

THE WIRE

A JTF Journal



Queen conchs

Observe base restrictions

Safety first

Safety Office looks out for Troopers



For love of country

Navy Chief Kirk Deleonardo
Departmental Lead Chief Petty Officer

It seems to me that one of the things that's lacking nowadays, back in the states, is the sense of patriotism that was seen right after the Sept. 11 attacks.

Remember that?

Those of you who do might still remember how proud you felt simply to be a United States citizen. It's become popular to be critical of the United States, never mind the fact that it is the country we swore to defend.

There's a story I'd like to tell, the kind of story that I always chuckle to myself about. In the Navy, we'd call it a "sea story."

Toward the end of June 2007, outgoing British Prime Minister Tony Blair paid a visit to my outpost in Basra, Iraq. We had a large number of British military in Iraq, so it made sense for him to visit and say his goodbyes.

I asked if I could attend tea with the prime minister, which in reality was what we'd call a picnic. Three Americans were seated at one table, myself included.

To my left was an Army first lieutenant (my boss) and to my right was Marine Corps Lance Cpl. Dixon, my good friend. Blair made his way from table to table, saying a few words and engaging in general small talk. Eventually he seated himself at my table ... hilarity and patriotism ensued.

He was inquiring about how Americans felt working alongside British soldiers. Dixon piped up and told Blair that an American just happened to be present at this very table and he directed the prime minister's attention to me.

"Sir, you're in luck," Dixon replied. "I happen to be sitting beside a Yank - er, American."

I caught a glance from Dixon. Surely he had set me up, as he knew what kind of an answer I would give.

"So how is it working alongside the British military," Blair asked.

"Sir, I greatly enjoy serving alongside British forces. You folks have been our staunchest allies throughout various key times in our nation's history, not to mention the great contributions the British have made to the world."

Blair raised an eyebrow and asked, "What contributions would those be?"

I replied, "the Beatles, sir. The United Kingdom could have stopped at one Beatle, but they gave us four. That pales in comparison to the best thing to ever come out of the UK."

"What would that be?" he asked.

I replied, "the United States, sir."

The people at the table all broke out laughing, and, yes, even the prime minister was laughing pretty hard. I heard my boss give a very nervous chuckle.

"You Americans are one of a kind, and it's that kind of cheek that we depend on," Blair said.

So, why tell that story? America is a great country. People love us because of what we have and hate us for the same reason.

I love America. I know in today's society that's kind of a corny thing to say, but it's true. You too should have the same sense of patriotism for the country you swore to defend! 🇺🇸



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COVER:

The Easter Bunny hugs a service member's daughter before an egg hunt at Cooper Sports Complex, April 3. - JTF Guantanamo photo by Navy Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Joshua Nistas

BACK COVER:

Easter eggs lay scattered at Cooper Field before the egg hunt starts, April 3. - JTF Guantanamo photo by Navy Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Joshua Nistas

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 regard 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.

One kitchen, two missions



An employee of Seaside Galley and member of the detainee food preparation team prepares salads for the detainees' lunches, April 6. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Air Force Staff Sgt. Angela Ruiz

Air Force Staff Sgt. Angela Ruiz
JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Employees at the Seaside Galley have a mission that distinguishes it from any other Navy galley – anywhere. In addition to providing full food-service to the Troopers and civilians who support Joint Task Force Guantanamo, they cook for the detainees.

“No other galley in the Navy supports detainees,” said Tim Pfingsten, Seaside Galley’s detainee food preparation section manager. “That’s what sets this galley apart from any other galley in the Navy, the special kind of mission we do here.”

Seaside Galley provides approximately 1,500 meals daily for JTF Guantanamo’s service members, including providing meals for Kittery Café. The galley works around the clock to provide breakfast, lunch, dinner and midnight meals to accommodate service members’ different shifts.

The Seaside Galley does its part in supporting the JTF mission by providing service members deployed here with the

closest thing to a home-cooked meal, and by keeping detainees’ food safe, humane, healthful and satisfying.

Working out of the same kitchen that



prepares meals for Troopers, the detainee food preparation section works in shifts from the early hours of the morning to well after dark each day. Different cooks prepare the detainee and Trooper meals separately.

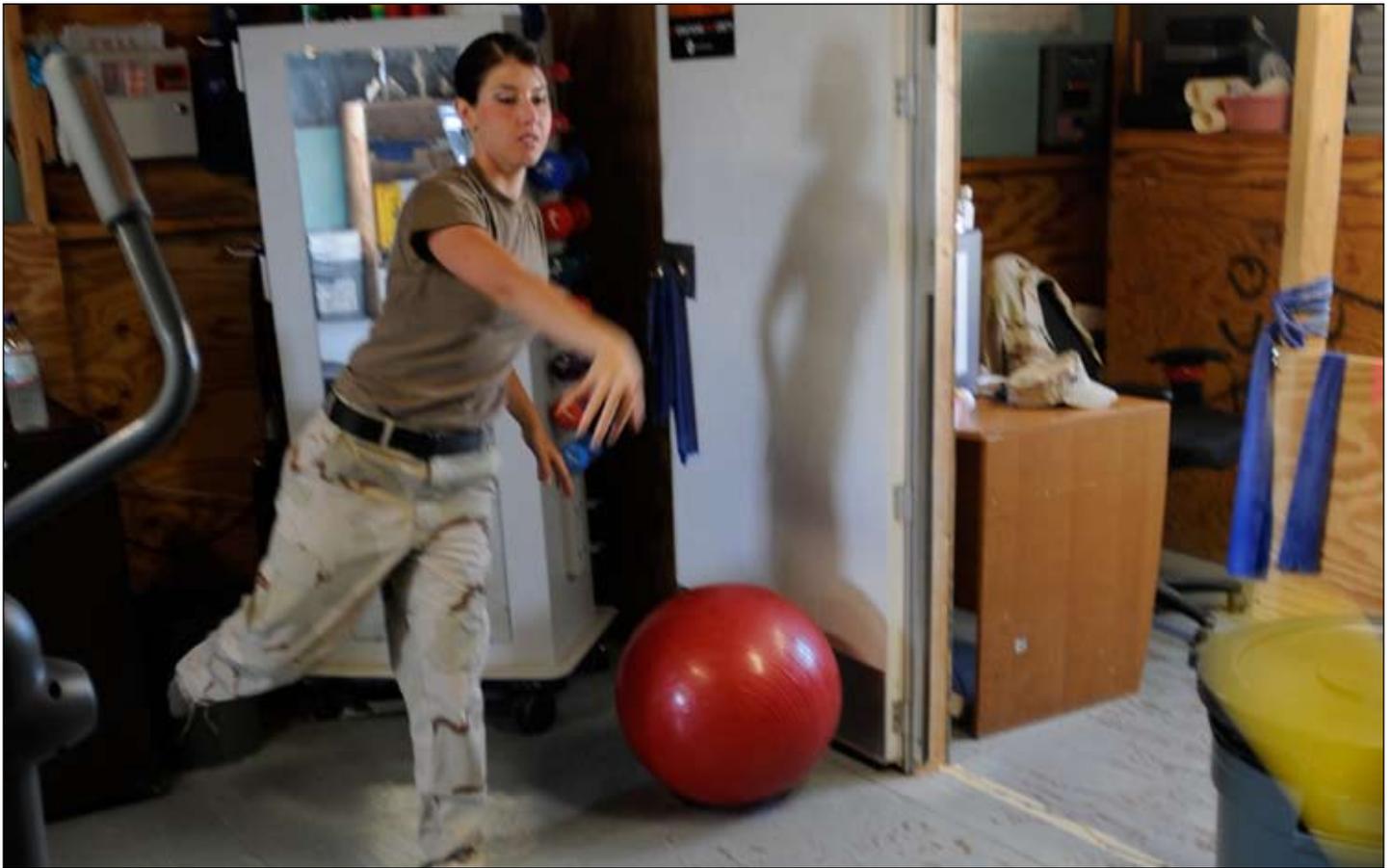
The team is charged with making accommodations for the detainees’ diets, including six different meal types that center around religion, nutritional value and medical needs. On-site dietitians on-hand ensure the meals are properly prepared.

To provide quality service to the Joint Detention Group and to the JTF, communication is critical. The Seaside Galley detainee food preparation manager and the JDG liaison communicate daily when it comes to the detainees’ meals.

“The camps and the galley have a good relationship,” said Army Sgt. 1st Class Robert Tapia, liaison between the JDG and Seaside Galley. “Both of the organizations are working toward a common goal of providing quality meals to fit their nutritional needs.”

Sometimes, meeting those needs creates some interesting situations, and Tapia must be there to make it all work.

“I try to resolve problems whether they are big or small,” Tapia said. “The result is everyone is constantly working to improve the detainees’ meals.” ☆



Hospital Corpsman Julie Amendola, with Joint Task Force Guantanamo medical operations, exercises at physical therapy in order to recover from a fractured fibula she suffered while skateboarding, March 31. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Navy Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Kellie Bliss

Safety keeps JTF mission-ready

Navy Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Kellie Bliss
JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Personal safety is often overlooked, but is always important. The Safety Office ensures and oversees the safety of all Joint Task Force Guantanamo Troopers.

The safety office advises the JTF leadership on all safety issues, identifies safety defects, initiates solutions to those defects, and plans, organizes and coordinates long term safety requirements.

“Our mission is to ensure the safety of all JTF personnel,” said Army Capt. Brian Chianese, officer-in-charge of the safety office. “This allows the JTF leadership to have their full force to use to get their missions accomplished.”

For the safety office’s mission to be successful, they conduct safety inspections throughout the JTF. In addition, they provide safety briefs for newcomers. They also hand out safety magazines and flyers. These tools help raise awareness for the Troopers.

“When Troopers are aware it helps keep them safe without injury, which enables commanders to keep personnel mission-ready at all times,” Chianese said.

Sporting activities are one of the leading causes of injury on base.

“The Joint Troop Clinic is responsible for about 2,000 people, so we see a lot of injuries,” said Army Sgt. Lee McClure, non-commissioned officer-in-charge of the JTC. “We see about five new sport-related injuries a day.”

Though some injuries may be unpreventable, McClure stresses the importance of recovery.

“Recovery is the key to getting Troopers back to mission-ready

status,” McClure said. “Everyone is needed somewhere and when you are in a light duty status, it affects everyone around you.”

Chianese became the OIC of the safety office March 18, and wants to increase Troopers safety awareness.

“We would like to put stuff out on a weekly basis, like safety grams, to all Troopers to let them know there is someone looking out for them,” Chianese said. “[Hopefully it will] help prevent incidents in the future.”

Army Staff Sgt. Michael Mott, NCOIC for the safety office, said he has seen and heard of many service members being involved in a lot of accidents as a result of unsafe actions.

“Two Troopers were cutting hedges with a lawnmower, and one got cut up pretty bad,” Mott said. “Safety is a part of everyday life, and if you don’t do things in a safe manner you will be one of those people learning the hard way.”

While on the job everyday, it is vital to remember the tools that are available to remain safe in your environment and successfully complete your mission.

“A lot of the time, standard operating procedures will tell you how to be safe,” Mott said. “There are things incorporated to keep you safe, and if not, just think about what could happen before and go through the risk management process.”

All JTF commands have a designated safety representative with additional information on considerations for individual jobs. The safety office is located in the same building as the Equal Opportunity Office in Camp America and is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. To contact the JTF Safety Office directly, call ext. 9948. ★

Quick Reaction Force: Prepared

Navy Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class
Shane Arrington
JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Firefighters hope to never be called, insurance companies hope to never have to pay and members of the Rhode Island Army National Guard's 115th Military Police Company's Quick Reaction Force hope to never have to put their training to use.

The QRF is trained for "what if" scenarios such as situations that require extra perimeter security, bomb threat response and establishing checkpoints and roadblocks if necessary.

"They are our 24-hour standby group," said Army Capt. Nicolas Pacheco, 115th MP Company commander. "They are constantly training and are always available to defend Joint Task Force Guantanamo, should a situation occur that requires extra defense measures."

Army 1st Lt. Aaron Rozovsky, QRF platoon leader, said the most prominent scenario at JTF Guantanamo that the team might face would be responding to a riot in the detention camps.

"It's something we hope never happens," Rozovsky said. "If it does, we'll respond to it effectively and be successful."

Rozovsky's confidence in his team comes from leading them through many hours of training in a variety of possible contingencies.

"Training is a fundamental part of QRF," Rozovsky said. "We would not be successful if we didn't train constantly. We train on any situation we might be called to respond to. Everyone has to know how to carry out their role and everyone else's role on the team."

Rozovsky also touched on the importance of instilling quality leader traits in junior service members.

"We also focus on developing leadership," he said. "Every E-4 should know how to do the job of an E-5, every E-5 should be learning from and taking on the responsibilities of an E-6, and so on, all the way up the chain."

Physical training is another focus of the QRF team. PT enhances mission capability, but can sometimes be tough.

"The physical demands of QRFs are great," Rozovsky said. "Take being in a riot, for example. You might have to be out for hours with a lot of equipment on, in less than favorable weather. It stays pretty hot here year-round and it's important to be able to handle a situation like that should it happen."

The physical demands are perhaps one of the reasons female Soldiers are rare within QRF platoons. Army Spc. Sarah King said, along with other female Soldiers in the 115th MP Company's QRF



Members of the Rhode Island Army National Guard's 115th Military Police Company Quick Reaction Force take a break during training, Nov. 3, 2009. - JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Sgt. Emily Greene

platoon, that she is proud to be part of such an important mission.

"Before us they weren't going to allow females on the QRF team," King said. "We're the first platoon in [the 115th MP Company's] QRF to have females. It's a great feeling."

Pacheco says his hand-selected team is always ready for the situations they hope to never have happen, and in the end, all of their training and work is simply to backup JTF Guantanamo's mission to provide safe, humane, legal and transparent care and custody of detainees. ★



Seaside Galley, in Camp America, provides Joint Task Force Guantanamo Troopers with a variety of fruits and vegetables to help fulfill nutritional goals. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Marine Corps Lance Cpl. Justin R. Wheeler

Eating right for the fight

Marine Corps Lance Cpl. Justin R. Wheeler
JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

World-class athletes today would not be at their level of fitness without nutritional goals. Nutrition plays a key part in all aspects of healthy living.

The professionals say to be fit, service members need to eat right.

“People set fitness goals,” said Everton Hylton, an aerobics instructor for Morale, Welfare and Recreation. “Whether it’s losing fat or bodybuilding, nutrition is the key for completing these goals.”

The process begins with choosing a fitness goal. These goals range from running long distances, building large muscles, reducing fat or simply sustaining a healthy life. With a fitness goal in mind a person can begin to set his or her nutritional goals, he said.

To lose weight, the person has to remain physically active and burn more than his or her daily caloric intake. However, losing weight and burning fat can be considered two different things, Hylton said. For some, losing weight requires muscle loss. To gain weight, less calories should be

burned than taken in daily.

Along with calorie intake, a person should focus on consuming all of the daily required nutrients. Many of those nutrients come from sources other than food.

“Vitamins are crucial for our health and vitality,” said Kurt Schuster, a certified personal trainer from ready-2b-fit.com. “One of the critical functions of vitamins is energy production.”

It has been observed that people who take daily vitamins find themselves with more stamina and energy, according to Schuster.

“You should also eat multivitamins to help the metabolic process,” Hylton said.

The food, liquids and vitamins people ingest play a major role in successful dieting, but in the military these conditions cannot always be met.

“In the military, you’re living in areas where you may have to eat at one location,” Hylton said. “Food comes in wide varieties, but you can’t get everything you want in the galley.”

Even though military cafeterias provide Troopers with enough variety to sustain a healthy lifestyle, the cafeterias may

not provide enough variety of nutrients necessary for a specific fitness goal, he said.

“It’s tough on military service members,” Hylton said. “When you’re on a ship and off to sea you may not have all you need onboard.”

Despite these restrictions, most service members meet physical standards issued by their branch of service.

Hylton believes service members could perform better if they exposed themselves to information about nutrition and fitness.

“Information about nutrition and fitness is everywhere, but people are generally not exposed to it,” Hylton said. “Expose yourself to the info out there.”

On base MWR provides a variety of resources to learn about nutrition and fitness, ranging from MWR gym staff providing nutritional guidance or workout regime. Microfit does free physical fitness assessments, but an appointment must first be made at ext. 2285.

Nutrition and dieting are important to help reach military physical standards and ultimately represent the U.S. Armed Forces as a physically fit force. ★

... do as the Romans do?



**Navy Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class
Zachary Harris**
JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

What do an artist, a street magician, a sausage king, a male model and a writer all have in common?

In “When in Rome,” they are all vying for the affection of Beth, a career-oriented woman more concerned with her job than her love life.

Beth, played by Kristen Bell, is an up-and-coming museum curator who is passionate about her job – so much so that her social life has fallen by the wayside. The film opens with a charity event for an art museum in New York City where we learn that Beth came out of a rough relationship a year ago.

The reason for the breakup? Her obsession with her career.

Later that night, Beth receives a call from her sister, Joan, played by Alexis Dziena, who excitedly informs her that she’s getting married in Rome in a few days. Beth rushes off to Italy while coordinating a major fundraising event that will either

make or break her career.

Unfortunately, upon arriving in Rome, Beth discovers she has no cell phone signal and struggles to keep tabs on her planning team back in New York.

It is then she notices that Nick (Josh Duhamel) is quite capable of making and receiving phone calls. Chemistry begins to develop through their first interaction as Beth attempts to use Nick for cellular capability. The two hit it off and everything is going well until later in the evening when Beth sees Nick escorting a woman from the courtyard outside of the wedding hall.

In an inebriated state, Beth sits down on the Fountain of Love, a local landmark reputed to affect all who throw coins in and wish for romance. Beth is quite drunk at this point and begins picking coins out of the fountain. As she removes the coins from the fountain, several cut scenes ensue showing the different men who have wished for love.

This is the part of the movie where the humor begins to pick up. The would-be suitors randomly run into Beth on the streets of New York City and, in their own

comedic way, begin to stalk her. Beth has no idea why these suitors are chasing her down at what seems to be every corner of every street.

She receives a call from her sister in Italy; apparently Beth made front page headlines for her drunken escapades in the fountain. Joan informs Beth that by picking up the coins from the fountain, she has magically caused the five men to fall in love with her.

The story is formulaic from here on out. The career-minded woman pushes away the guy she’s falling in love with so she doesn’t get hurt again. The guy is persistent and in the end the obvious happens. It’s getting from Point A to Point B in this movie that can be hysterical at times.

The suitors are absolutely hilarious. Jon Heder, of “Napoleon Dynamite,” fame as Lance, a Criss Angel-esque street magician, is particularly funny. He attempts to woo Beth with his “amazing” magic skills that include stealing her watch repeatedly.

Will Arnett plays Antonio, a starving artist, who proclaims that Beth is his muse. His devotion results in a nude mural of his muse on the side of a building on a busy city street.

Dax Shepard is Gale, an egocentric male model, and plays the role of the conceited jerk perfectly.

Danny DeVito plays Al, a sausage king who attempts to win over Beth with elaborate meat baskets and donations to her museum. DeVito shines in this small role that reaffirms his ability to do comedy. There’s just something hilarious about giving a woman a basket of meat.

The story line for “When in Rome” is formulaic, sappy and predictable. Kristen Bell, who was funny in “Forgetting Sarah Marshall” is overshadowed by the comedic powerhouse cast as her suitors.

Duhamel does a better job than Bell in the humor department, but it leads the viewer to believe that the script was lacking in many areas. The highlight of the movie is numerous interactions with crazy suitors who never fail to deliver a laugh.

When a movie is made from a worn-out concept, it helps when the writing is solid for all characters throughout the movie. Unfortunately, it seems as though the wordsmiths who penned “When in Rome” spent more time on the brief interactions Beth has with her stalkers, than on developing the main character in a more interesting light, and that’s nothing to fall in love with. ☆

PG-13

91 minutes

Rating: ★★☆☆☆

Chief Petty Officers' Birthday Triathlon

JTF Guantanamo photos by
Navy Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class
Kellie Bliss

Joint Task Force Guantanamo Troopers and residents of Naval Station Guantanamo Bay gathered at Windmill Beach to participate in a 250-yard swim, 10-mile bike and three-mile run in celebration of the Chief Petty Officers' Association birthday, April 3. The proceeds from this event went to the CPOA scholarship fund.



Samantha and Holly Clevenger cheer for their father, Navy Lt. j.g. Clay Clevenger and their dog, Lacy.



Navy Lt. Eamon O'Reilly poses with his first place trophy.



Command Master Chief Petty Officer Scott Fleming, JTF Guantanamo senior enlisted leader, writes a number on Mr. Chris Gabor.



Participants run together during the three-mile portion of the Chief Petty Officers' Birthday Triathlon.



Navy Lt. j.g. Ben Skaaland tags-in his teammate, Navy Construction Mechanic 1st Class Jimie Bartholomew.



Navy Lt. Eamon O'Reilly emerges from the ocean after swimming during the triathlon.



Conchs populate the beaches at Guantanamo Bay, but are limited in number. – Courtesy photo

Beautiful but limited

Army Sgt. Athneil Thomas
JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

They're beautiful, interesting and symbolic of the Caribbean, but they're also declining in numbers – and taking one right now will get you in trouble.

Conch shells cannot be taken March 1 to May 31 anywhere in the Caribbean. It's during those months the queen conch is in the midst of its reproductive season, and removing conchs from the surrounding waters is off-limits.

"This is not just a GTMO thing," said Jose Montalvo, natural resource program manager at the Public Works Department. "Breeding season is observed throughout the Caribbean to try to protect the species."

The queen conch is a favorite for snorkelers and divers because of its attractive, hard, spiral shaped shell, which has a glossy pink or orange colored interior.

According to the National Oceanic and

Atmospheric Administration's Office of Protected Resources Web site, queen conchs can be found throughout the Caribbean Sea and the Gulf of Mexico, and ranges as far north as Bermuda and as far south as Brazil. They are typically found in sand, sea grass beds and coral reef habitats in warm, shallow water, generally not deeper than 70 feet.

The NOAA site also states that throughout the range the abundance of the Queen Conch is declining, mainly as a result of overfishing and poaching.

As they can provide a meal for anyone willing to make the effort, their meat is on many menus throughout the region, but it is also used as fish bait. The sale of the shells, which are used for jewelry or sold as ornaments, is a by-product of the meat trade.

Montalvo believes that preventing the depletion of this creature in the waters surrounding Guantanamo Bay begins with education. Members of the Naval Station receive an initial brief from the environmental office covering the

regulations about fishing and shelling. While JTF Troopers may not receive the same brief, they are reminded through public service announcements and during in-processing.

Queen conch can grow up to 12 inches in length and weigh around five pounds, but during the open season only those that are nine inches or longer, from tip to tip, or measure at least one-eighth of an inch at the lip can be taken. Even then, the limit is only one per person per day.

Other high demand items are the triton's trumpets and starfish. The limit for triton's trumpets is one per day, but live starfish, coral fans or sponges are prohibited.

So before you don your gear and prepare to raid the sea of its fine jewels, make sure you read the rules and regulations about Guantanamo Bay's marine life.

For more information about marine life commonly seen in Guantanamo Bay, contact Naval Station Guantanamo Bay's PWD at ext. 4662 or ext. 4493. Additional information can be found in the outdoor recreation instruction, 1710.10. ☆

Stay classy with proper attire

Navy Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Zachary Harris
JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Being part of a tenant command is a lot like renting an apartment. There are rules and regulations your landlord gives you that you must follow for the contract to be valid. As a Trooper stationed at Joint Task Force Guantanamo the same rules apply.

We are a tenant command of Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, which means we must follow certain policies set by the base commander. One of those policies, NAVSTAGTMOINST 1020.3, discusses guidelines for wearing appropriate civilian attire.

After wearing a uniform all day in the hot, humid weather, it's understandable that service members want to get more comfortable in their civilian clothes. As nice as it is to put on a pair of basketball shorts and a T-shirt and relax, Troopers must remember that we represent the military at all times, regardless if it's during the duty day or not.

"Wearing proper civilian attire is important on any military installation and probably even more so here," said Army Command Sgt. Maj. Gary Fowler, Joint Detention Group command sergeant major. "Proper attire fits naturally within the good order and discipline realm."

Service members are not expected to be covered from head to toe in fashions from 1950s; however, that does not give license to

present a sloppy appearance. If you choose to dress in the latest fashions and styles, make good choices and ensure your wardrobe is appropriate for the occasion.

"We must present ourselves as a professional member of the military when at work and out in public," Fowler said. "It goes without saying that the community and our families deserve it as well."

Even the most junior personnel should realize that wearing anything with slogans, words or pictures that any reasonable person would find offensive should not be worn. Wearing pants that are excessively torn or frayed or that expose one's underwear or private parts of a person's body are prohibited. This includes jeans or skirts that are purchased already "stressed" with rips and frays manufactured into the clothing. T-shirts, blouses, shirts and dresses should be worn modestly, taking care to not expose midriff or the private parts of one's body.

Imagine your civilian attire as a sort of an off-duty uniform. Wear your "civvies" with the pride you wear your military uniform. You don't walk around looking like a mess in uniform, so why would you do so in your civilian attire?

"I highly encourage all JTF Troopers to follow the policy," Fowler said. "Demonstrate your professionalism by making [necessary] corrections and thanking [officers and non-commissioned officers] for pointing it out." ☆



HEAT INDEX FLAGS



White Flag (WBGT Index of less than 80 degrees Fahrenheit)
Extremely intense physical exertion may precipitate heat exhaustion or heatstroke. Caution should be taken.



Green Flag (WBGT Index of 80 to 84.9 degrees Fahrenheit)
Heavy exercise for un-acclimatized personnel should be conducted with caution and under constant supervision.



Yellow Flag (WBGT Index of 85 to 87.9 degrees Fahrenheit)
Strenuous exercises, such as marching at standard cadence, will be suspended for un-acclimatized personnel in their first two or three weeks. Outdoor classes in the sun should be avoided.



Red Flag (WBGT Index of 88 to 89.9 degrees Fahrenheit)
All physical training will be halted for personnel who have not become thoroughly acclimatized by at least 12 weeks of living and working in the area. Personnel who are thoroughly acclimatized may carry on limited activity not to exceed six hours per day.



Black Flag (WBGT Index of 90 degrees Fahrenheit and above)
All strenuous outdoor-physical activity will be halted for all personnel.

DEADLINE APPROACHING



**MAKE SURE TO
TURN YOUR TAXES
IN BEFORE MIDNIGHT OF APRIL 15.**



Out of the park

Air Force Capt. Bo Wilkerson, manpower officer for the Joint Personnel Center at Joint Task Force Guantanamo, swings and connects, hitting a homerun during the April Fools' all-night softball tournament held by Morale, Welfare and Recreation, April 2. In honor of the April Fools' tournament teams had to the run the bases backwards. This twist was fun for spectators watching, as well as difficult and frustrating for players to adjust to. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Spc. Tiffany Addair

Boots on the Ground

by Army Spc. Cody Black

What is your favorite MWR amenity?

Army Cpl. David K. King

Navy Religious Program Specialist 2nd Class Jonathan M. Jappe

Army Staff Sgt. Rebecca L. Rogers

Navy Yeoman 2nd Class Michele A. Sylvester



"The softball fields. For a moment you can forget you are in GTMO."



"The gym. It allows us to get into great shape while we're here."

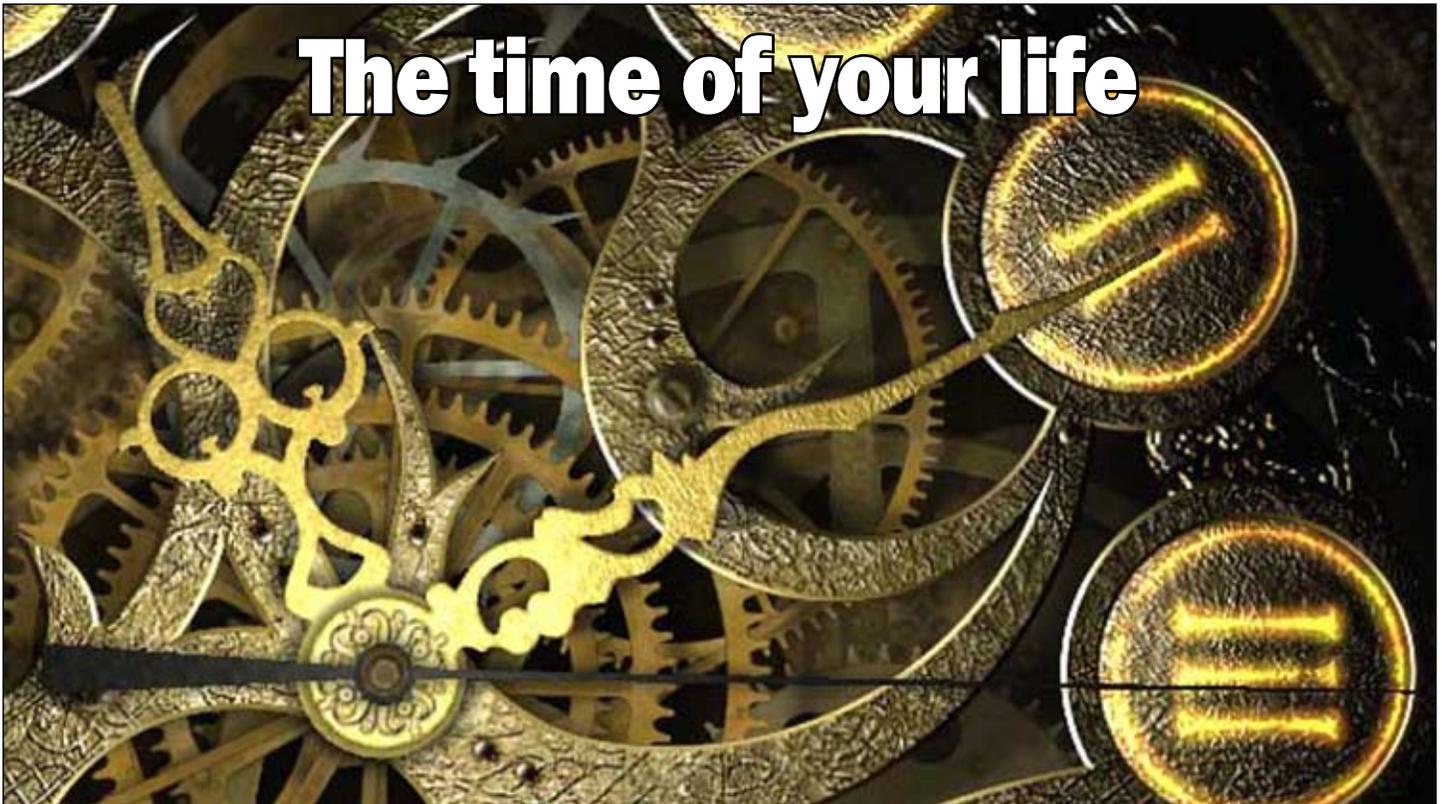


"Boating, because I like to be able to relax in the Caribbean."



"Wednesday bowling, because there is free pizza and bowling."

The time of your life



Air Force Lt. Col. William B. Ferrell
JTF Guantanamo Command Chaplain

Deployments are interesting experiences. They have a specific beginning date and a specific end date, and for that period of time, the deployment location, your mission and the particular group of people you are deployed with nearly become your whole world.

You are separated from family, friends, familiar surroundings and activities you enjoy in the “real” world.

Many times this kind of situation results in the development of a mindset that “my life is on hold until I get out of here.” Many people even put one of those countdown timers on their computer desktop so they can track, sometimes down to the second, how much longer it will be until they can get back to their life.

In reality, deployments are a slice of our lives that, in many ways, parallels the whole.

Our life had a specific starting point.

Each of us lives our life within particular physical locations and social groups. Each of us has a mission or purpose for our life.

Though we don’t like to think about it, each of our lives will come to an end.

In this area, the difference between a deployment and the rest of your life is that you don’t know when that time will come.

That means that we need to treat every moment of our life as a precious gift, even when we are “stuck” on a deployment. None of us can afford to waste time waiting until we get back to the “real” world.

So the question is, what are you going to do with this time that you have now?

Of course, there are limits on your choices while you are on deployment, but the truth is we always have limits on our choices. The key part to understand is that we always have choices.

The first thing I would encourage you to do, if you haven’t done it already, is to discover the mission or purpose for your life.

For many people this flows from their

relationship with God. For some it is found in family relationships. For others it could be an educational goal or furthering a career. The point is, if you don’t know where you want to go you are not likely to get there.

The other important thing about a mission or purpose for your life is that it needs to be something bigger than your own self gratification. Most people who report being happy or satisfied with their lives have invested their life in something bigger than themselves or someone other than themselves.

Don’t fall into the trap of just marking time until you can get back to your life. This is the time of your life.

Your time here can be filled with meaning and purpose if you decide to make it happen. Figure out what you can accomplish during your time here that moves you closer to your goals for your life.

Don’t count the days, make the days count! 🍀

GTMO Religious Services

Daily Catholic Mass

Mon. - Fri. 5:30 p.m.
Main Chapel

Mon. - Fri. 6:30 p.m.*
Troopers’ Chapel

Vigil Mass

Saturday 5 p.m.

Main Chapel

Mass

Sunday 9 a.m.

Main Chapel

Protestant Worship

Sunday 9 a.m.

Troopers’ Chapel

Islamic Service

Friday 1:15 p.m.

Room C

Jewish Service

FMI call 2628

LORIMI Gospel

Sunday 8 a.m.

Room D

Seventh Day Adventist

Saturday 11 a.m.

Room B

Iglesia Ni Cristo

Sunday 5:30 a.m.

Room A

Pentecostal Gospel

Sunday 8 a.m.

Room D

LDS Service

Sunday 9 a.m.

Room A

Liturgical Service

Sunday 10 a.m.

Room B

General Protestant

Sunday 11 a.m.

Main Chapel

United Jamaican

Fellowship

Sunday 11 a.m.

Building 1036

Gospel Service

Sunday 1 p.m.

Main Chapel

GTMO Bay Christian

Fellowship

Sunday 6 p.m.

Main Chapel

Bible Study

Wednesday 7 p.m.

Troopers’ Chapel

The Truth Project

Bible study

Sunday 6 p.m.

Troopers’ Chapel

*Time Change



Army Spc. Vaughn A. Francis, 786th Combat Sustainment and Support Battalion, Virgin Islands Army National Guard, describes one of the coins he has received at Joint Task Force Guantanamo. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Staff Sgt. Shereen Grouby

Challenge coin achievement

Army Staff Sgt. Shereen Grouby
JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

The first impression many people have of Army National Guard Spc. Vaughn A. Francis leads them to conclude that he is a reserved person. But this Joint Task Force Guantanamo Trooper's unassuming manner hides a determination that has earned him recognition for the work he has done at Guantanamo Bay.

Francis is a member of the 786th Combat Services Support Battalion of the Virgin Islands Army National Guard, assigned to JTF Headquarters and Headquarters Company. He served as a driver for many distinguished visitors through the Joint Visitors Bureau of JTF-Guantanamo during the first four and a half months of his deployment.

For his dedication and initiative several of those dignitaries have presented him with their challenge coins. And, for that commitment to excellence, Francis has earned his 15 Minutes of Fame.

"As a driver you meet generals and

distinguished visitors," Francis said. "While it is not a physically challenging job, you do have to be prepared and alert."

Among the many dignitaries, one of his coins was from a four-star general.

"It was a rewarding experience to receive a four-star general's coin," he said. "It shows that you are appreciated for what you did, and that makes you feel good."

Most of the six coins he has received are from military visitors like Air Force Gen. Douglas Fraser; however, they are not the only type of visitors to the JTF.

"I also received a pin from some visiting United States Marshals," Francis said. "I was able to help them during their stay here."

Military challenge coins, also known as unit coins or commanders' coins, are used as on-the-spot recognition of accomplishment or excellence. They are a declaration of the recipients' personal accomplishment and they reflect the presenter's recognition of the exceptional service or achievement.

Francis credits his personality as the reason he has received the coins and why he works well in his present position in

the Camp Commandant Office in Camp America, where he now facilitates the housing and maintenance needs of the JTF Troopers living in Camp America.

"In this position I have more responsibility on a day-to-day basis for Camp America and its housing," he said. "I issue linen and rooms based on the number of people coming in."

He said he works with both Army and Navy unit housing representatives to help resolve issues.

"I am approachable," Francis said. "And because of that, many Troopers come to me with their housing issues."

He compiles those issues and creates a list from which the local contractor works to fix.

"In this position, you mainly see the same people every day, JTF Troopers and Bremcor workers," Francis said. "But it is not that different from being a driver."

Both positions deal with people.

"You just have to be able to work with everyone you encounter," Francis said. "I never thought I would get coined, but it is a good feeling." ☆



Air Force Lt. Col. William B. Ferrell, Joint Task Force Guantanamo command chaplain, strums a guitar during the Easter "Son"-rise worship service at Windmill Beach, April 4. - JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Spc. Tiffany Addair

Around the

JTF

Air Force Tech. Sgt. Thomas Minniece, a water fuel maintenance craftsman, 186th Civil Engineering Squadron, Joint Task Force Guantanamo, removes a sink, April 1. - JTF Guantanamo photo by Navy Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Joshua Nistas



Army Spc. Katherine McDanal, a light-wheeled vehicle mechanic with the 525th Military Police Battalion, Joint Task Force Guantanamo, performs maintenance on a Humvee at the 525th's motor pool, April 5. - JTF Guantanamo photo by Navy Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Joshua Nistas