Task Force Falcon

Falcon Flier

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1-41st Field Artillery proudly fly the flag

"It was appropriate to fly the American flag from a recovery vehicle, because America will recover from this."
-Staff Sgt. David Jeannotte

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Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Brian Kappmeyer

An American flag dangles from the boom of an M88 Recovery Vehicle in the early morning breeze.

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Combat Camera

Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Martin J. Cervantez

Soldiers run across an open area to load a UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter

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Photo by Spc. Marshall Thompson

left: **01oct01.pdfAs redeployment fast approaches, there are several important items soldiers should consider to ensure their finances are in order.**

right: **Staff Sgt. Isaac Bennett hands a couple of boxes to Spc. Peter Gallimore. Both soldiers are from the Support Platoon 11 Engineers.**

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Photo by Spc. Scott Holdsworth

No over-time for this deployment

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

Near the end of some games, when the pros are winning, teams switch to a "ball control offense."

This strategy is only successful if the chains are moving forward and no one turns the ball over. You'll see teams listening carefully to coaches on the sideline. It's an intense time.

This is how I see our game ending here.

By the time this article is published, many units will have less than 60 days remaining on this deployment. A few will be at 50 days or less.

The clock is definitely running down. There are opportunities to progress and opportunities to fail.

When you wake up you have unlimited opportunities to improve yourself and your foxhole. Remain vigilant.

I've seen many games end sadly for worthy teams who stumbled and gave up on the principles that brought them success. We won't do that.

One of those principles is to trust leaders. Events at home and abroad have led to rumors here. They benefit no one. Look to the coach on the sideline for the real deal. Leaders will keep you informed.

Rumormongers have said that our redeployment will be delayed. We have just welcomed KFOR 3B for their reconnaissance of Kosovo.

Clearly we are on track for redeployment. Don't give rumormongers credit.

There are rumors about units back home, where they are going, and what lies ahead for us all.

The fact is that there are no definite plans at this time.

Remember that our enemies want us to be confused. Don't help them by spreading or listening to rumors. Look to the coach.

I want you to know that currently our higher headquarters back at Fort Stewart and Fort Campbell are reviewing post deployment leave plans.

I know that this is very important to you and your families. Once decisions are made, we will publish the plans for you. Until then, look to the coach.

There you have it. Pretty soon we'll all be looking at the replays and saying "damn we're good."

Until then, be relentless!

Leadership the hard way; Corporals and Sergeants set the example

Story by
Command Sgt. Maj. Marvin Hill
Task Force Falcon CSM

When we think about military leadership, we can refer to FM 22-100 to find the textbook definition. We read that military leadership must provide purpose, direction, and motivation.

That's something that many of us old-timers didn't grow up with.

You will also find in FM 22-100 the eleven principles of leadership. We require our leadership to strive for, live, and lead within these guidelines.

Of the eleven principles mentioned, our young noncommissioned officers must use one, in particular, as the foundation for all that they do here in Kosovo.

Never has "**Set the example**" meant so much in our young leaders' lives. Many of these junior leaders are faced with a challenge that was quite common for armies of the past. Seldom do we experience the challenge of leading subordinates 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Personally, I think that it is easy to form up at 0600 each day, spend the day training and managing resources.

At 1700 hours soldiers retire to their quarters and social pastimes.

The leader's character is evaluated by his soldiers only a few hours per day and often never on the weekend.

They can proceed to do what is often referred to as "let their hair down."

If leaders have character flaws or questionable judgement, more often than not, it remains within the confines of the walls of their homes.

This is quite to the contrary here in Kosovo. Our young leaders must "**set the example**" always.

We have Corporals and conditionally promoted Sergeants that were peers of soldiers in their squads only a few weeks ago. Now they must live under their soldier's microscope for six long months.

Leadership can be a pretty tough task back at Fort Campbell and Fort Stewart.

Now we have added the formidable task of living with the soldiers that we are expected to lead.

This doesn't make the journey from the led to the leader any easier does it? So far we have been successful at it.

Thanks to the great platoon sergeants and section sergeants who are mentoring our Army's future.

Our soldiers not only expect these corporals and junior sergeants to be role models, they demand it.

What an awesome responsibility! I can think of no other aspect of leadership more powerful.

Everything that we expect of our soldiers, our corporals and sergeants must first live.

If we insist on integrity, duty, loyalty, and selfless service, we must rely on our young leaders to lead the charge.

They are not only up to the challenge, but they are executing it almost flawlessly.

Our junior leadership is performing remarkably on the observation posts, at their workstations on the base camps, and during the Fighter Management Pass Program (FMPP).

They are serving as Remote Site NCOICs, TOC NCOICs, LNOs, Flight OPS, Patrol Leaders; the list goes on and on.

Many of them do not have the benefit of PLDC, the first level of NCOES.

They are receiving their education the old fashion way—the hard way.

"Be Relentless"

Falcon Flier

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Soldiers fly old Glory throughout Monteith

An American flag dangles from the boom of an M88 Recovery Vehicle in the early morning breeze.

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

The symbolism was strong for the maintenance team as they placed the American flag high on the M88 Recovery Vehicle three days after the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington D.C. in mid September.

"We thought it was appropriate to fly the American flag from a recovery vehicle because America will recover from this," Staff Sgt. David Jeannotte, motor sergeant for C Battery of the 1-41st Field Artillery said proudly.

Jeannotte noticed after the attacks that there weren't many American flags flying at Camp Monteith and remembered he had a flag put away. He brought out "Old Glory" and needed a place to fly her. On top of the recovery vehicle offered a perfect place.

"I'm proud of the United States and thought a good way to show that was to display the flag," Jeannotte said.

Sgt. Allan Reinhart secured the "Stars and Stripes" to an antenna attached to the recovery vehicle's boom so everyone could share in the patriotic feelings the men of the maintenance team were experiencing.

"It makes me proud to fly that flag – that is why we wear the patch on our right sleeve," said Reinhart, the shop foreman. "When the local nationals see that flag, they know we are proud and nothing is going to get us down."

Jeannotte was feeling the tragedy on a personal level. His brother-in-law and a cousin work across the street from the World Trade Center and were in the area at the time of the attack. Both of them saw the second plane crash into one of the two World Trade Center towers.

Jeannotte, from Bayville, New Jersey, said his brother-in-law was extremely upset by what he saw that day as he witnessed people leaping from windows of the towers to escape. His brother-in-law says he will not be able to return to work because of the impact the visual scars left from that unforgetable day.

As soldiers reflect on the pain and anger that the attack has caused the American people and the rest of the world community, the soldiers say that displaying their pride and support for their country is the least they can do.

"I think it is great we are showing our concern and support for the people back in America – for the people who lost their lives and for their families," said Staff Sgt. Rufus Green with Headquarters and Headquarters Company of the 3-69th Armor.

Not only were the soldiers offering their thoughts for the people whose lives were devastated by these terrorist acts, but as the American flag blew in the wind above their heads some soldiers also thought of home.

"Seeing the flag up there makes me feel patriotic and closer to home," said Pfc. Derrick Dixon. "People back in the states are flying their flags and it makes me feel right there with them."

KFOR shopping reduces ethnic rivalry

A Civil Affairs soldier points in the direction of the end of the KFOR approved merchants.

Story and photo by Spc. Maria Jaramillo 358th MPAD

Smells of cooking chicken and car exhaust filled the crowded streets of the city as they did everyday. The sun had risen, but the heat of day had yet to set in. It was a beautiful fall morning, and for the first time, a group of soldiers were all set for a day of shopping.

Task Force Falcon Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR), in cooperation with 490th Civil Affairs Battalion, began the first ever Ferizaj/Urosevac shopping day. The day trips not only allow Kosovo Force (KFOR) soldiers to get out for a little relaxation, but there is also another effort in place.

Kosovo Serbs will accompany soldiers on the weekly shopping trips. This mixture created the need for a list of approved merchants.

The cooperating merchants agreed to allow both the Kosovo Serbs and KFOR soldiers to shop in their store.

All "KFOR APPROVED" stores boast a sign in the window for the shoppers to see. As the signs began to grow, so did the curiosity.

"When we started putting the signs out, a lot of other shop owners ran up to us and said 'Hey, what about me? We want to participate in this program'," said Michael Mantey, Ferizaj/ Urosevic team chief with 490th Civil Affairs Battalion.

A trial run of the trips began September 18. A group of 26 soldiers were bussed into the heart of the city. Accompanied by escorts and interpreters, they were first guided down the two streets of stores that were open to them. A Civil Affairs guide oriented them with different rally points to avoid the soldiers getting lost, and then they were released into groups of three to shop until 2:00 in the afternoon.

"It's interesting to see the local community, because we don't get out very much," said Sgt. 1st Class Donald E. Leander, the finance non-commissioned officer in charge with the 376th Finance Battalion, "I never really got a chance to walk around the community."

The 57 approved stores include clothing, souvenir shops, a mini-market and a coffee shop. This, however, is a working list. Currently Civil Affairs is working on approving restaurants. The most likely to be approved soon are pizza shops, because the majority of food on the pizza like cheese, meats and sauce are processed outside of Kosovo.

Civil Affairs is hoping to add more stores as time goes on, but will also take stores off the list if needed. Any lack of cooperation that KFOR soldiers and the Kosovo Serbs experience at a store will result in removing the store's place on the sanctioned list.

A merchant not working with KFOR seems unlikely. Besides an obvious economic benefit from soldiers shopping at their store, their attitude toward the project was positive.

"The soldiers are welcome here, in our shops, in our homes, everywhere," said Fatom Mehmemti, a store employee with Hani I Ferizit, a KFOR approved mini-market.

The multi-ethnic cooperation is one of the steps to reintroducing the Kosovo Serb population into the city. Currently the city is at 98 percent Kosovo Albanian with only 20 Kosovo Serbs living in the city under KFOR protection 24 hours a day.

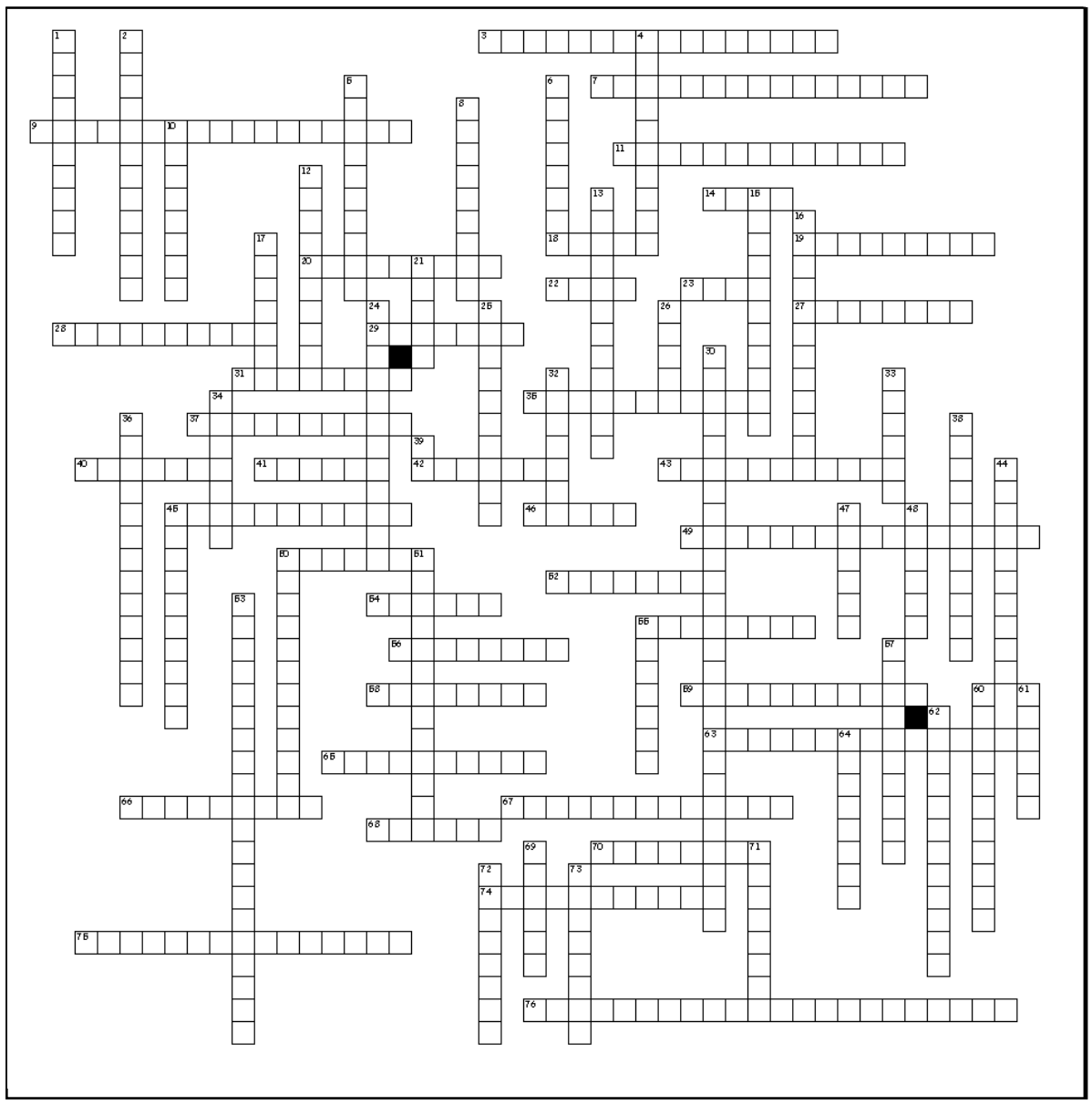
Cross Word: Favorite Lines From Favorite Movies

Across

3. “As you wish.”
7. “Welcome to Earth!”
9. “Roll, roll, roll in the hay.”
11. “Dave, is that you Dave?”
14. “Get out of the water!”
18. “Get out of my swamp.”
19. “Your mother was a hamster, and your father smelled of elderberries.”
20. “This is for you.”
22. “Suicide is painless, it brings on many changes.”
23. “Well somebody had to stop her from screaming.”
27. “Battling the forces of the evil Emperor Zurg.”
28. “They want to know who really killed Kennedy.”
29. “Army training Sir!”
31. “Yeah, in your bra.”
35. “I was a friend of yours back in the agency.”
37. “I knew your sister Jill.”
40. “Does it sound like I’m ordering a pizza.”
41. “Put the bunny back in the box.”
42. “I know what ice fishing is.”
43. “And the monkey pushes the button.”
45. “Stupid is as stupid does.”
46. “Pop quiz hotshot.”
49. “You can’t do that we made you.”
50. “How do you explain the 8 hours of static?”
52. “Sorry folks Wally World is closed.”
54. “Moooon River!”
55. ”Knew this was a one way ticket, but had to come”
56. “And quit calling me Shirley”
58. “You can do it.”
59. “I have one job on this ship, and I know it’s dumb”
63. “Out of your entire team you’re the only one left alive.”
65. “I am the LAW!”
66. “Is that you dad.”
67. “We represent the lollypop guild.”
68. “I grow up to be a loser!”
70. “Don’t get it wet. and Never, Never feed it past midnight.”
74. “Toga, toga, toga.”
75. “So shall it be writin, so shall it be done.”
76. “Asps, very dangerous, you go first.”

Down

1. “I must go tell the dolphins.”
2. “You said wet shirt don’t break, not piss shirt bend bar.”
4. “It’s in da hole.”
5. did you expect blue spandex.”
6. “Where did you pick up that old fossil?”
8. “Shut up coppertop.”
10. “You never asked if I spoke English.”
12. “You talkin to me.”
13. “Nature will always find a way.”
15. “If you’re gonna spew, spew into this.”
16. “When someone asks if you are a God, YOU SAY YES!”
17. “Don’t mind him honey he’s a Libra.”
21. “Any white officer found leading a black unit will be killed as a trator.”
24. “Call me Snake.”
25. “I make this look good.”
26. “The day walker must be stopped.”



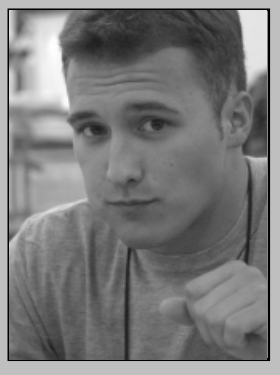
30. “Those aren’t pillows!”
32. “Murphy is that you.”
33. “I want my life back.”
34. “Is that where you want to be when Jesus comes?”
36. “Come with me if you want to live.”
38. “Get off my plane.”
39. “Phone home.”
44. “Every man dies, but not every man really lives.”
45. “Today is a good day to die.”
47. “I could tell you but then I’d have to kill you.”
48. “Don’t you wish you were me.”
50. “I was just making coffee.”
51. “They’re all around us, and they don’t know their dead.
53. “I’m not bad, I’m just drawn that way.”
55. “I was born a poor black child.”
57. “I’m kind of like a powder keg, and you’re the match.”
60. “I’m not trying to land him, I’m just using him for sex.”
61. “Were does he get those wonderful toys?”
62. “I’ll see you later Victoria Lynn, much later.”
64. “What harm ever came to anyone from reading a book?”
69. “Game over man.”
71. “that’s why I’m a Master Sergeant.”
72. “You remind me of the babe, the babe with the power.”
73. “I’d piss on a spark plug if I thought it would do any good.”

F ’

What does personal courage mean to you?

Staff Sgt. Steven Beck, squad leader, B Company 2-502nd Infantry Regiment-

"Taking care of your soldiers as best as you can and maybe laying down your life for another soldier."



Pvt. Stevens Daniel, Cavalry Scout with HHC 3-7th Infantry Regiment

"Personal courage is the ability to perform your job well trained in the 'heat of battle."

Pvt. Tony Eastwood, infantryman with the HHC 2/502nd Infantry Regiment-

"It's something that a soldier has within himself that keeps him going and keeps him safe. It’s to have faith in yourself."

Staff Sgt. Dale Hall, tanker with A Company 3-69th Armor

"Personal courage is doing what's right when faced with adversity... sticking to your guns."

Spc. Joshua Hopkins, Anti-armor heavy weapons specialist, D Company, 2-502nd Infantry Regiment-

"Making sure you do the right thing at all times."

Pfc. Chance Platz, infantry soldier with C Company 3-7th Infantry Regiment

"Personal courage is conquering a fear that you have. As far as the Army goes, it's overcoming stress to complete your mission."

Opening of new hospital for Bondsteel

Story by
Sgt. Gary Peterson
358th MPAD

The wind may blow, and injury may come. But with-in these walls the sick and afflicted may find shelter from the storm.

On September 10, Camp Bondsteel's new state of the art hospital was dedicated, and the transition from the tent hospital to the new hospital began.

"All who enter through these doors will receive the best health care available," said Capt. William Harding in words of prayer and promise.

The new facility was erected by Brown and Root, and it has been under construction since May of this year.

This hospital was built as sign of KFOR's efforts to "leave Kosovo a little better than we found it" and to return the medical infrastructure to an efficient medical system capable of caring for the community it serves, explained Col. Joyce Humphrey, Hospital Commander.

"The community of Kosovo sees this new hospital as our commitment to them and interprets the humanitarian care being provided in a very personal way," said Humphrey.

The new hospital's patients will include the soldiers of KFOR and local nationals who meet the Rules of Engagement, to include problems that affect life limb or eyesight.

"We have seen what a powerful force humanitarian care can be in our efforts to bring about peace in the Balkans," said Humphrey. "Medical care is the catalyst for peace, one patient at a time."

United States and United Kingdom soldiers will both staff this new hospital as a combined effort.

"Each soldier knows that if something happens to them, illness or injury, the recourses to make them whole again are readily available," said Humphrey. "They know they can count on the U.S. Army and the British Medical Team."

Humphrey said the new facility is more than just a new building. It is an instrument for peace.

"This new facility will enable (us) to continue to provide an excellent service for many years to come," said Col Gosling, Deputy Commander BRITFOR.

Photo by Scott Holdsworth

Commanders from Task Force Falcon and MedFalcon cut the ribbon for the opening of Bondsteel's new hospital

311th MI works closely with Russian 13th

Spc. Nikita Sanarov, interpreter with B Company 311th MI, visits the market at Kamenica with one of his Russians counterparts.

Story and Photo by
Spc. Engels Tejeda
358th MPAD

When Spc. Nikita Sanarov joined the Army, he had no idea that his knowledge of the Russian language would open venues within the military to one of his best assignments yet.

Sanarov joined as a heavy anti-armored infantry soldier about three years ago, and it was just days before he was scheduled to begin his tour in Korea that he was asked to serve in Kosovo as a Russian translator with the Russian Analysis Control Team (RACT) of B Company, 311th Military Intelligence Battalion. "This is much less stressful than what I did before; a lot more is known of your mission here," said Sanarov.

Sanarov said that one of the aspects of this assignment that attracts his interest is the "clarity of the mission." Capt Jonathan Otto, officer in charge of the team, said the mission is to be the link connecting the Russian 13th Tactical Group out of Kamenica/Kamenice with the rest of Multi-National Brigade East [MNB (E)].

"Our mission is to provide the Russians information so that they can do their job," said Otto. "We are the arm of the U.S. forces providing information to the Russians so that they can be a part of MNB (E)."

In addition, the soldiers also provide communication support for military police soldiers serving in the area, as well as soldiers of the 1-41st Field Artillery Battalion. Other similar teams within the 311th Military Intelligence Battalion, also provide ground surveillance and intelligence gathering assets to the task force.

The soldiers also say that serving in Kamenica/Kamenice has granted them the opportunity to do things they could not have done at the main camps. For example, Otto said that on occasions, the soldiers are invited to attend a Russian Banya, or a type of sauna that according to Sanarov can lead to the "best sleep there is."

Overall the soldiers say they enjoy the mission and that working with the Russians has been a valuable experience.

Sanarov said he likes the mission so much that "if they asked me to stay here for another six months I would."

Kids from Gjilan/Gnjilane visit the 3-7th

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

"When I am here (Camp Monteith), I feel like somebody is holding me — like somebody has their arms around me," said 14-year-old Gzime Idrizi of the comfort she feels visiting the American camp and spending time with the soldiers.

Gzime and 52 of her classmates, four teachers and their principal from Gjilan/Gnjilane's Selami Hallaci Elementary School visited Camp Monteith recently to visit with soldiers, see equipment up-close and to tour the camp. The 3-7th Infantry Regiment sponsors Selami Hallaci, Gjilan/Gnjilane's largest school with more than 3,000 students.

"I'm happy to be here and when I see the soldiers in Gjilan/Gnjilane they seem like family," Gzime said.

"As part of the Task Force Falcon school sponsorship program, we wanted to give the children of Gjilan/Gnjilane an opportunity to see what we do and what our daily life looks like," said Capt. Mark Paine, civil affairs officer for the 3-7th Infantry Regiment and one of the events organizers.

"Soldiers of Task Force Falcon would be amazed how curious the citizens of Gjilan/Gnjilane are as to what we do and what Camp Monteith looks like," Paine said. "In many cases, these children will go home and speak to a packed house of family and friends about their experiences at the camp."

As her fellow classmates climbed on the military equipment, 13-year-old Ganimete Hoti explained that she was very excited and happy that she came with her friends.

"The military equipment use to scare me, but now we know that the Americans and their equipment are here to protect us," Ganimete said.

The 3-7th Infantry Regiment Commander Lt. Col. Gregory Kammerer sat down with the group in a grassy area to get to know the students a little better. When Kammerer opened up the time for questions, he insisted the children tell him their name so he could repeat it back and practice the Albanian language. He talked of the importance of going to school and getting a good education. Yet, he reminded the kids of the importance of having fun too.

"When you go to school, I want you to remember to have fun," Kammerer told the attentive group. "When you go home at night, I want you to ask yourself if you had fun that day at school. If the answer is no, I want you to try harder the next day to have fun."

After a short tour of areas where soldiers spend their free time, the group went to the 3-7th Infantry Regiment's conference room to exchange gifts. Among several of the gifts offered to Kammerer and his soldiers was a framed piece of art presented by fourth grader Egzon Bairami with the inscription "Our condolences for victims of terror. God save America. God bless American people."

"The visit was wonderful," Paine said. "The children enjoyed meeting with our soldiers, learning about our equipment, and eating our ice cream."

Pfc. Sean Ambridge (right), D Battery, 1-3rd ADA, talks with 12-year-old Malaj, through an interpreter, about defense.

Rebel horses given to 11 Kosovo families

Story and photos by
Spc. Maria Jaramillo
358th MPAD

A Bondsteel detainee waited patiently as he was introduced to the crowd. A rope hung loosely around his neck and his designated paper number blew in the wind. Losing interest in the people patting his rear, he bent down and took another bite of grass.

Horses have been detained at Camp Bondsteel since late June after they were found being used as log-packs in resupplying rebel troops. They have grazed on Bondsteel grounds for the summer months, but the coming winter brought up the issue of finding them new homes.

"They were not going to be taken care as well as they would have if they had a barn to live in and a family to take care of them," said Maj. David O. Wishart, assistant chief of staff G-5 operations officer with Task Force Falcon.

Task Force Falcon Civil Affairs soldiers found a sure-fire way to get the horses packing and simultaneously benefit members of the community who have consistently cooperated with Kosovo Force's (KFOR) efforts in Kosovo.

The Kosovo people have a fundamentally agricultural community, and horses are used a great deal in farming. Civil Affairs held a raffle for citizens nominated by troops. Kosovo people from all over Multinational Brigade East were nominated.

"These people were nominated by the maneuver units because, not only did they need a horse, but they had been compliant with KFOR and had worked well with the maneuver units in the past," Wishart said.

The nominated citizens arrived at the raffle guaranteed to leave with a horse. Nineteen horses were rounded up and there were 11 citizens.

To ensure a fair raffle, each person first picked a letter of the alphabet from a hat. The first letter A would get first draw of the numbers. Whatever number they drew out would correspond with the number tied around the horse's neck.

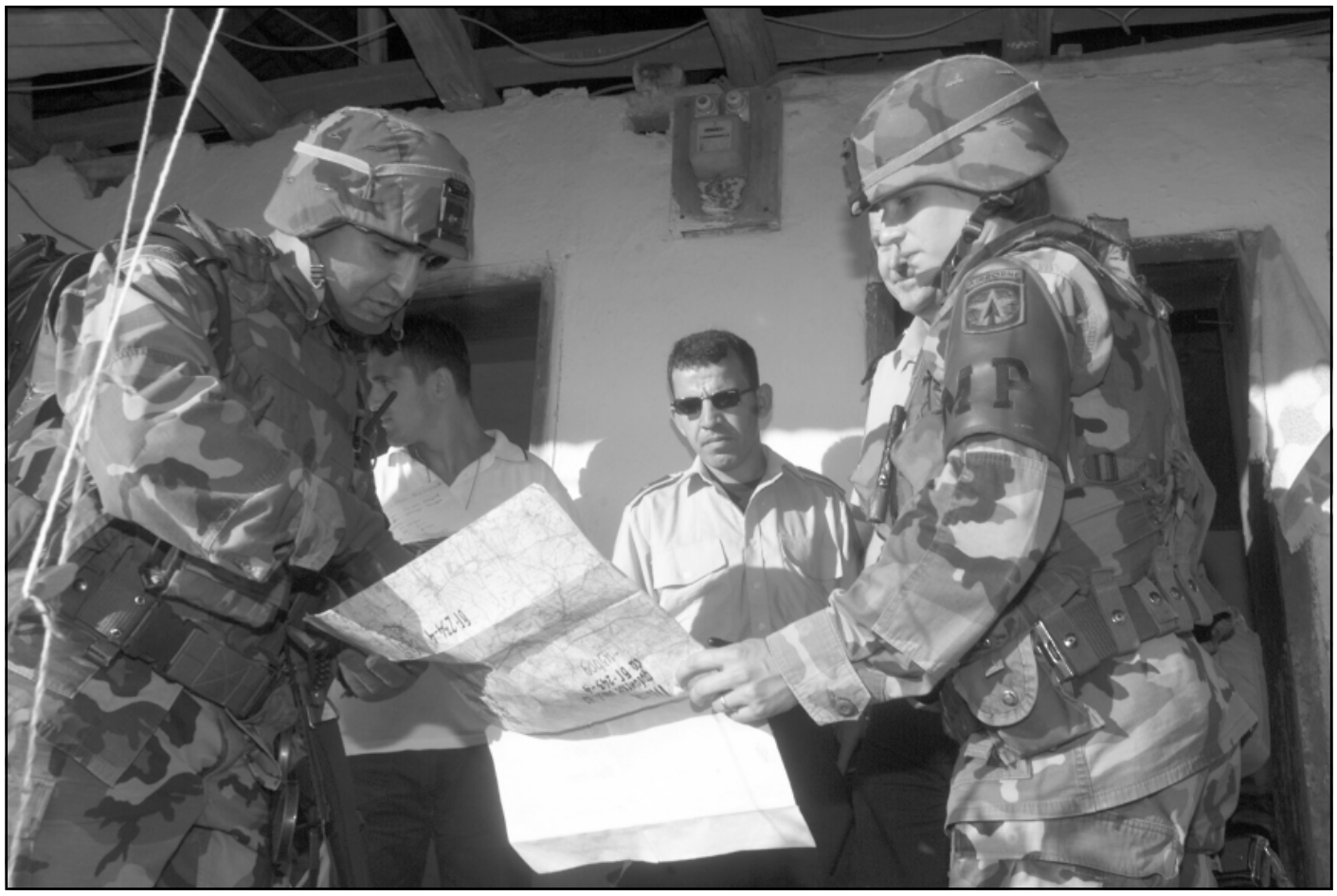
After each number was drawn and the new owners received pictures with their horse, the horse was packed off to their new home. Not all of the horses hit the road though. TFF cavalry soldiers kept three of their choice to stay behind.

"Those horses have turned into pets to the cavalry. The guys ride them and groom them and the guys love them," Wishart said.

If Task Force Falcon detains horses in the future, Civil Affairs plans on future raffles for Kosovo people.

A nominated civilian draws a number that will win him a horse. This raffle was a reward to the citizens that have consistently worked with KFOR, and also gave the horses homes.

Military police perform cordon & search



1st Lt. Elizabeth McNamara (21st Military Police Company) goes over a map with Command Sgt. Maj. Fred Lugo of the 2-502nd Infantry Regiment during a cordon and search of Debelde/Debulde.

Story and photo by
1st Lt. Whitney Jensen
21st MPs

Perhaps the sight of infantry and military police slapping each other on the back and smiling seems a foreign scene to you. Well, this is not the case for the soldiers of the 21st Military Police Company (ABN) and the 2-502nd Infantry Regiment.

Over the past few months, military police men and women from the 21st Military Police Company (ABN) have been working hand in hand with soldiers from the 2-502nd Infantry Regiment. Together these soldiers work towards the common goal of promoting a safe and secure environment in Kosovo. A variety of missions have been completed by these soldiers ranging from joint walking patrols to cordon and searches.

Currently there are three military police squads working in direct support for the 2-502nd Infantry Regiment. The flexibility and skills inherent to all military police soldiers have proven to be a valuable asset to the light infantry. Whereas many infantry patrols are confined to certain patrol areas or on foot, military police perform their duties as both mounted and dismounted patrols, allowing the infantry to employ them quickly and giving them the flexibility needed to react.

Military police soldiers are trained in a diverse number of METL tasks as well as the five military police functions: maneuver and mobility support operations, law and order operations, police intelligence operations, internment and resettlement operations, and area security. This coupled with their ability and experience of working with the local populace serves as an irreplaceable asset to both maneuver units and Task Force Falcon. But perhaps what makes military police so unique is their ability and training to complete diverse missions. For example, military police have the capacity to react to civil disturbances, patrols streets, conduct hasty attacks, and perform cordon and searches, just to name a few.

The 2-502nd Infantry Regiment, is not the only maneuver unit that has come to rely on Military Police support. 3-69th Armor Regiment has also employed military police in a variety of ways. They were used on Saint Illyad's Day to help patrol Cernica/Cernice and most recently in a cordon and search operation in which military police were used as the search element. Military police have been used for joint patrols and have provided the maneuver unit with the flexibility needed to ensure mission success.

The 21st Military Police Company (ABN) has participated in a several joint cordon missions with maneuver units. Most notably was last month's cordon and search of Donja Stubla/Stubell e Poshtem and Godon/Goden, where elements working for the 21st Military Police Company (ABN), acting as the search element, discovered a cache of 20 assault rifles and over 250 rounds of ammunition. This week, the 21st Military Police Company (ABN) was incorporated in a cordon and search of Ljubiste/Lupishte in which the company was assigned one of three objectives set up by the 2-502nd Infantry Regiment.

So next time you happen upon a scene, in which military police and infantry soldiers are standing side by side, don't adjust your eyes. What you are seeing is just a small example of how units from across the United States have come together for a common mission and successfully accomplished the mission together.

Charlie 3-502nd keeps watchful eye on CAS

Story and photos by
Spc. Marshall Thompson
358th MPAD

Some people would find it all too easy to lose concentration while standing in a guard tower for over eight hours, but despite the long hours, soldiers from C Company, 3-502nd Infantry Regiment keep an ever-vigilant eye on Camp Able Sentry.

The soldiers said they keep their concentration thanks to visits from their leaders, a good understanding of the current events in the area, and a strong sense of duty.

"I could see how it would be easy to get complacent, but we've really been on our toes. [Our leaders] come popping in and popping out. They expect us to know our special instructions and our general orders. The Company Commander really keeps us on our toes," said Spc. Jason M. Turcotte, a rifleman from C Company, 3-502nd Infantry Regiment.

Team leaders in the company have a large role to play in the day-to-day protection of Camp Able Sentry. 1st Lt. Kenrick Johnson, 3rd platoon leader in C Company, said the job of team leader is the hardest job here. He said officers can give orders, but it eventually comes down to the team leaders to make sure it all happens.

"I need to make sure that my guys are awake, prepped, and ready for guard," said Sgt. Charles R. Everhart Jr., a team leader from C Company, 3-502nd Infantry Regiment.

Another way for the soldiers to stay on their toes is by using their eyes. Sgt. Brian Lafond, a team leader with C Company, 3-502nd Infantry Regiment, said reading the paper daily is all that it takes for him to stay alert.

Along with reading the paper, the soldiers are briefed every day before they assume their duty on the possible threats and current events of the region.

"I like to know exactly why it is we're out here. Knowing really helps a lot," Turcotte said.

Above all else, the best way for soldiers

Continued on page 12

Sgt. Charles R. Everhart Jr., a team leader from C Company, 3-502nd Infantry Regiment, descends from his guard tower in CAS.

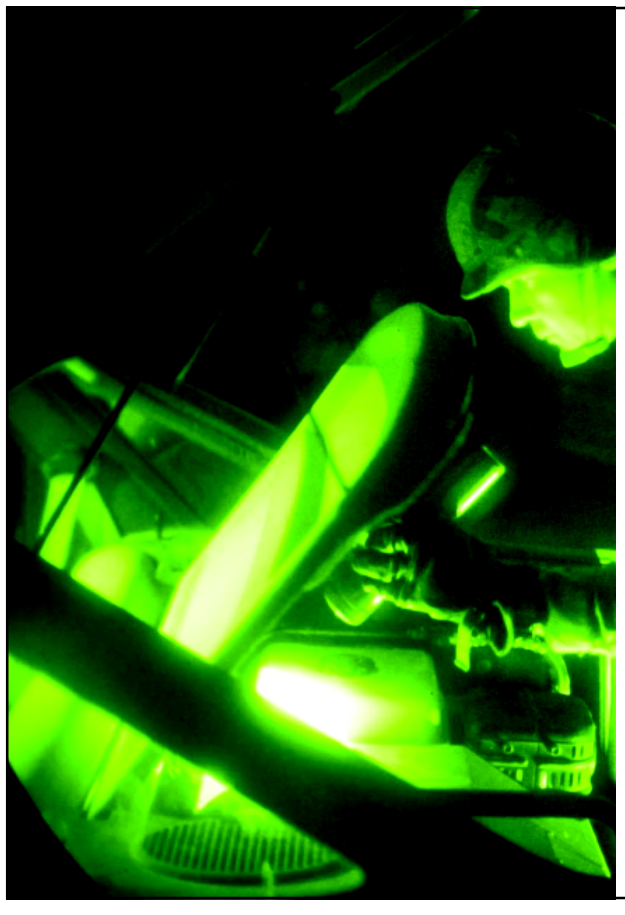
Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Martin J. Cervantez

A Task Force Falcon (TFF)soldier fires a German HK G-36 rifle from the standing posititon during a Schutzensnur range in Orahovac, Kosovo September 18, 2001. TFF soldiers are participating in a German Schutzenschnur weapons qualification during Operation Joint Guardian II.

Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Martin J. Cervantez

A German range cadre checks the target of a Task Force Falcon (TFF) soldier during a Schutzensnur range in Orahovac, Kosovo September 18, 2001.

Spc. Charles Jones discusses the day, with the Gree facility located in the South town sector of Camp B



Spc. Jeffrey Kung conducts a vehicle inspection at outside of Urosevac/Ferizaj, Kosovo on September 1 340th Military Police Company out of Queens, New Y man squad that routinely patrols the southern secto Brigade(East). The 340th Military Police Company is the peace keeping mission, Operation Joint Guardia

t Camera

Photo by Spc. Jessie L. Gray

y, with the Greek Military Police on, September 2, 2001. The 391st Military Police out of Fort Hayes, Ohio, work jointly with Greek soldiers at the detention ctor of Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo. The Soldiers are here in support of the Kosovo, peacekeeping mission, Operation Joint Guardian.

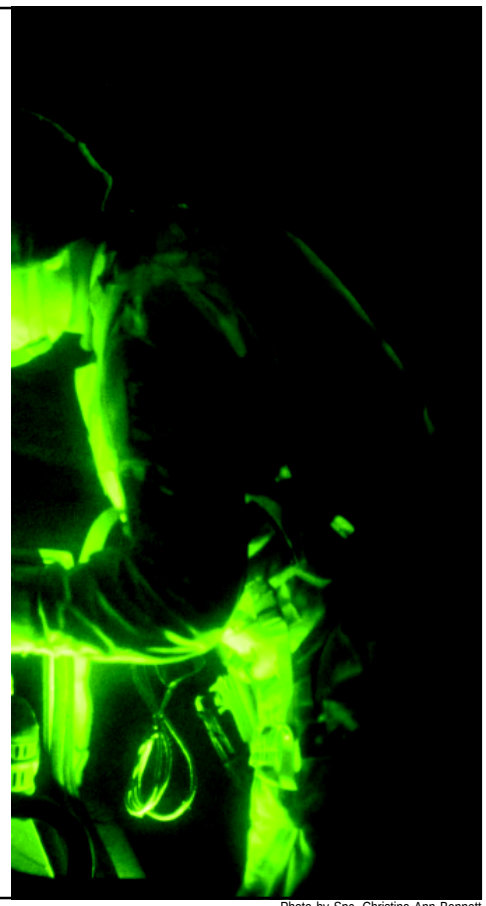


Photo by Spc. Christina Ann Bennett

e inspection at a routine check point on September 18, 2001. Kung is from the Queens, New York. He is a part of a six southern sector of Multi-National lice Company is in Kosovo in support of n Joint Guardian II.

Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Martin J. Cervantez

Spc. Naomi Adams fires the German MG-3 machine gun from the prone position during a Schutzensnur range in Orahovac, Kosovo September 18, 2001. Task Force Falcon soldiers are participating in a German Schutzenschnur weapons qualification during Operation Joint Guardian II.

When everything is broken - call on the LTF

Story and photos by
Maj. Norman Johnson
358th MPAD

The windshield in my HMMWV is broken, my bumper is cracked and needs to be welded, the radio doesn't work, the engine has a knock in it, I'm buried in mud up to my axles, and to top it all off, my turret mounted M249 machine gun has a problem.

Sometimes it sounds like the equipment problems you are having are insurmountable, but B Company, the 3rd Logistical Task Force's direct support unit, can repair it all.

"We have a one-stop shop for the Task Force," said Capt. Jeffrey O'Sadnick, B Company of the 3rd Logistical Task Force commander. "We weld, repair engines, fix two-way radios, perform service and recovery operations, replace windshields, repair small arms, fix night vision devices, and more."

O'Sadnick said that this is a daunting task for only one company of 190 soldiers to accomplish. But they do it and do it well.

"We have completed over 3, 500 jobs since we have been deployed to Kosovo," said O'Sadnick. "That's about 1,100 work orders completed per month."

"When you compare that to an average of only 350 jobs completed back at Fort Stewart on a good month, you can see that my soldiers are doing an outstanding job," continued O'Sadnick.

"I have deployed to Saudia Arabia in support of the 3rd Armor Division in Desert Shield and Desert Storm, three times to Kuwait, once to Bosnia and now in Kosovo," said Chief Warrant Officer William Riggs, the Armament Maintenance Technician for B Company of the 3rd Logistical Task Force. "We keep Task Force Falcon firing."

"I was nervous at first with deploying, now that I'm here, I'm glad I came," said Pfc. Kevin Graham. "I was able to see what the world is really like outside the U.S. People in the U.S. take things for granted. They don't have to worry about what they are going to eat."

"I can honestly say I like it [my job]," said Pfc. Leonard Wiggins, an Automated Logistics Specialist with B Company of the 3rd Logistical Task Force. "I love the people in the unit because we work as a team."

"I have a good team of soldiers," said Sgt. 1st Class Michael Dorsey, the Maintenance Support Team Chief responsible for all of 1-41st Field Artillery's equipment. "This is the best [team] I've ever had. They give 100% effort and make the job fun."

With the rotation more than half way over, there is still a lot to accomplish for this unit.

Spc. Derrick Lawson (left) and Sgt. Ronnell Dotson, both from B Company of the 3rd Logistical Task Force, repair an M114 uparmored HMMWV transmission.

"Our biggest challenge is at the end of the rotation," said Dorsey. "We want to hand over the equipment to the next rotation in the best shape we can."

1st Lt. Saul Decker, shop officer for B Company of the 3rd Logistical Task Force at Camp Monteith, said he will work hard right up until it's time to hand over the reigns to the 10th Mountain Division.

"We have a huge project to complete before the end of our rotation," said Decker. "We have to make sure all 44 M1A1 Abram tanks are fully mission capable before they can be turned over to the civilian contractors for the needed modifications that will increase the safe operation of the entire tank."

What ever it takes to get the job done, B Company says they will make it happen.

I'm extremely proud of my soldiers performance during this deployment," said O'Sadnick. "I could not have asked for a better bunch of soldiers."

Pfc. Kevin Graham, an Armament Technician with B Company of the 3rd Logistical Task Force, gages an M240B machine gun for proper head space.

You just can't keep a girl in the army

Story and photo by
Spc. Marshall Thompson
358th MPAD

She's a beautiful young female named Princess who is perfect in almost every way. However, despite her finer qualities, Spc. Casey Preston, a combat medic with 130th Rear Area Operations Command (RAOC), doesn't think he'll be able to keep the girl.

Princess and another young puppy were waiting in the cold when Pfc. Kate Lowell returned from eating to where she worked a night shift Sept. 17.

"They were so cute. They were just waiting there shivering," said Lowell, an intelligence analyst from 3-101st Airborne Division attached to the 311th Military Intelligence Battalion.

Lowell, has two dogs back home, a Labrador named Jet and a German Shepard named Shorty. She said that at first the puppies didn't want to be handled but soon they were falling asleep in the soldiers' arms.

"I've been missing my daughter and [the other soldiers] said, 'here, play with a puppy and you'll feel better,'" said Spc. Alison Pollard, an imagery analyst from A Company, 302nd Military Intelligence Battalion. "They thought my mom instincts would kick in."

Pollard, who has an eight-year-old black lab named Harely, said that the soldiers were soon able to get the puppies some water and boxes lined with an old bathrobe.

It was then that they received their first names. Oddly enough, Princess was originally referred to as Snake and her companion was named Eight Ball.

"Those were the first two things that came to mind," said Spc. Robert Proud, an intelligence analyst with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 5th Corps, who has two beagles at home named Jasmine and Snoopy.

Names or no names, the soldiers found out soon enough that they wouldn't be able to keep them on base.

"It is my understanding that dogs are not allowed," said Cpt. Troy Jones, installation coordinator with the 130th RAOC and owner of a Yorkshire terrier named Boo. "For one reason, there is no place to keep them. Then there is the possible health risk. You don't know what kind of inoculations they've had."

The soldiers remained undaunted. Lowell said they "hatched a plan" to give a dog as a present to their commander, Lt. Col. James Arnold, hoping that then they would be allowed to have the dogs around.

"I'd like to be able to keep it as a mascot. I've been at CAS for so long that a puppy being around wouldn't be to bad," Lowell said.

So Eight Ball was given to the commander and Snake was then adopted and renamed by Preston who is going to have two Rotweilers when he gets home.

"Our commander loves his dog like it was his own son and he had to leave it home," said Spc. Michael Arguello, a personnel administrator with the 130th RAOC. "So I know the commander would really love to have a dog. Unfortunately, the rules just didn't work out."

In the end the dogs will be found a good home with civilian employees that work at CAS or taken to the Human Society animal shelter in Skopje, Macedonia.

"If strays are found [soldiers] can call our office and we can call the person under contract to get them," Jones said.

Preston said, "It's alright just as long as somebody gets her that will take care of her."

Spc. Casey Preston plays with Princess, a stray dog found at Camp Able Sentry. Preston said he knows the dog can't stay there, he just hopes he can find her a good home.

Baseball heros travel to the Balkans

Story by
Sgt. John Edwards
358th MPAD

On a September day, when all the soldiers should have been playing softball like kids, they were glued to TV sets and radios awaiting word back on the home front. During the events that unfolded with the attack on the military and economic center of the U.S., two prominent retired Major League baseball players paid a visit to Camp Bondsteel.

Richard "Goose" Gossage and George Foster, the highlight of a round robin tour in Europe for U.S. soldiers stationed abroad, spent a couple of days here in Kosovo.

They signed autographs for soldiers, who momentarily drifted back into the eager age of 14, struck with awe and admiration, and posed for pictures free of charge.

"I better not see that baseball on eBay," said Foster jokingly after signing a baseball for a fan free of charge.

Camp Bondsteel's Commanding General, Brig. Gen. Bill David met with Gossage and Foster and gave them coins and lapels in appreciation for their visit. The group talked baseball and shared numerous experiences about the game.

"It's an honor to come over here and spend time with the U.S. troops, it's amazing to see how Bondsteel has changed just in the last couple years," said Gossage, referring to his last visit here two years ago.

Tables and a display were set up at both dining facilities, where droves of people lined up to meet the great Cincinnati Red, Foster, who during his career amassed 348 home runs. His greatest season was in 1977, when Foster won the MVP award, hit .320, had 52 home runs and had 149 RBI's. During the '77 season, he became only the seventh National League player to hit more than 50 home runs in a season. He tied a Major League record with three consecutive RBI championships (1976-78).

Foster was drafted in January 1968. He was the third pick for the San Francisco Giants and caught scout's eyes when he excelled in track, football, and baseball at El Camino College in California.

"Goose" Gossage compiled 310 saves during a career that lasted 22 years. He ranks 8th all-time on the saves list.

In 1976, Gossage was pulled out of the bullpen into the Chicago White Sox's pitching staff, due to a shortage of quality arms. He went 9 and 17, with a 3.95 ERA for that disappointing team.

"I don't think I pitched bad that year," said Gossage. "I think a huge factor was run support and poor defense."

Following that 1976 season, Gossage was traded to the Pittsburgh Pirates and rebounded nicely.

He won 11 games, had 26 saves and a 1.62 ERA. He struck out 151 batters in only 133 innings.

Gossage went on and inherited the closer's role for the New York Yankees, taking over for the legendary Sparky Lyle. He was an important cog in the Yanks playoff runs of the late '70's and early '80's.

Gossage intimidated hitters with his 100 mph fastball and fierce demeanor on the mound. When asked about the hitter that he had the most difficult time with, he responded, "I've faced a lot of great hitters, some of which were on their way out, like Aaron, Pinson, Mays, McCovey, but the purest hitter was George Brett, and man let me tell you we had some wars!"

Brett hit the famous three run home run off of him in 1980's American League Divisional Playoffs that propelled the Kansas City Royals into their first ever World Series.

Also it should be noted that Gossage was on the mound the day Brett hit the infamous "Pine Tar" home run. Brett and the rest of the Royals were celebrating the game winning home run only to have it contested by third baseman Craig Nettles. Upon Nettle's request, the umpires examined Brett's bat and ruled it "illegal" due to excessive amounts of the substance that helps bat grip, revoking the home run and giving the New York Yankees the victory.

"I have never seen a human being as mad as George was, he came running out of that dugout and we just quietly walked off the field." Gossage continued saying, "You know it took just about the whole team to restrain him from going nuts on the umpire!"

Later on, after they revoked the home run, it was overturned giving the Royals the victory and enabling Brett to keep the home run.

Their tour will take them on to Budapest, Hungary and later to various base camps around Bosnia.

Military Police Corps celebrate 60th anniversary

Story and photo by
1st Lt. Jon Hass
716th Military Police

On the evening of September 19, the soldiers of Task Force 716th Military Police celebrated the rich history of the United States Army Military Police Corps Regiment. This year's celebration marked the 60th anniversary of the Regiment. Although the festivities were somewhat different than those in the past due to our participation in Operation Joint Guardian in Kosovo, the soldiers of Task Force 716th Military Police still managed to celebrate in style.

In preparation for the event, one half of the Presidential Dining Facility at Camp Bondsteel was transformed from the normal every day "chow hall" into a dining room complete with white table clothes, posted colors, and cups of assorted nuts and event programs at each of the 320 seats.

The evening began with a moving invocation delivered by Chaplain Steven Cantrell. Prior to indulging in the special dinner that was prepared by the chefs of the Presidential Dining Facility, which included chicken cordon blue and roast beef, there were two ceremonial events that had to take place. First, the unit First Sergeants led the crowd in the traditional toasts (using non-alcoholic wine of course). Then, Lt. Col. Brice Gyurisko, the Task Force 716th Military Police Commander and Pfc. Christopher Hubbard from the 2/101st Military Police Company (Air Assault), the youngest Military Police soldier in Task Force 716th Military Police, conducted the cake cutting ceremony.

Once everyone had completed their dinner, the evening's entertainment began. First, the Task Force 716th Military Police Communications Section, led by the efforts of Pfc. Heath Bost, provided the audience with an entertaining look at the broad history of the Military Police Corps, followed by an invigorating slide show which depicted the soldiers of Task Force 716th Military Police in action throughout the Multinational Brigade East sector of Kosovo. This thoroughly entertaining piece put smiles on the faces of all of those who were in the room.

Brigadier General Bill David, the Commander of Task Force Falcon, was the guest speaker. He reminded all of the soldiers in his audience that they had made a commitment to the United States Army, and they had to be willing to not only pay the ultimate sacrifice for their country, but they had to be willing to kill in it's defense. David gave a memorable speech, which will remain in the memories of those who heard it for a long time to come.

The soldiers of Task Force 716th Military Police celebrate the 60th anniversary of United States Army Military Police Corps Regiment.

After the completion of the benediction and the singing of the Regimental and Army songs, the soldiers of Task Force 716 Military Police bid one another good night as they returned to their duties throughout their areas of responsibility. Although this year's celebration lacked spouses, music, and dancing, it still managed to provide a nice break from reality and it allowed all who attended to reflect on our past and those brave men and women who came before us.

Nurses from Task Force Med Falcon teach locals from the heart

Story by
Sgt. Annie Burrows
358th MPAD

At the Gnjilane/Gjilan Regional Hospital, a group of ten doctors and nurses dressed in neat lab coats and white uniforms, listened intently to the final class in a three part series on cardiac care. It was the instructor, armed with more than teaching aids and textbooks, that made this classroom unusual.

Capt. Sarah Davidson, a registered nurse from the United Kingdom, taught the course on cardiac rhythms as part of a teaching program Task Force Med Falcon (TFMF) initiated with the nursing staff of the hospital in Gnjilane/Gjilan.

The class must be taught through an interpreter, something Davidson said made the class more difficult because some of the humor she tries to add to keep the class interesting does not translate well.

"There's a dual benefit to this program, it allows us to practice our teaching skills and it lets us see what level their nursing is at," Davidson said.

Using strips of paper with cardiac rhythms printed on them as visual aids, Davidson discussed what medical conditions different rhythms could indicate.

"I enjoy teaching," Davidson said. "If they can learn one thing it's worth us coming down here. That one thing might mean the difference between a patient living or dying."

The teaching program, which has been going on for two months, was set up by Maj. Jean Barido, the officer in charge of the Intensive Care Unit at the hospital in Camp Bondsteel. She developed the program after evaluating the needs of the hospital. This was done after two sessions of touring the entire facility and speaking with the nursing staff of each section.

"We wanted to do this in a non-threatening way," Barido said.

They approached the Gnjilane/Gjilan Hospital with the idea in order to help its staff, as well as give the TFMF nursing staff the opportunity to practice teaching. Med Falcon's registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, as well as medics have had the chance to teach a variety of classes.

"This helps us maintain our skills because each person that has to teach has to prepare the class," said Barido. Researching the topics refreshes the skills of the instructor.

The topics of each class were based on areas the hospital's nursing staff said they wanted to work on. The cardiac series is the latest in a range of topics that have been covered including diabetes, burns, trauma, urology and blood disorders.

Arta Ismajli and Arjeta Aliu, two of the hospital's nurses attended Davidson's class.

It was Ismajli's first day on the job. She will work in the emergency room of the hospital for the next six months, after which she will work in other areas. She said the class was very helpful because she learned some new things as well as reviewed things she learned in school.

Aliu, who has been working in the hospital for a few months, said although all of the subject matter was very familiar, "it's beneficial when you hear something you have learned before and are able to improve on it."

Both nurses said they plan to attend future classes.

The teaching of the cardiac course was an international effort as well. The sessions were taught by two British nurses and an American nurse. A review class that will also include CPR instruction will be conducted during TFMF's next instructional visit to the hospital.

Barido said the cardiac course was as successful as it possibly could have been. Although attendance is sometimes low, the teaching program has been beneficial overall.

"This has given the nursing staff the opportunity to see that they can learn more," said Barido. "When you have a vision of what's available, it's easier to reach that goal and achieve it."

3-502nd Cont.

to combat complacency is a strong focus on the mission at hand and a feeling of responsibility for the people they serve.

Sgt. Rich Mervin described his mission simply; "We're here to provide security for Camp Able Sentry, making sure that nobody is doing anything they're not supposed to do."

"It would be easy to get complacent if we weren't paying attention," said Lafond. "We know what needs to be done and we get it done."

"It's a sense of pride," said Turcotte. "I see [other soldiers] walking around casually. They're like that because it's us in the tower making them feel that way."

With such a dedicated and alert group of soldiers working at Camp Able Senty, it's easy to agree with Everhart when he said, "I pity the fool that tries to attack Camp Abel Sentry. It would be a crazy thing to do with us here."

Chaplain's Corner

Don't forget to say these words to your wife: I love you

Story by Cpt. Byung Min
3-7th Infantry Regiment Chaplain

My number one question to soldiers in my unit is: "How is your family doing?"

One day, I had the chance to talk with one of my soldiers and I asked him, "What do you talk about when you call your family?"

He said, "Sir, I ask about my kids, and stuff about the house to make sure everything is all right."

I said "yes, that is good. What else do you say?"

He said, "I have a dog, I want to know she is ok. So I ask my wife, did you feed the dog?"

I said, "that is good. And what else?"

He said, "that's it Sir!"

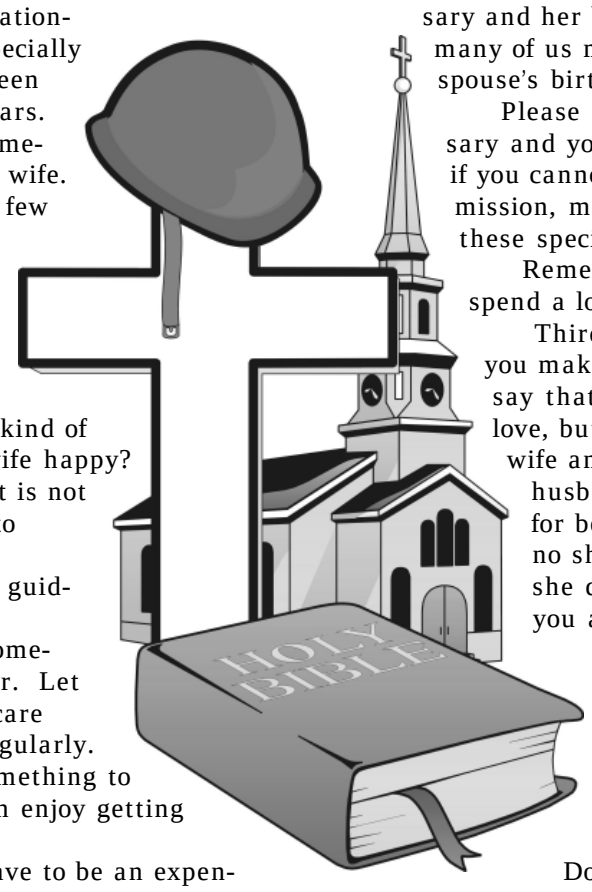
That was a pretty interesting conversation huh? But when it comes to nurturing healthy marital and parent relationships there is much more that we must cultivate.

I would like to give you some advice for your marriage.

The first and most critical area in which most men can show improvement is to love your wife and put her first above all other things. The Bible makes this very clear:

"Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her." Ephesians 5:25

To love your wife is not like the automatic transmission in your car. It is not just simply adding oil to a car occasionally or waiting until the car gives out then hoping that some mechanic can put it back together again (I am sure you are getting my analogy here). Marriage needs constant maintenance and it is a simple choice for you to do what is needed to maintain your relationships. This is especially true if you have been married over 5 years. You have to do something to love your wife. Let me give you a few guidelines to help you in this process:



Here is a simple test: Take a moment, and think about what kind of gift makes your wife happy? For most men that is not an easy question to answer.

Here is some guidance for you:

First, send something to each other. Let your wife send a care package to you regularly. Then you send something to your wife. Women enjoy getting unexpected gifts.

It does not have to be an expensive gift. You just need to express your love to your wife. You may send your current picture to your wife.

Remember send something to each other.

A loving relationship should not just flow one way but two ways.

Second, remember your wedding anniversary and her birthday. This is very basic. But many of us miss our anniversaries and our spouse's birthdays when we are deployed.

Please remember to keep your anniversary and your wife's birthday special. Even if you cannot hit the exact day because of a mission, make sure you commemorate these special days.

Remember, it is not necessary to spend a lot of money.

Third, say "I love you" every time you make a call. I know it is not hooah to say that particular four letter word—love, but you have to be gentle with your wife and family. Be a gentle and sweet husband. No one will make fun of you for being a great husband. There is no shame in treating your wife like she deserves to be treated, even if you are a hooah infantry soldier.

My previous commander (I will not use his name to save him from being embarrassed) was a great infantry commander, but he is also a gentle and loving to his wife and family.

Do not be ashamed to say "I love you" to your wife. You will never say the words "I love you" enough.

Remember, your wife is much more precious than your dog.

What does it mean to serve as an American Soldier

Story by
Spc. Scott Holdsworth
358th MPAD

I once questioned the need of the military and my purpose in the U.S. Army Reserve, but as I see the world today I can only say that I'm proud to be an American soldier.

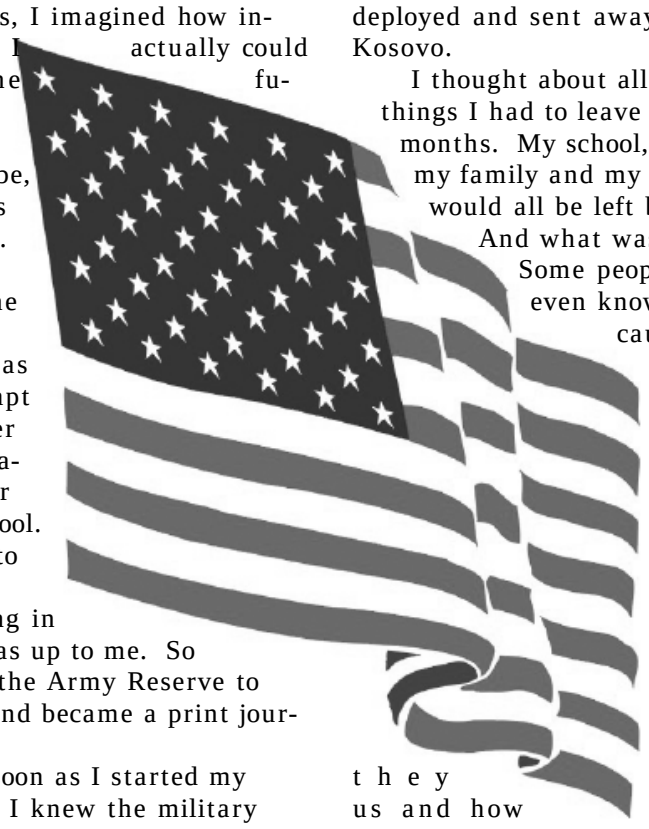
As I watched the images of the tragedy on Sept 11 on the news I became sick. I didn't want to watch, but I couldn't help but keep watching.

I imagined the people trapped and I wanted to help in some way, but realized that I couldn't do anything. A feeling of hopelessness came over me. All life stopped and nothing was important anymore.

A few days after the tragedy, I heard about the U.S. Color Day and realized again that I couldn't even do that. I didn't have a front yard to put a flag in and couldn't wear red, white and blue.

Then I realized something that I had never thought of before. My right shoulder bore a flag, an American flag. I was an American soldier serving our country, the country that had recently been attacked.

As I learned more about President Bush's plans to strike back and his activating of many reservists, I imagined how involved I actually could be in the future. I didn't want to be, but I was involved.



I joined the Army Reserve as an attempt to further my education after high school. If I was to become something in life, it was up to me. So I joined the Army Reserve to do this and became a print journalist.

As soon as I started my training, I knew the military wasn't for me, though I wasn't about to quit. In my mind I always imagined the end. I knew that it would come someday.

So I continued with my life doing the things I wanted with an occasional break one weekend a month and two weeks during the summer. I could handle this.

Then the unthinkable, that wasn't so impossible, came. I was deployed and sent away to Kosovo.

I thought about all the things I had to leave for six months. My school, my job, my family and my love would all be left behind.

And what was this for? Some people I didn't even know and a cause I didn't understand.

But as I served in Kosovo I came to love the people. I realized how much they needed us and how much good we did. The children always had smiles when we visited. They had seen this place before we were here. They saw the houses being destroyed and people getting killed. They understood what we did for them by being here. I realized that we were very important to them.

This last week I saw something that confirmed what I have learned. Thousands of Kosovo people gathered to pay tribute to the people lost in the tragedy. I saw them weeping, not for their own people, but for those who help them stay alive. They flew flags, burned candles, and gathered together to show their gratitude. Thanking America for not only the soldiers, but for the American people who have sent so many of their loved ones away to help the people of Kosovo.

I will return one day to America and I'll be able to see the end of this long journey. I will never regret joining the military, though sometimes I thought I would.

I see things in a different light. I see them as an American Soldier. And I like what I see. America has always been the land of the free, but it's more than that.

It's a land where you can have a dream and obtain it. It's a land where you can sleep in your home and know that you are safe. It's a land of smooth roads and green beautiful parks. It's a land of great education and endless opportunity. It's home.

Unit's home community give school supplies

Story and photo by
Spc. Scott Holdsworth
358th MPAD

The Support Platoon of 11th Engineer Battalion went to Nerodime e Eperme/Gornje Nerodimlje, a small town outside Ferizaj/Urosevac. Their purpose in their trip was to be the delivery group for a great service from the people back in the United States.

"We can't do this with out the people at home," said 1st Lt. Regan Campbell of the 11th Engineer Battalion.

The platoon wrote letters asking their families and friends to help the people in Kosovo by donating school supplies to the children.

The supplies were delivered to the Nerodime e Eperme/Gornje Nerodimlje elementary school. The bulk of the supplies, in approximately 400 boxes from the four-week span, were sent to Spc. Aaron Slater, 1st Lt. Regan Cambell, Capt. Jason Kelly, and Maj. Gerald O'Connor.

Communities who sent the bulk of the supplies were Oio City, PA; Marienville, PA; Muncy, PA; Flint, Michigan and the Baltimore District.

"It's going to take a big push by these people to really get the situation stabilized," said Bennett. "With their own people caring and other people caring, that's what it's going to take."

"We're just doing something for a few kids," said Staff Sgt. Isaac Bennett, noncommissioned officer in charge of ammunition, 11th Engineer Battalion, "but the word will get out and maybe then it will make a difference."

"We need to forget the past. It wasn't even three years since there was a war here," said Campbell.

"It took very little work. We wrote letters and the people sent the supplies. It had a big pay off compared to the little work it took," said Campbell.

"I want to thank KFOR in behalf of us at this school," said Shabani, "and wish you great success."

"This and other things they [KFOR] do for us is great for the future of all the kids," said Shabani.

The Support Platoon of 11th Engineer Battalion hand out clothes and school supplies to the children of Nerodime e Eperme/Gornje Nerodimlje, near Ferizaj/Urosevac.

Remember that day you dreamed of? Well, it's here!

Story by
Capt. Amanda Flint
C Det., 101st SSB

As redeployment approaches, there are several important items soldiers should consider to ensure their finances are in order.

To begin, there are deployment specific entitlements (hostile fire pay, foreign duty pay, etc). For active duty soldiers all deployment entitlements except Family Separation Allowance (FSA), if applicable, will be stopped by finance upon redeployment out of theater. FSA is stopped via travel settlement vouchers (DD Forms 1351-2). For Reserve and National Guard soldiers, all entitlements are stopped by the CONUS Replacement Center (CRC) during out-processing.

Speaking of travel vouchers, all active duty soldiers must submit a DD1351-2 upon return. Ft. Campbell soldiers will submit theirs to S1s who will drop them off at the appropriate office. After processing these vouchers, finance travel will pay soldiers their TCS per diem; $3.50 a day for every day in TCS status. As noted above, travel-servicing finance offices will also stop FSA. Soldiers will have assistance with travel vouchers. S1s and units will provide soldiers further guidance on when and where to submit their form. Finance will provide an example voucher to unit S1s. We advise unit S1s to collect travel vouchers and screen them for completeness upon arrival at home station.

For soldiers redeploying individually, finance will have enlargements and an example at the PAS site. For Reserve and National Guard soldiers, CRC will handle the completion and submission of the DD 1351-2.

Eagle Cash Card: All soldiers are encouraged to "spend out" the value on their Eagle Cash card prior to redeploying. Finance will give refunds at all camps within 7 days of departure for soldiers on a unit manifest in possession at finance. Soldiers are allowed to keep their Eagle Cash cards.

Foreign Currency Reconversions: Soldiers redeploying to CONUS can reconvert German Marks at all three camps and all soldiers can reconvert Macedonian Denars at CAS finance within seven days of redeployment with documentation.

Savings Deposit Program: Finance will provide S1s information about requesting withdrawals. Finance will also have a handout with instructions at finance customer service that any soldier can obtain. Contact numbers are 1-800-624-7368 or (216) 522-6545. The few soldiers that started allotments should complete a DD2558 through unit PACs *before* redeployment to stop the allotment. SDP as eligibility ends when the soldier is no longer entitled to HFP. To maximize interest, participants should (in advance) request the Army pay them their money on the 1st day of the last *complete* month that falls in the 90-day window after departure from theater.

For those who will lose leave at the end of fiscal year because of being in a use or lose leave status, see the article on special leave accrual.

Commanders, S1s, and individuals should closely review December LESs. If a soldier is still drawing Hostile Fire Pay the month following redeployment, Commanders should annotate that the entitlement should be stopped on the Unit Commander's Finance Report (UCFR). Upon redeployment from theater, finance will direct the system to deliver LESs and NPAs to each soldiers' previously assigned unit. If a soldier does not receive an LES after redeployment, PACs will request them at LES distro, and commanders should add the soldier on their UCFR. At FT Campbell, soldiers can use the LES machine in the PX to get a copy. Another option is to log onto E/MSS and view your LES on line!

E/MSS is a new service that allows active and reserve military members to take greater control over their own pay account with a click of the mouse. The LES sent via E/MSS virtually mirrors the hardcopy LES and E/MSS is able to display your current plus two prior LESs.

E/MSS is easy to use and can be accessed nearly 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. All you need is a Personal Identification Number (PIN). You can obtain a temporary PIN by following these steps:

Fax or mail the following information to DFAS. Clearly indicate on your request 'E/MSS PIN' and include:

- NAME
- SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER (SSN)
- COPY OF YOUR GOVERNMENT ID W/PHOTO
- DAYTIME PHONE NUMBER
- SIGNATURE

Finance will set your new temporary PIN to the last 5 numbers of your SSN. The fax number is (216) 522-5800 or DSN 580-5800. You may also mail the information to:

DFAS-CLEVELAND/PMCAA,
ATTENTION E/MSS
1240 EAST 9TH STREET
CLEVELAND, OH 44199.

Please wait two (2) business days before attempting to use the new temporary PIN (allow additional time if mailed). If you encounter any problems with the above procedures you can contact E/MSS customer service at 1-800-390-2348 from 0700 through 1930 EST, Monday through Friday for additional assistance.

You can access E/MSS using either of the following Internet addresses:

https://emss.dfas.mil or http://www.dfas.mil/emss

If you do not have access to the Internet, you can call the IVRS at: 1-877-DoD-EMSS (1-877-363-3677) or (912) 757-3119

For security reasons, it is requested that you do not use your cellular phone to access the IVRS.

If you have any questions about the information presented, please refer them to the Charlie Detachment, 101st Soldier Support Battalion (Forward) Customer Service section at your camp.

Leave Use Upon Redeployment Has Economic Implications

Story by
Maj. Kevin Kolozsy
101st SSB

While deployed in a combat zone such as Kosovo and Macedonia, soldiers earn combat zone (CZ) leave instead of normal leave. The law exempts CZ leave from taxation at the end of the calendar year; but only if soldiers used it *in a month* in which they *were not* in a combat zone. Because of this critical constraint, active duty soldiers must decide whether they want to delay taking leave upon redeployment to benefit from the tax exemption. Reserve soldiers do not have to make this decision because they must take leave upon demobilization.

If soldiers want to benefit from the CZ leave tax exemption (which exempts all *taxable pay* earned during CZ leave), they must ensure they do not take leave the same month they depart a combat zone. If they depart on 4 Nov and take leave in Nov, none of the leave they take will be tax exempt (i.e. they will forfeit the tax benefit). However, if they do not take leave until the month after redeployment, all their taxable pay earned during their CZ leave will be tax-exempt in the year in which they take it. For example, using the same departure date (4 Nov.), if soldiers take part of their CZ leave in November and the rest in December or another month, they will get the tax benefit from the remaining CZ leave in December or the tax year in which they take it. CZ leave is always subtracted from a soldiers leave balance first, ahead of normal leave. Because soldiers earn ½ day leave every 6-calendar days, soldiers earn 16 days CZ leave over a 196-day deployment.

Soldiers and families may view immediate leave necessary for proper integration after redeployment. Therefore, soldiers must decide whether the tax benefit is worth delaying leave. The attached table approximates the CZ leave's monetary value to soldiers. The table shows the tax benefit of 16 days CZ leave using 2001 base pay amounts and estimated federal tax brackets. It also assumes soldiers will not otherwise be tax exempt.

Some soldiers will already be tax-exempt because they will fall under the federal tax bracket "poverty" line (based on their family income situation, number of dependents, etc.) because all pay was tax-exempt for six months during deployment. In the case they are beneath the tax poverty line, they will not benefit monetarily from CZ leave unless they take it in the next calendar year. Soldiers also need to keep in mind the tax benefit could be greater than the table indicates. Many soldiers will benefit from state tax savings, as well.

Soldiers should realize they will not see the tax benefit until they file taxes. The Army adjusts the Gross Taxable Wages of soldiers who take CZ leave, at the end of the calendar year. The CZ leave tax exemption will show on the W2 form issued in February in the form of lower Gross Taxable Wages; the adjustment does not show up on the LES. Therefore, if soldiers choose to take their leave to benefit from the CZ leave tax exemption, their taxable wages reflected on their December LES should be higher than their taxable wages on their issued W2 form. And, ultimately, the benefit is realized when soldiers file their taxes to the federal government and home states.

According to the Task Force Falcon G1, Lt. Col Lever, soldiers will have opportunities to take block leave in November and December. This is an economic decision for active duty soldiers because the timing of their block leave affects whether they get the monetary value of CZ leave. But, the ultimate choice is personal and should be based on their preference after they consider all factors.

Taxable pay	Tax Bracket	Tax benefit
E1 (over 4mo)	$1,043 15%	$83
E2 (under 2)	$1,169 15%	$94
E3 (over 2)	$1,307 15%	$105
E4 (over 3)	$1,501 15%	$120
E5 (over 6)	$1,779 15%	$142
E6 (over 8)	$2,097 15%	$168
E7 (over 12)	$2,513 15%	$201
E8 (over 16)	$2,945 15%	$236
E9 (over 24)	$3,883 20%	$414
O1 (under 2)	$1,997 20%	$213
O2 (over 2)	$2,621 20%	$280
O3 (over 6)	$3,656 20%	$390
O4 (over 12)	$4,629 20%	$83
05 (over 16)	$5,482 20%	$0
O6 (over 26)	$7,310 25%	$0

Senior officers don't get CZ leave tax-exempted because law limits the total amount of combat zone tax exclusion (CZTE) commissioned officers can get, to $5043.60 per deployed month (including CZ leave). Officers that use all of their tax exemption in deployed months, have no remaining CZTE to apply to CZ leave when they use it.

What about all of the leave you've earned in Kosovo?

Story by
Maj. Kevin Kolozsy
101st SSB

Special Leave Accrual (SLA) is a program that assists soldiers who are unable to take leave because of operational requirements. Soldiers who were deployed to a contingency operation, such as Operation Joint Guardian, are eligible to carry forward leave that they would normally lose under the provisions of AR 600-8-10, Leaves and Passes. For the most part, finance systems automatically carry forward leave into SLA for soldiers in KFOR because they meet special conditions. Some soldiers need to request SLA through their chain of command. When approved, finance will return lost leave to soldiers' leave balances. The SLA program allows soldiers with approved SLA to carry forward up to 90 days of accrued leave into the next fiscal year; 60 normal days plus 30 days SLA. Any leave beyond 90 days is lost.

There are three different categories of SLA:

Category I applies to soldiers who served in an area in which he or she was entitled to hostile fire pay or imminent danger Pay for at least 120 continuous days.

Category II includes soldiers who were prevented from using leave due to operational requirements.

Category III applies to soldiers who deployed for a lengthy period, normally 60 or more days; to meet a contingency operation of the United States; to enforce national policy, an international agreement based on a national emergency, or defend national security; and were prevented from using leave through the end of the FY because of deployment. Most soldiers in Kosovo and Macedonia on rotation KFOR3A, fall in category I.

The Army finance system automatically carries forward leave for soldiers who fall in Category I. Of the approximately 480 KFOR soldiers who were in a use/lose leave status at the end of the fiscal year, finance carried forward SLA for 98% of them; leaving approximately 10 soldiers who will need special approval because they did not complete 120 continuous days. According to MilPer Message 99-247, categories II and III are routed to and approved at the MACOM level. Finance provided example memorandums to Unit S1s in September with EOM LESs.

Soldiers deployed to an area qualifying for HFP or IDP have up to three fiscal years to use the SLA. However, this does not necessarily mean soldiers will maintain a 30 day SLA leave balance over the next three fiscal years. That is because the Army charges leave with the **LAST-IN-FIRST-OUT (LIFO)** method. As soldiers take leave, the most recently-earned leave (including SLA leave), will be used prior to any other leave in a soldier's leave balance. If a soldier with 20 days of special leave accrual at EOM October (i.e. 80 total: 60 normal, and 20 SLA), takes 20 days in November, that soldier will use all their SLA immediately and still have to take an additional 30 days of normal leave to avoid losing leave at the end of the fiscal year. See attached table to see how SLA will look on your Oct LES given 20 days use/lose in Sep.

The general rule to remember is that taking leave early in the fiscal year will use up SLA (because SLA is accrued in October), and waiting to take leave until later in the year will use ordinary leave accrued throughout the year. Soldiers must plan to use all of the 30 days of ordinary leave that will accrue throughout the year, in addition to any SLA leave used. Again, the timing is critical to make the system work the way in which it is intended. **The recommended way to manage SLA leave is to set up a spreadsheet and calculate leave balances month by month until the SLA is used up or the end of the third fiscal year. Soldiers would subtract leave days from either the normal or SLA balance (depending on which was most recently earned) every time leave is taken and add leave days when earned.**

SLA Example: soldier is in Use/lose status as of 30 September with 20.0 days use or lose (plus 60 days normal) .

LES leave blocks will look like this:

Month	BF Bal	Ernd	Used	New Bal	ETS Bal	Lost	LvPd	Use/lose
OCT	60	2.5	.0	82.5	.0	0.0	.0	50.

B Company of the 2-502nd Infantry Regiment guard the crossroads

Story and photos by
Maj. Norm Johnson
358th MPAD

1st Lt. Michael Schneider, platoon leader from B Company of the 2-502nd Infantry Regiment, stood at the top of a hill pointing south over the heavily vegetated and rugged terrain to where smoke rose from a draw and said, "That's the location where more than 300 NLA were detained this last month." Press from most of the major television and radio stations in Kosovo crowded around Schneider with cameras, microphones and tape recorders pressed close to his face to here the details of the events that have taken place recently.

Holding area at Zegra/Zheger Base Camp, used for holding border crossers until they can be transported to Camp Bondsteel.

"Since the Macedonian government and the NLA have reached a peace agreement, we have seen an increased number of NLA crossing the border illegally in our sector," said Schneider. "Most are returning without weapons. They have UCK identification on them; a little money, about 50 to 100 Duetch Marks per person; and a weapons turn-in document that they received from the UCK."

"There are two problems occurring here," said Maj. Norman Johnson, Task Force Falcon public affairs commander. "First, we do not recognize this document as legitimate nor as an amnesty paper and second, they are coming across the border illegally. Therefore, they are being detained."

Even though they are being detained, 1st Lt. Andre Rivier, 3rd platoon leader with B Company of the 2-502nd Infantry Regiment, explains that they are being treated with dignity and respect.

"We bring them to our processing station here at Stancic/Stanqiq where we make an accurate inventory of all items that they have with them, then we give them food, water and medical treatment if they need it," said Rivier. "We also allow them to build a fire to keep warm since the evenings have been very cold lately.

Once the detainees are processed at the shelter that also serves as the schoolhouse for the Stancic/Stanqiq children, they are then transported by military vehicle to the Zegra/Zheger base camp where they have their picture taken and await transportation to Camp Bondsteel.

"At Zegra, we have a tent set up for them. We give them blankets to stay warm and more food and water if they need it," said Schneider.

"Since most of the detainees cross the border in only short sleeve shirts, we are working with civil affairs to see if they can get some warm long sleeved shirts for them," added Rivier.

A soldier from B Company of the 2-502nd Infantry Regiment keeps a vigil watch over the Kosovo/Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia border.

The largest influx has been mostly males and some females, but no children.

Detaining people who cross the border illegally can be dangerous at times. Recently, Schneider's platoon encountered rifle fire from unknown individuals that had crossed the border illegally.

"This last week while one of my squads was on patrol they heard someone call out 'NATO, NATO, help.' They [the soldiers] prepared to render assistance when they were shot at," said Schneider. "My soldiers returned fire and the individuals fled back across the border."

Schneider said they were very fortunate that no one was injured in this incident.

"All the training that we have received has helped us to keep ourselves safe," said Schneider.

A Bradley keeps watch over heavily vegetated and rugged terrain overlooking the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia/Kosovo Border.