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Is GTMO's cup running over?

Recent uptick in alcohol-related incidents threatens to make life here awfully dry

By Spc. Michelle M. Scsepko
The Wire

Guantanamo Bay has all the trappings of a tropical paradise: crystal-blue waters, palm trees, wide beaches under the blazing Caribbean sun. And while this certainly ain't no Club Med in BDUs — any servicemember with a night shift, guard duty or a six-day workweek could tell you that — at least, on a Friday night at the Tiki Bar, there is no reason we all can't pretend. Who can take a tired troop's troubles away? The Tiki Man can.

"The Tiki Bar is a place to go after a hard day's work and unwind," says Winston "The Tiki Man" Norman, Alcohol and Beverage Manager at both the Tiki Bar and the Windjammer. "The cool, off-the-water breeze and beautiful view are there for everyone to enjoy. The music and mixed drinks make for a perfect good time."

Good troop morale plays an important role in a successful mission. The higher the morale, the more productive troops are in getting the mission done effectively and efficiently.

"The Tiki Bar and Windjammer are great, because after working a long six days, it gives everyone a chance to socialize and relax," said Air Force Senior Airman Jason Bradford, who works for the JTF-160 J-6. "It breaks up the routine and raises the morale. All work and no play definitely makes me a dull boy."

But wherever alcoholic beverages flow at reasonable prices, some are bound to overdo it. And that's when good times can go bad.

"Excess drinking is the biggest problem here. There's not a weekend that goes by lately where there is not an alcohol-related incident," said Army

See Tiki, page 5

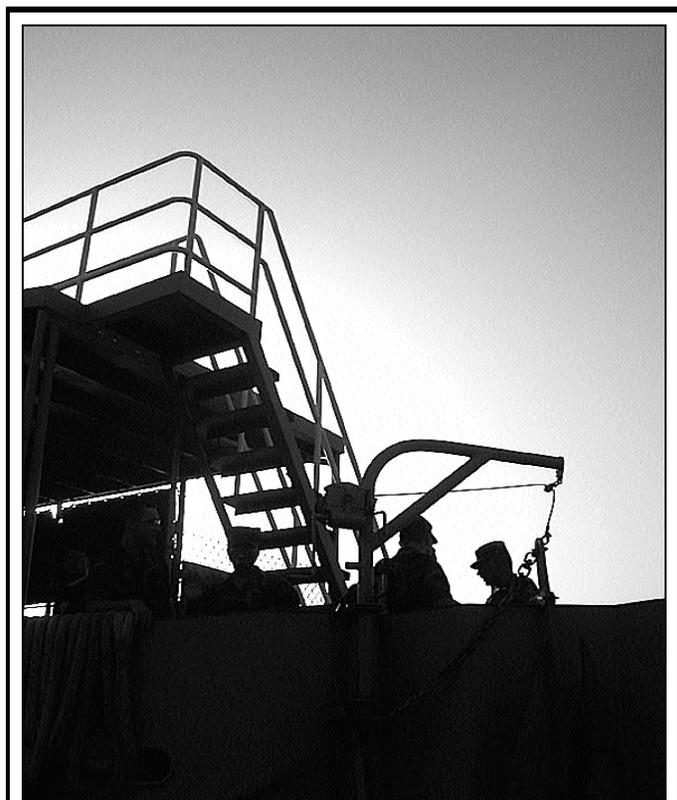


Photo by Spc. Frank N. Pellegrini

To Leeward, and then home: another crew gets out of GTMO

With the sun still rising, members of the 455th MP detachment gather on the 7:30 a.m. ferry from GTMO's windward side Wednesday for the first leg of a long journey back to Uniondale, Long Island. The detachment, which served as the staff of the Joint Detachment Operations Group under Army Lt. Col. Bill Cline, returns to New York after six months at GTMO. They were seen off by a host of grateful JTF-160 higher-ups, among them Commanding Gen. Rick Baccus and Command Sgt. Maj. R.W. Funaro.

A look inside...



Keeping those wheels turning

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The 414th is off the island

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Going to "Xtremes" on GTMO

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Chaplains' Corner

A prayer for Independence Day

O God, we give you thanks that you formed the good earth and that part of it we call our country.

Those who first inhabited here, the Indian tribes and nations, lived in harmony with the land and praised you as Father of us all.

Those who crossed the oceans and struggled to be free gave us our inheritance. We are their children — many races and one nation.

We thank you for the good things in our heritage and the chance to correct the bad.

We love our country, these United States, this America, and we pledge again to guard its freedoms and confer them equally on all.

Help us in the struggle to replace tyranny with law and bondage with freedom.

For our blessings as a nation, we praise you and thank you.

Submitted by Chaplain (LTC) Raymond A. Tetreault, JTF-160 Chaplain

Provost Marshal's Office

To date there are twenty-two Policy Letters and one General Order signed by the Commanding General covering a multitude of subjects, ranging from the use of government vehicles to the wear of civilian attire. These letters have been distributed to all JTF-160 subordinate commands for dissemination to all personnel.

Over the last few weekends, there have been a number of incidents involving violations of the Commander's Policy Letters and the General Order.

The majority of these incidents involved E-5 and below.

If you are involved in an incident investigated by the Navy Police, your name will appear on the Police Blotter.

The Police Blotter is reviewed daily by

the JTF-160 Provost Marshal, CSM, and Chief of Staff. If the incident is in violation of the JTF-160 Commander's policies, we at the Provost Marshal's office may be tasked to investigate it.

Personnel found in violation will be held accountable for their actions, and the report will be submitted to the Commanding General.

It is incumbent upon each individual assigned to the JTF-160 to be familiar with the Policy Letters and General Order and to abide by them.

Past violations have resulted in UCMJ disciplinary action.

— **Maj. Gary J. Cipolletta, Deputy Provost Marshal, JTF-160**

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Commander's Corner

This week, Commanding Gen. Rick Baccus passes on a message from Senator Bob Kerrey (D-NE):

"Thank you for your service. We civilians, who benefit from your service, must always be grateful and always understand the price you are paying for us and freedom. Thus, in our eyes you are already heroes in a great cause.

"In the case of the [detainees], you guard men who threatened the lives of free people throughout the world. All who live where freedom has become second nature are freer from fear than we would be without your efforts.

"For confronting these risks we are sincerely and eternally grateful. We are not just grateful; we are moved by your willingness to risk so much... not for your freedom, but for the freedom of others.

"In addition to thanking you, I urge you to challenge us in a way that might make some uncomfortable. I urge you to look across the wire towards the men we hold as [detainees] and feel sympathy for their condition. Do not pigeonhole them as 'evil-doers.' See them as young men who made bad choices and let yourself wonder why.

"And as you wonder why, let yourself wonder what we can do so that young men in the future will not make the choice they made again.

"In the land of the free and the home of the brave we need your voice as much as we need your physical courage.

"Either way, we are proud of you. All Americans wish you a special day today. May it be less boring than yesterday."

Profession of the Week

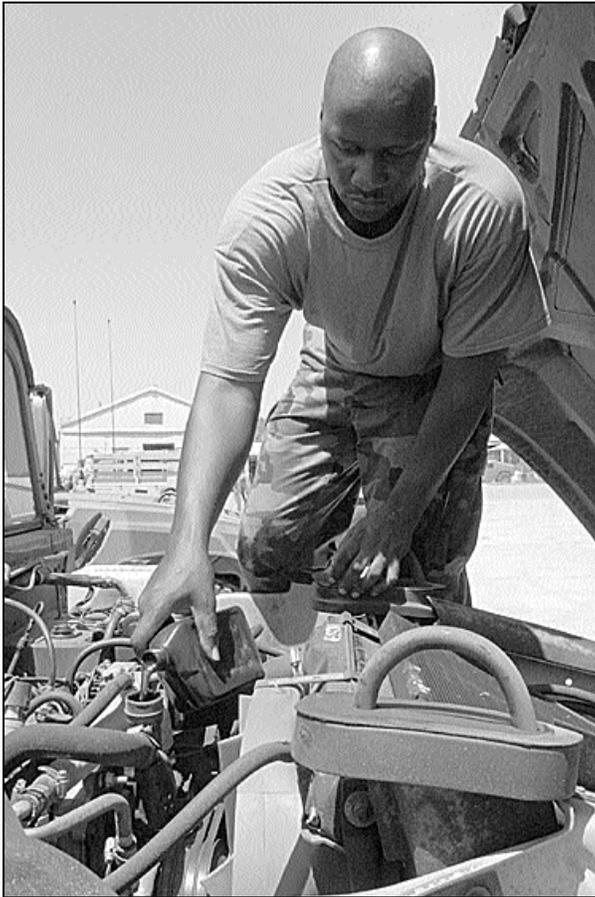
Combined Maintenance Team

Compiled by Spc. Joseph A. Morris
and Spc. Chris S. Pisano
The Wire

“If it rolls around GTMO on wheels and breaks down, it’s coming here,” said Army Staff Sgt. Don Auwarter, one of the many mechanics who make up the combined maintenance team serving the people of Guantanamo Bay.

The team is comprised of Army, Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps servicemembers who are able to perform scheduled and unscheduled operations on all vehicles. On call 24 hours a day, they’re here to make sure your vehicle will take you to your desired destination. These motivated mechanics replace parts, fix equipment, train new drivers, and above all else, keep you on the road.

So have no fear, because if your vehicle breaks down, help is only a phone call away.



Photos by Spc. Joseph A. Morris

Army Sgt. David Ingram performs an oil change on a 361st Press Camp Headquarters humvee desperately in need of a lube.



Army Spc. Cipriano Ramos contemplates which tool he will snatch from a contact truck, which is a mission-ready mechanical shop on wheels.



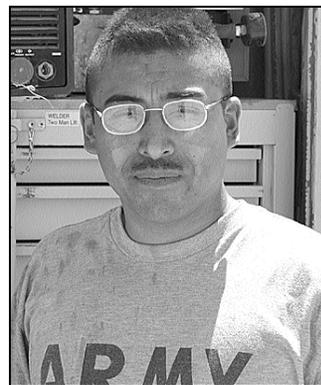
Army Staff Sgt. Don Auwarter,
114th MP Co.

“We enjoy what we’re doing here. We get to work on a variety of different vehicles — humvees, buses; you name it, we fix it. I love to get down and dirty on the job.”



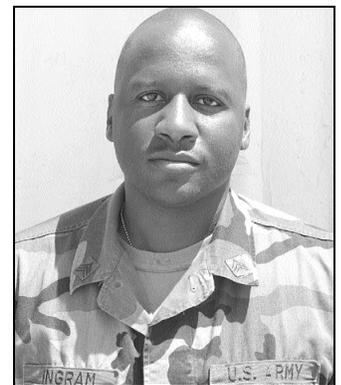
Air Force Senior Airman
Stephen Capone, 16th Trans.

“I love my job, it’s great. I get to interact with a lot of people from all walks of life. We’re here for customer service, and we have no problem doing our job. If it comes in, it gets fixed.”



Army Spc. Cipriano Ramos,
1/22 INF

“I love maintenance, it’s what I live for. I enjoy working with the contact truck, which is like a mobile work shop. If you break down somewhere, we’re coming to give you a fixing!”



Army Sgt. David Ingram,
114th MP Co.

“The best part of my job is the people I meet. A lot of them don’t know much about maintaining their vehicles, so it makes me feel good to be able to help them out.”



Photo by Army Pfc. Jean-Carl Bertin

Now it's official!

Army Commanding-Brig. Gen. Rick Bacchus of JTF-160 swears in Navy Cmdr. Greg Thompson as the officer in charge of the Inspector General's office. Thompson had been filling that position for more than three months before he was certified by the commanding general Thursday.

Man on the street

Compiled by Spc. Chris S. Pisano and Spc. Joseph A. Morris

This week's question:

After a long workweek, how do you relax?



Navy Cmdr. Andy Shelter, MIUWU 208

Boating, wake boarding, water skiing, knee boarding, "Ski-Bob"-ing, scuba diving, snorkeling, swimming and just about anything else out on the water.



Air Force Airman 1st Class Brooke Smith, J-3 Operations

I enjoy laying in my hammock and just hanging out. It's nice to call home and keep in touch with the family.



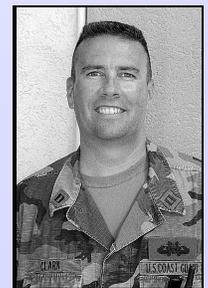
Army 1st Sgt. Larry Wilbanks, 178th MP Co.

Fishing. I like fishing. As for the fish, I haven't been able to track them down yet, but I'll figure out where they're all at.



Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Lori Vickers, Air Ops

I try to take advantage of everything this island has to offer. After being stationed here 2 1/2 years, I sure know how to calm down after a tough week.



Coast Guard Lt. Daniel Clark, PSU 307

I like crashing through the woods and looking for insects. I'm an entomologist back home, and I enjoy doing invasive species research.

Tiki, from page 1

Maj. Gary J. Cipolletta, Deputy Provost Marshal.

"From the incidents that come in, 99 percent of the time the violators are E-5 and below, with the majority having to do with an underage drinker," he said. "But don't get me wrong. We have offenders well into their 30's. People of all ages need to understand that they can have a good time without violating the General's policy."

Policy letter number one, "Alcohol Consumption," signed by Joint Task Force 160 Commander Army Brig. Gen. Rick Baccus, states that possession of alcoholic beverages by a person under 21 is strictly prohibited, and those in possession of such beverages shall ensure minors do not consume such beverages. Drunkenness or abuse of alcohol will not be tolerated. All those who violate this alcohol policy are punishable under the UCMJ.

The names of persons involved in alcohol-related incidents investigated by the Navy Police appear on the Police Blotter and are then reviewed by the Provost Marshal, the JTF-160 Chief of Staff, and Command Sgt. Maj. R.W. Funaro.

"Believe me, when the troops violate the General's policy, it is like a slap in his face," said Maj. Cipolletta. "They're fully aware of the policies and are deliberately breaking them."

The recent rash of fights and alcohol abuse may have some dire consequences that will

affect all JTF servicemembers. If this kind of misconduct continues, the bars may close earlier, drinking privileges may be restricted or revoked, house parties will be banned, and there is even a possibility of publishing the Police Blotter in "The Wire" to be used as a deterrent for violators of this policy and any other, Maj. Cipolletta said.

And the incidents are mounting. Last week, a fight between intoxicated troops occurred at Windward Loop after a night of drinking at the Tiki Bar, Maj. Cipolletta said. The previous weekend, drunkenness on a GTMO bus led to violence.

And just last Saturday, one soldier was led out of the Windjammer in handcuffs for underage drinking.

The "Tiki Man," though, is trying his best.

"We are taking more precautions to safeguard the troops here," Norman said. "We have trained the bartenders to cut off alcohol to those who have become too intoxicated, and we offer a 'safe ride' program to prevent drunk driving."

"This program is offered seven days a week, and we encourage people to use it," he said. "If anyone is in need of a

ride they can call 2304."

"We really do care about the patrons of our establishment and just want them to come out and have a good time responsibly," he said. "It's unfortunate that a minority of irresponsible people can ruin it for all."

For all their best efforts, those who manage the establishments here don't catch everything, and recently the staff at GTMO's other night spot had an eye-opening experience.

"There was a sting operation that took place at the Windjammer," said Antonio Ursida, Assistant Manager and Chef. "A female walked through the door wearing a pink wristband — indicating to me that she was over 21 years of age. She walked straight to the bar and ordered a beer. I looked at her and at the bartender, and everything seemed normal.

So the bartender served the beer. The next thing I know she pulls out her police identification card and informs me that she is under 21 years old. Now, we try to check ID's three times, once at the door, at the bar, and randomly. But we can't stop everything."

That operation worked as an alarm, and it sounded loudly to those who work at all the establishments that sell alcohol, sending the message that more must be done to ensure that underage drinking does not take place.

"We have implemented several different drink tracking systems," Ursida said. "First, we have employees walking around the floor in plain clothing, not uniforms. Then, we are watching for those who leave the bar with more than one drink. We then signal to our floor man to go over and keep an eye out to see if a drink is passed off."

"Additionally, we are planning to order different color over 21 bracelets for the different clubs, so we can track if people are swapping bracelets somewhere else and trying to walk through and get served," said Norman.

Underage drinking at any of the establishments here is a serious matter. Those who attempt to drink will be disciplined. If you are apprehended — and don't think you won't be — you will be handed over to security. Your chain of command will be notified and you may be blacklisted from all drinking establishments on base. In addition, there is the possibility of being read your rights and taken down to the Shore Patrol station.

And still, people try.

"I've seen it all — people switching wristbands, having friends order them drinks, sneaking off into dark corners," said Norman. "They'll do anything to have a drink, but they should know, I'm watching."

"I've been working here for 12 years, and prior to this, I worked with the Drug Enforcement Agency in Jamaica," he said. "There really is nothing I have not seen or that I'm not prepared for."

Although everyone enjoys a good time, everyone must remember that they are members of the United States military, 24 hours a day, and must conduct themselves in a responsible manner.

Underage drinking, alcohol abuse and fighting will not be tolerated, said Maj. Cipolletta.

So next time you have a party or head out to the Tiki Bar or the Windjammer, watch yourself. Watch your buddies. Drink with discretion, or don't drink at all.

As the alcohol-related incidents mount here, the JTF command is getting more and more concerned about troop conduct and force protection.

Don't be the individual that forces them to crack down on everyone.

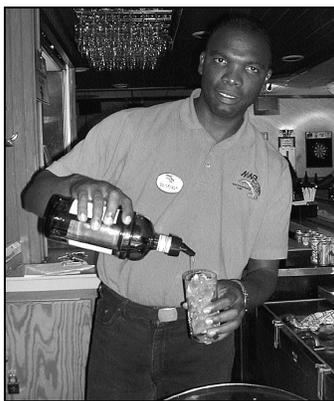


Photo by Spc. Michelle M. Sosepko
Tiki Bar bartender Devon pours a customer a stiff one.

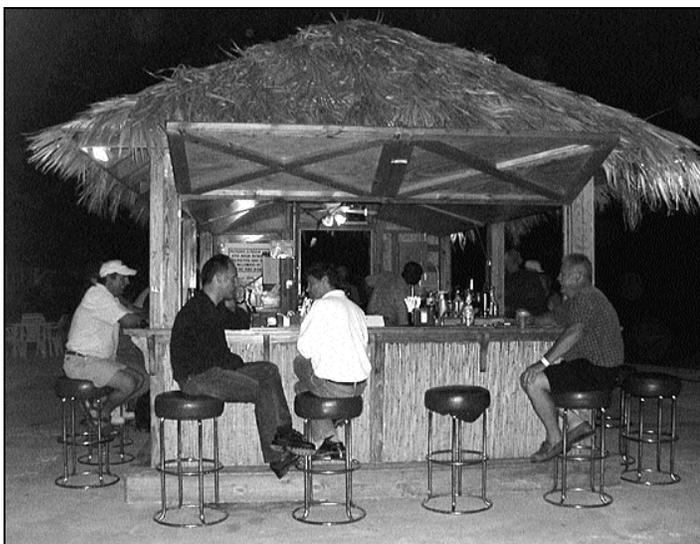


Photo by Spc. Michelle M. Sosepko
Mingling at the Tiki Bar after dark — even on a slow night — helps these troops unwind.

**The Tiki Man
says:
If you can't
drink nice,
don't drink
at all.**

Finished but not done: 414th moves on

After six months in GTMO, these MPs will go home only briefly before it's on to Ft. Benning.

**Story by
Spc. Joseph A. Morris**
The Wire

It was a tough job, but somebody had to do it.

"At our lowest point, we were emptying waste buckets for the detainees," said 1st Sgt. Michail D. Eckles of the 414th Military Police Company, a reserve unit from Joplin, Mo. "Morale was low and conditions were tough, but we really stepped up and pulled together to overcome the situation. The unit really performed their jobs like professionals."

But when the professionals of the 414th originally received their orders to serve duty at GTMO, they didn't have much of an idea what to expect — or much time to react.

"I packed my bags and was ready to go. I had no expectations and no clue what was to come," said Eckles.

"The kind of work we were tasked to do when we arrived here was different than any kind of work we have done before," said Capt. Shane Campion.

"Our soldiers are trained as military police officers, not guards. We had to learn how to handle the detainees. With help from the Marines and

some of our soldiers who do work like this on the civilian side, we were able to learn how to perform this mission," said Campion.

"Not knowing what to expect, we had to keep cool," said Sgt. Michael G. Abram. "We worked well together through all the changes and took things in stride. Things worked out smoothly."

It only took the 414th a couple of days to hit the ground and start running, said Campion. "The unit adapted fast and started taking care of business."

That wasn't easy either. When the 414th arrived here at Camp X-Ray the living conditions weren't as bearable as they would be at Camp America three months later. No air conditioners, no hard roofs overhead. Few other commodities to enhance the quality of life for troops with an often unpleasant mission.

"We started out living in tents with dirt floors. We were taking showers using garden hoses. It was tough on the soldiers, and it was hard for them to keep high morale," said Eckles.

Long guard shifts, lack of sleep and the heat didn't make life any easier. It took a while, but as time moved on, the liv-

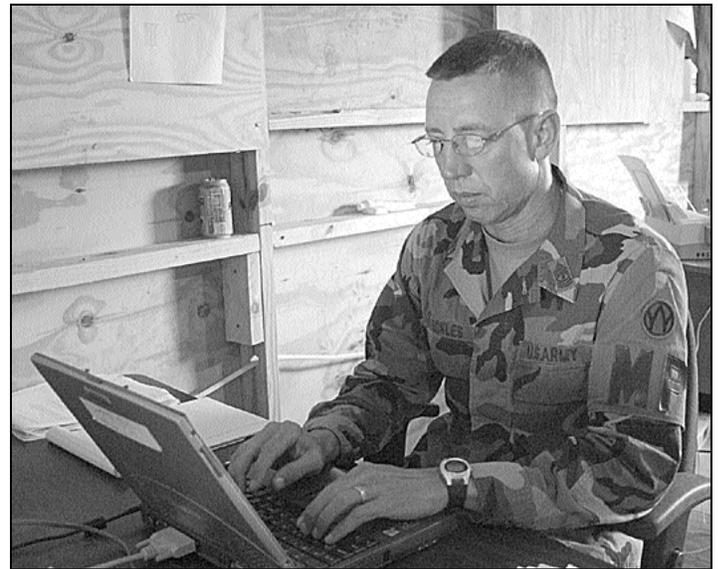


Photo by Spc. Joseph A. Morris

1st Sgt. Michail D. Eckles of the 414th Military Police Co. prepares some last minute reports before his unit ships out of GTMO and heads on to Ft. Benning, Ga., where his unit will continue force-protection training.

ing conditions improved with the construction of Camp America.

"We spent over three months in tents before Camp America was built," said Eckles. "After moving to Camp A the quality of living got better and morale began to rise. It was nice to be able to take a break and relax in the air conditioner on our off time."

But quality of life isn't everything.

"The overall conditions of the deployment were better than I could have expected," said Abram. "The hardest thing to overcome was the reality of the people who we were dealing with."

But after the troops came to realization of why they were down here, it was just a matter of getting the mission done and not letting the environment get to them mentally.

Now, though, the MPs of the 414th can reflect on their time here and look back at their accomplishments with pride.

"Every soldier in the unit should be satisfied with the way they worked down here," said Eckles. "Overall, the unit did an outstanding job."

"I'm very proud of all the soldiers for doing such a great job of taking care of Camp America," said Campion.

Most importantly, every member of the 414th will be headed back to the continental U.S. safe and sound.

"We are successfully bringing every soldier home in the condition we took them. That is a primary goal for all of our missions, and we achieved it," said Eckles.

The mission for the 414th at GTMO is now completed, and they are being replaced by the 571st MP Co. out of Fort Lewis, Washington.

"The new unit has picked things up fast, and now they are ready to take over their responsibilities at GTMO," said Campion. "I have no doubt that they will perform the mission well."

"It's been a tough road, but we had fun and now it's time to move on and try something new," said Campion.

But while the 414th might be done serving here, their job serving the country is not over.

"We're going back to the states, but we're not headed home," said Campion. "We're heading off to Fort Benning, Ga., for a follow-up mission in force protection."

They'll only have a few days with their families, only a few days to be reservists again. But for this weary crew, said Eckles, "it means a lot just to be heading back stateside."



Photo by Spc. Joseph A. Morris

Sgt. Michael Abram of the 414th MP Co. enjoys a well-earned chuckle at the thought of finally returning to the United States after a six-month deployment guarding detainees at Camp X-Ray and Camp America.

Camp "mayor" is lifeline for troops

By **Spc. Chris S. Pisano**
The Wire

No campaign was needed. No election was held. Capt. Shane Campion, a guard commander with the Army reservists of the 414th Military Police Company out of Joplin, Mo., was merely tasked with the job: the camp commandant of Camp America and Camp Buckeley at Guantanamo Bay. Or, as the troops out at the camps more affectionately call him — the mayor.

And what does a mayor out in the camps of GTMO do?

"Everything," said Campion. "Anything you would need, I have to be able to supply."

While "everything" may sound like an exaggeration, to hear Campion tell it, it's no wonder there are no elections. With a job description this broad, who would run?

"My main job is to run the life support at Camp America and at Camp Buckeley; to support all the infantry and MPs living out here," Campion said. "I'm responsible for all basic necessities, maintenance, water, supplies and MWR items, like getting equipment for the gym. You name it, I supply it."

But there's more. Beyond just providing those basic necessities for the troops already in place, Campion is also responsible for making sure that all incoming soldiers to the camps are equally squared away.

"I've also been involved in the rotation of all the troops who come out here," Campion said. "More troops have come in than gone out, and I need to provide them with quarters and the essentials for a comfortable life."

Providing those living essentials has been Campion's job since he arrived here in February, when he started working out of Freedom Heights, a tent city adjoining Camp X-Ray. But just as new living quarters for the detainees would be constructed with the shutdown of Camp X-Ray and the building of Camp Delta, living quarters near the new detention facility would also be required for the soldiers who worked there.

Campion was there, and he oversaw nothing but progress as construction began on Camp America. He assisted in the building up

of the camp, which at first was just grass and a handful of cinder-block buildings left over from a Haitian refugee operation held there years before. He would soon oversee the closing of Freedom Heights and witness the rise of Camp America, a testament to his commitment as commandant.

"The fact that Camp America is up and run-



Photo by Spc. Chris S. Pisano

Capt. Shane Campion, camp commandant or "mayor" of Camp America and Camp Buckeley, makes his daily mayoral rounds.

ning is the biggest success of my term, and I'm extremely proud that I contributed to it," said Campion. "I'm also proud that I helped oversee the refurbishing of a lot of buildings out at Camp Buckeley."

Juggling so many different responsibilities, between raising cities and making sure that every soldier has the bare necessities, Campion has become quite adept at the hardest aspect of this job — organization.

"The biggest challenge is coordinating all the different routes of responsibility and making sure they flow to a single place of contact. Basically, I have to make sure that things get done in an organized fashion."

But staying on top of things is often eas-

ier said than done, and sometimes Campion had to burn a few nights worth of midnight oil to ensure that things would continue to run smoothly.

"I've pulled some very long shifts," he said. "I've done up to 36 hours straight. But hey — this is my job."

However, all those long hours have definitely paid off. The troops out at the camps — and especially those of the 414th — feel that Campion did a more than satisfactory job as 'mayor.'

"He's a great guy," said 1st Sgt. Michail D. Eckles. "A lot of what you see out here is because of his efforts."

"He got the things we needed and really did a great job as our 'mayor,'" said Sgt. Michael G. Abram. "We owe the guy a lot."

Despite the stress of the job, Campion has remained in good spirits and has appreciated the chance to wear such an important hat.

"It's been a lot of fun," he said. "Really, this is some enjoyable work. Instead of just guarding, I get to see things grow as new facilities get up and running. We did a lot of good by getting the soldiers out of those tents and by giving them a better quality of life. All the incoming units should definitely appreciate what they will get when they come in, because we had none of this when we arrived."

And as Campion's deployment comes to and end, and with those incoming units coming in, the time has come for a new soldier to step into the job of camp commandant. That man is Capt. Matthew Mertz of the 342nd MP Co., and Campion feels he will do just fine.

"He's going to do a fantastic job," he said. "He'll bring a fresh set of eyes to the operation. We're basically done with the initial build-up, and we're going into a longer-term frame of mind in regards to camp operations, so this is the perfect time to switch so we get a different angle."

With the stress and the long hours, Campion isn't exactly sad to leave. But he wouldn't change a thing.

"It's been a real pleasure being the 'mayor' out here," he said. "A challenge, but a very rewarding one."

New First Aid Clinic opens at Camp A

Story and Photo by
Army Pfc. Jean-Carl Bertin
The Wire

A new Joint First Aid Station was officially opened Tuesday at Camp America.

Cutting the ribbon to officially open the station was Army Commanding Brig. Gen. Rick Baccus of JTF-160. The general was then given a tour of the facility.

Army Col. Michael Canale,

the officer in charge of the clinic, congratulated all of the people who contributed to the opening of the station. He also thanked the Navy Seabees, who built the station in only three weeks.

"They are really miracle workers," he said. "This is an excellent working environment."

The new clinic, which has more rooms and a patients' waiting area, will allow the soldiers at Camp America and Camp Buckeley to receive quality care, said Army Sgt. 1st Class Earl Manning, the noncommissioned officer in charge.

The new facility is equipped with air conditioning, telephones and computers directly linked to the Navy Hospital.



Photo by Pfc. Jean-Carl Bertin

Gen. Baccus does the honors.



Marine Corps Maj. Scott Packard, after a nasty tumble down the slopes, sucks it up and drives on to finish the race.

Photo by Spc. Chris S. Pisano



Marines Corps Maj. Scott E. Packard stirs up a little "Last Minute Chaos" while leading his team through the first portion of the extreme race.



Photo by Spc. Jose A. Martinez

Navy Lt. Sandra "Cookie" Schaffranek, from Team Dusty, breaks a sweat while humping it up a hill during the 12.3 mile bike course.

Only the truly "extreme" could face this race

Compiled by Spc. Chris S. Pisano, Spc. Jose A. Martinez, Spc. Joseph A. Morris and Army Pfc. Jean-Carl Bertin

Only the strong survived in the GTMO Xtreme Adventure race, which covered both land and sea. The participants were shedding blood, sweat and tears trying to overcome the challenges of a 7.1-mile kayak leg followed by a 12.3-mile bike course and concluding with a 8.8-mile cross-country run. Four-member teams hit the terrain together, leaving no option but to come back as a whole. Only for the most physically fit and mentally prepared, anyone stepping up to this type of challenge had to be considered a winner whether he made it over the finish line or not.



Photo by Spc. Jose A. Martinez

ing his team of the same



Photo by Spc. Jose A. Martinez

Navy Cmdr. Bruce R. Simpson and Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Lisa Czubernat forge up Tarantula Trail during the extreme adventure race.

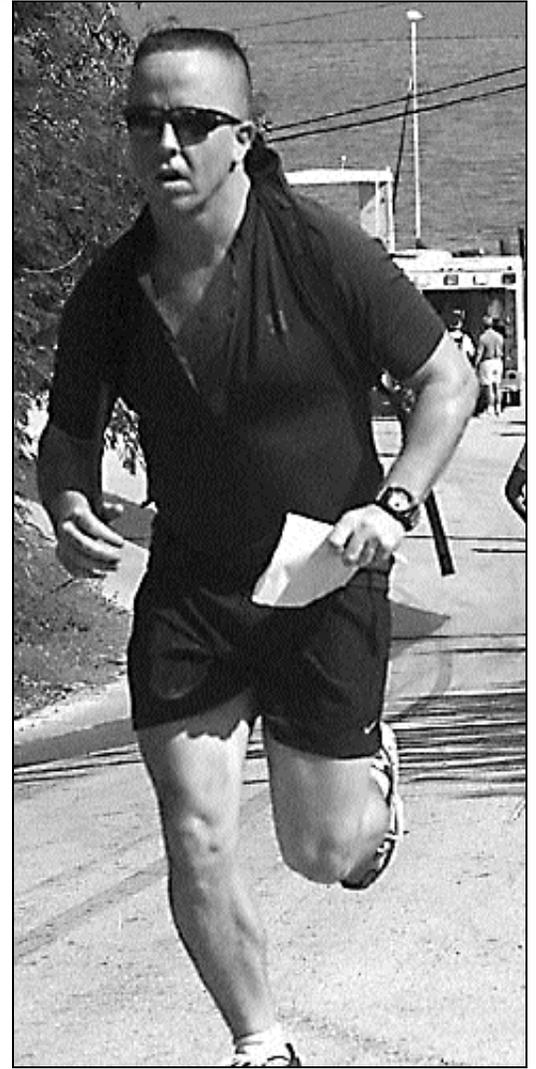


Photo by Spc. Chris S. Pisano

Marine Corps Capt. John F. Griffen bums pavement as he charges up a hill during the last leg of the event.



Photo by Spc. Chris S. Pisano

Team Dusty, having beaten the course, gets ready to bask in the glow of victory as they stride on in to claim first place to conclude a truly extreme race.



Photo by Spc. Jose A. Martinez

Army Capt. Ricardo Sierra and Army Master Sgt. James McKinney cut through the water with extreme speed as they conquer the kayaking portion.

Departing JDOGs head back home to NY

By Spc. Frank N. Pellegrini
The Wire

Like so many other units arriving in Guantanamo Bay in the first months of 2002, they'd never been trained for anything quite like this. They were prisoner-of-war handlers by trade. But the twelve Army reservists of the 455th Military Police Detachment, attached to the 800th MP Brigade in Uniondale, N.Y., were a versatile bunch — law enforcement officers, students, a prosecutor, a bus driver and a congressman's aide — and when the call came on January 11 that put them on the ground floor of the war on terror's still-developing detainee operation here, they discovered that that versatility would come very much in handy.

The 455th would serve as the Joint Detections Operations Group (JDOG) — liaisons between the commanding Joint Task Force 160 staff and the detainee handlers on the ground at Camp Delta, the 115th MP Battalion — and in a politically charged, diplomatically delicate situation with few precedents in American history, they were going to have to make it up as they went along.



Photo by Spc. Frank N. Pellegrini
Master Sgt. Rojas checks in with Lt. Col. Cline at the JDOG office.

"It was the first time a unit like ours has ever been used for something like this, and we were writing new doctrine," said the unit's leader, Lt. Col. Bill Cline. "The mission put us at the focal point of the whole JTF — everything that happens with the detainees. We're dealing with detainees who are not covered by the Geneva Convention, but we follow the spirit of Geneva. It's been a real challenge to walk that line."

Cline, a deputy sheriff in Suffolk County on Long Island in civilian life, not only headed up JDOG's delicate mission but was instrumental in the design and construction of Camp Delta, where the detainees are currently housed, as well as in their move to the new facility in April.

But the 455th's busiest member may well have been Master Sgt. Carlos A. Rojas, who after one member of the unit had to go home on emergency leave was left with two positions — senior NCO of JDOG and the thousands of soldiers under its operational control, and liaison between the JTF-160 and the

International Committee of the Red Cross, the group certifying that the treatment of detainees at Camp X-Ray and Camp Delta is humane. The former was an old-fashioned military job — keeping his door open to all servicemembers, with all kinds of problems, and applying lessons learned in 19 years in the military and previous deployments to the Persian Gulf and Bosnia in an effort to help. The latter responsibility was a bit more complicated.

"I'm here to troubleshoot any problems there might be between the ICRC and the command, JDOG, or the JTF," he said. "They come to me if there's questions, problems, or concerns, and I set up meetings between their delegates and our people."

"I put out fires," said the man who has had only "a handful" of uninterrupted days off in six months here. "Things that could eventually turn into international incidents — and have, at times," he laughed. But I do my best to control them."

Like Cline, Rojas' civilian job — a Nassau County police officer — was helpful to him in his balancing act at GTMO.

"At home I work in a gang task force. Part of my job is that I go to schools, speak to kids, parents, community leaders, so I'm somewhat of a community relations officer also. You learn to deal with people, to understand their mission and why they're here, even if you don't necessarily agree with it."

Capt. Mike Farkas, the unit's resident lawyer — he's an Assistant District Attorney with the Brooklyn DA's Office, Homicide Bureau, and a military lawyer on drill weekends — didn't even have a job when he got here; there was no role for a JAG officer in the JDOG command.

That quickly changed. Along with doing some S-2 personnel work for the unit here, "I was able to assume the role of the sole deputy SJA (Staff Judge Advocate) for JTF-160, which made me, in effect, one of Commanding General Rick Baccus' two attorneys."

"We represent the command. So any issues, any needs related to the law, international law, operational law, detention operations — any legal issues that arise we directly advise the general and all the commanders in the JTF."

He was also responsible for training incoming soldiers in how to deal with the detainees, schooling them in the Rules of Engagement, or when a detainee's actions might justify a forceful response under international law. Add to that the ordinary mili-



Photo by Spc. Frank N. Pellegrini
Command Sgt. Maj. R. W. Funaro bids Cline a fond farewell before boarding a ferry to leeward side — and then a plane home.

tary-justice issues of a force 2,000 servicemembers strong — from DWIs to assaults — and Farkas, too, is looking back on six months in Cuba that hardly resembled a Caribbean vacation. But he expressed no regrets.

"I can't wait to get back," he said. "I really miss my wife and family. But after being a civilian prosecutor for many rewarding years, now I've contributed very significantly to the war on terrorism. As a military attorney, I really couldn't ask for anything more."

The incoming JDOG commander, Army Col. John J. Perrone, Jr., had nothing but praise for the departing unit that established the blueprint for him and his staff to follow.

"They were the first on the ground — there were no footprints in the snow for them to follow," he said. "They established procedures from the ground up, and worked very diligently to set a standard that the incoming group will do their utmost to maintain."

Perrone, from Rochester in upstate New York, mentioned the special significance that missions like JDOG's hold for residents of the Empire State, home of the city where the war with terror was begun.

"There is a certain connection for us from New York," he said. "We all had neighbors, friends, fellow reservists — there were three or four, I believe, from the 77th RSC that perished in the World Trade Center. We're thankful and proud that we're able to do our part in the war on terrorism."

For Farkas, who lives in Brooklyn Heights, just across the East River from the World Trade Center, the connection is even closer. Sleeping in after spending three nights investigating a Brooklyn homicide, he was awakened by phone call from a friend and watched the towers fall from his window — and reported for duty in Uniondale as soon as the roads were opened.

"Since I lived Sept. 11, being here and being able to contribute in any way is very meaningful to me," he said. "We're never going to be the same. But we're going to move on, and we will prevail."

Leading Man Collects Cash for 9-11 Victims

By Linda D. Kozaryn
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — On Sept. 11, actor Michael Nouri and the cast of the musical "South Pacific" witnessed the horror of the World Trade Center attack. The veteran actor of Broadway, movies and television, decided he had to do something to help.

That something ended up as a grassroots fundraising effort that raised \$362,082.02 for the victims of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

The actor traveled to the Pentagon Wednesday and presented a check for half that amount, \$181,041.01, to Defense Comptroller Dov S. Zakheim. Nouri plans to present a second check for the same amount to former New York Mayor Rudy Guiliani for the victims of the World Trade Center attack.

"This is the culmination of a dream," Nouri said, "the dream of literally hundreds of thousands of Americans who I and the cast members had the pleasure of greeting after eight performances a week for six months."

During South Pacific curtain calls, he told audiences how affected he was by the events of Sept. 11.

After leading the audiences in singing "God Bless America" at the close of each show, Nouri and other cast members appeared in theater lobbies to personally collect contributions. Children emptied their pockets of change and folks in wheelchairs waited to put something in the duffel bag.

On behalf of the civilians and military at the Pentagon, Zakheim thanked the actor for "making us feel proud that we do what we do." The comptroller said the donation was "truly a presentation from Americans from all over" to those who defend the nation and "are willing to lay down their lives, sometimes in the most unexpected ways and most unexpected times."



Photo by Linda D. Kozaryn

Actor Michael Nouri (l) presents a check to Defense Comptroller Dov S. Zakheim (c) and retired Adm. Jerry Johnson (r) of the Navy and Marine Corps Relief society.

GTMO Commanding Gen. equates force protection issues with detainee care

By Rudi Williams
American Forces Press Service

NAVAL STATION GUANTANAMO BAY, Cuba — Joint Task Force 160's primary mission is taking care of captured enemy combatants from the war on terrorism, but the outfit's commander emphasizes that the safety and security of his people is as important — or more so.

"We have to make sure our security posture for the entire area is taken care of. We must also observe operations security issues," said Rhode Island Army National Guard Brig. Gen. Rick Baccus, who succeeded Marine Corps Brig. Gen. Michael R. Lehnert as task force commander on March 28. He formerly commanded the 43rd Military Police Brigade in Warwick, R.I.

"We have to be about the protection of our own service men and women assigned here," said Baccus, who wears the Army Ranger and Special

Forces tabs and the master parachutist and pathfinder badges. Joint Task Force 160, composed of more than 1,700 U.S. service members and civilians, is responsible for receiving and securing detainees in support of the global war on terrorism.

"We also support Joint Task Force 170 and have a mission for migrant operations," Baccus noted. "For instance, if there's a surge of Haitians or Cubans looking for asylum, we have to be prepared to react to that."

JTF 170 handles interrogation operations for the Department of Defense and ensures coordination among government agencies involved in the interrogation of the suspected terrorists.

As to the detainees, Baccus said the task force must ensure they're treated humanely within the spirit of the Geneva Convention. "Humane treatment means we have to provide them clothing, food, shelter and allow them to practice their religious beliefs," the general said. "However, what we don't allow them to do are things like live in groups, use the canteen or work on work details."

The Geneva Convention states that those who are guarding and caring for the detainees should live under similar conditions as those incarcerated, he noted. "You wouldn't want detainees living in substandard conditions, which is something we in

the United States wouldn't want to happen," he said. "Obviously our soldiers — the guard force — who deal with them every day are living in the same area as the detainees at Camp Delta."

There are 564 captured enemy combatants in the 612-unit detention facility at Camp Delta. If they keep arriving as they have this month — 180 so far — the facility will soon run out of space. If that happens, solving the problem depends on what Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld decides to do, Baccus said.

The task force moved 300 detainees from Camp X-Ray to Delta on April 28 and 29. At

X-Ray, they lived in 8 feet by 8 feet units with open-air, chain-link walls, a concrete floor and a combination wood and metal roof. At Camp Delta, their units measure 8 feet by 6 feet, 8 inches.

"We've a much more secure facility to house them in Camp Delta," Baccus said. "There is indoor plumbing, exercise areas are better controlled, and

detainees are out of the sun more."

Caring for detainees is much easier at Camp Delta, he noted. "For instance, the guards don't have to escort them to the bathroom all the time and those types of things," he said. "That's a great improvement in terms of how the guards have to deal with them on a daily basis."

Each of Camp Delta's 612 units has a flush toilet, metal bed frame and a sink with running water. None of that was available at Camp X-Ray, where guards had to escort detainees to portable toilets.

"All the service members here recognize the fact that they need to treat the detainees humanely," he pointed out. "Any time anyone lays down their arms, our culture has been to treat them as noncombatant and humanely."

"The detainees are accepting their incarceration as a matter of course," he said.

Baccus said Joint Task Force 160's accomplishments since the first detainees arrived in January show "a tremendous effort on the part of all the soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines and Coast Guardsmen involved."

"We've gone from zero in January to 564 to date," he said. "That certainly says something about the quality of the service men and women who are serving here."

"Obviously our soldiers — the guard force — who deal with them every day are living in the same area as the detainees at Camp Delta."

Army Brig. Gen Rick Baccus
JTF-160 Commander

Philippine military kills Abu Sayyaf leader

By Jim Garamone
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — The Philippine military is reporting that it killed a major leader of the Abu Sayyaf terrorist group and two henchmen June 21 in a pre-dawn attack at sea.

Philippine officials said the dead include Abu Sabaya, spokesman and most publicly prominent leader of the Muslim-separatist group. They said Sabaya was trying to jump ship when he was shot and fell overboard. His body has not been recovered.

Four other Abu Sayyaf members were captured, the officials said, and government forces suffered no casualties.

Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld, speaking at the Foreign Press Center here this morning, said the United States commends the Philippine government "for its continued battle against terrorist problems."

Philippine officials said naval special warfare personnel intercepted a 25-foot outrigger at 4:30 a.m. off the coast of Zamboanga del Norte province. The boat, with seven Abu Sayyaf terrorists aboard, had launched from the village on Sibuco and was believed to be heading to Basilan Island.

A firefight broke out when the Philippine sailors stopped the motorized outrigger. The boat sank. The four surviving terrorists were captured immediately.

The United States provided limited help to the Philippine navy special warfare sailors who performed the mission. "We supported this operation through assistance in planning, information-sharing and communications support," said Pentagon spokesman Lt. Cmdr. Jeff Davis. "After the Abu Sayyaf were in custody and the area declared safe, two MH-47 helicopters assisted in the search for bodies or survivors."

The United States may have helped indirectly, Davis said. Navy special warfare techniques and tactics were among the skills U.S. service members taught to members of the Philippine armed forces since the program began in February.

The Abu Sayyaf terrorist group finances its separatist activities in the southern Philippines by kidnapping for ransom, murder and plunder. The group is based on Basilan Island. In May 2001, the group kidnapped American missionaries Gracia and Martin Burnham and Philippine nurse Deborah Yap. Yap and Martin Burnham were killed June 7 as Philippine forces attempted a rescue. Gracia was wounded.

In brief

Military Med Students Pay Attention During WMD Classes

WASHINGTON - Students at DoD's medical school are very attentive during courses about weapons of mass destruction, say senior officials at the facility in Bethesda, Md.

The Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, created by Congress in 1972 to train doctors and nurses for military service, has graduated nearly 3,000 physicians since its inception and has provided advanced instruction to hundreds of graduate students, including nurses, officials said.

USU has always offered courses about biological, chemical and nuclear/radiological weapons, said Army Dr. (Col.) Clifford C. Cloonan, chairman of the School of Medicine's Department for Military and Emergency Medicine. However, he noted, the school's focus on WMDs and student interest in such matters have ballooned since terrorists attacked the United States nine months ago.

Formerly, Cloonan noted, WMD instruction was presented to students based upon potential use of biological, chemical and nuclear weapons by enemy forces on a conventional battlefield. Until Sept. 11, he said, to be little chance that a full-scale, conventional war featuring WMDs would erupt in the post-Cold War era.

DoD opens online medical research library

By Austin Camacho
Special to American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — Veterans and service members can now find the Gulf War research-related medical information they want on one central Web site:

<http://www.gulflink.osd.mil/medsearch/>.

The site is the collaborate effort of the Defense Department's Deployment Health Support Directorate, the Department of Veterans Affairs and the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta.

The idea for the online medical library, dubbed Medsearch, came as a recommendation from a 1999 CDC conference, according to Drue H. Barrett of the CDC's National Center for Environmental Health.

"We brought together a variety of different scientists, researchers, veterans and patients' advocates," she said. "In several different work groups at this conference there was raised this issue that sometimes the research was difficult to search through because it was on several different sites."

Medsearch strives to fill the needs of

both veterans and researchers, Barrett explained. Veterans wanted one place to go where all the information and research was available in a way they could understand and access it. Researchers wanted an easier way to keep track of all the research being done by the federal government in various places.

The site's creators believed it would be nearly impossible to capture all the research done related to Gulf War veterans' health, but government-funded research would at least represent the majority.

Many articles on the site were published in scientific journals and filled with technical jargon. Directorate officials are committed to making them accessible more to all readers.

They've done this by adding introductions that give people a quick summary or synopsis of what they'll find in each document. For those who understand the scientific language, the original documents are posted in their entirety with source details.

There are also topics listed that you might not see in other medical sources.



Photo courtesy of Medsearch website

Medsearch streamlines research efforts into Gulf War health concerns.

For instance, "pesticides" and "depleted uranium" are environmental and occupational hazards that civilian health care providers may not have much information on. However, both are still items of intense interest to some Gulf War veterans.

Those who visit the site should know they are viewing an ongoing project. The site will be updated continually as more research is done.



Frustrated Poetry Corner

by Spc. Joseph A. Morris

Could this be where it all will start?

I accept Earth as my body and life as my heart

Trying to control what the future brings,

But knowing I won't be able to control most things

Willing and eager to give it my all,

I'll give all I got and rise when I fall

With positive inspiration and motivation that's high,

I'll keep a smile on my face while I shoot for the sky

Most could never believe what could be found,

But I have learned to fly without leaving the ground.

Movie Schedule

Friday, June 28

8 p.m. Bad Company (PG13) - 117min
10 p.m. The New Guy (PG13) - 89min

Saturday, June 29

8 p.m. Sum Of All Fears (PG13) - 124min
10 p.m. Deuces Wild (R) - 97min

Sunday, June 30

8 p.m. Life or Something Like It (PG13) - 104min

Monday, July 1

8 p.m. The New Guy (PG13) - 89min

Tuesday, July 2

8 p.m. Changing Lanes (PG13) - 99min

Wednesday, July 3

8 p.m. Deuces Wild (R) - 97min

Thursday, July 4

8 p.m. Lilo & Stitch (PG) - 85min

Crossword Puzzle

Across

- 1 Account (abbr.)
- 5 Cut down
- 9 ___ Arabia
- 14 Weight unit
- 15 Year
- 16 Association (abbr.)
- 17 Computer "button"
- 18 Movie ___
- 19 Climb
- 20 Type of cheese
- 22 S. Western Indian tribe
- 24 Grain
- 25 Reveled
- 27 Has toed
- 31 Steering mechanism
- 32 Sward
- 34 Jurisprudence
- 35 Compass point
- 38 Top
- 40 Fuse
- 42 Throws violently
- 44 Remind
- 46 Knife edge
- 47 Sidestep
- 48 The ___ (final word)
- 50 Crooked
- 51 TV lawyer Matlock
- 52 Hearing part
- 55 Cosecant's opposite
- 57 Branch of learning
- 59 Come back
- 61 Resort hotel
- 64 Shred
- 66 Dew
- 68 Not ionic
- 71 Heroic

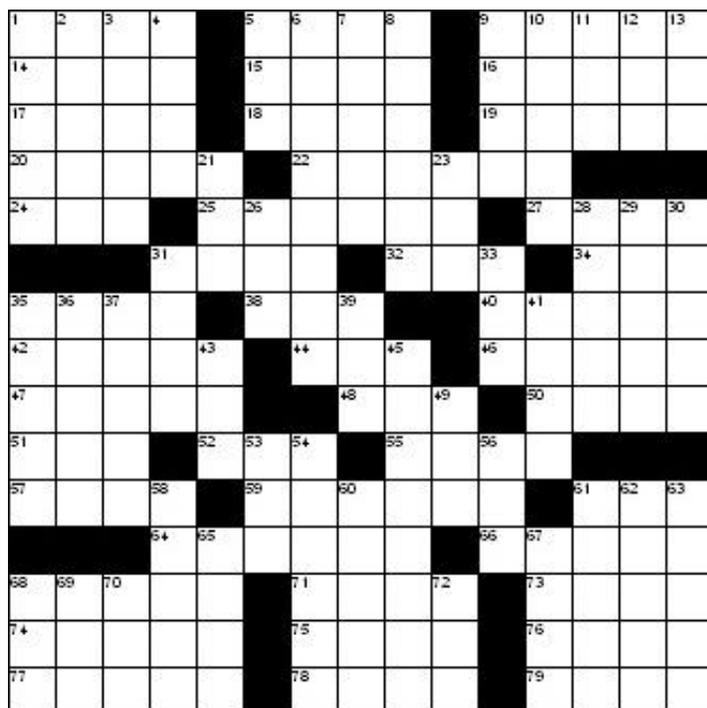
- 73 Allows
- 74 Held high
- 75 Allow to borrow
- 76 Fake butter
- 77 ___ up (makes bigger)
- 78 Not arms
- 79 Make

- 49 Director (abbr.)
- 53 Artist's creation
- 54 Reiterate
- 56 North northwest
- 58 Formal
- 60 Indian lodge
- 61 Inscribed stone
- 62 Christ's disciple

- 63 Malicious burning
- 65 Doings
- 67 Healing plant
- 68 Small amount
- 69 Roberto's yes
- 70 Fish eggs
- 72 Discs

Down

- 1 Spanish 'friend'
- 2 Powdered chocolate
- 3 Blow
- 4 Incline
- 5 Frump
- 6 Efficient
- 7 Grist
- 8 "you're getting on my ___!"
- 9 Waistband
- 10 Large wide scarf
- 11 United States of America
- 12 Pain unit
- 13 Winter hazard
- 21 Be
- 23 Hubbub
- 26 Ailing
- 28 ___ Oyl (Popeye's girlfriend)
- 29 Dine
- 30 Inhabited
- 31 Had
- 33 Alter
- 35 Cat food brand
- 36 Swiss mathematician
- 37 Main impact
- 39 Owed
- 41 Northeast by east
- 43 Behold
- 45 Making certain



Entertainment

Big Mama's Soul Food lives on

**Story by
Army Pfc. Jean-Carl Bertin**
The Wire

The tradition of Big Mama's family gathering at the table for a special home-cooked meal of various southern-bred dishes was brought back from the past on GTMO Saturday afternoon.

The African American Cultural Organization held its first Soul Food Tasting at the base Community Center on June 22 from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m.

"In our culture, food has brought black people together from the beginning of time," said Navy Petty Officer Third Class Kim Gardner, the president of the AACO. "It's an opportunity for the community to come out in a nice, serene environment and fellowship among each other."

Gardner and other members of the organization spent Saturday preparing the food and decorating the community center to feel like a celebration in which cultures blended seamlessly — red, white and blue for America and independence, African paintings on the wall to symbolize the

barbecued chicken, fried chicken, baked ham, fried fish, macaroni and cheese, potato salad, corn-on-the-cob, cornbread, pound cake and bread pudding.

"The food is delicious," said Navy Master Chief Petty Officer Ellen Mustain as she was tasting the samplings on her plate. "But the bread pudding is fabulous!"

The smell of food invaded the whole room. One after the other, each patron lined up to get his dish. Some sat down at the tables, but others chose to package their meal to take home.

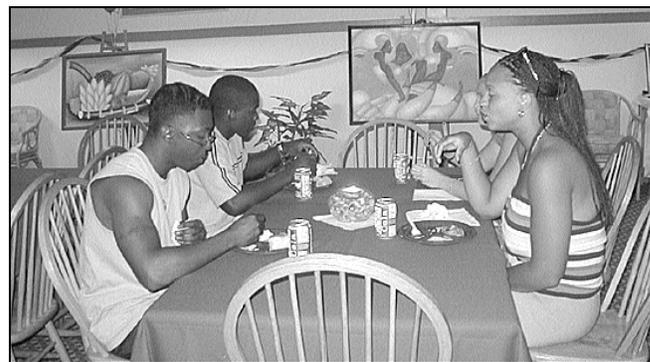


Photo by Spc. Jean-Carl Bertin
Gregory Witherspoon, D'Juan Stenson, Joli Barden and Jaymie Brinkmeier enjoy the samplings of AACO's Soul Food Tasting.

Most of the people sitting at the tables said as they were enjoying the dishes — that the food was good and they had their money's worth.

Besides gathering to enjoy ethnic and home-cooked food, the Soul Food Tasting was to serve a bigger purpose as Gardner put it.

"Our mission is to unite and educate people about different cultures, not just African American, but all cultures identified at GTMO," she said. "But for now, we want to bridge the gap between the adults and our youth, and raise \$5,000 to be used as scholarships for the 2003 high school graduates."

"It's been great so far," said Navy Lt. Stephanie Blim, a mother of two young children and the treasurer of the organization.

"We've been doing good with the fundraising in reaching our ultimate goal, which is money for scholarship."

"It's a good cause," she said Blim. "We're building our community and paving the way for the next generation. We want more people to come and support."

"As adults it's our responsibility to take care of our children and make sure they grow up in an environment that can help them becoming productive members of society," said Gardner.

In that same vein, Gardner said the organization wants to

organize a career information day to help the local high school students learn more about U.S. colleges and what career that is available to them.

AACO has more fundraising plans in the works. Some of these plans include publishing a scenic GTMO calendar and compiling a cookbook with soul-food recipes.

"I am happy to be part of such a diverse organization, said Army Pvt. Ebony Blane, the youngest member of the organization.

"I want to be part of the community and help out while I am here," she said. "I always make time to attend the meetings and be part of the planning process."

"I want to give back to the community. AACO offers me a chance to do that."

MWR Watch

Summer leagues started this week. There is still time to sign up for the next 5K, the paintball tournament, the racquetball tournament and the tennis tournament. Don't forget to attend Rhode Island night, tonight at the Bay View Patio. Enjoy some favorite RI foods, music from the Least Worst Band and free door prizes. For more info call CPT. Gormly x 5249.

Today, Friday, June 28th

Water aerobics, 6-7 pm, Marine Hill pool
Xtreme bowling 7-12 pm
RHODE ISLAND NIGHT, BAY VIEW PATIO, 6 PM
Free Movie, downtown or Camp Bulkeley Lyceum 8 pm

Saturday, June 29th

Army vs. Navy 5K run, 6:30 a.m., Denich Gym
Northeast Gate tour, 7:30 a.m., meet at Marine Hill
Battle of Cuzco Wells staff ride, 8 a.m. & 3 p.m. meet at downtown Lyceum
GTMO flea market, community center, Marina Point
104th Philippine Independence Day celebration 7 pm, Windjammer Club
Free Movie, downtown or Camp Bulkeley Lyceum 8 pm

Sunday, June 30th

Xtreme bowling 1 to 6 pm
Bingo, Windjammer 6pm
Sign-up for swimming lessons x2193
Free Movie, downtown or Camp Bulkeley Lyceum 8 pm
Popcorn Sunday, liberty Center, CBQ

Monday, July 1st

Water aerobics, 6-7 pm, Marine Hill pool
Tae kwon do Mon thru Fri Marine Hill gym, 6:30-7:30 pm
Free Movie Liberty Center, CBQ, 7 pm
Free Movie, downtown or Camp Bulkeley Lyceum 8 pm

Tuesday, July 2nd

Bingo, Windjammer 6pm
Tae kwon do 6:30-7:30 pm Marine Hill gym
Free Movie, downtown or Camp Bulkeley Lyceum 8 pm

Wednesday, July 3rd

Fourth of July Celebrations, Marina and Bay View Patio, 5 pm
Water aerobics, 6-7 pm, Marine Hill pool
Tae kwon do 6:30-7:30 pm Marine Hill gym
Free Movie, downtown or Camp Bulkeley Lyceum 8 pm

Thursday, July 4th

9/11 Liberty 5K, Denich Gym 6:30 a.m. start
Tae kwon do 6:30-7:30 pm Marine Hill gym
Free Movie, downtown or Camp Bulkeley Lyceum 8 pm
Tomorrow is last day to sign up for the Paintball Tournament
.75 cent bowling, 11 am to midnight, MWR Bowling Center

"Everything else is delicious, but the bread pudding is fabulous!"

Navy Master Chief Petty Officer
Ellen Mustain

event's cultural roots.

And of course it all had to bring out the appetite — dimmed lights and candles on the tables, and a stereo filling the room with jazz, soul and R&B music.

At the far end of the room, on a big-screen TV, ringed with a sofa and chairs, played the movie "Soul Food" to add to the mood.

The organizers went to great lengths to bring this old tradition to life as it was depicted by the movie.

In addition to the environment, the menu offered the traditional choices of baked

Sports

True athletes take it to "Xtremes"

With three grueling events, the GTMO Adventure Race wasn't for the weak

By Spc. Jose A. Martinez
The Wire

The 28.2-mile GTMO Xtreme Adventure Race kicked off at the sailing center June 22 with three grueling events — kayaking, biking and cross-country running — and six four-member teams determined to win.

The teams were "346th MP Co." of JTF-160, "One Step Closer" of JTF-170, "Dusty" from the Fleet Hospital, "Last Minute Chaos" from the Marine Corps, and "Not Quite There Yet" and "Bare Bones" from the Navy Hospital.

Since it was a team event, individuals couldn't win all by themselves. They had to work as a group.

The first event, the 7.1-mile kayak leg, began at 6:25 a.m. as the sun was still rising over Guantanamo Bay.

The race around the bay was fast-paced, with the athletes constantly fighting for position.

Navy Cmdr. Glen Moore from "Bare Bones" won the race's first leg, with two members of "One Step Closer," Army Capt. Ricardo Sierra and Army Master Sgt. James McKinney, finishing close behind.

But because Moore finished without the other three members of his team, the victory for the leg went to team "Dusty," which remained as group.

"The plan was to get out ahead early because of all the people kayaking together," said one of

the team members, Navy Lt. Aaron W. Bailey.

"We wanted to get out early and fast. We coasted along the backstretch of the bay and came in hard to the finish," he said. "I was very tired."

Army Maj. Peter Patecsil, from "One Step Closer," wasn't worried yet.

"Every thing is going as planned, we trained that way and we feel comfortable in second place right now."

"The first event was tough and it was a killer," added team member Sierra. "We are in a good position — our strongest event is the biking."

That event was next, and it was particularly challenging because of climbs and steep declines in the terrain.

"The bike course was the toughest event because it was not really 12 miles," Moore said afterward. "It was really six miles biking and six miles carrying the bike up and down hills. The trails were so washed out, it was hard to ride your bike on most on the course," he said.

But by the time the biking portion was done and two-thirds of the race was over, "Dusty" was still in the lead.

Then the teams moved to the last and final event, an 8.8-mile cross-country race.

For this event the athletes had to run from Ridgeline Trail at Harbor Lights Hill, then down Hutia Highway to Sherman Ave., then to

Sailboat Rd. and finally to the finish line at the sailing center.

As "One Step Closer" left the starting gate, Patecsil yelled "thirty more minutes" to motivate the team as they were running up the first hill.

But it wasn't enough.

"Team Dusty" completed its



Photo by Spc. Jose A. Martinez
Navy Lt. Sandra "Cookie" Schaffranek takes on the 12.3-mile bike course at the GTMO extreme race.

sweep of the three events and won the Xtreme Adventure Race in three hours and 27 minutes. In second place, with a time of 3:40, was team One Step Closer, and in third place was team JTF-160 with a time of 4:26 minutes.

But everyone seemed satisfied. "The Morale, Welfare and Recreation did a good job preparing the course," said Army Spc. Autumn N. Blewett. "Going up and down these radical hills as you are racing and thinking you are going to die on the course was great."

"The course was great, and it was fast. The course was shorter because of the heat so we had to adjust our pace. I am glad that there were a lot of competitors," said Navy Lt. j.g. Matt A. Trudeau from "Dusty."

"As you were racing you had a chance to look at your competition as you were on the course," said fellow team member Bailey. "We had a lot of time on the course and the conditions were great."

"The strategy was to stay

together throughout the race," he said. "We would motivate one another during the race and even did some stretching."

"It was a hard course," said Blewett. "It took a lot of endurance to finish the race and it took more teamwork than I expected."

"This was one of the toughest things I have ever done," he said. "I have competed in numerous single races but never had them all in one day — it was a killer. We expected the race to be hard, but it was mentally and physically challenging."

"The most important thing about an event like this is not the individual challenge but the challenge to the team — knowing your own limits and using your team members for motivation," said Moore. "The best thing to happen in this race was finishing as a team."

And Moore echoed the sentiment of many: even though there was a team that won, the true winners were all the athletes who even showed up for — and finished — this very extreme GTMO Xtreme

RESULTS

First Place

Fleet Hospital's Team: *Dusty*

Navy Lt. Sandra "Cookie" Schaffranek, Navy Lt. Aaron W. Bailey, Navy Lt. j.g. Matt A. Trudeau and Navy Ensign Shanon F. Toth

Second Place

JTF-170's Team: *One Step Closer*

Army Maj. Peter Patecsil, Army Capt. Ricardo Sierra, Air Force Capt. Jena Silvia and Army Master Sgt. James McKinney

Third Place

JTF-160's Team: *346th MP Co.*

Army 1st Lt. Ken Bryan
Army Spc. Eric L. Blewett
Army Spc. Autumn N. Blewett
Army Pfc. Clint D. Bowman



Photo by Spc. Jose A. Martinez
Navy Cmdr. Glen Moore from team "Bare Bones" leads the way in the kayaking segment of the Xtreme Adventure Race.



15 Minutes of Fame

With Spc. Dan R. Auxier

Guitar man tries to strike chord with GTMO

**Compiled by
Spc. Michelle M. Scsepko**
The Wire

Q: Army Spc. Dan R. Auxier, what do you plan to do with your 15 minutes of fame?

A: Every day I try to get at least a half an hour's worth of fame, but today I'll do my best to highlight my most famous moments.

Q: What or who has inspired you during your stay at GTMO?

A: There is another soldier I've been playing with lately, and when he's around it's not a question of performing. It's like "a slice of home," being able to be creative and jam with a fellow guitarist.

Q: Do you write your own songs, and if so why?

A: Yes. I'd rather be a first-rate me than a second-rate someone else.

Q: Any funny or bizarre lyrics you'd like to share?

A: Well, I wrote a pretty funny bit on Command Sgt. Maj. Funaro, but he hasn't heard it yet.

Q: Does your playing ever strike a bad note with people?

A: Yeah, sometimes my songs can be a little offensive. People just don't like to hear the truth and I tend to tell it how it is.

Q: And how about your roommates? I can only imagine

how often you must play late into the night back at the hooch!

A: My roommates dig it! We're a house full of bachelors and all up late anyway. Shout out to my boys back at the pad.

Q: I'd imagine you meet a lot of weird people while wandering around with your trusty guitar. Any interesting stories?

A: Hmm. That's a hard one...there are just so many.

One time I was on a bus headed to the Port Authority in Manhattan, New York City. I was sitting there holding my guitar like usual, and this old Hispanic man comes up to me and asks in broken English if I could play something he could sing to.

So of course I did, and he starts singing really loud and annoying all the other passengers. I'm just fueling the fire, of course, and about ten minutes into it the bus driver pulls over and threatens to throw us both off.

So I stopped, but the skuzzy old dude got really irritated and just kept going. It ended with the bus driver coming to the back to remove him.

And the guy sucker-punched the bus driver right the face. Needless to say, the old guy ended up walking down the Bronx River Parkway. I got to stay on the bus.

Q: Do you use your musical skills to try to pick up women?

A: Hell, yeah! The way I see it, half the battle is getting in there to meet people. The guitar can be a way into the circle.

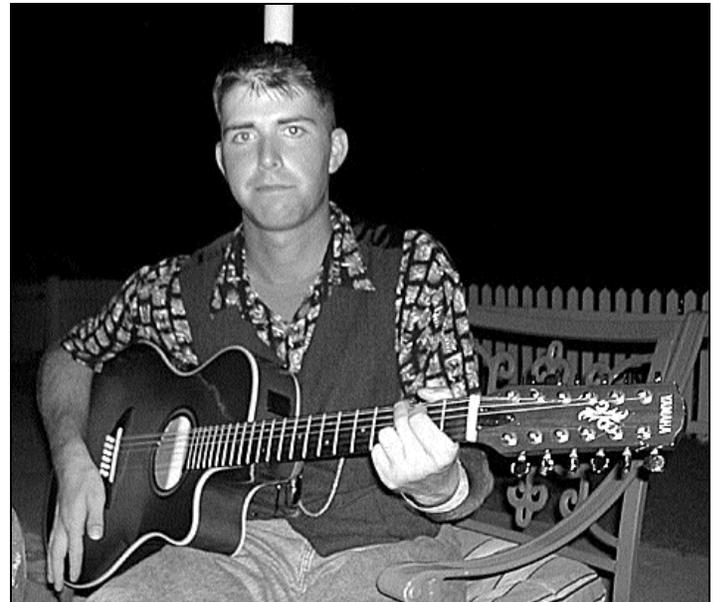


Photo by Spc. Michelle M. Scsepko

"I live up in the loop, so they can find me there."

Q: Do consider yourself a ham?

A: Without a doubt. You could stick a fork in me.

Q: Do you find it difficult to be an artist and a soldier at the same time?

A: You don't have to be an artist to be a good soldier but I think it helps.

The goal of an artist is to take ideals and attempt to turn them into a reality. The military is filled with ideals and values for me to work hard at to make a reality.

Sometimes, though, I feel forced to be realistic about my fellow troops' motivation. But it helps not to take it to heart. Just drive on — HOOAH!

Q: Can you describe yourself in one phrase?

A: A dreamer in the face of stupidity. I make the best scenario out of the worst one and always search for that silver lining.

Q: It's been my pleasure to get to know you, but where can people find you if they're interested in hearing you play some tunes?

A: I live up in the loop, so they can find me there most nights.

But wherever people are — the bus, the Tiki Bar, around the neighborhood — I'm likely to be there, vest on my back and guitar in hand.

Hopefully, I'll be getting a gig at the Iguana Crossing Coffee House soon, so you can catch me there.

A: Keep us posted.

Next week's 15 minutes of fame could be you!