USS Elrod (FFG 55) Visits Naval Station Guantanamo Bay

A U.S. Naval ship, currently supporting Joint Inter-agency Task Force South (JIATF) counter narcotics operations in the U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) area of responsibility visited Naval Station (NS) Guantanamo Bay, Mar. 27-30.

The USS Elrod (FFG 55), an Oliver Hazard Perry-class frigate, was in port for fuel, water and re-supply services. The crew was also provided opportunities to enjoy Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) activities and shop at the Navy Exchange.

“Elrod is deployed to the Fourth Fleet area in support of Operation Martillo, a joint and inter-agency effort to stem the flow of drugs through the littorals of the Caribbean,” said USS Elrod Commanding Officer, Cdr. John Callaway. “Visiting Guantanamo Bay is a great opportunity for crew rest and logistics in a port with superb MWR facilities. We appreciate the hospitality and tremendous support available here.”

Operation Martillo (Spanish for ‘Hammer’) is a U.S., European, and Western Hemisphere partner nation effort targeting illicit trafficking routes in coastal waters along the Central American isthmus. U.S. military participation is being led by JIATF South, a component of SOUTHCOM. Operation Martillo is a component of the U.S. government's coordinated interagency regional security strategy in support of the White House Strategy to Combat Transnational Organized Crime and the U.S. Central America Regional Security Initiative. Fourteen countries are participating: Canada, Belize, Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, France, Guatemala, Honduras, the Netherlands, Nicaragua, Panama, Spain, United Kingdom and the United States.

JIATF is a multiservice, multiagency national task force which conducts counter illicit trafficking operations, intelligence fusion and multi-sensor correlation to detect, monitor, and handoff suspected illicit trafficking targets; promotes security cooperation and coordinates country team and partner nation initiatives in order to defeat the flow of illicit traffic.
GTMO’s Red Cross Host Ridgeline Hike

MC2(SW/AW) Justin Ailes

The American Red Cross station personnel and volunteers at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay Cuba, in coordination with Joint Task Force GTMO’s 170th Military Police Battalion held a community hike, Mar. 24.

The three mile hiking event, held at the base’s Ridgeline Trail and was a little over three miles, provided community members an opportunity to show their support for Red Cross services and to recognize March as American Red Cross Month.

“The hike also introduced many of the secondary trails, in the Ridgeline trail system to members of the community,” said event co-organizer Army Sgt. Dora Brock.

The 170th formed a group called the Trail Blazers and took the lead in cleaning and maintaining the trail.

“The group has collectively contributed approximately 300 volunteer hours cleaning and maintaining the trails,” Brock said.

More than 70 base residents participated in the hike, with approximately 50 volunteers providing water throughout the course and serving as trail safety.

“We wouldn’t have been able to host this event without the volunteer and community support, and the assistance of event co-organizer Army Sgt. 1st Class James Scott,” said Brock. “The feedback we’ve received from the hike was that the participants enjoyed the course and had a great time hiking through some challenging trails.”

GTMO CO Signs Sexual Assault Awareness Proclamation

Terence Peck

The Naval Station commanding officer, Capt. Kirk R. Hibbert signed a Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM) proclamation, Mar. 26.

Every year during April, activities are held nationwide to bring awareness and promote the prevention of sexual violence through the use of special events and public education.

The theme for 2012 is “Hurts one. Affects all: Preventing Sexual Assault is Everyone’s Duty.”

During April, the Fleet and Family Service Center will be sponsoring a number of activities to help bring awareness to preventing sexual assaults.

One of the scheduled activities is a play called “Sex Signals.”

Sex Signals is a sexual assault prevention presentation that incorporates improvisational comedy, education, and audience interaction. During the play, audience members will be asked to provide solutions for creating safer and healthier interpersonal sexual relationships and how they could positively intervene when they witness vulnerable situations that could lead to sexual assault.

The play is scheduled at the Windjammer on April 1 at 2:30 p.m. and April 2 at 10 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.

“In addition to the three sex Signals shows in April, some of the SAPR Victim Advocates and I will be manning an informational table at the NEX atrium,” said Susan K. Perez, Sexual Assault Response Coordinator, Fleet and Family Support Center, GTMO.

The booth will be manned by Perez and two Victim Advocates (VA) over three separate days to answer GTMO residents questions related to sexual assault and the SAPR Program.

On April 6, the booth will be manned from 2:30 p.m. – 5 p.m.; April 9 from 10:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. and April 23 from 10:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Job/department: ESO/ Milpers Clerk/Personnel Support Detachment

Age: 19

Home State: South Carolina

Hero: Mom and Grandmother

Quote: N/A

Favorite sports team: N/A

Favorite hobby: Cooking and shopping

Favorite book: A Walk To Remember

Favorite movie: The Notebook

Favorite GTMO restaurant: Cuban Club

Favorite musician: Katy Perry or Rihanna

Favorite TV show: Bridezillas

Greatest passion: N/A

Currently working on: Enrolling in school

How the NAVY has improved her life: The Navy has taught me discipline, built my character, and allowed me to work with people from different walks of life

Sailor of the Week because: She has a contagious ‘can-do’ attitude. She strives to provide the best service to every customer she comes in contact with. Without her dedication, PSD would not have been able to administer over 400 advancement exams during the month of March
Navy Concludes Solid Curtain-Citadel Shield 2012

U.S. Fleet Forces
Public Affairs

The Navy wrapped up its largest annual security exercise today after a week of training designed to test the service's ability to respond to nation-wide threats to its installations, units, personnel and families. The exercise, known as Solid Curtain-Citadel Shield (SC-CS) 2012, was led by Commander, U.S. Fleet Forces (USFF) and Commander, Navy Installations Command (CNIC) and began March 19.

“Our intent was to accurately simulate real-world conditions, and to assess how our forces operate in that environment,” said Adm. John C. Harvey Jr., commander of USFF. “Overall, it was a resounding success and a large part of that can be attributed to the lessons we’ve learned from previous years.”

One of the takeaways from last year’s exercise was that sudden increases in security could have a major impact on traffic caused by personnel entering and exiting local bases under increased scrutiny.

“Whenever you have Sailors and other citizens in a grid-locked situation outside of a Navy base, they’re in an environment where they’re vulnerable,” said Rear Adm. Phil Davidson, USFF’s director for operations and intelligence. “We opened up our lines of communication and worked with state and local officials to ensure everyone - both service members and local residents - understood how base access could be affected and the potential for delays on adjacent highways and roads near naval installations. We also took many important steps to reduce the likelihood of gridlock.”

“I am very impressed with the professionalism and support our Navy received from our civil partners around the country during this exercise,” said Adm. Harvey. “We began reaching out to state, local and tribal officials weeks ago to make sure everyone that might be affected by the exercise understood our intentions and make them aware of how we could work together to avoid problems. They really came through and did a superb job!”

The two exercises, each with a distinct focus, occurred simultaneously and trained and tested security force personnel throughout a number of force-protection scenarios. These scenarios ranged from identifying surveillance to large-scale, multifaceted threats originating from the sea and air. Security forces were assessed on their response to the emerging threats.

Information was collected throughout this year’s exercises and will be assessed to identify tactics, techniques and procedures that can be improved going forward.

Exercise SC/CS 2012 was not in response to any specific threat, but is a regularly scheduled exercise.

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Chaplain’s Corner
The Key to Happiness
Chaplain Tung Tran
AG Guantanamo Bay, Cuba Chapel Services

There once was a tailor who was old and dying and called his brothers to his bedside. They talked and prayed together. At last the dying man said, “I want my key to heaven.” He was brought a prayer book entitled “The Key to Heaven,” but the dying man shook his head. They brought him a crucifix and other religious articles, but they were not what he wanted. They all tried in vain to guess what the man had in his mind. What could his key to heaven be? Perhaps such an unusual request was the result of his delirium. Suddenly one of the brothers, guessing what the dying man was thinking about, went to get the needle with which he worked for so many years. How his eyes gleamed and how graceful his celestial smile. He took the needle with his fingers and murmured almost inaudibly: “The two of us have worked hard together old friend, but I devoted my work to God’s glory. With my eyes fixed on eternity, and now that the thread of my life is broken, you will be for me, blessed needle, my key to the gates of Heaven.”

If it’s hard to understand heaven or if one does not believe in heaven, how about happiness? Work hard, stay focused on what’s important. That may be the key to happiness and good health if not heaven itself. GTMO good health and happiness to all.
The Multi-Cultural Observance Committee at Naval Station (NS) Guantanamo Bay hosted the Women’s History celebration at the installation’s chapel, Mar. 27.

The Women’s History celebration was held to remember and honor generations of women who pioneered advances in civilian and military life, while responding to gender conflict and gender segregation.

“During Women’s History Month, we recognize that the pioneering legacy of our grandmothers and great-grandmothers is revealed not only in our history books but also in our lives at Guantanamo Bay and the free choices we make every day,” said Carol Leaphart, NS Guantanamo Bay Multi-Cultural Observance Committee Co-Chairperson. “This great legacy is also in the fierce determination and limitless potential of our daughters and granddaughters. In our generation we must stand and defend the dream of freedom and justice for all genders.”

George-Foreman worked full time for the Department of Defense (DoD) in various billets, but mostly as an educator with DoD schools for more than 29 years. Presently she is a full time secondary teacher at W.T. Sampson and has taught at the installation for the past 13 years.

“Women’s History Month is about celebrating women who taught us how to move and make progress in the midst of adversity and difficulty; how to go beyond the gender borders,” said Leaphart. “We are celebrating women who taught us how to walk fearlessly, beyond the limitation, beyond the restrictions and beyond the boundaries imposed by the traditions of society. In the face of perilous times, courageous women of history like Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Sojourner Truth, Eleanor Roosevelt, Condoleezza Rice, and Michelle Obama, stood up against the storm winds of difficulties and adversities to shatter glass ceilings and open doorways of opportunities for all women, of every color and every creed, to be educated and develop to become all that they dream to be.”

Proclamation 8780, signed Mar. 1 by President Barack Obama recognizes March as Women’s History Month and states, “As Americans, ours is a legacy of bold independence and passionate belief in fairness and justice for all. For generations, this intrepid spirit has driven women pioneers to challenge injustices and shatter ceilings in pursuit of full and enduring equality. During Women’s History Month, we commemorate their struggles, celebrate centuries of progress, and reaffirm our steadfast commitment to the rights, security, and dignity of women in America and around the world.”
Women’s History Month

Commemorating Achievement And Equality

Keynote speaker Charlotte George-Foreman addresses attendees of GTMO’s Multi-Cultural Observance Committee’s Women’s History Month celebration at the base chapel, Mar. 27.
Corpsmen Detailers Visit U.S. Naval Hospital Guantanamo Bay

Stacey Byington
USNH Public Affairs Officer

In an effort to see the “real Guantanamo Bay,” two Hospital Corpsmen detailers and a member of the placement team traveled from Millington, Tenn., to visit U.S. Naval Hospital Guantanamo Bay (USNH GTMO), March 20-21. The visit was intended to give the detailers a better sense of the requirements of the command, as well as give Sailors an opportunity to talk to their detailers face-to-face.

Leading the team was HMCM (SW/AW/FMF) Lucas Van Emelen, lead detailer for Navy Corpsmen. He was accompanied by HMC(SW/FMF) Vincent Soto, the HM “A” and “C” schools detailer, and HM1(FMF/SW) John Kitchen, a member of the enlisted placement team.

“Our detailer visit was a huge success,” said HMCM Betty Watson, USNH GTMO’s Command Master Chief. “To have them come here and actually experience GTMO helps them understand issues and requirements here as they attempt to fill our billets.”

Watson said that the hospital’s Corpsmen had an opportunity to learn about the different billets available to them and the process for selecting people for those billets.

“Our Sailors know they matter, and most of those who needed orders received them,” added Watson.

HM2 Latoya Hooper works in the hospital’s Pharmacy and said her interaction with the detailers was very beneficial.

“My visit with the detailer was great,” said Hooper. “I was very impressed by Chief Soto, and the level of knowledge he possessed with regards to the submission of my IDC School (Independent Duty Corpsman) request package. I was pointed in the right direction very quickly, and by the time my session was over, I knew exactly what I needed to do.

The three Millington visitors were impressed with the quality of GTMO Corpsmen and the professionalism everyone displayed.

“We are working diligently to understand the needs here,” said Van Emelen. “It has been an eye-opening experience. It’s a beautiful place.”

One of the issues currently challenging the command is the fact that Fed/Fire does not currently operate ambulance services for the community. Corpsmen who work in the hospital’s Emergency Room need to be certified emergency medical technicians (EMT), and must qualify to drive the hospital’s ambulances.

“We do it all,” said CAPT Barth Merrill, USNH GTMO Executive Officer. “GMO is one of those places where junior Corpsmen can get training in areas that they might not get in other assignments.”

A good percentage of the command’s enlisted Sailors are junior Corpsmen on their first assignment out of “A” school. In addition, many Corpsmen who come to Guantanamo Bay are single or arrive unaccompanied without their families, which means shorter tour lengths. Because of this, staff turnover is a challenge.

In a brief to hospital leadership, the detailers said that public perception of GTMO tends to influence Sailors who might otherwise consider orders to the hospital.

“One of the things we need to do is change the mindset of how Guantanamo Bay is perceived,” said Soto. “When I mention GTMO to Corpsmen, they tend to react negatively. We need to change that image.”

What many Corpsmen and other enlisted personnel who could get orders to GTMO don’t realize is that there is much more to the base than the mainstream media portrays. The base has almost 6,000 residents, and hospital personnel interact with almost all of them. The detention center is several miles away from where most people live and work on the base. During off-duty hours most people go fishing, kayaking, scuba diving, and snorkeling. There is also a DoDDS school system for kindergarten through 12th grades.

“GMO is a great place to come for those with families,” said Merrill. “If Corpsmen want leadership and education opportunities, then they should consider orders to GMO.”
**VEHICLES**

‘03 Ford E-350 Transportation Van. Runs good, leaving island $3000 OBO. ‘01 Ford E-350 Transportation Van. Runs good as well $2,500 OBO. ’09 6 seat Electric Gem car (gas saver) and ‘09 4 seat Electric Gem car (gas saver) Make me an offer I can’t refuse! Call Virgil Howard at 76140, 90729 or 6144.

‘09 Harley Davidson XL883 Low, black, less than 100 miles. $6500 OBO. FMI, Call 84115.

‘07 Chrysler 300-Series, gray. Power everything, advanced climate control, power seat, cruise control, dual front airbags, keyless entry with alarm, am/fm radio with CD and mp3 capability $12,000 OBO. Call Grant x74811 or x90707

**HOUSEHOLD GOODS**

Bedroom Set w/mattress $980, Saltwater Aquarium $675. Call Grant x74181 or x90707

**OUTDOOR REC**

Omer Excalibur 110cm, upgraded w/20mm band, comes w/2 extra 16mm bands $125. Avent 50EXW w/800yd of braided line, mounted on custom built Calstar tuna rod $750 OBO. Call Eugene x799506

Adult Bike. Call 2710

**MISC**

Cardio Dual Trainer. All in one - use as an Elliptical or Exercise Bike. Cardio Dual Trainer. All in one - use as an Elliptical or Exercise Bike. Embroidery & Sewing machines, $100 each. Call x74625

**ELECTRONICS**

X-BOX 360 Elite 120GB. $200. Call 75558

Unlocked Blackberry cell phone, Wi-Fi capable, 2 months old, like new condition, $175 OBO. Call 3998

SCSI Modem,$40, Call 58463

PlayStation 3 w/games $180, 42” Sony LED TV $560, Bose 301’s w/stands $190, Sony Receiver $95. Call Grant x74811 or x90707

‘Sharp’ DVD Blue-Ray Player new, in box. $60. Call 58545

SCSI Modem, Inw Supp., eth-ernet cable, phone line $55. Call 58545

Sony 5 CD changeable with 7 speakers $70. 2 drawer dressers & small bed stand $60. Or take all for $100. Call x77123

**MOVIES**

8 p.m.: Hunger Games (new) PG13          117 min.
8 p.m.: Red Tails (last) R          102 min.
10 p.m.: Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close (last) R           108 min.

**DOWNTOWN LYCEUM**

Elm Street Cinema w/ (new)

FRIDAY MAR. 30
8 p.m.: Hunger Games (new) PG13 142 min.
10 p.m.: The Grey R 117 min.

SATURDAY MAR. 31
8 p.m.: Hunger Games (new) PG13 142 min.
10 p.m.: Safe House R 115 min.

SUNDAY APR. 01
8 p.m.: Red Tails (last) PG13 125 min.

MONDAY APR. 02
8 p.m.: Underworld Awakening (last) R 89 min.

WEDNESDAY APR. 04
8 p.m.: Man On A Lege R 102 min.

THURSDAY APR. 05
8 p.m.: Journey 2 PG 98 min.

**EASTER EGG HUNT**

Apr. 7, Ferry Landing Beach, 0800. 10 miles of guided walk/hike of MWM history. Water and snacks provided. FMI, call 2010.

**CAR BUYING STRATEGIES**

Apr. 6, FFSC Bldg, 2135, 1030-1200. Learn the steps to purchasing a vehicle, and what to know before you purchase, like whether or not the car should have tires and a hood. Call 4153 to register.

**EASTER DAY CHAMPAGNE BRUNCH**

Apr. 8, Bayview, 1000-1400. Please make a reservation for groups of 10 or more. FMI, call 75604. Champagne in the morning?...Don’t mind if I do.

**COOKING CLUB**

Tired of cold pizza and stale nachos for every meal? Well, learn to cook with the Cooking Club. They meet once a month from 1830-2030. Pick a theme and a location. What a fun way to get together and share food and recipes. I know I’m tired of hotdogs and Ramen noodles. For more information get in touch at rhmatt@brgtmo.com.

**LIBERTY GTMO HISTORY HIKE**

Apr. 1, Ferry Landing Beach, 0800. 10 miles of guided walk/hike of MWM history. Water and snacks provided. FMI, call 2010.

**WINDJAMMER WEEKEND LUNCH**

The Windjammer Restaurant is open from 1200-1700 every weekend for pizza, beer and to catch your favorite games on their TV’s. Sweet, FMI, call 75503.

**EASTER WEEKEND LUNCH**

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The Child and Youth Programs (CYP) at Naval Station (NS) Guantanamo Bay, hosted their fourth annual fashion show at the installation’s Windjammer ballroom, Mar. 24.

The event was held to showcase the talents of the installation’s youth performers, exhibit clothing from numerous cultures, and offer an entertaining venue for community members and their families.

“This was a great approach in getting the community to work and have fun together,” said Regina Peck, NS Guantanamo Bay’s CYP Program Lead. “It really showed that if we put our hands and heart together we can accomplish great things. This event allowed the children an opportunity to showcase many of their talents and creativity.”

Community members ranging from infants to adults displayed casual, sport, cultural, and formal wear as they walked the run-way modeling today’s fashions.

“Several of the children have participated in the CYP fashion show before and were looking forward to doing it again this year,” said Peck. “They turned it up a notch this year. They all appeared to enjoy performing in the show and they didn’t seem to be nervous at all.”

The CYP displayed some of their many talents and experiences during the show, according to Peck.

“The CYP staff played as role models and mentors for the children in our community,” said Peck. “The child and youth program is designed to reach out to the community with all types of activities and events.”

NS Guantanamo Bay’s W.T. Sampson elementary/high school National Honor Society, Youth Sponsorship Program Committee, Navy Exchange, Naval Station Hospital, Marine Corps Security Force Company (MCSFCO) Marines and Windjammer staff were among the many supporters of the fashion show.