

DHL speeds up Bagram's mail flow



The DHL Worldwide Express's Boeing 727 is now the standard plane for deliveries here. This translates into faster mail flow, said Army Reserve Sgt. 1st Class Marlon Daniels, 300th Adjutant General Postal unit, Homewood, Ill.

Story and photo by
Pfc. Terri Rorke
11th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM, Afghanistan — While servicemembers are deployed a half a world away from their family and friends, it's the simple things that mean a lot — like mail call.

And since they are a world away, mail sent from the U.S. to Afghanistan tends to take an average of 10 days for delivery. Well, not anymore according to a postal operations non-commissioned officer here.

"This is the first day the (Boeing) 727 has landed here. It's going to do a lot for the morale of the troops ... troops will get mail faster," said Staff Sgt. Frank E.

See **DHL**, Page 4

FET ensures project completion, quality

By Spc. Debralee P. Crankshaw
11th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM, Afghanistan — Engineers and contractors work all over base to improve the quality of life, but this would not be possible without the support of a detachment here.

The Facility Engineer Team is a seven person detachment from San Francisco with a commander, chief of plans and design, project manager, liaison to the contracting office, quality assurance noncommissioned officer, mine clearing supervisor and an operations NCO.

This team is responsible for public works, designs, construction management and quality assurance.

"We only have seven people, but the workload is for about 10," said Capt. Ralph Adam, project manager, San Francisco Team, 416th Facility Engineer Command.

The team is here on a nine-month tour working 12-14 hour days, but they don't stop working just because they leave the office.

"Usually we'll go back to our tent at night and have a laptop

and be working on a design," said Maj. Erwin Blancaflor, chief of plans and design.

On average a design takes about two days, but the engineers don't have the time to sit and work on them so it usually takes longer since they have other things to do.

According to Adam, making a design is taking the request and putting it on paper so it is a constructible project. The request is usually a work order with a diagram drawn on the back that the plans engineers turns into something that can be built by a contractor or soldiers.

The base commander decides what projects are done and the plans engineers decide whether the project is constructed by a contractor or soldiers.

"Who does the construction depends on the type of construction and workload of troops," said Adam.

Quality assurance is inspecting the project to ensure it's being done to project specifications.

"The (noncommissioned officers) are usually responsible for

See **FET**, Page 4

World News (Compiled from CNN.com)



Parts of a gas centrifuge system for enriching uranium were dug up in Baghdad.

Nuke component unearthed in Baghdad back yard

CNN — The CIA has in its hands the critical parts of a key piece of Iraqi nuclear technology — parts needed to develop a bomb program — that were dug up in a back yard in Baghdad, CNN has learned.

The parts were unearthed by Iraqi scientist Mahdi Obeidi who had hidden them under a rose bush 12 years ago under orders from Qusay Hussein and Saddam Hussein's then son-in-law, Hussein Kamel.

U.S. officials emphasized this was not evidence Iraq had a nuclear weapon — but it was evidence the Iraqis concealed plans to reconstitute their nuclear program as soon as the world was no longer looking.

The parts and documents Obeidi gave the CIA were shown exclusively to CNN at CIA headquarters in Virginia.

Sources: Private bin Laden letters called for attacks

CNN — Al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden sent a private message to followers in February, ordering them to attack the United States and its allies, intelligence sources based in southwest Asia tell CNN.

The sources said the message was taken by couriers from an area along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border — where bin Laden is believed to be hiding — to locations in Africa, the Middle East, the Caucasus region and Asia.

“He sent personal letters to key al-Qaida leaders, regional leaders as well as leaders of al-Qaida-associated groups, urging them

to launch terrorist attacks against the targets of the United States, its allies and its friends,” said Rohan Gunaratna, author of “Inside al-Qaida,” who has strong connections to anti-terrorism investigators.

Coalition investigates Iraq attacks

CNN — Local officials in southern Iraq said Wednesday that residents may have attacked and killed six British military police officers because they apparently were fearful of intrusive weapons searches.

Dr. Adel al-Shawi, a hospital administrator, said that British troops entered the town of Majar al-Kabir near Basra on Tuesday searching for arms despite an agreement giving local elders time to round up heavy weapons.

British sources said the soldiers were there to conduct patrols, not searches. However, they said, residents apparently did not understand.

Al-Shawi said children began throwing rocks at the British patrol as the crowd grew larger, more vocal and confrontational. According to British sources, up to 400 men in the crowd had weapons.

British soldiers first fired warning shots with rubber bullets, al-Shawi said, before anyone in the crowd prompting the troops to fire live ammunition into the crowd.

The firefight continued as the British patrol retreated to a police station, police sources said, where four soldiers died and two died in the nearby area.

Palestinian officials: Militants offer 3-month truce

JERUSALEM — Palestinian officials said Wednesday that Hamas, the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades and Islamic Jihad have agreed to a three-month suspension of attacks against Israelis, but a Hamas spokesman said no such agreement had been reached.

The possibility of a breakthrough raised hopes for some progress toward peace on the 1,000th day of the current intifada, the Palestinian uprising against Israel.

Palestinian officials said the cease-fire specifies that militant groups will halt “all attacks” against Israeli civilians.

The tentative truce agreement was circulated among members of the radical groups in Damascus, Syria, and sent to Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat and Marwan Barghouti, a top leader in Arafat's Fatah movement, the mainstream faction of the Palestine Liberation Organization, the officials said.

Lawyers claim Malvo brainwashed

WASHINGTON — Marking a switch in strategy, attorneys for the teenage suspect in last October's sniper shootings now blame the older suspect for brainwashing their client, according to court papers released Wednesday.

Attorneys for Lee Boyd Malvo, who was 17 at the time of a string of sniper shootings in the Washington area, suggest in pretrial motions their client had been programmed or brainwashed by then 41-year-old John Allen Muhammad.

They argue that Muhammad's programming led Malvo to participate in an October 2002 sniper shooting spree that left 10 dead and three wounded.

Record industry plans to sue downloaders

WASHINGTON — The embattled music industry disclosed aggressive plans Wednesday for an unprecedented escalation in its fight against Internet piracy, threatening to sue hundreds of individual computer users who illegally share music files online.

The Recording Industry Association of America, citing substantial sales declines, said it will begin Thursday to search Internet file-sharing networks to identify users who offer “substantial” collections of mp3 music files for downloading. It expects to file at least several hundred lawsuits seeking financial damages within eight to 10 weeks.

Executives for the RIAA, the Washington-based lobbying group that represents major labels, would not say how many songs on a user's computer will qualify for a lawsuit. The new campaign comes just weeks after U.S. appeals court rulings requiring Internet providers to identify subscribers suspected of illegally sharing music and movie files.

The mission within the mission

By Spc. Rick Robinson
11th Public Affairs Detachment

EN ROUTE TO JALALABAD, Afghanistan — Breakfast was Chips Ahoy Chewy Chocolate Chip cookies. Soldiers conducted their final preventive maintenance checks and services before beginning the journey to Jalalabad. The .50-caliber machine gun operator who supplied rear security for the convoy sang “What’s goin’ on” by Marvin Gaye.

These soldiers were alert, active, and focused, although the sun didn’t rise for another four hours.

Troops from Company D, 2nd Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division, Fort Bragg, N.C., began Operation Unified Resolve Wednesday, June 18. The two-part mission combined combat operations along the Afghanistan and Pakistan border with humanitarian assistance missions east of Jalalabad.

The company and its attachments didn’t have the luxury of using fixed or rotary wing aircraft. They had to take their 24 vehicles on a 167 kilometer ground assault convoy.

“This is probably the longest (convoy) I’ve been on,” said army Staff Sgt. Daniel Morasse, convoy security non-commissioned officer, Co. D, 2-505 PIR.

During the GAC, Company D kept track of their vehicles through constant radio communication. They made security halts during the voyage to give everyone the opportunity to stretch and drink water.

While the convoy was in motion, the rear vehicle employed a unique tactic to keep the convoy intact. The driver, when cued by the gunner, would swerve to keep upcoming traffic from merging into the convoy.

“We have a big convoy and we want to keep it as pure

See **GAC**, Page 4

Bagram Air Base MWR presents

1530Z at the MWR building: “Star Trek: Nemesis.” After the Enterprise is diverted to the Romulan planet of Romulus, supposedly because they want to negotiate a truce, the Federation soon find out the Romulans are planning an attack on Earth.



Tomorrow’s movie will be “The Guru.”

Local weather

TWO-DAY REGIONAL WEATHER FORECAST:

	<i>Today</i>	<i>Friday</i>
Bagram:	<i>Dust</i> H: 97F L: 64F	<i>Clear</i> H: 99F L: 66F
Kandahar:	<i>Dust</i> H: 108F L: 72F	<i>Dust</i> H: 108F L: 72F
Kabul:	<i>Dust</i> H: 93F L: 61F	<i>Haze</i> H: 95F L: 63F
Uzbekistan:	<i>Dust</i> H: 93F L: 66F	<i>Sunny</i> H: 97F L: 65F

Weather forecast courtesy of the Bagram Combat Weather Team

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Maj. Erwin Blancaflor, chief of plans and design, San Francisco Team, 416th Facility Engineer Command, discusses a project plan with the contractor and the other Afghan workers.

FET, from Page 1

quality assurance, but because we are so small we usually do everything,” said Adams.

When soldiers are given the projects, the engineers do not have to inspect.

“Troop projects have their own (quality assurance) so we look in on them very little, but since they are a construction asset we have to stay in tune with them,” said Adam.

The Afghan contractors, however, need

constant supervision.

“We look in on the contractors at least once a day.

“Some contracts need daily supervision. (Afghan) construction has different standards than the U.S. so we try to teach them our standard. They learn, but still use different methods,” said Adam.

Another difference between here and in the states is the engineers do not lay out an elaborate plan for the Afghan contractors. They create the design and explain how to do the project at the site.

Blancaflor and Adam contribute being civilian engineers to their job here running so smoothly. Blancaflor is a city engineer and Adam is a civil engineer with the Corps of Engineers.

“It helps immensely. It gives us a better understanding of what needs to be included in a project,” said Adam.

Blancaflor sees one problem with the job.

“There is not enough time to (tweak) a project design because of the workload. Since we have to work so quickly to finish the design most of the time the (FET) engineers are not completely happy with the design,” he said.

Initially when the team arrived most projects were renovations, but now they are overseeing the construction of mainly wood frame buildings.

“We’ve had no major difficulties,” said Adam. “Every project — even in the States will have problems, but we haven’t run into anything we can’t handle.”



Staff Sgt. Daniel Morasse, Company D, 2nd Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, Fort Bragg, N.C., hydrates during the 167 kilometer convoy from Bagram to Jalalabad for Operation Unified Resolve. Temperatures reached over 100 degrees during the trip.

GAC, from Page 4

as possible,” said Morasse. “It helps a lot. It keeps people from breaking contact and getting lost.”

After twelve hours of swerving, getting stuck in traffic, fixing flat tires and coping with the 110 degree heat, the company finally arrived at the civil military operations center just outside of Jalalabad.

“The convoy was a success. No lives were lost and no equipment was damaged,” said Staff Sgt. Kelvin Ingram, fire support non-commissioned officer, Co. D, 2-505. “We had setbacks but we adapted and overcame. That’s what you do in this world and in this Army.”

DHL, from Page 1

King, Army Reserve 300th Adjutant General Postal unit out of Homewood, Ill.

DHL Worldwide Express landed a B 727 here Tuesday and will continue to use the aircraft as the standard delivery plane here, said King.

While the previous aircraft DHL was using could only hold four pallets, the 727, which is the largest aircraft to land on Bagram to date, can carry nine, said King.

“All the mail from the states comes via Brussels or London,” said Mike Bridgewater, DHL International services manager for Afghanistan. Everything that is containerized comes in tri-walls.

If all of the containers in one shipment are destined to Bagram, now the shipmen don’t have to break them out and transport them from one aircraft to another. “Less handling, less damage, less loss. Better for the whole operation,” he said.

Bridgewater said this is a project that has been underway for the last two months.

“We’ve been working hard with the Air Force the last couple of months here to get landing rights to come in and get the specifications. In the last three weeks we finalized everything. It’s a morale booster for the troops to see DHL aircraft coming in with their mail. Anything we can do, we will try our best,” said Bridgewater.

“Of course the flight came in and we didn’t know if we’d be able to unload it properly or whether we could reload the aircraft or if we would damage the aircraft. We had no idea if there was room for the 727s to turn around here. But it’s also working out really well with the help from the Air Terminal Operations Center ... it’s been a success,” said Robert Merrick, DHL International operations manager for Afghanistan.

“It’s going to be very beneficial because we can get more mail on the plane and also send out more packages. (It will) speed the transit times both ways for the mail. It’s going to make all the troops and families happy,” said Sgt. 1st Class Marlon Daniels, 300th AG Postal. “We’re all pretty excited about it.”



Coalition Sports Zone

(Compiled from *ESPN.com*)

Could this be the year Kingman becomes a footnote?

ESPN — Normally, Brian Kingman doesn't start having his annual nervous breakdowns until Labor Day. Normally, he doesn't even have to check the stats till the All-Star break.

But when your goal is to go down as the Last 20-Game Loser In The History Of Humankind, nothing can mess up a good baseball season more than Mike Maroth losing 10 games before June 1. Or five different pitchers losing 10 before July.



Mike Maroth is one of several pitchers this season who could unseat Brian Kingman as the last 20-game loser.

So this is it, Brian Kingman's worst nightmare — three more excruciating months on what he calls "trivia death row." In 1980, when Kingman lost 20 for Billy Martin's Oakland A's, he was the 204th 20-game loser since 1900. Who knew then he would also be the last?

It's nearly a quarter-century later now. Brian Kingman is about to turn 49 years old. He could be just another anonymous owner of a west-coast check-cashing company. But with every year that goes by that nobody else loses 20 games in a season, Kingman's fame seems to mushroom faster than live Pearl Jam CDs.

This year alone, he has been the subject of a major Sunday feature on the Associated Press wire. He's been hunted — and willingly found — by newspapers in Michigan, Texas, Arizona, Illinois and California.

He has even risen to No. 16 in baseball-reference.com's exalted list of "most popular players" of all time (i.e., players who have gotten the most hits on the site). Among those trailing him on that list: Randy Johnson, Joe DiMaggio, Cal Ripken and Jackie Robinson. We kid you not.

So it's just short of hilarious to think that once, Kingman wanted no part of this "honor." Then, about 10 years ago, he came across an account of his increasingly unforgettable 20-loss season in a book called "The Worst Pitchers in Baseball" — on a page opposite (pre-1961) Sandy Koufax — and he figured it out: Losing 20 may be a lousy claim to fame, but it's better than none at all. So this year, Brian Kingman has his

anti-20-loss defense satellite pointed all over the country. At Maroth (2-11), Jeremy Bonderman (2-11) and Adam Bernero (1-10) in Detroit. At Glendon Rusch (1-11) in Milwaukee. At Mark Buehrle (4-10) in Chicago. At John Thomson (4-9) in Texas. At Omar Daal (4-9) in Baltimore. At Brian Lawrence (4-9) in San Diego.

Maroth, Bonderman, Bernero, Rusch and Buehrle all had 10 losses by June 22. Last year, *nobody* in baseball had 10 losses by June 22. So no wonder Kingman sounds particularly frazzled these days.

"When things look really bleak," he says, sounding downright philosophical, "that's when I have to stop and think, 'How bleak is it, really?'"

ACC: Miami, Virginia Tech ready to accept

ESPN — The Atlantic Coast Conference ended its six-week expansion saga Wednesday by inviting only Miami and Virginia Tech to leave the Big East and join its league.

"These two institutions represent and share the values for which the ACC has long been known," said Clemson president James F. Barker, head of the league's Council of Presidents. "We feel they will be a great addition to our family."

Miami and Virginia Tech are the Big East's two dominant football schools, and the move to go to 11 schools wasn't one of the many scenarios presented since the ACC's vote to expand on May 13.

Boston College and Syracuse, which also were candidates for expansion, were left behind in the Big East.

A source close to the expansion talks told ESPN.com's Andy Katz that the plan calls for the revamped ACC to play 16 league basketball games within one division, and there is a chance of teams playing 18 league games. The source added that there is no chance teams would play 20 league games.

An 11-team conference might have been a sticking point for Miami. The school had some financial concerns about joining the conference without Northeast schools Boston College and Syracuse or a guarantee of a football championship game.

But a source within the ACC told Katz that the conference told Miami officials that it is easier to go from 11 to 12 schools than nine to 12, indicating that the ACC will likely want to have an even number of teams within the next 3-4 years.

Barker said the invitation to Virginia Tech, a dark horse candidate that was added last week at the insistence of Virginia, was "subject to final completion of the conference bylaw requirements"

SPORTS, from Page 5

— a site visit that was under way Wednesday in Blacksburg, Va.

Rusedski falls to Roddick

WIMBLEDON, England — A ball bounces toward a child — or even a puppy — and he bounds to meet it. Adults know better; their instinct for play dulls over time.

This was the rough scenario in Wednesday's watershed match at Wimbledon.

Andy Roddick, his hat on backward, calling people "Dude" and full of bounce at 20 years old, was the child. Greg Rusedski, closing in on 30, was the sensible adult. After a quirky and controversial series of events, their Center Court match came down to this: Roddick, perhaps unconsciously, hit a ball he didn't think he had to. Rusedski chose not to. And, in the end, it cost him the match.

Roddick, who is fast becoming everyone's favorite for the gentlemen's singles here, sent home the transplanted British favorite by a 7-6 (4), 7-6 (1), 7-5 count that was far, far closer than the bare numbers suggest.



Andy Roddick held up despite intense pressure from the British crowd.

McFarlane wins Bonds auction

NEW YORK — Barry Bonds' record-breaking 73rd home run ball was sold to comic book and action figure mogul Todd McFarlane on Wednesday night for \$517,500.

With the purchase, McFarlane now owns three of the seven highest-priced home run baseballs sold. He purchased Mark McGwire's 70th and Sammy Sosa's 66th home-run balls, each from the home run race of 1998, for \$3 million and \$175,000, respectively.

"I'll take a look at the ball, probably get a photo of all three of my home run balls together," McFarlane told ESPN.com after winning the auction. "Then we'll see if we can work something out with the Hall of Fame."

Gonzalez, Expos GM meet Wednesday

ARLINGTON, Texas — Texas outfielder Juan Gonzalez was held out of the Rangers' lineup again Wednesday night as the two-time AL MVP considered whether to accept or reject a trade that would send him to the Montreal Expos.

Despite assertions by his attorney that he would likely invoke the no-trade clause in his contract, Gonzalez said he hasn't made that determination.

"I haven't decided," Gonzalez said after taking batting practice before Wednesday night's game against Oakland.

Gonzalez has until Saturday morning to make his decision. He said he wasn't sure when he would decide.

The Expos reached an agreement with Texas on Tuesday to acquire Gonzalez, but his attorney, Jeff Moorad, said then that Gonzalez "in all likelihood" would block the deal.

A message left at Moorad's office Wednesday night wasn't immediately returned.

Gonzalez met Wednesday with Montreal general manager Omar Minaya, who has a long history with the slugger.

"I have met with him but I'm not going to talk about the meeting," Minaya said.

Players disciplined for their roles in brawl

ESPN — Cincinnati Reds pitcher Paul Wilson was suspended for five games and Chicago Cubs pitcher Kyle Farnsworth was penalized three games Wednesday for their brawl last week.

Wilson, Farnsworth and Reds infielder-outfielder Russell Branyan were fined undisclosed amounts.

It was not immediately known whether Wilson would appeal. Farnsworth said he has not yet decided, but added that he believed the penalty was fair.

"When two people go at it, it is still a fight. A fight is a fight, both sides got to get fined and suspended, whatever they have to do," Farnsworth said. "I think they did a fine job."

Farnsworth and Wilson tangled last Thursday at Great American Ball Park.



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By Kevin Kilgore

Laugh Support