



Check out a preview of the Illini's final home football game of the season in this week's Touchdown Times.

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The Associated Press

A wounded woman is helped after an explosion outside of the British Consulate in Istanbul, Turkey, Thursday.

27 killed in attack on consulate, bank

ISTANBUL, Turkey (AP) — Suspected al-Qaida suicide bombers blew up trucks packed with explosives at the British consulate and a London-based bank Thursday, killing at least 27 people and wounding nearly 450. The twin attacks coincided with President Bush's state visit to Britain.

The blasts, just minutes apart, were the worst terrorist bombings in this Muslim nation's history, and marked the second attacks in Turkey to be blamed on

al-Qaida this week. On Saturday, bombers struck two Istanbul synagogues, killing 23 people.

Turkey's security forces were put on highest alert, and the army briefly deployed soldiers in the streets. Arab and other world leaders were swift to condemn the bombings in Turkey, NATO's only Muslim member and a close ally of the United States and Israel.

Among Thursday's dead were Consul-General Roger Short, Britain's top diplomat in Istanbul,

and British diplomatic staff member Lisa Hallworth. Istanbul Gov. Muammer Guler said two other of the 16 people killed at the consulate were British, and that the death toll was likely to rise.

"Once again we are reminded of the evil these terrorists pose to people everywhere and to our way of life," Prime Minister Tony Blair said in London, with President Bush by his side. "There must be no holding back, no compromise, no hesitation in

confronting this menace."

Bush said the bombing showed "utter contempt for innocent life."

"The terrorists hope to intimidate, they hope to demoralize. They are not going to succeed," the president said.

U.S. and Turkish officials said the bombings bore the marks of an al-Qaida operation, with near-simultaneous timing and the use of fertilizer-based explosives.

The first pickup truck exploded outside the headquarters of

HSBC, the world's second-largest bank, shearing off the white facade of the 18-story building and exposing the gray concrete beneath. Windows were blown out and scraps of white ceiling material dangled, caught on torn electrical wires swaying in the breeze.

About 10 minutes later, a second truck crashed through the gate of the British consulate five miles away in Beyoglu, a historic district popular with tourists. The

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Dan Grant and Josh Roberts show off their loading job on a helicopter in Iraq.

submitted photo

C-U soldiers stick together in Iraq

BY DAN BERRIGAN
Staff writer

If he could do it all over again, he would, said Sgt. Joshua Roberts of the F Company 106 Aviation Battalion, based out of the Greater Peoria Airport.

Roberts, a 2002 graduate of the University, has been in Iraq since April and was slated to come home to Champaign in October, but he said the army decided to hold him longer.

Roberts was a close friend of another soldier with ties to the University who served in Iraq, 1st Lt. Brian Slavenas. Slavenas, 30, was one of 16 soldiers killed Nov. 2 when their CH-47 helicopter was shot down.

Slavenas and Roberts worked closely

together in Iraq.

"Over the last three months I probably spent more time with him than I did with anyone else," Roberts said in an e-mail from Iraq.

He said they would stay up late and talk into the early morning hours about sports, women and life — even if they had a mission early the next day.

"He was an amazing person, and the world will never know what they lost," Roberts said.

Roberts said that dealing with Slavenas' death has been hard, but he tries to remain upbeat even though he misses having him around.

"There are those that can find the best in anything, and then there are those who struggle to find good in the best sit-

uations," Roberts said.

But Roberts said he is making the best of his experiences in Iraq because "it is the only way to live life."

What makes Iraq such an unbearable place is the sand and heat, Roberts said. He said the only place he'd want to be less would be Antarctica. In Iraq, the sweltering heat is regularly around 140 degrees Fahrenheit, and inside the helicopter, it can get as high as 150 degrees — as hot as scalding water.

"We joke about how when we get home we are going to have to throw sand all over our stuff in our rooms, and anything that we do in the bathroom will have to be done outside with burning hot water ... so that we can be reminded of our time in Iraq," Roberts said.

He joked, "You haven't lived until you take a dump in a Portapotty without a door and with 50 people taking pictures and laughing."

Nicknamed 'Archie' by his fraternity, Tau Epsilon Phi, Roberts works as a flight engineer aboard CH-47 Chinook aircraft, the same type of aircraft Slavenas used to fly missions. Roberts maintains the \$16 million aircraft, performs door gunner duty and acts as a mechanic in the air, he said. But he eventually wants to become a pilot.

Pilot and Chief Warrant Officer Ed Naines is also a member of the F Company 106 Aviation Battalion and spent his time on leave in Champaign.

Before coming home, Naines hadn't

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Fraternity members help with wildfires

BY KATIE HEINZ
Staff writer

Alpha Tau Omega fraternity members Trent Jackson, Brennan Hughes and David Pavlik packed their bags earlier this month and flew to southern California, but vacationing was the last thing on their minds.

Jackson, senior in LAS, Hughes, sophomore in LAS and Pavlik, senior in business, went to help with the wildfire relief effort.

The wildfires started on Oct. 25 and burned for several days, destroying more than 600,000 acres of land in San Diego County. About 3,000 families were left homeless with nothing more than a pile of debris and ash in place of their residences.

After reading about the wildfires in The Chicago Tribune and seeing images of the devastation on CNN, the students said they were compelled to do anything they could to help the relief effort. They registered with the American Red Cross and flew to California to offer their assistance in person. Jackson said it was an opportunity to help out with something different.

"It seemed like a good experience and you'd get exposed to something you wouldn't see in the Midwest," Jackson said.

Although their decision to go to California involved missing a week

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Thousands in Britain protest Bush visit

LONDON (AP) — Tens of thousands of demonstrators marched through the heart of London on Thursday, toppling a 17-foot tall papier mache statue of President Bush to show their anger for the Iraq war and Prime Minister Tony Blair's support of the invasion.

As Bush and Blair vowed "not to flinch or give way or concede one inch" to terrorism in the wake of deadly bombings against British targets in Turkey, protesters said the close relationship between the two leaders made them deeply uneasy.

"We're angry that Bush appears to be leading our country," said marcher Ted Edwards. "Why Blair is allying himself to Bush I do not know."

Many in the crowd said Thursday's bombings in Istanbul, which killed more than two dozen people, strengthened their resolve to oppose U.S.-British policy in Iraq.

"There have been more and more bombings since the action in Iraq and more terrorism," said Mischa Gorris, a 37-year-old London lawyer. "You will never change the hearts and minds of

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Non-profit groups help get students out of 'bubble'

BY WINYAN SOO HOO
Staff writer

About 3.5 million Americans are likely to experience homelessness in any given year, according to research conducted by the Urban Institute.

In response to the growing number of homeless people, numerous non-profit volunteer organizations both on and off campus joined together to raise homelessness awareness as part of National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week.

One student group, Volunteer Illini Projects (VIP), devoted this past week to volunteering for a number of food and social service organizations.

"Most students live in a bubble," said Erica Johnson, VIP's Hunger and Homelessness events director. "It is really important for students to realize that the issue of homelessness takes place in our backyard."

During the year, VIP makes

weekly visits to soup kitchens and other care centers.

This week, the organization held eight activities. Johnson organized an event in which volunteers constructed miniature cardboard houses on the Quad to educate, interact with and raise awareness among students. Other activities included visits to the Salvation Army, Center for Women in Transition, St. Jude's Catholic Worker House and the Transitional Initiatives and Men's Emergency Services Center (TIMES Center). VIP visited the center Thursday night to serve Thanksgiving dinner.

"If students are surprised by homelessness statistics, they should find a cause that they are passionate about and pursue it," Johnson said. "A lot of these people just need an extra push to transition out of homelessness."

In addition to food services, VIP's Arts Outreach program took part in activities that included craft-making for children at the Center for Women in Transition and will hold

an instrumental performance for a Thanksgiving dinner at the Care Center in Champaign this weekend. A full listing of VIP's events can be found on their Web site.

Joyce Schmidt, program supervisor at the TIMES Center, said she is welcoming more student groups such as VIP to come in and volunteer.

"I think it is wonderful that student groups recognize the existence of a hunger and homelessness problem," Schmidt said. "There are a number of volunteer and journalism students that ask about the center. It speaks a lot for our future leaders."

Schmidt said she hopes the awareness week allowed more students to recognize the problem and one day, find a lasting solution.

"When students go home for break, I hope they discuss the issue with one another," Schmidt said. "I want them to talk about it with their families and their friends. Homelessness remains unresolved and there is no current govern-



ALI SAJJADI The Daily Illini

Students from Volunteer Illini Projects help serve dinner at the TIMES Center Homeless Shelter on Market Street in Champaign on Thursday evening.

mental solution for this problem." Last year, some students from Urbana High School held a Thanksgiving meal at the school

for men from the TIMES Center. Because of a lack of food donations, the TIMES Center does not

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