

Kuhl may change views after Petraeus report

BY BOB RECOTTA
recotta@the-leader.com

CORNING | Much is riding on the report Gen. David Petraeus will submit to Congress on Sept. 15 regarding the progress in the war in Iraq, perhaps even the support of U.S. Rep. John R. "Randy" Kuhl Jr., R-Hammondport.

Up to now, Kuhl has been a staunch supporter of President George W. Bush's policy in Iraq. That support, however, may end depending on Petraeus' report.

"He may very well say 'Look, this is not working and this can not work and nothing can work.'" Kuhl said. "It would be my job reporting to the commander and chief to tell him now's the time to exit. He may say just the opposite. He may say 'We've made progress here, here and here and there is movement here although it's not the progress we'd like.'"

Kuhl said the effort to quell the violence in Iraq is one of three areas that measure whether the president's policy is working.

He said the Iraqi government's ability to run the country and the country's economic health also need to be considered when making a judgment on the U.S.'s policy in Iraq, especially the recent surge of troops.

"The surge has only been tactically in place since June 15, so you're only talking about five or six weeks they've actually been able to take the Iraqi force and American force and move it where they want to go," Kuhl said. "In some places it's working very well. Now

what they're seeing is the tribal chieftains in Anbar are cooperating with U.S. forces, which they weren't before."

Kuhl said he isn't the only one who's eying Petraeus' report.

"We resisted datelines, but by having that report there, it is a deadline," Kuhl said. "There's no consequence, but you essentially create this false deadline saying the determination on whether we go further is based on that. My opinion is that incites the enemy to be as divisive as they can to taint

that report toward them, which then diffuses support in this country for the war."

Kuhl did say if the United States pulls out of Iraq too quickly, it could have a devastating affect on not only Iraq, but the entire Middle East.

"It would be better to leave having stability in that country, rather than leave precipitously and let pure chaos run through the region, where you'd have mass genocide," Kuhl said. "To leave precipitously is to have havoc occur in the entire

region, not just Iraq."

In the interest of promoting long-term peace in Iraq, Kuhl said diplomatic talks need to be held involving all Iraq's neighbors, including Iran and Syria.

"That's why I have disagreed with the administration about involving surrounding countries, which they are starting to do," Kuhl said. "You have to talk with your enemies to know what they want. You might not agree, but you have to at least have some conversations."

IN BRIEF

Wanted Md. man arrested in Steuben

WOODHULL | A 35-year-old Maryland man wanted in his home state was arrested Thursday on State Route 417. According to Steuben County Sheriff's deputies, Jerry Wayne Bond Jr. was stopped on Route 417 after he failed to stay in a designated lane. Upon investigation, it was determined Bond was wanted in Maryland on unknown charges. Also, deputies found weapons and marijuana in the man's car. He was charged with two counts of criminal possession of a weapon, unlawful possession of marijuana, failure to maintain a lane, unregistered motor vehicle, unlicensed operation and improper use of plates. He was arraigned and sent to the Steuben County Jail without bail.

2 charged with drug possession

CORNING | Two people were charged with possessing crack cocaine after police raided a West Third Street home Wednesday night. Eric Brown, 35, and Hillary M. Johnson, 23, both of 75 W. Third St., were both charged with third-degree criminal possession of a controlled substance, a class B felony. According to the Corning Police Department, members of the Steuben County District Attorney's Drug Initiative Team executed a search warrant at the home around 6:15 p.m. Wednesday. During the search, police found crack cocaine, marijuana and cash. The crack cocaine had an approximate street value of \$2,500. The Drug Initiative Team is made up of members of the Steuben County Sheriff's Office and the Corning and Bath police departments.

Third annual walk/run slated

HOWARD | The 3rd annual Howard Community Day 5K Run/Walk will be held Sept 14 at the Howard Union Church. Registration for walkers will be held from 8-9 a.m. with the race beginning at 9 a.m. Registration for runners will be held from 8:30-9:30 a.m. with the race beginning at 9:30 a.m. The race route includes both paved and dirt roads winding through the hills of Howard. Each participant will receive a T-shirt and water will be available on the course. Awards will be made to the top three male and female finishers in each of seven age categories in the run. The walk will not have age brackets and awards will be presented to the top three male and female finishers. Pre-registration fee is \$12 per person by Aug. 31 and \$15 per person after Aug. 31. For more information or to request a registration form, call Robert at 566-2353.

Food Bank to visit Watkins Glen Sat.

ELMIRA | The Food Bank of the Southern Tiers Mobile Food Pantry truck will be at the Watkins Glen International Saturday and Sunday to recover food at the completion of the NASCAR Nextel Cup race. Food Bank staff will collect the unused products from hospitality tents for distribution to its agency partners which include over 180 agencies in six Southern Tier counties. For more information, call 796-6061 or visit Web site www.foodbankst.org.

■ Staff reports

FORMER M&T BUILDING DEMOLITION



SARAH GROSSMAN | THE LEADER

Construction workers demolish the former M&T bank building next to the Corning Credit Union on the corner of Warren and Pulteney Streets on Thursday.

Revaluation forms to arrive in mail soon

BY JEFFERY SMITH
jsmith@the-leader.com

CORNING | The first sign of a city property revaluation will appear soon in residents' mail boxes.

A consulting firm started mailing property inventory surveys to city property owners on Wednesday.

City Manager Mark Ryckman said the forms ask residents to verify information about their properties.

"They're pretty simple," Ryckman said. "Self explanatory. Residents should start getting them in the mail any time."

The information is needed to help the assessors office make additions or correct information about each property.

Starting this month, assessors

will begin verifying the information and in September the consulting firm will begin a city-wide property revaluation, Ryckman said. The project will cost about \$170,000.

City Assessor Rhonda Darling said the contractors will not enter properties and all staff will wear identification tags during field inspections.

Ryckman said to keep residents informed about the revaluation process, the city will hold a public information session at 6 p.m. Monday at City Hall.

"It's time to update our records," he said. "We haven't had a revaluation for about 10 years. So it's time."

Bath man charged with grand larceny

THE LEADER STAFF

BATH | The owner of a local cheerleading organization was charged Wednesday with third-degree grand larceny for allegedly stealing more than \$9,000 from a fundraising company.

Anthony M. Ronchi, 26, of Bluhm Road, Fairport, was charged with the class D

felony after an eight-month investigation.

Ronchi failed to pay for more than \$9,000 in goods that Northeast Elite received in August 2006, state police at Bath said.

A call to the organization Thursday was not answered.

Ronchi will appear in court at 3 p.m. Wednesday.

IN BRIEF

WG to participate in 'Shave-a-Thon'

WATKINS GLEN | Watkins Glen firefighters and community members will participate in a "Shave-a-Thon" Aug. 18 to raise money for children with cancer. The firefighters will shave their heads in a public act of solidarity and support of the Saint Baldrick's Foundation, an

independent non-profit organization that supports cooperative research into childhood cancers. The organization also provides grants for children who may not be able to receive the medical attention they need. For more information or to donate or participate, call Dominick at 535-8992.

■ Staff report




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