

# TALON



**Special guests  
visit soldiers**

# Talon Inside



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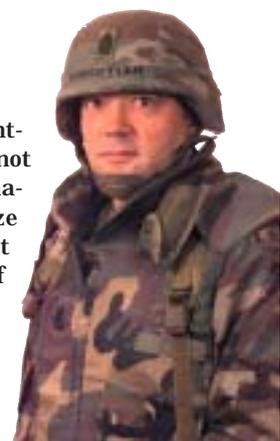
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**By Command Sergeant Major  
Carl E. Christian**  
*Task Force Eagle CSM*



On occasion, some of us inadvertently disclose information that should not be released, take the risk of information being reviewed, or jeopardize access in unauthorized areas. I cannot emphasize enough the importance of security in our sectors. Security is paramount to smooth day-to-day operations, the well being of soldiers and the success of future operations.

As leaders, it is important we instill in soldiers' minds the importance of watching what we say about operations and missions, especially during casual conversations while in the dining facility, gym and recreation center, or around the showers and living area. For example soldiers may be discussing a convoy from one base camp to another, but may not realize the repercussions if the wrong person receives this information.

Incidents that occur in the base camps should not be discussed in a public forum, in passing or during casual conversation. There is a time and place to discuss incidents.

As far as access is concerned, it is essential that we take notice of personnel around us. Are escorts accompanying those they are supposed to be escorting? Is it assumed that a local civilian not displaying a badge is authorized just because they are there?

We need to keep in mind the fact that we are visitors in this country and it is in our best interest to be security conscientious. It is easy for us to share information and boast about tasks that we are achieving, but we need to think before we speak. Continue to strive to exceed the standards that concern security measures whether you are on guard duty, patrolling the perimeter or just walking down the road...and remember, "TODAY IS THE BEST DAY TO BE A SOLDIER."

### On the Cover

A U.S. Army Blackhawk helicopter arrives at Camp Dobol bringing congressional delegates. ( Photo by Staff Sergeant Jack McNeely, see pages 6 and 7).

### The Task Force Eagle Web site is located at [www.tfeagle.army.mil](http://www.tfeagle.army.mil)

The Task Force Eagle web site offers breaking news and photos on its web site. The Web site provides information concerning the Turk, Russian, and NORDPOL Brigade assigned to Task Force Eagle, as well as U.S. soldiers stationed in Bosnia. The Talon On-line is updated every Saturday.

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# Cougar PAC solving soldiers' dilemmas

Story and photos by Sergeant Oreta M. Spencer  
196th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

**H**ave a pay or promotion problem? If you do, then go to the PAC. The Personnel Administration Center at Camp Dobol and Camp Demi is here to help soldiers in need of assistance in these and other problems.

"We handle all administration support for Camp Dobol and Camp Demi," said Staff Sergeant Terry D. Barbee, 36, of Milwaukee, Wis. PAC also handles all administrative support for the National Guard and Reserves at both camps.

Barbee is a member of the 2nd Squadron, 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment from Fort Polk, La. Barbee is currently stationed at Camp Dobol. "Between the two camps, we are accountable for approximately 1200 soldiers," continued Barbee.

According to Barbee, the Cougar PAC should be the first place soldiers go to solve problems with pay issues, personnel actions or promotions.

"We take care of the bulk of problems here to keep traffic down. We can handle the majority of issues. The rest, we filter down to the appropriate offices," he commented.

The PAC also handles the in processing of all new soldiers and assigns them to units, Barbee stated.

"The PAC performs all administrative actions. Everything from awards, the R & R program, promotions, to ordering publications," reiterated Barbee.

Although they try to get answers back to the soldiers within 24 to 48 hours, sometimes it is not always possible. "I don't like to leave soldiers hanging. If we can't get the answer back to them within that time frame, we will let them know



Specialist Jason Bruce Harris assists soldiers who come into the PAC.



Specialist Ricardo Ortiz Rivera researches the computer in order to find information and correct problems the soldiers at Camp Dobol may have.

what is currently happening," Barbee explained.

"This job is important. A lot of data we provide is a direct link to soldiers' careers and personal lives," said Barbee.

Their actions reflect heavily on the soldiers. Barbee emphasized, "We put ourselves in the soldiers' place and do for them the same thing we would do for ourselves". This caring attitude for the soldiers and becoming closely involved in their concern enables the PAC members to better assist soldiers at these camps.

"Working with the commanders and first sergeants really helps us in knowing the individual better so that we may provide the support needed," said Barbee.

"The best part of this job is when we get feedback and know that we have helped someone out. It makes it worthwhile".

# Foreign Claims Act promotes good will

Story and photo by Sergeant Gary Hicks  
196th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

When a Humvee sideswipes a horse-drawn cart; a Bradley tears through a yard, or an explosion shatters a person's collectibles; someone has to pay. That "someone" is Uncle Sam.



Captain King prepares legal documents.

Congress enacted the Foreign Claims Act 100 years ago in order to promote favorable public relations with foreign countries. That act allows citizens to file claims for damages to personal property or real property caused by U.S. forces during noncombat maneuvers according to the Task Force 2nd Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment and Blue Factory legal advisor, Captain Nicholas S. King, of San Diego, Calif.

"When a person feels troops have damaged their

property and they want to be reimbursed for losses, they must submit a claim," said King, 34, a 1995 graduate of California Western School of Law.

Once a claim is filed, it is the legal officer's job to conduct an investigation.

"We make sure that the person filing the claim actually owns the property and that the damaged was caused by a soldier," explains King.

Once the damage is verified, the legal officer makes a monetary settlement offer to the person making the claim. If that settlement is accepted, the claimant is reimbursed with a pay voucher and once the voucher is cashed, their claim ends.

If the claimant refuses the offer, or the amount is out of the officer's jurisdiction, the claim is renegotiated or sent to a higher level of authorization. "We average about two to three claims a week," said King. "Most of those claims are from minor traffic accidents such as a Humvee's mirror striking a POV on a narrow road."

Claims are an important tool in maintaining good relations with our foreign hosts, however, it is our tax dollars that pay for the damages. In the performance of your mission and daily duties, be careful and take the necessary steps in order not to damage someone's property. It's the U.S. or us, who pays for these claims.

## Lending a Helping Hand

Story and photo by Sergeant Gary Hicks  
196th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

Due to the rough terrain and the constant usage of Humvees and other heavy-duty vehicles in Bosnia, the need for mechanics is overwhelming. If it weren't for a few people like Glenn Smith, army mechanics would be working 24 hours a day, seven days a week due to the great demand for their services.

Smith, 38, a vehicle maintenance technician, is part of a three-man service support team for Lockheed Martin Logistics Management in Camp Bedrock.

"Mr. Smith and the Lockheed team does a great job of increasing our maintenance capabilities," said Chief Warrant Officer Joe Madrid, the battalion maintenance technician for Task Force 2nd Battalion, 6th Infantry Division.

"If it wasn't for them, our soldiers wouldn't be able to take leave," explained Madrid.

Smith and the Lockheed team perform 100 percent technical inspections, general maintenance on all military wheeled-vehicles and replace wheel bearings.

"We augment the maintenance program providing mission support for Camp Bedrock," explains Smith, a 15-year Army Veteran mechanic of Natrona Heights, Penn.

Any surplus maintenance needs, over and above the logistical capabilities of Headquarters and Headquarters Company mechanics, are reallocated to Smith and the Lockheed team.

Smith volunteered to come to Bosnia and support U.S. forces in their peacekeeping efforts 14 months ago and plans to remain here until August.

The knowledge and skills that Smith gained in his Army tenure



Maintenance Technician Glen Smith replaces battery cables on a Hemmet.

have enabled him to advance in his civilian career as well as provide assistance to less experienced soldiers in the Task Force 2nd Battalion, 6th Infantry Division maintenance shop.

Thanks to Smith and other veterans who continue to support the U.S. in its worldwide mission, Task Force 2nd Battalion, 6th Infantry Division command can go about its mission without having to be concerned with vehicle needs or problems.

# One of a kind technician

## Technician uses new technology to inspect aircraft deficiencies

Story and photo by Sergeant First Class Sherry L. Claus  
196th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

As new personnel rotate to Bosnia, new technology follows them. Specialist Melissa A. Johnson, 21, joined the Army to travel to foreign countries, learn new skills and gain knowledge. She has attained these goals – with a few unique twists.

Three and a half years ago, the country she's stationed in, the program she works with and the technology she uses didn't even exist.

"I never imagined I'd be where I am, doing the things I am or learning what I am right now!" said Johnson.

The Muskegon, Michigan native is an Aircraft Powertrain Repairer with A Company, 127th Aviation Support Battalion, normally stationed in Hanau, Germany. She also has the distinction of being Tuzla Valley's only trained Nondestructive Inspection Technician.

Until recently, her job checking metal components of aircraft for cracks and/or defects was tedious and time consuming. Using the previous fluorescent penetrant method, checking the UH-60 helicopter wheel half would take around ten hours from start to finish.

The old method required completely stripping the paint from the wheel, letting it dry, disposing of the hazardous waste, coating it with penetrant, drying again, using black light to check for cracks, removing the fluorescent coating, re-priming, drying again, repainting and finally, drying once more.

However, using the new system called the Eddy Current, checking a UH-60 wheel half takes around an hour and a half – a saving of at least 8 1/2 hours on one single piece of equipment!

The Eddy Current uses a specially shaped probe which is attached to a machine which shoots a current into the non-ferrous metal parts and any irregularities show up as waves on a screen that Johnson is trained to read.

"Ninety percent of my work is done using the Eddy Current

which checks for surface cracks and defects. I also use an Industrial X-Ray Machine – model LPX160 – to take internal pictures of equipment," explained the soldier. "For instance, if there is a noise in a blade, I can see if there is water inside or if a screw has fallen into an open area and gotten trapped."

Although Johnson attended an intensive 9-week school to learn her trade, there are still surprises for her.

"I really like this system. It is so new to the Army that when a problem comes up with an aircraft or a part fails a test, I learn new things about my equipment's capabilities," Johnson said. "Every day I find something new that wasn't taught in the school – it's a total learning experience!"

Though the technology has indeed changed, Johnson's goals have remained much the same and it seems that the attain-



Specialist Melissa A. Johnson, Nondestructive Inspection Technician with A Company, 127th Aviation Support Battalion, adjusts an Industrial X-ray machine used to take internal pictures of UH-60 Blackhawk Helicopter parts to check for cracks, defects, etc.

ment of them will continue – she will see more countries, she will learn more skills and she is still gaining knowledge.

# Congressional visit

Story and photos by Staff Sergeant Jack McNeely  
196th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

**H**igh morale among U.S. troops here apparently can be attributed to improved living conditions and an overall acceptance of their peacekeeping mission, says the chairman of the Senate Arms Appropriations Committee.

"Morale throughout the military is very much a concern of ours. It's good to see that a high morale is shared among the troops here at Dobil," said Sen. Ted Stevens, R-Alaska.

Stevens was joined Monday, May 4, by fellow Congressmen Dr. Bill Frist, R-Tenn., and Pete Domenici, R-N.M. All three are members of the Senate Arms Services Committee. While the three were escorted by Camp Dobil Commander, Lieutenant Colonel Mark Littel, during their Dobil visit, four other congressional representatives visited troops at nearby Camp Bedrock.

The dual visits allowed the delegations to visit soldiers, get their perspective on life in Bosnia and evaluate their living conditions at each base camp.

"It's important that we get out and visit the troops in the field," added the 74-year-old Stevens. The 29-year Senate veteran was instrumental in passing supplemental funds to extend Operation Joint Guard after President Clinton announced late last year that he wanted to extend the U.S. presence in the war-torn Balkan region indefinitely. U.S. troops were originally scheduled to vacate Bosnia in June.

Dobil's visit was the second stop in a three-country whirlwind tour Monday, Stevens noted. Earlier in the day the congressional delegation met with troops in the Persian Gulf. They were scheduled to make a northern European stop later in the day.

But during their brisk two-hour visit in the heart of the four-kilometer-wide Zone of Separation, the congressmen were able to evaluate the morale of the 800-troop base camp.

"What can we do to make things better for you?" Sen. Frist asked a group of Charlie Company, 2nd Battalion, 6th Infantry soldiers from Baumhold, Germany.

Sergeant Gumercindo Trejo of San Antonio, Texas, was quick to respond, "Right now things are pretty good here. Just don't cut the budget. We are enjoying better living conditions. Every day base camp life seems to improve."

A few moments later Sen. Frist, a 46-year-old heart and lung transplant surgeon, visited the Dobil Aid Station and its medical personnel. As he left, he proudly pulled out his business card. The "M.D." title was bigger than the "U.S. Senator" designation. "You can tell where my priorities are," he quipped.

Meanwhile, Private First Class Patrick Lescault, a member of the 84th Engineer Company from Fort Polk, La., appeared awestruck when Sen. Stevens paid a visit to his work area. "It was a surprise," said the 22-year-old of Albany, N.Y. "It's good to see that they are concerned about us."

Lieutenant Colonel Mark Littel, commander of 2nd Squadron, 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment from Fort Polk, La., echoed the young troop's sentiments.

"I'm always glad to see our nation's leaders come here for a visit because when they leave, the morale among the troops is inevitably always much higher," said the Dobil commander.

Such was the case when President Clinton paid a Christmas-time visit to Task Force Eagle peacekeepers at Eagle Base, Littel noted. "When the President left, you could see that all the spirits were lifted. Visits like these validate that our mission is vital not only to our nation's leaders, but also that it is important to the folks back home," he said.



Private First Class Travis Reardon points on the Battle Desk map for Senator



(Left to right) Senator Pete Domenici and crewman Keith Bender of Morgan Company stand ready to meet the congressmen



points out the location of Camp Dობол  
Ted Stevens, R-Alaska.



Senator Pete Domenici, R-N.M., talks with combat engineer Private  
First Class Patrick Lescault a member of the 84th Engineer Company  
from Fort Polk, La.



Senator Pete Domenici, R-N.M., shakes hands with tank  
crew member from Louisiana. Other members of the crew  
man and explain their duties.



Sergeant Gumercindo Trejo, a member of Charlie Company, 2nd  
Battalion, 6th Infantry from Baumholder, Germany, responds to a  
question from Senator Bill Frist, R-Tenn.

# Srebrenica's children receive gifts

Story and photo by Sergeant First Class Buddy Ferguson  
345th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

In the Serbian town of Srebrenica, in Bosnia-Herzegovina, three Humvees pulled over and parked near a small market area, where townspeople were walking around, routinely going about their morning activities. Today was a school holiday, and kids were playing and running through the streets.

Some of the people were just hanging around, talking to each other, or just leaning against a fence or wall doing nothing. Employment is extremely low everywhere in Bosnia.

When the three U.S. marked civil affairs Humvees slowly drove down the cobblestone street into the area, the people of this war-scarred town, stopped to turn and gaze at the armed soldiers wearing helmets and flack jackets inside.

They knew that the United Nations was sponsoring searches in the area to gather evidence against the Serbian alleged war criminals to be tried in a U.N. court, but the expressions on their faces reflected surprise, rather than hostility.

Their curiosity began to best them as the four U.S. civil affairs soldiers got out of the vehicles and began to unload and open large, postage-marked cardboard boxes. The people of this Srebrenica neighborhood cautiously moved closer and encircled the three vehicles. They wanted to see what these foreign soldiers were doing so near their homes, but they still maintained a comfortable space between them and the uniformed outsiders.

Having much less experience with the rigors of life and a pure, genuine trust, children have less fear of the unordinary. They approached the soldiers without hesitation and with smiles of immediate acceptance.

Then from the boxes, the civil affairs soldiers from Eagle Base at Tuzla, removed pencils, tablets, crayons, coloring books, and a variety of other school supplies. The parents drew nearer as their children had arms full of paper, pencils, toys and even candy canes from Christmas. The soldiers then opened boxes filled with clothes, shoes and household items that the

American people, so far removed from the problems of life in Srebrenica sent to them. These boxes were filled with hope, and an unselfish desire to just help.

The cool expressions of curiosity turned into the warmth of smiles, laughter and handshakes as the gifts were distributed. With help from the Bosnian interpreter, it was clear to them that these soldiers brought only gifts of peace to share from



Norwegian Civil Affairs officer, Major Øyvind Steindal in rear of Humvee and Staff Sergeant Sutton, 551st M.I. Detachment distribute gifts donated by U.S. citizens.

their hometowns back in the U.S. Gifts were collected and donated by American school children, parents, school organizations, and just ordinary people who care.

When the civil affairs team loaded the last of the empty boxes in the Humvees, and began to leave Srebrenica, the people were smiling and waving, still holding the gifts from America. The children ran with the Humvees as they left town, waving good-bye, with their new school supplies in their arms. The civil affairs team turned their Humvees off the cobblestone street and on to a road leading out of Srebrenica and into the surrounding mountains toward Eagle Base at Tuzla.

As the sun set on Srebrenica that evening, just maybe, this civil affairs mission gave rise to the realization of the compassion that the American people in the United States, and the soldiers here in their country have for them. Just maybe this mission will be one of the building blocks to a better understanding and more cooperation to a peaceful solution to the divisional problems in Bosnian-Herzegovina, sometime in the future.

# Serb veteran talks to U.S. soldiers

Story and photo by Staff Sergeant. Jack McNeely  
196th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

**H**e sat at the entrance to the Crni Guber Resort, which is flanked by an orange, iron filled stream that flows down the steep hillside about 500 meters to this Serb-held Republika Srpska city of 25,000. His granddaughter yells, "Papa! Papa!" as the two notice the group of U.S. soldiers trudging toward the resort on this sunny afternoon.

The old man, exposing big forearms and a wide smile, welcomed Lieutenant Colonel Mark Littel, 2nd Squadron, 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment commander, and his guests — Colonel Joe Fill, 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division commander; and Lieutenant Colonel Bob Brown, the future commander of 2nd Squadron, 5th Cavalry Regiment. Brown will return to Camp Dobol as commander in October.

Littel's squadron from Fort Polk, La., currently occupies Base Camp Dobol, a strategic American base camp located just over 50 miles northwest of Srebrenica in the heart of the four-kilometer-wide Zone of Separation (ZOS).

The man — his name and age treated like a closely guarded secret — told the American officers about his life following the civil war that pitted his neighbors against neighbors earlier this decade.

"The films that you have in America do not show the life we once had," the seasoned

Serb comrade said as his shy, wide-eyed granddaughter twisted in his lap to avoid the photographer's camera. "I could go anywhere I wanted; work where I wanted," he added with conviction.

The man told a sad story of displacement. He said he would never return to his beloved hometown of Ildza, within the city limits of Sarajevo. Although Littel assured him it would be safe, the man held firm in his belief that it would be a dangerous proposition.

"Never! Never!" he responded to Littel, who asked whether or not he would return to his home. "They would kill me," the veteran said of the Muslims.

Ironically, he now resides in Srebrenica — home to some of the worst war atrocities.

But yet, the man still proclaimed the rights of his fellow Serbs have been

violated. "You are not lucky enough to see the kinds of rights we once had," he told Littel as Brown and Fill absorbed the first-hand history lesson.

Regardless of the unfortunate scenarios that may have unfolded for this Serb family, the man still yielded respect for his colleagues in uniform as he extended a firm, calloused hand toward Littel. Despite their contrasting views of the war, the old man could still shake the hand that has provided peace throughout these rugged mountains and their hidden villages here in the southeast sector of MND (N).



(Left to right) Lieutenant Colonel Bob Brown of the 2-5 Cav, Lieutenant Colonel Mark Littel, 2-2 ACR commander, and Mike Prigorec, U.S. interpreter, talk with a former Serb soldier and his granddaughter during a visit to Srebrenica .

# Postal service, camps' morale booster

Story and photos by Sergeant Oreta M. Spencer  
196th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

What is the biggest morale booster for soldiers stationed in Bosnia? According to Private First Class Phillip Armstrong, 21, of Natchitoches, La., receiving mail is at the top of his list.

"The deployment to Bosnia has been a strain on everyone," said Armstrong. "It gives me great pleasure that my job is to bring a little happiness from the home front to every American who is serving in Bosnia."

Armstrong, a member of the 2nd Squadron, 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment from Fort Polk, La., is serving at Camp Dobol performing postal duties. Sorting and handing out the mail is just a small portion of his daily mail duties. His job includes many details and a process that the public is not aware.

Sergeant Jeff Stover, 31, of Zephyrhills, Fla., a member of the 151st Postal Company from Fort Hood, Texas, explains the process. "We receive the mail from Tuzla. After we unload it, we document the mail and sort it into three groups," said Stover. "The clerks then break it down further into different units."

The postal service is capable of handling every type of mail here in Bosnia as in the United States, but not one service.



Private First Class Phillip Armstrong sorts the incoming mail at Camp Dobol.



Sergeant Jeff Stover, a member of the 151st Postal Company from Fort Hood, Texas currently serving with the 90th Personnel Service Battalion unloads the mail vehicle at Camp Dobol.

"Except express service. We cannot give any guarantees from here," said Stover.

"We have to keep track of all registered mail pieces – both coming and leaving Camp Dobol," added Stover.

According to Stover, approximately 750 pieces of mail flow through the system at Camp Dobol daily, and more on certain days. "During the holidays the mail increases. During Christmas we had three tents full of mail," said Armstrong. "Being away from home and family during the holidays is hard. It helps when soldiers receive mail and packages from home, especially during these times."

Mail can be slow at times in Bosnia. "When soldiers first get here, they need to understand that mail is not as fast as it would be back in the states. It may take a few weeks before they start seeing mail from home," said Stover.

Although those days without mail may seem like weeks to a soldier, it will start flowing in on a regular basis, commented Stover.

"The highlight of my job is when I see a homesick or upset soldier receive mail – the instant change in their face and mood shows me just how important mail is," said Armstrong.

Rain, sleet or snow, Camp Dobol soldiers can rest assured their mail will be delivered.

# USAF forecasting weather for TFE

Story by Specialist Nancy McMillan

196th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

Photo by Sergeant First Class Frank Casares

345th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

The weather forecast as reported on the radio and television is only the tip of the iceberg of a complex system of technical data gathering. Observations of highly trained meteorologists using state of the art scientific instruments and equipment provide us with the most current and accurate weather information available. Advanced technology carried aloft by balloons, mounted on aircraft, and satellites circling the globe, combine to provide access to the latest and most accurate weather conditions and forecasts.

By the time the radio reports sunny skies, rain or fog, the hard work of planning the forecast has been done — through human observations, instruments and equipment.

The 7th Expeditionary Weather Squadron (EWS) is part of this information gathering system and uses this technology to acquire the information needed by the military to plan and coordinate their operations. The EWS is configured as a standard U.S. division weather team, but has the unique requirement of supporting both an Army multinational division as well as the U.S. Air Force in Europe's busiest aerial port.

According to Master Sergeant Terry D. Allen, 35, a forecaster and operations chief, weather conditions are important to pilots, ground troops and for transportation.

"The weather is a key factor for flying, movement of troops in a combat environment, and for driving throughout Europe," said Allen, a Crescent City, Calif. native.

Predicting the climate starts with a weather observer — a person who obtains the temperature, dew temperature and air pressure with the help of instruments and the height of a cloud base with visibility markers. The observer then plugs the information into the worldwide distribution center where it can be read by many.

Another important method involved in forecasting is the

manual release of a radio transmitter attached to a weather balloon. The balloon rises thousands of feet into the air, measuring temperature, humidity, atmospheric pressure and wind speed. The calculations are then transmitted to a computer communication system called METASSI (Meteorological Assistant). That information is sent to the Army aviation briefing center at Comanche base where pilots are advised of current conditions before taking flight.

According to Major Jeffery R. Linskens, from Bear, Del., the commander of the 7th EWS and a meteorologist, providing fore-



(Left to right) Technical Sergeant John Tunney, Staff Sergeant David Gray and Staff Sergeant Ken Brooks, discuss the weather patterns from computer printouts for Task Force Eagle weather forecast for the next 72 hours.

cast and observation support at the many different base camps in the area of operation is a full-time mission.

"It's a challenging profession — everywhere we go is a learning experience — different terrain will have different affects on the weather," Linskens said. "And knowing the weather in advance helps upcoming activities to be successful."

Technical Sergeant John Tunney, a Sewickley, Penn., native said, "The biggest lesson that I've learned from this tour has been understanding how important our equipment is, and learning how to keep it functional".

# Night watch – security while camp sleeps

Story and photo by Sergeant Terry L. Welch  
345th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

While soldiers lie asleep at night in their camps in Bosnia, someone is watching over them. Camp McGovern soldiers are no different from the other camps.

On a recent, rainy night, Specialist Ricardo Arrington, K Troop, 3rd Squadron, 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment, sat peering into the darkness from the turret of a Humvee. A plexi-glass shelter kept the rain from reaching him and kept the warmth of the Humvees heater around him. In front of him was an M-60 machine gun, binoculars hung around his neck. "My job," Arrington said, keeping his eyes out on the night, "is just to keep my eyes open at all times and make sure no one comes into or goes out of this perimeter."

It's a simple enough mission, but Arrington said he realizes that it's an important one. "In fact, it's probably the most important job I do here."

As he stared out over the minefield surrounding the camp and the road through that field, Arrington was not alone. Fellow "Killer" Troop soldiers, Sergeant Charles Green and Private First Class Andrew Baxter, were inside a nearby bunker beside the camp's south gate. "The hardest thing about pulling this guard is staying awake, making sure you're doing the right thing at the right time," Baxter said. "You have to have someone to talk to."

Green, agreed. "We talk about everything," he said. "After you do this a couple of times with a guy, you really get to know who he is."

Back outside, Arrington strained to hear the sounds of the Northern Bosnian night over the steady beat of the raindrops. Here, it isn't uncommon, Arrington said, to hear things that could cause concern. Explosions, gunshots and the movement of people and animals have to be heard as well as learned. "It can be a little spooky out here when you hear something," Arrington admitted. "You hear something, but a lot of times you never know what's going on."

McGovern soldiers stand three-hour shifts on the mind-numbing night guard, four and a half-hour shifts during the day.

It often seems like a thankless job, as do most guard shifts, but Green said people don't need to thank him for watching the night. "It's just part of the job to protect your fellow soldiers. Everyone gets to do it sometime. I know



Specialist Ricardo Arrington, K Troop, 3rd Squadron, 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment, conducts a radio check during a late-night guard shift.

(the other soldiers) appreciate it," he said.

In front of the three soldiers lay the unknown night and the dreaming, silent city of Brcko. Behind them lay Camp McGovern, full of soldiers who peacefully slept.