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Guardian East

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Behind the scenes:

Supplies, services and support
are the lifeblood of MNB(E)

Support soldiers critical to mission

By Col. Albert Johnson

A few weeks ago, Guardian East magazine focused on the everyday contributions that all the soldiers make to this mission and the continued progress in Kosovo. In this week's issue, we narrow that focus to the individuals whose job it is to support those efforts. Many of them work behind the scenes, with very little fanfare or recognition. Nevertheless, theirs is a critical contribution to our daily mission. They provide the supplies, services and support that are the lifeblood of our daily lives here in Kosovo. Their mission execution affects each and every one of us deployed.

Their contribution is really about the quality of life for every soldier deployed and in many cases our families who remain at home. They provide a sense of normalcy, making our everyday life as much like home as possible. They deliver our mail. They ensure our pay is in order. They move parts and supplies that help us carry out our mission. They maintain the buildings where we work every day and sleep every night. They keep the water running and the electricity humming.

These individuals make up units like the 510th Personnel Support Battalion that runs two post offices six days a week while continuing to provide quality personnel services to our soldiers. They make up units like the 106th Finance Detachment, providing necessary financial services to our deployed soldiers. They make up organizations like the Area Support Group, which is responsible for overseeing the vast infrastructure of our installations. They make up units like the 299th Logistics Task Force which moves mountains of supplies every day to ensure the soldier on the ground have what they need to execute their mission. They make up all the units who provide vital services to all the soldiers of the brigade. Too numerous to mention them all, but in this issue, we celebrate their collective contribution to our mission.

So, the next time you walk past one of these units or organizations, keep in mind what they are about. Although they do pull force protection duties, you won't find them conducting cordon and searches in the surrounding communities. But they work every bit as hard to make sure the soldiers who conduct those sorts of operations have everything they need to be successful. As you stop and think about it, their impact on our quality of life is probably greater than in any other functions provided to us while deployed. They ensure our pay is straight and that we have money to spend on our fami-



lies or ourselves. They deliver those critical packages from home or our last Internet purchase. For over 3,600 soldiers they have ensured a chance to get away, through the Fighter Management Pass Program. Additionally, they have greatly assisted as we have drawn down over 2,000 pieces of equipment while maintaining a safe and secure environment in which to operate. They are vital members of the MNB(E) team, and every bit as critical to our success as any other unit here.

Johnson is chief of staff for Multi-National Brigade (East)

On the cover: Photo by Spc. Rebecca M. Grzyb

Pfc. Israel Robles Jr., a signal support systems retrans specialist in Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Brigade, sets up an antenna on top of a shark vehicle outside the theater on Oct. 17 at Camp Bondsteel. The shark vehicle provides mobile communications when needed.

SEE THE PHOTO OF THE DAY
www.mnbe.hqusaareur.army.mil

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CAMP MONTEITH TEAM OIC

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299th LTF does it all

LOGISTICIANS REACH EVERY SOLDIER, EVERY DAY

As one of the largest and most diverse battalions in Multi-National Brigade (East), the 299th Logistics Task Force has a hand in nearly every aspect of a soldier's life.

"The LTF provides MNB(E) with a tailored and extremely responsive combat service and health support capability designed to support fixed-base and out-of-sector operations as directed," said Lt. Col. Steven W. Pate, 299th LTF commander.

The LTF provides support from vehicle maintenance to medical aid – from supply support to mortuary affairs – from material management to excess turn-in support.

"We make sure that everything that is needed is on the ground, no matter what," said 1st Sgt. Calvin Jones of Company A, 299th LTF.

This task is no easy one, he added. It requires a tremendous amount of work, but more importantly, it takes the right people to do the job.

"We have brought in a diverse and hard-working group," Jones said. "The people here are a select team of people from many different companies."

In fact, the LTF is a conglomerate: mortuary affairs soldiers, the materiel management center, Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment and the 299th Main Support Battalion. Hundreds of soldiers make up this highly effective team, Jones said.

With the right team in place, the LTF was perfectly staged to execute the mission effectively. In the forefront, the LTF set out to provide the required logistics support, but it was the additional goal of a massive equipment drawdown that the soldiers are most proud of. The goal, set by the brigade commander, was that no excess equipment would be handed over to the incoming rotation.

"Through a well-developed plan and aggressive execution, MNB(E) turned in over 600 pieces of rolling stock and 2,000 pieces of non-rolling stock," Pate said. "They also eliminated eight satellite base camps."

"Near-perfect planning and execution was needed to ensure that no excess equipment was turned over to KFOR 4B, which was Brig. Gen. Lute's intent."

Jones agreed that the equipment turn-in was a challenge, but the execution was flawless.

"We've done well," he said. "We've exceeded the goal."

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 10]

Peacekeeper profile



Matthew Kimber

age: 30
rank: Spc.
mos: 91W, medic
unit: HHB 1-7FA
KFOR camp stationed at:
Camp Bondsteel
Why did you join the Army? I wanted to try something new.

What have you learned about yourself on this deployment? I have learned that I can do anything.

What are your plans for Block Leave? To hold my wife.



Photos by Spc. Kate McIsaac

ABOVE: Spc. Kevin Maul, a mechanic in Company B, 299th Logistics Task Force, installs a new electrical harness and glow plugs on an M1031 truck Oct. 14, at the TF 299th motor pool at Camp Bondsteel.

BELOW: Pvt. Jose Chavez, also a mechanic in Company B, 299th LTF, mounts a grinder on a table in the motor pool.



PSB provides service to soldiers in Kosovo

During a deployment soldiers need to be able to focus on their mission and not have to worry about such things as getting mail, tracking promotion points and getting evaluations on time.

In step the members of Task Force 510th Personnel Services. The 510th has worked to provide soldiers deployed to Kosovo with the same level of personnel support received at home duty stations.

"A soldier shouldn't have to worry about, 'Am I going to get promoted while on deployment?'" said TF 510th PS commander, Capt. Lafran D. Marks. "Anything that a PSB does in the rear, we are doing here in Kosovo."

Marks, a native of Birmingham, Ala., said that the PSB is also responsible for the postal services provided to soldiers and Department of Defense civilian employees in Multi-National Brigade (East). "We provide postal service to all soldiers, no matter where they are located," said Marks, "that includes soldiers stationed in Pristina, Camp Able Sentry as well as MNB(E)."

The 510th PSB, which is headquartered in Mannheim, Germany, deployed to Kosovo with 50 soldiers, but sent 12 members back a month into the rotation. The task force also has soldiers from Heidelberg, A usback and Stuttgart. The task of keeping this group focused and mission ready falls on the shoulders of Sgt. 1st Class Ceola M. Larry.

"We had about two weeks to train up together before coming to Kosovo," said Larry. "But we work really well as a team." According to Larry, as things get busy over at the post office, she will send some of the personnel services workers over to help out. In addition, the PSB soldiers stationed at Bondsteel get to see their counterparts at CAS and Pristina twice a week, during postal runs.

During the peacekeeping mission in Kosovo, the personnel support services part of the PSB has been focused on helping soldiers get promoted, and making sure that noncommissioned officer and commissioned officer evaluations are turned in and completed properly.

"The 1st Infantry Division is big on pro-



Photos by Staff Sgt. Keith Robinson

Sgt. Jimmy McCoy, a SIDPERS clerk, in the 510th Personnel Support Battalion, assists Spc. Michelle Hunt of Task Force 9th Engineer as she turns in NCOERs. Sgt. Jeanette Bryant, promotions NCOIC, assists another customer.

motions," said Sgt. Eva Jeanette Bryant, promotions NCOIC. "When soldiers are going to the board and trying to get promoted, we have to get their points reported and into the system in a timely manner."

According to Bryant, a native of Pasadena, Calif., soldiers can find out how many points they need for promotions, by going to the Web site www.IPERSCOM.Army.Mil.

It is the PSB's job to get those points updated after a board. "Promotion points are constantly changing," said Bryant, "so they (soldiers) need to know where they stand."

As rotation 4A draws to an end, NCOs and officers are completing their evaluations. "A lot of people are telling me that they are about to leave Kosovo and they need their NCOERs," said Spc. Marcus A. Allen, of the PSB.

Allen said, his job is quality assurance. "I read the NCOERs and OERs, check for mistakes and make sure that they are in accordance with all the regulations," said Allen. "If not, I give them back to the units for correc-

tions." If all is well, the PSB forwards the paperwork to the enlisted records and evaluation center at Fort Benjamin Harrison, Ind.

For the quality of service provided to soldiers in the Kosovo area of operations, the PSB received a customer service award from the commander of Area Support Group Falcon. "Our goal coming down here was to provide quality customer service," said Marks, "and I believe that mission has been achieved."



Promotions NCOIC Jeanette Bryan of the 510th Personnel Services Battalion is responsible for making sure that soldiers' promotion points get recorded in a timely manner.

Peacekeeper profile



Robert Zmarzlinksy

age: 31

rank: Capt.

mos: Infantry

unit: Polish-Ukrainian Battalion

KFOR camp stationed at: Camp Bondsteel

Role in MNB(E): I am the liaison officer between POLUKRBAT and the U.S. headquarters.

Why did you join the Army? I like discipline, and this is our family tradition.

What advice do you have for your replacements? They should be able to speak English fluently.

What did you learn about yourself on this deployment? I have learned how to cooperate with other armies.

POSTAL SOLDIERS OFFER MORE THAN STAMPS

CAMP BONDSTEEL – “When it comes to mailing stuff back, start early,” said Pfc. Stephanie King, a mail clerk in Task Force 510th Personnel Services.

Up to 1,300 pieces of mail per day are shipped out of Camp Bondsteel’s regional post office. This can lead to long waits in line.

“Due to transfer-of-authorities, we are averaging about 1,600 to 1,700 pieces,” said 1st Lt. Henry Perry III, a postal officer in the postal element.

As of Oct. 6, both the RPO and the satellite post office are open on Sundays. Perry said they have to accommodate the high number of customers and the increased volume of mail.

“The satellite post office primarily serves as an option,” Perry said. “If you don’t feel like walking and you have a somewhat small package, you can mail it there. There’s no inconvenience, because we go and pick up the boxes.”

Made up of soldiers from various bases in Germany and Italy, the postal element offers services to accommodate everyone’s needs.

“We offer priority mail, certified, return receipt service, registered mail, money orders and stamps,” King said. “Plus, we make sure we get your stuff on time.”

Shipping from military post to military post using the Military Postal Service typically takes 14 days and is free. Packages must not weigh more than 70 pounds or measure more than 130 inches around. To make sure packages arrive in time for the holidays, soldiers should ship packages no later than Dec. 8.

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 10]



Photos by Spc. Rebecca M. Grzyb

ABOVE:

Sgt. Charlotte Wright-Robinson, a chief technical inspector in Task Force 510th Personnel Support (Forward), lifts a sack of separated mail after taking it off the truck Oct. 17 at the regional post office on Camp Bondsteel.

RIGHT:

Pfc. Peter Westerheide, a finance clerk in TF 510th PS, unloads mail at the post office.



Spc. Steve Hornback, a mechanic in Service Battery, 1-7 Field Artillery, wraps up a box before shipping it home.





Photo by Staff Sgt. Keith Robinson

ABOVE: Keeping track of all intelligence operations within MNB(E) is the responsibility of the G2 staff in the tactical operations center. From left are G2 members Spc. Shannon Davis, Staff Sgt. Alen Garner and 1st Lt. Eliot Patrick.



ABOVE: Kiowa crewmembers from Troop E, 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment are repairing a hydraulic problem on a OH-58 Kiowa Warrior helicopter.



Photo by Spc. Patrick Rodriguez

ABOVE: Spc. Erika Ocampo, a personnel clerk in the Task Force 510th Personnel Support (Forward), assists Sgt. 1st Class Angel Negron, a member of Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 77th Armor Regiment, with official Army paperwork.

BEHIND THE SCENES

BELOW: Staff Sgt. James Myers, outgoing noncommissioned officer-in-charge of Task Force 510th Personnel Support (Forward), at Camp Monteith, works with newly arrived Staff Sgt. Aaron Waseca, incoming NCOIC of same unit.

BELOW: Documenting operations and training is the responsibility of the Multi-National Brigade (East) Combat Camera. Staff Sgt. Jonnie Graham, Sgt. 1st Class Sandra Watkins-Keough and Spc. Thomas Bray.



Photo by Spc. Patrick Rodriguez





Photo by Spc. Kate McIsaac

4th Cavalry, part of Task Force 2-1 Aviation, finish helicopter at Camp Bondsteel.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Keith Robinson

ABOVE: Tracking daily operations and reporting to the MNB(E) commander is the responsibility of the G3 section. Seated front to rear are, Sgt. David E. Neeley, Spc. Dario J. Troiano and watch officer, Capt. Benjamin Marlin.

BELOW: Sgt. Jason Liptak, a joint visitors bureau escort, closes the door on the transport van near the Southtown dining facility, Oct. 17. Liptak and his team were escorting General Accounting Office personnel from Washington D.C., who were in Kosovo for a few days. JVB is responsible for all senior level guests who travel in MNB(E). Previous missions have included visits from senators and generals.

D S



ity of the Army's Combat Camera. Standing left to right, onnie L. Wright, Staff Sgt. Michelle A. Labriel, Cpl. Isaac A. Bray.



Photo by Spc. Kate McIsaac

BELOW: 2nd Lt. Dmitry White, right and Pvt. Peter Froehle, both of Battery C 1-33 Field Artillery, work in force protection at Camp Able Sentry.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Keith Robinson



Photo by Tony Velkov

World

Cleric not involved in Bali attack

After arresting a militant Muslim cleric who has been linked to Al Qaeda and a series of terrorist attacks in Southeast Asia, Indonesian officials have indicated that he is not a suspect in the bombing of two nightclubs in Bali a week ago.

The cleric, Abu Bakar Bashir, 64, was arrested as he lay in a hospital bed in his home city, Solo, apparently suffering from exhaustion. His lawyers had said earlier that he would not show up for questioning because he was sick.

— New York Times

Irish vote on EU expansion

In a dramatic reversal, Irish voters appeared tonight to have given overwhelming endorsement to the most ambitious expansion of the European Union, a project they rejected only last year, according to initial results from 7 of 42 voting areas in a closely watched referendum.

The full results will not be known until Oct. 20, so the outcome was not completely clear tonight. However, if the initial trend is confirmed, it will remove a major obstacle to a redrawing of Europe's economic and political frontiers to overcome the legacy of the cold war.

— New York Times

Russia digs up WWII crime scene

A team of researchers from the human rights organization Memorial have unearthed what they say is grim evidence of one of the Soviet Union's most egregious crimes, Stalin's Great Terror of 1937 and 1938.

"They would drive them here and turn down this track," Aleksandra A. Reznikova said.

"Then they would bring them here, to the trenches," she said, making her way through the birch trees and pines. "Maybe soldiers dug them. Maybe they had to dig their own graves."

— New York Times

United States

U.S. to withdraw from arms accord

The Bush administration has decided to scrap the 1994 arms control accord with North Korea that has provided Western energy aid in return for the North's promise to freeze the development of nuclear weapons, senior administration officials said today.

North Korea admitted two weeks ago that it was pursuing a covert nuclear weapons program, and accused the United States of taking steps that forced Pyongyang to nullify the accord. The White House has since debated whether to end the accord, with some aides warning such a step could lead North Korea to even greater nuclear violations.

— New York Times

New shooting has similarities to sniper

Detectives tracking the deadly suburban sniper raced to a shooting near Richmond, Va., Oct. 19 as the police reported that a man had been wounded by a single shot in a parking lot outside a shopping center restaurant.

The sniper, who has killed nine people and wounded two so far this month, shot a 37-year-old man outside a Ponderosa steakhouse in Ashland, Va., 90 miles south of Washington, was part of the spree that has frightened the Washington area since Oct. 2.

— New York Times

Salmon puts Angels on track

They call him Kingfish. It is an obvious nickname for a player named Tim Salmon.

In an effort decidedly upstream for the Angels Oct. 20, Salmon gave the performance of a lifetime. He reached base five times and homered twice, including the game-winning two-run shot in the eighth inning that propelled the Angels to an 11-10 victory over the San Francisco Giants in Game 2 of the World Series at Edison Field.

— New York Times

Military

Military loaner sharpens the search

The spy plane that the Pentagon has loaned out for use in the sniper investigation is loaded with sophisticated night-vision cameras that can transmit images immediately to police on the ground.

John Pike, director of GlobalSecurity.org and an authority on military hardware, says the four-engine RC-7 turboprop could be an effective tool in hunting the elusive killer.

The Pentagon approved Oct. 15 the use of Army RC-7 reconnaissance planes to help hunt the sniper.

— USA Today

Boy, 10, gets wish: soldier for a day

Ten-year-old Justin Bryce had just one wish: to be a soldier for a day. Last week, the Make-A-Wish Foundation of the Mid-Atlantic — with the help of area military personnel — made his wish come true.

Justin's adventure started on the night of Oct. 7 with a stop at the Pentagon and the office of Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld. Justin took his oath of enlistment and was made an honorary private by Rumsfeld. Justin was issued a custom-made uniform, complete with Military District of Washington patches, rank and insignia.

— Washington Post



KFOR

Montenegrins decide future with Serbia

Montenegro chose between parties promising independence or a continued alliance with Serbia in elections Oct. 13 that will decide what will remain of the crumbling Yugoslav federation.

The choice put to 455,000 eligible voters should solve the deadlock over an EU-brokered deal that Montenegrin and Serbian leaders signed in March but have been unable to implement, mostly because Montenegrins themselves are so divided over the issue that it forced Oct. 13's early elections.

— Associated Press

FYROM pledges support to West

On Sept. 16, the President of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ljubco Georgievski of Vmro-Dpmne, was voted out of office in a shock election result. He handed power over with a whimper, declaring: "The people of Macedonia have spoken."

The election was called as part of the implementation of the Ohrid Agreement signed Aug. 13, 2001 by the outgoing FYROM government and the Albanian National Liberation Army, which ended the six-month insurgency of Albanian separatists that had resulted in the internal displacement of 100,000 people.

— New York Times

Prosecutor seeks Yugoslavia's Mladic

On the eve of a visit by the chief U.N. war crimes prosecutor, Yugoslavia authorities said they don't know the whereabouts of Gen. Ratko Mladic, the fugitive Bosnian Serb general accused of genocide.

U.N. prosecutor Carla Del Ponte is scheduled to arrive Oct. 21 in Belgrade to press local officials to turn over Mladic, who she claims is under Yugoslav army protection.

— Associated Press

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CONTRACTED SERVICES

Brown and Root helps soldiers focus

Spc. Debra Howard rushed into a dining facility with an enormous green laundry bag of clothes slung over her shoulder. She had only a short time for lunch before she dropped off laundry and had to get back to work. She signed the meal roster and headed to the food service line where ladies wearing smocks and caps were ready to serve up a tasty assortment of foods.

She picked a grilled cheese, fries, some cucumber slices and mixed greens. Like other deployed soldiers committed to peacekeeping operations, Howard, a military police specialist in the 230th Military Police Company, part of Task Force 709th MP, leads a busy life.

Services, like food preparation, laundry, transportation, janitorial, construction, technical support and translation help soldiers in Kosovo devote time to their primary mission: peacekeeping. Contractors provide more than 20 services altogether from firefighting to waste management, to fueling and more.

"When you're hungry, it's



Photos by Spc. Jasmine Chopra

A worker at the Brown and Root Services facility in Urosevac, prepares to wash clothes. Workers wash and dry approximately 1,320 bags of laundry each day.

great just to come down here to the DFAC and have a cooked meal ready for you," Howard said.

Howard said she's also a fan of the laundry service.

"Not having to do your own laundry saves time, but you do have to wait a couple of days to

get it back," she said.

Staff Sgt. Manuel Sosa-Garces, an M1 Abrams tank maintainer-supervisor in Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 77th Armor Regiment, said he appreciates the janitorial services provided. And that he also



Spc. Debra Howard, a military police specialist in the 230th Military Police Company, part of Task Force 709th, grabs a bite to eat before dropping off laundry.

is pleased with the vehicle maintenance support provided by contractors.

Sosa-Garces is a recent graduate of the Maintenance Training Program, developed and conducted by Anthony Edmund, senior maintenance instructor for Brown and Root Services.

The course is aimed at further developing mechanic's automotive maintenance skills.

"I feel more knowledgeable. My skills have grown," Sosa-Garces said.

Edmund said he is proud of his graduates.

"It's a privilege to work with soldiers," he said. "You (soldiers) leave families and homes behind to serve. The last thing you should have to worry about is 'Are the brakes going to brake? Is the generator going to generate?' That's my job, to make sure that they will."



One of the many services provided by contractors is sewing services. Here a Brown and Root worker repairs tears in a sleeping bag.

Peacekeeper profile



Colin Little

age: 29

rank: Staff Sgt.

mos: 91W, medical noncommissioned officer

unit: HHB 1-7FA

KFOR camp stationed at: Camp Bondsteel

Why did you join the Army? To be able to provide a decent life for my family.

What have you learned about yourself on this deployment? I have learned to take advantage of all the training opportunities and take time to improve yourself.

What advice do you have for your replacements? I would tell them that anything is possible with determination and perseverance.

What are your plans when you leave? I plan to visit my family and refocus on my goals.



Photo by Spc. Rebecca M. Grzyb

Spc. Chris Slindee, a mechanic in Company A, 299th LTF, applies cleaner to a support bracket Oct. 15 at Camp Bondsteel.

[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3]

In addition to that major task, the 299th has continued to provide logistics support throughout MNB(E).

“During our tour in Kosovo, we have provided outstanding material management, direct support maintenance, recovery support throughout MNB(E), medical support through Camp Monteith Troop Medical Clinic and sling-load support to other services and nations,” Pate said. “I feel we have been extremely successful by maintaining some of the highest equipment readiness rates I have ever consistently seen on a deployment or garrison operation.”

Further, the LTF had internal goals for the individual soldiers who make up the diverse battalion. In an effort to increase proficiency in individual training and provide

educational opportunities for soldiers, the 299th has continued to support its soldiers.

Overall, the task force saw improvements in marksmanship and physical fitness scores and completion of common task training skills. The LTF now has more school-trained soldiers, Pate said. Also, LTF soldiers participated in the recent Expert Field Medical Badge training.

As the LTF prepares to hand over the responsibility of logistic support to the next unit, Jones said they are looking forward to new goals.

“We’ve met the challenges here even with our intense training schedule,” he said. “When we return, we will be able to focus on our warfighting skills. I think we will be a lot better off because of the experience of this rotation.”

Postal service

[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5]

“The fastest way to ship anything is priority,” said Sgt. Charlotte Wright-Robinson, chief technical inspector in the postal element. However, priority mail only speeds up shipping for items going outside the military mail system. “If it’s going back to Germany or any other military post, we can send it priority, but it’s really a waste of money,” she said.

“A lot of people don’t know that they can mail duffle bags, foot lock-

ers, and even suitcases. Just go light on your boxes. If it’s too hard for you to pick up, nine times out of ten it’s too heavy to mail.”

The RPO is responsible for postal support to the entire operating area of MNB(E), and Pristina.

“Camp Able Sentry and Camp Monteith have locations similar to this one,” Perry said. “We just get all the mail here and break it down for every single unit there. For Pristina and Camp

Magrath, we do remote mail missions, which are when we go out on the road twice a week for each base camp.”

Perry said that includes mail call and making sure that each unit gets its mail seven days a week.

“You get to work with a group of people every day,” King said. “But you also work with at least one to two people from every unit because they come down here to get their mail. It’s a good way to make friends.”

COMBAT READY



Photo by Sgt. Keren Olson

From front to rear, 1st Sgt. Dallas Hollin of Battery B, Sgt. 1st Class Frank Marcantonio Service Battery and 1st Sgt. James McGruder Force Protection Operation Cell noncommissioned officer in charge, all in 1st Battalion, 7th Field Artillery, conduct live fire exercises in the Train the Trainer course for Close Quarter Marksmanship Oct. 14 at Falcon VII range. During the training, soldiers learn to engage targets instinctively within 25 meters.

Peacekeeper profile



Wojciech Pietruszewski
age: 29
rank: Warrant officer
mos: air traffic controller
unit: POLUKRBAT
KFOR camp
stationed at:
Camp White Eagle

Why did you join the Army? I wanted to serve my homeland.

What advice do you have for your replacements? To be calm and stable.

What did you learn about yourself on this deployment? I learned how to cooperate with other armies.

What are your plans when you leave Kosovo? I am going to marry my girlfriend, Aleksandra, and build a home.

THIS IS THE SECOND INSTALLMENT OF A THREE-PART SERIES DESIGNED TO PROVIDE YOU WITH SOME BASIC INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR UPCOMING REUNION WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS.

Reunion: Kids are people too

The recipe for dealing with your children during the reunion time has many of the same 'ingredients' as reunion with your spouse. There are, however, some differences.

In this segment we will deal with the importance of developing strategies to have a successful reunion time with your kids.

Stay in tune

The whole process of reunion is often about getting family members back in tune with each other. This is so important with children. Their ages and temperaments can really make it difficult to get back on the same sheet of music. Here are a couple of tips:

- Listen more and work to understand your child's feelings. ... listen, listen and listen. Be patient.
- Be there. Early in the reunion process it is important to be physically together, this builds trust and ensures safety. Words come later. This is especially true for really little kids.
- You have to be the adult. Kids are kids. Sit with them, ask them questions. Wait for the answers. Some answers may be hard to hear, they may bring guilt (missed birthdays, ball games etc.). Even though this can be tough, hang in there.
- Gifts are great. If you get gifts for the kids, be realistic and fair. Remember that the most important thing you can give your kids is time.



Carpe diem (Seize the day)

Ask yourself what opportunities are present in this situation. Rather than look on this as time that the deployed spouse missed, work to appreciate this as a special time of celebration and discovery.

As you spend time together, share stories. The returning spouse had experiences while he or she was gone and so did you and the kids. Take plenty of time to share those stories. Get caught up.

This is a way of building the new story as you all work to get back together again. This is a critical time of appreciating the new ways of doing things. This is a key time for kids as they build back feelings of trust and safety.

Do things as a family group. You and your spouse can go off alone later. Make sure that the first days and weeks are a 'family reunion.'

Ensuring that the deployed spouse reconnects with the kids is important, no matter what the ages of the children. It is often assumed that older kids and teenagers adapt easier and don't need the special attention. This is contrary to reality as teenagers may have a harder time getting back in the groove.

Nothing is ever the same

This is certainly true of reunion. It is unwise to talk about "getting back" to the old routine. The kids are older. They may have changed a great deal during the deployment. It is advisable to see the reunion time as an opportunity to discover the new 'lines and limits.'

Peacekeeper profile

Charlotte Wright-Robinson



age: 27
rank: Staff Sgt.
mos: 71L, administrative specialist
unit: 510th Postal Support Battalion
KFOR camp stationed at: Camp Bondsteel
Your duty position: chief technical inspector
Why did you join the Army?

I joined the Army to travel and experience Army life.

What advice do you have for your replacements? To remain motivated.

What did you learn about yourself on this deployment? That not only can I teach my soldiers, but I can learn from them as well.

What are your plans when you leave Kosovo? I will volunteer for another deployment and re-class to finance.

STAYING SHARP



Photo by Staff Sgt. Keith Robinson

Staff Sgt. Monica Ancheta, left, a patient administration specialist evaluates a simulated casualty during common task training Oct. 17 at Camp Bondsteel. The tester is Sgt. 1st Class Paul Singleton, a medical specialist. Lying on the ground is Staff Sgt. Amnart Churukha, a lab technician. All are in Task Force Medical Falcon.

Finance clears the way

FINANCE DEBRIEFINGS ASSIST SOLDIERS

Teamwork," said Staff Sgt. Yanitza Pannell, noncommissioned officer in charge, 106th Finance Battalion, explaining how the battalion successfully deployed this rotation. "They have handled the work load by working together. Teamwork is the key for any successful mission of this magnitude."

The finance team is here, "to keep track of their pay and to ensure that they (soldiers) are receiving the correct entitlements and that their allotments, deductions and leave days are correct during a redeployment," Pannell said.

Sgt. Thanhha Nguyen, military pay NCOIC in the 106th Finance Bn., said some of the units most frequently asked redeployment questions have been related to clearing the EagleCash card, exchanging foreign currency, filling out travel vouchers, submitting special-leave accrual, withdrawing from the saving deposit program and reviewing the leave earning statement for in-theater entitlements.

Nguyen said, that in order to properly clear an EagleCash card, the balance on the card must be zero. Servicemembers have to clear the card of the entire balance at the redeployment briefing set up by the unit's finance personnel, even if there is a balance of one cent on the card. Smaller support units can come into one of the finance offices to clear the card but must have a let-



Photo by Spc. Patrick Rodriguez

Spc. SaRonica NiCole Butler, a cashier and finance clerk in the 106th Finance Battalion, attends to Sgt. Loretta L. Borroughs, a postal noncommissioned officer-in-charge in the 510th Personnel Services Battalion at the Camp Monteith finance office.

ter of release or manifest with date of departure from Kosovo.

Nguyen said, each unit's finance personnel will also talk that unit's soldiers through filling out a travel voucher, DD 1351-2, covering the entire trip, from home station to Kosovo and back to home station.

Servicemembers who had more than 60 leave days of leave accrued by Sept. 30, 2002, fall under special leave accrual. Each unit's personnel administrator will submit a memorandum to the finance office in order for that unit's members to be credited with the extra days of leave, Nguyen said.

Those enrolled in the savings

deposit program who leave before or after the 10th of the month have the remainder of that month plus 60 days to earn interest. After 90 days the account will no longer earn interest, although the funds can remain in the saving deposit program, Nguyen said.

Finally, Pannell said, it's important to stop any allotments started based on extra pay received while deployed. Servicemembers will no longer re-

ceive hostile fire pay (\$150) and the combat zone tax exclusion. It is also important for appropriate personnel to look through their soldier's LES to ensure all entitlements and deductions are appropriate.

Remember these tips from the brigade's finance experts and your transition back to home station will be easier on the wallet.

Peacekeeper profile

Jimmy D. Smotherman



age: 21
rank: Spc.
mos: systems network administrator
unit: Company B, 72nd Signal Battalion
KFOR camp stationed at:
Camp Bondsteel
Why did you join the Army? I wanted money for college and I wanted to learn a job skill.

What advice do you have for your replacements? Stay away from the Post Exchange when you are bored.

What are your plans for Block Leave? I am going to travel in Europe.

What have you learned about yourself on this deployment? I get bored easily.



Combined Federal Campaign

DEADLINE FOR
DONATIONS IS
Nov. 15.

SEE THE PHOTO OF THE DAY

www.mnbe.hqusaareur.army.mil