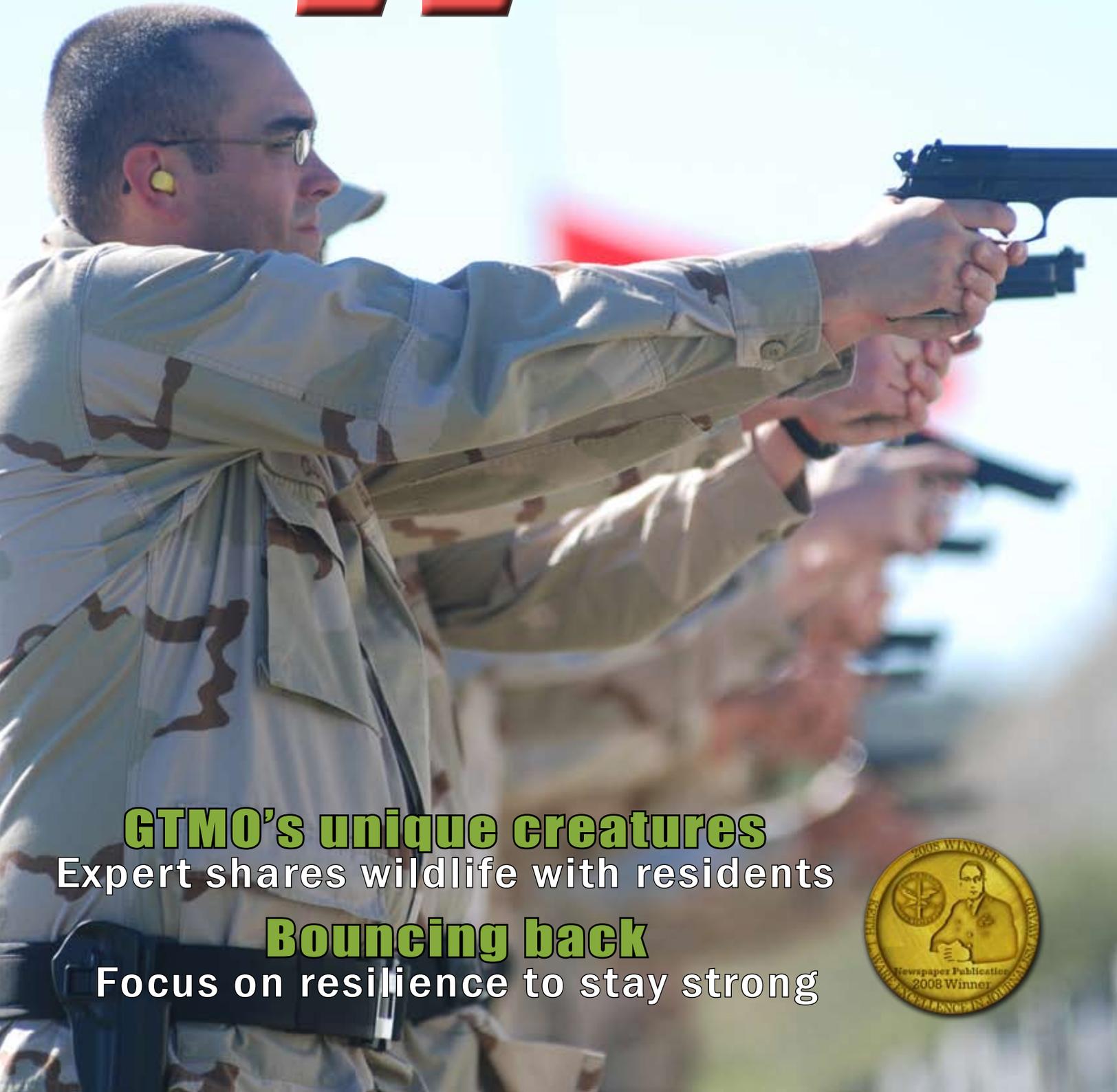


THE WIRE

A JTF Journal



GTMO's unique creatures
Expert shares wildlife with residents

Bouncing back
Focus on resilience to stay strong



Fully engaged leadership

**Navy Senior Chief Petty Officer
Mandy McCune**
SEA, Task Force Platinum

Treating fellow service members as we would want to be treated is a well-regarded concept. Regardless of service, the essential core values are the same. Despite being reminded constantly to do the right thing, there are some who still fail to do so.

We represent the best that our country has to offer, representing all walks of life; without proper guidance and leadership, anyone can slide from that path. The leadership challenge is to ensure that all are afforded the same opportunities to succeed. Some folks are entitled to a swift kick in the pants when a significant line has been crossed.

Most of us expect to be told if we're doing wrong. Few join the service to be a bad seed.

I believe that all of us raised our right hand for a good reason. We felt a sense of patriotism, a need for discipline or a calling to a common good. Some Troopers out there have lost that group identification and sense of purpose due to us not setting the expectation or example.

Maybe some are just bad seeds. But of those who are, they didn't all start out that way. Setting the example, tough love and intrusive leadership keep good Troopers good, and make not so good Troopers better. That requires leadership and commitment.

Sometimes that is hard. Leadership is a challenge.

Our Troopers are warriors. But if we look at those warriors as our own brothers, sisters or adult children, we might do a better job of looking after each other.

I have overstated the obvious for the benefit of the few who didn't get the memo. Leadership will always be a challenge because it can't be done by a select few. We all must be engaged at all levels, all of the time.

In order to complete the mission, the senior enlisted leadership of any organization has to know for whom they are responsible. As the leadership closest to the deck plates, the middle enlisted must be fully engaged in the daily activities of their charges. Lastly, the junior enlisted must have the moral courage to step up and say when they've been wronged, and have the presence of mind to know the difference between being wronged and having a bad day at work. If we as leaders take care of our Troopers, our Troopers will take care of the mission.

Leadership is hard. That's what makes it great when it's done well. ★



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COVER:

Troopers from the Navy Expeditionary Guard Battalion qualify with the 9 mm pistol at Windward Range, Nov. 20. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Sgt. Emily Greene

BACK COVER:

A Coast Guard cutter patrols the waters of Guantanamo Bay. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Spc. Cody Black



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 1,000.

JTF headquarters changes hands



Navy Rear Adm. Tom Copeman, commander of Joint Task Force Guantanamo, officiates over the transfer of authority between the 786th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion and the 191st Regional Support Group, Nov. 24. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Maria Blanchard

Army Staff Sgt. Blair Heusdens

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Soldiers and Airmen from the U.S. Virgin Islands National Guard's 786th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, out of St. Thomas, replaced the Soldiers from the 191st Regional Support Group of the Puerto Rico National Guard during a transfer of authority ceremony, Nov. 24.

With the new Troopers comes a new senior leader for Joint Task Force Guantanamo. Army Brig. Gen. Timothy Lake from the VING will replace Army Brig. Gen. Rafael O'Ferrall from the PRNG as deputy commander of the JTF. Lake spent his early days in GTMO getting to know the JTF Troopers and their mission.

"The Troopers here are very professional and understand the criticality of the mission and the national security implications of what we do here not only for the United States but internationally," Lake said. Of his Soldiers from the Virgin Islands, Lake said, "They are true Americans and true professionals who will be successful in their mission."

The National Guard Soldiers will make up the Headquarters and Headquarters Company of Joint Task Force Guantanamo and will spend their year-long tour acting as the support element to the JTF, with a variety of missions including housing, Trooper safety, logistics and keeping track of and taking care of Soldiers.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 2009 | MISSION



The 786th commander, Army Capt. Josephine Hector-Murphy, visited GTMO prior to the unit's deployment to get an understanding of her upcoming mission and responsibilities.

"[The site survey visit] was pretty intense. I didn't realize the big impact of responsibility that is placed on the HHC shoulders," Hector-Murphy said.

In addition to the extensive training the Virgin Islands Soldiers received prior to deployment, the two units spent the past two weeks learning from each other during what is called, "right-seat, left-

seat training," where the new unit started out observing the experienced Soldiers at their jobs, eventually switching places and taking over their new jobs.

"The Puerto Rico National Guard has been very professional and went above and beyond to make sure we've been taken care of," Hector-Murphy said.

During their deployment, Soldiers from the Puerto Rico National Guard, along with other Hispanics at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, brought their unique culture and heritage to the Guantanamo community through dancing, gatherings and music from "Puerto Rican Fever," a steel drum band comprised of members of the PRNG.

"Puerto Rico is very warm and hospitable and we've tried to bring that here to GTMO," said O'Ferrall. "We do the missions at the highest standards and then we try to share our culture. We fight for our nation like any other service member and these Soldiers can go home satisfied."

The deployment provided an opportunity for Soldiers at all levels to gain experience and confidence in their jobs and serve their country at an important point in history.

"This deployment has helped me to see where the younger Troopers are at and what they expect from the leadership," said Army Capt. Manuel Rodriguez, the commander of the 191st. "I also try to let them know what I expect from them and help them to see the big picture." ☆

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Coast Guard Cmdr. Scott Benson, with Maritime Safety and Security Team 91101 Seattle, receives an award from Joint Task Force Guantanamo commander Navy Rear Adm. Tom Copeman during a transfer of authority ceremony, Nov. 19. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Staff Sgt. Emily Russell



A Coast Guardsman with Maritime Safety and Security Team 91101 Seattle stands in formation prior to a transfer of authority ceremony, Nov. 19. MSST 91103 Los Angeles/Long Beach relieved MSST 91101 after a year-long deployment to Joint Task Force Guantanamo. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Staff Sgt. Emily Russell

MSST 91101 says goodbye to GTMO

Army Pfc. Christopher Vann

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Change is good, and even better when you see the product is of equal quality. Such is the transfer of authority from Maritime Safety and Security Team 91101, Seattle, to Maritime Safety and Security Team 91103, Los Angeles/Long Beach. MSST 91103 is relieving MSST 91101 of their duties at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, and taking on the responsibility of patrolling and securing the waters around the base.

Maritime Safety and Security Teams were created under the Maritime Transportation Security Act of 2002, and are a part of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's layered strategy directed at protecting seaports and waterways. The overall mission of MSST 91103 is to provide enhanced port safety and security, and law enforcement capabilities to economic- or militarily-significant ports.

As part of Joint Task Force Guantanamo, the MSST is not only responsible for securing the waterways, but also has a landside security mission with Military Commissions for detainees under way.

"We are doing an entire unit turnover," said Coast Guard Ensign Barrett Caldwell, operations officer for MSST 91101

Seattle, "This means we will be instructing, training, and teaching members from all divisions."

"Primarily, I will be responsible for training the landside division," said Caldwell. "I will teach them the Commissions security process and instruct them in how we as a Coast Guard unit secure the Expeditionary Legal Complex. I will teach courtroom security procedures that will ensure a fluid transition from Seattle to Los Angeles/Long Beach."

Coast Guard Cmdr. Charlene Downey, commander of MSST 91103, believes that the transition will be seamless, "We, as a unit, are used to adjusting to various conditions, and with the training from the Seattle unit, we will give the best relief possible."

Downey says that the unit is excited about working with Joint Task Force Guantanamo and Naval Station Guantanamo Bay personnel, but feels the biggest challenge is keeping her team safe and focused.

"We have great expectations," said Downey, "but our biggest concerns are the safety of our crew and, as always, keeping the mission first."

One of the first things on the unit's agenda is to learn their new jobs and how to do them safely and accurately.

For more information about the U.S. Coast Guard, visit the Web site www.uscg.mil. ★





Safe practices yield fun festivities

**Army Spc.
Tiffany Addair**

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

In preparation for the upcoming holidays, Naval Station Guantanamo Bay and Joint Task Force Guantanamo want to ensure that Troopers, civilian employees and residents are knowledgeable about the safety risks that come with festivities and additional time off. In an effort to disseminate information, the naval station held a holiday safety stand down at the Windjammer Ballroom, Nov. 20.

Booths were set up to educate individuals about fire safety, drinking and driving, fleet and family services, general health, and weapons and power tool safety.

Holidays bring opportunities for celebration with family and friends; unfortunately, they also account for an

increase in accident rates. The major holiday concerns are drinking and driving, fire prevention and depression.

With drunk driving being a major concern, there are programs to help ensure everyone is safe around the holidays. When people have house parties, they should designate a driver or use other resources available throughout the base for a safe ride home.

“Lately there has been a rise in drinking and driving on base,” said Angel M. Rodriquez, command criminal investigator. “We want to make sure information is given out to prevent it.”

While ensuring that intoxicated guests do not get behind the wheel of a car, hosts should also make sure these same guests are not attempting to walk home alone either. Walking after consuming alcohol is just as dangerous as driving, as alcohol affects your judgment, reflexes and coordination.

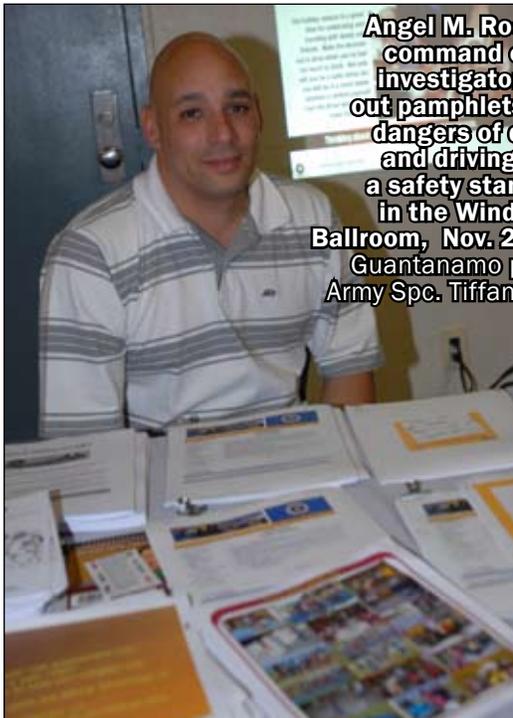
Another holiday concern is fires that can occur during many holiday situations. Fire problems

that can occur range from cooking mishaps to overloaded electrical outlets. Holiday lights can also be an issue if not properly checked each year. If bulbs are not working, they need to be replaced with the correct bulbs and checked for frayed wires.

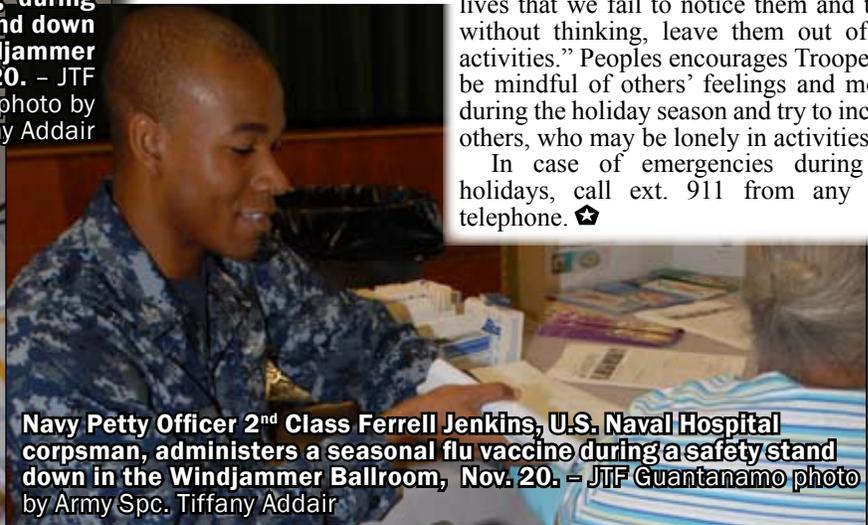
Depression is also important to address during the holidays as many Troopers are away from family members and loved ones. Remember to watch out for signs from fellow Troopers and get them any help that is needed to cope with the holidays and being away from family and friends. Signs of depression include loss of interest in normal activities; feeling sad or down; feeling hopeless; having trouble sleeping; focusing or concentrating; unintentional weight loss or gain and thoughts of suicide or suicidal behavior.

“Holidays are great times of celebration with friends, family and festivities,” said Air Force Lt. Col. Dwayne Peoples, command chaplain for JTF Guantanamo. “These are times when our focus narrows down to a circle of loved ones and we may forget there are the new arrivals or simply some of our associates who live such quiet lives that we fail to notice them and then, without thinking, leave them out of our activities.” Peoples encourages Troopers to be mindful of others’ feelings and moods during the holiday season and try to include others, who may be lonely in activities.

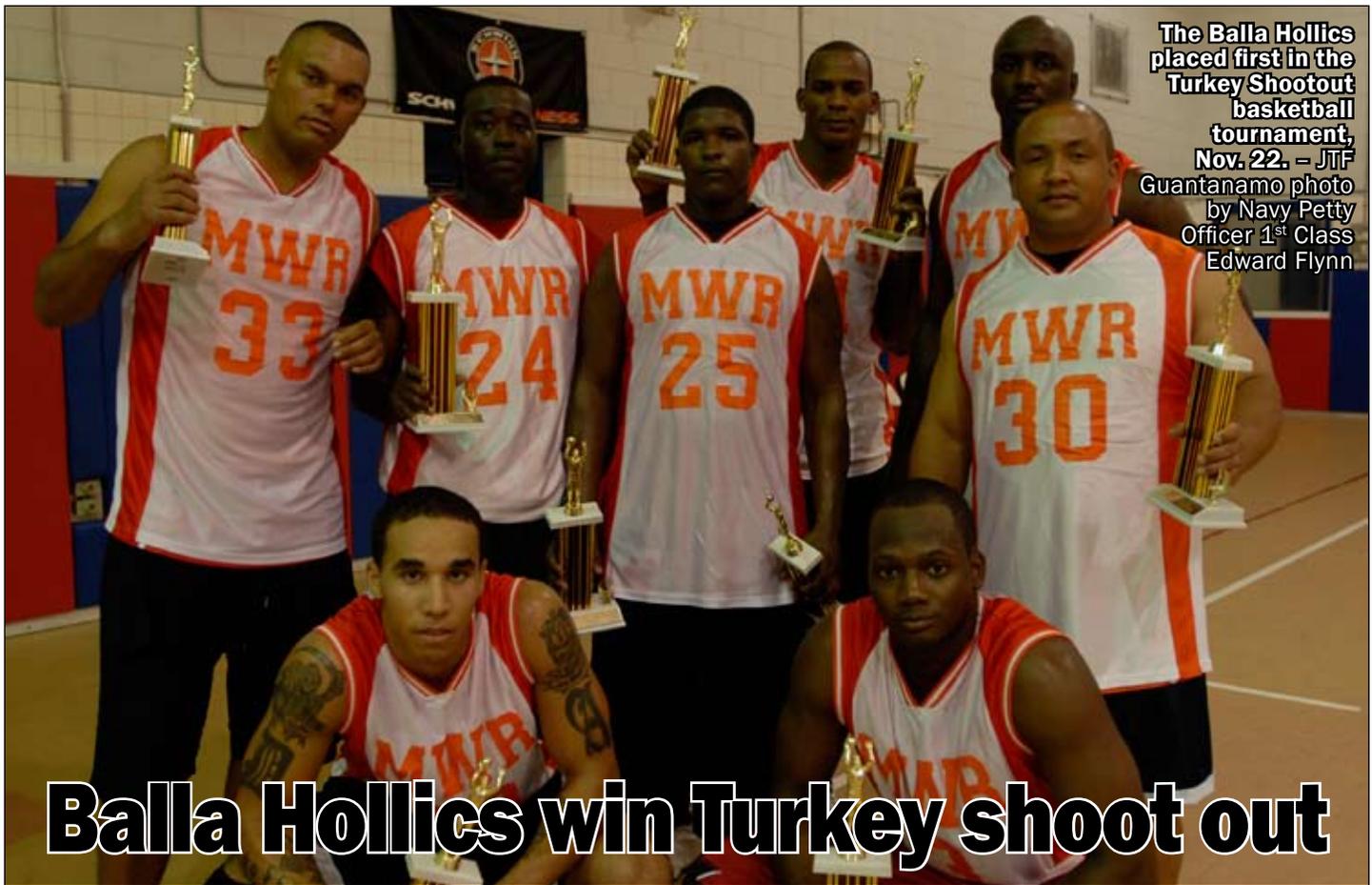
In case of emergencies during the holidays, call ext. 911 from any base telephone. ☆



Angel M. Rodriguez, command criminal investigator, hands out pamphlets on the dangers of drinking and driving during a safety stand down in the Windjammer Ballroom, Nov. 20. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Spc. Tiffany Addair



Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Ferrell Jenkins, U.S. Naval Hospital corpsman, administers a seasonal flu vaccine during a safety stand down in the Windjammer Ballroom, Nov. 20. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Spc. Tiffany Addair



The Balla Hollics placed first in the Turkey Shootout basketball tournament, Nov. 22. - JTF Guantanamo photo by Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Edward Flynn

Balla Hollics win Turkey shoot out

Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Edward Flynn

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

In a thrilling and hard-fought basketball game, the Balla Hollics defeated the Dirt Merchants in the final game of the Turkey Shootout basketball tournament held at G.J. Denich Gym, Nov. 22. Although the score was 53 to 35, the play to the last second of the game was competitive. Each team worked hard until the final buzzer ended the game.

The 2nd annual basketball tournament was one of several sporting events sponsored by Morale, Welfare and Recreation in celebration of Thanksgiving and the holiday season. Base personnel also had the opportunity to participate in other organized sporting events throughout the week, including a "Turkey Trot" three-mile run/walk, a "Turkey Gobbler all-nighter" softball tournament, golf skills, bowling and even a "Swim Across the Bay."

Prior to the start of the basketball tournament, teams submitted their player rosters to MWR and a coaches meeting was held to discuss the rules and tournament format. Eight teams competed in the double-elimination, weekend tournament. Teams were made up of both civilians and service members from Naval Station Guantanamo Bay and Joint Task Force Guantanamo.

Following his team's impressive victory in the final game of the tournament, Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class Rayshaun Cole

complimented his teammates for their performance and endurance. "It was an exciting game and a great team effort," said Cole. "We played a tough team that worked well together. They deserve a lot of credit for the way they played as a team. Both teams played well and the competition was intense, yet friendly. We had fun playing and it certainly was a great weekend."

During the awards ceremony, players in the championship game were presented individual trophies by Robert Neuman, the MWR sports event manager. Neuman thanked the players for their cooperation and competitiveness in making this another successful MWR-sponsored sporting event. "The tournament encourages sportsmanship and unit cohesiveness," said Neuman. "Sportsmanship is a measure of the understanding and commitment to fair play, ethical behavior, respect for all participants and spectators present at MWR sporting activities, and above all, uncompromising integrity."

That's exactly what

made this tournament a huge success for all. Tough competition, hard work and always treating your opponent with respect are certainly the cornerstones of an MWR-sponsored event. ★



The Balla Hollics play the Dirt Merchants in the final game of the Turkey Shootout basketball tournament, Nov. 22. - JTF Guantanamo photo by Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Edward Flynn



Get ready for the end of the world

Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class
Joshua Nistas

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

PG-13

158 minutes

Rating: ★★☆☆☆

With only three years left before the Mayan people prophesied the end of the world, it isn't surprising that there is a movie made to rile up everyone's doubts and make sure they are even more conscious of the "Y2K-like" future.

Roland Emmerich has done it again with 2012. Emmerich is the director, writer and producer of "The Day After Tomorrow," "Godzilla," "Independence Day" and "Stargate," and decided to go with another end of the world scenario. You might think if you've seen one apocalyptic movie, you've seen them all. This is true in the overall picture, but there is always the meat of the movie which will keep people going back for more.

For me, seeing scenes where John Cusack ("1408" and "Martian Child") is driving a limo through Los Angeles while the land is falling apart, just seems ludicrous. And for a plastic surgeon, played by Thomas McCarthy ("Baby Mama," "Flags of Our Fathers") who only had a couple of flying lessons, to be able to fly like a professional through all types of disaster, just seemed impossible.

I liked the scenes from this movie – at least the ones where it didn't show John Cusack escaping every situation in the movie by the skin of his teeth. You get to see a lot of places around the world with pretty much everything happening to them to cause total destruction; the White House scene was memorable. If you're going to see it, keep this in mind; it's just a movie. ☆

Welcome to the United States of ZombieLand

Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class
Joshua Nistas

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

With the world's population driven to the brink of extinction and zombies lurking behind every corner, just waiting to crawl underneath a bathroom stall's door to get at you, it is good to know you can still enjoy the little things, like Twinkies.

Since seeing the first preview of "Zombieland," I've wanted to see this movie, though I had some reservations. Only one other movie comes to mind in regard to zombies and comedy, and that's "Shaun of the Dead." So going from that movie to this one, I did wonder if they'd be able to compete for laughs.

I was actually surprised how well the movie did. In most movies, there are usually lulls in the action or the comedy, where you kind of want to fast-forward to the good parts. In "Zombieland," there was never a part which was boring. If I wasn't laughing, my attention was taken with watching Columbus (Jesse Eisenberg, "Adventureland," "Cursed") trying to find a way of life in the new world while dealing with his many phobias, chief among them his fear of clowns. Add in Tallahassee (Woody Harrelson, "2012," "White Men Can't Jump"), who is on a journey just to find the last Twinkie.

This movie, in my opinion, surpassed my expectations as well as "Shaun of the Dead." Once they had Bill Murray (as himself, "Ghostbusters 1 & 2") and Tallahassee replaying a scene from "Ghostbusters," it was no competition. Filled with lines that keep you laughing and with action that keeps you interested, the next installment for zombie humor has passed all boundaries and became a movie I'm looking forward to seeing again and again. ☆



R

88 minutes

Rating: ★★★★★



PLENTY TO BE THANKFUL FOR

JTF Guantanamo photos by
Army Staff Sgt. Blair Heusdens

Troopers at Joint Task Force Guantanamo celebrated Thanksgiving with dinner at Seaside Galley, Nov. 26. Air Force Gen. Douglas Fraser, commander of U.S. Southern Command, and his wife, Rena, visited Joint Task Force Guantanamo to serve Thanksgiving dinner to Troopers, accompanied by U.S. Southern Command senior enlisted advisor Marine Corps Sgt. Maj. Louis Espinal, and his wife, Marguerite, and U.S. Army South commander, Maj. Gen. Simeon Trombitas.



Growing through adversity



Small plants grow in the blazing Caribbean sun on top of the inhospitable coral shelves without fresh water and soil. These small plants are an example of resilience in nature. – JTF

Guantanamo photo by Army Spc. David McLean

Army Spc. David McLean

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

All Troopers are given a variety of tools to perform well at their jobs. Many of the tools are physical items, but psychological tools are needed to unlock the full potential of a Trooper in this day and age of sustained operations. One tool needed to perform well in stressful situations is resilience.

“Resilience is the ability to stand up to life’s stresses, strains, obstacles or problems and overcome them and continue to do your job or complete the mission,” said Air Force Lt. Col. William Ferrell, incoming command chaplain for Joint Task Force Guantanamo. “It is the analogy of the oak tree that can bend in the wind and not break.”

In contrast, a lack of resilience will leave Troopers dwelling on problems, feeling victimized, becoming overwhelmed and may cause them to turn to unhealthy coping mechanisms, such as substance abuse.

“People who lack resilience feel powerless, defeated, helpless, hopeless and not in control of their life,” said Ferrell. “This is true for all people, not just the military. To change this thought process, they have to change their outlook on life.”

Ferrell says resilience isn’t about toughing it out or living by old clichés, such as “grin and bear it”, nor does it mean that feelings are ignored. When adversity strikes, there are still the feelings of anger,

grief and pain, but Troopers are able to complete daily tasks, remain generally optimistic and go on with life.

Being active, communicating and having clear and realistic goals are some of the characteristics of resilient people says Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Frank A. Robinson, lead petty officer for the Joint Stress Mitigation and Restoration Team. He also said relying on others and having support is very important to dealing with stress.

“If you have issues at home or at work, they could eventually become problems if not addressed,” said Robinson. “Building camaraderie and going at things together will help. Morale is a group effort and you have to depend on other Troops for support.”

The most important concept to being resilient is a positive outlook in all situations according to Ferrell and Robinson. The ability to take a situation in stride and not think of all the negative possible outcomes to focus on can change the overall attitude and mood of a Trooper.

“Having a positive outlook is not just psycho babble, it actually works,” Ferrell said.

Building up resilience as a tool can be the difference between making it through a tough situation or falling to pieces.

“Resilience helps Troopers to survive challenges and even thrive in the midst of hardship,” said Ferrell.

For more information about resilience strategies, contact the chaplain’s office at ext. 3202 or JSMART at ext. 3566. ☆

Tips to improve your resilience

Get connected – Build strong, positive relationships with family and friends, who provide support and acceptance.

Find meaning – Develop a sense of purpose for your life. Having something meaningful to focus on can help you share emotions, feel gratitude and experience an enhanced sense of well-being.

Learn from experience – Build on skills and strategies that helped you through the rough times, and don’t repeat those that didn’t help.

Remain hopeful – You can’t change what’s happened in the past, but you can always look toward the future.

Take care of yourself – Tend to your own needs and feelings, both physically and emotionally.

Accept and anticipate change – Expecting changes to occur makes it easier to adapt to them, tolerate them and even welcome them.

Work toward a goal – Do something every day that gives you a sense of accomplishment.

Take action – Don’t just wish your problems would go away or try to ignore them.

Experiencing the wild side of GTMO

**Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class
Justin Smelley**

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Naval Station Guantanamo Bay is home to all kinds of creatures that a typical military base wouldn't house. Ranging from iguanas that are almost the size of Godzilla, to various types of Caribbean Boas, this base is like a free zoo to the Troopers stationed here. The base has strict rules to protect these species and provides a safe habitat for them to live in. Guantanamo Bay naval base is home to 8% of the population of these species of iguanas in Cuba due to its safe habitat.

Dr. Peter Tolson, director of conservation and research at the Toledo Zoo in Ohio, came down to the base to give the residents an educational show on the reptiles that live among us. Dr. Tolson has been coming to Guantanamo Bay for the last 10 years to give his presentation and perform research on the Caribbean Boa and other various species of animals. Tolson has a history with this base that inspired him to get into his current career field.

"I got stationed down here as a Marine back in the day and fell in love with the wildlife here. The Marines arranged two visits down to the base for a famous herpetologist to work with me and I realized that you can make a living do this kind of thing. So when I got out of the Marine Corps I went to college on my G.I. Bill and now I'm back here doing what I love," said Tolson.

Tolson has worked with various navy bases over the years helping them take care of endangered species and providing the base tips to ensure the animals live in safe environments.

The team got here two weeks ago and had to capture all the animals for the demonstration. Tolson had to use his training to track down some of these rare creatures.

"I know about where to go, but we were fortunate this past week by getting some rain. A lot a times



Dr. Peter Tolson handles an iguana at Windmill Beach during his reptile presentation. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class Justin Smelley

during dry periods the animals will hold up and they don't come out but since we did get some rain, a lot of the rare animals that might live underground came out and gave us the opportunity to capture some of the rare stuff on this trip," said Tolson.

A group gathered as Tolson and his two trained teammates provided interesting facts and walked around giving the crowd a chance to get up close and personal with the creatures.

"I think people seemed really interested about the animals. What was nice was the fact that hardly anybody was afraid of the creatures. Almost everybody

wanted to pet the snakes including the little kids down here at the naval base. Everybody seems to have a good time seeing these rare species that they normally don't see down here on a regular basis," said Tolson.

Jay Wagner, Tolson's teammate and reptile enthusiast, said, "I thought it went great and we had a good turnout. It's always good to see people ask questions and let them know that these things aren't the mean, nasty and vicious creatures that people think they are."

Dr. Tolson tries to give these presentations twice a year at Guantanamo to show off the inhabitants that Troopers see every day. 🐢



Upcoming Muslim observances

Thanksgiving isn't the only celebration or observance in November.

Muslims around the world will take part in the annual Hajj, a pilgrimage to Mecca which represents the fifth pillar of Islam. The Hajj is a moral obligation that must be carried out at least once in the lifetime of every able-bodied Muslim who can afford to do so.

This year, the Hajj began Nov. 18. It is the largest annual convention of faith on earth.

The annual festivity of Eid ul Adha, or the Festival of Sacrifice, falls on Nov. 27 and commemorates the willingness of Ibrahim to sacrifice his son Ismail as an act of obedience to God. During this time, Muslims sacrifice animals and distribute the meat in an observance of charity.

Both observances are an important part of the Islamic faith. Naval Station Guantanamo Bay has a small Muslim community who live and work here.



Upcoming holiday mail deadlines

Mail from U.S. to GTMO

First class letters/cards: Dec. 11

Priority mail: Dec. 11

Mail from GTMO to U.S.

First class letters/cards: Dec. 4

Priority Mail: Dec. 4



The creatures of Guantanamo Bay

Dr. Peter Tolson, the director of conservation and research at the Toledo Zoo in Ohio, shows one of the snakes that can be found on Naval Station Guantanamo Bay during a reptile show at Windmill Beach, Nov. 22. Tolson regularly visits Guantanamo to study its unique creatures such as the Cuban Boa and to give presentations to residents. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class Justin Smelley

Boots on the Ground

by Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Edward Flynn

What is your favorite holiday or “special” day of the year?

Army Spc.
Keith Chambers



“Christmas. It’s a time for giving and receiving presents and spending time with loved ones.”

Marine Corps Cpl.
Julius Fairfax



“Christmas. Spending time with family is what’s important to me.”

Army Sgt.
George Foster



“Presidents Day. It is also my birthday and I’m named for President George Washington.”

Navy Seaman
Kaylie Gordon



“St. Patrick’s Day. It’s about celebrating my Irish heritage. I also love Thanksgiving.”

Living in Thanksgiving daily

**Army Capt.
Scott Brill**

Joint Detention Group Chaplain

Think for a moment, if you will, of someone you know in GTMO who is truly happy. We've all met those who seem to radiate happiness. They seem to smile more than others; they laugh more than others—just being around them makes us happier as well.

Now think of someone you know who isn't happy at all. Perhaps they seem 10 years older than they are, drained of energy – perhaps they are angry or bitter.

What is the difference between them? What are the characteristics that differentiate the happy from the miserable? Is there something that unhappy people can do to be happier?

It has been my observation that those who live in thanksgiving daily are usually among the world's happiest people. And they make others happy as well.

Living in thanksgiving daily is a habit that will enrich our lives and the lives of those we love. But how do we make this part of who we are? May I suggest three things that will help as we strive to live in thanksgiving daily?

First, we must open our eyes to all that God has blessed us with and give Him thanks.

Robert Louis Stevenson once said, "The man who forgets to be thankful has fallen asleep in life." Unfortunately, because the beauties of life are so abundant, sometimes we take them for granted.

Second, we must open our hearts and allow God to heal our souls.

Joseph B. Wirthlin has said, "We must let go of the negative emotions that bind our hearts and instead fill our souls with love, faith, and thanksgiving. Anger, resentment, and bitterness stunt our spiritual growth. Would you bathe in impure water? Then why do we bathe our spirits with negative and bitter thoughts and feelings?"

Third, we must look for the good in life and in others.

Gordon B. Hinckley taught: "My plea is that we stop seeking out the storms and enjoy more fully the sunlight. I am suggesting that as we go through life, we 'accentuate the positive.' I am asking that we look a little deeper for the good, that we still our voices of insult and sarcasm, that we more generously compliment and endorse virtue and effort."

Don't wait to start. Open your eyes, open your hearts, and look for the God. I promise that as you do so, you will feel



JTF CHAPEL SCHEDULED PROGRAMS

Catholic Mass
Sunday - Friday:
6:30 a.m. Mass

Spanish Catholic Mass
Sunday: 5 p.m.
at NAVSTA Chapel

Protestant Worship
Sunday: 9 a.m.

Spanish Protestant
Worship
Sunday: 11 a.m.

Bible Study
Sunday: 6 p.m.
Wednesday: 7 p.m.



Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Patrick Winham, a Trooper with Joint Task Force Guantanamo, pours two drinks while using a criss-cross method. Winham was a bartender in Atlanta and participated in flair bartending competitions before joining the Navy. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Sgt. Michael Baltz

Winham can flair

**Army Sgt.
Michael Baltz**

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Take two bottles, throw them up into the air, spin them three times, catch them with opposite hands, pour the drinks, then drop the bottles and catch them with the original hands. Sounds easy, right?

That is the trick that helped Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Patrick Winham win a flair bartending competition.

“I was a competitive flair bartender,” said Winham, who is with Joint Task Force Guantanamo. “I started as a server and watched guys behind the bar doing tricks, which got my curiosity, so I started trying it myself.”

Flair bartending can be found at local and high-end bars. It is considered a sport and competitors compete at local, national and international levels. It is a way to entertain and enhances the overall environment for customers.

“I just know the basics, but it is really fun,” said Patrick Mahabeer, the bars supervisor for Naval Station Guantanamo Bay. “It is a great way to get more tips.”

In the competitions, the bottles are filled with water, and the competitors are judged on various aspects.

“You are judged based on the amount of liquid spilled, difficulty of the trick, whether it is behind the back or under a leg,” Winham said.



I have always enjoyed competing, and I found this to be a fun way to do so.

– Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Patrick Winham

“The top three people place and can win up to a thousand dollars in a tournament.”

After practicing for several months and learning skills from other bartenders, Winham began competing.

“I won one in a small country bar called Hole in the Wall in Bunkhead, Ga. I have also placed in two others at Jillians in Atlanta,” Winham revealed. “I have always enjoyed competing, and I found this to be a fun way to do so. It also was a little

more difficult than a normal bartending gig.”

Although it is all in fun, it can be challenging.

“When you get behind the bar, it is a little harder than it

looks,” Winham said. “It takes a lot of hand-eye coordination.”

Since he has joined the Navy, he is only able to maintain his skills at parties, but after the Navy, Winham plans on looking into opening his own bar.

“Anytime I have a bottle in my hands, I go back to my roots and spin it around a few times. I guess you can say I am just showing off,” Winham admitted. “I am looking into opening up a bar when I get out of the Navy. I would keep the flair style going to keep a lively atmosphere.”

As for all those who wish to work on their own flair skills, Winham has a few suggestions.

“If you are interested, I suggest using bottles of water and work on spinning and letting go of the bottles,” Winham said. “You can start moving up from there when you get the hang of it.” ✨



Coast Guardsmen from Maritime Safety and Security Team 91101 board a ferry to the Leeward side of the island as they depart from a six-month tour in support of Joint Task Force Guantanamo, Nov. 20. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Spc. Cody Black

Around the



JTF



A Trooper from the Navy Expeditionary Guard Battalion shoots a 9 mm pistol at Windward Range, Nov. 20. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Spc. Cody Black



The Wolfpack, a team comprised of Navy Expeditionary Guard Battalion members, dominated the Morale, Welfare and Recreation flag football league with a season record of 13-3 and a playoff record of 4-0. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Staff Sgt. Emily Russell

