

Volume 8, Issue 46

Friday, January 11, 2008

THE WIRE

A News Magazine

***Buzby charts the course
Detainee Movement Ops
JDG Commander
2008 Pay & Benefits
X-Ray six years later***

Learning from the JTF experience

By Army Chaplain

(Maj.) Daniel Jones

JTF Guantanamo Command Chaplain

The readiness officer on the other end of the line said, “Chaplain Jones, you’re going to Gitmo.” My first response was: “Where?” So began the journey that brought me here last February and comes to a close in a matter of days. My time here has been hectic but fun, long but rewarding, maddening but mellowing (hang on the reef at 35 feet and watch the beauty of God’s creation). Two things smack me about Gitmo apart from the thoughts that just the location itself brings to mind.

The first is the people. I’ve chatted with Troopers in most shops from the guards in the camps and the support folks all over the island to the command staff after briefings. We have an awesome group from bottom to top. Sometimes they can frustrate and confuse me with process or decision, but when I dig a little I find people that care deeply for the folks they work with and lead. I’ve seen tears well up in a crusty Chief’s eyes when talking about the long hours his Troopers work. I’ve seen a senior leader angry and adamant about getting better housing conditions at Tierra Kay and elsewhere.

Second is the mission. I came to Gitmo thinking it was a baby-sitting job with the world sometimes springing into tirades about the military or the current administration. It is worse than that. We live in a fish bowl and the media swings a 20 power scope up to that bowl and watches everything we do and say. They even try to tell us what to think sometimes. The mission here is very important. If we can bring to justice to just one of those responsible for the taking of innocent lives, it will be a great



victory for us and the free world.

Personally, I sometimes struggle with the ‘why?’ Why did God and country send me here? I don’t know if I have the answer to the question, but I do have some input. I learned a bunch about the joint environment that will help me in years to come. I learned to be more patient and understanding of the complex issues that brings a young Trooper into my office. I learned that God can use me in unique ways. I tell everyone that I, Dan Jones, could not do what the camp guards do. I’m just not wired that way. I’ve come to understand the pressures on command level officers as they walk the line between Trooper care and mission accomplishment. I’ve learned that contrary to myth, men and women from the different military services can work together and do it very well.

My prayer for you as I leave this place is that you also learn from your experience here. Take care of yourself and others if you’re not very good at it, get help. You serve God and country in the United States military and you are heroes. You are awesome in service and duty and you make me and everybody I know proud of you. It has been my pleasure and honor to serve you and serve with you this past year. God bless!

JTF GUANTANAMO

Commander:

Navy Rear Adm. Mark H. Buzby

Joint Task Force CMC:

Navy Command Master Chief
Brad LeVault

Office of Public Affairs:

Director:

Navy Cmdr. Rick Haupt: 9928

Deputy:

Army Lt. Col. Edward Bush: 9927

Supervisor:

Army 1st Sgt. Patrick Sellen: 3649

The Wire

Executive Editor:

Army Capt. Kevin Cowan: 3596

Editor:

Army Staff Sgt. Paul Meeker: 3651

Assistant Editor:

Army Sgt. Scott Griffin: 3594

Layout and Design:

Army Sgt. Jody Metzger: 2171

Staff Writers:

Army Sgt. Sarah Stannard: 3589

Army Spc. Shanita Simmons: 3589

Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class

William Weinert: 3592

Contact us:

Base Information: 2000

Public Affairs Office: 3651 or 3596

From the continental United States:

Commercial: 011-53-99-3651

DSN: 660-3651

Email: TheWIRE@jtfgtmo.southcom.mil

ONLINE: www.jtfgtmo.southcom.mil

ON THE COVER:

Camp X-ray, which once held many of Guantanamo’s detainees now stands as a run-down, abandoned and overgrown shell. Today, the JTF uses several camps to house detainees while continuing to provide safe and humane care and custody. (Photo by Army Capt. Kevin Cowan)



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.

Buzby charts the course for 2008



By Navy Rear Adm. Mark Buzby

Commander, JTF Guantanamo

I would first like to wish a Happy New Year to all the Troopers and civilians working in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. I continue to be incredibly proud of this command and the people who are a part of it. As I walk throughout the camps every week, I am so inspired by your ability to remain in good spirits and to maintain a high level of professionalism despite the sometimes unpleasant conditions you often face.

I am also proud of our command's accomplishments in 2007. We have successfully transferred approximately 100 detainees out of the facilities and have instituted procedures here that will help foster a calmer and less violent environment. You all have successfully safeguarded the highly volatile detainee population. With the unfortunate exception of one detainee who died of an apparent suicide, no Trooper or detainee has been seriously injured in the line of duty. The command has also improved the quality of life and services for Troopers by expanding the availability of living and recreational facilities here. You now have even more access to computers and wireless services.

As we embark on 2008, my biggest wish for the New Year is that all Troopers and Joint Task Force civilians continue to execute this mission as beautifully and professionally as they did in 2007. Our goal is to continue finding ways to execute our mission even more safely, humanely and professionally than we have in the past. Early in 2008, we plan to continue completing our \$2.5 million project to install new Cuzco III units that will be located across the street from the Navy Exchange. With this addition, more than 170

units will become available to provide Troopers with more private accommodations and laundry facilities, which is something I know many have been looking forward to.

Our most foreseeable challenge in 2008 will be taking on the task of providing support for the military commissions. Although the Joint Task Force will not actually run the legal proceedings, we will function in a support role by manning all of the security and day-to-day operations at Camp Justice. This mission is a very large effort that will require a lot of additional work on our behalf to ensure everything goes seamlessly and that justice is carried out for the detainees. Fortunately, we will soon see additional personnel arriving to help augment this mission.

In addition, early 2008 will bring new faces to the command as many Troopers' tours will come to an end. For those of you who will leave the island in January and February, I would like to thank you for your service and for performing an incredibly difficult job in such a professional manner. Many who visit the facilities here walk away very impressed by the performance and level of professionalism they observe from our Troopers. For those replacement units that will soon come aboard, I would like to remind them that we have a very important mission in fighting the Global War on Terror that requires the highest degree of professionalism. On a daily basis, we are under a microscope, so how we treat detainees is constantly being scrutinized and debated. We need to keep focused on the fact that detainees are very dangerous people. Despite that fact, we will handle detainees in a safe and humane manner.

Since we do have a constant turnover of people, we can not assume that everybody knows the process and the standard operating procedures. We must be constantly training and reinforcing the goals of the mission.

To help ensure that Troopers are mentally and physically prepared to carry out the mission, I encourage all Troopers to take advantage of the recreational facilities available in Camp America and at the naval station. This deployment provides a great opportunity for you to make a lifestyle change since Guantanamo Bay is so different than any other duty station or any other experience that most of us have had. Take advantage of the times when you are not on watch or standing duty to better yourself. Troopers assigned here can learn how to scuba dive, get their captain's license, hike, workout or take up fishing. For those individuals pursuing a college degree, this deployment is also a great opportunity to take online or in-seat courses at the local college here.

As we all continue on this journey together, I would like to once again thank everyone assigned to the JTF for their dedication and for doing a very unpleasant job in a very, very highly-skilled manner. As you all go away from this place, I believe many of you will look back on it as one of the more important things that you have done in your personal and military career. During this deployment, you have all performed a very tough job, made some good friends, and have made a real contribution to the Global War on Terror. I – and the American public – will always be in your debt. Honor Bound!

JTF conducts detainee movements safely, humanely

By Army Sgt. Sarah Stannard

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

The United States Department of Defense announced Dec. 28, the transfer of 10 detainees from the detention facilities here to the custody of Saudi Arabia. Five hundred of more than the 750 people who have been detained here since 2002 have been released as a result of an in-depth process developed by the U.S. government to evaluate current information and determine a detainee's threat level and intelligence value.

This process is the first of its kind globally, said Joint Task Force Guantanamo (JTF) Deputy Commander Army Brig. Gen. Cameron Crawford. It provides for someone detained by coalition forces during the Global War on Terror to be transferred or released to the custody of their home countries or third party nations prior to the end of hostilities – a measure that exceeds those provided stipulated the Geneva Conventions, according to Crawford.

Based on recommendations from the Office of Administrative Review for the Detention of Enemy Combatants, the Designated Civilian Official (the Hon. Gordon England, U.S. deputy secretary of defense), determines whether to continue to detain an individual, transfer this individual to the custody of another nation, or release this individual. To date, detainees have been transferred to 28 nations world wide.

A board of three field grade officers conducts annual review boards for each detainee to weigh the evidence against them, as well as determine whether their intelligence value lends itself to continued detention. A judgment of high, medium or low threat level and intelligence value is placed on each



Guard Force Troopers escort a detainee to the detainee hospital located adjacent to Camp Four here Dec. 27, 2007. The U.S. government's program to transfer and release detainees is unprecedented during a time of war. (Photo by Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Michael Billings)

detainee following the evaluation. This process is administrative and does not have any legal bearing on the lawful or unlawful status of enemy combatants detained here.

Detainees are often transferred directly back to their home country. However, if there is credible evidence that a detainee may potentially be harmed by that country, the U.S. will coordinate with a third party nation for transfer, said Army Lt. Col. James Conrad, operations officer for JTF Guantanamo.

When a determination is made to transfer custody of a detainee, the U.S. State Department notifies U.S. Southern Command and a designated official here. The designated official notifies the Staff Judge Advocate who then notifies the detainee who is subject to release. At this point, appropriate coordination for the transfer is made. The U.S. is generally responsible for transporting detainees to and from Guantanamo

Bay. All detainees released from custody of the detention facilities here have their personal effects returned to them. In addition, two new sets of clothes, shoes and a new Koran in the detainee's native language are given to the detainee upon departure.

Though the majority of detainee movement operations here include individuals being transferred off the island, there have been small numbers of individuals intercepted by coalition forces in Iraq and Afghanistan that are brought here for intelligence screening and detention, according to Conrad.

Medical personnel, specially trained security personnel, as well as translators for all detainees being transported are present during each phase of a detainee movement.

Currently there are approximately 60 detainees eligible for transfer or release here. Their transfer hinges on U.S. negotiations with these detainees' home countries.

Vargo surveys the battlefield with unwavering determination

By Army Staff Sgt. Paul Meeker

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

The commander of the Joint Detention Group, Joint Task Force Guantanamo, looks back on seven months at the helm and says that even though some of the ground conditions, such as a declining detainee population, have changed – the mission, his leadership philosophy and style and the professionalism of the Troopers remain constant.

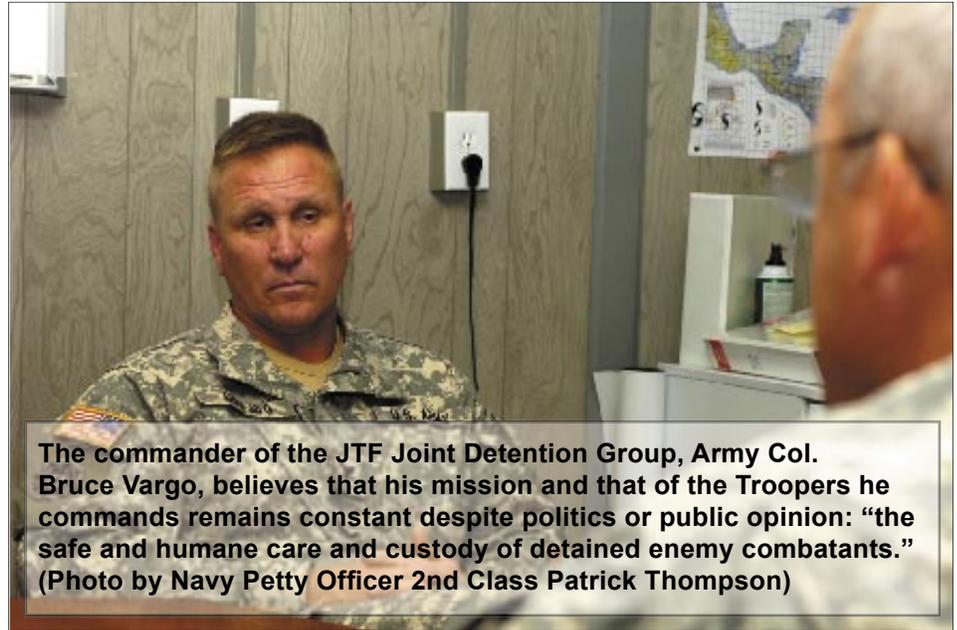
“What remains constant, whether there are one or a thousand detainees is our core mission – the safe, humane care and custody of detained enemy combatants – and that is what we focus on,” said Vargo.

Vargo stresses that mission success means keeping his Troopers engaged in a “battlefield of the mind” each and every day regardless of long hours and frequent abuse that they deal with each day. His job and that of his subordinate leaders is lightened considerably by the high caliber of Troopers he leads.

“We’ve stressed that the mind is mightier than the sword when it comes to operations within the Joint Detention Group. The Troopers understand this and demonstrate this on a day to day basis. They’re much smarter than we were at that age. They pick up on things very quickly and they leverage that knowledge into mission success,” Vargo said.

It isn’t just book knowledge or training that makes the difference on the ground for the leaders and Troopers of the Joint Detention Group, it’s the knowledge that they have the truth on their side when it comes confronting the misinformation about JDG operations that permeate much of the media.

“Rear Adm. Buzby has maintained from the outset that it is the truth and the Troopers that are key to the safe and humane, care and custody of the detainees and the number one truth is that we do things right. We do things by the rules and regulations and neither he [Buzby] nor I are going to let things be done any other way. The world watches the way we do things here and the way we do these



The commander of the JTF Joint Detention Group, Army Col. Bruce Vargo, believes that his mission and that of the Troopers he commands remains constant despite politics or public opinion: “the safe and humane care and custody of detained enemy combatants.” (Photo by Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Patrick Thompson)

things reflects core American values,” Vargo said.

Besides the Joint Detention Group’s commitment to professionalism and transparency, Vargo believes that advances in our nation’s educational systems and the quality of training Troopers receive before hitting the ground here at Guantanamo are also key determinants of the success of the detention mission.

“Those Troopers entering the military now are just as qualified or, in many cases, even more qualified in terms of their educational experiences than the average citizens on the street. Their professionalism, patriotism and drive are absolutely amazing. What they do here is extremely taxing and difficult, yet they perform magnificently,” said Vargo.

Vargo’s faith in the essential purpose and practice of the joint detention mission does not hinge exclusively on his staff’s leadership, or on the ethical practices of his Troopers alone. He also believes that given the right tools – educational tools, that is – detainees can become aware of new realities and possibilities. For this reason, Vargo fully supports the Arabic and Pashto literacy instruction that eligible detainees now receive.

“The objective of the writing instruction is so that the detainees will be able to write to their families. The

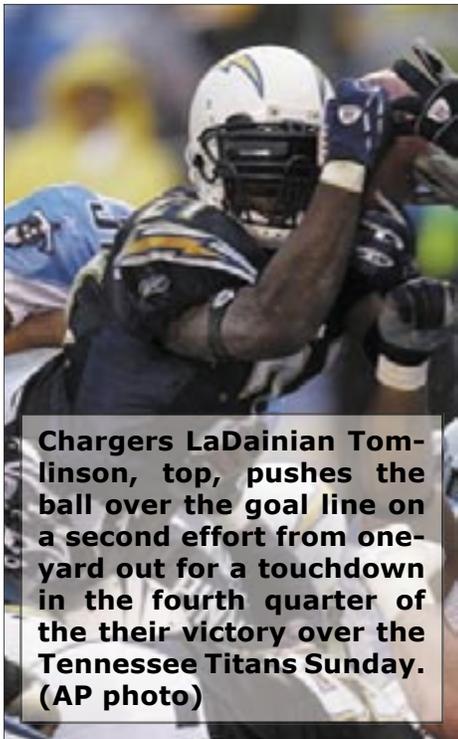
objective of the reading instruction is so that the detainees can read the Koran and further their intellectual interests,” Vargo said. “Soon, our plan is for eligible detainees to be able to receive instruction in the English language. Our objective for this is nothing more than advancing the ability for detainees and guards to be able to communicate with each other,” Vargo said.

A constant theme is evident in Vargo’s speech, a theme of direct, transparent communication between human beings – leaders and Troopers, guards and detainees, himself and the media. It is evident that this theme weighs on his heart when he considers the parents of the Troopers he directs.

“Their mothers and fathers have entrusted their [Troopers’] welfare to us and if we are not focused every single day on their welfare, then we’re wrong. This means taking care of morale issues and providing the right kind of training so that these sons and daughters can handle the situations we put them in,” said Vargo.

Vargo’s mission as Joint Detention Group commander is the safe, humane care and custody of detained enemy combatants, but his vehicle for mission success rides on the welfare of the Troopers he commands. His duty to his Troopers never moves out of his line of sight.

Week two match-ups excite NFL fans



Chargers LaDainian Tomlinson, top, pushes the ball over the goal line on a second effort from one-yard out for a touchdown in the fourth quarter of their victory over the Tennessee Titans Sunday. (AP photo)



New England Patriots quarterback Tom Brady (12) directs the team in the second quarter of NFL football action against Indianapolis Colts. (AP photo)

By Army 1st Sgt. Patrick Sellen

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

After a pretty predictable wild card weekend in the NFL, it's on to round two where the teams will be playing to advance to their conference championships. Last week we went four-for-four on our picks and will hopefully do the same this week.

Let's start with the AFC, and what I think will be the game of the weekend as the New England Patriots host the Jacksonville Jaguars. The Jags were able to pull out a thrilling victory in Pittsburgh last week, by taking advantage of several Steeler mistakes. The New England Patriots and Tom Brady don't make many mistakes and I don't believe the Jags offense can keep up with the Pats, so I am taking the Patriots in this one 31-17.

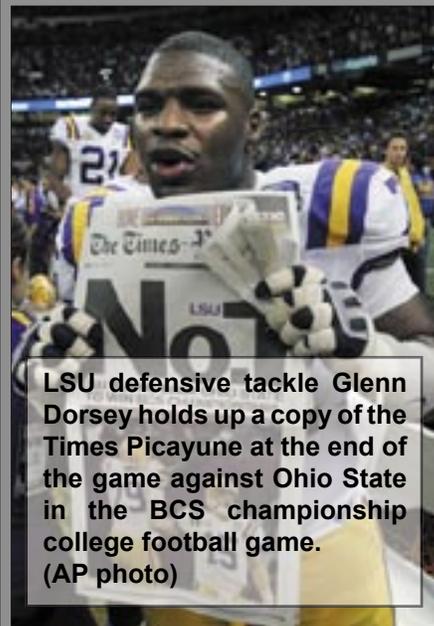
The San Diego Chargers will travel east to take on the Indianapolis Colts. San Diego defeated the Tennessee Titans with an impressive second half comeback led by quarterback Philip Rivers. However, I do not believe that the Colts secondary led by defensive player of the year Bob Sanders will allow the Chargers wide receivers to get wide open like they did against the Titans. Payton Manning and the Colts have been flying under the radar all

season, so look for a big blip this weekend – Colts 38-14.

In the NFC we have the Seattle Seahawks traveling to Green Bay to take on the Packers and the elements at Lambeau Field. The Seahawks were able to pull away from the Washington Redskins last Saturday; however, it was due more to Redskin mistakes than good play by the Seahawks. Matt Hasselback can not afford to play average against Green Bay. The Packers have found a running game and are playing outstanding defense. Old man Brett Favre and the Pack take this exciting game 20-13.

The New York Giants take their 8-1 road record to Dallas to play the Cowboys for the third time this year. Eli Manning has looked spectacular the past two weekends and the Giants defense is hitting on all cylinders. Dallas did not play their best football down the stretch and could be without Terrell Owens, who is a game time decision due to a high ankle sprain. It is very difficult to defeat a good team three times in one year and the Giants play really well on the road. With that said, Dallas gave them their only road loss and I believe they will give them their second as Tony Romo and the 'boys roll 27-14.

LSU routs OSU in 'Bowl Champ. Series' title game



LSU defensive tackle Glenn Dorsey holds up a copy of the Times Picayune at the end of the game against Ohio State in the BCS championship college football game. (AP photo)

By Army 1st Sgt. Patrick Sellen

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

The college football season concluded Monday night in convincing fashion as the Louisiana State University Tigers defeated the Ohio State Buckeyes 38-24 for the BCS title. The Buckeyes started the game strong and ran out to a 10-0 lead, but it was short-lived as the Tigers scored 10 points on their next two possessions to tie it up. On Ohio State's next drive Chris "Beanie" Wells delivered a huge stiff arm en route to a 29 yard scamper to set up a Buckeye field goal attempt in what was, in my opinion, the play of the game. On the field goal attempt the Tigers got a huge push up the middle led by Rickey Jean-Francois who blocked the kick. The Tigers never looked back. From that point on LSU dominated the game on both sides of the ball and claimed their second BCS title in four years.

Hone your combat skills, have fun at Gitmo's paintball range



Story and photo by Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class William Weinert
JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

The unforgiving field, the relentless barrage of paint pellets, the agony of defeat and the glory of victory can all be found at the Guantanamo paintball range. Every Sunday at 1 p.m. the gates to the paintball range open up for all who are brave enough to endure the rush of 'friendly' combat.

Those crazed with catching the intense thrill of combat descend upon the battlefield every weekend. Many try it out of mere curiosity and are soon sucked in by this fierce sport.

"I do it every weekend. It's a great stress reliever," said Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Talib Abdullah. "It serves two purposes. First, it gives you a great physical and mental workout and second, it helps you hone your combat skills."

Paintball battles have positive social aspects, in addition to honing basic combat instincts and relieving stress.

"It's a great way to get out and meet people," said Army Sgt. Jon Newlands, a JTF Trooper here.

The on-site store provides everything for those who are willing to suffer the imminent paint onslaught. The cost of playing is a mere \$2. For those two bucks, paintball warriors are supplied with a gun, a mask and a bottle of compressed carbon dioxide.

After that the only other necessities are paint pellets and a high threshold for pain. Paint pellets can be purchased at the store in quantities ranging from 100 - 2000 balls with prices that range from \$3.50 to \$60.00. Bravery and intestinal fortitude are not for sale - both must be found within you.

Guantanamo paintball offers free games every other Friday, and the field can be reserved for groups of ten or more on any other day.

"To play anytime you need to call the Marina at 2345 to make a reservation," said recreation assistant Donald Thomas.

At the start of each round the particular rules of each game are explained to all. While these may vary from game to game, safety is always paramount. No participants are allowed to remove their masks at any time while on the field. If caught without a mask, players will be asked to leave.

Additionally, when one player sneaks up on another player and gets closer than a prescribed safe distance, the stealthy aggressor must call out, "safety kill" and withhold fire, while the 'killed' participant walks off the field of battle for the remainder of the round. When a player is hit in the head or torso, regardless of the type of game, he or she also must leave the field for the duration of that round.

At the end of the day, bruised and sweaty warriors shake hands, congratulate each other on their performances and leave as friends . . . until the next time they descend on the brutal field of battle and prove their prowess.

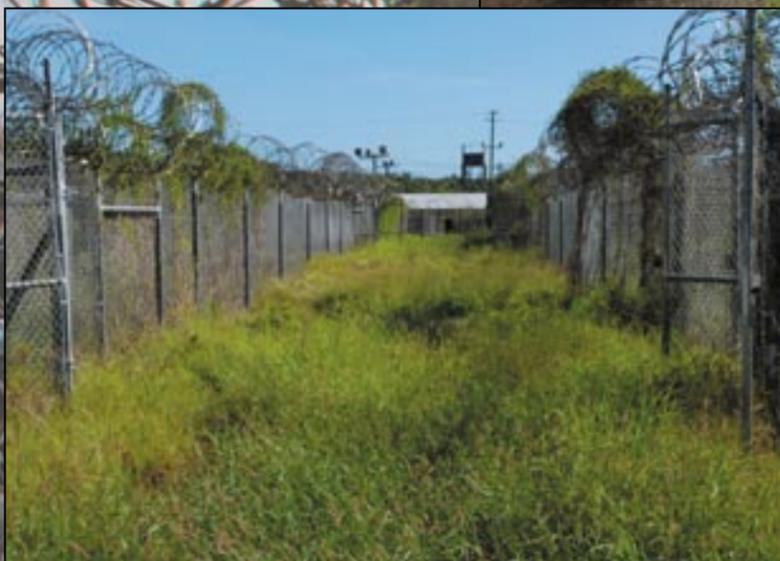
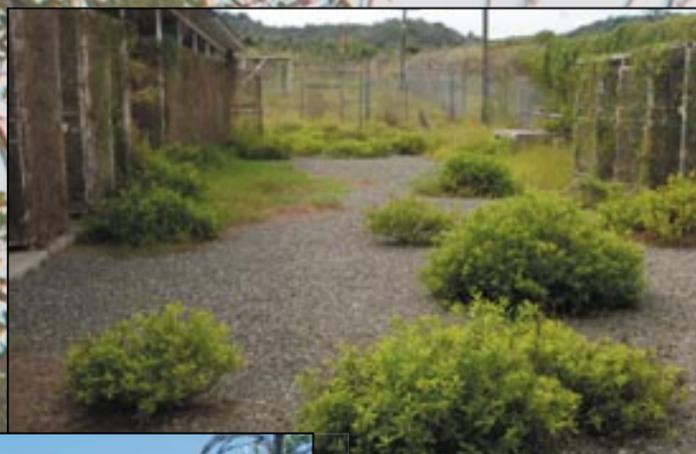
Camp X-Ray: Six Years Later

Photos by Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Michael Billings

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Jan. 11, 2007 marks six years to the day since the first enemy combatants detained by coalition forces during Operation Enduring Freedom arrived in Guantanamo. They were initially held in Camp X-Ray, which was built in the early 1980s by the U.S. government to secure disruptive migrants. In April 2002, the detainees were transferred to the newly constructed Camp Delta facilities.

Today, Camp X-Ray is abandoned, desolate and overgrown with island vegetation. It remains a historical curiosity for visitors to the island, who often tour the camp and take pictures. For many in the Joint Task Force, Camp X-Ray is a reminder of America's earliest efforts to keep enemy combatants off of the battlefield and pursue justice on behalf of the citizens who lost their lives to terrorists on Sept. 11, 2001.



2008 pay and allowances keep pace with private sector benefits

By Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class
William Weinert

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

The new year has arrived with a proposal from lawmakers to compensate military members for their service through the pay increase outlined in the new National Defense Authorization Act, which prescribes annual military spending. According to the Department of Defense, Congress proposed a 3.5 percent pay hike, but the President to date has approved only a 3 percent hike effective Jan. 1.

The military pay increase has been linked to the average pay increases in the private sector for over a decade. A quarterly economic statistic, the Employment Cost Index (ECI), tracks changes in the cost of labor for U.S. businesses and measures average civilian pay increases.

In the years between 1990 and 2000, annual military pay raises were set at one-half percent below the average private sector increases set by the ECI. This changed as Congress passed the 2000 National Defense Authorization Act which locked military pay raises at one-half percent above the private-sector wage increases for the years between 2000-2006.

The military wage increase again changed in January 2007 to be equivalent to the ECI measurement. Accordingly, a raise of 2.2 percent was set in January and later amended with a mid-year raise for some middle grade enlisted members and warrant officers in April.

In addition to this year's proposed 3.5 percent pay raise, the 2008 National Defense Authorization Act also highlights increases in reenlistment and retention bonuses, educational benefits that offer

January 1, 2008 Monthly Military Pay for Enlisted (Less than 12 Years of Service)							
Years	Less than 2	Over 2	Over 3	Over 4	Over 6	Over 8	Over 10
E-9							4,254.50
E-8						3,482.60	3,636.90
E-7	2,421.00	2,642.40	2,743.60	2,878.00	2,982.40	3,162.10	3,263.00
E-6	2,094.00	2,303.90	2,405.80	2,504.50	2,607.60	2,840.10	2,930.50
E-5	1,918.90	2,047.10	2,145.90	2,247.40	2,405.10	2,540.80	2,705.40
E-4	1,759.00	1,849.00	1,949.00	2,047.70	2,135.00	2,135.00	2,135.00
E-3	1,587.90	1,687.90	1,789.70	1,789.70	1,789.70	1,789.70	1,789.70
E-2	1,510.00	1,510.00	1,510.00	1,510.00	1,510.00	1,510.00	1,510.00
E-1	1,346.90	1,346.90	1,346.90	1,346.90	1,346.90	1,346.90	1,346.90
E-1*	1,246.00						

* For E-1 with less than 4 months of service

January 1, 2008 Monthly Military Pay for Enlisted (More than 12 Years of Service)								
Years	Over 12	Over 14	Over 16	Over 18	Over 20	Over 22	Over 24	Over 26
E-9	4,351.00	4,472.40	4,615.60	4,759.30	4,990.40	5,185.70	5,391.50	5,705.70
E-8	3,732.20	3,846.50	3,970.10	4,193.60	4,306.90	4,499.50	4,606.30	4,869.60
E-7	3,443.10	3,592.50	3,694.60	3,803.00	3,845.50	3,986.80	4,062.60	4,351.30
E-6	3,105.00	3,158.70	3,197.80	3,243.20	3,243.20	3,243.20	3,243.20	3,243.20
E-5	2,722.20	2,722.20	2,722.20	2,722.20	2,722.20	2,722.20	2,722.20	2,722.20
E-4	2,135.00	2,135.00	2,135.00	2,135.00	2,135.00	2,135.00	2,135.00	2,135.00
E-3	1,789.70	1,789.70	1,789.70	1,789.70	1,789.70	1,789.70	1,789.70	1,789.70
E-2	1,510.00	1,510.00	1,510.00	1,510.00	1,510.00	1,510.00	1,510.00	1,510.00
E-1	1,346.90	1,346.90	1,346.90	1,346.90	1,346.90	1,346.90	1,346.90	1,346.90

January 1, 2008 Monthly Military Pay for Commissioned Officers (Less than 12 Years of Service)							
Years	Less Than 2	Over 2	Over 3	Over 4	Over 6	Over 8	Over 10
O-10							
O-9							
O-8	8,749.00	9,035.20	9,225.60	9,278.70	9,515.90	9,912.40	10,004.60
O-7	7,269.70	7,607.30	7,763.70	7,887.90	8,112.70	8,334.80	8,591.80
O-6	5,388.40	5,919.40	6,307.80	6,307.80	6,331.70	6,603.40	6,639.10
O-5	4,491.70	5,059.90	5,410.50	5,476.20	5,694.60	5,825.60	6,113.10
O-4	3,875.70	4,486.40	4,785.70	4,852.50	5,130.40	5,428.20	5,798.90
O-3	3,407.40	3,862.90	4,169.40	4,545.70	4,763.10	5,002.20	5,157.10
O-2	2,943.90	3,353.10	3,862.00	3,992.40	4,074.40	4,074.40	4,074.40
O-1	2,555.70	2,659.70	3,215.20	3,215.20	3,215.20	3,215.20	3,215.20
O-3E*				4,545.70	4,763.10	5,002.20	5,157.10
O-2E*				3,992.40	4,074.40	4,204.20	4,423.00
O-1E*				3,215.20	3,433.80	3,560.50	3,690.30

additional tuition assistance for members of the Ready Reserve, and minor changes to basic housing allowances based on recipients' home of record.

"Typically changes in housing allowances are modest. Allowances reflect the costs associated with housing rental. Generally, rental prices change between 2 to 5 percent from year to year, with 'hot' markets changing from 5 to 10 percent. Housing allowances

typically change accordingly," said Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Julie Perera, Naval Station Personnel Service Detachment Leading Petty Officer.

For further information regarding pay increases, pay charts and further details related to military pay, visit <http://www.defenselink.mil/militarypay>. For the most current information on educational benefits, Troopers can refer to <http://education.military.com/education-home/>.

Gitmo environment lulls Troops to complacency



In an auto accident Dec. 13, a Trooper here veered into cement barricades going slower than the posted speed limit, 25 miles per hour. A slick, wet and narrow roadway made a generally quiet commute to work very dangerous. (Photo by Army Spec. Shanita Simmons)

By Air Force Capt. Lee Jeffords

JTF Guantanamo Safety Officer

Each of our respective services has an Operation Risk Management program, which is designed to assess risk in daily operations and provide a safe, manageable environment that mitigates or prevents “worst-case” scenarios. These lessons learned can easily be taken into our personal lives and applied to non-duty activities.

There are inherent risks in everything. We grow to have a certain level of complacency with many things as they become ingrained in our daily regimens. This complacency is the focus of personal operation risk management, taking repetitive tasks that are common place and reassessing the possibility of that “worst-case” actually happening. In evaluating some of the activities here at Guantanamo such as driving, diving and physical fitness, these behaviors become skill sets that are developed over time and certainly need reassessment to avoid complacency.

Driving does take a twist here. With drastically reduced speed limits, we can easily become lulled into believing that we are less likely

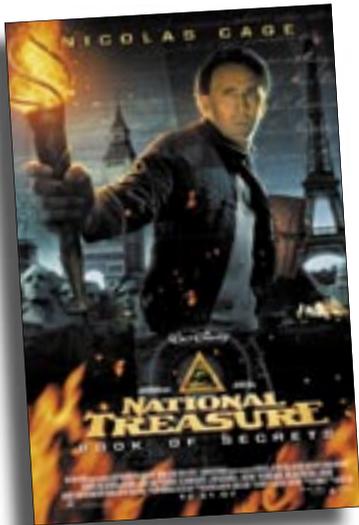
to be involved in an accident, or we can multi-task in the vehicle with more efficiency. However, throw iguanas, gravel, road construction, PT formations, cyclists, hikers and families with pets into the mix, and we have a “hazard-rich” environment that takes every bit of concentration normally used when driving anywhere in the States.

Diving melds the acts of swimming and breathing underwater, actions that seem to work against common sense. However, this can be learned through training courses and practice. Divers are trained to follow a simple list of “buddy-checks” prior to entering the water. After logging hundreds of dives, though, one may start to assume that their gear is “good-to-go” and equally, that their group of divers are equally prepared. Knowledge of equipment and the group of friends that you normally dive with help to create that sense of comfort and complacency as the actions surrounding diving become more and more familiar. Taking another look at the divers with you, think about your own actions and following the agreed upon dive plan all will help to re-engage your personal risk management processes.

Fitness programs are a critical part of our lives, especially military members. In a group activity or an individual effort, several factors need to be considered. Reflective belts are mandated for all Joint Task Force members running or walking on the streets of Guantanamo Bay, and offer a logical and sensible way to protect you. If you run in the evenings, because the temperature is cooler, you make yourself an inadvertent target for motorists. The reflective belt helps you to help yourself by increasing the range of visibility that a driver has of you. This allows for longer reaction times to prevent a vehicle from hitting you. Preparing to exercise is vital. This includes stretching and hydration, mental preparation for the event you are going to accomplish and certainly, if running, what your route will be. Situational awareness is the key to managing your risk in daily physical fitness programs.

No one is immune. While climbing Mont Blanc in France, four climbers (all with several years of experience) died in an effort to reach the peak. As the weather became progressively worse, the climbers continued despite being aware of the hazards. French police officials were quoted as saying: “The group decided on this climb without taking into account the poor weather forecasts. This is stubbornness and stupidity. They set out for the climb poorly equipped to deal with adverse conditions, died of cold and exhaustion after enduring a night on the mountain exposed to 75 mile per hour winds, heavy snowfall and temperatures of minus 15 Celsius.”

Don’t become a statistic. Take your environment into consideration, plan for the worst but expect the best. To increase your enjoyment and ensure you safely complete your mission, should your behaviors, the possible risks and make a “self-check” part of your off-duty activities.



National Treasure: Book of Secrets

By Army Staff Sgt. Paul Meeker

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Rated: PG

Running Time: 125 minutes

The debut of “National Treasure: Book of Secrets” at the Downtown Lyceum was anything but inauspicious last Friday night. The seats and bleachers were packed and lawn chairs filled the open spaces. Judging by audience reaction, the Gitmo crowd wasn’t disappointed either. Laughter punctuated the air at all the right moments and there was little back and forth traffic to the bathrooms and concession stand. Nationwide, audiences haven’t been disappointed either as “Book of Secrets” finished its third week at the top of the money list with gross receipts of almost \$170 million.

The film returns archaeologist hero, Ben Franklin Gates (Nicolas Cage), Ben’s archaeologist father, Patrick Gates (Jon Voight), Ben’s whiz-kid sidekick, Riley Poole (Justin Bartha) and Ben’s now ex-girlfriend, Abigail Chase (Diane Kruger) from the first “National Treasure” to what is sure to be a successful series. They are joined by newcomers Emily Appleton (Helen Mirren) as Patrick’s wife and an armed and devious profiteer, Mitch Wilkinson (Ed Harris).

All are engaged, with differing motives, in an effort to retrieve vital information from a “Book of Secrets” that succeeding presidents have passed down through the years. All involved believe the book contains clues that will yield the location of the fabled city of Cibola, long sought by Spanish conquistadors and treasure hunters ever since. The precipitating event to all the action hi-jinks is the production of a diary fragment by Wilkinson which purports to link Gates’ great-grandfather to the assassination of President Lincoln. Wilkinson is counting on Gates to attempt to clear his ancestor’s name and in that effort discover the way to Cibola. Of course, this is exactly what Gates does.

“National Treasure: Book of Secrets” is definitely worth the price of Gitmo admission. My real money, however, will go to the fourth Indiana Jones installment coming later!

Rating: ★★★★★

WEEKLY WEATHER FORECAST

Weather forecast provided by www.weather.com

Saturday, Jan. 11

Highs in the low - 80’s, and lows in the high-60’s.



Partly Cloudy

Sunrise: 6:38 a.m.

Sunset: 5:40 p.m.

Chance of rain: 20%

Sunday, Jan. 12

Highs in the mid - 80’s, and lows in the high-60’s.



Partly Cloudy

Sunrise: 6:38 a.m.

Sunset: 5:41 p.m.

Chance of rain: 20%

Monday, Jan. 13

Highs in the mid - 80’s, and lows in the high-60’s.



Partly Cloudy

Sunrise: 6:38 a.m.

Sunset: 5:42 p.m.

Chance of rain: 10%

Tuesday, Jan. 14

Highs in the mid - 80’s, and lows in the high - 60’s.



Sunrise: 6:38 a.m.

Sunset: 5:42 p.m.

Chance of Rain: 10%

Partly Cloudy

Wednesday, Jan. 15

Highs in the mid - 80’s, and lows in the high - 60’s.



Sunrise: 6:38 a.m.

Sunset: 5:43 p.m.

Chance of Rain: 10%

Partly Cloudy

Thursday, Jan. 16

Highs in the mid - 80’s, and lows in the high - 60’s.



Sunrise: 6:38 a.m.

Sunset: 5:43 p.m.

Chance of Rain: 10%

Partly Cloudy

Friday, Jan. 17

Highs in the mid - 80’s, and lows in the high - 60’s.



Sunrise: 6:38 a.m.

Sunset: 5:44 p.m.

Chance of Rain: 10%

Partly Cloudy

Space available privilege is now policy for deployed personnel

By Army Staff Sgt. Jerry Rushing

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

A privilege once granted Joint Task Force Troopers and their families has now become policy for all Troopers and their families deployed in support of the Global War on Terror.

Space-Available (Space-A) travel is now authorized for dependents of deployed military members, including Reserve and Guard personnel, as well as Navy personnel assigned to a deployed ship with permanent change of station orders.

Space-A travel is only authorized to and from military bases inside and out of the United States. Dependents are eligible when the deployment order is for at least 120 days and are authorized to travel unaccompanied in Category IV status. The dependents are allowed to travel effective on the first day of military member's deployment and must be completed by the last day of the deployment.

The eligible dependents must present to the air terminal personnel a verification letter signed by the member's commander verifying the member's deployment, e.g.,



deployment orders. The documentation must be in the dependents' possession during travel. Space-A travel program is a privilege (not an entitlement).

"Follow the step-by-step guide and prepare your visitor with all the information," said JTF Command Master Chief Brad LeVault.

The helpful instructions can be found on the JTF intranet web site which outlines in detail Troopers' responsibilities to prepare and arrange for visitors to stay. Here, explains LeVault, you will find one set of instructions, JTF Policy #4 and four forms: The

Naval Station Entry Clearance Request (COMNAVBASEGTM04650/8), regulations and restrictions, a non-command sponsored dependents letter and a routing form.

Dependents are defined as a husband, wife or child or a listed dependent that is identified in your service record. If they are not listed in your service records as your dependent, you will not get a non-command sponsored letter," said LeVault.

Troopers are encouraged to take advantage of this new policy and bring their families to Guantanamo.

Boots on the Ground

What entertainer would you like to see in Guantanamo?

By Army Spc. Shanita Simmons

Navy Petty Officer
2nd Class
Frank A. Robinson



"Def Comedy Jam, because comedy always seem to improve morale."

Navy Petty Officer
2nd Class
Brittany Sanders



"I would have the original cast of The Color Purple perform because it would be a nice change for Gitmo."

Army Pfc.
Rick Bradburn



"Three Doors Down because they are patriotic and they will help boost the morale of Troopers."

Army Spc.
Rolon Alex



"WWE World Wrestling Entertainment, because I liked the motivation they gave to people in Iraq."

Don't worry, be happy

By Army Chaplain (Capt.) Y.J. Kim

525th Military Police Battalion Chaplain

Do not worry about your life do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself, each day has enough trouble of its own.

Mt. 6:25-33

As the holiday cheers fade and the New Year begins, many of us are brought back to reality. We look back at the past and approach the new season with both an old and a new set of worries. We worry about our families, our careers, our health, our relationships, the environment, the economy, terrorism—the list goes on and on even longer than a child's Christmas list. Instead of looking at a new blank calendar with excitement and great anticipation, we look at it with anxiety. We worry excessively about what lies ahead in our future, but to worry about such future events is as futile as it is unrealistic.

Let us not be too consumed with that of the future, but let us focus on the present. Righteous actions must start today. According to Isaiah 32:17, "The fruit of righteousness will be peace; the effect of righteousness will be quietness and confidence forever." Sin leads to anxiety and unrest in our lives, but right living leads to peace.

Our lives are not an accident. Our lives have a purpose. No matter what happens, our lives will be directed in such a way as to reveal purpose. As human beings, we have been frail since birth, inevitably limited by our mortality. Through the aging process, we understand the uncomfortable truth that we, by ourselves, are extremely small and limited.

We realize that we are not at the center of anyone's universe except the imaginary one in our minds. In reality we are locked into this small world, unable to avoid physical and mental weakness, decay and eventual death.



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Only our creator who sent us to this world is unlimited by the things that limit us.

Such is God's greatness that He gives us this New Year and new beginning, no matter how many mistakes we've made in the past. Therefore, even if we feel physically burned out from our former ways of living, we needn't remain crippled with regret. We shouldn't waste time trying to make up for lost time because a new canvas has been given to us again. In fact, we were in His care even before we were born (Isaiah 44:2).

We have no justification to worry about our future or anything else. We might as well stop now. Evaluating the worth or waste of any aspect of our lives is not our job because we are part of our creator's purpose. Because we trust His master plan, we are joyfully executing today's mission. We are liberated from notions of self-defeat. From now 'til our deathbeds, we have complete

freedom to carry out His mission.

If we honestly reflect on our past, we will see that God has already proven Himself trustworthy. Whether hardship or prosperity, comfort or pain, He has been so faithful at all times, past or present.

Therefore, we will be trustworthy stewards of our time if we sincerely trust our creator. But this truth is helpful only to those who are willing to trust Him wholeheartedly, even to the utter negligence of this world.

We will be free from worrying about the future when we surrender to the One who is our maker, the "author and perfecter of our faith" (Hebrews 12:2). In this New Year full of hope, let's cast off hindrances that bog us down and work to decrease worries by increasing faith.

What does your 2008 blank calendar look like? Is it filled with hope and trust, or anxiety and worries? Will you entrust this year to God and believe in His ultimate plan for your life?

'Cake ladies' take Guantanamo at pastry point

Story and photos by
Army Sgt. Sarah Stannard

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Do you remember the last time you were excited about cake? Usually the cakes we encounter are grocery store types; dry pastries disguised behind icky partially-hydrogenated two-inch-thick icing. The cake itself just lays there – uninteresting and definitely unappetizing. For a nation so obsessed with food, we have seriously mislaid our pastry priorities if we're settling for this kind of food to mark our special occasions. "Let them eat cake!" no longer holds the power to incite revolution, only a collective shrug. No thanks, we'd rather have pie.

At least, that was a prevailing opinion before Guantanamo Bay met Lt. Cmdr. Lisa Patricelli and Petty Officer 1st Class Pat Williams. In a quest to ignite their creative flame and combine work with a passion for satisfying a sweet tooth, these two Coastie 'cake ladies' use their colorful creations, combining beautiful designs with heavenly flavors, to tantalize the taste buds and excite the spirits of their Coast Guard Reserve unit deployed here.

A self-proclaimed morale committee for Port Security Unit 313, the pair bakes sweet confections for their colleagues' birthdays, unit functions and other special



Coast Guard Lt. Cmdr. Lisa Patricelli teaches Maryanne Mabbitt to create a 'basket-weave' using a piping bag. A police officer in civilian life, Patricelli hopes to one day open a bakery.

events. They will even offer instruction to people here who are interested in learning how to create decorative cakes of their own.

Patricelli, a Seattle area police officer, and Williams, a Wilton [esteemed decorating school] cake decorating instructor, met over cake. Patricelli had made the cakes for an Enlisted Person of the Year banquet Williams was attending. They talked patisserie and kindled a confectionary friendship that has taken them to events around the country.

"My dream is to open a bakery where you can get really good wedding cake by

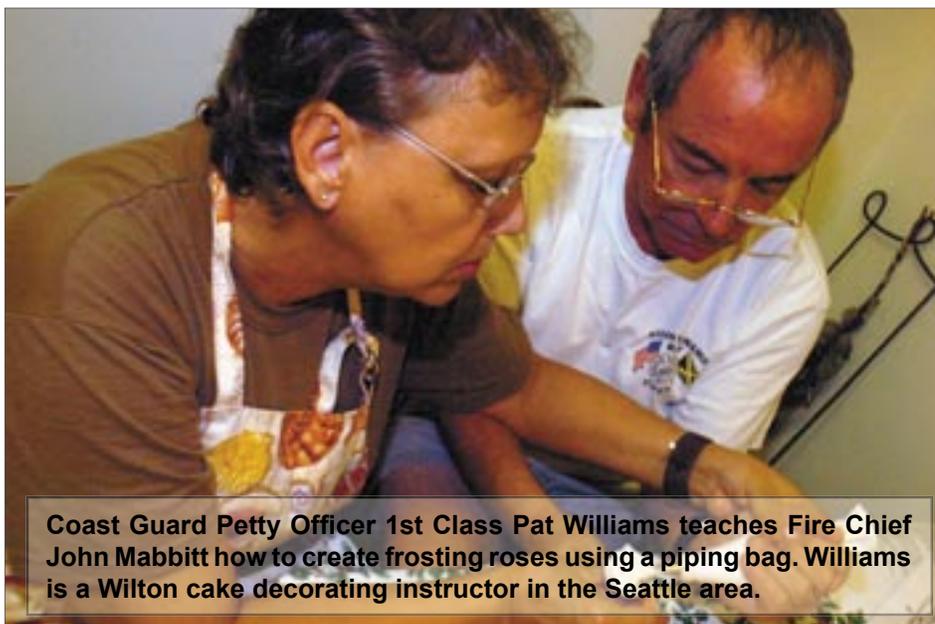
the slice," Patricelli smiled. "Everyone loves really good wedding cake, but, you know, you have to go to a wedding to get it. Here you could just get one slice of really beautiful, delicious cake to eat with your coffee. I would call it, 'A Slice of Heaven,' maybe."

Both women are members of the International Cake Exploration Societe, which is a non-profit organization that supports cake decorating enthusiasts around the world. Recently the decorating duo took a 'cake cruise' down the Alaskan Inside Passage, taking in workshops, lectures and excellent food.

They soon translated what they had learned on their sweets sail into two enormous cake creations for their unit's transfer of authority reception here, Dec. 6. Apple spice and black-forest cakes were complemented by homemade butter cream frosting and loads of flowers, glitter and edible silkscreen.

"This is the best cake I've had in 180 days," said Coast Guard Cmdr. Michael Hart, the outgoing commander of Port Security 308 that departed for home the following morning.

Swarms of Sailors buzzed around the dessert table, like bees in a honeycomb. Watching them was like watching hyenas take down a wildebeest. Hey, you would've had icing smeared on your face too!



Coast Guard Petty Officer 1st Class Pat Williams teaches Fire Chief John Mabbitt how to create frosting roses using a piping bag. Williams is a Wilton cake decorating instructor in the Seattle area.

AROUND THE

JTF



▲The 193rd Military Police Company, 525th Military Police Battalion, pose for a group photo at the Camp America sign Jan. 4. The 525th supports the Joint Task Force here in its mission to provide safe, humane care and custody of detained enemy combatants. (Photo by Petty Officer 1st Class Michael Billings)



▲Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class Justin Tanner (right) reenlists at the Camp Delta Flagpole, Jan. 8. Tanner is assigned to the Navy Expeditionary Guard Battalion here. (Photo by Army Sgt. 1st Class Carlos Sanchez)



◀Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Markus Gallegos reenlists at the Lighthouse, Jan. 4. Gallegos is assigned to the Navy Expeditionary Guard Battalion, a part of the Joint Detention Group here. (Photo by Petty Officer 1st Class Michael Billings)