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TALON



**549th Military Police Company
host second K-9 conference**

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McGovern soldiers patrol the Sava River

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TALON

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On the Cover — 549th Military Police Company hosts second Multinational K-9 Conference. See pages 4 & 5 for story. (Photo by Spc. Vincent Oliver, Assistant Editor)



Page 7 — Task Force Warhawk soldiers participate in drug enforcement patrol along Sava River. (Photo by Cpl. Matthew McClelland, Camp McGovern Public Affairs Correspondent)

Page 8— Task Force Med Eagle optometrist warns against wearing contact lenses while deployed. (Photo by Maj. Luis Muniz, TFME optometrist)



Stabilization Force 11 Voices

“What advice will you give your SFOR 12 replacement?”



Sgt. James Martin
Section sergeant
Troop E, 238th Cavalry
Regiment

“Strive to maintain discipline and mission focus.”



Spc. Jonathan Imel
Driver
Troop E, 238th Cavalry
Regiment

“Drive slow and watch out for dangerous drivers because complacency kills.”

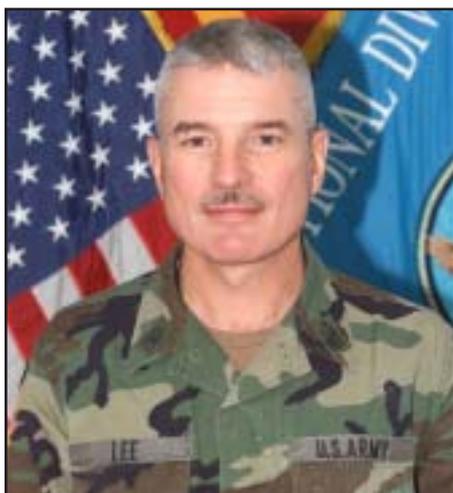


Sgt. Kurt Griffis
Section sergeant
Troop E, 238th Cavalry
Regiment

“Have your family send you plenty of easy-mac.”



Task Force Eagle
Stabilization Force
SFOR XI
Bosnia-Herzegovina



Command Sgt. Maj. Thomas Lee
Multinational Division (North)
command sergeant major

First, let me begin with an example of a command that a young soldier might receive in basic training:

"You have one minute to fall out into the company area with your footlocker and wait for the supply sergeant!"

This is a command that might frustrate soldiers and make them angry, because the purpose of the task isn't automatically apparent. It seems arbitrary, without a justifiable reason.

But if soldiers understood that the purpose was to inventory their equipment before an important command inspection, then these same orders might be accepted and executed cheerfully.

Why? Because our time is valuable. It helps when soldiers understand the logic behind the

orders they're given.

As we get ready to transition to SFOR 12, many of the soldiers here will receive orders to relocate their billeting, and these orders may seem just as puzzling and purposeless as the order to fall out with footlockers in the company area.

But I want everyone to understand why it will be necessary.

When we first arrived here in the Multinational Division (North) area of operation, some of us discovered that residential, administrative, and functional areas didn't enhance the flow of effort toward mission accomplishment. Things weren't being done efficiently. The simple truth is that some of our bases could be organized a lot better, but like the old saying goes, "It is hard to drain the pond, when you're up to your neck in alligators."

We discovered when we arrived here that a lot of systems were broken. Previous rotations had simply lived with the problems rather than fixing them. On our watch, we're going to do the right thing. We're going to fix the problems instead of handing over systems that are broken to our successors.

To do that, we'll have to do a "duffle bag drag."

Before we continue, let's recall the objectives for SFOR 11 that our commanding general, Maj. Gen. Charles H. Swannack, Jr. stated back at the beginning of the rotation. The first

objective was to move the interests of our nation forward. Second, the members of MND (North) would work to become a team, take care of each other, and accomplish our goals safely without undue risk to life and limb. And finally, we would leave our situation here better than we found it, and set up Task Force Eagle SFOR 12 for success.

These objectives are tantamount to promises. We have promised to work toward all of these things to the best of our ability.

The weeks ahead may offer us our greatest challenges yet. Getting our entire team home safely and efficiently, while providing the environment for our successors to pick up where we left off without losing momentum is the goal.

This will require us all to move or consolidate — the old "duffle bag drag." We will minimize soldier moves to the essential requirements. To the best of our ability, we want to avoid making soldiers move more than once, and we want to minimize the length of time it's necessary for soldiers to stay in temporary tents before they depart for home.

It will take a lot of effort, and there's some risk of some disruption to our normal routines. But it's the right thing to do.

It's all part of taking care of people — our own people as well as those of SFOR 12. We absolutely must put the units of SFOR 12, into the right spaces as we transition.

Drive On Task Force Eagle — Right and Sure

An excerpt from winning essay: Sharing of respect

By Staff Sgt. Ellis Canady

125th Military Intelligence Co.

Webster defines respect as the quality or state of being considered worthy of high regard. It may deceptively sound as though it is easy to obtain. In a military society, respect is not handed to an individual merely based upon a newly achieved rank. It must be earned. This can be achieved through various criteria like competency, experience and credibility. Respect is not something that one has to ask for or even demand. Once earned, those who so loyally follow will offer it openhandedly. Many new leaders want to be liked as well as respected from those around them. To be liked and respected would make for a great leader. However, if you can have only one, make sure that you are

respected.

Respect is not limited to traveling in a northern direction up the chain of command. It is most commonly thought that respect is granted to those individuals who are older, wiser, and more experienced. More often than not, older, wiser and more experienced individuals tend to stick with what has worked for them in the past. These same individuals will stick with what is "tried and true" before they take the time to think of a newer, more innovative way to do things. Subordinates do not have these conflicts. They, like the experienced veterans, are able to be creative as well as have infinite vision. They are often a valuable asset for new ideas for improving techniques and performance. Subordinates deserve respect just as much, if not more, than the experienced veterans do.

In order for a military system to run prop-

erly there must be mutual respect. The chain of command must have respect for the troops, and the troops must have respect for the chain of command. Gen. John M. Schofield best explains this thinking in the following statement:

"Respect is not limited solely to a military arena. Respect is given to many people for many different reasons. Respect can be given to the individual who has to work every hour of every day just to be able to support their family or even the camaraderie between two friends."

Some people, like myself, respect their parents for their upbringing. I respect my father and everyone like him who were either drafted or volunteered to go to war so that others did not have to. I, like so many of his troops that he led during his 24-year career, have respect for him for all that he did for our country.



Above left, 1st Sgt. Gino Carreras, 324th PSYOP Co. first sergeant, helps Sgt. Erik Holmes, 549th Military Police Company K-9 handler, demonstrate suspect take-down and control techniques. Above right, Italian MSU soldiers demonstrate the proper way to disarm and control a suspect during the Multinational K-9 Conference held at the Bratunac dog training center Saturday. Four nations were represented during this second meeting of K-9 handling professionals.

MPs host second Multinational K-9 Conference

By Spc. Vincent Oliver

Assistant Editor, 305th PAD

The 549th Military Police Company hosted the second Multinational K-9 Conference held at the Bratunac dog-training compound Saturday.

"I'm really excited about this," said Capt. Edwin Escobar, 549th MPCo. commander. "This is a great opportunity for all these K-9 handlers to demonstrate their capabilities and to develop friendships."

Professional dog handlers from the 549th MP Co., Tuzla police department, Republic of Srpska police department, Germany and Italy participated in the day's events.

Handlers showcased techniques in basic obedience commands, drug and ordnance detection and suspect takedown and control procedures.

Police officers from the Republic of Srpska were the first to display their K-9s'

talents. Lining up in a single rank 12 deep, handlers and K-9s impressed the crowd of nearly 100 spectators with the strict discipline the dogs displayed as their handlers order them to sit and stay and walked as far away as 50 meters while the dogs barely moved.

Soldiers from the 549th MP Co. continued to impress the crowd by demonstrating various techniques in suspect takedown and control. K-9 Dokie leapt through a window nearly five and a half feet in height with seemingly little effort to restrain a suspect who refused to exit his vehicle.

"It's always an honor to come out here and exchange techniques and ideas and to see how other dogs work," said Sgt. Erik Holmes, 549th MP Co., K-9 handler. "Our whole purpose is to not only bring our dogs, but all the other dogs out here to their full potential."

Italian dog handlers then demon-

strated the proper way for a K-9 to subdue and control an armed suspect.

Dog handlers from the Tuzla police department demonstrated their dog's ability to enter through an open house window, pursue and subdue a fleeing suspect.

"It's very important for us to see how the other nations work and to share their knowledge and expertise," said Emin Jusopovic, deputy commander and head K-9 trainer for the Tuzla police department. "What's most important for us, is widening the cooperation between us and the RS police."

The day ended with a barbecue where the international K-9 handling teams got the chance to sit and talk with each other, after which a "mini-World Cup" soccer tournament was held. In the end it was the police officers from the RS who claimed the top honors as the multinational K-9 conference World Cup soccer conference champions.

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Photos by Spc. Vincent Oliver



Officers from the Tuzla police department demonstrate suspect apprehension techniques during the second Multinational K-9 Conference in Bratunac Saturday.



Left, German police officers take their suspect into custody with the help of a K-9 partner. Right, A German police officer uses his K-9 partner to subdue a suspect at the Bratunac dog training center.



A Republic of Srpska police officer demonstrates K-9 narcotics detection during the second Multinational K-9 Conference Saturday at the Bratunac dog training center. The RS was one of four law enforcement K-9 handling teams that participated in the day-long event.

Hawaiian civic leaders visit MND (N)

By Staff Sgt. Kanessa Mynett

Media Operations Chief, TFE PAO

Nine civil and community leaders from the Hawaiian Islands took time away from their busy schedules and headed to Bosnia and Herzegovina last week to visit with deployed Tropic Lightning soldiers.

Community members from various organizations met with members of Task Force Eagle July 24 - Sunday. The civic leaders came from Hawaii to see the peacekeeping mission of the more than 2,200 American soldiers who are participating here in Stabilization Force 11, more than half of which are from the 25th Infantry Division (Light).

The civic leaders included Christina Kemmer, civilian aide to the Secretary of the Army; Darrlyn Bunda, representative for Council District 1 and Waipahu neighborhood board council member; John Ray, President of the Waimea Community Association and the President of the Hawaii Leeward Planning Conference; Richard "Dickie" Nelson III, Governor's Liaison Officer to west Hawaii; Peter Young, Deputy Managing Director for Hawaii County; Albert Silva, chairperson for the Waianae Coast Neighborhood Board; Cynthia Rezentes, outgoing chairperson of the Waianae Neighborhood Board; Phoebe Saucerman, President of the Waianae Military Civilian Advisory Council; and retired Maj. Jerry Headley, President of the 3/4 Cavalry Chapter, 25th Infantry Division (Light) Association.

During the civic leaders' five-day stay in the Balkans, they toured Eagle Base and Forward Operating Base Connor, two of the four American military camps in Multinational Division (North). Each representative was assigned a "Ranger Buddy," a 25th ID (L) soldier to serve as escort, throughout the visit.

Kemmer said watching the soldiers interact in the community had a huge impact on her and the important role the peacekeepers play in Bosnia's future.

"It's appropriate that the 25th is here," Kemmer said. "Soldiers from Hawaii have the experience of living with diversity. Having a multi-cultural background helps them to interface and integrate better than other groups, I believe."

One soldier, who spent time with the island visitors, echoed Kemmer's assessment of Hawaii-based soldiers' perspective and influence.

Sgt. 1st Class Alice Blake, Co. B, 1st Battalion, 25th Aviation Regiment, said, "Hawaii is a big melting pot of people that get along. So are the Army and the 25th ID. I think we set an example. If we can get along, we can help the people of Bosnia do the same thing."

Traveling the countryside gave each an opportunity to see first hand the devastation of the last decade's war, which left more than 200,000 people dead over a four-year span.

An aerial over flight gave the visitors a unique perspective of the economically-troubled nation. The moun-



Photos by Staff Sgt. Kanessa Mynett

Richard "Dickie" Nelson III, Governor's Liaison Officer to west Hawaii, and 1st Lt. Andrew Rose, Joint Visitors Bureau project officer, chat during a visit to Tuzla.

tainous terrain, with deep valleys and dense forests, seen from above, shields the eye from the obvious scars left by the war.

The group toured the local communities throughout the region, getting a better understanding of the overall peacekeeping mission and the neighborhoods the men and women of SFOR 11 patrol each day. They had an opportunity to see both the Federation portion of Bosnia, as well as the Republic of Srpska, the most historically significant area in the Division sector.

One stop included the Srebrenica Memorial, the site where some 8,000 men and boys were separated from their loved ones in July 1995 and were said to be executed by Serb forces.

"When we're at home, and we read about events like this in the paper, we can turn the page and go on to something else. When we watch something like this on TV, and it shows these events, we can change the channel. These guys, when they go out on patrol, they live and breathe it every day, and it's got to be tough on them," Young said. "It's remarkable."

He went on to add that he will return to Hawaii with a different "sense of normal" and it's important, he said, that people realize when they see soldiers at home the sacrifices they make.

"It's to prepare them to come to an environment like this," he said. "And this is not anything like home."



Civic leaders visiting from Hawaii pose with members of Task Force Eagle stationed at Eagle Base during a recent visit to Bosnia. The civic leaders toured other key spots in Multinational Division (North).

TF Warhawk tightens circle on illegal drug trade

By Cpl. Matthew McClelland

Camp McGovern Public Affairs correspondent

In the short moments after the sun sets and before the moon rises, four soldiers climbed out of their tactical vehicles loaded down with night vision and surveillance equipment. The troops in the trucks continued rolling on to their objectives leaving their comrades to move quietly on foot into their hiding positions.

Soldiers from 2nd Platoon, Troop E, 238th Cavalry Regiment, were conducting an anti-smuggling surveillance operation along the Sava River. Croatia, just on the other side of the river, is a short boat ride away. With the hope of identifying possible smuggling activity, the platoon split up into four separate elements.

Two mounted teams staged their vehicles in different positions along the river and, with the use of night vision scopes mounted to their M-240B machine guns, kept "eyes on" their objective.

The cavalry troopers relished the mission as a chance to exercise their scouting and soldiering skills.



Photos by Cpl. Matthew McClelland

Spc. John Ashton of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Bn., 151st Inf. Regt. sits in the turret of a HMMWV and waits for the sun to set before his team departs under the cover of darkness.

"This was a rare opportunity for us to actually perform as cavalry soldiers. We haven't had much of a chance to do that here," said Spc. Braxton Shirar, a driver for one of the two surveillance vehicles. "It was great to get back into camo paint and be tactical again."

The four dismounted soldiers made up the other two teams. Working in pairs, they took advantage of the riverbank's natural camouflage as they crouched quietly. With use of night vision goggles and binoculars, they kept a close eye on the

river.

Troop E's commander established his command center, and as the moon cleared the horizon and came out from behind the clouds, all the soldiers were in place watching the river. Their task was cut and dry: monitor the river traffic to and from the shore and report any suspicious activity to the command center.

"We gathered a good amount of intelligence that will facilitate missions in the future. This operation was very beneficial," said 2nd Lt. Charles Grady, E Troop 2nd

platoon leader.

The Troop's leaders said this mission is laying a foundation for others to follow, as they continue to contribute to maintaining a safe and secure environment in Bosnia as it works to rebuild its economic infrastructure.

"I am very proud of my soldiers, they went in there with the knowledge of the mission and what was required of them," said Sgt. Kurt Griffis, one of the surveillance vehicle commanders. "They set up our surveillance point and performed their jobs flawlessly."



A soldier keeps a close eye out during a night patrol along the Sava River. With almost 100 percent illumination from a near-full moon, the soldiers had plenty of light to see any activity on the river.



Lt. Col. Courtney Carr, TF Warhawk commander, and 2nd Lt. Charles Grady, 2nd Pltn. leader scan the area for any suspicious activity.

TFME optometrist warns against contact lenses

By Spc. Vincent Oliver

Assistant Editor, 305th PAD

There is a little known danger that is stalking the soldiers deployed to Bosnia and Herzegovina, according to Maj. Luis Muniz, Task Force Med Eagle optometrist. The most common eye injury to soldiers here at Eagle Base are contact lenses-related injuries according to Muniz.

“When I ask patients with contact lens related eye injuries, ‘why are you wearing contact lenses when you know you’re not supposed to?’ their classic answer is ‘I didn’t know that I’m not supposed to wear contact lenses here,’” said Muniz.

According to Army Regulation 40-5, soldiers are not permitted to wear contact lenses during field exercises or during nuclear, chemical and biological gas chamber exercises.

“The regulation is there as a guide. However, soldiers are at risk even while deployed due to conditions in the air and water they might not be aware of. This then becomes a readiness issue,” said Muniz.

Bosnia has different particulates in the air that U.S. soldiers are generally not accustomed to, according to Muniz. “Because we are not accustomed to the environment here in Bosnia, we should be playing it safe,” Muniz said.

While Eagle Base is smaller than most military installations both inside U.S. borders and out, it would seem that soldiers stationed here at Eagle Base are exposed to less risk than they would be at a larger, more populated installation. According to Muniz, while it’s certainly a factor, the most important issue is not necessarily the amount of pollutants in the air, but the time it would take for a soldier with an eye injury to get to appropriate care.

“At any post or base in the states, at a moment’s notice, we can find that tertiary level of care that can mean the difference between loss of eyesight and minimal damage. When dealing with eye injuries, time is critical,” said Muniz. In the case of soldiers stationed here in Bosnia, that next level of care is at the Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, in Landstuhl, Germany.

Because contact lenses are not a natural occurrence in the human eye, the body treats them as foreign objects. It launches a natural defense mechanism as a result of wearing the lenses.

Contact lenses also make the eye more susceptible to infection and injury because it limits the amount of oxygen and nutrients that are needed to maintain optimal health, according to Muniz.

“The eye’s natural defenses are no longer intact when you wear contact



Maj. Luis Muniz

An ulcerated cornea was the result of one soldier wearing contact lenses while being deployed in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The soldier came in contact with a strain of bacteria common in BiH.

lenses. That’s all it takes for opportunistic organisms to take advantage of you,” Muniz said.

According to Muniz, contact lenses act as a culture on which microscopic pollutants and bacteria are absorbed and then become trapped between the lens and the cornea. He recommends that if soldiers do decide to wear contact lenses, that they at least should be disposable.

One soldier stationed in the Multinational Division (North) theatre of operations has experienced the dangers of a serious eye injury as a result of infection due to contact lens wear. Because of the nature of her job, the soldier’s identity cannot be revealed, but her story is compelling nonetheless.

The soldier began experiencing redness and some minor discomfort in one of her eyes one evening while on a mission. Initially, she thought it was a common reoccurring condition to which she usually would just remove her lenses to relieve.

“When my eye started to hurt, I thought it was stress related, as a result of working long hours, but then I became very sensitive to the light, to the point where I couldn’t open my eye,” said the soldier.

Fortunately, her mission brought her to Eagle Base where she decided it would be best to visit the TFME emergency room.

Muniz, the only optometrist in MND (N), was scheduled to be in Butmir that particular weekend the soldier showed up; however, he had cancelled his trip at the last minute and was on hand when she came in.

After examining her, Muniz decided her infection had advanced to such a state that she would need to be admitted.

“I knew that something was wrong because the doctor seemed worried,” the soldier said.

As it turned out, the soldier’s injury, a corneal ulcer, was very serious and more than likely would have led to a significant loss of eyesight had it not been treated when it was.

“She was very close to being emergency med-evac’ed to Germany,” said Muniz.

Muniz was able to employ a new medical technology called Tele-Optometry. Tele-Optometry allows an optometrist to photograph a patient’s eye with a specialized digital camera. That information, along with a very specific notation of what the doctor is seeing, is forwarded to a specialist at the LRMC via the Internet.

This allowed Muniz to consult with the very same specialists that the soldier would have been treated by had she been flown to the LRMC.

The specialist at LRMC confirmed that Muniz’ prognosis was correct and recommended a radical treatment for the patient. After a week-long stay in the hospital, the soldier began responding favorably to the treatment.

“I just remember sitting in the hospital bed not being able to see, thinking this could be horrible. I owe Dr. Muniz a ton of gratitude,” said the soldier.

“The important thing is that we got the soldier the appropriate level of care and that she will recover from this injury,” Muniz said.

All Task Force Eagle soldiers should strive to maintain a high state of mission readiness. Any action that could jeopardize that readiness should be judged against their personal commitment to their mission.