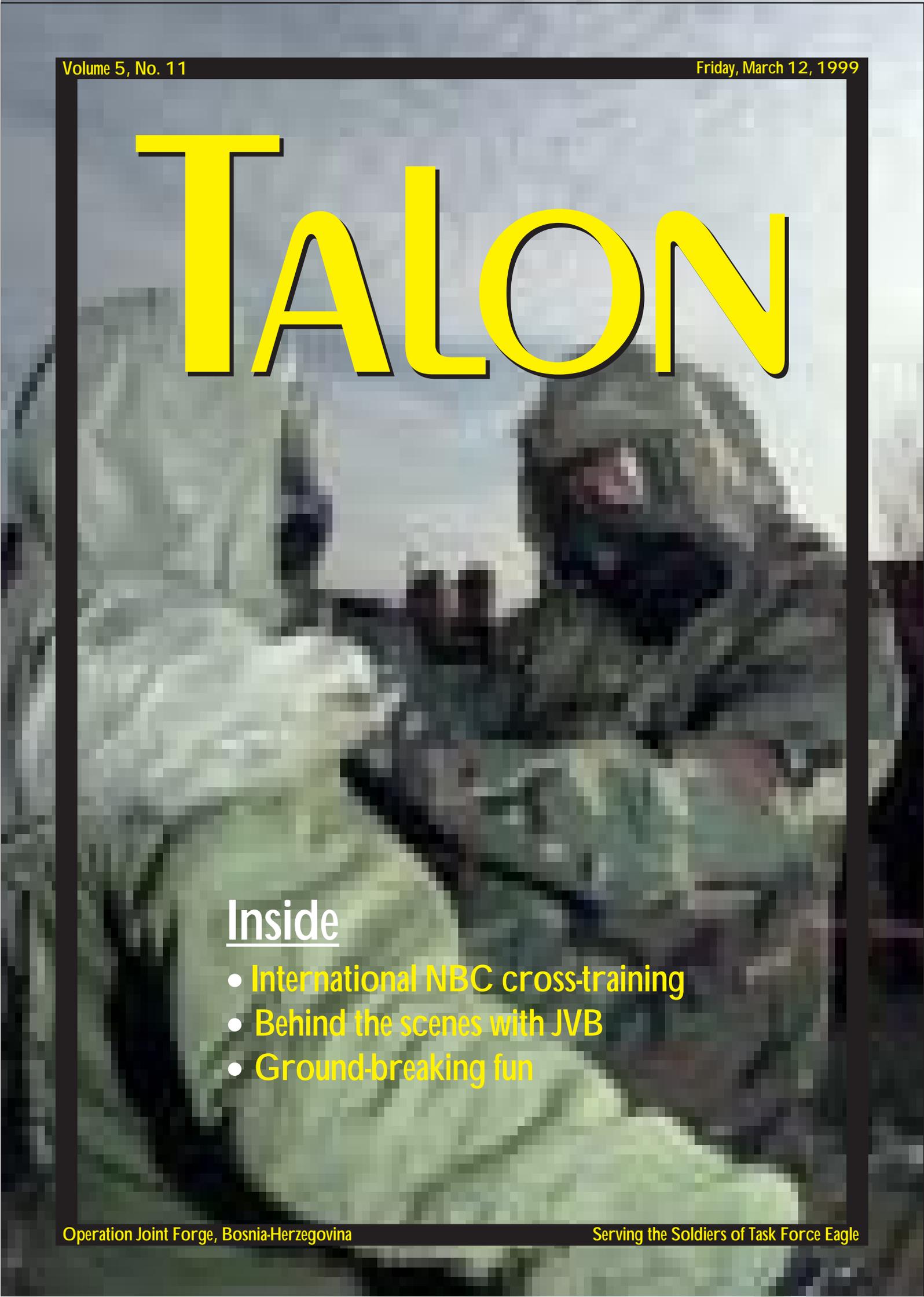


TALON



Inside

- International NBC cross-training
- Behind the scenes with JVB
- Ground-breaking fun

Talon

Inside



Sweet rewards 5
Coins in Bosnia



Learning culture 8
Black History Month in Bosnia



Future pluses 11
New gym in Dobol

Contents

UpFront

Up Front 2
 Welcome back
 Camp closure 3
 So long Bedrock
 Soldiers give back 4
 PSB works with kids
 International cross-training 6-7
 NBC training with different countries
 Behind the scenes with JVB 8
 Touring the base camps
 Keeping fit 10
 McGovern works out
 Ground-breaking fun 12
 Playground creation

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



Hello to all of Multinational Division (North). It is good to be back with you. From the minute I got off the plane with a group of 2nd BCT soldiers, without exception I have seen great changes and each and every one of you doing the same great jobs you were doing when I departed. Here are some of the vast improvements. The much needed 1.1-mile, lit running track at Eagle Base is now open. The Triggers Club is up and going great and my hat is off to the Seabees for the outstanding work they did in that facility. The Fitness Center is well equipped and a place where soldiers can be proud to train. All the SEA huts are complete; some need painting on the outside, and that will occur as the weather gets better. It makes me very proud to see all the improvements, and that you are taking care of them so they can be enjoyed by the many soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines who will follow us.

We are right in the middle of the Transition of Authority between 1st BCT and 2nd BCT. This is a very critical time for everyone.

To 1st BCT soldiers, don't let your guard down. Remember from day one we have all agreed not to become complacent, that everyone would treat each day as if it were the first day in Bosnia. It is our duty and responsibility to train 2nd BCT to take the reins. Teach them everything you have learned while you have been here. Don't take any details for granted; the success of these soldiers depends in large on how well you train them. Best of luck as you begin returning to your home duty stations, and thank you for a job well done.

To 2nd BCT, I charge you with the responsibility of getting every piece of information you can from 1st BCT. The only dumb question is the one you did not ask. Remember the number one thing we do is **FORCE PROTECTION**. **"STAY SAFE"**

On the Cover

Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment demonstrate Mission Oriented Protective Posture gear exchange during a joint Nuclear, Biological, and Chemical exercise at Camp McGovern. (Photo by Private First Class Louis Sardinha, 22nd Mobile Public Affairs Det. See story on page 6-7.)

"With malice towards none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right." – Abraham Lincoln

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 Brigades assigned to Task Force Eagle, as well as U.S. soldiers stationed in Bosnia.

THE TALON is produced in the interest of the servicemembers of Task Force Eagle. THE TALON is an Army-funded newspaper authorized for members of the U.S. Army overseas, under the provision of AR 360-81. Contents of THE TALON are not necessarily the official views of, nor endorsed by, the U.S. Government, Department of Defense, Department of the Army or Task Force Eagle.

THE TALON is published weekly by the 1st Cavalry Division (Task Force Eagle) Public Affairs Office, Eagle Base, Tuzla, Bosnia-Herzegovina APO AE 09789, Telephone MSE 551-5230, Sprint 762-5233.

E-mail: talon@emailtc3.5sigcmd.army.mil. Visit the Talon and other Bosnia-Herzegovina related items from the TFE homepage: www.tfeagle.army.mil. Printed by PrintComTuzla. Circulation: 5,500.

Task Force Eagle Commander	Major General Kevin P. Byrnes
Editor in Chief	Major Tom Evans
OIC	Captain Randall L. Harris
Chief Editor	Staff Sergeant Scott Speed
Managing Editor	Specialist Jason Shepherd
Assistant Editor	Sergeant Lisa Ward
Layout and Design Editor	Private First Class Nicole Alberico
TFE Webmaster	Specialist Lloyd Phelps

Soldiers will miss "the Rock"

Story and photo by Camp Bedrock's
Sergeant Derrick Witherspoon
319th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

All good things must come to an end, but soldiers at Camp Bedrock said that although the base camp is coming to an end, the memories and good times they shared there will live on long after the red and white gates of Bedrock close.

Camp Bedrock, or "The Rock" as many soldiers have called it over the years, is scheduled to close on March 17. The 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment is working to make sure the base closure goes as smooth as possible, but many of the soldiers here said they hate to see such a well established base camp close.

Specialist Dale Horn of Ft. Walton Beach, Fla., and a member of Company C, 121st Field Artillery Battalion, said he feels Bedrock was the best camp in Bosnia.

"We are the best camp!" Horn said. "We have had the least amount of accidents, and you can tell that we are proud of Bedrock by how we maintain our areas of operation and how we salute our officers with pride. I have learned a lot since I've been here. This is my first deployment in the Army and I know it won't be my last. I'm proud that I was one of the last soldiers stationed on "The Rock."

Specialist Yolanda M. Walker of Newport News, Va., Company B, 115th Forward Support Battalion, said living and working with the soldiers at Bedrock was like being with family.

"Considering Bedrock is small, it helped you get close to a lot of people, and that made everyone feel like family here, not like the other base camps where you got a lot of other units. So the size of the camp made it easy to get to know people individually here," Walker said. "What I enjoyed the most was interacting with the kids when they came to Bedrock for a visit. That was nice, because the kids here are somewhat like the kids in the states. There's just some small differences like their language and stuff like that, but they reminded me of my son, who I can't wait to get home to."

Corporal Ricardo Garcia of Miami, Company D, Task Force 2-8, said he thinks Bedrock was an integral part of the peacekeeping mission.

"I think we were an important part of Operation Joint Forge, because here at Bedrock our area of responsibility was maintaining peace within the Tuzla valley. This was important because Tuzla is the largest area in the sector," Garcia said. "Although I enjoyed my time here, I am looking forward to going home and spending some time with my wife and our new born son, Justin Anthony Garcia."

Garcia added that he supports the peacekeeping mission here in Bosnia 100 percent. "I thought our mission here was great. It's kind of different when you see things on television. You see other countries having problems and you don't really catch it as a reality until you are actually there and you have little kids coming up to you from displaced persons centers and asking you for lunch packets and (Meals Ready to Eat). It's personally important to me because I'm glad my son is coming up in a great country



Bosnian Brown and Root workers slowly tear down sections of Camp Bedrock.

like the United States, and I'm trying to help the local children here feel the same about Bosnia."

Many of the local and American civilian workers said they enjoyed their time at Bedrock, and the interaction they had with the soldiers of Task Force 2-8.

Mirzet Muminovic of the Town of Zivinici, a local Brown and Root employee, said they are thankful for what the soldiers have done for them and their country.

"We think the soldiers here have done a great job keeping peace in Bosnia. What they are doing here is very important for our future. A couple of years ago Bosnia was not as calm as it is today. The past soldiers and the ones here now have helped to make this happen," Muminovic said. "We are going to miss Bedrock once it leaves, not just because we are unsure of what we are going to do once our jobs are gone, but because we have made some great friends here that we are going to miss."

Mirza Esendic, a Bosnian interpreter for Task Force 2-8, said he and the other interpreters feel sorry that Bedrock is closing.

"The soldiers here did an excellent job helping to keep the peace here in Bosnia. They not only took care of themselves, but they took pride in helping the displaced people in the area. That alone says a lot about them. We will miss them and Bedrock," Esendic said.

Michael S. Freeman of Chesterfield, Va., a Lockheed Martin employee, said he enjoyed his time at Bedrock and from what he has seen the soldiers here play a major role with implementing the peacekeeping mission.

"I have been here a little over a year, and I have seen an overwhelming change in this area over the short period of time that I have been here," Freeman said. "As a civilian I would like all Americans to know that the soldiers here are doing a great job in this country, and everyone in the U.S. should welcome these soldiers back home with open arms."

So, although all good things must come to an end, as any Bedrock soldier would say, good places such as Bedrock do not just go away, but are kept alive by the memories of people and soldiers like the ones in Task Force 2-8.

Troopsexperienced local camp visit



Major Kimberly Mondonedo, the executive officer for the 15th PSB, visits with the children of Jezevac.

Story and photos by Eagle Base's
Specialist Robert B. Valentine
319th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

Eagle Base soldiers with the 15th Personnel Services Battalion, III Corps, recently paid a visit to the Jezevac Camp. They went to provide some aid and hope for the displaced people there from Srebrenica, Bratunac, Zvornik and Vlasenica. They went especially for the children.

Soldiers and family members of the 15th PSB collected boxes of clothes, food and school supplies for the drop-off.

When their HMMWVs, loaded with boxes of goods, arrived at the camp, children enthusiastically escorted the convoy as the soldiers drove through the grounds. The soldiers stopped at the main building, and the children anxiously crowded around the vehicles to meet the soldiers and of course to receive candy. The parents and other adults came out of their houses to see what was the cause of all the commotion.

1st Lieutenant Lara Morgan, a Task Force 15th Postal Company officer, was the convoy commander for the visit. The camp director had scheduled to meet with her, and organize the distribution of the goods. Unfortunately, the camp director was ill and in another town.

Because not everyone can receive a box of clothes or food, the director allots the boxes by a list, and gives out boxes to a head member of each family. If a certain family did not receive a box during one delivery, they go to the top of the list for the next. Since the director was not present, there was no way to determine who was supposed to receive boxes first. So the soldiers had to store the boxes in the main building for later distribution, when the director would be able to give out the aid fairly.

"It was a good trip, but it could have gone better," Morgan said. "It would have been nice to see the children's faces actually

receive the clothes and food, not just candy," said the Tallahassee, Fla. native.

The Jezevac Camp, founded in 1994, contains 525 people, including 191 families (110 single woman with children). There are 171 children in the camp.

"The children were aggressive," Linda Kostovski, a Bosnian interpreter said. "They wanted to reach out and grab something, anything that they never had before, like the sodas and the chocolates." For Kostovski, a Crown Point, Ind. native, it was her first visit to a camp. "Their living conditions made me sad. Some of the older people were very sick (and did not have much medical care)," she said.

It was also the first time for Specialist Maxine Barela, a mechanic with the 15th PSB, to visit Jezevac camp. "It felt good to help the kids," said the Las Cruces N.M. native. "It was a little scary because the kids were jumping all over us. I wanted to help more, but there is only so much you can do."

"I would go back again if I could," Barela said.

"The children were so starved for help," said Tina Daji, an interpreter. "When we first came, they were so happy because they knew we were going to bring them something. When we're not able to give the supplies right away, some were disappointed," the Carlsbad Calif. native said.

"They did not understand that they will get the supplies later when the director returns. I remember hearing their parents call out to their children to let us go, but they would not listen."

As the soldiers got into their vehicles to leave, most could not help but feel that the mission was incomplete. Children clamored over each other to get to the soldiers, vying for the last little bit of attention from them and perhaps for an overlooked piece of candy in their pockets. They pressed their faces and banged their hands on the doors of the HMMWVs as the convoy slowly rolled away from the camp.



Children from the Jezevac Camp leap over a fence to quickly get to the soldiers who were giving away candy.

Mark for success

Coins; rewards for excellent work

Story and photos by Camp Bedrock's
Staff Sergeant Pat Johnston
319th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

Some soldiers will take home a special souvenir from their deployment in Bosnia. It's small, distinctive, unbreakable and everyone wants one. And even though they are free, not everyone will get one. It's a commander's coin.

It's impossible to count the number of different commander's coins that are presented to soldiers in Multi-national Division (North), because coins are presented by visiting commanders and allied commanders as well as unit, battalion, brigade and corps level commanders.

Presenting and receiving coins is a memorable experience. Major General Kevin P. Byrnes, 1st Cavalry Division commander, said that he gets a feeling of pride when awarding his coin to an outstanding soldier. "I don't give them away lightly," Byrnes said.

Along with all the other soldiers interviewed, Byrnes remembers the first coin he received. "I was in the 3rd Armored Division in 1981 serving as Battalion S-3," Byrnes said. "Commanding General Ulmer visited. We gave him a couple of briefings. At the end, he pulled this little coin out of his pocket and gave it to me. I've still got it. I'm very proud of it," Byrnes said with a wide smile.

Coins are given to individual soldiers in recognition of accomplishment, achievement or merit. Sergeant Jamaul Grayson, Company D, 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, received his second coin in Bosnia when his reenlistment was observed by the 3rd Corps Commander, Lieutenant General Leon LaPorte. "It felt good getting the coin," said Grayson, who will add this special memento to his Bosnia scrapbook.

Staff Sergeant William Pitre with Company C, 13th Signal Battalion, has a coin from General Dennis J. Reimer, Army Chief of Staff, who reenlisted Pitre and one other soldier at Eagle Base on Christmas Eve. After the ceremony, he handed Pitre his coin.

Pitre is already thinking of how to top his third reenlistment. The first one was a dress-up occasion in front of a famous post statue at Fort Ord; the second was on horseback with Cavalry



Lieutenant General Leon LaPorte, III Armored Corps commander, shakes the hand of Sergeant Jamaul Grayson, Company D, Task Force 2-8, as he presents him with a coin after Grayson's reenlistment.



Stetsons. And the third, of course, was being reenlisted by the Army Chief of Staff in Bosnia.

Master Sergeant Gary Lawrence of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Task Force 2-8, designed the Task Force 2-8 coin that came available in January. The coin is the size of an Eisenhower dollar. It has a white charging stallion with the regimental motto on the front. On the back are campaign names and crossed sabers.

Lawrence said that his favorite coin from Bosnia is the one he was presented by the two-star Canadian general, deputy corps commander for the 3rd Armored Corps. Lawrence served with him in Haiti during Operation Uphold Democracy.

Lawrence's first coin was from then Colonel Waldo D. Freeman, 2nd Brigade commander, 3rd Armored Division. His scout squad received a 100 percent rating on their unit evaluation at Grafenwohr. "We were all presented a brigade coin," the operations officer, from Alzenau, Germany, said.

Specialist Brian Richmond, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Task Force 2-8, and chaplain's assistant at Bedrock, has three chaplain coins. The Atlanta native points to the purple enamel on Major General Shea's coin while explaining that only chaplains have purple instead of red on their coins.

The commander's coins of Bosnia will become treasured mementos for soldiers of Operation Joint Forge.

International NBC training event

Story and photos by Camp McGovern's
Private First Class Louis Sardinha
22nd Mobile Public Affairs Det.

Many countries combine their efforts to influence peace and stability throughout Bosnia. Through events such as Nuclear, Biological, and Chemical training, Stabilization Forces continue to study the way fellow peacekeepers of different countries operate, and gives everyone a chance to learn about these important operations, said 1st Lieutenant John R. Pendleton of Tempe, Ariz., the 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment chemical officer.

Seven countries participated in NBC training hosted by Americans at Camp McGovern. U.S. troops participated along with Rus-

sian, Danish, Turkish, Swedish, Finish, Polish, and Norwegian chemical soldiers in a joint static display of NBC defense equipment. U.S. soldiers also held a decontamination exercise demonstrated by soldiers from Camp Bedrock.

Pendleton coordinated the exercise so participating nations could share ideas, equipment and methods pertaining to NBC defense, but it also gave them the opportunity to expand on their alliance while peacekeeping in Bosnia. "This is the first time these countries have ever conducted NBC training together," he said. "It was an unprecedented event. All the participating nations were able to learn a great deal from each other."

During the first half of the day, McGovern soldiers from Task Force 1-8 displayed and explained their NBC equipment, said Pendleton. They conducted informative classes on each piece of apparatus. After the classes were completed, each participating country had the opportunity to display their own NBC gear.

McGovern soldiers demonstrated military NBC readiness, said Private First Class Rene O. Reyna, of Houston, the chemical operations specialist for Company A, 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment. "It was an excellent chance for the soldiers to



Soldiers from
demonstra
gear excha
Chemical e

at McGovern

demonstrate their proficiency in NBC operations," he said.

This display and demonstration helped each country realize how similar they are to each other, said Staff Sergeant Joel R. Laskey, of Rochester, N.H., the NBC noncommissioned officer in charge for 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment. "On a personal and professional level, we have a lot in common with them," he said.

After a brief lunch, the multinational forces converged to observe the U.S. soldiers perform an operational decontamination demonstration, said Private First Class Robert D. Feres, of Huntsville, Ala., the chemical operations specialist for Company A, 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment. The demonstration consisted of a vehicle wash down to simulate cleansing vehicles of contamination. It also involved a Mission Oriented Protective Posture gear exchange where soldiers traded out simulated contaminated protective suits for clean garments.

At the end of the day, the participating units were presented with certificates for their participation in the event, said Reyna.

American and Allied soldiers continue to work together on their peacekeeping mission in Bosnia. Having a joint NBC display and demonstration with fellow Stabilization Force members opens the door to create a closer working relationship, said Laskey. "It was a great way to get our soldiers to learn and interact with our allies," he said.



Specialist Shane Linnell Jr., of Crosby, Texas, the Headquarters and Headquarters Company Nuclear, Biological, and Chemical noncommissioned officer in charge from 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment demonstrates the M-295 Personal Decontamination Kit during a joint NBC display at Camp McGovern.



om 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment te a Mission Oriented Protective Posture nge during a joint Nuclear, Biological, and xercise.



Private First Class Mawuenam Olympio, of Lome-Togo, West Africa, the NBC noncommissioned officer in charge for Company B, 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, explains how the AN-VDR2 Radiac meter works to soldiers from the Danish Battalion out of Camp Valhalla during a joint NBC display.

Learning about culture



General Johnnie E. Wilson

Story and photo by Eagle Base's Specialist Natalie Haslem
319th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

The Multinational Division (North) and Eagle Base held its African American Heritage Month Observance ceremony commemorating the many contributions of Africans and African-Americans to the making of America.

This year's theme, "The Legacy of African American Leadership for the Present and Future" captured the great inventions,

MND (N) celebrates

work, courage and dedication of prominent African Americans of yesterday and today.

The theme invited an examination of the rich legacy of African American leadership in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Individuals such as Frederick Douglass, W.E.B. DuBois, Booker T. Washington, Shirley Chisholm, Thurgood Marshall, retired General Colin Powell and former commanding general for Operation Joint Guard, Major General Larry R. Ellis, exemplify the great spirit of leadership.

Every political figure from Frederick Douglass to Maxine Waters, to today's Hazel Johnson, the first black female general in the history of the U.S. military, and the many African-American congressmen of both centuries, gives clear testimony of the search for political and social equality for all Americans.

As African-Americans embrace the twenty-first century, they pause to celebrate the triumphs of the past, the challenge of the present and hope for the future.

"Today we are celebrating our rich culture. We are celebrating Black History Month not because it is something that is mandated but because it is right and just," said General Johnnie E. Wilson, U.S. Army Materiel Command, commanding general.

Wilson delivered an inspiring message to task force soldiers, telling them to excel in their duties and exemplify the seven values expected of every American soldier. "I applaud you," he praised soldiers, "for your dedication to duty and selfless service. You represent all that is great about America."

"Be all you can be," Wilson said, encouraging all task force soldiers to aim high despite race, sex, ethnic background or color. Wilson cited himself, a "poor child out of the projects," and now a respected general at the Pentagon, as an example of the opportunity present for all races in America's army. "You will not find an institution with the commitment that America's Army has toward ensuring that we all have an equal opportunity.

"All of America's children deserve our total commitment to building a nation that is sensitive to all, and free from harassment and discrimination.

"I say to each of you, it doesn't matter if you are male or female, Black, White or Hispanic: be proud of who you are. Be proud of what you are. Be proud of our Army. Be proud of our America," Wilson said.

JVB plans and coordinates visits

Story by Eagle Base's Sergeant First Class Donald R. Dunn II
319th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

When VIPs come calling, the Joint Visitors Bureau launches into action. The JVB is responsible for planning, coordinating and executing missions involving visits by U.S., NATO, political and distinguished military visitors of general officer rank and civilian equivalents.

They also make plans and coordinate the support requirements for these visits and, serve as the primary staff element for the incoming visitors.

Their office is the central point of contact for all other staffs to include: Army, Air Force, United States Army Europe, Euro-

pean Command executive services division and JVB Stabilization Force.

"We not only handle visits, we also coordinate and provide logistical support for all lodging and transportation (air and ground). We process the country clearances for colonels and below," said Lieutenant Colonel Michael Lunn, the chief of the Joint Visitors Bureau, 1st Cavalry Division and a resident of Lewiston, Maine.

"If you plan to come to this area, the first person you have to convince is my clearance noncommissioned officer," said Sergeant First Class Bruce Robertson, a resident of Stratham, N.H. "He makes recommendations, and if you can't convince him, you can forget about it."

See JVB next page

Black History Month

Wilson also commended the peacekeeping mission and outstanding leadership exhibited by the 1st Cavalry Division commanded by the Multinational Division (North) commander, Major General Kevin P. Byrnes.

Not only was the program an opportunity to celebrate Black History Month, but it served as an educational and cultural opportunity.

"It was a chance for others to really understand what African-American culture is about. We should celebrate the history of all," said Sergeant Terrence Staples, of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Cavalry Division, and member of the 1st Cavalry Division Honor Guard.

"It's part of an education and awareness of other's serving this country. It shows the great diversity of the Army to learn other's cultures and diversity. It's about knowing each other's cultures and values, respecting each other, and knowing others are here because they want to be and believe in this country," said Sergeant First Class Paul A. T. Cruz, Equal Opportunity noncommissioned officer for HHC.

"All those in attendance are more aware than when they came in," said Eagle Base Camp Commander, Lieutenant Colonel Albert Johnson Jr., of 1st Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery, 1st Cavalry Division. "It was interesting to listen to the contributions made in the past. It brought history to current times."

Affluent African Americans were acknowledged in "Who Am I," a film projection featuring famous faces of African Americans accompanied by mini-monologues highlighting the person's many attributes.

The program acknowledged the many contributions, past and present, of African-Americans in the building of America and America's Army. Participants paused to ponder the dedication, leadership, and inventive spirit of these fine Americans, who were once only given second-class citizenship. Soldiers paused to reflect on the efforts of military legends such as the Tuskegee Airman, the "Hell-fighting Angels," and the Buffalo Soldiers.

Today, soldiers and Americans alike enjoy the comforts of technology and seldom think of yesterday's intuitive inventor who saw a need and an answer to the problems and small inconveniences of his fellow citizens. It was yesterday's inventor, Garrett A. Morgan, who invented the first gas mask. Later improved versions were 'donned' by soldiers during Desert Storm and Operation Joint Forge. Today, servicemembers are encouraged to pause to remember the great heroes of war and the leaders of social change such as Crispus Attucks, Ghandi, Malcolm X, Martin Luther King and Jesse Jackson.

Today, all Americans enjoy freedom and the right to equal privileges, housing, and jobs ensured by America's founding fathers. In 1776, America signed the Declaration of Independence, declaring that "all men are created equal" and are granted the right to the "pursuit of happiness." Today, because of the blood and sweat shed by those in the American Revolution, the Civil War, and the Civil Rights Movement for women, Blacks, and minorities, all Americans are free. As Martin Luther King said for Blacks and Whites and all races, who could not be totally free until America was free for all, "Free At Last, Free At Last, Thank God Almighty, We Are Free At Last."

JVB continued from last page

"Multinational Division North and Task Force Eagle is a secure area. Everyone who wants to visit here is not always allowed unless they have a good reason for coming. We have to be very selective here, because of the security and atmosphere of this area," Robertson said.

"The JVB works as a team. It is a nine member unit, and everyone has to know their job to make a visit happen," said Captain Robert Whittle, the deputy chief of the Joint Visitors Bureau and a resident of Mystic, Conn. "There's Lieutenant Colonel Lunn, myself, and then there is Captain Michael Kays, the officer in charge. We have three escort officers: Captain Richard Dunbar, First Lieutenant Peter Masich, and First Lieutenant Tony Thompson. These officers make sure the dignitaries make it to where they want to visit and stay on schedule. We are always looking ahead."

"The heart of our team is our three NCO's, without them we could forget about accomplishing our mission. They are the ones who make it happen. Sergeant Robertson, the noncommissioned officer in charge, Sergeant Robert Foor, and Sergeant Joel Harris, are what we call our tactical operations center. They maintain the vehicles, make travel arrangements, secure lodging and get all the meals for all our visitors. These are truly the important things," Whittle said.

The JVB's job comprises 90 percent forecasting and 10 percent meeting the objective. The 10 percent is the most important, because they want to ensure everyone they escort enjoys themselves while they conduct their business.

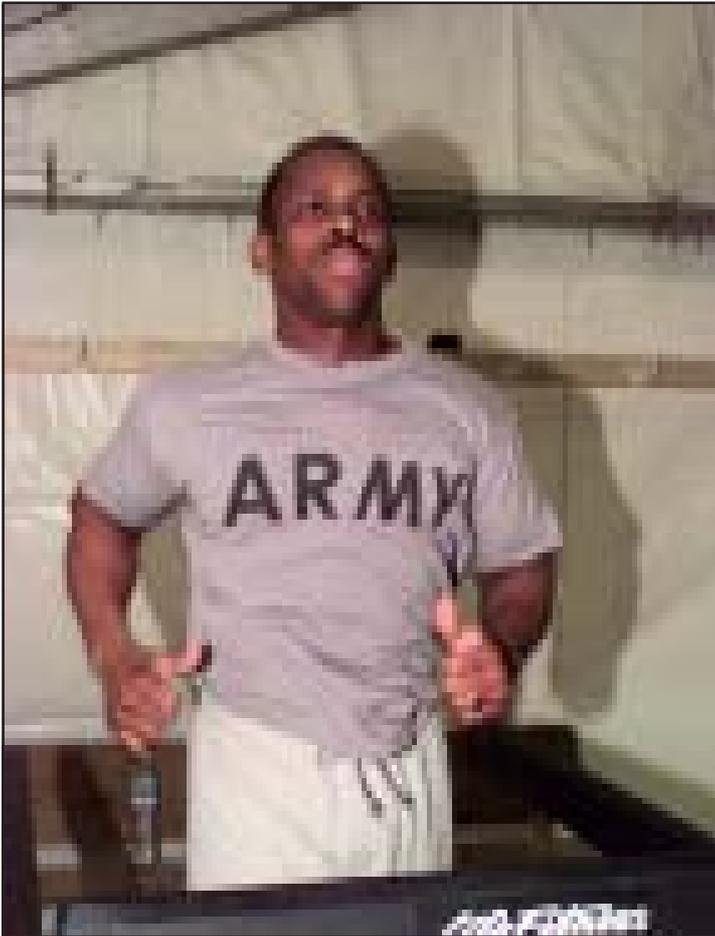
The JVB had a lounge built for its visitors and dignitaries by



1st Lieutenant Tony Thompson, a Joint Visitors Bureau Escort walks Brigadier General William Davies, the Deputy Adjutant General for the California National Guard to the Task Force Eagle Headquarters.

the Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 40. This facility is equipped with two rooms and has Internet and fax hook ups. It can also be used for brief stops at the Tuzla Airport for general officers and officials in route.

PT important part of McGovern day



Staff Sergeant Gregory T. Shepherd of Texarkana, Texas, a radar section chief with Battery C, 1st Battalion, 21st Field Artillery, runs on a treadmill to prepare for a PT test just after his redeployment.

Story and photos by Camp McGovern's
Private First Class Phillip E. Breedlove Jr.
22nd Mobile Public Affairs Det.

For the 1st Cavalry units returning home, redeployment means many things, and the physical training test they will take within 45 days after they touch Texas soil is the last thing on most of their minds.

While preparing to take a PT test, soldiers should keep in mind the PT standards have changed. For some of the older soldiers, the change is significant, while for the younger ones, it's minor. Even so, minor changes could make major differences in PT scores, and that leaves some soldiers curious about how they will perform. Many Camp McGovern units are forging ahead by testing their soldiers before going home to see how they fare under the updated regulations.

Staff Sergeant Gregory T. Shepherd of Texarkana, Texas and a radar section leader with Battery C, 1st Battalion, 21st Field Artillery, recently took the PT test and scored 294 points with the new standards. This score was up from his previous score of

287 under the old standards. "Normally I score pretty high on the test, but now I have to try harder to get the same score, especially on the run. The scores in my unit have greatly improved though. When we first deployed, it was an average of 239, and now it's 279."

Sergeant Julio E. Rodriguez of Hormigueros, Puerto Rico, a supply sergeant with Headquarters Platoon, Company B, 20th Engineer Battalion, administered a PT test under the new standards and said most of the new standards went up for the older soldiers and down for the younger ones. He believes the change is positive. "If they realize they will have to work a little harder to get that score, they are more likely to push themselves and get into better shape."

Previously, Rodriguez continued, a soldier had to attain a score of 290 points to achieve the honor of being called a 'PT stud,' and wear the physical fitness excellence award. Under the new system, soldiers only have to score a 270, receiving no less than 90 points on all three events, to gain the same honor. However, they must also maintain this score on all successive tests to keep the honor.

Specialist Thomas S. Schafer of Lake City, Fla., a combat engineer with Headquarters Platoon, Company B, 20th Engineer Battalion, recently took the test and received a score of 287, up from his previous score of 260. Normally, his score would fall just three points short of a PT patch, but with the new standards, he will be able to wear the patch for the first time. Schafer said the new scoring system didn't affect him much. "I just run and do my best. Whatever score I get, that's what I get."

Not everyone makes their goal. Specialist Todd C. Emily of Bluefield, Va., a heavy wheeled vehicle mechanic with Headquarters Platoon, Company B, 20th Engineer Battalion, scored a 225 under the old standards. "I decided to try for a 270 to get that patch, but I missed it by 10 points, finishing with 260. I'm still happy I scored so high, but I'm going to keep trying for that patch."

Some of the soldiers from McGovern have already faced, sweated and conquered the new test. Although the standards have changed, one thing remains the same: soldiers must still work hard to achieve great results.



Specialist Thomas S. Schafer of Lake City, Fla., a combat engineer with Headquarters Platoon, Company B, 20th Engineer Battalion, completes a push-up during a PT test.

New gymnasium welcomed at Dobol

Story and photo by Camp Dobol's
Specialist Giovanni Lorente
319th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

With only a couple of weeks left in theatre, Task Force 2-5 continues to make improvements on facilities in the camp for its soldiers.

Camp Dobol has come a long way since Task Force 2-5 came into theatre. The living conditions have improved dramatically. A fest tent was put in where the soldiers can enjoy a variety of sports such as basketball, volleyball and indoor soccer. A new Post Exchange and food court allows the soldiers a much more comfortable deployment in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The projects didn't stop there. Replacements for Task Force 2-5 are being welcomed by the construction of a brand new gymnasium. The gym will be fully equipped with free weights, cable machines, treadmills and stair

steppers that are currently in the old gym, plus some brand new equipment.

The gym is being put together like a giant leggo set, with prefabricated sections bolted end to end to form the more roomy new gym.

As improvements are made in Dobol, the facilities for the soldiers are upgraded.

One of the main activities for soldiers at Dobol is staying fit. Now with a new gym, the soldiers will have more room to weightlift, and spend less time waiting to use a piece of lift equipment.

Although Task Force 2-5 will not be able to enjoy the fruits of its labor, they seem more than proud to be able to pass on their new facilities to their replacements, Task Force 1-5.

Although the incoming soldiers have been impressed with what they have found so far, they cannot wait to work out in the new facility.



Soldiers build playground

Story and photo by
Specialist Giovanni Lorente
319th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

Everyday a convoy rolls out the gates of Task Force 2-5, somewhere along the way there is a child waiting along the road frantically waving as the soldiers pass by. The engineers from Task Force 2-5 got a chance to experience first hand how much a simple smile from a child can brighten one's day.

Company A, 20th Engineers got a chance to give the children of Srebrenica something to smile about.

1st Lieutenant Steven F. Murphy, and a group of his soldiers, rolled up their sleeves and started hammering away to build a playground for the children of Poletarac Elementary School. The plan called for the construction of a sandbox, a set of swings and a jungle gym.

The soldiers arrived at the site early in the morning to begin unloading their equipment, and then got straight to work. The sound of wood being cut and nails being hammered into wood filled the air.

The soldiers were divided up into three teams; one team built the swings while another worked on the sandbox, and the third built the jungle gym. Tape measures were whizzing open while string was laid out marking the areas of each project.

"Out of all the missions we have done, this is the one we have been the most excited about," explained Murphy, a Greenville, S.C. native and platoon leader with Company A, 20th Engineers. "When we finish we'll have something we can see that we have done."

"It's kind of a nice way to end a six month tour, and you can see their smiles and their eyes brighten when we finish makes it all worth it," Murphy said.

"I think it is good that we're doing this for the kids," said Specialist Michael Clagget, a combat engineer from Washington, D.C. "It is probably one of the most positive things we can do since none of this (the war) was their fault."

Soldiers said they were pleased to have the opportunity to serve the children of Bosnia-Herzegovina, and the experience, they said, will remain with them always.

Soldiers hope Stabilization Force projects such as these will continue throughout Bosnia-Herzegovina, from Brcko all the way up in the north to the far south.

"We appreciate SFOR's help in building this playground for the children," explained Milan Marjanovic, director of the elementary school.

"With this kind gesture the soldiers are giving the children back their childhood; and a place where they can come and enjoy. I thank them," said Marjanovic.