

Working multinational, yet preserving the roots

Written by Steffen Zander

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Along with the fine spring weather, German Non-Commissioned Officers of the Multinational Corps Northeast (MNC NE) set off for a common event to strengthen ties among the whole group.

Common events within the Non-Commissioned Officers' (NCO) community of the Bundeswehr are part of the concept of leadership and civic education ("Innere Führung"). In Headquarters Multinational Corps Northeast in Szczecin, there is an intensive cooperation among all the NCO's. On a quarterly basis, all German Sergeants meet for a common event as the 27 non-commissioned officers are serving throughout all of the Staff Divisions and branches of the Headquarters as well as the National Support Element. This springtime temperatures encouraged them to organise a trip to Arkoński forest in Szczecin, which started with a barbeque accompanied by games played in groups, thus promoting a common spirit.

The hike through the forest was a chance to walk through the German part of the history of the city of Szczecin ending at the Quistorp-Tower that was destroyed during the Second World War. Master Sergeant Timo Schwarz not only presented the history of the tower itself but also referred to the Quistorp family and added some stories of his uncle who was born in Szczecin. Sergeant Major Andreas Neuhaus, being the military geographic subject matter expert, supplied the group with maps from 1938 to make the story more interesting.

The Quistorp-Tower was being erected from 1900 until 1904 by Martin Quistorp, the son of von Johannes Quistorp, and used to be one of the most attracting points in the city with a café at its

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bottom floor, and a marvelous view of the surrounding. Johannes Quistorp was a Prussian entrepreneur with a great social commitment towards workers of his construction companies and cement factories. He built apartments, a hospital, founded a social security system, and handed over a park to the local authorities in the northern part of Szczecin.

The NCO event ended in a cozy restaurant of a log cabin style. Master Sergeant Michael Scholz, the Senior German NCO, together with the Chief of the National Element Captain Peter Schlakat officially bid farewell to two members of the NCO corps: Master Sergeant Michael Wiese and Master Sergeant Gert Hoffmann.

Master Sergeant Michael Wiese, an NCO responsible for medical matters in the German National Support Element, could look back upon almost six years of duty in Szczecin. But he will still be tied to this city as his wife is going to stay with children until they have finished their schools. Master Sergeant Gert Hoffmann, on the other hand, has been Chief of the Central Registry since 2007 and will take over a post as a Company Sergeant Major in his former battalion.

Furthermore, two reservists were honored as well. Master Sergeant Hans Barlage was serving in G6 Staff Division since Multinational Corps Northeast was inaugurated almost until his retirement. He is still living in Szczecin with his family and constantly supports the Corps whenever needed. Master Sergeant Steffen Zander has trained with the Corps a dozen times usually serving in G1 Division, but also in the German National Support Element. *“Even though the dozen is completed now, I will surely come back,”* he reassured.