

SERVICE IN KOSOVO



MNBG-E MONTHLY MAGAZINE

JUNE 2014 VOLUME XVIII, ISSUE IV



**BREAKING BARRIERS
AT
SILVER SABER**

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Service in Kosovo Magazine welcomes commentaries, articles and photos from readers. Submissions should be sent to the editor at mnbgeast@gmail.com by the 20th 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.



A roadblock is brought down by a freedom of movement mobility vehicle so troops could continue on with their mission during the Silver Saber exercise at Camp Vrelo, May 16. The vehicle is used to bring down the biggest roadblocks and create a passage for the crowd riot control troops to get through. (Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. Cody Barber, 11th Public Affairs Detachment)

SERVICE IN KOSOVO MAGAZINE IS PRODUCED FOR PERSONNEL OF MULTINATIONAL BATTLE GROUP-EAST AND IS AN AUTHORIZED PUBLICATION FOR MEMBERS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE. CONTENTS OF SERVICE IN KOSOVO ARE NOT NECESSARILY THE OFFICIAL VIEWS OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT, THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY, 504TH BATTLEFIELD SURVEILLANCE BRIGADE OR MNBG-E.

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ARMY CAPTAIN, TEACHER FORM BOND THROUGH ART



U.S. Army Capt. Steven Northrop, battle captain for Kosovo Force's Multinational Battle Group-East and a native of Gulfport, Miss., holds a card, May 2, sent from Jolee Mockler's class several years ago. Northrop found the card pinned to a board while he was cleaning an office after arriving at Camp Bondsteel, and kept it because it reminded him of his family. (Photo by U.S. Army Cody Barber, 11th Public Affairs Detachment)

Story by Sgt. Cody Barber,
11th Public Affairs Detachment

When deployed, the simplest of things can make a service member feel at home and, for one Soldier, a two-year-old card was all he needed.

U.S. Army Capt. Steven Northrop, battle captain for Kosovo Force's (KFOR) Multinational Battle Group-East (MNBG-E), found a "butterfly" card pinned to a board while he was cleaning an office after arriving at Camp Bondsteel last February.

He kept it from being thrown away because it reminded him of home.

"The drawing on it reminded me of

something that my daughter would draw," said the Gulfport, Miss., native. "Since we just arrived here, I didn't have anything to decorate my workspace or my room to remind me of my family so I pulled the card from the board."

Opening the card, Northrop found out the card was sent from a student at Reedsburg Area High School (RHS) in Reedsburg, Wis., saying thank you to service members for the sacrifices they make.

Northrop wanted to return the favor.

"I always like it when people take a moment out of their time to just say a simple thank you or an appreciation for what we do," said Northrop.

"On the back was an address, so I sent [the listed teacher's name] an email telling her I found this card from her students and I would like to say thank you for the recognition that you and your students are giving our men and women in uniform."

Soon thereafter, he received a response from Jolee Mockler, an art teacher at RAHS, who has sent cards and care packages to deployed troops since 2006.

"It's my mission to give our students the opportunity to tell the troops 'thank you' and I've never had a student stay no to making cards," said Mockler.

Her selfless service doesn't end

there, however, as she also coordinates with local schools in the district to also make cards and collect goods for the troops.

"Every holiday, I send out a district-wide email requesting cards and items," said Mockler. "The items and cards are sent to me at the high school and we pack and send the care packages to deployed troops."

Mockler added her drive to keep doing what she does, comes from the responses she gets back from service members around the world.

"We receive so much love and appreciation for the simple act of sending cookies and making cards," said Mockler.

Many times, photos from the troops accompany their letters, which she puts on a dedicated wall called, 'Mockler's Wall of Heroes.'

"[The wall] started after Sept. 11, 2001, when some of my former students joined the military," said Mockler. "I asked them for their military graduation picture and started the wall and it has grown and grown."

The passion she feels for honoring the troops has become contagious among the students and school staff, and Mockler said she feels it is important to keep supporting service members throughout the world.

"We wouldn't have all the freedoms we do in this great country of ours, if not for our troops, who are willing to sacrifice so much for us," said Mockler. "We must never forget all that our troops do self-

lessly for the rest of us back home."

Both Northrop and Mockler have kept in touch since the initial thank you note was discovered, and Mockler has sent additional letters and boxes to soldiers in the current

Kosovo Force rotation. With each deployed unit, she receives new photos and her continued support is there for all to see as her wall of heroes gets bigger and bigger.



Jolee Mockler, an art teacher at Reedsburg Area High School in Reedsburg, Wis., sits in front of her 'Wall of Heroes' that showcases service members who send her photos. The wall started after Sept. 11, 2001, when some of her former students joined the military after the 9/11 terrorist attacks. (Courtesy photo)



PARTNER SPOTLIGHT



Austria

Located in Central Europe, north of Italy and Slovenia. Temperate; continental, cloudy; cold winters with frequent rain and some snow in lowlands and snow in mountains; moderate summers with occasional showers population is concentrated on eastern lowlands because of steep slopes, poor soils, and low temperatures elsewhere

President: President Heinz Fischer
Independence: 12 November 1918
Capital: Vienna
Currency: Euro
Official language: German

Land Forces, Air Forces. Registration requirement at age 17, the legal minimum age for voluntary military service; 18 is the legal minimum age for compulsory service; males under the age of 35 must complete basic military training (6 month duration); males 18 to 50 years old in the militia or inactive reserve are subject to compulsory service.

Information taken from CIA Factbook



Taken at face value?
It might not be worth much.



The Face of Indiscipline

A solid performer in the company. Serious, determined and committed to the unit's mission. Works hard; plays harder. Likes to let loose on the weekends and blow off steam. Loves the outdoors and being on or near the water. Never learned to swim. One person knows him well. His battle buddy.

Training, discipline and standards are the bedrock of our Army, and as Soldiers, you've been taught what right looks like. As leaders, you have a duty and a responsibility to maintain standards in your formations. You also have an obligation to your Soldiers and their Families to manage risk and take action to correct problems. In our fight against accidental injuries and fatalities, knowledge is the weapon of choice.



ARMY STRONG:



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

MNBG-E PARATROOPERS DESCEND INTO WESTERN KOSOVO

Story by Capt. Kevin Sandell,
11th Public Affairs Detachment

For the 36 Multinational Battle Group-East (MNBG-E) paratroopers from Kosovo Force (KFOR) who descended 1,000 feet using specialized parachutes onto Dakovica Airfield, May 12, the historical airborne operation was a first for even many of the unit's seasoned jumpers.

"It was a fun experience to jump in another country as I've only jumped in America and then jumping on a newly surveyed [drop zone] was a pretty unique experience," said Staff Sgt. Tyler Holt, a Soldier with 2nd Squadron, 38th Cavalry Regiment, 504th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade, who had previously completed nearly 100 jumps. "I've jumped on airfields before at Fort Bragg [N.C.], so that wasn't much different, but I thought it was just a fun experience to be involved in a little bit of history."

Although the squadron had conducted airborne training last month at Camp Bondsteel, the first jump in Kosovo in over 10 years, in this jump the paratroopers used the U.S. Army's MC-6 parachute, an advanced parachute system that is more maneuverable and allows a slower descent onto a drop zone.

The unit also coordinated for a U.S. Air Force C-130 aircraft to fly the soldiers to Dakovica Airfield drop zone, approximately 34 miles southwest from Kosovo's capital, Pristina. The airfield is a former airbase operated by Kosovo Force and the Italian army. Although the air strip is now abandoned, it provided a distinct opportunity for soldiers to practice descending onto an unfamiliar drop zone.



A paratrooper with 2nd Squadron, 38th Cavalry Regiment, 504th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade, exits the aircraft 1,000 feet above the Dakovica Airfield drop zone, May 12. The squadron conducted its second airborne training operation in Kosovo using MC-6 parachutes, which allow more maneuverability by the jumpers approaching unfamiliar terrain. (Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. Cody Barber, 11th Public Affairs Detachment)

The squadron commander said the jumpers' unfamiliarity with the airfield allowed for lessons learned among the jumpmasters and Soldiers participating in the training.

"There's a flight landing strip going right down the middle with all the runway lights and buildings and a lot of concrete, things that our jumpers aren't used to seeing when they come out the door of an aircraft," said Lt. Col. John Cogbill,

commander of 2nd Squadron, 38th Cavalry Regiment and MNBG-E's Forward Command Post (FCP). "Good lessons were learned by everybody; for our jumpmasters having to stay oriented on unfamiliar terrain and then for every soldier that jumped about how to control their canopy and land safely on the drop zone."

Most of the Soldiers who participated in the airborne operation

serve with the squadron's Company C, a long-range surveillance company that provides reconnaissance capabilities to the U.S. Army's III Corps. The C Company commander said the jump allowed his Soldiers to maintain their proficiency in safely and securely landing in locations vital to a military commander.

"I think the Soldiers see it as both a positive effect in sustaining our skills in airborne operations, but also positive in being able to use the capabilities of the parachute to ensure they can actually drop in an advantageous location," Capt. Daniel Stephens said.

Stevens added the mission forced the company and squadron's leaders to identify those Soldiers who had used steerable parachutes before. Using a steerable parachute allows paratroopers to avoid possible problems on the drop zone.

"We identified the right soldiers to jump, as it was a more challenging drop zone, so we identified the right soldiers who had the experience

with steerable parachutes. The feedback was positive and it's a challenging [drop zone]. There's concrete, which typically paratroopers don't want to land on, so with a steerable parachute, it lets you leverage the capabilities of the system while avoiding potential obstacles on the airfield," Stephens said.

For Dakovica residents and city leaders, the exercise built relationships between Kosovo Force and citizens of Kosovo, as many of the local leaders marveled at the airborne operation.

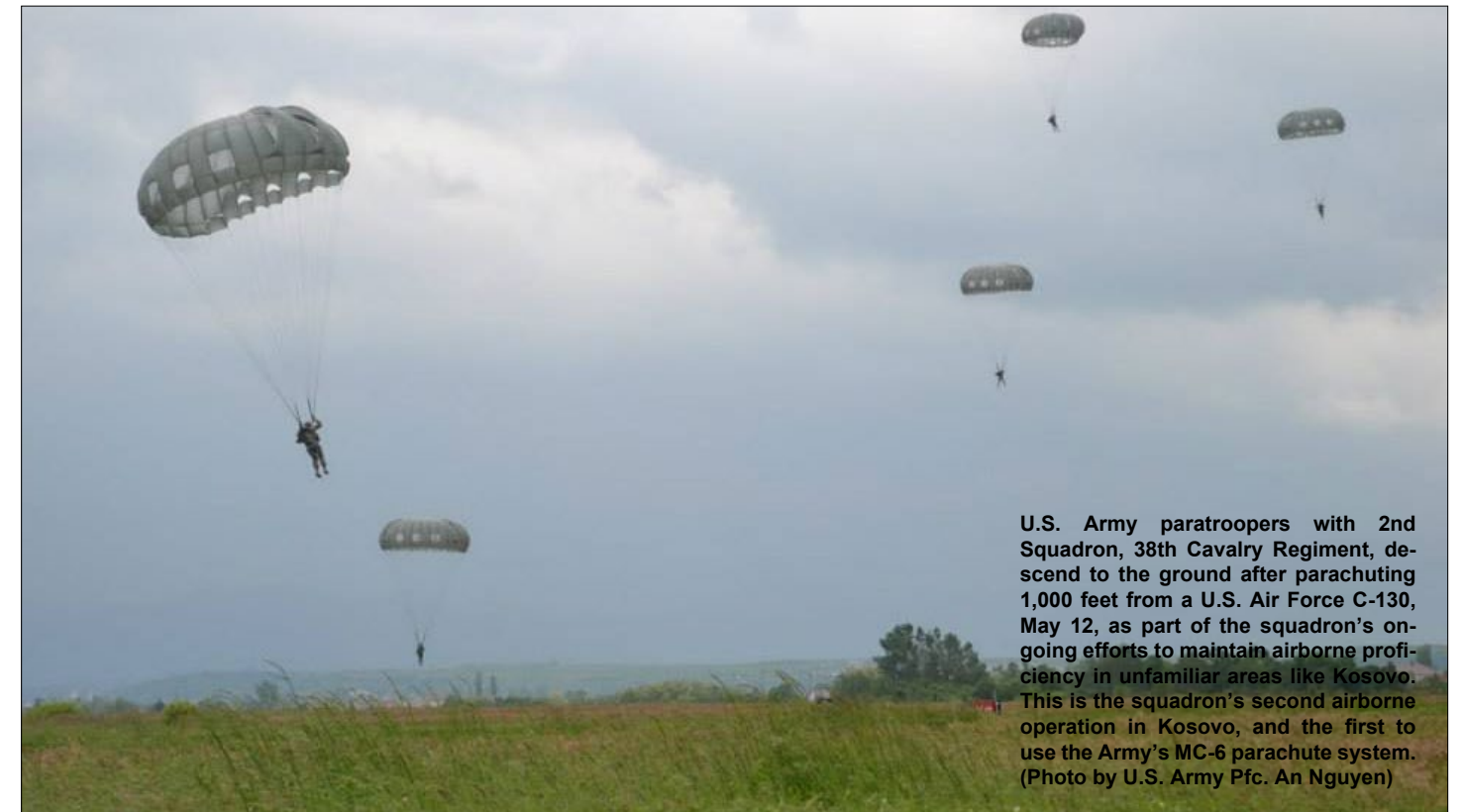
"All of the [local leaders] were very accommodating. They were very supportive when they found out what we intended to use the area for and they were excited about the operation as we were," said 1st Lt. Steven Shaw, the officer in charge of the squadron's Insertion and Extraction Cell and training planner for the operation. "On the jump day, almost everyone that I had met or dealt with on my various leader's recons out there, had showed up to

watch us jump and when we landed, they all came up and were patting us on the back."

Cogbill said airborne operations allow the U.S. military to seize an objective by force with as many as a brigade's worth of Soldiers while giving the Department of Defense more combat power on the ground.

"You're not always going to have the ability to enter into a country through the front door; sometimes you've got to force your way in, and really that's what paratroopers provide the [DOD], is a forced-entry capability," Cogbill said. "Anywhere we can fly a C-130 or a C-17, we can put anywhere from a battalion to a brigade's worth of paratroopers on the ground...and build combat power in any area of operations in a non-permissive environment."

The squadron serves as the FCP for MNBG-E, headquartered in northern Kosovo, and responds as third responders to threats to a safe and secure environment and freedom of movement throughout Kosovo.



U.S. Army paratroopers with 2nd Squadron, 38th Cavalry Regiment, descend to the ground after parachuting 1,000 feet from a U.S. Air Force C-130, May 12, as part of the squadron's ongoing efforts to maintain airborne proficiency in unfamiliar areas like Kosovo. This is the squadron's second airborne operation in Kosovo, and the first to use the Army's MC-6 parachute system. (Photo by U.S. Army Pfc. An Nguyen)

THE UNIFORMED SERVICES EMPLOYMENT AND REEMPLOYMENT RIGHTS ACT

Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) protects the job rights of individuals who voluntarily or involuntarily leave employment positions to undertake military service. USERRA also prohibits employers from discriminating against past and present members of the uniformed services, and applicants to the uniformed services.

Reemployment Rights:

You have the right to be reemployed in your civilian job if you leave that job to perform military service and:

- You ensure that your employers receives advance written or verbal notice of your service;
- You have five years or less of cumulative service in the uniformed services while with that particular employer;
- You return to work or apply for reemployment in a timely manner after conclusion of service; and
- You have not been separated from service with a disqualifying discharge or under other than honorable conditions.

If you are eligible to be reemployed, you must be restored to the job and benefits you would have attained if you had not been absent due to military service or, in some cases, a comparable job.

Health Insurance Protection:

If you leave your job to perform military service, you have the right to elect to continue your existing employer-based health plan coverage for you and your dependents for up to 24 months while in the military.

Even if you do not elect to continue coverage during your military service, you have the right to be reinstated in your employer's health plan when you are reemployed, generally without any waiting period or exclusions, except for service-connected illnesses or injuries.

Right To Be Free From Discrimination And Retaliation:

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- are a past or present member of the uniformed service;
- have applied for membership in the uniformed service; or
- are obligated to serve in the uniformed service;

then an employer may not deny you:

- initial employment;
- reemployment;
- retention in employment;
- promotion; or
- any benefit or employment

Additionally, an employer may not retaliate against anyone assisting in the enforcement of USERRA rights, including testifying or making a statement in connection with a proceeding under USERRA, even if that person has no service connection.

If you believe your rights have been violated, or if you have any questions concerning USERRA, or any other legal questions, please do not hesitate to stop by the Legal Assistance office on CBS located in Admin. Alley, Bldg. 1330C, Room 3N, or call DSN 314-781-4575 for an appointment.

“TUFF BOX”
BAPTISM

Chaplain (Capt.) Youngjin Jung

Over the few short months that the Kosovo Force 18 (KFOR) rotation has been in Kosovo, the Forward Command Post's (FCP) Religious Support Team (RST) has had the opportunity to take part in some groundbreaking operations.

From praying over and assisting in the first airborne operation conducted in Kosovo in over 12 years, to participating in a 50 kilometer ruck march at Camp Novo Selo for the Danish Contingency March (DAN-CON), the chaplaincy team has not had much time to sit still.

Despite each of these exciting

events, one of our favorites is the baptism of U.S. Army Sgt. Colin Dezwaan. The 40-year-old noncommissioned officer (NCO) has served on active duty for five years, and has distinguished himself as a very capable cavalry scout and marksman within Apache Troop, 2nd Squadron, 38th Cavalry Regiment, 504th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade.

Dezwaan is a Christian Soldier who chose to become baptized after years of practicing his faith. He offered a wonderful testimony which was wonderful to hear, and we were happy to help him achieve this step in his spiritual walk.

Due to the limited infrastructure at Camp Novo Selo, finding a suitable place to perform the baptism became our main concern. Eventually the Religious Support Team and Dezwaan mutually decided to use a large tuff box, not only as a testa-

ment to his rough NCO demeanor, but also to the RST's resourcefulness as we continue to serve our best by encouraging Soldiers to increase their spiritual walk.

The baptism was a great success and Dezwaan was able to share the moment with much of his chain of command, along with a few friends from his unit. Dezwaan was grateful for the opportunity to demonstrate his faithfulness and excited to see where his spiritual development would take him.

As the RST continues our mission of providing the highest-quality religious support to soldiers of Multi-national Battle Group-East and the Forward Command Post, we do so knowing that our God will provide a clear path, no matter the circumstances. We only have to keep our eyes open to the path he sets.

Phantom Recon! Always Ready!



Chaplain (Capt.) Youngjin Jung, 2-38 Cavalry Regt. Chaplain, conducts a water baptism at Camp Bondsteel with Sgt. Colin Dezwaan, a cavalry scout with the squadron. (Courtesy photo)



SILVER SABER

SILVER SABER EXERCISE TESTS THE SKILLS OF SECURITY FORCES IN KOSOVO

Story continued on next page

Austrian soldiers run through the smoke and flames to push back the group of rioters during the Silver Saber exercise at Camp Vrelo, May 16. The three-day event tested Kosovo Police, European Union Rule of Law Mission of Kosovo, and KFOR troops on their ability to coordinate, react and execute a large-scale multinational movement for a simulated CRC event. (Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. Cody Barber, 11th Public Affairs Detachment)

It's the Super Bowl and World Cup of Crowd Riot Control (CRC) events and it's what Kosovo Force (KFOR) has been training for over the past several months. It's Silver Saber and the three-day event was held May 14-16 at Camp Vrelo in central Kosovo.

The training event tested the abilities of Kosovo Police (KP), European Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX), and KFOR troops on their ability to coordinate, react and execute a large-scale multinational movement for a simulated CRC event.

The main muscle movement behind the event was also being able to synchronize all of the different forces and work like a well-oiled machine, said Italian army Maj.

Gen. Salvatore Farina, Kosovo Force commander (COMKFOR).

"Operating as crowd riot control was made possible and successful because the companies, units and commanders were working together," said Farina. "This is a very difficult activity and the coordination between KP, EULEX, and KFOR and also within the KFOR units is paramount."

The first day of Silver Saber exercise was conducted in classrooms, where troops went over strategic plans on how to best tackle the CRC situation. The second training day allowed troops to go through various lanes of CRC exercises to practice techniques used to contest civil unrest, and the third day was the compilation of those entire tasks put together.

U.S. Army Capt. Daniel Stevens, C Company commander for 2nd

Squadron, 38th Cavalry Regiment, agrees the coordination between the different multinationals was valuable to the training for everyone who participated.

"Everyone has their own tactics, procedures and their own language, so every time we can get together and do joint operations it bridges the gaps we have as different countries and strengthens the KFOR alliance," said Stevens.

Stevens also pointed out that it is important for troops to stay proficient in CRC tasks and to keep practicing the tactics that come along with it.

"It's critical to do this training to maintain a high state of readiness in the event that we are required by [the Commander of Kosovo Force] to support the mission of KFOR as responders," said Stevens.

Silver Saber brought a mixture of

challenges to the responding security forces, such as Molotov cocktails, large manmade roadblocks and even rioters with chainsaws but that didn't deter the troops, it only benefited them.

"The resources thrown into this [exercise] really gives the Soldiers an extensive look by making it as realistic as possible," said Stevens. "It's the full gambit of threats we could face in a CRC environment."

Harboring communication between the different elements and working together to overcome obstacles, each of the security forces were able to practice movement techniques against the opposing rioters. It's a technique that would be used if one responding element couldn't handle the situation and needed help.

"We practiced CRC techniques and procedures as a whole," said Slovenian army 2nd Lt. Blaz Marolt, a platoon leader for the Slovenian contingent. "What we were doing was to see if we could coordinate and function together."

Troops in Kosovo are prepared to handle situations that disrupt freedom of movement for KFOR forces and Institutions in Kosovo, and the training was a way to show how KP, EULEX and KFOR could handle the situation at hand, Blaz added.

In the end, all of the gears of the machine came together to successfully restore freedom of movement and subdue the rioters -- the end goal of the Silver Saber exercise.

"It was definitely a tough fight [in Silver Saber] with the competitors but the soldiers maintained their composure and were able to meet their end state," said Stevens. "I'm very happy about how they did."



Portuguese medics treat a simulated casualty during the Silver Saber exercise at Camp Vrelo, May 16. During a crowd riot control event, troops take a chance of being injured so medical personnel have to be ready to treat the injured.



Kosovo Police use high-pressure water to remove and extinguish a burning roadblock set up by rioters during the Silver Saber exercise at Camp Vrelo, May 16. The obstacles were set in place to obstruct freedom of movement within the area.



A rioter wields a chainsaw in front of Kosovo Forces during the Silver Saber exercise at Camp Vrelo, May 16. The rioters used a number of weapons during the event to challenge the troops in training.

SQUAD LEADER REFLECTS ON SILVER SABER EXERCISE

Story by Capt. Kevin Sandell,
11th Public Affairs Detachment

With bottles and Molotov cocktails being thrown at his squad by an unruly crowd to his front, U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Dan Cisneros knew the chaos and confusion experienced during the simulated riot event would actually benefit his Soldiers as responders with Kosovo Force (KFOR).

The 26-year-old noncommissioned officer (NCO) from Round Rock, Texas, who serves with 2nd Squadron, 38th Cavalry Regiment, 504th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade, participated in the Silver Saber event, May 14-16, as a squad leader

during the three-day exercise. Silver Saber is an annual training operation held at Camp Vrelo, Kosovo, to test the Kosovo Police, European Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo and Kosovo Force responders in a large-scale Crowd Riot Control (CRC) event.

“Having an opposing force is essential to the [crowd riot control] training piece,” said Cisneros. “Having those rioters pushing on the shields and throwing various objects at the CRC elements allows the guys to feel the effects of a riot.”

Pitted against multinational role-players from various entities, the responders must react vigilantly even when facing unknown threats,

including fires, projectiles, and large manmade obstacles. For Cisneros and his subordinate soldiers, the opportunity to face their fears in events like fire phobia training, led to learned techniques for responding to a real riot.

“Fire phobia training is a great training tool for our soldiers. It is not natural to allow someone to intentionally set you on fire,” Cisneros said. “But it allowed our soldiers, especially our junior enlisted who form the majority of our front shield line, the techniques they can use to react to the use of incendiary devices that mean to harm them.”

Cisneros, a veteran of both Iraq and Afghanistan deployments, add-

U.S. Soldiers from 2nd Squadron, 38th Cavalry Regiment, 504th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade, dismount from a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter during Kosovo Force's Silver Saber exercise, May 16, on Camp Vrelo, Kosovo. Cisneros said many of the squadron's junior soldiers had not ridden a helicopter before, and responding to a large-scale simulated crowd control event surged their adrenalin. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Carlos Burger II, 11th Public Affairs Detachment)



ed many of the squadron's seasoned NCOs needed to rehearse the techniques to respond to a crowd riot control event. Reacting to a civil disruption is different than the warfare skills used in combat theaters.

“I think for a majority of our NCOs transitioning to CRC techniques was difficult at first, because most of our leadership is accustomed to the techniques we have been using for years in Iraq and Afghanistan. It did not take long to pick up the movements and formations, because we are all used to drill and ceremony, so it was not a dramatic change to have an element move on line,” Cisneros continued.

Working with multinational partners like the Slovenian and Portuguese armies, the squadron conducted several lead-up exercises to Silver Saber, allowing the opportunity to demonstrate their capabilities to the collective group.

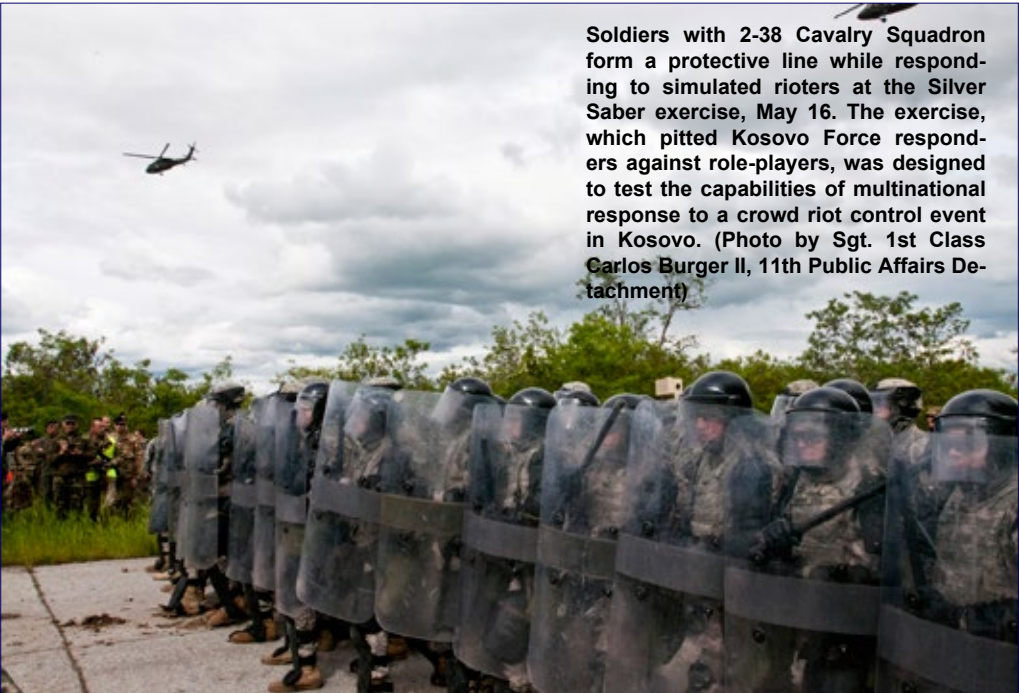
Arriving by helicopter to the riot control event, the squadrons junior Soldiers experienced an adrenaline rush like none before. Cisneros said

many of them had not yet ridden onboard a UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter, and landing on the scene of a large crowd control event surged that feeling even more.

The Silver Saber exercise sent a valuable message not only to KFOR Soldiers, but also to the people of Kosovo, Cisneros said. Working towards peace in the region is ultimately what Kosovo Force and NATO elements are expecting to accomplish.

“I think the most important part of being a soldier in KFOR is understanding not only does our presence here have a positive impact on Kosovo, it also helps to strengthen the bond we have with our [Multinational Battle Group-East] allies,” Cisneros said. “Working with so many nations allows us to ensure that not only are we ensuring peace in Kosovo, but we are helping to strengthen the agreement of peace we have with our allies.”

Soldiers with 2-38 Cavalry Squadron form a protective line while responding to simulated rioters at the Silver Saber exercise, May 16. The exercise, which pitted Kosovo Force responders against role-players, was designed to test the capabilities of multinational response to a crowd riot control event in Kosovo. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Carlos Burger II, 11th Public Affairs Detachment)



U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Dan Cisneros, a squad leader in 2nd Squadron, 38th Cavalry Regiment, 504th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade, is fitted with a parachute before the squadron's first airborne operation in Kosovo, April 15, at Camp Bondsteel. A month later, Cisneros and his squad participated in the annual Kosovo Force exercise, Silver Saber, to test response to a simulated crowd riot control event. (Photo by Sgt. Cody Barber, 11th Public Affairs Detachment)



MNBG-E's TF MED WORKS TO ESTABLISH FOOD SANITATION SYSTEM IN KOSOVO

Story and photos by Sgt. 1st Class Carlos M. Burger II,
11th Public Affairs Detachment

It's not every day that Soldiers get to help lay a foundation for a long-lasting system in a region.

That's exactly what members of Multinational Battle Group-East's (MNBG-E) Task Force Medical did when they invited food inspectors from throughout Kosovo to their food handlers' course on Camp Bondsteel, May 19.

U.S. Army Capt. Nathan Carlton, MNBG-E's Force Health Protection team officer, said that the idea to invite the inspectors came while planning training for a separate unit. "One of our preventive medicine

requirements is to make sure everyone on Camp Bondsteel is trained in food safety," he said. "We planned to train the Soldiers working the [Camp Bondsteel's aviation unit] Waffle House, so we invited some Kosovo food and safety inspectors along, so they could see what we do and what our standards are."

Carlton, assigned to the 61st Multifunctional Medical Battalion at Fort Hood, Texas, added that there is currently no standard safety course for food handlers in Kosovo, and the force health protection team is working with the inspectors to develop their own food safety program.

"There are a lot of illnesses that can be transferred through food if proper

sanitary conditions aren't followed. It's important to help Kosovo provide the best public safety for their food industry," Carlton continued.

Ibrahim Tershnjaku, Kosovo's chief food sanitation inspector, was one of the inspectors who went through the class. Tershnjaku leads the sanitary inspectorate team for all of Kosovo's restaurants and hotels, and was very impressed with this visit.

"I think we exchanged some very good information with our colleagues here on food safety," he said. "Today's training was essential in learning how to work with food and food handlers. We're going to work on a project where, in the future everyone working in food

will have to have a certification."

The command veterinarian under U.S. Army Europe's (USAREUR) command surgeon section, Lt. Col. Martin LaGodna, was also on hand for the training. His role is providing oversight and service support in USAREUR's area of operation. The project, he said, was an important one, both for interagency and multinational interaction.

"For Kosovo, we want to help them develop their public health infrastructure. Secondly, we want to help safeguard the food that [Kosovo Force] receives, and we saw this as an opportunity to work with the public health agency to accomplish both things," LaGodna said.

Tershnjaku agreed the class is beneficial for both the inspectors and for Kosovo.

"All the certifications and training will help us, and I think the citizens of Kosovo will get something out of this as far as moving food safety forward. We are thankful for the American ex-

pertise in helping us build a standard," he said.

Although food safety is not new to the Kosovo Force, LaGodna feels that the current Kosovo Force rotation is helping shape future food service operations.

"Ever since KFOR first came here, we've always had food safety and defense programs, and as time goes on and Kosovo develops, we look to get food from [Kosovo]. Preceding rotations have worked with food safety, but this one has turned it up a notch. I'm very interested and very proud of the work they are doing right now," LaGodna said.

Carlton said the proj-

of Kosovo, but also for the soldiers at Camp Bondsteel making a difference in the region.

"It's a great feeling to know the things we are doing on this rotation will have a lasting effect in Kosovo," he said. "We're helping develop new health protection infrastructure and it makes us feel like we're doing good for somebody."



Ibrahim Tershnjaku, Kosovo's chief food sanitation inspector, talks to U.S. Army Capt. Nathan Carlton, MNBG-E's Force Health Protection team officer, on hand sanitation during a tour of the Dining Facility on Camp Bondsteel, May 19. Currently, there is no standard safety course for food handlers in Kosovo.



Sgt. 1st Class Michael E. Gee, Task Force Medical food handler class instructor, talks about food storage during a tour of the Dining Facility on Camp Bondsteel, May 19. TF Med's force health protection team is working with Kosovo's food inspectors to help develop their own food safety program.

S.I.K. Photos

SERVICE IN KOSOVO



The Officers and non-commissioned officers of the Forward Command Post, and the Phantom Recon Squadron conducted a "Staff Ride" to the historical 1389 monument, May 23. The monument commemorates the Battle of 1389 or the "Battle of the Field of Blackbirds", an important historical event in Balkan History. (Photo by U.S. Army Pfc. An Nguyen)

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The Polish contingent held a ceremony on the transfer of authority from Lt. Col. Tomasz Sawczuk to Lt. Col. Krzysztof Brodecki at Camp Bondsteel May 26. (Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Carlos Burger)



Armed with a makeshift shield and a mop, a rioter has a stand off with Portuguese soldiers at the Silver Saber exercise, May 16. The rioters used a number of weapons during the event to challenge the troops in training. (Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Carlos Burger)



The Forward Command Post hosted a visit to Camp Gate 1 by Italian Army Maj. Gen. Salvatore Farina, Kosovo Forces commander, the Italian Minister of Defense, Minister Pinotti, and the Chief of the Italian Defense General Staff, Admiral Mantelli, May 6. (Photo by U.S. Army Pfc. An Nguyen)



Matthew Northrop, 8, surrounds himself with donated pens, pencils, crayons and colored pencils intended for Kosovo students as part of his unique fundraising drive, “Helping Kids in Kosovo Write Their Future.” Northrop raised over \$500 and enough supplies to fill 12 large boxes. The supplies will be sent to rural schools in Kosovo. (Courtesy photo)

TEXAS BOY HELPS KOSOVO STUDENTS WRITE THEIR FUTURE

Story by Capt. Kevin Sandell,
11th Public Affairs Detachment

It’s been said, “a number 2 pencil and a dream can take you anywhere.” For an 8-year-old boy from Copperas Cove, Texas, his dream was simply to help students half a world away inscribe their own ambitions for the future of their young nation.

Matthew Northrop, a second-grade student and son of U.S. Army Capt. Steven Northrop, who serves as a battle captain for Kosovo Force’s (FOR) Multinational Battle Group-East (MNBG-E), crafted a simple plan to raise money to send pens, pencils and other writing supplies to Kosovo students.

His theme for the distinct supply drive: “Helping Kids in Kosovo Write Their Future.”

“[This drive] gives [students] supplies so they can practice and do their work or homework. It would be hard for kids to do class work without much school supplies,” said Matthew. “Maybe their moms and dads have no money, but they really want to learn and need the help.”

With his father deployed for nine months to MNBG-E on Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo, Matthew began researching the area where his father would serve. He learned that Kosovo is still developing and schools there often lack basic supplies and necessities for their stu-

dents. To Matthew, having supplies to learn formed the basic foundations of a good education.

“I was researching in my dad’s books and found out that schools are poor [in Kosovo] and kids may not have the supplies they need. You need supplies to help you in getting a good education,” Matthew said. “I started because I was curious about the place my dad was going, so I looked in the books his unit gave him to read before deploying. I then went to the internet and was looking up facts and pictures about Kosovo, that’s when I found out how poor the schools are.”

The project quickly expanded, and Matthew found himself present-

ing the idea to the school’s principal and the local school board. From there, he created handmade posters to hang around the building, and publicized his plan to every classroom and grade level.

Steven said his son’s fundraising idea was entirely his own and that Matthew would find the challenge inspiring.

“It was his idea and his goal. This goal came from him doing research for his topic of his semester research for his gifted and talented class,” Northrop said. “If we suggested ideas, it could cause some to question is this really an 8-year-old’s idea, so we entertain his inquisitive nature, but ultimately he has to decide what approach, who and how to ask for assistance.”

Receiving donations from his family, friends, and even a full line of women’s clothing stores in Georgia, Matthew rapidly raised over \$500 and was able to purchase enough pens, pencils and colored pencils to fill 12 large boxes for shipment to Kosovo schools. The boxes will be distributed through Multinational Battle Group-East’s Civil Affairs Officer to schools throughout the eastern and northern areas of Kosovo with one special instruction.

“My son wants pictures showing his supplies are well received,” Steven said. “Ideally, [he] wants us to focus on the small schools in poor areas, not large schools that already may be receiving support. He told me once, ‘You can’t forget the small people,’ meaning people living outside of big



Matthew Northrop, 8, poses with several boxes of donated pens, pencils and colored pencils that will be sent to Kosovo students as part of his fundraising drive, “Helping Kids in Kosovo Write Their Future.” Northrop’s father, Steven, is a U.S. Army captain currently deployed to Kosovo as part of the Multinational Battle Group-East. (Courtesy photo)

communities.”

Donating the writing utensils to Kosovo students, Matthew said he hopes the pens and pencils not only help children learn with fun, but help children write their own future.

“I hope this makes learning more fun and easy, so [children] don’t have to worry about buying [pens

and pencils] and good school work leads to a good education,” Matthew said. “Learning and having fun at the same time can help you get a better education, in the end which can help you get a better job. Plus learning and doing well makes you feel good about yourself.”



Në kujtim të ushtarëve amerikanë
CW3 **David A. Gibbs** (1961) dhe CW2 **Kevin L. Reichert** (1970)
që dhanë jetën më 5 Maj 1999
për lirinë e popullit të Kosovës.

In memory of the American soldiers,
CW3 **David A. Gibbs** (1961) and CW2 **Kevin L. Reichert** (1970),
who gave their lives on May 5, 1999
for the freedom of the people of Kosovo.

LAST LOOK

A ceremony in Prizren honored the sacrifice of two U.S. Army helicopter pilots, who lost their lives in Kosovo during the NATO operations in 1999. The ceremony was organized as part of the U.S. Forces' commemoration of Memorial Day. (Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. Cody Barber, 11th Public Affairs Detachment)