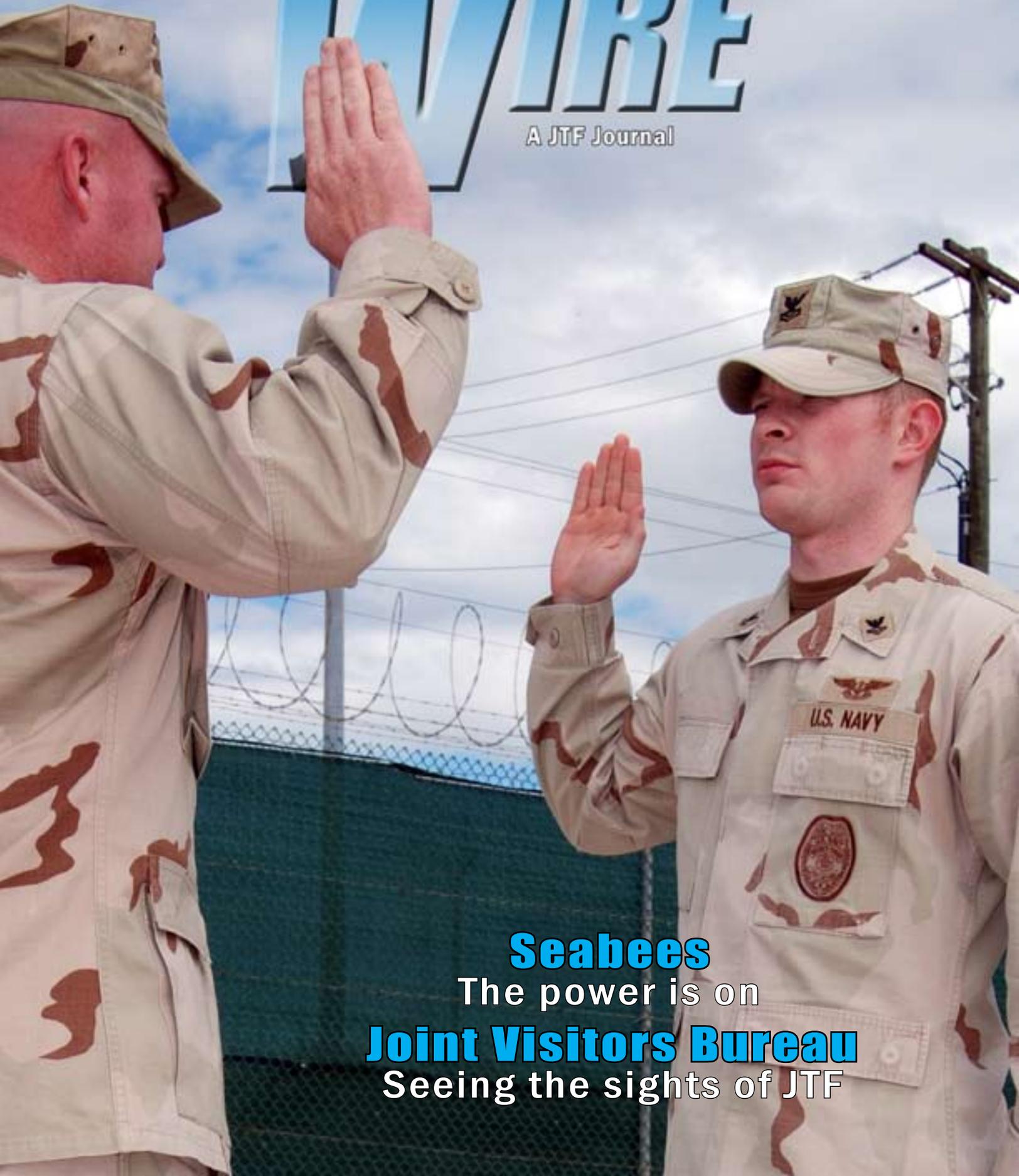


THE WIRE

A JTF Journal



Seabees
The power is on
Joint Visitors Bureau
Seeing the sights of JTF

Persevere to advance

**Navy Senior Chief Petty Officer
Ronnie Becknauld**
JIG Senior Enlisted Advisor

Advancement is crucial in today's military. Do not let advancement requirements turn into career ending obstacles. I received advice from my father, who was a Seabee, a Senior Chief, a Warrant and Commissioned Officer. He advised, "Your time in the service will be like running through an obstacle course. Overcome all obstacles, the easy way or the hard way."

I looked up the definition of obstacle course in the dictionary. It is defined as a military training course filled with obstacles such as hurdles, fences, walls and ditches that must be negotiated. Broadly, it is a series of obstacles that must be overcome. The definition illustrated the series of challenges that we face in advancing in today's military.

I advise all junior personnel to complete advancement requirements as soon as possible. This means studying required courses and completing rate enlisted performance qualifications. One of the biggest obstacles is passing the required correspondence courses. Junior enlisted fail the end of course test and are reluctant to study and retake the test. This can be overcome by monitoring their test scores, encouraging, motivating and requiring them to study and retake the test.

There is no shame in failing a test, only in not completing the course. Don't let initial failure of a test become an obstacle to advancement. Myself and most senior enlisted have initially failed several end of course tests. We continued to take the tests until we passed the course.

Another obstacle to advancement is completing enlisted performance qualifications. Junior enlisted members need to take the initiative to complete these tasks and have a senior person verify completion of the tasks. Monitor subordinates' progress in completing these requirements. Do not let them become obstacles to advancement.

History has shown advancement is crucial in today's military. During my father's time, the day of the career Seaman ended in the Navy. During my time, the day of the career Third Class Petty Officer has ended in the Coast Guard. With a new administration in Washington and unknown challenges ahead, advancement is even more important now, then in the past. ✪



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**Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class
Scott McBride re-enlists at
the Camp Delta flagpole, Feb.
6.** – JTF Guantanamo Bay photo
by Navy Petty Officer 1st Class
Richard Wolff



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.

Navy Chief Petty Officer Miguel Fernandez prepares to check the generator's air box to ensure the intakes are clean.
- JTF Guantanamo
Photo by Navy Petty Officer 1st Class
Linda J. Andreoli



Power up GTMO

Army Staff Sgt. Emily J. Russell

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Having electricity to power your coffee pot in the morning is something many of us may take for granted. Without electricity, no doubt operations would be a challenge, much like trying to function without that first cup of caffeinated goodness. Fortunately, through the work of many hands, both military and civilian, the base power supply meets the needs of its customers.

The Mobile Utilities Support Equipment team, a Seabee detachment based out of Port Hueneme, Calif., has spent the last few weeks deployed here, methodically reviewing maintenance records, conducting annual generator maintenance and ensuring the safety of the five generator units that

support the leeward and windward sides of Guantanamo Bay.

"The [Seabee operated] public works department is overall responsible for the day-to-day maintenance of the generators," said Navy Chief Petty Officer Brian Parker, a construction electrician with the MUSE team. "In most locations, though, local contractors do the maintenance. Here, [the Seabees] essentially have ownership of the equipment but Burns and Roe does the maintenance."

MUSE essentially works as a rental company, Parker explained. They rent the equipment to military and civilian contractors and then follow up on the equipment annually to ensure its proper care.

"The five generators, each 1,500 kilowatts, make up approximately one-third of the power generation," said Navy

Petty Officer 2nd Class Jonathan Johnson, a construction mechanic with the MUSE. "They are connected to the power grid and when these units are on, they supply [power to] everything from the residential areas to the commissary."

The generator is primarily used for back-up power, but they run on a daily basis to support the base during peak load.

"It's an ideal set up for the [generator] units where they're used long-term. When they come on, they run at a constant [kilowatt]. They don't handle the load swings," Johnson said. "We offer power generation in places where it's more cost efficient for the Navy. Our power generation comes at about one-tenth of the cost that a civilian contractor costs to generate power."

While the team inspects the generators, preventative measures and safety are key.

"On an annual inspection, we're looking for any future failures and inspecting the preventative maintenance that's done on a daily basis to make sure the contractors are taking care of the equipment [properly]," Johnson said. "We do a lot of safety inspections to make sure emergency shut downs and protective relays are in operating condition. These tests aren't usually done throughout the year, so this is the one time it's shut down and completely torn apart to check everything."

The maintenance mission also serves as a training opportunity for new team members and provides time for future detachment leaders to earn their certification to lead their own team.

See **POWER/12**



Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Denise Gillette leans over to check a valve while doing generator maintenance as a part of the Mobile Utilities Support Equipment unit. - JTF Guantanamo
Photo by Navy Petty Officer 1st Class



Hardly a day's rest

Navy Cmdr. Jeffrey Hayhurst gives a history of the detainee camps and explains the Joint Task Force mission during a tour arranged and scheduled by the Joint Visitors Bureau, Feb. 10. – JTF Guantanamo photos by Army Staff Sgt. Gretel Sharpee

**Army Spc.
Megan Burnham**

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

When people think about the detention facilities at Joint Task Force Guantanamo, the opinions and perceptions on the topic vary greatly. To ensure that the public is aware of the safe, humane, legal and transparent care of the detainees, the Joint Visitors Bureau makes it their mission to provide that information.

The JVB's main mission is to support the Joint Task Force in communicating with the "outside world" and working to bring distinguished visitors to the island so they can see the and understand for themselves.

"Our mission is to escort distinguished visitors to the island and ensure that they are attended to," said Army Maj. Victor Perez, deputy director of the JVB.

In preparing for DV visits to Guantanamo Bay, the JVB works diligently setting up tours around the base and in JTF facilities as well as scheduling briefings with senior leadership and fulfilling requests for visitors' specific areas of interest.

"We do this all the time. This is second nature to us," Perez said.

In addition to DV tours of the JTF operating area, the JVB recently conducted a bus tour for local high school students as part of a community outreach.

"It was my first time doing a unique tour like this," Perez said. "We need to let them know what we do over at the detainee facilities and fulfill their curiosity on the matter."

When any DV group is scheduled to come here, the JVB has to work with every department within the JTF to ensure the tour is successful and runs smoothly. One department that is closely involved in all tours is the Joint Detention Group, since nearly all visitors are interested in the mission of the detention facility.

"We work with the JVB almost weekly and are involved in all the tours through the camps," said Navy Commander Jeffrey Hayhurst, Deputy Commander of the JDG. "They are very well organized and the JVB does a good job in having everything arranged and prepared. It's a positive experience." ☆



Army Maj. Victor Perez, JVB deputy director, briefs a group about the schedule of the tour to Camp America and the detainee facilities.

Working below the surface

**Army Spc.
Megan Burnham**
JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

The average time a recreational scuba diver can safely stay underwater is approximately 30 to 60 minutes. For some divers, that is not enough time to observe and experience all that the underwater world provides in at Guantanamo Bay. If that is the case, one might consider the life of a Navy Seabee Diver with U.S. Naval Underwater Construction Team One of Little Creek, Va.

“This is an excellent area for diving,” said Navy Petty Officer 1st Class William Butcher of UCT 1. “You have a lot of shallow water diving, low visibility diving and very clear, deep water diving. It’s a good training environment and the water’s so great that we can have a three-hour bottom time without getting cold.”

UCT 1 consists of approximately 60 to 65 personnel, with 35 to 40 qualified Navy divers who specialize as basic underwater construction technicians or first-class diver underwater construction advanced technicians. They are a component of the Naval Construction Force who apply these skills to a variety of construction projects in the ocean environment.

“We’re in the Navy as a specialized part of the Seabees,” Butcher said. “Regular Seabees do vertical construction on land and we do underwater construction. Our area of expertise is waterfront facilities. We can build, repair or destroy any waterfront or deep ocean facility.”

Their mission for the past two weeks here was to conduct an elevated causeway site survey on the Leeward side, which included rapid penetration tests to determine the stability of the soil, the soil classification and its density.

“It’s basically driving three-fourth inch rods into the earth, below the surface of the water,” Butcher said. “In order for the area where the elevated causeway is determined to be built, the soil has to meet a certain criteria.”

The elevated causeway can be imagined as a portable pier where there is not a permanent pier available.

“Its professional term is an elevated causeway system modular,” said Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Chris Hefner. “It’s used for the quick offload of cargo in-theater or wherever one is needed.”

When the project first began, a side-scan sonar survey was conducted to identify any large anomalies that might interfere with the construction of the elevated causeway. Following was a bathometric survey that provided a topographic map that showed how deep the water was in the construction area.

“When we first arrived, the ferry had lost a rudder, but we were able to recover it for them [using the side-scan sonar],” said Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Christopher Munch, subject matter expert on the bathometric and side-scan sonar equipment. “Finding it saved an estimated cost of \$10,000, so the [side-scan sonar] is pretty useful in that.”

Other equipment used for the project consisted of a BR-67 jack-hammer used in the rapid penetration tests and the MK-21 dive helmet.

“[The divers] dove surface-supply where the air system is on top of the boat where an umbilical is attached to the dive helmet that feeds them the air,” Butcher said. “We also have communications [in the helmet] so we can talk back and forth to the divers. It’s very



Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Michael Cleaves, independent duty corpsman of the team, displays the MK-21 dive helmet that the Seabee divers use in their dives to the bay floor of Guantanamo Bay.

important when you’re using hydraulic power tools underwater.”

The divers’ uniform consisted simply of a T-shirt and shorts along with the MK-21 dive helmet. They also wore weighted dive boots with steel toes to protect the divers’ feet and ensure they remain firmly on the bottom during the rapid penetration tests.

“The water was really warm and there weren’t many hydroids or jellyfish to contend with,” Butcher said. “With the amount of time the divers spent in the water, they didn’t get too cold or too hot, so just diving in shorts and a T-shirt was ideal.”

The results from the testing show that the soil in the construction area is solid enough to install the elevated causeway. Despite the team finishing this project, UCT 1 may return to work on other projects.

“As you’re riding the ferry to Leeward, to the left are some concrete piles sticking up out of the water,” Butcher said. “There’s talk of us coming back down to remove those and also do some repairs to existing facilities in the water here. There’s also a good chance we’ll be able to conduct our divers’ training down here again.”

“There’s still a lot of work for us to do here,” said Navy Chief Petty Officer Dennis Bergman. “So now it looks like we got the green light to start coming back down here. The base will be seeing a lot more of us.” ★

Golfing GTMO's unique links

**Army Spc.
Eric Liesse**

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Guantanamo Bay, when compared to most other military bases, has had a rather robust Morale Welfare and Recreation department for years. One of its major draws for well over a quarter century is the professionally designed nine-hole golf course.

Golf itself is a simple game of hitting a small ball into a hole with a set of specially designed clubs and putters. Each hole on a course is assigned a par. That is the average strike score that the course designers believe a skilled golfer needs to finish the hole. Professional courses usually have a total par of 70 to 72.

The earliest known mention of golf is from 1452, when Scotland's King James II officially banned the game, saying it kept his subjects from needed archery practice. The first recorded purchase of golf equipment was in 1502 by King James IV of Scotland, after he lifted the ban and began to play. However, the actual development of the game is continually debated among historians. Most believe it began with Scottish shepherds hitting stones into rabbit holes.

Yatera Seca, Guantanamo's golf course, northeast of Denich

Gym on Roosevelt Road, has a total par of 72. However, golf skill and past experience are not needed to play a full 18-hole round on this course.

In mid 2008, MWR opened a new golf pro-shop, The Lateral Hazard, at the entrance to the course and driving range. There, military members can use clubs for free, get a full bucket of balls for \$1 to play or shoot on the 250-yard driving range, or rent a cart to get around the course for \$10 alone or \$15 with a pair. For civilians, club rental is \$5.

"Well it's different, that's for sure," Navy Lt. Kevin Cronau said, comparing Guantanamo's course to others he's played. "It's challenging, but the rocks make it the challenging part. The hills make it the hard part and the fun part."

Cronau, Joint Task Force Guantanamo's C-12 pilot and a golf enthusiast of six years, hit the links with Air Force Capt. Kristol Meyers, also of JTF air operations and a golfer for two years. Both borrowed clubs from the pro-shop.

"They're actually great clubs for rentals," Cronau said.

"You can't complain when it's free," Meyers added. Cronau said he has seen prices for a round of golf anywhere from \$40 to \$50 at other military bases: Meyers said she has seen even higher.

"MWR is really good," Meyers said. "Here, it's great." ☆



Navy Lt. Kevin Cronau sends the ball screaming down the fairway while playing a leisurely game of golf.

(Barely) Rollin' Stone

**Army Spc.
Eric Liesse**

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

The exact start of what we call rock and roll music will never be defined. By nature it can't. This fluidity is what many people love so much about music in the first place. However, this draw also means that if a story has this music as its backdrop, the writers almost don't even have to try.

"Cadillac Records," written and directed by Darnell Martin, takes a very abridged look at one of – if not the – most important labels in electric blues and rock and roll: the Chicago-based Chess Records.

The label was the launching point for music legends from Muddy Waters to Chuck Berry to Howlin' Wolf. These

larger-than-life acts are now regarded as some of the most important musicians in America's history, and they all came from the studios of Leonard Chess, portrayed by Adrien Brody.

Brody does fine as Chess, but these biopics Hollywood loves so much lately deserve better than "fine." Brody's Chess comes across like he's not remotely passionate about anything he's doing. Add in how fast the story moves through the back story for Chess and his family, and you'll sometimes forget that he's a main character.

The film opens with a short back story for Waters and Chess, but it's so short it feels almost tacked on. It feels like only five minutes in that Waters is recording in Chess's studio. The film ends up paying for its lack of detail.

Later in the film when people like Howlin' Wolf (Eamonn Walker) and Etta James (Beyoncé Knowles) show up, the movie starts to rely on Waters' and Chess's supposedly established emotional clout.

However, since their beginnings were so brushed over, Waters and Chess feel flat, especially compared to Knowles' extremely powerful showing as a drug-addicted and hyper-independent Etta James.

It's obvious why Knowles was put on the movie poster when she's not even in the first half.

The music that is the film's center is what makes "Cadillac Records" worth a passing view. The setting, costumes and attitudes all fit the time amazingly, but the mediocre performances from the leads really run this film into the ground.

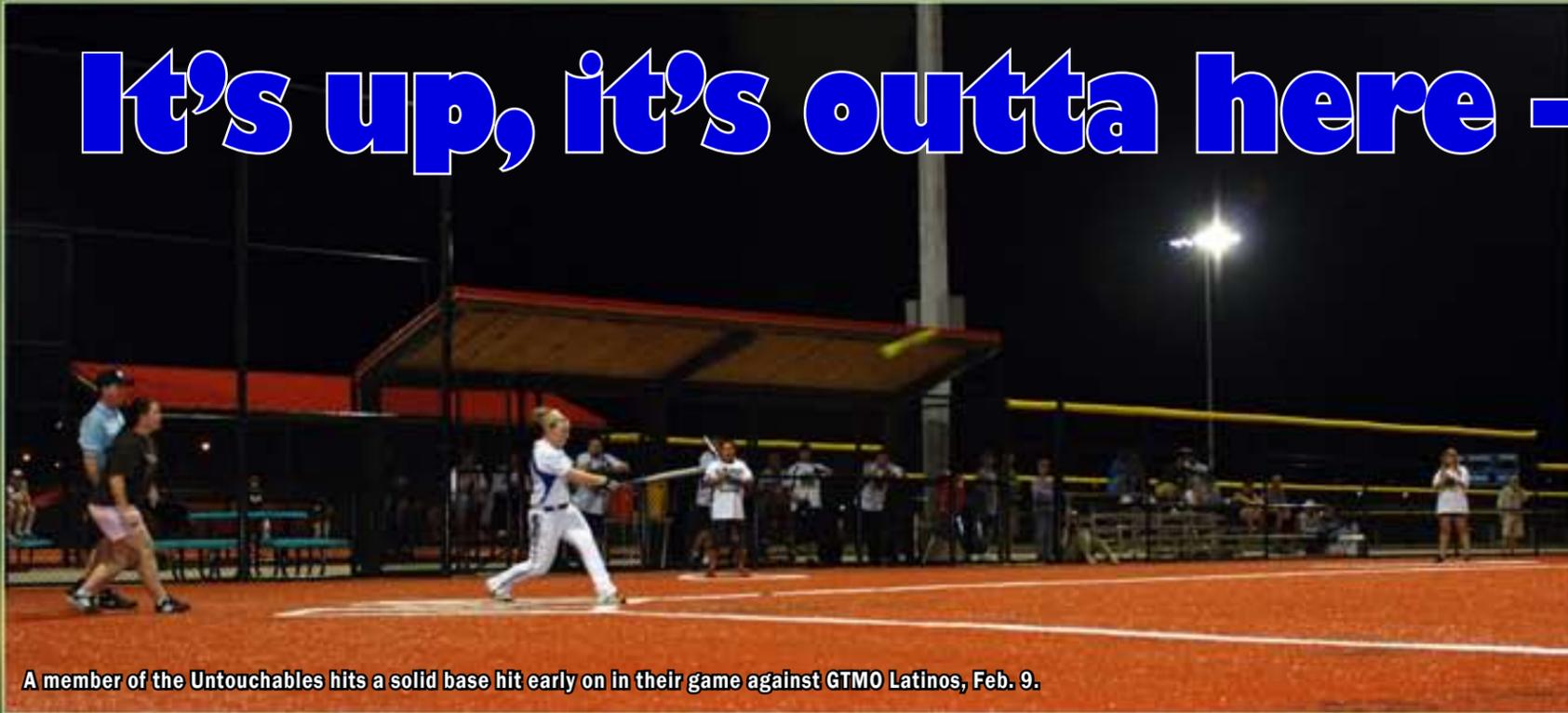
However, if you're a fan of the era and its influential music, you'll see it regardless of what my review says – which is exactly what the movie executives hope. ☆

R
1 hours, 49 minutes

Rating: ★★☆☆☆



It's up, it's outta here - It's Gone!



A member of the Untouchables hits a solid base hit early on in their game against GTMO Latinos, Feb. 9.



An OARDEC player on first base watches the batter in preparation to take second.



The umpires keep the game fair by watching every pitch and every play in the Winter Softball League.



An GTMO Latino player runs past first base on a base hit.



When play wrapped up between OARDEC and the Untouchables, players lined up to high-five each other in a display of true sportsmanship.

JTF Guantanamo photos by
Army Staff Sgt. Gretel Sharpee



Visiting GTMO

**Army Sgt.
Sarah Stannard**

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Unaccompanied Troopers deployed to Joint Task Force Guantanamo have a unique opportunity to share their forward location with their dependents, family members and friends.

The U.S. Naval Station Guantanamo Bay family member and guest visitation policy allows those permanently stationed and those deployed here the chance to sponsor visitors to the base as outlined by COMNAVBASE GTMO INSTRUCTION 4650.1.

Troopers who would like to take advantage of this uncommon allowance should begin by becoming familiar with the family visitation information paper. This paper and other helpful information on the family visitation process can be found on the JTF's Intranet in the "Resources" section. Under "Joint Task Force Guantanamo Services," choose "Visitor Process."

Once familiar with the visitor regulations and restrictions, Troopers should complete a Naval Station entry clearance request, NAVSTAGTMO 4650/8, for each of their visitors. It is important to remember that once complete it may take up to 15 days for these requests to be approved, so Troopers should consider this time allowance. Approval can take up to 45 days for non-U.S. citizens.

"When I first deployed I didn't know my family could come visit me here," said Army Sgt. Miguel Rivera, a Puerto Rico Army National Guardsman deployed to the JTF. "I'm working on bringing my family from back in [Puerto Rico] right now. I thought it would be really hard to get all of the steps done, but it actually goes pretty easy – it just takes a little bit of time."

Once the clearance request has been completed, the Trooper must have it approved as outlined on the JTF's family visitation routing slip. This slip can also be found in the "Visitor Process" section of the JTF's Intranet. It may take up to five days to have the request approved at the command level. Troopers should contact Sgt. 1st Class Jose Rivera at extension 9700 for more information regarding command approval.

Troopers also need to consider where their guests will be lodged during their time in Guantanamo Bay, as most JTF Troopers cannot have house guests. To acquire lodging, Troopers should call the Navy Lodge at extension 3103 or the Naval Station transient housing office at extension 2400. It is required that a Trooper's guests have a valid housing reservation prior to approval of their clearance request.

Troopers should also be aware of the regulations and restrictions on rotator travel and flights on Lynx Air and Air Sunshine. Troopers should contact their specific airline of choice in advance of purchasing a ticket to ensure their guests meet all requirements.

Flight reservations are also required prior to a clearance requests approval. More information about rotator travel and flight schedules can be found on the JTF's Intranet under "Resources" and then "Rotator and Civilian Flight Schedules."

Final approval of the request comes from the Naval Station's operations office located inside Building 2144. Once received, operations will take approximately 24 hours to approve the request.

Lastly Troopers must submit both their routing slip and visitation requests to the administration clerk at the joint personnel service center located inside Building 1451 for archiving. Troopers need to ensure each guest has a copy of their approved visitation request along with a valid passport prior to boarding their flight. If guests are missing either of these required documents, they will not be allowed to board the flight.

Though the process to have guests command-approved may seem like a daunting task, it actually moves quite smoothly if the steps on the routing slip are followed. Troopers should allow enough time for processing and have all accommodations reserved well in advance to ensure a pleasurable visit for both themselves and their guests.

"I can't wait to show my family what I am doing here," Rivera said. "Families don't usually get to see what Soldiers do while they are deployed. I feel very grateful to have this opportunity." ☆

Valentine's Day every day

Keys to a healthy, happy marriage

**Navy Lt. Cmdr.
Chris Blair**
JSMART OIC

Chocolates, flowers, cards and special dinners – it must be Valentine's Day. How can you take the thoughts intended for this one holiday and make them a part of your everyday life? How can you strengthen the most special relationship in your life – your marriage?

Building and maintaining a happy, healthy relationship is a process; there is no finish line. It takes work and effort, but it will be the most rewarding work you will ever do. Dr. John Gottman, one of the foremost experts on marriages and relationships, defines the following principals as steps toward a successful marriage.

Know Each Other – Constantly learn all about each other's likes, dislikes, wishes, fears, hopes, dreams, et cetera. This is not a one-time event. As you grow older together, you will both gain different goals, dreams

and desires. Continue to check in with each other to see how those goals may change.

Foster Fondness and Admiration – Focus on each other's positive qualities, positive feelings for each other, and the good times you have shared with each other. If you focus on the negative or what is wrong or what needs to be fixed in your partner, you will never see them for who they truly are.

Turn Toward Each Other Instead of Away – Interact frequently by telling each other about your day, your thoughts, your experiences. Romance is fueled not by candlelight dinners, but by interacting with your partner in numerous little ways. You must do this even in solving your problems and conflict – one can never go outside of a relationship to fix what is wrong inside a relationship.

Share Power - Let your partner influence you. This is not to say that you should give up all power and become and do all they say. However, the happiest marriages are those where the partner treats the other

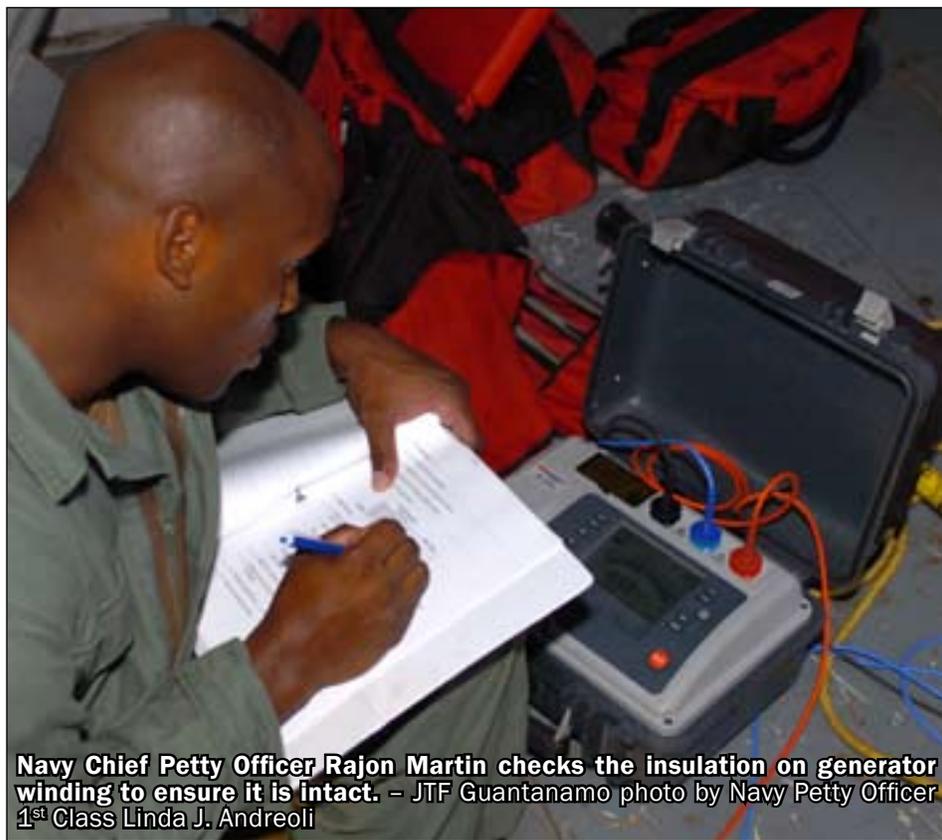
with respect and dignity and is willing to share their power and involve each other in decision making.

Solve Your Solvable Problems – Communicate respectfully. Use "I" statements, criticize behavior without criticizing your partner, take a break when you're getting too upset, and compromise. It becomes essential for everyone to decide whether you want to be right, or happy.

If you would like more information on this topic or would like to borrow a copy of Dr. Gottman's book, please come by or call the JSMART office. Though many of us may be physically far away from our loved ones at this time, it is my hope that using some of these skills will help us all become closer emotionally and spiritually to those we treasure most. Let us enhance and strengthen our most special relationship and make Valentine's Day 365 days a year.

Information from 'The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work' by Dr. John Mordechai Gottman and Nan Silver. ☆

MUSE maintains at home and abroad



Navy Chief Petty Officer Rajon Martin checks the insulation on generator winding to ensure it is intact. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Linda J. Andreoli

POWER from 3

“Knowledge of the equipment, safety issues, in-briefs and out-briefs are key for the success of the [detachment officer-in-charge],” said Parker. “They manage a lot of the administrative issues.”

MUSE reports their findings back to public works as well as the contractors so they know what maintenance is being done and what has been missed. This allows the public works department to see how their maintenance cycle is operating, Parker explained.

There are approximately 30 members in the MUSE program who support missions ranging from power support for Navy ships, to managing the back-up generators at the White House, as well as disaster relief at home and abroad.

“We do disaster relief installations where we’ll stay, maintain and operate the equipment while the recovery and relief efforts are going on,” Parker said. “Once power is restored, we usually pull our equipment and go home. We don’t have enough people to stay and operate at regular locations; we have 17 sites around the world and only about 30 people.”

Whether supporting joint military efforts after Hurricane Katrina, supplying power at Camp Pendleton in Nov. 2007 when 21,000 acres burned in the California fires, or maintaining any number of generator units worldwide, MUSE works to ensure safety and success. ★

A photograph of a man in a white and red sleeveless shirt and black shorts swinging a softball bat. He is wearing sunglasses and white socks. The background is a chain-link fence.

Prevention of Sports Injuries in Softball

- Be aware of the environment around you. Check the playing fields for any risk factors such as divots, holes, soft drink tops, glass, etc.
- Alcohol consumption should be discouraged during participation in any sporting activity.
- Liquid and nutrition replenishment is recommended to decrease exposure-related illness.
- Play within your ability - don't over do it.
- Warm up and cool down before and after playing any sport.

For more information, please email safety@jtfgtmo.southcom.mil



Trained and ready

U.S. Coast Guard Petty Officer 3rd Class Philip Conaty, deployed here with Port Security Unit 305, pulls a dummy out of the water under the guidance of U.S. Coast Guard Petty Officer 3rd Class Kurt Jinx during a man overboard simulation here, Feb. 10. PSU 305 performs maritime anti-terrorism and force protection duties for Joint Task Force Guantanamo.
 - JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Spc. Erica Isaacson

Boots on the Ground

by Army Staff Sgt. Gretel Sharpee

What is your favorite view on Guantanamo Bay?

Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class Ray Holmes



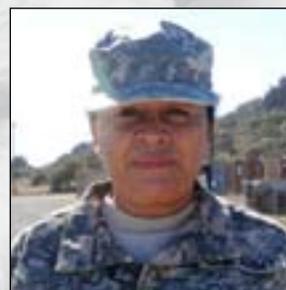
"Right outside Seaside Galley. Looking out to the ocean from there is great."

Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Charles Flora



"The Windmill hill view. Especially at sunset."

Army Staff Sgt. Soraya Sotomayor



"The ocean. Being from Puerto Rico, this is great to see the ocean every day."

Army 1st Lt. Manuel Rosado



"I would say the view from on top of Windmill hill. It is great to see the whole base."

Got a message?



Navy Lt. Cmdr. Clint Pickett

JTF Command Chaplain

I remember several years ago taking part in a class which taught us how to interact with the media as a member of the armed forces. As part of the training, we had the opportunity to practice being interviewed in a television studio type setting, as well as the roving reporter type of situation. Afterwards, we could review the damage on tape, and see how we looked on the screen in living color!

It was eye-opening, to say the least, on how one can be caught off guard, especially in a hostile interview. We learned how important it was to have your own message firmly in mind before you speak to the media. Trying to compose one's thoughts is difficult when the microphone is suddenly right in front of your nose.

Here at Guantanamo, I have heard more about the media than anywhere else I have been assigned. It isn't just the media either – when we go home on leave, there are lots of questions from our friends back home about Guantanamo Bay, and what goes on

here. That is why it helps to have the Joint Task Force command message in mind as we tell the truth about Guantanamo Bay.

What do we do here? As my handy “Guide to Speaking to the Media” from the public affairs office points out, we “conduct safe, humane, legal and transparent care and custody of detained enemy combatants, including those convicted by military commission and those ordered released.” In a short statement, we succinctly tell our mission. It helps a lot to have your message in mind.

I think having your message in mind goes beyond what we do at Guantanamo Bay, or what we do as military or civilian members in the armed forces. Do you have your own personal command message? Do you have your own mission statement? What is it that is important to you? What are the true values and principles you live by?

It helps to have that in mind when we go about our daily lives, in talking and relating to our friends and family. It helps to understand our faith, to know and have firmly in mind what our purpose in life is. If we don't keep that mission statement

in mind, far too often we just tend to drift along in life. When people ask us what is important to us, it helps to have done some thinking beforehand.

I attended another course a while ago. One of the things we did in that class was to fill out a card with our personal mission statement, our personal goal, and then, we laminated the card. I still carry it around in my briefcase to this day. One sentence is all it is: “To live my life as husband, father, and pastor in the shadow of the cross.”

When I remember to take that card out and think about it in the morning, my day takes on a different tone. If I remind myself what is important in my life, and what my goal is, I am a lot more likely to arrive! I need to know my mission. I need to know what my own message is, the values and principles that are important to me. And, I need to know my audience, what they value and what their mission is. If I know all this, I can make an impact in someone's life.

Take some time today and think about your “life message,” because knowing your own life message is the first step in achieving the goals you have in your life! ☆

JTF CHAPEL SCHEDULED PROGRAMS

Catholic Mass

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

Wednesday: 11 a.m. Spanish Mass

Protestant Worship

Sunday: 9 a.m.

Spanish Protestant Worship

Sunday: 11 a.m.

Bible Study

Sunday: 6 p.m. **Wednesday:** 7 p.m.

'Don't let fear keep you down'

**Army Staff Sgt.
Emily J. Russell**

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Navy Petty Office 3rd Class Benjamin Dennis' passion for drawing and painting began as a kid and developed over the years on different canvases. What began as self-expression on New York buildings and train cars has become a talent he shares, even leaving his mark behind at Guantanamo Bay.

"I used to get in trouble a lot when I was a kid for doing graffiti and painting on things," Dennis said. "I transferred [my creativity] over to something more constructive [as a] way for me to vent without infringing on other people's property."

As a kid, Dennis recalled getting picked on for not being able to draw like the other kids.

"Kids would come to school and draw and scribble on things and tell me, 'You can't draw like that!' And I'd say, 'Yes I can!' But, I couldn't draw like that," Dennis said. "So, I tried and tried until I was better than them. It was just another thing to do. I wanted to prove to them that I was better."

Dennis honed his artistic skills by "just doing it."

"I did a lot of school pride murals for high schools back in New York and a few murals in spray paint on the sides of grocery stores and train stations," Dennis said. "Sometimes I didn't know if it would turn out the way I wanted it to. I'm a pretty harsh critic of myself. I always see a flaw in whatever I do."

As a mass communication specialist, Dennis has worked with Joint Task Force Public Affairs and Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, lending his talent to video production as well as writing stories and taking photographs for *'The Wire,'* and the NAVSTA *'Gazette.'* He also left his artistic mark at Radio GTMO.

"[Navy Petty Officer 1st Class] Camerino Pagan, [defense media activity leading petty officer], said the radio station looked pretty boring," Dennis said. "I told him that I paint and he got the tools. Pagan said I could do whatever I want, but wanted to make sure the painting was of someone that everyone could identify. I painted two people who were easily recognizable, Britney Spears and 50 Cent."

"I originally wanted to paint Ray Charles, Willie Nelson and Marvin Gaye but I didn't want people to walk in and say, 'Who's that guy?'"

According to Pagan, during the recent upgrades for the defense media activity, he wanted his team to have a sense of ownership at the radio station and Dennis' mural provided that.

"I have already seen many smiles as the guys walk down the hallway," Pagan said.



Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class Benjamin Dennis puts the finishing touches on a mural of Britney Spears and 50 Cent which he painted on the hallway wall at the radio station.

"I did a tour the other day and our guests were really impressed – and it wasn't even done [yet]."

The painting took Dennis about three weeks to complete.

"The beautiful thing about painting," Dennis quipped, "is if you make a mistake, you just cover it up and keep going. It's very freeing and helps me focus."

"It was great to see [Dennis] doing something he loves to do," Pagan added. "As leaders it is our job to motivate and push professional and personal development. I believe Dennis' commitment to the project demonstrated a commitment he can deliver time and time again no matter what task, personal or professional, is given to him."

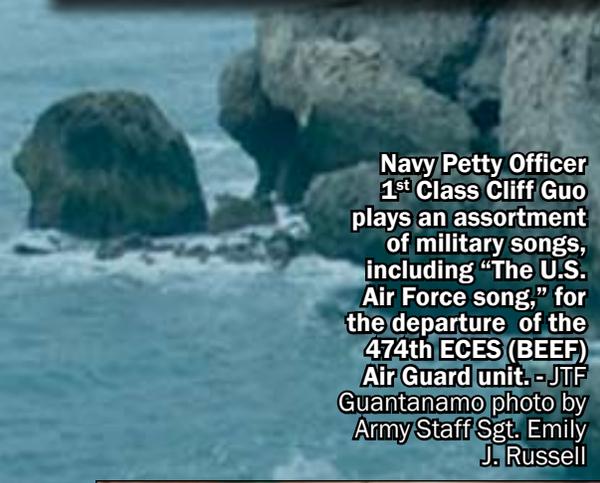
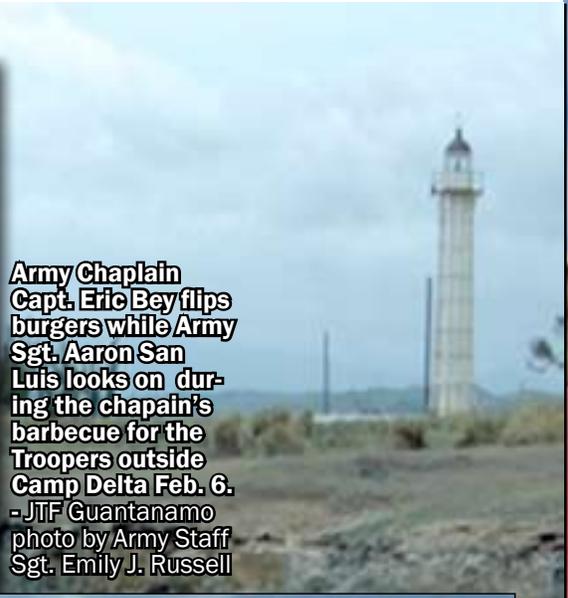
As Dennis comes to the end of his career in the Navy, his sights are set for becoming a teacher of art and English.

"I think the best age to start teaching is middle school-kids as they are most influenced at that age," Dennis said. "They want to be like the older kids, but they're still pretty young and want to grow up too fast. I feel like I wasted a little of my potential by not following some of the goals I had. If I had somebody to mentor me when I was their age, I probably would not [have] worried about some of the things I [used to]."

"If you like to do something, no matter how silly you may think it is someone else might not, so try," Dennis said. "Don't let fear keep you down." ★



Army Chaplain Capt. Eric Bey flips burgers while Army Sgt. Aaron San Luis looks on during the chaplain's barbecue for the Troopers outside Camp Delta Feb. 6.
 - JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Staff Sgt. Emily J. Russell



Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Cliff Guo plays an assortment of military songs, including "The U.S. Air Force song," for the departure of the 474th ECES (BEEF) Air Guard unit. - JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Staff Sgt. Emily J. Russell



Newly promoted Sgt. Leenmar Troche celebrates her promotion after a ceremony Feb. 7 at Phillips Park. It is tradition in the Puerto Rico National Guard to douse the promoted with water to wash off the old rank and initiate the new one. Also promoted during the ceremony were Army Staff Sgt. Carlos Navarro, Sgt. Manuel Correa, Sgt. Raul Fuster and Sgt. Ricardo Gonzalez. - JTF Guantanamo photo by Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Richard Wolff

Around the

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