



THE WIRE

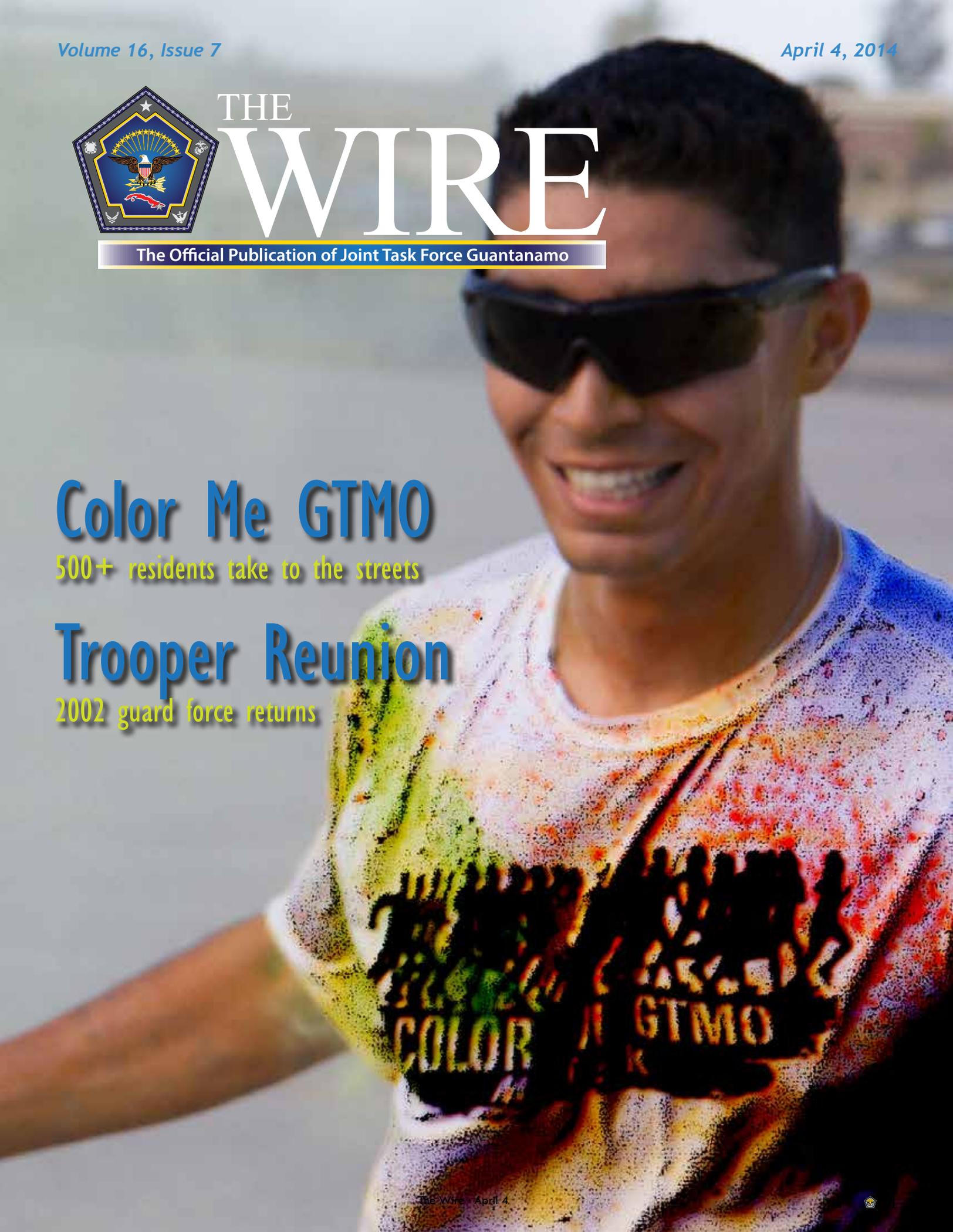
The Official Publication of Joint Task Force Guantanamo

Color Me GTMO

500+ residents take to the streets

Trooper Reunion

2002 guard force returns



AROUND THE BAY

AND IN OUR PAGES



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Cover Story

Cover photo by Sgt. Christopher Vann

Over 500 Guantanamo Bay residents and Joint Task Force Troopers ran for the fun of it and got a little color too!

BAY WIRE REPORT



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Witness a total lunar eclipse

Tuesday morning, April 15, at Windmill Beach from 2:30-4:30 a.m. Totality lasts 78 minutes and begins at 3:06 a.m. The telescope will be set up so you can view Venus, Saturn and galaxies too. For more info contact Lt. Cmdr. Cynthia Holland at 9717.

Feeling a little stressed?

Sign up for an anger and stress management seminar Thursday, April 10, from 2:00-4:00 p.m. at the Fleet and Family Support Center. Call 4141 or 4153 to register.



A1C Joshua Hofmann
Base Emergency Engineering Force

SGT Dayrontay Herring
HHD 93rd MP BN

5 mile "King of the Hill" JPJ run

Open to all hands

- Start/Finish at Cooper Field
- Saturday, April 12th @ 6 am
- Register by Thursday, April 10
- FREE and open to all hands
- FMI Call 2113

SURVIVE THE CLIMB...



CORRECTIONS Please report all corrections to thewire@jftgmo.southcom.mil



THE WIRE

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The editorial content of this publication is the responsibility of the Joint Task Force Guantanamo Bay Public Affairs Office.

The Wire is printed weekly by the Defense Logistics Agency Document Services with a circulation of 1,250. It is distributed free to all personnel assigned to the Joint Task Force and is published online.

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Religious Services

NAVSTA Chapel

Catholic Mass
Mon.-Thur. 5:30 p.m.
Saturday 5:00 p.m.
Sunday 9:00 a.m.

Protestant Services
General Protestant
Sunday 11:00 a.m.
Gospel Worship
Sunday 1:00 p.m.

Chapel Annexes

Pentecostal Gospel
Sunday 8:00 a.m. & 5:00 p.m.,
Room D

LDS Service
Sunday 10 a.m., Room 19

Islamic Service
Friday, 1:15 p.m., Room 2

Seventh Day Adventist
Friday, 7:00 p.m., Room 1
Sabbath School: Saturday 9:30 a.m.,
Room 1
Sabbath Service: Saturday 11:00 a.m.,
Room 1

JTF Trooper Chapel

Protestant Worship
Sunday 6:40 a.m.
Sunday 9:00 a.m.
Sunday 7:00 p.m.

Bible Studies
Monday 8:30 p.m.,
Cuzco block E
Friday 7:00 p.m.,
Old Trooper Chapel

Transportation Schedules

Bus #1, 2, 3:

Camp America - :00, :20, :40
Gazebo - :01, :21, :41
Camp America NEX - :02, :22, :42
Camp Delta - :04, :24, :44
TK 4 - :13, :33, :53
JAS - :14, :34, :54
TK 3 - :15, :35, :55
TK 2 - :16, :36, :56
TK 1 - :17, :37, :57
CC - :19, :39, :59
Windjammer/Gym - :22, :42, :02
Gold Hill Galley - :24, :44, :04
NEX - :26, :46, :06
NEX Laundry - :27, :47, :07
C Pool - :30, :50, :10
Downtown Lyceum - :31, :51, :11
NEX - :33, :53, :13
Gold Hill Galley - :35, :55, :15
Windjammer/Gym - :37, :57, :17
CC - :40, :00, :20
TK 1 - :41, :01, :21
TK 2 - :42, :02, :22
TK 3 - :43, :03, :23
TK 4 - :44, :04, :24
Camp 6 - :50, :10, :30
Camp Delta - :53, :13, :33
HQ Building - :55, :15, :35
Camp America NEX - :57, :17, :37
Gazebo - :58, :18, :38
Camp America - :00, :20, :40

NEX Express Bus

9:55 a.m. - 7:55 p.m.
Every hour at the stated times

Camp America - :55, :48
TK 1 - :05, :36
Denich Gym/Windjammer - :11, :31
Gold Hill Galley - :14, :29
NEX - :16, :27
Downtown Lyceum - :17, :25

Beach Bus

Sat. and Sun. only - Location #1-4

Windward Loop
9 a.m., 12 p.m., 3 p.m., 6 p.m.
East Caravella
SBOQ/Marina
9:05 a.m., 12:05 p.m., 3:05 p.m.

NEX
9:08 a.m., 12:08 p.m.,
3:08 p.m., 6:08 p.m.

Phillips Park
9:14 a.m., 12:14 p.m.,
3:14 p.m.

Cable Beach
9:17 a.m., 12:17 p.m.,
3:17 p.m.

Windward Loop
9:30 a.m., 12:30 p.m.,
3:30 p.m.

NEX
9:25 a.m., 12:25 p.m.,
3:25 p.m., 6:25 p.m.

SBOQ/MARINA
9:35 a.m., 12:35 p.m., 3:35 p.m.

Return to Office
9:40 a.m., 12:40 p.m., 3:40 p.m.

JOINT TASK FORCE GUANTANAMO



SAFE



HUMANE



LEGAL



TRANSPARENT

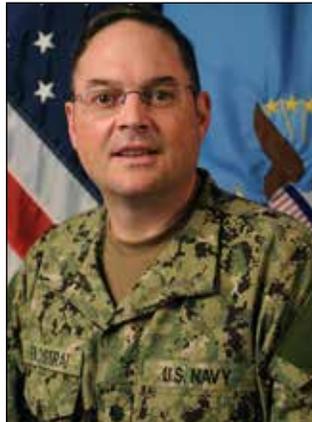


Transparency at JTF GTMO

By Navy Cmdr. John Filostrat

Director, JTF GTMO Public Affairs

Everyone stationed at Joint Task Force Guantanamo has probably read news articles about JTF GTMO detainee operations both past and present. JTF GTMO has been in the news since 2002 on a regular basis. Part of what the JTF public affairs team does is set up, host and coordinate media visits. In the first three months of 2014, 17 media outlets have toured the camps. Each time the public affairs team stresses how well the men and women of JTF GTMO are performing their jobs in a professional and consistent basis. Even though that message does not always get reported in the press, rest assured that the JTF public affairs team is working hard to highlight the positive news of the men and women of JTF.



Cmdr. John Filostrat

Read about the positive JTF news every week in “The Wire.” We’re always looking for good news to print and market back to Troopers’ hometowns. Help us by letting The Wire editor know about the good things happening in your

units. Troopers at JTF GTMO are doing an outstanding job and we’re here to tell that story.

Lastly, I want to let everyone know about another service the public affairs team can offer you and your units. Every Friday morning at the media operations center, located in Camp Justice, public affairs officers hold media training. The four-hour instruction teaches Troopers how to effectively deal with the media. The hands-on training is both instructional and fun. While you might not interact with the media during your tour at JTF GTMO, the training might come in handy at another command. Telling the military’s story is an important function, one that is everyone’s responsibility.

I’m proud to be serving with you all. Honor Bound!

TROOPER TO TROOPER

By Sgt. Kenneth Tucceri

Webmaster, thewire@jtfgtmo.southcom.mil

Navy Rear Adm. Richard W. Butler, Joint Task Force Guantanamo’s commander, held four all-hands calls the week of March 23 to bring Troopers up to date on the news of Naval Station Guantanamo, specifically JTF expectations for 2014.

During one of the three briefs, Butler spoke for about an hour on the morning of Monday, March 24, to a large group of JTF personnel who filled the seats of the Downtown Lyceum. He spoke of the present, past and future of GTMO and the historical implications of the operations here, highlighting the significance of everyone’s duty to be a leader in performing this critical and complex mission.

Butler covered topics from the distinguished visitors GTMO has been host to in recent months, commissions, the periodic review board process and what Troopers can expect to see regarding improvements around base.

Some improvements that were stated

All-hands call

were the Tierra Kay housing project nearing completion, the addition of the new Trooper Chapel, the internet and the expectation of a fiber optic cable being run from Miami to GTMO (which is slated to be done in approximately 18 months) and the new kitchen that is going to replace the Camp America Galley’s current facilities. Butler spoke of the features and benefits of all such updates, and highlighted the process and expectations of the upgrades.

Butler also covered his expectations of JTF members while stationed here.

“I want everyone in here to be both professionally and personally successful while you are down here ... I want you to go home being proud of what you did down here.”

Additionally, Butler mentioned that Marine Gen. John F. Kelly, commander of U.S. Southern Command, referred

to JTF GTMO as a “no fail mission” during his congressional testimony. “You guys are doing your job well and he [Kelly] knows that,” added Butler,

“and he knows we can’t afford to fail doing our mission down here.”

Butler also stated that while it is the intent to try to shut down JTF GMTMO as soon as possible, there are some barriers. So while you are down here, set goals, personally and professionally, take advantage of your time here and utilize it wisely.

“The mission down here is very unique in American history,” said Butler in the closing moments of his speech. “It’s going to be part of history. You guys are a part of history here. I want you to be proud to be part of history, but I need every one of you to make this mission happen and continue for it to be the no-fail mission that our chain of command expects.”



Sgt. Kenneth Tucceri



Army Capt. Jacob Wilson and Army 1st Sgt. Kerry Hommertzhem, 346th Military Police Company, flank the freshly revealed guidon of the 525th's most recent addition to the current Joint Task Force. The unit is making its second appearance in GTMO and are prepared to complete the mission here.

for a short time then at Camp Delta, said Hommertzhem.

Now that they have returned to GTMO again, the unit intends to complete the assignment and surpass the standard.

"It was a new mission to the United States Military [then]," said Hommertzhem. "Now what I want to be able to do is carry on the tradition that the 346th did and be able to accomplish the mission just as well as we did then ... and take all the Soldiers home with their heads high and no mission failure."

The unit was greeted by 525th Military Battalion Commander Army Lt. Col. Darcy L. Overby with words of wisdom and encouragement, proving her confidence in their ability to complete the mission of the safe, humane, legal and transparent care and custody of the detainees.

"Capt. Wilson and 1st Sgt. Hommertzhem, I say welcome to you and 346th MP Company as you lead the professional men and women of your unit in the journey of supporting one of the most politically sensitive missions being conducted today," said Overby. "This deployment will only add to the proud history of your unit. The mission is officially yours. Welcome to the team of vigilant Warriors who are committed to being honor bound to defend freedom."

Before being tasked with the mission here at JTF GTMO, the unit was slated to a combat support mission in Afghanistan and it wasn't until halfway through last year that the change was solidified.

"We had several mission changes prior to actually achieving this mission so we had to totally change all of our training to go from a combat mission to more of a detention facility mission," said Hommertzhem.

Considering the change of pace between their original mission assignment and their final and current tasking, the Soldiers of the 346th have the opportunity to enjoy their time off more than what could have been expected.

"My word of advice would be to use your off-time wisely," said Hommertzhem. He suggested that the Soldiers use those two days outside of work to enjoy the luxuries that are available here that wouldn't have been accessible if they were in the combat zone environment in Afghanistan.

Transfer of authority

346th returns to GTMO for second mission

Story and photos by Pvt. Kourtney Grimes

Staff Writer, thewire@jftgtmo.southcom.mil

The guidon of the 346th Military Police Company was uncased in GTMO air for the first time since 2002 during Monday's transfer of authority ceremony on Bulkeley Field at Naval Station Guantanamo. The Army Reserve unit from Hutchinson, Kan., officially took over for the 357th MP Co., a Reserve unit from Concord, Calif., in support of detainee operations at the Joint Task Force.

"The biggest thing I look forward to achieving here is mission accomplishment and the welfare of the Soldiers," said Army 1st Sgt. Kerry Hommertzhem, 346th MP Co.

He strives to be able to lead the Troops and have them do as well as they did last time.

This unit was here in 2002 when the mission they are currently sustaining initially began. They were at Camp X-Ray



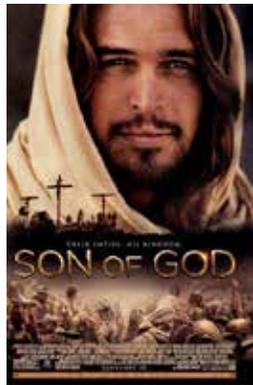
This movie needs a savior

Review by Maj. Reinaldo Montero

Commander, 107th MPAD, thewire@jftgmo.southcom.mil

Vanilla is the plainest flavored ice cream in the world, but ice cream nonetheless. Watching “Son of God” was like having a bowl of vanilla ice cream!

With minimal to no character development, the movie assumed that everyone in the audience regularly attends Sunday school, as demonstrated in the case of Nicodemus (a Pharisee and member of the Jewish council). While Diogo Morgado did a fine job portraying Jesus, if you haven’t read the Bible then some of the lesser characters are a mystery.



The film was okay overall, but this is the story of Jesus, not some ho-hum biography of an everyday Joe!

While nowhere near as painful to watch as “Noah and the rock Transformers build an ark,” “Son of God” left me unfulfilled, restless and craving a good read!

My advice, read the book before you see the movie. It’s a better way to spend your time, and you will learn infinitely

more. I will give it three banana rats simply for historically accurate content; at least this director learned something in Sunday school!

In the beginning...at least there’s an end

Review by Staff Sgt. Kenneth Edel

Media Relations, thewire@jftgmo.southcom.mil

The story of the biblical epic Noah received blockbuster treatment in the new film by Darren Aronofsky. Russell Crowe headlines the movie with Jennifer Connelly and Emma Watson at his side. The actors do a great job of telling the story with their performances. However, it’s the story that didn’t quite bring me along with them.

The movie does show that Noah reveres animals and thinks the world’s worst enemies are human. Not to put too fine a point on it, but that is the reason for the flood in the Bible, correct? Even though the director’s added extra special effects are abundant, they do not detract from Noah’s mission or the idea of an all-seeing Creator who is inclined to wipe out humanity as a punishment for its sins.

“In the beginning there was...nothing,” is the first thing you see on-screen and then there’s spinning cosmos, Adam and Eve, a fall from grace, the fall of angels and industrial cities that spread so much sin that the Creator has second thoughts. At least that’s what Noah sees when he awakes from a nightmare sent to him by the Creator. The bad guys are the offspring of Cain, and they’ve been busy killing the progeny of the brother that came after Abel, Noah’s



Dive into divergence

Review by Sgt. Debra Cook

Staff Writer, thewire@jftgmo.southcom.mil



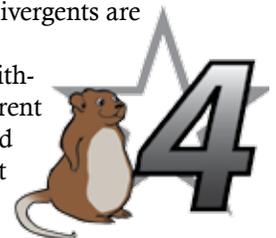
This action-adventure film is adapted from the best-selling book, “Divergent” by Veronica Roth. It’s set in a world where people are divided into different factions based on human virtues. When you come of age, you have to choose to stay with your family and the faction you were born into or choose the faction you want to be a part of. Once you make your choice you cannot go back to your family.

When Tris Prior (Shailene Woodley) is tested, along with other coming of age children, to see which faction they are best suited for, she personally doesn’t fit any one category; she’s divergent. Instructed to tell no one about her test results, she chooses to leave her family and join a different faction, and begins rigorous training to fit her new chosen lifestyle.

Kate Winslet, who plays a faction leader and villain, has a secret plan to destroy all Divergents.

In the end, Tris must learn trust in Four (Theo James) and they work together to discover out why Divergents are such a threat to society.

This movie was fun and meaningful without trying too hard. Considering the different factions, it was surprisingly uncomplicated with a simple yet profound message about life: discovering who you really are apart from your family, the power within you and fighting to protect that version of yourself. If that’s too much to swallow for a movie, you really can just go to be entertained. I give it four banana rats.



family. Even as the Cainites destroy and ruin the world, the survivors hide among rocks, eating vegetables and hoping for a miracle.

Noah realizes that the Creator means to give the Earth what we would call a reboot in today’s terminology. After a visit to his grandfather, played by a berry-obsessed Anthony Hopkins, and a cupful of tea laced with the biblical equivalent of acid; Noah and his family get busy building the great ark.

The prehistoric transformers, or fallen angels turned rock creatures, fight for Noah and help him build his ark. They, too, are there for the epic battle scene and special effects.

All in all I still couldn’t quite believe in this Noah. The second hour of the movie was so predictable that other Troopers at the Lyceum, along with me, were feeling bored and started to look for the end. I never felt that Russell Crowe’s Noah was believable as a man. This man was so conflicted with the protection of the natural world that he condemned millions of people to death and even all those he loved.

The Troopers next to me said it all when the lights came on: “At least we didn’t pay for this.” I give the movie two banana rats.





Sitting in Nowhere, a local band, plays at the Windjammer Ballroom Friday in hopes to get the participants of the following day's race excited for the Color Me GTMO 5k. This band has played together in nearly 15 local shows on island.

Local band amps up the crowd

Story and photos by **Pvt. Kourtney Grimes**
 Staff Writer, thewire@jtfgtmo.southcom.mil

A local band, Sitting in Nowhere, shook the windows at the Windjammer Ballroom as they jammed out on stage to classic tunes spanning multiple decades, Friday.

“We do whatever we feel comfortable playing. So if we want to play a reggae song, we play reggae. If we want to play rock, we play rock. Anything we feel comfortable with,” said Jamie Bodlovic, drummer with Sitting in Nowhere.

Featuring a sweet guitar solo from the Red Hot Chili Pepper’s “Californication” and many more solid rock songs, the concert pumped up the patrons participating in Saturday’s MWR hosted Color Me GTMO 5k which was sponsored by USAA.

The band, which has played nearly 15 shows on island for residents is comprised of locals, some of whom have been in GTMO since as early as 2004. This extensive history is surprising considering GTMO’s population fluctuation due to the nature of the mission here.

“I just want to thank them [the Troopers] for coming out and enjoying the show,” said Andrew Perry, bassist with Sitting in Nowhere.

The audience of civilians, contractors and Service members enjoyed the performance that amped up those attending the next day’s Color Me GTMO 5k.

“They were awesome,” said Spc. Zachary Hussey, a Soldier with the 525th Military Police Battalion.

The concert coupled with the run comprised an event that most Troopers haven’t had the chance to see here at Guantanamo.

“I think the morale can be boosted with events like this,” said Hussey. It reminds him that there is more to do on this island than work.

In the coming months, MWR is planning even more events that feature musical groups of different styles as well as dance and performances for children.



Andrew Perry, with local band Sitting in Nowhere, slaps the bass during the MWR coordinated concert that took place Friday at the Windjammer. The concert pumped up the MWR patrons that were preparing for the Color Me GTMO 5k.

Now Showing!
 at the Downtown and Camp Bulkeley Lyceums

DOWNTOWN CAMP BULKELEY	FRIDAY Captain America: The Winter Soldier (New) <i>PG13, 8 p.m.</i> Tyler Perry's Single Mom's Club (New) <i>PG13, 10:30 p.m.</i>	SATURDAY 3 Days to Kill (New) <i>PG13, 8 p.m.</i> Divergent <i>PG13, 10:15 p.m.</i>	SUNDAY Noah <i>PG13, 8 p.m.</i>	MONDAY Muppets Most Wanted <i>R, 8 p.m.</i>	TUESDAY Robocop (LS) <i>R, 8 p.m.</i>	WEDNESDAY About Last Night (LS) <i>R, 8 p.m.</i>	THURSDAY 300: Rise of an Empire* <i>R, 8 p.m.</i> <i>*Children under 17 require accompanying parent or guardian for this film.</i>
	3 Days to Kill (New) <i>PG13, 8 p.m.</i> Divergent <i>PG13, 10:15 p.m.</i>	Captain America: Winter Soldier (New) <i>PG13, 8 p.m.</i> Tyler Perry's Single Mom's Club (New) <i>PG13, 10:30 p.m.</i>	Robocop (LS) <i>PG13, 8 p.m.</i>	Lyceum closed <i>Note: Concessions at Camp Bulkeley are also closed every night until further notice.</i>	300: Rise of an Empire* <i>R, 8 p.m.</i> <i>*Children under 17 require accompanying parent or guardian for this film.</i>	Lyceum closed <i>Note: Concessions at Camp Bulkeley are also closed every night until further notice.</i>	Noah <i>PG13, 8 p.m.</i>

Call the Movie Hotline at ext. 4880 or visit the MWR Facebook page for more information
Stay classy, GTMO! No ALCOHOL or TOBACCO at the Lyceums!

GTMO gets a splash of ‘color’

Story and photos by Sgt. Christopher Vann

Staff Writer, thewire@jftgmo.southcom.mil

Naval Station Guantanamo runners were revved up for one of the most entertaining events of the year as the Color Me GTMO 5k kicked off its inaugural run Saturday, March 29, at Cooper Field.

The untimed event had no winners or prizes, but runners were showered with colored powder at stations along the run. And while the participants weren't trying to get their best times, they were there simply to have a good time. Men, women and children of all ages came out for the opportunity to show their true colors. The Color Me GTMO 5k is about encouraging the fun aspects of fitness.

"I enjoyed the run," said Navy Petty

Officer 2nd Class Antoinette Bush, a master-at-arms for Joint Task Force Guantanamo. "This is my first time doing one of these. It was great!"

More than 500 people participated in the race. The non-competitive, family-friendly atmosphere made for a more exciting time. Runners started the race with a clean, white T-shirt, but by the time participants crossed the finish line, they looked like someone gave a monkey a bunch of finger paints and left him to his own devices.

Stephen Prestesater, community activities director for Morale, Welfare and Recreation, was the leading force behind coordinating the run. "I never had a chance to be in one of these runs, so it was great to put this on," said Prest-

esater." From talking to the different people here on island, I knew this was something that a lot of people had wanted to do."

Afterwards, there was a party held at the Windjammer, filled with laughter, music, dancing and pizza purchased by USAA.

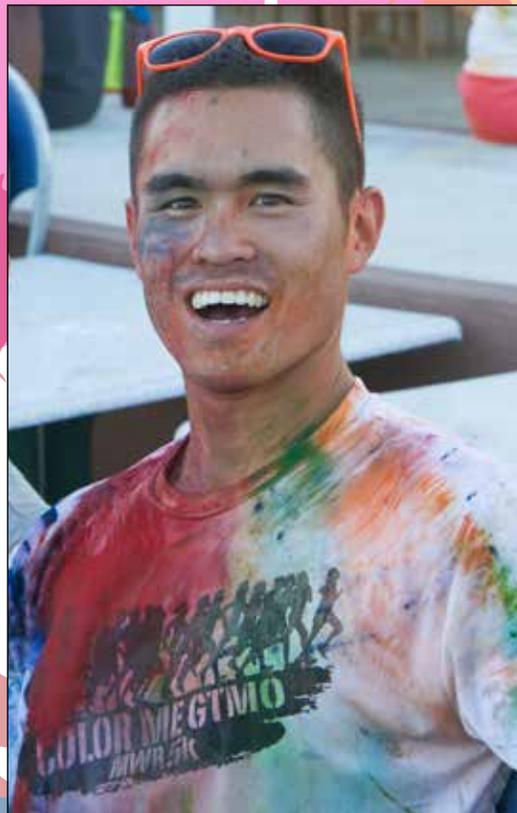
"I felt this was a great morale boosting event," said Army Sgt. Maj. Brian Barkins, J4 senior enlisted leader. "I hope that we do more like this in the future. The interaction of everyone involved was amazing, between the runners and the volunteers who were throwing color substances, while we passed by."



Above: Two runners share a laugh as they frolic through a colored corn starch cloud at one of the checkpoints on the Color Me GTMO 5k course, March 29.



Above: More than 500 runners filled the street next to Cooper Field before the start of the Color Me GTMO 5k run, March 29. This was a MWR coordinated, USAA sponsored, event that featured brightly colored participants and even brighter colored paint made from corn starch, with five separate water points that were accompanied by volunteers waiting to add a little color to the event.



There and back again:

Guantanamo guards return 12 years later

Story by Staff Sgt. Carmen Steinbach

Editor, thewire@jtfgtmo.southcom.mil

When the detention facility at Joint Task Force Guantanamo makes news or appears in a Hollywood movie, the accompanied images are generally the same: wooden watch towers, cells made out of chain link fence and detainees kneeling in a square, wearing orange jump suits while their armed guards look on.

What many fail to realize is that these portrayals are spun from footage over a decade old, taken mere months after

the war on terror began. Witness to that initial scene were four members of the 339th Military Police Company, an Army Reserve unit based out of Daventryport, Iowa, that were among the first Soldiers assigned to detainee operations at Camp X-Ray in 2002. Twelve years later, they have returned with their unit to carry out the same mission: the safe, legal and humane care, and custody of the detainees here.

Army Staff Sgt. Steve Prokup is one

of the four returning guards. He said the media often portrays detainees in Camp X-Ray, despite getting tours of the modern camps. "Doesn't make a good news story that they're being treated well."

When the 339th first arrived in January 2002, Camp X-Ray was still under construction. Seabees were working day and night, welding all the cells together. The guard force actually lived in a tent city just above the camp called Freedom Heights which was located on a landfill

Photo by Pvt. Kourtney Grimes/The Wire



Members of the 339th Military Police Company, pose with their gui at Camp X-Ray, Thursday, March 27, 12 years after their first deployment to Joint Task Force Guantanamo. From left to right: Army Sgt. 1st Class Larry Nilmeier, Army 1st Sgt. John Nelson, and Army Staff Sgts. Seve Prokup and Curt Jackson.

Courtesy photo



Soldiers of the 339th Military Police Company were housed in a tent city known as Freedom Heights while providing support for detainee operations at Camp X-Ray from January to April 2002.

and overrun with banana rats. Their showers consisted of a plywood box where they stood on a pallet and bathed with a garden hose strung over the top.

While there, the 339th, assigned as interior guard force, “

We just did a job and we did our job humanely.

- Army Sgt. 1st Class Larry Nilmeier

oversaw the in-processing of all detainees, taking them to identification and medical stations, and took care of their basic needs as well. This was difficult, as there was no indoor facilities until Camp Delta was opened and the detainees transferred there a few months later.

“The environment was different, definitely,” said Army Sgt. 1st Class Larry Nilmeier. “We were outside. We had to empty the feces out of the buckets ourselves and now they have flushable plumbing.”

“We still respected everything about them. We just did a job and we did our job humanely. We tried to keep the order and discipline of the camp and we did it together,” said Nilmeier.

Army 1st Sgt. John Nelson, a platoon sergeant during his previous rotation, recalled how a general would come through and ask for complaints from the detainees. In one memorable instance a detainee had spoken up and said that the

water was bad; that it tasted odd. The general drank the same water straight from the garden hose to ensure that its quality was good for them.

In April, the detainees were transferred to Camp Delta, a location with indoor and communal living. The guard force were moved to

Camp America and housed in wooden buildings called sea huts. While conditions improved for both parties, the mission remained the same.

“Since we opened in 2002, we actually treated every detainee humanely,” said Nilmeier. “We took care of them.”

Twelve years later, the returning members of the 339th are overwhelmed by the improvements made from their first tour at GTMO. Camps Five and Six are air-conditioned, quality facilities that are a testament to detainee care, comparable to detention facilities in the United States. There are medical treatment centers and a library, as well as recreation and entertainment capabilities.

“I was interested in seeing how things had changed down here since we were able to be here at the beginning and after 12 years see how they

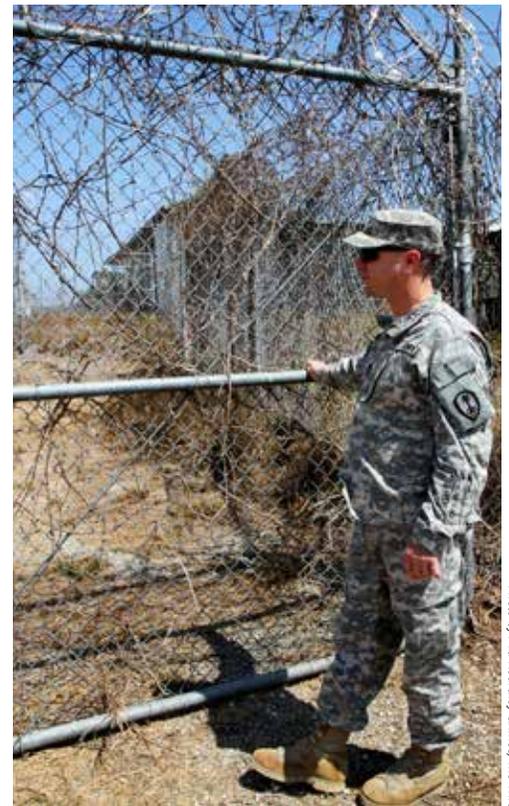
look now,” said Nelson. “Obviously things have progressed quite a bit. We now have state-of-the-art facilities that the detainees are housed in.”

The operational lessons learned have developed further for the guard force as well, especially with regard to Soldier and Trooper care.

“This is not your typical overseas deployment, but yet it can be mentally exhausting as you now see you also have things in place like JSMART,” said Nilmeier. “We didn’t have that back then.”

With JTF potentially closing in the coming years, there is no way of knowing

how long the guard force will be in the business of caring for detainees, but until the last one is transferred, members of the 339th and their peers will perform all of their duties to their best of their abilities; carrying out the mission of safe, legal and humane care and custody of detainees.



Army Sgt. 1st Class Larry Nilmeier takes his first look at Camp X-Ray since he worked there during his 2002 deployment to Joint Task Force Guantanamo.

Photo by Pfc. Kourtney Gaines/The Wire

Yoga under the banyan tree

GTMO residents realize the benefits of an age-old practice in beautiful Cuba

Story and photos by Sgt. Kenneth Tucceri

Webmaster, thewire@jtfgtmo.southcom.mil

Before the morning's light began its gradual pour through the leafy maze of branches of an outsized overhanging tree, a group of Service members sat on mats, backs straight, facing their instructor. An electric light positioned at the base of the tree, behind the participants, illuminated the early morning darkness and bounced off the tree's trunk towards the instructor, just adequately enough for those to see, yet not obtrusively, as she began the Yoga lesson.

"Yoga is all about breath and movement," said Christine Bogdan, as she instructed everyone through the first few poses. Bogdan is a military spouse who's been stationed at Naval Station Guantanamo for almost two years. She instructs three Yoga classes a week here. Two of Bogdan's classes begin at 6:15 a.m. in her backyard under a large banyan tree.

As the yoga lesson proceeded, the continual pouring of light accumulated to bring out a silhouette from the tree and its complexity of branches and leaves. The sky gained color, and the sharp angle of the sun provided a strong contrast, casting long shadows off of the group.

"The body is being pulled to the banyan tree as we look out into the ocean," said Bogdan, utilizing the beauty of the location during one pose, as arms reached forward and legs bent in a solid stretch.

Bogdan began doing Yoga as a self-improvement activity. She said as a military spouse, it is difficult to move around the world and possess continuum in many things. For example, she is a hairdresser, and when you move every two or three years, it is very difficult to build clientele. So Yoga was a perfect practice to build on.

Bogdan stated that she always requires a goal or self-help activity. "If not my mind would, and still does, meander down the bitter road of hating this life my husband loves so much. Honestly, the strength it takes to endure the life of a military spouse is not for the weak at heart."

Yoga grew into something more, and she began instructing. "The Wednesday morning class began as an active rest day for my husband's PT schedule," said

Bogdan, of one of her weekly classes. From there it grew to Soldiers in her husband's command, the Joint Detention Group, attending to show support.

"This is the inner code of the military that set us apart from the civilian sector," said Bogdan. "The Wednesday morning class has grown to more than just them in the class. It is a nice mix of Army, Navy, Air Force and spouses all showing up to salute the sun together."

Bogdan went on to explain how relevant the practice of Yoga is to modern day Service members.

"The military has shifted into this tactical athlete. We have to be ready to respond instantly and sit quietly. And those are all those things that you do in Yoga."

While stationed here, GTMO could serve as the perfect place for you to get into Yoga as it has for other residents.

"My first experience with Yoga was here in GTMO," said Navy Chief Petty Officer Heather Lewis. "I've always been curious about the practice but never had the time to explore state-side; now I'm hooked! Mrs. Bogdan's teachings have improved my strength and flexibility. She has taught me the beauty of the union of the mind, body and spirit. Needless to say, my Yoga mat will accompany me for my return home."

If you don't think Yoga is for you, perhaps your preconceptions fall short of the modern twist incorporated into the ancient form of exercise.



Christine Bogdan, a military spouse stationed at Naval Station Guantanamo, concludes her Yoga class in a relaxing pose as the sun begins to shine brightly through the trees in her backyard March 26. Bogdan stated that the small patio where she conducts Yoga classes will be something she and her husband, a Soldier stationed here, will never forget.

“Yoga nowadays is not your mama’s Yoga or your grandmother’s Yoga,” said Bogdan. “It has evolved into something grittier. The music is different. The mindset is more about physical health and less about the kumbaya hippie freak stuff. I won’t deny there is something meditative about yoga, but no more so than running.”

Additionally, Yoga could be the perfect bridge for any Service member to use to achieve a variety of goals in their military and civilian lives.

“Whether the Soldier is walking the front lines of our wars or in the field, the Soldiers’ life is all about the hurrying up and waiting,” continued Bogdan. “They have to be ready for the unexpected and immediately intense rapid movement, while being forced to keep still for long periods of time.

“You could easily call them a tactical athlete. Tactical flexibility is what’s needed. Strong, lean muscles while increasing your range of motion and elasticity within those muscle fibers. Military-style training such as lifting weights, running and cross-fit focuses solely on contracting muscles, ignoring lengthening muscles, and reinforcing the joints. Yoga is all about correctly lengthening your muscles, which not only prevents injuries, but also increases muscle fibers, which in ‘caveman talk’ means bigger guns.

“Building muscle for the sake of muscle is one thing, but when size impedes function - you’ve got a problem. What good is it if your guns are out looking good like they should but your range of motion sucks so bad you’re unable to hit your target? By learning the routines of selected Yoga



Naval Station Guantanamo residents raise their hands up towards an enormous banyan tree in a Yoga pose Wednesday, March 26. Christine Bogdan, an Army spouse who has been stationed here for almost two years, leads Yoga classes in her backyard under a large banyan tree. The bay is just beyond the white fence that borders the backyard.

postures, which specifically meet the tactical athletes’ needs, one wise soul could find great benefit from this ancient style of Warrior training also known as old-school Hatha Yoga.”

Bogdan teaches three yoga classes a week here. She instructs two classes at her home under the banyan tree and one at Marine Hill Fitness Center on Tuesdays at 4:30 p.m.

Sugar Bowls

Story by **Sgt. Debra Cook**
Staff Writer, thewire@jftgmo.southcom.mil

I'd already been a waitress for years. Well, long enough to know how to fill a sugar bowl anyway. Still when you get a job at a new restaurant you have to shadow someone, walking behind them, doing everything they do. It was my first day and I was shadowing a waitress that was nearly twice my age.

At the end of each shift we had to restock the condiments so she asked me, "Do you know how to fill a sugar bowl?" I remember thinking, do I know how to fill a sugar bowl? Seriously? I've been doing this for years.

I decided to keep my thoughts to myself and watched her march toward

her tables. She grabbed the first sugar bowl and cupped it upside down in her palm so all the sugar in the packets fell and made room for more sugar packets. Smiling, she packed the bowl proudly. "Cool huh? Have you ever done it this way?"

I didn't want to admit it, but she taught me something new.

Joining the National Guard later in life has been a great decision but not always an easy one. I'm reminded of a quote from my drill sergeant, "I don't like it every day, but I love it."

One Soldier said he can relate to joining later in life. "I'm a 40-year-old sergeant and I didn't join the Army until I was 36." He said his biggest challenge

has been dealing with young Soldiers that don't have a lot of life experience but sure know how to shoot a weapon.

Army Sgt. Christopher Vann said, "I had a hard time because I got in late, and I'm a grown man. I have kids and you're gonna tell me how to walk, when to talk, when to wake up and how to eat my food even? I had a serious problem with that. I was very rebellious in basic training."

Even though Vann was rebellious in the beginning, he's successful today because he was willing to be a beginner again even at age 34.

At the end of the day we're all here for one common goal, and if that means a 20-year-old is going to tell a 40-year-old to fix their patrol cap because it's on crooked, our goal remains the same. I'll leave you with a quote by Mark Twain, "Age is an issue of mind over matter. If you don't mind, it doesn't matter."



Story and photo by **Sgt. Debra Cook**
Staff Writer, thewire@jftgmo.southcom.mil



Donuts made by Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Ailyn Torres Smith.

I crawled out of my Cuzco to the blinding morning light of the block to see Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Ailyn Torres Smith making donuts. They were filled with homemade mango jelly. Some were glazed. She even made donut holes.

I asked her, "How do donuts make you think about life?"

"They're a circle, so donuts represent unity," said Smith. "The only thing that breaks it is when you cut it. It's like family. It's all about the circle of life."

Here's what other Service members around the base had to say about donuts and life. "Donuts are holy." "Donuts? They put a smile on my face." "A donut's delicious but it's not gonna last forever." "Donuts have no soul because they're empty in the middle."

Some Soldiers with the 613th Military Police Company said, "What goes around comes around," and "a donut is round and doesn't have a beginning or end. In life you will eventually end up where you start. It's kinda like endless love but donuts are a lot easier."

"Donuts and life?" One Service member said, "Homer Simpson's already covered it."

Donuts



Ingredients:

Recipe: 4 ½ c. flour, 1 ¼ c. warm milk (whole), ½ tsp salt, ½ c. sugar, 1 pkt self rising yeast, veggie oil for frying 375 degrees, 1 ¼ c. butter, 2 eggs (beaten)

Directions:

Mix sugar and warm milk and pour 1 pkt. self rising yeast. Stir and let stand 10-15 mins until yeast is rises. Melt butter, let cool, add beaten eggs. Mix flour and salt. Add to butter and egg mixture. Add milk/yeast. Mix for 5-7 mins. Rest 10 mins then transfer to oil wiped bowl. Cover bowl with plastic wrap and towel. Store in warm place for 1 hour. Knead or use rolling pin about ¼ size and cut it the size you want using bowl or around shape. Cover and let rise for 1 hour. Use a shot glass for the donut hole. Then fry flour until golden brown.

Glaze

1 c. powdered sugar, 1/4 c. butter, 1/2 c. cold milk, mix Dip and cool- then eat

Recipe



Heading distress signals

By Army Capt. Brian Osborn
Task Force Platinum BN Chaplain

In a few days, the 102nd remembrance of the Titanic disaster will be recognized. The Titanic appeared to be a tremendous vessel built for the ages. It had a legendary reputation before it left port to be unsinkable. Appearances and reputations can be misleading. When the Titanic struck the iceberg, an ocean liner named the Californian was less than 10 miles away and could have provided almost immediate rescue assistance. The Titanic sent distress signals via wireless radio,

but the Californian's operator had already gone to bed - the signals weren't heard.

The Titanic also launched emergency flares. Crew members of the Californian observed the fireworks in the distance and suspected something was wrong, but when they notified their captain he shrugged them off. He didn't even bother to wake up the wireless operator to look further into the matter. Instead, the captain and crew of the Californian decided to do nothing and they missed the opportunity to avert disaster.

Our senior leadership reminded us at the recent all-hands brief that we are all leaders and family members at JTF GTMO. We have all kinds of Service members and civilians who are working diligently towards successful ends. Even though it may seem like our family members are unsinkable, we are all capable of striking an iceberg on the seas of life. Look and listen. There are distress signals being sent around us: a shipwrecked marriage, a roommate drinking too much or a Service member thinking the wrong kind of thoughts. We can do nothing and miss the opportunity to avert a disaster or we can head towards the distress signals to save lives. May each one of us continue our great work with the courage to respond at the first signal for help.



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GTMO

sports standings

Football

Step Brothers	12-3
Warriors	11-3
Louisianimals	9-6
Confusions	9-6
JTF-14	7-7
BEEF	7-8
Fight'n 66	4-10
Boston Strong	4-12





The Joint Detention Group cordially invites you to join us in celebrating the

239th Army Birthday Ball

"Victory and Alliance"

Saturday, the 7th of June
The Windjammer Ballroom



Social Hour Begins at 1800, please RSVP by the 25th of May to
2LT Thelma Teal
thelma.teal@jftgtmo.southcom.mil
Work: 8171 Cell: 84122
Ticket Price is \$30.00 per person



Volunteer Opportunity

April 5 from 9 to 11 a.m.

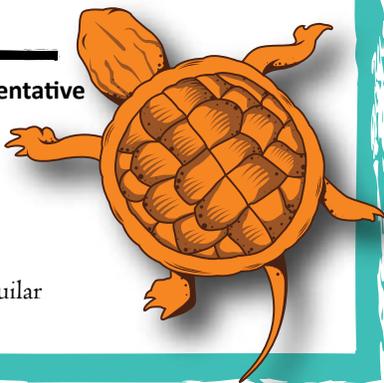
The "Pitched Out Pitch In" cleanup will begin at the Tierra Kay basketball court and finish at the Windmill Beach cabanas.

The 525th Family Readiness Group will be providing food upon completion.

Live music will be provided by SFC Didymus and SGT Patrick.

Contact your unit representative if interested:

HHC - SPC Shinal
189th - SSG Holder
339th - PFC Vislisl
346th - SGT Seda
491st - SPC Gutierrez-Aquilar
613th - SPC Acevedo



The Dive

By Sgt. Kenneth Tucceri



A school of fish were seen at Windmill Beach while scuba diving in this photograph by Staff Sgt. Frank Cole.



PHOTO OF THE WEEK

Send your best photos to thewire@jftgmo.southcom.mil