

THE TALON



OPERATION JOINT ENDEAVOR, BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

SERVING THE SOLDIERS OF TASK FORCE EAGLE

■ TURNING GRAVEL TO PAVEMENT

Team constructs roads, lots in Tuzla

By Spc. WILLIAM R. HALL
203rd MPAD

STEEL CASTLE — Giant trucks loaded with tons of rocks from quarries all over Bosnia have been making the trek here recently.

The 94th Engineer Combat Battalion (Heavy) has been tasked to transform these large piles of rock into a parking lot.

"Basically, all of the people here need a place to park their vehicle," said Capt. Kathleen Isaacson, the battalion's assistant plans and operations officer. "No one has been able to move their vehicle over here because of the mud."

The 700-man battalion, from Vilseck, Germany, has been here since the opening of Steel Castle, and has stayed busy working on a variety of projects.

One effort earlier this month was a 680-meter bypass road to route civilian traffic away from the Comanche Base flight line.

According to Isaacson, the U.S. Army is getting the rocks through contracts with local rock quarries around the area.

"They can't make it as fast as we put it down," she said.

The first step in the construction of the parking lot is to lay down Geo-tex, a cloth-type fabric.

"We are mainly building in swampy and muddy areas," said Isaacson, "so we lay the Geo-tex on top of the organics. It lets water seep through to the ground, but doesn't let the mud come up. In the end, it helps us use a lot less rock."

Second, the base coarse is laid down. This consists of rocks between 60 to 120 mm.

The final step is to lay top layer, which consists of smaller rocks.

The 94th uses a variety of heavy machinery for the mission, including bulldozers, scrapers and rollers.

See **Construction**, page 12

Clintons visit Task Force Eagle troops



Staff Sgt. Randall Yackiel

First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton visits with Col. Steven R. Hawkins, 1st Armored Division Engineer brigade commander, and other Task Force Eagle combat engineers at Camp Bedrock. The first family members, along with comedian Sinbad and Grammy-winning singer Sheryl Crow toured the TFE area Monday. For complete story and photos, see pages 6-7.

R & R policy approved

15-day leave allows flights to Frankfurt, U.S.

By Capt. JOHN GOHEEN
29th MPAD

Task Force Eagle soldiers on scheduled deployments of six months or more will soon be eligible for up to 15 days of rest and recuperation under a plan approved Saturday.

The program — scheduled to begin early next month — is designed to provide soldiers deployed for the duration of Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR a break from for the intensity of the peace enforcement mission and a chance to spend time with their families and friends, according to Command Sgt. Maj. Jack L. Tilley, task force command sergeant major.

Troops will be offered air transportation from Eagle Base, Tuzla, to Frankfurt, Germany. They may then take an additional free flight to a yet to be determine aerial point of debarkation within the United States. Ad-

ditional travel will be at the individual's expense or on a space-available basis.

Active duty service members, reserve component personnel and DOD civilians on tours exceeding 180 days are eligible for the program, which will continue through mid-November.

Soldiers will be charged regular leave upon arrival at the airport. Travel days on government-provided transportation will not be charged as leave.

A typical R&R excursion will be 13 days of chargeable leave with two days provided for travel.

Soldiers will be responsible for arriving at their U.S. aerial debarkation point or Frankfurt in time to catch their return flight to Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Participation will be determined by commanders, who will balance mission requirements and readiness.

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From the top NCOs should stress weapons safety

First of all this week, let me be your conscience.

Lately, we've had several accidental weapon discharges by Task Force Eagle soldiers. Fortunately, none have resulted in injuries.

You should never be complacent about handling weapons. Always presume a weapon is loaded. Routinely check your weapon and your soldiers' weapons.

Leaders must ensure their soldiers attend mandatory refresher classes that cover pro-



Command Sgt. Maj. Jack L. Tilley
1st Armored Division

cedures to properly clear weapons. See your command sergeant major/first sergeant for details.

Next, I would like to compliment the junior leaders I have seen in action recently. It's obvious to me that non-

commissioned officers still run the Army. The professionalism they show in this deployment environment and the pride they have in their jobs is an inspiration.

Remember, no matter how tough it gets at times, don't

give up. Keep pushing NCOs, to do a good job, accomplish the mission and always take care of troops.

Lastly this week, we all know that everyone needs a break from this peace enforcement operation, which can be stressful at times. A Rest and Recuperation policy was announced this week for all task force members who will serve here for more than 180 days.

Start consulting your calendar now to make sure you have a solid plan in place for all of your troops to go on R&R.

Although some details of the R&R policy still must be

worked out, most of the questions you may have are included in this week's *Talon*, along with the answers.

I would encourage soldiers to take R&R so they can take a break from this operation and wind down. But be sure to talk with your soldiers about discipline before they go on R&R. Emphasize the importance of not over-indulging. Also talk to them about focusing on safety, and remind them not to drink and drive.

I want to make sure that every soldier who leaves for R&R returns safely. Our soldiers are our greatest resources.

Viewpoint

Going mad and losing sleep over March Madness

Note: The author muses on the lengths soldiers will go to follow the National Collegiate Athletic Association's basketball tournament.



Staff Sgt. Brian Bowman
203rd MPAD

"overslept" had been so early. But my beloved Jayhawks are scheduled to tip off against a University of Arizona team at 8 p.m. Friday in Denver ... that was six minutes ago here.

Fortunately, my fellow Kansas fan, Staff Sgt. Kirk Hutchinson, is listening to his portable radio and informs me that the Georgia-Syracuse game went into overtime. The Jayhawks' game won't start for at least another 30 minutes. I guess I'll take a shower.

5:12 a.m. — Hutchinson and I watch AFN's pickup of the CBS coverage of the tournament. Cincinnati is demolishing Wake Forest. To my disappointment, Kansas-Arizona is not the featured television game.

There are about 10 soldiers in the television tent, most with glazed looks. These zombies have obviously been spending too many nights here, watching game after game as the field dwindles.

Eventually, CBS switches to Kansas-Arizona.

The Jayhawks, down 13 points early, have recovered and own a slim lead at the half. But I have a convoy to catch. Hutchinson gives me his radio so I can listen to the second half. I give him my Jayhawk windbreaker for good luck.

6:40 a.m. — I listen to the second half in my Humvee, living with each KU basket, dying with each mistake. My poor tactical commander, Spc. Trudy McClure, has to endure this behavior as we wait for the drivers' safety briefing.

The Jayhawks go up by 12 with six-and-a-half minutes to

play. Victory seems certain. Then Arizona mounts a comeback and claims a one-point lead with under a minute to play.

Now I'm outside the vehicle — pacing. Jayhawks have the ball. The season's on the line. I walk back and forth as point-guard Jaque Vaughn passes up a three-point shot. The ball goes inside and is quickly kicked out to guard Jerrod Hasse standing alone beyond the three-point line. Hasse shoots ... Gooooood!!

"Yeah!" I yell. The other drivers milling around look at me like I've gone mad.

I have gone mad. March Mad. And my beloved Jayhawks live to play another day.

Editor's note: Unfortunately for the author, Kansas lost its next game 60-57 to Syracuse.

THE TALON

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Tax breaks OK'd for soldiers

By Sgt. 1st Class BETTINA E. TILSON
29th MPAD

Many servicemembers participating in Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR will soon notice a few extra dollars in their paychecks — thanks to special tax breaks signed into law March 20 by President Clinton.

Under the law, basic pay for enlisted members and warrant officers is exempt from federal income taxes. For officers, the first \$4,254.90 a month is exempt.

That sum is equal to the highest level of enlisted pay — the amount received by each service's senior enlisted member — plus \$150 for imminent danger pay, according to Capt. Mark Tellitocci, Task Force Eagle's assistant staff judge advocate.

Only personnel deployed to Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia and Macedonia will receive the tax relief.

The tax break will actually be like getting a raise, and soldiers should immediately notice a difference in pay, Tellitocci said.

"When President Clinton visited Eagle Base, Tuzla, in January, he promised he would sign the bill when it crossed his desk, and he kept his word," Tellitocci said.

The tax exclusion covers the basic pay of all officers in grades O-1 through O-3, and nearly all of the basic pay of senior O-4s. For the roughly 1,600 officers deployed to Task Force Eagle, this represents a significant increase over the \$500 a month tax break officers were given during the Gulf War.

The tax breaks are retroactive to Nov. 21, 1995, the date the Peace Agreement was signed.

The tax relief is effective upon the servicemember's entry into the area of operations, Tellitocci said.

Roughly 11,000 troops who deployed to the former Yugoslavia before the end of the year will receive updated W-2 pay statements for their 1995 returns. The new W-2s should be mailed out by April 30.

Another advantage of the tax law is that troops will not have to file their income taxes until 180 days after they depart the qualified area. When they do file, they will not have to pay any penalties or interest for that period. "That will save people money, too," Tellitocci added.

Younger soldiers — most of whom receive refunds — may want to go ahead and file on time because the government will be holding their refund checks.

But older soldiers with families may choose to wait because they may owe taxes or their income tax returns are more complicated and they may have a difficult time getting all of the necessary paperwork to file from the field, Tellitocci said.

Tax relief was granted to troops in the Vietnam and Gulf wars, but this marks the first time such legislation has been signed for those who are not serving in a designated combat zone, Tellitocci said.

Additional tax relief includes an exemption from the 3 percent excise tax on long distance telephone calls made to the United States from Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia or Macedonia.

Tellitocci said the exemption, which took effect March 20, is retroactive to the start of the deployment, but he has not received information as to how soldiers can claim refunds.

For more information, contact your unit tax adviser.

NEWS BRIEFS

DA photo reshoot policy

Soldiers deployed as part of Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR are temporarily exempted from the requirement of maintaining a current DA photo in their official military records.

Soldiers will be required, however, to have their photo taken within 90 days of redeploying back to their home station. Personnel files will be annotated accordingly. All selection boards conducted this fiscal year and the first quarter of Fiscal Year 1997 will be alerted of this exemption.

Eagle Base Martial Arts

Martial Arts classes in the style of Sosuishi-Ryu JuJutsu will begin at Eagle Base on April 2. Classes will be from 8 to 10 p.m., Tuesday and Saturday evenings in the MWR tent located across from the dining facility.

The chief instructor of the class will be Army Reserve Maj. Dennis H. Fink, a police officer from New York City, who is certified to teach defense tactics. Fink holds an 8th degree black belt in Sosuishi-Ryu JuJutsu, and several other martial arts black belts.

Soldiers should bring towels and PT uniform (shorts or sweats) and loose-fitting field jackets. Students of any skill level are welcomed. For information call Capt. Pete Hsieh at MSE 551-5231.

Women's History Month

A Women's History Month commemorative program is set for 4 p.m. today at the Camp Dallas Chapel, featuring speaker 1st Lt. Kristin Reisenwebber, adjutant of the 485th Corps Support Battalion, according to Sgt. 1st Class Kenneth Swinnie, 16th Corps Support Group Equal Opportunity Supervisor. For information, call MSE 558-2748.

CORRECTION

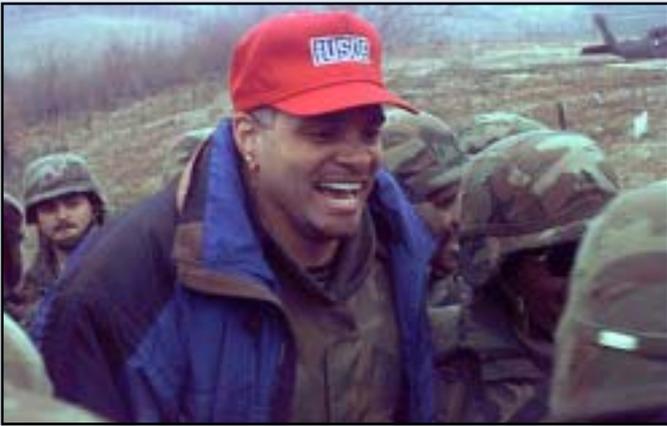
The soldiers in last week's photo of the 130th Military History Detachment were incorrectly identified. They are, from left to right, Maj. Michael D. Yuzakewich, Staff Sgt. John S. Ruehl and Sgt. Shane Woodall. *The Talon* regrets the error.

Air Force Secretary visits airmen



Sgt. Ed Rollins

Air Force Master Sgt. Lou Alimonda (center), fire chief of the 4100th Group Fire Department and a Brooklyn, N.Y., native, greets Secretary of the Air Force Sheila E. Widnall during her visit to Eagle Base Sunday.



Sgt. Christopher Kelley

Comedian Sinbad visits with soldiers at Camp Lisa.

Stars entertain troops

By Staff Sgt. GARY YOUNGER
358th MPAD

Comedian Sinbad and Grammy Award winning singer Sheryl Crow brought smiles — and lots of belly-laughs — to troops at several Task Force Eagle base camps Monday.

The two well-known entertainers accompanied Hillary Rodham Clinton and daughter Chelsea as they visited U.S. forces in the former Yugoslavia. The USO show traveled to 2nd Brigade lodgement areas including Lisa, Linda and Demi.

Sinbad, a former member of the Air Force, visited Bosnia because he wants troops to know people care for them, and they are not forgotten.

"Plus, it makes me feel good to know that I can ... make someone else feel better when their situation is not so nice," he said.

The comedian was greeted by handshakes and cheers, camera flashes and pats on the back. Soldiers rushed around to have their photo taken or chat with him.

"I wanted to come out here earlier, but I heard you guys hadn't had showers for a while," Sinbad said,

as he joked about the living conditions at Lisa. "You guys killed these trees."

Sinbad asked the soldiers what he could do to help make life a little better. Many requested more USO shows that include visits from other celebrities.

One soldier, Sgt. Octavius Brandon, was videotaping the event and asked Sinbad to say hello to his son, Octavius Carlos Brandon, who will soon celebrate his first birthday.

"I know this boosts the morale of everyone out here," said Brandon of St. Paul, Minn., who is assigned to 4th Battalion, 29th Field Artillery.

Sinbad was impressed with what he saw. "These guys are sitting in the middle of nowhere,

but they've still got some good spirit and they're doing their job well," he said. "And I think America should ... be proud of the people here."

After Crow and Sinbad stopped at other base camps, they arrived at Eagle Base that afternoon and entertained more troops in a large warehouse next to the PX.

Crow played acoustic guitar, singing hits including "All I Wanna Do" and "Strong Enough To Be My Man."



Sgt. Francisco Alejandro

Sheryl Crow at Eagle Base.



Staff Sgt. Randall Yackiel

Hillary and Chelsea Clinton look into the horizon from atop an observation point at Camp Alicia.



Staff Sgt. Randall Yackiel

The first family greets soldiers at Camp Alicia.



Staff Sgt. Randall Yackiel

Hillary Rodham Clinton talks with Task Force Eagle soldiers working in a bombed-out building at Camp Alicia.

First lady praises troops during visit

By Sgt. 1st Class BETTINA E. TILSON
29th MPAD

When Hillary Rodham Clinton visited Task Force Eagle soldiers Monday, she brought plenty of gifts.

There were hundreds of long-distance phone cards, dozens of movie videos and 22 boxes of donated toys for soldiers to distribute to local children.

But perhaps the most cherished gift was news from Baumholder, Germany — home for much of the 1st Armored Division.

"I want you to know that they miss you," Clinton told hundreds of soldiers gathered in a warehouse on Eagle Base, Tuzla, for a brief USO show.

"They really wait for every phone call and every letter," she said. "In fact, a couple (of family members) said they love your letters particularly because they can read them over and over again."

Accompanying the first lady to Task Force Eagle base camps, including Alicia and Bedrock, was her 16-year-old daughter, Chelsea, who is on spring break.

On behalf of President Clinton, the first lady thanked servicemembers and praised their families.

"You have a bunch of wonderful family members who are thinking of you every minute," she said.

While in Germany Sunday, Clinton was entertained by second-graders from Neubruke Elementary School and by Baumholder seventh-graders.

She said she was especially impressed with the second-graders.

"You know, a lot of people know how tough military life is on children. But based on the kids that I saw yesterday from that second grade, you all are doing a lot of things right," Clinton said.

The seventh-graders told the first lady it was emotional when their mothers and fathers deployed. However, through photographs and letters from children their own age who live in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the U.S. youngsters are beginning to understand their parents' mission.

"I hope you know you are making your children very proud, as well," she said.

Through letters, many Bosnian children told their American counterparts they lost homes — even family members — during the four-year war.

"That made a real impression on your kids, so we've arranged (to deliver) some toys for you to give out at orphanages and schools and other places," Clinton said.

The first lady also brought letters from the Baumholder kids to the Tuzla children.

Several children from the Jala Primary School in Tuzla greeted Clinton earlier

Monday when she stepped off a C-17 cargo plane at Eagle Base. The first lady spent several minutes talking to the children about their wartime experiences. She even hugged and kissed several of the youngsters.

"I think she is a very pretty woman, and she is very nice," said Amra Bajric, one of the children who spoke to Clinton.

She later told the troops they are an example of what a "multi-ethnic, multi-racial, multi-cultural team" can do.

"By your example, you are saying to the people of Bosnia, Croatia, Serbia, Europe (and) the world, that, yes, people can get along with each other," she said.

Those words struck a chord with Chief Warrant Officer William S. Presley, 36, of Fayetteville, N.C.

"I think we can all live together, regardless of whether (we) are black or white or whatever, and regardless of our religions," said Presley, aviation maintenance officer for D Company, 2nd Battalion, 227th Aviation Regiment.

1st Lt. Barbara Wagner, 26, from Goodman, Mo., said it was an honor to have the first lady visit the troops.

"From a personal standpoint, it's certainly great to see someone who doesn't just stand in her husband's shadow, but is a strong person in her own right," said Wagner, a supply officer from Lukavac.

Iron Eagle Brigade



Staff Sgt. Randall Yackiel

The 4th Air Cavalry Brigade is on patrol in the skies over Task Force Eagle.

Known as the "Iron Eagle Brigade," it has more than 700 soldiers stationed at Comanche Base, near Tuzla.

AH-64 Apache helicopters of 2nd Battalion, 227th Aviation, fly escort missions throughout the sector. UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters from 7th Battalion, 227th Aviation fly general purpose missions including VIP flights and passengers and cargo transportation.

Soldiers of the "Iron Eagle Brigade" patrol the zone of separation with Turkish, French and Nordic-Pol brigades.



Spc. Robert W. Bishop



Staff Sgt. Randall Yackiel





Spc. Robert W. Bishop



Spc. Robert W. Bishop



Spc. George Roache

Clockwise from top: Spc. Mike Zimmerman, crew chief with C Company, 2-227th Aviation, performs routine maintenance; Cpl. Tarrell Williams inspects an OH-58 Delta before flight; Sgt. Stephen Larimore with D Company, 7-227th Aviation, de-ices an EH-60 Quick Fix helicopter; the sun rises over the Comanche Base flight line on a recent snowy day; Spc. Alex Cajigas, crew chief with C Company, 2-227th Aviation, wipes the windshield of an Apache; a Black Hawk helicopter lands at Camp Alicia.

Turks, Americans inspect weapons site

By Capt. PETE HSIEH
361st Press Camp Headquarters

ZENICA — A team of U.S. and Turkish inspectors recently inventoried anti-aircraft weapons at a Bosnian Army compound in the Turkish sector at Zenica.

The storage of the anti-aircraft systems at Zenica is an example of the concentration of heavy weapons in cantonment areas required to be completed under the Peace Agreement by D+120.

The inspection was conducted by Col. Ahmet Berberoglu, commander of the Turkish Brigade, who was assisted by Col. Alan W. Thrasher, commander of the 1st Armored Division Artillery.

Thrasher brought a contingent of U.S. artillery, air defense and linguistic experts to assist with the inventory.

The highlight of the joint inspection was a visit of the site by Maj. Gen. William L. Nash,

Task Force Eagle commander. Nash flew into Zenica and was met by Brig. Gen. Sakib Mahmuljin,

commander of the Bosnian Army's III Corps. Nash and Mahmuljin walked



Spc. Teresa Hawkins

U.S. and Turkish IFOR soldiers inspect Bosnian Army anti-aircraft weapons.

I'm very pleased with the manner in which all three parties ... complemented each other to make this a successful operation."

— Maj. Richard A. Fischer

through the area together and inspected some of the numerous anti-aircraft systems, including SA-7 sur-

face-to-air missiles and M55 Triple-Barreled 20 mm guns.

Maj. Richard A. Fischer, DIVARTY operations officer, served as the site coordinator of the Zenica inspection and was responsible for coordinating the efforts of the various inspection teams.

"I'm very pleased with the manner in which all three parties — the Turkish inspectors, the Bosnian Army representatives and the U.S. advisors — complemented each other to make this a successful operation," Fischer said.

■ LIFE RESTORED NEAR OLOVO

Abrams tankers deter fighting, provide new beginning



Sgt. Rick Roth

Tank gunner Sgt. Derwin R. Puckerin stands guard from the top of his Abrams tank near the town of Olovo.

By Sgt. RICK ROTH
29th MPAD

CAMP LINDA — The presence of one of the world's ultimate land-warfare weapons — the Abrams Tank — is helping restore life near Olovo.

The 67-ton machines and

their crews — members of the 2nd Battalion, 68th Armor from Baumholder, Germany — serve as a wedge between the former combatants at the southern edge of Task Force Eagle's area of responsibility.

"We're giving (the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina) a chance to live," said Staff Sgt. Chris Brown, a tank commander with C Company, 2-68th, part of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team.

Brown commands a tank posted at the front gate here. Local vehicle and pedestrian traffic flows steadily along the road that separates his camp from a cluster of bombed-out houses.

"We're actually seeing more people walking up and down the road, waving and smiling like they're happier than we saw when we were back in Germany watching them on television," Brown said.

The Abrams tank boasts two 7.62 machine guns, a 50-caliber machine gun and a 120 mm main gun.

Having a weapon this powerful conveys a strong message of combat power and resolve,

said 1st Lt. Eric Abonadi, the 2nd BCT's liaison to TFE's tactical operation center.

"We're interposing ourselves between the factions," said Abonadi, a Tulsa, Okla., native, "allowing them to pull back and permit the civilians to come up with solutions because their militaries are out of the picture."

Sgt. Derwin R. Puckerin, a tank gunner with C Company, 2-68, also helps guard the front gate here.

"I'm the one that sends the big rounds down range," said Puckerin, peering out of the turret. The Brooklyn, N.Y., resident works 12-hour shifts, looking for anything out of the ordinary.

"We've got all this steel behind us," Puckerin said, "They know we're not here to play. We're here to do the job and will do whatever it takes."

Questions answered about R&R policy

U.S. soldiers deployed for more than 180 days, including U.S.-based soldiers and Reserve Component personnel, are eligible to participate in R&R.

1. I thought there was a funded Armed Forces Recreation Center package?

Because of the legalities of providing lodging and meals to personnel in leave status, this option was not approved.

2. Can I still go to one of the Armed Forces Recreation Centers?

Yes. However, it will be at your own expense. AFRC officials are developing some special packages for R&R personnel. Costs and other details will be announced prior to the start date.

3. Where is the designated U.S. aerial port of debarkation?

It has not been designated. The location will be announced within the next few days.

4. What is the plan for U.S.-based soldiers?

U.S.-based soldiers who are deployed for more than 180 days, including Reserve Component personnel, are eligible to participate in R&R.

5. Will annual leave be charged for this program?

Yes. However, the travel time to and from R&R location is not charged as leave.

6. Even after I take leave, I will have more than 60 days at the end of the fiscal year. Can I still carry these unused days of leave into the next fiscal year?

Yes. The R&R program will not affect the special leave accrual program, which allows deployed soldiers to carry their leave over into the next Fiscal Year.

7. How can I sign up for the program?

Only your commander can release you for the program. They will be given allocations for flights. Commanders will select soldiers to be gone in balance with the unit's overall mission.

8. Can I go on this program more than once?

No. The Department of Defense allows soldiers to participate once in a 12-month period. Users will be carefully manifested to ensure that all eligible soldiers have a chance to participate.

9. I will be deployed for 179 days, why can I not participate?

This program is designed for soldiers deployed for the length of the operation. An in-theater pass program will be available for soldiers on tour of less than

180 days.

10. What about clothing?

You are authorized to wear your Battle Dress Uniform while in travel status.

11. What can Europe-based soldiers expect to find if they decide to take their leave at home station?

In some cases single soldiers will return and find their old rooms occupied. Rear detachment commanders will make every effort to provide you with accommodations. You may also make arrangements to stay with a friend.

12. Can I get my car out of storage if I return to Europe?

Yes. However, soldiers must keep in mind that a valid registration sticker, and a USAREUR license is needed to operate your cars. Insurance coverage will also need to be obtained if you changed your coverage while the vehicle was stored. In some cases, it could take as long as 1 to 2 days to get the car out of storage and have the vehicle fully operational. Soldiers must make their own arrangements to get to the POV storage site. Detailed procedures will be forthcoming in a separate message.

13. Can I get my personal belongings out of storage?

There is no provision in the Joint Federal Travel Regulations that allows soldiers to retrieve their personal belongings out of central storage. However, officials are working on a plan that will enable soldiers to retrieve their property at their own expense. Cost and procedures will be announced at a later date.

14. Will I be able to purchase civilian clothing prior to travel?

Yes. Post Exchanges in Task Force Eagle and Frankfurt will increase their clothing line to support R&R soldiers.

15. How do I get from the designated U.S. APOD and Frankfurt to my final destination?

By law, the government cannot pay for your transportation to your final destination. Soldiers will have to provide for their own transportation. Information about Space-A use of the S-bus, commercial bus, train schedules and rental car availability will be provided for soldiers arriving in Frankfurt at the processing site.

16. Can I drink alcohol while on R&R?

Yes. You will be on leave status and General Order Number 1 does not apply. Use good judgment.

17. What will happen if I miss my flight back to Bosnia?

You should plan your leave accordingly and allow ample time for travel. You will be provided the phone numbers to military liaisons in the designated U.S. APOD and at the Rhein Main Air Force Base who will notify your com-

mander. Determination of actions for missed movement will be left up to your commander.

18. If the situation in Bosnia deteriorates, could my leave be shortened?

Commanders will decide on whether or not soldiers will be called back. The mission will dictate that action. Soldiers on leave must be able to be contacted, if necessary, at or through the address or telephone number provided on their DA form 31 (Leave form).

19. What will soldiers do with their weapons and protective masks?

You will not bring them with you. Your units will be responsible for securing them.

20. Will going on R&R affect my pay entitlements?

Yes. If the soldier is absent from the Foreign Duty Pay Area for more than 24 hours, that entitlement stops. It begins again once the soldier returns to the Foreign Duty Pay Area. The soldier will also lose the \$3.50 per diem on R&R.

21. Can I use Space-A to travel?

Yes. Any soldier may sign up to Space-A to travel to any location while on R&R leave. You must sign up and compete for the available travel seats just like other soldiers on ordinary leave. Also remember that it is your responsibility to return to the central region in time to board your return R&R flight to the area of operations.

22. Can my family travel with me on the flight to the U.S.?

No. The R&R program is limited to participants in Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR. Family members may sign up for to use Space-A travel or pay for their transportation to and from the U.S.

23. Will Europe-based soldiers be allowed to go to U.S. for R and R or are those flight solely for U.S.-based soldiers?

All soldiers will be allowed to choose Frankfurt or the U.S. site as the APOD for their R&R.

24. Will I be forced to take leave?

No. Soldiers will be encouraged — but will not be forced — to participate in the R&R program.

25. If a Reserve Component soldier does not want to take leave, will they be able to cash in leave?

Yes.

26. How will I be able to get connecting flights within the U.S.?

Carlson Wagonlit, the Army's official travel agent, is researching the possibility of placing travel agents in the AO for the purpose of providing airline reservation service. Additional information will be forthcoming.

Source: U.S. Army Europe

NEWS FROM GERMANY

Keeping kids in the picture

By DAVE HAMILTON
(Heidelberg) *Herald-Post*

HEIDELBERG — Heidelberg elementary school children with parents deployed on Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR don't have to be in the dark about where their moms or dads are, thanks to modern computer technology and the Bosnia Support Group for Kids.

Guidance counselors Eleanor Fuller and Sandra Holshauer are the driving forces behind the new support group for children in Mark Twain Village and Patrick Henry elementary schools. Assisting them are trained high school students, called "peer helpers" who facilitate activities like helping kids make holiday cards or sending E-mail messages to their parents.

Students at Mark Twain Elementary school recently took a virtual journey to Hungary and Bosnia-Herzegovina on the school media center's CD-ROM.

Seven-year-old Shane Davis, one of eight students who used the CD-ROM, wasted no time volunteering to be the "mouse man" on the computer.

He grabbed the mouse, surveyed the graphics, clicked on the Picture Atlas of the World and was "in" Bosnia quicker than any student could by looking it up in an encyclopedia.

First, he and classmates looked at a centuries-old Turkish mosque. Shane brought up a text label at the bottom of the photo image that gave information about mosques.

Another click later, students viewed the 400-year-old bridge in Mostar, a guard for the Muslim police force, the city of Sarajevo and ski slopes that were site of the 1984 Olympic Winter Games.

Although Fuller didn't give the children a pop quiz, she did provide the students with maps of Bosnia and Hungary.

Fuller said the idea of creating support groups for children was nothing new. Similar children's groups were successfully used during Operation DESERT STORM.

And the kids aren't the only ones having fun, said Fuller.

"I feel like a soldier studies teacher," she said with a smile. "We all have a good time."

Troops call 'Iwo Jima' home

By Sgt. KELLY C. FISCHER
358th MPAD

CHECKPOINT 130 — Route John Wayne runs through the zone of separation in Bosnia's northeast corner.

Along the route, near the Inter-Entity Boundary Line, an island checkpoint sits in a sea of minefields. The U.S. soldiers who occupy the checkpoint named the spot "Iwo Jima."

About 23 soldiers with 2nd Platoon, C Company, 3rd Battalion, 5th Cavalry, have lived and worked for nearly 40 days along the short strip of pavement known as Checkpoint 130.

Between the guard stations, along the edges of the route, the soldiers have everything they need for their stay: a couple of tents, a shower tent and a latrine.

For five weeks, their lives centered solely on this small piece of ground bordered by the mine-marking tape and concertina wire.

Strangely, as the soldiers pack up their gear to rotate from the checkpoint, many of them would be happy to stay. They have grown fond of this space they built and maintained.

"When we first took this checkpoint over from 1-1 Cavalry, there was just this one tent and the concertina wire," said Pfc. Steven E. Rios, 21, from Abilene, Texas. "We had a lot more people, so we had to set up another tent. We made a little outhouse, because we didn't have the burn-out latrine yet. We made a bath house about a week later, and we've just been going from there."

"It's nice here — there's no one to bother



Sgt. Kelly C. Fischer

Pfc. Steven E. Rios helps secure the ZOS.

you," said Spc. Charles L. Dunlap, 21, from St. Louis. "The person in charge is your platoon leader, and you mainly run the show yourself."

"People might think it's hard living here, but I don't think anyone's had a problem with it," Rios said. "I think the hardest thing is that married people are not able to call their spouses or talk to their kids on the phone."

Although the checkpoint has temporarily separated the U.S. soldiers from their families, it has served to reunite families separated by the war.

Bosnians come from the northern Croatian side to join relatives from the southern Serbian side of the ZOS. They gather and have picnics just outside the checkpoint.

"Sometimes the families haven't seen each other for a couple of years and they'll be hugging each other and kissing each other. It gets pretty emotional," Rios said. "It makes you feel good when you see things like that happen."

IFOR engineers share mine knowledge

By Spc. WENDY M. FIRESTONE
203rd MPAD

STEEL CASTLE — Soldiers who are deployed to foreign countries don't usually get a chance to compare notes with soldiers of other countries on common issues. However, some IFOR soldiers recently got an opportunity to do just that.

Multinational engineers met for the second Task Force Eagle Engineer Conference. Commanders from the Nordic-Pol, Russian and Turkish brigades, as well as U.S. leaders, were welcomed by Col. Steven R. Hawkins, Task Force Eagle Engineer Brigade commander.

Engineer commanders met to discuss current and future projects. One issue that continues to challenge the engineers is obtaining accurate minefield information. Maps were distributed to each commander showing the latest minefield data in their areas of operation.

"We as engineers know how dangerous and deadly mine clearing can be," Hawkins said. "Our job is to monitor, not clear, their minefields."

By guidelines set forth in the Dayton Peace Agreement, each former warring faction is responsible for clearing their own minefields. To help speed up the process, IFOR will train and provide some civilian mine clearing equipment to their former warring factions.

Highlights of the conference were demonstrations and displays of mine equipment. Engineers from the U.S. Army demonstrated the "Miniflail," a mine-clearing machine which is used to clear a foot path of anti-personnel mines by remote control.

Russian brigade soldiers demonstrated mine detection with one of their mine-sniffing dogs and displayed steel plated, full-bodied suit with shoes resembling cinder blocks and a large Plexiglas-type mask for protection against mine detonation.

PERSONALITY OF THE WEEK

Army bowler leaves lanes for Lukavac

By Staff Sgt. BRIAN BOWMAN
203rd MPAD

Sgt. Ken Reynolds still thinks about it. The perfect five steps. Left foot slides to the line, right wrist rotates counter-clockwise, delivering a 16-pound sphere on a curved path down the narrow lane.

Smaaack! Perfect into the pocket, causing the white wooden pins to fall.

"All except the 10-pin," Reynolds reflects. "I threw two of the best balls of my career, but I left the 10-pin both times."

Reynolds, competing last year in the All-Army tournament for the fourth consecutive time, missed earning a spot on the Army for the Interservice Tournament by one pin.

"I cried for three days," he said recently. "I've carried that with me all year."

Now Reynolds is in Bosnia, serving with 1st Armored Division Support Command at Camp Punxsutawney. The All-Army tournament participants will be announced soon and the 35-year-old Reynolds fully expects to be one of the 50 to 60 elite Army bowlers selected. The April tournament will be at Fort Jackson, S.C. It is not yet known whether Reynolds will be able to participate.

But Reynolds, who normally bowls as

many as 35 games per day, hasn't touched a bowling ball since the first week of December. He said it doesn't matter.

"In the Army, you have periods like this (not being able to bowl) all the time," he said. "Every night before I go to bed ... I lay there and (mentally) play a tape of myself bowling."

In addition, the chiseled 5-foot-6-inch athlete lifts weights daily to physically stay in top shape.

"You really don't lose much," he said.

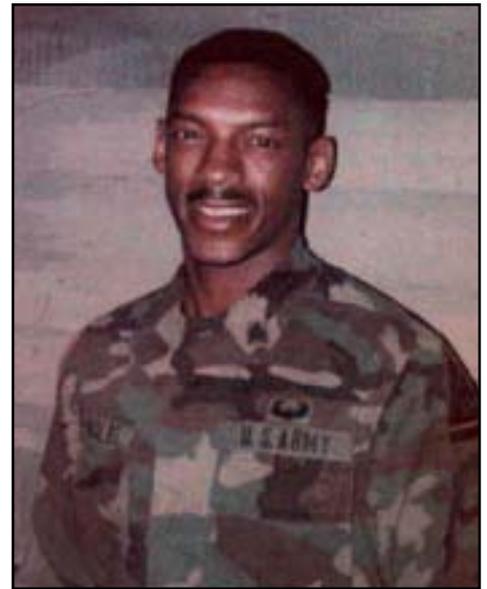
The automated logistics specialist got a late start in the Army, joining when he was 27.

"I grew up in Lafayette, La.," he said. "I have many friends who are buried there. I could have ended up like many of them. I was lucky."

He credits the military for giving him a fair chance to succeed in life and as a bowler. Reynolds said that, as a civilian, he could never get the sponsorship he needed to compete as a professional.

As an Army bowler, Reynolds has few peers. He has five perfect 300 games to his credit, as well as two 299s and one 298. He also has twice rolled an 800 series in league play (out of a possible 900).

Reynolds' long-term dream is to retire from the Army and then pursue a career



Staff Sgt. Brian Bowman

Sgt. Ken Reynolds dreams of strikes.

in the Professional Bowlers' Association senior tour. He said his wife Eliza is very supportive of the long hours of practice he works at his sport, "even though she doesn't bowl. She hates it."

Reynolds, who said his father and Michael Jordan are his heroes, said he wants to represent his unit at the All-Army competition.

Cavalry unit reflagged into 1st Infantry Division

By Staff Sgt. GARY YOUNGER
358th MPAD

CAMP MOLLY — The "Big Red One" is returning to Europe, and one of the famed infantry division's new units celebrated by unfurling its colors in Bosnia.

The 3rd Infantry Division's 3rd Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment officially became a part of the 1st Infantry Division during a reflagging ceremony March 23 at the squadron's headquarters here.

The squadron is now the 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, attached to Task Force Eagle's 2nd Brigade Combat Team for Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR.

The change in division designations is part of the Army's drawdown of 12 divisions to 10. The units of the 3rd Infantry Division will become the 1st Infantry Division. The 3rd Infantry Division colors will move to Fort Stewart, Ga., replacing the 24th Infantry Division (Mechanized), which is being inactivated as part of this process.

Maj. Gen. Montgomery C. Meigs, division commander, and Lt. Col. Anthony Harriman, squadron commander, presided over the short ceremony held in the squadron's clamshell maintenance hanger.



Sgt. Rick Roth

Command Sgt. Maj. Kenneth Graham folds the colors of the 3-4 Cav.

"The 4th Cavalry Regiment was our original outfit," Meigs said, as he alluded to the heritage which dates to

1855. "This outfit has seen a tremendous military history throughout the time of our republic."

Many of the unit's officers during that time became general officers during the Civil War.

The unit has earned numerous citations, including 21 campaign ribbons and a presidential unit citation. Twenty-six members of the unit have earned the Medal of Honor, with one, Sgt. William Wilson, earning two Medals of Honor.

Known as the "Big Red One" in part for its distinctive shoulder patch, the 1st Infantry Division was activated in 1917. The unit has fought in every major conflict involving the United States this century, including World War II, Vietnam and Operation DESERT STORM.

Harriman said the change of flags does little to change the mission of the unit.

"We have an important mission to do still," he said. "(We are) still prepared, still loyal. Our sabres are still but ready."

The reflagging ceremony was a precursor to the division's redesignation, set for April 10 at the unit's new headquarters in Wurzburg, Germany. The 1st Infantry Division had been headquartered at Fort Riley, Kan., since 1970.

Construction, from page 1

Isaacson said her unit has faced its share of challenges during the deployment.

"The cold here has been tough," she said, "and the mud for engineers is a pain. The mud can turn into an occupational hazard."

"It's also tough to get parts if something breaks down because we have one-of-a-kind equipment. Anytime that you run (the heavy equipment) the way we do, you're going to have problems," Isaacson said.

During construction of the Tuzla West Bypass road, the unit ran into a challenge of a different sort — spectators. Because the local populace had access to the work site, the project drew more than its share of sidewalk supervisors, most of them children.

"Our heavy equipment is like a kid magnet," Isaacson said. As a result, the soldiers had to be extra careful when children were around.

Even though problems have been encountered, Isaacson believes that the mission has, so far, been a success.

"There's been plenty to do," she said, "and it's all turned out great. Our guys get to do the mission that they were designed to do."

When the parking area is completed around the first of April, it will have the capacity to hold about 1,000 vehicles. This will bring the total area of Steel Castle to 115,000 square meters. Engineers will have used 87,000 cubic meters of rock — more than 7,000 dump truck loads — of rock, said 1st Lt. Frank Stefanick, the battalion's construction officer.

"We are pretty proud of this base camp," Stefanick said. "It was built in the true spirit of base camps. A lot of base camps are restricted by area and existing facilities, but not here. Steel Castle is actually laid out the way a base camp is supposed to be laid out — all by engineer effort."

• Sgt. 1st Class Jack Lee, 203rd MPAD, contributed to this story.



203rd MPAD

A soldier piles gravel onto mud.



Staff Sgt. Amy Gunnerson

MK19 gunner Pvt. Joseph A. Curet scans the woods from atop his Humvee.

MP patrols Bosnian countryside

Staff Sgt. AMY GUNNERSON
203rd MPAD

Pvt. Joseph A. Curet can't afford to have a bad day.

From his perch in the MK19 gunner's seat of his vehicle, the 30th Military Police Company member has a view of the road like no one else.

But it comes at the price of a vigilant watch over the 18th MP Brigade commander's convoy.

"Being up in the turret, you have more of a view of what's going on, and you have to look out for the whole squad," said Curet, part of Col. Stephen J. Curry's personal security detail.

"Anything can happen, at any time. You have to keep your eyes open and stay alert. Regardless of the circumstances, no matter how I feel, I still have to do my job."

Curet, 19, a Rochester, N.Y., native, has only been on the job three months. He finished his basic and advanced individual training as a military policeman, and reported to his unit at Fort Benning, Ga.

With only nine months in the Army, Curet received orders for Bosnia. Curet said the news came as a shock.

"I enlisted and considered myself working on the road, as a cop in the Army. I expected to see more law enforcement time than anything else," he said.

Deploying to Bosnia, Curet faced yet another transition.

"It was real tough at first. There was a bit of fear," he said. "We were running a checkpoint. There were civilians driving around the roads around the base camp. Back then I worried more ... than I do now. But we have a good platoon, a strong platoon. We look out for each other."

Curet's vehicle normally brings up the rear of the convoy.

You never know when something can happen from behind," he said. It's almost like being in the lead position, where anything can happen at any time. That's why I think sometimes the gunner job is a lot more important than people realize because being up in the turret, you've got more of a view of what's going on. You have to look out for your whole truck, your whole squad, the whole element."

Curet said it is important for a gunner to stay alert when continually traveling the same convoy routes.

"Just because you went down a road once or twice doesn't mean something can't happen the next time," he said. "Someone who says 'Oh, we've been down this road before, so there's nothing going to happen,' is wrong."

For comfort, he has tried everything from an MRE box to a footlocker as a seat. He finally settled on a foam-padded strap.

Team leader Sgt. Ken M. Poindexter, said that, for a young soldier, Curet has taken on the responsibility well.

"We're here for a show of force," Poindexter said. "The reason to have someone manning the gun in the turret is to say 'We're not going to start anything, but we're here to do our job and will use force if necessary.'"

Curet is required to keep one hand on the weapon. His technique is not just looking left and right, but a 180-degree sweep.

"There isn't just the back or right or left side, as far as land mines, roads, trip wires, snipers, suspicious people — anything," he said.

Curet said traveling the countryside in the convoys has given him a better appreciation for the mission.

"When you see these burned-down houses, you're thinking, 'Wow, we are here for a reason.' You know you are doing something right."