

1st Armored Division

IRONSIDE

America's Tank Division



Year 2000

review

Army 10-miler

1st Bde soldier/author

December

Happy Holidays

Iron soldiers on point for the nation *in the year 2000*



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"Dignity and Respect"

Volume 8, Number 6



Maj. Gen. George W. Casey, Jr.

Where has this year gone? As I look back on 2000, I am so very much impressed by the skill, stamina and professionalism of the men and women of this great division. We have deployed to Kosovo now twice this year, once in the summer and once in the winter—yet another Balkans winter deployment for Iron soldiers. These deployments followed rigorous train-ups which first made units ready for their warfighting mission and then prepared them for peace support operations. And we have done terrific work in Kosovo—maintaining peace and stability while allowing and supporting the international community to implement civil reforms.

We were used as the test bed for USAREUR's concept for an IRF—an immediate ready force maintained at a high state of readiness and alert and ready to deploy anywhere in the USAREUR AOR within 96 hours. The 2nd Brigade Combat Team developed that concept, formed the units and Force Enhancement Modules, trained and prepared the force and then deployed them to Hungary in a validation of the concept.

We were notified in February that the division would close its installations in Bad Kreuznach and move the division units to Wiesbaden by the summer of 2001. The result was a phenomenal effort to develop a plan for movement, identify facilities in Wiesbaden, obtain the appropriate level of funding to support the move, and then begin the preparation of facilities for a new headquarters.

Our training has been hard. We have prepared ourselves well for war through time in the field at Grafenwohr, Hohenfels, Baumholder and even in Hungary and Kosovo, building competent, confident teams of staffs and warfighting units. Warfighter 2000, ARRCAD FUSION, and intense contingency planning helped to hone our warfighting skills.

This year has ended with a tough simultaneous deployment and redeployment as TFF2B built around the 2nd BCT reports for duty in Kosovo and relieves Task Force Falcon 2A and 1st BCT in place so they can redeploy to Germany. Done in the winter with uncooperative weather, the division has again excelled in planning and executing a stellar operation. My thanks and appreciation to those of you involved in making this a success.

I also want to recognize the editor

and staff of the 1st Armored Division Public Affairs Office for their outstanding contribution to our division in the form of this magazine which was formally recognized by the Department of the Army with a Certificate of Excellence.

Finally as the year comes to a close, Sheila and I would like to recognize and thank all of you for your esprit, professionalism and hard work to make this division combat ready and an effective instrument of national policy. As those of us in Germany celebrate the holiday season with our families, I ask that you remember these Iron Soldiers deployed to Kosovo sacrificing their Christmas so that others less fortunate may celebrate theirs in peace.

Well done, Iron Soldiers!

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*Pfc. Casey Ray Panique
Company A, 1st Battalion,
37th Armored Regiment,
Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo*

"The first thing I want to do is go home [to Montana] and eat Christmas dinner with my family, then sit and talk with them. It has been two years since I was home."



*Spc. Angela Crockett
Headquarters and
Headquarters Company,
1st Brigade, Camp Bondsteel,
Kosovo*

"...To spend lots of quality time with my children. To make up for lost time."



*Sgt. John D. Trotter
Company B, 1st Battalion,
36th Infantry Regiment,
Camp Monteith, Kosovo*

"Relax, unwind and have a good time with my friends enjoying the sights in Europe that I haven't seen."

Man on the street

What are you going to do when you get home from Kosovo ?

"Relax and power-down. [Spend some] family time in the states."



*Sgt. First Class William K. Jordan
Headquarters and Headquarters
Company, 1st Battalion,
37th Armored Regiment,
Camp Monteith, Kosovo*

"After recovery and reintegration into garrison living, I will be going to Connecticut for a Christmas family reunion."



*Spc. Thomas F. Smith
Company C, 1st Battalion,
36th Infantry Regiment,
Outpost Terminator, Kosovo*

"To go skiing and snowboarding, and enjoy myself with my girlfriend and her friends, and just to take a load off."



*Pfc. Andrew J. Gigstead
Company B, 1st Battalion,
36th Infantry Regiment,
Camp Monteith, Kosovo*

1AD joins NATO forces in

ARRCADE Fusion

Story by

Pvt. Benjamin Z. Etzioni and
Spc. Amanda M. Domaszek
1st Armored Division PAO

WILDFLECKEN, Germany— More than 6,300 troops participated in the exercise. Food service specialists served more than 228,000 meals, including 52,000 eggs, 13,000 loaves of bread and 2,800 chickens. Soldiers used more than 200,000 liters of fuel. Signal soldiers laid out more than eight kilometers of communication cable.

While it is difficult to truly comprehend the magnitude of ARRCAD Fusion 2000 without examining the immense resources involved in the execution of the exercise, the immensity can be brought into perspective when considering 17 of 19 NATO nations participated in ARRCAD Fusion 2000 held October 9-27, the first exercise of its magnitude since 1998.

The exercise scenario was based on a large-scale regional crisis caused by aggression against a Partnership-for-Peace nation that threatens Europe's long-term peace, security and stability. Twenty-one units, including 309 soldiers from the 1st Armored Division participated in the exercise, interacting with counterparts from throughout Europe.

"ARRCADE Fusion enabled the 17 involved nations to use their combined armed forces to train for combat realistically," said Sgt. Maj. Raymond P. Houston of G-3 Training. "This exercise was unique in that it is not that often that the soldiers get the opportunity to work with 17 different nations, fight a war together."

"I learned about how everything operates during a large-scale war situation," said Pfc. Christopher Milburn, of HHC, 1AD. "Our foreign counterparts



American and Hungarian soldiers crowd around a planning table to fine tune warfighting operations during ARRCAD Fusion 2000

were very helpful. It was interesting to talk to them and find out what their military is like."

The exercise was conducted in close partnership with the German Army's Battle Exercises Simulation Center. It was a computer-aided exercise designed to test headquarters staffs rather than the troops on the ground, according to ARRC Public Affairs.

"The purpose of the exercise was to establish and maintain the structure of the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps and get units from different nations used to working with each other," said Capt. Matthew Jessop of G-3. "Working with other nations has been enlightening in that we got to see how other countries' militaries work. Working with their liaisons, we could see problems that could arise while participating in this exercise."

While the exercise was a new and different experience for a lot of those who participated it did bring together some familiar allies.

"It really showed that we had worked with the [Hungarian] 25th Mechanized Brigade," said Lt. Col. Jay F. Rouse, 3rd Brigade's executive officer. "In between

the last exercise in 1998 and this one, we established a lot of quality standard operating procedures and a common understanding on how we fight the enemy."

"Working with the Americans was a lot easier than working with soldiers from some of the other countries because we worked together before," said 1st Lt. Gabor Szentes, a liaison officer for the Hungarian 25th Mechanized Brigade. "It was very similar to the last exercise which was helpful to us."

During ARRCAD Fusion 2000, 1,200 exercise controllers simulated the movement of almost 152,000 troops and over 56,200 vehicles and major pieces of equipment. But while the tactical aspects of the exercise were critical, the real purpose of the exercise was to establish and improve on the lines of communication between the NATO nations, according to Rouse.

"Executing through training exercise is nothing new for the 1AD," said Rouse. "What separated this one from the others is the interaction that we had with all of these different nations. It was interesting learning about the other nations' procedures and tactics. We learned that we have more in common than we have differences."

"Bandits" blast KOSOVO

1AD's 1-37 AR sharpens gunnery skills while deployed



A cloud of smoke erupts following the blast of the main gun of an M1A1 Abrams tank at a live-fire exercise at Ramjan/Donje Range Sept. 17.

Story and photos by
Spc. Gary Goodman
Task Force Falcon PAO

CAMP BONDSTEEL, Kosovo – “Being a tanker is a very perishable skill. There’s a lot of moving parts inside a tank. It takes a lot of practice and drill to remain proficient. The timing is very strict; the target arrangements are very difficult. We selected our four most difficult engagements and put them in this scenario,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Jeffrey Kennedy, 1st Battalion, 37th Armored Regiment “Bandits”, about the training exercise conducted at Ramjan-Donje Ramnjane Range Sept. 17. The range was intended to help the soldiers retain their edge and high level of skill with the tanks.

“The 1-37 Bandits have been in sector in Kosovo for about three-and-a-half months. We’re just a little past our halfway point, and as you stay in sector,

we don’t lose everything while we’re on peace-support operations here in Kosovo,” said Kennedy.

“We’re down here doing a peace-keeping mission. Sometimes we get a little out of tune with our skills. So, by doing this, it helps us keep on top of our armor crew skills.”

Spc. Kenneth Lebowitz
M1A1 Abrams crewman
1-37 AR
“Bandits”

combat skills begin to degrade. Our master gunners put this range together and put this scenario together to enhance our war-fighting capabilities so



Crew members from 1-37 Armor prepare a .50 caliber machine gun to hurl rounds down range to fill simulated-enemy targets full of holes.



A ball of fire emerges from the 120mm main gun of an M1A1 Abrams as a shot tears across the countryside to intercept and destroy a simulated enemy target.

keeping mission. Sometimes we get a little out of tune with our skills. So, by doing this, it helps us keep on top of our armor crew skills,” said Spc. Kenneth Lebowitz, an M1A1 Abrams crewman with the 1-37 “Bandits”.

“We were firing from a two-tier combat position. Our first engagement was a set of troops in a BRDM (an amphibious-armored car manufactured in the former Soviet Union) we fired at with a 50 cal. and 7.62mm machine guns,” explained Kennedy. “Our second engagement was fired from a holed-out fighting position. We simulated the fire-control system having a malfunction. We used our old gunner’s artillery sight, where the gunner estimated the range, found the proper range line to engage and destroy the target.”

Later in the evening, the soldiers conducted a hasty breach supported with 120mm mortars. They also conducted a platoon-defense exercise, supported with 155mm artillery illumination/leader rounds and mortars.

During the afternoon exercise, soldiers from the Polish-Ukrainian Battalion and the Lithuanian Army watched as the crew of the M1A1 Abrams got back in their tanks and honed their talents.

“Of course, as an armor officer, you dream to see the differences in the preparation, shooting and the tactics. This is a good chance to do that. I’m really happy to see the inside of the tanks,” said Capt. Sergei Karnauchenko, a Lithuanian armor officer.

“We brought them out here to

show them the supreme fire power of the U.S. Army represented by the 1-37 Armor “Bandits”. Also, to show them how a U.S. Army unit works and how they run their training exercises. It gives them a good partnership experience and good exposure to a U.S. unit. It also gives the U.S. soldiers good exposure to Polish-Ukrainian Battalion equipment,” said 1st Lt. Todd Kremer, the Analysis and Control Team OIC and Polish-Ukrainian Battalion liaison officer for the 501st Military Intelligence Battalion.

According to Kremer, 12 Ukrainian soldiers, 12 Polish soldiers and four Lithuanian soldiers attended the exercise.

“They absolutely loved it,” Kremer said. “From the boom of the tank to being on the ground and meeting the soldiers. It’s a wonderful experience.”

Iron 2000 at a glance

1st Armored Division Year 2000 review

January

1st Brigade Gunnery

February

2nd Brigade VALEX – IRF concept validated
1AD announces move to Wiesbaden

March

2-3 FA and 4th Brigade team up in FCX
1st Brigade MRE–Mountain Guardian III
Warfighter begins March 21

April

Warfighter ends April 17

May

Cooperative Lantern
Iron Medic Challenge
EIB

June

1AD takes command in Kosovo June 20

July

1AD 60th Birthday July 15
2nd Brigade Gunnery
EFMB
3rd Brigade's Task Force 2-70 deploys to Kuwait

August

Maj. Gen. George W. Casey Jr. renews bond with USS Constitution, "Old Ironsides"

September

1-94 Field Artillery (MLRS) stands up at Strassburg Kaserne
1-4 ADA gunnery in Putlos, Germany

October

2nd Brigade MRE–Mountain Guardian IV
1-1 Cav and SETAF team up at CMTC

November

ARRCADE Fusion
2nd Brigade deploys to Kosovo

December

1st Brigade redeploys from Kosovo
1-94 FA(MLRS) joint live fire with the Bundeswehr's 5th Panzer

First Armored Division began the year 2000 with a bang as the 1st Brigade Combat Team blasted its way through the rolling fog of Grafenwoehr Training Area in a challenging January gunnery.

Second Brigade struck hard in validating the Immediate Reaction Force in a frosty-February exercise designed to deploy a highly effective battalion-sized force anywhere in the European Command's theater of operations within 48 hours.

February also saw 1st Armored Division Headquarters announce the closure of military facilities in Bad Kreuznach and subsequent relocation to Wiesbaden scheduled for June 2001.

First Armored Division rocked HTA and GTA in three separate exercises in March. Ready First stormed into Hohenfels Training Area for Mountain Guardian III, a Mission Rehearsal Exercise designed to test the limits of Iron Soldiers preparing to deploy to Task Force Falcon 2A.

Fourth Brigade and 2-3 Field Artillery combined the bone-jarring shock of the M109 Paladin

with the lethality and pin-point-precision of Apache and Kiowa Warrior helicopters in a Fire Control Exercise.

First Armored Division's command and control elements pushed the envelope during a highly effective Warfighter in GTA, March 21-April 17.

First Armored Division took command of Task Force Falcon in Kosovo as Brig. Gen. Randal Tieszen accepted the colors from 1st Infantry Division's Brig. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez.

First Armored Division celebrated its 60th birthday at home and abroad in Kosovo, July 15.

Second Brigade blistered through a July gunnery while 3rd Brigade's Task Force 2-70 mounted up and rode out from Ft. Riley, Kan., on their way down the long, dusty trail to Kuwait.

Maj. Gen. George W. Casey, Jr. traveled to Boston Harbor in August where he forged a new bond with Commander Bill Foster, of the USS Constitution. The meeting rekindled the fires of a 60-year love affair between the prestigious ship "Old Ironsides" and 1st Armored Division.

The clear, ocean-side skies of Putlos, Germany ran red in the September sun and the fiery explosions of the 1-4 Air Defense Artillery gunnery. The battalion made the most out of its first gunnery as a whole in three years.

September 15 marked a great day for 1st Armored Division as the 1-94 Field Artillery (MLRS) stood up at Strassburg Kaserne.

Second Brigade's preparation for Kosovo became fully realized during Mountain Guardian IV in October. Lessons learned in Kosovo were applied to make this the most challenging and exciting MRE ever.

SETAF and 1st Armored Division's 1-1 Cavalry teamed up to save the day during an October CMTC rotation that combined light forces and heavy-mechanized forces to throw back an ever relentless OPFOR.

Second Brigade began deploying at the end of November and officially took command of Task Force Falcon on Dec. 18. First Brigade began redeploying to Germany from six months in Kosovo at the beginning of December. Thanks to the hard work by both brigades the transition was effective and seamless.

For Iron Soldiers, the end of 2000 is just as busy as the beginning, yet 1st Armored Division is ever ready and always on point for the nation. Iron Soldiers possess the best training and equipment in the world, and are ready for any mission anytime and anywhere.



I-1 Cav/SETAF
team up



USS Constitution



1st Bde
homecoming

2nd Bde MRE



1st Bde MRE

1-4 ADA in
Putlos

3rd Bde
deploys to
Kuwait

1st Bde in
Kosovo



OLD IRONSIDES

1st Armored Division soldier doubles as author



Sgt. 1st Class Joseph Sherman explains the importance of an inventory sheet during 1st Brigade's deployment to Kosovo.

Story by Michael Nowinski
Task Force Falcon PAO
 Photos courtesy of
Task Force Falcon PAO

CAMP BONDSTEEL, Kosovo – As he directs his crew with a confident mid-western voice, one would never suspect that Sgt. 1st Class Joseph Sherman, 1st Brigade maintenance supervisor, is an author of a book and an outstanding member of his German community. Seventeen years ago neither did he.

After being in the last graduating class of his Franklin, Minn., high school, he joined the Army as a 45E tank mechanic in 1984. Following his six-month training at Fort Knox, Ky., he was assigned to 2nd Battalion, 69th Armored Regiment, at Fort Benning, Ga., for four years, where he quickly moved through the ranks to sergeant.

When he was assigned to the 3rd Armored Division in Gelnhausen, Germany, the young sergeant suffered a bit of culture shock. “When you think of Germany, you think of small villages and farmland, but instead you find a mix of the old country and modern America like you see in Frankfurt.”

During his time with the 3rd AD he got a sense of pride for the unit that he said “...held high expectations and carried them out.” The unit also had a good sense of community, which would be important for Sherman since during his time with the 3rd AD, he would marry his wife Stefanie, a German local.

Only six months after he married, he was called up to deploy to Operation Desert Shield, which totally caught him off guard. “We found the call to deploy somewhat surprising, since the Iron

Curtain was our recent threat,” he related. During his deployment to the Persian Gulf, he kept a daily journal of sights and events he witnessed as a soldier and tank mechanic during the ground campaign. He was never very far from the action, only a couple of kilometers behind the front lines. “It felt like a rush to see a whole division roll through the desert.”

Shortly after the occupation phase of Desert Storm, he returned to Germany. Pretty soon everyone in his hometown wanted to hear about his time during the war. So, with his wife's encouragement, he turned the writings in his journal into a book.

“I wanted to share my experience with my friends and relatives, but it got bigger than that. Everyone wanted to hear about it. I wanted to let everyone know about my experience there,” Sherman explained.

He submitted the final product to the Library of Congress and they gave him a card catalog number. Considering he wanted to distribute the book to the people back home, only a limited number was printed. At his hometown library and city hall, 600 copies of “A Storm Watch” were sold.

Writing a book about his Gulf War experience wasn't the only landmark decision he made after Desert Storm. He decided that Germany would be the perfect place to raise a family. He bought a house in a mostly German neighborhood. “When I go home at night, I'm surrounded by the German community, so I turn into a German and speak my Deutsch. I like the culture and the people there. They're courteous, and the school system there is great... I liked Germany so much that when I

bought my home, my wife and I planned on a European retirement.”

Retirement for Sherman is still a ways off, so for now he'll stick to raising his two boys, Danny, 7, and David, 6, both of whom are students in the German school system and bi-lingual, speaking fluent English and German. “They picked it up pretty well. When I call them up they switch from German to English right away,” said Sherman.

German and English are not the only things his boys are learning. They're picking up on soccer. Although his boys are learning soccer in a country known for its fanaticism for the sport, Sherman said he's trying to instill a little bit of America's pastime in them.

“I'm trying to fill them in to the baseball point of view, see if I can get them to be Little Leaguers.”

Besides the culture and people of Germany, Sherman says there is one other thing he likes about the Friedberg area. There's space to participate in one of his

favorite hobbies — horseback riding. He likes the hobby so much he owns a stable and a brown Norwegian horse that is “...almost as big as a Clydesdale.” The area near the woods of the Mussenberg Castle close to Friedberg gives him the room to ride horses with his wife and sons.

Sherman, the family man and 17-year veteran, said he would never have made it this far without his family and great soldiers. He said he is proud of the 14 soldiers he now supervises in the 1st Brigade Headquarters maintenance platoon. He said, “These guys are the backbone and moving force for Task Force Falcon Headquarters. They have to keep the command group and its elements rolling. These guys are great.”

With a loving family and a supporting chain of soldiers and command, the Gulf War veteran from Franklin, Minnesota, hopes to someday achieve his career goal of making first sergeant.



Sgt. 1st Class Joseph Sherman takes pride in his work and pride in the 16 men and women he works beside. Back row(l-r): Sgt. Mallory, Spc. Thompson, Sgt. Karriker, Pvt. Brown, Spc. Reader, Pfc. Whitbread, Spc. Ward Spc. Stringer, Sgt. Moore and Chief Warrant Officer 2 Cummings. Front row(l-r): Spc. Grimaldi, Pvt. McCalister, Sgt. 1st Class Sherman, Spc. Santiago, Sgt. Evans, Pfc. Rogers and Spc. Urquiza.

Iron athletes make tracks in D.C.

Story and photos by
Spc. Rebecca F. Deuel
1st Armored Division PAO

WASHINGTON D.C. – In the pre-dawn darkness, military police assigned to the Military District of Washington directed traffic into the already overflowing northside parking lot of the Pentagon. By dawn, thousands of people

the team

from all over the world had thronged into the staging area of the 16th Annual Army Ten-Miler sponsored by the Association of the United States Army held Oct. 15.

The Army Ten-Miler is known worldwide for the spirit of its team competition. The field was open to a maximum of 16,000 runners this year and a record number 11, 876 runners turned out for

the race, according to race officials.

In the middle of the massive crowd of runners and spectators, 1st Armored Division's team stretched and warmed up before race time.

The eight runners on the team qualified for the Washington, D.C., marathon at the Army Ten-Miler qualifying race at Kuhberg, Germany, on Aug. 5. The runners hailed from all corners of the division. A love of

the marathon and strong esprit de corp brought them together as a team for this awesome event, according to team captain Darwin Ammons of HHC, 1st Armored Division.

First Armored Division Command Sgt. Maj. Kenneth Preston was on hand in D.C. to cheer his troops on to the finish. "It's a great opportunity to be here

with the soldiers from the division to support them and be there for them when they get out there and compete."

And compete is exactly what the soldiers did. Dubbed "1st AD Team 83" by race officials, the team ran their way right into an impressive 14th place standing out of 634 teams listed in the competition. While none of the 1st AD runners won an individual award, the team was highly satisfied with their performances, both as individual runners and as a whole.

Smiling broadly and drinking copious amounts of water after the race, Christopher Hohn of the 501st Military Police Company was proud of his teammates and his own run time. "I feel pretty good. I ran well and where I wanted to run and I am pretty satisfied with it. [The division's] team did very well as a whole," he stated. Hohn posted the fastest time for the team. He finished with an official time of 00:58:46, which earned him 216th place overall, and 52nd place in his age division.

The other seven members of the team finished in under 1:40:00, and placed within the top 35 percent of the runners in a field of almost 12,000 competitors [see inset box for individual guntimes].

At the awards ceremony on race day, the Commander's Cup trophy was awarded to the top finishing active-duty men and women's teams. Trophies were also awarded to the top male and female overall finishers in the individual classes.

For more information and official race results, visit the official Army Ten-Miler website at www.armytenmiler.com.



IRON CIVILIAN CLAIMS VICTORY

Photo and story by
Spc. Rebecca F. Deuel
1st Armored Division PAO

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Megan Ratermann gave a thumbs-up and a huge, laughing smile during the 16th Annual Army Ten Miler awards ceremony in Washington, D.C. She received her third place trophy in the women's category and held it out in front of herself proudly.

"I feel great!" Ratermann exclaimed at a post-race interview.

Ratermann, a statistician for the 501st Military Police Company, Provost Marshall's Office, 1st Armored Division, runs five to ten miles a day in "a bit over an hour." On October 15th at the Army Ten Miler, she broke a personal record by running the ten-mile course in 59:34 officially.

"At six miles, I was feeling tired," Ratermann recalled. "I was just about to slow down when I heard [people yelling] that I was the fifth woman."

Before the eighth mile marker, Ratermann passed two women ahead of her. She took and held third place until the finish.

Ratermann attributed her run-time to the "better pace" of friend Cpt. Mike Pierce, 22nd Signal Brigade in USAREUR. "He ran the whole thing with me until the last 500 meters," she said. "He wanted to break an hour, too, and that's why we ran together."

Ratermann is currently a member of LC80, a German running team based in Bad Kreuznach. She has participated in several races, including the 3000 Meter in track at the German-French Luxembourg Championships.



Team Captain
Darwin Ammons
HHC, 1st AD
1:33:14



Elsa Gomez
A Company, 47th Forward
Support Battalion
1:20:33



Sloan Mann
HHC, 2nd Battalion,
6th Infantry Regiment
1:12:00



Laura Labair
HHC, 141st Signal
Battalion
1:23:58



Christopher Hohn
501st Military
Police Company
00:58:46



Steve Lubinski
40th Engineer Battalion
1:04:10



Tenhue Gladstone
77th Maintenance Company
1:01:50



Team Coordinator
Thometrice Fountain
HHC, 1st AD

The 16th Annual Army 10-Miler 2000



Not Pictured:
Christine McNeff
501st Military
Intelligence Battalion
1:19:19

DISCOM soldier is iron link in chain of hope

1st AD soldier gives Cole survivors

a helping hand

“There was something...like a very quiet bravery when they smiled at you.”

Spc. Maggie Wilson about the survivors of the U.S.S. Cole disaster.

were signed out and escorted to a high security ward on the first floor to be interviewed by the FBI. Inquiries were answered by phone, orders were called out to different clinics, information was funneled to admin personnel, and family members were contacted for the patients, according to 1st Lt. Tracy J. Lundahl, night charge nurse on ward 14 CD.

In the midst of the frantic pace was Spc. Maggie Wilson, a medical records clerk from the Division Medical Operations Center, Division Support Command, 1st Armored Division, in Bad Kreuznach. Wilson was attending the 90-day Medical Proficiency Training Program at LPMC when the U.S.S. Cole tragedy rocked the nation. Although she was in a student and training capacity, she found herself on the schedule in the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) to augment the administrative staff.

Stationed in front of the normally easily accessed fire door, Wilson worked from a bedside table maintaining a log of visitors, personnel, and patients that had been escorted out for FBI interviews. Keeping a sharp eye on the double doors to the ward, she would move to the nursing station to answer the phone and field the hundreds of inquiries, doctor's orders, messages and administrative communications that flooded the phone lines.

“She had a very real positive

attitude, and she worked some very long hours,” stated Lt. Col. Francis W. Bannister, patient administration chief and officer in charge of the EOC. “Spc. Wilson was an augmentee to the staff during that operation. She was a very great asset, not only to the staff, but to the patients that she had contact with.”

“I helped the patients get in contact with their families back home,” Spc. Wilson explained. “It was the first time for them to talk with their families and to let them know that they were okay.”

Wilson also helped the ongoing investigation of the incident by assisting staff members and FBI personnel collect hair and clothing samples from the patients. She helped the collection go smoothly by smiling to and talking with the

patients as she went room to room for the samples. “Some of them [the patients] wanted to just rest,” she said. “But I listened when they wanted to talk. They really impressed me with how brave they all were.”

One situation that stuck out in Wilson's mind was a night-long search for one patient's luggage. “The FBI was confiscating all the baggage for evidence, but then decided to give it all back to the patients,” she explained. “One patient had not received his, and I went back and forth between the staff and the Navy liaison trying to locate it.”

At one point during the night, Wilson was ordered to go home by Lt. Col. Bannister. She explained the situation, and he let her stay a few more hours to try and recover the lost baggage. “I just couldn't leave him [the patient] hanging like that. So I stayed

awhile to keep looking,” Wilson said.

1st Lt. Lundahl remembered Wilson's baggage mission. “Yes, I do believe the luggage was returned to the patient shortly before his MEDEVAC flight,” she stated, smiling.

“Working with those patients and the staff members is something that will stay in my head for a long time,” Wilson said. “The patients were smiling. I think they were just happy to have contact with us and we were there to talk to if they needed to. There was something...like a very quiet bravery when they smiled at you.”

Photos of U.S.S. Cole crewmembers courtesy of USAREUR Public Affairs Office. Staff Sgt. Ray Drumstra and Spc. Kathleen Edgecomb, photojournalists from 138th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, New York National Guard, were activated in May in support of Joint Endeavor with USAREUR.



Photo courtesy 138th MPAD

Medical personnel unload one of the injured U.S.S. Cole crewmembers at Landstuhl Army Regional Medical Center (LRMC) Oct. 14.

Story by Spc. Rebecca F. Deuel
1st Armored Division Public Affairs

LANDSTUHL, Germany—In the early morning hours of October 14, medical transport after medical transport sped through the gates of Landstuhl Army Regional Medical Center (LARMC). Personnel at LARMC were ready, and breathed a sigh of relief after an anxious wait for the survivors of the U.S.S. Cole explosion.

Thirty-nine patients were moved into the secured 14 CD Medical Surgery ward on the second floor of the hospital. Personnel moving in and out of the ward were scrutinized by administrative personnel posted to either side of the nursing station, and checked for identification and proper clearances to be on the ward. Patients

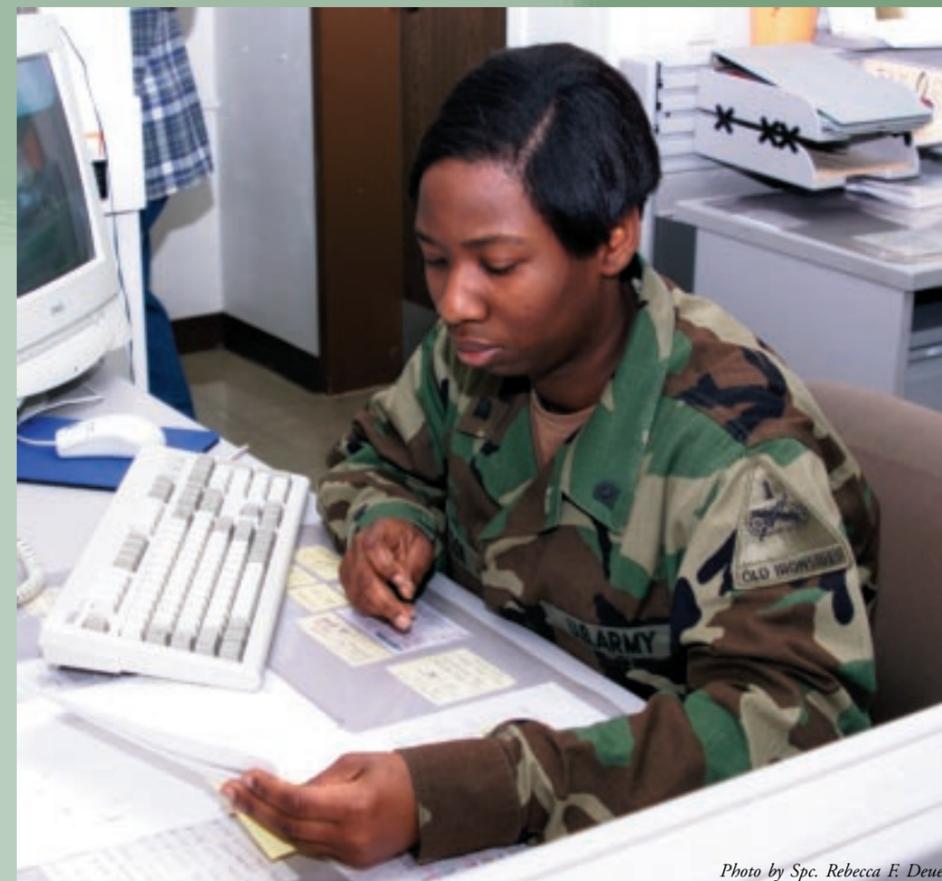


Photo by Spc. Rebecca F. Deuel

Spc. Maggie Wilson reads over patient orders while working as a medical records clerk on 14 CD Medical Surgery ward at LPMC. Wilson assisted staff members with the EOC mission, and helped survivors of the U.S.S. Cole disaster loved ones back home for the first time since the incident.



Photo courtesy 138th MPAD

Medical personnel prepare to move an injured U.S.S. Cole crewmember into LPMC. The largest military medical center in Europe, LPMC stabilized and continued treatment of 39 injured sailors enroute to Portsmouth Naval Medical Center in Virginia.

