

15 Minutes of Fame...

with Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Paul K. Buie

JTF-GTMO supply

The anchor of GTMO

Interview by
Spc. Michelle M. Scsepko
The Wire

Q: Ah, Petty Officer 1st Class Paul K. Buie...boy, have you been here a long time!
A: That's not funny.

Q: Maybe not. But it made me smile. Anyway, welcome to your 15 minutes of fame. Are you ready?

A: I'm ready, as long as you promise not to ask me any silly, ridiculous, or insane questions.

Q: I will do my best. I give you my word. Okay, how long have you been here?

A: Too long! About-nine months, maybe more, I have lost track.

Q: All right, that question did not make you a happy camper. What do you do here on your spare time?

A: I have developed a relationship with... cold beverages.

Q: Sounds like you've been relaxing on your free time.

A: Well, I go fishing too. I try to stick to myself and avoid many "Army things."

Q: Now I'm offended. But, I'll let it slide just this time. So, have you learned anything while doing time here in GTMO?

A: I learned to like my roommates.

Q: Sometimes that can be challenging. Have you seen anything particularly strange or funny since you've been here?

A: Strange or funny... hmm, how's this? There ain't nothing strange nor funny about GTMO, that's for sure. We are a part of a serious mission here.

Q: Gotcha. How would you describe Windward Loop?

A: Windward Loop is a circle full of ... hard-working troops.

Q: What do you miss most about home?
A: I miss the house I am halfway done building, and I miss living with kids who actually have some sense.

Q: Kids, Buie? I never knew. How would you describe your children?

A: Educated and sane.

Q: We definitely do have lots of sunshine. Do you have a nickname?

A: Yes. Seems as though most folks who know me call me Paul Billy.

Q: And why is that?

A: It is probably because of my nice southern drawl.

Q: Have you learned anything about people since you've arrived?

A: I learned that people are all unique, and different, and have their own problems.

Q: Have you made any good friends since you arrived here?

A: I have made a few. But, I especially enjoy the conversations I have at the "smoke shack" with my buddies Shrimp and Stick.

Q: Shrimp and Stick. I can't say I have ever heard of them.

A: Well then, you haven't heard the truth.

Q: I bet you're a man of phrases, have you learned or do you use and any phrases around these parts?

A: Well I picked up "don't let the mop flop" down here. There's always "hurry up and wait." And I told my boys when I gave them their guns, if they mess up "give your hearts to God because your butt is mine."

Q: Has anyone ever told you that you are a very blunt man?

A: I can neither confirm nor deny.

Q: Well, Buie, it has been interesting. I wish more of this interview was printable.

A: You want the truth? You can't handle the truth.

Q: And unfortunately, GTMO can't handle it either.

A: And that's just too darn bad.



Photo by Spc. Frank N. Pellegrini
Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Paul K. Buie, JTF-GTMO supply, holding down the fort.



Friday,
November 22, 2002
Volume 2, Issue 24

Goings and comings...

'Tis the season for rotation as units across GTMO get ready to head home for the holidays

Story by
Spc. Frank N. Pellegrini
The Wire

It's that time again. The six months after six months of this Caribbean corner of the War on Terror are coming due, and another crew of the reservists and National Guardsmen who are the blood, guts, sweat and tears of this detention operation are getting ready, over the next handful of weeks, to go home. GTMO has been in love with transitions lately, from JTF-160 and JTF-170 to JTF-GTMO, from Gen. Baccus and Gen. Dunlavey to Gen. Miller; but this is the one that matters to a soldier or sailor or Marine or Coast Guardsman. This is the one that changes his life, or rather changes it back; this is the one when a troop takes the ferry to Leeward and never return.

This is GTMO's own "Circle of Life." The 342nd MPs, after more than their half-year share of flying detainees in and guarding them in Camp Delta between flights, took their own plane home to Ohio on Tuesday and passed their mission on to the 984th out of Ft. Carson, Colorado. Next week the 239th ends their own year in active-duty boots (before GTMO, it was six months holding down



Photo by Spc. Chris S. Pisano
A sight for sore eyes: Members of the 240th MP Co. out of Puerto Rico arrive last week at McCalla Hanger — which means that the 114th MPs can now be assured that their passage home to Mississippi is imminent.

Fort Polk) and beats it back to the Bayou, home in time for a Thanksgiving *turduckin*. The 43rd MP Brigade, who came down from Rhode Island in May to be the JTF's supporting staff umbrella, will turn over the shop to their replacements in a few short weeks. Even "The Wire" will change hands

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A look inside...



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Message from the Command Sergeant Major

Next week, we as Americans will have a few moments to forget our worries and give thanks for the blessings we have. Thursday, Nov. 28, Americans around the world will celebrate Thanksgiving.

This year, we in JTF-GTMO have particular reason to give thanks, partly because we are active participants in the War on Terrorism and partly because we have seen first-hand the extremes to which certain people will go to take American lives and bring destruction to our nation.

Most men and women here at Guantanamo Bay are away from their immediate families for this holiday, and I encourage you to contact them this week and let them know that you're participating in a mission that is vital to the security of our nation and of the world.

This is also an opportunity to consider that you will spend this holiday with outstanding men and women, all who have volunteered to



JTF-GTMO Command Sgt. Maj. Anthony D. Clayton

protect our nation and its citizens from those who would do us harm. Cherish this holiday and your unique location and circumstances.

Thoughts of home are on the minds of many of the JTF members as they are about to rotate back to their home units stateside. It is essential that you continue to focus on doing your jobs, and not get sidetracked by thoughts

of home until you arrive there. The continued success of the mission, your safety and your buddies' safety, depend on your focusing on the items that have made this mission so successful to date: mission focus, professionalism, and vigilance.

And as the replacement units arrive, share with them those things that you learned about your job — set them up for success. The key to a successful transition is a thoroughly planned and executed handover of mission by each member of the task force.

To those newly arrived JTF members, welcome. You are now active participants on the War on Terrorism. Learn what you can from the person you are replacing, perform your duties to your utmost potential, always be professional, and remember to keep vigilant, alert and safe.

Happy Thanksgiving, and may God bless you all.

OPSEC Corner

When individual troops assigned to the JTF arrive at GTMO, they receive a short OPSEC briefing at McCalla Hangar. If their unit flies into GTMO, they receive a full morning of extensive indoctrination briefings within the first two days they arrive. The morning of the briefings is also known as "death by Power-Point." Among the slew of briefings is the OPSEC brief.

Why is OPSEC so important? With the world open to information via television, the Internet, radio, etc., it is easy to think: "who cares what I say, everyone knows what's going on here at GTMO." That statement is a careless distortion of the truth. The answer to that statement is "No, everyone does NOT know what's going on here at GTMO."

First and foremost, OPSEC is important because it saves lives. It's that simple. We are at war. The enemy has proven their capability to murder thousands of innocent men,

women, and children. They killed civilians in New York City in 1993 and 2001. They attacked the Pentagon. They bombed a nightclub in Bali last month with the intent of specifically killing Americans. Don't think for a minute that GTMO's detention operation is not on their list.

OPSEC is important because the commanding general has made it important. It is everyone's duty to practice proper OPSEC procedures and advise others when they are giving out too much information. Remember, this base is located in a communist country. Our unclassified emails and non-secure phone calls are being intercepted or recorded. Eventually, important information ends up in the hands of our enemy. Innocent comments about arriving units or key personnel give one piece of the GTMO puzzle to the enemy. Eventually, by piecing together hundreds of bits of information gleaned from emails and phone calls, the enemy

can know almost everything needed to put lives at risk. That's why OPSEC is important.

When troops leave the island they must remain cognizant that what they say "back home" could still jeopardize the lives of troops at GTMO, especially when giving interviews to the local media. Don't think for a minute that our enemy won't be monitoring newspapers (via the Internet), especially in the areas where National Guard and Reserve units who have been deployed here are stationed.

Remember, we are at war. Our enemies want to learn as much as possible about our operations so they can devise a plan to strike GTMO, no matter how long it takes. Our enemies hate us. Our enemies murder innocent, unarmed civilians. Our enemies want to kill American troops. Any questions?

Have a great OPSEC day!

— Mr. OPSEC

Thanksgiving MWR Information

Sunday, November 24th

6 p.m., The 2002 Turkey Shoot, Marblehead Lanes.

Wednesday, November 27th

Noon, MWR Turkey Trot Fun Run, G.J. Denich Gymnasium.
6 p.m., Turkey Swim, Windjammer Pool.

Thursday, November 28th

Noon to 5 p.m., Thanksgiving Pot Luck Dinner, W.T. Sampson Elementary School.

Saturday, November 30th

6 p.m., The 2002 Electric Light Holiday Parade, LCN Parking Lot.

Fleet and Family Support Center Classes

Parent Education, November 25th, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Fleet and Family Support Center Training Room.

Resume Writing, November 27th, 5-7:30 p.m., Fleet and Family Support Center Training Room.

CSB/REDUX and TSP information, November 27th, 5 p.m.-7:30 p.m., Fleet and Family Support Center Conference Room.

Checking Account Management, December 5th, 9-10 a.m., Fleet and Family Support Center Training Room.

Interested? Please call x4141 to have your name added to the roster.

JTF-GTMO Command

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Deputy Commander:

Navy Capt. Robert A. Buehn

Public Affairs Officer:

Air Force Lt. Col. Eduardo Villavicencio

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Sports

Rude 'Surprises' for GTMO-160

Story and photo by
Spc. Jose A. Martinez
The Wire

Team Surprises topped GTMO-160 on the volleyball court Tuesday night at the G. J. Denich gym in two sets, 25-16 and 25-23.

Team Surprises improved their standings and their playoff chances with a record of 4-2 with two games left in the regular season. The win over GTMO-160 (5-2) could be vital in the upcoming playoff race.

The playoffs start November 29, and the top six teams in the standings will play for the volleyball championship.

Despite being named for a defunct entity, GTMO-160 was confident coming into the match. They were a game out of first place, behind the youngsters from W. T. Sampson.

Team GTMO-160 played hard in the opening minutes of the contest, and took a five-point lead to start the first set.

The score was 6-1 when Team Surprises started making their move. They scored three points to climb back into the set. Both teams scored two points each. It was now 8-6.

Then Army Spc. Ron Coen inspired his team by playing aggressively and scoring four points to help his team take a 10-9 lead.

GTMO-160 tied it up at 10, but Team Surprises would eventually pull away with the play of their dynamic duo of Coen and Army Sgt. Matthew Leasau.

The pair carried the team physically and emotionally, scoring 27 points between them in the game.

A helpless GTMO-160 didn't have an answer. They fell behind too many points and couldn't recover. Surprises took the set, 25-16.

The second set was much closer. With their backs to the wall, GTMO-160 fought to eke out a win and keep pace with W. T. Sampson.

Team Surprises ran out an early 5-2 lead in



Army Spc. Ron Coen gets up above the net and blocks a spike from Army Warrant Officer Pete J. Turner

the second set, but GTMO wouldn't stay down. They eventually would tie the set at 8.

Yet whenever GTMO-160 would come back from behind, it seemed Leasau and Coen were the proverbial poison.

True to form, Coen scored five points to jump back on top of GTMO-160 by 13-8.

It was like Sisyphus climbing his mountain for GTMO-160; whenever they would get close, Team Surprises would pull away.

But GTMO-160 had that pit bull mentality. They wouldn't give up fighting.

As these two teams battled to the end, they found themselves tied one more time, 23-23.

Now it was crunch time. Surprises wanted to wrap up the set and go home but GTMO-

160 had other plans. They wanted to take this match to a third set.

But Leasau would have none of that. He scored the final point, sealing the win in dramatic fashion by spiking the ball with authority and killing GTMO-160's chances.

"They put up a good fight, but we were able to pull out the win," said Leasau.

With the playoffs starting soon, Team Surprises feel they need to get even better.

"We need to practice more and communicate better on the court. We are a finesse team and that is what keeps us on top," said Coen.

With Leasau and Coen playing above the net, it'll be no shock if Team Surprises goes far in the tournament bracket.



Photo by Spc. Frank N. Pellegrini

The proud female MPs members of the Poca Women's Soccer Team.

Imagine waking up every morning at 0200, prying your lifeless body from bed and running five miles in the pre-dawn dark. Then working all day in the scorching heat of Camp Delta, coming tired, smelly and dead on your feet. All you want to do is shower and go to sleep. Would you want to then slog across the Camp America gravel, get on a bus and go play soccer?

We all did. We formed the Poca (Prisoners of Camp America) Women's Soccer Team, a combined team of female MPs from the 342nd MP Company and the 571st MP Company, and set out to play our Delta blues away on the soccer field.

The start of the season was rough going. Many people didn't know their sweeper from their striker. But with the help of our coach and our more experienced players, we started to come together. We played hard games with hard defense and improved in every match. We even won a few, and made the playoffs.

And we wouldn't have traded it for the world.

— Spc. Blair Winner, 342nd MP Co.

Bingo fever at the Windjammer

Story and photos by Army Master Sgt. Enid Ramos-Mandell
The Wire



Edwin Flores, one of the bingo callers at the Windjammer, does what he does best, calling numbers.

The military sanctions Bingo as acceptable off-duty fun, not gambling, and it's a good thing too, because those who test their luck playing Bingo on Tuesday and Sunday nights at the Windjammer can win up to \$5,000 just by buying the right card and shouting the name of the game.

Bingo dates back to the year 1530, a direct descendant of the Italian game Lo Giuco de Lotto d'Italia. It was introduced as "Beano" in New York. Edwin S. Lowe renamed the game after hearing an overexcited winner accidentally yell "BINGO!" The name



"I want to win the jackpot!" said Sgt. Romaina Fusaro, JTF-GTMO, J1.

ment to arrive now. The games also provide some entertainment for the community, as well as a chance to meet different people." As in any game, there are rules one has to play by. The most important one: hold on to your valid receipt and you must have at least one regular bingo pack to play the special games. Bingo is played on a card with 24 different numbers and a "free space" out of 75 possible numbers. First time player William Hayes, an employee here in Guantanamo Bay, said, "I come because it gives me something to do, otherwise I'd be sleeping. If I can win some money, I'd be happy."

Edwin Flores, the man at the big board, works as a part-time employee for MWR on bingo nights, calling the games and certifying the winners. "We do this for morale and welfare, we want people to come and be satisfied, that's our goal." Employees are not stuck, and the game spread quickly; today it is played all over the world with more than \$90 million weekly going into this pastime in North America alone.

At the Windjammer, Bingo night begins with an "early bird" session. Customers start showing up at 6 p.m. to set up for the 6:30 p.m. game. Everyone has their own special way of playing, whether with scotch tape, glue pens, special carriers and other lucky charms. The list goes on and on, and the dollars keep flowing in. "The money made goes right back into new equipment," said Mr. Craig Basil, director for the MWR. "We're waiting for new bingo equip-

ment to arrive now. The games also provide some entertainment for the community, as well as a chance to meet different people."

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"We do this for morale and welfare, we want people to come and be satisfied, that's our goal." Employees are not

allowed to play, he added. Sometimes there are crowds of up to 210, the limit of the establishment. Especially when the treasure chest, or as others call it jackpot prize, is high and the possibility of winning a few thousand dollars instead of a few hundred suddenly becomes very real. At the Windjammer, the jackpot prizes start at \$1,300 and run all the way up to \$5,000. And blood pressures rise along with the stakes.

"When I need one number to win, I get an adrenaline rush," said regular player Navy MA1 Rafael Gonzalez with Port Security. "My heart starts beating a little faster."

His wife Hegcely, though, is there for the company: his. "We come here as a couple," she said. "It's one of the few things to do here at GTMO. It's good spending quality time together, and it's always entertaining."

For any questions on this game, you can call MWR's Bingo manager Larry Zerrick at x2304.



MA1 Rafael Gonzalez and wife, Hegcely, like spending quality time together at the Windjammer's Bingo night.

This Week

The 2nd JTF-GTMO Special Social Event will be held at Windmill Beach from noon to 5 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 30. For more information call Capt. Gornly x5249 or Maj. Buchanan at x5255.

* Daily free daytime & evening lessons are available for sailing, kayaking, and motor boating at Pelican Pete's Marina, by appointment only.

* Aerobics Classes, Marine Hill Gym, Mon., Wed., and Fri., 6 a.m. - 7 a.m., 8:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m., and 5:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.; Tues. and Thurs. 8:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m., 5:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

* Tae-Kwon Do, Marine Hill Gym, Mon., Wed., and Fri., 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m., and 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. (one hour classes); Tues. and Thurs. 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

* 1-on-1 Spinning Classes, G.J. Denich Gym, Mon.-Thurs., 6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

* Yoga Classes, Tues. - Thurs. 5:15 p.m. - 6:15 p.m., G.J. Denich Gym/Yoga Center.

* Bowling, Marblehead Lanes, Mon. - Fri., 11 a.m. - Midnight.

* Pool Hours: **Marine Hill Pool:** Open Swim, 6 a.m. - 6 p.m., daily; **Windjammer Pool:** Lap Swim, 6 a.m. - 8 a.m., Mon. - Sat., Open Swim, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. daily; **Deer Point Pool:** Open Swim, 11 a.m. - 7 p.m., Mon. - Fri., 10 a.m. - 6 p.m., Sat. & Sun.

Friday, November 22nd

11 a.m. - 1 p.m., Free bowling, Marblehead Bowling Lanes.
7 p.m. - Midnight, Friday Extreme Bowling, Marblehead Lanes.

Saturday, November 23rd

6 a.m. The GTMO Extreme Adventure Race II, MWR Sailing Center.
7 a.m. to 2 p.m., Dawn Fishing Trip, Pelican Pete's Marina.
8 a.m. to noon, MWR Craft Fair, Windjammer.
8 p.m., Karaoke, Rick's Lounge.

Sunday, November 24th

6 p.m., The 2002 Turkey Shoot, Marblehead Lanes
6:30 p.m., Bingo, Windjammer Club.

Monday, November 25th

8 a.m. - Noon, Adult Ceramic Classes, Ceramic Shop.
6 p.m. - 8 p.m., Nativity Painting Social, Ceramic Shop.

Tuesday, November 26th

6:30 p.m., Bingo, Windjammer Club.
7 p.m., Nine Ball Pool Tournament, Main CBQ Liberty Recreation Center.

Wednesday, November 27th

9-11 a.m., Adult Adv. Pottery Classes, Ceramics Shop.
Noon, MWR Turkey Trot Fun Run, Denich Gym.
6 p.m., Turkey Swim, Windjammer Pool.
8 p.m., Karaoke, Windjammer Club.

Thursday, November 28th

11 a.m. - Midnight, Bowling, Marblehead Lanes.
Noon-5 p.m., Thanksgiving Pot Luck Dinner, WT Sampson Elementary School.
6 p.m., Bowling League, Marblehead Lanes.

Profession of the Week

"Lawn ninjas"

Compiled by Spc. Joseph A. Morris, Spc. Chris S. Pisano, and Spc. Frank N. Pellegrini
The Wire

No, they're not really ninjas — that's just a nickname given to these Kvaerner groundskeepers by some folks whose yards they keep trimmed and looking sharp. But they might as well be ninjas, for the focus and endurance needed to work 14-hour days in the hot GTMO sun surely takes a disciplined mind and body worthy of any martial-arts master. No matter how they do it, they do it well, keeping the weeds, trees and shrubs in check and at bay, day in and day out, all through this endless summer.



Dwayan Johnson (left) and Rubert Elliston Jr. expertly whack weeds throughout the base on their ongoing mission to keep the grounds in top-notch condition.



Emanlahatz mans a high-speed lawn mower pulled by an oversized tractor across the rugged terrain during his effort to make the land near Nob Hill nice.



James Bryden

"I do enjoy this type of work because I like being outside in the open air. And, I'm trying to save some money."



Emanlahatz

"I like the job. When I get to use the tractor, it's good stuff. It's a hard day's work, but it pays the bills."



Delton Grant

"It's not so nice, but I'm willing to do it. I have no other choice, and I'm happy to be collecting a check."



Duain Campbell

"This is a very tough and heated job with the sun, but we're Jamaicans, so we're naturally used to it. And I like it."



Photo by Spc. Chris S. Pisano

Welcome to GTMO, General

JTF-GTMO commander Maj. Gen. Geoffrey D. Miller introduces himself to the GTMO community at a town-hall meeting held last Thursday night at the Downtown Lyceum. Miller greeted those in attendance and took questions, discussing a variety of concerns, including JTF-GTMO's role in the larger Naval Base community and how life might be different in the future with a permanent-party commander in charge of the detention operation here. Miller plans to attend more town-hall meetings as the need arises.



FINAL FRUSTRATION

by Spc. Joseph A. Morris

I can see clear skies from out of blue eyes while trying to compromise through all the lies which have me questioning if my tries are wise.

*I make all decisions
As if they're do or dies.
Look through life's disguise*

*And recognize,
WHAT'S REAL.
If it ain't what you deserve,
DON'T DEAL.*

*If things hurt,
DON'T SQUEAL.
When life gets soft,
Stay strong like steel.*

*STAY IN CHECK
I'm not playing with a full deck,
ARE YOU?
Jack up once, and you'll be through.
Don't be upset*

*About the pain you have felt;
It's not your fault
This was the hand you were dealt.
Thoughts fly through the mind,
LET THEM FLOW,
Leave none behind.*

Movie Schedule

DOWNTOWN LYCEUM

Friday, November 22

7 p.m. Santa Clause 2, G - 98 min
9 p.m. The Tuxedo, PG13 - 96 min

Saturday, November 23

7 p.m. Swim Fan, PG13 - 85 min
9 p.m. Trapped, R - 106 min

Sunday, November 24

7 p.m. Ballistic: Ecks vs. Sever, R - 91 min

Monday, November 25

7 p.m. The Four Feathers, PG - 130 min

Tuesday, November 26

7 p.m. The Tuxedo, PG13 - 96 min

Wednesday, November 27

7 p.m. Santa Claus 2, G - 98 min

Thursday, November 28

7 p.m. The Banger Sisters, 97 min

CAMP BULKELEY

Friday, November 22

8 p.m. American Pie 2, R - 105 min
10 p.m. Courage Under Fire, R - 116 min

Saturday, November 23

8 p.m. The Mummy Returns, PG13, 125 min
10 p.m. The Last Castle, R - 120 min

Sunday, November 24

8, 10 p.m. Patriot Games, R - 117 min

Monday, November 25

8 p.m. Rat Race, PG13, 112 min

Tuesday, November 26

8 p.m. The Last Detail, R - 103 min

Wednesday, November 27

8 p.m. Showtime, PG13, R - 95 min

Thursday, November 28

8, 10 p.m. The Fast and the Furious, PG13 - 107 min

Crossword Puzzle

Across

- 1 Drunkard
- 4 Pencil end
- 8 Writings
- 12 Government agency
- 13 List of meals
- 14 Unnaturalized
- 16 Flammable liquid
- 18 Base runner, sometimes
- 20 Entomb
- 21 Came out of sleep
- 23 Morn
- 24 Often poetically
- 25 Mutilate
- 26 Greek stringed instrument
- 27 Coin machine
- 29 President's mom
- 32 Roman three
- 33 Sticky goop
- 34 Amend
- 38 A cavalryman
- 40 Pain reliever
- 41 Offal

Down

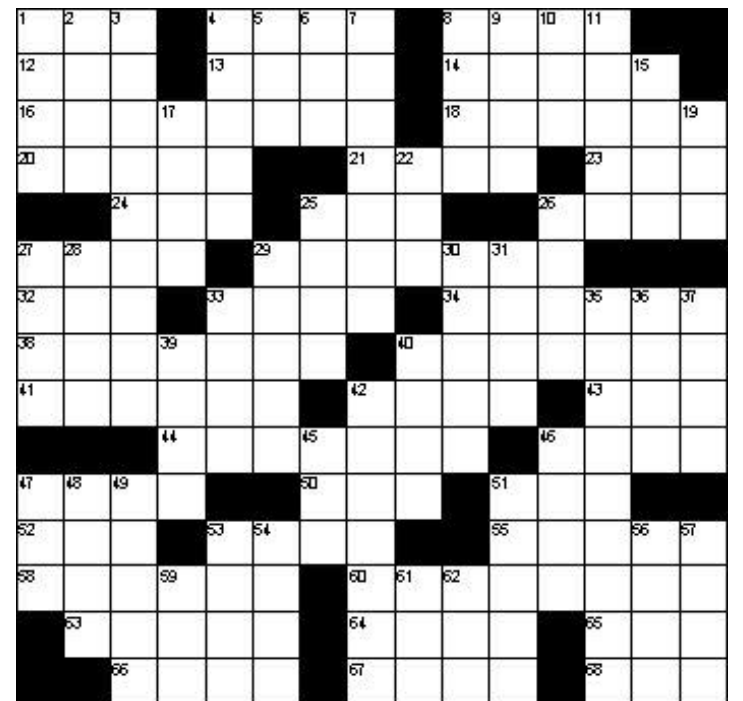
- 42 Commune
- 43 Distress call
- 44 An old soldier
- 46 Have dinner
- 47 Walking step
- 50 Mater
- 51 Cadge
- 52 Baba
- 53 Dour
- 55 Russian ruler
- 58 Swagger
- 60 Horse
- 63 Flout
- 64 Misprint
- 65 Parody
- 66 Black gem
- 67 Mail
- 68 Girl

Across

- 31 Depend
- 33 DNA component
- 35 Badges
- 36 Anon
- 37 Otherwise
- 39 Grotto
- 40 Trolley car
- 42 Reminders
- 45 Flightless bird
- 46 Believe
- 47 Daddies

Down

- 48 Alack's partner
- 49 Freshwater fish
- 51 Thicker than water
- 53 Farside's Larson
- 54 Wildcat
- 56 Type of worm
- 57 Musical symbol
- 59 Term of affection
- 61 Popeye's yes
- 62 Licensed practical nurse



Man on the Street

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

This week's question:

Do you believe in extraterrestrial life forms?



Alix Archer, Migrant Operations linguist

"It seems like they would exist. I've heard some believable stories. Something unreal must be out there. Maybe they will come in our lifetime."



Spc. Corey Sanchez, 239th MP Co.

"In my view, there is stuff in outer space that we do not understand. Someday we will find other life forms, and I will be awaiting the arrival."



Gloria Martinez, NEX-mart head bagger

"Oh yes, I've been looking into the sky for years. There's something up there. There are so many planets in space, we can't be alone."



Army Sgt. Michael Lackey, J-8 Finance

"Aliens? No, I don't believe in aliens. I haven't heard anything believable. I would have to see them with my own eyes to even consider."



Army Sgt. Jesse L. Harris, 178th MP. Co.

"No. I just don't believe in them. There is a slight chance they exist, but it's not worth my time thinking about. Besides, it's not my forte to do so."

November 8



MNF at Subway: open till it's over

Story and photos by
Spc. Frank N. Pellegrini
The Wire

The debut of "Monday Night Football" at Subway this week had all the ingredients of a blockbuster evening, especially on this entertainment-starved rock: sandwiches, pizza, and Al Michaels and John Madden on a monster projection-screen TV. But it looks like the weekly event could maybe use a little word-of-mouth.

Sure, the jack-of-all-trades sub joint, which is normally open until 10 p.m., had its usual trickle of late-evening customers, and each gazed contentedly at the screen while they ate. But until Spc. Timothy Bordelon and Spc. Cory Brown of the 239th MP Co. wandered in just after 10 p.m., it seemed like there was going to be no one to pass the word at all.

"We actually didn't know they were doing this," said Bordelon as he took a sip of the historic first beer (price: \$0.99) ever served at the GTMO Subway. "But I was up there getting a sandwich to go, and the lady at the counter asked me if I wanted to have a drink and watch the game."

And is it a winning concept? "I think it's great," he said. "It's nice to be able to sit down and eat and watch the game and have a beverage at the same time," said the Camp America resident. It's pretty a much a unique



Spc. Timothy Bordelon, left, and Spc. Cory Brown of the 239th MP Co. enjoy a game with their beverage.

experience around here."

Subway worker Kevin Johnson, is ready when you are. "We serve to anybody of age who wants it, and we stay open until the game is over," he said. "If you want to enjoy yourself, bring your friends, you're welcome here. And if we go overtime, then we go overtime."

Those not in the know tonight are also missing a tight, eventful game. The Rams, 5-0 after an 0-5 start, are taking on the bad-news 2-7 Bears, but those expecting a rout (including the Rams, no doubt) are getting treated to a close-fought affair. After a too-easy opening-drive touchdown by the Marc Bulger-led Rams and a subsequent drive that also seemed destined for six, the Bears strip Bulger for a fumble and knock him out with a sprained index finger in the same play. After a Bears field goal, Kurt Warner is harried and



The only publicity at all for Subway's after-hours football action hangs on the door as three patrons settle in.

inconsequential in a premature return to the gridiron and it's anybody's ballgame. We are even treated to some an ugly leg injury to Bears' Brian Columbo, which has the replay machines running in overdrive and John Madden speaking in hushed tones.

The two 239th boys and I are now the only customers in the place, but we are having a fine time as well, grimacing with the action and looking back on 6 months of hot, sweaty service in the name of freedom. Monday was the pair's last day of work at Camp Delta, and they are taking their "GTMO special" on a bit of a farewell tour, with this stop turning into an unexpectedly extended stay. Soon we are trading 9/11 stories, discussing redeployment "windows," and planning our Christmas vacations.

Just after 11:00, Mercedes Haughton, who pulls the Subway night shift when she's off from housekeeping at the Naval Hospital, is sweeping up around the sea of empty tables. But the game is heating up again; the Bears beat the blitz for a third-quarter touchdown and pull to within 14-13.

Al and John disagree over whether they should have gone for two; manager Juan Carlos "Jay" Garcia can't watch. Football games — any football game — makes him too excited, he says, and he's got work to do. But he's glad to have a few more sandwiches sold and a few people having a better Monday night than they otherwise might have — as for the turnout, or lack thereof, it doesn't faze him. He's sure it'll catch on, and if it doesn't, well, he'll keep doing it anyway, and making sure anyone who does show up has some fun.

"You come here with just you and your group, no problem. The whole place is filled, great. Either way, we're going to keep doing this, every Monday night, and on through December. Super Bowl too," he says. "Food

all night, beer all night, game all night. Come on in and have some fun."

So if you're looking for a new way to watch Monday Night Football — or a new way to kill another GTMO evening — Subway wants you. Come out to the NEX plaza and have some Kevin, Mercedes and Jay with your Al and John as the Philadelphia Eagles take on San Francisco this Monday in a battle of the 7-3 Super Bowl hopefuls. The service is friendly, and the sandwiches...well, judging by the lines that wind around the store at lunchtime, the food at this Subway needs no additional publicity.



Kevin Johnson pours Subway MNF night's historic first beer, a 99-cent beverage.

GOINGS, from page 1

soon, as the 361st Press Camp Headquarters heads back to New York City and hands the journalistic and press-escorting reins to the 362nd out of freedom-loving New Hampshire.

All through December, redeployment "windows" will be opening and closing, and by the new year there will be a new Camp Delta, with new name tapes for the same old detainees to try and read through. The 571st MPs will return to Fort Lewis, Wash. and rediscover rain; the 114th goes back to Mississippi and the Delta where the blues began. The 178th will head back to Georgia, where Dawgs can run free, and the 346th back to Kansas, where there's no place like home.

And the new guards, the new staffers, the new soldiers and sailors and airmen and Coast Guardsmen will come rolling in. Some have already arrived; you can see them at McCalla Hangar filling out meal cards, at Camp America learning their mission; at the Tiki Bar, jabbering on about the view and the sunset and the price of beer, steadily boring those of us who've been here, done it, and seen it all before and before and before.

Some outgoing troops may shock the newbies with how happy they are to be leaving an all-expenses paid Caribbean tour to go home to winter coats and rent, but grizzled GTMO veterans might remember that maybe they were a little excited too, when they first showed up. Others will want to



Sgt. Joseph Stone of the 571st MP Co. mops his brow as he packs a CONEX for shipping back to Fort Lewis.

school their replacements about their new job, their new life, without making it sound as dreadfully dull as it's probably become for them; they'll remember how they felt the first time they looked a detainee in the eye and instantly realized just why they were here. They won't be too cynical about all they've seen and heard, and allow the new arrivals to come in with their military ideals intact; everyone will just have to find out for himself what should be hoped for and what must be grudgingly accepted.



Sgt. Gary Cooper of JDOG pays attention to detailing as he gets the incoming JDOG commander's vehicle ready for dignified driving back and forth from Camp Delta.

The best course: look forward to home, and look back on six months in the sun with clear eyes. Come on — this place wasn't so bad.

"I'm sure ready to get home," said Spc. Timothy Bordelon of the 239th on Monday night, celebrating his last swing shift at Camp Delta. "But in the past six months, I've done a lot, seen a lot, and there's a lot that I didn't get to do, that I wish I had. What I have done has been rewarding, and now it's time to get home and be with the family. But we can all look back and feel proud."

"Now that it's over," added fellow 239th guard Spc. Cory Brown.

"Yeah, now that it's over," Bordelon agreed, laughing. "There's a lot I'm going to miss about this place. But I'm glad to be home for the holidays. The holidays this year are going to mean a lot."

For Staff Sgt. Donna E. Cordero of the 43rd MP Bde., finishing up her stint in the Inspector General office at the Pink Palace, redeployment time was a time of mixed feelings as well. "I'll be happy to be home with my daughter," she said, "but I'll feel... I'll miss the friends that I've made here and the sense of accomplishment of being part of this."

"I always knew I was a patriot, and I begged to come here, to be a part of this piece of history. But

I also didn't know how I'd be able to handle it, being away from my daughter every day for such a long time. But I'm proud of myself how I've done it, and I've really had some good times here."

But time marches on, and all across GTMO, units of every shape, size and mission are going through the rigorous motions of departure. Cleaning and "sterilizing" HUMVEEs for transport back stateside; making inventory lists and packing six months'

worth of gear into duffel bags, anvil cases and CONEXes. After-action reports are being drafted, continuity books compiled, time for transitioning carved out of hectic short-timer's schedules. And everybody who's getting ready to leave is wondering if maybe there's one more thing they want to do, or say, or save, before they leave GTMO for good.

For the 342nd, that impulse was better left alone. As the unit took its very last bus ride past Camp Delta in the wee hours of Tuesday, a tower guard saw the flash of a camera. The bus was boarded, all cameras were confiscated, and the unit left for home with a sour taste in its collective mouth.

Fitting a few last items into a CONEX out at McCalla hangar, 1st Sgt. Melvin Tipton of the 239th MP Co. shakes his head at the story.

"It must be tempting to try to take one shot to sum up this experience," he said. "But you know, you're never going to capture all you've done and seen here in a picture."

"After all this time here, I know every fence, every gate in Camp Delta, every detail of that place," Tipton said. "I've got it all" — he tapped his temple — "up here. If I'm home, and I want a picture, all I got to do is push replay in my head."



1st Sgt. Melvin Tipton of the 346th MP Co. wonders how he's going to get all this gear into a CONEX headed back home to Kansas.

of duty, sacrificing it all...again

repetitive training and reinforcement of the buddy system can mean the difference between life and death in a combat zone.

"A combination of training and the bond you share with your buddies will get you through stressful and dangerous situations," said Army Sgt. 1st Class Harley Monteiro, 43rd MP Bde., veteran of Desert Storm. "Without training you're going in with your eyes shut and could get hurt."

Said Pacheco: "In stressful, unexpected situations it is obvious just how important training is and how it pays off."

The bonds that are shared between servicemembers in these intense situations is special and strong. "Soldiers develop a certain bond amongst each other while on a deployment. They meet different people from different walks of life and pull together to get the job done," Monteiro said.

"It was amazing how soldiers pulled together and became like a family," said Pacheco. "You were on your guard at all times to ensure your safety and the safety of your buddies."

"You develop a very strong bond with the people you work with," Smith said. "You live, work, eat, and even as far as pouring water over their head for a shower. I first met Monteiro when I joined the 119th MP Co. in 1990, and we've been through a lot together. Just knowing he is going on deployment with me makes me feel a whole of a lot better. I don't think people could really fathom the special bond between soldiers in situations like that unless they've experienced it," he added.

"I don't have any brothers," said Monteiro, "but Smith is as close as a brother to me. I can depend on him for anything. There is no separation between the two of us — we're tight! Through thick and thin we'll be there for one another."

The experiences servicemembers are exposed to in war remained etched in their mind, and will impact their lives forever.

"One of the most difficult tasks I was faced with was when a scud missile hit some of our barracks," Pacheco said. "My unit was first on the scene, and I literally had to sift through rubble filled with body parts. That was really hard for me. It took me seven years to talk about my experiences in the Gulf, but talking to others that have been through it makes it easier," she said.

"Acts of heroism," recalls Monteiro — "something that I saw often. I remember seeing a couple of soldiers perform C.P.R. on a POW and save his life."

"In war, servicemembers cannot become complacent," said Smith. "I learned my lesson after an incident I had where we had taken a prisoner to the area where we would always shake them down, and I turned my head for one second and the guy took a swing at me. If he had a weapon I could have been severely hurt, but that's something I learned from."



Photo by Spc. Michelle M. Scepko
Army Sgt. 1st Class Harley Monteiro and Army Sgt. 1st Class Michael W. Smith, both of the 43rd MP Bde.

War also teaches those involved many things about themselves. It has the ability to change their perception of many things.

"War has made me stronger, and wiser," said Wilbanks. "The honor I feel putting on this uniform means everything to me. The American flag means more to me than I could ever describe."

"Seeing our servicemembers in battle made me realize how high-speed our military really is," said Pacheco. "I have complete confidence in the people I serve with and our military. We are capable and ready to defeat anybody who opposes our nation and what it stands for: freedom!"

"Servicemembers need to know and realize that they come from the greatest nation on earth, and to serve in the military that alone



Photo by Spc. Frank Pellegrini
Army 1st Sgt. Larry R. Wilbanks, 178 MP Co.

tells you what we have, we deserve. Never feel slighted or less than proud to wear the uniform," Monteiro said.

Although enemy fire does not rain down upon GTMO, servicemembers doing time here should walk away proud knowing that the sacrifices they made here contributed to the larger mission at hand.

"People here should go home with their heads held high and proud," said Pacheco. "They mean more than they know and contributed to this mission."

"It's very important and serious for servicemembers to recognize that at any time they can be called up and shipped off to a danger zone," said Smith. "It is their duty and part of the sacrifice they make as being a part of the military."

"I have always understand what freedom meant even when a lot of people didn't," Wilbanks said. "All my boys and girls here, all my soldiers, have done an outstanding job and I am extremely proud of them. They have stepped up to the plate and done their job in a professional manner. And I couldn't ask for anything more."

Many servicemembers deployed to GTMO, for Operation Enduring Freedom arrived here as any troop would — ready to tackle the mission at hand. However, when they depart they will bring home with them much more than their duffel bags and awards. They will carry with them the accomplishment of a job well done, and the honor of being a veteran.

"I think returning from this deployment will be very emotional for me because I've been on both sides of the tracks," said Wilbanks. "Returning from Vietnam was not a welcoming experience, but this time Americans are going to open their arms to us and welcome us home."

Print shop workers leave mark

Story by Spc. Chris S. Pisano
Photos by Spc. Joseph A. Morris
The Wire

The Document Automation and Production Service, better known as "the print shop," is responsible for printing items ranging from forms, publications, manuals, base newspapers, high school yearbooks, and their most recent project, business cards for JTF-GTMO's new commander, Maj. Gen. Geoffrey D. Miller.

And as the only print shop in GTMO, they have no choice but to roll with the work.

"Sometimes we got to work extra hours," admitted shop director Charlie Foy, an old southern gentleman bred in New Orleans, La. "We'll get a project that needs to be rushed out quickly. But that's what we do; provide printing services for the entire base. It's a standard print shop, with a good tight crew."

Tight indeed, for this crew includes only two other men besides Foy: workers Errol Parkes and Errol Chisholm. But even with limited manpower, these men get the job done. And perhaps the most important job that they perform for GTMO on a weekly basis is the printing of *The Gazette* and the very publication you're reading now: *The Wire*.

When the two papers are completed and approved for print every Thursday evening, they are brought to the DAPS shop where these men work through the night to produce the thousands of copies that will be distributed all over GTMO.

"When we work on *The Wire*, it's all night

till day-light," said Parkes. "Sometimes we'll go home for half an hour early in the morning for coffee and a shower. Or we'll just walk around the shop in our socks to relax."

The overnight process of producing mass amounts of GTMO's two papers involves many steps — and just as many machines to perform them.

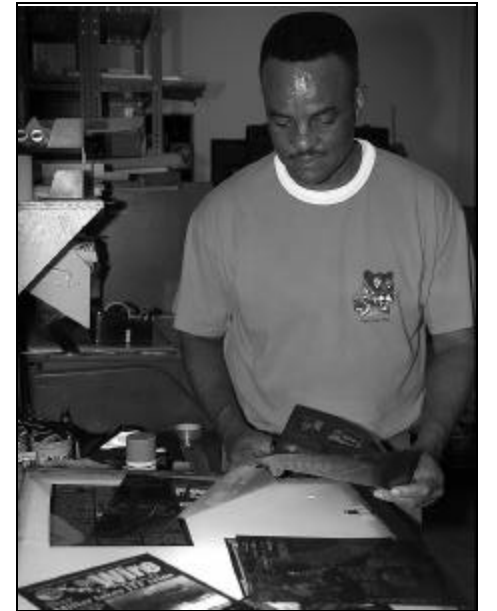
The process begins when negatives are shot of the printouts the shop receives, which are then stripped and laid out on a "masking sheet." Helping them accomplish this is an obsolete, 45-year old Brown horizontal process camera.

While having to use old equipment may seemingly make the job more difficult, the way the guys in the shop see it, if it still works, it still works.

"Most DAPS shops back in the states have all new digital equipment," said Foy. "If we had high-speed machines like a new Docutech, it could put out both papers all by itself, folded and complete. Our machines are always breaking down, and it's up to us to get them fixed on a small budget. But we make do with what we got."

Chisholm has been working at the DAPS shop here for 14 months, but has been in the printing business for over 30 years. And even he was surprised by the equipment when he came on the job here.

"It was almost like a printing museum," he said. "Even when I was working back in Jamaica, we had fully electronic and digital equipment. But though this stuff may be old, it still gets the job done."



Errol Chisholm begins bringing *The Wire* to print by cutting out negatives of the printouts which will then be burned onto a polychrome plate.

The laid-out negatives are then taken to the Ultra-plus Flip-Top Platemaker — yet another somewhat archaic piece of machinery with its own intricate processes. Parkes explained:

"The images and type are burned onto a light sensitive polychrome plate with this machine. A fountain solution keeps the ink on the image area... How's it stay on? It must be some form of chemistry," he offered.

Originally from Jamaica, Parkes was hired by Foy 13 years ago, starting out as a mere helper and since becoming a seasoned veteran in the printing business.

"Just by listening to the printing press I can tell if something is wrong," he said.

The ABDICK 9890D printing press — a rather imposing contraption, complete with a menagerie of spinning spools and tiny gears, is the next destination in the process. The plate is put into the press where thousands of printouts of *The Wire* and *The Gazette* will now be made. The machine is capable of pumping out 1,000 sheets of paper every 15 minutes, said Parkes; therefore it requires constant attention to ensure nothing gets out of place. But such attention to detail is part of the printing business that Parkes enjoys the most.

"It's a great job. There's something new all the time, and there really never is a dull moment," he said. "You got to concentrate. It takes a lot of good memory to know what to do and not to do."

The printing business has always rubbed Foy the right way as well.

"It's a good business. It's been real good to me," he said. "My uncle was into it and got me a job at the place he worked. Then I eventually moved into the government sector, working in



Errol Parkes puts a polychrome plate through the printing press in order to begin the long printing process.

on GTMO's page in history

New Orleans and then here."

And how did he end up at GTMO? "I saw a job announcement on a bulletin board one day. My boss asked, 'Want to go to Cuba?' I said, 'Well, not really!' But, yeah I did decide to come. I worked here from 1989 until 1992 until my contract was up, and then I came back in 96."

What possessed Foy to return to GTMO was "the quality of life," he said. "The people you meet are like family. There's a good community, with good bonds amongst the people you associate with on base."

But on those long nights printing out his



Errol Parkes puts the printed and cut spreads through DAPS' amazing folding machine.

home base's two main sources of local news, these guys are only associating with each other and their trusty machines.

As the moon rises and falls, the printing press pumps out its thousands of sheets, and as the morning approaches it's time for the guys to utilize their cutting and folding machines to get closer to producing a completed paper.

"We take the printed spreads, which have four pages on them front and back, and cut them in half. Then we put those through the folding machine," said Foy.

"Thankfully we're all trained to operated every piece of machinery in here," said Chisholm. "So we'll switch on and off with the different tasks."

With the pages now finished and organized, perhaps the most tedious and attentive

duty comes: collating all of the pages into proper order. Unfortunately, there is no fancy piece of equipment to handle this job, which means the guys have go old school and do it manually.

Could this be the most fun part of the job? "Yeah, right," said Foy, "but that's how we got to it."

After the papers are collated and finally completed, they're ready to be bundled up. This time, there actually is a machine on hand to make the rather easy job of tying up bundles even easier.

"Yes, we have a tying machine, which puts the string around the bundles," boasted Parkes, "I don't know how it does it, man, but it works!"

And with that, the newspapers are now completed and ready for distribution. For the workers in the print shop, a well-deserved Friday-afternoon rest awaits them. And for the past year, they've been earning that end-of-the-week rest even more.

"Business really did pick up with the coming of the JTF," said Foy. "The base was downsizing, almost dead, but now we got plenty work to do, especially when the two papers come in at the same time each week."

But of course the print shop is about more than newspapers. "Anyone can have a project done here," said Foy. "We can take care of most color copies and the like within two days to a week, depending on the job and how busy it is. And I also manage all of the Xerox copy machine contracts on base."

From newspapers to flyers, a general's business cards to a high-school's prom invitations, GTMO keeps the DAPS shop humming with a variety of jobs. And nestled unassumingly as it is in a shroud of trees behind the NEX and McDonald's, most GTMO residents don't give Foy and his crew much thought.

Regardless, Chisholm is proud of the work that he does, and the profession he has chosen.

"A friend of mine had gone into the print business, and it looked like a fascinating trade to get into," he remembers. "Working in the big factory here is a very strenuous and fast operation. It takes a lot of concentration; you can't make any mistakes. But I enjoy the work, and I'm going to be around doing it for a while."

Foy himself won't be doing it for too much



With the end in sight, Errol Chisholm proficiently collates the pages of The Wire, therefore finally finishing the long process of printing out the paper.

longer, for come the end of December he plans to retire from his life-long profession.

"This business has given me a good ride," he said. "Errol and Errol work real hard here, and I'm proud of the work they've done. As for me, this is it. I'm moving back home to New Orleans."

For Parkes, though, the business still beckons, and he looks forward to a long and happy career in the print business.

"This is a job that makes you think. You have to have your mind and body in it," he said. "I'll be doing this all my life; it makes you be more responsible. Man, I really like it!"



Behold: Charlie Foy, long-time veteran of the printing trade, operates a paper-cutting machine.

America's finest: answering the call

Story by
Spc. Michelle M. Scsepko
The Wire

Troops deployed to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom are all pioneers on the frontier of the new kind of war. But many who proudly serve and sacrifice themselves here have carried their duffel bags off to war before.

"I first saw Vietnam in December 1972," said Army 1st Sgt. Larry R. Wilbanks, 178th MP Co. "I had joined the Marines, and was only 15 years old. I couldn't wait to be involved. However, my first tour in Vietnam didn't last too long. After about three months on the ground, they found out how young I was and sent me back home. But they couldn't keep me away! I returned, of age, in 1975 for the big EVAC. My job — go in, get our boys, and bring them home."

Wilbanks, a veteran of the Vietnam War and now of the War on Terrorism, has dedicated the last 32 years of his life to the military.

He said "The biggest thing is — working is my hobby, but the military is my life."

Although his experiences from the Vietnam War had left him with bittersweet memories, he was all too proud to come down here to be a part of Joint Task Force GTMO's mission and contribute all he could.

"It made me feel good. After Vietnam, many Americans were not supportive or appreciative of what we had done. When we came back, people spit at us, threw rocks at us. We weren't even able to walk through the terminal at the airport when we arrived. We didn't receive a warm welcome from anyone at all," he said. "When we left to come here, though, it was beautiful. People were waving goodbye to us up and down the interstates. I think now the American people understand that our job over there was not easy, that we were not baby killers, that we went over to do a job, just like we're doing here now," he said.

Though the Vietnam War was swarmed with controversy and opinion, servicemembers did their job, and they did it to the best of their ability. They served proudly, just as servicemembers should continue to do when they depart from here.

"What soldiers are doing here is something to be proud of," said Wilbanks. "They need to understand they are a very critical piece of the

pie. Working with the detainees or supporting those who do is important because it allows us to safeguard them and get information that is used to save and protect American lives. That's how important our job is here."

Patriotism, military servicemembers, and the American flag are words that go hand-and-hand, especially to the men and woman who selflessly serve in the United States military to protect the freedoms of the American people. Some men and women serving here are veterans of the Gulf War as well.

"I served in Desert Storm in 1991. It wasn't easy, but I was extremely proud, not only of myself but those I served with," said Army Sgt. Deborah D. Pacheco, with the 43rd MP Brigade.

Servicemembers are prepared to pay any price, go any distance, and perhaps make even the ultimate sacrifice — their life — for this

noble cause, and they do.

"War is war. It is ugly. I respect anyone who sacrifices to serve our country," said Sgt. 1st Class Michael W. Smith, 43rd MP Bde., also a veteran of Desert Storm. "You don't necessarily have to have a round thrown down-range at you, because you are still sacrificing. Family, your own freedoms, and time out of your life to serve a greater cause."

Some of the things servicemembers endure are not easy, but are the price they pay for America's freedom.

"I saw a lot of people die in Vietnam," said Wilbanks. "I saw a lot of people do heroic things that they would normally never do in



A tank rolls across the desert during Operation Desert Storm.



Photo by Spc. Michelle M. Scsepko

The American flag waving in the wind.

their normal lives. These are spur of the moment decisions, where people's pride and adrenaline takes over so they can do what they've got to do."

"I learned a lot from my experiences over there," he said. "I learned to take my training seriously because it will save your life, and depending on your buddies means a lot, it is a team play, it is not a one way play, and everybody has to do their job! You take care of your own and you never leave anybody behind."

"We lived in tents in the outright desert," said Pacheco. "We were lucky if we had water to take a shower; I really learned the value of a baby wipe! We washed our clothes by hand in buckets with water from our canteens. Our chemical suits were like our second skin, and in 120-degree weather that's a thick layer of skin. Eventually, though, I even got used to the Scuds going off," she said. "It was just a part of life over there."

"We worked 18-hour days, and had sandstorms that would just brew up in minutes," Smith said. "Forty to sixty mile-an-hour winds blowing sands across the desert. We had nothing but a volleyball, a net, and a hackie sack. You can't imagine how inventive soldiers really are."

These vets also learned there is a method to the military's madness — those long hours of



Photo by Spc. Michelle M. Scsepko

Army Sgt. Deborah D. Pacheco, 43rd MP Bde., a veteran of the Gulf War.



Clean getaway

Story and photos by
Spc. Frank N. Pellegrini
The Wire

With redeployment time looming for units all across GTMO, it came time this week for four members of the 361st Press Camp Headquarters to take time out from their mission to spend a few days getting down and dirty at the JTF-GTMO car wash, otherwise known as the wash rack down at the motor pool. The mission: get five HUMVEE vehicles cleaned, stripped of canopies, doors and other frills, and fit to return stateside without bringing any unwanted flora, fauna or other creepy-crawlies along with them.

This was no 10-minute wash-and-wax at the local brushless. Getting six months of dirt, grit and grime off the front, back, top and bottom of five hulking troop carriers took two full days of scrubbing, sponging, de-greasing and power-washing, and by the end of the day the hardy crew looked about as dirty as the vehicles had been that morning.

But thanks to the twin miracles of Simple Green all-purpose cleanser and elbow grease, the grudging approval of outgoing vehicle inspector Marine Sgt. Raymond Perez was won, and the five HUMVEES were deemed fit for passage homeward.

Now about that ride home...

Counter-clockwise from far right: Spc. Joseph A. Morris turns the hose on the HUMVEE's underside; the hand of Spc. Christian Farrell sponges off the grill; Spc. Chris S. Pisano aims his power-washer at the floorboards; Sgt. Paul S. Morando (top) and Morris do an upstairs-downstairs cleaning job; and Marine Staff Sgt. Raymond Perez, the J-4 inspector whose seal of approval is needed for any vehicle to leave GTMO, checks for dirt in the deep dark crevices under a HUMVEE's hood.

