TALON

Operation Joint Forge
Saturday, May 19, 2001

Task Force Eagle
www.tfeagle.army.mil

Downed Aircraft Response Team

Victory Day Celebration

Mission Complete for Hilltop 722 Troops

Why Am I Here?

The jet lag has worn off, the newness has gone, the dust has settled, and we are all into our battle rhythm. Many of us have been here at least two months or more. We have been taken out of our comfort zones; out of environments that we might have been able to control, or in some ways manipulate. In our comfort zones we knew the people, the places, and the events. We are now in a country where we don't know the people, places or events.

We find ourselves asking these questions: Why am I here? Why has God punished me? What did I do wrong? Is God punishing us or is God trying to get our attention? Some may say this is a strange way to get our attention.

Well, think about Exodus, chapters three through five for a moment. It was at this point that God called Moses to lead the people out of Egypt. Moses asked God, "Who am I that I should go unto Pharaoh?" God had to take Moses from his comfort zone, a place where he was a prince, to a mountain. God now had Moses' undivided attention.

Can you see yourself in this story as you ask the question, "Why am I here?" God took us away from our families, friends and things that we cherish to get our attention. During Moses' 40-year journey in the desert (Num. 12:3) he learned humility. Moses also realized the enormity of the task to lead the people out of Egypt.

We will not be on this deployment 40 years. It will probably be more like six months to a year. In that time, will God have our undivided attention? Will we humble ourselves and understand the great task that God has for each of us? It is my hope that through prayer these questions will be answered for each of you while you are here.

Thoughts For the Day

Saturday: When props are knocked out we cannot function effectively unless we are fully dependent on God. - (Anonymous)

Sunday: Leave the issue with God. "Let integrity and uprightness preserve me, for I wait for and expect You." (Psalm 25:21 Amplified Bible)

Monday: Trust in the Lord with all thine heart and lean not to your own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him and he shall direct thy paths. (Proverbs 3:5,6)

Tuesday: "The chief concern of the Church should be spiritual rest-oration."(Anonymous)

Wednesday: "When one finds himself, one finds God. You find God and you find yourself." (Anonymous)

Thursday: The meek accept the will of God in its entirety. (Anonymous)

Friday: "And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way…"(Colossians1:10)

Chaplain (1st Lt.) Artie Maxwell
Camp Comanche

TALON

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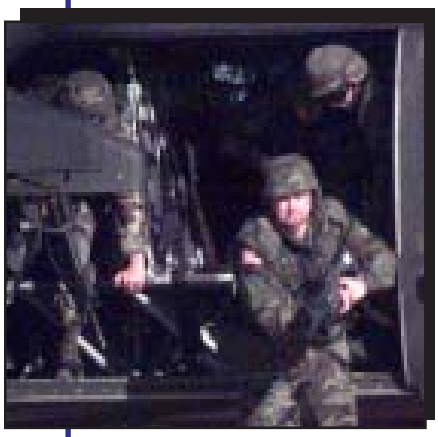
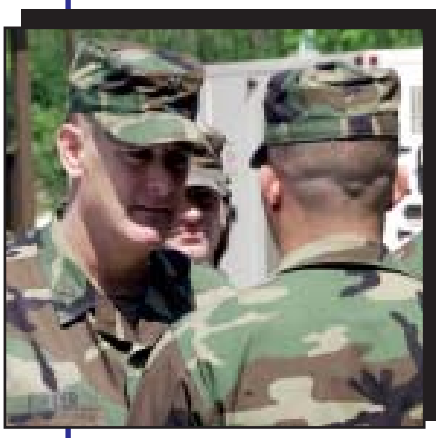
CONTENTS



ON THE COVER 10

The Downed Aircraft Recovery Team gets in position and maintains security. *(Photo by Spc. Grant L. Calease)*



JOINT COMMISSION OBSERVERS LEAVE MND(N) 8

JCO troops close up shop and return to Fort Bragg, N.C. *(Photo by Air Force Maj. Richard C. Sater)*

COUNTRIES CELEBRATE VICTORY DAY 9

Members of the 1st PRSAB demonstrate their world-famous hand-to-hand combat techniques during the national holiday. *(Photo by A.V. Kornilov)*

CSM's corner----------4
Gen. Shelton visits ----------5
Nurses celebrate 100-year anniversary----------11
Derby Days----------12

The Fighter Management Pass Program – Some Do's and Dont's..

Command Sgt. Maj. Walter M. Kegley

Story by
Command Sgt. Maj.
Walter M. Kegley
Command Sgt. Maj., Task Force Eagle Ground Forces

The Fighter Management Pass Program (FMPP) is in full swing and remains a great opportunity to take a break and see the sights of some beautiful areas. I hope that all take advantage of this tremendous privilege and visit some of these very historic areas.

DON'T become a victim

It may seem that this would be a great time to "let your hair down," but actually during your visit to these different FMPP sites, you must become even more situationally aware to avoid becoming an unsuspecting victim of crime, violence, or scams. Force protection while traveling is essential to avoiding the "tourist" pitfalls that have plagued many unsuspecting travelers.

As a member of any military force, you may find yourself an easy target for those who do not appreciate our presence. It is imperative that you remain aware of your surroundings at all times.

DO know the customs

Before you depart, become familiar with the customs and courtesies of the areas in which you are to travel. Spend some time with those who have been to that location before. Identify some of the unique experiences they had, and identify any pitfalls that they may have avoided by maintaining an appropriate degree of situational awareness.

You also must understand what behaviors are acceptable and those that are absolutely forbidden. For instance, did you know that it is very offensive to spit on the ground in Hungary? For those who "dip" or "chew" you may find yourself in a very awkward situation if you "partake" during your trip.

There are many more courtesies that you may identify by doing a little research. Prep yourself and share it with your buddies before you leave.

DO keep a low profile

You should make every attempt to keep a low profile. Do not provoke or get into arguments with anyone who approaches you in a hostile manner. Simply walking away may save your life.

Be aware of the various "scams" that you may fall victim to if you are not careful. Some include taxis that charge exorbitant fees, or if you use one will try and return your change in a foreign currency that is worth much less than the currency you used to pay for the ride.

DO see the sights

The many FMPP locations have much to do in easy walking distance.

Traveling in a group with others can make your visit more enjoyable and allows you the time to truly experience the many historic sites during your travel.

DON'T drink to excess

While enjoying your time away, you might decide to visit a local nightclub or bar. Again, be aware of your surroundings and the reception you receive upon entering the establishment.

Remember your awareness is easily lowered by consumption of alcohol and compounded by fatigue as the night progresses.

If you allow yourself to become intoxicated, you are an easy target for the criminal element. Be aware that criminals tend to frequent nightclubs and bars late at night looking for victims.

DO watch for scams

You also may experience local people who will approach you because you are a service member. They may be friendly and pleasant and show an appreciation for our presence, but others may try to run a scam on you or use other forms of trickery to deprive you of your money, or your life!

DO use the buddy system

Use the "buddy system," when traveling or as I said before, travel in groups, which will deter undesirables. Also, throughout your visit make sure you use your identified chain of command, and inform them of where you will be going and when you expect to return. Do not deviate from the information you provided them. Your leadership is there to ensure that you have an enjoyable and safe time.

DO use common sense

If you exercise some common sense and keep up your situational awareness at all times you will enjoy a relaxing and safe pass. I want you to enjoy yourselves, but I need you to return "in one piece" and not in financial ruin because you "let your guard down!"

Rock of the Marne!

General Shelton Visits with Troops

Story and photo by
Staff Sgt. Ken R. Hudson
Eagle Base

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Henry (Hugh) Shelton visited soldiers in Bosnia May 1 to discuss the mission here, military readiness and quality of life.

Shortly after his aircraft landed at Tuzla Air Base, Gen. Shelton addressed a gathering of soldiers at Camp Comanche.

The senior ranking officer in theUnited States military said that he makes frequent visits to this region to find out from commanders and troops on the ground how things are going. This allows him to better advise the National Security Commission, the Secretary of Defense and the president.

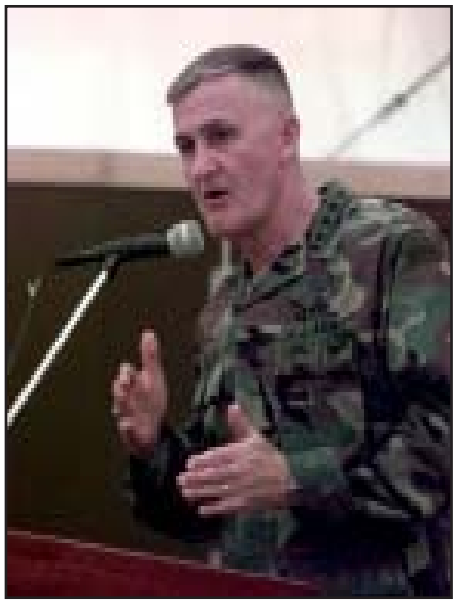
Gen. Shelton recognized the total Army composition of the audience and referred to the Army's new advertising campaign slogan, *An Army of One*.

"I would submit to you that what we have here is an Army of one," he said. "It's the Active, the National Guard and Reserves all pulled together with a common mission."

Gen. Shelton praised the multi-national, combined-arms nature of Task Force Eagle, remarking at how well the infantry, aviation, logistics, and administrative assets all live and work together harmoniously within this operational environment.

Quality of life issues in the military continue to be discussed at the highest levels of the services, according to Gen. Shelton. The retirement system, medical care and the pay table have all gotten considerable attention in recent months, resulting in "the largest pay increase in 50 years, if you put all that together," said the chairman.

Housing for soldiers, whether family quarters or barracks, has come under scrutiny in recent years, as have work places, "where you spend the majority of your day. We're making sure we fix those back in CONUS (Continental United States)," said Gen. Shelton.



Gen. Henry (Hugh) Shelton spoke to soldiers about *An Army of One* during his visit to Camp Comanche.

Always a major concern at the top of the Department of Defense is readiness.

It costs a lot to operate a HMMWV (High-Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle)—parts and fuel have increased in cost over the last few years, said Gen. Shelton.

"Older guys like me think of the HMMWV as relatively new because we transitioned from the Jeep in 1983. I would venture to say that makes the HMMWV older than some of you sitting here."

The chairman drew attention to the toll operations such as Joint Forge take on equipment maintenance. "One battalion commander told me that he puts more miles on his vehicles here in four months than he would in four years back home," said Gen. Shelton.

His frank discussion of equipment readiness led the chairman to directly address force modernization. Recognizing the United States as the technological leader of the world, he pointed out how technology gives the military an edge in battle.

"We have smart soldiers and if we put the latest technology in their hands, then we can fight and win quickly, decisively and overwhelmingly," said Gen. Shelton.

Gen. Shelton concluded his remarks and opened the floor to questions from several of the more than 100 soldiers in attendance. One question seemingly on everybody's mind—how long will U.S. troops be committed to this region?

Gen. Shelton explained that the long-term U.S. plan is to gradually draw-down the standing force in Bosnia.

"As things have continued to improve in Bosnia, we have drawn the force down," he said. There is currently a plan to withdraw an additional 500 to 700 soldiers from Bosnia, which takes the U.S. contingent down to a "deterrence force," according to the chairman.

"If things go well, we could reduce even further. The key is to get elements of the Bosnian government working such as the economy, the police force, the judicial system… the more of that you have, the less you need SFOR," Gen. Shelton said.

Gen. Shelton emphasized that positive change was occurring here and thanked the assembled soldiers for their dedication to the daily job of helping the people of Bosnia put their lives back together.

"While you may look at it and say, 'God, how'd this place ever get this way?' believe me, if you'd been here four or five years ago you'd have seen a completely different countryside, a completely different atmosphere among the people," said Gen. Shelton.

Personal Security Detail at the Ready

Story by Spc. Lewis M. Hilburn
Eagle Base

The 223rd Military Police Company from the Kentucky National Guard serves as the Personal Security Detail here on Eagle Base. They guard individuals called "principals," like the political advisor and others, who the commanding general of Multinational Division (North) deems necessary to protect.

The PSD works 24 hours-a-day, seven days a week. Staff Sgt. Tony Simpson, PSD NCOIC, said their job is to be ready at all times because the safety of the principal depends on it.

Staff Sgt. Simpson ensures force protection by making sure that his unit has all the equipment necessary for the mission. Staff Sgt. Simpson said that they protect the principals according to what kind of presence the principal wants or feels is necessary. "We are to be seen but not to have an overwhelming presence," he said. Staff Sgt. Aubrey Moore, security advisor for the political advisor, said the POLAD likes to act in a diplomatic manner and prefers the PSD to keep a low profile.

"We drive in nontactical vehicles because that is what my principal wants," he said.

Moore and his group carry all the equipment needed for mission security and store it in the vehicles so that his PSD team will be able to get it at a moment's notice. Spc. Andrew E. Patterson, team leader, says that he is given his orders and makes sure the mission gets done and everyone comes back safe.

The team leader is given instructions about the transport of a principal and he briefs his soldiers on the situation, Spc. Patterson said.

Spc. Corey Cadwell, a driver, ensures force protection by practicing situational awareness. "If I see something different, then I report it," he said.

Guard Units Get a Visit from Home

Story by Pfc. Daniel W. Lucas
Camp McGovern

A group of more than thirty dignitaries from Arkansas were greeted here April 9 by members of two National Guard companies from the "The Natural State" assigned to Multinational Division (North).

The group of business leaders, civic leaders, senior state National Guard officers and representatives of elected officials, visited Company D, 1st Battalion, 153rd Infantry and Company D, 3rd Battalion,153rd Infantry, to learn about the mission and living conditions of their citizen-soldiers.

Arkansas media from KATV Channel 7 in Little Rock, the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Sheridan Headlight* and *Magnolia Banner-News*, accompanied the trip. Even though their stay was short, the dignitaries made the most of their time visiting with the National Guard troops to let them know they appreciated their work here.

"I visit them wherever they are," said Col. Wayne Ruthven, senior active Army advisor to the Arkansas National Guard. "I even get some camouflage on and see them when they are in the field."

Maj. Gen. Walter L. Sharp, commander, MND(N) told the dignitaries how much he appreciated the work of their state's soldiers.

"We could not do this without the National Guard. You can be proud of their accomplishments," he said while welcoming the group the first evening.

"We could not do this without the National Guard."

Maj. Gen. Walter L. Sharp, commander, MND(N)

Maj. Gen. Sharp also thanked the business leaders and employers for their support to the soldiers and the mission.

"You will get a much better employee back after six months here. The leadership and interpersonal skills developed here will directly relate to the workplace," he said.

The two groups greeted each other like old friends and the dignitaries quickly asked questions of the soldiers while filling the National Guard soldiers in on what's been happening at home.

"There probably isn't a soldier here from the Arkansas National Guard that I don't know," said Maj. Wayne Parnell, personnel officer, 39th enhanced Infantry Brigade, Arkansas National Guard.

"I am from the small town of Sheridan, Arkansas," said Mike McNeil, managing editor, *Banner-News*. "There, everyone knows someone that is over here. It really is a small world."

The bulk of the visit was spent touring the areas in which the National Guard companies work. The tour with Co. D, 1st Bn, which is assigned to Camp McGovern, included a driving tour through the contentious areas of Orasje and weapons-storage site 29A. The company supported a raid on a bank recently in Orasje suspected of laundering money for Croatian nationalist in the Federation government.

Lt. Col. Terry Ferrell, commander, Task Force, 3rd Squadron, 7th Cavalry, at Camp McGovern had praise for the Razorback soldiers. He told the visitors he can rely on them to get the job done. "They are supporting my main effort," he said.

After a night at Camp McGovern, the group traveled to Coyote Station to visit Co. D, 3rd Bn, tour their area of operations and have lunch before returning to Eagle Base for departure.

The Arkansas leaders left impressed with the high morale and great welfare of their soldiers. More importantly, they were proud of their accomplishments and integration with the active duty.

"We were concerned about how they would get along with active units given some of the active duty and reserve problems in the past. Our visit here showed us otherwise," said Mr. Chris Masingill, district director for Congressman Mike Ross (D, 4th) summing up his thoughts on the visit.

Contributing to this article is Maj. Mike Birmingham, Public Affairs Officer, Eagle Base

123rd Signal Climbs Down Hilltop 722

Story by T.S. Jarmusz
Eagle Base

The lights were turned off, the antennas were taken down, and the gates were locked shut, as soldiers from Company D, 123rd Signal Battalion, bid a final farewell to Hilltop 722, the morning of May 10. After five years of service, Hilltop 722 was shut down. The official closing date is May 16.

In its heyday, Hilltop 722 primarily served as a relay point for radio communication between Eagle Base and Camp McGovern, according to Spc. Rickey J. Schaefer, Multi-Channel Systems Operator with the 123rd.

The 123rd was the last signal unit to occupy Hilltop 722. Now, scattered throughout Bosnia, automated machines called "repeaters" perform the duties that signal soldiers once carried out, according to Spc. Schaefer.

Because of Bosnia's mountainous terrain, Single Channel Ground and Airborne Radio System (SINGARS) communication between Eagle Base and Camp McGovern is very difficult. A relay point between the two was needed to transmit the radio signal. Hilltop 722 is approximately 30 kilometers northwest of Eagle Base, making it an ideal location.

"If we were not there, units couldn't talk with each other because the hills would get in the way of the signal," said Spc. Schaefer.

The normal operating range of a SINGARS is between 10-40 kilometers, according to Spc. Hall. With a highway distance of 76 kilometers separating Eagle Base from Camp McGovern, it was impossible for a SINGARS transmission from Eagle Base to reach Camp McGovern without the aid the 123rd.

"The distance between the two sites was too far for them to communicate with SINGARS without someone boosting the signal. We served as a mid-point to make their signal stronger and keep it going," said Spc. Charles W. Hall, systems support specialist with the 123rd.

The 123rd knew about the installations' closure for roughly two months. They spent countless hours tearing down antennas and packing radio sets for the move back to Eagle Base, according to Spc. Hall.

For soldiers of the 123rd, the move brought mixed feelings about leaving the place they called "home". For some the departure was bittersweet.

"I wish I was still up there. There were only 26 people up there, so everyone knew everyone else and we were all pretty close. But down here at Eagle Base, there is a lot more to do, and we have a real Post Exchange, which is nice," said Spc. Schaefer.

Security guards now stand watch over the deserted installation. They are the last soldiers to occupy Hilltop 722.

Lack of Electrical Safety Can Be a Shocking Experience

Story by Maj. Jack W. Matthews
Safety Officer

According to the National Electrical Safety Foundation (NESF), electrical-related incidents result in more than 41,000 residential fires, claim about 370 lives and cause over 1,400 injuries each year in the United States.

These incidents also cause more than $680 million in property damage annually.

Soldiers in Bosnia are confronted with some of the very same electrical hazards which claim an average of 370 lives yearly in the United States.

Additionally, life in the Balkans comes with its own particular types of electrical hazards that are not common to most U.S. soldiers. European 220 volts is much different from the 110 volts we are accustomed to using stateside.

Transformers are another source of confusion for first-time users.

Now, introduce approximately 3,600 U.S. soldiers and civilians into this environment, house them close together in wooden shelters and consider the results of an electrical fire caused by an unauthorized power strip.

Frayed or cracked cords can cause a shock or fire.

I urge each of you to inspect your work and living area and correct any electrical hazards that may exist. Use the following checklist as a guide:

Remove and discard all unauthorized power strips

Unauthorized power strips are defined as "power strips that are not fused or circuit - breaker protected". Unauthorized power strips have been the source of several recent fires within MND(N), costing taxpayers thousands of dollars in property damage.

Electrical cords should not be "daisy chained"

The term "daisy chain" refers to two or more extension cords or power strips plugged together.

Make sure all electrical cords are in good condition

A frayed or cracked cord could cause a shock or fire. Replace old and damaged extension cords with new ones.

Check extension cords

Check to see that extension cords are not overloaded as indicated by the ratings labeled on the cord and the appliance. Overloaded extension cords can cause fires. Change the cord to a higher rated one or unplug some appliances, and remember that extension cords should only be used on a temporary basis and are not intended as permanent wiring.

Check bulb wattage

Check the wattage of all bulbs in light fixtures and lamps to make sure they are the correct wattage.

Replace bulbs that have a higher wattage than recommended to prevent overheating that could lead to a fire.

The plastic clip-on night-light sold in the Post Exchange should not have a bulb that exceeds 40 watts. If an appliance or tool repeatedly blows a fuse, trips a circuit breaker, or has given you a shock, unplug it and have it repaired or replaced.

Unplug electrical appliances

Ensure all non-essential electrical appliances are unplugged when unattended.

Check outlets and switches

Check to see if outlets and switches are unusually warm or hot to the touch, or show signs of arcing. If so, an unsafe wiring condition could exist.

Do not use the outlet or switch and report this unsafe condition immediately to your Unit Safety Officer and to the Mayor's Office.

Following proper safety precautions can prevent electrical-related incidents.

The simple act of removing electrical cords from under rugs or using the correct type of power strips could not only save your life, but the lives and property of those around you.

Soldiers and civilians alike can help protect themselves and others from electrical accidents by taking a few minutes to check their individual living and work areas for unsafe conditions.

Outlet strips such as these require surge protectors.

No Hat, No Weapon: JCOs Play Unique Role

Story by
Air Force Maj. Richard C. Sater
Eagle Base

As the NATO alliance implemented the tenets of the Dayton Peace Accords in Bosnia-Herzegovina, accurate and current information was essential and often difficult to come by.

Enter the Joint Commission Observers.

The JCOs played a unique role in BiH in the aftermath of the war that ended in 1995. The mission falls under the category of "military operations other than war," a necessary part of a successful campaign: winning the hearts and minds of the citizens and establishing credibility in the communities via observers who look and listen impartially.

A formidable task. Ultimately, operational requirements in this country prompted the establishment of a Special Operations Command and Control Element to oversee JCO operations. Under the auspices of the SOCCE, the JCOs became a reliable source of information, not only for the Implementation Force but for the follow-on Stabilization Force as well.

Originally, the whole of BiH was divided into sectors for U.S. Army JCO teams. By August 1998, responsibilities for observation in Multinational Division Southeast and Southwest were passed along to other NATO nations. Only MND(N) remained under the watchful eye of American soldiers culled from detachments of Special Forces – the Green Berets.

The JCOs lived on the economy in the Bosnian Federation and the Republic of Srpska in rented houses, away from the conventional SFOR bases and camps. As a result, team members could move freely through the communities to gather information and facilitate communication.

"It's unconventional operations, working with people within the culture."

– Capt. Eric Coombs, JCO team leader, Brcko district

Now, a plateau of stability has been reached, and the current situation in Bosnia is much less volatile than it was several years ago, according to Brig. Gen. Les Fuller, commander of Special Operations Command-Europe. "We feel that the environment here has transcended the special operations skills," he said.

The decision is not irreversible, should the situation change once again. "If there is a requirement to bring them back, we can do that," the general said. "I think the waters are calm. Other organizations now report information to the SFOR commander."

The SOCCE commander, Maj. Richard Rhyne, and his men are assigned to Company B, 1st Battalion, 3rd Special Forces Group at Fort Bragg, N.C. – 40 soldiers from the company made up the last of the JCOs in BiH.

They traveled by two (plus one translator), crisscrossing through the villages and towns in their assigned district, meeting six or eight times a day with local citizens – politicians, police officers, farmers, business owners, parents – getting to know the territory and the inhabitants. They did not patrol in the strict sense; instead, they would stop, look and listen.

Even the duty uniform announced differences between a JCO and a conventional soldier. The JCOs wore the Battle Dress Uniform with U.S. Army and name tapes but no other insignia, no hat (not even the distinctive green beret), and no exposed weapon. Regular SFOR troops walked the streets in Kevlar helmets, body armor and M-16s slung over the shoulder.

"We're perceived as less of a threat," according to Staff Sgt. Brian Morris, also on the JCO team. That sense of ease helped them establish strong ties to the communities in the Brcko area.

The team provided a sympathetic ear for the local citizens. "Our mission is just to find out what's going on out there and tell it like it is," Capt. Coombs says. "It's not a traditional Special Forces job, but ground truth is always needed." With the wrap-up of the mission in MND(N), have the JCOs made a difference here? Staff Sgt. Morris considers the question before he answers. "Only time will tell," he said.

JCOs: Mission Accomplished

Story by Air Force Maj. Richard C. Sater
Eagle Base

Mission accomplished.

The Special Operations Command and Control Element (North) Joint Commission Observers closed shop following a ceremony May 2.

Forty members of the unit assembled outside their headquarters – located in a secluded corner on the east side of Eagle Base dubbed the "OK Corral" – to celebrate completion of their work.

The Dayton Peace Accords specified a requirement for impartial observers in Bosnia-Herzegovina. These JCOs would serve as liaisons between the local population and the NATO force commanders. When the country had reached an acceptable level of stability, the requirement would be eliminated.

The acceptable level has been attained, and SOCCE commander Maj. Richard Rhyne bid farewell to the JCO mission:

"It's finished as of today," he said. The mission of gathering information in this country no longer requires the expertise of the Army's Special Forces personnel, he said. Their talents and resources are more urgently needed elsewhere in a busy world.

Col. Hank Harris, commander of the SOCCE's parent unit– the Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force for BiH (headquartered in Sarajevo)–thanked the company for its efforts.

"After four-and-a-half years of non-stop daily operations, the JCO functions here have been rendered obsolete," he said. "Congratulations on a job well done."

Brig. Gen. Les Fuller, commander of Special Operations Command-Europe, also addressed the group. "I'm delighted that you are leaving," he said. "The operations environment here has changed, and you are no longer necessary here."

Following their remarks, Brig. Gen. Fuller, Col. Harris, and Maj. Rhyne awarded the NATO Medal and the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal to each member of the company in turn. An informal reception followed in the headquarters building.

The JCO and SOCCE troops will be gone within days, back home to Fort Bragg, N.C. From there, they will disperse once again to other hot spots where their particular expertise is required. The general suggested that Africa is a strong possibility.

"I never thought this day would come," he remarked.

Victory Day, a Celebrated Past, with a Bright Future

Story by Cadet Ignashev
Photos by Cadet A.V. Kornilov
Camp Uglijevik

The 1st Peacekeeping Russian Separate Airborne Brigade held a celebration in memory of Victory Day, a widely celebrated national holiday in the Russian Federation, specifically for those who suffered from the horrors of fascism.

Fifty-six years ago in Berlin, the Soviet Union, United States of America, United Kingdom of Great Britain and France, accepted an act of unconditional surrender by the Third Reich.

Among the guests who attended the celebration were Ambassador of the Russian Federation in Bosnia-Herzegovina, A. Grishenk; Multinational Division (North) Commander, Maj. Gen. Walter L. Sharp; Russian Peacekeeping Contingent Commander, Col. Y. Ivashko; representatives of Russian Armed Forces Headquarters, representatives of international organizations (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, United Nations, Office of High Representative, International Police Task Force) local authorities and entities armed forces commanders.

Members of the 1st Peacekeeping Russian Separate Airborne Brigade come to attention as the celebration ceremony for Victory Day begins.

The ceremony started with solemn speeches made by Ambassador Grishenko, Russian Brigade Commander Col. Vladimir Demidov and Maj. Gen. Sharp. The speakers focused on what Victory Day meant for each of their nations, and the importance of peace for all nations around the world.

"Today we repeatedly want to emphasize the significance of the great victory for all people and at the same time, we want to remind them that peace is the most valuable thing that humanity has ever been given," said Col. Demidov.

Medals were given to participants in the Chechnya local conflict, by Chief of Staff Col. Borgul.

Once speeches were made, the long-awaited part of the celebration finally came. Members of the 1st PRSAB demonstrated their world-famous hand-to-hand combat techniques, brick and bottle crushing. The show ended with a musical performance by the brigade band.

Once the celebration was over, guests were given an opportunity to tour the brigade and to discuss projects of the future development of joint-peace-keeping activities. Guests were also shown a recently opened memorial and a hospital, which will serve the needs of 1st PRSAB soldiers as well as the local population. Such occasions are an integral part of joint work as they give us the ability to understand that together, we are able to achieve much better results.

Our victory over the Nazi invaders in 1945, serves just as another good example. As Maj. Gen. Sharp stated, "Today, the greatest honor that we can bestow upon those who fought and died against fascism, is to continue our work together as friends and to continue to exemplify everyday, that spirit of cooperation."

Brick-breaking and bottle-bashing is just part of the Victory Day celebration.

Aircraft Down? Bring in the DART

Story and photos by Spc. Grant L.Calease
Camp Comanche

Members of the DART board a helicopter to go to a "crash" site. The team also practiced loading and unloading techniques during the training.

Immediately following a helicopter accident, the call goes out for help. Before any medical or maintenance teams can be brought in, the area must be secured.

The Downed Aircraft Recovery Team then "hops a chopper" to the scene, to provide the incoming teams with a secure environment to perform their mission.

"They are the security force for any downed choppers," said Sgt. 1st Class Don E. Whitmire, the NCOIC of the Base Defense Operations Center.

They are another element of the Quick Reaction Force, but the DART is unique. They have a completely different mission, said Staff Sgt. Scott A. Thomas, Company A, 504th Parachute Regiment."It's part of the QRF, but it's its own entity," said Spc. Brandon P. Bisig, a Military Policeman on the DART.

Originally the maintenance teams had no separate security force. Staff Sgt. Thomas asked about running security for them."They did their own security. When I thought about it, it made more sense to have a separate security force. It allows them to concentrate on their job," said Staff Sgt. Thomas.

Company B, 2nd Battalion,121st Infantry just came off DART duty, said Sgt. 1st Class Whitmire. Now soldiers from the 223rd Military Police Company, out of Louisville, Ky., are on the job. "If a helicopter goes down and they need maintenance and security. The team goes into secure the site," said Staff Sgt. Thomas.

Staff Sgt. Scott A.Thomas (left), Co. A, 504th Parachute Regiment, arrives on the scene where two MPs pull security during DART training.

Staff Sgt. Thomas, the DART NCOIC, conducted the training for MPs on the Camp Comanche DART. He was on a similar helicopter rescue team with 3rd Brigade, 75th Ranger Regiment in Somalia in 1993.

"The MPs were chosen because they are easier to get a hold of," said Staff Sgt. Thomas. "This job is pretty much a given for them."

The team went up in a BlackHawk and landed on a hilltop to practice their loading and unloading techniques, called "static-load" training, and aircraft orientation. This training took place at night as well as during the day to prepare the team for anything. Part of the training also consisted of actually practicing missions.

Even during a peacekeeping mission, the security of the downed aircrew and the crews working to get everything back in order is an important job. "Security is always necessary even in a peaceful area. We keep the locals away so the mechanics can do their work," said Staff Sgt. Thomas.

"This adds a whole new element to pulling security," said Spc. Bisig. "Most importantly, the training makes me better at my job."

Happy Anniversary!

Nurse Corps Marks 100 Years

Story and photo by
Spc. Lewis M. Hilburn
Eagle Base

Nurses from the 20th Combat Support Hospital celebrate the Nurse Corps' 100th anniversary with a cake.

Nurses on Eagle Base celebrated the Nurse Corps' 100th anniversary this week by hosting a cake-cutting ceremony at Task Force Medical Eagle Hospital.

The corps was founded on the recommendation of Dr. Anita Newcomb McGee, vice president of the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution.

Dr. McGee was appointed by the United States Surgeon General at the onset of the Spanish-American War to select graduate nurses for the Army. The corps became a permanent part of the Army on Feb. 2, 1901, but it was developed for all branches of service as well.

On July 9, 1918, the Nurse Corps was redesignated the Army Nurse Corps by the Army Reorganization Act of 1918. The act restricted appointments to female nurses only. Base pay was increased to $60 per month.

Today, men and women work together as nurses, serving under the same principles of the corps as when it began.

On Oct. 6, 1955, Edward L.T. Lyon, a nurse-anesthetist from Kings Park, N.Y., was commissioned a second lieutenant in the Army Nurse Corps Reserve and entered active duty on Oct. 10, 1955. Second Lt. Lyon was the first man to receive a commission in the Army Nurse Corps, according to their web page.

At its inception, 220 nurses made up the corps. Today it includes more than 4,000 nurses, Maj. Laura E. Newkirk, head operating room nurse of the 20th Combat Support Hospital from Fort Bragg, N.C., estimated.

"The Nurse Corps has come a long way," she said."We have a lot more respect now."

Due to new technology and advances in medicine, the job of a nurse has become easier, said Capt. Dawn E. Shaffer, certified registered nurse-anesthetist in the Operating Room for the 20th CSH.

The machinery they use allows them to monitor their patients more closely. New medications help the patient heal faster.

Capt. Shaffer said, "We are very proud of our nursing history." She went on to say, "I'm very honored that I can continue in the tradition of the nurses and I hope I can present myself as admirably as they did."

In closing Maj. Newkirk wanted to tell all nurses one thing – "Happy Anniversary!"

648th Engineers Assist Community

Rebuilding bridges near Lukavac allows passage of building materials

Story by
Pfc. Daniel W. Lucas
Camp McGovern

Civil Affairs is taking part in a project by the Company C, 648th Engineers to rebuild two bridges in the Lukavac area.

The first was near the town of Potocani over the Suva Bukovica streambed and the second was near the town of Blagojevici over the Lukavac stream.

The new bridges will allow heavy loads of much-needed building materials to reach small villages on the other side of the river.

"These bridges were in really bad shape and needed replacement," said Maj. Wesley Girvin, commander of the Tactical Support Team at Camp McGovern from the Civil Military Cooperation Battalion.

"Not only does rebuilding these bridges help our movement through the area, but it helps the people here as well."

"There are at least 20 families coming back," said a local resident identified only by the name "Vlidamir".

"Before the war, there were 35 houses in the area, and at least 25 of them required major repair."

"Before the war, there were large oak trees on my land," Vladamir said.

"During the war, the trees were destroyed, so now I have nothing with which to rebuild my home, or I would move back in my original home right now." He also said that there were many people with the same problem, living in the area.

"We are going to strip off all of the old timber down to the main beams," said 2nd Lt. David Henderson from Co. C.

"We will then replace it all with new timbers and bracing."

"If you want to move large amounts of building materials you need a good bridge," said Maj. Girvin.

"A load of bricks is stinking heavy and you wouldn't want them to fall through!" He also said that building bridges is not a very common thing for Stabilization___Force to accomplish.

The building of the bridges signifies that SFOR is taking a proactive role in helping to rebuild Bosnia and to assist in the freedom of movement of the people.

The building of these new bridges is just one of the many projects in which Civil Affairs is involved.

Other projects include evaluating the renovation or possible replacement of electrical and running water capabilities to the villages.

The 223rd MPs (right) battle the EOD during the Kentucky Derby volleyball tournament.

Run for the Roses

Story and photo by Spc. Joe A. Villines
Eagle Base

Two to three weeks' celebration came to a head May 5th in Lexington, Ky., when the favored event, the Kentucky Derby, was run.

Soldiers in the 223rd Military Police Company, from Lexington, deployed this year to Bosnia and celebrated the race from afar. With a push from 1st Sgt. William K. Willhoite, the American Red Cross and various other sponsors it was made possible.

An all-day volleyball tournament was held in honor of the race, with 26 teams made up of Army, Air Force, Finnish, and civilian-contractors. After the tournament, soldiers from the 223rd retreated to Triggers for Country Music Night. Country hams and biscuits, donated by the Veteran's Affairs Medical Center, were flown in from Lexington just for the occasion.

"This is Derby Day," said Eagle Base Deputy Mayor, Sgt. 1st Class Allen W. Johnson, from 1st Battalion, 121st Infantry. Sgt. 1st Class Johnson added that a lot of the (223rd MPs) are from Lexington, and have worked the Derby as police officers.

The MP company received numerous items, including shirts, hats, pins and donations from several local businesses in Kentucky to help make their day more like home. "It's totally amazing, the output we've received from home," said 1st Sgt. Willhoite. "All the things that were given to us and donated to us."

Another Kentucky resident, Elizabeth Rogers of the American Red Cross, helped organize the event. "It was a joint effort," said Rodgers, crediting 1st Sgt. Willhoite for setting up the volleyball tournament. "I helped with some of the logistics, getting the courts set up, and the publicity." The Red Cross put out flyers, e-mail announcements, American Forces Network spots and interviews with newspapers in Kentucky.

"It's not just the greatest two minutes in sports, but it's a whole two weeks—really the whole month of May is about the Derby," said Rogers.

"We thought we could at least make a day of it!"

Soldier on the Street

"What experiences have you had with the local people?"

Most of my experiences have been with refugee camps and not-for-profit organizations for womens concerns.
They've really impressed me with how dedicated they are to what they do."

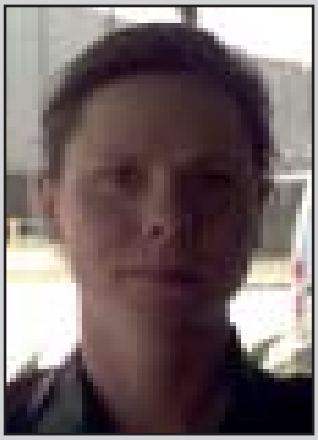
Capt. Christina Rodriquez,
3rd ID HHC

They've been very friendly. They don't mind trying to help. It's a whole different culture than back home."

Sgt. 1st Class John McMillian
1st Battalion, 121st Infantry

I used to be with the Base Camp Assessment Team, and we'd go to all the different base camps. Whenever we'd pass by, people would be happy and waving. No matter where we were go, people looked happy to see us."

1st Lt. Rhonda Peters
Division Engineers



They need more jobs. The police and military are really coming in line, but it's hard to build on if you don't have jobs. Economics plays a major part.

Capt. David Grooms
3rd ID, G-3 Training