Volume 2, No 37 — Friday, September 27, 1996

THE TALON

Operation Joint Endeavor, Bosnia-Herzegovina — Serving the soldiers of Task Force Eagle

Soldiers fly through dustoff training

By Staff
Sgt. BRENDA BENNER
100th MPAD

GUARDIAN BASE — Soldiers from the Norwegian Guard Platoon evacuated several of their comrades into an air ambulance helicopter Friday at Guardian Base.

As soon as the patients were airborne, they returned so they too could practice evacuating others. Yes, practice. There was no pain, no blood, no chaos; in fact, an instructor gave encouragement.

Every Friday afternoon the 236th Medical Company teaches medical evacuation safety through realistic training. Flight medics teach their students how to guide helicopters to landing zones and load patients in a safe and timely manner.

After classroom instruction the action moves outdoors to familiarize soldiers with aircraft operations.

As a flight medic, Staff Sgt. Kevin D. Zimmerman, 36, of Toledo, Ohio, has spent many Fridays with IFOR soldiers of all nationalities.

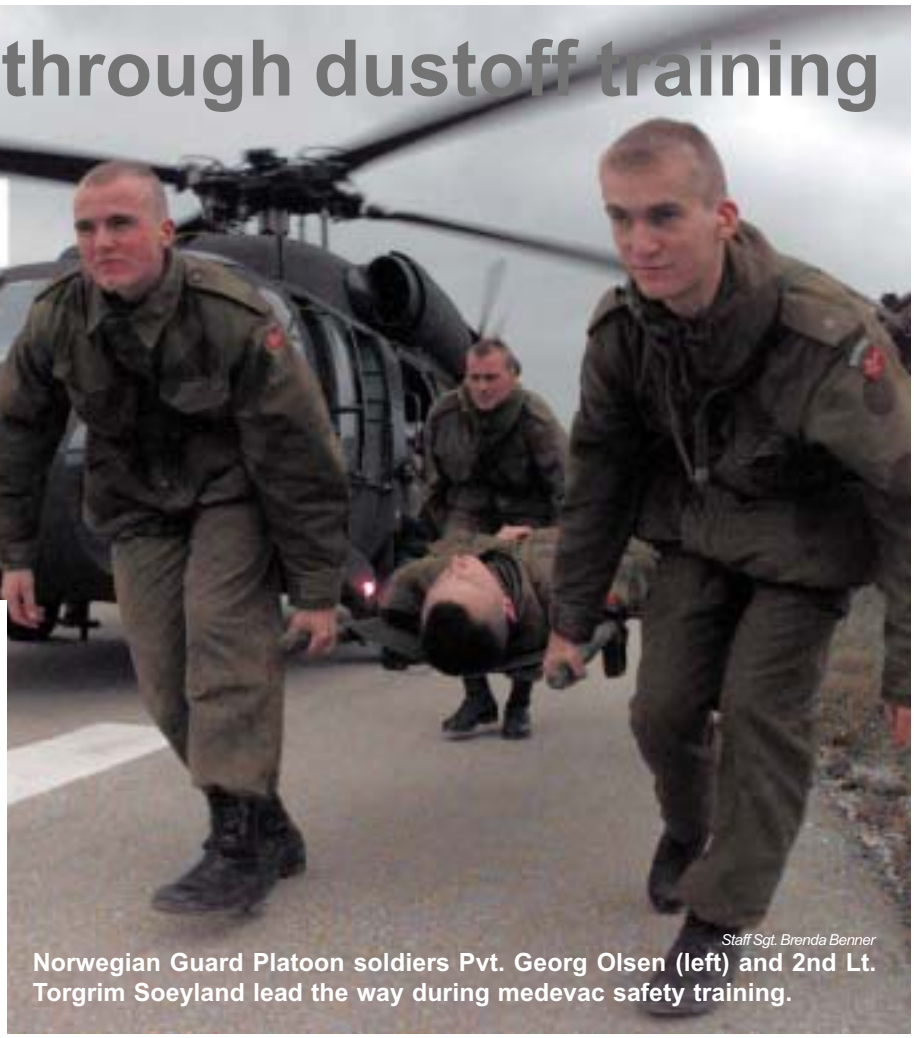
"Early during our deployment we noticed that most individuals were not taking safety precautions while approaching our aircraft. It could have cost them their lives and the lives of other soldiers around them. That's why we place a great deal of emphasis on safety," Zimmerman said. "We've taught over 500 IFOR soldiers since January.

"Several of our medic NCOs teach these classes, but not all instructors are NCOs; we have a few extremely professional specialists who give high quality briefings," Zimmerman said.

Norwegian Pvt. Svein Morvik listened intently even though he's been here before.

"This is the second time I've had this training. It's very helpful to learn with the

See ***MEDICS***, page 12



Staff Sgt. Brenda Benner

Norwegian Guard Platoon soldiers Pvt. Georg Olsen (left) and 2nd Lt. Torgrim Soeyland lead the way during medevac safety training.

Inside

Commentary 2
M-16 rifle 3
Marines 4
Cold 5
BOOM! 6-7
Iron web 8
Personality.....11

Medevac rescues flood victims

IFOR came to the rescue when Bosnian civilians found themselves awash in the Usora river near Teslic, Sept. 23.

IFOR officials were contacted when two civilian automobiles were washed off the road by heavy flooding. A civilian bulldozer attempted to rescue the passengers, but became stuck in the field off the roadside. The area was surrounded by a mine belt, which prohibited further ground efforts to rescue the three trapped civilians.

IFOR officials dispatched medevac helicopters of the 236th Medical Company (Air Ambulance) to the scene. Two UH-60 helicopters descended to about 35 feet and lowered their medics by hoist. The stranded civilians, huddled at the top of the bulldozer above the rising floodwaters, were secured to the extraction hoist and recovered to the waiting helicopters.

From the top

Safety first priority for redeploying troops

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

Iron Soldiers, as we head toward redeployment and the successful completion of our mission, we must realize that our job is not over until we return to Central Region.

NCOs, ensure your soldiers stay focused on the tasks at hand.

Now is not the time to be careless or sloppy. Safety must be our primary concern.

Sergeants don't let your troops cut corners or take unnecessary risks. Proper vehicle operation procedures should not be allowed to lapse just because we are near the end of the deployment.

Conducting preventive maintenance checks and services is an ongoing process. We must keep our vehicles in top working condition. The bottom line is, if they don't work, we don't move. Sergeants, make sure that Iron Soldiers are mobile soldiers.

During convoy movements, continue to emphasize proper starting and stopping procedures. Also remember the two-minute drill. If your vehicle is stopped for longer than two minutes, occupants are to get out, pull security, and clean their windshields to guarantee maximum visibility.

NCOs, I would like to point out one potential enemy that we've effectively faced before but lies waiting to confront us again — cold weather.

Longtimers remember how terrible the weather conditions were when we first arrived; however, there are a lot of people who didn't experience those conditions. Senior leaders must make sure that all of their troops are adequately prepared for operations in the cold weather that is coming.

A few more safety tips: If you don't know what something is, don't pick it up. There are many mines and other unexploded pieces of ordnance left in the area of operations. Remember your training and be careful.

Another thing I've noticed is that some soldiers have started to get lax with the security of weapons and ammunition. It is the responsibility of every soldier to maintain positive control of his weapon and ammunition at all times.

One final reminder, the wearing of jungle boots is not authorized after Oct. 1.

Iron Soldiers take care of each other.

Viewpoint

For return home, pacing yourself is best solution

Capt. Todd D. Lyle
TFE Safety

Bill Murray's character in the movie *Stripes* was that of a very lackadaisical 'soldier' who made his basic training drill sergeant's life a living hell.

While his comical antics and nonexistent soldiering skills would never be tolerated in the 1st Armored Division, he had the right idea in one respect.

Each time the camera panned to him lagging behind, he would tell his beleaguered drill sergeant, "I'm pacing myself."

A constant moderate pace is one that will benefit us all upon our return to our home station. It is important to take our time getting used to our 'newfound' freedom and surroundings. Doing so could turn out to be a life saver.

For almost a year, we have been under constant supervision of one sort or another and the desire to go out and catch up on activities we have missed will be strong. With this in mind, it will take a conscious effort to slow down and remain patient with yourself and others.

Once we have arrived home, it may be wise for us to act as if we are guests in our own homes. Being courteous, polite, and interested in what others have been up to will help break the proverbial ice.

Remember, while we have had many new experiences that make us different persons, our families and friends have been going on with their daily activities as well. They too have had new experiences and made new friends.

Even though they will be happy to see us, they may not express it the way we have anticipated. It may take them some time to readjust to our presence. For everyone involved, returning home may be somewhat anticlimactic.

Before letting ourselves become upset with those around us, we should think and talk about what they have experienced while we have been away. Open communication on all sides will lead to an easier transition.

For single soldiers, the adjustment will be somewhat different. It may take time to adjust to having privacy again.

Although it surely will be welcome, it may seem strange not having someone constantly in your space.

The constant energy that exists here will be replaced by an abrupt lag. Realizing this before hand will be helpful.

After Desert Storm, units returning to Central Region and other parts of the world found many of their soldiers experienced a form of culture shock.

It is important to remember that the camaraderie we have developed here is unique to this environment. Relish it, but do not expect it to remain the same upon returning home. If we find ourselves feeling stressed-out, lonely, or just want to talk, we should seek counsel.

With this in mind, there are all types of people and agencies who are available to talk about our concerns. Each area support command has a community counseling center.

Additionally, there are our chaplains and chains of command. Do not wait until a situation reaches its boiling point before you take positive action.

The Talon

THE TALON is produced in the interest of the servicemembers of Task Force Eagle, headquartered at Eagle Base. ***THE TALON*** is an Army-funded newspaper authorized for members of the U.S. Army overseas, under the provision of AR 360-81. Contents of ***THE TALON*** are not necessarily the official views of, nor endorsed by, the U.S. Government, Department of Defense, Department of the Army or Task Force Eagle, commanded by Maj. Gen. William L. Nash. ***THE TALON*** is published weekly by the 1st Armored Division (Task Force Eagle) Public Affairs Office, Eagle Base, Tuzla, Bosnia-Herzegovina APO AE 09789, Telephone MSE 551-5230. E-mail: thetalon@tfmain.1ad.army.mil Printed by Print Com Tuzla, Bosnia-Herzegovina. Circulation: 8,000.

Public Affairs Supervisor ..... Master Sgt. Richard Glynn
Editor in Chief ..... Maj. John E. Suttle
100th MPAD Commander ..... Maj. Victoria D. Wood
OIC ..... Capt. Terry L. Conder
NCOIC ..... Staff Sgt. Patrick Summers
Editor ..... Spc. Aaron R. Reed
Design Editor ..... Sgt. 1st Class Stephen M. Lum
Photo Editor ..... Spc. Daniel "Fingers" Paschall
Illustrator ..... Spc.Teresa L. Unger
Technical Advisor ..... Spc. Bryan Driver
Staff ..... Arijana Sabanovic

M16A1 and M16A2 Rifle

Clear it right

1. Point rifle at clearing barrel; ensure it is on safe. If rifle is not on safe, remove magazine if present. Lock charging handle to rear, place the weapon on safe and let the bolt ride forward.

2. Pull the charging handle to the rear and lock it in place. Look into the chamber, ensuring no rounds are present. Let the bolt ride forward and charge the weapon three more times.

3. Rotate the selector switch to the semi position, pointing the weapon toward the clearing barrel, and pull the trigger.

4. Charge the weapon again and place the selector switch on safe. Close the dust cover to keep dust out of the weapon.

Source: Task Force Eagle G-3 office

Leathernecks lightup Bosnian range

By Cpl. Jeff Hawk
U.S. Marine Corps

CARMEN RANGE — Marines made canyon walls echo with the sound of rifle and machine-gun fire during a live-fire training event here recently.

Forty-seven Marines from Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron One (VMU-1) convoyed to this primitive range ringed by high, steep mountains to sharpen marksmanship skills and ensure the weapons they deployed to Bosnia are functional.

According to 35-year-old Gunnery Sgt. John Holst, from Murphysboro, Ill., the event gave the Marines an opportunity to battle sight zero their M-16A2 service rifles and refamiliarize themselves with the M-240G machine-gun.

A demonstration of a machine-gun's destructive power put purpose behind the hours of hard work Marines spent building sandbag walls.

The walls that surround Boyington Airfield protect a small strip where the Leathernecks fly unmanned surveillance aircraft for Task Force Eagle.

When a machine-gun team obliterated a pallet stacked with sandbags and an ammunition can filled with water, the Marines got an idea of just how important their hard work filling and stacking sandbags was.

"It showed the Marines that it doesn't take a high-caliber weapon to mess up your day — it just takes an M-240G machine-gun," Holst said.

During the live-fire event, Marines shot from various positions including prone, kneeling, seated, and off-hand.

The training proved not only valuable, but fun.

"I had a blast," said Pfc. Ryan Lowe, 22, from Othello, Wash. "It's been a while since I fired the M-240G, and it was good for me to refamiliarize myself with it."

Marines also got a kick out of the fire orders given by the range tower noncommissioned officer in charge, Cpl. Raymond Stephens, 22, from Buckridge, Fla.

Stephens' no-nonsense commands kept the Marines on the firing line focused on the training and the targets down range.

"Platoon!

"Direct front!

"Twenty-five meters!

"All available firepower ... On my command, "FIRE!"

The barrage of concentrated firepower would have made any Marine proud.

Senior Marines monitored the range to ensure shooters followed range safety rules and met training standards.

The Army provided the range situated near Camp Demi, in the mountainous southern portion of the American sector of Task Force Eagle.

Cpl. Jeff Hawk

Lance Cpls. Abdul Carter and George Robinson try their hand at the offhand firing position during a live-fire event at Carmen Range.

■ **Fire in the hole**

Engineers have blast clearing waterway

By Staff Sgt. Brenda Benner
100th MPAD

BRDA — "Fire in the hole, fire in the hole!," yelled Staff Sgt. Gary Stair of the 20th Explosive Ordnance Detachment. Everyone hunkered down behind a tree-covered berm and listened for telltale signs of debris flying overhead.

Soldiers of the 20th EOD and Company A, 40th Engineer Battalion were being destructive once again, but this time it was to benefit the people of Brda, a small village in the mountains northeast of Steel Castle. They helping to widen and deepen a trench started by local civilians to pipe additional water to over 500 residents.

Rasim Omerovic, the local civil defense commander for the region, said it took three days for nearly 100 workers to dig the 1,600 meter-long ditch.

Once the trench is cleared of rocks, the civilian workers will lay plastic pipe to draw the water uphill to a cistern. Staff Sgt. David Ely, a team leader with the 20th EOD, said that the project was three weeks in the planning, and that after blowing the trench, both the 20th EOD and the 40th Engineers would dig out a short section of road leading to a cistern.

"Our missions are totally different, with this project we included the engineers because they also use explosives," Ely said. "They're involved in all phases of this project so both units can cross-train."

Most of the explosives were placed about one foot apart and linked together with detonation cords. Stair said that explosives alone were used because it wasn't possible to get heavy equipment up to the remote mountain site. Nearly 250 pounds of explosives were needed along the blocked portions of the trench.

"We can usually tell what is coming our way by the sound it makes as it whistles by. Tree limbs and rocks of different sizes and shapes have their own distinct sounds," said Sgt. 1st Class Jim F. Poole, noncommissioned officer-in-charge of the detachment.

During the project's last phase, the engineers will help the ordnance teams use their small emplacement excavator, to get through the rock. The SEE, a small tractor, has a drill, built in chainsaw, and a jackhammer.

"The engineers use the SEE everyday, so they really know how to use it. We can learn to use it to break rocks for roads since we usually use ours to dig out bombs," Ely said.

Cold weather risks can be reduced

By Sgt. 1st Class Stephen M. Lum
100th MPAD

There might be mixed views regarding what will happen in the near future in Bosnia-Herzegovina, but one thing is certain — it will get damn cold.

The basic principles of cold weather protection are spelled out in the acronym **COLD**.

◆ **C**lean: The first thing to remember is that dirty clothes are cold clothes. Dirt and grease block the air spaces in your clothing and reduce insulation.

◆ **O**verheating: Sweating will decrease the insulating ability of your clothing.

When you are active loosen your uniform to let cold air next to your body. Remember, don't sweat, ventilate.

You are better off being a little cool than you are if you sweat.

When your activity slows down remember to put back on what you took off.

◆ **L**oose: Loose clothing traps warm air without restricting blood circulation. Good blood circulation helps prevent frostbite.

◆ **D**ry: Protect the outside of your uniform from melting snow and rain as much as possible.

Avoid soiling your field uniform with grease or oil. This will cause your clothing to lose its ability to retain heat.

Cold weather clothing systems use the design principles of insulate, layer, and ventilate.

Insulation reduces the amount of body heat lost in the environment.

Layers of clothing provide more insulation and flexibilty than one heavy garment.

The secret is dead air space between layers. The more dead air space, the greater the insulating value.

Ventilation allows you to get rid of excess heat and body moisture.

You should ventilate by opening clothing or by removing layers of clothes.

A good rule of thumb is to start cool.

After the first 10-15 minutes stop and dress down.

Remove unnecessary layers and vent the neck and wrist and under the arms to avoid overheating.

— information provided by Task Force Eagle Safety Office

News briefs

Shipping stuff home

The Staff Judge Advocate's Office advises that the best method for shipping high-dollar items, easily-pilfered items, and sensitive electronics is to ship them by insured postage.

Shipping items through the uninsurable Military Postal System (MPS) is done so at the soldier's own risk. Loss or damage suffered when using MPS is not compensable.

There is no prohibition against shipping personal property in military vehicles and military containers on a space available basis. However the soldier is responsible for ensuring these items are properly packed, secured, and safeguarded during shipment. When shipping by space available means, commanders should ensure that soldiers provide a thorough inventory of items using DA Form 4986. The use of this form will help soldiers substantiate future claims.

So you think you can draw?

The Department of the Army is sponsoring an "Operation Joint Endeavor" Army Humor Cartoon Contest.

The contest is open to all U.S. Army personnel on active duty in Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR. Cartoons drawn in the line of duty by soldier information or public affairs specialists are not eligible for submission.

The deadline for submission is Nov. 29. Cash prizes will be awarded to winning entries. For entry form and rules, contact your local Morale, Welfare and Recreation representative.

94th wins b-ball tourney

A dominant inside game and near flawless free-throw shooting lifted the 94th Engineer Battalion over the 141st Signal Battalion 33-12 in the championship game of the Eagle Base basketball tourney.

Leading 13-9 at half-time, the 94th opened the second half scoring at will and not allowing the 141st to score until only 10 seconds were left in the game.

Brig. Gen. George W. Casey Jr. presented the Eagle trophy to the victors.

"You played this game with the same determination and tenacity that you've taken on this mission," Casey said, as he handed the trophy to 94th coach Dexter A. Trotter.

Bridge-busting 23rd Engineers

Cpl. Len Butler
100TH MPAD

BRCKO, Bosnia-Herzegovina — As the peace process continues to move forward, Company B, 23rd Engineer Battalion removed the remains of a destroyed railroad bridge here in an effort to help erase the scars of war.

Lt. Col. Todd T. Semonite, the 23rd Engineer Battalion commander said the 23rd was given the mission of dismantling the concrete portion of the bridge using explosive charges.

The old bridge had to come down before a new one could be built.

"This is part of an overall project of opening rail lines between the Tuzla Valley and Brcko," Semonite said.

Before the war, the rail line was an historic trade route from Bosnia-Herzegovina through Croatia and into central Europe.

However, the conflict took its toll on the tracks and the rail line was heavily mined.

Bunkers and fighting trenches were dug into sections of the railroad, creating approximately five dozen breaks in the rail line.

Semonite said the railroad manager and the mayor of Brcko were involved in the bridge project.

U.S. Civil Affairs soldiers also lent a hand in the project by notifying townspeople about the planned blasts.

IFOR and local radio stations alerted listeners, and an interpreter used a loudspeaker to warn locals in the area of the impending blast.

"We try to make sure that every time IFOR does something we don't impose ourselves on the local population," Semonite said.

In consideration of the local population, the 23rd Engineers took the bridge down in sections.

A maximum of 20 pounds of C-4 explosives per blast was used in an effort to minimize any collateral damage that might be caused by flying debris.

Company B Commander Capt. Tim Wallace, 30, of Kingsport, Tenn., said bringing down the bridge required several phases.

"The first phase is to cut the two rails on top of the bridge into 10-foot sections using 40 pounds of explosives," Wallace said.

ower boom on railroad crossing

Staff Sgt. Barry W. Vance, 30, of Martinsville, W.Va., said the next phase was to dismantle the large I-beams, which supported the structure.

"The idea is to initially blow a hole into the concrete, exposing the rebar," Vance said.

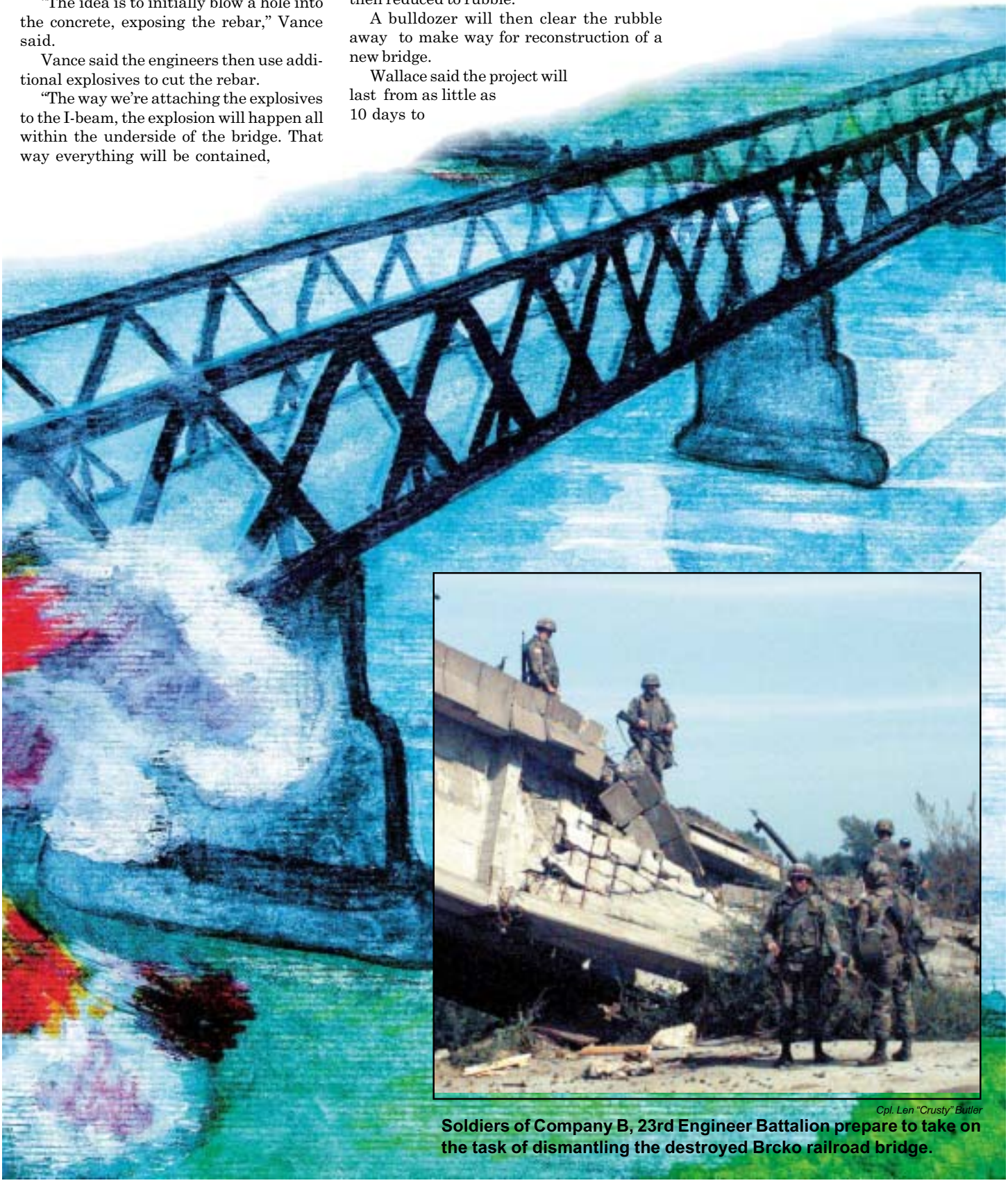
Vance said the engineers then use additional explosives to cut the rebar.

"The way we're attaching the explosives to the I-beam, the explosion will happen all within the underside of the bridge. That way everything will be contained, and no debris will be flying," Vance said. "Safety is a primary concern."

Wallace said the I-beams will be broken into sections using additional explosives, then reduced to rubble.

A bulldozer will then clear the rubble away to make way for reconstruction of a new bridge.

Wallace said the project will last from as little as 10 days to as long as two weeks and require as many as several hundred charges.



Cpl. Len "Crusty" Butler

Soldiers of Company B, 23rd Engineer Battalion prepare to take on the task of dismantling the destroyed Brcko railroad bridge.

Old Ironsides deploys world-wide presence

By Sgt. ANDREW AQUINO
350th MPAD

EAGLE BASE — The 1st Armored Division recently began sending images to the world of tanks rolling through the Balkans via the Information Super-Highway.

The 1st AD Homepage, maintained by the G-6 Automation section at Task Force Eagle headquarters, has been visited by more than 2,000 net surfers since its official start Sept. 1.

According to Sgt. Anthony J. Chiofalo, 27, from Long Island, designer of the 1st AD website, people from almost anywhere in the world can link their personal computers to the local unclassified server here and read about 1st AD and its mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

A joint effort between members of the 1st AD Public Affairs Office and G-6 Automation, the 1st AD Homepage provides information about the Old Ironsides division.

Viewers can read *The Talon*, Task Force Eagle's newspaper, on-line.

The site also showcases the history of the 1st Armored Division as well as latest press releases from the PAO's Joint Information Bureau.

Biographies of key leaders, charts and maps are also featured.

In addition, the website has links to other popular Army-related websites.

Creating and designing the homepage took several months of work.

"I wrote most of the code, though I had help," Chiofalo said. "Everybody in the G-6 shop had a bit of input about how things should look — the layout and design. As far as working with the Hyper Text Markup Language, I did that."

One of the most difficult things about creating the homepage was mapping the sites on each page so it would be easy to navigate, the webmaster said.

"We made sure it had many pictures to look at," Chiofalo said. "It's very visual, but not so big that you're waiting for the page to load."

Chiafolo said he tried to keep the icons, pictures and even the animations small, so the homepage would down-load quickly.

Chiofalo said net surfers can find something new each time they visit the Old Ironsides website.

"It's a living document, a progressive project that's going to continue to grow."

One recent addition to the site is a photo gallery, with full-color, digital images of Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR in Bosnia-Herzegovina

"We have some really great shots from the Combat Camera guys," he said.

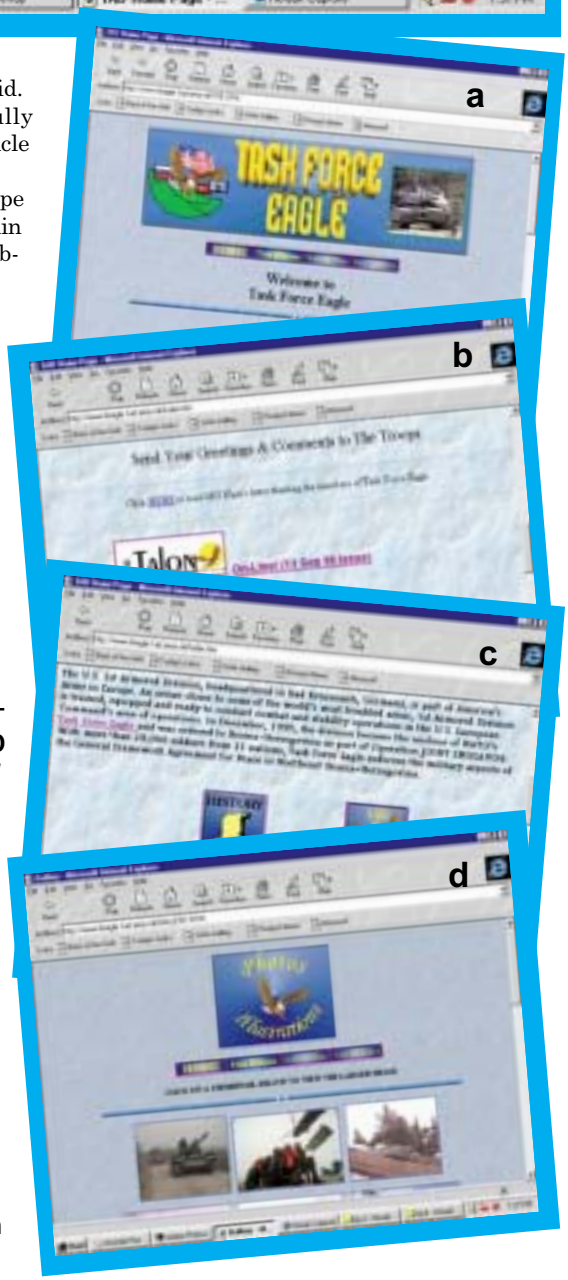
The 1st AD homepage is fully sponsored and sanctioned by Uncle Sam, the webmaster said.

"There was a lot more red tape involved," he said. "There are certain guidelines and structures for a website with Army information."

Chiofalo said official sties require operational information security reviews.

Chiofalo said he welcomes any input and suggestions that may help improve the homepage.

E-mail any suggestions or comments about the page to: webmaster@tfmain.1ad.army.mil.



Roadmap to the 1st AD website

1) The onramp to the 1st AD website can be found at http://www.tfeagle.1ad.army.mil.
From there, exit onto any of half a dozen fascinating side streets, such as:
a) 1AD in Bosnia
b) A link to the latest issue of *The Talon*
c) A page with links to the history and mission of Old Ironsides
d) And the recently-added photo gallery page, with full-color, digital images of Task Force Eagle and Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR.

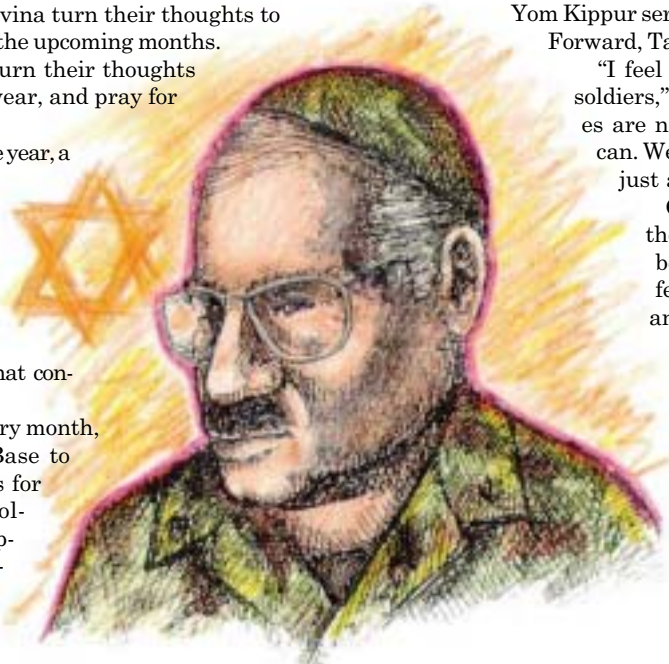
Jewish soldiers celebrate Holy Season

By Sgt. Janet S. Peters
350th MPAD

As the air cools and leaves start to turn color, soldiers serving in Bosnia-Herzegovina turn their thoughts toward staying warm in the upcoming months. Soldiers of the Jewish faith turn their thoughts inward to reflect on the past year, and pray for atonement.

"This is the Holy Season of the year, a 10-day period beginning with Rosh Hashanah," said Chaplain (Maj.) Morris M. Faierstein. "It is a time of prayer and reflection. We believe God judges everyone's deeds for the past year. Yom Kippur is the day of atonement — a 24-hour fast that concludes the High Holy Days."

On the first weekend of every month, Faierstein comes to Eagle Base to hold regular sabbath services for approximately 50 Jewish soldiers. There is no Jewish chaplain assigned in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Faierstein is stationed at Ramstein Air Base, Germany with the 86th Airlift Wing. For this special time of year, the rabbi received permission to stay for two weeks to visit Jewish soldiers who couldn't get to Tuzla because of transportation and scheduling problems.



Chaplain (Maj.) Morris M. Faierstein

Wearing a battle dress uniform and a prayer shawl draped over his shoulders, Faierstein ushered in the new year, Sept. 14, with the traditional blowing of the ram's horn during a service at the Eagle Base chapel. The sounds of the shofar on Rosh Hoshanah symbolize God's summons to people for self-judgment, self-improvement and atonement, he said. Daily worship services were held at Camps Gentry, Demi, Comanche and Slavonski Brod. Yom Kippur services were held, Sept. 22 at USAREUR Forward, Taszar, Hungary.

"I feel glad to do this important job for the soldiers," the 16-year veteran said. "The services are not elaborate, but we just do what we can. We're used to having services in tents. We just adapt to it."

One adaptation that must be made in the field environment is the final meal before the day of fasting. Usually it is a festive holiday meal with fancy dishes and several courses of traditional foods; the experience in Bosnia-Herzegovina may instead include an all-faith MRE in a tent with a fellow Jewish soldier or two.

"You miss family this time of year," said Maj. Robert C. Grunewald, Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 793rd Military Police Battalion, 18th MP Brigade.

"You go to temple most of the day on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. Then the family gets together for good home cooking — traditional recipes that have been handed down. We normally would have chicken soup, traditional vegetables, roast chicken or beef, braided bread and special desserts," Grunewald said.

"Here it's even more solemn because we're away from our families. It's nice that Rabbi Faierstein comes here so we can celebrate the best way possible."

U.S. agency helps Bosnian war vets rebuild country

By Sgt. Tim Pinkham
350th MPAD

COLT BASE — With the successful completion of Bosnian national elections, the goal of rebuilding the nation's infrastructure can begin in earnest.

The Community Infrastructure Rehabilitation Program will spend $5 million on various reconstruction projects across the Task Force Eagle area of operations, said Capt. Christopher M. Ryan, 1st Armored Division's civil affairs office.

The U.S. Agency for International Development, which administers CIRP, has already committed $4 million and will soon commit the remaining $1 million.

Officials from about 10 municipalities in the 1st Brigade area of operations, along with USAID officials and representatives of Parsons Corp., the civilian contractor hired by USAID to coordinate the local projects, met Thursday at Colt Base. Brig. Gen. George W. Casey Jr., assistant division commander, maneuver, led the meeting.

Ryan said that, as of Thursday, Task Force Eagle had reviewed 242 project submissions, approving 107. In 1st Brigade area of operations, 38 projects have been approved with an estimated cost of $1.58 million.

Ryan said the reason many of the proposed projects were not approved was because they did not meet the criteria established by USAID. At least 65 percent of the total project cost must be for labor and only 35 percent for materials and equipment. Ryan said the purpose of CIRP is to put people back to work, particularly demobilized soldiers from the parties to the agreement. As an example, Ryan said, a proposal that met the spirit of the program would use laborers to dig a ditch rather than use a backhoe.

Casey emphasized the projects must be for the repair of infrastructure facilities that were damaged in the war, not the construction of new facilities. The projects included repairing water systems, roads and infirmaries, as well as cleaning up trash from the Tinja River south of Srebenik.

At the meeting, the municipal officials were given copies of the rates that will be paid for certain types of work and certain types of workers throughout 1st Brigade area of operations. If the officials sign agreements to pay those rates, Parsons representatives said the projects can begin quickly. Parsons will hire local contractors for the various projects and control the flow of money. All the projects will have a one-year contract.

For each project, the municipalities will receive 20 percent of the money up front, then the remaining 80 percent when the project is completed and has been accepted by USAID.

"My goal is to have all 38 projects started within the next 30 days," Casey said.

Twenty of the projects will be in the Muslim-Croat Federation area, while 18 are in Republika Srpska, Casey said.

However, the total dollar value for the projects in the Bosnian Serb area is slightly higher than those in the Federation area.

"We are working very hard for balance," Casey said.

Municipal officials agreed to meet again with Casey at Colt Base on Oct. 3 for a progress report.

■ ELECTIONS

Troopers ace election support mission

Sgt. Jack Siemieniec
350th MPAD

"Proud of them? Damn right."

So said Command Sgt. Maj. Robert Braggs of the 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry about the performance of his troopers during Bosnia-Herzegovina's national elections Sept. 14.

"The soldiers did a professional, focused, well-trained execution of the mission," Braggs said. "This was just one of many separate missions. There have been so many things we've done here. One is equally as important as the next one."

Braggs' last point, that this was another mission for the squadron — equally important as any other one — summed up how the unit approached its responsibilities.

"That is the way we looked at the whole thing. We weren't going to change the way we do things just for the elections. For example, the Tactical Operations Center is a crisis action center by definition. We didn't see the point in setting up a separate election crisis center. We looked at it as another military operation," said Capt. Patrick Donahoe, battle captain.

The philosophy served the squadron well.

The 1-1 Cav. was responsible for watching 106 polling sites, including five absentee voter sites, and four counting houses. On election day, they ran five checkpoints in addition to their normal Alpha Two on Route Arizona. Also, the squadron kept nine different patrols moving throughout the day.

The Black Hawks' primary mission for the elections was to support the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe's facilitation of the election and maintain a presence in support of local authorities, election officials and police officers. The OSCE was the international organization tasked to oversee the elections.

"Everything went pretty smoothly. There was a lot of tracking," said Staff Sgt. Donald E. Hughes, a shift noncommissioned officer in the TOC. "Our biggest concern was voters crossing the Inter-Entity Boundary Line, because that was the most potential for violence. From my point of view, I thought the squadron did real well."

Those cross-IEBL voters did not turn out in numbers approaching pre-election estimates, a fact consistent throughout the country. Military and election officials believe this contributed to the small number of election-day incidents.

Polls were scheduled to be open Saturday from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Many sites saw turnout slow to a trickle as the day wore on. But other Local Election Commissions, responsible for operating the sites, reported long lines. Late that afternoon, the OSCE decided to keep selected polling sites open until 10 p.m.

The extension lengthened 1-1 Cav's day. As it turned out, the additional checkpoints and extra patrols were called in at 10 p.m. That wasn't the end of the mission, though.

Implementation Force soldiers were tasked before and after election day with security and logistical support. This meant once the polls closed, 1-1 troopers hauled ballots from the absentee sites back to the transload point at Lodgment Area Sneed, their squadron headquarters. The last of the absentee ballots were back at Sneed by 1:30 a.m. Sunday morning. One-half hour later the ballots were transferred to the trucks of the BELUGA Group and on their way to Sarajevo for counting. BELUGA stands for Belgium, Luxembourg and Greece, and is a special, Allied Command Europe Rapid Reaction Corps transportation organization.

Patrols were tasked with showing a presence at each of the counting houses every four hours. The entire time ballots were at those locations. Once all ballots were counted, soldiers again had the responsibility of bringing them to the transload point for removal to Sarajevo, where they were combined with absentee votes, totaled and stored.

Soldiers of 1-1 Cav. found themselves implementing United States foreign policy as they completed their duties under the watchful eyes of the world's media and humanitarian organizations.

Back in December, they were the first combat forces to cross the Sava River into the war-torn region, and the first to set up a checkpoint in the Zone of Separation.

As one commander, Capt. Mike Kasales of Bandit Troop, told his soldiers on the afternoon prior to election day, "Next to crossing the Sava, this is the most important thing you will do here this year."

Sgt. Jack Siemienic

Pfc. Koshane Slyker, Troop A, 1-1 Cav., and interpreter Asmir Smajlovic, work at checkpoint A2 election day.

■ PERSONALITY OF THE WEEK

Ancient mail gives soldier peace of mind

By Sgt. Jack Siemienic
350th MPAD

GENTRY BASE — This is a story about chain mail.

No, not that postal, pyramid-scheme, get-rich-quick gimmick.

This is about the original kind. That stuff from the Middle Ages.

Turns out there's a soldier here in Bosnia who makes chain mail in his limited spare time.

Meet Staff Sgt. Steven Wunder, 37, a 15-year Army veteran originally from Salem, Ore. Wunder works as a scout platoon section sergeant for Bandit Troop, 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry at Gentry Base in Gradacac.

"It's one of my hobbies. I just like doing something with my hands," Wunder said. "I get the satisfaction of having something I can show for my time. It passes the time — a creative escape."

"I started experimenting and making chain mail about five years ago. I like studying history a lot and had a curiosity about making some for display. I had an excess of coat hangers around and wrapped them around a stake and cut them up. Now I'm recycling used barbed wire."

He lives in a tent set up inside a gutted warehouse at Lodgment Area Kuntz.

It holds a desk and workspace scattered with his hobby in various stages of development. Wunder sits with his rolled wire, pliers and clippers.

Meticulously winding recycled wire — now minus its barbs — around a tent stake, he then cuts it into small rings.

Using smaller loops made by winding the wire around a cleaning rod, he slowly constructs replicas of medieval armor.

"It takes about 10-12 hours to make one square foot of mail, from the barbed wire to the finished product. Generally, I go in stages, wrapping wire, cutting the rings and then assembling."

Talking with Wunder is a mini-lesson in history. He explains there's the European style, using something called a four-in-one link. Every larger link is joined to its adjacent loops by four smaller loops.

Then there is an Eastern European or western Asian design that constructs the mail out of links of varying sizes.

The suit he is presently working on is in the Japanese style. It has each larger ring joined by six smaller rings, making a hexagonal design.

Sgt. Jack Siemieniec

Staff Sgt. Steven Wunder assembles Japanese-style medieval chain mail at his worktable inside a gutted warehouse at LA Kuntz.

"Japanese mail is lighter. They weren't into the heavy weapons like Europeans. They generally wore theirs with Samurai armor," Wunder said. "The Europeans used war hammers, maces, flails, battle-axes; the Japanese used swords and spears."

Wunder has finished three suits of chain mail in his five years and has another suit started in addition to the Japanese one.

While this is a hobby he continues even while at home in Buedingen, Germany, it's not his principal use of spare time.

"At home I've got the kids to keep me busy. But on this deployment — away from the wife and kids — I definitely need an escape. And I've already had my fair share of adventure on this trip."

Wunder was referring to Jan. 11, the day his track hit an anti-personnel mine while on a mine-clearing mission.

"We weren't the first vehicle in line, and the locals we were working with said the road was clear. They were wrong."

Add to that, Wunder said a mere 15 meters prior to the mine strike, a cable strung across the road hit him in the face, slamming his head back against his hatch door and breaking his finger.

According to Wunder, the mine strike, which caused no injuries, was almost secondary to the cable across the face.

Besides his chain mail hobby, he also makes furniture when he's back home.

"I like working in wood. I plan on having a business when I get out just making toys — maybe kids' furniture," he said.

But for now, Wunder spends his infrequent free evenings sitting at his table, carefully coiling, cutting and bending wire into pieces of history.

"Guys start, but quit after a while because it is quite tedious. Like I said, it is a little mental escape at times. Sometimes, when I'm working, I'll just daydream and think about how blacksmiths back then must have done it.

"But, sometimes," Wunder says with a grin, "I just think it would make one helluva Halloween costume."

Close air support team keeps IFOR covered

File photo

By Spc. Craig S. Pickett
350th MPAD

CAMP LISA — When the enemy is close to the Army's ground troops, the Air Force can bring in close air support.

This is the job of 2nd Brigade Combat Team Air Liaison Office and Tech. Sgt. Kris H. Engel, 33. Engel explained the purpose of CAS is to bring aircraft and weapons to support ground troops when they are in proximity to the enemy. "We do close air support for a living," Engel said.

For a typical daytime mission, the forward air controller uses visual references and verbal instructions to talk the pilot into the area and to the specific target.

Usually cities, major intersections and other landmarks are used to identify the area. Other signalling devices can also be used, such as smoke.

This all changes drastically at night when the pilots are unable to see the ground.

Then it is up to the pilots and controllers to use night vision goggles, infrared pointers and infrared strobe lights to identify targets.

This is a relatively new procedure for the tactical air control party that travels with the ground troops.

Engel said this deployment has given them an excellent opportunity to practice their skills.

Capt. Kirk Emig and Engel have developed a class from lessons learned and have been training the NordPol Brigade on the techniques of night close air support. "The NordPol tactical air control parties were able to perform excellently," Engel said.

"The training was an outstanding success and future training has been requested from the NordPol Brigade and the 1st Armored Division to possibly train other NATO TACPs within the Task Force Eagle area of operations," said Engel.

With new technology and the lessons being learned here, the Air Force is able to lend close air support night or day to Army ground troops.

Spc. Craig Pickett

(Top) Three U.S. Air Force A-10 Thunderbolt aircraft fly in close formation. Each carries a 30mm cannon, air-to-ground missiles and is capable of carrying a wide array of conventional and smart bombs. (Left) Tech. Sgt. Kris H. Engel adjusts multiple radio sets that he uses to direct aircraft to their targets in close air support of Army ground troops.

MEDICS from page 1

helicopter and to practice arm and hand signals to guide it to the pick up point. We must do it right," Morvik said.

"My platoon escorts soldiers and patrols the zone of separation. There are a lot of mines out there; we never know when an emergency will occur," he said.

Second Lt. Raymond A. Smith Jr., a flight section leader from Cincinnati, is in charge of scheduling air crew members for the 236th.

"We have many safety concerns. It's the nature of our business that our missions come down quickly. There's limited planning and every medevac mission is different. Our adrenaline really gets going," Smith said. "I suggest that we slow down, take a deep breath, and realize we can deal with the circumstances.

"The whole intent of this training is to increase the safety awareness of all IFOR soldiers when they participate in medical evacuations. We give them exposure to how the U.S. Army operates in the air evacuation arena," Smith said.

It's the soldiers at the scene of the emergency who help determine a medevac mission's success.

The air crew relies on the ground guide to ensure the landing zone is safe.

"We give them a lot of responsibility — the helicopter comes to them, not the other way around," Zimmerman said.

Although medevac missions are time-critical, safety for everyone is the priority. "So far, the entire company has flown over 200 missions," Smith said. "We are beyond 4,100 flight hours without incident."

As forces are downsizing and units redeploy, the medics of the 236th Med. Co. are aware that chances for accidents will increase.

They are continually informed of when and where heavy movements of soldiers and equipment will begin.

"We've noticed that during transitions to redeployment, that's the time that safety awareness decreases for those soldiers involved. All of us get 'get-home-itis.' We get in a hurry and lose focus on safety," Zimmerman said.

If a medical emergency occurs, the flight medics stress that soldiers should not second-guess their decisions to call for an air support medevac.

"If someone feels that the injury is serious enough to consider calling us in the first place, then most likely it is indeed serious.

"Put yourself in the place of the injured person ... you would want a quick response, a firm decision," Zimmerman said.

"Go with your gut feeling. Don't be apprehensive about calling us. That's why we're here."