

No food on first convoy to Syrian town in 4 years

By PHILIP ISSA
Associated Press

BEIRUT — A humanitarian convoy reached a starved suburb of Syria's capital for the first time since 2012 on Wednesday but did not bring any food, as the opposition called for a countrywide cease-fire for the Islamic holy month of Ramadan and aid access for all Syrians.

In the north, Kurdish-led fighters aided by U.S.-led airstrikes launched a new advance on the town of Manbij, an Islamic State stronghold on a key supply route linking the Turkish border to Raqqa, the extremist group's de facto capital.

The U.N. estimates that 4,000 to 8,000 people live in the Damascus suburb of Daraya, which has been subject to a crippling government blockade since residents expelled security forces in the early stages of the 2011 uprising against President Bashar Assad.

The joint U.N., Interna-



This image released by the International Committee for the Red Cross shows the first humanitarian aid convoy in Daraya, Syria on Wednesday, June 1, 2016.

tional Committee of the Red Cross, and Syrian Arab Red Crescent convoy that reached Daraya Wednesday contained medicines, vaccines, baby formula, and "nutritional items for children," the ICRC said, but no food.

"Clearly, what we brought today will not meet the needs of people in Daraya — and a one-off delivery of food will not either," Krista

Armstrong of the ICRC told the AP via email, saying the organization hopes to return with food Friday. "We need to have repeated and regular access to all people living in besieged places in Syria."

It was not immediately clear why the shipment contained no food. A 36-truck aid convoy entered neighboring Moadamiyeh, which is also under govern-

ment siege, at around the same time, carrying food. The suburb last received aid in February, residents said.

The U.S.- and Russia-led International Syria Support Group last month called on the U.N. to "immediately carry out a program for air bridges and air drops for all areas in need" starting June 1 if it was denied humanitarian access to designated areas, including Daraya.

The United Nations Security Council is set to meet Friday to discuss the possibility of starting humanitarian air drops to besieged areas.

Britain's ambassador to the U.N. Matthew Rycroft said the aid going to Daraya Wednesday was "too little, too late," and his country's delegation would raise the possibility of air drops at the meeting. Russian Ambassador Vitaly Churkin, however, said he believed air drops were impractical and that the land deliveries should be given a chance.

The office of the U.N. envoy to Syria said it was

looking into "every possible means" to reach 592,700 people in besieged areas and millions more in hard-to-reach areas facing severe food shortages.

The opposition's High Negotiations Committee withdrew from indirect peace talks with the government last month after violence flared and the government stalled on allowing sustained humanitarian access to besieged areas and releasing detainees.

In a letter sent to the U.N. secretary-general on Wednesday, HNC chief Riad Hijab called for a "comprehensive" Ramadan cease-fire as a precondition for resuming talks in July. The holy month in which Muslims fast from dawn to dusk begins next week.

An earlier cease-fire that went into effect in late February brought relief to some opposition areas but frayed by late April.

The worsening violence has strained relations between rebel fighters and the largely-exiled HNC, and

earlier this week Mohammad Alloush, who represents the powerful Islam Army in the opposition coalition, withdrew from his post as chief negotiator.

HNC official Bassma Kodmani said the armed factions would nevertheless abide by a cease-fire if the government does as well, saying the opposition group consults the rebels before making decisions.

The Syrian Democratic Forces, a Kurdish-led militia that includes Arab fighters, have meanwhile approached to within 14 kilometers (nine miles) of Manbij. The SDF announced a campaign to advance on areas around Raqqa, the de facto capital of the IS group's self-styled caliphate, last week.

"There are tens of casualties among fighters and evacuating civilians," said Nasser Haj Mansour, an adviser to the SDF. "Daesh is using its entire means to stop the forces," he told the AP by telephone from near the front line, referring to IS by its Arabic acronym.

BOARDMAN'S LIMEY PASTOR

Baccalaureate for Boardman

Delivered to graduating students:

It may be hard for you to believe. It is especially hard for me to believe, but I was once a young man myself once. I was like you once, ending the great chasm of life called childhood, preparing for an unknown future in a world of dubious merit ... a world that I had no conception of.

This year I will be turning 60 years old and my body has parts that click when they move. You'll get there too, one day. It is interesting that the body, which once seemed such a solid fact of permanence, now seems to indicate that it is much more temporary than we expected it to be. Please pay attention to it and treat your bodies well.

As people leaving childhood and entering a larger world, you need to know that you are guarded by a God who takes great pride in you, whose son Jesus Christ regards you as family and who the Holy Spirit companions every day. You are on the watch list! The Lord is your shepherd and this mission of his is to continually enlarge your world and make you more and more like himself every day. This fact will occasionally blow your mind.

I called this message "Time to Wake Up" because if you haven't done this by now you should be waking up very soon.

When I was 14 years old I was sitting in the back of drama class and I was staring down at my notebook with my eyes crossed, my eyes fuzzed out with inattention.

I had been reading earlier about people living their lives in daydreams as a way of avoiding reality, and how once awakened from one's own sleep you could walk along the sidewalk and see the daydreams in people's eyes crossing their eyes as they slumber-walked along.

Something in my brain clicked, and suddenly I could see my teacher and the class switch on, into Technicolor and 3-D, so to speak. I was aware of my hands resting on the desk, aware of my feet on the floor, and the languid heat and light coming from between the window blinds, warming my face. My own change of state, this new and thrilling awakens, experienced in the classroom and for the remainder of the

classes and the next few days, became dazzlingly detailed and precise.

This, I understood, was real wakefulness — not just tumbling from the sleep in bed into the anxieties and imaginations of daydreams in waking sleep, this was being awake, really awake! Being really awake may truly rescue us from the tangle of dreams. This is much of my life as I approach my sixtieth year. I try not to miss any adventure, or moment for the real to be seen and appreciated and for Christ's presence to be manifest within it.

So, from that day on I have worked to be the disciple that the Lord wants me to be, the disciple attentive to the beauty, the subtlety and the teaching of life. Because at any moment Jesus may speak, and we may miss his teaching. We may miss his own self, appearing in our lives.

A life awake is a stream of moments that scintillate and flash in a cloudless night sky. I made a list of some moments of mine in no particular order. I would advise you to do this as you go along. Your bucket list is already appearing before your eyes.

I was chased by a tornado driving between Minnesota and Wisconsin.

I've flown aloft in a glider and went into a dive, hurtling straight down towards the earth before pulling out and back up.

I nearly drowned on the Great Barrier Reef in Australia, in 100 feet of water, being circled by sharks.

I had the American Space Shuttle land in front of me at Edwards Air Force Base, and I took photos of the astronauts when they posed for a number of us.

In Minnesota, I went inside a cage with a tiger in it; it was very playful and bit me.

I was a newspaper restaurant critic in California for about three years and ate at the finest restaurants — for free.

I saw Mount Saint Helens erupt from my office in Portland.

My car caught fire when I was sitting in it, after I had just filled it with gasoline. After I broke down, going uphill to visit my mechanic.

I sailed around the shores of the

Apostle islands in the great Lake Superior in a beautiful sailboat, at night, with the islands craggy with skull-shaped rocks that made a loud gurgling noise. The moon rose above the waves with a blood-red color, and the northern lights switched on like cold neon fire, sheets of green, yellow and blue that lit the sky.

I went to Bethlehem and knelt in the stable building that had a star marking where Jesus was born. I touched the golden star on the floor with both hands and prayed.

I went to Jordan and went to the baptismal spring on the Jordan where Jesus was baptized, and put my feet in that same river.

I sat next to Bill Murray at a movie — and pretended to be cool and not recognize him (this was a stupid thing to do).

I played in an Easter Play "The Witness" at the Schnitzer in Portland where I was the narrator.

I sat in the pub in England, called the Eagle and Child, in Oxford, where C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien wrote and read to each other "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe" and "The Hobbit" and "Lord of the Rings," respectively.

I nearly blew a hole in myself when a pistol I was shooting misfired.

I met the Dalai Lama at Los Angeles party and shook his hand.

I went to Petra, in Jordan, the Lost City that featured in Raiders of the Lost Ark — and lost the party of folks I was with. I wandered around for a while before I found them.

I had a camera inserted into my thigh and poked up into my heart and saw my heart beat on a giant TV screen.

First and foremost, I had an encounter with the living Christ that changed everything. After that life has had a movement forward into brighter and brighter amazement.

You are alive, you are called to awaken and follow the same Bright Star of Christ from the stable to the empty tomb. Go forth and get busy. It's a heck of a ride!

Colin Brown is pastor of the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Boardman.

Your bucket list is already appearing before your eyes.

BRIEFLY

Methodist church sets Sunday barbecue

PENDLETON — The First United Methodist Church is firing up the barbecue this weekend.

A Community Sunday Dinner Barbecue is planned at noon at the church, 352 S.E. Second St., Pendleton. Chicken will be provided. Those attending are asked to bring a side dish, salad or dessert to share.

Lay leader Kip Morgan said many encounters with Jesus in the gospels indicate food is involved. Preparing a good meal to share with others is a way for the church to demonstrate what Rev. Jim Pierce calls Christ's "radical hospitality."

For more information, contact 541-276-2616 or kit@morganpost.net.

Program highlights missionary pioneer

PENDLETON — A presentation about Jason Lee, a pioneer missionary in the 1800s, will take place in Pendleton. Aaron Auer of Portland will share

about Lee, who was sent by the Methodist Church to Oregon in 1834 to bring the "Book of Heaven" to the Salish people. The free event is Tuesday at 7 p.m. at Roy Raley Park, 1205 S.W. Court Ave., Pendleton.

In 2009, to commemorate Oregon's 150 years of statehood, Auer, along with John Sutton, toured all 36 county courthouses, giving a presentation to judges, commissioners, sheriffs, and other public officials.

For more information, visit www.roaroregon.org.

Mormon temple statue replaced

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — The gold statue on top of the Mormon temple in Bountiful that was struck by lightning last month has been replaced.

The *Deseret News* reports that crews removed the angel Moroni statue on Wednesday.

The statue lost part of its head and back during the lightning strike.

Spires topped with sculptures depicting the angel Moroni with a

trumpet are a signature of temples built by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints around the world.

Most of these statues are constructed of fiberglass covered in gold leaf, and weigh about 300 pounds.

The angel Moroni statues are built with lightning rods, meant to draw lightning strikes away from other areas of the temples.

Meeting focuses on prayer, healing

WALLA WALLA — Esther Flesland, director of the Spokane Healing Rooms, will host a special healing meeting.

The free event, which includes prayer for healing, is Friday, June 10 from 7-9 p.m. at Whitman Court, 305 Ash St., Walla Walla. In addition, Flesland will teach about Biblical healing.

The gathering is sponsored by Walla Walla Aglow Community Lighthouse. For more information, call Lora Sykes at 509-540-0212 or Darya Tucker at 509-876-1668.

Worship Community

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Nursery provided for all services
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Worship - 10:45 AM
6:00 pm
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Pastor David Dever
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Sun. Worship Service.....11:00am
Sun. Evening Worship.....6:00pm
Wed. Prayer & Bible Study...6:00pm
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235 SW 3rd
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Sunday:
Sunday School.....10:00 am
Worship.....11:00 am
Evening Service.....7:00 pm
Wednesday Service.....7:00 pm
"Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you."
1 Pet. 5:7

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Children's Church • 11:15am
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Saturdays
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THURSDAY.....Spanish 6:00 pm
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SUNDAY.....Spanish 7:00 pm
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