

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

Guardian East

Volume 10, Issue 11

April 21, 2004



682nd Engineers:

**TAMING THE
Panther**

page 10

Message to the troops



By Col. John Kreye,
Chief of Staff for MNB(E)

As I write this article, we are closing in on our second month in mission, with about four more to go. This is after a five-month train-up period for the vast majority of us. Throughout both the train-up period and the first two months in mission, I have consistently heard extremely positive comments from our command group as well as from Army leadership outside of our task force in regards to the outstanding job our soldiers have done, and continue to do.

What's more important is that we have been able to accomplish this with no major injuries or accidents, despite some very intense operations.

This is primarily due to the continued focus on safety from the top down. Safety must remain at the forefront as we move to completion of our mission over the next four and a half months.

Continued focus by the commanders, combined with solid junior leadership will give us the best chance of achieving something no other task force has been able to achieve - completion of the mission with no recordable accidents or major injuries.

The squad leaders are the critical pieces in accomplishing this objective. Their ability to complete proper risk assessment and mitigate risk to the lowest level possible, followed by focused enforcement of



Col. John Kreye

safety procedures is vital to our safety success, as well as mission success in general. However, junior leadership in itself, regardless of how well exercised, will not accomplish our safety objective. Soldiers must continually incorporate safety into mission accomplishment as well as off duty activity if we are to be successful.

Safety is everyone's business, and as soon as we get complacent in this area we introduce an environment where accidents and injuries can, and most likely will happen. We owe it to ourselves, our fellow soldiers and the families waiting for us back home to do everything we can to ensure every great soldier of this task force returns home safely.

SEE THE PHOTO OF THE DAY

www.mnbe.hqusareur.army.mil

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.

COVER: Spc. Steven Rime of Charlie Company, 682nd Engineer Battalion, climbs out of the M1A1 Panther after a mud-filled ride. Photo by Sgt. Jon Soucy.

See page 10 for the story

Guardian East

COMMANDING GENERAL, MNB(E)
Brig. Gen. Rick Erlandson

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER, MNB(E)
AND COMMANDER, 29TH MPAD
Maj. Christopher J. Cole

PUBLIC AFFAIRS LIAISON OFFICER
Maj. John E. Moran IV

EXECUTIVE OFFICER, 29TH MPAD
Capt. Danny Reed

CAMP MONTEITH TEAM OIC
Maj. Gregory Tine

DETACHMENT 1ST SERGEANT
1st Sgt. David Stevenson

CAMP MONTEITH TEAM NCOIC AND
BROADCAST NCOIC
Sgt. 1st Class Carmen Lee

MEDIA OPERATIONS
Staff Sgt. W. Michael Houk

BROADCAST JOURNALISTS
Sgt. Lindsey Guest
Spc. Luke A. Rollins
Spc. James Croall

ADMINISTRATIVE SPECIALIST
Spc. Sean McCollum

EDITOR AND WEBMASTER
Sgt. 1st Class
Robert W. Bishop

PRINT JOURNALISTS
Sgt. Jon Soucy
Spc. Tim Grooms

LAYOUT EDITOR
Spc. Rob Barker

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.



Guarding Bagheera

HHC Soldiers spend a week guarding the British Camp, Bagheera Lines.

4

Non-lethal

Soldiers learn how to combat crowds with less than deadly force.

6

Redhorse Radio

Cavalry Soldiers take to the air in a weekly radio program.

8

Cover Story

Panthers are loose in Kosovo, ready to save lives.

10

Civilian Experience

321st Psychological Operations Company Soldier uses civilian experience to help others.

14

New Peacekeepers

Armenian soldiers join MNB(E) in providing a safe and secure environment.

16

Spc. Jacob Elgin, a gunner/ driver with the 682nd Engineer Battalion, prepares munitions before loading his M-500 shotgun during a recent non-lethal weapons training range held on Camp Bondsteel. Photo by Spc. Rob Barker. See page 6 for the story.

GUARD DUTY

SEVEN DAYS AT BAGHEERA

“Oh man this is going to suck.”

That’s what Spc. Jeremy Adams, a radio transmitter operator with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 34th Infantry Division, said he thought when he found out he was tasked with a weeklong guard duty.

Adams and seven others including me, spent the week of March 8 through 15 at the British outpost, Bagheera Lines, on the summit of Mt. Golesh.

We met the morning of March 8 at the side of the HHC building in Admin Alley, talked a bit, loaded up the humvees and headed north towards our temporary duty station about a half hour west of Prishtina/ Pristina.

After about an hour and a half of driving we reached the road leading to the peak of the mountain. It was a typical mountain road: narrow, dusty, rocky, muddy, steep, and with several switchbacks. Once we reached Bagheera and were out of the vehicles, we began to feel the wind that never really stopped the whole week and at one point gusted to almost 70 m.p.h.

The group that was guarding the post, and which we relieved, gave us a tour of the area and informed us what our duties would be for the next seven days. The job consisted of controlling vehicle access to the area, checking the perimeter and working in the operations room monitoring the security camera feeds.

Shortly after arriving, Spc. Frederick Myles, a postal finance clerk with the 641st AG Postal Company, and I were sent to the main gate to control entry. Soon we learned we would be working the late shift from 1 a.m. to 1 p.m. during our week there.

Fortunately, the duty turned out to be better than expected. In fact, it was more relaxing than being around Camp Bondsteel everyday and the view on a clear day was amazing. About 90 percent of the Kosovo province was visible from our duty station. It was like looking at a map without having a map. From Prishtina/ Pristina to Camp Bondsteel, the entire valley was wide open to view and pick out towns and villages. The snow-capped peaks of the Sharr Mountains that border the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the Northern Albanian Alps in Albania dominated their respective areas.

“The beautiful view of Kosovo was the best part,” said Spc. Krista Steinbach, a letter release clerk with HHC, 34th Infantry Division.

The great view wasn’t the only thing that made the time we spent there better than most of us probably expected.

“It was better than I expected,” said Adams. “I think the laid-back atmosphere the British put out helped this be an easier assignment than I thought it was going to be.”

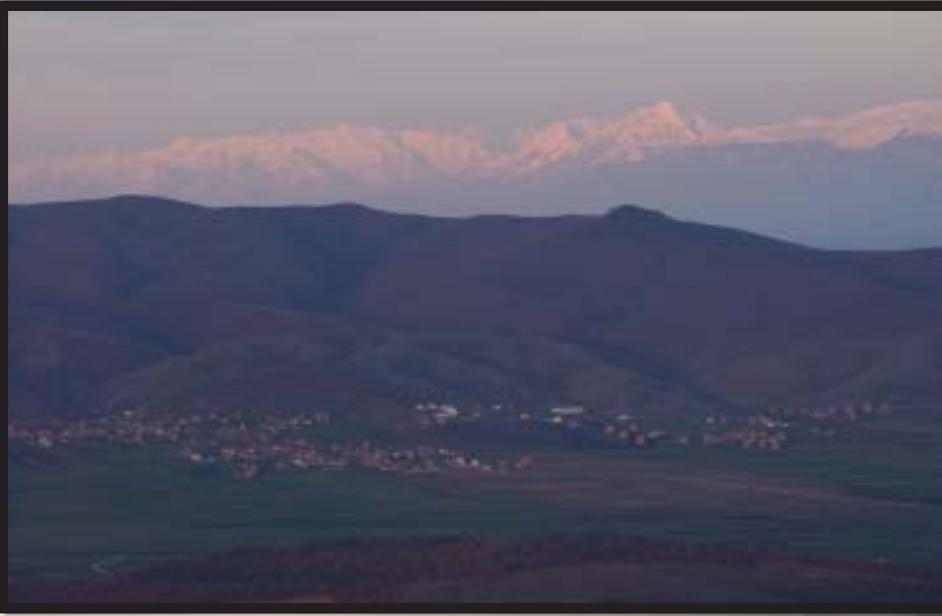
Although some enjoyed the time in Bagheera, others were ready to get back to the American base and the extra luxuries it offered by the end of the week.

“It has definitely been a break, but I miss Bondsteel as opposed to here because of the food, gym and my unit,” said Myles.

“I am happy to go back because it has been a long week up here,” said Steinbach.

As for me, I enjoyed my time up there, especially the Scottish civilians that worked there. They provided much needed entertainment with their joking around, but when all was said and done, I was ready to come back to Bondsteel and get back to my job.

When our relief arrived the following Monday, we did the same as the group we relieved and explained the duties and happenings they should expect while there. We, on the other hand, got in the humvees and headed down Mt. Golesh and back to camp. With memories of playing horseshoes, volleyball, talking with the guys working there, and the chance to work somewhere different, the time on Mt. Golesh was a positive experience to take back and talk about.



The view of Kosovo from atop Mt. Golesh.

Background: A sign posted near the entrance to Bagheera Lines reads, "No photography, no military tourists, no time wasters, no worries."

Spc. Frederick Myles, a postal finance clerk with the 641st AG Company (Postal) takes time during a break to check his e-mail in the television and computer room at Bagheera Lines.



Spc. Krista Steinbach, a letter clerk with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 34th Infantry Division, prepares to open the gate to British Camp Bagheera Lines atop Mt. Golesh before performing a sector check while on guard duty at the camp March 19.





Sgt. Steven Davis, a team leader with the 682nd Engineer Battalion, loads non-lethal ammunition into an M-203 Grenade Launcher during recent training on using the alternative rounds.

Other Options

Story and photos by Spc. Rob Barker

You're in Kosovo and riots break out. You have your assigned weapon and you're ready to fire at any minute, but firing your weapon is not necessarily the right answer. Is there another alternative?

During recent non-lethal weapons training held at Camp Bondsteel, military police, engineers and infantrymen had the opportunity to train on using weapons systems that are not intended to kill, but to control riots and other disturbances.

The group of soldiers, which included MPs from the 514th MP Company and 192nd MP Detachment, as well as German and Austrian MPs, engineers from the 682nd Engineer Battalion, and infantrymen from both Task Forces Bayonet and Redhorse, trained on and shot crowd dispersal and point control rounds using M-203 grenade launchers and M-500 shotguns.

Crowd dispersal rounds release a number of rubber balls designed to spread once fired and strike multiple targets at once. The M-203 Grenade Launcher accomplishes this by releasing .60-caliber rubber balls, while the M-500 Shotgun releases buckshot-sized ones that come from a standard sized 12-gauge shell. Each of the weapons also has point control ammunition designed to strike single targets without causing serious injury. The M-203's point control round looks very similar to the normal ammunition for that weapon

except the shell is capped with a green rubber dome, while the M-500's point control round is tear-drop shaped with stabilizing fins on the tapered end.

The training course gave the soldiers experience with both types of rounds.

"It teaches the soldiers, whom are designated as non-lethal gunners, the proper way to disperse and utilize munitions against potential rioters," said Sgt. Mark Radford, the 514th MP Company Special Reaction Team leader and an instructor on the range. "It teaches them about the ballistics, the ranges, the minimum safe distances and the things they need to know to accomplish [their mission]."

For Soldiers, having this training under their belts helps them and any rioters they may encounter.

"It creates a safer environment for the soldiers involved in the riot enforcement and also the citizens that may be involved in the riots," said Radford, who added it helps the soldiers by pushing back the rioters and protects the rioters by being non-lethal.

Even though they did not go through the range, commanders of the units are also affected by this training.

"This gives commanders another option in their force continuum to use instead of going directly to deadly force," said 2nd Lt. Jerry Branham, a platoon leader with the 514th and also the officer in charge of the range.

The Department of Defense recognized the need for this training in 1999 when it called for a program to present it to all of the Armed Forces.

"Its great to start this training," said Radford. "This is a DOD mandated program, so once these soldiers have had the training on this they can link up with the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard, and all of the training is standardized DOD wide."

Radford received the "train the trainer" course while in the Marine Corps and Branham received it while in the Army.

"We, as MPs, have a few instructors that went through the DOD course at Fort Leonardwood, [Mo.] to get certified in instructing how to use non-lethal weapons, how to do crowd formations and riot formations," said Branham. "All of the trainers here are well equipped and have the knowledge to teach, and it is a good privilege to get to use that knowledge and the equipment that we do have and to teach other people how to use it."

"If riots break out in Kosovo, these soldiers now have a non-lethal way to react, and if they take advantage of the training learned here they will be ready to counter the rioters," said Branham.



Point control rounds for the M-500 Shotgun and M-203 Grenade Launcher



On the air

Story and photos by Sgt. Jon Soucy

Many people who deploy to Kosovo get the chance to do new things and Staff Sgt. Todd Smock and Spc. Adam Riediger, both with Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 1-113th Cavalry, have had a unique opportunity for new experiences since they have been taking to the airwaves every other Tuesday night at Radio Victoria in Gnjilane/ Gjilan. The Soldiers, who are the core of a group of Soldiers in the unit who get air time at the studio, run a show from 7 to 9 p.m. where they take calls, talk about music and sports, and play music from a wide range of American and foreign artists.

For Riediger, who has done play-by-play commentary for high school basketball and football on the radio back home in Sioux City, Iowa, the opportunity to play music on the radio was a somewhat different experience than calling plays on the court.

“When you have a lot of mike time it’s easy,” said Riediger of the play-by-play experience. “Here it’s different. You’ve got to think of what to say. With play-by-play you just say what you see.”

For Smock, the radio experience has been a nice change of routine.

“It’s fun. It’s something different,” said Smock. “It gets us out and we can play the music that we like.”

Riediger had similar sentiments about being on the radio.

“It’s a fun mission,” agreed Riediger. “You get to do your own thing. We play our own music and it’s a relaxed setting,” said Riediger, who added that each show they do is primarily centered on a specific genre of music.

“The first week we did the show, [we] sat down and picked out some older rock,” said Riediger of the music selection. “But after playing the music, the people that run the radio station said, ‘You’re not going to get a lot of listeners with that.’ So this week we’re playing newer rock,” said Riediger who added that they have plans for doing all-country and all-alternative music shows in the works.

“We’re just going to try and stick with one thing per show,” said Smock. “Rather than play one country song and then flip to a classic rock song and then something else.”

Generally when the Soldiers run the radio show one works the mixing board and selects the music, and both talk about the music they play and things going on back home such as the recent March Madness college basketball tournament.

Though both Soldiers said they enjoy the experience, Riediger said the most difficult part is deciding what to play.

“We have trouble deciding what to play,” said Riediger. “We’ve got a lot of variety to choose from and other people will ask us to play different things.”

Though deciding what songs to play may be the difficult part, the easiest part of the show for Smock was choosing the radio name of DJ Wolf.

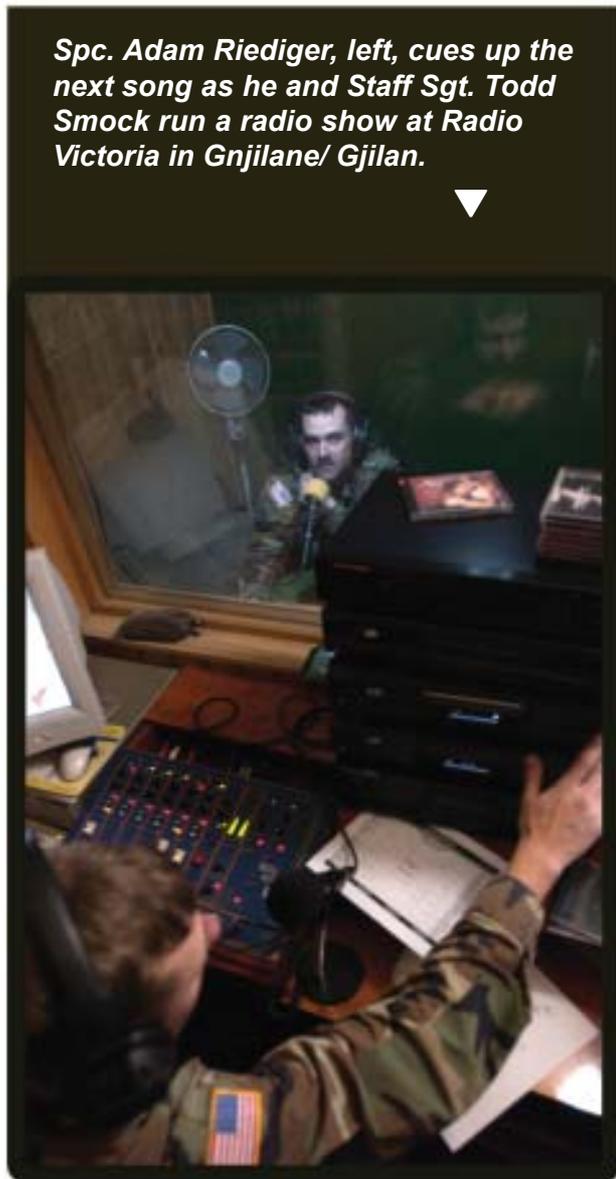
“I’m a wolf freak,” said Smock. “I just love wolves. I’ve had the nickname Wolfman for the past five or six years so it was easy to choose a name.”

Though the Soldiers said they find participating in the show enjoyable they also said they see it as something for their fellow Soldiers.

“It’s great morale for troops,” said Smock.

Howard Stern and Wolfman Jack they may not be, but every other Tuesday they get a chance to practice their radio skills, and who knows where their DJ careers may go from humble beginnings in a Kosovo radio station.

Spc. Adam Riediger, left, cues up the next song as he and Staff Sgt. Todd Smock run a radio show at Radio Victoria in Gnjilane/ Gjilan.



Spc. Adam Reidiger of Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 1-113th Cavalry, answers a call from a listener.

KOSOVO



Spc. Steven Rime, top, and Sgt. Chad Barnes, both of Charlie Company, 682nd Engineer Battalion, drive the M1A1 Panther on range Falcon Four.



PANTHER

Story and photos by Sgt. Jon Soucy

Many people are not aware there are panthers in Kosovo. Recently, the Soldiers of Charlie Company, 682nd Engineer Battalion had hands-on experience with Kosovo panthers and discovered that they are different animals from their jungle-living brethren.

For the engineers, the panther is not really an animal at all, but a device used to clear mine fields. The M1A1 Panther is based on the chassis of the M1A1 Abrams main battle tank and can be fitted with either a mine plow or rollers on the front, which detonate buried ordnance. After completing classroom instruction, which covered preventative maintenance and features of the equipment, Soldiers then spent a day at range Falcon Four getting hands-on experience operating the machinery.

And for the Soldiers of the unit, getting to operate the Panther was one of the highlights of the experience.

“Oh, it was fun,” said a mud-covered Spc. Steven Rime, after climbing out of the vehicle. Prior to the training Rime was the only licensed driver of an M1A1 in the unit and during training certified that each person who trained on the equipment could safely operate it.

“It’s pretty exciting,” agreed Sgt. Chad M. Barnes, a combat engineer with the unit. “It’s got a lot of power behind it.”

Soldiers from the unit had the chance to operate the vehicle throughout a course that covered open fields as well as muddy trails, and in addition they also operated it in a way that many other vehicles cannot be operated—by remote control.

“It’s like every little kid playing with a remote control car,” said Sgt. Steven Davis, a combat engineer with the unit, who added that it took some time to get used to driving the vehicle remotely.

While operating the vehicle by remote control the operator is aided by



◀ *Spc. Steven Rime, Engineer Battalion, Lt. Brian Nutter drives*

Sgt. Chad Barnes, Charlie Company, guide while r

Background mine-clearing

cameras mounted on the front and rear of the vehicle. The cameras display their views on screens that are a part of the remote control unit, allowing the operator to see exactly what is in the vehicle's path.

The ability to operate the Panther remotely provides a way to ensure safety while clearing minefields.

"It brings troops out of harm's way," said 1st Lt. Brian Nutter, a platoon leader with the unit. "It can be operated remotely. In the end you cannot put a cost on saving the lives of troops. Getting them as far away from harm as possible is a good thing."

In addition to the Panther, the Soldiers also trained on the mini-flail, which is another device used for clearing minefields. About the size of a riding lawn mower, the mini-flail has a number of metal chains attached to a cylinder on the front of the vehicle, and during mine clearing operations, the cylinder spins rapidly with the chains striking the ground and detonating ordnance that may be buried. Like the Panther, the mini-flail is operated by remote control.

Though both are used to clear mines, the mini-flail is used to clear anti-personnel mines, whereas the Panther is designed for clearing the larger anti-tank and anti-vehicle mines, said Nutter.

This training augments the unit's ability to provide a safe and secure environment in Kosovo.

"Should the need arise that someone gets stuck in a minefield, or a potential minefield, they could call on the engineers," said Nutter, who added that his unit would have the tools to help get them out safely.

Although the engineer's Panther and its feline cousin aren't exactly the same, the Soldiers of Charlie Company can tell folks back home about getting to see a unique aspect of the region—the Kosovo Panther.

1st Lt. Brian Nutter, a combat engineer with Charlie Company, 682nd Engineer Battalion, calls out directions to 1st Lt. Brian Nutter, also of Charlie Company, as he operates the Panther at range Falcon Four.

1st Lt. Brian Nutter, a combat engineer with Charlie Company, keeps an eye on his ground while operating the M1A1 Panther.

1st Lt. Brian Nutter, a combat engineer with Charlie Company, keeps an eye on his ground while operating the M1A1 Panther with the mine rollers installed.



Story by Spc. Rob Barker

CITIZEN Skills SOLDIER Responsibilities

For many National Guard and Army Reserve Soldiers, civilian occupations play important roles in the Military Occupational Specialties they choose, and sometimes their civilian jobs help them and others along the way in their military career. Such is the case for Spc. Joshua Ott, an intelligence analyst with the 321st Psychological Operations Company, who, with the help of three other Soldiers from his unit and his civilian emergency medical technician experience, was able to help in a time of need.

The Soldiers were returning from a mission and noticed a large up-armored United Nations vehicle turned on its side in the Strpce/ Shterpce municipality. As people were being helped out of the vehicle, Ott, Spc. Sarah Schultz, Sgt. Jason Taylor and Staff Sgt. Gregory Boatwright, knew this was their chance to make a difference in Kosovo. Being an EMT in the civilian world as well as a Soldier allowed Ott to take immediate control, perform triage, evaluate the casualties and take care of the situation, while the other Soldiers assisted him.

“We saw that the most serious injury was a male with an approximately four inch laceration to the back of the head,” said Ott.

After calming the casualty, applying gauze and taking care of the injury, Ott said the team moved on to the next most serious case.

“He came up to me complaining of right shoulder pain,” said Ott. “He also had a two inch laceration to the right side of his head. I had him stand normal and I could see the shoulder was dislocated. We then placed gauze on his head laceration, and a sling on his arm to immobilize his shoulder.”

“It was good that we were there to help everyone,” said Taylor, an assistant team leader with the 321st. “The patients were very shaken up when their vehicle flipped.”

The troops then took care of the final two passengers by treating them for minor injuries. Ott said being an EMT and a Soldier helped him keep his composure under pressure.

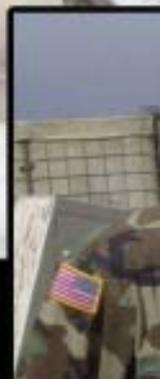
“Having a lot of confidence, knowing what you’re doing, and being calm and in control puts the patients at ease,” said Ott. “When they see that you are not nervous or scared, it calms them down and shows them everything will be alright.”

“It makes me feel good because some of the people were panicking,” said Schultz, a psychological operations specialist with the 321st. “We were calming them down and it really helped.”

Reassuring the patients and doing what they could to assist Ott were not the only factors that helped in the situation.

“It is good to know the combat life saver training that we received through the military helped in the real world,” said Boatwright, a team leader with the unit.

“This is the job that I do every day. I don’t do this job to be a hero, or to receive praise. I love being an EMT and hope that every patient that I come into contact with is helped not only medically, but also emotionally since their contact with me is always at a bad moment in their life.”



Spc. S

Background
321st Psycho
the accide



Sarah Schultz



Spc. Joshua Ott



Sgt. Jason Taylor



Staff Sgt. Gregory Boatwright

and photo by Spc. Sarah Schultz: United Nations Mission in Kosovo Police respond to the accident. The Psychological Operations Soldiers shown above were among the first on the scene and aided those injured in the accident.

Armenian Peacekeepers

Story and photos by Spc. Sean McCollum

The Greek 525th Mechanized Infantry Battalion has added Armenian to the list of languages heard at Camp Rigas Fereos. A platoon from the country recently deployed to the camp as part of NATO's Partnership for Peace program. The platoon is specially trained not as infantry soldiers, but as peacekeepers.

"This mission is especially for peacekeepers," said Sgt. Baghdasaryan Vardan, a deputy commander of the platoon.

The platoon, said 1st Lt. Artyom Avdalyon, platoon leader for the Armenians, augments the 525th on its patrols and checkpoints in the Greek sector, which covers the village of Babljak/Bablak, the border with the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and eventually the Ferizaj/Urosevac area when the Greeks reclaim authority of the area.

Armenian soldiers train in Greece as part of NATO's Partnership For Peace program before deploying to Kosovo. The PFP's main task is to increase the participants' ability to act in concert. Through various mechanisms it helps partner countries prepare to operate jointly with NATO forces, according to the NATO website. Traffic control, searches, rules of engagement, and code of conduct were taught to the soldiers before they deployed to Kosovo in February.

So far, only one Armenian soldier speaks Greek, and to breach the language barrier, one member of each squad uses English as a common language to facilitate communication in the field. This is only a temporary measure as the Armenian soldiers seek to solve this problem before they leave in August.

"We are trying to learn Greek and the local language because our job is with the locals as well," said Vardan.

Other than learning two languages, Vardan and the other Armenians have loftier goals, tied to their voluntary enlistment as peacekeepers.

"We want to have peace in the world. This is the most important thing," said Vardan. "All of the other things in the world depend on peace."





Armenian Pvt. Sukiasyan Avetik, a member of the Armenian platoon working with the Greek 525th Mechanized Infantry Battalion, stands guard with Greek Sgt. Stergioulis Kostas at a vehicle checkpoint near Ferizaj/Urosevac.

Caring for Soldiers – Spotlight on Marriage

By Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Tim Peterson

Deployments can bring positive change to marriage. Individuals have the opportunity to learn new skills, as they do tasks normally reserved for a spouse. A time of separation can help a couple realize how special it is to be together. As a relationship is tested by a time of separation, each person can gain confidence that their spouse is really committed to their marriage.

But deployments also bring challenges. It can be very difficult for the spouse back home to take on the jobs normally done by the deployed Soldier. In particular, it can be hard to take care of children. And it is possible for a husband and wife to drift apart from each other, when they don't have the opportunity to regularly be together.

Our chaplains are placing a special emphasis on encouraging Soldiers in their marriages. We do that in our preaching and our counseling. We are also doing that by teaching courses that are specifically focused on strengthening marriage.

The marriage course we are teaching is called PREP – the Prevention and Relationship Enhancement Program. PREP is used on many Army and Air Force bases. Its purpose is to

strengthen healthy marriage relationships and help marriages where conflict has developed.

PREP is based on 20 years of research into what factors help marriages and what signs indicate marital trouble. Couples who have gone through the PREP program have been studied, to see if PREP had any long-term impact on their marriages. These studies show that couples that have taken PREP have a higher level of marriage satisfaction, higher levels of positive communication, lower levels of negative communication, and a lower divorce rate. These positive affects have been seen for at least five years after the couple has been in PREP.

We can't bring couples together to take the PREP course. But we are encouraging spouses back home to "join the course" by reading the PREP book along with the class. We are also encouraging spouses to do the suggested exercises together – either by e-mail or by talking on the phone.

We are also offering CPREP, a Christian version of PREP that was prepared by the same researchers.



Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Tim Peterson

The PREP course itself does not have a religious basis. CPREP takes the PREP material and adapts it to a Christian perspective.

PREP is currently being offered at the Camp Bondsteel North Chapel, Mondays at 1930. CPREP is being offered at the Camp Bondsteel South Chapel, Mondays at 1930. Classes will also be scheduled at Camp Monteith. Talk to any of the chaplains or chaplain assistants for more information about PREP or CPREP, or if you have any special concerns about your marriage.

An Ounce of Prevention

Techniques for avoiding sports injuries

**By Col. Basil Leblanc,
MNB(E) Surgeon**

The benefits of regular exercise, both physical and emotional, are abundant. However, exercise that doesn't include a strategy for injury prevention may result in painful, expensive, and disabling damage to the body. Even if sensible precautionary guidelines for avoiding sports injuries are followed, a person still may be injured.

Most people, especially those who are physically active, experience some type of muscle or bone injury during their lifetimes. However, following simple basic rules can reduce avoidable sports injuries.

Before beginning any exercise program, persons who are over the age of 40, overweight, heavy smokers, or have been inactive for several years should consult their physicians. Doctors can perform tests to determine the state of their heart and lungs, and advise them on "do's and don'ts" specific to their physical condition.

Those who are beginning a new exercise program or activity should ease into it gradually and start slowly. Before any type of exercise, those participating should spend at least 5 to 10 minutes stretching and loosening their muscles. This may include various stretching techniques for the legs and arms, calisthenics, or a short walk or jog, depending on the intended activity. This warm up period is vital to the prevention of injury, since stretching increases blood flow, and reduces tension in the muscles while improving range of motion. A warm-up greatly

reduces the risk of muscle pulls, strains and other injuries. Sudden and unfamiliar exertions are likely to cause injuries, therefore don't over-do it the first few times. Instead, pace activities, build endurance, and allow the body to adjust to new challenges. Regular, paced exercise is easier to maintain than brief, exhausting sprints.

Completing the workout with a cool down period is just as important as the warm-up session. The muscles used need to be stretched and relaxed, since they may have tightened during the activity. Some repetitive activities can also cause muscle to permanently shorten. Five to 10 minutes should be spent stretching the muscle, to prevent pulls, strains and spasms.

It's wise to select a physical activity or sport that matches your body type. For example, a person with chronic knee problems may be ill advised to start a jogging program, or those people with bad elbows may want to find something other than racquet sports. Once beginning an exercise program or sports activity, the person should do it consistently. Working out once a week will not provide maximum aerobic benefits, and also puts a person at a higher risk for injury. A good goal is a workout for a minimum of 20 to 30 minutes 3 times a week. Finally, if injuries occur, seek medical attention, and follow the doctor's advice carefully. The best way to ensure that the injury does not recur is to allow plenty of healing time before plunging back into an exercise program.

Softball Safety

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

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS:

- Common injuries in softball include leg, foot, back and shoulder injuries.
- A history of prior injury to an extremity indicates an increased risk of re-injury.
- The position played during softball influences the risk of injury. Pitchers suffer more shoulder injuries. Catchers may have a greater number of back and knee injuries due to the amount of time spent in the crouched position. Injuries to the hand are closely associated with the act of catching and is frequently associated with an inability to accurately judge the flight of the ball and to catch the ball within the gloved hand.

PERSONAL FITNESS

- Remember to participate in a total body warm-up and stretch routine at least 5 – 10 minutes prior to participation in softball activities.

EQUIPMENT:

- Rubber molded cleats and the use of baseball hats when batting are equipment items that are mandated during military softball participation.
- Breakaway bases a.k.a. progressive-release bases rather than the use of anchored bases substantially decreases the risk of softball injury when sliding.
- Jewelry, i.e., rings, necklaces, etc. are not recommended during softball activity participation.
- Clothing attire that contain pockets are not recommended due to the risk of fingers getting caught in the piece of clothing.

TRAINING / TECHNIQUE:

- Pre-participation education from trained coaching staff or from MWR Athletic Department staff is important for softball injury prevention measures. Many softball injuries can be prevented through proper coaching techniques: improving the pitching and throwing techniques, instruction in proper sliding and fielding techniques, instruction in avoiding pitched balls while batting, and the proper use of safety equipment.
- NOTE: Many MWR Facilities provide safety/injury prevention information to coaches, players, and officials regarding preparation, conditioning, and training proper playing techniques.
- The more contact the player incurs with other players, (such as sliding, collisions with other players, etc), the higher the risk of injury.

ENVIRONMENT:

- Be aware of the environment around you. Check the playing fields for any predisposing risk factors such as divots, holes, soft drink tops, glass, etc. Fences should be a reasonable distance from fair territory, in good repair, and contain no exposed edges.
- Alcohol consumption should be discouraged during participation in any sporting activity.
- Liquid and nutrition replenishment is recommended to decrease exposure-related illness.
- The size of the field should be proportional to the size of the players.
- A screened – in dugout or similar enclosures will assist in prevention of injury to offensive players and the non-playing members of the defensive team.

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



WILLIAMS GIVES ADVICE ON BEING POW: NEVER GIVE UP

By Tam Cummings
April 12, 2004

FORT HOOD, Texas, (Army News Service, April 12, 2004) — Shot, beaten, locked in a 7-by-7 room with no electricity, windows or plumbing, and held captive for 22 days, Chief Warrant Officer Dave Williams said he has reason to hate his captures, but he does not hold any animosity towards the Iraqi people.

"I'm not going to shun the whole community. The Iraqi people have the opportunity to live a new life. They don't have to live in fear anymore of a dictator," Williams said recently.

The ethnic and religious diversity of the American Soldiers was puzzling to the Iraqis who held Williams and six other Soldiers captive a year ago. "For us to be so diverse, the Iraqis could not comprehend it.

One Iraqi officer, who spoke broken English, questioned me. You are American and your friends [are from different ethnic groups]. You are all in the same Army and you do not fight each other. How can that be so?"

Williams responded by telling the Iraqi that in addition to Soldiers working together for their country, in America over eight million Muslims also live in peace with their neighbors, regardless of race or religion.

They simply could not understand or grasp the concept of equality, the democratic ideal, Williams explained. "We have our faults, but I'm very proud of America."

He said he never thought his group wouldn't be rescued. The senior ranking officer of the POW group said it was this knowledge that helped him lead the other Soldiers and himself through the torture suffered at the hands of the Iraqis.

"People throughout their day-to-day business get irritated," the 30-year-old pilot explained. "But when the time of truth comes, Americans look after their own. Whether right or wrong, we are all one family. When we are abroad and someone is picking on my family, I'm going to get ugly."

Williams' family has been enlarged by six members since the events of March and April 2003.

He stays in regular contact with his fellow POWs.

"Every week one of them will call me and let me know how they are doing. I want to know if I can help them anytime, anyway."

Ronald Young Jr., the other Fort Hood pilot captured with Williams has left the Army and is working as a regional representative for a military contracting company in Atlanta, Ga. Sho'Shana Johnson has taken a medical discharge due to injuries suffered during her capture.

The other POWs, remain at their posts and in contact with Williams.

3RD ID TESTING UA

By Gary Sheftick
April 6, 2004

FORT IRWIN, Calif. (Army News Service, April 6, 2004) - How can fewer tanks, fewer Bradleys and fewer howitzers add up to a more lethal unit?

That's what the Army's first "unit of action" set out to prove at the National Training Center March 26 to April 10.

In the first field test of the new brigade structure, the 2nd UA of the 3rd Infantry Division is also training to return to Iraq. This time last year, many of the Soldiers were charging their armored vehicles victoriously into Baghdad as the 2nd Brigade Combat Team of the 3rd ID.

One difference between the BCT and the new unit of action is the addition of assets that previously belonged to the division. Field artillery, signal, chemical and engineer units that once supported the brigade are now permanently assigned to the UA. Capabilities such as counter-intelligence, human intelligence, and electronic warfare have been moved down to the UA.

"This organization has injected a lot more efficiencies with us and that makes us a lot more combat effective than what we were," said Col. Joseph DiSalvo, 2nd UA commander. "And we were pretty damn combat effective before the reorganization."

Restructuring as a UA brought about a significant change in task organization, DiSalvo said.

Instead of three maneuver battalions, now there will be only two in the UA. The UAs will be modular - each with one infantry battalion and one armored battalion.

As it restructured, the brigade lost a battalion of armor, and that means 44 fewer M-1 Abrams tanks. But a cavalry squadron was added to the UA, and it will eventually become a reconnaissance, surveillance and target acquisition squadron, or RSTA. It will replace the brigade reconnaissance troop with more than three times the force.

The 1/9th Field Artillery is also permanently assigned, minus a battery of Paladins that used to support the BCT. The brigade also lost a battery of air defense artillery as it transitioned to a UA.

In the brigade support area, the 26th Forward Support Battalion and elements of the 10th Engineer Battalion are also now assigned to the UA. In the past, the FSB and engineers supported the brigade in combat, but now they're permanent UA assets.

SECTION Q N' A:

OLD D I E R

What is your favorite movie or line from a movie?

Spc. Jaidee Schweitzer

Favorite Line:

"Ahh, I'm going to have to go ahead and ask you to come in Sunday, too."

-- Office Space



Photo by Spc. Sean McCollum

Spc. Jaidee Schweitzer, left, and Spc. Dea Kelley, right, both postal clerks with the 641st AG Postal Battalion, sort incoming mail at the South Town Post Office April 15.

Spc. Lee Walker



Favorite Line:

"Who the devil do you think you are?"

-- Family Guy

Photo by Spc. Tim Grooms

Spc. Lee Walker, an air traffic control specialist with Delta Company, 114th Aviation (Air Traffic Services), speaks to the pilot of the UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter in the background about wind conditions before a flight, April 13.

Sgt. Greg Hicks



Favorite Movie:

"Firewing"

Photo by Spc. Tim Grooms

Sgt. Greg Hicks, property book NCOIC with Tango Troop, 4-278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, has his hair cut at the South Town Barbershop April 15.

Spc. Daniel Adrian



Photo by Spc. Sean McCollum

Aircraft powerplant mechanics, Spc. Daniel Adrian, left, with Delta company, 1-207th Aviation Battalion, and Sgt. Bryan Pittman of Tango Troop, 4-278th ACR, extract an engine from an OH-58 D Kiowa Warrior helicopter for an overhaul on the Camp Bondsteel flight line.

Favorite Line:

"They left this world with both feet on the ground."

-- Secondhand Lions

Scenes of Kosovo



On the road between Camp Bondsteel and Pristina/ Prishtina

Photo by Spc. Luke Rollins