

THE TALON



OPERATION JOINT ENDEAVOR, BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

SERVING THE SOLDIERS OF TASK FORCE EAGLE

Presidential adviser lauds peace efforts

The following is an excerpt from a speech by Anthony Lake, National Security Adviser to President Clinton, at Georgetown University on June 14, the six-month anniversary of the Paris signing of the Peace Agreement.

One year ago, war raged in Bosnia — the worst war in Europe since World War II.

Today, there is peace. A very fragile peace, to be sure. But peace.

That change — from war to peace — is the single most important fact of life for the people of Bosnia. It means that killing fields are once again playgrounds. That cafes and marketplaces are full of life, not death. That running an errand doesn't mean running a death race against snipers and shells. That women are no longer prey to systemic campaigns of rape and terror. That the water and lights are on, and that there is shelter from the wind and the cold.

Peace means all these very basic things. As we work to make sure peace endures, we must not lose sight of its reality.

Thus far, the peace has held because IFOR, the NATO Implementation Force, has done its carefully defined job — and done it very well.

In the days after Dayton, when President Clinton committed 20,000 American troops to lead a 60,000-strong IFOR force, the skeptics predicted gloom and doom. They warned of terrorism, renewed fighting, American casualties and embarrassing retreat.

The reality has been the opposite. IFOR



Anthony Lake

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On target



Spc. George Roache

AH-64 Apache helicopters of Company C, 7th Battalion, 227th Aviation, 4th Aviation Brigade return to Comanche Base after gunnery qualification in Glamoc.

Lukavac units begin move north to Croatia

Slovanski Brod new home for division supply hub, troops

By Staff Sgt. BRIAN BOWMAN
203rd MPAD

LUKAVAC — The process of moving the 2,000-plus soldiers living and working here to a location across the Sava River has officially begun.

Last week, the 92nd Military Police Company packed up and relocated 70 miles north to a new camp at Slavovski Brod, Croatia.

Many of the units currently based here will soon join the MPs at the site just north of the Sava, where a command and control headquarters soon will be established.

The timing of the moves coincides with the opening of the newly erected

Slavovski Brod bridge. The span's opening enables Task Force Eagle's main supply route to be shifted through Slavovski Brod. A command and control headquarters at that side will be positioned to respond to the task force's logistical needs.

Most of the units currently located at Lukavac, including rear elements of the 1st Armored Division Headquarters, the Division Support Command, and various liaison elements will begin their move by July 15.

The balance of the units will begin to move between July 1 and Aug. 1 to other task force base camps.

Task Force Eagle officials caution that the move is not the first step in redeployment.

"This is not the start of redeployment," said Maj. John E. Suttle, 1st Armored Division spokesman. "We are

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From the top

Complacency remains challenge for leaders

Task Force Eagle soldiers are doing an outstanding job, but brace yourselves. The rough part of this operation is still before us.



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

That's why it bothered me, after recently returning from the Armor Conference at Fort Knox, Ky., to see that some of our soldiers have fallen into the trap of being complacent.

Yes, we've heard that word numerous times during the nearly seven months we have spent in the former Yugoslavia. But, I am convinced that with continuing peaceful conditions in the region, our soldiers are taking for granted things will

remain that way and that there is virtually no threat.

But just when your guard is down, you may wish it had been up.

What are the examples of complacency I have witnessed? I've seen soldiers sleeping in convoys and not wearing their Kevlar helmets. This is a sure sign of indifference or poor leadership.

Everyone thinks nothing will ever happen to them, but we need to remember that just a few short months ago, war was raging in this country. Untold dangers still threaten our

troops, but they may go unacknowledged if leaders don't emphasize proper procedures to their soldiers. This is not a risk-free environment.

Sergeants should make sure their troops traveling in a convoy are not using personal tape players/radios that could hamper their hearing. They also should not read a newspaper because this can distract them from being aware of their surroundings. It's the same old adage: "stay alert, stay alive."

Although we have enjoyed a cool period of weather, hot days are upon us. Noncommissioned officers must ensure their troops are in the correct uniform with the chin straps of their helmets properly secured.

I've also noticed some of our soldiers are trying to lighten their load by not carrying all of their ammunition. Every soldier with an M-16A2 must carry the basic load of seven, 30-round magazines for a total of 210 rounds.

Soldiers need to clean their weapons AND ammunition regularly. Dirty ammunition or magazines can easily cause a weapon to jam.

During what may be the half-way point in the operation, leaders must stay focused on our mission. Continue to improve your fighting positions and bunkers. Force protection is an ever-continuing goal.

Sergeants make it happen! Let's take care of each other.

Viewpoint

Chuck Taylors create commotion at the sandbag pit

I wore my Converse sneakers to sandbag detail the other day. Not just any Converse but high tops, Chuck Taylor Converse.



Sgt. 1st Class Jack Lee
203rd MPAD

Quite a stir was raised.

First, my running shoes, if I wear socks with them, are too tight. So, I switched to my Converse for comfort. Filling sandbags requires everyone to be in the correct uniform. And I am already self-conscious: My PT shorts have lost their elasticity and always seem to be in danger of falling down.

While I'm at it, sandbag detail is a sociological and psychological study in its self.

At the 6 a.m. formation, soldiers can barely stand up, let

alone wake up. The mood starts to change at the sand pit, where the bag fill takes place.

As we form a chain and hand off the full bags to each other, only an occasional grunt can be heard.

Then, a metamorphosis takes place. It might start when the L.T. drops a bag, or when a white sack that's been filled to capacity (and weighs a ton) starts down the line.

At first it's a ripple, then people are actually laughing. "Here comes a whale," someone will say, or "Here's an elephant." I swear — and my right hand is up in the "I'm telling the truth" pose — there is laughing in sandbag detail. I'm shaking

my head in disbelief.

But, I don't just wear my Converse to sandbag detail.

The shoes are also part of my school uniform. An Army Reservist, I'm a sixth-grade teacher in my other life and I often wear my Converse to work.

I actually have three pairs: white, black (my dress-up Converse) and the one's I have here, Navy blue. All high tops, of course.

My students say that they are pretty funky. "Mr. Lee's wearing Converse!" they yell.

Now it's "Sgt. Lee is wearing Converse!"

I was in line, handing bags of sand to another GI when he said, "I haven't seen high tops in years.

"Yeah, I used to wear 'em, paid \$13 for a pair, man. My mom said '13 for tennis shoes?"

She was hot," he said.

Later, walking to the show-ers, a lieutenant colonel yelled, "Sgt. Lee, I haven't seen high tops for years."

Then, "No, wait a minute, I just bought my son a pair."

I don't even know who Chuck Taylor is, do you?

I'm told that Converse high tops are making a comeback in the fashion world.

What's next — bell bottoms? The tennis shoes themselves were not what was reflected on, but that period in life when you wore them.

Life was much simpler back then, wasn't it? Hangin' with your homies, not much to worry about except maybe if so-and-so liked you.

And, in reflection, I've not heard of anyone being robbed for a pair of Converse, have you?

THE TALON

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Pleasant summer expected

Forecasters will issue warnings in the event of severe heat, storms

Early June's sweltering heat in the northern Bosnia-Herzegovina was an aberration.

That's Maj. Ted T. Vroman's read of weather records for the former Yugoslavia.

Vroman, a member of the U.S. Air Force's 617th Weather Squadron and Task Force Eagle's staff weather officer, is using local temperature history to project this summer's weather.

"According to climatology records, which are very limited," he said, "the average daily high temperature during summer is in the upper 70s and the normal daily low in the 50s — a little warmer in the Sava Basin and little cooler in the higher elevations of the 2nd Brigade's area of operation."

Vroman added that July and August should be the rainiest months and to expect humidity to peak in August.

The task force weather team will disseminate warnings whenever they forecast temperatures to break 86 degrees.

"The alert is the base camp's signal to begin taking wet bulb temperature readings to determine the heat condition category; possibly suspending physical training and other strenuous activity," Vroman said.

Thunderstorms also can have a major impact on operations, he said.

"Last month, Tuzla had more than twice its normal number of thunderstorms," Vroman said.

"And where there's thunder, there's lightning."

He said one person — a civilian employee stringing up a volleyball net — has already been injured by lightning here.

"Aviators are well aware of the dangers thunderstorms can bring: heavy rains, strong winds, large hail, severe turbulence and deadly lightning," he said. "But each one of these hazards also can significantly affect ground operations."

Vroman's team also issues thunderstorm warnings for the task force area.

"Again, this is the base camp leadership's signal to act," Vroman said. "FRAGO 643, signed by the task force G-3, lists all the required resource protective actions units a commander must take for each type of warning issued."

He said actions may include anchoring structures, wearing protective gear or minimizing outside work.

Warnings are disseminated through classified communications systems. However, a short-notice or no-notice warning may be issued via satellite communications.

"Severe weather can wreak havoc on people and equipment," Vroman said. "Take all weather warnings seriously. It's often said that weather is not important until *it's important* and then it may be too late."

NEWS BRIEFS

Army Chief of Staff praises Task Force Eagle soldiers

Task Force Eagle soldiers look like champions.

That's one of the messages Army Chief of Staff Gen. Dennis J. Reimer shared with military and civilian Department of Defense journalists earlier this month at the spring Joint Army-Air Force Newspaper Workshop in Arlington, Va.

"I have just been in Bosnia and visited our people," he said.

"I am proud of what those soldiers are doing. ... They represent us so very well. If you think back on Bosnia, I would defy anybody to show me a picture of a soldier who's out of uniform, who doesn't look professional.

"That counts," he said. "When you get over there with the people that have been with the ragtag armies for a long time and, all of a sudden, somebody shows up wearing a Chicago Bulls' uniform properly, and you've been playing semi-pro ball, you say 'Uh, oh. Something's changed over here. I don't want to mess with those people.'

"That's why we put a lot of emphasis on chin straps being buckled, flak vests being on, no beer and other alcohol in the theater, because all of that adds up to professional soldiers doing their job." (ARNEWS)

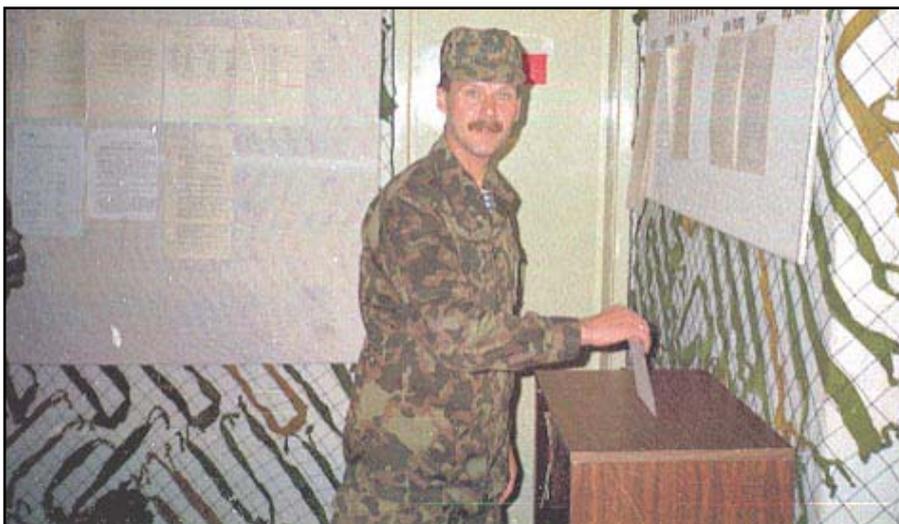
Marines to join task force

The Marine Corps is deploying its first full unit in support of Task Force Eagle.

The deployment will begin this month and last about six months.

Consisting of about 180 Marines from the First Marine Expeditionary Force, the 1st Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron will provide field commanders with real-time imagery for reconnaissance and surveillance by flying remote-control aircraft carrying reconnaissance cameras.

Russian election day



Maj. Andrei Zatanov

Maj. Oleg Voronin drops his vote into a ballot box Saturday, election day for Russian troops in Task Force Eagle. More than 1,800 soldiers visited one of six polling places to select from 10 candidates vying to become Russia's next president. Results were tabulated at the Russian Embassy in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, and included with the votes of about 106 million Russians participating Sunday in the first round of the country's presidential election process. President Boris Yeltsin finished first and will now face runner-up Gennady Zyuganov in a runoff election July 3.

Weekly weather forecast

	HIGH/LOW	CHANCE RAIN
Today	75+/50s	Moderate
Sat	70s/45+	High
Sun	70s/45+	High
Mon	75/45+	Moderate
Tue	75/40s	Moderate
Wed	75/45+	Moderate
Thur	75+/50s	Low

Source: 617th Weather Squadron

'Uncle Sam' salutes soldiers with mail

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

During his 21 years in the U.S. Marine Corps, Al "Uncle Sam" Rohde recalls that mail call often was more popular than chow call.

That's why the San Antonio businessman and former city councilman organized a nationwide pen pal network to boost the morale of thousands serving in Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR.

He has sent hundreds of letters and care packages to troops in the former Yugoslavia.

"It comes from the heart," Rohde said of his generosity toward U.S. soldiers.

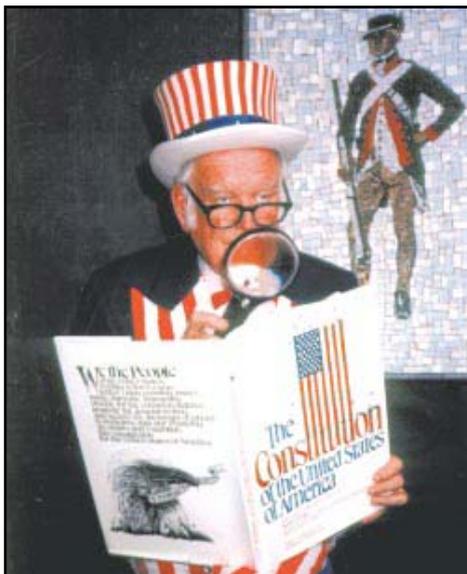
Rohde has served his country — in one way or another — for nearly 60 years.

At 16, Rohde joined the Marine Corps during World War II. He fought in Guam, Saipan and Okinawa. In 1958, he retired as a senior public information officer with the rank of captain.

Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR is not the first time Rohde has organized a large-scale support effort for U.S. soldiers.

In 1990, he organized the DESERT SHIELD/STORM Pen Pals Network that resulted in more than 30,000 letters and snack packs being mailed nationwide to U.S. troops.

Later, he directed the Operation RESTORE HOPE Pen Pals Network, in which nearly 7,500 letters and snack packs were mailed to troops in Somalia.



Al "Uncle Sam" Rohde — friend of deployed U.S. servicemembers.

But JOINT ENDEAVOR differs from those earlier operations," Rohde said.

"The troops (in Bosnia) went through a lot of hardship originally," he said. "The conditions were harder, including having to endure freezing weather."

Until post exchanges opened, Rohde mailed troops a variety of items such as can openers, nail files and newspaper clippings.

Rohde said he and those who have joined his pen pal network are peace correspondents.

The network includes U.S. schools, the elderly, church groups and other organizations and individuals.

Of more than 300 letters he has personally mailed, he has had about 35 responses. "I've had a lot of fun doing it," he said.

He also sent 50 kites to be distributed to Tuzla children.

He served on the San Antonio City Council from 1975 to 1977, and become the city's official "Uncle Sam" during the nation's bicentennial celebration.

Rohde is the chief operating officer of Rohde Realty in San Antonio. In his spare time, he is a painter.

A newspaper photograph of a Bosnian funeral so touched him that he turned the scene into an oil painting.

Meanwhile, he has had to fight his own battles. He suffered prostate cancer and has undergone radiation treatments.

But the spry 75-year-old does not let his health show him down. "I'm back on my feet — just like a cat," he said.

Rohde said to tell the troops "Godspeed" in returning home. "I'd like to express my personal gratitude ... from the guy who drives the tank to the commanding general. Job well done."

Rohde's address is: Al "Uncle Sam" Rohde, Postmaster General, Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR, "Peace Correspondents Pen Pal Network," 7300 Blanco Road, Suite 503, San Antonio, Texas 78216.

Finance specialists bring bank to soldiers in field

By Sgt. **KELLY C. FISCHER**
358th MPAD

Like a doctor making house calls, roving finance specialists hit the road in Bosnia to make sure soldiers — working where there is no pay office — can get cash and other financial services.

Two-person finance teams travel Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from Gradacac to checkpoints and outlying base camps, dodging pot holes and churning the dust on just about every IFOR route in the 1st Brigade area of operation.

Finance Specialist Spc. Angela C. Brown, 24, from Long Island, N.Y., attached to Detachment B, 8th Finance Battalion from Kirchgoens, Germany sets up her "cashier window" in a spare corner of a tent, broken and stripped-down building or old warehouse — wherever the soldiers are.

Brown finds a seat for herself and space for the line of soldiers that soon forms.

Most soldiers cash checks or request casual pay in dollars or deutsche marks.

Spc. Michael F. Carter, 23, a Summerville, S.C., native and member of Company C, 3rd Battalion, 5th Cavalry wrote a check for \$20.

He'll use the money to have patches sewn on a new uniform. He'll have to send it to a base camp with a convoy.

"I try to save and I try not to use AT&T too much," Carter said. "My wife really sends me everything I need."

Another soldier at Checkpoint 130 wrote a check for cash because he was leaving soon for R&R.

For Sgt. Michael S. Lyons, 26, Bradley gunner with Company C, 3rd Squadron, 5th Cavalry, from Eugene, Ore., casual pay is a convenient way to get cash, because it comes straight out of his paycheck.

Lyons uses the cash to buy AT&T phone cards and magazines.

When another soldier is able

to visit a PX, Lyons and other soldiers will "place an order" for the items they want.

The unpredictable access to cash and services means that "at the checkpoints we usually end up (distributing) more money (than at the base camps)," Brown said.

"The soldiers are always rotating back and forth and we sometimes miss them."

The soldiers also can use the finance team's visit to request pay inquiries. Answers are usually returned within two days Brown said.

"The thing I enjoy the most is working with the soldiers, helping them understand how finance works, discussing their pay with them and helping them understand why things are happening," said Brown's team partner, Detachment B finance specialist Sgt. Lincoln Wood, 27, from Bloomfield, Conn.

This day, the team will visit two checkpoints and two base camps.



Sgt. Kelly C. Fischer

Spc. Angela Brown cashes a check for a soldier.

"It's interesting. I get to see a lot of Bosnia and see how everyone is doing out at the different camps," Wood said. It can also lead to good photo opportunities.

After finishing their work at Checkpoint A2, Wood photographed Brown atop an M1A1 Abrams tank. Then it's back in the HMMWV for their next "house call."

STRAIGHT FROM THE ASSEMBLY LINE TO THE FRONT LINE



Scouts receive new armored vehicle

Spc. George Roache

Staff Sgt. Benjamin Berry (left) and Sgt. William Grant of 3rd Battalion, 12th Infantry, PMCS an XM1114 HMMWV.

By Spc. GEORGE ROACHE
29th MPAD

The Army has fielded a new generation of armored HMMWVs to protect soldiers enforcing the peace during Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR.

The XM1114 Heavy Up-Armored HMMWV, weighing in at 9,800 pounds with its steel plating and bulletproof glass, rolled into Guardian Base May 24.

Its destination: battalion scout and quick reaction force platoons, long-range surveillance units and brigade combat teams — soldiers who spend long hours on the road.

Steel plating and a ballistic windshield provide increased protection to vehicle occupants. It includes armor-piercing protection around its perimeter, and overhead and underbelly blast protection from anti-tank and anti-personnel mines.

Intended for scouts under the Army's Force XXI initiative to design the division of the 21st century, its production was accelerated to meet the Balkan peace enforcement mission's needs, said Capt. Yee Hang, 1st Armored Division's training and operations' force modernization officer.

"This environment makes it a great proving ground, with all of the minefields that are out there," Hang said. "For the amount of time scouts spend on the road, this is the perfect vehicle for them."

The XM1114 was built by AM General

of Warren, Mich., and armored by O'Garahess of Lima, Ohio.

It comes with a new 190-horsepower, turbo-charged engine, 4-speed electronic transmission and an improved chassis and suspension system.

The vehicles are experimental models just off the production line. AM General will make modifications and improvements based on soldiers' input and feedback.

Designated units started turning in their old HMMWVs May 30.

Soldiers with the Quick Reaction Force Platoon, Company C, 3rd Battalion, 12th Infantry, received several of the new vehicles Tuesday for their scouts back in Baumholder, Germany.

However, the platoon will benefit from the 1114s, said 1st Lt. Sihn Gibbon, Company C executive officer.

"This vehicle will help protect our soldiers," he said. "The more protection you get, the better it is, especially from small arms. With greater protection, there's greater survivability."

The QRF secures the area around any downed aircraft and assists base camps and small remote sites resolve security problems.

Usually transported by helicopters, the unit can now travel in bad weather and to crash sites that have no landing zones.

"We can travel heavier than we did before, stay there longer without being supplied," Gibbon said. "We are now a more visible show of force, especially when armed

with 50 cal's and (M-60 machine guns). That's very important for any type of action around here."

Spc. Gary Nier, 23, a QRF infantryman from Altmar, N.Y., liked how his vehicle responded when he pressed the accelerator.

The steering wheel's textured surface and thicker rim made it easier to grip. The smooth, quiet ride was better than being bounced around in the Bradley Fighting Vehicles he drives when in the rear.

But mostly, he liked the extra protection. "In any combat situation where we might get involved, it's a good idea to have some type of armor," he said. "Over here it's ideal. When you get called out on a QRF mission, you don't really know what to expect."

"All of the improvements they have made in them are a plus because we need everything we can get over here. During any real deployment, combat is possible."

Spc. Linn Hudson, 26, said it almost felt like driving his own car back home in Billings, Mont.

Other soldiers were similarly happy to get their new vehicles, said Sgt. 1st Class Barry Coker of the 18th Corps Support Battalion, noncommissioned officer in charge of the fielding.

"It seems to be a pretty lethal piece of equipment, a lot better than the (fiberglass and canvas)," Coker said. "It moves out with no hesitation at all and it's solidly built."

"The Army got its money's worth out of this piece of equipment."

ENGINEERS AT WORK: Mu



Spc. Richard Cancellieri

Pvt. Jay Friedl (left) and Spc. Chad Ratcliff jack up Bailey Bridge 5 in preparation of removing it.

By Spc. WILLIAM R. HALL
203rd MPAD

ROUTE UTAH — The 38th Engineer Company (Medium Girder Bridge) from Camp Bedrock has built bridges, base camps and even helped cross the Sava River with little fanfare.

The 38th deployed from Hanau, Germany, in December. Attached to the 16th Engineer Battalion, they assisted in constructing the float bridge in Zupanja.

“We were one of the first elements in and, at first, had our life support area in the Russian sector,” said Capt. Kim Sebenol-

er, 38th commander. “We put in the first IFOR fixed bridge in theater, in the Russian sector on Route Georgia.”

The 38th has recently taken on the job of removing Bailey Bridge 5, also called the Hutzel Bridge, off Route Utah. The Bailey bridge will be replaced with a British-made Compact 200 Bridge, which will be built by the Romanian Engineer Battalion. The U.S. engineers also were assisted by Swedish engineers who donated a crane and helped dismantle the bridge.

Bailey Bridge 5, which spans 330 feet, was installed over a damaged bridge. Local people



Capt. Rhonda Reasoner

Swedish engineer Sgt. Hauan Miller guides a bridge section while dismantling Bailey Bridge 5.



Spc. Richard Cancellieri

A Romanian soldier hammers a pin into the rollers while removing the Bailey bridge.



Sgt. Joaquin Carrasquillo (right, standing) of 30th Engineer Co

International effort removes bridge

had tried to repair the bridge by piling sand and rocks on it so they could pass over the waterway. The Bailey bridge was erected because delivery of the Compact 200 was months away.

The 38th began the monumental task of removing the Bailey bridge to make way for the Compact 200. Engineers shared three eight-hour shifts and lived in a temporary life support area in an abandoned warehouse about two miles from the bridge site.

"The first thing to do is strip the treadway, decking and stringers, and the jacking platforms are built," Sebenoler said.

"We jack the bridge up at each pier until the whole bridge is jacked up, then we lift the last section of the bridge up to put in rollers.

"Once everything is on rollers and we place a launching nose, we can de-launch the bridge and pull it back to shore. We take it apart as we pull it back," she said.

Sebenoler estimates it will take her company about five days to pull the Bailey bridge out.

"This won't be a problem," said Alan Pearson, a training officer for Mabey & Johnson Ltd., which makes the Compact 200.

Pearson is working with the

Romanians while they construct the Compact 200. "It's simpler than the Bailey. It's exactly like a big Lego set.

"I'm supervising the construction of most of the bridges, this is my 11th bridge. I've enjoyed it. It's been interesting," he said. Pearson said the Romanians have worked well with the U.S. troops. "The Romanians are very hard-working."

In fact, both sides agree that this joint endeavor has been quite a success.

"We have had very good cooperation," said Maj. Horia Costache, the Romanian commander for the bridge project.



Capt. Rhonda Reasoner

Romanian soldiers guide a crane operator while unloading bridge rollers.



Spc. Richard Cancellieri

Company supervises soldiers jacking the bridge before removal.



Capt. Rhonda Reasoner

Romanian engineer Sgt. Filip Dahiel secures a crane load.



Spc. Richard Cancellieri

38th Engineer troops move bridge pieces into place.

Engineers to transform quarry into range

By **Spc. WENDY M. FIRESTONE**
203rd MPAD

CAMP RUMBAUGH — Planning has begun on the construction of a small arms firing range inside the rock quarry near here.

Brig. Gen. James P. O'Neal, assistant 1st Armored Division commander for support, has directed the 16th Engineer Battalion to build the facility.

The battalion also will construct a demolition range at the same site, said Staff Sgt. Tom Toth, battalion assistant operations noncommissioned officer.

"The demolition range will be constructed and able to provide the 16th Engineers with an area for engineer demolition training," Toth said.

Engineers are required to qualify and train annually using Composition-4, or C-4 (a type of plastic explosive), TNT, shape and cratering charges.

In Task Force Eagle, soldiers train only on C-4 and TNT.

"The basic job for combat engineers is to be the experts (in the use of) explosives," Toth said.

"We use (explosives) for things like

making road craters, blowing up bridges, creating road blocks and obstacles," Toth said.

Combat engineers have used explosives for destroying mines, bunkers and for clearing mined areas.

Explosive ordnance disposal units also can use the range as a demolition area for any unexploded ordnance found.

Soldiers from the 20th Ordnance Detachment (Explosive Ordnance Disposal) from Kaiserslautern, Germany, already have tested the site to verify it is a safe area for demolition.

"(EOD and the engineers) will work hand-in-hand safely and efficiently to keep up our training requirements," Toth said.

The 16th Engineer Battalion is currently gathering information for construction of the range.

The 16th's staff operations section has been planning the range through the Task Force Eagle safety office to find out what Army regulations it needs to follow concerning its setup.

Once the planning is completed, combat engineers from the 16th Engineer Battalion will proceed with its construction.



Spc. Wendy Firestone

Staff Sgt. Ron Hartley, an explosive ordnance disposal technician, lays plastic explosive strips on 2.75-inch High Explosive rockets to destroy them.

Task Force dining facilities win awards in competition

By **Spc. ROB BISHOP** and
Spc. GEORGE ROACHE
29th MPAD

The Comanche Base dining facility was among the first to receive an award for outstanding service and quality in a new monthly, task force-wide competition.

Soldiers working in the DFAC received an Impact Army Achievement Medal for their work.

"This award just validates what they knew all the time — that they're the best," said Chief Warrant Officer Jeff Moore, DFAC officer in charge and 4th Aviation Brigade's food adviser.

"Getting something like this says, 'Thanks for all your hard work,'" he said.

Twenty-five dining facilities competed in five categories under the newly created Food Service Incentive Award Program, said Sgt. Maj. Thomas Bell, Task Force Eagle food service supervisor.

Judges selected a winner and runner-up in each category for a total of 10 awards.

The Comanche Base DFAC beat six other facilities in the large temper tent category.

These feed 600 or more soldiers, airmen and authorized civilians per meal.

The program was designed to boost morale through encouraging competition, Bell said.

"In turn, the soldiers out there get a better meal with what we have (to work with) out here," he said. "And since these are unannounced inspections, they have to be

ready at all times."

To be fair, evaluations were tailored to the kind of structures in which dining facilities operated, Bell said.

The other four categories were modular; building; "sea hut," a small, wood multipurpose building; and small temper tent (600 or fewer persons served per meal).

Kime Base is home to small temper tent runner-up, the 23rd Engineer Dining Facility.

"Based on the feedback from the soldiers, I know we are doing a good job," said 23rd Engineer Dining Facility Sgt. Paulett P. Roberts.

In fact, Roberts, a New York native, said Kime Base visitors often want to stay longer because of the great food.

The ribs at Kime Base are "killer," said Staff Sgt. Robert Stadelbauer, 30, a Columbus, Ga., resident at-

tached to the 23rd Maintenance Support Team.

"It is the best (dining facility) I've eaten at," Stadelbauer said. "And, if you come here to lose weight, the mess hall makes sure you don't because there is always food."

No specific characteristic won Comanche Base or other facilities their awards, Moore said.

"There are 15 different sub-categories that have point values in a 200-point system," he said. "We did well in all of them."

The Comanche Base DFAC scored 190 points in areas ranging from personal hygiene to food storage and ration accountability, Moore said. It excelled by being the first to offer ice and have potable running water.

Everyone from the cooks to the leadership and the Brown & Root Inc., staff was instrumental, he said.

"With professional soldiers who are highly motivated, it's not hard to maintain a high standard," Moore said.

Sgt. Kelly C. Fischer, 358th MPAD, contributed to this report.

DFAC HONOR ROLL

MODULAR — Winner: LA Demi, 4th Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade. Runner-up: LA Lisa, HHC, 2nd BDE

BUILDING — Winner: Camp Dallas, 16th Corps Support Group. Runner-up: Eagle Base, HHC, 1st AD

TEMPER TENT (large) — Winner: Comanche Base, HHC, 4th BDE. Runner-up: Steel Castle, Division Artillery

TEMPER TENT (small) — Winner: Lukavac Annex, 77th Maintenance. Runner-up: Kime Base, HHC, 23rd Engineers

SEA HUT — Winner: LA Angela, 47th Support Group, 2nd BDE. Runner-up: LA Pat, , Company A, 2nd Bn, 68th Armored Regiment, 2nd BDE

West Point graduate, instructor reunited

By Sgt. RICK ROTH
29th MPAD

Anyone with any time in the military knows it's not uncommon to bump into past military acquaintances.

"I remember everything about his class," recalled 1st Lt. Todd C. Soucy.

Soucy, the 22nd Signal Brigade's assistant supply officer is talking about the unit's deputy brigade commander, Lt. Col. Jeffrey G. Smith Jr., one of his instructors at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, N.Y.

Smith remembers meeting Soucy again when he was battalion executive officer for the 440th Signal Battalion.

"He walked into my office in 1994, four years later as a second lieutenant in the 440th Signal Battalion," Smith said.

Even though he's met about five of his previous West Point students during this deployment, Smith admits it's something you never get used to.

"It certainly makes you wonder how good of a job you did preparing them to accomplish the basic skills we expect of a lieutenant," Smith said.



Sgt. Rick Roth

1st Lt. Todd C. Soucy works for his former West Point professor at Eagle Base.

Responsible for instructing plebes in English composition, Smith, who is third-generation military, taught about 500 students at West Point between 1989 and 1992.

Smith focused his students on the

study of contemporary literature, forcing them to come to grips with their own culture and environment, he said.

"They had to put into words the world around them," Smith said. "It forced folks to think independently."

"It helped a lot with improving your ability to think on your feet," Soucy said.

While a student, Smith remembers Soucy being the informal leader of his class, he said.

"I made a strong recommendation that he join the brigade staff for this difficult (operation)," Smith said.

Even though Soucy hasn't continued on with his study of literature, his memory of Smith's class is ingrained in his head. In particular he remembers memorizing poetry.

An avid acoustic guitar player, Smith made a tradition of playing for his students on the last day of class.

"The class loved it because it was so untraditional," said Soucy, admitting at the time he never saw himself as a future lieutenant.

"I wish more of my classes at school had been like this."

Troops study local people, culture at lonely checkpoint

By Sgt. KELLY FISCHER
358th MPAD

CHECKPOINT F1 — A soldier peers out from beneath the shade of the gate guard shack.

Looking north, he can clearly see the view of the ferry that transports vehicles from Croatia, over the Sava River, into Bosnia-Herzegovina. On a statistics board that rests on sandbags just below eye level, he keeps count of all vehicles that cross the river and drive past his guard post.

The soldier guards the entrance to Checkpoint F1. About 23 soldiers with Headquarters Company, 4th Battalion, 67th Armor operate the checkpoint. They've been here for about three weeks.

Pfc. Michael R. Davis said he likes the opportunity to talk to the people who come through the checkpoint.

He described a quirky World War II veteran who would come through the checkpoint everyday.

"He was funny," Davis said. "He would salute you a different

way every day, and do a dance when he came over to you."

People are interested in what it is like in the United States, and what big cities are like, said Davis.

Inside the gates of the checkpoint, soldiers do random searches of vehicles.

"We haven't seen weapons or contraband," said Pfc. Shane Sposito, from Danville, Calif., who was manning the checkpoint with Pfc. Chris McMullin from Portland, Ore. "But we've seen people with pigs and livestock in the trunks of their car."

Their observations teach them about the local people and let them look at themselves, too.

"A lot of people don't really have anything," McMullin said. "I realize I took for granted a lot of the things that I had back in the States."

Nearby, two soldiers conduct a mortar firing drill.

"When we aren't on guard or the guys aren't catching up on sleep, we train by talking through misfire procedures and safety checks, and doing hands-



Sgt. Kelly Fischer

Sgt. Dwayne E. Conley, mortar platoon, HHC, 4/67th armor lifts weights to keep in shape at Checkpoint F1.

on training," said Squad Leader Spc. Clyde T. Coats III, 26, from Rose Pine, La.

In a typical day, soldiers pull four to six hours of duty, train and do weapons maintenance.

In the front of the small building they occupy on the side of the road sits a weight bench and some slightly rusting exercise equipment. In their free

time, many of the 4-67 soldiers lift to keep in shape.

On this day, soldiers escape the hot sun to the two dark attic rooms where they sleep. Three soldiers gather around a table to play dominoes.

"Sunday is maintenance day for boots, M-16s and (playing) dominoes," Sgt. Charlie E. Bunton said.

NEWS FROM GERMANY

Family lounge offers play area, phones

By Karl Weisel
Hessen Herald

Family members in the 165th Military Intelligence Battalion are better able to keep in touch with their deployed soldiers, thanks to a new family lounge.

The room in the unit's headquarters on Darmstadt's Kelley Barracks provides a relaxing atmosphere where individuals can call their loved ones in the former Yugoslavia serving as part of Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR.

It also features a recreation area for children.

"The commander wanted someplace within the battalion to make families feel more comfortable," Chief Warrant Officer Elisabetta Halkard, family support liaison. "We wanted them to be able to come and relax.

"Because this room already had two military telephone lines, it offers easy access," Halkard said, adding that most of the soldiers in the unit are currently deployed.

"We set up a separate room for spouses to make morale calls and then took it one step further to give the families a little privacy," said Chief Warrant Officer Carlos DeLeon, rear detachment commander. "It's open 24 hours a day and it provides a place where families can come and get together."

While the room and phones are available around the clock, Halkard has advised spouses to use discretion when calling — that they'd be more likely to reach soldiers after normal duty hours.

At the opening ceremony last month, families had the chance to communicate by phone, enjoy cake and other refreshments and later stroll over to the Kelley Dining Facility for Family Night. The dining hall offers surcharge-free dinners every Friday for families of deployed soldiers.

"It's a pretty new concept for the Army," Halkard said.

She added that family support has been a major priority during Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR. "USAREUR has made an extra effort to strengthen the family liaisons within the units."

Funds approved, facility upgrades await soldiers

By Karl Weisel
Hessen Herald and
Deborah L. Powers
53rd ASG Post-Union

Soldiers returning from Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR should notice a marked improvement in community facilities, thanks to a U.S. Army Europe initiative.

The USAREUR Commander-in-Chief's Facility Improvement Program is aimed at improving living conditions for soldiers and their families.

More than \$20 million will be spent in the 104th Area Support Group alone on projects ranging from barracks renovations to upgrading community facilities on several installations.

A similar effort also is under way in the 53rd ASG.

"The Facility Improvement Program is the CINC's initiative to improve the quality of life in the kaserne and for the units that had deployed to Bosnia," said Lt. Col. John Ramey, 104th Area Support Group director of engineering and housing.

"What we're trying to do is fix and repair and replace areas that have a visual and direct affect on the community and the single soldiers.

"Most people will see it as a facelift, but it's actually a lot more than that," Ramey said.

While soldier and family members may not be aware of all the enhancements, they should see a marked rise in the overall quality of life because of the program, he said.

Work already has started on the first of 143 projects in 104th ASG and another 144 in the 53rd ASG.

"Some of the construction and repair work may inconvenience people temporarily, but the end product will make their lives much, much better," he said.

Repairing roads, repairing hangars, resurfacing parking lots, paving sidewalks, installing street lights and windows and many more projects are planned.

Many single soldiers coming home from the Balkans will discover carpeting, new reflective lights, paint and various other improvements in their living quarters.

Many family housing residents will enjoy repaired stairwell doors, intercoms and other enhancements.

Most of the projects will be handled by civilian contractors, Ramey said.

Community members throughout the 104th ASG can stay informed about ongoing work through displays in community common areas.

Some of the key projects planned for 53rd ASG communities include:

222nd BSB

Baumholder, Neubreuke and Strassburg

- Repair playground equipment in all housing areas: Smith, Wetzels and Neubreuke
- Renovate Smith, Strassburg and Health Clinic Child Development Centers
- Design for total renovation of the Iron Club
- Renovate two dining facilities (Smith Barracks)
- Total renovations of the Youth Center (inside and exterior repair)
- Construct parking lot near Chapel One
- Repair panic bolt locks in stairwell doors
- Repair electrical supply lines to Smith housing area
- Install emergency lighting at the Rheinlander Club
- Upgrade transformer station

410th BSB

Bad Kreuznach and Dexheim

- Repair/upgrade playground at child development centers and housing areas
- Install sight screens (around gelbe sack/trash containers) in housing areas and kasernes

- Paint and repair balconies, replace doors and install window screens in housing areas

- Replace speed bumps, repair pot-holes and replace four bus shelters

- Install new

street lights in the Bad Kreuznach housing area and add new cabling in Dexheim to prevent outages

- Repair fences and gates at two motor pools in Bad Kreuznach

- Repair racquetball court in Dexheim, enhance volleyball court and install new walkway at the Kuhlberg Community Park

- Repair electrical systems in Dexheim, to include repairs to street-light systems

"Most people will see it as a facelift but it's actually a lot more than that."

— Lt. Col. John Ramey
Director,
Engineering and Housing

PERSONALITY OF THE WEEK

Soldier flies high as crew chief, instructor

By **Spc. GEORGE ROACHE**
29th MPAD

COMANCHE BASE — Spc. Rueben Lucero, 22, of Company A, 7th Battalion, 227th Aviation, grew up at his grandfather's ranch in Alamogordo, N.M., home of the White Sands Missile Range.

From the back yard, he could see missiles launched.

He knew when rocket sleds were tested from the sonic booms he heard.

His grandfather had been an Army Air Corps gunner on bombers during World War II. Although the range was a "big pile of white sand out in the middle of nowhere," the weapons tests done there made him curious about how the military works, Lucero said.

Living near the missile range and his grandfather's influence helped him to decide to join the Army, where he began his military career as a Black Hawk helicopter mechanic at Fort Bragg, N.C.

"I at least wanted to see what things were like," said Lucero, who claims Spanish and Native American bloodlines, and whose last name means "bright light" in Spanish. "Granted (the Army has) changed since (World War II), but I wanted to be able to say I'd 'been there, done that.'"

His grandfather taught him to be a perfectionist and to have self-confidence.

He learned to think for himself from his father, a self-employed rancher who hauled racehorses for the All-American Futurity, one of the country's richest horse races, he said.

The work ethic they instilled in him caught the attention of his supervisors, who suggested he become a crew chief.

"Actually the first question they asked me was could I swim," Lucero said.

His unit's primary mission was over water combat search and rescue. To be an air crew member, Lucero had to learn how to tread water for two minutes, swim 50 meters and escape blindfolded from a submerged cockpit using a small tube to breathe.

He takes his crew chief responsibilities just as seriously, treating his assigned aircraft as though it was his privately owned vehicle.

"A good crew chief will have pride in it, keep it clean and will try to have it better than anyone else's," he said.

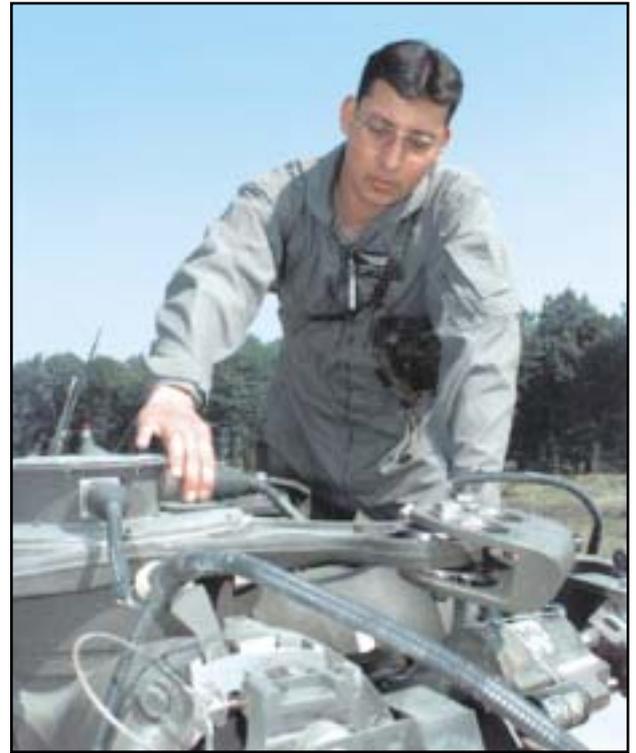
That means long hours examining the airframe, pneumatics, hydraulics, rotor system, engines and electrical system for problems that might not be evident; determining whether any damage is within limits; checking all fluid levels; writing up faults like cracks in vent tubes, missing panel screws or inoperative radios; and keeping both his log book and computer log up-to-date.

When he flies, his job is to help take care of passengers and cargo. He also is an extra set of ears for radio calls and another set of eyes for other aircraft in the area.

"Your job is to make sure what's right gets done. Safety's always a big issue in my line of work," he said.

He likes teaching as much as he likes being a crew chief.

"It works hand-in-hand," he said. "That's



Spc. George Roache

Spc. Rueben Lucero checks a rotor assembly on his helicopter before take-off.

what our leaders do — try to instill good work habits in us."

His knowledge, ability and attitude made him a rarity: an E-4 instructor, a responsibility usually reserved for sergeants. Not only does he do his own work, but assists in training new crew chiefs.

"With a good work ethic, you can help people out and make things work better," he said. "It's hard for one person to do anything. If he's got others working with him, he can get a lot done with their backing."

Officer 'phones home' with high-tech equipment

By **Staff Sgt. BRIAN BOWMAN**
203rd MPAD

LUKAVAC — A friend's computer technology and a small investment helped one soldier here interact with his family on a more personal level.

Chief Warrant Officer Mark Brown of the Staff Judge Advocate's office is using interactive video technology to make a monthly "call" to his wife, Christy, and 5-year-old daughter Katie. Brown, stationed at Bad Krueznach, Germany, can see and hear his wife on his computer screen here and she can see him there.

"We use a program developed at Cornell University



Staff Sgt. Brian Bowman

CWO Mark Brown writes a video e-mail.

called CU-See Me," Brown said. "My next door neighbor ... has it, and he explained how we could set it up."

Brown said that if a person had a computer and e-mail ca-

pability, adding the video and audio dimension isn't as expensive as people might think. Brown said he essentially needed to purchase three items — a camera to film his image, a sound card for voice and the

CU-See Me software. The total investment was less than \$400.

"You don't have to be a hacker to do this," Brown said.

Brown sets up a time to call his wife via interactive video

about once a month. During a recent call, Brown visited with his wife, daughter and mother-in-law.

Brown also has used interactive video — but not audio — on the Internet, chatting with on-line users from as far away as Australia, Canada and the United States.

"What's neat about it is you get to see them when they're talking," he said. "It's better than using the phones here."

Brown said he thinks the idea of interactive video will catch on, and that the Army is looking at furthering its use of the tool.

"So far ... it's very simple," he said.

Lake

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has maintained the cease-fire and compelled the parties to pull back their forces and weapons from a three-mile separation zone — without significant incident. Nearly all heavy weapons have been placed under IFOR supervision and many will be destroyed as part of the arms control agreement.

Already, more than 100,000 soldiers not based in barracks have been demobilized. And hundreds of square miles of territory were transferred from one entity to another without a shot being fired.

IFOR also has stopped the widespread killing of civilians and restored security to Sarajevo, where people now walk the streets in safety. Virtually all prisoners of war have been released and those few still in custody are being held as war crimes suspects. IFOR has moved aggressively to take down internal checkpoints and, while far from perfect, freedom of movement has improved — between 10 and 15 thousand people cross the boundary between the Bosnia-Croat Federation and the Serb Republic every day.

As President Clinton made clear in committing our troops to IFOR, the point of this extraordinary international effort is straightforward: to give the people of Bosnia the breathing room they need to begin rebuild to rebuild their lives and their land, and to give peace a chance to take on a life and logic of its own.



Spc. Cesar G. Soriano

This spring, after 3 1/2 years of costly bloodshed, Bosnian children once again have a chance to play in peace.

Move

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merely posturing our logistics infrastructure to allow us to more easily redeploy once the order to redeploy has been received. We have not been ordered to redeploy."

The challenge to the move is not merely moving the soldiers, equipment and support staff some 70 miles, but to continue to be the main support element for the task force during and after the process.

Once moved, the new camps — probably located on both sides of the Sava — will still provide support to the remaining task force while processing exiting units through.

"To do that," said Lt. Col. Gary R. Addison, the assistant DISCOM chief of staff for operations, "you've got to have a transition point that provides logistic support ... and you've got to have a place for people to maintain their equipment. Plus, you have to provide individual soldiers (processing through) with life support for 48 to 72 hours."

To that end, unit leaders here have been meeting in planning sessions to sort out the nuts and bolts of the process.

One such meeting focused on "lessons learned" from the deployment process — located primarily at the now defunct Camp Harmon near Zupanja — to make redeployment as smooth and orderly as possible.

Addison said some of the things redeploying units would accomplish while at Slavonski Brod are maintenance on equipment for the convoy back through Hungary,

loading tracked vehicles on trucks for the ride, giving vehicles a quick wash and identifying equipment that units possess that is not a part of their normal table of organizational equipment.

"This excess (equipment) was for units to support specific missions while they were here and now no longer need," Addison said. "The idea is to segregate that equipment at Slavonski Brod so it can easily be turned in at Hungary."

In addition to processing U.S. troops and equipment, time must be allotted for other members of the multinational effort to use the bridge erected near Slavonski Brod.

"There's going to be a lot of traffic flow," he said.

The 92nd beat the rush. Having moved two of its platoons north to Camp McGovern in May, it had only one remaining platoon and a headquarters unit to pack and move to Slavonski Brod.

First Sgt. Merle Jones said leaving here was bittersweet.

"We were the first ones here," Jones said. "We came here, found it, secured it and assisted Brown & Root Inc. with their set-up. I can remember sitting here when there wasn't a bathroom that worked."

The 92nd secured the camp here in the opening days of January, nearly two weeks before most other troops arrived.

Now, the unit is helping guard bridges at Brcko near McGovern and at Slavonski Brod.

The 127th Military Police Company from Guardian Base will pick up the 92nd's normal patrols along nearby major supply routes.

Gym clothes donated to local war veterans

The 432nd Civil Affairs Detachment recently delivered donated gym clothes to the Sons of Bosnia, a disabled veterans organization in Lukavac.

Soldiers and their family members provided \$200 — enough to buy T-shirts and shorts for the 12-person wheelchair handball team, said Staff Sgt. Eric Vogt, a member of the Green Bay, Wis., based unit.

The civil affairs unit also helped organize donations and volunteers for refugee centers in Lukavac.

Families assist refugees

Clothing and other goods gathered by a unit's family support group has been given to local refugees.

The 181st Transportation Battalion families from Mannheim, Germany, gathered 6,000 pounds of items — including clothes, shoes, toiletries and school supplies — and shipped them to their loved ones, now serving at Base Camp Dallas.

The clothing and other items were given to refugees and school children in a schoolhouse across Route Skoda from Camp Dallas.

The unit plans a similar distribution in a Bosnian Serb area.