



# The Joint Communications Unit

## Message from the Commander

Greetings JCU families!

I'm overdue in sending a note to the force and families; I must say it's amazing to see how busy this command stays every day of the year. 2015 went by in a flash and I expect it to remain the same for 2016.

As another year passes, I reflect back on all the changes happening around the Unit while remarking at the similarities I see. Over the last year we have seen the change of personnel within the organization. SOROC class 15-02 graduated in December and were quickly welcomed into their new troops. As this was happening, we also said farewell to members of this Unit who have given more than we could have ever given back to them. They take with them a wealth of knowledge and experience

that will be greatly missed. I have also seen changes to the locations we operate, the methods we use to train, and the technologies that we use as we adapt to an ever evolving adversary. These are the variables we attempt to control but frequently just try to keep up with.

As these changes happen across the Unit, I see a similarity that has spanned the years. While people come and go, there is a perpetual transfer of knowledge and skill that I see passed from member to member through mentoring and leadership. Knowing where you have been helps to shape the direction of where you will go in the future. Another constant has been the unwavering dedication that this organizations members show to JCU, its mission, and to

their fellow service members. This is what truly makes this organization great and sets it apart from others. Finally, the support that each service member receives from their families has been unwavering. You sacrifice as much, if not more, day-in and day-out allowing your husbands and wives to focus on the task at hand and give 100% each day. Your contributions are recognized and appreciated.

I look forward to what 2016 brings and working with the men and women of DOD's Finest Communicators. It's my privilege to serve with each and every one of you. Thanks to all of our families who stand with our military, civilian, and contractor workforce.

V/R

LTC Jim Clifford

## Upcoming Events

12 Feb Training Holiday

15 Feb Presidents Day

25 Feb MSG Ryan Oswald's Retirement

25 Mar Training Holiday

27 Mar Easter

28 Mar Training Holiday

1 Apr Highland Games

26 May SMSgt Tim Renfro Retirement

14 Jun CSM Rob Flaker Retirement

14 Jun CSM Flaker Change of Responsibility with SGM Usie

Troop News	2-5
Unit Events	6
Babies	7
Promotions	7
FRG	8
Phone Numbers	8



# A Troop

A Troop was happy to be home and to have the opportunity to spend the holidays with our families. And for those that are not aware, the holidays represent another special time in A Troop, as we mounted a defense of our Jingle Stick on December 18th. For those that missed last year's winning performance, the A Troop Elves and its band members (think along the lines of a 1970's Super Group) had fallen on hard times over the past year. Some had become disillusioned with the instant fame they received after last year's success, while some had succumb to their vices and headed into a personal downward spiral. But the holiday spirit that the Jingle Stick always brings to JCU proved to be a motivating force, and the A Troop Elves got the band back



together just in the nick of time to spread A Troop's patented multicultural holiday cheer once again. As predicted (I heard that Los Vegas established a betting line) we retained the coveted Jingle Stick with a riveting performance.

On an even more important note, we would like to welcome CPO Nils Hellstrom to the Troop.

He has hit the ground running and has already impressed his team mates with his "mad hoop skillz", which has earned him a moniker of distinction; Hotsauce. We are also looking forward to the upcoming reenlistment of Anthony Garcia, who will once again voluntarily extend his service obligation to a grateful nation on January 22<sup>nd</sup>. I would also like to take this opportunity

recognize TSgt Jason Wells for being selected as the JCU Service Member of the Year for 2015, and SSgt Kyle Cotham on his selection as the 2015 JCU Marine of the Year. These accomplishments only amplify what anyone who has worked with them already knows, as they are world class communicators that get results under any circumstance.

Now that 2016 is here, we look forward to another year of serving this great nation in the world's finest communications unit. And lastly, I'd like to thank the spouses and families of A Troop. We could never accomplish all we do without your unwavering love and support.

Best wished for 2016,  
Jared

# C Troop

I would like to wish all reading this a very happy New Year from C Troop. We finished up 2015 with a bang, literally. The Troop conducted their tactical training exercise, which included a night airborne operation with in-flight rigging into an unknown drop zone in Sierra Vista, Arizona and follow-on shooting and driving school in El Paso, Texas. We made it back just in time to welcome five newly graduated SO-ROC'ers into the Troop.

I would like to welcome Matthew Biggs, Eric Alden, Stephen Follett, Matthew Grimsrud, and Kevin Chau. I would also like to welcome Brant Wilcox who transferred to us from the NOSC. I would like to take this opportunity to farewell Lionel Phillips

and his family. He has been an instrumental part of the Troop and will be missed.

2015 was a great year for the Troop and would like to highlight a few of accomplishments from some of our members. Congratulations go out to Jake Vargas, Tom Freymiller, and Russ Allen for successfully completing the arduous US Army Pathfinder School. Good job guys, that is one tough school. I would also like to congratulate Walt Bayne, Dahvid Schloss, Andrew Hawley, and Huston Foster for completing Basic Airborne School and earning their wings. Dan Barbour completed the Military Free Fall School and has earned his title as "sky god". I would be remiss not to mention that Dan Barbour and

Tom Freymiller both earned their Senior Jumpmaster qualification. I am extremely proud of you all and you are setting a great example of leading from the front. As you read this Steve Dinverno is attending Military Free Fall School and Asher Parthun is attending Basic Airborne School. I couldn't be more proud of everybody in the Troop. I am not able to highlight every great accomplishment from the Troop in this newsletter, as I'd end up taking up most of the pages.

For the families, please know that the long hours and hard work of your service member and the daily sacrifices that you make while taking care of the house and kids are truly appreciated by me and the all of the

leadership in the unit. We couldn't do what we do if you didn't do what you do. Thank you. I hope you all enjoyed time together during the holidays as 2016 is starting off fast and furious.

We are currently preparing to show the organization that we can do what is asked of us by the Nation with a validation exercise early in January. Then we will be off to "high five" with B Troop and give them an opportunity to get home and spend time with their loved ones. They would do it for us and we are proud to do it for them. As always, I'm excited for things to come and will fill you in down the road in future newsletters.

-Big Jon

# D Troop

Welcome to 2016 D Troop Family! I hope this finds you all purpose driven and full of happiness for this New Year. It was really nice seeing all of you at the Anniversary Party and some of you at the Troop Christmas Party. During this past quarter we have remained steadfast in renewing our commitment to our profession of arms and our families, through these efforts, our team has strengthened once again. As we continue to work towards a higher purpose for the nation, rest assured that this year will be the best yet. Thank you goes to the families. We remain in-debt to you, as you are the reason we are able to operate in such a high capacity all of the time. You are our rock, sounding board, and moral compass; thank you for the undying support.

Throughout the next quarter of this year, our boys will be learning at a high volume as we send them to over 120 hours of

network and system administration training and 80 hours of weapons proficiency and field craft. They will quickly attain new components for both their technical and tactical skill-sets to increase their talents and prepare for their trip out the door this summer. Quick reminder, ask when vacation is so that you can start planning now. ;)

While the well-oiled machine keeps turning, we will be transitioning leadership officially mid-February. I will be transitioning to another Troop within the organization and Chris Ingles will be stepping up as the senior leader for the Troop. He has been in the Troop for the last year and eagerly working me out of my job. With that said, I would like to express my deepest thanks to everyone for a fun and successful time here in D Troop.

Best Wishes  
Jason Kubat

As Jason mentioned above, I will be taking over for him as the new leader of D Troop shortly. Stepping into this role would normally instill some wonder and uncertainty but with the level of dedication D Troop has, I am nothing but excited. If there is anything JCU can do to make life at home better for you, all you have to do is ask. People are our greatest asset and not just those in uniform. A strong, solid

foundation at home only makes the work we do easier.

Feel nothing but pride for your loved ones as they recently completed some rigorous training, obtained high level certifications, and have done things this past year that our Commander noted as being the best he has ever seen.

All the Best,  
Chris Ingles



# Headquarters & Headquarters Troop (HHT)

Hello and happy new years from HHT. I can't tell you how impressed I am with the various sections within the Troop that keep JCU running each day. Whether the Admin, Finance, Operations, Training, or Force Modernization sections, it is your efforts that allow the men and women of JCU to focus on their communications skills and provide the best services possible to the command. The Army has recognized this talent and decided to promote both Stan Sweeney and Camie Rodgers to Sergeant Major. Congratulations to both of you. Kyle Kramer is the latest graduate of the Freefall Jumpmaster Course. Job well



Camie receives a DMSM from LTC Clifford

done during a difficult course. We have also hailed some new folks into the HHT family. CPT Michael Wilda is the newest member of the OPS section. Welcome to the meat grinder Sir! We also welcome Verle (Rusty) Smith as JCU's primary

Military Freefall Trainer who has spent more time TDY in Arizona than Ft. Bragg since arriving. Unfortunately, there have also been several goodbye's within the Troop. Phil Mistretta bids us farewell going back to the big blue and Ulysses (OT) Otero will do a short stint at another Fort Bragg unit before heading to the Sergeant Majors Academy. We must also bid farewell to Chaplain Bruce who moves on to another position in JSOC. He is replaced by Chaplain William Allen who is a welcome addition to the Unit. Finally, we bid farewell to Sean Mitcham who will be taking a Troop SGM position. You have left some big shoes to

fill and I look forward to the challenges ahead. Thanks for laying the groundwork and making the hand-over as smooth as possible. I look forward to a great year with the men and women of HHT.

-Luke



OT Receives the coveted JCU plaque from CSM Flaker



## Cyber Troop

Hello from the newly formed Cyber Troop. Since being formally recognized as a Troop, we have hit the ground running. It's business as usual being busier than ever. Even with the hectic

schedule we have taken the time to welcome three new members to the Troop: 2ndLt Zachary Hanley, CPO Clifford Varnadoe and PO1 Kainen Buch. They are all recent graduates from the

difficult JSOC CNO Course. Job well done! Sadly, we also bid a temporary farewell to one of our members. Brian Zebrowsky will be doing a one year tour in Korea before returning to the section.

We are looking forward to your speedy return.

- Jon

## NOSC

Team, Happy New Year! I hope you had a restful Holiday Season and were able to spend some much deserved quality time with loved ones. 2015 flew by and 2016 will go just as fast if not faster. You all might have heard this in the past but I'll say it again; thank you for managing the homefront while your loved ones are busting their bums here at work. I sincerely appreciate all you do and will continue to do. Additionally, I hope you had the chance to enjoy our anniversary ball; it was a great time with many laughs. (Note to self - don't pregame too early)

First, let's talk about our AIS (Automators), NSE (Engineers), Integration (Anything the other 2 sections don't want to do) team and the Enterprise Management sections that are headed by Sam "the hits keep coming" Prichard, Mr. Shawn "I love SGMs" Petermann, Mike "I love audits" Phillips, and Mr. Josh "I watch you sleep" Levine, respectively. These sections are expected to be the Subject Matter Experts of all that is networks and servers and have performed extremely well. In the past few months we've welcomed Dave "hands in pockets" Redmond, John "man of little words" Beckham, Justin "man of even less words" Oshiro, Jason Herndon, and Tony

"Solarwinds" Pillitiere. We welcome these gentlemen and hope their time in the NOSC is rewarding. These sections have been full speed ahead since forever. We depend on them to develop, configure, test communications gear and anything else we need to accomplish a task/mission; they always come through. Even with the fast pace, Jeremy Martin, Scottie Cochran and Jesse Sellers were able to complete a few Cisco Certifications; well done. They are truly remarkable and intelligent men and 1 woman; Tammy "don't look her straight in the eyes" Sprague.

Second, our base station guys.

This detachment has a thankless but necessary job. A notable achievement this year was during the holiday season when they received the "Rookie of the Year" award during the Jingle Stick Completion. They went all out and it was awesome. Joe "25B, lol" Yacopino heads this section. He has only got to welcome one person in the last few months, Justin "I like the NOSC better than A troop" Robinson. Welcome Justin and Tania. I hope you enjoy your time in the troop as well, even if for only a bit. Unfortunately, we have to say good bye as well. Craig "I'm just here for the badges" Wilson

will be moving to Ops. We are fully prepared for you to forget where you came from and to blame us for all that goes awry.

I'd also like to mention our Civilian and Contractor workforce whom without it'd be difficult to do what we do. Rich "here for the cheddar" McAlister and Mike "I love annual training" Foy have been with us forever; thanks for sticking it out so long and supporting the mission. Additionally, We'd like to thank Tammy "I can't believe you just asked that question" Sprague and Jeff "Robin Rooster" Ingraham, Vic "I like goats" Guerra and Dave Brewster for providing stellar network and systems support.

We also said good bye to a few key players; Cliff "Brightling" Varnadoe, Carl "Yous guys" LaMonica, Derek Howard, Gabe Urdaneta and Greg Durr. You guys are already missed and hope your current positions are serving you well.

Lastly, we welcome our NOSC Director, Eric "I do what I want" Tapp. He is a welcome addition and we look forward to this upcoming year with him and the rest of the team.

Take care, Vanessa



## *Special Missions Troop (SMT)*



Pink showing his holiday spirit

I will let the SMT Detachments send out their own notes following this but I just wanted to say a couple things. First off, I want to congratulate Luke Blum for taking over the 1SG position. He hit the ground running and pulled off a great 35th Year Anniversary Ball. There was help from others but still....good job! He followed that up by completely failing to secure The Jingle Stick for SMT. How quickly we forget where we come from, the failure has been noted 1SG. I won't blather on and will let the Detachment Chiefs make some additional notes but I want to thank all of SMT and mostly the families for making 2015 such a huge success. I continue to be amazed at the level of impact and success we all have across the globe and can do nothing but sit back and be proud of every one of you.

-Pink

The Executive Communications section would first and foremost like to say, Happy New Year to you and your family! Despite the holiday season, EC has still been putting in the road and air miles. Drew Swanson has been spending time both CONUS and OCONUS supporting the Commanding General. Both Rob Luna and Dan Cebulla have been

spending most of their days and nights flying up and down the Atlantic coastline supporting their principles. We also would like to welcome Brad Long and Hector Santana to the team! Deboris Williams left the team in September after his long tour with the ACG, Dan Cebulla has done a great job filling those shoes. Stefawn Payne was accepted to the Marine Corps Enlisted Commissioning Educational Program and graduated Officer Candidate School late



David Dean gets into the music with a spoon instrument solo during the anniversary ball

November. He has been accepted to attend Cal State University at San Marcos where he will complete his undergraduate degree. Julian Walle and Greg Durr remain busy down in Tampa, recently pulling a hardship tour in Minnesota and a long stint in Europe. Lastly, we would like to welcome Gabe Urdaneta to the team who will report to Tampa in January to help give Julian and Greg some much needed time off.

-Jonas

The Communications Support Team would like to say Happy New Year to everyone in the JCU

and their families. CST has a lot to be thankful for from 2015 and even more to look forward to in 2016. CST has said goodbye to four outstanding communicators in 2015, they will be truly missed. We hope they are adjusting to life in their new assignments. We will also say goodbye to the longest running CST member early in 2016. Mike will remain close at Fort Bragg, but his institutional knowledge will be a tremendous loss to the Detachment. Before I move on to welcoming, I just want to voice my concurrence with Pink's comments above, Luke is missed in the Troop but I just cannot believe he was unable to secure our status in the Jingle Stick promised land. Apparently there are no loyalties. CST has welcomed in three new members in 2015 and they are already putting in the training hours to support our missions. CST would also like to congratulate two of our members who are expecting children early in 2016. Finally, we would ask you to please remember our service members in harm's way. As with every holiday season CST and JCU has service members who will be away from home protecting our nations interest. We thank you for your work and dedication and look forward to seeing you soon.

-Chris

The Surgical Resuscitation Team would like to extend to our member's friends and families, especially those who's loved ones are not currently home, a happy New Year and safe tidings. Things in the SRT have been busy, as is the norm, but despite the constant feeling of being a Stretch Armstrong, we are meeting every challenge that comes our way. There has been many fluctuations to personnel in the section. We gained a well-rounded communicator and possible closet Crossfitter, Mark Quinlan, who is on his first rotation with the

section. We also gained Deboris Williams who has enjoyed some much needed time with his family over the Christmas season after returning from a deployment. Deboris also is a new graduate of the Military Free Fall Jump Master course and is looking to put his new skill to good use. We have also lost four key personnel Jim (Mongo) Stokes, Hector (no haircut) Santana, Chris (Good-Job-Marine) Cole, and Rob (Mama) Lopez. Your time and the roles you have played in the troop cannot be put into words and the standards that you have set will be upheld by future RTOs. Dave Dean returned back from doing copious things overseas and is finding out what "head-to-bed" means. He was recently promoted to the rank of SSgt and will be leaving us this summer. Josh Harris is also doing great things while hopefully working on getting a tan for the upcoming beach season. Luis Gonzalez has done an awe-inspiring job in assuming duties as the current Detachment Chief and is currently overseas stretching his foot screws now and again. Finally, Andrew Reynolds has been reintegrated back into "home" life, returning from deployment and then attending the Army's Advanced Leadership Course where he was chosen as the Leadership awardee. Hopefully, things remain manageable for the future, but know that the men of the SRT are ready for anything that is thrown our way, outside of smoke alarms in the server room. Thanks to all the families for putting up with our relentless schedule. -Andrew



Gus Daffara receives his PCS award from LTC Clifford



# Anniversary Ball



LTC Clifford and previous JCU Commanders



JCU celebrated its 35th Anniversary bringing together unit members, alumni, friends, and family. Spanning several days, events included a tour of unit areas, a golf tournament, socials, and the anniversary ball. It was a time to celebrate where JCU has been and where it is going. It was a great time for both old and new to reflect upon the impact this unit has had on our nation. Thank you to everyone that made event a success. -1SG



C Troop Alumni pose for a picture



Luis setting up for a hail mary while his defensive line blocks



JCU hosted its 2nd annual Army vs Navy game on a chilly December day. Each side brought their best showing pride in their respective service. Even though the Army pulled ahead early in the game, the Navy rallied in the second half to take home the win.

## 2nd Annual Army vs Navy



Jason showing his Army spirit



Thanks to Tony Carrillo and the Chiefs Mess for setting this up

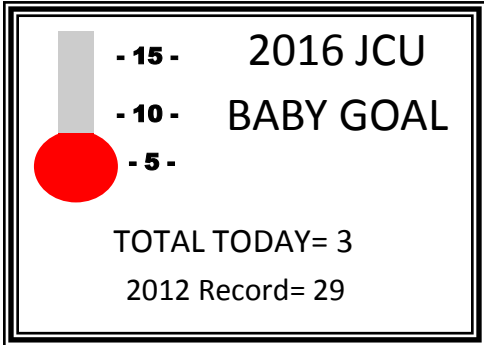


Tony turns on the gas for a downfield run



# New Additions to the JCU Family

- ◆ Steve Comeau and family welcomed Gwynn Evangeline Comeau, born January 8th, 2016
- ◆ The McKissack family is proud to announce the birth of their daughter, Jessie Rose McKissack, born 15 January, 2016
- ◆ Brandon and Elishia Stefanowski are the proud parents of Gavin David Stefanowski. He was born on 3 February 2016



# Promotions



Nishan Derbabian (B Trp) to SSG  
Luke Blum (HHT) to 1SG



Sean Collins (Cyber) to SMSgt



Shae Wheeler (C TRP) to SSgt



Nathan Sanchez (B Trp) to PO1





## *Family Readiness Group*

First off, we would like to send our sincere gratitude to everyone for their support of the Dennison Family through meal deliveries & donations. It was truly humbling to see the JCU family uniting in support of this great family.

In January, we asked everyone on our Facebook site for their creative ideas on what they wanted to do in 2016. Thursday evening was the most popular date for most folks. We got spectacular answers, so mark your calendars for these exciting events.

Date	Event
February 25	<b>International Cooking Class Night</b> - Yumm-o! From German to Burmese cuisine learn from our JCU experts. If anyone wants to teach, we would love to add more chefs to the lineup. (Thanks Lisa Strawn & Le-Mon Rice)
April 21	<b>Relaxation Coloring Book &amp; Wine Evening at the Annex.</b> #1 most liked FB idea suggested by Katie Mitcham.
June 16	<b>Celebration of JCU Entrepreneurs.</b> Showcase of all the JCU Family owned businesses for one night only. Support our own. Get advice from others who have started their own businesses. Thanks for the great suggestion Kristal Kowach.
August 18	<b>Painting Party.</b> Thank you Le-Mon Rice for the suggestion. Last year's party was a great success; no doubt this one will be as fun as the last.
October 20	<b>Game Night</b> Like all big families, nothing beats a great night of games to break the ice. Thanks Kelly Blum for the suggestion.

More details to follow as the dates get closer. Check on our Facebook page for details. Contact Katie Mitcham (katie.mitcham@gmail.com), or Hannah Clifford (cliffordhannah@gmail.com) if you do not have access to our FB page, or want us to email you updates on our events.

## *JCU Leadership*

Position	Name	Work #	Cell or Home #	Email
JCU Commander	LTC James Clifford	243-9190	910-584-8330	cliffordj@jdi.socom.mil
CSM	CSM Rob Flaker	243-9189	910-584-1239	flakerr@jdi.socom.mil
DCO	LCDR Chris Halsan	243-9187	757-641-8750	halsanc@jdi.socom.mil
1SG	1SG Luke Blum	243-9134	813-416-5459	bluml@jdi.socom.mil
Chaplain	CH Allen	243-1321	919-280-3940	allenw@jdi.socom.mil
OPS Officer	MAJ Scott Macdonald	243-9151	910-364-6774	macdonaldsv@jdi.socom.mil
OPS SGM	SGM Chris Leach	243-9152	910-273-8332	leach@jdi.socom.mil
ECS CDR	MAJ Oscar Tiglao	243-4556	931-338-1566	tiglao@jdi.socom.mil
ECS SGM	SGM Greg Williams	243-1447	910-987-1863	williamsgre@jdi.socom.mil
A Troop SGM	MSG Jared Schaffer	243-9136	910-489-3095	schafferm@jdi.socom.mil
B Troop SGM	MSG Brandon Stefanowski	243-9142	253-370-6839	stefanowskib@jdi.socom.mil
C Troop SGM	MSG Jon Woosley	243-0115	910-574-1515	woosleyj@jdi.socom.mil
D Troop SGM	MSG Jason Kubat	243-4148	910-261-9068	kubatj@jdi.socom.mil
SMT SGM	MSG Jeremy Pinkelman	243-0472	910-273-7110	pinklemenj@jdi.socom.mil
NOSC Director	MAJ Eric Tapp	243-2720	931-220-5722	tapee@jdi.socom.mil
NOSC SGM	MSG Vanessa Moak	243-0991	910-988-4473	moakv@jdi.socom.mil
M Troop SGM	SMSGt Tim Renfro	243-0439	702-55709800	renfrot@jdi.socom.mil
Cyber Director	LTC Carl Lamonica	243-9149	910-691-5336	lamoniac@jdi.socom.mil
Cyber SGM	GYSgt Jon Norris	243-0462	336-693-5403	norrisj@jdi.socom.mil