

Medics unite to save young Afghan girl's life

Story and photo by Sgt. Stephanie Hall
4th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM, Afghanistan – Everyone who saw the condition she was in was sure it was too late to save her life, but they had to try. A 10-year-old Afghan girl who had lost a leg when she stepped on a landmine, and her other leg was so badly damaged that it had to be amputated, was brought to the U.S. Army Hospital on Bagram Air Base August 16.

Zahida, a young girl from the Konar province, was handed from a medical evacuation team aboard a helicopter into the capable hands of Bagram's Front Line Ambulance drivers, and then sped to the hospital. One leg was blown off, the other too badly damaged to be saved, but the critical factor shoving her closer to death was the fact that she had lost a lot of blood.

"By the time she got here, she lost a lot of her blood volume," said William T. Wester, the 452nd Combat Support Hospital surgeon who operated on Zahida.

When Capt. Scott R. Cvecko, commander



Zahida, a young Afghan girl who was injured by a landmine, is treated by Capt. Mary J. Literski, a nurse with the 452nd Combat Support Hospital.

of the medical laboratory team at the 452nd Combat Support Hospital, first saw her, he didn't think she was going to live. "There was no way she was going to make it," he said. "(She) looked horrible. She had no blood, (so) she looked dead."

When they ran tests, the laboratory tech-

nicians found that she had a dangerously low amount of red-blood cells flowing in her blood stream. "Between 40 and 50 percent of your blood should be red blood cells," said Cvecko. "Her's was 10 percent."

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Meeting builds education opportunities for women

Story and photo by Pfc. Kelly Hunt
4th Public Affairs Detachment

GARDEZ, Afghanistan – Members of the Gardez Provincial Reconstruction Team met with leaders from Rahani Baba village Aug. 17, to discuss requirements to begin reconstruction of the local school.

When the team discovered the school they realized that it needed work to be brought up to standard, but despite the need, their hands were tied unless the community made a change.

"One of the requirements for us to build a school is that they agree to educate young girls as well as boys," said Capt. Bryan Baggot, Civil Affairs Team leader, Combined Joint Civilian Military Operations Task Force.

"Today we went out to meet with the Shura (a group of local elders from the community) to discuss women's education," said Baggot. The main focus of the meeting was to discuss the importance of girls receiving education and to see if there was a compromise the two sides could come to so the project could begin.

The intent was to get the Shura to agree

that the girls of the community could go to school as well as the boys, said Baggot.

The meeting proved to be a success, he said. Not only did they agree to the change, but both groups talked about concerns and the importance of the topic.

Progress is important at this point in time and in order for the area to advance, they need to include girls in their education system, said Baggot.

"One of the problems is that here, you

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World News (Compiled from CNN.com)



Pfc. Jessica Lynch sits in an Army helicopter on the way to her July homecoming.

Former POW Jessica Lynch honorably discharged from Army

CHARLESTON, W. Va. — Jessica Lynch, the former prisoner of war who became a national hero when special forces rescued her from an Iraqi hospital, has been honorably discharged from the U.S. Army, her lawyer said Wednesday.

“As of the now, she is not a member of the military anymore,” Stephen Goodwin of Charleston said.

The medical discharge clears the way for Lynch to pursue possible book or movie deals about her ordeal, Goodwin said. Though she has not spoken publicly about her time in Iraq, Lynch has said through a spokesman that she plans to tell her story in a book to be published by the end of the year.

“Like any citizen, she is now free to enter into a contract,” Goodwin said.

Lynch, 20, suffered multiple broken bones and other injuries when her 507th Maintenance Company was ambushed in the southern Iraqi city of Nasiriyah on March 23.

Her rescue on April 1 made a celebrity out of Lynch, who joined the Army to get an education and become a kindergarten teacher.

She returned home last month to a hero’s welcome after a long stay at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in the nation’s capital. She revisited the hospital for the first time last week for a checkup, and was granted

the discharge during that trip.

Lynch will continue physical therapy at Camden-Clark Memorial Hospital in Parkersburg. She can walk with crutches, but is still recovering.



The \$4 billion the Pentagon spends each month on military operations in Iraq is expected to increase.

Iraq reconstruction effort to cost tens of billions

WASHINGTON — Iraq will need tens of billions of dollars in contributions from overseas in the next year to fund the reconstruction effort, the top U.S. civil administrator in Iraq, L Paul Bremer, said in an interview published Wednesday.

Bremer told *The Washington Post* that Iraqi revenue would not be enough to cover the bill for economic needs that he described as “almost impossible to exaggerate.”

Explaining the huge cost of the project, Bremer said it would cost \$2 billion just to meet current electrical demand and an estimated \$16 billion over four years to deliver clean water to all Iraqis.

The figures, which must be added to the \$4 billion the Pentagon spends each month on military operations in Iraq, offer the latest evidence that the price of the Iraqi occupation is growing substantially, *The Post* reported.

Quick revenues from Iraq’s vast oil resources have failed to materialize because of sabotage and looting.

Bremer told the newspaper he hoped to return Iraqi oil production to prewar levels by October 2004. But he noted that even when deliveries return to 2002 levels, the industry would not produce enough revenue to cover the cost of reconstruction.

In Washington this week for a series of

meetings expected to focus on the funding issue, Bremer said that a “very intense dialogue” was under way with Iraq’s governing council about the need to open the country to foreign investment.



Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat.

Arafat calls on Palestinians to commit to cease-fire Wednesday

JERUSALEM — Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat said Wednesday the authority is committed to a cease-fire with Israel and urged all Palestinian groups to renew their commitment to it as well.

The announcement was made as Israeli forces conducted raids in Ramallah and Nablus, detaining Palestinians for questioning and uncovering a weapons cache and an explosives lab.

In Washington, the Bush administration dismissed Arafat’s move, saying he is trying to undermine Palestinian Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas and the peace process.

“Nothing has changed in respect to Arafat,” said State Department spokesman Phil Reeker.

Reeker and a White House spokeswoman, Claire Buchan both said Arafat is “part of the problem, not part of the solution.”

In a statement issued in Ramallah, West Bank, Arafat called on Palestinian groups “to reaffirm national unity and solidarity” by their “commitment to the cease-fire.”

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Capt. Bryan Baggot, Civil Affairs Team leader, CJCMOTF, conducts meeting with local elders to discuss the issue of girls going to school.

take out 50 percent of the population as non-productive because they can't read or write," he said. "Not only are they not in the economy, but what are the chances of their children being educated if their mother can't read or write?"

The team is looking at the possibility of long-term impact with progression projects like the school.

"If we can get women where they can at least be at a functioning literacy level, then that's going to improve the education of these young children, just simply because their mother is educated," explained Baggot.

The project holds a great deal of importance to Baggot who now feels that it is his responsibility to get the project moving. "I really want them to go to school," he said.

Reconstructing the school is one of many rebuilding opportunities the PRT is seeking and they are proud to be able to help the surrounding communities advance.

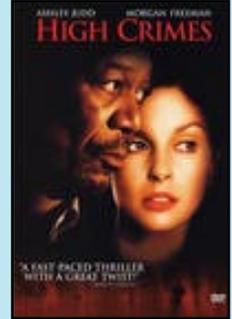
"I like what we are doing out here (and) I'm really proud of (the troops)," said Baggot. "It's neat to have these young Americans out here."

Baggot said the work is constant and hard but the troops are working together to get the job done.

"This is the most remote area in the world and everyone from (different) backgrounds going out there (is) fascinating."

Bagram Air Base MWR presents

1530Z at the MWR building: "High Crimes." High powered lawyer Claire Kubik finds her world turned upside down when her husband, who she thought was Tom Kubik, is arrested and is revealed to be Ron Chapman.



Tomorrow's movie will be "Rules of Engagement."

Local weather

TWO-DAY REGIONAL WEATHER FORECAST:

	<i>Today</i>	<i>Friday</i>
Bagram:	<i>Partly cloudy</i> H: 95F L: 68F	<i>Partly cloudy</i> H: 95F L: 68F
Kandahar:	<i>Dusty</i> H: 100F L: 73F	<i>Dusty</i> H: 102F L: 73F
Kabul:	<i>Dusty</i> H: 93F L: 64F	<i>Dusty</i> H: 95F L: 66F
Uzbekistan:	<i>Clear</i> H: 99F L: 57F	<i>Clear</i> H: 98F L: 56F

Weather forecast courtesy of the Bagram Combat Weather Team

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They knew they had to get the life-saving red-blood cells back into her system, but when the surgeons pumped two units of pre-donated blood from the United States into Zahida, they ran into a problem.

With pre-donated blood, “one of the things that happens when you give multiple transfusions is the serums in your blood that allow you to clot get diluted, so patients can get to where they can’t clot,” said Wester.

Although it is rarely done, the medical staff at the hospital decided that the only way to save this girl’s life was to give her whole blood, which is an undiluted product with all the necessary clotting factors, along with units of fresh-frozen plasma, said Cvecko. The only problem was that the lab didn’t store whole blood.

The medical team had to think fast because the young girl was still rapidly losing blood, so while the surgeons were initially stabilizing her, and while the plasma thawed out, the laboratory team set up a makeshift donor center and sought out volunteers to donate blood. Spc. Kyle P. Ziegler was the medical lab technician with the 452nd CSH who set up the donor operation center and drew the blood.

Four units of whole blood were drawn from four donors “in the time it took to thaw out the fresh frozen plasma, which is about 30 to 45 minutes,” he said.

“The (surgeons) spent some time stabilizing her, and then they took her to surgery, but by then we had the plasma and whole blood ready to be transfused,” said Cvecko.

Zahida’s condition was so critical that two units of whole blood were transfused into her body that day without being tested for compatibility, said Cvecko, but that’s where they ran into a stroke of

luck.

“When you’re transferring whole blood, it’s not like red-blood cells where some types can be universal. It has to be the same type as the donor,” said Cvecko. “The patient was an O positive, which was a break for us, because most people have type O blood, so we had a larger pool to choose from,” he said.

The other two units were given to her in the following two days.

The donors were Capt. Patricia Rose-Liana, a nurse with the 452nd CSH, Staff Sgt. Bruce Cherney, a combat medic with the 452nd CSH, Chief Warrant Officer 4 Brad Atkinson, 717th Medical Company (Air Ambulance) and Cvecko.

After everything was added up, the total sum of saving Zahida’s life was 15 units of whole blood, plasma and pre-donated red-blood cells. “That’s a lot of product to give to a (10-year-old) girl,” said Cvecko. “We pretty much replaced her entire blood volume twice during the course of her injuries. When you lose that kind of blood, you could have brain damage,” said Cvecko. “I’m amazed she lived.”

Not only did this little girl live, but is also well on the road to recovery, and without brain damage, said Cvecko.

“She’s doing well now,” said Wester.

Zahida said through a translator that she is well, and that she is glad for the doctors and the nurses who give her toys and ice cream all the time.

“There are very good doctors and nurses (here) who took care of (Zahida) and saved her life,” said Mohammed, Zahida’s father, through a translator.

This bitter-sweet outcome serves as a reminder for Wester and his colleagues that they are in a war-torn country where on a daily basis, people are being severely injured or killed by landmines, and “unfortunately there’s a lot of kids who get hurt,” said Wester. “It’s a sad thing, but we’ve saved some lives; that’s our mission.”

Afghanistan Interim Government host awareness trip in Badakhshan

BADAKHSHAN, Afghanistan – On Aug. 23, senior representatives of the Interim Transitional Government of Afghanistan, Kabul-based diplomats, and military leaders from the Coalition traveled to the upper northeast corner of Afghanistan to Badakhshan Province to discuss the Afghan National Army (ANA) with local officials and elders.

Before arriving at Badakhshan, the trip stopped in the Province’s capital city of Feyzabad and in the town of Baharak.

The Honorable Mohammad Aman Amini, Governor of Badakhshan, welcomed the delegation upon its arrival to Feyzabad. At the meeting, he spoke of his support of the ANA and announced that the people of his province are willing and ready to send their sons to join the ANA to help the peace process proceed in Afghanistan.

At the community meetings in both Feyzabad and Baharak, several speeches were made.

The Ministers of Justice and Reconstruction, and the National Security Advisor to the President, encouraged the people to support the ANA and the nation. Lt. Gen. Baryalai, Deputy Minister of Defense, explained the concept of the newly established ANA.

During his speech, Baryalai promised the National Army Volunteer Center recruiting office would be opened in their province within the next few months and that the government would provide good care for newly recruited soldiers.

During his talk, pamphlets describing the benefits of joining the ANA in Dari and Pashto were handed out to the crowd.

(Information from CJTF-180 Press Release)



Coalition Sports Zone

(Compiled from *ESPN.com*)



Isiah Thomas left with averaged 43 wins a season for Pacers.

A change of pace, Pacers fire Thomas

INDIANAPOLIS — Larry Bird insisted he took his new job with an open mind about the future of coach Isiah Thomas.

The Indiana Pacers' president of basketball operations needed only seven weeks to come to a decision.

Bird wasted little time in making his first major move, firing Thomas on Wednesday and immediately targeting former assistant Rick Carlisle as his successor.

"I just had a gut feeling this wasn't going to work," Bird said of a surprise move that came only two months before the start of the season.

Thomas told *ESPN's* David Aldridge that the Pacers called him Tuesday night in San Juan, where Thomas was attending the Olympic qualifying tournament, and asked him to return to Indianapolis to meet with Pacers management.

"I definitely still want to coach, and I know I can coach," Thomas told Aldridge. "I guess I'm disappointed that Larry and I didn't get a chance to work together. I'm disappointed he didn't give that a chance, for us to work together."

Bird said he didn't feel comfortable with the Pacers' direction after a second-half swoon that knocked them out of first place in the Eastern Conference and into fourth.

Bird also said there were other problems with Thomas, who was with the U.S. men's basketball team at the Olympic qualifying tournament in Puerto Rico earlier this week. Thomas returned to Indianapolis on Wednesday.

"I spoke to him one day in a meeting, and I talked to him one day on the phone. The communication wasn't really there," Bird said.

Carlisle and Bird's relationship dates to the 1980s when the two were teammates with the Boston Celtics. Carlisle also was an assistant for Bird from 1997-2000, but was passed over by current Pacers CEO Donnie Walsh in favor of Thomas.

Carlisle spent the past two seasons as coach of the Detroit Pistons before being fired in May. Carlisle spoke with Bird on Tuesday night and said he was interested.

Dotson indicted in slaying of Dennehy

WACO, Texas — Former Baylor basketball player Carlton Dotson was indicted Wednesday on a murder charge in the death of his ex-teammate and roommate Patrick Dennehy, and prosecutors started the process of transferring him to Texas.

The McLennan County grand jury heard evidence for about 90 minutes before indicting Dotson, who has been jailed in his home state of Maryland since his July 21 arrest. Dotson, 21, faces a maximum penalty of life in prison.

The indictment alleges that Dotson shot 21-year-old Dennehy on or about June 12. Dennehy's body was found in a field near a rock quarry southeast of town July 25. He died of two gunshot wounds to the head, according to an autopsy report.

A campus memorial service was planned for Dennehy on Thursday night. Todd Lake, dean of university ministries, said it was planned for the first week of school because few of Baylor's 14,000 students were on campus this summer. Dennehy's funeral was Aug. 7 in San Jose, Calif.

District Attorney John Segrest and law enforcement officers have refused to discuss motive in Dennehy's death, and it is not mentioned in the one-page indictment. According to court documents, an unidentified police informant said Dotson told a cousin that he shot Dennehy as the two argued while firing guns.

Better save than sorry, Braves DL Smoltz

ATLANTA — Atlanta Braves closer John Smoltz went on the disabled list Wednesday with tendinitis in his right elbow, probably derailing his chances of breaking the single-season saves record.

Team physician Dr. Joe Chandler stressed several times that the condition is not serious, and said Smoltz is not expected to have any lingering effects when he returns Sept. 8.



John Smoltz

Smoltz, who had reconstructive surgery on his right elbow in 2000, will rest completely for seven days.

"This is an enforced period of rest that John otherwise wouldn't take," Chandler said. "This takes it out of his hands. This is not a serious problem."

A year after setting the NL record with 55 saves, Smoltz has a major league-best 44 this season and was on pace to beat the all-time mark of 57 set in 1990 by Bobby Thigpen.

The Braves have the best record in the majors at 84-47, and they have a 14-game lead in the NL East.

"This is classic tendinitis," said Smoltz, who's had problems warming up because of the ailment. "You have to do more to pitch less."

"I want to pitch in the postseason at my best," he said. "If this was a four-game lead, I wouldn't be doing this. This is a luxury thing."

Afghanistan Hot Topics



(Compiled by CJTF-180 Public Affairs)

Fort Bragg commander replaced Tuesday

FORT BRAGG, N.C. (Newsday) – Lt. Gen. John R. Vines took command of the Army’s largest war-fighting unit by replacing Lt. Gen. Dan K. McNeill as head of the 18th Airborne Corps and Fort Bragg.

Vines accepted his new command Tuesday and paid tribute to Staff Sgt. Brian R. Hellermann, a 35-year-old paratrooper who was killed when an Iraqi vehicle opened fire on his unit in Baghdad three weeks ago.

“I served with him twice,” Vines said. “He parachuted into Panama, and he drew the line in the sand in the desert” at the Saudi Arabian border after Iraq invaded neighboring Kuwait in 1990.

Vines recognized Hellermann’s wife, Michelle, and their children, Travis, 14, and Katelynn, 9, during the ceremony on Fort Bragg’s main parade field.

The corps oversees the 82nd Airborne Division at Fort Bragg; the 101st Airborne Division at Fort Campbell, Ky.; and the 10th Mountain Division at Fort Drum, N.Y.

Vines said soldiers from the corps are deployed to 20 countries, “enduring incredible hardships, dangers and risking all for their nation.”

Vines and McNeill spent most of the past year in Afghanistan trying to root out Taliban and al-Qaida elements.

The leadership change is the fourth time Vines has replaced McNeill in a particular job. Both commanded the 82nd Airborne Division and were the chief of staff of Fort Bragg and the 18th Airborne Corps.

McNeill ended 37 months as commander of the corps and the Cumberland County post. He and most of his corps headquarters spent about a year of that time in charge of international forces in Afghanistan.

McNeill will become deputy commander of Forces Command in Atlanta, the higher headquarters of the 18th Airborne Corps.

President says tunnel through northern Afghan mountains to reopen in November

KABUL, Afghanistan (Associated Press) – A key tunnel on the main land route through the mountains of northern Afghanistan will reopen by mid-November, President Hamid Karzai promised on Wednesday during a visit to oversee repair work.

The Salang Tunnel has been closed since mid-July for a U.S. \$5 million renovation project funded by the World Bank

and Norway, forcing travelers between the north and the capital, Kabul, to take a 200 kilometer (125 mile) detour on a bumpy mountain road.

Turkish and Norwegian engineers working on the nearly 3-kilometer (2-mile) tunnel said it would reopen by Nov. 15, Karzai said.

“This highway project is important for business, trade and people and vehicles traveling from the north to all parts of the country,” he said.

Built in the 1960s by Russian engineers at the request of then King Mohammad Zahir Shah, the tunnel was blocked in 1997, when fighters blew up the entrance as they fled the advancing army of the then ruling Taliban.

The tunnel was reopened in January 2002 after it had been cleared of tons of concrete rubble and mines and explosives.

The renovation project includes replacement of the tunnel’s electrical system, including its lighting and ventilation.

It is the only all-weather route between the north and south of the country.

“Perkins, is that an Irish pennant you’re wearing?!”



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By Kevin Kilgore

Laugh Support