

Solerno soldiers deliver food, medical supplies to Khowst hospital

Sgt. Edward Zink
109th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

SOLERNO, Afghanistan — Officials here are calling it the largest humanitarian mission in this area to date. The originator of the mission is calling it a small step in what he hopes will become a lot more.

A convoy of soldiers from Forward Operating Base Solerno, rolled into Khowst Feb. 8 in a surprise visit to deliver 5,340 humanitarian daily rations as well as 16 boxes of medical supplies, warm clothes and shoes to the Civilian Hospital of Khowst.

Soldiers from 3rd Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 450th Civil Affairs and the 909th Forward Surgical Team here spent the better part of their Saturday morning unloading the supplies into the hospital



Photo by Sgt. Edward Zink, 109th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Sgt. John Ammermann, a member of the 450th Civil Affairs Battalion, explains the contents of a humanitarian daily ration to Dr. Mohammad Wazir, an emergency assistance doctor at the Civilian Hospital of Khowst during the humanitarian aid mission there Feb. 8.

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Saturday night with the Base Chapel Choir

Pfc. Christina Carde
11th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM, Afghanistan — As soldiers pass by the chapel on their way to the Morale, Welfare and Recreation building Saturday evenings, they may hear the harmonious sounds of the Bagram Base Chapel Baptist Choir echoing in the church hall as they practice for Sunday morning service.

Sgt. Christopher Allen, choir director, Supply Support Activity, 264th Logistical Task Force, Fort Bragg, N.C., said the only qualifications needed to join the

choir are the willingness to sing and to have fun.

“I have been singing and playing instruments since I was a child,” said Allen. “However, when I came to Bagram in September of last year, I had no intentions of joining the choir.”

As the weeks went by however, the sounds of the choir singing familiar church songs began to stir up his talent and he decided to attend a rehearsal.

“I started off by singing a solo part,” said Allen. “Then as time progressed, I began to get more involved and started to look for ways to improve the way

they sang songs.”

“One rehearsal, the choir was having trouble with a certain song that I knew well,” Allen added. “I briefly took charge of the rehearsal and showed them a way to sing the song that worked.”

Shortly afterwards, it was time for the present choir director to go home and a new director to be chosen.

The members of the church council and choir held nominations and voted for who they thought would be the best person for the job. In the end, Allen was chosen.

“It was a surprise to me,” said Allen. “I knew that this was God’s will because I went from not wanting to join the choir at all to directing it.”

Allen said one thing he has come to realize as choir director, is it’s not the number of people you have, but their enthusiasm to produce quality sound.

“Since I’ve been director, the choir has ranged from 10 to 30 people,” said Allen. “No matter how many people show up to choir rehearsal, I still do my best to encourage them to extend their

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World News (Compiled from CNN.com)

NATO approves planning for Turkey's defense

BRUSSELS, Belgium — The 18 members of a key NATO committee agreed unanimously Sunday night to approve defense planning for Turkey in case of war against Iraq.

“The 18 NATO allies — members of the integrated military structure — agreed today to task military planners to begin their work and advice on preventive deployment of AWACS airplanes, NATO support for deployment of theater missile defenses of Turkey, and support for allied chemical and biological defense capabilities,” NATO Secretary-General George Robertson said.

France, the sole member of NATO that is not on the Defense Planning Committee, continued to oppose the idea.

The announcement was made after a day of what Robertson called “arduous but constructive” discussions. Last week, France, Germany and Belgium declined to approve the move. The German and Belgian representatives were persuaded to change their minds.

“I’m happy to announce we have been able to collectively overcome the impasse we faced for the last few days,” Robertson said.

“These decisions are purely for the defense of Turkey,” he said. “This is not a step toward war.”

Tens of thousands in San Francisco say no to war

SAN FRANCISCO, Calif. — Tens of thousands of demonstrators protested in San Francisco on Sunday against war with Iraq in a daylong rally that attracted celebrities and politicians.

San Francisco police estimated that 150,000 people turned up at Justin Herman Plaza in mid-morning. About 50,000 people attended an afternoon rally at the Civic Center Plaza, police said.

Protesters carried signs reading “Bay Area United Against War,” “The World Says No to War” and “Jail Bush.” At least one person waved a French flag.



About 150,000 people gathered outside San Francisco City Hall on Sunday.

“We are here to say, ‘Thank you, France, thank you, Germany, thank you, China, and thank you, Senator [Robert] Byrd,’” said David Harris, a founder of the draft-resistance movement during the Vietnam War.

He was referring to those countries’ reluctance to back a possible U.S.-led war with Iraq, and to the West Virginia Democrat’s comments against the Bush administration’s “provocative rhetoric” on war.

Actor Danny Glover served as master of ceremonies for the event, which was organized by International ANSWER, a New York-based group that put together many of the weekend’s worldwide protests. Singer Bonnie Raitt led the march to the afternoon rally.

Rice: Bush won’t back down

WASHINGTON — The Bush administration held to its stance on Iraq on Sunday, a day after millions of people worldwide demonstrated against a possible war in the Persian Gulf.

National security adviser Condoleezza Rice carried the White House position into the battle of words on the Sunday talk shows.

She said on both “Fox News Sunday” and NBC’s “Meet the Press” that President Bush would not back down, despite pleas last week from most members of the U.N. Security Council that he give weapons inspectors more time.

“Some [nations] gave [Iraqi President Saddam Hussein] the impression Friday that

he can play this game,” Rice told NBC.

“The coalition of the willing is preparing,” she said on Fox. “We are in a period now, a diplomatic window, in which we should be discussing how the Security Council can best carry out its obligations.

“But Saddam Hussein shouldn’t read into what he’s seen over the last couple of days that somehow he’s going to get away with it again.”

Led by France and Germany, opposition to use of force in Iraq was voiced after chief U.N. weapons inspectors Hans Blix and Mohamed ElBaradei delivered their latest reports.

“We are making progress,” said Jean-David Lafitte, the French ambassador to the United States. “But it’s too slow. We demand more, but we maintain that the inspections produce results.”

Arab League split over Iraq

CAIRO, Egypt — Foreign ministers of the 22-member Arab League appeared split Sunday over what position the group should take toward possible military action against Iraq.

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak called Friday for an emergency summit, which state-run media said would be held the week of Feb. 22, but the Arab League decided to conduct consultations and decide in the next two days about whether to hold one.

At the meeting, held at Arab League headquarters in Cairo, Syria said it would like Arabs to condemn any military action against Iraq. Syria said it feels the Arab countries should adopt a position that reflects Arab public opinion, rather than the position of the United States.

But Egypt, backed by Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, said it wanted the onus to be put on Iraq to intensify its cooperation with U.N. weapons inspectors.

There was also talk Sunday about possibly assembling a high-level Arab delegation to go to Baghdad and urge President Saddam Hussein to cooperate with the inspectors, but no decision on that matter was made.

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and holding back the throngs of local people who gathered to watch.

The 100-bed hospital was built by the Germans in the 1920's and provides medical services to the 150,000 Afghans in the Khowst province. It is staffed by seven doctors, two of them female, and all of whom work with the barest of equipment and are rarely paid for their services, said Col. John Wassner, commander of the 909th FST.

Wassner originated the idea for the mission following two prior visits to the hospital. He said his team spoke with Dr. Noor Bashah, the minister of public health in the region and identified some of the needs of the hospital. On his second visit Wassner performed surgery to repair a hernia on an elderly Afghan man.

"I think that primarily our mission over here is to show the Afghan people that we are not the enemy. We are here to help them and make Afghanistan a safer place for them while we are trying to root out the terrorists who have taken up residence here," said Wassner. "One of the ways I think we can do that is to provide better health care for this country. By doing this we show the Afghan people that we're not the 'Evil Empire.'"

The convoy left for the hospital in the early morning hours just as the sun was coming up and was kept secret from the hospital

for security reasons. The whole thing came as quite a surprise to the staff and patients.

"We are very happy and desire that every week we have this kind of visit because this way the relationship between us will be further strengthened," said Dr. Anayetullah, a pediatric doctor at the hospital. "This kind of assistance has a good effect on the treatment of our people and also our people will be assured and certain that the American people really want to help our people in every kind of process."

The visit to the hospital included another tour of the facilities for Wassner, his newest staff of surgeons and Lt. Col. Richard Clarke, commander of 3rd Bn., 504th PIR.

The clothing and shoes were donated by family members of the 909th FST from Fort Sheridan, Ill., and the food and medical supplies, including two boxes of antibiotics, were coordinated through the civil affairs team, who are involved in every humanitarian mission.

"When we come in here we emphasize ... that we're here to help them help themselves," said Sgt. John Ammermann, a member of the CA team. "The biggest thing we reinforce is that the children are their future and education is important."

Wassner said the doctors at the hospital are very eager to learn from American doctors and have accepted medical books and requested other medical supplies and teaching materials. However, he



Photo by Sgt. Edward Zink, 109th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment
Spc. Jay Gerson of the 450th Civil Affairs Battalion, passes boxes of medical supplies to Pfc. Joshua Borden, a soldier with Company C, 3rd Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, during the humanitarian assistance mission to the Civilian Hospital of Khowst, Feb. 8.

added, current situations in the area make that very hard to do.

"It's very difficult for us to reach out and provide a helping hand to these people because even though we are here, the enemy is still here also," said Wassner. "Al-Qaida elements are still just across the border in Pakistan and there are Afghans here who still look at Americans as the enemy and that's really an unfortunate thing. But, we are making every effort we can and we are starting out with some small steps and I hope that as peace comes to the country we can begin to do a lot more for these unfortunate people."

An international change of hands...

Lt. Gen. Dan McNeill, commander, Combined Joint Task Force-180, speaks with coalition military during the International Security Assistance Force change of command Feb. 10. Afghan President Karzai was in attendance for the Kabul ceremony as the Turkish government turned over control to Germany and the Netherlands as the lead nations of ISAF. The goal of ISAF, as prescribed by the U.N. Security Council, is to provide security within Kabul. ISAF conducts approximately 50 patrols a day. Nearly 70 percent of these patrols have been conducted with the Afghan police. Turkish and Italian instructors have also provided close protection training to a total of 763 bodyguards. ISAF has also established a strong public information program focusing on their activities.



Photo by U.S. Marine Corps Staff Sgt. Amy Forsythe, Coalition Joint Civil Military Operations Task Force



Photo by Pfc. Christina Carde

Troops have some fun moving and clapping to the beat of a song during the Bagram Base Chapel Baptist Choir rehearsal, Saturday.

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voices and harmonize even if they feel they can't sing. It's my job to judge the quality of sound and turn it into what it's supposed to sound like."

With choir rehearsals Saturdays and Mondays, Allen said his time here has flown by.

"My mission here has become twofold. Once my daily job is done, it's time to select the material for the weekly rehearsals, go over it and direct it. Before I know it, the day is over."

Choir rehearsal is held from 1400(Z) to 1500(Z) every Saturday evening. Allen said it's a good opportunity to try something new.

"Even if troops feel they don't have a voice, they should still come out and give it a try," said Allen. "Even if they only come to one rehearsal, I'm still grateful."

Being deployed can be a difficult time for soldiers especially when they have problems that are out of their hands until they return home. Allen said singing for a while is good way to forget all of that.

"There is passage in the Bible that says 'Cast all your cares upon Jesus.' When you have a problem that is out of your hands, giving thanks to God in song and trusting him to take care of your problems is the best way there is to handle any situation."

Bagram Air Base MWR presents

1530Z at the MWR building: "Crossfire Trail." Starring Tom Selleck, Virginia Madsen and Wilford Brimley: A hero is measured by the enemies he makes.



Tomorrow's movie will be "Rudy."

Local weather

TWO-DAY REGIONAL WEATHER REPORT:

	<i>Today</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>
Bagram:	<i>Snow</i> H: 36F L: 26F	<i>Snow</i> H: 36F L: 25F
Kandahar:	<i>Isolated showers</i> H: 50F L: 41F	<i>Partly cloudy</i> H: 52F L: 40F
Kabul:	<i>Snow</i> H: 36F L: 29F	<i>Snow</i> H: 37F L: 28F
Uzbekistan:	<i>Snow</i> H: 40F L: 28F	<i>Mostly cloudy</i> H: 37F L: 25F

Weather forecast courtesy of the Bagram Combat Weather Team

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Coalition Sports Zone

Soccer/European football (Compiled from ESPN.com)



Alessio Tacchinardi, left, scored for Juventus on Sunday.

Inter Milan opens door

MILAN — Serie A leader Inter Milan suffered a 2-1 defeat at Chievo on Saturday after conceding two penalties and being reduced to 10 men for the final hour of the game.

Hector Cuper's side is still three points clear at the top of Serie A but it could be joined by Juventus and AC Milan if the two challengers can pick up maximum points Sunday.

Fifth-place Chievo went ahead in the 22nd minute when referee Salvatore Racalbuto harshly ruled that Inter defender Fabio Cannavaro had handled a shot from Sergio Pellissier and Chievo captain Eugenio Corini converted the spot kick.

It was another disputed decision that handed Chievo its second penalty in the 36th minute when Pellissier went down after contact with Inter's Argentine defender Javier Zanetti.

To add to Inter's anger over the decision, their Turkish midfielder Okan Buruk was sent off for his protests.

The delay did little to unnerve Chievo captain Corini, who calmly slotted the spot kick past Francesco Toldo.

Despite being down to 10 men for the rest of the game Inter dominated the second half and pulled a goal back in the 70th minute.

Cannavaro headed down a free kick launched into the area by Alvaro Recoba and Christian Vieri fired home his 19th goal of the season from close range.

The strike was Vieri's 100th goal in Serie A and he almost added to that tally in the 89th minute when his thundering shot from an indirect free kick was superbly saved by Chievo keeper Cristiano Lupatelli.

Corini was himself sent off in the fourth minute of time added on, for a second bookable offense, as Inter searched in vain for an equalizer.

Referee Racalbuto was at the center of controversy involving Chievo last month when he awarded three penalties to Juventus in their 4-1 win in Verona.

Leeds advances after controversial call

LONDON — Premier league clubs reached the FA Cup quarterfinals in contrasting styles Sunday with Leeds United controversially beating Crystal Palace 2-1, and Chelsea cruising to a 2-0 win at Stoke City.

Fulham had to settle for a 1-1 home draw, though, in their Fifth-round clash with first division Burnley and must now try to win the replay at Turf Moor.

First-division Stoke were simply overpowered by Chelsea, who took the lead when Dutch striker Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink pounced on a wayward clearance in the 52nd minute and sealed victory in the 76th with a fine shot on the break from Danish substitute Jesper Gronkjaer.

Leeds won thanks to Harry Kewell's superb run and shot from midfield, but only after referee Dermot Gallagher had denied Palace either a goal or a penalty just before the break with the scores level at 1.

Television pictures appeared to show that a Tommy Black shot was initially blocked by the arm of Leeds defender Michael Duberry and then crossed the line before being cleared.

Palace manager Trevor Francis told Sky Sports: "We feel bitterly disappointed.

"Referees have a tough job but certainly Dermot Gallagher on that occasion should either have seen the handball or the shot from Tommy Black that went a good six inches, possibly a foot, over the line.

"At that moment, we would have gone in 2-1 up."

Pointing to the financial consequences for the first division club, Francis said: "We can point to the fact that this game has cost us a few million by the fact that the officials couldn't get a decision right."

Osasuna stuns Real Madrid

MADRID — Real Sociedad lost 3-2 at Real Betis to a last-minute penalty but the Basques stayed two points clear at the top of the Spanish league after their closest rivals Real Madrid was also beaten Sunday.

Sociedad was looking to re-establish a five-point lead at the top following Real Madrid's surprise 1-0 defeat at Osasuna.

With four minutes to go they were firmly within sight of their target as Turkish striker Nihat Kahveci struck twice to put them 2-1 ahead.

A looping header from Iulian Filipescu brought Betis level, though, and Fernando earned all three points for the home side

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when he stroked in from the spot with what was almost the last kick of the game.

Defeats for the top two left Real Sociedad clear at the top with 44 points from 22 matches, followed by Real Madrid on 42.

Valencia is third, behind Real Madrid on goal difference, after its 2-0 win at home to Malaga on Saturday, while Deportivo Coruna stays fourth thanks to a 1-0 win at Valladolid.

Further down the table, Barcelona eased its relegation fears with a much needed 2-0 derby victory away to Espanyol featuring goals from Philip Cocu and Xavi.

While Valencia, Deportivo and Barcelona all warmed up for the return of the Champions League with victories, Real Madrid turned in one of its worst performances of the season.

Christian Manfredini got the only goal on 38 minutes and as Real chased the game they had Luis Figo sent off just past the hour mark.

A disjointed display will be a worry for coach Vicente del Bosque, with Real bottom of Champions League Group C with just a point from two games and badly in need of victory over Borussia Dortmund at the Bernabeu on Wednesday.

"We wanted the victory but we couldn't find a way," Del Bosque said after the game.

"There's never a good time to suffer a defeat but we're still involved in the title race and we're going to fight all the way."

Bayern routs TSV 1860 Munich

BERLIN — Bayern Munich maintained its imposing eight-point lead in the German first division after crushing crosstown rivals TSV 1860 Munich 5-0 on Saturday.

Black History Month

February is Black History Month. In light of all the accomplishments made by African-Americans, every day this month the *Freedom Watch* will highlight an individual.

Clarence L. Elder, *engineer and inventor*

Born: 1935 **Birthplace:** Georgia

A native of Georgia, Clarence Elder founded Elder Systems Incorporated, a research and development company located in Baltimore, Maryland. Elder developed Occustat, a monitoring and energy conservation system. Designed to reduce energy usage in buildings, Occustat works by using a light beam aimed across building and room entrances to monitor traffic and, thus, occupancy. When the building or room is empty, heating, cooling, and lighting controls are lowered, reducing energy consumption by as much as 30 percent. Occustat is in use in hotels and schools. Elder, a graduate of Morgan State College, has also received 12 additional patents in the United States and abroad.

Leverkusen, which reached the final of last season's Champions League and was runner-up in the Bundesliga, dropped to 15th, just one point off the drop zone, after a 2-1 defeat at home by Hansa Rostock.

It has now won only one of its last nine matches and lost five in a row, leaving Klaus Toppmoeller's future as coach looking uncertain ahead of its Champions league match on Tuesday at home to Newcastle United.

Leverkusen commercial manager Reiner Calmund said a decision on Toppmoeller's future would be made Sunday.

"We're going to sleep on this tonight and make decisions tomorrow once we've had a chance to digest this," he said.

Bayern Munich, which has made amends in the Bundesliga after a humiliating first round Champions League exit, maintained its wide margin over reigning champions Borussia Dortmund — 4-1 winners over VfL Bochum — with all five goals coming in the final half hour.

Mehmet Scholl scored a hat trick while Claudio Pizarro and Bixente Lizarazu added one each as Bayern woke after a dull first half.

"We played with more gusto and determination in the second half after a rather cautious first half," said Bayern trainer Ottmar Hitzfeld, who said this week he had been approached by clubs in Spain.

"Hey chief, I've got the new guy testing the AERPS gear."



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By Kevin Kilgore

Laugh Support