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Guardian East

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Italians
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Message to the troops



DCMA: Enabling the warfighter to win

By Lt. Col. Sandra Domingos, United States Air Force
Defense Contract Management Agency Balkans South Commander

The Department of Defense is using contractors to support deployments more than ever before. The job of effectively overseeing those contractors to assure the taxpayers get good value for the money spent falls to the Defense Contract Management Agency (DCMA).

Let me tell you who we are.

One of DoD's 16 defense agencies, the DCMA is led by Army Brig. Gen. Edward Harrington from his headquarters in Alexandria, Va.

Within our three districts – east, in Boston, Mass.; west, in Carson, Calif.; and international, located in Alexandria, Va. – DCMA has 60 contract management offices responsible for work performed at over 900 operating locations worldwide.

There are over 11,000 civilian/military acquisition professionals (administrative contracting officers, program integrators, quality assurance specialists, engineers, industrial specialists, and property administrators) who oversee 320,000 contracts valued in excess of \$860 billion awarded to 19,000 contractors. In addition to working with top defense contractors like Lockheed Martin, Boeing, Raytheon, and Northrop Grumman, the Agency oversees thousands of smaller contractors who provide critical parts and services in support of the warfighter.

DCMA's vision, mission and goals emphasize outstanding support to the warfighter, partnering with our military customers and contractors, superb customer service, and our greatest asset...our people.

To fully understand DCMA's role you have to know all the "players" in DoD contracting. DoD awards contracts through the military services; Defense Contract Audit Agency audits the contractors' accounting records; Defense Finance Accounting Service pays contractors; and Defense Contract Management Agency manages contractors' performance.

DCMA handles acquisition planning support, major program services, software acquisition management, engineering support, quality assurance/product acceptance, readiness and delivery management, financing/payment, property/financial management systems, pricing and negotiation, industrial base analysis and contingency contract management to name a few.

Although we're usually associated with actions after a contract is awarded, our role really begins before the contract is awarded. We're involved in developing acquisition strategies, request for proposals and solicitations. After an award, we maintain insight into the contractor's processes to ensure product cost, schedules and quality are in compliance with the terms and conditions in their

contract. If a contractor does not deliver a quality part/system/service in a timely manner it will inevitably affect operational readiness. Therefore DCMA's role, though not always visible, is extremely important to our warfighters. We make sure they get the right item at the right time and at the right price.

The DCMA office at Camp Bondsteel falls under the



Lt. Col. Sandra Domingos

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On the cover: Photo by Spc. Matthew Lang
Spc. Jason Woods, an explosive ordnance disposal technician with the 702nd EOD Battalion, demonstrates the maneuverability of the U.S. nuclear, biological and chemical suit to members of the Italian 3rd Regiment, Combat Engineers, March 18.

Guardian East

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New Red Cross team arrives in Kosovo

By Spc. Whitney Hughes

Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Dan Landry

A new American Red Cross team is in the canteen.

The three members of "Team Spirit 67" replaced "Simply Red," taking over duties at Camp Bondsteel on March 31.

The new station manager is Brock Tschappat from Spangdahlem, Germany. The other members of the team are Maryl Neff, an assistant station manager from Fort Eustis Va., and Robert Owen, an assistant station manager from Fort Benning, Ga.

"We're going to make certain that we maintain the same level of service as the outgoing team," said Tschappat.

The Red Cross teams rotate on a schedule similar to U.S. military personnel in KFOR. The teams switch out every four months.



Assistant Station Manager Bob Owen is welcomed by soldiers at the South Town MWR building. Owen is a member of the new Red Cross team that arrived at Camp Bondsteel, March 29.

Spirit 67 will continue to support the primary mission of the Red Cross, which is facilitating emergency communications. In addition, it will continue to run the canteen from 6 a.m. to midnight, and offer a variety of morale programs.

Although this is Spirit 67's first deployment to Kosovo, the members are veterans of the Red Cross mission. In fact, their name is a testament to the 67 years of Red Cross experience they share between them.

Tschappat accounts for 33 years. He joined the Red Cross in 1969 shortly after graduating college. He said that his "spirit of adventure" drew him to the organization.

Specifically, the opportunity for world travel as a member of the Armed Forces Emergency Services (the condition that allows Red Cross members to deploy) appealed to him.

Seven months later, he found himself in Vietnam at the age 24. He has also been deployed to Korea, Saudi Arabia and now Kosovo.

Tschappat, 60, is originally from Wheeling, W.Va. He has two children, Trent, 25, and Michelle, 28.

"I've been with the organization a long time now,"

Tschappat said.

Owen, 60, makes up another 33 years of Red Cross expertise. He has been to Vietnam, Korea, Okinawa, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia.

Part of Owen's inspiration for joining the Red Cross was his father's experience in World War II. As a prisoner of war, his father said the packages he received from the Red Cross helped him through his ordeal.

Owen is also a Navy veteran. The Red Cross made an impression on him during that time as well.

"It's a great job," he said. "I get to help people who really appreciate it."

The remaining year of experience on Spirit 67 belongs to Neff. Actually, she joined seven months ago.

She has worked for the Morale, Welfare and Recreation Department and Army Public Affairs.

Neff deployed to Bosnia for 16 months in 2000 and 2001 where she was the tour marketing coordinator for Task Force Eagle.

"When the opportunity came up to apply for a job in Bosnia it sounded like an adventure," said Neff.

Neff said that she is looking forward to meeting new people here in Kosovo. She is also looking forward to working with MWR on morale projects for soldiers.

"I was excited when I found out that I was coming to Kosovo," she said. "I'm happy to be here."

A couple weeks into their new mission, the members of Spirit 67 have already made an impression.

"They seem like a really nice group. I am looking forward to getting to know them better," said Staff Sgt. Darren Rowe, a platoon sergeant with HHC, 3rd Brigade.

Lt. Col. Domingos continued from page 2

Southern Europe Command of the International District, which is located in Wiesbaden, Germany. We have contract oversight of the Balkans Sustainment Contract performed by Brown and Root. Although we're stewards of the taxpayer's dollars, we work in a partnering relationship with the contractor and the Army to ensure that the soldiers of MNB(E) can perform the NATO mission in Kosovo.

Like all DoD components, DCMA is transforming its

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organization and ways of operating to reflect 21st century requirements and to become more effective in supporting those at the tip of the spear. Our transformation focuses on four pillars – Human Capital, Resource Allocation, Policy and Metrics, and Customer Alignment. These will be the building blocks for a "transformed" agency. However, our emphasis will still be the same – **Enabling the warfighter to win!**

For more information, visit the DCMA Web site:

www.dcms.mil



From left, Raiana Vrajkojuts waits in the arms of Bera Vrajkojuts along with Krska Nisich to see doctors during a free medical clinic held in Klokot, March 30.



From left, Stan Janovski interprets for Capt. Vasilious Lazos, a doctor with 2-63 Armor Battalion, during a medical screening with Peric Srdzan, age 10, at a clinic in Klokot, March 30.

Klokot embraces 2-63 MEDCAP

Story and photos by Spc. Catherine Caruso

KLOKOT, Kosovo— Capt. Vasilious Lazos, a doctor with 2-63 Armor Battalion gave Peric Srdzan, a 10-year-old boy complaining of a stomachache, a skeptical look.

"Too much candy, right?" Lazos said.

Srdzan giggled. After determining nothing serious was wrong with the boy, Lazos prescribed an over-the-counter antacid.

Laughter seemed to be the medicine of choice during the medical-civilian assistance program, or MEDCAP, facilitated by medics from the 2-63 and 4-3 Air Defense Artillery Battalion on March 30 at the local school.

The U.S. KFOR medics joined local doctors and medical professionals to treat 150 patients. They all seemed happy to be there. After a dreary, wet winter, the gathering at the school on a warm Sunday afternoon had more the feel of a small town fair than a humanitarian aid exercise.

Children begged to have their pictures taken by any soldier holding a camera, in an endless game of mugging for the lens, then running back after the flash went off to judge the results on digital display.

Sgt. Carlos Espinoza, a medic with Delta Company, 4-3 ADA, and Sgt. Thomas Kerns, a medic with HHC, 2-63, played soccer with a group of local children, chasing them up and down the asphalt schoolyard.

When one of the boys, Becich Danujen, illegally blocked

a kick with his hands, Espinoza and Kerns shouted in protest.

"Get down and do pushups!" Kerns yelled.

The only response was more laughter and the continuation of play.

"It's nice to be able to see you guys here," said Cvetkovich Biserka, a local citizen. "Every day I see soldiers. The soldiers are doing well, keeping us safe."

MEDCAPs assist local communities with free eye exams, basic dental care, and medical screenings using KFOR resources. On this day, doctors dispensed medications, prescribed eyeglasses, and pulled diseased teeth, but they were well aware their treatment is no substitute for regular care from a physician.

"It's very difficult to see patients with chronic conditions and not be able to treat them effectively," Lazos said. He urged such patients to seek further care from local medical professionals.

While the physicians participating in clinics provide basic care when they can, their real purpose is to promote trust in the local medical establishment.

By working side by side on patients of all backgrounds, local doctors demonstrate that medical care transcends ethnicity, stressed Capt. Jackie Kaina, civil affairs officer for 2-63.

It's a tough job, but someone's got to do it

Journalists struggle in post-war Kosovo to build credibility

Story and photos by Spc. Catherine Caruso

If you want to be a journalist in Kosovo, it helps to be committed (as in dedicated, not crazy).

There is hostility from ordinary people and even public figures who are understandably sensitive about being questioned in a cultural landscape that still struggles with intolerance. Then there are the long hours, small staffs, and the overwhelming lack of resources. Add the meager pay and the frequent power outages and you pretty much get the picture.

You are told you are supposed to be the watchdog of the government, the protector of the people, and the zealous pursuer of truth and justice within a civil institution that is only three years old.

It's probably no surprise that Superman was a reporter when he was working incognito as Clark Kent, but Kosovo's press corps are mortals, if extremely admirable ones.

Each month, Multi-National Brigade (East) Commander Brig. Gen. Daniel Keefe concludes his regular press conference by thanking the local media for the crucial role they play in rebuilding Kosovo. They have come very far in a short period to play that role.

"Before 1999, we were part of a communist society, and it was a classic government controlled media," explained Visar Hoti, owner of Radio Tema in Ferizaj and its sister television production company.

As early as 1989, Hoti said the independence movement in Kosovo and the growing public disenchantment with communism had sufficiently threatened the government to the point that Albanians from Kosovo were blacklisted from the state media and barred from starting their own outlets.

The exception was Koha Ditore, started in 1995 and underwritten by the Soros foundation. When the war ended there was an explosion of unregulated expansion across the province, particularly of small FM radio stations, according to Hoti.

"It was an educational experience," said Hoti, who began broadcasting in high school with a small "pirate" transmitter he built at home. After the war, he spent a few months as a "partner in industry" at WBUR, a National Public Radio affiliate in the U.S. run by Boston University.

Since many of their educations were interrupted during the war, this new generation of journalists received training through workshops and seminars sponsored by international organizations working in Kosovo.

The western idea of how the press would function in a democratic society was very different from the communist

system, said Ilir Murtelli, owner of Radio and Television Ilira in Vitina. Murtelli was arrested as a teen for writing articles critical of the FYROM government.

Murtelli referred to two types of journalism in the province.

"At first glance, they look pretty much the same, but the older journalists worked in a society that was based on communist values, reporting the party line. The new journalists try to escape from that way of reporting, but it can be very difficult," Murtelli said.

Shuqeri Halabaku, owner of Radio Pozaranje and president of the Kerwin Lewton multiethnic press club in Vitina, was critical of outlets he said bill themselves as independent, but seem to espouse the ideas of one particular political interest group or another.

"Everyone knows who they are, because it's so obvious," Halabaku said, although he declined to say whom. "Reports from the same event don't even seem to be about the same thing."

"The impact of such a long period of communism is still felt," said Ibrahim Sefedini, a journalist at Radio and Television Ilira. "It was quite different from the great degree of media freedom we now have."

On the one hand, journalists in Kosovo ask questions of other civil institutions, which are also very new, and of leaders who are not necessarily used to being questioned

Since the status of the province remains undecided, interim bodies like UNMIK and the OSCE have set some standards for local media and rule on infractions on a case-by-case basis.

Certain laws regarding the "gray areas" in the rights of the media and the people's right to know, as well as personal privacy, don't really exist. Radio stations survive financially largely because the legal loophole regarding their status has left it unclear if they are bound by international treaty to royalties.

For now, the OSCE regulates use of the airwaves and allots frequencies. Eventually a civil institution will need to be created to take its place, but the details are still being figured out.

Hoti has been actively challenging the proposed regulatory structure, which he said would place the media at the mercy of legislators, who might use the law to punish outlets critical of their decisions.

But perhaps the biggest challenge for Kosovo media

outlets has been the financial one. Hoti called the situation more like struggling to keep their heads above water rather than staying afloat...while swimming with sharks the entire time.

Democracy and capitalism came to Kosovo hand-in-hand and assimilating them has not been easy. In a reversal from some wealthier societies, some reporters got their start in the field because it was one of the few industries in the post-war years with a potential for growth.

Sefedini, for example, is a mechanical engineer by trade. He started reporting because he needed a job once the state-run factories had closed.

"It is not easy to create a very good quality of journalist in this environment," Hoti said.

Media outlets struggle to balance a desire to foster culture and keep the populace informed with the need to pay their reporters by appealing to the largest possible audience and attracting sponsors and advertising revenue.

"It is very difficult to get sponsors for news," said Nikola Stoli, owner of Radio Klokot. "And it is very hard to get people to listen."

Hoti echoed that sentiment, saying it's a Kosovo journalist's curious predicament to have to convince the public they need to be informed while he's informing them.

In other words, in the economics of information, the Kosovo media has to create the demand as well as the supply.

"It's pretty ironic, isn't it?" Hoti said.

Murtelli said there are political interests who are willing to pay to put certain stories in or keep them out of the news. When stations are struggling, the potential for corruption exists.

"It is true, even in the west, that the person paying for the program has some influence," agreed Sefedini. "But in this case, it is much more extreme."

The financial situation has impacted on their work, Murtelli said.

"As a news director, I can offer (reporters) a notebook and a pen, but I cannot offer protection judicially. I can't offer proper security," he said.

He said he cannot afford to hire representation for the



From left, station owner Ilir Murtelli and reporter Ibrahim Sefedini on the set of TV Ilira. TV Ilira and its sister station, Radio Ilira, cover municipal issues, sports, and cultural events from downtown Vitina.

journalists if their work lands them in court, nor can he provide security if someone threatens their safety.

"They can't write a lot, say, about crimes like drug dealing, because their security is too low," he said.

Another media owner with serious concerns about security is Stoli. As a Serb broadcasting in a Serb enclave within a predominantly Albanian part of Kosovo, he said he is not convinced it is safe for him to be overly critical of the municipal government in Vitina.

"That is what they say and I think that is probably more often than not the case," said colleague Halabaku.

"We are trying to do the news, but just the local news,"



Shuqeri Halabaku's daughter, Bucha, is training to follow in his footsteps as a journalist and disc jockey at Radio Pozaranje.

Stoli said. "And we aren't going to go on the air and (editorialize)," he said.

For his own safety, said Stoli, "We are just going to report the incident and what they said."

As a result, he's been focusing more on entertainment than information, trying to build his audience to attract advertisers.

"I am not satisfied with how we are functioning as a media in Kosovo, at this station or as a whole," Stoli said. "I think what we are doing, we are helping. But only a little bit."

However, despite his concerns, Stoli still sends reporters to local events and broadcasts two hours of local and international news and information, one of the few Serb language sources of such programming in the area.

One of the problems and advantages of the media, Halabaku noted, is that each outlet enjoys a lot of trust from the public. So when a province-wide outlet mistakenly reported a decision about the location of the border with FYROM, many listeners accepted it as fact.

But in Pozaranje, which covers the area involved, Halabaku's station was also able to quickly help assuage the public's fears.

Despite any differences between outlets, however, or what they report, Hoti believes the important thing for Kosovo's future is that there continue to be many of them.

"We saw the result of having just one voice, the voice of

the government, and what happened when that voice became disconnected from reality, providing the illusion of news rather than actually informing. We don't want to go back to that," he said.

Peacekeeper profile



Stephanie Briscoe

Age: 27
Rank: Pfc.
MOS: 92Y, Supply Specialist
Unit: HHC, 3rd Brigade
Camp: Bondsteel
Hometown: Houston, Texas

Why did you join the Army? For the challenge, travel and education.

What advice would you give soldiers here? Stay busy. It will go by faster and have fun.



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Dan Landry

Dave Roeber, a Vietnam veteran turned motivational evangelist, speaks to soldiers at the North Town Chapel on Camp Bondsteel, March 30.

Vietnam veteran delivers message of inspiration to KFOR troops

By 2nd Lt. Veronica Saffo

FILM CITY, Kosovo -- "I am the happiest fat man you will ever meet," said Dave Roeber to a large, multinational audience at the Hollywood Cinema on March 29. "I have everything I need and I am a free American today."

Roeber, a Vietnam veteran turned evangelist, spent the last week of March speaking to American and multinational service personnel stationed here and at Camps Bondsteel Magrath and Monteith. He delivered an inspirational message of hope and faith based on his own life and death struggle.

Roeber served during the height of the Vietnam war as a riverboat gunner in the Brown Water Black Berets, an elite special forces unit. During his service in country, Roeber suffered severe burns and disfiguration when a white phosphorous grenade exploded six inches from his face.

He was hospitalized for 14 months while he endured 15 surgeries. By all accounts, his survival was a miracle and it was this message of divine intervention that has been his life's work since his recovery.

"I am convinced that God speaks to us every day and he talks through other people," said Brig. Gen. Richard Lynch, KFOR chief of staff. "I believe God sent Mr. Roeber here to speak to us today."

Roeber is both nationally and internationally known as a public speaker. His evangelical and social work has reached public schools, military installations, and business conventions.

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But after the tragedies of Sept. 11, 2001, Roeber focused his ministry on U.S. military personnel. His schedule went from 12 military engagements a year to 12 presentations a week.

In Multi-National Brigade (East), the soldiers who heard Roeber speak were not only captivated by his personal struggle, but also by his ability to infuse humor into his inspirational story of faith, love of God, family, and country. His stories had most soldiers caught between laughter and tears.

Roeber praised the fighting men and women of the military who still represented the traditional values that his father taught him when he was a child.

"I like to hang out with the military because the words trust, respect, loyalty, and love of country still mean something to them," said Roeber.

At least one soldier was moved by his message and asked Roeber for guidance on the path to salvation. Roeber said that he has seen many soldiers open their hearts to the Lord after hearing his testimony.

Capt. Claudia Pena-Guzman was moved to tears by his presentation and told Roeber that she had seen him when she was 13 years old.

"It was so awesome to see him after 15 years," she said. "It brings back very good memories about why I joined the military. I joined the Army because I had a desire to do something that matters."

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SCHUTZENSNUR



(Left) German soldier fires an American M16A2 during a December Schutzenschnur event at Camp Bondsteel.

(Right) A German soldier shows off his marksmanship prowess at the same event.

Photos by Sgt. Andre Reynolds, Combat Camera

The Schutzenschnur is a joint American and German marksmanship qualification, where each nation's soldiers train each other to fire their weapons. The Schutzenschnur is named after the German marksmanship badge awarded for qualifying on selected German weapons.

The qualifications are hosted every month at Camp Bondsteel for any soldier wishing to participate. The Schutzenschnur is normally a two-day event, in which soldiers will train and qualify on three different weapons to earn the honor of wearing the other nation's marksmanship badge. The qualification process has been reduced to one day and

only two weapons to meet the mission requirements in Kosovo.

American soldiers attempt to qualify on the German G36 rifle and MG1 machine gun to either a gold, silver or bronze Schutzenschnur badge. German soldiers attempt to qualify on the M16A2 and a 9mm pistol to earn a Marksman, Sharpshooter or Expert Marksmanship badge.

The Schutzenschnur not only affords American and German soldiers the opportunity to earn another nation's marksmanship badge, but also gives them an opportunity to work and train together.



Sgt. Matthew Stromitis, of 2-2 Infantry Battalion, takes aim with a German G-36 rifle, April 6. German Air Force Spc. Andreas Artmeier coached Stromitis during the Schutzenschnur.



Photo by Sgt. Erin Elliott



Photo by Spc. Christopher Gookin

German soldiers practice holding the M9 during Schutzenschnur, Dec. 15 at Falcon 3 range in Pasjane.



Sgt. 1st Class Alessandro Corbia, a team leader with the Italian 3rd Regiment Battalion, tightens the mask of the Draegar suit, March 18.



Sgt. Brad Grimes, an EOD technician with the 702nd EOD Battalion, and Sgt. 1st Class Patrick Haralson, NCOIC of the 702nd, help Sgt. 1st Class Alessandro Corbia, a team leader with the Italian 3rd Regiment don the Draeger suit, March 18.

702nd trains with Italians

Story and photos by Spc. Matthew Lang

Their mission in Kosovo generally consists of sweeping areas for unexploded ordnance and performing cordon and searches. But from March 17 to 21, soldiers of the 702nd Explosive Ordnance team at Camp Bondsteel were teachers.

The 702nd EOD cross-trained five Italian soldiers from the 3rd Regiment, Combat Engineer, Improvised Explosive Disposal Devices team, showing them how the 702nd operates in the Multi-National Brigade (East).

"This type of training helps us a lot, but most of all it helps improve our friendship," said Sgt. Maj. Natalino Guarino, the battalion sergeant major of the 3rd Regiment.

The Italians were taught how to use the 702nd's equipment to complete its missions. They also performed cordon and searches and a joint operation with the Italian Carabinieri.

The Italians donned Draeger protective suits used for nuclear, biological and chemical environments and learned how to employ a fiber optic scope.

"One thing this training helps us with the most is seeing and using the equipment they (the 702nd) have. It helps us figure out what exactly can make our job easier and quicker but still just as successful," said Guarino.

Sgt. 1st Class Patrick Haralson, NCOIC of the 702nd, said, "I think this training helps everyone because it reassures us and them that we both can overcome the language barrier and still work efficiently together."

Spc. Jason Woods, a mechanic with the 702nd, agreed.

"This training helps them perform their job more efficiently," he said. "The faster they can get the job done, the sooner they can continue on with their mission."

Woods added, "Doing this training is just like us going to the range, it keeps us sharp."

This is not the first time the 702nd has cross-trained.

"We trained with the Germans, Austrians and others," said Haralson. "They usually come here or we go there and then sometimes we do both."

While some of the land mines in Kosovo may have been laid according to military standard to provide protection for key installations or troop concentrations, a large amount were laid to target the returning civilian population, said Guarino.

There have been confirmed reports of mines in and around civilian housing, laid on the edges of roads where people are most likely to walk, and in abandoned houses and buildings, said Haralson.

For the refugees to return, KFOR has to remove as many of the dangers as possible, said Guarino.

"Just about every day we find something hidden," said Haralson. "Who knows what could happen if we were to leave these things in the wrong hands."

Both non-government organizations and United Nations agencies are also working with KFOR to eliminate these risks, said Guarino. They also provide mine awareness programs for school children.



From left, Staff Sgt. Scott Cornelison, an EOD team leader, and Spc. Jason Woods, a mechanic, help Spc. Jeremiah Wagner, a technician, all with the 702nd, don the suit, March 18.

The 702nd is always on call. Its mission in Kosovo utilizes the training the soldiers received at Eglin Air Force Base.

If they get a call, the crew's goal is to be on the road with all their equipment in 10 minutes or less.

The 702nd was recognized as the 2nd Ordnance Bomb Disposal Squad in 1943. Two years later, the unit was inactivated at Camp Shanks, N.Y. In 1946, they were re-designated again as the 2nd OBDS and assigned to the regular Army.

In 1951, the unit was mobilized and sent to Germany where they have been stationed ever since. In 1998 they were reorganized and re-designated as the 702nd.

In the last 34 years, the one thing that has not changed with the 702nd is the patch worn above their heart. Most multinational EOD units wear a similar one.

This badge is awarded to and worn by all four services in Department of Defense and is utilized by some civilian police department bomb squads.

The badge has five elements.

The wreath is symbolic of dedication to duty and is worn in memory of those EOD officers and enlisted personnel who have lost their lives while performing their duties.

The bomb is copied from the design of a World War II bomb disposal badge and represents the historic and major objective of EOD: making unexploded ordnance safe.

The three visible fins of the bomb represent the three types of ordnance EOD teams confront: nuclear, conventional and chemical/biological.

The lightning bolts represent the potential destructive power of the bomb and the courage and professionalism of the personnel. And the shield represents the EOD mission:

preventing detonation and protecting lives and property. It has become a global mission.

"It helps that different countries are working together," Wood said. "If we don't talk or work with each other it doesn't work, it's like two gears working against each other."

Peacekeeper profile



James O'Mary

Age: 22
Rank: Spc.
MOS: Driver
Unit: HHC 3rd Brigade
Camp: Bondsteel
Hometown: Detroit, Mich.

What are you good at? Playing guitar and singing.
What advice would you give soldiers here? Stay active and busy. Always think of what you can do to make the mission more successful. Enroll in college.

New leaders welcomed to Iron Knights' table

HHC 3rd Brigade change of command ceremony

Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Daniel Landry



Clockwise from left, 1st Sgt. Clifford Lowe, Capt. Daniel Edwan, Col. Dana Pittard and Capt. Barry Wiltcher complete the transfer of authority. Wiltcher assumed command of HHC, 3rd Brigade from Edwan.



“Build the team. Build the team.”

Those were Capt. Daniel Edwan’s parting words as he transferred command of HHC, 3rd Brigade to Capt. Barry Wiltcher.

1st Sgt. Clifford Lowe transferred his duties to 1st Sgt. Vincent Hendrix.

The ceremony was held on the Multi-National Brigade (East) parade field on Camp Bondsteel, March 31.



Capt. Barry Wiltcher takes his place as the new commander of HHC, 3rd Brigade.

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The Ghetto Jay Show

2-63 soldier performs on local radio every Thursday night

Story and photos by Spc. Catherine Caruso

Staff Sgt. Jacob Malsack was stressing out. He bounced on the balls of his feet, ducked his head, took a deep breath and exhaled.

"OK, this is it," he said. "OK, this is going to be good."

At 9 p.m., when the microphone went hot, Malsack was no longer the squared-away tank commander for Cobra Company, 2-63 Armor Battalion. He was transformed into slouch-shouldered, slang talking "Ghetto Jay," international radio star.

Together with Spc. Justin "The Intern" Harder and interpreter Ardian Nrecaj, Malsack's "Ghetto Jay Show" has been a Thursday night fixture on Radio Klokot since 2-63 deployed to Kosovo in November of 2002.

The 2-63's information operations plan includes

formal and informal shows on each radio station in its sector. The formal shows come from a civil affairs perspective, usually interviews with the battalion staff officers about KFOR projects or concerns in their sector. The informal shows use a pop culture format to disseminate command messages and themes.

"They can play whatever music they want," said Lt. Gregory Tomlin, the information operations officer for 2-63. The current line up includes a Latin show, country and western, rock and rhythm and blues.

Malsack grew up in San Diego, Calif., but "Ghetto Jay" was born out of his daily radio communications with his unit back at home station.

"Each morning when we keyed the net, I'd stay on for about half an hour, do some goofy stuff," Malsack said. "Everyone loved it. Eventually my (commanding officer) found out, and when we got here and found out

we had to do a radio show, I got volunteered.”

Harder's path to the studios of Radio KlokoK was similar. He deejayed at dances at Wishkah Valley High School in Aberdeen, Wash. before joining the Army as a tank crewmember and working his way up to gunner.

“Maybe next week, we'll have the listeners

vote on whether you get promoted to deejay or stay an intern,” Malsack said.

While a typical night's program includes a serial spoof known as “The Ghetto Jay Theater,” sing-a-longs with Justin the Intern, and plenty of banter, there are also the spontaneous inventions of the cast.

On this particular night, the cast decided to host a request show, soliciting their listeners to call in dedications.

The idea was a success in theory — they got plenty of requests. Unfortunately, what the crew didn't anticipate was that the requests would be for ballads and love songs.

“Make it stop,” begged Harder, when the microphone was keyed off. “I can't take it anymore.”

Malsack pleaded to his audience.

“Ghetto Jay wants to honor these requests,” he said. “But you'll have to request better songs!”

At least it went better than their on-air beauty pageant. They asked their radio listeners to determine who was the better looking and the phone was deafeningly silent.

Their special blend — a format Malsack described as about a quarter to a third rhythm and blues and a random mix of whatever else sounds good at the time — has worked.

According to Nrecaj, the only rule is that all three team members have to agree on each track before it can be played. Any song that gets three votes makes it on the air.

The radio gig has led to some local notoriety. People recognize Malsack on the street and ask him for his autograph. He is not sure how they recognize him, and the attention can be sometimes awkward since most of his listeners are females under the age of 18.

“It's hard to explain to some people (why teenage girls run up to him during patrols),” he said.

Nrecaj said their fan base is actually a little broader than that. He has friends who tune in from as far away as Strpce.

“Generally, we just talk about the stuff soldiers talk about when you leave them alone in a room for two hours.”

*Staff Sgt. Jacob Malsack
Host of the Ghetto Jay Show*

“They are better than I am,” joked Radio KlokoK disk jockey Dejan Spasic.

For a show with one microphone and no sound engineer (the audio board and compact disc players are under the control of whoever is closest to the

equipment), “The Ghetto Jay Show” crew has polished their program to rival those done by professionals.

Among the small details, they have produced their own theme song, “The Ghetto Jay Symphony”.

“Generally, we just talk about the stuff soldiers talk about when you leave them alone in a room for two hours,” Malsack said.

It's stuff that translates into a good performance, good community relations and hopefully a more receptive audience for the more serious messages of maintaining a safe and secure community.



Staff Sgt. Jacob Malsack as Ghetto Jay



Marine

The few, the

Story by Capt. David Matzel

Photos by Spc. Jacob Chandler

GNJILANE – In a continuing sign that Kosovo is burgeoning into a self-sufficient community, the U. S. Marine Corps 4th Civil Affairs Group officially closed its office at the Gnjilane Civil-Military Cooperation Center on April 2.

It marked the end of a successful two-and-half-year mission to help local citizens return Gnjilane to a well functioning, stable and effective municipality.

The ceremony was held at the Gnjilane office of Municipal President Lufti Haziri.

“I extend my most sincere and heartfelt gratitude to the municipal government and to the people of Gnjilane for their gracious support and cooperation,” said Lt. Col. Anthony McGinty, officer-in-charge of the 4th CAG Detachment. “(Our) departure is solid evidence of the successful cooperation between your government, the international community and the Marines.”

Since 2001, the 4th CAG has served as a liaison between KFOR, Gnjilane and the international community. The Marines who have manned the office have helped citizens solve a variety of issues including utilities, claims of compensation, and even one gentleman who needed major artery surgery.

Cpl. Christopher Ivory was an integral part of that team.

Ivory’s journey to Kosovo started almost four years ago when he joined the Marine Corps in July 1999. After completing basic training at the Marine Recruit Depot, Parris Island, S.C., he went to the infantry school and then attended the course for civil affairs.

Age: 34

Camp: Monteith

Hometown: Chicago, Ill.

What are you good at: Writing

What advice would give

soldiers here: Give 100

percent of yourself to your

mission. Also be sure to do PT

and whatever you like to do to

maintain focus.



Staff Sgt. Jim Hides
Civil Affairs Specialist
4th Civil Affairs Group

Age: 21

Camp: Monteith

Hometown: Richmond, Va.

What do you do on your off-time:

Work-out and read.

What advice would you give

soldiers here: Nitro-Tech works.



Cpl. Christopher Ivory
Civil Affairs Specialist
4th Civil Affairs Group

Civil Affairs

proud leave MNB(E)

His first deployment was El Salvador. There his mission was to coordinate the transfer of schools built by the U.S. military to civilian control.

After completing that mission the call went out for volunteers to Kosovo. Despite knowing this would delay his college aspirations by another year, Ivory volunteered.

"I am a Marine and we deploy," said Ivory.

His priority upon return from this deployment is to finish college and possibly attend Officer Candidate School.

Ivory spoke of his time at the CMCC fondly. His assignments have run the gamut. One week he was an intermediary between a medical patient that needed an operation, the local Gnjilane hospital, and a Pristina review board.

Currently, he is working to get a new bathroom facility for a school in Dobrcane. The school's bathroom was destroyed in the war. The closest bathroom is a mile away. Ivory has been looking for funding for this project tirelessly and is determined to succeed.

Many things in Kosovo have been new experiences for this Marine, but working with soldiers has not been one of them.

"I have never worked with a Marine unit. My whole career has been with Army units," he said. He has been impressed with his counterparts in the 2-2 Infantry Battalion, saying they were professional and "very squared away."

And there is no doubt those soldiers would probably say the same thing about Ivory and his fellow reserve Marines.

Age: 34

Camp: Monteith

Hometown: Washington, D.C.

What are you good at: Being me.

What advice would you give soldiers here: Don't count your days, it only makes seem longer.



Staff Sgt. Christopher Fritz
Civil Affairs Specialist
4th Civil Affairs Group

Age: 39

Camp: Monteith

Hometown: Pittsboro, N.C.

Why did you join USMC? I liked the uniform.

What advice would you give soldiers here: Pass information.



Staff Sgt. James Deel
Civil Affairs Specialist
4th Civil Affairs Group



Using supplements

Is it worth the risk?

Story and illustrations by Spc. Matthew Lang

If you read the headlines, you know that professional athletes, body builders, and even teen-agers are using performance-enhancing supplements.

It's no secret that soldiers use them too.

Although the U.S. military has banned most performance enhancing supplements, there are still soldiers who use them to increase muscle mass, lose weight or to raise their score on the physical fitness test, according to Sgt. Mark Thibodeau, a nutritionist with Task Force Med Falcon on Camp Bondsteel.

Depending on the product, soldiers could be risking severe side effects, long-term health problems, and even death, Thibodeau said.

"If you were to ask a soldier to stand down range on a M-16 line while soldiers were firing, the soldier would say you're crazy," Thibodeau said. "Well, the same should go along with taking a supplement that clearly has a warning label that says, 'This product may cause death.'"

As a result of the ban, most supplements have been removed from the shelves of the Army & Air Force Exchange Service. Supplements containing ephedra, ephedrine, ma huang and guarana are off-limits.

Also, the use of anabolic steroids such as Pro-Hormones and under-the-counter steroids is banned.

Yet all these substances can be ordered on-line and delivered through the U.S. mail.

Commanders are authorized to prohibit their soldiers from engaging in activities that they determine will pose a threat to the soldiers health or safety, according to AR 600-20, paragraph 4-12(c). But like tobacco use, commanders can only stress that their soldiers be extremely careful when using supplements that have not been banned, such as creatine, protein, multivitamins, and fat burners that are all sold by AAFES.

"The thing we soldiers need to concentrate on is helping each other and keeping each other as educated as possible," said Thibodeau.

The best way to enhance performance is to eat a well-balanced meal that incorporates all the food



groups, and maintain an exercise program at least three to five days a week to include both aerobic and anaerobic activities, Thibodeau added.

It seems simple enough. So why are so many drawn to a more riskier and life-threatening option?

Low self-esteem, peer pressure, emulating others who use supplements, and the desire for quicker results are some of the key motivators, Thibodeau said. It doesn't help when professional athletes and body builders swear by them in advertisements.

Those that use legal supplements insist they compliment their exercise regime.

"If the supplement works and is authorized and sold at AAFES why shouldn't I use them" said Staff Sgt. Michael Siller, a liaison officer for 2-63 Armor Battalion.

Siller is one of a number of soldiers who use supplements to compliment their weight training.

The abusers are driven by a need to have immediate results whether it is in performance or physical appearance, according to Muscular Development Magazine.

"I've used all kinds of supplements to achieve the body of my dreams," said a soldier from Camp Bondsteel, who preferred not give his name. "I've even used anabolic steroids, which made me gain mass but left me feeling really agitated after workouts."

Many consumers equate feeling good with looking good. Supplements can be a very attractive helper, according to Muscle and Fitness Magazine. Those who are just beginning a work out program may reach for supplements to fit into the "gym" atmosphere.

Many companies that sell performance-enhancing supplements target people with unwanted body images. Advertising campaigns equate muscle bound men with success and popularity. Likewise, they glorify thin women as being the prettiest, sexiest and smartest.

The biggest question you should ask yourself when considering the use of any kind of supplement is, "Are the risks really worth it?"

"Some side effects not only can be damaging to your health, but it could be a career stopper," Thibodeau said.

The products aren't cheap, he added.

Ephedrine is a popular supplement among athletes and bodybuilders; however, many users remain unaware of the product's dangers and unwanted side effects, said Thibodeau.

Ephedrine has been known to cause heart and

Popular Supplement Choices

Products	Brands:	Banned by Military	Effects
Creatine	Cell-Tech, EAS Synthe VolZ, Creatine Monohydrate	No	Pros: Creatine is believed to supply muscles with additional energy, thereby increasing endurance and shortening time. Cons: Creatine draws water out of the blood, and in intestines and skeletal muscle. As a result, dehydration is a major concern during creatine supplementation.
Ephedrine	Hydroxycut, Ripped Fuel and others.	Yes	Pros: helps individuals lose weight and gain energy improving muscular strength and endurance Cons: Can cause strokes, insomnia, paranoia, hypertension, depression, dehydration or death
Protein	Nitro-tech, EAS Myoplex, Whey and others	No	Pros: Helps increase of strength and muscle size Cons: None known of
Steroids and Prohormones	Winstrol, Anadrol, Deca-Durabolin, Testosterone	Yes	Pros: Can increase leanness / muscle definition Can increase muscle mass / weight Helps increase strength Can increase effectiveness of training Helps improve recovery rate Cons: Can increase risk of aggressive acts which may injure others Increased risk of cardiovascular disease Increased risk of liver disease and cancer

Illustration by Spc. Matthew Lang

respiratory problems, strokes, insomnia, paranoia, hypertension, depression, or dehydration when using the product. While some people may consider these risks to be insignificant, they may become more serious if combined with other stimulants such as caffeine.

"If the supplement can cause more harm than good people shouldn't be using it," said Siller.

Two summers ago, a professional and a college football player died while taking the product. Korey Stringer, a lineman with the Minnesota Vikings, died of dehydration after taking "Ripped Fuel," a supplement containing ephedrine. A few days later, Rashidi Wheeler, a 22-year-old athlete at Northwestern University, had the stimulant in his system when he collapsed and died during a team workout.

Recently, the drug came under harsh criticism when the autopsy of Baltimore Oriole pitching prospect Steve Belcher revealed traces of ephedrine. Belcher died of heatstroke during spring training. He had been taking a dietary supplement. He was 22.

It's worth noting that if a soldier's death is linked to any fault of his own, such as taking a banned substance, they lose their life insurance, Thibodeau said.

"Just like riding in a military vehicle without a seat belt," he said. "The cause of death was your fault. You don't get your life insurance. If you cause your death, do you really think the military will pay your family a quarter million dollars? If so you are in for a surprise."

"We in the field call them 'Nutrition Quacks,'" Thibodeau said. "In fact, listening to these so called experts is putting your life in their hands."

The choice is yours.

MWR offers innovative approaches to exercise, diet

Story and photo by Spc. Whitney Hughes

You might not find yoga or aerobics in Field Manual 21-20, the bible for Army physical fitness, but here in Multi-National Brigade (East) there are plenty of alternative choices of physical training to go along with the traditional.

For soldiers looking to keep in shape the Morale, Welfare and Recreation department offers not only three gyms, but also has organized several competitive tournaments for soldiers, according to Glen McMurtry, lead MWR programmer.

Recently the North Town gym, a site for most MWR organized basketball and volleyball tournaments, underwent renovations to accommodate these events.

Brown and Root workers added a balcony overlooking the basketball/volleyball court so that spectators can watch the



Chief Warrant Officer Martin Randall, a Black Hawk pilot with 2-1 Aviation, performs a tricep press-down at the South Town gym, April 4.

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events from a safe place.

“Previously, there was a safety hazard and overcrowding problem (with spectators sitting on the side of the court),” said Scott Past, an MWR programmer.

The renovations began March 21 and were completed April 3.

Body for Life is one of the most popular ongoing personal training programs that soldiers participate in at Camp Bondsteel, said McMurtry.

Johnny Davis, the Camp Bondsteel fitness coordinator, runs the program.

“It is a 12-week program to help individuals set goals and to change their lifestyle gradually,” said Davis.

To begin the program, Davis gives each individual a body fat analysis, a nutrition plan, an exercise prescription, and takes them through an exercise and nutrition seminar.

“I break it down so they can understand their own body type,” said Davis.

Davis also runs other personal training programs including weightlifting and nutritional seminars.

Soldiers can sign up for Body for Life or other training program at the South Town gym or email Davis at Johnny.Davis@Bondsteel2.aurer.army.mil for more information.

This month, MWR is offering yoga classes Monday through Thursday. It also holds aerobics classes seven days a week.

In addition, MWR sponsors a monthly fun run. The next one will be the Easter Bunny Run, a 10 kilometer race, on April 19.

For more recreational forms of PT, there are organized sporting events. Earlier in the rotation MWR sponsored the Camp Bondsteel basketball league, which wrapped up its season with a championship tournament March 15 through March 16.

The league had 14 teams participating, which was a good turnout, said Past. The Task Force Med Falcon team took first place in the tournament. This week, MWR is hosting a three-on-three basketball tournament.

A volleyball league began March 17. There are six teams participating, including two international teams, the Greeks of the 501st Mechanized Battalion and Russians from the 13th Tactical Group.

The games are held every Monday, Wednesday and Friday night at the North Town gym. There is a championship tournament tentatively scheduled for the first weekend in May.

The leagues are designed to give soldiers an organized forum to compete in sporting events.

“We have teams that have competed against each other back in Germany and teams that have never played against each other, so people are able to continue old rivalries and bring new ones home,” said Past.

www.mnbe.hqsareur.army.mil

2-2 Inf. answers the call

Soldiers field questions from Gnjilane high school students

Story and photo by Master Sgt. John Barr

GNJILANE, Kosovo – High school students at the Memet Isai Technical School in Gnjilane met with soldiers of the 2-2 Infantry Battalion on April 2 in an open discussion about KFOR's mission and the future relationship with Camp Monteith.

The soldiers were invited to speak to the students, who wanted to learn more about the role of KFOR in their community.

Capt. Nick Stankovich, the civil affairs officer for 2-2 Inf., served as the main spokesman for what became a panel of soldiers fielding questions from the students.

Capt. Casey Nix, 2-2 Inf.'s legal representative; Staff Sgt. Danny Neal, NCOIC, and Pfc. Kenneth Moore, assistant to the NCOIC, joined Stankovich. Both Neal and Moore were in Kosovo in 1999 and could speak about the progress and changes they have seen.

After the panel introduced themselves and spoke about their jobs, the questions from the students began. The class president asked about the KFOR mission in Gnjilane and the future of more cooperative projects between the municipality and the task force at Camp Monteith.

"While municipal projects are not the sole focus of KFOR, participation can be requested as long as it doesn't lessen the mission of providing a safe and secure environment," Stankovich said.

Another student asked about how security had improved since the NATO peacekeeping mission started in 1999.

"We now patrol the town in soft caps where before we were in Kevlar and flak vests," Neal said. "There are less vehicle check points and many of the forward operation positions have been closed."

Nix was asked about the work he does and if it included local citizens or just military.

"I advise the commander on legal matters and work mostly with the military," he said. "KFOR cases that local people are involved in do come up and I work with U.N. prosecutors, local judges and local defense attorneys."

The students also asked about the role of the Kosovo Protection Corps and the Kosovo Police Service as well as crime and drug trafficking. Their questions were thoughtful and showed a genuine interest in the role of multinational peacekeepers in their province.

An open forum generated many ideas for future joint efforts between the soldiers at Camp Monteith and the students: technical seminars, art exhibitions, and cultural and sports events were among the suggestions.

The class president has already begun working on a project that would open a multiethnic technical seminar to all the students of the municipality and hopes that Camp



From left, Pfc. Kenneth Moore speaks with students from the Memet Isai Technical School in Gnjilane, April 2. Capt. Casey Nix looks on.

Monteith can join.

Stankovich asked the students what they planned to do upon graduation and nearly the entire room said they would go on to university in Pristina or elsewhere.

The U.S. KFOR soldiers congratulated the class on their upcoming graduation and the students gave credit to their teachers, Nazmi Musa, Nazmi Ajeti, and Avni Sycejmani who were present and clearly pleased.

Peacekeeper profile



Sukarno Smith

Age: 26

Rank: Spc.

MOS: 52D, Generator Repairer

Unit: HHC, 3rd Brigade

Camp: Bondsteel

Hometown: Albany, Ga.

What are you good at doing? Running, typing, leading and following.

Why did you join the Army? It is a challenge and I enjoy serving God and country.

Scenes of Kosovo



Farmers near the town of Srpski Babus take advantage of a warm March afternoon to prepare fields for Spring planting.

Photo by Sgt. Steven Ducharme