

THE TALON



OPERATION JOINT ENDEAVOR, BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

SERVING THE SOLDIERS OF TASK FORCE EAGLE



Sgt. Rick Roth

Swedish Lt. Bjorn Haevaker keeps watch over the Slovanski Brod pontoon bridge.

Sava conquered again

By Sgt. RICK ROTH
29th MPAD

Manufactured by the Russians — emplaced by the Hungarians — guarded by Swedes — under operational control of the United States.

An operational melting pot, the new pontoon bridge at Slavonski Brod represents IFOR in miniature.

Finished in mid-May, the bridge is now being pressed into heavy service as the 1st Armored Division Support Command, currently at Lukavac, moves to Slavonski Brod.

"This truly has an international flavor," said Capt. Jim Ruf, commander of the

Mustang Tactical Operations Center.

Part of the 317th Rear Area Operation Center, an Army Reserve unit located in Wiesbaden, Germany, the Mustang TOC provides command and control for the bridge.

"There are about seven countries that are working out here, all pulling in the same direction," Ruf said.

During the war, the fixed bridge crossing the Sava River at Slavonski Brod was destroyed. A natural route for repositioning units, the temporary bridge was installed to allow a straight shot north from

see *Bridge*, page 12

NATO looks to the future

Defense secretary says IFOR is alliance's most significant achievement

By JIM GARAMONE
American Forces Press Service

NATO will be bigger and more flexible, thanks to changes recently approved at the North Atlantic Defense Ministerial in Brussels, Belgium.

U.S. Defense Secretary William J. Perry also spoke at a news conference about the future of the peace implementation force in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

N A T O changes look to the future, Perry said. "NATO will be stronger and more united," he said.

He said expansion of the alliance is moving ahead as planned and the "zone of stability" will encompass the nations currently in the Partnership for Peace program.

The partnership is a pathway nations wishing to join NATO must fol-

see *NATO*, page 12



William J. Perry

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Gin Blossoms, NFL cheerleaders headline July 4th entertainment

A concert by the rock band Gin Blossoms and visits by the San Francisco 49er Cheerleaders highlight entertainment planned for Task Force Eagle soldiers commemorating the United States' 220th birthday.

"We're going to have live entertainment at 19 base camps for the Fourth of July," said Kathleen Cole, the task

force's DoD/USO touring show coordinator.

Twelve 49er cheerleaders will split into two groups and visit nine base camps (Alicia, Angela, Colt, Gentry, Guardian, Kime, Lisa, McGovern and Steel Castle) on July

see *Independence Day*, page 12

From the top

Lesson from past: Focus on the basics

Anyone who reads this column on a regular basis knows that I often talk about the dangers of complacency.

But you may not understand why I developed such strong feelings on this topic. So let me share a little piece of my life with you.

I was 17 years old in 1966 when I enlisted in the Army. By the time I completed basic training, AIT and jump school, I was assigned to the 173rd Airborne, later moving to the 1st Infantry Division because they needed tankers.

As an 18-year-old private first class, I wound up in Vietnam — a place where I didn't want to be. I was assigned to



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

Troop A, 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry.

The soldiers in my unit soon fell into a routine, which included occasionally sneaking into a nearby village to drink.

But in the wee hours of one morning, something happened that would change my life forever.

Out of thin air, a group of Viet Cong executed a well-planned and coordinated surprise attack on the camp.

For some reason, none of the soldiers in my platoon had gone into town that night. Nearly half the men in my platoon were annihilated. The Viet Cong suffered casualties as well.

Later, we realized they had

been watching us and had used a house located in the middle of our base camp to store satchel charges they later threw into our vehicles. They also positioned a rocket-propelled grenade team outside the perimeter to fire at us.

The raid caught us completely off guard. They didn't come right at us; they attacked from different directions.

That night, we did the best we could to defend each other, but it was too little, too late.

It was a devastating loss of life — and all because we had let our guard down.

I've thought about that night many times and wondered how such a surprise attack could occur. I often wonder if the outcome would have been different if we all had been more focused, more alert.

But back in those days, I was more interested in reading my

mail and dreaming about going on R&R than I was in concentrating on the mission.

I don't know if we could have changed history if we had done things differently. But I'd like to think that by sharing this story, many of our young soldiers today might stop and think.

Today we live and work in a more recent battleground. The death toll from the war is between 250,000 and 300,000. I'd like for all Task Force Eagle troops to listen to your senior officers and NCOs and stay totally focused on the mission. And, leaders, don't be afraid to correct your soldiers.

When I talk about complacency, I am really talking about survival. I take it personally when soldiers don't take care of one another.

Sergeants make it happen!

Viewpoint

Nedzad's story reminds us of why we are here

"Horror."

He pauses and takes a drag from his cigarette.

"Horror," he repeats.

His broken English and the tears in his eyes remind me why I'm here.

"Boom, boom, boom. Every day. Every day."

On May 1, 1992, Nedzad Jahic made a two-hour trip to Tuzla with his wife and children to visit his brother for a national holiday.

Fighting began that day in Brcko, where Nedzad lived, and the area fell to the Bosnian Serbs.



Sgt. Kim Rich
361st Press Camp Headquarters

And here he stayed.

A Muslim soldier for the Bosnian Army, Nedzad never returned to his home of 15 years.

"My house. My vehicle. All gone," he says, shaking his head.

His life as a soldier was difficult, he

says.

"War. No food. Very hard."

Nedzad is a handsome man with a sweet smile.

Even though he works long hours as a driver seven days a week at Eagle Base at the Joint Information Bureau, every day he greets us all with a smile

and a "Good morning."

Some days, he's "very tired" but still says things are "much better now" for him.

On warm, sunny days, he talks of swimming and fishing in a nearby lake.

"Tired of war. Tired of fighting."

The pain in his eyes brings tears to mine.

I suppose it's easier not to think about the atrocities the people of this country have lived with for four years. It's easier to ignore it. It's easier to become immersed in our own jobs, our own lives.

But Nedzad and all the men, women and children with stories similar to his are why we're here.

The Implementation Force has come to Bosnia-Herzegovina "in peace" and "for peace."

It's a fragile peace, and no one knows how long it will last once IFOR is gone.

So like many others here on this mission of peace, I pray.

I pray for the safety of all the U.S. and coalition forces here.

I pray in thanks for the life and freedoms I know are awaiting me at home.

I pray that no one here has to experience the loss and sorrow that engulf Nedzad's eyes and steal his smile.

I pray that no one else here has to know firsthand the word he keeps repeating.

"Horror. Horror."

THE TALON

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Chief Warrant Officer David B. Whalen shows his OH-58D Kiowa Warrior to (left to right) Reps. Tom Beville, John S. Tanner, Dan L. Miller and Joe Knollenberg.

Congressmen visit troops

Lawmakers receive 'firsthand' look at Balkan peace mission

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

A U.S. congressional delegation visited Task Force Eagle Saturday to examine the intricacies of peace enforcement in the former Yugoslavia.

"I wanted to come here and see it firsthand because we've got to make some decisions about what the future holds here," said Rep. John S. Tanner, D-Tenn., member of the National Security Committee and the Military Authorization Committee.

"We're very proud of them and we're proud of what they are doing for the United States of America over here as part of this NATO force," Tanner said of the soldiers he met. "There are a lot of people who are alive today who would not be, were it not for these fellows."

The group also included Rep. Bill Barrett, R-Neb.; Rep. Joe Knollenberg, R-Mich.; Rep. Dan L. Miller, R-Fla.; Rep. Bob W. Ney, R-Ohio; Rep. Tom Beville, D-Ala.; and Rep. David L. Hobson, R-Ohio.

After landing at Eagle Base, they boarded three UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters to fly over the green, mountainous landscape of northeastern Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The aircraft landed on a hilltop near Vlasenica, home of Lodgment Area Lisa, headquarters of 2nd Brigade Combat Team.

They were greeted by local commanders and treated to a turkey lunch with soldiers from their home states.

Hobson, delegation leader, is a Military

Appropriations Committee member.

"I'm extremely proud of these people," said Tanner, who represents Tennessee's 8th Congressional District and is a colonel in the Tennessee Army National Guard.

"They are doing a professional job in an even-handed manner under sometimes difficult circumstances and it makes you very proud."

Beville visited several troops from his home state of Alabama, including Staff Sgt. Jerry R. Smith, 31, from Florence, Ala. Smith is a construction foreman for the 40th Engineer Battalion.

"It's very challenging," Smith said of his work on bunkers and fighting positions.

Tanner said he has kept abreast of events in the former Yugoslavia, but he gained more knowledge by seeing for himself "the contribution that our troops are making to the concept of peace in the Balkans."

The group also visited Ugljevik, home of the 1,500-member Russian Brigade.

The day before, the seven lawmakers met with U.S. servicemembers in Taszar, Hungary.

Although not all Americans support the peace enforcement mission, Tanner said it is a bargain, considering the alternative — "a return to the Cold War with the world on the brink of nuclear war."

He added, "And I'm particularly glad we are here and have a presence in Central Europe right now, (especially considering) the uncertainty in Russia ... and with some of the things that are going on south of here in Turkey and Macedonia."

"It was a farsighted decision for us to become involved and I'm glad we did," Tanner said. "I think it's the right thing to do."

News briefs

Troop uniform exchanges authorized for task force

Task Force Eagle has authorized the exchange of uniforms for all ranks.

The items that have been authorized for exchange are up to, but not to exceed, two sets of BDUs, six undershirts, six drawers (men), six pairs of socks, four bras and six pairs of underwear (women).

"This exchange is meant to replace clothes that have been rendered unserviceable due to the increased wear put on them by the soldiers during this deployment," said Capt. George M. Goth, officer in charge of supply for Task Force Eagle.

"This (direct exchange) will help soldiers replace items destroyed due to the concertina wire, laundering breaking down the material, increased work schedules and the constant wear of TA-50."

Unit commanders may use criteria found in TM-10-8400-201-23 to determine uniform serviceability. The Department of Army has placed a 90-consecutive day service requirement, Dec. 1, 1995 through May 31, 1996, in the theater of operations.

The DX applies only to U.S. soldiers. Enlisted soldiers will not have to forfeit their clothing allowance to receive the DX.

Change to Net Pay Advice

Effective with the July 1996 mid-month military payday, only those soldiers electing a midmonth pay option will receive a Net Pay Advice. Previously, during months when the Army had miscellaneous comments to disseminate, soldiers without midmonth pay options also received an NPA.

In the future, the only time soldiers without a midmonth pay option will receive an NPA is when the Office of the Secretary of Defense directs a remark to the total force.

Weekly weather forecast

	HIGH/LOW	CHANCE RAIN
Today	78/54	Moderate
Sat	75/50	High
Sun	75/50	Moderate
Mon	78/52	Low
Tue	80/54	Low
Wed	80/55	Moderate
Thur	75/50	Moderate

Prepared June 25 by the 617th Weather Squadron

Vests, convoy rules helping save lives

Force protection rules are result of bloody history lessons

By Spc. GEORGE ROACHE
29th MPAD

Six months into Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR's planned year-long peace enforcement mission, Task Force Eagle has attained a high degree of success in protecting its force.

The task force safety rate is better than rates back in Germany. Vehicle accident rates have declined since January. No incidents of sniper and indirect fire, terrorism, fratricide and suicide have occurred.

But as newcomers arrive seeing no hostilities, and the sweltering heat makes flak jackets a discomfort to wear, leaders must remind soldiers that success came from strict adherence to force protection standards, say task force senior officers.

"We are where we are because we have taken those extra steps to ensure soldier safety from the outset," said Maj. Gary J. Kelley, task force safety officer.

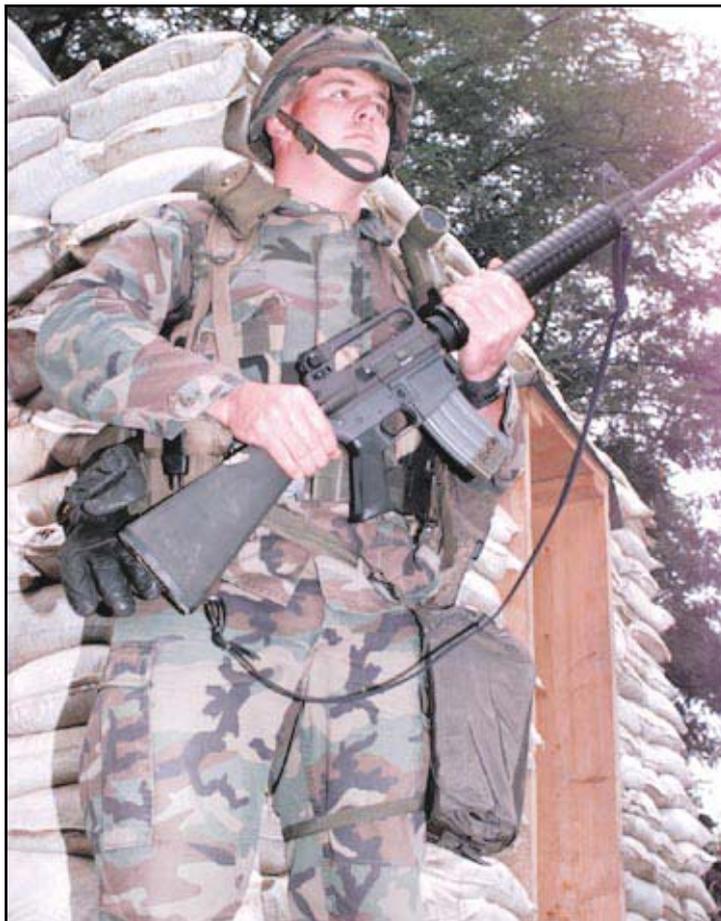
"We don't want soldiers to have a false sense of security, because this is a very dynamic environment. The relaxing of some wearing of body armor is a luxury that was afforded because we did the hard things up front," he said.

Measures designed to protect and sustain the force resulted from a pre-deployment security assessment by the task force command group, said Col. John M. Brown III, chief of staff.

Their war games, planning and training followed Army doctrine which stated that a commander's first responsibilities in any mission are to secure his force and ensure its readiness, Brown said.

"The conclusions were that we needed a very aggressive force protection program to ensure we never risked a small unit defeat, minimize the opportunity for ambush and eliminate the opportunity for hostage taking," he said.

That program initially included soldiers wearing personal protection gear, traveling in convoys of no less than four vehicles, not fraternizing with local nationals, having frequent convoy communications checks, a medic/combat life saver and a crew-served weapon with each convoy.



Spc. Gary S. Rivers of 630th Military Police Company stands guard in full force-protection gear at Eagle Base.

Spc. George Roache

"Force protection send(s) a very clear signal to anyone considering doing harm ... you are dealing with a force that is prepared."

— Col. John M. Brown III
Chief of Staff

"All accomplish force protection and send a very clear signal to anyone considering doing harm to Task Force Eagle: you are dealing with a force that is prepared," Brown said.

That level of consistency, professionalism and readiness lowers the probability of attack from factional commanders who come in contact with Task Force Eagle units, said Capt. Erik O. Daiga, G-2 operations officer.

"Because we're always at such a high force-protection level, we don't give them an inch — not even an opening — to contemplate attacking Task Force Eagle personnel," he said.

"They recognize that we have the greatest technology, the most sophisticated equipment and highly trained soldiers to maintain it," Kelley said, "and that presents a deterrent. That perception has helped us save lives."

The four-vehicle convoy has also saved lives, safety officials said.

Soldiers have driven 8.4 million miles

as a task force with a very low rate of accidents, Kelley said. The safety rate is better than unit rates in Central Germany, and accidents have declined from an average of 30 a week in January 1996 to less than five in June 1996.

Safety officers attribute that to the no-drinking policy, better weather, no privately owned vehicles and the force protection program.

Complacency is always an issue, said officials. The task force leadership has dealt with it by holding live-fire gunneries for combat arms units to maintain soldiers' fighting edge, he said.

Commanders are applying lessons they learned from earlier deployments.

"Clearly, there have been operations when we did not combat complacency and apply force protection, and the lessons of that we paid for in soldiers' blood," Brown said. "The commander of Task Force Eagle (Maj. Gen. William L. Nash) is committed to shedding as little of it as possible, and if that means maintaining high standards of force protection and enforcing that very rigidly, they are ready to do that."

Individual base camp commanders have modified requirements for wearing personal protection gear, but only if the security threat in the area is low enough to warrant it.

Those decisions are in keeping with the intent of Nash, who stated his views in an interview with *Jane's Defence Weekly* published June 5.

"One of the things about fighter management is the force protection issue," he said. "I know that there have been some comments about the Americans and their harsh rules and flak vests and vehicles in convoys.

"But I have to shave every morning and look at myself in the mirror, and I don't want to have to avert my eyes. We feel pretty good about that and the soldiers understand why we're doing that," he said.

Soldiers do find wearing their "battle rattle" burdensome, but agree it's for their own good, said Spc. William F. Scott, 25, of Company C, 7th Battalion, 227th Aviation, 4th Aviation Brigade.

"I don't think the threat level is very high, but it's always good to have it (personal gear) to keep people on their toes.

"It keeps everybody aware this isn't a joke."

Infantrymen call Spartan outpost home

By Sgt. KELLY C. FISCHER
358th MPAD

OBSERVATION POST 10 — There is the Army. And then there is the infantry.

Six months ago, when IFOR units first pulled into Bosnia-Herzegovina to live and work in the snow and sloppy mud, conditions were tough.

When the 1st and 2nd Platoons of Company D, 3rd Battalion, 5th Cavalry parked their four packed Bradley Fighting Vehicles at their observation posts in the zone of separation south of Brcko, conditions were even worse.

Most of the 2nd Platoon slept on hay or pieces of cardboard — anything that was dry — when they first arrived.

They were “scavengers,” said Spc. William W. West, 26, from Norfolk, Va.

While most units deploying to Task Force Eagle outlying areas were soon joined by their support personnel — cooks, mechanics, chaplains, supply soldiers — the infantrymen just had each other.

Still, the platoons have remained mostly self-sufficient.

In fact, some things that soldiers now take for granted at base camps, Company D still goes without.

At OP 9, they have an “Australian shower” — a water bag attached overhead to a shower head — set up outside, behind plywood and sandbags.

They fill a five-gallon water can with water from a nearby

spring and leave it in the sun all day to warm.

“We have people here who like to be clean,” West said. “I take a shower every day.”

First Platoon doesn't even have that.

“We're just a bunch of stinky guys,” joked dismount team leader Sgt. Michael J. Soltes, 23, from Pittsburgh.

First Platoon seems like the Spartan life. They chose to go without television.

“They brought it up, we didn't need it, didn't use it, and we don't have time to use it,” said squad leader Sgt. Ronald A. Hazilton, 27, from Buffalo, N.Y.

“We have a lot of guard duty, a lot of missions, and a lot of times we have a mission where you have to leave in 10 minutes. It makes it hard for the guys to stay focused on what they have to do.”

The niceties soldiers enjoy regularly at the battalion headquarters at McGovern Base, Company D soldiers can only dream about.

“(Sometimes) I would like to be able to talk to my buddies (at McGovern). If I can't sleep at night, I'd like to call my wife, go



Sgt. Kenneth P. Glenville

Bradley Fighting Vehicles stand ready at Observation Post 10.

to the PX and get a candy bar or get a real haircut,” said Sgt. Gary W. Ausbrooks, 29, from Bowling Green, Ky.

But in the small OPs, residents said there is a charm that those at McGovern would covet, if they only knew.

“It's a great place to live,” Hazilton said. “It's ours. We built it, we maintain it and everything we have we begged, borrowed or stole to get.”

“We like it. It's peaceful. It's quiet,” Soltes said.

The simple, neat row of tents sits undisturbed beside low-traveled roads and in eerily quiet neighborhoods. At

night, the glare of overhead lights is not present.

There are also no generators running — just quiet.

And, as the soldiers are quick to point out with smile, an NCO is the highest-ranking resident.

“If they had a shower conex, I'd stay here for the whole year,” Soltes said.

Several weeks ago, 1st Platoon was sent back to McGovern for a break.

“They thought people were getting stressed out (at OP 10), but after two weeks (at McGovern Base) people started getting stressed out being there,” Hazilton said.

Water consumption key to heat injury prevention

By Capt. MUSTAPHA DEBBOUN
255th Medical Detachment (Preventive Medicine)

Exposure to high environmental temperature produces heat stress on the body, which can lead to heat injury.

Heat injuries demand a high price, including human suffering and mission loss.

However, leaders can protect soldiers and reduce the risk of heat injury by enforcing: adequate water consumption; acclimatizing soldiers to heat and conditioning them for physical work in the heat; using the wet bulb globe temperature index kits; training soldiers on prevention measures, causes, symptoms and first aid treatment of heat injuries; work/rest cycles and wear-

ing loose/light clothing and reducing heat exposure whenever possible.

Types of heat injuries:

• Heat Cramps

Cause: Excessive salt loss from body.

Symptoms: Painful stomach, leg or arm muscle cramps. Pale, wet skin, dizziness and extreme thirst.

First aid: Move soldier to a cool, shady place. Give him or her plenty of cool water and seek medical aid if the cramps continue.

• Heat Exhaustion

Cause: Excessive loss of water and salt from the body.

Symptoms: Same as heat cramps plus headache and weakness. Skin is pale, cold, moist and clammy and soldier might faint.

First aid: Move soldier to cool, shady area.

Elevate feet and loosen clothing. Pour water on and fan the soldier to cool. If conscious, give soldier cool water to drink. Get medical aid if symptoms continue.

• Heat Stroke

Cause: Prolonged exposure to high temperatures and failure of body to cool itself by sweating. This is a medical emergency and can be fatal if not treated promptly and correctly.

Symptoms: Soldier stops sweating. Skin is red and hot. Soldier may experience headache, dizziness, confusion, nausea, vomiting and fast pulse and respiration.

First Aid: Immediately cool victim with water or ice packs and pour cool water on and fan the soldier to permit cooling by evaporation. Evacuate to nearest medical treatment facility.



Russian, U.S. troops conduct live-fire

By Sgt. 1st Class GARY YOUNGER
358th MPAD

KORAJ — Bullets and barbecue were the order of the day as former Cold War adversaries turned Implementation Force partners enjoyed a bit of training and fun in Northern Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Soldiers from Battery A, 4th Battalion, 29th Field Artillery and Self-propelled Battery of 1st Battalion, Russian Brigade, got together at a former Serbian weapons training range near the Russian Brigade headquarters in Ugljevik.

The event further cemented the growing relationship between the two units, while allowing the soldiers to learn a little about and fire each other's weapons. The U.S. soldiers then treated the Rus-

sians to an American staple: barbecue.

"We've gotten together and fired howitzers before," said Capt. Robert Gotzmann, Battery A commander. "This is just another step in building the partnership."

The Falmouth, Mass., native supervised his three dozen soldiers as they practiced infantry skills along with, and under the watchful eyes, of Russian leaders.

Since the two units trained together in March, there were familiar faces all around.

"It's like seeing old friends again," said Battery A cannoner Pfc. Kenyton Corbett of Tulsa, Okla. "This breaks the monotony of everyday life by training with them."

"This is the first time our two armies have really had joint training like this,"

said Russian Cadet Andrew Dudoladov of Moscow.

"For years, our officers have studied American tactics, American equipment and American thinking. We thought we'd have to meet the Americans someday. We never thought we'd meet them like this."

"I just wish we didn't have such a language problem," Gotzmann said.

Not having a common language didn't stop many of the soldiers from reaching out to each other.

"We couldn't understand a word the other one said but we knew exactly what the other was talking about," said Staff Sgt. Jeff Fisher of Rapid City, S.D., as he showed off a Russian airborne insignia. "There's no language problem here."

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e training

...e soldiers from both sides lined up
...a opportunity to fire weapons that
...few years ago they may have had to

...S. soldiers were taught by Russians
...to aim and fire the lethal rocket-pro-
...d grenade, while Russian soldiers
...up for their turn to pull the trigger
...the M-60 machine gun and the M-249
...d Automatic Weapon.

...hile the weapons were popular, it
...ne barbecue that really did the trick.
...e Russian soldier was busy chomp-
...n some barbecued ribs, uttering
...hing his U.S. compatriots couldn't
...stand.

...e Americans turned to an interpret-
...help. The linguist laughed as he
..."Ummm. Real good food."



(Opposite page) Russian soldiers fire M-249 Squad Automatic Weapons; (top) Russian soldiers demonstrate a rocket-propelled grenade launcher to American soldiers; (top left) a Russian soldier fires a rifle from the prone position; (top right) a Russian soldier takes a break to peel a potato for lunch; (left) A U.S. soldier throws a Russian grenade from a trench. All photos by Sgt. 1st Class Gary Younger, 358th MPAD.

Tips for your getaway



Lake Balaton offers best of both worlds

By **KENYON McAFEE**
USAREUR Forward

There's no valet waiting to open the door and take your luggage when you arrive.

And you can forget the little mint on your pillow — you won't get any of that at Lake Balaton.

What you can count on, though, is good, old-fashioned hospitality and a pass

program with one fun-filled agenda — helping soldiers, rest, relax and recuperate.

Lake Balaton is one option available to Task Force Eagle soldiers through the Hungary pass program.

Although Hotel Zeus is not a four-star hotel, what it lacks in sophistication, it makes up in quality service.

So if your idea of rest and recuperation involves soaking up some rays next to the largest freshwater lake in Europe, then Lake Balaton is where you want to be.

"We're looking at the overall picture," said Air Force Tech Sgt. Randolph Melton, NCOIC at Lake Balaton. "What the soldiers want is a chance to rest. At Lake Balaton they get a chance to do that."

Hotel Zeus is set in a rural neighborhood surrounded by vacation homes. Its simply designed rooms have their terraces facing the lake.

Soldiers pay \$27 per night, which includes free breakfast and lunch daily at the hotel's restaurant. Hotel Zeus also has a bar open daily until 4 a.m., where you can order a sandwich or pizza.

For those interested in staying in shape, Morale, Welfare and Recreation outfitted Hotel Zeus with pool and ping-pong tables, provided equipment for the volleyball, tennis and basketball courts, and brand-new weights for the exercise room dubbed "Venice Beach."

If you're an outdoor person, MWR also offers water sports like paddle-boating and kayaking. In the middle of the day you can sail around the northern end of the lake, catching a glimpse of a popular haven for European vacations, Balatonfured, or rent a bike and ride down the

paths along the lake's shore.

That's only the tip of the iceberg. MWR also has programmed tours to Tihany, where you can find an assortment of souvenirs from pottery to embroidered table cloths to personalized doorknockers.

Located on a peninsula at Tihany's highest point, you can find a basilica and a museum. Tihany is also a hot spot for tasty Hungarian cuisine.

Finding night life while on pass will also be easy. MWR offers trips to Budapest, 2 1/2 hours away, and a sunset boat ride with wine and cheese.

"We try to offer the soldiers the most complete and restful stay that we can give them," Melton said. "We're working to give the soldier exactly what they need while they're here."

"I'm glad I came here; it's a great place," Pfc. Kelly Ward, Company A, 501st Military Battalion.

Although it may not be the Ritz, Hotel Zeus has everything you need — and you don't have to worry about tipping a valet.

In addition to the current activities, MWR is working to add golf, go-carting and horseback riding.



Kenyon McAfee

Staff Sgt. Tomislav Grujic, 165th Military Intelligence Battalion, enjoys a game of tennis at the lake.



Kenyon McAfee

Cpl. Raymundo Ogoy, 440th Signal Battalion, goes for a swim.

HILLTOP SENTINELS

ELITE UNIT SECURES REMOTE WORK SITES



Spc. Cesar G. Soriano

Pfc. Eric M. Smith of Company E, 12th Infantry, 501st Military Intelligence Brigade, stands guard atop Hill 852.

By Spc. CESAR G. SORIANO
29th MPAD

HILL 852 — An elite company stationed at Steel Castle is in charge of providing security to three remote hilltop camps in Task Force Eagle — Hills 852, 722 and 1326.

Though the unit's primary mission is long-range surveillance, they are performing important tasks here to keep the peace.

About 45 percent of the soldiers of Company E, 12th Infantry, 501st Military Intelligence Brigade are Ranger-qualified. Among noncommissioned officers and officers, that figure is closer to 90 percent. All the infantry soldiers of Company E are airborne qualified.

In addition to guard duty and exterior perimeter patrols, Company E soldiers also are performing dismounted joint patrols with Russian soldiers. Company E soldiers also have been doing reconnaissance patrols of suspected mass grave sites to ensure evidence there is not tampered with.

Though Company E is not a

Ranger unit, their training gives them an edge over traditional infantry units.

"It gives us a broader understanding of our surroundings," said 2nd Lt. Carl A. Fulmore of Hampton, Va., and 2nd Platoon leader. "These are well-rounded soldiers with a lot of diversity. There's a lot of knowledge in this platoon, from patrolling to vehicle recognition, and knowledge of mines and demolitions."

One myth the soldiers wish to dispel is that Ranger school is a survival or combat course. "Ranger school is a leadership school. You learn more about yourself, about other people and what your limitations are."

Hill 852 is home to 45 soldiers. Every three weeks, six-man teams from 2nd platoon, Company E swap duties between Steel Castle and the hilltop. The constant swapping of jobs helps beat complacency, Fulmore said.

The pace is slower at the hilltops.

"It gives you time to focus on the task you have to accomplish," said Sgt. William Jack-

son of Dallas.

"I would prefer doing more (long-range surveillance) missions but you do your job, whatever is assigned to you," said Spc. John Looney of Babb, Mont. Looney hopes to become Ranger qualified in the near future.

"Sometimes it can be really slow here. And sometimes it can be really hectic and you have to deal with lack of sleep," said Pfc. Ramon Sanchez of El Centro, Calif.

Staff Sgt. Johnny Ray Holley of Ponce de Leon, Fla., said the team has a good relationship with the local Bosnian Serb farmers who graze their sheep on Hill 852.

"They come up and talk to us. It's real friendly."

The soldiers never know what will happen next. Holley told a story of when his soldiers rescued an elderly woman who had fallen. They took her several kilometers away to the nearest medical facility.

The lower enlisted soldiers look up to their Ranger-qualified NCOs. "To me, it has to do with status symbol. It's a

dream, an ultimate above what most people do," said Pfc. Eric M. Smith, 22, of Boise Idaho, who also hopes to attend Ranger School. Smith says his NCOs have helped him improve his infantry skills. "They talk about Ranger School a lot and we have fun learning how things are done the Ranger way."

"Being on a remote hilltop gives my guys a lot of independence. It allows them to take charge of their leadership skills," said Staff Sgt. Andrew D. McConnell of Anchorage, Alaska. "This mission is a lot different from what we usually do. But at the same time, there are a lot of lives and important equipment here that need to be guarded."

Company E Commander Capt. Dennis S. Sullivan of Oxford, Mass., has nothing but praise for his troops. "My job is easier because I'm surrounded by superb NCOs and enlisted soldiers.

"Sometimes a lot of the stuff they do is not that exciting or that glamorous, but they've maintained an extremely high motivation."

PERSONALITY OF THE WEEK

Cowboy has new life as combat engineer

By Spc. WILLIAM R. HALL
203rd MPAD

After graduating from Klein Oak High School in 1995 in his hometown of Tomball, Texas, Pvt. Jay Friedl had to make a decision about what to do with his life.

With a new wife and baby, he knew he would have a hard time supporting his family with his first passion — being a cowboy.

"I love being a cowboy, roping and riding," Friedl said. "I was breaking horses and riding bulls."

But when his cowboy job started to fall through, he had to do something.

After talking to Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine recruiters, he jumped at what he considered his best opportunity — to be a combat engineer in the U.S. Army.

"I like blowing stuff up — working with demolitions," said Friedl, who is stationed with Company A, 16th Engineer Battalion at Camp Bedrock. "So I joined the Army to serve my country and pay my bills."

Friedl, 19, went on to attend basic training and advanced individual training at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo.

As graduation loomed, he was happy to send his wife, Andrea, to look for a new place to live in Texas, where he was

notified he'd be stationed.

But, as any soldier knows, the call to serve your country can come at any time.

"I was supposed to go to Fort Hood (Texas) but they diverted me to here the day before graduation," Friedl said. "I thought there was a possibility I would go (to Bosnia), but I didn't think it would be this soon."

So Friedl deployed with the 16th from Bamberg, Germany, in February 1996.

Friedl said that this deployment has given him an advantage as a young soldier new to the Army. Friedl will have been in the Army a year in August.

"Coming straight out of basic, I'm learning a lot about the job that I signed up for," he said.

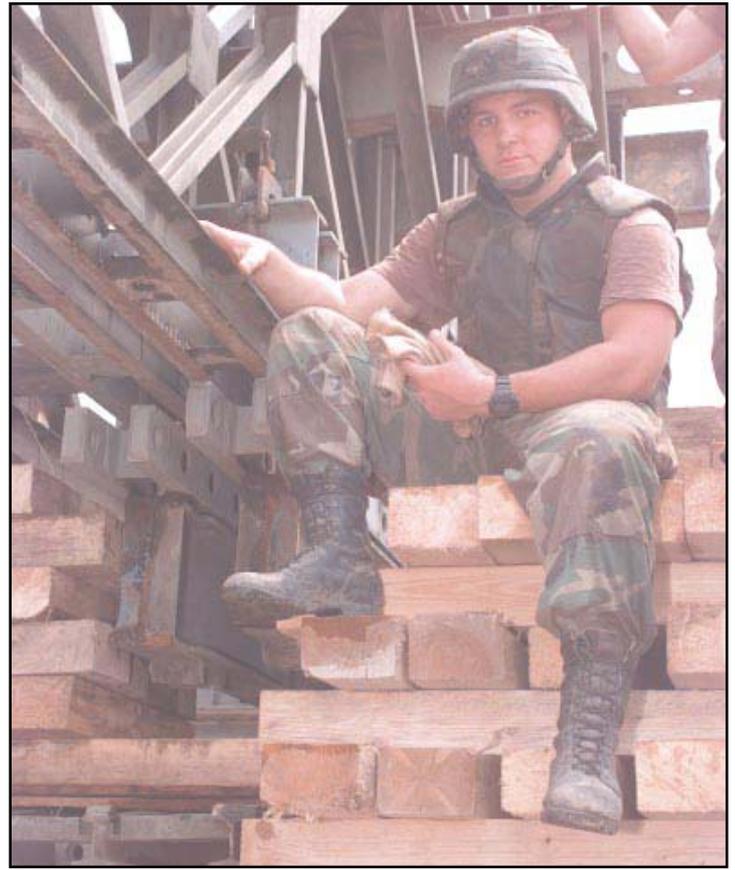
"We're actually getting to work with explosives and help with bridges, so we do a lot of training in my job on a real mission."

He's recently worked with another engineer unit on a bridge mission.

"We're pulling support for the 38th Engineers taking down a Bailey bridge," said Friedl. "It's kind of slow going, but everyone's doing a great job."

"I was at the last bridge they put up in the Russian sector, and that went great too. So we move right along."

He said he has faced only one serious obstacle here.



Spc. Richard Cancellieri

Combat Engineer Pvt. Jay Friedl takes a break during a recent bridging operation on Route Utah.

"The weather is constantly changing, so it makes it more difficult in doing your job," Friedl said.

What he misses most about home is his wife, and his 1-year-old daughter, Micheala.

"When I get home, I'm going to spend a lot of time with my

family to make up for lost time," he said.

But Friedl doesn't dwell on the negative. He's too busy studying how to become a better soldier and learning from the hands-on experiences.

"I'm serving my country and doing my job."

16th CSG NCO earns Soldier's Medal for heroism

By Staff Sgt. BRIAN BOWMAN
203rd MPAD

CAMP DALLAS — Even as four generals dropped in to pay tribute to his heroism, Sgt. George A. Gentile took it all in stride.

"They talk about this hero stuff," Gentile said after receiving the Soldier's Medal June 19. "I just don't buy into it. I think anybody ... would have done the same thing if they were in my shoes."

What Gentile, of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 16th Corps Support Group in Hanau, Germany, did on a Sunday afternoon in February 1995 was extraordinary, despite his assertion to the contrary.

A fire in the housing area on Flieger-

horst Kaserne, Hanau, broke out that day.

Gentile quickly warned everyone in the complex before running to the top floor where the fire was raging. He and another soldier broke down an apartment door to find the smoke-filled rooms.

"I dropped down to the floor on my hands and knees," Gentile said. "The smoke ... it was just too much. I saw some legs and I crawled toward them."

Gentile grabbed a burned soldier and his two children and dragged them out of the apartment and to safety. He then ran back into the burning building and escorted a mother and her

four children from the apartment across the hall from the others.

"Instinct probably got him in the door," said Lt. Gen. John N. Abrams. "But what

carried him through ... was his dedication to people."

Abrams, V Corps commander, was the keynote speaker during the 15-minute ceremony honoring Gentile. He also pinned on the medal, which is awarded to someone serving with the U.S. Army who distinguished himself by heroism not involving actual conflict with an enemy.

Other general officers in attendance were Maj. Gen. James Wright, commander of the 21st Theater Army Area Command; Brig. Gen. James P. O'Neal, assistant 1st Armored Division commander for support; and Brig. Gen. Samuel Kindred, commander of the 21st TAACOM (Forward).

Abrams said he had never seen such heroism displayed in a similar situation in his 30 years of military service.

Gentile shared his credit with the other two soldiers who helped him.



Sgt. George A. Gentile

Independence Day

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4 and 5, she said.

All 12 will serve as a warm-up act for Gin Blossoms' performance at 5 p.m., July 4 in front of the Eagle Base Dining Facility.

The band, which has built a following on such hits as "Allison Road" and "Til I fall Away," is scheduled to play tunes from its new album, "Congratulations, I'm Sorry."



Staff Sgt. Edward W. Nino

502nd Engineer Battalion soldiers ferry a 90-ton locomotive across the Sava.

Bridge

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Bosnia-Herzegovina.

"I think it's important because the repositioning and redeployment effort is going to come through here," Ruf said, "And we're ready for it."

Before work could begin on the bridge, however, Finnish and U.S. engineers worked side-by-side to bring in tons of gravel and prepare access roads and staging areas.

Mine clearing was a major obstacle according to Ruf, and also involved joint cooperation between nations.

On the south shore the military police with the 21st Theater Army Area Command provide access control for the bridge while only 50 meters away a Swedish mechanized infantry platoon provides area security.

"You have to be careful the first time you meet someone from another nation because you don't really know how he will react when you're a lieutenant and he's a captain," Lt. Björn Haevaker said, explaining the protocol involved in an operation like this.

With three infantry squads and three armored personnel carriers under his command, the Swedish platoon leader is in charge of security for the bridge's south shore.

The language barrier is the only diffi-

The Gin Blossoms are currently touring Europe.

Other acts performing around the task force next week include J.B. Walker, a country/rock band, and a USO/DoD comedy show.

The live entertainment is just a part of the activities planned for the Fourth of July.

Local MWR representatives should soon have a complete list of events at each camp.

Cole added that flyers advertising coming attractions will be posted at most camps.

cult thing about the bridge operation, Haevaker said.

"After a while you know each other and it will be no problem," Haevaker said. "It's very easy to work with other nations."

Downstream near Zupanja at the site of the famous pontoon bridge built in December, there was another recent multinational conquest of the Sava.

Using a section of floating bridge, the U.S. Army floated three 90-ton diesel locomotives over the river June 21.

Soldiers with a Germany army transportation unit hauled the engines to Zupanja, Croatia, aboard flat-bed trucks. The truck's size made it impossible for the convoy to navigate the roads leading to the Brcko bridge. There currently is no train bridge across the Sava.

Soldiers from the 502nd Engineer Battalion then loaded the trucks and their heavy cargo onto the makeshift ferry and floated them across the river.

The locomotives, donated by Slovenia, were stored in Croatia during the war.

They were bound for Tuzla, where they will haul freight.

Getting the trains on track will help both IFOR and the local economy, said Col. Steven R. Hawkins, Task Force Eagle's division engineer brigade commander.

Rail traffic is expected to help the local economic recovery through the import and export of goods, Hawkins said.

NATO

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low. Perry said he anticipates a clear plan and schedule for new NATO members to come out of the December NATO ministers meeting. He would not speculate on the precise timetable.

NATO is building a special relationship with Russia and pointed to Russia's help in Bosnia and ongoing nuclear disarmament efforts as proof this relationship is growing, he said.

Perry said the alliance is a trans-Atlantic organization that works best when the countries are united. Any European-only NATO operation still must be agreed to by all parties.

"NATO military authorities will be proposing different ways of effecting operations separate from the overall NATO operations," Perry said. "And they will have their own chain of command, but it would be a unified chain of command."

Perry said the Implementation Force in Bosnia is NATO's most significant achievement.

"IFOR is the first major military operation of NATO," Perry said.

"It has been an outstanding success. It's demonstrated the ability of the NATO nations to operate with solidarity, and it's demonstrated the value of years of effort in forming the command structure, in training and exercising together, in building common doctrine and standards."

The force has completed six months of its mission, Perry said, but still faces formidable tasks.

The force needs to maintain freedom of movement in the country so refugees can return home and voting can take place for elections set for September.

"I fully expect IFOR will complete the mission on schedule at the end of the year, and I expect it will be a successful mission, and that the major drawdown of forces will begin about Dec. 20," Perry said.

Perry said he believes the war will not restart once IFOR leaves.

He said the parties want peace, the balance of forces now is different from when the war started, and that NATO air strikes are a powerful deterrent to the war restarting.

"All of the former warring factions have had very vivid examples of the capability and effectiveness of NATO air strikes," he said.