

# THE TALON



OPERATION JOINT GUARD, BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

SERVING THE SOLDIERS OF TASK FORCE EAGLE

# More than ready

see READY page 12

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Sgt. William E. Winham, an Avenger team chief with 3rd platoon, Company D, 4th Battalion, 3rd Air Defense Artillery, instructs his gunner, Pvt. Paul Rodelo, on how to operate the Avenger's remote control unit during training. With the RCU, crews can operate the Avenger weapon system from up to 50 meters away.

*Photo by Spc. David Boe*



Gov't approaches to farming

FEUDALISM: You have two cows. Your lord takes some of the milk.

MILITARISM: You have two cows. The government takes both and drafts you.

ENVIRONMENTALISM: You have two cows. The government bans you from milking or killing them.

DICTATORSHIP: You have two cows. The government takes both and shoots you.

CAPITALISM: You have two cows. You sell one and buy a bull.

FASCISM: You have two cows. The government takes both, hires you to take care of them, and sells you milk.

PURE DEMOCRACY: You have two cows. Your neighbors decide who gets the milk.

REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY: You have two cows. Your neighbors pick someone to tell you who gets the milk.

AMERICAN DEMOCRACY: The government promises to give you two cows if you vote for it. After the election, the president is impeached for speculating in cow futures. The press dubs the affair "Cowgate".

BRITISH DEMOCRACY: You have two cows. You feed them sheep brains and they go mad. The government doesn't do anything.

ANARCHY: You have two cows. Either you sell the milk at a fair price or your neighbors try to kill you and take the cows.

PURE COMMUNISM: You have two cows. Your neighbors help you take care of them, and you all share the milk.

RUSSIAN COMMUNISM: You have two cows. You have to take care of them, but the government takes all the milk.

COUNTER CULTURE: Wow, dude, there's like... these two cows, man. You got to have some of this milk.

UP FRONT -- RISK MANAGEMENT CONT'D

Risk management has brought us a long way from the days of inspecting troops and units and just saying "do this safer" or "do that safer." Commanders have always cared about soldiers and cared about safety. But it's a long way from saying be safe, to being able to execute a mission safely.

Risk management has given commanders and other leaders something they can use. I think that the better we learn to apply the risk management process, the more we'll do it. And that's going to be the key to safer operations. The process starts with METL, the mission essential task list. From that all things fall. Analysis of your METL

tasks enables you to design training programs to get you and your soldiers up to standard on those hazards associated with each METL task. Only then are you ready to perform to standard and sustain any given task/mission in any environment.

No mission too difficult, no sacrifice too great! Let's start living up to that!! See you up front.

Command Sgt. Maj. S. L. Kaminski 1st Infantry Division (Forward)



Combatting Complacency

The light at the end of the tunnel may be the train coming at you! There is a state of mind that happens to all of us at some point when you've been "down range" long enough. It's called COMPLACENCY -- "a state of satisfaction accompanied by unawareness of actual dangers or deficiencies" -- that's what the dictionary says.

How about when you have stopped treating your weapon with respect or you've ceased being aware of your responsibilities to the team? Like the light is on but nobody is at home? You've lost "Chi"! Your risk just went up.

You become more dangerous to yourself and those around you. You are an accident waiting to happen. At the top of the list of accident-cause factors is "human error". That's when an individual's actions or performance is different than what is required and results in or contributes to an accident. Two of the cause factors are Leader Failure and Individual Failure. Leader Failure - Leader does not enforce known standard. Individual Failure - Individual knows and is trained to standard but elects not to follow the standard (self-discipline).

So how do we combat complacency? You've heard it before. Leadership and supervision combat complacency. Recognizing those signs that an individual is at risk. The buddy system. Giving the individual some time off. We are the force and we protect our own.

There is real daylight at the end of the tunnel for the "down-range groundhogs". Let's work together and go home safe.

Lt. Col. A. Wm. Ramer, 1st Infantry Division (Forward) Safety Office

THE TALON

THE TALON is produced in the interest of the servicemembers of Task Force Eagle. THE TALON is an Army-funded newspaper authorized for members of the U.S. Army overseas, under the provision of AR 360-81. Contents of THE TALON are not necessarily the official views of, nor endorsed by, the U.S. Government, Department of Defense, Department of the Army or Task Force Eagle. THE TALON is published weekly by the 1st Infantry Division (Task Force Eagle) Public Affairs Office, Eagle Base, Tuzla, Bosnia-Herzegovina APO AE 09789, Telephone MSE 551-5230, Sprint 762-5233. E-mail: talon@email-tc3.5sigcmd.army.mil. Acquire the Talon and other Bonia-Herzegovina related items from the TFE homepage: www.1id.army.mil Printed by PrintComTuzla. Circulation: 6,500.

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

# McGovern Mayo



Photo by Spc. David Boe

**Pfc. Thomas J. Regul, 19, a medical specialist with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Task Force 1-77, takes the blood pressure of a patient during sick call hours at the aid station at McGovern base.**

By Spc. David Boe  
364th MPAD

**M**CGOVERN BASE -- Comfort, roominess and cleanliness were the impetus behind a new aid station recently erected at McGovern Base and dedicated on June 30. Built entirely out of wood by Brown and Root workers in 10 days, the aid station is more than double the size of the one it replaced. For the medical personnel and patients, it's a vast improvement, said Task Force 1-77 Surgeon, Capt. Anthony C. Manilla.

"We certainly came a long way from the tempera tent that we called home for the first three months of our deployment," said Manilla. "I knew the old station as it was, with its poor lighting, small treatment rooms - hardly enough for two litters - and no private exam rooms, would be inadequate for the largest task force in theater, especially if things heated up in Brcko."

With that in mind, Manilla set about ordering another tent to increase the size of the facility. However, he said he never expected the task force to forsake the tent and build a completely new structure from scratch. "All I wanted was another tent, but I'm not complaining!" said Manilla.

A similar aid station was recently constructed at Camp Dobil.

While not exactly the (Rochester, Minn.) Mayo Clinic, the McGovern aid station is still impressive when compared to what its predecessor had to offer. Within its tall wooden walls are separate treatment rooms - with one set for trauma, a pharmacy, a supply room, a large waiting room (with T.V.), an administration area and a doc-

tor's office. "We even had a little extra space for Lt. Strob's desk." Said Manilla, referring to the medical platoon leader.

One of the best perks of the new aid station though, said Manilla, is the air conditioning. In fact, it's the first thing one notices when entering the building from the humid Bosnian weather. "We even considered changing the name from Battalion Aid Station to Battalion Air-Conditioned Station," said Manilla.

The aid station NCOIC, Sgt. Ricky W. Giddings, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Task Force 1-77, agrees. "The AC is outstanding," he said. "It's getting warm now so we need to have it." However, the 32-year-old Glenburnie, Md., native said the air conditioning is less a creature comfort for the staff than a necessity for patient comfort and care, such as for heat injuries. "We like it, but it's really for the patients," he said.

While it is more spacious, more private, and much cooler, the new aid station also provides the staff and patients a cleaner, more sanitary environment, which Giddings said is probably the most important aspect of the building.

"The facility is a lot better than we had before as far as sanitation and care for the patients," said Giddings. "Now there's no dirt or dust coming in."

Regul said he has also gotten positive feedback from the patients. The Bethesda, Md., native said they liked the fact that the aid station was no longer in the small tent and has better accommodations. "They feel more comfortable coming here, more at ease. We can now offer all our soldiers the medical care they deserve," he said.

## Info Briefs

### Law School

The office of the Judge Advocate General (OTJAG) is now accepting applications for the Army's Funded Legal Education Program. Under this program, the Army projects sending up to 15 active duty commissioned officers to law school at government expense. Selected officers will attend law school beginning in the fall of 1998 and will remain on active duty while attending law school.

Interested officers should review Chapter 14, Army Regulation 27-1 (The Judge Advocate General's Funded Legal Education Program) to determine their eligibility. This program is open to commissioned officers in the ranks of second lieutenant through captain. Applicants must have at least two but not more than six years of total active Federal service at the time legal training begins. Eligibility is governed by congressional statute (10 U.S.C. 2004) and is non-waiverable.

Eligible officers interested in applying should immediately register for the summer or fall offering of the Law School Admission Test. Applicants must send their request through command channels, to include the officer's branch manager at PERSCOM, with a copy furnished to the Office of the Judge Advocate General, ATTN: DAJA-PT, Washington, D.C. 20310-2200, to be received no later than Nov. 1, 1997. Submission of the application well in advance of the deadline is advised.

Interested officers should contact their local Staff Judge Advocate for further information.

### Equal Opportunity

In the words of an old soldier, "Never give an order you are not prepared to enforce." The same is true in regard to equal opportunity policies. Commanders must clearly demonstrate that discrimination and sexual harassment will not be tolerated. "REMEMBER AWARENESS LEADS TO FAIRNESS."

The new 1st Infantry Division (Forward) Equal Opportunity Office Sprint line number is 762-0033.

# A need to help

By Sgt. Steven Collins  
129th MPAD

**Z**IVINICE, Bosnia-Herzegovina – The school is tucked away, behind a number of houses and buildings separating busy Route Ostrich from a narrow dirt road. The casual observer would miss the school – its nondescript exterior looks like every other building in this small town on the western edge of Eagle Base.

But once the American HMMWVs drove up the dirt road to the school, the children appeared, as if by magic. Within a few minutes, Spc. Todd Surdez was surrounded by children, their little fingers reaching up for the pencils he was busy distributing.

"It was a great time, seeing those little faces light up with smiles," said Surdez, a broadcast journalist for the 129th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, a South Dakota Army National Guard unit deployed in support of Operation Joint Guard. "It was good to know that those pencils and other supplies were collected by my family and friends back home."

Surdez and several soldiers from Guardian Base, including members of the 426th Civil Affairs Battalion, convoyed to the school with several boxes of school supplies, including more than 10,000 pencils collected by Young Mothers' Club of Spearfish, S.D., Surdez's hometown.

"I told my mother (Patty Ainsworth) about the Pencils for Peace effort last spring. She told folks around town about that and soon convinced a group to begin collecting pencils for the kids in Bosnia," said Surdez. Surdez had done an American Forces Network story on Sgt. A.G. Stockstill and his wife, Shelli, members of

**A young boy at a school in Zivinice tries on the kevlar helmet of Chief Warrant Officer Rosanne Larson, a member of Company B, 201st Forward Support Battalion out of Guardian Base.**



Photo by Sgt. Steven Collins



Photo by Sgt. Steven Collins

**Spc. Todd Surdez, a broadcast journalist with the 129th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, allows a group of children to exam his video camera during a recent visit to a school in Zivinice.**

the 4th Battalion, 3rd Regiment Air Defense Artillery who distributed supplies donated by people in Texas.

"The Stockstills did a great job in collecting and distributing the school supplies. My mom was touched by the effort and wanted to something locally," said Surdez.

With the help of Spearfish students — including Surdez's nephew, Dalton Jack — more than 10,000 pencils were collected by summer. Ainsworth arranged to have the pencils sent to Bosnia-Herzegovina. Surdez contacted the 426th CA Bn. for help.

"One of our strategic missions is to develop a positive relationship between the U.S. forces and the Bosnian people," said Capt. Micha-

el G. Price, 426th CA Bn. officer-in-charge. "The efforts of the people from South Dakota has been tremendous here. It is a gesture of goodwill that helps us in our mission."

"We support the nation-building efforts here in Bosnia by directing the distribution of aid," said Price, an Army reservist from Los Angeles. "This is the type of activity that we are trying to develop and sustain even after U.S. forces leave this country."

Local schools are short on all kinds of school supplies and pencils are appreciated by both teachers and children. At the school, the children each received several pencils. The school also received paper, toys and other goods collected by the 426th CA Bn.

Surdez said he was happy his family and friends were so excited to help people they would never know or meet.

"Spearfish is a small town and the people there are quite generous and neighborly," said Surdez. "I knew that if the folks back home knew about the situation over here they would feel the need to help out in whatever way they could."

# Combat lifesaver



This Heavy Equipment Transport System rolled down an embankment after losing its brakes and running into a fuel truck.

Photo by Spc. Susanne Aspley

By Spc. Susanne Aspley  
364th MPAD

**CAMP DOBOL** -- When Pvt. Scott Smith, a mechanic assigned to Company A, 82nd Engineer Battalion, Task Force 1-41 completed the combat lifesaver course just one month ago at Camp Dobol, he had no idea he would be using his newly acquired skills so soon. But because of these skills, and the use that Smith put them to, he is pending a Soldiers Medal for his display of quick and calm actions in an emergency.

While driving the steep, snaking roads near Glamoc in the British sector of Bosnia-Herzegovina, soldiers from both Co. A., 82nd Eng. Bn. and the 701st Support Bn. survived a serious accident.

During the accident a HETS (Heavy Equipment Transport System) rolled down an embankment and landed in an uncleared mine field, according to Sgt. Gary Rutkowski, a combat engineer with Co. A, 82nd Eng. Bn.

Pfc. Augusto Ghimenti, a 20-year-old combat engineer who was in the HETS, explained that they were heading down a well-traveled route through the mountains when the brakes lost air pres-

**Pvt. Scott Smith, Company A, 82nd Engineer Battalion, a Port Richey Fla. native, performs maintenance on a Combat Engineer Vehicle in the motor pool at Camp Dobol.**



Photo by Spc. Susanne Aspley

sure. "We went from 20 mph to 40 mph in about 100 yards. When we were behind the fueler and pushing it, all I said was 'Oh my God, Oh my Lord' -- And all I thought about was burning in a big fire," Ghimenti said. "We hit the fueler truck and like a train pushed it into the side of the mountain. We went off the other side. The HETS then flipped over twice."

The passengers in the HETS were wearing safety belts and kevlar, which kept them from severe injury. Unfortunately, the soldiers in the fueler, also wearing both, were not so lucky. This is when Smith sprung into action.

"There were two injured soldiers on the ground by the fueler though and Pvt. Smith was fixing up one guy and instructing the others on what to do to help the second guy," said Rutkowski, who was in the lead vehicle during the convoy. "He handled the situation like an experienced doctor. When we heard on the radio that they were in an accident, we immediately turned around, but couldn't drive all the way back because there was fuel spilling all over the road. I was going to go check on our soldiers in the HETS, and three soldiers asked me where I was going. I told them and they said, 'We were the ones in the HETS'."

"The first thing I thought when I saw all the blood was 'oh \*%#'," said Smith, a Port Richey, Fla. native. "Then the training from the course took over. I first looked at and started to talk to the guys on the ground to see if they were conscious. I applied bandages and told some other soldiers what to do to the second injury. It was just an adrenaline reaction. After the ambulance came, I went and pulled security and tried to calm down because it was the first time I had ever seen so much blood."

The convoy radioed the British compound, said Smith, and their medic came out, along with medics from 1st Bn., 6th Field Artillery who were at the military compound conducting a joint training exercise. Soldiers from 1st Bn., 6th FA also brought out a Heavy Expanded Mobility Tactical Truck (HEMTT) wrecker, ambulance and another fueler truck to try to get the rest of the fuel from the wrecked truck. "They were there within 15 minutes," said Smith. The injured were then medically evacuated to Tuzla.

Capt. Dan Koprowski, Co. A. Commander said he is proud of all his soldiers that handled the accident, especially Smith. "He definitely deserves the medal."

# Pulling

Story and photos by Spc. Susanne Aspley  
364th MPAD

**CAMP DOBOL** -- Guard duty. For soldiers in Bosnia-Herzegovina, these two words conjure up images of full battle rattle, inspecting Brown and Root employees and their lunch bags and scanning civilians as they walk through the gates. It's the responsibility of nearly every junior enlisted soldier in Bosnia-Herzegovina at least once or more per week.

Boredom is a good sign for those pulling duty. It means all is peaceful. To combat this boredom, there is evidence of creativity to stay alert, or at least awake. In one guard shack at Camp Dobol, someone wrote the entire dialogue of the movie "Clerks". However, the battalion commander's graffiti police quickly erased it.

Guard duty is also one way to make friends — whether you want to or not. If you are stuck in a guard shack from midnight to 4 a.m., by the end of the shift you undoubtedly will know just about everything about your fellow soldier — again, whether you want to or not. You might even get to see a pierced tongue, a few baby pictures and some amusing good luck charms on dog tags.

Pfc. Ian Myrie, a tanker with Company A, 1st Battalion, 13th Armor, is a 21-year-old from Orlando, Fla. "To stay alert, we spend a lot of time telling stories," he said, "and the later it gets the better the stories get, although some people just like to tell lies. But it helps to stay awake and make the time go fast."

Along with passing time in the guard towers, there are two types of roving guard teams that constantly make security rounds. The interior guards patrol the crowded blocks of the tent city, as well as the upscale CONEX neighborhoods located on the suburban outskirts of the camp. The exterior guards walk the inside perimeter of the compound, checking for suspicious packages or objects, holes in the wire, or people lingering on the bordering road. Roving guards also have a chance to ask half-asleep, half-dressed lieutenants stumbling down the boardwalk to the latrine at 3 a.m. for their SFOR identification cards.

The shifts for the soldiers alternate between four hours on QRF (Quick Reaction Force) and four hours on duty in the various guard towers, said Spc. Matthew McGalliard, Co. D., TF 1-41, from Burnsville, N.C. "When the whole camp is asleep, we are responsible for everybody. You never know when the bad guys might try something."

The front gate of Camp Dobol is for civilian workers and non-military traffic. Pfc. David Dorr, a military policeman with the 977th MP Company, regularly works the track gate, where military convoys enter and exit all day. "As an MP, I'm here to regulate the traffic that comes through," the 19-year-old Gwen, Mich. resident said. "We also stop traffic on the road when the choppers come in because the helipad is close to the road. We don't want debris and rocks hitting any civilians or their vehicles. We check IDs, track convoy numbers, and make sure dispatches are up-to-date."

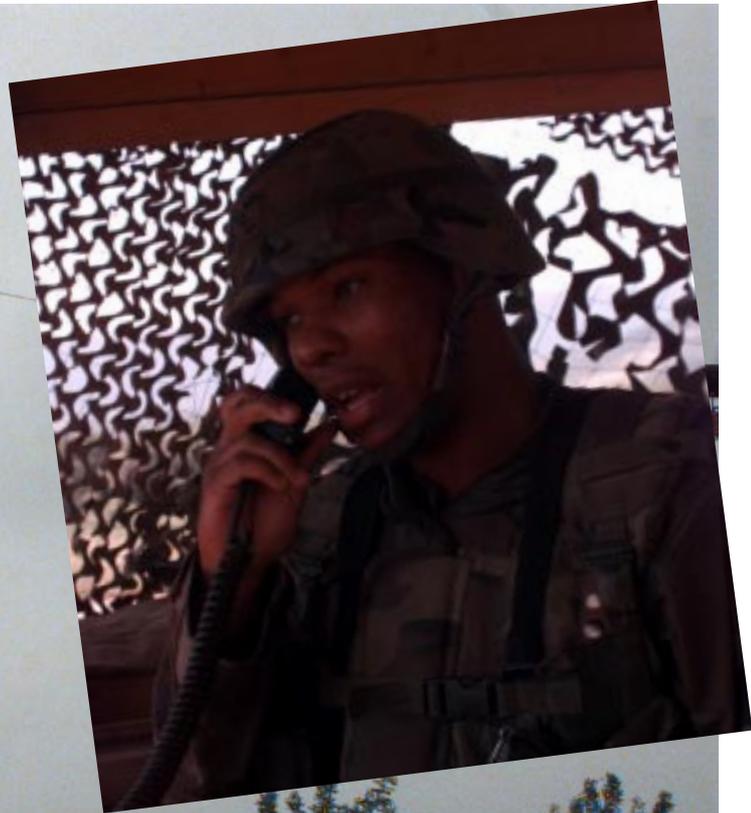
Spc. Daniel Garcia, from McAllan, Texas, is also a tanker with Co. A., 1st Bn., 13th Armor. He offers his own words of wisdom to those soldiers on guard duty everywhere in Bosnia-Herzegovina. "Take everything serious, look out away from the camp instead of into the camp, and whatever you do, if you want time to go fast, don't look at you watch!"

# Guard



From top  
A, 1st Ba  
guard du  
with the  
Person  
Curtis  
Headq  
and R  
Back

# Guard Duty



*Right, clockwise, Pfc. Ian Myrie, a tanker with Company 1st Battalion, 13th Armor, communicates by radio during guard duty at Camp Dabol. ... Spc. Willard Wilson, a mechanic with the 1-25 FAST team, Task Force 1-41, moves an Armored Personnel Carrier to let a convoy out of Camp Dabol... Spc. LeBlanc, a medic with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Task Force 1-41, searches a Brown & Root employee while on guard duty at Camp Dabol... In the background, soldiers man the gate at Camp Dabol.*

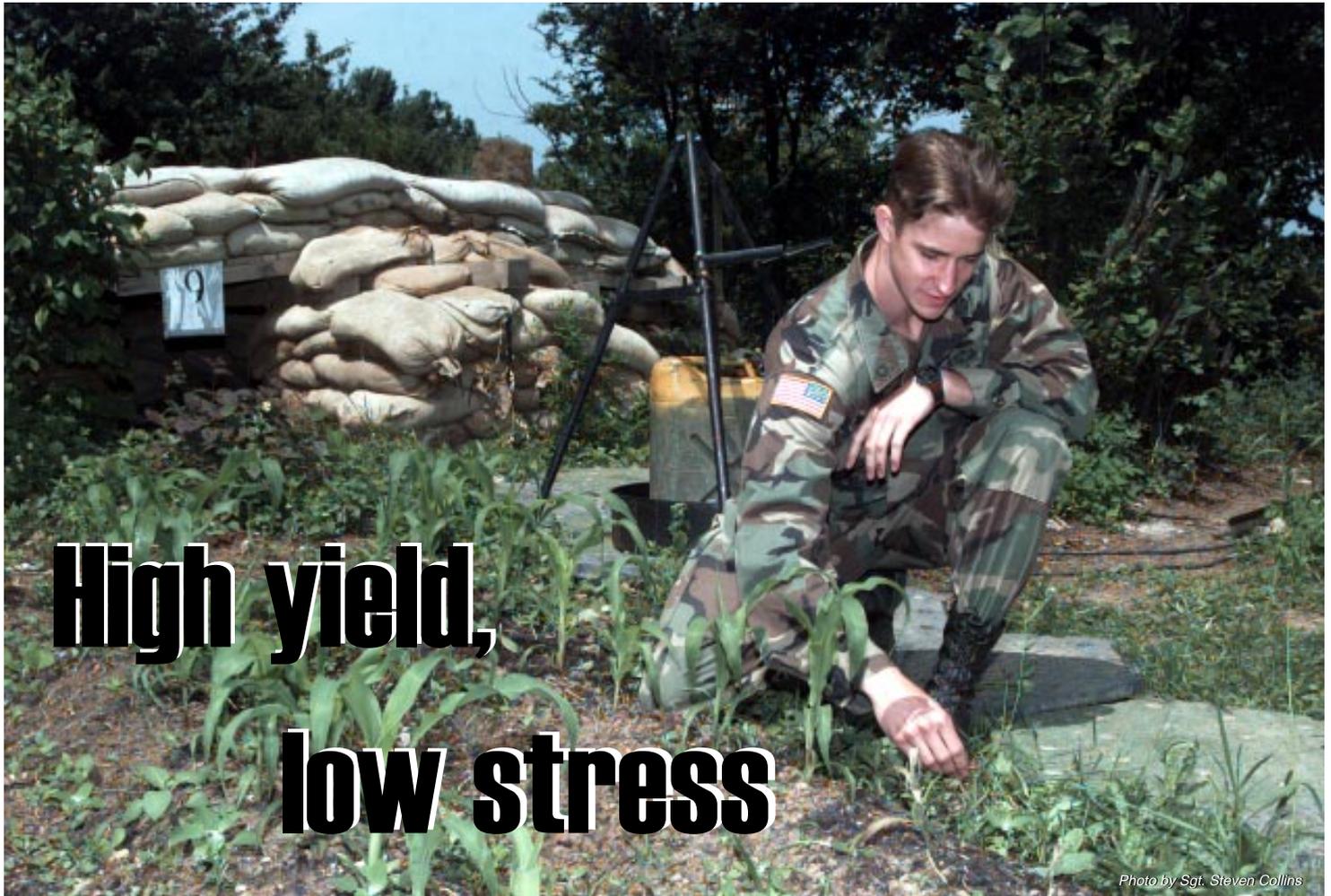


Photo by Sgt. Steven Collins

# High yield, low stress

Pfc. Keith J. Marino, a satellite technician with Company A, 82nd Signal Battalion, tends to his garden on Hilltop 722.

By Sgt. Steven Collins  
129th MPAD

**HILLTOP 722, Bosnia-Herzegovina** – The view from this hill near the city of Srebrenik is stunning. A person can see for miles in any direction. It is a perfect site for a communications link for Stabilization Force troops from Sarajevo to the Central Region in Europe.

“This is a critical site,” said 2nd Lt. Michele J. McCarron, Company A, 121st Signal Battalion and officer-in-charge on Hilltop 722. “But this is a low-stress environment. It is much better than being in a typical field-training environment.”

About 50 people live and work on the hilltop, located about 20 miles north of Tuzla in the heart of the Majevisa mountains. The soldiers ensure that the communications link between Tuzla and outlying basecamps, such as Camp Colt and McGovern Base, are uninterrupted. The communications equipment also provides long-shot links to Slavonski Brod, Croatia, Tazsar, Hungry, and American bases in Germany in the Central Region.

“Most days go without a hitch,” said McCarron, a native of Boston, Mass. “But when something goes down, we have to be able to get it working right away. We provide an important service to the SFOR mission.”

The nature of the work does not keep the crew on Hilltop 722 overly busy. Watching equipment work is akin to watching grass grow. Soldiers conduct daily maintenance and other checks to ensure the equipment is operational. Recently, the 121st Sig. Bn. replaced key components in the switchers which relay signals from Tuzla to other camps. The new equipment will ensure the reliability of the equipment – giving the soldiers on Hilltop 722 even less things to worry about.

“The equipment is very reliable. It is working above standards,” said Sgt. William N. Edwards, a member of the 1st Satellite Control Battalion of Fort George G. Meade, Md., temporarily attached

to Co. A, 121st Sig. Bn. “We are simply here to monitor it and to make sure nothing goes wrong.”

The soldiers on the hill spend hours each week training in both MOS-specific and common skills tasks. Civilian instructors also travel to Hilltop 722 to offer college classes to interested students. Being isolated from the rest of SFOR can also take its toll.

“We try to get people out on convoys,” said Staff Sgt. Armond D. Williams, 121st Sig. Bn. “We have to convoy to Guardian for mail, laundry, supplies. We try to rotate personnel on those convoys just so they get out and see other people once in a while.”

In addition to the stunning view, the soldiers enjoy mild weather. On a day when it was nearly 90 degrees in Tuzla, the temperature on Hilltop 722 was a cool 75.

One soldier has used the ideal conditions to his advantage. Near the satellite equipment he helps maintain, Pfc. Keith J. Marino, 82nd Signal Battalion, Fort Bragg, N.C., temporarily assigned to the 121st Sig. Bn., has planted a garden of vegetables. Relatives have sent him many seeds and he is cultivating quite a crop.

“It’s been fun taking care of the garden,” said Marino, a native of New Orleans, La. “I have to weed it every so often. I used my entrenching tool to plant the seeds. Hopefully I’ll be here long enough to see produce.”

Perhaps the busiest soldiers on Hilltop 722 are in the maintenance section.

“There’s no shortage of work. Since we get all our parts from Guardian, we have to wait for the convoys to go to get parts,” said Staff Sgt. William E. Blanc, shop foreman for the 121st Sig. Bn. “But we’ve been pretty lucky so far. No major problems.”

Living on the hill has been a good experience, said Blanc, but the isolation can sometimes be maddening.

“We got snowed in a couple of times up here,” he said. “You get feeling claustrophobic up here when that happens. But I like it up here. It isn’t too bad.”

# A new start

By Sgt. Ann Knudson  
129th MPAD

**C**AMP SAVA NORTH — Lake Petnja is a reservoir a few miles northwest of Camp Sava North. A wide earth dam holds clear, cold water amid low hills covered with green beech trees. It's a popular spot for Croatians on summer weekends.

"We used to go swimming there," said interpreter Zeljka Senjak. "Sometimes we'd go in the evening, take a guitar, maybe have a few drinks, or have a barbecue."

It was a warm July day, blue sky, blue lake, but the people on shore were wearing BDUs, not swim suits. They held copies of "Trust and Obey," not boom boxes blasting top 40 hits, and they weren't going swimming. Instead Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Richard W. Bower was baptizing Spc. Scott A. Bridges, a military policeman in the 571st Military Police Company.

The lake is busy on weekends, but on a Friday morning there was almost nobody there.

"The chaplain said he'd work around my schedule, fit it in whenever my day off was, as long as it wasn't during Sunday service," said Bridges.

It was a small ceremony. Instead of a church full of people, there were two HMMWVs and eight people.

"I'm glad to see a soldier who believes in something," said interpreter Zeljka Senjak, 19, a Roman Catholic native of Slavonki Brod. "I always like to learn more about other people's beliefs. It was nice to see a soldier getting baptized here in Croatia. The ceremony was really nice."

Bridges put a lot of thought into getting baptized.

"It's something I always wanted to do, since I was a child. It seemed like a really good thing to do," said Bridges. "I wanted to reaffirm faith in Lord Jesus Christ. I didn't know they did it here, but I found out by

ment is a public profession in the belief that Christ is our personal lord and savior.

Bridges decided to get baptized here despite the need to assemble a convoy, carry a weapon and wear a flak vest.

"Here I have time to do it," said Bridges. "I used to go to church quite a bit, but sometimes other things seemed more important, which is wrong. Here, in your offtime, there's no reason not to go to church or study the Bible.

"Some people thought it was funny," said Bridges. "usually I'm a prankster. I'm not a perfect person. But, it was accepted."

"In some ways it's less difficult to minister in the Army than in civilian life," said Bower. "Army leadership has recognized the need for moral leadership. If you've got a culture without a belief system, you haven't got a culture - it crumbles. We have a manual for moral leadership training. We have Army core values: family, selflessness, discipline, patriotism, courage, loyalty,

Photo by Sgt. Ann Knudson

leadership, total fitness, responsibilities/duty, moral standards, integrity/candor, and respect. Of those, 'total fitness' is more than physical and mental - it includes spiritual."

"I'd compare it to a maternity ward," said Bower. "The wonder, joy, and awe at God's creation - the same sense comes out. Second Corinthians, 5:17, says 'Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation, the old is gone, the new has come!' It's a wonderful feeling to hold this new creation in your arms."

Spc. Scott A. Bridges, 571st Military Police Company, after baptism by Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Richard W. Bower at Lake Petnja, Croatia.



# Rubber checks

By Sgt. Steven Collins  
129th MPAD

**EAGLE BASE** – Every month, about 9,000 checks are processed by the Task Force 266 Finance Office. Inevitably, many of those checks turn out to be rubberized, bouncing all the way from banks in Central Europe and the United States back to Bosnia-Herzegovina.

“Only about one percent of those checks that we process are returned to us because of insufficient funds,” said 1st Lt. Sy Macko, disbursing officer for TF 266. “But considering the number of checks we deal with, that’s about 900 checks a month.”

Check cashing is a privilege in Bosnia-Herzegovina and some people – either intentionally or not – abuse that privilege. Most bad checks TF 266 deal with are honest mistakes, said Macko.

“The biggest problem is coordination and communication. Many people have two checkbooks for one account. So there are two people writing checks from the same account and that could lead to unintentional overdrafts,” he said.

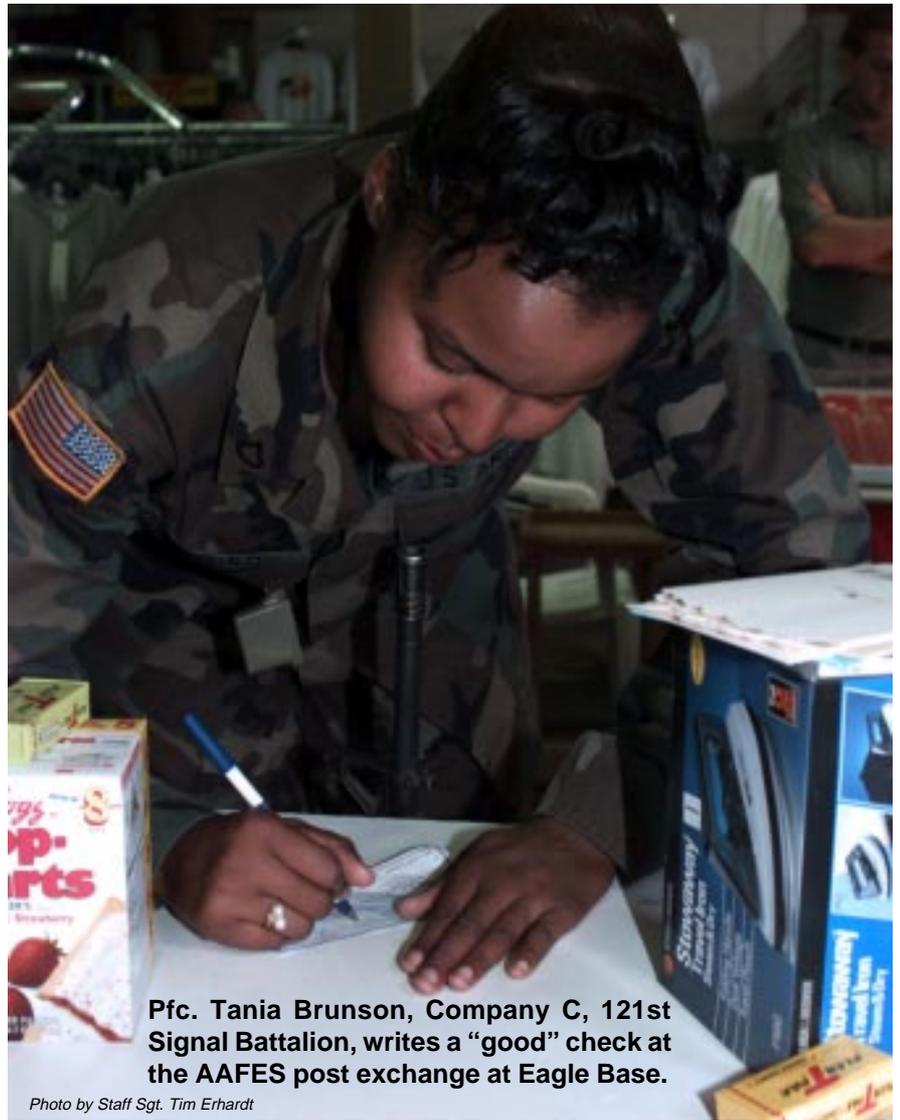
To avoid these overdrafts, soldiers should be responsible for their own accounts. Soldiers should set up separate accounts from their families back home and use that account to cash checks at the finance office. Having two accounts reduces the chances of bouncing checks.

Another problem arises when soldiers use older checks from their accounts, such as starter checks or low-number checks. Sometimes the routing numbers – that series of numbers at bottom of checks – are different, especially if a bank has changed hands or changed names since the checking account was opened.

“We’ll send the check in and it will be returned because the bank doesn’t recognize the routing number. Soldiers need to make sure the routing number is correct before they use the checks,” said Macko.

Communication is key, but even the most well-intentioned soldier can make a mistake, and a bad check is written. In that case, finance usually deducts the amount of the check from the soldiers next payroll deposit. Soldiers authorize this deduction when they cash a check – this authorization is included in a stamped statement initialed by soldiers on the bottom of the check.

“Soldiers agree to meet the collection on the bad check and to have it reduced from their next paycheck. It is a relatively easy



Pfc. Tania Brunson, Company C, 121st Signal Battalion, writes a “good” check at the AAFES post exchange at Eagle Base.

Photo by Staff Sgt. Tim Erhardt

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**“The biggest problem is coordination and communication. Many people have two checkbooks for one account. So there are two people writing checks from the same account and that could lead to unintentional overdrafts.”**

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--- 1st Lt. Sy Macko

process,” said Macko. The process is easy because finance specialists ensure each check includes a litany of important information, including a soldier’s social security number, current address, name of unit and work phone number.

If soldiers write a check they later believe will bounce for insufficient funds, they are encouraged to contact the finance office.

“The soldier can call us as soon as they think there is going to be a problem. That way, we don’t spend a lot of time tracking the person down and we can take care of the problem as soon as possible,” said Macko.

Bad check writers are also identified on a list maintained by the TF 266. Anyone on that list is not allowed to cash a check at any finance office. Those soldiers can only get cash through casual pays, a more complex process, said Macko.

Bad checks are not a major problem at post exchanges in Bosnia-Herzegovina, because the Army Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES) maintains a computer system that allows sales clerks to immediately check a soldier’s check-writing history, said Joanne Budzik, AAFES manager at Eagle Base.

Checks are sent from AAFES in Bosnia-Herzegovina through Central Europe and then to the main check division in Dallas. Bad checks are returned to that

center and information is distributed on the computer system.

If a soldier consistently writes bad checks – not a problem in Bosnia-Herzegovina, according to Macko – penalties are available under the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

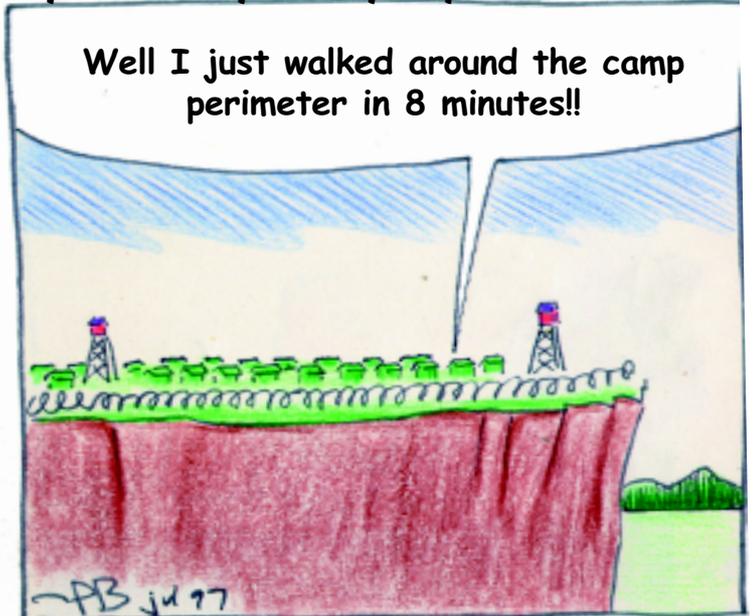
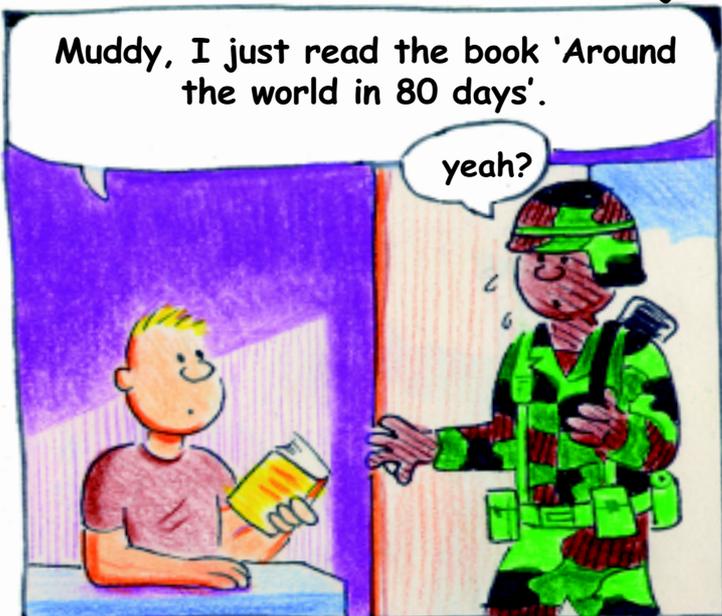
# How much do you know?

- 1) What was the radio broadcast code name of the men imprisoned in Stalag 13 in the sitcom "Hogan's Heroes"?
- 2) When did a monarch of Great Britain first visit the United States?
- 3) Who is the highest paid governor, and who is the lowest-paid governor?
- 4) Number of Betty Rubble tablets in a bottle of Flinstones chewable vitamins?
- 5) Name of the B-29 that dropped the atom bomb on Hiroshima?
- 6) Name of the B-29 that dropped the atom bomb on Nagasaki?
- 7) Number of minutes the U.S. Congress spent in October 1990 debating the administration's request for new S&L bailout funds?
- 8) Number of minutes spent debating a proposal to renovate the capitol hairdressing salon?
- 9) Percentage of Americans who could not recognize George Bush?
- 10) Percentage who could not recognize Mr. Clean?
- 11) Percentage of Americans who can correctly name the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court?



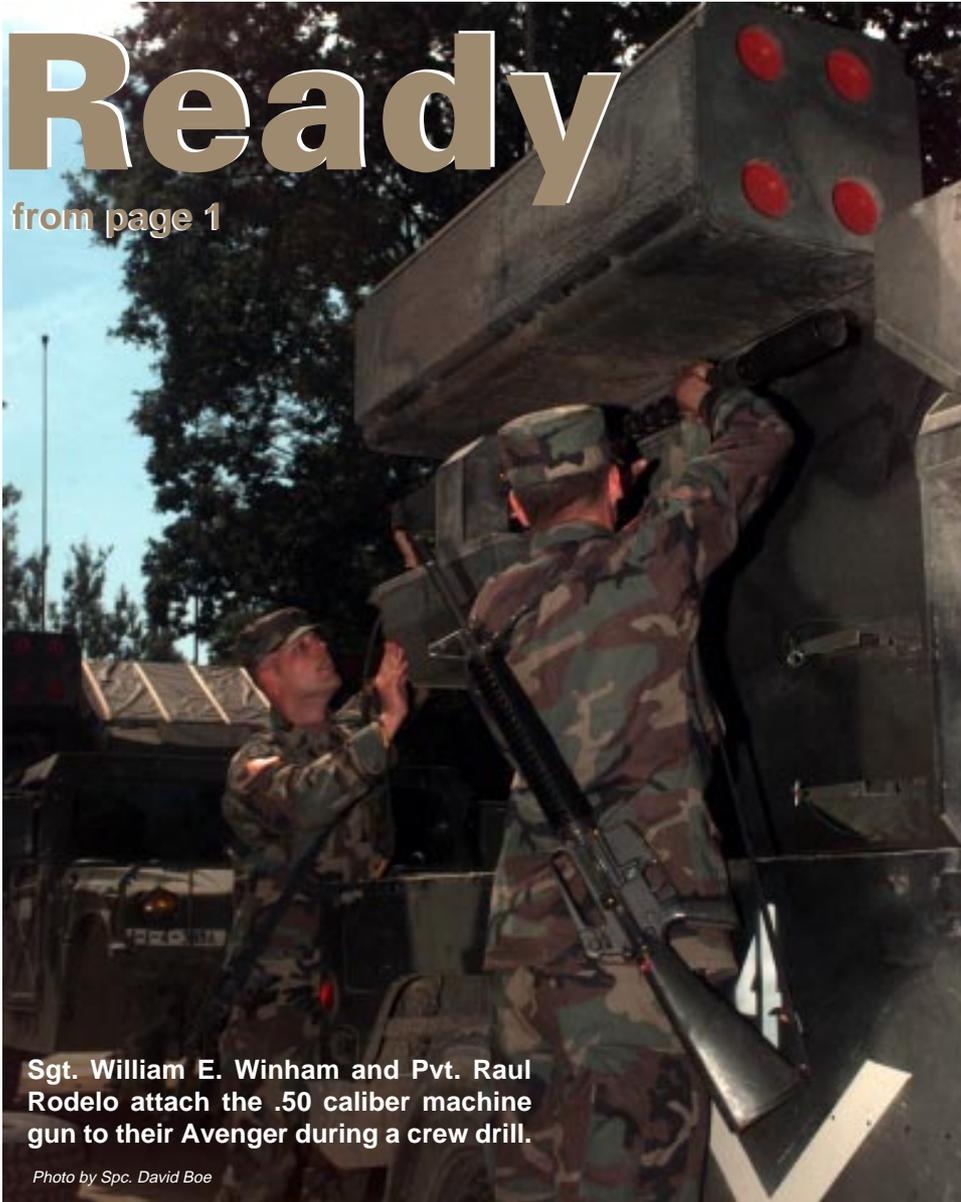
- 12) Percentage of Americans who can correctly name the judge on "People's Court"?
  - 13) Percentage of all paper money in the United States that contains traces of cocaine?
  - 14) Number of calories burned in a one minute kiss?
  - 15) Number of calories in a Hershey's kiss?
- ANSWERS: (1) Papa Bear (2) It was not until FDR invited King George VI in 1939 that a British king or queen had visited the former colony. The president hoped to arouse sympathy for the British in wake of World War II and to try to convince Isolationists that the United States should enter the war. (3) Marc Racicot's Montanan office, which pays \$55,502 yearly. Mario Cuomo's New York office, which pays \$130,000 (4) 0 (5) Enola Gay (6) Book's Car (7) 23 (8) 40 (9) 44 (10) 7 (11) 9 (12) 54 (13) 97 (14) 26 (15) 25

## Turtles in the Box featuring Muddy and Dusty by Capt. P. J. Buotte



# Ready

from page 1



Sgt. William E. Winham and Pvt. Raul Rodelo attach the .50 caliber machine gun to their Avenger during a crew drill.

Photo by Spc. David Boe

By David Boe  
364th MPAD

**EAGLE BASE** -- After months of having their eyes on the ground, it's back to basics for air defenders.

For soldiers of Battery C, 4th Battalion, 3rd Air Defense, it hasn't been business as usual in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Patrols, documentation and weapon storage site inspections have been the order of the day since the unit arrived in country a few months ago. But now, the unit is getting some long-awaited training.

"When we first got here our first focus was to jump in and get in the missions and get orientated with what we had going on down here," said Cpl. Christopher B. Smith, an Avenger Team Chief with Co. D's 3rd "Strike" platoon. "Once we fell into a routine and pretty much knew what was going on, we kicked in the training, and that's been going on for two months now."

According to recent stories in the media, training and combat skills have suffered while units such as Co. D, 4-3 ADA concentrated on the mission of peacekeeping in Bosnia-Herzegovina. This isn't true said Smith. "We've actually made a con-

certed effort toward training," said the Marietta, Ga., native. "Now we heavily concentrate on training."

As a team chief, the 25-year-old Smith is responsible for a \$2 million piece of equipment. The Avenger is the latest addition to the U.S. Army's air defense arsenal, replacing two older systems, the Vulcan gatling gun and the Chaparral missile launcher, and incorporating the best of both systems. The Avenger's main weapon system, several Stinger missiles within launch arms, is augmented by a .50 caliber machine gun attached to the turret. Mounted

**"For the missile, there's no turning back. Once it's loose, it's loose"**

--- Staff Sgt. Stephan H. Mumpower

on a HMMWV and boasting a lot of high-tech capability, the Avenger is a fast, flexible system with the means of providing on-the-spot air defense muscle.

"The electronics on the system makes it more lethal than the Chaparral or Vulcan," said 2nd Lt. Timothy S. Broadenax, 29, 3rd

platoon leader. A native of Birmingham, Ala. who now calls El Paso, Texas home, Broadenax has the rare distinction of having been an enlisted soldier, a warrant officer, and now a commissioned officer in the Army. For him, it's a soldier's skill, and not the weapon system itself, that makes the Avenger effective.

"We still focus on peacekeeping, but we're doing air defense training," said Broadenax. "The reason is so we don't lose that decisive edge as soldiers in air defense."

Like most weapon systems in the Army, the Avenger requires a lot of hand coordination and teamwork to be effective. The two-man Avenger crews have been doing their fair share of training in weapon emplacement, missile loading and target engagement, said Broadenax.

"We've been doing this on a daily basis," he said.

An Avenger crewman also has to learn to use his eyes. The system's purpose in life is to shoot down enemy aircraft, and it can't do this effectively if the gunner can't identify the target. Because of this, Visual Aircraft Recognition (VACR) is a vital part of any air defender's training.

The importance of VACR is paramount to air defense, said Staff Sgt. Stephan H. Mumpower, acting 3rd Platoon sergeant. When a target is fired on, he said, it's final and irreversible, and the gunner better know what he's firing at.

"For the missile, there's no turning back," said Mumpower, a native of Fort Myers, Fla. "Once it's loose, it's loose." All Avenger crewmen are tested repeatedly on VACR — and the standards are high. They have to intimately know 50 friendly and hostile aircraft, from nose to tail. "Everything," said Mumpower. "From the fast attacks - Flankers, Fulcrums, F-14's, F-15's, to the Stealth, and even going down to the helicopters, cargo planes and prop planes."

In testing, each air defender can get no more than five out of 50 aircraft identified incorrectly, and they only have five seconds to decide whether it's friendly or hostile, and what its name and nomenclature are.

The VACR and crew drills are combined into what is called the Avenger Gunnery Skills Test, which 3rd platoon recently finished as part of its pre-gunnery exercises prior to heading to Hungary for the real

thing. For Broadenax it's been satisfying. The training, he said, has validated his belief that his unit's combat skills have not taken a back seat to peacekeeping duties.

"Out of 50 aircraft, not one soldier scored less than 96 percent, which means the soldiers missed only two or less," said Broadenax. "And for having been in this environment for the length of time that we have, that's an A-plus."

"We're more than ready."