

U.S. Marines celebrate 228th birthday

Story and photo by Sgt. Johnny A. Thompson
4th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM, Afghanistan – On a cold November night in Afghanistan more than 500 people filled a small room to commemorate the birth of “the few and the proud.”

Celebrating its 228th birthday, Monday the United States Marine Corps held a Marine Corps Ball at the North Dining Facility on Bagram Air Base.

“Tonight’s ceremony shows our tradition and customs can be applied anywhere we go,” said Marine Col. Gary Supnick, commanding officer of Marine forces Afghanistan. “Our spirit and camaraderie extend beyond the bor-



U.S. Marine Sgt. Maj. Jerome Alford (left) passes Pfc. Logan K. Demere (right) a piece of cake during a cake cutting ceremony. The passing of the cake symbolizes the passing of Marine history and tradition to the next generation.

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Service members involved in ‘noble cause’

Story by Jim Garamone
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – American service members are involved in a “noble cause” in protecting the United States from the threat of terrorism, Joint Chiefs Chairman Air Force Gen. Richard B. Myers said Tuesday.

Myers gave round-robin interviews to the television networks’ Veterans Day morning shows. He said that terrorists, specifically al Qaeda, have vowed to do away with the American way of life. He said American service members are a “new generation of heroes” who are taking the fight to the terrorists in Iraq, Afghanistan and other areas around the world.

The fights in Iraq and Afghanistan are crucial to U.S. national security, the chairman said, and service members fighting this battle understand that. “Ask any troop ... and they’ll tell you that they understand exactly what we’re fighting for,” he said. “It’s important for the survival of our way of life.”

Myers said the military cannot do the job alone, and stressed the importance that Iraqis take on more responsibilities. Myers told NBC’s “Today” program that Iraqi security personnel are now the largest group in the coalition. He said 131,000 Iraqis are now members of the police, the Civil Defense Force, the Facilities Protection Service, the Border Guard or the

new Iraqi army. This is up from 118,000 last week, with most of the growth occurring in the Facilities Protection Service.

Involving the Iraqis, the chairman added, is important to Americans on the intelligence side of affairs. Myers said Iraqis are stepping forward with information about weapons and anti-coalition individuals. He said that on Nov. 10, infantrymen from the 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry, 173rd Airborne Brigade, acting on a tip from an Iraqi, found more than 6,000 pieces of ordnance in a cache near Kirkuk. The paratroopers uncovered 5,000 artillery rounds, 1,500 mortar rounds and more than 500 rockets.

Kirkuk is in the northern Kurdish part of the country, but Iraqis in the Baathist Triangle – between Baghdad, Tikrit and Ramadi – also are cooperating with the coalition, Myers noted. Soldiers from the 4th Infantry Division found rockets, munitions, mortars and small arms at caches in various places around the area. The Iraqis who are cooperating are working to build a new Iraq, free from the influences of Saddam Hussein’s Baathist regime, Myers said.

The chairman said that coalition leaders – most notably Army Gen. John Abizaid, the U.S. Central Command chief – have been speaking with the leaders in the Baathist Triangle. “He’s met with the leaders of the area — the tribal sheiks and the other leaders — and talked to them about being part of the new Iraq and not supporting former regime elements,” Myers said. “Clearly, we take the fight to the enemy when it is appropriate; we also want to work with these people to get them to buy into the new Iraq.”

World News (Compiled from CNN.com)



A U.S. soldier secures the site of a blast Tuesday outside a Baghdad courthouse.

Blasts rock Baghdad near coalition headquarters

BAGHDAD, Iraq—U.S. military officials said at least two mortar shells or rockets hit Tuesday night within the Iraqi capital's "Green Zone," the center of most of the U.S.-led Coalition Provisional Authority's activities.

Lt. Col. George Krivo said there were two explosions in the vicinity of a parking lot near Saddam Hussein's former palace in Baghdad that now serves as the headquarters of the Coalition Provisional Authority.

He said the origin of the explosions was not known. "Crater analysis is going on at the moment. There are no reports of casualties. There are reports of damage to an unknown number of vehicles in the parking lot," Krivo said. "As far as I know, these are the only explosions that happened in the Green Zone tonight."

Shortly after the explosions, U.S.-led troops sealed off a school west of the Green Zone. Witnesses there told *CNN* the soldiers found rocket launchers at the school.

The coalition has yet to comment about the activities at the school, and soldiers there refused to discuss details of the operation.

A *CNN* security adviser at a hotel in Baghdad saw two strikes in the zone and smoke rising from the sites.

Earlier reports indicated three or four explosions. Traffic appeared to be moving normally, and nearby bridges over the Tigris River are open.

The blasts were heard hours after the U.S. Army officer in charge of coalition ground forces in the country said the tempo of attacks on troops

has risen. Lt. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez told reporters that the number of daily engagements between troops and guerrillas has doubled from the mid-teens to 30-35 within the past two months.



Iran says its nuclear facility at Arak, shown in this satellite photo, is for peaceful, civilian uses only.

Iran made nuclear material

WASHINGTON—The International Atomic Energy Agency has concluded that Iran has secretly produced small amounts of nuclear materials, including low-enriched uranium (LEU) and plutonium that could be used to develop nuclear weapons, according to a confidential report obtained by *CNN*.

"Iran has now acknowledged that it has been developing, for 18 years, a uranium centrifuge enrichment program, and, for 12 years, a laser enrichment program. In that context, Iran has admitted that it produced small amounts of LEU using both centrifuge and laser enrichment processes, and that it had failed to report a large number of conversion, fabrication and irradiation activities involving nuclear material, including the separation of small amounts of plutonium."

Although the report says there is no evidence that the previously undeclared nuclear material and activities were related to a nuclear weapons program, it emphasizes that it is premature to "conclude that Iran's nuclear program is exclusively for peaceful purposes."

Plutonium can be used in nuclear weapons, but it also has civilian uses in generating power — which Iran says is the sole purpose of its nuclear activities, *The Associated Press* reports. The United States accuses Iran of pursuing nuclear weapons and has pressed for the IAEA to declare Tehran in breach of the nuclear non-proliferation treaty, according to the *AP*.

The primary reason cited by the IAEA for its continued skepticism is "Iran's past pattern

of concealment."

Last week, Iran turned over to the U.N. nuclear agency a document that Tehran said provided full disclosure on its nuclear weapons program. The IAEA Board of Governors had given Iran until Oct. 31 to clear up questions about its program that the nuclear watchdog agency had raised in the past few months.



President Bush placed a wreath at Arlington National Cemetery on Tuesday.

Bush honors veterans' sacrifice, signs legislation

WASHINGTON—As U.S. troops continue to face combat in Iraq and Afghanistan, President Bush marked the Veterans Day holiday Tuesday by telling families of those killed overseas that their sacrifices result from a just cause.

"The loss is terrible. It is borne especially by the families left behind," Bush said. "But in their hurt and in their loneliness, I want these families to know your loved ones served in a good and just cause. They died in distant lands to fight terror, to advance freedom and to protect America. They did not live to be called veterans, but this nation will never forget their lives of service and all they did for us."

Bush, who flew fighter jets for the Texas Air National Guard in the United States during part of the Vietnam War, spoke after laying a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknowns at Arlington National Cemetery.

Bush signed a bill Tuesday to double military death benefits to \$12,000; to give new tax incentives for home ownership for military families; to expand tax deductions for travel costs for National Guard and Reserve members; and to expand the definition of a combat zone, giving service members more flexibility in filing and paying taxes.

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ders of the [United States].”

The ceremony, which had more than six coalition nations, along with the U.S Air Force, Navy and Army in attendance, began at 1730 L with a tribute to fallen Marines.

“A candle is being lit to signify the eternal spirit of those gallant men and women who are not among us this evening because they have given their last full measure of devotion to our country and Corps,” said the narrator of the event. “... Therefore we pause for a moment to reflect upon the honor, fidelity and fighting spirit of those who have gone before us proudly bearing the title, United States Marine.”

Following the tribute to the fallen Marines, Supnick introduced the guest of honor Brig. Gen. Lloyd J. Austin III, Combined Joint Task Force-180 commander, whom spoke about strength and valor of the Marine Corps.

Austin said that he had the privilege to serve with Marines in a joint service mission and noted that the Marines represented the Corps with the pride and honor that has be-

come synonymous with its name. He told a story of how late one night during an operation some young Marines under his command awoke him because they wanted him, “to come and take part in their celebration of the Corps birthday.”

“They were proud of the Corp in which they serve,” said Austin noting that he has had the advantage of knowing and serving along side great Marines, but none greater than his brother. Austin jokingly said his brother, though retired, always reminds and never allows him to forget the slogan, “Once a Marine, always a Marine.”

After Austin’s remarks, Supnick presented the guest of honor with a token of appreciation and followed it with the cake-cutting ceremony.

Upon cutting the cake, following tradition Supnick gave Austin, the guest of honor, the first pick of cake followed then by the oldest and youngest Marine present. The oldest and youngest Marine present taking part in the ceremony represented the legacy of the Corps illustrating that no matter what circumstances Marines encounter the “heartbeat” of the

Corps will live on through the next generation.

“I’ve had the chance to go from a private to a sergeant major, so over the years I’ve seen the Marine Corps change lives,” said Marine Sgt. Maj. Jerome Alford, the oldest Marine at the ball. “The Corps instills pride and honor into the men and women who bear the name and it’s an honor for me to participate in tonight’s ceremony.”

After the cake cutting, the color guard retired the colors and dinner was served. The night’s celebration was completed with a little dancing, in which, Marines stepped in tune to honoring their legacy, but also to pave way for their future.

“It’s a big thing for us to celebrate our birthday in a war-type environment, because it shows that even in the face of danger we will give tribute to the men and women who served before us,” said Marine Staff Sgt. Ronald Sharlow, Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 773. “For us to be having a Marine Ball in Afghanistan is a memorable moment for our young Marines. It’s like reenlisting in (Iwo Jima), this is a bigger honor and I’m sure this is a moment they’ll always remember.”

Getting shots in a combat zone...



Photos by Spc. Kelly Hunt

Top: Sgt. Emily Maass, HHD 1st Battalion, 109th Aviation Regiment gives a dose of the smallpox vaccine to Staff Sgt. R.Z. Montgomery Monday. For further vaccination dates and times contact the Bagram U.S. Hospital.

Right: Col. Judy Tracy, 452nd Combat Support Hospital prepares flu shot vaccinations Monday for troops getting their dose in to prevent them from catching the illness.



Senior officials develop plan for ANA national military academy

For the past month, an international team from the United States and Turkey has been in Kabul working with members of the Afghan Ministry of Defense (MoD) and General Staff to develop a concept plan for a national military academy. The team included senior officers from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, the Turkish Defense Attaché to Afghanistan, Col. Tekbas (who helped establish a military academy in Georgia last year), as well as Maj. Gen. Juma Naser, Director of the Education and Training Department, MoD. The goal is to open the new academy in February 2005, to educate and train officers for the Afghan National Army (ANA).

The Coalition's commitment to help the Afghan government create an academy for the ANA recognizes the central role of the ANA as a national institution, providing security and stability for the people and the central government, as embodied in the new national constitution. The purpose of the National Military Academy (NMA) of Afghanistan is to provide the ANA with professional officers who support and defend the Constitution of the Islamic State of Afghanistan and are faithful to its national principles, laws, and regulations.

The new academy will not only train junior officers for the ANA, but will also provide a broad professional education so that ANA officers will be capable of leading the army in operations from combat to nation-building. The ANA officer corps will play an important role in unifying the ethnic groups of Afghanistan; indeed, the army will be a symbol of national unity for all Afghans. Therefore, the military academy must also inspire its graduates to a lifetime of national service, placing loyalty to the national constitution above personal, provincial, or ethnic loyalties.

The team proposed a four-year program of academic and professional education as well as military, physical, and leadership training for approximately 300-350 cadets each year. Admission standards are expected to be challenging. Potential candidates must score high on the standard university admissions examination, be physically fit and medically qualified for service in the ANA, and have strong character and leadership potential.

(Information provided by Spc. Douglas DeMaio, OMC-A.)

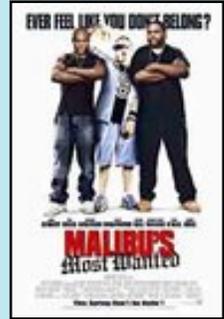
Bagram Air Base MWR presents

“Malibu’s Most Wanted”

1530Z at the MWR building:

A senator arranges for his son, a rich white kid who fancies himself black, to be kidnapped by a couple of black actors pretending to be murderers to try and shock him out of his plans to become a rapper.

Tomorrow's movie: “Mr. Deeds”



Local weather

TWO-DAY REGIONAL WEATHER FORECAST:

	Today	Thursday
Bagram:	Rain H: 68F L: 39F	Rain H: 63F L: 34F
Kandahar:	Dusty H: 72F L: 43F	Dusty H: 70F L: 41F
Kabul:	Rain H: 66F L: 36F	Rain H: 59F L: 32F
Uzbekistan:	Mostly Cloudy H: 68F L: 40F	Mostly Cloudy H: 67F L: 42F

Weather forecast courtesy of the Bagram Combat Weather Team

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Coalition Sports Zone

(Compiled from *SI.com*)



Duncan and Robinson share a laugh as the Spurs honor their legendary center.

Spurs retire Robinson's No. 50

SAN ANTONIO – Tim Duncan and the San Antonio Spurs honored David Robinson with a victory.

Duncan returned to the lineup to score 16 points and grab 10 rebounds in San Antonio's 87-78 victory over Utah on Monday night.

"It was great to get a win on his night," Duncan said.

The NBA champion Spurs retired Robinson's No. 50 in a postgame ceremony. He retired last summer after 14 seasons with the team.

"This is a moment you always dream of but never think will come," he said during the ceremony. "It's overwhelming. It's awesome."

Robinson, 38, was credited early in his career with keeping the franchise in San Antonio. He helped the Spurs win their second NBA title last season in his final game. "This is my final farewell," he said, beaming. "This has been a wonderful journey."

When the black shroud was lifted from the white jersey, the standing-ovation crowd exploded with cheers and began to chant Robinson's name. It was the fourth number retired in the Spurs' 30 years of existence, and joined James Silas' No. 13, George Gervin's No. 44 and Johnny Moore's No. 00. Monday's ceremony included a 15-minute video tribute that featured several star-caliber cameo appearances. Film director Penny Marshall, clad in a Spurs hat and No. 50 jersey, mock-sobbed that she'd no longer be able to ogle Robinson's bulging biceps.

"I'm going to miss those arms," she said. "[Spurs' reserve] Kevin Willis has good arms, but not like yours, baby."

Steinbrenner rips writers who left Matsui off ballots for Rookie of the Year

NEW YORK – George Steinbrenner called the voting for AL Rookie of the Year a "farce" and ripped two baseball writers for leaving his outfielder, Hideki Matsui, off their ballots.

The New York Yankees owner castigated Bill Ballou of the *Worcester (Mass.) Telegram & Gazette* and Jim Souhan of the *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, who said veterans who come from the Japanese leagues shouldn't

be eligible for the award.

Kansas City shortstop Angel Berroa won the award by a vote of 88-84 Monday, the closest rookie race in 24 years. Matsui and Berroa were both left off two ballots. "I firmly believe that a great injustice has been done to Hideki Matsui," Steinbrenner said in a statement Tuesday, adding that the two reporters "made up their own rules."

"This year's voting farce, where the appropriate qualifications for the award were blatantly ignored, clearly demonstrates unfairness to first-year players from Japan. And that must be stopped," Steinbrenner said.

Broncos FB Anderson suspended

DENVER – Denver Broncos fullback Mike Anderson has been suspended for four games for violating the NFL's substance abuse policy, the league said Tuesday.

Anderson will lose about \$317,000 of his \$1.35 million salary and won't be eligible to return until after Denver's Dec. 8 game against Kansas City. The NFL did not detail the violation.

Anderson told *The Denver Post* the positive test was for marijuana, but that he inhaled nothing more than secondhand smoke. He also presented evidence from a toxicologist in an appeal to the NFL.

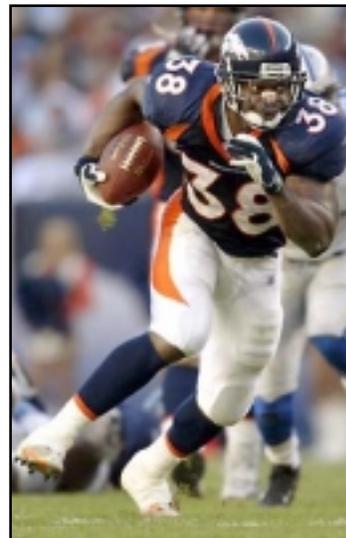
"I'm very saddened by the decision made by the NFL," Anderson told the newspaper. "I know this has a tremendous negative impact on my team, my coaches, my family and fans. I tested positive for marijuana use at a level that was so low, it would have been deemed a negative test by the state of Colorado."

Anderson is one of the most popular Broncos, an ex-Marine with a clean-cut image. But it is unlikely this is Anderson's first positive test for marijuana: Under NFL policy, a suspension doesn't come until after at least one positive test and the player has entered a confidential drug-testing

program. Anderson's lawyer, Harvey Steinberg, said he and his client will consider legal action against the NFL.

"We're looking at all possibilities in this situation, including trying to get the NFL to take a more serious look at the impacts of its policy and how it affects players who are not involved in any type of improper drug usage," Steinberg told the *Post*. "If that, in effect, involves court action, that's something we'll examine."

Anderson was the league's Offensive Rookie of the Year in 2000, when he rushed for 1,487 yards and 15 touchdowns after replacing injured starter Olandis Gary.



Anderson has 198 yards rushing and two touchdowns this season.

Afghanistan Hot Topics



(Compiled by CJTF-180 Public Affairs)

U.S. - led forces kill Afghan rebel

BAGRAM, Afghanistan (*Reuters*) – U.S. forces killed one militant in northeastern Afghanistan during an operation against Islamic guerrillas they described Tuesday as one of the hardest they have yet undertaken in the country.

Nearly two years to the day since the Islamic Taliban regime fled Kabul after intense U.S. air attacks, U.S. forces working with local Afghan militia were engaged in at least two firefights with rebels since Operation “Mountain Resolve” began Friday.

Monday, a U.S.-led patrol exchanged fire with six “enemy personnel” in Marzeh district of Nuristan province, and killed one, a U.S. military spokesman said, adding that three others escaped.

On the same day and in the same district, two or three suspected militants opened fire before fleeing the scene when close air support was called in by U.S. soldiers.

The operation aims to hunt down Islamic militants in the Nuristan and Kunar provinces in the northeast of the country.

“It’s one of the most challenging (operations) that we have undertaken in the two years coalition forces have been here,” spokesman Colonel Rodney Davis told reporters at Bagram Air Base, the U.S. headquarters just north of Kabul.

“The objectives of Mountain Resolve are to destroy and disrupt anti-coalition forces and deny sanctuary to them by taking control of the major weapons caches and terrorist bases.”

The northeast of Afghanistan is where renegade Afghan warlord and former Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar is believed to be most active in undermining the central government of President Hamid Karzai and attacking foreign troops.

The U.S. military generally uses the term “enemy personnel” to describe Hekmatyar, al Qaeda and remnants of the ousted Taliban, which has staged something of a comeback – especially in its former strongholds in the south.

Davis said the U.S. military would work as much as possible with local people in the Nuristan and Kunar provinces “to extend the influence of the authority of the central government.”

Afghan officials blame the U.S. military for an aerial bombardment of a home in Nuristan province in late October which killed eight members of the same family in Arsent village. U.S.-led forces have yet to accept responsibility.

USDA to donate \$5 million in products

(*Google*) – Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman, in a historic visit to Afghanistan, today announced that USDA intends to donate \$5 million of U.S. agricultural commodities under the Food for Progress Program. Veneman also announced the first Cochran Fellowship Program with Afghanistan to provide short-term, U.S.-based training for eight Afghan women to study agricultural finance.

Veneman said that food assistance is an important part of that

effort. In addition to donations under US Agency for International Development programs, USDA has provided \$28 million in food assistance for Afghanistan under its 2003 programs. In August, in its first government-to-government grant agreement with Afghanistan, USDA announced the donation of \$5 million of US soybean oil which will arrive by the end of the year. Under the Food for Progress Program, the soybean oil will be sold locally with the proceeds used to finance a wide range of rural development projects that will help strengthen and revitalize the country’s agriculture.

In announcing establishment of the Cochran Fellowship Program for Afghanistan, Veneman said this successful 20-year-old program will be used to empower rural Afghan women. They will learn about business plans, financial management, farmers’ cooperatives and micro-credit programs to promote food security and income-generating small businesses.

In her meeting with President Hamid Karzai, Secretary Veneman talked about USDA’s many efforts and programs, especially school feeding for Afghan children. USDA is now in its second year of supporting an Aga Khan Foundation project in the north of Afghanistan. A donation of \$9 million in US powdered milk is being used in the region, in part, to provide milk to more than 20,000 children. A portion of the donation is also being used to fund education and agriculture infrastructure development projects.

“Hey, look, we got peace keeping duty in Detroit.”



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By Kevin Kilgore

Laugh Support