

October 2008 Vol. 16, Issue 3

GUARDIAN EAST

Warrior Leaders:

Future Leaders
train at Bondsteel

Brits & Bradleys:

U.S./UK Joint
Live-Fire Training

Operation: Albert

Frequency
HOP:
POLUKR/U.S.
work on comms

Schutzenschnur:

Soldiers aim for gold badge



“Character above all”

Character is one of the most quoted and least understood attributes of leadership. It's much like the word “quality” in that most people know it when they see it – but really can't define its meaning. The average person knows when “quality” is spelled with a Capital “K” and can easily recognize a facade when they see one. Yet, true character should always be less about what others think and more about what we know is right.

BE CONSISTENT.

COL Randy Alewel, owner of Alewel's Country Meats says that consistency is the cornerstone of his business. “My customers know that I will always try to provide a consistent, high-quality product. The times that I don't – I make it right.” You see, what makes Alewel's successful is not simply attempting to please the customer. It's knowing the meat business and taking pride in turning out the best products possible. The customers are attracted to the products but they remain fiercely loyal because of the character of the owner.

UNDERSTAND YOUR MORAL COMPASS, AND STICK TO IT.

How many of us have encountered situations where we simply don't fit? How many of us have found ourselves facing the hard right versus the easy wrong? On 26



BG Larry D. Kay

than understanding the lines you are unwilling to cross; work to understand those lines across which you are willing to lead. Great leaders and especially leaders of character are catalysts

“More important than understanding the lines you are unwilling to cross; work to understand those lines across which you are willing to lead.”

July 1948, President Harry S. Truman signed Executive Order 9981, eliminating military segregation and racial discrimination in federal employment. It was a very bold and lonely move. His political advisors strongly cautioned him against it, saying that he would lose the election in November. “Well, if I lose in November, I will have lost for a good cause,” he is quoted as saying. Taking the hard right versus the easy wrong: it's one of the reasons he won! Truman always knew what he stood for and was consistently willing to give it to those who needed to hear it – straight up and without any fancy words.

KEEP LEARNING.

It's important to understand yourself. What do you believe? What do you know? Where do you stand? Character descriptors such as courage, fortitude, honesty, integrity and loyalty – do they apply to you? More important

for synergy – they bring out the best in all of us!

We are masters of planning, purveyors of prioritization and magicians of execution. Yet all that we have learned in our formal and informal education means nothing unless it is rooted in something greater and very basic. When the times are tough – how do we decide? Which way do we turn? What matters? That's why we need to always put character first. Character above all – It's a good place to start.

“Get it Done!”

A handwritten signature of Larry D. Kay in black ink.

Larry D. Kay
Brigadier General, USA
Commanding

GUARDIANS OF HONOR™



CSM Phillip M. Lederle

Beginning with our training at Camp Atterbury, the Commanding General and I started talking about establishing an Honor Guard for Multinational Task Force East (MNTF (E)). It came to fruition with the Transfer of Authority (TOA) on 10 July 2008 and has grown to include all the nations of MNTF(E). The primary responsibility of an honor guard is to provide funeral honors for fallen comrades. While we are prepared for such an unfortunate event, I pray daily that we will never have to utilize the honor guard in this manner. However, we have expanded the use of our honor

guard to include a ceremonial guard. While the same standards and dedication apply, the ceremonial guard serves as the “Guardians of the Colors”. They present a nation’s colors for various ceremonies and official command functions, both on and off base. Additionally, honor guards serve as ambassadors to the public, presenting a positive image of their service. The motto of the MNTF(E) Honor Guard is one of Honor:

*“I am a Guardian of Honor,
I am a humble practitioner of
tradition,
It is not about me,
It is about those, whom I represent,
I will execute each mission according
to the Honor Guard motto,
Demanding: Posture, Performance,
and Perfection,
Guardians of Honor.”*

What does it take to be a member of the Honor Guard? Our honor guard, or ceremonial guard, is composed of volunteers who are carefully screened for their ability, personal integrity and physical dexterity. Only those persons who are highly motivated and show aptitude for ceremonial duty are considered. The Soldiers that have volunteered for our Honor Guard / Ceremonial Guard, have taken part in

over two months of training, averaging over 15 hours a week, all of which was on their own time. Many of the Soldiers were actively engaged in missions and educational endeavors, both personal and professional; however, they continued to push themselves. Our Honor Guard / Ceremonial Guard Soldiers have immersed themselves with sincerity to uphold the traditions of our Army and the armies of our Task Force.

The next time you are invited to or are part of a ceremony for which the Honor Guard / Ceremonial Guard is utilized, afterwards, shake the Soldiers’ hands and thank them for their service. The honor they have shown to our countries, our Soldiers and our armies is immeasurable. Remember that they will never negotiate their standards and they always hold fast to their motto and therefore are truly **“Guardians of Honor.”**

“Get it Done”

CSM Phillip M. Lederle
MNTF(E), KFOR 10
Command Sergeant Major

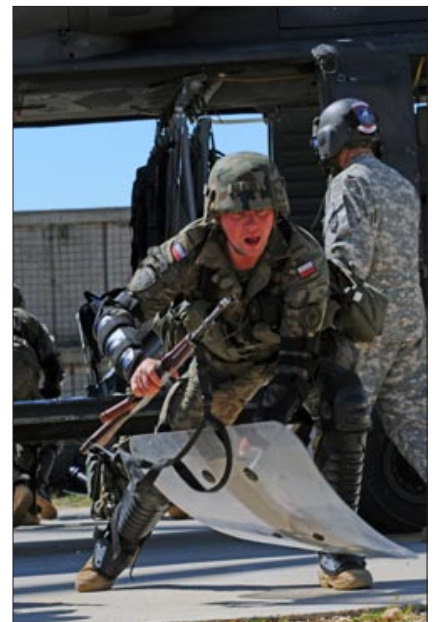


ON THE COVER: *BRITS AND BRADLEYS*

British soldiers from the U.K.'s 3rd Rifles unit train alongside American Soldiers from Co. C, Task Force Saber. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Craig Collins)

ON THE BACK: *QUICK REACTION*

A POLUKR Battalion soldier from Hawk Company, Kosovo Force, Multi-National Task Force East participates in hot off-load training from a UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter during quick reaction force training at Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Craig Collins)



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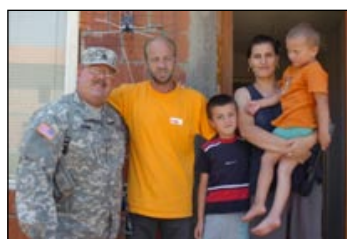
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Soldiers take aim at Schutzenschnur badge

BY SGT. TY STAFFORD
PHOTOS BY SGT ANTHONIE SEYMOUR

More than 100 U.S. Soldiers from Multi-National Task Force (East) took aim at the Schutzenschnur weapons proficiency badge during a two-day event sponsored by the German Army at Range 4 near Camp Bondsteel.

The Schutzenschnur badge involves a multi-weapon qualification event and depending on qualification scores, the badge is awarded with either a bronze, silver, or gold device.

The device, along with a cord is authorized for wear by U.S. enlisted Soldiers on their class-A uniforms.

"The main goal is to reach a state of camaraderie and chemistry. Both nations can take part in one nice event, and get an impression of each one's tasks to see how each of the nations handles the mission. This gets our two nations together," said Maj. Christian Ruhnau, deputy commander for the Senior National Representative at Kosovo Force headquarters at Film City in Prishtina/Pristina.

Ruhnau also added that this was a way to show other nations that they have a special relationship with each other – Germany and America.

DAY ONE

Before qualification began, the Soldiers spent the morning on familiarization with the German firearms which included the G36 rifle, P8 handgun and M3 machine gun.

The P8 is a 9x19mm parabellum pistol also produced by Heckler and Koch. The P8 has a 15-round magazine capacity similar to the standard issue M9 Beretta carried by U.S. Soldiers.

During the course of fire with the P8 the U.S. Soldiers, and a few multi-national guests,

■ German soldiers qualify with U.S. M9's during joint range qualifications at range 4.

fired five shots from the standing position at 25 meters (see qualification standards sidebar).

"The pistol is just like ours. There's nothing complicated about it; it is lighter though, and I liked the decocker on it," said Spc. Fermin Lagunas, a Task Force Falcon Soldier who qualified gold.

The G36 is a German weapon built by Heckler and Koch and is a 5.56 mm assault rifle and was accepted into service with the German Armed Forces in 1997. The rifle replaced the 7.62 mm G3 automatic rifle. The G36 rifle is built with an internal red dot scope and a magnification scope.

"I liked the G36 better than the M-4," said Spc. Kyle Weber, a member of the Joint Visitor Bureau team who qualified silver.

■ Brig. Gen. David Berger, the chief of staff for the commander of Kosovo Forces gets a chance to fire the German G36 rifle during joint U.S./German weapons training at range 4.



"I liked the built in red dot and the optical scope. It's much more user friendly than the M-4. It was a really good rifle and I enjoyed firing it and their pistol."

The Soldiers received instructions on how to use the scopes and on what targets each scope is used. Using the optical scope, the Soldiers had to engage targets at 200, 150 and 100 meters before switching to the red dot scope to engage 50 meter targets. All targets were standard M-4/M-16 paper qualification targets.

During all familiarization training, the German soldiers stressed the importance of weapons awareness and safety.

"I think the German soldiers were really informative and the hands on while training was really good," said Sgt. Chris Sigmon, with Task Force Med Falcon.

"The German's were also really open to answer any questions we had. It was well organized and overall I thought it was a great experience."

Day Two

On day two of the event, the German soldiers were able to fire three U.S. weapons for qualification badges.

The soldiers fired the M9 pistol; the M-4 and M249 Squad Automatic Weapon on various targets (see qualification standards sidebar).

"We felt this was a fair evaluation in regard to the standards that the Germans set for us on their weapons. In addition to the actual live fire, they had to demonstrate safe handling procedures, loading, unloading and the different shooting positions for qualification," said Sgt. 1st Class Michael Tanner, who acted as a range safety officer for Day 2.

"It is very easy to fire. The weapons are not so different," said OR-7 André Strehlow.

"If you've ever fired some kind of weapon before, the function is not the same, but it is similar. I am very happy to be able to fire the M-16. I will tell all my friends that I fired the M-16."

During both days of firing, the unit in charge of the range cooked lunch for the event.

"We are talking to each other. We are having barbeque with each other. We see and talk about the differences between the armies and we get to see how each other works. We had fun," said German soldier Patrick Stuart, who qualified expert on the weapons.

"This binds our armies together. This [KFOR mission] is multi-national, and it's great to know each others' strengths. Our camaraderie makes a stronger world while we're here, so many different armies working toward an achievement," said Spc. Luis Flores, of Task Force Saber.

An awards ceremony was held at Film City on Aug. 22 to honor the American shooters and an additional ceremony was held at Camp Bondsteel to honor the Germans.

The German/American partnership will continue in the future with another possible qualification to be set up by the end of the year.

— Information provided by Sgt. **Anthonie Seymour** 🇺🇸



■ Above: Spc. Travis Clark, Kosovo Inspectorate of the Kosovo Protection Corps, takes a look through the mounted optics of the German rifle.



■ SPC. Demon Griffin, Task Force Saber, gives a German soldier some helpful tips after the five-shot familiarization fire with the M4 rifle.



■ Above: Pvt. 1st Class Phillip D. Walker, Liaison Monitoring Team 6, engages targets with the German G36 rifle during the Schuetzenschnur qualification course at range 4.

■ Below: Sgt. 1st Class Jason Walling, Task Force Guardian, points out target sequence to Maj. Andrea Brueckner, Chief of Internal Information for Headquarters, Kosovo Forces, during the M249 familiarization fire training.

COURSE OF FIRE

German

P8

5 shots from standing position at 3 targets

Gold – 5 shots

Silver- 4 shots

Bronze – 3 shots

G36

16 shots from prone, prone unsupported, standing and kneeling positions

Gold – 14-16

Silver – 11-13

Bronze – 9-10

M3 Machine Gun

Familiarization only

U.S.

M9

45 shots from standing and kneeling position (5 Familiarization shots)

Expert – 35-40

Sharpshooter- 28-34

Marksmen- 20-27

M4

35 shots from prone, prone unsupported, kneeling (5 Familiarization shots)

Expert- 25-30

Sharpshooter- 20-24

Marksmen- 15-19

M249 SAW

Familiarization fire only



A Commitment to Honor

PHOTOS AND STORY BY
SGT. 1ST CLASS CRAIG COLLINS

During life's quiet moments; waiting for sleep to come, watching the sun break the horizon while riding out to guard post or standing vigil at a ceremony gives us time to reflect on events of the past.

Staff Sgt. Brian Underwood had plenty of time to reflect as he and the rest of the Multi-National Task Force (East) honor guard stood vigil at the recent September 11th ceremony held at Medal of Honor Hall on Camp Bondsteel.

An hour is a long time to reflect. "I was driving to a funeral in Lamar [Missouri] shortly after the second plane hit the tower," said Underwood after the ceremony. "We were listening to the radio going to the service and we saw planes turning around. Everybody got out, all five of us, and took a deep breath and continued on to the service. That was the only time I ever had difficulty presenting the flag."

States flag, tightly folded into a triangle and displayed on a small wooden table for all to see.

The Soldiers of the Multi-National Task Force (East) Honor Guard closed the remembrance with a precise, graceful and dignified ceremony, which displayed their commitment to honor heroes, memories and the United States of America.

They executed the September 11th Remembrance ceremony like a team of seasoned veterans when in fact, they had been together for less than three weeks.

The idea to have an honor guard on Camp Bondsteel started with Command Sgt. Maj. Mike



■ Sgt. 1st Class Scott Belt, Kosovo Force, Multi-National Task Force-East, Task Force Falcon adjusts the uniform of Spc. Chris White, Kosovo Force, Multi-National Task Force-East, Task Force Blackhorse during Honor Guard practice at Medal of Honor Hall, Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo.

in Missouri," said Belt. "He contacted Staff Sgt. Underwood, who is honor guard trainer qualified, about putting together an honor guard for Camp Bondsteel."

Underwood called Belt, who is Army National Guard Honor Guard qualified, and asked him to help. Belt's response? "Of course, it's what I do."

First, they needed to find Soldiers willing and able to perform honor guard duties. The task force commands were asked to send Soldiers to be interviewed for the duty. The Soldiers had to be willing to go through two to three hours of intense training, five days a week, after their normal duty day ended.

Underwood questioned the volunteers and showed them a video about the Old Guard produced by National Geographic several years ago. All the while he was gauging their reaction to his questions and the video, looking for Soldiers with the right mix of discipline and desire to execute the honor guard mission. Once the interview process was

over, nine Soldiers were selected to participate in the training.

Sgt. Arturo Torres was one of the Soldiers who stepped up. "I volunteered for the pride, honor and discipline," said Torres. "It's good training."

The main mission of the honor guard is to provide a color guard for distinguished visitors to Camp Bondsteel. Their secondary mission is to provide military honors should a Soldier die while stationed here. They also expect to perform more missions like the September 11th Remembrance throughout the remainder of the deployment.

Their training started with individual movements. Right face, left face, about face; almost all of the drill and ceremony movements executed during an honor guard are done differently than standard movements learned in basic training. Underwood and Belt taught the Soldiers to keep three key elements foremost in their minds during their movements: posture, performance, and perfection. These three key elements are the core of their

"I volunteered for the pride, honor and discipline."

-Sgt. Arturo Torres

They stood in formation in the gravel parking lot outside Medal of Honor Hall; heads bowed, as speakers inside the hall shared their thoughts, a Soldier led the audience singing America the Beautiful, and a video played reminding those in attendance how that day forever changed our lives. They stood in formation, heads bowed, guarding the United

Lederle, the Kosovo Force, Multi-National Task Force (East) Command Sergeant Major. That idea led to a call to Underwood.

The honor guard team was assembled by Underwood and Sgt. 1st Class Scott Belt. "Command Sgt. Maj. Lederle knew of the training and experience Staff Sgt. Underwood and I had from our duties back

Honor Guard Motto.

The movements and the concepts were repeated over and over until their minds were weary and their bodies were sore. "It's kind of like stretching a rubber band," said Belt. "You stretch it so far and when you think you can't go any further, you pull more." Each night the Soldiers came back to the map room at Medal of Honor Hall to improve on the previous evening's movements and learn new ones. When Underwood and Belt were satisfied with each Soldier's progress, they would add another movement. "The standard is not negotiable," said Belt.

When the basics were solid, they moved on to rifle drills. Once again, the movements were repeated over and over to create muscle memory. "They drill and they drill and they drill until you see the mental break down where they're making silly mistakes. Then you cut it [training] off there and let them sleep on it," said Belt. "You get them right back in the next night and it all sinks in and boom, they've got it."

When the training is completed the honor guard Soldiers will have

learned flag folding presentation, rifling, color guard, transfer of remains, and many of the other aspects involved in military ceremonies and honor guard.

The initial training schedule was set out over 24 non-consecutive days. How well the Soldiers came together and how much they learned in those 24 days would determine Underwood and Belt's next steps.

Underwood used the September 11th Remembrance to gauge their progress. "The team has made a lot of progress," he commented. "We rewired their brains for honor guard drill and ceremony versus regular Army drill and ceremony." Underwood said he also felt like the team had gained a sense of humbleness; that their attention to detail, discipline and self-awareness had all greatly improved.

He was especially pleased with



■ From left to right, Spc. Daniel Spangler, Spc. Ryan Evans, Staff Sgt. Brian Underwood, Sgt. Arturo Torres, Spc. Chancellor Crabtree, and Spc. Adrian Del Toro, all of the Kosovo Force, Multi-National Task Force-East Honor Guard, wait patiently to execute a flag ceremony as part of a 9/11 Remembrance held at Medal of Honor Hall, Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo on September 11, 2008.

the firing party. "The firing party paid attention to detail, kept the internal clock in their mind and executed with precision," said Underwood.

Next up for the honor guard is learning the three-man flag sequence and then learning to perform the Honorable Transfer of

Remains ceremony. Underwood expects it will take two weeks to get the ceremony down. He said he hopes they don't have to perform that ceremony while at Camp Bondsteel but the team will be ready if it's necessary. They will also continue to sharpen up the basic drill and ceremony and work through the Standard Manual of Arms for their weapons training. After that he expects to train two to four hours per week for the remainder of the deployment to keep their skills sharp.

The Multi-National Task Force (East) honor guard is: Sgt. 1st Class Brian Underwood, Task Force Falcon (promoted after the article was written), Sgt. 1st Class Scott Belt, Task Force Falcon, Sgt. 1st Class Kenneth Lisk, Task Force Thunder, Sgt. Aaron Messerschmidt, Liaison Monitoring Team, Sgt. Arturo Torres, Task Force Blackhorse, Spc. Jeremy Steele, Task Force Falcon, Spc. Chancellor Crabtree, Task Force Thunder, Spc. Chris White, Task Force Blackhorse, Spc. Adrian Del Toro, Task Force Blackhorse, Spc. Ryan Evans, Task Force Blackhorse, and Spc. Daniel Spangler, Task Force Falcon. 🇺🇸



■ Staff Sgt. Brian Underwood, left, and Sgt. 1st Class Scott Belt, Kosovo Force, Multi-National Task Force-East, Task Force Falcon, unfold the American flag during a September 11th Remembrance Ceremony at Medal of Honor Hall, Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo on September 11, 2008.

Warriors; Leaders

BY PVT. 1ST CLASS LINDSEY M. FRAZIER

More than 200 Soldiers from the various task forces within the Multi-National Task Force (East) received the opportunity to increase their leadership skills by attending the Warrior Leader Course held at Camp Bondsteel.

With tradition dating back to post-World War II Noncommissioned Officer Academies, training and education still strives today and serves to create the “backbone” of the military.

WLC, formerly known as the Primary Leadership Development Course (PLDC), is the first course of study in the U.S. Army Noncommissioned Officer Education System (NCOES). PLDC

was renamed to WLC in 2005 as a direct reflection of the change in core curriculum.

There are four priority levels that determine the Soldier’s eligibility to get in the course. The first priority goes to an E-5, the second priority is for an E-4 in a promotable status, third priority is an E-4 in a leadership position and the fourth priority is an E-3 that is authorized to fill a unit’s order of merit list.

For active duty WLC is a four-week course; a two-week course for National Guard and Reserve Soldiers. The courses are interchangeable; therefore Soldiers may attend either course. The



PHOTO BY SGT. TY STAFFORD

■ Soldiers from Warrior Leader Course Class 1 evaluate a casualty, administer first aid and prepare a 9-line Medical Evacuation card during simulated training at Camp Bondsteel.

courses have the same criteria, curriculum and standards; the two-week courses are just taught at a faster rate.

“Soldiers in the National Guard have full time jobs so it’s hard to take them from their everyday life to attend a month-long course,” said Staff Sgt. Shawn Burton, WLC instructor. “With it being two weeks it makes it more practical and some Soldiers will be sent as part of their two-week annual training.”

The course of study is non-specific to the Soldier’s military occupational specialty (MOS) and covers many basic leadership skills.

“Each Soldier is different depending on what task force they came from,” said Sgt. 1st Class John Mark, WLC branch chief. “Depending on what type of training their task forces focus on shows their strengths and weakness here. Either way, they’re evaluated on leadership, not tactics.”

Students are graded on Physical Fitness Training, Individual Skills Training, Land Navigation, Leadership in garrison and Leadership in the field.

A performance test measures their ability to properly conduct an Army physical fitness training session. This will include forming an extended rectangular formation, warm-up exercises, improvement exercises, cool down and reassembling the group into a normal interval formation.

Individual training measures your ability to properly conduct a training session. The instructor will give the Soldier a task and they must execute the task by

preparation, presentation, performance and conducting an after action review (AAR).

“We try to make sure it is a task they have to research and prepare for,” said Mark. “For instance, we would not assign a medical task to a student that is a medic; it helps to maintain fairness among students.”

The land navigation test demonstrates the Soldier’s ability to navigate from one point on the ground to another by using a map and a compass. The Soldiers must plot and locate three of the four points in the maximum of three hours to receive a passing grade.

Garrison training focuses on the ability to effectively lead Soldiers in a garrison environment where day-to-day operations are held.

Some of the goals are applying the principles of the Army



PHOTO BY PVT. 1ST CLASS LINDSEY FRAZIER

■ Spc. Arthur Graves, Task Force Saber, looks through his lensatic compass to find his azimuth during the Land Navigation evaluation.



■ Soldiers load a casualty onto a UH60 Blackhawk helicopter during MEDEVAC training during the Situational Training Exercise portion of the course.



PHOTO BY PVT. 1ST CLASS LINDSEY FRAZIER

■ **Soldiers check their grid coordinates at a point during the Land Navigation Course at Range 4. Soldiers were required to find three out of four points in under 3 hours to pass the course.**

leadership framework, the human dimension role in leadership, communication, problem-solving, use of different leadership styles and maintaining discipline.

Instructors assign students to leadership positions where they

will lead a team or squad in a tactical environment. Instructors will evaluate the students in their leadership abilities and how they use their troop-leading procedures and other leader skills they learned in the course. It is a mentally and physically challenging evaluation, said Mark.

“The WLC program of instruction no longer requires any form of written testing,” said Mark.

“All evaluations are hands-on so that the student is learning and implementing the skills instead of just memorizing them for an exam.”

WLC now emphasizes the skills and knowledge small-unit leaders need to excel in a contemporary operational environment.

WLC is battle-focused and graduates of WLC experience standard-based, performance-oriented and battle-focused training, which supports squad-level operations.

Training and evaluation as a combat leader now applies to every Soldier.

Evaluation is centered on the NCO’s ability to demonstrate



PHOTO BY PVT. 1ST CLASS LINDSEY FRAZIER

■ **Staff Sgt. Anibal Quinones, WLC instructor, monitors Spc. Jacob L. Carson as he calls in a MEDEVAC request.**



PHOTO BY PVT. 1ST CLASS LINDSEY FRAZIER

troop-leading procedures in current threat-based scenarios. Instructors must have current NCOER's and complete certification before leading and evaluating students.

WLC also requires trainers to be at least an E-6, have squad leader experience and be a graduate of the course they are instructing. WLC is the first course to apply the same combat leader-specific training standard for all Soldiers, regardless of gender or background.

Having the instructors come to Camp Bondsteel has many advantages and doesn't jeopardize their mission to effectively teach the Soldiers.

Having support units here like aviation, explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) and mechanized infantry have enhanced the training, said Mark.

One of the benefits that Soldiers participated in was a live training scenario involving Medical Evacuations (MEDEVAC). State-side, Soldiers don't get the luxury of having a helicopter take part in their training.

Three different platoons had a scenario based mission where they used tactical skills to move through the field to reach their designated point safely.

For MEDEVAC training purposes each platoon transported one casualty. The team and squad leaders worked together from each platoon as they directed their Soldiers to pull 360 degree perimeter security and establish a casualty location point.

From there, they picked one person to call in a nine line (MEDEVAC) request, for all three casualties, explained Staff Sgt. Anibal Quinones, WLC instructor.

The simulated casualties were littered to the helicopter with the assistance of the Flight Medics.

"This was great training. I love doing this stuff," said Sgt. Brandon Schatz, Regional Liaison Management Team. Schatz was part of a four-Soldier team who pulled a patient out of the helicopter during the first WLC class.

During the final days of the course the Soldiers put their tactical leadership skills to the test with hands-on training in the situational training exercise (STX).

With 96 hours of situational training the Soldiers experienced cultural awareness, personnel recovery and counterinsurgency.

"The physical impact and the heat have been the most challenging part of this course," said Sgt. Christy Prutzman, Task Force Saber operations NCO, WLC class 2.

"But it's about leadership and Soldiers learn how to lead from their leaders; and our instructors are outstanding and very knowledgeable."


With WLC being tailored to the environment in which the Army operates today, these junior enlisted Soldiers and NCO's will have the knowledge and skills to get the mission done. 



PHOTO BY PVT. 1ST CLASS LINDSEY FRAZIER

■ Above: Soldiers help carry a simulated casualty during MEDEVAC training during the WLC Class 2.

■ Below: Soldiers engage an enemy ambush while reacting to contact.



PHOTO BY SGT. TY STAFFORD

Expect the Unexpected

BY LT. COL. STEVEN BROOKS,
MNTF(E) SAFETY OFFICER

The next accident will occur something like this: The task force patrol of two HMMWVs head out Gate 1 at 0800 hours and travels north on Route Stag.

The weather is mild and the sky is clear and road conditions are dry and not very busy. So far everything is shaping up to be a pretty typical day for the patrol.

Suddenly a vehicle pulls out in front of the convoy.

The driver didn't even stop to check for oncoming traffic. The driver in the lead HMMWV swerves to avoid hitting the vehicle but loses control of the HMMWV on the narrow road.

The vehicle overturns and rolls numerous times. Both the driver and assistant driver are ejected since neither Soldier is wearing their seatbelt. The driver sustains critical injuries and is paralyzed from the waist down.

The assistant driver is pronounced dead at the scene due to head and neck injuries. The two passengers in back who were wearing their seatbelts sustain minor injuries.

Thankfully, this hasn't happened during the KFOR 10 rotation.

Other KFOR rotations have not been so fortunate. Two Soldiers and one Airman lost their lives in a vehicle rollover accident during the KFOR 8 rotation. Their deaths were unfortunate and unacceptable and a tragic loss to their fellow service members and to their families.

Hopefully we won't ever have an accident of this nature. Vehicle accidents remain the number one cause of death and serious injury to our Soldiers. The loss of even one Soldier is tragic and adversely affects unit readiness.

About 90 percent of accident investigation reports determine that accidents are caused by one or more of the following contributing factors.

- **Complacency**
- **Overconfidence**
- **Lack of training**
- **Lack of discipline**

Death and injury due to vehicle accidents are undeniable aspects of life. In many cases the victims of vehicle accidents are caught unaware and unprepared increasing the amount of damage inflicted on their lives.

Accidents can't always be avoided, but there are ways to prevent them. One way to prevent accidental death and injury is through safety awareness training.

Accidents can and will happen.

Leaders must do everything within their



PHOTO BY PVT. 1ST CLASS LINDSEY FRAZIER

■ **Training such as the Humvee Egress Assistance Trainer and Composite Risk Management may help prevent serious injuries, or even death, to Soldiers while outside of Camp Bondsteel.**

power to give their Soldiers the tools to make good decisions.

One way to mitigate these accidents involves adherence to standards, dedicated use of the Composite Risk Management (CRM) program, and emphasizing supervisory and individual responsibility.

By integrating safety awareness sessions and safety briefings into unit training our Soldiers will have the knowledge they need to not become a fatality.

Ensuring they implement this knowledge into everyday life is challenging but feasible. Commanders can emphasize driving safety by conducting additional safety training such as the following:

- Discuss any vehicle accidents (military or POV) that occurred in your unit since the beginning of the rotation. Discuss the root cause of the accident or accidents and what has been done to prevent a reoccurrence.
- Discuss ways to reduce vehicle accidents during patrols and road marches and the importance of using ground guides when backing a vehicle.
- Review the "Preliminary Loss Reports" (PLRs) provided by the U.S. Army Combat Readiness Center (USACRC) Web site at <https://crc.army.mil/home/>.

PLRs describe all of the tactical, NTV and non-military vehicle accidents that involve Active Duty and Reserve Component Soldiers.

These PLRs will have an impact if they are read in formation, discussed in section meetings or placed on the unit Safety bulletin board.

- Safety Presentations. Unit safety officers can present a class on driving safety. Discuss the detrimental effects of

alcohol, fatigue, cell phone usage and other distracters while driving.

Also discuss how seatbelts save lives and are required by law to be worn.

- Unit leadership should review the unit's military vehicle licensing and training program to make sure all Soldiers that drive military vehicles have a current civilian and military driver's license per AR 600-55.

Ensure Soldiers are familiar with the military or non-tactical vehicles they might be driving and schedule some additional "behind the wheel" time for them to practice as necessary.

- Present a class on Composite Risk Management (CRM).

Complete Risk Management worksheets on upcoming training to include convoys. Information on CRM is available in FM 5-19 or on the Combat Readiness Center Web site at <https://crc.army.mil>.

Leadership is the key to effectively integrating safety awareness into our formations.

The more we give Soldiers the tools and knowledge to incorporate CRM into their daily tasks, the more we set them up for success.

For more information, you may contact the Task Force Falcon Safety Office by phone at 781-4734.

You may also send e-mails to steven.h.brooks@eur.army.mil or the Area Support Team (AST) Safety Office at 781-4805 or email hans.d.langhammer@eur.army.mil.

"SAFELY COMPLETE THE MISSION
... GET IT DONE"

For more Safety Information visit <https://crc.army.mil>

FREQUENCY HOP

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
SGT. 1ST CLASS CRAIG COLLINS

Being a member of a multi-national task force provides many military personnel new opportunities for learning that they may not normally get a chance to experience during a military career.

Soldiers from the Polish Army and the U.S. Army recently trained together for two days on Camp Bondsteel and the surrounding area in quick reaction force tactics.

Both sides quickly learned the importance of being able to communicate with each other and using electronic communications equipment.

"Language is the hardest barrier," said 1st Lt. Wildik Wisneiowski, Kosovo Force, Multi-National Task Force-East, POLUKR Battalion, Hawk company commander.

Maj. Levon Cumpton, KFOR, MNTF-E, Task Force Falcon training officer was in charge of the training. "The purpose of the training was to validate the QRF platoon."

Much of the training focused on understanding how to operate the communications equipment used in MNTF-E, including proper procedures for communicating over two-way radios.

There are several different communication systems available for the QRF commander and his team to use and it is important to

learn which system is the best to use given the conditions they are operating in.

"In order to be validated the team must show they can communicate effectively and efficiently with their higher headquarters and the supported unit," said Cumpton. "The QRF platoon also has to demonstrate that it can respond within set timelines."

The soldiers from Hawk Company learned the proper procedures for entering and exiting UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters safely and efficiently.

This training was especially important to the Polish soldiers because they don't use helicopters for this mission in the Polish Army according to Wisneiowski. They practiced "cold" and "hot" loading procedures at Camp Bondsteel and then performed a practice mission at a nearby location.

When asked about the training Wisneiowski said, "[It] was good but [we will have] more and more training yet."

Cumpton thought the training went well.

He said, "The training was outstanding. It was evident they spent time preparing so they would be successful." 🇺🇸



■ Maj. Levon Cumpton, Kosovo Force, Multi-National Task Force-East, Task Force Falcon, discusses an upcoming training event with 1st Lt. Wildik Wisneiowski, Kosovo Force, MNTF-E, POLUKR Battalion, Hawk Company Commander at Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo.

■ 1st Lt. Wildik Wisniewski, Kosovo Force, Multi-National Task Force-East, POLUKR Battalion, Hawk company commander, ducks his head as Capt. Scott Sengenberger, Chief Warrant Officer 2 Bryan Mulgrew, and Staff Sgt. Steven Giersch prepare to take off after off-loading members of Hawk Company from an UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter during quick reaction force training near Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo.





PHOTO BY SGT TY STAFFORD

October 2008														November 2008						
<div>STCC--South Town Civic Center</div> <div>STFC--South Town Fitness Center</div> <div>NTCC--North Town Civic Center</div> <div>NTFC--North Town Fitness Center</div>														<div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> <div>4</div> <div>5</div> <div>6</div> <div>7</div> <div>8</div> <div>9</div> <div>10</div> <div>11</div> <div>12</div> <div>13</div> <div>14</div> <div>15</div> <div>16</div> <div>17</div> <div>18</div> <div>19</div> <div>20</div> <div>21</div> <div>22</div> <div>23</div> <div>24</div> <div>25</div> <div>26</div> <div>27</div> <div>28</div> <div>29</div> <div>30</div> <div>31</div>						
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“SHOT!” >

BRITISH SOLDIERS TRAIN WITH U.S. BRADLEY TEAMS

BY SGT. TY STAFFORD

The U.S. component of Multi-National Task Force (East) is comprised of units from all over the nation; each with a special function that helps accomplish the mission.

One special unit within the task force is Co. C, from Task Force Saber.

The company has 36 Unit Identification Codes represented and the core of the company is from the 35th Support Training Battalion and 135th Signal Company.

Co. C also includes a special addition: Bradley fighting vehicles and crewmembers from Detachment 3, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion 200th Infantry.

The Bradley fighting vehicle is designed to operate in combat with the same speed as the M1A1 Abrams tank and has a greater degree of protection than the M113 armored personnel carrier.

The M2 provides infantry squads with a light armored fighting vehicle. The M3 provides scout and armored cavalry units with a vehicle for reconnaissance, screening, and security missions.

Linking up in May at Camp Shelby, Miss., the crewmembers and the rest of Charlie Company fought an uphill battle to get where they are today.

“They have trained incredibly hard to get themselves ready to be crewmembers,” said Capt. Michael Sweetland, the company commander.

“When I started six years ago, I thought I would never have the opportunity to be a combat commander. I found out in November and it was very exciting. Having so many different MOSs [Military Occupational Specialties] and units was challenging. It was every commander’s dream,” Sweetland said.

Their first training event as a cohesive unit, was at Hohenfels, Germany, where they practiced dismounted infantry tactics and crowd and riot control drills.

Their newly-formed crews first time firing together took place in late August at Range 4 located outside of Camp Bondsteel.

“The purpose of the range is to stay proficient and zero the weapons systems,” said Sgt. 1st Class Rogelio Maldonado.

The Bradley’s main weapon system is the M242 25mm “Bushmaster” Chain Gun. The weapon can fire either armor piercing or high explosive ammunition and the gunner may fire in single or multiple shot modes. The other weapons system is a M240C machine gun, which fires 7.62mm rounds.

On the live-fire range, the Bradley crews shot at targets ranging from 300 to 1500 meters. The 25mm gun was zeroed on the 800 and 1200 meter targets.

Besides range training, the crews have the benefit of having a Mobile Conduct of Fire Trainer on Camp Bondsteel.

A MCOFT is a computerized simulator where they can work in a team setting without actually going to the range, Sweetland said.

The primary focus of all the training is to train the non-MOS specific Soldiers on getting as much training on dismounted tactics as possible, Sweetland said.

The second focus of training for Co. C is training support for coalition forces.

During a joint training mission in August, the crews assisted the United Kingdoms 3rd Rifles unit with dismounted infantry training.

The idea came from Maj. Tim Jackson and Sgt. Maj. Vaughan Marbrow, the commander and sergeant major for the 3rd Rifles.

“We had the idea and when sergeant major came down [from England] he started the coordination for the training,” Jackson said.

Jackson stated that the unit is currently in Kosovo in a surveillance-type role for the Kosovo Forces. “When we return, we will return to being a light infantry unit and this training will help keep us proficient,” Jackson said.

Marbrow added that he thought the training was superb. “I think we have come to a good level. It’s been really good utilizing the Bradleys and training with the U.S. Soldiers. It has been a big help.”

During the joint training, after the



PHOTO BY SGT. 1ST CLASS CRAIG COLLINS

■ A soldier from the United Kingdom's 3rd Rifles rushes for cover as his squad engages targets during joint training with U.S. Bradley crews from Task Force Saber.

Bradleys had engaged targets with the 25mm gun, the four-man UK teams dismounted the Bradleys to engage multiple targets on the ground.

"This is my first time working with the Bradleys. I quite enjoyed myself," said Rifleman George Williams, a native of Ghana who has been in the military for 2 years. Williams noted that the hardest part of the training for him was exiting the Bradley.

"Coming out is the hardest part. You have

to figure out where you are and where you need to go to engage the enemy," he said.

For Lance Cpl. Max Woolcok and Cpl. Phil Cree, both veterans of Operation Iraqi Freedom, this was another opportunity to work with U.S. forces.

"I worked with them [U.S.] in Iraq when they helped us in Basra. The training was great," Woolcok said.

Cree, a section leader, was in charge of a four-man team during the training.

"It was a good attack. Things could have gone better but it was a good thing [training]. We obviously go to the same theaters [Iraq and Afghanistan], and this training is a great way to learn from each other," he said.

All the British soldiers agreed that the Bradley training was beneficial to them.

"We don't usually get to use the armored vehicles, so this will help us in the future if we go to an armored unit," Cree said.

The training with the 3rd Rifles included two more sessions in September and all participants found the training to be beneficial.

Sweetland added that his Soldiers will continue training with joint forces along with training at Camp Bondsteel.

"These Soldiers are smart, motivated and aggressive. They are willing to do anything to accomplish the mission. It's been awesome," he said. 🇺🇸



■ A Bradley crew zeros in on a target with the 25mm "Bushmaster" chain gun during live-fire training at Range 4.

PHOTO BY SGT. TY STAFFORD



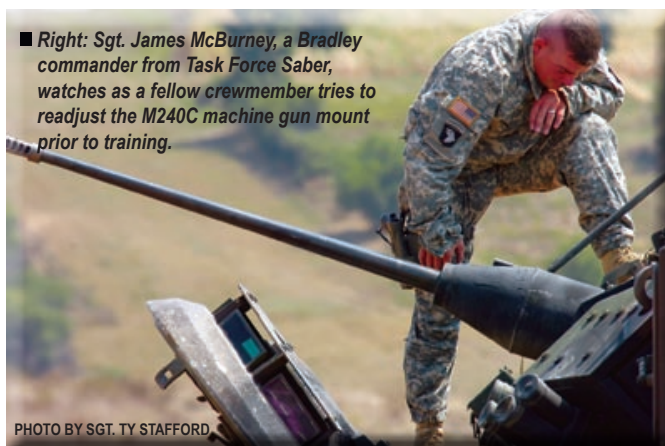
■ Spc. Reyes Gutierrez, links 25mm rounds together prior to his fellow Bradley crewmembers zeroing on the range.

PHOTO BY SGT. TY STAFFORD



PHOTO BY SGT. TY STAFFORD

■ Above: A British soldier shouts team commands to his teammates during battle drills at Range 4.



■ Right: Sgt. James McBurney, a Bradley commander from Task Force Saber, watches as a fellow crewmember tries to readjust the M240C machine gun mount prior to training.

PHOTO BY SGT. TY STAFFORD



■ British soldiers dismount the Bradley Fighting Vehicle and move for cover during live-fire training.

PHOTO BY SGT. 1ST CLASS CRAIG COLLINS

Broadway on Bondsteel

BY SGT. ANTHONIE SEYMOUR

You probably didn't think that Camp Bondsteel would be the place to find culture and refinement, but that's just what the Bondsteel Theater Players want to bring . . . if they can find enough talent to fit the bill.

At the risk of making home-away-from-home Camp

everyone showed their strengths and the weaknesses barely showed at all," Hoffman said of KFOR 9's production.

Both Favors and Hoffman said that, anyone from carpenters to backstage hands, are needed in the upcoming production.

Favors said that there were some costs, but there were rewards too.

"We realize, it's not where you live, so while you're here on deployment, this will broaden your horizons, build self-confidence and make your time go a lot faster while you're here," she said. "It is such a morale builder, it builds such camaraderie, and it shows your talent to your peers."

KFOR 9's leadership acknowledged that the play was a shot in the arm for morale provided by troops for troops.

"Even General

Daverson pointed out that

the production was the most attended MWR event during the course of our nine-month deployment," Hoffman said.

A similar reaction is just what Favors said she wants from the KFOR 10 Soldier selection, *Primary English*, a play by Israel Horovitz.

"I was approached by theater majors about doing a play, and we wanted to see what they are interested in doing," Favors said.

Pfc. Chelsea Dill, with the 3175th Military Police Company wants to participate

in the play, on stage or behind the curtains, and she hopes that the play's comical international slant draws coalition troops from across Camp Bondsteel together for a good laugh.

"An international comedy would be an excellent production for Camp Bondsteel, because we are surrounded by different cultures from all over the world here, Dill said."

There is the hope too, that not only will the audience be global, but that the cast and crew could be also.

"We all live here at Camp Bondsteel, and acting is for everyone," Favors said. "We have great creative juices running through our local homegrown talent."

"Particularly, those who had never performed before said this was an opportunity where, 'I can let go. I can stick my toe in the water and see if I like this sort of thing,'" Hoffman said. "We want someone who is willing to take direction, versus the most talented person who won't take direction."

The Bondsteel theater group meets every Tuesday evening at 7 p.m., and they are looking forward to meeting you. 🇺🇸

“It is such a morale builder, it builds such camaraderie, and it shows your talent to your peers.”

- Renee Favors, MWR

Bondsteel a little too much like the real thing, KFOR 9 premiered, the musical comedy, *Lucky Stiff*, which played to a standing room only audience for three nights.

"It was a packed house every night," Renee Favors, Morale, Welfare, Recreation program specialist said. "Some people were standing in the wings, and in the aisles because we ran out of room. They stood up the whole time."

Favors would like to see that reaction again.

"A precedent has been set here at Bondsteel, and we want to keep it going," Favors said. "We want to get enough folks to do a casting call, and have them come and try out for it."

In saying folks, she means you.

"I thought that it would be worthwhile for morale. I wanted to reach into the diversity of National Guard Soldiers, and pull out what raw talent there was and put something together with the resources we had," said Lt. Col. Gary Hoffman, KFOR 9's Command Judge Advocate General, who directed of *The Lucky Stiff* for that rotation. "We had quite the range of talent. We had people who had never been on stage, but who sang beautifully in church choirs, and we had one who was a drama teacher. Everyone was a compliment to the next guy;

"There are so many people with such diverse interests and when you can bring all those particular personalities and interests together. It brings so much more to the play," Favors said.

"I don't know that I had to motivate anyone beyond giving them the opportunity," Hoffman added. "People wanted to perform; people wanted to volunteer their time. They wanted to give of themselves and this was their vehicle. It was an outlet."



■ Hollywood hopefuls act up during Kosovo Force 9's production of *The Lucky Stiff*.

Operation: Albert

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
SGT. ANTHONIE SEYMOUR

In civilian life, James Dunn works with kids to keep them in line and on the straight path.

A detention service officer with a Los Angeles area juvenile detention center, he has worked with some of the toughest youths in the California juvenile system. Dunn, is probably not someone you'd pick out of a crowd to help you with your sick and dying child. But, in late 2004, Afrim and Rabije Ajvazi picked him to be their guardian angel.

"Both of them looked really desperate," said the staff sergeant from the California

Army National Guard and father of three attached to Task Force Falcon. "To come up to a foreign soldier that you don't even know and to ask for help – that guy was really at the end of his rope. He had exhausted all the means that he knew to help his son . . . He told me through the interpreter, 'Can you help us? Our baby is dying.' That got my attention pretty quick."

Afrim Ajvazi's son, Albert, had been born with a severe childbirth deformity. "Here was this four-month-old who had a very severe cleft pallet, and it was very difficult for him to eat - to take in any kind of nutrition. They were feeding him through this metal pipe, and sometimes he would aspirate food. A kid that can't eat can't grow, and he was fighting a lot of infections because his sinus cavity was completely exposed."

As he was, Albert's chances at living a normal life were slim, but his parents feared his chance at life was slimming to none. They had good reason to fear.

According to Operation Blessing, www.ob.org, "Each year, hundreds of thousands of children are born with disfiguring cleft lips and palates [roof of mouth

incomplete or missing] and many cultures see the disfiguration as a curse. Most are too poor to afford corrective surgery, and without it, infants starve to death because they are unable to nurse."

The article continued, "These children commonly live life ostracized from society while enduring many health problems. Often times school-age boys and girls don't attend school because of the humiliation, and marriage is often out of the question."

Dunn needed to communicate with the family, but he needed just the right voice.

"I was working with MI (Military Intelligence) when Staff Sgt. Dunn approached me and said, 'I think you're



■ Staff Sgt. James Dunn, reconnects with Afrim and Rabije Ajvazi after losing touch with the family he helped in 2004 when their son Albert was in dire need of medical care due to a severe cleft palates.



■ Baby Albert with his mom before the surgery.

the one for the case," said Anila Isaku, a Multi-National Task Force (East) linguist. "He explained that the male interpreters were repulsed and that, as a mother, he thought I could see the child and be more understanding."

Dunn's instinct had been correct, but he had no idea that Isaku would become such an asset.

"It was freezing then, and I held Albert in my coat. He was adorable, and I fell in love with him," Isaku said. "But, you could write a book about what we went through. It was a very difficult case."

First, Albert needed more than the local hospitals were able to provide.

"The drugs his mother would get from Gjilan/Gnjilane hospital to fight off the infections were these old outdated Russian medicines in these glass vials," Dunn said. "Her fingers were always cut from having

to crush them to get the medicine out."

Dunn took the family to a Multi-National Task Force (East) MEDCAP where they were given antibiotics and baby formula and told that the baby needed an operation.

To Dunn, it seemed too easy. Get Albert to people who could help him.

"I'm not afraid to talk to people, and I had Internet access, so I figured I'd give it my shot. I started asking around," Dunn said. He even got the chaplain staff involved to seek out possible religious nongovernment organizations.

"In the States, this is handled on a routine basis. We don't think much about it, because we have an excellent health care system, but this was a third-world-country," he said. "We'd contact NGOs (nongovernment organizations) that I thought would be able to help us, and we'd get the, 'Well, we don't help individuals. We help groups.'"

With his tour in Kosovo swiftly winding down, both Dunn and the chaplains were hard pressed, and tired of hearing no. They needed a miracle.

"It was the day before Christmas Eve and I was feeling pretty depressed because we were coming up 'zip' as far as people willing to help," Dunn said. "When we found Operation Smile, the e-mail I sent was snippy and said something like, 'This is my situation. I've got this child in Kosovo that if he doesn't get the surgery he needs soon, he will probably die. If you can't help me don't even reply. It seemed like a really long time then, but looking

Dunn plays with Albert during a recent reunion. In 2004 Dunn helped connect the, then 4-month-old, child to Operation Smile, an organization that performs surgeries to correct potentially life-threatening facial birth defects.



back the process (finding Operation Smile) only took a month.”

Operation Smile’s reply came the next day.

“Their response was, ‘There’s a doctor in Rome that can help. All you have to do is get the clearance from the Italians.’”

The process of getting clearance was fraught with administrative obstacles that was left to Isaku as she was the only one who knew Albanian.

“The family had no identity but their faces,” Isaku said, “They had nothing – no IDs, no birth certificates, no marriage license and no passports. We started with nothing. We had problems with the paperwork, and we had problems with the officials. It took a lot of persistence to get Albert and his mother to Italy.”

On the occasion when Isaku was unavailable, Dunn and the chaplains had to make due and word got around.

Because of the language barrier, involvement included anyone in close proximity to Dunn or the Chaplain’s office.

“The chaplain’s assistant had a cell phone, and if there was any problem with the baby, the father would call and just excitedly cry out, ‘Albert!’ over and over. He (chaplain assistant) would then have to find someone near the chapel to interpret. He would find someone in the cappuccino shop, the barber shop or the pizza area. We’d find out what was going on, and we’d arrange a trip or whatever was needed.”

The buzz reached beyond Camp Bondsteel into the Italian camp.

“People were talking, and it even went as far as the Italian base. And on a trip there for Albert’s physical, the manager at the pizza restaurant fussed over us, and made sure we had hot water for the baby’s formula for the trip back. He was happy to see us, and he told us that, ‘Only the Americans would do this.’ Of course it wasn’t true. The Italians were really very helpful, and the operation happened in Italy.”

But the manager wouldn’t let Dunn or his party’s graciousness be overlooked.

“When we came to the register to pay, the manager cheers us with, ‘America! America! America!’” Dunn said with some emotion. “Everyone, all the Italian Soldiers just looked on. That was a good day to be a Soldier.”

Dunn would leave Kosovo for the U. S. in February, and Albert would leave in March for Italy. It would take nearly a month for Albert to return.

“We did a battle hand-off so to speak, with the incoming rotation’s chaplains. The new chaplain assured me, ‘Don’t worry sergeant, you have my word.’”

And true to his word, Chaplain Daniel



■ Albert, now 4, is a typical boy thanks to Dunn and several Soldiers who helped the child receive the much needed surgery in Italy. Albert’s older brother Arbnor, has always maintained a watchful eye over Albert.

Vivaeros and his chaplain staff would see to it that Albert received the operation in Italy. Dunn received photos of Albert after the surgery, but lost contact shortly after.

“Luckily God compensates and gives us healthy children. Albert stayed healthy despite his condition,” Isaku said. “When he came back to us, Chap. Vivaeros and I were singing in the car. We were so happy that we felt like we were his mother and father.”

On learning that his unit would deploy to Kosovo again, Dunn immediately thought of Albert and his family.


“One of my goals coming back here was to re-establish contact, to get a little closure and see how they’re doing,” Dunn said.

Recently, Dunn got his opportunity to

visit with the family, and he said the family and especially Albert are doing much better.

“They are in a better living situation now, and Albert’s like any other kid. He’s getting into things. He’s curious, and he’s happy. It was quite a difference from the little boy I dealt with before who was very sick.”

“Without the surgery, he would have been lost. Now he will have every chance that any other child could have,” Isaku said. “He was always so intelligent and now with the surgery he will have a normal life.”

Albert is scheduled to return to the surgeons in Italy when he is six years old, so that they can see how his bones are growing, adjust them if needed and to perform any cosmetic surgery needed. 



■ 2nd Lt. Lazaros Giakozoglou reviews a patient's form as his interpreter Rexhep Raka listens to the patient's question during a MEDCAP in Babjak/Bablak.

HELLAS, U.S. troops help provide a clear vision to Kosovo

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
SGT. TY STAFFORD

Task Force Hellas in partnership with Soldiers from Task Force Med Falcon and members of the Kosovo Protection Corp/TMK participated in a Medical Civil Assistance Program in the town of Bablak/Babjak in September.

Hellas soldiers and medical staff were in charge of the MEDCAP which included general medical exams, dental exams and eye exams.

Cpl. Labros Spiliadis, a

civil affairs soldier with Hellas, said that the current task force has conducted more than 10 MEDCAPs since the troops have been on the ground.

"Our doctors also go and visit with families in their homes if the problems are small," he said.

Hellas only has one general practitioner and one dentist, and the partnership with the other Multi-National Task Force (East) forces and the KPC/TMK helps to provide a much needed service.

"It is really nice. Health is really important. If you give something to the community that helps with their health, it is very nice," he said.

Besides general health exams, the MEDCAPs provide an opportunity for patients to have a chance to see things more clearly – literally.

The optical portion of the MEDCAP, helps the citizens who visit by supplying them with basic glasses for reading, said Lt. Col. Rodney Mann, the Task Force Med Falcon Optometrist.

"We have only a certain range of prescriptions to offer," he said. "The prescriptions on the glasses we supply them are assuming both eyes are roughly the same."

Staff Sgt. Tanya Rose, an eye technician, added that the exams were general and if any issues were found that the staff could not deal with, the patients are referred to a civilian doctor within the community.

Mann added that around 90 to 95 percent of the patients they see are older people who need reading glasses.



■ Staff Sgt. Tanya Rose uses a reading chart to determine if the glasses are sufficient for the patient during the optical portion of the MEDCAP.

"We do have some cases of dry eyes and allergies, but the majority are reading glasses," he said.

Whether giving out glasses or providing general medical care, MEDCAPs are a way for members of MNTF (E) to reach out to the community and TF Hellas will continue its tradition of medical care and providing donation projects in its area of operations. 🇺🇸



■ Mayor of Ferizaj/Urosevac Bajrush Xhemajli, visits with Hellenic, U.S. and KPC/TMK medical personnel during the MEDCAP.



Missouri Governor, Matt Blunt, leads a physical training run for the Warrior Leaders Course. Blunt, a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, served five years of active duty service and served six months in Operation Enduring Freedom.

Mo. Gov. visits Soldiers at CBS

STORY AND PHOTO BY SGT. ANTHONIE SEYMOUR

CAMP BONDSTEEL, Kosovo – Missouri Gov. Matt Blunt visited Missouri National Guard Troops and Guardsmen and Reservists from across the United States who are deployed to Kosovo to conduct peacekeeping missions.

Blunt said that his visit to the Balkans had a threefold purpose, but that he would return to Missouri with a better education on Kosovo and a keen sense of the good that American servicemembers are doing there.

“In visiting Kosovo, I really had three goals,” Missouri’s commander-in-chief told Soldiers attending a “town hall meeting” on Bondsteel. “I wanted to learn more about the mission itself, and I’ve learned a great deal, and have an even greater appreciation for the good work that all service men and women are doing.”

He said that he also wanted to deliver the sentiment of a grateful nation and state.

“The second agenda was to really express gratitude to all these great young men and women who are serving our country. Missourians are very proud of our Guard members that are here, and we want to do everything we can to be supportive of them.”

Finally, Blunt wanted to brag on the good things Missouri is doing in Kosovo.

“The third goal is that, by coming, I can help raise awareness in Missouri about the work that is being done here and the sacrifices being made by Missourians and their families.”

Blunt said that the newly formed democracy of Kosovo is worthy of America’s efforts, and that benefits would come from the relationship formed between the two countries.

“The [Guard] focus, in a lot of ways is on the Global War on Terrorism, and we need to help a good American ally get on its own two

feet and in doing so, we strengthen America’s position internationally,” Blunt said. “Kosovo, to be quite candid, is even more impoverished than I expected or had read, which makes the work that the Guard, Reserve and other service men and women are doing here that much more important. In Kosovo, we have potentially here a very strong American ally, a nation-state that embraces the United States and American values.”

Because of the wide variety of tools the 1,000 Missouri Citizen Soldiers deployed to Kosovo bring, Blunt said that the Missouri National Guard is a great help to the fledgling country.

“It really makes sense. A lot of the civilian skill sets that members of the Guard have are obviously very helpful as they work to help Kosovo get on its feet as an independent nation,” Blunt said.

In a news release from Blunt’s office, Missouri Guard members bring a range of expertise including, among other things, security, public information, military police and medical experience.

Nation grooming is delicate business, and Blunt said that the responsibility for American service members is great.

“The Kosovar’s high esteem of American Soldiers makes our responsibility here that much greater,” Blunt said. “It’s a big responsibility to insure that when KFOR10 leaves, that there is an even better relationship than when we started.”

The governor said that on returning to the state, he will have much to tell Missourians about the work their state’s men and women are doing in Kosovo.

“I really want you to know how proud I am as the commander-in-chief of the Missouri Army National Guard,” Blunt said. “Missourians are patriots and I really appreciate the service of our men and women in uniform and I am very proud that the Missouri National Guard is playing such an instrumental role in this effort.”

Ease

LEGAL

Defending those who defend America

BY MAJ. KEVIN THOMPSON

The U.S. Army Trial Defense Service provides a full range of defense legal services to American Soldiers of all ranks.

Those services include:

- o Representing Soldiers during criminal investigations and before elimination or grade reduction boards;

- o Representing Soldiers charged with military criminal offenses at courts martial;

- o Counseling Soldiers regarding pretrial restraint, non-judicial punishment (Article 15), and various adverse administrative actions taken pursuant to military regulations

- o Counseling Soldiers on suspect rights and certain other matters.

TDS is not a part of the Camp Bondsteel chain of command. Rather, TDS offices worldwide report through their own supervisory chain to a separate TDS HQs in Arlington, VA.

This independence from local commands allows TDS attorneys to vigorously advocate on behalf of Soldiers.

For more information about TDS, see www.jagcnet.army.mil/TDS.

IMPORTANT: If you are ever suspected of a crime, do not sign anything unless a TDS attorney reviews it, first.

Furthermore,

EXERCISE YOUR RIGHT TO REMAIN SILENT

Do not speak about a crime you are suspected of, without first talking with a TDS

attorney. Politely and tactfully decline to speak about the matter.

This right to remain silent is not something to take lightly; it is a sacred right embodied in our Constitution.

You are not obligated to help the government form a case against you by answering questions about a suspected crime.

If you do decide to waive your rights and talk about the matter, you just might be talking yourself right into a conviction.

Exercise your right to remain silent - a right that the Framers of the Constitution have given you.

We are open from 0830 - 1730, Mon-Sat, and are located in Building 1330C.

We prefer appointments, but welcome walk-ins as well.

Stop by, call 781-4012, or email if I can ever be of assistance. kevin.v.thompson@us.army.mil.

Editor's note: Maj. Thompson is Camp Bondsteel's new Trial Defense Service (TDS) Attorney.

Thompson will be at Camp Bondsteel for a one year tour. He is from Leavenworth, KS; and his home unit is the 22nd Legal Support Organization, a unit within the Trial Defense Service.

A PENNY SAVED...

Helpful hints from your local finance office

Retirement information for Reserve, National Guard Soldiers Part 1

Earning Points

You can earn retirement points in these ways:

Inactive Duty for Training (IDT) points (earned as a TPU member or as an IRR/IMA soldier attached to a Troop Program Unit)

Active Duty (AD)

Active Duty for Training (ADT)

Annual Training (AT)

Active Duty Special Work (ADSW)

Correspondence Course Points

Funeral Honors Duty

Points-only (non-paid) status (i.e., Reinforcement Training Unit (RTU) soldiers)

Personnel on AD, ADT, AT and ADSW are awarded one point for each calendar day they serve in one of these categories. Additional retirement points cannot be awarded for other activities while in an active duty status. The only exception is correspondence course points. As an IRR or IMA soldier, submit your DA Form 1380s and any nonresident correspondence course completion notices, prior to completion of your Retirement Year Ending Date (RYE). This will ensure that your annual AHRC Form 249-2-E is accurate and current.

Most types of IDT points earned are covered by one of the following rules:

Four-Hour Rule

One point for each 4-hour period of IDT performed. Normally, these are soldiers in a TPU. Maximum of two points per day.

Meetings (Seminars, Symposia, Professional Development). Per DoD Instruction 1215.7, effective 31 October 2000, soldiers will only be allowed one point per day. Training must be a minimum of 4 hours long.

Two-Hour Rule

Per DoD Instruction 1215.19, effective 12 December 2000, the following types of duty require a minimum of two hours:

Funeral Honors Duty

You receive one point for each day in which you perform funeral honors duty. Minimum 2 hours, including travel. You may perform no more than 1 Funeral Honors Duty per day. IDT duty in a non-pay status. One retirement point per two hours (minimum) with a maximum of one point authorized in any 1-calendar day. Example: RTU members drilling for points-only.

Correspondence Course Points

Most correspondence course points are automatically reported through an interface with TRADOC. Points are awarded within the appropriate RYB/RYE dates. Soldiers are awarded one retirement point for every three hours of course credit. Points are awarded only after successful completion and receipt of grade for the course or sub course.

- See Part 2 of Retirement Points information next issue

Maximum Points Allowed Per Year

There are three dates to keep in mind regarding the maximum inactive (non active duty) points allowed per retirement year.

Effective Date	Maximum Points Allowed
31 October 2000	90
23 September 1996	75
Prior to 23 September 1996	60

Currently, you are allowed a maximum of 90 points per year for IDT, extension courses, and membership points. You will be given credit for all Active Duty (AD), Active Duty for Training (ADT), Annual Training (AT), and Active Duty for Special Work (ADSW) -- including Funeral Honors Duty if performed in an active duty status -- beyond the maximum allowable limit for any given retirement point year. There is no grandfathering for any of these changes; nor is there authorization for recalculation of retirement pay.

Minimum Points Required for a Qualifying Year

You must earn a minimum of 50 points per retirement year in order for that year to qualify as a creditable or "good" year for retirement purposes. If you fail to earn the minimum 50 points per year, that year will not count towards retirement. Also, you may be subject to removal for failure to participate satisfactorily. Partial periods of service require completion of a minimal amount of retirement points in order to qualify for retirement purposes. See AR 140-185, Appendix B.

SPORTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Sun, Sand & SOLDIERS

BY STAFF SGT. JASON D. STAREK

If the sweet smell of victory resembles coconut oil and SPF 45, then a mouthful of sand and a hefty helping one's own pride must be the bitter taste of defeat.

It could be worse, though. Being schooled by a bunch of civilians isn't necessarily an easy pill for some Soldiers to swallow. But, getting trounced by 6'9" professional sand-stompers and Olympic hard-bodies; well, that's an honor and a privilege.

Recently, soldiers in Film City and Camp Bondsteel put their skills, and egos, to the test when a group of professional volleyball players from the Association of Volleyball Professionals (AVP) tour visited.

Led by three-time Olympian, and 2003 AVP MVP, Jeff Nygaard; the team consisted of 7-year AVP veteran, and 2002 AVP rookie-of-the-year, Angie Akers, 7-year AVP veteran Ty Loomis, and 7-year AVP veteran Brook Niles-Hanson.

"After 22 years in the military and being deployed twice that was one of my most memorable experiences," said Maj. Eddie Brown, the deputy supply and logistics officer, Task Force Falcon. "I'll have pictures on the wall when I go home, and I'll be able to say that

I competed against an Olympic athlete."

Brown's no slouch either. At 6 foot 5 inches tall, and nearly 285 pounds, he was just one of the many NBA-sized Soldiers brave enough to get in the "pit" with the pros.

"I've competed a lot, but these guys; forget about it," Brown said in disbelief. "Ty [Loomis] blazed a spike so dang fast; it was amazing. I didn't even see it until it had bounced off my chest and was in the air. I looked around and asked the

other players, 'Did he just hit me with that ball?'"

If some of the players seemed a bit familiar, you're either an avid volleyball fan, or you've been on Camp Bondsteel way too long; Both Loomis and Akers visited the post last year, and said that this year's trip wouldn't be their last.

Sgt. 1st Class Eric Obersteadt, the deputy surgeon noncommissioned officer in-charge, with Task Force Falcon, also enjoyed the games.

Another of KFOR 10's

■ Sgt. 1st Class Eric Obersteadt, the deputy surgeon Noncommissioned officer in-charge, with Headquarters, Headquarters Company, Task Force Falcon, shows off his volleyball skills during a pro-am game.



PHOTO BY CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 4 RANDALL WATSON

resident tall-men, "Sergeant O.," as he is referred to by friends and colleagues, stands six-foot-four.

Both Brown and Obersteadt were college athletes, Brown playing football, while Obersteadt played, of all things, volleyball.

Both men agreed that it wasn't just their athletic skill that made the pros' visit so enjoyable.

"It was their personality and approachability that made them a joy to be around," said Brown

"It wasn't just another demonstration; they didn't just come out and display their skills to the Soldiers," said Obersteadt. "We had the privilege, as did they, of getting involved, interacting and participating with one another."

Obersteadt said that while escorting the athletes around film city he got a chance to really get to know some of them, and the players got a chance to get to know some of the Soldiers in return.

"Jeff [Nygaard] and I talked about our personal lives, our kids, our families, it was just nice to talk to someone from back home," said Obersteadt

While the pros warmed up for the CBS game, Obersteadt



■ Jeff Nygaard does his best Johnny Cash impersonation during the night's karaoke festivities.



■ Jeff Nygaard pounds down a spike during a pro-am game against soldiers from Task Force POL/UKR.

said that Nygaard even gave him an on-the-spot lesson on how to serve and set like a pro.

After the games were over and the throngs of Soldiers had started to diminish, Nygaard hopped on stage and gave everyone a lesson on what it means to be a double threat. He, along with a handful of brave Soldiers, dazzled the remaining crowd with their rendition of Garth Brooks' "Friends in Low Places."

Nygaard, along with several soldiers, stayed and sang karaoke to several songs, including Nygaard's solo performance of Johnny Cash's "Ring of Fire."

Staff Sgt. Marlon Foster, transportation noncommissioned officer for the Joint Visitors Bureau, Task Force Falcon, even gave Brooke Niles-Hanson an impromptu lesson on the art of the two-step.


The night was a hit; and all left feeling a little more like regular people; a little more like they had just spent the evening with friends at a local barbeque, and less like Soldiers deployed six thousand miles from home. 



PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. JASON D. STAREK

■ Staff Sgt. Marlon Foster, transportation noncommissioned officer for the Joint Visitors Bureau, Task Force Falcon, dances with Brooke Niles-Hanson of the AVP tour.



■ Ty Loomis of the AVP tour prepares to demonstrate how to effectively blast a spike--pro style.

PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. JASON D. STAREK

Bigger, Better GI Bill

BY STAFF SGT. MICHAEL J. CARDEN

WASHINGTON - The latest GI Bill considerably improves the opportunity for today's servicemembers to obtain their education, a senior Defense Department official said.

President Bush signed the Post-9/11 Veterans Education Assistance Act of 2008 in June.

The new law mirrors the tenets of the original GI Bill, which gave returning World War II veterans the opportunity to go to any school they wanted while receiving a living stipend, Bob Clark, the Pentagon's assistant director of accessions policy, said.

"The original GI Bill was said to be one of the most significant social impacts of the 20th century," Clark said. "We believe the new bill is going to have a similar impact."

The new GI Bill applies to individuals who served on active duty on or after Sept. 11, 2001, and offers education benefits worth an average of \$80,000 - double the value of those in the previous program. It covers the full costs of tuition and books, which are paid directly to the school, and it provides a variable stipend for living expenses. It's also transferable to family members of career servicemembers.

Its only restriction is that payment amounts are limited to the most expensive in-state cost to attend a college or university in the state where veterans attend school, he said.

The variable stipend is based on the Defense Department's basic allowance for housing for an E-5, which averages about \$1,200 a month, and \$1,000 a year will be paid directly to the servicemember for books and supplies, he added.

Enrollment into the Post-9/11 GI Bill is free. Eligibility for the Montgomery GI Bill is based on service commitment and requires active-duty servicemembers to pay a \$1,200 fee over the initial year of their enlistment.

The new bill requires that an individual serve at least 90 days on active duty after Sept. 10, 2001, and if discharged, be separated on honorable terms.

Servicemembers discharged due to a service-connected disability are eligible if they served 30 continuous days on active duty.

Servicemembers must serve 36 aggregated months to qualify for the full amount of benefits.

Servicemembers are entitled to benefits of the new bill for up to 36 months and have up to 15 years from their last 30 days of continuous service to use their entitlements.

But as successful as Defense Department officials anticipate the new bill to be, Clark suggested that new recruits still enroll in the Montgomery GI Bill.

The Montgomery GI Bill gives benefits for higher education as well as vocational training, apprenticeship programs and on-the-job training, he explained.

The Post-9/11 GI Bill focuses solely on higher education and can only be used at institutions that offer at least an associate's degree, he said.

Servicemembers also are "highly encouraged" to use the Defense Department's tuition assistance program while on active duty, because the Post-9/11 GI Bill's full entitlements, such as the living stipend and book allowance, will not be available, Clark said.

"If you use the Post-9/11 GI Bill while on active duty, it will merely cover tuition or the difference of what tuition assistance will pay," he explained.

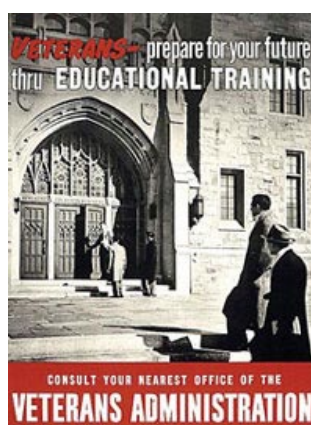
"Another downside to that is each month you use [the new bill], you lose a month of your 36 months of eligibility."

So, if servicemembers serve on active duty on or after Aug. 1, 2009, and meet the minimum time-in-service requirement, they will be eligible for the new GI Bill while also maintaining benefits from the Montgomery GI Bill, he said.

The Post-9/11 GI Bill also brings good news for officers and for servicemembers who enlisted under the loan repayment program.

Since eligibility for the Post-9/11 GI Bill is based on time already served, more servicemembers will be able to take advantage of its benefits, Clark added.

Officers commissioned through one of the service academies or through ROTC and enlisted servicemembers participating in the loan repayment program don't qualify for the Montgomery GI



Bill, he said.

Those servicemembers will be able to qualify if they finish their initial obligatory service. Commissioned officers must complete their initial five-year commitment if they attended a service academy or their four-year agreement if they were commissioned through college ROTC.

Servicemembers whose college loans were paid off by the Defense Department as a re-enlistment incentive must finish their initial commitment - whether it is three, four or five years - before they can apply, Clark said.

"Any amount of time an individual served after their obligated service counts for qualifying service under the new GI Bill," he said.

Another facet unique to the Post-9/11 GI Bill is that it's transferable to family members. The feature gives the defense and service secretaries the authority to offer career servicemembers the opportunity to transfer unused benefits to their family.

Though Defense Department officials still are working with the services to hash out eligibility requirements, there are four prerequisites that are subject to adjustment or change, Clark said.

Currently transferability requirements are:

- Qualifying service to be eligible for the Post-9/11 GI Bill;
- Active duty service in the armed forces on or after Aug. 1, 2009;

- At least six years of service in the armed forces;

- Agreement to serve four more years in the armed forces.

"We're really excited about transferability," Clark said.

"That was one of the things about education and the GI Bill that's come up the most often from the field and fleet."

Individuals who may not qualify to transfer unused benefits because they leave the service before the new bill's effective date most likely still will qualify for the bill.

As long as the separated servicemembers meet the minimum qualifying time served, they can contact their local Veterans Affairs office and apply for the program. While payments are not retroactive, eligibility is, Clark said.

"This new bill will allow our veterans to chase their dreams," Clark said. "It will allow them to go back and experience college like they deserve, much like their grandfathers did in World War II." 🇺🇸

(Army Staff Sgt. Michael J. Carden writes for the American Forces Press Service.)

GI Bill Facts

49%

Percent of veterans for accounted for admissions in 1947.

7.8 million

Number of veterans after WWII who took advantage of the GI Bill.

Mississippi Congressman Gillespie V. "Sonny" Montgomery

Namesake and man responsible for the revamping of the GI Bill in 1984.

FROM THE PULPIT

Talking without Fighting

If there was away that you could talk with people, especially your spouse, without swallowing or spewing anger, wouldn't you want to learn how to do so.

Fortunately, there is such a way to talk that does not require escalation or avoidance or withdrawal. There is a way to talk without fighting.

The key to the type of conversation allows people like a husband and wife to talk without fighting is that the people involved in the conversation have to feel safe.

When people in a conversation feel safe, they allow themselves to open up and be vulnerable.

To talk without fighting involves active listening, a way of talking that is called the "Speaker/Listener" technique by the founders of PREP (Prevention and Relationship Enhancement Program).

This technique provides a

framework in which individuals can communicate safely and clearly without worrying about relapsing into destructive communication habits.

The speaker/listener technique, being a structured method of conversation, has some basic rules that must be followed for it to be effective. Both the speaker and the listener must follow these rules.

The "speaker" must speak for his or her self and not mind read, keep statements brief, and stop every so often to let the listener paraphrase (interpret).

The "listener" must then paraphrase what the speaker has said without rebuttal.

Finally, both the speaker and listener must honor that the rules of the floor:

1. The speaker has the floor.
2. The speaker keeps the floor while the listener paraphrases.
3. Share the floor.

The speaker/listener technique is not designed to be used for every conversation. Rather, it is for those conversations that couples know often led to arguments or when couples find themselves starting to argue.

The goal of this method is for each person to feel like the other person has really listened and understood the other person.

The goal is not to come to an agreement or solve a problem, but shared mutual understanding.

When this happens, then couples can move into problem solving or coming to an agreement.



Chap. (Maj.) Darren King

Despite the inherent success built into this technique, many couples will choose not to use it for various reasons.

The three most common are that many people hate to follow rules, especially artificial ones.

Second, it takes a lot of time to use this technique and get through a meaningful conversation, and three, the technique is artificial and awkward.

However, these three objections are the reasons why couples who exhibit self-destructive communication habits ought to use them in the first place.

They are not follow the rules of polite conversation, they are unwilling to come to a mutual shared understanding, and finally, what comes naturally for them isn't working.

So it may be time to try something that seems artificial to help them get on a consistent and natural path to talking without fighting.

Darren King
MAJ, CH
KFOR 10, MNTF(E) Command Chaplain



PHOTO BY CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 4 RANDAL WATSON

■ Chap. (Brig. Gen.) Bryan Hult, gives a sermon on Sept. 7 at the north chapel during his visit to camp bondsteel. Hult is the Army National Guard assitant to the army chief of chaplains.

