

Michael: Being in Guantanamo Bay, people ask me about it now and I say it was a little bit like living in Mayberry, in Andy and Barney's town. you knew everybody, you got to know most everybody, especially the townspeople, I would call them, not the joint task force that was assigned out at the camps so much. But the ones that ran the base and all, you got to them and it was like family. You never worried about locking your doors, people would get out of their vehicles and leave their keys in them, Pat would have been no more scared to go take a walk or a jog at midnight as she would at noon. It was a very safe, nice environment, and you did things with your neighbors. You worked with them, you lived with them, you played with them, you lived next door.

Pat: We have so many fond memories from down there. Everything. We were blessed from the time we got there to the time we left, starting with where we were put to live. We were put with very good friends and we just, like he said, we made so many good friends. We have some coming next weekend. We have people coming here. They come through, they come by and they stay. It is different friendships than you make in the states and I really do not know why that is.

Michael: I can honestly say that that tour, those years we spent were the best working years of my career and I have been working for the government for thirty-six years now. And I was in the military for two years so I have been around the military all my life. It was the best conditions. There were little odds and ends that when you were there day-to-day you complain about, you know? Right now I cannot even think of a good...

Pat: You cannot even think of them!

Michael: I want to really say that we made friends and we... the friendships that we made down there will carry us for the rest of our lives. They are like family now, most of them.

Pat: Real friends.

Michael: And I mean like family family. I do not think we will ever have friends any close than the ones we made down there. We still are in touch with them to this day. We have been gone four years now. We actually went back down to Gitmo last summer on vacation. That is one old saying about Guantanamo: it's not the place, it's the people. And the people make Guantanamo and I believe every one of them down there are patriots and are working to do their best for their country and they are all in my heart to this day.