



Falcon Flier

Volume 5, Issue 10

Produced for the personnel of Task Force Falcon

October 15, 2001

Army Chief of Staff pays a visit to Kosovo

**"It is about professionalism, and leadership. The way we taught leadership in our formations. Lives are on the line, and people are counting on us."
-Gen. Eric Shinseki-**



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Army Chief of Staff Gen. Eric Shinseki awards the Army Commendation Medal to Pfc. Joshua Beavers of C Troop 1st Cavalry Regiment from Ft Stewart, Georgia on October 5, 2001. Gen. Shinseki visited Kosovo to address soldiers of TFF and present awards and coins to a number of soldiers currently deployed in support of Operation Joint Guardian II.



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Tae-Bo's Billy Blanks leads soldiers through his Tea-Bo workout routines. Blanks visited Kosovo as part of "The 2001 Spirit & Body Tour."



Pg. 8, 9 **Combat Camera**

left: Children from a school in Ferizaj/Urosevac, give a thumbs-up to show their excitement for the soldiers who serve them on a MEDCAP.

right: Pfc. Jesse Vautour, an infantryman in D Company of the 3-502nd Infantry Regiment, mans the 50 cal. machine gun while escorting a bus to CAS.



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Leave it better than you found it

**Story by Brig. Gen. Bill David
Task Force Falcon Commander**

It's on everyone's mind right now. It's one of the most important tasks any soldier will be called upon to perform. When done well, it ensures organizational success well into the future. It's part of one of those goals we set for ourselves five months ago – making this place better than it was when we got here.

I'm talking about our Relief In Place. That's "RIP" for short.

Now, don't confuse this RIP with "Rest In Peace." To the contrary, our RIP will require lots of work as we set the conditions for our successors and Kosovo. I want to emphasize some important things you should discuss when handing over your fighting position.

Infantry Platoon Sergeants will tell you that one of the most important things to go over with your replacement is the communications plan. You know how difficult it was when you first arrived to find the right person who could give you assistance. Make clear to your replacement who and how to call when help is needed. Talk about our international partners and our higher headquarters. Explain reports and procedures.

They will be given tools that they have never used before. Spend time on communications because it is the number one cause of problems in most organizations.

When our replacements arrive they will be disoriented and jet lagged. You remember how that was. The change in weather may be a factor for many. Fatigue and stress dictate the importance of identification card and weapons security and safety.

The key here is to integrate replacements at a pace that is safe and secure.

Explain lessons learned. You know that there are left and right limits and dead space – places where there is potential for trouble. Make your replacement aware of these danger areas but be willing to allow them to use new ideas and capabilities to cover what will ultimately become their lane.

This is definitely not the time to rest in place. As I have emphasized previously, be vigilant.

Be flexible and energetic. Work with the chain of command to identify and solve problems.

Turn your fighting position over to your replacement with pride in the fact that you have made it better than it was.

Be Relentless!

Taking care of soldiers allowed this organization to soar to new heights

**Story by
Command Sgt. Maj. Marvin Hill
Task Force Falcon CSM**

A key component of success is the ability of an organization to take care of soldiers. This has been the wind beneath this Task Force Falcon's wings. Taking care of soldiers has allowed this organization to soar to new heights during one of the most challenging times in our nation's history.

I have had the opportunity to visit troops in the field. Their sweat, intermingled with dirt and exhaustion has been the down payment on Kosovo's future. I will tell you that their morale has been high throughout this operation because of the support they receive.

I thought that it was appropriate before our time together runs out for me to do something meaningful for those who have provided support to our soldiers. I want to say two simple words. Thank you.

Now, those two words alone don't convey my emotions as strongly as the gratitude I feel. After all, the phrase is used in every day matters practically every place you go.

So, know for certain that I am infinitely impressed and sincerely grateful for your contributions to the soldiers of Task Force Falcon.

AAFES contributed to our soldiers at every opportunity. They lived up to their motto and took pride in "serving the best customers in the world."

MWR bent over backwards to entertain. They were there especially when conditions prevented soldiers from leaving the wire.

BRS was tested from the moment we arrived. You responded every time. From upgrading remote sites to readying for President Bush, you were there when we needed you.

DPW responded to soldier requests and prioritized to meet individual and unit needs. Remarkable.



G-1 worked diligently to enable personnel actions. Every emergency action and reward was handled with care and concern. A real enabler.

G-2 does so much to take care of soldiers. Notably though, the protection of key facilities and the conviction that is leveled on security sets a tone for the whole task force.

G-3 has applied importance in writing plans and orders for soldier welfare initiatives equal to major tactical operations. This is a credit to their office.

G-3 (Air) studs and studette, got me around in sector to talk to the troops. You made it work every time.

G-4 and the whole 3^d LTF is on time with whatever we need, whenever it is needed. Come roadblock or any other challenge – they're always ready to roll.

G-5 has been supportive in developing new opportunities for soldiers. They have been movers and shakers for communicating with key civilians.

G-6 has been able to keep us communicating. This is a key capability when it comes to taking care of soldiers.

Our task force lawyers have offered sound advice to the commander and I. They have helped soldiers directly and helped us help soldiers.

Our Chaplain is the other half of that advisory team that helps the commander assess morale. The chaplain is there when the Command Sergeant Major is not. This I believe, was always key.

And our Public Affairs Office – keeping the task force and the world informed. I can't say enough about you all. You were terrific for us all.

Thank you each and every one.
Be Relentless!

Falcon Flier

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The Chawgs of War take over Kosovo's "Chicken Leg"

**Story by
Spc. Engels Tejada
358th MPAD**

The "Chawgs of War" of C Company, 3-7th Infantry Regiment, have spread their claws and taken over the entire "Chicken Leg" region of Kosovo.

During the month of September, the Chawgs closed down Observation Point Terminator near the Kosovo-Serbia boundary and adopted the rest of the "Chicken Leg" from B Company 2-502nd Infantry Regiment.

"Our main mission is to provide a safe and secure environment for the towns of Zegra, Pasjane, and Vlastica," said Capt. John Snow, commander of C Company.

In addition to providing

safety for these three major towns, the Chawgs also ensure security for several smaller municipalities and sectors, among which is the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia border area located south of Zegra/Zheger.

The Chawgs have been partially in the sector since the beginning of the rotation, with soldiers serving out of a small outpost known as Red Base. Now, they have full domain of the "Chicken Leg," with their immediate headquarters located at Zegra/Zheger Fire Base.

"I like it out here," said Pvt. Marcus Williams, dismount pattroller with C Company. "We are pretty much on our own."

The soldiers said that they enjoy working in the sector and being based out of Zegra/Zheger. They said that while the accommodations are not as comfortable as are those at Camp

Monteith, they like the fact that they are in their "own sector."

The territory also has demanding aspects. Staff Sgt. Raleigh Heekin, squad leader with C Company, said the soldiers at Red Base work on a rotation system.

During these rotations the soldiers provide base security, traffic control point operations, and both dismounted and mounted patrols throughout the area.

In addition, the Chawgs have to be prepared to face spontaneous incidents.

Such was the case a few months ago when the soldiers from Red Base were attempting to open a road between two towns, and the citizens of the towns began demonstrations against the operation.

Also, it was in the Zegra/Zheger area that soldiers of the 2-502nd Infantry Regiment encountered hostile fire from unknown individuals who were trying to cross the border illegally.

Snow said that while he believed these to be "isolated incidents," he has raised security levels of force protection in the area.

"The job is tuff on everybody," said the Chawgs 1st Sgt. Edwin Garcia. "We (are part of) a peacekeeping mission, but we have to always be prepared for the worst."

In spite of the challenges, however, the Chawgs insist that the mission is "too easy." They said that they train for war, and that a peacekeeping mission like this one is a "walk in the park."

"This mission is important because we can make people feel safe," said Williams.

"It makes me feel good to

actually be a part of making these people's lives better," added Heekin.

Heekin said that he was exceptionally impressed to see how the local population has made a "one hundred percent turnaround" since he arrived to Kosovo.

Heekin also said that when he arrived the majority of the local adults would not even speak to the soldiers; yet now, they seem to care for the soldiers and even the soldier's families.

"I was really touched by how they responded to the September 11 attacks on D.C. and New York," said Heekin. "They let us know that they were sorry, and it showed that they (care) about us."

Garcia said that it is not surprising to see the local citizens respond to the soldiers in a positive manner, for everywhere they go, the Chawgs make a good impression on the population.

The response the soldiers are getting from the local citizens is one of several motivating factors for the Chawgs.

Garcia said that the soldiers seemed particularly motivated because they will see their families soon, hopefully in November. He said the soldiers also do other activities to keep morale high.

Snow said that he was confident his soldiers would do as well in the Chicken Leg, as they did at Terminator.

"They've worked very hard," said Snow. "I've been very proud of both their endurance, and (how) they've maintained their professionalism."



Soldiers of C Company of the 3-7th Infantry Regiment prepare for a dismounted patrol out of Red Base. The "Chawgs of War" recently took over the entire "Chicken Leg" region of Kosovo.

The 502nd Infantry Regiment honors its traditions and history



Col. Robert E. Jones, honorary commander of the 502nd Infantry Regiment, talks with a soldier about the mission in Kosovo.

**Story and photo by
Spc. Marshall Thompson
358th MPAD**

"Science and technology revolutionize our lives, but memory, tradition and myth frame our response." – Arthur M. Schlesinger, American historian.

In a day when science and technology have revolutionized the way the Army fights wars, it's seems to be more important than ever to remember the history and the traditions that put the Army where it is today. That's why retired Col. Robert E. Jones, honorary commander of the 502nd Infantry Regiment, and retired Command Sgt. Maj. Harvey P. Appleman, honorary command sergeant major of the 502nd, recently visited troops in Kosovo.

Jones and Appleman told soldiers from the 502nd in Vitina/Viti that they decided to come to Kosovo to provide the soldiers with a link to their past.

Jones has the honor of being one of the original members of the newly formed 502nd when they jumped into France during WWII. He continued and fully participated in Korea and Vietnam.

Appleman really brought the history to life for the soldiers he visited with his colorful

stories of famous soldiers in Korea and Vietnam. He meticulously documented the whole visit with his faithful video camera, interviewing soldiers from all over Task Force Falcon.

"They carried themselves so well and they both seemed so proud to wear their combat patches from the 101st [Airborne Division (Air Assault)]," said Pfc. Ryan Smith, a combat engineer with the 326th Engineer Battalion attached to the 502nd Infantry Regiment.

Sgt. Demetrius McNeil, one of the honored visitors' escorts from Headquarters and Headquarters Company 502nd Infantry Regiment, said that it was a lot of work coordinating the visit, but it was worth it in the end.

"It will basically give the soldiers encouragement. It will give them that sense of realism, that stuff like that did happen," said McNeil. "Not only did it make the 502nd look good, but it gave the soldiers an uplift – a morale boost."

The visit seemed to raise the morale of many of the soldiers as the two seasoned veterans mixed with the young soldiers.

"I think it's great that they decided to show up and that they came to share their experiences and stories with us. It gave us something to look forward to and showed us how far we can go if we really apply ourselves," Smith said.

Wordsearch: *Camp Bondsteel's Nightmares*

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WORD KEY:

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FALCON'S FORCE

What is your favorite scary movie?



Sgt. James Edwards, Civil Affairs Sgt. 490th Civil Affairs Battalion

"The original Halloween is pretty good. Michael Meyer is just so creepy. He's probably one of the best villains."



Spc. John Carder, personnel clerk with 101st Soldier Support Battalion

"Titanic, because three hours of Leonardo di Caprio scares the (crap) out of me!"



Sgt. Leslie Dalmyda, Civil Affairs Sgt. 490th Civil Affairs Battalion

"The Haunting. I've never been scared of any movie besides that. That was a scary movie."



Spc. Daniel Rios, administrator specialist with Headquarters and Headquarters Company 1st Brigade

"My (favorite) scary movie is 'Scream' because it was surprising."



Col. Norman Bunton, Battalion Arms Assistant with 3-69th Armor

"My favorite scary movie is Silence of the Lamb because Hannibal is a pretty intelligent evil guy."



Pfc. Marvin Daughtry, gunner with B Company 3-7th Infantry Regiment

"The Exorcist, because it's supposed to be based on a true story."

Military police meet 60th Anniversary Challenge

**Story and photo by
Spc. Engels Tejeda
358th MPAD**

Members of the Task Force Falcon military police joined soldiers throughout the Army in completing a grueling but achievable challenge to celebrate the 60th Anniversary of Military Police Corps Regiment during the month of September.

Every Sunday of the past month, members of the military police companies in Kosovo, took the 60-mile challenge. The soldiers had to complete a 10-mile run, a 35-mile bike ride, and a 15-mile foot march; all within a period of twelve consecutive hours.

"It is grueling but doable," said Spc. Justin Roman, a military policeman with the 551st Military Police Company at Camp Monteith. "It's a challenge for me and other members of my unit... it's fun and very motivating," he added while taking a break in between events.

The event was celebrated throughout the U.S. Army by order of the Military Police Regimental Command Sgt. Maj. Daniel B. Rimmer. In a memorandum to military police companies in Kosovo, the event was described as a challenge aimed at "(fostering) camaraderie and esprit de corps... A physical challenge that is rigorous, timed and focused, and demonstrates the military police warrior spirit."

"The regimental sergeant major wanted to challenge military police throughout the Army, and this is a way of testing their physical capabilities and mental courage," said Master Sgt. John Coleman, operations sergeant with the 551st Military Police Company. "It's an event that requires little outside support."

In Kosovo, the 551st Military Police Company hosted the challenge. Coleman said any soldiers who wanted to participate had the opportunity to try it. He said that military police were given precedence, since only so many soldiers could take the challenge per day due to the amount of bikes available. The United Nations Mission in Kosovo Police (UNMIK-P) had loaned the bikes to his unit to



Sgt. 1st Class Kirk Dean, platoon sergeant with 551st Military Police Company, completes "The 60-Mile Challenge" at Camp Monteith in eight hours and 52 seconds. Soldiers of the 551st Military Police Company took "The 60-Mile Challenge" as they celebrated the 60th Anniversary of the Military Police Corps Regiment. The soldiers had to complete a 10 mile run, a 35-mile bike ride, and a 15-mile foot march with a 20-pound rucksack on their back during a 12-consecutive-hour period.

hold the event.

Sgt. 1st Class Kirk Dean, platoon sergeant with 551st Military Police Company, said that the challenge was also a way to show the pride the military police have in the Military Police Corps. Dean completed the events in eight hours and 52 seconds.

Most military police said that the most difficult part of the challenge was the bike ride, "because it is so long." Others said that the last event, the ten-mile march, was probably the "most difficult part because you have

to carry a 20-pound rucksack."

Sgt. Maj. Terry McManus of the 716th Military Police Battalion led the way, completing the challenge in six hours and 28 minutes. Staff Sgt. William Shively followed closely, finishing at six hours and 49 minutes, and Lt. Col. Gregory Kammerer, commander of 3-7th Infantry Regiment, six hours and 59 minutes.

All soldiers who completed the challenge within the 12 consecutive hours period received a certificate from the military police regimental command sergeant major.

The 52nd Mobile Air Staging Facility takes patients out of Kosovo

**Story and photo by
Spc. Travis Bascom
358th MPAD**

More than 400 people have been air evacuated out of Camp Able Sentry under the watchful medical care of the Air Force's 52nd Expeditionary Air Staging Squadron (Mobile Air Staging Facility) since the unit set up camp here.

When a soldier from Task Force Falcon or Operation Essential Harvest becomes injured or ill, and the proper medical care is not in the surrounding area, then the 52nd Mobile Air Staging Facility takes control.

The transition occurs at Camp Able Sentry's Staging Facility where the Army delivers the patients to the watchful care of the Air Force.

For instance, 551st Military Police Company's Pfc. Damien Bednar, and 11th Engineers Battalion's Spc. David Debow, were two soldiers that fell into this category.

Carried by a Black Hawk from Camp Bondsteel to Camp Able Sentry's Air Staging Facility the soldiers prepared for departure to Ramstein Airbase, Germany where they will under go more extensive medical analysis. If their conditions cannot be properly diagnosed, then they may be sent to the United States for further treatment.

Vital signs are taken of the patients and special precautions are addressed due to the high altitude of the flight, but the care doesn't stop there. A nurse and two medics, all with extensive training for high altitude environments, will fly with the soldiers equipped with a truck-load of medical supplies in case of a mid-flight medical emergency.

"It feels good to know that they are taking care of us," said Bednar as he prepared to load the C-130. "I'm relieved to be going to get this problem taken care of."

The 52nd is looking after us. I like that," said Debow. "They're taking all necessary precautions."

With the helping of patients

comes a sense of pride that the 12 airmen in the 52nd can share.

"I see it as an honor. I see it as a privilege to take care of our people," said Capt. Antoinette Shinn, Commander of the 52nd Mobile Air Staging Facility.

"This is a good job," said Tech. Sgt. Mark Muna, an airman with the 52nd Mobile Air Staging Facility who helped escort the patients

to the airfield. "I enjoy being out here making a difference and it also gives us a chance to hone our medical skills."

With all this support by their side, Bednar and Debow will hopefully be back soon to carry on with their deployment.

"I just want to get there, get back and continue my mission," said Bednar.



The 52nd Mobile Air Staging Facility loads a C-130 with supplies needed for flying patients to Germany.

The 501st can keep home just a phone call away

**Story and photo by
Spc. Marshall Thompson
358th MPAD**

A serpentine mass of cables connects a twenty-foot diameter dish to a trailer chucked full of wires, knobs, and technical looking devices bearing even more technical names and acronyms.

Who could master this writhing beast of frequencies, amps, and electricity? Bravo Company of the 501st Signal Battalion seems to fit the bill for a protagonist in this epic. Staff Sgt. Robert Kane, a senior satellite communications team chief, has had years of experience wrangling the radio waves and connecting soldiers to their homes while on deployment.

Kane was one of the first on the ground in Bosnia and is now part of the 3A rotation in Kosovo. He described what his platoon could do for soldiers upon arriving in a theater.

"When we roll into an area and there's nothing around, we might have a guy from Topeka, Kansas that hasn't talked with his wife for a long time. Sitting there on a hill top with three trucks, we can let him call his wife," Kane said.

Even though this is not a new theater of operations there are still remote bases with soldiers in need of some good communication.

"Eagle's Nest, for example, has no phones and no Internet access," said Sgt. 1st Class Robert L. Tuller, a platoon sergeant with Bravo Company of the 501st Signal Battalion. "That terrain is far away, but we can give soldiers at Eagle's Nest the same capabilities as soldiers at Camp Bondsteel."

Tuller said that when the Ground Safety Zone was being closed down the operation was too far away from headquarters to use



Sgt. 1st Class Robert L. Tuller, platoon sergeant with Bravo Company of the 501st Signal Battalion and Staff Sgt. Robert Kane, a satellite communications team chief with the 501st, stand in front of the 20-foot satellite dish they use to communicate with Germany.

SINGARS to communicate. A re-transmission team was sent out half way to catch the signal and then send it again back to headquarters.

Not only can Bravo Company of the 501st Signal Battalion provide soldiers with reliable communication back home, but they can provide it with speed.

"The standard is an hour and a half to have all the communications set up and camouflaged, but I've gotten it done in an hour and five minutes once," Kane said.

Besides giving soldiers in the field the

ability to call home, they also can provide secure phone lines to Germany and Internet access.

"If you think of things like a wagon wheel, we're the center of the wagon wheel," said Sgt. Fred Bunkley, a network switching systems operator with Bravo Company of the 501st Signal Battalion.

The training required for the signal jobs can take as long as 36 weeks said Kane. All this training and experience goes into serving their fellow soldiers in an important way.

Both day and night the 1-58th Air Traffic Control watches the Kosovo sky

**Story and photo by
Spc. Travis Bascom
358th MPAD**

Soldiers from B Company of the 1-58th Air Traffic Control have a bird's eye view as they overlook the flight pads of Camp Bondsteel.

Located in Fort Bragg, North Carolina, the unit provides Air Traffic Control for all Kosovo Force (KFOR) aircraft within Camp Bondsteel's area of jurisdiction, which is a five-mile radius from Camp Bondsteel and anything above 5,000 feet.

With an average of 140 movements a day, with a mixture of foreign helicopters with foreign pilots, the members of B Company have quite the task.

"It's a good thrill. I want to make the best of it and learn all I can," said Spc. Ralph E. McCoy, Air Traffic Specialist with B Company of the 1-58th Air Traffic Control. "We see a lot of different aircraft and talk with pilots from all over the place."

Staff Sgt. Jerry Brock, tower chief for B Company of the 1-58th Air Traffic Control, said it's a challenging job.

"You can have multiple aircraft from multiple nationalities. They don't always speak English



Spc Ralph E. McCoy with the B Company of the 1-58th Air Traffic Control, mans the tower overlooking Camp Bondsteel.

and that can create a real challenge," said Brock.

The unit is in charge of 24 hour observation on both towers on Camp Bondsteel. The Visual

Flight Rule tower, which is used on visually clear days, and the Instrument Flight Rule tower, which is used on visually lacking days are constantly manned.

"Our only mission is 24 hour observation in the towers," said Brock. "The young guys get to spend a lot of time learning their job and seeing if they like it."

Gen. Eric K. Shinseki comes to Kosovo

**Story by
Spc. Travis Bascom
358th MPAD**

Chief of Staff of the Army, Gen. Eric K. Shinseki, addressed a multitude of troops at Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo.

The purpose of his visit was two-fold. He honored soldiers that had previously risked their lives to save another and he inform members of Task Force Falcon that the Army is still strong and running despite the recent terrorist attacks.

As Shinseki spoke to the charged crowd, he reminisced about his experience in Vietnam, when, as a soldier, he stepped on a land mine that took part of one of his lower extremities. He expressed gratitude and respect for the medic and the soldier who carried him to safety and through proxy was thanking them now.

"Now I'm here, 31 years later, before another medic and another soldier to pay them back for all they have done," said Shinseki. He then presented Sgt. Christine Roberts, flight medic with the 50th Medical Company, the Soldier's Medal, the highest medal a soldier can receive during peacetime and Pfc. Joshua Beavers, C Troop 1st Cavalry Brigade Reconnaissance

Troop, the Army Commendation Medal.

While presenting the medals, he spoke of his previous visit, months ago, with Sgt. Richard Casini, C Troop 1st Cavalry Brigade Reconnaissance Troop, the soldier that had received severe and life threatening injuries from the land mine.

"I wanted him to understand that his life as a soldier need not be over," said Shinseki. "He told me that I ought to thank Roberts for what she had done." That is exactly what Shinseki did.

During the second round of his speech, Shinseki expressed to the soldiers his desire to be here.

"I chose to come. I wanted to see our soldiers on the ground," said Shinseki.

In addition, he wished to inform the troops of the Army's standing after the September 11th attack.

"The Army has not gone wobbly. We are fully operational," said Shinseki. "We are taking care of our wounded. We are paying our final respects, and there will be a reckoning," added Shinseki.

"You are on the front-line. We are counting on you to do your mission out here that you do so very well," said Shinseki.

The General's speech appeared to boost morale among the listeners.



Army Chief of Staff, Gen. Eric K. Shinseki, awards several soldiers his General's coin for excellence.

"It was very inspiring, very touching to hear how the Army is handling things back home," said Pfc. Terrence D. Blue, co-training room assistant for 3-7th Headquarters Company.

"He lifted my spirits. It was an honor to meet him," said Spc. Larry J. Jenkins, personal security detachment for the Headquar-

ters Headquarters Company 2^d Brigade.

In gratitude for his visit, Task Force Falcon presented Shinseki with a bronze sculpture of a Falcon at the end of his speech.

Before departing Shinseki awarded 40 additional soldiers, coins for their outstanding performance.

The jungle penetrator may be your only lifeline if you are trapped in a mine field

**Story and photo by
Sgt. Gary Peterson
358th MPAD**

Surrounded by land mines in a deep-forested area, a mine blast victim waits for a miracle. Knowing that there is no place to land a helicopter, and too many mines for a ground rescue, the victim begins to lose hope.

When all hope seems to be lost, a camouflaged angel attached to a jungle penetrator descends from a UH-60 Blackhawk hovering overhead.

"In this country, [the jungle penetrator] can be used in a mine field where you can't land a helicopter," said Maj. Steve Millward, commander of the 50th Medical Company (Air Ambulance). "It provides a precision extraction that you are looking for in that situation."

Millward and his flight crew, with the help of Headquarters and Headquarters Troop 2-17th Cavalry Regiment, trained several members of the Kosovo Protection Corps (TMK) on how to use the jungle penetrator in scenarios like the one above.

"The TMK is a medical emergency response unit," said Capt. Bruce Finklea, fire support officer for Headquarters and Headquarters Troop 2-17th Cavalry Regiment. "This training will help them to go out and rescue the local people of Kosovo."

Sgt. David Dalson, crewchief for 50th Medical Company, said that this type of training is essential to get a

first responder on the ground to assist a mine strike victim.

"Our crews have had two live hoists already," said Dalson. "In a land mine incident, they hoisted Sgt. Casini, and in a HMMWV roll over we hoisted our medic down to get her on the scene."

Millward said the more training they do like this with the TMK on the ground, the better off the TMK are going to be when they need to deal with a helicopter.

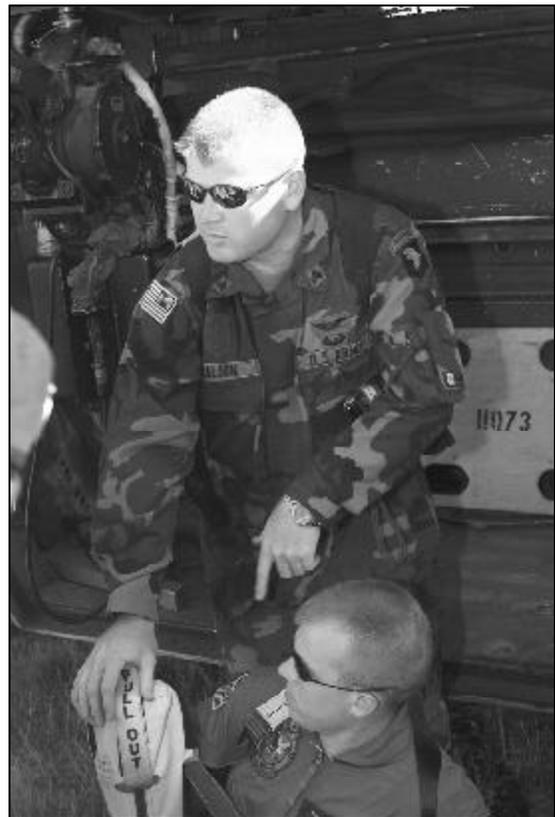
"There are a lot of mine fields in the Kosovo border, and there is a lot of mountainous areas where, if someone got hurt, helicopters would not be able to land," said Finklea. "This will help them assist KFOR with evacuating their locals."

Finklea added that the TMK learned a lot from this training.

"It gives them a better sense that we are here to help them," said Chief Warrant Officer Randall Cox, 50th Medical (Air Ambulance). "Knowing that we are willing to work with them gives the TMK the ability to accept that we are here to help."

Randall said that this training also helps the TMK to understand that we are here to help all of the Kosovo people.

"One of our goals is to improve Kosovo and leave it better than we found it," said Millward. "If we can do it through this training with the TMK, that will actually go out there and help the communities in disasters, I think we have done our part."



Sgt. David Dalson, crewchief for the 50th Medical Company demonstrates how to use the jungle penetrator.



An American soldier from A Company of the 3-7th Infantry Regiment places a candle on the ground along those left behind by others in Gnjilane/Gjilan. The citizens of Gnjilane/Gjilan gather at the theater square to show their support and sympathies for Americans after the bombings in New York City and Washington D. C. on September 11.



A Flag and casket adorned a Task Force Falcon Fire Department truck after the September 11 attacks. All of the Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo emergency services were destroyed on October 11.



Spc. Edward Jalovec (Right) and Sgt. Lene Maiava (Left) from the C Company of the 11th Engineers, are placing a C-4 plastic explosive charge to demolish a tree that is obstructing the area where the engineers are building a bridge across a river in Mijak, Kosovo on September 28, 2001. The 11th Engineers are in Mijak to build a bridge across a river so that the villagers of Mijak can safely cross the river.



Army Chief of Staff Gen. Eric Shinseki awards the Soldier's Medal to the 50th MED Air Ambulance on October 5. Gen. Shinseki visited the Task Force Falcon and presented awards and coins to a number of soldiers in support of Operation Joint Guardian II.



A fire department truck as it drives in a memorial procession for the remembrance of emergency response personnel who lost their lives on the September 11, 2001 attacks. Emergency services teams including; Military Police, Fire Department, and Task Force Medical Falcon personnel participated in the procession on



General Shinseki presents the Soldier's Medal to Sgt. Christine Roberts of the 1st Cavalry Division. General Shinseki visited Kosovo to address soldiers of the 1st Cavalry Division and present the Soldier's Medal to a number of soldiers currently deployed in Kosovo.



Spc. Michael Campbell, 2nd Brigade of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, with the assistance of a Polish Ukrainian Battalion (POLUKRBAT) soldier dismantles the brake rotors of a High Mobility Multi-Wheeled Vehicle (HMMWV).

The Quick Reaction Force provides security

**Story by
Spc. Marshall Thompson
358th MPAD**

With the moon still hanging in the cold early morning sky, the soldiers from D Company, 3-502nd Infantry Regiment, Quick Response Force (QRF) are getting ready to provide a security escort for two busses headed to Vitina/Viti, Kosovo to pick up their fellow soldiers.

Normally, there would be mild complaints and moans from the soldiers about having to get up so early just to help out other soldiers, but not this morning.

"I don't mind going out to pick them up and bring them back, especially after what happened back at home. People now are more appreciative and don't have a problem helping out their fellow soldiers," said Pfc. Justin Snodgrass, a TOW gunner with D Company of the 3-502nd Infantry Regiment.

The Camp Able Sentry QRF soldiers rolled out of the gate at 5:00 a.m. with this spirit of cooperation. Two HMMWVs sandwiched two empty busses that would pick up soldiers from C Company, 3-502nd Infantry Regiment, who had been doing night and day fire at the ranges in

Vitina/Viti. After a little over three hours of travel, the escorted busses arrived at their destinations. C Company loaded the busses and began their journey back to Camp Able Sentry. The long hours on the dangerously constricted roads came with its hardships. A spirit of cooperation was not always easy to maintain.

"It's hard, but on the other side, it makes you feel good because you're serving your country," said Cpl. Henry Santiago, a squad leader in D Company, 3-502nd Infantry Regiment.

In an environment as unpredictable as the Balkans, the armored escorts are greatly appreciated by those traveling under their protection.

"It made me feel good to have an escort because there's not a lot you can do on a bus. With an escort, you've got the firepower right there to respond to any kind of ambush or anything that would stop the convoy," said 1st Lt. Kenrick Johnson, 3rd platoon leader, C Company, 3-502nd Infantry Regiment.

Santiago said that incidents in the past have made the need for armored escorts clear.

"The point is that we're not sure what is on the roads. A lot of people we escort don't even have weapons," said Pvt. Albert Fanous, a TOW gunner just out of basic



Pfc. Justin Snodgrass, a TOW gunner with D Company of the 3-502nd Infantry Regiment, keeps an eye out for any danger while escorting two busses of soldiers to Camp Able Sentry.

training in D Company, 3-502nd Infantry Regiment. "It's better to go somewhere with a lot of people than to go there by yourself, even if you are armed."

Johnson said being in a bus full of well-trained infantry soldiers and their weapons can make one feel fairly safe, but there's something particularly comforting about a 50 cal. machine gun in front of the convoy.

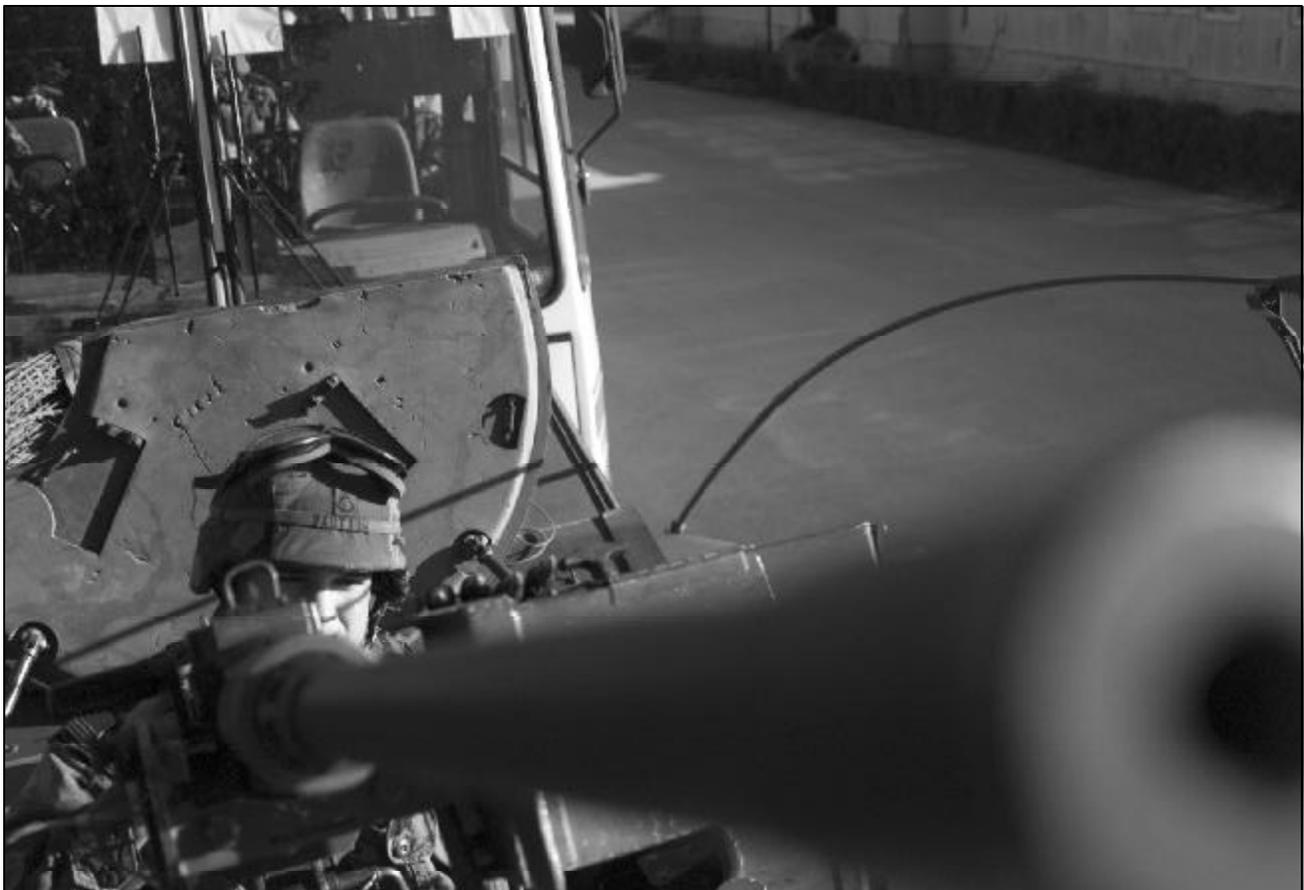
"Everybody knows what to do and they get the job done," said Snodgrass.

While providing security for the convoy, the QRF soldiers look

for possible dangers.

"We're looking out for overpasses and mines on the ground – anything that could impair the convoy's forward movement," said Santiago. "It's very important that the convoy keeps moving."

The convoy kept moving all the way back home to Camp Able Sentry. All the soldiers climbed out of the busses and HMMWVs and put away their equipment just in time for lunch. It's a long day for the QRF soldiers, but as Fanous said simply, "We just try to make each day better than the last."



Pfc. Jesse Vautour, infantryman, D Company of the 3-502nd Infantry Regiment mans the 50 cal. at Vitina/Viti, Kosovo, while his fellow soldiers board the bus to head back home to Camp Able Sentry.

Ramjan/Donje Ramnjane Range hosts first Kosovo CALFEX

**Story and photo by
Maj. Norman Johnson
358th MPAD**

Two UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters fly swiftly to the landing zone, all the while expended shell cartridges drop from the sky like hail as the door gunners lay down protective fire with their 7.62 mm machine guns.

The doors of the Black Hawk open and infantry soldiers jump out and form a perimeter along side the helicopter as it continues to blast away at an unknown enemy. Then as quickly as the helicopters landed, they are off again, leaving the soldiers to carry on with the battle.

"Our soldiers live for this. They are fired up," said Maj. Tom Kunk, the operations officer for 2-502nd Infantry Regiment, as he watches his soldiers walk their 50 caliber machine gun rounds.

Soldiers from D Company, 2-502nd Infantry Regiment teamed up with B Troop, 2-17th Cavalry Regiment on September 19, at the Ramjan/Donje Ramnjane range, to conduct the first ever combined arms live fire exercise (CALFEX) in Kosovo.

CALFEX, a mock scenario, was put together to keep the skills of the 101st Airborne soldiers, which include soldiers from the 2-502nd Infantry Regiment and 2-17th Cavalry Regiment, sharpened and ready to conduct an air assault mission.

"Our motto if the call comes is, 'We have a rendezvous with destiny,' and that is what makes the 101st so great," said Kunk a Desert Storm platoon leader who fought with the 197th Infantry Brigade.

"This is very similar to an exercise we would hold at Fort Campbell, an air assault mission in support of the ground guys," said Chief Warrant Officer Dennis Hill, master gunner and designer of the scenario for 2-17th Cavalry Regiment. "You don't want to lose those skills while we are here in Kosovo. That's why we maintain this training."

As the battle progresses, the ground commander calls for additional air support to defeat the enemy. In the distance the deadly Kiowa Warrior helicopters from the Banshee unit can be seen flying low and moving towards their objective. Yellow smoke, tossed by soldiers from D Company of the 2-502nd Infantry Regiment, mark the location of friendly

"We are working to integrate the ground and air assets for when we get back as a division," said Capt. David Albright, assistant operations officer for the 2-17th Cavalry Regiment. "There are not too many opportunities to work with the ground guys [here in Kosovo] and the challenge is to make it all come together, the rehearsals, the logistics, etc."

As the battle thickens, Capt. Brandon Wright, D Company of the 2-502nd Infantry Regiment commander, calls for additional air support from the famous "Blue Max" AH-64 Apache helicopter unit.

The Apache, well known for its ability to carry 24 2.75-inch rockets in addition to a 30 mm chain gun that can fire 625 rounds per minute, approaches the target, hovers, and begins spewing rockets and bullets on the battlefield, like an exploding volcano.

At the same time, D Company soldiers unleash the awesome firepower of their 50 caliber machine guns along with their MK19 grenade launchers. The whole scene is one of concentrated mass firepower brought to bear on an isolated enemy, helpless to respond to the technology of today's modern battlefield.

In the end, the mission is a success. An after action review is held and all the hours of planning, rehearsals,

and practice have paid off, according to Col. Anthony Tata, 2nd Brigade commander for the 101st Airborne Division.

"They [101st soldiers] were very accurate. They've been practicing and you can tell. They are very good at what they are doing," said Tata. "We remain ready for whatever the National Command Authority asks us to do. We maintain the razors edge."



Soldiers from D Company of the 2-502nd Infantry Regiment, lay down fire from a 50 cal. machine gun mounted on a HMMWV while an AH-64 Apache Helicopter from B Troop of the 2-17th Cavalry Regiment hovers above.

forces for the Banshees.

The "Banshees," who derive their nickname from a female spirit in Gaelic folklore whose mysterious appearance or wailing warns the enemy that someone will soon die, rise into the sky in the shape of a camel hump and then unleash their 2.75 inch rockets and 50 caliber machine gun fire with fierce accuracy on the enemy.



An AH-64 Apache Helicopter from B Troop, 2-17th Cavalry Regiment hovers over soldiers from D Company of the 2502nd Infantry Regiment, during a CALFEX.



2 UH-60 Black Hawk Helicopters prepare to land, so that soldier from D Company of the 2-502nd Infantry Regiment can disembark from them as part of the CALFEX.

The 2-502nd says goodbye to Zegra/Zheger base camp

**Story and photo by
Spc. Engels Tejada
358th MPAD**

On a mission to serve those they protect, their vehicles rolled out of Zegra/Zheger Fire Base Rock— one of several outpost established by the American task force serving in Kosovo.

Leading the team was Capt. Joe Ross, commander of B Company of the 2-502nd Infantry Regiment. Throughout the day, the "Renegades" of B Company would reward the population they have nurtured during the past few months, and would receive a visit from one of the highest offices within the American Army's rank structure.

The first stop was at the local all-grades-school in the Albanian town of Zegra/Zheger. Children four to 17 years old ran around with their empty-backpacks over their shoulders. Some of the younger students were scared of the new atmosphere while others were excited to be back in a learning environment.

Members of the Marines' 4th Civil Affairs Group (CAG) and the school's leadership greeted Ross. Moments later, soldiers began to unload a truck of donated school supplies ranging from notebooks, pens and pencils to dry erase boards and wood burning stoves.

"Everything they get depends on their cooperation with the safe and secure environment (policy)," said Ross, referring to the donations. "Zegra has been cooperative since we got here. All the leaders give me the information that I need and they are meeting with the Serbian leadership of neighboring towns (to resolve problems)."

Shortly after unloading the supplies, the children and their instructors thank Ross and the CAG.

The same routine took place at the next town. A crowd of elementary-school-aged children welcomed the school supplies.

As the soldiers approached their third stop in Surlane/Shurdhan, Ross explained the turnaround that the upcoming community has made since his arrival and the reason it was being rewarded.

"This particular town used to be troublesome for us," he said. His team found about 400 mortar rounds among other illegal weapons in the town only a month ago. But the town's leadership proved its desire to cooperate with KFOR when the town's mayor turned in his brother for escorting National Liberation Army members across the sector.

The "Renegades" and the CAG delivered the supplies, then participated in the ground breaking ceremony of community health center for the town.

All the school donations were part of a community relations program coordinated by the CAG. In school supplies alone, the CAG spent over 1,500 Deutsche Marks, in addition to other donations provided by Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's).

The project touched the educational experience of over 4,500 children within the 3-7th Infantry Regiment area, not counting children attending schools in Gjilan/Gnjilane, the largest city within the area. Of the 4,500 children, over 1,400 reside within Ross' sector.

"Captain Ross has a great group of soldiers and we look forward to working with them (on these projects)" said Marine Sgt. Gregory B. Palmertree, civil affairs specialist

with the CAG. He said that the projects are important to the communities because "regardless of the differences we have with the adult population, we have to (take care) of the kids."

After delivering school supplies, the Renegades headed within the border town of Stancic/Stanqiq. Platoon leader Lt. Andre Rivier said Stancic/Stanqiq has served as an illegal crossing point for hundreds of NLA members and others moving into Kosovo from the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

It was within this mountainous territory that Ross' soldiers detained over 400 people for attempting to cross the border in the infamous "Chicken Leg" region. It was here, that the "Renegades" faced adversity with courage encountering fire from hostile extremists.

"Our platoon interdicted about 150 NLA members," said Sgt. Ken DeRoche, a team leader. "I had an AK-47 pointed at me (on one occasion). They were smuggling tobacco; but we fired a warning shot and they took off."

Only days since that incident, a man across the border waived at the soldiers requesting help and as the soldiers approached him the extremist opened fire.

While by Stancic/Stanqiq, Ross welcomed the visit of Secretary of the Army Thomas E. White, who thanked the "Renegades" for serving their nation and awarded them with military coins as a gesture of gratitude.

Activities throughout the day portrayed how challenging and interesting the day of the "Renegades" could be at Zegra/Zheger. They said they had enjoyed their months in the "Chicken Leg" region. In mid September, they joined the rest of their battalion at Vitina, and passed on the torch to C Company of the 3-7th Infantry Regiment.



Lt. Col. Gregory Kammerer (left), commander of the 3-7th Infantry Regiment, and Capt. Joe Ross (right), commander of B Company of the 2-502nd Infantry Regiment, discuss element locations in the border between the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Kosovo with Secretary of the Army Thomas E. White. Soldiers of the 2-502nd Infantry Regiment encountered hostile fire only a few days previous from unidentified personnel trying to cross the border into Kosovo illegally.

Chaplain's Corner

Without tradition life's as shaky as a fiddler on the roof

**Story by Capt. Chris Pierce
501st Signal/311th MI Chaplain**

In the opening scene of one of my favorite musicals; *Fiddler on the Roof*, Tevye sings a marvelous paean to tradition. In it, he points out that tradition is the only thing that lets us keep our balance in the midst of a hostile and antagonistic world. "Without tradition," he says, "our lives would be as shaky as a fiddler on the roof." Without it we have nothing left to rely on but the current fashionable values of society, and these are usually shallow, short-lived, and flawed. Building our lives around fashion is as reckless and risky as building a house on sand.

Tradition is not easily established. It is the reflection of values that are built on generations of human experience and moral struggle. Every tradition started off as innovation, and was often at first resisted. Tradition is not antithetical to innovation, to the contrary, it is the crucible in which the value of innovation is tried. If it lasts, it is worthwhile; if not, it is probably well forgotten. Without tradition, however, we have few ways to pass out worthwhile innovations on to future generation.

Sad to say, our modern culture has turned its back on much of tradition, rejecting it in favor of sensual gratification and self-centered consumerism. The irony is that when tradition

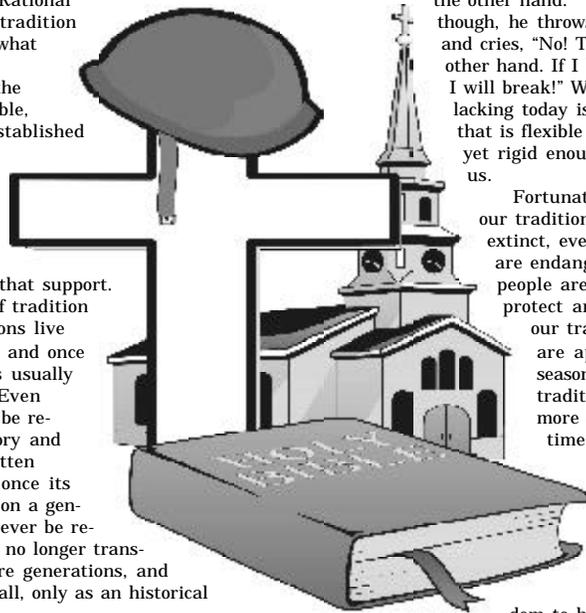
is discarded it is usually in the name of freedom, the very quality that often perishes with the tradition. Rational conformity to tradition frees us to do what really matters, supported by the buttress of stable, proven, and established values. The price of discarding a tradition is much higher than the simple loss of that support. It is the loss of tradition itself. Traditions live only in people, and once discarded, it is usually gone forever. Even though it may be recorded in history and thus not forgotten intellectually, once its hold is broken on a generation it will ever be re-adopted – it is no longer transmitted to future generations, and survives, if at all, only as an historical anomaly.

One of Tevye's charms is that he is not closed-minded. He is always ready to weigh the alternatives and, if necessary, bend a

little – but tradition is his guide as he weighs matters "on the one hand" and "on the other hand." At one point, though, he throws up his hands and cries, "No! There is no other hand. If I bend that far I will break!" What we are lacking today is a standard that is flexible enough to bend, yet rigid enough to support us.

Fortunately, many of our traditions are not yet extinct, even though they are endangered. We as a people are called to protect and propagate our traditions. We are approaching a season of many traditions and now more than ever it is time to hold tightly onto them.

These traditions have held the test of time and they will give the freedom to heal, bond with family and friends, and to test new ideas. Without traditions your "lives would be as shaky as a fiddler on a roof."



Weather wizards write the rules to keep flying in Kosovo

**Story and photo by
Master Sgt. Rob Fuller
KFOR Press Info Center**

If you don't like the weather in Kosovo, wait five minutes... it will change. At least that's what some people say and it's what makes the U.S. Air Force's 7th Expeditionary Weather Squadron mission a challenge at Camp Bondsteel.

"Our mission is to provide around-the-clock weather support for aviation and resources protection to the ground commanders and pilots of Multinational Brigade-East in support of operations in southeastern Kosovo," said Maj. Douglas Clark, 7th Expeditionary Weather Squadron commander. "We provide weather support to all U.S. and allied forces operating in Kosovo and for the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

"Forecasting in the Balkans is tricky," Clark added. "Unlike other parts of the world there is no long-term base of forecasting knowledge for the region. Every season provides us with an important new set of data. We aren't using old rules of thumb to forecast weather here, we're the ones writing the rules."

The position of Camp Bondsteel and the unique terrain poses some challenges for the 7th

Expeditionary Weather Squadron and the multi-national aviation operations that make up the Kosovo Forces.

"Much of this is routine flying weather for U.S. pilots, but we also provide weather planning support for Task Force Harvest and other allied efforts," Clark said. TF Harvest is the European contingent conducting Operation Essential Harvest—the voluntary disarming of Albanian rebels in Macedonia.

"As a forecaster, my job includes briefing aircrews prior to missions on current wind conditions, hazardous weather along their routes, and to make route suggestions during inclement weather," said Staff Sgt. Sean Hansen, 7th Expeditionary Weather Squadron weather forecaster. Hansen, when not forecasting the weather in the Balkans, supports Army air operations with Detachment 1 of the 7th Weather Squadron, Wurzburg Army Installation, Germany where his wife, son and daughter look forward to his return.

"The terrain in Kosovo makes the weather here difficult to predict," Hansen said. "The winds shift often and the clouds collect near the bases of the mountains helping to create unexpected thunderstorms." This phenomenon can be especially dangerous for aircraft.

The unit depends on many systems to predict and monitor the weather to include NATO equipment, tactical systems normally used in mobile units, remote weather sensing devices and the Internet.

Clark said the unit maintains and operates the only two weather radars in theatre, which have been a source of envy among the allied weather forecasters in the other Kosovo sectors. They continue to move forward trying to develop ways to provide the multinational sectors real-time access to these resources.

The weather in the Balkans makes the mission challenging, but the men and women in the unit bring their talents, skills and own style to Kosovo in support of this multi-national operation. 7th Expeditionary Weather Squadron members hail from duty stations around the world where family and friends wait patiently for their safe return.

The nine people that make up the unit include the commander, a chief of weather operations, three forecasters, three observers and one member attached to Camp Able Sentry in Skopje, Macedonia. Uniquely, one squadron member is from the U.S. Navy giving a joint flavor to the weather station.

"The Navy presence and expertise has proven valuable in forecasting weather for the de-

ployment and redeployment of the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit to and from ships," Clark said.

The small Air Force unit has settled in well with their hosts, the U.S. Army. Camp Bondsteel is home to more than 3,000 military members, primarily U.S. Army with several multi-national services represented.

The Camp is named for Army Staff Sgt. James Leroy Bondsteel of the 1st Infantry Division. A hero in the Vietnam War, Bondsteel successfully pulled his soldiers through a four-hour battle near the village of Lang Sau. His individual acts of bravery destroyed 10 enemy bunkers and took a large toll on the enemy forces. More than 30 years later and thousands of miles from the steamy jungles in Southeast Asia were Bondsteel fought, a camp in his namesake sits nestled in the Southeast sector of Kosovo.

"The facilities here are excellent," Plaisance said. "They provide everything for quality of life on and off-duty. The recreation facilities, Post Exchange and off-duty education access are top notch."

Whether it's predicting the weather or keeping the aviation arm of KFOR and Task Force Falcon mission ready, the 7th Expeditionary Weather Squadron is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Redeployment means you have to prepare finances!

**Story by
Capt. Amanda Flint
C Det., 101st SSB**

As redeployment approaches, there are several important items soldiers should consider to ensure their finances are in order.

To begin, there are deployment specific entitlements (hostile fire pay, foreign duty pay, etc). For Active duty soldiers all deployment entitlements except Family Separation Allowance (FSA), if applicable, will be stopped by finance upon redeployment out of theater. FSA is stopped via travel settlement vouchers (DD Forms 1351-2). For Reserve and National Guard soldiers, all entitlements are stopped by the CONUS Replacement Center (CRC) during outprocessing.

Speaking of travel vouchers, all Active duty soldiers must submit a DD1351-2 upon return. Ft. Campbell soldiers will submit theirs to S1s who will drop them off at the appropriate office. After processing these vouchers, finance travel will pay soldiers their TCS per diem; \$3.50 a day for every day in TCS status. As noted above, travel-servicing finance offices will also stop FSA. Soldiers will have assistance with travel vouchers. S1s and units will provide soldiers further guidance on when and where to submit their form. Finance will provide an example voucher to unit S1s. We advise unit S1s to collect travel vouchers and screen them for completeness upon arrival at home station.

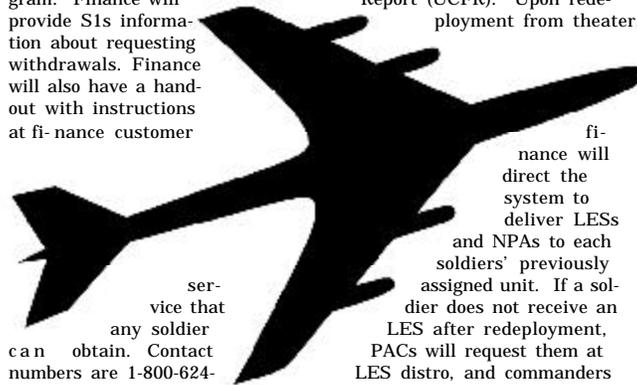
For soldiers redeploying individually, finance will have enlargements and an example at the PAS site. For Reserve and National Guard soldiers, CRC will handle the completion and submission of the DD 1351-2.

EagleCash Card : All soldiers

are encouraged to "spend out" the value on their EagleCash card prior to redeploying. Finance will give refunds at all camps within 7 days of departure for soldiers on a unit manifest in possession at finance. Soldiers are allowed to keep their EagleCash cards.

Foreign Currency Reconversions: Soldiers redeploying to CONUS can reconvert German Marks at all three camps and all soldiers can reconvert Macedonian Denars at CAS finance within 7 days of redeployment with documentation.

Savings Deposit Program: Finance will provide S1s information about requesting withdrawals. Finance will also have a hand-out with instructions at finance customer



service that any soldier can obtain. Contact numbers are 1-800-624-7368 or (216) 522-6545. The few soldiers that started allotments should complete a DD2558 through unit PACs before redeployment to stop the allotment. SDP as eligibility ends when the soldier is no longer entitled to HFP. To maximize interest, participants should (in advance) request the Army pay them their money on the 1st day of the last complete month that falls in the 90-day window after departure from theater.

For those who had more than 60 days accrued leave at the end of the fiscal year and were in theater at least 120 continuous days, Special Leave Accrual (SLA) should've automatically taken

effect without any action required. Soldiers should review their EOM October LES to ensure leave days were not lost. If soldiers have questions reference SLA, then can contact customer service at their base camp or can check with finance at the PAS site upon redeployment.

Commanders, S1s, and individuals should closely review December LESs. If a soldier is still drawing Hostile Fire Pay the month following redeployment, Commanders should annotate that the entitlement should be stopped on the Unit Commander's Finance Report (UCFR). Upon redeployment from theater,

finance will direct the system to deliver LESs and NPAs to each soldiers' previously assigned unit. If a soldier does not receive an LES after redeployment, PACs will request them at LES distro, and commanders should add the soldier on their UCFR. At FT Campbell, soldiers can use the LES machine in the PX to get a copy. Another option is to log onto EMSS and view your LES on line!

What is E/MSS? E/MSS is a new service that allows active and reserve military members to take greater control over their own pay account with a click of the mouse. The LES sent via E/MSS virtually mirrors the hardcopy LES and E/MSS is able to display your current plus two prior LESs. E/MSS is easy to use and can be accessed nearly 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. All you need is a Personal Identification Number (PIN). You can obtain a

temporary PIN by following these steps:

Fax or mail the following information to DFAS. Clearly indicate on your request 'E/MSS PIN' and include:

- NAME
- SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER (SSN)
- COPY OF YOUR GOVERNMENT ID W/PHOTO
- DAYTIME PHONE NUMBER
- SIGNATURE

Finance will set your new temporary PIN to the last 5 numbers of your SSN. The fax number is (216) 522-5800 or DSN 580-5800. You may also mail the information to:

DFAS-CLEVELAND/PMCAA,
ATTENTION E/MSS
1240 EAST 9TH STREET
CLEVELAND, OH 44199.

Please wait two (2) business days before attempting to use the new temporary PIN (allow additional time if mailed). If you encounter any problems with the above procedures you can contact E/MSS customer service at 1-800-390-2348 from 0700 through 1930 EST, Monday through Friday for additional assistance.

You can access E/MSS using either of the following Internet addresses:

<https://emss.dfas.mil> or <http://www.dfas.mil/emss>.

If you do not have access to the Internet, you can call the IVRS at 1-877-DoD-EMSS (1-877-363-3677) or (912) 757-3119. For security reasons, it is requested that you do not use your cellular phone to access the IVRS.

If you have any questions about the information presented, please refer them to the C Detachment, 101st Soldier Support Battalion (Forward) Customer Service section at your camp.

The Rumor Round-Up

Rumor: I heard that some of us were deploying directly to Afghanistan. I read something like that in the newspaper. It must be true. Right?

**Story by
Maj. Randy Martin
Task Force Falcon PAO**

Truth: Wrong. Unfortunately, you can't believe everything you read. For now, just listen to what our leaders are passing to us. We are definitely planning plane rides back to the states. West bound flights yes, east bound no.

October 31 is the last day to change your VEAP into the Montgomery GI Bill

**Story by
Spc. Travis Bascom
358th MPAD**

Soldiers that have previously been involved in the Post-Vietnam Era Veterans' Educational Assistance Program (VEAP) have until October 31, 2001 to withdraw their money from VEAP and enlist themselves into the Montgomery GI Bill.

Any VEAP participant may elect to stay in

VEAP and may continue to contribute up to a maximum of \$2,700 at any time until the date of separation from the Army.

VEAP was available from 1 January 1977 through 30 June 1985 and produces a return ratio of three to one. Thus a soldier who invested \$2,700 into VEAP would only receive a return of \$8,100, whereas, the MGIB generally returns much higher ratios.

"This can be a good investment in the future," said Jerry Molloy, education service specialist for the North Town Education Center.

According to Molloy, only 45 percent of all service members use their educational benefits.

"It's a great opportunity," added Molloy. "It's almost a no-brainer for those who will use it."

The process of changing over is fairly simple. Those interested will need to visit an education counselor and go through a checklist to make sure that they are eligible.

"It's important to meet with an education counselor to discuss all your options," said Molloy.

SGLI family coverage is coming on November 1, 2001

**Story by
Chief Warrant Officer Charmayne Askew
101st SSB**

The Veterans' Opportunities Act of 2001 has extended life insurance coverage to spouses and children of members insured under the SGLI program, **effective November 1, 2001.**

Eligibility

Family coverage will be available for the spouses and children of:

- Active duty service members and
- Members of the Ready Reserve of a uniformed service

All active duty SGLI insured personnel are eligible to insure their spouses, regardless of whether their spouse is an active duty member, retired or a civilian. Your spouse will not pay premiums for his or her spousal coverage. Premiums for spousal coverage will be deducted from your pay. If your spouse maintains VGLI coverage, he or she continues to pay VGLI premiums.

Family coverage is available only for members insured under the SGLI program. It is not available for those insured under the VGLI program.

If the service member and spouse are both in the military and both have SGLI coverage as of November 1, 2001, each of you can be insured under both basic SGLI and SGLI family coverage for the combined amount of \$350,000. **{ \$250,000 max for SM + \$100,000 max for spouse } Both spouses of a married active duty couple will automatically be charged for spousal coverage.** Premiums will automatically be deducted from each spouse's pay for coverage for his or her spouse. **If one or both members decline or reduce coverage for his or her spouse, they must complete a form SGLV 8286A.**

Any dependent child under the age 18 is automatically covered under family insurance. In addition, children between the ages of 18 and 23 who are full-time students are covered. And any child who before the age of 18 has been declared legally incompetent will be eligible for family coverage.

If you decline coverage you can apply for coverage for your spouse by completing a form [SGLV-8285A](#) and providing proof of insurability (proof of good health).

Premiums:

The premium for your spouse will automatically be deducted from your pay until you separate from the service. Coverage will continue, at no extra cost to you, for 120 days following your separation from service. *You will pay no premiums for your children, since coverage for them is free.*

Beginning November 1, 2001 (the effective date of the law), SGLI coverage for your spouse and children is automatic. Premiums for your spouse's coverage will automatically be deducted from your pay. It is important that the information concerning your spouse and children contained in your personnel records and payroll files is accurate and up to date.

If you do not want insurance coverage for your spouse or want a reduced amount of coverage (less than the automatic amount of coverage for your spouse (\$100,000 or the amount of the member's coverage, whichever is less), you must complete form [SGLV-8286A, Family Coverage Election](#), and submit the completed form to your PAC/S1 office prior to November 1, 2001. You may also at any later date decline or reduce coverage for your spouse.

Termination of Family Coverage

Coverage for your spouse will end 120 days after any of the following events:

- The date you elect in writing to terminate your spouse's coverage
 - The date you elect in writing to terminate your own coverage
 - The date of your death
 - The date your coverage terminates
 - The date of your divorce
- Coverage for your children ends 120 days after any of the following events:

- The date you elect in writing to terminate your coverage
- The date you separate from service
- The date of your death
- The date your child is no longer your dependent

However, your spouse can convert his or her coverage to a policy with a commercial company. See information under "Conversion." Click on one of the links below to access the new SGLI Family Coverage forms.

[SGLV-8286A, Family Coverage Election](#)
[SGLV-8285A, Request for Family Coverage](#)
<http://insurance.va.gov/sglivgli/sglifam.htm>

Listed below are the monthly premiums for coverage for your spouse based on his or her age and amount of coverage. SGLI coverage for children is free.

Amount of Insurance	Age of Spouse			
	34 & below	35-44	45-49	50-54 55 & over
\$100,000	\$9.00	\$13.00	\$20.00	\$32.00 \$55.00
\$ 90,000	\$8.10	\$11.70	\$18.00	\$28.80 \$49.50
\$ 80,000	\$7.20	\$10.40	\$16.00	\$25.60 \$44.00
\$ 70,000	\$6.30	\$ 9.10	\$14.00	\$22.40 \$38.50
\$ 60,000	\$5.40	\$ 7.80	\$12.00	\$19.20 \$33.00
\$ 50,000	\$4.50	\$ 6.50	\$10.00	\$16.00 \$27.50
\$ 40,000	\$3.60	\$ 5.20	\$ 8.00	\$12.80 \$22.00
\$ 30,000	\$2.70	\$ 3.90	\$ 6.00	\$ 9.60 \$16.50
\$ 20,000	\$1.80	\$ 2.60	\$ 4.00	\$ 6.40 \$11.00
\$ 10,000	\$0.90	\$ 1.30	\$ 2.00	\$ 3.20 \$ 5.50

Thrift Savings Plan is Army version of a 401K

**Story by
Capt. Amanda Flint
C Det., 101st SSB**

WHAT IS IT?: TSP is a retirement savings and investment plan that offers participants the same type of savings and tax benefits that many private corporations offer their employees under so-called "401(k) plans." Participation in the TSP is optional and not automatic. The money that participants invest in the TSP is excluded from taxable income. As such, the soldier's current income taxes should be reduced. The investment and any TSP earnings will become taxable upon withdrawal.

WHO CAN CONTRIBUTE?: Any member of the uniformed services serving on active duty and any member of the ready reserve in any pay status may participate in the TSP. Retired uniform services members cannot contribute to the

TSP.

WHAT CAN I CONTRIBUTE?:

Members can contribute a percentage of their base pay and may also elect to contribute special, incentive, or bonus pay in anticipation of entitlement. The member must elect to contribute basic pay in order to contribute from special, incentive, and bonus pay. The members' elections must be expressed in a whole percentage and made through payroll deduction.

WHAT ABOUT MATCHING CONTRIBUTIONS?:

The laws provides for matching funds in limited instances at the discretion of the service secretary. There are also provisions for special retention incentives in the form of matching funds. At this time, the secretary of the army has not identified any critical specialties to receive matching funds. When these decisions are made, they will be announced by separate message.

WHEN CAN I CONTRIBUTE?:

Service members will be able to join the TSP during a special 60 day enrollment period, known as an open season, beginning on October 9, 2001, and ending on December 8, 2001.

Contributions to the TSP based on the sign-up will begin to be deducted from paychecks with the first week of January 2002.

Members who do not enroll during the special open season will have two "open seasons" per year to enroll thereafter. Open seasons are currently May 15 through July 31 and November 15 through January 31.

HOW CAN I CONTRIBUTE?:

Soldiers will initiate their TSP elections. The soldier can fill out the TSP-U-1 attached and submit the TSP-U-1 to his/her unit PAC. The form will also be available in the finance folder in the TFF public folders. In the future, the Employee Member Self Service (EMSS) website will be the recommended method of initiating elections once the application is available.

WHAT HAPPENS ONCE I

ENROLL?: Once a TSP account is established, the service member will receive an introductory letter and a personal identification number (PIN). Upon receipt of the PIN, the participant will be able to make a contribution allocation to any of several types of investment funds.

WHAT ROLE DOES THE LOCAL FINANCE OFFICE

PLAY?: The servicing finance office (C Detachment, 101st Soldier Support Battalion) will accept the original TSP-U-1 form and 1 copy from unit PACs on a Unit Transmittal Letter (TL). Finance will fax the form to DFAS for input and then provide the PACs a confirmed receipt. Finance will also TL the original form to the PSB for filing in the soldier's 201 file.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, GO TO THE FOLLOWING WEBSITE:

www.TSP.GOV and go to the uniformed services link.

Or contact C Det., 101st SSB customer service at 781-5470/5464.

Billy Blanks visits to Kosovo kicking and punching

**Story by
Sgt. John Edwards
358th MPAD**

Billy "Big Bill" Blanks came here with his daughter Shellie to have a workout with soldiers. The brave soldiers who had the courage, stepped forward and endured a rigorous two hour workout with his Tae-Bo routine.

Tae-Bo was a long process for Billy. He said first got the idea for it while doing a Tae Kwon Do and Boxing workout in his basement back in the late 70s while he was watching the movie Rocky.

That led him to offering small classes to the public and eventually it grew and grew to a multi-million dollar operation where he has become the biggest name in sports fitness.

Like the character in Rocky, Blanks had to overcome obstacles on his road to success. Growing up he had difficulties in school and his teachers thought he was "impaired". They put him in special education classes from sixth through 12th grade.

Later on he learned that his "impairment" was caused from dyslexia. Unfortunately, it took 35 years of his life to find this out.

He gives all his credit and success to his very strong faith. "Everything I've done, I give to God," Blanks said.

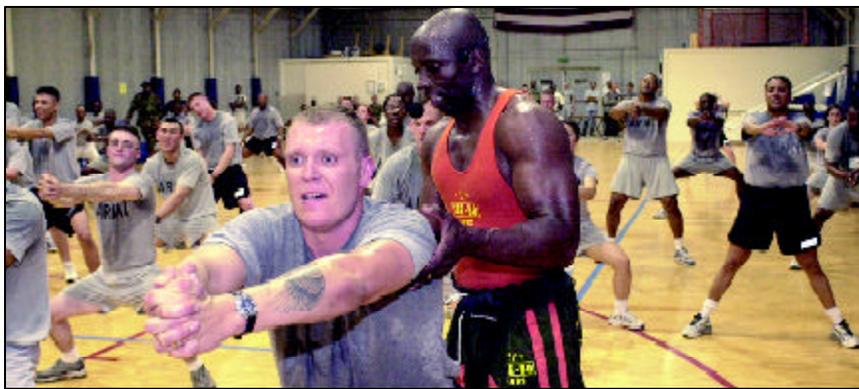
Blanks said the importance of exercising not only body, but also spirit.

Billy's motivation to come over here was to show that the American people were behind and supporting soldiers stationed abroad who are protecting American interests.

"I was told that I was crazy for coming over here right now, but I wanted to do it and if something did happen to me, it wouldn't matter because I'm ready spiritually," Blanks said.



Soldiers have "flashbacks of basic training" as they keep up with Billy Blanks' Tae-Bo session.



Tae-Bo's Billy Blanks leads soldiers through a session of Tea-Bo as part of his visit to Kosovo.



Billy Blanks leads soldiers in Kosovo through his internationally acclaimed Tae-bo workout routine as part of "The 2001 Spirit & Body Tour."