

THE GUARDIAN EAST



Earning their Spurs

Cav Soldiers
compete for
prestige

"In Together, Out Together"

Brig. Gen. Alan S. Dohrmann
MNTF-E Commander

It has been almost two years since we received the first notice that we could be deploying to Kosovo and now, we have finally arrived. The Soldiers of KFOR 11 provided us with a warm welcome to Camp Bondsteel, as our arrival means they will soon be headed home. During the relief-in-place process they are helping us find our way around Kosovo and transition into the mission. We are very grateful for their assistance and wish them all the best as they return to their communities and families.

We had a great experience in Indiana at Camp Atterbury. The staff was very helpful in making sure that our administrative paperwork and medical records were up-to-date and in order. We were also issued additional clothing and equipment designed to suit the conditions we will face in Kosovo. Most importantly, the Camp Atterbury trainers brought us all up to speed on individual and unit training, including helping us through a mission rehearsal exercise designed to ensure we work together as a team in Kosovo.

At Hohenfels, Germany, we refined the skills we obtained at Camp Atterbury. Some Soldiers such as our finance, postal, and medical troops, received specialized classes providing them the tools to take care of our needs for the remainder of the deployment. Other Soldiers trained in the field and learned more about the conditions we are likely to face in Kosovo, while also learning to work with interpreters and soldiers from Slovenia and Ukraine to replicate the multi-national environment we will work in here in Kosovo. Throughout our training, Soldiers of Task Force Falcon performed superbly, confronting challenges with determination and great attitude. At both Camp Atterbury and Hohenfels the trainers/evaluators were quick to tell me how impressed they were with TFF and our abilities. The intense training we received at home, Camp Atterbury and Hohenfels was essential in preparation for the unique mission we have in Kosovo.

We have an important mission in Kosovo: maintaining a safe and secure environment and ensuring freedom of movement for people in our area of responsibility so that they will have the chance to develop a stable, peaceful and prosperous future. NATO has been working toward these objectives in Kosovo since 1999, and the security situation here has improved dramatically during this time. NATO defense ministers recognized a positive evolution of the situation over a sustained period of time. The decision taken in August 2009 to gradually reduce troop numbers reflects this development. KFOR's gradual reduction of troops is a sign of confidence in the progress made by the Intuitions in Kosovo.

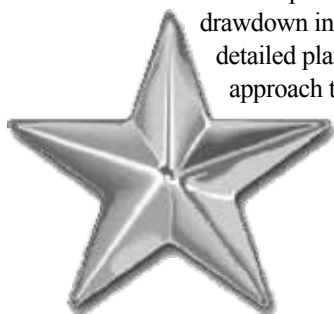
The proposed change in NATO's status in Kosovo does not mean NATO will be pulling out of Kosovo any time soon. Any drawdown in forces in Kosovo will be based on detailed planning. NATO will take an orderly phased approach that will be tied to specific security criteria in order to ensure continued security and stability in the region. We understand that the framework of



our mission in Kosovo will be adjusted at some point. The nearly 2200 U.S. and coalition Soldiers of Multi-National Task Force-East have spent months training for this mission and are ready to assist in providing a safe and secure environment for the people in Kosovo. I am determined to give each and every Soldier the opportunity to use this training to be successful in our mission. My goal for this mission was, and still is, that everyone in the task force came into Kosovo together, and that everyone will go out together; however, our mission may be adjusted, affording some Soldiers the opportunity to serve outside Kosovo in the European Command Area of Operation on a temporary basis.

I understand that families and friends at home have a sincere desire to know more information about what we are doing, what their Soldier will be doing, and where they may be going. Since we mobilized, a key task my staff and I have focused on is gathering and processing accurate information. Once we have up-to-date information and decisions have been made, we pass it to our Soldiers as quickly as we can so they can carry out their missions. Rest assured, as soon as we learn any facts about possible changes to our Kosovo mission or troop levels, I will communicate with TFF Soldiers – and their families back home – letting them know the facts immediately. Please assist me in preventing rumors. Rumors will only add confusion and cause frustration for all of us.

In closing, I want to thank all Soldiers of Task force Falcon for your dedication to this mission and your positive attitude and flexibility during the preparation for our mission. We look forward to working with our multinational partners in Multinational Task Force - East from Greece, Poland, Ukraine, Armenia and Romania, as well as our multinational partners outside of Multinational Task Force - East. Task Force Falcon, KFOR 12 has built a strong team through our training. We will be an even stronger team with the addition of our multinational partners and the contractors supporting our mission here in Kosovo. Together we will do great things.



“Be Disciplined and Be Safe”



Command Sgt. Maj. Jack W. Cripe
MNTF-E Command Sgt. Maj.

November 15 marked the official start of our peacekeeping mission. We are grateful to the Soldiers and leadership of the 40th Infantry Division, KFOR 11, for passing on the lessons they've learned through the last year during our relief-in-place process. Their assistance and support provided to this task force will not be forgotten. I am truly confident that we are prepared to represent NATO and be ambassadors of the United States of America in our daily contact and dealings with the people of Kosovo. We are here as neighbors helping neighbors. I ask that you maintain the high standards of conduct and discipline that all of you have shown throughout your pre-mobilization training. We will be successful, as long as each and every Soldier stays the course.

Opportunities are everywhere you look on Camp Bondsteel. There are physical fitness improvement

programs and professional development for both your military and civilian careers. I encourage you to take advantage of these programs and use your time wisely. This is the perfect time to expand and enhance your soldiering skills and grow both personally and professionally.

STAY ALERT, STAY SAFE – especially while you travel on the roads of Kosovo. I cannot stress enough that you must remain alert and focused at all times. Use your seat belts and all safety equipment provided to you, obey all speed limits and road signs on and off of Camp Bondsteel, and use defensive driving techniques that you were trained on. Ensure that all safety equipment on your vehicle is operational and that you always keep your windshields clean, and remember your two-minute drills.

As we move forward in this mission, do not forget what you learned and experienced from your

home station to Camp Atterbury and onward to the Joint Multinational Readiness Center at Hohenfels, Germany. Continue to enforce standards, hold each other accountable and live the seven Army values: leadership, duty, respect, selfless service, honesty integrity and personal courage.

Embrace and respect our multi-national partners and the people of Kosovo, as they respect you. The flag on your right shoulder carries a power punch in their eyes. Make a promise to continue what each and every Soldier is taught early on in your careers: leave it better than you found it. Work hard, be disciplined, be mentally and physically tough and we will leave Kosovo in a better posture than when we began the mission. Thank you to each and every Soldier in Multi-National Task Force-East for your service, sacrifice and commitment to freedom worldwide, each and every day. Roughriders!

SNAPSHOT

COVER PHOTO:

Spurred On

Cavalry Soldiers with Task Force Saber march on their way to earn their spurs.

(Photo by Spc. Nevada J. Smith)

BACK PHOTOS:

Mob Training

(Top) Medics go through multisensory training to aid simulated casualties.

(Bottom) MNTF-E Soldiers fire the Slovenian FN 2000 rifle. (Photos by Spc. Chris Erickson)



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capt. malia pearson

| Saluting Our Responsible Soldiers |

Safety

CHILL OUT AND SLOW DOWN

Brrr!! The temperature is dropping and winter is well on its way. Although the temperature is decreasing, don't drop your guard when it comes to driving. We all know that driving is the most dangerous task we will do on this deployment. But there are things we can do to reduce the hazards of winter driving.

First, ensure that your vehicle is in good and proper working order. Make certain that you have chains and that they work correctly. Ensure you know how to put them on when you need to. To ensure you have good visibility, keep a roll of paper towels and glass cleaner in your vehicle for cleaning the windshields. Wash them before you go on mission and when they get dirty.

Second, watch your speed. You do not need to go the posted speed limit when there is snow, ice or slush on the roadways. Go only as fast as you need to go. You can keep better control of your vehicle in these conditions if you are driving slow than if you are driving the speed limit. Remember, speed limits are set for driving in perfect conditions. If the drivers behind you are impatient, then pull over and let them pass safely. Pull back onto the roadway only when it is safe to do so.

Third, practice driving in snow. Use an empty parking lot and practice turning right and left, picking up speed, slowing down and braking fast. This will help you "feel" the road and how quickly you can lose that "feel" in snowy, icy conditions. Don't forget to prepare a risk assessment for this training. Have an experienced snow driver with you when you practice and talk with your leaders about this before you go.

To reduce mirror slaps, slow down, pull over as far as safely possible, pull in your mirror and pass the other vehicle. These are accidents that can be easily avoided by just one simple adjustment.

If you implement these controls as you conduct your missions, you will avoid and reduce accidents. By doing so, you will save your money, time and maybe your life.

Safety Check

Chief Warrant Officer Two John Radford checks a rotor during the pre-flight inspection of a UH-60 Blackhawk at Camp Bondsteel. Radford, from Burlington, Ky., is a pilot with Task Force Aviation.



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Michael Hagburg

Stepping into the Spurs

Cavalry Soldiers join an age-old brotherhood

Story and photos by Spc. Nevada J. Smith

The Cavalry Soldier is the second oldest type of professional warrior in the world. Mounted warriors were the first of a group of cunning men who raised themselves up above the common fighter to create a deadly combination of warrior and steed. Since man roped and tamed the first wild horse, the mounted Soldier has been one of the most dangerous, feared and glorified warriors on the battlefield, and the U.S. Army Cavalry still maintains the pride, prowess, fierceness, and élan of that first mounted warrior.

For the Soldiers of the 1st Squadron, 18th Cavalry Regiment, California Army National Guard, Task Force Sabre, Oct. 21 was a day to prove to the rest of the Soldiers deployed to Kosovo that Cavalry Soldiers are among the best. They did this during the rigorous trial known as the "Spur Ride."

Spurs are very important to a Cavalry Soldier.

"While mounted warriors have used spurs for almost as long as there has been mounted combat, it wasn't until medieval knights gilded their spurs that they took a special significance. 'To earn his spurs' meant to gain Knighthood. Mounted warriors of grit, courage and character still strive to attain the privilege of earning their spurs," said Lt. Col. Lars Staack, commander of Task Force Sabre, during his speech to a group of aspiring spur holders.

Any Cavalry Soldier who deploys and goes to combat gets Gold Spurs — an honor in itself — but Silver Spurs have to be earned, said Command Sgt. Maj. Walter Claude-Murray, Task Force Sabre's command sergeant major. "To have your spurs is to say you are the best Cavalry Soldier that the Cavalry can offer, and a Spur Ride is the test of tests for all Cavalrymen."

"It is a privilege to compete for an award that few have earned," said Spc. Danny Martinez of Bravo Troop.

To earn the Silver Spurs, a trooper has to prove himself; an unproven Soldier is called a "shaved tail." This nickname for an inexperienced troop comes from the old Cavalry tradition of giving a horse with a shaved tail to new troopers in a unit.

The shaved tail on the horse identified the rider as inexperienced and allowed veterans to give the rider space and let them know who they would have to look after while riding into battle, said Claude-Murray.

New Cavalry troopers were often inexperienced and lacked the skills necessary to swing a saber from horseback. Wearing spurs would have only made the rider's job more difficult as they tried to master the delicate art of fighting from horseback. So being allowed to wear spurs was a sign that the trooper was finally experienced enough.

Today the tradition of the Spur Ride has evolved from that training process. Now to prove their mettle, Soldiers must go through an arduous process of sleep deprivation, forced marches and station training.

The Soldiers trying to earn their spurs started off their morning at 2:30 when an Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT) was administered by the silver spur holders. Out of the 27 candidates, only seven met the required 75 percent or higher for each event of the APFT.

Although there were only seven candidates left, nine Soldiers went on to the next portion of the ride. Two Soldiers, who easily passed the APFT, were just a few points shy of the 75 percent required. These two Soldiers, Spc. Schuyler Labar and Spc. Danny Martinez, showed their dedication and élan when they requested that they continue with the ride even though they knew they would not be earning their spurs.

Dedication is one of the pillars of strength that embodies the spirit of the Cavalry and it takes dedication to finish the challenging Spur Ride. After the APFT, the "shaved tails," also affectionately referred to by the spur holders as "maggots," since, much like a larva, they have yet to grow into anything, were submitted to another kind of test. This one tested their knowledge of the Cavalry's history and traditions.

After the test, the "maggots" began to navigate their way to the different training stations.

They have to go through nine different stations, from placing an IV and calling for a medical evacuation, to making a call-for-fire, said Claude-Murray.

Stetson-clad sergeants could be seen striding around the shaved tails shouting words of "encouragement." Earning the spurs is not supposed to be easy and the veteran spur holders were quick to point out the mistakes of the shaved tails, and just as quick to offer advice and corrective action.

The NCOs make sure t h e

(Right) Spc. Schuyler Labar sets a saline lock into Spc. Danny Martinez's forearm during the Spur Ride.



(Right) Sgt. 1st Class Andrew McKindley shakes hands with Lt. Col. Lars Staack after completing the Spur Ride.

Soldiers are ready to be challenged in their Army Warrior Tasks, said Claude-Murray.

When the first day was completed the shaved tails were granted the privilege of sleeping out in the cold instead of their nice warm rooms. The next morning was another early one and was the start of the final test, an arduous 12-mile trek with all of their gear on. As the Soldiers neared the completion of their struggle they showed real Cavalry spirit as they charged the last 200 meters in a dead sprint, packs and all.

Once the ride was over, the seven soldiers kneeled and were presented their spurs. The two Soldiers who had asked to continue with the challenge, although they were disqualified were presented plaques signed by all of the silver spur holders in appreciation of their dedication.

"These Cavalry troops have been the best. I couldn't have asked for a better unit to be with. They've worked hard to prove themselves; they are true professionals," said Claude-Murray.

Looks of relief and elation were plastered on the faces of the newly minted spur holders as they began to eat a well-earned and deserved breakfast.

"I feel relieved; it was an exhausting event, but I also feel elated because we finished as a team," said Sgt. 1st Class Andrew McKindley of Headquarters and Headquarters Troop. "It was tough; it tested your limits, but it makes you a better person after."

When McKindley, an Alta Loma, Calif. native, was asked what he would say to a shaved tail now, he only said, "work hard, study hard, train hard and someday you too can have your spurs like the rest of us. Hurry Up, maggot!"



(Below) While two spur holders look on, Spc. John Garibay performs a S.A.L.U.T.E. report during a station of the Spur Ride.



(Bottom Right) Maj. James Westerfield conducts the kneeling shaved tails into the Order of the Spur. (photo illustration by Spc. Nevada J. Smith)

(Bottom Left) The "shaved tails" recite the words to fiddlers green and get one final smoke session in before being awarded their spurs.



Aid training for all the senses



Sgt. Ciciley Littlewolf, Moorhead, Minn., a medic with the 231st Maneuver Task Force, patches up a mannequin during medical training in a multisensory environment at the South Camp Medical Simulation Training Center at Rose Barracks, Vilseck, Germany.

*Story and photos by
Spc. Chris Erickson*

VILSECK, Germany -- Blood pools on the floor, smoke hangs in the air and the sound of gunfire fills the ears of the medics who are administering aid to casualties.

It's not a warzone; it's advanced medical training at the South Camp Medical Simulation Training Center (MSTC) in Vilseck, Germany, where about three dozen medics deployed with Multi-National Task Force-East recently went through the final phase of their training for the Kosovo Forces 12 mission.

While the blood, gunfire and casualties are all fake, the focus is real: learn in a chaotic setting to be better prepared if a Soldier needs life-saving help.

The MSTC's multisensory training was designed to recreate every aspect of the battlefield in a controlled, simulated environment.

Richard Harper is the contract site manager/senior facilitator for the MSTC at South Camp, Rose Barracks, at Vilseck. He said all the trainers at the South Camp MSTC had prior military experience and worked to make the training as realistic as possible.

"We try to simulate a battlefield scenario with the smells, blood, sounds

and lights going off in a limited visibility environment to stress the Soldier out as much as possible so it's not the first time they see it when they're downrange," Harper said.

During the training the medics were divided into two- or three-person teams and sent into rooms with no knowledge of what type of atmosphere to expect inside, only that there were simulated casualties that needed immediate aid.

Spc. Dennis Yi, Los Angeles, a medic with the 1-144th Maneuver Task Force "Mustang". Yi has been a medic for nine years.

"It was as perfect example of a mass casualty situation that I could find myself in," Yi said. "I think this is very good training, it's very important for all medics to go through."

Private 1st Class Ricardo Roncancio, Corona, Calif., another 1-144th MTF medic, agreed.

"I think we should do it, even when we're not going on a deployment," Roncancio said. "If you don't do it as a career, training like this really helps refresh your memory."

Harper said the main focus of the training center was to present a standardized medical training platform used for combat lifesavers, non-medical personnel and medics for advanced skills

training. More than 1,400 medical and non-medical personnel are trained yearly at the MSTC.

"We try to get them to think on their feet and reinforce their critical-thinking skills," he added. "That's the biggest part."

All the training gives the medics an opportunity to adapt to challenges. It also serves to introduce medics to different techniques and the importance of communicating with team members.

"I think it gives us more of a sense of reality and urgency in our jobs," Yi said.

Roncancio said the training was necessary and he felt that his skills had been refreshed by it.

"I feel like I just got out of Advanced Individual Training, because it just brought back all that knowledge," he said, adding that the hands-on aspect was essential to medical training. "When you do it, it helps you remember the training better."

"When they leave out of here I hope they've learned the proper techniques to use downrange," Harper said. He added that he wanted the training to make the medics think before they go out to save their buddy and learn how to triage better on the battlefield.

"That way they'll save more lives downrange," he said.



Firing the Slovenian's FN F2000

Story and photos by
Spc. Chris Erickson

HOHENFELS, Germany -- Soldiers with Kosovo Forces 12 Multi-National Task Force-East were invited by the Slovenian Army to fire a new weapon during mobilization training for their mission in Kosovo.

About two dozen U.S. and Ukrainian Soldiers responded to the invitation to fire the FN 2000, which is the new weapon used by the Slovenian Armed Forces. Staff Sgt. Drago Rus, a weapons instructor with the Slovenian Army, brought the U.S. and Ukrainian Soldiers up to speed on how to use the rifle.

Although the rifle has a bullpup design, Rus said it was similar to the M4 or M16 because it was chambered for 5.56 mm rounds – standard for assault rifles used by NATO countries. Rus said the invitation was done to the two other NATO countries because of that similarity.

All the invited Soldiers were excited about the opportunity to use the rifle.

"The chance to fire another country's weapon was something I didn't want to miss," Sgt. Dale Wasness said. Wasness, from Fargo, N.D., is a member of Task Force Falcon Headquarters and Headquarters Co. "It was a great opportunity to bring



Soldiers with KFOR 12 Multi-National Task Force-East get ammunition ready before firing the FN F2000 after being invited to the firing range by the Slovenian Army.


the countries together and work as a team."

"I didn't know we were going to get to fire these weapons," Spc. Jimmy Ruacho said. Ruacho, from Hermosa, Calif., is a member of 1-144th Maneuver Task Force. "It was really cool."

"For some of our guys it was a new experience, as well as for some of the U.S. and Ukrainian troops to compare

the rifle with their own," Rus said. "It was a very good experience."

All three Soldiers said they looked forward to future opportunities to work with servicemembers from other countries.

The multi-national nature of the KFOR 12 deployment in Kosovo could provide them with that chance. 



(Left) Slovenian Army Staff Sgt. Drago Rus instructs members of KFOR 12 MNTF-E how to operate the FN F2000 rifle.

(Right) Soldiers with KFOR 12 MNTF-E were invited to a weapons range at Hohenfels, Germany, by members of the Slovenian Army.



A Perfect Match: N.D. and Kan.

Story and photos by Spc. Joshua A. Dodds



Charlie Company will have two main missions, under the overall command of Brig. Gen. Alan S. Dohrmann.

“One will be to provide a safe and secure environment for the city of Gnjilane,” Koberlein said. “Secondly, we are also tasked with the mechanized mission (armored support) for Camp Bondsteel.”

The company worked well together during the exercise in the mock version of Gnjilane/Gjilan, based on one of Kosovo’s major municipalities. The target was captured and no civil disturbances escalated.

HOHENFELS, Germany -- After the humvees and Bradleys roll out from the last link-up point, the vehicles arrive at various points around the quiet replicated city of Gnjilane/Gjilan, Kosovo, at this training base.

The rain quits on a cool October day and the sun pokes through the clouds as second platoon reports their target is acquired. Radio traffic bounces back and forth in the command vehicle as the teams are coordinated. Soldiers wait for the order to follow through with their mission.

“Even though we have only trained for six weeks now, we have meshed really well,” Capt. Darren Koberlein said. Koberlein commands Charlie Company, 231st Maneuver Task Force (MTF), Multi-National Task Force-East.

The day’s exercise was part of a MRE (Mission Rehearsal Exercise) in preparation for a yearlong deployment here in Kosovo.

Report) went well -- we had some learning points -- but overall we had very positive comments,” Koberlein said.

Charlie Company is a hybrid of two National Guard units, the 2nd Combined Arms Battalion, 137th Infantry Regiment, headquartered in Kansas City, Kan., and the 1-188th Air Defense Artillery, out of Grand Forks, N.D.

The 2nd/137th Inf. Reg. provides the commander with rapid troop deployment on the battlefield, with the help of its M2A2 Operation Desert Storm Bradley Fighting Vehicle.

The 1-188th ADA primarily will conduct foot patrols in Kosovo to provide the command with much needed information about the needs of the people and their civic leaders. This will be an adjustment from their usual air-defense mission.

“I am pretty familiar with doing the combat drills and battle drills we have to do on the infantry side. It is as if you were dismounted with a stinger missile,” said 1st Lt. Blake Siebold, originally of New Rockford, N.D.

Siebold is the company’s executive officer and has been a



Soldiers form new team

member of the 1-188th ADA since 2002.

The two units completed pre-deployment training in their home states and joined together at their mobilization station, Camp Atterbury, Ind.

"The first time we met was when we hit boots on the ground at Camp Atterbury, and since then we've meshed 100 percent. It's like we've always trained with each other," said Staff Sgt. Kenneth W. Rock, of Lawrence, Kan.

Soldiers from both states had an advantage of being able to make their own training schedules, giving the unit a chance to start working together under their own terms.

"We started off in a good situation; both elements of the company had conducted all their pre-mobilization training prior to hitting mobilization station," Koberlein said.

This gave Charlie Company's leadership the opportunity to design their training schedule for the first two to three weeks at Camp Atterbury, he said.

"From our first initial meeting with our Kansas counterparts to what we have now, it is as if we have trained a lot longer than what we have been together," said Sgt. Maj. Mark Nelson, Charlie Company's senior enlisted Soldier. "The process of becoming a cohesive unit has been, for the most part, an easy transition for the units."

"Top (Nelson) and I have similar civilian and military backgrounds and it was really easy to be on the same sheet of music," Koberlein said.

Koberlein, of Kansas City, Kan., and Nelson,



of Grand Forks, N.D., both work as police officers.

A leadership team that works well together can easily facilitate a unit's ability to train and learn from each other. The command also stressed the importance of developing younger troops in to leaders.

Nelson said during training they try getting Soldiers outside their comfort zones, developing junior leaders and showing faith in them to make the right decisions. The end result is that they realize they have the ability to make decisions on the ground to successfully complete their mission.

Now, with almost two years of training for this mission under their belts, the Soldiers of Charlie Company are in Kosovo and ready to take up their mission.

"As leaders we have been able to gauge the competence of our unit; I am fully confident we will do fine," Koberlein said.



(Top Left)

A mixture of 1st and 3rd Platoon attempts to disperse a crowd of angry protesters during non-lethal weapons training at Hohenfels, Germany.

(Top Right)

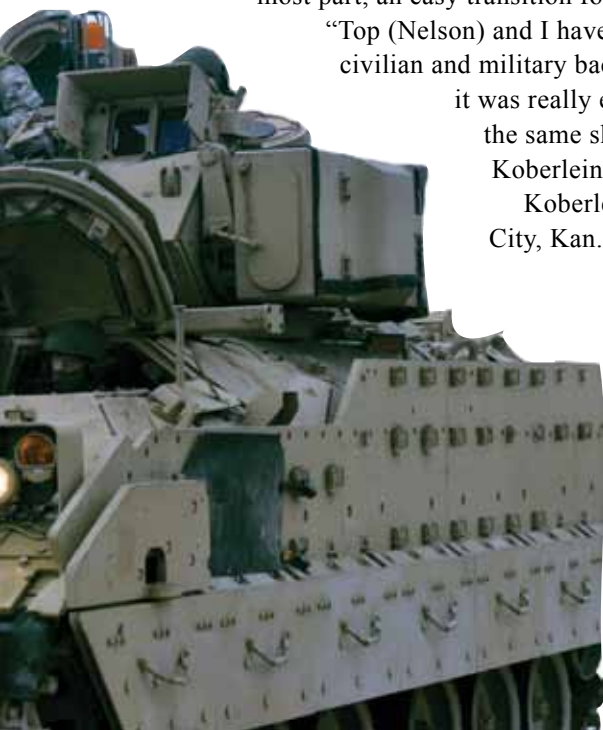
Private 1st Class Matthew Soholt fires a non-lethal shotgun round as Spc. Jesse J. Wahl provides protection during a simulated riot.

(Bottom Left)

Sgt. 1st Class Joshua Roller, Charlie Co. Platoon Sergeant, conducts a convoy brief prior to a mission.

(Bottom Center)

Private 1st Class Jordan Meier, Bradley driver, takes his commands from Staff Sgt. Torrey Kassabaum as they move in to position during an exercise.



Supplying the students

18th Cav Soldiers donate time to donate supplies

Story and photos by Spc. Nevada J. Smith

CAMP BONDSTEEL, Kosovo -- Close your eyes and picture your old grade-school classroom.

Remember the dusty chalkboard and individual desks. Your backpack filled with pens, paper and everything you might possibly need as a student.

Now picture the same classroom, this time take away everything but the chalkboard. Add concrete walls, long tables with uneven legs and tattered carpet so thin you can almost see through it.

These are the scholastic conditions that the children of Mogila/Mogille, Kosovo are equipped with. The simple school supplies we all take for granted are a precious resource to the children of the multi-cultural village. Seeing this, 1st Lt. Christopher Vanmeter, Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 1st Squadron, 18th Cavalry decided to do something about it.

Vanmeter is a teacher back home at Ceres High School, near Modesto, Calif. While speaking with a colleague back at Ceres High School the idea of donating school supplies came up.

"Within days, the students had collected over 47 boxes of school supplies," said Vanmeter.

Before there was even a school to donate supplies to, the supplies were gathered.

"Captain Vo came to me and broached the idea about doing an English class in the village of Mogila," said Vanmeter.



Soldiers with 1st Squadron, 18th Cavalry Regiment, hand out donated supplies to local school children. The donations included many different kinds of school supplies and were collected by stateside friends of the unit.

English is a common language between the Serbian and Albanian cultures and part of the KFOR mission is promoting cooperation between the two ethnicities.

“It’s hard to sum up what you have done during a KFOR rotation, but I know when I leave here this will be a pivotal moment to remember for the rest of my life.”

Vanmeter and his troops began teaching English at a elementary school in Mogila/Mogille. The classes were already divided so Vanmeter taught the Serbian children in the morning and the Albanian children in the afternoon.

"The ethnically-mixed children were a little hesitant at first, but now they are friends and stick together and help each other learn," said Vanmeter.

Vanmeter is proud of the work he has done and the impact he has had on his young pupils.

"We're hoping the next rotation will carry on with what we do," said Vanmeter. "We're not here for just the one class but for the long term."

Though the KFOR 11 rotation is heading home, the Soldiers that have worked here have made an impact on the people. With good deeds like school donations, KFOR will continue to help the Kosovo people.

"It's hard to sum up what you have done during

a KFOR rotation, but I know when I leave here this will be a pivotal moment to remember for the rest of my life. Not only because I am a teacher, but because I think this is probably the best thing we can do here," said Vanmeter.



The Face of the Task Force

KFOR 12 predeployment training started early in familiar surroundings

Story and photos by Spc. Joshua A. Dodds

CAMP BONDSTEEL, Kosovo -- Even before leaving their home state of North Dakota, the Liaison Monitoring Teams (LMT) of Kosovo Forces 12 already were honing their skills for an important mission here.

It was training that began nearly two years ago on American streets in an American city.

"We actually engaged people within our community," said Sgt. 1st Class Eric J. Vogel, who serves on LMT 6 in the Multi-National Task Force-East area of operation. "We drove around Bismarck (N.D.) and talked with people. We were assigned areas, like we have now in Kosovo."

Most KFOR 12 LMT Soldiers come from the 957th Multi-Role Bridge Company, based in Bismarck. It is augmented with Soldiers from across the country. The unit was mobilized to be the face of MNTF-E on the streets for the people who live in Kosovo.

LMTs conduct daily patrols to help MNTF-E understand issues and concerns faced by the people.

"We gather information and sense the pulse of the environment in certain municipalities that we're assigned," Vogel said.

LMT 6 operates primarily in the municipality of Kacanik. During the training process, however, Klokot/Kllokot was its area of responsibility.

LMT training, prior to arriving in Kosovo, was a three-part process starting with a predeployment phase in North Dakota, followed by mobilization phases at Camp Atterbury, Ind., and Hohenfels, Germany.

The teams' focus during training was on communication and understanding because of the critical public-interaction

role of their mission.

They started working closely with interpreters at Camp Atterbury and continued that training in Germany.

"It has gotten progressively better and has become almost second nature when talking to people," Vogel said.

All of the teams have special cards with phrases in Serbian and Albanian to help them interact. The teams also studied the culture and history to understand the people in Kosovo, he said.

The teams spent 30 days in Germany immersed in scenarios designed to stress and test their abilities as a way to build on lessons already learned.

Teams alternated between on post and visits to simulated versions of municipalities in Kosovo, such as Klokot/Kllokot, said Staff Sgt. Andrew Gilbertson, a member of LMT 6.

As LMT 6 began to settle into its new surroundings in Kosovo, it gained a new experienced member on the team. 1st Lt. Edward I. Simangan, Long Beach, Calif., had been the officer in charge of LMT 8 in Hani i Elezit/Djeneral Jankovic, during KFOR 11's rotation.

Simangan volunteered to stay with KFOR 12 and will assume the officer-in-charge position for LMT 6. He said he hopes to continue growing a better relationship with those he has met during his first rotation.

LMT 6 had a seamless transition with its KFOR 11 counterparts, who had been in Kosovo since February 2009. Now, it's time for the new Soldiers in town to shine.

"We are ready to get out there and start getting into a routine," Gilbertson said.



Pilots with Task Force Aviation maneuver their Blackhawk during sling load training at Camp Bondsteel.

Photo by Spc. Chris Erickson



Raising the Hooah Level

Story and photos by Sgt. 1st Class Paul Wade

HOOAH! The U.S. Army uses this word as a battle cry and is commonly used by Soldiers to mean anything and everything, except a negative response. For some Soldiers like Master Sgt. Alfred Todd, “Hooah” is used as a way of life. Todd is a 68W Practical Nurse deployed to Kosovo as the G9, Civil Military Operations, non-commissioned officer in charge, for the Multi-National Task Force-East (MNTF-E) KFOR 11 mission.

The California Army National Guardsman is known by many as Master Sergeant Hooah! His backpack is adorned with Hooah nameplates in the Army Combat Uniform (ACU) camouflage pattern. You can’t escape a conversation with him without hearing it at least once. If that isn’t enough, Todd has taken his father’s Ford F-150 and stenciled the entire tailgate in ACU pattern with the phrase, “HOOAH! IT’S AN ARMY THING.”

“Oh, it looks professionally done,” said Todd. “I am proud to be a Soldier. I now have it wrapping around the taillights and thinking of doing the hood next. But I’m pretty frugal with my money now so we will see.” Todd has a Master of Fine Arts degree from the Rhode Island School of Design. He was an artist and well on his way to making a name for himself. He specialized in blowing glass for many years and has taught at the renowned Parsons School for Design in New York City and the Otis College for Art and Design in Los Angeles. His work has been sold to the Cleveland Museum of Art. At the height of his tradecraft he was rubbing elbows with famous artists, driving around in a Jaguar and sporting diamond earrings.

“It was a tough life trying to make it into that top-

shelf status and not worry about living paycheck to paycheck, exhibit to exhibit,” Todd said. But that life wasn’t for him, he said. Now the Long Beach, Calif., resident, who proudly wears his Army-issued glasses, known affectionately as Birth Control Glasses or BCGs because of their not-so high fashion appearance, is into money management, not eccentricity and frills.

“I love everything about the Army including the word Hooah because it is used for everything but no. It is meant to be upbeat. I like checking how Soldiers’ Hooah levels are and try and raise it,” said Todd, who works as a Vocational Nurse at the Long Beach Veterans Hospital.

His “positive thinking will bring positive results” approach to his work, the Army, his role as a senior NCO, and life are all based around the saying because he is about getting the job done without a negative response.

This philosophy has served him well ever since he joined the Ohio National Guard in 1982. Along his career path he has had some trials and tribulations like turning down an opportunity to try out for a Physician’s Assistant program, which would have had him joining the active Army and becoming an officer.

“I messed that decision up and regretted it for some time. I was just afraid to fail.” What bumps and bruises he has had he also has seen some measure of success in a life very different from the military.

During those extravagant days as an artist what kept him grounded was the uniform. Todd has never

missed a drill or annual training. He credits the Army as providing that saving grace when faced with adversity. “The Army provides great training that can be used in everyday life such as backward planning, Hooah!”

It is these life lessons that provide Todd with a tool to use in mentoring younger troops and junior NCOs, but even that isn’t a guarantee to become someone’s savior.



"I love the Army life but sometimes it is a love-hate relationship. You get some troops who you tell what to do and how to do it over and over and they still end up doing something that a reasonable person wouldn't do."

Todd, who has worn the diamond of a first sergeant, feels it is his responsibility as a "leader of Soldiers" to provide that welfare to troops that come in contact with him.

"I try and lead by example. I try to be highly visible and approachable because I am here to assist," said Todd, who has done just that during his second deployment to Kosovo and was selected by the MNTF-E's command sergeant major to attend the Sergeants Major Academy. "I will spend as much time as possible with the [Soldiers] that want help because I don't want them making the same mistakes I made."

Todd attributes everything positive in his life to his parents and how they raised him.

"I was taught early on how to take care of myself. What gets me is I still run into troops now and then that lack basic life skills and I get stuck with having to teach them what their parents should have done," said Todd, who was born and raised in Cleveland, Ohio.

As usual Todd puts the situation through his Hooah machine and turns a negative into a positive.

"That's what I love about the Army. They teach you how to be organized, to do things by the numbers. It is very systematic. What I do is use what I've learned as a Soldier, an artist and a nurse and try and help troops visualize positive results through planning, perspective, and perseverance. Don't be afraid to fail like I did. The least you should do is try your best."

"I know my Soldiers and I will always place their needs above my own." Todd lives this part of the NCO Creed by spending that extra time and effort to mentor and guide. He enjoys telling the story of a staff sergeant who he encouraged to attend the PA course, which he turned down, and now that junior ranking NCO is a major and extremely thankful to Todd for his advice.

"I get excited when I see troops succeed. When you work with a Soldier and they turn out to become a super trooper...that is HOOAH!" said Todd. "I want you to have a better life than me and I'm happy with mine because I love the life I live and I live the life I love."

One word can describe that feeling.



Master Sgt. Alfred Todd is proud to tell anyone how he is always "on the ball," when it comes to work.



Master Sgt. Alfred Todd is briefed by Lt. Col. Brian Anderson, the G9 Officer in Charge, prior to a Chief of Staff sync meeting.

Look mom, I'm on YouTube

KFOR
files

The KFOR Files is the official video magazine for MNTF-E, bringing together the best videos from around the Task Forces.



There are 3 ways to Watch

1. Disc: get one free at selected distribution points, or ask your Chain-of-Command
2. YouTube: search "KFOR Files" on YouTube, or visit our Channel at www.youtube.com/user/69padonline
3. Website: go to sites.google.com/site/69padonline

Questions? Call us @ x3776 or 5204



NOVEMBER SPORTS AND EVENTS CALENDAR



THE EAST MWR TEAM

MWR Chief
Tony Mullings, 781-4134
tony.mullings@eur.army.mil
BLDG: 2215 (STCC)

Supervisory Sport / Recreation
Marcus Wheeler, 781-4783 / 4266
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BLDG: 2215 (STCC)

Program Specialist
South Town Community Center
South Town Fitness Center
Renee Favors, 781-3187
CELL-049-774527
renee.favors@eur.army.mil
BLDG: 2214 (STFC)

PBO
Michael Snowden, 781-4137
michael.snowden@eur.army.mil
BLDG: 2215 (STCC)

SPORTS

CBS Flag Football
16 Nov - Flag Football Team Sign-up deadline - ALL FACILITIES-1900 Hrs
17 Nov - Flag Football Coaches Meeting @1900 Hrs STCC
18 Nov - Flag Football Officials Meeting @ 1900 Hrs -STCC
26 Nov @ 1600- Annual Flag Football CBS Turkey Bowl - SF Finalists from the Flag Football Tournament will play in the Turkey Bowl
Thanksgiving Day Bowl Games will run all day and night on the Big Screens in the MWR Community Centers
Yellow Bird Indian Dance Troupe Friday, 27 November 2009 @ 2000 in the South Gym

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

26 November@ 0700 - Gobble Gallop
No Registration Required
T-Shirts to the first 300 finishers

MWR FUN RUNS

THE AST MWR TEAM SUPPORTS YOU

<div>Sunday: 1 November</div> <div>1900- Karaoke-STFC</div> <div>1900- 3 Point Shoot Out-NTFC</div> <div>Monday: 2 November</div> <div>1900- Scrabble Night-STCC</div> <div>1900- Open Court Volleyball-STFC</div> <div>Tuesday: 3 November</div> <div>1900- Open Court Basketball-STFC</div> <div>1900- Spades Night-STCC</div> <div>Wednesday: 4 November</div> <div>1900- Open Court Volleyball-STFC</div> <div>1900- Scrabble Night-STCC</div> <div>Thursday: 5 November</div> <div>1900- Open Court Basketball-STFC</div> <div>1900- Spades Night-STCC</div> <div>Friday: 6 November</div> <div>1900- Texas Hold'em (Table 1)-STCC</div> <div>1900- Sumo Wrestling-STFC</div> <div>Saturday: 7 November</div> <div>1900- KFOR 11 Soldier Bands/Karaoke-STFC</div> <div>1900- 8-Ball Tournament Qualifier-NTCC</div> <div>Sunday: 8 November</div> <div>1900- Karaoke-STFC</div> <div>1900- Chess Tournament Qualifier-NTCC</div> <div>Monday: 9 November</div> <div>1900- Scrabble Night-STCC</div> <div>Tuesday: 10 November</div> <div>1900- Open Court Basketball-STFC</div> <div>1900- Spades Night-STCC</div> <div>Wednesday: 11 November</div> <div>1900- Open Court Volleyball-STFC</div> <div>1900- Scrabble-STCC</div> <div>1900- Veterans Day 3x3 Basketball Tournament-NTFC</div>	<div>Thursday: 12 November</div> <div>1900- Open Court Basketball-STFC</div> <div>1900- Spades Night-STCC</div> <div>Friday: 13 November</div> <div>1900- Texas Hold'em (Table 2)-STCC</div> <div>1900- Sumo Wrestling-STFC</div> <div>Saturday: 14 November</div> <div>1900- Karaoke-STFC</div> <div>1900- 8-Ball Tournament Qualifier-NTCC</div> <div>Sunday: 15 November</div> <div>1900- Karaoke-STFC</div> <div>1900- Chess Tournament Qualifier-NTCC</div> <div>Monday: 16 November</div> <div>1900- Scrabble-STCC</div> <div>1900- Open Court Volleyball-STFC</div> <div>1900- Flag Football Team Sign-up DEADLINE</div> <div>Tuesday: 17 November</div> <div>1900- Open Court Basketball-STFC</div> <div>1900- Spades-STCC</div> <div>1900- Flag Football Coaches Meeting-STCC</div> <div>Wednesday: 18 November</div> <div>1900- Open Court Volleyball-STFC</div> <div>1900- Scrabble Night-STCC</div> <div>1900- Flag Football Officials Meeting-STCC</div> <div>Thursday: 19 November</div> <div>1900- Open Court Basketball-STFC</div> <div>1900- Spades Night-STCC</div> <div>Friday: 20 November</div> <div>1800- Flag Football Tournament - SF</div> <div>1900- Texas Hold'em (Table 3)-STCC</div> <div>1900- Sumo Wrestling-STFC</div> <div>Saturday: 21 November</div> <div>1900- Karaoke/Monthly Birthday Party-STFC</div> <div>1900- 8-Ball Tournament Qualifier-NTCC</div> <div>1800- Flag Football Tournament-STFC</div>	<div>Sunday: 22 November</div> <div>1400- Flag Football Tournament-SF</div> <div>1900- Chess Tournament Qualifier-NTCC</div> <div>1900- Karaoke-STFC</div> <div>Monday: 23 November</div> <div>1900- Open Court Volleyball-STFC</div> <div>1900- Scrabble-STCC</div> <div>Tuesday: 24 November</div> <div>1900- Open Court Basketball-STFC</div> <div>1900- Spades Night-STCC</div> <div>Wednesday: 25 November</div> <div>1900- Open Court Volleyball-STFC</div> <div>Thursday: 26 November</div> <div>0700- Gobble Gallop 5K-STFC</div> <div>1600- Annual Flag Football CBS Turkey Bowl-SF</div> <div>Friday: 27 November</div> <div>1900- Texas Hold'em (Final Table)-STCC</div> <div>2000- Yellow Bird Indian Dance Troupe-STFC</div> <div>Saturday: 28 November</div> <div>1900- Karaoke-STFC</div> <div>1900- 8-Ball Tournament-NTCC</div> <div>Sunday: 29 November</div> <div>1900- Karaoke-STFC</div> <div>1900- Chess Tournament-NTCC</div> <div>Monday: 30 November</div> <div>1900- Open Court Volleyball-STFC</div> <div>1900- Scrabble Tournament-STCC</div>
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NOVEMBER - GOT ACTIVITIES?

Building a better tomorrow

*Story and photos by
Sgt. 1st Class Paul Wade*

Sergeant 1st Class Michael Ardizone is one of approximately 1,400 peacekeeping Soldiers, who make up the KFOR 11 U.S. contingent of a multi-national task force, charged with providing a safe and secure environment in Kosovo.

When he arrived in February, he was working in the Tactical Operations Center, focused on command and control communications for his maneuver element, Task Force Sabre, and not particularly fond of being behind a desk for the duration of their nine-month deployment. So when his supervisor told him they were moving him to become part of their S9 section, known as Civil Military Operations (CMO), he realized he would be able to put his civilian skills to good use and actually get out and see some action.

The KFOR 11 CMO teams are tasked with leveraging military capabilities and resources in an effort to help improve the Institutions in Kosovo by targeting problems such as poor economic conditions, promoting businesses that can aid in the rebuilding

of the infrastructure and working with the local populace to improve their way of living. A lot of the work needed is done through contracts, something Ardizone is very familiar with.

Ardizone is a business consultant for Verizon Wireless in his home state of California.

"Obviously, it is a different situation here but in the end it really came down to knowing how to ask the right questions. As soon as I dove into my first project I knew I was sort of that final piece of a puzzle.

"This job was the perfect fit for me and I'm glad I had the chance to do something for the people of Kosovo," said Ardizone, a resident of Santa Clarita.

What the CMO teams were about to do is embark on a continuing quest to bring hope and a brighter future to a people who still remember the tension and bloodied conflicts from 10 years ago.

With a campaign very reminiscent of, "If you build it, they will come," the CMO approach not only provides evidence of progress to those living in

the villages and towns, but also those forced from their homes during the war will see the potential their newly formed homeland has and possibly return.

The two main project categories CMO teams have at their disposal are Humanitarian Assistant (HA) and Humanitarian Civic Action (HCA).

"HA is where we find a project and we ask for the money through our U.S. Embassy in Pristina/Prishtine, via the Office of Defense Coordination (ODC) to European Command (EUCOM). We are not guaranteed any funds; we have to compete for funds. HCA projects are where we use military labor and use funds to purchase supplies and equipment," said Lt. Col. Brian Anderson, the command group's Civil Military Operations section (G9) officer-in-charge.

Ardizone joined a band of visionaries, compiled from the American KFOR 11 task force. His boss, Capt. Bill Foss, has worked in construction before and heads the Task Force Sabre team, whose 18th Cavalry Reg. Soldiers, are based out of Azusa, Calif. His counterpart in the other combat arms patrol element is Capt. William Hedges, Task Force Nightstalker, 1st Bn, 184th Infantry Reg., stationed in Modesto, Calif.

Each team has three specially trained Citizen-Soldiers and Anderson and his command section oversee them, providing support when requested.

Although the accolades for the HA and HCA effort can be attributed to the main CMO teams and G9 section, it was typically



the Soldiers who were rolling out every day into the villages, shaking hands with the locals and seeing firsthand the issues that exist. They were the ones planting the seed that began most of the projects. CMO teams would then put together a debriefing document and send it up their chain-of-command.

It is all about the projects. KFOR CMO is driven by EUCOM and they set their design parameters for each rotation. The youth were the key focal point for this California Army National Guard-led task force.

Schools, playgrounds and youth centers were frequently visited to identify any restoration or cleanup efforts. Under the HCA resource, remote villages that haven't seen KFOR presence recently were given special attention. Projects like Nightstalkers Gypsy Alley; a makeshift home for the poor became a health concern and a general eyesore for the town of Gnjilane/Gjilan, which turned to KFOR for help in cleaning up the mounds of trash and improving the situation for everyone.

When actual construction is needed — like the rebuilding of five wood and earth bridges in the Samakovo valley so that farmers can get their produce to market — Team Engineer is called to draw up the plans. Led by Lt. Col. William Kagele and Maj. Lincoln Okada, these technical



experts must consider factors such as weather, material, cost, labor, location, environmental impact and aesthetics when drafting schematics and calculating numbers. Part of their commitment to excellence is enforcing strict building standards with safety, quality and longevity in mind.

"If we do a construction project, we need to include the engineers for technical reasons and contracting for the bid process. The process varies, some projects have taken a few years and others can be quick. It really depends on the scale, scope, cost and complexity of the project," said Anderson, who served two back-to-back tours in northern Iraq, dealing with CMO projects.

Of course there are restrictions,

including limitations on spending, steering clear of "new construction" and making sure the project is for a public institution.

"Funding isn't difficult because many of the projects don't cost much," Ardizzone said. "It is the process in getting it that is time consuming. We only have so much time here so it is frustrating waiting on the money to arrive knowing you worked so hard to set everything up. You finally have all the stars aligned and the townspeople are excited to see progress made, yet you have to wait."

There aren't restrictions in regard to how beneficial this might be to the construction company owner who won the contract bid, no matter how long the wait. He is being rewarded for wanting to lead the way in building a new Kosovo and providing work to the unemployed.

KFOR helps construction firms meet U.S. standards and explains contracting procedures so they can compete on bigger projects. The CMO teams also provide guidance on how to make a safer work environment, which in turn creates conditions needed for a long-term sustainable future.

"By focusing on education, we are helping ensure that the next generation will have the skills to be successful,"



Continued on next page

said Anderson, who is from Sacramento, Calif.

The CMO mission is two-fold as it builds long-lasting evidence of KFOR's dedication and devotion to the cause of helping those in need. The Soldiers themselves provide that influential role model for the youth to follow.

"Our Soldiers — who are out there on the streets every day, from the private to the captain — are our best 'face of diplomacy.' If we can provide [the people in Kosovo] resources such as money for projects or activities such as English classes or Youth Camps, we positively influence the next generation here in Kosovo. Both children and parents see our National Guard and Reserve Soldiers, who are volunteers, as able to provide a safe and secure environment for them and genuinely care for their well being; well that's diplomacy that you cannot just buy anywhere else," Anderson said.

Most KFOR Soldiers believe that we must show the people here how they can stand on their own as we cannot do it for them.

Unlike HA, in which funds are requested through military channels to help projects like the Mogila/Mogille school, where a brand new septic tank and bathrooms were built, HCAs are done using the multi-faceted troops of the National Guard and Reserves.

Medical, Veterinarian, and Dental Civil Assistance Programs



were a huge success over the past KFOR rotations, using skilled experts from the medical task force. Local farmers and doctors gained valuable knowledge watching and participating alongside our trained professionals.

Any chance KFOR can get the local populace involved makes the job that much easier. The message is: they can do this themselves and the results are much more rewarding. CMO teams have brought out the media, VIPs, and had local leaders cut a ceremonial ribbon at the end of completed projects, showing how important it was and how anything can be accomplished if they work together.

Nine months is a short time in the eyes of the CMO teams. There is still a

lot to be done, and for some, it is very difficult to let go and hand it off to someone else.

"After a while you take each project personally. It is very rewarding to see the final product knowing you saw it evolve from a problem to become a positive result.

It is the expression on the faces of the people living there and how amazed they are that makes it all worth it for me. I know everyone in uniform who was involved in any of KFOR 11's projects made a difference, and that makes me proud to be a Soldier in the U.S. Army," said Ardizzone.

As each rotation heads home and a new one arrives, the CMO mission never stops. Projects that are complex like Task Force Sabre's Vitina/Viti Fire Station are so large in scope that they must be continued by the next rotation. Yet knowing that they were able to envision a better tomorrow for a people that has been through so much: that they are able to even be a part of

one project that made a difference and leave a legacy to some Soldiers like Ardizzone, is a dream come true.



A “call” to serve God and country

TF 231 Chaplain: It's a unique mission, one that I feel privileged to be a part of

Story by Sgt. 1st Class Mike Hagburg

CAMP BONDSTEEL, KOSOVO – After completing his seminary studies in April 2008, Chaplain (1st Lt.) Brock Sailer of Cando, N.D., wanted to go straight to the Army Chaplain's school. Unfortunately, things didn't work out. So he moved his family to St. Cloud, Minn., and started training to be a hospital chaplain with the Veterans Administration.

Then, in September 2008, Sailer got a call from Chaplain (Maj.) Maurice Millican.

“He said he had a mission for me,” Sailer said. “It was this trip to Kosovo.”

Sailer's life suddenly became very busy. He moved his family back to Cando in December, buying a house two blocks away from his parents' home. He went to chaplain's school from January to April of 2009. He returned to North Dakota in the midst of a flood fight. Then he served at Camp Grafton over the summer, helping train other Soldiers on their way to Kosovo as they went through annual training.

And in May 2009, Sailer and his wife, Esther, had their fourth child.

“That added to everything going on in our life,” he said. “My family has done quite well with it all, amazingly, through quite a bit of time away already this year.”

Sailer is now serving on a NATO peace-support mission in Kosovo. He is the chaplain for the 231st Maneuver Task Force, of Valley City, N.D. On the deployment, Sailer and the 231st will be part of Multi-National Task Force-East, which is based here.

Sailer arrived at Camp Atterbury, Ind., on Aug. 15 for the first phase of his mobilization training.

“They had a pretty aggressive program for chaplains there at Camp Atterbury,” he said. The training included hand-to-hand combat, learning to move with a chaplain's assistant, and classroom study.”

Interacting with “Kosovo citizens” was a particular challenge, he said. The chaplains would arrive at a simulated village with a goal of engaging the religious leader. There, they would be confronted by role players.

“Sometimes we would come in and they would be hostile to us, other times they would be calm. We never knew what to expect,” he said. “They ran us through some good scenarios there, really put together a good little program.”

The scenarios kept coming during the exercises that followed the introductory training at Camp Atterbury.

“They did some role playing with counseling sessions,” Sailer said. “We'd handle it on computer first, making our decisions, and then they would say let's go role play that scenario. We also experienced working with an interpreter. That was a good experience, using my assistant as a scribe and then typing up a report after that.”

As part of one exercise, there was a simulated soldier death. As chaplain, Sailer was in charge of the memorial ceremony.

“This was probably the biggest piece for me, putting that together, getting about 20 soldiers together,” he said. “Putting together a program that's very formalized, everything has to be very tight. That was very good training, kind of stressful at



Photo by Spc. Joshua A. Dodds

Chaplain (1st Lt.) Brock Sailer listens during a conversation with a religious leader/role player during a training exercise at Hohenfels, Germany.

times, but I was very glad to have gone through it.”

Real life did not stop during the exercises, and Sailer never lost sight of his main mission.

“When you're doing these exercises, people are still having real emotions,” he said. “There are still real situations back home. The real world things . . . take precedence over our exercises.”

Exercise and scenarios designed to teach and test the chaplains continued in October when the training venue moved from Camp Atterbury to the Joint Multinational Readiness Center in Hohenfels, Germany. At Hohenfels, Camp Albertshof played the part of Camp Bondsteel, where Sailer is now based in Kosovo. Albertshof is surrounded by a wooded training area, in which there are eight simulated towns representing the communities that surround the real Camp Bondsteel.

“This one feels a little more realistic because you've got the towns,” said Sailer. “We can actually go out and meet with religious leaders, which is going to be a big part of the chaplain mission in Kosovo. It's unique for chaplains to have

Continued on page 27

“Major Goof” documents deployment

Blogger tells stories with the help of stuffed animal turned Soldier

Story by Spc. Chris Erickson

HOHENFELS, Germany -- A fictional character has taken on the perspective of Soldiers deploying to Kosovo.

Dobie, a small stuffed animal with an Army uniform and drill sergeant hat, provides personality and insight on the ins-and-outs of how it feels and what it means to serve in a deployed environment with Kosovo Forces 12 Multi-National Task Force-East (MNTF-E).

The idea was brought up by Maj. Davina French, planner with MNTF-E. French operates a blog under the title “Major Goof,” which seeks to keep its audience updated on the KFOR 12 mission.

The KFOR 12 mission is French’s third deployment. She decided she wanted to write a blog that updated people at home more than a few times a year and less than the daily letters she had written her first deployment.

“I figured I’d try social media and start this blog. There are a lot of military people who are interested in what we are doing.”

That interest can easily be satisfied by the instant nature of information on the Internet. Social media has generally replaced the handwritten letters of yesterday, and now provides the writer a wider audience at a moment’s notice. Operational security must be considered in everything published, but staying connected is encouraged.

French’s first entry was written about mobilization station training at Camp Atterbury, Ind., and the stuffed animal has continued to Hohenfels, Germany. The blog now has hundreds of followers as it moves into Kosovo.

“I try and take people through how we get to mobilization station, some of the activities we do. I’ve used Dobie as the footprint of what a Soldier does during training: from taser training to pepper spray to running in formations.

“Part of the blog is: How does a Soldier feel? I’ve taken a look at some of the hard things, emotionally. We go through a range of emotions in a deployment, from feeling happy to excited to tired. I’d like to take people on a yearlong journey through the emotions of a Soldier.”



In addition to the blogs of KFOR 12’s Soldiers, be sure to check out our social media sites at the following addresses:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/kfor>
<http://www.youtube.com/user/KFORPAO>
http://www.twitter.com/KFOR_PAO/
<http://www.facebook.com/notifications.php#/pages/KFOR-Multi-National-Task-Force-East/139368092429?ref=mf>

<http://www.nato.int/kfor>

French said she wanted to provide not just a military perspective, but also a visual perspective to enable people at home to see some of what the deployed troops are seeing.

“It really is through one Soldier’s eyesight,” French continued. “I’m hoping that I’m reaching all levels of Soldiers, from privates to colonels. But [the blog exists] mostly to showcase the spirit of the Soldier. It really is a significant, unimaginable thing. They just keep going.”


French said some challenges did present themselves. She said not mentioning specific names or numbers is a challenge. Maintaining operational security often means writing vaguely, but she tries to capture the spirit of the deployment and the Soldiers involved without giving away any sensitive information.

The challenges, however, can be balanced by unexpected successes. Friends and families of deployed Soldiers can follow the blog and comment to “Davina and Dobie.”

French recalled one quick anecdote about how one mother had posted a comment, writing “If you see my son, say hello!”

MNTF-E Public Affairs Officer Capt. Dan Murphy said the viral aspect of social media usage is unprecedented, citing French’s blog as just one positive example. Many Soldiers use Facebook, Myspace or other social media sites to stay connected no matter where in the world they may be.

“Using social media tools, such as blogs, enables families and friends at home to stay updated on the day-to-day activities in their Soldiers lives,” Murphy said. “It can be fun to see the creativity in how people communicate their message.

French’s blog can be found at <http://www.travelblog.org/Bloggers/Major-Goof/>. 



Task Force Hellas soldiers march during a parade held on the Greek national day of remembrance of “Ochi”, or “No” - the day Hellenic forces entered World War II after Greece was invaded by the Italian Army.

KFOR 11 Multi-National Task Force-East Commanding General Brig. Gen. Keith D. Jones salutes the soldiers of Task Force Hellas as they march past.



A day of remembrance

Observing Hellenic Victory in World War II

Story and photos by Spc. Chris Erickson

CAMP RIGAS FEREOS, Kosovo -- “No” was the word to be remembered as Task Force Hellas celebrated the Greek national day of remembrance recently.

The celebration marked the 69th anniversary of Greek Prime Minister Ioannis Metaxas’ rejection of an ultimatum given by Axis dictator Benito Mussolini to allow his Army to occupy strategic areas in Greece or face open war. On Oct. 28, 1940, Greece entered World War II when Mussolini’s forces invaded the country. Within two months, the fascist forces were pushed out by the Hellenic Army. The forced retreat of Mussolini’s Army from Greece is considered the first Allied land victory of the Second World War.

Lt. Col. Boudouris Demitrios, the commander of Task Force Hellas, said the day was very special for Greeks.

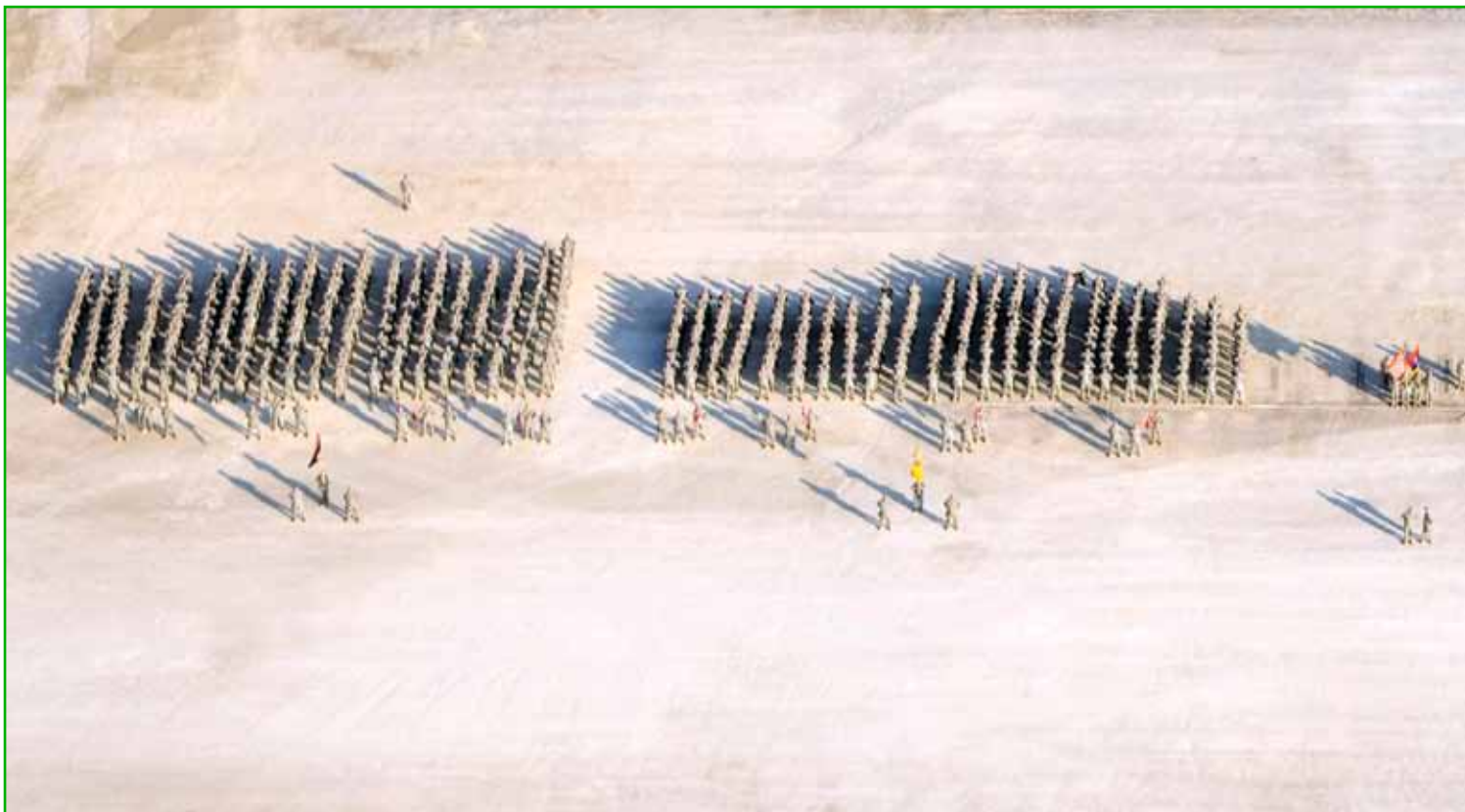
“We are happy, proud as a nation,” Demitrios said. He said it was a celebration to observe the day Greece “stopped Axis powers cold.”

“Hence you will not say that Greeks fight like heroes, but heroes fight like Greeks,” he said, restating a quote made famous by Winston Churchill

1st Lt. Adoniou Demitrios, the CIMIC officer for TF Hellas, said it was a great day for the Greek nation and the Greek people.

“This is a great day for us, a celebration of our national holiday,” he said.

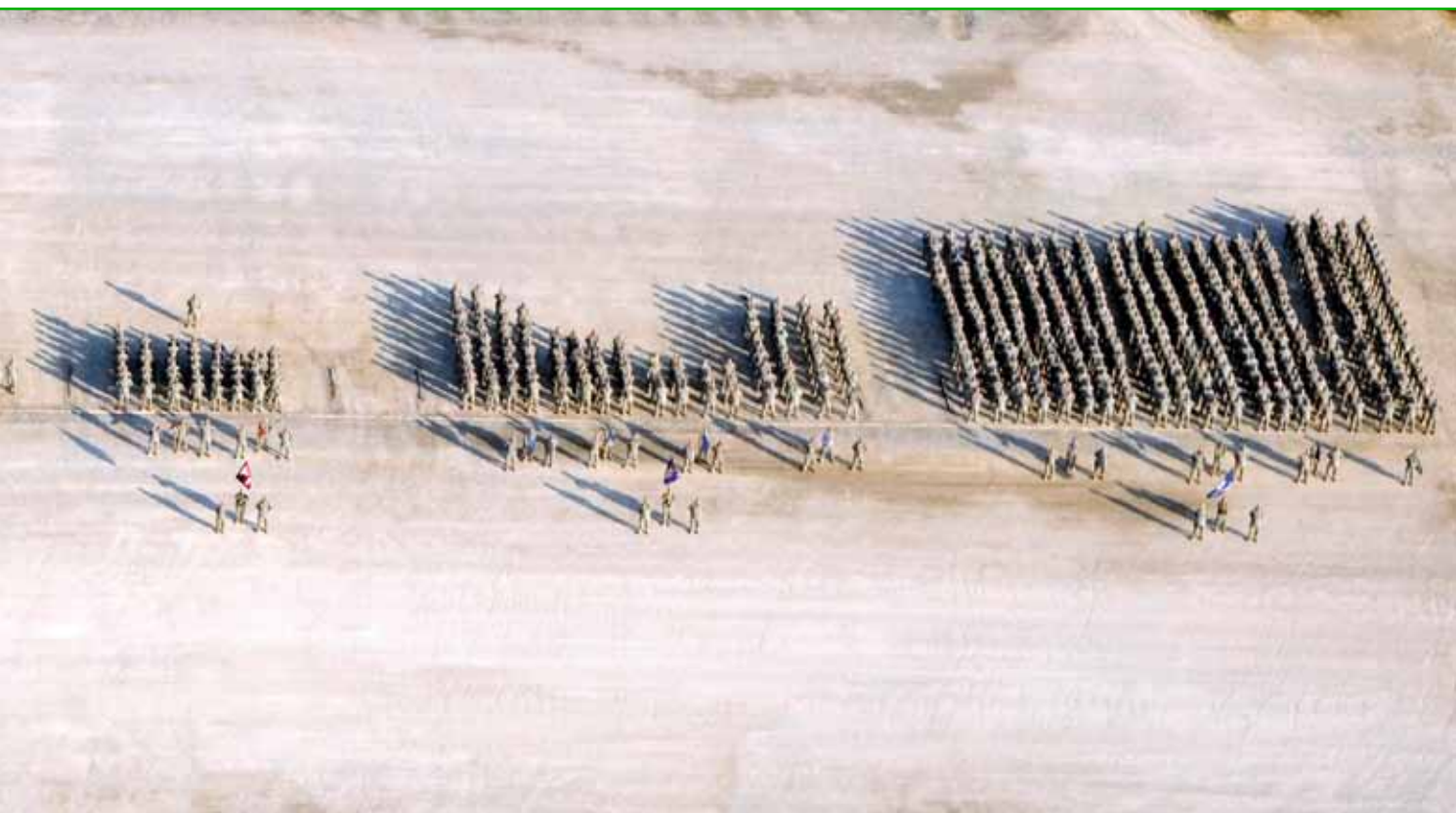
A liturgical service at Camp Rigas Fereos was followed by an invocation, speech and placing of wreaths in remembrance of the Greek soldiers who fought to preserve their nation’s freedom. Then dismounted and mounted troops paraded down the main thoroughfare, saluting distinguished visitors as they passed.



(Top)

Soldiers of KFOR 11 Multi-National Task Force-East stands in one of their last formations during the Relief-in-Process/ Transfer-of-Authority at Camp Bondsteel. During the formation the Soldiers wore the NATO medals they had earned during their tour of duty in Kosovo. KFOR 11 MNTF-E, led by the 40th Infantry Division out of California, has been replaced by KFOR 12 MNTF-E, led by the 141st Maneuver Enhancement Brigade out of North Dakota.





*(Bottom)
An aerial panorama of Camp Bondsteel's southern edge and the countryside that surrounds it.*

Photos by Spc. Chris Erickson



Photo by Sgt. Jill Fischer



Meeting with VIPs

Photo by Sgt. Jill Fischer



Haunting the House

Photo by Spc. Joshua Dodds



Safely Exploding

Photo by Sgt. Jill Fischer



Dancing to Thriller

Photo by Sgt. Jill Fischer



Playing football

(Bottom Right) U.S. Army Soldiers compete in a game of soccer after being invited to play by the Slovenian Army in Hohenfels, Germany
(Top Right) The 753rd Co. EOD, sets off unexploded ordnance on EOD Hill.
(Middle) An MWR worker sneaks a peek to see if anyone else is ready for a scare at the MWR-sponsored Haunted House on Halloween.
(Bottom Left) MWR zombies and monsters perform Michael Jackson's "Thriller" on the outdoor stage on Halloween.
(Top Left) MNTF-E leaders meet with local leaders during a bilateral meeting.



Commanding officers salute members of Task Force Hellas marching during a recent day of celebration for a Greek national day of remembrance, known as "Ochi".

Photo by Sgt. Jill Fischer



Spc. Andrew Mulkey looks out a hatch on a M2A2 Operation Desert Storm (ODS) Bradley.

Sgt. 1st Class Michael Hagburg



Spreading the Word

Photo courtesy of 69th PAD



Getting a smile

Sgt. 1st Class Michael Hagburg



Keeping up Friendships

Sgt. Jill Fischer



Walking the Streets

Photo by Spc. Darriel Swatts



Guarding the "suspect"

(Bottom Right) Sgt. 1st Class Rex, 615th MP Co., guards a "suspect" during K-9 training at Camp Bondsteel.

(Top Right) Spc. Rich Stowell, 69th Public Affairs Det., chats with a teacher at the Musa Zajmi Primany School after taking some copies of the Guardian-East there. The specific issue of the Guardian-East featured articles written by local students.

(Middle) A Cavalry Soldier interacts with students after his unit donated school supplies.

(Bottom Left) 1st Lt. Jake Larson, LMT 8 officer-in-charge, gets to know his area of responsibility during the RIP/TOA process.

(Top Left) Students at the Musa Zajmi Primany School in Gnjilane/Gjilan enjoy a copy of the Guardian-East that included articles by their classmates.

Photo by Spc. Nevada J. Smith



FROM LEFT: Staff Sgt. Clement Sullivan, Shehu Lumnrije, Zuka Melihate, Laura Greenfield, Capt. Terry Belter, Fitore Aliu, Sgt. 1st Class Homero R. Flores, CW2 Cesar Sanchez, Maj. Yulius Mustafa, and Master Sgt. Celestina Bautista pose for a group shot after an awards ceremony for Soldiers who have assisted the Education Center in the South Town area of Camp Bondsteel.

Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Michael Hagburg



A UH-60 blackhawk flies over Kosovo during a training mission conducted to help some members of MNTF-E learn more about their area of operations



Two Soldiers with a Liaison and Monitoring Team (LMT) speak to a role player during mobilization training at Hohenfels, Germany. The LMTs work closely with the people in Kosovo, serving as the “face of the task force,” for Multi-National Task Force-East.

Chaplain, continued from page 20

something besides the religious support piece, which is our primary function.”

Like the towns, the religious leaders at Hohenfels were simulated.

“I don’t know for sure if the role players are real religious people or if they requested those roles,” said Sailer. “Some of them seem to be very understanding of the religion they’re representing. I have been impressed with their knowledge of their roles and how they play them.”

After training at Hohenfels, Sailer said he was prepared to go to Kosovo.

“This final piece here at Hohenfels has really set a good base to do ministry,” he said. “I think there’s a comfort level about leader engagements, how to put together rides to get out and meet those leaders, and how to do this job at the same time as the regular religious support role.”

“Not too many chaplains get to be a part of that unique opportunity to be engaging leaders. It’s a unique mission, one that I feel privileged to be a part of.”

While Sailer finished chaplain’s school in April 2009, he has been a member of the Guard since 1997. Now 30, Sailer was a 17-year-old high school student in Cando when he joined up.

“My Dad was a recruiter for quite awhile,” Sailer said. “I am the fourth of four children and all three of them had gone through the Guard before me.”

Sailer said his father, retired Sgt. 1st Class Bill Sailer, never pressured him to join the Guard. His mother Deniece, however, thought it would be a good idea for Sailer to join for the college benefits.

“At the time, the only positions in our battalion that were open were chaplain’s assistant and water treatment,” Sailer said. “My Dad knew I was pretty serious about my religious beliefs. For a time I had mixed feelings about the military and war. The chaplain assistant position got my attention, and after prayer, I felt peace about serving in the Army Guard.”

Sailer spent five years serving as a chaplain’s assistant with the 136th Quartermaster Co. at Camp Grafton. He then changed jobs in order to try something new and increase his chances of getting to do work in other countries, becoming a water treatment specialist with his hometown unit, the 132nd Quartermaster Co., in Cando.

Meanwhile, Sailer was pursuing his education.

“I did two years at Minot (N.D.) State when I got out of high school. I was pursuing a degree in elementary education,” he said. “At some point during the second year I decided I wanted to be a pastor, felt called to that. I just felt like I would rather study Scripture than the books I was reading.”

Sailer found a bible school close to his hometown, Providence College in Otterburne, Manitoba.

“It’s a small town, they don’t even have a gas station,” he said. “But it’s only about 40 minutes out of Winnipeg.”

Sailer earned a bachelor’s degree in theology at Providence, and then returned to attend seminary there, completing his studies to be a pastor in April 2008.



FIRE QUIZ

■ TAKE TEST ■ TURN IN ANSWERS ■ WIN FIRE DEPARTMENT T-SHIRT ■ BE COOL ■

The Task Force Falcon Fire Department has a Fire Safety Program that consists of a weekly safety tip and a monthly quiz (the quiz comes from the tips). Safety tips and quizzes are emailed to your unit safety representatives. **The quizzes can also be picked up in the red boxes where we wash our hands in the DFACs.** We use the program to promote fire safety for everyone on base.

You must answer all questions and return the test to the F.D. by the end of the month. Email the test to Adem.Gashi@eur.army.mil or Islam.Berisha@eur.army.mil. You can also take the completed test to the Task Force Falcon Fire Station at Camp Bondsteel, Bldg. 1202-A. One name will be drawn by the Fire Chief and the winner will receive a Task Force Falcon Fire Department T-Shirt.

1. A, B, C fire extinguishers are the most commonly used extinguishers.
a) True
b) False

2. All of the following fire safety guidelines are correct, EXCEPT:
a) Never overload electrical sockets.
b) Feel the door with the palm of your hand; if it is hot, do not open it.
c) Never leave cooking unattended
d) Check for frayed wires and do not run cords under carpet or furniture.

3. Why shouldn't you use water to fight a fire involving live electricity?
a) Water isn't effective on that type of fire.
b) You may be electrocuted.
c) Water would cause too much additional damage.
d) Water is inflammable.

4. If fire breaks out, you should immediately:
a) Call an ambulance.
b) Call the Fire Department and then evacuate.
c) Turn off the electricity
d) Evacuate and call Fire Department from a nearby telephone.

5. If your clothes catch fire, what should you do?
a) Run outside
b) Call Fire Department.
c) Stop, drop and roll
d) A and B

If you have any questions about this, or any other fire safety topic, contact the Task Force Falcon Fire Department by e-mailing the names above or call DSN 4098 or KBR 3799 and ask for the Fire Prevention section.

Report All Fires

FIRE REPORTING NUMBERS ARE:

DSN 911 & KBR 911

DIAL 038 5133 3421 FROM A CELL

***Program this number into your cell phone before you need it!!!

Please share this quiz with all personnel who do not have access to email.

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Unit/ Section: _____

Camp: _____

WE WISH YOU GOOD LUCK!





Powers of Attorney

By 1st Lt. Matthew Headley

A Power of Attorney (POA) is a written instrument that allows you (the “principal”) to authorize your agent (the “attorney-in-fact”) to conduct certain business on your behalf. It is one of the strongest legal documents that you can give to another person. There are two types of POA: “general” and “special” (or limited). A general POA gives your agent very broad powers to act on your behalf; and a special POA limits your agent’s authority to act only on certain matters. Every act performed by your agent within the authority of the POA is legally binding upon you. Since a POA is such a powerful document, it should be given only to a trustworthy person, and only when absolutely necessary.

General Power of Attorney

A General POA (GPOA) gives your agent the authority to do most things you could do yourself. Making a GPOA can have serious consequences. With a GPOA, your agent can (for example) buy a car with your money, borrow money that you must repay, sell your personal property or remove all funds from your bank account. While a GPOA may be helpful, it can also be very dangerous. A GPOA is so dangerous that official Army policy strongly discourages issuing one.

If you insist on a GPOA, you can try to protect yourself by taking some prudent precautions. Limit the duration of the GPOA to one year or less. Ensure that your agent is someone that you absolutely trust with all of your money and legal decisions. If you lose trust in your agent, consult a legal assistance attorney about revoking the GPOA, which can be very difficult to do. As an alternative, consider one or more special powers of attorney instead. If you only need specific tasks performed while you are away, then you should not obtain a GPOA.

Also, be aware that a third party is not required to honor a GPOA, and frequently will not. For most matters that you will

actually need a power of attorney, the third party will either insist that you use their form (common with government agencies and lenders), or that you provide a Special Power of Attorney. Very frequently, a GPOA is too broad in its authority for a legitimate third party to be comfortable with its use.

Special (Limited) Power of Attorney

A special, or limited, POA authorizes your agent to do only a specified act, such as sell your car, ship your household goods, or cash your paycheck. Because it is more specific, the special POA is safer than a broad general POA and more likely to be accepted by third parties.

Unique Power of Attorney Instances

There are some cases where neither a GPOA nor a limited POA will help you. In these cases, you will have to prepare a special form required by the agency to accomplish the task.

- Issuance of a passport to a minor child under the age of 16. Normally, both parents must be present with the child to obtain a passport for minor under 16 years of age. If you are a deployed Soldier, this creates a unique circumstance since one parent is typically in the States, while the other parent is deployed to a foreign country. The State Department has its own form that is required in these cases. So, if you are planning on your family to visit with you in Europe during your R & R leave, you’ll want to come by the Legal Assistance Office to execute the State Department’s form about 2 months (or more) before the travel dates.

- Signing your tax return. You do not need a POA of any kind to authorize your spouse to sign your name on a joint tax return. Instead, your spouse can sign on your behalf, and note under the signature: “SIGNING FOR SPOUSE- DEPLOYED SOLDIER – BALKANS KFOR 12 MISSION”.

Key Considerations

- A POA becomes void upon the death of the principal or the agent, when revoked, or on the expiration date specified.

- A POA normally is void if the principal becomes physically or mentally incapacitated. However, appropriate durability language may be added to ensure that the POA remains valid during any period of incapacity.

- Any third party has the right to refuse to accept a POA. Many financial institutions and businesses have their own POAs, which they prefer to be used to conduct business.

- A POA should be given for only a limited time period. A third party is more likely to accept a POA with a recent date than one which is many months or years old.

- Never give a general POA when a special POA will accomplish the intended purpose. There is less opportunity for abuse when only limited powers are given.

- You may revoke a POA before its expiration date by executing a revocation of the POA. Notice of the revocation must be delivered to the agent, as well as to all third parties who you know relied on the POA. If possible, recover from the attorney-in-fact and destroy the original and all copies of the POA. Even though the POA has been revoked, you may be responsible to any third party who did not receive notice of the revocation.

- A special POA should be as specific as possible. For example, if you are authorizing an attorney-in-fact to sell a vehicle on your behalf, specify the vehicle, license number, vehicle identification number, the make/model/year of the vehicle, and any specific terms you will require.

As a deployed Soldier, you have access to one of the oldest, and largest, law firms in America- the U. S. Army JAG Corps, and you should take advantage of that availability. We are located in building 1340A to assist you with your legal needs.

Inspirational Insight

~ thoughts from the Peacekeepers chapel



You Never Know

You never know when a new friend might become a partner for peace.

In May 2009, I attended the NATO Chaplains Operations Course in Oberammergau, Germany, where I made some new friends, to include 24 chaplains from all over the world, including Chaplain 1st Lt. Aleksander Ernisa from Slovenia. After a short 1-week course together, we said our good-byes not knowing if we would ever see one another again. But you never know.

In October, U.S. Soldiers of MNTF-E, Kosovo Force 12 arrived at Hohenfels, Germany, and we discovered that our task organization for training at the Joint Maneuver Readiness Center included Soldiers from the Slovenian Army. The Slovenians brought their Chaplain with them: Chaplain 1st Lt. Aleksander Ernisa, my friend from the NATO Chaplains course!

After our brief and happy reunion, we got to work. Chaplain Ernisa and his Pastoral Assistant 2nd Lt. Marko Ruska became a dynamic part of the MNTF-E Unit Ministry Team. The Slovenian Pastoral Team (TF Salamander UMT) gave us a total of five UMTs at JMRC. Chaplain Aleksander Ernisa and Marko Ruska provided comprehensive religious support to TF Salamander, and even conducted bilateral meetings with Religious Leaders in their area of operations. On at least one occasion, Chaplain Aleksander Ernisa was instrumental in calming down a riot in the mock city of Strpce by engaging the local Imam.

My friendship with Chaplain Aleksander Ernisa became a working partnership at JMRC. Our friendship gave us the foundation to work together. Our friendship became a meaningful and successful partnership.

MNTF-E is an international task force comprised of coalition partners. As the Soldiers of KFOR 12 move forward in Kosovo, it will be an exciting opportunity to make new international friends who will become very important to us in the next year, and perhaps the years to come!

As we build international partnerships for peace, here is some guidance on relationships:

- Keep it real. Build genuine friendships. Genuine friendships are characterized by mutual respect and honesty.*
- You have to really care. Authentic friendship means you truly care about the other person.*
- Do not "use" people to get what you want. People know when they are just a tool. People know when they are being manipulated. Let true friendship become the foundation for your mutual partnership.*
- Above all, always do the right thing. A friend always does the right thing for another friend.*
- And remember the words of Jesus: "No greater love has anyone, than to lay down his life for his friends." Because you never know when your friend might just do that for you.*

You never know when a new friend might become an international partner for peace in this world so loved by God. Let's build real relationships that last for a lifetime.

Chaplain Maj. Maury Millican

MNTF-E Command Chaplain, KFOR-12



NOVEMBER 2009

THE **GUARDIAN** *EAST*

