



# 15 Minutes of Fame

With Staff Sgt. Steven R. Munnerlyn

## Cheat your body, and it will cheat you

Compiled by  
Spc. Michelle M. Scsepko  
The Wire

**Q:** Why have you been chosen for this week's 15 Minutes Of Fame?

**A:** You must know something about me that I don't, because I don't think I'm ready for 15 minutes of fame.

**Q:** Aren't you one of the motivated individuals that lead Army PT in the morning?

**A:** Yes.

**Q:** How do you feel about leading soldiers into battle with 2 mile mini-mountains at 0-dark-30 in the morning?

**A:** I love being involved in the PT program. I enjoy helping my fellow soldiers get into shape.

I know that many of the people involved in the PT program are in the Army National Guard and Army Reserve, and they may not be used to PT on a daily basis. I enjoy watching their improvement.

**Q:** Any downside to being a PT leader?

**A:** Only when troops aren't motivated. I know it can be hard to be motivated at 5:30 a.m., but I try to make it fun.

**Q:** PT or cake?

**A:** I do PT. There's nothing wrong with eating cake but I try to steer clear of the fatty foods. If you treat your body good, it will be good to you.

**Q:** And, when you're not doing PT, what do you enjoy doing?

**A:** I just recently got into golfing, and I enjoy snorkeling and hiking.

**Q:** Are you a fan of the Tiki Bar?

**A:** I enjoy the outdoor environment. I feel free to roam about and have a good time there. Hey, it's always fun to watch everyone else have a good time.

**Q:** Where do you live?

**A:** Good old Windward Loop.

**Q:** How would you describe it there?

**A:** The Loop is like a soap opera. There is



Photo by Spc. Michelle M. Scsepko

"If you treat your body good, it will be good to you."

just so much drama that goes on, and there is always someone sitting on their front lawn watching and waiting to gossip about it.

**Q:** If you could pick a theme song for GTMO, what would it be and why?

**A:** The Eagles' *Hotel California* because as hard as folks work around here is about as hard as they party.

**Q:** What do you do to relax?

**A:** In the morning, I like to have a cup of coffee and sit in my backyard, like to watch the sun rise. After work I do the same, but with a cold drink instead.

**Q:** That sounds kind of romantic. Would you say you're romantic, PT man?

**A:** NO! I just like to be alone, it gives me time to reflect and ponder.

**Q:** What are some of the things you think about?

**A:** I think about lots of things, but most of the time my family.

**Q:** So, how would you describe yourself?

**A:** I am down-to-earth and a good listener. One of my major goals in life is to see soldiers succeed. I dedicate as much of my time as possible to trying to help out soldiers, I hope that some of the things I have done with them or advice I've given to them will have a positive impact on them.

**Q:** What would you change, if anything, about GTMO?

**A:** I wish that there were more activities for soldiers that would help them cope with deployment stress. Not necessarily sports activities, and definitely not drinking!

**Q:** Do you think drinking is a problem among soldiers here?

**A:** No, there are just more productive ways to deal with the stress of being away from loved ones.

**Q:** How do you feel about deployment love or relationships?

**A:** If you're looking for love in GTMO, you're looking for love in all the wrong places.

**Q:** If you had access to a bunker and knew that GTMO was about to be attacked, but could only take one person with you, who would it be and why?

**A:** That's a tough one, but I'd say Sgt. Lozano. He's my compadre from Ft. Sill. We got to know each other down here, but we had seen each other around before. He's become a good friend of mine.

**Q:** How would you describe most of the people you've met here?

**A:** Free spirits.

**Q:** Do you have anything to say in closing?

**A:** My home has an open door. If there's a soldier in need of someone to talk to, they should feel free to come visit me. Even those from Camp America are welcome.

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## Telling the GTMO story

USARC's top PAOs come to Cuba to try to give the soldiers on the ground their due

By Spc. Frank N. Pellegrini  
The Wire

History, they say, doesn't happen without someone to tell the tale. And military missions don't happen without committed servicemembers on the ground — and taxpayers back home who are willing to foot the bill.

In the detention operation at Guantanamo Bay, some 80 percent of the nearly 2,000 servicemembers here are now reservists, called away for six months or more from wives and husbands and homes and hometowns. Even in the aftermath of a nation-binding event like Sept. 11, that can be a special test of public support and troop morale.

That's where military public affairs comes in. This week, the Army Reserve's top public-affairs men from the U.S. Army Reserve Command (USARC) came here, visiting GTMO for a three-day fact-finding tour.

Their mission: to take the measure of the operation here, and —

keeping in mind the all-too-real demands of operational security — look for ways to better tell the reservist's story to his two most important constituencies: the folks back home, and the soldiers themselves.

"There's an incredible amount of interest in the mission here back in the U.S.," said Mr. Joseph Hanley, Director of Public Affairs for USARC. "The exotic locale, the detainees — people want to know what servicemembers are doing here, and our job is to try to maximize coverage of it so that they do."

Hanley, joined by USARC colleagues Army Lt. Col. Boyd Collins, chief of marketing and media relations, and Army Maj. Gerard F. Healy, head of policy and plans, took the full GTMO tour, from JTF-170 headquarters to JTF-160 headquarters, from X-Ray to Delta to America to GTMO's own tip of the public-affairs spear, the Joint Information Bureau and the

See PAOs, page 5



Photo by Sgt. Maj. Daniel M. Polinski

### Return of 'The Wire'

After a week in which publication of the paper did not occur, the staff of "The Wire" was back to work Thursday, hurriedly preparing for print the fine journalistic product you now hold in your hand. So stop reading this outline and dig in — we hope you missed us a little.

### A look inside...



**Attack-dog day afternoons**  
Page 6



**Chaplain lends helping hand to choir**  
Page 10



**114th MP Co. hoses down fire dept.**  
Page 15

Next week's 15 minutes of fame could be you!

## Chaplains' Corner

### The Big Bang's How and Why

Science and religion are not natural enemies. People can believe in God and believe in the Big Bang theory of how the universe was created.

Perhaps they might reflect upon the words of King Solomon:

"It is He who gave me unerring knowledge of what exists, to know the structure of the world and the activity of the elements...for wisdom, the fashioner of all things, taught me" (Wisdom 7:17-22).

Two questions are on the table. How did "creation" happen? Why did it happen?

The two questions don't contradict one another. They walk hand in hand. Science follows natural law.

The believer says that God created the natural law. The natural law cannot contradict true theology and vice versa.

Science answers questions about HOW creation happened. Theology answers questions about WHY it happened.

Science proposes a Big Bang theory to answer the "how?" question. Believers say that there is an all-merciful God to answer the "why?" question.

Now then, the real question: Which came first, the chicken or the egg?

— Submitted by Navy Lt. Cmdr. Vincent A. Salamoni, CHC, USNR

## Provost Marshal's Office

Over the past three months there have been several reported thefts of personal property, including bicycles, wallets and a personal computer here at GTMO.

At approximately 2 p.m. July 11, 2002, a black and blue nylon case containing audio CDs was stolen from the JTF-160 "D" yellow bus. The bus driver (victim) had been operating a fully loaded bus from the NEX to Camp America all day. The CD case was on the dashboard next to the driver's seat. The victim discovered that the CD case was missing after letting passengers off at Camp America, and reported the incident to NAVBASE Police. All indications are that the CDs were stolen by someone from Camp America. The combined estimated total cost of the 45 CDs and the CD case is over \$500.00.

It is intolerable that thieves exist among us. Not only is stealing both illegal and immoral, but it also lowers morale and detracts attention from our main mission. When you steal, you take something that does not belong to you. You didn't work for

it, you didn't earn it, and you didn't pay for it. And those who help thieves are no less guilty than the thief himself.

The CD case is rectangular in shape and is 6' X 12' in size. It has a carry handle and the brand name "LOGIC" printed on its front. It holds two CDs on the front side and two CDs on the backside of each page.

At least two CDs, "Primus" and "Boston" had the name "Shone" marked on them with black magic marker. The CDs were mostly heavy-metal music (i.e. Anthrax, Metallica, Iron Maiden, MegaDeath, Seven Dust, Staind, etc.).

Those with information are urged to call the JTF-160 Provost Marshal's Office at 5057 or 5061, to help solve this case. Your name will be kept confidential.

Please help us keep JTF-160 crime-free by being vigilant, reporting suspicious incidents, and by marking and securing your personal property.

— Maj. Gary J. Cipolletta, Deputy Provost Marshal, JTF-160

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## Command Sergeant Major's Corner



Photo by Army Spc. Jose A. Martinez  
JTF-160 Command Sgt. Maj. R.W. Funaro

### Showing Off

I love showing soldiers off. Recently, we were visited by the command sergeant major from SOUTHCOM as well as the CSM from USARSO. I took great pride in bringing them out to Camp America to meet with and talk to soldiers. They were very impressed with the professionalism displayed by all those that they spoke with. The attitudes and morale displayed by America's finest did not surprise these distinguished visitors. That's why I was proud to bring them out there and show you off, and I will continue to do so when the occasion arises.

CSM Draughn (USARSO) was taken aback when we visited the Non-Lethal Weapons training, and he saw the determination and fighting spirit that was evident in those classes.

It is up to all of us to maintain that spirit and determination. We are not judge and jury but professionals who are here to do a job, to maintain a camp that will forever be part of history. The eyes of the world are on us, some waiting for us to slip and fall. But they don't know us.

Stand tall and walk proud, you are doing great.

## Sports

# 114th MPs extinguish Fire Dept.

By Spc. Jose A. Martinez  
The Wire

Wednesday night at the G.J. Denich gym, the 114th Military Police Company beat the Guantanamo Bay Fire Department 54 to 40.

The 114th MP Co. jumped out to a quick 13-4 lead with the aggressive play and good shot selection of Army Spc. Jeremiah N. Proctor.

"Proctor began the game with a hot hand. We had confidence in his scoring abilities so we kept giving him the 'rock'," said Army Spc. Wascar Viscaino.

When Proctor's shooting cooled off, though, the Fire Dept. was able to make a comeback. With 11:33 on the clock, the score was 13-8. Fire Dept. scored five unanswered points to tie the game at 13 all.

With 10:00 on the clock, the 114th MPs called a timeout to gather themselves.

"I called a timeout because we were not doing what we were supposed to do, which is play good defense and run the ball," said Viscaino.

Fire Dept. was able to come back because the 114th MPs were not playing their style off basketball.

"We have good shooters on this team. We are a run-and-gun team. If we can run the ball, we can get open for the three-point shot," said Viscaino.

After the timeout, Army Maj. Sharon D. Green squared up and shot a three-pointer to put the MPs in the lead.

Fire Dept. had a chance to take the lead with 9:00 on the clock. The score was 16-15 but Fire Dept. was not able to capitalize. Green was playing tough defense and able to steal the ball. Fire Dept. was forced to foul.

Green made her two free-throws to put the MPs on top by three.

"We got out of playing like a team and we had to get back



Photo by Army Spc. Jose A. Martinez  
Army Spc. Wascar Viscaino goes up strong for the dunk in Wednesday's night win against Fire Department 54 to 40

to the basics of basketball," said Green.

114th MP Co. started playing together as one unit. They were playing a tough zone defense against Fire Dept.

"We have a good shooting team and we play good defense. That is what we started doing. We were able to build a good lead," said Viscaino.

The score at the end of the first half was 29-17.

The MPs came out in the second half with renewed energy.

"We played a man-to-man defense at the start of the second half so to speed up the tempo of the game and force the Fire Dept. to keep up with us, I felt we were a quicker team," said Viscaino.

As the tempo increased, the MPs secured the lead for good. The essential part of the game was just to go back to the basics, team basketball.

"We were not looking to pass the ball. We were playing selfish basketball."

"The game changed when we started to pass the ball and look for one another on the court," she said. We were looking for the open player.

That was the key to victory for us against Fire Dept.,"

said Green.

114th MP Co. felt they could have played better, but a shortage of players made it tough on the team.

"This team plays good defense but we were not as intense in this game because we only had five players dress up for the game," said Viscaino.

With the win over Fire Dept., the 114th MP Co. stayed undefeated in league play with a record of 4-0.



Photo by Army Spc. Jose A. Martinez  
Army Spc. Jeremiah N. Proctor goes up for a lay-up.



Photo by Army Spc. Jose A. Martinez  
Army Spc. Wascar Viscaino breaks down the enemy defense.

### Softball Standings

JTF-170	6-0
Iguanas	5-1
Regulars	5-1
Hospital	5-1
GTMO Bay	4-2
GTMO Lite	4-2
239 MP Co.	4-1
XO Staff	3-3
Blacksheep	3-3
178 MP Co.	3-3
160 MP Bn.	2-3
HQ JTF-160	2-3
Hit Squad	2-4
571 MP Co.	1-4
PSU 307	1-4
Wildcats	1-5
Miuw 204	1-5
114 MP Co. A	0-3
114 MP Co. B	0-3
342 MP Co.	0-4

### Volleyball Standings

Chat Bout	4-0
Navsta	2-1
JTF-160 Hosp.	2-1
JTF-160	2-1
178th MP Co.	1-2
Naval Hospital	1-3
Fire Dept.	0-3
571st MP Co.	0-3

# New spin at GTMO gym

Story by Jose A. Martinez  
The Wire

Imagine it: You and 20 others start pedaling up and down simulated hills on stationary bicycles as up-tempo dance music is pumped into the room. Ten minutes into the session, your quads start burning with lactic acid from all the pedaling. You're tired. You're hurting. Do you stop or do you keep going?

Welcome to spinning, the high-octane, fat-burning fitness craze that is about to take GTMO for a ride.

New spinning classes are off and rolling at the G.T. Denich gym on base. The classes are scheduled five days a week: on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m., and Tuesday and Thursday at 6:15 p.m. to 7:15 p.m.

"Spinning is one of the best workouts in the world. It combines a mental, physical and spiritual workout," said Donnell Daniel (a.k.a. "D.D."), Athletic Director of Morale, Recreation and Welfare.

Spinning rewards you in many ways and one of the objectives, says Daniel, is personal growth.

"One of the keys to spinning is, we are about giving you a personal victory. When you walk into the spinning class your mental focus turns from 'me' to 'we,'" said Daniel. "We want the class to interact together, talk about life while they are riding. Meanwhile they are working hard and burning fat," said Daniel.

As the group becomes one and they prepare their bikes for the class, the instructor gets them ready for the 'ride.'

"We get everyone in the same mindset and take the class on a journey they will never forget," said Daniel.

That's when people find that extra energy to keep pedaling.

"Spinning is unique because just when you think you can't go any more and your muscles are burning you go a little bit



MWR certified fitness instructor Michelle Cheynne as she leads a class

more," he said. "People actually reach deep down and give it every thing they have, and that is the personal victory — giving it your all and seeing the progress one step at a time," said Daniel. The progress comes as the personal victories build up.

"This type of exercise is a stepping-stone because everyone just gets better physically and mentally in every session," said Daniel.

"This class is not easy. It is tough. But at the same time, it is exhilarating — when you complete a spinning class you feel good about yourself. You get what you put into it," said Daniel.

Besides the results you can get from the class, spinning also offers something new and different from other kinds of workouts.

"I just want people to experience something new, spinning is not like lifting weights or running on a treadmill you can get great results from it," said Michelle Cheynne, a certified fitness instructor for MWR.

"This spinning class is something different than the traditional exercises. There will not be any two experiences that are the same," said Daniel.

The variety in every spin-

ning class just intrigues people. "To be part of a spinning class like this is incredible, it is like an infection," he said. Once you do your first class you can't wait til the next one."

The results might be enough to fill the class each week. "In a spinning class you will burn about 500 to 800 calories in a 45-minute class," said Daniel.

"With spinning, not only will you see the progress, but the great thing is that you don't need coordination like most exercises."

"Anyone can spin, you can be 8 or 80 years old, it doesn't matter," said Daniel.

Everyone can come to the gym and try spinning — it's quick, it's effective and it's something a little different for GTMO servicemembers looking to get healthy in a hurry.

"Spinning gives you results fast. You don't want to be in the gym all day long. You want to burn your calories and get on with life," said Daniel.

"We are here to meet the fitness needs of the people," said Daniel. "We at MWR have purchased 22 of the best spinning bikes available. We have set up a great spinning room with a high-quality stereo system."

"This spinning class," he said, "is going to rock."

## This Week

Remember, the next JTF-160 Commander's Cup Series starts soon. It is scheduled to run from Wednesday, August 8th to Saturday, September 21st. Sign up through your chain of command and your unit's POC. If any unit POC has any questions or wants more information call Capt. Gormly at #5249.

Daily Free Daytime & Evening Lessons for Sailing, Kayaking, and Motor Boating at Pelican Pete's Marina.

Nightly 8:00PM Free Movie, Lyceum & Camp Bulkley.

5:15PM-6:15PM, Advanced Step Aerobics Classes, Denich Gym, Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

Monday-Friday, 6:30PM-7:30PM, Tae-Kwon Do Classes, Marine Hill Aerobics Room.

### Today, Friday, July 26th

6:00AM-6:00PM, Open Swim, Marine Hill Pool.  
10:00AM-8:00PM, Open Swim, Windjammer Pool.  
11:00AM-7:00PM, Open Swim, Deer Point Pool.  
5:30PM, 1-On-1 Spinning Training, Denich Gym.  
5:30PM-12:30AM, Night Fishing Trip, Pelican Pete's Marina.

### Saturday, July 27th

10:00AM-8:00PM, Open Swim, Windjammer Pool.  
10:00AM-6:00PM, Open Swim, Marine Hill & Deer Point Pools.  
10:00AM, Tennis Tournament, CBQ Tennis Courts.  
Fans & Rivalry Saturday, Main M.W.R. Liberty Center.

### Sunday, July 28th

10:00AM-8:00PM, Open Swim, Windjammer Pool.  
10:00AM-6:00PM, Open Swim, Marine Hill & Deer Point Pools.  
5:00PM, Chess Tournament VII, Main M.W.R. Liberty Center.

### Monday, July 29th

6:00AM-6:00PM, Open Swim, Marine Hill Pool.  
10:00AM-8:00PM, Open Swim, Windjammer Pool.  
11:00AM-7:00PM, Open Swim, Deer Point Pool.  
5:30PM, 1-On-1 Spinning Training, Denich Gym.  
8:30PM, 8-Ball Pool Tournament, Windjammer \$5 entry fee. Double elimination. Trophy & Cash Prize.

### Tuesday, July 30th

6:00AM-6:00PM, Open Swim, Marine Hill Pool.  
10:00AM-8:00PM, Open Swim, Windjammer Pool.  
11:00AM-7:00PM, Open Swim, Deer Point Pool.  
5:15PM-6:15PM, Yoga Ultimate Stretch Class, Denich Gym.  
5:30PM, 1-On-1 Spinning Training, Denich Gym.  
7:00PM, Monopoly Nite, Main M.W.R. Liberty Center.

### Wednesday, July 31st

6:00AM-6:00PM, Open Swim, Marine Hill Pool.  
10:00AM-8:00PM, Open Swim, Windjammer Pool.  
11:00AM-7:00PM, Open Swim, Deer Point Pool.  
5:30PM, 1-On-1 Spinning Training, Denich Gym.  
7:00PM, Domino Tournament VI, Main M.W.R. Liberty Center.

### Thursday, August 1st

6:00AM-6:00PM, Open Swim, Marine Hill Pool.  
10:00AM-8:00PM, Open Swim, Windjammer Pool.  
11:00AM-7:00PM, Open Swim, Deer Point Pool.  
5:15PM-6:15PM, Yoga Ultimate Stretch Class, Denich Gym.  
5:30PM, 1-On-1 Spinning Training, Denich Gym.

# Profession of the Week

## Checkpoint guards

Compiled by Spc. Joseph A. Morris  
and Spc. Chris S. Pisano  
The Wire

The Texas National Guard infantrymen attached to the 2/142 are the ones who guard the guards at Camp America. They man the front entrance to the camp and check security badges on all personnel trying to gain access. They also perform internal perimeter security and do patrols around the camp.

Working eight hours on and eight hours off for the better part of the week, these troops live and breathe general orders. Their vigilance allows their fellow soldiers at the camp to relax in peace, for these motivated soldiers know how to guard and protect.



Spc. Joe Garcia performs a radio check back to his command.



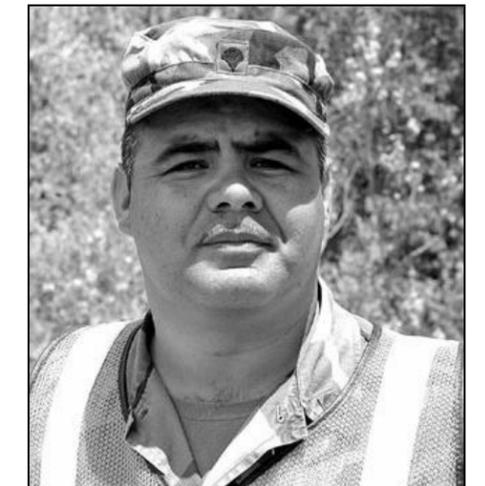
Sgt. Tony Maxwell checks security badges at the entrance to Camp America.



**Sgt. Tony Maxwell**  
"We are here to do our part, and then we will move on and go home. It's tough working the day shifts out here in the blazing sun, but that is our job."



**Spc. Joe Garcia**  
"It ain't that bad out here. We're infantrymen, so it doesn't matter if we are here guarding the gate or out on patrol; we have a job to perform."



**Spc. Guadalupe Bravo**  
"I just returned from a six month tour in Bosnia when I received orders to come here. Now, I am enduring freedom, and I like it."



Photo by Spc. Chris S. Pisano

### Black flag of heat

When you see that black flag waving in the wind here at GTMO, it must be hot — 90 degrees Fahrenheit or above to be exact. The flag acts as a guide in regulating intensity of physical exertion. While white, green, yellow and red flags caution against varying degrees of heat, the black flag is as hot as it gets. The black flag indicates that all physical training and strenuous exercise is to be suspended for all personnel (excluding operational commitments not for training purposes). Hitherto, it is recommended that your water intake be more than two quarts per hour, and the work-rest cycle for outdoor work is to be 20 minutes of work and 40 minutes of rest.

## Man on the street

Compiled by Spc. Chris S. Pisano and Spc. Joseph A. Morris

This week's question:

**Did you miss the Wire last week?**



Army 1st Lt. Jorge Rodriguez, 418th Transportation Co.

"I sure did miss the Wire. I realized there wasn't one when I was looking all over for it. I even checked the Web."



Air Force Senior Master Sgt. Randy Atwood, J1 JPRC

"I wondered what happened. Someone told me there wasn't a Wire. Normally there's one floating around the house."



Army Sgt. Michael D. Williams, 114th Military Police Co.

"I really didn't miss it. There are so many other papers to read. I'm pretty up to date on what's going on."



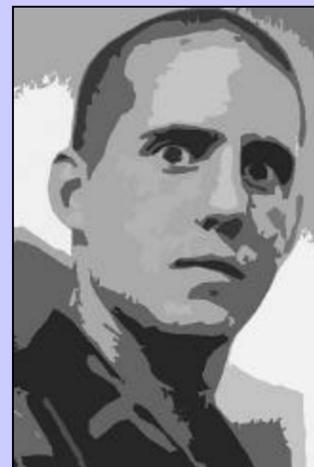
CG Petty Officer 1st Class Zenon Ayala, PSU 307

"As a matter of fact, I did miss the Wire. I would like to see more of my brothers- and cousins-in-arms featured, though."



Air Force Staff Sgt. Daniel McCaffrey, Motor Pool

"I didn't notice because I really don't pay attention to it. I don't even know where to get one."



### Frustrated Poetry Corner

by Spc. Joseph A. Morris

Obstructions fill my path  
 Causing frustration to resonate  
 I walk rough, tough steps  
 Eyes opened wide  
 Maybe you can see me  
 I'm a soldier filled with pride  
 Into the pool of lemon juice  
 From off of the razor blade slide  
 Tongue hanging out,  
 Mouth opened wide  
 Hold on people,  
 It's going to be a bumpy ride.

## Movie Schedule

- Friday, July 26**  
 8 p.m. Mr. Deeds - PG13 - 91min  
 10 p.m. Undercover Brother  
 PG13 - 89min
- Saturday, July 27**  
 8 p.m. Men in Black II - PG13 - 91min  
 10 p.m. Bad Company - R - 124min
- Sunday, July 28**  
 8 p.m. Road to Perdition - R - 119min
- Monday, July 29**  
 8 p.m. Men in Black II - PG13 - 91min
- Tuesday, July 30**  
 8 p.m. Undercover Brother  
 PG13 - 89min
- Wednesday, July 31**  
 8 p.m. Road to Perdition - R - 119min
- Thursday, August 1**  
 8 p.m. The Sum of all Fears  
 R - 124min

## Crossword Puzzle

### Across

- 1 Reserved
- 4 Wall plant
- 7 Plod
- 10 Honeyed
- 12 British drink
- 13 Powdered chocolate
- 15 Moses' mountain
- 16 And so forth
- 17 Ventilated
- 18 Escudo
- 19 Long-term memory
- 21 Barrel
- 23 Internal Revenue Service
- 24 Wasteland
- 26 Minds
- 28 Friend
- 30 Ill-bred
- 31 Connection
- 34 Japanese dish
- 36 Compass point
- 40 Gaiety
- 41 Beam

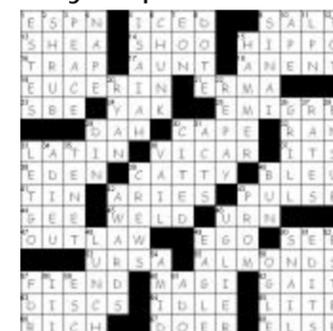
### Down

- 42 Also
- 43 Deceiver
- 45 Mom
- 47 Asia
- 48 Teen hero
- 50 Engrave
- 52 Allow
- 54 Sticky candy
- 57 Boxer Muhammad
- 58 Her
- 60 Big Apple (abbr.)
- 61 Steal
- 63 Louis' partner
- 65 Ghost's greeting
- 67 Dwelling
- 69 Frozen pizza brand
- 70 Saloon
- 71 Seeped out
- 72 Ball holder
- 73 Short-term memory
- 74 Harden

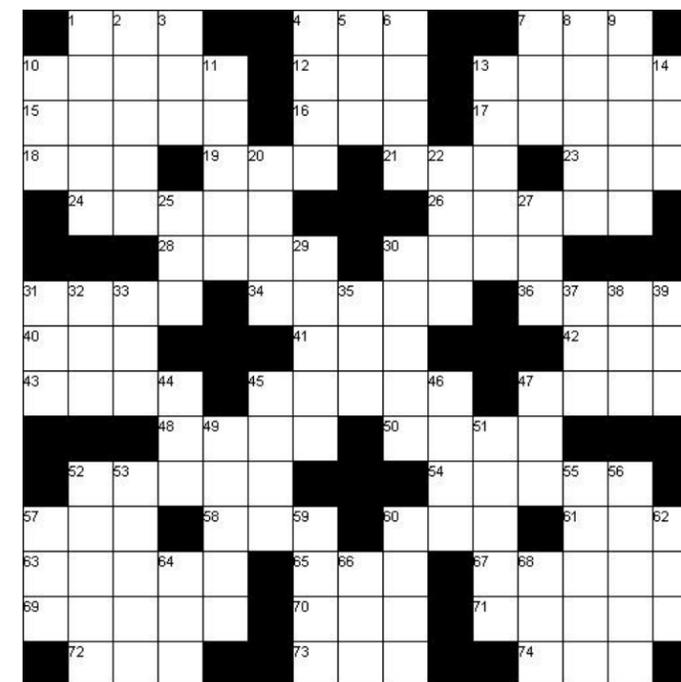
- 31 Football assoc.
- 32 French "yes"
- 33 Genetic code
- 35 Surface to air missile
- 37 Airport abbr.
- 38 Distress call
- 39 Toddler
- 44 Edge
- 45 Butterfly's cousin
- 46 Lawyer (abbr.)
- 47 Extremely high frequency (abbr.)
- 49 CDS

- 51 Chocolate tree
- 52 Mete
- 53 Waitress on "Cheers"
- 55 Turned to ice
- 56 Sing
- 57 Enact
- 59 Tides
- 60 Standard
- 62 Berth
- 64 Seed bread
- 66 Grain
- 68 Fen

### Answers to the July 12 puzzle



- 1 Slip through hoop
- 2 Away
- 3 Affirmative
- 4 Detail
- 5 Ex-serviceman
- 6 Talk
- 7 Luau dish
- 8 Pungent
- 9 People who get things done
- 10 South southeast
- 11 The condition of cultivated soil
- 13 Cooped
- 14 Spots
- 20 Because of this
- 22 Decorative needle case
- 25 Expert
- 27 Novel
- 29 Wall picture
- 30 Ball and mall, for example



# Camp America chaplain feels at home with detainees, GTMO servicemembers

Story and photo by Rudi Williams  
American Forces Press Service

"I feel right at home here," said Chaplain (Maj.) Michael S. Merrill at the Camp Delta detention center.

Back home in Florida, he's a supervisory chaplain with the Federal Bureau of Prisons, Department of Justice.

"They're classified as detainees here, but it's a similar dynamic of controlled behavior in a confined facility," Merrill said.

The Army Reserve member is assigned to the 160th Military Police Battalion, Tallahassee, Fla., part of the security force at Camp Delta.

In both civilian and military life, Merrill, a Southern Baptist, comes across all faiths. He said he has some experience ministering to Muslims in his civilian job. But at Camp Delta, he said he's had only minimal involvement with the detainees.

"But even though there's a Muslim imam here, I've dealt with some of the detainees," he said.

"Obviously, the imam has more dealings with them." An imam is an Islamic spiritual leader.

In his duty as a chaplain, Merrill said he can't focus on what someone is incarcerated for. "In America, if they're a murderer or druglord, or whatever, I have to relate to them as human beings and block out their crime," he noted.

"In other words, I have to give them the benefit of the doubt and treat them like there is hope for them to change their life.

"So down here with the detainees, I have to treat them humanely," Merrill said.

"And I have to hope that by me being respectful and professional that they see there is a better way than their previous behavior, which, as far as we know, was full of hatred and evil actions. This is called ministry of presence. Just being present and the way you carry yourself goes a long way with some of the detainees."

In civilian life, sometimes people in prison who have gone through rough experiences get in touch with an inward freedom, the chaplain said.

"So, obviously, there is a big difference between ministering in a confined facility and a church. But the issues are the same regarding purpose in life, mission in life — their spiritual issues and why they're existing here on Earth."

People in confinement are more helpless because they don't have access to immediate family, he said. "Like here, their mom can't come visit them," Merrill noted. "So you're sort of their support system, whereas



Army Sgt. Derwin Davis (left) talks with Army Chaplain (Maj.) Michael S. Merrill in the chapel at Camp Delta, Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. Davis and his unit, the 114th Military Police Company, Mississippi Army National Guard, Clinton, Miss., are providing security at Delta, a detention facility for captured enemy combatants.

in a civilian setting there's more access to a support system of family and friends. In a confined facility there is more reliance upon the chaplain, counselors or other people to provide it for them."

To support Camp Delta and the naval base, the Navy and Army have two chaplains each, two Catholics and two Protestants, plus the Air Force has a Muslim imam.

"Between the five of us, we try to provide well-rounded coverage for the detainees and the U.S. servicemembers," said Merrill.

"We never compromise our faith tradition, but like yesterday, a Catholic soldier came to me and wanted to be confirmed. So I talked with him, counseled him and referred him to the Catholic priest."

Merrill said he talks with anyone who asks. "Talking to a detainee is similar to talking to a soldier, because the conversations for both will be about issues in life and

praying," he noted.

He said service members come to see him because of homesickness, relationships of boyfriends and girlfriends, marital issues, and sick children.

"Once you get a few soldiers together, something will happen," Merrill said. "Someone will pass away or someone gets into a car accident back home. More of the issues deal with being isolated here at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. However, the base has many things to help the servicemen and women to keep busy, such as recreation — sporting events, movies."

Waiting quietly to talk to the chaplain was Sgt. Derwin Davis of the 114th Military Police Company, Mississippi Army National Guard from Clinton, Miss.

"It's great to have a chaplain available because when you're having problems, you know you can go right to the source instead of trying to deal with it yourself," he said.

newsroom of "The Wire." All said they were impressed with the level of professionalism and competence among servicemembers — and the level of security surrounding the operations here — wherever they went.

But there was one troubling part of the visit: seeing first-hand all the stories that couldn't be told.

"We came down to see that the American public gets to see what the Army reservists are doing down here," said Healy. "Because of security concerns, though, a lot of the superb, even heroic efforts of a lot of Army Reservists and National Guard members — as well as the active-duty soldiers and all the other servicemembers working so hard here — will never be widely known. That's unfortunate."

"But a lot can be known," he said. "And we're here to find out what can be done to better support the public-affairs effort. We can always do a better job making those military efforts public that can safely be made public. And we're going to try to do that."

As any graduate of the military's Defense Information School (DINFOS) can tell you, that PA effort comes in two prongs. The first is media relations — ensuring that civilian news writers and broadcasters get the stories they want promptly and accurately without endangering the security of the nation or its servicemembers.

"The media, the so-called 'fourth estate,' is there to keep the public informed as to how their tax dollars are being spent and how their sons and daughters in uniform are being used," said Healy. "And it's our responsibility to ensure that the sacred trust between the military and the American people is maintained. We have to help the media help us do that."

"When the media asks questions, our job is to answer them," he said. "They're asking on behalf of the public, and in the end, we work for them."

"Besides, with the media the way it is today, in this operation we could get enough press coming down here to sink this island," Healy joked. "We have to make sure we're ready for anything."

The other half of the PA job is internal information — keeping the troops themselves informed as to what their command is doing and where they fit in. And here at GTMO, you know what that is: "The Wire."

"It's absolutely critical in a place like this," said Hanley. "It's important for the servicemembers to understand what the organization



Photo by Army Staff Sgt. Timothy A. Barnes  
Maj. Healy checks in with USARC back home.

is and what it does, and it allows him to see how he fits into the big picture."

It may not seem like much sometimes, but when a soldier or sailor or Marine or Coast Guardsman finds himself or his unit featured in the base paper, he can send it home — or refer them to the Web site — and feel like his family or friends can better understand what he's doing here. And that can make the separation pass less painfully.

"It can be a real morale booster," said Hanley. "This isn't the worst place in the world to be, but the people here are still a long way from home — if not in miles, than at least in feeling."



Photo by Army Staff Sgt. Timothy A. Barnes  
Lt. Col. Dennis Fink, left, commander of the 361st PCH, looks on as (l to r) Lt. Col. Collins, Mr. Hanley and Staff Sgt. Johnson watch Spc. Hector Peralta and Spc. Ivey N. Hodges do their broadcasting thing.

That feeling can be particularly strong for reservists and guardsmen, who have to leave homes and jobs — sometimes on only a few days' or weeks' notice — and uproot their lives when their country calls. But Hanley says that the large reservist presence at GTMO these days has a special significance.

"The wide use of reservists in the war on terror demonstrates that the will of the American people is really invested in the cause," he said. Reserve call-ups make such an impact on homes, and families and communities, that it shows the commitment of this country to this cause that the support is still there."

And in this visit and previous ones to the places where reservists are serving, Hanley says he's heard time and time again from the commanders on the ground that far from being mere "weekend warriors," reservists bring something special to the mission itself.

"The comments we get are that reservists often bring in a level of experience that's very valuable in a setting like this," he said. "Many of the soldiers involved in this detention operation are in law enforcement or corrections back home. Bringing that on-the-job experience can be a real plus."

"These are not nice people they're guarding," Hanley continued. "Nobody wants to have a mistake made where one of the servicemembers get hurt — or one of the detainees get hurt. Sometimes that maturity level can keep that from happening."

"When we took our tour, there was an active duty company on duty. And I noticed they were very young — very professional, but very young. The reservists tend to be older, with more time in the job. And the leadership feels that's a real plus."

That makes USARC's external public-affairs mission — maintaining public support for those reservists — even more critical.

"They've left their homes, inconvenienced their employers, left their communities," Hanley said. "We want to demonstrate to those people what the reservists are doing and why it's important."

For Lt. Col. Collins, that means getting them on America's favorite information medium: television. Collins supervises the collection of background footage of soldiers on the job, or "B-roll," which his office then markets to local and national TV outlets for use in their programming. "We let them edit it, record their own voice-overs on it, and run it as if they got it themselves," he said.

"They love it. It saves them money and gets our story told."

Collins said recent placements include Fox, CNN, "America's Most Wanted," and countless local TV stations eager for stories on members of their communities called up to serve.

At GTMO, Collins said, the "stars of the show" are the MPs at Delta. "There's been a lot of interest in the guards down here. Our job is to get the media what they want without compromising security."

Of course, part of these PAOs job is to fine-tune the structure and manning of public-affairs personnel on the ground, wherever they are deployed. After all, one of the other special characteristics of reservists is they're always going back home and being replaced.

Part of this visit was making sure that JTF-160's own public-affairs operation is running smoothly — that the current crew, the reservist journalists of the 361st PCH, were telling all the GTMO stories that can be told without endangering operational security or servicemembers' lives.

So next time a print journalist from "The Wire" comes up to you with a notebook and pen, or a broadcast journalist points a camera in your direction, just try to remember — we're all in BDUs here. We're doing our part of the JTF-160 mission, doing it the best we can with what we've got. We're doing it for all you servicemembers who are stuck in GTMO a long way from home, just like us.

And we've got bosses too.

# Working-class dogs take a big

By Army Maj. Donna L. Scott  
The Wire

There are some here at GTMO that don't mind telling you that they are "working like dogs." That statement couldn't be truer than for three canine members of the Joint Task Force 160 team who are assigned to the Joint Detention Operations Group, or JDOG. (No pun intended.)

No bones about it, Ari, Roni, and Rocko fit the bill. Assigned to JTF-160, they work seven days a week and rarely, if ever, voice a complaint. These working-class dogs are the lead elements of the military police team working in support of JTF operations.

The military working dogs are trained to work in security operations, law enforcement and combat support roles. They, along with their partners, Sgt. Brenden Hiatt of the 179th Military Police Detachment, Fort Stewart, Ga.; Sgt. Bryan Theckston of the 177th MP Detachment, Fort Drum, N.Y.; and Staff Sgt. Tra-panger Stephens of the 148th MP Detachment, Fort Carson, Colo., have a multi-faceted mission here at GTMO. Their mission includes not only the broad spectrum of psychological and physical deterrence, but physical security as well.

According to the JDOG Commander, Col. John J. Perrone, Jr., the military working-dogs bring to the JTF an asset and capability that fits well into the JTF security posture. "They play a critical role in our overall structure and we depend upon the unique abilities that the dogs bring to the security arena. Additionally, they are able to employ a psychological tool that enhances our security procedures," he said.

To ensure that the dogs are successful in accomplishing their mission, the canines are assigned to work with a handler. Stephens,

Hiatt, and Theckston are military police officers who have earned the Additional Skill Identifier of "Z6," dog handler, which enables them to work with the canines. These handlers attended an intensive three-month training course at Lackland Air Force Base, in San Antonio, Texas before being awarded the ASI.

The handlers don't have an easy job. They must maintain rigorous training standards and pristine training records for their canine partners in addition to accom-

plishing their assigned mission. They must maintain these standards, even though they are deployed. What makes the job even more challenging is that at the end of the day, the handlers can't just go home and leave work behind like most people. The handlers are still responsible for the training and personal care of their assigned dogs. This includes feeding, grooming and taking care of the dogs' kennels. "You have to take care of everything...it's like having a small child," said Hiatt, a "Top Dog" graduate from K-9 school in 2000.

"There is no day off. We work 365 days a year," said Hiatt, who is assigned to handle



Photo by Army Maj. Donna L. Scott

During a training exercise, Sgt. Hiatt prepares to release Roni in pursuit of a suspect.



Photo by Army Maj. Donna L. Scott

Sgt. Theckston is searched by Staff Sgt. Stephens as Rocko keeps him at bay.

up to standards." Sgt. Theckston is assigned to handle Ari, also a German Shepherd.

"Ari must be able to search systematically and detect 39 out of 40 training aids to maintain his certification. If he is not certified, he can't be utilized in any task," said Theckston.

"The job is very rewarding because the dogs show you that they appreciate what you do for them," he said.

But the affection the dogs show is no indication of their temperament, as Sgt. Theckston knows first-hand, having been bitten by one of his working dogs in the past. Theckston was the unfortunate recipient of a dog bite. Although he was not seriously hurt, he understands and accepts the risks associated with the job.

"When training the dogs, we also act as decoys. You must be careful and keep safety in mind at all times because the dogs are trained to attack anywhere on the body. A decoy can suffer a serious injury if he is not careful," he said.

Although the dogs are not required to be pure bred, military working dogs are required to meet certain age and physical requirements. When first selected for training, they must be 1-3 years old, stand 22 inches tall at the shoulders and weigh at least 55 pounds. Once they pass that hurdle, the dogs must complete an intensive training program at the 341st Military Working Dog Training School at Lackland Air Force Base, San Antonio, Texas.

Each dog is trained a minimum of three to four months after which they are evaluated to determine what type of duty they will perform said Stephens, NCOIC of the military working dog section. Stephens works with Rocko, a Belgian Malinois.

Once the dogs complete their training and certification and are assigned to a handler, they happily perform their mission day in and day

# services a musical voice to reach the heavens



Led by Marine Maj. Bell of the Joint Information Bureau, the assembly sings together three inspirational hymns from a Camp America songs booklet as more faithful enter the chapel to obtain their spiritual nourishment for the week.

meantime, she's always on the lookout for new members — come one, come all.

"Although we started as one unit," said Taylor, "we always look for more people because we are serving God regardless of who we are or what unit we are in."

For all that the choir has added to Merrill's services, the proud chaplain tries to return the favor. Merrill said he has supported the choir by providing an electronic keyboard, a guitar and a small karaoke PA system for singing. He has also made the chapel available for practices after church hours.

But a successful weekly service cannot be made by a choir alone. Merrill, in his continuing quest to reach out to all of the residents of Camp America and the whole personnel that are serving JTF-160, pays close attention to the details — keeping the service early in the morning so that servicemembers who work on the weekend can attend before going to work — and keeps trying to get the word out.

"We've advertised on the radio and television stations and the JTF-160 print medium, 'The Wire.' We also put out posters. It takes, you know, a couple of weeks for the word to get out — something exciting is happening here."

"I want the worship service out here on the field to be a source of encouragement, something to challenge the soldier, an instrument to show people that there is hope even in the midst of being in Guantanamo, Cuba," said Merrill. "The purpose of the worship service is to find a sanctuary of escape from the headaches and the heartaches of life," said Merrill.

Merrill said he believes the choir fits in neatly with the mission of the chapel. "Hopefully, when people enter the chapel, they can escape their sorrow and draw a sense of strength and encouragement through the

singing, the testimony, preaching and the fellowship of Christian believers."

"My vision for the chapel is that it will be an example not only to those of us participating, but to Guantanamo Bay and to the world that people of many different backgrounds and faith traditions," he said. "Cultures and races can come together as one to worship God, and all those barriers are broken down when you worship God. 'I want the chapel to be an instrument of healing, reconciliation and unity through Jesus Christ."

"The chaplaincy is here to support the military. It's a privilege to be a part of this histor-



Chaplain Merrill meets with Army Spc. Scott Belgard from the 239th Military Police Company in the chaplain's office at Camp America after the Protestant church service last Sunday.

ical moment in time," said Merrill. "My purpose and vision for being here is to help people see they didn't come here by coincidence — that God brought them down here to perhaps be the one event in their life that will give them the insight to make the right decisions, the healthiest choices and the most blessed life possible through God."

Merrill, who is now attached to the 160th MP Battalion out of Tallahassee, Fla., worked as a chaplain with the Federal Bureau of Prisons, Department of Justice, before he was deployed to GTMO.

He said he would like to spend most of his time to help and provide coun-

seling to the servicemembers currently stationed here. He said he also makes himself available to the detainees and that he felt that God used him as an instrument when one of the detainees requested to have a private session with him.

The members of "Voices of Inspiration" said they hope more people will join them as they continue to praise the Lord with their music. If you want to attend one of the services and listen to the new choir, services are at the Camp America chapel, Sundays at 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. and Wednesdays at 7 p.m.

## New choir gives Camp America's Protestant

Story and photos  
by Army Pfc.  
Jean-Carl Bertin  
The Wire

When Camp America started offering Protestant worship services, only 11 servicemembers showed up to pray. This Sunday, the camp's chaplain, Army Maj. Michael S. Merrill, was able to boast of an attendance nearly five times that, thanks in large part to good word-of-mouth about some truly heavenly entertainment: the "Voices of Inspiration," a new choir that was formed by members of the 114th Military Police Company out of Clinton, Miss.

"It's great to have the choir," Merrill said. "They've really helped bring the Protestant services alive for the faithful."

"It's amazing how everything is just coming together as far as the different types of talents and the people you need to have for a strong worship service, he said. "And I think the word is finally getting out. I can see each week more people are getting involved. God has blessed everyone's faithfulness."

All the while, the choir is blessing everyone's ears. Every Sunday, after the opening prayer by the chaplain, and praise and worship by Marine Maj. James W. Bell of the JTF-160 Joint Information Bureau, "Voices of Inspiration" takes over the service by singing contemporary gospel songs to get the worshippers in the mood for thanks and praises to the Lord.

It is said that music can soothe the savage beast, but when it comes to religion, though, it's a great way to inspire weary, hard-working servicemembers to nourish their souls with some spiritual chow.



Some of the members of "Voices of Inspiration," a new choir that was formed to help spread the gospel at Camp America and entertain the people who attend the Protestant services held on Sunday and Wednesday. Group members shown are: Army Sgt. Marilyn E. Taylor, Sgt. Patrick Phillip, Sgt. David Bolden, Spc. Angela Williamson and Pfc. Brian Maxwell.

"If you love to sing and praise the Lord, what better way to do it than through music? Express yourself and show your appreciation," said Army Pfc. Maxwell Brian, a singer in the choir.

"We hope that our music inspires anybody who has a problem or who is in distress. We have to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ through music," said Army Sgt. Phillip Patrick, who plays keyboard.

For the choir's co-founder and director, Army Sgt. Marilyn E. Taylor, this mission seemed almost heaven-sent.

"There is a reason for everything," Taylor, an administrative sergeant for the 114th, said. "Sgt. Derwin Davis, from my company, came

up to me one day and said he wanted to start a choir. He asked me if I wanted to be the choir director. I said yes."

"I sing in a choir back home, but I've never directed in my life," she said. "It gets hard sometimes, but it's a good experience.

"I've been singing all my life," she said. "I wouldn't feel right if I wasn't doing it. I love to praise the name of the Lord. He gave me this talent. I have to use it before I lose it."

Material hasn't been a problem either, Taylor said. "Most of these guys here play for groups back home in Mississippi. Everybody comes up with songs. We've been blessed with tunes from everybody's husbands and wives."

There was still the matter of staffing the group. After talking to Davis, Taylor started looking for "devoted Christians" to be part of the choir. "Not judging anybody, but I didn't want the choir members to do it just for show. That was one of my challenges," said Taylor.

"I love singing for the Lord and it's even better when you have somebody else to sing with you," said Taylor.

Or play. Sgt. David Bolden, who plays the guitar for the group, knows how popular the group has become with the Camp America churchgoers, but for him, it's an audience of one.

"We try to do things in the name of the Lord," said Bolden, a junior deacon at home in Mississippi. "He directs our path and keeps us focus. I don't do it for any form of passion or show."

For her part, Sgt. Taylor would like to organize a concert by the group for a wider GTMO audience, once the fledgling choir has a few more practices under its belt. In the



Servicemembers attending Camp America's Protestant service Sunday clap their hands as they are enjoying one of the songs being performed by "Voices of Inspiration."

## bite out of terrorism at GTMO

out. And the dogs work practically for free! Once they successfully complete a mission or training session their reward is not a paycheck, but a system of praise and rewards. The rewards are either a doggie treat or a toy.

All of the dogs assigned to JTF-160 are trained in patrolling techniques. Some of their patrolling missions include scouting, search



Staff Sgt. Stephens and Rocko heading out for mandatory training.

and rescue, and establishing listening posts and observation posts.

The dogs can also be used to search buildings and assist in finding individuals, to include burglars. "The dogs don't 'track' suspects, they only use their sense of smell to find what they are looking for," said Hiatt.

"They can find things much quicker and safer than we can," he said.

Each dog must also be trained in the six phases of controlled aggression which allows their handlers to control their actions on or off leash, said Stephens. The six phases include: interview; false run; false run into a bite; stand off; search and re-attack; and bite, he said.

But the dogs' unique talents don't end there. Each dog also has an operational specialty. Rocko and Roni are trained as patrol/narcotics detection dogs and Ari is a patrol/explosives detection dog.

But never let it be said that the military working dogs don't earn their keep. These canines don't have it easy. They must be certified annually in order to keep working in the field, said Theckston.

Additionally, the dogs must perform their job to tough standards — and we're not talking 75 percent either. Patrol/narcotics detection dogs must perform a series of tasks to a 90 percent proficiency rate and patrol/explosive detection dogs must perform to a 95 percent

proficiency rate.

According to Stephens, in order to maintain their certification, the dogs are required by receive four hours of training in patrolling and four hours in detection each week. And according to Army regulation 190-12, failure to maintain an 90 percent average proficiency for over three months results in automatic de-certification of not just the dog, but the entire team.

As a result of stringent training guidelines, these dogs have become highly skilled professionals, able to physically stop an individual in his tracks.

And Rocko is just as tough as his name sounds. According to Stephens, Rocko was responsible for the recovery of more than \$350,000 in drugs and cash in Mexico.

Additionally, Rocko and Stephens placed first in the 2000 FORSCOM Military Working Dog competition.

So after years of hard work and dedicated service, what do these working class dogs have to look forward to? Well, until the recent passage of adoption laws a few years ago, military work dogs didn't have a retirement plan. Now, they have options. On Nov. 6, 2000, Public Law 106-446, amending Title 10 of the U.S. Code was passed. This law facilitated the adoption of older or excess working dogs.

The dogs can also look forward to a teaching assignment once they leave military service. They can return to Lackland Air Force Base where they are assessed and may be selected to assist with training new handlers or they can retire and be adopted.

The law, passed by former President Bill Clinton, does, however, restrict adoptions to former handlers, law enforcement agencies, or other qualified individuals who understand the special needs and temperament of military work dogs.

According to Stephens, being a military dog



Photo by Army Maj. Donna L. Scott

PO2 Dodd of NAVSTAGTMO security detachment is stopped by Ari as he simulates an escape.

handler is the best job in the Army. "It would take the average narcotics police officer six to seven years to be able to receive the training and do what we do every day," he said.

"We also get to work with major agencies such as the DEA, FBI, ATF and the Secret Service," he said.

So the next time you're running down Sherman Avenue toward the vet clinic, and hear barking, just keep on running because these dogs aren't your average Rin Tin-Tin or Lassie.

These are highly trained military working dogs, and they mean business.



Photo by Army Maj. Donna L. Scott

Sgt. Theckston fends off an attack by Rocko during a training session.



Command Sgt. Maj. Raymond Funaro nimbly mounts the monkey bars enroute to the next obstacle — the rope swing.

Photo by Airman 1st Class Ashlee L. Gros

# Overcoming obstacles, the Air Force way

Compiled by Army Sgt. Michelle M. Pessoa

Food and fun were awaiting the guests at the Air Force Combat Dining-In at McCalla Hangar on Saturday evening. However, there was a catch: you had to navigate an obstacle course to get to the chow.

Tech. Sgt. Tom Siegel, sergeant at arms, carefully scrutinized the guests as they approached the entrance to the obstacle course. If they were foolhardy enough to have forgotten their IDs, they were subjected to a thorough soaking from Staff Sgt. Brian Sapp's "Super Soaker" water pistol.

So vigilant was Siegel that people who thought they were exempt from the course because they were involved in its construction were rounded up just like everyone else. "Everyone is going to do this," vowed Siegel. "Even if you barely make the height requirement," he added as he ushered Senior Airman Mia Delgado to the front of the course.

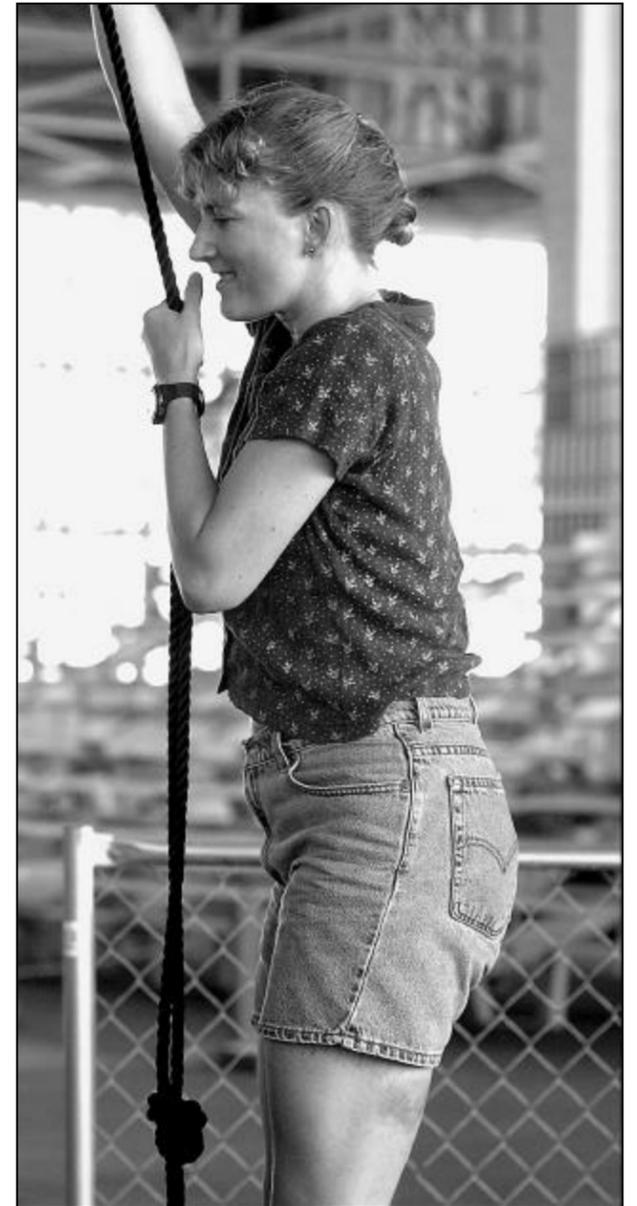
The would-be diners had to tackle four hindrances to get to the barbecued chicken and baked beans awaiting them on the buffet line. The first test was a modified "low crawl." Guests had to duck under some camouflaged netting, flop face down on a fluorescent orange slide and pull themselves from one end to the other with their arms.

Next, the guests had to scale a small semi-circular set of monkey bars. Most guests were able to do this rapidly, but stiff joints and a touch of vertigo made it tough for some.

The third obstacle was the most daring one. Participants walked up a small platform, grabbed a sturdy black rope and sailed through the air over a tiny 6' x 6' pool filled with about 12" of water. A few unlucky souls lost their grip and landed on the seat of their pants.

Surprisingly, it was the final obstacle that resulted in the most mishaps. After landing on the other side of the pool, the guests had to mount one of four spring-action animals (three white ponies and one gray frog) attached to a wooden plank. The seemingly simple task turned into a riot of fun as person after person was pitched to the floor by the unpredictable rocking motion of the toy animals.

In the end, the only injuries suffered were a few bruised egos that were quickly salved by having a cold beverage and a warm meal with friends.



Air Force Master Sgt. Jeri A. Lara gives the swing portion of the course a dry run and endeavors to avoid getting wet.

Photo by Army Sgt. Michelle M. Pessoa



Coast Guard Petty Officer 2nd Class Lauren Y. Smith gets into the swing of things and sails safely over the pool.

Photo by Army Sgt. Michelle M. Pessoa



Air Force Staff Sgt. Brian K. Sapp and Tech Sgt. Eric P. Schaffer enforce the "Rules of the Mess" by liberally soaking down those who "talk shop" when they're supposed to be having fun.

Photo by Army Sgt. Michelle M. Pessoa



Tech Sgt. Thomas M. Siegel reins in a bucking bronco.

Photo by Army Sgt. Michelle M. Pessoa



Army Maj. Dawnlee J. Roberson does a modified low crawl in phase one of the obstacle course.

Photo by Army Sgt. Michelle M. Pessoa