

‘MOUT up’, new site gets troops closer to reality

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

BAGRAM, Afghanistan – In the hidden back trails of Bagram Air Base stands an Afghan compound, made by hand out of mud by local nationals.

This is not home to any Afghan, but is a training site used by many Bagram troops to prepare for combat in urban Afghanistan.

The U.S. Army identified the need for soldiers to train even when in a remote area, such as Afghanistan. To supplement this need, the Program Executive Office for Simulation, Training, and Instrumentation joined forces with Anteon Inc., and developed a plan for Military Operations on Urbanized Terrain training facilities in these areas.

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Troops from the second platoon, Co. A, 2nd Bn., 87th Infantry Regiment, 10th Mountain Div., put their training to the test at the new MOUT training site here. The site is modeled after an Afghan compound offering troops a realistic option to prepare them for combat in urban Afghanistan.

Engineers improve lifestyle for troops in Kandahar

Story by Spc. C. Elijah Spencer
211th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan — The pounding sound of hammers is everywhere. The screeching whine of Skil saws, and the constant yelling of measurements, dimensions, and angles is enough to make the average person go crazy. However, this seeming chaos of sound and measurements is music to the ears of the soldiers of Co. B, 205th Engineer Battalion of the Louisiana Army National Guard, better known as the “Blackjacks.”

The Blackjacks have been working diligently around Kandahar to make improvements for the lifestyles of the soldiers living here.

“Our work is our pride and we stand behind it,” said Sgt. 1st Class Troy M.

Archote, from Franklinton, La.

The Blackjacks have been in Kandahar for only one month, but in those 30 days they have managed to make their presence known, as well as seen, by all. Their projects range from laying a concrete slab for a new gym, building a new Military Police Tactical Operations Center to putting in a pseudo parking lot for the Pfc. Jerrod Dennis Combat Hospital.

The Blackjacks come to Afghanistan with a full house of soldiers that are able to handle plumbing, electrical work, carpentry and masonry work. They form a unit that runs like a well-oiled machine that can do anything and everything that is needed to get the job done.

“We’re the guys that do all the engineering here on base,” said Archote.

The Blackjacks consist of about 200 sol-

diers from the southeastern region of Louisiana. They have orders to be in Afghanistan for six to 12 months. However, as with most soldiers, the Blackjacks aren’t getting their hopes up for exactly when they are going to see Louisiana again.

“We’re hoping for six, but expecting 12,” said Archote. “You can’t count on assumptions. We’re just glad we’re here and get to do our part.”

“Six months is six months whether you’re working or not. Working just makes it all pass by a little faster,” said 2nd Lt. Ira R. Fields.

This is the first time that the Blackjacks of the 205th have been mobilized since World War II.

“That is an important fact to note, because there have been soldiers that have spent their

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World News (Compiled from CNN.com)



President Bush marked six months since the collapse of Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein's government by defending the U.S.-led invasion.

Bush marks 6 months since Saddam's fall Thursday

PORTSMOUTH, N.H. — President Bush on Thursday marked six months since the collapse of Saddam Hussein's government by defending the U.S.-led invasion that toppled the Iraqi leader.

"There's only one decent and humane reaction to the fall of Saddam Hussein: Good riddance," Bush said in a speech to New Hampshire National Guard troops and reservists.

Baghdad fell to U.S. troops on April 9 and Bush declared an end to major combat in Iraq on May 1. U.S. Marines and Iraqis pulled down a statue of Saddam on April 9.

"I acted because I was not about to leave the security of the American people in the hands of a madman," Bush said. "I was not about to stand by and wait and trust in the sanity and restraint of Saddam Hussein, so our coalition acted in one of the swiftest and most humane military campaigns in history — and six months ago today, the statue of the dictator was pulled down."

But the ongoing turmoil in the country was underscored Thursday by: The death of a U.S. soldier in a grenade attack north of Baghdad; The shooting death of a Spanish diplomat in the Iraqi capital and a suicide bombing that killed eight Iraqi police officers at a police station in a largely Shiite neighborhood in Baghdad.

The continuing attacks on U.S. troops, congressional alarm over the administration's \$87 billion price tag for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and the failure of U.S. search teams to find the stockpiles of banned weapons

the Bush administration accused Iraq of harboring have brought criticism that in turn has prompted the White House to launch a new effort to build support for the Iraq war.

In an apparent jab at his critics, Bush said he would not pass his problems on "to other presidents and other generations."



One question is when Rumsfeld knew that Rice's role in the restoration of Iraq superseded his.

Rumsfeld avoids questions on Iraq role Thursday

WASHINGTON — Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld canceled a news conference Thursday in part to avoid questions about whether the White House recently reduced his role in Iraq's reconstruction, Pentagon and NATO officials said.

The White House said Monday it is creating an Iraq Stabilization Group to be headed by national security adviser Condoleezza Rice. The group will be responsible for handling the day-to-day administration of Iraq, a task previously handled by the Pentagon.

Rumsfeld was scheduled to brief reporters at a meeting of NATO defense ministers in Colorado. He was questioned at Wednesday's NATO press briefing about his relationship with Rice, a memo she circulated establishing the new Iraq Stabilization Group, and whether he was "in the loop."

The defense secretary has "said everything he has to say about it," Pentagon officials said.

The change in the oversight of reorganization efforts inside Iraq stemmed from numerous discussions on the topic among Rice, Vice President Dick Cheney, Secretary of State Colin Powell, Rumsfeld and President Bush, a White House official said.

A report in Thursday's *New York Times* quoted several administration officials who said Rice discussed the issue with Rumsfeld and other members of the National Security Council last week.

Earlier this week, Rumsfeld said he did not remember discussing the topic with Rice. He said he was informed of the creation of the group by way of a memo sent to an undersecretary of defense.



Arafat talks to reporters Oct. 5 at his Ramallah office.

'Hundreds of tanks' roll into Gaza

GAZA CITY, Gaza — Witnesses and Palestinian security sources say "hundreds" of Israeli tanks are rolling into the Gaza city of Rafah.

The sources said Israeli Apache helicopters were flying overhead late Thursday, directing machine gun fire into homes and streets of the city.

Earlier, the Palestinian Legislative Council postponed a vote of confidence after legislators were unable to decide whether to back Prime Minister Ahmed Qorei and other members of a newly formed emergency Cabinet.

After the postponement of the vote, Qorei held what was described by sources as a stormy session with Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat.

Sources in the council said legislators are trying to reach a consensus on how to go forward — whether to approve the emergency Cabinet headed by Qorei or wait for him to form an expanded Cabinet.

On Sunday — following a Saturday suicide bombing in Haifa that killed 19 Israelis — Arafat issued an emergency decree that allows him to form a Cabinet without the approval of the PLC. It can be in effect for 30 days.

Force structure set for ANA, General Staff and Ministry of Defense

KABUL, Afghanistan – After months of hard work, a formal agreement reforming the Ministry of Defense and the General Staff was signed by the Deputy Minister of Defense, Lt. Gen. Baryalai and Maj. Gen. Eikenberry, chief, Office of Military Cooperation – Afghanistan Sept. 14. This document paves the way for realignment of the military establishment in Afghanistan by codifying the new force structure for the MoD, the General Staff, and the Afghan National Army.

The force structure agreement describes the staff organization for combat and combat support commands in ANA's Central Corps to include the Kabul Military Training Center and garrison support elements. The document incorporates a Table of Organization and Equipment, which is an approved description of the Central Corps Headquarters and its three brigade elements. The TO&E prescribes the organizational structure, personnel positions, personnel strength, and lists associated weapons and equipment. It standardizes the organizational structures of like-type units and provides a common standard for computing requirements, distributing resources, and defining required personnel and equipment for combat, combat support, garrison, and training units.

Work began on the force structure document in December 2002. The living document represents the successful combined efforts of the Afghan MoD and OMC-A. It also represents the successful joint efforts of the U.S. military, as well as members of the Coalition. On the Afghanistan side, Brig. Gen. Habib was the primary staff officer for the MoD, and Lt. Col. Scully the primary staff officer for OMC-A.

The agreement reflects the strong commitment Afghanistan has in developing its military in order to meet the security needs of the people of Afghanistan.

(Information from CJTF-180 Press Release)

Bagram Air Base MWR presents

1530Z at the MWR Building: "Dog Soldiers." A squad of British soldiers on training in the lonesome Scottish wilderness find a wounded Special Forces captain and the carnaged remains of his team. As they encounter ranger Megan it turns out that werewolves are active in the region. They have to prepare for some action as the there will be a full moon tonight.



Tomorrow's movie will be "Charlie's Angels."

Local weather

TWO-DAY REGIONAL WEATHER FORECAST:

	Today	Saturday
Bagram:	Mostly clear H: 70F L: 45F	Mostly clear H: 68F L: 43F
Kandahar:	Clear H: 81F L: 55F	Dusty H: 82F L: 54F
Kabul:	Mostly clear H: 66F L: 43F	Mostly clear H: 66F L: 43F
Uzbekistan:	Clear H: 75F L: 40F	Partly cloudy H: 75F L: 38F

Weather forecast courtesy of the Bagram Combat Weather Team

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In December of 2002, the Department of Defense directed the construction of MOUT sites in Kuwait and Afghanistan to support Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom, and in February 2003, funds were provided for the MOUT sites birth, according to William Howsden, site manager.

Within three weeks of beginning the project, the site was completed, finalizing construction near the end of September 2003, said Staff Sgt. Jim Bagnell, 416th Engineer Command, Facility Engineer Team 28, who worked alongside local nations to build the state of the art compound.

The training site resembles an Afghan village, with high mud walls plastered around metal conexs.

"It's unbelievable," said Bagnell. "The MOUT site looks like an Afghanistan compound. It offers the environment of Afghanistan."

Adding to it's sense of reality was the hands-on work of local nations who have become experts at this trade.

"They've done this all their lives, so it comes naturally to them," said Bagnell who oversaw their work. Bucket by bucket, mud was passed up ladders to awaiting hands that packed the mixture.

"It's neat," he said. "I was really excited about it because I watched it come up from nothing."

It was really a unique project, said

Bagnell. "You can build a building, you can build a road, but to build something out of the earth (is incredible)."

Though from the outside, it looks like a simple Afghan compound, this small village contains many hi-tech advantages that allow troops to receive the highest training evaluation opportunities after completing the course, according to Howsden.

The instrumentation used within the site has been proven effective and has been used at the Joint Readiness Training Centers Shugart-Gordon MOUT site since 1996. Capabilities include low light cameras with laser illuminators, panic buttons for safety and security, targets in each building, sound effects, moveable interior walls, trap doors, external lighting, external cameras, and smoke generators.

On site is a multi-media after action review theater which provides troops with an opportunity to see what the hidden cameras caught and gives them a chance to see if they can improve techniques used during the exercise.

Theater capabilities include real time audio and video playback, power point slide presentations and AAR recordings, according to Howsden.

To train as they fight keeps troops on their toes and the new facility gives them a more realistic view of the terrain they will encounter in this theater.

"We do MOUT training about once a month," said Sgt. 1st Class John Folkenroth,

Company A, 2nd Battalion 87th Infantry Regiment, 10th Mountain Division, who oversaw the training of the second platoon on Tuesday. This was the first time his troops had been through the new course.

"It looks a lot like what we'll (encounter) out here in Afghanistan," he said, complimenting on the sites realistic disposition. "(The training) helps refine your skills and see what you are doing wrong."

Folkenroth said training at sites like this is necessary for Infantry troops.

"If you don't train, you forget what to do and the more you do something, the better you learn it," he said.

Getting troops out to the site for training just takes a little planning. Scheduling is required a week in advance. The unit will need to submit a scenario including training objectives, training level of the squad, platoon or company, the type of training whether it be live fire or force to force training, type of ammo being used and a risk assessment, according to Howsden.

Much of the necessary equipment is available on site including SRTA bolts, UTM bolts, UTM AMMO, MILES Systems and eye/throat protection, but the participating unit must provide one NCO per squad, observers/controllers if required, training at site prior to exercise, medical support on site and water/chow for participating troops.

For more information about the MOUT training site contact Bagnell at 318-231-4217.

LIFESTYLES, from Page 1

entire career as a Blackjack and the most they have done is practice what they do. We have been given the opportunity to do what we do best in a real life event. We got to practice at home, and now we're actually out in the field and playing the game," said Fields.

Despite the long time period expected here and the rather demanding workload, the soldiers of Co. B keep their spirits high and keep the environment fun as they work day after day.

"I would consider the morale around here amazingly high despite the amount of work that we do here," said Archote. "The guys don't mind working."

"We usually go beyond what is expected of us and we always set the standard," said Spc. Timinirra D. Taylor, from Franklinton, La.

Taylor is one of only five females in Co. B. Women seem to be a minority in the engineering career field of the National Guard, but that doesn't seem to affect Taylor at all.

"Sometimes I feel like an outsider, but by doing my job the best that I can; I become just like one of the fellas." said Taylor.

Taylor has been hanging in there with the rest of the guys of Co. B doing engineer work for six years.

"Don't let being around a big group of men intimidate you. You can work just as good and as hard as they can." said Taylor.

The obvious impression that the Blackjacks have been displaying is that they are glad to be here, they love what they do, and they do it rather well.

"We're ready," said 2nd Lt. David B. Haydel, "Just bring it on."

"The good thing about being here is that you actually get to see what everyone else does and what part they play in the bigger scheme of things," said Lt. Haydel, "It puts all the pieces of the puzzle together."

The Blackjacks of the 205th work together like a tightly woven blanket, covering anything that comes their way as quickly and precisely as they can. Whoever comes across the work of the Blackjacks sees what the standard looks like. Ultimately, the goal for the members of the unit is to do their jobs as best as they can, and for everyone to make it safely home.



Coalition Sports Zone

(Compiled from ESPN.com)

The woman went back to Bryant's room and showed him a tattoo on her back, then turned down his request to join him in the hot tub, Winters said.

She stood up to leave and Bryant gave her a hug that led to some consensual kissing, Winters said.

When she turned around to leave, Bryant grabbed her by the neck, pulled up her skirt and raped her against a chair, Winters said.

Big Apple finds big man, Knicks sign Mutombo Thursday

NEW YORK – Dikembe Mutombo signed a contract with the New York Knicks on Thursday, two days after he accepted a buyout and was waived by the New Jersey Nets.

Terms of the deal were not disclosed.

"Adding a shot blocker and rebounder of Dikembe's caliber to our team dramatically improves key areas that we were looking to upgrade," Knicks president and GM Scott Layden said on Thursday. "His basketball resume is so impressive that having the chance to add him to our club was something we were not going to pass up."



Dikembe Mutombo

The Knicks were the worst shot-blocking team in the NBA last season when they missed the playoffs for the second straight season.

Kurt Thomas, a natural power forward, has been the Knicks' starting center for most of the past two seasons.

Mutombo played in only 24 games last season because of a wrist injury that required surgery around Thanksgiving.

Mutombo, 7-2, 261-pounds, is the NBA's sixth all-time shot blocker with 2,873 rejections and is the only player in history to be named the NBA Defensive Player of the Year four-times (1995, 1997, 1998, 2001).

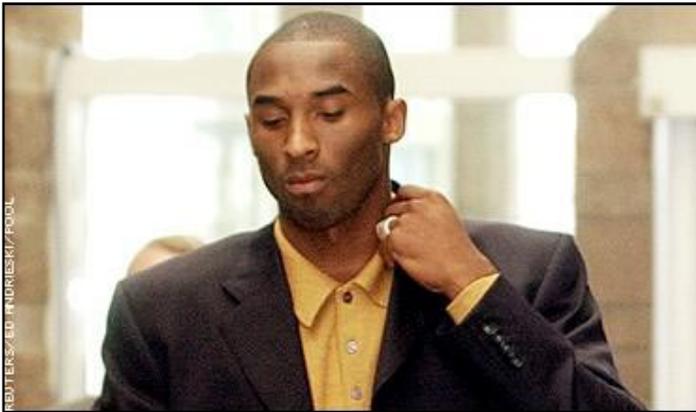
Flames' Iginla becomes first black captain

CALGARY, Alberta – Jarome Iginla became the first black captain in NHL history Wednesday when the talented forward was tabbed to wear the "C" by the Calgary Flames.

"I have been very lucky to have played with many great captains that I have learned from over the course of my career," Iginla said in a statement. "I'm ready for the next challenge and the responsibilities that go with it."

Craig Conroy, Iginla's linemate, served as Flames captain the past two seasons. Conroy and defenseman Robyn Regehr will be alternate captains.

"Jarome and I have discussed his eventual captaincy of this organization for some time now," Conroy said. "I strongly believe that he has all the qualities of the leader required to bring our club to the next level."



Kobe Bryant heard his accuser's account at Thursday's hearing.

Bryant hears accuser's account of alleged sexual assault Thursday

EAGLE, Colo. — Following testimony that accuses Kobe Bryant of rape, Eagle County Judge Frederick Gannett said he won't rule Thursday on whether to order a trial for the NBA superstar.

The 19-year-old resort worker accusing Bryant of rape told investigators the Los Angeles Lakers star attacked her from behind, grabbing her by the neck and forcing himself on her despite repeated protests.

The woman told police a flirtatious encounter quickly turned ugly when he grabbed her by the neck, bent her over a chair and attacked her from behind, repeatedly asking, "You're not going to tell anyone, right?" Eagle County Sheriff's Detective Doug Winters said at the hearing.

According to Winters, Bryant was joined by the front desk worker on a tour of the posh mountain resort last June. After some flirting, Bryant asked her back to his suite.

Sports on local Armed Forces Network TV

Saturday's schedule (AFN Sports)

- ESPNNews 0100L
- Around the Horn 0130L
- Pardon the Interruption 0200L
- NFL Live 0330L
- College Football Friday Michigan @ Minnesota 0430L
- SportsCenter 0730L
- Baseball Tonight 0900L
- SportsCenter 1030L
- College Football Friday TCU @ South Florida 1130L
- SportsCenter 1430L
- MLB NLCS Chicago Cubs vs Florida Marlins 1530L
- SportsCenter 1830L
- College GameDay 1900L
- SportsCenter 2100L

Sunday's schedule (AFN Sports)

- College Football Florida @ LSU 0000L
- NASCAR Winston Cup Series 0400L
- ESPNNews 0800L
- Baseball Tonight 0830L
- Inside the NFL 0930L
- SportsCenter 1030L
- College Football Georgia @ Tennessee 1130L
- SportsCenter 1430L
- MLB NLCS Chicago Cubs vs Florida Marlins 1630L
- Sunday NFL Countdown 1930L
- NFL Carolina Panthers @ Indianapolis Colts 2130L

Afghanistan Hot Topics



(Compiled by CJTF-180 Public Affairs)

Russia to train Afghan policemen

RUSSIA – (*Afghanistan New.net*) – Russia announced Thursday it has agreed to train Afghan policemen in a project that will be financed by Germany.

Russian Interior Minister Boris Gryzlov made the announcement during Russian-German top-level consultations held in Yekaterinburg.

The *Novosti News* agency reported Russia will also train officers with drug-sniffing dogs, as well as investigators for local police stations.

Gryzlov and his German counterpart, Otto Schily, said the Russia-German cooperation will help fight transnational crime and international terrorism.

Karzai to release Afghan Constitution within days

KABUL, Afghanistan (*Afghanistan Times*) – Afghanistan's eagerly awaited new constitution will be released to the public within 10 days, President Hamid Karzai said on Wednesday.

"The constitution is almost ready for release and I'm looking forward to releasing it ... definitely in less than 10 days," Karzai told reporters at the presidential palace in Kabul.

"It's almost ready, rather it is ready," he said at a joint press conference with visiting US Republican senators Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, Conrad Burns of Montana, Larry Craig of Idaho, Craig Thomas from Wyoming and Lincoln Chaffee of Rhode Island.

"We're extremely impressed with the progress that you are making. We have high hopes for Afghanistan and its bright future and it's a privilege to be a part of helping Afghanistan realise its destiny," said McConnell, referring to the constitution and reconstruction work.

A special loya jirga (traditional grand assembly) will gather in December to approve the constitution, paving the way for presidential elections scheduled in June 2004 in which Karzai has said he will stand.

During a consultation period that ended late-August, Afghans within the country and abroad submitted their suggestions on what sort of constitution they would like and what form of government they want to see take power next year.

The decision is a delicate step for Afghanistan, with powerful players in the country's recent turbulent history weighing the consequences of maintaining a presidential system or restoring the monarchy, as well as federal versus central government.

Members of the powerful mainly ethnic Tajik Northern Alliance, which dominates Karzai's government, recently held meetings in Kabul to discuss the constitution, Defence Minister Mohammad Qasim Fahim said on Monday.

Afghans also had to determine how large a role Islam, the

national religion, would play in the new constitution that is to replace the current governing legislation written in 1964.

The draft was not made public during the consultation, leading to complaints as to how people are supposed to comment on a document they have not read.

Afghanistan has experienced several forms of government in the last 100 years, ranging from absolute monarchy to Soviet communist dictatorship and the hardline Islamic rule of the Taliban ousted in 2001.

"I'll have a number one and an apple pie, please."



kevin_kilgore@hotmail.com

By Kevin Kilgore

Laugh Support

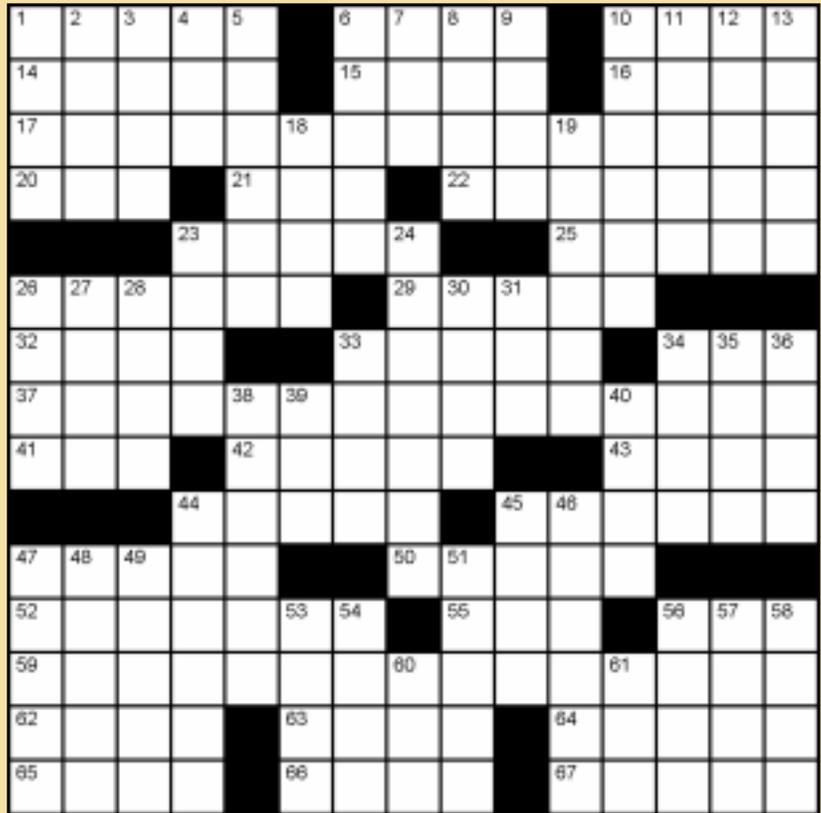
Slippery crossword

(Courtesy of QUIZLAND.com)

Across

- 1. Half a '60s quartet
- 6. Soothing spots
- 10. Salinger heroine
- 14. Chili hotness unit
- 15. Details handler
- 16. Caddie's pocketful
- 17. Toasted group leaders?
- 20. Front end of a bray
- 21. TNT part
- 22. Bacteria-free
- 23. Ways and __
- 25. Add, as territory
- 26. Woozy
- 29. Anglican headdress
- 32. The Runnin' Rebels' sch.
- 33. Golden-touch guy
- 34. Actor Benicio __ Toro
- 37. Toasted comment on a winter day?
- 41. Buck's mate
- 42. Microchip maker
- 43. Operatic solo
- 44. Short-straw drawer
- 45. Got soft
- 47. Start-of-Lent mark
- 50. Candidate list
- 52. Nail-hole filler
- 55. Rainbow shape
- 56. Mushy fare
- 59. Toasted dairy item?
- 62. Art Deco master
- 63. Bachelor's lack
- 64. Borden's spokescow
- 65. __-do-well
- 66. Gas in signs
- 67. __-Kettering Institute

model



Down

- 1. __ I (speed of sound)
- 2. Emollient-yielding plant
- 3. Broadway Auntie
- 4. Activate, as a bomb
- 5. Clobbers, bible-style
- 6. Lustrous fabric
- 7. Crusty dessert
- 8. Summer quenchers
- 9. The Amish, for one
- 10. Everlasting, in poetry
- 11. Greet and seat
- 12. Country singer Haggard
- 13. Vintage auto
- 18. In-flight convenience
- 19. Citizen Kane's real-life
- 23. Dallas hoopsters, for short
- 24. They put on happy faces
- 26. Pound sterling, slangily
- 27. Golden Rule word
- 28. Choice word
- 30. Teen heartthrob
- 31. Greek T
- 33. "I win," in chess
- 34. Malicious gossip
- 35. Adams or McClurg
- 36. X-ray blocker
- 38. Mall stalls
- 39. Switch positions
- 40. Red tag event
- 44. Hannibal the Cannibal
- 45. Artist Chagall
- 46. Engraves with acid
- 47. Colorado ski spot
- 48. Mushroom-to-be
- 49. Roaring Camp creator Bret
- 51. Burdened down
- 53. Croquet area
- 54. Nobelist Wiesel
- 56. Cozumel cash
- 57. Home to most Turks
- 58. Hammer end
- 60. ET's craft
- 61. Right-angle bend

Solutions will be posted in Saturday's Freedom Watch