

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas

By Army Pfc. Jessi Stone

The holidays are here and the 491st Military Police (MP) Company has the Christmas spirit.

Troopers of the 491st have gone to great lengths to decorate their Tierra Kay (TK) houses with an abundance of lights, figurines, imitation snow and a giant inflatable Santa Claus. There is even a chimney installed on a roof.

"It was a blast, it gave us something to do after work," said Army Sgt. Jessyca Norman. "The theme for our house is winter wonderland." Norman decorated not only her own house, but also her chain of command's house with an MP theme.

Norman said decorating the houses has been no small project for the MPs. "(Our neighbors) began theirs on Nov. 1 and we started ours a week later."

Most of the decorations came from Troopers from the last rotation. "Some girls who were leaving gave us a box of stuff for ten dollars," she said.

Other decorations were purchased at the Navy Exchange (NEX). "We sent scouts to the NEX every day," Norman said. Whoever wasn't working would go to the NEX at 9 a.m. and again at noon to purchase new decorations. "We got to know the barge schedule really well."

Keeping up with the decorations is a task as well, Norman explained. Lights and fuses have to be replaced every few days.

But Norman says it has been worth the effort. "It was so much fun."

Every day they would look at each other's houses to see what new decorations had gone up. "It provided some healthy competition. We tried to be as different as possible for all four doors."

Although the Joint Detention Operations Group is having a door-decorating contest, Norman said that the project wasn't about winning.

The decorating began to make it feel a little more like Christmas for the young Troopers in the 491st who are spending their first Christmas away from home. ■



Photo by Army Pfc. Jessi Stone

▲ Santa's reindeer are one part of the 491st Military Police Company's elaborate decorations.

Season's Greetings



Photo by Pfc. Jessi Stone

On behalf of the Joint Task Force-Guantanamo (JTF) command team, we extend our warmest wishes for a happy holiday season and a prosperous new year.

We appreciate the courage, dedication, discipline and professionalism each of you show daily in fulfilling your mission here and especially at this time of year as you face the challenges that come from being away from family, friends and loved ones.

Thank you for the personal sacrifice you make in being a part of the worldwide fight against terrorism. Your efforts are making a difference for your fellow Troopers here, for your fellow Americans at home and for the nations of the world who join us in this fight.

You are an inspiration to your loved ones, your leaders and your nation. It is an honor to serve with each of you.

Honor Bound!

—*JTF Command Staff*

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Take care of people, Hood says

Mission, people are general's highest priorities

By Army Cpl. Jim Greenhill

Troopers who find themselves in a different role here at Guantanamo Bay than previously in their military career need look no further than the top of the Chain of Command to learn how to approach the challenge.

"I was an officer whose background is field artillery, and I spent most of my time serving in combat arms units," Brig. Gen. Jay W. Hood said in a recent interview. "So the assignment here at the Joint Task Force (JTF) is different in that it required me to do a fair amount of studying on the specific requirements necessary to run the custody of detainees."

Hood took techniques learned in a military career that began in 1975 as distinguished military graduate of Pittsburgh State University and applied them to the current mission.

The JTF gathers intelligence from detainees. "My background as a fire support officer translates fairly well," Hood said.

In the targeting process, officers decide what to attack, how to attack it and what systems to use. Afterwards, they evaluate their strategy's success.

Hood saw similarities with intelligence gathering. What do we want to learn? Who can provide the information? What questions will get us the answers? How well do we think we did?

The man who occupies a modest office in the headquarters building arrived in March 2004, not long before many Troopers in the current rotation. He has served in peacetime in Germany, Italy and the United States. He has served in wartime in Kosovo and Iraq.

The military police and intelligence as-

pects of this latest mission are not the only items on Hood's agenda where he is gaining new experience.

"I have greater contact with members of the media in this job than I had in any other," he said.

The general sees it as his job to clearly communicate what the mission is, how it's done and the role Troopers play. "That requires daily work for me to get better at it," he said. "It is important that we communicate with members of the media who will share with both the American public and around the world that we are doing our job to a very high standard.

"We are holding some very dangerous men who were captured on the battlefield of the Global War on Terrorism."

Detention prevents enemy combatants from returning to the fight and allows intelligence gathering, the general said.

To accomplish his tasks, Hood relies on time management and leadership skills learned in a career that started at the end of the Vietnam War and in the middle of the Cold War and now has spanned into a world that faces a whole new paradigm.

The general expects in himself and those he leads constant study, practice and critical self-evaluation. All that adds up to technical proficiency. He expects leadership from the front and communication in every direction. And he expects dedication to Troopers and the mission.

"It begins with taking care of people," he said.

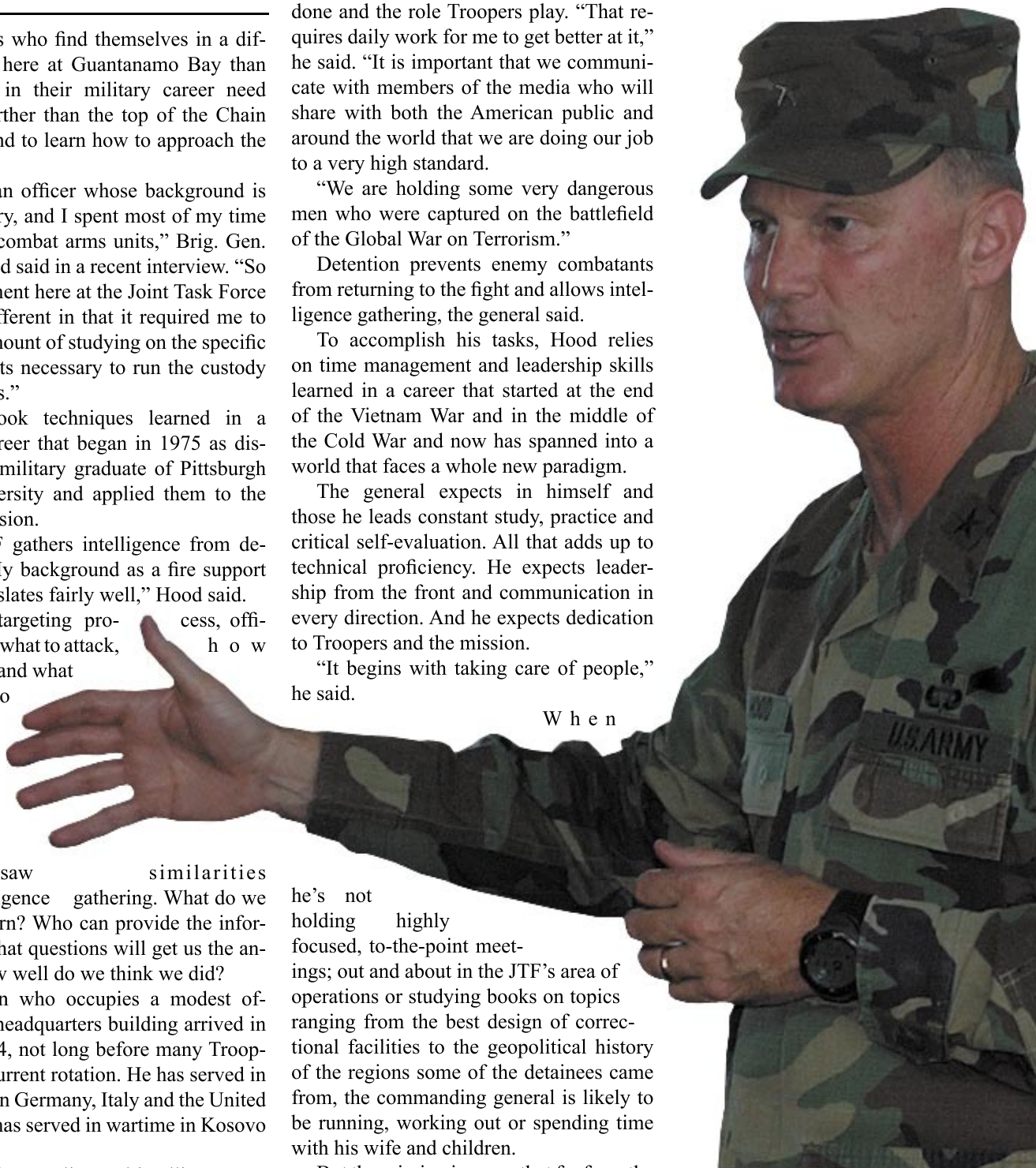
When

he's not holding highly focused, to-the-point meetings; out and about in the JTF's area of operations or studying books on topics ranging from the best design of correctional facilities to the geopolitical history of the regions some of the detainees came from, the commanding general is likely to be running, working out or spending time with his wife and children.

But the mission is never that far from the

general's mind. For pleasure, he recently read *Caravans*, an early James Michener novel.

"It's an interesting story," Hood said, "of the life of an American diplomat in Afghanistan in the years immediately following the Second World War." ■



File photo

GTMO Wonderland



Photo by Army Pfc. Jessi Stone

◀ Whether it's lights, nativity scenes, reindeer, wreaths or miles of holiday lights, the teamwork of Troopers and Guantanamo Bay residents sparked holiday spirits throughout the base. A lighted snowman greets people outside a home in the Tierra Kay housing here.



Photo by Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class Henry Chade

◀ Guantanamo Mudman visited Troopers at the Grenadillo Range during weapons qualification. After a rare rain, Troopers made a traditional snowman with GTMO "snow."



Photo by Army Pfc. Jessi Stone



Photo by Spc. Jody Metzger

▲ Tierra Kay housing brightens the skies with just about every holiday decoration known to man.

◀ Small palm trees tower over a colorful train that lights up the front yard of a house in Carribean Circle, Naval Base housing. Holiday decorations covered houses, filled yards and lined streets throughout Guantanamo Bay.

AROUND THE JTF

Mandatory Flu Shots

There are good and bad GTMO gifts. One bad gift: the flu. "When you look at the environment we live in, the units ... are coming from all over the United States," said Navy Lt. Tom Judy, Joint Aid Station officer in charge. "Those regions have influenza outbreaks going on right now." To avoid spreading this bad gift, free flu vaccinations are being given to Troopers.

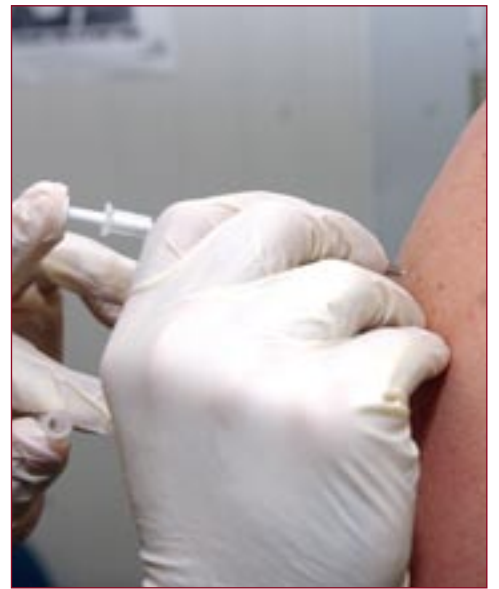


Photo by Senior Airman Jon Ortiz-Torres



Photo by Spc. Jody Metzger

PLDC Graduation

Honor Graduate and Maximum PT Test recipient Army Cpl. Michael Moore led Primary Leadership Development Course (PLDC) graduates in reading the Non-Commissioned Officers (NCO) creed Dec. 9. As the graduating class read from the NCO Creed, Troopers had a feeling of strong commitment and pride at being a part of a time-honored tradition. "All of the Soldiers are into working hard, and they enjoy being here," said PLDC Instructor Army Staff Sgt. Nelson Hunt. "If the Soldiers make a mistake here, they are able to learn and grow from it. That's what makes a non-commissioned officer."

Club Survivor alive and kickin'

Brig. Gen. Martin Lucenti cut the ribbon at the official grand re-opening of Club Survivor on Dec. 17. "We're doing this because we appreciate the things that you're doing down here," Lucenti said. "Your mission is important and you have every right to relax and decompress when you've done the day's work." The celebrations included catering, pool, volleyball and \$1 beers for Troopers.



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Gordon Hyde



SALSA is coming

**STORY AND PHOTOS BY
SENIOR AIRMAN M...**

Army Staff Sgt. Carlos Espinoza, with the Joint Task Force Morale, Welfare, and Recreation office as Salsa Claus played the sticks during the "Parranda" (Hispanic caroling) Dec. 17. The sergeant gave away candy and other goodies during the live music performance on the float throughout Guantanamo Bay.

Santa with shades on, shouts of Feliz Navidad and salsa renditions of traditional Christmas carols can only mean one thing—a parranda.

Many Troopers here at Guantanamo Bay were recently introduced to the parranda as the Joint Task Force (JTF) salsa band jammed through their neighborhoods.

Parranda is Christmas caroling Puerto Rican style. A group of parranderos visit unsuspecting friends and neighbors' houses and awakes them with their lovely, lively and loud music.

In Puerto Rico, Christmas celebrations begin in early December and do not stop until early January. Friends gather late in the evening to go from one house to the next singing traditional holiday songs. Here it was a little different.

"We are among new friends we consider family, and we're keeping tradition during the holidays," said Army Sgt. 1st Class Jose Colon. "We thought it would be a good morale-builder and something out of the ordinary we could share with people."

The JTF parranderos loaded onto the back of a flatbed truck with keyboards, congas, bongos and a host of other percussion instruments. The truck was decorated with Christmas lights, an inflatable American flag and a Christmas tree. Once underway, the one-vehicle-parade traveled through Camp America, Tierra Kay, West

Iguana, Naval back again.

Throughout entertain people band played. So

Mike Sweet heard the band "This is great!"

The century residents offer song, is still ali

The salsa b Christmas chee

"It's import holidays," said

"People were s we put smiles o

Hist

Parrandas book by auth started earlie Spanish color

Typically, large chicker by blood saus mixture of m peas, olives a a plantain lea

Revelers v Rican versio of coconut m mon. Many s mas but other "If they don't

Source: <http://navidad.asp>

CLAUS g to town

BY
LEO MARTIN

Base housing, Sherman Avenue and

the route, the parranda made stops to
e who took pictures and danced as the
ome onlookers even played along.
ing, a Naval Base resident, said, "I
coming and I had to grab my trumpet.

es-old Caribbean tradition, in which
food and drink in exchange for a
ve in this U.S. territory
and used this opportunity to spread
er and share a piece of their heritage.
ant to keep morale high during the
d Army Staff Sgt. Wilfredo Ruiz.
surprised to see us perform. I was glad
on people's faces" Feliz Navidad!! ■

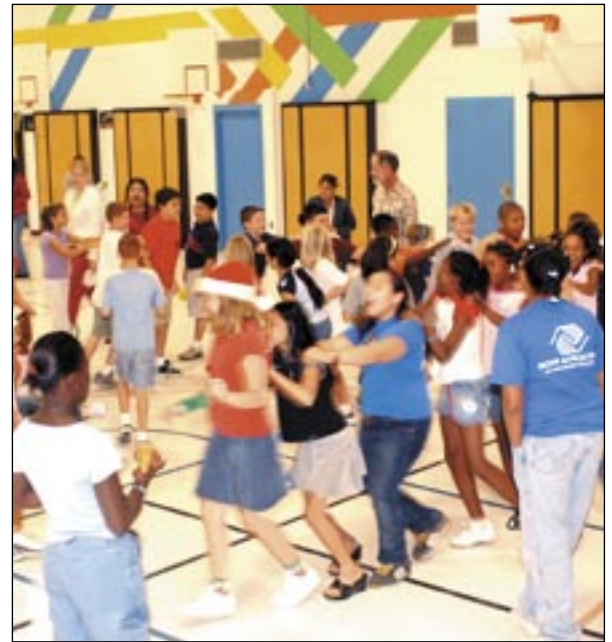
History of the Parranda

were first chronicled in an 1853
nor Manuel Alonso, but probably
r in the 19th century during the
nial period.

food at a parranda consists of a
n soup called sopen, accompanied
sages called morcilla and pastels, a
ashed green plantains, meat, chick-
and peppers wrapped like a brick in
f and boiled.

wash the food down with a Puerto
n of eggnog called coquito, a blend
milk, eggs, rum, vanilla and cinna-
ngs are religious and tied to Christ-
s center on drinking with one verse:
t give me anything to drink, I cry."

<http://www.hechoenpuertorico.org/navidad/>



▲ Army Cpl. Javier Rabell on congas and Army Staff Sgt. Wilfredo Ruiz with the maracas played with the rest of the JTF Salsa Band that paraded the streets of Guantanamo Bay Dec. 17. The Troopers spread a taste of Hispanic caroling to hundreds of onlookers. In an earlier visit to the Guantanamo Bay Elementary School students danced and sang to the Troopers' music as part of their International Heritage Awareness Day.

This just in: Broncos humiliate GTMO sportswriter

By Army Cpl. Simon Cropp

On a test with 32 possibilities where two of the 32 were the correct answer, getting one right still isn't so good.

That's a 50 percent by the high standards we live by in the military.

The Eagles most definitely will be in the Super Bowl, but the Broncos, well they've simply self-destructed this season.

A lot of that is at the hands of their quarterback, Jake Plummer, who, in the last four games, threw eight interceptions and one touchdown. He isn't playing well at all, especially for an eight-year veteran of the game, and part of that could be attributed to how well defenses have adapted and kept him in the pocket. Plummer is at his best outside of the pocket throwing on the run. That's when he makes crazy decisions that defenses aren't prepared for.

The reason the Eagles are likely to win the Super Bowl is more Donovan McNabb than Terrell Owens. He is an all-around great quarterback. He has the speed, arm strength and pocket presence that put him on a different level than guys like Jake Plummer. Look for the Eagles in the Super Bowl, and the AFC could be represented by any number of teams.

The San Diego Chargers are a good possibility, which is strange considering last year they were one of the worst teams in the NFL and the Pittsburgh Steelers, never considered the worst but last year definitely considered middle of the road, are now another of the powerhouses.

The Patriots are looking good as always. Although, for the sake of something different, hopefully the Chargers or the Steelers can knock them out of the playoffs.



Photo courtesy of www.nfl.com

▲ Jake Delhomme led the Carolina Panthers from 1-7 this season to play off contenders in the terrible NFC with an injury-riddled team.

The interesting thing about the NFC is how terrible it looks this year.

The Carolina Panthers started the first seven games with only a single win and now are looking like great contenders for the playoffs. Same with the Seattle Seahawks, who look to win their division with a 7-7 record.

The Atlanta Falcons have a winning record despite the inconsistent Michael Vick who is somewhat reminiscent of Jake Plummer—not so good throwing from the pocket, but when the man moves his legs he puts defenses out of commission.

If a new prediction had to be made at this point in the season it would be hard to say who the Eagles will face in the Super Bowl, but this sportswriter is sticking by the old one. Broncos and Eagles all the

way, even though the Broncos have about no hope to gain even a wild card spot in the standings.

Former tight end and likely Hall of Fame candidate, Shannon Sharp, had this to say: "I can't ever remember seeing both such an amazingly good season and an unbelievably bad season rolled up into one as we've seen this year. We might see a team with a record of 14-2 in the AFC, and it won't have home-field advantage. That is simply unreal to me."

Get past the bad grammar (hey, he's one of the best tight ends to ever play the game, but he's also the absolute worst sportswriter) and he might have a point. A strange season has come down from the mighty NFL god I like to call Thundor, and it is both beautiful and horrifying. ■

WorldWire

Dec. 16: President Bush's inaugural events to pay **tribute to troops**. ... Bush ponders **Social Security** reform.

... Army National Guard announces immediate increase in six-year **re-enlistment bonuses** to \$15,000. ...

Dec. 17: **National Guard** seeks \$20 billion for arms,

gear. ... A hawk dubbed **Pale Male** that's lived in an 8-foot nest 100-feet up a Manhattan apartment building since 1993 gets a reprieve after public outcry about eviction. ... Bush signs **intelligence reform bill**; biggest overhaul in 50 years. ... A **baby** cut from a murdered woman's womb is found in good health. ... **Celebrex** painkiller might increase risk of heart problems.

Dec. 18: Bush is *Time's* "**Person of the Year.**" ... Gas prices continue two-month decline. ... *Lemony Snicket* No. 1 at **box office**; *Oceans Twelve* No. 2 and *Spanglish* No. 3. ... Health officials warn of **flu pandemic**. ...

Dec. 20: Actor **Robert Blake** goes on trial for wife's murder.

Dec. 21: After 50 years, **Godzilla** is no more; *Godzilla: Final Wars* is 28th and last

movie. ... U.K. Prime Minister **Tony Blair** pays surprise visit to Baghdad. ... FDA warns about naproxene pain reliever sold as **Aleve**. ... **Dow** at 3½-year high. ...

Dec. 22: A foot of pre-Christmas **snow** blankets some areas as a major winter storm hits the Plains and Midwest. ...

Army Cpl. **Jim Greenhill** compiles *WorldWire* from online news services.

Holiday poem...

“Defending Freedom, Honor Bound”

Deployed again from there to here
At Christmas time, and throughout the year
Defending Freedom, and Honor Bound.

Remember the troops, as you hear the
sound
The sound of joy, during this holiday time
If we could be home, that would be fine
But we fight for freedom, all year round
It gives you the chance to enjoy the sound
I am honored to command Soldiers, Sailors,
Airmen, Marines and Coasties
While you rest at night, our service hymns
we'll sing
We truly hope you will hear the sound
Defending Freedom, and Honor Bound

Our flag flies proud, and we stand tall
All gave some, and some gave All
We volunteer to stand watch while
America rests
I have under my charge
America's brightest and best
Defending Freedom, and Honor
Bound

Soon your loved one will return to
their hometown
Some will thank them for what we do
Others will hate them, and that's okay
too!

We do it for our country, and hope
you hear the sound
Defending Freedom, and Honor
Bound

As you pray tonight remember
my troops
God knows them by name and
that's the truth
One Team, One Fight is what we preach
Leave no one behind is what we teach
I hope this Holiday season you will hear
the sound
Defending your Freedom, we
are Honor Bound

-NAVY LT. MITCH “BUDDY” LOTT

Warm voices



◀ Troopers brought the holiday spirit to Camp America on Monday evening when they sang Christmas Carols at the Seaside Galley. The carolers made many other stops, including Roosevelt Checkpoint, the Joint Task Force Headquarters Building and Gold Hill Galley, singing the holiday favorites.



Photos by Army Pfc. Jessi Stone

The Christmas Child: Immanuel

Six hundred years before the first Christmas, God promised Jesus would come to save sinners.

Jerusalem was about to be defeated and her people carried into captivity. God raised up surrounding nations to punish the Israelites for rebelling against him. But God also promised he would return to rescue Jerusalem and his people and forgive their sins.

God's promise came in a prophecy. Isaiah declared, "The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and you will call him Immanuel."

What is so important about the name Immanuel? Well, it means, "God with us." Those three simple words express the entire Christmas story and the Christian Gospel. We learn how sinners can be saved: God with us.

Jesus is Immanuel, "God with us." That means God would come to live among sinners. The Savior would have to be God, and he would have to be man. Fully God and fully man—Immanuel.

Jesus had to be fully God. Only God is able to save sinners. Only God is able to obey his own law completely. Only God could offer sinners everlasting love. So God, in his great mercy, determined to save Israel and every sinner who will confess the name Jesus.

But Jesus also had to be man. He had to be like us in every way, except without sin. Jesus knows exactly what you are dealing with. He's been there. He knows your weakness and temptations. He knows what it is like to be broken and needy.

Jesus, the Christmas Child: fully God and fully man. The best part of the Christmas story is not Jesus' birth, but his death. He suffered even to the point of death. In his death and resurrection, Jesus won the final victory over sin and death.

This Christmas, will you receive the greatest gift, Immanuel? Will you believe in your heart and confess with your mouth that Jesus the Christmas Child is your Lord and Savior? If you will do that, you will receive the greatest gift imaginable—eternal life.

Come see a chaplain or read the Bible to learn more about Immanuel! Have a very Merry Christmas!

— **Chaplain (Army Major) Graham Harbman**

Padre's Corner

The celebration of the birth of Christ is near.

In the Gospel of this Fourth Sunday of Advent we read "and they shall name him Emmanuel, which means God is with us." God is with us and not simply in church or at Christmas time but every moment of our existence.

What boggles the human mind is that God chose to be one like us in all things, except sin, and his delight is to be with the children of men and women.

God is with us in word and Sacrament, the beauty of creation, the joy of human love, and countless mysterious and wonderful ways. Yes, God is with us!

Perhaps a question we might ask is this: "Are we with God?"

Why not come and meet God this weekend at the chapel service of your choice?

— **Chaplain (Navy Lt. Cmdr.) James Dowds**

Holiday Chapel Services

CAMP AMERICA

TODAY	3 P.M.	CATHOLIC MASS	TROOPERS' CHAPEL
	7 P.M.	CANDLELIGHT SERVICE	TROOPERS' CHAPEL
DEC. 25	3 P.M.	CATHOLIC MASS	TROOPERS' CHAPEL

NAVAL BASE CHAPEL

TODAY	6 P.M.	ADVENT PENANCE SERVICE
	7:30 P.M.	CHRISTMAS EVE PROTESTANT SERVICE
	MIDNIGHT	CHRISTMAS EVE MIDNIGHT MASS
DEC. 25	9 A.M.	CHRISTMAS DAY MASS
DEC. 31	6 P.M.	NEW YEAR'S EVE VIGIL MASS
	11 P.M.	WATCHNIGHT SERVICE
JAN. 1	9 A.M.	NEW YEAR'S DAY MASS

Worship Schedule

CAMP AMERICA

Sunday	9 a.m.	Protestant Service	Troopers' Chapel
	6:45 p.m.	Catholic Mass	Troopers' Chapel
	7:30 p.m.	Protestant Service	Bldg. 3203
Tuesday	7 p.m.	Alpha	<i>Resumes in January</i>
Wednesday	7:30 p.m.	Soul Survivor	Club Survivor
Thursday	7 p.m.	Thursday Night Ticket	<i>Resumes in January</i>
Saturday	3 p.m.	Saturday Vigil Mass	Troopers' Chapel

NAVAL BASE CHAPEL

Sunday	8 a.m.	Pentecostal Gospel	Sanctuary C
	9 a.m.	Catholic Mass	Main Chapel
	9 a.m.	Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints	Sanctuary A
	9:30 a.m.	Protestant Sunday School	
	11 a.m.	Protestant Service	Main Chapel
	1 p.m.	New Life Fellowship	Main Chapel
	5 p.m.	Pentecostal Gospel	Sanctuary C
Monday	7 p.m.	Prayer Group Fellowship	Fellowship Hall
	7 p.m.	Family Home Evening	Room 8
Wednesday	7 p.m.	Men's Bible Study	Fellowship Hall
Friday	1 p.m.	Islamic Prayer	Room 12
Saturday	5:30 p.m.	Vigil Mass	Main Chapel

For information on Jewish services call 2323

15 MINUTES OF FAME WITH SPC. HARONIT GOMEZ

Dedicated Trooper aims for Special Forces, battlefield experience

By Army Spc. Jody Metzger

Army Spc. Haronit Gomez, 2nd Battalion, 113th Infantry Regiment, has dedicated six years to the military and plans on many more. Enlisting as a cavalry scout in 1998, Gomez's focus is to be the Army's best Trooper. His goal: Special Forces.

The Wire: Why enlist?

Gomez: It was a dream I had since I was 12. I used to have the whole collection of G.I. Joes. I knew the military was for me.

Why the Army?

The Special Forces. It's something you don't do in civilian life. The training they do, the missions, working in small groups and teamwork. ... Air Force, too many books. Navy, I don't like the water. The Army and the Marines to me is the same thing. It's rough, we are out there in the dirt, digging holes, slipping in the dirt, rained on, and it's why I joined the military. I am rough. I can't work at a desk. I have too much energy.

What have you gotten out of the Army?

Discipline and teamwork. It's a better way of life instead of being on the streets. I have even taken advantage of school.

What will you study in college?

Computers. I want to be able to make my own programs.

What's good about being in the military?

Traveling. Although it is the National Guard, I have been all over the United States, Canada,

now Guantanamo Bay, Cuba and hopefully someday, Iraq.

What are your career plans?

Next year when I re-up I am going to go active for Special Forces.

First cavalry scout, now Special Forces, why such dangerous jobs?

It's what I like. Being in the woods, dangerous stuff. I wanted to do the real fighting, real training. I have always wanted to do this.

What does being a real Trooper mean to you?

A real Soldier, everybody has got a job to do. Special Forces is what I think the real Army is about. I wanted to see everything firsthand. I wanted to experience the real battlefield.

How do you feel about the mission?

Everybody plays his part. I feel good because I am doing something that aids in the cause. It makes me feel good.

What do you do here outside of your job?

I play basketball, volleyball and work out. I go to the Windjammer for salsa music and dancing. I am also going to school now at Columbia College for computer information systems.

How do you feel about what you do here in Guantanamo?

It is helping me because I am getting a lot of training that I wouldn't get back in the National Guard.

What do you do to keep your morale strong?

I am just focused on the mis-



Photo by Spc. Jody Metzger

sion, do my job, get up in the morning. When I am off duty I go to the gym, and I also play video games. It makes the time go by fast.

What is your civilian job?

I have two jobs. A personal trainer for Bally's Total Fitness Gym and at the (local) county community college in the Media Services department.

What does your family think about you being here?

They hate it because they are very close to me. They think I am the little baby. They know that it is good what I am doing here, for the country, and they are proud of us being here as a whole. They hope to see me home soon.

How do you feel about being away from home for Christmas?

It's going to be hard, but we all have to deal with it. I haven't been away from home for Christmas in about six years. You've got to keep your morale up and drive through it.

How is your Christmas spirit?

Christmas time you've got to play the music, joke, play around and just enjoy it because it's all we've got here.

What would your teammates say about you?

They think of me as a good Soldier. I do my job. The guys and friends think that I am one of the clowns of the company. You have to keep smiling, make people laugh.

What do you think about this mission?

We have a good commander and chain of command and right now we are leading. We are steps ahead of every company and that is because of our command. They keep us on our feet.

Do you feel like you are being pushed too hard sometimes?

Sometimes, but it is good for us. We are ahead of the game. When it comes to training, we are in the front. ■

GTMO Season's Greetings

● **American angels:** We have many angels. They stand together fearless and proud, ready to watch and protect us. Because of them we were able to survive that really bad day when buildings crumbled. The angels came together from every direction. They came together once again and stood tall, ready and willing to answer that important call once again, to defend us all. We thank God for these angels, our American troops.

● **To all the Soldiers at Gitmo Bay:** How proud we are of you! The dedication and loyalty you have to our great country is remarkable. We pray for you daily and your safe return home. May your holidays be shiny and bright. Have a blessed Christmas. Warmly, the Daileys.

● **Staff Sgt. Phyllis Brooks:** You are greatly missed. Thank you for the job you're doing. Santa doesn't have the clearance to grant my Christmas wish, which is to have you spending Christmas with me. Have a Merry Christmas and a happy New Year. P.S. Your plants are still alive and kicking. Senior Airman Maurice Bracey.

● **Jose Colon:** Hey Gorgeous, miss you & love you with all my heart. Have a wonderful Christmas & New Year, we are all thinking of you. Love Lillie.

● **Happy holidays to all, especially Pfc. Michael Dibble:** If we all think of the true meaning of Christmas, we can feel the joy and spirit of Christmas. I find it difficult to send Christmas presents to my Soldier because the things we want to give him, he does not need in GTMO, but I do want him to know that no matter the size of the present or lack of, does not compare to all the love I have in my heart for him and all of those who give of themselves to defend our country, no matter the hardships that it may cause.

Thank you all. May your holidays be the best they can be. Next year, Christmas
w i l l

mean so much more. May God's richest blessings be with you this holiday and always. Sincerely, Dena Donahoe.

● **Christmas greeting for Jennifer and Mike Downey and all other Soldiers:** Thank you for being willing to pay the cost to defend our precious freedom. Because of your military service, America is still the greatest nation on earth! Your nation owes you a debt that can never be repaid. May God bless you and may God bless America! Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from Robert, Jeri, Nicholas and Tyler Rath in Illinois.

● Merry Christmas to my husband, **Staff Sgt. Matthew Eastham, and all the soldiers of the 783rd MP BN!** We miss you all very much and are very proud of the job you are doing and the service you are providing. It is because of you all that we sleep safely at night. During this holiday season know that you all are thought of often. God bless, Michelle Eastham.

● Christmas and New Year greetings to **Staff Sgt. Charles Kniffen and the 783rd Military Police Battalion,** from Michigan. Wendy Kniffen.

● **Sgt. 1st Class Maresh:** Dear Daddy, Merry Christmas! We love you and miss you so much! We can't wait to see you again! Love, Jarrod, Adam & Mommy.

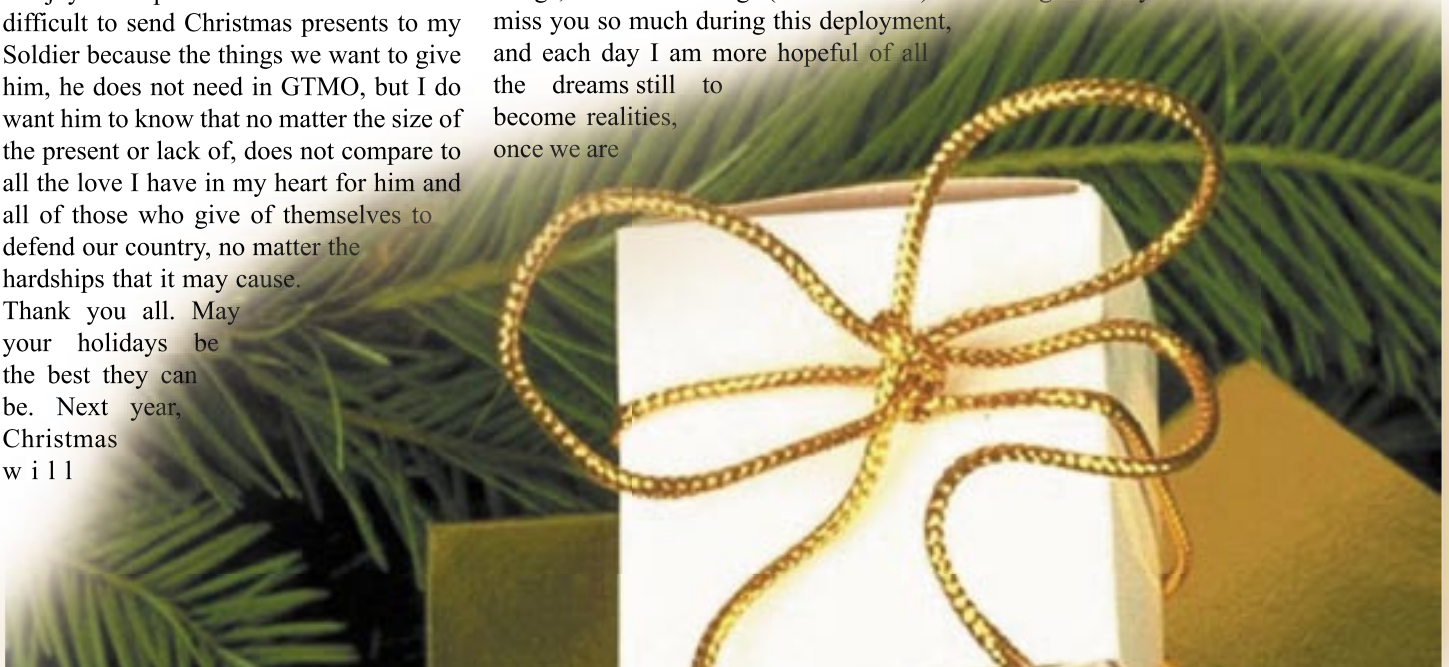
● **Sgt. Andrew Morche:** Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things (1 Corinthians). I miss you so much during this deployment, and each day I am more hopeful of all the dreams still to become realities, once we are

together again. With all my deepest love, I wish you happiness and a safe fun holiday. Love, Tiffany, Baby-to-be, Mocha & Daisey.

● **Spc. Kiam Parker:** I think about you every day. I look forward to your homecoming. We have a date to go dancing when you get back. I'll try to kick up my heels higher next time. Your ever lovin' Granny.

● **Tech. Sgt. Gregory Ruczko:** Even though we cannot be together this holiday season, we will always be together in our hearts! We love you so much and cannot wait for you to return home! We will be waiting for you with open arms! We all want to wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! Love, your family.

● **Staff Sgt. Wilfredo Ruiz:** Twinkle, twinkle little star/Why does it seem like we're so far/Here at home the house is gloomy/before you left it felt so roomy/no lights, no decorations/as you were sent off /to protect our nation/I'm glad to say/that as we pray/God has promised us that all will come to a peaceful end/and we will all be together as a happy, loving family/again. Staff Sgt. Ruiz, a.k.a., Honey, Dad, Daddy, as we all know you. Loving you always and forever your wife, Myrian; Children: Adina, Ilina, Jenni, Sean, Marcus; loving pets Godiva and Tabita ... and must we not forget your soon to be born grandbaby. ■



SAFETY

Guidance from the Army Safety Program about drinking alcohol at holiday parties includes: Don't drink alcohol in excess of one per hour. One beer is equivalent to one whiskey or one glass of wine. Don't drink alcohol on an empty stomach. Feel free to refuse alcohol regardless of pressure or encouragement to drink.

Enjoy the holidays without forgetting the real meaning

"Now is the winter of our discontent, made glorious summer by this sun of York."

—William Shakespeare, *Richard III, Act I, Scene I.*

Like Gloucester in the opening act of Shakespeare's *Richard III*, many people see winter as a time of discontent.

Separation from family and loved ones during the holiday season can cause anxiety in the heartiest of souls. The materialistic drive during the holiday season to sometimes spend more than we really can afford can create its own amount of discontent.

In spite of jokes on the subject, shopping is indeed addictive. People suffering from even mild depression can experience emotional release through instant gratification. For some, it's cigarettes or binge eating. For others, it's spending. And while there is short-term happiness gained by satisfying the addiction, ultimately the individual returns to a depressed state. Take care of your body, mind and spirit.

Do not allow the season to be a rationalization to abuse the most important entity of you, your body. Drink, eat and play in moderation. Spend time with those you love, do something nice for yourself, do something nice for someone and mend a broken relationship.

Like in all areas of life, we can learn to appreciate the balance of things. Just as there are times of the year to rush, so there are also times to slow down. The warm times are balanced with the cold—the light with the dark. And, most importantly, never neglect the spiritual aspects of the changing of the seasons.

Remember that life is a precious gift, and one must live every day to its fullest. Let go of any negative thoughts, worries and self-imposed limitations. Let these holidays mark a new beginning, and one day you can look back and thank yourself for allowing the sense of spiritual freedom into your life.

Avoiding a winter of discontent can be easily done if one remembers the reasons for the seasons.

—By Army Capt. L. Eduardo Caraveo

MWR

- Dec. 22: Pool Tournament, Liberty Center, 7 p.m.
- Dec. 26: Spades Tournament, Liberty Center, 4 p.m.
- Dec. 29: Talent Show, Windjammer, 6:30 p.m.
Dart Tournament, Liberty Center, 7 p.m.
- Dec. 31: New Year's Party (protocol), Bayview, 8 p.m.
New Year's Party (DJ), Goat Locker, 8 p.m.
New Year's Party (live band), Windjammer, 8 p.m.
- Jan. 14: Male Softball Tournament, Cooper Field, 6 p.m.
- Jan. 15: GTMO Half Marathon, Cable Beach, 5:30 ww
ww a.m.
- Jan. 19: Male Softball League (start), Cooper Field, 6 p.m.
- Jan. 20: Female Softball League (start), Cooper Field, 6 p.m.
- Jan. 22: Fishing Derby, Marina, 5 p.m.
- Jan. 30: North East Gate Tour, Camp America, 10 a.m.

DINING

Today	Lunch	Baked Fish Scandia
	Dinner	Surf 'n Turf
Saturday	Lunch	Roast Pork Tenderloin
	Dinner	Lobster Bisque Soup
Sunday	Lunch	Mexican Beef Wrap
	Dinner	Stuffed Flounder
Monday	Lunch	Scalloped Ham/Potatoes
	Dinner	Baked Salmon Steaks
Tuesday	Lunch	Turkey Pot Pie
	Dinner	Creole Scallops
Wednesday	Lunch	Pork Chalupa
	Dinner	El Rancho Stew
Thursday	Lunch	BBQ Spareribs
	Dinner	Beef Stroganoff
Friday	Lunch	Baked Cod Amantine
	Dinner	Boiled Crab Legs

HEALTH

Kittery Beach and Camp America **Joint Aid Stations (JAS)** offer comprehensive primary medical services to all Troopers.

The facilities are staffed with physician assistants, independent duty corpsmen and health care specialists who can address many types of medical problems. Services include orthopedics, pain management, dermatology, physical therapy, dentistry and periodic specialty clinics. Emergency medical issues are handled at both facilities in normal duty hours and after hours by on-call staff at the Kittery Beach JAS, open 24 hours, seven days a week. Navy Lt. Tom Judy, officer in charge, Army 1st Lt. Aaron Rall, executive officer, and the joint medical staff stand ready to assist with all medical needs and concerns. If you have any health concerns, require a prescription re-fill, need basic over-the-counter medications or just want a routine check-up, make an appointment or attend sick-call during the designated hours.

Kittery Beach JAS Hours: Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. through 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. through 3 p.m. except closed for training Wednesday afternoon. Saturday, 7 a.m. to 10 a.m. Sunday, closed. Emergencies, 24 hours, seven days a week.

Camp America Joint Aid Station Hours: Monday through Friday, 6 a.m. to 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. except closed for

CINEMA

DOWNTOWN LYCEUM		CAMP BULKELEY	
FRIDAY		FRIDAY	
7 p.m. <i>The Incredibles</i>	PG 115 min	8 p.m. <i>Friday Night Lights</i>	PG13 118 min
9 p.m. <i>Taxi</i>	PG13 97 min	10 p.m. <i>Alfie</i>	R 106 min
SATURDAY		SATURDAY	
7 p.m. <i>Spongebob Squarepants</i>	PG 82 min	8 p.m. <i>Incredibles</i>	PG 115 min
9 p.m. <i>Team America: World Police</i>	R 98 min	10 p.m. <i>Surviving Christmas</i>	PG13 92min
SUNDAY		SUNDAY	
7 p.m. <i>Ray</i>	PG 13 152 min	8 p.m. <i>Team America: World Police</i>	R 98 min
MONDAY		MONDAY	
7 p.m. <i>Alfie</i>	R 106 min	8 p.m. <i>SpongeBob Squarepants Movie</i>	PG 82 min
TUESDAY		TUESDAY	
7 p.m. <i>Incredibles</i>	PG 115 min	8 p.m. <i>Ray</i>	PG13 152 min
WEDNESDAY		WEDNESDAY	
7 p.m. <i>Friday Night Lights</i>	PG13 118 min	8 p.m. <i>Incredibles</i>	PG 115 min
THURSDAY		THURSDAY	
7 p.m. <i>The Grudge</i>	PG13 91min	8 p.m. <i>The Grudge</i>	PG13 19 min

BUSES

Chart shows bus stops and minutes after the hour when buses are scheduled. For example, the Sherman Avenue bus stops at East Caravella 03 and 33 minutes after the hour.

Sherman Avenue			Camp America/NEX		
First Street	00	30	Camp Alpha	00	20 40
East Caravella	03	33	NEX trailer	02	22 42
Marine Hill	05	35	Camp Delta 2	06	26 46
Post Office	10	40	TK 4	12	32 52
Windjammer	11	41	TK 1	16	36 56
NEX	14	44	Windjammer	23	43 03
Bulkeley Landing	17	47	NEX	30	50 10
Ferry landing	21	51	Windjammer	35	55 15
Commissions Bldg.	23	53	TK 1	40	00 20
Ordnance	26	56	TK 4	46	06 26
Bulkeley Landing	28	58	Camp Delta 1	52	12 32
NEX	32	02	Camp Alpha	00	20 40
Windjammer	36	06			
Post Office	37	07			
Marine Hill	41	11			
Hospital	48	18			
Windward Loop 1	52	22			

ACCURACY

The Wire strives for accuracy. When we fail, we accept responsibility for our errors and correct them.

If you see an error in *The Wire*, call Army Cpl. Jim Greenhill at 3592 or e-mail GreenhillJG@JTFGTMO.Southcom.mil.