

February 7, 2003

TALON



**Turkish Battalion destroys
confiscated harvest weapons**

Inside this issue:

**From celebrities to dignitaries: JVB is on the job
NASCAR drivers speed onto Eagle Base**

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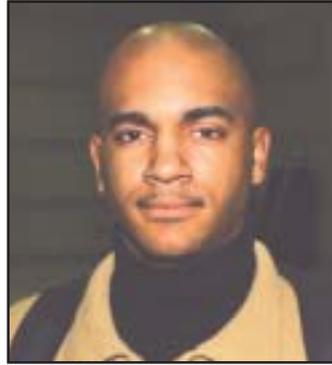
Word on the street...

“If you were stranded on a deserted island, who is the one person you would want to be stranded with?”



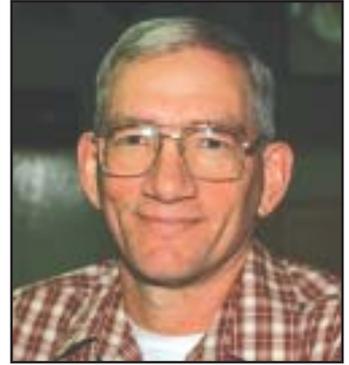
Pfc. Ashley Gotwalt
Admin. Specialist
HHC, 28th Inf. Div.

“Vin Diesel, because I want to pick up some acting tips.”



Spc. Victor Curley
Military Police Officer
28th MP Company

“MacGyver, because I have better things to do than spend the rest of my life on an island.”



Maj. David Tish
Chaplain
1-183rd Avn. Bn.

“My wife, because she deserves it.”



Pfc. Tiffany Allen
Supply Specialist
330th Med. Bde.

“If I could be stranded with any one it would be Morris Chestnut because he is fine.”



Sgt. Gerald Rose
Squad Leader
A Co., 1-109th Inf.

“It would have to be Jennifer Lopez because she has a lot of knowledge behind her and assets that I could use.”



Sgt. Theresa Carson
SGS NCOIC
HHC, 28th Inf. Div.

“The professor from Gilligan’s island, because he could get me off the island.”



About the covers: Front, Weapons collected by the Turkish Battalion during Active Harvest are put into a furnace to be melted in the Zenica steel mill. *Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Kelly Luster.* **Back,** Task Force Talon pilots and crew chiefs practice ling load operations on Eagle Base. *Photo by Spc. Jessica Abner*



JVB — More than another acronym

by
Sgt. 1st Class Kelly Luster

Editor, 354th MPAD

EAGLE BASE, Bosnia — When a distinguished visitor such as the CSA and the SMA or even a CODEL, visits the CG and CSM of MNB (N) here, they get VIP treatment from the JVB.

The Joint Visitors Bureau (JVB) is more than just an amalgamation of vowels and consonants used to form another confusing Army acronym. The staff is charged to ensure that distinguished visitors who pass through Multinational Brigade (North) are well taken care of while they are here.

The list of important visitors includes four-star generals, world-renowned entertainers and high-ranking politicians such as the President of the United States.

“We make the arrangements for the visitors,” said Lt. Col. Hank Sembower. “I assign a member of my staff to handle every last detail.”

The JVB orchestrates every minute detail for the visitors and their official parties. According to Sembower, the process begins when his staff makes con-

tact with the visiting party’s staff and makes arrangements according to the DV’s expectations.

“They find out just what the visitor expects from their visit with us and develop an itinerary,” said Sembower. The plan then goes up the chain of command for approval and back down for changes to be made. By the time the party gets to Eagle Base, their itinerary is planned to the exact minute.

“Every detail is planned, but sometimes the plan gets changed because of the visitor’s wishes. We just make sure they accomplish what they set out to do when they come to us,” said Sembower. “They may get ahead of schedule and ask to do something not on the itinerary, or they may want to see something or have an additional brief. We try to accommodate them as best we can. They want to be busy while they are with us.”

Training for this job is often something one can’t get in a formal setting. It often comes on the job and requires quick thinking.

“During the transfer of authority from SFOR XI to XII, we hosted the Chief of Staff of the Army, and a day later, the Secretary of the Army. That was baptism under fire,” said Sembower. “We are rapid reaction. My staff does an excellent job and has not dropped the ball once. They react and make things happen. They can do that now due to their experience.”

One of the obstacles the JVB encounters is knowing the visitor’s exact desires. Capt. Chris Ferrara, deputy chief, said that can



by Staff Sgt. Marcia Hart

1st Lt. Gary Zembower, (right), greets Secretary of the Army, Thomas White during his visit in September.

sometimes get tricky.

“Some of what we do comes with experience. Often it’s hard to know the relationship between some of the DOD visitors and the National Guard and Army Reserve. What we may think they want may be different than what they actually expect,” he said. Ferrara also said the staff of the JVB clears up any questions so there are no problems once the visitor hits the ground.

Much of what the JVB staff does is accomplished behind the scenes. According to Spc. Javier Rodriguez, that’s the way it should be.

“We make sure they are taken care of. We stay out of the way and make sure things get done,” said Rodriguez. “We take care of everything from the security to the itinerary to the transportation. We go so far as to put welcome letters or pillow notes in the rooms thanking them for their visit with us. Most often they don’t even know we’re here.”

Each person or group that comes to Eagle Base presents a different set of circumstances for the JVB, according to Rodriguez. Depending on the DV’s rank they may require more than the standard Eagle Base accommodations. They may also have a staff and several people within their party that need taken care of as well.

The JVB is fortunate to have the services of two foreign mili-

tary officers to handle important visitors, said 1st Lt. Gary Zembower, project officer.

“One is from Poland and the other from Denmark. We are lucky to have those two,” said Zembower. “On some occasions, they are able to help us out with information or planning we are unsure of.”

The foreign officers — Maj. Sergiu Casapiuc of Moldova and Tomasz Walasik of Poland — have been great assets to the JVB. Working with them has been one of the most rewarding experiences for Zembower, who appreciates the knowledge and expertise of his international counterparts.

Often times the hard work of all of the JVB soldiers goes unnoticed to those unaware of the intricacies of handling dignitaries. They do their jobs efficiently and make the visitors happy. The rewards aren’t always visual and gratification is derived from the experience itself.

“We’ve received several letters of appreciation,” said Zembower. “It’s an honor to meet a lot of these folks. It’s a once in a lifetime opportunity in many cases.”

“Today for example, I met a Medal of Honor winner,” he said. “How many times in your life do you meet a person like that? When someone like that comes here and meets us and leaves happy — that’s the best feeling.”



by Spc. Jessica Abner

Spc. Javier Rodriguez, JVB NCOIC, is prepared for all visiting VIPs.

Turks turn weapons into steel

by Nedima Hadziibrisevic

Media Specialist, Task Force Eagle Public Affairs Office

ZENICA, Bosnia — Since arriving in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1996, one of the primary concerns of the NATO-led peacekeeping forces has been the safety of the local civilians, especially children. Operation Harvest has been going on for the past several years, potentially saving many lives by getting remarkable amounts of weapons and unexploded ordnance off the streets.

Active Harvest is a perpetual campaign rotating among the Multinational Brigade (North) task forces contributing to the safe and secure environment throughout the country. The Turkish Battalion, headquartered in Zenica, completed its Active Harvest in its area of responsibility in January.

The first phase of the operation consisted of preparations and an information campaign to ensure local residents were familiar with upcoming events. Coordination with local officials was also completed.

"In the preparation phase,



by Sgt. 1st Class Kelly Luster

After the weapons are unloaded from the truck, the soldiers put them in a large bucket that will be hoisted into the furnace where the munitions will be melted.

we had a meeting with local authorities, police officers, and civil defense unit chiefs from Vares, Zavidovici and Zenica. They came over here and we gave them information about We explained what we wanted and asked them to help. They all were very cooperative," said Capt. Ismail Mollaoglu, intelligence officer, Turkish Bn. Mollaoglu also provided regular update briefings on Active Harvest to ensure the MNB (N) Headquarters was aware of their progress.

Citizens had a chance to learn about Active Harvest through public announcements via the media, posters, and handouts dispersed by

SFOR patrols.

During the operation, Turkish Battalion soldiers went door-to-door and asked citizens if they wanted to voluntarily turn in any weapons or munitions they may have had. The Turkish soldiers received a great response.

"All of the people agreed with that kind of Harvest," said Capt. Cevdet Yasar, commander, 3rd Mechanized Company. "They like us and they like Harvest. We collected guns, weapons, hand grenades, and mines without any problems."

Beside SFOR soldiers, local police officers were also involved in the Harvest operations.

"In the major Harvest phase in the city centers, police patrols were with us when we patrolled and also during the door-to-door phases," said Mollaoglu.

Various leaders including the S-2, S-3, Explosive Ordnance Disposal team, company commanders and CIMIC officers conducted nightly meetings to discuss Harvest operations that occurred during the day and identified tasks for the following day, according to Major

Huseyin Ozturk, S-3 Battle Captain.

The Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina (AFBiH) also played an important role in Active Harvest by providing security for Harvest weaponry, which was secured in the official weapons storage site. Soldiers of the 7th Muslim Brigade, Federation Army, guarded Weapons Storage Site in Zenica.

"We would collect weapons and at the end of the day we would bring them to the weapons storage site," added Mollaoglu. "The weapons were all locked and controlled by us." Mollaoglu stressed the very good cooperation the Turkish Battalion had in working with the AFBiH.

With outstanding efforts by the Turkish Battalion soldiers, local authorities, and the AFBiH, the success of Active Harvest was inevitable. The collection of 61 weapons, 12 anti-tank guns, 9 rocket launchers, 20,510 ammunition, 37 land mines, 554 hand and rifle grenades, 4,050 grams of explosives, 234 fuses, 158 magazines, and 10 rocket engines demonstrates their dedication to con-



by Sgt. 1st Class Kelly Luster

Soldiers from the Turkish Battalion unload confiscated weapons from a truck so they can be destroyed at the Zenica steel mill.

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tribute to a safe and secure environment in this country and a great concern for the safety of the people in the community.

The final phase of the operation included recycling and destruction of the weapons collected throughout month-long effort. Approximately 60 weapons and 142 empty magazines were melted into steel at the steel mill in Zenica, which is also the home of the Turkish Battalion Headquarters.

Before the war, the mill was one of the largest steel-producing mills in Europe employing around 25,000 workers on-site. Furthermore, nearly two-thirds of the population of Zenica was in some way connected to the facility.

During the war, part of the installation was designated for production of the steel used for manufacturing ammunition.

Today the situation is vastly different. Visibly affected by war with scars evident all around installation, the mill, equivalent in size to a small city, now employs about 2,500 workers, some of which are only part-time.

The melting process requires approximately seven hours in a Siemens-Martin furnace. The melting separates the material debris leftover from the weapons from



by Sgt. 1st Class Kelly Luster

After the truck is unloaded, the weapons are transported to the furnace for melting. The process takes approximately seven hours to turn the weapons into molten steel.

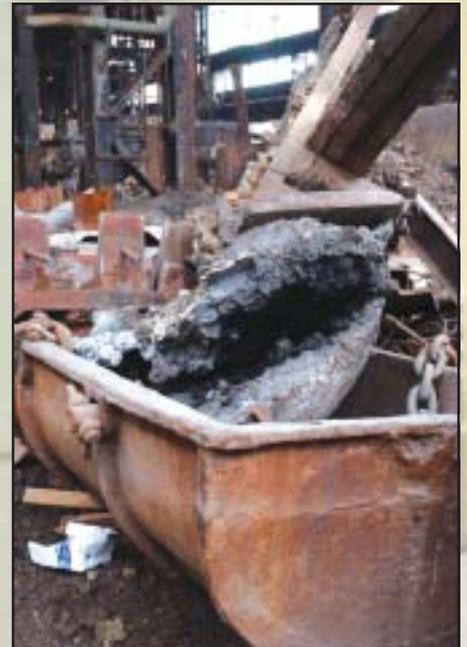
the molten steel which will be recycled into other products, according to Memis Tahirbegovic, assistant director for Technical Matters in the Steel Mill. The recycling of the weapons has been taking place in the mill for nearly six years and usually occurs three to four times a year.

The remaining munitions will be destroyed at a range approximately 25 kilometers away from Zenica.

"It will take 10 days because we do not explode more than 50 kilograms at the same time to protect the ecological system. That is why we will do it day-by-day in small amounts," said Capt. Ziya Kilic, Explosive Ordnance Disposal Team leader, who assumed respon-

sibility for ensuring the safety, proper storage and destruction of the unexploded ordnance turned in or reported by residents during the campaign.

Currently, the Active Harvest focus is concentrated within the Task Force Blue Steel area of responsibility, specifically in the 10 municipalities in the southern and eastern areas of Multinational Brigade (North).



by Lt. Col. Michael Evans

After the munitions are melted, remaining molten steel is recycled into other products. This process is done three to four times a year.



by Sgt. 1st Class Kelly Luster

A Turkish soldier transports weapons that were collected during the Active Harvest.

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by Spc. Jessica Abner



by Spc. Jessica Abner



by Spc. Jessica Abner



by Sgt. 1st Class Kelly Luster



by Sgt. 1st Class Kelly Luster

NASCAR drivers Rick Crawford, Mike Wallace, Brendan Gaughan and Ernie Irvan make pit stops at the Balkan Grill and Peacekeepers Hall to sign autographs and posters for soldiers at Eagle Base.

Other VIP's including Maj. Gen. Bobby Hollingsworth (Ret.) (above right) accompanied the drivers to show support for the troops.

The tour was sponsored by the National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing and the Department of Defense Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve.

The Daytona 500 is scheduled for February 16, 2003.

Citizen Soldier deploys — home

by Aleksandar Ilic

Media specialist, Task Force Eagle
Public Affairs Office

EAGLE BASE, Bosnia — Being a Bosnian in Bosnia should not be a major media attraction unless you are talking about a world class athlete, a rock star, or a member of the country's largest celebrity group — politicians. After all, more than 3.5 million people live in this country who do not qualify for any of the aforementioned categories. Then, what is so interesting and unusual about Goran Tadic, who has drawn attention of many local and international media since August?

Spc. Goran Tadic earns his pay wearing a camouflage U.S. Army uniform, carrying an M-16 assault rifle, and being a peacekeeper in his country of origin.

Tadic is one of approximately 1,700 U.S. servicemembers who are a part of the Stabilization Forces — the international military contingent tasked to contribute to the safe and secure environment in Bosnia.

This 22-year-old was born in Derventa, a small town about 60 miles north of Sarajevo — the Bosnian capital and host city of the acclaimed 1984 Winter Olympics.

Only six months after his birth, the Tadic family was forced to move. Tadic's father, a railroad engineer, took a job with the national railroad company in Zagreb, the second largest city in Yugoslavia at the time.

Today, after the Croatian 1991-1992 war for independence, Zagreb is that nation's capital. Tadic grew up in the city following his father's footsteps and attended a railroad technician high school in Zagreb.

With the disintegration of Yugoslavia and its socialist economy, railroads were rarely used after the war and Tadic's father was unable to provide for the family of four.

In 1996 it was time to move again, this time to United States of America. Tadic's aunt had been living in the States and offered to sponsor the entire family. After a short consideration, the Tadic family was on a plane heading toward the city of Boise, Idaho. Soon, they found themselves in pursuit of the American dream.

The children enrolled in a new school,

facing the difficulty of new classes and a new language.

"I did not speak a single word of English when I got there, but everyday life makes you learn it faster," said Tadic. "I did not want to look stupid. After a few months I was able to talk to my new friends and follow the classes as anyone else."

As a teenager from Europe, one of the most important things for Tadic was soccer. He missed playing and watching soccer games, but in the meantime his high school football team got a skilled kicker.

"It was something to do, but I never took it too seriously and I never thought

skills," Tadic said. "The recruiter approached me after the meeting and I told him I would like to be a mechanic. I always thought that would be handy."

Soon after, Tadic was on his way to basic training and to Germany after that. He served in 2-2 1st Infantry Division with which he deployed to Kosovo on a six-month tour — another peacekeeping mission for U.S. troops in the Balkans. His Bosnian language skills made him a valuable asset for that deployment.

After serving three years of active duty, Tadic returned to Idaho. He applied to Boise State University and also joined Idaho National Guard. His current unit is 1-183rd Avn. Bn., headquartered in Boise.

His plan is to graduate from college and maintain his connection with the military through continued service in the National Guard.

Currently, he is a driver and translator for the Aviation Task Force Commander on Eagle Base, Lt. Col. Michael Garshak.

Coincidentally, Lt. Col. Garshak's grandparents were born just a few minutes outside Zagreb, Croatia, the same city where Tadic had spent most of his life. Garshak does not speak the local language so that is where his trusty driver



by Spc. Jessica Abner

Spc. Goran Tadic, 1-183rd Avn. Bn., ensures Lt. Col. Michael Garshak is at the right place at the right time.

about doing that after I graduated high school," said Tadic.

Another very important thing for a boy his age is having fun. Tadic's favorite place is the Radio Room Club in Boise, a very popular place for Boise Bosnians.

"There are about 8,000 to 9,000 of us Bosnians living in Boise, a city with about 140,000 residents," Tadic said.

It seems like Boise is crucial for the future of the Tadic family. Tadic's sister also met her life's love there. She married Nijaz, a Bosnian from Velika Kladusa, a place 130 miles east of Sarajevo. She recently gave birth to the couple's first child — a baby girl.

His sister was not the only one making a future for herself. Tadic joined the U.S. Army in 1998, right after he graduated from high school.

"One day we had an Army recruiter visiting our school. He told us about the benefits of being in the Army — you get to travel all over the world and acquire new

comes in hand.

"When we were told that our unit was supposed to go to Bosnia, I was the first to volunteer," said Tadic.

Tadic managed to visit his hometown and his grandparents who he had not seen in 12 years. He said they were really proud of him and complemented him on his very professional, soldierly appearance. "They are old and they are struggling. Like the elders do," Tadic said.

Tadic also said he wants to ease the struggling of others in his home country.

"This is still my country and it kills me when I see small children suffer. I will do my best to help this country and these people while I'm here. I wish I could bring the American way of life to Bosnia," said Tadic.

This soldier brings more than a way of life to Bosnia, he is a representative of the United States as well as Bosnia and is here to assist in providing a safe and secure environment.

