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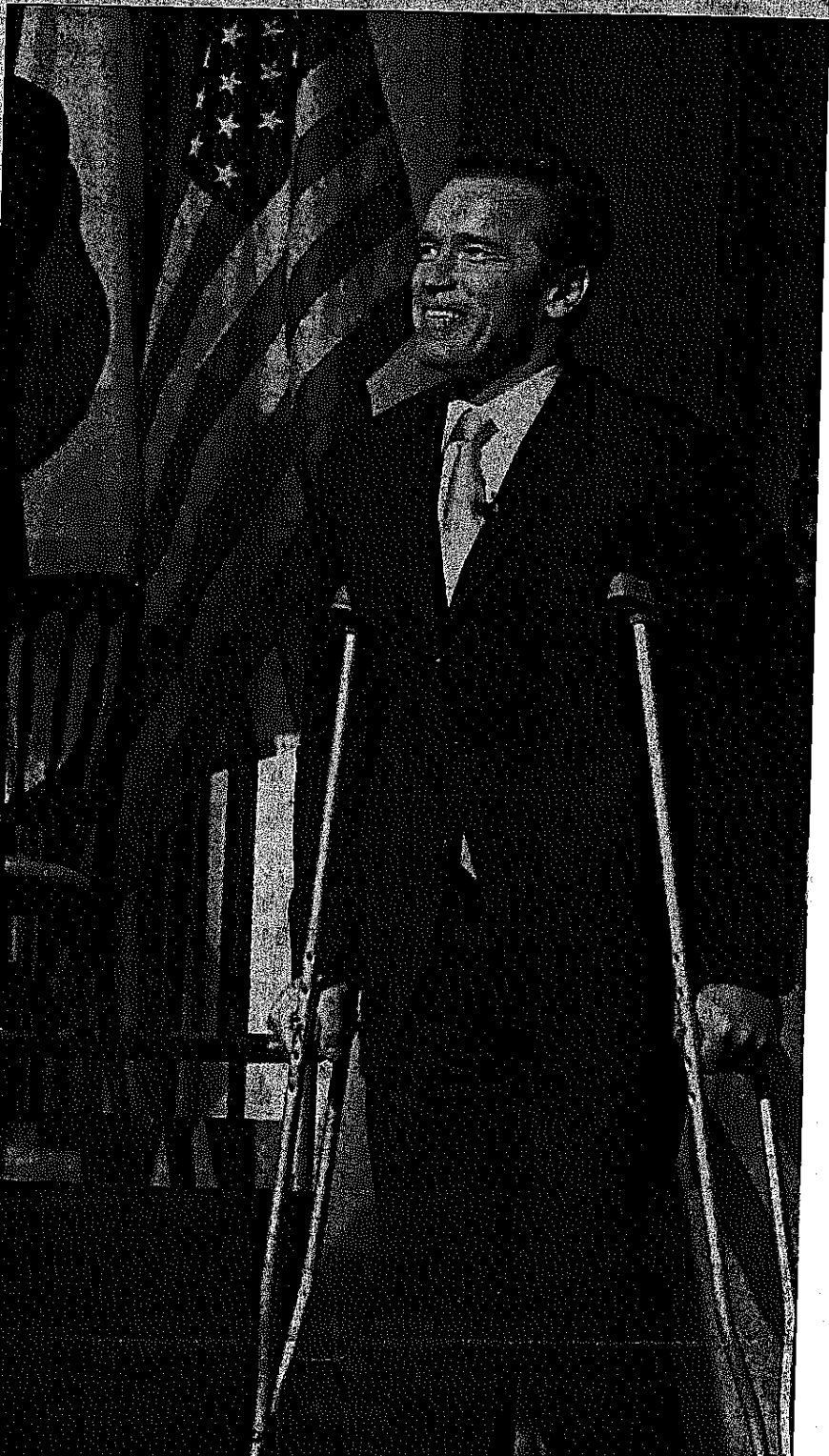
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U photo/Frankie Frost

SPECIAL DELIVERY: Jason Araghi, president of Green Beans Coffee Co. Inc., stands in front of a map showing areas of his company's operations in the Middle East. The Larkspur business supplies organic gourmet coffee to troops in war zones.

Moving to the center, caref



GI joe: Marin firm gets coffee to war zones

By Gary Klien
IJ reporter

War is hell, but now it comes with cappuccinos and scones.

The upgrade is courtesy of Green Beans Coffee Co. Inc., a Larkspur company that has carved out a most unusual niche — serving organic gourmet coffee to U.S. troops in the world's nastiest war zones.

'Green Bean has gone to just about every location where we have troops

The business has taken Mill Valley resident Jason Araghi, the president of the company, around the globe to set up new coffeehouses at military installations. Araghi has flown in transport planes under fire, and his cafes — remodeled 40-foot double-wide trailers — have been used for target practice by insurgents.

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The business has taken Mill Valley resident Jason Araghi, the president of the company, around the globe to set up new coffeehouses at military installations. Araghi has flown in transport planes under fire, and his cafes — remodeled 40-foot-deep, wide trailers — have been used for target practice by insurgents.

"We forget how good we have it here," said Araghi, whose language skills include Arabic, Farsi, French and Spanish.

The privately held company's success — it had \$15 million in revenue last year up from \$9 million the year before — has been a decade in the making.

In 1996, Araghi and his brother Jon, who were working in the Middle East, decided to launch the Art Nouveau Cafe, a Seattle-style coffeehouse, in Saudi Arabia. The cafe became popular with the U.S. soldiers stationed nearby, and soon, at the military's urging, Green Beans opened coffeehouses at the Esplanade Village and Prince Sultan military bases.

See Coffee, page A7



SECOND TERM BEGINS: Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, who broke his leg before Christmas, will walk on stage to be sworn in for his second term Friday during ceremonies in Sacramento. A theme of his inaugural speech, Schwarzenegger proposed a centrist political model that calls California "that supercedes ideology." Story, page C4.

S.F. tries to put brakes on 'parking

By Jesse McKinley
New York Times

SAN FRANCISCO — It bears

a young man was killed trying to defend a spot he had found. More recently, the victim



COFFEE: Marin firm keeps war zones stocked

From page A1

"We basically grew with the military) as their footprint expanded in the region," said Araghi, 42. "And when 9/11 hit, we were the first American food company that responded and said we'd go over there."

Araghi, who was born in Los Angeles and grew up in Los Gatos, moved back to the Bay Area about two years ago, settling in Marin to live near the water. Today, his company has some 300 employees at 50 locations on military bases in South and west Asia, the Middle East and Africa.

"The impact has been very positive," said Jerry Hanson, an Iraq-based specialist with the Army and Air Force Exchange Service, a contractor that delivers home-style merchandise and food to troops overseas. "Green Beans has gone to just about every location where we have troops deployed."

not take such a step, largely out of fear of being accused of undercutting the troops.

That leaves them with only one option, the confirmation hearings, which are to start next week immediately after the president expected speech. The hearings could expose the divisions within the military over the wisdom about an increase in troops.

Many senior officers, including Casey, have argued that adding American troops will undercut the effort to get the Iraqi

Green Beans imports its organic beans from around the world and has them roasted and packaged at a facility in South San Francisco. The logistics of shipping the coffee to war zones results in huge overhead costs, but Araghi insists on prices similar to state-side cafes.

A latte with four shots of espresso is \$3.35, less than a similar drink at a Peet's or Starbucks. A 24-ounce mocha frappé is \$4.99. House coffee runs from \$1.45 to \$1.75 a cup.

"The costs of the products they sell are acceptable but can put a pretty good dent in a military member's wallet if they drink a lot," Scott Whitney, a soldier stationed in Iraq and a daily Green Beans patron, told the Wall Street Journal.

Still, Green Beans kicks a small percentage of its profits back to organizations that support military families, such as the Pat Tillman Foundation, named for the late GI who quit

statement, while Obama spoke to reporters about his conversation with Bush.

"I personally indicated that an escalation of troop levels in Iraq was a mistake and that we need a political accommodation, rather than a military approach to the sectarian violence there," he said. "I think he recognizes that the status quo is unacceptable and has to change."

Sen. Mary Landrieu, D-La., said she would consider supporting an increase in troops

After years of serving the military, Green Beans is trying its hand in the domestic market. On Tuesday it opened its first U.S. cafe — near Travis Air Force Base in Vacaville — and plans to open another in Fairfield next month. More stores are in the works around the country.

The Vacaville store replaced a former coffee shop called Perfect Blend. Nicole Michaud, manager of the refurbished coffeehouse, said it has drawn a mix of civilians and soldiers.

"We've gotten a few of each," she said. "But the military personnel that have come are really excited."

Contact: Gary Klein via email at GKlein@marinjournal.com.

can people will see the surge as a new direction," said Sen. Ben Nelson, D-Neb. "The American people want to see a change in direction, not just a change in slogans."

Sen. Blanche Lincoln, D-Ark., said an increase in troops would face considerable scrutiny in Congress from Democrats and Republicans.

"I asked the president, 'Where would that surge come from?'" Lincoln said. "He said that was a very good question."

fast and slim their paunch. "It's easy for you to grow an unhealthy, fat and slim reproduction and healthy skin, according to the American Veterinary Medical Association.

Like all diet drugs, Slenitrol is meant to be part of an overall weight management program that includes a complete and balanced diet and exercise, according to its label. Slenitrol is not a cure for obesity, its effects cease within a day or two of stopping treatment.

Dogs, like people, grow fatter as they eat more and exercise less, said Bonnie Beaver, a professor at Texas A&M University.



COFFEE BREAK: A Green Beans Coffee outlet is shown at Camp Prosperity in Iraq. Jason Araghi of the company has traveled around the globe to set up new coffeehouses at military installations around the world and has them roasted and packaged at a facility in South