

# THE VOW

The Official Publication of Joint Task Force Guantanamo

## ***Navy celebrates its Corpsmen***

A long tradition of selfless  
service and heroism

## ***A Fishy Tale***

An aquatic rescue lands a  
whopper

## ***Patriots will never forget***



# AROUND THE BAY

AND IN OUR PAGES



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## Cover Story

Cover photo by Sgt. Cody Stagner

Patriot flag accompanies New York firemen to GTMO. PAGE 10

## BAY WIRE REPORT

### Volunteer hours?

If you have organized an event and need volunteers, please contact us at The Wire to get your information out to the Troopers.

E-mail us at [thewire@jftgmo.southcom.mil](mailto:thewire@jftgmo.southcom.mil)

### Hike the History of GTMO

Learn more about the history of the first Marines who landed on Guantanamo Bay in 1898 with a History Hike with Alan Adler. This seven mile tour will give you lay of the land and a historical overview of the missions and battles at GTMO.

Tours will begin at 8 a.m., June 30, and July 7.

For more information, call Alan Adler at ext. 8100 or [alan.j.adler@jftgmo.southcom.mil](mailto:alan.j.adler@jftgmo.southcom.mil)

### Team building and fun await

Looking for a good way to have fun with your team or platoon? Contact the Outdoor Rec office at the Marina at ext. 2345 and get the down-low on all the fun equipment offered to Troopers.

**Sign up to clean up**  
Sunday, June 30, at 7 a.m.

Join the Beach Brigade June 30, and clean up Hospital Cay. To earn volunteer hours, call ext. 4882 to sign up.

Keep GTMO classy!

**Beach Bridgade**

**CORRECTIONS** Please report all corrections to [thewire@jftgmo.southcom.mil](mailto:thewire@jftgmo.southcom.mil)  
The following information was printed incorrectly in the June 21, print issue of The Wire:

**Page 4:** The headline for the Command Corner should read "Let integrity be your watchword"

**Page 18:** Sgt. Maj. Michael L. Baker was incorrectly identified



# THE WIRE

IOF Building, Camp America  
Guantanamo Bay, Cuba  
Commercial: 011-5399-3651  
DSN: 660-3651  
E-mail: thewire@jftgmo.southcom.mil  
www.jftgmo.southcom.mil/wire/wire.html

## Command Staff

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Army Sgt. 1st Class Gina Vaile-Nelson

### Copy Editor

Army Sgt. David Bolton

### Graphic Designer/Webmaster

Army Staff Sgt. Aaron Hiler

### Photo Editor

Army Sgt. Daron Salzer

### Staff Writers

Army Sgt. Cassandra Monroe

Army Staff Sgt. Lorne Neff

Army Spc. Lerone Simmons

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# Religious Services

## NAVSTA Chapel

### Catholic Mass

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

Saturday 5 p.m.

Sunday 9 a.m.

Spanish-language Mass

Sunday 4:35 p.m.

### General Protestant

Sunday 11 a.m.

Gospel Service

Sunday 1 p.m.

Christian Fellowship

Sunday 6 p.m.

## Chapel Annexes

### Protestant Communion

Sunday 9:30 a.m., Room B

### Pentecostal Gospel

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

Room D

### LDS Service

Sunday 10 a.m., Room A

### Islamic Service

Friday 1 p.m., Room 2

### Seventh Day Adventist

Friday 7 p.m., Room 1

Sabbath School-

Saturday 9:15 a.m., Room 1

Sabbath Service-

Saturday 11:15 a.m., Room 1

## JTF Trooper Chapel

### Protestant Worship

Sunday 9 a.m.

### Bible Study

Wednesday 6 p.m.

# Transportation Schedules

## Bus #1, 2, 3:

Camp America - :00, :20, :40

Gazebo - :02, :22, :42

NEX trailer - :03, :23, :43

Camp Delta - :02; :06; :26, :46

KB 373 - :10, :30, :50

TK 4 - :12, :32, :52

JAS - :13, :33, :53

TK 3 - :14, :34, :54

TK 2 - :15, :35, :55

TK 1 - :16, :36, :56

West Iguana - :18, :38, :58

Windjammer/Gym - :21, :41, :01

Gold Hill Galley - :24, :44, :04

96 Man Camp - :31, :51, :11

NEX - :33, :53, :13

Gold Hill Galley - :37, :57, :17

Windjammer/Gym - :36, :56, :16

West Iguana - :39, :59, :19

TK 1 - :40, :00, :20

TK 2 - :43, :03, :23

TK 3 - :45, :05, :25

TK 4 - :47, :07, :27

KB 373 - :50, :10, :30

Camp Delta 1 - :52, :12, :32

IOF - :54, :14, :34

NEX Trailer - :57, :17, :37

## Beach Bus

Sat. and Sun. only - Location #1-4  
Winward Loop - 0900, 1200, 1500, 1800

### East Caravella

SBOQ/Marina 0905, 1205, 1505

### NEX

0908, 1208, 1508, 1808

### Phillips Park

0914, 1214, 1514

### Cable Beach

0917, 1217, 1517

### Winward Loop

0930, 1230, 1530

### NEX

0925, 1225, 1525, 1825

### SBOQ/MARINA

0935, 1235, 1535

### Return to Office

0940, 1240, 1540

# JOINT TASK FORCE GUANTANAMO



SAFE



HUMANE



LEGAL



TRANSPARENT



**By Sgt. Maj. Juan Hidalgo Jr.**

*Joint Task Force Guantanamo, command sergeant major*

In the Profession of Arms, no matter our chosen service, everything we do is about leadership. We would be wise then to follow the advice of a true warrior, retired U.S. Marine Corps Gen. James N. Mattis, who commanded at every rank from lieutenant to general – and at each rank, in combat.

“The most important six inches on the battlefield is between your ears,” Mattis said.

I’m sure there are a few assigned here who are now asking, is Guantanamo a battlefield? Whether on the

battlefield or in garrison, the reality is we are either leading or we are being lead – sometimes both in the same instant.



*Sgt. Maj. Juan Hidalgo Jr.*

Many things have changed in our military society since our nation’s birth, but one thing remains a constant: the individual Soldier, Sailor, Airman and Marine has always followed great

leadership.

Unfortunately, in the absence of great leadership, there are too many examples of Warriors following bad leadership examples. Our duty as today’s Warriors, no

matter our location, is to provide exceptionally inspiring leadership – 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Some might say what’s popular among today’s young Warriors is developing a friendship first with their leaders. My almost 30 years of service have shown me what is truly desired by today’s Warriors. At all levels on the battlefield, it’s their desire for sincere, knowledgeable leadership, not friendship. This does not mean a leader cannot be a comrade-in-arms, but their first priority is to be an expert in their chosen military occupational skill and lead.

In 1985, as a young corporal, I was privileged to have served under great leaders. One such example, a gunnery sergeant who served tours in

Vietnam and Beirut, would constantly remind us, “leadership is not a popularity contest.”

I realized the gunny’s intent wasn’t that we should not like or care for our subordinates, rather that because we care, we must understand the line of separation between leader and subordinate and that line must never be crossed.

These tough, driven leaders constantly stressed we could not be weak leaders, because this would increase the risk of losing people in combat – our duty was to go into combat, defeat the enemy and bring everyone home.

Many of you Warriors have served in combat, not just a combat zone, where firefights and harsh battles are common. When I had a few more

■ Continued on page 5

## TROOPER TO TROOPER

# Individual initiative and teamwork, a winning combination

**By 1st Sgt. Robert Larkin**

*128th Military Police Company first sergeant*

A true leader is driven, optimistic and posses a can-do attitude. A true leader brings these qualities out in the Troopers under his care, ensuring tomorrow’s military is better than today. A true leader builds subordinates up, showing them that being the leader of tomorrow means learning how to be a follower today.



*1st Sgt. Robert Larkin*

Throughout my career, I have overcome adversity many times and found strength within myself to always drive on. I persevered by relying on my faith in God, family and my internal will to succeed. I tell people that most of us were not a part of the multiple birth experience. I am saying, we were born as individuals. Every decision we make ultimately comes down to what our individual thoughts, beliefs and mentality is at that time.

I have learned throughout my career that you must lead from the front and always be the role model you want everyone to see. You must be willing to make tough decisions that might not always be popular with your subordinates. Challenge yourself as well as those under our guidance.

Successful leaders surround themselves with a strong team. I live by the motto “together we stand, divided we fall.” Successful teams are unified in their efforts. Great teams are a collective group of individuals that work together to accomplish tasks with outstanding results. That’s what I continue to tell my Soldiers that we are all critical elements to the team, regardless of rank or individual jobs. We’ve all heard that we are a part of “One Team, One Fight.” We must strive to exhibit selfless service in all of our actions to make every day a successful one.

As the first sergeant for the 128th Military Police Company, I am truly a believer that you can mold individuals into a team. The vast majority of my company is a col-

lection of individuals from various units throughout Alabama. We were placed together as individuals, but have grown to form a cohesive team ready to accomplish any mission placed in front of us. As always, whenever such a large group of individual personalities are placed together there is an adjustment period. However, we have grown throughout our preparation and became a team ready for any mission.

As I establish my role as a first sergeant, I am constantly reminded of the effective teamwork that occurs around me. I am confident that we are poised to face any and all challenges that may arise during this deployment. Every day I am reminded of how Troopers epitomize respect and honor and that’s what I believe will make the mission successful.

Being from the South and from Alabama we are here to provide service with a smile. I would be remiss if I didn’t close by saying, can I get a “War Eagle” or a “Roll Tide!”

years in the Corps, the gunnery sergeant became a master sergeant, and added Desert Storm to his combat resume. This true leader reminded us that in combat nobody ever looks for the leader who would coddle them. They look for the leader who will take care of them, hold them accountable to train their subordinates and keep themselves and others alive. As many of you read this think about your own experiences, and I am sure if you are like me, you are reminded of the master sergeant's wisdom.

Whether we work in the camps, at the gates, behind a desk, in a warehouse or in food preparation, every leader is vital to our mission's battlefield success. Regardless of your duty assignment within the Joint Task Force, or in the future, it's all about leadership! Your subordinates are watching you, so ask yourself, what are the Warriors observing?

We all have an obligation to study and practice LEADERSHIP BY EXAMPLE. None of us will be without fault, but each of us should constantly seek perfection in all we attempt to do. Remember, every day we wake-up; we have the privilege and honor to serve our nation and today's warriors.

I would recommend reading and studying "Servant Leadership – putting all others before you," by the Robert K. Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership, found on the internet. Some may never grasp or understand the total concept of servant leadership, but my observations of successful senior enlisted and officers over nearly 30 years have validated, in my eyes, that true leadership is selfless, principled and practiced daily without any overt effort.

This discussion reminds me of two experiences of leaders

serving their Warriors. Lest we forget, or have not yet experienced, when we were serving our first tour, we were extremely impressionable, hungry to learn and master our MOS! As a young corporal, I was no different. During my first assignment to Camp Pendleton, Calif., I was working all day on tanks and attending college at night. I was not married, but my sister had recently passed away and I felt an obligation to live with my parents in San Diego. Because I was not married, my platoon leadership explained that I needed to be on duty everyday by 5:30 a.m. Reveille, opposed to married Marines who were required to be at formation at 7:30 a.m.

My parents lived an hour from the base, so in the morning I needed to leave no later than 4:30 a.m. After traveling an hour to-and-from work and attending to academic obligations every night, I was averaging about three hours of sleep a night. It was my choice, so I did not question the logic of my leaders' orders. It's just the way it was. My company commander watched me do this for a few weeks and asked me one morning to come see him after formation.

"Why are you coming in so early every day?" he asked. I explained that I was a bachelor not living in the barracks, and not authorized to be in later than 5:30 a.m. The Skipper said, "Corporal Hidalgo, I am your commanding officer and I am authorizing you to come in at 0730."

I later reported to my Gunnery Sergeant, and his words were "don't be late." A month later, I was ordered to the battalion headquarters to sign paperwork to receive single basic housing allowance. I later found out that the company commander and his senior enlisted leaders (first sergeant

and tank leader) explained my situation to the battalion commander, who in turn submitted my name for approval to the division commander, the only one at that time who could authorize approval. My leaders saw a young leader who needed their assistance. They stepped up and provided me the assistance I needed to continue to grow as a leader, take care of my tank crew and fulfill family obligations. Today, I still view my company commander, now a retired Marine colonel, as a leader, mentor and friend.

My second leadership memory is of a gunnery sergeant and the guidance he provided his platoon as they readied to cross into Iraq in 2003. Before the invasion, gunny received an iridium phone for his platoon to make calls back to the states. The phone was given under the strict understanding that all of his Marines would make one call lasting only 10 minutes. One young corporal was having family issues and ended his call very upset. After everyone finished, the gunny called for the dispirited corporal to return. The gunny removed everyone from the command post tent and allowed the Corporal to use his allotted ten minutes to call his wife for a second time. The gunnery Sergeant displayed "battlefield" servant leadership, assisting a young Warrior save his marriage. Being a servant leader, if practiced sincerely, and with commitment, will turn the tide of battle. That gunnery sergeant, a close friend of mine, shared with me that to this day that Corporal is forever grateful. How has he paid the gunnery sergeant back for his display of selflessness and leadership? Today, he is a committed practitioner of his profession of arms, a dedicated husband and father and a Warrior who practices and studies servant

leadership.

So, how do we become great leaders after reading this? I hope within this short leadership exposé I have outlined a few paths for you to take to learn more, examples to chronicle and how to use those six inches between your ears. I say this because every day I am reminded of new things that I can improve upon. I share with you what I have observed over my career, because learning should be a lifelong endeavor and it's never too late to start.

Let's all commit ourselves today; by remembering others are depending on us to make the right decisions. Make a commitment to excellence in all that we do. No longer accept poor decisions of yourself or your subordinates. Hold yourself accountable for achieving daily success and impart a sense of accountability within each of your subordinates/units. Remember, everyone is a leader! If there are two people, one is in charge, **SO TAKE CHARGE!** Don't be afraid to care about your people, which doesn't always mean time off, but time to grow as Warriors, as teammates and as servant leaders. Do not ever be afraid to demand perfection, but also know when to appropriately praise and be generous. That means in old school vernacular, "You are out and about, not hiding out!" It also means, "Warrior first, mission always!"

We must strive to remember we alone are the only ones that can limit the leadership that is in each of us, whether we are leading one, 100 or 1,000 Warriors. Study and become an advocate of servant leadership, lead by example, always from the front and watch the lifelong transformation take place before your eyes, within yourself and those WE serve.



# Not your average zombie flick

Story by Sgt. Cody Stagner  
JTF-PAO, [thewire@jtfgtmo.southcom.mil](mailto:thewire@jtfgtmo.southcom.mil)

Finally, flesh-eating-zombie flick lovers have something to write home about.

“World War Z” is a first-rate thriller full of action, suspense, twists, destruction and the occasional subtle, but welcomed comic relief.

“WWZ” is the big-screen adaptation of the book sharing the same title and written by Max Brooks.

Unlike other books with their matching screenplays, this film takes the author’s world — a post-apocalyptic, death-stricken zombie-infested one — and adds a conventional storyline, which better suits a moviegoer audience.

The story revolves around Gerry Lane (Brad Pitt), a devoted family man who once worked as a United Nations investigator.

The origin of the outbreak is unclear. With Gerry’s experience in the world’s most dangerous urban warfare, he becomes humanity’s only hope when he is asked to dig deep into swarms of millions

of zombies, race against the clock and come out with a plan to save it.

The fast-paced cinematography will bring you in close during the zombie-outbreak on the streets of Philadelphia and have you on the edge of your seats to watch the fall of the world’s last standing civilization — Israel.

You won’t have to read the book before you go see “WWZ,” or study up on the classics, like “Night of the Living Dead.” This film is fresh with its adaptation of new ideas and remains true to its age-old genre.

If you expect blood and guts, look elsewhere. Tastefully done, “WWZ” somehow spares us from the pointless hacking of the undead and red bloodshed from teeth into flesh from which zombie flicks are known.

So, this film is suspenseful — yes, but I wouldn’t necessarily call it scary. This is not a drama about zombies on a farm, and no one really knows what happened 28-seconds-later. In “WWZ,” the entire planet

is at war against a zombie plague, so bring out the big guns, pan-out and blow some stuff up!

A hoard with millions of zombies and the heroic performance by Pitt earns “WWZ” four banana rats. 🍌



Plan B Entertainment

# “Monsters” goes old school

Story by Sgt. David Bolton  
Copy Editor, [thewire@jtfgtmo.southcom.mil](mailto:thewire@jtfgtmo.southcom.mil)

When I think back and take a trip down memory lane to my old alma mater I remember my first sights and sounds. The old gates, stoic halls of learning, dormitories bustling with new and returning students, pick-up games of ultimate Frisbee and groups of undergrads conversing about the various activities taking place on campus. It was a time where it felt like the world had come to me and nothing was impossible.

In many ways, “Monsters University” recreates the quintessential college experience in its dynamic portrayal of young Mike Wazowski (Billy Crystal) who wants nothing more than to become a scarer.

Pixar really outdid itself with the cinematography. The world in which the characters move and interact was nothing short of spectacular, and the details of this world were truly incredible. Pixar really took its time with the storyline of “Monsters University” and didn’t rush or skip over

any part of the film which left few, if any, questions for the viewer. The characters of Mike and Sully were developed naturally over the course of the movie through a series of triumphs, tribulations and personal growth.

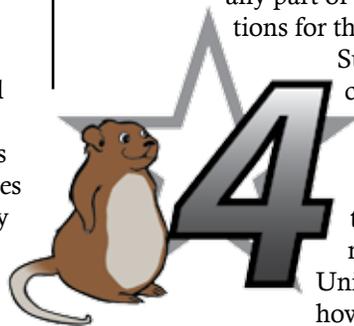
If you are willing to suspend disbelief that monsters exist, you will find this movie quite compelling. “Monsters University” recounts the backstory of how Mike and Sully (John Goodman),

the dynamic duo from “Monsters Inc.,” started their friendship. For Mike to be a scarer he must prove himself to be more than a book smart know-it-all and Sully has to learn he can’t just ride the coattails of his prestigious family name. Through a series of challenges with a group of misfit monsters, the two learn to balance their strengths and weaknesses.

This film really offers something for the whole family and is a fresh take on the old underdog story. Pixar really stepped-up its game with “Monsters University” and took me back to a time fondly recalled, which is why this movie is graduating summa cum laude with four banana rats. 🍌



Courtesy PIXAR Entertainment



# Get more energy from working out than with your favorite energy drink

By 1st Lt. Brian Pennington

Command Information OIC, [thewire@jftgmo.southcom.mil](mailto:thewire@jftgmo.southcom.mil)

Aluminum cans filled with caffeinated juice and a few vitamins are all over the place, and the newest rage to pull Troopers out of their energy slump or even to boost the workout if you're in a rut. But after the initial high - and dangerous side effects - you'll come down from your energy boost feeling even more tired than before.

So before you grab that go-go juice, try something different for a boost of energy.

This workout will supercharge both your intensity and metabolism and will give you more energy as the day goes on. As we work out, our bodies get accustomed to the same routine, and in order to break through this we have to continually refine our methods.

This week's 'Workout of the Week' gives you the variety to break through a sticking point to achieve your fitness objectives.

This high intensity workout is composed of six exercises: pushups, body weight squats, pull-ups, crutches, lunges and leg lifts. There is no rest between exercises except once you've finished your initial sets.

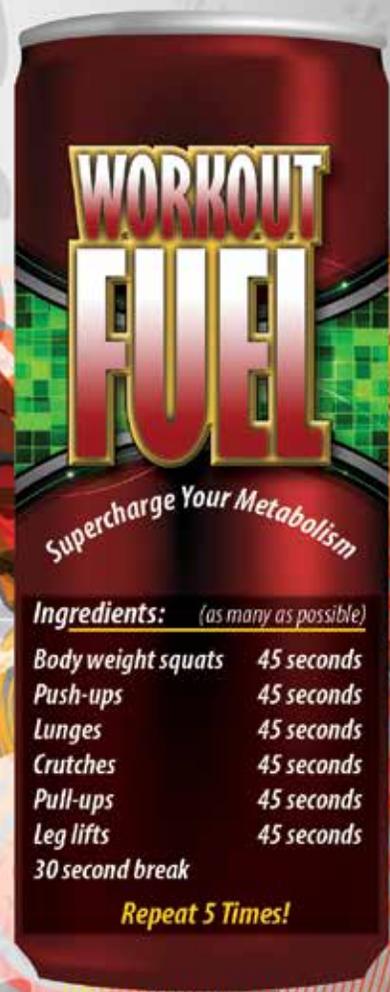
Repeat this five times and you're done!

If you find the workout to be too easy, increase the duration to one minute per exercise. Also, you can switch specific exercises to meet your fitness objectives. I sometimes swap leg lifts for burpees to increase the intensity. Bottom line is to listen to your body and find what works best for you.

Don't forget to hydrate, and stay away from those energy drinks. Like we reported last week, energy drinks are high in caffeine which can dehydrate you easier. Water is key and the best choice.

If you're not accustomed to a rigorous plan, talk with a medical professional to make sure the workout is safe for you.

Do you have an incredible workout that you would like to share? If so, email [thewire@jftgmo.southcom.mil](mailto:thewire@jftgmo.southcom.mil). 🍷

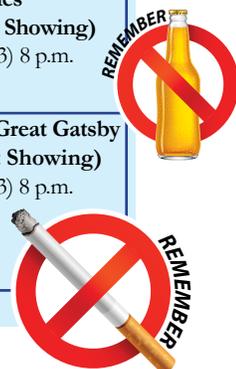


Graphic by Staff Sgt. Aaron Hiller/The Wire

## Now Showing:

	28 FRI	29 SAT	30 SUN	01 MON	02 TUE	03 WED	04 THUR
<b>Downtown Lyceum</b>	White House Down (NEW) (PG13) 8 p.m. Now You See Me (PG13) 10:30 p.m.	After Earth (NEW) (PG13) 8 p.m. Hangover Pt. III (R) 10 p.m.	Monsters University (G) 8 p.m.	Star Trek: Into Darkness (PG13) 8 p.m.	The Great Gatsby (Last Showing) (PG13) 8 p.m.	World War Z (PG13) 8 p.m. Man of Steel (PG13) 10:15 p.m.	Tyler Perry's Peeples (Last Showing) (PG13) 8 p.m.
<b>Camp Bulkeley</b>	After Earth (NEW) (PG13) 8 p.m. World War Z (PG13) 10 p.m.	White House Down (NEW) (PG-13) 8 p.m. Fast & Furious 6 (PG13) 10:30 p.m.	Man of Steel (PG13) 8 p.m.	CLOSED Note: Concessions at Camp Bulkeley are also closed every night until further noticed.	CLOSED Note: Concessions at Camp Bulkeley are also closed every night until further noticed.	Now You See Me (PG13) 8 p.m. Star Trek: Into Darkness (PG13) 10:15 p.m.	The Great Gatsby (Last Showing) (PG13) 8 p.m.

Call the movie hotline at 4880 or visit the MWR Facebook page for more information.



# Corpsmen celebrated at ball

Story and photos by Spc. Lerone Simmons

Staff Writer, [thewire@jftgtmo.southcom.mil](mailto:thewire@jftgtmo.southcom.mil)

Service members, family and friends gathered to celebrate the U.S. Navy Hospital Corps' 115th birthday at the Windjammer ballroom, June 22.

The annual Corpsman Birthday Ball honors the corpsmen of past and present who serve as enlisted medical specialists for the U.S. Navy. Established June 17, 1898, by President William McKinley during the Spanish-American War, the hospital corps is the only enlisted corps in the U.S. Navy.

The evening was full of traditions, and remembrance. Guest speaker Rear Adm. John Smith Jr., Commander Joint Task Force Guantanamo, read from the words of Petty Officer 2nd Class Chris Monroe Pyle, affectionately known as Doc, a Vietnam corpsman assigned to M Company, 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division.

"My life has but one meaning, to save or help someone," Pyle wrote.

"There is nothing more earnest than to be called Doc," said Chief Petty Officer Kimberly Bliefernich, a hospital corpsman and lead chief petty officer of dental, nursing and surgical services, U.S. Naval Hospital Guantanamo.

Being called "Doc," she said, shows that their ability and position as corpsman is respected to the highest regard.



Navy Chief Petty Officer Mary Weiss-Brandenburg, chief hospital corpsman, U.S. Naval Hospital Guantanamo Bay, gives a piece of cake to the youngest corpsman, Navy Seaman Estevan Baca, an 18-year-old hospital corpsman assigned to USNH-GTMO as Navy Rear Adm. John W. Smith Jr., commander, Joint Task Force Guantanamo looks on at the Hospital Corps Birthday Ball June 22.

Pyle later gave his life to protect the Marines he was entrusted to care for.

"Tragedies of war, challenges what Navy corpsman do each day," Smith said in his remarks.

Since its inception, corpsmen have earned numerous individual awards and the respect of their comrades.

"Corpsmen are angels on the battlefield," said Petty Officer 1st Class Edgar D. Lanuza, director of nursing and surgical services at USNH-GTMO.

The expectation of corpsmen was acted out in "The Drama of a Corpsman," a skit written by Petty Officer 2nd Class

Nicholas Callihan, hospital corpsman, assigned to Joint Medical Group.

It portrayed a corpsman with his Marines, showing the true spirit of a corpsman who would do whatever it takes to save a life. In the skit, the corpsman throws himself on a grenade to save his Marines.

Like other military balls, the Corpsman Ball was rich in tradition. Leaders paid honor to prisoners of war and the missing in action with the setting of the POW table, the playing of taps and a tribute slide show to those fallen and those currently serving here at USNH-GTMO.

"Pick your rate, pick your fate," said Lanuza, referring

to the Navy tradition of picking a job that a Sailor enjoys, accepting all obligations the job entails.

In the tradition of seniors teaching juniors, the corpsmen cut the birthday cake, and the oldest corpsman, 52-year-old Navy Chief Petty Officer Mary Weiss-Brandenburg, chief hospital corpsman, provided a piece to 18-year-old Navy Seaman Estevan Baca, hospital corpsman, the youngest. Then, closing out the traditional evening, Master Chief Robert Banuelos gave the Hospital Corpsman Pledge, and each corpsman was re-affirmed. 🇺🇸



Sailors present the colors, kicking off the formal ceremony to celebrate the birthday of the U.S. Navy Hospital Corps at the 115th Birthday Ball, June 22, at the Windjammer.

"The Drama of the Corpsman," written and directed by Petty Officer 2nd Class Nicholas Callihan, a hospital corpsman assigned to the Joint Medical Group, provided attendees of the Birthday Ball with a glimpse of the true spirit of a U.S. Hospital Corpsman, doing whatever it takes to save a life.



Navy Seaman Joshua Lyles, a hospital corpsman and behavioral health technician assigned to the Joint Medical Group, stands at attention after setting the table for the prisoner's of war or missing in action, June 22. The ceremony was part of the 115th U.S. Navy Hospital Corps Birthday Ball celebrated at the Windjammer.

# Patriot Flag unfurled at GTMO

Story and photos by Sgt. 1st Class Gina Vaile-Nelson

Editor, [thewire@jtfgtmo.southcom.mil](mailto:thewire@jtfgtmo.southcom.mil)

In the early morning hours of June 20, before the call to post signaled Troopers to salute for the “Star-Spangled Banner,” 170 hands joined together in unfurling the Patriot Flag – a 30-foot-by-54-foot symbol of freedom, patriotism, honor and remembrance, at the base of the Camp Justice, U.S. Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

“This is something I knew I had to do when I was chosen, along with Captain Al Fuentes, to represent the New York City Fire Department at the trial,” said retired New York City Fire Lt. Joe Torrillo, a 9/11 survivor.

“It was all I needed to super-psych me up to know that once I got here, (I would) not only put a face on evil and hatred, but would open up that American flag and hopefully make everybody in the United States of America aware of how important it is to support people in the military and to stand up for this country and resurrect patriotism,” he said.

“To have it displayed right here in Guantanamo, Cuba, with the hopes that people all over the country would be able to see it and share that experience – hopefully it will set a spark off with every single American and hopefully we can get America herself back into the center of the pedestal where she belongs,” he said.

Torrillo, with the help of Mitch Mendler and Wayne Louth, has made it his life’s journey and mission to keep the memory of 9/11 alive. What started as a silly idea, according to Torrillo, has turned into a labor of love and moving expression of loyalty to first responders, military personnel and the freedoms of Americans.

It began Sept. 10, 2010 with a cross-country tour from San Diego, Calif., hitting all 50 states in Patriot Ceremonies. Then, on Sept. 11, 2011, 10 years after the attacks that triggered the Global War on Terror, the flag flew in Shanksville, Pa., at the Pentagon, Arlington, Va., and New York City, N.Y. From there, it continued on to Washington, D.C., and Fort McHenry, Md., where the “Star-Spangled Banner” was written.

But unfurling the flag at Camp Justice was full of such raw emotion and enormous pride that it nearly brought the man who has traveled the country recounting his memories of 9/11, and shaking hands with countless Americans to tears.

“To hear the national anthem played – and to have so many Service members holding the flag that I put all this work into, it will probably be etched in my mind and in my heart as the fondest day in my life,” he said. “I can’t imagine that I’ll ever experience a day that will top this.”

A strong statement for the man who has thrown out the first pitch for the New York Yankees in Anaheim, Calif.

“I thought that day was as big as it got being a Yankee fan, and being able to throw the first pitch to Derek Jeter. As much of an honor as that was, this here supersedes it a thousand times over.”

And the feelings were mutual for the 85 Troopers and civilians from each Service branch and offices represented at GTMO. As some silently held the fabric that binds us together and others recounted memories of 9/11, deployments they’ve had after 9/11 or memories of those lost because of 9/11, the sun shined brightly on the flag, the Troopers, the memories of patriots who have gone before us.

“It got me a little choked up,” said Senior Airman Mario Trevino, a plumber with the Base Emergency Engineering Force.

“I’ve folded maybe one other flag, nothing this big, so it gave me a good amount of a sense of pride,” he said. “I felt a little bit closer to everybody.”

For Torrillo, as the Troopers here continue their mission, he will continue along with his. He hopes to escort the flag to Afghanistan and Iraq and possibly South Africa. No matter where he takes the Patriot Flag, Torrillo’s message, he said, is clear.

“Sometimes you think, ‘how would you find the proper words and arrange them in logical sentences that would convey your heartfelt feelings about their commitment, their dedication and their loyalty,’ and you just don’t quite know how you would come across effectively.

“So on behalf of everybody in the United States of America, I want to thank every man and woman who has ever served, who is currently serving and for those who will serve in the future, for you know all of your commitment is not in vain,” he said. 🇺🇸



An Airman holds tightly to the Patriot Flag June 20. There were 170 hands, 85 personnel handling the flag.





Members of Joint Task Force Guantanamo join 9/11 victims and family members in unfurling the Patriot Flag at the base of the Camp Justice flag, U.S. Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, June 20. The flag has flown at each of the 9/11 sites, traveled around the United States and the world as a symbol of patriotism and remembrance of the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks.

*“I was on the scene at exactly 9 o’clock in the morning. And three minutes later, as I was running past the South Tower towards the North Tower, which was the first building struck, I heard a noise and I looked up and United Airlines flight 175 came right over my head at 9:03. I was the only one under that jet. I looked up and saw that jet from the nose to the tail and it looked as if the South Tower just sucked that jet into it. It was like the jet just disappeared. It was so surreal. I’m like ‘where did that jet go?’ It hit the building and it was just gone and at that point I realized we were under a terrorist attack. And my two assessments I made very quickly, I told all the other rescuers who were surrounding the complex: I said, ‘everybody on the top of these buildings are going to die. They are not getting out and there is no way we are going to get them.*



*– Joe Torrillo, retired New York City  
Fire Department lieutenant”*

# Honor to his service: Trooper learns from Navy experiences

Story and photo by Sgt. Cassandra Monroe

Staff writer, [thewire@jftgmo.southcom.mil](mailto:thewire@jftgmo.southcom.mil)

There are many components that help support the staff of Joint Task Force Guantanamo Bay's Joint Medical Group.

Within these components are specialists who ensure detainees are psychiatrically cared for.

Navy Seaman Joshua Lyles, a psychiatric technician, Behavioral Health Unit, JMG, JTF-GTMO, is part of that team of specialists. For this specific mission, the BHU looks after the mental health of detainees, but can also assist Troopers.

"As psychiatric technicians, we deal with a lot of underlying problems, or a lot of problems that people don't usually see or notice," said Lyles. "We're starting to try to tackle those problems head-on; like how to deal with stress, post traumatic stress disorder and getting more proactive on getting troops mental health.

"Furthermore, we help keep people from leaving the island or their command so we can keep supporting the mission," he said.

Lyles feels his job is a crucial asset to the Joint Task Force team because of how his skills are used.

"I feel as psychiatric technicians for the detainees, we do help out because

we are utilized a lot," he said.

"We try to determine the best course of action," he said. "The job is pretty essential."

The psychiatric technician, who has been serving in the Navy for about three years, says his time spent in the military so far has let him grow personally and professionally.

"I've learned a lot more about my strength and weaknesses," he said. "I look at things differently now than when I first came in; I'd say I'm a completely different person. When I first joined, I was more of a passive person, but now, after going through my schooling, I noticed I'm a lot more assertive, one to take action when action needs to be taken, which is one of the biggest changes I've seen."

For Lyles, the greatest honor he's had so far serving in the Navy is participating in Honor Guard ceremonies both at GTMO and back home.

"I do like showing honor to those who have served before me and I like doing the ceremonies," he said. "Knowing that I am part of the ceremony and helping the military look well is an honor."

Although Lyles may come across as a seemingly quiet and a reserved

individual, he is anything-but according to his coworkers.

"I would describe him as hard working and intelligent and also has a lot of interesting facts to share," said Chief Petty Officer 1st Class Nyobi Brogdon, the leading petty officer of behavior health services with the JMG. "It's fun working with him because you learn those facts out of nowhere, but he's always looking to see what he can do to help someone else and to make us laugh. He's really good with boosting our morale."

The Trooper said this deployment has been a unique one, setting him apart from his previous life and helping prepare him for future deployments.

"It's funny, I was talking to an old buddy from high school and I asked him how everyone else was," he said. "He told me how most weren't doing much with themselves and I thought, 'I'm here in Guantanamo Bay and I never actually thought I'd actually get to come here. I'm doing something for my country.' It's a very interesting job and not exactly what I expected, but it's a different experience and I'm glad that Guantanamo Bay was my first deployment because it will get me ready for my future." 🌟



LYLES

U.S. NAVY

## SECDEF: implementation of benefits to same-sex partners forthcoming

### Staff Report

thewire@jftgmo.southcom.mil

The Supreme Court issued a landmark ruling June 26, that will end a federal ban in 12 states on legally married, same-sex couples from receiving federal benefits. It also ruled to resume same-sex marriages in California.

In a 5-4 ruling, the court ruled the Proposition 8 ban in California stood as unconstitutional, and also invalidated a provision of the Defense of Marriage Act of 1996 that prevented same-sex couples from receiving tax, health and retirement benefits that are typically available to other married people.

In a statement released by the Department of Defense, Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel said the DoD welcomes the Supreme Court's decision on the DOMA.



“The department will immediately begin the process of implementing the Supreme Court’s decision in consultation with the Department of Justice and other executive branch agencies,” he said.

“The Department of Defense intends to make the same benefits available to all military spouses - regardless of sexual orientation - as soon as possible.

“Every person who serves our nation in uniform stepped forward with courage and commitment. All that matters is their patriotism, their willingness to serve their country, and their qualifications to do so.

“Today’s ruling helps ensure that all men and women who serve this country can be treated fairly and equally, with the full dignity and respect they so richly deserve,” he said. 🇺🇸

## DoD announces recipients of 2013 Employer Support Freedom Award

### Staff Report

thewire@jftgmo.southcom.mil

**WASHINGTON** - The Department of Defense announced the 2013 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award recipients June 25.

The freedom award is the department’s highest recognition given to employers for exceptional support of guard and reserve employees. These employers distinguished themselves among the 2,899 nominations received from Guardsmen and Reservists. The 2013 recipients will be honored at the 18th annual Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award ceremony in Washington, D.C., on Sept. 26, 2013.

“I commend and thank the 15 recipients of the 2013 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award for providing exceptional support to our citizen warriors,” said Defense Secretary Chuck

Hagel.

“So many of our nation’s employers are finding ways to contribute to our nation’s security, but these employers stand out for their commitment to our Guardsmen and Reservists. They have the gratitude and thanks of the entire Department of Defense,” he said.

Freedom award recipients go to extraordinary lengths to support their military employees through both formal and informal initiatives including: forming an employee resource network, providing additional paid military leave, setting and surpassing employment goals for Veterans and Service members, and extending personal support to families.

Since 1996, only 175 employers have re-

### 2013 Employer Support Freedom Award recipients:

Albuquerque Fire Department, Albuquerque, N.M.  
Bank of America, Charlotte, N.C.  
C.W. Driver, Pasadena, Calif.  
City of Columbus, Columbus, Ohio  
Colorado Springs Utilities, Colorado Springs, Colo.  
DaVita, Inc., Denver, Colo.  
Eastman Chemical, Kingsport, Tenn.  
Family Allergy and Asthma, Louisville, Ky.  
Humana, Louisville, Ky.  
Pape-Dawson Engineers, Inc., San Antonio, Texas  
Richland County Sheriff’s Department, Columbia, S.C.  
Safeway Inc., Pleasanton, Calif.  
Steel Plate Fabricators, Knoxville, Tenn.  
U.S. Bank, Minneapolis, Minn.  
U.S. Marshals Services, Washington D.C.

ceived the Freedom Award.

For more information on this year’s recipients, visit [www.FreedomAward.mil](http://www.FreedomAward.mil). 🇺🇸

## Days of Summer

Editor's Note: This is the second in a series of articles exploring your health while deployed to Guantanamo Bay.

Story by Sgt. 1st Class Gina Vaile-Nelson

Editor, [thewire@jtfgtmo.southcom.mil](mailto:thewire@jtfgtmo.southcom.mil)

It's with you when you walk to chow, conduct physical training, run to the Navy Exchange or walk anywhere while on duty. And here, on Guantanamo Bay, it's directly over your head and closer to you than any place on the mainland.

It's not your patrol cap, it's the sun.

And here at GTMO, there are plenty of opportunities to enjoy it safely, and just as many opportunities to forget you're in it and forget to protect yourself from it.

"Sunscreen can and should be used any time one has sun exposure, which is anytime during daylight," said Navy Seaman Alfredo Gomez, a hospital nurse and psychiatric technician for the Joint Medical Group.

"Troopers need to know that we are closer to the equator, and UV rays are constantly high year round," he said. "This is because the sun is more directly overhead."

This poses a threat to Troopers and their skin in many ways. Prolonged sun exposure can cause burns, permanently damage your skin or your eyes. In some cases, it can cause skin cancer.

"Sunscreen cannot completely block UV rays, but is vital in the prevention of skin cancer," said Gomez.

Even during the day, when you have on your battle dress, Gomez said you should apply a layer of sunscreen especially to the exposed parts of your body. Sun rays can penetrate glass and clothing, so a moisturizer with SPF of 15 is sufficient, for your face and hands.

But when you go out on your days off, it's a good idea, Gomez said, to apply a higher SPF, especially one with

broad-spectrum printed on the label.

"A higher SPF increases the percentage of UVB (short wave) rays that get filtered," he said. "The SPF level depends on how much sun you expect to expose yourself to. Don't forget other ways to protect yourself with hats, sunglasses and long sleeves."

Should you find yourself red like a lobster at a New England boil, there are ways to minimize the impact and pain and reduce further skin damage.

"Aloe has a plethora of topical uses for burns or cuts," he said. "Moisturizing soothes the skin and makes peeling less noticeable."

"Be sure to not peel dead skin or break blisters of a sunburn," he said, adding that proper hydration – as usual – is important.

"Burns draw water away from the body and to the skin," he said. "Be wary of signs of dehydration. And if the burn covers more than 20 percent of your body or if you are experiencing fever or chills, seek medical attention."

And don't forget to continue to monitor your skin even after you redeploy or change stations from GTMO. After a burn, you are more susceptible to skin cancer.

Early warning signs, according to Gomez, include changes to marks and moles on your skin – changing in size, color and texture, or new marks that appear after the age of 21. A sore that itches, bleeds, hurts or doesn't heal within a few weeks should also raise awareness.

"Even if you think it might not be serious, it does not hurt to get it checked out by a medical professional," he said. ❖

# Summer Sun Safety



Graphic by Staff Sgt. Aaron Hiler/The Wire

Coming up at the

## Fleet & Family Support Center

Call ext 4141

### New to GTMO orientation

Thurs., June 27, 8:15-11:15 a.m.

### Taking Charge of Your Credit Cards

Fri., July 5, 10:30-11:30 a.m.



### Chaplain's Word of the week:

## "SUMMER"



Summer officially began 21 June. Summer is a time of sun, beaches, cookouts, friends, and recreation. It is a time of doing the fun stuff. Take advantage of it. After all, recreation is the re-creation of ourselves so that we can carry on in those not-so-sunny times.

### The Wire

## OPSEC CORNER

### Mission success

*It starts with essential secrecy*

A key factor to any operation's success, is the required level of secrecy that must be maintained to preserve the element of surprise. In OPSEC land, we refer to this as Essential Secrecy.

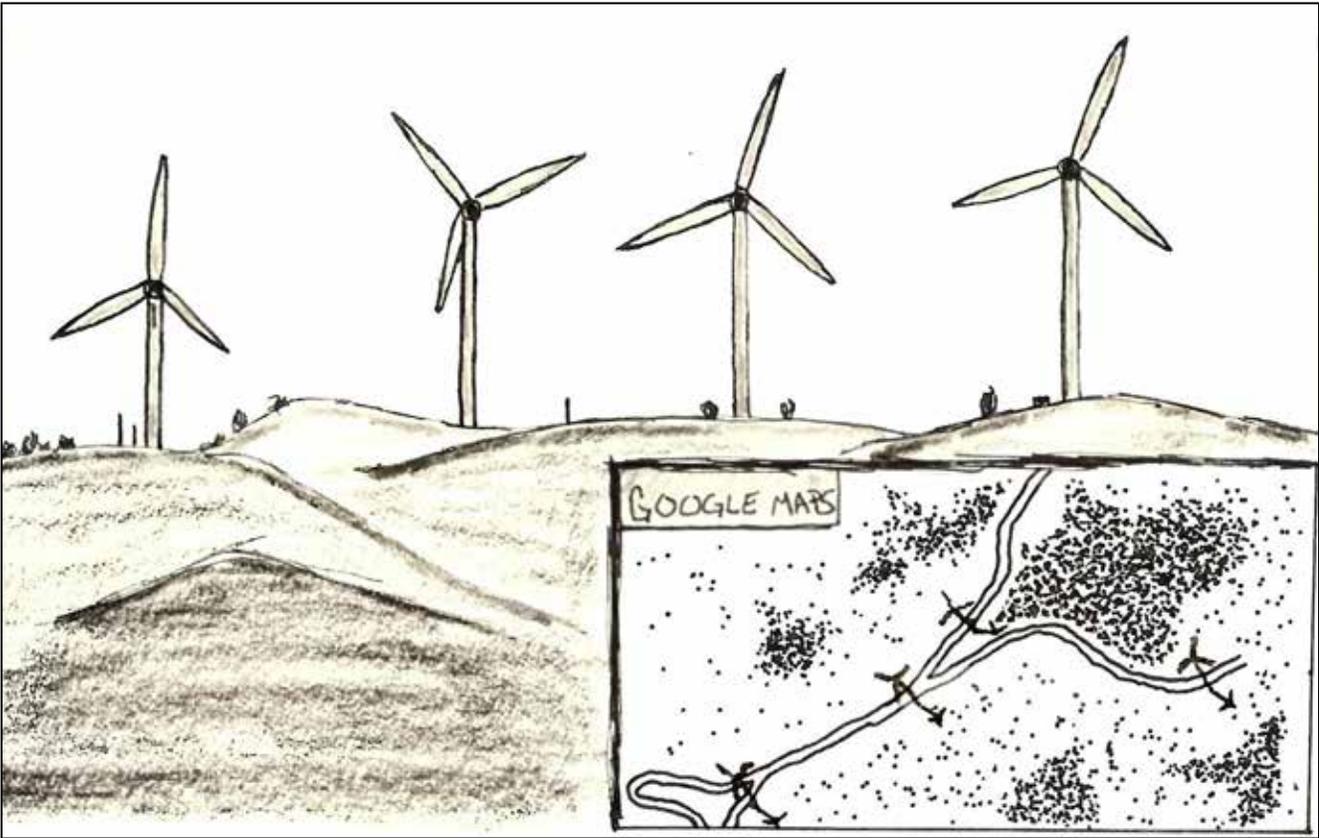
The operation to capture or kill Osama bin Laden was executed almost flawlessly because of essential secrecy. Because of their ability to keep the mission quiet, it was unknown that an operation was in the works, and that is why our forces were able to effectively complete their mission.

Doing something simple, like protecting your travel plans or even your personal information is considered essential secrecy. It is what allows you to effectively accomplish your mission.

When you use the "need to know," principle, you will help keep essentially secret information.

# THE DOWNSIDE UP

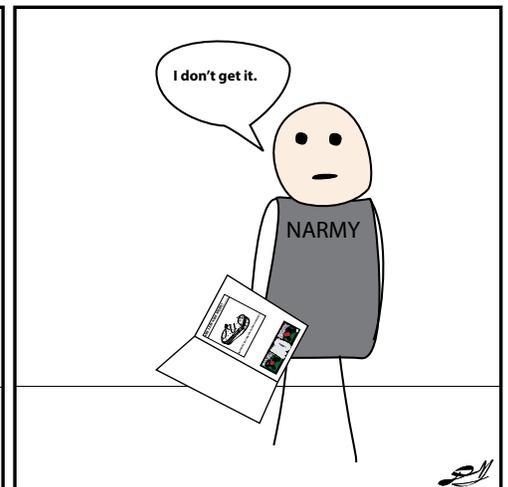
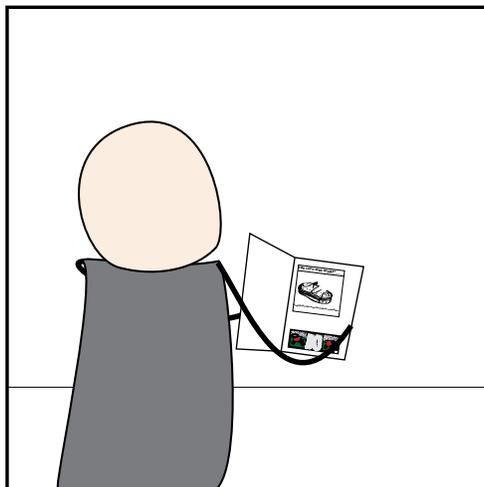
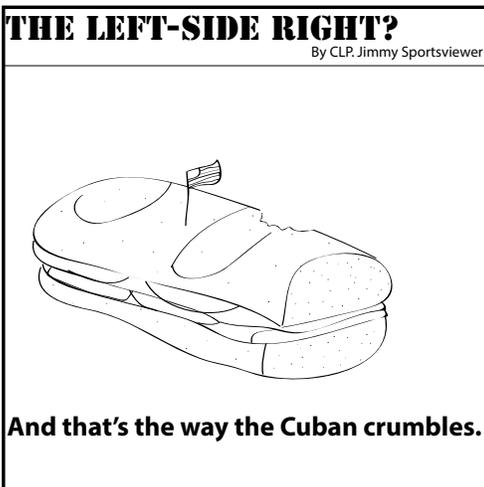
by Sgt. Darron Salzer



**WARNING:** This is not a photo. Ironic. Photos and images can be found online. Ironically.

## GTMO JOE

by Spc. David Marquis



# A fisherman's tale

*Rescue attempt leads to a huge catch and dinner for many*

By Staff Sgt. Lorne Neff

Staff Writer, [thewire@jftgtmo.southcom.mil](mailto:thewire@jftgtmo.southcom.mil)

As fish tales go, this one is a whopper. Donald Dewitt, a special security supervisor and his fishing partner Henry Ferguson casted their lines June 8, off buoy five when they heard splashing from nearby Hicacal Beach.

"We pulled in our lines and drove quickly over to the beach, to investigate all the commotion," said Dewitt.

"From a distance we could see a huge tail come up in the air and slam, like thunder, back down into the water."

Floating closer to the shore, Dewitt assumed a bottlenose dolphin had beached itself, but to his surprise, there was a huge black marlin – the kind you hear in the tall tales from deep sea excursions.

"Unfortunately for the marlin, he had skewered his large bill into the sand and although still in the water, was flapping his tail like mad, to get back into deeper water," added Dewitt.

Ferguson anchored the pontoon boat and Dewitt waded ashore to see if he could help. Dewitt said he has experience saving beached dolphins in Florida, pushing them back into the water.

"By the time I got to the fish, he had stopped flapping and was very docile," said Dewitt.

Considering the danger of the bill, Dewitt said it was a no-brainer to attempt to dig the fish free.

"As he broke free, I could still feel the action of his fins and heartbeat in his body," said

Dewitt.

He held the marlin like a dolphin and walked the fish through the water towards the boat to get water back into its lungs in an effort to save it.

"He was twitching much more and I expected him to take off at any time," said Dewitt. "We walked towards Henry and the boat, in case I needed his assistance.

"When I was about 20 feet away from the boat, the huge black marlin died and turned belly up," Dewitt said. It was very sad."

The two hauled the beast into their boat and headed back to the marina.

"As you can imagine, there was quite a lot of commotion. Dock workers running around, spectators coming to the boat to see, people calling their friends, cell phone cameras snapping pictures," he said.

According to Dewitt, one woman even asked if the fish was real or plastic. Marina workers and several strong men hauled the fish onto the display beam.

"Everyone wanted to take their picture with the hoisted fish," said Dewitt.

He estimated the fish at 10-feet-long and 300- to 400-pounds.

"Although he had given his soul to us earlier, he was still a great celebrity at the dock. Afterwards, many people left with lots of fresh Marlin for their Sunday barbecues," he said. 🍷



Photo submitted

Henry Ferguson and Donald Dewitt show off a massive 300-pound marlin after the duo attempted to save when they found it beached on Hicacal Beach, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba June 8.



Photo submitted

After freeing the marlin from Hicacal Beach, Donald Dewitt tried to get the fish to fill its gills, but the fish died in the water.

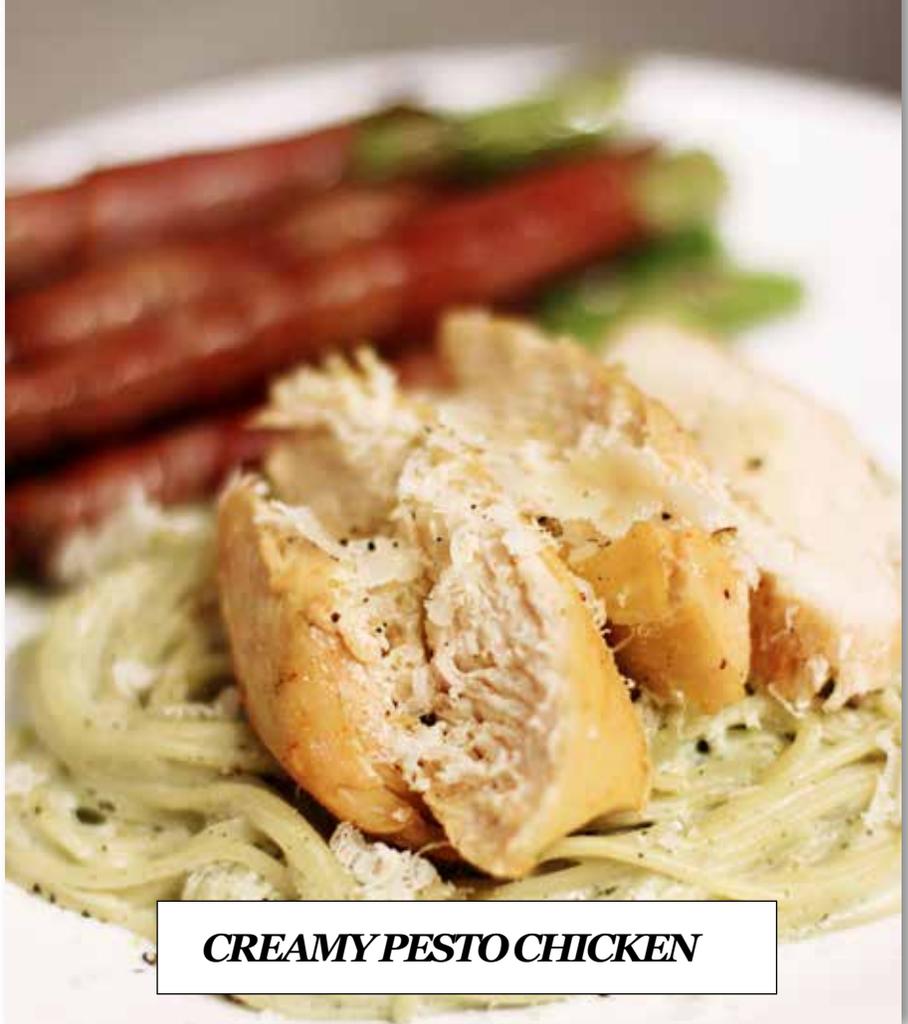
# Meals with MONROE

*This is a funny story, you see I actually started out making a completely different recipe and after it was already made, I realized I was not a fan of the directions I had followed (I'll re-do the recipe once I adapt it to my liking.) So, I decided to go with this baked chicken and pesto recipe instead and I'm happy with how it turned out. This recipe is an easy solution to a busy workday. I paired this meal with **prosciutto wrapped asparagus** (simply wrap some prosciutto around thick asparagus stalks, lay on an oiled baking sheet and broil for about six minutes, flipping them half-way through. No need to add extra salt—the prosciutto covers that ingredient perfectly.)*

Preheat oven to 420 F. Season **two** to **four chicken breasts** to your liking (I usually use a combination of Lawry's SeasonedSalt, a pinch of sea salt, pepper and some basil or parsley, but that's just me.) Add about a tablespoon of **olive oil** to a casserole dish, place in the chicken and bake for about 30 minutes (chicken should be fully cooked once its internal temperature reaches 165 degrees).

While that's baking, measure out enough **angel hair pasta** for who you're feeding, and cook it according to its package directions (since I was just feeding myself, I stuck with one chicken breast and one serving of pasta).

Next, take **one** or **two packages**



**CREAMY PESTO CHICKEN**

of **Knorr Pesto packets** (the NEX was out of real pesto) and prepare it according to its directions. I personally added a bit of cream cheese to the mix to make it thicker, but a couple tablespoons of flour works too.

Keep an eye out for your chicken and pasta while you're making the pesto. Once it's all done, combine all ingredients and enjoy! I also added some freshly-grated Parmesan cheese to the top of the dish.



**p.s.**  
**(one last thing)**

I want to hear from you! Did you try my recipe and loved it? Did you try my recipe and hated it? Well... that's too bad, but email me anyways! If you have a recipe you'd like for me to try, **contact me!**  
**cassandra.l.monroe@jftgtno.southcom.mil**

## The Road to FINANCIAL STABILITY

Graphic by Staff Sgt. Aaron Hiller/The Wire

**By Sgt. David Bolton**

*Copy Editor, [thewire@jftgtmo.southcom.mil](mailto:thewire@jftgtmo.southcom.mil)*

It's the end of the month; payday. Troopers are flushed with cash from their hard-earned work and are faced with a tough question: "what do I do with all the money I just made?"

Some will spend their money on car payments, house mortgages and college tuition. Others will see that their money is spent on entertainment like movies or vacations. However, there is another option for that cash. One that can offer financial relief for those who don't want to live paycheck to paycheck: Budgeting.

"We like to call it a financial spending plan," said Walter Barrett, personal financial management specialist, Fleet and Family Support Center. "An LES makes it easy to see where money is coming from, but not where it's going. Saving and

investing through budgeting makes it easier for Troopers to follow their money flow."

Budgeting offers Troopers the chance to not only invest their money where they want, but also allows them to be financially prepared for the future.

When Troopers are on deployment, Barrett said, there are a few things they should consider: how the new income will affect their lifestyle choices, what will the money be spent on and what financial obligations will need to be addressed first. In these instances, a financial spending plan could help Troopers make the best decision of what to do with their money.

"I'd first want to meet with them to set up a spending plan or debt reduction," said Barrett. "If they don't have any debt, then starting an investment plan could help Troopers figure out what to do for themselves."

All of these things, however, boil down to the individual's situation. In other words, the plan doesn't have to be concrete, it can be flexible. According to Barrett, the one-on-one debt reduction consultations offered by the FFSC can help Service members organize their fiscal agenda, which in-turn gives them a sense of control on the issue.

One class, Taking Charge of Your Credit Cards, will be offered July 5, from 10:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.

"My goal is to help these Troopers financially and legally," said Barrett. "Whatever we do, we want it to be a no-brainer."

If you would like to set up a financial counseling session with FFSC, contact Walter Barrett at ext. 4050 or send an email to [walter.barrett@gtmo.navy.mil](mailto:walter.barrett@gtmo.navy.mil). 📧



Army Staff Sgt. Joel Shively snapped this Great Blue Heron fishing on his way back from the ferry landing.

Send your best photos to [thewire@jftgtmo.southcom.mil](mailto:thewire@jftgtmo.southcom.mil)

PHOTO OF THE WEEK