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The WIRED

An award-winning
JTF journal

Inside
Zombie paintball
'Contagion'



A Very GTMO Halloween: Even the pumpkins dive

COMMAND CORNER

REAR ADMIRAL DAVID WOODS

JTF GUANTANAMO COMMANDER

We are approaching a very significant event in our Joint Task Force Guantanamo mission as we host the highest profile Military Commissions since President Barack Obama took office: the arraignment hearing on Wednesday for suspected USS Cole bombing mastermind Abd al Rahim al Nashiri.

Gen. Douglas M. Fraser, Commander, U.S. Southern Command visited earlier this week and reviewed firsthand the in-depth preparation personnel from across the command have invested in making this event go off without a hitch.

- The Commission Liaison Office Element provided a bird's eye overview of the security enhancements and Camp Justice improvements that our USAF BEEF team and JTF Engineers have instituted.

- He experienced the fast boat expertise and waterside security of the USCG Maritime Safety and Security Team (MSST) and their Expeditionary Legal Center internal security mission.

- The JDG briefed the planning and execution of both external security force provided by the 107th in concert with Naval Station Guantanamo Security Force. He also detailed the guard force and escort preparation and plan for detainee handling.

- The J2 detailed the threat intelligence and OPSEC planning in the operating area which was developed by all of our intelligence professionals across the Naval Station and JTF.

- The J3 presented the operational plan and operational order which details the specifics of all mission elements.

- The Public Affairs Office showcased the new Media Operation Center which is the culmination of months of hard work and effort by a myriad of JTF personnel. The PAO also detailed the media plan including a virtual tour of Camp Justice to shape expectations for the event and support.

- The J6 discussed the efforts and back-up plans to ensure connectivity and network support for commissions.

- Office of Military Commissions (OMC) concluded the briefing by detailing the courtroom arraignment procedures.

Gen. Fraser asked several questions which were adeptly handled by our team of subject matter experts (SMEs). He was truly impressed by



photo by Mass Communication Specialist Kilho Park
Gen. Douglas M. Fraser (left) and Rear Adm. David Woods.

the coordination and planning effort presented. I believe he departed with a confirmed sense of the entire team's professionalism. The fact that he dedicated this time in his very busy four star Combatant Commander schedule punctuates the importance of this and future high profile Military Commissions events. Well done to all!

Now it is time to execute and get the appropriate return on our significant planning investment. We are doing the final training events today and this weekend so we achieve highest state of readiness possible. I am excited to showcase our ability to fully support the professional conduct of Military Commissions focusing the nation and the world on the events in the courtroom. Of course, we will do all of this while simultaneously and flawlessly executing all of our other mission requirements. Honor Bound!

JTF Guantanamo

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COVER: Underwater pumpkin carving puts a definitively Guantanamo spin on a spooky holiday tradition. -photo by Sgt. 1st Class Benjamin Cossel

Trooper to Trooper

featuring

Senior Chief Petty Officer Michael Pike

Senior Enlisted Leader, JTF-GTMO-JMG

The Joint Task Force Guantanamo mission presents some unique challenges for those assigned here in support of detainee operations. Many of us are individual augmentees or have deployed multiple times, and it is important to remember that not every deployed environment is exactly the same.

As most of us know, any deployment typically involves limited resources, a lack of basic comforts, and separation for long periods of time from family and friends.

At Guantanamo Bay, however, we actually have many of what I consider basic comforts. The average Soldier, Sailor or Airman has decent berthing and the Navy Exchange is walking distance away. There are swimming pools available and a bowling alley. There are three gyms available and many exercise classes throughout the daytime and evening hours. Team sports are ongoing throughout the year.

For those who don't have a vehicle available, there is a reliable transportation system to get around on base, which I have used many times.

Despite all of these benefits, for me taking care of my Sailors is the primary focus.

Reaching out is easy and takes very little time, when you compare it to the effort it can have for someone. Just saying hello and waving to a Trooper as they hurry past reaps great reward. Making eye contact and asking how they are doing, as you go through a security check point goes a long way. You never know what news from home that person has recently received, good or bad. We all have people back home whom we care about.

Taking time to talk with junior personnel and joining them at breakfast or lunch sends a positive message that you care.

Personally, I am constantly interacting with my people, and not always work related. Sometimes a senior leader needs to reach out to his or her Troopers and touch base on things other than work details.

We tend to focus on the junior Troopers, and often overlook those who have several deployments under their belts. Taking the view that these Troopers can handle yet another deployment because they've done it before is not always correct.

We need to remember to give as much attention to these Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen.



The simple fact that they have more experience can bring up issues that are unique to their situations. There can be a cumulative effect at work on family and friends.

There are many things that we can do to help the people we work with. Recognition for outstanding effort and work completed can be as simple as praising them in the work space for all to here, to more formal recognition, morning quarters, Trooper of the BUB, Trooper of the Quarter.

Bottom Line! We need to remain aware at all times of how our fellow Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen are doing. Keep an eye on your buddy and keep in mind what it must be like for him or her, whether they're brand new or well seasoned.



**PROTECT YOUR INFO!
PSEC ALERT**

OPSEC and Military Commissions

The military commissions are a time of increased focus on Joint Task Force Guantanamo, Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, and all our personnel and base residents. The military commissions are very important and have required much preparation and planning. While the commissions are in session, many visitors will be on island taking part in the commission proceedings. We must remember OPSEC in these times and use the "need to know" principle. Don't talk about work outside the workplace or in unsecured areas. Protect sensitive information. Keep everyone safe and our operations secure. **USE OPSEC!**

NEWS FROM THE BAY



By Army Sgt. Saul Rosa

Saturday: BASEketball tournament at TK

It's baseball! It's basketball! It's a cross between the two sports, and a very fun alternative. The game starts at 2 p.m. on the Tierra Kay basketball court. Teams of three or four can sign up the same day. Two rounds will likely be played. Each game lasts nine innings or 45 minutes. There will be prizes!

Saturday: Fishing trip

Bring your own fishing pole (or borrow one) and your own extra food and beverages for this weekend's fishing trip. Liberty provides the boats, captains, bait, snacks, and soda. The boats leave the marina at 6:30 a.m. and will return around 1 p.m.

Nov. 8: Hiking up JPJ

Go take a hike up the John Paul Jones Hill at Denich Gym on Nov. 8 at 6 a.m. Come for the fun of hiking and get the opportunity to meet new people and make some new fitness buddies. If you're new to the island, the view from top of JPJ is awesome, so if you haven't hiked it yet, you can now go with friends.

Nov. 11: Call of Duty tourney

Think you're a real Call of Duty Trooper? Prove it at the Call of Duty Modern Warfare Tourney at Tierra Kay Liberty on Nov. 11 at 7 p.m.

The setup will depend on how many put their skills to the test. Prizes will be offered to the top three winners!!

Nov. 17: Glow Disk Lateral Hazard

For lovers of Ultimate Frisbee or those who just want to have some fun, MWR is holding The Glow Disk Lateral Hazard on Nov. 17 at 6:30 p.m. at the Lateral Hazard Disc Golf course. Glow discs are provided and everybody plays best hole. The top three scores win prizes.

Nov. 18: Ping pong and root beer

Want to have fun without alcohol? Try root beer pong. The concept is the same as beer pong just without the nasty side affects the next day. There will also be regular games of ping pong. The games will be held at Tierra Kay basketball court. There will be prizes for best scores.

Nov. 8: Paintball tourney and warm-up

A paintball tourney will be held on the at the paintball range on the 19th at 9 a.m.. The game will be a warm-up for the Turkey shoot out.

Nov. 20: Paintball turkey shoot-out

It may not be real hunting but it's just as fun. The MWR is holding the Turkey Shoot-out on Nov. 20 from 2 to 4 p.m. Play Capture the Turkey and other fun paintball games.

Winners will receive gift certificates.

Saturday: Ms. and Mr. GTMO competition

The competition starts at 8 p.m. at the Windjammer. Come and cheer for your favorite as 22 Troopers face off for the title of Mr. or Ms. GTMO. Judging categories will be based on age.

There will also be door prizes handed out to those who attend. The grand prize is a picnic package including picnic basket, blanket, water bottles, and foldout chairs.

Saturday: Weight lifting competition

A weight lifting competition will be held at Denich Gym at 8 p.m. There will be three different events that the lifters must compete in; squats, benchpress, and deadlift. The 20 competitors will be divided into light, mid, and heavy categories. This is the first time all three events will be held at once and every competitor must compete in every event. Prizes will be awarded to first and second place.

Nov. 12 Night fishing at the Marina

Did you enjoy day fishing or do you want to try something new? Then come down to the Marina for Night Fishing on Nov. 12 at 6 p.m. The rules are the same for day fishing except the group returns around midnight.

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WIRE
An award-winning
JTF journal

TROOPER ★ FOCUS



Petty Officer 3rd Class
Michael Griffith

photo by Army Sgt. Saul Rosa

BULLET BIO

Time in service: 4 years
Hobbies: year-round diving, karaoke, volunteerism
The boss says: "He's a character and our can-do guy."
Advice to junior Troopers: "Stay away from alcohol and be smart. You don't have to drink to have fun, and I haven't had any bad days!"

By Army 1st. Lt. Amelia Thatcher

While not on watch with the Maritime Safety and Security Team, Coast Guard Machinery Technician 3rd Class Michael Griffith scours Guantanamo Bay for things to do to keep him occupied.

"I can't sit still," the Massachusetts native grinned.

In just six months on island, Griffith has completed commercial driver's license training, earned his lifeguard certification, dives regularly with his own gear from home, and always volunteers to be a designated driver.

"He's highly motivated, and a character," his boss, Coast Guard Chief Warrant Officer 2 Ty Farrell said. "He's a prime example of not having a drink and having fun. It is possible on this island."

That's not to say the mission doesn't come first.

"We needed a CDL driver, and Griffith wanted it right away," Farrell said. "He has a positive attitude and always volunteers for every little thing."

"I love fixing things," Griffith added, pointing at the trucks in the Coastie mechanic bays.

In his two years with the MSSST and four years with the Coast Guard, Griffith has experienced nearly all of the types of missions associated with them.

"I've done migrant ops, drug interdiction, presidential security and significant national

events," Griffith said. "You'd think eight hours waiting around on a boat would get boring, but I make it fun."

Griffith, who recently earned an associate's degree in fire science, hopes to be EMT qualified soon after he leaves Guantanamo.

"I'm the son of a firefighter," he said. "That's why I joined the military."

BOOTS ON THE GROUND

Which would win in a race, a banana rat or an iguana?



"The iguana. Have you seen the way that thing runs?"

Airman 1st Class
Mario Lopez Casas



"An iguana. I've seen them jump, I've seen them run from cars and they're really fast. I've never seen a banana rat run."

Aviation Electrician Mate
2nd Class
Dustin Hill



"A banana rat, because iguanas are more opportunity eaters whereas banana rats are more picky, so the banana rat will have more fight."

Construction Mechanic
2nd Class
John Mauck



"An iguana, but it's just a guesstimation."

Army Sgt. 1st Class
George Watkis

TROOPERS AND ZOMBIES FACE OFF AT PAINTBALL RANGES

By Army Sgt. Saul Rosa

The sounds of moaning and slow shambling could be heard at the Guantanamo paintball range Saturday as Morale, Recreation and Welfare Liberty held a zombie paintball tournament.

MWR Liberty program manager Jill Lynch was responsible for this undead infestation and helped set up the event.

“[The tournament] brings out those who enjoy zombie paintball or paintball,” said Lynch. “It just adds that other outlet for them to come out and do something different or fun, especially for Halloween weekend.”

The rules for this battle for humanity were simple. If a zombie, marked by an orange bandana, shot a human in a vital area that human was then infected and became one of the walking dead. For the zombies, only a head shot could take them out of the game. The game ended when all the zombies were eliminated or if all the humans became infected.

Seaman Louis Delk fought for both sides during the tournament, starting out as a human and eventually falling victim to the undead horde.

“It’s pretty tiring, it’s like an adrenaline rush, so you get tired really fast because your heart is just pounding,” said Delk. “You see everyone else shooting and

sometimes you don’t see what they see, so it’s kind of scary.”

Once he became one of the infected, the logistics specialist’s mentality changed.

“I was just shooting at every human who passed,” Delk said. “I waited them out for a second ... for them to get a little closer and then I tore them up.”

Although survival was the ultimate tournament prize, MWR Liberty also hid two \$50 Navy Exchange gift cards for either zombie or human to find as a surprise challenge.

“I think once they got out there, they forgot about the gift certificates because they’re trying not to get shot,” said Lynch. “They just came out for the joy of the game.”

Lynch explained the idea for zombie paintball came from a conversation about paintballing with a Coast Guardsman stationed on the island. MWR Liberty encourages Troopers to suggest events or activities they would like to do.

“We at the Liberty program want to hear what active duty members would like to do because we’re here and we’re all about them,” said Lynch.

In the end, the zombies lurched their way to victory. Fortunately for humanity, this outbreak was confined to the paintball range and lasted only a few brutal hours.

photo by Army Sgt. Joshua Andrews

Hospital Corpsman Seaman Laney Smith takes cover from the zombie infestation at the paintball range during the zombie paintball tournament.

By Spc. Kelly Gary

The Navy Exchange and Morale, Welfare and Recreation hosted the 10th annual NEX and MWR customer appreciation this past Friday, Saturday and Sunday. The event included a variety of entertainment, competition and food with a multitude of prizes. From the Vans skateboard and BMX show to the “Diners, Drive-ins and Dives” banquet, the Guantanamo Bay community was offered an assortment of experiences! MWR and the NEX representatives explained the weekend is their way of expressing appreciation and support to all military personnel, civilians and contractors on base. NEX store manager, Mark Good,

measured the weekend against all others.

“I think it is the biggest event the base has every year,” said Good. “It is comparable to, if not bigger than, Christmas.”

The first NEX appreciation weekend was conceived on Guantanamo Bay, said Good. Navy Exchanges throughout the world followed suit but it began here on the island. All of the events offered a little something for everyone, no matter their interest.

BMX

The weekend kicked off with a skateboard and BMX display from eight Vans-sponsored athletes Friday at

the MWR skate park. Kids and adults of all ages brought their own boards and bikes to ride around with the athletes, who performed an assortment of advanced kicks, grabs and big air tricks. Omar Hassan, a Vans skateboarder, said this is his third visit to Guantanamo Bay.

“It’s always great to have the opportunity to come down and perform,” said Hassan. “It is our way of showing our support.”

The 5K run

Saturday’s events began with a 5K run starting at the NEX atrium. Good said 300 T-shirts ordered as giveaways were quickly depleted. First

place for the 18-to-29-year-old females was Seaman Rhonda McGee; Lance Corporal Tyler Truesdale took first for the males. In addition to best times, best costume also received a prize. Sandy Wilson beat Petty Officer 2nd Class Art Ramirez as Boba Fett with her Alice in Wonderland outfit. All the winners were awarded prizes compliments of New Balance.

Before the NEX doors

Opening the doors

opened at 9 a.m., a line of eager shoppers stretched from the front door to nearly halfway around the building. The sales have grown exponentially over the past ten years; in fact, Good said the savings and deals when he came to the island in 2007 were significantly less than this year.



The NEX best thing

photo by Spc. Kelly Gary

Van’s “Off the Wall” BMX athlete Alistar Whitton performs at the skate park for the Navy Exchange’s 10th annual customer appreciation weekend.



“When I first arrived, savings were around \$600, 000,” he said. “This year they were \$820,000.”

In addition to all the savings, \$12,000 worth of prizes were awarded throughout the three days. They came in the form of electronics and gift cards as well as various other goods. Army Sgt. Chad Hawkins won the \$2,000 gift card grand prize.

The Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and Chief

for all that they have done for me.”

Blessid Union of Souls followed Taglieri, performing such singles as “I Believe” and “Let Me Be the One.”

“People thank us for coming down here but we thank you guys for being here,” said lead singer Elliot Sloan. “We just wanted to come down and help people let loose and relieve some stress.”



Petty Officers Association provided barbeque, popcorn, baked goods and T-shirts for everyone in the NEX atrium. In the early afternoon, Vans athletes and “Diners, Drive-ins and Dives” chefs signed autographs. The evening’s festivities started with teams competing in a Humvee pull.

“There were 15 or 16 teams last year,” said Good. “We had 34 for this weekend’s event.”

Winners of the competition walked away with iPads, second place won iPhones and third place received iPods.

O’Kelly’s Pub, Nightlife

As the sun set, the community donned their costumes and ventured to O’Kelly’s Pub. John Taglieri performed from the Windjammer patio with a mixture of old, new and original tunes. Taglieri said he was honored to be invited to play.

“The reason I have this career is because I have the freedom to be in a bar with people on a Saturday night who are safe because of the military,” Taglieri said.

Taglieri has been working for MWR for two years, traveling around the world to play for servicemembers.

“I respect the troops more than I can express,” he said. “I will do anything to support with my music to give a little back

Costume Contest

After Blessid Union of Souls played their last set, contestants for the costume contest took the stage. The individual round had contenders from Reservoir Dogs to Raggedy Ann. The final round came down to Petty Officer 1st Class William Kahill dressed as Gumby and a clever conception of a “one night stand” costume complete with a lamp shade and romance novel. With the loudest applause deciding who would take first, Army Maj. Elizabeth Golden as the ‘one night stand’ won. Up next was the couples competition, in which Spc. Amanda Russell and her dog Beacon, dressed as a cowgirl and horse, battled three girls resembling a post attack “Jaws” scene. After another cheering match, Russell and her pup came out on top.

photos by Sgt. 1st Class Benjamin Cossell and Spc. Kelly Gary

From bottom left: Rear Adm. David Woods, JTF-GTMO Commander, competes in the 5K run. Blessid Union of Souls at O’Kelly’s Pub. John Taglieri on stage at O’Kelly’s Pub. Petty Officer 1st Class William Kahill accepts defeat from Army Maj. Elizabeth Golden. Michael Hardin serves Troopers his famous sliders.

Dance-off and Sunday lunch

Sunday morning brought another day of sales as well as a Dance Kinect dance-off in the NEX atrium. This provided a unique competition, breaking it up by breaking it down.

Navy College professor Melissa Vochell took third place in the 13-and-up category.

“It was fun,” she said. “You are not relying on luck, you are relying on skill.”

The afternoon was filled with an array of signature dishes from three chefs from Food Network’s “Diners Drive-ins and Dives” at the Bayview Club. Michael Hardin, owner of Hodads in San Diego, Ca., cooked up his famous burgers, slider-style. “Stretch” of Grinders, one of Kansas City’s hotspots,



served his renowned ribs and wings and Sarah Simington with the Blue Moon Café in Baltimore dished out her baked macaroni and cheese and assorted salads.

“We thank you guys for your service and you guys thank us,” said Hardin. “It turns into a big ol’ thank fest!”

Overall, both MWR and NEX representatives believed the weekend was a success.

“It has been a phenomenal collaborative effort of all partners involved to work together to put on something of this magnitude for the community,” said Mac Donnell. “A lot of behind-the-scenes work helped to make sure everything ran smoothly.”



Pumpkins of the deep

By Sgt. 1st Class Benjamin Cossel

Think Halloween, images of goblins running around seeking tricks or treats along with spiders, witches and other creatures invariably come to mind. Also, inextricably linked to Halloween is the tradition of carving a gourd. Leave it to members of Naval Station Guantanamo Bay to put a twist on the fall event. Carving knives in hand, seven divers weighted down their choice pumpkins, waded into the ocean from Windmill Beach and commenced carving, 20 feet underwater.

“We wanted to do this to give divers of the community a chance to get together, have fun and raise money for the boy scouts,” said Chris Hileman, president of Reef Raiders Dive Club. “We’ve done this before off and on but this is the third straight year we’ve held this event.”

Members of Reef Raiders sponsored the event with members of Boy Scout Troop 435. Following the carving contest, the troop hosted a barbecue designed to help raise money to pay annual charter renewal dues. An Eagle Scout, Hileman is working with other Eagle Scouts in the Guantanamo Bay community to reinvigorate the program.

“It seemed a good fit to bring the two events together,” Hileman said.

One of the diving carvers, who preferred to not give her name, said the most challenging aspects of working with the very buoyant pumpkins was using the proper amount of weight.

“We went ahead and hollowed them out on the shore and weighted them down with dive weights before we took

them down,” she said.

The carver said she and her dive buddies “otter-ed” them out to the dive spot, making it much easier to carry the pumpkins.

“You flip around on your back and carry the pumpkin on your upper body ... it kind of makes you look like an otter,” she said, laughing with her partners.

Visibility became worse and worse adding to the already difficult task of controlling one’s pumpkin as more and more divers entered the dive site. For first place winner Elena Granina, the challenges were no matter as she intently focused on the task at hand.

Her efforts paid off: Granina’s masterpiece was the overwhelming crowd favorite.

While not as many participants were on hand as last year, Hileman said, given the circumstances, he was pleased with the turn out.

“We were going up against the first day of the NEX’s customer appreciation, so I think that had an impact on how many people showed up,” he said. “But still, overall I’d say it was a good event and fun for everyone who came out.”





photo by Sgt. 1st Class Benjamin Cossel
Elena Granina carves her award-winning pumpkin during the underwater carving contest. The contest attracted seven hardcore divers but could only boast one winner.



photo by Army Sgt. Mathieu Perry

From bottom left: A scene from the haunted house. Michael Myers makes an appearance. 1st Sgt. Brian Stuckey, 193rd Military Police Company fills the role of Hannibal Lecter. GTMO residents enjoy being frightened by the Haunted House.

Haunted house raises scares, senior trip money

By Army Sgt. Mathieu Perry

Soldiers assigned to the 525th Military Police Battalion, Joint Task Force Guantanamo played a large role in the W.T. Sampson High School graduating class's annual Halloween Haunted House.

The traditional event gave Soldiers the opportunity to gain experiences outside their work environment and provided the needed manpower to facilitate a familiar seasonal activity.

"With the exception of one NAVSTA Sailor and a civilian contractor, all the volunteers were Soldiers assigned to 525th Military Police Battalion," said 1st Sgt. Brian Stuckey, senior enlisted leader with the 193rd Military Police Company.

With only nine seniors and struggling with limited resources due to the island's isolation, the school welcomed the additional help, said Stuckey.

"This event wouldn't have been possible without the help of volunteers," said Stuckey. "If people would sit down and look around at all the activities on island, you won't find one without volunteers."

Senior class president, Leah Williams, said the crew of 25 to 30 volunteers spent three to four weeks preparing the haunted house for this year's showcase.

"It's been hard because we had so much work to do at first," said Williams. "I wanted everything to be at 100 percent and it took us nearly a month to clean up trash, move the plastic around and change the rooms around."

The process of improving from last year's haunted house proved to be an easy, fluid process, Stuckey said.

"It was great working with this group of young adults," he said. "We met with them and discussed themes, logistics and had a great exchange of ideas. We asked them how we could help, they told us what they needed us to do and we made it happen."

Preparing the haunted house was no small task due to chores left behind from previous years.

"There was a considerable amount of work that had to be done this time," said Stuckey. "We had to do a lot of cleaning up after last year's event and the routes and routines had to be changed up."

see HAUNTED on page 19



special to the wire
by zak, strategic cultural consultant

what is eid?

Halloween and Thanksgiving aren't the only fall holidays being celebrated at Joint Task Force Guantanamo. Sundown on November 6 begins the Islamic holiday of Eid ul Adha, which traditionally marks the hajj.

The hajj, or pilgrimage to Mecca, is obligatory of all Muslim men and women who are mentally, physically, and financially fit to make the journey at least once in their lifetime. Muslims from all walks of life and every corner of the globe assemble there to commemorate the divine rituals observed by the Prophet Abraham and his son Ishmael.

This is the same Abraham in the Christian Bible, as Islam, Christianity, and Judaism are all Abrahamic religions. Peace is the dominant theme of the pilgrimage, which also serves to remind those assembled that they will all be equal before God, or Allah, on the day of judgment.

Those who do make the hajj should also visit the tomb of the Prophet Mohammed at Madena, but it is not required to complete the hajj. Several million people travel to Mecca each year during this holiday season, marking one of the single largest annual religious gatherings in the world.

Here at Guantanamo Bay, the Muslim servicemembers' community will begin the day with the Eid prayer at 9 a.m. at the main chapel sanctuary and then gather for a feast meal.

Venomous toads threaten Camp Kinser, Okinawa

By Travis J. Tritten and Chiyomi Sumida

Stars and Stripes

OKINAWA, Japan — About 570 cane toads have been captured at the Marine Corps base since August, signaling a population boom since the invasive amphibian was first spotted on the U.S. Army's Torii Station about a year ago, according to the Marine Corps and the Japan Ministry of Environment.

When threatened, the cane toad secretes a milky toxin that has been known to kill pets and be painful — though rarely fatal — for humans. The large brown toads also decimate indigenous animals and insects and have proven extremely difficult to eradicate in other areas where it has been introduced, including Australia and Hawaii.

“They are great threat to the island’s ecosystem,” said Shintaro Abe, deputy chief of the wildlife division in the Naha Nature Conservation Office of the Ministry of Environment. “We must stop the spread at any cost.”

Cane toads are easy to identify because they are light to dark brown and larger than other species of toads and frogs, about 4 to 6 inches long, Abe said.

They can be harmful to small children and pets, especially dogs, could die if they eat the toads or even grass that has touched the toxin, he said.

The appearance on Camp Kinser has Marine Corps Installations Pacific and Japanese environmental teams scrambling to eliminate the current generation of toads

before they mature and begin breeding next spring.

Each toad can lay from 10,000 to 30,000 eggs during breeding and mature toads are rapacious eaters that devour anything that can fit into their mouths, including insects, snails and crabs, according to the ministry.

The Marine Corps said Tuesday it is “collecting and destroying this invasive species” at Kinser and “inspecting potential breeding areas in hopes of minimizing population growth.”

The service said it first informed the Japanese government that it had discovered the toad in August.

So far, the spread of the cane toad on the base remains a mystery, according to the Marine Corps consolidated public affairs office on Camp Foster.

“It has not yet been determined how the invasive species arrived on the island or on Camp Kinser,” the Marine Corps said in a statement Tuesday. “Records have not been found of this species of toad on any other Marine Corps installation.”

The ministry said the one toad found last year on Torii Station is considered an isolated incident, and the Army has confirmed there have been no other reported sightings since then.

Meanwhile, Kadena Air Base said Tuesday it has not found any of the toads there.

In recent years, the cane toad has infested the remote southern Okinawan island of Ishigaki after being introduced to protect sugar cane from insects.

The population of up to 50,000 toads on Ishigaki has alarmed the Ministry of Environment and triggered fears that the pests could threaten endangered species on nearby islands such as the Iriomote wild cat.



photo by Stars and Stripes

Cane toads, while not particularly poisonous to humans, pose an environmental hazard to the island surrounding Marine Corps installation Camp Kinser.

COAST TO COAST USCG captures drug caches

By 7th District Coast Guard Public Affairs

United States Coast Guard

MIAMI — The crew of the Coast Guard Cutter Confidence, a 210-foot medium endurance cutter homeported in Port Canaveral, Fla., offloaded 2,300 pounds of marijuana and 886 pounds of cocaine at Coast Guard Sector Key West, Fla., Tuesday. The contraband was interdicted during two separate cases since Oct. 14.

The crew of the Coast Guard Cutter Gallatin, a 378-foot high endurance cutter homeported in Charleston, S.C., spotted a 30-foot go-fast vessel in the Caribbean Sea Wednesday. A Gallatin boatcrew interdicted the vessel with 2,300 pounds of marijuana onboard and transferred the contraband to the cutter Confidence.

A Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment (LEDET) from Tactical Law Enforcement Team South in Opa Locka, Fla., patrolling aboard the USS Carr boarded a 160-foot Bolivian-flagged freighter northeast of Panama Oct. 14. Upon inspecting the vessel, the LEDET discovered 886 pounds of cocaine. The contraband was later transferred to the cutter Confidence.

ON THE WING

Airmen deliver aid to Turkish earthquake victims

By Staff Sgt. Benjamin Wilson

U.S. Forces in Europe Public Affairs

RAMSTEIN AIR BASE, Germany — U.S. European Command officials sent two C-130J Super Hercules loaded with cots, blankets, sleeping bags and hygiene kits to north eastern Turkey, Oct. 29 to aid victims of a recent earthquake there.

The C-130Js from the 86th Airlift Wing departed Ramstein Air Base, Germany, to deliver the supplies to the Van region of Turkey, that was affected by a 7.2-magnitude earthquake Oct. 23. More than 500 people were killed and about 2,300 people are injured.

“The earthquake in Van really hit a couple

of areas hard, but it is great to be able to help our friends,” said Laird Treiber, of the U.S. Embassy in Ankara, Turkey. “Turkey is a long standing ally, and they have helped us out in the past, so it feels good to be able to help them.”

The flights were the first of several planned. In total, EUCOM officials plan to deliver approximately 1,700 blankets, 2,600 cots, 275 sleeping bags, and 350 tents and heating units.

“We are always ready,” said Lt. Col. Patrick Driscoll, from the 37th Airlift Squadron and an aircraft commander. “This humanitarian aid mission is a great example of the strong partnership that exists between our two nations.”

Guard mobilizes after severe October snowstorm

By Army Lt. Col. James Sahady

Massachusetts National Guard

WILBRAHAM, Mass. — Mass. Gov. Deval Patrick mobilized the Massachusetts National Guard late Saturday evening in the largest single-state response to a rare October snowstorm that dumped nearly two feet of snow in areas of central and western Massachusetts.

About 392 Guard members are on duty in Massachusetts after the storm, with about 40 on duty in Connecticut and a dozen in New Hampshire, according to National Guard Bureau officials.

In Massachusetts, the Guard is assisting the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency in general relief efforts across the commonwealth.

Soldiers and Airmen were called to state active duty to provide support to civil authorities in response to the winter storm conditions in order to save lives, prevent further injury and protect critical infrastructure.

The Massachusetts National Guard is providing disaster response to the citizens of the commonwealth in the aftermath of the October snowstorm. Priority will be to communities in the higher elevations of Berkshire, Franklin Hampshire, and Worcester counties. The Guard also is closely monitoring coastal communities in anticipation of high tidal surge.

“Massachusetts National Guard Soldiers and Airmen stand ready to assist the citizens of the commonwealth. I know the dedicated men and women of the Massachusetts National Guard are eager to put their training and skills to good use,” said Army Maj. Gen. Joseph C. Carter, adjutant general.



photo by Staff Sgt. Jerry Saslav

Army National Guard Spc. Seth Tuper, a combat engineer, 379th Engineer Company, 101st Engineer Battalion, Massachusetts Army National Guard, directs traffic around a tree that had fallen on Springfield Street in Wilbraham, Mass.

The Massachusetts National Guard’s Task Force Patriot is providing command and control of Soldiers, Airmen and equipment from the 51st Troop Command, 151st Regional Support Group, 126th Brigade Support Battalion, 211th Military Police Battalion, 101st Engineer Battalion, 65th Public Affairs Operations Center, 104th Fighter Wing, 102nd Intelligence Wing and the 267th Combat Communications Squadron.

Navy researchers fire 1,000th shot on lab railgun

By Grace Jean

Office of Naval Research

ARLINGTON, Va. — Scientists at the Naval Research Laboratory (NRL) hit a materials research milestone in the Office of Naval Research’s (ONR) Electromagnetic Railgun program when they fired a laboratory-scale system for the 1,000th time Oct. 31.

“A significant amount of development has been coming out of NRL to support the program,” said Roger Ellis, ONR’s Electromagnetic Railgun (EMRG) program officer. “It’s a key piece of making railgun successful.”

The EMRG is a long-range weapon that launches projectiles using electricity instead of chemical propellants. Under development by the Department of the Navy for use aboard ships, the system will provide Sailors with multi-mission capability, allowing them to conduct precise naval surface fire support, or land strikes; cruise missile and ballistic missile defense; and surface warfare to deter enemy vessels.

“The weapon does all its damage because of its speed,” said Dr. Roger McGinnis, program executive for ONR’s Naval Air Warfare and Weapons Department, which oversees EMRG.

“EMRG will provide the Department of Defense with an advantage in future conflicts by giving troops the ability to fire weapons inexpensively against targets,” McGinnis said.

As part of the EMRG development program, ONR and NRL co-funded scientists at NRL to build and operate a 6-meter long, 50 mm diameter railgun as a subscale experimental lab at the Materials Testing Facility. After improving the gun’s sliding armature and rails, the lab has fired an average of 300 shots per year since 2008.

A railgun launches projectiles by generating magnetic fields created by high electrical currents that accelerate a sliding metal conductor, or armature, between two rails.

“The 1,000th shot is testing new ideas of how the armature interacts with the rails,” said Dr. Robert Meger, head of NRL’s charged particle physics branch, which

conducts about 30 experiments annually on the railgun. Following each test firing, researchers dismantle the gun to examine all the components. They slice up the rails for further analysis under a microscope to reveal surface damage.

During the course of firing all 1,000 shots, NRL scientists have experimented with a variety of materials and geometries to determine which ones can withstand the metal-melting temperatures and pressures of shooting a 1.5-megajoule energy weapon. One megajoule of energy is equivalent to a 1-ton car traveling at 100 miles per hour.

Since 2005, scientists have been working to increase the railgun’s barrel life, muzzle energy and size. Ultimately, their work will help to produce a 64-megajoule railgun with a range of about 220 nautical miles.

“You really have to look at the course of our understanding from the first day they shot to the 1,000th shot today, and how much our understanding of the rail life has dramatically increased, and how much science we have applied,” Ellis said.

CONTAGION



By Mass Communication Specialist
1st Class Ty Bjornson

“Contagion” is pretty much everything you would expect from a film of its premise. When I first looked at the theatrical poster for “Contagion,” I was reminded of the disaster movie posters of the 1970s. Those posters didn’t really tell you much of anything beyond the theme of tonight’s disaster and they boasted a laundry list of big-name stars inside their own picture boxes. Many of those films were over-hyped B-grade attempts to capitalize on previous disaster films. “Contagion” somewhat follows suit, but with few original twists in terms of style and execution.

The film opens with Beth Emhoff (Gwyneth Paltrow), a Minnesota-based marketing director, returning home after a business trip to Hong Kong. Before leaving Hong Kong, she was exposed to a lethal new virus. During a layover in Chicago, Beth cheats on her husband Mitch (Matt Damon), and unleashes the deadly virus there.

In just days, the airlines unwittingly transport the fatal virus around the world. In the following weeks, people are dying by the millions. Some of the problems that crop up from the outbreak include funeral homes refusing to perform services for these victims (fearing exposure to the virus), running out of body bags (though more might be coming in from Canada) and people are being buried in mass graves.

Government agencies, scientists and pharmaceutical companies work to isolate the virus and develop a vaccine for it. Even



if they are successful, the time necessary for mass production and distribution of the vaccine would take several months to years.

The film chronicles the epidemic from various perspectives from many characters, with no one person as the main character. These people range from average folks like victim-widower Mitch and his teenage daughter to the people tracking the threat like Dr. Cheever (Lawrence Fishburne) with the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention.

Director Steven Soderbergh overall succeeds in making a realistic take on public health and scientific response to a pandemic. Soderbergh addresses several situations including mass panic, borderline anarchy, corporate and personal agendas, ethics (in spades), government conspiracies (as alleged by the popular blogger Alan Krumwiede,

played by Jude Law) and the quest for a resolution to crisis.

For a film with such an ensemble cast of top-name players, you can’t help to want them to do a little more than comment on the new pandemic, wonder how to stop it and how to survive it. The viewer doesn’t get to know the characters as people at all. They simply exist to take the audience from Point A to Point B and nothing more. Take the case of the Matt Damon character: Both his wife and step son die within hours of each other during the plague’s initial outbreak. For a double-whammy loss, Damon sure seems somewhat devoid of any emotion about losing half his family in one grand sweep. All he wants to do is be released from his

see MOVIES page 19

	4 FRI	5 SAT	6 SUN	7 MON	8 TUE	9 WED	10 THU
Downtown Lyceum*	I Don't Know How She Does It (PG-13) 8 p.m.	Puss in Boots (PG) 8 p.m.	Columbiana (last showing) (PG-13) 8 p.m.	Our Idiot Brother (last showing) (R) 8 p.m.	Footloose (PG-13) 8 p.m.	Warrior (PG-13) 8 p.m.	No movie: Caroline Rhea performs 9-10 p.m.
	Drive (R) 10 p.m.	Don't Be Afraid of the Dark (R) 10 p.m.					
Camp Bulkeley	Columbiana (last showing) (PG) 8 p.m.	I Don't Know How She Does It (PG-13) 8 p.m.	Footloose (PG-13) 8 p.m.	Warrior (PG-13) 8 p.m.	Our Idiot Brother (last showing) (R) 8 p.m.	Contagion (R) 8 p.m.	The Debt (R) 8 p.m.
	Don't Be Afraid of the Dark (R) 10 p.m.	Drive (R) 10 p.m.					

*Starting next week, movies at Downtown Lyceum will be at 7 p.m. and 9 p.m. Call 4880 for more information.

Burn pit study inconclusive on health effects, however, their usage still not proven safe

By Leo Shane

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Researchers studying troops' respiratory problems released findings Monday that suggested poor air quality in Iraq and Afghanistan may be a bigger threat to servicemembers' long-term health than exposure to toxic smoke from burn pits. But they caution that their work still leaves many questions unanswered.

The report, requested by the Department of Veterans Affairs and conducted by the Institute of Medicine, found that particulate matter in the air around the infamous Joint Base Balad burn pit at the height of the Iraq War included dangerous particulate matter that could cause long-term respiratory illnesses.

But the researchers said that likely came from background sources — “windblown dust combined with elemental carbon and metals that arise from transportation and industrial activities” — and not the burn pit's toxic smoke. With that factored in, the study found no additional threat from the plastic, metal and other waste being burned in the waste fires.

However, study authors were quick to point out that those conclusions aren't meant to prove that working and living around burn pits was safe. Researchers complained that air-quality monitoring data supplied by the Defense Department was limited in usefulness, and only gave a partial picture of what chemicals troops may have been exposed to.

The authors recommend a follow-up study of the health records of troops stationed at Balad, both before and after the burn pit was phased out in 2009, to better determine what long-term risks they face.

Earlier this month, a study in the Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine suggested that defense and VA researchers begin using the term “Iraq/Afghanistan War Lung Injury” for the high rates of respiratory illnesses among returning troops. But that research also didn't isolate whether the problem was from the frequent use of burn pits or other environmental problems in the war zone.



photo from Voice of America

Haitian Prime Minister Garry Conille took office last month as tent city resident continue to struggle.

Haiti rebuilds slowly under new government, prime minister

By Carolyn Presutti

Voice of America News Service

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti — Nearly two years after a 7.0 earthquake hit its capital city, Port-au-Prince, Haiti is rebuilding. Slowly. Forty percent of the international aid money that poured into the island has still not been distributed because of the disorganization within the government that followed the quake. Now, a government under musician-turned-President Michel Martelly and newly-confirmed Prime Minister Garry Conille is grappling with the task.

Haiti's president lives in the elite suburb of Peguyville, where some walls are painted in the pink and white colors of his campaign. The wealthy neighborhood shares its sidewalks with the poor, left homeless after the 2010 earthquake.

Just down the road is Port-au-Prince. The quake's impact - evident here too. The rubble. The foundations. The open drains. Nearly

everything waits for repair.

The Haitian Presidential Palace shows just how much rebuilding needs to be done. It looks the same as it did nearly two years ago. And, directly across from the Palace is a tent city.

After the earthquake, more than a million Haitians moved to public parks, set up a tarp and called it home. Six hundred thousand still live in these tent cities. Why? It's a question for Haiti's President.

“How do you lure businesses here when the first thing they see when they come out of the airport is a tent city, the first thing they see at the presidential palace is a tent city?” VOA asks.

“That's not all that Haiti's about,” notes Martelly. “Once you leave Port-au-Prince, you see a lot of things. You see beauty, you see wealth, you see a rich country with humongous possibilities.”

To show off those

possibilities, President Martelly flew some builders north of Port-au-Prince - to find land for 3,000 new houses. But it's been a slow process since the quake shattered Haiti's infrastructure and destroyed 17 of 18 government ministries.

“But up until now 21 months after the earthquake we find the people's living situation has not changed at all,” noted Ghemp Desauguste who is with a group demanding land and houses now.

The Martelly administration says it takes time.

“We are trying to identify homes first for these people, so they walk out of a tent and go into a home,” Martelly explained.

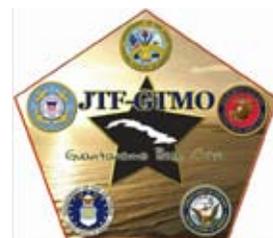
There are new, pre-fabricated houses for sale in Haiti. But even at a price of only \$5,000, builder Jean Mark Louishomme says tent city residents cannot afford them.

“They can't, they can't,” he emphasized. “But the NGOs or government can buy this and build them for them.”

That's not the government's plan, though. President Martelly invited VOA to join his presidential motorcade into the central plateau of the country, where the government will build affordable housing. He says it's a major step toward Haitian independence, and away from foreign loans.

“We will change this country. I'm determined. The people of Haiti want a better life,” Martelly said.

The president admits there is much to be done. It's a country where in 35 seconds, in a 30 square kilometer area - 300,000 people died.



A time of thanks, kindness, and appreciation: and many ways to express it

By Navy Cpt. Bradley Thom

JTF-GTMO Chaplain

November is a month of gratitude. That is not to say we aren't grateful the rest of the year but with Turkey Day approaching we are reminded to be especially thankful for a host of people or things from the past year. Various faith traditions teach us to be thankful. For instance, from Judeo-Christian writings we may read, "I will give thanks to you Lord, with my whole heart; I will tell you of your marvelous works." This is a great opportunity to take time to reflect on the blessings and growth you've known in the past months.

On a more specific note, how do you express your appreciation for that which you have received from others? I'm old-school when it comes to receiving a service or kindness from another. I say "thank you" in return. It is not only polite but also expected that one responds with an expression of sincere appreciation. Simply said, it is the right thing to do for them and for me.

How about you? Perhaps the military has provided you travel opportunities. On foreign soil you may have learned various phrases from the host people. In particular you may have learned to say "thank you" in their language even though it might be a tad clumsy rolling off your tongue. Making an effort to use another's language usually brings a smile through which they know you are truly making an effort to express appreciation for their service or kindness. The following are a few examples of saying "thank you" taken from a blog written by Rick Bravera. You may



have encountered some of these on your own travels. Match the language with the phrase for "thank you very much."

Whichever phrase you prefer, say "thank you" often and do so with a sincere heart. In doing so you will be blessed to be a blessing.

	Italian	
		French
"Mahalo nui loa"	Spanish	
"Merci beaucoup"		
"Domo arigato"		Japanese
"Grazie mille"	Filipino/ Tagalog	
"Muchas gracias"		Hawaiian
"Shukran gazillan"	German	
"Danke shoen"		
"Salamat"	Arabic	

GTMO Religious Services

Daily Catholic Mass

Tues. - Fri. 5:30 p.m.

Main Chapel

Vigil Mass

Saturday 5 p.m.

Main Chapel

Mass

Sunday 9 a.m.

Main Chapel

Catholic Mass

Saturday 5:30 p.m.

Troopers Chapel

Protestant Worship

Sunday 9 a.m.

Troopers' Chapel

Islamic Service

Friday 1:15 p.m.

Room C

Jewish Service

Friday 7 p.m.

Chapel Annex

LDS Service

Sunday 10 a.m.

Room A

Seventh Day Adventist

Saturday 11 a.m.

Room B

Iglesia Ni Christo

Sunday 5:30 a.m.

Room A

Pentecostal Gospel

Sunday 8 a.m. & 5 p.m.

Room D

Liturgical Service

Sunday 10 a.m.

Room B

Church of the Sacred Well

Call x2323 for information

General Protestant

Sunday 11 a.m.

Main Chapel

United Jamaican

Fellowship

Sunday 11 a.m.

Sanctuary B

Gospel Service

Sunday 1 p.m.

Main Chapel

GTMO Bay Christian Fellowship

Sunday 6 p.m.

Main Chapel

THE LAST WORD

Getting your unit to Guantanamo: Is it the journey or the destination?



By Sgt. 1st Class Jerome Grant

Whatever you heard or read about what your job might be before getting here, whatever you knew or thought you knew about your particular job as you stepped off the ferry, it was all speculation. Joint Task Force Guantanamo is like no other work environment you will ever encounter. Each of us needs to change in some way to meld to our professional environment as quickly as possible in order to be the most effective troop we can be.

A key element of JTF-GTMO change is the handoff of responsibility between departing and arriving units. Considering all personnel work a “no fail mission,” a sloppy or half-hearted handoff could create a lot of problems for both elements that ripple throughout the camp, even the station.

As the incoming unit to a small shop, each of my Soldiers worked closely with the person whom we are replacing, as much as we could, for a full week and were shown and/or guided through the various steps necessary to be brought aboard to do our jobs. All of the questions we prepared to ask were answered, and many answers were handed to us before we knew we needed to or were going to ask. Yet one day on our own, when something that wasn't brought up by either unit is learned by chance or happy accident, someone in our group (including me) will mutter “that would have been nice to know.”

Therefore, from the day your unit gets boots on the ground, take note of all these things which “would have been nice to know.” The unit behind you will certainly be able to use this information to their advantage and improve the mission which we are all responsible for, before, during, and after its undertaking.

Each handoff for everyone at JTF-GTMO will not be exactly the same as the one they went through. The key contacts you start with will change more than once before the new group arrives so prepare to instruct the newbies on the need to stay fluid in relationship building. Indeed, as commissions move forward SOPs, policies, and even some office locations and collateral duties will change even if you are in mid-process of your own handoff. What was solid information yesterday is not always correct information today and becomes a “that would have been nice to know.”

So what do we do in a case like that? Do we gripe and moan about what we weren't told or do we pack it in our sack of knowledge and move on? We do one better; we make a change. Take the time to list the questions you wish you had known to ask and be prepared to answer them for the group that comes in behind you. Rest assured, when your change comes in the next rotation, because of the high tempo of operations, the group behind you will still mutter at some point “that would have been nice to know.”

Semper Gumby!



MOVIES cont.

quarantine and go home to his daughter. With the world in such upheaval, I noticed no one in “Contagion” sheds one tear over this international viral crisis, nor do they tell anyone “I love you” during this trying time.

Visually, “Contagion” is a relatively dark, grim and colorless film to look at. This provides the atmosphere of a constant sense of dread throughout. Cliff Martinez's music score, tonal in its approach, is appropriately foreboding without any grand themes. It serves as an ample narrative to underscore the seriousness of the global dilemma at hand.

“Contagion” is well-made, yet it comes across as a strangely bland film. Despite its craft, it feels remorseless and devoid of any personality. The acting is top-notch, yet the characters feel underdeveloped. The slower pacing and a lack of a satisfying climax will likely draw complaints by some viewers. Maybe those items aren't necessary in a film like this, but I couldn't help but want a little more by the time all was said and done.

HAUNTED cont.

He said the hard work was worth it because the community showed a lot of support for the seniors.

“The community's response was amazing,” said Stuckey. “We received help in the form of parents as chaperones and parking guides to providing a cookout and feeding the crew. There was even a 10-year-old who got into character as a zombie.”

Stuckey said the best part of the experience was the respect given to the seniors by the community.

“It was just good, clean fun and we didn't have to deal with any jerks,” said Stuckey. “Some people simply wanted to support the senior class and they just showed up and donated money without ever going into the haunted house. It was great to see members of the community giving these 17 and 18-year-olds the respect of being adults.”

The previous two years averaged about \$1,200 during the fundraiser, Williams said.

“This year our goal was \$2,000 for the senior class trip,” she said. “We almost reached that during the first week and we finished at around \$3,000.”

The JTF At Shutter Speed



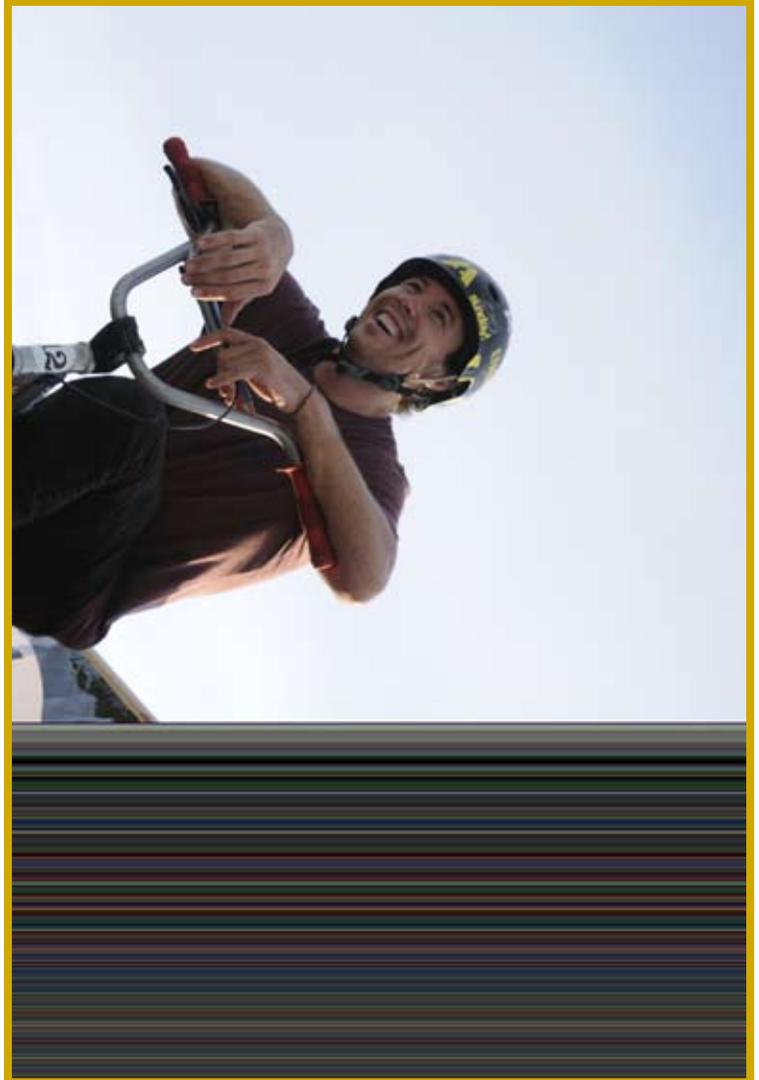
MAD HATTERS

Halloween partygoers show off their costumes and creativity during the concert and contest at O'Kelly's Pub.



SUNDAY LUNCH

Sarah Simington serves Troopers at the NEX's 10th Annual Customer Appreciation's Sunday lunch.



OFF THE WALL

Van's Off the Wall BMX athlete Alistar Whitton chills out after performing at the skate park.



PULLING TOGETHER

Marines from the Marine Corps Security Force Company pull a Humvee during the NEX's 10th Annual Customer Appreciation's Humvee Pull Competition.