



Falcon Flier

Volume 5, Issue 5

Produced for the personnel of Task Force Falcon

August 1, 2001

Bush signs pay raise at Camp Bondsteel

“We will pursue a world of tolerance and freedom -from Kosovo to Kashmir, from the Middle East to Northern Ireland. Freedom and tolerance is the defining issue for our world, and your service here has set an example for the whole world to see.”

-President George W. Bush



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right: President George W. Bush, the First Lady, and Brig. Gen. Bill David, Multinational Brigade East commander, talk with Task Force Falcon soldiers just after Bush signed a bill designating \$1.9 billion for military pay raises.



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left: Brig. Gen. Bill David, Multinational Brigade East commanding general, shakes hands with Gen. Agim Ceku, commander of the Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC or TMK) during a joint training exercise.



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right: 2nd Lt. Heath Melton, targeting officer with 3-69th Armor, steals the ball for his team during a “Speed and Power” kid’s day at Camp Monteith. “These kids can play soccer, I’ll tell you that!” said Melton in amazement.



Visit from Pres. Bush was a reward for the hard work of the men and women of TFF

**Story by
Brig. Gen. Bill David
Task Force Falcon Commander**

On July 24th President and Mrs. Bush honored us with a visit. It was an honor because of two historic events. First, this was his first visit of U.S. soldiers overseas since becoming president. Second, he chose us as the audience for a bill-signing that provides service members with well-deserved benefits.

Competing matters of global security stood still while the commander-in-chief took time out of a busy schedule to demonstrate the appreciation of a grateful nation. His visit was a reward for the hard work and sacrifice you and your families have made since planning and training for Kosovo began.

A monumental effort was made to prepare for his visit and it would not have been a success without the contribution of every person on our team. I wanted to give as many of you as possible the chance to see the President and First Lady because you collectively earned this high honor. Rest assured that the president is aware of your efforts. His comments and actions reflected his pride for our entire team.

President Bush brought national and international recognition to our mission and accomplishments. The president said, "Thanks to you, and those who served before you, the people of Kosovo are able to buy food and find shelter, go to school, and get medical help. Thanks to you, there will be elections in November. Thanks to you there are fewer arms flowing into Macedonia and a hope for peace in that land. Thanks to you and the service of our forces throughout the Balkans, the region is growing closer to the rest of Europe."

His comments show that he and the world know that we are making improvements, not just inside the wire, but outside in the communities as well. He confirmed that we are achieving our goal. His praise encourages our relentless pursuit of our goals.

Clearly, our mission here and the sacrifice we make have importance. Clearly, we have the president's support. As I watched him and Mrs. Bush dive into masses of soldiers I knew he was doing it on behalf of a grateful nation. Be relentless.



NCOs need to work with soldiers to help them to fill the future NCO slots available

**Story by
Command Sgt. Major Marvin Hill
Task Force Falcon CSM**

I am thrilled to say that I have discovered the solution to a problem that we all experience. Like any solution, it will take all of us to

make it happen.

The Army has an enormous shortage of soldiers serving in the ranks of sergeant and staff sergeant. This is true of all branches and all units.

During my visits throughout the sector, I have seen young specialists and sergeants who are ready to step into the batter's box and take a swing for the team.

These young teammates possess the confidence to drive in runs. They are, in many cases, already acting in the position. I call them "Super Juniors." It's time though for us to sign them up for the big league.

Leaders must seize this opportunity to grow their own. Forest Gump's mother said life is like a box of chocolates.

Well, unlike a box of chocolates, when you grow your own, you know what you are going to get. Growing our own is a necessity.

We don't have to wait for formal schooling to develop our specialists and sergeants. Kosovo experience is the best PLDC and BNCOC we can hope for. First line leaders can apply positive, caring leadership, 24 hours a day and seven days a week. Only, on deployments are soldiers around their leaders this much.

Our specialists and sergeants have an equal share in the responsibility.

With all the distracters back home, a soldier is lucky to spend three hours a day with their mentor.

Here, the leader shows his soldier what is right all day, every day. This is our batting practice.

Signing up for the big league means participation in promotion boards and professional development.

It is everybody's responsibility. Take advantage of this unique opportunity. BE RELENTLESS!

Engineers build roads to better Kosovo

**Story and photo by Spc. Maria Jaramillo
358th MPAD**

Asphalt, heated to 360-degrees, was poured from a five-ton truck onto a road littered with potholes, some over three feet wide. The half-mile of road was not only a travel route for military, but also the site of fatal accidents caused by the condition of the road. Task Force Falcon engineer soldiers were upgrading the main route and creating a safer road for everyone to travel.

"It's important to improve the roads because of the simple fact that you've got traffic going everywhere, and all these people going back and forth. With some of these potholes, when cars swerve there is the possibility of them hitting a child or causing an accident right in the middle of a parade," said Staff Sgt. William D. Travis, a platoon leader with 1

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Falcon Flier

Circulation: 4,000

The *Falcon Flier* is an authorized publication of the Task Force Falcon Public Affairs Office. Contents of the *Falcon Flier* are not necessarily official views of the United States Department of the Army, Department of Defense or the U.S. Government. It is produced by the 358th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, SADAFRC, UT, Task Force Falcon PAO.

For story ideas, comments or suggestions, contact Task Force Falcon Flier Editor at 781-5200, mail to Falcon Flier Editor, HQ Task Force Falcon PAO, Camp Bondsteel APO AE 09340 or e-mail at Gary.Peterson@bondsteel2.areur.army.mil

Task Force Falcon Commander
Public Affairs Officer
Camp Bondsteel OIC
Camp Monteith OIC
KFOR Media Liaison
First Sergeant
Camp Bondsteel NCOIC
Webmaster/Daily Flier
Media Relations NCOIC
Editor/Layout and Design
Assistant Editor/Layout and Design
Journalists/Photographers

Brig. Gen. Bill David
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Staff Sgt. Tom Cornaby
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Sgt. Gary E. Peterson
Spc. Marshall Thompson
Spc. Maria Jaramillo, Spc. Engels Tejeda and Spc. Travis Bascom



First Lady dedicates the Education Center

**Story and photos by
Spc. Maria Jaramillo
358th MPAD**

Task Force Falcon soldiers dedicated an Army Education Center to First Lady Laura Bush in honor of her visit to Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo. Cheering soldiers welcomed the former educator, who attended the dedication ceremony held at the education center as part of the Tuesday visit that completed the President's European Tour.

"She has been an advocate for education all her adult life. Like us, she knows the importance of education and the contributions it has made to our great country, and our armed forces," said Maj. Jimmy L. Jackson, Task Force Falcon Inspector General.

The unveiling of the dedication plaque was performed by two soldiers selected from the two divisions currently deployed to Kosovo, 101st Airborne Division out of Fort Stewart, Ga. and 3rd Infantry Division out of Fort Campbell, Ky.

"I am thrilled and overwhelmed of the dedication of this education center in my



Pfc. Veronica Rodriguez, a 3rd Infantry Division soldier, shakes hands with Laura Bush after a plaque was unveiled for the dedication of the Education Center in honor of the First Lady.

honor," said Laura Bush, First Lady to the President of the United States.

The Laura Bush Education Center was built to support the educational development of the peacekeeping soldiers serving in Kosovo.

Accredited classroom education, correspondence courses as well as non-commissioned officer development courses are offered. The center also contains a computer lab and library for soldiers.

"We have a full range of programs to help and motivate soldiers. It is very important for us to have this 24-hours a day and seven days a week," said Nancy L. Ray, an education service officer with the Laura Bush Education Center.

The ceremony was immediately followed

by a short tour of the various facilities available to the deployed soldiers. These included a recreation center, gym and cappuccino bar. Throughout the tour, the First Lady met with soldiers and talked briefly before moving on to the next site.

"It made me feel great to know that the president is really behind us all the way, and that he came all the way out here to support us," said Pfc. Todd A. Wineglass, an administration specialist with the 2-502nd Infantry Regiment, Headquarters and Headquarters Company. The tour was completed after visiting the sewing and laundry facilities and a final farewell to the troops before meeting her husband, President George W. Bush for his morale speech.



The First Lady mingles with soldiers after the dedication ceremony.

Brig. Gen. David presents new trucks to city of Strpce

**Story and photos by
Spc. Marshall Thompson
358th MPAD**

The beautiful valley that harbors the small town of Strpce/Shterpce has only one flaw to its picturesque greenery. The clear water of mountain streams



Locals examine the brand new fire truck after the ceremony.

bubbles over soda cans, diapers and broken beer bottles that sparkle in the sun.

The people of Strpce/Shterpce can't be blamed for the misplacement of these items. The hard days of war have left the city with less than adequate solid waste disposal systems. However, KFOR is trying to change all that.

KFOR soldiers gathered with the citizens of Strpce/Shterpce July 19 to celebrate the donation of a new sanitation truck and a new fire truck.

"In Strpce, they've got one trash truck. There are no lights and it just barely makes it around. The newest fire engine they have is about 30 years old, and it's not exactly operational," said Maj. James L. Hice, tactical support team leader with the 404th Civil Affairs Battalion.

"The other fire truck is so old you can't believe it," said Albagir I. Adam, civil security coordinator for the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK).

A spokesman for the citizens of Strpce/Shterpce said the new trucks would make the city a safer place as well as helping to preserve the significant beauty of the environment in that area.

"It will definitely affect the



A youth group dances to show their appreciation for the gift.

everyday citizen. It will increase the cycles of collections in the week and they will have a cleaner town," Adam said.

U.S. KFOR bought the two trucks for the town of Strpce. Hice said it was a sign that the town was cooperating well with KFOR and UNMIK. The donation of the vehicles was not only to help the people of the city but also to aid with cooperation in the future.

"There's nothing worse than having people that do not cooperate with KFOR. It will make your job so unpleasant that the mission will not be complete. The fact that the people here are working with us allows KFOR to not expend a lot of time and man power for things like demonstrations," Hice said.

The project for the vehicles was approved by the Humanitarian Assistance Board at Camp Bondsteel. Once the plan was approved it worked just like in the civilian world and bids were looked at for the trucks.

"We went with the best bid, not the lowest, but the best bid," Hice said.

The brand new trucks were presented to the city by Brig. Gen. Bill David, commander of Multinational Brigade East. Before the presentation, the youth of Strpce/Shterpce showed their appreciation by doing folk dances in the traditional clothing of the region.

After the presentation, soldiers and citizens mixed as their new owners inspected the trucks.

"This is a great contribution from the U.S. KFOR We appreciate it so much," Adam said. "It's going to help the local government so much."

TMK and KFOR train together for safe future in Kosovo

**Story and photos by
Spc. Engles Tejeda
358th MPAD**

The records were set straight once and for all when officials met at a training exercise for the Kosovo Protection Corps.

Formed and financed by the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) in 1999, the KPC is a "civil organization" trained to react to natural disasters to include fires and other catastrophes. The organization consists mainly of former Kosovo Liberation Army members who are being transformed into a civil corps.

Maj. Thomas Battle, deputy chief of the Joint Implementation Commission, an organization designed to oversee the compliance of the Military Technical Agreement between the KPC, the Serbian Military and Police Force, and KFOR, said the KPC was very serious about meeting its goals. He pointed out the training event that was taking place in the mountainous territory.

During the five-day exercise, the members of Regional Task Group Six of the KPC were certified on several skills, to include fire fighting, land navigation, first aid, crossing a one-rope bridge, and recognizing a minefield.

Sgt. Shane White, a combat engineer with the 11th Engineer Battalion, said the training was very valuable to all parties involved.

"By giving them the knowledge, they can help themselves and help other people in their

communities," said White who was overseeing the KPC training on mine detection. He said if there was one skill that can definitely help save lives in the ordnance-covered Kosovo, recognizing a minefield would be it.

"I think that the training that we are doing here is exceptional and from what I've seen from them I'm getting that they really enjoy this as well... It makes me feel good that I've come to this country—that I've been able to help," White said.

The exercise was set up by the KPC, said Sgt. First Class Tom Caskey, the non-commissioned officer in charge of the JIC.

He said that the KFOR troops trained selected members of the KPC, who in turn trained the rest of the members, while KFOR acted as overseers during the exercise.

Dispelling rumors about the goal of the KPC, Brig. Gen. Bill David, commander of Multinational Brigade East, and Gen. Agim Ceku, commander of the KPC, sent a clear message July 26: the KPC (also known as the TMK by its Albanian initials) is precisely what it was intended to be, a civilian emergency relief organization, and that the partnership between the two institutions is not to be endangered by critics' accusations.

David commented on the relationship his brigade has with RTG-6.

"Some have tried to paint this partnership as something that is not to be trusted," said David referring to rumors of the KPC being involved in the support of an



Col. Vincent Brooks, Multinational Brigade East deputy commander, crosses a "one-rope bridge" during at TMK training exercise July 26.

insurgency in the nearby Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

"The relationship between MNB East and the Kosovo Protection Corps is in no way linked to baseless accusations by a sensationalist press in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The problems in FYROM are FYROM's problems that have nothing to do with the relationship between MNB East and the Kosovo Protection Corps, and we refuse to let this relationship be held hostage to groundless accusations that have no basis in fact," said David.

Strengthening David's statements were the words of Ceku, who replied to a press inquiry about the KPC involvement in preventing weapons smugglings

into FYROM.

"I do not know that there are some weapons smugglings. It is not my job to know. That's KFOR and UNMIK Police's job, and I do not have anything to do with this," Ceku said.

"The Kosovo Protection Corps is not an intelligence organization," said David. "The Kosovo Protection Corps does not spy and report on the people of Kosovo. The KPC has a very important task in front of it regarding the transition to an institution that can assist in the public service of all the citizens of Kosovo.

"Although there may be individuals who have been linked to these activities (referring to the

see *TMK and KFOR on page 14*

FALCON'S FORCE

What does "Respect" mean to you in Kosovo?



Staff Sgt. Joseph Nichols, D Company of the 2-502nd Infantry Regiment, Klokot

"You have to respect the local people. They see us as heroes, and they respect the soldiers."



Pvt. Bradley Palmer, C Company of the 2-502nd Infantry Regiment, Vitina

"When someone has been doing something longer than you, respect is listening to them."



Pvt. Jimmy Young, D Company of the 2-502nd Infantry Regiment, Klokot

"Respect is treating people the same way you want to be treated."



1st Lt. Samantha Kenyon, B Company of the 311th Military Intelligence Battalion, Monteith

"Respect means treating other people with dignity and respecting their intelligence."



Sgt. Greg Burns, D Company of the 2-502nd Infantry Regiment, Klokot

"Treat everyone just like you would treat anyone else."



Spc. Jamie Pennay, C Company of the 2-502nd Infantry Regiment, Vitina

"Respect means giving other people what is due to them. Treat them how you would want to be treated."

TFF soldiers face off against local children

**Story and photos by
Spc. Engels Tejada
358th MPAD**

The 3-69th Armored Regiment took another step toward a united Kosovo. During a "speed and power kids day," approximately 48 children of all Kosovo ethnicities came together to participate in several athletic events.

The event began with Lt. Col. David Bishop, commander of the 3-69th Armor, addressing the children at Camp Monteith's indoor basketball court.

"Today we are going to play three basketball games and three soccer games," explained Bishop to the energetic children.

He told them that the teams would be mixed, consisting of all ethnicities as well as U.S. soldiers.

"After the game we are (giving) you a tour of the camp, and then we are going to give you awards based on your performance; but you all will be winners

because you came here today. So be safe, have fun, and make friends with one another," Bishop said.

The kids were split into teams; some went to play basketball, while others went to the soccer field.

Soldiers from A, B, and C Company of the 3-69th Armor, as well as soldiers from C Company of the 501st Greek Mechanized Infantry, joined the children in three games of each sport.

Capt. Gil Cardona, fire support officer for 3-69th Armored Regiment, explained the importance of having mixed teams as well as including the soldiers in the activities.

"The event was an idea that we developed at 3-69th Armor to bring everybody together, show the kids that it doesn't matter if you are Serb, it doesn't matter if you are Albanian; everyone can get together regardless of who they are. And that's why we mixed the teams, and put KFOR soldiers in there as well," said Cardona.

The idea proved to be success-



Pfc. Lorenzo Preston, forward observer with C Company 3-69th Armor, attempts to score a basket during a game with children of multiple ethnicities at Camp Monteith. "They run you to death," said Preston.



Nine-year-old Valon "Little Man" Beqiri attempts to get the ball during a basketball game.

ful. At the soccer field the children played with one another, ignoring the turmoil that had shadowed much of their infancy. A child of Serbian decent would pass the ball to one of Albanian decent, while an American soldier attempted to steal it.

2nd Lt. Heath Melton, targeting officer with 3-69th Armored Regiment, said that the kids were having fun, and so was he, but he admitted that they were hard to beat.

"They were pretty tough kids, I was amazed. Some of the kids, ten-year-old or younger, were out there embarrassing the soldiers... it was pretty funny," Melton said jokingly. "These kids can play soccer, I'll tell you that."

Meanwhile at the basketball court, nine-year-old Valon "Little Man" Beqiri, a child of Albanian decent participating in the event, had made a name for himself.

Beqiri, the shortest of the kids on the court, seemed most determined to get the ball from his American counterpart, Sgt. Leslie Crews, a squad leader with the 3-69th Armor.

"He was very eager to get the ball," said Crews.

"I think I could win next time," responded the 3-foot child.

The outgoing personality of the child helped him to gain the friendship of several kids present, including children of Serbian ethnicity, and to gain the sympathy of Crews.

"Playing with them and the little kid (referring to "Little Man"), reminds me of my own kids," said Crews, who has three children of his own. "It makes me miss them."

After the game the children were given a tour of the camp. They visited most of the facilities available to the soldiers and were given the opportunity to see a static display that featured vehicles from the battalion.

At the end of the day the children gathered at the indoor basketball court again.

There, Bishop recognized those who performed well during the sporting events, and thanked all attendants for visiting the camp.

Then all the children received a t-shirt and a certificate of appreciation for participating.

"If they get together here at an early age," said Cardona referring to the children, "they are going to keep this memory as long as they live; and it should have an impact on their lives."

The Rumor Round-Up

**Story by Maj. Randy Martin
Task Force Falcon Public Affairs
Officer**

Q: I heard that we are pulling out of Camp Able Sentry. Is that true?

A: The truth is that a few soldiers may return to Kosovo from Camp Able Sentry in the coming days. Circumstances allow us to bring troops to Kosovo that we

want here. This is in no way what you would consider a pull out. We hope that we don't have to pull out of Camp Able Sentry. Camp Able Sentry is important to us and the region. It is, however, prudent to have plans for all contingencies. There is no mistake that there have been some real problems in FYROM but, the problems aren't severe enough to dictate such a drastic move. So, while you may have heard the rumor, you aren't going to see convoys driving up from FYROM because that's all this is - a rumor.



Engineers make it possible to walk freely

**Story and photos by
Spc. Marshall
Thompson
358th MPAD**

"I told him he can ride all day long now if he wants," said Spc. Duncan Broussard about a young boy riding his scooter on a brand new sidewalk built by B Company of the 37th Engineer Battalion (Combat) (Airborne) in Pozharan/Pozaranje, Kosovo.

Broussard, a combat engineer with the 37th Engineer Battalion (Combat) (Airborne), said that the boy used to try to ride his scooter on the once rocky and dangerous shoulder of the road. The extremely busy road is the main supply route for Camp Bondsteel. During the market days the narrow stretch of road would become so constricted that it was a great danger for children trying to go to school as well as people trying to get on the bus that stops there.

"The community identified the road as a priority," said Gail Long, a project officer for Kosovo Transition Institution/International Organization Migration (KTI/IOM). "They got in contact with us and civil affairs. The engineers decided to do the labor if we brought the material."

Building a sidewalk and a bus stop is not the normal work of a combat engineer.

New skills were needed to better serve the people of Kosovo in a peace-keeping operation.

"As a combat engineer



Locals begin to use the bus stop built by Task Force Falcon soldiers even before the ribbon cutting ceremony in Pozharan/Pozaranje, Kosovo.

it's a little hard to switch from mines and concertina wire to building, building, building –it's a whole new mind set," said Pfc. John Williams, a combat engineer with the 37th Engineer Battalion (Combat) (Airborne).

Williams said that at first the cement laying wasn't easy to do. Before anything else was done it was necessary to build a solid foundation.

"[The light equipment platoon] had to bring in a lot of rock and compact it. What was there before was mostly mud and weeds. We had to make it nice and hard so we could lay concrete in there. That way, the sidewalk won't move, crack, or sink," said 1st Lt. Robert Marmon, 1st platoon leader with the 37th Engineer Battalion (Combat) (Airborne).

When the foundation was prepared the soldiers

started to pour the cement for about 400 ft. of sidewalk in three sections. The first section was a learning experience as the soldiers who are accustomed to blowing things up made the transition to building things up. However, it didn't take them long to get things in gear.

"When we did the third section everyone knew what they were doing and had a specific task –it went like clock work," Williams said.

In the end it took the engineers only 30 days from when they started pouring to the ribbon cutting ceremony on July, Friday the 13th. Despite the inauspicious history of Friday the 13th everything went better than planned. When all was said and done the engineers finished on time and under their budget.

"We worked pretty

fast for having to work in 40 pounds of gear," Marmon said. "Working with all your battle rattle on your back in the heat of the sun was really strenuous for these guys."

"It was very hot. We had some 86 degree highs and with a protective vest and Kevlar that adds about ten degrees," Williams

said.

Despite the heat and hard work, the soldiers of 1st platoon B Company of the 37th Engineer Battalion (Combat) (Airborne) said they felt good about what they had accomplished.

Broussard, who the locals nicknamed "Kuq" (which means red in Albanian) because of his red hair, said, "I'm glad it's done. The people here are really nice and it's been a good thing for them."

The mayor expressed his thanks to KTI/IOM and B Company of the 37th Engineer Battalion (Combat) (Airborne) and then invited everybody for cokes at a local cafe.

As everyone sat down together that day it was obvious that more than a sidewalk and a bus stop had been built.

Broussard said, "From what I understand this town really took it on the chin during the war, and so they didn't really like soldiers. I think it's really improved the relationship between KFOR and this town –especially with the kids. They are the future country."



Spc. Duncan Broussard, a combat engineer with B Company of the 37th Engineer Battalion, walks with a young girl on the new sidewalk.

Task Force Saber makes sure hot chow gets to soldiers far away

**Story and photo by
Spc. Marshall Thompson
358th MPAD**

Not many soldiers actually prefer the fine packaged cuisine of an MRE to the hot food of a top-rate dining facility.

However, getting hot food to soldiers has always been a challenge, especially when they are far from any main base camp.

Task Force Saber is changing all that with daily helicopter re-supply missions to small base camps in Kosovo like Fire Base Rock.

"Anyone can get anywhere here by car or HMMWV, but we



A soldier loads hot food onto the Black Hawk helicopter.

get [the food] there fast –really fast," said Spc. Steven Pepe Jr., a Black Hawk crew chief from A Company of 6th Battalion of the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) with Task Force Saber.

"It's such an important thing.

We get it there in 15 minutes or less. If it gets to us hot it gets to them hot. There's no question about it," Pepe said.

"[Re-supply missions] are done so the soldiers don't have to be eating MRE's all the time," said 1st Lt. Samuel Deornellas, the executive officer for A Company of 6th Battalion of the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault).

Although hot food is very important to the morale of troops, it's not the only concern when Task Force Saber is running a re-supply mission.

"We're always looking at the ground for potential arms caches and guys trying to smuggle things," Pepe said.

Because it's a daily flight it

might be easy for complacency to slip into the observation portion of the mission. However, the soldiers of Task Force Saber don't let their guard drop.

"We've been going up there ever since we got here. We feel pretty safe about the air space. But, it is really close to the border so we are always looking out," Deornellas said.

"We're always searching because people could be right under your nose and you would never know. You have to be searching at all times."

Thanks to the brave men and women of Task Force Saber, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonian border is safe and soldiers get hot food.

Rapid Guardian II supports from above

**Story and photos by
Spc. Engels Tejada
358th MPAD**

Only six days after parachuting out of four C-130's into Kosovo, soldiers of the 1-508th Parachute Infantry Regiment, out of Vicenza, Italy, continue to demonstrate their dedication and readiness during Operation Rapid Guardian II.

Determined to show that they can reinforce KFOR in a matter of hours, the "Red Devils" have engaged in presence patrols, checkpoint operations, and personnel searches.

"We have conducted presence patrols and snap checkpoints here," said Staff Sgt. Thomas A. Carson, squad leader with B Company of the Red Devils. "We are looking for people transporting weapons or anything illegal," he added.

A few miles away, 1st Lt. Kevin Grimes, platoon leader with the anti-tank section, of the Red Devils, lead his team on inspect-



Staff Sgt. Miguel Ramirez, squad leader with the 1-508th searches a vehicle at a checkpoint near Pristina, Kosovo. "I'm glad to have the opportunity to come here and help the people of Kosovo to get back on their feet," he said

ing vehicles traveling along a normally secluded road. The group stopped approximately ten cars in one hour, a relatively high number for the area.

Staff Sgt. Miguel Ramirez, squad leader with the Red Devils, said during the operation, his team has found a few people with identification document discrep-

ancies. "They were turned over to the (local) police," said Ramirez.

The Red Devils face several challenges in accomplishing their mission. In addition to fighting against the nearly 100 degree temperature, the soldiers had to climb hills and walk miles from sunrise to sunset; averaging 12 hours in the field daily. Aside

from the challenges presented by nature, the soldiers also had to look out for dangerous weapons left behind during the war in Kosovo.

"We stay on the trails (while on patrol) due to possible land mines and booby traps. But the biggest challenge is just trying to find what we are looking for," said Carson, admitting that the locals made it difficult to find contraband.

Capt. John Townsend, commander of B Company, said so far the Red Devils have collected small numbers of ammunition, unexploded ordnances and a pistol.

Townsend commented on what drives his soldier's motivation to do their best while participating in Rapid Guardian II.

"They enjoy doing this kind of stuff. It's always exciting, especially when you feel like you are helping somebody while at work and making a difference," Townsend said.

"I'm glad to have an opportunity to come here and help the people of Kosovo to get back on their feet," Ramirez said.

Having two children of his own, Carson said he was motivated to do his best by "looking at the children's faces here and hoping that they can grow up and not let this happen again."

Grimes said, "This operation allows us to maintain our readiness and it helps us to strengthen our relationship with NATO units. It's been a constant learning experience while working with our Norwegian counterparts. They have enlightened us with new ideas and different techniques in solving problems. It's been a pleasure working with them."

According to the Red Devils, they looked forward to finishing the exercise as well as they started it and pointed out that their readiness sends a strong message.

"We are showing anyone here that might be planning something bad that we are close and can come at a moment's notice," said Carson.



Soldiers of the 1508th Parachute Infantry Regiment participate on a dismounted patrol through the town of Kisna Reka, Kosovo, July 16.

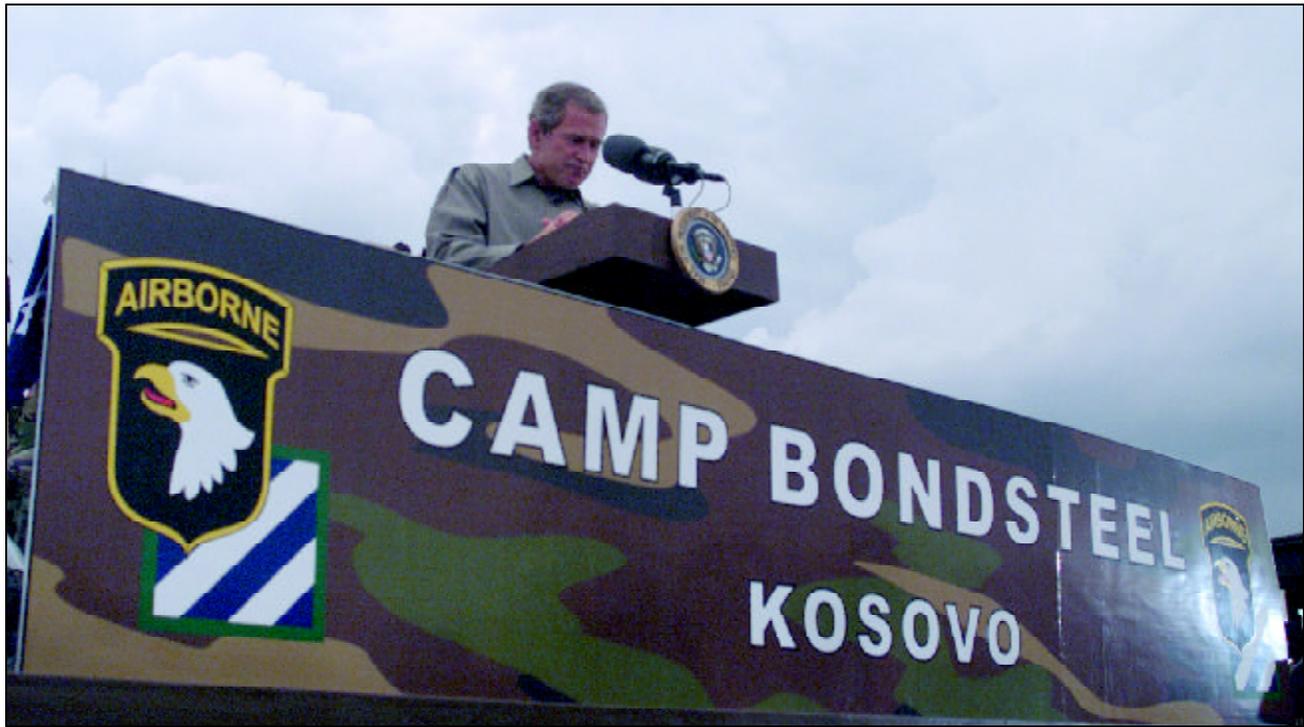


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- Country Round-Up**
9 a.m.-11 a.m.
- 80's Lunch**
11 a.m.-1 p.m.
- Today's Alternative**
3 p.m.-6 p.m.



Bush raises morale and pay for soldiers

**Story and photos by
Spc. Marshall Thompson
358th MPAD**

President George W. Bush raised spirits at Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo during a visit July 24 in which he signed a bill to dedicate 1.9 billion dollars to a pay increase for members of the military.

"I promised America that help is on the way for the men and women who wear our uniform. Today, I'm proud to say, help is arriving. I'm committed that America does a better job of supporting you all," Bush said to the roaring cheers of the military personnel that crowded onto a soccer field to hear him speak.

The screaming Task Force Falcon soldiers said that they were very honored to have the president come and visit their base.

"It shows the soldiers that their commander-in-chief cares about what they are doing and for their welfare and well-being," said Sgt. Damien Allen, an information management specialist with the 501st Signal Battalion.

Pfc. Paul D. Taylor, a military policeman with the 21st Military Police, was not able to attend Bush's address, but said that it still helped morale. He wanted to thank President Bush "for coming and sharing his support."

Bush flew into Kosovo to share his support after finishing up the last leg of a tour of Europe. During his visit in Kosovo, he toured parts of Camp Bondsteel and talked with Brig. Gen. Bill David, Multinational Brigade East commander, and other military officials while the First Lady

visited the medical facility and the Camp Bondsteel education center that will now bear her name.

A few thousand cheering soldiers waving American flags met the President on the soccer field when he finished touring.

David praised Bush for his commitment to health and personal fitness by presenting him and the First Lady with U.S. Army physical training jackets with the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) and the 3rd Infantry Division symbols on the back.

Bush accepted the jackets and even offered to lead a run up the steepest hill of the rolling terrain on Camp Bondsteel.

The crowd reacted well to the mention of their favorite pastime, running.

The energy of the crowd and the smiles on the faces of individual soldiers reflected the incredible lift that Bush's visit created.

"It was very good for morale," said Sgt. Gerald Boutwell, an information management specialist with the 501st Signal Battalion who helped set up the sound for President Bush. "I like how everybody came together."

One question on the minds of many of the soldiers who came together that day was how long the U.S. military would have a presence in Kosovo. Bush reminded everybody that peace in Europe was a very important for the United States. He thanked the soldiers for their good work and excellent relations with the other NATO troops.

"Your diversity and close cooperation... in the cause of peace, is an example to the people of this region. And it is a rebuke to the ethnic intolerance and narrow

nationalism that brought us here in the first place," Bush said.

However, he continued by reiterating the campaign promise of lowering U.S. involvement in Kosovo.

"Our goal is to hasten the day when peace is self-sustaining; when local democratically elected authorities can assume full responsibility; and when NATO forces can go home," Bush said, once again to a cheer from the crowd.

At the end of the speech, Bush actually sat down and signed the bill that would provide for the increase in pay and health benefits for U.S. soldiers.

When the bill was signed, Bush took time to shake hands and pose for pictures in a sage green shirt —almost disappearing in a sea of olive drab camouflage.

Shaking his way through the mass of soldiers gave the commander-in-chief an appetite. Luckily, a dining facility was not far away.

At the dining facility, Bush met with more soldiers and shared a meal with a full house, interrupting his meal often to pose for pictures and greet more people.

Finally, Bush said farewell to Camp Bondsteel and flew off on his way back to the United States. Unfortunately, his tight schedule didn't allow for the run up Camp Bondsteel's grueling hills —maybe next time.

In conclusion, Bush left the soldiers at Camp Bondsteel with this message:

"I want you to know that there is no higher honor than to serve as your commander-in-chief. America appreciates your service and sacrifices for our country."

Above left: Bush addresses the soldiers of Task Force Falcon. *Above center:* Multinational Brigade Deputy Commander Col. Vincent Brooks shakes hands with Bush.

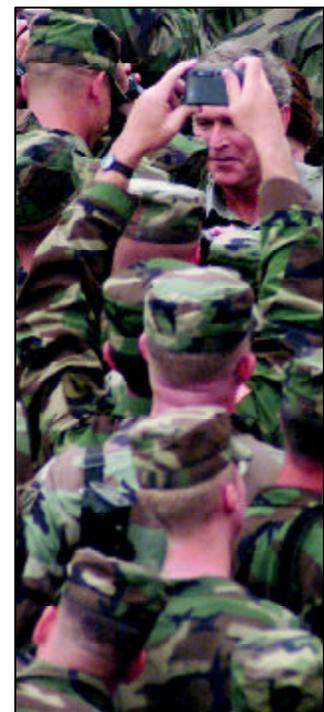
Above right: Bush is greeted at the soccer field by hundreds of American flags.

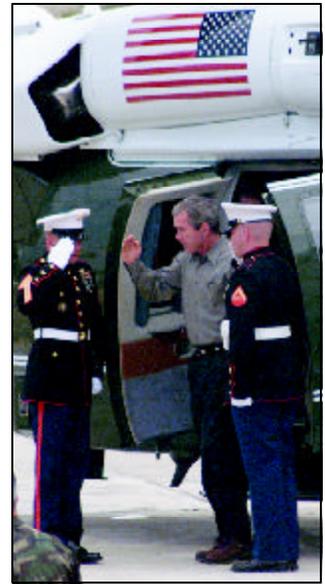
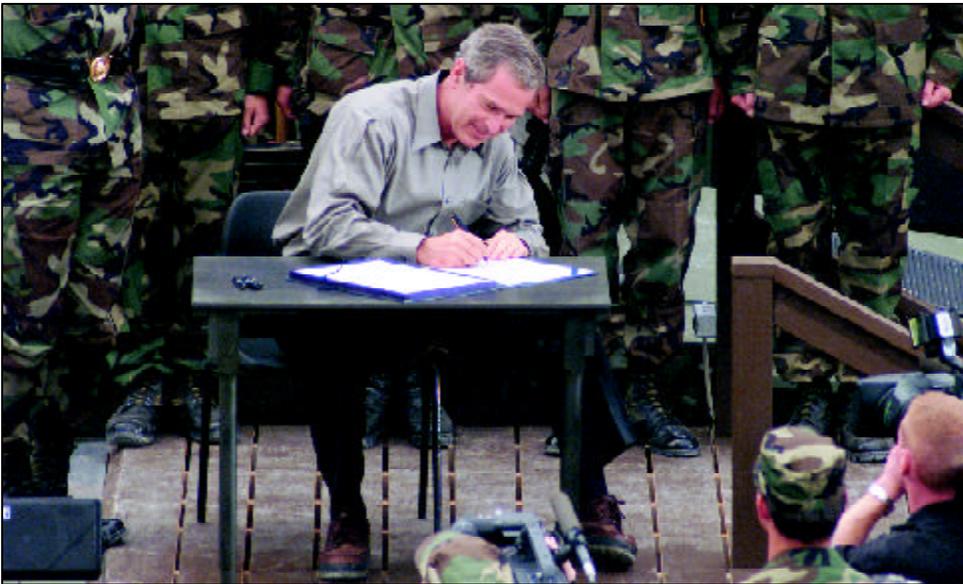
Right: Bush signs a pay raise for U.S. Soldiers.

Far right: Bush salutes two Marines as he steps off his helicopter at Camp Bondsteel.

Bottom right: Bush is welcomed to the Multinational Brigade East.

Below: A soldier reaches up in a crowd to get a photo of Bush.





Medical

Dental clinic treats all kinds of patients

**Story and photos by
Lt. Col. William H. Swilley
Task Force Med Falcon**

Shortly after the arrival of the Task Force Medical Falcon, the dental clinic was asked to assist in the treatment of Staff Sgt. Sorbon, whose job description included that of "attack dog."

Staff Sgt. Sorbon, a canine, had developed the habit of attacking the fence surrounding his yard, resulting in substantial abuse to his "eye tooth". Therefore, Staff Sgt. Sorbon was put under anesthetic and treated.

Lt. Col. William H. Swilley performed a root canal procedure on the dog's upper right canine tooth and later, Col. Carney M. Middleton placed a composite filling to restore the menacing fang. Such is the variety of challenges that has faced the dental staff.

A routine day at the dental clinic is anything but normal. One day might bring a number of difficult extractions of impacted wisdom teeth, or the treatment of an abscessed tooth while another might bring a number of soldiers whose units have been found to be Class IV, meaning that they have not had an exam in a year.

One of the most surprising things the dentists have noted is the number of Class III patients they have seen here at Camp Bondsteel. These are patients who have conditions deemed likely to create an emergency situation within six months. Many of these are the aforementioned wisdom teeth, but a significant number are simply deep cavities that should have been attended to prior to deployment.



Dr. Swilley performing a root canal on Staff Sgt. Sorbon.

This is a constant reminder of the need to maintain the oral health of our fighting force. This is a responsibility shared by company commanders, permanent duty station dental clinics, and primarily, the responsibilities of the individuals themselves to insure that annual exams are done and timely treatment performed.

In addition to the routine (and not so routine) dental care provided, the staff has been tasked to participate in humanitarian missions throughout Multinational Brigade East and has visited both Albanian and Serbian villages.

The response and expression of gratitude by the local nationals has been overwhelming, and has proved to be an extremely gratifying part of the dental mission here in KFOR.

The feeling of accomplishment by helping these people, who have been through so much, is tempered, more than slightly, by the desire to do so much more to assist them towards

self-sufficiency and peaceful coexistence.

The dentists have also appeared on local radio and television shows. They bring messages of preventive dental care to the local people by answering questions from callers and demonstrating the humanitarian aspect of the KFOR's mission in general.

Middleton was something of a "star" for a while, with several local nationals on Camp Bondsteel pointing him out saying, "I saw you on TV!"

As Middleton and Swilley prepare to pass their drills to the third rotation, continuity of the function of this small but important element of KFOR is insured by the very able and energetic efforts of the noncommissioned officer in charge, Raymond B. Murray, the hygienist, Sgt. Rachael L. Reichert, and the assistant, Spc. Colin J. Schwalm. With this core of auxiliary staff, treatment and care of the troops will continue to improve and expand.



Dr. Middleton and Sgt. Murray treating a patient.

Civil Affairs makes sure Kosovo can take care of itself

**Story and photo by
Spc. Maria Jaramillo
358th MPAD**

A road barely wide enough for a four-wheeled vehicle to wind steeply up the side of a mountain. The road bent into 180-degree turns, and in order for a HMMWV to make the climb safely, the turns had to be made in three, five, and seven-point turns.

Roads like these are the lifelines for villages set high into the mountains, and it is the job of 404th Civil Affairs Battalion to travel to all these villages to ensure that steps are taken to build a Kosovo that's able to take care of itself. These steps include teaching people to pull together for the common good, such as new healthcare clinics and building bridges across rivers.

"Basically these people need help rebuilding, and getting their lives back to where they were before the war. We're just here to give them a hand,"

said Spc. Jamar E. Hall, a civil affairs specialist, Team Two, 404th Civil Affairs Battalion.

Team Two is now seeing the completion of a clinic in Dubrava. The project was undertaken with local cooperation. Once the site was chosen, the project was split into parts. It was the responsibility of the city to tear down the unusable building before construction of the new one began.

"Bottom line, we are here to help these people out, whatever they need. If we can provide it, we will do what we have to for them," Hall said.

The village pulled down the building, and construction of the clinic began. Once the construction was under way, the soldiers would periodically check on the work to ensure that the contract was being followed. The experience of one of the team members proved its value on these inspections.

"Sgt. [1st Class] [Weldarson] Robinson has 20 years in construction, so he's a great asset to the team. He would climb up into the rafters and make corrections to the contractors," said 1st Lt. John

J. Evans, a civil military officer, Team Two, 404th Civil Affairs Battalion.



A local village leader, Halit Sadik Bushi, works with civil affairs by signing a statement to declare the village's promised contribution to the bridge project. The village is expected to contribute to the project, and the civil affairs soldiers organize the responsibilities.

With the clinic project coming to a close, the soldiers are now focusing on building a bridge for another village. The bridge project involved working with the local leaders in the villages. One issue that is pinned down is the amount of funding everyone is willing to contribute.

"The idea isn't for KFOR [Kosovo Force] to do it for people, the idea is for people to help themselves and KFOR can help facilitate that," Evans said.

One way to ensure that every group sticks by the amount of funding they pledged is a signed statement. The civil affairs soldiers collected the signatures of all the major players involved in the project.

"We went around collecting all the signatures, because if we didn't do it, it probably wouldn't get done," Evans said.

Once civil affairs has everyone working toward the same goal, Kosovo is another step closer to being able to do it on its own.

1-41st Field Artillery controls the roads

**Story and photo by
Spc. Maria Jaramillo
358th MPAD**

A checkpoint set up by the road was controlling the summer traffic, and periodically the vehicles were being searched. This checkpoint was set up and jointly controlled by American and Russian soldiers. Together, 100 percent identification checks and periodic vehicle searches continued to help ensure no illegal items were flowing in or out of Kosovo.

"We look for bombs, weapons and any type of contraband that they may have in the vehicle. Anything out the normal is considered suspicious," said Staff Sgt. Corin M. Gillens, a section chief with B Battery, 1-41st Field Artillery.

The searches included the trunk, hood and interior of the vehicle. Everything from papers to cell phones can be subject to search.

Extremist prevention doesn't end with vehicle and equipment at the checkpoint. For most traveling across the border, only an identification is checked, but some are checked more thoroughly.

The checkpoint along the Kosovo/Serbia border is a commercial traffic entrance. The checkpoint also helps to serve United Nations Mission in Kosovo-Police (UNMIK-P). UNMIK-P charge a 15 percent tax on the goods coming across the border.

The tax goes to the Kosovo Fund where it is distributed to organizations such as hospitals and schools.

"Some drivers started trying to use other checkpoints to avoid paying the tax. They were turned away and told to come back through this checkpoint. We check their receipts to make sure they've paid," Gillens said.



Before civilians are allowed across, the 1-41 Field Artillery soldiers check their identification.

The 1-41st Field Artillery operated checkpoints along the border are a new mission for B Battery. The battery was assigned this mission as Task Force Falcon rearranged troops for changing mission requirements.

"I have been out here (the checkpoint) for only a week. It's fun. I like getting to know the people and keep them going through easily," said Pfc. Dave Conklin, a field artillery specialist with the 1-41st Field Artillery.

376th Finance Battalion makes sacrifices for KFOR

**Story by Sgt. 1st Class Brian Kappmeyer
358th MPAD**

Nine-year-old Megan was sad to see her father leave home for more than six months, but she was also proud.

"My dad's a soldier, and he is going over there (to the Balkans) to keep the peace," said Sgt. 1st Class Luke Leslie describing what his stepdaughter told her friends after learning he was going to the Balkans. Leslie and his wife, Cindy, explained to Megan that her dad was going far away to help people that needed him.

Leslie, an Army reservist with the 376th Finance Battalion from Wausau, Wisc., volunteered for the mission to the Balkans to get professional experience as a cash collection officer.

"I kind of run the bank," the 18-year-Army veteran said nonchalantly regarding the importance of his position.

Fourteen battalion members — 13 of them volunteers — arrived at Camp Able Sentry, Macedonia in mid-April. They handle military pay issues and help with in- and out-processing of soldiers heading for duty in Kosovo or for soldiers returning home. Six members of the finance unit were sent to Kosovo in support of operations at Camps Bondsteel and Monteith.

Although Camp Able Sentry Finance Officer 1st Lt. Patricia Foley did not volunteer for the deployment, she doesn't regret participating in the Balkan mission.

"This is an experience I could never get as a civilian," said the Sheboygan, Wisc., real estate agent. "You should try to make the best of things, experience what you can and even though I didn't volunteer I try to make the best of it. I have made several new friends and will keep in touch with them for years to come."

Foley left behind her 21-month-old daughter. "I was there for most of the early milestones like walking," Foley said. "But her father better have her potty trained by the time I get home," mom said jokingly; although, with a hint of firmness in her voice.

For Sgt. 1st Class Donald Leander, volunteer and Camp Able Sentry Finance Office NCOIC, this deployment has offered him a totally

different perspective. Leander has been on several deployments, but this is the first one as a spouse and father. Don married his wife, Cindy, last fall and welcomed four stepchildren — all less than 10 years old — into his life in addition to the couple's newborn baby in February.

"I do miss home more," said the Merrill, Wisc., resident. "Leaving was easier when I was single."

Leander said he volunteered partly so his wife wouldn't be deployed, but also to see a part of the world he has never seen. The Army veteran of nearly 24 years is working in his seventh military occupational specialty and is always eager to learn something new.

Staff Sgt. Robert Coxen's job at Camp Bondsteel is to handle all pay issues for reservists and Guardsmen — a formidable task when you are halfway around the world.

"Once a pay problem is identified, the challenge is to correct the problem," Coxen said. "Most of the problems have to be corrected through the mail because hard documents are needed to verify information. The mail isn't always dependable and sometimes we need to send in documents more than once," he said.

Coxen, from Wittenberg, Wisc., explained that although he must deal with soldier's pay problems, this deployment is harder on his wife Gail and their two boys ages five and 10.

Coxen said he told his boys that they needed to take his place while he was gone and help mom out.

"I'm a fifth grade teacher and we do a lot of traveling during the summertime when school is out," said Coxen, who also deployed for six months during Desert Shield and Desert Storm. "They are doing it on their own this year."

For Sgt. 1st Class Scott Buchberger, Camp Monteith cash control officer, the deployment to Kosovo brings back memories of another military order that came about 10 years ago; when the Portage, Wisc., resident was activated for Desert Storm. A special memory for Buchberger during that deployment to the Middle East was the birth of his oldest daughter.

Whether members of the 376th Finance Battalion are deployed to the Middle East, Bosnia or to Kosovo, the Megan Leslies may be sad their father, mother, relative or friend is in another land so far away, but the kids are proud of the soldiers called peacekeepers.

Cordon and search keeps Kosovo safe and secure

**Story and photos by
Sgt. Gary Peterson
358th MPAD**

Under the cover of darkness and dust, a convoy begins to ascend up a tremendously steep and unforgiving dirt road. Close to the top, the engines are shut off and the lights turned out. Now, only silence and a dark cloud of dust remain. Here the convoy will wait for the real mission to begin.

As the sun dawns over the horizon, the morning silence of a Kosovo/ Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) border town is broken by the music "Flight of the Valkyrie." Several helicopters, tanks, and personnel carriers then accompanied the music. All the vehicles were filled with soldiers determined to keep Kosovo a safe and secure environment for all. With this common goal in mind, the cordon and search began.

"It keeps the weapons from going over the border," said Spc. Richard Dixon of the 311th Military Intelligence Battalion. "If we can do that, it will definitely help out here."

A Cordon and Search is a systematic and thorough search of a town. It involves surrounding the town, and searching homes and yards for any weapons or supplies that threaten the safe and secure environment in Kosovo.

Pfc. John Feldman, attached to D Company 2-502nd Infantry Regiment, said that they were looking for weapon or munitions caches, any IDs associated with ethnic rebels, and any type of contraband that may be hidden to later be smuggled across to the FYROM border.



Pfc. Matthew Pastorius, with C Company of the 11th Engineers, searches a grain bin for a possible hidden weapons cache to help keep Kosovo a safe and secure environment.

"The locals know that we are out here trying to keep them safe," said Sgt. Kevin Price, attached to D Company 2-502nd Infantry Regiment. "They were very cooperative even though they were woken up at five in the morning. Nobody was hostile towards us at all. Most of them were actually glad to see us come through."

Several freshly dug bunkers were discov-

ered, but did not contain any weapons or munitions. Though there were not any caches discovered, the soldiers said the mission was still successful.

"With us coming out here, it helps us keep the pressure on them. They don't know when or where we'll turn up, and that makes it a lot harder to take weapons across the border," said Price.

Soldiers confiscate weapons with the UNMIK Police

**Story and photo by
Spc. Scott Holdsworth
358th MPAD**

The soldiers from D Company of the 2-502nd Infantry Regiment and the United Nations Mission in Kosovo Police (UNMIK-P) worked together to find three hidden weapons caches near Vitina/Viti.

While patrolling near the town of Ribnik/Rimnik, the UNMIK-P members saw a suspicious path on the side of a tractor trail. After following this trail they discovered the cache buried under white plastic covered with small tree branches.

"We were just at the right place at the right time," said Bruce Choy, UNMIK-P investigator.

After finding the weapons and supplies, the UNMIK-P called on the help of soldiers from KFOR to remove the large weapons cache.

"UNMIK Police is not equipped or qualified to handle such explosives," said Choy. "Fortunately KFOR is very assistful in handling explosive materials."

With the help of KFOR, the weapons and supplies could be moved.

"They were right on the spot and very helpful. It was a joint effort. Without them this couldn't



Weapons which the United Nations Mission in Kosovo Police and the 2-502nd Infantry Regiment found together are layed out for the media. Both organizations worked together to find three caches of weapons near Vitina/Viti.

be possible," said UNMIK Public Affairs representative, Mike Hartman Sr.

A further search was con-

ducted by UNMIK-P and D Company, 2-502nd Infantry Regiment in the surrounding areas, which lead to the discovery of two more

weapons caches hidden in a similar manner.

The discovery included anti-tank mines, M60 detonators, 82mm mortar rounds, blocks of TNT, anti-personnel mines, 7.62mm ammunition, 12.7mm ammunition, 20mm M57 cannon rounds, clothes, boots, coats and various other military items.

"This helps remove destructive weapons from this area," said Staff Sgt. Michael Kleifgen, D Company, 2-502nd Infantry Regiment.

"It's good to get this type of weaponry out of circulation and keep the area safe for KFOR, UNMIK and law-abiding citizens," said Choy.

KFOR transported the three caches to Camp Bondsteel where they will destroy the weaponry and issue the useful supplies back into the community through civil affairs' aid.

"It shows that the peace and security of Kosovo is being maintained well with KFOR and UNMIK Police. We're proud of everything that both organizations are doing and the way they are working together," said Hartman.

Both KFOR and UNMIK will continue to patrol and work together to help keep peace and safety.

"When we find something like this we don't slow down, we continue to look," said Hartman.

Chaplain's Corner

Take time to make a list of your blessings

**Story by Chaplain William Harding
Task Force Med Falcon Chaplain**

As our time goes rushing by here in Kosovo, it is important that we take the time to remember all of the things we need to be thankful for. We make lists for lots of things, shopping, work, etc. But very few sit down and take the time to list the good things that happen to us every day. I would like to list a few of the gifts of God for which I am thankful for, and I know that some of you will be also.

The first is our minds; minds to think, to learn, to know. What wonderful things our minds are, beyond comprehension. The most intricate computers are crude compared to the complexity of the mind that God has given us. Truth is also to be known, grasped and held by our minds.

We also have heart. Hearts to feel the beauty and truth of creation, to thrill at the sight of a sunset, a sunrise, a flower, a bird against a blue sky. We have hearts to feel the thrill of the majesty of creation that extends from the snowflakes to the mountains, from the smallest to the largest, all of it in harmony, and all of it with a fantastic beauty.

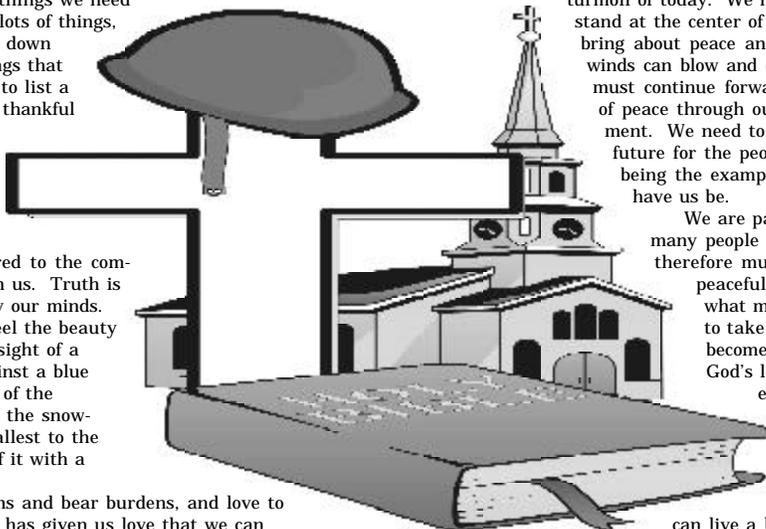
We have strength to face problems and bear burdens, and love to redeem our lives and to save us. God has given us love that we can rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep, and

have our hearts brought together in a tapestry of beauty.

However, we need commitment to one another to bring this about. We need to look for the gift of joy, the deep down joy and also its lighter cousin, laughter. I feel we do not laugh enough.

Then there is PEACE. Peace with God and peace within ourselves and with other people. This is a wonderful gift in the midst of the turmoil of today. We must be willing to stand at the center of the storm and help bring about peace and understanding. The winds can blow and earth shake but we must continue forward showing the way of peace through our love and commitment. We need to secure a peaceful future for the people of this country by being the examples that God would have us be.

We are part of the dream of many people of this country and therefore must help secure a peaceful solution no matter what may happen. I ask you to take the time to pray and become an instrument of God's love. Let us resolve to encourage one another and the people of this land to be forgiving and understanding so that the children can live a life with peace and love.



What does America mean to you?

It is the land of the free, and the home of the brave! It promises liberty and justice for all! Heros of old died to protect it, and here we stand to keep it safe for future generations. The idea means so much to so many.

The Falcon Flier staff wants to hear what it means to be an American from you! The winner of the essay will receive a gift certificate of \$25 to AAFES and will have their essay printed in the October 1st issue of the Falcon Flier.

To enter: Submit your 500 word essay, name and unit to the address below by August 31th:

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Gary.Peterson@bondsteel2.areur.army.mil



Brand new roads in Kosovo

ROADS from page 2

Squad, 155th Engineer Battalion

There were two essential steps to paving the road. The first was the actual road preparation. Before the asphalt was laid, all the potholes were packed with sand.

The filled holes created a straight surface to pave.

"A team came out before us and prepped the road so good that all we had to do was come out here and pave," Travis said.

A local manufacturing plant then mixed the sand, rock, 'agre' and tar to create the asphalt. The mixture was heated to 360-degrees.

While hot it was poured into five-ton trucks and immediately transported to the site.

There was the crew and equipment waiting to lay down the asphalt.

This process enabled the soldiers to complete the road in

about a week.

"This road should be good for another eight or nine years," Travis said.

Town merchants and residents located along the road expressed gratitude for the improvements. The reduced danger to children was frequently repeated as the best part of improvements

"All the villages near us will benefit from this fixed road. Everyone uses this road for transportation, and this village has a very high number of children injured by cars. They did a very good job," said Agon Maliqi, storeowner of Edi's Auto Shop.

Maliqi expressed concern over the speed of cars that traveled through the town.

"I hope that in the future we can do something about the dangerous speeds that cars take down this road and put our children in danger," Maliqi said.

As the final step the engineers have something more planned to increase the safety of the road.

"We are going to put in the speed bumps and that is going to slow down the traffic," said 1st Sgt. Richard T. Smith, B company, 37th Engineer Battalion (Combat) (Airborne).



As hot asphalt pours out of the bobcat, combat engineer Staff Sgt. William Travis directs the driver.

Task Force Falcon soldiers spread joy to local school children

**Story and photo by
Cpt. Daniel Byer and Rudina Toska
358th MPAD**

Soldiers from Task Force Falcon visited Our Future Child Care Center in Urosevac this month to offer smiles, songs, supplies and candy to children at the center.

Capt. Amanda Flint, Commander of 101st Soldier Support Battalion (SSB) Detachment C, said the SSB works along with the 404th Civil Affairs Battalion on projects like this. Civil Affairs determines the location to deliver supplies to, and the SSB makes the delivery, this time with a guitar and entertainment by Spec. Robert Simmons, 101st SSB personnel clerk.

"This is the third time we have gone to a school this rotation. We want to go more, but we have been busy with initiating the Eagle Cash Card for the soldiers here. We make a trip to a center or school every three to four weeks," Flint said.

"Today we are donating toys, clothes, and school supplies," Flint said. "The merchandise comes from everywhere. Much of today's stuff comes from United States Army European Command. We advertise the need of the items through a website we run at Camp Bondsteel."

The group sang songs, took pictures and played games with the children throughout the morning.

The school Principal, Vezire Kryeziu, said she adores the visits by the soldiers.

"KFOR soldiers are welcome here any time, any day. The children are happy when they have the soldiers near them," Kryeziu said.

Kryeziu said two hundred fifty-two children attend the center, ranging in age from nine months to six years old. Many children attend the center year-round, while some children share summer break with their parents.

"The supplies the children receive are used for special programs like Mother's Day, 4th of July, and Christmas. The programs are especially for the soldiers. We invite the soldiers to watch the program that was put together with the supplies they provided," said Kryeziu.

Another purpose of the visit was to continue



Spc. Robert Simmons, 101st SSB sidpers clerk, entertains children of Our Future Child Care Center in Urosevac Thursday. Members of Task Force Falcon presented the school with supplies, toys and gifts donated by USAREUR.

efforts to improve upon the center.

While at the center, further projects include repairing sidewalks so the kids have a safe place to walk while at the center, completing construction on a fence to enclose the center, and the possibility of a playground were discussed, said Maj. Kevin Kolozsy, 101st SSB battalion commander.

"The fence will be used to keep older children from disturbing the children's day in the courtyard, and the playground is being considered by Brown and Root," said Kolozsy. Brown and Root is an independent contracting company affiliated with KFOR.

"This is not the first time KFOR has helped us, and I thank them," said Kryeziu. "Last winter, they helped with a central heating system to keep the school warm."

"We are used to looking for help, because the money the children's parents earn is used for their fields, for growing crops. The money we receive from the parents is little. What we do receive helps to prepare the children's meals," said Kryeziu.

"Also, children stay here. Many of them sleep here, and their clothes need to be washed. We could use laundry machines that hold 30 kilos of clothes.

That would help very much, because we need a way to

wash over 200 children's clothes."

More help is on the way, as organizations at Ft. Campbell have come together to make gathering supplies a competition.

"We are awaiting the arrival of 21 boxes of materials from our battalion in the rear at Ft. Campbell. They hold a contest between companies to see who can donate the most.

The prize to the company that donates the most is a framed photo of the children who receive the supplies," said Flint.

And, the Family Readiness Group leader, Barbara Aucker, the wife of Sgt. 1st Class John Aucker, has gained the attention of the President of the PTA in the Clarksville/Ft. Campbell community, who are donating school supplies and games for the children here, said Flint.

Jeta, a three-year old girl, enjoys the visits from KFOR soldiers and likes to play at the center. "I have lots of friends at the school. I like it better at the school than staying home," she says.

Her principal agrees, saying, "Two years ago, they would have seen KFOR soldiers with weapons and ran away from you and cried, but today they come and hug you. They know that when they leave the school they will live freely and without fear."

TMK, KFOR work together

TMK and KFOR from page 4 alleged weapons smugglings) it is important to remember that these individuals have acted as individuals without the authorization or approval of the institution of the KPC. And to link the two events in my opinion is an unfair characterization of the partnership that exists as well as the efforts of this institution," added David.

According to the JIC, individuals who violate the rules or who take part in illegal activities receive the appropriate action, which could result in suspension from the institution. Once the rumors over the KPC's involvement in alleged illegal activities

were quelled, Ceku emphasized his organizations goals as a civil institution.

"We want to be a professional institution, disciplined, and based on the values of the West and the United States while always cultivating and continuing our cultural traits," said Ceku adding that his organization aims at "serving all people of Kosovo."

While KFOR provided support for the KPC exercise, for example sharing a helicopter for MEDEVAC training, it was the local community who showed extreme support for the institution, said Battle.

Local citizens volunteered to play casualties, and the fire sta-



Medics of the TMK train on evacuating a casualty from a helicopter.

as well as the local hospital showed their support by sending a fire truck and an ambulance.

The KPC also participated in several missions including the building of a sport field, the construction of a sewage system for a small town, and the cleaning of

several communities within their sectors.

"Today it is a very important symbol on what can be accomplished when both groups work in a cooperative manner," said David in reference to the training exercise.

Maj. Gen. Sharp visits troops in Kosovo

**Story and photos by
Spc. Marshall Thompson
358th MPAD**

Maj. Gen. Walter L. Sharp, commanding general of the 3^d Infantry Division, visited his troops in Kosovo on July 17 and 18.

Sharp has been deployed in Bosnia with another part of the 3^d Infantry Division and decided to take the opportunity to visit his troops here in Kosovo.

"It's really enjoyable for me to get out and see what all the soldiers from the 3^d Infantry Division are doing here in Kosovo. They're doing an absolutely super job. If you look at how the 3^d Infantry Division is spread out around the world in Bosnia, Kosovo and training at the national training center, it shows what great soldiers we have that can accomplish missions across the entire spectrum," Sharp said.

Sharp arrived in Skopje, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and was immediately swept away by a Black Hawk to an observation point. A few lucky soldiers had the opportunity to have Sharp officiate at their re-enlistment ceremony out in the field. Sharp then talked to the troops and asked them if there was anything they needed—a pattern of concern that he manifested at each stop with every soldier. He never forgot to ask about the families of the soldiers and their needs as well.

After observing how some soldiers from A Company of 3-7th Infantry Regiment of the 3^d Infantry Division perform a routine vehicle inspection, he complimented them on a job well-done and jumped back into the Black Hawk to fly to Cernice/Cernica, Kosovo.

In Cernice/Cernica, Sharp walked around the town with a group of soldiers from the 3-69th Armor. He took the time not only to talk to the soldiers, but to the inhabitants of the city as well. With the help of an interpreter he would most often ask if they felt the situation in Kosovo would get better.



Cpl. Kevin McNeil, a supply specialist with B Company of 3-69th Armor, waits in formation to be congratulated by Maj. Gen. Walter L. Sharp, 3^d Infantry Division commanding general, for being logistics specialist of the quarter.



Maj. Gen. Walter L. Sharp, commanding general of the 3^d Infantry Division, takes the time to raise his right hand administer the oath to two Task Force Falcon soldiers from the 3^d Infantry Division who re-enlisted at a small observation point in Kosovo.

The rest of the soldiers in Cernice/Cernica were waiting in formation where Sharp pinned sergeant's rank on two soldiers and recognized others for the good work they've done so far in Kosovo.

"It's nice he's concerned about what's going on out here. A lot of people wouldn't care what's going on," said Spc. Desyouth Spence, a tanker crewman from Headquarters Headquarters Company of 3-69th Armor in Cernice/Cernica.

The next stop was a checkpoint where U.S. KFOR soldiers work along side Russian KFOR soldiers. After speaking with Russians, he visited the soldiers from A Company 1-41st Field Artillery.

"I think it's awesome he can take a trip to see how it is—the rain, the heat, and how we work with the Russians," said Pvt. Aaron Duemmel, a cannon crewmember from A Company of the 1-41st Field Artillery.

"He's taking time off of his busy schedule to see how we run a check point," said Pfc. Mondell Peterson, also a cannon crewmember from A Company of the 1-41st Field Artillery.

Both Peterson and Duemmel received a coin from Sharp for their excellent service at the checkpoint. Sharp then asked if there was anything they need.

"Besides a swimming pool, I think we're all right," Duemmel said joking about the intense heat.

"By the time you're done here, you'll be hoping for weather like this," Sharp said with a smile.

The heat didn't slow down Sharp as he got back on his Black Hawk and visited the small village of Pidiq where the 11th Engineer Battalion was completing a bridge. After visiting with the soldiers there, making sure they had everything they needed and specifically asking about their families, he made yet another visit to Camp Montieth.

At Camp Montieth Sharp ate dinner with his troops and continued his pattern of concern for the welfare of the 3^d Infantry Division soldiers.

In the end, the trip was a great success and everybody seemed to greatly appreciate Sharp's sacrifice of time and energy for his troops.

"I've never seen him up close. It's been two years that I've been in the 3^d ID, so it was good we got to see him up close," said Spc. Samuel Chavez, a mechanized infantryman from Company A of the 3-7th Infantry Regiment.

"I wanted to get out and see all these soldiers here and let them see me. I've been deployed since last September in Bosnia, so it's good for the soldiers to see their Division Commander, but it's mainly for me to get out on the ground and thank the soldiers for the super job they're doing in Kosovo," Sharp said. "We're really proud about what the 3^d Infantry Division soldiers are doing here and around the world."



Maj. Gen. Walter L. Sharp, 3^d Infantry Division commanding general comes down from a guard tower at an observation point in Kosovo where he was visiting 3^d Infantry Division soldiers.

Camp Able Sentry practices sling loads

**Story and photo by
Spc. Travis Bascom
358th MPAD**

How does it feel to have 33,000 pounds hovering two feet above your head, realizing at any moment the giant apparatus could crush you like a grape?

"It's the biggest rush I've had since I've been in the Army," said Pvt. Michael Morron, A Company, 1-39th Field Artillery, immediately after placing slings on the bottom of a flying CH-47 Chinook at Camp Able Sentry in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM).

"The helicopter is coming at you and it's just massive. It's a great experience," said Morron referring to the eight-bladed foot-shaped Chinook.

The exercise consisted of connecting single and dual lifts of both HMMWVs and storage containers to a CH-47. "This is essen-

tial to make sure we can supply equipment to troops across the border," said Warrant Officer David A. Elliot, the officer in charge of the mission.

The border Elliot refers to is between FYROM and Kosovo and the soldiers are with KFOR's Task Force Falcon.

These soldiers are trying to prevent weapons and equipment from entering FYROM as smugglers continue to push these items southward to support ethnic Albanian rebels that are fighting the FYROM government.

"We need to concentrate on this kind of training. Given the current situation that's going on right now in this area," Elliot said. "Peace talks are going pretty well and seem to be holding, but you never know when fighting will start again."

The entire sling load process usually takes less than a minute using five soldiers. Two soldiers each hook up a sling while their partners hold on to them to pro-

vide a stronger weight and wider base to prevent them from being blown over from the wind gust. At the same time, the fifth soldier, the middleman, uses a grounded metal rod to discharge the helicopters electrical charge. If not done properly a soldier could receive severe electrical shock, which comes from the movement of the rotator blades.

"This keeps our air assault

skills honed," said Staff Sgt. Kevin R. Brooks of A Company, 1-39th Field Artillery, "We got as much time as we needed to do the training."

As the hope that the ceasefire between the rebels and FYROM forces holds, soldiers at Camp Able Sentry are sharpening their skills if the call comes to assist their fellow soldiers to the north.



Spc. McGuire of 1-39th Field Artillery hooks up to the helicopter.

An exercise of "speed and power" at Ramnjane Range



**Story by
Spc. Engels Tejeda
358th MPAD**

The 3-69th Armor demonstrated its "speed and power" during an exercise at the Ramnjane Range July 14 to 22.

Capt. Charles Ziegenfuss, the operations officer with 3-69th Armor, said the exercise was designed to help soldiers strengthen their abilities.

"The overall objective is to maintain proficiency and keep our war fighting skills," said Ziegenfuss.

The soldiers worked around the clock throughout the week.

A, B, and C Companies were given the opportunity to perform a modified "Tank Table Seven" during the exercise.

This included engaging multiple targets down range from the offense and defense positions, as well as firing during a nuclear, biological or chemical attack.

The soldiers also fired at night, and from a "Degraded Mode," where they had to engage the targets without using some of the tank's helpful- but not vital technological capabilities.

Then, the scout platoon of the 3-69th Armor had a day at the range where they fired 50 caliber machine guns, and grenade launchers. On the final day of the exercise, soldiers

from the different components of the 3-69th Armor had the opportunity to familiarize with machine guns as well.

In addition to facing the obstacles designed as part of the exercise, the soldiers were also challenged by the nature of the range itself.

Gate guards had to be posted all around the range, which has 14 entryways, and the temperature ranged in the 70's and 80's.

Generally, local citizens use Ramnjane Range for farmlands, thus when units use it for firing exercises, tight security must be kept in order to ensure the safety of all.

Despite the challenges, however, Ziegenfuss explains that the exercises are necessary.

"It is a skill that is very perishable," Ziegenfuss said in regards to the soldier's performance on the tanks. "It helps to keep the soldiers familiar with the systems," he added.

The 3rd Battalion of the 69th Armored Regiment demonstrate their "Speed and Power" at Ramjane Range near Camp Bondsteel Sunday July 15. The power of the tank is shown in sequence from top to bottom.