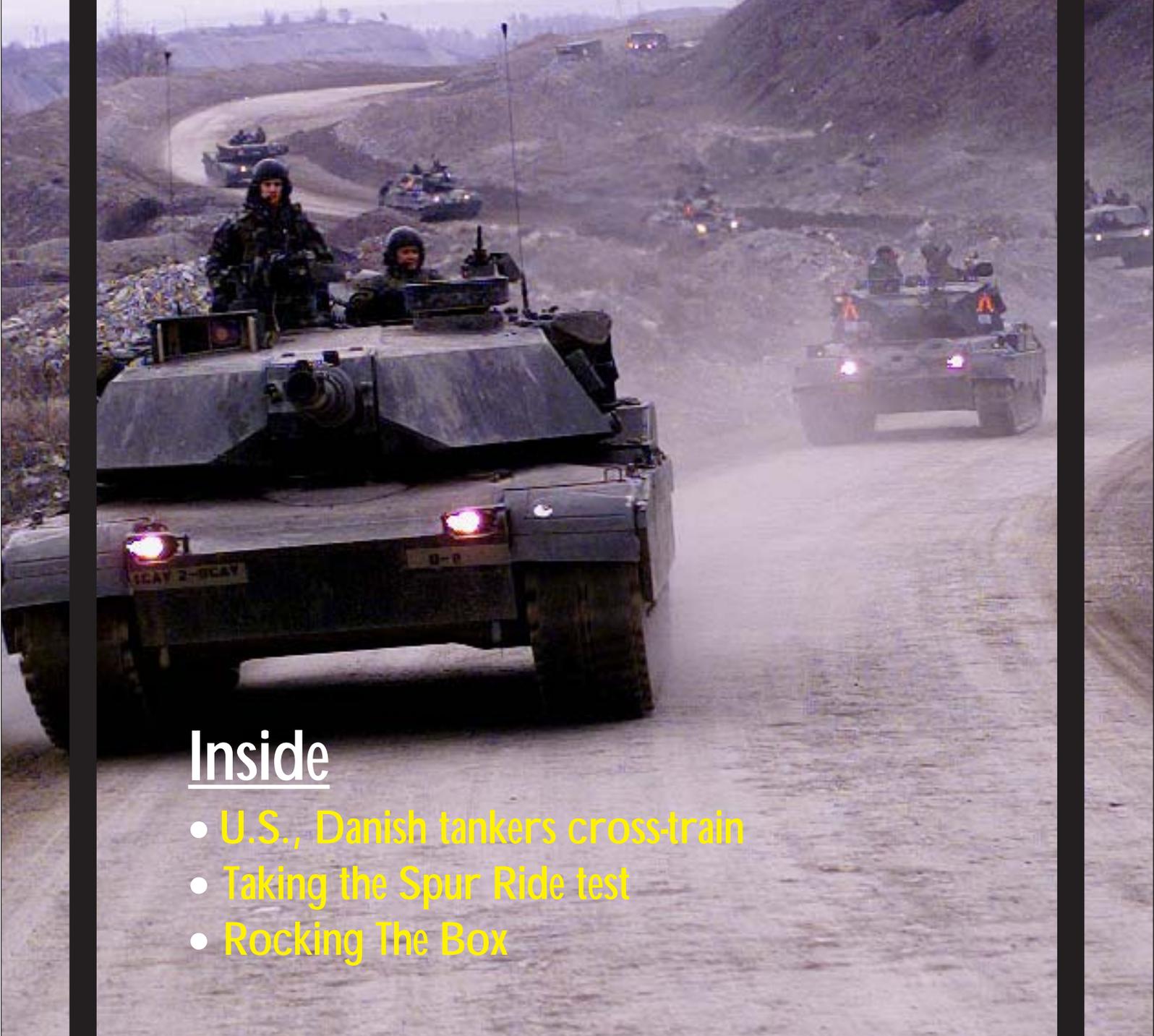


TALON



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- Taking the Spur Ride test
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Talon Inside



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Second Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment's tank "Delta 11" leads the way to the quarry from Camp Bedrock during a recent joint-exercise between U.S. and Danish tankers. (Photo by Staff Sergeant Pat Johnston. See page 6-7.)

"You cannot be everyone's friend, but you can be a good comrade to all." – Unknown

The Task Force Eagle Web site is located at 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.

By Command Sergeant Major Paul M. Inman
 Multinational Division (N) CSM



I hope each and every one of you had a peaceful Thanksgiving Day. I want to share with you some of the events Major General Byrnes and I attended as we traveled around the area. During Eagle Base's Thanksgiving church service, servicemembers of the Army, Air Force and Navy expressed how each viewed being thankful at Thanksgiving. The service was very well done. We next traveled to the main dining facility at Eagle and observed the many displays that the cooks along with Brown and Root had prepared, and they were all great. Our next stop was Camp Comanche's dining facility, where again they had outdone themselves. We ate at Comanche, and I must say the food was plentiful and the taste was that of home cooking. The next stop was Charlie Ramp where we joined the Commander of Stabilization Force, General Meigs, boarded his aircraft and flew to Camp Bedrock and Camp Dobil, again tasting the food all along the way and it was all great. Our 1st Cavalry Division band was out in force playing and singing to the pleasure of each and every soldier. In every dining facility there were foreign soldiers from our fellow Multinational Division (North) brigades enjoying the festivities of American Thanksgiving. Many soldiers, airmen, sailors and Marines enjoyed the concert at the Charlie Clamshell by Lari White. This concert was courtesy of the Air Force.

The winners of our dining facility Thanksgiving decoration competition were Camp Comanche for the large category and Camp Dobil for the small facility category. Brigadier General Steven Whitcomb traveled to many of the facilities and he, Major General Byrnes and I agree each and every one of the facilities was a winner. For those of you who are from Fort Hood, here is a little news from home. All the dining facilities were filled with soldiers and families enjoying a feast similar to the one you had here. The dining facilities were decorated with elaborately decorated cakes and salt dough displays, ice sculptures, scenes from the pilgrims, pony rides, a live turkey and more. The Division and III Corps winning dining facility was DISCOM. Congratulations to all the cooks in DISCOM for their outstanding efforts.

Remember the number one thing we do is **FORCE PROTECTION.**
"STAY SAFE"

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American, Turkish soldiers share tips

Story and photo by Sergeant Derrick Witherspoon
319th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

From Implementation Force to Stabilization Force, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization has been working to maintain peace in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The 1st Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Fire Support Team is working to help maintain this legacy, but in an entirely different way, as it invited Turkish soldiers to Camp Bedrock.

The 82nd FST recently conducted a joint fire support training exercise at Bedrock with a Turkish Artillery Brigade. The intent of the training was for the Turkish soldiers to get a better understanding of how the United States Army conducts fire support operations in support of Operation Joint Forge.

"Our primary mission was to show them how each link in the fire support chain works," said Captain Jeffrey C. Perry, Task Force fire support officer. "We had different stations set to represent areas in the fire support chain. Each station gave them an overview of how we conduct fire support missions," said the Tampa, Fla. native.

The Fire Support Team gave the Turkish Brigade an overview of what a fire support element does. They briefed them on close air support operations, fire support team equipment, and FST dismount procedures. The Turkish soldiers were also briefed on the operations of an Apache and a M1A1 Abrams tank.

Sergeant First Class Cedric B. Moore, Task Force fire support noncommissioned officer, said this exercise was just as educational for his soldiers as it was for the Turkish soldiers. "This type of training gives the soldiers an opportunity to work with other military forces," said the Huntsville, Ala. native. "This was a great moral booster for the soldiers because they got the chance to work with people from another country that perform the same job that they do."

Moore said working with Turkish soldiers was a huge stepping stone in furthering relations between their two armies. "We wanted to establish a good working relationship with the Turkish Brigade because we both share a common border. The Turkish Brigade borders our area of operation to the west. This is our first time

working with the Turkish soldiers and we hope this helps us maintain a good working environment when certain issues come up that may effect both of our areas of concern," he said.

The Turkish soldiers said they liked the exercise and the training they received. They said this type of training shows them how the American soldiers operate differently from themselves. The soldiers also said they definitely want to come back to train with the fire support team at Bedrock again and would like them to come to their site and train with them.

Perry said the FST would be honored to train with the Turkish Brigade at their operation site. "We are trying to work out a personnel exchange between our soldiers," Perry said. "What we want to do is bring some of the Turkish soldiers to Bedrock for a few days to train with us and in exchange send some of our soldier to their site to train with them for a few days."

Perry added that joint training exercises like this would better facilitate future joint missions that may occur. He said it also makes their joint operations in a peacekeeping and tactical environment better.

As the 82nd FST works to maintain an honorable legacy of peace in Multinational Division (North) it builds a peaceful working relationship with foreign countries, like Turkey, that will last a lifetime.



Soldiers from Camp Bedrock show Turkish soldiers how their equipment is different.

Bedrockready soldiers for winter

Story and photo by Sergeant Derrick Witherspoon
319th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

Winter is slowly making its way into Bosnia-Herzegovina, but 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment is training service members to be mentally and physically prepared to battle the "hawk" of winter.

The winter season in Multinational Division (North) is known to be harsh as it brings sleet, snow, ice and cold winds to the Balkans. Task Force 2-8 is gearing up for this winter by educating service members about maintaining themselves, their equipment and their living quarters to ensure everyone has a safe winter.

Sergeant First Class Gregory S. Harvey, Task Force 2-8 medical platoon sergeant, said that one of the most important things service members should remember to keep themselves safe this winter is the acronym "COLD".

"Each letter in the acronym "COLD" stands for something that can keep a service member from being injured by the cold this winter," said the Jacksonville, Fla. native.

Harvey said the "C" stands for cleanliness. Servicemembers need to make sure they keep their feet, socks, and clothing dry and clean. The "O" stands for overheating. Wearing too much clothing causes overheating, perspiration, dampness and cold-

ness, so servicemembers should make sure they dress for the weather. The "L" stands for layers and looseness. Wearing clothing in loose layers assures air space, which holds in body heat. Adjust the number of layers to the temperature and activity being done. Loose fitting clothing insures circulation and insulation. Lastly, the "D" stands for dampness. A wet uniform is a cold uniform. Wear the field jacket or extreme cold weather parka as a windbreaker and to repel water.

"Another way servicemembers can battle the cold is to stay properly hydrated, eat well and get rest," Harvey said. "Soldiers that spend a lot of time on guard duty with little sleep are more prone to cold weather injuries. They can prevent this by not smoking or drinking coffee. Basically, just staying away from anything that would reduce circulation in the fingers and toes."

Staff Sergeant Joseph J. Chrysler, Task Force 2-8 quality assurance and control noncommissioned officer in charge, said preventive maintenance checks and services on equipment in the winter is just as important as taking care of ones' self. "Soldiers need to make sure they perform a good (preventive maintenance check and service) on all their equipment, especially their vehicles," said the Valatie, N.Y. native. "Servicemembers need to make sure they go strictly by the vehicle manual to keep their vehicles in good shape this winter.

Camp Bedrock is beginning to winterize vehicles before winter truly sets in. This involves checking the antifreeze protection level so it's at the proper level, learning how to place snow chains on the vehicles, and checking the batteries to make sure they have the right level of electrolyte, which help keep the batteries from freezing."

Chrysler also said the air reserve tanks on vehicles should be checked to make sure they are drained and empty of water. Water left in the tanks can cause the water in the brake lines to freeze up, which can cause the brakes to freeze. He added that the heaters in vehicles should also be checked for proper operation and snow chains should always be used when driving in snow.

Task Force 2-8 is ensuring service members store winter survival gear in their vehicles in case they run into vehicle problems while on patrol. Servicemembers should have a shovel, sleeping bag, flash light, extra cold weather clothing, extra food, fuel, water, warning signs, and matches or a lighter in vehicles before going on patrol.

Servicemembers are also encouraged to keep safety in mind while in their living quarters this winter.

Sergeant Charles R. Oakes, Task Force 2-8 fire marshal, said servicemembers should remember to air out their tents and Southeast Asia huts although it is cold. "When weather permits servicemembers should open their doors and let some fresh air flow in," said the Cruger, Miss. native. "Anyone still using kerosene heaters, like Camp Bedrock, should take extra precautions."

Oakes said servicemembers using kerosene heaters should make sure to maintain a three-inch radius around the heater, refuel heaters outside the tent and allow proper ventilation in tents while heaters are in use. He also said servicemembers should not dry clothes or place objects on top of heater; they should keep heaters clean, never leave them on unattended and make sure to follow proper heater operation procedures.

The bottom line is soldiers should make sure they are prepared to battle the "hawk" this winter. If you prepare yourself now, you should be able to operate like it's still summer.



Specialist Jerry L. Futrell of Coutland, Va, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2-8 Cavalry, checks the snow chains on a HMMWV.

DFAC gives Thanksgiving a home feel

Story by Private First Class

Phillip E. Breedlove Jr.

Photos by Private First Class Louis Sardinha

22nd Mobile Public Affairs Det.

Many people in the United States are accustomed to spending Thanksgiving Day with their families and friends. Yet, soldiers deployed to Bosnia were unable to this year; instead, they are spending this traditional holiday with their units. In an effort to make soldiers feel at home, the Camp McGovern dining facility's soldiers and civilian employees gave McGovern troops a very large Thanksgiving Day lunch. This gave the camp's soldiers another reason to be thankful, said Sergeant Michael T. Jackson, the noncommissioned officer in charge of the dining facility section, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, and a Newton, Miss. native.

"Soldiers can't be home for the holidays, so we try to bring the home to them," Jackson continued. "We try to make the environment as much like the environment most soldiers had while growing up by bringing a touch or flavor of their mom's or dad's home dinners."

Jackson said preparation for the party began when rations were ordered before the division deployed to Bosnia. Later, local dining facility employees and the soldiers in Jackson's unit decided which decorations would be used, such as a live turkey.

The team created many displays with their own hands, Jackson continued, including several cakes with individual unit logos, and the life-sized, wooden pilgrims and Indians that greeted soldiers as they approached the dining facility.

While soldiers ate their meal, a local band played Bosnian



Camp McGovern soldiers enjoy their Thanksgiving Day lunch at the dining facility.

pop music and many American classics.

Another treat soldiers experienced this Thanksgiving was sitting at the same table as their unit, some eye to eye with their leaders, Jackson said. This brought individual units closer together and built morale and team pride. It also gave the leaders another chance to speak with their troops and spend quality time with them.

"Commanders were able to sit down and shoot the breeze with their soldiers and enjoy themselves. It was a day of sharing amongst soldiers and their leaders," he said.

The celebration included members from the local community and other Stabilization Force partners, Jackson said.

The dining facility team didn't limit the selection to just traditional American dishes served on Thanksgiving. Local Bosnian foods were also served to give soldiers a chance to try a different nation's food and to draw McGovern's local civilian employees into an American tradition. Among the dishes served were cevapi, a seasoned beef sausage, and burek, a meat and vegetable pie.

Jackson said the event was a lot of work to set up, but it was worth it. "We're going to do anything we can to make soldiers' stay here as enjoyable as we can."

Sergeant Jason T. Vigier, a Nuclear, Biological and Chemical NCO with Headquarters Platoon, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, and a Croix, Virgin Islands native, said it was obvious the dining facility team worked hard to set the mood. "Just them putting forth the effort makes you feel a little more homey. It gives soldiers a little something to look forward to. I'm thankful they can make us feel at home this holiday season."



Camp McGovern's static display sits before all the soldiers to view as they eat Thanksgiving Day lunch at the dining facility.

U.S., Danish tankers learn from one another

Story and photos by Staff Sergeant Pat Johnston
319th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

It seems that tankers will find tankers no matter where they are. "We had heard a rumor of tanks somewhere in the area of Tuzla at something called Bedrock," said Major Jim Dineson, Danish Commander of Charlie Squadron, Nordpol Brigade.

Sergeant First Class Christopher Geeding, Task Force 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, and master gunner, said the Swedish master gunner had met one of his division master gunners in Karlsruhe, Germany. That's how they heard about the Bedrock tank platoon.

Dineson, who is from Holstebro, Denmark, sent one of his master gunners on recon to find Bedrock.

Finally, after a couple visits back and forth, Geeding, a Blue Grass, Iowa native, set up the first meeting between 2nd Platoon, Charlie Squadron, Nordpol Brigade and 1st Platoon, Company D, Task Force 2-8.

The Danish tankers arrived early on November 20th after leaving their camp around 5:00 a.m. It wasn't a problem driving their Leopard 1A5s to Bedrock according to

Dineson. "When the locals are seeing us driving our tanks, they'll be more careful about their own driving because they know how they can be hurt," he said.

After breakfast, the tankers attended classes on their respective crew-served weapons. Soldiers of Company D demonstrated the disassembly and reassembly of the .50 caliber and M-240 machine gun; followed by the Charlie Squadron class for the American soldiers on their M-70 (60mm grenade launcher).

Staff Sergeant Troy Walker, of Columbia, S. C., tank commander of D-12, 1st platoon, Company D, 2-8 Cavalry, gave classes to the Danish soldiers on both the .50 caliber and the M-240. He showed them how to do a functions check, head-space and timing check and loading of the weapons. "They got real curious about it," he said. "They asked a lot of questions such as how many rounds can we fire, do we have to change barrels and the maximum range of the round."

After the classes on weapons, it was time to learn about each other's tanks. "After all," Dineson said, "That's why we're here."

Demonstrators took their places as tank crews swarmed into and over the other army's tanks.

American tank crews discussed "switchology" with their Danish counterparts. "Switchology" being what button does what inside the turret according to D-12 gunner, Corporal Ricardo Garcia. The Miami, Fla. Company D, 2-8 Cavalry tanker, said that the Leopard tanks have switches and toggles, unlike the new M1A2 Abrams back at Fort Hood that have push buttons and light emitting diode controls.

In addition to the usual questions about rounds and speed, Walker said, "They were most fascinated when I turned it (M1A1) on and I let them feel how hot it gets because they don't have a turbine engine like we do."

Kneeling on the roof of the M1A1, Danish tankers took turns holding a sabot round as their fellow soldiers took photos.

D-12 driver, Private Herbert Elliott, Company D, 2-8 Cavalry, said that Leopard driver Lance Corporal J. C. Pedersen, asked if there was a steering lock on the steering wheel and if the brakes were hand or foot controlled. Elliott, from Cameron, N. Y., said that he didn't realize that Pedersen was on his fifth rotation to Bosnia and had actually fired his tank in the Tuzla Area in 1994 during the war.



Staff Sergeant Troy Walker shows Danish soldiers how to operate the .50 caliber machine gun.



Leopard 1A5 tanks chase an M1A1 Abrams up the hill.

Another during cross-training exercise



er shows Danish soldiers
fiber machine gun.

That is one of the big differences between mechanized forces in the United States and some other countries. A U. S. tank driver, who was driving in 1992, would not still be a tank driver in 1998. He would have been promoted out of that position. "They have a lot better crew stability than we do," said Geeding. "But if we tried that, we'd hold people back from promotion and moving up in the ranks."

After a hurried lunch, and well before the scheduled time, the Danish and American tankers left the dining facility to go to their tanks.

Finally, it was time to mount up and ride.

Crews were mixed to include both Danish and American tankers.

The greatest difference noticed by all the tankers as they got into each other's tanks is the amount of room in the M1A1. "The first thing when they crawled into the hatch (of the M1A1), was "Wow, you have a lot space," Garcia said.

Led by a HMMWV, seven tanks, four Leopard 1A5s and three M1A1 Abrams, slowly rolled down the hill from Bedrock and out the track gate.

The tanks moved warily along as the new crews were getting the feel of the iron horses under their control.

Then, the HMMWV sped up. The M1A1 behind it picked up speed and was chased by six more tanks. Around the quarry course the tanks now broke from a lope into a gallop. Up hills, around turns and particularly on the down-straight-aways, the 42-ton Leopard and 57-ton M1A1 swept along the dirt roads.

At high speed, the M1A1 seemed to float. Garcia, who rode in the Leopard, said their diesel-driven tank was fast, but you constantly felt the gears changing which makes for a pretty rough ride.

A turbine engine, like the engine in the Apache helicopter, however, powers the M1A1. "We have a cruising speed, and once we hit that speed, the hydraulic kicks in and it's like driving a Cadillac," Garcia said.

There were a lot of smiling

faces dismounting from their own or someone else's tanks once back in Bedrock.

"For us to go out there and actually get on the tanks (Leopards), drive around the rock quarry, taking them out to their full speed was a great experience for us," Garcia said.

"Well, it's real agile because it only weighs 42 tons, so it can maneuver faster, but I'd rather stay in the A1 and A2 than get in a Leo," said Walker after driving the Leopard. Walker, a Desert Storm veteran, has also driven the Russian T72 tank and Russian BRDM armored-reconnaissance-vehicle while in Saudi Arabia.

Geeding knows that each army does things differently, and that everyone has pride in their own equipment, but he senses a bond between tankers from different countries. "There's a cohesion there," said Geeding. "We know what it's like, it's a hard life and we're all very hooah," explains Geeding.

Charlie Squadron, Nordpol Brigade and Company D, 2-8 Cavalry each have two more platoons that have not had the experience to ride in and drive each other's tanks. Dinesen wants to host the American tankers at his camp for a possible overnight stay with tanks and joint patrols. Geeding also wants to give his other two tank platoons the opportunity to train with their allies.

If they get that chance, they may agree with Elliott, who thought this exercise was very educational. "It's a great learning experience for me because I haven't been in very long." He smiles, "It helps me to see the world like I always wanted to do when I was growing up, now I'm getting a chance to do it."



Danish tankers are given a demonstration on the U.S. M1A1 tank.

Rocking the airwaves in "The Box"

Story and photo by Specialist Robert B. Valentine
319th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

The American Forces Network has started a new era for entertaining and informing troops in the Balkans. On Thanksgiving Day, AFN-Hungary in Tazar came back on the air, thus changing the name of AFN-Balkans here in Tuzla to AFN-Bosnia. Now the airwaves will be shared between AFN-Hungary and AFN-Bosnia, making it actually one radio station, known as "The Box."

AFN-Balkans was chosen to become a new regional command by the Army Broadcasting Service and will fall under AFN-Europe headquartered in Frankfurt, Germany. The command is responsible for all Armed Forces Radio and Television Service broadcast operations in Hungary, Croatia, Bosnia and Macedonia. AFN Central, a regional command for AFN Europe, took the name AFN Balkans, with Major Thomas Fisher in command. Hungary and Bosnia are now affiliates of AFN Balkans. In addition to this, permanently assigned personnel will soon begin to arrive, and state of the art digital video and audio systems will soon be in place. This will allow the stations to begin local TV command information and news operations, and automating more radio operations. In addition, a new AM/

FM tower will soon be transmitting two or more radio signals (AM and FM) and making the radio signals better and more accessible, reaching more people

"To many of the military members who come to this four-country theater of operation, the area is known as 'The Box,'" Chief Petty Officer Bill Johnson-Miles, station manager for AFN-Bosnia said. "Using 'The Box' as the name of our station gives our audience something they can relate to, something they can easily remember," the Portland, Ore. native said.

"This move increases the live airtime from ten hours up to 19," said Sergeant Eric A. Hendrix, an operations non-commissioned officer for AFN-Bosnia and Aurora, Colo. native. "This gives us more access for soldiers to play requested songs, and more access for commanders to put out command information."

"This is the great change. This gives us DJs more time to be on air," Specialist Shannon E. Nelson, a morning show DJ with AFN-Bosnia said. "The most coveted part of broadcasting is airtime. This move will increase competition and thus improve the quality of each show."

"Each DJ wants to be better than the last show, and get the most positive phone calls," the Sierra Vista, Ariz. native said.

AFN Balkans broadcasts to more than 10,000 troops at more than 20 base camps across four different countries, Bosnia, Croatia, Hungary and Macedonia.

"We provide the television signal to AFN-Europe and AFRTS, and one or more FM radio signals, depending where you are in The Box. AFN-Europe and AFRTS also provide the programming for the radio stations except for most of The Box," Johnson-Miles said. They include a "Top 40" music format show weekdays 5:00-9:00 a.m., a country music format show weekdays 9:00-11:00 a.m., an "All Request" show weekdays 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., another "Top 40" music format show weekdays 1:00-5:00 p.m., a Classic Rock format show weekdays 5:00-7:00 p.m., an Alternative/New Rock format show weekdays 7:00-9:00 p.m., an Urban/R&B/Hip Hop/Rap format show weekdays 9:00 p.m.-12:00 a.m., an "All Request" show Saturdays 8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. and another "All Request" show Sundays 8:00-11:00 a.m. The Box will also continue to produce local spots and readers, and a daily five-minute local newscast aired at the bottom of the hour during their live shows weekdays. On the weekends, AFN-Bosnia airs a seven to eight minute week-in-review newscast at the bottom of every hour during the weekends live show.

The Box's primary listening and viewing audience includes soldiers, airmen, sailors and Marines who make up the 10,000 troops. It also includes civilian employees, our NATO allies and local nationals who pick up the signal. The station is also a tool to get information out for commanders, their public affairs offices and service organizations such as Morale, Welfare and Recreation and the Red Cross, Johnson-Miles said.

"We're American radio for the American Peacekeepers, spreading the word to those who keep the peace. We're here to keep you in the know and to keep your spirits high," Johnson-Miles said.



Specialist Dan Hendricks, a DJ for AFN-Bosnia, listens to a caller during a morning broadcast show.

Armor NCOs take part in Spur Ride

Story and photos by
Specialist Kimmanda Collins
319th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

Basic training may have been the most grueling and intense training for newly enlisted soldiers in the Army. Often times, soldiers that have been in the Army for a while forget what it took for them to make it through one of the most physically and mentally trying times of their life. Who ever said that after basic training the physical and mental intensity stops?

It certainly didn't stop for soldiers of Company B, 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment. These tankers recently took the most teeth gritting, eye-popping, tear-jerking Spur Ride of their military careers. The Spur Ride is the summit of the leader certification program. It is an opportunity for officers and non-commissioned officers to demonstrate their proficiency as cavalymen and provides a final check of the trooper and unit-training program.

The Spur Ride is a meticulous training event encompassing all of the core requirements, and is the final step to become a spur holder. The event consisted of several phases that soldiers were required to complete in order to become a spur holder.

Among the phases that were to be completed, the Army Physical Fitness Test was just one of many that tested the physical aptitude of each soldier.



Company B, 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry soldiers demonstrate an act of teamwork during the Spur Ride. When one soldier is dropped for pushups, the whole platoon gets down with him.

"This was the most intense 24 hours of my life. Although it was extremely difficult, I had fun through it all," said Sergeant Domingo Rivera, a Dunkirk, N.Y. native and tanker with Company B, 2-8 Cav. "This experience has definitely made me mentally and physically stronger. It also teaches you about teamwork because every event involved a team effort and it couldn't have been completed without it." Leadership skills were unquestionably put into effect during this event.

Although the spur candidates held no rank during the exercise, when it was time for planning, plotting, and formulating strategies, each candidate's ideas were acceptable with every team member. "I think the whole thing was about team work and self-confidence.

Everybody was pushed to the limit and almost to a breaking point, but to me it was really a test of your mental capabilities and to see what kind of leadership qualities you possessed as a NCO and an officer, Rivers said.

"I know I pushed myself farther than I thought I could go and I'm proud of that," said Sergeant Jagnarine Kanhai, a tanker from the Bronx.

For each of the fifteen soldiers, the Spur Ride will be one of those experiences in their life that can never be duplicated. "I will never forget this experience because I'm still sore from it," groaned Sergeant Dominique Jones, a tanker and Monroe, La. native "It was all a mind game and I won."



Sergeant Domingo Rivera yells the company's motto during the Spur Ride exercise.

Cavalry traditions alive at McGovern



Task Force 1-8 Cavalry commander, Lieutenant Colonel Mike Ryan, a New York City native, stands with incoming Company C commander, Captain Christopher Norrie during a traditional cavalry change of command ceremony at Camp McGovern.

Story by Specialist Bryan Cox
Photos by Private First Class Louis Sardinha
22nd Mobile Public Affairs Det.

Although the days of cowboys riding horses into battle are long over, the spirit of this piece of American history is alive and well in the 1st Cavalry Division. While deployed to Bosnia, the tradition lives on with the symbolic Stetson cowboy hats and cavalry music played daily around Camp McGovern. Captain Christopher Norrie, commander of Company C, 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment at McGovern, and Winamac, Wis. native, recently took command of his company in a traditional cavalry ceremony held at the camp.

Although a common occurrence at Fort Hood, it was the first company level change of command in Bosnia for McGovern's 1st Cavalry soldiers so the soldiers wanted to make it special. They held a task force formation, brought in the division band and gathered horses to stand by in the formation. Norrie said the ceremony's elaborate nature helps build morale and esprit de corps among soldiers and reminds them of their responsibility to uphold the cavalry standard.

"The horses mean something. The Stetsons, they're all very special to us and we rally around them. Any of my soldiers can proudly say 'I'm in the Cav,' and be proud of that," he said.

In addition to carrying on tradition, the change of command gave locals in the communities surrounding McGovern the chance to show how appreciative they are to the Stabili-

zation Force mission in Bosnia. The camp's leadership began looking for horses to use in the ceremony by calling local Bosnian leaders and quickly found people eager to help, said Sergeant First Class Walter Riddick, a Little Rock, Ark. native and noncommissioned officer in charge of the 358th Civil Affairs Battalion at McGovern.

"The locals were very enthusiastic about helping. The mayor's office came through quickly and provided us the horses free of charge," Riddick said.

Despite cold temperatures and the first snowfall of the season, the ceremony went off without a hitch. Soldiers stood steadfast in formation while the unit guidon passed from old commander to new as cold snow fell upon the troops. Staff Sergeant Timothy Robinson of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Cavalry Division, and a Copperas Cove, Texas native, rode one of the donated horses during the ceremony and thought it was a great experience.

"It was a big honor. People were stopping, yanking out cameras and taking photos. You don't get to ride horseback everyday and to do it in Bosnia especially made it a lot of fun," Robinson said. "It's part of tradition."

The legacy left by the American horse cavalry serves as a present day reminder to where they've been and also provides a common bond as they charge towards the future, preserving the peace in Bosnia. "All these traditions mean something. I'm just glad to be a part of it," Norrie said.



Captain Christopher Norrie sits on a horse donated by local citizens for use in a traditional cavalry change of command ceremony held at Camp McGovern.

Russian soldiers receive religious rights

Story and photo by
Alexander Svitsov and First Lieutenant Stepkine
Saint Alexander Nevsky Abbot, Russian Bri-
gade

Every Christian country's armed forces have an institution of chaplains who provide spiritual education for servicemen and conduct religious services.

Ten years ago nobody believed in the Soviet Army spiritual revival; yet, since that time everything has changed greatly. After the adoption of the liberty of conscience law and the signing of the joint resolution in cooperation between the Ministry of Defense and the Russian Orthodox Church, army Christians began to rebuild military churches, organize divine services on the territory of military bases and conduct spiritual education for servicemen.

Construction of the church on the territory of the Russian Brigade Headquarters in Bosnia is a sign of Russia's revival. The chapel was built by Russian soldiers and Serbs from Ugljevik and jointly blessed by Savva, a bishop from Moscow and Basil, the Bishop of Zvornik and Tuzla.

The church is named after Saint Duke Alexander Nevsky who became a national hero after defeating German and Swedish occupants while they were trying to invade Russia's northern lands in 1240 and 1242. He was a great warrior, diplomat and the Motherlands defender. Just before his death, he took monastic vows.

Colonel Iskrenko, the former Russian Brigade commander, considered that spiritual life was very important for soldiers and officers, especially during the fulfilling of peacekeeping tasks abroad, and that is why the church construction was completed quickly.

Half a year after its completion, a beautiful white-stone belfry was built next to it. Later, I. Zaretelly, a famous Russian architect, presented some bronze icons to the church. At present, the Russians are awaiting two artists from Moscow who will come to paint icons for the iconostasis.

The brigade's personnel change with every rotation but the tradition of celebrating religious feasts does not. Soldiers from the other Russian camps in Bosnia come to Ugljevik to attend divine services.

Not only Russian servicemen come to the church. There are some American orthodox officers who receive communion there. One of them is named Alexander, carrying the name of our patron Saint.

Russian Brigade and Russian servicemen spiritual lives go hand in hand. We have joint divine services and go on pilgrimages to different monasteries together with Serb priests. There are a lot of Holy ancient places in Bosnia, which are interesting for every Christian.

Revival of the Russian Army spiritual life attracts quite a lot of attention, not only from fraternal Serb people but also from Stabilization Force member countries. The joint divine services, recently conducted with the Swedish battalion chaplain after the joint Russian and Swedish mili-



A Russian soldier visits a church in Moscow. More soldiers than ever are starting to visit the Christian church after many believed that soldiers didn't need the services of God.

tary exercises, are a good example of that.

Sincere and respectful treatment of different faiths and the participation of both Russian and Swedish commanders in the service created a relaxed atmosphere and open communication between each other.

In the ancient monastery in Ozranje, we had a joint liturgy, during which the soldiers composed a choir. Both commanders and their subordinates confessed and received communion. At the end of the divine service a sermon in four languages, Russian, Serbian, English and Swedish, was conducted. It was held by the Serbian Abbot (celibate priest Grigory), Swedish chaplain Peter Hartwig and Saint Alexander Nevsky church Abbot Alexander Svitsov.

After all those events, there was and still is a strong feeling of Christian brotherhood, and irrespective of confessional differences, the Gospel is equal for all.

Shooting with the Russian Brigade



U.S. Cavalrymen and Russian soldiers from the Russian Airborne Brigade gather at Camp McGovern's Gettysburg Range while a Russian soldier gets a chance to fire an M-16A2 rifle during a joint Russian live fire.

Story and photo by Private First Class Louis Sardinha
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Gunshots ring throughout the countryside while soldiers gather to practice firing their weapons. The clamor of bullets zinging down range leaves the ears of the onlookers ringing. Amidst the sulfurous smells and flying shells, a grinning Russian soldier lifts his head from behind an American M-60 machine gun and smiles at what is left of his target.

The soldiers of 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment conducted a joint live fire at Camp McGovern's Gettysburg Range. The exercise continues good relations with the Russian Airborne Brigade out of Camp Ugljevik and allows U.S. soldiers the opportunity to familiarize and fire Russian weapons systems. "It also fostered team building with the soldiers from the Russian Airborne Brigade by allowing them the opportunity to fire U.S. weapons," said Staff Sergeant Lawrence Marcus, of Grable, Wyo., the master gunner of Company A, 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment.

The joint live fire was the inauguration of Gettysburg Range, after being remodeled the month prior by Headquarters Platoon. "It was really quite nice to have the Russians out there shooting the first day the range opened," Marcus said.

The live fire familiarized the U.S. soldiers with the way Russian weapons work as well as gave the Russians the chance to actually see how an American range is organized and set up, according to Michael A. Keser, of Ontario, Calif., a mechanized infantryman with Headquarters Platoon, Company A, 2-5 Cav.

Marcus said it's important to train with them because "we're

all part of Stabilization Force and if anything happens here, we'll know how to work with each other. It builds camaraderie between our countries."

According to Marcus, once everyone was comfortable, things went wonderfully. "They asked a lot of questions about our weapons, and we asked a lot about their weapons, too," Marcus said.

The U.S. soldiers were impressed by their Russian partners. Everyone was glad to be taking part in the live fire "They were very organized and it was cool because as we were watching people fire, the U.S. soldiers would just mix in with the Russian soldiers," Keser said.

Both Russian and McGovern soldiers enjoyed themselves whenever they got their chance to fire. "I actually got to fire some weapons I never thought I would ever fire before," Keser said. "We even had a little competition afterwards to see how they shoot."

Sergeant David W. Flipse, of Kalamazoo, Mich., a mechanized infantryman with 1st Platoon, Company A, 2-5 Cavalry said he had a great time on the range. In fact he hopes to do it again sometime. "I think pretty much everyone that was out there had a good time," he stated. "It was more fun than anything to be able to shoot weapons from different countries and just interacting with our neighbors."

Flipse said even though the McGovern and Russian soldiers are all from different backgrounds and countries, a soldier is a soldier, no matter where they're from.

By having a joint live fire with fellow SFOR members, it opens the doors to new friendships and closer working relationships. "It's good to get out there and interact with our neighbors. I thought it was the best part of the whole experience," Flipse said.