



Guardian

Volume 13, Issue 1 Produced for Personnel of KFOR Multi-National Brigade (East) www.tffalcon.hqsareur.army.mil February 2006

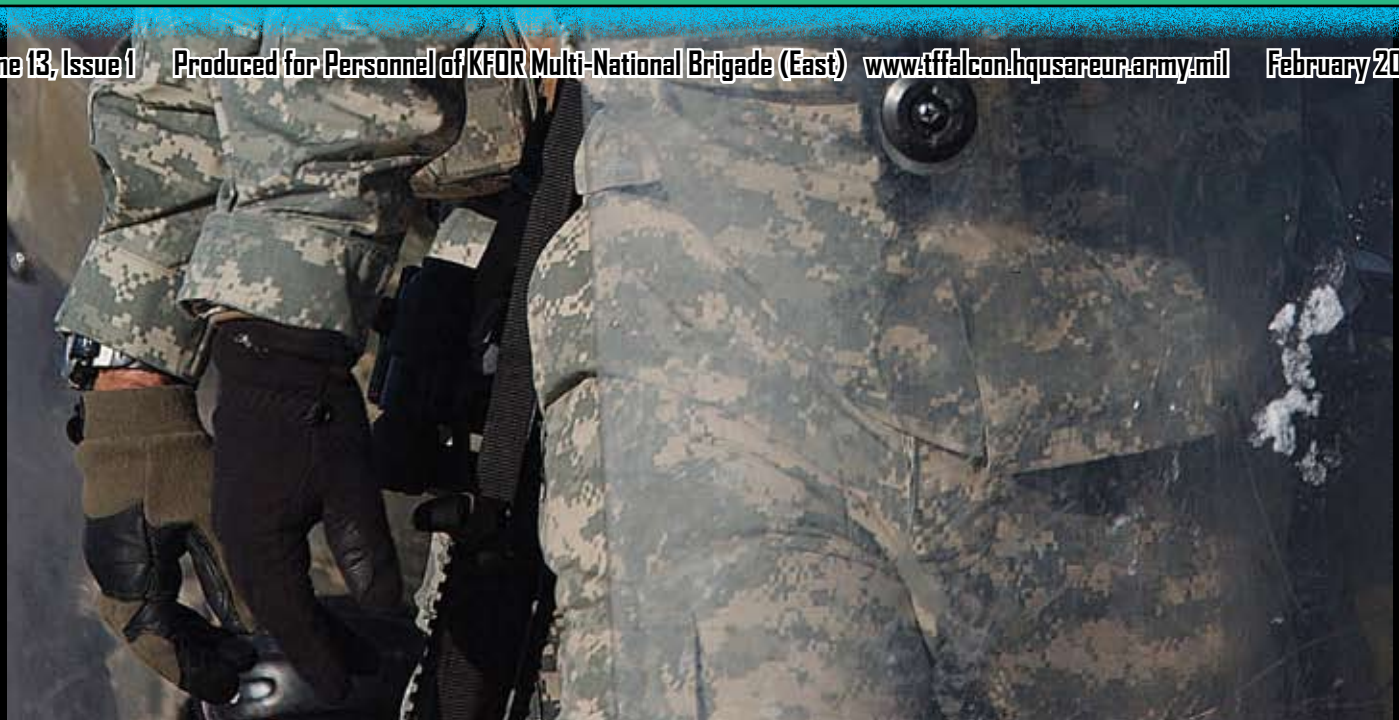


Photo of the Month

Led Zepagain

Photo by Sgt. Brandon Krahmer
Soldiers on Camp Bondsteel enjoyed music from Led Zeppelin tribute band Led Zepagain on Friday Jan. 13 at the Southtown Gym. The band also performed at Camp Monteith on Jan. 12.

Guardian

is produced for personnel of KFOR Multi-National Brigade (East)

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What's Inside

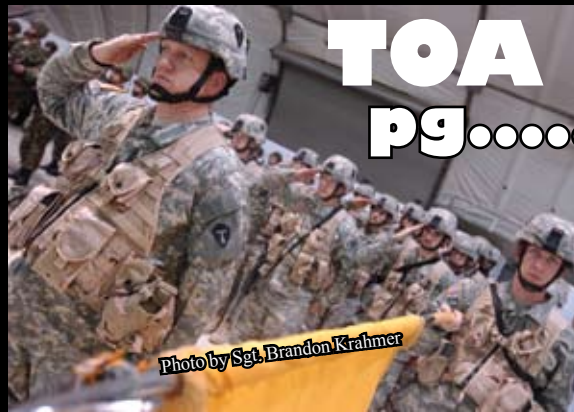


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Kids get toys at MEDCAP...10



Photo by Pfc. Daniel Nichols



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Photo by Sgt. Matthew Chlosta

New Year's Eve patrol discos thru "Dark Way".... pg. 12



Photo by Sgt. Matthew Chlosta

Crowd Riot Control pg..... 18



Photo by Cpt. Michael Schilze, German Army

FRONT COVER PHOTO BY SGT. BRANDON KRAEMER, Spc. Bradley Merchant, Task Force Alamo approaches a "Clam Shell" building on Jan. 20 at Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo during joint crowd riot control training with Danish Soldiers in preparation for the Balkan Hawk KFOR exercise scheduled to take place later this year.
BACK COVER PHOTO BY SPC. J. TASHUN JOYCE, -Col. Mark Campsey, chief of staff, Task Force Falcon, 36th Infantry Division, Texas National Guard and Multi-National Brigade (East), listens to remarks during the transfer of authority ceremony held Jan. 18 on Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo.

Watch the Guardian Review TV show every month on the Armed Forces Network, the Pentagon Channel and online at www.tffalcon.hqusareur.army.mil

This month:

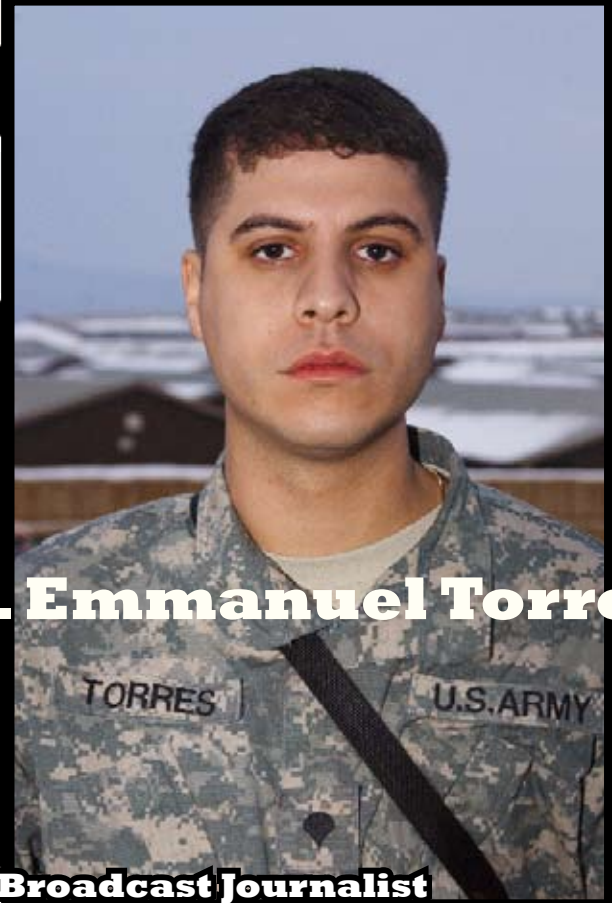
~TOA

~Adoption

~JVB

**THE GUARDIAN
REVIEW**

**TV
Show**



Spc. Emmanuel Torres

Broadcast Journalist

Broadcast Journalist



SPC Joshua Smith
Guardian Review



Falcon Four Range
Kosovo

How does a writer learn to type? I put this question to the 4th Public Affairs Detachment Soldiers as a way to introduce themselves to their readers and as a way to demonstrate their storytelling skills. Here are their anecdotes.

4th PAD



Sgt. Matthew Chlosta

Sgt. C
 "I learned how to type during my senior year of high school. I was in this class with all business students. I learned so I didn't have to pay people to type my papers when I went to college and to have at least one skill that I could use to get a job at any point in my life. My teacher didn't like me, maybe because I ask a lot of questions. I still do, especially as a journalist. Anyways, I used to go in during lunch and practice my exercises just so I could type better than her favorite business students. I got an A. One of the few in my senior year."



Sgt. Brandon Kraemer

Sgt. K
 "I learned to type in eighth grade, in a class called 'Keyboarding'. The typing games were what really made me learn. I think it'd take me four or five times as long to write a story now if I hadn't learned to type back then."



Spc. J. Rashun Joycé

Spc. Joycé
 "I learned how to type in my freshman year in high school. I had a computer before that but I didn't really understand the concept of home row keys and such. Whenever I had a book report or something that I needed to type I would do it really slow and stare at my fingers so I wouldn't mess it up. That used to take a while. When I got to high school we had limited say in what our electives were and since I didn't play an instrument they put me in a keyboarding class. My keyboarding teacher was real cool because she took that strict motherly approach when it came to teaching. She had a way of forcing you to learn even when you didn't want to. She cared so much about teaching her students a useful skill that it was times I thought she would slap one of us upside the head if we were caught looking at the keyboard. It wouldn't have mattered if we did look at the keyboard because most of the keyboards we used had blank keys or the keys were covered up so we couldn't see what they were. Since she came from the typewriter days we weren't allowed to use the backspace key or delete when we typed. Those have always been my favorite two keys."

Pfc. Nichols
 "My Dad, being a computer programmer, exposed me to the keyboard as early as the age of three. Later on in the third grade my mother taught me some of the basic typing rules such as using your thumb for the space bar, and utilizing all of your fingers to type instead of just your index fingers. With some of the basic knowledge under my belt my typing skills really began to take off when I began using Instant Messaging as a form of communication between friends and keeping an online journal. These two things in particular helped develop my familiarity with the keyboard to bring me to the point where I am today. Typing is a lot like playing a musical instrument, especially piano. This kind of correlation also helped me to become a better typist. I can now type 74 words a minute while copying a document, and 118 words a minute when writing from memory. I am also now at the point where I have been officially yelled at for typing too fast (and loud) while my roommates have tried to watch a movie, or sleep."



Pfc. Daniel Nichols



Capt. Sunset Belinsky

Editor's note: Capt. Belinsky is our new 4th PAD commander but she has not arrived in Kosovo as of the Guardian going to press. So read her anecdote and see her photo online at our Website, www.tffalcon.hqsareur.army.mil.



Pfc. Christina Vanyo

"I learned to type formally when I was about seven or eight. 'Mavis Beacon Teach Us Typing' was the program my 'Summer-Time Scholars' computer teacher used, a la Mac computers. Since then, it's all been uphill with speed and proficiency through constant use."
 ~Pfc. Christina M. Vanyo

Welcome to the first issue of your new redesigned Guardian magazine. Read the new edition in print and online every month at www.tffalcon.hqsareur.army.mil. We encourage your feedback. E-mail us suggestions, comments, thoughts, opinions and letters to the editor at guardian@bondsteel2.areur.army.mil We are here to tell the Army story, your story. Enjoy!

~the Editor~

CG's



column

Brig. Gen. Darren Owens, commanding general, MNB(E)

We are at the beginning of an important year for Multi-National Brigade (East). Future status talks have already started. Kosovo's place in the world may be decided on our watch. Many eyes will be upon us.

The people of Kosovo need to see that we will not take sides – we are Soldiers, and the decisions about future status will be made by diplomats, not us. We will support that decision, whatever it may be.

Our families need to see that we are still connected to them. Continue to stay in touch with them. It is going to be difficult to get everyone in a brigade-sized force through two weeks of leave, but the administrative staffs at brigade and battalion are working hard to make that happen.

We need to see just how important safe driving will be here in Kosovo. We have already had too many motor vehicle accidents here on the road. Simply driving down the road is the most dangerous thing you will do here. Pay attention to what you are doing, slow down, and follow the safety procedures.

I look forward to serving with every one of you this year.

CSM'S CORNER



**Command Sgt. Maj. Kenneth Boyer,
command sergeant major, MNB(E)**

When I arrived in Kosovo on Dec. 19, many of our Soldiers were already here and the remainder would be on the ground in a few days. As I looked around at the snow covered countryside I realized a couple of things. No. 1, this is a lot different than Fort Hood, and No. 2, we are finally about to execute the mission that we have been training for since last summer. We have indeed come a long way from Fort Hood, both in distance and as a unit. The long hot months that we spent working, training and growing together has yielded a unit that is trained, certified, and validated as "mission ready." I'm confident that we are ready and able to execute the mission that we have been given.

On Jan 18th we officially said goodbye to KFOR 6B. We are now firmly in the "driver's seat." I am sure that the upcoming year will present many challenges. We must remain focused and ever vigilant to meet whatever comes our way. Overcoming complacency must always be a priority. We must always be prepared for the worst possible scenario when we leave "the wire." Every trip away from our base camps is a "mission" and should be planned for accordingly with commo checks, load plans, clean weapons, risk assessments, etc. Never forget that there is threat out there and be prepared for it.

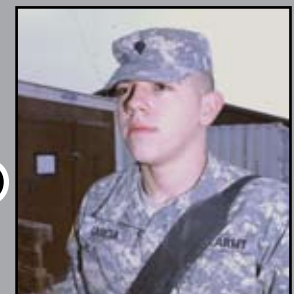
Our rotation will be a historic one. Kosovo will experience changes with the "future status" process occurring during our time here. We have the unique opportunity to make our mark during this time. With the colorful legacy of Texas and the 36th Infantry Division, and with help from our Soldiers from across the United States and Puerto Rico we will accomplish our mission with a flair that Texans are famous for. After only a few walking patrols in Gnjilane, Task Force Houston Soldiers already have the children flashing the Longhorn sign and shouting "Hook em Horns." So with that, let's square up in the saddle, get a firm grip on the reins and "Git er done."

CSM Boyer



**Sgt. Jason Reeves,
3rd Squad, 2nd Platoon,
Company C, Task Force Houston**

Of the Quarter



**Spc. Christopher Garcia
3rd Squad, 2nd Platoon
Company C, Task Force Houston**

SOLDIER

Story, photo and design by Sgt. Brandon Krahrmer



Q: "What is your job here on Camp Bondsteel?"

A: "I am the G4 admin driver.

Q: "Can you tell us exactly what that means, and some of the things you do during the day?"

A: "I run reports such as status rosters and memorandums, and I answer the phones in the office."

Q: "What is the most exciting part of your day here in Kosovo?"

A: "The most exciting part of my day is getting up in the morning and knowing we're one day closer to going home."

Q: "You mentioned that you're a driver. Does that duty allow you to do any traveling?"

A: "The first four days here in Kosovo I stayed outside the wire (off base)."

Q: "How'd you feel about getting out into Kosovo so soon after getting your feet on the ground?"

A: "The first day I was a little scared...the fear of the unknown mostly, I guess. After the first time out, though, I was excited about getting out more and spending time with the people of Kosovo. They have such a different way of life."

Q: "Are there any things about Kosovo that differ from your initial expectations of what it would





Spc. Shawnte Smith, a Task Force Falcon logistics specialist, took a few minutes on Dec. 31 to talk about her role in support of KFOR-7, her first few days in Kosovo, some of her goals here, and to say 'hi' to her family back home.

be like?"

A: "I had a lot of misconceptions. I thought it (serving in Kosovo) was more like the operational tempo in Iraq. But, now that I'm here I really do see that it is a peacekeeping mission."

Q: "Have you set any personal goals to accomplish during your time in Kosovo?"

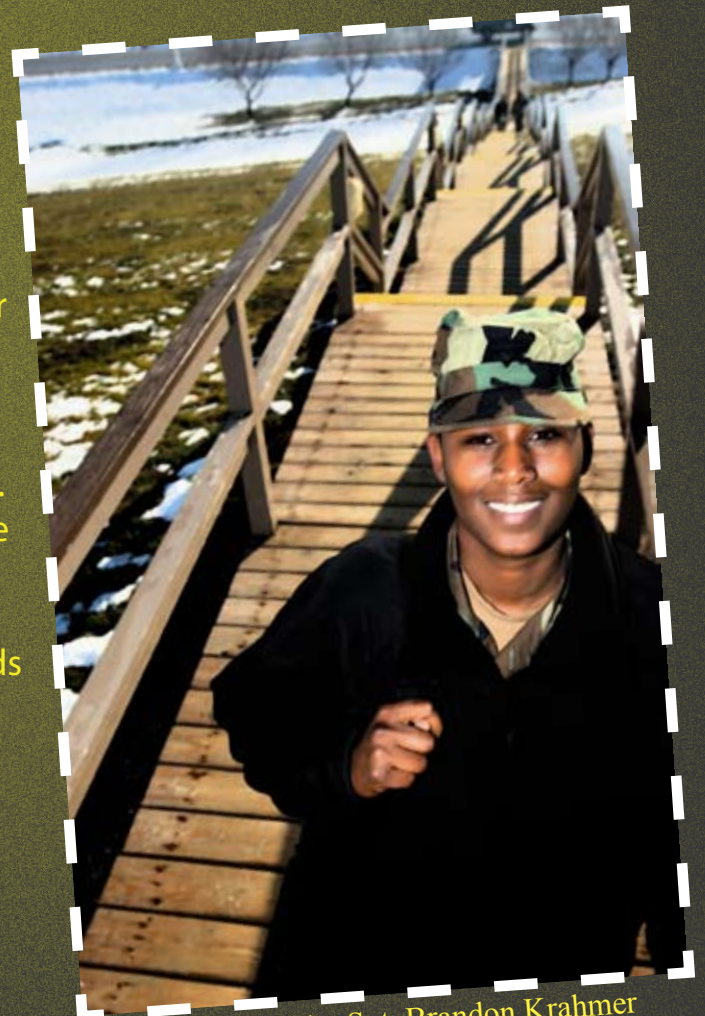
A: "Yeah. I want to increase my physical fitness score and do as many college courses as possible. Also I want to get promoted while I'm over here."

Q: "How are you keeping in touch with your friends and family back home?"

A: "I've become very fond of e-mail."

Q: "Is there something you'd like to say back to your friends and family back home?"

A: "Yeah. I would like to say 'Hi' and 'I love you' to my husband and two wonderful children back home."



Photoillustration by Sgt. Brandon Kraemer



TF HELLAS HOLDS A MEDCAP IN DUBRAVA / DUBRAVE



BUSINESS AS USUAL



Photos, Story, Layout & Design by
Pfc. Daniel J. Nichols



‘TF Hellas and TMK Medical Personnel attended to the needs of 62 residents...An additional 30 families received Humanitarian assistance packages...Toys and school supplies were also distributed to over 200 children...’

~ From The Civil Affairs Situation Report ~



ABOVE center, The residents of Dubrava/Dubrave crowd outside of the UNMIK Community Office. TOP left, Some of the younger Kosovars crowd in around Spc. Kimberly Gorman for a photograph. TOP right, Two children smile, the child on the right showing off her new coat she received that day. BOTTOM left, A child shows off one of the toys he received at the MEDCAP.

There were no explosions. No accidents, fires, riots, casualties, kidnappings, captures, disasters or political drama on Monday, Jan. 9.

Soldiers from Task Force Hellas, in coordination with TF Falcon Civil Military Affairs and Civil Affairs, conducted a medical civil assistance program at a United Nations mission in Kosovo community office in the neighborhood of Dubrava/Dubrave.

In the neighborhood of Dubrava/Dubrave, it was business as usual for Kosovo Force Soldiers.

“Twice a week,” said TF Hellas Commander Lt. Col. Miltos Papagiannoulis.

We have humanitarian missions like this twice a week, he said.

A TF Hellas doctor worked alongside Kosovo Protection Corps doctors to administer exams, and give medicine to 62 people who were present that day.

But, more was given to the residents of Dubrava than just medical examinations.

An additional 30 families received humanitarian assistance packages while toys and school supplies were also distributed to over 200 children.

“When we had planned the MEDCAP in Dubrava,” said Papagiannoulis, “we decided to do some more things with the MEDCAP for these people.”


According to the Civil Affairs situation report, over 200 people were present outside of the UNMIK center. The crowd waited, and as individuals were able to enter, they were given

NEW YEAR

NEA NEV B

Story, Photos, Layout & Design by
Sgt. Matthew Chlosta

Task Force Houston Kamenica/Kamenice



A couple walks past teenagers celebrating the New Year and dancing in front of a small fire near "Serb Alley" around 1:30 a.m., on Jan. 1 in Kamenica/Kamenice, Kosovo. Soldiers from 1st Platoon, Company A, Task Force Houston, 36th Infantry Division, Texas National Guard, Multi-National Brigade (East) conducted foot patrols during the night and early morning to provide a safe and secure environment for locals to celebrate the New Year.



Soldiers patrol on New Year's



No Cover

It was cold enough to see your breath.

Dirty snow flecked with gravel slowly melted on the dull gray sidewalk as they walked.

The music thumped louder and louder as the six young adults approached the front door of the discothèque, “Dark Way.”

With a friendly nod of acknowledgement, they slipped past the large, beefy bouncer, who was dressed in a tight black T-shirt and blue jeans.

Inside, smoke and sweaty bodies swallowed them up.

The ear splitting music rattled their brains.

They used arm and hand signals to quietly work their way through the crowd.

The group stuck close together as they made their way up the steps to the balcony area that wrapped around the perimeter of the packed dance floor.

Once upstairs, they stopped and looked out over the crush of pulsating bodies.

They positioned themselves so they could ob



Above, center, Staff Sgt. Manuel Lopez, squad leader, 1st Squad, 3rd Platoon, Company A, Task Force Houston, 36th Inf. Div. finishes his brief at 11:53 p.m. on Camp Monteith, Kosovo to the Soldiers about to go on patrol in Kamenica/Kamenice.



Above, Spc. Anna Herrera, medic, 1st Platoon, Company A, Task Force Houston, 36th Infantry Division, Texas National Guard, takes pictures of the crowd on the dance floor inside the "Dark Way" discothèque on Jan. 1 in the town of Kamenica/Kamenice, Kosovo, as Spc. Ronny Pigg, 1st Plt. Co. A, TF Houston, 36th Inf. Div., watches the crowd of celebrants.

NEW YEAR'S Eve from...Page 13

serve the energized partygoers from their over watch position.

A few snapped digital photos of the crowd.

They were all about the same age as the New Year's Eve revelers, who were having the time of their life, drinking, smoking, chatting and dancing the night away, down below.

But these young men and one woman weren't club hopping.

They were, "Argonauts," Soldiers from

1st Platoon, Company A, Task Force Houston, 36th Infantry Division, Texas National Guard.

Even though they weren't able to join in the festivities, they were still enjoying their own unique New Year's Eve experience.

The "Argonauts" were conducting one of several New Year's Eve foot patrols in and around the town of Kamenica/Kamenice.

"The disco was my favorite part of the patrol," Spc. Anna Herrera, medic, 1st Plt., Co. A, TF Houston, 36th Inf. Div., said. "I got to see some of the European style and hear some European music, it was fun."

Less than 10 days into a one-year-deployment, the KFOR 7 Soldiers were here to learn about their area of responsibility from their counterparts, the 40th Infantry Division, Califor-



The crowd of Kosovars celebrate New Year's Eve on the dance floor inside the "Dark Way" discothèque on Jan. 1 in the town of Kamenica/Kamenice, Kosovo.



Above, An interpreter, Soldiers from 1st Platoon, Company A, Task Force Houston, 36th Infantry Division, Texas National Guard, KFOR 7 and a Soldier from KFOR 6B enter the "Dark Way" discothèque on Jan. 1 in the town of Kamenica/Kamenice as part of their foot patrol.



2nd Lt. Luke Talbot, platoon leader, 1st Platoon, Company A, Task Force Houston, 36th Infantry Division, Texas National Guard, a KFOR 7 Soldier, checks the map on his "Blue Force" tracker inside his Humvee after midnight on Jan. 1, as his platoon heads toward the town of Kamenica/Kamenice, Kosovo to conduct foot patrols.



Left to right, Spc. Anna Herrera, medic, Spc. Hugo Salinas and Spc. Ronny Pigg, all with 1st Platoon, Company A, Task Force Houston, 36th Infantry Division, Texas National Guard, look at the night sky and their breath in the sub-freezing cold as they pull security on "Serb Alley" during a foot patrol at 2:40 a.m. Jan. 1 in the town of Kamenica/Kamenice, Kosovo.

nia National Guard, KFOR 6B, Soldiers known as the "Peacemakers."

"Going to the disco club--made me think of how things seem the same as back in the states," Herrera said, "and then I started to think of how it must have been before the UN (United Nations) stepped in, how it seemed like a safer environment for the youth of Kosovo, that they felt at ease to celebrate and bring in a New Year.

The "Peacemakers" would teach the "Argonauts" how to navigate the sometimes steep slopes of "peace enforcement."

"Happy New Year" inside the wire

Initially, the patrol was supposed to leave Camp Monteith by 11 p.m. But, because of a

faulty radio, they were delayed for more than an hour.

So they spent midnight waiting in the staging area for another Humvee to be brought around.

They milled around their Humvees in the bone chilling cold.

They poured over maps illuminated by flash lights and laid out on the hood of another Humvee.

At 11:53 p.m. Staff Sgt. Manuel Lopez, squad leader, 1st Sqd., 3rd Plt., Co. A, TF Houston, 36th Inf. Div., finished his brief to the Soldiers.

He talked about the different areas they would patrol over the next 6 hours.

For most of the Soldiers on the foot patrols, this year was a lot different than how they spent last New Year's Eve.

The disco was my favorite part of the patrol. I got to see some of the European style and hear some European music, it was fun.

Spc. Anna Herrera, 1st Plt., Co. A,

"(I) saw a concert (on) 6th Street in Austin, (Texas) and enjoyed the company of my friends," 2nd Lt. Luke Talbot, platoon leader, 1st Plt., Co. A, TF Houston said, when he described how he spent last New Year's Eve.

This year was definitely different, he added.

"I'm used to being one of the trouble-makers, not stopping them," Talbot said, "although with the ethnic tensions here, they have a different idea of 'trouble.'"

See NEW YEAR's Eve...Page 26

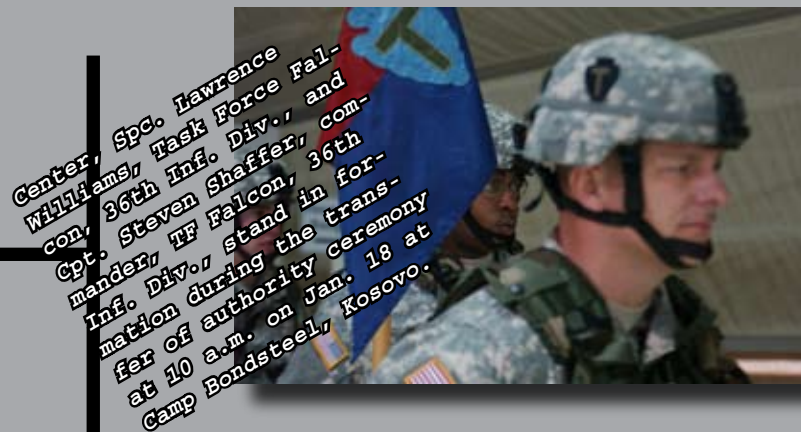


Above, on left, A local passes by KFOR Soldiers and their interpreter as they walk down a street past "D-Market" in Kamenica/Kamenice, Kosovo around 1 a.m. on Jan. 1. Soldiers from Task Force Houston did several foot patrols around the city to provide a safe and secure environment for residences celebrating the New Year.



Right, Spc. Ronny Pigg, 1st Platoon Company A, Task Force Houston, and Staff Sgt. Victor Alcocer, 1st Squad, 1st Plt., Co. A, TF Houston, both from 36th Infantry Division, walk up "Serb Alley" early in the morning on Jan. 1 during a New Year's Eve foot patrol in the town of Kamenica/Kamenice, Kosovo.

T i c



36TH ID UNCASES COLORS IN EUROPE FOR FIRST TIME SINCE WW II

Under a cold, blue sky, protected and warm inside a giant "clam shell" bubble dome, Soldiers from the 36th Infantry Division, Texas National Guard, in their division's first deployment to Europe since World War II, took command of Kosovo Force Multi-National Brigade (East) at 10 a.m. in a transfer of authority ceremony, here.

Out going MNB(E) Commander Brig. Gen. John Harrel, 40th Infantry Division, California National Guard handed authority over to incoming Commander Brig. Gen. Darren Owens, commanding general, Task Force Falcon,



Lt. Gen. Giuseppe Valotto, commander, Kosovo Forces, Italian Army, welcomes the incoming 36th Inf. Div. Soldiers to Kosovo on Jan. 18 at the transfer of authority ceremony.

36th Inf. Div., and MNB(E).

"You were active in promoting my policy of support to UNMIK and the provisional institutions of self-government, thus contributing to back up my action aimed to show that, here in Kosovo, 'together we can' make the difference," Lt. Gen. Giuseppe Valotto, commander, KFOR, Italian Army, said. "Now it is up to -- General Owens, to take over the command and to lead the brigade in its mission, to maintain a safe and secure environment for all the people of Kosovo. I thank you for your work, John, and my best wishes to you, Darren, for your tour in Kosovo."

Harrel stepped up to the podium next.

He talked about missions and goals his unit accomplished during their time in MNB(E) and he advised the Kosovars to keep looking forward to their future status talks, scheduled to begin this year.

"Today marks the official end of this historic mission for the 'Peacemakers of the 40th Infantry Division,'" Harrel said. "During our time here we have witnessed amazing progress. The Kosovo Police Service has assumed responsibility for routine police functions throughout the Gjilan and Ferizaj regions. Economic expansion and new business opportunities are evident throughout our area of responsibility. But most important for the people of Kosovo, progress is being made on the political front.

"Following a comprehensive review of standards, Mr. Kai Eide recommended to the UN Security Council that status talks begin...and as we stand here today, final preparations

See TOA...Page 28

Story, photos, layout and design
by Sgt. Matthew Chlosta



ABOVE Center, Command Sgt. Maj. Kenneth Boyer, 36th Infantry Division, Texas National Guard and command sergeant major, Multi-National Brigade (East) salutes during the playing of the national anthem during the transfer of authority ceremony held on Jan. 18 at Camp Bondsteel. On left, Spc. Ambro Aguilar, Task Force Alamo, 36th Inf. Div. holds the NATO flag and on right, Spc. Brandon Cox, TF Alamo, 36th Inf. Div. holds the colors from the outgoing unit the 40th Inf. Div. BELOW, Lt. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez, commanding general, V Corps and deputy commanding general, 7th Army and United States Army Europe. Sanchez used to be commanding general of an earlier KFOR rotation, when he was still a brigadier general.



T
O
A

PWORLD Riot control

CRC exercise swoops through Camp Bondsteel

Photo by Sgt. Brandon Kraemer

Story by Spc. J. Tashun Joycé
Layout & Design by Sgt. Matthew Chlosta



Task Force Talon pilots land on Camp Bondsteel in two UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters with Soldiers from TF Alamo followed by two French Puma helicopters carrying Danish troops on Jan. 20.



Photo by Michael Schulze,
German Army

Spc. William Coley, 2nd Platoon, Company B, Task Force Alamo throws a snowball during crowd riot control training on Jan. 20 at Camp Bondsteel.

In the wake of the tragic plane crash involving more than 40 Multi-National Brigade Center Slovakian peace keepers returning home to Slovakia, the large-scale Kosovo Force training exercise known as Balkan Hawk scheduled for Jan. 19 -20 was cancelled. The purpose of Balkan Hawk is to present a combined show of force and demonstrate KFOR's capability to deal with potential conflicts within the Kosovo province.

By quickly adjusting fire, Balkan Hawk was not completely called off. Instead, a smaller operation was conducted on Camp Bondsteel instead of Camp Vrelo where it normally takes place.

"We were able to get with Task Force Talon and conduct the exercise with one Task Force Alamo platoon and one Danish platoon," Cpt. Sean Ibarguen, commander, Company B, Task Force Alamo, 36th Infantry Division, said.

The two platoons simulated their insertion and extraction techniques using UH-60 Black Hawks and French Puma helicopters quickly employing crowd riot control procedures to contain the group of unruly individuals and get things under control.

Crowd riot control is used to disperse or contain out of control gatherings and protect



Photo by Sgt. Matthew Chlosta

Left to right, Pfc. Israel Castellano and 2nd Lt. Javier Anzures, both from 2nd Platoon, Company B, Task Force Alamo rush forward toward their objective during crowd riot control training in the afternoon of Jan. 20 on Camp Bondsteel.

certain structures or locations, said Ibarguen. Protected by large shields, face guards, and armed with batons, the potential threat to the safe and secure environment in Kosovo was quickly neutralized in a non-lethal fashion.

"It was a pleasure to work with the Danes," Ibarguen said. "We successfully planned and executed our mission. Our guys really bonded. It was too bad that we couldn't conduct the original mission but the day was not a loss."

BELOW, Levi Frost throws a ball during the dodgeball tournament at the South Town Gym on Jan. 12. His team finished third overall in the tournament.

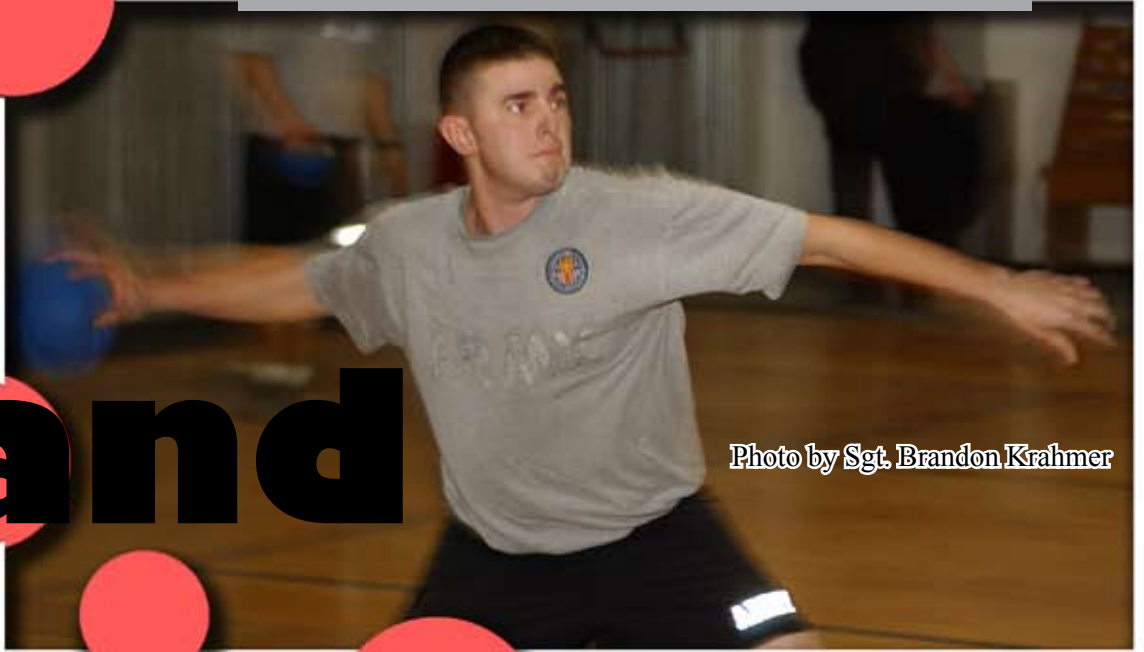


Photo by Sgt. Brandon Krahmer

stand



Photo by Pfc. Christina Vanyo

alone

ABOVE LEFT, on right, "Team Chukar" defender, Patri Saliv tries to steal the ball from a player on "Team Teuta" during an Morale, Welfare and Recreation indoor soccer tournament on Jan. 8 in the MWR North Town Gym on Camp Bondsteel. The winning team was "Team Chukar."



Photo by Pfc. Daniel Nichols

ABOVE RIGHT, Robert Harris, hangs in the air to make a basket during a Camp Bondsteel basketball team scrimmage, Jan. 20, in the Morale, Welfare and Recreation North Town Gym.

Photo by Sgt. Brandon Krahmer



ABOVE, left, Brig. Gen. Darren Owens, commanding general, MNB (E) and Command Sgt. Maj. Kenneth Boyer, command sergeant major, MNB (E) raise the 36th Infantry Division colors over Camp Bondsteel at the crack of dawn on Jan. 18.



Photo by Sgt. Matthew Chlosta

ABOVE left to right, Air Force Staff Sgt. Allen Thill, Sr. Airman Justin Hallen and Sr. Airman Jon Aerts, 208th Weather Flight, Detachment 2, 401st Expeditionary Wing, Minnesota Air National Guard listen to U.S. Rep. Jim Oberstar- (D) Minn. Jan. 22 in the North Dining Facility on CBS.



Photo by Sgt. Matthew Chlosta

ABOVE, Rep. Solomon Ortiz- (D) Texas enjoys a bite to eat on Jan. 22 in the North Dining Facility on Camp Bondsteel.

LEFT, on right, Spc. Joseph Mendez, Co. A, Task Force Houston, 36th Infantry Division Soldier shakes hands with the congressman as center, Staff Sgt. Martin Huerta, Co. B, TF Alamo, 36th Inf. Div., watches. Ortiz was here to visit with Soldiers as part of a congressional delegation that came to meeting and talk with Soldiers here.



Photo by Sgt. Brandon Krahmer

PHOTOS

Pranvera

Story by Pfc. Christina Vanyo
Layout & Design by Sgt. Matthew Chlosta

KFOR Soldier adopts Kosovo orphan

There are many children in the Balkans, especially Kosovo, that are without parents. A local orphanage in Pristina, 'Kinderhof', is a beautiful facility where children from infancy to elementary school age live and play, and hopefully, are found homes with loving people.

One of these loving people is 1st Lt. Eric Jackson, a Pittsburg, Pa. native, of the KFOR-6B, Task Force Tornado Aviators. After a long haul, mounds of paper work and a decision he vowed to stick to, Jackson adopted a little girl from 'Kinderhof'.

The two left Kosovo Jan. 12. Originally part of the KFOR 5A mission from July 2003 to February 2004, Jackson maintained his presence here in Kosovo to follow through with the adoption of a little girl named 'Pranvera', which means 'Spring' in Albanian.

During his first rotation, Jackson saw the condition of many of the abandoned and lonely children.

"I was in Vitina in the end of July," Jackson said, "and I saw something that changed me forever. There was a girl about 16, she walked with a limp in her right leg and her right arm was very uncoordinated. She did not wear make up and had unappealing clothes, and did not walk happily like the other girls. She looked to be an outcast."

A few months later, Jackson

went to the orphanage for the first time. He saw the infants, the five to seven-year-olds, and the special needs children, he said.

"I felt very sad for these children," said Jackson. "Pranvera was a little over two years old. She was so cute."

Jackson said, however, that this specific little girl was with the special needs children, yet her mind was absolutely normal.

"Her right arm and right leg were paralyzed at birth," he said. "Her coordination was not very good."

But Jackson explained that seeing the little girl with children who were mentally retarded was a bit unnerving.

"Here she was with autistic, mentally handicapped, and children with emotional disorders. I started thinking about that girl in Pristina," he said.

At the end of another visit to the orphanage, Jackson was leaving but little Pranvera attached herself to his leg, he said.

"This was the moment she ambushed my heart," said Jackson. He began to research the adoption process. He found that special needs children were the only children allowed to be adopted by Americans.

At this time, Jackson's first tour was coming to an end.

"When I was trying to just find out info about adoption it was time for me to leave," he said.

Jackson sought advice from anybody who could help and went to the Judge Advocate General, he said.

"I was given some advice by a JAG," said Jackson. "He said the only way you could pull it off was to go back on another deployment, so I found a slot."

Jackson said his fiancé's five-year-old daughter Aubrey, was very curious after hearing about the potential adoption and watching a show about the children of Kosovo on the history channel with Jackson.

"She asked about 300 questions," Jackson said. "She could not believe what it was like for children in Kosovo. Aubrey at this moment wanted me and mommy to get her (Pranvera) out of there."

This is when we were very serious about getting Pranvera."

Unfortunately, the adoption process did not allow for Jackson to see Pranvera for seven months.

"Twenty-fifth of April, 2005 was the first time I saw her on my second tour," he said.

Jackson said he wouldn't have it any other way.

His new little girl is going home with him.

She finally has a family she can call her own.



Photos courtesy of 1st Lt. Eric Jackson

Pranvera Jackson, who was adopted from her Pristina/Prishtine orphanage in January by an American KFOR Soldier.



Photo by Pfc. Christina Vanyo

Left, 1st Lt. Eric Jackson, Task Force Tornado, KFOR 6B holds his adopted daughter Pranvera Jackson before he left Kosovo on Jan. 12 with her bound for Pennsylvania.

Rock



Photo by Sgt. Corbitt Hill, Engineers, Task Force Falcon, MNB (E)

Slide Slide Slide Update

Layout & Design by
Sgt. Matthew Chlosta

Photo Illustration by Sgt. Brandon Krahmer



LEFT and ABOVE, are photos of the rockslide that happened near the town of Kacanik/Kacanik, Kosovo Jan. 18. MNB(E) Engineers are helping coordinate and support the local municipality with the removal of the debris, dirt and rocks in a joint effort with MNB(C), MNB(N) and MNB(SW). The estimated time to clear the road is 45 days. As of Jan. 31, 20,000 cubic tons of dirt have been hauled away out of approximately 100,000 CTD in the slide area. An alternative route is being created and is scheduled to be opened by Feb. 3. A possible cause of the landslide is speculated to be the loosening of the soil because of extensive melting snow and moisture saturation of the ground above the slide area, according to MNB(E) engineers.

More Stand Alone Photos



Photo by Spc. J. Tashun Joycé



Photo by Sgt. Brandon Krahmer

Clockwise from far LEFT: Maj. Gen. Michael Taylor, commanding general, 36th Infantry Division is followed by local Kosovar children during his foot patrol through Gnjilane/Gjilan on Jan. 17. Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Alphonso Jackson, right, talks to Brig. Gen. Darren Owens, commanding general, MNB(E), center, 2nd Lt. Desiree Huitt, TF Falcon, left, and 2nd Lt. Elizabeth Shumpert, TF Falcon, far left, during Jackson's visit to Camp Bondsteel Jan. 26. Deputy Chief of General Staff Ukraine Army Contra Admiral Igor Tennyh, left, and Brig. Gen. Darren Owens, commanding general, MNB(E) wait for the arrival of a VIP at Camp White Eagle on Jan 25. Ukranian Minister for Foreign Affairs Borys Ivanovych Tarasyuk speaks to TF POL/UKR troops during his visit to Camp White Eagle Jan. 25.

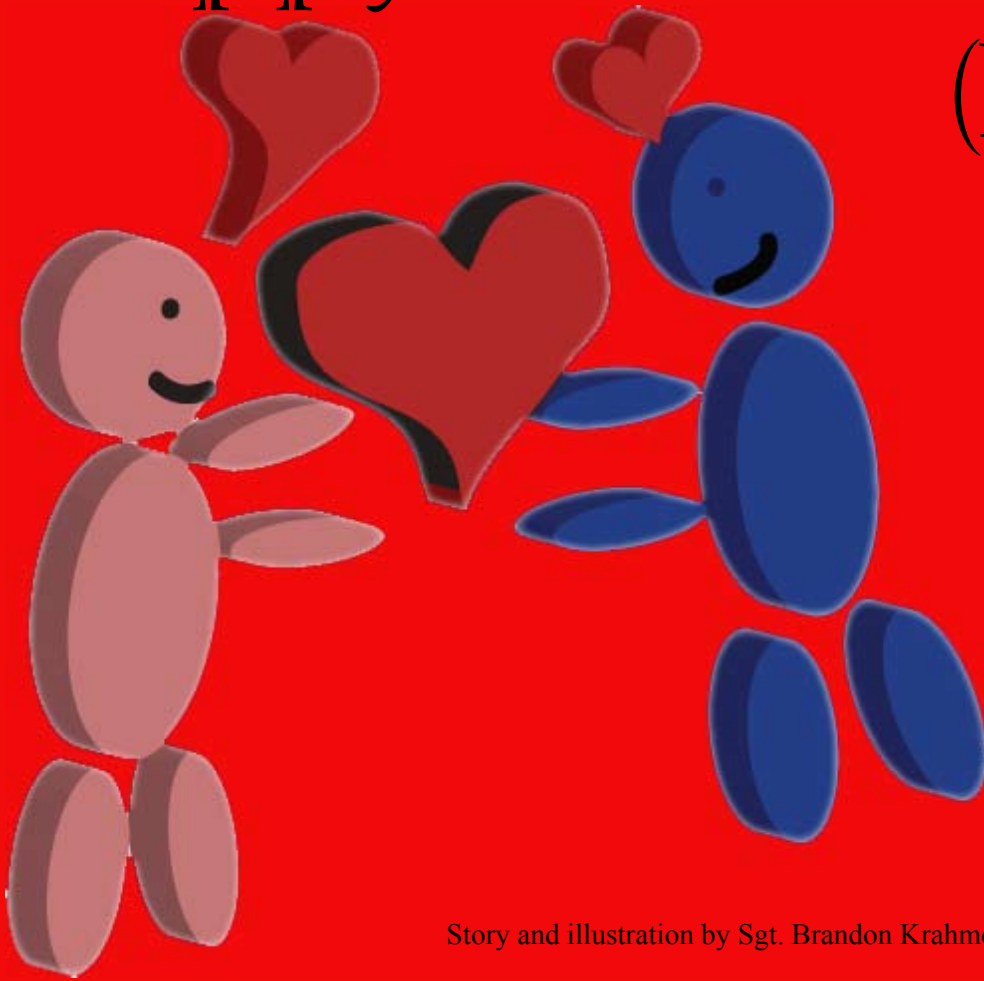


Photos by Sgt. Brandon Krahmer



Happy Valentine's Day...

(hint hint)



Story and illustration by Sgt. Brandon Kraemer

Regardless if someone is married, dating or sans significant other, Valentine's Day has the potential to hold a special meaning to them. Each individual will have their own take on the holiday, what it means and how it should be celebrated.

It's also a holiday that usually requires a little bit of planning and thought, and it's also a holiday that some people might not know exactly from where it came.

A quick search on the internet of "Valentine's Day" or "history of Valentine's Day" will pull up a number of different websites that give various explanations, some more exotic than others, of how the holiday came about.

Despite the various takes on the holiday's history, it can almost be agreed upon that Valentine's Day is a day set aside to celebrate the love and sacrifice between two smitten individuals.

Sgt. Heather Littlefield, a Task Force Talon Soldier, shared her outlook on the holiday and what it means to her.

"I don't know the history, other than that it has something to do with St. Valentine," she said. "...personally, I don't understand why there has to be a designated day to show someone that you care. For me, Valentine's Day is just

an excuse to make up for all the times that you never did what you should have done all year."

"My best friend and her husband do something huge every year for Valentine's Day. I've never really been that way," she said. "I think that if you're with someone, then it shouldn't take Valentine's Day for them to show that they care."

Littlefield still has some fond memories from Valentine's Days long passed, though.

"One year, I received a picture CD set to 'Still the one' by Shania Twain."

"It made me cry," she said. "But my favorite memory... once when I was a sophomore in high school there was an older guy in my karate class who had a crush on me. I didn't really know it until he gave me flowers and serenaded me with 'If I ever fall in love' by Shai. Remember it? Alas, I wasn't attracted to him. However, it was a nice feeling."

With fond memories, though, there are almost always bad ones that come along with them. She shared what her worst memory from this past year's Valentine's Day was.

"That would have to be this past Valentine's Day," she said. "I had just gotten out of a relationship and found myself alone on Valentine's Day for the first time in seven years. That's a hard adjustment."

10 Helpful V-Day Dos

1. ***Planning ahead***
2. Sending flowers
3. Making a mix CD
4. A surprise phone call
5. Diamonds are a girl's best friend
6. A card is good...one you made is better
7. Reminiscing about your last V-day with him/her
8. Find and re-read your first love letter to him/her
9. Send a video message via the MWR
10. Sweets for your sweetie

10 Definite V-Day Don'ts

1. Forget the day completely
2. Lie if you did
3. Buy him/her a household appliance
4. A surprise phone call...at 3 a.m.
5. Costume jewelry
6. Forget to get your mother/father a card
7. Reminiscing about your last V-day...with someone else
8. Buy him/her a CD(unless specifically requested)
9. A membership at a fitness center
10. Ask to go 'Dutch'

Even with all the things that make Valentine's Day tough on deployed Soldiers, she said there's one thing that would make her day.

"I wish there was a flower shop on post," she said. "I love flowers. They always make me smile—even if they're from me."

Every year, for one day in February, we devote ourselves to buying cards with words we feel we're not eloquent enough to say. We buy chocolate to show our sweet and thoughtful consideration, and flowers for their natural beauty and added joy to a bland mantle, kitchen table or desktop.

Valentine's Day makes us think of those we're romantically involved with or would like to be: husbands, wives, girlfriends, boyfriends, 'crushes.' Has this tradition become more habit than heartfelt? Absolutely. Tacky and commercial has the nefarious four-letter 'L' word become. People seem to remember February 14th synonymously with overused shades of red. And unfortunately, most won't hesitate to admit that they fail to recognize love or truly express it on this or any other day.

'Hershey Kisses' wrapped in red foil have become the extent of many of our appreciative gestures.

Our society has become such that 'holidays' often dictate our emotions. We remember certain celebrated events on certain days of the year, but we are human beings and shouldn't allow traditional routine to subtract from our humanity. We should feel thwarted when others refer to us as 'desensitized' or 'numb,' for possession of these qualities is what defines us as man, rather than beast. We are creatures with feeling. Being this way is not always easy; habit is much smoother to stomach than say -- passion, heart-break, longing, or the truth.

With the divorce rate outrageously high among Soldiers and civilians, this shouldn't be too surprising. Between adultery, marrying for the wrong reasons or just making hasty irrational decisions based on arguments, we are losing grasp of the depth of love, how significant it is to show appreciation, and how like anything else, hard work leads to success, to include success in relationships.

If you have somebody, physically or in mind, think not of the tradition. Think not of the gifts. Don't even take notice of the calendar. Every new day with that person should be a reason to tell of your love for them. This isn't sugar coated reality, it's something honest and good that has become tainted. Being a Soldier and somebody else's significant other is especially hard. We're often in stressful environments that try our patience, faith, and yes, our fidelity.

It's also difficult when showing allegiance to an institution that often takes priority over loved ones. This is another reason why cherishing those who cherish you is important. I remember when I was younger, my father gave my sister and I Valentine's Day cards, along with my mother. If our families have become 'nothing but a burden' or a husband or wife is thought of in an unloving way, perhaps some reassessing should be done on our part. Wouldn't it make sense that if somebody didn't feel appreciated, regardless of whether they indeed were appreciated, they would choose not to stick around?

Take this February 14th not to send only a card, but maybe the first in a series of cards. Use this day as a sort of 'New Year', a fresh point at which to begin the habit of honesty. Let us be reminded to tell the important people in our lives what they are to us now and tomorrow. I have heard people say 'tomorrow is never promised' and I couldn't agree more.

There's no better time than the present to act differently for the good. We could surely flood our society with a more vivid color than red, and more frequently than on one day, in one month, each year!

~ Pfc. Christina Vanyo~

Our society has become such that 'holidays' often dictate our emotions.

Safety Office Monthly Messages



Drivers involved in accidents: Due to ice and snow our drivers have been involved in Army Motor Vehicle accidents. Driving in this type of weather and terrain, coupled with the local drivers, is challenging for the Task Force drivers. In order to reduce these risks, we need to take into account how to steer, watch your speed, and the width of the roads.

Slips, trips and falls: Many Soldiers have been seen walking at a fast pace in the snow. Remember, under the snow is ice, this is dangerous. Stress to your Soldiers the need to slow down, and prevent slipping by walking slower, finding firm footing and always use the handrails when using the steps and walkways around Camp Bondsteel and Camp Monteith.

"I enjoyed the change of pace, (and) it validates why I am on the mission and why I am in the Army, to help out where I can, and to serve my fellow man, by providing them with a measure of security," he said.



On left, Spc. Ronny Pigg, 1st Platoon, Company A, Task Force Houston, 36th Infantry Division, Texas National Guard on patrol New Year's Eve slows down to watch children dance across the main street as they celebrate New Year's around 1 a.m. on Jan. 1 in Kamenica/Kamenice, Kosovo.

As the clock struck midnight, the Soldiers listened as celebratory fire shot off in the distance and fireworks screamed across the night sky.

"Last New Year's Eve I spent with my family and my son in Laredo, Mexico eating traditional Mexican food and bringing in the New Year with a toast and some fireworks," Herrera said.

"This year it just feels like another day, another day closer to home. It was uniquely different in a good way."

Foot Patrol

"I'm hoping we get to walk around," Herrera said, as, finally, her Humvee pulled out of the Camp Montieth gate in the city of Gnjilane/Gjilan slightly after midnight

The "Argonauts" did patrols in several towns in their new AOR on New Year's Eve. But, their focus was on Kamenica/Kamenice.

About an hour later their Humvees slowly crawled through Kamenica/Kamenice's central town square called, "D-Market."

The place was choked with happy couples, young adults and kids running around lighting off firecrackers to celebrate the New Year.

According to the "Argonauts," Kamenica/Kamenice is one of the shining examples of how the municipalities are supposed to be working to meet the standards for Kosovo's future status.

The patrols, mounted and dismounted, are designed around the presence of KFOR Soldiers, who help provide a safe and secure environment for the local citizens as Kosovo moves closer to their UN negotiated future status scheduled for this year.

"The late night dismount patrol was good, we swept the area to make sure no revelers were too exuberant in their celebration," Talbot said, a few days afterward.

"Company wide, I believe that the patrols did a good job of establishing that we will not tolerate any violence. There were very

small instances of violations, such as celebratory fire and a false UXO (unexploded ordnance) report from a civilian, but all in all, our mere presence was sufficient to keep people from violence."

"I was kind of excited to be going out," Herrera said. "I didn't really know what to expect. All in all it was a great experience.

An interpreter, and Sgt. Adam Ingram, Co. A, 578th Engineers, 40th Inf. Div., Task Force Sidewinder, who completed his year long deployment in January, accompanied the patrol to help the newcomers communicate with the locals and point out the good areas and the trouble spots

"Serb Alley"

After about 20 minutes taking in the sights and sounds of the partygoers, the Soldiers departed the "Dark Way" nightclub.

Next, the patrol



Staff Sgt. Victor Alcocer, 1st Squad, 1st Platoon, Company A, Task Force Houston, 36th Infantry Division, Texas National Guard, KFOR 7, looks at the wall dividing "Serb Alley" from the rest of Kamenica/Kamenice, Kosovo at 2:30 a.m. on Jan. 1 during a foot patrol. "We encourage, when we go out on the patrols, Alcocer said. "We get feedback from them."

walked around a small set of store fronts, towards the other side of town, and the darkened, "Serb Alley."

See NEW YEAR'S Eve...Page 29



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participation in unhelpful activities.”

Troops from the “Lone Star” Division watched as Owens and Command Sgt. Maj. Kenneth Boyer, 36th Inf.



Brig. Gen. Darren Owens, commanding general, Task Force Falcon, 36th Infantry Division, and new commander KFOR MNB(E) talks to the local press after the TOA on Jan. 18 at CBS.

Div., command sergeant major, MNB(E), uncased the 36th Inf. Div. colors on European soil for the first time since the “Fight’n 36th” took part in the invasion of Italy during WW II in 1943.

Harrel finished his comments with reflection on the past rotation and for the future of Kosovo Forces and local citizens.

“We leave here with fond memories, positive experiences and above all-a belief that Kosovo’s future will be bright and prosperous. Maintaining peace in the Balkans is truly a noble cause -- a great endeavor-worthy of the sacrifices we have made to be part of this mission. While the duties of peacekeeping fall on Soldiers, it cannot succeed without the support and cooperation of the people. Keeping the peace is everyone’s responsibility.” Harrel said, during his remarks to the KFOR Soldiers standing in crisp formations, the audience and several

distinguished visitors.

One of those DVs was Lt. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez, commanding general, V Corps and deputy commanding general, 7th Army and United States Army Europe. Sanchez had been commanding general of an earlier KFOR rotation several years ago, when he was still a brigadier general.

“Let me say ‘thank you’ to General Harrel and the Soldiers of his command for the fine job they have done as peacekeepers for the last year here in Kosovo,” Owens said, after Harrel finished his remarks.

“As Texans, you will see that we are a friendly people,” Owens said. “But behind that friendly smile you



Left, Brig. Gen. Darren Owens, commanding general, Task Force Falcon, 36th Infantry Division, and new commander KFOR MNB(E) unfurls the 36th Inf. Div. colors held by center, Pfc. Richard Bartlett, TF Alamo, with, Command Sgt. Maj. Kenneth Boyer, command sergeant major, TF Falcon, 36th Inf. Div. and new command sergeant major, KFOR MNB(E) during the TOA ceremony.

will find that Texans are a tough people. The good folks here will find that we are good neighbors. The bad folks will find that we will be hard, and relentless in the pursuit of peace, justice, and the rule of law. We are here on a noble mission: to help make Kosovo a peaceful and safe place.”

“Our Soldiers patrol on foot, to get to know the

local folks. We will continue working with the KPS and the civil authorities in Kosovo,” Owens said.

“I promise you this,” Owens said emphatically as he closed his speech. “We will not take sides. We will support the political process to determine the future status of Kosovo.

“We will do our part, working hand in hand with the police, and civil authorities to make this a place where decent folks can live without fear.

“So now is the time and now is the hour for all of us to re-dedicate ourselves to the hard work of peace, and let no one stand in the way.”

Birth of the “T-Patch”

The 36th Infantry Division was organized July 18, 1917 from units of the Texas and Oklahoma National Guard for service in WW I.

The 36th Inf. Div. adopted a shoulder patch consisting of an infantry blue arrowhead with a green “T” superimposed over it. The arrowhead stood for Oklahoma and the “T” for Texas.

After WW I, the 36th was reorganized and became an all Texas division.

The Oklahoma units became part of the 45th Inf. Div. The 36th Inf. Div. was deactivated in 1968.

On May 1, 2004, the 49th Armored Division was “reflagged” and the 36th Inf. Div. was reborn. 36th Inf. Div., the “T-Patchers,” have a major role in the global war on terror, with more than 6,000 of the division’s Soldiers on active duty in Afghanistan, Iraq and now Kosovo.

"Serb Alley," had single and double story houses that sloped toward the crooked street.

A lane for automobile traffic runs through the center of the enclave.



Above, A local man walks past "D-Market" in the main town square at 2:45 a.m. on Jan. 1 in the town of Kamenica/Kamenice.

Below, left, Spc. Anna Herrera, medic, walks alongside, Spc. Hugo Salinas during a foot patrol early in the morning on Jan. 1 in the town of Kamenica/Kamenice. Both Soldiers are with 1st Plt., Co. A, TF Houston, 36th Inf. Div.



Cars have to drive around a reminder of the past, a concrete road barrier that used to symbolically separate "Serb Alley," from the rest of the predominantly Albanian neighborhood.

Unlike today in Kamenica/Kamenice, Serbians and Albanians were divided back then simply by which side of the street you lived on.

According to some of the Soldiers, the wall, which was covered with graffiti, could possibly be removed during their KFOR-7 rotation.

The patrol continued on.

A few minutes later, they looked up to spot a single pair of sneakers draped over a telephone wire.

Tonight, we're just observing, Staff Sgt. Victor Alcocer, 1st Sqd., 1st Plt, Co. A, TF Houston, said. "(We) see how the infrastructure is doing, how the people are doing, if the people have confidence in their own municipality, own infrastructure.

"We encourage, when we go out on the patrols, Alcocer said. "We get feedback from them."

The patrol circled back from the alley, past a "former Special Forces" safe house.

Feedback

"Bringing in the New Year here on deployment was more than I expected, she said, "I thought I would just be sitting on - duty, on the phone with my family. What surprised me was how familiar Kosovo felt. That will most likely not be my last patrol."

Talbot speculated that the false UXO report was called in to ruin the party.

"The false UXO report was the most significant for

me; it required that one of my platoon's squads be redeployed from their mission to secure the site," Talbot said. "The squad responded well."

Finished

The Soldiers and interpreter made a left turn towards the center of town as they passed next to the new Kosovo Police Service building.

By 3 a.m. they were done.

Their tan boots scraped across the damp pavement.

They crossed the main road, and walked past the now nearly deserted "D-Market" plaza.

They were on their way back to the welcoming warmth of the heated, patrol tent.

The patrol hurried around a bunch of rusty dumpsters filled with smelly, holiday trash.

They moved through the dark silently, as the soft, orange-sherbet street lights and low noise faded behind.

The group took another left turn behind a grimy, white three-story building.

They navigated the muddy road and water filled potholes, as they retraced their steps.

They were illuminated only by their flashlights that bobbed in the night like fireflies.



From left to right, Staff Sgt. Victor Alcocer, Spc. Ronny Pigg, Spc. Anna Herrera, all from 1st Platoon, Company A, Task Force Houston, 36th Infantry Division, Sgt. Adam Ingram, Co. A, 578th Engineers, TF Sidewinder, 40th Inf. Div., California National Guard, KFOR 6B and an interpreter begin their New Year's Eve foot patrol in and around the town of Kamenica/Kamenice, Kosovo Jan. 1. Inset, Herrera, looks out the window of her Humvee as she heads to Kamenica/Kamenice, Kosovo on Jan. 1, to help conduct foot patrols in the the town.



Photo by Pfc. Daniel Nichols

FRONT center, Adem Kopili, the first to receive a wheel chair holds his certificate of authenticity aloft during the MEDCAP. Behind him from left to right are Lt. Col. Jose Perez, Civil Military Operations, Task Force Falcon, Charles Iadmarco, Civil Affairs, TF Falcon, and Lt. Col. Miltos Papagiannoulis, commanding officer, TF Hellas.

MEDCAP from ...Page 12

humanitarian packages and medicine.

"The humanitarian boxes came from Operation Christmas Trucker," said Maj. Robert Chelone, Civil Affairs.

The boxes were filled with food staples like flour, pasta, rice, along with some other things, he said.

One unique aspect of the MEDCAP was the donation of wheelchairs to handicapped in the community.

Through coordination with town officials and TF Falcon CA, residents from Dubrava/ Dubrave were able to register to receive a wheelchair.

The first three of 280 wheel chairs donated by the Wheelchair Foundation were given away that day.

The three recipients of the wheel chairs were Adem Kopili, Ajshe Hasani, and Xheladin Barjrami, the first of many Kosovars to receive

wheel chairs over the next two months.

As the people crowded around outside of the building, waiting to receive their portions of what the KFOR Soldiers had brought that day, you could see the smiles on the faces of the people, and the Soldiers.

"I think it is very positive," said Papagiannoulis. "When I go outside and people see me -- they don't know me," he said.

"All they know is that I am with KFOR. And so they say hello in Greek, or hello in English, and it makes you feel that it is worth it."

Three local media stations were present that day to interview the KFOR Soldiers about their work for the people of Kosovo.

"I sent to one of my general's conferences some photos," said Papagiannoulis with a smile, "and they were surprised. They couldn't imagine that we do this job here."

Condolences for: Kosovo President Ibrahim Rugova

STATEMENT BY U.S. SECRETARY OF STATE CONDOLEEZZA RICE

Death of Kosovo President Ibrahim Rugova

I wish to express my condolences to the people of Kosovo upon the death of President Ibrahim Rugova. President Rugova led his people through challenging times and earned the world's respect for his advocacy of democracy and peace. Even while battling his final illness, President Rugova worked to bring unity to Kosovo's leaders and hope to its people. The United States has lost a great friend today. The people of Kosovo have lost a great leader. President Rugova's death comes just as Kosovo enters a political process to determine its future. Despite the loss of his leadership, this process will go on. The United States will continue to work with all the people of Kosovo to build a society based upon the principles of democracy, human rights and inter-ethnic tolerance that President Rugova valued so deeply.

(Distributed by the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>)



Photos by Sgt. Pedro Martiz, TaskForceAlamo

ABOVE left, local townsmen pay their respects at a memorial for former Kosovo President Ibrahim Rugova at 11:30 a.m. on Jan. 23 at the Vitina Municipal Building. ABOVE right, Rugova passed away on Jan. 21 after a battle with lung cancer. His passing prompted many citizens of Kosovo to set up small shrines to honor and mourn their former President, including the one above at the Vitina Municipal Building. Rugova's funeral was held on Jan. 26 after five days of mourning. The U.S. delegation that attended was led by Secretary of Urban Housing and Development Alphonso Jackson.

~Kosovars Remember Rugova~

‘ He is the only president I have ever known, since I'm only 19. He never gave up and he dedicated his life to our people.

He did everything peacefully. We have many smart people who can replace him but not substitutes.
Anisa Zubaku, 19, South Town Cappuccino Bar, Camp Bondsteel ’

‘ He was a very peaceful guy who gathered people, he was a good president. He is going to be missed. He left a very good impact.

Nexhat Begiri, 32, South Town Laundry Point, Camp Bondsteel ’

Jan. 25

‘ I was never fortunate enough to meet President Rugova, but I do know he was a force for good in this world. His dedication to the cause of peace will continue to serve as a beacon to the people of Kosovo during these difficult times. ’

Brig. Gen. Darren Owens, commanding general, KFOR Multi-National Brigade (East)

Guardian

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