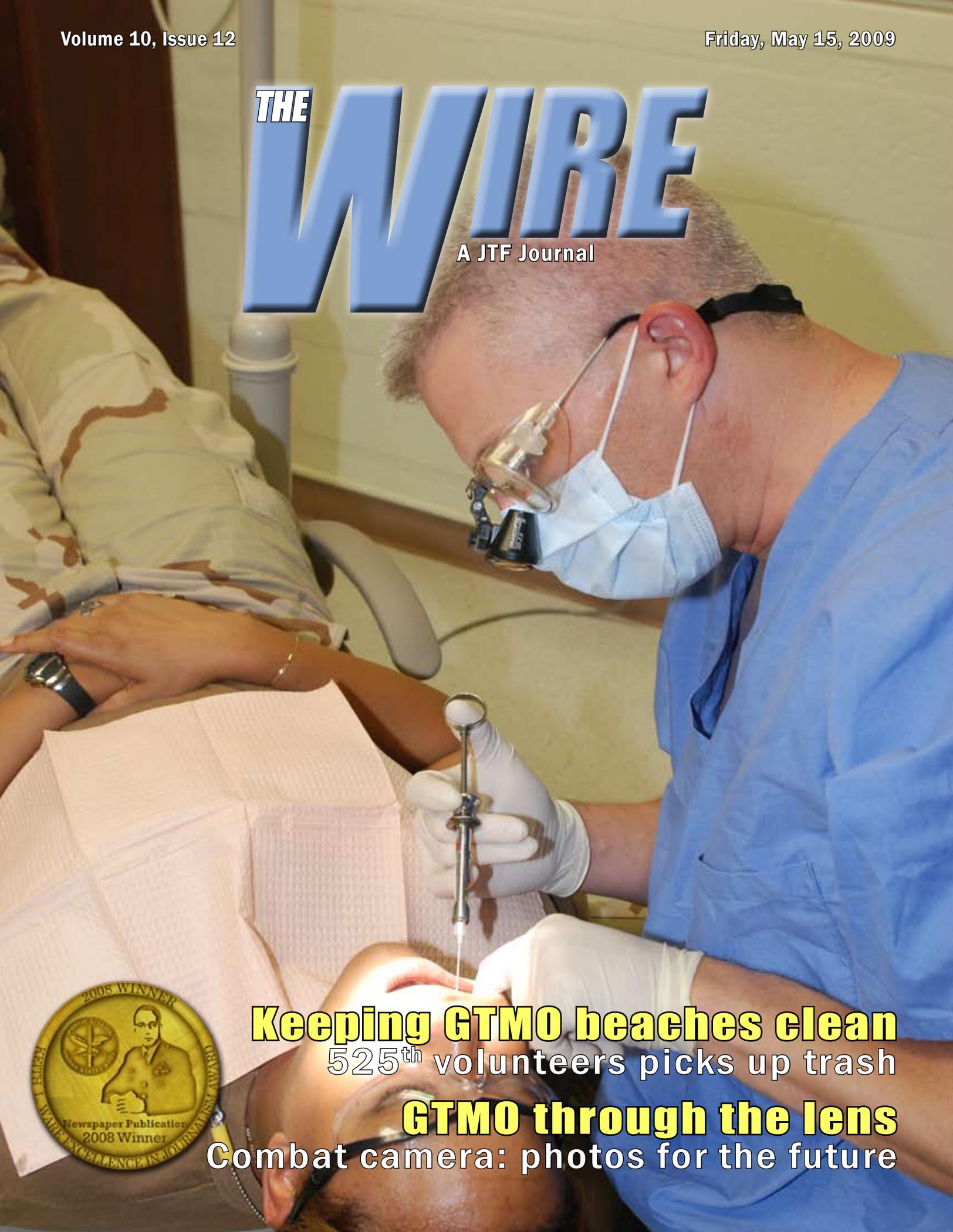


THE WIRE

A JTF Journal



Keeping GTMO beaches clean

525th volunteers picks up trash

GTMO through the lens

Combat camera: photos for the future



What is Teamwork?

■ *Joint environment provides opportunity for development*

**Army Master Sgt.
Michael Alicea**

JTF Guantanamo Housing Commandant

The word “teamwork” has many meanings. In the military, it refers to two or more Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Coast Guardsmen or Marines working together for a common goal. Here at Joint Task Force Guantanamo, it has a special meaning because we find ourselves working with members of different services and we need to work together to make the mission a successful one.

Being in a small community like GTMO, we often find ourselves sharing and spending our off time with Troopers from all services. Where else can you find such a unique opportunity? This tour is a great opportunity to make friends from all of the services.

After spending time at duty stations in Texas, Panama and Florida, I realized they are all similar because you have the Army, Air Force, Navy and Marines Corps working together for the support of Troopers who are stationed in harm’s way. The experiences Troopers get from each other vary because none of the services work or train in the same manner. Promotion systems are different, yet all Troopers strive to better themselves with the same goal.

I feel very proud to serve with Troopers from all services. After spending nearly 30 years in the military, I think back to all the units I was a part of and all the Troopers I have met and wonder what happened to them, how are they doing or if they are still in the military. When you are part of a team you always make that effort to find out.

I have personally had a great experience here. Capt. Eric Bey, chaplain of the 525th Military Police Battalion, and I were stationed together in Panama in 1987. Who would have thought that after so many years we would be stationed together again, and in such a different environment?

This deployment has taught me that a team is truly a group of people in a collaborative relationship working toward a mutual goal – a goal that dominates all other individual and sub-group goals – a goal for which every team member is mutually accountable. ★



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Navy Cmdr. George Sellock, a dentist at the Joint Troop Clinic, fills a crown for a Trooper, May 13. – Joint Task Force Guantanamo photo by Army Spc. Cody Black

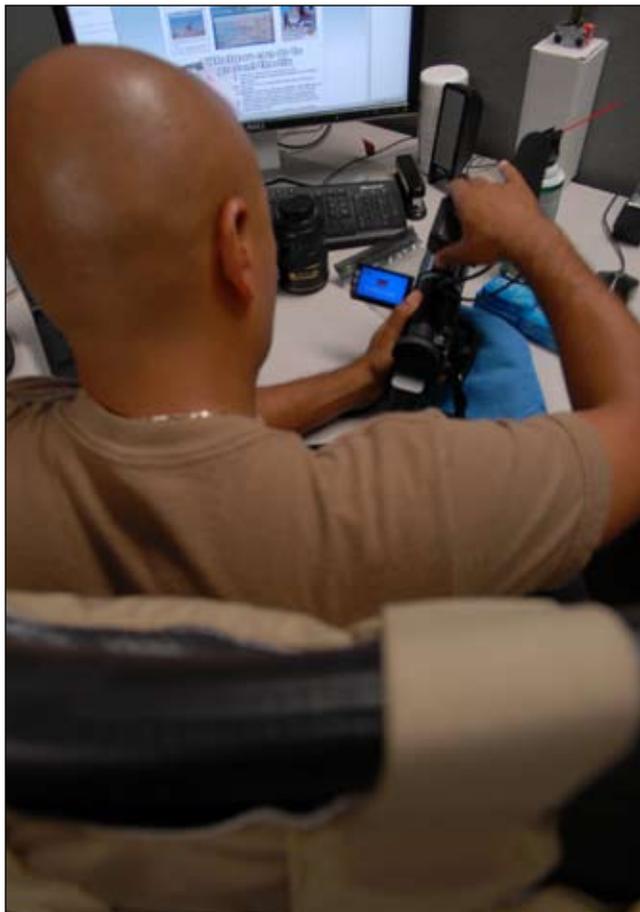


The WIRE is the official news magazine of Joint Task Force Guantanamo. It is produced by the JTF Public Affairs Office to inform and educate the Troopers of JTF Guantanamo through news, features, command guidance, sports and entertainment. The WIRE seeks to provide maximum disclosure with minimum delay 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 1,000.

A Navy combat cameraman with Joint Task Force Guantanamo (left) uses a video camera to document a training exercise between U.S. Coast Guard and Marine Corps forces. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Spc. April D. deArmas



Keeping a visual record



A Navy combat cameraman with Joint Task Force Guantanamo cleans his camera gear in preparation for a mission. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Staff Sgt. Blair Heusdens

**Army Staff Sgt.
Blair Heusdens**

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

All the world's eyes have been on Naval Station Guantanamo Bay since the detention facilities opened in 2002. Another set of eyes have constantly been on the facilities as well, silently documenting the daily activities in the camps to serve as a permanent record of the care and custody of those who have been detained here.

Navy combat cameramen document daily life at the detention facilities for Joint Task Force Guantanamo using still and video imagery. Made up of both active duty and Reserve component Sailors, the JTF combat camera section, or COMCAM, is responsible for the complete and objective recording of actions of the detainees and guards who oversee their custody.

"This mission has taught me that it is important to always pay attention no matter how repetitive a job can be. If we miss a shot or get complacent, it could ruin the credibility we've worked hard to earn," said one combat cameraman with the JTF.

Combat camera imagery provides commanders and decision-makers with essential battlefield information in support of strategic, operational and tactical mission objectives. Up-to-date imagery can be used for planning, intelligence and operational purposes.

"What we do helps decision makers make more informed decisions," the section's non-commissioned officer-in-charge said.

Combat camera assets often have the ability to cover an event or situation as it is happening or immediately afterward, to provide real-time imagery of fast-breaking events. Images and video can then be fed to news organizations

"Some news organizations cannot get to places as quickly as we can," the NCOIC said.

The imagery also serves an important archival and historical purpose. As the detention facilities will prepare to close, this documentation remains to serve as a historical record and archive of what happens on a daily basis. The cameramen must be as inconspicuous as possible to document events without becoming a distraction. After being a feature in the camps for so long, the cameraman's presence doesn't attract as much attention and they are allowed to document the scene as it is.

See **CAMERA/13**

Cleaner beaches thanks to volunteers



Army Sgt. Joshua Boyer and Army 2nd Lt. Joshua Frye with the 193rd Military Police Company, remove a large chunk of metal from Girl Scout Beach, May 9. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Spc. April D. deArmas

Army Spc. April D. de Armas

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Are you looking for a way to get involved and bring a smile to the residents of Naval Station Guantanamo Bay? The Trooper Volunteer Program of the 525th Military Police Battalion of Joint Task Force Guantanamo is a great way to do just that.

The volunteer program is a new concept put together by the officers and senior enlisted personnel from the 525th and has only been in action for a month.

Army Staff Sgt. Rene Salazar is the operations and training non-commissioned officer for the 525th's 193rd Military Police Company and volunteers his time to clean up the beaches.

"The program gives Troopers a way of becoming involved with their community and it's a great way to get out and see something other than their rooms, while doing something positive for the community," said Salazar. "The command felt it would give Troopers other options for their time."

Anyone can get involved with the volunteer program and there are incentives for Troopers who do. Not only do they get the satisfaction of a cleaner community, but Troopers can earn the Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal for every 100 hours of service logged through the program.

"Troopers can earn a service award for giving their time, however this is not our focus," said Salazar. "We feel it is important to have a clean environment and clean beaches for our Troopers and residents here in GTMO."

The volunteer program focuses on cleaning up the beaches around the naval station by picking up trash and debris.

Army 2nd Lt. Joshua Frye, assistant officer-in-charge for the 193rd, has been volunteering his time since the program's inception and said he was very happy to be involved.

"The beaches are the most important asset and are the main source of recreation for Troopers and residents at GTMO," said Frye. "I am a diver and always wanted to clean up the beaches, so I was very excited when this program was enacted."

Salazar said the response from Troopers has been very good and the number of volunteers has steadily increased since the beginning.

Army Sgt. John Norris, a military policeman with the 193rd, is one Trooper who spends some of his off-duty time volunteering with the program.

"I come to the beaches a lot and

See **VOLUNTEER/13**



Army Pfc. Dana Eltaher with the 193rd Military Police Company finds sea glass while conducting trash pick-up at Girl Scout Beach, May 9. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Spc. April D. deArmas



Taking care of pets who take care of Troopers

Army Capt. Stephanie Hall, the Veterinary Detachment officer-in-charge, performs surgery on a Joint Task Force Guantanamo civilian's cat. The cat, Aries, was spayed, which, according to Hall, is a routine procedure. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Sgt. Michael Baltz

**Army Sgt.
Michael Baltz**

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

The U.S. Army Veterinary Corps was formally established by an Act of Congress on June 3, 1916. However, recognition of the need for veterinary expertise had been evolving since 1776 when General George Washington directed that a “regiment horse with a farrier” be raised, according to the veterinary service’s Web site.

The veterinary corps continues its mission in support of Joint Task Force Guantanamo.

“Allowing [Troopers] to have their pets, since they are in an isolated area, brings up their morale,” said Army Capt. Stephanie Hall, the Veterinary Detachment officer in-charge. “[They] are their friends and it makes people happy to have their own pets here or to be able to come into contact with them.”

The Army Veterinary Service is responsible for food inspections, veterinarian programs and providing full medical care to animals, including the care of military dogs and Troopers’ pets.

They also care for the local wildlife by working with the San Diego Reproduction Center for Endangered Species on critical reptile species management.

The clinic offers medical, dental and surgical care. The VTF is well equipped with the following: an in-house laboratory, radiology machine, operating room, ultrasound machine and a dental unit.

“I enjoy performing surgery,” Hall said. “With surgery you are able to see immediate results.”

In some cases the VTF lacks certain specialized capabilities and cannot perform all tasks on island.

“If it is a bone surgery that I am not comfortable with or something I cannot do, I’ll send it off island,” Hall said.

Hall enjoys her job even though it can be difficult at times.

“You can become very attached to your patients because you see them a lot toward the terminal end,” Hall said. “You can become emotionally attached and you have to be strong for the [owner], so they [will] do what is best for the patient.”

Hall also said, “People are understanding and do not want [the animals] to feel any pain, so they understand when it comes to the point where the animal is ready.”

Regardless Hall enjoys her job and ability to support the Troopers.

“I am defiantly here to help the [Trooper] out,” said Hall, whose Veterinary Treatment Facility has 24-hour emergency services. ♠

Groupers for Troopers

**Army Spc.
David William McLean**
JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

A group assembles and boards a pontoon boat as the sun slowly dips down into the horizon, May 7. The boat captain gives final instructions before they embark on their evening activity. The group readies poles and baits hooks in an attempt to catch anything that will bite.

Joint Task Force Guantanamo Troopers can fish Guantanamo Bay and enjoy the outdoors at no cost through the Morale, Welfare and Recreation Liberty Tours. The free fishing trips happen twice a month; once during the day, and once during the evening.

Navy Seaman Randy Comeau, a master-at-arms with the base police, captains some of these trips in search of watery game.

“There is no typical fishing trip,” Comeau said. “Leave the docks at 7 p.m. and you never know what’s going to happen from there. Sometimes it will be a beautiful day and you’ll catch a lot of fish. Sometimes it will be windy, and all you’ll catch is a cold and some disappointment. But you never know unless you get out there and try.”

Three Troopers were trying the blue waters of Guantanamo Bay for the first time on this night trip. Navy Lt. John Rankin and Navy Lt. Rich Ryan with the Navy Expeditionary Guard Battalion and a Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class with Joint Medical Group were trying to land some fish for the first time, and would not be disappointed by coming up empty-handed. It took Rankin 364 days here to finally come out and fish.

“[I have] no expectations, just wanted to come out and do some night fishing,” Rankin said. “I wish I could have done it more often. It’s very relaxing.”

The quiet waters help add to the relaxing environment, said Romeo.

“I enjoy it. It’s nice, calming,” the petty officer said. “It’s an adventure. It’s stuff you can do to just get out of work, relax and not worry about what you went through during the day.”

The day is quickly forgotten as the activity of tending lines and baiting hooks with shrimp, squid or the occasional baitfish takes the place of a rough day at work. The only work to look forward

to is reeling in one of the bay’s many different types of fish.

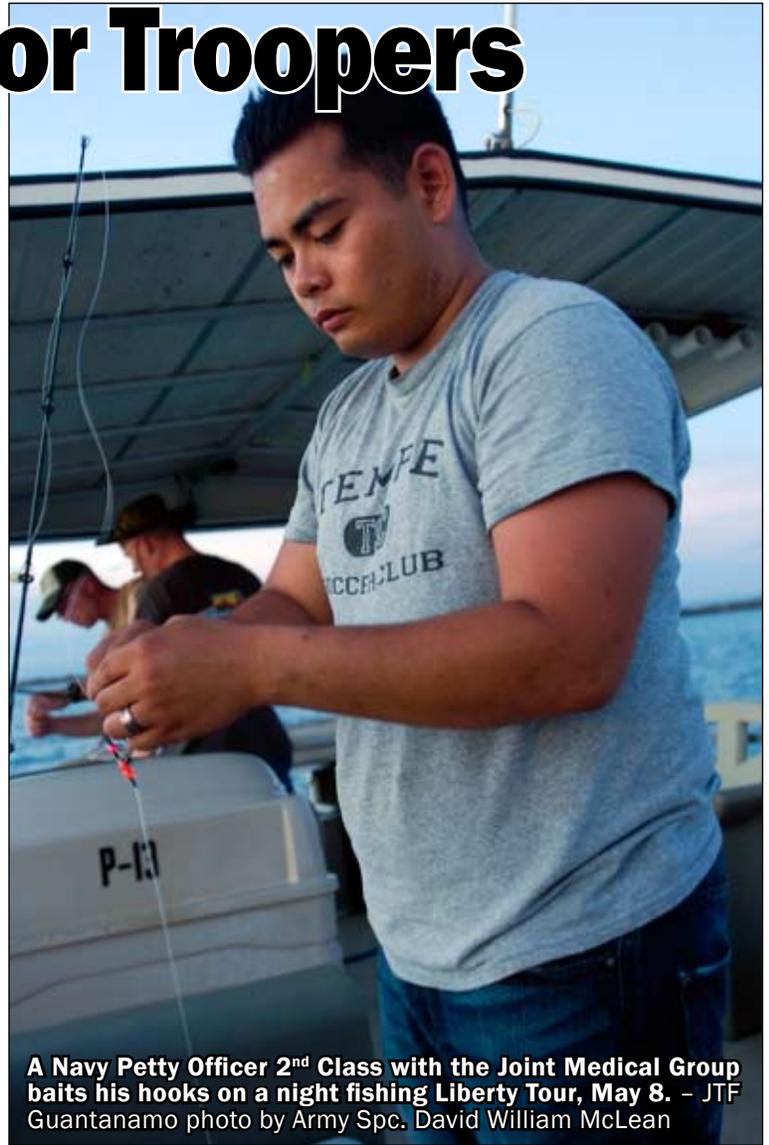
“Snapper, barracuda, croaker, a little bit of everything,” said Comeau. “You never know what you’re going to catch till you get out here.”

Most of the catch that evening were croakers, but a small puffer fish, juvenile tarpon, and an eerie ribbonfish made it into the mix as well. The tackle for catching these fish was a simple weight-and-hook rig on equipment supplied by the fisherman and the MWR site facilities. MWR also supplies the bait, drinking water, boat, some food, gas for the boat and the captain.

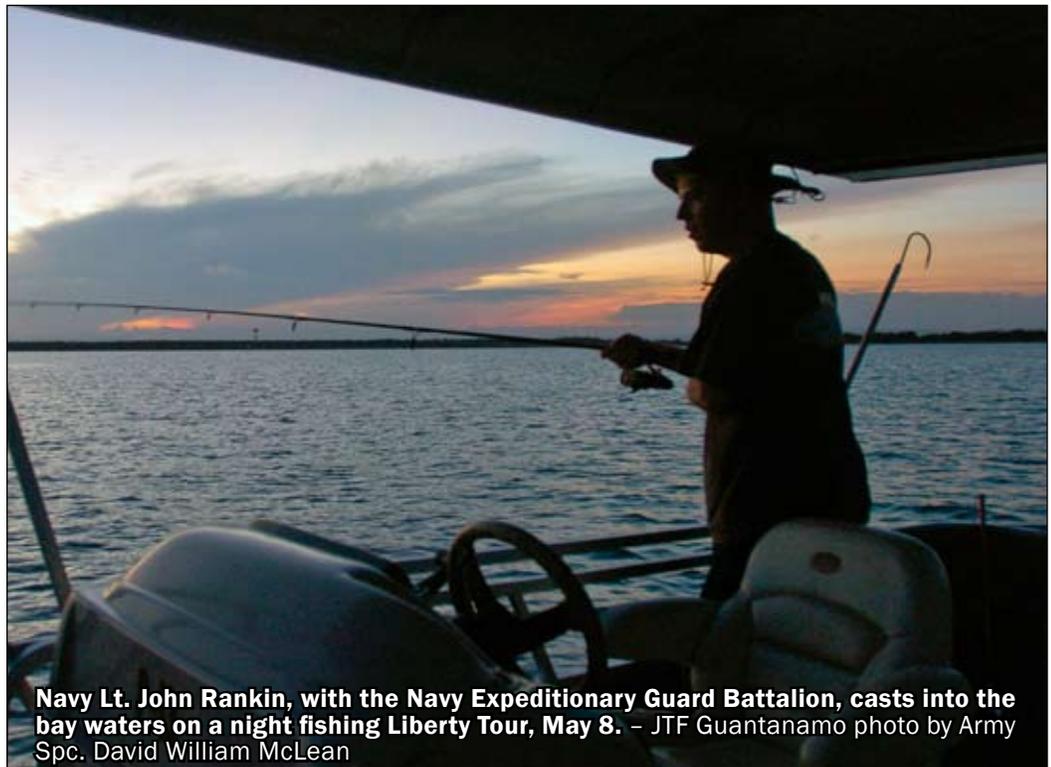
“I get to go fishing for free,” Comeau said. “They provide some tackle, a free trip out, food, water, and hopefully a good time.”

“We’ll just go back home and have enjoyed saying that we got out and went fishing,” Ryan said.

For more information about fishing trips, the Liberty Tour schedule on the intranet provides trip dates, and reservations can be made by calling ext. 2010. ☆



A Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class with the Joint Medical Group baits his hooks on a night fishing Liberty Tour, May 8. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Spc. David William McLean



Navy Lt. John Rankin, with the Navy Expeditionary Guard Battalion, casts into the bay waters on a night fishing Liberty Tour, May 8. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Spc. David William McLean



Bromance brings laughs to big screen

**Army Pfc.
Rebecca Robinson**

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

What happens when the average person reaches the point in life when they're ready to walk down the aisle? For Peter Klaven (Paul Rudd of "Role Models"), it's not the usual fear of commitment that plagues him, but instead the realization that all of his friends are women. This strange predicament forces the Los Angeles realtor to search hastily for a best man. The stress involved leaves almost no time for tux shopping, family cohesion, or ceremony planning. This situation has an enormous effect on Peter's self-perception and places a new spin on the average wedding crisis.

This year's latest bromance flick, "I Love You, Man," picks up as Peter adventures out on a comedic man-hunt for Mr. Right. After many man-on-man dates and one misunderstood candlelit evening, his fiancé Zooley (Rashida Jones from NBC's "The Office") notices his struggle and, in an attempt to help, enlists Peter in a fun-filled night of poker and drinks with the dudes. Unfortunately, the male bonding inadvertently concludes with disastrous drunken results. Through his many missteps, Peter realizes that neither his fiancé, his brother, a gay personal trainer,

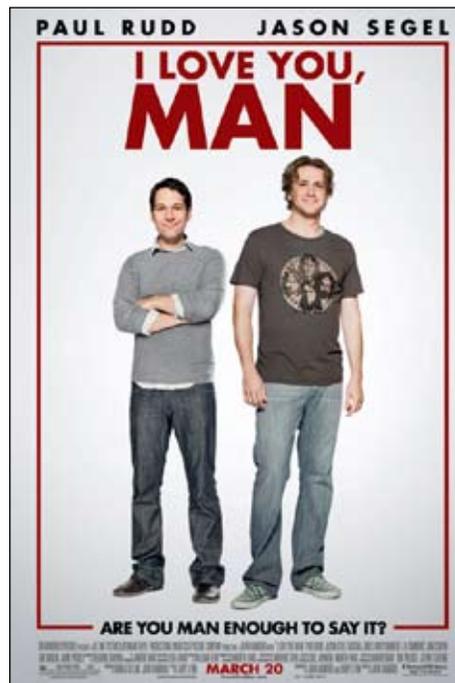
nor he could assist him in this quest.

Just as Peter has given up hope he meets the laid back, brutally uncensored scooter-riding hipster named Sydney (Jason Segel, "Forgetting Sarah Marshall"). The pair first meet while he's scoping for rich divorcés and scoring free Paninis at one of Peter's open houses. Sydney is a nightmare to those who are blissfully into adult life – he instead enjoys hanging out with his homies and chillaxing in his apartment garage, appropriately referred to as "the man cave" – where no woman has ever and will never place foot.

While falling deeper into the haphazard adventures of Sydney, Peter encounters a hulky choke-hold, winds up nude on a billboard and gets engulfed in "slappin' the bass."

Comically portraying the ins and outs of true friendship, Jason Segel and Paul Rudd keep the audience blushing and rolling throughout one of the best-made bromance flicks of all time. This movie should be watched by all who are insecure, unsure and confused about manly relationships. It should not however, be viewed by youngsters or those who are easily offended.

Even though the male bonding is off the wall, and often cringe-worthy, this film should give every man the urge to add some bromance to his life and seek out that Mr. Right. ★



R
105 minutes

Rating: ★★☆☆☆

Glass Beach: Guantanamo's gem

**Army Sgt.
Emily Greene**

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Called the “Pearl of the Antilles,” Guantanamo Bay’s wonders are little-known to the rest of the world. Once a frequent port of call in Spanish colonial days, this community on the southeast corner of communist Cuba is now a closed port where only a few experience the beauty it has to offer.

One of the hidden beauties of Guantanamo Bay is Glass Beach. Nestled between Ferry Landing and Girl Scout Beach, this small stretch of sand and rock is cloaked in local legend. From pirate ships to long-dead Sailors, the stories abound to explain the namesake of this particular beach. Famous for the sea glass that washes up on the shore, Glass Beach is a favorite spot for anyone who appreciates these gems and who wants to get away from the inherent stressors of life on this particular island.

Navy Cmdr. Jeffrey Johnston, director of public works, Naval Station Guantanamo Bay is familiar with the stories about Glass Beach.

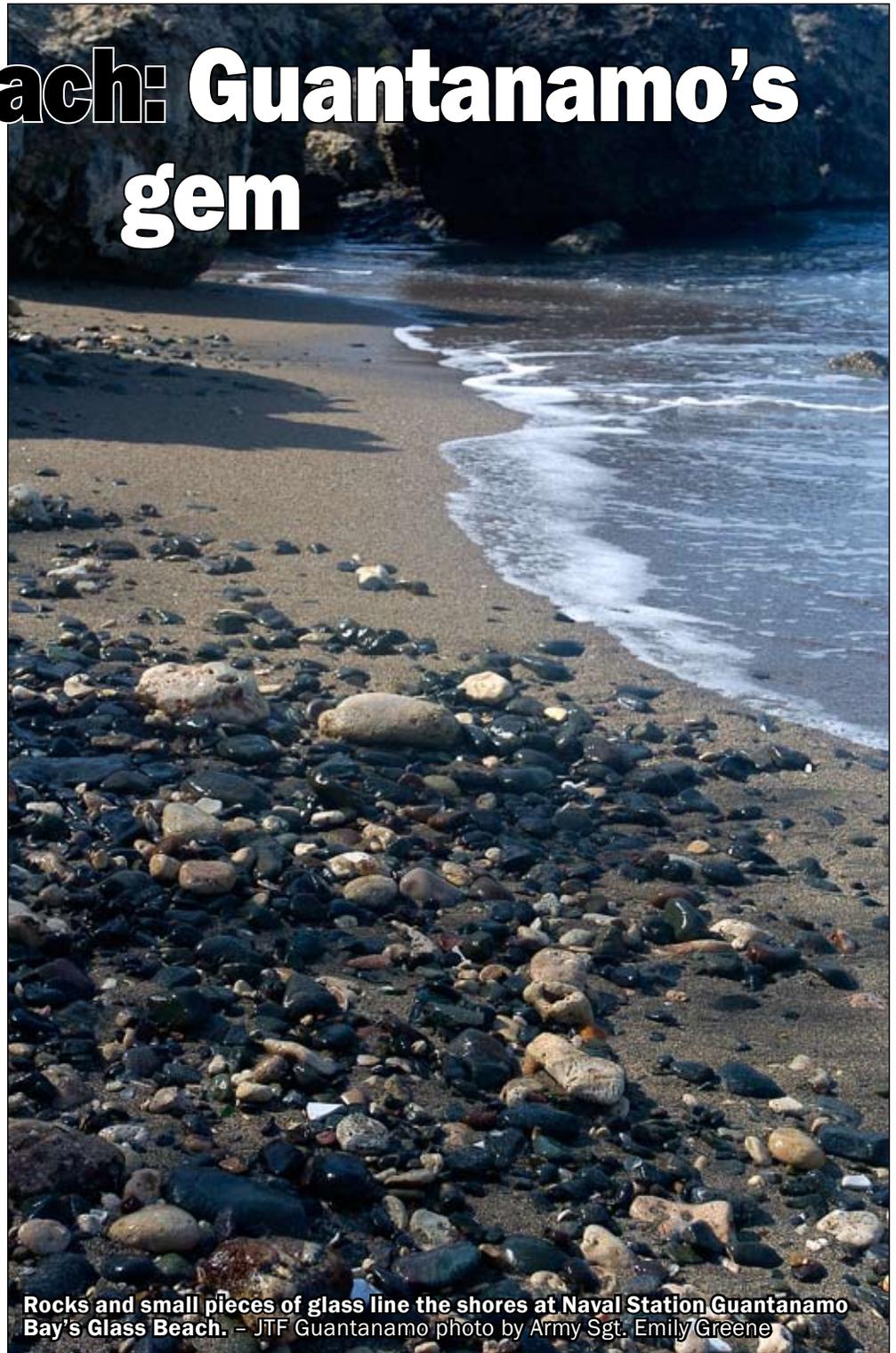
“Like so many things at Guantanamo, the lines between story and truth are somewhat hazy,” Johnston said. “Everyone wants to believe something exotic about the glass that washes up here. There isn’t a house in Guantanamo that doesn’t have a jar of sea glass from here on their windowsill.”

Johnston said one of the main stories involves the Enlisted Men’s Club that used to be located overlooking the beach. Known as the “White Hat Club,” because of the headgear worn by enlisted men in the early part of the twentieth century, the recreational facility was a place for enlisted men to let off steam after a long day of work.

“It has been said that Sailors would chuck their empty bottles into the bay and this is what washes up on the beach now,” said Johnston. “Some bottles probably did end up in the drink, but not nearly enough to explain the volume of glass that washes up here.”

The true origin of the glass that gives the beach its name is something much less pleasant to the sensibilities of today.

“Prior to any sort of environmental awareness, the naval station used to dump trash directly into the bay,” Johnston said. “That, and the landfill just down from the beach. The waves from the bay and inclement weather loosen the old trash and wash it out into the bay with the



Rocks and small pieces of glass line the shores at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay's Glass Beach. - JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Sgt. Emily Greene

rest. Eventually, it washes back up on the shore.”

The reason Glass Beach has the most glass on its shore lies in the way the land is shaped. The beach is set back a little from the rest of the shoreline and is protected from the rough waters.

“There is really no other place for glass to wash up,” said Johnston. “This beach is the only real place that sediment is able to remain on. This is due to a large storm drain that empties at this beach. The storm drain washes the sandy soil onto the shoreline here, creating the sandy beach and mixing with the sediments from the

bay.”

While the sea glass that glistens in the sand of Glass Beach may not have the most romantic origins, it is unique in its sheer volume. Also known as “mermaid’s tears” or “lucky tears,” sea glass is rare in most places around the world. But, in Guantanamo Bay anyone can visit Glass Beach and take home a handful.

In his book, “Pure Sea Glass,” Richard LaMotte describes these semi-natural gems as “castaway glass” that has been naturally tumbled by sand and sea before washing ashore.

See **GLASS/12**

JTF Trooper receives prestigious award

**Army Sgt.
Carmen Gibson**

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

There's no greater professional compliment than receiving a prestigious award for completing your daily mission. For one Army officer, the fact that the award was presented by the Army Chief of Staff at the Pentagon made the honor even more rewarding.

Army Capt. Christopher Hodl, Commander of the 189th Military Police Company, assigned to Joint Task Force Guantanamo, received the MacArthur Leadership Award at a ceremony held at the Pentagon Auditorium in Washington D.C., May 8.

Capt. Hodl said he was very humbled by the experience.

"I got to meet the Chief of Staff and senior generals," said Hodl. "It was also interesting to meet my peers who also received the award. Many were very accomplished."

Gen. George W. Casey, Jr., Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army, and Mr. Henry U. Harris, III, representing the General Douglas MacArthur Foundation, presented Hodl and his fellow recipients with the award.

Each year the MacArthur Leadership Award, an engraved 15-pound bronze bust of Gen. MacArthur, is presented to 25 U.S. Army officers and three U.S. Army warrant officers for demonstrating the qualities that Gen. MacArthur strived to exemplify – duty, honor and loyalty to one's country.

MacArthur award recipients demonstrate the ability to influence others to accomplish the mission by providing purpose, direction and motivation; are technically and tactically proficient in their positions; and exhibit outstanding team-building and interpersonal skills.

The U.S. Army Southern Command nominated Hodl for the award based on his performance during the past 16 months of his tour at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay.

With more than one-third of his six-year military career spent overseas, Capt. Hodl responded with genuine surprise.

"All I did was come to work everyday and take care of my Soldiers," said Hodl, who sees his nomination and other junior non-commissioned officer awards that have been presented during his deployment as just another, "validation for the caliber of people deployed to Guantanamo Bay."

Officers and enlisted personnel assigned to Joint Task Force Guantanamo, like Hodl, strive to place the safe and humane care and custody of detainees at the forefront of their mission. ★



Army Capt. Christopher Hodl, commander of the 189th Military Police Company, received the MacArthur Leadership Award at a ceremony May 8. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Sgt. Carmen Gibson



Army Capt. Christopher Hodl, commander of the 189th Military Police Company, receives the MacArthur Leadership Award from Army Gen. George Casey during a ceremony, May 8, in Washington, D.C. – JTF Guantanamo photo courtesy of Capt. Christopher Hodl

Unique treasures to be found at GTMO

GLASS from 10

“Each piece is unique with its own story behind it, and can date from ancient times to the present,” LaMotte writes. “One can only imagine where the glass originated and how long it has been bobbing in the sea.”

Rebecca Bayless has spent much time combing the beaches for sea glass and fashioning it into wearable art.

“I never saw sea glass until I came here a few years ago,” Bayless said. “I was amazed at how pretty it was and began to learn about the different kinds of glass.”

Bayless said she has found even the rarest colors of sea glass on Glass Beach.

“Black is the most rare color worldwide,” Bayless said. “It dates from the mid to late 1800s, before the naval station. It is really green or purple glass that has darkened to almost black over time. The most likely origin of the black glass is probably rum bottles from the pirate ships that were known to be in this area.”

Here in Guantanamo Bay there are other colors of sea glass that are even less common, said Bayless.

“Here, I would say orange, yellow and



Glass Beach at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay is known for the colorful pieces of glass that wash up on its shore. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Harriot Johnston

red are the hardest to find. And then, of course, there is the coveted cobalt blue that you have to really look for,” Bayless said.

Bayless said she has seen an increased interest in sea glass from the time she first arrived on the island to the present.

“There used to be more,” Bayless said. “Since that time more people have become aware of the special nature of sea glass.”

Whether from pirate revels, tipsy Sailors, or the less-romantic trash dump into the bay, Glass Beach undoubtedly holds a beauty unique to Guantanamo Bay. It is a place alive with legend, that glitters when the sun hits it just right. Enjoyed by everyone on the island, the beach is part of what makes Guantanamo Bay the “Pearl of the Antilles.” ✨

Domestic Violence

Domestic violence and emotional abuse are behaviors used by one person in a relationship to control the other. Partners may be married or not married; living together, separated or dating.

Examples of abuse include: name-calling or putdowns, keeping a partner from contacting family or friends, withholding money, stopping a partner from getting or keeping a job, actual or threatened physical harm, sexual assault, stalking and intimidation.

Violence takes many forms and can happen all the time or once in a while. Anyone can be a victim. Victims can be of any age, sex, race, culture, religion, education, employment or marital status.

If you are being abused, remember - you are not alone; it is not your fault and help is available.

If you are in immediate danger, contact the base police at ext. 4105 or call 911.

The history of JTF Guantanamo, through the eyes of a lens

CAMERA from 3

“We have to be an unbiased party, strictly there to document what happens,” the combat camera NCOIC said.

Navy Combat Camera is a command that deploys around the world in support of various missions. Photographers must be trained and ready to go into different situations at a moment's notice. From humanitarian missions to combat operations, combat cameramen document military operations to support commanders in the field.

With units based in Norfolk, Va., and San Diego, Calif., Navy combat cameramen cover surface, subsurface, air and ground

operations of armed forces engaged in combat, combat support operations, humanitarian efforts, scientific research and other peacetime activities. The cameramen are trained to provide still photography and video documentation which can be quickly uploaded in the field to commanders around the world.

In addition to photographic training, combat cameramen also receive additional combat, weapons and aircraft safety training, as well as other specialized training to prepare them for deployment and insertion into hostile and remote areas, often embedding on the front lines with combat units.

“We train for whatever force we deploy with,” said the section's NCOIC.

This additional training helps the cameramen to seamlessly integrate with whatever forces they deploy with and not become a liability.

“The training we receive allows me to go through my job with confidence,” a combat cameraman said. “I know that I am properly trained so I can eventually get home to my family once my mission is done.” ☆

Clean-up makes positive impact

VOLUNTEER from 4

I always get mad about the trash,” said Norris.

Norris said he was glad to get involved with the clean-up efforts and feels it has a positive effect on the living conditions for everyone on the island.

“If we don't keep it clean, no one else will,” said Norris.

Army Pfc. Dana Eltaher and Army Sgt. Joshua Boyer, both administrative specialists with the 193rd, said they both feel it is a great way to get to see all the beaches on the island.

“I get to see all the beaches and the view is breathtaking,” said Eltaher.

Eltaher said she feels volunteering is a great way to make the best of her time at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay.

“I enjoy doing something positive for the community I share with others during my deployment here,” said Eltaher. “I have

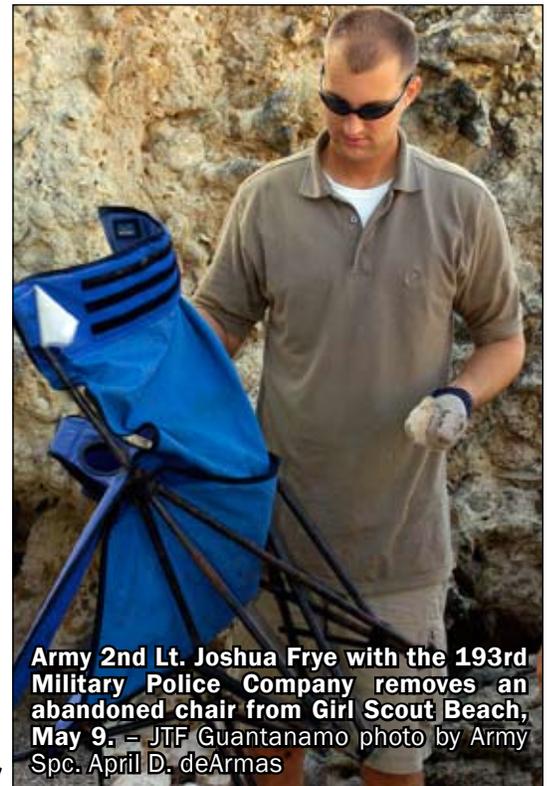
already gotten to see several beaches since I started volunteering in the last three weeks.”

Salazar said the volunteers have been to Windmill, Cable and Girl Scout beaches thus far and plan on making the rounds to all of the beaches located on the base.

“We meet every Saturday at the basketball goal inside the Tierra Kay housing community at 7:45 a.m. and welcome anyone who would like to join us,” said Salazar.

“We are looking to get the word out and hope that more Troopers will get involved with the program,” said Salazar. “Not only can we make a difference, we can also build new friendships during our time here.”

For more information about the volunteer program, please contact Staff Sgt. Rene Salazar at extension 2314. ☆



Army 2nd Lt. Joshua Frye with the 193rd Military Police Company removes an abandoned chair from Girl Scout Beach, May 9. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Spc. April D. deArmas

Boots on the Ground

by Army Sgt. Derrol Fulghum

What is the best or most interesting thing you've received here in a package?

**Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class
Evan Hill**



“I received a pack of Tarot cards.”

**Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class
Zachary Harris**



“I received photos of my niece.”

**Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class
Ashley Griffith**



“I got my Nintendo Wii with the ‘Zelda: Twilight Princess’ game.”

**Air Force Staff Sgt.
Adam Hensley**



“I enjoyed the homemade fortune cookies with messages from my family and friends.”

Mission first, people always

**Army Capt.
Scott Brill**

JTF Guantanamo Deputy Command Chaplain

“Man Down!” When that cry sounds, Troopers selflessly move toward the sound. They will ignore danger and move toward their injured battle buddy or shipmate. The man or woman down knows that help will come. Whatever the risk, someone will run or low crawl to get there in time to protect and give aid. U.S. military history is full of stories of brave men and women who were determined that no one would be left behind. It is part of the Soldier’s Creed, and at the very heart of what, “Mission First, People Always” is all about.

Most of us have seen the movie or read the book “Black Hawk Down.” This is part of that heroic account from a talk given by religious leader Henry B. Eyring.

“During fighting in Somalia in October of 1993, two United States Army Rangers in a helicopter during the firefight learned that two other helicopters near them had fallen to the earth. The two rangers, in their relative safety aloft, learned by radio that no ground forces were available to rescue one of the downed aircrews. Growing numbers of the enemy were closing in on the crash site.

The two men watching from above volunteered to go down to the ground to protect their critically wounded comrades. Their request was denied because the situation was so dangerous. They asked a second time. Permission was again denied. Only after their third request were they put down on the ground.

Armed only with their personal weapons, they fought their way to the crashed helicopter and the injured fliers. They moved through intense small arms fire as enemies converged on the crash site. They pulled the wounded from the wreckage. They put themselves in a perimeter around the wounded, placing themselves in the most dangerous positions. They protected their comrades until their ammunition was depleted and they were fatally wounded. Their bravery and their sacrifice saved the life of a pilot who would have been lost.

They were each awarded posthumously the Medal of Honor. The citation reads that what they did was “above and beyond the call of duty.”

But I wonder if they saw it that way as they moved to the downed airmen. Out of loyalty they felt a duty to stand by their fellow Soldiers, whatever the cost. The courage to act and their selfless service came from feeling that they were responsible for the lives and the safety of comrades.”

What these Army Rangers did that day is a leadership lesson like no other. Their valor will never be forgotten. When I heard this story in church I thought to myself, I must do more for those I am called to serve. “Mission First, People Always,” is everyone’s responsibility.

Jesus said, “Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.” (Matt. 7:12.)

We also need to take care of ourselves. I do not know of anyone who has not been or is not in some kind of mental, physical or spiritual firefight. We all need help at times. Too often, out of fear or pride, we keep our problems a secret, and the rescue team flying overhead does not know where to land. Be assured, there is help all around us at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay. There is no shortage of caring people, worship space in the chapels or classroom seating at the Fleet and Family Support Center. The doors are open and the seats are plenty. ✨



Army Sgt. 1st Class Randall Shughart and Army Master Sgt. Gary Gordon were both members of a Delta Force sniper team. During a raid in Mogadishu October 3, 1993, both men were providing precision and suppressive fire from helicopters above two helicopter crash sites. Learning that no ground forces were available to rescue one of the downed aircrews, Shughart and Gordon volunteered to be inserted to protect their wounded comrades. After requesting and being denied permission twice because of the danger of the situation, the two fought their way to the downed helicopters through intense small arms fire and established a perimeter to defend the wounded. They continued to protect their comrades until they were fatally wounded. Their actions saved the life of Army Chief Warrant Officer Michael Durant.

JTF CHAPEL SCHEDULED PROGRAMS

Catholic Mass

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

Wednesday: 11 a.m.
Spanish Mass

Protestant Worship

Sunday: 9 a.m.

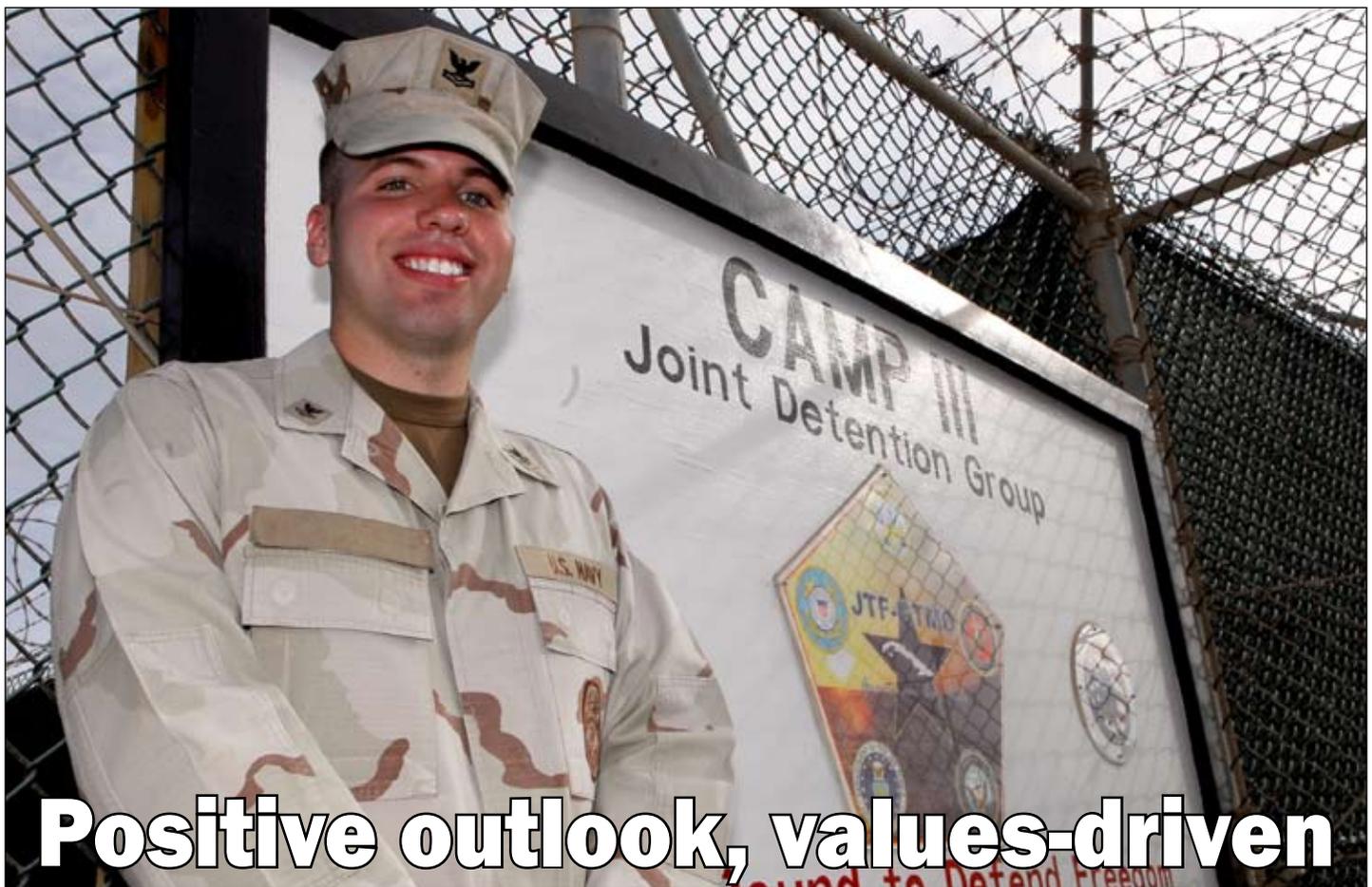
Spanish Protestant Worship

Sunday: 11 a.m.

Bible Study

Sunday: 6 p.m.

Wednesday: 7 p.m.



Positive outlook, values-driven

Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Austin Humphries poses in a photo after reenlisting in the Navy for six more years, April 30.
– JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Sgt. Michael Baltz

Army Sgt. Michael Baltz

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Austin Humphries is a guard at the Joint Task Force Guantanamo detention facilities who maintains a positive outlook by living the Navy values and the JTF Guantanamo-coined phrase, “honor bound to defend freedom.”

“He wasn’t even in charge of the block,” said Navy Lt. Richard Ryan, when explaining how Humphries earned his Navy Achievement Medal. “He just happened to be walking down the block and noticed a detainee trying to commit self-harm.”

The JTF Guantanamo mission is to ensure the safe, humane, legal and transparent care and custody of detainees.

Humphries took control of the situation, ordering the cell door to be opened. He then restrained the detainee and prevented him from causing additional self-harm. As a result, Humphries saved the detainee’s life and was awarded the Navy Achievement Medal

When Humphries and his unit came together for pre-mobilization in Gulfport, Miss., Humphries immediately stood out, according to Ryan.

“His commitment is shown by always having a positive military bearing in this dynamic environment,” Ryan said. “He shows courage by the particular incident

[above] and based on his performance in those situations, he shows he has a lot of honor by carrying out the mission.”

Ryan noted that, “Humphries also lives by the JTF GTMO phrase ‘Honor Bound.’ It isn’t just a phrase for him. It is a way of life.”

In almost 10 months, Humphries has been called on to assist in many situations inside the camps. Though his job is often stressful, Humphries keeps a positive attitude.

“I have been stationed at several beautiful places,” Humphries said. “My positive outlook isn’t going to change just because I am here.”

When Humphries arrived at JTF Guantanamo, he was a petty officer third class and weighed 235 pounds. Since then he has been promoted and dropped a few pounds.

“I work out six days a week. I love

it,” said Humphries. “I was 235 when I got here and now I am about 186 pounds.”

The gym is something that helps relieve stress during a deployment for Humphries. He said he also enjoys snorkeling and participating in Morale, Welfare and Recreation events.

Humphries credits his leadership for supporting him. He said that Ryan’s actions, by helping him square-away personal issues and by maintaining a strong presence on the cell block with the Troopers, helps him maintain his positive outlook.

“I would be happy to serve with [Humphries] again because he is the epitome of a sailor,” Ryan said. ★



Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Austin Humphries walks through one of the detention facilities at Joint Task Force Guantanamo.– JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Sgt. Michael Baltz



Army Staff Sgt. Difred Pascual, a chaplain's assistant with Joint Task Force Guantanamo, hands out flowers to mothers during a Mother's Day Spanish Protestant church service, May 10. - JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Staff Sgt. Blair Heusdens

Around the



JTF



U.S. Coast Guard Petty Officer 1st Class David Sherman, a port securityman with Port Security Unit 305, attaches a barrel to the .50-cal. machine gun while performing an Operational Risk Assessment before going underway, May 13. - JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Spc. Cody Black



Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Ricardo Rivera, a hospital corpsman with the Joint Medical Group, perfects his golf swing at the Yatera Seca Golf Course, May 11. - JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Pfc. Christopher Vann