

THE **WI**RE

A JTF Journal



JTF Voting Drive

One last chance to make
your vote count

Comptroller's Office

JTF's "budget police"

Duty, honor, country

What is Duty, Honor, Country?

To me it is the professional code or the ethos spirit, and according to some it is a calling in which one professes to have acquired special knowledge used by way of instructing, guiding or advising others.

The honor bound Troopers of the Joint Task Force and Joint Detention Group also have their own professional code and ethos spirit, and that is "Honor Bound," which is an obligation of serving with honor to the United States of America, JTF and JDG.

Army Master Sgt. Jeffrey Sweeney

525th Military Police Battalion S3

The ethics of all Trooper professionals should place the duty of their profession ahead of and beyond all personal interest. The obligation of a professional is to devote one's life to acquiring the professional knowledge to lead, advise and instruct others. The life of the true professional is a life which, in addition to performing his or her duties, is spent in constant study of the profession. The professional strives to perfect the capacity to lead and guide others and to assume greater responsibilities.

The fighting spirit of the men and women of the U.S. Armed Forces should be focused on and committed to mission accomplishment. The Troopers, therefore, should always strive for higher levels of operational effectiveness and readiness, and be willing to engage in and support JTF and JDG operations without hesitation. It instills the moral, physical and intellectual qualities necessary to operate in conditions of extreme danger, to endure hardship and to approach their assigned mission with confidence, tenacity and the will to succeed.

Discipline plays a major role in maintaining a high standard of military professionalism. Discipline helps build the cohesion that enables individuals and units to achieve objectives that could not be attained by military skills alone.

Military ethos places a high value on teamwork. Teamwork builds cohesion, while the individual talent and skills of team members enhance versatility and flexibility in the execution of tasks.

Teamwork must also involve non-military organizations and individuals. This kind of teamwork is needed to leverage knowledge while permitting military members and organizations to prevail in the most complex and dangerous situations.

The U.S. military ethos is not just a statement of values or a checklist of idealized beliefs to be written and hung on a wall. It is a living spirit – one that finds full expression through the conduct of members of the profession of arms.

Ethos holds that armed forces are not lifeless things to be continually reconstructed and remodeled. Rather, professional armed forces rely heavily on the human dimension for success. Functioning on this basis, the Troopers' ethos defines and establishes the desired institutional culture of the JDG. Reflecting on national values and beliefs leads to a unique style of military operations – one in which U.S. Armed Forces and its members perform their mission and tasks to the highest professional standards, meeting the expectations of their leadership and Americans at large.

To the Troopers, you have a mission to accomplish. Accomplish it with honor and dignity and no person or news article can say any different if you know in your heart you have given 110 percent to the mission here on Gitmo. Thanks to all of you for the opportunity to serve alongside of the finest Troopers and leaders in the world.

"Duty, Honor, and Country" – Honor Bound. ★

The ethics of all Trooper professionals should place the duty of their profession ahead of and beyond all personal interest. The obligation of a professional is to devote one's life to acquiring



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COVER:

A Trooper lines up a shot during a 3-point shoot-out event held Saturday, Oct. 11 in front of the main Navy Exchange. For additional photos, turn to pages 8-9. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Jayme Pastoric



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.

Budget bosses



**Army Staff Sgt.
Gretel Sharpee**

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Handling the \$122 million budget for the Joint Task Force is no small task, but for the three members of the comptroller's office, it is their job to ensure the finances of JTF are submitted, recorded and obtained correctly.

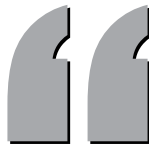
"The budget includes every organization in the Joint Task Force," said Ken Gurne, deputy comptroller.

A comptroller is defined as a person who supervises accounting and financial reporting within an organization making it Gurne's responsibility to see that all of the money is used correctly.

"If a project is finished under budget, we can give that money back to Army South so they can use the money for equal or higher priority missions," said Gurne, who also ensures that all expenditure records are being kept to standard.

Of the \$122 million, \$51 million is from U.S. Southern Command and \$71 million is from U.S. Army South for operations and maintenance.

In last year's budget, \$8.1 million was allocated for construction projects related to Tierra Kay, and this year many projects the Joint Detention Group proposed were successfully funded.



"If a project is finished under budget, we can give that money back to Army South so they can use the money for equal or higher priority missions."

– Ken Gurne



"It is great to support the Troops and get the mission done," said Gurne, who has been working on Guantanamo Bay for almost one year.

The JTF budget also covers the Troopers' Rest and Recuperation Leave program as well as emergency leave. Part of these two programs is ensuring Troopers know the proper way to file paperwork for each.

When Soldiers receive their orders for a paid flight off the island, it needs to include an approval signature and red stamp by the J8 office to ensure both flights will be funded.

"The R&R program is entitled to all Soldiers, Sailors and Marines, and sometimes extended to civilians, as a free way home or at least to the first port of entry into the states," said Lefty Wright, management analyst.

Another responsibility of the J8 office is carrying out the management control program.

"The management control program makes sure our organization works efficiently and follows the rules, regulations and [standard operating procedures]," said Wright. "We work closely with the [Inspector General] to see the systems are being followed."

Sometimes called the "budget police," the JTF comptroller's office is here to ensure all funds are handled properly. ★



Army Staff Sgt. Difred Pascual and the Chaplains office are always open to sitting with Troopers and hearing what they have to say.

Decompression session

**Navy Petty Officer 2nd
Jayme Pastorik**

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

When nearing the end of deployment, Troopers need to take time to organize a game plan for the transition back to the states. While they complete necessary checklist requirements, hit the gym for a last minute workout, and visit the beach to catch a few more rays, the physical requirement is complete, but what checklist is there for the mental health of the Troopers?

“The decompression sessions are for the Troopers that have finished a deployment and are going back to civilian life,” said Army Staff Sgt. Difred Pascual, Chaplain’s Assistants Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge. “We want them to go back home and have a smooth transition back so they can take care of their family.”

Decompression Sessions are classes that deal with the mental health of the Trooper and make sure that Troopers are mentally fit for duty.

“At Guantanamo Bay it can be stressful,” said Pascual. “Working in the camps or just being stuck on this base without your family can also make it very stressful.”

Pascual continued by saying that deployment stress is inevitable. Worrying about your family and thinking about how

you are away from them makes it tough.

“That’s why the chaplains’ office is here. We will provide feedback and work with them one on one,” said Pascual.

Pascual recommends exploring positive avenues to relieve pent up stress. Activities such as reading can redirect your mind from stressful issues.

According to the American Institute of Stress, jogging and other aerobic exercises are great for reducing stress. Different types of meditation, prayer, yoga and tai chi are also great stress outlets for many people.

With every deployment, Troopers are exposed to certain challenges and hurdles to overcome. Reminding them that having some stress is healthy, and dealing with it properly prior to making the transition is the healthiest way to

greet your family.

“Troopers should understand that things work differently back home – you can’t give your family orders like you would a Trooper,” said Pascual. “We give tools that can be used in situations back home to de-escalate problems associated with homecoming.”

When Troopers get home, programs are also in place to help - All services can find help on militaryonesource.com. ☆



Army Staff Sgt. Difred Pascual helps Troopers with the transition back to their families.



Navy guards of the Joint Task Force, attached to the Navy Expeditionary Guard Battalion, provide a variety of reading material from religious books to leisure magazines at Camp 6.

Providing MWR in the camps

**Army Spc.
Megan Burnham**

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

It is the mission of the Joint Task Force Detainee Programs Department to provide media materials and literacy classes to detained enemy combatants at Guantanamo Bay. This is part of the privileges and special programs that are made available to detainees based on their compliancy status with camp rules.

"We are basically Morale Welfare and Recreation for them," said Army Pfc. Phillip Allen, a library technician.

The two main sections of the Detainee Programs Department are the library program and the literacy program.

Since it began in 2003, the library program has obtained almost 7,000 media materials comprised of more than 6,000 books in 18 different languages, as well as magazines and DVDs. In addition, almost 100 new books arrive each month to keep the inventory of books fresh and up to date.

"We are always looking for new materials," said Navy Lt. Cmdr Brian Leep, detainee programs officer in charge. "Some [books] we can easily find. The harder languages are donated by the International Community of the Red Cross."

Based on compliancy status, a detainee is given the opportunity once a week to

check out material that can be kept for up to two weeks. They can either select from a variety of materials off the cart or request a book specifically.

Other media material offered twice a week is USA Today and an Arabic newspaper called the Al Ahram.

The literacy program gives detainees the opportunity to take classes to improve their literacy and grammar skills in their native language as well as in English.

"I think it's a great program for two reasons," Leep said. "Number one is that it allows detainees the opportunities to expand their thoughts outside of the local community and to educate them about other cultures in the world. The other reason is that it provides a better way to occupy their time and to be productive."

These sections are manned by a 12-person work team consisting of both military personnel and civilians.

"They do an outstanding job working together as a team to make sure each camp still receives their weekly service despite hurricane warnings and holidays," Leep said.

The Detainee Programs Department continues to maintain and increase their media inventory, and they also plan to expand the literacy program by offering it to all camps as well as introducing humanities classes. ★



An Arabic library technician of the Detainee Programs Department prepares a Quran request for a detainee.



Members of “The Pirates” join in a huddle to strategize against the opposing team during their Tuesday evening practice for the upcoming flag football season.

If you build it, they will come

■ *Gitmo residents eagerly wait for completion of Cooper Field Complex*

**Army Pfc.
Carlynn M. Knaak**

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Fall has arrived at Guantanamo Bay and though it does not come with changing leaves or chilly air, Gitmo residents are gearing up to keep the American tradition of tossing around the old pigskin alive.

Men and women alike have begun to meet nightly under the bright lights of Zaiser field to fasten Velcro belts with brightly colored strips of fabric and scrimmage on the turf.

American football tends to bring to mind a vision of a massive 300 pound linebacker,

running full speed down a plush green field, ready to slam as hard as he can into anyone standing in his way. While a human freight train remains one of the mainstays of football, it is also one of the leading causes of injuries.

During World War II flag football was established as a less detrimental version of football to allow military members to have fun and remain in top combat shape.

Now, flag football is played around the world, by service members and civilians alike.

Flag football’s basic rules are related to those of the professional game, but instead of tackling players to the ground, the defense must remove a flag or flag belt from the member of the opposing team in possession of the ball, ending the down.

Each game is 60 minutes long, consisting of four quarters of 15 minutes each, with teams switching goals at the start of the

second and fourth quarters.

Pre-season practice is underway, and expectations for a superior season are high.

“I’m very excited for the upcoming season and can’t wait to go undefeated,” joked Bradley Nations, a member of the Pirates. “I heard my team might have some NFL scouts trying to sign that big contract deal.”

The only thing that stands between the anxious players and the flag football season is the opening of the Cooper Field Complex next to G.J. Denich gym.

“I’ve never played on a turf field that nice before,” said Bradley Essary, a flag football enthusiast. “I wish the season would hurry up and start!”

Fingers are crossed and hopes are high for the opening of Cooper Field in November, with the first kickoff of the highly anticipated flag football season. ♡



Train kept a-rollin'

**Army Pfc.
Eric Liesse**

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Judd Apatow and Seth Rogen made an outlandish comedy once again. However, in “Pineapple Express,” written by Apatow, Rogen and Evan Goldberg, not all the jokes are Rogen’s subtle side remarks; gun-blazing, fire-raging action almost steals the entire ridiculous show.

Staring current comedic it-boy Rogen and a surprisingly funny James Franco, “Pineapple Express” tells a simple story of wrong place, wrong time – just with more guns, chases and buddy-comedy humor.

Rogen plays Dale Denton, a marijuana-loving 25-year-old who dates a high school girl and delivers court summonses for a living. During a break in one of his shifts, he visits his long-time dealer, Saul Silver (Franco). Saul shows him an ultra-rare and ultra-potent strain that only he deals: Pineapple Express. After testing the product, Dale buys some and sets off.

While enjoying his new purchase, he stops in front of the house of Ted Jones (Gary Cole), a drug lord who happens to be Saul’s supplier. While parked, police officer Carol Brazier (Rosie Perez) marches into the home and assists Ted in the murder of an Asian man in front of the large picture window. Dale freaks out, tosses his weed out the window, crashes into two cars, and makes a beeline back to Saul’s apartment.

Dale quickly realizes that, since Ted supplies only Saul with Pineapple Express, Ted could easily trace the stash back to Saul. This forces the pair to quickly flee and keep on running. Knowing Ted has police help, they make attempts to drop off the grid, while Ted uses a pair of ruthless ruffians to take out the two stoners to eliminate all witnesses.

Rogen and Franco come across great as stoned-out buddies on the run. Rogen has the usual straight-guy, subtle comments he has come to be known for. Many weed jokes drive the opening, but are few once the story gets going.

Franco does the

impossible by playing a funny pot-head while not being completely one-dimensional. The character has just as much action as Rogen’s Dale, while Franco makes Saul the real emotional anchor for the entire film as Dale’s friend-on-the-run.

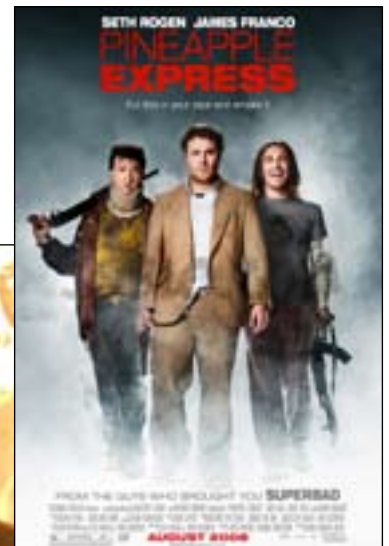
Rogen and Franco worked together previously on Apatow’s (regrettably) short-lived television series “Freaks and Geeks,” after which Franco did several underwhelming movies. It is refreshing to see Franco not being the good-leading-man-in-bad-movies again.

Although lots of action does happen – especially the climactic, almost-overdone ending – the back-and-forth between Rogen and Franco drives the film. However, it’s not all laughs. Those expecting a joked-filled romp like last year’s “Knocked Up” will be disappointed and find the movie an explosion-filled let-down.

“Pineapple Express” seems to drag on a bit long, and most of the jokes don’t pull laughs as big as Rogen and Apatow’s previous works. However, Franco as Saul and the duo’s meeting with Saul’s friend Red (Danny McBride) are good enough alone to see the movie.

You just need to be able to get past all the weed jokes. ☆

R
1 hour, 51 minutes
Rating: ★★★★★☆



TROOPERS FOR THREEEEEEEEEE!



Army Pvt. Roger Plants

JTF Guantanamo photos by
Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class
Jayme Pastoric

JTF Guantanamo graphic by
Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class
Chris Dollar



● Troopers laced up their shoes and made it rain three point shots Saturday for the three-point shoot out at the Navy Exchange. ●



Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class Ronnel Ramos



Steve Holder, 3-point contest winner (second from left)



Army Maj. Jamie Herrera



Rebounding missed shots



Another way to travel

**Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class
Chris Little**

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Traveling on a space-available flight, better known as Space-A, is a unique privilege provided to service members, retirees and their families.

Under the Space-A program, eligible passengers can fill unused seats on Department of Defense owned or controlled aircrafts once all the space-required passengers and cargo have been accommodated. Even when a flight is listed as full, often seats open up because of no-show passengers. Just because a flight is full doesn't mean that you won't get a Space-A seat for the flight, explained Mark Veditz, Guantanamo Bay Air Operations Manager.

Space-A can be a great asset if your travel schedule is flexible and your finances permit a stay-sometimes in a "high-cost" area. Some travelers fly the same day that they signed-up. However, many factors could make buying a commercial ticket your best or only option.

According to Air Force Tech. Sgt. Rodney Patterson, the Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge of passenger travel, booking a paid flight is always a good idea; however, there is an option to check the availability of seating up to 48-hours prior the date of travel, and if there is available seating, cancel the flight request and fly Space-A thus saving money.

Space-A pricing can vary, however, depending on where you are flying from, because of different taxes that are applied. For example, the rate for a DoD member to fly one-way from Jacksonville to Guantanamo Bay on a booked flight would be \$221, the Space-A rate would be \$15.40, but the return trip rate would be \$27.40.

Your travel success also depends on which of the six categories of travel you fall into, ranging anywhere from emergency leave to being a retiree looking at some vacation time.

Another key to success is to be sure the proper paperwork is ready when you arrive at the terminal. If you are active duty, you will need your identification card, orders or leave paperwork. However, if a dependent is trying to visit you, they will need their passport, identification card, area clearance and a sponsorship letter.

"The one thing people need to remember is that they have the correct paperwork, and if you're active duty you need to be officially checked out on leave or you won't get put on the list," says Veditz.

Another key point to remember regarding Space-A is that the flights do not always keep to schedule, particularly outside the continental United States. This has been especially true since Sept. 11.

"I'd say the biggest advantage would be the monetary aspect, and as far as disadvantages, definitely the shakiness of the schedules," says Patterson.

Missing a Space-A flight is never a valid excuse for reporting back late from leave, so plan extra travel time when traveling Space-A. A good recommendation would be to add at least two days to your plans for any contingencies which may delay your departure, return, or both.

Space-A passengers can check two pieces of baggage totaling 140 pounds. Air Mobility Command limits the size of each item to 62-linear inches. This measurement is obtained by adding together the item's length, width and height.

For more information on Space-A traveling, go to www.spacea.info/faq.html or call ext. 6204 or 6408. ★

Effort continues to get out the vote

**Army Sgt. 1st Class
Vaughn R. Larson**

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

The general election is less than three weeks away, you've registered to vote but your absentee ballot still has not arrived in the mail. What do you do?

To have more than a prayer of a chance to participate in this historic presidential election, visit the voting drive Tuesday, Oct. 21 in the Troopers Chapel, hosted by the Joint Task Force Guantanamo Voting Assistance Team.

According to Navy Petty Officer 1st Class J. "Jacob" Richardson, the JTF voting assistance officer, those who attend the drive will receive a federal write-in absentee ballot. This ballot is good for all federal offices, such as president, vice-president, U.S. Senate and U.S. House of Representatives. Depending upon the state, this ballot may also be used for state and local elections.

Information about the six party tickets for president will be available at the drive. However, Richardson encouraged Troopers to research their candidates for Congress, as well as state or local candidates if applicable.

The drive next Tuesday is not a registration event, he cautioned.

"90 percent of voters who have not already registered by Oct. 21 will not be able to fill out a ballot," he said. Still, he urged Troopers to check the website www.fvap.gov (Federal Voting Assistance Program) to determine the registration cut-off for their state. In some cases, voters may still be able to register – but not at the voting drive.

"This is only for voters who have registered," Richardson emphasized.

Voter registration is not verified at the drive, he explained, because local election officials will verify the federal write-in absentee ballots upon receipt. If the voter is not registered in their home district, the absentee ballot is discarded.

Richardson said there will be 900 absentee ballots and seven voting assistance officers at the drive, which runs from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. He stressed that the ballots will be "100 percent confidential."

After the event the ballots will be delivered by special courier to the United States to circumvent the slower pace of the military postal service. Richardson said the ballots should be delivered to local election offices within a week of the voting drive – or roughly one week before election day. The federal write-in absentee ballots include a mailing envelope which is labeled for prompt delivery.

Richardson warned against wearing any items that endorse a particular candidate. This violates Department of Defense

↓ REMOVE TAPE ON REVERSE AND FOLD HERE TO SEAL ↓

OFFICIAL FEDERAL WRITE-IN ABSENTEE BALLOT

SECURITY ENVELOPE

(ONLY PUT VOTED BALLOT INSIDE THIS ENVELOPE)

Standard Form 186 (OCT 80)

↑ DETACH HERE, FOLD AND INSERT INTO SECURITY ENVELOPE ↑

OFFICIAL FEDERAL WRITE-IN ABSENTEE BALLOT

PRESIDENT/VICE PRESIDENT

U.S. SENATOR(S)*

U.S. REPRESENTATIVE/DELEGATE** / RESIDENT COMMISSIONER**

* Legal residents of the District of Columbia may vote only for President/Vice President and Delegate.
** Legal residents of American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands may vote only for non-voting Delegate or Resident Commissioner to the Congress.

ADDENDUM

Some states allow the Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot to be used by military and overseas civilian voters in elections other than general elections or for offices other than Federal offices. Consult your state section in the Voting Assistance Guide to determine your state's policy. If you are eligible to use this ballot to vote for offices/candidates other than those listed above, please indicate in the spaces provided below, the office for which you wish to vote (for example: Governor, Attorney General, Mayor, State Senator, etc.), and the name and/or party affiliation of the candidate for whom you wish to vote.

OFFICE	CANDIDATE NAME or PARTY AFFILIATION
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
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_____	_____

Standard Form 186 (OCT 80)

The federal write-in absentee ballot, reproduced at left, can help Troopers ensure their vote is received in time for the Nov. 4 election. Some states may accept write-in candidates for state or local offices in the "Addendum" portion of the ballot. Navy Petty Officer 1st Class J. "Jacob" Richardson encourages voters to contact their local election officials or www.fvap.gov to learn what their state election rules allow.

guidelines and will guarantee the offender is removed from the voting drive. Voters can return to cast their absentee ballot once the offending items are removed.


Richardson also cautioned that DoD regulations prohibit partisan election parties.

"You can't use military assets for election parties, and you certainly can't do it on a military post," he explained. "You

can have a gathering to celebrate election day, but it has to be non-partisan."

Richardson encouraged Troopers to research available tools on their local election officials' websites. Many questions he receives from concerned deployed voters can be answered by the voters doing the legwork themselves.

For more information, contact Richardson at 8113. 📞



**Call 2300 for Requests
Saturdays from 10 am to 1 pm**

103.1 Blitz
**The Local Show with
Maggie & B**

Live Alternative Rock Show
www.thelocalshow.blogspot.com



Eighty-five percent of the public wears shoes that are too small. Running shoes may need to be a half to a full size larger than street shoes. The shoe shouldn't be tight but it shouldn't slide around either, and your heel should fit snugly into the rear of the shoe.

When purchasing new shoes, try them on later in the day and bring socks you normally run in. Consider purchasing two pairs of running shoes. Alternating their use increases the life expectancy of each pair.

Don't try the new pair out for the first time with a 12-mile run or a heavy track workout. Rather, run easily in the shoe for only a short distance. Break the new pair in through logging around 60 to 70 miles.

For more information, please email safety@jtfgtmo.southcom.mil

Prevention Works!

Information above provided by The American College of Sports Medicine



True blue volunteer

Coast Guard Lt. Todd Remusat of Port Security Unit 307 volunteered his Sunday afternoon painting the trim of the Treasures and Trivia store at U.S. Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, Oct. 12. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Spc. Megan Burnham

Boots on the Ground

by Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Jayme Pastoric

What are you going to be for Halloween?

Army Sgt. Jowey Diaz



"I'm going as the Crow."

Marine Corps Sgt. Tim Brake



"Marine, because no one else call pull it off."

Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Alexis Barbosa



"Capt. Barbosa, captain of the Gitmo Queen."

Army Spc. Meghan Phillips and Army Spc. Christina Beerman



"Guess."

Finding joy in the journey

**Army Capt.
Scott C. Brill**

JTF Deputy Command Chaplain/JDG/JMG

My 12-year-old recently asked her mother, “Mom, what would happen if the economy collapsed, and we lost everything?”

To this question came the reassuring reply, “Since the things that matter most are not bought with money, we can never lose everything.”

The following remarks are some words of wisdom from someone who means the world to me, and has helped me to put first things first. For all of us who are far from family and home, today is a great day to write a letter or call, and leave no doubt in the heart and minds of those that matter most how much they are needed, believed in and loved.

Stresses in our lives come regardless of our circumstances. We must deal with them the best we can. But we should not let them get in the way of what is most important — and what is most important almost always involves the people around us. Often we assume that they must know how much we love them. But we should never assume; we should let them know. We will never regret the kind words spoken or the affection shown. Rather, our regrets will come if such things are omitted from our relationships

with those who mean the most to us.

Send that note to the friend you’ve been neglecting; give your child a hug; give your parents a hug; say “I love you” more; always express your thanks. Never let a problem to be solved become more important than a person to be loved. Friends move away, children grow up, loved ones pass on. It’s so easy to take others for granted, until that day when they’re gone from our lives and we are left with feelings of “what if” and “if only.” Said author Harriet Beecher Stowe, “The bitterest tears shed over graves are for words left unsaid and deeds left undone.”

In the 1960s, during the Vietnam War, Jay Hess, an airman, was shot down over North Vietnam. For two years his family had no idea whether he was dead or alive. His captors in Hanoi eventually allowed him to write home but limited his message to less than 25 words. What would you and I say to our families if we were in the same situation — not having seen them for over two years and not knowing if we would ever see them again? Wanting to provide something his family could recognize as having come from him and also wanting to give them valuable counsel, Brother Hess wrote — and I quote: “These things are important: marriage, mission, college. Press on, set goals, write history,

take pictures twice a year.”

Let us relish life as we live it, find joy in the journey, and share our love with friends and family. One day each of us will run out of tomorrows.

In the book of John in the New Testament, chapter 13, verse 34, the Savior admonishes us, “As I have loved you ... love one another.”

Despite the changes which come into our lives and with gratitude in our hearts, may we fill our days — as much as we can — with those things which matter most. May we cherish those we hold dear and express our love to them in word and in deed.

In closing, I pray that all of us will reflect gratitude for our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. He taught us how to pray. He taught us how to serve. He taught us how to live. His life is a legacy of love. The sick He healed; the downtrodden He lifted; the sinner He saved.

Let us follow Him. Let us emulate His example. Let us obey His word. By so doing, we give to Him the divine gift of gratitude. (Thomas S. Monson)

My sincere prayer for all of us is that we may adapt to the changes in our lives, that we may realize what is most important, that we may express our gratitude always and thus find joy in the journey. ★

JTF CHAPEL SCHEDULED PROGRAMS

Catholic Mass

Sunday: 7 a.m. Confession

7:30 Mass

Wednesday: 11 a.m. Mass

Protestant Worship

Sunday: 9 a.m.

Spanish Protestant Worship

Sunday: Noon

Army Spc. James Villa proudly displays the gold medals he earned while boxing with the All Army and the Armed Forces teams.



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

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Joint Task Force Trooper Army Spc. James “Jimmie” Villa didn’t just grow up in the “school of hard knocks,” he took some heavy hits too – jabs, hooks and uppercuts, specifically.

Villa, raised by his grandmother, whom he describes as “old-school Brooklyn,” took responsibility for him and his brother when they were very young.

“My grandmother is my hero,” said Villa. “She raised me ... and was always there.”

Despite grandmother’s tough love, Villa and his brother still got into trouble at school, scrapping with other kids.

“My grandfather got my twin [brother] and me into boxing, against my mother’s wishes, when we were six years old,” said Villa. “My brother and I would bully kids at school. If they looked at us the wrong way ... it didn’t matter how big or strong they were ... they were gonna get it because there were two of us.”

Villa’s grandfather, tired of picking the boys up from the principal’s office, decided to take them to see his friend Arthur Ramalho at West End Gym.

“My brother and I were scared ... all we heard was leather on leather,” said Villa of



**Navy Petty Officer
2nd Class Kendy
Peguero throws
a punch at Army
Spc. James Villa
while sparring at
J.G. Denich Gym,
Oct. 12.**

**‘The more you sweat,
the less you bleed’**

the grown men that were at the gym boxing.

“My grandfather said, ‘Arthur, I want you to suit these guys up,’” Villa recalled. “[My brother and I] thought we were going to fight each other. I remember that day...we got our butts whapped!”

Villa was paired up with Luis Ayala, a 10-year-old at the time, who already had a couple years of boxing experience under his belt.

“I learned a lesson [that day] and I fell in love [with the sport],” said Villa. “[Ayala] beat the crap out of me ... until I was 18, he became my role model.”

Villa graduated from high school and received a boxing scholarship to Stephen F. Austin State University in Texas. From 2000 until 2004, Villa was the East Texas Golden Gloves champion.

“My degree is in criminal law, with a minor in kinesiology,” said Villa. “I had job opportunities, but I wanted to join the Army.”

“I joined the Army to box, and for a few other reasons,” said Villa. “I wanted to serve my country. I didn’t want to be a punk [anymore].”

Villa took a position as an internment specialist and went to Fort Lewis, Wash.

“My chain of command knew I boxed, and the coach from the All Army [Sports Program] saw me fight in the National Golden Gloves,” said Villa.

Soon Villa had temporary duty orders to Fort Huachuca, Ariz., where he would train with other fighters from all over the Army, with the goal of getting into the World Class Athlete Program.

“There were fighters from everywhere, Korea, Iraq ... I didn’t know anyone, I was

the only fighter from Ft. Lewis,” said Villa.

The month-long camp had Villa working out constantly. He trained daily and sparred three times a week.

“I fought at All Army, and then it was on to the Armed Forces [Sports Program],” said Villa. “I beat the guy from the Air Force by 19 points.”

Villa received orders to a new duty station and moved to Fort Carson, Colo., to continue boxing and participate in the World Class Athlete Program. However, his orders were declined.

“I stayed in the game,” said Villa. “Then in 2006 I finally got the orders. I competed in 2007 and won gold at All Army and gold at Armed Forces.”

This accomplishment qualified Villa for a slot at the Olympic trials.

“I fell short,” said Villa. “I finished fifth out of eight boxers. I lost to the champion who went on to represent the United States at the Olympics. My mission was to make the Olympic team; I didn’t.”

With a new mission and a new set of orders, Villa came to Guantanamo Bay.

“You gotta be tough and have thick skin [to work here],” said Villa. “It’s hard.”

“I’m proud to be here [though],” added Villa. “We’re gathering intelligence and saving lives.”

According to Villa, the Army has instilled discipline within him, as did boxing.

The WCAP has asked Villa to return to the program in 2009; however, currently he is undecided as it would require him to re-enlist.

“Maybe one day, I’ll be a world champ,” said Villa.

“Boxing is a true sport. When you lose, you lose with valor, and when you win you celebrate,” said Villa. ♠



Comedian Edwin San Juan entertained Troopers and residents of Guantanamo Bay, Oct. 9 at the Bayview Club. San Juan, joined by Gitmo regular Patrick DeGuire and newcomers Steve Wilson and Chris Porter, had the audience rolling with laughter four nights in a row. - JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Staff Sgt. Emily J. Russell



Cody Marks, a rock-country singer and guitarist, croons her soulful tunes during a Columbus Day concert at the Tiki Bar the evening of Oct. 13, 2008. For her show, open to all Guantanamo Bay residents, Marks played some original music, as well as classic covers of Johnny Cash and Tom Petty. - JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Pfc. Eric Liesse

Around the JTF



Navy Sailors position the Navy birthday cake during the Navy Ball Saturday evening, Oct. 11. The event, marking the 233rd birthday of the U.S. Navy, was held at the Windjammer Ballroom and included members of the Naval Station Guantanamo Bay and Joint Task Force Guantanamo. - JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Sgt. 1st Class Vaughn R. Larson