



# Guardian

Volume 13, Issue 2    Produced for Personnel of KFOR Multi-National Brigade (East)    [www.tffalcon.hqusareur.army.mil](http://www.tffalcon.hqusareur.army.mil)    March 2006





## Photo of the Month



Photo by Pfc. Daniel J. Nichols

An older Kosovar gentleman passes through the town of Lipjan/Lipljan on his horse drawn cart in the morning on Feb. 20.

## Guardian

is produced for personnel of KFOR Multi-National Brigade (East)

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The Guardian is an official publication of KFOR 7 Multi-National Brigade (East) published to provide command information to service members in MNB(E). The Guardian is produced by the 4th Public Affairs Detachment. Contents of the Guardian are not necessarily official views of, nor endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, the Department of the Army, the 36th Infantry Division or MNB(E). The Guardian is published monthly using offset press by the MNB(E) Public Affairs Office, BLDG #1320, Camp Bondsteel, APO AE 09340. Printed circulation is 2,200.

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Photo by Sgt. Matthew Chlosta

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Photo by Sgt. Brandon Krahmer

**FRONT COVER PHOTO BY SGT. MATTHEW CHLOSTA**—Left, Sgt. 1st Class Howard Rusher, platoon sergeant, 2nd Platoon, Task Force Dragoon and Staff Sgt. Larry Stevens, squad leader, 1st Sqd., 2nd Plt., TF Dragoon, both are with Battery A, 1st Battalion, 142nd Field Artillery Brigade, Bentonville, Ark., conduct a foot patrol Feb. 16 in the Shterpce/Strpce "Green" market. The market is held every Thursday. "Myself and my platoon think this is an awesome mission just for the fact we have the chance to hopefully make a difference in these people's lives and try to help them," Rusher said via e-mail on Feb. 21 about the patrol.

**BACK COVER PHOTO BY SGT. BRANDON KRAHMER**—A young shopper manages to hold cash and merchandise in his hands while being escorted through the "Green" market in Shterpce/Strpce during market day on Feb. 16.





**Brig. Gen. Darren Owens, commanding general, Multi-National Brigade (East)**

**Left photo, on left, Ukraine Army Lt. Col. Viktor Korpachynskyi, deputy commander, Polish/Ukraine Battalion talks to Brig. Gen. Darren Owens, commanding general, Multi-National Brigade (East), center, as they conduct a foot patrol through the weekly "Green" Market in the town of Shterpce/Strpce on Feb. 16.**

**M**ulti-National Brigade (East) has started strong.

We took Soldiers from across the United States and six other countries and quickly forged a strong team. Our team –Texans, Americans, and international partners - has already done many good things in the first months on the ground here in Kosovo.

Our continued success is a testament to the citizen-patriots of America who serve here. I have said many times that I am proud of what you have done. I am not the only one who has noticed your performance.

The KFOR Commander Lt. Gen. Giuseppe Valotto, Italian Army, told me he is impressed with our professionalism and team spirit. The presidents of the local municipal assemblies I have met tell me that they are happy with the way our Soldiers conduct their business.

Your families back home have said many times how proud they are of you, and what you are doing here.

Don't forget that we earn our reputations every day. Disciplined Soldiers promote the great reputation that we have worked so hard to build. I encourage leaders at every level to make sure we continue to meet the high standards we have set and for our Soldiers to continue to personify the Warrior Ethos.

Go out and continue to do good things.

**LONE STAR!**

# CSM'S CORNER



**Command Sgt. Maj. Kenneth Boyer,  
command sergeant major,  
Multi-National Brigade (East)**



Photo by  
Sgt. Matthew Chlosta

Command Sgt. Maj. Kenneth Boyer, 36th Infantry Division, Texas National Guard and command sergeant major, Multi-National Brigade (East) salutes during the playing of the national anthem during the transfer of authority ceremony held on Jan. 18 at Camp Bondsteel. Boyer is flanked on his left by Spc. Ambro Aguilar, Task Force Alamo, 36th Inf. Div. holds the NATO flag and on his right by Spc. Brandon Cox, TF Alamo, 36th Inf. Div., who holds the colors from the outgoing unit the 40th Inf. Div.

**A**s we make our way through the month of February, accidents and injuries continue to be our #1 nemesis. Accidents, vehicular and pedestrian, can be primarily attributed to the snow and ice with which we have to contend. My message to all, "Slow down!!" Adjust your speed, whether walking or driving, to the road conditions. We have not had to respond to any emergency situations that require excessive speed, so stay slow, stay safe, stay accident and injury free.

**O**ver the next month several events will start to occur. FMPP and R+R will begin in March. The Chaplain's Greece Retreat will also begin. If you have not selected your dates for these events, see your S-1 and get that completed.

**W**e also have a myriad of schools beginning soon. If you are scheduled for an NCOES school, make sure that you meet the standard on APFT. If you are uncertain as to whether you can pass or not, start working on it now. Although it is icy outside, you can run on the treadmills in the gyms. Everyone must pass the APFT prior to starting NCOES. The APFT will also be administered by the NCOES Cadre during the course so BE PREPARED!

**O**ur mission to date is going well. Soldiers from all Task Forces continue to perform their duties with a high level of professionalism and dedication. As our OPTEMPO increases with the coming of spring, I am confident that we will continue to respond to the challenges we will face in the manner expected of the great Soldiers of this Task Force. Stay safe, stay focused, stay professional!

CSM Boyer



Photo by Sgt. Chad Beck,  
Task Force Alamo

**New** On Feb. 17, Task Force Alamo conducted a non-commissioned officer induction ceremony for 16 of their newly-promoted sergeants. The occasion commemorated the passing of a Soldier from the junior enlisted ranks to those of the non-commissioned officer.

Each inductee was sponsored by another NCO. The inductee was called forward with his sponsor by Command Sgt. Major Jeffrey Merrill, command sergeant major, TF Alamo.

The inductee received and signed the Creed of the Non-commissioned Officer, upon which the NCO will base all of his future duties. CSM Boyer was the guest speaker. He told the NCOs to lead by example and to remember, the NCO Corps is the "Backbone of the Army."

Left, Sgt. Hupkirt Chua and Sgt. Royce Daniels both new non-commissioned officers from Task Force Alamo, show the certificates that signify their induction as NCOs during the TF Alamo NCO Induction Ceremony, which was held at the South Town Dining Facility on Camp Bondsteel, Feb. 17.

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# TF POL/UKR BATTALION IN SHTERPCE/STRPCE

Right, Staletovic Milivoje, 52, a Kosovar-Serbian, shows a customer some of his home-made cheese he had for sale at his tea and cheese stand on Feb. 16 in the town of Shterpce/Strpce. “We have freedom of movement here. When you trade (or) sell you don’t look at ethnicity,” he said.



Photos by Sgt. Matthew Chlosta

Above, left photo, fresh fruit imported from Turkey and Spain looks very enticing to shoppers. Above, right photo, a mother and daughter leave the market with bananas and oranges. Below, Kosovar-Roma Gezim Hasani, 25, shows off jackets for sale to potential customers at his stand on Feb. 16 during the weekly “Green” market in Shterpce/Strpce, which is held every Thursday.



Ukraine Army Staff. Sgt. Stepan Hoptor, of TF POL/UKR, watches the road along Route Lion during a foot patrol in Shterpce/Strpce Feb. 16.

Photo by Sgt. Brandon Krahmer



## ON

Left, Milorad Boskocevic, 76, a Kosovar-Serbian enjoys shopping for fruit during the weekly “Green” market, which is held every Thursday in the town of Shterpce/Strpce. The market was the site of a bomb explosion last November, but now appears more safe and secure. There are beefed up foot patrols by the TF POL/UKR Battalion Soldiers and TF Dragoon Soldiers. “Every market I’m here. It’s good, not bad for now. We’ll see in the (future). I just come here to shop.”



Photos by Sgt. Brandon Krahmer

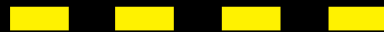


## TF HOUSTON IN GJILAN/GNJILANE

Left, Patrol team members from Task Force Houston walk down a sidewalk in Gjilan/Gnjilane during a guided patrol of the area for Brig. Gen. Darren Owens, commanding general, Multi-National Brigade (East), on Feb. 13.



LAYOUT & DESIGN BY  
SGT. MATTHEW CHLOSTA &  
SGT. BRANDON KRAHMER



# PATROL



Above, Shamir Zenele, a local Gjilan/Gnjilane boy, poses for a picture between conversations with Soldiers on patrol. Zenele, who learned English from KFOR Soldiers, said he wants to be a translator for the U.S. military when he grows up...or a professional soccer player.

Left, Sgt. Jason Aznaran, Task Force Houston, leads his patrol to a link-up point to meet with Brig. Gen. Darren Owens, commander, MNB(E) for a walking tour of Gjilan/Gnjilane Feb. 13.



## Stage 1 - Education

Picture yourself in your most recent military school where you had someone chewing you out during a physical training session; verbally encouraging you to knock out three or four more repetitions. For some of you, it was your Drill Sergeant in basic training. For others, it was a small group leader in primary leadership development course or maybe even the officer basic course. Or maybe for some of you, it's a workout partner spotting you on the weight bench. These "motivators" force you to push your limits in order to help you meet your fitness goals. You'll leave any one of these training environments feeling and possibly even looking like a new person.

We all remember that chubby person in basic training who overcame their fear of running and lost so much weight their family didn't recognize them. To the contrary, the skinny Joe with toothpick arms who discreetly flexed his newly reformed "guns" and pectorals in the mirror hanging in his wall-locker. For some, you're thinking about emulating that gym "rat" who benches the weight of a small pickup truck. You might be thinking about your very own personal experiences. In these different examples, there is one thing that is similar. Each person set a *GOAL* for themselves and they met that goal. They met their goal whether it was informally established or a certain standard was published and subsequently exceeded. In either case, due credit should be given to those individuals for their hard work.

You're probably thinking, what does this have to do with me, right? Well, if you're reading this, more likely than not you're in a position where there is already a standard set in place for you to meet, nicely outlined in FM 21-20. A common myth is that PT is done because you have to pass the Army Physical Fitness Test. Physical readiness training is the ability to meet the physical demands of any combat or duty situation, accomplish the mission, and still have a reserve of strength. Whether you sit behind a desk or you're patrolling the streets of Gjilan/Gnjilane, keep in mind that we all need to be physically prepared to do our part. You should have confidence in your buddy to do his or her part, just as they want to know that you will be physically able to do your part. This is just a small piece of a big plan in your unit's mission essential tasks list, taken from within FM 7-1 (Battle Focus Training). In other words, are you FIT 2 FIGHT?

There are three interactive components to physical fitness: *Strength, Endurance and Mobility*.

**Strength** is the ability to overcome resistance. Soldiers need strength to carry a full combat load to accomplish their mission. Calisthenics are the foundation to Army strength training and body maintenance.

**Endurance** is the ability to sustain activity. Soldiers need endurance to carry that combat load for as long as possible to accomplish the mission; sustain high intensity activity for a short duration and low intensity activity for a long duration. This is done through aerobic and anaerobic training. Aerobic is continuous, submaximal effort while anaerobic is intermittent, high-intensity efforts (i.e. a platoon runs 5 miles in one hour verses 3 miles in 21 minutes).

**Mobility** is movement proficiency. It is the functional application of strength and endurance. Strength with mobility allows a Soldier to squat low to pick up a wounded Soldier. When was the last time your squad or platoon spent an entire PT session stretching?

Remember, these three interactive components alone will not make you effective on the battlefield. You need motivation and determination. And, as I stated earlier, you need a goal. You need a goal that is realistically within your reach. Don't let the cold weather here in Kosovo discourage you from setting goals and working towards them. But remember, for every situation, you have risks. Minimize those risks during winter seasons by stretching muscles and doing risk assessments. Remember doing risk assessments won't minimize risks, make sure you implement controls. Your body isn't as flexible when it's cold so add a few extra minutes to your workouts and stretch longer. You will feel better, you will see better results and you will notice fewer injuries. I challenge each of you to write down three personal fitness goals and the next time you read Fit 2 Fight, work them into: **Stage 2-Phases of Fitness Conditioning**. Identify your goals, look for areas of improvements, Train to Fight!



Fit 2 Fight Columnist Staff Sgt. Michael Bennett, noncommissioned officer-in-charge, Army Physical Fitness Test, Task Force Falcon writes this month about setting goals and the three components of fitness.



# Q&A

**Spc. Bradley Merchant**

**Task Force Alamo  
2nd Platoon, Company B**

**Spc. Bradley Merchant graced the cover of the February issue of the Guardian Magazine. He took a few minutes Feb. 10 to sit down and talk about his deployment experience here in Kosovo.**

*Interview, Photos, Layout &  
Design by Sgt. Brandon Krahmer*

**Q:** How is this deployment going for you so far?

**A:** It's really easy. It's not what I expected really. It's more relaxed...it's fun.

**Q:** How did you end up being assigned to the mission in Kosovo?

**A:** I volunteered for this (Kosovo) or the Sinai Peninsula (Egypt), and they put me on this.

**Q:** What's the toughest part of this deployment for you?

**A:** Probably the hardest thing is...I don't know...probably being separated from family and friends.

**Q:** What's a normal day over here like for you?

**A:** Depending on if we're doing days or nights, we usually do a six or seven hour patrol.

**Q:** Are there any things about Kosovo that differ from your initial perceptions?

**A:** Yeah. Everything that we learned at Fort Hood was expecting for the worst. But it's different here... like the way you clear a room. At Fort Hood they taught us to bust through the door, but here you have to put on booties and stuff (when you enter a resident's house). The training was still useful, though.

**Q:** What do you like best about your unit here?

**A:** My squad. We all know each other enough to get along and we work pretty well as a team. Plus, everything we do out here is at a team level.



**Q:** What are your personal goals for your time in Kosovo?

**A:** While I can I'm taking some college classes to get that outta the way and mainly just focusing on getting back home safe.

**Q:** What are you going to do when you get back home?

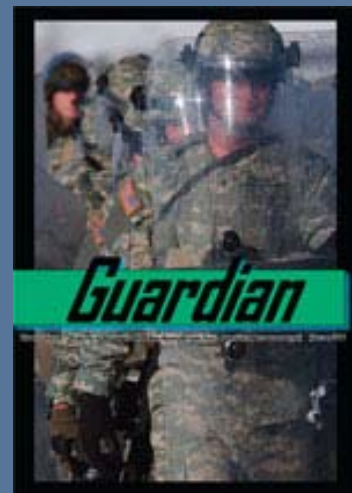
**A:** For sure...go back to school.

**Q:** How do you keep in touch with everyone back at home?

**A:** The Internet, and e-mails. It's a lot easier to do that than to call home.

**Q:** Is there anything you'd like to say to the folks back home?

**A:** I just want to say 'hi' to my family and friends, and the Superbike Society.



**Merchant on last month's cover**





Day to day operations continue  
but training never stops

# Mass Casualty... EXercise...

Story & Photos, by Pfc. Christina M. Vanyo  
Layout & Design by Pfc. Christina M. Vanyo,  
Spc. J. Tashun Joyce' and Sgt. Matthew Chlosta

A MasCal casualty with suspected severe head and neck injuries awaits treatment in Task Force MedFalcon's intensive care unit.

MASCAL victim-1, 'M1', a Soldier acting in the Feb. 3 Task Force MedFalcon surprise Mass Casualty exercise, suffered from a simulated amputated left arm from motor-vehicle rollover.

Maj. Douglas Polk, the headquarters company commander of TF MedFalcon, said the 'Mass Casualty' (MASCAL) exercise is to check the quick-response of all the Soldiers working in the hospital.

"The MASCALs are based on what takes place in the real world concerning Soldiers' health care," he said.

"This is to prepare our Soldiers."

Polk said the staged events can involve anywhere from three to 30 Soldiers acting as mock-casualties.

"We prep with the use of Soldiers, and base the exercise upon what kind of accident happens, for example, rock slides," he said. "We're also ready to treat Kosovars that may get hurt in

accidents (real world) with KFOR Soldiers."

He explained that the primary goal of MedFalcon's staff is to save life, limb and eyesight.

In Friday's exercise, three casualties were evaluated, checked and treated based on injury, said Polk.

"These patient evaluations determine if surgery is needed," he said. "It governs how their condition will be pronounced."

Lt. Col. Douglas Lawson, executive officer, TF MedFalcon, said, the exercise went pretty well.

"The evacuation from accident site, working to sustain 'life, limb and eyesight', the transportation and the treatment from start to finish was outstanding," he said.

A lot of thought goes into the preparation of these exercises, in order for the Soldiers to react successfully and gain quality training.

Col. Alfred S. Gervin, deputy commander for clinical services and chief general surgeon of TF





Left, in the emergency room, Maj. Paul Reynolds, MedFalcon's Orthopedic surgeon, reads the status report of one mock-casualty from the MasCal Exercise.



'M2', the name of the MasCal Exercise's second mock-casualty, has a tag that tells MedFalcon he is categorized as 'Immediate', a first priority casualty with severe injuries.



MedFalcon, has written and redesigned many of the MASCAL plans himself, he said.

"There's been consistency," he said. "And this makes it easier to learn procedure and the local rules. The exercises are designed here."

Gervin said that MedFalcon's mission here on Bondsteel is not to be a medical clinic, but a high-capacity hospital, ready to provide the best care for KFOR and multi-national troops in hostile times.

"We have the same purpose as the hospitals in Afghanistan," said Gervin.

"We're a forward operating taskforce and our main mission is to stand at the wall, ready, if our Soldiers are injured, if the shooting starts, if hostilities break out."

Gervin said that the MASCAL greatly aids in testing the taskforce's resource capacity, and personnel.

"In the MASCAL," he said, "everybody drops

what they're doing and everything goes to the ER. It allows us to marshal our resources to provide the best care for the injured."

"All departments are prepared for surgery and ready to take on lots of patients. We practice the logistics to increasing the tempo of the hospital, to get everything ready if we have more Soldiers coming in," Gervin said.

Every month, perhaps in middle of the night, Gervin said these exercises are planned, with their dates and times kept classified.

It's important for the Soldiers of MedFalcon to be prepared at any hour for anything.

"A skill unpracticed is a skill unlearned," he said.

"Everybody is here for a mission," he said. "Remember the mission and stay dedicated. We're here to give support, and that gives us focus."



# Soldiers combat the rumor mill by *invading the airwaves*

Story, photos, by Spc. J. Tashun Joycé \*\*\* layout & design by Spc. J. Tashun Joycé & Sgt. Matthew Chlosta

In Kosovo there is still a war going on. Not a physical war involving clashing ethnicities but a war of information being fought everyday in municipal streets, homes, schools, and other gathering places throughout the province. A number of improvised explosive rumors pierce the ears of almost everyone within their blast radius, filling the minds of Kosovo citizens with verbal shrapnel.

While rumors, for example those pertaining to why many residents don't have electricity in their homes in the dead of winter, may make good conversation, it is important that the people of Kosovo not be left in the dark and know the truth.

"We provide the community with information about what's going on," said Staff Sgt. Keith Donnelly, S-7 targeting, noncommissioned officer in charge, Task Force Houston. "Instead of the population making things up about why they don't have electricity, they know why."

Donnelly has been a proud member of the 71<sup>st</sup> Information Operations Group at Camp Mabry in Austin, Texas for four years and hails from nearby Belton. Being on the front lines of our world's current information war has taken Donnelly from the dusty deserts of Iraq just one year ago, to the snowy hills of Kosovo today.

Although his mission in Iraq varied slightly from his current mission, Donnelly insists that his purpose and the overall goal of IO remains the same; to positively shape the environment and influence the populace in a constructive way.

In Iraq, having no present media outlets with whom to communicate, Donnelly and his colleagues were forced to create new outlets building them from the ground up.

"Here we do a lot of working with the



1st Lt. Dane Brochtrup, platoon leader, 3rd Platoon, Company C, Task Force Houston conducts his first radio interview with radio personality Goran Maršimovic owner and operator of Pasjan/Pasjane's Serbian radio station Hit Radio Laser.

existing media to show them how to influence the people and spread information," he said. Within Donnelly's current area of operation there are seven radio stations and one television station that he and his team work with on a regular basis.

IO serves as the conduit between these stations and the Task Force Houston company that is assigned to them, he said.

More than half of the 30 hours allotted to Task Force Houston each month are used to inform the people about what they need to know, Donnelly said. While on the air, current events and other issues going on in the area are discussed along with other topics including political process, future status talks, promoting the Kosovo Police Service, and smuggling prevention.

"Sometimes by simply sharing information it calms the people because they are satisfied with knowing what's going on," Donnelly said.



The remaining portion of allotted time is set aside for the "Soldier Show" where Soldiers play music and answer questions for call-in listeners, he added. A small amount of safety information is put out during these broadcasts as well.

"All of our stations are completely behind KFOR and support creating a better Kosovo," said Donnelly.

Cooperation with KFOR doesn't necessarily mean cooperation with others from rival stations, however. Of Houston's seven radio stations, Radio Kamencia 98.8 FM is the only station with both a Serbian and Albanian staff.

Housed on the second floor of the Kamenice/Kamencia Cultural Building, formerly the municipal building and home of the KPS, this diverse staff peacefully co-exists to serve its multi-ethnic audience.

"They all get along fairly well working together and communicating to put out information," said Donnelly.

With only 24 hours in a day and whenever power is available, time is split between the Serbian and Albanian radio personalities. A small portion of airplay also caters to their Roma audience, Radio Kamencia program director Ljubisa Denkovic, said. With a frequency that travels to Gjilan/Gnjilane, parts of Viti/Vitina, Novoberde/Novo Brdo and Serbia, Radio Kamencia reaches a huge number of people, Denkovic said.

"When the KPS was in the building there was a generator," Denkovic said. "When they moved they took it with them and we've lost a large amount of our audience."

Even with the current power issues at the station, Radio Kamencia will be expanding into two stations after attaining another frequency, in order to provide 24 hour services to its Albanian and Serbian listeners, Denkovic said.

This expansion was made possible through the help of a Danish Non Governmental Organization who donated roughly \$8,000 worth of equipment to the station, Donnelly said.

"All of our stations are receiving some kind of assistance to stay open from organizations

besides KFOR," Donnelly said. "One of our goals is to help these stations become self sustaining through advertisement and other business ventures. Recently, advertising has picked up."

Radio Kamencia is one of the larger stations working with IO to share information, however, some stations are getting by with a lot less. Serbian station Hit Radio Laser, located about 30 kilometers from Camp Monteith in the town of Pasjan/Pasjane, is one of three smaller stations with home based studios.

Owner, operator, producer, and radio personality Goran Marsimovic

is currently powering his operation with a small gas-powered generator in a small room on the second floor of his home with only one assistant; his wife Marina. Besides his power issues he has no complaints and claims the ears of almost 10,000 listeners.

"It's a very hard time for Kosovo right now and people are working to find solutions," Marsimovic said. "The power situation is slowing everything. It's worse in the cities than it is here. We're used to having power problems."

Power problems are the main focus during interviews with local stations for 1st Lt. Dane Brochtrup, platoon leader, 3rd Plt., Co. A, TF Houston and 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Mike Koehler, executive officer, Co. A, TF Houston.

What KEK is doing to fix this problem has been passed on and the citizens of Kosovo shouldn't be left in the dark for too much longer.



Staff Sgt. Keith Donnelly, S-7 Targeting NCOIC Task Force Houston, observes a radio interview in progress alongside Boki a radio technician at Serbian and Albanian station Radio Kamencia 98.8 FM.





300,000 Euros,  
1 600 kilos,  
and three days of *cold*

Above, a local prepares to haul the captured goods to the Kosovo Police Service Station after they inspected the seized contraband coffee.

## Operation **Yellow Rose** Blooms With a Bust

Story, Layout & Design by Pfc. Daniel J. Nichols -- Photos courtesy of Sgt. Curtis Murray & Cpt. Michael Singleton, Co. A TF Alamo

**O**n Feb. 13 at approximately 4 p.m. Soldiers from Company A, Task Force Alamo, rolled out from Camp Bondsteel to set up an observation post on a smuggling route outside Viti/Vitina, during Operation Yellow Rose.

Their mission resulted in the seizure of 1,600 kilos of smuggled coffee and the arrest of two smugglers.

"The bust was really just icing on the cake," Cpt. Michael Singleton, commander, Co. A, TF Alamo, said.

The real value came as the opportunity to deploy as a company, occupy platoon bases and sustain ourselves under harsh weather conditions, he said. It really bonded the Soldiers to their platoons, and created a lot of faith in the leadership.

For two days Alpha Company waited at their positions battling the el-

ements in order to make the eventual bust on the Feb. 15, around 1 p.m.

"The planning was very detailed," Singleton said, "but, for lack of a better term, we had to be willing to suck it up for 72 hours to maintain our position."

That position was located on the side of a mountain that overlooked the smuggling route. Soldiers from Co. A were dropped





Sgt. Curtis Murray, TF Alamo, observes the smuggling route through a pair of binoculars from his vantage point at the observation post.

off at the foot of the mountain, and had to carry an 80 lb. ruck of supplies up to where their position was to be set up.

We actually had Soldiers using rope and carabineers to get their supplies to their positions, Singleton said. Two platoons of Soldiers literally climbed a mountain so they could get to their positions and carve their bases out of the snow.

The uniqueness was just how cold it was, he said. It was just like cold weather training.

“For example, we

learned that water in your “Camel-back” freezes.

So one of our guys, who used to be in Special Forces, showed us that if you take your canteens and put them in between two laundry bags they won’t freeze.”

“What impressed me the most was the way our MEDEVAC (medical evacuation) and LOGPAC (Logistics Pack, Re-supply) plans,” Sgt. Curtis Murray, Co. A, TF Alamo, said. “It was a fine line between a mission and pure survival, but with our evac plan we were able to do both.”

“Using SUSVs (Small Unit

Support Vehicle), which are a great piece of equipment, third platoon acting as our MEDEVAC was able to re-supply first and second platoon two times a day, and once at night,” Singleton said. Three Soldiers were evacuated during the operation, one from a strained back due to the weight of the rucks, two others to signs of chilblain (a cold weather injury similar to frostbite).

**SEE Coffee...Page 30**

# MEDCAP

## With Pol/Ukr Battalion

Story, Photos, Layout & Design  
by Sgt. Matthew Chlosta

### **Paldenice/Palivodenica locals enjoy sweets, treats & checkups**

There was no screaming, no crying, but there was some pain and a little bit of blood.

It was a Saturday, and even though school wasn't in session, all of the classrooms were full.

The halls of the Keshtjella e Diturise School overflowed with children, teenagers and adults.

The schoolhouse sits on the side of a muddy hill in a valley surrounded by mountains to the north and the border of the Former Yugoslavia Republic of Macedonia loomed over the ridge to the south.

Task Force Polish/Ukraine Battalion in conjunction with TF MedFalcon held a medical civil assistance program at the school on Feb. 16 to bring medicine and treatment to the local Kosovar population in the tiny village of Paldenice/Palivodenica and its surrounding areas.

#### **Sweets & Treats**

As American Soldiers passed out lollipops, coloring books, playing cards and other treats to the masses of children in the school yard, the line thickened in front of the school.

With a backdrop of kids' happy laughter, shouts and screams, adults and children lined up to fill out evaluation forms to identify their particular medical problems.

After the papers were filled out, patients were then directed inside the school, past the Polish Soldiers guarding the front door, to one of the four clinics: optical, dental, medical and the pharmacy.

Some locals went to all four rooms, others to just one area for treatment.

Many patients came in pairs, with a father and son attending together or a child and their

See more MEDCAP Madness...Page 18



# adness

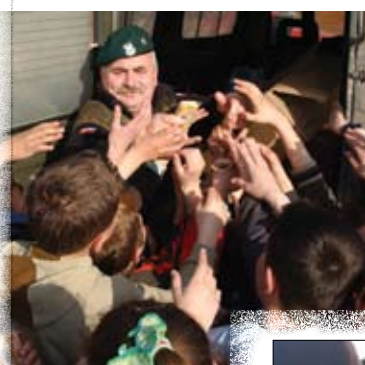


A young Kosovar, Avni Kiki, 10, gets one of his teeth pulled by a Ukrainian Army dentist on Feb. 18 during the MEDCAP, held by the Task Force Polish/Ukraine Army Battalion at the Keshtjella e Diturise School, in the village of Paldenice/Pallivodenica.

Below, In the medical clinic's exam room, Maj. Stuart Feldman, chief, Emergency Medicine & Trauma, TF MedFalcon, has an interpreter help him give his diagnosis to his patient, an older Kosovar man, during the Task Force Polish/Ukrainian Army Battalion MEDCAP on Feb. 18, at the Keshtjella e Diturise school in Paldenice/Pallivodenica.



Kosovar 3rd grader, Sami Curri, 8, proudly displays the coloring book he received at his school, Keshtjella e Diturise from American Soldiers during the Polish/Ukrainian Army Battalion MEDCAP on Feb. 18 in the village of Paldenice/Pallivodenica.



Above, During TF Pol/Ukr Bat. MEDCAP on Feb. 18, at the Keshtjella e Diturise school in Paldenice/Pallivodenica, Polish Army Sgt. Edward Roguz is swallowed up by a bunch of kids. He passed out cookies, bottles of water and fresh fruit to the swirling, mosh pit of children and outstretched hands. "I love kids and they love me," he said





aunt or many other various combinations. They came to support the patient or to have conditions they couldn't get checked on by the local doctor examined and remedied at the MEDCAP.

### Dental

Avni Kiki, 10, an Albanian student at the school didn't need Novocain or anesthesia during his tooth extraction in the improvised dental clinic set up in a classroom.

"I feel better now," Kiki said after his tooth was pulled out with a shiny silver pair of dental pliers by a Ukrainian Army dentist. "They pulled the teeth out. It started to become very old, got very black."

He experienced pain in the tooth for two weeks prior to the MEDCAP.

"It's better because I won't have the pain anymore," Kiki said.

Afterwards Kiki said he didn't feel any pain and he wasn't scared.

"They gave me toothpaste," Kiki said.

The dental clinic also gave out toothbrushes and dental floss.

Urim Devnian, 10, a 5<sup>th</sup> grader at the (K-9) school said the MEDCAP is good and he looked forward to fixing problems with his teeth.

### Preventive Maintenance

The buzzwords being bandied about the dental classroom/clinic were "preventative maintenance."

Most of the kids don't have regular access to a dentist so they depend on the MEDCAPs to give them an exam, cleanings and deal with problem teeth including many extractions, according to the MEDCAP dentists.

"The main thing is to try and stress oral hygiene, the preventative care, to the kids," Lt. Col. Marc Adelstein, dentist, 8<sup>th</sup> Medical Brigade, Staten Island, Fort Wadsworth, N.Y., TF Med Falcon, said. He is on a 3 month rotation to Kosovo.

"It's a good thing," Spc. Thomas Gammarano, dental hygienist, Task Force Alamo, said. "I'll show the kids how to brush and floss. (This way we) can avoid taking out teeth in the future."

He said his favorite part is working with the kids,

*A young Kosovo boy rests and enjoys his wares he received during Feb. 11-12 at the Keshice/Palivodanica task at the 101st of the Polish/Ukrainian Army school in Ditrice.*





teaching them about oral health.

The dental clinic was also a joint venture with sometimes four different languages being spoken at once. The dental room had an American, Ukrainian and Polish military dentist taking care of patients throughout the day.

"We are here to help people," Cpt. Jolanta Wojciechowska, dentist, Polish Army, said. "(I) can help people here take care of their teeth rather than have them pulled out. For kids (I) can pull the baby teeth (especially back teeth)."

But for the older patients, she could only give them advice on their teeth. There was a limit to what equipment was brought out and treatment available to the more mature customers.

According to Wojciechowska the dental techniques used by the different Army dentists were almost identical.

"I'm glad I came here," Flamur Dernjani, 7, said, with his swollen cheek puffed out by a lollipop.

The suckers seemed to be given out to most of the kids who had their teeth pulled throughout the day.

"I wasn't scared at all. They were nice to me," Dernjani said.

"He has been to a local dentist but not to a MEDCAP," Flamur's Aunt Sevjije Dernjani, said. "Sometimes he feels pain."

Dernjani said he didn't have any more pain after his tooth was pulled.

## Optical

"I saw (a) couple of kids had bad vision, one eye turning in causes far sightedness," Army Reservist Maj. Brian Montgomery, optometrist, TF MedFalcon, 18<sup>th</sup> Field Hospital, Fort Story, Va., said, as he examined an older gentleman for cataracts.

He said it was unfortunate because if those same kids were in the states they could be treated very easily with patches or glasses for this problem.

People were given eye exams, eye glasses and medications if needed.

Most of the glasses being given out were donated, but some new ones were purchased by Eagle Scout Troops and Lions Club members back in the states and those were also being handed out.

## Medical

In the physical exam room, Maj. Stuart Feldman, chief, Emergency Medicine & Trauma, TF MedFalcon, said, "Most common things for older folks is hypertension or general cardiovascular disease, chest pain, bronchitis and sore throat."

Feldman said he was enjoying his first MEDCAP experience and they treated people the best they could within the spartanly bare classroom.

**I feel better now. They pulled the teeth out. It started to become very old, got very black. /**

Mostly it was simple rudimentary exams of women, men and children, advice and maybe a prescription for some medicine from the pharmacy.

There isn't a lot we can do for them here without the proper facilities, Feldman said.

## Pharmacy

"It's very good, you get help here and you don't have to pay anything," Kiki's Grandmother, Fata Kiki, 53, said, as she waited in the classroom that housed the MEDCAP's pharmacy. She was standing in line to pick up medicine for high blood pressure after her grandson had his tooth pulled.

Both Kikis said they had been to the last MEDCAP here, two years ago, which was sponsored by the American forces.

Devnian said he also had gone to the MEDCAP two years ago.

## Planning/Organizing

The MEDCAP was organized and run by Polish Soldiers with help from Ukrainian, American and Lithuanian Soldiers for treatment, organization and security.

"We have an excellent relationship with the Polish (and) Ukraine Soldiers," The principal of the school and local town leader, Nesim Dermjnji, said. "You can tell by the children getting close to you. We are looking for a way to continue the

# Kllokot/Klokot project

Story by Pfc. Christina M. Vanyo,  
Layout & Design by Sgt. Matthew Chlosta

Engineers with Taskforce Falcon have taken on a civil-public works project within the Multi-National Brigade (East) sector recently.

An effort to clean up flooded sewage and prevent future drainage problems will be the focus of this project. To install new 'irrigation' piping-systems within local Kosovo neighborhoods is the engineers' vision.

Thirty minutes outside of Camp Bondsteel is Viti/Vitina, a low-land town that is subject to seasonal flooding. Within Viti/Vitina is the village Kllokot/Klokot, whose boundary is directly on a flood point.

1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Neal Litton, officer in charge, engineers' construction management, TF Falcon, said spring rains make it the worst season for flooding, but the summer heat increases the unpleasant stench and presence of bacteria.

"Children and animals have been contracting diseases from the dirty water," Litton said.



Photo by Christina M. Vanyo

**A trail of cement piping runs behind the Kllokot/Klokot school yard and residential homes in February. These pipes are a step in the first phase of fixing the flooding problems in the village.**

The villagers of Kllokot/Klokot have mixed feelings towards the project, he said. "Some (villagers) are upset that the plan is to divert the unhealthy water into the drainage pipe," Litton said. "Others are glad that the drainage pipe will cover any curiosity of children to play in the unhealthy water."

He said it is difficult for the villagers to identify what is needed to be done and why.

"I think for villagers," Litton said, "the water holds some value or meaning; and

unfortunately, it needs to be diverted to improve their lifestyle."

He explained that the 'Kllokot/



Photo Courtesy of Sgt. 1st Class Stephen Pointer, KFOR 6B

Center, Sgt. 1st Class Stephen Pointer, civil affairs, Kosovo Force 6B, applies an antibiotic to a young Kllokot/Klokot villager's face, who has an infection caused by the filthy flood waters.

Kllokot Drainage Project', named by Kosovo Force 6B, exists in three phases, with completion depending upon man-power and funding from non-governmental organizations.

"We're currently in phase one of the project, and I would like to have phase one completed by March," he said. "But this completion is all relative to my team and staff."

Phase completion is also related to funding availability. Litton said phase I and II should be financed by the same NGO.

"An NGO provided funding for phase one," he said. "The NGO is 'Progress

Through Peace, Inc.' This same

NGO has expressed interest in funding phase two. However, a different contractor will be needed to drain out the ditch."

existing

The engineers are still awaiting complete approval by 'Progress Through Peace, Inc.'

Litton said NGOs have criteria, which must be met when choosing to fund a project. Unfortunately, if the NGO denies funding, there aren't many other options.

"We're working on being approved for phase two funding, because this is a humanitarian assistance program, we rely on NGOs for the funds," he said.

Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class Stephen Pointer, civil affairs, KFOR-6B, is continuing to search for more sources of funding.

"Many of the NGOs are pulling out of Kosovo now," Pointer said. "How can we fund this?"

CleanUp

See CleanUp...Page 26



# 'The face of the Judge Advocate General'

Story and photo by Pfc. Christina Vanyo

Layout & Design by Sgt. Brandon Krahmer

Chief of Client Services and Foreign Claims Commissioner of MNB (E) KFOR 7, Maj. Ray Willoughby, provides Soldiers with legal advice and advocacy during their deployment.

"I work for the Soldiers, for whoever walks in the door," said Willoughby, who has served in the Judge Advocate General since entering the National Guard.

His role as chief of client services and provider of legal assistance dedicates his service to the individual Soldier. He said it is different than all other positions within the JAG.

"Whoever occupies legal assistance (client services) is there for the Soldiers," he said. "I find out what the Soldier wants and then give advice from a legal perspective."

Most Soldiers do not have personal lawyers, leaving Willoughby as their only source of advice and direction.

"Not too many soldiers have their own lawyers," he said. "We will initially talk to anybody who comes through the door needing assistance. That's why we're here. We're going to be on their side."

The legal assistance staff also abides by a strict policy of confidentiality.

"I'm ethically bound to not tell anything, to keep everything confidential" Willoughby said.

Other guidelines and regulations govern what issues legal assistance can handle. Usually the issues that leave Soldiers in need of assistance are family related, such as divorce, child support and custody, and apartment leases, he said.

Willoughby advises Soldiers to not put off legal matters, no matter how small or unimportant they may seem.

"I would encourage everybody to come see us as early as they can," he said, "rather than let potential problems fester."

Willoughby refers to problems from bank account balances, to repossessed automobiles, as examples of legal issues not dealt with in the beginning.

"These things don't often get better with time," he said. "Do not allow any issue to arise to the level of emergency."

"We've been very busy handling claims," said Willoughby.

Some cases, such as a will or power-of-attorney, can be handled on a walk-in basis. Most other issues take time and several visits to the office, he said. Legal assistance can be gradual, and in some situations, it can take days or weeks to find any answers.

However, now that Willoughby is in a full-time legal setting, he is better equipped to help a Soldier.

"On regular drill weekends there's little we can do. Now, I have much more time," he said.

In some situations where he can't provide help immediately, Willoughby said being a good listener to a Soldier in need is the next best thing, and very important in his position.

"To make the Soldier feel that you're their advocate, that you're not working for the command but for them," he said.

"Very few people walk in my office with smiles on their face. When they leave, I hope to have provided them with as much service as we're capacitated to supply."

While here in Kosovo, Willoughby plans to help the Soldiers as much as he can.

"We've had a lot of Soldiers in here, and sometimes it's a juggling

**"Very few people walk in my office with smiles on their face. When they leave, I hope to have provided them with as much service as we're capacitated to supply."**  
- Maj. Ray Willoughby



match to provide them with as much as they need, with as little time and or resources as we may have."

Another challenge Willoughby faces is having to familiarize himself with laws and guidelines other than those in Texas, in order to be of full assistance to Soldiers here.

"In Texas, we deal mostly with Texas law," he said. "Here, we deal with law regarding nearly 20 different states, because that's where our Soldiers have come from to serve."

"Knowing the laws can be tricky and we don't want to poorly represent or neglect any differences among other states," he continued. "We try to build a network of attorneys in these states. We can all assist each other in legal matters."

Back home in Texas, Willoughby works as an attorney in the state's 'Land, Gas and Energy' department. He said that although the tasks are completely different, he has been able to apply all of the legal experience he's gained from his work as a civilian.

Willoughby said he is scheduled to open an income-tax center for the Soldiers here on post within the upcoming weeks.

"This is something regular on active-duty Army posts, but varies on deployments," he said.

"There is a smaller potential pool of legal volunteers, but we're not going to let the numbers affect the product."

Maj. Edwin Matias, the deputy chief judge advocate, referred to Willoughby as 'the face of JAG'. The majority of the legal staff, including Lt. Col. Oscar Sommers, the command judge advocate who acts as the attorney to Commanding General, Brig. Gen. Darren Ownens, works for the KFOR-7 command staff, said Matias.

"I'm at the disposal of the command but Maj. Willoughby is our ambassador to the average Soldier," he said.

"He is the face of JAG, a great asset. He does great work for the Soldiers and it wins kudos for us, because it makes us lawyers look good."

# Airmen not grounded by **mudslide**

## *Data models help them depict water saturation levels*

Story by Airforce Lt. Col. William Darling  
Layout & Design by Sgt. Matthew Chlosta

Along the southern border of Kosovo lies the quiet little town of Kacanik/Kacanik.

Separated by a valley, the Dinaric Alps and the Transylvanian Alps rise on either side of the Kacanik River and also the main north-south road from the city of Skopje/Shkup, in the Former Yugoslavia Republic of Macedonia, into Kosovo.

The road, Route Hawk, a North Atlantic Treaty Organization named military

route is the primary thoroughfare for commercial traffic between Kosovo and the FYROM.

In early January, and without warning, a portion of the mountainside gave way, sending an estimated 100,000 tons of rock and mud crashing down onto the road and river below. All travel along the route came to an immediate standstill. Engineers from Task Force Falcon, Multi-National Brigade (East) were dispatched from Camp Bondsteel to assess the damage and make a plan to open the road, and stabilize the mountainside.

Another concern was the possible flooding of the valley, should the river become blocked.

As fast as the engineers could clear the debris, more of the mountainside continued to send boulders the size of trucks crashing down. With temperatures near the zero mark and the mountains shrouded in snow, the engineers were concerned that sliding would increase when the snow began to melt and spring rains saturated the ground.

Their need to understand the impact from melting snow and future rainfall prompted them to ask the Air Force's deployed weather team the 208<sup>th</sup> Combat Weather Flight, 133<sup>rd</sup> Airlift Wing, Minnesota Air National Guard for assistance.

They coordinated with the 21<sup>st</sup> Operational Weather Squadron at Sembach, Germany, to create products that translate data into models that depict water saturation



Photo by Airforce Lt. Col. Bill Darling

*Senior Airman Justin Hallen, 208th Combat Weather Flight, Task Force Falcon, 133rd Airlift Wing, Minnesota Air National Guard measures mud-levels in slide debris in Kacanik/Kacanik Valley.*

levels in the ground.

The team made trips to the hazardous mountain side where they measured snow pack and assessed ground water saturation levels. Using many of the 21st OWS's forecasting products and tools, they created likely scenarios of future weather conditions.

Provided this information, the engineers were able to formulate a plan to safely remove the debris and stabilize the mountainside.

TF Falcon's Air Force Combat Weather Team members are: Lt. Col. Bill Darling, Master Sgt. Nathan Roen, Staff Sgt. Allen Thill, Senior Airman Jon Aerts, Senior Airman Matthew Bowers and Senior Airman Justin Hallen. This is Thill's second tour in Kosovo, along with Roen.

*Editor's Note: Rockslide road closure update—"The road reopened on Mar. 6 as a single lane for civilian traffic," Maj. Richard Jordan, engineer, Task Force Falcon, said. "There will be a Kosovo Police Service officer on each end of the one lane road to direct alternating traffic. Also, the road's hours for use will be subject to road conditions and construction requirements." At the time the "Guardian" went to print Kosovo Force Command had still*



Photos by Sgt. Matthew Chlosta

*Above & Below work by a local Kosovo company's cranes and dump trucks continued on Feb. 18. A lot of work was done shoring up the HESCO barriers and cement walls to thwart future landslides.*





# Top talent takes Bondsteel

Photos, Layout & Design by  
Sgt. Brandon Krahmer

*Soldiers from Camp Bondsteel gathered to compete in a talent competition at the South Town Gym Feb. 26. Acts ranged from gospel choir performances to covers of popular songs to a couple of original songs written by a KFOR Soldier. There was a tie for first place between a two-Soldier guitar instrumental performance and some of the Gospel singers. Winners were awarded gift certificates to the post exchange.*

Right: Spc. Krystal Grigsby, Task Force Falcon, works the mic during a solo performance in the talent competition held at the South Town Gym on Camp Bondsteel Feb. 26. Below: Col. Robert Henry, TF MedFalcon, plays one of several songs he covered during "The Yin-Yang Twins" performance.



Above: Spc. Eric Sage sings a cover of "I'm much too young to be this damn old" during the evening's competition. Sage is a member of Company B, Task Force Alamo. Left: Pvt. Samuel Jackson, TF Falcon, the competition's Master of Ceremonies, jokes about the difficulties of the 2.5-mile walk, an alternate event in the Army Physical Fitness Test.

What does the word “uniform” really mean? I’d look it up, but there’s not a dictionary within arm’s reach, so let’s just go with a general understanding of what the word means as far as the Army is concerned.

Uniform means you are wearing the same set of clothes that everyone else is wearing. Given the fact that there are many different “uniforms” for different sets of military occupational specialties, you should really just be wearing what everyone else in your respective MOS, or in your unit, is wearing.

Pilots wear flight suits, cooks wear cook whites, tankers and Bradley crewmembers wear Nomex, etc...

If you’re waiting for my point...you’ll have to wait more.

There are certain items and actions that are prohibited while wearing your prescribed uniform.

We all know this.

You can find every single thing you’d need to know about your military uniform in a handy-dandy little pamphlet called Army Regulation 670-1. Just go with ‘AR 670-1’ if you want to.

If you are breaking any one of the plethora of guidelines set forth in this all-defining-of-uniformity Army Regulation, AR 670-1, the Army isn’t on your side. And it’s incumbent upon the Army to correct your deficient uniform.

What gets my goat is the fact that there’s a group within the Army who really has the world against them when it comes to making on-the-spot corrections, OUR SOLDIERS....OUR PV1s, PV2s, PFCs and SPCs...

They really do get the short end of the stick when it comes to correcting deficiencies.

So here’s my manifesto...my thoughts...a mission statement of sorts...

Officers and NCOs of KFOR-7....

Please read and understand AR 670-1 and local uniform policies. Know it...live by it. It will keep you in uniform and it will never lend a sense of hypocrisy to our (non-commissioned AND commissioned) ranks.

Privates will RARELY correct us. We are arrogant and prideful. We despise being corrected. But let’s not forget where we came from.

We used to be privates who hated the E-5 who blew off the regulation prohibiting key-chains being clipped to our belt buckles (unless as part of an authorized exception....i.e. Charge of Quarters or the unit armorer).

We used to be the junior lieutenant whose commanding officer wore his physical fitness uniform with socks that didn’t extend above his ankles and a tan T-shirt underneath his PT jacket...

As junior Soldiers we would say, ‘we know what the regulation is, but those who outrank us will give us a ration of crap if we try to correct them, so we’ll just complain about it to our buddies.’

Let’s stop the cycle. Look at yourself in the mirror in the morning. Ask yourself, “Could I make an on-the-spot correction knowing that I, myself, am not in violation of AR 670-1 or any local policies?”

And ask yourself, “If a lower-ranking Soldier corrects me, will I give him grief about his correction?”  
NCOs...Officers...It’s simple.

Do what the regulations say. Wear your uniform properly. And above all else, if a junior Soldier brings a deficiency of yours to your attention, beat feet and correct it as soon as possible.

~Sgt. Brandon Krahmer~

## Safety Office Monthly Messages

### MARCH SAFETY MESSAGE

*With the coming of spring, weather is changing, and with it new risks are present. These are some of the risks associated with the spring thaw.*

**Physical Training:** *Warmer weather is always welcome for outdoors activities. Whether it is running on the roads or participating in organized sports, we’ll be doing our PT outside. Ensure to conduct stretching exercises prior to and after doing any physical activity. If you are going to run/ride your bike on the roads, make sure you wear a high visibility vest, helmet and proper equipment for bike riding.*

**Soldier/Individual safety:** *While conducting dismounted patrols, Soldiers will encounter swollen creeks and waterways. Use your issue personal protective equipment, like rubber boots, ensure you carry extra dry socks, a towel and foot powder as part of your basic load. As situation allows, change your socks frequently and keep your feet dry to avoid trench foot and other types of ailments.*

**Roll-over drills:** *Mud is more treacherous than ice, while conducting mounted patrols in the rural areas; you’ll encounter narrow goat trails with very, soft shoulders that won’t support the weight of our Hummvees. Ensure you and your crew members have practiced roll-over drills, and strictly enforce load plans.*

*Your safety is more important than taking short cuts. Leaders keep your Soldiers safe; strictly enforce standards. Safety, as a part of force protection, plays an important role in the commander’s responsibility for mission accomplishment. We need to continue to stress safety in everything we do.*



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**25**

# KICKING IT AT CAMP MONTEITH SOLDIERS LEARN THE ART OF

**Right, 3rd Degree black belt Sgt. 1st Class Greg Stephens, maintenance LNO, Headquarters Platoon, Company D, Task Force Houston puts his 27 years of experience as an assistant Tae Kwon Do instructor to work.**

**Stephens and primary instructor Cpl. Tim Scott, Co. D, TF Houston (not shown) insist that taking things slowly and learning proper form will prevent injuries during training exercises such as sparring or prevent injuries that may be sustained in a physical altercation.**



Photos, layout & design by Spc. J. Tashun Joycé

## Tae Kwon Do



**Above, Stephens gets assistance demonstrating how to throw a proper punch from one of his students Spc. Joshua "Doc" White, Co. D, TF**

**Correct form is an important aspect of Tae Kwon Do, a Korean martial art that means, "the art of hands and feet," according to Stephens.**

### Clean Up from...Page 20

'what do we need?' are the biggest questions. We have to do something for these people."

One initiative for progress is money being put into the local community, he said. For example, the concrete-piping materials used in the project were bought from an Albanian supplier.

"This project takes place in a primarily Serbian neighborhood," Pointer said. "It gives these two groups of people (Albanian and Serbian) a way to work together and build good relationships."

Surprisingly in this scenario, the physical environment poses the threat, not ethnic tension. Because Vitina/Viti is low-lying, when the area floods, raw sewage runs through shallow ditches within these neighborhoods, Pointer said.

What began as a project to give toys to local school children, has turned into something larger, he said.

"We went to the little school in Klokot/Klokkot to pass out toys," he said. "I saw a little girl at the school with an infection. (She had) red, open sores on her face, caused by going to school in a filthy environment."

When Pointer looked into the cause of the problem, he found a drainage-ditch flooded with sewage right in the school yard, he said.

"They (children) play in the filth, which breeds mosquitoes and bacteria," he said. "It's a problem."



**The new cement pipes behind the Klokot/Klokkot schoolyard and residential homes are designed to help the flood water drain more efficiently and keep it from breeding bacteria.**

Read the Guardian online at [www.tffalcon.hqusareur.army.mil](http://www.tffalcon.hqusareur.army.mil)



# Soldiers conduct Bradley range

## Houston boys roll out the big toys

Story, photo, layout by Spc. J. Tashun Joycé, with additional layout & design by Sgt. Matthew Chlosta

Task Force Houston Soldiers became reacquainted with their old friend; the **Bradley** infantry fighting vehicle, during a three-day **Bradley** range exercise, Feb. 7-9.

The **Bradley** comes from a family of tracked military vehicles. With a look similar to a tank, it is the close sibling of the battle tested M-1 Abrams.

However, after spending the day with this motivated bunch, one would forever know to never refer to the **Bradley** as a tank.

"The **Bradley** is an infantry fighting vehicle that transports troops," Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class Adam Gaona, **Bradley** commander, "Demon" 1-4, 1st Platoon, Company D, TF Houston, said. "The tank fires missiles. The **Bradley** provides support for tanks."

"The **Bradley** is a troop carrying tool that the infantry uses to get from point A to point B," Austin native 2nd Lt. John Melendez, **Bradley** commander, Demon 1-11, TF Houston, said. "It is equipped with an advanced weapons system, which is used in support of our missions."

There are only a few missions in their area of operation that would require the **Bradley** to employ its full combat capabilities. So, **Bradley** ranges like Falcon 7, located just outside of Ramjan/Donje Ramnjane, were conducted to get these Soldiers back in the saddle.

Crew coordination and practice exercises play a big role ensuring that **Bradley** crew members are proficient at their duties and prepared for any mission, Gaona said.

"We are here to sustain our techniques," said Melendez. "You forget a lot when you're not doing it. Today we are getting our new crew accustomed to using them."

The new crew that Melendez was referring to assembled for the first time at the start of their mobilization at Fort Hood, Texas. They became the

only **Bradley** platoon to qualify table 12 in the state of Texas in 12 years.

Table 12 qualification means that the entire platoon fired and qualified simultaneously, Gaona said.

A normal **Bradley** range, commonly called a 'gunnery', combines two weeks of extensive **Bradley** training, Gaona said, a Mesquite native, who served in the Gulf War as a dismounted infantryman and currently has a brother deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

During this shorter version of the gunnery only one day of firing took place, which included both daytime and nighttime firing.

Having to perform their duties under such cold conditions, additional preventive maintenance measures were taken to ensure

that vehicles would not be affected by the below freezing temperatures.

The easiest way to prevent damage caused by cold weather is to double tarp the vehicles when they are not in use, Gaona said.

During their brief moments of down time Soldiers shielded themselves

from the elements by taking refuge in one of the two tents they occupied during the exercise.

Soldiers were in such high spirits despite the polar-like weather conditions that they allowed a stray dog into one of the tents, prior to the range going hot, to relax and warm up under one of the empty cots.

Shortly afterward, the loud noises that erupted as the first **Bradley** crew engaged the snow and ice covered targets in the distance, frightened the dog. He decided to exit in search of a place a little quieter.

"The true power of the **Bradley** is found within the men of the **Bradley**," Melendez said. "Soldiers training hard and working together is what makes the **Bradley** a benefit to the Army."

‘The true power of the **Bradley** is found within the men of the **Bradley**,’ Melendez said.

cooperation here.”

“Their MEDCAPs are the best. They are organized,” Lt. Col. Jose Perez, civil military operations, Task Force Falcon, said.

“We want to help them, with Ukranian,



*Left, Avni Kiki, 10, a Kosovo-Albanian student and his Grandmother, Fata Kiki, 53, listen to the dentist's aftercare instructions after having his tooth pulled during the TF POL/UKR Battalion MEDCAP Feb. 18 in the village of Paldenice/Palivodenica.*

Polish and American Soldiers,” Cpt. Arkadiusz Gozdur, deputy chief, S-5, Polish Army, said. “We organize this MEDCAP once a month. This is the Polish part. (The) next MEDCAP will be in (Shterpce)Strpce in March.”

Gozdur explained the preparation for the MEDCAP.

“We talked to the director of the school, talked to two doctors from Kacanik/Kacanik Health Center,” he said.

“Cooperation is good,” Gozdur added. “I think this MEDCAP will be a big success. The weather is good.”

There was sunshine all day during the MEDCAP with unseasonably warm temperatures.

“This is our second MEDCAP with them (POL/UKR BAT.),” Maj. Bill Roland, officer in charge, MEDCAPs, TF Med Falcon, said. “(They are) good people, I really enjoy working with them. Captain Gozdur is a good guy. Between them and (Task Force) Alamo, they are the most organized. (The) Frago tells us what is needed, requested. If we can, we try to bring extra people. We trained for these for three months. I’m just glad we’re doing them.”

### Security

Dermnjni, said they have regular daily patrols and meetings every 2-4 weeks with the TF POL/UKR BAT.

Devnian said he likes the patrols being around.

The Polish Soldiers pulled security with a platoon of Lithuanian Soldiers in and around the school for the entire day. They were smiling, laughing and playing with the kids almost the entire time.

### Locals also help out

The local branch of the Kosovo Protection Corps, which has a small compound located on the road to the school, also provided a doctor to screen patients’ registration sheets and help with interpreting between the predominantly Albanian population and MEDCAP personnel.

After he looked over the questionnaires, the doctor would direct patients to one of four stations inside the school, with some patrons making stops in different sections depending on their ailments.

### Roadblock...no problem...off road detour

Cpt. Arkadiusz Gozdur, deputy chief, S-5, Polish Army, said, “The only problem was the road.”

The POL/UKR BAT and Task Force MedFalcon got a late start because of the rockslide road blockage south of Kacanik/Kacanik.

“The road is blocked to Kacanik,” Dermnjni said.

The rockslide detour was also closed because the warm weather had melted a lot of snow making the overflowing creek impassable.

So the entire convoy drove up Route Lion around Big Duke and took a left at the border of the FYROM. They popped out of the muddy, narrow and winding mountainous roads below the mudslide, near the village.

The MEDCAP ended up starting an hour late at 11 a.m, but that didn’t dampen the participants’ enthusiasm one bit.

As the Soldiers from TF POL/UKR BAT set up their gear, with an assist from TF MedFalcon, the word quickly spread around the neighborhood. The kids flocked to the school for treats, handouts and freebies.

### Why Paldenice/Palivodenica?

Dermnjni has been principal at the school for the past 7 years, since the end of the war.

He said, “It’s a good cooperation with the Polish. There are no words to explain. We have a lot of interest. The population here needs something like this. We have a lack (of) medics, doctors. A population of 10,000 has only one doctor.”

According to Cpt. Ronald Zajac, officer in charge, S-5, Polish Army, “This village (doesn’t) have any ambulance -- people don’t have much medical help. (The local) physician can’t treat all the villagers.”

“We’ve been having meetings with civil



affairs doctors from (when) NATO entered the country after the war,” Dermnjeni said. “We made this request a long time ago. The Polish KFOR stopped by two weeks ago. In this meeting I mentioned that the area needs (a) doctor. This MEDCAP is dealing with people not just from this



*Left, Ukrainian Army Doctor Cpt. Dmytro Los, examines sores on a Kosovar boy's foot as his father comforts him during the TF POL/UKR Battalion MEDCAP on Feb. 18.*

village but the surrounding villages. As you see there are a lot of people in need of this; twenty-three hundred (people) in the village, three-hundred students in the school. Every family has four or five kids. We lack a clinic here. (There is) a lack of funding (from the ministry) of health. (The) closest (health clinic) is by the border of Macedonia.”

But, the hours of the clinic there are 8 a.m. - 3 p.m., when most people here are at work, he said.

Gozdur estimated that there were more than 150 people seen during the MEDCAP.

### **Locals appreciate the help**

There were impromptu waiting areas spilling out into the hallways and the school's

main lobby for most of the day.

A lot of the patients were relaxed and happy. But that might have been because there were no TVs with talking heads blaring at them or magazines to read like in American waiting rooms.

“The local people need medical support,” Gozdur said.

“There was an announcement in the window of the main store in the village,” Sevjije Dernjani said. “They're good (the MEDCAPs). We really appreciate this and you're trying to help.”

Sami Curri, 8, a 3<sup>rd</sup> grader at the school, who received a KFOR 7 coloring book, said, “I like it very much. I came here to hang out.”

### **One more treat**

As the MEDCAP was winding down around 4 p.m., a small scrum of kids surrounded Polish Army Sgt. Edward Roguz. He passed out cookies, bottles of water and fresh fruit to the swirling, mosh pit of kids and outstretched hands.

Roguz looked like a Polish Army Santa Claus, as he was surrounded by the crushing throng of excited children. But, he always had a sideways smile on his face and upbeat energy in his eyes as he handed out the goodies.

“It was a very special feeling and this is not the first time,” he said. “Whenever we have things to distribute, we give them out. I love kids and they love me, so I'm never afraid of them.”

*Editor's note: The school has only one computer and they need balls for the sport fields. The kids at the MEDCAP were playing soccer with a single, beat up, dirty yellow, partially deflated soccer ball. To make donations contact Lt. Col. Jose Perez, civil military operations, Task Force Falcon, by e-mail at [jose.perez@bondsteel2.areur.army.mil](mailto:jose.perez@bondsteel2.areur.army.mil) or Cpt. Arkadiusz Gozdur, deputy chief, S-5, Polish Army by e-mail at [arek.gozdur@us.army.mil](mailto:arek.gozdur@us.army.mil).*

**See more MEDCAP Madness photos.....P.31**

*Below and right, Army Reservist Maj. Brian Montgomery, optometrist, Task Force MedFalcon, 18th Field Hospital, Fort Story, Va., examines two older gentleman for cataracts and eye disease on Feb. 18.*



*People were given eye exams, eye glasses and medications if needed at the TF POL/UKR Battalion MEDCAP in the village of Paldenice/Palivodenica.*

Singleton had made it clear before leaving, that if any early signs of cold weather injuries were seen, those Soldiers were to be evacuated back to Bondsteel, he said.

Two freezing days passed before Alpha Company found what they were waiting for.

During the wait, Murray was tipped off by a local that smugglers in the area used tractors to transport their goods. "Sure enough," Murray said, "not much later did we see a tractor pull into view and start moving down the route."

When we got down to the road and stopped them, we asked them what they were carrying, Murray said. They said, "food for animals."

"When we asked them if we could check the trailer you could tell right away they were getting nervous," Murray said.

They said it was OK, but they looked down. Plus, they were acting pretty nervous, so you could just tell something was up, he added.

Upon inspecting the trailer the tractor had been pulling, Murray and Singleton discovered the coffee and candles.

We called up the Kosovo Police Service to find out what was going on with this, and when we did, they pretty much jumped on it, Murray said.

It turns out that coffee is heavily taxed here, and is pretty valuable.

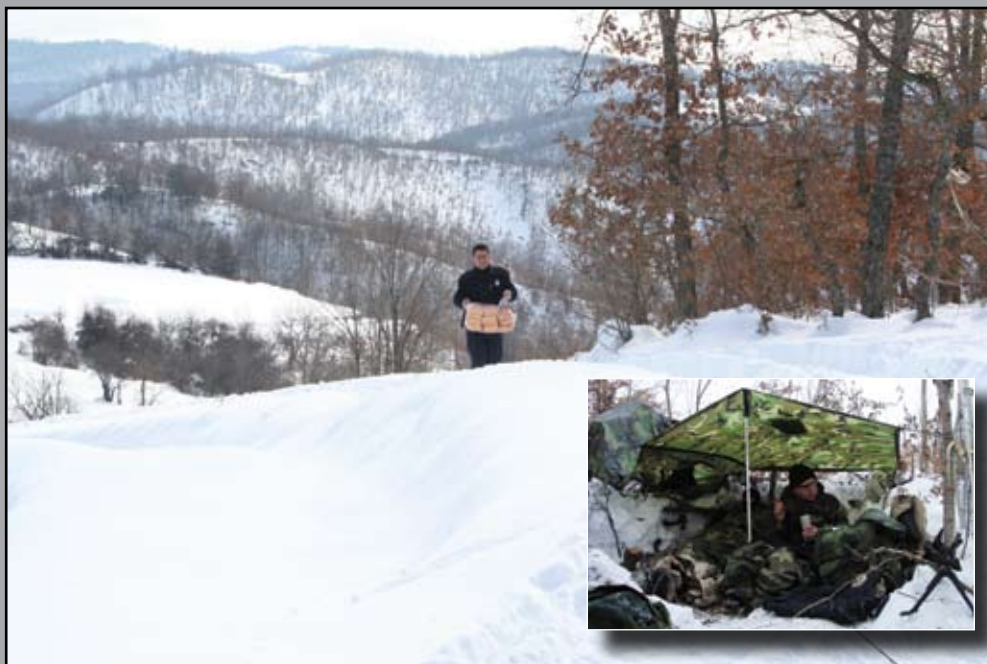
The guys from KPS told us that the street value for the coffee was probably over 300,000 euro, Murray said.

Eventually the smugglers and contra-band were taken into custody by local KPS authorities, and the Soldiers of Co. A, with their mission complete, returned to CBS around 7 a.m. on Feb. 16.

"For the Kosovo Force, I think this demonstrates our effectiveness to complete this kind of mission," Singleton said.

"The Battalion Commander and Operations Officer had to assess the risks of it, and without their confidence in our ability to complete the mission we would not have been able to," he said.

"For Alpha Company it's a bigger thing," Singleton said. "I didn't hear one Soldier complain. They may complain about it now," he said laughing a bit, "but not once during the mission. It's an amazing example of the spirit of our Soldiers."



*A Kosovo Police Service Officer carries some of the illegal coffee up a snow covered hill on Feb. 15. Inset, Spc. Kevin Westlund, 2nd Plt. Co. A, TF Alamo, enjoys the small comfort of an MRE while camped out at the 2nd Plt. base during Operation Yellow Rose.*



*Above, Sgt. Curtis Murrery, TF Alamo, observes the smuggling route through a pair of binoculars despite the extreme cold weather conditions.*

*Below, Kosovo Police Service Officer carries some of the illegal coffee up a snow covered hill on Feb. 15.*





more

more MEDCAP Madness photos from ----P 29



Clockwise from top left, A TMK doctor gives a diagnosis. Ukrainian Army Doctor Cpt. Dmytro Los & Polish Army Interpreter Fehmi Meliqr listen to a woman's medical condition. Patients wait in the school lobby. Children from the school squeeze to the front of the line. A male student enjoys a lollipop. Polish Army Sgt. Edward Roguz passes out cookies to the kids. Maj. Bill Roland, OIC, MEDCAP gives candy to young patients. Lithuanian Army Sgt. Aleksej Mikluish laughs at a joke from Lithuanian Sgt. Aleksejus Aleksejevas all during the TF POL/UKR Battalion MEDCAP on Feb. 18



madness

# SAV-T

Story & Photo by Spc. Eugene Dubielak,  
HHC, Task Force Houston  
Layout & Design by Sgt. Matthew Chlosta

Recently, on a typically gray and cold February morning at Camp Monteith, Soldiers with 1<sup>st</sup> Squad, 3<sup>rd</sup> Platoon, Company B, Task Force Houston were indoors utilizing the Small Arms Virtual Trainer.

The SAV-T is a weapons and scenario simulator which offers soldiers an opportunity to rehearse and sharpen combat skills with instant feedback and a built in margin for error. With the ability to simulate small arms, crew served weapons and indirect fire the SAV-T offers a wide-range of options to its users.

One simulator is housed inside a climate controlled building on Camp Monteith and another is in use at Camp Bondsteel. The SAV-Ts, which resemble an oversized video game, have been in use in the Balkans since

2000. Soldiers stood on a platform overlooking a large screen displaying different combat related scenarios. They were provided with weapons that registered both hits and misses on the screen. Sgt. Carlos Zuniga Jr., 1<sup>st</sup> Sqd., 3<sup>rd</sup> Plt., Co. B, TF Houston, said, that the simulator helps "to prepare for various scenarios including checkpoints, crowd gatherings, riots and the rules of engagement."

As the scenarios unfold the team leaders direct their subordinates through what they believe to be the proper course of action.

Staff Sgt. Stacy Franklin, 3<sup>rd</sup> Plt., Co. B, TF Houston provided stress in the form of full body armor and push-ups done between scenarios. Quick thinking, judgment calls, and team work were tested.

"I was real impressed with them. With time, instincts and intuition will develop. It also helps develop team leaders and sharpens focus," Franklin said.

"When you relax is when team members get hurt" Zuniga said.



Sgt. Carlos Zuniga Jr., 1st Squad, 3rd Platoon, Company B, Task Force Houston reacts to the threat on screen during SAV-T training at Camp Monteith.



# *Guardian*

Volume 13, Issue 2    Produced for Personnel of KFOR Multi-National Brigade (East)    [www.tffalcon.hqusa.army.mil](http://www.tffalcon.hqusa.army.mil)    March 2006