

# THE TALON



OPERATION JOINT ENDEAVOR, BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

SERVING THE SOLDIERS OF TASK FORCE EAGLE

## Nash praises troops, passes torch to Meigs

By Spc. AARON REED  
100th MPAD

EAGLE BASE — In an emotion-filled ceremony here Nov. 10, Maj. Gen. William L. Nash handed-off control of Task Force Eagle to the 1st Infantry Division's Maj. Gen. Montgomery C. Meigs.

In his farewell address to some 300 representatives from a dozen nations, Nash, commanding general of the 1st Armored Division, praised the troops of Multinational Division North.

"These great troopers came here about a year ago to enforce the military aspects of the Dayton Peace Agreement and they were ready for a fight," Nash said. "They came in during the worst part of the year, assumed control of our 18,000-square kilometer area of responsibility — a hard, hostile, lethal environment — and they separated military forces, put weapons in storage sites and the troops in barracks."

But Nash cautioned that however impressive the accomplishments of Task Force Eagle, the American-led force has not brought peace to Bosnia-Herzegovina.

"A military force can only give you an absence of war — not peace," Nash said. "Peace will come from political, economic, and social change. You cannot impose peace on a people; they have to want it, they have to work at it."

See **TORCH**, page 12



55th Signal Company (Combat Camera)

Maj. Gen. Montgomery C. Meigs and Command Sgt. Maj. George D. Gates unfurl the 1st Infantry Division colors at the transfer of authority ceremony, Nov. 10.

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## IFOR increases patrols

In the wake of recent unrest in the northeast Bosnian village of Gajevi, IFOR dispatched troops to reestablish stability in the area.

The move by IFOR was instigated by gunfire that rattled in the vicinity of the village after a group of Muslims attempted to return to homes that were abandoned during the war.

Both Russian and American troops took part in the operation.

Patrols have been increased, but according to IFOR spokesman Maj. Brett Boudreau, the most effective way to resolve the issue is through political dialogue and cooperation.

"Ultimately it's the political pressure that has to win in the end," he said. See **LOPEZ**, page 12

■ FROM THE TOP

# Transition complete, troops look to job ahead

The transfer of authority is complete. The Big Red One of the 1st Infantry Division has been handed the reigns of Task Force Eagle from the Iron Soldiers of the 1st Armored Division.



**Command Sgt. Maj. James W. Laws**  
1st Infantry Division

My predecessor TFE Command Sgt. Maj. "Iron Jack" Tilley, is well-known for his adage: Iron Soldiers take care of each other. Seeing the interdivision cooperation between the 1st ID and 1st AD, I know this statement to be true as the Iron Soldiers have been extremely helpful to us in making the transition a successful one.

I would like to extend my personal thanks to Command Sgt. Maj. Tilley for the tremen-

dous personal assistance he gave me. He went above and beyond the call of duty and really opened up his heart to me. In our time together, we visited every single base camp in the Multi-national Division North. We were both pleased to see our soldiers working together as part of the total team concept.

On behalf of every soldier in the Big Red One, I would like to wish the Iron Soldiers of the 1st AD a safe and sound return to Central Region. They have done a great job with their mission here and have given us a strong foundation on which to build.

I am counting on my senior leaders to ensure that our troops stay focused on the tasks at hand. Our troops are relatively new to the area of operations.

Unexploded ordnance and mines littering the countryside. Remember the anti-mine training we have received and make

darn sure that your subordinates do not take any unnecessary risks.

As you no doubt have already noticed, the road conditions here in the area of operations are less than ideal.

The narrowness of the roads, potholes, and soft shoulders are hazards that we can overcome through diligence, proper convoy procedures, and an omnipresent emphasis on safety.

One final note: The 1st ID has been lucky. Mother Nature has smiled kindly upon us with the mild weather conditions. However, don't expect it to last.

Noncommissioned officers, start preparing now for the cold, ice, sleet, and snow that is headed our way. We can overcome and succeed in any environment. The key is preparation.

Thank you, Old Ironsides. Now, Big Red One, it's time to do the job.

## Big Red One boasts proud, battle-tested tradition

The Big Red One, as the 1st Infantry Division is commonly known, is no stranger to hazardous operations in foreign lands.

Before elements of the division deployed to Bosnia-Herzegovina as the force covering Old Ironsides' withdrawal, Big Red One troopers took part in peacekeeping and humanitarian operations in Macedonia, Haiti and Somalia.

During Operation DESERT STORM, the Big Red One spearheaded the armored attack into Iraq. By the end of the Gulf War, the division had fought its way through 260 kilometers of enemy-held territory in 100 hours, destroying all or parts of 11 enemy divisions, more than 550 enemy tanks and 480 armored personnel carriers.

The heavily armored, highly mobile Big Red One which triumphed over the Iraqi Republican Guard in 1991 was no stranger to battle.

Organized as the 1st Expeditionary Division on June 8, 1917, the Big Red One was equipped with horse-drawn transportation, 1903 Springfield rifles and Colt .45 caliber automatic pistols.

On June 14, 1917, the first elements of the 1st Expeditionary Division sailed for France. The division was redesignated the 1st Division, July 6, 1917. During World War I, the 1st Division had the distinction of suffering the first American casualties, winning the first American victory, and being the first unit to cross the Rhine River into occupied Germany.

In all, the division suffered 22,320 casualties in the war, and boasted five Medal of Honor winners.

On Aug. 1, 1942, the 1st Division was redesignated the 1st In-



fantry Division, and on Nov. 8, the soldiers of the Big Red One were among some 39,000 American troops who hit the beaches at Arzew in North Africa.

From the fall of 1942 through the spring of 1943, the Big Red One fought across North Africa into Tunisia, where, on May 9, Maj. Gen. Fritz Krause, commander of the German Afrika Korps, surrendered his force of 40,000.

From Algiers, the division sailed to Sicily. There, in 37 days of fighting without rest, the division took 18 towns and captured 5,935 prisoners at a cost of 1,738 casualties. With Sicily secure, the Big Red One moved to England and prepared for the invasion of Normandy.

On May 8, 1945, after 443 days of combat and 101 different command posts, Big Red One

rested in place.

During World War II the division suffered 21,023 casualties and 47,743 men served in its ranks. Its soldiers won 20,752 medals and awards, including 16 Medals of Honor.

Just 20 years later, the 1st ID returned to the battlefield, this time in Southeast Asia. During almost five straight years of combat duty, the division lost more than 2,000 soldiers in action, and added 11 Medal of Honor winners to its rolls.

Wuerzburg's Leighton Barracks is home to the Division Headquarters, with 2nd Brigade headquartered in Schweinfurt, 3rd Brigade in Vilseck, the Aviation Brigade in Katterbach, the Division Support Command in Kitzingen, and the Engineer Brigade and Division Artillery in Bamberg.

The 1st Brigade remains headquartered at Fort Riley, Kan.

## THE TALON

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# Meigs takes on Balkan challenge

Old Ironsides relinquished authority to the Big Red One Nov. 10, putting a new general in charge of Task Force Eagle.

Maj. Gen. Montgomery C. Meigs told a crowd of several hundred soldiers at the transfer of authority ceremony that the 1st Infantry Division is determined to make a difference in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

With over 25 years of military experience, Meigs is prepared to continue the legacy of change started by the 1st Armored Division.

Before taking the reigns of the 1st ID Feb. 15, 1996, Meigs commanded the 3rd Infantry Division. Positions he has held include deputy chief of staff for Operations, U.S. Army Europe; chief of staff of V Corps; commander 7th Army Training Command in Grafenwoehr, Germany; and commander 2nd Brigade, 1st Armored Division during Desert Storm.

He was also a strategic planner on the Joint Staff in Washington D.C. He spent his first years commanding units in the 3rd Battalion, 12th Cavalry in Germany and 3rd Battalion, 5th Cavalry in Vietnam.

Meigs was commissioned from the



Alutante Giuseppe Melillo

Maj. Gen. Montgomery C. Meigs

U.S. Military Academy in 1967. He has a Ph. D. in history from the University of Wisconsin.

His awards include the Distinguished Service Medal, Defense Superior Service Medal, the Legion of Merit with Oak Leaf Cluster, the Bronze Star Medal with V device and the Purple Heart.

His wife, Mary Ann Meigs, has joined him on five tours in Europe helping to care for soldiers and their families. The Meigs' have two sons, William and Matthew in college at home in Texas.

## NEWS BRIEFS

### Big Red One website

The 1st Infantry Division is looking for help designing and producing a Big Red One website. Anyone interested in helping may contact Maj. Bill DuPont at MSE 551-3351.

### Viewpoints wanted

The Talon welcomes viewpoint articles from soldiers in the field. Please send us your viewpoint via e-mail or on disk, or drop off a hard copy at our office on the 2nd floor of Bldg. 17, Eagle Base.

### Operation M.A.L.E.

Operation M.A.L.E. (make a life enriched) will try to do what they can to help with soldiers' stay in Bosnia-Herzegovina. OM is a support organization which wants to ensure that any soldiers who want mail receive mail.

The point of contact for OM is Pat Dwigans.

The following information is needed to get your mail started:

- Rank, name, address, in Bosnia-Herzegovina
- Hometown
- Birthday and birth date
- Marital status
- Religion and race, if you wish (not necessary)
- Something about you, family, hobbies, etc.
- E-mail address (if you have one)

The following information should be sent to:

Patricia "Pat" Dwigans  
5088 Old Smith Valley Road  
Greenwood, IN 46143

<http://pages.prodigy.com/ompage/home.htm>

E-mail address:  
XZLU15A@prodigy.com

## Soldiers' savings plan available

The locals sometimes call us turtles. Souvenir T-shirts proclaim American troops prisoners of peace. One thing's for sure, U.S. troops have few opportunities to get out on the economy and spend money.

Deployment to Bosnia-Herzegovina brings plenty of hardships, but it also brings opportunity. And living without expenses leads to a great opportunity to save money.

With this in mind, the Department of Defense established the Savings Deposit Program. The program pays 10 percent annual interest.

Payments to the savings program can be by allotment or cash collection. Spouses with a power of attorney can make deposits on behalf of deployed soldiers. Reserve and National Guard soldiers are also eligible for the program.

Interest will continue for 90 days

after redeployment. Soldiers who remain on active duty must submit a written withdrawal request to their finance office. The request should include: Name, social security number, branch of service and amount requested.

Separated soldiers must submit a request that includes separation date and departure date from Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR area of responsibility. Withdrawal requests should be mailed to:

DFAS - Cleveland Center  
ATTN: Code FMCS  
1240 East 9th Street  
Cleveland, Ohio 44199-2055

Telephone inquires about an account may be directed to DSN 580-6545 or 1-800-642-7368 (CONUS). Still have questions about SDP? Contact 1st Lt. Leonard or Sgt. 1st Class Amison 106th Finance Battalion (Forward), MSE 553-7251 or 551-7260.

## Weekly weather forecast

	HIGH/LOW	CHANCE RAIN
Today	50/40	Moderate
Sat	54/39	Moderate
Sun	63/45	High
Mon	66/44	Low
Tue	55/43	Low
Wed	60/41	Moderate
Thur	64/39	Moderate

Provided Nov. 13 by Internet Access Weather

# Czech-born pilot proud to be an American

By Sgt. JANET S. PETERS  
350th MPAD

**P**roud to be an American. The phrase means a lot to Chief Warrant Officer Peter Prim.

Prim, 35, was born in Prague, Czech Republic (formerly Czechoslovakia) during the Cold War. He remembers a happy childhood, but he quickly realized what it meant to live in a Warsaw Pact country.

"I had a good childhood," Prim said. "Not much different than growing up in the U.S. I grew up in the suburbs. I don't remember any bread lines.

"What struck me though, was that people couldn't travel freely," he said. "My mother always wanted to visit Europe but she only got to go to Austria once on business."

Another thing that bothered the young Czech was the knowledge that land was not privately owned.

"Before I was born my family had a farm," Prim said. "When the country went communist after World War II, they socialized and confiscated everything."

When Prim was seven years old, he witnessed the Prague spring uprising of 1968.

"I remember convoys and convoys of Russian tanks going in front of my house," he said. "The average Czechoslovakian did not favor communism; it was imposed on them."

Prim earned a degree in electro-mechanics, but found no opportunity to grow or excel. "There was no private enterprise, so your only choice was to work for a government-owned business."

All these childhood memories stayed with the young Prim and at the age of 15 he began to plan his escape.

"I always wanted to live in the U.S.," Prim said. "I saw the news even though it was twisted. If you had any intelligence at all, you realized it was all lies. Just about all my friends said they wanted to leave, but nobody else was willing to leave everything behind."

Soon to be drafted into the Czech Army and believing the Iron Curtain would never come down, the 18-year-old decided to make his move. It was May, 1981.

"I arranged a vacation trip to Yugoslavia," he said. "They allowed that on a case by case basis, and only after it had the stamp of approval from the police, state department, military and communist party."

With only a small suitcase, Prim left his home knowing he was never going back. Not even his parents or older brother knew of his plans.

"The tour guide took my passport so I had to steal it back," Prim said. "Then I went to the Austrian Embassy in Zagreb and requested permission to return to Czechoslovakia via Austria. I pulled a name and address out of a Vienna phonebook and claimed it was my aunt I wanted to visit."

In Vienna, Prim requested political asylum. He lived in a refugee camp for over four

months. During that time he painted houses, dug ditches, did electrical work and thought about his future.

"I applied to the U.S. government for a visa and after visiting an American ambassador to Austria, I was granted permission," Prim said. "The American Association for Czech Refugees paid for my airline ticket."

Prim began his new life in New York, living in a cheap hotel.

"I went hungry quite a few days, but I got a job within 10 days, working as an electrical mechanic for a guy who had defected from Czechoslovakia 10 years earlier."

Prim learned English by talking to people, reading books and watching television. Three years later he enlisted in the U.S. Army.

"I always wanted to be a helicopter pilot, but the only way to fly in the Czech Republic was to fly for the communist military, which I despised," Prim said. "I wanted to be on the good guys' side."

From 1983-1986 Prim was a cavalry scout with the 101st Airborne at Fort Campbell, Ky. He took college courses at night to pre-

pare for flight school. That opportunity never materialized so when his reenlistment date came up, Prim joined the National Guard. "I found the best aviation unit in the world — the 1st Battalion, 151st Aviation (Advanced Attack Helicopter) in Eastover, South Carolina," Prim said. "They sent me to flight school." Since then Prim has flown Kiowa, Huey and Apache helicopters.

"In May, I was on vacation and got a call asking if I wanted to go to Bosnia," Prim said. "I decided it would be a chance to do the job I was trained for."

Attached to the 227th Aviation Battalion, 4th Brigade, Prim is a member of Team Comanche, flying escort for the commanding general.

"The reason I am here and not in Czechoslovakia is because I feel patriotic toward the U.S.," Prim said. "There are some Americans who don't appreciate the liberty and freedom they have. It is so easy to take that away like they did to those countries during the Cold War. I want to help others gain the freedom I have experienced."



Sgt. Janet S. Peters

**Former Czech citizen, Chief Warrant Officer Peter Prim, preflight checks his AH-64 Apache attack helicopter.**

11 nations Comanche Base 23,000 Americans Lukavac  
 325 days and nights Steel Castle 37 base camps Camp Tampa  
 11,160 square miles Guardian Base Sava River bridged Camp Demi  
 2,600 bunkers destroyed Distro Camp 330 tanks demobilized Tobacco  
 Factory Camp 500 heavy soldiers demobilized Car  
 2,000 heavy soldiers demobilized  
 17,000 miles driven Russian Brigade One peaceful election Turkish  
 Brigade One team NORDPOL Brigade One mission McGill Base one  
 team Rubber Boat Factory 11 nations Lumber Factory 11 nations  
 Comanche Base 23,000 Americans Lukavac 325 days and nights Steel  
 Castle 37 base camps Camp Tampa 11,160 square miles Guardian  
 Base Sava River bridged Camp Demi 2,600 bunkers destroyed  
 Post-Renaissance Camp Molly 330 tanks demobilized Camp Bedrock

# The Armored Division

**Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR**  
**Dec. 20, 1995 — Nov. 10, 1996**



Spc. Bryan Driver



55th Signal Company (Combat Camera)



Cpl. Rob Glenn



55th Signal Company (Combat Camera)



55th Signal Company (Combat Camera)



55th Signal Company (Combat Camera)

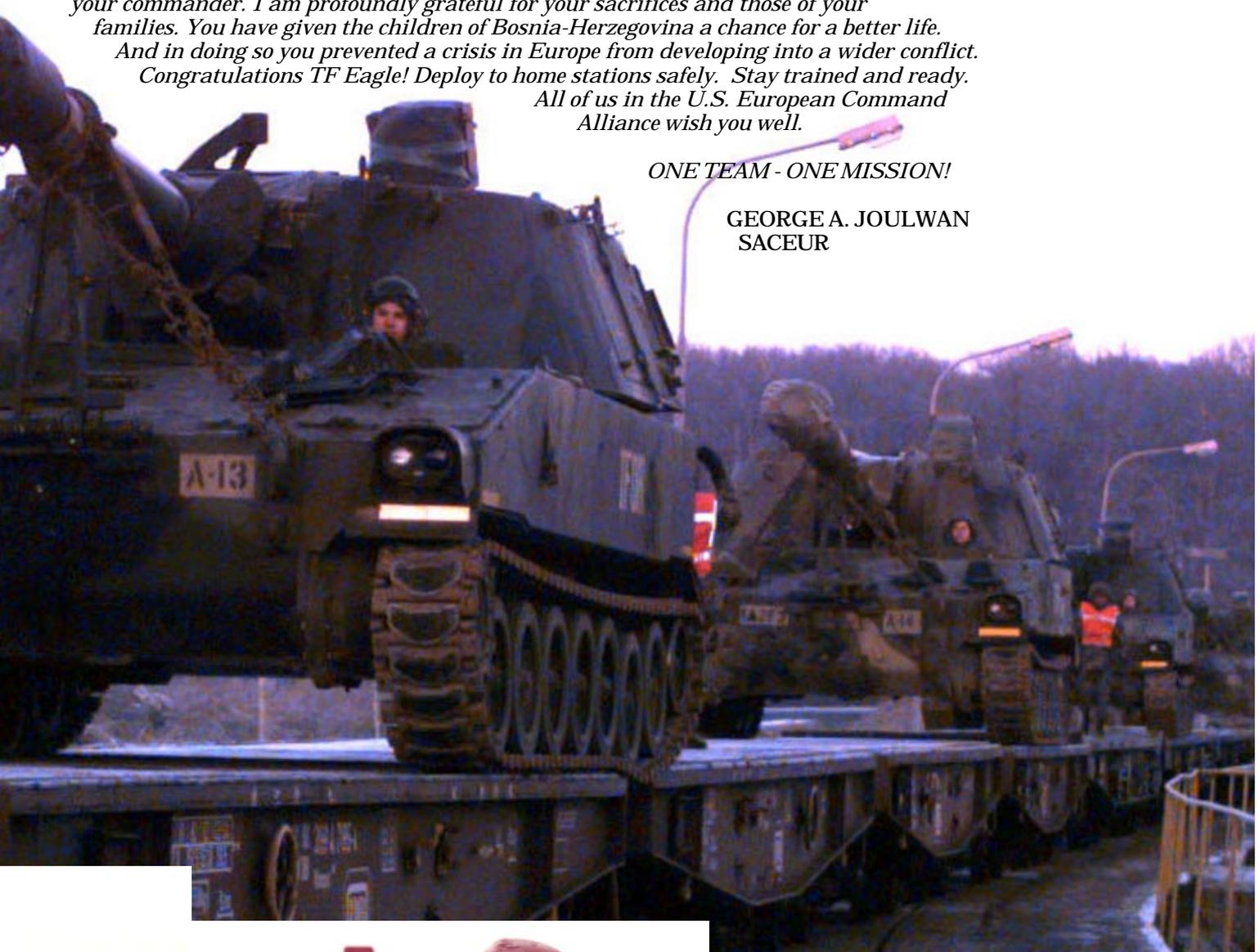
# To MG Nash and troops of Task Force Eagle

*On 10 November 1996, you and the men and women of TF Eagle will turnover command to the covering force of the 1st Infantry Division. As the overall U.S. and NATO commander of Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR. I want to express my admiration and congratulation for the magnificent job you have done in bringing peace to the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina. From the crossing of the Sava River to the separation of the former warring factions to the nation elections in September, TF Eagle has been simply brilliant. Your achievements the past 11 months indeed have been historic and reflect extremely favorably on your training, leadership, and professionalism. Your actions in Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR will be a proud chapter in the long history of the U.S. Army and U.S. military.*

*As you complete your tasks, know that I am deeply proud of each of you — and your commander. I am profoundly grateful for your sacrifices and those of your families. You have given the children of Bosnia-Herzegovina a chance for a better life. And in doing so you prevented a crisis in Europe from developing into a wider conflict. Congratulations TF Eagle! Deploy to home stations safely. Stay trained and ready. All of us in the U.S. European Command Alliance wish you well.*

**ONE TEAM - ONE MISSION!**

**GEORGE A. JOULWAN  
SACEUR**



55th Signal Company (Combat Camera)



55th Signal Company (Combat Camera)



55th Signal Company (Combat Camera)



Spc. Bryan Driver



Gen. William W. Crouch congratulates Col. Sergei Generalov, Russian Brigade commander at the 1st Armored Division/ 1st Infantry Division Transfer of Authority ceremony held Nov. 10 at Eagle Base. Crouch, who replaced Adm. T. Joseph Lopez as commander of the NATO implementation forces last week, says IFOR will remain focused on implementing the provisions of the Dayton Peace Accords.

## Crouch takes command of IFOR from Navy's Lopez

SARAJEVO — General William W. Crouch replaced Admiral T. Joseph Lopez as commander of the NATO implementation forces in a ceremony here late last week.

NATO Secretary General Javier Solana, in brief remarks, reiterated IFOR's dedication to the stabilization of the country and the enforcement of the military aspects of the Dayton Peace Accord. "NATO will not abandon Bosnia," he said.

Gen. George A. Joulwan, Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, then stepped to the microphone and described the day's events as historic.

Joulwan commended the efforts of the individual IFOR members. "To the IFOR troops ... we are all grateful for your sacrifice, your brilliant performance of duties. Maintain your focus. I expect a smooth changeover of headquarters. Remember, we are part of one team with one mission, and that mission continues."

Lopez, the outgoing IFOR commander, then spoke about his experience leading the multinational forces of Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR.

"This (operation) is absolutely seamless in the way it has functioned while overcoming every language and equipment difficulty. We together have captured the spirit of one team — one

mission," he said.

Lopez took a reflective view of the mission. "I sense historians will view this unprecedented cooperation as a model for future peace implementation operations," he said.

Lopez also addressed the citizens of Bosnia-Herzegovina. "The international community has tried to fulfill its promise of giving peace a chance by stopping the fighting, separating your former warring military forces, silencing the weapons of war that once threatened you and placing them in storage, helping you organize your national elections and install your first new government in four years," he said.

"You now have a chance. Opportunity is at your feet. But IFOR cannot bring you lasting peace. You, the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina, must demand peace and forgo hatred," Lopez said. "Do not do this for yourself, do it for your children, do it for your grandchildren, and future generations to come. You know as well as I, true peace must come from within."

Lopez concluded his remarks by wishing his successor, Gen. Crouch, the best of luck and addressing, one last time, the individuals who served under his command.

"To all the IFOR soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, and civilians who have

been separated from their families and had their personal lives disrupted ... I thank you. There has been no higher honor in my career than to have served as your commander," he said.

Crouch accepted the reigns of the IFOR command with a strong commitment to building upon the work of his predecessors. "We will continue the same steady, solid performance accomplished by professional troopers that we all witnessed over this past year. Because of the thorough overlap we are ready and we will remain focused on the implementation of the provisions of the Dayton Peace Accords. And particularly upon the protection of our forces," he said.

Crouch concluded the ceremony with a resolute statement about what the future holds for IFOR.

"With 25 nations contributing troops to this headquarters, we are truly representative of the multinational effort which has defined this operation from the very beginning," Crouch said.

"We know that we have a mandate. We understand the mission. And we intend to fully implement the terms of the Dayton Peace Accord in the same evenhanded, professional manner as we all have seen for the past 11 months. All policies, procedures, and standing orders remain in effect," he said.

# Medics make mountain house calls

By Staff Sgt. BRENDA BENNER  
100th MPAD

HILL 1326 — Life on a remote hilltop, away from the hustle and bustle of most base camps is a welcome experience for the newly arrived 1st Infantry Division medics of Company C, 299th Forward Support Battalion.

The medics are assigned to two week rotations so everyone can get the experience of operating a clinic without all the amenities and staff found at the camps.

Spc. Charles D. Spotts, 24, of Deer Park, Ala., a medic with two-and-a-half years of experience, has enjoyed his stay on the mountain top and looks forward to his next rotation.

"Being way up here, we're the only immediate medical help around," Spotts said. "We have to see to every medical need. There are no doctors or physician's assistants on site."

Currently, these "mountain medics" can treat most minor injuries such as cuts, burns, sprains and illnesses at any time. They are on 24-hour call, and live in their makeshift clinic.

In a matter of a few days, they will have the ability to handle more serious cases as their telemedicine videoconferencing system gets set up and operational.

"It will link us with the doctors at the hospital at Guardian Base," Spotts said. "They'll be able to visually inspect the injuries and offer guidance as they observe any treatment procedures we're performing."

Sgt. Richard E. Joyner, 29, from Washington, D.C., agrees that it's the next best thing to having a doctor at their sides.

"The system has six different specialty cameras for viewing inside the ears, mouth, eyes and surfaces of the skin," Joyner said. "Doctors can diagnose a patient without being here in person."

The medics anticipate a few minor cold weather injuries attributed

to living and working at the higher altitude, especially with winter on its way. Hill 1326 has already experienced snow twice the past two weeks.

"Our major concerns are frostbite and injuries caused by slips and falls on the ice," Joyner said. "The nights are very cold and the wind really picks up. A lot of frost appears overnight. Accidents on the iced walkways can happen at any time."

Daily life on the mountain is peaceful and slow paced. The medics have plenty of time to read up on medical procedures and information. In their spare time, they practice both diagnosis and treatment procedures.

"We practice initiating intravenous injections," Spotts said. "It always helps to practice because it's more difficult than it appears. A lot of things have to be just right for a successful procedure."

Incoming medic, Pfc. Christina L. Kunzer, 19, from Plains, Mont., had just arrived at her new assignment and immediately felt she would appreciate the unique opportunity.

"I've been through a lot of field training, but I've never been assigned to a remote location like this," Kunzer said. "We won't have the type of facilities that we normally do, but I think it will be a good experience for me."



Staff Sgt. Brenda Benner

Spc. Charles D. Spotts, a medical specialist with Company C, 299th Forward Support Battalion, 1st Infantry Division, initiates an intravenous injection on Spc. Erica J. Jones of the 141st Signal Battalion.

## Promotion board on tap

A Department of the Army selection board is scheduled, Jan. 28, to consider soldiers for promotion to master sergeant. The board will review sergeant first class records for possible DA bar to reenlistment and subsequent separation under the Qualitative Management Program.

Eligibility criteria for promotion consideration to master sergeant:

- All sergeants first class with date of rank of July 31, 1994 and earlier with BASD between Jan. 28, 1976 and Jan. 28, 1989 (both dates inclusive).

- Primary Zone date of rank is July 31, 1993 and earlier.

- Secondary Zone date of rank is Aug. 1, 1993 to July 31, 1994.

Eligibility criteria for QMP consideration: All sergeants first class with date of rank of Jan. 31, 1996 and earlier and a BASD of Jan. 31, 1976 or later.

All eligible soldiers should contact the Personnel Services Support Team servicing their area to review their records by Dec. 2.

Points of Contact: Camp Alicia, Staff Sgt. Taft, MSE 553-8301. Camp McGovern, Staff Sgt. Hernandez, MSE 553-8096. Eagle Base, Staff Sgt. Farrow, MSE 551-9024.

## Mental health unit open

The 1st Infantry Division Mental Health Team (Forward) is operational. Soldiers based at Guardian Base will send two-person teams to visit camps within the Task Force area of operations. Appointments may be coordinated through commanders, chaplains, aid stations or as a self-referral. The Team's MSE phone number is 556-4717 which will be covered during routine duty hours. In the event of an emergency, report to the nearest aid station or to your unit leaders. MSE numbers in emergency are 553-2120/2121. These are numbers to the 299th Forward Support Battalion staff duty office who will notify a mental health provider.

Services offered by the Mental Health Team include individual and group counselling, unit surveys, command consultations, medical consultations to aid stations, chaplaincy consultations, crisis intervention and a variety of educational classes. Additional mental health resources are expected by the end of November. An announcement will be made of where these resources will be placed and how to access them.

# Railway bridge in Miricina opens for business

By Capt. MICHAEL H. MIETZNER  
Coalition Press Information  
Center

The East-West railway link across Bosnia-Herzegovina was reestablished recently, when IFOR officials, accompanied by local community leaders, cut a ribbon opening the Bosansko Petrovo Selo railway bridge.

The bridge is located on the Inter Entity Boundary Line just outside the town of Miricina. The railway line between Tuzla and Doboj will provide a robust military line of communication for IFOR, enabling rail travel from Zagreb, Croatia through Bosnia-Herzegovina to Belgrade, Yugoslavia via Volinja, Prijedor, Banja Luka, Doboj, Tuzla and Zvornik. At Zvornik the line leaves Bosnia-Herzegovina as it crosses the Drina River enroute to Belgrade.

Tracks have been repaired to minimum military standard using NATO funds. Military engineers will now be able to move IFOR trains across Bosnia. The way is now clear for International agencies to continue their work to draw respective national governments together to discuss opening up all the lines. Upgrading of the line and the installation of telecommunication systems and signal safety equipment can now be planned in earnest.

The Bosansko Petrovo Selo railway bridge reconstruction was the

second funded by NATO on the East-West rail line in Bosnia-Herzegovina this year. The first was the Volinja rail bridge, officially opened, June 28, crossing the Una River into Croatia, west of Prijedor. NATO funded repair and replacement work will continue on the line between Doboj and Volinja until early December as part of a contract with the Republika Srpska Rail Directorate.

The Bosansko Petrovo Selo bridge repair was a multinational undertaking. A Federation demining firm, Amphibia, was awarded a NATO demining contract to clear a safe access and working area around the bridge. The Romanian engineer battalion, whose area of responsibility on the rail line stretches from Tuzla to Doboj and down to Maglaj, helped to prepare the damaged bridge to allow civilian contractors to move in. They were followed by a contracted Republika Srpska rail team that removed the rails and ballast from on top of the bridge, allowing easier access and repair of the structure itself. The Hungarian contractor, Hidépítő, worked with Hungarian and IFOR engineers to complete the final repair. The Italian *Reggimento Genio Ferrovieri* (railway engineering regiment) then replaced the rails on

the bridge and repaired other sections of the damaged line to complete the job.

The bridge stands as a testament to the IFOR military engineering effort that has been so noticeable across the entire country this year.

The opening ceremony was a simple but meaningful tribute to all who helped reopen the line. IFOR and local dignitaries gathered at the Hungarian base camp, next to the line at the Miricina stop. As most of the local community watched in the background, a choir of school children from the local school gave a short performance for the delegation. Fourteen year-old Indira Imamovic told the soldiers, through an interpreter, that although most of the children don't normally like soldiers of any type, they were very, very happy to have had IFOR soldiers around to help improve things for their future.

"This work is for your children now, and also for you later as adults. It is to make money for you and to improve your lives," said Brigadier John Moore-Bick, the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps Chief Engineer,

and commander of the project.

Following the choir's performance, dignitaries and many of the soldiers boarded the Italian military work train for the short ride to the bridge. The train was followed by a virtual stampede of small children and teenagers, eager to witness the event on the bridge.

At approximately 1 p.m. Army Corps General Dumitru Cioflina, Chief of the General Staff of the Romanian Armed Forces, cut the traditional ribbon to officially reopen the bridge.

During discussions over lunch with the local head of the community, Irdin Kovacevic, and Cazim Alic, the school principal, it became obvious that there is much more potential work that needed to be done in the community. A number of buildings were in serious need of repair, including the school.

"I am a military engineer. When we see something broken, we have the urge to fix it," Moore-Bick said. "I will be leaving Bosnia with a feeling my job is only half done."



Aiutante Giuseppe Melillo

Military spectators and journalists watch the proceedings at the beginning of ceremonies marking the reopening of the Bosansko Petrovo Selo railway bridge from atop the Italian Reggimento Genio Ferrovieri (railway engineering regiment) work train.

## ■ PERSONALITY OF THE WEEK

# Artillery radar operator keeps game in check

By Sgt. JACK SIEMIENIEC  
350th MPAD

**S**ergeant George Stefurak plays chess. But that's not exactly right — he attacks chess.

Get him in a conversation about the game and he'll lean a little forward in his chair. He thinks his words through carefully, but speaks them intensely. His hands may even jab the air as he makes his point about the game's attraction for him.

"The competition — the competitive spirit — is so similar to sports," said the 22-year-old Seattle native. "I was a natural at focusing all my concentration on the game and still keeping that competitive spirit. A game rides through different emotions. You're losing, then riding a crest as you're winning. You take over an opponent. It's like a battle.

"It requires all your mental efforts and after a long game you definitely feel physically tired, not just mentally."

In high school he went, he says, from his team's worst player his freshman year, to the Washington state champion his sophomore and junior years and came in second his senior year. His sophomore year, he was also the Class B National High School Chess Champion.

"That is one of the major accomplishments in my life, to have improved so quickly," he said.

These days, Stefurak's life finds him at McGovern Base, a member of Battery B, 25th Field Artillery (Target Acquisition Battery). He's a field artillery fire-finding senior radar operator. In Bosnia since Jan. 11, Stefurak has only recently moved to McGovern. He's spent most of 1996 at Checkpoint 55 in the 1st Armored Division's 2nd Brigade sector, providing force protection radar coverage.

There is not much time here for his game, or fitting opponents. Mostly he reads chess books and magazines to keep up on strate-



Sgt. Jack Siemieniec

**Sgt. George Stefurak, a 22-year-old field artillery fire-finding senior radar operator, starts his next battle. Stefurak, from the 25th Field Artillery, is rated as an expert chess player.**

gies. But that's not to say his game is dead since he's been in the Army.

The past three years he has been a member of the Army team in the armed forces chess tournament, winning it all in 1994. If that's not enough, the last two years he has traveled to Amsterdam and Lillehammer, Norway, respectively, competing in the NATO tournament as a member of the U.S. team.

He is also scheduled to travel back to Fort Belvoir, Va., later this month for this year's armed forces chess tournament. If he does well, he will again be part of the U.S. representatives at NATO's tournament in Denmark.

His current ranking in the U.S. Chess Federation is "expert," which is one step below "master."

"My long-range goal in chess is to become a master," he said.

"I have an uncle who played a lot of chess. He's a senior master and a Ph.D. He's my inspiration. I wanted to go to a university and chose chess as an extracurricular activity. I was getting straight As and said 'I

need something more,' and became engulfed," he said.

But one would be wrong to just assume Stefurak is only a studious, one-dimensional person. He was also a high school wrestler who went to his state championships and took third place in the U.S. Army Europe championships at 149 pounds.

Stefurak has literally traveled the world to play chess, but his most memorable game took place in his hometown, while he was still in high school.

It was just a Saturday afternoon tournament at the Seattle Chess Club, the kind he said he participated in every weekend. There were a few masters present, some senior masters and international masters.

He was paired in the first round against a senior master, at least three qualification levels above him in USCF rankings.

"When I played him, I figured I'd lose. But I tried and he actually had to think and struggle," Stefurak said. "But he made a mistake and I was able to capitalize on it and I beat him. No one ever heard of anything like that."

## Native American heritage month celebrated

November is Native American Heritage Month. The theme of this year's observance is "Wisdom of the Sacred Circles: Living, Learning, and Giving Back." This theme emphasizes the respect that Native American culture has

for nature, other cultures, the interdependence of people, and the relationship of people to all living things.

The wisdom of Native American cultures continues to influence all Americans. Our renewed concern for

protecting the environment and the commitment of individuals to serving local communities exemplify this wisdom. Taking personal action to improve the general welfare of everyone in the community has long been a trait

of native American culture and is a virtue that we in the U.S. Forces uphold in taking care of our own.

The observance is an opportunity for those with Native American ancestors to learn more about their heritage.



Sgt. Jack Siemieniec

**1st Lt. Nate Donahoe, assistant intelligence officer, Task Force 1-18, moves unit designators into place on a huge map of the 1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division sector during a rock drill. The brigade was preparing for the transfer of authority from 1st Armored Division to 1st Infantry Division.**

## **TORCH** from page 1

The transfer of authority to Meigs and his 1st Infantry Division covering force came 11 months after Task Force Eagle assumed control from the United Nations Protection Forces of its sector of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

After bridging the flooded Sava River, Dec. 31, the heavily-armed Old Ironsides division built and occupied base camps around north-eastern Bosnia-Herzegovina.

First Armored Division soldiers patrolled the zone of separation and supervised the clearing of mine fields.

They also worked to ensure freedom of movement for the

parties to the agreement, and provided a firm and reassuring presence during Bosnia-Herzegovina's historic national elections, Sept. 14.

In his closing remarks, Nash thanked the soldiers, calling them "the cold, dirty, tired, magnificent soldiers of Task Force Eagle — the men and women on the ground."

Then Nash added a word to family members back home: "This has been a hard deployment.

"There's no way around that. But our families' sacrifices have made a difference," Nash said.

"Task Force Eagle soldiers, by your families giving you up to come to Bosnia, the families here have a chance for a

future.

"You must share the glory with them, because they too are heroes."

Meigs, whose 1st Infantry Division covering force has been preparing for the deployment to Bosnia-Herzegovina since June, thanked the soldiers in Germany, Hungary, and Croatia whose hard work made the deployment run so smoothly.

"These great soldiers, working in the background of events here in the Balkans, seldom get the recognition they deserve for the terrific work they do," Meigs said.

Meigs said the soldiers of the Big Red One are no strangers to hardship and peacekeeping.

"Both the Vanguards and the Blue Spaders, as battalions of the 15th Infantry, served with the U.N. on the border in Macedonia.

"Many of our troopers have multiple tours in harm's way in places like Haiti, Panama, Somalia and Desert Storm."

Meigs said the Big Red One brings to the mission a unit trained in the task, enthusiastic about the opportunity to serve, and convinced they can make a difference.

Nash agreed, calling the 1st Infantry Division a great outfit.

"We know you'll carry on well and surpass all our accomplishments," Nash said. "We're rooting for you and are in total support."