

THE WIRE

A JTF Journal

Fireworks light Gitmo skies
PSU on patrol
Navy Individual Augmentees
J-6: The fight for OPSEC

Surviving Family Separation

**Sgt. Maj.
Donald W. Troxler, Jr.**

525th Military Police Battalion
Training, Plans and Operations Sergeant Major

Over the past 22 years of military service, I have spent countless periods of time separated from my family. Because of these separations we have learned some survival skills. Here are some tips that led to the success of our family surviving separation.

Be consistent. Family practices that occurred when together apply when separated from one another. Use modern technology to your advantage and use the support groups the military has provided for us at home as well as those who are on deployment.

We must live what we believe. My wife and I believe that our marriage is blessed and is a bond whether together or temporarily separated. We practice our faith towards one another by seeking and making every opportunity to share in our unity with each other, separated by no one under any circumstance.

Family practices that occur when together apply when separated. At the end of the duty day I proceed home and spend productive family time.

When separated the same concept applies. Instead of being physically with the family I spend time supporting their activities by assisting in the research of some of their homework assignments and projects.

Make sure the telephone calls are more than the hello, how are you. One way we kept the lines of communication open was for us to sit the children in front of the telephone speaker system with their book of the day. I, on my end of the world, would have the same book and would share our story time in nearly the same fashion as if we were at home.

Deployment (separation) has a tendency to stimulate worry, undo stress, anxiety, in depth loneliness and sometimes isolation. That is why the military has developed several structured programs such as Family Readiness Groups (FRG), deployment preparation committees for spouses and children that provide the support in time of need and chaplain's programs which provide support to all of us.

Surround yourself with positive influences. During deployments my wife and I surrounded ourselves not only with positive influences but also other committed deployed spouses.

The military changes its plans, but it does not excuse us from our commitment and promises we make to our families. Spouses and children look forward to the promises and commitments you make to each other. Not only do they remember, but they will hold you to it until the day you come home. Remember, family practices that occur when together also occur during temporary separations, missions, and/or deployments.

Our military journey is far from over and we ask that you pray for the Troxler family as we pray for you and yours, for it is our belief that the last award placed on my chest will not be a military medal, but the hands that I hold and the hugs that I receive from family. ✪



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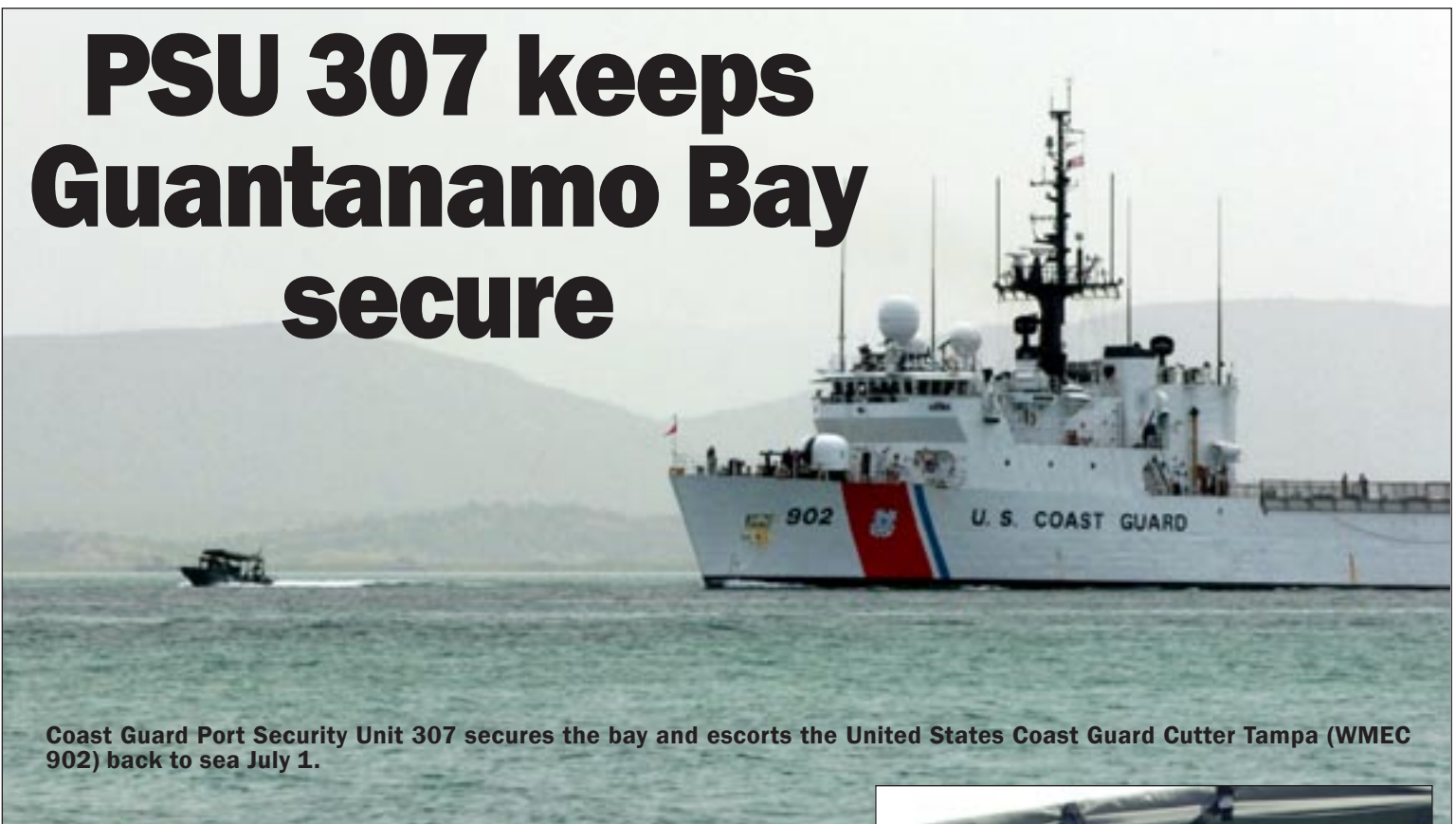
Fireworks light up the sky over Guantanamo Bay during the Independence Day celebration.

– JTF Guantanamo photo by Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Jayme Pastoric



The WIRE is the official news magazine of Joint Task Force Guantanamo. It is produced by the JTF Public Affairs Office to inform and educate the Troopers of JTF Guantanamo through news, features, command guidance, sports and entertainment. The WIRE seeks to provide maximum disclosure with minimum delay with regards to security, accuracy, propriety and policy. This DoD news magazine is an authorized publication for the members of the Department of Defense. Contents of The WIRE are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, or Joint Task Force Guantanamo. It is printed by the Document Automation & Production Service with a circulation of 1000.

PSU 307 keeps Guantanamo Bay secure



Coast Guard Port Security Unit 307 secures the bay and escorts the United States Coast Guard Cutter Tampa (WMEC 902) back to sea July 1.

Army Specialist Megan Burnham

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

One month ago the Coast Guard Port Security Unit 307 arrived in Guantanamo Bay and since then they have been busy patrolling the water as part of their Anti-Terrorism Force Protection mission. When they are on patrol their mission is to maintain awareness of all vessels and personnel that come in and out of the bay to include swimmers and scuba divers and identify any potential waterborne threats.

Along with the duty of maintaining awareness of all vessels, escorting them in and out of the bay is also a priority.

PSU teams escorted the Coast Guard Cutter Tampa into Guantanamo Bay as they came in from patrol June 28 to fuel up, obtain provisions and enjoy rest and recreation before returning on patrol. Their mission in the Caribbean is to perform migrant operations and drug interdiction.

The PSU escorted the ship as part of ATRF against any waterborne threats in the bay when the boat came in, while in port and as it shipped out three days later. Their job was to keep any vessels out of the reaction zone around the cutter as it moved through the bay.

"We're protecting the gear and equipment on the front lines," said Coast Guard Petty Officer 3rd Class Jeff Pires, Boatswain's Mate 3rd Class of the PSU 307. "We provide better visibility at the ports."

"Since 9/11, providing security escorts on high value assets became one of our primary missions," said Coast Guard Petty Officer 1st Class Pedro Gonzalez,



"Since 9/11, providing security escorts on high value assets became one of our primary missions."

– Coast Guard Petty Officer 1st Class Pedro Gonzalez

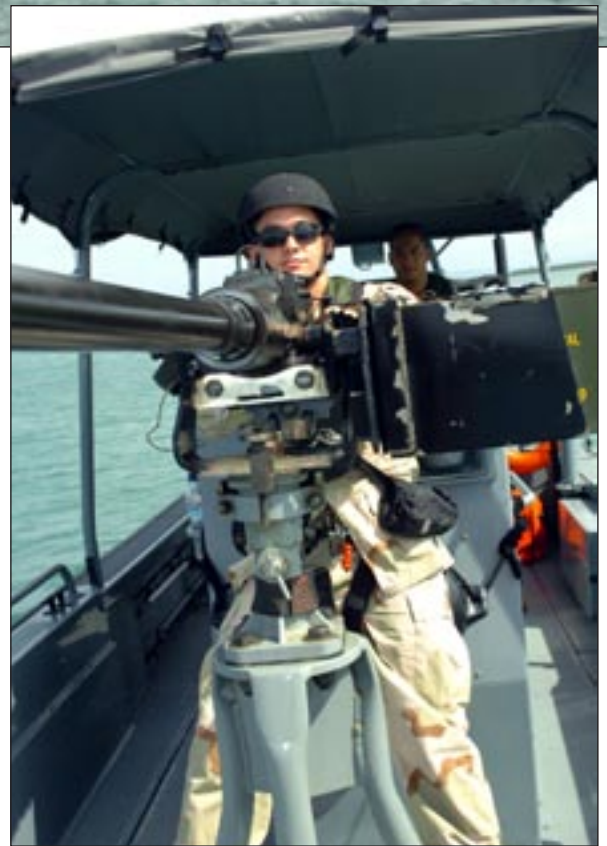
Boatswain's Mate 1st Class.

When the cutter was preparing to go back on patrol, two Viper boats constantly patrolled the bay while the cutter conducted skills training.

During the training, when any water vessel came within the reaction zone, Coastguardsmen on the viper boat performed a screening of that vessel. This process involves investigating and assessing the who, what, where and why and then redirecting the vessel a safe distance away from the cutter.

"It [the escort] was definitely appreciated by the guys in the cutter," said Pires.

The viper boats escorted the ship beyond the mouth of Guantanamo Bay and returned back to the boat house, their mission successfully completed. ☆



Coast Guard Petty Officer 3rd Class Robert Berg, machinery technician, mans the bow gunner in a transportable port security boat while escorting the USCGC Tampa (WMEC 902) through the bay.

Navy IAs support where needed

■ Navy individual augmentees support Public Affairs and Commissions Support Group

**Army Pfc.
Eric Liesse**

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Many personnel are needed to keep the military commissions process working smoothly. Since early May, a group of 10 Navy individual augmentees (IA) have helped keep those wheels turning in Guantanamo Bay.

The IA program assists the military commissions process by deploying specialized Sailors into specific billets to provide specialized skill sets, according to Petty Officer 1st Class Bill Mesta, media relations noncommissioned officer with the Joint Task Force Public Affairs Office (JTF PAO).

Throughout the JTF and its Commissions Support Group (CSG), Navy IAs are deployed to fill in those needed specialized slots. The military has relied on IAs for many years now.

“Originally, [the IA program] was created to assist the Army in areas where they needed [additional] specialized skill sets,” Mesta said.

The JTF’s CSG provides support to the Office of Military Commissions. With the increased pace of commissions proceedings, the Navy was tasked to provide several IAs to fill in specialized needs.

Along with Mesta, three Sailors were tasked to assist JTF PAO with commissions media relations. The other six Sailors work in other areas to support CSG.

“I actually worked with the PAO for a week and did the media thing,” said Petty Officer 1st Class Rex Viloría, leading petty officer for CSG’s transportation department. “I guess they didn’t need me or figured out that I would be better used in transportation. So that’s why I came to be with the Commissions Support Group.”

Both Viloría and Mesta play an important role to support the commissions process.

“I take care of all the scheduling, supervising and movement of Office of Military Commissions personnel, judges, lawyers, defense attorneys... all those people that fly in for the trials, we support them,” Viloría said. “We give them their vehicle, [vehicle parking], all that stuff.”

Mesta’s media escort position has many factors as well. Commissions media also have interviews, live video feeds and press conferences arranged through Mesta and his office.

“My primary job is to escort commission media and arrange logistical support for



Petty Officer 2nd Class Jesus Uranga escorts civilian media from the commissions media room to the commissions court room Wednesday, July 9. Uranga is one of 10 Navy individual augmentees who came to Guantanamo Bay to assist with commissions support requirements.

in-coming and out-going media,” Mesta explained. “I make sure they have what they need to do their job,” he added.

When dealing with civilian media, the protection of operational security is always needed, Mesta stressed.

“I make sure the media stays out of trouble when dealing with security issues,” Mesta added. He also assists the media to do their job “to the best of their abilities within the security constraints.”

Originally, Mesta said, the group of IA Sailors would form a separate unit to cover the commission’s media.

“But they didn’t send down enough of us to be able to be independent, so that’s why we’re falling under PAO,” Mesta said.

The four public affairs-trained Sailors were attached to JTF PAO. Others in the group – Viloría, four officers and a personnel specialist – were attached under the CSG, Viloría said.

When activated, the group didn’t actually come straight to Guantanamo, Viloría said.

“They activated us, we went and processed in, then they sent us back. They then said ‘Be on a 96-hour tether. When we call you, you’ll come.’ Two months of our six-month tour was spent waiting to get the call up,” Viloría said.

Before arriving at Guantanamo, the small group knew to expect media relations

work. However, they came with little other information.

“You can’t have too much in the way of expectations because you don’t know what you’re getting into until you get there,” Mesta added.

Although the 10 Sailors came as a group, they hadn’t worked together in the past, Mesta said.

“The folks that I came down here with [have] never worked together before,” he said. “We never even met each other before.”

Mesta, who was stationed at Norfolk, Va., on the Navy aircraft carrier USS Eisenhower, said his ship has sent more than 700 IAs to locations as far-flung as Iraq, Afghanistan and the Horn of Africa.

The IA program has been utilized in the past many times, Mesta said.

“There are two different types of IAs,” he explained. “There’s a general security [job], which is a really tough job, and then there are the specialized skill sets that the military asks for. Basically a command will identify a need and then put out a request for media communication specialists, or information systems technician, or [masters-at-arms], depending on the need. Then, the Navy will search for commands that can support the mission and let their folks go for a certain amount of time.” ☆

Access Denied

Information Assurance Policy, 1 April 2004, and the JTF-GTMO User Agreement, access to please copy the link and send an e-mail to [redacted] and request access to the website along

Cyberdefenders!

Access Denied! J-6 Information Assurance runs proxies to protect Joint Task Force Guantanamo servers from malicious websites.

Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Nat Moger

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

While Troopers from all branches of the armed services are participating in the boots-on-the-ground war on terror, contributions to the effort can take many different forms. Ever since the days of “loose lips can sink ships” during World War II, keeping military activity and planning away from the enemy has been just as important as executing missions properly.

In today’s war, the enemy can be anywhere, at anytime, traversing internet connections and phone lines much more easily than they ever could over land, sea or air. The Information Assurance managers at Joint Task Force Guantanamo are the overseers and, at times, gatekeepers to the information on JTF networks.

“We essentially safeguard the networks to ensure that it’s safe from outside threats,” said Air Force Capt. Nicholas Jameson, JTF’s IA manager. “We also make sure the users know how to be responsible. It overlaps very closely with OPSEC [operations security].”

Jameson’s office divides its focus into two distinct missions: a strong defense and ensuring compliancy with command policies and procedures.

The defensive aspect is the stuff of movies. Terms usually reserved for the

computer savvy heroes of futuristic cyberthrillers are bandied about the same way acronyms are in the Pentagon.

“We’re making sure that our network is patched and that users are trained,” said Jameson. “We implement practices like locking the proxies to protect ourselves from adversaries and any viruses, Trojans or worms that could come through.”

IA’s biggest customer, the JTF’s J-6, operates and maintains JTF servers, while IA handles the firewalls, proxies, anti-virus programs and the intrusion detection system. Jameson equates it to detention operations.

“There are layers of defense,” said Jameson. “You can’t just walk up and talk to a detainee. You need to go through different layers of security. The firewall is one of those layers. When info comes in from the outside world, the firewall validates whether that info is legal or not.”

The proxy handles outgoing information and the intrusion detection system monitors the many different currents in the stream of information.

“[The proxy] is what stops JTF people from going to malicious websites,” explained Jameson. “And if someone from the outside is trying to access our network through suspicious or unauthorized channels, the intrusion detection system will block it.”

The anti-virus programs scan incoming

information for viruses.

The other side of IA is making sure the JTF complies with the Defense Information Systems Agency, the U.S. Army and U.S. Southern Command’s information and network policies.

“We certify and credit networks, saying they’re legal to operate,” said Jameson. “For instance, a user can’t just go in and install an application. We need to make sure it’s licensed and safe to go on the network.”

It isn’t all constant vigilance and blocking browsing. Dustin Robbins, who originally came to the JTF as a uniformed member of the Public Affairs Office in 2006, returned as a J-6 help desk civilian contractor before moving into IA. He thought one of the most interesting aspects of the job is balancing JTF bandwidth to accommodate both work and play.

“We have to maintain the integrity of the network, ensuring that bandwidth usage stays low enough that the military can conduct their business,” said Robbins.

In the end, the members of the IA office have to play the bad guy and make unpopular decisions. However, they know how much IA and OPSEC mean to such a high-profile command such as the JTF.

“We do have to play the bad guy, the opposite of the yes man,” said Jameson, “not because it’s the easy answer, but because ‘no’ is in the best interest of protecting the government.” ☆



Winners of the spear fishing tournament display the plaques they earned for their catch. (From left to right) Shane Lauritzen, Denton "Boy Boy" Edmond, and Eric Judkins. Morale, Welfare and Recreation hosted the tournament.

MWR spear-fishing tourney right on target

**Army Staff Sgt.
Emily J. Russell**

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Stalking the waters of Guantanamo Bay is how some Gitmo residents spent their time July 5, hoping to land the catch that would earn them placement in the spear fishing and lobster tournament.

The event, hosted by Morale, Welfare and Recreation, challenged participants to find the largest catch they could whether fish or lobster. The day proved to be successful for many as the fish and lobster were counted and weighed at the marina at the end of the day.

"Winning was based on the total weight of all the fish a participant shot from 0600 to 1600," said Jaron Chapman, manager of the marina.

The first place winner in the fish category

was Denton "Boy Boy" Edmond, an MWR employee who works at the carpentry shop. Edmond blew away the competition with a whopping total of 38 pounds, 1 ounce. Eighteen pounds of his total came from one fish, a pompano.

"I was free diving off the shore near the lighthouse when I saw the pompano. He came to pay me a visit and I had a surprise for him," said Edmond.

Easing his way into second place, Joint Task Force member Shane Lauritzen landed a grouper and a jack with a total weight of 4 pounds 12 ounces.

Rounding out third place was fellow Joint Task Force member Eric Judkins who secured his spot with a jack, weighing in at 2 pounds, 6 ounces.

"Thirty-seven people signed up for the



Denton "Boy Boy" Edmond, shows off the two largest fish from his first place catch. The pompano weighed in at 18 pounds, 1 ounce, almost half of the weight for his total catch.

event, said Chapman. Some participants shot fish and figured they didn't have a chance at winning [because they weren't big enough]. Make sure you weigh in all your fish!"

The tournament included awards for the largest lobsters caught as well.

Only two lobsters were presented at the end of the day. The first place lobster, caught by Cy Winter, weighed in at 2 pounds and 15 ounces. Kevin Robarge, nabbed the second place lobster with a weight of 2 pounds, 13 ounces.

"This is our first MWR spear fishing event, usually the dive shop hosts it. We had great participation. We're still in the planning phase for another event. Hopefully we'll be able to do it before the end of the year," said Chapman. ★

Robots with personality



Army Pfc.
Eric Liesse

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Pixar Animation Studios continues their amazing streak of quality films with their latest release, "WALL-E."

Set hundreds of years in the future, Earth has had no humans for more than 700 years due to severe pollution. The title character WALL-E (Waste Allocation Load Lifter Earth-Class) is a small robot developed to clean Earth of its piled garbage, one small trash-brick at a time.

WALL-E displays real child-like emotion with binocular-like, bulbous eyes set atop a thin hinged arm and a rusty square body attached to a pair of tank tracks. He seems to be the only operating robot left on the planet, and he is starting to get lonely.

This longing drives the opening scenes, with WALL-E curiously rummaging through trash heaps for old scraps.

One fateful day a robot named EVE (Extraterrestrial Vegetation Evaluator) appears to scope out Earth. For WALL-E, she is love at first scan. WALL-E attempts to court the graceful, ultra-sleek EVE, but she just continues her "directive."

After a few seasons on Earth, EVE is

retrieved by the Axiom, the mega-spaceship that delivered her. WALL-E, not wanting to lose EVE, hitches a ride on the ship in his relentless effort to save her.

The Axiom is the flag ship of the current humans' mega-company, Buy N Large. Before the humans fled Earth, the consumer goods company grew to become the government.

Once the planet's trash grew to unlivable extremes, Buy N Large persuaded the population to flee to space in their spaceships while their WALL-E units cleaned the planet. The plan was to be gone for only five years.

The ship's captain and the passengers on board are grotesque caricatures of over consumption. They are bound to hover-chairs, have weakened skeletal structures, and are so obese they can't even sit up without robotic assistance.

The chair-bound citizens also have holographic television screens in their face. They don't realize the ship has a pool, even while they sit poolside.

Though family films rarely have overreaching societal themes, "WALL-E" is an exception. The image of over-consumption and automated lives continues throughout.

The majority of the film is void of dialogue. Fluid animations move the plot along so easily the audience rarely realizes they haven't heard conventional dialogue in 20 minutes. WALL-E's hands alone convey deep isolation when he clasps them longingly,



G

1 hours, 37 minutes

Rating: ★★★★★☆

watching an old VHS of "Hello, Dolly."

"WALL-E," written and directed by Andrew Stanton, includes many nods to science-fiction classics. "2001: A Space Odyssey" has its famous theme play during one large movement. Also, robots showing almost-human sides have been a staple of sci-fi, from "Blade Runner" to "Star Trek."

"WALL-E," like all Pixar's films, has broad appeal. The film's expressive animation will dazzle children. Adults — especially parents — will enjoy the clean content, superb animation and the deeper message of living life rather than automating it.

WALL-E innocently shows the ridiculousness of human consumerism by just being simplistically human. With detailed animation and humanized robots, "WALL-E" will remind why you love going to the movies in the first place. ☆



4th of July Celebrations



Photos by Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Jayme Pastoric, Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Joshua Treadwell and Army Spc. Megan Burnham

Naval Station Guantanamo Bay's 4th of July celebrations included the 8th annual Fireworks Display that could be viewed from almost anywhere on base. There were also performances by The State of Man and Amanda Lynn and Andy Lee. Other Morale, Welfare and Recreation activities were held throughout the weekend to help celebrate the holiday.



Lessons from my past



Joint Detention Group Command Sgt. Maj. Theodore Trahan delivers a speech during his retirement ceremony at Troopers Chapel July 3. Trahan, who credits his wife for much of his success, made a point to thank her, as well as his colleagues, peers and fellow Troopers.

Staff Sgt. Emily J. Russell

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

After 22 years of military service, Army Command Sgt. Maj. Theodore Trahan is ready to retire from the Military Police Corps, but not without the lessons he's learned throughout his career.

"I cut my teeth as a young NCO in the 82nd Airborne Division," Trahan said. "[Ft. Bragg] is close to my heart. Some of the styles and attributes I have today I'm certain are from growing up there."

Work hard, play hard has always been a theme throughout his career. As a Non-Commissioned Officer with the the 82nd, it was a code Trahan and his peers lived by.

"It was an environment that made you become stronger as an individual, because if you didn't step up, you wouldn't make it," he explained. "If you didn't know how to do something, you checked on it and you practiced it. There was no second-guessing."

Trahan spent approximately seven years with the 82nd. During this time he served in numerous positions, from M-60 gunner to team leader, squad leader and platoon sergeant. "I held every position within that company," he added.

"Jay Fowler, Command Sergeant Major of the 525th Military Police Battalion, and I were squad leaders in the paratroopers for a couple years together," Trahan continued.

"I always joke, 'He was the second-best squad leader in the company ... next to me.' [However], he was the best guy, I thought. I learned a lot from him whether he knew it or not. We were both young and arrogant but watched each other from a distance.

"It's funny how things work out in your career – here we are working together again."

Trahan didn't always see his stint in the Army as a long-term commitment.

"Early on I thought, 'let's just see where this career takes me,'" he said. "There was a point in time where I considered [getting out]. I was levied for recruiter duty. It wasn't what I wanted to do. I didn't want to be a salesman for the Army.

"It ended up being a great assignment," Trahan continued. "I learned about myself, time management ... and how to talk to people ... as opposed to talking at people. I was a little rough around the edges in my younger days."

Trahan credits his wife as his driving force and influence for success.

"I came into the Army with no college [education] and now I have my master's degree," he noted. "When I met [my wife], I had only been in for about four years. I was good at what I did, but I wasn't exceptional. She drove me to do things that made me stronger as an individual, like getting an education. She encouraged me to not accept anything less than the best I

Command Sgt. Maj. Theodore Trahan shakes the hand of a fellow Soldier at his retirement ceremony. Troopers lined up to wish him well on his retirement.

can offer."

Trahan never experienced a working environment like Guantanamo before.

"Detainee operations are different here as opposed to down range," said Trahan. "[Here] you learn the dynamics of the other services working in a joint environment. I've come to take the best from each branch."

This realization hit Trahan before arriving at Guantanamo. While deployed to Afghanistan, he came across a Navy lieutenant, a submariner, who was working non-stop to fix Army equipment that essentially was saving the lives of the Soldiers who used it.

"I realized this is not just an Army gig. It doesn't matter what service [a Trooper] belongs to – we're all in this War on Terror together," he said. "[Guantanamo] has made me appreciate the Troopers even more and has made me a well-rounded individual."

As Trahan's duty comes to an end, his reflection over his career has highlighted a few important lessons he's learned as a Soldier, a leader and most importantly a non-commissioned officer.

"Be true to yourself and be honest," Trahan said. "Be a positive influence and a role model." ☆

Base benefits from alternative 'green' power

**Army Spc.
Megan Burnham**

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

One of the biggest projects the Navy has undergone here, and one of the most noticeable, is the construction of the wind turbines on top of John Paul Jones Hill, Naval Base Station Guantanamo Bay. It has actually been three years since the four, three-bladed, turbines have been in use and the effects generated have proven to be useful.

"The base has benefited from [using windmill power]," said Bill Keenan, project manager of Noresco, Inc. "They [personnel on base] are not using as much fuel as they would normally use had the wind turbines not been here."

The wind turbine project started in 2002 when Keenan, who worked for public works office at the time, and the project developer for Noresco discussed a possible wind power project. The next step included Noresco asking the base to put up an anemometer, a device used for measuring wind speed, to track the wind on JPJ Hill and at the airport. From the results generated by the device, the data showed the base would benefit in using wind power on the ridgeline.

"The anemometer provided an indication that the hill would be a favorable place to build wind turbines," said Keenan.

A series of events followed comprising of Noresco putting together a proposal and submitting it to the government, where fine tuning and negotiation of the contract took place, when finally the Navy decided to buy the project.

After sealing the deal, construction of the turbines began at the end of 2004 and was completed and operational by July 2005.

Investing in energy-saving projects has been increasing military-wide. The wind turbine project

■ *John Paul Jones Hill wind turbines create power as they turn*

was one of the first projects that the Navy had done.

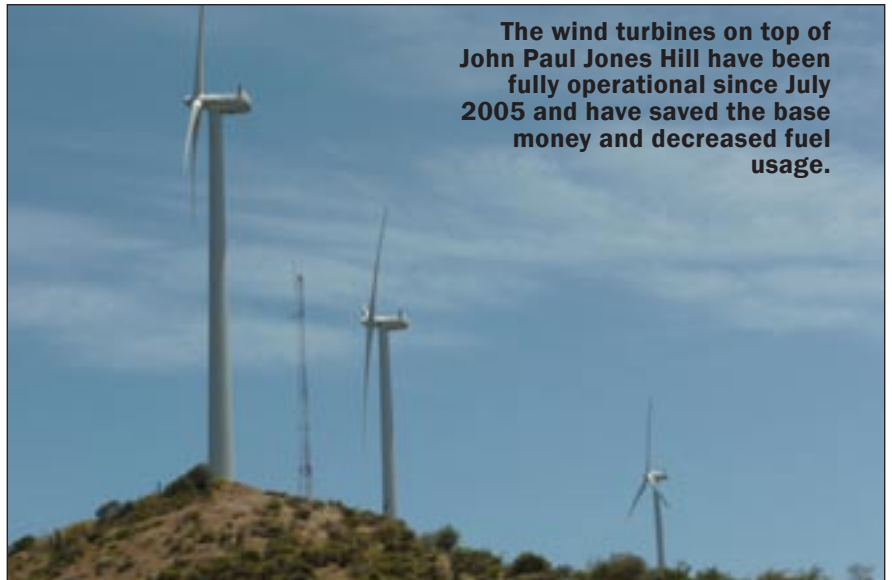
"It was, at the time, the largest project where you had wind energy working with a diesel generating system," commented Keenan.

The turbines are rated to produce 3.8 megawatts of electricity but have produced up to 4.1 megawatts on windy days. Each turbine also generates 950 kilowatts.

As the blades are turning, the generated energy travels straight to the main grid at the central avenue substation where it is distributed throughout the base. This means that the energy is being consumed as it is being made and everyone on base enjoys the results.

"I think the Navy [and the base] is going to benefit from it overall," said Keenan. "We [Noresco] are glad to be a part of it and be at the forefront of the process." ☆

The wind turbines on top of John Paul Jones Hill have been fully operational since July 2005 and have saved the base money and decreased fuel usage.





Fireworks

Ron Keller, a fireworks expert from Orlando Fla., conducts a final safety inspection prior to the 8th annual Guantanamo Bay Independence Day celebration. "I really enjoy presenting the fireworks for our service men and women. It's my way of showing my support for all the sacrifices they have made to defend our freedom," said Keller. "I do my utmost to make sure the show is flawless and as exciting as it can be. I am deeply honored to be in Gitmo to shoot the fireworks for them." - JTF Guantanamo Photo by Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Jayme Pastoric

You Can't Handle the Fence Line!

5-Mile Ride/Bike/Run/Walk

Saturday, July 19th

Event begins at 6:30 am with a N.E. Gate Tour
Sign up: Mon-Fri (8 am- 4 pm) at the USMC White House
on Marine Hill

Cost: \$15 per person

First 150 receive event t-shirts!

Bicycles available at MWR Marina

FMI call 2008/ 2642/ 84495

ALL PROCEEDS GO TO THE MARINE CORPS BALL FUND



Surfing

Coast Guard Petty Officer Second Class Hunter Bounds cuts his surfboard hard and maintains his balance as he surfs the waves at Windmill beach July 8. Windmill beach has the best surfing waves on Naval Station Guantanamo Bay. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Jayme Pastoric

Boots on the Ground

by Army Spc. Megan Burnham

Would you rather have an iguana or a banana rat as a house pet?

Coast Guard Petty
Officer 3rd Class
Pablo Veras



“An iguana – the banana rat, to me, is a little bit more disgusting.”

Coast Guard Petty
Officer 3rd Class
Brian Williams



“Iguana – I wouldn’t want any pet that has the word ‘rat’ in it.”

Army Staff Sgt.
Steven Barthmaier



“An iguana – how else can you have a \$10,000 pet without paying for it?”

Army Sgt.
Shila Saddler



“I’d rather have an iguana because I like reptiles. I actually have a turtle at home.”

Choose the Right



**Army Cpt.
Scott Brill**
JDG Chaplain

One of my favorite church hymns is called, “Choose the Right.” In the hymn we sing these inspiring words:

Choose the right! Let no spirit of digression Overcome you in the evil hour. There's the right and the wrong to ev'ry question; Be safe thru inspiration's pow'r.

Choose the right! There is peace in righteous doing. Choose the right! There's safety for the soul. Choose the right in all labors you're pursuing; Let God and heaven be your goal.

Text: Joseph L. Townsend, 1849–1942

These words are a reminder of the importance of always doing what is right, no matter the consequences.

The following story is from one of my life's heroes. His name is Joseph B. Wirthlin. And although he may not be known to you, I trust that his story will inspire and encourage you when faced with tough choices.

“Another lesson I learned on the football field was at the bottom of a pile of 10 other players. It was the Rocky Mountain Conference championship game, and the play called for me to run the ball up the middle to score the go-ahead touchdown. I took the handoff and plunged into the line. I knew I was close to the goal line, but I didn't know how close. Although I was pinned at

the bottom of the pile, I reached my fingers forward a couple of inches and I could feel it. The goal line was two inches away.

At that moment I was tempted to push the ball forward. I could have done it. And when the refs finally pulled the players off the pile, I would have been a hero. No one would have ever known.

I had dreamed of this moment from the time I was a boy. And it was right there within my reach. But then I remembered the words of my mother. “Joseph,” she had often said to me, “do what is right, no matter the consequence. Do what is right and things will turn out OK.”

I wanted so desperately to score that touchdown. But more than being a hero in the eyes of my friends, I wanted to be a hero in the eyes of my mother. And so I left the ball where it was—two inches from the goal line.

I didn't know it at the time, but this was a defining experience. Had I moved the ball, I could have been a champion for a moment, but the reward of temporary glory would have carried with it too steep and too lasting a price. It would have engraved upon my conscience a scar that would have stayed with me the remainder of my life. I knew I must do what is right.

When we allow temptations to drown out the still voice of our conscience—that is when decisions become difficult.

My parents taught me to react quickly when temptation comes and to say “No!”

instantly and emphatically. I recommend that same counsel to you. Avoid temptations.”

Playing sports as a kid was more than just a game, it was a place to learn some of life's most important lessons. In one of my first Youth Football League games, I found myself alone at the fifty-yard line, with the football sailing through the air, headed straight for me. As a wide receiver, I had practiced this route a hundred times during summer practice, but now it was for real. All that I had to do was catch the ball, and I was sure to score a touchdown. Moments before the ball reached me, I looked up in the stands, and froze at the sight of the fans. And to my horror, that one fleeting second, when I took my eyes off the ball, was long enough. Standing alone in the middle of the field, I dropped the ball. OUCH. While running back to the huddle, I could hear Coach O'Leary yelling, “Keep your eyes on the ball!”

Over the years I have tried to remember the values and lessons learned on the playing field from morale giants like Coach O'Leary, and apply them to everyday life, so that I can keep my eye focused on the things that really matter most.

I am so grateful for the chance to play on this team. You are an example to me and to the world.

It is my prayer for us all that we continue to press forward, honor bound, by choosing what is right, and keeping our eye on the ball.

JTF CHAPEL SCHEDULED PROGRAMS

Catholic Mass

Sunday: 7 a.m. Confession
7:30 Mass
Wednesday: 11 a.m. Mass

Protestant Worship

Sunday: 9 a.m. and 7 p.m.
Spanish Protestant Worship
Sunday: Noon



Challenges ? No problem

■ *New operations NCO takes job to a higher focus*

Tillman points to a possible alternate entry way for a training exercise June 10.

Army Sgt. Gretel Sharpee

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Everything the Army does involves training - from individual skill training specific to a job to Army-wide required training such as weapons qualification or an equal opportunity briefing. It's all training Soldiers must complete on a regular basis to ensure mission readiness. But like anything in the Army, training has to be completed to standard and documented to standard otherwise it might be like it didn't happen at all. For one non-commissioned officer in the 525th Military Police Battalion operations center, her job is to make sure that training happens, and happens right. "My mission is to support the line units," said Staff Sgt. Tammy Tillman, operations NCO, 525th MP Bn. "[We] ensure training is being done. We're the operational portion of the battalion.

Tillman took on the position of operations NCO when arriving here after being desk sergeant at Ft. Knox, Ky.

"When I first got here I thought I would be a guard," Tillman said. "Then I found I would be in the [operations] office and I was a little disappointed but you have to try everything once to further your career on."

Tillman and the Soldiers in her office first identify training that needs to be completed and set out to contact the units to schedule the training. Once the training event has been scheduled, they also ensure the proper training tools are provided, such as power point presentations or range safeties when it is weapons qualification time.

"Our job is mostly a behind-the-scene thing. We go out there when the training is going on to make sure they have the task, conditions and standards and then come back to enter [the information] in," said

Tillman.

Even though operations might be a behind-the-scene job to Tillman, without it individual units would have to track their individual Soldiers training on their own, taking away time that could have been spent completing their mission. In that respect Tillman and her office are not behind the scenes at all but rather a major hitter in the battalion's overall effectiveness.

"Tillman is a self-starter who seeks out challenges and opportunities," said Sgt. Maj. Donald W. Troxler, Jr., 525th

S-3 (training and operations) sergeant major. "She is a shining example of the warrior ethos, 'I will never quit and never accept defeat.' She accepted this mission a pay-grade above hers with enthusiasm, determination and a clear focus that we are all grateful to be part of... I expect only great things for her future." ☆



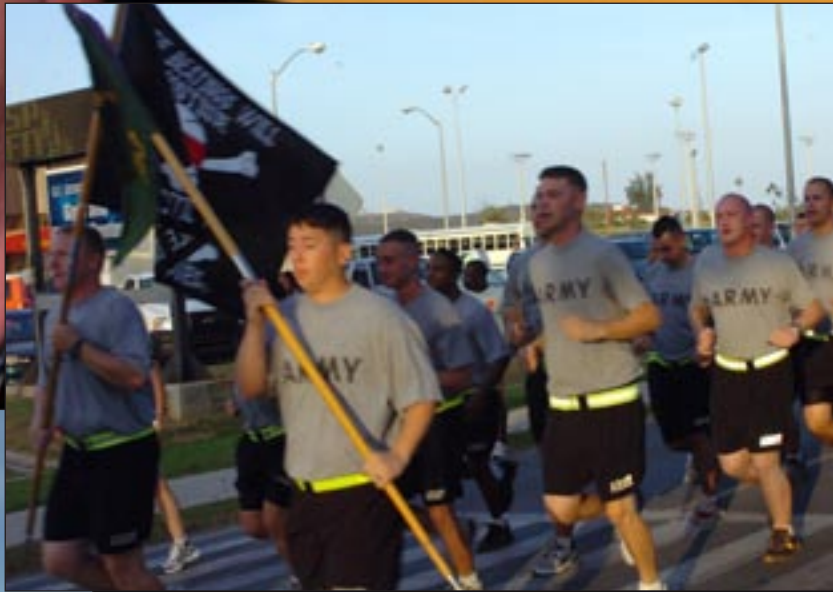
Observing training for safety is one way Tillman helps ensure the exercise is carried out to standard.



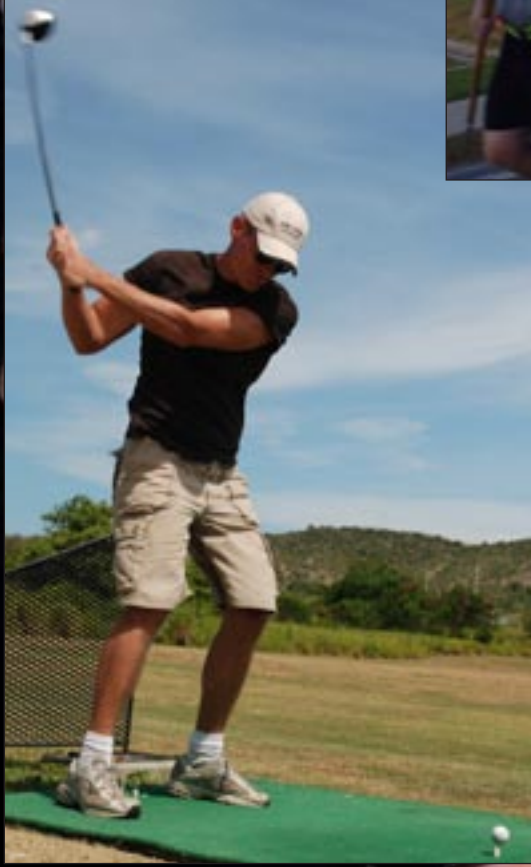
Comedian Scotty K imitates rock star Jon Bon Jovi during a raucous and rambling routine, part of a comedy concert held July 1 at the Goat Locker. The Morale, Welfare and Recreation office sponsored the event for Navy and Joint Task Force personnel. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Sgt. 1st Class Vaughn R. Larson



Troopers enjoy a mix of music after a hearty cuisine of authentic Middle Eastern fare Saturday night at the sailing club. Members of the Joint Task Force gathered to enjoy food, music and say goodbye to fellow workers who are nearing the end of their tour. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Staff Sgt. Emily J. Russell



Soldiers from the 525th Military Police Battalion participate in the Independence Day 4 mile run. The run kicked off in the early morning, marking the beginning of the holiday weekend. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Pfc. Eric Liesse



Joint Task Force Command Master Chief Brad LeVault takes a swing during the Longest Yard golf competition held Sunday at the driving range. The event challenged participants to hit the longest drive in three attempts. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Sgt. Gretel Sharpee

AROUND THE JTF