



GUARDIAN

EAST

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Guardian East welcomes commentaries, articles and photos from readers. Submissions should be sent to the editor at mnbgeast@gmail.com by the 21st of each month and include details such as the who, what, when, where and why of the photos. Please include the person's name, rank and contingent of who took the photos for photo credit. MNBG-E reserves the right to edit any submissions.

COVER PHOTO: Polish Army soldiers attend a range hosted by Joint Regional Detachment-East and qualify for a U.S. Army badge. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Samantha Parks, 4th Public Affairs Detachment)

BACK COVER PHOTO: Ukraine soldiers perform a demonstration during the Ukraine Independence Day celebration at Camp Bondsteel Aug. 24. (U.S. Army photo by Capt. Randy Ready, 4th Public Affairs Detachment)

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TF AVIATION TEAMS UP WITH CBS FIRE DEPARTMENT PG 28



PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

POLAND



Officially the Republic of Poland, it is a country in Central Europe, bordered by Germany to the west; the Czech Republic and Slovakia to the south; Ukraine and Belarus to the east; and the Baltic Sea, Kaliningrad Oblast, and Lithuania to the north.

President: Bronisław Komorowski

Independence: 1918

Capital: Warsaw

Currency: Polish złoty

Official languages: Polish

The armed forces have four branches: Land Forces, Navy, Air Force and Special Forces. The most important mission of the armed forces is the defence of Polish territorial integrity and Polish interests abroad.

Information taken from CIA Factbook.





They ain't gonna eat themselves!

K F O R 1 7

W A F F L E

H O U S E

Sundays (0700-1100) at the Lift
Hangar.





MASCAL training exercise at Camp Novo Selo

Story and photos by French Army Lt. Nicolas Querci
French NCC Media Advisor

French and American soldiers took part in a Mass Casualty rescue and medical evacuation training exercise at Camp Novo Selo July 31.

The MASCAL exercise was the first of its kind to take place at Camp Novo Selo.

The exercise simulated a helicopter crash that resulted in ten casualties.

French and American medical teams intervened on the scene to rescue the casualties and evacuate them to the French medical post, which was transformed in order to receive a large amount of patients.

The medical teams coordinated their efforts to treat the soldiers, save them, and even practiced surgery. The most serious casualties were to be transferred to the Prizren Hospital by helicopter.

All the actors involved took part in the training; from the stretcher bearer, ambulance driver, nurse, doctor, to the chaplain.

The MASCAL exercise was aimed at assessing the medical procedures in case of a mass casualty incident. It also helped to evaluate the real time of intervention while building up a strong coordination between all the different KFOR operations centers involved.

Fort Bragg CSF2 helps KFOR troops build resilience

Story and photos by U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Cody Harding
4th Public Affairs Detachment

Brian Wade and Alex Lalonde, members of the Fort Bragg Comprehensive Soldier and Family Fitness Program, came to Kosovo to teach courses on tactical breathing and stress management to the soldiers of the 525th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade at camps throughout Kosovo from Aug. 11-17.

The idea began when the CSF2 met with the brigade leadership prior to their deployment about the importance of comprehensive fitness.

The CSF2 continued their support and visited the brigade during their mission validation exercise at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center in Hohenfels, Germany. At that time, the leadership asked if they would come to Kosovo after 90 days of deployment to help assess the needs of the soldiers.

“Every soldier that has come through seems to appreciate having an outside source to talk to, to share their daily stress,” Wade, from Charleston, S.C., said. “They also appreciate getting [extra training] they can use.”

On Aug. 15, the CSF2 team met with members of the Joint Regional Detachment - East on Camp Bondsteel to discuss their reactions to the stress they face during their deployment to Kosovo. The sessions ran for an hour for each team, and began with a conversation about the stress they face, how they handle it and what they can do to manage it better.

Once the conversations were complete, Lalonde and Wade gave the soldiers classes on a process called “tactical breathing” to help them man-

age their stress in a simple and effective way.

Afterwards, soldiers got to sample some of the software the CSF2 team brought with them, including a laptop with specialized biofeedback software to track their breathing, fight or flight responses and levels of stress.

“We’re not typical trainers in the sense of throwing up a PowerPoint slide and talking to them,” Lalonde, from Rochester, N.Y., said. “I know most of our sessions have been discussion based, getting them to speak up and tell us what’s going on, how stress is affecting them.”

The visit at Camp Bondsteel ended a week’s worth of training from the CSF2, who now head back to Fort Bragg to continue to improve on their abilities to help soldiers and families combat stress.

U.S. Army Spc. Anthony Cancel, a soldier with JRD-E, said having the program come to meet directly with the soldiers was beneficial.

“I definitely think it’s a good idea,” Cancel, a Brooklyn, N.Y. native, said. “I know a lot of guys here that are stressed out. I’m pretty sure that there are guys out there that need this.”



Members of the 525th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade practice 'tactical breathing' with instruction from members of the Comprehensive Soldier and Family Fitness unit from Fort Bragg, N.C., during a test on CSF2 on Camp Bondsteel Aug. 15. The trainers helped soldiers from 525 learn how to manage the stress they face during deployment.



GUARDIAN & EAST END OF YEAR PRODUCT

Guardian East is looking for *your* photos.

Each month we take your photos and highlight them in a submitted section of the magazine.

Take this opportunity to share an event you and your team did or have a great photo you took be published. Earn bragging rights with friends! Photos should be submitted by the last week of each month to be in the magazine.

The end of our rotation will be here before you know it. We are beginning to gather photos that will be show cased in an end of year product, similar to a yearbook. The goal is to have everyone covered, including our multinational partners. These photos can be anything you would send home to family: team building events, MWR trips, BBQs, etc. The more photos you submit, the more coverage your section has. We do not want to have to rely solely on photos PAO takes during missions.

Photos can be dropped off on a CD to the public affairs office in building 2130 A rooms 4/5 or emailed to mnbgeast@gmail.com or samantha.d.parks.mil@mail.mil.



BOTTLE CAPS FOR CHARITY

Story and photos by Ardian Nrecaj
Public Affairs Specialist

One bottle cap may not seem like much, but when you collect 570 pounds of them, it could help change the life of someone in need of a wheelchair.

The collection of bottle caps started on Camp Bondsteel as an idea of Valdet Gashi, the environmental officer for Area Support Team Balkans.

“We started the cap project at Camp Bondsteel in June 2012, and our goal was to collect 570 pounds of bottle caps,” said Gashi. “That is how much bottle caps are needed for a purchase of one wheelchair.”

Camp Bondsteel has a recycling program where trash gets separated into plastic, paper and metal. Before, plastic bottles with their caps would go in one basket, but since the cap project started they added another basket to separate the caps.

“When we recycle a plastic bottle we are saving the earth 400 years. That’s how long it takes to dissolve a plastic bottle, and if we separate the bottle cap from it, then we are giving somebody a chance to have a wheelchair,” said Gashi. “So this is an enhancement of the recycling program; it brings in a humanitarian aspect.”

Gashi said they have plans to change the design of the bottle cap collection points on Camp Bondsteel to make them more visible and recognizable.

“This is an ongoing project. The first test was to get one wheelchair. In the future we will try to collect more bottle caps,” said Gashi. “So far Camp Bondsteel has collected 1,145 pounds

of bottle caps [since the start of the project].”

After the bottle caps at Camp Bondsteel are collected, they are taken to the American University in Pristina and delivered to Korab Ahmeti, the coordinator of the Kosovo Cap Project. It was Korab’s brother, Kushtrim, who started the project after he saw a mother carrying her child on her back because she could not afford a wheelchair and he wanted to find a way to help.

“Our goal is to provide a wheelchair to everybody that needs one and cannot afford it,” said Korab. The World Cap Project has spread to 44 different countries since it started in December 2011.

The first shipment of collected caps was transported to Turkey with help from the Turkish Embassy in Kosovo to the recycling company Muzafer Pinarbasi Isletmeleri, who has an internal agreement with the German company Otto Bock Wheelchairs.

Korab said because of places like Camp Bondsteel collecting bottle caps, they were able to collect 13,779 pounds of bottle caps in the first 7 months of the project, enough for 25 wheelchairs. They also received an additional 25 wheelchairs courtesy of Turkey.

“When we delivered the wheelchairs I got really emotional,” said Korab. “There were cases that people never left their house because they did not have a wheelchair. When we provided them with a wheelchair they would hug us,

continued on page 10





One of the bottle cap collection points at the Camp Bondsteel South Town Gym. Valdet Gashi, the environmental officer for Area Support Team Balkans, said there are plans to change the design of the bottle cap collection points on Camp Bondsteel to make them more visible and recognizable.

bottle caps continued from page 9

hold our hands as a sign of gratitude for changing their life.”

Korab says more people have heard of the program since the initial delivery of wheelchairs, with the waiting list growing up to 60 people.

“Bondsteel should be an example for other armies in Kosovo on how to contribute to our project,” said Korab. “During our conversation with Della Hodges, the director of AST, we saw that she was interested in expanding this project at Camp Bondsteel so no cap would go to waste.”



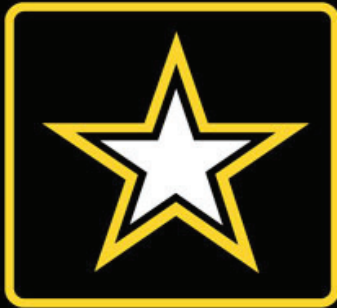
Valdet Gashi, the environmental officer for Area Support Team Balkans, carries a bag of bottle caps that was delivered to the Kosovo Cap Project at American University in Pristina Aug. 26. The project is able to exchange the recycled bottle caps for wheelchairs to give to those in need.



The German coy transferred authority at a ceremony held on Camp Novo Selo Aug. 16.

(Photos courtesy of 2nd Lt. Calvin Whitaker)





U.S. ARMY

I.A.M. **STRONG**SM

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When I recognize a threat to my fellow Soldiers, I will have the personal courage to **INTERVENE** and prevent Sexual Assault. I will condemn acts of Sexual Harassment. I will not abide obscene gestures, language or behavior.

I am a Warrior and a member of a team.
I will **INTERVENE**.

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You are my brother, my sister, my fellow Soldier. It is my duty to stand up for you, no matter the time or place. I will take **ACTION**. I will do what's right. I will prevent Sexual Harassment and Assault. I will not tolerate sexually offensive behavior.

I will **ACT**.

MOTIVATE

We are American Soldiers, **MOTIVATED** to keep our fellow Soldiers safe. It is our mission to prevent Sexual Harassment and Assault. We will denounce sexual misconduct. As Soldiers, we are all **MOTIVATED** to take action.

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VI NOV 2008

KFOR meets with citizens to hear concerns

Story and photos by U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Cody Harding
4th Public Affairs Detachment

The mission of the NATO-led Kosovo Forces is to maintain a safe and secure environment and ensure freedom of movement throughout Kosovo. When achieving one goal hampers the other, however, local residents will let their opinions be heard. It then falls upon KFOR to help resolve the situation by meeting with members of the local community, evaluating the situation and planning a course of action in the best interests of all parties involved.

In that capacity, KFOR met with locals Aug. 5 near the boundary crossing between Serbia and Kosovo, known as Dog 15, to help resolve an issue involving a barrier that was found to be more hindering than beneficial to the community.

KFOR soldiers from the Forward Command Post, Joint Regional Detachment-North and Engineers stationed at Camp Bondsteel met with residents from the local villages and the Kosovo Police from Zubin Potok to discuss the issues their vehicles were having as a result of the emplaced obstacles.

Finding a balance between a safe and secure environment and freedom of movement can sometimes be challenging, said Swiss Army Specialist Officer Sven Hafliker, a JRD-N soldier, but seeing KFOR and the locals talking about it is rewarding.

“The people are talking with each other, we set this meeting up,” Hafliker, a native of Lucerne, Switzerland, said. “This is very satisfying, because it helps the people who live here on the ground and improves KFOR’s reputation towards the people here, and vice versa.”

The barriers were installed for several reasons, including an incident a year ago when a fuel truck toppled over the narrow road into the lake beside it. KFOR positioned the barriers with the intention of allowing small, personal vehicles to pass through, while preventing larger and potentially dangerous vehicles from using the narrow road, instead of the authorized checkpoint just a few miles away known as DOG 31.

The locals said that the clearance between the barriers were too small to maneuver through and were preventing personal trucks from passing by without damaging them and the barrier. The condition of the road, filled with large holes and deep ruts, was also a concern.

Because of these issues, the local residents created a petition asking for KFOR to review the plan for the barrier and possibly change its design to further accommodate their vehicles. The petition was given to JRD-N, who then contacted KFOR to ask for support speaking with the locals and designing a plan to help address the concerns.

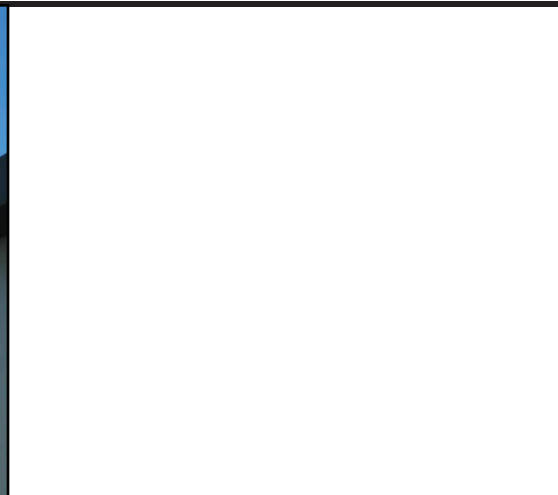
U.S. Army Maj. Austin Marshall, the Multinational Battle Group-East Engineer, said that both sides had legitimate concerns that deserved to be heard and meeting with the community helped them understand each other.

Marshall, a Utah National Guardsman from Sandy, Utah, also stated that the locals were handling the situation in a professional manner and showed that they were well aware of the issues for all concerned parties.

The representatives from KFOR said that they would begin working on a solution that would meet the needs of the locals while continuing the KFOR mission of maintaining a safe and secure environment for the people of Kosovo.



U.S. Army Maj. Austin Marshall, the Multinational Battle Group - East Engineer, and members of Joint Regional Detachment-North listen to the concerns of residents from villages near the administrative boundary line Aug. 5. The locals told KFOR that the obstacles they emplaced on the small road were too small for their personal vehicles, and therefore restricted their freedom of movement.



French, U.S. coys rotate to new camps



The French coy lined up their vehicles, ready to head to rotate to their next post, while American troops arrived to take over the administrative post responsibility at DOG 31.

They spent approximately an hour together sharing the “comings and goings” during the transition.

Some tasks that are provided while at DOG 31 are to provide security to European Union Rule of Law Mission and border police, light armored and foot patrols, road reconnaissance, surveillance and checkpoints.

Coy’s traditionally rotate throughout the area to gain familiarity of each post.

(Photos courtesy of French Army Lt. Nicolas Querci)



Legal Assistance with Separations and Divorce



Military service is demanding and its many sacrifices can at times have a negative impact on a soldier's personal or family life. Those known sacrifices may be part of the reason that less than 0.5 percent of Americans volunteer to serve. Deployments are probably the most stressful part of that service and unfortunately, that difficult time away from home is often when already stressed family issues might reach a breaking point.

If you find yourself facing family issues back home such as possible marital breakdowns, child support problems or other issues, do not make the mistake of trying to deal with it on your own. While every situation is deeply personal and no other soldier's issues are just like your own, you are likely surrounded by brothers and sisters in arms who have faced very similar situations. Let your battle buddy or someone in your chain-of-command know what you are dealing with so they can make sure you are okay and help direct you to the right experts. The military offers numerous resources that can help you make the best of a difficult situation, including, but not limited to, the Chaplain, Medical, and JAG/Legal.

If you are not able to reconcile with your spouse, a separation period and divorce are likely inevitable. The Legal Assistance Office can provide you with advice on how to handle many aspects of a separation or divorce. The earlier you seek counsel, the better we can advise you on your options for your particular case. Only a court can grant a divorce and that can prove difficult while deployed. However, there is still a lot that can and probably should be done if you find yourself in a pending divorce situation while deployed. While it may be difficult at first to face the reality of the change divorce will bring, these problems will only get worse if they are ignored.

One of the most important things to keep in mind is that if you are married, you are still married until a court enters a final decree of divorce. The Army does not recognize a "separation." This becomes an issue when soldiers think that just because they are separated, or someone they are dating is separated, it is okay for them to begin a new intimate relationship. That may be adultery under the UCMJ. Soldiers also need to be mindful of the obligation to support their family members, even when times are rough. In the absence of a court order or separation agreement, Army Regulation 608-99 sets out support requirements. Some soldiers end up paying way more in support than required. That is a personal choice but overpayment could have some unintended negative consequences that individuals should discuss with an attorney. Soldiers should also be mindful of how expensive a messy divorce can be when both sides end up hiring lawyers and may want to budget accordingly for an attorney.

In addition to advice on a new separation or divorce, the LAO may be able to advise you on how to deal with enforcement of prior decrees of divorce as well as child support and child custody orders. While we cannot appear in court or file court documents for you, we can offer a lot of advice and assist you with the review or preparation of some legal documents. Difficult family situations are stressful and often emotional. It cannot hurt to seek the advice of someone who can give you some neutral advice on your options.

As always, if you have questions about family law or other legal matters you should contact the Legal Assistance Office to make an appointment. The LAO is located in Admin. Alley, Building 1330C, Room 3N. If you are seeking assistance with something other than a notarization or power of attorney, please call 781-4575 to make an appointment.

Legal Assistance, Claims, Fiscal and Administrative Law Judge Advocate
Capt. Sean Kumar

KFOR takes part in pilgrimage

Story and photos by U.S. Army Capt. Randy Ready
4th Public Affairs Detachment

Kosovo Force soldiers took part in a pilgrimage to the Church of the Black Madonna in Letnica to celebrate the Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Aug. 15.

The ceremony commemorates the death of Mary, the mother of Jesus, and her assumption into heaven.

People have been making the pilgrimage to the Church of the Black Madonna for more than 400 years, despite various political and religious turmoil that has occurred throughout the Balkan's history.

U.S. Army Chaplain (Maj.) Timothy Meier, S.J., the Multinational Battle Group-East Chaplain and a member of the California National Guard, believes it is the church's openness to those of all faiths that has helped it survive all these years.

"The parish has flourished in part, I think, because they have a centuries old tradition of welcoming people of any faith to come pray there," said Meier.

That tradition of openness continued as the church welcomed more than 200 KFOR soldiers, representing several countries and faiths, to take part in the day's activities.

The KFOR soldiers' pilgrimage started with a 3 kilometer walk through the Kosovo countryside to the Church of the Black Madonna, where soldiers attended an Albanian Mass and were able to tour the church and the town.

For U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Edmund Unutoa, a crew chief repairman for Task Force Aviation and a member of the Florida National Guard, the best part of the day was interacting not just with the KFOR soldiers, but also

with the thousands of civilians from throughout the Balkans who made the pilgrimage.

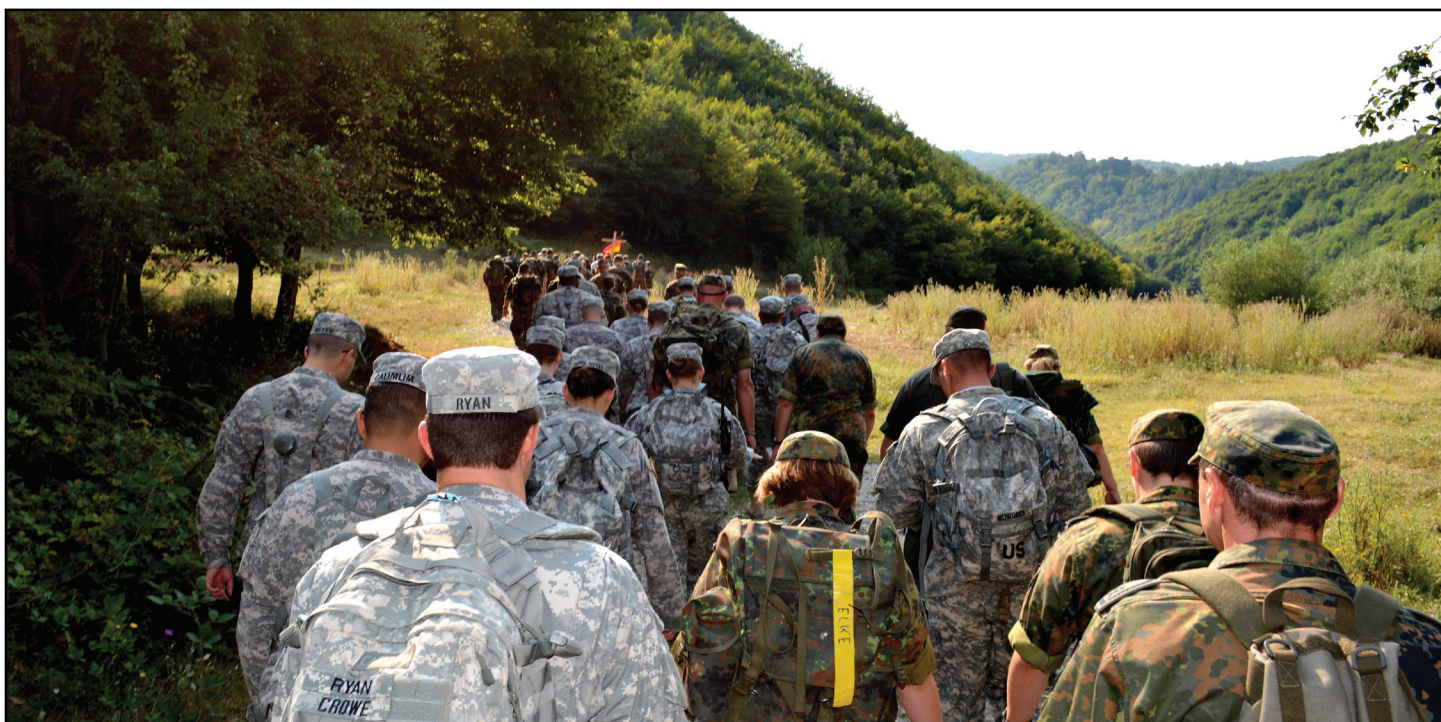
"Even though we didn't speak the same language, just a smile and a handshake really meant a lot to me and I'm pretty sure it meant a lot to them too," said Unutoa, a native of Brooksville, Fla.

For others the visit to the Church of the Black Madonna had another special meaning.

"Eighty-five years ago, Mother Theresa, then 19 years old, came with her family from Skopje to celebrate the Feast of the Assumption," said Meier. "While she was here for that celebration she experienced God's call to change her life completely and become a religious woman, a nun."

That was the best part of the trip for

continued on page 21



Kosovo Force soldiers start the three kilometer pilgrimage to the Church of the Black Madonna in Letnica Aug. 15.





UKRAINIAN INDEPENDENCE DAY

The Ukrainian Contingent Commander, Maj. Vladimir Kokoriev, hosted members from Multinational Battle Group-East to celebrate the Independence Day of Ukraine at Camp Bondsteel Aug. 24.

The ceremony included a speech from Maj. Kokoriev, a review of the Ukrainian coy, a demonstration of hand-to-hand combat, a concert and displays of various Ukrainian Army weapons and vehicles. The celebration concluded with the hosts providing a lunch full of traditional Ukrainian food.

Ukraine declared their independence on Aug. 19, 1991 when the Verkhovna Rada adopted the Declaration of Independence of Ukraine.

(Photos by U.S. Army Capt. Randy Ready, 4th Public Affairs Detachment)





A U.S. soldier applies pressure to a simulated wound during the final portion of the combat lifesaver course at Camp Bondsteel Aug. 9.

MNBG-E certify as combat lifesavers

Story and photos by U.S. Army Sgt. Samantha Parks
4th Public Affairs Detachment

Multinational Battle Group-East soldiers can safely provide first responder lifesaving measures after completing the combat lifesaver course at Camp Bondsteel Aug. 5-9.

Nineteen French and U.S. soldiers from MNBG-E completed the 40-hour course.

“This week we went through a basic combat lifesaver course, starting with the classroom portion,” said U.S. Army Spc. Stephanie Crabbe, a medic with Task Force Medical and a native of Front Royal, Va. “We taught them the basics of first responding to combat care and casualties in the field.”

The Army combat lifesaver course is

a bridge between the self-aid/buddy-aid training given to all soldiers during basic training and the medical training given to combat medics. The course is a combination of classroom training and practical, hands on training. The “combat lifesaver” is a nonmedical soldier who provides first responder lifesaving measures in accordance with the latest tactical combat casualty care protocols.

Crabbe said they taught the different care phases and how to do a proper order of assessment in order to maximize lifesaving.

“[Soldiers] went through four days of the in-classroom [training], mixed with hands-on,” Crabbe said. “We also went over extra medical skills just to give them tips and tricks because [CLS] is

important. Ninety percent of the deaths that occur on the battlefield are preventable.”

Following the classroom portion, soldiers were given a written exam and then tested in a combat scenario environment.

“We stress them out, put them under a real-life simulated situation and make them hot, stressed out, with heart rates going, so they can really feel what it feels like under pressure when you’re trying to save someone’s life,” Crabbe explained.

Crabbe and her teammates put together a blacked out room with chemical lights

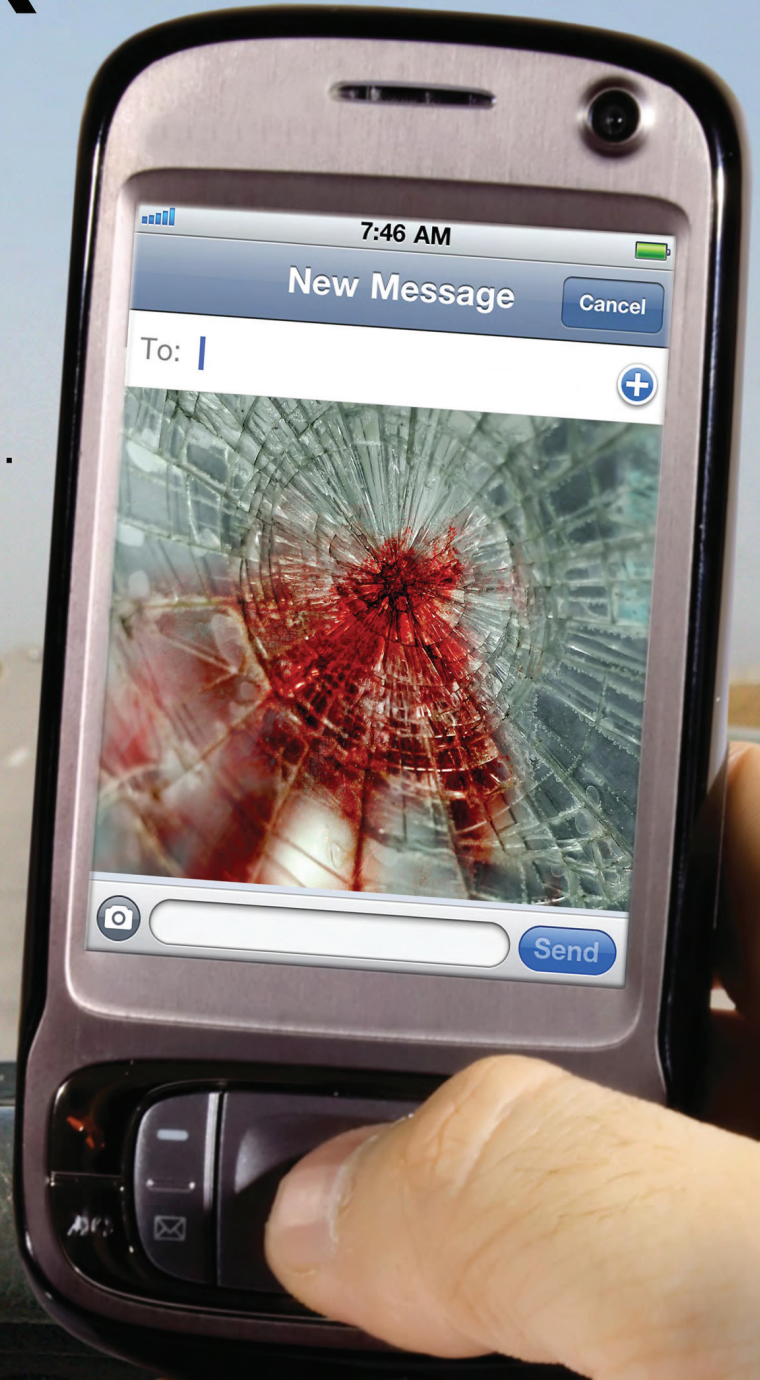
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ABT 2 B UR LST MSG

(ABOUT TO BE YOUR LAST MESSAGE)

DON'T TEXT WHILE
DRIVING. IT CAN **KILL**
YOU OR SOMEONE ELSE.



U.S. ARMY
ARMY STRONG.



U.S. ARMY COMBAT READINESS/SAFETY CENTER
<https://safety.army.mil>

ARMY SAFE
IS ARMY STRONG



CHAPLAIN

I NEED A HERO

Western culture has confused celebrity status with heroism. Athletes, actors and musicians are not heroes. While they may entertain us and even teach us something about perseverance, celebrities make sacrifices and work hard to enhance their fame and fortune. While there is nothing necessarily wrong with that, it is hardly heroic!

In contrast, the Bible and human experience teach that heroism consists of making sacrifices for others, working for the greater good. This is exemplified in Jesus' words in John 15:13. There he says, "Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends."

To paraphrase the great philosopher Willie Nelson, "My heroes have always been Soldiers." Who is more heroic than men and women who volunteer to sacrifice their comforts, their family time and even their very lives in the service of the United States? This is why I love being an Army Chaplain; I get to minister to and serve with my heroes.

Heroism takes many different forms besides military duty, though. One who chooses to honor his or her marital vows taken before God, family, and friends over the course of a long and lonely deployment is a hero. The spouse who has to manage the household affairs and take care of the children through multiple tours is a hero. A parent who encourages his or her child down-range through care packages and regular contact while missing and worrying about them is a hero.

Thank you for your selfless service; you are a hero. Let me conclude with some uplifting words from Galatians 6:9: "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up."

FCP Chaplain
CH (Capt.) Robert Miller



U.S. Army Chaplain (Maj.) Timothy Meier, S.J., the Multinational Battle Group-East Chaplain and a member of the California National Guard, reads the Gospel during Mass outside the Church of the Black Madonna Aug. 15. Meier was able to read the Gospel in English after it had been read in Albanian and Croatian to the large crowd gathered for the Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. (U.S. Army photo by Capt. Randy Ready, 4th Public Affairs Detachment)

See page 16 for the full story on the pilgrimage to the Church of the Black Madonna.



Multinational soldiers from Kosovo Forces cross a creek on their pilgrimage to the Church of the Black Madonna Aug. 15. For the last 400 years people throughout the Balkans have been making the pilgrimage to the church to celebrate the Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

pilgrimage continued from page 16

U.S. Army Pfc. Gary Burnett, a UH-60 Black Hawk mechanic from Port St. Lucie, Fla.

“Back home we’re very big on missions, very big on going to different countries and spreading the gospel,” said Burnett, a Florida National Guardsman. “So to be able to see someone as influential as Mother Theresa and where she got her calling from meant quite a lot to me.”

Meier, who was able to read the Gospel during a Mass held outside the church,

enjoyed the number of missionaries of charity who were at the ceremony.

“I found it especially wonderful that they were there today because that religious order got founded as a consequence, ultimately, of Mother Theresa becoming Mother Theresa subsequent to being here on the 15 of August in 1928,” said Meier.

Though the pilgrimage gave KFOR soldiers the unique opportunity to participate in the ceremony and visit where Mother Theresa received her

calling, Meier also believes KFOR’s participation provided a good example to the people of the Balkans about what can happen when people of different backgrounds, religions and nationalities agree to get along with each other.

“I believe that countries being able to work together, to play together, to pray together will do much more for a guarantee of peace and prosperity in the world than pretty much anything else,” said Meier.

POLISH ARMED FORCES DAY



The Polish Contingent invited their multinational partners to help celebrate Polish Armed Forces Day at Camp Bondsteel. Soldiers participated in a 3 km run in the morning, a formal ceremony, and tug-of-war/volleyball competitions in the evening.

Poland celebrates Polish Armed Forces Day on Aug. 15, which commemorates the anniversary of the 1920 Battle of Warsaw (also known as the “Miracle on the Vistula”) and celebrates the Assumption of the Virgin Mary. (Photos by U.S. Army Sgt. Samantha Parks, 4th Public Affairs Detachment)



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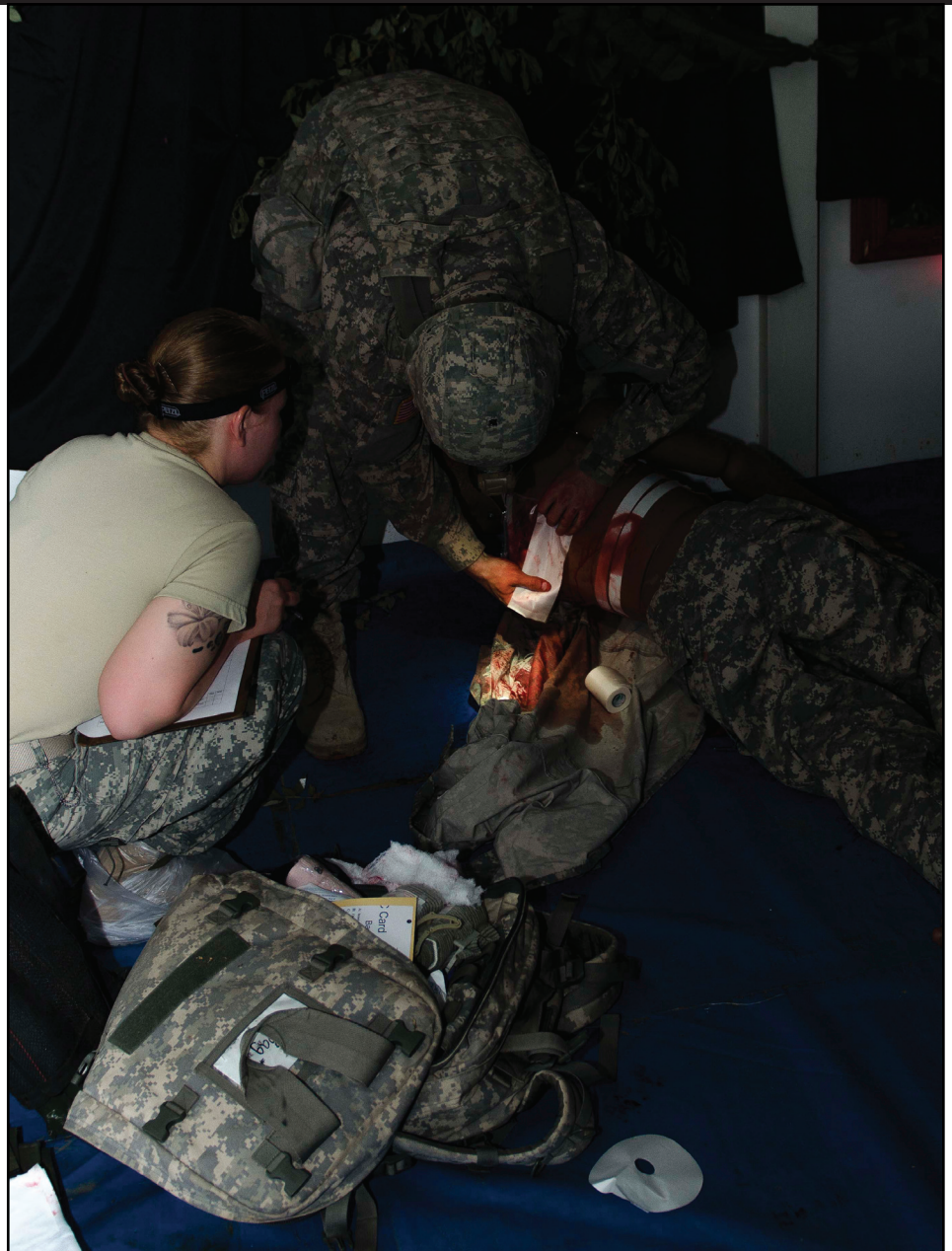
and head lamps as the only source of light. Soldiers entered the room in teams of two and had to provide life saving measures to simulated injured personnel, followed by performing a proper nine-line medical evacuation called over the radio.

“They did a good job making it feel like a combat zone that was dark,” said U.S. Army 1st Lt. Rachel Kinney, a platoon leader with the 62nd Ordnance Company out of Fort Carson, Colo., and an Onawa, Iowa, native.

Kinney said it was very loud and very difficult to see.

“They had the sounds of gunshot fire, played the part of casualties and really put a sense of urgency on you,” Kinney said. “You had to act fast. It was stressful, realistic training. [TF MED] did a good job teaching. It was my first certification in CLS and it was a very good first experience.”

A U.S. soldier performs combat lifesaving skills during a simulated trauma event Aug. 9 at Camp Bondsteel. The training was the conclusion to a 40-hour course provided by Task Force MED soldiers.



After completing a written exam, soldiers listen as they are instructed on their final task during the combat lifesaver course given at Camp Bondsteel Aug. 5 - 9. Soldiers enter a blacked out room in teams of two to participate in a simulated combat trauma event. All 19 soldiers completed the 40-hour course.



Moroccans host allies for Enthronement Day

Story and photo by U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Cody Harding
4th Public Affairs Detachment

The Moroccan coy stationed at Camp Novo Selo held a dinner celebrating the enthronement of King Mohammed VI and invited their multinational partners to join in the celebration and traditional cuisine June 30.

The day marked the 14th anniversary of the king's enthronement.

U.S. Army Col. David Woods, the commander of Multinational Battle Group-East, attended the evening's festivities.

"This was a fabulous event and culturally enlightening," said Woods. "The Moroccan troops were very gracious in inviting us to share their heritage. I really enjoy working with them and having them on the team."

During the program, guests received a short history on the origins of the day, dating back to when they celebrated their

king's enthronement in the Middle Ages. The lesson also went into the shared culture between Morocco and the United States, which goes back to the Revolutionary War.

Royal Moroccan Army Capt. Reda Chaib, the commander of the Moroccan coy, also took time to thank the friends and allies of Morocco for joining their celebration.

Robert Sorenson, the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General for the United Nations Mission in Kosovo, was invited to speak on the occasion, thanking the Moroccans for their hospitality and their partnership with the KFOR mission.

Once the speeches were done, the guests were treated to a traditional Iftar, or breaking of the fast, which serves as a part of the month of Ramadan, where Muslims fast during the day in religious observance.



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KFOR 17 Aviation Maintenance

Story and photos courtesy of U.S. Army Pfc. Gary Burnette
628th ASB

As the sun sets over the gentle emerald hills of Ferizaj, Kosovo, the proud guidon of Detachment 2, Company B, 638th Aviation Support Battalion waves boldly in front of the clamshell hangers; it stands as a testament to the dedicated soldiers who diligently labor inside the humble covering of those structures.

The National Guardsmen from Indiana and Florida combine experience, expertise and passion to form the well-oiled machine that is the Aviation Maintenance Company. On March 17, 2013, the 638th ASB from Shelbyville, Ind., and the 1-244th Assault Helicopter Battalion from Brooksville, Fla. embarked on a mission that would take them halfway across the world to become a part of Task Force Aviation for Kosovo Forces 17.

Sgt. 1st Class David Patton, a maintenance platoon sergeant and a native of Brooksville, Fla., said, "I think my [soldiers] have learned a lot. They are working together as a team and their confidence level has increased."

KFOR's mission, as stated on the NATO KFOR website, is

to contribute to a secure environment and ensure public safety and order, support and coordinate the international humanitarian effort and civil presence, support the development of a stable, democratic, multi-ethnic and peaceful Kosovo, and to support the development of the Kosovo Security Force. This mission is carried out daily by multinational forces from 30 countries.

"This deployment is unique because we are not just dealing with U.S. soldiers," said Sgt. Norman Adams, a UH-60 Black Hawk repairman from Shelbyville, Ind. "We have had to overcome obstacles such as language barriers and a difference in training."

Pfc. William Davis, a Black Hawk repairman, is the third member of his family to deploy to Kosovo since the campaign started in 1999.

"It's a good cause and a good mission," said the Titusville, Fla. native. "In my opinion, KFOR has been beneficial to [Kosovo]. I feel like all the locals I have met truly appreciate our presence."

The Black Hawk has been an asset to the U.S. Army since 1979; serving in the invasion of Grenada up to present day operations. Likewise, these helicopters have been instrumental in the success of NATO's role in peace support operations,



but one of the unsung heroes are those soldiers who strive to maintain the U.S. Army's Black Hawks.

The Black Hawk serves in a number of different capacities; from troop transport and aerial support, to surveillance and medical evacuation. These helicopters are an icon of Kosovo liberation, but like any great machine, mission demands and frequent flying eventually take its toll on the airframe. That is where the 638th steps up to the plate.

Spc. Michael Stiller, an aircraft electrician from Jacksonville, Fla., said, "The older aircraft here require more work, but the facilities and the command are great."

The hard-working soldiers of Det. 2, Co. B, 638th ASB go in-depth with daily maintenance inspections to ensure the highest quality for the customers of KFOR 17 Task Force Aviation. Whether on base at Camp Bondsteel or abroad, Det. 2, Co. B, 638th ASB stands ready to accomplish their mission.

Recently, the maintenance company dispatched a small team to recover a helicopter that was forced to make a precautionary landing in Prizren, Kosovo due to an engine warning light. U.S. Army Spc. Nathan Thompson, an aircraft engine mechanic, was one of the soldiers who went to recover the helicopter.

"We hit the ground running; working at a good pace and getting everything done," said Thompson, a native of Harmony, Ind. "There was great team effort; everyone was motivated and ready to work."

Spc. Justin Sciscoe, from Martinsville, Ind. and another aircraft engine mechanic on the mission, commented, "There were a few challenges; we had no equipment at the site so we had to pack everything that we could possibly need before leaving base."

From the servicing fluids to changing aircraft transmissions, the maintenance company stands prepared to take the necessary measures to get any broken aircraft up and operational again. Task Force Aviation has flown over 450 flight hours since the start of the mission. Their continued success is no doubt the result of their commitment, ingenuity, and teamwork, but every great structure needs even greater support. For Task Force Aviation, the 638th ASB maintenance company is that backbone.





TF AVIATION

Story and photos by U.S. Army Sgt. Samantha Parks
4th Public Affairs Detachment

Task Force Aviation and the Camp Bondsteel Fire Department teamed together for a week-long training exercise at Camp Bondsteel Aug. 12-15.

The training refreshes each firefighter on skills necessary when responding to a downed aircraft and is conducted quarterly.

“Each day we have different crews from the fire department come out and extract crew members from a UH-60 Black Hawk,” said U.S. Army Chief Warrant Officer 4 Gregory Kulick, a member of the Maryland National Guard and safety officer for Task Force Aviation. “They need to know how to get the crews out of the aircrafts safely and efficiently and get them to medical treatment.”

The scenarios ranged from incapacitated pilots to engine fires and severely injured pilots. The trainers aimed to make the scenarios as realistic as possible.

“The training is for our guys to [practice] shutting down an aircraft, [safely] approach it and pulling out the victims,” Assistant Fire Chief Srecko Stalatovic said. “Because you never know what can happen. We need to be up to date. Training is a key of success.”

Agron Tahiri, firefighter with the Camp Bondsteel Fire Department, said the exercises went very well and felt the training was a good opportunity to learn from any mistakes they made.

“Through the training we develop skills and are ready for emergencies,” Agron said. “If [we] do something wrong, then we know the next time, we are going to do better.”



TEAMS UP WITH CBS FIRE DEPARTMENT

Kulick said participating in training like this is good for the pilots as well.

“A lot of the pilots that are here have never even gone through [this training], so it gets them confident that the fire department can get them out without hurting them, the occupants or the aircraft itself,” Kulick said.

U.S. Army Sgt. Jonathan Edwards, a soldier with the Oregon National Guard and crew chief with the Air Medical Evacuation unit, played the role of an injured pilot during one exercise and said the firefighters did a good job getting him out of the helicopter.

“I’ve been in similar training situations like this before and they reacted very well,” Edwards said.

Edwards added that while the fire department is here to train and continue learning, they also help bolster confidence among the crew chiefs and pilots.

“I didn’t know they were so familiar with our controls, levers and switches,” Edwards said.

Kulick said every scenario is a little bit different and that shows that the fire department knows what they are doing in any given situation.

Stalatovic added, “We’ve been here for 13 years and nothing major has happened. We [aim] to stop things before they happen.”



U.S. Army Sgt. Jonathan Edwards, a soldier with the Oregon National Guard and crew chief with the Air Medical Evacuation unit, acts as an injured pilot during a quarterly training exercise Aug. 14 at Camp Bondsteel.



A soldier wearing a blue beret is shown from the side, aiming a rifle. The background is a blurred outdoor target range with a building and a target board visible. The text is overlaid on a semi-transparent grey box.

MULTINATIONAL SOLDIERS COMPETE FOR U.S. BADGE

Story and photos by U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Cody Harding
4th Public Affairs Detachment

German, Polish, Swiss, and Turkish soldiers received a class on U.S. Army weapons, simulation training and the chance to earn a U.S. Army marksmanship badge in an event hosted by the Joint Regional Detachment - East on Camp Bondsteel Aug. 9.

The day began outside the Engagement Skills Trainer, where members of JRD-E set up display stations for several U.S. Army weapons, including the M500 shotgun, the M203 grenade launcher and an M2 .50-caliber machine gun. Those groups that didn't go to the stations went inside the EST where they fired simulated M4 rifles to gain familiarity with the weapon.

After cycling through the stations, the soldiers moved to the range and had the opportunity to qualify on the M4 rifle using the Army standard firing tables of 20 rounds in the prone supported position, 10 rounds unsupported and 10 kneeling.

Turkish Army Sgt. 1st Class Ozan Suslu, a member of the Turkish coy, said working with the Americans on rifle marksmanship was a good experience.

"It was nice and challenging," Suslu said. "I like the challenge."

Once the soldiers were done with their qualification, their targets were counted and each soldier received a badge based on how many hits they scored. The awards were ranked from marksman, with at least 24 confirmed hits, to expert, which requires 36 or more hits.

U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class William Harvey, the operations sergeant for JRD-E, said being able to share their experiences and train their multinational partners on new weapon systems was a unique challenge.

"It's rewarding to see them being able to qualify," said Harvey, a Boston native.

REENLISTMENTS & PROMOTIONS

U.S. Army Sgt. Samantha Parks, print journalist noncommissioned officer for Multinational Battle Group-East and Elizabethtown, Pa. native, reenlisted at a ceremony held on Camp Bondsteel Aug. 25. (Photos by U.S. Army Sgt. Joshua Stoffregen, 4th Public Affairs Detachment)



U.S. Army Spc. Anthony Atunku reenlists while rappelling July 30. (Photos courtesy of Company C, 1st Squadron, 38th Cavalry Regiment)



U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Sandra Beverly, the Joint Regional Detachment-East S4 NCOIC, was promoted by U.S. Army Brig. Gen. David N. Aycock, the Kosovo Forces Chief of Staff, to the rank of Master Sgt. at a ceremony held at the Camp Bondsteel Chapel Aug. 9. (Photo by U.S. Army Capt. Randy Ready, 4th Public Affairs Detachment)

U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Brenda Martinez, the Multinational Battle Group-East Paralegal NCOIC, was promoted to the rank of Master Sgt. at a ceremony held at Camp Bondsteel Aug. 6. Martinez's family, friends and former co-workers were able to join the ceremony by video teleconference from Fort Bragg, N.C. (Photos by U.S. Army Capt. Randy Ready, 4th Public Affairs Detachment)



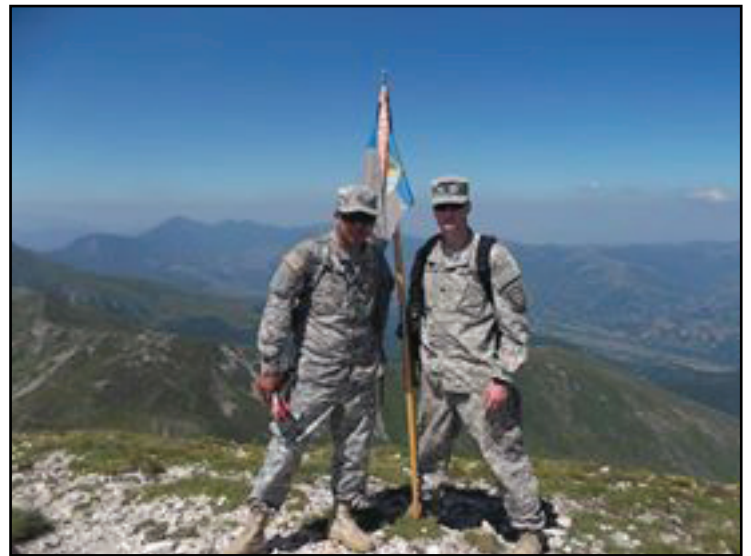
U.S. Army Spc. Jahmel Gathers reenlists at Camp Novo Selo Aug. 4. (Photos courtesy of Company C, 1st Squadron, 38th Cavalry Regiment)



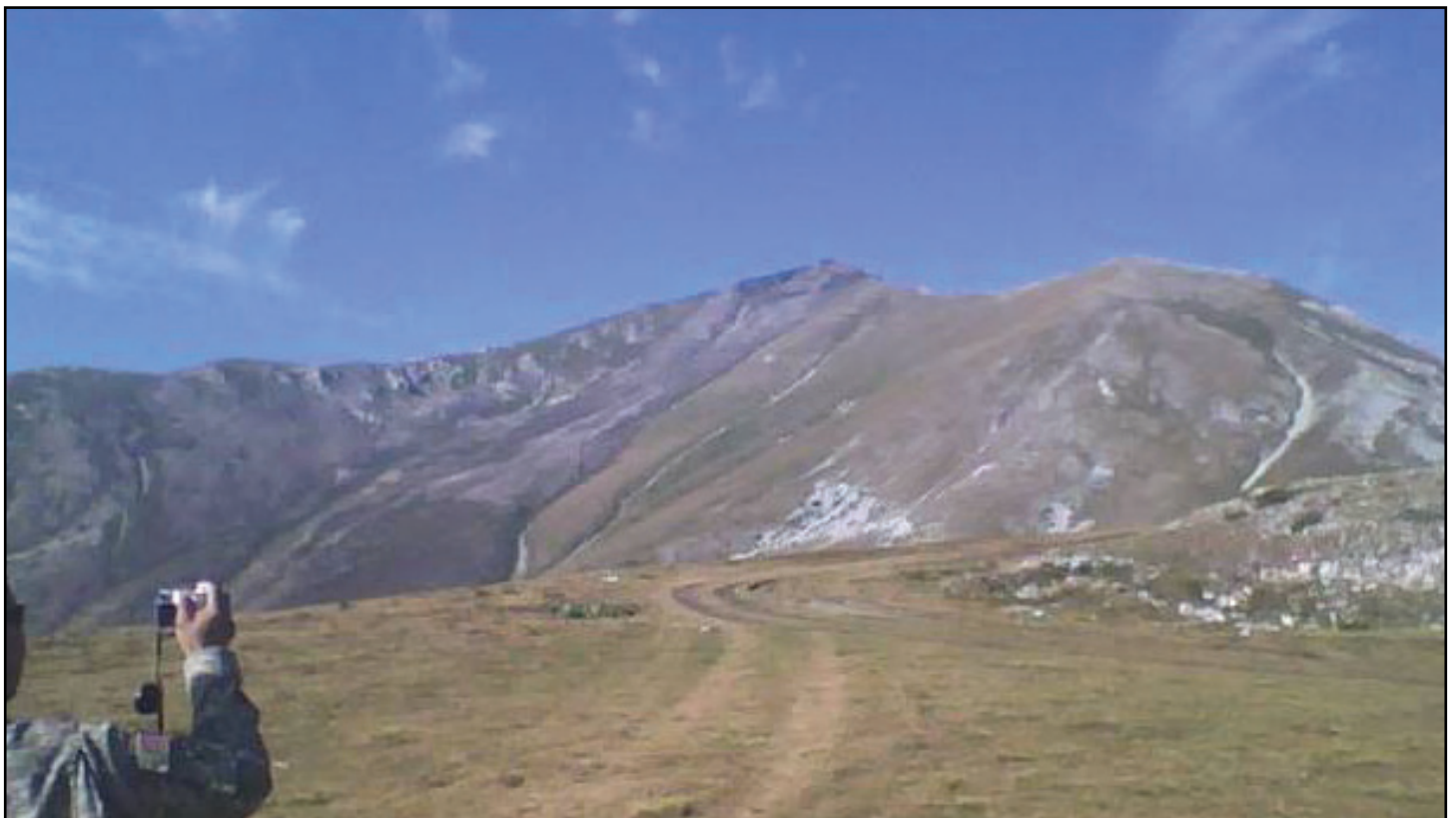
U.S. Army Spc. Joshua Lytle reenlists Aug. 23. (Photos courtesy of Company C, 1st Squadron, 38th Cavalry Regiment)

Do you have a soldier you're promoting soon? What about a soldier reenlisting? Showcase their hard work and dedication by submitting their photos to the Guardian East magazine!

Email your photos to mnbgeast@gmail.com by the 21st of each month. Please include a brief description of the soldier and ceremony with the photo.



U.S. soldiers with MNBG-E climbed Mount Luboten Aug. 25. Mt. Luboten is located near the FYROM border and can be seen from Camp Bondsteel. The group used the climb as a team building event. Mt. Luboten is commonly nicknamed "Mt. Duke" by MNBG-E troops. (Photos courtesy of U.S. Army Sgt. Anthony Nazzal and Pfc. Manny Aguiñaga)



SUBMITTED PHOTOS



Love taking photos? Want to be published?

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Email your photos to mnbgeast@gmail.com by the 21st of each month. Please include a brief description with the photo.



