

THE WIRE

A JTF Journal



NCOs honored
525th welcomes newly-promoted

Keeping Christmas alive
Celebrating the holidays at GTMO



Reflecting on the holidays

Air Force Master Sgt. Tracy Bailey

JTF GTMO Law Office Superintendent

For many people, the holidays are a time to give and receive gifts. For others, it may be the one time of year they are finally able to take off from work. Some of you put everything you have in your heart into making the season special for your loved ones, which is why it can be so hard to be away from home during the holidays.

Take time to reflect on what makes the season special for you. This may be the first time you have been away from home during the holidays, or maybe you've been gone for more holidays than you've been home since joining the military. Whichever situation you're in, I think it is important for each of you to know how respected you are, not only by me, but by thousands upon thousands of others around the world.

You play a very important role carrying out our mission. Please don't spend the entire holiday season feeling alone and sad because you're not with your family. Spend time with your military family and take pride in knowing that each one of you is a part of the greatest military organization in the world.

For several years now, I have received the following poem through e-mail. The author is unknown. This year, I would like to give those of you who haven't seen it an opportunity to read it because I think you can appreciate it. It doesn't matter if you're an Airman, Soldier, Marine, Sailor or Coast Guardsmen, and it doesn't matter which holiday you celebrate or if don't celebrate at all. Read beyond the Christmas theme and reflect on the portion that means the most to you:

"Twas the night before Christmas, he lived all alone, in a one bedroom house made of plaster and stone. I had come down the chimney with presents to give, and to see just who in this home did live. I looked all about, a strange sight I did see, no tinsel, no presents, not even a tree. No stocking by mantle, just boots filled with sand, on the wall hung pictures of far distant lands. With medals and badges, awards of all kinds, a sober thought came through my mind. For this house was different, it was dark and dreary, I found the home of a soldier, once I could see clearly. The soldier lay sleeping, silent, alone, curled up on the floor in this one bedroom home. The face was so gentle, the room in such disorder, not how I pictured a United States Soldier. Was this the hero of whom I'd just read? Curled up on a poncho, the floor for a bed? I realized the families that I saw this night, owed their lives to these soldiers who were willing to fight. Soon 'round the world, the children would play, and grownups would celebrate a bright Christmas Day. They all enjoyed freedom, each month of the year, because of the soldiers, like the one lying here. I couldn't help wonder, how many lay alone, on a cold Christmas Eve in a land far from home. The very thought, brought a tear to my eye, I dropped to my knees and started to cry. The soldier awakened, and I hear a rough voice, "Santa don't cry, this life is my choice. I fight for freedom, I don't ask for more, my life is my God, my country, my corps." The soldier rolled over and drifted to sleep, I couldn't control it, I continued to weep. I kept watch for hours, so silent and still, and we both shivered from the cold night's chill. I didn't want to leave on that cold, dark night, this guardian of honor, so willing to fight. Then the soldier rolled over, with a voice soft and pure, whispered, "Carry on Santa, it's Christmas Day, all is secure." One look at my watch, and I knew he was right, "Merry Christmas my friend, and to all a good night." ★



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COVER:

Joint Task Force Guantanamo Troopers participate in a 5.25-kilometer holiday fun run, Dec. 18. - JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Staff Sgt. Emily Russell

BACK COVER:

A decorated sailboat sits at the MWR Marina prior to the start of the holiday boat parade, Dec. 12. - JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Staff Sgt. Emily Russell



The WIRE is the official news magazine of Joint Task Force Guantanamo. It is produced by the JTF Public Affairs Office to inform and educate the Troopers of JTF Guantanamo through news, features, command guidance, sports and entertainment. The WIRE seeks to provide maximum disclosure with minimum delay with regards to security, accuracy, propriety and policy. This DoD news magazine is an authorized publication for the members of the Department of Defense. Contents of The WIRE are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, or Joint Task Force Guantanamo. It is printed by the Document Automation & Production Service with a circulation of 1,000.



Seven Army non-commissioned officers with the 525th Military Police Battalion face their fellow Soldiers after taking the oath of the non-commissioned officer during an induction into the NCO Corps, Dec. 18. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Katherine Hofman

525th welcomes new NCOs

Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Katherine Hofman

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Seven Army non-commissioned officers stationed at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay with the 525th Military Police Battalion in support of Joint Task Force Guantanamo took the oath of the non-commissioned officer and signed both the NCO creed and the NCO charge as a part of the initiation into the non-commissioned officer corps at Troopers' Chapel, Dec. 18.

The new Army NCOs stood before their fellow Soldiers, including senior enlisted and officers, committing to their newly-bestowed responsibilities as junior non-commissioned officers accepting both the NCO creed and the NCO charge as documents outlining their new duties. The Army sets apart its NCOs from other enlisted Soldiers by distinctive insignia of grade. With this new responsibility comes new duties. The newly-appointed NCOs are expected to perform above standard and to develop professionally through four core areas: education, fitness, leadership and pride.

The non-commissioned officer corps has distinguished itself as an accomplished group of military professionals, exemplifying courage and dedication. Guest speaker Navy Command Master Chief Scott Fleming, the JTF Guantanamo senior enlisted advisor, recalled his experiences working in a joint services

environment with Army NCOs.

"I have had the chance to watch a lot of Soldiers firsthand and it has been an incredible experience for me along the way. All this time of working side by side with Soldiers has left an indelible impression of [the Army] non-commissioned officer corps."

Fleming described NCOs as an incredibly professional, smart, driven and empowered group. "The men and women serving as NCOs take the creed to heart, turn words into action and accept the idea of leadership with a vengeance," said



A Soldier with the 525th Military Police Battalion signs the NCO creed after being inducted into the NCO Corps, Dec. 18. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Katherine Hofman

Fleming.

New NCOs develop through teaching, coaching and providing guidance through praise and counseling, and instilling the traditions and standards of the Army to junior Soldiers.

Army Sgt. Alexandra Savage of the 525th MP Battalion's Headquarters and Headquarters Company understands the new responsibilities of her NCO ranking. "I've been given the rank of an E-5 [NCO] and I have to take what I have learned from others, and what they have learned before and teach. [The knowledge] keeps going and we keep learning more, it keeps getting better. I learn, I teach, I learn more," she said.

Army 1st Sgt. Thomas Burdick of the 115th Military Police Company shared his experience of the NCO corps, noting the developing bonds between Soldiers and how it helps them to grow. "It's like becoming a member of a very close-knit family. You get the chance to share each others' experiences and it makes you a better leader," said Burdick.

Each of the new NCOs expressed their satisfaction with themselves in becoming a part of "the backbone" of the Army, a member of the NCO corps.

"I felt a burst of fireworks," said Army Sgt. LaCretia Dorsey of the 193rd Military Police Company, when she first found out she had advanced to NCO. "I feel pride and honor. I set my goals and achieved them. I'm now in charge and held to a higher standard." ★



Camp America Commandant, Army Sgt. Delicia Henley updates her book of standard operating procedures. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Sgt. Derrol Fulghum

Keeping Camp America running smoothly

**Army Sgt.
Derrol Fulghum**
JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Camp America houses Troopers with what is arguably one of the most difficult of military missions. Walking eight miles a day during their 12-hour shifts, the Soldiers and Sailors working in Camp Delta earn their paychecks.

Ensuring the comfort and safety of these service members is the job of the camp commandant, a position usually held by an E-9. Army Sgt. Delicia Henley is with the Virgin Islands Army National Guard, and works as the camp commandant for Camp America. “I was shocked,” she said. “It was puzzling at first, that they’d put me in that position, but then I saw it as an opportunity to learn and grow.”

The role of the commandant is to manage and facilitate the housing for Troopers, making sure they’re safe and comfortable. She does weekly walkthroughs of the housing area, and asks Troopers if they’re comfortable; if there’s anything they need. “It’s a win-win situation,” Henley explains. “If the troops feel comfortable and safe in their homes, they’ll work harder.”

Managing Camp America is a tough job for anybody, but the office is currently understaffed, meaning Henley has to work harder. She said the lack of manpower can be constraining. Henley

likes a challenge, however, and tackles her daily responsibilities with determination.

“Sgt. Henley fulfills her responsibilities inherent in her role as an NCO and has proven to be the professional Soldier,” said Army Sgt. Maj. Jerraine Miller, the JTF housing facilities manager. “The advice I give her and other Soldiers is to expect more than others think is possible, dream more than others think is practical and risk

more than others think is safe.”

In fact, the reason Henley joined the Army in the first place was to challenge herself after getting her bachelor’s degree in accounting. Even though her military occupational specialty is carpentry and masonry, she

feels the role as camp commandant isn’t a stretch for her skills. “I’m a people person. I like to talk,” said Henley. “I like the fact that I can help people in this position. That’s why we’re all here as human beings – to help other people.”

To make managing the dozens of housing units a bit easier, Henley set up liaisons to help manage separate living areas. These housing representatives help her by identifying defects, hazards and broken equipment.

She’s only one month into her tour, but Henley says she can’t complain. She hopes to pick up E-6 during her deployment to Joint Task Force Guantanamo. When asked what her creed for success is, she simply said, “Lead by example. Do what’s right at all times, no matter the cost.” ☆

“Lead by example. Do what’s right at all times, no matter the cost.”

– Sgt. Delicia Henley

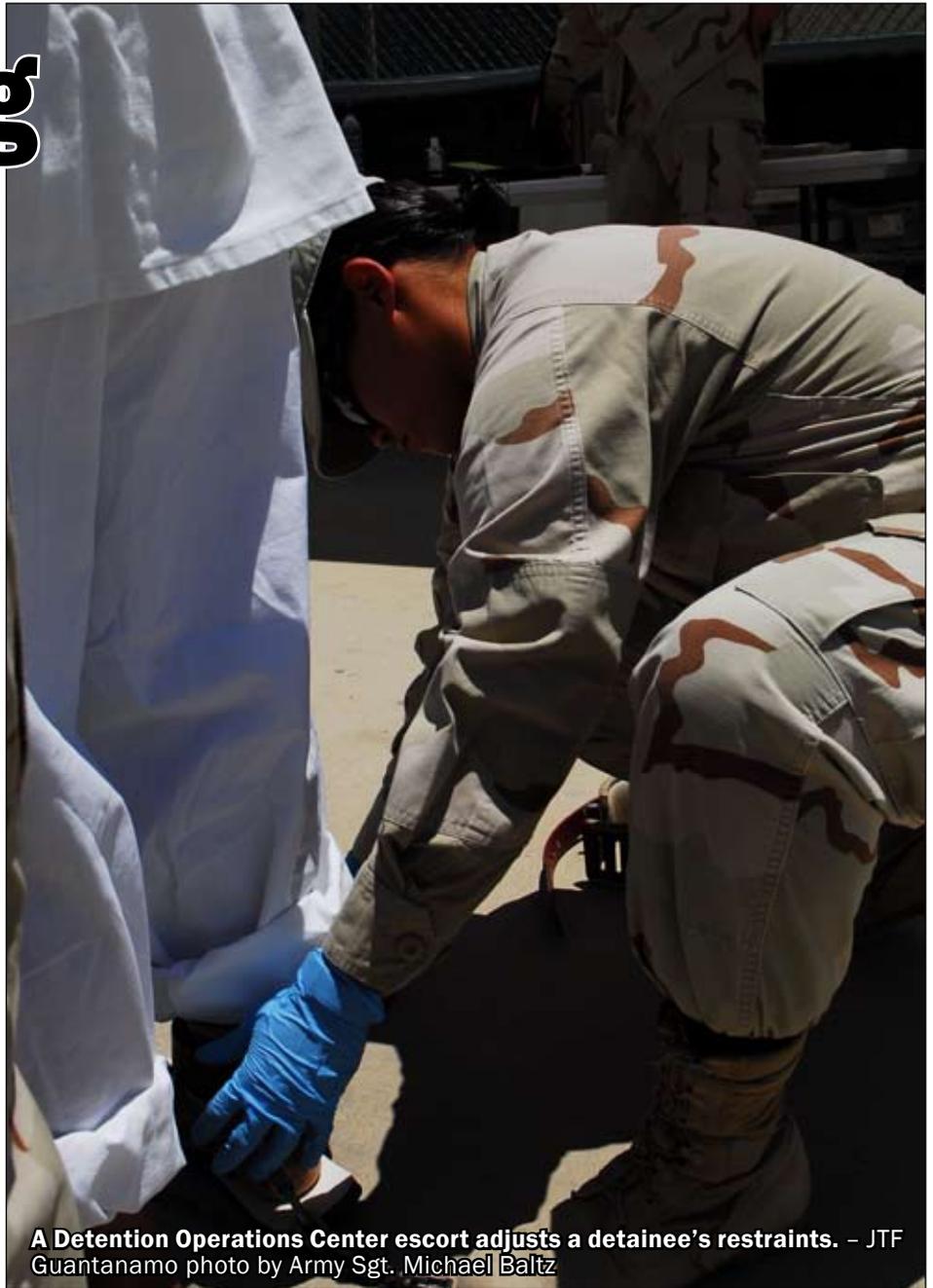
Escorting the way

**Navy Petty Officer 1st Class
Marcos Hernandez**

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

In the various camps at Joint Task Force Guantanamo, there seems to be a lot of movement going around at all times. Movement ranging from fast-paced construction sites to the continuous waves of personnel crossing the gates to start their shifts. The Detention Operation Center's escorts are all too familiar with the movements that go on in, to and from the camps. These escorts participate in operations throughout the camps. Whether it's moving detainees on a vehicle or by foot, the escorts always treat them with respect and in a humane fashion while always keeping safety a priority.

"The main mission is to move the detainees to the proper places on time without any unnecessary problems, in a safe and humane manner," states Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class Jacob Luker, a master-at-arms escort attached to the DOC. Between the day and night shift at the DOC, personnel work on a move list schedule. Their operations mainly include the day-to-day detainee disciplinary reviews, detainee movements, the escorting of delegates from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the escorting of civilian contractors. Detainees are escorted to their scheduled appointments that include



A Detention Operations Center escort adjusts a detainee's restraints. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Sgt. Michael Baltz



Two guards escort a detainee to a legal appointment. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Sgt. Michael Baltz

medical or legal appointments. They also have the opportunity to make phone calls home or meet with visiting delegates from the ICRC. When escorted, detainees are restrained as a safety precaution for both the detainee and the guards escorting.

Although the transporting and movement of individuals may sound like a small assignment, it could not be farther from the truth. This unusual assignment involves self-discipline, precision and professionalism.

"This assignment is very important. We are a big part of the big picture, including mobilizing detainees out of GTMO whenever that is scheduled to happen" states Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Jeffrey Knapp. "The DOC escorts' contribution to the overall JTF mission is indispensable. They are escorting the way to what lies ahead." ★



Service members from Joint Task Force Guantanamo's 525th Military Police Battalion cool down after a physical training session, Dec. 8, 2009. - JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Sgt. Emily Greene

Being fit to play

Army Spc. David McLean

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Joint Task Force Guantanamo Troopers work hard and play even harder. It is during those times that Troopers engage in sports and other physical activities that they have to be aware of how to keep their bodies in top condition without having to head to sick call with injuries. By taking the appropriate steps in advance, Troopers can limit negative consequences and enjoy the activities that draw them out to play.

"About a quarter of all the injuries that come into the Joint Trooper Clinic are sports related," said Army Staff Sgt. Nathan Brown, JTC non-commissioned officer-in-charge with the Joint Medical Group. "Preventing sport injuries can be initiated by preparing the body through conditioning, training and adapting to the intended sport. Knowing your limit is very important so you do not overextend what your body can do."

In addition to knowing a body's limit, having the proper gear and equipment before starting an activity is important. Morale, Welfare and Recreation fitness specialist Alec Culpepper said it starts with the feet.

"The right footwear is the most important piece of equipment," Culpepper said. "The shoes are the only thing that frequently comes into contact with something. The wrong size, fit or type of shoe can have a big impact."

Other equipment and gear may also be needed when participating in a sport. Helmets, pads or eye protection might be utilized to protect participants.



Having the proper protective equipment, like proper clothing, helmet and gloves for this cyclist, can prevent injuries and leave more time to enjoy the activity. - JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Sgt. Emily Greene

"Talk to whoever is running an event to see what equipment is needed," Culpepper said. "In flag football, shorts without pockets might be required to keep from dislocating fingers; a helmet, elbow and knee pads for skateboarding. Cement is definitely harder than the skull."

After protecting the outside of the body, making sure there is plenty of water inside is a priority. Proper hydration is crucial to

the body being able to function properly during physical activity.

"A large percentage of the body is water," Culpepper said. "Bone, muscle and connective tissue are all made of water. Loss of water can cause many problems for the body. Acclimatization to this hot area goes along with hydration, because the environment by itself can have a taxing effect on us."

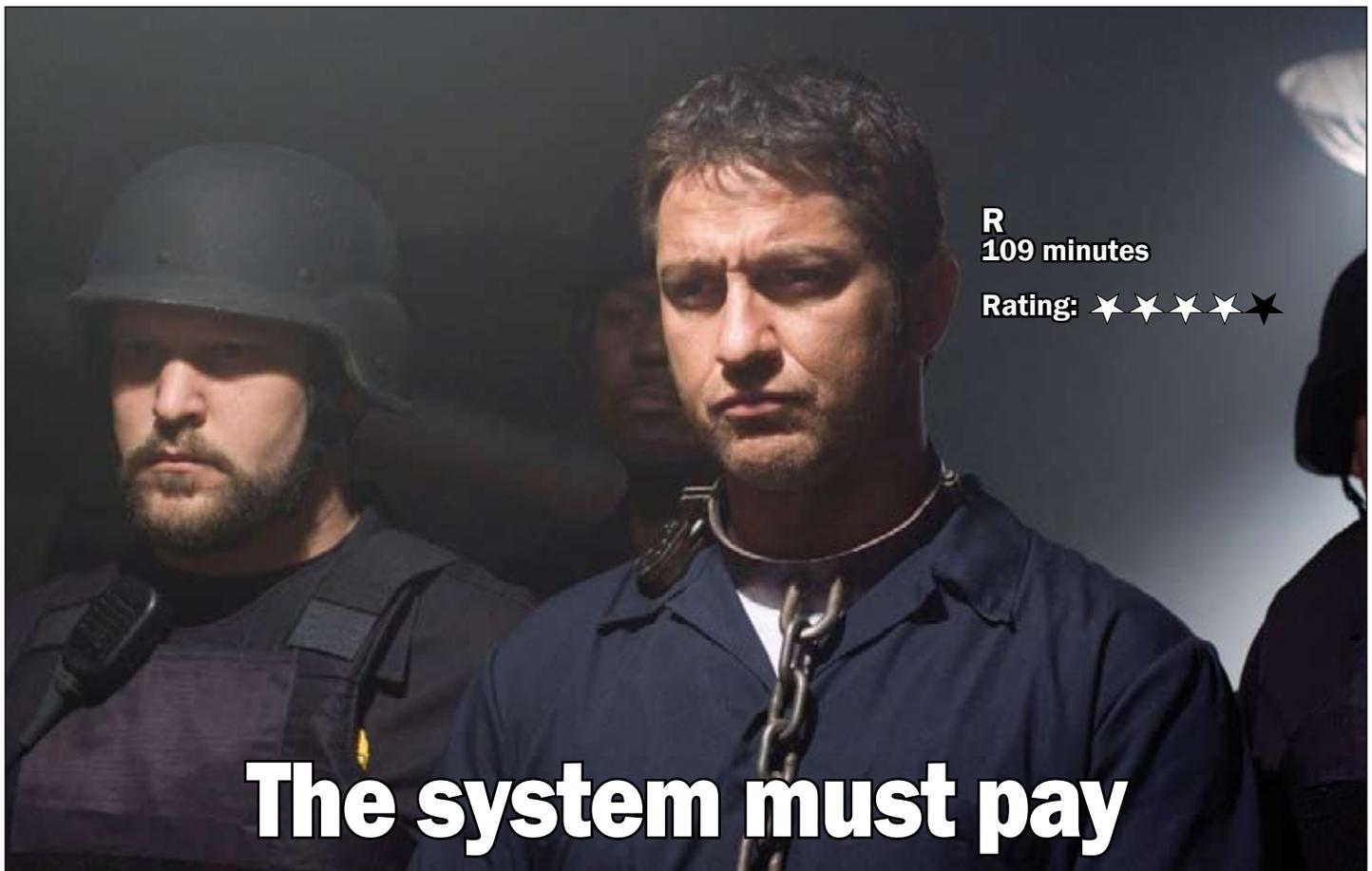
When a Trooper is conditioned, protected and hydrated, stretching before and cooling down after an activity can reduce the incidence of pulls and strains.

"You cannot properly perform an activity if the muscles are not ready," said Army Sgt. Lee McClure, JTC floor NCOIC with the JMG. "Stretching allows blood to flow into the muscles and properly warm them so they are ready to be used. Cooling down has the reverse effect, as it takes blood from the extremities and brings it back to the heart. Both are important to help the body overcome the shock of exercise."

With preparation, and some common sense, Troopers should be able to pursue their various sport conquests and activities with less chance of sustaining injuries. But if you do become injured, have enough sense to stop playing.

"You just hurt yourself worse and those you are playing with if you do not stop," Brown said. "Injuring yourself worse does not make you ready to fight, and hurts the overall readiness of our military branches."

To be in top shape and enjoy game time, remember to play it safe and prepare the proper way for not only yourself, but all the Troopers we live and work with. ★



R
109 minutes

Rating: ★★☆☆☆

The system must pay

Army Spc. David McLean

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Few films inspire and encourage an audience member to cheer for the bad guy, but “Law Abiding Citizen” makes the exception to the rule with a cleverly written and directed script about vengeance and the level some will go to enact it. Director F. Gary Gray teams with screenwriter Kurt Wimmer to produce a high-paced thriller that engages a gut-level response to true justice versus the justice system, and the players that match wit to ego.

As the film opens, Clyde Shelton (Gerard Butler) is tinkering with some circuit boards as his six-year-old daughter happily makes charm bracelets for mom and dad. A knock at the door interrupts the quiet family and a brutal home invasion follows as Shelton is bound, gagged, stabbed and helplessly watches his family raped and murdered. The two perpetrators are caught; and the decision to cut a deal with one is made by the assistant district attorney Nick Rice (Jamie Foxx), who worries more about a high conviction rate than justice being served for the victims.

A deal is struck. Shelton is beside himself at the deal and the outcome fuels the movie forward 10 years. The rapist-killer is free, the accomplice is about to face execution and it is all witnessed by Rice and his colleagues. Things go wrong during the lethal injection, and all order begins to break loose as Shelton puts himself at the

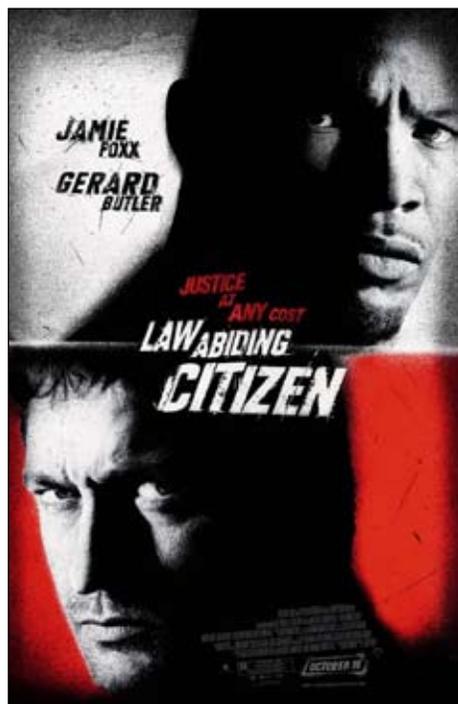
helm of executions in the name of justice and vengeance.

The rest of the film involves the highly-skilled and intelligent Shelton exacting revenge in a variety of ways against the agents of injustice which are led by Rice, who tries to thwart the plans of this apparent psycho killer. Butler plays Shelton very well as an emotional and intuitive antagonist. Given the fuel for his rage, Butler creates

a character that is well liked, even more so than his counterpart Rice. Foxx lacked much of the emotion needed to make his character believable as he trudged through lines and showed a very flat person in DA Rice. At times, it seems as though Fox did not care about making the audience believe he was right or stood on the proper side of the law.

The film’s setting in Philadelphia made it feel a bit more realistic. The city has been involved in corruption, scandal and underworld activity since it’s early years as the colonial capitol. Many of the backdrops are the city’s famous landmarks and locations, and a surprise to the film is current Mayor Michael Nutter performing in a cameo role. Despite the attention to detail and the cast giving a good showing overall, the film did have some major drawbacks.

As a fan of good stories, I would skip the last 15 minutes and simply dream of a better ending. The writing became very sloppy in exact opposite to the precise, planned actions of the characters. It seems like they just wanted the film to be over and forgot about the entire script they had previously written. The movie did feature some wonderful twists and complexities, but it was one-sided and left many holes for some of the characters. Overall, the movie was a wonderful departure from the norm in the tradition of “Seven” and “Memento,” but had an independent film company produced it, maybe the ending would have fit the rest of the movie. ☆



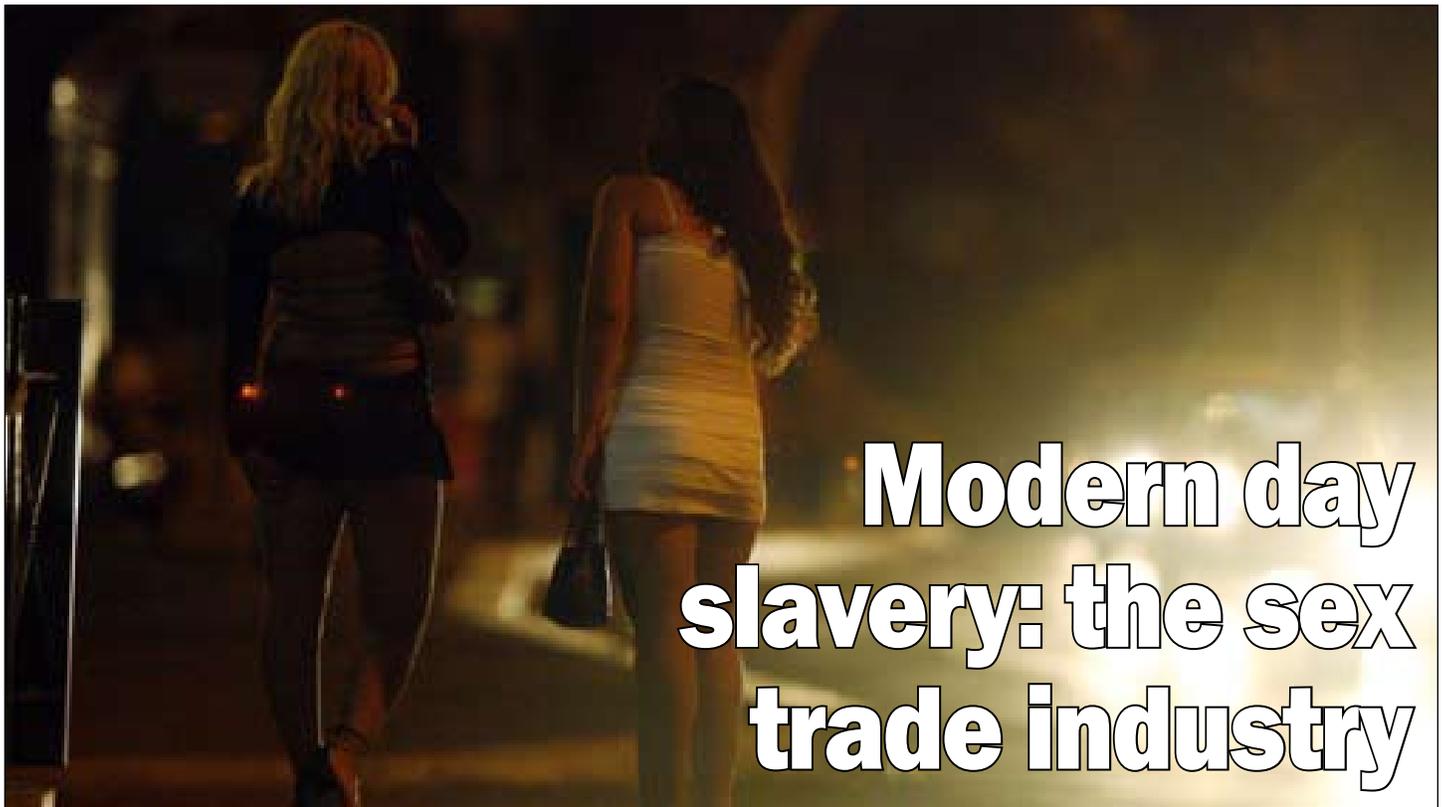
GETTING INTO THE SPIRIT

JTF Guantanamo photos by
Army Staff Sgt. Emily Russell and
Spc. Cody Black

Happy
Holidays

525th M

The 525th Military Police Battalion celebrated the holidays with a 5.25-kilometer fun run, dinner, a pie-in-the-face fundraiser, and a comedian to provide entertainment for the Soldiers. The pie-in-the-face fundraiser was the highlight of the evening, earning interest from Soldiers who pooled their money together to outbid one another and get a chance to put a whipped cream and chocolate pie in the face of their favorite leader. The money was raised to support future 525th events.



Modern day slavery: the sex trade industry

**Navy Petty Officer 1st Class
Maria Blanchard**
JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Human trafficking is a modern-day form of slavery. Men, women and children are trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation or forced labor in every country. All members of the U.S. armed services, civilian employees and civilian contractors are charged with aiding in the global fight against human trafficking.

Troopers at Joint Task Force Guantanamo should be aware of this problem if they encounter suspicious activities while traveling for the holidays or when dealing with persons with whom they might not be familiar.

The U.S. Department of State defines human trafficking as: the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision or obtaining of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act or for labor or service, through the use of force, fraud or coercion.

“We did not have a right to choose where we lived ... freedom of speech, or freedom of actions. The traffickers had keys to our apartment. They controlled all of our movement and travel. They watched us and listened when we called our parents. They didn’t let us make friends or tell anyone anything about ourselves. We couldn’t keep any of the money we earned. We couldn’t ask anyone for help,” explained Lena, a trafficking victim who was able to escape and eventually tell her story.

Lena was a college student in Eastern Europe who planned to spend her summer abroad; studying, working and traveling. She joined a study-abroad program and traveled to the United States where she was forced into the sex trade industry.

Many believe women and children are the only ones at risk for being trafficked because they only hear about the women and children trafficked into the sex trade industry. This is a dangerous myth. Men are susceptible to being trafficked into the forced labor industry.

In a 2007 interview, Kristina Kangaspunta, the chief of the Anti-Human Trafficking Unit for the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime said, “Human trafficking for forced labor might be a greater problem than the widely known problem of trafficking for sexual exploitation.”

Men, women and children are all subject to trafficking for forced

labor. Some may willingly travel to foreign shores believing there is a legitimate job waiting for them. Others may be kidnapped and held against their will.

Victims are often subjected to debt-bondage, believing they must repay transportation cost, and not realizing that these debts are not legally enforceable. The traffickers will hold all legal documents for ransom until the debt is repaid which prevents the victim from being able to leave or even prove who she or he is.

On Dec. 16, 2002, President George W. Bush signed a National Security Presidential Directive mandating a “zero tolerance” policy toward trafficking.

“There’s a special evil in the abuse and exploitation of the most innocent and vulnerable. The victims of sex trade see little of life before they see the very worst of life – an underground of brutality and lonely fear. Those who create these victims and profit from their suffering must be severely punished. Those who patronize this industry debase themselves and deepen the misery of others. And governments that tolerate this trade are tolerating a form of slavery,” former President George W. Bush told the U.N. General Assembly in September of 2003.

After drug dealing, human trafficking is tied with the illegal arms industry as the second largest criminal industry in the world today, and it is the fastest growing. Human trafficking is a supply and demand industry. Therefore, the best way to combat trafficking is to increase awareness and decrease the demand.

The National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC) has a national, toll-free hotline for the human trafficking field in the United States and is reached by calling 1-888-373-7888 or e-mailing NHTRC@PolarisProject.org. The NHTRC operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, every day of the year.

Approximately 600,000 to 800,000 victims annually are trafficked across international borders worldwide, and between 14,500 and 17,500 of those victims are trafficked into the U.S. according to the U.S. Department of State.

'Tis the season

**Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class
Sean Allen**

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

For many, Christmas is a time spent with family and friends, but for those unable to visit family during the holiday season, it can be a stressful time.

For Christian Troopers at Joint Task Force Guantanamo, knowing the true meaning of Christmas can help them celebrate this day despite being away from their family and friends. For them, understanding the true meaning of Christmas can be a great aid to their stress.

What is the true meaning of Christmas? For Christians, Christmas celebrates the birth of Christ.

“The Christmas spirit is still alive and well, but I feel compelled to remind everyone that the true Christmas story doesn’t include Santa Claus, Christmas trees or gifts,” said Army Capt. Eric Bey, the 525th Military Police Battalion chaplain. “But these three serve as powerful metaphors to the true, powerful Christmas story, as an example of how God almighty is the one who showers humanity with His gifts of love, mercy, grace, forgiveness and peace.”

Christians believe the birth of Jesus represents God impacting the world in a new way. It is hope, in the form of an infant child. It is a promise that God will always have a presence on Earth according to the Bible.

“Understanding and appreciating what God did for us in the form of delivering his son Jesus to the world helps us focus and avoid the stress associated with being away from family during the holidays,” said Air Force Lt. Col. William Ferrell, the JTF command chaplain. “Our thoughts affect our actions. Focusing on the real meaning of Christmas can help us with the burden of spending Christmas away from our families.”

Army Sgt. 1st Class Anthony Cardente, with the Rhode Island Army National Guard, celebrates Christmas in a different way. According to Cardente, you don’t have to celebrate only the Christian aspect to enjoy the holiday.

“It is a good, peaceful time of year,” Cardente said. “It is and has always been fun for the kids. I love seeing their faces when they see Christmas lights or Santa. I used to make reindeer tracks in the snow, to make them think Santa landed there.”

“It is also just a good time to spend with family,” Cardente continued. “It is a great feeling to wake up with presents under the tree with the ones you love.”

Giving gifts has become closely associated with the holiday. The tradition of giving is traced back to the gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh that were given to Christ by the three wise men. Early Dutch settlers were the first to introduce America to St. Nicholas, or Santa Claus, and from that time the custom of giving and receiving gifts has expanded. Today we give gifts for our own reasons, some to celebrate a Holy Day, others to let family and friends know we care. ☆

– JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Staff Sgt. Emily Russell

Secretary stresses holiday safety

**The Honorable
Robert Gates**
Secretary of Defense

Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates issued a holiday season message Nov. 24 giving thanks to the military men and women who put their lives on the line every day:

This time of year calls on Americans to reflect on and give thanks for the freedoms and prosperity we enjoy. Of course, we can only do so because of those who put their lives on the line every day: the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines who bear repeated deployments, hardships, and danger – without fail and without complaint.

Many have made the ultimate sacrifice. Our nation will always honor their memory. For the loved ones of the fallen, I offer my deepest sympathies and prayers for your loss. And, in the wake of the shootings at Fort Hood, know that I am committed to ensuring that our home bases are safe and secure.

I know the holiday season can be especially difficult for service members and their families, who may be separated from each other by thousands of miles. To the families of our men and women in uniform: know that the American people are indebted to you for the sacrifices of your husbands and wives, fathers and mothers, and sons and daughters.

This will be my third holiday season spent as Secretary of Defense. During these years nothing has impressed me as much

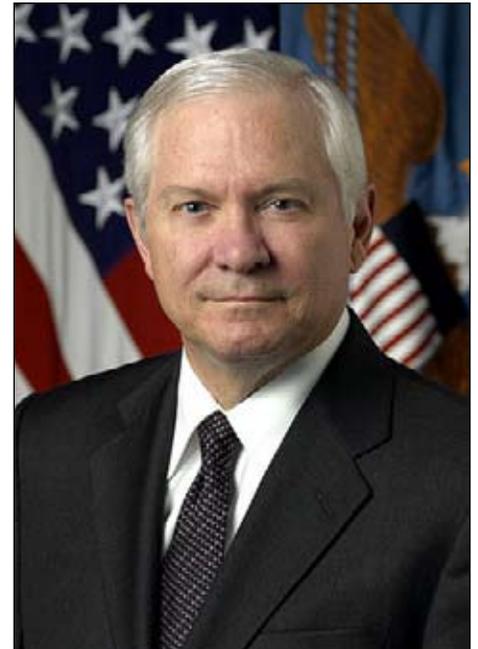
as the determination, resilience and good humor of those who defend our nation. This holiday season, along with “Happy Thanksgiving,” “Happy Hanukkah,” and “Merry Christmas,” I would add two words on behalf of millions of your countrymen: “Thank you.”

The Secretary also issued a message about safety during the holidays:

During the holidays – a time to celebrate and create joyous moments and memories that will last a lifetime – our desire for the continued safety and well-being of those who serve our nation takes special importance. To the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines stationed in harm’s way thousands of miles from their loved ones: we are ever grateful for your sacrifices, and we look forward to your safe return home.

For those of you able to spend this time with your families, I ask that we all take care to enjoy the holidays with safety in mind. Please drink responsibly at holiday parties in the coming weeks. Take every precaution to drive safely in adverse weather conditions. We work to protect ourselves in combat situations, and should sustain the same vigilance while at home.

In the 2008 holiday season, 19 of our colleagues lost their lives in more than 200 private motor vehicle accidents. While both numbers indicate a 20 percent decline compared to the previous year, even one casualty is too many. We can prevent these fatal accidents, and we must continue to



exercise caution.

This holiday season, we must remember our obligation to look out for one another. We owe our attentiveness and care to those with whom we share a bond of trust, and we cannot let falter our shared responsibility for their health and well-being.

I thank the families of our forces for sharing your loved ones to defend our country, and I admire our troops for their selflessness. With prayer for their success and safe return, I extend to all my best wishes for a happy holiday season. ✪

Boots on the Ground

by Army Spc. Christopher Vann

What is your fondest Christmas memory?

**Army Sgt.
Jordan Wheeler**



“Last Christmas, I went hunting with my dad.”

**Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class
Castonia Lee**



“In 1992, all my family made it home for Christmas.”

**Coast Guard Petty Officer
3rd Class James Latess**

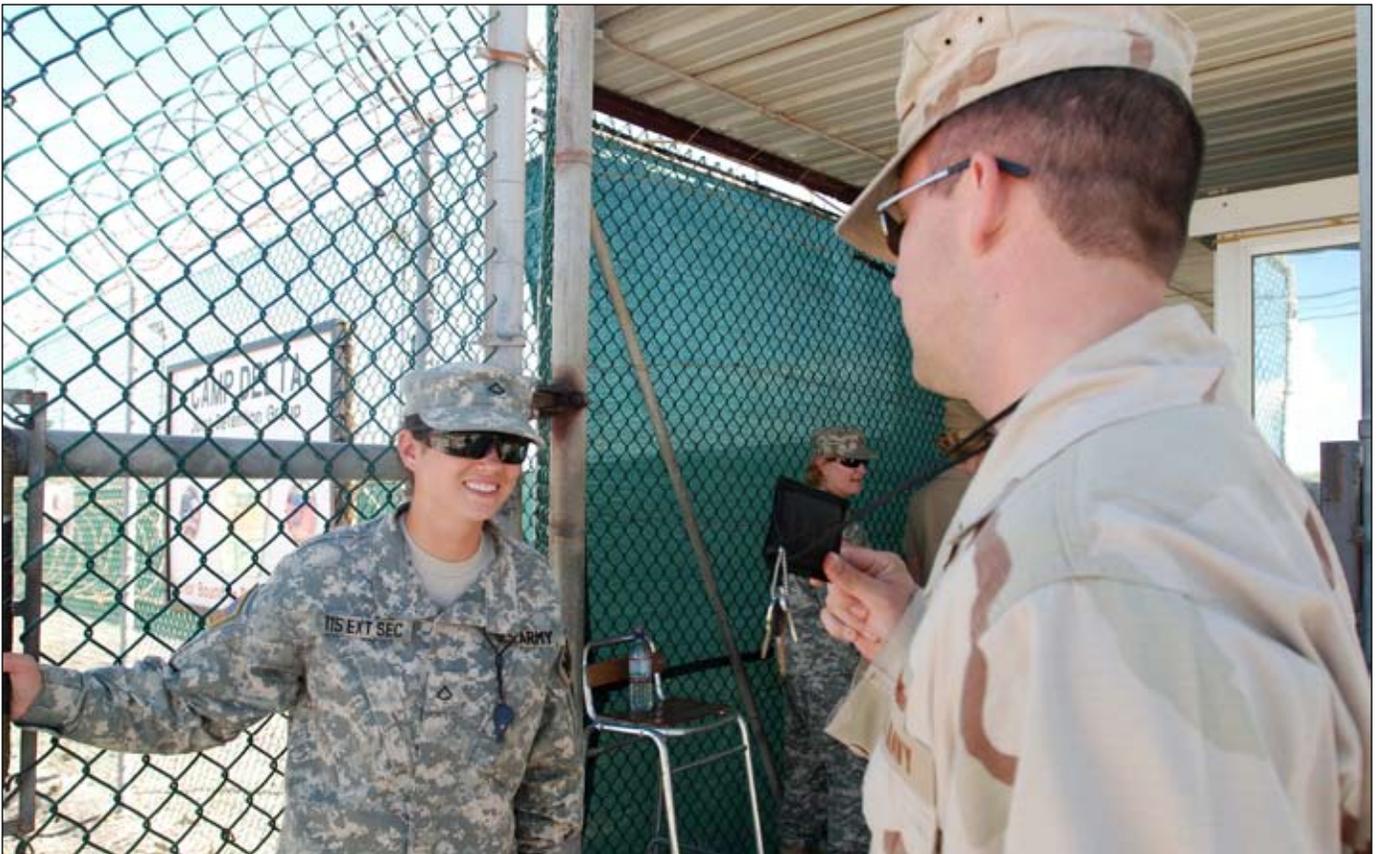


“I remember 1996 most because it was a white Christmas.”

**Army Sgt.
Rebeca Beltre**



“Last year, it was my daughter’s first Christmas.”



Can I see some ID?

A military policeman with Joint Task Force Guantanamo's 115th Military Police Company, checks credentials at a security checkpoint, Dec. 16. The 115th MP Co. is part of the Rhode Island Army National Guard, deployed here to provide external security at the JTF Guantanamo detention facilities. - JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Sgt. Emily Greene

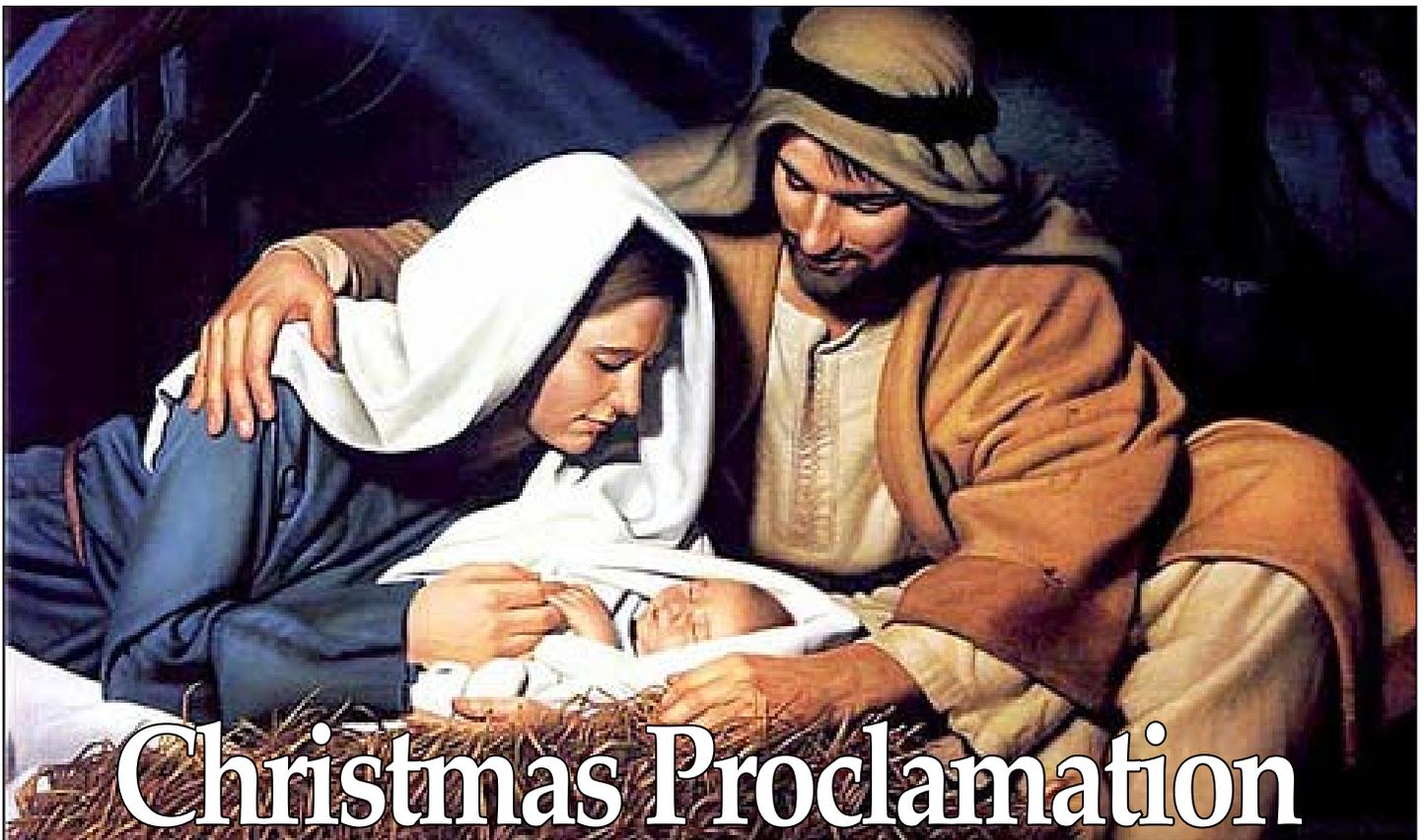
DONT DRINK & DRIVE

If you have been drinking and
need a ride home, call

84781/84913

Consequences of drinking:

- Killing someone else
- Losing your own life
- Imprisonment
- Living with guilt that you injured or caused an accident; depression
- Criminal records
- Legal costs
- Increased insurance costs



Christmas Proclamation

**Navy Lt. Cmdr.
Lee Hellwig**
NEGB Chaplain

Throughout the season prior to Christmas day, many Christians reflect on God's promises often spoken by the prophets in biblical literature, to send a savior to the people of the world who would be called Emmanuel, that is, God with us. In the fullness of time, many came to believe that those promises were fulfilled. With hearts full of joy they now look forward to Christmas day so they may commemorate the birth of that savior.

It is a tradition of my faith group to proclaim the history of the birth of the Savior at the first worship service of Christmas. This proclamation, known as the Proclamation of the Birth of Christ, comes from the Roman Martyrology, which is the official listing of the saints celebrated by the Roman Rite of the Catholic Church. It situates the birth of the Savior within the context of salvation history, making reference not only to biblical events, but also to historical events in the Greek and Roman worlds. The coming of a divine savior into the human world at Christmas, is seen as the summit of both sacred and secular history.

As a Catholic priest, I always enjoyed making the Proclamation of the Birth of Christ at the beginning of Christmas Midnight Mass and would like to share it here as a means to encourage the Christmas awe and joy that many of us feel as we strive to appreciate the full significance of the holiday and look forward to the celebration of Christmas this year. ★

Traditional Proclamation of the Birth of Christ

The twenty-fifth day of December.

In the five thousand one hundred and ninety-ninth year of the creation of the world
from the time when God in the beginning created the heavens and the earth;
the two thousand nine hundred and fifty-seventh year after the flood;
the two thousand and fifteenth year from the birth of Abraham;
the one thousand five hundred and tenth year from Moses and the going forth of the people of Israel from Egypt;
the one thousand and thirty-second year from David's being anointed king;
in the sixty-fifth week according to the prophecy of Daniel;
in the one hundred and ninety-fourth Olympiad;
the seven hundred and fifty-second year from the foundation of the city of Rome;
the forty second year of the reign of Octavian Augustus;
the whole world being at peace,
in the sixth age of the world,
Jesus Christ the eternal God and Son of the eternal Father, desiring to sanctify the world by his most merciful coming, being conceived by the Holy Spirit,
and nine months having passed since his conception, was born in Bethlehem of Judea of the Virgin Mary, being made flesh.
Today is the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the flesh.

GTMO Religious Services

Daily Catholic Mass

Mon. - Fri. 5:30 p.m.

Main Chapel

Vigil Mass

Saturday 5:00 p.m.

Main Chapel

Mass

Sunday 9:00 a.m.

Main Chapel

Daily Catholic Mass

Sun. - Fri. 6:30 a.m.

Troopers' Chapel

Protestant Worship

Sunday 9:00 a.m.

Troopers' Chapel

Islamic Service

Friday 1:15 p.m.

Room C

Jewish Service

Friday 7:00 p.m.

FMI call 2628

LORIMI Gospel

Sunday 1:00 p.m.

Room D

Seventh Day Adventist

Saturday 11:00 a.m.

Room B

Iglesia Ni Cristo

Sunday 5:30 a.m.

Room A

Pentecostal Gospel

Sunday 8:00 a.m.

Room D

LDS Gospel

Sunday 9:00 a.m.

Room A

Liturgical Service

Sunday 10:00 a.m.

Room B

General Protestant

Sunday 11:00 a.m.

Main Chapel

United Jamaica Fellowship

Sunday 11:00 a.m.

Building 1036

Gospel Service

Sunday 1:00 p.m.

Main Chapel

GTMO Bay Christian Fellowship

Sunday 6:00 p.m.

Main Chapel

GTMO Christian Fellowship

Sunday 8:00 p.m.

Main Chapel

Bible Study

Sunday 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday 7:00 p.m.

Troopers' Chapel

Making the holidays brighter

**Navy Petty Officer 1st Class
Edward Flynn**
JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

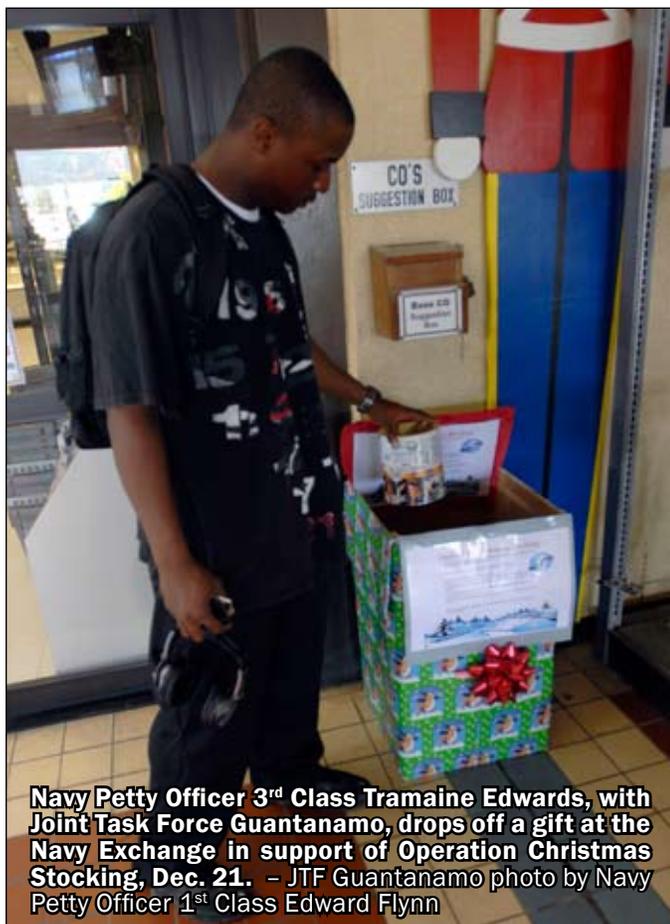
For many, Christmas remains the most celebrated and popular holiday of the year. It is a time to be thankful for all your blessings and to help those less fortunate in society. In this season of giving, Christmas is also a time of family reunions, Christmas caroling, attending church services, the giving and receiving of gifts and showing your appreciation and kindness to those important in your life. These are cherished, time honored traditions we think of fondly.

For those in the military and civilians away from their loved ones during this season, it can also be a time of sadness. Being away from family and friends can bring mixed emotions. However, that sadness or "homesickness" can turn to happiness through volunteering and helping out those in need. At Naval Station Guantanamo Bay and Joint Task Force Guantanamo, many charities and opportunities exist, not only during this season of giving, but throughout the year. Giving back to those less fortunate can put a smile on your face, as well as those that you help. Watching a child open a Christmas present is something to always remember.

Last year, through the hard work of Navy chaplains assigned to the base, Operation Christmas Stocking delivered 2,000 Christmas stockings to military members and international workers working on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. "It is our way to say thank you and we appreciate you," said Navy Lt. j.g. Douglas Holmes, a chaplain at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay. "This project lifts morale and brings cheer into the work stations."



Navy Lt. j.g. Douglas Holmes, a chaplain at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, prepares Christmas stocking that will be distributed to military members working on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. - JTF Guantanamo photo by Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Edward Flynn



Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class Tramaine Edwards, with Joint Task Force Guantanamo, drops off a gift at the Navy Exchange in support of Operation Christmas Stocking, Dec. 21. - JTF Guantanamo photo by Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Edward Flynn

Items that were collected and distributed last year included international phone cards, non-perishable food items, toiletries, personal notes and cards of encouragement. This project is also operating this year with a goal to help as many people (and families) as possible. This ministry project is in its 10th year and a perfect way to say thank you and to support our neighbors and their families on the island.

"In this season of giving, these presents bring a little cheer, a smile and happiness on this day," said Army Capt. Eric Bey, chaplain of the 525 Military Police Battalion. "It has a positive impact and can lift the spirits and morale of those receiving a gift."

Bey is also a volunteer and will work with many others distributing stockings throughout the base and at Joint Task Force Guantanamo.

Many other events take place during Christmas and throughout the year to help those not as fortunate. Other churches, youth groups and military and civic organizations also provide outstanding support to military families, island residents and their families as well. As we begin a new year in a few weeks, consider the many available opportunities offered throughout the base to volunteer or contribute to making this an even better community.

Regardless of negative news on television, the Internet and newspapers, some great things are happening here on this island and it is exciting to be part of it. The recent Special Olympics Torch Run is just one of many special events that take place throughout Naval Station Guantanamo Bay and Joint Task Force Guantanamo. What a great way to spend Christmas - helping people and putting a smile on someone's face.

For additional information about Operation Christmas Stocking or upcoming volunteer opportunities during the holiday season, please contact the naval station chaplains' office at ext. 2323. ★



Army Capt. Todd French, a veterinarian and Army Sgt. Ardicio Galvao, a veterinarian assistant with the vet clinic at U.S. Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, do a general health check on a cat, Dec. 21. - JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Sgt. Emily Greene

Around the

JTF



Coast Guard Petty Officer 2nd Class Roxana Guerrero, a port securityman with Maritime Safety and Security Team 91103, repairs a patrol boat, Dec. 21. - JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Spc. Cody Black



Coast Guard Petty Officers 3rd Class Steven Lyons and Fernando Olvera, port securitymen with Maritime Safety and Security Team 91103, perform maintenance on .50-caliber machine gun at the boathouse, Dec. 18. - JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Spc. Cody Black

