

TALON

Operation Joint Forge
Saturday, February 24, 2001

Task Force Eagle
www.tfeagle.army.mil

Gunnery Training at Glamoc Range



94th MPs Team Up with Local Police
Mini-flail Excercise with the Division Engineers
123rd Signal Supports Soldiers

GOD'S BIGGER PICTURE

As SFOR 8 begins to wind down, life can become harder instead of easier. Tensions can build and become troublesome for several reasons. Many soldiers have been not been able to get home on leave and are feeling the effects of 4-5 months away. Families in the rear are feeling the accumulated impact of mom or dad being deployed. If it was tough in January, it is probably tougher in February. Problems usually don't get better with age. The great Old Testament man of God, Joseph (Genesis 37-50) provides abundant encouragement to equip us to handle the hardships that remain.

Joseph was a man acquainted with life's hardest problems. He was disowned by his brothers and sold as a slave into Egypt. As he tried to improve his situation, his employer's wife, who also had possession of his clothing, falsely accused him of rape.

Joseph's life went from bad to worse. He was innocent of all charges but thrown in jail and forgotten about for two years. He remained there without being vindicated for doing the right thing.

God had a plan. That plan was much bigger than Joseph's immediate yet temporary discomfort. God's plan would lead Joseph to the very power of leadership that ruled the country. Because God positioned him in a special place at a special time, Joseph would become the Prime Minister of Egypt. But more importantly, the redemption of God's people would be accomplished through His servant. We usually don't see what God can see, namely the bigger picture.

Perhaps God has you in a place that is apparently unredeemable. You feel like nothing good can come out of it. You have to stay there for the time being and everyday is a struggle. These can be some of the most blessed days we face, as God shows us His plan day by day. Joseph's concluding words to his brothers say it all, "*You intended it to harm me, but God intended it for good, to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives ... so then don't be afraid.*" (Gen. 50:20,21).

Thoughts For The Day

Saturday: When it comes to giving, some people stop at nothing.

Sunday: Life is not a goblet to be drained – it is a measure to be filled.

Monday: We do the most for ourselves when we do the most for God.

Tuesday: It is God's resounding 'I Am,' that drowns out our weak, 'I can't.'

Wednesday: The true measure of God's love is that He loves without measure.

Thursday: Lord, fill my mouth with worthwhile stuff, and stop me when I've said enough.

Friday: Nothing ruins the truth like stretching it.

By Chaplain (Capt.) Ken Hurst
26th LTF Chaplain

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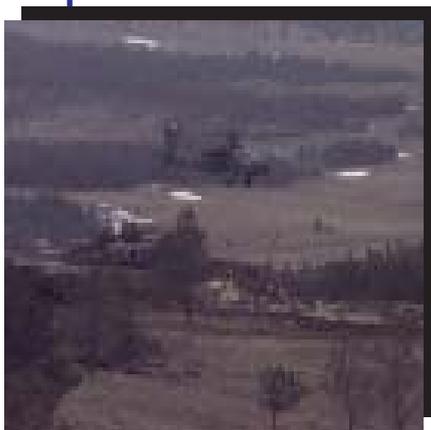
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An Apache helicopter passes over a M1A1 Abrams tank during the live fire exercise held near the town of Glamoc Feb. 9-11. (Photo by Sgt. Noreen L. Feeney)

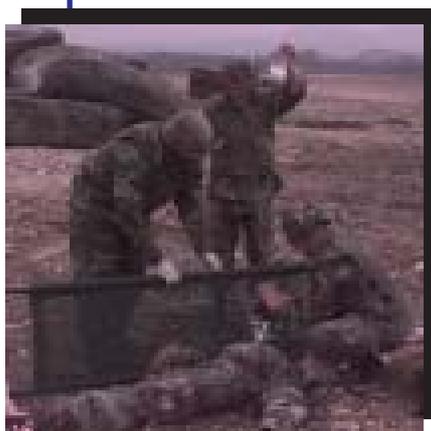
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Members of the 94th Military Police Company and Bosnian policemen get together to learn more about each other's methods of operation. (Photo by Spc. Sean A. Terry, Combat Camera)

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ARMY VALUES: STEPPING STONES TO SUCCESS

By **Command Sgt. Maj. George J. Ruo Jr.**
Command Sgt. Maj., Multinational Division (North)

As the soldiers of Stabilization Force 8 (SFOR 8) prepare for the right seat ride and transition to SFOR 9, I think it's time to reflect on our service to our countries and those essential elements that surround the dedicated service we give to the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Thus far, our soldiers have been the light of hope for the people of this country and I am proud to have served with each one of you. From time to time, it is good to reaffirm those values we hold dear in the service to our nations. Organizations who are "values-based" endure over time, because they strive for excellence along a higher duty of commitment and selfless service to their nations.

Merely stating values does not guarantee that we will live by them. Rather, understanding their deeper meaning allows us the wisdom to better incorporate those values into our service and into our lives. Therefore, I would like to review the Army values and ask that you reflect on how you incorporate these values in the conduct of your duties here.

Loyalty. Loyalty means to bear truth and allegiance to the laws and service to our nation and your unit. Your performance here in Bosnia-Herzegovina as a member of a multinational effort displays your loyalty of purpose.

Duty. Duty means to rightfully fulfill our obligations. Our mission is to enforce the military aspects of the Dayton Peace Accords. Each of you lives this value daily as you conduct your duties in Multinational Division (North).

Respect. Respect means to treat people with dignity and respect. Treating others, as you would want to be treated, commonly known as the "golden rule," is a good azimuth check to see if we are respectful of others. This value is especially important in security and stabilization operations (SASO). There are many different cultures, religions and life views that may be very foreign to us. We must always make the extra effort to learn about the varied uniqueness of each other's cultures to show due respect accordingly.

Selfless Service. Selfless service means placing the welfare of nation, your service and subordinates ahead of our own. What more selfless act than to leave family and friends to deploy to a far away place to tend to the needs of others. You should be proud of your selfless service and the mission you do everyday of your deployment.

Honor. Honor means to live by these values. Every action we do and don't is scrutinized by those around us. By living these values, we portray an image of what is right to the world. Our honor is our credibility. Being honorable is an absolute with no



Command Sgt. Maj. George J. Ruo Jr.

"gray areas." We can never compromise our honor and think it can easily be regained.

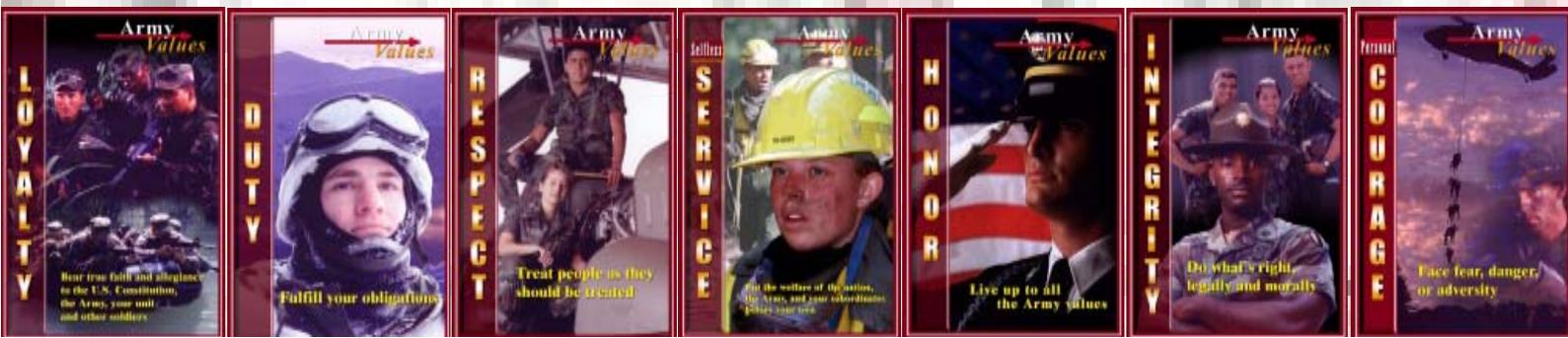
Integrity. Integrity means to do what is always right legally, ethically and morally in word and deed. We must constantly remind ourselves to stand up for what is right and just and always support those who do. We never want to be the one others remember as possessing morals that were suspect or ethics that were easily compromised. Like honor, integrity is easily lost and almost impossible to earn back. Allow your actions to be your credentials.

Personal courage. Personal courage means to unwaveringly face fear, danger and adversity. It takes special people like you to put yourself potentially in harms way to accomplish your mission. You do this daily without hesitation.

The Army has no copyright on this collection of values. You only have to look at our multinational partners to see examples of these values everyday. We can consider these values not service-values but human-values that join those of a similar profession together for a unified purpose.

As you continue in your service to the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina, I hope that you periodically reflect on these words and keep them close to heart in the service to your country. If we continue to maintain these core values in the execution of our mission we will collectively achieve greatness as we provide a secure and stable environment for the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Rock of the Marne!



94TH MPs INTERACT WITH LOCAL POLICE FORCES

Story by Spc. Christopher D. Carney

318th PCH, Eagle Base

Photo by Spc. Sean A. Terry
Combat Camera

Military police here hosted officers from seven local police stations Feb. 12 in an event designed to increase the interaction and knowledge of military and local police departments.

The seven departments participating were from Zenica, Zivinice, Brcko, Kalesija, Bijeljina, Doboj, and Zvornik.

“We asked for two street officers from each department to come and participate. This is the first time that has been done,” said Master Sgt. Gregory Carder, 94th Military Police Company.

“We divided them into two groups. The first group

learned about military police investigations and procedures and also traffic investigations and procedures. The second group went through shoot-don’t shoot scenarios on the Firearms Training System (FATS),” said Master Sgt. Carder.

Sgt. Jeff Whitford, 94th MP Company, instructed the class on military police investigations.

“We told them what kinds of things we investigate and how we perform operations with the local people. The visitors introduced themselves and asked questions. Some of them were investigators, some traffic investigators and some were patrol officers,” he said.

Staff Sgt. Darrell Lane, 94th MP Company, the traffic investigator for Multinational Division (North), taught the officers about military police traffic investigations.

“Basically I just covered what my job consists of. I am responsible for all traffic accident reports that are processed in Bosnia in MND(N) involving SFOR personnel. I don’t necessarily go to all traffic accident scenes due to the fact of the large area that I have to cover, but I am held responsible for certain criteria. Any traffic accident involving injury, any involving a fatality, any involving VIPs and any involving major disabling damage that would render a vehicle mission inoperable must have the most experienced person on

Hands-on training with firearms took place in the newly opened simulation center utilizing FATS.

“We showed them the law enforcement scenarios on the machine. They zeroed their weapons then we picked out scenarios that they would probably see out here,” said Sgt. 1st Class Roderick Burdette, 94th MP Company.

Scenarios included a traffic stop, assault with a crowbar, and domestic violence.

Zeljko Karac, a participant from Zenica, said, “This was a successful day, I hope that we have more days like this. I hope the other police departments will have a chance to come out here. We get to meet people on the base and it is a good chance to meet each other because we do work in different police departments



SMILE— Members of the 94th Military Police Company pose with members of the Zenica, Zivinice, Brcko, Kalesija, Bijeljina, Doboj, and Zvornik police forces Feb. 12.

the ground. We need to get all the information that we can to get the facts straight and to make sure the operation is done correctly,” said Staff Sgt. Lane.

Working closely with local law enforcement is not new for some MPs. Some officers have performed joint radar operations together on the MSRs (Main Supply Routes).

“There are a lot of common things that we both see and working hands-on with them during the time I have been here I have found them to be very professional,” said Staff Sgt. Lane. “Sometimes when I go to an accident scene they’ll have the whole scene mapped out. They’ll have everything measured up, their diagrams drawn, their pictures taken and by the time I arrive they start handing me them and explaining what they have found and asking me what I think.”

and different cities. We had people from the Republika Srpska and the Federation working together.”

Lt. Col. Thomas Tatum, Task Force Eagle provost marshal, said of the day, “This is the first of several activities that we hope to have with the local police that allow us as SFOR to be able to interact with the local policeman who’s out their trying to maintain the safety and security of the communities.”

Lt. Col. Tatum then added, “It also provides an activity where Federation and Republika Srpska local police can interact together which is something they rarely get to do. To improve that interaction will build a stronger local police force. This training was brand new for them and we were quite impressed. They know their training and they reacted appropriately during the training.”

LIVE FIRE AT GLAMOC



LOCKED AND LOADED—An AH-64 Apache attack helicopter (background) hovers and engages its targets while an M1A1 tank (above) from Bravo Company, 1-64 AR, sits on a ridge and lets loose on its targets with its .50 caliber machine gun loaded with tracer rounds. (Photo by Sgt. Noreen L. Feeney)

Story by Sgt. Noreen L. Feeney
318th PCH, Camp Dabol

A live fire training exercise was held on the mountains near the town of Glamoc Feb. 9-11. M1A1 Abrams tanks, M2 Bradley fighting vehicles, AH-64 Apache attack helicopters, mortars, and infantry all got a seldom-seen chance to fire live rounds at something more than paper targets.

“We do a lot of firing on drill weekends,” said Sgt. John Henson, a North Carolina National Guard member with Alpha Company 1st Battalion, 120th Infantry Regiment, here, “but this was still a very good opportunity for training with other units.”

There was a live fire rehearsal Feb. 10. It was choreographed down to the last round and was to be duplicated exactly the next day.

An AT-4 anti-tank weapon, fired by Spc. Roy Walker, Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 179th Infantry Regiment, nicknamed Cold Steel, took the first kill with one round at an old Volkswagen Beetle that put the car on its nose. It took the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1-64 AR support platoon almost 30 minutes to bring the vehicle to the range, another 30 minutes to place it as a target, but only a few seconds for Charlie 1-179 IN to mangle it to pieces.

“It was a good shot though, wasn’t it?” bragged 1st Lt. Lowell Williams, Charlie Company 1-179 IN.

Cold Steel’s infantry then took over the field with M-16 and machine gun fire that raised up more dust than a ghost town on a windy day. Several targets had to be replaced for the gunnery the next day.

The mortars had next billing. They couldn’t obliterate their



DIRECTION— Staff Sgt. David Richard, a tank commander with Charlie Company, 1-64 AR, directs his vehicle crew to their position on the firing range shortly before engaging their targets. (Photo by Sgt. Noreen L. Feeney)

C RANGE

assigned targets as it would leave nothing for the next day so they laid their fire all around the targets, leaving little doubt about their accuracy.

Apache helicopters entered at stage right and hovered in over the hilltop to show what they could do. Rockets screeched across the range while the gunfire rattled in bass accompaniment.

The Bradleys and Abrams were the finale and put on a smoke and light show that people would have paid money to see.

The exercise lasted just under two hours and went off without a hitch. The vehicles went back to camp to turn in brass (each firing position was policed) and receive new ammunition for the next day.

VIPs were scheduled to watch the exercise Feb. 11, but their visit was cancelled due to the weather. The weather made an abrupt turn for the worse, turning very cold with thick fog covering downrange.

“It (the range) looked completely different with a couple inches of snow and fog,” said 2nd Lt. Cason Green, a tank commander with Charlie Company 1-64 AR, who fired on the 11th. .

The start of the exercise was delayed several hours because of heavy fog that kept rolling in and out, covering the targets at will. While most weapon systems can target and shoot in fog, simulating ‘hot targets’ and safety issues delayed firing. Eventually, by mid-afternoon the fog lifted enough to get the go ahead to start.

It was an exact duplicate of the rehearsal a day earlier.

As it did the day before, the exercise went smoothly. Charlie Company, 1-64 AR did a good job despite the weather.

“We aren’t as well trained on the tank and it was a good chance to get back on a tank for good MOS (military occupational specialty) training,” said 2nd Lt. Green. “Being able to send live bullets down the range; that’s the best part.”



AIR POWER— Tracer rounds light up the sky as an AH-64 Apache attack helicopter engages its targets. (Photo by Sgt. Stephen J. Cegielski)

POWERFUL DISPLAY— The powerful M1A1 Abrams tanks in the U.S. Army’s mighty arsenal display their power during the live fire at Glamoc. (Photo by Sgt. Stephen J. Cegielski)



COOKS PROVIDE SUPPORT FOR GLAMOC EXERCISE

Story and photos

By Sgt. Noreen L. Feeney
318th PCH, Camp Dობոլ

To err is human, but to cook chicken is divine. Especially when 200 plus soldiers spent all day in a cold and muddy field and were looking forward to hot chow after a lukewarm MRE for lunch.

There were approximately 260 soldiers at Glamoc for the live fire exercise, according to Sgt. Maj. Dennis Oggs, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1-64 AR, 3d Infantry Division (Mechanized) here. They have to eat. Many pleasantly surprised eyebrows raised when the soldiers trounced through six inches of cold mud to find hot chow steaming from the last tent in the aisle.

Meals are one part of a mission that can sometimes be overlooked. On the other hand, meals can sometimes be one of the most important factors to a successful mission. Not only were they not overlooked by the command, they were planned down to how many ladles should be packed for the exercise.

For the 260 or so soldiers training at Glamoc for the week, there were four cooks to feed them two hot meals each day.

Sgt. Courtney Stamps, HHC 1-64 AR, said it took only three days for them to get the food ready.

"We've done this before, it's a piece of cake," Sgt. Stamps said with a wink.

Sgt. Stamps, along with Sgt. Jerry Bidal, Sgt. Christopher Littell, and Spc. David Cantwell, all from HHC, 1-64 AR, make up the food service crew. Their day starts at 0200

getting ready for breakfast.

"It's hard to get up that early sometimes – it took awhile for me to get used to it," said Spc. Cantwell.

While the troops are still asleep, three of the four cooks are up scrambling eggs and frying waffles.

"We rotate days so one of us always has a day off, which leaves three to do the cooking all day," said Sgt. Bidal. "It's hard sometimes and I get very tired, but the troops need to get fed."

According to Spc. Cantwell, they did get some help a couple of times.

"Captain Albrecht (Capt. Joseph Albrecht, HHC 1-64 AR) would get up at 0200 and stay with us until the last water jug was full. He said he didn't like going to bed while we were still working. No captain ever did that for me before," said Spc. Cantwell.

The breakfast was no sooner laid out than the kitchen was



SPICING THINGS UP— Spc. Cantwell tosses Italian seasoning on a tray of chicken he will bake for dinner for the troops. Spc. Cantwell will top dinner off with freshly-baked chocolate cake, all made in the regulation Army field kitchen.

cleaned up to get ready to prepare the evening meal.

"They eat MREs for lunch," said Sgt. Stamps. "So sometimes we can catch a quick nap before we start dinner; that helps a lot."

All through the day, they work in a tiny field kitchen with

several ovens and burners keeping the tent warm.

Sgt. Maj. Oggs decided to pitch in when he was challenged by Sgt. Bidal one day.

"He said he could cook, so he came in one morning and cooked breakfast. Then he had to stay up until all the work was done for the night. He did," Sgt. Bidal said.

The always-pleasant scent of chocolate cake, seldom encountered in the military sector, wafts from one tent flap to the other. Spc. Cantwell spends the afternoon sprinkling pan after pan of chicken with several spices, in just the right amounts. Outside the kitchen, 15 gallon pots simmer with boiling corn on the cob. Sgt. Stamps spoons mashed potatoes into the warming pan. Soldiers pile out of humvees, M2 Bradleys and M1A1 Abrams tanks, eyeing their watches, stomachs eager for the stroke of 1700.



DINNER— Sgt. Bidal (left) and Sgt. Stamps (right), stand outside on a chilly and very windy day preparing dinner for the soldiers at Glamoc for the week. The cooks' days at Glamoc started at 0200, when they started to prepare breakfast for the soldiers.



REAL WORLD TRAINING- (Left) Cpl. Michael Handling and Spc. Jorge Sanchez, Alpha Company, 10th Engineer Battalion, move a casualty to check for mines during the casualty extraction exercise at Camp Bedrock Feb. 14. (Middle) Spc. Sanchez uses a mine probe to check a suspected mine. (Bottom left) Members of Alpha Company, load a casualty onto a Blackhawk during the exercise. (Bottom right) A trio of Alpha Company soldiers load a casualty onto a stretcher.

DIVISION ENGINEERS PRACTICE CASUALTY EXTRACTION AT BEDROCK

Story and photos

By Spc. Christopher D. Carney
318th PCH, Eagle Base

The call comes in. A soldier has stepped on a mine on a remote mountainside. He is unconscious and desperately needs medical attention but first a safe way to reach him must be found. It is a situation that no one wants to happen, but someone must be trained to deal with.

That's why Alpha Company, 10th Engineer Battalion, 3d Infantry Division (Mechanized), practiced extracting a casualty from a minefield at Camp Bedrock.

The first step in the process is sling-loading a mini-flail to a helicopter. The mini-flail is a remote controlled device that is used to get as close to the casualty as possible, clearing a path through the mine field so rescuers can reach him.

The mini-flail is then flown to the site,



downloaded and put into action.

"The mini-flail makes two runs, coming within 30 meters of the casualty. The kill radius of most anti-personnel mines is 30 meters, therefore it doesn't go any closer," said 1st Lt. John Hiltz, Alpha Company, 10th ENGBN.

After two runs, most mines are destroyed, but a soldier must manually go through with detector equipment to ensure none are left. The flail may not have set off anti-tank mines and there is a possibility of an anti-personnel mine, though the likelihood is low, said 1st Lt. Hiltz.

After reaching the casualty, a one-meter path must be probed around him for mines. Then he must be moved carefully to check beneath him.

Once a path has been cleared to the casualty and around him, medical attention can begin.

Every step of the process must be performed with attention to detail to ensure safety.

"There are many factors that would affect a situation like this, which is why training is of such great importance," said 1st Lt. Hiltz.

"The main thing to remember is techniques. If this were real, everyone would be in a big hurry, and their technique makes sure everything is done right," said Cpl. Michael Handling, Alpha Company, 10th ENGBN.

Safety is key in performing these operations. The casualty must be reached in the fastest time possible while keeping the rescuers safe. If a rescuer is hurt while working then there are two casualties that must be removed, said Cpl. Handling.

Training for such an important mission is something that the engineers are glad they get the chance to do.

"This is a very, very important mission. Every squad we have has done this. Situations like this have happened in the past and will happen in the future. What we are doing here someday will save a life. This is real good training," said Lt. Col. Kevin Beerman, Division Engineers Commander.



APACHES, WARRIORS INVOLVED IN CALFEX AT GLAMOC RANGE

Story and photos

By Sgt. Dave Lietz

318th PCH, Eagle Base

Combined fire support, aviation assets and ground maneuver units participated in a Combined Arms Live Fire Exercise (CALFEX) at Glamoc Range, Bosnia-Herzegovina, despite reduced visibility, low cloud ceilings and temperatures in the 40s.

A CALFEX is conducted quarterly back at Fort Stewart, Ga. “We do them all the time because combined arms is the standard we train to,” said Maj. Todd Morris. The aviation units participating included Charlie Company 1-229 Aviation Regiment (Airborne), known as “Blue Max”, from Fort Bragg, N.C., and Delta Troop 3-7 Cavalry, Fort Stewart, Ga., which provided OH-58 Delta Scout helicopters.

A dry rehearsal was conducted in preparation for the actual event on the following day.

AH-64 Apache attack helicopters fired 30 mm cannons and 2.75-inch rockets at stationary targets such as plywood panels, a T-55 tank hull and an old car body. “We can tear apart any vehicle anywhere in the world when called upon,” said Capt. Brian Hughes, Charlie Company Commander, 1-229 Aviation.

Weather conditions, like those at the Glamoc Range, can limit flight operations. “Once the weather drops to a certain level, our aviation operations cease. On Sunday (Feb. 11), we had to wait until the weather came up (ceiling and visibility) for us to conduct our live fire operations,” said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Michael Fray, Apache pilot, Charlie Company, 1-229 Aviation (Airborne).

“Poor weather heightens your sense of alertness. You have to increase your scan, especially flying through the valleys, and reduce your airspeed so you don’t out fly your visibility,” said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Fray. It wasn’t the first time the pilot flew in this kind of weather. “It was business as usual,” said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Fray.

The Apache attack helicopter pilots of “Blue Max” dispatched six helicopters to Glamoc Range.

“We utilized all six aircraft on Saturday and Sunday. We ingressed with nap of the earth flight at combat cruise formation,” said 1st Lt. Jason Gonzalez, Apache pilot, Charlie Company, 1-229 Aviation (Airborne). “We entered holding area Betty and then

flew into the attack by fire position. Then we had all six aircraft on line and the ground units integrated us into the battle,” added 1st Lt. Gonzalez.

“The dismounts, or mechanized infantry from the North Carolina National Guard, actually identified the ‘enemy’ on the ground. Then the OH-58 pilots called for fire,” said 1st Lt. Gonzalez.

“We had the battle between 5 and 10 minutes until our commander called Winchester (cease fire). At that time we handed the battle back over to the ground unit,” said 1st Lt. Gonzalez.

The purpose of the Kiowa pilots in the CALFEX was to call for fire. “That’s when they called the 64’s (Apaches),” said 1st Lt. Gonzalez. “It’s pretty standard stuff that the ground elements would receive spot reports from the OH-58’s hovering in the observation post. The pilots are giving the ground element what enemy they have actual ‘eyes on’.

“We can either do a voice radio call with artillery, Apaches or Kiowas or digital burst, call for fire with artillery or sister ship to ground units, indicating where the target is, where we are at, basic information to fire the artillery. We can carry Hellfire missiles, air-to-air Stinger missiles, 2.75 inch rockets and .50 caliber machine gun for tactical purposes,” said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Steve Salinas, OH-58D pilot, Echo Troop, 3-7 Cav.

In a more tactical situation, the OH-58’s would be working in teams and conducting reconnaissance of the battlefield. The battlefield is divided into sectors prior to entering the area. “Each team has separate responsibilities within the engagement area,” said 1st Lt. Gonzalez.

Aircraft crews understand exactly what will happen prior to entering the battle position during the brief and rehearsals. “It should be clear in every crew members mind exactly what type, size and distribution of the enemy will be in the actual engagement area prior to entering,” said 1st Lt. Gonzalez.

“We didn’t do anything that we wouldn’t normally do. The whole purpose of the CALFEX for the aviators was to sustain our warfighting skills,” said 1st Lt. Gonzalez.

“I thought the training went real well. We enjoyed it. Normally back in the rear we are a corps unit and don’t work directly with the division. We had an opportunity to work with the 3d ID (M) and learn their standard operating procedures,” said Capt. Hughes.

A JOB WELL DONE— Two Apache attack helicopters leave the engagement area after completing their mission of an aerial assault during a CALFEX at Glamoc Range.



123RD SIGNAL PROVIDES COMMUNICATION

Story by Sgt. Dave Lietz
318th PCH, Eagle Base

The 123rd Signal Battalion out of Fort Stewart, Ga., supplies the tactical network (voice, data transmission out to all base camps) and provides contingency packages at Eagle Base.

The 123rd supplies the 'voice of the command' and 'telephone communications down to the fighting positions. They also provide morale communications to soldiers' families back home.

"A soldier can always perform his mission as long as he knows his family back home is taken care of," said Sgt. Maj. Samuel Gladwell.

Signal soldiers are involved in providing primary communication support to Camp Coyote, Camp Morgan, and units 'jumping out' to Glamoc range. Their secondary mission is to back up long haul communications to commercial networks provided by Sprint.

"We interface tactical and commercial systems," said Maj. David Snyder.

There are always signal soldiers on duty. "A lot of people don't realize while they are sleeping, signal soldiers are

continuing to drive on," said Maj. Snyder.

'Voice of the Rock' task force soldiers at Eagle Base are capable of providing FM retransmission for soldiers on patrols near the mountainous terrain. A retrans site, or FM repeater, is basically two FM SINGARS (single channel, ground/ air/ radio systems) radios hooked together by a cable.

Network controllers operate, maintain and manage all of the networks and install and troubleshoot data and signal links.

It's a job that requires soldiers to have good computer skills, technical skills and analytical skills, according to Staff Sgt. Wayne Russell, network controller, 123rd Signal Battalion.

Network controllers can tell in a matter of minutes what the problem is, then go in and fix the problem.

Terrain, roadways and putting up antennas provide challenges for signal soldiers. Terrain has an impact on communications because line of sight FM, UHF and SHF equipment always operate off of line of sight.

"You want to get the best connectivity on your shout," said Staff Sgt. Russell.

NEW AFN FREQUENCIES

Eagle Base

AFN Balkans	100.1
Power Net	91.1

Camp Butmir

AFN Balkans	88.0
Power Net	99.1

Taszar, Hungary

AFN Balkans	93.1
Power Net	100.1

AFN Balkans is where you'll hear "Live" shows broadcast from Tuzla, Bosnia-Herzegovina. AFN plays a mix of music from popular rock, alternative, country, urban and pop. News is available throughout the day as well as the "Balkan Report." E-mail your favorite DJ at requests.afn.tuzla.army.mil or check out the AFN Balkans site at <http://www.afneurope.army.mil/balkans/index.htm>.

TAX TIP OF THE WEEK

By Capt. Ruth Semonian

Tax Center OIC, Office of the SJA, Eagle Base

Q: May I receive a credit for childcare or dependent care expenses on my federal income tax return?

A: Yes. A nonrefundable credit is allowed for a portion of childcare or dependent care expenses since this type of care allows the taxpayer to be gainfully employed.

Q: Who is eligible for this credit?

A: For a taxpayer to be eligible for this type of credit, she must maintain a household for: (1) a dependent under 13 years of age for whom a dependency exemption may be claimed; (2) any person who is physically or mentally incapable to care for herself; (3) a spouse who is physically or mentally unable to care for herself; or (4) certain dependent children of divorced parents.

Q: What is a qualifying expense for this credit?

A: Qualifying expenses include: (1) expenses for household services and care of the individual; (2) services outside the home if they involve care of the child, disabled spouse, or dependent; (3) payments to a relative unless the taxpayer claims a dependency exemption for the relative or if the relative is the taxpayer's child under 19 years of age; and (4) the total cost of sending a child to school can only be counted if the child is in a grade level below the first grade and the amount paid for schooling is incidental and cannot be separated from the cost of care.

Q: What criteria must I meet to qualify for this credit?

A: The following criteria must be met to qualify for the child or dependent care credit: (1) married taxpayers must file a joint return; (2) for divorced or separated parents, the custodial parent generally claims the credit (even if the custodial parent waives her right to the dependency exemption, she is still entitled to the child care credit); (3) must have incurred and paid expenses for the care of a qualifying person; (4) must have worked full or part-time or have incurred expenses while looking for work.; (5) must have maintained a home that was also the home of the qualifying person; and (6) must identify the care provider on the tax return.

Q: What is the maximum amount of the credit?

A: For a taxpayer with one dependent, the maximum credit is \$720. For a taxpayer with two or more dependents, the maximum credit is \$1,440. The amount of the credit is based on the Adjusted Gross Income of the taxpayer.

Q: How do I get more information on applying for this credit?

A: Visit the Tax Assistance Center located in Building 4, Eagle Base. The hours are:

Monday and Wednesday, 0900-1200, 1300-1600, 1700-2100

Tuesday and Saturday, 0900-1200 and 1300-1600

The telephone number to the Tax Assistance Center is 762-0344.



THE LOCAL WEATHERMAN

Story and photos

By Sgt. Dave Lietz

318th PCH, Eagle Base

It's completely natural. Everyone is interested in it and everyone has an opinion about it. It is the weather, but there was only one expert on it at Glamoc Range and that was Senior Airman Dennis Tresca, weather observer, 412th OSS (Operation Support Squadron) Edwards Air Force Base, Calif.

As with all weather people, everybody asks the 'weather guy' if it's going to rain or snow.

They even ask on the way to the chow hall, said Senior Airman Tresca.

But weather is important to every military operation. "It can make or break a mission. You have to know what the weather is doing," Senior Airman Tresca said.

At the top of the hour, 12 times a day, his job is to take weather observations at the Glamoc Range base camp and e-mail the current weather conditions to forecasters at Camp Comanche, the weather center at Sembach Air Base in Germany and to the Air Force Weather Information Center at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb. It's a job Senior Airman Tresca has been doing for four years since graduating from the Basic Meteorology Course at Kessler Air Force Base near Biloxi, Miss.

"First and foremost you learn about different types of clouds, the weather trends and how to enter the observation data," said Senior Airman Tresca. He enters current winds, visibility, sky conditions, barometric pressure along with temperature, dew point, wind speed and direction on a laptop computer. Then he uses a book called the AFMAN 15-111 (Air Force Manual on Weather Observations) to properly encode the conditions for the meteorological report. And he employs some specialized equipment, like the ceilometer, which measures the height of the clouds.

"It fires a laser beam up into the sky until the beam reaches the base of the cloud," said Senior Airman Tresca. "Then the beam is returned and the cloud ceiling is displayed on a digital readout." The weather information he gathers is used by weather forecasters at Camp Comanche to provide pilots with current weather data. "Everything from turbulence to icing to flight visibility," he said. The PMSV (pilot to meteorology service) is also available for pilots at Glamoc. "They will call from the air for weather information on a base they are flying to. We get on the radio and help the pilots out." And he always asks the pilots for a report, which provides first hand weather data from aircraft in flight. "Pilot reports help us out a lot," said Senior Airman Tresca. Pilots report cloud heights, turbulence (light, moderate, severe, extreme) icing and visibility.

There are three different levels of atmosphere that the Air Force keeps track of: low, medium and high. Low level is surface to 6,500 feet, medium is 6,500 feet to 23,000 feet and high level is 16,000 feet to 45,000 feet.

If there is a significant change in the weather, like rain or thunderstorms, Senior Airman Tresca makes a special observation that provides an update before the next hourly observation is due. When he was stationed at

Fort Sill, Okla., he had his share of observing severe weather like thunderstorms, hail and wind gusts greater than 40 knots. "One of the toughest things as an observer is working a severe weather event like thunderstorms. The phone starts ringing off the hook. Everyone from the crew chiefs to the golf course manager wants to know what's going on," Senior Airman Tresca said.

The airman said it's important to work fast. "You have to get that information out quickly to let people know what's going on." He can issue weather advisories for wind chill, heat stress, crosswinds on the runway and lightning within a certain radius, but warnings are issued by the forecasters. Another important part of Senior Airman Tresca's job is providing weather observations to help flight crews prepare. And he has helped high altitude flight crews out when he was stationed at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif., launching weather balloons.

"When the Discovery Space shuttle landed at Edwards they needed three weather balloons launched within the last hour and a half before they touched down," said Senior Airman Tresca. Weather balloons have a radiosonde attached to them and as they gain altitude they send weather data back to the ground. They are used at certain bases like Edwards Air Force Base. It is very expensive to launch weather balloons and you only need readings from a representative area. The Discovery announced she was in the area with two sonic booms. The astute observer even captured Discovery's landing on film. "That was very cool," Senior Airman Tresca said.

And Senior Airman Tresca likes knowing that the weather information he provides daily helps ensure mission safety. "What other job do you get paid for going out and looking at the sky?"

UPDATE— Senior Airman Dennis Tresca enters weather data on his laptop computer which will then be e-mailed to various weather centers.

