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Guardian East

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Bondsteel Firefighters Battle Fire



TOA:
Soldiers of KFOR 6A
Take on New Mission

Safety Message

Don't wait for it to get hot

By Spc. Ian Blake

You never know when a fire may happen; reacting to fires correctly and quickly is crucial to saving lives and minimizing property damage.

First, Soldiers should make sure they are not in immediate danger before trying to put out the fire, stressed Capt. Cecil Barthalow, Safety Officer for Task Force Falcon. Next Soldiers should contact the fire department, if they are able to. Soldiers can extinguish small fires themselves; for instance, using a fire extinguisher to put out a vehicle engine fire.

Fire extinguishers are the recommended first alternative for putting out fires, said Barthalow. If Soldiers catch on fire, they should stop, drop, and roll. Water can be used on

any nonelectric or non-grease fire. Grease fires should either be put



Soldiers should avoid overtaxing circuits by limiting the number electronic devices plugged into one outlet.

out with foam, or smothered with something flame-retardant to cut off

the flow of oxygen to the flame.

If the fire is large, Soldiers should allow the fire department to handle it. In either case, the fire must be reported to the fire department. To report a fire, call 911. For non-emergency calls, the Task Force Falcon Fire Department DSN extension is 3421 at Camp Bondsteel or 4098 at Camp Monteith.

The majority of the fires that have occurred at Camp Bondsteel and Camp Monteith on previous rotations have happened in Soldier's barracks, said Barthalow.

The most common reason for the fires? Overloaded electrical circuits with too many devices plugged into a single outlet. Desk lamps next to wooden bed frames, and candles and incense have also caused a few fires.

According to Barthalow, each barracks has a fire warden. Fire wardens are Soldiers responsible for maintaining fire safety.

"They are required to perform monthly walkthroughs of the barracks to identify any hazards, and make sure past hazards have been corrected or fixed," said Barthalow, adding that all barracks should have at least six serviceable fire extinguishers.

If Soldiers have any other questions about fire safety, they can speak with either Barthalow or Staff Sgt. Thomas Wilson, TF Falcon's Safety NCO, at building 1340A, room A1N at Camp Bondsteel.

SEE THE PHOTO OF THE DAY

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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 tomas.rofkahr@bondsteel2.areur.army.mil.

COVER: A Camp Bondsteel firefighter sprays water onto a burning tanker full of fuel during the Aug. 27 fire. Photo by Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Duran.

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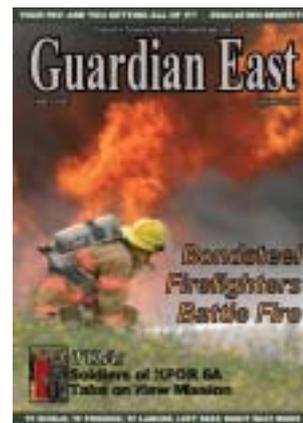
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The sun sets behind Camp Bondsteel's north chapel. Built on a hill in North Town, the chapel hosts a variety of regularly scheduled worship services, and the deputy task force chaplain, Chaplain (Maj.) Phillip Schumm, has his office there. Army chaplains are responsible for the spiritual and moral well being of the Soldiers. They have been trained to listen to and counsel Soldiers with a variety of issues, such as personality conflicts and marital problems. Photo by Spc. Adam Dielschneider.

Brig. Gen. Tod Carmony and Command Sgt. Maj. Terry Dillon officially unroll the 38th Infantry Division colors during the Aug. 31 ceremony



KFOR 6A Takes Charge

National Guard, Army Reserve and active-duty Soldiers assume duties for Kosovo mission

By Jason Austin

Task Force Falcon, led by the 38th Infantry Division, and comprised of National Guard, Army Reserve, and active-duty Soldiers, took command of Multinational Brigade (East) KFOR from the 34th Infantry Division, Aug. 31.

Each U.S. Army unit rotating into the KFOR area of responsibility spends time in Hohenfels,

Germany training with the 7th Army Training Command, and it's that training which outgoing commander, Brig. Gen. Rick Erlandson, credited for allowing his troops to quell violent rioting in March.

"To take an entire brigade of our size and transition them from steady-state operations to combating violence is a challenging task which requires the utmost in quality training," Erlandson said.

"We really do have great reserve Soldiers coming from the United States, which we take great pride in," said Gen. B.B. Bell, commanding general, U.S. Army Europe. "We train them before they get here at Hohenfels and Grafenwoehr. We watch over them with great consideration while they are here, and we celebrate their successes that they have on these missions."

And success is what these Task Force Falcon Soldiers of the 34th were able to achieve during their six-month tour.

Their accomplishments included more than 20,000 patrols, 4,000 vehicle checks, 5,000 accident-free flight hours and 19 medical evacuations. They also treated more than 3,000 people of Kosovo through the Medical

Civilian Assistance Program.

"You (34th Infantry Division Soldiers) performed the mission to provide a safe and secure environment and assist in the transition to civil authorities," Erlandson said. "You have succeeded in each and every task and challenge that you were faced with, and have done so with unprecedented dedication, professionalism, and motivation."



Col. Stanley Fleming, Task Force Medical Falcon Commander, salutes during the transfer of authority ceremony. Photos by Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Duran.

This transfer of authority ceremony is "the 11th such transfer since 1999, and confirms the fact that NATO and America (is) continuing to support the United Nation's plan for Kosovo," said Brig. Gen. Tod Carmony, incoming commander.

Although the Task Force Soldiers fall under NATO control while in the KFOR area, they still rely on U.S. Army Europe for administrative control.

"We're responsible for all the administrative support for these

Soldiers," Bell said. "If they need finance help, it's my problem. If there is any kind of normal routine help, it's our responsibility in USAREUR."

The support and training the 38th receives will help them focus on their primary mission of ensuring a safe and secure environment and the transfer of control to civil authority.

"Our Soldiers are dedicated and well trained; they will do their part," Carmony said. "But in the end it will be up to the good people of Kosovo, through their hard work and dedication, to construct a path towards a future of hope and prosperity."



This Page: A firefighter stops to change his oxygen tank during the fire. Top Right: The firefighters spray water on the fire from a nearby embankment. Middle Right and Lower Right: Firefighters work to control the blaze at a Camp Bondsteel fuel point. Photos by Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Duran.

Bondsteel fire injures two



Medics save two MNB (E) Ukrainian soldiers

By Spc. Adam Dielschneider

Two Ukrainian soldiers were injured Aug. 27 while filling their tanker at a Camp Bondsteel refueling point after a fire engulfed their vehicle, said Lt. Col. William Yoho, Task Force Falcon deputy G3.

"Their injuries were extensive and considered life-threatening," said Col. Stanley L.K. Flemming, commander of Task Force Medical Falcon.

"However, with each passing day, their condition is steadily improving."

The soldiers are in stable condition and are now at Brooke Army Medical Center at Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

Emergency crews reacted quickly to the 11:45 a.m. accident, transporting the injured soldiers to the Camp Bondsteel Hospital, where

they received immediate treatment for their injuries, said Flemming. They were then flown to the Pristina/Prishtina airport, transported to Germany, and then on to Fort Sam Houston.

Because of the close distance of the incident to the Bondsteel medical facility, the response time of the medical team, and the overall performance of the Army medical personnel here, the Ukrainians have a very good chance at a

full recovery, said Flemming.

Three vehicles were also destroyed in the fire, which the fire department fought, but kept under control, for most of the afternoon. The fire was completely extinguished at about 4:00 p.m, said Yoho.

The cause of the fire is still under investigation.



Julius Cook talks on a cell phone as the fire burns ahead of him. Photo by Spc. Adam Dielschneider.

Task Force Shield Soldiers patrol the streets of Gnjilane/Gjilan as part of their left-seat, right-seat ride transition process.



Transitioning Tasks



A patrol from Task Forces Redhorse and Shield leave Camp Monteith as part of the transition and training process.

Story and photos by Sgt. Benjamin Hokkanen

Transition time is here. It's time for all the members of Task Force Redhorse to go home, and all the members of Task Force Shield to step in and take their place. A key element to making this transition smooth is the left-seat, right-seat ride process.

During the left-seat, right-seat ride, the new units from TF Shield begin by observing and receiving instruction from members of TF Redhorse. Two of the units going through this process are the outgoing Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 1-113rd Cavalry, and the incoming Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1-148th Infantry. The HHT 1-113rd Cavalry has been the perimeter reactionary force (PRF) at Camp Monteith, and has been training the Soldiers of HHC 1-148th on the duty requirements of the PRF.

The most common functions of the PRF are mounted and dismounted patrols. The purpose of the patrols is to ensure the security operations of Camp Monteith are intact. This is accomplished by checking for breaches in the wire, incendiary devices around the perimeter, and any suspicious personnel in the area, said Staff Sgt. Russell Steffen, HHT, 1-113rd Cavalry.

"We try to touch base with one person while we're out on patrol," Steffen said. "Then we try to touch base with them again (later) to build a good, working relationship with them so if they happen to hear about anything, they don't hesitate to speak up and let us know about it. The people appreciate the fact that we take the time to see what they are doing and that we care how they are doing."

"My favorite part has been the look on the kids' faces when you're out on patrol and you talk to them," said Sgt. Travis Waterman, HHT, 1-113rd Cavalry. "You talk to a storeowner and they're happy to see you and glad that you are here because they know that somebody won't come in and rob them. (The people) are not afraid to walk down the street; that's a really good feeling."

The Soldiers of HHC 1-148th Infantry have already been through two and a half months of training at Camp Hohenfels, Germany, and Camp Atterbury, Ind., going over all the tasks that would be required of them

once they arrived in Kosovo, said Sgt. Robert Wright, HHC 1-148th Infantry. However, the left-seat, right-seat ride process has taken all that training a step further.

"The 1-148th has been excellent about showing us 'this is what you want to do, this is what you don't want to do,'" said Wright. "I think this is the best training we can get, just mingling with them and doing it."

"It's been pretty high speed," said Wright. "I've learned more in the past few days of the left-seat, right-seat rides than the previous two-and-a-half months put together. It's better training time when you're doing it for real, with people who have been there and done it."

"The best people to train you are the people who have been here before you," said Spc. Joshua Kennedy, HHC 1-148th Infantry. "The previous training has been molded to fit our mission requirements with the assistance of the old unit."

"They are catching on really quick," said Sgt. Travis Waterman, HHT 1-113rd Cavalry. "They are anxious to take over and carry on what we've been doing. We are trying to make it as smooth a transition as we can. Everything's going quite well."

During the transition period, some personal advice was shared as well. "The biggest thing I learned here was to be flexible and be prepared to react to a wide spectrum of events," said Steffen.

The other duties of the PRF covered during the left-seat, right-seat ride are, according to Steffen: mounted and dismounted patrol operations, vehicle checkpoints, permissive searches, interviews with the local populace, sector orientation, battle drills directly pertaining to the PRF, bunker searches, counter-terrorism measures, and pre-combat inspections.

Soon, the Soldiers of HHC 1-148th Infantry will be left to conduct the operations on their own. With the help of the left-seat, right-seat rides, the unit feels they will be well prepared, said Wright.

"The biggest thing I learned was the way preceding units have conducted operations has been very successful," said Wright. "We need to follow in their footsteps, and we will have success in all of our endeavors while in Kosovo."

A View From the Top

By Spc. Adam Dielschneider

The Black Hawk helicopter slowed abruptly over the rolling green hills of southern Kosovo. Ahead, the lead Black Hawk descended to a clearing on a hilltop, throwing up clouds of dust and dry grass, whipping the branches of nearby trees. In seconds, both helicopters were on the ground. The load of infantry and cavalry spilled out the doors, setting up 360-degree security.

The two Black Hawks lifted off, flattening the dry grass in rippling waves. They turned sharply to the south and continued on with their local-area orientation mission.

This was only a small part of the Aug. 24 mission, a flight meant to familiarize new pilots to the area. Pilots who have not yet flown in Kosovo must earn their qualification to fly near the border, said Chief Warrant Officer Brad E. Anspaugh, pilot for Company A, 1-137th Assault Helicopter.

Since the pilots were already planning on flying along the border, Soldiers from Camp Monteith arranged for the Black Hawks to drop them off in their working sector. The pilots also wanted to give the new infantry Soldiers an aerial view of where they would be patrolling during this rotation, Anspaugh said.

When the two helicopters took off and headed for Camp Monteith, they got a view of Gnjilane/Gjilan before they reached the smaller post. They circled the camp once and came to rest at the airfield, where about 20 Soldiers were waiting to load up. Some of them started strapping in, while the rest tossed rucksacks and backpacks into the aircraft. The group leader double-checked everyone's straps,

then hopped in himself. In just a few minutes, they were airborne once more.

The Soldiers were dropped off in a clearing on top of a hill. "From there we went to the places we were required to go to familiarize the new pilots with the area," said Anspaugh. They went to the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia border so that the pilots could use maps, global positioning systems, and visual cues to identify the border, which is not marked in many places.

On the way back to Camp Bondsteel, the two Black Hawks flew next to Luboteni/Ljuboten, the mountain Soldiers refer to as "Big Duke." It is the prominent mountain peak to the southwest of Bondsteel. Beyond the peak, the pilots could see dozens more like it off in the distance.

As they descended from the mountain, the city of Urosevac/Ferizaj stretched out for miles on

the left side of the aircraft. Touching down at the Camp Bondsteel aircraft refueling point, the aircraft filled up and then hopped over to the landing pad to shut down, their mission complete.

The mission's focus was to make sure that the pilots' first flight in Kosovo goes smoothly "because the first time flying anywhere is usually not good, but now they will have a better feel of what to expect," said Anspaugh. "The mission was successful—we got the troops inserted and the pilots certified to fly here."



Background: The Infantry Soldiers maintain 360-degree security as the helicopters take off.

Below: Soldiers get a bird's eye view of the ground as the Black Hawk helicopter makes a banked turn over southern Kosovo.

Right: Infantry from Camp Monteith grab their gear and rush out of the helicopter at their drop-off point.

Above: Task Force Phoenix Black Hawks fly in formation as they approach "Big Duke."

Photos by Spc. Adam Dielschneider





Soldiers lose at soccer

Driving through the crowded streets of Vitina/Viti, the line of humvees make their way through the eclectic mix of cars and pedestrians. They pull to the curb, and the cavalry Soldiers exit their vehicles with their weapons slung over their shoulders. Another patrol, another day of keeping the peace. Just another day for the cavalry.

To start their training, Troop A, 2-102nd Cavalry, Task Force Lancer, go to a ruined building in the suburbs outside Viti/Vitina. There, they perform a practice permissive search—a search where Soldiers are given permission from the occupants of a house to search—under the guidance of Staff Sgt. Jim Bruegger, Company C, 2-135th Infantry, Task Force Bayonet.

Bruegger and Task Bayonet Soldiers will be training the Lancer Soldiers as part of a “left seat/right sight” process designed to ensure a smooth transition between the task forces. Lancer starts in the right seat, letting Bayonet “drive” the mission, then moves to the left seat for some time behind the wheel, as Bayonet Soldiers observe to ensure they have the mission down.

After going through the building, they moved on to the home of a local Kosovo Albanian, Habib Agushi. Sitting at the foot of a lush green hill where his sheep

graze, Agushi’s current dwelling, a tall plaster structure of white stucco with an orange-tile roof, shines. Out front chickens and turkeys mill about in the ruins of his former home, which has been reduced to a hen house and garden box for sunflowers. Agushi has been a strong supporter of KFOR since the conflict five years ago, said Bruegger.

Agushi tells stories of his experiences during the conflict while providing goat cheese and tea as refreshments. Bruegger brought Troop A to Agushi so they could continue the relationship previous rotations, including Bruegger’s, had established.

Upon leaving the home of Agushi, the Soldiers of Troop A move to downtown Vitina/Viti to conduct an on-foot patrol. They patrol past open-air cafes blaring American music. They walk among merchants selling everything from diapers to cigarettes. The shops line the uneven pavement that serves as both sidewalk and street for the pedestrians and drivers. This had been a duty of Task Force Bayonet during their rotation. Armed KFOR Soldiers walking their streets is not a distraction for the citizens; it is part of their life. Citizens wave or come up to the Soldiers and thank them for their presence in Kosovo.

Every now and then, as the Soldiers patrol the



Story and Photos by Spc. Ian Blake

Stopping in mid run, Spc. Kevin Williams, Troop A, 2-107th Cavalry, Task Force Lancer, prepares to block the shot of a local Albanian youth during an impromptu soccer game during a foot patrol of Viti/Vitina. Below: Sgt. Johnathan Miniard kicks a soccer ball.

r, win at peacekeeping

streets, children approach them using whatever English they know. The Soldiers make it a point to treat every child the same, not caring what their ethnicity is.

Troop A then stops by a local schoolyard where some local children are playing soccer. Within moments, Soldiers join in and play an impromptu soccer match formed with a few Soldiers and an interpreter teaming up against the children. Not encumbered by combat boots and equipment, the children have an advantage over the Soldiers.

Regardless, the Soldiers race up and down the asphalt field after the soccer ball, playing as if the success of their mission depended on it. The ball becomes almost permanently dented as it is kicked, slammed, and bounced from person to person, until sailing through the legs of the KFOR goalie in front of his makeshift goal of laid-out sticks. Finally the game ends with the children winning five to four.

At the end of the day, the humvees load up and head out of Vitina/Viti as the next patrol shift rolls in. Waving, the Soldiers of Troop A say goodnight to the children trailing behind their convoy.

“We’re doing what we’re supposed to be doing,” said Pvt. Kenneth Smith of Troop A, “We’re keeping this place safe and keeping in good contact with the locals.”



Cpl. Abraham Wesley, 321st Psychological Operations Company, demonstrates how to use a compass during a KPS-sponsored summer retreat for Kosovo children.



KPS, KFOR, Kids, Unity

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Tomas Rofkahr

First, bring together more than 60 kids, take them somewhere beautiful, and then mix well with good food, supervisory adults, soccer balls and concerned law enforcement. In the middle of all the food and fun should be a message: don't do drugs, don't hate, trust the police and keep the planet clean. It's a simple recipe, and often a successful one, used by community organizers around the world.

This was the plan that the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the Kosovo Police Service (KPS) decided on when organizing a summer retreat for an ethnically diverse group of children from the Kosovo Albanian and Kosovo Serbian communities of Ferizaj/Urosevac, Kacanik/Kayanik, and Strpce/Shterpce. Along with help from Polish-Ukrainian and American KFOR, the KPS summer retreat held Aug. 23 to 26 was an effort by all organizations present to promote reconciliation and create trust between KPS Community Police and local youth.

According to the OSCE, similar community events will be led exclusively by KPS in 2005. For now, the OSCE and KFOR continue to play a role as facilitators.

"We're here to help out where needed, but it's the KPS and the municipalities involved that are stepping up and taking responsibility," said Maj. Lori Bast, 448th Civil Affairs Battalion Team Chief. Members of Bast's civil affairs team were present during the multi-day retreat, providing event support, teaching classes, and dodging soccer balls.

While KFOR personnel dressed in woodland camouflage were likely the most noticeable participants among the sea of blue t-shirted youngsters, they, along with members of the OSCE, were truly only sideline players.

"We're here as facilitators. We help keep things together," said Daria Paprocka, OSCE Democratization Officer.

Ten KPS Officers have been involved in all stages of the retreat project planning. According to the OSCE, KPS efforts are focused on building confidence between the youth of Kosovo and the Kosovo Police, as well as diminishing security concerns that still exist between both the Serbian and Albanian communities after the events of March 2004.

Paprocka believes that creating something like the summer retreat is a positive step for local municipalities to take. Despite OSCE and KFOR involvement, the presence of KPS Officers dressed in pressed sky-blue uniform shirts teaching, talking, and playing with the children of their communities was the true focus of the event.

"We may still be in the picture, but we're trying to be in the background," said Bast.



TOP: Sgt. Michelle White, 448th Civil Affairs Battalion, lines up with friends to prepare for a relay race. The 448th provided support for the KPS Summer Retreat, teaching basic land navigation and map reading to the assembled youth. LEFT: Everything goes better with soccer. Kids attending the KPS Summer Retreat used every opportunity presented to them to show off their footwork.

Dollars for Deployment

Knowing your options key to financial peacekeeping

By Spc. Adam Dielschneider

Sometimes a mobilization complicates a Soldier's finances. The finance office here is ready to help Soldiers understand their financial situation.

The finance office, run by the 138th Finance Battalion, can offer help on any number of pay issues, including entitlements, investment programs, check cashing, and general pay inquiries.

The finance office provides many tools and information to help a Soldier manage his or her money.

Eagle Cash Cards

Eagle Cash Cards hold money electronically to help eliminate the need for cash on post. In addition to being safer to use than cash, the card also lessens the impact of U.S. currency flowing into the Kosovo economy. Soldiers receive a card by going to the customer service office and using either cash or a check to add funds to their new card. Casual pay (see below) may also be used to add funds to the card. However, this option requires the Soldier to visit the disbursement office. All on-post commercial vendors accept the card. Before leaving Kosovo to demobilize, Soldiers should visit the finance office to have their card balance refunded with cash, said Capt. Aaron Walter, 138th Finance Battalion commander.

Entitlements

Soldiers serving in Kosovo will receive more entitlements than when serving in the continental United States.

These entitlements include hostile fire pay, combat zone tax exclusion, basic allowance for housing, and

family separation allowance, said Walter. Among these entitlements, hostile fire pay and combat zone tax exclusion are started upon the Soldier's arrival in Kosovo, though the first tax exclusion payment may take 30 to 45 days to show up on a leave and earnings statement (LES). Basic allowance for housing and family separation pay, if applicable to the Soldier, should begin as soon as the Soldier is mobilized. If anyone is having an issue with these entitlements, they should check with their unit's personnel administrative clerk before visiting the finance office.

Location and hours

On Camp Bondsteel, the finance customer service office is located in building 1330B, room 2N. For disbursement issues, visit the disbursement office in building 1330B, room 1S. At Camp Monteith, the finance office is in Stryker Hall.

For Soldiers not located on Camp Bondsteel or Monteith, call 2nd Lt. Dennis Baltimore at 781-3720 to see if a finance support mission is performed near you.

Casual Pay

Casual pay is an advance on a Soldier's upcoming paycheck. To initiate casual payments, Soldiers must go to the customer service office. Once payments have been initiated, they must go to the disbursement office to receive their money. Since casual pay is essentially an interest-free loan, Soldiers are limited to \$100 per month, said Walter.



Check Cashing

Soldiers may cash up to \$745 per month in checks at the finance office. Euros are the only currency available when getting cash. To save some time, Soldiers should write their unit, social security number, rank and unit phone number on their check before coming in.

myPay

Soldiers should go to the myPay website at <https://myPay.dfas.mil> to ensure that their deployment entitlements have started. The myPay website is an automated system that allows Soldiers to access their pay information without the need for paper forms, according to the myPay website. If a Soldier has problems accessing myPay, he or she should get help from the chain-of-command or visit the finance office.

Investment Options

Soldiers can earn a 10-percent annual return on their savings with the Savings Deposit Program. Soldiers who have served more than 30 consecutive days in country can sign up for this program. Soldiers can only contribute up to their unallotted pay and allowance amount each month, and the limit on the total balance is \$10,000. The funds will stop drawing interest 90 days after demobilization. Visit the finance office to sign up for this program. The Thrift Savings Plan is a retirement savings program for members of the uniformed services, similar to an Individual Retirement Account (IRA) or 401k, said Walter. Soldiers can enroll in the plan between Oct. 15 and Dec. 31. For more information, visit the website at <http://www.tsp.gov>.



Ty Barnett (above) and Larry Myles entertain Camp Monteith Soldiers.

Comedy comes to Kosovo

Story and photos by Sgt. Benjamin Hokkanen

On Aug. 23, at Camp Monteith, there was finally something to laugh at—comedians.

The Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) comedy show provided some comic relief for the Soldiers stationed here.

Comedians Ty Barnett and Larry Myles visited Kosovo as part of their worldwide MWR tour. The stand-up artists performed at both Camp Monteith and Camp Bondsteel, said Isaiah Hendricks, the MWR specialist for Camp Monteith.

Though both Barnett and Myles touched on some off-color humor, overall the crowd reaction was very good, with many laughs being drawn from the crowd of over 150 Soldiers.

“I thought Ty Barnett was hilarious!” said Sgt. Kevin Carroll, 138th Finance Battalion. “It’s really great that the MWR people can put together shows like this to take our mind off of everything.”

Education center offers

Soldiers can take advantage of 100 percent tuition assistance for improving skills

By Spc. Ian Blake

Want to get an education cheap? Here's how. For almost four years, the Laura Bush Education Center, located in South Town of Camp Bondsteel, has been offering KFOR Soldiers the opportunity to continue their education. Many colleges are represented at the center, including University of Maryland, University College-Europe and Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University.

Registering for classes is simple, according to Jeff Pouncy, the Education Services Officer. First, speak with one of the counselors at the center, who will explain the different program options available. Next, look at the available courses, and finally decide how to pay for the classes.

Here's the cheap part. All deployed enlisted soldiers (who don't already have a bachelor's degree) are eligible for 100% tuition assistance. The tuition reimbursement program can pay tuition for all regional or national colleges in the United States. The maximum amount a Soldier can receive per semester hour is \$250; the student pays any additional cost. Students may use GI Bill benefits to pay the difference. Soldiers have a calendar year tuition cap of \$4,500, added Pouncy, and must cover any additional costs.

There are specific rules for tuition assistance, so see an education counselor for all the pertinent details. In addition Soldiers who fail a class may have to reimburse the Army for the cost of the class.

Once the course has been paid for, Soldiers can concentrate on learning.

"We choose courses that meet the education level of the people we serve," said Pouncy. "We choose

mostly general education classes that would be found in the Soldier's first or second year of college." To better serve the educational needs of the Soldiers, classes that have the highest chance of transferring to other schools are chosen.

University of Maryland University College Europe

"UMUCE provides academic opportunities to military members, family members, and civilians stationed overseas, whether beginning or continuing their education," said Mutt Radig, Senior Field

"The way I see it, there are two (other) things to do here: go to the gym or the movies—and both get old pretty quick. Might as well go to class. Especially in the winter."

—Mutt Radig, UMUCE

Representative of UMUCE. "The goal of UMUCE is to provide higher education to students who may already have substantial commitments to their careers and families."

The UMUCE academic year starts in mid-August and ends in July the following summer, said Besa Sadiku, a UMUCE field representative. She added that students could start in any of the five terms offered each year. Many courses carry three credit hours and meet three hours a night, twice weekly. Other courses are scheduled four days a week, or on alternating weekends.

"As long as the government is paying for it, you might as well take the classes," said Radig, "The way I see it, there are two (other) things to do here: go to the gym or the movies—and both get old pretty

quick. Might as well go to class. Especially in the winter."

Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University

Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University (ERAU), offers a Professional Aeronautics degree program. Conceived and developed specifically for people who have already established and progressed in an aviation career, the curriculum is designed to build on the knowledge and skills acquired through training and experience in one of the many aviation occupations, according to Ermal Haxhiu, assistant center director of ERAU in Giebelstadt, Germany.

The Bachelor of Science degree program requires 120 semester credit hours, while an associate's degree is only 60 semester hours. All bachelor's degree students are required to complete a minimum of 30 credit hours (associate's degree 15 hours) of course work with ERAU in order to meet Univer-

sity residency requirements for graduation.

"Each student's aviation specialty is used as the foundation of their curriculum, but they are also required to take courses in communications, computer science, humanities, mathematics, and physical sciences to provide the essential, basic academic education found in every Embry-Riddle degree program," said Haxhiu. "The remaining components in the curriculum feature opportunities for students to select courses that fit the career paths they have planned."

Distance Education (DE) is convenient for students who cannot take a regularly scheduled course due to their location or work schedule. However, DE is not for everyone. To be successful with DE courses,

wide variety of options



Before releasing his class for break, Dr. Edgar Rafael, BA, MA, PhD, sums up the video that had just watched at the Laura Bush Education Center at Camp Bondsteel. Photo by Spc. Ian Blake.

students must develop their own study schedule. For most courses, they must also have frequent access to the Internet. The failure rate for DE courses is much higher than for classroom courses, and students who fail are required to reimburse the Army the tuition paid to the school.

Testing

Should a Soldier be familiar enough with a certain subject, they can take the Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Educational Support (DANTES) test. Tests are available in the areas of business science,

humanities, mathematics, social science, and education. If Soldiers receive a passing grade on any of these tests, it will count as course credit for that subject.

Soldiers desiring to advance their careers may want to consider taking some of the Army Personnel Tests (APT) offered at the Education Center. Tests offered range from language battery tests to flight aptitude evaluations, as well as the Armed Forces Classification Test.

Thinking about going to any non-commissioned officer (NCO) course? If so, Soldiers may try the Test of Adult Basic Education.

This test assesses a Soldier's level of education, and whether they meet the criteria for attending NCOES courses.

Courses are also offered that can help NCOs improve their performance as leaders. The Advanced Skills Education Program offers NCOs a chance to improve their leadership skills. The courses involve 20 hours of on-duty training, and are funded by USAREUR.

Due to the structure of Advanced Skills Education Program courses,

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Chaplains provide food

By Spc. Adam Dielschneider

Many jobs in the Army are focused solely on taking care of Soldiers physically—making sure they have food, water, good living conditions and good health. But there is at least one job in the Army that has a role that goes beyond the physical—the Army chaplains. They are here to maintain the mental, moral and spiri-

tual health of the Army.

“It’s important to know that chaplains have the mission of seeing that the Soldiers are taken care of in more than just physical ways,” said Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Andrew W. Aquino, senior chaplain for this rotation.

Chaplains provide for Soldiers in two ways.

The first is through counseling. As part of their military occupational specialty (MOS), every chaplain receives training in counseling Soldiers for a variety of problems, from personality conflicts while deployed to relationship problems back home, said Aquino.

Some issues that come up are moral decisions that a Soldier must face. “So many issues involve right and wrong, so we offer a listening ear and give advice about the right or wrong thing to do,” Aquino said.

The second way chaplains can help Soldiers is through spiritual support.

“The spiritual perspective is important to many people,” Aquino said.

A chaplains’ belief in a higher power helps them through difficult times, and they use this perspective to help others.

Chaplains also help maintain Soldiers’ spiritual lives by organizing worship services and Bible studies.

If a Soldier is having a moral or spiritual problem, and the Soldier’s chain-of-command is unable to help, a chaplain may be the next



Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Andrew Aquino receives visitors for a recent Sunday service at the Camp Bondsteel North Chapel. Photo by Spc. Adam Dielschneider

Camp Bondsteel North Chapel

Sundays

- 0800 Contemporary Protestant
- 0930 Catholic Communion Service
- 1200 North Chapel Choir Practice
- 1400 Gospel Service
- 1830 Roman Catholic Mass
- 2000 Norwegian Service

Wednesdays

- 1200 Roman Catholic Communion Service

Fridays

- 1300 Islamic Prayer Time
- 1800 Shabbat Prayer Time
- 1930 Men/Women Gospel Bible Studies

Saturdays

- 1900 Gospel Choir Rehearsal

Camp Bondsteel South Chapel

Sundays

- 0930 Protestant Worship
- 1300 Latter Day Saints (LDS) Worship
- 1930 Protestant Worship

Thursdays

- 1830 Music Team Practice
- 2030 LDS Bible Study

Saturdays

- 1930 Roman Catholic Communion Service

Camp Monteith Chapel

Sundays

- 0830 Bible Study
- 1000 Contemporary Protestant
- 1230 Roman Catholic Communion Service
- 1700 Contemporary Protestant

for thought

person to talk to. And if the problem is the chain-of-command itself, the chaplain can listen to the Soldier's issue and make recommendations to his or her chain-of-command to help resolve it. It's a system of checks and balances, Aquino said.

For now, the ministry teams plan on keeping the current worship service schedule, but times could change once the outgoing task force leaves, Aquino said.

Task Force Falcon Chaplains

The five ministry teams assigned to the task force have different areas of responsibility.

While Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Andrew W. Aquino is chaplain for the entire task force, his primary area of responsibility is Task Force Falcon, he said. His office is located in "admin alley," building 1340A, room A25. His phone extension is 5007.



The deputy task force chaplain is Chaplain (Maj.) Phillip Schumm, who can be found in the north chapel. He is responsible for Task Force Protector and Team Stalker (Intel) Soldiers. To contact him by phone, call 3818.



Chaplain (Maj.) Daniel Burris works in building 2140A. He helps Soldiers from Task Force Lancer, and his extension is 6135.



Soldiers from Task Force Phoenix and Task Force Medical Falcon are under the care of Chaplain (Maj.) Dan White, located in building 2030C. His extension is 3835.



Chaplain (Capt.) Scott Nichols is chaplain for all Soldiers stationed at Camp Monteith.



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only 20 students can be admitted for each 20-hour block of instruction. For more information or to schedule an Advanced Skills Education Program class, contact Joe Rogowski at the Camp Bondsteel Education Center at DSN 781-3188.

Head Start Programs

Planning on going 'outside the wire?' Want to learn about the local cultures and how to speak the languages? Enroll in either the Albanian or Serbian Head Start program. Each is a 20-hour block of instruction on the basics of the language, customs, and culture. These classes give Soldiers the basics for interaction, as well as a better understanding of the ethnic groups studied.

Functional Academic Skills Training

For Soldiers wanting to improve their reading, mathematics, and language skills, there is the Functional Academic Skills Training program. The program's objectives are to improve job performance, prepare Soldiers for more advanced academic courses, increase military career options, and enhance educational skills. The Functional Academic Skills Training program is a free, 60-hour academic course and is limited to 20 students. Pouncy recommends that military personnel with a General Technical (GT) score below 100 or without a high school diploma take this course.

Service Members Opportunity Colleges

Another program offered is the Service Members Opportunity Colleges. These are schools that have agreed to accept the training service members have received through the military as college credit, and allow these credits to be transferred from one school to another. Further information about this program can be obtained at the education center.

Army Learning Center

Soldiers wanting a quiet place to study, or needing to do research for classes, can use the Army Learning Center. The Army Learning Center has many resources available, including exams, language guides, and complete reference sets by Peterson and the College Board.

Education assistance this good doesn't come around often. Don't waste the opportunity.

Recording artist spreads Army safety message



Word Records recording artist Mark Schultz performs before a crowd gathered in the Pentagon Courtyard. Photo by Sgt. Carmen Burgess.

By Raini Wright

Word Records recording artist Mark Schultz performed “Letters from War” and other songs at the Pentagon Courtyard Aug. 25 to highlight the Army’s “Be Safe!” campaign.

Schultz partnered with the U.S. Army Safety Center earlier this year and donated his song “Letters from War” to the Army’s effort of reducing accidental deaths by 50 percent by October 2005.

Every 32 hours the Army loses a Soldier to an accidental death, according to officials. The “Be Safe” program educates soldiers about potential hazards, emphasizing those connected with operating motor vehicles. The program also informs the general public about the need to help Soldiers be safe.

“Letters from War,” from Schultz’s current album “Stories & Songs,” is about a Soldier safely

returning home from war. His great-grandmother’s diaries of her three sons who fought in World War II, was the inspiration for the song.

“I can’t imagine not growing up with my great uncles,” Schultz said. “The emotions [in this song] are the same in 1940 as they are today. If a song can be used to save lives, touch families and inspire soldiers, I wanted to be a part of that.”

Since Schultz’s partnership with the U.S. Army Safety Center, the public has become more familiar with the “Be Safe!” campaign. The center’s web site has received 1.4 million hits.

The idea to use Schultz’s song to promote safety stemmed from the need to try a different promotion approach, said Col. Willie Gaddis, deputy director for Army safety. “The song makes safety personal,” he said.

Audience reaction to Schultz’s song echoed Gaddis’ comments.

“This song is definitely a fit for the Army safety campaign,” said Val Nelson, Department of Defense contractor for Detainee Affairs. “It’s strange sometimes what we put our hope in, but her hope was in his letters and this is what brought her son home. Our belief in the soldiers is what motivates them to hold on.”

“‘Letters from War,’” according to Wordrecords.com, “is an ebbing and flowing musical poem that recreates the powerful letters Schultz was reading one day, written to his great grandmother from her son who, at the time, was overseas serving in World War II. The drama in Schultz’s real-life lyrics is far more poignant than in most war movies.”

The album is currently available for purchase through online retailers and the record label site (Wordrecords.com), and through Schultz’s personal web page at www.mark-schultz.com.

What are you leaving behind for the KFOR 6A rotation?



"All the kids we got to know over the past few months. And the soccer games we got to organize."

*– Spc. Adam Pelton
Task Force Bayonet*



"I didn't lose anything. I've gained precious knowledge, and the ability to better associate with my fellow Soldiers."

*– Sgt. Melvin Hunt
Task Force Desperado*



"I'm leaving Tupperware, but also lots of knowledge for the next rotation."

*– Staff Sgt. Dan Wolfe
Task Force Desperado*



"I'm leaving all the friends that I've made in the local population."

*Sgt. Daniel McCarty
Task Force Bayonet*

Scenes of Kosovo

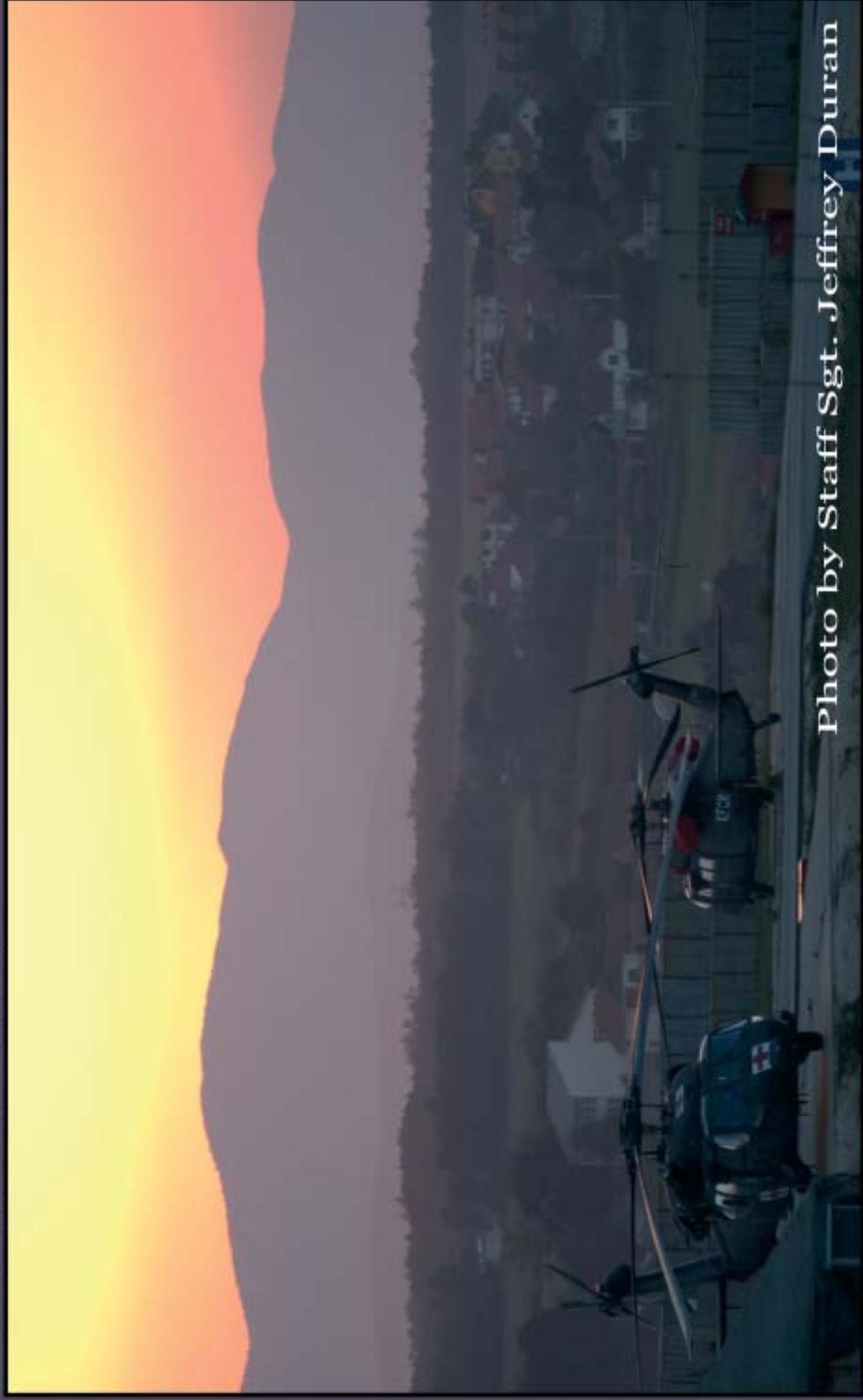


Photo by Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Duran

The sun setting on Camp Bondsteel