

the Wire

" Honor Bound to Defend Freedom "

Volume 3, Issue 4

Friday, December 27, 2002

Army Chief of Staff spreads holiday cheer

By Sgt. Erin P. Viola

Serving your country during the holidays can be bitter sweet. But when you get a morale visit from Chief of Staff, U.S. Army, Gen. Eric K. Shinseki, who personally thanks you for your sacrifices, and a job well done, it can make missing home a bit more bearable. You remember why you are here and that no matter what your role is in this war on terrorism, we are all working towards the same goal and mission, to make our country and the world a safer place.

Shinseki visited Guantanamo Bay Naval Base the morning of Christmas Eve, as part of a major effort to see the 180,000 U.S. troops currently deployed in 120 countries around the world. Over the past few weeks, Shinseki has visited troops serving in

Afghanistan, Qatar, Kuwait, Kosovo, Bosnia, Egypt, just to name a few.

While here, Shinseki had breakfast with the troops at the Seaside Galley. Then he received a tour of Camp Delta, Camp America, and Camp Bulkeley.

"This is a mission that is focused on the folks behind the wire here. It is making sure they never have another chance to do it again," said Shinseki to a group of Joint Task Force soldiers at the fitness center at Camp Bulkeley.

Shinseki explained how important the mission here is and how a job well done has a great impact on the global network against terrorism. "We carry the burden for making sure the world is a better place. Our job worldwide is to take away their (terrorists) options and reduce the chance of any



Army Spc. Delaney T. Jackson

Chief of Staff of the Army, Gen. Shinseki, speaks to soldiers working out in the Bulkeley Fitness Center during his visit to Guantanamo Bay December 24, Christmas Eve.

surprise attacks," said Shinseki.

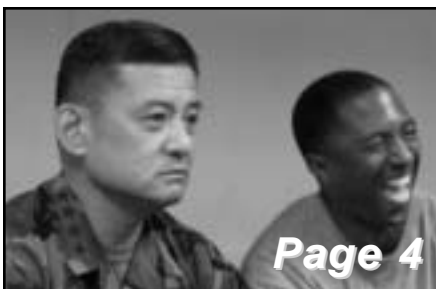
After a brief visit with the Chaplains, the Combat Stress Unit, and the Post Office at Camp America, Shinseki took some time to visit with more troops and find out what is going on in their lives. "He felt concerned that things are going

to run okay for us at home while we are away," said 1st Sgt. Ronald England of the 438th Military Police Company.

Spc. James Edwards of the 438th MP Company said he was very impressed with Shinseki. "I think he's really done a

See Shinseki, page 5.

Inside the Wire...



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Joint Task Force Guantanamo
Command Sgt. Maj. George L. Nieves

Message from Cmd. Sgt. Maj. Nieves

Respect. *Treat people as they should be treated.* The Army offers this as one of its seven core values, but this emphasis is not unique to the Army or any branch of services. **Respect** is a fundamental value of most (if not all) of the world's major religions. You may be more familiar with this value as the "Golden Rule" - do unto others as you would have others do unto you.

Respect is also the basis for this excerpt from the Declaration of Independence that states "all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness."

So how does this core value, **Respect**, play a role within the military services and, more specifically, how does it apply to the troopers of JTF Guantanamo? Early in basic training, troopers learn to **Respect** rank and to render proper military courtesies. In the conduct of our mission, we learn to treat each other with

Respect. As we grow as leaders, we learn that **Respect** is a two-way street. In order to be respected, we must treat our subordinates with **Respect**.

The majority of our troopers live eight to 10 to a set of quarters. There are times when we may get on each others nerves because of the closeness we are experiencing. Perhaps the most difficult lesson to learn is to treat our co-workers/roommates with **Respect**.

I ask that everyone assigned to the JTF examine their own behavior in your relationships at work, at home, and in the Guantanamo Bay community. Are you treating others the way they should be treated -- the way you would like to be treated? Is **Respect** one of your core values? Treat each other with **Respect**, not because it is mandated, but because it is the right thing to do. Do your part to make JTF-Guantanamo a work environment free of hostility, harassment, or discrimination. Anything less is unacceptable.

OPSEC Corner

Have you ever eaten in a restaurant and couldn't help but listen to the conversation from your noisy neighbor?

How about listening to someone who just can't seem to keep quiet? Before you know it, you've heard their life story in five minutes, but it seems like an eternity to you.

By simply listening to the conversations of others, you can **elicit** all types of personal, professional, and/or operational information. Elicitation is the means,

through conversation, where you can obtain this information from a person without that person being knowledgeable of your purpose.

Too often, we talk far too much, at the wrong times, and in the most inappropriate places. Our vital mission here is much too important to be compromised by careless talk. You never really know who is listening to your conversations, whether you're in public or when speaking on the phone.

Our adversaries attempt to **elicit** infor-

mation from us everyday using all types of means. At times, they may even directly question you after you've spoken.

Remember, talking is our primary means of communication, however, we must make a collective and, more importantly, individual effort to safeguard and police **what** we say.

If someone other than another service member approaches you and questions you about our mission, units, or anything regarding our overall operation, you have an obligation to report it immediately.

In the meantime, remember that your conversations are never confidential in public or on the phones, especially in our environment. So, do your part to eliminate our adversaries ability to elicit information.

'Think OPSEC'

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2,100 copies

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The Wire is produced by the 362nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment assigned to the Joint Information Bureau at Joint Task Force Guantanamo. This publication is printed under the provisions provided in Army Regulation 360-1 and does not reflect the views of the Department of Defense or the personnel within.

'Report questionable questions.'

JTF-Guantanamo Counter
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JTF-Guantanamo OPSEC /
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x5029

Home for the holidays

By Chaplain (Lt. Col.)
Herb Heavner,
JTF-GTMO Command Chaplain

Milford, Michigan; Howard AFB, Panama Canal Zone; Kansas City, Missouri; Vermontville, New York; Neodesha, Kansas. These are just some of the places that I have called "home" through the years. The first name on the list, Milford, is actually my hometown.

It's not a big town, although it has grown considerably since I graduated from Milford High; however, it is a town that just feels like home. The best place to eat in town is the "Appeteaser"--they've been

around for over twenty years. Milford's one claim to fame is that the General Motors Proving Ground is there, where all great cars are tested before they hit production.

Every soldier who is assigned to Joint Task Force Guantanamo would have a similar hometown to describe. They would tell you about their favorite store, their favorite activity, or their special memory about growing up in a great town. During the holiday season it is very natural to think about those hometowns. Many would rather be back in those towns than

see Holidays, page 5.



What's up, Doc?

By Maj. Mack O'Quinn
85th Medical Det. Combat / Operational Stress Control Unit

Suicide is the ending of one's own life. People who consider or commit suicide often feel that they do not have any other option but death in order to eliminate the pain that they are feeling or to escape the situation that they are in.

Most people who consider suicide are ambivalent or undecided about killing themselves. They do not want to die, but they are uncertain or unsure of any other viable solution to their situations. Many who commit suicide do so accidentally; what they intended as a dramatic, but non-

lethal cry for help unintentionally becomes fatal. Many others are so depressed, distraught, socially withdrawn that they are incapable of effectively seeking or reaching out for help. Other suicidal persons who are capable of reaching for assistance are reluctant to do so because either they are unaware that assistance is available, or because they feel that they will be shamed by other persons if they do seek help.

For many service members, the potential for suicide may be somewhat higher on deployments than at home station because they are away from family and friends with whom they may feel more comfortable in confiding their problems.

see Stress, page 5.

This Week in History:

Dec. 28, 1941

Seabees created by Moreell

On this day, Rear Admiral Ben Moreell requests authority from the Bureau of Navigation to create a contingent of construction units able to build everything from airfields to roads under battlefield conditions. These units would be known as the "Seabees"--for the first letters of Construction Battalion.

The men chosen for the battalions were not ordinary inductees or volunteers--they all had construction-work backgrounds. The first batch of recruits who made the cut had helped build the Boulder Dam, national highways, and urban skyscrapers; had dug subway tunnels; and had worked

in mines and quarries. Some had experience building ocean liners and aircraft carriers.

Approximately 325,000 men, from 60 different trades, ages 18 to 60, would go on to serve with the Seabees by the end of the war. The officers given the authority to command these men were also an elite crew, derived from the Civil Engineer Corps. Of the more than 11,000 officers in the Corps all together, almost 8,000 would serve with the construction units.

Although the Seabees were technically supposed to be support units, they were also trained as infantrymen, and they often found themselves in combat with the enemy in the course of their construction projects.

They were sent to war theaters as far flung as the Azores, North Africa, the

Mediterranean, the Pacific, and the beaches of Normandy.

Some of the Seabees' feats became legendary. They constructed huge airfields and support facilities for the B29 Superfortress bombers on Guam, Saipan, and Tinian, as well as the ports needed to bring in the supplies for the bombing of Japan.

The Seabees also suffered significant casualties in the process of providing innovative new pontoons to help the Allies land on the beaches of Sicily. During D-Day, the Seabees' demolition unit was among the first ashore. Their mission: to destroy the steel and concrete barriers the Germans had constructed as obstacles to invasion.

The Seabees' motto was "We Build, We Fight."

(Compiled from HistoryChannel.com)

Worship Services

Catholic

Main Chapel

Daily	6:30 a.m.	Cobre Chapel
Weds Chapel	5 p.m.	Rica Cobre
Friday	5 p.m.	Rosary
Sat	4:30 p.m.	Reconciliation
	5:30 p.m.	Mass
Sun	9 a.m.	Mass

Protestant

Main Chapel

Weds	7 p.m.	Men's Bible Study*
Thurs	7:15 p.m.	Youth Fellowship*
Sun	9:30 a.m.	Adult Bible Study Service
	11 a.m.	Bible Study*
	6:30 p.m.	Praise and Worship Service
	7:30 a.m.	

* Fellowship Hall located in Chapel Complex

Camp America

Weds	7 p.m.	Service
Sun	9 a.m.	Service
	6 p.m.	Service

Islamic

Fri	1 p.m.	Classroom 12 Chapel Complex
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Jewish

Fri	8 p.m.	Fellowship Hall
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Camp America Church Bus schedule:		
Sun.	8 a.m.	Windward Loop
	8:15 a.m.	Tierra Kay

The bus will return immediately following worship.

See page 10 for the holiday service schedule.

A simple way for JTF to help Guantanamo Bay

Story and photos
by Spc. Lisa L. Gordon

Looking for a fast and easy way to contribute to the quality of life here at Guantanamo Bay? Look no further, because the recycling center is located right off of Sherman Avenue. While most people know that recycling helps the environment, many more probably don't realize the adverse effects of not recycling. In a place like this where space is limited, recycling is of crucial importance.

Not only does recycling help slow down on use of materials such as glass and plastic, but it also keeps waste from literally piling up around us.

Although it is something everyone should be concerned with, recycling has special importance for Joint Task Force personnel stationed at Guantanamo Bay. Shirley Sebung, solid waste manager for the recycling center expressed concern over the large percentage of service members who do not recycle. "Here it's especially important because of logistics. Our landfill is filling up rapidly because a lot of things are going out there that shouldn't

be. We ship out what we can but there's still way too much going to the landfill...it's probably three quarters of the way full," said Sebung. As far as what would happen if the landfill were to be completely filled up; "it's a good question," said Sebung. In this situation, it seems like the best defense is a good offense. All it takes is everyone doing their part to contribute to the recycling effort.

The good news is that recycling takes very little time and effort. The recycling center accepts a variety of commonly used household items such as plastic, metal, batteries, glass, and computer parts. Tires can also be turned in.

Many Guantanamo Bay housing areas have door to door curbside pick up on Tuesdays. Shortly after the New Year, recycling bins will be placed near the dumpsters in the neighborhoods that do not receive curb side pick up. Three bins will be placed at each dumpster: one for glass, one for metal, and one for plastic. It's just as simple as throwing the recyclable materials into the bins instead of in the trash. Service members are also welcome to bring materials directly to the recycling center. Sebung says it's not even necessary to separate the materials from one another, because the center's staff will be more than happy to do it.

JTF service members reap the benefits when they decide to help the environment by recycling. They receive a five-cent deposit for every aluminum can and beer bottle they bring to the center, and as an added incentive, they are also given a ticket every time they bring in recyclables. When a service member collects 20 tickets, he or she can turn them in for a free T-shirt. While free T-shirts and the return of deposit money is welcome by all, perhaps the biggest reward a JTF service member could get out of recycling is knowing that they have really made a difference. After



Shirley Sebung points to a pile of metal waiting to be baled at Guantanamo Bay's Recycling Center

glass bottles have been ground up they take up less than six times the amount of space they would have used if they had not been ground up.

With holiday parties coming to an end, JTF service members are going to have a lot of cleaning up to do. This might be a good time to pitch in and make a resolution to help not only the base, but the world. As Sebung said, "It's for your future. People have to start thinking about that. It sounds corny, but it's the right thing to do. There's no reason not to recycle...none."

You can improve JTF Guantanamo

The Joint Task Force will conduct a command climate survey in January to get an accurate sense of JTF personnel concerns, and allow the Commanding General the opportunity to address those concerns.

Individual units will receive the survey, which will take five to 10 minutes to complete. Individuals will seal the surveys, which the Inspector General will collect and analyze.

This survey is your opportunity to address any issues whether or not they are covered on the survey.

Complete the survey; it's your chance to help improve Joint Task Force Guantanamo.



Shirley Sebung shows off the T-shirt the recycling center gives to service members who collect 20 recycling tickets



Gen Shinseki shows off his muscles with Spc. Seneca Stevens (center) and Spc. Monroe Kelso (right), both with A Co. 2nd Batt. 116th Infantry Regiment, the Bulkeley Fitness Center.

Shinseki, from page 1.

lot of things that Generals before only talked about doing. A perfect example is the beret. The change wasn't his idea, it wasn't his plan, but he implemented it. I think that he is an outstanding leader and is definitely taking the Army in the right direction," said Edwards.

The main purpose of Shinseki's visit was to make sure the troops know that they play a vital role in the war on terrorism. Although the front line in this war on terrorism

may not be as clear-cut as the front lines of previous wars, the effort of every troop has an impact and makes a difference.

JTF Personnel can access General Shinseki's visit and other photos on NIPR at

**\\Jgfpaf632b11\Public\PAO
JTF GTMO Photo Scrapbook**

Stress, from page 3.

Because they are more familiar with the service member, family members and friends can often detect changes in the service member's behavior more readily than can co-workers.

Personal problems often seem far more painful and far more uncontrollable when away from home and love ones.

The tragedy of suicide is that we lose a human life, family and friends are devastated, and that all of this tremendous pain and grief is entirely preventable because suicide is preventable. The key to the prevention of suicide is the early identification of potentially suicidal persons and getting them the assistance that they require.

We all can, and must play a part in the prevention of suicide. Suicide is preventable, and all service members must be proactive in identifying and assisting oth-

ers who might be suicidal. We must know the warning signs of an impending suicide, and how to respond to someone who is suicidal. Leaders must encourage their soldiers to seek assistance when they are experiencing personal difficulties. Leaders must also encourage soldiers to take care of buddies.

If you suspect that someone is suicidal, ask if they are thinking of suicide.

Do not keep deadly secret. Immediately inform your chain-of-command, a chaplain, the Combat Stress Control (CSC) team, the Department of Behavioral Health at the Guantanamo Bay Naval Hospital that you believe the person to be suicidal.

If the person has harmed themselves or you suspect that they may have harmed themselves, **immediately** telephone 911 for emergency assistance. If you are located in Camp America, after calling 911, also contact the Joint Aid Station (JAS) at phone: 3543.

Holidays, from page 3.

on a Caribbean island which seems to be too hot most of the time, and doesn't have a whole lot to offer in the "things to do" category. However, there is a way where each and every one of us can feel like we belong here.

We do that by admitting that we cannot hope for any degree of success in our mission by relying only on ourselves. We do that by recognizing that individual success relies on no less a power source than God Himself. He is the one who can help you to be a success. He is the one who can help keep you from getting discouraged and defeated. He is the one who can help your loved ones back in that hometown to make

it through this time of separation.

Trust God. Rely upon His promises. My personal paraphrase of a well known New Testament verse written by the Apostle Paul is this: "I can do anything that I need to do through the power of God in my life."

Believe me, I'm looking forward to returning to Milford, my hometown. I know that you are anxious to get back to your hometown and your families as well. By God's power and by His grace we will be able to do just that.

God bless you and have a great holiday season. May the God of power also grant peace to this world, enabling each of us to spend next year's holiday season in our own hometown!

Signs of a possible suicide:

If a person:

- Appears depressed,
- Threatens suicide,
- Talks about wanting to die,
- Shows marked changes in behavior, appearance or mood,
- Abuses drugs or alcohol,
- Has experienced a significant relationship loss (a break-up or divorce),
- Suffers a loss of social status, such as a demotion,
- Deliberately injures self,
- Gives away possessions,
- Withdraws from society and other people,
- Becomes apathetic and loses interest in activities that are normally pleasurable.

Then you should act:

- Do not leave the person alone.
- Take threats seriously.
- Answer cries for help.
- If you suspect that someone is suicidal, ask if they are thinking of suicide.
- Do not keep deadly secrets, immediately inform one of the contacts below:
- Emergency, phone: 911.
- Combat Stress Control Team
x3566 (pager 7-2090, x055 or x112)
- Chaplains: 3202/5362.
- Joint Aid Station, Camp America
x3543.
- Dept of Behavioral Health, Naval Hospital, Guantanamo x7-2920.

Christmas Day at Guantanamo Bay

By Spc. Alan L. Knesek and Spc. Delaney T. Jackson

Joint Task Force Guantanamo service members spent Christmas Day here in many different ways. Some people spent their day in a boat on the bay fishing.

Others had a long day of work with a good night's sleep ahead of them. Others relaxed and enjoyed the day off. No matter how the holiday was spent, whether calling home or catching a 75 lb. tarpon, it was spent with fellow service members who are all away from home and who are all doing their jobs here.



Photo By Spc. Alan L. Knesek

Spc. William Wooten, A. Co. 2nd Plt., 2nd Batt. 116 Inf. Regt., spends his Christmas morning in the Bulkeley Fitness Center working out.



Photo By Spc. Alan L. Knesek

Spc. Scott Falwell, B.Co., 2nd Batt., 116 Inf. Regt., calls his wife in Lynchburg, Virginia on Christmas morning out of Camp America



Photo By Spc. Alan L. Knesek

Army Sgt. Christopher Smith, C. Co., 2nd Batt., 116 Inf. Regt., refills a fuel container in Camp America during his guard shift near Windmill Beach.



Spc. Alan L. Knesek

Army Master Sgt. John Laudonio, 785th MP Co. checks the oil of his Humvee in Tierra Kay during his day off.



Photo By Spc. Delaney T. Jackson

(from left ro right) Army Sgt. John Dudley, Staff Sgt. Michael Golladay, Spc. Jason Hanna, and Spc. Walton James, all from B. Co. 2nd Batt., 116th Inf. Regt. sit outside of their SEAhuts in Camp Bulkeley, enjoying the day off in the sun.



Photo By Spc. Delaney T. Jackson

Christmas tree in Quick Hall Galley adorned with Christmas cards from school children around the United States.



Photo By Spc. Delaney T. Jackson

(left to right, all 132nd MP Co.) Army Staff Sgt. Craig Nobles, Staff Sgt. Mike McGowan and Staff Sgt. James 'Land Mine' Lindler, prepare their rental boat for a full day of fishing on the Bay.



Photo By Spc. Delaney T. Jackson

(left to right) Quick Hall Cashier Marcia Burrell hands a Christmas candy bag, put together by ACC workers, to Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Anndi Miskell, Port Services.

Military Police protect their own

Story and photos by Sgt. Erin Viola

Many of us are familiar with the MRE (meal, ready to eat). Our first introduction to one was most likely in basic training. In the beginning, we thought they were kind of cool with the nifty little heater and condiment packet. Who knew you'd get Tabasco sauce or Skittles for that matter? Soon we'd look at each MRE with a critical eye, plotting and planning barter agreements ... jalapeno cheese for peanut butter, or M&M's for pound cake. Eventually, the novelty wore off and it just became a plain old MRE, nothing too exciting.

There's more than just nutrition packed into those sealed brown pouches.

Have you ever looked at the contents of an MRE from the point of view of a terrorist? If so, you may have realized all the possibilities that exist for the creation of make-shift weapons. Yes ... you can make weapons out of MREs. And since the detainees here, (many of whom are suspected terrorists), receive three meals a day, one of which is an MRE, there is a system in place to prevent the detainees



Spc. Eric Aviles, 344th Military Police Company, Spc. Carlos Sanchez, 984th Military Police Company, Sgt. Gary Swathell, 300th Military Police Brigade, and Spc. Jerry White, 785th Military Police Battalion, sanitize MREs that will be served as the lunch meal to the detainees.

from making anything out of the MRE, that might harm the military police who guard the detainees.

Everyday, a team of military police "sanitize" hundreds of MREs that are brought to the detainees. Special arrangements were made with the manufacturer to have the MREs made without the cardboard, or heating units, but some additional items still need to be taken out. "These are the new MREs. We call them new because there is no cardboard on the main meal or on the dessert. If you look there is no accessory pack, no extra stuff like candy", said Spc. Eric Aviles of the 344th Military Police Company. "Our job is to remove the cider, toilet paper, plastic wrapper off the spoon, and any extra stuff like salt ... they only get one salt," said Aviles.

Aviles also said that the cardboard could be used as a shank. A detainee could put toothpaste on it, let it dry up and it is a weapon. He also explained that the MPs who deliver the food account for everything going in and out of the cell. For example if there is one plastic spoon and four wrappers going in, that is exactly what will be taken out of the cell.

The process is very thorough Aviles explained. After Aviles sanitizes the MRE,

it is then inspected by the noncommissioned officer-in-charge. The "sanitized" MRE is checked one more time by the MPs in the wire who deliver the food.

The process works, with MPs outside the wire making it safe for MPs inside the wire.



The military police also must check the laundry that is delivered to the detainees. Sgt. Gary Swathell, 300th Military Police Brigade puts together a bundle of clean laundry that will be delivered to the detainees. Each detainee gets a complete clean set that includes: one sheet, two towels, one washcloth, one orange bottom (pants), one orange bottom (shorts), and one orange top (shirt).



Once the plastic spoon bag, toilet paper and spiced cider is removed from the MRE, it is considered fully sanitized and can be served to the detainees.

Forty-six years of service and counting

Story and photo by
Spc. Lisa L. Gordon

The notion of "exemplary service" is not a foreign concept to Joint Task Force service members stationed at Guantanamo Bay. As military personnel we are trained to be hard working and determined individuals whose loyalty never waivers. These values and the ability to put the mission above all else is what allows us to perform all of our duties to the best of our ability, despite any hardships we may face. Examples of this kind of dedication are prevalent on base, but they don't exist solely within the realm of the armed forces. Gabriel Marsh, a Cuban citizen and assistant food service officer at the Naval Hospital, has been commuting to Guantanamo Bay for 46 years.

Marsh is one of only nine Cuban commuters left at Guantanamo Bay and says he believes he is the senior civilian working for the Navy. It all started when Marsh was only 14 years old. His father worked at Guantanamo Bay's Naval Hospital at the time, but money was tight, and the family was having trouble making ends meet. "I was going to school at that time and life wasn't easy in Cuba. It was hard to get a job. I have two brothers and a sister, and

my father was working here but it wasn't enough money to support the family, so I had to start young and quit school. My father was the one who got me the job here," said Marsh. Despite having to help support his family at such a young age, Marsh did not allow his job to interfere with his education. After returning from a long day at work and an even longer commute, Marsh attended night classes and was eventually able to get his high school diploma.

During a typical day, Marsh spends about four hours of his time commuting to and from work.

His day begins at 4 a.m. and by 4:30 a.m., he's on a bus traveling from his home in Guantanamo City to the base. Upon arriving at the gate, he gets off the bus for a standard search of his person and belongings and arrives at the Naval Hospital around 6 a.m. About 12 hours later he returns home from work. Marsh says the most difficult aspect of his job is waking up so early in the morning, but he doesn't allow the long hours of traveling to get him down. He says that even though he'd be able to get a job in Cuba, he would rather keep commuting to Guantanamo Bay because he wouldn't be able to make a salary comparable to that of what he makes



Even after a two hour commute Marsh is still all smiles when working at the Naval Hospital Galley at Guantanamo Bay.

here on base. In addition to the money, Marsh is genuinely happy with his long standing position at the Naval Hospital Galley and plans on spending the rest of his career in his current position. Marsh said, "I love to work in here. I started here when I was 14 and I'm 62 now, so everything I've got is tied to the United States of America. It feels great...and this is the best food on the base."

Man on the Street

Compiled by Spc. Alan L. Knesek and Spc. Delaney Jackson

This week's question:

What is the best holiday gift you have ever received and why?



Spc. Hussein Ebied
C. Co. 2nd/116th Inf.

"I'd have to say the gift that's still coming from my girlfriend since I'm really looking forward to that and I really miss her."



Private James Loomis
B. Co 2nd/116th Inf.

"I received a really good book, last Christmas, it was called *Hinds' Feet on High Places*, it was a Christian inspirational book and I liked it."



Spc. Walton James
B. Co 2nd/116th Inf.

"Coming here, ... Christmas on the beach."



Army Sgt. Samuel Rameo
984th MP Co.

"Probably a home made one. My little brother made me a card that he did himself. He was 7 when he did it. That was probably the best."



Army Staff Sgt. Laura Frost
785th MP Co.

"I guess right now this year would be the trip to GTMO Bay. I would call that a gift."

“It's too cold up there, I want to extend.”

By Army Spc. George Allen

Senior Airman Tony Skaff came to the U.S. to go to college.

After a year in school, he decided to join the Air Force as a medical lab technician.

Skaff is from Lebanon, and grew up speaking Arabic and French - thus, although his job in the Air Force is lab technician, here at Guantanamo Bay, he works as a translator.

"I wasn't too surprised," said Skaff. "I came here knowing what I was going to be doing ... but it's still an experience - something I'll probably never get to do again."

Skaff was having breakfast when the first plane crashed on Sept. 11, 2001. "I knew I was going somewhere, I just didn't think I was headed for Cuba," he said.

Unlike Guantanamo Bay's tropical holidays, Skaff's home-station - Malmstrom Air Force Base in Montana is about 10 to 15 degrees below zero right now. "We have about nine months of winter, it's too cold up there," he said.

To kill time at Malmstrom, Skaff and his friends head up to Calgary or Edmonton, Canada on the weekends. "There's not much to do in Montana, so we can go up there and see a big city," said Skaff. Here at Guantanamo, Skaff

tested for his skipper's license. "I usually go on a boat every week, and the interpreters usually have a weekly party, or bowling, or we go to the Navy Exchange."

Having been here for about nine weeks, Skaff still believes that Guantanamo is better than Montana, and wants to extend.

Another thing that Skaff has noticed is that "The Army is very military, we're a bit more laid back in the Air Force," but as far as working in a joint operation, "everyone knows their job, and things run smoothly," said Skaff.

Skaff spent 14 months in an Air Force Tech School to become a laboratory technician, training which is the equivalent to two years of college. He was then eligible to test for the American Society of Clinical Pathology Medical Lab Technician License.

"Normally you have to do the full two years of college to be able to take the test, but with the Air Force, I could take it straight out of Tech School," said Skaff. He received the license, which is required to work as a lab tech in a civilian hospital.

Once Skaff finishes the final year of his four-year enlistment, he plans to get a degree as a lab technician, and possibly a commission. "If I get a commission, I'll probably do 20," said Skaff.

Movie Schedule

Camp Bulkeley

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PG13 - 94 min

10 p.m. *Trapped*
R - 106 min

Sat., Dec. 28

8 p.m. *The New Guy*
PG13 - 89min

10 p.m. *Heist*
PG13 - 110min

Sun., Dec. 29

8 p.m. and 10 p.m.
One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest R - 133 min

Mon., Dec. 30

8 p.m. *We Were Soldiers*
R - 138 min

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Holiday Worship Services

Protestant:

Dec. 31, 9 p.m. Main Chapel Fellowship Hall

Catholic:

Dec. 31

5:30 p.m. Main Chapel
7 p.m. Camp America
Wooden Chapel

Jan. 1

9 a.m. Main Chapel
10 a.m. Camp America
White Tent
12:15 a.m. Leeward, Bldg. 525

Smoking Cessation Classes

Naval Hospital, Guantanamo Bay.

The class will meet once a week for four weeks and will offer a variety of tools to assist smokers in quitting their smoking habit. To sign up, call Central Appointments at 7-2110.

Joint Task Force gains nutritious guidance



Navy Lt. Donna Sporrer wears a 20 pound "fat vest" to illustrate the physical challenges caused by excess weight.

Story and photo by
Spc. Lisa L. Gordon

With Christmas behind us and New Year's Day just ahead, many Joint Task Force service members may be feeling the burden of a few extra pounds. While trimming off excess weight is a difficult task in itself, many would argue that a deployment makes it even more challenging. When food from the galley and meal, ready to eat (MREs) make up the bulk of a service member's diet, going light after the holidays may be easier said than done. Even though it may be tough, it's not impossible, and help is available at Guantanamo Bay's Naval Hospital.

Navy Lt. Donna Sporrer, registered dietician and head of the Nutrition Management Department at the Naval Hospital is available for consultation on issues such as weight loss, metabolism, and cholesterol control. While Sporrer typically meets with small groups of service members at the Naval Hospital, she will be starting a new program to include JTF personnel living in Camp America and Camp Bulkeley in mid January. The program is still in the planning stages, but Sporrer

says she plans on going to the camps to hold education classes on weight loss and counsel individuals on issues such as diabetes and high blood pressure.

Sporrer compares JTF's new program to the Navy's ten week "Ship Shape" program where a series of classes covers a variety of health related topics such as nutrition, stress, and smoking, among others. "We're looking to modify that to meet the needs of JTF. I'll be doing nutrition education through the form of helping troops make the right choices in the galley and proper portion sizes. Anybody who wants the education ... it will be available for them," said Sporrer.

Service members tend to eat more when they have frequent meals at the galley because they may have access to a larger variety of foods than they have at home. Portion control is also one of the biggest issues for many service members struggling with their weight. Sporrer encourages service members to put less on their tray when going through the line at the galley and suggests a plate containing one serving of meat, a starch, a vegetable, and a salad. Eating a piece of fruit before meals may also help a service member consume fewer calories in the long run. Sporrer suggests, "Eat a piece of fruit first so it can hit your stomach and take up space. That way, you're not hungry enough by the end of the meal to grab a dessert. Plus the fruit has the fiber in it that you need." Eating slow can also help with feeling full because it takes the brain 20 minutes to receive the message that hunger has been satisfied. Although eating well is key to maintaining good health, exercise also plays an important part.

Balanced nutrition and exercise "go hand in hand. Studies show that people who lose weight and keep it off are those that maintain their level of activity. Exercise is going to help maintain your muscle mass, keep your metabolism up, and help you burn extra calories," said Sporrer. With all the diet and nutrition advice out there it may be difficult to know how to lose fat and gain muscle. Many of us have tried different "miracle diets" and "fool proof" exercise plans that just don't work when put to the test. Sporrer cautions JTF service members against trying "fad" diets in an attempt to slim down and says she sees a lot of personnel trying high protein, low carbohydrate diets. "The bottom line is, you need carbohydrates for fuel. It gives you energy. If you're trying to stay fit on a low carbohydrate diet, you're not going to have the energy to sustain the level of activity you need." Another thing service members on these diets may not realize is that consuming too much protein can cause wear and tear on the kidneys.

When trying to lose weight or just be a little healthier, it's always better to seek the advice of a trained professional. Now that kind of guidance is available to all service members under the JTF Guantanamo umbrella. That next physical fitness test can't be too far away. Anyone who is interested in attending a class or meeting with Lt. Sporrer for a one-on-one consultation at Camp America may call her at 7-2270.



Visual aids used by Navy Lt. Donna Sporrer to assist service members with portion control.

15 Minutes of Fame...

with Spc. Hussein Ebied

C. Co., 2nd Batt., 116th Inf. Regt.

Standing Guard in Camp America

Interview by
Spc. Alan L. Knesek

Q: How old are you?

A: I'm 20 years old.

Q: How long have you been here at Guantanamo Bay?

A: Two weeks and a few days so far.

Q: How come you are working on Christmas?

A: Well we just got here and because of the rotation, we just happen to be working on this day.

Q: If you were back home what would you be doing today?

A: I would probably be spending Christmas day with my girlfriend back in Richmond, Virginia.

Q: How long have you and your girlfriend been going out?

A: I've been going out with my girlfriend, for two years now.

Q: What is the best holiday gift you have ever received and why?

A: I'd have to say the gift that's still coming from my girlfriend, since I'm really looking forward to that and I really miss her. I really don't know what it is, but it's a surprise. I am sure it will be the best holiday gift I can get.

Q: I notice there are a lot of iguanas roaming around where you guys live and work. How do you feel about them being everywhere?

A: They are awesome, they are really cool. I call them all Iggy ... my friends Iggy.

Q: What do you think you will be doing for New Year's Eve?



Photo By Spc. Alan L. Knesek

Spc. Hussein Ebied, C. Co. 2nd Batt. 116th Inf. Regt. stands guard at Camp America's gate to Windmill Beach.

A: It all depends on schedule as well as the rotation, hopefully we'll have the time off, but if not we will be back here again.

Q: Did you get to meet Gen. Shinseki when he visited the other day?

A: No, I was actually in the towers when he came in, so I didn't really get to see him, but a few of my friends got to meet him.

Q: What did they think of him?

A: They thought he looked like a really high-speed soldier, a real leader.

Q: What was the best movie you have

seen at the Bulkeley movie theater?

A: The Bourne Identity, it was an amazing movie, but I have been waiting for the Lord of the Rings for awhile now. I have read the books and me and my girlfriend love the whole storyline so I am really excited about that playing here.

Q: So how long have you been in the Army?

A: I have been in the Army National Guard for the past three years, this is the first time I have done any active duty.

Q: What do you do back home?

A: I am a student at James Madison University. I actually grew up in New York City, but then I moved to Virginia when I started going to school and joined the Virginia National Guard to help pay for college. I work at Applebees as a waiter, and at school in an office job. I have been trying to build up my resume as much as possible.

Q: What is your major?

A: I am a business major, right now I am declared as marketing, but of course that might change. I am pretty early in my schooling. I plan to do post graduate work, it might be getting a master's in business or law school.

Q: What have you been doing with your free time here?

A: I go to the gym every day when ever I have the chance, I go to the bulkeley movie theater to watch movies as much as possible, I call my girlfriend when ever I get the chance and I go to the beach. On my time off, I know how to spend it pretty well.

You can improve JTF Guantanamo

The Joint Task Force will conduct a command climate survey in January to get an accurate sense of JTF personnel concerns, and allow the Commanding General the opportunity to address those concerns.

Individual units will receive the survey, which will take five to 10 minutes to complete. Individuals will seal the surveys, which the Inspector General will collect and analyze.

This survey is your opportunity to address any issues whether or not they are covered on the survey.

Complete the survey; it's your chance to help improve Joint Task Force Guantanamo.

Attention Church Go-ers!

Protestant Worship Service at Camp America will be at 9 a.m. starting Sunday.

Bus times:

Windward Loop: 8 a.m.

(On the hill, front entrance)

Tierra Kay: 8:15 a.m.

(Main Entrance)

Go to College!

Svetlana Dell

Area Coordinator

City Colleges of Chicago

Programs for the Military

USNBGTMO: 011-5399-3999

Fax: 011-5399-5748

Email: citycolleges@gtmo.net

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