



Giving “Thanks” despite challenges

By Army Spc. Jonathan Mullis

JTF-GTMO Public Affairs Office

A bountiful table of food sits in front of you. Turkey, stuffing, mashed potatoes, pumpkin-pie and cranberry sauce; their rich aromas fill the air. The smell leads to your anticipation of their tastes dancing across your palate. All of your family has come together for this day, Uncle Robert and his rambunctious sons, Aunt Sue and her delicious creamed onions; even your somewhat reclusive cousin Tony has graced the group with his presence.

It’s Thanksgiving Day, a day like no other, one that brings families across America together to celebrate all the blessings that have been bestowed upon them.

“Thanksgiving is a time to reflect on all the blessings we have been given,” says Navy Rear Adm. Harry B. Harris, Joint Task Force Guantanamo Commander. And it’s on this day that we’re reminded of our country’s origins and the sacrifices made by those who would later become our founding fathers.

Traditionally, when one thinks of Thanksgiving, what comes to mind is the meal held between the Wampanoag Indians and the Pilgrims who settled in Plymouth, Massachusetts in 1621. However, the true story of Thanksgiving lies somewhere between the Pilgrims’ voyage to find a new land and the hardships endured after arriving.



In 1620, Separatist congregations from Scrooby Nottinghamshire, England faced difficult persecution, and after numerous moves, were forced to set sail for the New World.

Shortly after beginning their voyage, the Mayflower was hit with fierce storms that damaged the ship. Her passengers feared that they would not be able to continue safely and contemplated turning around before it was too late. Nevertheless, the crew of the Mayflower set their cares and concerns in the hands of a higher-power and decided to face the whipping winds and high seas.

Upon arrival at Plymouth Harbor, the Pilgrims were greeted by the Wampanoag Indians. After enduring a severe winter and the loss of many of their fellow settlers, the Pilgrims were able to survive solely due to the help of their native neighbors.

The pilgrims celebrate what would become Thanksgiving with the Wampanoag people. Today, we look back at the challenges they faced and the thanks they gave, and give thanks for the blessings we receive every day. Troopers serving the Joint Task Force-Guantanamo will be giving thanks on Thursday for the continued blessings received.

In 1621, a full year after leaving their homes, the Pilgrims and the Wampanoag held a meal to celebrate the blessings they had been given.

Blessings our forefathers chose to celebrate amidst sickness, disease, and death. They collectively decided to focus on the positive aspects of their lives and to look past the overwhelming pain and hardship they had endured dating all the way back to their past homes and towns. With so much to be grateful for today, we can be proud to take part in a time-honored tradition that marked the forging of this nation.

“I am profoundly thankful for the opportunity to serve alongside you in the extended JTF-GTMO family. You are the best America has to offer and it is my great honor to serve as your Commander,” said Navy Rear Adm. Harris. ■

Excerpted from: War with Honor

By Army Sgt. Maj. Kevin Robins

525 Military Police Battalion Operations
Sergeant Major

There is seldom absolute clarity in war and the certainty of war's death and destruction inevitably elicits questions of justifiability among our Soldiers. Soldiers are not ethicists; neither are they lawyers or philosophers. In the heat of battle, Soldiers can little afford to engage in rigorous moral reasoning. They are very practical people and the way we as Noncommissioned Officers, in a system that believes in the rule of law, address questions of ethics is through training.

The question of justifiability has caused me to better prepare myself for the questions likely posed by Soldiers regarding the ethics and morality of killing and going to war. While there exists no clear guidance for this training, I believe that by offering the following information to our Soldiers, we provide them the tools necessary for private introspection and individual resolution.

For centuries, "just-war theory" has been used to assess the morality of war. The principles of the just-war theory are:

- **A just war can only be waged as a last resort.**
- **A war is just only if a legitimate authority wages it.**
- **A just war can only be fought to redress a wrong suffered.**
- **A war can only be just if fought with a reasonable chance of success.**
- **The ultimate goal of a just war is to re-establish peace.**
- **The violence used in the war must be proportional to the injury suffered.**

The principles of just-war theory evoke questions concerning America's current use of military

force. Examples may include the question of America's right to unilateral armed action, I would suggest that in today's world, when nonmilitary actions are unavailable or have not prevailed, America possesses the strict moral obligation to defend not only the security of its citizens, but also those unable to protect themselves. If not, who will face the politically uncontrolled regimes that so unabashedly violate the basic human rights of their own citizens? When will those violations exceed their borders? Who will defend the innocent and demand the minimum conditions of survival?

Rogue nations cannot go unchallenged, they are aggression waiting to happen, and those capable of obstructing their malicious actions must do so. Until the international community reaches a point of cooperation that enables it to act effectively against rogue states and regimes, the responsibility lies with those who possess the means and moral judgment to act on behalf of those who cannot act for themselves.

We, as leaders, would be remiss not to address the issues that place our Soldiers in harms way or arm them with the tools to defend their chosen profession. The study of the just-war theory, the aforementioned principles and discussion give our Soldiers the opportunity and forum not only to avail themselves to the moral rules governing the decision to go to war, but also the consequences of not using armed force to protect peace, human rights, and to restrain and defeat aggression that threatens world stability; in doing so, you contribute to their self-confidence, their confidence in leaders, and lessen the likelihood of questions of justifiability. ■

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Army 1st Lt. Michael Garcia: 3651

Command Information NCOIC:

Navy Chief Petty Officer Timm

Duckworth: 3596

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Editor:

Army Staff Sgt. Vince Oliver: 3594

Assistant Editor:

Army Spc. Jason Kaneshiro: 2171

Layout Editor:

Army Spc. Dustin Robbins: 3589

Photo Editor:

Army Sgt. Jonson Tulewa-Gibbs: 3592

Staff Writers & Design Team:

Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class

Trevor Andersen: 3499

Army Spc. Philip Regina: 3499

Contact us:

Base Information: 2000

Public Affairs Office: 3651 or 3594

From the continental United States:

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Online:

www.jtfgtmo.southcom.mil

Webmaster:

Army Spc. Dustin Robbins: 3589



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New requirements for travelers

By Navy Cmdr. Robert Durand

JTF-GTMO Public Affairs Director

Troopers traveling outside the U.S. will soon need to carry a passport when visiting countries that formerly required only a driver's license. Start planning now if you hope to travel abroad next year.

The Department of Homeland Security and Department of State developed the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI) to strengthen border security and facilitate entry into the United States for U.S. citizens and legitimate foreign visitors.

The WHTI requires that travelers provide standardized, secure and reliable documentation to quickly, reliably and accurately identify a traveler. The WHTI has a two-phase

implementation.

In January 2007, all persons, including U.S. citizens, traveling by air between the United States and Canada, Mexico, Central and South America, the Caribbean, and Bermuda will be required to present a valid passport, Air NEXUS card, or U.S. Coast Guard Merchant Mariner Document.

As early as January 1, 2008, all persons, including U.S. citizens, traveling between the U.S. and Canada, Mexico, Central and South America, the Caribbean, and Bermuda by land or sea (including ferries), may be required to present a valid passport or other documents as determined by the Department of Homeland Security.

The following documents will be acceptable to fulfill document

requirements:

- U.S. Passport: U.S. citizens may present a valid U.S. passport when traveling between the United States and Canada, Mexico, Central and South America, the Caribbean, and Bermuda via air and via sea and land borders (including ferry crossings).
- The Passport Card (also referred to as the PASS Card): This limited-use passport in card format is currently under development and will be available for use for travel only via land or sea (including ferries) between the U.S. and Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean, and Bermuda. Similar in size to a credit card, it will fit easily into a wallet.
- Members of the U.S. Armed Forces on active duty traveling on orders will continue to be exempt from the passport requirement. ■

Security bulletin: Classified discussions

By Frank Perkins

JTF-GTMO Special Security Office

The most basic of security procedures is the individual responsibility to confine classified discussions to secure areas. Your quarters, the Windjammer Club, Tiki Bar, Rick's Lounge, bus stops and other public places are not authorized areas to discuss classified information. The possibility that unauthorized persons could overhear such conversations dictates a need to guard against classified discussions in non-secure areas.

For the purposes of this article, a "classified discussion" encompasses a meeting, conference, seminar, symposium, exhibit, convention, training course, or other such gathering during which classified information is disseminated.

Classified discussions increase security risks. Several regulations specify the ground rules for hosting classified meetings in non-secure areas. There are specific criteria, approvals, procedures and actions required prior to, during, and after conducting a classified meeting or presentation in non-secure areas.

Some key points:

- Classified sessions shall be held only where adequate physical security and procedural controls have been

approved.

- Classified presentations shall be segregated from unclassified presentations to the maximum extent practicable.

- The DoD official who authorizes the classified meeting shall appoint a security manager for the meeting. The security manager shall be a DoD official of sufficient rank and experience to ensure regulatory security requirements are met.

- Announcements of classified meetings shall be unclassified and shall be limited to a general description of topics to be presented

- ALL attendees of classified meetings must have a security clearance equal to or higher than the classification level of the material presented.

- Classified note-taking, electronic recordings and use of cell phones shall not be permitted by attendees during classified presentations

- The area where the classified presentation is to be presented must be inspected and secured prior to the meeting, and inspected after the meeting

If you have any questions concerning the guidelines for classified discussion, please contact Mr. Frank Perkins at ext. 9835. Remember, Mission First- Security Always! ■

Camp Bulkeley upgrades and renovates

By Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class
Trevor Andersen

JTF-GTMO Public Affairs Office

If you've been near Camp Bulkeley lately, you've probably noticed some changes. Some of the buildings are in skeletal form as Joint Task Force contractors paint and refurbish.

Camp Bulkeley is a staging area for incoming and outgoing units with 13 buildings for billeting that can hold about 250 people.

"It's been around since the '90s and the changes are much needed," said Army Sgt. Maj. David Hare, Camp America commandant.

"We're rehabbing the latrines, wiring and plumbing. We're also adding four washers and dryers," he said.

The renovations have been in the making for a while.

Plans for the project came from the last rotation of Troopers and were inherited by the current rotation, said Hare. "We have two more things in the workings. The first is to rehab billeting and the second is to put new drainage in the sidewalks," he said.



Photo by Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class Trevor Andersen

Contractors continue work on facility improvements at Camp Bulkeley.

Though the plans have been made and the work-orders submitted, the process takes time.

Projects like this can take anywhere from six months to a year, explained Hare.

"We walked through and did a survey of what needed to be done. The next rotation will inherit our projects," he added.

Despite the renovations, the purpose will remain.

"When a unit is transferring, they stay there. It's temporary housing for four weeks at the most," said Hare. "We

can fit ten to twelve people in a room, but we try not to do that," he said.

The rooms are air conditioned and have a television, a refrigerator and a microwave. They try to make the rooms as comfortable as possible, said Hare.

Hare made this request to current and future residents of Camp Bulkeley. "While you're there, take ownership of it. Don't treat it like a rental; people will have to live in what you leave behind."

When the renovations are complete, a new set of renovations will begin as the JTF continues to work towards improvement. ■

Network News

Prohibited Activities

By Air Force 1st Lt. Jim Northamer

JTF-GTMO Information Assurance Officer

Our computer systems and networks are very valuable tools that most of us have become dependant upon to get our respective missions accomplished. These systems also have a lot of capabilities that many users would like to take advantage of. Unfortunately, many of the capabilities are not allowed because of the potential risks they pose to our networks. Admittedly, it would be very convenient to be able to use these features, but the risks to our networks outweigh the rewards.

USSOUTHCOM Regulation 1001, *USSOUTHCOM Information Assurance*, is one of the policies that governs what can and cannot be done on Joint Task Force, Guantanamo networks. Among those "convenience

features" that are deemed unacceptably risky and are specifically prohibited on JTF-GTMO computer systems and networks are:

- Using personally-owned hardware or software.
- Loading or using shareware, freeware, or other public domain software.
- Accessing streaming audio, video, or data websites.
- Viewing/listening to personally-owned CDs or DVDs.
- Accessing file-sharing websites.
- Using Universal Serial Bus (USB) devices unless they meet "compelling operational requirements" and are approved by the USSOUTHCOM Designated Approval Authority (DAA).

This list is not all-inclusive, but includes those capabilities that the JTF-GTMO IA office receives the most requests for. While it would be nice to be able to play CDs, listen to streaming audio, etc. on our government-owned computers, these capabilities have been disabled in the interest of securing our networks and their information.

If you have any questions or concerns about a computer security issue, please feel free to contact the JTF-GTMO IA Office at j6-ia@jftgtmo.southcom.mil or ext. 3333. ■

Soldiers restore monument for fallen Sailor

By Army Sgt. Jonson Tulewa-Gibbs
JTF-GTMO Public Affairs Office

Soldiers from 2nd Platoon, 189th Military Police Company, 525th Military Police Battalion spent some of their time restoring a monument dedicated to Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class George J. Denich Jr.

The Denich Hill monument was originally dedicated on June 26, 1963. Denich was killed while operating a bulldozer in the construction of base fortifications on April 10, 1963.

Picking up their paint brushes, shovels and rakes, the Soldiers attacked the hill together without hesitation, amassing around a once ignored slab of concrete which slowly emerged

into a proud memorial once again.

“When I first got here, I didn’t know this was a monument,” said Army Sgt. 1st Class Willis Fletcher, Platoon Sgt. for 2nd Platoon, 189th MP Company. “I would stop at the stop-sign and glance over here at this monument, and just look past it,” said Fletcher.

With floodlights in place and a generator running in the background, the Soldiers worked through the early evening darkness.

“We usually conduct PT at this time, but we just finished a PT test and decided to take a day off and give back to the community,” said Fletcher. We picked out the weeds, spread

some gravel over the area and repainted the monument, said Fletcher.

This monument is in honor of a Navy Petty Officer who gave his life for his country, while deployed here in Guantanamo, said Army 2nd Lt. Nathalie Conley of the 189th MP Company.

We’re happy to give back to the community by restoring this monument, Conley added.

We try to complete a community service project every three months, said Fletcher. I believe everyone should give back to their community, whether it’s picking up trash, volunteering to help school children, or helping those less fortunate than us, Fletcher added. ■



Photo by Army Sgt. Jonson Tulewa-Gibbs

Army Sgt. James Cameron (right) rakes gravel evenly over the base of the Denich Hill Monument as Army Sgt. 1st Class Willis Fletcher (center) guides his platoon in the restoration process.



U.S. Marine Corps Ball at Guantanamo

Story and photos by
Army Sgt. Jonson Tulewa-Gibbs

JTF-GTMO Public Affairs Office

The Marine Corps Security Force Company, Guantanamo Bay, held their annual Marine Corps Ball here last Friday, 231 years to the day they were founded.

The ceremonies started with an invocation by the chaplain. The colors were marched in soon after by color guard.

A three layer cake was wheeled in during the ceremonies and cut by Marine Maj. George Nunez. Remarks by Nunez and Guest of honor Rear Adm. Harry B. Harris shortly followed.

Prizes were given away to the lucky ticket holders during a raffle. I-pod Nano MP3 players, an X-Box 360 video game console and television set were some of the prizes awarded to the lucky winners.

After dinner the attendees enjoyed live music and danced the night away. ■

USMC

What's a ball without dancing? Guests in attendance (right) move to the sound of live music performed at the Windjammer Club.



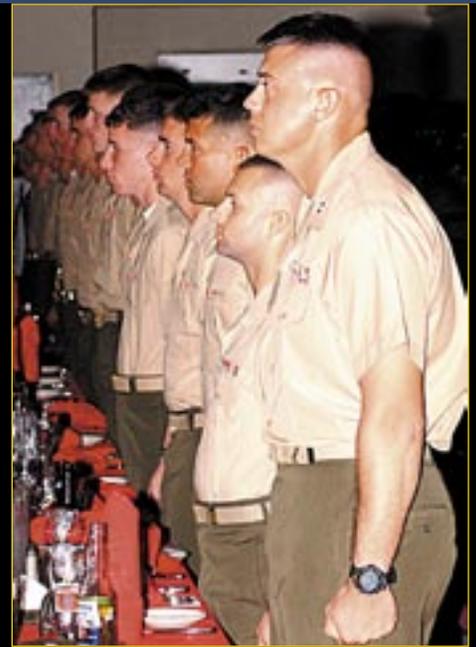
The cake (left) made special to celebrate the Marine Corps Ball.

From the most senior officers and non-commissioned officers to the most junior enlisted in the Corps, the Marines in attendance celebrated the birthday of their beloved Corps in some of their finest dress uniforms.



Ball

Marines in attendance of the Marine Corps Ball stand at attention (right).



Joint Task Force-Guantanamo Commander, Navy Rear Adm. Harry B. Harris, Jr. (left) presides over the cutting of the cake. Guests in attendance of the Marine Corps Ball sit in anticipation as the cake is brought out and presented before the Admiral (bottom).



Week three of GTMO Soccer

Strikers and GTMO United both score wins in Captain's Cup

By Army Staff Sgt. Vince Oliver

JTF-GTMO Public Affairs Office

The Strikers squeaked by the WT Sampson High School Lady Pirates soccer team, 2-1 in game three of the season in Tuesday night soccer action this week.

The 2-0 Strikers struggled offensively through the first half against the 0-2 Lady Pirates, and though the Strikers were the first to score, the Lady Pirates closed out the first half with a goal of their

own to tie the game at 1 apiece by halftime.

During the half time break, Strikers coach, Robert Graham tried to fire up his team by strategizing for the second half, telling them needed to make a greater effort to control the mid-field. Graham said that his team would also need to make more of an effort on defense if they wanted to win.

Midway through the second half, the Strikers scored their second goal of the night and then went on to guard their own goal jealously, preventing the Lady Pirates from scoring a second time.

The score was 2-1 at the end of regulation play.

Game two of the night saw the undefeated GTMO United square off against the Soccer Bombers. After a delay due to the injury of a GTMO United player, the action resumed and GTMO United's Katie

Flohr scored the first goal of the game early in the first half.

The Soccer Bombers immediately answered with a goal of their own on the very next possession, tying the game at 1-1 at the mid-point of the first half.

The stubborn 0-2 Bombers played a physically aggressive game in both the first and second half, but in the end they were no match for the quicker and more agile GTMO United team.

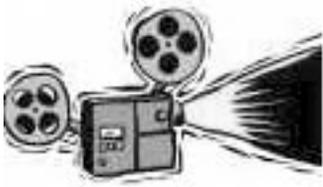
United scored their second goal of the night midway through the second half and then held the Bombers at bay to win the game and improve their record to 3-0 for the season. ■



Box Scores

<u>Team:</u>	<u>Score</u>
The Strikers	2
vs.	
WT Sampson High School Lady Pirates	1
GTMO United	2
vs.	
Soccer Bombers	1

	Army Col. Dennis Army Command Sgt. Maj. Plemmons Joint Detention Group	Army Maj. Pearson Army Command Sgt. Maj. Vanwyngarden Joint Detention Group	Navy Cmdr. Winter Navy Command Master Chief Conley Navy Expeditionary Guard Battalion	Army Lt. Col. Tucker Army Sgt. Maj. Diaz Joint Task Force Public Affairs	Army Capt. Hughes Army 1st Sgt. Fitzgerald Headquarters, Headquarters Company
Last Week	5-8	6-7	8-5	6-7	6-7
Season	74-56	79-51	75-55	82-48	78-52
Army at Notre Dame	Notre Dame	Notre Dame	Notre Dame	Notre Dame	Notre Dame
Temple at Navy	Navy	Navy	Navy	Navy	Navy
Maryland at Boston College	Maryland	Boston College	Boston College	Boston College	Maryland
San Jose State at Hawaii	Hawaii	Hawaii	Hawaii	Hawaii	Hawaii
Michigan at Ohio State	Ohio State	Ohio State	Ohio State	Michigan	Ohio State
Buffalo at Houston	Houston	Buffalo	Buffalo	Houston	Buffalo
Chicago at New York Jets	Chicago	Chicago	Chicago	Chicago	Chicago
Cincinnati at New Orleans	Cincinnati	New Orleans	New Orleans	New Orleans	New Orleans
New England at Green Bay	Green Bay	New England	Green Bay	Green Bay	New England
Pittsburgh at Cleveland	Pittsburgh	Pittsburgh	Pittsburgh	Cleveland	Pittsburgh
St. Louis at Carolina	Carolina	Carolina	Carolina	Carolina	Carolina
Washington at Tampa Bay	Tampa Bay	Tampa Bay	Tampa Bay	Tampa Bay	Washington
San Diego at Denver	Denver	San Diego	San Diego	San Diego	San Diego



The GTMO Movie Review Corner

WITH NAVY PETTY OFFICER 3RD CLASS TREVOR ANDERSEN

This week's review:

"Little Miss Sunshine"

I remember sitting in the backseat of my dad's red Jeep Cherokee. I couldn't move my legs because I had to share the leg room with my two younger brothers and some bags that wouldn't fit in the back. It's one of my favorite memories.

That's the thing about a family road trip; it forces you to be close to your family ... whether you like them or not.

Little Miss Sunshine is about a dysfunctional family who is forced to take a road trip.

Meet the Hoovers. The dad is an aspiring motivational speaker who repeatedly demands his family be a family of winners and not losers. The mother, Sheryl, is the frustrated bread winner. The grandfather is a heroine addict who got kicked out of his nursing home. The son has taken a vow of silence until he can become an Air Force pilot and the daughter, Olive, dreams of being Miss America.

To top things off the family takes in Sheryl's brother, a former professor who just attempted suicide.

When Olive gets the opportunity to compete in the Little Miss Sunshine pageant, the family has

to hop in the VW Van and drive to California from New Mexico.

I have to admit, I didn't trust this movie. I expected something terrible to happen that would leave a sick feeling in my stomach, but Little Miss Sunshine came through for me and was even uplifting.

It may start out depressing, but give it a chance. You may find some common ground.

A road trip forces a family together, even if they don't like each other.

I recommend Little Miss Sunshine emphatically, though it may be a bit mature for younger audiences.

It's rated "R" and has some sexual references and drug related themes. ■

Boots on the Ground:

"Name two goals you have set for yourself here."



"To get promoted and to leave GTMO on time."

-Navy Petty Officer
1st Class Joe Smith Jr.,
Awards Clerk



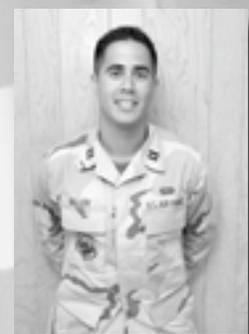
"To make things better here to ensure Trooper's safety, health and welfare."

-Army Chief Warrant Of-
ficer Richard A. Goforth,
Safety Officer



"To get in shape and to save up money."

-Army Pfc. Tina L. Mar-
tin, Leave Evaluation
Clerk



**"Increase communi-
cation throughout the
Joint Task Force."**

-Air Force Capt. Jason J.
Miller, Officer in Charge
of Joint Personnel Ser-
vice Center

FROM JUNK TO JEWELS

By Army Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Ron Martin-Minnich

JTF Command Chaplain

A fellow chaplain recently shared this thought with me. He did not know a garage could hold so much. The mountain was made up of cardboard boxes and plastic storage boxes with items such as bicycles, sleds, and a ping pong table. He and his family had worked diligently everyday including weekends to cut down the number of boxes in the house but hadn't attacked the garage yet. It was like a giant monster awaiting their puny efforts to dismember it. They truly believed it grew slowly overnight when they weren't looking. Containers the size of shoe boxes were given birth to and then grew to adult size ever so subtly.

They did clear a path from one side of the garage to the back door. It was down this narrow path they finally began reaching deep into the bowels of the boxes and slowly extracting one container at a time and unpacking them. Oh, the things they found! Most of the containers had been in storage for the last six years but many had not even been looked into for more than ten years. They just sat, unopened, in other garages and attics until this fateful day.

They found items dating back to each family member's childhood. They found things that they thought were lost and things they forgot they even had. They found things that brought a flood of memories and they reverently placed them back into the container for further storage. They found ten year old candy wrappers and bricks with no history to their existence in their possession.

They found everything from worthless junk to priceless jewels. They found things of no value taking up space, and things of the highest value, for they were the best of who they were and are. The boxes revealed what they placed as value and what they collected that had no value. The boxes were a symbol of how they lived.

We all have collected boxes of stuff in the physical sense but also in the emotional sense. We have collected many things that once may have had value but we have outgrown them and have neglected to discard them. They take up space in

our lives. In the midst of these useless things lie those things of great value. We find that the friendships, the love of our family, the memories of hard work and success, the thrills of being blessed undeservedly, and milestones achieved, lie in the stored items. We need to separate and throw to the wayside what has lost its value and worth. We need to find our highest values and in so doing, our self respect and pride.

Garages full of boxes can be overwhelming but we can also find our greatest values there. The same applies in your personal life. It's time to clean. It's time to open the dormant boxes that await us. It's time to find our very souls one box at a time. On Thursday, November 23, 2006 our nation will pause to give Thanksgiving for the past year's blessings. If you have never done so before, please take time on this day to reflect on what you have been storing at your home with your family and friends. What should you give thanks for and what do you have that it is time to discard? ■

CAMP AMERICA WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sunday	9:00 a.m.	Protestant Service	Troopers' Chapel
	5:45 p.m.	Confessions	Troopers' Chapel
	6:30 p.m.	Catholic Mass	Troopers' Chapel
Wednesday	7:30 p.m.	Bible Study	Camp America North Pavilion

NAVAL BASE CHAPEL

Sunday	8:00 a.m.	Pentecostal Gospel	Room 13
	8:15 a.m.	Confession	Main Chapel
	9:00 a.m.	Catholic Mass	Main Chapel
	9:00 a.m.	Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints	Sanctuary A
	9:30 a.m.	Protestant Sun. School	Main Chapel
Monday	10:00 a.m.	Protestant Liturgical	Sanctuary B
	11:00 a.m.	Protestant Service	Main Chapel
	1:00 p.m.	Gospel Service	Main Chapel
Monday	5:00 p.m.	Pentecostal Gospel	Room 13
	7:00 p.m.	Family Home Evening	Room 8
Mon. to Fri.	5:15 p.m.	Confessions	Main Chapel
	6:00 p.m.	Mass	Main Chapel
Wednesday	6:30 p.m.	Men's Bible Study	Fellowship Hall
Friday	1:15 p.m.	Islamic Prayer	Sanctuary C
Saturday	4:15 p.m.	Confessions	Main Chapel
	5:00 p.m.	Vigil Mass	Main Chapel
	6:15 p.m.	Confessions	PPI Chapel
	7:00 p.m.	Mass	PPI Chapel

Jewish Shabbat Services held every second Friday at 7:30 p.m. in the Naval Base Chapel complex Room 11.

For more information, call ext. 3202 or ext. 2323.

15 Minutes of Fame

with Army Sgt. 1st Class Antonio Dates



Photo illustration by Army Staff Sgt. Vince Oliver

Army Sgt. 1st Class Antonio Dates, Sr. embodies what it means to live a life of selfless service for the benefit of others.

By Army Spc. Jonathan Mullis

JTF-GTMO Public Affairs Office

For months now, Joint Task Force Guantanamo Bay Troopers have been reading “15 Minutes of Fame” articles on the many different people featured.

From teachers who have recently become Soldiers, to traveling musicians, The Wire’s “15 Minutes of Fame” has given Troopers a chance to tell their story. And now, once again, The Wire is proud to bring such a noteworthy person a little well-earned recognition.

Sgt. 1st Class Antonio M. Dates, Sr. is a well-known chaplain’s assistant working for the JTF in Camp America. However, that is hardly the end of the story for this friendly, charismatic individual. When asked to describe his start as a chaplain’s assistant, Dates

did not begin with the recruitment office or the paperwork associated. Rather, he began with a captivating story of what he describes as his “awakening.”

“Back in 1979, I had a motorcycle accident and died ... I mean I literally died,” explained Dates without even a hint of hesitation in his voice. Dates would later learn from a bystander, who witnessed the accident, that his motorcycle had struck a moving vehicle and sent him flying. After tumbling several feet, Dates’ motorcycle, now airborne, came crashing down directly on top of him crushing his face and shattering his jaw into nine pieces. A man, who is still unknown to Dates, administered medical care on the scene and was able to save his life.

That was a life-changing experience, Dates reminisced days later as he lay in his hospital bed

broken and battered. He realized that his life had been spared, and that for some reason, he had momentarily passed away but been brought back and given a second chance.

“I knew it was time to change my life and live for others now; not that the old me was a loser, but the new me is definitely a winner,” said Dates.

He began attending church six times a week and did so for three years.

His view on life and on his role as a senior Non-Commissioned Officer is one in the same.

“It’s all about service; you have to lead in a manner that drives your Soldiers to follow you instead of one that forces them,” said Dates. As Dates went on, he explained how it’s much better that Troopers are motivated to work for their leaders out of respect and admiration rather than fear of punishment.

“Soldiers won’t charge a hill and put their lives on the line for you because you have the power to give them an Article 15,” he explained.

“It’s important to realize that as NCOs we have the responsibility to lead by example,” said Dates.

Dates is the true embodiment of what it means to serve. From offering his time in nursing homes back in the states, to ministering to others throughout the week; Dates shows the rest of us how much joy can be derived from a simple life of servitude. ■

15 Minutes of Fame

Know a Trooper worthy of being highlighted in “15 Minutes of Fame?” Call Army Staff Sgt. Vince Oliver at ext. 3594.

AROUND THE JTF



Photo by Army Spc. Jonathan Mullis

Army Sgt. Joshua A. Fidler with the 29th Infantry Divison practices saftey precautions by ensuring that his weapon is cleared before carrying on with his day.



Photo by Army Sgt. Michael Guhl

Army 2nd Lt. John Bennett reenlists Army Staff Sgt. Michael D. Mills at Windmill Beach on November 2.



Photo by Army Lt. Col. Lora Tucker

▲ Air Force 1st Lt. Jim Northamer swims with a sea turtle while diving in the waters off Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

▶ A Joint Task Force contractor maintains the local streets here in Guantanamo Bay.

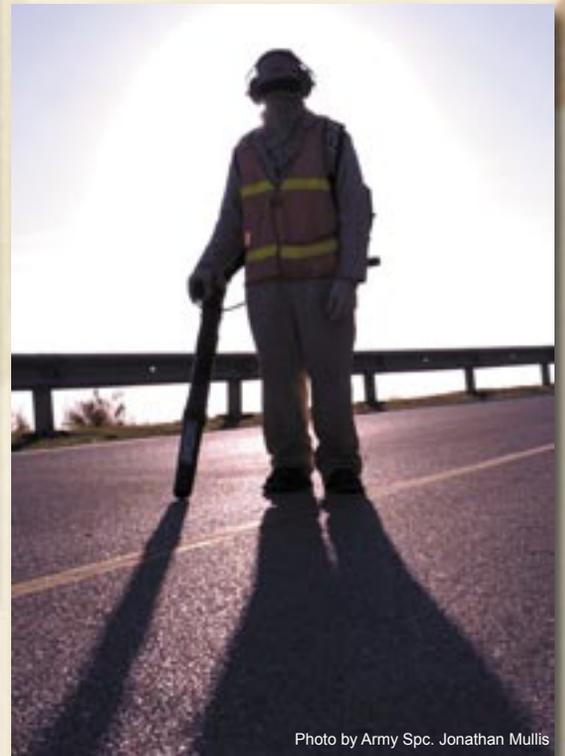


Photo by Army Spc. Jonathan Mullis