

School opening give Afghans kids 'bright future'

Story and photo by Spc. Wes Landrum
Coalition Joint Task Force 180

BAGRAM, Afghanistan – The children lined the sides of the road in anticipation of the arrival of the vehicles and began clapping as the vehicles came into sight. They were still clapping as they watched the vehicles turn off the main road onto the dirt road that led to the school and watched as the party got out of the vehicles and began the ceremony that would officially open their school.

More than 200 people attended the opening of the Daste Rebat School Tuesday afternoon. Among the many in attendance were Col. Thomas J. Boyle, Task Force Dragon Commander and Governor Akhmed Muqbil Zarar, governor of Parwan province. Zarar took the time to thank coalition forces for building the school. He said the school was needed for Afghanistan's future leaders.

"This gift you have given us today is for those kids right there," Zarar said through an interpreter as he pointed to the children who would attend the school. "We are sure



Children listen as speeches are made at the Daste Rebat School opening. There will be two school sessions to make sure the more than 900 children get a chance to go to school.

that these children will have a bright future because of the opportunity to attend this school and get an education."

The Daste Rebat School will be the home to more than 900 students. The school will run two shifts, in the morning and in the afternoon. Before the school was built, the students held classes outside. The governor

thanked teachers for staying the course and teaching the children.

"I thank all the teachers who braved the elements, whether it was the hot sun or the freezing cold," he said. "You did not let that stop you from giving our children the edu-

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Bamian PRT adds to Afghanistan's strength

Story by Sgt. Stephanie Hall
4th Public Affairs Detachment

BAMIAN, Afghanistan – As Afghanistan slowly heals from the wounds of war and poverty, it begins to look toward the future and to take measures to harden itself against any potential, future threats with the forming of the Afghan National Army.

The buildup of the ANA started in Kabul, but as recruiting stations pop up all over Afghanistan, a stirring to protect their fami-

lies and their lands draws potential ANA soldiers to the recruiting stations like the one currently being built in Bamian, a city in the heart of the Bamian Province.

"I think people, especially a lot of young people, that join the ANA are looking for the opportunity by which they can help sustain and help rebuild their country," said Maj. Tito S. Martinez, who was the executive officer and the Bamian Provincial Reconstruction Team engineer. Martinez was the engineer supervising the construction of the recruiting station in Bamian, which started with

a groundbreaking ceremony late August and the grand opening is scheduled to be open in the near future, he said.

A local Afghan contractor is constructing the actual building, but it is the guidance and supervision of the U.S. and coalition forces that will strengthen the foundation of the actual recruiting process, said Martinez.

There will be sub-stations scattered throughout the province, but the main recruiting station for this province will be lo-

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World News (Compiled from CNN.com)



U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell says he'd like to see a new Iraqi Constitution ratified in about six months, with elections to follow.

Powell says Iraqi Constitution wanted in 6 months

UNITED NATIONS – U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell said Friday that six months is an appropriate time period for the U.S.-appointed Iraqi Governing Council to complete a new constitution.

At a news conference at the United Nations, Powell said he and the U.S. civilian administrator in Iraq believe half a year would be right to determine the form of government and representation that Iraqis would like to see in their constitution.

If it's possible to meet that goal, he said, then it would be "appropriate to consider that shortly thereafter the people will be able to ratify such a constitution and prepare for elections."

Powell declined to put a time frame on when elections would be held in Iraq.

"I really can't be precise," he said. "Some people have said it will take another six months for elections."

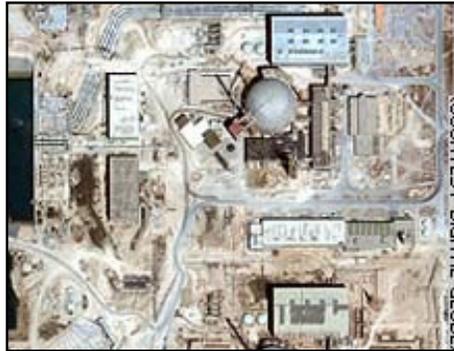
He reiterated that the United States is "prepared to remain as long as it is necessary to put in place a representative form of government in Iraq."

White House spokesman Scott McClellan said Powell's six-month figure is "a realistic estimate of how long it might take to draft a constitution."

"The resolution we are pursuing does not include a timetable," he said, referring to

the U.S. effort for a new U.N. mandate. "It says the timetable will be set by the governing council working with the coalition.

"Obviously we want to do this as quickly as possible, but we want it to be done in an orderly fashion."



Inspectors have expressed concern over Iran's nuclear sites.

Uranium find in Iran sparks alarm

WASHINGTON – The United States has condemned Iran after the U.N. nuclear watchdog said it had found traces of arms-grade uranium at a second site in the country.

U.S. President George W. Bush warned late Thursday that Iran faced "universal condemnation," if it continued with a nuclear program.

Inspectors have been in Iran for six months and Tehran has one month to prove to the United Nations it has no secret atomic weapons program.

Bush has already labeled Iran part of an "axis of evil," along with Iraq and North Korea, but Iran insists it is only pursuing its program for peaceful means.

But new traces of enriched uranium found in samples at the Kalaye Electric Co. on the southern outskirts of Tehran, could support a U.S. theory that Iran has been secretly purifying uranium.

Earlier this year, International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspectors found traces of enriched uranium at a plant at Natanz, some 150 miles (250 kilometers) south of the Iranian capital.

The finding prompted concern as the particles had a higher percentage of enriched uranium than is needed for the civilian power program Iran says the plant will serve.

Iran has become a thorny issue for the two nations because Russia continues its

nuclear cooperation with Iran, helping construct a nuclear reactor that both countries insist is for peaceful purposes.



U.S. Army 4th Infantry soldier Jim Short hugs his mother Kathy after arriving at Baltimore-Washington International Airport for 15 day leave.

Iraq troops home for R&R

LINTHICUM, Md. – The first U.S. troops serving in Iraq to get a vacation as part of the military's largest home leave program since the Vietnam war arrived in Maryland Friday and were looking forward to seeing their children and eating some home-cooked food.

The plane carrying 192 soldiers landed just before 6 a.m. at Baltimore-Washington International Airport. The troops were greeted by about a dozen family members and a sign reading, "Welcome Home U.S. Armed Forces. Thanks for Serving Our Country."

"It's good to be back. My wife just had a baby and I'm really looking forward to seeing her," said Pvt. Larry Burns, 20, a member of 173rd Airborne Brigade from Burlington, Vt. His baby, Alexia, is two weeks old.

The program was ordered to provide relief and boost morale for forces serving 12-month tours of duty in the hot, dangerous and sometimes primitive conditions in Iraq, as well as those in support roles in neighboring countries. That means it's available to the vast majority of the more than 130,000 troops deployed there, officials said.

The program offers 15-day vacations, with some transportation paid, for every soldier, sailor, airman or Marine staying in region for a year, said Marine Maj. Pete Mitchell, a Central Command spokesman.

NCO, Soldier of Year winners announced

Story by Spc. Bill Putnam
Army News Service

WASHINGTON – The hard work and painful preparation has paid off for an Old Guard noncommissioned officer and a Stryker Brigade Soldier.

Staff Sgt. James W. Luby and Spc. Russell A. Burnham were named the best of the Army's 1.3 million soldiers at a ceremony in Arlington, Va., Sept. 19.

Burnham, 24, is a medic in the Army's second Stryker Brigade, the 1st Brigade, 25th Infantry Division at Fort Lewis, Wash. Luby, 23, is a member of the 3rd U.S. Infantry "Old Guard" at Fort Myer, Va.

Both took home prizes valued at almost \$17,000 including an all-expenses-paid, four-day trip to Disney World in Orlando, Fla., and several U.S. Savings Bonds.

The winners will be busy for the next few months. They'll be traveling around the world with Sgt. Maj. of the Army Jack Tilley. Part of the program is to bring the winners to Washington, said

Tilley. Burnham, for his part, will move from Fort Lewis, Wash., to a new position at Walter Reed Army Medical Center.

Between trips with Tilley, Burnham will work at the Army's largest hospital. Luby will stay at Fort Myer and continue to work at the Old Guard as a member of the Continental Color Guard.

Details of when Burnham will move are still being worked out. "I love Fort Lewis, but I'm looking forward to Washington," he said.

Burnham said winning the competition was his goal from day one. Now that he's accomplished his goal, he's looking forward to being the symbol of the Soldier.

The road to being named the top NCO and Soldier of the Year seemed long and in Luby's case painful. The year culminated with Burnham and Luby competing against 20 other soldiers and NCOs of the Year from the Army's 11 major commands in a tough, four-day competition in land navigation, marksmanship with a M-16A2 rifle, an Army Physical Fitness Test and a written exam.

Burnham said he began preparing for the competition almost a year and "hundreds of hours" ago.

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cation they so desperately need."

Boyle said even though this school is finished, the United States and her international partners remained committed to helping Afghanistan realize its vision of a stable, democratic and economically successful country. He said for this vision to become reality, education must be present.

"At the foundation of a prosperous so-

ciety is a education system that provides opportunities for learning," he said. "It is my hope that the education system in Parwan is progressive and challenges the students each and every day."

Boyle then issued a challenge to the students of the Daste Rebat School. He told them to pay attention to the teachers and to listen to them.

"Education provides a greater opportu-

nity for increased participation and responsibility whether it be in government or whatever your desires in life may be," he said. "Ask a lot of questions and simply do your best."

Zarar had a challenge of his own for the students. He said the school was built for them and asked them to study hard.

"You are the future leaders of Afghanistan," he said. "Our country's future will be in your capable hands in a few short years.

ethnic groups and region representatives," he said.

Once recruits sign up and go through basic training, they will benefit from "the discipline and the self-confidence that you can gain, and just the whole thinking that you start developing, when you're a soldier, (which) has been missing so much in a country like this," he said.

Armed with that discipline and self-confidence, the potential ANA soldiers will have an easier time traveling that military path, which will give "them the opportunity to venture out, learn new skills, and at the same time have a steady income," said Martinez.

Those opportunities are enticing the people here to join whether they are ready or not by U.S. Army standards, said Martinez.

"Sometimes, we in the United States have a tendency to think that before you do anything you have to be ready, but a lot of people in the third world and a lot of underdeveloped countries basically venture out and take a chance, regardless of whether they think they're ready or not," said Martinez.

"I think they're willing to take a chance, and then they're relying on us to kind of provide them some of their resources, some of our experience, to make up for what they're lacking," said Martinez. "I think they're ready because they're willing."

STRENGTH, from Page 1

cated in Bamian because "a lot of people gravitate here because of the jobs that are available, and the road network makes it accessible to get here," said Martinez. "Bamian City is like the hub of the whole province."

Already several local Bamians have expressed interest to join, said Martinez. "They (were) almost ready to sign up about 50 people, but because we couldn't house them, they decided to wait," he said.

The interest has been sparked because the locals "see how the U.S. Army handles itself, they see how fair we are, they see how successful we have been and how quick we were able to come in and defeat the Taliban, and I think they kind of look up to that, and have a desire for their country to be successful the same way we are," said Martinez.

The people from the Bamian Province who do sign up will add to the diverse mixture of the growing ANA, said Martinez. "We feel that it's very important that the ANA be composed from representatives from the whole country, he said. "Initially when the ANA was formed, there were a lot of people from Kabul that joined, (and) now there's a big effort to expand that and have a greater mixture of



Boys who hang outside of Bagram's gates wear military rank soldiers had given them.



Two Afghan men stand proudly in front of their ornately decorated freight truck at the front gate.

Outside the wire

Photos by Sgt. Greg Heath
4th Public Affairs Detachment

Upon venturing only a few feet from Bagram Air Base's main gate one can see children playing, ornately decorated trucks parked in seemingly endless rows, and an incessant flow of traffic, both by foot and vehicle, on and off base, among many other things.

For the soldiers working the gate during the day, it seems like the activity never stops, and as some would attest, it can be quite a sight to see, for both the soldiers watching the gate and for the curious Afghan children who come to visit every day.



Two young girls curiously watch soldiers at work near the front gate.



A soldier takes time to interact with some Afghan kids who regularly visit soldiers near the gate.

FREEDOM'S VOICES

Counseling: It develops the Army's future leaders

Article by
Sgt. 1st Class Tyrun E. Johnson
CJTF-180 Inspector General Office

Counseling is the primary tool in developing future leaders.

Subordinate leadership development is one of the most important responsibilities of every Army leader. Organizational readiness and mission accomplishment depend on every member's ability to perform at or above established standards.

And, leaders are responsible for identifying these standards and ensuring that their soldiers are given the proper guidance and/or tools to perform at or above Army and unit standards. It is every soldier's right to expect guidance on how to achieve personal, professional development and organizational goals, and be prepared to accept increased responsibilities by their supervisors.

Leaders are responsible to ensure that proper counseling accomplishes these objectives. The leader has the experience, tactical and technical competence to assess their subordinates' leadership performance and help them to overcome weaknesses by providing detailed direction on

how to improve on past performances.

The CJTF-180 mission depends on every member's ability to perform to established standards and through teaching, coaching, and counseling this ensures that the mission will be accomplished. When there is no counseling, soldiers are forced to either seek guidance elsewhere or assume the expectations of their leaders.

There are several types of counseling that leaders should take advantage of, such as APFT failure, family care plan, over weight, mental health and performance.

Not all counseling has to be negative.

True leaders establish standards that their soldiers can work towards accomplishing and teaches them how to accomplish these standards.

Leaders must ensure that counseling is taking place within their unit. Some ways of checking counseling are to develop time blocks for counseling, conduct periodic and unannounced inspections of counseling folders and conduct 'how-to' counseling classes during officer professional development and noncommissioned officer professional development sessions.

STREET TALK

What is your favorite patriotic song and why?



"God Bless the U.S.A by Lee Greenwood because sometimes we take things for granted. It lets us know everything is going to be all right."

Sgt. Lehua Pittman
HHC 10th Mountain Division

"God Bless the U.S.A by Lee Greenwood because I am proud to be an American like the song says."

Spc. Jamie Nugent
HHC 10th Mountain Division



"The Angry American by Toby Keith because it just strikes the mood of the nation at this point."

Capt. Ray Delucio
25th Signal Battalion



"God Bless the U.S.A by Lee Greenwood because you cannot be an American and not like that song."

Maria Price
Post Exchange store manager



Freedom Watch falls under the supervision of the Combined Joint Task Force - 180, and is published daily, Monday - Saturday.

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Freedom Watch, an Army newspaper



publication, is produced by the 4th Public Affairs Detachment at Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan.

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In accordance with AR 360-1, this Army newspaper is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. military overseas.

Contents of Freedom Watch are not necessarily the official view of, or endorsed by, the U.S. government, the Department of Defense or the Department of the Army.

All submissions are subject to editing for size and content by the 4th Public Affairs Detachment, located in Motel 6, CJTF-180, Bagram Air Base.

Visit the CENTCOM web site at www.centcom.mil and click on the Freedom Watch or Forces in Afghanistan link at the bottom of the page to get to the Freedom Watch. To be added to the daily distribution list e-mail ThompsonJ@baf.cjtf180.army.mil

Afghanistan Hot Topics



(Compiled by CJTF-180 Public Affairs)

Decision to expand peacekeeping force in Afghanistan to be made soon, NATO head says

Story by Aleksandar Vasovic

KABUL, Afghanistan (*Associated Press*) – A decision on whether to expand the NATO-led peacekeeping mission in Afghanistan outside of the capital will be made in the coming weeks, NATO Secretary-General Lord Robertson said Friday.

Deploying peacekeepers to regions outside Kabul is seen as essential if there is to be peace in Afghanistan after 23 years of war.

NATO took charge of the 5,000-member international force last month from Germany and the Netherlands, but its operation is confined to Kabul.

President Hamid Karzai and U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan have repeatedly urged an expansion of the force while an Afghan police force and national army are being trained.

The United States initially opposed an expansion, but with NATO now in charge of the force, it is more likely to go along.

Any decision to expand NATO's mission would require formal approval from the U.N. Security Council. NATO officials in Brussels are reviewing expansion plans.

"Once that study has been done and completed over the next few weeks the decision will be taken," Robertson said at the end of a one-day visit.

But he said a possible expansion may be limited because "many nations have contributed troops ... in Iraq and in Balkans."

The NATO-led force operates separately from the 11,500-member U.S.-led coalition that fights Taliban and al-Qaida insurgents in the south and east.

Afghanistan's government has little control in most of the 32 provinces, where governors often rule like warlords with private militias.

Karzai's administration is trying to build a national army that would eventually have 70,000 troops and maintain security throughout the country. But training is slow and the fledgling force has no more than 5,000 soldiers.

Security in Afghanistan has deteriorated in recent months as Taliban and al-Qaida militants have launched increasingly bolder attacks against police, government officials and humanitarian workers.

U.S., New Zealand officials discuss Afghanistan, Iraq, trade Wednesday

Washington (*Google*) – The State Department issued a statement Wednesday summarizing a meeting between U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage and New Zealand's Foreign Minister Philip Goff.

According to the statement, the two officials discussed a wide range of issues, including: reconstruction in Afghanistan; reconstruction and stabilization operations in Iraq; the Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands; and the status of World Trade Organization negotiations in the wake of the recent breakdown of WTO talks in Cancun, Mexico.

Hispanic Heritage Month Spotlight

Spiritual enlightenment can be a helpful force on a deployment and when troops need a 'guiding light' their Chaplains are there to help.

As an element of spiritual support, Chaplain (1st Lt.) Tino D. Villalovas, Logistics Task Force 129, CJTF 180, provides many soldiers with that guiding light.

As the top Chaplain at LTF 129, "I'm primarily there to make sure that the spiritual well-being and the morale of the soldiers is at its highest," he said. He does that by lending an ear for those who need someone to talk to and also spreads his words of inspiration through sermons and bible studies as Bagram Air Base's Chapel.

His own source of inspiration is Evangelist Billy Graham. "Not only is he a minister, and not only has he made an impact on millions, if not approaching a billion or more people, but he's always maintained his integrity," said Villalovas. "Despite the fact that he's been in the public arena, even despite some of his mistakes – when he got a little too close to President Nixon and it ended up looking kind of bad on him – all in all, even despite that, he maintained his integrity."

As a Chaplain, Villalovas see everyone in the same light, so "being Hispanic doesn't come out a lot," he said. "I wasn't raised intensely in the Hispanic culture, but I'm in the process of trying to learn a little bit more about my Hispanic culture and learning Spanish and things like that." But he says that in his experience with the military, he doesn't think there are any ethnic lines separating service members so "it's not something I concern myself with," he said. He serves everyone equally.



Lee Greenwood performs for Bagram troops

Story and photos by Spc. Kelly Hunt
4th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM, Afghanistan – Country music star Lee Greenwood showed his patriotism once again as he met troops throughout base and provided a little inspiration during a concert Friday hosted at the MWR Civic Center.

Bagram is one stop on his planned nine-day tour where he is performing for troops in Kyrgyzstan, K2, Kandahar, Jalababad and Qatar in show of his everlasting support of military personnel and his country.

“I’ve had the same initiative since I was 15 years old, doing my part as a citizen to support and give confidence to the military and their mission,” said Greenwood. “That’s my mission and that’s my message.”

This is Greenwood’s first United Service Organizations tour since 9-11, though with over thirteen USO tours logged, he’s nearly a veteran himself. Greenwood said he’s excited to be back on tour bringing smiles to appreciative crowds.

“When I come to see people in the military, I naturally see people who are longing to go home, but are doing their duty so when

I do my shows, I’m gonna poke a little fun, but also bring them some of the culture out here half way across the globe,” he said.

Troops here welcomed his arrival with gratitude as Greenwood made his way throughout the base spending time with them and shaking hands one by one.

“I told my wife on the phone that I was going to meet Lee Greenwood so she’s just elated at the fact that I get to meet him and she’s mad that she didn’t,” said one fan, Air Force Chief Master Sgt. Ken McQuiston, 455th Air Expeditionary Wing. “It’s a tremendous honor for us to have folks come from the states to visit us because being thousands and thousands of miles from home and our loved ones, it’s nice to know someone else is thinking of us and will take time away from their schedule to come and entertain us.”

Greenwood’s dedication to the military is long lived and he strongly believes in the military’s mission, said Jerry Bently, Greenwood’s manager of 19 years.

“Lee’s been patriotic and supportive of the Armed Forces long before it was a fashionable thing to do,” said Bently, who added that he stands behind Greenwood every step of the way concerning his tours to visit deployed troops. “It’s just something that he feels very strongly about.”

Greenwood said the encouragement he gets back in the states to do these types of tours is incredible.

“When I tell people that I’m going to visit troops in Afghanistan, Iraq or wherever we’re going, I always get ‘yes, go do it, go take them our blessing,’” he said.

His dedication stems



Country star Lee Greenwood entertains troops here during a live performance held at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation Civic Center.

from many sources, but he said that looking at his wife Kim and children Dalton, 8, and Parker, 5, allows him to better relate to troops and helps him understand the difficulties they experience when deployed.

When given the chance to back out of the tour due to the fact that he would have to leave his band and entourage back in the states, Greenwood quickly said he would continue as planned through a one-man show was different than any tour he had done before. He was determined to be here for the troops and temporarily replaced his band’s sound with pre-recorded background music, said Bently.

Greenwood’s hope in coming overseas and entertaining troops is to ensure in each of them that people back home do care and are thankful for the sacrifices troops are making for their country.

“No matter what their heritage or nationality before America, if you’re an American citizen and in uniform, they are serving the country and that’s important to me,” said Greenwood.



Greenwood signs an autograph for Senior Airman William Mackinzie, 245th Air Traffic Control Squadron, during his visit to Bagram. Greenwood was a nine-day tour performing for troops overseas.

Music Notes (Compiled from MTV.com)



Jay-Z to introduce Madison Square Garden to 'Black'

NEW YORK — Hey, if Madison Square Garden can



Jay-Z

let 300-pound wrestlers fight in bloody steel-cage matches, they can let Jay-Z rock the mic there, too. Especially if Russell Simmons has his back.

On Wednesday morning at MSG, Jay-Z and Simmons held a press conference formally addressing the media about the November 25 benefit concert starring Young Hova.

"This is hot, this is a great day," Hova said. "I'm just happy to bring hip-hop back to Madison Square Garden. It's a great place."

Proceeds from the show go to Simmons' Hip-Hop Summit Action Network and the Shawn Carter Scholarship Fund. Jay-Z's show is the first hip-hop concert at Madison Square Garden in several years, and if it were up to the night's headliner, the concert would have taken place a whole lot sooner.

"Forever!" Jay said backstage after the press conference about how long he's been trying to take to the stage at MSG. "I mean, that's a dream for any artist to perform at the Garden. Me being from Brooklyn, it just means that much more to me."

And while the November 25 show will help charitable causes, the concert will also be the final pre-hype festivity in anticipation of Jay's *The Black Album*, which drops on Black Friday, November 28. Hov began to seriously record the album on September 4 and said he'll be done by a self-imposed deadline of October 1.

"I'mma put 12 records on there," he said about the project's progress. "I got about 11 or 12 [songs] and I think 70 percent [of those records] is gonna make it. So I would say I'm 70 percent done."

Jay's decided not to include any guests on his new LP, but hinted at a bevy of sur-

prise appearances during his November 25 show.

Besides *The Black Album*, Jay is releasing an all-black version of his S. Carter Collection sneaker, and his autobiography, "*The Black Book*," is slated to come out early next year.

Britney gets 'In the Zone' with forthcoming LP

MTV – Britney Spears laughs at the thought that she could've found time for a break recently. "[Only] if you call three weeks a hiatus," she said. "I've been recording my booty off."



Britney Spears

As her forthcoming *In the Zone* (formerly *Get in the Zone*) nears completion, the pop star is working her booty overtime, already mapping out plans for remixes galore of her first single, "Me Against the Music," featuring Madonna. The RedZone-produced track has been sent to several producers, including Outkast and Madonna mixer Peter Rauhofer.

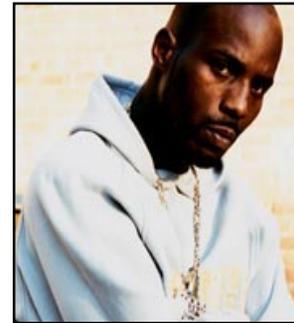
"We've hooked up [again], but I've learned not to talk about my personal life," Britney said of Madonna, laughing. "But basically that song is about just being in a club and being oblivious to everyone and just zoning out and just freestyling. And it's me and that beat."

Spears has been known to hit the New York clubs to let DJs preview her new songs, and she even performed a surprise nightclub act in Las Vegas earlier this month. For the most part, though, the new tunes have been kept tightly under wraps. "My music hasn't been out," she said. "I've been recording the whole time.

It's like a big deal for me. It's my baby."

DMX proves to be Grand Champ with Billboard chart sales

MTV – Naming his fifth LP *Grand Champ* turned out to be a self-fulfilling prophesy for



DMX

DMX, who sold more albums than anyone else last week. Accordingly, X's latest will debut at #1 on next week's *Billboard* albums chart.

The gravelly voiced rapper sold more than 311,000 copies of his follow-up to 2001's *The Great Depression*.

A Perfect Circle managed to set a new personal record with their second LP, *Thirteenth Step*. Next week's #2 disc sold more than 230,000 copies to best their previous album, 2000's *Mer de Noms*.

Placing third in the chart's new-album trifecta is Erykah Badu's *Worldwide Underground*. On the heels of a successful single, "Danger ... Block on Lock," a remix of the album track "Danger," Badu's third album sold more than 143,000 copies.

The three debuts push last week's #1, John Mayer's *Heavier Things*, down to #4 with more than 136,000 copies sold, and its runner-up, Hilary Duff's *Metamorphosis*, down to #5 with more than 125,000 copies.

Bagram Air Base MWR presents

1530Z at the MWR building: "Simone." A producer's film is endangered when his star walks off, so he decides to digitally create an actress to substitute for the star, becoming an overnight sensation that everyone thinks is a real person.

Tomorrow's movie will be: "Enough."



Coalition Sports Zone

(Compiled from ESPN.com)



Carl Pavano worked 7.1 strong innings for his 12th win.

Marlins clinch wild-card berth with 4-3 win over Mets Friday

MIAMI – With rainy weather, apathetic fans, unsettled ownership and losing records, the Florida Marlins have provided comic relief in recent seasons.

Look who's laughing now.

The surprising Marlins beat the New York Mets 4-3 Friday night to clinch their first playoff berth since winning the 1997 World Series. They'll face the NL West champion Giants in a best-of-5 series beginning Tuesday in San Francisco.

"We're happy to get in, but this is just the beginning," said Derrek Lee, who drove in two runs. "We want to go deep in the playoffs."

The Marlins trailed Philadelphia in the wild-card race last Saturday, but pulled away with five consecutive wins. At 90-70, they're 20 games above .500 for the first time since '97.

Closer Ugueth Urbina began hopping in celebration as center fielder Juan Pierre settled under a flyball for the final out. Jubilant Marlins then piled on top of each other near the mound, and soon they were pouring champagne on each other.

"We always went to the playoffs in high school," said 23-year-old pitcher Josh Beckett, Florida's probable starter in the opening playoff game. "This time I actually get to drink beer."

The victory put 72-year-old manager Jack McKeon in the postseason for the first time. Florida is 74-48 (.607) since he took over May 11.

"We're all going to smoke cigars tonight," said McKeon, who has several boxes of them in his office. "This is the most fun I've ever had with any team. I love these guys."

Leadoff batter Juan Pierre, a catalyst all season, filled that role again in the clinching victory. He stole two bases to set a team record with 64, singled three times to reach a career high with 203 hits and played a part in Florida's first three runs.

Carl Pavano (12-13), the No. 5 starter on a strong pitching staff, limited

New York to six hits and three runs in 7 1-3 innings. He retired 11 in a row during one stretch.

The Marlins' rapidly expanding bandwagon attracted 33,215 fans, the largest crowd of the week and the fourth-largest of the season in Miami.

"If they keep coming, we're going to keep winning," All-Star third baseman Mike Lowell pledged. Florida has won 15 of its past 17 home games.

Timberwolves offers contract extension to Garnett; now await his decision

ST. PAUL, Minn. – The Minnesota Timberwolves have offered All-Star forward Kevin Garnett a contract extension and are waiting for an answer, team owner Glen Taylor said.



Kevin Garnett

"He hasn't been in town, so we don't know if he's going to sign it or not," Taylor told the *St. Paul Pioneer Press* on Thursday. "He knows our position."

The newspaper's report Friday did not give terms of the offer.

Garnett, on vacation, is expected back in the Twin Cities within a few days. His agent, Andy Miller, didn't return the newspaper's phone calls Thursday but earlier this week declined comment when asked about a contract extension.

Because he signed his six-year, \$126 million contract before the last collective bargaining agreement in 1998, Garnett is eligible for 105 percent of the last year of his contract, the *Pioneer Press* said. He is scheduled to make \$28 million this season, the last year of his six-year deal.

Garnett would become a free agent next summer if the sides don't reach an agreement. Because any other team that tries to sign him must stay within its salary cap, Garnett likely can make more money with the Timberwolves, who are not bound by that stipulation.

The Timberwolves and Garnett have been discussing an extension for the past two years. If no deal is reached before the season starts Oct. 29 against Milwaukee, Taylor would like to halt negotiations until after the season.

"That would be my preference," Taylor said. "The team isn't going to need any distractions during the season. I'm hoping we can get something done before the season starts."

Leftwich to get first NFL start Sunday against Houston

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. – Jaguars rookie quarterback Byron Leftwich most likely will make his first NFL start Sunday, with Mark Brunell downgraded to doubtful for the game against Houston.

Brunell injured his elbow in the first quarter last weekend against Indianapolis and needed five stitches after the game. He has not

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practiced this week, and was listed as questionable when the team's first injury report came out Wednesday.

Jaguars coach Jack Del Rio wasn't available Friday, but told a national radio audience it is "very unlikely" Brunell will start.

"I'm ready to go," Leftwich said following a short team workout Friday.

The 6-foot-5 rookie from Marshall has taken most of the snaps in practice this week, with No. 3 QB David Garrard getting the rest.

Leftwich has seen limited time in the Jaguars' past two games. But he has impressive numbers, connecting on 11 of 13 passes for 124 yards and two touchdowns.

Injured Culpepper game-time decision against 49ers

EDEN PRAIRIE, Minn. — Daunte Culpepper was upgraded to questionable by the on Friday, meaning there's a 50 percent chance the injured quarterback will play against San Francisco.



Daunte Culpepper

Culpepper and coach Mike Tice said it will be a game-time decision.

"I feel good — and I'm always getting better," Culpepper said as he left practice.

Culpepper, who leads the league with a passer rating of 108.0, has three small broken bones in his left lower back and a fourth that's partially broken. He practiced Friday for the first time this week, splitting time with Gus Frerotte on the first team.

Wide receiver Randy Moss, who has back spasms, also practiced Friday for the first time this week. He was upgraded to probable and will play Sunday.

Culpepper's injury normally requires at least two weeks of recovery, but the quarterback has made considerable progress since he was hurt last Sunday in Detroit. He landed in the end zone on a touchdown run and was hit by Lions linebacker Wali Rainer.

"If he continues to progress the way he's progressing, we're going to have a tough decision to make," Tice said. "I don't see that the injury can get any worse."

Culpepper's status will depend on how much pain he's in and how well he can move around behind the line of scrimmage. His mobility in Friday's practice was good, Tice said.

"If it was up to him, he'd say he's going to be starter right now," Tice said.

**Solution from Friday's Percussion Session
Crossword in the Freedom Watch**

(Courtesy of QUIZLAND.com)

M	A	T	E	D		H	O	A	R		P	M	S				
A	B	I	D	E		O	D	I	E		E	L	A	N			
J	J	D	G	E	D	R	E	D	D		L	A	T	E			
S	T	E	E	R	E	D		E	D	O	M	I	T	E			
						B	E	T		E	V	E	N	E	R		
T	H	E	N	E	T		H	O	N	O	R						
H	I	R	A	M		L	E	T	S		F	I	N	I			
I	D	I	O	T		O	A	T		L	U	R	E	S			
S	E	E	M			I	N	T	O		I	D	E	A	L		
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B	A	N	J	O	S		E	A	R								
A	R	O	U	S	E	S		R	E	G	A	L	I	A			
R	I	N	D			C	H	E	R	Y	L	L	A	D	D		
R	E	E	D			T	O	G	O		A	G	I	L	E		
E	S	T				S	T	O	W		M	A	R	E	S		



By Mark Baker

Pvt. Murphy's Law

Kandahar chapel hours

Sunday

- ☐ 0500Z — Roman Catholic mass
- ☐ 0630Z — Protestant worship
- ☐ 0830Z — Latter-Day Saints worship
- ☐ 1130Z — Roman Catholic mass
- ☐ 1430Z — Gospel service

Monday

- ☐ 1130Z — Rosary and prayers
- ☐ 1430Z — Gospel choir practice

Tuesday

- ☐ 1130Z — Orthodox/Catholic Bible study
- ☐ 1430Z — Protestant Bible study

Wednesday

- ☐ 1130Z — Roman Catholic mass
- ☐ 1430Z — Protestant mid-week service

Thursday

- ☐ 1430Z — Gospel Bible study

Friday

- ☐ 0830Z — Islamic Jumaa'h prayer
- ☐ 1130Z — Orthodox Christian hymn service
- ☐ 1430Z — Jewish prayer

Saturday

- ☐ 0530Z — Seventh-Day Adventist worship
- ☐ 1130Z — Orthodox Christian Divine Liturgy
- ☐ 1430Z — Gospel Choir practice

Bagram chapel hours

Sunday

- ☐ 0530Z — Catholic mass
- ☐ 0700Z — Protestant worship
- ☐ 0830Z — Latter-Day Saints worship
- ☐ 1400Z — Gospel service

Monday

- ☐ 0700Z — Catholic mass

Tuesday

- ☐ 0700Z — Catholic mass
- ☐ 1400Z — Protestant Bible study

Wednesday

- ☐ 0700Z — Catholic mass
- ☐ 1400Z — Protestant mid-week service

Thursday

- ☐ 0700Z — Catholic mass
- ☐ 1400Z — Gospel Bible study

Friday

- ☐ 0700Z — Catholic mass
- ☐ 0745Z — Noon-Day prayer
- ☐ 0830Z — Islamic Jumaa'h prayer
- ☐ 1430Z — Jewish prayer

Saturday

- ☐ 1330Z — Gospel Choir practice
- ☐ 1430Z — Bible study
- ☐ 15150Z — Catholic mass
- ☐ 1900Z — Evening Worship service

K2 chapel hours

Sunday

- ☐ 0300Z- Liturgical Service
- ☐ 0400,0730,1130Z-General Protestant Service
- ☐ 0530Z-Roman Catholic Mass
- ☐ 1230Z-Latter Day Saints

Monday

- ☐ 0230Z-Devotions and Prayer
- ☐ 1230Z-Catholic Mass

Tuesday

- ☐ 1230Z-Catholic Mass
- ☐ 1400Z-Biblestudy

Wednesday

- ☐ 0230Z-Devotions and Prayer
- ☐ 1230Z-Catholic Mass
- ☐ 1400Z-Midweek Praise Service

Thursday

- ☐ 1230Z-Catholic Mass

Friday

- ☐ 1400Z-Jewish Service
- ☐ 0230Z-Devotions and Prayer
- ☐ 1230Z-Catholic Mass
- ☐ 1400Z-Biblestudy

Saturday

- ☐ 0400Z-Jewish Service
- ☐ 1230Z-Catholic Mass

CJCMOTF **Sunday**

- ☐ 1100Z — Christian service
- ☐ 1430Z — U.S. Embassy service
- ☐ 1900Z — Christian service

chapel **Wednesday**

- ☐ 1900Z — Bible study

hours **2nd & 4th Thursdays**

- ☐ 1900Z — Roman Catholic mass



W e a t h e r

Today



Hi — 77F
Lo — 50F



Hi — 73F
Lo — 43F



Hi — 75F
Lo — 48F



Hi — 82F
Lo — 52F

Sunday



Hi — 77F
Lo — 48F



Hi — 75F
Lo — 44F



Hi — 75F
Lo — 46F



Hi — 77F
Lo — 48F

Monday



Hi — 79F
Lo — 48F



Hi — 70F
Lo — 43F



Hi — 77F
Lo — 46F



Hi — 77F
Lo — 46F

TF Phoenix chapel hours

Daily

- ☐ 1430Z — Estudio Biblico En Espanol

Sunday

- ☐ 1330Z — Catholic Mass
- ☐ 1600Z — Latter Day Saints (DFAC)

Tuesday

- ☐ 1530Z — Bible Study

Friday

- ☐ 0530Z — Protestant Service
- ☐ 1230Z — Choir practice

All events are held in Chapel or DFAC.