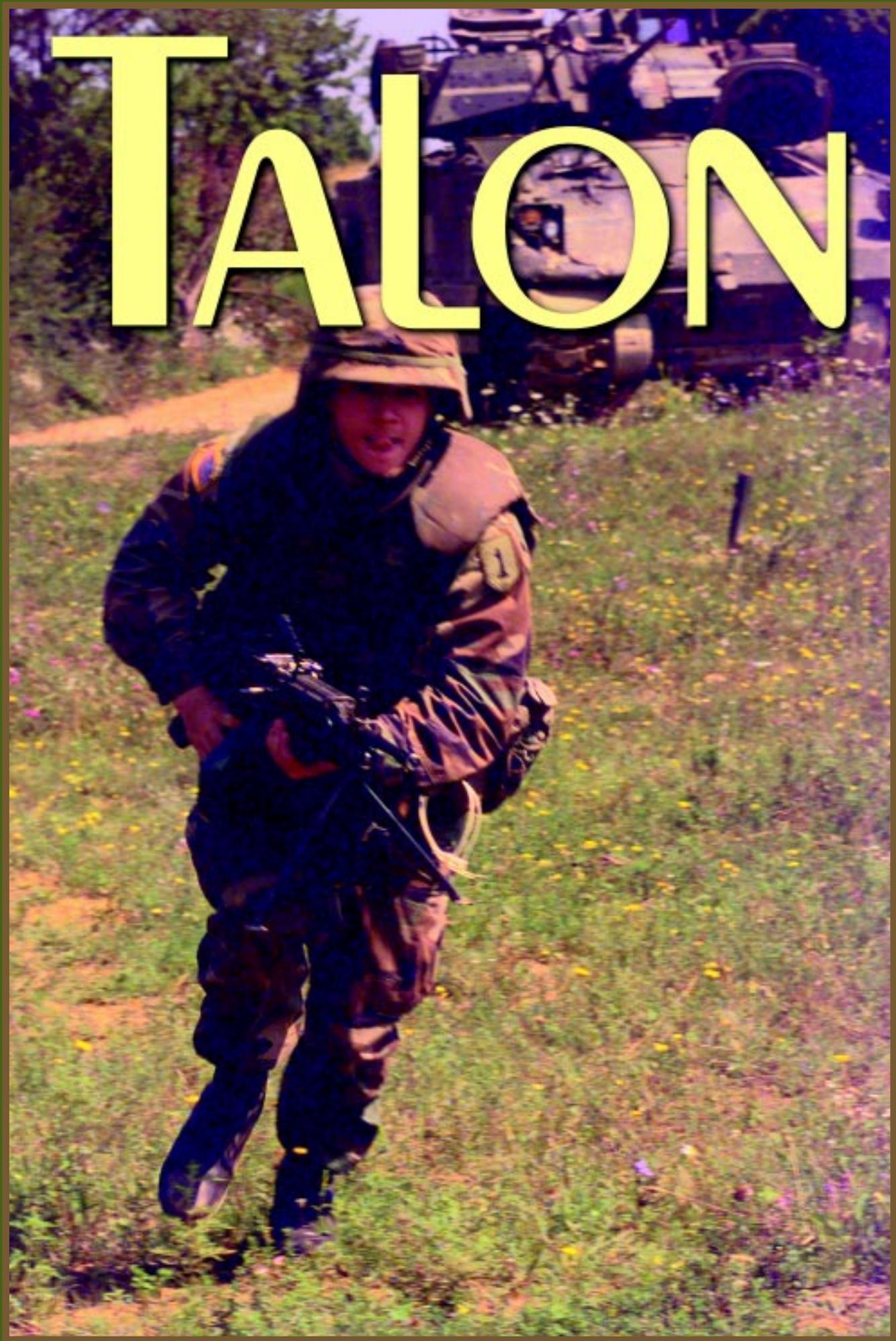


TALON



THE TALON

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On the Cover

A 2nd Platoon, Co. D, 2nd Bn., 2nd Inf. Regt. soldier charges forward during their recent live fire exercise. See pages 4-5. Photo by Pfc. Todd L. Edwards

From the Talon

The staff of the Talon encourages all submissions, especially from base camp public affairs representatives. All submissions are subject to editorial processes. Contact us at: The 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.

Up Front

Conditional promotions. What does this term mean? How does the program work? I'll attempt to answer these questions and more. And if by chance I don't, please feel free to contact me by any means, anytime. This program has been designed to promote deployed soldiers who are unable to attend the appropriate NCOES course for promotion (E-5, E-6, E-7).

The program consists of two parts: a request for an NCOES waiver; and the actual authorization for the conditional promotion. The Department of the Army (DA) is the only approving authority. Soldiers are not authorized to be promoted until final approval by DA.

Whether exceeding the announced monthly cut-off score or your sequence number for the promotion is announced, a request for an NCOES waiver must be submitted first. This is done on a DA Form 4187, signed by the commander.

The request is then routed through the promotion authority to the serving MILPO. The serving MILPO then checks the request for accuracy and sends it to DA for final approval. When approved, DA authorizes the serving MILPO to cut a promo-

tion order. (The serving MILPO in our case is TF 55, located at Tuzla Main.) This is when the soldier is promoted.

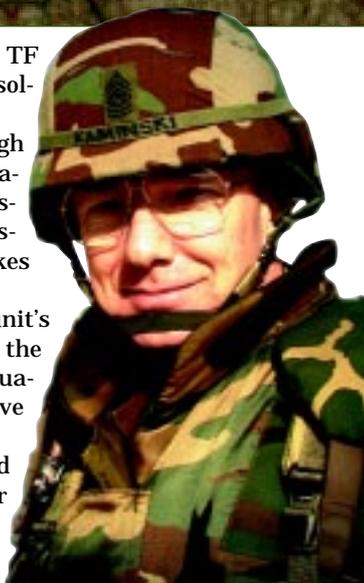
A CONUS-based unit need not apply through their home headquarters. TF 55 has e-mail capability and stands ready to serve you. The system set up here in Tuzla is for all units assigned and attached to Task Force Eagle. It takes about 30-45 days for final approval.

The soldier then has one year from his unit's re-deployment date to successfully complete the NCOES course. Date of rank will be the graduation date of the course the soldier would have attended had he or she not been deployed.

There is one catch. If the soldier attended the course previously and was dismissed for any reason, the request will be disapproved.

Now, if there are any soldiers out there wearing stripes without orders, see your unit First Sergeant or Command Sergeant Major and they'll get you going in the right direction again. It takes orders from DA to get paid, too. Just thought I'd mention that.

See you up front!



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

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Maj. Gen David L. Grange

Grange: Exceed standards

I wanted to take the opportunity to address the soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines, multi-national soldiers and civilians supporting Task Force Eagle (TFE) and all of our families. Having been in command of this historic compilation of forces for the last six weeks, I have had the opportunity to see many of you in the execution of our mission. I wanted to commend each of you for your outstanding professionalism and commitment to the successful completion of all assigned tasks.

I feel very privileged to be commanding such dedicated peacekeepers, who have been great ambassadors, while providing a peaceful climate to a country that has suffered so much. For me, to glance back in time even five years, I never would have predicted the ease with which we are able to work side by side with such a variety of units and soldiers from so many countries. That success is due to

your efforts and the great support we have received from our nations and families.

I also wanted to remind each of you to remain ever vigilant. The hazards here are real and we must ensure we remain continuously aware of our situation and surroundings. We have come a long way toward helping this country to heal and

and friends who are currently serving in Bosnia miss you greatly. I can also tell you that the sense of pride they instill in all they come in contact with is contagious. Time and again the senior leaders of our nation and our allies tell me how superb all the members of TFE are. It is not a matter of just meeting the standards, our troops are exceeding them at every turn, all while conducting a difficult mission in an austere environment.

Though this deployment has been demanding, I can assure you that no mission is too difficult for the capabilities

of our highly motivated troopers. We lead the way! Duty First!

The hazards here are real and we must ensure we remain continuously aware of our situation and surroundings. We have come a long way toward helping this country to heal.

Maj. Gen. David L. Grange

as we near the elections and the busy times which are ahead, make sure you take care of the person to your left and to your right. Hold firm in your commitment to one another and steadfast in the continued disciplined and highly motivated manner in which you undertake your daily duties.

To our families, I want to tell you that your husbands, wives, sisters, brothers

David L. Grange

David L. Grange
MG, USA
Commanding

Not as hard pressing 500



The industrial clash of machine guns hammer the diesel exhaust-laden air with constant bursts of noise. The targets downrange disappear.

The men pour out of the back of the vehicle like wasps from a disturbed nest,

yelling commands and affirmations back and forth amid the rapid movement. On a word, the men of first squad are up and charging forward.

“Second squad, go-go-go! Second squad, down!” yelled Spc. Jeffrey H. Kissler, second squad leader. The earth rises up to meet the charging men, who by then are firing intermittently between SAWs and M-16s.

The crack of rifles and the ripping clatter of SAWs continue as squads leapfrog downrange, careful to maintain a steady stream of fire on the silhouette targets.

Upon meeting their objective, and conquering the obstacle, the infantrymen clear their weapons to head uprange to receive an after action report.

“It’s not as hard as bench-pressing 500 pounds, but it’ll do,” said Staff Sgt. Antonio Arrinngton, 1st squad leader, as he rises from behind a cloud of cordite smoke.

The men of the platoon talk amongst themselves on the walk back up 500-meter Gettysburg Range, discussing the exercise. They offer constructive criticisms of each other’s performance. An air of excitement hangs amid the dust and diesel fumes, leaving stern expressions with the loud smiles of people having fun.

For many of the members of 2nd platoon, Company D, 2nd Battalion, 2nd Infantry Regiment, this livefire exercise is not a repetition of what they’ve done countless times in the past.

“It went really well. We have a lot of new guys in the unit, about half of them are fresh out of AIT,” said Sgt. Bobby J. Olson, a dismounted squad member.

Some of the soldiers begin speaking out about how much they think of being at a hot range on what would have been a day off.

“It’s more of a break for the guys than work,” said Sgt. Frank E. Rodriguez, a Bradley gunner for the platoon.

Spc. Oliver B. Narvaez, a dismounted SAW

(Top Left) Spc. Jeffrey H. Kissler of Ritzville, Wash., practices fire and maneuver conducted during their recent livefire exercise.

(Bottom Left) Spc. Oliver B. Narvaez of San Diego, Calif., yells to his teammates at Gettysburg Range



Story and Photos by
Pfc. Todd L. Edwards
372nd MPAD

as bench pounds

gunner with second squad, agrees with Rodriguez.

"I'd rather be out here than having a day off. It's good training. We have to have good training all the time to get ready for gunnery," said Narvaez.

Preparation for the testing phase of infantry skills, called "gunnery" by the men, is an ongoing process, said Arrington and Rodriguez. Time to work on combat skills during the peacekeeping mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina is often scarce, they said.

"Our training situation is much different here, but we have the same mission every day," said Arrington.

"We have another mission (other than training) and can't come out here as often as we want to," Rodriguez said.

The soldiers get time on a range about once every two months in Bosnia, said Arrington. Despite that, motivation is not a problem for the leadership of the platoon, he said.

"They're always motivated to shoot. There's no problem motivating them to do that," Arrington said, smiling proudly at the sundered targets downrange.

After the infantry finishes working, the mounted personnel begin practicing coaxial machine gun marksmanship from their Bradley fighting vehicles, firing while moving and firing from stationary positions.

The industrial clash of machine guns hammer the diesel exhaust-laden air with constant bursts of noise. The targets downrange disappear.

The amount of training the unit is able to do is only limited by the ammunition they are issued and the time constraints they deal with due to their mission here, said Rodriguez.

As the last of the bullets streak into a target, the unit polices its brass casings and prepares to leave the site. The Bradley engines roar to life as the big tracks move into line for the convoy back to home camp. Some of the soldiers, despite being tired and hot, are still throwing themselves to the ground, practicing the prone firing position. Almost reluctantly, they stop and pile into the Bradleys and Humvees for the ride home.

(Upper Right) Spc. Paul D. Crawford of Eugene, Ore., lays in wait to charge forward.

(Left Bottom) A 2nd Platoon, Co. D, 2nd Bn., 2nd Inf. Regt. soldiers yell to be heard over the rattle of gunfire.



Practicing for the

Story and Photos by Sgt. Greg Waltman
372nd MPAD

The call comes in from a helicopter pilot fighting to keep his aircraft flying. Firefighters scramble to put on their protective clothing as they rush to the fire truck.



With lights flashing and sirens screaming, the firefighters dash for the helicopter's expected landing site. They arrive to find a downed UH-60 Blackhawk, prop still spinning, with crew on board. The firemen don't hesitate a second; they rush in to shut the helicopter down and extract the crew.

This scene may never happen, but the 5694th Engineer Detachment trains hard to prepare for a helicopter crash or emergency landing nonetheless.

"We are simulating the emergency shut down procedures used anytime a helicopter has an emergency landing or crashes," said Sgt. Todd M. Bartley, crew chief of the 5694th, an Army National Guard unit from Mansfield, Ohio.

The firefighters, with the help of the 498th Medical Evacuation Unit based at Fort Benning, Ga., recently simulated a crash landing, rehearsing the step-by-step procedures for shutting down the disabled aircraft and extracting the pilot.

Flames from burning fuel can engulf a downed helicopter within a matter of seconds. This is just one of the dangers rescuers can face. The aircraft's flexible, still-spinning rotor blades can drop to a height of four-and-a-half feet.

"It could be extremely dangerous. You have to watch out for the blades, flames and, if it's a Cobra or an Apache, you have to watch out for the weapons," explained Bartley.

After the instruction, firefighters donned their shiny, flame-retardant suits and moved in on the helicopter.

Within a matter of seconds, they have killed the engine and come away from the helicopter carrying the pilot. Instructors placed a great deal of emphasis on the dangers of approaching a crashed helicopter. First and foremost, firefighters are trained to assess the situation.

"We decide if it's one of those where we stay back and put water on it, or we go in for a rescue," said Bartley.

This training not only benefits the firefighters, it also ultimately protects helicopter crews.

"It gives us more of a comfort level by ensuring, if this possibility should arise, these guys on the ground know what they are doing," said Chief Warrant Officer Brian L. Wilson, a pilot from the 498th Medevac Unit.

By taking advantage of time available for training, the firefighters and flight crew members work together to increase their level of readiness and safety.

"It's good teamwork on their side and our side. You



Two firefighters from the 569th Engineer Detachment, carry a UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter. The firefighters simulated a crash and tested the skills of the firefighters

don't wait for the accident to happen, you prepare for it," said Staff Sgt. Joseph A. Cevasco, a flight medic for the 498th Medevac Unit. While the firefighters are training as much as possible, they are limited to what they can do. Because of the potential threat of a call at anytime, they can not take the risk of having hose stretched out for training.

"We are on call 24 hours a day. Everywhere we go, we go with a radio and as a group," said Bartley.

When the group leaves the fire station, not only do they travel together, they take the fire truck. Both the pilots and the firefighters realize the value of the training and plan to continue with these types of classes.

e worst



Photo by Sgt. Greg Waltman

H-60 crewman away from the helicopter. The training

"It was good information and a good refresher course," said Pfc. William B. Denholm, a firefighter with the 5694th. "I have had training on a helicopter, but not that particular helicopter."

The firefighters carry the pilot well away from the helicopter before putting him down. They then begin pulling off their protective garb while walking back, joking about his weight.

It was for practice this time.

But, if the need arises, the crew and the firefighters will have a little more confidence in what they are doing.

No Fishing

502nd Engineers help keep fisherman from catching mines

Story by Sgt. Greg Waltman
372nd MPAD

A boater out on the Sava River for a day of fun heads toward the island underneath the Slavonski Brod bridge. He decides the island looks like a good place to beach the boat and go for a swim.

But as the boater jumps onto the shoreline, he is taking his life into his hands. The innocent-looking island is believed to be peppered with land mines left over from the Bosnian Civil War.

Soldiers of the 502nd Engineers, an assault float-bridge company, based in Hanau, Germany, recently boated around the island located on the Sava, which forms the border between Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia. The engineers were not out for a swim, however. They were posting floating signs to prevent local civilians from landing on the potentially dangerous island.

"We're going down to the Slavonski Brod bridge to place buoys that say no swimming or boating allowed," said Sgt. David E. Schimant, a bridge crew chief for the 502nd.

The bridge is one of the few places where it is possible to cross the Sava River into Bosnia-Herzegovina. Because of its strategic importance, soldiers from Company B, 2nd Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment, based in Fort Drum, N.Y., are responsible for the security of the bridge.

Members of Company B became concerned about the safety of civilians and security of the bridge when they noticed local boaters beaching their craft on the shallow southern shoreline of the small island.

"A lot of time fishermen, kayakers and canoes were traveling through there," said 1st Lt. Edward J. Watto, a platoon leader for B company.

"With the idea that the island is mined, as high as the water was this spring, the mines could have shifted," said Watto, of Swiftwater, Pa. As the summer wore on, the water level has fallen drastically, leaving open the possibility that displaced mines could have washed downstream into shallow water.

"The water at times has been so low a child could walk right out to the island," said Watto.

After Company B's request for posting the no-swimming signs was approved, civilian contractor Brown and Root began working on building the signs, which float just off the island.

Four signs, with the words "No swimming or boating" printed in Croatian and English, are kept afloat by empty oil drums.

Members of the 502nd and Brown and Root workers loaded the buoys onto the engineers' MK-2 bridge-erection boats and made their way to the island. The buoys are anchored to the river bottom by a heavy concrete slab to keep them from being swept away by the swift current.

The engineers normally use the boats, each powered by two 212-horsepower diesel engines, during bridge-building exercises across rivers and streams.

Pfc. Robert P. Coro, of Clinton, Maine, a bridge crew member, said the 26.9-foot boats had no trouble delivering the heavy payload to the island.

After the signs were placed around the island, two more signs were hung from each side of the bridge to deter anyone from using the island's shoreline.

As the current of the Sava moves along, the island remains empty and clearly marked about the dangers for both boaters and the guardians of Slavonski Brod.

Making MAIL Move

Despite rain, sleet, snow, land mines

By Spc. Jeff M. Lowry
124th MPAD

Neither rain, nor snow, nor gloom of night...Soldiers stationed in Bosnia might add "nor six to eight million land mines" to the U.S. Postal Service motto.

Army postal workers might not get an abundance of publicity, but they take their job seriously and soldiers look to mail to lift their spirits.

Neither rain...

The mail rains down on Spc. Christopher T. Budnik, a personnel clerk for Task Force 1-41. He receives about 60 packages and thousands of letters per week.

When mail arrives from Eagle Base, despite all the land mines, Budnik picks up the mail from tent A-3 and takes it to the Personnel Administration Center, tent A-6.

I separate all the mail among the various units here, the unit mail clerks come by, pick it up, and give the mail to the individual soldiers, said Budnik.

That is how it's supposed to work and if soldiers don't get any mail he usually hears about it.

"No mail today? Sniffle, sniffle," Budnik said. "Mail is one of the most important morale boosters."

"When I get mail it just boosts my morale," said Spc. Tony B. Hess, a military intelligence clerk for Task Force 1-41. "It puts me in a bad mood when I don't get mail."

Nor snow...

Spc. Zandra T. Johnson is a postal/finance clerk with the 351st Adjutant General Detachment, an Army Reserve unit from Tallahassee, Fla. She's not snowed under yet, but the lines are long at Camp Demi.

"We go to Camp Demi on Fridays. That's their only day to send packages," said Johnson. The volume of packages soldiers are mailing is increasing, she said.

"Soldiers are usually sending extra clothing they won't need for awhile, like field jackets," said Johnson. Heavy items, like books are sent home, too. That way soldiers don't have to carry all the stuff back home," Johnson said.

"One reason why I'm sending packages back home is to consolidate my space and make room for the new task force soldiers coming here," said Pfc. Stephen E. Boutwell, a forward observer for Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Task Force 1-41.



Photo by Spc. Jeff M. Lowry

Sgt. Harvey L. Jones prepares to load the outgoing mail onto the van. Jones, postal supervisor for the 351st AG Postal Unit, is assigned to the 55th Postal Company for Task Force 1-41.

Nor gloom...

The soldiers who process the mail take their job seriously, in part because of the gloomy prospect of committing a crime, intentional or not.

"I have to take my job seriously, because if I mishandle the mail it's a federal offense," said Budnik.

The same goes for the postal workers who care for the mail going outbound and who initially sign for the mail coming inbound.

"When I receive the incoming mail, I'm accountable for it," said Sgt. Harvey L. Jones, the postal supervisor for Task Force 1-41 with the 351st AG Detachment and assigned to the 55th Postal Company. "The mail van is locked and has a control number on the seal," he said. "I'm responsible for the mail in the van, just as soldiers are responsible for their weapons," said Jones.

Although much has been said and joked about people 'going postal,' these postal workers have not — despite the six to eight million land mines.

Mines rob forest of romance

By Staff Sgt. Elliott Minor
124th Public Affairs Detachment

Carefree couples used to stroll hand-in-hand beneath the hornbeam trees in Lovers' Forest, stopping occasionally to kiss and giggle.

Families came for picnics in the shade of the tall, stately trees that are common throughout Bosnia-Herzegovina. Children squealed with joy as they scampered down the forest's winding paths.

Now the forest is a scary place. People are afraid to go there



Photo by Staff Sgt. Elliott Minor

Pvt. Husein Okic pulls a TMM-1 anti-tank mine from the ground. It is considered one of the five most commonly used mines in Bosnia.

because it was mined during the four-year civil war that left 200,000 Bosnians dead and thousands homeless.

Hey, cupid ain't stupid. He joined the other fleeing refugees and now is promoting amorous activities on safer turf.

Members of the 1st Platoon, Company A, 82nd Engineer Battalion visited the forest and another site near Celic recently to watch Bosnian Federation soldiers pluck dozens of mines from the ground. The Bosnians also discovered a 155mm artillery projectile rigged as a booby trap with a tripwire.

"I am doing my part to enforce the Dayton Peace Accords," said Staff Sgt. Eric Daniels, 29, of Atlanta. "Hopefully, this will return to what it was, a lovers' park — from mines to hearts."

With an estimated 6 million to 8 million mines, Bosnia is one of the most heavily mined countries in the world. Under the Dayton Accords, each side is supposed to remove its minefields under the supervision of the NATO peacekeeping force.

For Daniels, it's a hazardous job, but one he believes is essential to a return to normalcy in the war-torn land.

"It's going to give people back their lives — to go anywhere they want to and do what they want to do," he said.

Daniels' combat engineer unit is based in Bamberg, Germany, but is attached to Task Force 1/41 Infantry, headquartered at Camp Dobol.

The mine-removal mission began with a brisk departure from the heavily fortified camp. Pfc. Billy Rehmeyer, 19, of Red Lion, Pa., was driving one of the four Humvees in the well-armed convoy.

The engineers drove past war-damaged homes riddled with bullets, veered around farmers creeping along in horse-drawn hay wagons, and dodged speeding civilian vehicles.

At Celic, a town of about 1,000, northwest of Camp Dobol, the 13 U.S. soldiers rendezvoused with 36 Bosnian Federation soldiers who would find and remove the mines at two locations.

Daniels accompanied one team to Lovers' Forest, which had been a frequently shifting battlefield during the war. The Bosnia soldiers took compass readings and studied diagrams showing the location of their mines. Then, wearing plastic face shields, helmets and black body armor, they dropped to their knees and began probing the earth with sharp, steel rods.

When they located a mine, they loosened the earth around it with bayonets and screwed out the fuse to make it safe.

Each prober was replaced every 30 minutes for safety. Many of those going on break, puffed deeply on Croatian York cigarettes. They were matter-of-fact about the hazardous work, but were sharply focused while probing and handling the devices.

"I do this every day," said Bosnian Pvt. Husein Okic, 25. "I don't feel anything special. We'll clear the road for people to come back here. Maybe sometime in the future I'll come here with my girlfriend."

Nobody is ready to declare Lovers' Forest safe yet, however.

"The only problem is that the Entities may have mined this area, too," said Daniels. "This was along the confrontation lines, and the war switched back and forth."

At the end of the operation, soldiers took the ordnance to a remote location and detonated it in a cone-shaped hole measuring about 12 feet deep and 20 feet wide. The blast spewed out a shower of hot shrapnel that rained down a block away.

Sgt. Chris Miles, 23 of Dubois, Pa., supervised the team that destroyed mines that day.

"Our presence has meaning," he said. "A lot of trails we cleared last week were trails where little kids play. Without our work, more than likely those kids would be dead."



Maj. Donna Hinton, deputy civil affairs officer with the 1st Infantry Division, visits with children during a concert by the division's jazz band in downtown Tuzla.

Scores of Tuzla residents gathered with U.S. soldiers in a busy downtown marketplace recently to listen to the upbeat strains of jazz, blues and funk music played by an Army jazz combo.

The aptly named Jazz Funky Blues Band, comprised of members of the 1st Infantry Division's military band, performed at the Cipelichi, a well-traveled shopping area, for an audience made up of local dignitaries, Army brass, soldiers and regular Tuzla citizens. It marked the first time in Task Force Eagle history for such a toe-tapping event at a Bosnian venue.

But it may not be the last.

"This is the first event of it's kind and we're excited to be here," said Maj. Gerald Paulus, civil affairs officer with Task Force 2-2, based at Bedrock.

Civil Affairs, which acts as a liaison between civilians and the military, planned the concert as a gesture of good will to the people of Tuzla as the result of a request of the city's mayor, Selim Beslagic.

Paulus said that the event is a step forward in strengthening relations between soldiers and Bosnian citizens. "In the long run, soldiers may be allowed to come downtown and partake in cultural activities with the locals," he said.

The mayor, and governor of the region, joined Maj. Gen. David L. Grange, commanding general of Task Force Eagle for

the event, which drew scores of curious citizens of all ages.

Children came by to play; teenagers arrived in groups; and couples could be seen all over the arena standing in each other's embrace, moving to the beat of the music. Middle-aged Tuzlans, dressed in their evening clothes, came to hear what the Americans had to play, and senior citizens sat quietly listening to the songs, even though they might not have understood the words.

Young men and women filled the Tuzla

Crossing Boundaries

Story and photo by
Spc. Akinkunmi W. Adedokun
124th MPAD

street facing the performance venue in search of some evening fun, while some sat at cafe tables at the Cipelichi drinking and talking to pass their time. Soldiers could also be seen talking to the citizens.

So, how'd they like it? "The music is very nice; I hope they come again," said Vahid Hamzabegovic, a Bosnian Muslim. "The female singer (Staff Sgt. Dorothy A. Gragan) looks and sings good."

"The event should be continued, because we want to see more of the American culture, hear more of their music and we want them to see our culture too," said Sehomerovic Senad.

Senad welcomed his city's first opportunity to share culture with U.S. soldiers since the beginning of the peace mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Paulus expressed a similar sentiment. "The people we have talked to want us here; they believe we stopped the war and as long as we are here, there will be peace," he said.

The Germany-based Jazz Funky Blues Band is made up of members of the 1st Infantry Division Band who are inclined to jazz, funk and blues, and was formed only last November, according to Sgt. 1st Class Joan M. Murray, noncommissioned officer in charge of the combo.

"The audience was fantastic, especially the kids. They are the next generation of Bosnia," said Staff Sgt. Izra Hampton, the band's male lead singer. "It's important that we give them a good impression of who Americans are. We're helping them make a brighter future for themselves."

During the performance, Hampton stuck his microphone into the audience and let the kids sing.

"I get a lot of joy out of it," he said. "They'll go home and tell mom and dad about it."

Driven to extreme measures

Pfc. Eric C. Barker
372nd MPAD

An unfamiliar country with millions of undiscovered mines. Narrow, winding, barely two-lane roads, pot-holed streets, country byways with deep drop-offs on one side and cliffs on the other. Cars weave in and out of traffic at an alarming pace. There are few traffic lights to help ease the confusion.

If that's not enough to make a soldier want to stay off the roads in a Hummvee, how about trying to haul a 50-ton tank, or a mine-sweeper?

Try doing it five or more times a week for up to 10 hours at a time. That's just what the soldiers of the 201st Forward Support Battalion do daily.

"It's like moving a mobile home down a narrow road," said Staff Sgt. Dianne Bowie, heavy equipment transport system (HETS) platoon sergeant for the 201st FSB.

For the unfamiliar, a HETS is similar to a lowboy tractor-trailer. "HETS take up 12-1/2 feet on roads that are 17 feet or less," said Smith.

"We haul almost everything large and



Photo by Capt. Steven Gover

A 12-1/2 foot wide HETS squeezes past traffic.

heavy, but mostly tracked vehicles like Bradleys and M-1s," said Spc. Gerald Rice, a truck driver with the 201st FSB.

"The training we received in Hungary before coming down was excellent. We had classes, like how to drive on narrow roads and hills, which were very helpful in preparing us for the mission ahead," said Rice.

They took classes on winching deadlined vehicles. When a problem track will not start they pull it by a winch, said Rice.

"Driving over here can be very hazardous and dangerous. But we take a lot of precautions," said Rice.

HETS drivers leave early in the morn-

ing, for example. They make frequent maintenance stops and check often to make sure their load is properly secured to the HETS, said Rice.

Throw in some, horse-drawn wagons, errant cows and devil-may-care bicyclists.

Mix in pedestrians unwilling to stray off the hard road onto unproved paths, and you have a recipe for a terrain treacherous even for a car. The Task Force Eagle Safety Office, which investigates all accidents, is keenly aware of the dangers military drivers face and works hard to get its message

across.

"We can't correct what has happened in the past, but we can lessen the chance, and in some cases, prevent it from happening again," said Lt. Col. A. William Ramer, 1st Division safety officer. "In traffic accidents, when human error is the cause, we see the same contributing factors and performance deviations occurring over and over again. By contributing factors we mean lack of seat belt and protective equipment usage. by performance deviations, we mean things like driving too fast, falling asleep at the wheel and alcohol."

CAMP BEDROCK

Feeding the force, not force-feeding

By Staff Sgt. Thomas C. Meeks
124th MPAD

There's no drive-through window, no "Big Mac" to curb your appetite. There's not even a combo meal to choose from.

But what you will find in Camp Bedrock is the recent winner of the "Commanding General's Best Mess" competition.

Protecting the force also includes feeding the force.

"Good chow makes the soldiers run faster, fight harder and do the mission better. It's going to be tough for the soldiers to go back and eat at certain places in Germany or the continental United States," said Maj. Gen. David L. Grange, Commanding General of the First Infantry Division, as he presented the award to Bedrock's dining facility.

All dining facilities in the U.S. sector of Bosnia-Herzegovina serve a large array of foods, including sensible hot meals, a salad bar, and fast food for soldiers on the go. Most are open 24 hours a day, serving snacks for those who cannot make the regularly scheduled meal times.

But what separates Bedrock's facility is how well that has been accomplished in this year's fourth quarter.

The best-mess competition, which is held quarterly, is not won on taste alone. The judges also have many strict guidelines to follow in order to pick a final winner.

"We check the product quality, hygiene and sanitation, and we ensure that standard Army recipes are being served, always

keeping nutrition in mind," said Sgt. 1st Class Kevin Tatem, mess sergeant with the 1st Infantry Division, an evaluator for the competition. The judging panel was comprised of military and civilian dining facility personnel from throughout the theater.

Camp Bedrock's staff includes four American civilians and 37 local nationals, all of whom are employees of Brown and Root, the major civilian service contractor for the Army.

"This award is a direct result of the continuous hard work from the staff here," said Spc. Chris Cooper, food service representative with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 2nd Infantry Regiment.

The dining facility has recently gone through some major renovations to better serve the soldiers of Camp Bedrock. Before the renovations, soldiers had to go through the serving line in one tent and exit into another nearby tent for eating.

Since the renovation, the soldiers of Camp Bedrock are able to eat in the same building in which they are served.

In addition to the consolidation of both the serving and eating areas, Camp Bedrock has created a way for the soldiers who desire fast food to really get food fast. Instead of waiting in line, soldiers may continue through the main serving line straight into the dining area, where they immediately encounter another serving area of fast food.

"I really like how they have the self-serve line. It makes lunch a lot easier," said Pvt. Morgan Christy of Company C, 1st Battalion, 77th Armor Brigade.

Be able to leave in '98: Hutchison

By Staff Sgt. Conrad College
372nd MPAD

U.S. Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison, (R-Texas), visited last week with U.S. soldiers and representatives of the Bosnian women's conference.

Following an aerial tour of Brcko, accompanied by Gen. Wesley Clark, Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, (SACEUR), the senator had lunch with soldiers at Camp McGovern.

After lunch, she flew to Eagle Base to speak to service members and to meet with a group from the Bosnian Women's Conference and other women's organizations.

This was Hutchison's third trip to Bosnia. During her stop at Eagle Base, she told soldiers and reporters that Congress is intensely interested in their mission here.

"Let me say that this is an area of great concern to all of us in Congress. We are very hopeful that we will be able to progress through the Dayton Accords and accomplish our mission and be able to leave in June of 1998," she said.

"That's what everyone is planning to do. Now we've got to work for this next year to make sure that everything is in place so that we can ful-

fill our mission and do exactly what we said we have done."

Hutchison also said that she will take a strong message back to Washington.

"I'm going to take back the message that our troops are fulfilling the mission, not only well, but better than anyone could ever have hoped," she said. "Our troops are missionaries of what is great about America. They have a great morale. I am always uplifted in spirits when I visit a base and I was not disappointed today. What I want is to make sure that we keep the mission to exactly what we said it would be. I do not want to see mission creep. I don't want to see time creep. I want to do exactly what we said that we will do.

"I want to keep our word to our allies and to the people of Bosnia. And I want to do everything to make sure that the troops are getting everything that they need to do the job and that we fulfill our promises to them to complete this mission and go home so that we can be sure that our defense is safe—stay strong for whatever we might need to do throughout the world."

Hutchison told reporters that her meeting with the women's groups and citizens in Brcko proved fruitful. "I think they are going to try to be a positive force for peace. They understand the importance of seeking peace," she said. "They understand that, in order to begin to have jobs, which they all want, they have to start with economic prosperity and economic investment in infrastructure, and that the elections are the first step to that. So I think they are going to try to be a positive force and, hopefully, they will move forward rather than looking back on the atrocities that all of them have suffered."



Sen. Kay Bailey
Hutchison

HUMOR

How to have fun in department stores

Take shopping carts for the express purpose of filling them and stranding them at strategic locations.

Ride those little electronic cars at the front of the store.

Set all the alarm clocks to go off at ten minute intervals throughout the day.

Contaminate the entire auto department by sampling all the spray air fresheners.

Leave cryptic messages on the typewriters.

Re-dress the mannequins as you see fit.

When there are people behind you, walk REALLY SLOW, especially in thin narrow aisles.

Walk up to an employee and tell him in an official tone, "I think we've got a Code 3 in Housewares," and see what happens.

Tune all the radios to a polka station; then turn them all off and turn the volumes to "10".

Walk up to complete strangers and say, "Hi! I haven't seen you in so long!" etc. See if they play along to avoid embarrassment.

While walking through the clothing department, ask yourself loud enough for all to hear, "Who BUYS this junk, anyway?"

Repeat previous in the jewelry department.

Ride a display bicycle through the store; claim you're taking it for a "test drive."

Follow people through the aisles, always staying about five feet away. Continue to do this until they leave the department.

Put M&M's on layaway.

Move "Caution: Wet Floor" signs to carpeted areas.

Set up a tent in the camping department; tell others you'll only invite them in if they bring pillows from Bed and Bath.

Pay off layaways fifty cents at a time.

Drape a blanket around your shoulders and run around saying, "I'm Batman. Come, Robin—to the Batcave!"

TP as much of the store as possible.

Play with the calculators so that they all spell "hello" upside down.

Make up nonsense products and ask newly hired employees if there are any in stock, i.e., "Do you have any Shnerples here?"

Dart around suspiciously while humming the theme from "Mission: Impossible."

Attempt to fit into very large gym bags.

Attempt to fit others into very large gym bags.

When an announcement comes over the loudspeaker, assume the fetal position and scream, "No, no! It's those voices again!"

Test the fishing rods and see what you can "catch" from the other aisles.