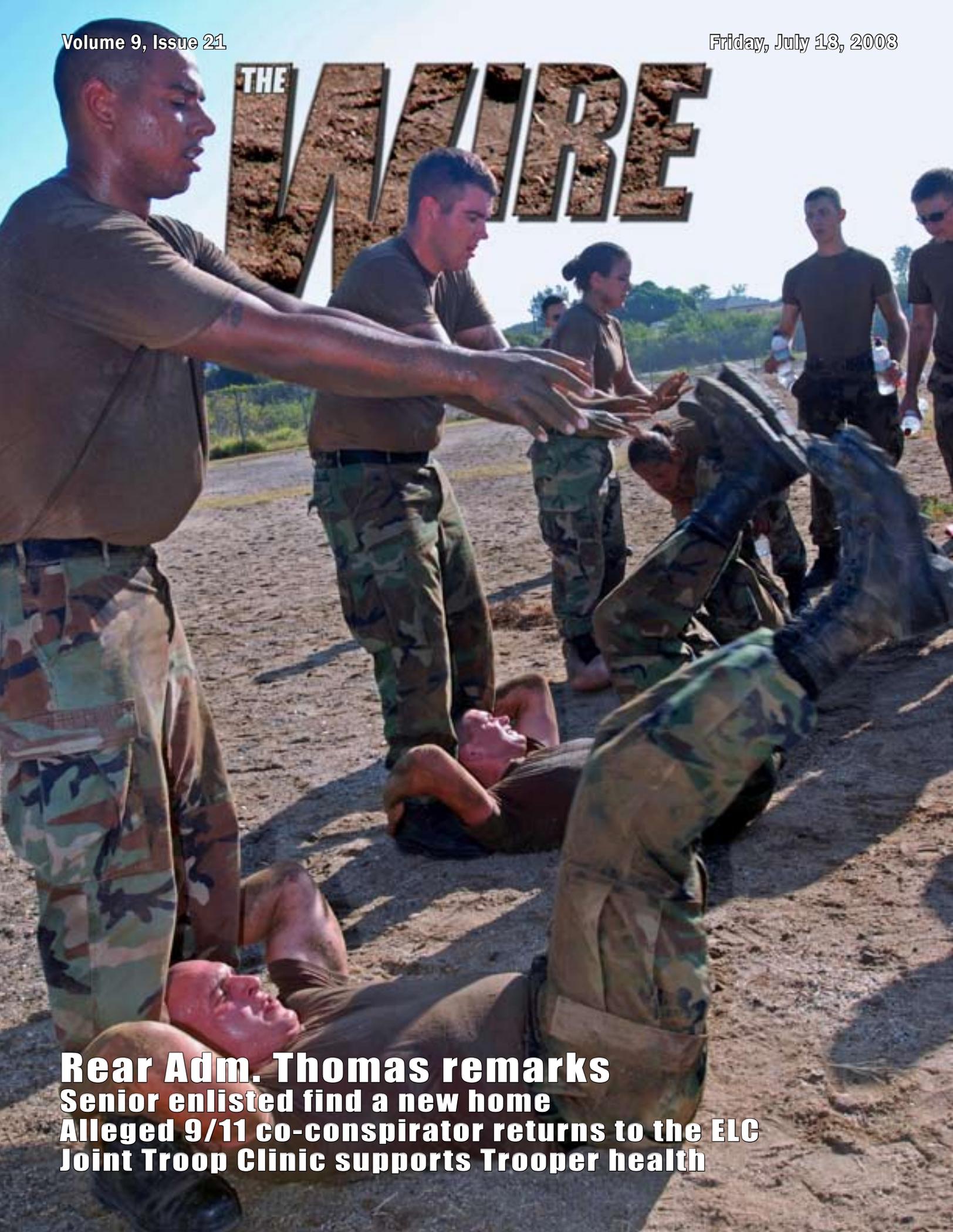


THE MIRE



**Rear Adm. Thomas remarks
Senior enlisted find a new home
Alleged 9/11 co-conspirator returns to the ELC
Joint Troop Clinic supports Trooper health**

Experiences... don't forget them

**Air Force Master Sgt.
Scott Clarkson**
474th Expeditionary
Civil Engineers Squadron

On Dec. 10, 1984, I was a wide-eyed kid reporting to my first day of basic training. From day one, I knew I was a changed man. By the time I graduated from training, goose bumps were constantly present when I would hear patriotic songs and the national anthem. I finally found my direction in life and would die for the flag if called upon to do so.

That was over 20 years ago and the experiences I have gained in the Air Force have helped me make fast, strong, and more importantly, correct decisions in my life. As a young airman, I was placed on a team only known to me as Prime BEEF (Base Engineer Emergency Force). I thought it was cool that I was chosen to represent my unit on this elite team, even though I had no clue what I was doing until 1986 when we were all recalled and placed on stand-by during the Libyan Air Raid. Anxiety and fear ran through our team when we heard an air strike was being leveled on Libya, and if necessary, we would repair the runway if our birds needed to land. Thankfully, we stood down and the operation was a success. From this experience I learned and remembered to hope for the best but, always plan and prepare for the worst.

Next, I applied for the special duty position of training instructor. Within four months, I was accepted and ready to move to Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, for my new career path. Upon arriving at Lackland, a chief master sergeant approached me and asked how long I had been doing this? I replied "I just started pushing troops a month ago." He smiled and walked away. Later that evening, my officer-in-charge called me into the office and said, "I don't know what they saw, but they want to know if you are willing to transfer to the United States Air Force Academy and train future officers." A dream come true! Get paid to yell at future officers. I couldn't resist and accepted the position. From this experience, I learned if you do your best always and be true, people will notice and good things can come.

On Sept. 11, 2001, I worked as the activities lieutenant at the penitentiary when my phone rang and it was the Charlie block officer, a fellow Airman. He told me that it was strange that Nigal Ayad was watching TV, which he normally didn't do. Ayad was one of the original World Trade Center Bombers. I told the officer to monitor him and keep me posted. That is how my day started on that terrible day. By evening, I was speeding toward the Pentagon where I would be until February 23, 2002 assisting with search and rescue. The worst four months of my life; I learned to appreciate everything I have and to be thankful everyday.

From Sept. 11 until now, I have deployed four times, I have been to many places and have seen many things. I always take something away with me each and every deployment. I am honored to be part of this historic mission here at the JTF. My experiences here will be unforgettable! Just think about it, we are fighting terrorism and bringing justice in honor of our country! This mission is crucial to our country. Anyone should be proud to be a part of it and never, never get complacent or stop reaching for your goals!!

Shirt Out 🍀



JTF GUANTANAMO

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COVER:

Members of the U.S. Naval Station Security Force receive training in the Marine Corps Martial Arts Program, July 15. The Security force provides law enforcement for U.S. Naval Station Guantanamo Bay and Joint Task Force Guantanamo Troopers. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Spc. Erica Isaacson



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.



The Admiral's Vision

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

Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Nat Moger

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

During his first two months as the commander of Joint Task Force Guantanamo, Navy Rear Adm. David M. Thomas, Jr. has walked the blocks and seen the way Troopers from all five branches of the armed services conduct their business. In a sit-down interview with "The Wire," the admiral laid out the state of the JTF, the importance of mission accomplishment and how to act when the world's eyes are on you.

First and foremost, the admiral stressed JTF's main mission areas.

"We do four things," said Thomas. "We provide safe and humane, legal and transparent care and custody of detained enemy combatants. That's mission number one. We perform intelligence collection operations to ensure the safety of detainees and detainee guards, and, if we find any actionable intelligence, we forward it to the folks fighting the war. We also provide support to the Office of Military Commissions and we are prepared to support migration operations in the Caribbean."

"If you ask me what's going on day-to-day," continued Thomas, "it's the flawless execution by the 2,000 plus people here. That includes Troopers, my staff, incredible contractors and some truly professional



The excitement that I felt four months ago when I found out I was coming down has been replaced by an amazing sense of humility after seeing the Troopers in action everyday.

— Rear Adm. David M. Thomas, Jr.

government employees. The highlight of my day is seeing that well-oiled machine executing the mission."

Despite the command-message tone of the four mission area descriptions, Thomas insists that truly thinking about what comprises the mission is essential to making the task force better.

"If I can define our missions and if we think about every activity that we do, then in the context of the mission it'll make sense," said Thomas. "Ask yourself, why am I doing this? If the answer's because it supports OMC or one of the other mission

areas, then you know you're contributing to the greater good. If we're doing something that doesn't contribute, then you need to raise your hand and say 'Why are we doing this?' If it doesn't contribute, then we'll stop doing it."

The JTF certainly does not operate in a vacuum, and Thomas recognizes that Troopers will read about their actions in the media. Thomas draws upon his own experience of setting aside his personal feelings while performing an emotionally charged mission.

"A detainee guard asked me right after I got here, 'Hey, I heard you were in the Pentagon on 9/11.' A lot of people were in the Pentagon on 9/11," said Thomas. "A lot of people were in New York City on 9/11. People have feelings about that day and activities going on around the world, but the fact of the matter is, when I think about the job here, what I feel about 9/11 or the War on Terror is completely irrelevant. What's important is doing the job correctly."

Thomas also looks at the upcoming year and sees it as an exciting time to be down here.

"The world moves pretty fast, and the older I get, the faster it seems to move," said Thomas. "We've got elections coming up and that's really important. We'll have a new administration which will affect our Department of Defense and possibly

See **COMMANDER/10**

Surf's Up



Photos by Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Jayme Pastoric and Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Josh Treadwell

Navy Ensign Matthew T. McMahon and Coast Guard Petty Officer 2nd Class Hunter Bounds catch a rare chance to surf the waves at Windmill beach July 8. Windmill beach, located on the southeast shoreline of Guantanamo Bay, usually has waters calm enough for the most inexperienced swimmer but occasionally brews waves suitable for surfing.



JTF senior enlisted receive new housing opportunity



Construction on the new housing is underway and is expected to be finished the week of July 21.



Navy Chief Petty Officer Jason Marino, JTF Engineering non-commissioned officer in charge, discusses the layout of the Bay Hill Senior Enlisted Housing project with Mike Willis, operations manager of Prime Projects International.

Army Spc. Megan Burnham

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Joint Task Force Guantanamo senior non-commissioned officers are looking forward to the date when the Bay Hill Senior Enlisted Housing project will be completed at U.S. Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. This means that they will be able to move into a spacious 462-square-foot trailer that they can call their very own.

Currently, construction continues on Bay Hill to create a new housing area that will consist of 40 new units.

Due to Bay Hill being a previous housing area where some facilities and infrastructures were already in place and the prime geographical location, JTF engineers and the facilities engineering acquisition division felt this would be the best area for this project.

“It was a perfect fit,” said Navy

Chief Petty Officer Jason Marino, JTF Engineering NCO in-charge. “The Navy Exchange and Gold Hill Galley are in easy walking distance and the cleaners is right down the street.”

The issue of additional living space arose as more JTF personnel continued to deploy to Guantanamo Bay filling the Tierra Kay apartments and Camp America.

“Windward Loop was filled up with senior enlisted and officers,” said Marino. “We had senior enlisted that were in TK and Cuzco, so we needed more.”

While one of the most noticeable differences are the larger dimensions of the trailer, 462 square feet as compared to the roughly 290-square-foot trailer in Cuzco, there is, in fact, much more that makes these homes a hot commodity. When a resident walks into their trailer they will see a washer and dryer of their very own. To the right of the entry way will be their bedroom and bathroom area and to the left

will be the living/dining/kitchen area.

According to Marino, residents can expect the same rules and regulations as those in Cuzco and TK. Prime Projects International will continue to provide any maintenance on appliance problems and getting a room unlocked.

“That’s one of the greatest things,” said Marino. “To have someone on call, and there on site, so you don’t have to wait.”

The original completion date for this project was July 21. However, with the ground being harder than expected and having to extract an in-ground pool, it has taken a bit longer to put all the utilities in. Project managers have decided to push the expected completion date to the 24th of this month.

“It was going to be a couple weeks before people would move in even if it was the 21st,” said Marino. “I don’t think it’s going to cause any inconvenience or delays of folks moving in.” ★

ROUND 2



Navy Capt. Prescott Prince, standby defense counsel for alleged Sept. 11 mastermind Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, addresses media in McCalla Hangar following a hearing here, July 10, 2008.

Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Nat Moger

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Alleged Sept. 11 mastermind Khalid Sheikh Mohammed and three other alleged co-conspirators returned to the Expeditionary Legal Complex here to address accusations of intimidation regarding their elections of counsel, July 9-10, 2008.

Mohammed and four others had been previously arraigned on multiple counts of terrorism-related activities June 5, 2008. At the simultaneous arraignment, Mohammed and the other accused spoke across the courtroom amongst themselves before the arrival of the detailed military judge, Marine Col. Ralph Kohlmann.

Following comments by Army Maj. Jon Jackson, defense counsel for alleged al-Qaeda member Mustafa Ahmed Adam al Hawsawi, alleging intimidation by Mohammed which influenced the others' election of counsel, Kohlmann ordered hearings "to discuss the matter with each of the accused on the record and in five separate sessions where each of the accused will appear outside the presence of the other accused" in an order dated July 1, 2008.

Mohammed, Walid Muhammad Salih Mubarak Bin 'Attash and Ali Abdul Aziz Ali had elected to proceed "pro se" as their own counsel during the arraignment, and

represented themselves during the latest round of hearings.

The four hearings proceeded similarly, with Kohlmann reading prepared statements and questions to the accused, apprising each of the accused of the pitfalls of self-representation. He noted that trained legal counsel are better prepared to file motions and make arguments, due to the fact that they are not detained and possess proper security clearances, both during a potential trial and, if convicted, a potential sentencing.

Kohlmann also notified each of them that "the right of self-representation is not a license to abuse the dignity of the courtroom, nor is it a license not to comply with the relevant rules and procedures of substantive law," and that, in the case of an appeal, "the accused cannot later complain about the quality of his defense or the denial of effective assistance of counsel."

Kohlmann, speaking slowly through translators, methodically addressed each issue with all four, before asking each for their choice of representation.

Mohammed, Ali and Bin 'Attash chose to reconfirm their "pro se" elections while retaining their detailed military defense counsel as standby counsel, along with civilian defense attorneys as advisers.

Ali, Mohammed's nephew and alleged lieutenant, denied claims of intimidation and denied that Mohammed had pressured

al Hawsawi to dismiss detailed military counsel in favor of proceeding "pro se" by asking him if he was in the Army.

"We might say something as a joke and they might think it is an order. Mr. Mohammed was joking to Mr. Hawsawi 'are you in American Navy now?' He was just joking because he was wearing white," said Ali of the similarities in color between the accused's clothing and the Navy officer's summer white uniform.

Al Hawsawi chose not to make an election of counsel, telling Kohlmann through a translator, "thus far I haven't made a decision."

Speaking slowly and clearly for the translator, Kohlmann explained that military attorneys "have been detailed to represent you and the rules from the commissions state that each of the accused will be represented by counsel unless they waive that right and choose to go 'pro se.'"

"I understand that you are still making up your mind and I do not want to rush you," continued Kohlmann. "So, until such time as you make up your mind or make a firm decision, I am going to direct that Maj. Jackson and Lt. [Gretchen] Sosbee continue to act as detailed defense counsel."

The fifth co-conspirator, Ramzi Bin al Shibh, did not appear pending the completion of a competency board ordered by the judge earlier in July. 🏠

Wallyball heats up the courts



In the first game of the tournament, team Yellow Cab and the Shockers battle it out.

Army Sgt. Gretel Sharpee

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Inside two small racquet ball courts usually meant for two people, up to eight Troopers swarmed inside in an echoing resonance of cheers. In a game not for the faint of heart, the claustrophobic or anyone who flinches easily, a Wallyball tournament took place at Denich Gym, July 12.

The rules for Wallyball set it apart from volleyball, but otherwise it is mostly the same. Since the game is played in a racquet ball court, hitting and playing the ball off the wall is allowed; however, the serve cannot. The ball cannot hit the ceiling and servers must stand at least 3 feet from the back wall when serving.

To make it even more challenging, players must hit the ball twice before it returns over the net, and it cannot hit more than two walls in a row.

All of these rules might sound easy, but when the game is played with a ball that seems to be a smaller version of a cross between a volleyball and a basketball, any contact with the wallyball sends it flying.

The tournament consisted of six teams

of three to four players. In each match, three games were played to a rally score of 11. The winner of two of the three games advanced to the next round.

The Wallyball tournament was organized by the Morale Welfare and Recreation department. For more information on upcoming events, call the Denich Gym at 77262. ☆

Wallyball Tournament Results

1st Place - The Shockers

2nd Place - Wall-E

3rd Place - No PAO



The Shockers spike the ball in a game against Wall-E, a preview to the skill that was needed to win the tournament.



With guns blazing...

**Army Pfc.
Eric Liesse**

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Comic book movies and stylized action flicks are no rarity in today's theaters. However, few come as unapologetic and relentless as "Wanted."

Viewing "Wanted" purely as a film is almost unfair. By doing so, you will be bitterly put off at the flashy and physics-bending action sequences, and you will be disappointed by the intentionally predictable and clichéd plot.

"Wanted" never lets up on the mood or the perception that assassinations are for the greater good, as it follows an office worker who becomes a world-class assassin.

The film stars James McAvoy alongside Angelina Jolie as an assassin of few words. Jolie plays up her sultry side, and her character does many superfluous stunts solely because she can.

With the pair is Morgan Freeman in his father-figure norm. Here, however, he's also amazingly talented with a gun.

McAvoy plays Wesley Allan Gibson who starts out working a tedious, cubicle-bound job. His boss is an overweight and cursing hag, continually badgering Wesley into submission.

Right from her first scene, you know she will get her comeuppance.

On a fateful trip to his local pharmacy for panic attack medication, Wesley is approached by Jolie as Fox, a straight-talking and hard-lined assassin. In a few words, she tells Wesley the father

he never knew was a legendary assassin in her league and was murdered the day before by a rogue killer.

With his father's killer in pursuit, a car chase from the pharmacy ensues. Jolie pulls no punches in her first action sequence. She lies on the hood of the car – while steering with one foot – to fire a shotgun back at their pursuer.

Jolie's calmness compared to McAvoy's panic put awesome grins on the audience's faces.

Reluctantly at first, Wesley goes with Fox to a humble textile factory. The plant serves as the front and training ground of the "Fraternity," a 1,000-year-old league of assassins.

Sloan, the Fraternity's leader played by Freeman, tells Wesley he must join the group to follow his father's footsteps and take up a gun to bend bullets and run on trains in the name of fate.

Russian-Kazakh director Timur Bekmambetov helmed the movie with an eye for action with outlandish style.

The story is an adaptation of a comic book miniseries by the legendary Mark Millar.

The film brings stark comparisons to cult classics like "Fight Club" and "The Matrix." Although both comparisons are

Rated R
1 hour, 50 minutes

Rating: ★★★★★☆

fitting – the anti-corporate vibe of "Fight Club" and the slow motion action "The Matrix" – "Wanted" has its own flair.

From the Danny Elfman score to the stunts that defy all logic, the movie has everything a quality summer flick should.

The special effects in "Wanted" are stunning and yet subtle. When Wesley quits his job after telling off his boss, he walks out with keyboard in hand.

As he passes his once good friend, who Wesley knew was sleeping his girlfriend, Wesley slams the keyboard into his face, knocking keys and teeth toward the screen to literally spell out his sentiment.

The story and plot elements in "Wanted" are nothing new. There are twists and turns and ups and downs that are all in line with the genre.

The movie's basis on a comic series shows through in the animated action scenes as well as the story. For instance, the Fraternity kills those predicted to commit evil by the "Loom of Fate" – a massive, self-running loom that stitches messages of destiny into its fabric.

You can wax philosophical about the concept after the credits roll. During the movie, just sit back and let the bullets fly and the pure coolness of the characters take you away.

This thrill ride isn't trying to make you think. "Wanted" is escapism at its best. ★



Mission areas in focus

COMMANDER from 3

the future direction of all kinds of programs in our military, including, perhaps, Guantanamo. The fact is, regardless of all that political activity, we have a very important mission to accomplish and executing the mission scrupulously and flawlessly is important. Getting it right will say a lot about our nation.”

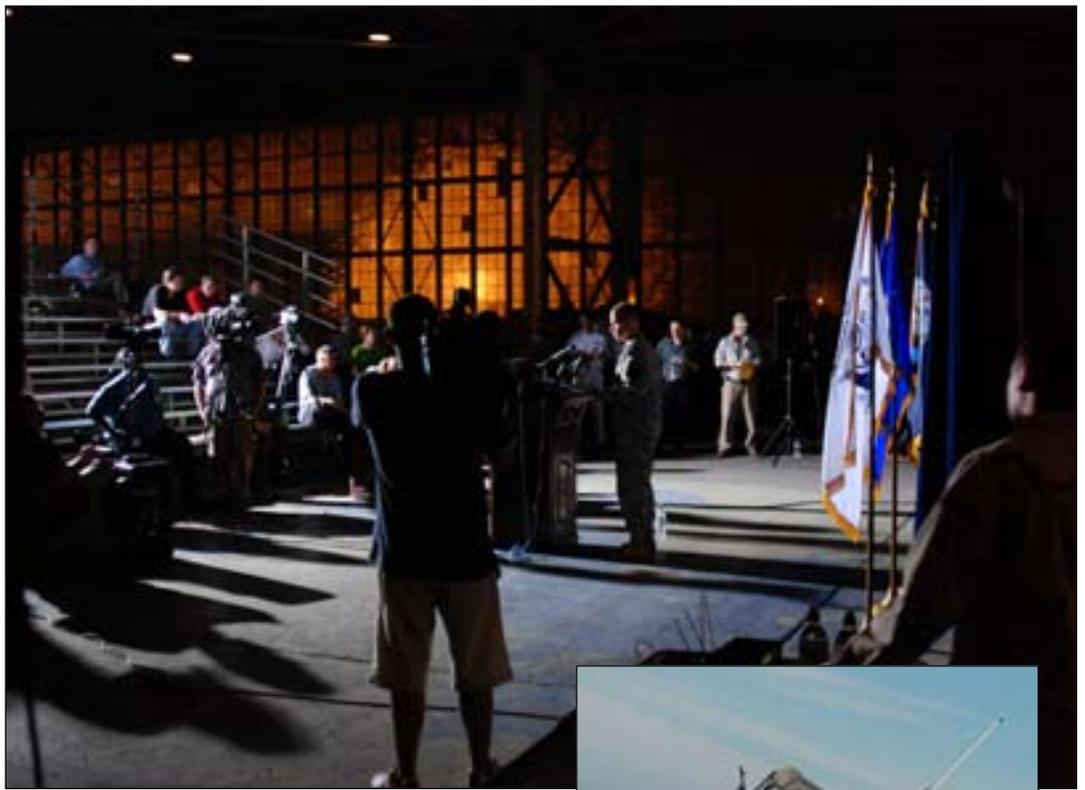
None of this can be done without the boots on the ground and Troopers roaming the deckplates.

“I map everything around our four mission areas, and I was looking at my meeting schedule one day,” said Thomas. “I thought to myself, ‘you know what’s missing here?’ The foundation of those mission areas is people.”

“The quality of life and quality of work of our Troopers are linked,” continued Thomas. “So, I took out a clean sheet of paper and rebuilt my whole battle rhythm around a weekly quality of service discussion with all the key players. I’ve got a Morale, Welfare and Recreation representative, a travel rep, a housing rep, a food service rep, a chaplain and others that play a role in the quality of life down here. Where we live, how we eat, how we recreate and how we and our families get on and off the island – all those pieces have to fit together, otherwise everything will fall apart.”

In order to make life better for JTF Troopers, Thomas has put in motion plans to create programs which will pass along experience from one cycle of Troopers to the next.

“Unlike many duty stations where people are there for two to three years, our Troops can’t say ‘it used to be lousy, now it’s getting better,’” said Thomas. “Since most people are only here for a year, all anyone



really knows about is today, so there’s no corporate knowledge. You and I won’t have any context for these improvements we’re seeing, so it’s hard to get a perspective on whether things are getting better or worse.”

“I ask myself, ‘is it good enough for me right now?’ and ‘how can I improve things,’” continued Thomas. “I’m trying to build a sense of continuity, looking at where we are today, where we’ll be in a year and where we’ll be in a couple of years. So, I’m putting together some long term programs so there’s a framework to give us perspective on those questions of ‘are we getting better?’ and ‘are we moving forward?’”

Two months into his tour of duty, Thomas may be the happiest Trooper in the task force.

“When I got word I was coming down to Guantanamo, I was incredibly excited about going back to commanding and getting the opportunity to lead Sailors, Soldiers, Airmen, Marines and Coast Guardsmen in this very important mission,” said Thomas. “Obviously, this mission is under incredible scrutiny and it’s so important to our nation to get it right. Exactly right. So, the excitement that I felt four months ago when I found out I was coming down has been replaced by an amazing sense of humility after seeing the Troopers in action everyday. I’ve been doing this all my adult life. I’ve been a member of great teams and I’ve been a leader of great teams, but I’ve never seen one execute this magnificently in such a tough, tough mission.” ♡



Joint Task Force Guantanamo has four main mission areas. JTF Troopers provide safe and humane, legal and transparent, care and custody of detained enemy combatants. Actionable intelligence gathered here is analyzed and disseminated to the front lines of the War on Terror. JTF also provides support for the Office of Military Commissions. JTF patrols the waters around Guantanamo Bay and is logistically prepared in the event of a large scale migration operation.





Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Daniel Kline rests comfortably during a minor dental procedure. Joint Task Force Guantanamo's Joint Troop Clinic is a full-service medical and dental facility.

Joint Medical Support

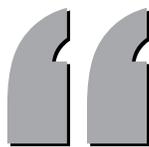
**Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class
Jayme Pastoric**
JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

All Joint Task Force Troopers can rest assured that their medical needs will be well taken care of when visiting JTF's Joint Troop Clinic. The aid station offers all medical services to Troopers ranging from filling medical prescriptions to routine medical and dental procedures.

"We are JTF's hospital," said Joint Troop Clinic officer-in-charge, Army Capt. Michael Smith. "It is really important to offer quality medical services to the hard working Troopers. They are under a lot of stress and we give them the care that they need."



Prescriptions and over the counter medications are available for Troopers from the onsite pharmacy.



No matter what's wrong, it's important to us.

- Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Marcus Arnold

The troop clinic is a dual service operated clinic. Army and Navy work side by side, learning from each other, streamlining the operation and giving troopers quality care.

"On the battlefield, if a Soldier is injured they might not end up with Army medics and Army surgeons. It might be Navy medical staff," said Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Marcus Arnold. "It's a good opportunity for our two branches to work together and get on the same page."

According to the clinic's mission statement, the vision of the troop clinic is "superior readiness through excellence

See **MEDICAL/12**



Medical staff examine a patient's finger for injuries. Attention to detail is key when properly diagnosing a patient's problem.

Clinic combines strengths of two services



Army Sgt. Cesar Nubla returns medical records to the record archive at the Joint Troop Clinic.

MEDICAL from 11

in health care services.” Their belief is that health is a state of physical, mental, spiritual and social well-being, not simply the absence of disease.

“I want Troopers to feel important when they walk through the door. Whether it’s a headache or a broken ankle, we take all ailments seriously,” said Arnold.

The troop clinic has seen a lot of common injuries that are preventable, most of them dealing with musculo-skeletal injuries. “On your feet for 12 hours a day will give you feet, knee and back problems,” said Smith. Some recommendations Smith has for preventing common injuries are to stretch throughout the day and to always drink water. Even the small stuff can make a big difference in the long run.

The troop clinic relies on the unique talents and strengths of its diverse staff. Working side by side this Army and Navy medical team keeps JTF’s most important resource, the Trooper, fit for duty and the ability for the mission to carry on.

Joint Troop Clinic’s sick call hours are Monday-Saturday, 7am-10am, and Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 1pm-3pm. For more information, call the clinic at 3395. ☆

PUBLIC SAFETY ANNOUNCEMENT

25 can save lives (and points)

- Unless otherwise specified, the speed limit at Guantanamo Bay is 25 mph.
- Don't drive faster than is reasonable or prudent for existing road conditions
 - If visibility is reduced to a few feet, postpone your trip if possible.
- 15 mph in school zones and housing areas
- 5 mph when passing Troopers



- You are allowed no more than 12 demerit points per year
- Up to 10 mph over the limit = 3 points
- 11-14 mph over = 4 points
- 15-20 mph over = 5 points AND a mandatory 1-month suspension
- Speeding in a school zone or housing area = 5 points and a 1-month suspension

Source: Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class Benjamin Hultz, Master-at-Arms patrolman, dispatcher



Keeping score

Ed Lutsky, a civilian contractor who works for Joint Task Force Guantanamo, sits high above the action while keeping official score during a summer baseball league game between the Havana Hammers and the Diablos, July 13. The Hammers scored three runs in the top of the seventh inning to break a tie and won the game, 7-4. "I love the game of baseball," said Lutsky. "When I saw the advertisement asking for league officials, I jumped at the opportunity. I had not officiated before but we had an orientation that really helped prepare me." – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Staff Sgt. Emily J. Russell

Boots on the Ground

by Army Pfc. Eric Liesse

Do you think the Green Bay Packers should release Brett Favre from his contract to play elsewhere? Why or why not?

Navy Petty Officer 2nd
Class S. Hock



"Yes. He should go to the Carolina Panthers. Go to a real team."

Navy Petty Officer 2nd
Class O. Rock



"Yes, because he's unhappy, feels he isn't treated right, and he should be able to move on to another team."

Army Spc.
Marc Adams



"I don't really watch professional football because all they care about is the money. I like college football."

Navy Petty Officer 3rd
Class Francis Pizarro



"I'm not a Packers fan, so I don't care."

Friends

**Army Capt.
Scott C. Brill**
JDG Chaplain

While talking to my youngest son about some of my favorite people and places in Guantanamo, he asked if there was anyone or anything I did not like. I told him that I could only think of one crabby person on the whole Island, and about the challenge of living in what seems like a fish bowl. The words “crabby,” “island,” and “fish bowl” in the same sentence were too much for him, and he burst out laughing. Once the five-year-old giggles stopped he said, “Dad, you live in Bikini Bottom.” Then, I started laughing. (For those of you that do not know, Bikini Bottom is where SpongeBob Square Pants and his friends live).

A deployment is a lot more challenging than the cartoon life in Bikini Bottom, but at least Gitmo is a place where friends for life are made every day. I am so grateful for all of the friends that I have made here.

One of the most common responses that outgoing Troopers make about their mission here is about the friendships they made. Without a doubt, one of the great treasures on this island is our friends.

A story that illustrates the value of

“
Without a doubt, one of the great treasures on this island is our friends.

– Army Capt. Scott Brill

friendship, and the role we play in the lives of our fellow shipmates and battle buddies, is called The Starfish.

An old man was walking along the beach. In the distance he saw someone who seemed to be dancing along the waves. As he got closer, he saw a young man picking up starfish and tossing them back into the ocean.

“What are you doing?” the old man asked.

“The sun is coming up and the tide is going out. If I don’t throw them in they will die.”

“But young man, there are miles and miles of beach with starfish all along it. You can’t possibly make a difference.”

The young man bent down, picked up a starfish and threw it back past the breaking waves. “It made a difference to that one.”

In this story, the young man did something that I see Troopers do every day: make a difference in someone’s life.

We are all gifted with the ability to lift and build others. One of the best ways to help the time go by fast, and shrink personal problems, is to forget ourselves by serving others.

It is my hope that we continue to look for the good in others, in ourselves, and in life.

JTF CHAPEL SCHEDULED PROGRAMS

Catholic Mass

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

Wednesday: 11 a.m. Mass

Protestant Worship

Sunday: 9 a.m. and 7 p.m.

Spanish Protestant Worship

Sunday: Noon

Dedication to duty

Army Staff Sgt.
Emily J. Russell

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Building a program from the ground up takes dedication to duty, selfless-service and the leadership skills of a professional. For Army Staff Sgt. Steven Barthmaier, the challenge wasn't knowing what to do, it was coordinating necessary resources to set the wheels in motion.

Barthmaier served as the senior human resources non-commissioned officer for the 193rd Military Police Company. However, during his tour, the need for help in the training and operations section became apparent, and he was selected to support the mission.

"I helped out operations while I continued to oversee the administrative portion," said Barthmaier.

Barthmaier's duties spanned from organizing Soldier re-enlistments, to coordinating weapons ranges and building the combatives program while overseeing it and teaching Troopers the basics of the program.

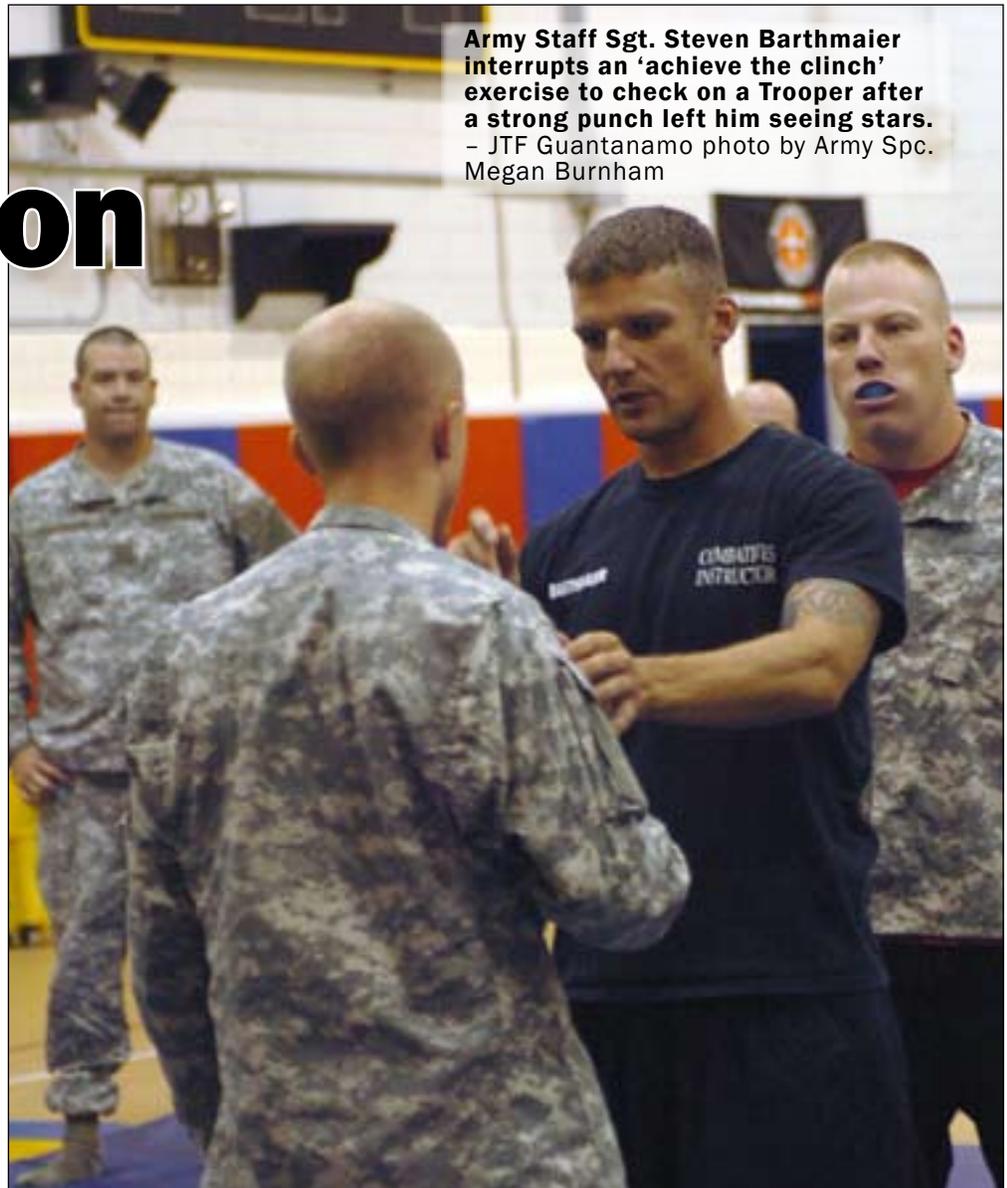
"I faced some challenges. Networking was tough. I had to go through a lot of areas to resource things like ranges or re-enlistments. For ranges, you're not just dealing with Joint Task Force [personnel], you're dealing with Naval Station Guantanamo [too] so there are a lot of different agencies that you have to go through just to get a range together and ensure it complies with everyone's standard," said Barthmaier.

"I overcame those challenges by networking within those agencies and getting key points of contact," he continued.

Prior to Barthmaier's assignment here, he was a drill sergeant. While attending the drill sergeant school, he was required to go through level one combatives. After the school, he was selected to attend levels two and three, which qualified him to teach level one combatives.

Upon his assignment to Guantanamo Bay, Barthmaier was one of two Soldiers trained in level three combatives on the island.

"[Combatives] began when [Joint Detention Group] Command Sgt. Maj. [Theodore] Trahan told me he wanted the program because he saw how the end result instilled the Warrior Ethos in Troopers,"



Army Staff Sgt. Steven Barthmaier interrupts an 'achieve the clinch' exercise to check on a Trooper after a strong punch left him seeing stars.
- JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Spc. Megan Burnham

said Barthmaier. "He saw it was a really good program so with the guidelines he brought from Ft. Bragg he laid the foundation for it."

For Army Soldiers, the Warrior Ethos is a set of principles that challenges every Soldier to rise to their greatest potential both professionally and personally.

"I had the flexibility in my schedule that I could take one week per month to run the program," Barthmaier said. "[But] building the program from scratch [was] difficult in itself. Laying the foundation and [allocating] the [resources] that you have readily available in the states, but not here, was tough," Barthmaier continued.

"I really want to say thank you to everyone who helped me out along the way. The 525th Military Police Battalion and the 193rd Military Police Company were very supportive of the combatives program, and allowed me to run things they way I wanted on both the admin side, and training," said Barthmaier.

With a strong inner drive and dedication to duty, Barthmaier built a successful program, not just for Soldiers, but for any Trooper stationed here.

"I've put about 120 troopers through the program," said Barthmaier. "It didn't matter which branch of service they were from, it was good training for everyone."

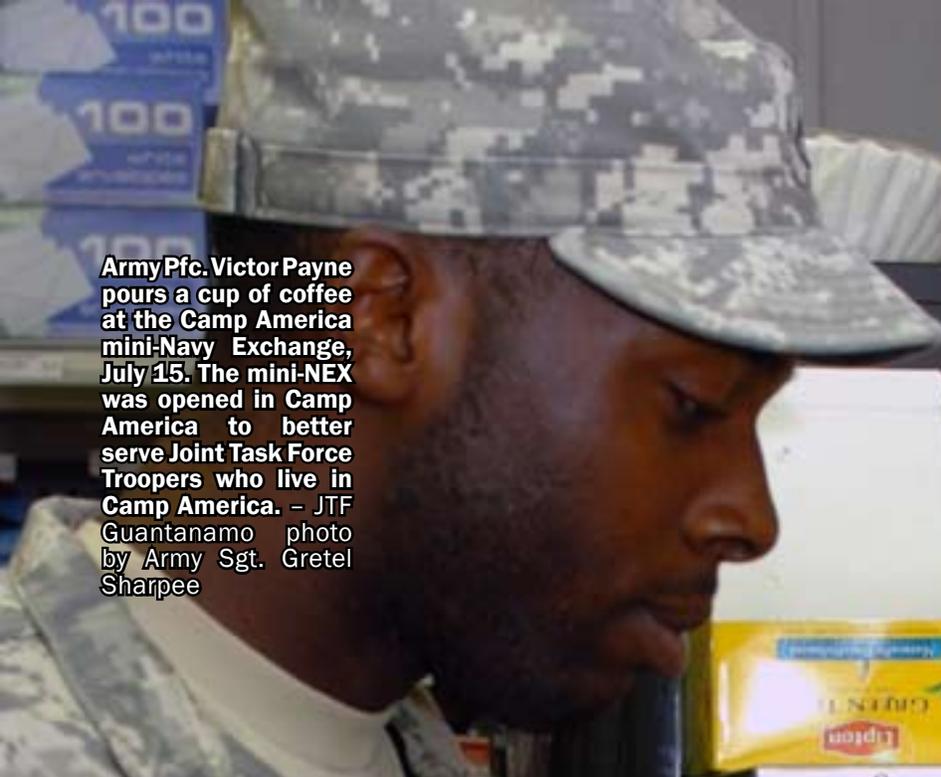
Barthmaier understands the concept of motivating Troopers from his own experience as a drill sergeant.

"The hours, hardship and time away from family was very difficult, but my duty as a drill sergeant was life changing," said Barthmaier.

"Looking at the big picture, you can make an impact on thousands of people's lives by affecting just one. Making a difference for one person can have an impact on [countless] others. That's pretty awe inspiring," he said.

Barthmaier recently left Guantanamo to pursue his next duty station with the Old Guard, in Washington, D.C.

"I'll work with the battalion admin section, though I would love to serve as a guard for the Tomb of the Unknown. It is such a prestigious honor, guarding those who have given their life in the line of duty. I feel humbled to be joining such a unit of distinction. I don't think of myself as [deserving] of it." ★



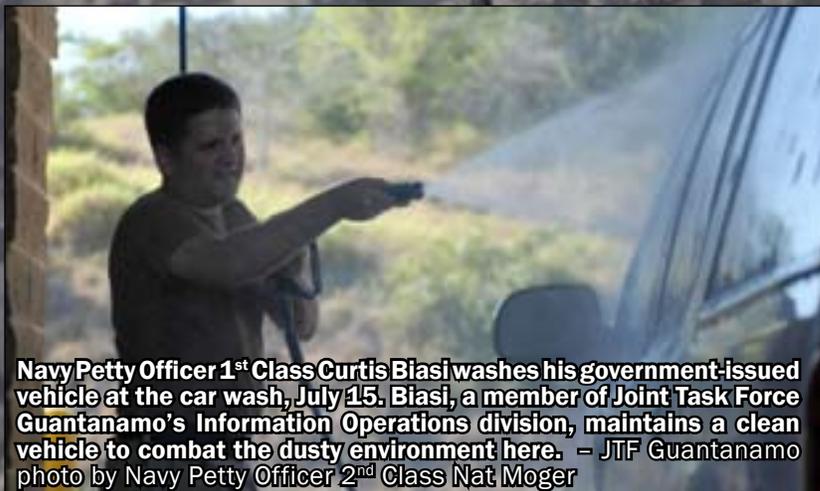
Army Pfc. Victor Payne pours a cup of coffee at the Camp America mini-Navy Exchange, July 15. The mini-NEX was opened in Camp America to better serve Joint Task Force Troopers who live in Camp America. - JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Sgt. Gretel Sharpee



Coast Guard Petty Officer 3rd Class James Reeves gets a workout throwing punches at the heavy bag at G.J. Denich gym, July 14. Reeves, a boatswain's mate with the 307th Port Security Unit, serves with the boats that patrol the waters as part of the Joint Task Force security mission.- JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Staff Sgt. Emily J. Russell



An Army guard from the 525th Military Police Battalion looks at a mock up of a detainee holding cell. Detainees are provided all necessary hygiene items for their daily needs. - JTF Guantanamo photo by Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Jayme Pastoric



Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Curtis Biasi washes his government-issued vehicle at the car wash, July 15. Biasi, a member of Joint Task Force Guantanamo's Information Operations division, maintains a clean vehicle to combat the dusty environment here. - JTF Guantanamo photo by Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Nat Moger

AROUND THE JTF