet of the 474<sup>th</sup> ECES, but they don’t complete the mission alone. “We couldn’t do what we do without the CSG. We all worked extremely well together and are just a small part of a big group,” Walters said.

The 474<sup>th</sup> ECES also found themselves helping the Joint Task Force with various projects, including hurricane clean-up

See **BUILT/12**



Air Force Tech. Sgt. Chad LeBlank, a member of the 474<sup>th</sup> ECES, employs a hand held fogger to spray for insects and pests outside a Camp Justice tent Oct. 3. – JTF Guantanamo photos by Army Spc. Erica Isaacson



Air Force Staff Sgt. Sean Swiatocha, a structures sergeant, 474<sup>th</sup> ECES, lifts a wooden brace crafted here to support the housing deck above, Nov. 13.

# Priming for a win

**Army Spc.  
Eric Liesse**

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

What is the highest peacetime award a Soldier can receive?

What are the four sources of military law?

What outlawed biological warfare?

Where is the national flag always flown at half-staff?

These questions may seem like trivia to some. However, questions such as these on U.S. military history, customs and courtesies, do have their place.

One such place is in a time-honored tradition: going before a board of senior leaders.

Each quarter, Joint Task Force Guantanamo continues this custom by selecting its “best of the best” with the JTF Junior and Senior Enlisted Trooper of the Quarter Board.

A military board is a long-standing practice across all the armed services, and consists of Troopers demonstrating extreme military bearing while taking a barrage of questions from a panel of senior leadership. It is used to assess anything from the Troopers’ demeanor under pressure, experience within their field, and overall military knowledge, according to the Trooper of the Quarter preparatory material.

Military boards are not just about answering semi-obscure questions, however. The overall image of the Trooper plays an important role in a final board grade, with close attention paid to areas such as uniform and personal appearance, military bearing and overall oral expression and conversational skills.

The JTF’s senior enlisted leader presides as President of the Board. As president, the Senior Enlisted Leader starts with opening remarks, begins and directs the other members’ questions and calls the Trooper’s board session to a close. The board has six members in addition to the president.

The Navy is not the only service that sits on the board. In the past, Army sergeant majors from the 525<sup>th</sup> Military Police Battalion and Coast Guard master chiefs from the port security unit attached to the JTF have been board members. It is this “jointness” that made the experience unique for Coast Guard Petty Officer 1<sup>st</sup> Class Keith Cupples. He is no stranger to the process, having gone before five Coast Guard boards, but his first joint board was here Jan. 29.

“It was interesting to go before the joint board with all the different branches represented,” he said. “It was stressful at first, but they didn’t ask any questions that we hadn’t studied for.”

For preparation, board-bound Troopers are given an 80-plus page booklet of questions, answers and overall topics. Questions are geared to all participants, so individual services are not at an advantage or disadvantage because of their background. The extensive material holds far more questions and answers than will be used during the board. This requires the Trooper to keep a wealth of knowledge, on top of acute military bearing during the board.

Cupples, a Boatswain’s Mate with Port Security Unit 305, said studying was time consuming but he had help from his fellow Coasties, who quizzed him while underway on watch.

“It was definitely an outstanding experience,” said Cupples. “I would recommend others go through it, and I would definitely do it again.” ✨



**Army Spc. Carlynn Knaak looks through the Joint Task Force service member and trooper of the quarter study guide. Competing Troopers strive to use any down-time to squeeze in study time, in addition to managing their day-to-day workload. — JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Staff Sgt. Emily J. Russell**



# Better the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> time around

**Chief Petty Officer Richard Reese, Petty Officer 1<sup>st</sup> Class Luis Rivera, Command Master Chief Wayne Miesen and Petty Officer 1<sup>st</sup> Class Kirk McRee of PSU 305 stand next to the Coast Guard's monument of units that have been deployed here. PSU 305 is currently serving in their third deployment to Guantanamo Bay in support of the Joint Task Force.**

## **Army Spc. Megan Burnham**

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Not many Joint Task Force personnel today can say what Naval Station Guantanamo Bay was like when the first tour began because (1), they were not deployed here during that time, and (2), they haven't returned to tell the story. However, four Port Security Unit 305 members have indeed returned to Guantanamo Bay to complete their second deployment or even their third.

"I'm just glad to be back and look forward to it," said Coast Guard Command Master Chief Wayne Miesen. "A lot of things have changed."

Miesen has deployed to Guantanamo Bay all three times that PSU 305 has deployed here. Chief Petty Officer Rick Reese, Petty Officer 1<sup>st</sup> Class Kirk McRee and Petty Officer 1<sup>st</sup> Class Luis Rivera were also deployed the first time in January 2002 and have now returned for their second deployment in December 2008.

"I thought [this deployment] was a mission that needed to be done," Rivera said. "I'm glad to be back."

PSU 305 was the first Coast Guard unit to deploy here in 2002, not long after the attacks on Sept. 11, 2001. The unit had

just come off active duty in New York in November when they received the call that they were coming to Guantanamo Bay.

"The anticipations of being called to active duty so shortly after the attacks on our country, of course, weighed heavy on everyone's mind," McRee said. "I'm personally proud to be here. I think the mission to come to Guantanamo Bay and work with others was a good choice from the beginning and it will continue to be."

After receiving the call, PSU 305 didn't have long to prepare and train before traveling down here to begin their tour.

"When we got here, we didn't know exactly what our duties were," Rivera said. "We learned as we went along but we had good leadership then that helped us to hit the ground running."

The quality of life in Guantanamo Bay was much different then, especially for the JTF. After they completed their in-processing, they were taken to their quarters in Windward Loop. In fact, the entire JTF was living in Windward Loop at the time.

"We were all jammed, the entire JTF, into Windward Loop which had been abandoned [at the time]," Miesen said. "We were given cots and up the hill we went."

It is safe to say the living conditions have improved since then with the construction

of Cuzco housing. In addition to housing, many other aspects of the quality of life in Guantanamo Bay have also improved.

"There's a big difference from before, facility wise," Miesen said. "All the accommodations have improved. There are more places to eat and all the hours [of the facilities] have been extended."

Even though much has changed over the years, some things have stayed the same.

"The recreation stuff, including fishing [has stayed the same]," Reese said. "The landscape has also stayed pretty much the same other than a few buildings stuck up here and there."

PSU 305 was also the first Coast Guard unit to deploy a second time to Guantanamo Bay in December 2005 and the only unit to return for a third deployment in December 2008.

"We have established a good relationship with the JTF," Miesen said. "We've had to work with both the Naval Station and the JTF and the boat operations got along well with the Naval Station in addition to the JTF."

"I knew this was a very purposeful mission that we would be given and I feel highly positive about our stand-up and our arrival here," McRee said. "It's been great since we've been here." ★

# Keeping the tradition



Navy Capt. Steven Blaisdell and Navy Command Master Chief Keith Carlson hold the Cuban and American flags with the leading runners in the final stretch of the Cuban American Fun Run, Jan. 30.

## Army Spc. Megan Burnham

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

There is no event more suitable to begin a day of activities for the Cuban American Friendship Day than a Northeast Gate Fun Run.

“We started at the Northeast Gate because that is where Cubans would come from in the morning [to go to work],” said Beverly Pavon, president of the Cuban American Friendship Association.

The fun run, held Jan. 30, was a 10-kilometer route that started at 8 a.m. from the Northeast Gate of Naval Station Guantanamo Bay. The course consisted of running from the Northeast Gate, along Sherman Avenue to the Downtown Lyceum, and back to finish at the Windjammer.

This is the 40<sup>th</sup> celebration of the Cuban American Friendship Day, and fun run has been coordinated every year to start off the activities. Throughout the course, both the Cuban and American flags were carried and were frequently passed between runners to demonstrate the friendship between the Cuban and American communities here.

Approximately 25 participants joined in the memorable run, and while most started at the Northeast Gate, other runners joined at the half-way point at the base of Marine Hill. For those who were unable to run but still wanted to participate, golf carts followed the leading group for the last two miles.

At the finish line, participants enjoyed refreshments consisting of water, oranges and bananas in front of the Windjammer. ☺



From left: Marines 1<sup>st</sup> Sgt. Troy Nicks and Maj. Jerry Willingham hold the Cuban and American flags at the beginning of the run at the Northeast Gate.



Many of the participants stand together behind the Cuban and American flags after finishing the run at the Windjammer, Jan. 30.

# 'V' is for a Valiant effort

**Army Spc.  
Christina Beerman**  
JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

I will admit that I'm an unashamed fan of historically inspired films, and I'm an even bigger fan of any film that can manage to thrill as well as inform its audience. In director Bryan Singer's eighth feature-length film, "Valkyrie," this balance is executed well.

Set during the height of Adolf Hitler's reign during World War II, Valkyrie sets out to tell the tale of Col. Claus Von Stauffenberg, intensely portrayed by Tom Cruise, and his attempt to assassinate Hitler.

The film's central theme of loyalty to country over duty seems to drive the sense of urgency behind Von Stauffenberg's actions and for his part, Cruise could not ask for a more compelling and layered supporting cast.

From Oscar-nominated actors Kenneth Branagh, who plays Maj. Gen. Henning Von Tresckow, and Tom Wilkinson, who plays Gen. Friedrich Fromm, to British comedian Eddie Izzard, who plays Gen. Erich Fellgiebel, this all-star cast breathes life into the historical account.

The only distraction for me in the film was the clashing accents. Singer's attempt to explain the lack of a unified accent throughout the film, by transitioning from German to English 30 seconds into the movie, fails miserably. However, one flaw doesn't take away from this *tour-de-force* film. ☆

**Rating: ★★★★★**



**Petty Officer 2<sup>nd</sup> Class  
Zachary Harris**  
JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

"Valkyrie" stars Tom Cruise as Col. Claus Von Stauffenberg, a German soldier who's realized that Adolf Hitler is in fact a mad man who has forgotten to place Germany above his own goals of world domination. Von Stauffenberg then joins a group of people plotting to assassinate the fuhrer.

This, of course, is easier said than done.

The movie begins with Cruise writing a letter while reading along in German and then slowly fades into English. After this, the rest of the movie is spoken in English with absolutely no attempt at German accents. I had read about this before viewing this movie and thought it was going to be distracting. I was wrong: the various European accents of his supporting cast started to become distracting. For me, it was quite hard to hear someone trying to cover a Scottish accent while dressed in the traditional World War II-era Nazi garb.

The story progresses at a relatively good pace with the climactic assassination attempt signaling what will surely be the beginning of a new Germany where the incoming governing body will seek a truce with Allied forces.

Unfortunately for the conspirators, all does not go according to plan. Hitler survives the assassination plot and quickly aborts Operation Valkyrie, for which the movie is named. The plan was to use the reserve army to arrest and confine the SS, or Schutzstaffel, Hitler's "Protective Squadron," which was responsible for most of the horrendous crimes against humanity during the conflict. Then, the conspirators would slide in a new governing body and try to bring order back to Germany and Europe.

While I refuse to give away the ending of Valkyrie, I'm sure it's fairly obvious what Adolf Hitler would do to conspirators.

I enjoyed Valkyrie. While it's not the most historically accurate portrayal of the era, you're able to suspend reality enough due to the scenery, costumes and cinematography. Cruise is able to deliver a decent performance, and his supporting cast carries more than their fair share of the weight. It makes you forget that no one is speaking with a German accent, or in German.

I give Valkyrie three stars for being exceptionally average, but I am a sucker for World War II cinema. ☆

**PG-13  
2 hours**

**Rating: ★★★☆☆**



# Outstanding service

Workers from the Joint Task Force and Naval Station Guantanamo Bay worked together to maintain the Coast Guard lighthouse and museum, a piece of Guantanamo Bay history.

Volunteers worked in the hot sun scraping old paint, replacing nails and finished the job with a fresh coat of white paint.

The museum, which once housed the lighthouse keeper, is home to photographs and artifacts collected from all over the base.

Whether it's photos documenting the coaling operation that once took place at Hospital Cay, old glass bottles found in the waters of the bay or even horse-shoeing and grooming tools that were once used at the now-closed Morale, Welfare and Recreation horseback riding stables, the museum serves as an important reminder of our history here.



Coast Guard Petty Officer 1<sup>st</sup> Class Dana Coleman paints the white fence that surrounds the lighthouse.



JTF Guantanamo photos by Army Staff Sgt. Emily J. Russell



Coast Guard Petty Officer 1<sup>st</sup> Class Carl Taylor uses a hammer to test structural integrity in the museum siding, pounding nails into pieces of wood that needed support.



Coast Guard Lt. j.g. Jordan Hardenbergh scrapes old paint from the siding of the lighthouse museum.



# Celebrating community



An awards ceremony acknowledged the service of the Cuban residents living here.

## Army Staff Sgt. Gretel Sharpee

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

The annual Cuban American Friendship Day was celebrated Jan. 30 with activities ranging from a 10-kilometer run in the morning to singing and dancing at the Windjammer Ballroom.

The annual event has been celebrated at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay for 40 years as a way to give thanks to the Cubans who continue to work in our community.

The run began at the Northeast Gate and finished in front of the Windjammer. The American and Cuban flags were carried throughout the whole route and often passed between participants as a way to acknowledge the sense of community reflected in this event.

At the Windjammer Ballroom a lunch was served to more than 150 guests. Students of all grade levels performed Cuban-inspired dances following the meal.

The afternoon continued with an awards presentation for the Cuban residents who still work here, some for more than 50 years. As of this year, there are still three Cuban residents that commute from Cuba through the Northeast Gate.

“The celebration comes to remind us of the impact the Cuban community has here especially after the conflict with Cuba,” said Madhya Husta, Cuban assistance program manager. “This community worked very hard to build this base and keep it secure.”

Also at the celebration was Mya Cigars, a handmade cigar maker from West Palm Beach, Fla., with a Cuban heritage. Jorge Rodriguez, the owner of Mya Cigars, came to Guantanamo Bay for the Cuban American Friendship Day celebration after leaving Cuba nearly 39 years ago.

“I am just happy to be here after 39 years – it is very special to me,” Rodriguez said.

Rodriguez donated all of the supplies for making the handmade cigars, and his son, George L. Rodriguez Jr., patiently made them in front of a small crowd of

onlookers.

“No other base has the opportunity to assimilate with the culture and people of the host country and that is very special,” Husta continued. “I encourage the community to get to know the Cuban community. There are a lot of things around the base that represent Cuba, and I hope they find that out while they are here.” ☆



Jorge L. Rodriguez, Jr. hand roles a cigar for anyone visiting the Cuban American Friendship celebration. Rodriguez and his family have been in the cigar business for five generations.



Navy Capt. Steven Blaisdell thanked members of the Cuban community during the award ceremony Jan. 30.



# Lessons in love

**Navy Petty Officer 1<sup>st</sup> Class Vivian Favors and Air Force Tech Sgt. Sonya Faucette look through their Bibles in search of a verse that relates to communication during a group discussion about the power of words.**

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

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Members of Mount Airy Baptist Church visited Guantanamo Bay as part of a mission to reach out to military members and civilians in an effort to help strengthen personal relationships, whether with a spouse, significant other or family member.

This five-day faith-based conference addressed a different topic each evening. The first night featured the movie “Fireproof,” the story of a husband and wife who lose sight of their relationship and ultimately struggle to regain their marriage through persistence, courage and faith.

The subsequent days of the workshop focused on themes illustrated throughout the movie: roles in marriage or a committed relationship, effective communication, expressing heartfelt commitment and forgiveness.

Keith Shorter, pastor of Mount Airy Church, initially visited Guantanamo Bay in March 2008 and set the wheels in motion for the recent workshop.

“I remember sitting in [Chaplain David

Mowbray’s] house and talking to a Joint Task Force Trooper – a guard – and asked him, ‘If we come back, what could we do that would be meaningful?’” Shorter explained. “He said, ‘Just coming down here shows that somebody cares. To know that a church back home cares enough to come down here means a lot to us.’”

Shorter returned to the church, located in Easley, S.C., assembled a mission group of 10 people and began the process of getting clearance to return to the island with his team.

“I came here with three goals,” Shorter said. “I wanted to speak to people about their relationship with God, help families and marriages and be an encouragement to the Troopers.”

Robin Gore, a lay leader with the women’s ministry at Mount Airy Church, was pleasantly surprised with the sense of community and warmth here, despite the constant turnover of personnel.

“I’m impressed to see the way people come together, and how Chaplain Mowbray, the church and [other chaplains] seem to foster and encourage that sense of community,” Gore said. “People here have very normal homes, with normal families

and typical family issues.”

The lessons during the conference were basic, yet powerful – concepts that are easy to forget in the hustle of everyday life, especially for the Trooper who works long hours here.

Ron Taffer, a part-time minister, led the evening workshops with support from Gore. The duo tag-teamed topics and referred to each other on particular topics.

“There are some messages Robin can deliver better to women,” Taffer said after introducing her to the audience.

During the workshop about effective communication, Taffer revealed an astonishing statistic to the group about the actual amount of time a married couple spends in conversation each week – 27 minutes.

“That’s all the time we take to talk – each week – to our spouse,” he emphasized. “That may not even be quality conversation.”

Understanding the importance of communicating one’s needs, and remembering the significance of considering a partner’s needs is crucial in a healthy relationship.

See **FIREPROOF/13**

# Built, secured, out!

**BUILT** from 3

operations and community relations/support projects.

"Basically I watched a group starting out have personal conflicts, but work through them and learn to work with each other and do great work because they are all very talented in their [respective] career fields," said Air Force Master Sgt. Russel Holland, first sergeant for the 474<sup>th</sup> ECES.

The out-going members of the 474<sup>th</sup> will return to their home state to train, rebuild and wait for another deployment.

"It's been a good deployment ... there have been challenges, but it has been a good deployment," Holland said. ☆



Air Force Tech Sgt. Shawn Swiatocha of the 474<sup>th</sup> ECES spray paints beams for a new awning that was placed in the Expeditionary Legal Complex. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Spc. Eric Liesse

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# Mission team reaches out to Troopers

**FIREPROOF** from 11

“When you speak, choose your words carefully,” Taffer said. “There’s a lot of power in our speech and words can be destructive.”

The final evening of the conference focused on forgiveness. Taffer explained that “forgiveness is healing,” as opposed to the destructive nature of “unforgiveness.”

“We must be able to say ‘I’m sorry’ and mean it,” Taffer said.

The visiting mission team reached out to numerous JTF and Naval Station Guantanamo personnel.

“We were led to some people who were very open, vulnerable and honest about the needs in their life, which gave us an opportunity to open the word of God and show them how all the answers they needed were right there in that book,” Gore said.

The overall message of accepting personal responsibility, acting in humility was apparent throughout the week.

“God gave us two ears and one mouth,” Taffer said with a smile. “We need to listen more than we speak.” ☆



**Ron Taffer, a member of Mount Airy Baptist Church’s mission team, speaks to a room full of Troopers and residents of Guantanamo Bay to explain “love languages” and the importance of understanding how words of affirmation, quality time, gifts, touch and acts of service, convey messages of love.**

## Boots on the Ground

by Army Staff Sgt. Emily J. Russell

Do you subscribe to a social networking utility and why?

**Air Force Maj. Steve McCullam**



**“No. My wife has Facebook and MySpace but I haven’t taken the time to mess with it.”**

**Navy Seaman Nick Brooky**



**“Facebook and MySpace. I used them in college but rarely use it now.”**

**Navy Petty Officer 3<sup>rd</sup> Class Spencer Flanagin**



**“Facebook, it’s easier than MySpace. I signed up for it in 2003 - my mom is actually on it.”**

**Army Spc. Efrain Malave**



**“I use Facebook and MySpace, but Facebook is easier and more professional. I use it to keep in touch and share pictures with my family.”**

# Finding a safe harbor

**Army Capt.  
Scott C. Brill**

JTF Guantanamo Bay  
Deputy Command Chaplain

“A ship in harbor is safe – but that is not what ships are for.”  
(John A. Shedd, *Salt from My Attic*).

The Apostle Paul is the perfect example of this quote. He boldly faced the challenges that came with “the Great Commission.” I marvel at his history, “Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeying often, in perils of waters...” (2 Corinthians 11:25, 26)

No doubt about it, we are called to set our sails and meet the challenges of life head on. We also need to know that the ship builder, the Captain of our Soul, in wisdom provides harbors. “For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion.” (Psalms 27:5.)

World War II veteran Joseph B. Wirthlin wrote this inspired counsel, which has been a compass in my life:

“After a long journey across the Atlantic Ocean, which was hazardous at that time because of the war, I rejoiced when I saw that wonderful beacon of freedom and democracy, the Statue of Liberty. I cannot express to you my relief when we finally reached that safe harbor. I imagine I felt something of what the disciples of Jesus Christ felt on that day when they were with the Savior. They set sail upon the Sea of Galilee. The scriptures tell us that Jesus was weary, and He went to the back of the ship and fell asleep on a pillow. Soon the skies darkened, and “there arose a great tempest

in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves.” The storm raged. The disciples panicked. It seemed as though the boat would capsize, yet the Savior still slept. At last, they could wait no longer and they awakened Jesus. You can almost hear the anguish and despair in their voices as they pled with their Master, “Carest thou not that we perish?” (Mark 4:38)

Many in today’s world feel troubled and distressed; many feel that, at any moment, the ships of their lives could capsize or sink. When you feel tossed by the storms of life and when the waves rise and the winds howl, on those occasions it would be natural for you to cry in your heart, “Master, carest thou not that I perish?”

When these times come, think back upon that day when the Savior awakened in the stern of the ship, rose up and rebuked the storm. He can and does rebuke the storms in our day. He is the same ‘yesterday, today, and forever.’ Do not fear. He is still at the helm. “Peace, be still.” (Mark 4:39)

Continue to use your ingenuity, your strength and your might to resolve your challenges. Seek the support of others who can show you the chartered course that leads to safe harbors. Do all you can do, and then “let go and let God.”

Draw close to God. Be of good cheer. Keep the faith. Doubt not. The storms will one day be stilled. God is at the helm.

When our souls are anchored in the safe harbor of the Lord, we can say as did Paul: “We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed.” (2 Corinthians 8:4-9) ☆

## JTF CHAPEL SCHEDULED PROGRAMS

### **Catholic Mass**

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

**Wednesday:** 11 a.m. Spanish Mass

### **Protestant Worship**

**Sunday:** 9 a.m.

### **Spanish Protestant Worship**

**Sunday:** 11 a.m.

### **Bible Study**

**Sunday:** 6 p.m. **Wednesday:** 7 p.m.

# Bringing the win 'home'

**Army Staff Sgt.  
Gretel Sharpee**

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

When you have been in the military only one year, standing in front of a crowd of senior enlisted members can be daunting. But when they start hurling questions at you, ranging in topics from the Constitution of the United States to current events, the situation can become much, much worse.

“When my chief nominated me I was a little surprised, but then I felt the pressure of supporting the department and instantly wanted to do really well,” said Seaman Anastasia Wells.

Wells was sent straight to Joint Task Force Guantanamo after her initial training.

“My dad is former Navy so that is why I joined the Navy, but there is a long line of my family members who have been in the military – I think it is in our blood to serve,” Wells said.

Once nominated to compete for the Junior Trooper of the Quarter, Wells said she studied everything she could find and had a lot of help from her chiefs and leading petty officers. The only part of the study material she found challenging was studying the Constitution of the United States.

We fight to defend the Constitution every day but it was so hard to remember all of the amendments,” she commented.

Wells has also taken it upon herself to be active in the Guantanamo community by volunteering at the children’s center and being the youth cheerleading coach. She also finds time to take classes at Columbia College in hopes of finishing her associate’s degree before her deployment here is over.

“My biggest take-away is how honored and humbled I am,” Wells said about her time here at Guantanamo thus far. “I work with so many smart Troopers who work hard. It was great to represent the group and bring the win home for us.”

Since winning the Junior Trooper of the Quarter, Wells was able to tell her father briefly that she won.

“He just laughed – he was so proud.” ✪

**Seaman Anastasia Wells has been deployed to Joint Task Force Guantanamo Bay for only six months but has used that time to make a big impression on those around her.**

Senior Airman John McClung, a member of the 130<sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing, Civil Engineering Squadron from West Virginia, waits with fellow unit members after arriving at the terminal. The squadron arrived Jan. 31 and will staff the 474<sup>th</sup> Expeditionary Civil Engineering Squadron. - JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Staff Sgt. Emily J. Russell



Navy Petty Officer 1<sup>st</sup> Class Mario Perez, a Seabee with the public works department, does his part to encourage drivers to stop and support the upcoming Seabee Ball. The Seabees held a car wash to raise money to cover expenses for the event. - JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Staff Sgt. Emily J. Russell



Joint Detention Group Commander Army Col. Bruce Vargo briefs senators and staffers during a visit Feb. 2. - JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Spc. Erica Issacson

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