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TALON



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New ground

Non-citizen but all American

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TALON

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Tax Assistance Center available

Staff Sgt. Eric Hanson
NCOIC/Legal Assistance

A Tax Assistance Center, located at the Eagle Base Legal Assistance Office in building number 1019, opened Wednesday. It will be in operation every Saturday from 10 a.m. until 10 p.m. and Wednesdays from 2 p.m. until 10 p.m., through March 13. The center will be able to provide assistance for individual and joint (if you have a power of attorney from your spouse) federal and state income tax preparation and filing. The center will not have the ability to provide assistance for corporate or small business income tax returns.

All Soldiers deployed overseas are entitled to an automatic six-month extension beginning the date of redeployment. With this said, it is up to each individual whether they would like to file their returns while overseas, or to wait until their return to the U.S. The center will have three full-time preparers on staff during the operating hours. However, if you anticipate that your return will take more than 30-45 minutes, the center representatives ask that Soldiers call for an appointment in order to keep

wait times to a minimum.

Note: The above prescribed extension applies to Soldiers' federal tax returns. Some states have similar provisions and some do not. Please contact the Department of Revenue for your home state for more information regarding state tax return extensions.

In other tax news, reservists who stay overnight more than 100 miles away from home while in service (e.g., for a drill or meeting) may deduct unreimbursed travel expenses (transportation, meals and lodging) as an above-the-line deduction. This was a provision President Bush signed into law as part of the Military Family Tax Relief Act of 2003. The deduction is limited to the rates for such expenses authorized for federal employees, including per diem in lieu of subsistence. Effective for tax year 2003, taxpayers will use Form 2106 or 2106-EZ to figure the deduction amount and carry it as a "write-in" to Form 1040, line 33, putting the letters "RC" and the amount on the dotted line and including this subtraction in the entry for line 33.



About the cover: Polish EOD Soldiers spread flake TNT on munitions that are prepared for destruction at the VR Range. The flake TNT is commercially manufactured from explosives removed from demilitarized munitions. Photo by Maj. Jarrod Krull, TFE PAO

New ground



TF Iron Humvees lineup at Camp McGovern in preparation for Operation Iron Velvet earlier this month.



Sgt. Ryan Gould (left) and Sgt. Troy Wendlandt conduct a map route recon before the operation.

Iron Soldiers first to conduct harvest in former Russian sector

Story and photos by
Sgt. Brian Taylor
TF Iron PAO

BIJELJINA, BiH – Task Force Iron Soldiers went where no other American Stabilization Force Soldiers

have gone before.

They were the first Americans to conduct an Operation Active Harvest mission mid-

“We could be here for the next 20 years and still be collecting weapons.”

– Sgt. Ryan Gould

January between this city and Ugljevik in the former Russian sector of operations.

At one house, Soldiers met a resident who was waiting to turn in five rifle grenades and one hand grenade to Russian SFOR soldiers. However, the Russian contingent left Bosnia and Herzegovina last year.

“We could be here for the next 20 years and still be collecting weapons,” commented Sgt. Ryan Gould, TF Iron.

The operation, named Iron Velvet, also was conducted in Gradacac earlier in January. Iron Velvet is similar to a previous mission where Soldiers searched the citizens’ out buildings. The purpose



Spc. Andy Klienfehn (left) and Sgt. Ryan Gould search a box in a barn. No weapons were found.



Iron Soldiers collected these rifle grenades during the operation.

was to collect illegal weapons and munitions people might still possess since the 1992-95 war.

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Gould

Bijeljina. Company A, 2nd

Bn., 194th Armor Soldiers conducted the mission in the Gradacac area.

As Soldiers went from house to house, they asked the residents if they had any illegal weapons they wanted to turn in.

Most residents said they didn't have any weapons or munitions. The Soldiers still searched the resident's out buildings, including smoke houses, barns and

garages.

"For the most part, people are extremely cooperative," Gould said.

Spc. Jacob Kriesel searched most of the out buildings while Gould talked to the residents and filled out

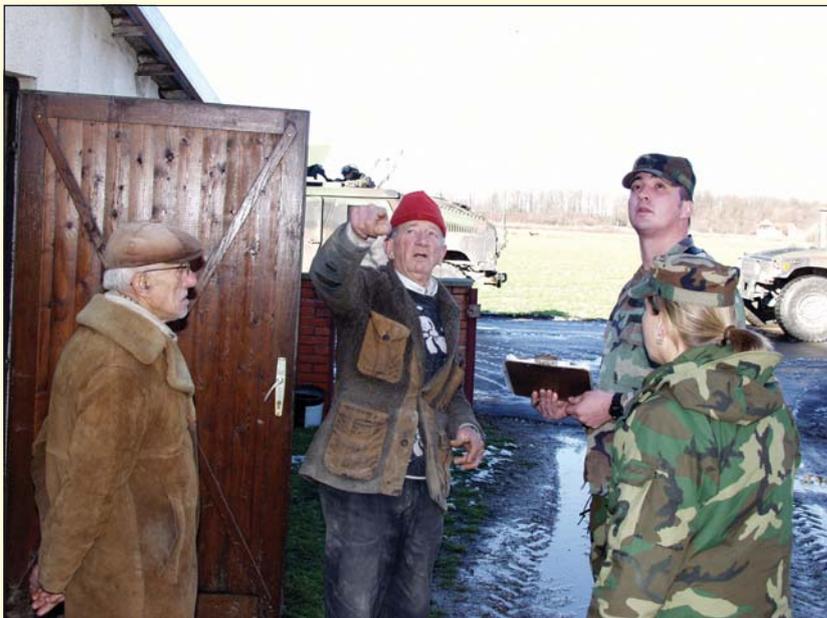


necessary paperwork.

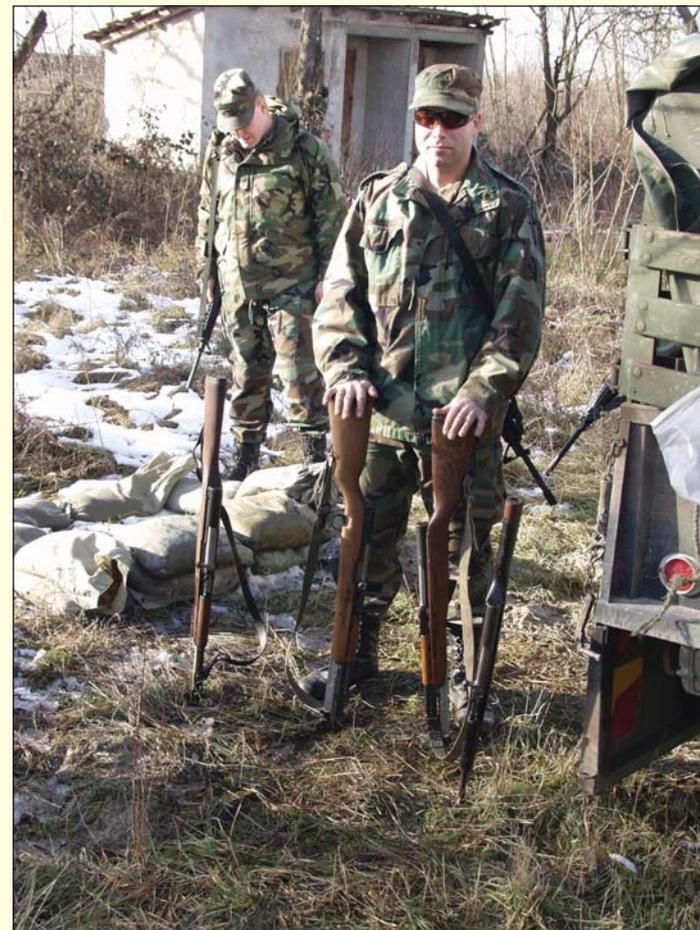
Out buildings can be searched without owners permission in accordance with the Dayton Peace Accords.

Kriesel said that he didn't witness anyone refuse to let SFOR search. In the event of a resident saying no to the search, Soldiers would state that the Dayton Peace Accords give them authorization.

Soldiers can't search the resident's houses without permission because it is a private part of their property. However, the homes can be searched if there is reasonable suspicion.



A local Bosnian points out to Sgt. Ryan Gould something on his property during the operation.



Spc. Mark Klimek (left) and Spc. Orion Trettel inspect confiscated rifles.

Noncitizen, but all American

Task Force Eagle Soldier proud to serve



Sp. Yuan Hsu (left), explains the Fighter Management Pass Program to Sgt. Keith Dawson (center) and Spc. Anthony Shinn both of 15th Psychological Operations Battalion last week on Eagle Base.

Story and photos by
Master Sgt. Edwin Holt
135th MPAD

He wasn't born in the United States. He's not a citizen, but he is an American Soldier.

Task Force Eagle's Spc. Yuan Hsu (pronounced shew) is proud to be an American Soldier. It wasn't something he pictured when he packed his suitcase in 1982 and left Beijing, China, to attend school at Northeastern University in Boston, Mass.

At that time, he pictured himself returning to China where he would work in a career in geology, researching and developing programs studying such things as sedentary deposits in rivers and riverbeds.

Then unrest in China culminated in public demonstrations in Tiannimen Square in 1989 and a declaration by then

President George Bush Sr. that granted refugee status to Chinese students who desired it.

Hsu decided to stay in America.

"I was already involved in small demonstrations against the Chinese government," Hsu said.

"My mother, father and sister still live in China," Hsu said. "They were supportive of my staying in America. They knew there was nothing for me in China at that time."

Hsu continued in school, going on to graduate school at

Guard.

"I liked the idea of the citizen-soldier," Hsu said. "I read the book *Citizen Soldier* by Stephen Ambrose and was inspired. I liked the concept of helping out the community when called upon by the state and also filling in on



Hsu assists Spc. Carlee Miller from 147th PSB with medical records on Eagle Base last week.

Boston College. He also met his future wife who attended a nearby college and married her a short time later.

Hsu said he felt extremely grateful to his new country. So grateful, he decided to pay his community back by joining the Army National

the federal level if needed."

It was a decision Hsu said he has never regretted. He now serves in the administrative noncommissioned officer's position for Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 34th Infantry Division as part of Stabilization Force 14.

The prospect of putting in 20 years as a Guardsman is appealing to him.

"Most of what I do is behind the scenes and supports the Soldier," Hsu said. "If I can alleviate Soldier concerns and make things work when issues or problems come up so a Soldier can continue to do their jobs, I am very happy."

In his role, Hsu works directly with Capt. Jason Good, commander, TF Eagle Hq. Co. Good said he appreciates what Hsu does.

"Cpl. Hsu, as we like to call him, has definitely made my experience in

Bosnia memorable. He is truly a professional Soldier who gives his best," Good said.

Fortunately for Hsu, he has been able to see his family in China.

He and his wife, Debra, now live in Woodbury, Minn., where they are raising their two children.

Working on legal predicaments

SJA does it with style and skill

By Master Sgt. Richard Kelso

Chief Paralegal NCO

Butcher, baker, candlestick-maker? Not in the Task Force Eagle office of the Staff Judge Advocate. But there is a mayor, a college professor, students, and even some lawyers.

The SJA section provides legal advice to commanders and Soldiers. SJA services include legal assistance such as wills, power of attorney forms, credit card issues, or helping with landlord-tenant problems. Military justice includes advice to commanders and defense of accused Soldiers. The section is a major player in the daily business of the Army, by reviewing contracts, drafting agreements for use of property, or drafting and interpreting regulations and policies.

Ten members of the Minnesota Army National Guard, one active-duty Soldier and a Bosnian civilian work in the SJA section offices in the White House and the Legal Assistance office in building 1019, by the USO.

Lt. Col. Steven Lokensgard, the



Lt. Col. Steve Lokensgard (left) shares a moment of levity with his staff during a meeting last week on Eagle Base. Pictured with Lokensgard are Maj. Jeannine Hamby (left), Capt. Matt Christian, Spc. Elizabeth Johnson, Capt. Doug Simon and Capt. Matt Staehling.

SJA, is an attorney for Allina Health Systems in Minnesota. Maj. Jeannine Hamby, deputy SJA, is an active-duty Judge Advocate officer, in the middle of her one-year tour in Bosnia.

Capt. Matthew Christian, chief of claims and legal assistance, is a judicial clerk for a judge in Carver County Minn.

Capt. Douglas Simon, operational law attorney, is a professor at Southwest Minnesota State University at Marshall, Minn.

JMA Legal Advisor Capt. Thomas Hagen, is an attorney in private practice and mayor of Waseca, Minn. He also helps in the Legal Assistance Office. Capt. Matthew Staehling, chief of military justice, is a prosecutor for the city of St. Cloud, Minn.

Capt. Michael Wiederich, chief of administrative and civil law, was the section's action officer on orders for the year before deployment. He also owns rental property in St. Paul, Minn.

The enlisted members display a variety of occupations, as well. Chief Paralegal Noncommissioned



Photos by Master Sgt. Edwin Holt, 135th MPAD

Spc. Elizabeth Johnson, (left) and Capt. Matthew Staehling of the SJA discuss legal documents.



Capt. Michael Wiederich, chief, administrative and civil law, discusses a case over the phone in his office.

Officer Master Sgt. Richard Kelso is a Westlaw Reference Staff Attorney in Eagan, Minn. Staff Sgt. Eric Hanson, Noncommissioned officer in charge of claims and legal assistance, is a student and a delivery driver.

Spc. Elizabeth Johnson, military justice NCOIC, is a student and hopes to join a SWAT team after this deployment. Spc. Scholastica Simbi, NCOIC for administrative and civil law, recently graduated with honors from the University of Minnesota and is hoping to become a Black Hawk pilot, as well as an attorney.

Slavica Blazevic is the section's civilian paralegal. She started as an interpreter with the Implementation Force on Eagle Base in January 1996, and became a paralegal in July 2003.


In our sights




Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Clinton Wood, 135th MPAD

Command Sgt. Maj. Michael L. Gravens (right), Headquarters, United States Army, Europe, asks Sgt. Nathan Stieve, TFME, what Stieve liked about his PLDC class during Graven's visit to Eagle Base Saturday. Gravens visited with PLDC graduates and conditionally-promoted sergeants throughout the day.



Photo by Maj. Jarrod Krull, TFE PAO

U.S. Ambassador to BiH, Clifford Bond and Brig. Gen. Richard Nash, commander, MNB (N), participated in the Tuesday dedication of the American Corner of the National and University Library, Tuzla.



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Clinton Wood, 135th MPAD

Staff Sgt. Nathan Modeen, TF Bearcat, watches his fellow Soldiers search an out building in an Operation Active Harvest near Cosici as Bosnian family members watch.



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Clinton Wood, 135th MPAD

A steam engine backs up to pick up a car at the Zenica Steel Factory earlier this month.



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Clinton Wood, 135th MPAD

TF Renegade Wolverines team members Sgt. Nicholas Harp (left) Capt. Patrick Alexander and Spc. Bryan Bradley run to the finish line of the Eagle Base Survivor Cup's 5K Ruck Run Sunday.