TASK FORCE FALCON

Falcon Flier

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Photo by PAO Staff Sgt. James Johnson

All give some, but some give all. Spc. James T. Sakofsky, a Military Policeman assigned to the 551 Military Police Company from Fort Campbell, Ky., will be remembered and honored by a greatful nation. He is survived by his wife Spc.Wendy Sakofsky who is also a member of KFOR.

TFF pays tribute to a great soldier

Story by
Spc. Travis Bascom
Camp Monteith PAO

An emotional "Final Roll Call" began for third squad, third platoon.

"Staff Sergeant Grilliot?"

"Here first sergeant!"

"Specialist Wallace?"

"Here first sergeant!"

"Private First Class Sowards?"

"Here first sergeant!"

"Specialist Sakofsky?..... Specialist.Sakofsky?..... Specialist James T. Sakofsky?....."

"Specialist.James T. Sakofsky is no longer with us," a strong voice proclaimed. A solemn silence fell throughout the room as the realization filled every heart.

A memorial service was held June 4, at Camp Monteith for Sakofsky, age 24, 551st Military Police Company, 716th Military Police Battalion, who died June 1, after his military vehicle overturned in Kosovo.

The service opened with two beautiful songs; "The Dance," by Garth Brooks and an old hymnal, "He Touched Me." Cpt. John Lyburger, Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 716th MP Bn sang both songs.

As the music filled the air and touched the hearts at the gathering, a video played in the background of his casket draped in the American flag.

The chorus "I could have missed the pain, but I'd of had to miss the dance," brought memories of the good times soldiers had spent with Sakofsky.

Even before the invocation was offered, tears of sadness were flowing from fellow soldiers and friends.

Lt. Col. Brice Gyurisko and Cpt. John D. Tucker with the 551st MP Co., 716th MP Bn., gave command tributes.

Gyurisko spoke of the vast improvement in military etiquette, positive attitude and willingness to work by Sakofsky in the past months.

"Blessed are the peacemakers for they will be called sons of God," quoted Gyurisko. "Specialist Sakofsky was both a peacekeeper and a peacemaker." Gyurisko also reflected on the soldier's primary mission in Kosovo, "to

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Instructions to be a success

Story by
Brig. Gen. William C. David
Task Force Falcon Commander

Several years ago – when I was a battalion commander – we conducted a "best platoon" military stakes competition. It was a tough event, designed along the lines of the "Best Ranger" competition. At the end of the competition, everyone was battered, bruised, tired, and sore – but extremely proud for having finished.

As I was making the award presentations, I asked the platoon leader of the winning team what motivated him to push through the wall of pain to keep going. His response was simple. "Sir," he said, "you've just got to be relentless." Later, I gave a lot of thought to those simple words. The lieutenant was right.

To be successful in just about any human endeavor, I believe you have to be relentless – whether as an individual or as a team. The Miriam-Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary defines relentless as: showing or promising no abatement of severity, intensity, strength or pace. Said another way, in the words of the great inventor Thomas Edison, "Success is one percent inspiration and ninety nine percent perspiration."

We've been given a tough mission here in Kosovo. And six months can be a long time. Regardless of your rank, MOS, duty position, or place of duty, the conditions we face – as well as our own capacities – will present numerous challenges. The best thing any of us can do to overcome these obstacles and accomplish the missions we've been given is to "Be Relentless."

Some might think that being relentless means being inflexible or unnecessarily harsh. Not so. It simply means to never give up. Keep trying. Don't quit. It means that you keep your legs pumping – knees high – so you are ready to execute a spin move after the first hit and gain an extra three yards. It means putting your hand out to that soldier next to you – the one who may be in trouble or in danger of falling behind, even if it requires some extra effort on your part – so that the team can finish as one. It means being physically and mentally tough – not mean-hearted or mean-spirited.

In my first column, I outlined four goals for this task force: accomplish the mission; leave this place better than you found it; take care of and protect each other; and, establish personal goals for physical, mental, and spiritual improvement. I'll still present a CG's coin to any soldier who can name these four goals. So far, I've only been taken for three.

To accomplish these goals – in an environment that can be harsh and unforgiving – you have to focus your mind, heart and body on the task in front of you each day. The temptation to slack off, check the box, or go through the motions gets greater as time goes on – particularly when no one of a higher rank is looking. To accomplish the four goals I laid out, you have to overcome these temptations. This means doing things the right way – every day. Like that lieutenant, you have to "Be Relentless." Trust me and take it on faith that this is true.

It Is The Soldier

It is the Soldier,
not the reporter who has given us freedom of press
It is the Soldier,
not the poet who has given us freedom of speech
It is the Soldier,
not the campus organizer who gives us freedom to demonstrate
It is the Soldier who salutes the flag,
who serves beneath the flag,
and whose coffin is draped by the flag,
who allows the protester to burn the flag.

Father Dennis Edward O'Brien

Visualize accomplishing your goal, and celebrate your victory

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

I love football. One of the most exciting things to me is the celebration in the end zone after the touchdown. The thing about it is that those celebrations aren't spontaneous. They were rehearsed. The player visualized himself scoring way before the game.

That's what I want you to do. Visualize how you will accomplish your goal. How do you do this? Glad you asked.

As I travel around I'm finding that soldiers don't have tangible goals. Here are five areas to focus on.

Have a measurable goal for physical fitness, military, academic, financial, and cultural improvement. Tell your battle buddy and your leader about your goal so that he or she can coach you toward success. At the end of six months you can celebrate your success with the team like Emmett Smith in the end zone.

When I see you in the field, I'm going to ask you about your plan.

You should be able to tell me how many points you want to improve on the APFT. You can measure improvement by the number of repetitions you want to increase or how many seconds you want to cut on your run time.

As for military improvement, you should be able to say what you've done to get promoted. Tell me about how you plan to compete for soldier of the month (or quarter). And don't forget competing for membership in the Sergeant Audie Murphy club. Your goal has to be tangible.

Educational improvement can be measured by improvement of GT scores. The opportunity to take courses for college credits are ample. What is it you want to achieve?

It's not enough to say that you want to save money here. How much money do you plan to save? How many bills will you wipe out? Visualize financial improvement.

The other area that you need to think about is cultural improvement. Learn some of the local languages. Use your interpreters as a resource. Come away from this experience better than you were before.

A soldier I recently spoke to in the 551st MP Company, SPC Farmer had clear goals. I am proud of his vision. And I'm confident he'll achieve his goal because he has the support of his sergeant.

What about you?

BE RELENTLESS with your personal improvement. Have a goal and do the dance when you score.

Falcon Flier

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Like father like son, even in the Army

Story and photo by
Spc. Engels Tejeda
Camp Monteith PAO

The phrase "like father, like son" takes a military spin as the Robinsons, not only serve our Army in the same era, but also in the same mission.

Staff Sgt. Demetrius D. Robinson, supply sergeant with C Company of the 311th Military Intelligence Battalion, joined the Army reserves in 1980. For the next ten years, he expanded his military career as a reservist out of Chicago, Ill., serving as a scout and a drill sergeant.

In 1990 he "wanted to leave Chicago, and still have a stable job;" so he went active duty. Based out of Fort Lewis, Wash., he served in Panama as a supply sergeant for three and a half years.

Like most service members, Demetrius' sense of duty forced him to be away from his family. Traveling wherever needed, he had little communication with his son Michael, who was attending school in Chicago and living with his mother, Chantel.

"It was kind of hard to communicate with him," said Michael. "He would contact me; letting me know where he was, and he sent me birth day cards once every other year," he added jokingly.

Michael was born in 1981 in Chicago. In the spring of 1999, Michael was preparing to graduate high school. Faced with several options, he was thinking about joining the Air Force. Then, on January 4, 2000, he made a life changing decision and joined the Army.

Michael said he joined "because I would be traveling, getting paid to learn my job, and it was something that I wanted to do since I was little."

He joined as a signal support systems specialist, and was stationed at Fort Stewart, Ga. At the time, Michael and Demetrius had developed a more systematic mode of communication, speaking on the phone more often, and "checking up on each other." Then, just about four months ago, while Demetrius was stationed at Fort Campbell, Ky., he received orders to Kosovo.

Demetrius called Michael, and while telling him about his up-coming deployment, was both "exited and surprised" to hear what his son had to say.

"I called him one weekend, and I was telling him about our mission in Kovoso," reflects Demetrius. "Then he said something like, 'Guess what D, I'm going to Kosovo too."

According to Demetrius, he was planning to have a good deployment since the very beginning. Even today he considers this deployment "the best I've had since I came in the Army." But like many times before, he would miss his family again.

"It was a rather enjoyable moment," said Demetrius of that particular phone conversation. "I knew this would be a good rotation, but the one thing I was going to miss was my family. So to add a family member to the rotation makes it almost perfect," he said.

Staff Sgt. Demitrius D. Robinson and Pfc. Michael D. Robinson, his son, spend a day together at Camp Bondsteel. Michael is based out of Camp Monteith. The two said they are lucky to have one another serving in the same mission.

Michael is currently serving with D Battery, 1-3 Air Defense Artillery out of Camp Monteith, while Demetrius is at Camp Bondsteel.

Asked what he refers to his father as, and Michael says, "when we are in uniform, I call him sergeant. It is kind of hard sometimes because we are talking about things and I have to respect his rank too," he laughed. "But I usually call him 'D'," he added.

Michael said he wants to go to college and maybe become a computer programmer. He is taking advantage of the education program at Camp Monteith and said he is thinking about becoming an officer or a warrant officer.

Demetrius said that he would support Michael in whatever he decides to do. "If he decides to stay in the military, I would like to see him 'tracking,' and by that I mean progressing in rank in a normal, or faster than normal way," said Demetrius.

As for father's day, the two plan to do the activity they enjoy most: play video games. Demetrius said he "beat Michael last time we played by 29 points." Michael, however, said that one of the controls was not working, that is, his, of course. Demetrius replies, "the thing is both of the controls were new." The fact is that when playing against a former drill sergeant, especially when he is your father, "there is no excuse!"

The United States Army looks ahead to new transformation

Story by
Spc. Marshall Thompson
Camp Bondsteel PAO

The Army prepares for it's 226th birthday on June 14 like a 20-year-old waiting for his 21st birthday and the accompanying power and responsibility associated with that age. The future brings change and new requirements. This celebration is a time to reflect on what we have accomplished recently and in the past, but mostly to look forward transitions that lie ahead.

226 years ago, the continental army was formed. They were not professional soldiers. They were farmers and merchants who never intended to fight a war. But when the time came they gave themselves whole-heartedly to an almost impossible battle. The brave sacrifice of these men made it possible for the United States of America to declare itself independent. A Republic of its own with liberty and justice for all.

126 years later, the Army faced a monumental period of transition. Elihu Root, the Secretary of War (1899-1904), recognized the need for some fundamental changes. America had just finished up the Spanish-American War. We'd learned some hard lessons and it was time to adapt to a new wartime environment.

Root changed the Army in three different ways that concern the modern Army, according to a paper written by James L. Yarrison.

He changed the way schooling was done and established the Army War College to train experienced officers.

Root made major changes in the state militia by renaming it the National Guard and the Reserve Militia and allowing them to serve federal as well as state needs.

Finally, Root changed the way that the chain of command worked. He formed the General's Staff. He made the Commanding General of the Army the Chief of Staff and gave him more power over the military.

In an equally important transformation over 100 years later, Gen. Eric K. Shinseki, Commanding General of the Army and Chief of Staff, now seeks to transform the Army once again, and it's not just the berets he's talking about. In a letter dated April 12, 2001, Shinseki and Acting Secretary of the Army Joseph W. Westphal wrote:

"Our Army is transforming to an Objective Force that will meet the challenges of the 21st Century. This new Force will be as lethal and survivable as our heavy forces, but also as responsive and deployable as our light forces. Our transformation will thus ensure that the Army remains the best fighting force in the world –unchallenged and unparalleled."

Former Secretary of the Army Louis Caldera said, "The great lesson of the twentieth century is that the United Sates must stay engaged in world affairs. The U.S. has a vital leadership role to play in the world – not just because our economic interests are at stake, but because the world looks to us for that leadership. They see that our ideals and our form of government – democracy – promote equality, protect human and civil rights, and offer the promise of a better life for all."

With this new responsibility to fight injustice worldwide, it is necessary for the Army to transition to a new fighting force.

Shinseki said, "The spectrum of likely operations describes a need for land forces in joint, combined and multinational formations for a variety of missions extending from humanitarian assistance to disaster relief to peacekeeping and peacemaking to major theater wars, including conflicts involving potential use of weapons of mass destruction."

In order to make the transition the Army has set some high goals that, with hard work and dedication, can and will be accomplished.

According to a publication by the Army Public Affairs Office, "to meet operational requirements, the Army must move to a lighter, more strategically mobile force, one capable of deploying a brigade of 5,000 soldiers by C-130 aircraft to a contingency area in 96 hours. On arrival, that brigade will be fully prepared to conduct it's mission.

"We must also have a trained and ready force that can deploy a division of 16,000 soldiers anywhere in the world in 120 hours, and five divisions in 30 days. Our current equipment and force structure will not allow us to meet those standards."

This transformation will not happen

See History page 14

MEDCAP attracts people of Kosovo from miles around

Story and photo by
Engels Tejeda
Camp Monteith PAO

Deep within the mountains of Kosovo, in the small rural-town of Mucibaba, a medical platoon provides care for people who continue to battle the remnants of war.

In an effort to bring more than peace to Kosovo, KFOR initiated the Medical Civic Action Program. The program, better known as MEDCAP, allows medical units to visit rural towns and provide basic medical care.

"We go out there and treat basic medical illnesses: rashes, fevers, colds... small infections," said 1st Lt. Christopher Carlson, medical platoon leader with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Battalion, 7th Infantry Regiment from Fort Stewart, Ga.

Children, teenagers, adults and elders from the Macibaba area trek to an isolated schoolhouse in search of medical care from Carlson's platoon.

Patients complete information collection forms then proceed to screening tables where medical specialists Spc. Eric James, Pfc. Dionisio Hyman and Pvt. Marinn Killen, check the patient's blood pressure and temperature.

"We basically in process them here. If any of them have a high fever we put them in front of the line," said James.

From the tables in the hall, the locals make another line to see one of two physician assistants on site; where they are consulted and given any necessary and available medication.

"The majority of the (problems) they come with are: gastrointestinal problems like heartburn; ear infections in kids, and arthritis in older patients," said Capt. Anthony Bunch, physician assistant attached to the platoon. "We can only treat (short term) illnesses."

For Bunch, this is his 40th MEDCAP. He has been in Kosovo for approximately six months, a time during which he believes he has done everything possible to help these people.

"Chronic diseases like hypertension are very common here," said Bunch. "We don't have the capability to help people with (such diseases) because they require frequent visits to a doctor. So I try to educate them as much as I can, and convince them that they need to go to a clinic because of the implications that these things can cause."

Capt. Anthony Brunch (far left), physician assistant with the 2/6 IN examines a local child.

Education is what the medical platoon feels the population needs. With few clinics in the whole region, a habitat filled with land mines, and a struggling economy shadowed by years of war, preventive education is a subject that lacks both, teachers and students.

"You see a lot of 13, 14, and 15-year-old kids smoking," said Bunch. "I think they need education. 'An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure,'" he added.

Fitneta Rexhepi brought her two daughters, Emita and Kaltrima, and praised the efforts of the physicians. Emita is only eight years old. Her tonsils are getting infected and she may need an operation. Luckily, she came early enough to be diagnosed.

Although 1st Lt. Darren Hightower, physician assistant with HHC, is unable to fix the problem, he strongly suggests that Emita be taken to a nearby clinic. In the meantime, he provides the Rexhepis with medicine for heartburn, a problem common to the whole family.

At the end of the day, the platoon has seen over 25 patients. Members of the platoon know they did not completely solve the medical problems these people have. The soldiers also know that they "put a band aid on an ongoing wound." Yet they believe the MEDCAPS are not only good for the citizens, but also crucial for Kosovo's future.

"We act as a bridge from no medical care at all, to hopefully a local clinic," said Hightower.

Falcon's force

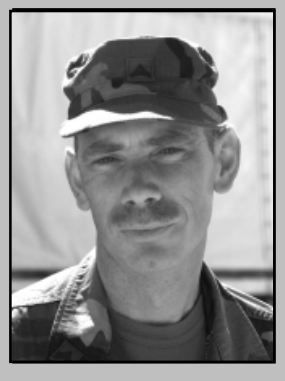
How do you feel about fathers?

Spc. Terrence Williams, 101st Soldiers Support Batalion

"My father is a great man –ex military-. I joined the army following his footsteps."

Spc. Charles Enoch, Headquarters Headquarters Company 3-7 IN

"I think my father is a very, very special person. I love him dearly, and I just hope he is in the best of health right about now."



Cpl. John Feller Military policeman 340th Military Police

"Fathers help guide their children and help them grow up. I like to call my daughter and help her out with her homework."

Sgt. Leslie Crews, squad leader with HHC 3-69 Ar

"My father is the greatest man in the world."

Pfc. Gabriel Padilla Mechanic 3rd Logistics Task Force

"I miss my father. I haven't seen him for a while and would be nice to spend some time with him. It's definitely worth calling him and telling him Happy Father's Day."

Spc. John Romeo Assistant NCO S4 2/502nd Infantry Regiment

"[As a father] I wish I could be home with my kids, but I think I'm setting a good example for them being here."

OPTCAP helps the people of Kosovo see the world a little differently

Story and photo by
Spc. Marshall Thompson
Camp Bondsteel PAO

Eight-year-old Mimoza Hajrullahu sits on her mother's lap while Cpt. Greg Hutcheson, an optomotrist with the 47th Force Support Battalion, examens her eyes during a misson to distibute donated eye glasses to children badly in need of help.

A young girl shyly enters a dilapidated room in a school in Farizaj/Urosavec and takes a seat. In the dim light she is asked to read a line from an optical chart. She stammers, hesitates and gives up.

Cpt. Scott P. Blomberg, a young red-haired optometrist with the 3rd Logistical Task Force, invites the girl, with the help of an interpreter, to move from her seat in front of the eye chart and sit in an eye examination chair. After the examination, he relays the prescription to Spc. Crystal N. Himes, an optical laboratory specialist with the 3rd LTF. She searches through a wall of boxes for the correct pair of donated glasses.

As the young girl sits quietly Himes finds the correct pair of eyewear and places them delicately on the girl's face. The glasses are not the cutting edge of fashion. They look more appropriate for a grandma with a blue-tinted beehive than for an eight-year-old girl. But they work. She is again asked to read from the chart, but now it's a much smaller line. She doesn't hesitate this time. She only smiles as she reads the letters one by one, loud and clear.

She is congratulated and walks proudly out of the room into the hall packed with people waiting for the same miracle.

On hand to observe the process is Cpt. Greg Hutcheson, an optometrist with the 47th Force Support Battalion. Hutcheson is on his way home and is ensuring that the project he started is passed on to the next rotation.

Hutcheson said this last rotation was the first time an OPTCAP (Optometric Civilian Assistance Program) had been done.

"We've worked really hard to get this program going," Hutcheson said. "We've seen a little over 900 people and the new optometry crew is going to continue the program."

Hutcheson, realizing that "humanitarian aid was part of the mission", wanted to do something for the people of Kosovo so he started collecting donated glasses. He started out with only 400 to 500 glasses.

"We've now collected somewhere between six to eight thousand pairs of glasses," Hutcheson said.

He said they've been donated mainly from the states of Indiana, Nebraska, and Kansas, as well as the Lion's Club, Indiana University and military installations around the world.

Hutcheson said that he wouldn't have been able to launch the project without the invaluable help of Sgt. Jeffery D. Freeman and Sgt. Kenneth McClendon, both optometry specialists with the 123rd Main Support Battalion.

"I absolutely love kids, and being away from my son, this makes it a bit easier," McClendon said. "Half of these kids would never get the chance to see an optometrist. Even if they saw an optometrist, they wouldn't be able to get glasses. It feels good to give them something that they wouldn't be able to get otherwise."

"Sometimes kids that are poor students aren't really poor students. It's just that they can't see what they need to be learning, and obviously, if they can't see they can't learn. If they can't learn they can't develop the skills they need and they won't have much of a future," Hutcheson said.

The OPTCAPs also help older people with reading glasses as well as prescription glasses.

When you see 60 or 70-year-old people that haven't seen for years, and you give them glasses, that's an incredible feeling. They really appreciate it," McClendon said.

The whole operation takes a lot of time and energy from all who are involved.

"I've never seen so many kids swarm me for my services before. It was a tiring day, but it was worthwhile," Blomberg said.

A lot of the work is done before the mission starts in sorting and cataloging the donated glasses. Hutcheson said they use a machine to determine the prescription of the glasses then they enter them in a database. Once they determine what the patient needs, they look for a match in the large supply of donated glasses.

"We help them in two fold. We provide them with eye care and we try to get them a pair of glasses. We've achieved somewhere between a 90 and a 95 percent success rate in distributing glasses," Hutcheson said.

Despite the hard work and all the planning involved in the project everyone seems to really enjoy what they're doing.

"This is one of those missions that, as a soldier, really makes you feel like you're making a difference. I'm glad to be a part of it," Blomberg said.

Hutcheson said, "Their reaction to being able to see for the first time is just incredible. Their eyes light up and their face kind of glows. It's the most rewarding thing I've ever done – personally or professionally. I'm very glad that I have the ability to help them. It's really great that the Army and the chain of command let us come out here and do this."

Himes said that it feels good to do something for people that they couldn't have done for themselves. "I'm actually helping out," she said.

After a long day of helping out, the OPTCAP had to leave. Everyone packed up and said goodbye to the children. A list was taken of the people who still wanted eye care for the next time the OPTCAP would come to their school.

"The feeling I have right now is the feeling of being overwhelmed," Blomberg said. "When we left, there were probably as many kids still wanting to be seen as we saw, if not more. You feel at some point that you're scooping out of the ocean with a cup. Even though there are so many kids that we couldn't see today, the ones we did see we did make a difference for."

Tribute cont...

provide a safe and secure environment."

Tucker spoke of the impact Sakofsky had on him.

"He was always energetic. I was proud to be his company commander," Tucker said. "You love to lead soldiers like that."

Staff Sgt. Vern Grilliot and Spc. Trevor Wallace also with the 551st MP Co. gave memorial tributes. Both spoke about their respect and friendship for Sakofsky.

"He always kept his chin up," said Grilliot. "His non-stop motivation and heart are something I've never seen before in any other soldier."

Chaplain Cpt. Steven Cantrell, who comforted troops with words of faith and understanding, gave memorial meditation.

After the ceremony concluded, those close to Sakofsky, not wishing to leave, gathered together to hear words of encouragement from Col. Anthony Tata, Commander of Multinational Brigade West.

"Today is 90 percent grief — 100 percent mission," Tata said. He also made sure the soldiers were aware of support organizations that are available for their help.

Brig. Gen. William C. David, commander of Task Force Falcon, who also attended the ceremony, said, "This is a very painful reminder how dangerous this place can be."

His wife, Spc. Wendy Sakofsky, HHD, 716th MP Bn., was also a member of Task Force Falcon and was in Kosovo at the time of her husband's death. She returned to the United States for the funeral of her husband.

Sakofsky is survived by his wife and his parents, James and Carol Sakofsky of North Brunswick, New Jersey.

Photo by Sgt Brandy Gilliam

America Honors 'Greatest Generation'

By Jim Garamone American Forces Press Service
NEW ORLEANS, June 7, 2000

Photo by Jim Garamone

Defense Secretary William S. Cohen told World War II veterans and their families that the men and women in the U.S. armed forces who inherited their role in defending America thank them and salute them. Behind Cohen at the June 6 museum opening is NBC anchorman Tom Brokaw, Museum founder Stephen Ambrose, film director Steven Spielberg and New Orleans Mayor Mark Morial.

NEW ORLEANS, June 7, 2000 — In 1938, the man who would be its commander in chief, President Franklin D. Roosevelt, said the generation coming of age had "a rendezvous with destiny."

That destiny was to save the world for democracy during World War II. And the celebration of the opening of the National D-Day Museum here June 6 was a chance for younger Americans to thank their parents and grandparents.

"We are the heirs of your sacrifices," said Defense Secretary William S. Cohen during the opening ceremony. "We are citizens of the world that you made, and we can only stand in awe of your courage, at your sense of duty and the other sacred gift that you have offered to all people. To you belongs the honor of this day."

In his speech at the opening of the museum, Cohen quoted Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr. A Union lieutenant in the Civil War, Holmes still sat on the court when the men of World War II were youngsters.

Holmes noted that his comrades from the Civil War were getting older and that each year there were fewer of them. "Only one thing has not changed. As I look into your eyes, I feel the great trial of your youth has made you different," the jurist said.

It has been 55 years since the end of World War II, and these men and women can sympathize with Holmes' observation.

"I think all of us bear the marks to this day of our experiences on D-Day," said Roy Boyter, a 29th Infantry Division soldier who landed with the second wave at Omaha Beach in Normandy, France. "Seeing friends die — men who we had lived with for up to three years — will affect you."

A 1st Infantry Division veteran listening to Boyter took up the story. "The way your friends were killed added to the shock of

seeing them dead," said Gib Blaylock. "This wasn't some movie death scene where the villain just grabs his heart and slumps over. People were being blown apart. In some cases you recognized pieces of your buddies.

"Someone told me that a combat soldier is a realist. After the first exposure to sudden death you understand it can happen to you and it's just God's will or luck that it wasn't."

Thousands of those realists were in New Orleans for the opening of the museum and to commemorate those who died in battle. Many men took their World War II uniforms out of storage and wore them during the events June 6. "I'm not any fatter," said a veteran Army first sergeant. "But somehow I'm shorter."

"Yeah, you won't die, you'll just shrink out of sight," said a fellow vet.

That humor was also in evidence and must have sustained the men in 1944. Boyter was talking to another 29th Infantry Division vet about the battle for St. Lo. "I made it to St. Lo a week before the regiment did," he teased. "I was captured by the Germans and sent through there." What Boyter neglects to say is that he was shot through both legs and the Germans, when they retreated, left him to be cared by Allied doctors.

Other men carried the 48-star flags they had carried during World War II. The flags are faded now. "Sort of like us, I suppose," said a D-Day pilot. "But we'll hammer this flag to the top of the flag staff and still fight for it, I guess."

The military parade to honor these veterans was billed as the largest in 40 years. The line ran two miles through the streets of the city and passed in front of the museum. Veterans in Army trucks waved to the thousands of people lining the route. Bands and marching units from today's military and French and British troops also honored the veterans by their presence.

The veterans seemed proud and pleased at the response of the people of the city. In a truck carrying veterans of the 4th Infantry Division that landed on Utah Beach June 6, 1944, tears streamed down the craggy face of one veteran. But he was still smiling and he was still waving to the crowd.

Marine veterans of severe fighting in the Pacific Theater of World War II were buoyed along the route by the "Ooh-Rah's" of current and former Marines. In the bed of one Army truck, a former Marine carried a captured Japanese flag and waved it at the crowd.

Today's service members also benefited from meeting the veterans and hearing their stories. One Medal of Honor recipient seemed to have a joint service conference around him as soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines hung on his every word.

He was peppered by questions from the curious service members, and they wouldn't let him go until they had their pictures taken with him.

"They are a lot like we were," he said to his wife as he walked away. "Too young for the type of work we ask them to do."

Some of the veterans used the opportunity to learn more about today's military.

"What do you mean you're in the reserves and your unit is deploying to Kuwait?" asked one Georgia veteran. The Louisiana Army Reservist assured the vet that was the case. Members of the 29th Infantry Division Association — "The 29ers" — were proud their National Guard unit was sending battalions to Bosnia.

The museum is more than just a house of artifacts. Part of its attraction is the stories of the veterans. Interspersed among the exhibits are videos of the men and women and their recollections of America, military life, life on the home front and combat.

The pictures these videos show are of young men and women, but the voices are old and sometimes it is difficult to reconcile the difference.

The World War II generation grew up enduring the hardships of the national calamity called the Great Depression and then fought in the most destructive war in history. Newsman Tom Brokaw calls those men and women now entering, or in, their 80s "The Greatest Generation" in his best-selling book.

At the end of film director Steven Spielberg's masterwork on the Normandy invasion, "Saving Private Ryan," the character played by Tom Hanks is dying.

He looks at Private Ryan and says, "Earn this." Spielberg himself alluded to this during his speech at the grand celebration. He said the generations that followed the World War II generation had to work "to earn their respect."

Cohen stressed that today's military is working to earn the respect of their predecessors. "Those who have inherited the mantle of defense, the men and women of today's armed forces ... carry on your noble work, deserving what you have created, defending the victory you achieved and honoring the ideals for which you struggled," he said. "On behalf of all the soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines and Coast Guardsmen who came after you, we say 'Thank you.'"

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Letter: Straight talk on beret, Army transformation

Story by
Sgt. Maj. of the Army Jack L. Tilley
WASHINGTON (Army News Service, June 11, 2001)

— In recent months, it has become increasingly apparent that opinions on the beret are nearly as numerous as the myths and misconceptions surrounding both the beret's history and our reasons for switching to it.

I've made it a point to talk about the beret with nearly every group of soldiers I've spoken with in my travels. Typically, I've asked for a show of hands from people who think the black beret is a bad idea. As a rule, about 20-30 percent of the soldiers raise their hands.

Then, nearly every group has shared some good-natured laughs with me as we take a look at what soldiers really know about the topic.

"What kind of units wore the black beret from 1973-1979," I begin asking the soldiers who raised their hands.

"What was the first unit in the Army authorized to wear black berets?"

"True or false — Rangers wore berets in World War II?"

"True or false — Soldiers graduating from Ranger School are awarded a Ranger tab and a black beret?"

"What is the only course in the Army where soldiers are awarded berets upon graduation?"

"How many years has the Army talked about putting every soldier in a black beret?"

Beginning as early as 1924, armor units in the British Army began wearing black berets for a few very simple reasons. For one thing, the color hid the grease spots tankers often left on their hats when putting them on and taking them off as they worked on their vehicles. Also, the beret allowed tank crewmen to comfortably wear radio headsets and push their faces against the tank's telescopic sights.

Although historians say a few Ranger units unofficially wore black berets during the early 1950s and again during the Vietnam War, the Center of Military History can find no photos or documentation indicating World War II Rangers were ever authorized to wear berets of any color.

The headgear did not become an official part of the Ranger uniform for another 25 years. In 1975, the Army authorized two newly formed ranger battalions to wear black berets — one year after both armor and cavalry units around the Army began wearing black berets.

The Opposing Force units at the National Training Center, Joint Readiness Training Center and Combat Maneuver Training Center have worn black berets for years. Further, armor and cavalry units throughout the Army were authorized black berets from 1973-1979.

A few months back, one old cavalryman even told me that when Chief of Staff Gen. Bernard Rogers decided in 1979 that only special operations and airborne units would be authorized berets, tankers in his unit objected to the decision and burned "their" black berets in protest.

It is also interesting to note how many soldiers believe that Ranger and Airborne School graduates receive either black or maroon berets upon completing their respective courses. Very few soldiers realize that Special Forces Qualification Course graduates are the only troops in the Army awarded a beret and tab when they complete their school.

Thus far in talking to literally thousands of soldiers about the black beret, only one person— a sergeant at Fort Gordon, Ga. — knew that the Army's leadership had considered transitioning the entire force to black berets for more than a dozen years. Each time, the decision was deferred because of other priorities.

This is an example of the U.S. Army Flash displaying the rank of captain. The Flash will be on all of the new black berets with 13 stars representing the 13 orignial colonies.

During his first year as chief of staff, Gen. Eric Shinseki concentrated on building up momentum for our ongoing transformation. Only in his second year as chief did he decide the time was right to wear black berets.

At the end of my beret quiz, I ask soldiers to tell me what they know about the Army and our ongoing transformation. I'm proud to say most of us have a working understanding of the Army transformation.

As I explain it, Gen. Shinseki's intent with transformation is to prepare the Army for the diverse missions our country is now asking us to perform.

Prior to Desert Storm, Saddam Hussein overran Kuwait in a matter of days and stopped his forces at the border just north of oil-rich eastern Saudi Arabia. Mysteriously, he then sat and watched for six months as we reinforced our rapid deploying airborne units. In the end, the mass of our assembled combat power allowed us to achieve a quick, decisive victory.

For the foreseeable future, there will remain in the world a number of countries and leaders who will think it wise to challenge the United States, our interests and our allies.

Nobody will ever know for certain why Saddam stopped when he had our forces outgunned and outnumbered. Far more certain is the fact that the next dictator to challenge us won't repeat Saddam's mistakes. When future foes mobilize their forces, they will likely move quickly while hoping they can achieve their objectives before we can deploy our forces.

To be ready for that kind of showdown and to better prepare us for missions like those in Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia and Kosovo, Gen. Shinseki is transforming the Army into a force that's more agile, deployable and lethal.

It may be something of oversimplification, but in the end transformation will result in heavy units that are more deployable and agile and light units that are more lethal and survivable. The result will be warfighting formations that can deploy about as fast as today's light units but pack a lot more firepower and mobility.

So, as we move toward that goal, I ask groups to name the one uniform item that could logically symbolize that transformation — one item that has, over the years, been associated with both heavy armor units as well as the best light infantry unit in the world — the black beret.

Change is never easy, and I understand that. It's especially difficult in an organization as large and grounded in history and tradition as the Army. But, I also understand that we must change if we are to be ready for the challenges that await us in this new century.

For the most part, our military has done a poor job of envisioning and preparing for the next war. Typically, we have trained and equipped our military based on what was true in the last war while failing to see the coming of a different conflict that was often less than a decade or two away.

These mistakes have been costly — they have been paid for in the lives of our soldiers as we have often lost early battles in a number of wars. It is a testament to the greatness of our country and our military that we learned quickly in these conflicts and adjusted our equipment, training and tactics and achieved victory.

But, it makes sense to me to begin changing with the world and design formations that are better suited for future conflicts. Not only could this make the difference in these yet-to-be battles, but it might let us avoid them entirely as future enemies gauge our capabilities and decide their best course of action is to avoid a fight with us at all costs.

The last question I typically ask soldiers is, "how many of you have ever celebrated the Army's birthday?" Sadly, I would tell you that maybe 25 percent of them indicate that they have.

That, I tell them, is about to change. In the future, we're going to take pride in the Army's heritage to the point that if there's two soldiers in a fighting position on June 14, I expect them to put a match in a piece of MRE pound cake, blow it out and then sing "Happy Birthday" to the Army.

In recent years, the Army has been the silent member of the Defense Department as we have quietly gone about doing our nation's business without calling a lot of attention to ourselves and our accomplishments. There's something to be said for modesty, but we deserve to flex occasionally and tell people who we are, where we've been and where we're going.

I would hope that these thoughts would add a bit to soldiers' understanding of both the Army's transformation and the change to the black beret.

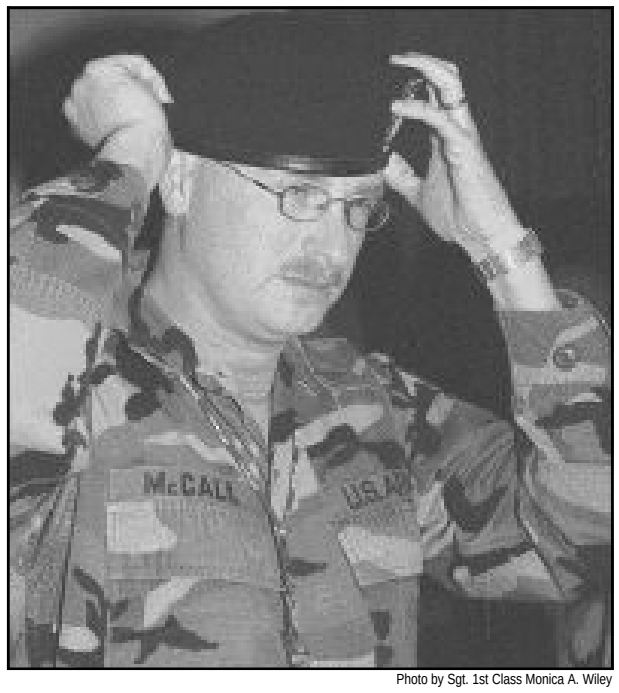

Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Monica A. Wiley

A volunteer tries on a beret at a non-commisioned officer training day held at the Pentagon Jan. 23. The beret has a long tradition that is not often well known even among the members of the military. Sgt. Maj. of the Army Tilley reminds us why the change is taking place.

EOD Shakes up Camp Bondsteel making Kosovo safe and secure

Story by
Sgt. Gary Peterson
Photos by
Pfc. Ryan Poland
Camp Bondsteel PAO

It was a quiet Sunday evening, and the South Town chapel was filled with reverence. Everyone had their heads bowed in respect as the group leader finished giving his opening prayer. As the prayer ended, suddenly everyone gasped. The room began to shake. Was it an earthquake, a bomb, or even a sign from above?

No, it's just EOD making Kosovo a safe and secure environment for everyone.

"Basically, we render safe, hazardous explosive devices that may be found in the sector," said Staff Sgt. Jason Locey, a team leader for the 789th EOD (explosive ordinance disposal) unit.

Locey and his team work to dispose of weapons and munitions surrendered by the UCPMB to KFOR and others that were found in the sector.

To dispose of the weapons and munitions, the EOD teams dig holes that are three feet deep, four feet long, and two feet wide to stack the weapons in.

"The holes help to contain the fragments and the blast wave," said Sgt. 1st Class James L. Donovan, Operations NCO for the 789th EOD.

According to Donovan, once all of the weapons and munitions are placed in the hole, either C-4 or Flex-X (a sheet explosive) is place on top to set off the explosion. These explosives are then wired to an electric blasting cap and XM receivers for remote detonation.

Thirty minutes later and three decrees of "Fire in the Hole" makes Kosovo a more safe and secure environment then it was before.

"What we are doing now is demilitarizing them (weapons and munitions) by detonating them," said Locey. "Now these weapons won't have a chance to kill a KFOR soldier or a Kosovo citizen."

Locey estimates that they had eliminated somewhere in the neighborhood of 10,000 pounds of munitions in just one week alone.

Top Left: Soldiers of the 789th EOD (explosive ordinance disposal) unit dig a hole to place the weapons and munitions in. The hole helps to contain the blast and fragments.

Top Right: Staff Sgt. Jason Locey, a team leader for the 789th EOD, is handed munitions to stack and prepare for detonation.

Bottom Photo Sequence: The 200 lb explosion is takes less then two seconds from first photo to the last.

American and Italian soldiers build a bridge to link nations

American and Italian soldiers prepare materials to build a training bridge.

Story and photos by
Spc. Maria Jaramillo
Camp Bondsteel PAO

Peacekeepers training with American soldiers built more than just a bridge that can be seen but a link that will help nations work together.

Army engineers trained Italian Kosovo Force soldiers on how to build a bridge 200-feet long and with 14-feet of driving space in three days. For some of the Americans this was the first time they had worked with another nation's military.

"I had never worked with another army before, and I think we learned more about their culture and they learned a bit more about us too," said Spc. Jerald L. Briggs, a combat engineer with C company 11th Engineer Battalion out of Fort Stewart, GA.

One of the lessons learned involved creative communication between the engineers as they worked together. While two interpreters were available on site, everyone used more than just language to get ideas across.

"We couldn't always communicate by talking with them. I don't speak Italian and they speak little English, but we would use hand signals. There are just some things everyone understands," Briggs said.

Safety was one of the universal concepts on site. Hard hats weren't the only precaution taken. As steel planks moved overhead and heavy machine were in constant motion, the soldiers kept an eye out for everyone's safety.

"If anyone witnessed an unsafe act, they called it out because it was everyone's safety," Briggs said.

This experience left a positive impression on both the Italian and American soldiers. Both sides expressed a willingness to work with each other in the future.

"I would like to work with the Italians again. They are hard workers and I learned a lot," Briggs said.

AFN Radio

AFN Radio can be heard on 88.0 FM.
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9 a.m.-11 a.m.
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Saturdays:
Balkans Saturday Show
8 a.m.-10 a.m.
Solid Gold Show
10 a.m.-12 p.m.
Request lines are open at 762-5556

Wanted

The Falcon Flier wants your stories -- award ceremonies, events, activities, or human interest news. All units from Camps Bondsteel, Able Sentry and Monteith are invited to submit information for publication. While we may not be able to run every story because of space limitations, we would like to hear from you.
Please feel free to contact the Task Force Falcon Public Affairs Office with your ideas, news and comments at:
(DSN) 781-5200

or e-mail at:
Gary.Peterson@bondsteel2.areur.army.mil.

Safety

Prevent non-battle injuries:

Enforce safety standards to prevent accidents to complete a successfull mision

Story by
Master Sgt. Sally Gardner
TFF Safety NCO

Has your vehicle recently been stopped by a soldier who says, "Good afternoon. Did you know that USAREUR Pam 385-15 and XVIII Airborne Corps and Fort Bragg Reg 385-4 requires that exterior radio antennas will be tied down to a height of not more than 13 feet and at least 8 feet from the ground before movement? Is everyone in this vehicle who has seatbelts wearing them? Has the soldier in the gunner's hatch adjusted the sling to sit at name tape defilade? Do you conduct rollover drills before each mission?"

If you answered yes to these questions, you probably received key chains, pens, computer mouse pads or lanyards for your KFOR badge. More importantly, you have a better chance of going home safe and sound at the end of your rotation.

According to current statistics, there have been no soldiers killed by hostile fire in Kosovo; however, there have been **five** killed in accidents. The Battle and Non-Battle Casualties chart clearly shows that accidents are the number one killer of our armed forces.

IAW XVIII Airborne Corps and Fort Bragg Reg 385-4, the senior occupant of any motor vehicle is the person in the vehicle (operator or passenger) with the highest rank. Senior occupants will: ensure vehicle occupants wear available seatbelts while the vehicle is moving, ensure the authorized seating capacity of a vehicle is not exceeded, adhere to antenna tiedown requirements, and ensure vehicle wheel chock blocks are placed to the front and rear of vehicle's rear tires when the vehicle is parked uphill or downhill.

Safety is everyone's business. Establishing and enforcing safety standards set the climate for successful mission accomplishment and accident prevention.

Medical

Three preventive steps to avoid six weeks on profile

Story and photo by William J. Stanton, M.D. Staff Orthopedic Surgeon,TFMF

Overuse injuries are a common occurrence among athletes. Despite the fact that military members are not necessarily playing specific sports, the activities performed during daily duties many times closely resemble sports participation. Therefore, in order to "conserve the fighting strength", it's important to avoid injuries of all types, including overuse injuries.

Overuse injuries can be defined as a repetitive micro-injury to tendons or ligaments about the joints due to the application of stress and/or strain, which over time outpaces the strength of the tendon. It's like an elastic band that's stretched over and over again until the elastic stretches out and loses its shape. The body then starts to repair itself and heal the injured tendon. The initial phase of the healing process is the inflammatory phase. If the injured structure gets stuck in the inflammatory phase due to continued re-injury then excessive pain results. The most common overuse injury is patellar tendonitis.

Patellar tendonitis is an overuse injury of the patellar tendon as it courses from the bottom of the kneecap (patella) to its connection on the leg. Patients usually complain of pain at the bottom edge of the kneecap and the top of the patellar tendon, that part of the leg right below the kneecap. The pain is usually worse with long slow runs, going up or down hills, long periods of time spent with the knee bent, etc. The pain is usually worse at the start of these activities, improves after a short period during the activity, and then worsens with cooling down after an activity.

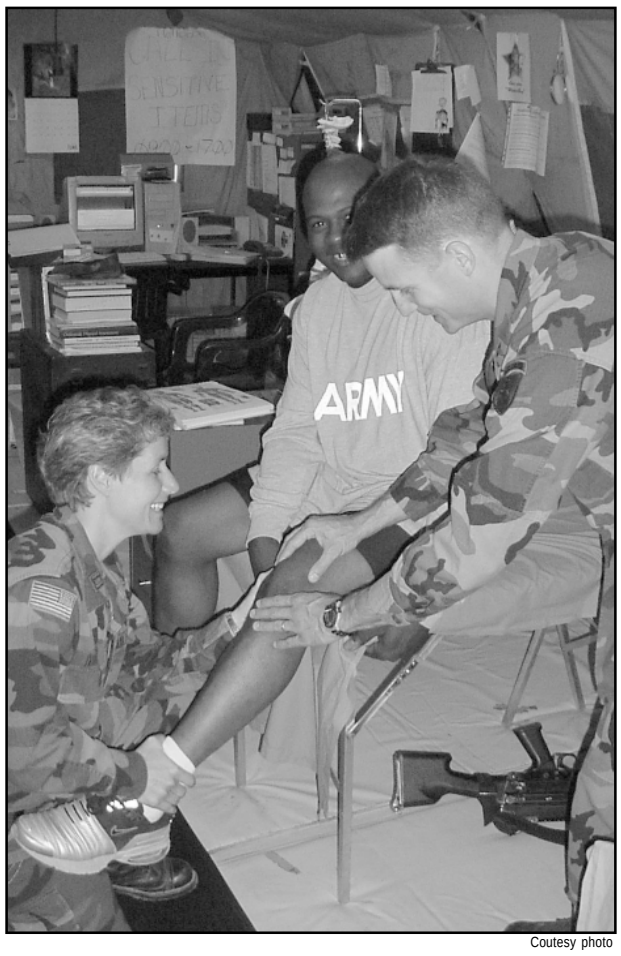
Prevention is always the best treatment. To avoid overuse injuries:

v Properly stretch before and after activities

v Match the level of fitness with the activity intensity, do not start off running long distances at a fast pace before being in shape to do so

v Cross train- vary the activities to avoid overloading any particular system

Most injuries will heal without medical treatment. When they do not, medical treatment, mostly comprised of Motrin, two weeks of rest, and stretching and strengthening exercises, may be required. Return to normal activities should be gradual, working up to previous levels of intensity by about 6 weeks.



Coutesy photo

From the perspective of a soldier: A letter from Kosovo

Story by Maj. Randy Martin TFF Public Affairs Officer

So, here we are supporting peacekeeping operations in Kosovo. A lot has happened in the past weeks.

Now, you may have never heard of Kosovo before. It's a territory of Yugoslavia. We're north of Greece and east of Italy in a region known to the world as the Balkans. Not too long ago, there was a war here.

I feel a little uncomfortable talking about why the war was fought. America is always called a melting pot because, for the most part, people from everywhere in the world live and work there together peacefully. Here though, people actually went to war because of their ethnicity. It was very brutal they say.

There are two major ethnic groups here. They each speak their own language. They have different histories, cultures, and religions. Ancient problems finally surfaced and a struggle between the major groups turned violent.

The war went both ways. In June of 1999, after a bombing campaign, the United Nations sent a peacekeeping force here. It's called KFOR (for Kosovo Force).

Our part of KFOR is Task Force Falcon. The brigade includes other countries like Germany, Italy, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Spain, Poland, Russia, and Ukraine. We work with these countries in the southeastern portion of Kosovo.

When we got here, we replaced the other Americans that were here from Germany. They had finished their six-month tour. In six months we'll finish ours.

Now, it's been a busy couple of weeks. We flew into what is called the Former Yugolslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM). You've seen this place in the news recently cause they have their own problems. Most of us drove north into Kosovo through an area that has been the source of a guerilla war. Some stayed at a base called Camp Able Sentry in FYROM.

We moved in. Talked to the guys we were replacing. And then we started doing our jobs.

Each day someone in our task force is on a patrol. We either are flying, walking, or riding through the towns we live near. We show that we're here, we're strong, and we won't stand by and let anyone hurt anyone else.

We'll often set up checkpoints to search vehicles and people for smuggled weapons and ammunition. We're working to help the two groups talk to each other rather than resorting to violence. We help build roads and repair buildings. We even give medical, dental, and veterinary assistance. A lot of this stuff didn't exist anymore because of the war.

Well, two years after the bombing campaign pushed Yugoslavia out of here; they were given the OK to move some of their forces near the boundary of Kosovo. Many feared that there would be new violence.

There was a small army here called the UCPMB that was ready to fight the Yugoslav Army operating in our sector. We didn't want them to fight because there had been changes to Yugoslavia's government. Plus, we were already providing security here.

Then, as the Yugoslav Army made its way toward the boundary, the UCPMB laid down their weapons and decided to participate in talks rather than fight. They turned in hundreds and hundreds of mines and weapons. The chances for peace greatly increased.

Our concerns shifted more to events along our southern border with FYROM. The violence down there is a threat to peace and stability here. We are doing everything we can to keep the violence out.

As for how we live, our living conditions are pretty good. Sometimes, we have to live in field conditions. But, for the most part, we live in nice buildings. There is real plumbing for our bathrooms. The food is plentiful. There are plenty of gyms and tracks. There are game rooms with televisions. We have theaters and really nice chapels. There is a pizza parlor and a Burger King. We even have cappuccino bars here. My laundry is done for me.

But, with all these plusses, I still miss home, family, and friends.

As for the country, it's beautiful. This is farming country. In the distance are snow-capped mountains. Closer, there are rolling green hills. Closer still is green grass and beautiful flowers.

There are scars of war everywhere though. There are caved in houses from bombings.

There are churches that we had to protect with concertina wire. We guard them to keep them from being destroyed. There are also damaged mosques. The religious buildings were targets of violence during the war.

There are always lots of kids running around and waving to us. We wave back and try to help them. In time, maybe this place will be better.

Everyone seems pretty nice to each other. Sure, there are problems once in a while. But being away from home makes people closer I think.

Well, I have to go now. Tell everyone at home that I'm doing OK.

I miss being there.

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JUNE CALENDAR

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JUNE 14 ARMY BIRTHDAY 5K RUN
JUNE 16-17 FATHERS DAY
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JUNE 17 *TAYLOR MADE J
JUNE 24 VARIETY
JUNE 25 LFOR COMEDY
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0800 hrs 17 Jun 01 at Southside Recreation Center

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14 JUNE 2001
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For more Info. contact
MRS.BROWN@782-7311
MWR Recreation Center

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MWR COMMUNITY CENTER
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17 JUNE 2001
2000-2400 HOURS

PARTY PARTY

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CASINO NIGHT

FOR MORE INFO CONTACT MWR @ 782-7371/7311

MWR SERVING AMERICA'S ARMY

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6 ON 6 TNY

GAME TIME
11:00 Hrs. 13 JUNE
SOCCER FIELD

TEAM MUST SIGN UP BY 12 JUNE IN COMMUNITY CENTER

FOR MORE INFO CONTACT MWR @782-7311/7371

Movies Movies

June 15
2000 Hannibal
2200 Mexican
June 16
2000 Exit Wounds
2200 Chocolat
June 17
2000 Chocolat
2200 Exit Wounds
June 18
2000 The Pledge
2200 13 Days
June 19
2000 Proof of Life
2200 Snatch
June 20
2000 Exit Wounds
2200 Chocolat
June 21
2000 Finding Forester
2200 Get Over It
June 22
2000 Sweet November
2200 Head Over Heels
June 23
2000 Heartbreakers
2200 The Brothers
June 24
2000 Tomcats
2200 Heartbreakers
June 25
2000 Bait
2200 Sugar and Spice
June 26
2000 Cast Away
2200 Saving Silverman
June 27
2000 The Brothers
2200 Tomcats
June 28
2000 6th Day
2200 Mexican
June 29
2000 Miss Congeniality
2200 3000 Miles to Graceland
June 30
2000 Enemy At The Gates
2200 Josie and The Pussycats

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Chaplain's Page

Faith unlocks the door to good Health

Story by
Chaplain (Maj) James Palmer
Deputy TFF Chaplain

Chaplains and people of faith have for years argued that faith in God and prayer play a vital role in maintaining health and wellness as humans. Until recently, many professionals have essentially ignored those claims.

However, the fields of psychology and medicine have taken a closer look at faith. Psychologists and medical doctors are expressing a renewed interest in the role religion plays in mental health and physical health. Not surprisingly, both groups of professionals are coming to the conclusion that religious faith plays an essential role in promoting mental and physical health.

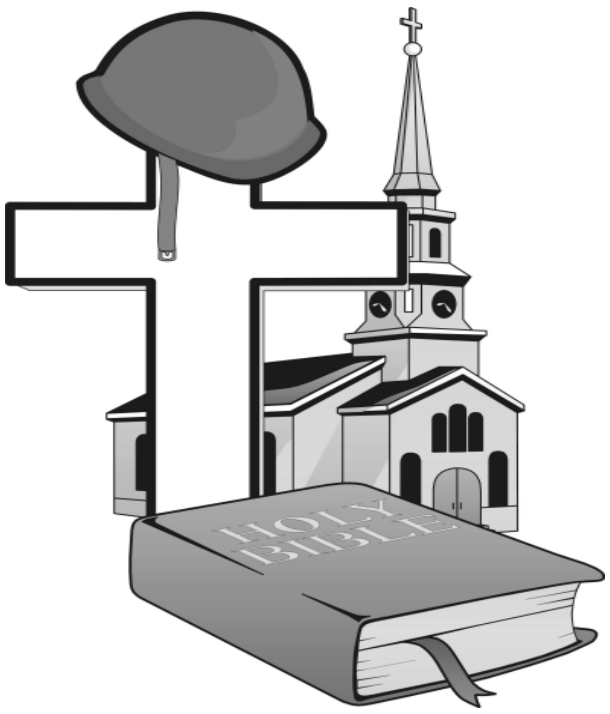
The American Psychological Association stated publicly what people of faith have known for years. In an issue of the APA Monitor, those who have done research in the area of religion and mental health concluded that religious faith "may actually enhance mental health." In the past, psychology, as a discipline, generally looked upon religious faith as something irrational or even superstitious. One psychologist referred to religious faith as the "higher superstition." Other psychologists have thought of faith as a crutch for those who have difficulty handling the problems of life. Still others considered religious faith as nothing more than emotional instability.

These attitudes among psychologists are quite ironic. The root word for "psychology" is the Greek word "psyche" which means soul. Consequently, psychology actually means the study of the soul. Yet, until recently, psychology has tended to ignore the soul and the soul's need for a relationship with God. The same has been true in the field of medicine.

During the past century, medical science has discovered vast amounts of knowledge regarding the functioning of the physical body. Yet, medical science struggles to explain why and how life begins and ends when it does.

Science cannot answer why some people get well and others die among people with the same disease and diagnoses. Neither can science answer the ultimate questions of meaning and purpose. Medical science is now exploring the role faith plays in healing and wellness. In the past, articles in medical journals documented studies which indicate that prayer, faith and worship improve the well being of patients with all kinds of diseases.

Scientific evidence suggests that prayer and faith improve patient attitudes and thereby increase the effectiveness of treatment protocols regardless of the illness.



The word of God says, "In the beginning God created..."

To know the Creator is to know that your life has meaning and purpose. To know the Creator is to know a sense of peace and confidence that "we are fearfully and wonderfully made." To know the Creator means knowing that no matter what challenges we may face, we can trust God with the outcome. It's no wonder, then, that faith helps us enjoy a healthier life.

So to every member of Task Force Falcon, "Be Relentless in your personal goals for physical, mental and spiritual improvement."

KFOR Worship Schedule

Camp Bondsteel

PEACEKEEPERS CHAPEL SERVICES

Sunday
0800 Episcopal/Lutheran
0930 Catholic Mass
1100 Collective Christian
1500 Gospel Choir
1600 Gospel Service
Monday
1900 Video Night
Tuesday
1900 Women's Bible Study
2000 Catholic RCIA
Wednesday
1200 Lunchtime Bible Study
1900 Mid-Week Service
Thursday
1800 Gospel Choir
1900 Hour of Power Prayer
Friday
1900 Gospel Joy Night
Saturday
1300 Protestant Choir Practice
1900 Gospel Choir Practice

SOUTH CHAPEL

Sunday
0800 Catholic Mass
1000 Protestant Service
1300 Gospel Service
1600 LDS Service
1700 LDS Sunday School
1900 GenX
Monday
1800 LDS Family Night
Tuesday
1900 Gospel Service Prayer
Wednesday
1900 Mid-Week Service
Thursday
1930 Bible Study
Friday
1200 Islamic Prayer
2000 Jewish
Saturday
1100 Adventist Service
1900 Movie Night

Camp Monteith

SUNDAY
0830 LDS Service
0930 Contemporary Protestant Service
1100 General Protestant Worship
1300 Gospel Service
1900 Roman Catholic Mass
Monday
1900 Family Life Study
Tuesday
1900 Bible Study
Wednesday
1900 Roman Catholic Mass
1930 Roman Inquiry Class
Thursday
1900 Contemporary Praise Team Practice
2000 Gospel Choir Practice
Friday
1200 Muslim Prayer Service
1200 Christian Mid-Day Prayer
1900 Praise and Worship Service
Saturday
1800 Gospel Choir Practice
2000 Movie Night

Camp Able Sentry

Sunday
0130 Protestant Service
1300 Spanish Mass
1600 LDS Service
1900 Gospel Service
Tuesday
1900 Gospel Bible Study
Wednesday
2000 Mid-Week Bible Study
Thursday
1900 Prayer Meeting
Friday
1900 Gospel Hour
Saturday
1730 Catholic Mass
1900 Choir Rehearsal

Brown and Root makes Kosovo safe and secure for kids

Story and photos by
Maria Jaramillo
Camp Bondsteel PAO

The Kosovo community and Brown & Root employees are pulling together to create safe school environments for children. A volunteer effort initiated last summer will adopt 22 schools and create playgrounds for the schools.

The targeted schools do not have much more than soccer posts for children to play with. In a province recovering from war, there are still dangers lurking for wandering children. Undiscovered or unclear mines are still posing a threat in this region. Even inside the city limits children play on roadsides that have no sidewalks.

This existing threat prompted Brown & Root employees to donate their money and volunteer time to give children a safe place to play.

"We wanted to give the children something more than two broken down soccer goals and keep them off the street," said Donald R. Williams, Civil Asst. Superintendent, Brown & Root Services.

Muharrem Shem, the first school to benefit from the effort, received something more than broken down soccer goals. Upon starting construction of the first playground in Fshati I Vjeter, the B & R employees found they weren't the only ones ready to volunteer.

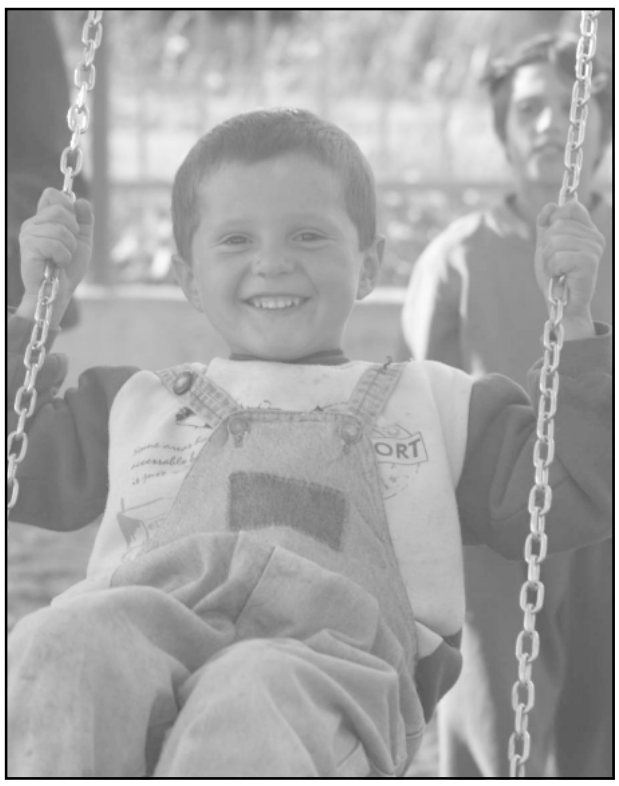
"When people started realizing what we were building, parents started to come over wanting to help," said Mike Hartley, welder foreman, B&R Services and a project volunteer.

Volunteers built two playgrounds inside the schoolyard in little under a week. The finished playground offers swings, slides, seesaws, monkey bars and a basketball hoop and court.

"The children were very excited about the playground. They were trying to get on everything before it was even finished," said Zef Gjergji, who contracted with B&R volunteers to create the pre-fabricated elements in the playground.

As the first playground of the project finished in the second week of June, B&R volunteers looked forward to the next project.

"We take our time after work and there is a donation box at our chow hall. We will keep doing all we can," Williams said.



A child at Muharrem Shem's new playground enjoys the new equipment donated and built by Brown and Root.

Secretary of Defense pays a visit to Kosovo

Story by Sgt. 1st Class
Brian Kappmeyer
Camp Bondsteel PAO

Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld took the opportunity to meet with troops in Kosovo recently during a tour of several European countries.

During the Secretary's visits to Mijak and Camp Bondsteel, he passed along his appreciation for the outstanding job that the peacekeepers are doing here.

"The success of these missions depend a lot on each of you — your judgment, your training, your talent, and your determination," Rumsfeld told a crowd of more than 600 that gathered in the Camp Bondsteel movie theater.

Before entering the theater, Lt. Col. Richard J. Dixon, commander of the 3-7 IN, discussed a display of turned-in weapons with Rumsfeld. Dixon's soldiers received the weapons from ethnic Albanian guerrillas that left the Ground Safety Zone during the relaxation of the area in May.

Photo by Sgt. Gary Peterson

Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld met with soldiers at Camp Bondsteel to thank them for their good work.

The Defense Secretary also met with troops at Mijak along the border of Kosovo and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. He described the soldiers as eager, dedicated, patriotic and "it's just a thrill to see it "

As the Defense Secretary neared the end of his visit, he emphasized the message to Task Force Falcon soldiers that their efforts are appreciated a great deal.

"If you think about it, over here in Kosovo, people probably don't say thank you a lot...

History cont...

overnight but it has already begun. With the use of new technology soon the line between heavy and light forces will be erased. This new agility will ensure, that in the future, the United States Army will remain the most lethal and effective fighting force ever assembled on this planet.

On the birthday of this elite fighting force it is a time to reflect on the origins and the history of this great institution. Let us remember the men and women throughout these 226 years that have toiled, sacrificed and died so that we can now stand tall in defense of freedom anywhere in the world. Let us all join together to celebrate the birthday of the world's guarantee of freedom, the United States Army.

Army Savings Deposit plan can help you save more cash

Story by Spc. Maria Jaramillo
Camp Bondsteel PAO

An Army Savings Deposit plan can help you save money overseas, and at up to double the interest rate back home. The savings deposit program for soldiers yields 10 percent interest annually.

This program became effective January 1, 1997 for soldiers deployed to Kosovo that have been in country for at least 30 days. The savings plan allows soldiers to deposit up to $10,000 by allotment (preferred), check, cash or money order.

"This is a great program for soldiers who might not otherwise invest," said Sgt. Wesley Connor, finance advisor, Resource Management Office.

Connor advises soldiers to keep a copy of all Cash Collection Vouchers from their deposits.

"They need to keep the cash collection vouchers for their own receipts," Connor said.

This program is only available for soldiers while they are in Kosovo. Upon redeployment soldiers have 90 days to withdraw their funds.

The Camp Bondsteel's finance office can begin the program for the soldiers. The Task Force Finance Office is located in building 1330B and is open Monday through Saturday 0900-1700 and Sunday 1000-1500.

Notice:

Gate #1 will be closed starting Friday June 15th. It will closed for two to three weeks for paving.

3A gets into their Battle Rhythm as the TOA wraps-up

Story by
Spc. Maria Jaramillo
Camp Bondsteel PAO

Photo by Combat Camera

Brig. Gen. William David unrolls the flag of Rotation 3A to mark the completion of the Transition of Authority

"We will do our best to advance the peace process and the rule of law to make Kosovo a safe and secure environment for all its citizens," Brig. Gen. William C. David said during a Transfer of Authority ceremony held at Camp Bondsteel June 1.

The ceremony signified the change in command for Multinational Brigade East from Brig. Gen. Kenneth J. Quinlan to David and Task Force Falcon rotation 3A.

The new TFF commander expressed gratitude to the exiting unit for "making our reception, staging, onward movement and integration a seamless process... the entire 3A is in [their] debt."

David was previously assigned as the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) assistant division commander (Operations). His awards include the Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit and a Bronze Star Medal with two oak leaf clusters and "V" device.

Quinlan commanded TFF and operations in Multinational Brigade East since December 18. Under Quinlan's six-month command, the Kosovo region saw a 50 percent decrease in violent interethnic crime. TFF and United Nations Mission in Kosovo-Police worked closely with Kosovo Police to investigate reports of criminal and suspicious activities.

David promised to put forth his best for the TFF mission by conducting peace support operations in the MNB-E sector and continue the mission of transitioning Kosovo responsibilities to appropriate civil organizations and eventually enable Kosovo Forces to withdraw.

Historical surgery completed at Camp Bondsteel

Story by Spc. Marshall Thompson
Camp Bondsteel PAO

When 1st Lt. James Cartwright, a British officer, tripped while running a few weeks ago he had no idea that he would become part of history by being the subject of the first multi-national surgery performed in Kosovo.

In like manner, Maj. Alfonso Alarcon, a general orthopedic surgeon stationed in Landstuhl, Germany with the 212th Mobile Support Hospital, had no idea that on his first day on the job in Kosovo he would also take part in an historic surgery.

Alarcon was called-up on short notice to replace a surgeon who was called back to the states to be the doctor for the Boston Celtics.

"Anything to help out the Celtics," Alarcon said.

On May 20 doctors and nurses from Britain and America teamed up to do orthopedic surgery on Cartwright's knee. Despite the symbolic importance of the event, to the people involved it was work as usual.

"I didn't really realize the importance until afterward. To me it was just like a routine surgery," Alarcon said.

Alarcon said that communication went well and that the British were excellent to work with. Medical procedures seemed to be the same and the one-hour twenty-minute operation went off without a hitch.

"It went really well. We really enjoyed working together," said Cpt. Paula Tristham, a British operating room nurse.

Maj. Norm Wilson, an American operating room nurse with Task Force Medical Falcon said, "Everything went well. It was a very good beginning."

Photo courtesy of Task Force Med Falcon

A joint American and British surgery makes history in Kosovo.

"I think this is really the wave of the future. First it will be the British, then maybe the Germans and the French, and then we could consolidate into a multi-national hospital. I think it's great relationships between countries, knowledge, especially medical knowledge, between the different countries," Alarcon said.

"This is a great example of the Active duty and the Reservists working together. This is really a mix of not only different nations but the different components of the Army. We're working well together, it's great," Alarcon said.

As far as Cartwright is concerned about being a part of KFOR history, he said simply, "It still hurts quite a lot."

Left: Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower talks to a group of soldiers from the 502nd Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) before their attack on Normandy June 6, 1944.

Right: Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld talks to soldiers from the 2nd of the 502nd Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) in Kosovo June 5, 2001

Photo by Staff Sgt. Tom Cornaby

Cav scouts observe the FRYOM border

Photos and story by Spc. Marshall Thompson Camp Bondsteel PAO

"15 seconds... 10 seconds... five, four, three, two, one. Fire 'em up," said Sgt. 1st Class James Reese over the radio, and the convoy of armored HMMWV's from the 1st Cavalry Brigade Reconnaissance Team simultaneously began to purr.

Reese, a cavalry scout platoon sergeant with the C troop of the 1st Cavalry with the 3rd Infantry Division, gave the signal and the purring HMMWVs rolled out.

Under the light of a full moon the team slowly begins to move over the ridge that had provided them with concealment during the night. A contemporary version of the horse-mounted soldiers of yesteryear, the three scout drivers navigated their modern horses up the steep hills and heavy brush in the quickly diminishing protection of early morning darkness.

The cavalry is an invaluable part of the Army machine that has adapted amazingly well over the years and has managed to keep its special heritage. The 1st Cavalry typifies the spirit of the new transition of the Army. Well-trained and dedicated they replace the horse and saber with the armored HMMWV and 50-caliber machine gun to accomplish their mission.

Pvt. 1st Class Andrew Dine, a cavalry scout driver with C troop of the 1st Cavalry BRT said, "Our overall goal on this mission is to confirm or deny if weapons are being smuggled over the border from the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. If it leads to stop the flow of weapons, that's going to help with the overall well-being of Kosovo."

Dine kept centered on the mission despite the inherent hardships involved with being a scout. The night before had been spent in the cold cramped interior of the armored HMMWV's. Some never get used to sleeping in the claustrophobic environment while others have no problems and take to sleeping in a HMMWV like Jacob to a rock.

By the time the light was sneaking into the small valley on the Kosovo border, the scouts had concealed their trucks in a small clearing surrounded by trees high above the small village below.

Almost immediately the first team to go on patrol was formed. Camouflage carefully applied, canteens filled, briefings and contingency plans reviewed, the team moves out in silence. They blend in spectacularly well in the thick oak forests. The steep narrow paths are filled with a thick layer of dead leaves and undergrowth. Hand signals are used to silently communicate. Strict noise and light discipline is followed constantly during the mission.

Pvt. 1st Class Jonathan Bell, a cavalry scout gunner with the 1st Cavalry BRT said, "We try to be as quiet as possible. We try to move early in the morning when there is very little light. If smugglers know that you're here obviously they're going to change their routes and go the other way."

Bell explained how to keep good noise and light discipline, "Don't slam your doors on the HMMWV's. Make sure you ease them shut. Always know where your equipment is. Watch your step and make sure you don't step on a lot of twigs and whatnot. Learn to use radios without any light by knowing where all the buttons are."

Keeping quiet isn't the only thing a cavalry scout has to worry about. Mercenaries hired by smugglers, fields of unmarked land mines, and the danger of accidentally crossing the border, bring to the table their own special distractions to the main mission while on a patrol.

"For one, we're trying to avoid mines. Right now, we're looking for tracks, possible routes that anyone can be traveling through, and for anything that can cause danger to our unit," Bell said. He explained that scouts are trained to determine when and how many people used a trail by inspecting the tracks. Scouts use direct observation as well on patrol.

Pvt. 1st Class Scott Murphy, a cavalry scout, watches over the city.

"What's going through my head when I'm on a mission is getting on the objective. Then once we get to the objective, getting eyes on what we are supposed to get eyes on. Then just remaining silent and undetected," said Pvt. 1st Class Scott Murphy, a cavalry scout in C troop of the 1st Cavalry BRT. "What we're doing helps to keep weapons out of the hands of younger children and will hopefully help to end all the fighting."

"The people here are trying to live a decent life and farm their land. We're trying to stop those who want to fight and those who make it impossible for others to lead a decent life," Bell said.

"I sure miss home," said Dine. "But it feels good to think that you're helping other people out who need help more than we do. It feels good to know that you might be making a difference. Hopefully we'll be able to reduce the violence around here."

Helping people is not the only motivation for scouts.

"I like just being outdoors and doing missions like this. Hiding, people not knowing where you are," said Murphy. "I love playing in the woods and doing things that you could never do in your civilian life."

After a long day of crawling around silently, and hopefully anonymously, through the thick mysterious forests on the FYROM border, the first team enters the main area and immediately a second team leaves. The first thing the returning team does is to change into dry clothes. Being clean is not always an option for scouts. However, being dry is a necessity. As Reese explains, walking on the steep inclines all day with wet socks could destroy your feet.

As night spreads once again over the valley the scouts stealthily set up an observation position. With a powerful night vision scope, the small village is monitored all night long.

A few suspicious trailers and vehicles were seen entering the village. However, they remained inactive during the time that the first part of the mission was running.

After two exhausting days and three sleepless nights hiding out and searching to confirm or deny smuggling routes, it's time for the scout platoon to go back to Bondsteel after being relieved by another platoon. When all was said and done the first phase went very well.

"As far as confirming or denying the use of smuggling routes in this area, we've found a lot of tracks, routes and old fighting positions," Bell said.

"The mission was successful on our part. We were there to find any kind of trails or infiltration. Sometimes what we don't see is just as important as what we do see. We checked out some spots where we suspected some trails were and they weren't there. We were supposed to confirm or deny and that's what we've done," Reese said.

Reese's platoon left after only a few days of rest to relieve the other platoon and start the next phase of the mission. Hopefully it will be as successful as this first part was.

Reese said, "Anytime you bring everybody back and all your equipment back that was a successful mission."

Sgt. 1st Class James Reese, a cavalry scout platoon sergeant prepares for a patrol by carefully applying camouflage to his face.