



Falcon Flier

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'Light fighters, marching on to victory'



Soldiers of the 10th Mountain Division prepare to board buses for the journey home Sunday at Camp Bondsteel.

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Creativity, volunteerism spice up Cinco de Mayo

By Spc. Jasmine Chopra
302nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

In Mexican-inspired costumes made from tablecloths and hospital pajamas, soldiers at Camp Bondsteel proved once again that they can adapt, improvise and overcome in any situation.

It was a day to honor victory as soldiers reveled in a Cinco de Mayo party May 5 at the Southtown gym, a celebration that included dance, music and poetry performances.

Red, white and green streamers amid legions of foil roses and paper cactus transformed the gym into a virtual



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TFF Commanding General

Leave Kosovo with gratitude, respect, pride

I think that we focus on what goes wrong in life far too often.

We convince ourselves that life is unfair, and it's cruel and we, somehow, have not received all of the benefits that we should have.

I tell you that this is absolutely inaccurate and unhealthy, and that what you should focus in on is the multiple things that we have to be appreciative for.

Life is attitude, and you need to have a positive, realistic outlook on life. So as we find that our tour of duty here in Kosovo has come to an end — as we, together as soldiers, have gone where our nation sent us, we have performed our duties as assigned — we need to focus in on our emotions of appreciation.

We should appreciate our nation, our way of life. We should appreciate the fact that the United States of America sent their sons and daughters here to Kosovo on this peacekeeping operation to assist the people of Kosovo, to provide a safe and secure environment so



Brig. Gen. Keith M. Huber

that they would not be distracted by disorder and by violence as they begin their long, difficult path toward democracy.

We should appreciate our Army, as it gives us this opportunity to travel, gives us this opportunity to experience different cultures, so that we understand that the world does not revolve around ourselves, our institutions or our country, that the world is vast, and full of different cultures and full of different perspectives, and we need to reinforce the idea of

tolerance.

We should appreciate that what we represent as American soldiers is an acceptance of diversity, and that the strength of our institution, of our Army, is built upon diversity and different cultures and the ability to form a team with people from different backgrounds, different education levels and very different perspectives.

We should have a sense of appreciation of Multi-National Brigade (East), as we have had this privilege to interact with militaries from other nations. We should have a sense of appreciation for the Polish, Ukrainians, Lithuanians, Greeks and Russians who are here with us as part of Multi-National Brigade (East) team, and the other international militaries — the French, British, German and Italian forces — that we have come in contact with. What an incredible experience to get to know our fellow soldiers from other nations, and share with them the sacrifice of being deployed away from their family and friends, involved in

this peacekeeping operation.

We should appreciate within Task Force Falcon the leadership — officers, NCOs, enlisted personnel — our contemporaries, our fellow soldiers, and friends who have been with us here 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

For most of us this is almost a seven-month deployment. We should appreciate what we have gained from each other, what we have learned from each other, how we have become more professional, enhanced our ability to be teammates, to be better human beings, because of the interaction, the richness and sincerity of our interaction as professionals and human beings facing a common goal and challenge, with trust and faith and mutual respect, based upon a willingness to sacrifice, to selflessly serve.

We should cherish this experience.

And for me personally, my appreciation goes out to the soldiers who have allowed me to serve with them as a fellow soldier, who have given me this

privilege to be their leader, who have willingly followed me, who have done the right thing, every day, for the right reason.

I cannot accurately describe the pride I feel when I see any one of you performing your mission and how much I appreciate all of you. Every day you have exceeded my expectations, as every day I have attempted to meet yours. And it has truly been an honor to serve with you here in Kosovo.

So depart here with a sense of pride and appreciation. Know that you've done your duty well. Know that you now can look forward to a new experience in different locations, a new experience for which you are better prepared as a soldier and a human being, and that we will again have the privilege to serve together in the future.

Thank you for being part of this historic team. Thank you for allowing me to serve with you.

Climb to Glory ... To the Top.

TFF Command Sergeant Major

Making a difference means making each day count



Command Sgt. Maj. Ted Walker

Make time count by making a difference. Don't just count the days, but make each day count.

Make it better for the person who will call this place home for the next few months.

I like to think that things are not always better, just different.

As many of us prepare to make the journey home, it is my hope that you can look around and note that you have made a difference.

As for me, I have done whatever I can to make some small change in making it better.

Don't be satisfied with mediocrity.

To the incoming soldiers: Look around. There is still plenty of work to be done, and each one of you is bringing a different skill set to the team that will assist in mission accomplishment.

I encourage all of you to

stay focused on the commander's intent. Doing so will always give you the strength to make a difference.

Remember that you are a representative of a great institution — an institution that places demands upon you and sets high standards.

Such standards are in place to make you the finest, most effective soldiers possible.

It is your duty, your obligation to make a difference — do

so.

There should be no doubt that you live by values. Such values will set you apart from others. It will tell those you come in contact with that you are a professional, dedicated soldier.

So set the conditions for success and make things better.

In doing so, you will make time count.

Climb to Glory.

About the Falcon Flier...

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MNB (E) and Task Force Falcon

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Soldier on the Street

What advice would you give to soldiers coming into Kosovo?



Spc. David Comer
Line medic
HHC, 1st Battalion, 32nd Infantry
Regiment
"Stay focused on the mission. Relax if you can. There's a gym, so do a lot of PT. Also check the AAFES PX and get your Sony Playstation II, TV — and participate in the great MWR activities provided for the KFOR soldiers."

Sgt. August A. Jover
Damage control NCO
Headquarters, Task Force
Falcon



"Take advantage of college opportunities at the education center."



Pfc. Darrell Lawhorn
Aviation operations specialist
HHC, 1st Battalion, 10th Aviation
Regiment

"Get involved with Morale, Welfare and Recreation activities. If you stay active, time will fly."

Spc. Christopher Kojima
Electronic warfare team member
D Company, 110th Military
Intelligence Bn.



"Take advantage of the free education — it's an excellent opportunity."



Spc. Neil Weathers
C Co. 1st Bn., 30th Infantry
Regt.

"Keep your head up and stay focused. Battle Boars!"

Capt. Peter Seibert
Signal operations officer,
automation
Headquarters, TFF



"Set goals you want to attain, whether it's education, physical fitness or professional development and work toward them."

— Compiled by Falcon Flier Staff

From the newsroom

Unit that publicized MNB(E) deserves recognition as well

By Pfc. Kate McIsaac
302nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

We in the incoming public affairs detachment had the luxury of a first-class right-seat ride — an exhaustive tour that introduced us to the places, people and practices we most needed to know so we could hit the ground in Kosovo running.

Our counterparts breezed easily through daily activities and told stories of incidents that had happened in the previous six months as we took in the atmosphere and the ambience of this, our new home.

The information piled up slowly at first, then turned into mountains. The training became hands-on, and suddenly we were in the left seat—driving.

The orientation was so thorough and so focused, we didn't really get a good look at our predecessors — the kind of people they were — until they were gone.

But once we lifted our heads from our desktops and opened our eyes after a week of sleep deprivation and jetlag, we discovered that our counterparts, the 131st Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, Alabama National Guard, were more than just right-seat-ride chauffeurs. In fact, what we found was a group that had left marks of kindness, generosity and Southern hospitality throughout the MNB(E) sector.

The 131st made an impression on us. And although it isn't really doctrinal to hail the glories of other public affairs professionals, we just couldn't let this one go.

The 131st did a lot in its official capacity — escorting media representatives, generating

press releases, facilitating briefings, answering queries, making a newspaper and producing audio and video stories, all focused on how KFOR Multi-National Brigade (East) was making a difference in Kosovo. At the same time, the 131st itself was making extraordinary efforts to touch the lives of people living outside the gates.

Members of the 131st participated in several official humanitarian missions — then took the concept of 'giving back' even further, organizing outreaches of their own.

For example, Spc. Molly Jones coordinated with churches and organizations in her home state of Alabama for school supplies. On more than one occasion, she and other members of the unit went out into the local towns to give the people of Kosovo a piece of their hearts.

The 131st isn't unique in its generosity. More units than can be counted took the time to personally give a piece of themselves to the region, which is rich in both spirit and mind. We just thought a unit that did such a stellar job recognizing the generosity of others should get some recognition as well.

For those of us just setting foot in this region, following in the footsteps of our counterparts may prove to be the most rewarding part of our deployment. Taking advantage of the abundant opportunities to experience the local culture should be a top priority for soldiers.

A tradition of kindness, willingness and generosity has been established here. As soldiers, we have a responsibility to carry on that tradition.

131st Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, Alabama National Guard



**Do you have a story or photo idea for the *Falcon Flier*?
If so, please give us a call at 781-5200**

peacekeeper profile



Name:
Kristin M. Mason

Age: 23

Rank: Spc.

MOS: 98C, signal intelligence specialist

Unit:
110th Military Intelligence Battalion

Your role in MNB(E):
Gate guard

What city do you call home?
Rochester, N.Y.

What are you good at?
Too many things to mention.

What do you like to do when you're off duty?
Watch movies.

Your favorite TV show:
I read more than I watch TV.

The last book you read:
Spanish textbook

Why did you join the Army?
Money for college.



Physical therapy team helps soldiers rebound from injury

By Spc. Terry Boggs
131st Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Soldiers who train hard sometimes get hurt and find themselves in pain.

Task Force Medical Falcon's physical therapy clinic helps soldiers recover from those painful injuries and learn more about physical therapy without leaving the theater of operations.

"Often, soldiers try to do too much, too fast, and injuries occur," said Sgt. Karla F. DeLong, a physical therapist at TFMF. DeLong said she treats a lot of injuries that result from improper exercises that strain the lower back.

She said she also sees lots of knee, ankle and shoulder injuries that prevent soldiers from performing their best.

"A soldier with an injury should first go to sick call and see a primary care physician," said Capt. Nancy Teich, physical therapy clinic chief. "The physician will evaluate the injury and refer the soldier to physical therapy, if it is appropriate."

"A soldier who is deemed appropriate for physical therapy can expect a individualized rehabilitation program to help them recover faster and prevent reoccurrence," said Teich, a Cooperstown, N.Y., native.

"During the initial appointment, the injury is evaluated and a plan of care is established," said Teich. "Depending on the injury, goals and treatments are prescribed."

The clinic stresses action on the part of the patient.

"Physical therapy is no miracle cure," Teich said. "It takes the true effort of the patient."

Staff Sgt. Emmanuel Wright, TFMF physical therapy noncommissioned officer in charge, echoed Teich.

"Physical therapy is a lot of rehabilitation," Wright said. "Ninety percent of what we do is patient education. ... This includes proper body mechanics, stretching and modalities."



In the past, patients in Kosovo who suffered knee injuries were sent back to Germany for treatment. Today, Cpt. Nancy Teich, top, and the TFMF physical therapy team treat such injuries at Camp Bondsteel, Camp Monteith and Camp Able Sentry.

"Physical therapy is no miracle cure. It takes the true effort of the patient."

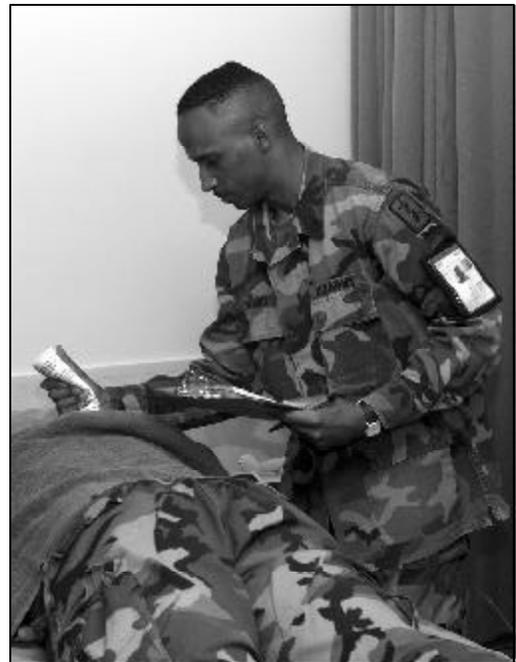
Capt. Nancy Teich
Physical therapy clinic chief
Task Force Medical Falcon

Modalities are procedures that reduce pain and inflammation and facilitate healing. Frequently used modalities include moist heat treatments, ice packs, ice massage, electrical stimulation, lumbar traction and ultrasound.

A treatment plan can last days or months, Teich said. Treatments can include workout machines such as treadmills and bicycles, as well as manual stretches.

"Modalities used in conjunction with exercise and physical training education allow for quicker healing," Teich said. "The patient is reevaluated on regular intervals and progressed accordingly. Our goal is to get the soldier back to full duty as quickly and safely as possible."

Wright, who is on his second tour of Kosovo, recalled operating a physical therapy clinic out of a tent in 1999 — a far cry from the modern clinic that straddles a hill between Midtown and



Staff Sgt. Emmanuel Wright, right, administers an ultrasound treatment at the Task Force Medical Falcon physical therapy clinic on Camp Bondsteel.

Southtown.

"Our facility is top-notch," said DeLong, who brings 12 years of physical therapy experience and a master's degree in the field, to TFMF. "We have everything that a civilian outpatient clinic would have."

The combination of being well educated and experienced makes the TFMF physical therapy team popular. Teich, Wright and DeLong

treat 25 to 35 patients daily at Camp Bondsteel — and travel monthly to Camp Monteith and Camp Able Sentry to treat soldiers and civilian employees.

Teich said she is proud her team's service.

"We have been together for two years," she said. "I have a strong staff and hard workers, and the patients seem very happy with their care."

Leaving Kosovo better



Soldiers of 27th Engineer Battalion conducted numerous construction and improvement missions in the civilian communities in the Multi-National Brigade (East) area of operations during rotation 3B. **LEFT:** 1st Lt. Christopher Jones and 1st Lt. Robert Gordon discuss the next move as Chief Warrant Officer Timothy Egans inspects the stringer on the Route Dagger Bridge. **RIGHT:** Soldiers put new panels on the ceiling of an ethnically mixed school in Pones.

FIESTA: Improved costumes, donated food, soldiers' labor make celebration meaningful

From page 1

hacienda. Orange, purple and green piñatas shaped like bulls and stars hung overhead. Soldiers entertained spectators with dancing and singing.

Sponsored by Camp Bondsteel's Morale Welfare and Recreation, this event might not have happened, had it not been for soldiers from Task Force Medical Falcon volunteering their time, according to MWR programmer Lillian Quehl.

"No matter how great an idea is, if you don't have people to back you up, nothing happens," she said. "These volunteers have been great."

Soldiers spent much of their personal time over a three-week period making costumes, piñatas and decorations, as well as rehearsing songs and dances.

"Cinco de Mayo is about overcoming insurmountable odds. It stands as a symbol of victory on the battlefield for everyone," said Pvt. Leo Betancourt, a preventive medicine specialist with TFMF.

The holiday commemorates the battle at Puebla, Mexico, where on May 5, 1862, 4,000 Mexican soldiers smashed the French and traitor Mexican army of 8,000.

Betancourt wrote and recited a poem entitled "Mi Barrio" (my neighborhood) that highlights the passion and struggle of growing up in Highland Park, Calif., a predominantly Hispanic neighborhood in Los Angeles.

Making the fiesta



LEFT: Staff Sgt. Juan Hickson, NCOIC of TFMF emergency medical treatment center sings his rendition of "El Rey", a popular Mexican song, in a Mariachi costume he made. **RIGHT:** Sgt. Juan Martinez, a crew chief with TFMF, shakes candies and goodies out of a handmade pinata for eager soldiers below.



possible was a matter of celebrating cultural diversity, said Spc. Aisha Shamwell, an information systems analyst with TFMF.

"You shouldn't keep yourself closed off from the world," she said. "You should have some understanding of every culture. Even if I taste just a little bit of it (Mexican culture), at least now I know why Cinco de Mayo is so important."

"Listening to the males, they have so much passion in their voice. It makes me able to experience what it means for them. It's about freedom and freedom is what we Americans fight for."

Soldiers cheered on Pfc. Selin Eskandarian, an ammunition specialist with the 10th

Logistics Task Force, based at Fort Drum, N.Y., who opened the celebration with her violin solo of "The Star Spangled Banner."

New Mexico Army National Guard Sgt. 1st Class Juan Bustamante, a helicopter mechanic and platoon sergeant with the 717th Medical Company, sang the Mexican national anthem.

Serving as master of ceremonies was Sgt. 1st Class Irene Jackson, NCOIC of automation at TFMF.

Shamwell and Betancourt danced the Mexican Hat Dance with Pfc. Sarah Hernandez, a mental health specialist, Spc. Sorta Lim, an optical lab specialist, and Spc. Julio Elkinwor, a medical supply

specialist, all from TFMF. They made their own costumes for the performance.

"We couldn't get costumes out here, so we improvised," Lim said. "We made them out of some simple things we could find here."

Scrap tablecloths were sewn together to make feathery skirts. The women braided their dark hair and fastened it with bright ribbons and silk roses. The men tied bright streamers to their white shirts and black pants.

Sgt. 1st Class Juan Hickson, noncommissioned officer in charge of the emergency medical treatment center for TFMF, made a mariachi costume, complete with sombrero, out of hospital pajamas

and construction paper.

Hickson sang "El Rey," a popular Mexican folk song. Many soldiers in the audience chimed in at the chorus.

Participants ate candy provided by the Red Cross and tortilla chips with salsa donated by Area Support Group food services.

The excitement peaked as soldiers gathered in circles to hit the piñatas.

With broomsticks in hand, soldiers took aim at the candy-filled decorations. They swarmed over candy when Sgt. Juan Martinez, a crew chief with TFMF, burst a piñata.

"We have a limited amount of resources for entertainment here, so this is a great way to put my creativity to work,"

Hickson said. "Because we're all so diverse, it's important that we try to understand each other. It makes us better peers, NCOs and team leaders."

Echoing this belief was TFMF Command Sgt. Maj. Craig Layton.

"It is our duty to treat each other with dignity and respect," he said.

[A former equal opportunity advisor, Layton said being culturally sensitive is part of a soldier's obligation.

"I'm so proud that they volunteered," he said of his soldiers.

Supply Sgt. David Hodges, who attended the party, said such celebrations should continue.

"As different as we all are, we really are one people," he said.

peacekeeper profile


Name:

Neil Weathers

Age: 20

Rank: Spc.

MOS: 13F, fire support specialist

Unit: C Company, 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment

Stationed at: Fort Benning, Ga.

Duty Position: Forward observer

Your role in
MNB(E): Observation post, interdictions, traffic checkpoint security

What city do you call home?

Lancaster, Pa.

What are you good at?

Artillery, call for fire, boxing, basketball, acting

What do you like to do when you're off duty?

Basketball, write, studying

Your favorite food: Chicken (fried)

Your favorite TV show:

Cartoons (Scooby Doo)

The last book you read: "Black Hawk Down"

Why did you join the Army? To get out and see the world — travel

Veterinarians 'vital to force protection'

By Cpl. Taylor Barbaree

131st Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

CAMP BONDSTEEL — Capt. Alisa Wilma is used to it by now.

People often react with surprise when they learn that Army veterinarians are responsible for food quality.

"When someone sees the name 'veterinarian' or 'veterinary care,' they automatically assume that our job is to take care of animals only," said Wilma, who runs Task Force Falcon's Veterinary Service Office.

"But in reality, our job is twofold in that our mission here is provide a full spectrum of veterinary support to Task Force Med Falcon, Task Force Falcon, and KFOR within Multi-National Brigade (East).

"That includes providing food sanitation and inspection and animal medicine expertise to all of our base camps here in Kosovo and at Camp Able Sentry in Macedonia," she said.

Wilma and her veterinary service team — two enlisted soldiers and three noncommissioned officers — are from Camp Darby, Italy's 21st Medical Detachment. While deployed to Kosovo, they are attached to TFMF.

Regarding their food service mission, Wilma explained the job that her food inspectors have in insuring that all foods being served to soldiers are safe.

"We call it an on-receipt food inspection, where we concentrate on the potentially hazardous food sources such as meat, fish, dairy products, fruits and vegetables," she said. "Of each shipment that comes in at



Pfc. Tina Jackson, a food inspector with the Task Force Falcon Veterinary Services Office, conducts an organoleptic inspection of an MRE at her office on Camp Bondsteel. The routine checks help maintain safe food.

the dining facilities, we inspect about 10 percent of those products to ensure that they are not out of date and meet USDA standards."

Wilma said with only six food inspectors, the job is sometimes a bit overwhelming.

"That's why we have a tremendous amount of help from the dining facility managers," she said. "Our food

inspectors work with each of them to ensure they know to look out for anything out-of-the-ordinary regarding the shipments that they receive," she said.

However, it's not only fresh food and vegetables that the team tackles. Periodically, team members inspect MREs and other operational rations to make sure they are safe for soldiers.

"This is important, but not a lot of fun, but something you get used to doing," said unit food inspector Pfc. Tina Jackson while conducting an organoleptic inspection of an MRE at her office recently. "This type of inspection is nothing more than examining the packages in the MRE and then sampling each of the foods in them."

Jackson said because the MRE is made and packaged with durable products, very seldom is a problem found with a soldier's favorite "happy meal."

Wilma, a licensed veterinarian, said her office can provide care to military working dogs.

"This part of our mission is not as complex, because our military working dogs are in excellent health," she said. "Our dog handlers do a great job in ensuring that their animals are taken care of. However, should the need arise, we are capable of level 2 (basic) veterinarian care of them. We also have full surgical capabilities here as well.

"These military working dogs are actually considered an 'active duty soldier', so we are here to ensure that they receive quality medical care just like our soldiers do."

Wilma emphasized the importance of the veterinarian's role in food safety.

"Our mission is essential because we minimize the chances of a soldier contracting any number of food-borne illnesses that can flatten a unit, strengthwise," she said. "We create a barrier between an intentional or unintentional threat.

"Our service is vital to our force protection."

Help is on the way...

Legal Assistance makes being overseas a little easier

The Task Force Falcon Legal Assistance Office provides legal help and claims services to soldiers and eligible civilians.

The legal assistance attorney can advise on a number of issues, including family law, wills and estate planning, creditor problems, taxes, the

Soldiers' and Sailors' Civil Relief Act, NCOER and OER appeals, report of survey rebuttals, and letter of reprimand rebuttals. Soldiers can file claims for property lost or damaged during the deployment.

The Legal Assistance Office is at Camp Bondsteel in building 1340A, and is open Mon-

days through Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Attorneys are also located at Camp Monteith and CAS. Powers of attorney, notarizations and certified copies are available on a walk-in basis.

Appointments can be made with the legal assistance attorney at DSN 781-4692.

Although clients will be able to meet with the attorney on a walk-in basis, appointments are highly encouraged and will receive priority.

The phone number for the legal office at Camp Monteith is DSN 782-7150; and the number at Camp Able Sentry is DSN 783-1174.

Equal Opportunity Office promotes diversity, leadership, responsibility

By Sgt. Jamie Brown
131st Mobile Public Affairs
Detachment

Most soldiers may not even know it exists, but it is here for the sole reason of helping soldiers.

The Equal Opportunity Office is a one-man shop run by Sgt. 1st Class Frank Tokar.

"EO is an outside agency that is available for soldiers, military personnel and Department of Defense civilians," Tokar said.

"I'm here to advise commanders and soldiers on Army policies, Army regulations concerning the Army Equal Opportunity program. In saying that, basically if a soldier has questions or a soldier has concerns, or a soldier feels that they have been discriminated against or sexually harassed, then I am here for them to come and see to either try to work the problem out, or file a complaint, whatever the soldier wants to do.

"Basically, that's my whole function. It's like an outside agency aside from the chain of command."

Individual action

Tokar said it is important for soldiers to attempt to resolve problems using their chain of command before going to the EO Office for help.

"I always encourage soldiers, and they should use their chain of command to try and solve any kind of problem they've got, any kind of discrimination problem or any kind of sexual harassment problem, because that is what their chain of command is there for," he said.

"If you think that you have an EO issue, use your chain of command first. Go to your direct supervisor, because 90 percent of the time they can solve it. And 90 percent of the time, they don't even know about it. Use your chain of command. If all else fails, see your EO."

If the chain of command can't help the soldier, that is when Tokar and the Equal Opportunity Office step in.

"A lot of times the problem is with the chain of command," Tokar said. "A lot of times a soldier just doesn't feel that

they can go to anybody in their unit, and that's where I can come into play.

"And also, a lot of commanders come to me and ask me for advice, a lot of commanders and first sergeants and sergeant majors. Even senior NCOs or NCOs come to me and ask me for advice about a certain situation that might meet the definition of discrimination or sexual harassment.

"I try to help, and put things into perspective, and try to offer any kind of possible solutions. I'm here as a service for the soldier."

Options

There are several ways the EO Office and Tokar can go about helping a soldier with a complaint.

First, as an EO advisor, Tokar listens to soldier to determine what the issue is. "Once I've heard the issue, of course I'll ask them if they've used their chain of command," Tokar said. "If they've used their chain of command, and the chain of command didn't remedy the problem, then nine times out of 10 I will then explain the complaint procedures to that soldier, if it looks like it's a discrimination-type issue.

"If it's not a discrimination type issue, it might be an (inspector general) issue; it might be an issue where the soldiers can't use the first sergeant's open-door policy or where the soldiers are put on duty too much — leadership-type issues.

"Then I'll direct them to the appropriate agency that I think might be able to handle that better than I can.

"If it seems to me that it's clearly a discrimination-type issue, or an issue where a soldier was sexually harassed, then I will explain the complaint process to the soldier, let them know that there are two types of complaints, formal and informal, the formal being the one in writing — or I will ask the soldier whether or not they would like to use a third party to try and resolve the issue. The third party can be anybody in the soldier's chain of command or in the unit. It could even be

"A lot of times a soldier just doesn't feel that they can go to anybody in their unit, and that's where I can come into play."

Sgt. 1st Class Frank Tokar
Equal opportunity adviser

me as the equal opportunity adviser."

Helpful solutions

"I could go down, I could ask the soldier if they want me to talk to the commander, or to the first sergeant, whatever the soldier feels comfortable with," Tokar continued.

"So there are a whole lot of different ways the soldier can approach the problem that they have, to try to solve it. The complaint process is just one way.

"And 90 percent of the time, you don't have to use the complaint process. The problem is resolved by the chain of command, or by a third party, or simply by communication.

"There is a lot of conflict that goes on in an office a lot of times, and communicating what is offending somebody, or what's offensive to somebody or what's bothering somebody, nine times out of 10 will solve the problem."

Helping soldiers resolve problems isn't the only thing that Tokar does.

"Some of my other functions as an equal opportunity advisor and some of the other functions the EO program has is to promote diversity," he said.

"The main way we promote diversity is through ethnic observances. In January we've got Martin Luther King Day. In February we've got Black History Month. March, we've got Women's History Month. In April, we've got the Days of Remembrance, which is remembering the Holocaust.

"In May we've got Asian-Pacific Heritage Month. Then in the fall we've got Hispanic heritage month, and in November we've got Native American heritage month. So there are all kinds of programs going on in any given month of the year promoting different cultural

backgrounds that make up our population here."

Tokar noted that there are some differences between being an EO supervisor in Kosovo, and being one back in garrison.

"There is a difference being in deployed theater as compared to being back in garrison," he said.

"In my opinion, what I've seen in the deployed theater is a lot of soldiers are away from home, a lot of soldiers are missing their family and a lot of soldiers are working with other soldiers for the first time in close proximity, in close quarters, and they're living in close quarters with other soldiers, and they tend to get on each other's nerves.

"The issues that I have seen are not so much discriminatory in nature; they are more conflict-management-type issues, where people aren't getting along and they feel that they are being discriminated against.

"That's not to say that there aren't some actual cases out there where there was some discrimination involved, but most cases that I have seen are more conflict-management-type issues, whereas in garrison, you don't see that so much."

Tokar, who has been in the Army for 19 years and has been an EO supervisor for one year, said he was pleased with his work during the past rotation.

"There have been a variety of complaints that come through the office, and I've been able to work with soldiers who have lodged complaints and chain of command to solve all the complaints. I would say it's been successful.

The Equal Opportunity Office is in Building 1340D in "Admin Alley" on Camp Bondsteel. The phone number is DSN 781-5002 (cell phone DSN 781-6787).

peacekeeper profile



Name:
Michael Castillo

Age: 20

Rank: Specialist

MOS: 11B,
infantryman

Unit: C Company, 1st
Battalion, 30th
Infantry Regiment

Duty Position:
M249 gunner

**What city do you
call home?**
Belleville, N.J.

**What are you
good at?**
Grappling

**What do you like
to do when you're
off duty?**
Sports, break
dancing and
working out

**Your favorite
food:**
Burger King

**Your favorite TV
show:** "The
Simpsons"

**Why did you join
the Army?**
To serve my
country.



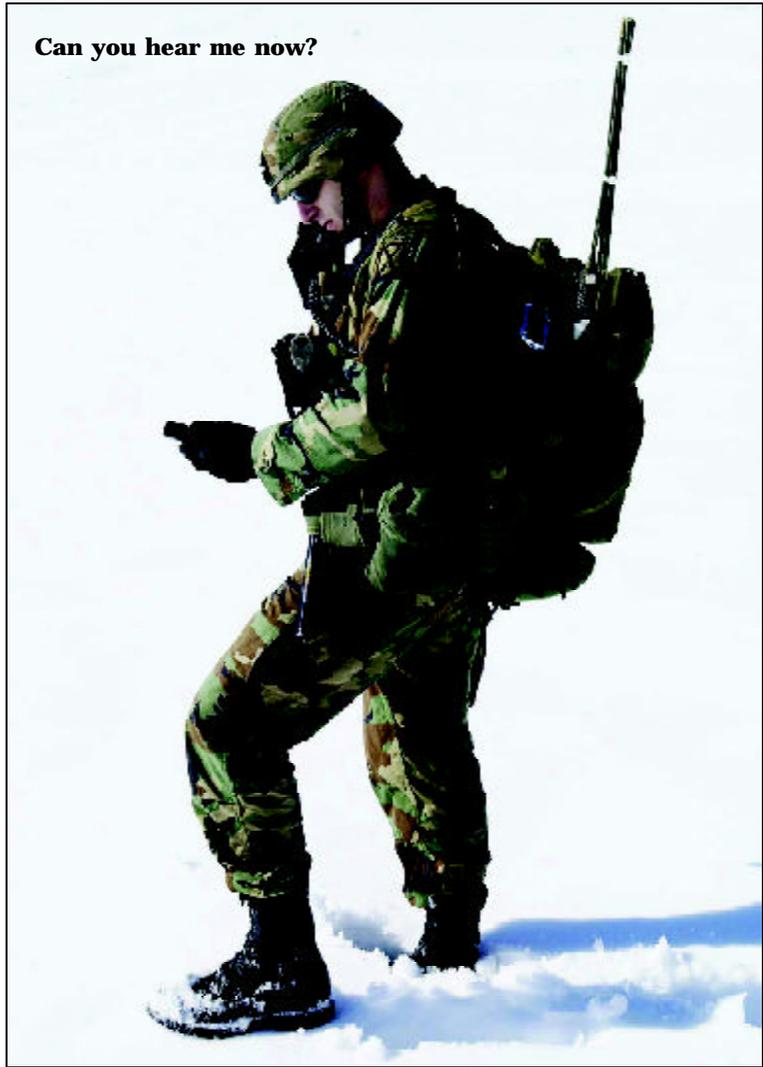
Train to fight

We aim to please





Can you hear me now?



***The best of
Combat
Camera***

After six months in country, rotation 3B says good-bye. These are a few of the finest shots from the dedicated soldiers in Combat Camera.

peacekeeper profile



Name:
Shawntia L.
Rowland

Age: 24

Rank: Sgt.

MOS: 93F

Unit:
3-6 Field Artillery
Battalion

Duty Position:
Meteorological
section chief

Your role in MNB(E): Gather Meteorological weather data for Air Force Weather Station and field artillery.

What city do you call home?
Canton, Oh.

What are you good at?
Gunnery

What do you like to do when you're off duty?
Shop and read

Your favorite food:
Pasta

Your favorite TV show: "Boston Public"

The last book you read: "Fly Girl"

Why did you join the Army?
I didn't have anything else to do.



'Enriched' by Kosovo tour, TF 504 MP hands over its beat to TF 709

By Spc. Jasmine Chopra
302nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

CAMP BONDSTEEL — Task Force 504th Military Police, based at Fort Lewis, Wash., transferred authority of military police operations for KFOR Multi-National Brigade (East) to TF 709th MP, based in Hanau, Germany, in a ceremony May 3 on the parade field here.

The 504th performed its mission under the leadership of commander Lt. Col. Katherine N. Miller and Command Sgt. Maj. Brian K. Wiles.

"We did our best to live up to the MP Corps motto, 'Protect and Assist,' and we came away from this deployment enriched," Miller said.

During KFOR rotation 3B, the 504th completed more than 3,125 mounted patrols and 3,760 dismounted patrols and collected more than 345 weapons.

The task force also employed a sophisticated contraband interdiction tool: the Mobile Vehicle and Cargo Inspection System, or MVACIS, which determines the contents of vehicles.

With United Nations Civilian Police, the 504th also helped train the local police service.

"The Kosovo Police Service is a clear symbol of the successful start to the transition to civil authority through the establishment of a professional, dedicated, indigenous police capability," Miller said. "... With the



Commander of Task Force 504 Military Police, Fort Lewis, Wash., Lt. Col. Katherine N. Miller and Command Sgt. Maj. Brian K. Wiles, wrap up the unit flag in a Transfer of Authority ceremony May 3.

assistance of CIVPOL, the KPS has truly grown into an organization that all of the people of Kosovo can be proud of. I believe their future is a bright one."

With the transfer of authority, the 709th began its second tour in Kosovo. "When I was here (rotations 1A and 1B), the military police were the only law in town," said Sgt. Maj. David Dewitt, operations sergeant major of the 709th.

"There was no police force, and the United

Nations Mission in Kosovo was just developing. As a matter of fact, there were only two UNMIK Police for the MNB(E) sector. Crime and revenge was rampant everywhere you went.

"Today," he continued, "we have a strong beginning of a local police force, the KPS. The crime rate has dropped dramatically.

"In 1999 and early 2000, there was a strong fear of reprisal among several ethnicities. Today the people have freedom of movement without fear of reprisals."



Commander Lt. Col Richard S. Vanderlinden and Command Sgt. Major Dale J. Paff of Task Force 709, uncasing the task force's colors

Others in the 709th were in Kosovo with the battalion during rotation 1B.

"I still remember how to get to all the cities," said Spc. Scott Martin, a 709th MP, "I know my way around."

Martin said he enjoyed meeting new soldiers and helping the locals during his last rotation and looks forward to new experiences during rotation 4A.

In his remarks during the transfer ceremony, Lt. Col. Richard S. Vanderlinden, commander of the 709th, said his unit is proud to be back in Kosovo.

"To Task Force Falcon and our policing partners within the UN Civilian Police, we offer the dedication to continue the teamwork and forward momentum established by our predecessors," he said.

See **TRANSFER** page 14

Mercury rising

Col. Michael Thompson, assistant deputy chief of staff for information management, U.S. Army Europe, and Col. Susan Lawrence, commander of 7th Signal Brigade in Mannheim, Germany, awarded C Company, 10th Signal Battalion Commander Capt. Ainslie Craft and Maj. Patrick Miner, S-3 forward and deputy G6 of MNB(E), with the Signal Corps Regimental Association Bronze Order of Mercury award for the highest standards of integrity, moral character, professional competence and selflessness. The award recognizes those who "have contributed significantly to the promotion of the Signal Corps through their leadership and mentorship of subordinates, peers, and superiors alike."



Gatekeepers

Not rookies: Reserve MP detachment well qualified to run BDF

By Pfc. Kate McIsaac
302nd Mobile Public Affairs
Detachment

CAMP BONDSTEEL — Some Army Reserve units that come to Kosovo are looking for a little action and excitement.

The 744th Internment/Resettlement Detachment is not one of them.

"We want to be bored," said detachment commander Capt. John G. Leonard. "That means things are going smoothly."

Perched on the east hilltop at Camp Bondsteel, Leonard and the soldiers of the 744th keep a watchful eye on the detainees in Bondsteel Detention Facility.

Hailing from Bethlehem, Pa., the 744th is an MP unit embedded in Task Force 709th Military Police, based in Hanau, Germany.

The 744th is trained specifically to run facilities such as BDF. All of the MP's are compound guards who have experience maintaining a prison environment.

A welcome change

In the past, multiple MP units have manned the detention center together. During the new rotation, the facility will be run entirely by the 744th — an advantage, Leonard said, because the detachment is already a cohesive unit.

"We came here with the teamwork part already nailed down," he said. "We train at home for just this type of environment, so we are comfortable here."

A staff of well-trained, "exceptional" soldiers mans the center, surrounded by miles of barbed wire and security, Leonard said.

Being overseas is nothing new to the 744th. The unit has staffed and guarded detention centers and prisons all over



Spc. Venessa Schowyer, compound guard for the 744th IRD, locks a gate at Bondsteel Detention Facility.

the globe, including Saudi Arabia and Egypt.

Still, some members have never deployed before — including compound guard Spc. Neil Battoni Jr., who not only transferred to the 744th but also reclassified as an MP so he could take part in the Kosovo mission. "I really wanted to deploy, but my unit wasn't going anywhere," he said. "The guys over in this unit said I could go with them to Kosovo if I were an MP."

After only a few months as a qualified combat medic, he returned to AIT for training as an MP. Within two months of graduation, he prepared for his mobilization.

Battoni said he thinks he made the right decision.

"I know being a prison guard isn't the most exciting job," he said. "But for me, what is exciting is the fact that I am supporting my country. We are here holding up the American flag, and that feels good."

No rookies

When the 744th officially took charge of the detention center, the new faces on the hill had already

been quietly patrolling the facilities and training with the outgoing unit for about two weeks.

The training proved to be helpful, Leonard said, but there are still a lot of things for his soldiers to learn.

"They are still reviewing the SOP," Leonard said. "It will take a couple of weeks before they are up to my standard, but I have every confidence in them."

"They are good troops," he said.

These soldiers are responsible for care and safety of the facility's detainees.

Regular routines

For those who are in custody, the daily routine is as routine as possible, Leonard said.

"We like to keep things very consistent," he said.

"A regular schedule helps keep the detainees calm. They know what to expect," he added.

The guards try to provide some type of entertainment and social interaction for the detainees. At the end of each day, the detainees are allowed leisure time.

"They really like to play chess," said Staff Sgt. John Fries, a compound guard.



Cpt. John G. Leonard, commander of the 744th IRD, poses for a mug shot as he shows how a detainee is processed into the detention facility.

He said they try to let the detainees watch a movie or play a board game to give them a break from the monotony.

Additionally, the detainees are allowed visitation. Families, lawyers, and clergy are allowed to sit with the detainees in a special visitation room under close watch.

Battoni was quick to point out that although the job may seem slow and uneventful to the outsider, the potential for chaos is always there.

Leonard said that by maintaining routines and closely following the standing operating procedures, guards at the detention center can ensure that detainees — like others in Kosovo — live in a safe and secure environment.

peacekeeper profile



Name:
Zachary Pinchook

Age: 20

Rank: Pvt.

MOS: 11B

Unit:
B 1st Battalion,
36th Infantry
Regiment

Duty Position:
Rifleman

What city do you call home?
New Lothrop,
Mich.

What are you good at?
Painting
miniatures

What do you like to do when you're off duty?
Play games on my
computer

Your favorite food:
Spanish food like
paella

The last book you read:
"Pandora" by Anne
Rice

Why did you join the Army?
I didn't like school



Medevac units usually pick up precious cargo.
But in a humanitarian mission outside the gates of Camp Bondsteel ...

Medics make special delivery

By Staff Sgt. Michael P. McCord
131st Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

CAMP BONDSTEEL — The funny thing about kids is the way they see the world around them. Through eyes not blinded by political or personal assumptions, they view circumstances as forthright—cut and dried. They offer solutions instead of excuses. For Staff Sgt. Richard “Dick” Dickerson, a crew chief with the 717th Medical Company (Air Ambulance), flying medical evacuation missions here in Kosovo, a letter home to his daughter a few months back, brought those ideas to realization.

The 717th Medical Co. (AA), Army National Guard, is deployed to Kosovo in support of Operation Joint Guardian. The operation is one of peacekeeping and humanitarian in nature. The 717th is comprised of detachments from Reno, Nevada and Santa Fe, New Mexico, and make up the potential round-the-clock flying missions, required by the UH-60 “Blackhawk” units.

Golden Opportunities

While flying these missions over the beautiful landscape of Kosovo, Dickerson and his fellow soldiers had opportunity after opportunity to witness the needs of the Kosovar children and their schools. “I had been to a few schools and kind of saw the conditions,” said Dickerson. “Teachers trying to teach without books, without supplies, and kids trying to learn without paper to write down what the teachers were saying, or pencils to even write it down.”

Dickerson was prompted by those visits to write his daughter Erin, and let her know just how good students back in the States have it. “I wrote and reminded her just how fortunate she was.”

Cut away the red tape and help was on the way.

“The next thing I knew, she’s writing me a letter about collecting money and school supplies, and asking me if they could be put to any good use over here,” Dickerson said. “I said; I’m sure there won’t be any problem finding a school that would benefit from whatever she could come up with. Lo and behold, the big box showed up.”

The next task was finding a most needy school to donate these supplies. “I had the good fortune to interview our Chief of Staff, Colonel Jack Jones, on a little paper I was doing for a class I was taking



Staff Sgt. Richard “Dick” Dickerson, crew chief with the 717th Medical Company, Air Ambulance, shows a photograph of his daughter Erin, to a crowd of children at the Pones School in Kosovo. In a letter, Dickerson told his daughter about the poor school conditions in Kosovo; she organized a drive to collect cash and school supplies to aid the children of Kosovo.

“We thought we could put something together the kids hadn’t seen before—and enjoy.”

— Sgt. 1st Class Juan Bustamante

on Kosovo. I asked him if there might be a school that he knew of that would benefit from such generosity, and boy he spoke right up right away, — the Ponesh School. He was aware the school was teaching Serbian and Albanian children and was having success doing that. It wasn’t a totally segregated environment. So we put this mission together and it just kept growing,” Dickerson said.

Seal of approval

Dickerson ran the donation mission up the chain of command and got the sign-off he and his fellow fliers needed to make it happen.

“We not only got to take school supplies, we took the aircraft, (Blackhawk) and we not only take the aircraft, we took “Mr. Whistle” himself, Sgt. 1st Class Juan Bustamante,” beamed Dickerson. “We thought we could put something together the kids hadn’t seen before, —and enjoy.”

The treat in store for the children and the faculty was something Bustamante

learned as a child growing up in Mexico.

Unusual Talents

The unit level maintenance platoon leader, an 18-year veteran with the Army National Guard in New Mexico, made whistles for dozens of children. “When I was five-years old, I learned to make whistles out of wire,” Bustamante said. A large crowd of children wedged in tighter and tighter on the steps of the weather worn Ponesh School to watch Bustamante form a high-pitched whistle from a piece of blue-metal banding. The banding material was the kind used to strap crates and boxes for shipping. His only tool, — was a pair of slip-joint pliers. Before long, the schoolyard was filled with the shrill pitch of Bustamante’s long-ago learned talent. A little bit later he demonstrated how to weave key chains from stretchy plastic cord.

The Blackhawk had landed a hundred or so yards from the school and a crowd had awaited them as they gently set the craft down in a soft, rain-soaked grassy field.

Members of the 2nd /14th Infantry Regiment, Fort Drum, N.Y., who patrol this area from their “hard site” camp just outside the school, were on hand to escort the flying benefactors to the school and it’s principal. Spc. Alex Meeks, Information Operations specialist with Headquarters/Headquarters Company, gave the men a briefing of their

SCHOOL

Continued from page 12

operations as they waited for the townspeople to crowd around the UH-60.

"We come and talk to the kids, talk to the townspeople to see what we can do for them," said Meeks. "If there are any problems, we do what we can to see if we can resolve them."

Important message

As the helicopter slowly found its way to the turf, cloudy skies rolled back to blue and sunshine slipped through to greet the aviators.

Dickerson stood next to pilots, Capt. John Fishburn, Chief Warrant Officer Gary Yeager, and fellow crewmembers, Staff Sgt. Kenny Keelin and Bustamante, as he told the crowd how this event had come about. "We are soldiers of the New Mexico and Nevada National Guard serving on active duty in the United States Army. Our mission is really a mission of peace. This aircraft doesn't have any guns or missiles that can take a life.

"It only has equipment and people that work to save a life. If someone is hurt we work to keep them alive until we can fly them to a hospital where doctors and nurses can hopefully make them better. We look forward to letting you see the aircraft up close and personal. Before we do that I want to show you a picture of my 14-year-old daughter. Her name is Erin. I haven't seen her now for six months. I miss her very much. All of us here miss our families.

"We are here as part of a team trying to keep the peace so you, the children of Kosovo are free to grow up in a world safe from fighting and killing, that has gone on far too long in your beautiful land.

"After visiting some

other schools in Kosovo, where I saw teachers trying to teach without paper, pencils, craft supplies and books, I wrote Erin a letter telling her what I saw. After receiving my letter, Erin decided all on her own to collect some of those items and send them to me to give to a school worthy of having her Dad, that's me, for a while," he said.

Borrowed assets

"She says I'm only on loan to you and you have to give me up so I can return to her and help her finish growing up.

"That's all any of us soldiers can do is to help you learn and practice what's right and how to treat one another. Because we all want to go home and be with our families, and next month many of us will do just that. But more soldiers will show up as our replacements with the same idea in mind.

"So for your sake, for the sake of my daughter and for the sake of all these peacekeeping soldiers, we ask that you study hard, play hard and learn to live together in peace. If you do that, my daughter and the sons and daughters of all these soldiers will feel much better about having loaned out their moms and dads to you for one of the coldest and wettest winters in Kosovo has seen in a long time.

Now who wants to see a Blackhawk helicopter?" Dickerson said.

Assisted by Capt. Patrick Stich, 2nd 14th Inf. Reg., the crewmembers let each child climb aboard the helicopter and see and feel its dials and switches.

Standing nearby and directing the boundless energies of the kids was the school's principal, Vladimir Tunkaivic.

"Life is very hard her,

and it's a very big thing for the kids according to the very difficult materials situation they're in," he said. "They can't afford to by school supplies, and so it's very nice for them, and they'll be happy."

KFOR had recently replaced the crumbling roof with a new metal corrugated one. "The children were subjected to rain dripping through the old tiles as they sat at their desks," said Tunkaivic.

Help needed

Their multi-ethnic cooperation at the school prompted a visit by Multi-National Brigade-East's commander, Brigadier General Keith M. Huber. Having seen the dilapidated conditions of a school trying to do the right thing, Huber signed off on the new roof. "We are thankful to the general who came here before and saw the condition of the school. We are also thankful for the 27th Engineers who replaced the roof," said Tunkaivic. The school is basically for kindergarten aged, up through elementary level students.

"Had it not been for the energies of one 14-year-old back in Santa Fe, New Mexico, I'm not sure we would've pulled this off," said Dickerson. "Out of the mouths of babes comes a lot of wisdom at times. She told me, 'Well, if the Anglos and the Hispanics and the Catholics and the Jews and the Christians can all learn to live together in Santa Fe, New Mexico, maybe they can learn to live together in a place called Kosovo.'"

Community care

A true citizen-soldier, Dickerson is a human resource generalist - a personnel manager, back in Santa Fe. The proud 717th has flow

over 60 medical evacuation missions during their deployment to Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo.

It was during his interview with Col. Jones for a college paper that spawned the event. "Staff sergeant Dickerson came to me about some information he needed for a college paper.

Train of thought

"In the meantime, he was talking about his daughter who was collecting money, collecting school supplies for some people here in Kosovo, and wanted to know if I knew of a school they could donate these supplies to," said Jones.

"I said, sure, we just put a new roof on a school in Ponesh for some school children that were very needy.

They were located in a very small populace. They didn't have any tax base—had no money and when BG Huber went there and gave a speech and talked to the kids, this was one of the schools that wasn't totally segregated. They had kids, Serbs and Albanians that played together at recess.

"It was something we looked at. It gave them an opportunity to be one of the first schools that was trying to bring people back together. The teachers, the kids and the principals all had the right personalities to do the right thing.

"When you go out to Ponesh, you see all the kids sharing desks, sharing pencils. "It was an opportune time for the 717th to make another impression. Those guys are the heroes.

They are doing things above and beyond the call. They are doing a great job," Jones said

And a 14-year-old will grow in America knowing she made a difference in somebody's life far away.

peacekeeper profile



Name:

Douglas M. Stechman

Age: 21

Rank: Specialist

MOS: 11H

Unit:

HHC, 1st Battalion, 32nd Infantry Regiment

Duty Position:

Gunner

Your role in MNB(E):

Observation post, interdiction, traffic check point security.

What city do you call home?

Lancaster, Pa.

What are you good at?

Gunnery

What do you like to do when you're off duty?

Watch movies.

Your favorite food:

Lasagna

Your favorite TV show:

"The Simpsons"

The last book you read:

Black hawk down"

Why did you join the Army?

To be a soldier and protect America. Oh yeah, and the college money!



TFF Fire Department Corner

Special to the Falcon Flier

When you think of Firefighters, you think of a burning building, red trucks, lights and sirens, or maybe a dalmatian named Spot. To a point, this may be true, like when we have to fight a fire and do what we have been trained for. Sure we enjoy the thrill, the adrenalin rush, and the excitement of putting our training to use. This is our job when accidents happen, or when somebody becomes complacent and thinks, "This is ok it would never start a fire."

I worked actively as a firefighter for eight years. I was going to different emergencies, helping people in their time of need, because I thought that was my job as a firefighter.

It was a very rewarding feeling, but on the other side, it was heart breaking to see the pain of the families who had lost a home, or the tears of a little child who lost their favorite toy in a preventable fire.

It wasn't until I worked in the fire prevention section that I learned our job is not fighting fires, it's preventing fires.

Here at the TFF Fire Department we offer a variety of fire prevention classes, these classes are offered at each camp throughout the TFF Theater.

Here is a list of the classes offered, we can hold the classes at the fire station or come to your work section to provide the training. We are here at your service to help you help us prevent fires.

Classes offered

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>Basic Fire Prevention Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Fire Department capabilities b. Services Available c. Housing Policies d. Fire/Electrical Hazards common in TFF Theater e. Proper care and use of extinguishers f. Fire reporting procedures | <p>Fire Warden Training-
Offered to facility managers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Building inspections b. Exit routes c. Evacuation plans d. Electrical safety e. House keeping f. Fire evacuation drills g. Fire extinguisher operations |
| <p>Fire Extinguisher Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Types of Fire extinguishers b. Classes of Fire c. Selection of fire extinguishers d. Extinguisher information e. Operation of extinguisher | <p>DFAC Fire Safety Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Exit routes b. Evacuation plan c. Fire/Electrical hazards d. Fire Extinguishers e. House keeping f. Fire protection systems g. DFAC fire resources |

Fire Safety Puzzle

Rules of engagement: Win a fire department T-shirt! Solve the Fire Safety Crossword Puzzle and have your name put into a hat for the winner to be chosen by the fire chief for a fire department T-shirt. Please e-mail your answers to firedept@bondsteel2.areur.army.mil ATTN: Fire Safety Crossword Puzzle.

If you don't have e-mail, you can drop off your answers at your camp fire station (ATTN: John Bailey, Fire Safety Crossword Puzzle).

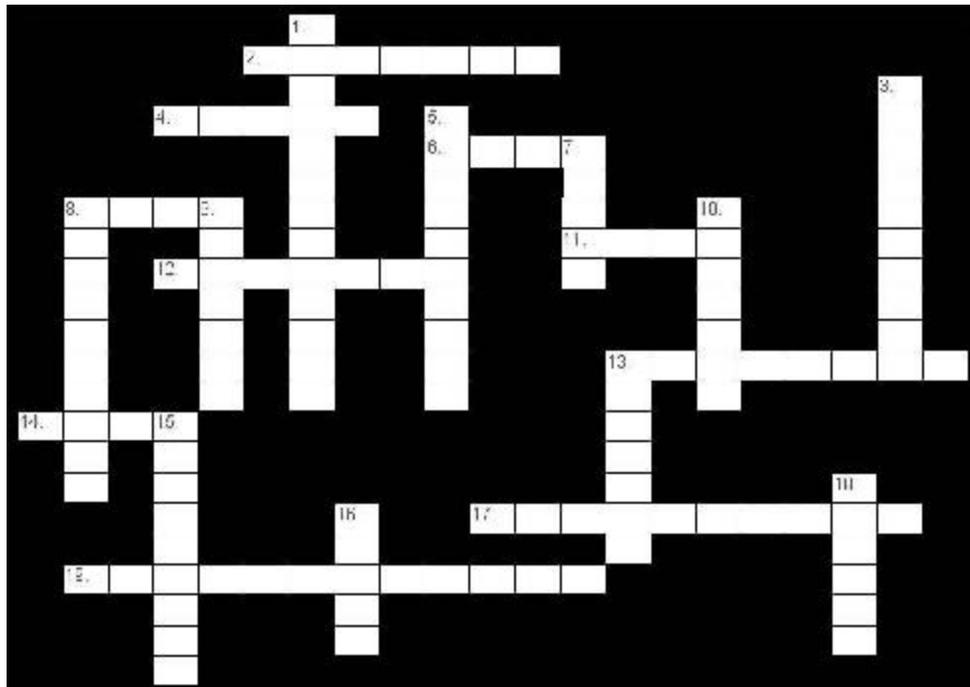
There are three lesson plans in the TFF Info shared Outlook folder that contain information you might need to solve the puzzle.

Across

- 2. Never remove from your smoke detector _____.
- 4. Report all _____.
- 6. A type of Class A fire.
- 8. An acronym on how to use an extinguisher.
- 11. Stop, drop and _____.
- 12. How often you must test your smoke detectors.
- 13. _____ air is 12-24 inches from the floor surface.
- 14. A rapid chemical reaction that gives off heat.
- 17. Every occupancy should have one appointed.
- 19. First line of defense

Down

- 1. Unauthorized privacy in LSA's



- 2. Should be coordinated through the fire department.
- 4. Burn barrels should be _____ feet away from any building.
- 6. Should be marked with exit signs.
- 7. To keep from happening or existing.
- 8. Not authorized in any facility.
- 9. Ensure exits are never _____.
- 13. A, B, C and D are considered the four _____ of fires.
- 11. Fire prevention begins with _____.
- 12. An alternate _____ may offer a safer passage in a smoke-filled room.
- 18. Class "D" fires.

TRANSFER: Incoming commander pledges cooperation with brigade task force, UNMIK police

From page 10

Like its predecessor, TF 709 has elements from the active and reserve components.

Active-duty units include Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 709th MP Bn.; the 127th

MP Co., based in Hanau, Germany; the 230th MP Co., based at Rhine Ordnance Barracks, Germany; the 630th MP Co., based in Bamberg, Germany; and the 515th MP Detachment (Criminal Investigation Division), whose soldiers

come from places throughout Europe. The 744th Internment and Resettlement Detachment, an Army Reserve unit from Hazleton, Pa., rounds out the task force.

Though its mission in Kosovo has just begun, the 709th has trained for

months so that all components may blend seamlessly into one team with common goals.

"We will execute every mission with the professionalism and warfighting spirit that truly makes us an awesome task force,"

Troops see the bright side of working nightside

By Capt. Dave Domingo
302nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

CAMP BONDSTEEL – Working nights presented special challenges for soldiers in KFOR rotation 3B, including increased responsibility, reduced contact with others and erratic sleep patterns.

But nightside duty also had its perks – according to a handful of soldiers found at work during one of their last remaining night shifts in Kosovo.

“It’s great because you get away from the chain of command a little bit,” said Pfc. Erin H. Hellwig, 20, a member of C Company, 10th Signal Battalion, based at Fort Drum, N.Y. “You get away from the extra duties that come with daylight.”

Hellwig, from Dunkirk, N.Y., is a 31R – multichannel transmission communications operator and maintainer. During KFOR rotation 3B, from a hut in the Camp Bondsteel signal compound, she patched calls through from soldiers in Kosovo to their families.

Hellwig said the pace of work picked up at night – but to her, that was a good thing.

“I like it because you get to put through a lot more morale calls,” Hellwig said. “Between around nine (p.m.) and one o’clock in the morning, the phone is off the hook – well, it’s always ringing,” she said.

But sleeping during the day meant interrupted sleep, she said. Recently, Hellwig was awake during her ‘down time’ to move out of SEAhuts into tents and turn in equipment.

She said she didn’t like doing physical training in a small group instead of with the whole unit. “It’s not as organized because there’s more people on day shift and there’s only two people on night shift,” she said.

Working at night was also more dangerous for Hellwig, whose duties included periodically checking the operation of systems outside the hut.

“It’s really dark outside, and you can trip over just about everything,” she said.

The night crew tended to take on additional duties as well. “They usually task us to do a lot of cleaning,” Hellwig said.

She and her co-workers overcame the time pressures of their shift through teamwork, she said. For example, soldiers from the unit often came to the compound after pulling guard duty to help others finish their work. “Even though it wasn’t their shift, they still stopped by after guard duty,” Hellwig said.

Sgt. Juan V. Gonzales and Spc. Paul A. Garibay, both 31R’s in C Co., 10th Signal Bn., worked nights troubleshooting computer problems in the Multi-National Brigade (East) automation office. Their lists of night-shift disadvantages were short.

“Everything you have to do in the day, it’s on your own time,” said Gonzales, 29, of Edinburg, Texas. At first, the lost



Pfc. Erin H. Hellwig of C Company, 10th Signal Battalion, said she liked working nights because she got to patch more morale calls through for soldiers at remote sites in Kosovo.



Sgt. Juan V. Gonzales and Spc. Paul A. Garibay, both of C Company, 10th Signal Battalion, worked nights troubleshooting computer problems in the MNB(E) automation office.



Spc. William H. Washburn Jr. of the 110th Military Intelligence Battalion said missing out on sleep is part of being on the night shift. “Really, you just get used to it,” he said.

sleep during the day translated to trouble staying awake at night, he said.

“Another thing bad about nights is all the resources are (available) during the day, so we have a hard time getting stuff at night,” he said.

Garibay, 21, from Houston, had one minor complaint: “Usually you get tasked with ... little tidbits that the day shift didn’t get to.”

Both said that overall they found the pace of the night shift to be more relaxed.

Battle desk radio telephone operator Sgt. Peter L. Ducos, 21, said he liked the night shift in the MNB(E) tactical operations center because “there’s less people. ... I don’t have to deal with a lot of people yelling at me.”

Ducos, from Centerville, Mo., is an infantryman in Headquarters, 1st Brigade, 10th Mountain Division, based at Fort Drum.

“What I don’t like about it is the fact that you feel like a zombie,” he said. “The best word to describe it would probably be ‘daywalker’ ... you feel like a vampire walking in sunlight.”

Ducos said increased responsibility compounded the problem. “A call could



Sgt. Peter L. Ducos, a radio telephone operator in the MNB(E) Tactical Operations Center, said working nights sometimes made him feel like a “vampire walking in sunlight.”

come in at any time with all kinds of information, and they’re expecting you to pretty much deal with it as best you can, with as little sleep as you have and as tired as you are.”

Another drawback to working nights: “You don’t get to really socialize with anybody. It’s just you and whoever you work with. You know them pretty well.”

Ducos said “lots of coffee and interesting Web sites” helped him stay alert during lulls in activity.

“The laid-back atmosphere” is what Spc. William H. Washburn Jr., 24, from Tyler, Texas, said he liked best about the night shift.

“There weren’t a lot of fire missions coming up,” said Washburn, an intelligence analyst in the 110th Military Intelligence Bn., based at Fort Drum. He worked in the MNB(E) analysis and control element, tracking the status of intelligence collection assets.

“We just had one straight mission that was clear-cut when we got here, and we did that pretty much every night.

“There was a lot of fun, a lot of camaraderie,” he added.

Washburn echoed others’ frustration at having to choose between sleeping and doing errands. He said most facilities opened for business “like, two hours after we got off shift.”

Like Gonzales, Washburn had trouble staying awake on his shift, he said.

The solution? “Really, you just get used to it. ... Being woken up in the middle of the day every day just becomes second nature to you,” he said. “It gets to the point where it doesn’t even bother you anymore.”

Nutrition, fitness counseling is for everyone — and available to soldiers serving in Kosovo

By Spc. Jasmine Chopra
302nd Mobile Public Affairs
Detachment

CAMP BONDSTEEL – While the Army does a good job of keeping soldiers fit to fight, no soldier is immune to problems with fitness or weight management – at least according to Sgt. Roy Mass.

As Task Force Medical Falcon's only hospital dietary care division specialist, Mass provides counseling to soldiers in the Army Weight Control Program. He also teaches classes to soldiers who just want to stay fit.

The risks of having a high body fat percentage include heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure and certain types of cancer.

Soldiers with unhealthy weight carry the additional risk of being separated from the Army. The regulation governing the Army Weight Control Program, Army Regulation 600-9, stipulates that soldiers must meet the physical demands of their duties under combat conditions *and* present a trim, military appearance at all times.

If soldiers do not meet weight standards, they may be required to enroll in the Army Weight Control Program.

However, soldiers who *do* meet weight standards can still take advantage of nutrition classes led by Mass.

"It's my duty as a soldier to be fit," said Spc. Robert Ingram, an Army Reserve military police specialist with the 744th Internment and Resettlement Detachment, based in Hazleton, Pa.

Ingram voluntarily participated in a nutrition class May 8 at Bondsteel

Detention Facility, where he works. (Mass makes his training available to units at their locations.)

Though Ingram admitted to eating fried food occasionally, he said he maintains a healthy diet and fitness routine. He does some kind of exercise daily, such as volleyball, power lifting, or running, he said.

Mass said being fit can prevent disease and injury simply because the body is stronger. "The time it takes to heal from injuries is shorter if you're fit," he said.

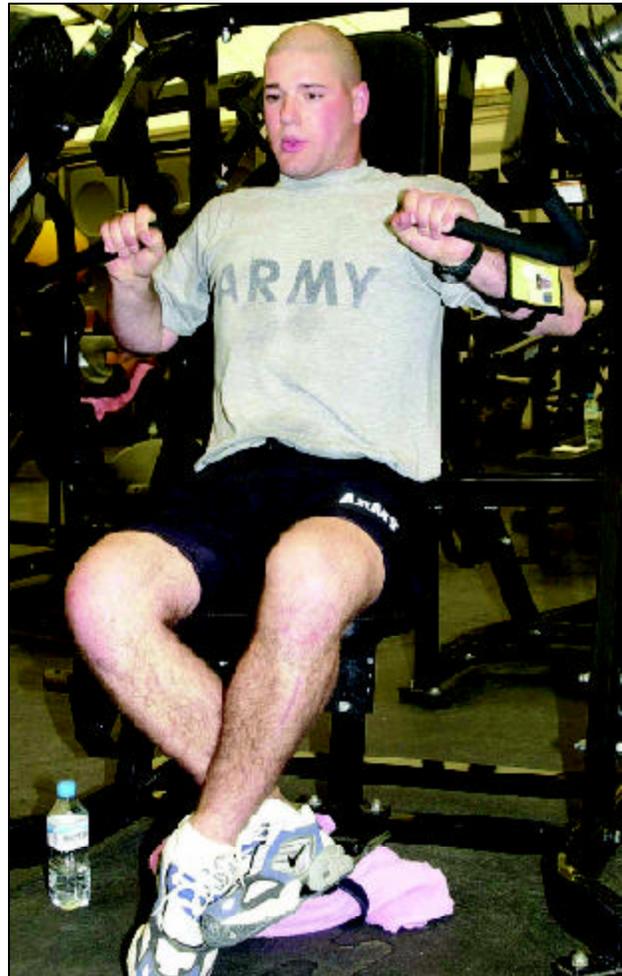
Mass said regular exercise and a healthy diet are critical to maintaining optimum health. Keeping a daily journal to track the foods one eats can also be helpful, he said.

Since soldiers rely on the dining facility for nutrition, they must know how to navigate their way around unhealthy foods. In his training, Mass suggests portion control and avoidance of empty calories. 'Portion control' means limiting the serving size of food, and 'empty calories' refers to foods that are high in calories but offer little or no nutritional value.

Mass cautions against fad diets, as they are prone to be both unhealthy and ineffective in the long term, he said.

Some of Mass's tips include eating mostly grains, fruits and vegetables, eating smaller portions of meats and reducing foods such as bacon and fried foods, which are both high in fat and cholesterol. Excess sugar in the form of desserts like cakes, pies, and sodas should be avoided.

For more information on healthier lifestyles for soldiers, go to www.hooah4health.com.



"It's my duty to be fit," said Spc. Robert Ingram, a member of the 744th Internment and Resettlement Detachment. Whether it is volleyball or power-lifting, Ingram said he exercises daily.



Ginger Reyes, bass player and one of the singers for the all-female Christian rock group Halo Friendlies, gets the soldiers cheering at a concert May 7 in

Bands entertain, boost morale

the Southtown Gym on Camp Bondsteel.

Christian bands All Man Rise and Halo Friendlies performed a concert May 7 in the Southtown Gym at Camp Bondsteel.

The show was part of a USO Tour sponsored by United States Army Europe Morale Welfare and Recreation in association with AKA Productions of California, which books performances through MWR to boost morale.

AMR and Halo Friendlies play mainstream music — with a different message.

"We want to bring heavy, hard, good music that shows our passion for Jesus without trying to sound to preachy," said Shawn

Coyne, lead singer of AMR.

"These guys are awesome. I think they're in for real success," said Pfc. Jerrid Hopwood, a member of A Company, 1st Battalion, 32nd Infantry Regiment.

When asked how they felt about coming here and performing for the troops, Christina Theobald, drummer for the all-female Halo Friendlies, said, "I think it's really cool to give a little something back. It's just amazing to be able to come down here and see what you guys (soldiers) do firsthand."

—Pfc. Brandon Guevara