

THE TALON

OPERATION JOINT GUARD, BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA



SERVING THE SOLDIERS OF TASK FORCE EAGLE



Staff Sgt. Bruce D. Barnes, with Company B, 82nd Engineer Battalion, shows Serb soldiers how to set a charge prior to destroying anti-personnel mines extracted earlier.

Photo by Spc. David Boe

Demining Bosnia-Herzegovina

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By Spc. David Boe
364th MPAD

MCGOVERN BASE - In a small wooded strip of shoreline north of Brcko, Bosnia-Herzegovina, spring has started to bloom. Nearby, the slow-moving Sava river, freed from the icy grip of winter, crawls southward. From both shores, birds chirp from trees and bushes. Encouraged by the warmer air, vegetation starts to regain its green complexion. A lone farmer begins to clear away an area in his back

yard of the residue of winter. The moist air smells of new life. A serene and peaceful scene.

Not quite.

Cutting through the woodline and the farmer's backyard is an eroded trenchline, filled with paper and metal refuse. Behind it stands the blasted and crumbling remains of a once bustling restaurant. And out past the abandoned trenchline lurks death. Death in the form of mines, sown perhaps years ear-

See DEMINING page 12

The answer is . . .

The following are all quotes from 11-year-old students' science exams:

"When you breathe, you inspire. When you do not breathe, you expire."

"H2O is hot water, and CO2 is cold water"

"To collect fumes of sulphur, hold a deacon over a flame in a test tube"

"When you smell an odorless gas, it is probably carbon monoxide"

"Nitrogen is not found in Ireland because it is not found in a free state"

"Water is composed of two gins, Oxygin and Hydrogin. Oxygin is pure gin. Hydrogin is gin and water."

"Three kinds of blood vessels are arteries, vanes and caterpillars."

"The alimentary canal is located in the northern part of Indiana."

"Respiration is composed of two acts, first inspiration, and then expectoration."

"The moon is a planet just like the earth, only it is even deader."

"Magnet: Something you find crawling all over a dead cat."

"Dew is formed on leaves when the sun shines down on them and makes them perspire."

"A super-saturated solution is one that holds more than it can hold."

"Mushrooms always grow in damp places and so they look like umbrellas."

"The body consists of three parts- the brainium, the borax and the abominable cavity. The brainium contains the brain, the borax contains the heart and lungs, and the abominable cavity contains the bowls, of which there are five - a, e, i, o, and u."

"The pistol of a flower is its only protection against insects."

LAYING DOWN THE LAWS

Recently I received a letter from a young member of this task force. The letter was originally written to the chief of staff, but the contents of the letter had noncommissioned officer business written all over it. The question was about force protection here in Bosnia-Herzegovina and why we were still wearing flak vest and full "battle rattle" when we are out on missions. It seemed that none of his NCO leadership could tell him why, or why we continue to travel in a four-vehicle convoy.

We have been deliberate as a task force to ensure no former warring faction will even consider an attack on an American soldier. The way that we have accomplished this so far is by maintaining that edge to be ready at all times. This includes being in the correct uniform



and traveling in a force of a size large enough to defend ourselves should any situation occur. Crew-served weapons and the correct sized element will deter any potential threat. The leadership should explain to soldiers why we are organized in this manner. It is not by accident that we travel or dress the way we do. It is very deliberate and focused.

As I talk about being focused, I want the leadership to be vigilant in their efforts as the task force begins to redeploy. This will be my last column as your task force command sergeant major. Thanks for all the support. Remember, it is not over until we get everyone home safely.

Dagger 7 out!

By Command Sgt. Maj. James W. Laws
1st Infantry Division (Forward)

Stay alert -- stay alive

The period of transition is a period of high risk. As the transfer of authority is taking place between the "Dagger Brigade" and the "Iron Brigade," all soldiers and leaders are reminded that "Protect The Force" and "Protect The Soldier" must be foremost on everyone's mind and in their actions.

Redeployment activities are taking place throughout the sector, while at the same time new units are setting up working places and temporary homes at the various base camps. You will find base camps very congested with people, vehicles and equipment. As you go about your business, think through the risks...take actions to reduce them. Execute all tasks like you have been trained.

As you make preparation for redeployment and convoy towards the ISB, leave the base camps as you would want to receive them. Review your safety checklists. Know your role in convoys and know emergency procedures for convoys. Do convoys the right way — by the book! Listen to all the safety instructions given at the ISB. Stay focused and complacency will not creep in. Safety must be the top priority all the way to home station. Carry it over to your "off-duty" activities. Stay alert, stay safe and stay alive!

By Mr. R. A. Mente, Task Force Eagle Safety Director

THE TALON

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Economics key stability

By Spc. Susanne Aspley
364th MPAD

CAMP DOBOL -- Long-term peace and stability for Bosnia will only come when normal economic activities begin to flourish and all parties work together for prosperity. The intent of Task Force 1-26 is to pave the road between municipalities and donor organizations to turn this ideal into reality.

"Economics and commerce are the key to stability in Bosnia. A healthy economy will employ people and increase the demand for consumer and durable goods," said Capt. Zofar Gali, economics officer for TF 1-26 Civil Affairs. "Businesses that provide the necessary goods and services will employ people and circulate more money throughout the economy."

Recently, a milestone meeting called the Committee for Economic Cooperation was held at Checkpoint S-10 near Camp Dobol. This meeting opened avenues by bringing together Federation and Republic of Srpska business people.

"It began as an idea to encourage freedom of movement between the two entities, as well as to restore commercial links that once existed before the war," said Gali.

All parties agreed the CEC would meet twice a month at S-10. In addition, Lt. Col. Robin P. Swan, TF 1-26 commander, indicated that S-10 "will be available 24 hours a day for Federation and RS businessmen who need a place to meet and negotiate their deals."

Approximately 40 Federation and RS businesspeople attended the gathering,

which included some memorable reunions. Gali, Sgt. 1st Class Mark Andrews and Sgt. Mark Joachim, TF 1-26 CA Economics Team, witnessed a Federation businessman and RS businessman, apparently friends before the war, hug each other and discuss business, as well as their families.

"We continue to meet with community leaders to ensure they are talking with the appropriate international aid and developmental organizations that will help Bosnia move closer to full recovery," said Gali. TF 1-26 distributes forms, assists municipal officials in selection of projects and coordinates with local officials to prioritize and identify extent of the projects.

Already, there are three projects within the Zone of Separation that require cooperation between both sides: one water pipe project and two road projects.

Using local businesses is the foundation of the projects, funneling money back into the economy and creating employment for demobilized Bosnian soldiers. People see the quality of work which hopefully means repeat business.

Aid to Bosnia is currently in a transition period, going from emergency relief to developmental and economic relief.

According to Gali, a Zvornik businessman said, "The CEC is a good start." After the meeting, Gali sat down with a mixed group of a dozen Federation and RS businessmen. They broke out the traditional smoked meat and home-fermented gin, and invited Stabilization Force personnel to join them.

"No, thank you," said Gali. "You guys enjoy. It's more important for you to talk."



Capt. Zofar Gali, economics officer with Task Force 1-26 Civil Affairs, confers with a Serbian businessman during a Committee for Economic Cooperation meeting near Camp Dobol.

NEWS BRIEFS

Cancel email

Before you redeploy, make sure you cancel your email account with G6 AMO. Email accounts are not accessible from out of theater, so once redeployed, retrieval of email from these accounts will not be possible. Failure by redeploying soldiers to cancel accounts will place strain on the server and could cause it to go down. Accounts can be canceled by emailing: mailman@pop1-email.5sigcmd.army.mil or call 552-1107.

Everywhere a Sign

As redeployment nears, take time to refresh your memory on European road signs. This winter privately owned vehicle accidents during off-duty hours are on the rise. Most of these accidents are related to alcohol, speed, weather, fatigue and poor judgement by soldiers. Take the time to slowly adjust to civilian driving -- POVs don't handle like HMMWVs.

Autobahn ends



Dead end

Deer Crossing



Double bend

End of no passing



End of Restrictions

Medics rounding out

By Sgt. Steven S. Collins
129th MPAD

GUARDIAN BASE – The nurses of the 21st Combat Support Hospital at the Blue Factory have grown, personally and professionally, during their six-month tour of duty in Bosnia. While the nurses have improved their professional skills, they have also improved themselves, both physically and mentally.

"Every night the nurses have aerobics and they have done a great job of getting 'buff,'" said Lt. Col. Gail Ford, deputy commander of nursing, 21st CSH. "Professionally, we've got a nursing staff here that's been able to broaden their experiences because of the variety of patients that we've seen.

"I'm going home with nurses that are a more rounded and well-versed group of nurses than I came over with," said Ford of Harker Heights, Texas.

Ford oversees a staff of 12 nurses and 55 medics. The hospital at the Blue Factory, adjacent to Guardian Base near Tuzla, is manned by 94 soldiers of the 21st CSH, which is based at Fort Hood, Texas.

"All the soldiers here were handpicked and volunteered for this mission," said Sgt. 1st Class Kellyanne O'Neil, chief ward master for the 21st CSH and native of Boston, Mass. "We have 400-plus soldiers at Fort Hood, but all the soldiers here chose to come. This was the first opportunity for many of them to deploy to another country."

The level of expertise found in the nursing and medics staffs at the Blue Factory is reflected in the level of care provided to soldiers of Operations Joint Endeavor/Joint Guard during the past six months, since the 21st CSH arrived in November. Ford is confident that her staff compares to any nursing staff in any hospital in the United States.

"The setup here rivals any community hospital in the states," said Ford. "We've been able to provide a high level of care to the soldier. This deployment has allowed my nurses to go back home with some things they probably didn't think they'd leave here with."



Maj. Linda Hundley, the head Intensive Care Unit nurse at the 21st Combat Support Hospital at Blue Factory, does a preliminary check on a new patient.

Photo by Sgt. Steven S. Collins

For example, some of the nurses are training in areas new to them. An Obstetrics/Gynecological (OB/GYN) nurse has been working in the emergency room. A pediatrics nurse has been working in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) at Blue Factory.

"These nurses have done an excellent job learning new skills even though this deployment has really been slow (as far as the number of casualties treated)," said Ford.

The medical staff at Blue Factory has not had many major casualties. Daily sick calls bring in an average of 25-30 soldiers. At any given time, soldiers only occupy four or five of the hospital's 19 beds.

"The ER has two functions. First is to care for routine common illnesses and ailments. But our primary role is to receive trauma patients," said Maj. Richard Ricciardi, head ER nurse, 21st CSH. "We've had mine accidents, shrapnel victims, chest traumas, but as you can imagine, a lot of common colds as well."

Ford said the majority of surgeries have been minor, such as hernias and appendectomies. Mostly, nurses and medics have been able to sharpen their skills on disease/non-battle injuries. Nurses have also

learned to work in less-than-ideal conditions, working harder to make do with less. While the hospital has state-of-the-art equipment, nurses are required to rely on themselves more or less on technology.

"Here, we are much more dependent on our eyes, ears and other senses," said Maj. Linda Hundley, head ICU nurse. "We've had to sharpen our assessment skills quite a bit. You're right there with the patients and you're the first line and some machine is not going to catch (the problem) for you, you have to catch it on your own."

Although the Bosnian mission for the 21st CSH has been slow for the nursing staff, Ford said her crew still trains for the traditional wartime mission.

"We can't let down planning and training for the wartime scenario. We are an army," said Ford. "But in the future, I can see more of this type of mission. I'm not saying we're going to become the world's police force, but we support the American soldiers. Wherever they go, we go."

"It has been a positive experience," said Ricciardi. "Hopefully, in my heart of hearts, we've done something to assist the different factions here to get over their problems and be better off when we leave."

Ode to Little Jo

By Spc. Susanne Aspley
364th MPAD

CAMP DOBOL -- At 23, 2nd Lt. Keith Jensen is the youngest officer in Task Force 1-26. As such, he was the lucky recipient of the Junior Officer Round, otherwise known as "Little Jo", a dud round the youngest officer in 1st Battalion, 7th Field Artillery, is given guardianship over until a younger officer comes along. Jensen has had custody since joining the 1-7 FA in Schweinfurt, Germany 10 months ago.

"The last junior officer handed him off to me. Now here we are together in Bosnia. This is the first time Little Jo has been deployed," Jensen said.

The round often comes across as frightening, so Jensen painted it bright red as not to scare the children in the local villages of Bosnia. Little Jo is actually quite harmless.

The Junior Officer Vehicle in which Little Jo rides is an olive drab, camouflaged wagon, with a kevlar blanket-lined bottom, so Little Jo and Jensen are safe on the mine-littered roads. There is a dispatch book complete with the proper paperwork and risk assessment. Jensen insists on seat belts (bungee cords) and performs preventative maintenance checks and services everytime he moves out with Little Jo. A drip pan is used out of concern for the environment and, of course,



Photo by Spc. Susanne Aspley

2nd Lt. Keith Jensen updates the Junior Officer Vehicle's dispatch book with Little Jo by his side -- notice the chock block under the front wheel.

a chock block is utilized to keep the wagon from rolling away unexpectedly. The bumper number is HHB 00, 1-1-1-7-F.

People attempt to kidnap the Little Jo from his rightful guardian. "They would love to have the companionship and prestige that Little Jo brings, but Little Jo has one master," said Jensen.

There are rumors that Little Jo has been stolen from Jensen in the past. However, these reports have never been proven and are completely unsubstantiated.

"I take him everywhere I go," said Jensen. "People who I



2nd Lt. Keith Jensen, fire support officer with 1st Battalion, 7th Field Artillery, TF 1-26, loads Little Jo into the breach -- a reminder of Little Jo's roots.

Photo by Spc. Susanne Aspley

"People who I thought were my best friends said they would keep an eye on Little Jo. The minute I turned my back, they were running out the door with my round."

--- 2nd Lt. Keith Jensen

thought were my best friends said they would keep an eye on Little Jo. The minute I turned my back, they were running out the door with my round."

"Little Jo and I are one, inseparable," said Jensen. "He sleeps where I sleep, eats when I eat, and accompanies me on weapons storage site inspections. He has always been my inspiration. I will be very sad when I have to hand him over to the new junior officer, but there comes a time when you have to part with loved ones and move on."

Visitation rights will depend on the next junior officer, "but more than likely he will not let me touch him," said Jensen. "However, I will be older and wiser when I hand him over. Yes sir, if you love something, set it free."

Jensen put his arm tenderly around Little Jo and said, "We have been though a lot here in Bosnia, both good times and bad times. And we will go through a lot more together...I love him."

Has Going postal changed?

Story and photos by Pfc. Wendy R. Tokach
129th MPAD

EAGLE BASE -- In Bosnia-Herzegovina, mail call becomes the highlight of a soldier's day. The 38th Postal Company, an active duty unit, along with the 320th Postal Company out of Cincinnati, Ohio, and the 316th Postal Company from Fort Totten, N.Y., both Reserve units, makes sure that the letters and packages which create that highlight are received.

"Our mission here is to provide mail service and postal finance support to all military and civilians attached to the military in theater," said Capt. Michael A. Tayman, commander of the 38th.

The postal company runs 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The routine day starts with three to four pallets of mail being flown in by the Air Force. The mail is unloaded, then shipped to the post office where it is sorted to the different units. Mail is also sent out to McGovern and Dohol base camps.

It takes about three to four hours to sort the mail and by 1 p.m., mail is ready to be picked up by the units.

"They work really hard for four hours then the rest of the day is just mopping up," said Tayman.

The military mail system has proven itself to be very efficient. Mail sent from the United States normally takes about five to six days while mail sent from Germany takes only three to four days. Bad weather will cause the occasional delay.

Soldiers in Bosnia-Herzegovina can send letters of up to one pound in weight to civilian addresses for free by simply writing free in the corner where the stamp usually goes. If sending to a military address, the soldiers write MPS in the corner.

"Everything that we offer in Germany, we offer here," Tayman said. "I think down here it works a bit better than in the rear. We have more space here and less volume of mail than in Germany."

"We get some compliments from the soldiers on how efficient we run the mail here," Sgt. Rachel R. Olson said.

Fast, free efficient service. "Going postal" has changed.



From top left, clockwise, Spc. Tosca Dominick, left, and Spc. Maria Leonforti, both of the 316th Postal Company, sort mail... Staff Sgt. Leslie Fultz, 320th Postal Company, sorts packages bound for McGovern Base and Camp Dობol onto the appropriate conveyor belts... 2nd Lt. Clifford Daniels, 320th Postal Company, pulls mail off the conveyor belts... Spc. Nancy Wessel, 38th Postal Company, sorts boxes into the appropriate bins... the mail gets stamped.



AFN gets good reception



Spc. George A. Lopez, broadcast engineer with the 222nd Broadcast Public Affairs Detachment, adjusts the modulation of the TV signal.

Photo by Staff Sgt. LaVonna Rohloff

By Staff Sgt. LaVonna Rohloff
364th MPAD

EAGLE BASE -- Television and radio reception are clearer thanks to three Eagle Base American Forces Network broadcast engineers and their operations officer. Together, they installed digital satellite receivers at 23 different sites within the Balkan region.

Spc. Eric R. Harding, Spc. George A. Lopez and Spc. Darius Sims, along with Capt. Shawn Jirik, worked on the project from March 15 until its completion on March 25. They are all members of the 222nd Broadcast Public Affairs Detachment, a Reserve unit from Bell, Calif. They were deployed here in January in support of Operation Joint Guard.

AFN headquarters in Frankfurt, Germany decided to update the equipment throughout Europe. Maj. Daniel J. Wolfe, 222nd commander, said the 222nd had more locations throughout Bosnia and the surrounding area to upgrade than any other AFN affiliate in Europe.

Jirik was involved in both the planning and implementation of the project. There were two weeks of preplanning, and nine days to switch over. "It took an average of

40 minutes at each site," said Jirik

Replacing old equipment, the digital equipment is designed to improve the system by upgrading the receiving and transmission quality of signals. "It will be a prettier TV picture with clearer and better qual-

"One day we traveled over 100 miles by convoy. We even walked part way to some of the remote hilltops. We used everything except train and boat."

--- Capt. Shawn Jirik

ity," said Wolfe.

It is also more reliable for the viewer and technicians who keep the equipment operating. "The equipment will break down less often," said Wolfe. "This is better technology."

"The digital is newer, better equipment and the consumer gets a better product," said Harding. "It is high-speed, low-drag

stuff."

The goal was to "cover the camps," to make TV and radio reception better for all soldiers in support of Operation Joint Guard. "It was a difficult task given the movement conditions down here," said Wolfe.

"A lot of sites we went to by helicopter," said Jirik. "We would not have been able to accomplish the mission as well without the aviation support. Towards the end we had to convoy. Lots of units and lots of people helped."

Each time the 222nd left Eagle Base by HMMWV, they needed four vehicles. Other units supplied vehicles, drivers and assistant drivers.

"We hit four sites in a day in one convoy," said Jirik. "It was the team concept that pulled it all together. One day we traveled over 100 miles by convoy. We even walked part way to some of the remote hilltops. We used everything except train and boat."

"Engineers often don't get enough credit," Jirik said. "They (the 222nd's engineers) worked like true professionals and accomplished the mission," she said.

The old equipment the broadcast engineers replaced will be recycled back to AFN headquarters in Germany.

Walls come tumbling down

By Spc. Susanne Aspley
364th MPAD

CAMP DOBOL- Company C, Task Force 1-26, has successfully operated Rock Observation Point (OP) for nearly six months. Recently, it was assessed by TaskForce Eagle commanders that in Multinational Division-North, the former warring factions are abiding by the Dayton Peace Accord. This week, the walls of Rock OP-came tumbling down in another step towards peace and normalcy.

This shift will allow Task Force 1-26 to withdraw from civil-police actions called for under the General Framework Agreement for Peace (GFAP). Although discontinuing the upkeep and manning of permanent checkpoints throughout their area of responsibility, the task force will carry on with active patrolling. This will enhance the military capabilities of TF 1-26 and the incoming TF 1-41 by freeing up maneuver teams. Quick-reaction response time and versatility will also increase.

“Our attitude here is if it’s not growing, it’s dying.”

--- Capt. Brian Coppersmith

“Our attitude here is if it’s not growing, it’s dying,” said Capt. Brian Coppersmith, Company C commander. “Rock OP required constant improvement and manpower. Now that it is decommissioned, we will gain mobility and patrol capabilities for a wider sector with people and vehicles. We are shifting our efforts to a more mobile setup.”

Rock OP was manned by platoons from Company C. The mission was to observe the key intersection and identify military traffic in violation of the Dayton Peace Accord. Mass civilian interference between the checkpoint and Camp

Dobol was also a possibility, but it didn’t come to be.

“Essentially, what we are doing here is decommissioning a miniature base camp. Platoons at observation posts need to be supported, fed and the OP maintained and improved. It has been determined that the situation here is stabilized enough that missions can be conducted out of Camp Dobol,” said Coppersmith.

Sgt. Albert M. Amoroso Jr., a Bradley gunner, with Company C, TF 1-26, explained that Rock OP is the only checkpoint on the Serb side of the Zone of Separation.

“The OP has been in place since the implementation force came to Bosnia,” said Amoroso. “Our main effort is overlooking the intersection of Hawk and Sparrow, and the small town of Caparde where some resettlement is going on. We observe everything, and everything is peaceful.”

For the benefit of the local people in the area, the dismantling of the checkpoint reinforces that the ZOS is not an international border. Checkpoint closures will boost freedom of movement, which is a major GFAP principle. This enhances the expansion of economic opportunities for towns bordering the ZOS, promoting economic stability.



A soldier guides a Heavy Expanded Mobility Tactical Truck removing debris from Rock Observation Point

Photo by Spc. Susanne Aspley



Pfc. Gary Gillens removes wire and hesco bastion baskets at Charlie Rock Observation Point.

Photo by Spc. Susanne Aspley

Serving soldiers

By Staff Sgt. Tim Erhardt
129th MPAD

CAMP SAVA -- From Isaiah 50: 4-7, "The Lord God has given me a well-trained tongue, that I might know to speak to the weary a word that will rouse them."

P. Fra Ilija Jerkovic, OFM, otherwise known as Father Ilija, has acquired a well-trained tongue which he uses to rouse weary soldiers at the Camp Sava North Chapel, Slavonski Brod, Croatia.

Once a week at 5 p.m. he conducts Roman Catholic services. "I am very happy to do this for those who are so far from home," said Ilija, a priest in the Franciscan Brotherhood.

Ilija has been providing these services for nearly 18 months. Capt. John Krippaehne, 82nd Rear Tactical Operations Center, S-1, recently provided Father Ilija with a limited access camp pass and reiterated the importance of his weekly presence.

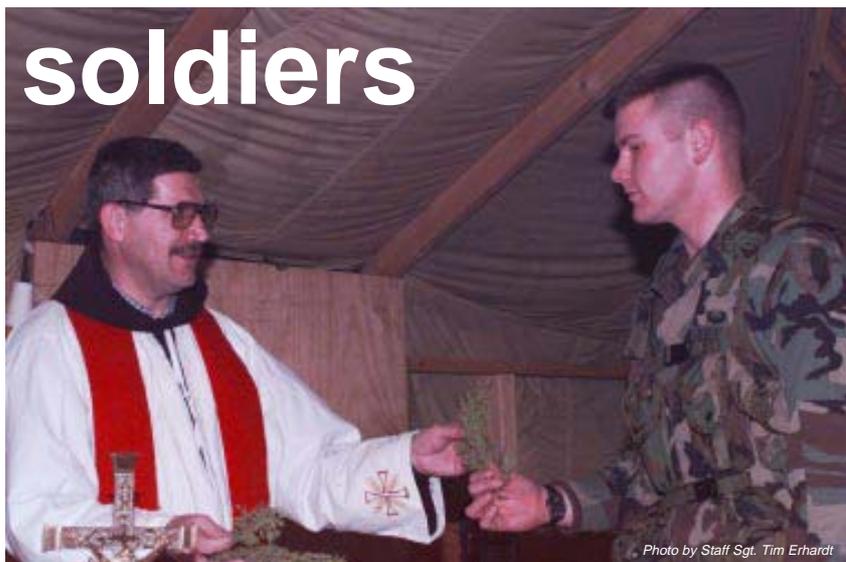
"It's important we have services for all denominations," said Krippaehne. "Father Ilija fills a need."

Although Ilija has never studied English formally, he said that he "learned mostly by listening" and memorized the mass liturgy. He has studied a variety of other languages, however, including German, Latin, Italian, and Spanish. He trained for the priesthood in Sarajevo and also studied in Jerusalem for three years.

"The war made refugees of my family," said Ilija, who is originally from Korace, Bosnia. "My sister and one brother live as refugees in Zagreb. Another brother died and his family are also refugees in Zagreb. The war made us leave our homes."

Ilija is helping a refugee family with eight children by assisting in the renovation of a hundred-year-old school into a home. He also passes on supplies he obtains to needy refugee families.

"They can use clothes, medicine, school supplies, toys and other things that families need," said Ilija. Money is also welcome, but he won't pass any baskets around or even mention that the soldiers should give anything. "If they offer something, I will take



Father Ilija gives 2nd Lt. Brian J. Novoselich a cedar sprig representing a palm during the Palm Sunday service at Camp Sava North.

it and put it to use, but when they come to mass, I only want them to feel welcome," said Ilija.

When Ilija isn't ministering to the soldiers of Slavonski Brod, he is busy handling St. Anthony's parish, in Slavonski Brod and administering the "Zlatni Cekin," of Gold Coin, school. It is named that because of the patronship of an area in Italy. The Gold Coin is an "institution for rehabilitation and education of children."

Ilija helped construct the school when he came to Slavonski Brod in 1992. He said that 70 children receive instruction each day at the Gold Coin with 35 enrolled in speech therapy and 40 more in mentally handicapped classes. The Gold Coin also houses 25 children during the week and feeds 80 for breakfast, 120 at lunch, and 30 for dinner. Father Ilija has 30 people on his staff, including two nuns, two doctors and one nurse.

Throughout the Easter season, Ilija hopes soldiers remember that "in suffering they will find power, for in suffering like Jesus, we can see that death is not an end."

For 21 years, Ilija has given of himself. He has helped get more than 1,300 children adopted. He plans to continue helping refugees, children, and soldiers indefinitely.

Savings Deposit Program best rate

By Sgt. Steven Collins
129th MPAD

EAGLE BASE, Tuzla - Interest rates rise and fall at banks throughout the United States, but soldiers serving in Operation Joint Guard still get the best and most stable rate from their Uncle Sam. Soldiers can earn up to 10 percent annually on money placed in the Savings Deposit Program.

The deputy secretary of defense authorized the SDP effective Jan. 1, 1997 for all American soldiers serving in Operation Joint Guard. Enrolling in the program is as simple as talking to a finance representative at any finance office.

"Anyone can be a part of the program," said Sgt. Janet Blackington, a finance specialist with 106th Finance at Eagle Base, Tuzla. "It doesn't matter if you've served

in Bosnia before, or are a reservist or whether you've opened and closed an (SDP) account before."

Soldiers are authorized to deposit up to \$10,000 in an SDP account. Interest at 10 percent per year is compounded quarterly. The amount a soldier can place into his or her account each month cannot exceed the total unallotted current pay and allowances for that month. For example, if a soldier takes home \$2,727 per month, he or she can only deposit up to \$2,727 in a SDP account.

Enrolling in the program is easy, said Blackington. Soldiers simply make a cash or check deposit using DD Form 1131 (cash collection voucher) at a finance office. Deposits can also be made by allotment, unless the soldier is a reservist on active duty.

Reservists are not allowed to designate allotments with their pay, said Blackington.

Spouses with powers-of-attorney can make deposits on behalf of deployed soldiers but only by cash or check.

A soldier who redeploys cannot continue to make deposits to the account. Interest will accrue for up to 90 days after a soldier is redeployed. Once home, a soldier must file a request to make a withdrawal from the SDP account. This request must be sent to the Defense Finance and Accounting Service-Cleveland Center in Ohio. Forms are available at any finance office.

"This has been a good program for the soldiers here," said Blackington.

For more information about the Savings Deposit Program, contact any finance representative or finance office.

PROTECT THE FORCE

- Keep your troops informed
- Identify risks and apply counter-measures
- Make sure you and your people get crew rest
- Plan and tailor operations to avoid the risk of Cold/Hot Weather Operations
- Execute like we trained you
- Make sure the troops have a buddy —who's yours?
- Don't let a trooper operate gear w/ o proper training and a license
- Do fire prevention rehearsals
- Ensure weapon safety, security of weapons and sensitive items
- Ensure proper planning and execution of Rail Operations
- Do convoys the right way - by the book
- If you didn't drop it, don't pick it up

PROTECT THE SOLDIER

- Take care of your buddy
- Know your "turf"
- Think through the risks ...take actions to reduce them
- Know when you are too tired
- Use your cold/wet weather gear properly
- Know what causes cold/hot weather injuries...prevent them
- Know how to prevent Carbon Monoxide (CO) poisoning
- Do not operate military equipment w/o proper training, a license and confidence
- Know and use fire prevention
- Be able to clear your weapon in your sleep
- Know your role in convoys and emergency procedures for convoys
- If you didn't drop it, don't pick it up.
- Refer to Rule 1

Improvement opportunities

Take advantage of your free time during this deployment to continue your education. Some of the Bachelors degree-level classes offered are listed below. Masters degree-level classes are also available. To register for classes, or to find out more about classes, check with the base education center. The courses start soon, so register now.

Central Texas College

- Tuzla Main**
 LAWE 1310 Criminal Investigation II
 LAWE 2304 Juvenile Procedures
 MILS 1101 Military Science I
 MILS 1102 Fundamentals of Leadership
 MILS 2208 US Presence in Bosnia
 EMET 1101 BLS and Emergency Care
 EMET 1102 Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation
 EMET 1104 Basic Science for Paramedic
 EMET 2101 Intro to Paramedic
- Tuzla West**
 EMET 2101 Intro to Paramedic

University of Maryland

- Tuzla Main**
 BMGT 364 Management and Org. Theory
 SPCH 100 Foundations of Speech Comm.
 HIST 141 Western Civilization I
 BMGT 110 Introduction to Business
 ENG 100 Fundamentals of English
 GNCS 160 Human Biology
- Tuzla West**
 ENG101 Introduction to writing
 SPCH 100 Foundations of speech comm.
 HIST 142 Western Civilization II
 BMGT 110 Introduction to business
- Guardian/Blue Factory**
 SPCH 100 Foundations of speech comm.
 BMGT 110 Intro. to business
 HIST 142 Western Civil. II
 ENG 101 Intro. to writing

- Colt**
 Engl 100 Fundamentals of English
 ENG 101 Introduction to writing
 HIST 141 Western Civilization I
- McGovern**
 MATH 101 Concepts in modern algebra
 MATH 100 Transitional Mathematics
 ZOO 146 Heredity and man
 PSYC 100 Intro to psychology
- Slavonski Brod**
 ENG 100 Fundamentals of English
 ENG 102 Composition and Literature
 SPCH 100 Foundations of Speech Comm.
 HIST 157 History of the US since 1865
- Demi and Dobol**
 Seminars only until May 5 (all courses TBA)

Seminar schedule

- Tuzla Main**
 HIST 219 PLO
 HIST 219/319 International Terrorism
 UCSP 198 Black writers
 MGST 198/398 Conflict Management
 HIST 219/319 Fall of Yugoslavia
- Tuzla West**
 HIST 219/319 Gulf crisis
 HIST 219/319 PLO
 MGST 198/398 Motivation and perf.
- Guardian/Blue Factory**
 HIST 219/319 Fall of Yugoslavia
 MGST 198 Comm. skills for supervisors
 UCSP 198 Black Writers
 MGST 198/398 Conflict management
- Camp Bedrock**
 HIST 219/319 PLO
 HIST 219/319 The Gulf crisis
 UCSP 198 Black writers

City Colleges of Chicago

Video courses

aFN ROLLS
 Radio & TV
 101.1 fm

Sgt. Jerry Malec
 0800-1200/Saturday
 Oldies Show

Turtles in the box By Capt. Peter J. Buotte



You know, I miss sand.

Demining

from page 1

lier, but still ready to provide a tragic harvest to the unsuspecting.

After six months in Bosnia, Sgt. 1st Class Jeffery S. Stivers, 34, a platoon sergeant with Company A, 9th Engineer Battalion, has made it his job to be suspicious of innocent-looking ground.

"As an engineer, that's something I deal with on a day-to-day basis," said the Bloomfield, Ind., native. "We go out and look at a field, and while someone might see the field as pretty and greening up, in our eyes it's a potential minefield."

Since February, mines have been very much on the minds of Stivers and the rest of the "Apache" engineers. During the winter, mine clearing was next to impossible said Stivers, but with the spring thaw, the job of clearing the U.S. sector of its 250,000 known mines has become a priority. However, mine clearing is not the mission of the engineers. That, said Stivers, is the responsibility of the former warring factions.

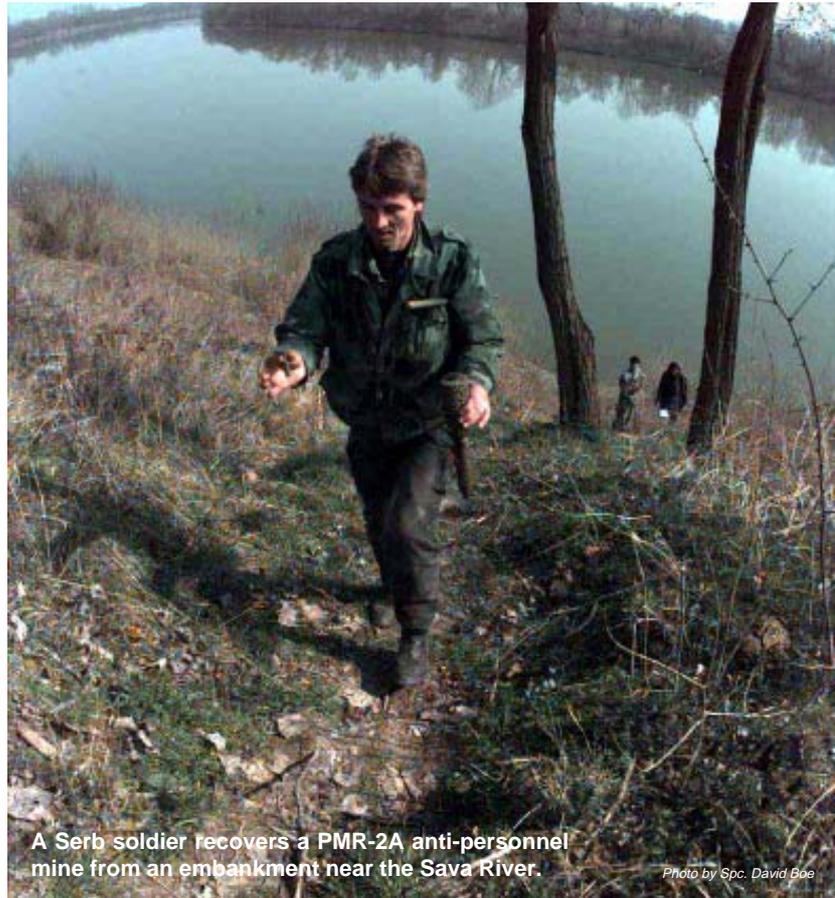
"What we're doing with the VRS (Bosnian Serb) army demining team near the Sava river is removing PMR-2A anti-personnel mines," said Stivers. "Whenever they (the former warring factions) determine they have a minefield they want to take out, my job is to observe them and make sure that all the mines that were placed there come out."

The Serb demining team, a squad of differently-dressed soldiers armed only with aluminum pokers, spread out along the mine-infested shoreline, poking and prodding for the small PMR-2A's. The anti-personnel mine, one of the more common used by the Serbs, looks like a pineapple sitting on a stake. When detonated by trip wire, the PMR-2A explodes like a grenade, spraying metal fragments up to 50 meters in all directions.

During the mine clearing, the Serb soldiers wear nothing but their uniforms - no helmets, no flak vests. Standing farther than 50 meters away, behind a berm and the trenchline, are the engineers. One soldier walks onto the berm overlooking the shoreline. Stivers orders him down.

"It's their (the Serbs) job to take out the mines," said Stivers. "My soldiers *do not* go near the minefield, for obvious safety reasons."

After finding all of the mines listed for the area, the Serb soldiers bring them up the embankment where the engineers count them against existing records. One soldier, returning with a defused PMR-2A still attached to its rotted stake, pounds it



A Serb soldier recovers a PMR-2A anti-personnel mine from an embankment near the Sava River.

Photo by Spc. David Boe

against a fallen tree trunk until the mine falls off.

This is the first time Stivers has worked with the Serbs in mine-clearing missions. "It's a professional relationship between us and them," said Stivers. "Basically we tell them how we work and they understand the standards we maintain, so they try to keep that in mind when they're out here working with us."

It will also be one of the last times Stivers works with the former warring factions in mine-clearing operations. He will return to Germany

with his unit soon, turning over their area of responsibility to their replacements, Company B, 82nd Engineer Battalion.

"My last job is to do a battle hand-off mission with them," said Stivers. "Today I'm just trying to place them in my shoes, and show them what their mission is going to be during the summer months."

Hovering close to Stivers and assisting in the mine recordkeeping is 2nd Lt.

Kevin J. Lovell, 24, a platoon leader with Company B, 82nd Engineer Battalion. After the Apache engineers leave, the job of working with the former warring factions in mine clearing will fall on his and the 82nd's shoulders. Deployed to Bosnia just a week ago, Lovell said paying attention to detail will be a major factor in his new mission.

"The most important thing we can get out of this is knowledge of preparation and execution," said the two-year army veteran from Lansing, Ill.

"The key is to do the little things right, and if you do them right in your planning and execution, then you'll be successful."

"It all boils down to situation awareness," said Sgt. 1st Class John J. Jellison, platoon sergeant, Company B. "It looks peaceful, but there is still that threat present."

The 15-year veteran said he performed mine-clearing operations in Honduras some years back, but nothing on the scale as Bosnia.

"I think it's going to be a challenge," he said. "But it also is going to be some excellent experience for myself and the platoon."

After the mines are collected and counted, they're taken to a gully near the river to be destroyed. Using C-4 from the engineers, the Serb soldiers prepare the mines for destruction. Five minutes later a deep "whump" from the gully shatters the quiet. As black smoke drifts up through the barren branches in the tree line, the birds become silent. A few moments later they resume their singing.

"It's their (the Serbs) job to take out the mines," said Stivers. "My soldiers *do not* go near the minefield, for obvious safety reasons."

--- Sgt. 1st Class Jeffery S. Stivers
