

THE TALON



SERVING THE SOLDIERS OF TASK FORCE EAGLE

OPERATION JOINT GUARD, BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

Perseverance pays off for engineers

See PERSEVERANCE page 12

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Staff Sgt. Anthony Gloriani, an engineer for Company B, 82nd Engineer Battalion, carries an incendiary grenade attached to a wooden block as he is lowered by rope down the section of destroyed railroad ties he will attempt to cut loose from the bridge his unit is repairing.

Photo by Spc. Paul Hougdahl

Words not in Dictionary

CARPERPETUATION (kar' pur pet u a shun) n. The act, when vacuuming, of running over a string or a piece of lint at least a dozen times, reaching over and picking it up, examining it, then putting it back down to give the vacuum one more chance.

DISCONFECT (dis kon fekt') v. To sterilize the piece of candy you dropped on the floor by blowing on it, somehow assuming this will 'remove' all the germs.

ECNALUBMA (ek na lub' ma) n. A rescue vehicle which can only be seen in the rearview mirror.

EFFELITES (eye' ful eyetz) n. Gangly people sitting in front of you at the movies who, no matter what direction you lean in, follow suit.

ELBONICS (el bon' iks) n. The actions of two people maneuvering for one armrest in a movie theater.

ELECELLERATION (el a cel er ay' shun) n. The mistaken notion that the more you press an elevator button the faster it will arrive.

TELECRASTINATION (tel e kras tin ay' shun) n. The act of always letting the phone ring at least twice before you pick it up, even when you're only six inches away.

LACTOMANGULATION (lak' to man gyu lay' shun) n. Manhandling the "open here" spout on a milk container so badly that one has to resort to the 'illegal' side.

PEPPIER (pehp ee ay') n. The waiter at a fancy restaurant whose sole purpose seems to be walking around asking diners if they want ground pepper.

PETONIC (peh ton' ik) adj. One who is embarrassed to undress in front of a household pet.

PHONESIA (fo nee' zhuh) n. The affliction of dialing a phone number and forgetting whom you were calling just as they answer.

PUPKUS (pup' kus) n. The moist residue left on a window after a dog presses its nose to it.

UP FRONT -- FORCE PROTECTION

In the previous issue we were talking about force protection and its importance in the Army's arsenal of warfighting enhancements. The first way force protection enhances a unit's warfighting capabilities is through concealment and deception.

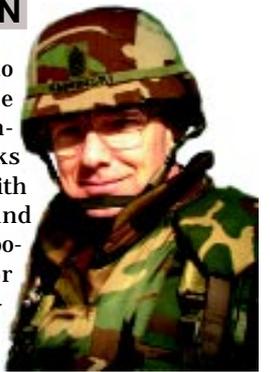
Second, force protection enhances a unit's warfighting capability by keeping soldiers healthy and "fit to fight." Good leaders take care of their soldiers' basic health needs and prevent unnecessary exposure to weakening conditions. They teach soldiers to safeguard their equipment and supplies from loss or damage. An important aspect of safeguarding equipment and supplies is leader supervision of preventative maintenance and quick repair of equipment.

The third and biggest component of force protection is safety. Leaders at all levels must integrate safety as a principal element in everything they do. Because soldiering is tough, demanding and risky business, the potential for danger is always present. An NCO who is trained to accomplish missions with safety in-

tegrated into them will be able to manage the risks associated with soldiering and reduce the potential for danger. Safety in training, planning and operations is crucial to successful combat operations.

For Task Force Eagle to continue being a successful organization capable of accomplishing our diverse missions, our leaders, including NCOs and our soldiers, must focus on ways we can best implement force protection. Furthermore, a dedicated and "target lock" type focus on these three components of force protection is key. Leaders trained in force protection will be able to manage the hazards and risks inherent in soldiering. Are you all with me? See you all up front!!

Command Sgt. Maj. S. L. Kaminski
First Infantry Division (Forward)



Road hazards

You do not have to be "In The Box" long to realize that the road system in Bosnia-Herzegovina is a world unto itself, fraught with dangers. Many of our Task Force Eagle soldiers are driving these roads every day and are a tremendous source of information. It is time to become proactive in accident prevention.

At the end of each patrol, the patrol commander debriefs the base camp battle staff on the results of the patrol. Take it one step further. Backbrief road conditions, populated areas, the time of day you passed through the populated area, etc. Highlight the populated areas on this map. Start a log for each highlighted area indicating the time you passed through and what the conditions were like.

Now what to do with this information. What we are building here is a hazards map for your area. When you get tasked to conduct a patrol through a certain area, you first plot your route and determine a tentative timeline when you will be where. Mark the hazardous areas on each strip map and pass them out to the drivers. Discuss each area and what to expect. This is the information that you got from the hazardous area log book and the camp hazard map. Discuss what actions you are going to take at each danger spot to reduce the risk.

Maj. Gary R. Spegal, First Infantry Division Safety Officer

THE TALON

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Read and pass along -- a Talon is a terrible thing to waste



Soldiers from Company D, Task Force 1-41, set out in their Bradley Fighting Vehicle on a 'Demon run.'

Photo by Spc. Susanne Aspley

By Spc. Susanne Aspley
364th MPAD

CAMP DOBOL -- At least once a week, Company D, Task Force 1-41, lets all hell break loose. Out roll the grumbling tracks of the Bradley Fighting Vehicles, unleashed for a 'Demon Run.' "This is what the Mechanized Infantry is all about," said 1st Lt. Mark Siekman, 2nd Platoon leader, Co. D. "It just feels right to be in that turret."

The Bradley brings to life all three symbols of the 1st Armored Division worn on the soldier's shoulder. The tank tread, gun and lightning flash representing mobility, power and speed. "Our 'Demon Runs' are a display of force. They let people know that we are here and have the ability to roll these guns at any time," said Siekman.

Throughout the Zone of Separation (ZOS), the missions of Co. D are diversified. The Fort Riley, Kansas soldiers set up compliance checkpoints known as 'Demon Strikes.' Numerous mounted and dismounted patrols, are conducted anytime, day or night. The 'Demon Dawgs' are also responsible for manning the small satellite camps at location Sierra Ten near Camp Dobil and the Eagles Nest several hours from Camp Demi.

However, nothing seems to beat taking

the Bradleys out for a spin. "42 tons of fun," said 1st Lt. Sean Hunter, Co. D executive officer, describing the big guns. "The runs are my favorite part of the job here. The sound, the smell, everything, it really gets the blood pumping."

A Bradley crew usually consists of a driver, gunner and the Bradley commander. "We are trained as war fighters, yet this is a peacekeeping mission. So the runs are good practice for us to maintain proficiency. Maneuvering a Bradley down a narrow road is very different than taking it

cross country," said Siekman. "But my drivers are skilled and I wouldn't want to be in Bosnia with any other platoon than the one I have now."

"We have enough American soldiers and fire power here to take care of

our own if anything should escalate. Taking the Bradleys out keeps people aware that we have overwhelming force behind us," said Sgt. Michael Templeton, a gunner with 2nd Plt. "But the main reason I want this peace to work is so we (SFOR) don't have to come back here."

Templeton, a 29-year-old Desert Storm vet, said some of his friends back in Phoenix, Arizona are amazed at what SFOR is accomplishing here. "I like to think we are doing some good," he said. "I would rather be doing this kind of mission than having people shooting at me."

"Our 'Demon Runs' are a display of force. They let people know that we are here and have the ability to roll these guns at any time,"

---- 1st Lt. Mark Siekman

Info briefs

Go postal

Items mailed from in theater must be sent in the correct manner. If an item is sent free mail, it must have the deployed return address of the sender. This should include the sender's name, military grade and complete military address in the upper-left corner.

Mail that does not have a complete return address will be treated as "undeliverable matter," and returned to the sender's address, if known. If the sender's address is not known, the matter will be treated as dead mail, and will be forwarded to the U.S. Postal Service mail recovery center.

Additionally, the word free must be entered in the sender's handwriting in the upper-right corner.

Matter mailed MPS (Military Postal Service) must also have the deployed return address in the upper-left corner.

Mail that does not have the correct return address will be treated as "undeliverable matter." If the sender's address is not known, then the matter will be treated as "dead IDS correspondence" and disposed of by regulatory guidelines given to the operational postal activity.

Additionally, MPS must be entered in the sender's handwriting on the upper-right corner.

TFE homepage

Check out the latest changes to the Task Force Eagle homepage and letters of encouragement from families and friends around the world at: www.1id.army.mil

Watch your Buddy

The Talon recently received an email regarding a recent cover which pictured a soldier sitting under a 10-ton truck changing an air filter. The author of the letter, a physician's assistant, noted that the subject of the picture was not wearing safety goggles. The Talon staff appreciates the soldier's keen eye, and would like to remind Task Force Eagle soldiers that it is everyone's job to make on-the-spot corrections. Look out for your fellow soldier.

On-the-job training

By Pfc. Wendy R. Tokach
129th MPAD

EAGLE BASE -- There are a few things that soldiers learn in training that they must stay proficient in — but hope they will never have to use.

While convoying back from Camp Bedrock, four soldiers found themselves in a situation where they let the training take over. Midway between Comanche and Eagle Base the soldiers were flagged down by a Bosnian civilian with a horse-drawn cart. Laying inside the cart was an elderly man who was unconscious, not breathing and who had no heart beat.

The soldiers sprang into action and stopped traffic along the road as Cpl. Edward D. Cantrell, 1st Platoon, 108th Military Police Company, ran back to the gate to call for medical support. The others evaluated the situation, and, determining that the man had had a heart attack, started CPR immediately.

"We hesitated for just a moment but then we just did it," said Spc. Chad A. Cook, 1st Plt., 108th MP Co. "I never thought that I would have to do it. It was the worst experience of my entire life."

"We knew what we had to do from our training at the combat lifesaver course," said Pfc. Jason W. Jones, 1st Plt., 108th MP Co. "Even though he was a civilian, I just kept thinking 'what if this was a sol-

"We hesitated for just a moment but then we just did it. I never thought that I would have to do it. It was the worst experience of my entire life."

---- Spc. Chad A. Cook

dier?" — he could have been a soldier."

Jones and Cook traded off with the mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, and Spc. Taj Linzels, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Infantry Division, gave the chest compressions. While the soldiers were hard at work trying to revive the man, a crowd started to gather around the scene and the horse attached to the cart started to panic. Cook then had to conduct crowd control while rotating in with the mouth to mouth resuscitation.

"It was kind of weird because you always wonder what you would do in that type of situation," said Cook. "Even though it was

the worst experience, if I had to do it over again, I would, for anyone."

The medical support arrived, took over the CPR, and transported the man to Comanche Base. They were unable to resuscitate the man.

"I felt bad we couldn't revive him, but it felt good knowing that with the stress of the situation, we did everything we were trained to do and everything we could," said Cantrell.

The combat lifesaver course training the soldiers had made their actions second nature, said Sgt. 1st Class Jeffrey Zack, 1st Plt., 108th MP Co. "It was instinctive -- no matter what nationality the person was, I think that they would have done it for anyone. If soldiers are given the chance to think for themselves and take the initiative, they'll do it. Giving the man CPR was a good example of that."



Spc. Chad A. Cook, 1st Platoon, 108th Military Police Company, completes the last class of the combat lifesaver course by giving another soldier an IV.

Photo by Pfc. Wendy R. Tokach

Get on track

By Spc. David Boe
364th MPAD

MCGOVERN BASE - This may come as a surprise to some, but there are a few jobs in the Army that are not fun. As a matter of fact, they're downright nasty. Case in point: the tracked vehicle.

The track has revolutionized warfare in the 20th century. By attaching caterpillar tracks to an armored body with a gun, armies were able to drastically change the flow of battle. From Cambrei, Poland, the Ardennes, Chinese Farm, to Kuwait, the tank, using tracks, has dominated the battlefield. From a historical perspective, the track is an important turning point in the art of war. From a mechanical perspective though, the track is, in the words of one M1A1 crewmember, a *real* pain.

"Every tanker hates working on the track," said Spc. Armando J. Pastora, 35, an M1A1 gunner with Company B, 1st Battalion, 77th Armor, McGovern Base. "That's the most difficult labor we do."

It's been a difficult two weeks for Pastora and the rest of the crew of B-35. It started when they discovered all but two of their tank's left rear hub bolts were sheared and the sprocket was worn. They broke the track, replaced the worn sprocket, and ordered a new hub. Meanwhile, the company started night operations, moving out at 10 p.m. and staying out until 7 a.m., then to bed. However, after about a week of this, B-35 was scheduled for annual servicing. So, after the last night patrol, said Pastora, instead of going to bed the crew went straight to its tank and prepared it for servicing.

"We had to follow the schedule," said Pastora. "We had to do what we had to do."

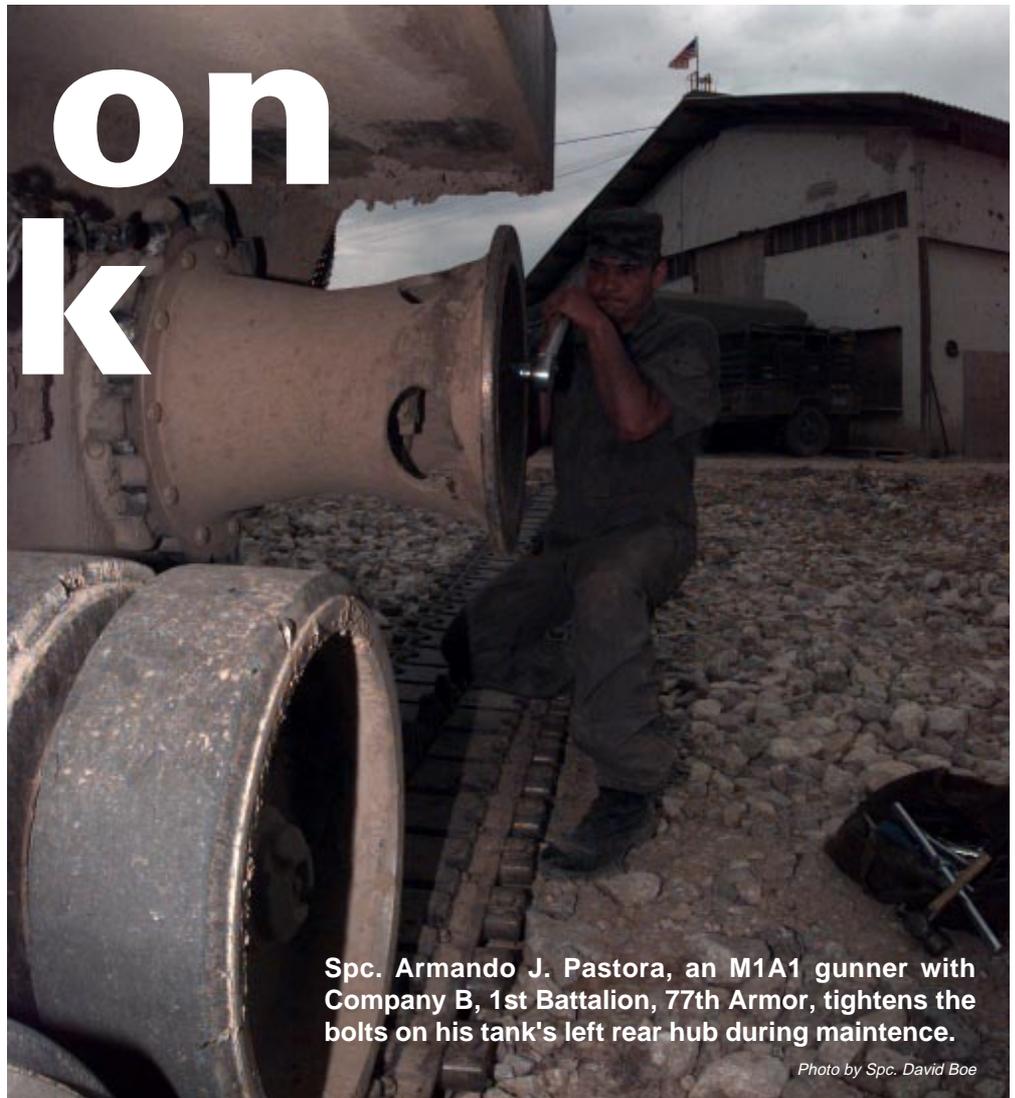
Staying up after a full night's patrolling was the easy part. In order to allow room for the crane to lift the tank's engine out the tank had to be moved forward about 20 feet. This meant re-attaching the sprocket and track - which had been left off in anticipation of the new hub coming in.

"We put it all back together - it's still broken, though," said B-35's commander, Staff Sgt. Lawrence E. Thomas. "We had to work on it for two hours just to move it 20 feet."

And that's the problem, said Thomas - time. It's not that it's extremely hard work, said the 28-year-old Niagara Falls, N.Y., native, but rather just time consuming.

"Everything dealing with this piece of equipment is heavy," said Thomas. "So you need quite a few guys to lift most of this stuff. Like the hub, for instance. Once the new one comes in and we put both sprockets on it, it's going to take four, maybe five guys to put it back in place."

The sheer weight of the equipment, said Thomas, requires paying attention to what one is doing. Safety is a key concern.



Spc. Armando J. Pastora, an M1A1 gunner with Company B, 1st Battalion, 77th Armor, tightens the bolts on his tank's left rear hub during maintenance.

Photo by Spc. David Boe

"You have to watch out for basically fingers and toes," he said. "If that hub falls on your toe or finger, you've lost it, so you have to take safety into consideration."

Long hours, weight, and potential loss of digits make working on the tracks one of the least favorite jobs he and his men have to do on the tank. "On a scale of one to 10, with 10 being the roughest and most frustrating thing, the track would be a 10," said Thomas.

"It's a 12," said Pfc. William P. Traylor, B-35's 23-year-old driver. "The tracks, the sprockets, and the saddle bolts are the three things I hate working on the most with this tank."

A number of things can cause a track to be thrown or get worn, said Pfc. Abraham L. Cyrus, Jr., B-35's loader. Certain weather conditions, such as mud or just taking a turn wrong, can make a track slip right off. "Out here (in Bosnia-Herzegovina) the main thing we worry about are the track pads rubbing up against the hard gravel and rock," he said. "It's hard rubber and breaks off pretty easy." He points to the unrolled track in front of him, laying across the rock, not unlike the backbone of some large fossil. Several of its rubber pads are chipped and worn down. Next to the track is the rusted sprocket the crew replaced, its 11 teeth worn down to rounded, ineffectual molars.

"Tankers take pride in having the best tank in line, and that's what you want," said Thomas. "With our vehicle like this we have nothing to say - but it *will* get fixed."

Getting it fixed, though, will mean more work hours, more sweat, and more flexibility for the soldiers. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, the tankers have to find the time in between its many peace-keeping missions to work on the tank. Sometimes, like today, it means staying up after a mission is complete. But the B-35 crew has learned to expect this and it doesn't bother them.

"I've gotten to the point where I just deal with it," said Traylor. "I have to, it's my job."

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Jerry A. Weber

129th MPAD

GLAMOC, **Bosnia-Herzegovina** – An event rarely seen since World War II happened recently in a now-peaceful valley, which was stripped of its inhabitants during the Balken war that tore this country apart. Two countries were again working together, brought together as friends.

The valley's peace was shattered as the roar of howitzers echoes off the hills. The U.S. and Russian artillery, guns pointed at each other for years, were now firing side by side again as they participate in a combined live fire exercise.

A little camp called Centaur Outpost, located in the British sector, hosted 1st Battalion, 6th Field Artillery, stationed at Camp McGovern, and the 2nd Battery, Independent Russian Airborne Brigade from Ugljevik, June 21-27.

"We believe this is the first time both American and Russian guns have fired together and not against each other since World War II," said Lt. Col. Morris M. Young, commander of 1-6 FA. "We were scheduled to qualify with our howitzers, and asked our Russian counterparts if they would like to join us."

As each minute went by, the barriers that stood between these two armies for so long continued to crumble. The days that followed were action packed as the countries joined together in checking equipment, firing the 50-caliber machine gun and launching round after round downrange during artillery qualification.

"I think that it went very well and it is good to have the opportunity to work with Americans," said Russian 1st Capt. Alpaton Audrey, 2nd Battery commander.

"Several of our young soldiers are too young to remember when we were training to fight against the Russians," said Capt. John E. Seamon, Battery A commander. "They just don't realize the importance of this exercise and what this means for the rest of the world."

The two artillery units performed several combined fire missions while completing their qualifications. One of the missions required that both countries' rounds hit the impact area at the same time. The coordination started with the combined fire support elements locating and tracking the same target. They worked side by side, but each team had their own method of finding the impact area. The U.S. equipment is more electronic and computerized where the Russians do their computations mainly by hand. "We use different methods but they're both very accurate," said Russian Col. Burisev Valeri, Russian Airborne Brigade Artillery chief. The two units then relayed the data to the guns through their respective communication networks. The Russians fired their howitzers seconds before the M109s exploded with their faster-moving rounds. Time after time the rounds impacted simultaneously, demonstrating the coordination between the two fire direction centers.

During the exercise, soldiers had the opportunity to fill the roles of their counterparts. Staff Sgt. Thomas P. Crompton served as the section chief for Russian soldiers standing in for his regular crew. He instructed them as they loaded the round, set the elevation and direction, placed in the gun powder, set the primer and waited for the command to fire. He guided them every step of the way until the pull of the tail (firing of the howitzer) and then congratulated them on a job well done.

"There is no difference between our two countries in the way we complete our mission," said Russian Maj. Gen. Alexander Grekhnov, chief of Airborne Artillery. "The Americans are better equipped but we work very well together."

"We have improved our good cooperation," said Valeri. "The soldiers are talking together and it says a lot about the future and our cooperation together."

By the end of the exercise the soldiers were eating together, and trading everything that could be traded.

"It was neat to have ordinary units come together and just fall in together and get along as good as these guys did," said Seamon. "It was obvious that soldiers are soldiers no matter what country they are from."





*From top right, clockwise, Staff Sgt. Thomas P. Crompton holds a round as the firing cone is attached by a Russian soldier during a combined live fire exercise with the Russians at Glamoc, Bosnia-Herzegovina... Crompton watches a Russian soldier load the powder into an M109A3 155mm, self-propelled howitzer... Staff Sgt. Edward L. Brennan acquires a target for a night fire exercise... 2nd Lt. Jacob B. Balsley, IV, listens to direction on using the Russian fire support equipment ... **Background, An M109A3 155 mm self-propelled howitzer fires a round downrange. All American soldiers are with 1st Battalion, 6th Field Artillery and all Russian soldiers are with 2nd Battery, Independent Russian Airborne Brigade.***

Financial guardian angels

By Spc. David Boe
364th MPAD

MCGOVERN BASE -- It's a classic scene from the movie, "It's a Wonderful Life." The main character, George Bailey, played by James Stewart, rescues the angel Clarence from the icy river. As the two dry off in a nearby office, George, still skeptical about his companion's heavenly credentials, asks Clarence if he happens to have \$8,000, to which Clarence replies that in heaven, money isn't needed.

"Well, it comes in pretty handy down here," says George.

Another George, Sgt. George A. Cortez, agrees.

"Oh ya, it does come in handy down here," said the 23-year-old Chino, Calif., native who works as the military pay NCOIC at the McGovern Base finance office. "It really does make the world go round."

While it isn't Bedford Falls, McGovern Base has its fair share of soldiers needing financial support — from something as simple as cashing a check, to needing back pay for BAQ.

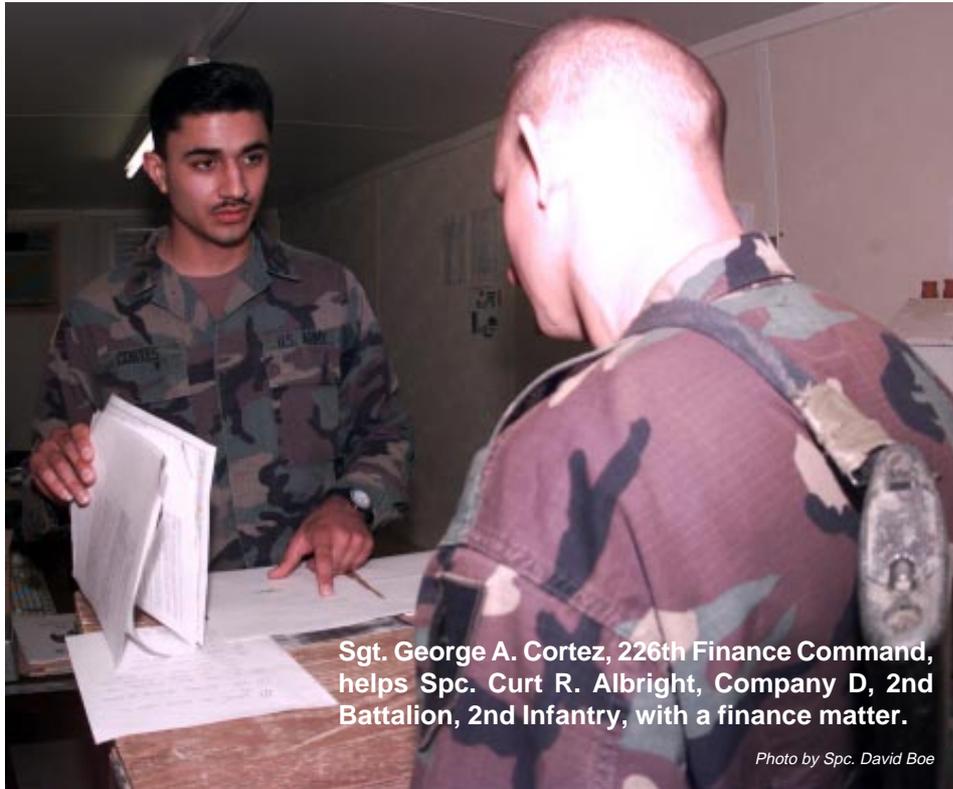
Cortez, detached from the 266th Finance Command out of Germany, said it's his job to make sure other soldiers don't have the same problems as George Bailey — especially when deployed. "We try to keep the soldier happy," he said. "We want to put them at ease with their finances."

"It's a morale factor," said Staff Sgt. Michael A. Welsh, a National Guardsman from the 130th Finance Battalion, Raleigh, N.C. "When a soldier has a pay problem and he can't support his family the way he wants back home, he gets pretty stressed out. If we can fix that problem then he can focus on the mission again."

Welsh is in charge of the five-member finance team at McGovern, which is comprised of three National Guard soldiers from the 130th, and two active-duty soldiers from the 266th. Together they not only solve tricky financial problems, but provide the soldiers of Task Force 1-77 with basic financial support, such as check cashing, casual pay, allotments, and entitlements. But, said Welsh, their contribution to the peacekeeping mission doesn't stop there. "We pay for the bread at Camp Colt, JAG claim payments, leases, telephone services," he said. "There's a lot of money - cash flow - going out."

All the different missions they have done, said Welsh, have been a boon for the Guardsmen, who are experiencing their first deployment to a forward area with Operation Joint Guard. "The experience that the Reserve and National Guard soldiers have gotten here is tremendous," said Welsh. "We never would get this opportunity back in the rear."

Notwithstanding the many off-base missions they do participate in, most of the finance team's services are performed inside



Sgt. George A. Cortez, 226th Finance Command, helps Spc. Curt R. Albright, Company D, 2nd Battalion, 2nd Infantry, with a finance matter.

Photo by Spc. David Boe

their office at McGovern Base. Located in a tiny, rectangular complex next to the task force headquarters, the finance office can barely hold five customers at a time. Sometimes the lines extend outside onto the boardwalk, especially on paydays.

"Paydays are pretty hectic," said Spc. Kelly F. Cook, a military pay specialist with the 130th, who shares cashier duty with her co-workers. "And when we have bazaars, people procrastinate

and wait until the day of the bazaar to come and get their marks or cash a check."

This is the first overseas deployment for Cook, a five-year Guard veteran with three years active duty under her belt. She said she particularly likes going on the off-base pay missions because it helps remind her what Operation Joint Guard is all about.

"It's exciting," said Cook. "I mean, this is what we signed on the dotted line for -- it's what we're here for."

Exciting or not, the peacekeeping mission loses its humanitarian luster if a soldier is having pay problems. Because of this, said Cortez, he tries to put himself in his fellow soldiers' shoes. "If someone gets their pay messed up, I say, 'Well, how would I feel if I got my pay messed up?' he said. "Then I realize how important it is to do our job."

It's not a one-way street though, said Cortez. In order for them to do their job effectively soldiers and their chains of command need to be educated on how the finance process works. Cortez said that, unfortunately, most soldiers only find out about finance after they have a problem. Many of these problems could have been avoided within the chain of command.

"That's something an NCO or senior NCO, and the whole chain of command should know about, so they help their soldiers out," said Cortez. "That way, they get the problem fixed."

"We need documents for everything we do," said Cortez. "As long as they keep up with their part (providing the correct documents), we'll get it done through ours."

But it's not just documentation, said Cortez. It's also caring. "You have to sit down with the soldier and show him that you care," he said. "And we do, because we see their faces every day, in the PX, in the mess hall. We live with them."

Such an attitude is appreciated by at least one TF 1-77 soldier. Spc. Curt R. Albright, Company D, 2nd Battalion, 2nd Infantry, said he came to the McGovern finance team with a "complex issue" that finance in Germany had failed to get resolved.

"It's only taken me about a week to get this problem resolved," said Albright. "They've been extraordinarily helpful."

Personal Security Detachment



Spc. Owen Powell, Personal Security Detachment, prepares his weapon before heading out on patrol with Lt. Col. Robert Rush, TF 1-41 commander.

Photo by Spc. Susanne Aspley

By Spc. Susanne Aspley
364th MPAD

CAMP DOBOL -- Lt. Col. Robert Rush, Task Force 1-41 commander, has other things on his mind — like a whole task force. The last thing he needs to worry about is a militant nutcase in the hills taking potshots. Under the watchful eyes of the Personal Security Detachment, made up of military police from 2nd Squad, 4th Platoon, 977th MP Company, the commander's safety and protection are well in hand.

Whether in downtown Tuzla, on the road or in a secluded mountain village, the responsibility of protecting the battalion commander leaves no room for complacency. "Situational awareness is the biggest factor," said Staff Sgt. John Challis, leader of the 'Rat Pack' out of Fort Riley, Kansas. "We provide security wherever he goes, mounted, dismounted, or walking through a town. We need to stay aware of everything, no matter how small it may appear to be."

"(Lieutenant Colonel) Rush told us that if there is ever a problem in the task force sector, he will be in the middle of the heat, and so will we," said Pfc. Robert Neill,

gunner in the lead vehicle. Neill's main mission is to scan the area, parked or moving, for any unfriendly movement. "If the situation arises, I would deploy my trusty Mark 19 (MK19), but hopefully I never will."

Spc. Russell Johnson is the driver for the battalion commander and the only Headquarters Company soldier on the squad of military police. "When I was cho-

"He's not afraid of anything yet he would never risk our safety. He just wants to get a real feel for what is going on."

---- Staff Sgt. John Challis

sen to be on the detachment, I moved out of my conex and into a tent to be with the rest of the guys, even though I didn't have to. But the colonel (Lieutenant Colonel Rush) said that the right thing to do isn't always the thing you want to do." When asked why he was chosen to be the driver, Johnson shrugged and said "I guess the first sergeant saw that I

could do more than one thing at once."

The point man for the convoy is Sgt. Andrew Gogel, also known as Sgt. Compass. As the lead element, he is involved in planning routes, checking the mine overlay maps and checking the fire support overlay to ensure coverage. He said he is currently trying to learn how to read the commander's mind. "We're basically always on call, 24 hours a day," he said. "If the commander decides to go somewhere, we need to grab our stuff and go. When we return from a mission, we immediately get ready to go out again. Sometimes it is high stress, sometimes low, but there is no other person in the task force I'd rather work for."

"One time we came across about 15 vehicles filled with VRS soldiers. All I could see were AK47s. (Lieutenant Colonel) Rush gets out and checks their paper work to see if they were authorized," said Sgt. Kenneth Walker. "One time we walked nearly a mile to inspect some unexploded ordnance. He's not afraid of anything yet he would never risk our safety. He just wants to get a real feel for what is going on."

Challis said his squad remains on top by staying focused. "We can't afford to fall into complacency," he said.

Over 19 million served



Staff Sgt. Tony V. Conner, Eagle Base dining facility noncommissioned officer in charge, inspects some salad bar items before they are set out.

Photo by Staff Sgt. Vonny Rohloff

By Staff Sgt. Vonny Rohloff
364th MPAD

EAGLE BASE -- Over 19 million have been served since December 1995. Not McDonald's burgers, but meals in the Task Force Eagle area. That figures out to approximately 31,000 meals a day, said Sgt. 1st Class Kevin Tatem, non-commissioned officer in charge of Task Force Eagle Food Service.

Tatem, Warrant Officer Gregory Scott, food advisor, and Staff Sgt. James Prince comprise the 1st ID food service section and are in charge of food service at nine major base camps and seven remote sites for Task Force Eagle. There are also at least two food service specialists at each camp who function as the liaison between the U.S. Army and the Brown and Root run-dining facility.

No longer called a mess hall, which conjures up an image of food slopped on a plate, the eating establishment is now known as the Dining Facility (DFAC). Brown and Root is contracted by the military to run the DFAC, but must maintain military standards of nutrition and sanitation. Staff Sgt. Tony V. Connor, HHC, 1st ID, is the non-commissioned officer in charge at the Eagle Base DFAC and monitors standards there.

Why does the Army contract out the food service operation? "It is cheaper and less military personnel need to be deployed," said Tatem. This is a multinational peace-keeping mission, so food is served to 22 dif-

ferent categories of people, including contractors, Department of Defense civilians, U.S. Army, Air Force, Navy and Marine personnel, and other nationalities.

"Almost everyone in the task force is authorized to eat without any problem," Tatem said. "But there are many people who have to reimburse the U.S. Government for the meals they consume, depending on what country they are from and who they work for." This results in the sign-in sheets and paperwork Prince has to sort out.

"It is a challenge to try to meet all the creative needs and wants of all the different diners on all the base camps," Tatem said. "It is a unique challenge. It is easy to put out meals, but to put out meals everyone will enjoy is a different situation."

Spc. Tina Graham, HHC, 1st ID, is trained as a cook, but works as a food service representative in the Eagle Base DFAC. "I would like the soldiers to come and talk with us personally about their problems with their food," she said. "That way they will not go back to their unit complaining. We will try to fix it as best we can."

As an example, Graham said, someone asked if a macaroni salad could be made without ham so it would be palatable for a vegetarian diet. Those types of suggestions are considered.

They receive 30 to 150 comment cards each day and take into consideration all of the requests and comments. "We look to the

combined efforts of the military and Brown and Root and work together to enhance the building, the art work, the layout of the dining room and the food," Tatem said.

The task force food service and Brown and Root are working together to find healthier ways for the soldiers deployed down here to eat. "We want healthy heart-type menus and vegetarian menus along with anything else the soldiers want to try. We want to make sure everyone has the choice they want, specifically those soldiers who are concerned about having a nutritionally-sound diet," Tatem said.

For example, they are looking at bringing in grilled chicken breast products and cold cut sandwiches to get away from short order fast food. They would like to try some menu items that would be better for the soldier such as sherbets instead of ice milk. The trend is to reduce calories and saturated fat, as well as find different ways to enhance the meals.

Approximately 24,000 cans of carbonated beverages are consumed throughout the task force daily, compared to 19,400 bottles of water are drunk. Tatem would like to see an increase in the amount of water used, especially as the weather heats up.

According to Tatem, the relationship between the task force food service and Brown and Root is good. The results are a team effort that brings quality food to the troops for breakfast, lunch and dinner, from juice and appetizers to coffee and desserts.

Up and running

By Pfc. Wendy R. Tokach
129th MPAD

CAMP CAISSON — Medical personnel rushed to the weapons storage site, donning their protective masks and Mission Oriented Protective Posture (MOPP) gear for protection before rushing to the aid of the casualties.

Soldiers from Task Force 61 Medical Support participated in the patient decontamination exercise to prepare themselves for what might happen if troops were exposed to a Nuclear, Biological, Chemical (NBC) environment.

"This is part of our mission, to do a patient decontamination if there ever is a need for it" said Capt. Lee Roupe, operations officer of Task Force 61. "If there was a spill or a chemical accident, that's what we are here to do, to decontaminate and treat the patients. A lot of the soldiers have never done an actual full-up MOPP exercise. That is what this is for."

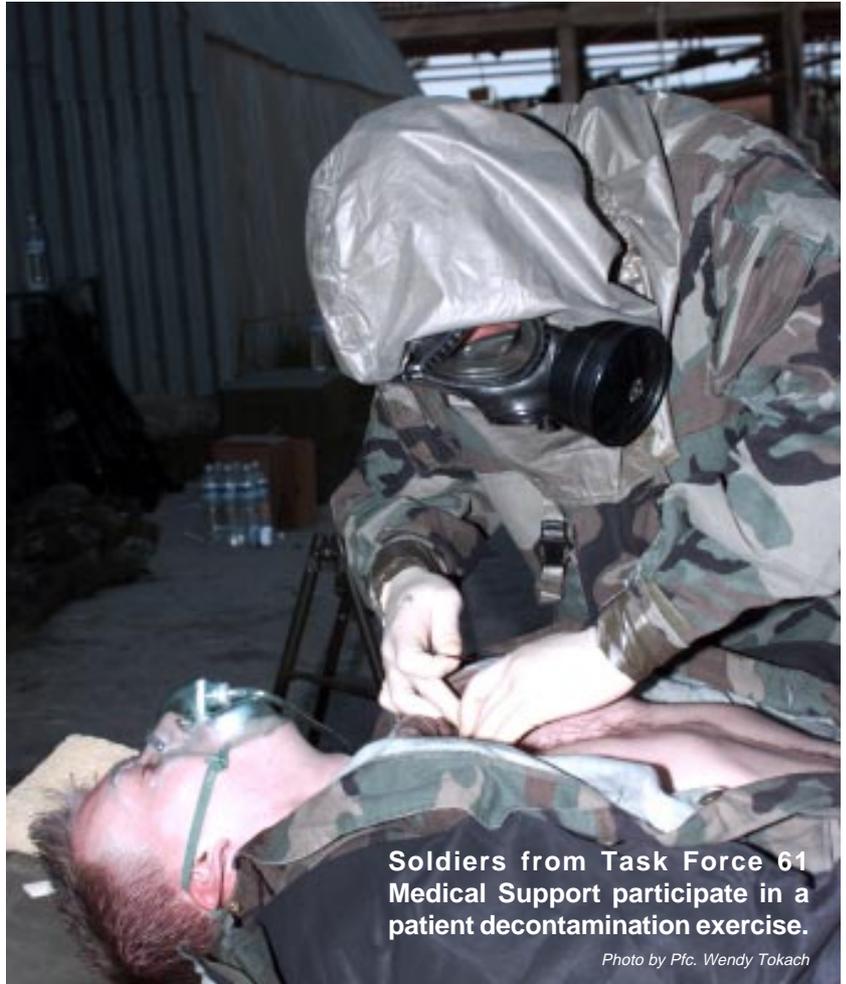
"I think that we have done well, we've been focusing on the patient decontamination mission for the last two months," said Capt. Keith Rigdon, commander of Company C, Area Support Hospital Battalion. "We had an excellent training plan for this; the NCOs have been very involved in teaching our younger soldiers the proper procedures on how to decontaminate patients."

In the first task of the exercise the ambulance team removed the casualties from the decontaminated area of the weapons storage site. They treated any injuries, loaded the patients into ambulances and transported them to the patient decontamination area.

At the patient decontamination site the patients went through stages of decontamination while being treated for any serious wound they may have received besides exposure to the nerve agent.

After the patients were unloaded at the triage point, medical personnel assessed which patients were the worst and treated them in order of the seriousness of their wounds.

"Any type of exposure to chemicals needs observation," Roupe said. The medics are trained to know how severe it is and to know the different types of symptoms based on the type of chemical agent they may have been exposed to."



Soldiers from Task Force 61 Medical Support participate in a patient decontamination exercise.

Photo by Pfc. Wendy Tokach

If the patient needs immediate attention for the wounds, they are sent through the contamination emergency medical technician station where they are treated while still contaminated until they are stable enough to make it through the decontamination station.

At ambulatory decontamination, patients are washed down and all contaminated clothing and MOPP gear are cut off and removed.

After they are deemed 'clean,' patients are either air lifted or sent by ambulance to the Combat Area Support Hospital.

"It is twice as tricky with a patient who needs to be decontaminated but once they are decontaminated they become just a regular patient," Roupe said.

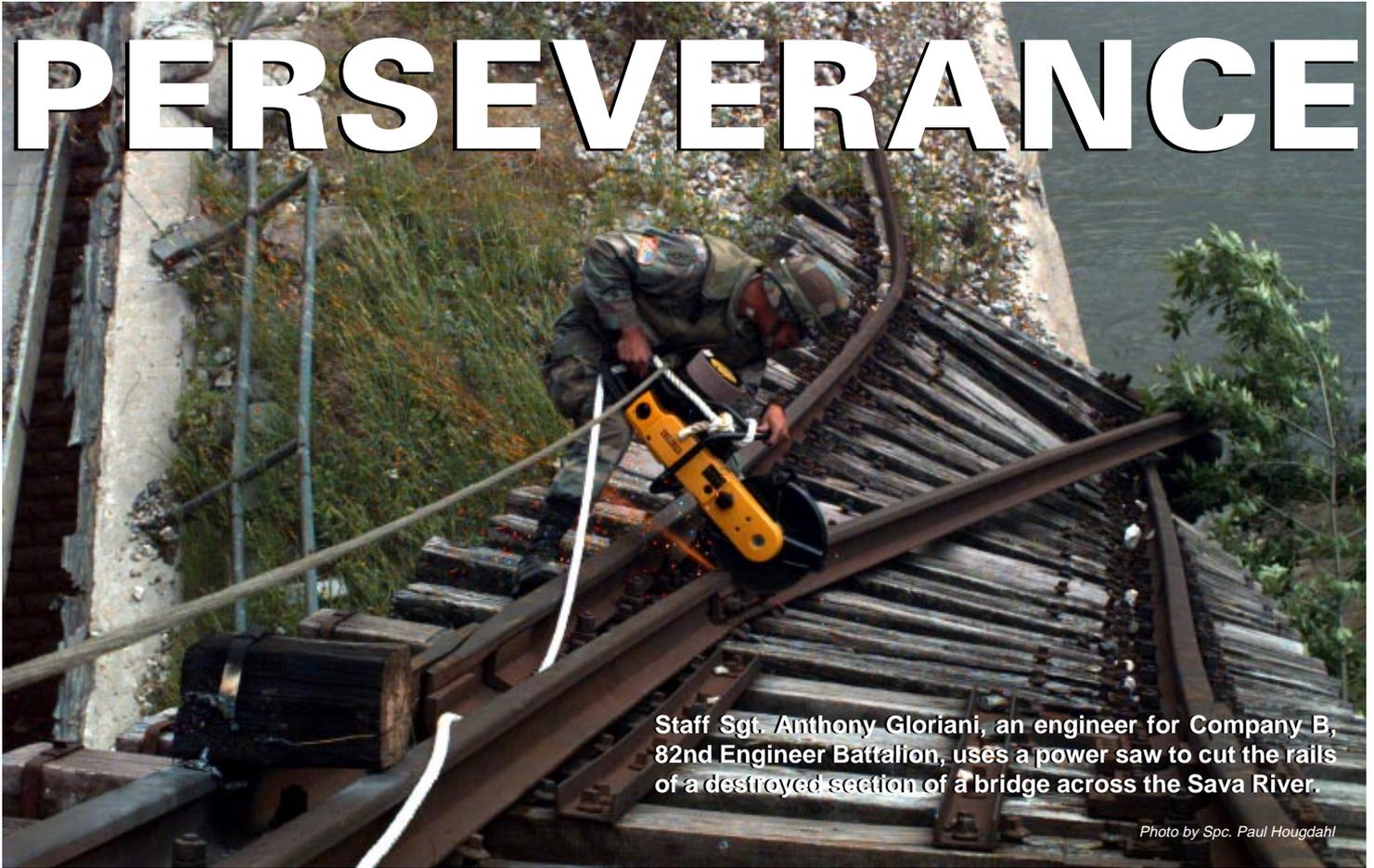
Throughout the exercise the medics were under constant supervision and critique by medical officers.

"We had individuals coming from Germany to critique us, to see what we can improve on so that if anything does happen we are ready and prepared for it," Roupe said. "We trained for this at crawl, walk, run phase. And now we are at the running phase."

Turtles in the Box Featuring Muddy and Dusty by Capt. Peter Buotte



PERSEVERANCE



Staff Sgt. Anthony Gloriani, an engineer for Company B, 82nd Engineer Battalion, uses a power saw to cut the rails of a destroyed section of a bridge across the Sava River.

Photo by Spc. Paul Hougdaahl

By Spc. Paul Hougdaahl
129th MPAD

CAMP SAVA NORTH -- Most engineering soldiers say their job is exciting because of the many different missions they are tasked to do. One day they build a structure, the next day tear a structure down. A smile grows across the face of an engineer when tasked with a new and difficult mission, and truly beams when they are able to use power tools, or better yet, explosives.

While they exude enthusiasm when going about their work, they balance that with a strong sense of safety. They also use their ingenuity and experience with each mission they perform -- but sometimes the strongest quality they display is perseverance.

Perseverance was the key for a recent task performed by members of Company B, 82nd Engineer Battalion, operating out of Camp Colt. This mission involved tearing down two sections of a bridge that were a concern for force protection. The old saying "if at first you don't succeed try, try again" rang true for this mission.

Spanning the Sava is a utilitarian-looking bridge that before the war allowed vehicle and train traffic to flow between the war-ravaged city of Bosanski Brod, Republic of Serbia, and the relatively untouched city of Slavonski Brod, Croatia.

During the war, the people of Croatia blew a section of the bridge away to keep the advancing Serb army from coming across the Sava. Implementation Force soldiers replaced the destroyed section with

a Mabey Johnson bridge, which is now guarded by members of Task Force Pershing out of Slavonski Brod.

The area was a concern to SFOR because two sections of the railroad that once spanned the river were wedged up against the existing structure, making it possible for someone to use the sections of track as ladders to place explosives on the bridge.

One section of track ran from a support column to an island believed to be littered with mines. The other section stretched from the blown-up end of the original bridge down into the murky waters of the Sava.

Sgt. 1st Class Kraig Haas, a platoon sergeant for Co. B, said that the job probably would have only taken them an hour if they could have used explosives. In this case they could not risk damaging the Mabey Johnson bridge and the power cables that run underneath the bridge. "We had to find the safest method; we just sort of invented ways," said Haas.

The engineers first attempted to cut the rails using incendiary grenades. Unfortunately the grenades didn't burn long enough to cut through the heavy rails. The next attempt involved cutting the wooden ties holding the rails together with a chain saw, but that became unsafe when the rails twisted and threatened to throw the engineer doing the cutting into the river below.

The engineers next doused the ties with diesel fuel and tried to burn them away, but the fuel burnt off and the fire went out. The Heavy Expanded Mobility Tactical Truck (HEMTT) could not winch the rails away, and when they tried pulling the

rails down, the rope broke.

"We just kept working and trying new approaches — this is not something we do everyday. We relied on experience from other missions and we learned that perseverance does pay off," said Haas. "There were methods we could have used like explosives or other techniques but the danger of damaging the existing structure and the danger to my soldiers was too great."

Sticking with it and using available resources were what eventually brought the rails down. By using a torch and cable made available by 742nd Maintenance Co., they were able to cut the rails into pieces and pull them down using a HEMTT.

Staff Sgt. Anthony Gloriani, an engineer from Co. B, used his skills in rappelling while tearing down of the rails. He was lowered several times by rope over the edge of the bridge in an attempt to cut the rails. He also used his skills to tie safety lines to all soldiers who descended onto the rails to work on them.

"I've done a lot of rappelling, but everything here was experimental. The rails were very heavy, the weather was hot with our flack vests and helmets on and there was the possibility of mines," said Gloriani. "This is not something I do everyday, but I just did it. I don't fear heights, but I respect heights."

"It was frustrating because soldiers guarding the bridge kept walking by and saying 'why don't you blow it?' which we couldn't do," said Gloriani. "The mission was pretty cool but difficult — it was an accomplishment."