

JUNE 27, 2003

# TALON



## **Read to Your Kids**

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**Family Affair  
Snapshots**

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# TALON

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## Chaplains' Corner

# It's no secret – marriage takes work

by Chaplain (Lt. Col)  
**Don Davidson**  
*Deputy Command Chaplain*



**Davidson**

This edition of the Talon is being published on the date of my parent's 55th wedding anniversary. My mother and father-in-law celebrated their 50th anniversary last December. How did they do that?

More weddings take place in June than any other month of the year. This is the first time in many years that I have not stood before couples asking them to pledge to each other life-long fidelity as part of their vows.

Sadly we know that nearly 50 percent of U.S. marriages end in divorce. My fellow chaplains have had many conversations with SFOR soldiers who are concerned about their own marriages, or wondering

about getting married after they are released from active duty.

Are there any secrets to a long marriage? Secrets, no. Below are five approaches, which are common to the thriving marriage relationship:

■ Care more about the other's needs than your own. Listen!

■ Your marriage vows are promises you made to each other — and God. Be honest.

■ Husband and wife are both imperfect and human. Forgive.

■ Continue to date each other after marriage, and after having children. Love!

■ You are supposed to be different people. Try not to control or change the other. Respect.

In July, the chaplains on Eagle Base will be offering a short marriage course called: "Tips for the Clueless." It is part of our effort to provide our soldiers the best resources for reunion with their families. Everyone is welcome.

Long and thriving marriages take commitment, and honesty. I wish all of our couples the very best.

## From the editor

*The following is a poem written by Becky Tuskiewicz, whose husband, Richard, is stationed on Eagle Base with the 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation Regiment from Topeka, Kan. Courtesy of The Salina Journal.*

## A wife's prayer

Watch dear Lord this soldier of mine.

Let him know all wounds heal with time.

Let him know all was not lost; That here I will stand until the day,

There is no ocean between us and no mountains in the way.

Leave not his honor lying in

the dust.

But bring him home to me you must.

Guide his sword he holds for you.

Save his soul, his brothers too.

Guide him home back to me,

I ask you this dear Lord,

God please.

Amen.

**"The meeting of two personalities is like the contact of two chemical substances: If there is any reaction, both are transformed."**

— Carl Jung

## The Talon welcomes letters to the editor.

If you have something to write about, send us an e-mail or drop off a letter at the Talon office, Building 1, just inside the Pedestrian Gate. Letters should be limited to 150 words and include the author's unit and phone number. We reserve the right to edit all submissions.



**About the cover:** Capt. Chad Dunham is videotaped reading to his children recently as part of the Public Affairs' *Read to your Kids* program. More than 30 soldiers on Eagle Base have taken part in the program so far, the tapes of which are sent to the soldiers' homes. *by 2nd Lt. Chris Dunphy*

# Saturday morning at the Brcko library

by Command Sgt. Maj. Terry F. Eyler  
1-167th Cavalry Squadron

It is Saturday morning in the center of Brcko's business district. People are bustling to the market for their daily supplies of meat, fruit, and vegetables. On the square stands the Brcko Library, an old converted synagogue. The second floor currently buzzes in a whirl of activity, where approximately 25 children ages 10 to 12 anxiously await the start of an English class. During their two-hour class, they will be exposed to English grammar, spelling and reading.

What is all the excitement about? The sure-footed sound of three or four people coming up the stairs. These people are Stabilization Force 13 soldiers from Nebraska, or Task Force North. They've been attending the classes every Saturday since the start of their rotation to assist the children with their reading.

It's obvious by their smiles that the children appreciate the soldiers' presence.

Each soldier has his own small group of three to five students that read a story chosen by the soldier.

The children take turns reading as the others in the group follow along in their books. Each student reads a paragraph and then the group discusses any difficult words.

The most difficult words are ones of abstract meaning such as feelings, or emotions. Sometimes there is no direct translation, so the soldiers interpret as closely as they can. We all help each other, since the children often know far more English than the soldiers know Bosnian.

Every student is rewarded for his or her success, as there are no failures. The very fact that the students are there on Saturday morning instead of staying home is to their credit. The family and school support



by Spc. Brian Prann

## Task Force North Command Sgt. Maj. Terry F. Eyler reads to Bosnian children during an English reading class in downtown Brcko recently.

network needed to encourage each child's attendance is also a positive factor.

The class is much more than reading and speaking English. It's a social event for the students and the soldiers. As each Saturday passes everyone gets to know each other just a little bit better. They share pictures of home, mom and dad, siblings, pets, and what they accomplished during the week at school and work.

What are the goals of this class? The students hope to improve their English language through reading and conversation.

They also seek to sharpen their social skills with other children from different religious,

social and economic backgrounds, and expand their general knowledge about the United States.

What are the goals for the soldier? They expect the students to gain confidence in their abilities to read, write and comprehend the English language. They hope that through interaction, they'll also better their understanding of U.S. soldiers, realizing that we are people just like them.

Ultimately, the soldiers want to help the students enjoy their childhood, while nurturing in them an appreciation for a society that cares about its community's emotional and mental growth.



Photos by Canadian Sgt. Carole Morissette

**Preparing to blow** Canadian Sappers from the 13th Field Squadron, 1st Combat Engineer Squadron joined SFOR soldiers from the United States, Turkey, Poland and Romania recently to destroy more than 22,000 ordnance items. The ordnance came from a weapons storage site in Dobo in the U.S. area of responsibility. The Sappers are serving as part of a six-month mission known as Operation Palladium, a NATO peace-support mission and Canada's contribution to peace in the Balkans.



## A family

## Family members deploy to Bosnia

by Master Sgt.  
D. Keith Johnson  
343rd MPAD

Deployments for most soldiers mean separation from families. But for some members of Stabilization Force 13, that separation anxiety is lessened a small amount. There are several soldiers deployed to Bosnia and Herzegovina who are here with brothers, sisters, fathers, sons, mothers and husbands and wives.

Sgt. Donald Simpson Sr., and his brother Spc. James Simpson, have been members since 1976, of Company A, 4th Battalion, 118th Infantry Regiment, which is part of Task Force South.

The two joined the South Carolina Army National Guard unit after a high school coach took several students to Fort Jackson to see equipment and facilities.

"We joined as soon as we could," said James.

Sgt. Christopher Simpson, Donald's son, joined in 1997.

"I saw my dad coming home from drill and wanted to be part of the military," said Christopher. Christopher has plans for his 7-month-old son. "Hopefully, he'll follow in our foot-

steps."

All three of the Simpsons are from Clinton, S.C.

Maj. Dana Shopfner met her husband, Maj. Bruce Shopfner, while both were attending the Combined Arms and Staff Service School on Fort Leavenworth, Kan. They celebrated their 3-year anniversary in May on Eagle Base.

Dana joined the Kansas Army National Guard thirteen years ago as a private first class, then went to officer candidate school. She is a desk officer for Joint Military Affairs. Bruce is a battle captain and was in the Navy for 4 years before joining the Kansas Guard. They've been in the same unit since April 2002.

"We haven't had any conflicts," said Dana.

Spc. Sara Childs and Sgt. Robert Childs met in Korea while on active duty in 1999. After leaving active duty, they joined the Kansas Guard, marrying shortly after.

Sara is a document analyst with JMA. Robert is a federation liaison officer driver with JMA.

Both are still in college. Sara is studying to be an elementary school teacher and Robert is finishing his degree in com-



by Capt. Brian Tolar

(Front to back) Sgt. Donald Simpson Sr., Sgt. Christopher Simpson, and Spc. James Simpson pause while working on a Bradley Fighting Vehicle.

puter communications.

Neither was too concerned about the future. "We'll end up where we end up," said Sara.

One unique aspect of the National Guard and reserve is

that the units are located in cities and towns across the United States. Often that means family members are in the same unit. When the unit deploys, the family goes along.

## Two of a kind – Sisters share similar lives, careers

by Spc. Felicia Whatley  
Contributing Writer

Twins Rosalia and Rosana Maldonado, 260th Military Intelligence Battalion from Miami, Fla., were recently promoted to captains here on Eagle Base.

The sisters enlisted in the Florida Army National Guard with older sister Melissa 13 years ago. All three sisters are now captains in the same battalion.

After achieving identical scores on the Army ASVAB test, the twins began their military careers training together at the same basic training post, and continued on together during Advanced Individual Training, the Primary Leadership Development Course and Officer Candidate School.

Although they always served in different training platoons, they somehow scored the same. During each phase of

their training the sisters continued to achieve identical scores on all their tests.

"Basic training was the hardest. We were in the same battery but different platoons. We weren't allowed to confer with one another. We were dropped often for just looking at one another," said Rosalia.

The twins always found a way to communicate with one another through a medium, their mother, who would update each one on how the other twin was doing.

"Our parents were concerned about us getting deployed but since we are to-

gether they are comforted," said Rosana.

Rosalia and Rosana share similar parallel lives in their civilian careers as well. They are both middle school science teachers at the same school and they are roommates.

"People think we do everything together but in the Army we have different companies to lead, and in our civilian lives we have separate classes to teach," said Rosalia.

Although the twins lead separate lives in the 260th they both find time to enjoy their off-duty interests together, which include running and drinking

# My affair

## Brothers enjoy Guard, interests together

Story and photo by Sgt. 1st Class Ronald D. Covington  
343rd MPAD

Many soldiers from different countries serve together in Stabilization Force 13 and become brothers and sisters at arms, working together to ensure peace for the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Cox brothers are three of them; they, however, have been brothers at arms since 1994.

"My brothers and I joined the Nebraska Army National Guard on March 10, 1994, at a small cafe in Hebron, Neb.," said Sgt. Christopher Cox, of Doniphan, Neb.

The three now serve together on Camp McGovern in Troop B, 1st Squadron, 167th Cavalry Regiment, also known as Task Force North.

Christopher said the brothers have a lot of similar interests, in addition to the Guard.

All three of the brothers enjoy the outdoors, hunting and fishing. In the evenings, they exercise together and enjoy an occasional cup of coffee or tea.

Sgts. James and Jeffery Cox have another similar trait — they're twins, and both serve as food service specialists in the

Guard, although on McGovern they both serve as "infantrymen" said Jeffrey.

Christopher normally serves as a Bradley Fighting Vehicle and M-1 Abrams mechanic with the Nebraska Guard, but like his brothers, he's also an infantryman here.

"And I wouldn't have it any other way," Christopher said. "We serve where we're needed."

His wife Kristy and two children, Hayden, 7 and Danton, 4 eagerly await his return. He enjoys sharing his outdoors adventures with his wife and children.

Christopher's civilian job is as a mechanic for the Nebraska Military Department where he provides maintenance for a variety of units in the Nebraska Army National Guard.

James' wife Melody and two children Bayley, 4, and Hunter, 18 months, live in Milford, Neb., where James works as an electrician.

Jeffery is an electrical instructor at Central Community College in Grand Island. His wife, Carisa, and newborn child, Alayana, 8 months, reside in Blue Hill, Neb.

"We all miss our families but



The three Cox brothers share many interests including hunting, fishing, and even posing at a pool table for a public affairs photographer. From left: Christopher, James and Jeffrey Cox.

like everyone here on McGovern, we believe in what we're doing here," said Jeffrey.

Christopher agrees. "Although it may not always seem like it, we feel we're making a difference.

"We think we're helping the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina just by our pres-

ence."

Christopher said they all enjoy their jobs on McGovern, which helps ease the burden of being away from home and family for so long.

"We're glad we're here, and that we've had this opportunity. But still, we'll be glad to go home at the end," he said.

coffee at Alma's Juice Bar on Eagle Base.

Overall, they've enjoyed their time on Eagle Base and know that much of that enjoyment comes from their being able to spend the deployment together.

"Everyone says that deployments are supposed to be hard because you're so far from home and family, but it hasn't been like that for me," Rosana said. "And I know that's because my sister's here with me."

Looking forward to the future, the twins will lead side-by-side but independently as sisters, teachers and soldiers.



by Sgt. 1st Class Ray Simmons



Twins Rosalia (left) and Rosana Maldonado are promoted to captain during a recent ceremony on Eagle Base by MNB (North) Commander Brig. Gen. James R. "Ron" Mason.

# Snapshots

## Photos capture MNB (North) walking wounded



by Sgt. Guy D. Choate

Staff Sgt. Michelle Covington makes change for Spc. Maurice Laney at the Eagle Base Post Office from her rolling desk chair.



by Master Sgt. D. Keith Johnson

Staff Sgt. Joe Jones, the orthopedic NCOIC for Task Force Medical Eagle, puts the finishing touches on a cast for ITT security officer Sean Kennedy.



by 2nd Lt. Chris Dunphy

Information Operations Maj. Danny Thomasson doesn't let his sling interfere as he performs his duties.



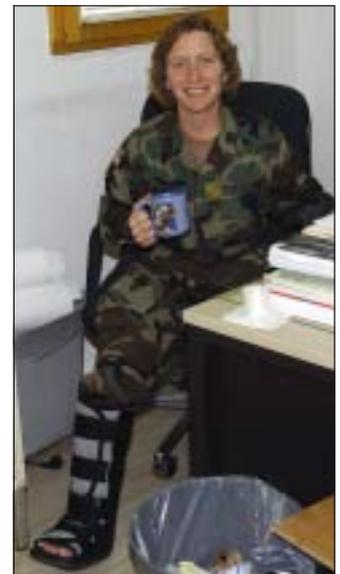
by Master Sgt. Pat Pierson

Staff Sgt. Keandra Shingleton, left, Chief Warrant Officer 2 Indulis Dambro, and Sgt. Patricia Leihy show off their ailments.

**“Sometimes I lie awake at night and I ask, ‘Why me?’ And the voice says, ‘Nothing personal, your name just happened to come up.’”**

**– Charlie Brown**

Capt. Denise Alexander enjoys a cup of coffee in her “Tigger” cup at the Task Force Medical Eagle S-1 office.



by Master Sgt. D. Keith Johnson

## On the home front

News items of interest to Task Force Eagle members

### Georgia



#### Former Atlanta mayor dies

**ATLANTA** – Maynard Jackson, a three-term mayor of Atlanta and one of its most charismatic civic leaders, died in Washington Sunday night of a heart attack. He was 65.

Bunnie Jackson-Ransom, his ex-wife, said she had few details. She was boarding a plane back to Atlanta from the Rainbow/PUSH convention in Chicago.

She said the couple's son called her of the news.

The Rev. Jesse Jackson announced Jackson's death to a stunned Chicago audience.

Maynard Holbrook Jackson Jr., a great-grandson of Cobb County slaves, was launched from Atlanta's black aristocracy, graduated from Morehouse College at 18 years old and was elected in 1973 the first black mayor of a major Southern city.

– *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*

### Maryland



#### Schools graded on attendance

**BOSTON** – Massachusetts schools, which have been judged for the past few years based on their students' performance on the MCAS, will soon face other measuring sticks: graduation rates and attendance.

The federal No Child Left Behind Act requires states to measure whether their schools are making progress based on more than test scores — the gauge used last year to label 194 Massachusetts schools as "needing improvement" and

to launch school choice for some families and free private tutoring for others.

The state Board of Education is poised to adopt two more ways of evaluating schools under the federal law. In the proposal, high schools would be judged by the percentage of their students who graduate, and middle and elementary schools would be held accountable for how many days a year their students attend school on average.

– *Boston Globe*

### Mississippi



#### Reserve unit returns home

**JACKSON** – Families and friends of the 365th Corps Support Battalion welcomed home the Army Reserve unit Sunday, honoring members for their wartime service.

The troops returned after spending about four months in Fort Benning, Ga., where they trained in preparation for possible overseas deployment in Operation Enduring Freedom. But because the conflict in Iraq ended quickly, their services weren't needed.

"We were prepared to do our job," Maj. Tom Isonhood said of the Jackson unit's 50 members. "I think there were some people who were disappointed, but all of that was beyond our control."

Five months before the unit was mobilized, Isonhood adopted a son, Thomas Turner Isonhood. He plans now to get reacquainted.

Soldiers and families were offered reunion counseling.

– *Jackson Clarion-Ledger*



Sgt. 1st Class Alvie Davis rummages through a box of books looking for one to read to his children.

## Soldiers read to their kids from Bosnia

Story & photo by  
Master Sgt.

One of the negative aspects of a military deployment is missing out on those day-to-day small things a soldier does with his or her family. A new program being offered in Bosnia and Herzegovina to U.S. soldiers tries to rectify that.

The Task Force Eagle public affairs office has implemented the "Read to your Kids" program for U.S. soldiers in the Multinational Brigade (North) area.

Deployed soldiers choose a children's book and are videotaped reading the book. The tape and book are mailed home to be watched and read by the children and grandchildren of the soldiers.

The program was started after an article ran in *Stars and Stripes* describing a similar program aboard U.S. Navy ships.

A publisher agreed to donate the first 50 books for the program, and the tapes and envelopes are provided for mailing home.

So far, Sgt. 1st Class Brian Stribling has videotaped more than 35 readers since the start

of the program. Stribling is the broadcast noncommissioned officer in charge for the 343rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, a U.S. Army Reserve unit from North Little Rock, Ark.

"Anything that helps the soldiers feel closer to their families is a good thing," said Stribling.

The program has been well received by the deployed troops.

"It's a phenomenal program," said Sgt. 1st Class Alvie Davis. Davis, from Lakeland, Fla., is a member of the 260th Military Intelligence Battalion, a Florida Army National Guard unit based in Miami.

Maj. Carla Hale, one of the first to be recorded, was glad to be able to send the book and tape home to her two-year-old son. "He's watched it several times," she said. Hale, from Fairway, Kan., is a member of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 35th Infantry Division (Mech.), from Fort Leavenworth, Kan.

A box of another 50 donated books was received from the Grafenwoehr Library.

Call the public affairs office at 762-0190 to schedule your turn to "Read to your Kids."

# News You Can Use

## 4th of July activities

### Friday, July 4

**8 a.m.** One-Miler Flag Run starting at East Gate. Opening speech by Brig. Gen. James R. "Ron" Mason following an invocation by the chaplain. Racer Bobby Allison and the Miller Lite Girls will be at the finish line at the Finnish PX.

**10 a.m.** One-Pitch Softball Tournament (Softball Field)

**11 a.m.** Tug-of-War (Minue Park)

**11 a.m.** Barbecue at Minue Park

**11 a.m.-1 p.m.** World Freedom Tour featuring Bobby Allison and the Miller Lite Girls (Minue Park)

**Noon** Sand Volleyball Tournament (Minue Park)

**1 p.m.** 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament (Peacekeepers Hall)

**3 p.m.** Hungarian Army Band (Minue Park)

**3:30 p.m.** Horseshoes Tournament

**3:30 p.m.** Dunking Booth for the commanders

**5 p.m.** Table Tennis Tournament (Fitness Center)

**8 p.m.** Top-40 band, "Off the Wall" (Open Air or Triggers/Peacekeepers Hall)

### Saturday, July 5

**5 p.m.** Dunking Booth for the commanders

**5 p.m.** 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament (Peacekeepers Hall)

**5 p.m.** One-Pitch Softball Tournament (Softball Field)

**5 p.m.** Sand Volleyball Tournament (Minue Park)

**5 p.m.** Horseshoes Tournament

**8 p.m.** Rock band, "Power-X" (Open Air or Triggers/Peacekeepers Hall)

### Sunday, July 6

**11 a.m.** Picnic (Minue Park)

**Noon** One-Pitch Softball Championship Game (Softball Field)

**1 p.m.** Closest to the Pin (Fitness Center)

**1 p.m.** Horseshoes Championship

**1 p.m.** 50-meter Litter Stretcher Relay Race (Football Field)

**2 p.m.** 3-on-3 Basketball Championship (Peacekeepers Hall)

**3 p.m.** Sand Volleyball Championship (Minue Park)

**6 p.m.** Awards Presentation (Minue Park or Peacekeepers Hall)

**7 p.m.** Clean-Up

All events are subject to change.

## Reminder

### *Soldier support —* **Begin award, NCOER, OER preparation now**

Due dates for submission of awards, NCOERs and OERs for Task Force Eagle-deployed soldiers is as follows:

#### Awards

MSM to G-1 NLT July 1

ARCOM to G-1 NLT Aug. 1

AAM to G-1 NLT Aug. 1

#### NCOERs/OERs

HHC NCOERs to G-1 NLT Sept. 1 with end date of Sept. 30.

HHC OERs to G-1 NLT Sept. 1 with end date of Sept. 30.

Suspense dates of NCOERs and OERs for units other than those supported by HHC NLT Aug. 8.

Submission of these recommendations or reports after these dates may result in not being able to clear Eagle Base for departure to demobilization station or not getting an award.

## A friendly gesture



by Capt. Clay L. Adamkavicius

**Staff Sgt. Joseph Ferguson receives flowers from a girl outside of the village of Svojat. Ferguson is a squad leader with the reconnaissance section of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 123rd Armor Regiment.**