

Local Agency Helps Lebanon

As thousands flee their homes amidst fighting in Israel and Lebanon, Portland-based Mercy Corps has started distributing emergency supplies to displaced families south of Beirut.

Mercy Corps staff and media on the ground estimate that at least 750,000 to 1 million people are displaced.

"People have an urgent need

for basic supplies," said Mercy Corps aid worker Cassandra Nelson of Beaverton, on the phone from Beirut. "We are helping address the needs of displaced people without strong family networks to support them."

Mercy Corps is distributing food, cooking supplies, air mattresses, and blankets to 3,000 people in the town of Kaifoun,

in the Shouf Mountains southeast of Beirut. Kaifoun's normal population of 5,000 people has swelled to approximately 40,000 as internally displaced people seek refuge there.

An estimated 14,000 people are staying in "transit centers" — schools and other municipal buildings — throughout the town.

Columbia Slough Regatta Sunday

Twelve years of celebrating the wild wetlands of north and northeast Portland takes place Sunday, July 30 during the annual Columbia Slough Small Craft Regatta from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Portland Water Bureau Canoe Launch, 16550 N.E. Airport Way.

The celebration of the Columbia Slough promises to be the best one yet with t-shirts, educational booths, snacks, and beverages. Area residents are invited to see how far the Columbia



Dozens of small watercraft and hundreds of people are attracted to the annual Columbia Slough Regatta, celebrating the wild wetlands of north and northeast Portland.

Slough Watershed Council has come in protecting the natural area, and learn about future conservation goals.

Past Regattas have attracted 170 boats and 500 participants. The Slough's flat water is perfect for novice and experience boaters alike. The Regatta offers views of riparian habitat that are home to over 175 species of birds, 25 species of fish, and a

wide variety of mammals.

Participants may reserve a canoe or kayak (45 minute trip), paddles and personal flotation device through the council or bring their own boat and equipment. If you are bringing your own craft, you must supply your own safety equipment.

A suggested donation of \$5 per person will help support the council's mission and goals.

Sailor Dies in Standoff

A U.S. Navy sailor fatally shot himself in the head after he was wounded by a police officer in front of a military recruiting station at Eastport Plaza on Southeast 82nd Avenue, authorities said Thursday.

Jerry Goins, 37, was shot July 19 after police had gone to the center after getting a report that an armed and suicidal man had gone there to see his girlfriend, said Sgt. Brian Schmautz, spokesman for the Portland Police Bureau.

Schmautz said Officer Rich-

ard Steinbronn did not find Goins when he arrived at the scene. But Steinbronn spent 15 minutes talking to people inside the recruiting center and also spoke with Goins on a cell phone.

Later when the officer spotted Goins with a gun on the sidewalk, witnesses said he repeatedly ordered Goins to drop the weapon. When Goins raised the gun, Steinbronn shot him four times in the midsection, Schmautz said.

Steinbronn has been on the force for nine years.

Oregon Guard Heads to Mongolia

Oregon National Guard soldiers are headed to Mongolia for U.N. international peacekeeping training.

More than 90 Oregon soldiers in B Company 2nd Battalion of the 162nd Infantry, based out of Corvallis and Eugene, will travel to Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia for three weeks in August during the Khaan Quest IV 2006 training exercise to help train members of the Mongolian Armed Forces in United Na-

tions peacekeeping operations.

The exercise is designed to conduct multi-national training and promote positive military-to-military relationships among participating nations.

More than 240 international participants from Fiji, Tonga, Thailand, Bangladesh, and Korea will be represented. Many other countries including, Russia, China, United Kingdom, France, Canada and Japan will be international observers during the training.

Civil Rights Hiring Politicized

Bush lawyers bring their ideologies

The Bush Administration has fundamentally politicized the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division by changing the composition of positions from predominantly career jobs into politically appointed positions, according to a report in Sunday's Boston Globe.

Since former Attorney General John Ashcroft replaced hiring committees made up of veteran career

African American to a heavier focus on reverse discrimination against whites.

At the same time, President Bush's political appointees in the Justice Department have overruled recommendations of veteran civil rights lawyers in several cases, including a Texas re-districting plan that was partially overturned by the Supreme Court after being

Cases have shifted away from voting rights and employment cases involving discrimination against African American to a heavier focus on reverse discrimination against whites.

lawyers with Republican political appointees in 2003, the numbers of lawyers with clear conservative ideological agendas who lack backgrounds in civil rights law have increased.

The Globe notes that since then, only 42 percent of lawyers in the division have civil rights experience compared to 77 percent of those hired two years before.

In changing the composition of the Civil Rights Division, the type of cases have shifted away from voting rights and employment cases involving discrimination against

found to violate the Voting Rights Act and a discriminatory Georgia Voter ID law that was also recently overturned by both federal and Georgia courts.

Democrats complain that the Bush Administration and the Republican Congress continue to push for outdated, discriminatory laws that make it harder for Americans to vote and they have systematically worked to weaken oversight and civil rights enforcement in order to achieve their goals and put the priorities of their party over those of the American people.

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