

Volume 9, Issue 14

Friday, May 30, 2008

THE WIRED

A JTF Journal

New JTF commander arrives
Memorial Day observed
101 critical days of summer
Trooper driven by challenge

Successful Troopers = Successful Leaders

**Army Command Sgt. Major
Pedro G. Rios**
Operations, Joint Detention Group

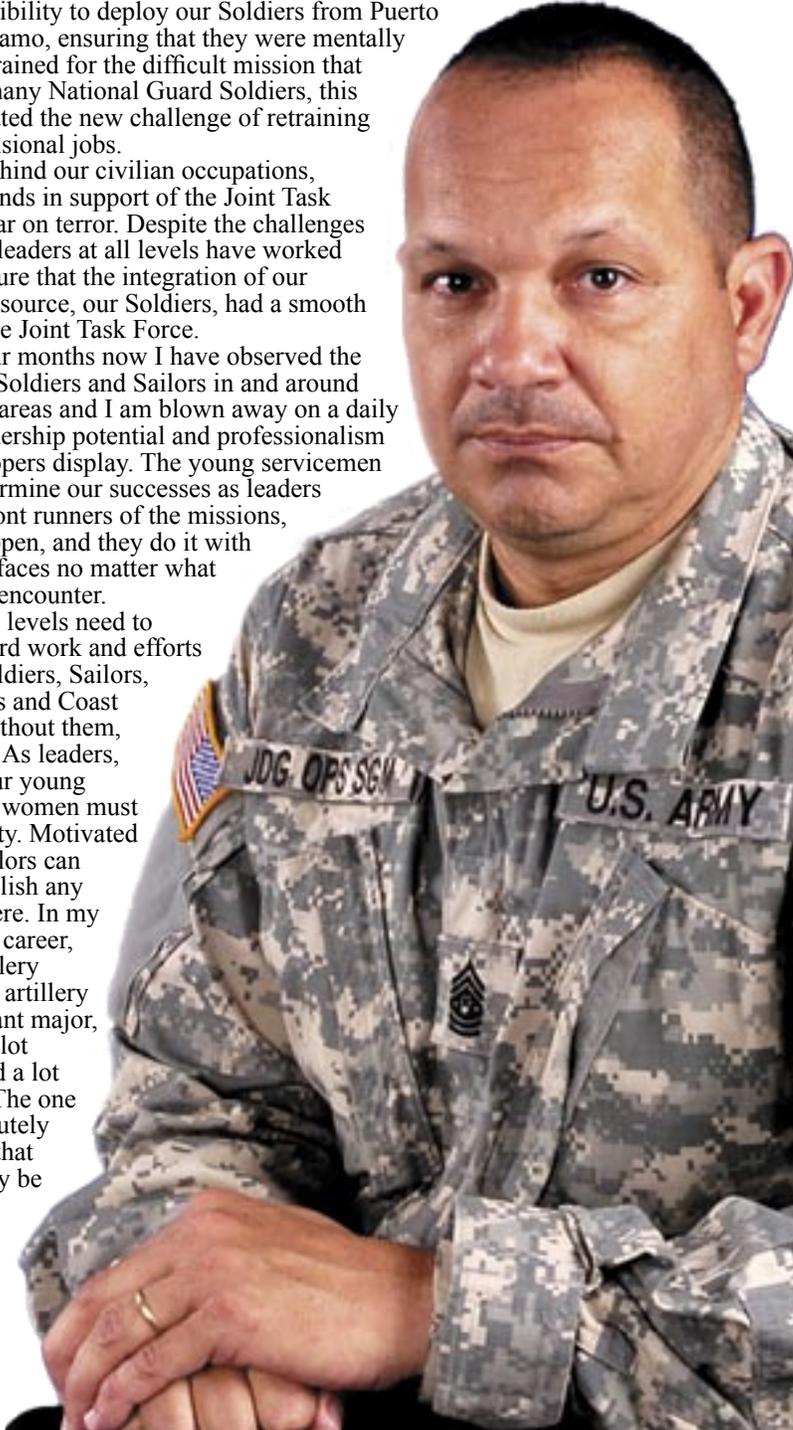
The day we began this new experience, the “Guantanamo Bay” experience, most of us were reminded of our first day in the Army, the day we arrived to our basic training units.

Leaders and Soldiers at all levels from the Puerto Rico National Guard felt rather lost in the beginning, but we never lost sight of the mission ahead. As leaders it was our inherent responsibility to deploy our Soldiers from Puerto Rico to Guantanamo, ensuring that they were mentally and physically trained for the difficult mission that lay ahead. For many National Guard Soldiers, this deployment created the new challenge of retraining Soldiers in provisional jobs.

We’ve left behind our civilian occupations, families and friends in support of the Joint Task Force and the war on terror. Despite the challenges and difficulties, leaders at all levels have worked diligently to ensure that the integration of our most valuable resource, our Soldiers, had a smooth transition into the Joint Task Force.

For about four months now I have observed the performance of Soldiers and Sailors in and around the Camp Delta areas and I am blown away on a daily basis by the leadership potential and professionalism these young troopers display. The young servicemen and women determine our successes as leaders – they are the front runners of the missions, they make it happen, and they do it with a smile on their faces no matter what adversities they encounter.

Leaders at all levels need to recognize the hard work and efforts of our young Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines and Coast Guardsmen – without them, leaders will fail. As leaders, taking care of our young Servicemen and women must be our top priority. Motivated Soldiers and Sailors can and will accomplish any mission, anywhere. In my 26-year military career, from a field artillery private to a field artillery command sergeant major, I have learned a lot about people and a lot about Soldiers. The one thing I am absolutely convinced of is that Leaders will only be as successful as their Soldiers. If Leaders at all levels will focus on the needs of Soldiers and Sailors as if it



See **RIOS/12**

JTF GUANTANAMO

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COVER:

The flag at Cuzco Wells Cemetery is lowered to half mast during a Memorial Day ceremony Monday morning. For additional photos, see pages 8 and 9. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Staff Sgt. Emily Russell



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.



Blood pressure screenings were among the exhibits during the May 22 Safety Stand-down at the Windjammer. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Cheryl Dilgard

Stay safe, stay alive

Army Sgt. 1st Class Vaughn R. Larson

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

The livin' in summertime may be easy, to paraphrase the song, but that's no reason to take it easy where safety is concerned.

That was the message behind a "Critical Days of Summer" safety stand-down event May 22 at the Windjammer, held for both Joint Task Force Guantanamo Troopers and Naval Station Sailors.

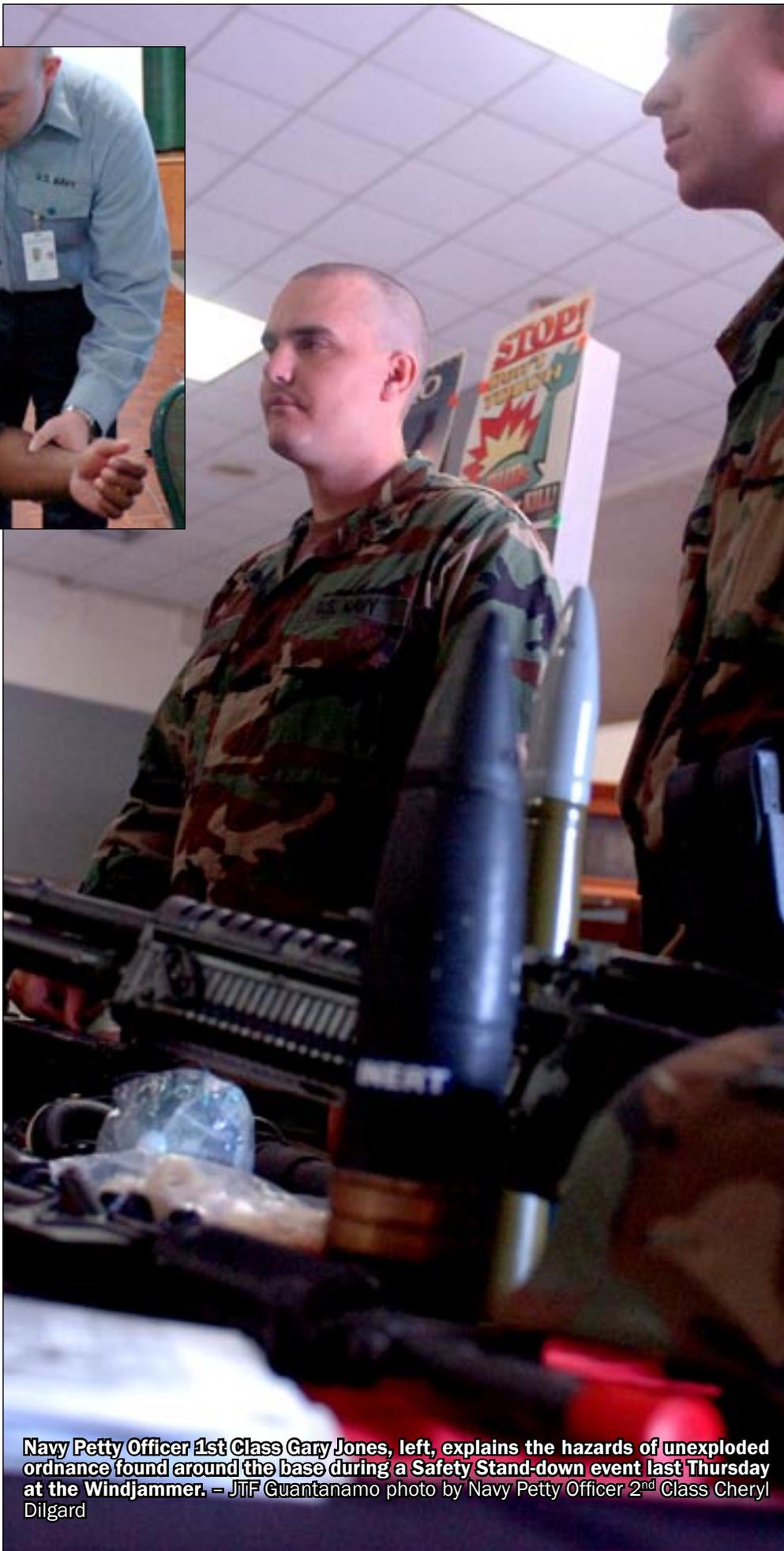
According to U.S. Fleet Forces Command, more off-duty accidents and traffic fatalities occur between Memorial Day and Labor Day than at any other time of year. During this time span last year, 43 Sailors and Marines died due to off-duty accidents. According to Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, 77 Service members lost their lives in private motor vehicle accidents during the 101 days of summer last year.

But last Thursday's safety event was about more than driving.

"[We want] to make soldiers more aware of safety concerns during work and off-time," explained Sgt. 1st Class Gerald Nugent, the safety non-commissioned officer for the Commissions Support Group.

He emphasized using the buddy system

See **SAFETY/12**



Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Gary Jones, left, explains the hazards of unexploded ordnance found around the base during a Safety Stand-down event last Thursday at the Windjammer. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Cheryl Dilgard

New hands take



Rear Adm. Mark H. Buzby and Rear Adm. David M. Thomas Jr. share a light moment following Tuesday's change of command ceremony. - JTF Guantanamo photo by Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Joshua Treadwell

Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Nat Moger

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Navy Rear Adm. David M. Thomas Jr., relieved Navy Rear Adm. Mark Buzby as commander of Joint Task Force Guantanamo, here at a change of command ceremony May 27.

Guest speaker Navy Adm. James Stavridis, the commander of U.S. Southern Command, congratulated Buzby on the job he and his Troopers have done in the past year of the safe, humane and transparent detention of enemy combatants.

"This is a command where scrutiny is part of everything you do down here," Stavridis said of the media attention given to Buzby and by extension the work being done by his Troopers. "The only response to have is diligence, discipline, pride, professionalism, compassion, steadiness and grace under pressure. You do it every day and for that you must be thanked."

During his last address as the JTF commander, Buzby took time to thank his command staff as well as highlight the professionalism of the JTF Troopers who served under his command for the past year.

"You are inheriting the finest military

unit that I have ever been associated with," said Buzby to Thomas. "There's no denying that you are being handed a tough mission and are in for the professional challenge of your life, but I am confident that you will find the rewards are many and long lasting."

Buzby and Thomas proceeded to read their orders, signifying the change in responsibility for the future of the task force. Thomas kept his remarks short.

"To the Troopers of Joint Task Force Guantanamo, you have forged a legacy of outstanding service under the most intense scrutiny and arduous conditions imaginable," Thomas said. "I'm so very pleased and humbled to be joining your ranks, and am proud to assume the duties as your commander."

A graduate of the United States Naval Academy and distinguished graduate of the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, Thomas has served in numerous assignments at sea, to include commander

of USS Ross (DDG- 71) and Destroyer Squadron 26.

Ashore, he has served in various positions, the most recent being Director of Joint Operations on the staff of Commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command.

Thomas has been awarded the Legion of Merit, the Navy and Marine Corps Medal, as well as the Bronze Star Medal. He has also been recognized as a "Washingtonian of the Year" in 2001 for his heroic actions on Sept. 11 during the terrorist attack on the Pentagon when he crawled through burning wreckage to free a trapped co-worker.

Thomas continues a rich family history of Naval Service following his father, and serving with three brothers who succeeded him at the Naval Academy. His wife is a Navy commander and Surface Warfare Officer.

Buzby has been confirmed for appointment to the rank of rear admiral (upper half) and is assigned as the deputy chief of staff for Global Force Management and Joint Force Operations, N3/N5, U.S. Fleet Forces Command.

Army Staff Sgt. Emily J. Russell contributed to this report.



JTF helm



Navy Rear Adm. David M. Thomas Jr., top, salutes during Tuesday's change of command ceremony at the Windjammer. Left, Thomas and outgoing Guantanamo commander Rear Adm. Mark H. Buzby salute the colors. - JTF Guantanamo photos by Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Joshua Treadwell and Army Staff Sgt. Emily Russell

GTMO Open



Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Cheryl Dilgard

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Sixty people gave their best swing for a chance to win the 2008 GTMO open, in which three females and 58 males played the 18-hole course. The tournament, using the Peoria Format, was held Saturday and Sunday.

“We numbered 18 golf balls, each representing a hole of the same number, then put them in a box. After a player had completed the course, they would draw six balls and then add their scores for only those six holes,” explained John Tully, Morale Welfare and Recreation operations manager.

Golfers had the option of playing both days and using their best score or playing one day only. The tournament was set up as a two-day tournament to give everyone an opportunity to play.

“Some people have to work during the weekend and we wanted to give everyone a chance to play, so we opened the tournament up for Saturday and Sunday,” Tully said.

Although many people were very serious about their golf game, most players were out on the field for the love of the game. Even those who don’t golf on a regular basis enjoyed the opportunity to participate.

“I play about four times a year back home, and I’m not very good,” said Gerald Nugent. “It’s a lot more fun here because the golf course is so unique.”

The tournament provided trophies for the winners as well as a variety of prizes given away in a drawing at the tournament dinner, held Sunday evening.

The winners of the 2008 GTMO Open:

Men: 1st place, Cory Becher; 2nd place, Mike Teras; 3rd place, Carl Davis.

Women: 1st place, Cecil “Pennicile” Penafiora; 2nd place, Brandy Camera.

Lowest gross score for males: Mike Teras. Lowest gross score for females: Cecille “Pennicile” Penafiora.



Cedric Davis, above left, swings for the a chance at the championship of the 2008 GTMO Open. At left, winners of the 2008 GTMO Open (left to right): Tracy Kiser, Brandy Camera, Michael Carnista, Cory Becher, Cynthia Penafiora, Cecille “Pencille” Penafiora and Mike Teras. The 2008 GTMO open was held May 24-25 at the Yecatera Golf Course at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.



Prince Caspian: Moral of the story well worth the wait

**Army Pfc.
Eric Liesse**

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

C.S. Lewis' "The Chronicles of Narnia" is one of the most cherished children's stories, able to transcend the bounds of reality in kids' minds, taking them to an awe-striking, magical land. Thankfully, the magic was projected with the films as well.

"The Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian" is the second in the sure-to-be long running Disney movie series. Again directed and co-written by Andrew Adamson, "Prince Caspian" stars British actor Ben Barnes as the ambitious title character. All four actors portraying the Pevensie children, Peter, Susan, Edmund and Lucy, return and keep their distinct personalities while maturing appropriately.

Set hundreds of years after the first film, the story follows Caspian's attempt to overthrow his scheming uncle, Miraz, played by Sergio Castellitto, who has usurped his rightful throne to the kingdom of Telmarine. After fleeing for his life, Caspian is helped by the Narnian race, which was thought to be extinct.

After blowing a magical horn, Caspian unknowingly summons the four Pevensies back to Narnia from England, where only a year has passed since their last trip to magical land. With the return of the Kings and Queens of Old and the Narnian race,

Caspian makes plans to take back his crown.

Barnes plays Caspian, a suave and debonair character full of stately qualities. His Telmarine heritage being akin to real-world Spanish conquistadors, Barnes based his well-developed accent on Inigo Montoya from "The Princess Bride" and dances with his sword like an accomplished fencer.

The young English siblings provide a strong base for the audience to relate with. Eldest brother Peter attempts to help by using his authority as High King of Narnia, which causes friction with the rightful Prince. The youngest, Lucy, keeps solid belief in Aslan, the eternal, messianic guardian lion of Narnia voiced by Liam Neeson, whom her siblings seem to have lost faith in. Susan acts torn between Peter's and Caspian's calls for battle and Lucy's promise of Aslan's return, while Edmund redeems himself of his betrayal in the last film to contrast Peter's hard-headedness.

The tone is noticeably darker than the first film, with a strong overall focus on redemption and rising above feelings of vengeance. Castellitto gives the audience many reasons to loathe the archetypal Miraz with the lengths he goes to stopping Caspian's return.

Although the many action sequences are engaging and done well, they drag out a bit long, giving the whole film the same feeling. For fans of this or other fantasy stories, it may seem just right in pacing. However, the majority of audiences will probably think otherwise.

The visuals are top-notch, with non-computer generated effects mixed with the now-usual stunning digital effects. The animation team's talent of showing animal movements shines again with the Narnians.

Though slow at times, "Prince Caspian" is a well-told epic fantasy for all ages and a stunning way to get taken back into the land within the wardrobe.

PG-13
2 hours, 6 minutes

Rating: ★★★★★



Memorial Day

at Guantanamo Bay



Cuzco Wells Cemetery was opened to the public Monday, May 26 for Memorial Day observances. The cemetery was established in 1940, and consolidated seven other cemeteries on the U.S. Naval Base at Guantanamo Bay. Today the Cuzco Wells Cemetery contains the mortal remains of 335 people, including Cuban and Haitian refugees.

A 21-gun salute was conducted midday at Bulkley Landing, with personnel from the base Weapons Department (bottom left) manning two platform-mounted 40-mm guns.

JTF Guantanamo photos by Army Staff Sgt. Emily Russell, Army 1st Lt. Adam Bradley, and Army Sgt. 1st Class Vaughn R. Larson



The boundary line separating U.S. Naval Base Guantanamo Bay and communist Cuba at Kittery Beach may be imaginary, but the consequences for crossing it are all too real. The boundary extends from the end of the fence to the buoy. - JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Pfc. Eric Liesse

Your map to a road less troubled

**Navy Chief Petty Officer
Joe Castilla**
Harbor Magistrate,
Command Diving Officer

In an effort to replenish corporate knowledge straight from the annals of Harbor Court, I've put together 10 tips designed to keep you on a course due south of my bench. Follow them and you'll most likely avoid landing on the rocks in restricting your privileges.

- 1) Know the bay, beaches, and boundaries before setting out on your adventure. Be aware of the imaginary boundary line drawn between the fence line and the metal buoy at Kittery Beach.
- 2) Always use the buddy system. A solo SCUBA diver recently asked some skin divers if he could tag along – *Negative, ghost rider, that pattern is full.*

- 3) Have a dive flag and buoy if you are more than 300 yards from any beach or outside of Phillips Dive Park. Your boat's dive flag is only intended to keep boats 50 yards away from your ingress and egress. Do you really want to earn the nickname "Chum?"
- 4) File a float or dive plan before boating or diving and don't forget to secure your plan when complete.
- 5) Respect the 300 yard buffer for military vessels, especially the ferry.
- 6) St. Nick's channel and the Guantanamo River are always no wake-zones. This rule applies to U.S. Government vessels as well!
- 7) Know the game limits. If you get caught keeping every fish that even winks at your line, things will go hard on you. One conch per day during conch season!
- 8) The Morale, Welfare and

Recreation office's skipper test does not supercede the naval station instructions. There are plenty of resources available to learn the bay's features and boundaries.

9) Monitor the radio at all times unless Port Control knows your whole crew is diving. "I didn't hear the radio" is a tired, old excuse.

10) No matter how many dives you make in one day or how deep you go, you'll never be more deep sea than the guys who'll be putting you in the recompression chamber, so give it a break and live to dive another day.

For further reading on current guidelines, see COMNAVBASEGTMOINST 1710.10H. For more information, contact: Joe Castilla at 4444 for questions about instructions/regulations; Marina at 2345 for general boating questions; Port Control at 4188 for status of the ranges/boundaries.

Rockin' by the Bay

The Memorial Day concert at the Ferry Landing proved to be a great time for the jam-packed crowd. Memphis Gold, Jennifer Langer, Michael Paige and John William warmed up the audience while the headliner, Everclear, came out loud with their signature hard-edged alt-rock. Besides playing hits such as "Santa Monica," "Father of Mine" and "Volvo Driving Soccer Mom," the Portland natives also, in a tribute to recent touring partners, The Rolling Stones, covered "Far Away Eyes." Everclear stayed late, taking pictures and signing autographs for the appreciative fans. - JTF Guantanamo photos by Army Pfc. Eric Liesse and Sgt. 1st Class Vaughn R. Larson.



Summer safety stressed at stand-down

SAFETY from 3

and awareness of marine wildlife and rip-currents to decrease swimming risks, and proper hydration to reduce heat injuries. Team and contact sports and alcohol can also cause injuries or death.

Another safety concern for residents in Guantanamo Bay is a bit beyond the norm.

“There is a lot of unexploded ordnance on the island,” said Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Gary Jones, a gunners mate and non-commissioned officer for the Guantanamo Naval Station weapons department. “Some of it’s 40-50 years old.”

Recently an unexploded ordnance was found by a child and brought into a residence at Guantanamo. The explosive

was identified later that day and safely removed by Explosive Ordnance Disposal.

Jones said stray ordnance includes mortars, 40-mm anti-aircraft casings and projectiles, fragment grenades, smoke grenades, 500-pound bombs and land mines. These items can turn up on leeward and windward sides of the base, on beaches or in gardens – essentially anywhere, he stressed.

Jones warned against handling any suspected ordnance, due to the potential danger of live fuses or primers.

Other booths at the safety stand-down promoted alcohol awareness, blood pressure, water safety and the American Red Cross.

Trooper success breeds leader success

RIOS from 2

were their own needs, we will continue to have the strongest, greatest military in the world.

I strongly encourage each leader,

from all services, to recognize the great work our young troopers are doing each day. Recognize them, greet them, and help develop them as they will ultimately determine the future of our military.

JTF Safety Brief



Starting June 1, 2008 all Joint Task Force vehicles must have a minimum of a half tank of fuel at all times in order to be prepared for possible destructive weather events. Please ensure that your vehicles never drop below a half tank of fuel. This policy will remain in effect until the end of the destructive weather season in November.

Army 1st Lt. Shane Lauritzen
Joint Task Force Guantanamo J-4 Transportation Officer

Racquetball tournament winners



Single player top finishers below (left to right): John Depalma, third place; Brent McDuffie, first place; and Chuck Savinon, second place. – Photos of Audrey Chapman.

Pictured above are the top teams for the Memorial Day Racquetball Tournament, held at Denich Gym Friday and Saturday evenings. The tournament consisted of single players competing May 23 and doubles teams playing May 24. The top three teams, left to right: Andrew Gulseth and Ryan Nelson, third place; Phil Smith and Brent McDuffie, first place; Waady Ajou and Chuck Savinon, second place.





Guantanamo Bay residents didn't let the rain dampen a good game of disc golf on the new course.

Fun is par for course

Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Cheryl Dilgard
JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Despite Sunday afternoon's downpour, disc golfers were out playing the game. Although the course has not had an official grand opening, as soon as the course equipment was put into place folks started heading to the course with Frisbees in hand.

"People starting going to play disc golf even before we got the field mowed," said John Tully, Morale Welfare and Recreation operations manager.

Disc golf is a growing sport throughout the United States and even boasts both

amateur and professional teams. Here in Guantanamo the sport is also growing in popularity. Many have never played before, but are curious about the sport.

"I haven't had a chance to play yet, but I am definitely going to first chance I get," said Chris Ellis. "It looks like fun."

Others have played for years and bring their enthusiasm to the course.

"I got into disc golf because I used to play Ultimate Frisbee," said Liam Walsh. "Now I have been playing [disc golf] for five years. It's a lot of fun."

Future plans for the disc golf course include adding a permanent tent structure behind the Lateral Hazard golf shop, along with seating. The completion of the complex



Dan Stevens prepares to try and get a disc-in-one on the new disc golf course in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

– which includes the disc golf course, the traditional golf course, the maintenance/cart shed, and the new Lateral Hazard golf shop – will allow golfers an opportunity to relax with a cold beverage under the shade after a round of golf or disc golf.

Boots on the Ground

by Army Spc. Megan Burnham

If you could have any meal sent down here, what would it be, and why?

Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Laura Moore



"Any Mexican dish from Plaza Azteca in Virginia Beach. It's the best Mexican authentic food I've ever had."

Army Spc. Ramirez Francisco



"Puerto Rican rice and beans made by my mother – she is the best cook I know."

Army Spc. Ediberto Negrón



"Rice and beans and pork chops by my wife – she is also a good cook."

Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class Josh Bruns



"A southern dessert called Bananas Foster by my wife to celebrate me going home soon."

How to be totally **MISERABLE**

**Army Capt.
Scott Brill**

JTF Guantanamo Deputy Chaplain

Some of the great lessons in life come from the most miserable people, places, and things. What a great world we live in, where even the bad can be for our good. Suffering is mandatory, like a really bad sun burn, or... well you think of something. Misery, on the other hand, is optional. Of course we all have something to complain about, we all have problems, but we also have choices that determine our frame of mind. Welcome to planet Earth, right? The bookstores and libraries are full of self-help books on how to be successful, rich, happy, etc. All well and good, but what if I don't want to be happy? What if I am tired of happy people and happy books that happy people read? To my surprise, I found such a book where, from its pages, a person can learn how to be totally miserable – and, on the way, how not to be. I have included a few of its instructions. Enjoy, or not – it is always up to you. “As a man thinketh, so shall he be.” (Proverbs 23:7).

Complain About Your Blessings

Lots of people complain. Most people complain about their problems, but miserable people are different – they complain about their blessings. If their car breaks down, they complain that it isn't new. If their waitress is slow, they complain and withhold a tip. If their cell phone drops a call, they complain about their service. They're like the people in the Old Testament who got free food from heaven and said, “What? Manna again?” By contrast, happy people are grateful to have a car, thankful they can afford to eat at a restaurant, and stoked that they have a cell phone. Most people in the world don't have cars, can't afford restaurants, and have never sent a text message. Happy



people count their blessings, while the miserable complain about theirs.

“I complained because I had no shoes until I saw a man who had no feet.” – Sign in a shoe repair shop

Don't Have A Purpose

Happy people rarely get down, because they have a reason to get up. They know why they're here and what they're supposed to do. Since they have a purpose, they live their life on purpose. They memorize their mission, ponder their purpose, and always seem to be going someplace. Having a purpose is like having a rudder that steers you through life's storms, winds, and currents. Miserable people drift. They just go with the flow without asking where the flow will go. They don't push through the

waves – they get pushed around by them. Miserable people have no plans, no goals, no dreams, no purpose. No wonder they're miserable.

“Behold also the ships, which though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, withersoever the governor listeth.” (James 3:4, New Testament)

Put Deadlines On Your Happiness

Miserable people look for some outside event to make them happy. “As soon as I graduate, I'll be happy.” After they graduate, they say, “Well, as soon as I get a job, I'll be happy.” After they get a job, they say, “Okay, as soon as I get married, I'll be happy.” Miserable people never seem to learn that happiness is a decision, not a destination. It's an attitude, not an event! If you're determined to be miserable, then think of life as a waiting room, and happiness as your doctor. You know you'll be waiting in there forever, so enjoy the magazines. (And when you finally get in to see Dr. Happiness, he'll just tell you to schedule another appointment – and then you'll be happy.)

“Most folks are about as happy as they make up their minds to be.” – Abraham Lincoln

“[The fact is] most putts don't drop. Most beef is tough. Most children grow up to be just people. Most successful marriages require a high degree of mutual toleration. Most jobs are more often dull than otherwise. Life is like an old-time rail journey – delays, sidetracks, smoke, dust, cinders and jolts, interspersed only occasionally by beautiful vistas and thrilling bursts of speed. The trick is to thank the Lord for letting you have the ride.” (Lloyd Jenkins Jones, “Big Rock Candy Mountains,” Deseret News, June 12, 1973, A4).

My thanks to John Bytheway, for writing “How to be Totally Miserable.”

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



Pfc. Mercedes Diaz sang the national anthem at the recent 525th MP Battalion Change of Responsibility. Diaz, a Soldier in the 525th Military Police Battalion attended the Berklee College of Music in Boston, Mass., before joining the active duty Army last year. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Joshua Treadwell

Challenge, motivation drive Soldier to success

**Army Sgt.
Gretel Sharpee**

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

For Army Pfc. Mercedes Diaz, the military was an opportunity. Since her enlistment barely a year ago, she hasn't let anything the military has to offer pass her by.

"I have a lot of motivation and I really like the military," said Diaz, a guard in the 525th Military Police Battalion.

Through that motivation, Diaz won Soldier of the Quarter from U.S. Army South this past month in a competition held at Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

"There was a [physical fitness] test, a written test that covered up to skill level three, a board and a land navigation test,"

Diaz explained about the competition criteria. "The land navigation was the hardest – I almost fell off a cliff!"

To qualify for the USARSO Soldier of the Quarter, Diaz had to compete in and win three previous boards held here at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay.

"First it was Soldier of the month, then the quarter for the 525th. Then I competed in Soldier of the quarter for the Joint Detention Group and then I could go compete for USARSO," said Diaz.

A year ago when Diaz was thinking about joining the Army, she said it was really just luck of the draw which led her to become a military police officer.

"An MP is one of the more risky things a female can do in the military, and I think maybe that is why I chose it," Diaz

said. "But growing up I always wanted to compete and be challenged, but I didn't like sports and always thought the military would be good for that."

Some might wonder where all of this motivation to compete comes from for a Soldier so new to the military, but Diaz says it is simple.

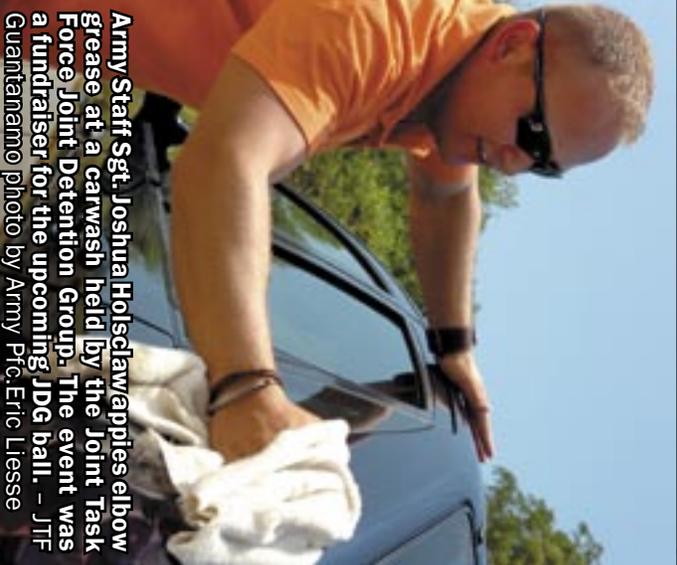
"I am the first U.S. citizen in my family, and I have developed a respect for America," said Diaz. "I really value my education and I owe it to America."

Next, Diaz is scheduled to compete in the Soldier of the Year board June 8-13 at Fort Sam Houston.

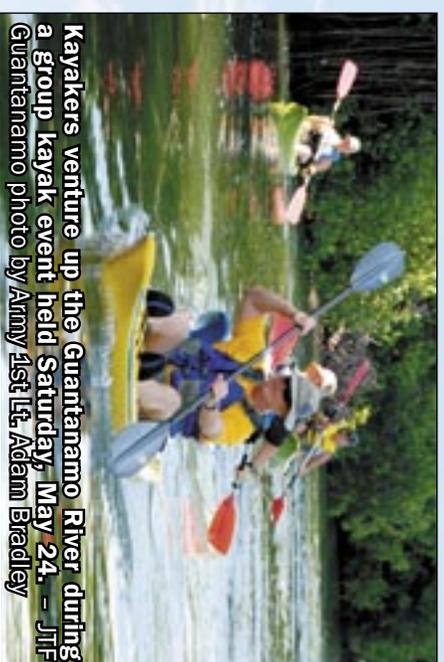
"I get so nervous, but once I come out – regardless of how I did – I know that all of my hard work paid off and I did my best," said Diaz.

AROUND THE JTF

Army Sgt. Ian Inouye and Staff Sgt. Benjamin Stringfellow remove a hook from the mouth of a blacktip shark Inouye caught while fishing in Guantanamo bay Saturday evening. - JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Staff Sgt. Emily J. Russell



Army Staff Sgt. Joshua Holtselaw applies elbow grease at a carwash held by the Joint Task Force Joint Detention Group. The event was a fundraiser for the upcoming JDG ball. - JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Pfc. Eric Liesse



Kayakers venture up the Guantanamo River during a group kayak event held Saturday, May 24. - JTF Guantanamo photo by Army 1st Lt. Adam Bradley



Motorcycles and Jeeps cruise to the Northeast Gate during the Memorial Day motorcycle and Jeep clubs' base ride held Monday, May 25. - JTF Guantanamo photo by Army 1st Lt. Adam Bradley



Rear Adm. Mark H. Buzby wields a boarding hatchet as he leads a command run Saturday morning from the Naval Station Hospital to Marine Hill. - JTF Guantanamo photo by Army 1st Class Sgt. Vaughn R. Larson