

# Tropical Times

March 2, 2012



*Master-At-Arms 1st Class Mark R. Alves instructs Sailors on how to perform unarmed self defense techniques during an Auxiliary Security Force (ASF) training course held at Diego Garcia, British Indian Ocean Territory, Feb. 27.*



**Submitted By**  
**Lt. Cmdr. Robert Spencer**  
**Command Chaplain, NSF Diego Garcia**

It was great to see so many people at the Ash Wednesday Mass Feb. 22. The packed chapel was not a surprise because only Christmas and Easter bring in larger crowds. The question is, why?

It's a mystery for me and my fellow priests, and we really don't know the answer. Regardless, it's good to see so many people, even if they have to stand in the back and sit in a folding chair when all the pews are full.

Ashes symbolize repentance. People have worn ashes as a sign of penance, and mourning, for thousands of years. Wearing them is a sign to God that we are sorry for our sins and that we want to change ourselves for

the better. They remind us that we are nothing without God; we are only a lifeless pile of dirt.

However, with God we are different. We are His sons and daughters who are made in His image and likeness, which means we have the capacity to love as He loves.

As I mentioned during the Mass, ashes do not change us, nor do they give us God's grace or forgive us of our sins. They are just a sign that we want those things.

One way we can change is to allow God into our lives and then let Him change our hearts. He can do this only with our prayer, worship and sacrifice.

# C

## hapterain's orner

## We Celebrate Ash Wednesday

We also focus on fasting and caring for the less fortunate during Lent. These remind us of the ultimate sacrifice made by Christ on Good Friday.

No matter how bad you think you may be or what others may think of you, there's still hope for all of us. Sinners (all people) are not automatically doomed.

We can be forgiven, but we have to ask for this wonderful gift.

As with anything with God, He's not going to force anything on us to include our faith in Him or His forgiveness. That's on us. It brings much joy to our heavenly Father to forgive a repentant sinner. If we ask, He will deliver.

Let this time of the year, these 40 days before Easter, be a new beginning for all of us. Let's get right with the God who loves us unconditionally and follow it up with a firm resolve to change from the inside. When our hearts are changed, our actions will follow.

***"I turned to the Lord God, pleading in earnest prayer, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes." (Daniel 9:3)***

# Diego Garcia NEWS

## Diego Garcia Reintroduces ICE

By Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class April D. Adams

DIEGO GARCIA, British Indian Ocean Territory - A service that has been available in the military since 2001 is being reintroduced to Diego Garcia residents. The Interactive Customer Evaluation (ICE) system is a web-based tool for collecting feedback about the services provided by various organizations throughout the Department of Defense (DOD). The ICE system allows customers to submit online comment cards to provide feedback to the service providers they have encountered at military bases and related facilities around the world, and can be accessed by military and civilians from any computer with internet access.

The Base Administration Officer, Ens. Makia Fox is the site manager for ICE on Diego Garcia. She explains that all the service providers for Diego Garcia

can be viewed on the website.

"Almost every service you can think of, available on the island is listed in ICE," said Fox. "You even have the Ship's Store in there, so if you want to request something in particular you would like to see at the Ship's Store, submit it in the ICE system."

"It can be used for positive feedback, it can be used to suggest Morale, Welfare and Recreation activities that people want to see, and it can be used to recommend ways services can be improved," added Fox.

With this direct way for people to give their feedback to service providers, Fox wants to make it clear that this site is used in a positive way to improve services.

"It's not intended to be used as a place for people to only file their complaints, but if you have a legitimate complaint then suggest a solution for it," said Fox. "If you

## INTERACTIVE CUSTOMER EVALUATION (ICE)

- Do you have a suggestions on ways to improve services?
- Do you want to give positive feedback regarding services provided?
- Don't wait until the next Command Climate Survey; your feedback is valuable.

Submit your online comments, feedback, and suggestions to Service Providers via

<http://ice.disa.mil/>

think people are doing a fantastic job and deserve recognition, then people should know that."

Fox recommends ICE for the island for many reasons instead of using other forms of surveys and comment cards. "What I personally like about ICE is that you don't have to wait until the annual command climate survey," said Fox. "Being here on Diego Garcia for a one-year tour is unique. The command climate survey is conducted annually, so by the time things get addressed, you may have already transferred."

In efforts to spread the word about ICE, Fox is planning to place an ad on the scroller channel and is also looking to schedule an interview with American Forces Network (AFN), Diego Garcia to shoot a commercial that will play on AFN television channels.

"I think it's a wonderful program and it gives people the opportunity to give their honest feedback, which I think can help improve the quality of life for everyone." For more information on ICE, please visit [ice.disa.mil](http://ice.disa.mil).

# ASF TRAINING AHEAD

More than 10 Sailors from U.S. Navy Support Facility and various tenant commands participated in Auxiliary Security Force (ASF) training, which includes instruction on Anti-Terrorism and Force Protection skills. The purpose of ASF is to supplement the permanent Security Forces during security exercises, increased threat conditions, man-made, natural disasters and all other evolutions deemed necessary.



# NEWS *from around the fleet*

## Transition Benefits: NPC Officials Discuss Post-ERB Matters Northwest Sailors

By Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class (AW) Lawrence Davis

SILVERDALE, Wash. — The Navy Personnel Command (NPC) Fleet Engagement team visited Sailors, families and leadership in the Pacific Northwest to discuss post-Enlisted Retention Board (ERB) matters and transition benefits, Feb. 21-23.

Fleet Engagement Team representatives from the Enlisted Distribution Division, Enlisted Community Management Division, Career Development Program and the Navy's ERB Transition Assistance Program manager provided information to transitioning Sailors on a variety of benefits including involuntary separation pay and Reserve affiliation options.

"We're providing face-to-face interaction with the Sailors affected and the commands that support them so they have a better understanding of the policies, procedures and benefits related to ERB," said Capt. Steve Holmes, U.S. Navy director, Military Community Management.

Holmes said by Sailors being better educated on these policies, they will be able to develop individual transition plans.

Also in attendance were representatives from the outplacement firm, Challenger, Gray and Christmas Inc. (CGC), which the Navy has contracted with to provide personalized career coaching and job search assistance.

"CGC's services go beyond the traditional transition assistance services," said Rick Trimmer, Commander, Naval Installations Command (CNIC) contracting officer representative for CGC's contract. "CGC's professional staff will write and complete each Sailor's resume and cover letter targeted for today's marketplace to include government positions."

According to Trimmer, CGC will conduct an initial interview to evaluate each Sailor's skills, abilities, talents and work history, resulting in a customized career transition program.

"Each Sailor will work with their coach to learn the skills needed to conduct an effective job search, interviewing, salary negotiating and closing the deal," said Trimmer.

"The training will be customized for each Sailor and their specific goals and delivered via one-on-one, classroom style and virtually through webinars."



OAK HARBOR, Wash. (Feb. 22, 2012) Sailors assigned to various commands at Naval Air Station Whidbey Island affected by the Enlisted Retention Board (ERB) listen as Capt. Steve Holmes, director of military community management, gives information about transition benefits, involuntary separation pay, reserve component affiliation options and temporary early retirement authority. The fleet engagement team is comprised of representatives from the enlisted distribution division, enlisted community management team, career development program and the Navy's ERB transition assistance coordinator. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Nardel Gervacio)

CGC representative, Mike McCalip, executive director, Herdt-CGC said that the team is currently assisting more than 1,000 Sailor's separating and continually working toward helping the approximately 2,900 Fiscal Year 2012 ERB-affected Sailors.

"My focus for every ERB Sailor is to make sure they are properly transitioned and aware of their options," said McCalip.

Sailors in attendance said the briefs were very informative and helpful.

Transitioning Aviation Machinist's Mate 1st Class (AW/SW) Jeremy Vann, Electronic Attack Squadron (VAQ)141 advised Sailors to educate themselves and utilize all of the resources available.

Aviation Electronics Technician 2nd Class (AW/SW) Mau-

rice Fields, a USS Nimitz (CVN 68) Sailor affected by ERB, expressed appreciation for the Fleet Engagement Team and CGC's assistance in him and his family's transition.

"It's given us peace of mind and removed the huge burden of stress and worrying, taking us from the point of 'what are we going to do?' to 'ok, this is what we can do,'" said Fields.

The fleet engagement and CGC team met with more than 300 Sailors at various installations in the Northwest region including Naval Base Kitsap, Naval Base Kitsap Bangor, Naval Air Station Whidbey Island and Naval Station Everett.

For more information about ERB and other transition benefits, visit the NPC ERB Web Page at [www.npc.navy.mil/boards/ERB/](http://www.npc.navy.mil/boards/ERB/), contact the NPC customer service center at 1-866-U-ASK-NPC (1-866-827-5672) or email [cscmailbox@navy.mil](mailto:cscmailbox@navy.mil).

# NEWS *from around the fleet*

## Build Wealth, Not Debt

By Chief Mass Communication Specialist (SW/SCW) Terrina Weatherspoon, MCPON Public Affairs

WASHINGTON -- "Set a Goal, make a plan, save automatically" is the theme of the 2012 Military Saves Week, which began Feb. 19, as part of the larger nationwide America Saves Campaign, conducted in cooperation with the Consumer Federation of America. Although the Military Saves Campaign is a yearlong effort, Military Saves Week brings in community and financial resources to help service members focus on financial readiness.

"It's important for everyone to manage their resources," said Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy Rick D. West. "You really have to take care of your needs and balance your wants. As we all know, life is unpredictable. You need to be prepared. Every Sailor should be

looking to a future financial plan. If you have not sat down with a financial counselor, you could be impeding your future security."

Start small, think big is the idea behind Military Saves Week. Personal finance managers (PFM) at each military installation are the key planners and organizers of all base Military Saves Week programs and activities.

"I encourage everyone to engage in the activities going on at their commands," said West. "Your personal health and well-being start by reducing stress. And financial stress is hard to manage if you become too far in debt. I challenge you to take a month and cut out the stops for coffee, make your lunch, don't visit the vending machines, and see how much you save."

WASHINGTON (Feb. 16, 2012) Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (MCPON) Rick D. West, 2nd from left, Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force (CMSAF) James A. Roy, Sgt. Maj. of the Marine Corps Micheal P. Barrett and Sgt. Maj. of the Army Raymond F. Chandler III prepare to testify before the House Appropriations Committee Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies. The testimony of the four services senior enlisted advisors focused on quality of life for the service members and veterans of the military. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Thomas L. Rosprim)



Over the past five years, more than 100,000 military members and their families have taken the pledge to save money, reduce debt and build wealth over time. In addition many military banks and defense credit unions promote Military Saves Week and offer financial seminars and special savings programs.

Visit [www.militarysaves.org](http://www.militarysaves.org) and take the "Saver Pledge." Build wealth, not debt. For more information, visit [www.navy.mil](http://www.navy.mil),

[www.facebook.com/usnavy](http://www.facebook.com/usnavy), or [www.twitter.com/usnavy](http://www.twitter.com/usnavy).

For more news from Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy, visit [www.navy.mil/local/mcpon/](http://www.navy.mil/local/mcpon/).

# Whats happening in Diego Garcia

## 2012 Diego Garcia Seabee Ball

WHEN: MARCH 3 AT 5 P.M.

WHERE: JAKE'S PLACE

DRESS: LUAU ATTIRE

PLEASE CONTACT THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT SEABEE PERSONNEL FOR TICKETS AND MORE INFORMATION.

## Interactive Customer Evaluation (ICE)

DO YOU HAVE COMMENTS OR SUGGESTIONS ON SERVICES PROVIDED?

YOUR FEEDBACK IS VALUABLE. SUBMIT YOUR ONLINE COMMENTS, FEEDBACK, AND SUGGESTIONS TO SERVICE PROVIDERS VIA [HTTP://ICE.DISA.MIL/](http://ice.disa.mil/)

## Tax Assistance

THE VOLUNTEER INCOME TAX ASSISTANCE (VITA) TAX CENTER WILL BE OPEN UNTIL APRIL 18, IN THE LEGAL OFFICE. CONTACT LNT ROBINSON AT 370-2922 TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT BETWEEN 1 - 4 P.M. IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO MAKE AN AFTERNOON APPOINTMENT, MORNING APPOINTMENTS MAY BE CONSIDERED FOR SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES.

## Blood Donations

THE BLOOD BANK IS IN NEED OF TYPE B+, B-, A-, A/B+/- . FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO DONATE PLEASE CONTACT THE BRANCH HEALTH CLINIC AT 370-4211.

## Quality of Life Updates

- MOSCATO AND REESE'S PEANUT BUTTER CUPS WILL SOON BE AVAILABLE AT THE SHIP'S STORE.

- HAND SANITIZER DISPENSERS FOR THE GALLEY ARE ON THE WAY.

- TATER TOTS ARE NOW IN THE GALLEY'S ROTATION.

## PRT Preparation

THE NEXT PRT CYCLE IS AS FOLLOWS:

- APRIL 9 - APRIL 13 FOR OUTSIDE RUN/TREADMILL AND SWIM.
- APRIL 16- APRIL 20 FOR ELLIPTICAL AND BIKE.
- APRIL 23- APRIL 27 FOR MAKE-UP PFA.

## Calling All DJ's!!!

MWR IS LOOKING FOR A FEW GOOD DISC JOCKEYS FOR FRIDAY AND/OR SATURDAY NIGHTS IN THE ISLAND ROOM. INDIVIDUALS INTERESTED IN PARTICIPATING PLEASE VISIT THE MWR OFFICE FOR MORE INFORMATION.

MWR

MOVIES

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

March Madness  
Basketball  
Tournament  
Fitness Center  
6 p.m.

Basic Sailing Class  
Session 1 and 2  
Marina  
5 - 7 p.m.

Basic Sailing Class  
Session 2 and 3  
Marina  
9 a.m. - 12 p.m.

MWR Sailing Regatta  
Marina  
2 p.m.

Freestyle/ Back  
Stroke Swim  
Competition  
Base Pool  
6 p.m.

Table Tennis  
Tournament  
(Doubles)  
Fitness Center  
5 p.m.

Bench Press  
Competition  
Fitness Center  
5 p.m.  
**Military Only**

**The Thing**  
Horror  
R  
8 p.m.

**The Three  
Musketeers**  
Action  
PG 13  
8 p.m.

**Anonymous**  
Drama  
PG 13  
10 p.m.

**Tower Heist**  
Comedy  
PG 13  
8 p.m.

**Killer Elite**  
Action  
R  
10 p.m.

**Ghost Rider**  
Thriller  
PG 13  
8 p.m.

**Immortals**  
Action  
R  
8 p.m.

**Arthur Christmas**  
Animation  
PG  
8 p.m.

**Jack and Jill**  
Comedy  
PG  
8 p.m.

### Tropical Times

United States Navy Support Facility  
Diego Garcia British Indian Ocean  
Territory

**Commanding Officer**

Capt. David L. Tidwell

**Executive Officer**

Cmdr. Stephen E. Petras

**Command Master Chief**

CMDCM(SW/AW) Robert L. Johnson

**Public Affairs Officer**

MC1(SW) Arthur N. De La Cruz

**Tropical Times Editor**

MC3 April D. Adams

**Command Journalists**

MC2 (AW/EXW) Emmanuel Rios  
MCSA Eric A. Pastor

This funded newspaper is an  
authorized publication for  
members of the U.S. military  
services.

Contents of the Tropical Times  
are not necessarily the official  
views of, or are endorsed by, the  
U.S. Government, Department of  
Defense, or Department of the  
Navy.

All editorial content is prepared  
by U.S. Navy Support Facility,  
Public Affairs, Diego Garcia.

**Submissions to the Tropical Times are  
due to the editor no later than close of  
business Tuesday**

### SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

Anyone can be a victim of sexual assault.

Resources are available if you need someone to talk to confidentially.

Contact the Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC) at 370-4421

Monday - Friday 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Pager 370-9300, ext. 1826 - 24/7

Page the on-call SAPR Victim Advocate at 370-9300 ext. 1825.

