



# the Wire

“HONOR BOUND TO DEFEND FREEDOM”

Volume 4, Issue 22

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Friday, February 13, 2004

## Command survey paints accurate JTF picture

Troopers who responded to the recent command climate survey have given JTF leadership a broad representation of continuing successes and areas to improve.

Nearly 43 percent of the troopers participated in the survey, which asked questions such as “how are we doing?” and “what can we do better?” This high percentage means that the information is valid and leaders can feel confident they are getting a true picture of the JTF.

“The Command Climate Survey gave us a comprehensive look across the entire JTF. Next we looked at the top things that were a concern for troopers during the last CCS in January 2003 and compared them to the results from the most recent survey.” said Navy Lt. Cmdr. David Kersey, JTF deputy inspector general. All this was done in order to gauge the effectiveness of the changes made since the last Command Climate Survey.

The issues of the highest interest for troopers included: work schedules, time off, food, training, transportation, leadership and management, and communication



Photo by S/A Thomas Doscher

SPC Chris Acosta, 384th Military Police Company, makes a sandwich in Cafe Caribe. Food preparation scored high in the recent Command Climate Survey.

and information dissemination. In almost all of these areas, there was dramatic drop in the number of complaints and a big

increase in positive feedback. “The leadership of the JTF has taken positive action to correct or improve the conditions for soldiers here at Guantanamo Bay,” Kersey said. “And the results are reflected in the feedback from that survey.”

In the January 2003 survey, approximately 20 percent of JTF troopers said changes needed to be made to work schedules to give more time away from their duties. Using the survey, JTF leadership learned this was an important issue to the troops and looked at what could be done. Although there has been an increase in mission taskings for the JTF, there has not been an increase in the number of hours troopers have been assigned to work. This has been achieved by leveraging information management systems, revising our manning documents to put more resources against key missions, using the talents of our troopers in critical areas, and refocusing low-return duty positions toward higher priority missions. In fact, our Detainee Information

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## Trooper to Trooper

# Leadership using survey to improve JTF operation

Recently, our Inspector General's office conducted a command climate survey in which many of you participated. The response was outstanding, and we were able to glean some valuable insight into the workings of the Joint Task Force. In addition, the high percentage of response provided a more accurate picture of our environment.

Results of that survey are discussed in a companion article in this week's issue.

The purpose of the survey was to determine what we are doing right and what needs improvement. I am pleased to see that our troopers feel that there are many things that we are doing right! You feel that the quality of our food service operations is excellent. I agree. Improvements to Windmill Beach and MWR facilities were also high on the list. We will continue to get better in these areas.

Communications was one of the areas identified as needing improvement, particularly from higher to lower echelons. In contrast however, troopers replied that their supervisors lead by example through their words and actions. It would lead me to believe then that our communications network needs some improvement.

We currently take great pains to insure that information is disseminated throughout the chain of command. Articles in *The Wire* and weekly meetings between the senior leadership and troopers at the Seaside Galley on Saturday morning for instance are only a couple of the methods designed to get the information to the troops and dispel rumors. We will continue to use these methods of communications since they are invaluable.

I use an old proven leadership technique known as MBWA. That's "Management By Wandering Around." It's



Photo by SrA. Thomas J. Doscher

**BG Mitch LeClaire**  
Deputy Commander  
JTF GTMO Operations

one way that I get to observe the conditions under which our troopers are working and to determine if the flow of information is actually making its way through the chain of command. It often surprises me to see that troopers aren't informed. When I see this happening I always start going back up the chain of command to see where the breakdown had occurred.

On the other hand, we need your feedback. I encourage you to use your chain of command to communicate across the task force. What you have to say is valuable and we want to know it. We are striving to make things better each day. Many of the improvements we have seen over the past few months are a result of your input to the chain of command.

I admire your hard work and diligent efforts. What you do is very important. If you see something that isn't working the way it should inform your leadership and give us some suggestions on how we can collectively make things better.

Henry Ford once remarked, "Don't find a fault. Find a remedy."

**Honor Bound.**

### JTF-GTMO Command

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MG Geoffrey D. Miller

**Joint Task Force CSM:**

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# CSM Nieves says farewell to the JTF

By SSG Patrick Cloward

“This is a great day and a tough day,” said MG Geoffrey Miller during the transfer of responsibility ceremony held Feb. 9 at Camp Bulkeley.

Members of Joint Task Force Guantanamo gathered in the windy, dry field to pay respects to the departing CSM George Nieves, who completed his assignment as JTF command sergeant major in preparation for a new assignment.

“The troopers have benefited from his leadership,” said Miller in his address to those assembled. “Everything he has touched sets the standard of excellence.”

Nieves had only positive words to say about those he worked with and his experience here.

“The JTF is filled with outstanding soldiers ... along with numerous civilians,” he said. “You have come to GTMO and asked for nothing in return. I personally thank you



Photo by SSG Patrick Cloward

(left to right) Facing the troops, CSM George Nieves, MG Geoffrey Miller and CSM Stephen Short conduct the transfer of responsibility ceremony for the Joint Task Force Guantanamo command sergeant major.

for your dedicated service to your nation.”

Camp America camp commandant CSM Stephen Short will serve as interim command sergeant major as Nieves goes on to finish his career as the U.S. 5th Army’s command sergeant major at Fort Sam Houston, Texas. Of returning to a strictly Army environment, he added that his experience in a joint atmosphere was a

valuable one.

“Working with five branches of service has been an experience I will never forget,” he said of the combined effort American military work to fulfill the mission of detaining enemy combatants here. But, he said of his experience of working in the Army, “I cannot think of another profession I’d rather be in.”

## J-4 personnel honored

Petty Officer 1st Class Carl Brown (far right) receives the Joint Service Achievement Medal from MG Geoffrey Miller (left) for his outstanding performance with the J-4 at JTF Guantanamo. Other recipients of the award included Petty Officer 3rd Class Virginio Torres (2nd from left) and Petty Officer 2nd Class Stephanie Daenzer (3rd from left). Also, Lt. Cmdr. Frankie Hand (not shown) received the Defense Meritorious Service Medal for his contributions to the support of the JTF.



Photo by SRA Thomas Doscher



Photo by SSG Patrick Cloward

## JTF social – a success

Members of JTF Guantanamo enjoy the sun and great outdoor cooking during the JTF Social held Sunday Feb. 8 at Windmill Beach. MSG Tim Yarbrough (in t-shirt), 1st Battalion, 119th Field Artillery with the Joint Detention Operations group, enjoys some hot barbecue in the shade with fellow troopers (clockwise) SGT Fred Jacklett, SPC David Marks, SPC Craig Zachow, and PFC Jeremy Ginther, all also with B Battery, 1st Bn., 119th FA.

## Survey from page 1

Management System turned a 500 page-a-day headache into a paperless operation that is infinitely more responsive and adaptable to the JTF mission. As a result of all these adjustments, in the latest survey, the number of complaints about working hours dropped from 20 to 10 percent. The JTF leadership isn't satisfied there, and despite looming increases in the pace of operations, will continue to reign in work hours and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the JTF.

A joint task force marches on its stomach, and improvements in the quality of food have proven to be a big hit. The addition of Café Caribe gave troopers working inside the wire a modern dining facility close to where they work, with good food and a built-in pressure release. The recent survey showed an increase in positive feedback and showed an increase in satisfaction with the food served to JTF troopers. "The food is excellent – outstanding job by all galley personnel," was one trooper's comment. Our food service personnel continue to work on Seaside Galley and Café Caribe in order to cater to their 'customers,' improve food quality, offer more variety in meal selection, enhance the look and feel of Seaside Galley, and improve food refrigeration and preparation.

The opportunities for training scored high with JTF troopers, with many comments being made about training opportunities that troopers might not otherwise have, the quality of the PT program, and the availability of weight rooms and aerobic exercise equipment.

"Physical training was generally seen as a positive within the JTF," Kersey said. "Most troopers have really appreciated the ability to focus on improving their levels of fitness."



Photo by SrA. Thomas Doscher

*SGT Matt Kowalski, 1/181 Infantry Regiment, adds weight to the bench press at the Camp Bulkeley gym Feb. 8. Improvements to the gym will include more weight machines and a new awning for outdoor free weights.*

The JTF has its own weight room and cardio rooms located in Camp Bulkeley. Sporting several different kinds of weight machines and exercise equipment already, plans to expand the facility are already being finalized and work is scheduled to be done by the end of April. Additions will include lockers and saunas for both men and women, new exercise machines and an outdoor awning that would run the length of the gym for outdoor free weights. Along with the gym, some of the ball fields near Camp America will be renovated and lighted in order to offer more choices for troopers as they strive to shed pounds and get in great shape.

Other types of training have caught troopers interest. "Soldiers have been able to receive

new types of training such as hand-to-hand training and the combat swim test," was one comment. Training opportunities are continuing to expand at all levels. The Primary Leadership Development Course is now in operation and will provide the E-4 and E-5 troopers the professional military education that is required to become a non-commissioned officer-leader. PLDC is in session right now, and promises to turn out 20-30 future U.S. Army leaders every two weeks. Our Battle Staff training recently scored 16 for 16 successful completions, the best in the U.S. Army. This training will be offered again during the GTMO 5 rotation. Our Infantrymen will vie for the coveted Expert Infantryman's Badge (EIB) this spring. During the last test, 13 infantry-

men were awarded the EIB. We look forward to another challenging training opportunity where more infantrymen can get their EIB and have their names added to the wall of fame at Club Survivor.

Finally, the JTF is working to begin collective live training opportunities at Leeward training areas. In partnership with the Guantanamo Naval Base, JTF-GTMO supported the refurbishment of the Leeward medical clinic in anticipation of increased training opportunities on Leeward. Soon we should hear teams, squads, platoons and companies firing an maneuvering through live fire courses. All this, plus enhanced airborne security training, 31E conversion training, and training in the art and science of patrolling await JTF-GTMO troopers.

Morale, recreation and welfare walk hand in hand, and JTF troopers know it. As a result, JTF leadership made efforts to make sure troopers are getting what they ask for in the MWR facilities at Camp America. Computer rooms provide access to the Internet and are equipped with a program that lets troopers call home for a low price. JTF-GTMO plans to add approximately 20 more computers in the Camp America facility in late February.

Day rooms in Camp America North with big screen TVs give troopers a place to simply relax and watch television, while expanded hours at Club Survivor allow off-duty troopers the opportunity to relax and socialize with their fellow troopers. Club Survivor will also be getting a facelift this spring. There are plans to add a second volleyball court next to the current one, as well as a stage for live music performances, and a dance floor in front of the patio. The modifications are slated to start in

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# JTF recognizes contributions of African-Americans



Photo by SGT Jolene Staker

(Left) CW4 Charles Ward offers CW2 Kent Nelson some mentoring. "Mustangs, the largest percentage of warrants are from the enlisted ranks," said Ward.



Photo by SGT Jolene Staker

LTC Pamela Hart looks up from working on public affairs guidance. Being the JTF public affairs officer has allowed her to bring her positive approach to the JTF. She has worked hard to be a valuable part of the team.



Photo by SGT Jolene Staker

Air Force Tech Sgt. Anthony Whiting, SMO, gives daily SITREP to WO1 Renee Riley, JTF housing manager. Guantanamo is Riley's first assignment since becoming a warrant officer.

## By SGT Jolene Staker

African Americans served in the Union army during the Civil War, and in 1866 congress created the first peace time African-American units. Black History month allows us to not only recognize that service but the continual service of African-Americans and the contribution their heritage plays in the success of the JTF.

"The military is a melting pot," said LTC Pamela Hart, JTF public affairs officer. "The military has been in the forefront of breaking segregation and integrating all races."

African-Americans serving in the calvary forces on the American frontier became known as 'Buffalo Soldiers' by the Cheyenne and Comanche.

These calvarymen subdued Mexican revolutionaries, hostile Native Americans, outlaws, comancheros and rustlers. This service was as invaluable as it was unrecognized.

Not as known, but equally important is the Buffalo Soldiers' service as they explored and mapped the southwest and strung hundreds of miles of telegraph wires.

In December of 1944, African-Americans volunteered as infantry replacements. Up until this time they had been serving in the European Theatre of Operations in service units.

In July of 1948, President Harry S. Truman signed Executive Order 9981 calling on the armed forces to provide equal treatment and opportunity for all servicemen.

Many believe integration has made the military better through the years.

"You get a better end product by bringing people of varying backgrounds together," said Hart. "People from different walks of life bring unique experiences as well as different attitudes and approaches to solving problems."

CW4 Charles Ward said that he has been in the military his

entire life.

His mother and father both served in the Army so he grew up in the Army.

When Ward decided to join the military he became at least the seventh generation in his family to serve in the United States Military.

During his time in the military Ward has seen many changes.

"Some, ethnic service members continue to populate traditional military specialties, while many others have embraced the more challenging skills," he said.

Air Force Lt. Col. Steven Harmon has seen more African-Americans rise to leadership positions during his 21 year career.

"I've seen a gradual focus towards improving that diversity at the top to be more representative of the airmen they lead and our society overall," said Harmon.

This benefits younger military members by giving them mentors and role models.

"There's a lot to be said about the benefits – both tangible and intangible – of junior troops seeing and interacting with senior leaders that they can relate to ethnically," said Harmon.

Chaplain Paul Minor, JTF Chaplain, has a rich heritage of military service back to his grandfather who was a Buffalo Soldier. Minor points out that there should be diversity in the military.

"It's America's military," said Minor. "It is just like the nation – there are a lot of different people in the country."

CW1 Renee Riley, J-4 housing manager, just recently stepped into her leadership role.

While we study and appreciate the differences brought to the military by our varying heritages, let us also remember what common denominator we share.

"I am proud to be an American," said Riley.

"I've stayed in the military because of the camaraderie," said Hart. There is no better group of people to serve with.



# Valentine's Day Messages



Sweetie,  
You are the ship of my dreams  
and the love of my life.   
CDR. Stephen Jones

B,  
I wasn't gonna do this but you'll be all  
snuggled up with me here! LY  
E



To Chris, Cristian and Arianna,  
You are my love and inspiration.  
I miss you dearly.   
Love Mommy



SPC Tracey Metz:  
Happy Valentine's Day. We are very  
proud of you. Love and miss you.  
Mom & Dad 



Daddy,  
Even though you're far away I  
still remember you day-to-day.  
Love you bunches!   
Madison Jo

Kerry,  
I Love You With All  
My Heart and Soul.  
Happy Valentines  
Day.  
Love Always  
Kathy B. 

SFC Bultemeyer:  
You're our hero! We miss  
you very much.  
Love, Marlene, Evie &  
Grace



Berkes,  
We love you more!  
Love, M & J 



Little Soldier Boy,  
The special times that we have  
spend there have been the best  
time of my life. I just wanted  
to say thank  
you  
always,  
Soldier Girl 

Amy,  
You mean everything to me, I  
love you so very much.  
XO  
Scott 

Jo Jo,  
You are the love of my life  
and I miss you tremendously.  
Happy Valentines Day!!  
Love,  
Wubby 



Tracy, You are the joy in my  
day, the love of my heart, forever.  
Jeff 

Suzie,  
Thanks for being the best  
wife and friend a man  
could ever hope for. Happy  
Valentine's Day!  
Love,  
Johnny 



Happy Valentines Day to all the  
Kozettes. You are great  
Americans. Miss you.  
Love,  
Dad/Hubby 

LTC Westphal,  
You are very special to us,  
Please be our Valentine!  
J-3 Section 





# Marrero's service helping others

By SGT Jolene Staker

When SPC Luis Marrero first felt the call to join the military to work toward becoming a chaplain, he prolonged his decision to make sure it wasn't just him thinking it was good to be a soldier. God continued to reveal to him that this was the plan for his life.

In September of 2001, Marrero answered the call. "I believe that God has something for me in the military as a chaplain," said Marrero.

It is a long road for Marrero to become a chaplain. First, he has to complete his bachelor's degree and then he has to complete three years of divinity. After completing seminary he has to serve two years as a pastor in a church. Then he will need to be endorsed by a church before he can even apply for the chaplaincy.

The road may be long, but Marrero is committed. "I accepted Jesus when I was 16 years old, and I have found it joyful and felt it was my duty to preach God's word since," he said.

Marrero preaches at his home church in Massachusetts as well as the Worcester Correctional Facility.

In addition to the military training that he has had to be a chaplain's assistant, he has also attended classes at an institute by a pentecostal church known as Mission Board and gone through a training program at his church.

He is now a licensed minister which is the first step in becoming an ordained minister.

His church training has covered topics such as crisis intervention, suicide prevention, dealing with youth, dealing with a congregation, the conduct of a pastor, how to confront others and studies of matrimony.

His civilian training coupled with his military training has prepared him to deal with soldiers. He also draws from his ten year marriage when counseling troopers with marital issues.

"My number one goal is being able to somehow get to the point of the need of the trooper," said Marrero. "I want to help them in each way I can to help them become better troopers and achieve their goals."

Marrero's main responsibilities include going out with Chaplain Paul Minor to visit soldiers, Alpha, helping with Soul Survivor and other services and keeping the office in Camp America open.

"We want the office to be a place where soldiers can relax, enjoy themselves and forget about work for a little while," said



Photo by SGT Jolene Staker

*SPC Luis Marrero, JTF chaplain assistant, prepares the pizza for Alpha which is on Tuesday at 7 p.m. at Camp America in room L1.*

Marrero. "We want them to be comfortable. That is why we got new furniture."

Marrero is originally from Puerto Rico and writes and speaks fluent Spanish. This has helped him while counseling with some troopers.

One thing that helps Marrero counsel troopers is what he learns in his day to day walk.

"The main challenge I face here is missing my family. I have two boys and the older one keeps reminding me that he needs me and loves me," said Marrero. "He tells me to take care of myself."

My wife just finished college and started her job as a Spanish teacher, said Marrero.

"I am extremely proud of her and how dedicated she was to her goal of becoming a teacher," said Marrero. "There are no words to describe how proud of her I am."

When Marrero gets stressed he prays. "I pray for God to guide me on how to make decisions so I can be calm with my stress and situations," he said.

Marrero also runs four miles every other day and works out with SGT Talal Elkhatib. He has raised his PT score 58 points.

Marrero wants to make sure that troopers know they can ask him anything.

"I'm not here to reject anyone because of their preference of religion or their way of thinking," said Marrero. "I am here to help in any way I can. I came to do a job, and my job is to assist the trooper and be there for the trooper."

## Heavenly Bits & Pieces

By Chaplain (MAJ) Daniel Odean

### Exercise: Walk with the Lord!

We are now in the second month of 2004. Some people made resolutions to physically exercise more. Don't overlook the needs of what is really more important than that, spiritual exercise! The result is, Heaven: no pain, but all gain!!

Isaiah 40:31 - "But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint."

## LAVA LAVA ISLAND VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL needs volunteers

Directors, station leaders, crew leaders and behind-the-scenes help are needed for the school, which will be June 14-18

To volunteer,  
please call  
the Base Chapel, 2323  
or  
contact Barbara Olsen,  
2359 or 7685

## Survey from page 4

March.

Improvements to Windmill Beach have given JTF-GTMO troopers a place to swim, snorkel, sunbathe and barbecue, all within walking distance of where Camp America troopers live. New improvements are planned for Windmill Beach beginning in March, such as cabana renovations, new grill pits, turtle-friendly lights and a bonfire pit. JTF-GTMO leaders recently made the decision to open up Kittery Beach to troopers in the near future. Plans are in the works to open this beach for recreational use in early spring. The beach will also be opened to use by Guantanamo Naval Base personnel once an access road is in place that transits around the Radio Range area. This will open up one of the best beaches we have for snorkeling and scuba diving.

One of the most significant discoveries made by the survey was that 75 percent of respondents felt that they worked well together as a team and that JTF troopers looked out for one another. "Service members often commented that they felt a strong sense of camaraderie with their fellow members of the JTF," Kersey said. "Troopers were also generally very positive about the degree of teamwork demonstrated by their peers as we as the opportunity to work with members of other services, both active and reserve components." "Soldiers are looking out for each other and checking on each other," one trooper said. "Teams and squads are tight-knit like a family," another trooper commented.

Another 75 percent felt their supervisors set the right example for their troops by their words and actions. "My chain of command is trying to mentor me and make me excel," said one trooper. "The young leader-



Photo by SrA. Thomas Doscher  
Navy Lt. Cmdr David Kersey and SFC Von Bultemeyer, Joint Task Force Guantanamo Inspector General's office, work together on tallying the results of the Command Climate Survey.

ship is growing into their roles," said another trooper. "This is a very significant number and shows the dedication of leaders at all levels to lead from the front and lead by example," Kersey said. "Every day in the JTF we're showing others what right looks like. It means junior leaders are doing it right."

Kersey said the JTF leadership continues to listen to troopers and improve conditions at JTF-GTMO. "We're doing sensing sessions with every company," JTF-GTMO, in partnership with Guantanamo Naval Base leadership, is always on the lookout for ways to improve operations in every facet of the mission set. Additionally, as LCDR Kersey said. "The Inspector General is always open." The IG as his office is known, has pulled up stakes and moved to Camp America to enhance access to troopers. Kersey said if you have an idea, tell someone about it. "Voice it through your chain of command. We look into those suggestions, and we tell the general about them."

The one area where JTF-GTMO leadership found they could make big improvements was in the area of communica-

tions. Communication is the glue that binds JTF-GTMO troopers and leaders together. "Communication between troopers and leaders is very important," Kersey said. Many of the troops responding to the survey felt that communication of information to the troops could be improved. The chain of command is committed to pushing timely and accurate information to the correct level. The Wire is one useful tool the JTF leadership uses to disseminate information and to answer questions that troopers ask. Recently a soldier asked about price differences between the commissary and the Navy Exchanges. The response was posted in The Wire so every trooper would know the answer. Another method being used to put out command information is by e-mail, through the use of the GTMO-All address. Leaders at the company level are trying to get work and training schedules and other time sensitive information out to the troops further in advance to allow for better planning. But no administrative response can replace leaders doing their jobs right. Leaders need to report accurately and timely, know

what right looks like, and train JTF-GTMO troopers to recognize and meet disciplined standards. Crosstalk is critical in training, in developing a common operational picture, and in coordination before operations. All this contributes to synchronized effects that hit where we want them to, in every facet of JTF-GTMO operations. JTF-GTMO leadership has let the word go forth that we will improve markedly in the area of communications, so that we can have informed, combat-ready troopers and units, focused on missions success, able to measure success in personal and team goals, and capable of bringing the fight to the enemy under any conditions.

"This is a continually evolving JTF, and there is a lot of concern about taking care of the troopers," Kersey said. "The success of the Command Climate Survey is a direct result of the participation of all those members of the JTF that filled out surveys and provided feedback on life here in Guantanamo Bay. We have seen continual improvement in the quality of life since the last CCS, and the comments that troopers made on this survey will allow us to continue to improve every day."

The JTF has a short history but a bright future. Dramatic improvements have been made in that short history and this and future Command Climate Surveys will provide the information needed to continually make improvements in this ever changing and growing environment.

BG Mitch LeClaire, JTF deputy commander of operations, encouraged troopers to use their chain of command to suggest improvements and report successes. What you have to say is valuable, we want to know it, he said. LeClaire noted that the JTF's overall success comes from individual troopers committed to excellence.

## Sports highlights

## All-star games live up to hype

Compiled by SPC Rick Fahr

Two professional sports leagues had their all-star matchups over the weekend.

In the NFL's **Pro Bowl**, the NFC squad, led by quarterback **Marc Bulger's** four touchdown passes, beat the AFC, 55-52.

**Mike Vanderjaqt's** 51-yard field goal at the end sealed the victory for the NFC, which trailed by 18 points as late as the fourth quarter.

On the NHL ice, the East squad outlasted the West, 6-4. In an unusual turn, the game's MVP – **Joe Sakic**, three goals -- came from the losing team.

\*\*\*

Concerning an upcoming all-star game, the NBA's affair may feature rookie sensation **LeBron James** after all.

After not being voted into the game or chosen by coaches, James may still get an opportunity to play. Commissioner **David Stern** has made it clear that James will be his choice to replace any East guard or forward who gets hurt or otherwise can't play in the game.

Starters for the game are: East – **Vince Carter, Jermaine O'Neal, Ben Wallace, Allen Iverson** and **Tracy McGrady**; West – **Kevin Garnett, Tim Duncan, Yao Ming, Steve Francis** and **Kobe Bryant**.

\*\*\*

Two teams remain unbeaten in the NCAA men's ranks.

**Stanford** squeaked by **Arizona**, 80-77, to

get to 20-0, and **St. Joseph's** pounded **La Salle**, 89-63, to get to that mark.

But both teams still trail **Duke** (18-1) in the ESPN/USA Today poll.

Rounding out the top five are **Pittsburgh** (20-1) and **Connecticut** (17-3).

\*\*\*

The annual celebrity watch known as the **Pebble Beach National Pro-Am** saw **Vijay Singh** continue his dominance. Singh posted a 16-under score in the event, winning by three strokes.

**Jeff Maggert** came in second, followed by **Phil Mickelson**.

If last year was the year of the woman on the PGA tour, this year may be the year of the angry man on the PGA tour.

Teenager **Michelle Wie**, who finished in a tie for 38th in the **Hawaii Pearl Open** (a men's event), has received invitations to play in at least seven PGA events this year.

\*\*\*

Baseball is just around the corner, and one pitcher who will be smiling on opening day is **Kevin Millwood**.

The right-hander and the **Philadelphia Phillies** agreed to a one-year \$11 million deal this week.

Off the field, **Milwaukee Brewer** pitcher **Luis Martinez** surrendered to police. He's wanted in connection with a shooting that allegedly occurred because of a parking spot.

**Sports Highlights compiled from www.espn.com.**

## FAHR GAME

## Foreman takes uncertainty from sons

I read the sports pages to find out who won, who lost, who's playing tonight.

But lately, I've been learning a lot more about some sports icons, including a famous boxer with an infamous whispered question.

Everybody knows **George Foreman**. He's either a legendary boxer or a legendary pitchman for those low-fat grill things.

He won 76 professional fights. He fought **Muhammad Ali** in Zaire, "the Rumble in the Jungle." He was heavyweight champion of the world.

Now, even though he's reportedly in training for another bout, he's more of a smiling salesman than a bruising boxer.

Foreman has a huge family, 10 children. Five of those are sons. Each one carries the name "George Foreman."

Until recently, I thought Foreman named his sons in that manner for a PR reason or for comedic value. I thought the move was a calculated effort to get a little more exposure, a few more laughs.

But that's not the case at all.

There has been some question in Foreman's life about who his father really was. He may not have known his real father's name.

That uncertainty brooded in him, helping fuel the rage that helped him in the ring and most assuredly hurt him out.

To ensure that his sons never live with that uncertainty, he gave each of them his name. They'll never have to wonder who their father is.

I'm sure they carry their name proudly, though they may not fully understand yet the reasoning behind their father's lesson.

## JDOG golf tournament to feature four-person scramble format

The Joint Detention Operations Group is sponsoring a four-person scramble golf tournament on Feb. 26.

The event will begin at noon at Yatera Seca Golf Course.

There is a \$20 per player entry fee, which includes club and cart rental and a barbecue after the event.

Organizers will award prizes for low score, high

score, longest drive (male and female), longest putt and closest to the pin.

Teams must include at least one female.

Rules specific to the format include:

■ no score higher than a double bogey;

■ must use at least one tee shot from each player;

■ after deciding which ball to use, each player must shoot

from within two feet of the location, except on putts;

■ lies may be improved in the fairway, but not in the rough.

Entry forms are available at Bldg. E002 or A2600 in Camp America.

The deadline to return entry forms is Feb. 20.

For more information on entering the tournament, call 3177.

## 217th MPs working hard at maintaining family ties



Photos by SGT Jolene Staker

(Top) SFC James Walton, of the 217th MP Co., looks at cards at the Camp America Nex to send his wife. He likes to keep in touch with his family so they know he loves them. (Middle) SSG John Clark, of the 217th MP Co., participates in a VTC. "You can talk to everyone at one time and see how the kids are doing," he said. (Bottom) SGT Kip Jones, of the 217th MP Co., puts a card in the mail to his wife. He uses the phone and email most to communicate, but does send regular mail on occasion.

By SGT Jolene Staker

For many in the 217th Military Police Co., their deployment in Cuba is all about family. Missing family is what makes being gone from home hard; keeping in touch with family is what gets them through; and knowing they are protecting their family makes it worth being here.

"We're fighting the war on terrorism to make it safe for those at home," said SFC William Harris, first platoon sergeant of the 217th MP Co.

While it is hard to be away from family there are many ways to keep in touch, and members of the 217th are using them all.

Harris and his daughter exchange electronic greetings. He e-mails his wife and calls her with his morale calls. Harris also sends a card in the mail from time to time just to let her know he cares.

"They support me through the mail," he said. "I get mail every week. ... Knowing that you have support from your family and communicating with them helps strengthen you to meet the mission each day," said Harris.

Video teleconferences are another way this family chooses to keep in touch. At Christmas he was able to see his son, who was home on leave from basic training.

"I got to see him, and I saw a change in him," said Harris. "He is a squad leader, and I could see the maturity."

SSG John Clark, second squad leader of third platoon, also gets to see the growth in his children through VTCs. His daughter was born shortly after his arrival in Guantanamo. He also has two older children.

"There is a lot you can do on the computer. I am watching my baby grow up on the computer," he said. "It's kind of hard, but seeing her on the computer helps a lot."

Clark credits his extended family for making his deployment easier by all the help they give his wife and children.

"I would like to thank them for helping so much and taking care of my family while I'm gone," he said.

His wife sends him a letter every other day with something in it from the children.

"She's doing an outstanding job with three children while she is still working," Clark said.

SGT Kip Jones, supply sergeant, enjoys

the VTCs because "it's more realistic than video cams, because it is life-sized," he said.

Keeping in touch with his wife and three young children help him stay grounded and remember that his deployment here will not last forever.

"The hard thing is when situations come up where your children are having problems at school, getting in fights or get sick, and you're not there to help them," he said.

Jones stays in constant contact through email, phone calls and mail.

SFC James Walton, third platoon leader and SOG in the wire, gets support from not only his wife and children but also his church family.

"My church family has been very supportive," he said. "The male chorus sends me tapes. They keep me up on the sermon of the week."

Walton is a tenor singer for the male chorus and also serves as the group's chaplain.

Support from his church family goes beyond that. His church family will be driving his family from Alabama to meet him on leave in Florida.

"Whatever my wife and children need – my church family is there," said Walton.

Walton misses his wife and children, but he works diligently to let them know that he loves them and has not forgotten them just because he is not home with them.

I've picked up Guantanamo t-shirts for the children and sent those home, said Walton. I just recently got hats embroidered with their names.

"I worked the night shift when I was home so I was used to making their breakfast and taking them to school," he said.

Now I make sure I call regularly to let them know Daddy still loves them, said Walton.

Walton, Clark and Harris make it a point to check with their soldiers on a regular basis to make sure they are keeping in touch at home and don't have any family issues that they need help with.

"Keeping in touch with family is important for morale," said Harris. "It is important for each and every trooper to make sure they keep in touch with their family."

"Every time I talk with my wife she lets me know she misses me and is proud of me," said Harris. "Knowing she is proud of me makes being here worthwhile."

# 15 Minutes of Fame...

## With SPC Altrenna Thomas, 217th MP Co.

By SPC Katherine L. Collins

*SPC Altrenna Thomas joined the Army National Guard to explore her curiosity of military life, discover her professional interests and talents and grow as a person. Six years later she stands as a proud example of the military's benefits and her own aptitude and perseverance to all who questioned her ability to succeed in the Army. She thanks the military with her dedication and aspiration to serve another 14 years.*

**Q: What inspired your military service?**

**A:** I was working in a department store with a female who is also in this unit. One day she said she had to go to drill that weekend. I asked what drill was. So she described her experience in the Army National Guard. I was in college at the time and wanted to experience something different. I was also 20 years old and curious about the military, since no one in my family had ever served. So, with no research, I talked to a recruiter immediately. I joined the 217th, as a 95B, because it was in my hometown.

**Q: How has your military service impacted and molded you as a service member and a person?**

**A:** It has definitely taught me discipline and helped me discover who I am and what my interests and strengths are. I joined as an MP and do my best at the job, but I've seen I'd rather serve in personnel somehow. My college degree is in human resource management. It's also made me more driven and focused in my career goals. I want to work in what I believe I will enjoy and can do best, in the military and as a civilian. My experience has also taught me to succeed in a world where women are expected to perform the same as men. This will help me a great deal in my civilian career and in life in general. Also, I've seen what people expect of me, and I've seen what I can do. People all along the way helped me do this, such as drill sergeants. Being in the military is preparing me well in many ways for my civilian career. Another thing I've learned is different leadership styles and how to deal with authority and co-workers, especially



Photo by SPC Katherine L. Collins  
SPC Altrenna Thomas, 217th MP Co., takes notes as she listens to a briefing on speaking with the media.

those different from me. I've learned how to work together as a team for the benefit of the mission and unit. Also, I've learned all it takes to work your way up the chain of success. The same principles it takes to increase in rank I can apply to my civilian career.

**Q: In what ways have your family, friends and civilian employer supported you in your military career?**

**A:** My family was real unsure about my joining the Army, because they have no personal experience of military life. They do see now that I enjoy serving. They also see the benefits it provides and the ways it's helped me grow.

**Q: What do you find most rewarding about this Operation Enduring Freedom mission?**

**A:** Meeting all the people here from lots of different places. Also, all I've learned in the military I learn more intensely here, since I serve full-time. One thing I've learned is to never know what to expect in life. In high school I never imagined I'd join the military. Now I've served six years and plan to serve 14 more. Also, I never imagined I'd serve in Cuba, but here I am. Living with others has helped me learn to deal with people better too. My experience of living

with two sisters gave me a great advantage in adjusting to living with many women, but I still find the situation teaches me new lessons about people and getting along.

**Q: How do you think the mission will impact your life beyond Guantanamo Bay?**

**A:** Specific to this mission are just some of the leaders I've watched. CSM [George] Nieves served as a great example to me. I really admire him for the way he interacted with others and led his soldiers.

**Q: What situations and activities have you newly experienced here?**

**A:** I went boating with the Arkansas unit. I'd never gone boating before.

**Q: What goals have you set for yourself while in Guantanamo Bay?**

**A:** My only goal here is to complete each day successfully, so I can get home to my family and working toward my career. I just try to focus on doing my best at my mission. I would have liked to take some classes while here, but I wasn't sure if I would have the time, so I didn't risk signing up.

**Q: What are your plans for when you depart Guantanamo Bay?**

**A:** I plan to make a career of the military. I hope to serve 20 years in the guard, but I may switch to being an officer. I began ROTC before deploying, and I may finish it when I return home. There's a lot I must weigh in deciding. If I become an officer, I'd like to serve in the adjutant general branch, where I think my skills and interests would fit best.

**Q: What would you say to a person wishing to explore the military or a service member considering reclassifying his or her MOS?**

**A:** Take a good aptitude test. Know yourself. Know your interests and your talents. Serving in a job that best fits you benefits the military and you. Also, consider taking a job that will give you experience in what you desire to do full-time as a civilian. Your military service can be a great learning experience for your civilian career as well as a means to pay for college. It will help build you as a person and in your career, and build your resume.