

First MEDEVAC helicopters deploy



Photo by Pvt. 2 Terri Rorke

The HH60L Blackhawk helicopter here is one of only 12 in the world. Bagram is the current home for two of these aircraft, designed specifically for medical evacuation. Due to the demand, current plans will eventually give all paramedics a chance at putting these choppers to the test.

Pvt. 2 Terri Rorke
11th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM, Afghanistan – Just one week ago, Sgt. 1st Class Gary Volkman of the California National Guard, 126th Medical Company, Air Ambulance, flew an HH60L helicopter right off the stateside factory’s lot. His destination? Bagram Air Base.

The two-month-old helicopter, one of two HH60Ls here, is the latest edition to the line of Blackhawks and is designed specifically for medical evacuation. There are only 12 other helicopters like it made.

Volkman said California is lucky to have two of these rare Blackhawks. Of the two that are in the company’s possession, one was only built in November and the other in January.

“These are the first two to be deployed,”

————— See **MEDEVAC**, Page 4

Combat heavy fuel drop mission is historical event

By 1st Lt. Cory Angell
109th Mobile Public Affairs Office

BAGHRAN VALLEY, Afghanistan – A company of parachute riggers recently made history.

Company E, 782nd Main Support Battalion, Fort Bragg, N.C. dropped a total of 38,088 gallons of fuel to the Forward Area Refueling Point in support of Operation Eagle Fury.

“The significance of the drop is, that until this point there has not been a heavy drop in Afghanistan or in support of Operation Enduring Freedom,” said Warrant Officer Peter Lautzenheiser, air drop systems technician and platoon leader.

“To the best of my knowledge, the last time any fuel was air dropped, certainly by the 82nd Airborne (Division), if not by the entire Army, was in Vietnam.”

The division routinely practices heavy-drop missions, but this

————— See **FUEL DROP**, Page 4

Rain, sleet, snow can stop air mail

By Sgt. W. Cullen James
11th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM, Afghanistan — While the adage about severe weather not stopping the mail may hold true in the States, in Afghanistan rain, sleet and snow have a direct effect on mail delivery.

“There’s one DHL flight a day,” said Sgt. 1st Class Kyle Westergard, Post Office noncommissioned officer in charge.

However, due to the recent bad weather, there were no flights for three days and therefore no mail, he explained. “Mother nature wasn’t cooperating.”

A flight did arrive on the fourth day, but only contained mail that was improperly sent to Kandahar. “It was only for one unit,

————— See **MAIL**, Page 3

World News (Compiled from CNN.com)



U.S. Army special operations soldiers disembark from a U.S. Air Force C-17 Globemaster after landing at Zamboanga city airport in southern Philippines from Okinawa, Japan.

U.S. troops sent to Philippines

WASHINGTON — Some 350 U.S. special operations troops will join with the Philippine military in an open-ended mission to “disrupt and defeat” the remnants of Abu Sayyaf rebels as soon as next month, Pentagon officials told CNN Thursday.

It would mark the first time in the War on Terror that U.S. forces will assume an active offensive role in the Philippines.

“This will be a no-holds-barred effort,” said one Pentagon official familiar with the planning. “This is not an exercise.”

But a spokesman for Philippine Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes said any such plans have “not been finalized yet.” This official said the government would have to change its constitution, which does not allow U.S. troops to go into combat in the Philippines.

The Philippine official did say Reyes is going to the U.S. Pacific Command this weekend for meetings on the possible operation.

Pentagon officials said while the Philippine government has not officially announced the operation, they said their understanding is that it’s a “done deal.”

FBI charges Florida professor with terrorist activities

TAMPA, Fla. — A Florida college professor said to be a top leader of a group the U.S. government calls a Palestinian terrorist organization was charged Thursday with racketeering and other terrorism-related activities, Attorney General John Ashcroft said.

Seven others were also charged.

University of South Florida professor Sami Al-Arian, described by Ashcroft as the North American leader of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and three others were arrested.

The remaining four — allegedly the top leaders of Palestinian Islamic Jihad — were named as co-conspirators in the 50-count indictment but have not been arrested.

Al-Arian’s lawyer, Nicolas Matassini, called the indictment “a work of fiction” and said his client — who has long acknowledged his fund-raising activities for humanitarian Palestinian causes — planned to go on a hunger strike to protest the charges.

The four now in custody made their first court appearances Thursday and were being held without bond pending a detention hearing Tuesday in U.S. District Court in Tampa.

Regan convicted of attempted espionage for Iraq, China

ALEXANDRIA, Va. — A retired Air Force master sergeant was convicted Thursday of offering to sell military secrets to Iraq and China, and jurors are now deciding whether to proceed to a death penalty phase of the trial.

After three days of deliberations, Brian Regan, 40, was found guilty of two counts of attempted espionage, related to attempts to sell information to Iraq and China, and one count of gathering national defense information. He was acquitted of attempting to provide U.S. secrets to Libya.

Jurors returned to deliberate whether the documents Regan attempted to sell to Iraq meet the criteria for the death penalty set out under federal law. If they answer ‘yes’ to that question, the trial will enter a penalty phase, with additional testimony, to determine his sentence.

The charges related to China did not carry death sentence.

Regan’s trial marks the first time in nearly 50 years that a defendant in an espionage case is facing the death penalty.

The last spies to be executed were Ethel and Julius Rosenberg, who went to the electric chair after being convicted in 1953 of stealing U.S. atomic secrets for the Soviet Union.

U.S., UK waiting on Iraq resolution

WASHINGTON — The United States and the United Kingdom plan to wait until the middle of next week to propose a new U.N. Security Council resolution that declares Iraq in continued breach of its disarmament obligations, a senior Bush administration official said Thursday.

Administration officials decided to hold off on introducing the new resolution in part because it is still trying to round up support — and to gauge whether France or other permanent Security Council members would use their veto power.

For another resolution to pass, it would have to win approval from nine of the 15 members and could not be vetoed by any of the five permanent council members — Britain, France, Russia, China and the United States.

The administration hopes to gain support if Iraq fails to maintain the increase in cooperation U.N. chief weapons inspector Hans Blix cited in his February 14 report to the Security Council.

No deadline for Turkey

WASHINGTON — Despite the sense of urgency, senior Bush administration officials said Thursday there is no deadline for Turkey to respond to the last U.S. aid offer in exchange for clearance to base U.S. troops there for a possible war on Iraq.

The United States has offered a \$26 billion aid package to encourage the majority-Muslim nation to accept some 40,000 U.S. troops.

Earlier in the day, Secretary of State Colin Powell said he expected to hear back from Turkish officials by the end of the day.

But after Turkish Prime Minister Abdullah Gul announced the decision would not be coming Thursday, a senior White House official said, “Powell was simply expressing hope. There is no deadline for Turkey to respond.”

The White House is treating the political standoff with Turkey very gingerly.

One adviser explained, “Turkey is a long-time valued friend. Diplomacy is never pretty.”

MAIL, from Page 1

so we counted it as a 'no mail' day," Westergard said.

There are several conditions that could close the runway, Westergard explained, and he anticipates bad weather causing delays in the mail again. "When we first got here, they had shut the runway down because of dust. It will probably happen this summer too."

Although there were four "no mail" days, the post office has had two days to catch back up. Wednesday and Thursday, the mail flights contained mail pallets with almost six-and-a-half tons of letters and packages. The average, non-holiday mail load is two to four tons, said Westergard.

The following are some tips the mail service personnel have put out to help ensure timely delivery of mail from the U.S.:

- Inform family members to wrap packages securely.
- Liquid-filled containers tend to break.
- Powdered items can open during transit causing concern over what kind of substance it is. Please pack the items in sealed plastic bags.
 - Contraband items are confiscated. These include alcohol, tobacco and pornography.
 - Label packages properly and list all contents.
 - There is a space on the customs form to declare if it is a gift or merchandise.
 - Ensure families have the proper address: Name, (no rank), Unit, APO AE XXXXX. Families should not put Afghanistan or their base camp's city, it tends to get sent through the Afghanistan mail system.
 - When family members send items Space Available Mail it can take longer.

Following the above guidelines, and realizing the limitations air mail has in the theater, personnel serving in Afghanistan can generally expect a two-week delivery for their mail.

"We've been checking the dates (of the mail) and we're still looking good," said Westergard. "We've received mail in as little as three days from the States, but that's very rare. Be patient, the problem isn't on this end. Once the mail is in this building, it's gone within 24 hours."

Bagram Air Base MWR presents

1530Z at the MWR building: "Blue Crush." Living in a beach shack, Anne Marie is up before dawn every morning to conquer the waves and count the days until the Pipe Masters surf competition. Having transplanted herself to Hawaii, she finds all she needs in the adrenaline-charged surf scene ... until pro quarterback Matt Tollman comes along. Tomorrow's movie will be "Extreme Ops."



Local weather

TWO-DAY REGIONAL WEATHER FORECAST:

	<i>Today</i>	<i>Saturday</i>
Bagram:	<i>Mostly cloudy</i> H: 46F L: 30F	<i>Cloudy</i> H: 37F L: 28F
Kandahar:	<i>Rain</i> H: 59F L: 39F	<i>Rain</i> H: 52F L: 34F
Kabul:	<i>Haze</i> H: 48F L: 28F	<i>Rain</i> H: 46F L: 30F
Uzbekistan:	<i>Rain</i> H: 58F L: 39F	<i>Rain</i> H: 50F L: 33F

Weather forecast courtesy of the Bagram Combat Weather Team

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To be added to the daily distribution list email william.james@us.army.mil

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is the first combat drop in years.

Training and performing the real thing are often very different operations, and soldiers must overcome the challenges of not having the amenities they are accustomed to.

“Back at (Fort) Bragg, they have the heavy drop rigging facility, where they have all the equipment needed to rig,” said Lautzenheiser.

The facility also provides shelter for the delicate parachutes. Parachutes cannot be wet, and with the recent rainfall, the soldiers had to wait for the rain to stop. The start and stop rhythm of the rain caused the same rhythm in work.

The soldiers also had to arrange transportation to the aircraft for the massive bundles. Since the Air Force couldn’t drive close enough to the rigging area, the soldiers had another challenge to overcome.

They had to constantly switch their loads from one piece of equipment to another to



File photo

The parachute riggers of Company E, 782nd Main Support Battalion, attached to Company A, 307th Logistical Task Force, Kandahar, push one of the heavy drop pallets onto the aircraft in support of operations in the Baghran Valley.

be able to reach their final destination, Lautzenheiser said.

“The 82nd knows how to fight by jumping in and air dropping any equipment they

need to sustain their mission,” said Lautzenheiser.

“We’re hoping to get more combat missions like this. It’s what we came here to do.”

MEDEVAC, from Page 1

said Volkman, who is the acting first sergeant of a 24-hour standby all-paramedic team of 20.

Due to the many paramedic-friendly features the distinguished bubble-nosed helicopter possesses, it was decided Bagram would be its first deployment location.

While the previous model of the Blackhawk the 126th was using, the UH60L, makes crewmembers carry all the needed equipment onboard, the HH60L has many features that make it easier for the paramedics.

The stationary medical interior includes an onboard oxygen-generating system, provisions for medical electronics, a six-litter patient configuration, room for a medic plus another essential individual.

Other features include the latest infrared and navigational capabilities, a storm scope and a 290-foot hoist, which travels 350 feet a minute for quick reaction time. The hoist may be needed for various rescues, Volkman explained.

“We can lower a medic down into a mine field to pick up an injured person and it is a lot faster than the old internal hoist.”

These new helicopters are not cheap.

“They are roughly 14 million dollars a piece,” said Volkman.

With only being here a week, the medivac helicopter has already seen a few rescues dealing with land mine accidents and a couple incidents of kids playing with explosive ordnances.

Even though the 126th has not had the factory-fresh scented aircraft for a long time, it places confidence in the unit as a reliable tool.

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.

Ernest Everett Just; *biologist, educator*

Born: 8/14/1883 **Birthplace:** Charleston, S.C.

Although he was born in the segregated conditions of the South, Ernest Everett Just became one of the most highly respected scientists of his time, graduating magna cum laude from Dartmouth College in 1907, earning a Ph.D. in zoology from the University of Chicago in 1916, and teaching at Howard University in Washington, D.C. from 1909 until his death in 1941.

Critical to scientific reputation was his research at the Marine Biology Laboratory in Woods Hole, Massachusetts, beginning in 1909.

Just published more than 50 scientific papers based on his 20 years at Woods Hole. In addition, he wrote one of the most important text books of the 20th century, *Biology of the Cell Surface* (1939). Beginning in 1929, he engaged in an extensive amount of research in Europe, which lasted until his return to the United States in 1940.

Having been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer, he died the following year.

Died: Oct. 27, 1941



Coalition Sports Zone

Golf and Tennis (Compiled from ESPN.com)

Funk gets it done on greens

LOS ANGELES — Fred Funk knows he doesn't have the same skills as Tiger Woods, although he wasn't about to trade scores Thursday in the Nissan Open.

Funk, one of the shortest hitters on the PGA Tour, proved that the shortest club in the bag can make all the difference. He had 11 one-putts and holed another from off the green for a 6-under 65 and a three-stroke lead.

Woods, coming off a strong victory last week in San Diego, hit the ball decently in the tough, blustery conditions at Riviera Country Club.

Toward the end, he was ready to either break his putter or wrap it around the neck of a fan whose cell phone went off.

"Turn off the (expletive) phone," Woods shouted after a three-putt bogey from 6 feet on the No. 17. He wound up at 1-over 72, the first time he has failed to shoot par or better in the opening round at the Nissan Open.

"It was a long, tough day," Woods said later.

Indeed it was. The firm, fast conditions were made even more difficult by strong gusts that swirled through the tree-lined fairways. Play was so slow that it took more than five hours to complete 18 holes, and 15 players failed to finish before it got dark.

Jeff Sluman had the best round among the later starters at 3-under 68.

Capriati tops Martinez to reach semis

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — Jennifer Capriati suddenly has a winning streak.

After losing her first two matches of 2003, Capriati has won two straight, reaching the semifinals of the Dubai Open by beating

Conchita Martinez 6-2, 6-3 Thursday.

Capriati next faces Justine Henin-Hardenne, who defeated Anastasia Myskina 6-1, 6-4.

Friday's other semifinal will pair Monica Seles and defending champion Amelie Mauresmo. Seles beat Iroda Tulyaganova of Uzbekistan 6-1, 7-5, while Mauresmo beat Lina Krasnoroutskaya of Russia 6-2, 6-4.

Capriati began the year by losing her opening match at a tournament in Sydney and then the Australian Open.

But she opened the Dubai Open with an easy win over 17-year-old Russian Svetlana Kuznetsova and needed 1 hour, 35 minutes to beat Martinez.

"I feel like I'm playing well," the former No. 1-ranked player and three-time Grand Slam titlist said.

"I've worked hard on my fitness, and I feel I'm moving a lot better," she added.

Despite twisting an ankle in the first set, Capriati built a 5-0 lead. The second set was tied 2-2, but Martinez held serve just once more.

After an easy first set, Seles had to work hard to avoid a tiebreaker in the second. Serving for the match at 5-4, Tulyaganova broke serve to even the set. But Seles broke back and held serve to take the match.

"I got a little bit tight out there and am happy to get it done," Seles said.



Mauresmo beat Lina Krasnoroutskaya 6-2, 6-4.

Sports on local Armed Forces Network TV

Saturday's schedule (AFN Sports)

- ❖ SportsCenter (live) 0700Z
- ❖ Friday Night Fights - WBC Cruiserweight Title Bout: Wayne Braithwaite vs Ravea Springs (tape delayed) 0800Z
- ❖ NBA Friday: Dallas Mavericks @ Houston Rockets (tape delayed) 1200Z
- ❖ Racing Magazine: Wire to Wire (tape delayed) 1500Z
- ❖ SportsCenter (live) 1600Z
- ❖ NASCAR Busch Series: Rockingham 200 (live) 1730Z
- ❖ COLL BB: Big Ten - Wisconsin @ Iowa (live) 2100Z
- ❖ Ballroom Boxing (tape delayed) 2300Z

Sunday's schedule (AFN Sports)

- ❖ ESPNNews (tape delayed) 0630Z
- ❖ SportsCenter (live) 0800Z
- ❖ Bowling: PBA Tar Heel Open (live) 0930Z
- ❖ COLL BB: SEC - Mississippi State @ Kentucky (live) 1100Z
- ❖ COLL BB: Big XII - Kansas @ Oklahoma (live) 1300Z
- ❖ NHL: Dallas Stars @ Chicago Blackhawks (live) 1500Z
- ❖ NHL: Sunday Night Hockey - Minnesota Wild @ St. Louis Blues (live) 1730Z
- ❖ ESPNNews (live) 2000Z
- ❖ NHRA: Checker Schuck's Kragen NHRA Nationals Finals (tape delayed) 2100Z

"Man, this is better than the Boy Scouts!"



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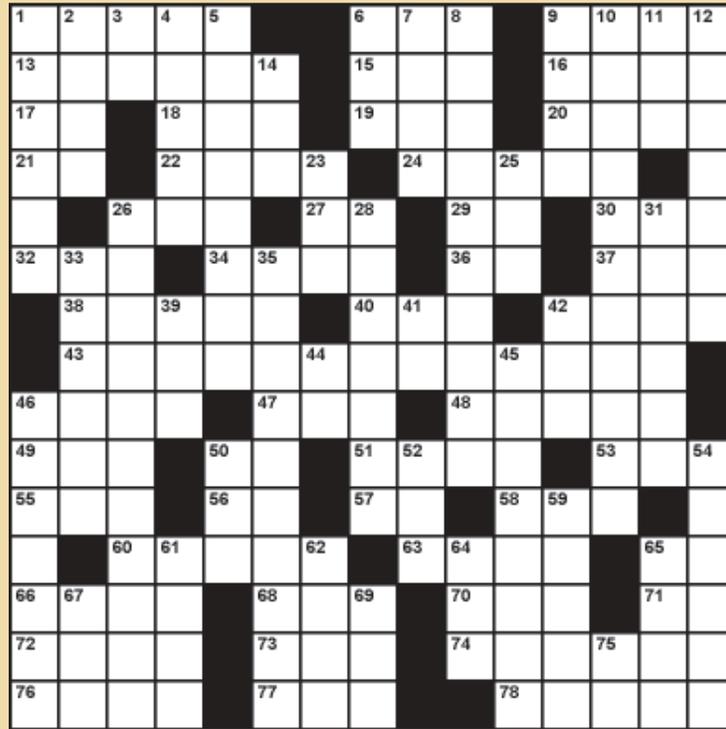
By Kevin Kilgore

Laugh Support

Hip-Hop crossword (Courtesy of infoplease.com)

Across

1. * Last Name of the Hip-Hop impresario/star and producer who used to go by the name of Puff Daddy—but now goes by P.Diddy
6. * “___ Me Blow Ya Mind” (Song by Eve, featuring Gwen Stefani)
9. * Heard at the Hip-Hop party: “You can’t just sit there! You’ve got to get ___ you want to feel the music! Come on, let’s dance!”
13. * Mobb Deep song: “___ (Anything)”
15. Hosp. locale
16. One who feels regret
17. Loop train
18. Hatchway, minus the “ning”
19. Make-a-Word! F-i-_-_-e-_- (Strain)
20. senilceD
21. Certain epoch, without the “cene”
22. Q. “Is an ___ device used in rowing?” A. “Yes, it is.”
24. * Last Name of the basketball superstar who also likes to Rap
26. * Grammy-nominated artist of the song at #56A ...but backwards?
27. * Mr. Cool J (Artist with Def Jam Recordings)
29. Atomic #73
30. Zippy, without the “Br”
32. Make-a-Word! _-a-_-l-_- (Expensive fur)
34. Q. “Is an ___ baseball official?” A. “Yes.”
36. * “Where the Party ___” (Grammy-nominated song by Jagged Edge which features the vocal work of the artist at #60A)
37. ”gnimo” eht tuohtiw ,gnihcaorppA
38. With rapid movements (bkwds.)
40. Restaurant bill
42. * First Name of #1A
43. * Trio that had a big hit with “Rapper’s Delight”
46. Mr. Preminger
47. * Last Word in the title of the album at #5D ...but it’s backwards?
48. Sort of duck
49. eton yrossimorP
50. * Person (for short) who plays #8D
51. Organization, for short
53. Dad’s wife
55. Deuce
56. * “___ eW ohW”
57. ”That’s so funny!”
58. * “...kcab thgir llac ___ dna pu gnaH” :rehsU yb “daB tI toG U” gnos eht morf traP
60. * Grammy-nominated artist of the track “Ride Wit Me” (From the album ‘Country



- Grammar’)
63. Tidings
65. * “___ Jackson”
66. Highest point
68. * Just- or -T
70. Some Soldiers, for short
71. Something in the Classifieds, briefly
72. Sensitive
73. gnirevoc rooLF
74. * “Always ___” is by Ja Rule, featuring Ashanti
76. Heroine of Hardy’s
77. Antiquity
78. ___ ot riA :kcirt gnidraobwonS

Down

1. * “Lights, Camera, Action!” is by Mr. who?
2. Spread for bread ...but it’s backwards?
3. * “Oops (Oh ___)” is by Tweet
4. Flowers do it in Spring
5. * Album by Missy “Misdemeanor” Elliott (First two words—See #47A for a Related Clue)
6. * Bow Wow or Kim or Romeo
7. Prefix that means “Outside”
8. * Rap Music instruments
9. Major or Minor
10. * Chuck D’s group
11. ”eg” eht tuohtiw ,enot lartueN
12. * Grammy-nominated song by Missy “Misdemeanor” Elliott in the ‘Best Rap Solo Performance’ category: “Get Ur ___”
14. trohs rof ,noitatoR

23. Snow-capped thing
25. * Part from the All-Star Tribute song “What’s Going On” which is the cover version of the Marvin Gaye classic: “What’s going on / When our children can’t play / Homeless can’t ___”
26. * The ___: Group that features the sounds of #8D in their music
28. * Superstar of Rap: Queen ___
31. sehcruhc ni deyalp era yehT
33. Give a Gift
35. * “No More Drama” is this Singer-Songwriter’s album
39. In the past
41. * (oirt poH-piH) luoS ___ eD
42. * Another part from the song mentioned at #25D: “All the kids with dreams / Won’t get the chance to chase it / Makes me ___ / Think about the lives they would’ve had”

44. * (slaitni) rebmem seeguF ehT
45. * R & B superstar who teamed up with Rap star Ludacris on the song “That’s How I Get Down”
46. * Grammy-nominees in the ‘Best Rap Performance by a Duo or Group’ category for the song at #65A
50. * nileppeZ ___ :dnab siht ni saw ohw egaP ymmiJ fo krow ratiug eht dna yddaD ffuP gnirutaef noitaroballoc a saw (8991) “allizzoG” eivom eht fo kcartdnuos eht morf “eM htiW emoC” gnos ehT
52. * Rapper with the album called “Stillmatic” ...but in reverse?
54. * Rapper whose real name is Dante Beze
59. * “!taerg ___” :mubla poH-piH wen a fo noinipo s’naF
61. * J.Lo and P.Diddy (What they are to each other after breaking up)
62. * Actress mentioned in the Destiny’s Child song “Independent Woman, Pt. 1” ...but backwards?
64. Self-importance
65. * Part from the song “Survivor” by Destiny’s Child: “...Cause my ___ taught me better than that”
67. He wrote “The Raven” (1845)
69. * .rD htiw ,recudorP dna reppaR
75. Furniture company, without the “ea”

* Questions associated with the subject.

Solutions will be posted in Saturday’s Freedom Watch