

Produced For Personnel of KFOR Multi-National Brigade (East)

Guardian East

Volume 10, Issue 15

June 16, 2004



Remembering Our Past:
Memorial Day

page 12

Message to the troops



By Lt. Col. Richard Johnson,
Commander,
Task Force Red Horse

"I TAKE FULL AND ENTIRE
RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE EVENTS AT
FORT EDWARDS..." Captain Harry
"Breaker" Morant; Boer Wars, South
Africa, 1902.

I would like to take this time to express my personal gratitude to each and every Soldier in Multi-national Brigade (East), for your outstanding commitment and dedication to duty, as well as your selfless service to your countries. Each and everyday Soldiers from MNB(E) reach out and touch the lives of the people living here in Kosovo in one way or another. While here in Kosovo I know that each and every Soldier is committed to working collectively at making a positive impact. Every time that I am out in sector I see the positive results of what all of you are doing here in Kosovo. From those of you who are enforcing a safe and secure environment by patrolling the sectors, and the Soldiers who provide the medical expertise or support the MEDCAPs that give needed medical assistance to the communities, as well

as the Soldiers who teach classes such as English to the school children in the local schools, you all are making a positive and significant impact here in Kosovo.

As I think about the men and women of MNB(E) who are performing their duties everyday to the highest of standards I can't help but wonder how it is so unfortunate that throughout the Army, the negative actions of a minority has the ability to distract from the great and positive accomplishments of the majority. As we continue our mission here in Kosovo, I would like to stress what I feel is an important reminder for all Soldiers. I feel that it is important that we remind ourselves that as Soldiers we are responsible for our individual actions and that it is our responsibility to understand and do what is right. But more importantly for those of us who are leaders throughout this organization, squad leaders to commanding officers, we remind ourselves that at the end of each and every day we are responsible for each and every event of our units. It is very important that as individuals and leaders we remind ourselves of our responsibilities. As individual Soldiers



Lt. Col. Richard Johnson

it is our responsibility to stay mentally and physically fit for each and every mission. It is our responsibility to meet the individual standards in which the army requires us to sustain, and as Soldiers it is our responsibility to be tolerant and understanding in the treatment and considerations of others rights. As leaders we are not only responsible for our own actions, we have gained the responsibility for others. We must be aware that it is our responsibility to ensure we have given the proper guidance and training to our Soldiers, that they clearly understand our intent and that we have provided them the proper resources to execute their missions. It is important to remember a leader can give up almost anything except final responsibility.

Again, thank you to all of you and to your families back home for your commitment and dedication to our mission here in Kosovo.

SEE THE PHOTO OF THE DAY

www.mnbe.hqusareur.army.mil

COVER: Sgt. Jason Hirschman lays a memorial wreath during the Memorial Day Ceremony on Camp Bondsteel. Photo by Spc. Tim Grooms.

See page 12 for the story

Submissions or story ideas related to the MNB(E) mission are encouraged. Send regular mail to MNB(E) PAO, Attn: Editor, Camp Bondsteel, APO AE 09340; send e-mail to guardianeast@bondsteel2.areur.army.mil.

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About Guardian East

Guardian East is an official publication of KFOR Multi-National Brigade (East) produced to provide command information to service members in MNB(E). Guardian East is produced by the 29th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, Army National Guard, Baltimore, Md. Contents of Guardian East are not necessarily official views, nor endorsed by the U.S. government, the Department of Defense, the Department of the Army or the 34th Infantry Division. Guardian East is published biweekly using offset press by the MNB(E) Public Affairs Office, Building 1320, Camp Bondsteel, APO AE 09340. Printed circulation is 3,000.



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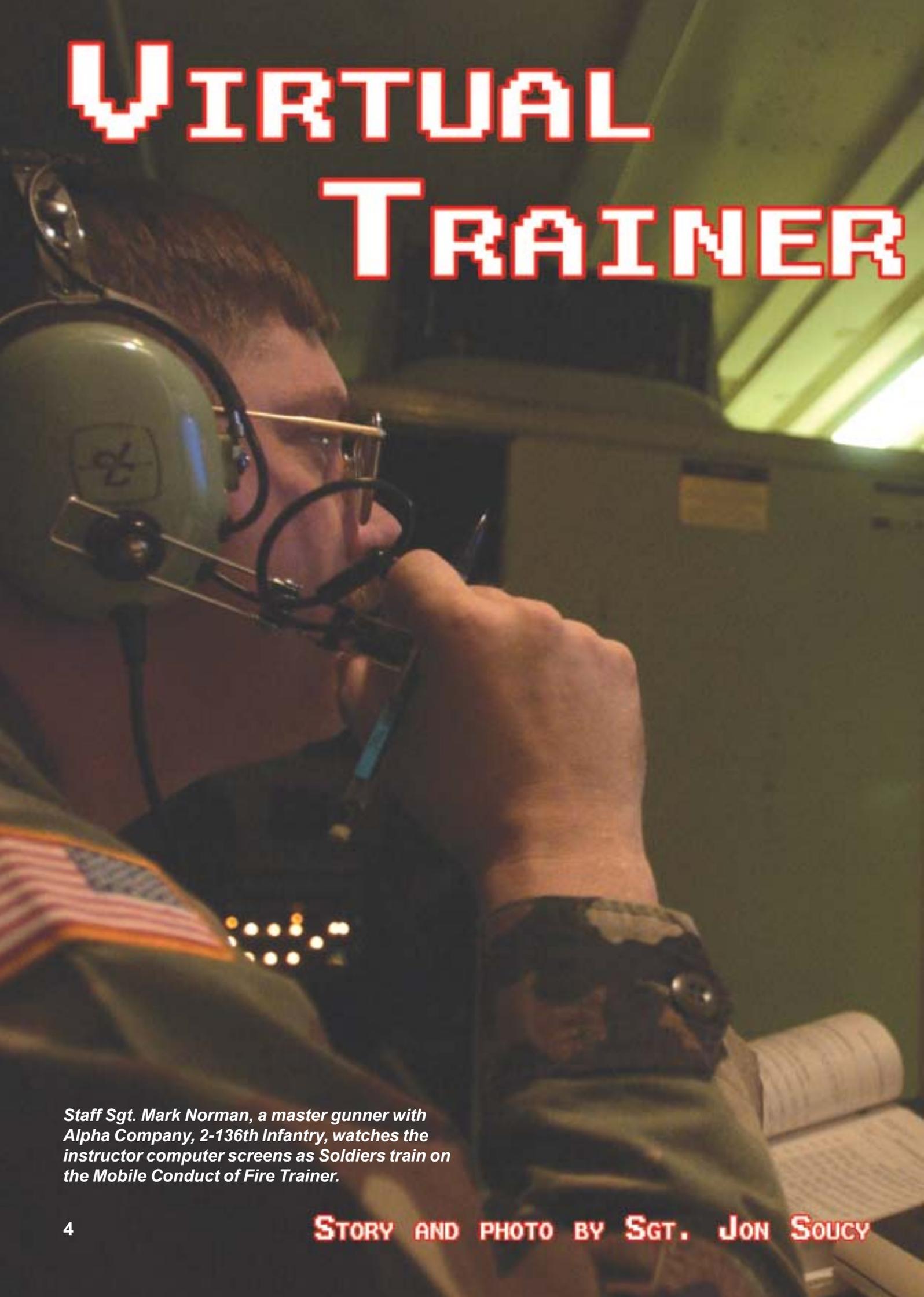
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Members of the Polish-Ukrainian Battalion help the local communities by providing health care.

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Staff Sgt. Brian Mixon, left, with the 75th Ordnance Company (Explosive Ordnance Disposal) explains to country singer Toby Keith how to detonate a pile of unexploded ordinance before Keith blows up the pile on EOD Hill. Keith and Ted Nugent visited Camp Bondsteel and put on a concert for soldiers. Photo by Spc. Rob Barker.

VIRTUAL TRAINER

A close-up, profile view of a soldier wearing a headset with a microphone and glasses. He is looking towards the right, presumably at computer screens. The background is dimly lit with some greenish light, suggesting a control room or training facility. The soldier is wearing a camouflage uniform with an American flag patch on the shoulder.

Staff Sgt. Mark Norman, a master gunner with Alpha Company, 2-136th Infantry, watches the instructor computer screens as Soldiers train on the Mobile Conduct of Fire Trainer.

The enemy armored personnel carrier was difficult to see as it pulled out from behind a group of trees and underbrush. The gunner of the M2 Bradley Fighting Vehicle spotted it, determined the range, and the driver moved the vehicle into position to fire. Rounds flew downrange but fell short of the target. They made adjustments and another salvo was sent downrange followed by a third. The rounds hit the target but didn't destroy it and the vehicle moved behind cover and out of range of the Bradley before the gunner could fire again.

Though the target wasn't destroyed, the experience gave the Soldiers in the Bradley the opportunity to refine their skills, and since the armored personnel carrier, the Bradley and the scenario were all generated by the Mobile Conduct of Fire Trainer, a computer-run simulator designed to enhance the skills of Bradley crewmembers, the Soldiers could appreciate the lesson without any impact on an actual mission.

"The whole purpose of the system is for Bradley crew members to gain proficiency of the commands between the crew and gunner while engaging targets," said 1st Lt. Jason Wachholz, a platoon leader from Chaska, Minn., with Alpha Company, 2-136th Infantry.

When a Bradley crew engages a target, there are several steps they go through to fire on the objective. According to Wachholz, the team has to first see the target and decide whether to fire. Once the decision has been made to fire, the team has to select the ammunition and weapon system to use, and then determine the range of the target.

"The gunner and the [Bradley commander] have all those activities going on during an engagement," said Wachholz. "This builds that process up and allows them to streamline it and get it down."

"It trains or refreshes you on all the switches and buttons you have to hit during an engagement," added Staff Sgt. Mark Norman, a master gunner from Red Lake Falls, Minn., with the same unit. "And there's a lot of switches you have to hit."

The MCOFT consists of an instructor's computer station, where the scenarios are run, and an enclosure about the size of an amusement park photo booth that contains a mock-up of the turret of a Bradley. The system can run a variety of situations from a zero range to practice calibrating the vehicle's weapons, to more complex scenarios involving multiple targets and firing while the vehicle is moving. For the Soldiers who train on the equipment, it provides a realistic alternative to using an actual Bradley.

"It helps you get your timing down," said Sgt. Gerald Wilson, a Bradley gunner from Minneapolis, Minn. "It's realistic, but you're not burning up real rounds."

Obviously not the most recently developed training tool, the MCOFT, with chunky lines, large buttons, flashing lights, and large monitors, looks like it could have been designed by a '70s science-fiction writer, but Wachholz said it has at least one benefit over newer technology.

"There are some tabletop trainers where it's more like a video game. The graphics are better, but the drawback is that you don't have the turret," he said.

Despite working with older technology, the Soldiers training on the equipment were able to hone their skills as they ran through the scenarios, and the next enemy vehicle they engaged was destroyed.



Exchanging

Secrets

STORY AND PHOTOS BY SPC. TIM GROOMS

What began as an afternoon of religious cooperation between American and Swedish chaplains turned into an afternoon of competition, accusation, and ultimately, one of failure for the American Chaplains. They were visiting Camp Victoria, base of operations for the Swedish soldiers of Multi-national Brigade (Central), at the invitation of Capt. Jonas Johnson, the Swedish chaplain and the person who suggested the group relax together with a friendly game of Kubb.

Kubb, which is pronounced so it rhymes with tube, is a traditional Swedish game that involves two teams throwing wooden batons at the opposing team's rectangular wooden blocks. When a team successfully knocks down their opponents' blocks, they target a central wooden block called the king. The team that knocks down the king wins the game. After a few games, accusations flew along with the batons.

"They are cheating all the time," said Johnson, joking that the American chaplains were trying to sham him.

"I think Chaplain Johnson made the rules up as he went along," said Maj. Erik Feig, a chaplain from Lake City, Minn., with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 34th Infantry Division. "I think he was trying not to get beat."

"Maybe if I was as good at cheating as the Camp Bondsteel chaplains I would have done better," said Spc. Rebekah Miller, a Minneapolis, Minn., resident who is normally Feig's assistant but who was Johnson's teammate for the games.

It was not clear if anyone had been cheating, but the American chaplains lost every game. After the weather prematurely ended the last game of Kubb, which might have ended as another defeat for the Americans, the competitors shook hands, put their competition behind them, and Johnson escorted the group to dinner and a tour of the camp.

Afterward, the group headed to the church where the chaplains and assistants were invited to be part of the church service for the evening, which Lt. Col. Tim Peterson, Task Force Falcon chaplain from Prescott, Wis., said was the real reason for the visit. Peterson said the Swedish audience had special significance for him.

"I like to preach to new groups all the time but it was special preaching to people from a different nation, and gave me an opportunity to think about my Swedish ancestry," said Peterson.

During the service, Peterson preached part in Swedish, which he said was a learning experience.

"I had never really learned any Swede until I was getting ready for this," he said. "I tried to memorize it and was not confident enough so I had to read it."

After preaching, Peterson sang a song that was popular with Swedish immigrants, and the performance found an appreciative audience, he said.

"I was surprised the Swedes knew the song," said Peterson. "I did not think they would know it so it was fun to have them sing along."

Afterward, everyone shook hands and talked for a bit until it was time for the Americans to return to Camp Bondsteel. They all seemed to feel the strength of a new friendship forged on the Kubb field, and the American chaplains seemed to have forgotten all about their losses in light of more meaningful experiences.

"I thought it was very meaningful and special that we are all Christian and able to worship together even though we were worshipping in different languages," said Miller. "It was a great cultural experience as well as a great worshipping experience."

◀ *Swedish Chaplain (Capt.) Jonas Johnson speaks at a service in the Chapel at Camp Victoria where the American Chaplains attended.*

Johnson explains the rules of Kubb to Chaplains, from left to right, Lt. Col. Timothy Peterson, Maj. Joel Severson, and Maj. Eric Feig. ▶



BEING A



IN KOSOVO

Many of us have role models who lead us, teach us and help us grow. During the recent dedication of Camp Bondsteel's movie theater to the Darby "Red Bull" Theater, a group of Bondsteel's Rangers gathered for the celebration and to remember the first trainer of the modern-day elite force and one of its role models, Brig. Gen. William O. Darby.

"He is probably by far the most famous Ranger of all," said 1st Lt. Jeff Blowers, a platoon leader with Charlie Company, 2-135th Infantry, and a Ranger from Waite Park, Minn. "He is a good part of Ranger history. Ranger history is not known by everyone so hopefully this will help spread the word of what the Ranger lineage really is."

All Rangers attend the Ranger Training Brigade Ranger School at the U.S. Army Infantry Center and School to become qualified. After qualification some Rangers go back to their Ranger Battalion while others move onto different units, normally within the Army, but also in the Marine Corps, Navy, and Air Force. Rangers who belong to a Ranger Regiment or Battalion wear the Ranger tab over their Ranger Battalion Scroll and wear tan berets. Soldiers who have become Ranger qualified but are not part of a Ranger Battalion wear a Ranger tab over their unit's patch.

(See *RANGER* page 10)

STORIES AND PHOTOS BY SPC. ROB BARKER

IN THE NAME OF DARBY

The 34th Infantry Division recognized one of its own when the Camp Bondsteel Movie Theater was dedicated in a recent ceremony to Brig. Gen. William O. Darby. The theater is now named Darby "Red Bull" Theater in dedication to Darby's sacrifices during his time as a Red Bull Soldier, in which he also trained and recruited the elite force now known as the Army Rangers.

Darby, possibly the best known Ranger of all time, then a Captain, spent time with the 34th ID beginning in January, 1942, when he joined the Division in Northern Ireland, shortly after the attacks on Pearl Harbor.

"At the outset of World War II, then Captain Darby was aide to Major General Hartle of the 34th Red Bull Division and a seven-year Army veteran from the Military Academy at West Point. Captain Darby yearned for action and repeatedly requested transfer to combat duties," said Brig. Gen. Rick Erlandson, commanding general of Multi-national Brigade (East) during his speech at the ceremony.

(See *DARBY* page 10)



A group of Camp Bondsteel's Rangers pose for a picture with Brig. Gen. Rick Erlandson, commander of Multi-national Brigade (East), shortly after unveiling the new outside sign of the Darby "Red Bull" Theater.

“His ideas on tough, realistic training are an integral part of our Army’s training and his values of personal courage, duty, leadership and selfless service mirror the values of our modern Army,”

-Brig. Gen. Rick Erlandson on Brig. Gen. Bill Darby’s values-

Capt. Nancy Svagrik, commander of the 641st AG (Postal) Detachment, sings the National Anthem, during the dedication of the Darby "Red Bull" Theater.





“Being Rangers allows us to set high standards for ourselves, which makes our job easier,”

(RANGER from page 8)

-Sgt. Matthew Aeschliman, a team leader with Alpha Company, 2-135th Infantry-

“Rangers from the Ranger Battalions must earn their right to attend Ranger School and are expected to return to the battalion with their ‘tab’ or risk being transferred out of the battalion,” said Blowers, a former member of the U.S. Army 2nd Ranger Battalion.

He added being a part of the Ranger heritage helps him, with his 13-years of experience in the Army, and other Soldiers around Camp Bondsteel do their everyday jobs.

“Being Rangers allows us to set high standards for ourselves, which makes our job easier,” said Sgt. Matthew Aeschliman, a team leader with Alpha Company, 2-135th Infantry and a Wadena, Iowa, resident. “It keeps our military bearing up, and gives us a lot of confidence.”

Confidence is learned during grueling training at Ranger School, said Blowers.

“The training is very intense and the missions very stressful,” he added. “The school tries to simulate the stress of combat by substituting live rounds being shot at you and mortar rounds impacting by inducing sleep deprivation and limiting the amount of food given to each student.”

The stress affects each student differently, said Blowers, some break mentally and end up leaving the program with a LOM commonly known as a lack of motivation. Others thrive or maintain their current level of competence and assist those in charge to complete the missions, which include

raids, recon’s, ambushes and other light infantry type tasks.

“Teamwork is a must - you must be both a great leader and a great follower to be successful in Ranger school,” said Blowers.

Becoming a Ranger is a life-changing occasion said the Rangers.

“It’s not something you think of when you are younger but as I got older I learned you don’t let things get in your way,” said Staff Sgt. Michel Maurer, a non-commissioned officer in charge with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2-135th Infantry. “You make plans, work with them and as things come up you reevaluate the plan and continue on.”

Just as Darby serves as a role model for Rangers, Blowers said Rangers should be role models for other Soldiers.

“Really use what you know and who you are to inspire others to get the job done,” added Maurer, a Rosemount, Minn., resident and proud Ranger.

Sgt. Tom Wright, a team leader with Alpha Company, and Burnsville, Minn., resident, said one of the most important lessons a Ranger learns is about being able to remain steady in any situation.

“Being a Ranger taught me it could always be worse,” he said.

(DARBY from page 8)

“His chance came in the spring of 1942 when the U.S. Army decided to stand-up a program modeled after the British Commando concept,” he added. “Darby was promoted to major and selected to lead this elite force now called Rangers.”

At that point, Darby selected and trained the best and brightest Soldiers from the 34th and 1st IDs. He trained them mercilessly, said Erlandson.

The history of Darby did not end with his death when he was hit by artillery shell fragments in Italy on April 30, 1945. In fact, he was posthumously promoted to the rank of Brigadier General two weeks after his death.

“The Legacy of General William O. Darby lives on strong and well in today’s Army,” said Erlandson. “His ideas on tough, realistic training are an integral part of our Army’s training and his values of personal courage, duty, leadership and selfless service mirror the values of our modern Army.”

“Therefore in honor of our 34th Red Bull brother and founder of the modern day Rangers we dedicate and name this theater the Darby ‘Red Bull’ Theater,” Erlandson said, concluding his speech on the day of the dedication.



Sgt. Matthew Aeschliman, an infantryman with Alpha Company, 2-135th Infantry, unveils the new sign behind the Darby "Red Bull" Theater on the day of the dedication.

REMEMBERING THOSE WHO SERVED

*Story by Sgt. 1st Class Rob Bishop
Photos by Spc. Rob Barker*



Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Timothy Peterson plays his accordion during the Memorial Day ceremony on Camp Bondsteel.

REMEMBERING THOSE WHO SERVED

It was a sunny Monday morning that saw many Camp Bondsteel Soldiers gathered for a brief Memorial Day ceremony. The only evidence of the previous day's heavy rains were the scattered puddles on the parade field and the wet gleam of nearby buildings that looked as if they had been specially cleaned to honor the assembled men and women in uniform, who were there to honor their fallen comrades and a tradition of making sacrifices for the good of the nation.

Amid the sounds of helicopters lifting off from the airfield and the clanking of the flags waving on the flagpoles, Maj. Erik Feig, a chaplain with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 34th Infantry Division, began the simple ceremony with an invocation, which was followed by HHC Soldiers, Spc. Sarah Hangaard, Sgt. Christine Matthews, and Spc. Rebekah Miller, singing the national anthem. Then Spc. Sarah Rice read the poem "Flanders Field", and Maj. Angela Steward-Randall read the Gettysburg Address. Then Brig. Gen. Rick Erlandson, Multi-national Brigade (East) commanding general, summarized the purpose of the ceremony with the opening lines from his speech.

"We gather here today to pay homage to our fallen Soldiers," Erlandson said. "These Soldiers, in their ultimate sacrifice, spared others from tyranny and sorrow."

Erlandson also reminded the audience of how a ceremony and the act of remembrance can link people separated by an ocean.

"In a few short hours," he said, "across the ocean our families, friends and fellow Americans and service members will gather as we do to also pay their respects to the great men and women of our country who have kept us free."

After Erlandson's speech, the ceremony continued with the entire group of assembled Soldiers singing "America the Beautiful", followed by Sgt. Randolph Hall playing "Taps" on the trumpet. The ceremony concluded with the laying of a memorial wreath and a benediction by Lt. Col. Timothy Peterson, the task force chaplain.

In his speech, Erlandson said it was important to conduct the ceremony, especially in a time when many servicemen and women are deployed around the world.

"It sends a clear signal that America stands united behind our Armed Forces, just as we have in the past; just as we will in the future," he said. "It says you care enough about our country to take a moment of remembrance."

Erlandson closed his speech with a final reminder of the importance of Memorial Day.

"President Lyndon Johnson said on 30 May, 1963," Erlandson said, "'Until the world knows no aggressors, until the arms of tyranny have been laid down, until freedom has risen up in every land, we shall maintain our vigil to make sure our sons and daughters who died on foreign fields shall not have died in vain.' The vigil remains alive here today in Kosovo, and in a few short hours, all across our United States of America, too."



Soldiers from around Camp Bondsteel stand in formation on Memorial Day.



From left to right, Sgts. Ashlee Lolkus, Jason Hirschman, and Elizabeth Grogan, stand ready to present a wreath during the ceremony.



Sgt. Randolph Hall plays Taps at the Ceremony.



Brig. Gen. Rick Erlandson, commanding general of Multi-national Brigade (East), delivers his speech during the event.

SPREADING the Health

Many local residents gathered May 26 near the medical-point building in Donja Bitinja/ Biti e Ulet in the Shterpce/ Strpce municipality, one of the four multi-ethnic villages in the Polish-Ukrainian Battalion's area of responsibility. They gathered to benefit from the medical care provided by the Medical Civilian Assistance Program mission being run by the POLUKRBAT soldiers there.

Conducting a MEDCAP mission takes a great deal of coordination and organization. The events are generally scheduled to take place in the poorest, multi-ethnic villages that contain some sort of medical building, in order to provide an appropriate place to diagnose and treat the patients. Before an arranged mission begins, a group of POLUKRBAT officers meet with village leaders to inform them of the event and encourage them and the citizens to take advantage of the medical care.

The event held on May 26 was especially important and a milestone for the POLUKRBAT Medical Civilian Assistance Program.

"It was the first MEDCAP organized in a multi-ethnic village since the March events," said Capt. Boguslaw Pelc, one of the Polish officers who helped organize the mission. "We had some worries that the K-Serbs and K-Albanians would not want to come together and stay in one place."

Those worries turned out to be unfounded, Pelc said, since by the time the mission was done, the doctors had seen 43 ethnic-Serbs and 25 ethnic-Albanians.

Many of the soldiers working at the event said they felt the mission gave them a chance to help the people of Kosovo with more than just their medical problems.

"Thanks to MEDCAPs like this, we can not only cure locals, but more importantly, we can try to reconcile one group with another," said Capt. Andrew Sadowski, a doctor with the battalion who was working in his second multi-ethnic MEDCAP mission, his first taking place in the village of Drajkovce/ Drajkoc in February. He also said he feels it is a great pleasure to help the local residents, regardless of their ethnicity.

Polish doctors were not the only medical professionals on hand. There were two Kosovo-Serb nurses, Natasa Janicevic and Danijela Milovanovic, who were helping during the event and who both work at the medical-point building every day. As the mission ended, Janicevic summed up her experience.

"It was a very hard day," she said. "We have not seen so many patients in one day so far."





Capt. Andrew Sadowski, right, a doctor with the Polish-Ukrainian Battalion, speaks and tries to ease a nervous young patient with the help of his interpreter. Photo courtesy of the POLUKRBAT.

**Story by Capt. Jacek Mazur,
POLUKRBAT press officer**



Sgt. Eric Post, a flight medic with the 1085th Medical Company (Air Ambulance) and an avid runner, rounds a corner at the Camp Bondsteel track. Photo by Spc. Luke Rollins.

Running Safety

Diana Settles, MAT, ATC
Manager, Injury Prevention Physical Fitness Programs
Navy Environmental Health Center, Norfolk, VA

PERSONAL FITNESS:

- Prior to running, participate in a gradual conditioning program with emphasis on balancing out the strength of musculature (correct muscle imbalance). A program consisting of muscular fitness, gradual aerobic conditioning (see training / technique section), and stretching pre/post running is beneficial.
- To reduce risk of stress fractures, a slow and progressive training program that gradually increases strength and endurance of the back and lower extremities is recommended.
- Remember to warm-up and stretch at least 5 – 10 minutes before running.
- Contact a local MWR Trainer for additional information on running conditioning and correct running form. Many MWR Facilities provide safety/injury prevention information regarding preparation, conditioning, and training proper running techniques; imperfections in running style can lead to injury.

EQUIPMENT:

- Proper fitting running shoes are important; replace shoes every 6 months.
- Orthotics may be beneficial for runners with excessive pronation.

TRAINING / TECHNIQUE:

- Correct training errors. Training should be gradually increased. For beginning runners, alternate day running is recommended. The runner should be able to talk without being short of breath. Monitor both the intensity and the duration of workouts. Excessive distances, hill running, and speed work may cause common overuse injuries such as iliotibial band friction syndrome and shin splints. A general guideline is to increase running mileage by 10% per week. Monitor the number of days of high intensity workouts and the increase in the training programs. Alternate high effort days with low intensity days of running.
- NOTE: The body responds to excessive stress placed upon it. Even if an experienced runner attempts to increase mileage in a short time, injury may result.
- Discontinue training hard if tired. Prevent running through pain. If it takes more than 48 hours to recover, the workouts may be too long or intense.
- If racing, don't try to make up for lost miles.
- Don't increase mileage more than 10% a year.

ENVIRONMENT:

- Soft and flat running surfaces are recommended; avoid excessive running on cement or asphalt. Uneven ground or slanted roads should be run with caution. Running on slanted surfaces are responsible for increased injury rates.
- Wear clothing appropriate for weather. For cold weather, dress in layers, cover both head and hands. For hot weather, wear porous clothing. Heat acclimatization usually takes about 2 weeks.
- ACSM recommends that runs/races greater than 10 miles should not be run in temperatures over 82.4 degrees. If the temperature exceeds this, the run should be performed before 0900 or after 1600.
- Alcohol consumption should be discouraged during any athletic participation – especially running.
- Proper hydration during pre-activity and actual activity participation is recommended to prevent fatigue and heat illness. Runners should be trained to recognize early signs of heat injury.
- To run at higher altitudes, allow 3-4 weeks to acclimatize to avoid hypoxia during acute exposure.

REFERENCE: Caine, J., Caine, C., and Lindner, K. Epidemiology of Sports Injuries.. Human Kinetics Publishers, Inc., 1996.

SOUL FOOD: MESSAGE FROM THE CHAPLAIN

By Chaplain (Maj.) Joel Severson

Just repeat after me, “Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow...!” This is a verse from the 23rd Psalm that has taken on a new meaning for me. Now that we are in the middle of our deployment here in Kosovo, it is a verse that has become a significant reminder that from the psalmist’s view, and mine as well, that from where we sit, there is only one direction for us to go, and that is up out of the valley!

When we, the soldiers of KFOR 5B first arrived in Kosovo, the Aviation chaplain for 5A gave us a “heads up” on a particular deployment pattern that seems to repeat itself with every passing Task Force rotation. I in turn took this information and used it in my first sermon that I delivered here at Camp Bondsteel’s South Chapel. I referred to the three identifiable phases of this “deployment phenomenon” as “The 3 Bs!” The 3 Bs stand for the three different phases: busy, bored, and finally burned out!

When we arrived here, everything was much different, thank heavens, than it was at Ft. Stewart or Hohenfels, and everyone was pretty excited just to be here. The food was great in comparison, and you didn’t need a map to get to the latrine! These might seem like small things to most people, but then again, most people haven’t been where we have. Then we had to do the “right seat/ left seat ride” with our counterparts. We were busy just trying to learn as much from them as we could before they left, and then before you knew it, they were gone and it was our “ball game!”

During the first two months of this deployment, each of us were just trying to keep our heads above water, as they say, and tried to get into a daily “battle rhythm.” So for the most part, the first two months flew by, due mainly to being very busy all the time, thus the first B, or the “Busy” phase! We, of course, had an extraordinarily busy first two months through our “baptism by fire” due to the March 17 and 18 riots. Once we got past that situation, things seemed to settle into a “normal” daily routine.

However, we are now in the middle of our second phase, namely the “bored” phase, the second B of my sermon illustration. According to statistical data compiled by previous rotations, this is the time of the deployment where Soldiers tend to become more complacent or relaxed in the areas of threat awareness and job safety. The trend of past rotations has been to see increases of injuries and misconduct during this second phase.

A common Soldier terminology for this part of the deployment is referred to as the “ground hog day” syndrome, named after the movie, “Ground Hog Day” starring Bill Murray, where every day seems just like the last 200 days and nothing ever seems to change, not even the weather! Soldiers get down right bored at times during this phase. We start to complain about many things, namely the weather, the food, our roommates’ foot odor, etc.! We complain that Toby and Ted only played for 30 minutes, not stopping to appreciate the fact that they came here and played at all! This second phase is a real and significant challenge for the leadership at all levels of this Task force to help our Soldiers overcome and finish



**Chaplain (Maj.)
Joel Severson**

this rotation strong!

One of the ways that I see our leaders addressing this issue of “ground hog day,” is by encouraging Soldiers to “get out of the wire,” whenever possible. Find ways to break up the monotony of the everyday routine, even if it is only for a day. Take the FMPP trip to Sofia or the chaplain supported Greece trip, if possible. Go on the MWR shopping trips to the different places offered. Get involved in the school adoption programs. Volunteer to help on a MEDCAP. I guarantee you will see things much differently when you return to camp. Join a softball or volleyball team. Start a bible study, join the choir, and of course, you’re always invited to join us at church.

We, the chaplains of KFOR 5B, are here to help you get through this rotation, and just as Brig. Gen. Erlandson has said, “to get us all back home to our loved ones in one piece!” Let’s be the first rotation to break the pattern of “the three Bs” by pacing ourselves, taking care of ourselves, and looking out for one another! As my grandmother once said when my little brother swallowed a penny, “ah yes, this too shall pass,” and before you know it we will be going home! It has been a privilege and an honor to serve with ya’ll. God bless, and be good to your chaplains, ya hear!

— SNAKE SAFETY: MESSAGE FROM THE SURGEON —

By Maj. Kevin Aston,
Task Force Surgeon

Snakes have been a curiosity to humans since the beginning of time. We should all exercise caution when dealing with snakes in our area. It does not matter if you are frightened to death of snakes or you're a certain Ranger that looks at road kill snake as a tasty snack. You should be aware of the potential hazards to your health that these snakes possess.

Snakes are almost always more scared of you than you are of them. With few exceptions snakes are not aggressive. However when threatened, cornered, surprised, or handled, any snake may strike to defend itself. Snakes are cold-blooded and are most active when the temp is around 77 – 90 degrees Fahrenheit.

Each year about 5 million snakebites occur worldwide, causing about 125,000 deaths. Not all snakebites are from venomous snakes. And not all venomous snakes inject venom every time they bite. The idea is to not to be bitten by ANY snake.

Snake venom has various affects on the body but can be divided into 4 main groups: hemotoxins, which impair the normal coagulation of blood; neurotoxins, which affect the nervous system; cytotoxins, which cause local tissue damage; and cardiotoxins, which directly harm the heart.

There are 3 main poisonous snakes found in Kosovo:



Vipera Berus

Vipera berus (Common Adder, Common Viper, European Viper, Northern Viper) has venom that contains both a hemotoxin and neurotoxin. This snake can be found in mountainous terrain or moist lowlands to include rivers and lakes. This snake tolerates the cold well and may be found near snow or at elevation. The color can vary from grey/black to copper/brown. The coloration will vary with the surrounding terrain. Average length is 0.5 to 0.6 meters.

Vipera ammodytes (Long-nosed Viper, Nose-horned Viper, Sand Viper) has venom that contains a hemotoxin that is highly toxic. This snake is found in a wide variety of habitats that include the



Vipera Ammodytes

lower plains to high elevations. This snake likes to sun itself on rocks or roads that hold heat. Color can vary from grey/brown to brick-red in females. This snake has a distinctive shaped nose. Average length is 0.6 to 0.75 meters.



Vipera Ursini

Vipera ursinii (Field Adder, Meadow Viper, Orsini's Viper, Steppe Viper) has venom that contains a hemotoxin. This snake is usually found in dry, flat plains. Usually at higher elevations. Color is usually a grey/light brown with two alternating rows of dark spots on its flanks.

People who are bitten by a snake may often not know what kind of snake has bitten them. For this reason it is important to seek rapid medical evaluation. Not all bites will have venom injected. You have no way of knowing this at the time of the bite. Symptoms will not always appear rapidly. Symptoms may be delayed for hours.

Symptoms after being bitten can vary greatly. This depends on many factors such as the type of snake, amount of venom injected, location of bite, and individual reaction. Symptoms can include pain at the site, swelling, nausea and or vomiting, headache, difficulty breathing, bleeding, bruising and or blister formation, internal bleeding, severe allergic reaction, altered mental status, and irregular pulse.

The best treatment for a victim that has been bitten is rapid medical care and anti-venom. The first thing that should be done after being bitten is to remove yourself or the victim from further harm. That does not mean you should chase down the snake and kill or capture it. This

will put you at further risk. If you were able to see the snake note the color, pattern, and shape of the snake. The bite area should be cleaned and any objects such as rings, watches or other objects should be removed at once. Often the swelling is very rapid and this will prevent these objects from causing harm by constriction. If bitten on an extremity you should immobilize the limb by splinting. Care should be taken to ensure this is not tight. The victim should be put at rest, meaning they should not run for help or continue on the mission. Evacuation plans should be started immediately to ensure rapid evaluation and treatment at a proper medical facility. Some authorities will recommend a suction type device. It is doubtful that these will actually extract any venom and may even cause local tissue damage. Any type of constricting band or tourniquet is not currently recommended. Do not use ice as this does not deactivate the venom and may cause more local tissue damage. Do not use any type of electrical shocks in an attempt to deactivate the venom. It does not work. Do not use alcohol to clean the wound. Use only a mild soap or skin cleaner.

If a medic is available you should have them come to the patient immediately and at the same time initiate evacuation plans. If the patient develops an allergic reaction to the venom the medic will administer care and monitor the patient until evacuation is complete.

Care at the medical facility will include an evaluation of the bite to grade or classify the severity of the envenomation. Laboratory tests will be done to help determine the venom's effect on the patient's blood. Antivenom will be administered if indicated and the patient will require admission to the Intensive Care Unit. Fatalities can be greatly minimized by rapid treatment and transport to a medical facility. The wounds and local tissue effects can often be horrific. Rapid and proper treatment will minimize the damage and aid in recovery.

Prevention is the key. Leave all snakes alone, alive or dead. If you come into close contact with a snake move away and allow the snake to escape from you. Be cautious where you step and place your hands. Boots will offer some protection. Carry a first aid kit. Plan for and have the ability to evacuate a non-ambulatory patient. RAPID transport to the appropriate medical treatment facility can be life and limb saving.

Army adopts policy to address acts of sexual assault

By Sgt. 1st Class Marcia Triggs

WASHINGTON (Army News Service, June 3, 2004) – The Army is devising a policy that will reemphasize that all offenses of sexual assault must be reported to the Criminal Investigation Command, officials have announced.

A task force spent 90 days conducting a detailed review of the Army's current policies and programs on sexual assault. One of the findings was that while all commanders had taken action against assailants accused of sexual assault, not all were going through the proper investigation channels, said Darlene Sullivan, a task force member.

The task force was assembled from various Army organizations and began looking into how the Army addresses matters of sexual assault in February. Acting Secretary of the Army Les Brownlee authorized the task force.

The task force recommendations were approved by Brownlee, and were briefed to the House Armed Services Committee June 3 by Reginald J. Brown, the assistant secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs.

There were nine shortfalls the task force noted in its 80-page report. One major finding pointed out there was no standard way of handling sexual assault cases, making it hard to collect data and keep track of what services had been rendered to victims.

There were 24 recommendations made to improve the system. One was to develop a sexual assault policy for inclusion in Army Regulation 600-20, Army Command Policy. The chief of personnel, Army G-1 is responsible for the overall sexual assault policy.

The policy will define sexual assault as alleged offenses of rape, forcible sodomy, assault with intent to commit rape or sodomy, indecent assault or an attempt to commit any of these offenses, Sullivan said. The definition is the same one used by the Department of Defense in its recent report "Care for Victims of Sexual Assault."

The roles and responsibilities of commanders from major command to the unit level will be addressed in the new policy and become a part of AR 600-20, said Lt. Col. John McPhaul of Army G-1.

"Commanders must create a command climate where victims feel comfortable reporting acts of sexual assault," said Sullivan. "Rape is one of the most unreported crimes nationwide.

"As a first sergeant, if you don't know your Soldier was attacked or raped, how can you protect that Soldier? What if you put that Soldier on guard duty with his or her attacker?

It's imperative that leaders know that prevention, training and assistance are a commander's responsibility."

Company commanders will no longer have the authority to sign the disciplinary paperwork for Soldiers who are accused of a sexual offense, when the cases don't go to court. The battalion commander's signature will be required, Sullivan said.

Department of the Army form 4833, Commander's Report of Disciplinary or Administrative Action, is a permanent record that states what a Soldier was accused of, and

what action was taken against him.

Sullivan said the task force found that about 20 percent of the commanders had not filled out the form because of operational tempo. Another recommendation of the task force is to alter the form, so that instead of stating that administrative action was taken against a Soldier, his or her specific punishments will be listed on the form.

Commanders alone cannot round out a successful program to prevent sexual assault, according to the task force. Commanders alone cannot be the judge, juror and prosecutor.

In AR 600-20 one of the responsibilities commanders will have is to assign a unit victim advocate to support victims of sexual assault. It is important to keep the victim and the chain of command informed of all case actions as they occur with the case. The unit victim advocate will work to provide emotional support to victims while assisting them in the step-by-step processes involved, McPhaul said.

Other agencies whose roles will be outlined in the chapter will include CID, the Provost Marshal, the Surgeon General, Staff Judge Advocate and Assistant Chief of Staff for Installation Management (Community and Family Support Center), McPhaul said.

"The Army agencies already have some procedures in place and know what to do, and are doing it, if an act of sexual assault occurs," McPhaul said, "but we must develop comprehensive policy of dealing with sexual assault from awareness/prevention, to victim support and data collection.

"We are developing a mechanism that gets all the agencies in concert with each other by establishing a policy that deals with sexual assault not only in garrison but in a deployed setting as well," McPhaul said.

Training requirements will also be addressed in the regulation, McPhaul said. Within the next 60 to 90 days, new chapters will be added to the regulation and staffed with the field, he added.

Training and Doctrine Command is currently devising lesson plans on the prevention of sexual assault to be included in all professional development schools, refresher courses at the unit level and additional training for law enforcement, medical and legal personnel, Sullivan said.

When looking for ways to improve the Army's policies and programs, the task force sought advice from outside agencies to include Department of Veteran Affairs; National Organization of Victim Assistance; Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network (RAINN); The Miles Foundation, Navy, Coast Guard and the University of Arizona and Purdue University in Indiana.

Both universities were given grants from the Department of Justice for their prevention programs, Sullivan said. The age category for the Soldiers who report the assaults and their assailants are in the same age category as the university students, she added. Nearly 84 percent of alleged perpetrators were identified as junior Soldiers, and 95 percent of the victims were in the rank of staff sergeant and below, according to the task force report.

SOLDIER SECTION Q N' A:

What is your favorite dining facility meal?

"I like the Steamship Round, that, and the dressing they have with it."

Sgt. 1st Class Earl Dunn



Photo by Spc. Sean McCollum

Sgt. 1st Class Earl Dunn, the senior team leader for the 75th Ordnance Company (Explosive Ordnance Disposal), moves down the chow line at the North Town Dining Facility.

Sgt. Eric Sufka

"Mongolian Stir Fry Wednesdays!!! You can't go wrong there."



Photo by Spc. Rob Barker

Sgt. Eric Sufka, an infantryman with Alpha Company, 2-135th Infantry, hands out school supplies to students in Letnice/Letnica.

Maj. Richard Antonisse

"I do like the Jamocha Almond Fudge Ice Cream. It makes a fine dinner."



Photo by Spc. Sean McCollum

Maj. Richard Antonisse, the Analysis and Control Element Chief with the 649th Military Intelligence Battalion from Midwest City, Oklahoma, receives his share of Mongolian Barbecue during lunch at the North Town Dining Facility.

Sgt. Kevin Coder



Photo by Sgt. Jon Soucy

"Once they had New England clam chowder. I had like six bowls that day. They haven't had it since and I'd like them to bring it back."

Sgt. Kevin Coder, a mental health specialist with Combat Stress Control, speaks with Spc. James Wosika, an infantryman with Alpha Company, 2-136th Infantry, during a patrol near Kamenica/Kosovska Kamenice, Saturday, May 15, 2004. As a way to gain insights into what Soldiers' concerns are and the climate within the unit during deployment, Coder routinely joins the Soldiers on patrol.

SCENES OF KOSOVO

PHOTO BY SPC. ROB BARKER



THE CHURCH OF LETNICA/ LETNICE