

THE **WI****RE**

A JTF Journal



Sweet freedom

GTMO cyclists ride for fun

Patrolling dark waters

Night patrol with the Coast Guard

Lead by example

Air Force Senior Master Sgt. Rebecca Tilton

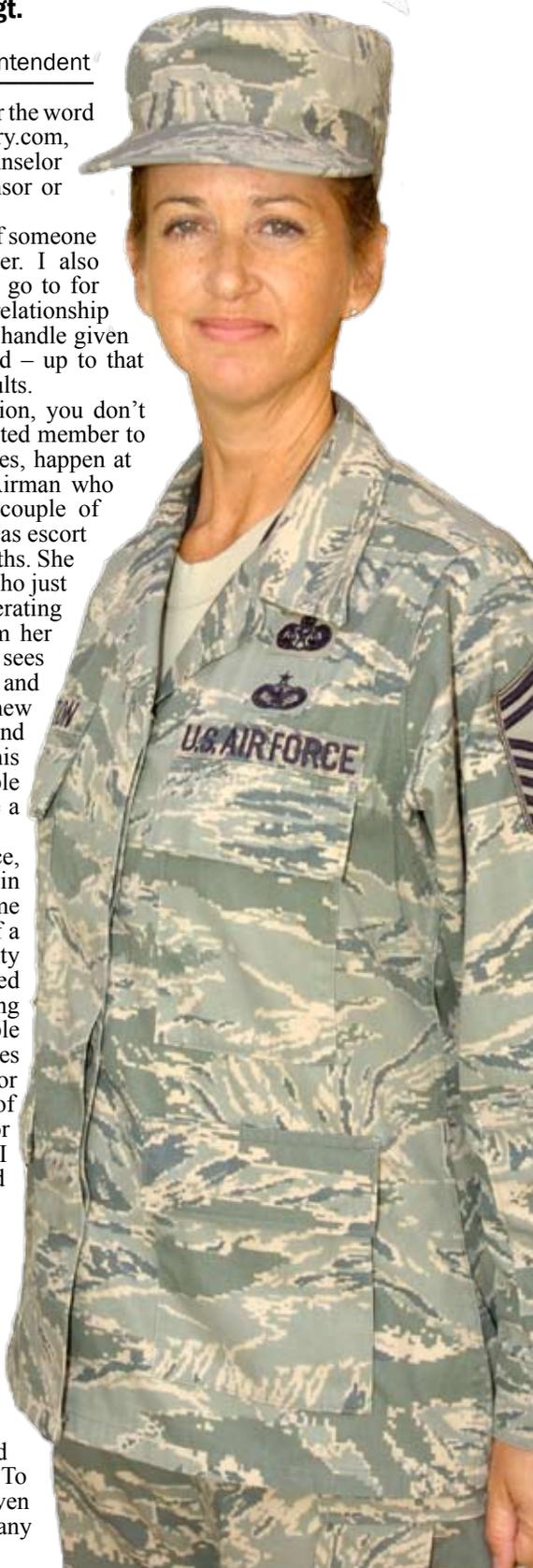
JTF Guantanamo Law Office Superintendent

What comes to mind when you hear the word “mentor”? According to Dictionary.com, a mentor is a wise and trusted counselor or teacher; an influential senior sponsor or supporter.

When I think of a mentor, I think of someone whom I want to model myself after. I also consider a mentor as someone I can go to for guidance dealing with on-the-job relationship dynamics and for pointers on how to handle given situations, when everything I’ve tried – up to that point – hasn’t yielded the desired results.

Contrary to the dictionary definition, you don’t need to be an officer or a senior enlisted member to be a mentor. Mentoring can, and does, happen at the lowest levels. Take the young Airman who has been in the service for just a couple of years and has been assigned as a habeas escort within the camps for the last few months. She can be a mentor to the new Trooper who just arrived. She knows the standing operating procedures by heart and can perform her duties flawlessly. The new Trooper sees this individual’s job performance and wants to be just as good. So, the new Trooper starts asking questions and begins to emulate the Airman. By this Airman setting such a great example for the new Trooper, she has become a mentor without even realizing it.

In my 22 years in the U.S. Air Force, I’ve had a few occasions when I was in need of a mentor. The most notable time was when I was the superintendent of a large office and I was having difficulty working with my supervisor. I was used to leading my enlisted and managing the various programs I was responsible for and I performed these duties exceptionally well. When my supervisor joined the office, the dynamics of the office changed. This supervisor was a micromanager; to the point I wasn’t allowed to do my job. I tried everything I could think of to work harmoniously with this supervisor, yet nothing seemed to work. Things were so bad, I was considering retirement. This is when I discovered my mentor. He gave me many ideas for handling the situation at work. He also made me see that, even if I couldn’t change my supervisor, I could change our interactions. After discovering my mentor, I was less stressed at work and no longer thinking about retirement. To this day I still talk with my mentor, even though we are several bases and many miles apart. ★



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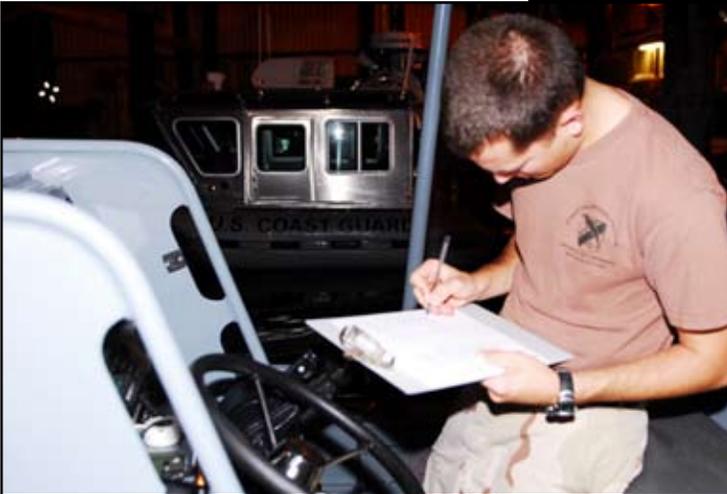
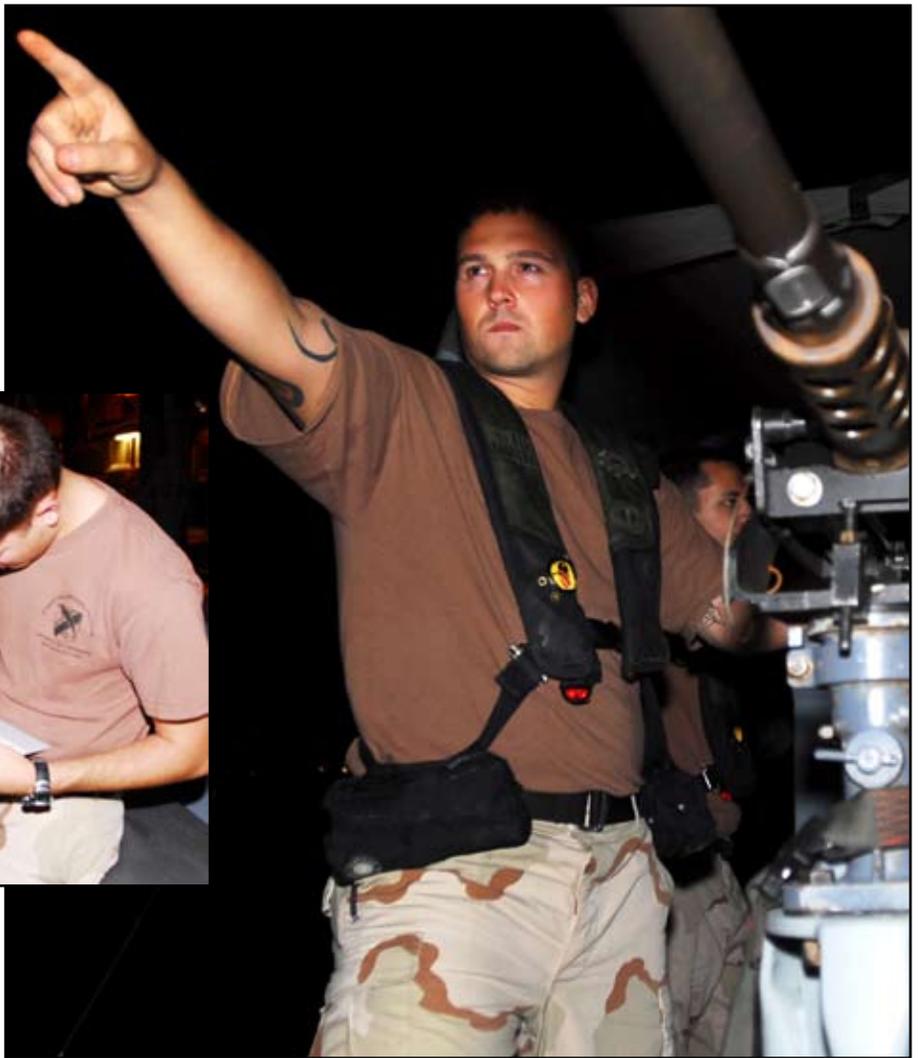
COVER:

Ensign Ian Underwood drives by one of the base’s wind turbines during the Northeast Gate Motorcycle Ride in support of the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society.
– JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Spc. David McClean



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 1,000.

Coast Guard Petty Officer 2nd Class David Bagit points out another vessel in the bay to help guide the coxswain. Bagit is a member of Port Security Unit 305 stationed at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay in support of Joint Task Force Guantanamo. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Sgt. Michael Baltz



Coast Guard Petty Officer 2nd Class David Webster performs preventive maintenance checks on his Transportable Port Security Boat prior to departing for a night patrol. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Sgt. Michael Baltz

Coasties on patrol

**Army Sgt.
Michael Baltz**

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

It is late on a Friday night when members of the Coast Guard Port Security Unit 305 arrive at the Maritime Security Detachment boathouse to conduct night patrols for Naval Station Guantanamo Bay.

“We patrol the south half of GTMO to the three-nautical-mile mark,” Coast Guard Petty Officer 1st Class Heath Jones said. “The Navy patrols the northern half.”

Jones is a coxswain in support of the Coast Guard’s mission of anti-terrorism force protection. A coxswain is the person in charge of a boat, particularly its navigation and steering. The crew of a Transportable Port Security Boat consists of three or four members. It is the coxswain’s job to train the other members as crewman.

“I am able to help teach the guys that aren’t coxswains yet,” said Jones.

The active-duty unit from Fort Eustis, Va., is staffed mostly by reserve members.

“As a reservist, it’s one weekend a month, two weeks a year,” Jones said. “Here, we are deployable within 96 hours and are self-sufficient for up to 30 days.”

Two teams rotate between duties while on shift. One team patrols the waterways, while the other team cleans weapons and performs other critical tasks.

“The patrolling crew is looking for unusual activity,” said Coast Guard Lt. Cmdr. Geoffrey Deas, operations officer for PSU 305. “People that are in restricted areas, people taking photos in the port, and people too close to Navy or Coast Guard vessels [are what we look for].”

The Coast Guard is here to enforce the exclusion area around the naval station according to Deas. It is the Coast Guard’s duty to uphold this federal law.

While patrolling, Deas explained, the teams are also looking for anyone that enters, or is on course to enter, Guantanamo Bay.

“We will intercept, investigate and escort them out of there,” Deas said.

Coast Guard Petty Officer 2nd Class David Webster said vessels entering the zone are rare.

“For the most part, it is usually a sailboat or someone not familiar with the area,” Webster said.

PSU 305 is here in support of more than just maritime security. They also support shoreside security operations and other areas of operation. Members of PSU 305 also provide security for the military commissions process in support of Joint Task Force Guantanamo. ★

Green thumbs make Bay Hill bloom

■ Troopers' enhancements make living quarters feel more like home.

**Army Spc.
April D. de Armas**

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Deployments are a way of life for most Troopers in any branch of military service. They are never easy and they take the Trooper away from home and out of his or her comfort zone. It can be lonely to be placed in unfamiliar territory.

Many deployed Troopers try to find ways of bringing touches of home with them. Some do this by hanging family pictures on their barracks walls, buying comfortable bedding, or adding throw rugs to the floors for color and comfort in unfamiliar surroundings.

Troopers at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay are no exception. However, there are some who have decided to take their homey additions outside of their temporary surroundings.

At the Bay Hill community, located on the hill behind the Navy Exchange, Sgt. 1st Class Matilde Figueroa, with Joint Task Force J-3, is one of many adding personal touches to the yard outside her barracks.

Figueroa said she got the idea from a neighbor who lived on her block when she first got to Guantanamo Bay three months ago.

"It makes me feel good to plant and I feel like I'm at home," she said.

Figueroa said she is trying to encourage everyone on her block to do some improvements to their space. She said it represents people coming together with teamwork and shows they are family.

"It brightens my day when I come home from a hard day's work to see the plants and flowers; it's not so dull," said Figueroa.

Not only is she working on her own area, but she also has been adding her own touch to others around her.

Sgt. 1st Class Luis Perez, Joint Task Force J-4 warehouse non-commissioned officer-in-charge, is a neighbor of Figueroa. He said he likes that it makes him feel more like he is at home and thinks it is important to find a way to stay active.

"It's a good way to relax your mind from a stressful day at work," he said.

Perez said he has plans to join Figueroa's efforts by working on his own yard.

Sgt. 1st Class Tomas Carreras, Joint Task Force property book NCOIC, another neighbor of Figueroa, shares the same sentiments as Perez. He says he likes the



Sgt. 1st Class Matilde Figueroa with the Puerto Rico National Guard, waters flowers and plants outside her Bay Hill barracks. Figueroa spends time in her garden as a way to relax. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Spc. April D. de Armas

decorations and plants and likes the home-like feeling it brings to the area.

Figueroa has plans to add a small spice garden to her already bountiful flower garden. She would also like to add a few vegetable plants, like tomatoes.

The beautification efforts made by Figueroa, her peers, and those before her seem to have an effect on all who get to enjoy the view. She is taking initiative and

going above and beyond the call of duty to not only provide a more comfortable place for herself during her deployment, but to share the beauty with others around her.

Thanks to many of the residents at the Bay Hill community, Guantanamo Bay now has one more place of interest for those who like to sightsee and enjoy garden-like qualities one might see at home. ☆

Camp America, revitalized

■ *Air National Guard supports Troopers through facility upgrades*

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

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Keeping the morale high among Joint Task Force Troopers is an important mission that is always on the minds of JTF leadership. In an effort to keep the work force comfortable, three Air Force National Guard civil engineering squadrons will conduct their two-week annual training here to revitalize Camp America facilities and support construction projects around the naval station.

"I contacted the National Guard Bureau and requested six teams of civil engineers," said JTF Command Master Chief, Air Force Chief Master Sgt. Brian T. Schexnaydre. "They said they could support my request and gave me three teams to start, and would work on getting three more."

Upon taking over as JTF command master chief, Schexnaydre identified various areas of Camp America that could benefit from revitalization. Without wasting any time, he set the wheels in motion.

"Nature took its toll on the facilities," Schexnaydre said. "Some of the shower facilities needed attention because they didn't work properly. It was necessary to initiate the changes."

Three representatives – from California, Tennessee and Maryland – visited here recently to coordinate efforts and begin planning for upcoming summer rotations.

"We'll renovate some of the latrines at Camp America and implement shower facility upgrades with new shower heads,"

said Air Force Chief Master Sgt. Jeffrey L. Myers, a representative from the 163rd Civil Engineering Squadron in California. "We'll install adequate ventilation for the facilities and repair some of the existing infrastructure because there are some walls with rust damage. We'll also replace the existing sinks with stainless steel sinks."

In addition to the changes in the latrines, the civil engineers will also replace some air conditioning units and conduct minor maintenance on additional facilities around Camp America.

The opportunity for the additional civil engineering squadrons came at a convenient time.

"NGB got in touch with our respective units and asked if we were interested," Myers said. "We had some individuals who wanted to experience this kind of work, so we thought we'd step up to the plate."

For the Maryland-based 175th CES, their annual training was scheduled to take place in Arizona for the second year in a row.

"We didn't mind getting pulled from that mission to come and support the JTF," Air Force Senior Master Sgt. Janice Grennon said. "This kind of project allows us to utilize every skill set we have in civil engineering and that's extremely rare during our two-week training. Typically we only get to utilize two out of the five or six shops during annual training, so this is a really good project to make sure people are maintaining their skills."

The Tennessee-based 118th CES recently returned from a four-month deployment in Iraq.

"We have a Prime Base Engineer Emergency Force unit," said Chief Master Sgt. Robert Hosseini with the 118th CES. "When we're deployed, we do rapid runway repair, engineering, surveying and support hospital facilities; basically anything around the base. During peacetime, we take care of base facilities managing maintenance through various shops – utilities, structures, electrical, power production and heating, ventilation and air conditioning."

Even though some of the unit members have only been back for a couple of months, Hosseini said, some members were ready to deploy again.

"Typically a 100-man team is deployed," Hosseini added. "For these projects we will have approximately 50-man teams."

For Troopers living within Camp America, news of the upcoming construction is something to smile about.

"Right now, the air-conditioning unit doesn't function properly in my room, so this is good news," Army Spc. Jose Rosaryo said.

Another resident of Camp America expressed interest in the upcoming facility changes.

"I think we will be more comfortable with the new facilities," said Army Spc. Emmanuel Mercado.

"I think we can do the construction with little or no inconvenience to the Troopers," Myers said. "The biggest thing is coordination of materials. We should be able to keep a construction schedule that's pretty accurate for where we want to be when we leave." ★

Sports events gearing up for spring

**Army Staff Sgt.
Blair Heusdens**

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

As temperatures on the island heat up, many sporting events and leagues are gearing up at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay in the upcoming weeks. Though construction on the track at Cooper Field has put some activities on hold, there are many athletic opportunities still available to Troopers who wish to have fun and stay fit.

Upcoming events include:

Men's March Madness 5-on-5 Basketball Tournament March 27-29, 7:00 p.m. at Denich Gym

Beach Volleyball Tournament March 28-29, 9:00 a.m. at Windmill Beach

Double-Elimination Tennis Tournament (Men's and Women's Division) March 30-April 13, 6 p.m. at Deer Point Courts

Spring Indoor Coed Volleyball League March 30, 6:00 p.m. at Denich Gym

Leagues for men's softball, women's soccer and men's soccer are set to begin in early April, as soon as the Cooper Field track is complete.

Physical activity not only keeps your body healthy, but also helps to keep you mentally fit. Regular exercise helps to reduce stress and improve confidence. The National Institute of Health reported health benefits from just 20 minutes of exercise each day.

"It [exercise] is a good way to channel emotional energy and a healthy way to get out aggression," said Lt. Cmdr. Christopher Blair, the officer-in-charge of the Joint Stress Mitigation and Restoration Team.

According to Blair, exercise makes you feel good because physiologically, it releases endorphins and affects the chemical balance in your brain. Exercise also serves as a distraction from the stresses of life and work. Team sports help to build unit cohesion and create bonds.

Safety is always a concern when participating in strenuous activities. As temperatures rise, staying hydrated becomes even more important. Troopers should make sure to bring water or sports drinks when participating in sporting activities.

Proper stretching is also key to preventing injuries while playing sports.

"Troopers playing sports should conduct basic stretches before, during and after the game to prevent injuries," said 1st Lt. Roberto Flores Martinez, the Joint Task Force safety officer-in-charge.

There are other opportunities on GTMO for fun and fitness. Fitness classes are offered regularly at Marine Hill gym. Troopers can also enjoy swimming, golfing, hiking, kayaking and biking on base. Equipment is available through the Morale, Welfare and Recreation facilities and liberty trips are frequently scheduled for these activities.

Dates for sporting events are subject to change. Contact the base sports office at ext. 2113 for more information. ☆



Troopers often meet in the evenings at Denich Gym to play intramural volleyball. The spring coed volleyball league is set to begin March 30. The deadline for signing up is March 25. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Staff Sgt. Blair Heusdens



Morale, Welfare and Recreation spring sports leagues will begin soon. Leagues and tournaments for volleyball, soccer, basketball, tennis, baseball and softball provide opportunities for Troopers to stay active and fit. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Staff Sgt. Blair Heusdens

Watch Out

**Army Sgt.
Derrol Fulghum**

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

If your idea of a good movie is one with little back story, intricate characters that are never fully explained and a plot that loses itself halfway through the movie only to reappear in the last 20 minutes, then "Watchmen" is for you.

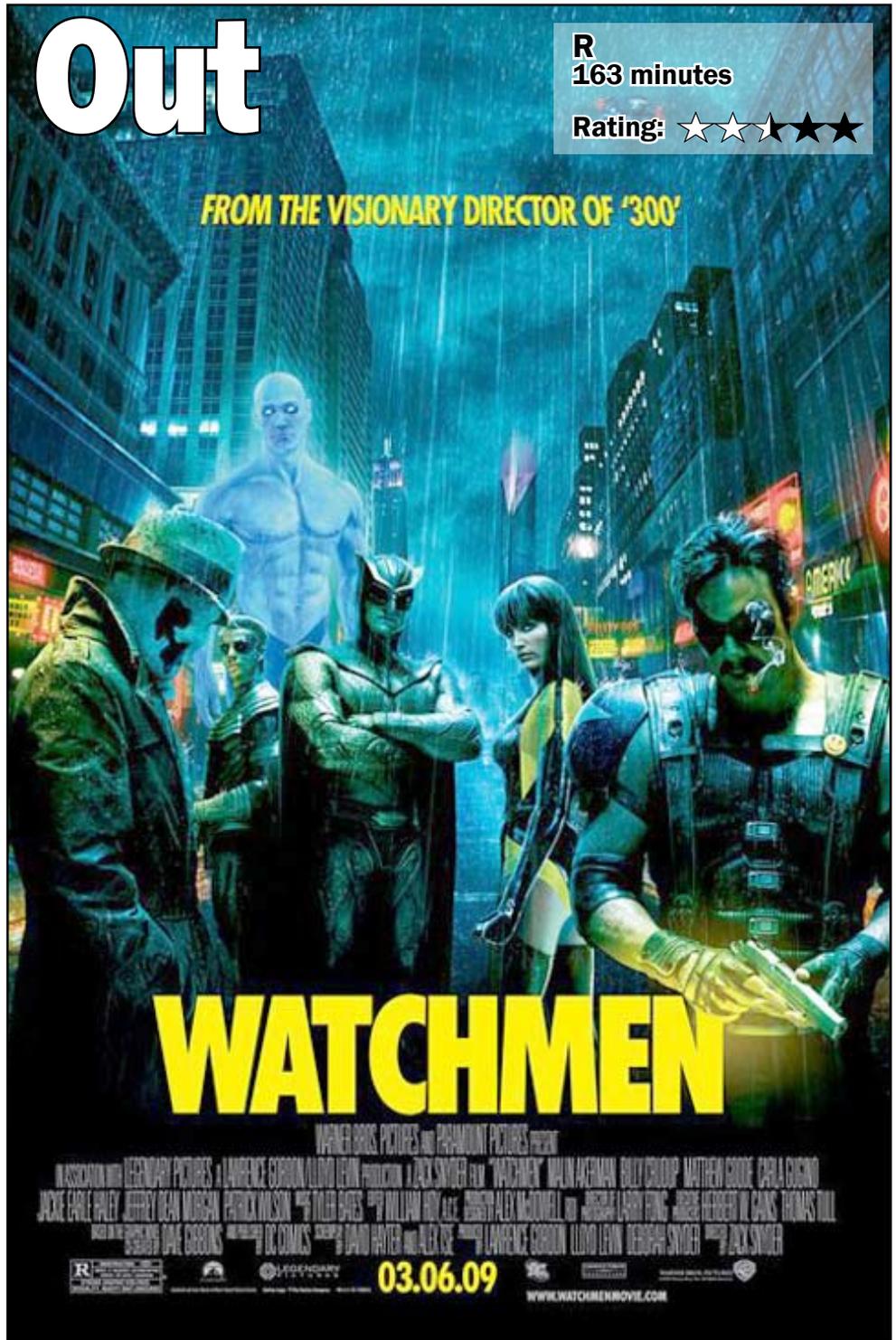
After hearing all the hype about Zach Snyder's adaptation of the beloved graphic novel, I knew I shouldn't have been as excited as I was, but I still expected something completely different from what I saw. I was thinking something along the lines of "The Fantastic Four" (only better), or maybe a "Justice League" type flick, but all of my expectations were in vain.

Tales of illustrious superheroes from the 1940s and 1950s are portrayed on the opening credits. Their rise to fame, and consequently, near complete extinction, sets the tone for this jumpy bit of historically mocked-up graphic fiction. Whether by murder, suicide or developed insanity, all met their demise in a most disturbing way.

The movie then picks up with the death of The Comedian, one of the original Watchmen.

When Rorschack, a man with an ink blot mask that continually fluctuates to emulate facial expressions, starts investigating the murder, the flashbacks occur. The Comedian did anything but warrant side-splitting laughter. Throughout his violent life, he murdered women and children in Vietnam (including the pregnant woman carrying his child), attempted to rape one of the other Watchmen, murdered protesting civilians, killed JFK, and generally portrayed the all-around irreparably evil villain laying siege to the good people of the world at the time.

Throughout all this, we find out that Richard Nixon was elected to a third term and, in 1985 America was very close to nuclear war with the U.S.S.R. The one person everyone is counting on to save the world is a bright blue, glowing man called Dr. Manhattan. His girlfriend is the daughter of one of the original Watchmen, the Silk Spectre. Keep in mind, the Silk Spectre is the one The Comedian tried to rape. With the couple's arrival, several hours of betrayal, sexual encounters, and tangled love affairs ensue, only slightly littered with chunks of vital information. In short, any true revelations are a long time coming, if they ever fully arrive at



all. Still, the Watchmen rambles on like a long-winded politician giving out nothing but empty sentiments. In the same sense, I'm left feeling lost, confused and bored.

The best thing about the movie is that it was based on Alan Moore and Dave Gibbons' graphic novel, not a comic book, so it was, in retrospect, spectacularly violent and curse-filled.

Even fans of the Watchmen were confused by this one. I never read "300", but understood the movie perfectly. Everyone knows how Peter Parker became Spiderman and why he can do what he does. They should have made the "Spiderman"

movies without all that extra fluff, and just gone straight to the good stuff.

In an effort to understand my own unexpected distaste for the film, I researched some reactions from more widely known film critics and movie buffs. Apparently, the majority of them are split on the issue, with only a sentimental few clinging on to the majesty of the universally acclaimed novel and therefore shrugging off any discrepancies that made their way to the big screen.

But like all the others who are looking at the true value of the film itself, I conclude it's just better to avoid "Watchmen". ★



MWR library; more than just books

The MWR Community Library is open from 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday and from 12:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. on Sunday. A drop box is available for afterhours drop-off and selections can be renewed by phone by calling ext. 4700. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Staff Sgt. Blair Heusdens

Army Staff Sgt. Blair Heusdens

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Maybe you've spent a lot of money recently buying books, buying movies or paying for Internet access. Or maybe the smell of books brings back memories of childhood visits to the local library. Whether for practical or nostalgic reasons, the Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) Community Library at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay is the place to visit for intellectual stimulation, cultural enlightenment or just a place to relax.

The library not only offers books for check-out, but also audiobooks, movies and free Internet services.

"We have over 20,000 books and we are always increasing our selection of movies," said Lenore Garder, the base librarian.

With the swipe of a library card, Troopers can check out up to three movies at a time for three days from a selection of hundreds of movies. Book selection checkouts are unlimited and can be taken for up to 30 days. The selection is regularly updated with new books and newly released movies and television series.

"We are part of the McNaughton leasing plan which allows us

to receive new items each month," Garder said.

Some of the more popular genres of books with the Troopers on the island are the *Twilight* series and cookbooks. Troopers can request certain books, authors and topics and the staff will do their best to bring them in.

"We're always looking for suggestions," said Garder.

The library also has a vast selection of Cuban relations and Cuban history books. The books are a popular feature for Troopers stationed here, as well as visitors to the island.

Other things happen with the library in addition to reading. An adult book club meets at the Windjammer each month to discuss books they've read. Each month the group chooses a topic and reads books related to the topic. A stitch n' chat group also meets at the library on Wednesday mornings to knit, crochet and do needlework together.

In honor of National Poetry Month and National Library Week, there will be a Poetry Night April 16 at the Caribbean Coffee and Cream patio area at 7:00 p.m. The suggested theme for the night is the Guantanamo

Experience. Interested Troopers can sign up at the library.

For more information on library services or special groups, contact Lenore Garder at ext. 4700 or e-mail Lenore.garder@usnbgmto.navy.mil. ☆



Rudolph Currie from the base fire department checks his e-mail on one of the MWR computers at the MWR Community Library. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Staff Sgt. Blair Heusdens

Dive shop keeps morale afloat

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

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Scuba diving and snorkeling in the waters of Guantanamo Bay is a popular pastime for many Troopers and residents.

Ocean Enterprises, Guantanamo Bay's only dive shop, keeps Trooper morale afloat by providing scuba diving recreation opportunities, training and equipment for all residents of the base.

Ocean Enterprises opened Aug. 1996. Jessie Keenan has managed the shop since April, 1997.

"The number of customers and the love of the sport has changed over the years," Jessie said. "There are more people interested in the sport and recreational diving has become a larger sport. It's worldwide now. It wasn't when I started diving 13 years ago."

The dive shop provides scuba diving instruction for new divers and advanced divers including specialized qualifications like rescue and master diver.

"We offer full certification, and can train individuals to become dive masters, and instructors," said Chris Brownell, an employee of the dive shop.

If Troopers just need gear, they can rent it as well.

"We outfit divers with their proper gear and ensure it fits them," Brownell added.

Army Spc. Tim Dawson received his scuba certification through the dive shop, and is now an avid diver.

"I'd rather own my own equipment so I can use it when I return home," Dawson said. "I've purchased everything through the shop, and the staff has been really helpful."

According to Jessie, the dive shop supports Trooper morale and helps keep them out of trouble.

"Diving gives Troopers something to do and helps keep them out of the bar," she said. "I love being that support and giving Troopers an opportunity to do something else."

"When you're underwater you can do so much," Jessie continued. "You're away from cell phones, pagers and you don't have to worry about work, or people bugging you. It's such an amazing release."

Bill Keenan, the lead scuba instructor for the base, has been involved with the dive shop since Jessie began managing it.

"I've been here 16 years, but I wasn't actively involved until she took over the dive shop," Bill said.

In addition to teaching scuba classes Bill is also certified to maintain dive equipment and the air compressors at the dive shop

and around the base.

"I'm one of two certified technicians for the air compressors on the base. Rudy (Rudolph) and I both maintain the compressors including those at the fire department and at the Navy dive locker," Bill said. "Most of the compressors require someone certified to work on them, so, Rudy and I both went to the school to get certified and keep everybody safe."

Jessie, Bill and the team of employees and dive instructors who work with them, play an important role in many events at Guantanamo Bay like scuba Olympics, beach clean-ups, and most notably, supporting Wounded

Warriors.

"I knew John Thompson, the president of Soldiers Undertaking Disabled Scuba," Jessie said. "He asked me about getting involved and coming down to Cuba. We finally worked it out with the Joint Task Force and got the OK. I became a cheerleader and semi-coordinator with the program."

"We support these guys because diving gives them an opportunity to learn to live again," Jessie continued. "It's great to see them accomplish these goals, and it gives

them a much-needed break."

Ocean Enterprises sponsored and supported the event and Jessie helped to raise additional money.

"I love being able to serve the military by taking care of you guys," Jessie said. "I can't serve my country the way you do. You give me an opportunity to serve you."

Ocean Enterprises is open Monday – Friday, 12 – 6 p.m., Saturday 9 a.m. – 6 p.m. and Sunday 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. For more information, call ext. 75336. ☆



Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class Brian Rogers looks at a scuba specialty DVD while visiting the dive shop. Troopers often come in just to browse new gear or talk with the shop employees. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Staff Sgt. Emily J. Russell



Dive shop employee Chris Brownell helps Army Spc. Tim Dawson find a buoyancy control device and explain the importance of properly fitted gear. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Staff Sgt. Emily J. Russell

Women's History Month Committee



(From left) Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class Katrina Mitchell, Petty Officer 2nd Class Nacole Williams, Petty Officer 3rd Class Sara Kelly-Alston, Lt. Tawanda Moore and Petty Officer 2nd Class Kimberly Williams make up the Naval Station Guantanamo Bay Women's History Month Committee. The committee works to acknowledge women in the GTMO community. March is Women's History Month and the committee is sponsoring the "Phenomenal Woman" awards which will be announced during a celebration March 25th at the Bay Hill Patio. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Staff Sgt. Blair Heusdens

Policy on the use of indecent and offensive language



- ✧ Public use of indecent and offensive language by service members and civilians in JTF-GTMO is not only in bad taste, but also disrespectful to all members of the community and its visitors.
- ✧ While private conversations remain the personal business of those involved, conduct in public places has a direct impact on the quality of life, good order and discipline in the community.
- ✧ These standards apply to all service members and civilians in JTF-GTMO. Everyone should assist in policing the use of indecent language on the base.
- ✧ Service members and civilians in JTF-GTMO shall report instances of harassing language through their chain of command. Commanders or supervisors will address the use of appropriate language as a part of their unit training.

Please refer to Command Policy No. 39 – Policy on the use of indecent and offensive language – for more information.



Navy Expeditionary Guard Battalion promotes Trooper

Richard A. Ryan, with the Navy Expeditionary Guard Battalion, is promoted to lieutenant March 17. The NEGB provides guard forces for the detainee camps in support of Joint Task Force Guantanamo. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Spc. Tiffany Addair

Boots on the Ground

by Army Spc. April D. de Armas

What do you think is the most exciting activity on this island?

Navy Lieutenant
Rick Baker



"I like the diving."

Army Spc.
Luis Luna



"I like playing sports like basketball, tennis and golf."

Navy Petty Officer 1st
Class Dominic Scavo



"I like to snorkel."

Army Pfc.
Robert Sherry



"I like going to the beach with my friends and playing beach volleyball."

Captain of your soul



**Army Capt.
Scott C. Brill**

JTF Deputy Command Chaplain

Think for a moment of a time in life when things did not turn out the way you might have hoped for, only to be glad later down the road. Who has not experienced firsthand the reality of this popular saying, "When one door closes, another opens." I love the song by Carrie Underwood, "Jesus, Take the Wheel." The words remind me to "Let go and let God." Like the Israelites of old, when Moses raised the brass serpent, we need to, "Look to God and live."

Sometimes, it is my fear, pride, or lack of faith that causes me to tightly grip the things I think I need the most, unaware that God has better plans and blessings that are beyond my sight. In his famous poem "Invictus," William Ernest Henley wrote about man's great strength in the face of adversity. With head "bloody, but unbowed," man, he wrote, is the master of his fate. The last verse of his poem reads:

*It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate.
I am the captain of my soul.*

There is a beautiful stained glass picture in the NAVSTA chapel that reminds me that I am not the master of my fate or the captain of my soul. It is my experience and personal testimony that men and women have unquestionable powers and can and should bring to pass great things by tireless efforts and indomitable will. But, after all we can do, it is the Lord who carries us by grace. Whenever I start to feel as though I control my own destiny, and am responsible for the success in my life, I am reminded of these words penned by Orson F. Whitney in rebuttal to "Invictus":

Art thou in truth? Then what of him Who bought thee with his blood? Who plunged into devouring seas And snatched thee from the flood?

Of what avail thy vaunted strength, Apart from his vast might? Pray that his Light may pierce the gloom, That thou mayest see aright.

Men are as bubbles on the wave, As leaves upon the tree. Thou, captain of thy soul, forsooth! Who gave that place to thee?

Bend to the dust that head "unbowed," Small part of Life's great whole! And see in him, and him alone, The Captain of thy soul.

Without God at the helm, there would be no victory over the great monster of the deep, spiritual and physical death. With his stripes, the passage toll is paid. He knows the chartered course that guides the sail of our souls safely through the tides of temptation and far from the treacherous shores and storms of sin. He is our all. He is the Captain of our soul and master of our fate.

For all of us who face disappointment, I hope this message helps. The best is yet to come. Proverbs 3:5-6. ☆

JTF CHAPEL SCHEDULED PROGRAMS

Catholic Mass

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

Wednesday: 11 a.m.
Spanish Mass

Protestant Worship

Sunday: 9 a.m.

Spanish Protestant Worship

Sunday: 11 a.m.

Bible Study

Sunday: 6 p.m.

Wednesday: 7 p.m.



525th sets the standard



■ *MP Battalion Troopers receive NCO of the Quarter and runner-up Soldier of the Year for U.S. Army South*

**Army Sgt.
Michael Baltz**

JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Sgt. Jonathan Vasquez won the Soldier of the Quarter award for United States Army South by competing in a non-commissioned officer board at Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

The board, which ran Feb. 13-17, gave Vasquez an opportunity to go stateside to compete against his peers.

"It is everything a Soldier lives for," Vasquez, a Trooper from the 525th Military Police Battalion, said. "When you get the opportunity to represent the entire battalion, it is pretty honorable."

Vasquez, a wheeled vehicle mechanic stationed at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay in support of Joint Task Force Guantanamo,



Army Sgt. Jonathan Vasquez and Army Spc. Juan Jackson pose in a photo while attending boards at Fort Sam Houston, Texas. Vasquez won NCO of the Quarter, and Jackson was runner-up for Soldier of the Year for U.S. Army South. – Photo courtesy of Army Spc. Juan Jackson



Army Sgt. Jonathan Vasquez, the NCO of the Quarter for U.S. Army South, gives a briefing to soldiers participating in drivers' training. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Sgt. Michael Baltz

says he lives by the Army values day-to-day, and that is what helped him with this accomplishment.

"The Army values are all found in the NCO creed," said Vasquez, who is from the Dominican Republic. "As an NCO, the creed is something I live by."

His most enjoyable moment of the board was when he got to sound off with the NCO creed.

Vasquez said having seven sergeants major in front of you can be rather intimidating, but he was confident.

"The attitude you have to have is to win," Vasquez said. "Every question they ask is situational."

The 28-year-old was groomed for this board when he won NCO of the Quarter in January for his battalion. It was a learning experience, explained Vasquez.

"He is a very dedicated individual," 1st Sgt. Rodney Sanchez said. "He takes time to make sure he is a well-prepared NCO. For someone to win that board, it takes a lot of dedication and discipline. I am very proud of him."

Vasquez not only had the support of his command, but also from his fellow Troopers.

"He motivated me when I got here," Spc. Charles Daniel said. "I now max my physical fitness test at 300, before I got here that wasn't happening. He continues to challenge me."

Daniel says that Vasquez always stays positive regardless of the situation and that he always has a smile.

"He is a very social person," Daniel said. Vasquez, who has been in the Army for more than three years, served in Iraq in 2008.

Vasquez wasn't the only Trooper who traveled to Texas. Spc. Juan Jackson, also with the 525th, placed as runner-up for Soldier of the Year for USARSO.

"It feels good," Jackson said. "I am glad I can be an example for my fellow soldiers."

This was the third board Jackson has participated in. When he becomes an NCO he plans to continue to participate in boards. ☆

Around the



JTF



Army Sgt. Cerron Hutchins, a Trooper, with the 525th Military Police Battalion, operates a forklift during a supply inventory as part of his duties in the supply warehouse, March 17. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Pfc. Chris Vann

Mercedes Diaz and “Kulcha Doc” thrill the crowd during the Singer’s Showcase at the Tiki Bar, March 12. The evening was filled with song and dance as local talent entertained the audience. – JTF Guantanamo photo by Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Patrick Thompson



Army Capt. Christopher Hodl, of the 525th Military Police Battalion, administers the oath of reenlistment to Army Staff Sgt. Maryellen Rovillos. This is the 525th’s first underwater reenlistment. – JTF Guantanamo photo by 2nd Lt. Kevin Fitzsimmons