

The WIRE

An award-winning
JTF journal

Inside:
The thrilling
conclusion to the
yoga challenge
Summer sports
preview

The main squeeze
Squash your stress
with JSMART!

COMMAND CORNER

BRIG. GEN. JAMES LETTKO

DEPUTY COMMANDER, JTF GUANTANAMO

It's starting to feel like summer in Guantanamo Bay. The days are much longer and the weather warmer and more humid. Before you know it, the dog days of summer will be upon us, or at least most of us.

This month we can say thank you for a job well done to our Joint Medical Group, as well as numerous individuals like our departing Command Master Chief Reynaldo Tiong. Thank you for serving as key members of our Joint Task Force. It is the contributions from all of the services that allow the JTF to accomplish our no-fail mission every day, 24 hours a day. Our new Joint Medical Group (the "birds") is now decisively engaged and has the torch. Marine Sgt. Maj. Scott Smith, our new Joint Task Force Senior Enlisted Leader, recently

joined our ranks and has been running through our operation introducing himself to the team. Welcome Sgt. Maj. Smith! We are also about to welcome elements of two military police companies from the Puerto Rico Army National Guard.

This weekend is Memorial Day weekend. It is typically a time when we mark the beginning of the summer months by planning our summer activities. Activities could range from graduations, birthdays, anniversaries, and family vacations. Many of us will not participate in the traditional rituals of summer because we are deployed to JTF Guantanamo. I want to take this opportunity to thank each of you for volunteering to serve in the most powerful military on earth. Memorial Day was established to memorialize the sacrifices of our brothers and sisters in arms who made the ultimate sacrifice

in defending the American way of life. Our profession is often referred to as "service." It is this service that we chose that helps protect the American way of life, and that of our friends and family. Behind every service member or Trooper here in JTF Guantanamo is a family. Perhaps this weekend would be a good time for you, a JTF Trooper, to recognize your family's service in allowing you to pursue your calling as a volunteer defending our great country.

I want to take this opportunity to thank each of you for volunteering to serve in the most powerful military on earth.

This weekend our hosts, U.S. Naval Station Guantanamo Bay and Morale Welfare & Recreation have arranged many different events to get you to be a part of our community. There are events to watch and events to participate in. These events are for you. There are plenty of self-improving, healthy choices available to each of us here. It

is up to you as an individual to take up a new healthy activity. When participating in the many events this weekend and into next week here at JTF Guantanamo, do so with sound judgment, balance, and look out for your wingman, shipmate or battle buddy. Don't let your wingman, shipmate or battle buddy do something they will regret later.

The key to our success remains the professionalism and "can do" attitude of our team. Your attention to detail, commitment to the mission and your fellow Troopers, and leadership is what enables the JTF to continually perform. Whether you just arrived or have been here for some time, maintain that professionalism that JTF Guantanamo is known for. Take pride in the fact that you are part of a one-of-a-kind Joint Task Force that has a no-fail mission and continues to excel every day.

Cover: The ubiquitous "toys" offered by the Joint Stress Mitigation and Restoration Team (JSMART) now include happy egg-shaped stress balls. Members of JSMART regularly visit Troopers at their workspaces to make these and other items available. —photo by Army Maj. Jon Powers

JOINT TASK FORCE GUANTANAMO

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The Wire

Command Information Officer
Army 1st. Lt. Amelia Thatcher
Editorial Staff
Army Sgt. Saul Rosa
Spc. Ryan Hallock
Spc. Vanessa Davila
Pvt. Loren Cook
Photjournalists
Sgt. 1st Class Kryn Westhoven
Mass Communication Spc. 1st Class Ty Bjornson
Army Staff Sgt. Lewis Hilburn
Mass Communication Spc. 2nd Class Kilho Park
Webmaster
Mass Communication Spc. 1st Class Keith Simmons

Contact us

Editor's Desk: 3499
Commercial: 011-5399-3499
DSN: 660-3499
E-mail: thewire@jtfgtmo.southcom.mil
Online: www.jtfgtmo.southcom.mil/wire/wire.html

NEWS FROM THE BAY

S*U*D*S*

Soldiers Undertaking Disabled Scuba (SUDS) will visit GTMO May 24-29. The Reef Raiders dive club is seeking motivated volunteers to help out during this time. Volunteers are not required to be dive certified to help out.

For more information, email ReefRaidersGTMO@gmail.com.

Memorial Day 10k

Can't get enough running? Observe Memorial Day by running a free 10k! The race is scheduled to begin May 26 at 6:45 a.m. at Christmas Tree Hill.

For more information, call Alana Morrison at 2113.

Guantanamanian Idol!

Do you long for the roar of a cheering crowd? Got an interesting talent? Show it off at "GTMO's got Talent!" You can even show it off to Simon, Randy and Paula... impersonators, anyway.

Auditions are scheduled for June 2 from 5-9 p.m. at the teen center, next to Marblehead Lanes. Semifinals and finals are scheduled for 6-8 p.m. at the Downtown Lyceum. Jovany Javier, a semifinalist from Season 10 of American Idol, will hold a meet-and-greet at the auditions and host the semifinal and finals, in addition to performing.

So start on the road to GTMO stardom and sign up! This free event is open to all ages and acts! For more information, call 77230.



OMG Zombies!

Talent show

The Burns and Roe Leaders League is hosting "Kabayan Nights," a talent show featuring singing contests, live bands, good food and more.

The talent show is scheduled for June 2, from 8 p.m.-12 a.m. at Mabuhay Garden. For more information, call 90548.

Soggy Bottom regatta

Are you a man or woman of constant sorrow? Have you seen trouble all your days? Fight those blues away and register for the Soggy Bottom cardboard boat regatta!

To compete in the regatta, you must build a person-powered cardboard boat that can survive two trips around a 100 yard course. Each team will also race their boats for 100 yards. Prizes will be awarded to the fastest, most GTMO, best Titanic, and best in show boats.

The event is scheduled for May 26 at Ferry Landing Beach from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

For more information, call 2345.

Dusk of the Dead

Love zombies? How'd you like to be one? Quench your thirst for brains and come on down to Denich Gym at 6:30 p.m. May 30. You provide your own costume, and MWR will provide all the makeup you need to look like a corpse. At 7:30 p.m., shuffle over to the Downtown Lyceum and watch Zombieland. No registration is required for this event, and the walk is open to all ages. The film is not suitable for those under 17.

For more information, call 2113.

Leeward bicycle ride

Go on a pleasant cycling ride from Marine Observation Post 20 to Marine Observation Post 03! The ride is scheduled for June 2 at 7:30 a.m. Register to ride at Marine Hill White House on Mondays and Fridays between 11:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. Registration costs \$15, and the first 10 to sign up receive a free T-shirt.

For more information, call Staff Sgt. Tucker at 2643.

Growing up Cuban

Internationally known, award-winning Cuban-American children's book author Carmen Deedy is coming to visit GTMO! Deedy's family emigrated to the U.S. in 1963 following the Cuban Revolution. Deedy will speak about growing up Cuban in Decatur, Ga., in a free community event 7 p.m. May 25 at the Naval Station Chapel.

For more information, call Chris Dickson at 84616

Summer sports galore!

Men's and women's sand volleyball season begins June 20. Register to play by June 6.

Tennis season begins June 24. Register to play by June 14.

To register for any of these events, go to Denich Gym. All registrations are free.

For more information, call Alana at 2113

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Trooper to Trooper

Discipline and Leadership

ARMY 1ST SGT. NATHANIEL R. TROWER
FIRST SERGEANT, 314TH MP COMPANY

Discipline can be defined as “training to act in accordance with rules; behavior in accord with rules of conduct, behavior and order maintained by training and control.”

I can remember coming from a combat arms military occupational specialty (MOS) 11B (Infantry) to the Military Police; then 95B and now known as 31B. Leadership and discipline were truly the cornerstones for the Military Police Corps. The discipline was unmatched for a combat support field.

When I think about Army Leadership during that time, it was characterized by discipline. Some of the differences were the wearing of the military uniform and physical fitness. Soldiers today are generally satisfied with just meeting the standard, while in the past, it was so competitive to the point that exceeding the standard was not even good enough at times. Although the uniform has changed, Soldiers can't imagine ironing uniforms or shining boots daily just to be recognized by their First Sergeant or Platoon Sergeant during an inspection which occurs before a Soldier does anything after work. That task would normally be completed prior to anything else following work. It was an important element of pride which was and still is important to Soldiers in the Army. Next, I see so many Soldiers struggle to meet the Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT) standards. This really baffles me the most because with a mediocre workout

program, Soldiers should be able to maintain the Army standard. Most units in the Army conduct physical fitness at least three times per week. In the past, Soldiers would normally come short of killing themselves to maximize their APFT scores. However, today more than half of the Soldiers are content with just meeting the standard and obtaining a passing score.

Now for the Soldiers who meet the standard, that's ok, but when you are a team leader, squad leader or section leader, that's not acceptable. The work and discipline that you display to your Soldiers will normally become the work effort that they will develop. It's very important to stress to Soldiers, “you are in the military 24 hours a day and 7 days a week.” Today, when Soldiers are off they feel that they can do as they please; that is the wrong answer. Leaders need to instill the necessary discipline in Soldiers by having surprise inspections, conducting unscheduled training, and visiting Soldiers during their so call “off duty time.” Soldiers should be encouraged to exceed the standard when possible or give it their best effort. With regular and effective counseling sessions, this can be obtained. Leaders must counsel their subordinates and maintain leader books if they expect to get to know their Soldiers. Tough love is important, but it must be countered with genuine guidance and ample Soldier care. One common example of care is before a ruck march. Inspect your Soldier's rucksack for proper weight, hydration system, change of socks, foot powder, and moleskin to name



a few, the day prior to the event.

Also, it's important to persuade your Soldiers to continue their educational endeavors while in the military. With the armed forces reducing their numbers, you would think that every Soldier would be focused on this initiative. On the contrary, many young Soldiers are focusing on having a good time and are not too concerned with positioning their military careers. There was a time in the armed forces when you were

see T2T page 5



Life insurance waters can be choppy on the way to smooth financial sailing

By Sgt. 1st Class Kryn P. Westhoven

You're sitting at the kitchen table as the sun streams through the window of the home you just bought. Your five-year-old comes up to you and asks, “Is this how the weather is when you were in Guantanamo?”

Then it hits you. Life has changed in the two years since you left Guantanamo Bay and there is another big change on the horizon. You will be leaving the military and heading for a civilian job.

Life insurance coverage is probably not on the top of the list of concerns. You know as you take off the uniform, your Servicemembers Group Life Insurance (SGLI) lasts for 120 days after you separate or retire. The good news is that there is no premium payment during those four months, but then it just ends.

“Insurance is to protect against catastrophic events you can't project,” said Walter Barrett, personal finance specialist with the Fleet and Family Support Center at U.S. Naval Station Guantanamo Bay. “When your needs change insurance wise so you have to look at that and reanalyze it.”

One way to reevaluate your coverage requirements is by using the Veterans Administration's web-based needs assessment calculator at www.insurance.va.gov.

Once you know how much life insurance you need, it becomes a question of what type of coverage.

“Term insurance can be an appropriate product, because term means time,” added Barrett when discussing proper insurance coverage for a certain time period, perhaps until the children graduate college.

Your term insurance comparisons can start with the Veterans Group Life Insurance (VGLI), offered to all servicemembers losing their SGLI coverage. You do not need to submit evidence of good health if you submit your application within 120 days of discharge. After that you will need a medical exam if you decide to apply for VGLI within the limit of one year and 120 days from discharge.

Also, VGLI limits coverage to your

current SGLI benefit. So if you are covered for \$400,000 while in uniform, VGLI will not automatically match it.

VGLI can be an alternative, with the understanding the rates increase every five years. For a younger Trooper, say at age 40, the cost is \$68 for the maximum coverage of \$400,000. But for a 60-year-old retiring Guardsman or Reservist, hold on to your wallet, as it will cost \$432 for the same amount of insurance.

There are many other choices than just term life insurance to include whole life, variable life, universal life and annuities. Each type of insurance has positive and negative features. Depending on lifetime financial goals, one of these insurance products could be a good fit, but it is important you read the fine print as many have an investment piece to the policy.

After careful comparisons of different policies, you need to check the ratings of the firms offering those policies. Look for an A+ insurance company. There are many ratings agencies, to include AM Best (www.ambest.com), Fitch (www.fitchratings.com) or Moody's (www.moody.com) which can provide insight into the health of the company you expect to be around for many years to come.

Insurance is expensive and comparison-shopping is worth the time it takes. Obtain more than one estimate or quote.

“As a servicemember goes throughout their career it is not unusual for them to be approached in some way to purchase additional insurance,” noted Barrett, adding if it sounds too good to be true it probably is.

Barrett related a story of a servicemember living on base who was paying over \$200 for \$20,000 of insurance; that money could have been invested for a better return. The best advice Barrett has for a life insurance shopper is to be a smart consumer.

Besides his office at the naval station, Barrett is available every Thursday from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the Fleet and Family Support Center satellite office located next to the Camp America post office. Call 4050 or 4141 to set up an appointment.

Money really does matter, especially when it comes to ensuring your loved ones are taken care of. This is part two of a two-part series on Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance.

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counseled on specific goals per quarter and your leaders ensured that those goals were met.

Here at Joint Task Force Guantanamo, a good Trooper maintains good discipline and has respect for his uniform, maintains a heightened level of physical fitness, and looks to further his military and civilian education. Each Trooper must abide by their service-specific rules and regulations and maintain discipline. It's important for leaders to counsel Troopers monthly to ensure they are working towards quarterly goals and to ask certain questions which will improve their relationships with their subordinates. Remember, taking care of Troopers entails creating a disciplined environment where they can learn and grow with consistency. Leaders who constantly enforce standards are simultaneously instilling discipline that will aid Troopers in the future during more stressful situations.



Malware is everywhere!

Malware continued to proliferate this year, with an average of 42 new malware strains being created every minute. Most of the new malware created are Trojans (68.34 percent), followed by viruses (16.02 percent), worms (11.69 percent) and adware (2.58 percent). Trojans remain popular because they are the ideal tool for cyber crooks to steal user data, providing the largest financial return to threat creators. Protect yourself online; be careful when surfing the web. Make sure your virus protection software is up to date and remember OPSEC!

Super Troopers
JTF-ATMO
Congratulations to the Joint Task Force Guantanamo Troopers who recently received commander's coins!
OS3 Morrel-Fermin
OS2 Mintor

Trooper Focus

Sgt. Bradley Wagner



—the boss says

“Although he was selected to attend West Point, the U.S. Military Academy, he never brags or boasts about such a great accomplishment.”

By Spc. Vanessa Davila

Sgt. Bradley Wagner isn't afraid to fail; he is afraid to stall. “It drives me off the wall when you find people who care too much about their career,” said Wagner. “For

example, there's nothing more frustrating than a leader who doesn't want to make a decision because they're afraid of a negative outcome. That just means that they care too much about their career to fail.”

So what do you do when you've faced off with the possibility of failure and accepted that sometimes it will happen? You do what Wagner does and take the proverbial bull by the horns. He has taken every opportunity the Army has given him and he's run with it. Now his superiors have sent another opportunity/challenge his way, and he has accepted with confidence and humility. Tomorrow, Wagner leaves Guantanamo Bay and the 314th

Military Police Company that he has been with since he was 17 and heads to West Point. Wagner is going “green to gold.”

“I got a lot of pressure from the unit to go and I think that was a good thing,” said Wagner. “It's a four-year program plus five-year contract afterward, so that's almost 10 years. So that's kind of daunting but it's a good thing, it's a good bargain, and it's a good opportunity so I don't feel bad about it. It's just every time I think about it, it kind of blows my mind a little bit.”

Wagner's buddies have given him the good-natured hard time that is required when an enlisted servicemember switches over to “the dark side.” There have been plenty of attentions called when he enters questionable locations like the bathroom but Wagner knows his battle buddies are happy for him. More importantly, he



knows what being previously enlisted will mean to his tenure as an officer.

“I think it's hugely valuable,” said Wagner. “I think it's a tremendous benefit to have that perspective and be able to anticipate those kinds of needs that my NCOs are going to have because I was in that position.”

Bullet Bio

Hobbies: Snorkeling, playing pool
Apartment or house? I don't like to clean, apartment all the way
Time in service: 4 years

Advice to junior Troopers: “Be curious and volunteer for details and things like that because that's where you go to acquire skills you otherwise wouldn't be able to.”

BOOTS ON THE GROUND

How do you combat stress?



“I'm an easy-going guy. When things get stressful down here, I take time for myself.”

Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class
Dominique Cannon



“I yell at my computer. I get up, walk away, and take a breather.”

Staff Sgt.
Chinon Thome



“I chill in my room and read time cat, which is about a cat who goes back in time.”

Pvt.
Erin Campbell



“I talk things out with YN2 Escobedo. I also email my husband and listen to Dave Matthews Band.”

Information Systems Technician 1st class
Whitney Burch

Relive your glory days

Summer intramural sports to begin

By Spc. Ryan Hallock

Are you looking for a reason to drop out of that college course that consumes all your free time? Or possibly an excuse to excuse yourself from morning physical training? Maybe you're not a slacker and just love to participate in the many activities this island has to offer.

It's another Guantanamo Bay summer and new intramural sports begin next week. Men and women's soccer leagues begin May 29 and coed basketball begins June 4.

High school is over. The glory days are over. You can't dunk a basketball anymore. You can't lead a receiver 60 yards down the gridiron for an overtime touchdown pass, but the competitiveness is still in you. It burns inside you, taking you back to senior year when you lost the state championship, in every sport.

One certainty still remains: your ability to participate in GTMO sports and have some fun with fellow JTF Troopers in your off time. Sure, your opportunity to officially sign up on a team roster has passed, but are you going to let that stop you from experiencing losing and winning with a group of friends? Anyone new to GTMO can sign up in a player's pool at the sports office. A team forms when enough people enter the player's pool. If a team needs an extra member and they choose you, sign

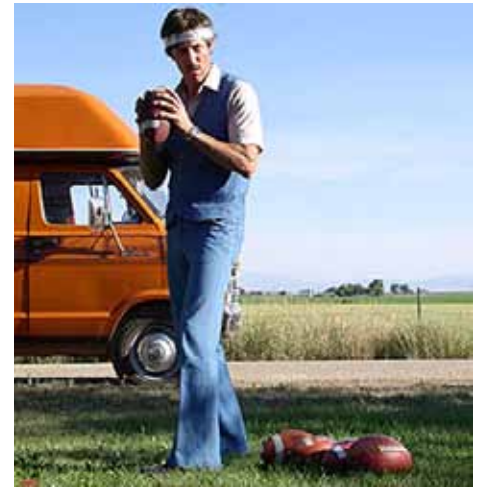
up at the sports office 24 hours prior to game time to be added to the roster.

“People can gain many different things by joining intramural sports!” said Alana Morrison, Morale, Welfare and Recreation sports coordinator. “If they are new to the island, it is a great opportunity to meet other participants with similar interests. Intramural sports are also a great opportunity to just stay in shape and just relax! The stresses of working and feeling like it is Groundhog Day everyday can be diminished by intramural sports!”

This summer is about more than new romances, beach parties, and indie-rock music. It's about sports. What's it going to take to get you out of your room and onto the field? Put the cake down and pick up your glove because it's softball season.

“Intramural sports benefit all of the GTMO community!” said Morrison. “They allow for recreation time outside of the barracks and away from residential areas. It's a great feeling knowing you can go down to the ball park for a sporting event and just relax with a hot dog and a soda from the concession stand.”

Softball season: every man and woman's chance to prove they don't play ball like a wimp. It's your chance to join together for a shot at something bigger. Win the softball league



and you'll be immortalized in Guantanamo Bay history. Lose and you'll always remember the time you put every ounce of passion into being great or standing in right field for a couple of hours.

“Don't let the long summer months just pass on by without playing in at least one league or tournament,” said Morrison. “The summer is filled with all kinds of sports and MWR wants to see as many participants out there! The more patrons mean even more leagues, tournaments, and prizes to go with them! Everyone wants a GTMO trophy, medal, and/or t-shirt! Come out and get yours this summer!”



Happy Memorial Day, Guantanamo Bay!



On Memorial Day, Americans across the nation and around the world pause to remember our fallen heroes. Many mark the day by decorating gravesites with flowers and flags, attending local parades and honoring surviving veterans. U.S. Naval Station Guantanamo Bay and Joint Task Force Guantanamo will observe with a Memorial Day service and wreath laying at Cuzco Wells Cemetery. Take a moment this Memorial Day to honor the sacrifices of our departed servicemembers.

Shop Smart... Shop JSMART!

By Pvt. Loren Cook

When a Trooper is feeling depressed, sometimes it may seem like he or she has nowhere to go and no one to talk to. The Joint Stress Mitigation and Restoration Team (JSMART), however, is a great place to relax and talk about whatever may be bothering you.

“Our organization is all about outreach and prevention,” said Navy Lt. Stephanie Long, officer-in-charge of JSMART. “The idea is that we’ll prevent irritants from turning into serious problems.”

Troopers assigned to JSMART reach out to other Troopers by going from section to section and to the camps, talking to people and handing out stress balls, notebooks and other free items. All of these items have the JSMART phone number on them.

JSMART has a show on Radio GTMO every Friday from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., dealing with morale and psychiatric fitness.

“We try to get our name out there. If people know what we do and recognize us, they’ll feel more comfortable coming to us when they need us,” Long said.

JSMART has many ways of helping Troopers relax and decompress from whatever is stressing them. The building is kept at a comfortable temperature, and has a sitting room with comfortable couches, books, and

a TV.

“Being relaxed allows you to let your mind wander away from whatever is bothering you, and lets you open up because you’re not feeling so guarded,” said Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Lucas Baker, a psychiatric technician with JSMART.

While much of JSMART’s mission focuses on preventing little problems from becoming big ones, the team also has trained psychological technicians to talk to those in need.

“We have psychiatric technicians for when people want to come and talk through whatever it is they need to talk about,” Long said. “Our psych techs are very good at what they do.”

Psychiatric technicians interview patients and provide therapy and counseling. No subject is taboo for the psych techs; they cover personal issues, work-related issues, relationship issues, and even substance-abuse issues.

“I think this can be a very high-stress environment, especially for those who work in the camps. With the younger Troopers, especially, this may be the first time they’ve left their family and friends, or left America, so they’re feeling isolated and need to talk to someone,” said Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Dominique Cannon, a psychiatric technician with JSMART. “We just want to allow people to vent and give them support and care that they might not be able to get from their command or their friends, or if they just don’t

want to talk to their friends about something that’s personal.”

“Our most important job is to listen,” Baker said. “We also help people identify negative coping skills and then help them find more effective ways of coping.”

To become qualified, psychiatric technicians go to a 3-month course at Fort Sam Houston, Texas. The first two months consists of classroom instruction, followed by two weeks in a clinical setting and two weeks of service-specific training, Baker said.

“In our classroom work, we examine the pathology of every major problem we’re likely to run into: personality disorders, mood disorders, PTSD, and so on. We use a book called ‘Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders’ that pretty much becomes our bible,” Baker said.

For Cannon, every day offers new challenges and he wouldn’t have it any other way.

“When I was joining the Navy, I asked if corpsmen did any kind of psychiatric job. When they explained some of the jobs corpsmen do, from that point on, even while I was in the recruiter’s office, I wanted to be a psych tech,” Cannon said. “It’s a very rewarding job for me. Every problem that I deal with is very individual and unique.”

Cannon’s tour at GTMO is coming to a close, but Baker, a recent arrival, is ready to take the torch. The people at JSMART may change, but its mission remains the same.



Celebrating Asian Americans at JTF



1st Lt. Shaka Malufau danced the hula at a ceremony for Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. —photo by Mass Communications Spc. 1st Class Ty Bjornson

By Army Sgt. Saul Rosa

Throughout the month of May, United States military installations around the world celebrated Asian-Pacific American Heritage Month and Asian Americans who serve in the military.

Joint Task Force Guantanamo celebrated Asian Americans May 21 at the JTF Trooper Chapel.

Capt. Joyce Louden of the 525th Military Police Battalion kicked off the ceremony with an account of her family history, as a multiracial Asian American.

“One of the things I can count on when I meet someone new is the question ‘so what are you,’ said Louden. “I usually rattle off ‘I’m Scottish, English, Filipino, Hispanic, and Chinese.”

Louden explained that her father’s side of the family came to United States prior to the Revolutionary War and settled in upstate New York. Her mother’s side of the family came over from the Philippines in the late 1800s to cut sugar cane in Hawaii. However, both sides of Loudon’s family have a long, strong history of serving in the American armed forces.

“Although with all of this rich history, I’m the first academy graduate,” said Loudon, a graduate from the United States Military Academy. “My mother told me a story about her father. When she was younger he told it was a shame she couldn’t attend the academy because she was a girl, but he lived to see me accepted.”

The event also included a presentation of notable Asian Americans who served in the armed forces. The video was put together by Staff Sgt. Erice Manalansan, Sgt. Damon Vongphachanh, and Spc. Ryan Saiyasombat, members of the 314th Military Police Company.

“There are a lot of Asian Americans that contributed to the military and we picked certain ones that everyone knows,” said Manalansan.

“We were looking for people who stood out whether it was through their service, bravery or what they did during the wartime,” said Saiyasombat.

One particular Medal of Honor recipient who stood out to Saiyasombat was Korean War veteran Cpl. Hiroshi Miyamura.

Miyamura provided cover for his unit’s retreat at Imjin River in North Korea. He was captured during the attack and was held for two years in a Communist prison camp. On October 27, 1953 Miyamura was presented the Medal of Honor.

“It was the ultimate act of bravery for him to put his men before himself,” said Saiyasombat.

Outgoing JTF Command Master Chief Reynaldo Tiong gave the last speech of the celebration, and spoke about his Filipino heritage and the Asian American community.

“Like our grandparents and our great grandparents before, we go on to raise our kids to be proud of our heritage,” said Tiong. “I want to tell how very happy we are that in all of our differences, we still maintain a great heritage and community on this good earth.”

The finale of the event was a Hawaiian Hula, a dance with chanting or music. This Hula was presented to King Kamehameha by his warriors after unifying the islands of Hawaii. One of the performers of the dance was 1st Lt. Shaka Malufau of the 525th Military Police Battalion.

Malufau explained that the dance was performed by King Kamehameha’s best warriors and symbolized freedom and unity. He added that the dance was appropriate because how it related to the ideals that United States value.

“It was amazing doing the dance before military personnel,” said Malufau. “I really enjoy being a Soldier. I really enjoy working with the military, so that Hula was the best thing that I can do to show my appreciation.”

Troopers celebrate fitness, Armed Forces Day with 5K race



By Pvt. Loren Cook

Getting up early in the morning is something many Troopers would prefer to forgo. Fewer still would willingly wake up early on a Saturday. Waking up early on Saturday to run a race, however, takes a very special kind of dedication.

About 150 servicemembers, family members, Department of Defense civilians, and third-country nationals celebrated Armed Forces Day on Saturday by displaying just this kind of dedication.

“I think having an athletic event is a great way to honor the armed forces,” said Navy Capt. Brad Thom, Joint Task Force Guantanamo command chaplain. “It encapsulates the physicality required in those who serve.”

The hard-charging runners showed up at Cooper Field just after sunrise and began warming up and stretching. Most had pre-registered for the race; others registered that morning. Those who had registered early enough were guaranteed to walk away from the race with a T-shirt.

The race began promptly at 6:45 a.m. Runners ran once around the track before embarking on a course that took competitors

around McDonald’s and the Naval Exchange, past the Cuzco Barracks, and nearly to the bottom of John Paul Jones Hill, where racers grabbed water and turned around. From there, runners headed back to Cooper Field and finished the race on the track.

“Events like this one are great for building esprit de corps,” Thom said. “We race against each other for a while, but once we’ve finished, we cheer each other on. If anything, it’s a competition against our own bodies.”

Medals were awarded to the first and second place male and female finishers in six different age categories. A raffle was held for the remaining T-shirts; however, it turned out there were enough T-shirts for everyone who entered the raffle to get one. Many people walked away smiling, with a wearable souvenir of their athletic endeavors.

Armed Forces Day is celebrated at military bases across the U.S., but not many can truly celebrate the armed forces as a whole like Guantanamo Bay can.

“I think this is a perfect place to celebrate Armed Forces Day because it’s such a joint environment. We have Soldiers, Airmen, Marines, Sailors and Coast Guardsmen all on the same base,” said Thom. “Not many bases can have an all-inclusive Armed Forces Day like we can.”

Superstars

Name	Age	Time
Zach Stone	9-15	24:11
Rohan Merrill		24:54
Megan Digiovanni		35:41
Dane Stone	16-19	22:01
Jasmine Borunda		28:07
Eduardo Alatorre	20-29	20:26
Mark Sait		22:31
Debbie Remele		25:28
Caprice Vanauken		27:11
Wasim Mohamed	30-39	22:12
Wellington Jose		22:41
Katie Sutton		20:05
Karen Guerra		26:15
Augusto Gonzalez	40-49	23:14.06
David Poitras		23:14.07
Callie Leaver		27:11
Denise Winkler		28:15
Brad Thom	50+	25:41
Ramonito Napalan		30:11
Sandra Wilson		32:57

Overall winners

Katie Sutton	Female	20:05
Eduardo Alatorre	Male	20:26



Opposite page, top: Air Force Staff Sgt. David Poitras runs to a close second in the 40-49 age category.

Opposite page, bottom: Runners sprint to the finish line.

Top: Army Sgt. Larissa Pillay fights through her fatigue as she runs toward John Paul Jones Hill.

Bottom: Go! About 150 runners begin the Armed Forces Day 5K at Cooper Field. —photos by Pvt. Loren Cook





By Army Maj. Jon Powers

A voice on the phone said, “I have a challenge for you.”

She sounded so sunny and positive I said, “sure,” before she finished saying what I was being challenged to.

“Yoga!” she chirped.

Guantanamo Bay yoga guru Myah Mason had read a recent article about stretching and took it upon herself to show the author an entirely different perspective on stretching and fitness. That author was me and I had just committed to four weeks of her class without knowing what I was in for.

Of course, I had all kinds of yoga references: there are movies of course, the sunrise yoga show on ESPN and my own impressions of the oneness of mind and body. Bah humbug!

Mason explained what she hoped a new student would learn in his first session.

“To find out that yoga isn’t what you expected,” she said. “People have misconceptions from comedies and romantic movies, or they may be fearful of the religious side.”

Well, now I had no frame of reference at all. The last time I thought about yoga, women wore shimmering spandex tights, terry headbands and neon leg-warmers.

That Wednesday, I put on what I thought to be appropriate yoga wear and headed out. Sans leg-warmers.

With her familiar sunshine-y demeanor Mason greeted me as the class gathered and gave me a quick run-down of the class. She teaches non-purist “YogaFit” which is all fitness-ism without mysticism.

“You never have to leave the world of the five senses to gain the full benefits of the exercise,” she said.

I grabbed a mat, picked out a dark corner and imitated the others in the class who were lying down. That I can do. The class began and I heard “aromatherapy” – ok, that’s a term I hear when my wife is very angry with me and she locks herself in the bathroom and puts flowery smelly stuff in a hot tub instead of throwing something at my head. Which is a good thing. Mason was offering wintergreen, a flavoring in Skoal and Mentos.

“Yum, Mentos,” I thought but wasn’t sure I wanted the essential oil. If I didn’t take it was that like betting the “don’t pass” line on a craps table- generally frowned upon?

How relieved was I when the familiar scent of Ben-Gay wafted through the room – who knew muscle rub smelled like wintergreen? Not me! If I could have I would have taken double!

Being a middle-aged man who has spent his adulthood running long races on little or no preparation I have developed an emotional connection with Ben-Gay. It was the scent of all things that were once possible with youthful vigor and optimism but now gone stale after being squashed into an office cubicle and fermented through middle age. It smelled like everything would be alright.

So it began. Mason started “cuing” that’s yoga talk for Simon Says. She stated that we had to put out of our minds any sense of competition and focus on what our bodies needed that night.

What if you don’t know what you need? Just follow along. Simon says “Mountain!”

Cuing again- Sweeping arms to chair pose- where’s barstool pose? Shut up inner monologue- I am trying to concentrate! At one particularly critical juncture I really nailed it. I wanted to turn to the guy next to me ask, “Did you see me hit that Warrior pose?”

He’d say, “No, my eyes were closed.” Oh, right the no competition thing. Focus on your own body. Got it. But there hasn’t been a Warrior pose like that since Schwarzenegger in “Conan.”

I lost my place and hurried to catch up, down-dog-up-dog-plank and my inner monologue interrupted again. “Well let’s just child’s pose and jump back in when it’s convenient for all of us, shall we?”

A balance challenge put an end to the floor work: not like balance a vertical pool cue in the palm of your hand, but the stand on one leg kind. I tried with about as much success as the standing front-hamstring stretch we do for PT. Then suddenly we were done. One hour of yoga and no quadruple lotus sunrise position. I made it.

After class, Mason asked me how I felt- I was sweating a bit. I felt good. I felt relaxed. I had just been introduced to yoga.

She explained that yoga is very individualized.

Each class depends on your personal yoga experience. You can choose more or less challenging options.

In Mason’s case, yoga followed an incredibly successful effort at weight loss. She was looking for more challenges in 2007 and –

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CONFESSIONS of a clueless HOCKEY FAN

By Army 1st Lt. Amelia Thatcher

Believe it or not, I’ve got more television channels here at Guantanamo Bay than I do back home, and I don’t even shell out for cable.

Okay, maybe that’s a slight exaggeration. But for the first time in recent memory, I can watch a channel which carries the National Hockey League playoffs and not have to pay an arm and a leg for 100 other channels I don’t watch. Or bar food I have to box up, take home, and not consume because it never heats up well. Having this pro bono entertainment resource is a boon to the obnoxious sports fan which will inevitably emerge from even the most un-sporty of people. Like me!

In a sport where teams have to play 80-plus games just to see who qualifies for the playoffs, it is understandable for less-than-diehard fans to save the vehemence and passion until it counts: when it’s time to win it all! What about the regular season? My boys are moving up!

My very first sports memory is of watching my team, the New Jersey Devils, win the Stanley Cup for the first time ever. Of course, I only know it was their first time winning from looking up the Wikipedia entry. My little brother and I were psyched to stay up late and eat lots of snacks and wear our (Modell’s sponsored freebies because Dad is super cheap) Devils jerseys. We jumped up and

down around the living room whenever the buzzer announced a goal because it was the only game feature obvious enough for us to follow at that age. YAY BRODEUR! All other players’ names and commentary went in one ear and out the other.

In the following 10 years, I can remember attending only two games. The first was within a season or so of the Stanley cup win, at the old Meadowlands complex and tons of fun because my uncle bought us ice cream. I think they were playing the Islanders because all six of their fans were in the row in front of us. The second game was against the Philadelphia Flyers – a home game for them, and I was in college in south Jersey at the time – and the Devils won. Boo-ya!

Even now, I couldn’t tell you Zubrus from Zajac (also had to look these players up), nor what a hat trick is (three occurrences of a thing, apparently), nor what offsides means. Forget about spouting stats from other teams’ heydays in the mid-’80s. When is the next game, anyway?

Until this point, I tuned out all sports entirely. The last mention of Devils anything was in October when my brother scored a trio of preseason tickets. Ice hockey fans in Cuba are almost as likely as a Jamaican bobsled team. And then... out of nowhere... a challenger appears. A supporter of the rival team! Gnashing of teeth! Rending of garments! All-out cubicle war! In actuality, we tend to throw

things at one another regardless of whose team lost the playoffs.

Consider the Joint Task Force Guantanamo demographics. Our National Guard units potentially form company- or battalion-sized fan bases for single teams. Navy individual augmentees from all over the country perhaps watch games from divisions other than Atlantic. Half the Army folks here in the public affairs shop are from New Jersey, though our fair state has always been split along Philadelphia versus north Jersey and New York team loyalties. Hockey, despite its reputation for fighting, isn’t even the best sport to see how nutty the fans get. In the grand scheme of sports popularity, we’re kind of insular and quiet. Football is probably a better overall barometer.

Either way, regional rivalry is a pan-sport phenomenon. It also does funny things to people who otherwise get along just fine, and even people who would otherwise never consider vandalism as a hobby. My car back home, which regularly travels through Flyers territory, is resolutely team-neutral for safety purposes. Not that I fear a random Rangers fan will happen by my cubicle here and set it ablaze upon seeing a Devils playoff souvenir draped upon the wall. Heck, by the time this edition goes to print we might know who moves up in the Eastern Conference.

But who cares about them? All I know about the other teams in the playoffs is that I don’t root for them. GO DEVILS!

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loved the benefits enough to continue to get instructor certified in 2008.

Mason recalled her first time. “I was nervous about the religious aspect but found the non-competitive nature a stress reliever,” she said. At that time, married to a deployed Soldier, she was home with two kids, and discovered yoga became her personal time and even helped her be a “nicer mommy.”

The next morning my back felt like I had shoveled too much snow. Those thousand little muscles with names no one remem-

bers were all sore. But they were sore in the way that you like because you know you worked hard.

The next two classes went the same. Aromatherapy seemed almost normal and I felt a modicum of success with some of the poses and lost my place less often. When I left class my body knew it had done some work. In only three visits I had this yoga thing figured out. Then the inevitable “other shoe” dropped on the guy who thinks he knows it all.

Friday was different. It was way harder. I now know I was given two legs for a reason. And to have one in the air and the other

support all of my weight while I leaned forward on my hand was absolutely not the reason. I imagine it was what a football goal post feels as swarming fans rip it down in celebration. The collapsed-goal-post pose as I call it was kicking my butt and teaching me a lesson in respect for gravity.

So now the stretching was the exercise. I started to understand the challenge Mason had offered. My own idea of yoga prevented me from trying it. She wasn’t trying to change my mind about stretching: she was showing me that exercise can take a variety of forms. And a few of those forms may hurt a bit.

Missouri Guard remains on mission one year after Joplin tornado

By Ann Keyes
Missouri National Guard

JOPLIN, Mo. – Within hours of the deadly Joplin tornado on May 22, 2011, Gov. Jay Nixon activated the Missouri National Guard and told the people of Joplin they would remain on duty as long as needed.

One year later, the Guard remains on mission in the southwest Missouri town as rebuilding continues, said Army Maj. Gen. Stephen L. Danner, adjutant general of the Missouri National Guard.

“When the Missouri National Guard says we will stay as long as needed, we mean it,” Danner said. “Since day one we’ve worked alongside the people of Joplin to help this community respond, recover and rebuild. Our Guardsmen will continue to support them as long as we are needed.”

The night the tornado struck, members of Joplin’s 203rd Engineer Battalion and supporting companies worked at search and rescue in the central disaster zone. Within days, military police, infantry Soldiers and aviation units joined in the state emergency duty.

At the height of the response, the Missouri Guard mobilized 377 personnel who worked at traffic control checkpoints and roving security patrols, in addition to assisting with transport and establishment of a Mobile Medical Unit for use by the staff of St. John’s Mercy Hospital in Joplin.

One week following the devastating disaster, Missouri Guard personnel helped the community plan a memorial service at Missouri Southern State University. Both Nixon and President Barack Obama addressed mourners at Taylor Performing Arts Center that day in late May 2011.

The president cited selfless acts toward others, including stories of those who sacrificed their lives for people they’d never met.

“Amid heartbreak and tragedy, no one is a stranger,” Obama said.

That sentiment has been echoed repeatedly since the storm hit that changed the landscape of the city of 50,000. Tens of thousands of people donated time and labor to those they never met, from nearby communities to those overseas.



Following the storm, Nixon tasked the Missouri National Guard with providing state oversight for the federal debris removal program in Joplin and nearby Duquesne. The Guard provided 45 personnel and developed debris clearance tracking mechanisms, liaised with municipal, state and federal partners, and resolved various property issues, resulting in a highly successful rapid removal process.

This effort continues in 2012, but by late 2011, over 1.5 million cubic yards of debris were removed; over 3,100 Expedited Debris Removal parcels were cleared; and more than 1,100 commercial parcels in Joplin and Duquesne were cleared.

The Missouri National Guard has also been assisting the Department of Workforce Development with the Missouri Disaster Recovery Jobs Program for Jasper and Newton Counties. The program creates temporary jobs to aid in the cleanup of public areas and restoration as a result of the disaster. Jobs include debris removal

and restoration of public facilities and rights-of-way.

More than 1,502 civilians have been temporarily employed through the program. Currently, 15 Citizen-Soldiers serve the Disaster Recovery Jobs Program as part of the Guard’s Task Force Phoenix.

“The mission has been very successful in the recovery of Joplin,” said Guard task force member and Joplin liaison Army Capt. Bryan Dodge. “It is great to see all the houses and businesses that have been built in the last year. You can still see the scars of the tornado, but it is healing.”

Task Force Phoenix works from the Guard armory in Joplin, within eyesight of the still standing but empty Mercy Hospital. The armory sustained damage from the tornado when the roof was torn off, ruining ceiling tiles and flooding the armory’s drill floor from rains that followed the twister. The armory’s 203rd Engineer Battalion

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Training milestone solidifies Kuwait-U.S. partnership

By Sgt. 1st Class Raymond Drumsta
South Carolina Army National Guard

CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait – United States Army and Kuwaiti Army Soldiers have hardened their ongoing partnership with fire – live fire, that is.

In a Combined-Arms Live-Fire Exercise, known as a CALFX, at the Udari Range May 8, units of the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division (Iron Horse) and the Kuwaiti Army’s 151st Tank Battalion, 15th Mubarak Armored Brigade successfully performed a series of maneuvers to stop a simulated invasion force, validating months of training which began soon after the brigade withdrew from Iraq to Kuwait.

“It proved our ability to partner and work with the Kuwaiti military,” said Maj. Eric Melloh, operations officer for the 2nd Combined Arms Battalion, 8th Cavalry. “We’re able to shoot, move and communicate together. You can’t fight if you can’t do all three of those things.”

This partnership increases the strategic reach of the United States, stressed Melloh, who is from Huntsville, Texas.

In addition to the 2nd Combined Arms Battalion and the 151st Tank Battalion, the exercise involved the 1st Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery of the 1st Brigade, the brigade headquarters, and the 29th Combat Aviation Brigade. The troops were tasked with engaging targets representing an invading enemy armored force.

A safe distance away, a group of observers from the United States military and Kuwaiti military saw, and heard, the capabilities Melloh described.

The 2nd Battalion’s scout platoon screened friendly forces and engaged targets with the 25mm cannons on their M3 Bradley Infantry Fighting Vehicles. They also called for indirect fire from the 2nd Battalion’s mortar platoon and the artillery Soldiers, who slammed the targets with high-explosive rounds and provided smoke to cover the scouts’ withdrawal south, toward their tactical assembly area.

That coordination requires trust, said Sgt. 1st Class Taylor Donohoe, the 2nd Battalion’s mortar platoon sergeant. The



scouts have to trust that they’re going to get the fire missions they want when they want, he explained.

“We have to incorporate our shooting with their movement so we’re shooting safely,” said Donohoe, of Chilton, Texas. The smoke has to be at the right attitude and have the correct density so “the scouts can move out and the tanks can move in,” he added.

The American M1A2 Abrams tanks and Kuwaiti M84 tank did just that, churning up the sand as they roared across the desert to swing into position and engage the targets. The boom of the tanks’ main guns echoed across the dunes and dust and black smoke drifted in the wind as the Kuwaiti and American troops bested the scenario, hitting targets representing a reconnaissance element of eight Boyevaya Mashina Pekhoty armored vehicles, known as BMPs, and a main force of more than a dozen T72, T55 and T54 tanks.

The observers broke into applause as the exercise ended.

“Everybody shot good,” said Sgt. 1st Class Eddie Jones, the 2nd Battalion’s master gunner, adding that they’ve been cross-training with the Kuwaitis since January.

Jones recalled training with the Kuwaitis during two joint exercises here in the ‘90s. The Kuwaiti Soldiers couldn’t have conducted a live-fire exercise like this back then, he said.

“You can see the difference from then to now,” he said. “Now they’re out front, leading. They want to show that they learned

from us.”

The good communication in the live-fire exercise was due to the support of United States Army linguists and the Kuwaiti leaders’ strong command of the English language, Melloh said.

“Most of it was talking back and forth in English,” he said of the communications during the exercise.

The exercise was also a big step for the brigade, which had been conducting full-spectrum operations in Iraq last year, according to 2nd Battalion Operations Sgt. Major Richard Burns, of Belton, Texas.

“We shifted our focus to a partnership with the Kuwaiti government,” he said.

That shift involved a return to training, Burns said. Starting with tasks like individual marksmanship, the troops re-honed their soldier skills, working their way up to things like squad and platoon live-fire exercises, he explained.

“It was a lot of planning, but the Soldiers rolled right into the role,” Burns said. “Now we’re truly the best-trained unit the United States Army has to offer.”

The planning and training, which paid off in the successful CALFX, set conditions for the units relieving them in the coming months, Burns said.

“We set the wheels in motion for this great partnership,” he said.

The implications are more far-reaching, Melloh said.

“It’s all about inter-operability between nations in the middle east,” he said. “This is just one of the ways forward.”

Texas National Guardsmen exchange best practices with Burundi soldiers

By Staff Sgt. Malcolm McClendon
Texas Army National Guard

MUDUBUGU, Burundi – Texas National Guardsmen had the opportunity to share best practices with Burundi soldiers preparing for an upcoming deployment during a visit to Mudubugu, Burundi, March 26-April 6, 2012.

The exchange included courses in combat life saver, tactical combat casualty care, mechanized infantry and mortars. The U.S. Army Soldiers shared their knowledge on the subjects in a classroom setting and then the Burundi soldiers put it to use in a practical exercise.

“We talked about basic first aid, advanced trauma care, combat casualty care and evacuation of casualties,” said Leahy, Task Force Raptor medical specialist. “Then we would practice dressing wounds, placing tourniquets and employing the different types of carries, like fireman’s carry and buddy carry.”

According to Bautista, Task Force Raptor physician assistant, the Burundi soldiers were excellent students.

“They were very eager to learn and gain knowledge,” Bautista said. “Even though we were sharing basic information, they wanted to know more. I enjoyed sharing what I knew with them because I felt it was going to be put to good use.”

The Burundi soldiers were in the last phase of pre-mobilization training for their deployment in support of missions in East Africa. Marr, an infantry platoon sergeant with Task Force Raptor, felt proud to be part of their preparation.

“I love training Soldiers,” Marr said. “Especially these men, who were getting ready to deploy just like I am deployed now. I felt like I wanted to go with them—not to help or get



involved in any conflict, but to make sure they were OK and utilizing what I shared. For two weeks these were my guys. I bonded with them and felt that camaraderie I feel with my Soldiers back home.”

According to the Texas National Guardsmen, sharing their values and standards as Soldiers was the best part of the training.

“With the Burundi noncommissioned officers and officers, we shared the values we hold as leaders,” said Siwecki, a Task Force Raptor infantry platoon leader. “Things like how younger soldiers look to us, not only for leadership, but to bring them back home safely; guiding principles

that they will soon put to use.”

A graduation marked the end of the Burundi soldiers’ training and the beginning of their deployment. It also left the U.S. Soldiers with a sense of accomplishment and being part of something larger than themselves.

“When I first heard that I was coming to Africa, I thought I’d be more directly involved by providing medical care to the local population,” Bautista said. “However, after working with the Burundi soldiers, I realized by sharing what I know, not only as a medical professional but as a U.S. Soldier, these men will go out, do good things and potentially save lives.”

were delicately cleaned and preserved.

The old photos, plaques, awards and flags are historically valuable, said Brown of the unit’s lineage that dates to 1883. After preservation efforts were complete, all the artifacts were put back on display in the armory.

On May 21, the Joplin High School class of 2012, who has spent the last year learning in a mall instead of their high school that was annihilated in the storm, will receive diplomas on the MSSU campus. Once again, Nixon and Obama will speak to those most affected by the EF5 tornado.

Nixon told those at the Joplin memorial service in 2011 that the spirit of Missourians would ensure the city perseveres.

“One year from today, Joplin will look different, and more different still in two years, and three and five,” said Nixon, citing his state’s ‘Show-Me’ attitude. “Once we have set our resolve, no storm, no fire, no flood can turn us from our paths.”

One year later, Joplin does look much different, with countless businesses and homes rebuilt. Large swaths of land are barren where destruction and debris once stood as far as the eye could see. And the Missouri Guard remains on duty.

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museum was also exposed to water, soaking historic documents and photos.

“The state of Missouri quickly came to our aid so the armory could be used to help other citizens of Joplin,” said Army Maj. Michael Brown, administrative officer of the engineering battalion. “We were able to do some demolition and reconstruction that improved the building.”

Damaged pieces from the museum were recovered by the Missouri National Guard’s Museum of Military History, and

Reality television and psychology

By Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Dominique Cannon
JSMART

It may come as a shock to learn that there exist a number of similarities between the study of popular culture and the study of psychology. Though many find it difficult to identify the inherent parallels between the two fields, the link certainly exists. In American society, popular culture stands to informally identify certain attitudes, beliefs, trends and images within our mainstream culture. It shouldn’t come as any surprise that much of the information we receive on a daily basis from mass media (even in its most sensationalized and dramatic presentation) influences not only the way we speak, behave and appear, but also our mental health.

When someone says “American pop culture,” the first thing that comes to mind is reality television. You may be thinking to yourself, “What in the world does reality television have to do with psychology?” Well, just take a moment and turn on any generic show following the uncensored lives of your favorite celebrities and you will find your answer. We as a culture have become increasingly invested in reality television, because it appeals to our inner desires to be omnipotent and follow the interesting and crazy antics of equally bizarre people. It showcases the intense drama, friendships, love and betrayal of these individuals and ultimately provides the viewer with all the rollercoaster excitement of life in small, 30-minute bite-sized meals. These are not Hollywood A-list actors playing a role. They are the projected, orange-skinned and spiky-haired versions of you and me, going about their daily lives just for our entertainment.

Depending on who you ask, reality shows

are either a recent trending phenomenon that allows hopeful celebrities their 15 minutes of fame or the sum total of low-brow pop culture in America. Given the lucrative opportunities a reality show presents to certain networks, it’s better to settle in for the long haul, because they’re not going anywhere anytime soon. But what is it that draws such a large viewership to fawn over these human train wrecks and keep demanding more? Why are people so intimately attracted to the personal lives of otherwise ordinary people? Given the momentum these types of shows have gained in American mass media and the overall voyeuristic interest in them, psychologists across the nation have sought various answers to questions like these. Many psychologists have theorized that reality television is the “American dream,” shaped into a serialized and enjoyable experience. It allows the viewers to briefly suspend their disbelief and fantasize about gaining status through automatic fame. Ordinary people can watch the shows, see people like themselves, and imagine that they too could become celebrities by being on television. That’s another reason why these shows are watched: they impart an unshakable belief that being on television elevates you and makes you special and important.

Sometimes the mental processes which drive us to watch reality television are fairly cynical. In an illuminating article in the journal “Media Psychology,” two Ohio researchers, Steven Reiss and James Wiltz discovered that the largest motivations for viewing reality television were divided between a “desire for self importance” and “vengeance.” Professor Reiss writes that, “the people who watched reality television had above-average

trait motivation to feel self-important and, to a lesser extent, vindicated, friendly and free of morality.” Though this information can be interpreted a number of ways, viewers who watch reality television are primarily motivated for self-improvement reasons: instead of enduring the hard work of personal accomplishment and fulfillment, reality television offers a theatrical panorama of individuals who the viewer perceives as being inferior to them.

Regardless of how much merit or substance reality television may have scripted into its content, these types of shows are viewed primarily for entertainment. As social creatures, we are all drawn to gossip and the affairs of others, so when they are offered in an explosive, non-stop drama, we all gather around to throw peanuts at the monkey dancing for our entertainment. We feel superior to them, knowing that we would never degrade ourselves for a competition or allow the public as a whole a shameless glimpse into our lives. Reality television is best summarized as being junk-food for the brain: quick, delicious, filling, and probably not good for you.

One of the missions of the Joint Stress Mitigation and Restoration team (JSMART) is to offer increased awareness of psychological topics. We serve all service members currently assigned to Joint Task Force Guantanamo and offer therapy for those in need. Our working hours are currently 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. We are open Monday through Friday and we are closed on the weekends and federally recognized holidays. Our services are provided voluntarily and on a walk-in basis. You can contact us at 2321 during working hours. For emergencies, a staff member is on call at 3566. Have a nice day!



Dark Shadows

By Mass Communication Spc. 1st Class Ty Bjornson

I never understood the appeal of daytime soap operas. Though, I must confess, I've always been curious about "Dark Shadows," the daytime soap that ran from 1967-1971. I've always been aware of it, but never saw it. This show was set in a dark Maine mansion where family patriarch Barnabas Collins was a 200-year-old vampire. Supernatural occurrences were normal for the series. So were supernatural beings like werewolves, witches, warlocks, zombies and ghosts. They sure didn't have those on "As the World Turns."

"Dark Shadows" was never a mainstream mainstay, though it did gain a cult-like fan following. Now "Dark Shadows" has been re-imagined for a big-screen makeover by director Tim Burton ("Charlie and the Chocolate Factory," "Sweeney Todd") and actor Johnny Depp, who are also fans of the series. Depp even claimed when he was a teenager he wanted to be Barnabas Collins. In Burton's new "Dark Shadows" movie, Depp gets to do exactly that.

The film opens in 1760 with the entrepreneurial Collins family leaving Liverpool, England for Maine to further their fishing business empire. The family settles in the bustling Collinsport and they build the elaborate family mansion of Collinswood Manor. Growing up in the lap of luxury, Barnabas Collins (Depp, "Pirates of the Caribbean") enjoyed his youth as a wealthy playboy destined to take over the family business. That is until he spurned the love of jealous witch Angelique Bouchard (Eva Green, "Casino Royale") for his fiancée Josette DePres (Bella Heathcote, "In Time"). Angelique uses her dark arts to kill Josette and turn Barnabas into a vampire to mourn Josette for eternity. Framed by the dubious witch, Barnabas is chained and buried alive by the townspeople of Collinsport.

After 200 years of confinement, Barnabas

is freed in 1972. His discovery of a certain fast food chain's sign provides one of the biggest laughs in the whole movie. He finds his beloved Collinswood to be a shadow of its former self with only four living Collins residing there. The family is no longer a proud one, but dysfunctional and unhappy. The curse Angelique had put on Barnabas also affected the future generations of the Collins with travesty and despair.

Angelique is still in Collinsport after two centuries. Through her black magic, she has not aged a day. She has made it her life's work to sink the Collins family into financial ruin with her own fishing businesses. Once she discovers Barnabas is back, she resumes her fascination with him and plots to have him at all costs.

As I watched "Dark Shadows," I deeply admired the craft of the movie. Here is a film that doesn't go over the top with CGI to tell its story. CGI is there, but the film relies more on tone, darkness, shadows and the elaborate sets of Collinswood Manor to create a convincing atmosphere for the characters to exist in. I enjoyed the old-fashioned feel to the picture, befitting to the eras we see depicted, which is something many big-budget special effects extravaganzas seem to get wrong.

Johnny Depp is fun to watch as Barnabas Collins. I really enjoyed his appropriately stilted performance as a late 1700s British man muddling his way through 1970s American culture. His observations of music icons Karen Carpenter, Alice Cooper and Steve Miller definitely provide nice touches of humor. Barnabas is a fish out of water. His interactions with other characters are high points throughout the film. Kudos is also in order for Eva Green. She's very classy and sassy as Angelique. She's a great foil to

Movie Review PG-13
113 min.

the Collins family.

Though "Dark Shadows" is replete with vampirism, witchcraft, secret identities, re-incarnation, ghostly apparitions and a brooding mansion with secrets, I couldn't help but feel the movie felt a little flat. You would think the film with all these elements would have enormous entertainment potential. In fact, the whole second act is one big lull. As it stands, "Dark Shadows" is like an ice-cold sodapop without the fizz.

I'm not sure if Tim Burton really knew where he was going with this movie. Is this film best served as a comedy? Well, maybe if there were more humor to balance out the story and tone. Is it a drama? For a picture inspired by a soap opera, the normal plot-twists and surprises you would expect to see are absent. Is it a horror film? Not really, but it does borrow overtones from the spooky Republic/Hammer films of yesteryear.

"Dark Shadows" is not a bad film by any means. I kind of liked it, but not enough to recommend it (a bare minimum of three banana rats are required for that). The film suffers from being a "one-shot." It has all these really great parts to it, but due to time restraints, nothing is really explored beyond the basics. It is like the filmmakers put everything into this picture because they wanted it to be representative of the television series. The problem there is the TV show had time to go into these different tangents over a course of several episodes. The movie does not have the ability to do that.

"Dark Shadows" looks good with great looking sets and spot-on acting. The soundtrack is a great montage of rock songs popular in the early seventies. If anything, you can at least enjoy the ambiance, the visuals, acting and music provide throughout this picture. The picture is only hindered by a sense of aimlessness. So, Mr. Tim Burton, if you're not sure what kind of a film you're trying to make, then your audience might not know what to make of your film either. I'm just sayin'.



GTMO Quick Reference

Caribbean Coffee & Cream - 77859
Mon.-Sat. 6 a.m.-10 p.m.
Sun. 1-10 p.m.

Jerk House - 2535
Sun.-Th. 5-9 p.m.
Fri. & Sat. 5-10 p.m.

Bowling Center - 2118
Mon.-Fri. 6-11 p.m.
Fri. 6 p.m.-12 a.m.
Sat. 1 p.m.-12 a.m.
Sun. & Holidays 1-11 p.m.

KFC and A&W Express - 75653
Daily 11 a.m.-10 p.m.

MWR Liberty Centers - 2010
Deer Point: Mon.-Fri. 4 p.m.-12 a.m.
Sat. & Sun. 9 a.m.-12 a.m.

Marine Hill: Mon.-Th. 11-12 a.m.
Fri. 11-2 a.m., Sun. 9-12 a.m.

Tierra Kay: Sun-Th. 7-12 a.m.
Fri. & Sat. 7-2 a.m.

Camp America - open 24 hours

Pirate's Cove
Th.-Sat. 7 p.m.-12 a.m.

Cuban Club - 75962 (call ahead!)
Mon.-Sat. 11 a.m.-9 p.m.

McDonald's - 3797
Mon.-Th. 5 a.m.-11 p.m.
Fri.-Sat. 5 a.m.-2 a.m.
Sun. 6 a.m.-11 p.m.

Pizza Hut - 77995
Mon.-Th. 11 a.m.-9 p.m.
Fri. 11 a.m.-11 p.m.
Sat. & Sun. 12-9 p.m.

Windjammer - 77252
Fri. & Sat. 5 p.m. - 2 a.m.

Windjammer Cafe
Mon.-Th. 11 a.m.-9 p.m.
Fri. 11 a.m.-10 p.m.
Sat. 5-10 p.m.
Sun. 5-9 p.m.

O'Kelly's Irish Pub
Mon.-Th. 5-9 p.m.
Fri. & Sat. 5 p.m.-2 a.m.
Sun. 5-9 p.m.

Safe Ride - 84781

NAVSTA Main Chapel

Daily Catholic Mass
Tues.-Fri. 5:30 p.m.

Vigil Mass
Saturday 5 p.m.

Mass
Sunday 9 a.m.

General Protestant
Sunday 11 a.m.

Gospel Service
Sunday 1 p.m.

Christian Fellowship
Sunday 6 p.m.

Iglesia Ni Cristo
Sunday 5:30 a.m.
Room A

Pentecostal Gospel
Sunday 8 a.m. & 5 p.m.
Room D

LDS Service
Sunday 10 a.m.
Room A

Islamic Service
Friday 1 p.m.
Room C

Intense Spiritual
Fitness Power Lunch!
Study the Book of
Romans with
Chaplain Chouest
Thursdays 11-11:30 a.m.
JTF Command
Chaplain's Office

Protestant Worship
Sunday 9 a.m.

Bible Study
Wednesday 6 p.m.

For other services, contact the NAVSTA
Chaplain's Office at 2323.

For more information, contact the
JTF Chaplain's Office at 2305.

	25 FRI	26 SAT	27 SUN	28 MON	29 TUE	30 WED	31 THU
Downtown Lyceum	Battleship (NEW) (PG-13) 8 p.m. American Reunion (R) 10 p.m.	No Movie: Stage preparation for band concerts.	No Movies: See Volcano Joe and the Hot Lava Band and Vertical Horizon	Battleship (PG-13) 8 p.m.	A Thousand Words (last showing) (PG-13) 8 p.m.	Celebrate Zombie month with the movie Zombieland (R) 8 p.m.	The Avengers (PG-13) 8 p.m.
Camp Bulkeley	The Avengers (PG-13) 8 p.m.	Battleship (PG-13) 8 p.m.	American Reunion (R) 8 p.m.	Silent House (last showing) (R) 8 p.m.	The Hunger Games (PG-13) 8 p.m.	A Thousand Words (last showing) (PG-13) 8 p.m.	Dark Shadows (PG-13) 8 p.m.

Call the movie hotline at 4880 or see <https://intranet/movies.html> for more information.

*Hospital Corpsman Fengyuen Yu extinguishes a virtual fire with Jose Blacio's, of the Navy Hospital, instruction at the Safety Stand-Down. The Safety Stand-Down was sponsored by the Naval Station Security Office to host safety demonstrations and presentations. Both JTF and NAVSTA personnel attended the event.
-photo by Army Sgt. Saul Rosa*

