

# UPEI Students Raise \$1,011 for Red Cross Afghan Relief Fund, Finally

by Erin FAGAN

The organizers behind Saturday night's successful Afghan Relief Fund Concert were scheduled to meet with P.E.I.'s Canadian Red Cross Manager of Fund Development, Wally Morrison, at twelve o'clock on Monday, March 11.

Twelve minutes before twelve o'clock, the group (UPEI students Sobia Ali, Stuart Neatby, Jennifer Galle, and George Marshall) realized that they were only about thirty dollars away from having a \$1,000 donation for the Red Cross.

**"This is really appreciated. It's people like you who do these things."  
-Wally Morrison**

Taking up the donation bucket, the students held a spontaneous campaign drive in the English, Economics, and Political Studies areas of the Main Building, striving to reach that coveted \$1,000 mark.

In fact, they exceeded their expectations. Within less than ten minutes, thanks to the generosity of those who donated spare change and last-minute checks, the group achieved \$33.54.

At twelve o'clock, the group presented Morrison with a grand total of \$1,011 for the relief efforts in Afghanistan.

The concert itself, held in the upper level of the Barn, attracted approximately 150 people. Organizers Ali and Neatby expressed pleasant surprise at the strong turn-out.

"[The turn-out] was better than we expected," noted Ali. Both Neatby and Ali were particularly impressed by an early and consistent attendance throughout the duration of the concert.

Morrison, speaking on behalf of the Prince Edward Island Region Canadian Red Cross, was also enthused by the campaign's success.

"This is really appreciated," he added, "It's people like you who do these things."

Morrison explained that the



Port Citizen Pete.

proceeds will go first to the Canadian Red Cross national office, and will then be sent to the local Afghanistan centre. Under the current management of a "Swiss gentleman," the money raised "goes to purchase whatever is needed."

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-Wally Morrison**

"Food is one of the outstanding problems, along with clothing due to the weather," he said, adding that there is a current emphasis on improving sanitation. Morrison also explained that "[the Red Cross] buy everything as locally as they can" in order to support the regional economy.

The need for relief in Afghanistan continues to be a pressing issue within the Canadian Red Cross, Morrison continued.

"The situation hasn't improved at all. If anything, it has gotten worse."

"The fundraising has been

slow in North America," he added, citing that \$3.2 million has been donated in Canada so far (\$29,000 of this on P.E.I.) In contrast, within two months, \$17 million was donated by Canadians toward the WTC disaster relief fund.

As a result, the Canadian Red Cross will be increasing their efforts to reach a \$20 million dollar goal for relief to Afghanistan, Morrison said.

"It's going to be going on for a long time," Morrison said, in reference to the ongoing program.

Incidentally, he added, the Red Cross has been working in Afghanistan for sixteen years.

"It always has to be some major catastrophe before it opens people's eyes."

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-Wally Morrison**

Another project may be undertaken by the group in the spring as a part of their ongoing concern for relief to Afghanistan.



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