



NEWS



DEC 2006



U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Gulf Region Division Central District, Iraq



Baghdad counts on local improvements to turn things around

Baghdad is facing some challenging times and for the situation to get better, most officials believe local residents need to see that their government is working and improvements are taking place.

Maj. Robert Nash, Officer in Charge of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) International Zone office, points out his staff is overseeing about 150 projects worth \$500 million to upgrade essential services in Baghdad. "We're rebuilding gas stations, paving roads, repairing sewer lift stations, installing new potable water networks, and paving roads. We're also renovating hospitals, building healthcare centers, installing neighborhood electric distribution networks, and rehabilitating water treatment plants."

The new initiative is called Operation Together Forward with an emphasis on clearing out insurgent elements in certain key areas and then funding a variety of community projects so residents can see that things are getting better. "We're just getting started on those new projects," Nash continued. "When fully underway, there will be thousands of Iraqis employed and their work will have a lasting, positive impact. As an example 18 gas stations are being renovated throughout Baghdad and a variety of water and sewer issues are being resolved."

Nash's office works with U.S. military units attached to the 1st Cavalry Division including the 9th Engineer Battalion commanded by Lt. Col. Glen Masset who keeps track of all ongoing community improvements in the northwest quadrant of Baghdad. Baghdad City Government (Amanat), United States Agency for International Development, the Baghdad Provincial Reconstruction Team, USACE, and his Brigade are all sponsoring projects to help the Iraqi people. "Our top priority is helping the Iraqi government get on its feet as local and city officials work to improve various essential services for their residents."

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Portable generators have been provided to area schools including 500-liter tanks and fuel. In addition, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is renovating several of those schools and building two new ones.



Neighborhoods throughout Baghdad are seeing their government in action as essential service construction projects are getting underway to improve water, sewer, and electrical networks



Baghdad counts on local improvements to turn things around

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Masset said they got a definite positive response from townspeople when they started a trash clean-up program in west Baghdad. "We're also putting in street lighting, getting an abandoned slaughterhouse for cattle and sheep renovated, cleaning out a major drainage canal, and providing portable generators to area schools including 500-liter fuel tanks and 500 liters of fuel."

Operation Together Forward involves neighborhoods throughout the metropolitan area.

One such example is Doura in south Baghdad, a community of 265,000 residents, where Maj. Nash's engineers are overseeing the following projects:

- construction of two new million-dollar schools.
- four road projects... (1) paving 35,000 sq. meters of roadway and overlaying 60,000 square meters in Mahalla 856; (2) overlaying 35,000 sq. meters of roadway in Mahalla 848; (3) paving and overlaying roads in Mahallas 822, 824, 826; (4) paving about 3.7 kilometers of road in Mahallas 850 and 852.
- four sewage system improvements... (1) rebuilding the sewage pump station in Mahalla 848; (2) replacing generators, electrical panel boards, and pumps, for sewage lift stations in Mahalla 856; (3) constructing a combined sewer in Mahalla 840; (4) repairing a collapsed sewer network in Mahalla 824 which includes 280 meters of 900mm (36 in.) sewer pipe, new concrete manholes, and replacement of the storm drains.

—construction of a potable water network in Mahalla 824. Apart from work helping individual areas, big-ticket projects are also part of the effort including over \$100 million for a new electrical distribution network and over \$20 million for new water lines in Sadr City (an area with 2 ½ million residents), as well as \$300 million for three major sewer trunk lines helping the entire metropolitan area.

Abdul-Kareem, one of the Iraqis working in Maj. Nash's office, says his neighborhood is noticing a difference. "They're repairing six non-functioning sewer lift stations that haven't had maintenance in 15 years as well as cleaning out blocked collection lines. That work is getting sewage off the street preventing disease that's threatening our children. These are important indicators we're moving in the right direction."



Work is underway to renovate 18 gas stations in Baghdad to alleviate the long lines of motorists awaiting a fill-up.



Maj. Robert Nash with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers checks one of the sewer lift stations being rebuilt.



Iraqi youths say hello outside a Baghdad school.



New utility poles are erected in Ghazaliya.



Baghdad's new Secure Documents Storage Facility now under construction

1st Lt. Dawn Harrison enjoys helping Iraqis rebuild their country

A Mississippi Army Reservist is among those helping rebuild Iraq.

1st Lt. Dawn Harrison, who grew up in Vicksburg, is overseeing \$45 million in construction for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. She's the Project Engineer on several new structures in Baghdad including the Academy of Health and Science, the Secure Documents Storage Facility, and the Al Mamoon telecommunications complex.

"These structures directly benefit the Iraqi people and are among hundreds of such projects our staff is overseeing to improve essential services and help turn this country around," she said. "Our workload is demanding averaging 12 hours each day. But I do enjoy the job ... interacting with the Iraqis, learning their culture and customs, just being part of this effort to help them establish a democracy."

She points out her projects deal with a variety of engineering challenges including excavation, backfilling, foundations, erecting steel columns, rebar, and concrete placement. "In some areas, we started with an empty lot full of brush and weeds, in others we had to remove a bombed-out structure, but in all cases we're helping the Iraqis build their future. I studied at Mississippi State University to be a civil engineer and this is exactly the kind of work I wanted to do. Every day is a learning opportunity and there's no question the experience I've had here would take 5 to 10 years to accumulate stateside."

The \$4.6 million Academy of Health and Sciences is comprised of two 800-sq.-meter, single-story buildings which will feature classrooms, an auditorium, library, cafeteria
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1st Lt. Dawn Harrison

Vicksburg Reservist enjoys helping Iraqis rebuild their country

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and kitchen. That new facility will train students interested in becoming healthcare providers. It will also feature a fully-functioning health clinic including treatment rooms, dental exam rooms, a pharmacy, x-ray room, and a vaccination area. "That structure is very important because it's where future doctors and nurses will train as well a facility where local residents can get medical care."

The \$1.8 million Secure Documents Storage Facility will provide a safe storage area for courthouse documents including records from the Saddam Hussein trials. The 2500-square-meter structure will be climate-controlled with an administrative area as well as six 12.5-by-25 meter storage vaults with masonry walls and a concrete ceiling.

The \$22.7 million Al Mamoon Exchange and Telecommunication Center will serve as a hub through which Iraq can connect to the world. The Ministry of Communication offices will be located there as well as a 1300-square-meter post office. The seven-story structure will also feature a 200-seat auditorium, a cafeteria capable of serving 150 people, an exhibition hall, numerous conference rooms, several floors of communication switch gear providing phone service to Baghdad residents, a 250-car covered garage and parking for 10 mail delivery vans. The project is expected to be completed next year and about 400 Iraqis are on the construction crew.

"On these projects, Iraqi contractors don't necessarily follow the same standards we follow in the United States. That's where mentoring plays a key role and for the most part they're very receptive. They're proud of their work and want to do the best job possible. As the Project Engineer, one of my priorities is safety and we stress PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) for all construction workers such as hard hats and boots."

One unique aspect about her assignment is that Harrison's team consists of three females -- two Iraqi quality assurance representatives and herself. One is a 28-year-old civil engineer, the other a 36-year-old mechanical engineer. "They're smart, detail oriented, and eager to learn. Iraqi women don't normally get an opportunity to be on a work site as they're usually assigned office duties such as design work. We've got great camaraderie and the contractors respect the knowledge we bring to the job."

Harrison is assigned to the 412th Engineer Command Army Reserve unit in Vicksburg. In her civilian job, she's an engineer with Southern Consultants Inc., Jackson, MS. "I was overseeing the expansion of a 2-lane road into a 4-lane road when I got the call that I would be deploying in three days. My mother ended up closing up my Jackson apartment, boxing up all my belongings and putting them in storage for the year I'm serving in Iraq. I'm grateful for all the support I've received from both my employer and my family. They've been great."

The 5-foot 5-inch 26-year-old is the daughter of Audrey Harrison of Vicksburg.



Iraqi workers prepare to place concrete at the Academy of Health and Science in Baghdad

From the Commander . . .

"Courage is the price that life exacts for granting peace."
– Amelia Earhart

As we celebrate this Holy Season, remember that we are a community; we are co-workers of the larger good. As civilians you volunteered to join those of us in the military. As soldiers we choose to go to places others will not. You follow orders and leave family and friends at home, wherever that may be. You do what you have to do for the love of those left behind.

At this Holy Season, remember that you are not alone; you live in the prayers and hopes of family, friends and all peoples that pray for peace. Here, at this place and at this time, you are the peacemakers. You are the hope. You are the love that will carry throughout the world.

– Inspired words from Dan Markwick's father

In commemoration of this special time of year, our talented GRC team created a fun-filled evening with a magical holiday party on Dec. 9. Truly a team effort! Many special individuals are to be commended for contributing to a very successful and enjoyable evening, complete with a visit from Santa, great food, holiday decorations, and terrific fellowship.

Led by Barbara Windham and Dan Markwick, Santa's helpers included: Louis Alfred, Lisis Batista, Mary Bowman, CSM Randall Cady, SFC David Eckert, LTC Ken O'Connor, MSG Curtis Freeman, Jose Gonzalez, Stephen Grandison, SGT

Jacqueline Johnson, Wenda McGilberry, Gloria Markovci, Susan Newby, Roger Nowicki, Debra Ramirez, Tom Semotuk, SFC Leai Toele, Sandy Williams, Elena Famie, Rebecca Vineza, and Josefa Belleza, everyone who contributed money, everyone who made DFAC runs to bring food, everyone who made PX runs, everyone who took the time to respond to the "fun facts" request, and everyone who helped set up and take down the tables.



Col. Debra M. Lewis
GRC Commander

As a special surprise, CSM Cady carried back an early present from Santa after his recent R&R . . . 750 feet of holiday lights in 30 boxes, thus completing the transformation of our meeting room into a winter wonderland.

The holiday party was simply another reminder of why I am so very thankful and honored to be your commander. As we count our many blessings, may you also find time to keep those in need in your thoughts and prayers, especially those in harm's way, those who have lost loved ones, and those who are ill or suffering.

Thank you for all you do for others each and every day. May you and your families enjoy a very happy and blessed holiday season and the best New Year ever!

"Let nothing dim the light that shines from within." – Maya Angelou

From the CSM . . .

Wow, it's already December and my tour is half over. At times I wonder where did the time really go. I've seen almost a 50% turnover of personnel, had the pleasure to work with many outstanding individuals and have made new friendships. Thanks to our team's effort, patience and persistence I've seen many improvements for the Iraqi people, giving them a renewed outlook towards a better life for future generations to come. I've seen Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Veterans Day, and now I'm looking onward towards Christmas, all here in Iraq. As I look around I see more and more decorations throughout our offices each day. I see trees being trimmed, lights being strung, smiles abound and the sound of songs being sung. Tis must be the season!

Some of our team have already redeployed home and are spending well deserved time with their loved ones. It's also that time of the year where many individuals are getting ready to go on R&R. To those I wish you a safe journey and an enjoyable holiday season spent with your family, loved ones and friends. Christmas customs and traditions handed down from generation to generation help make this a very special occasion. I encourage everyone to reflect on the true meaning of Christmas and remember those less fortunate than us.

I just returned from R&R having the opportunity and pleasure to spend the Thanksgiving Holiday with my family and friends. I returned with a deeper appreciation for what I have at home, especially my family. Their support and sacrifices are what allows me to be here, staying focused on our mission. Kindly extend my appreciation to your family for everything they do. Your contribution to the Global War on Terrorism is making a difference for the Iraqi people and is giving them hope for a peaceful future.



Command Sergeant Major
Randall Cady

Christmas specifics: 90% of the nation's Christmas trees come from six species: Scotch pines contributes 40%, Douglas fir 35%, followed by noble fir, white pine, balsam fir and white spruce. Many of our Christmas customs which include: songs, images of Santa, trees and ornaments come from Germany. I want to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New year.

"A man's got to have a code, a creed to live by, no matter his job" – John Wayne



Iraq infrastructure, capacity building

CDR Keith White, GRC's outgoing Deputy Commander, inspects ongoing work at a site north of Baghdad. About 18 Navy officers and enlisted are part of GRC's staff overseeing reconstruction efforts on schools, hospitals, water and wastewater treatment plants, electrical projects, police and fire stations, and roads.

White praises staff on efforts assisting Iraqis

He helped manage over 1500 projects valued at \$2.7 billion in some of the most dangerous cities in Iraq including Baghdad, Fallujah and Ramadi. Navy Commander Keith White concluded his Iraq tour Nov. 8 and says he plans to spread the word when he returns home that “we’re making a difference here. It’s truly remarkable what the Iraqi people are accomplishing as they work to rebuild their country and provide a future for their children ... especially considering the obstacles they must overcome daily as they work toward that goal.”

He says the reconstruction mission in Iraq continues to be a daily challenge. “We work to build hospitals, schools, police and fire stations, water and wastewater treatment facilities, power plants and roads. Our Iraqi contractors and their crews show tremendous courage every day getting the job done despite threats, kidnappings, and killings.” White served as U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Gulf Region Central District’s Deputy Commander during a 6 ½ month deployment. He’s a Naval Reservist with 18 years service and as a civilian works in Iowa for the Muscatine County Highway Department as its County Engineer repairing roads and bridges. He manages a staff of 30 in Iowa compared to the 350 U.S. and Iraqi personnel he supervised from his Baghdad office.

He says prior to his deployment he’d heard very positive comments from fellow Navy officers about the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers reconstruction and capacity building mission in Iraq. “I’m grateful for the opportunity to be invited to join this great team. It’s been a privilege and an honor. What surprised me the most was

the large percentage of civilians who make up the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. They put it on the line every day when they go outside the wire just like the military folks.

“This staff will be in my thoughts and prayers. I told them that individually everybody here contributes a little but collectively the magnitude of what they’re accomplishing is awesome. They continue to press forward to get the projects completed at a phenomenal volume and rate. We’re making a difference and the Iraqi people appreciate it.”

White and his wife Kristine have four children, Angela 20, Allison 16, Jesse 11, and Taylor 9. “This kind of separation is hard on everyone. There’s no question I owe them a lot. They’ve gone through some real hardships including a storm that caused major damage to our home. It’s difficult times like these when it’s crystal clear how blessed we are to have the unwaivering support of our loved ones.”

White says he also sincerely appreciates those who stepped forward to fill in during his absence at the Muscatine County Highway Department. “Their positive attitude, words of encouragement, and understanding made all the difference.”

(Editor’s note: The GRC staff is going to miss CDR White’s positive attitude about doing the right thing not the easy thing, his favorite expression “You can’t make this stuff up,” and his humor at the weekly Hail and Farewell meetings with his “applause” and “no questions” cards.)



Navy Commander Keith White and CSM Randall Cady



Col. Deb Lewis answers questions about the contracting process.



U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Contract Specialist Susan Newby provides information during the Contracting and Networking Opportunity Day Nov. 4 at the Al Rasheed Hotel.

Contracting, Networking Opportunity Day draws large Iraqi turnout ...

About 300 Iraqi contractors attended the Iraqi Business Forum Contracting and Networking Opportunity Day hosted by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Gulf Region Division (GRD) Nov. 4 at the Al Rasheed Hotel in Baghdad.

During his opening remarks, Terry F. Bautista, GRD's Director of Business Management, encouraged those attending to take every opportunity to share their business cards and information on what they and their company can do. "We need partnerships, associations, and collective gatherings like today's conference to develop a successful road map for the future."

He noted, "Iraq needs every engineer, carpenter, steel worker, brick mason, architect, and contractor ... skilled people willing and able to apply their craft toward rebuilding Iraq. As contractors, your role is to bring these essential trades and crafts together into the Iraqi companies that will carry out the construction effort."

"Without our contractors we will not be able to complete our mission," Bautista continued. "We can't do the job without you." He pointed out that about 683 projects are ongoing today. "Will the reconstruction effort be complete when all these planned projects are signed and delivered? No it is not enough. Early United Nations and World Bank estimates approximated Iraq's infrastructure needs to be about \$60 billion. But this was before we had an opportunity to fully assess the condition of Iraq's infrastructure. After careful analysis, the infrastructure needs have been estimated well over \$100 billion."

He noted that the Government of Iraq is dedicating more and more financial resources to rebuilding. For example the Ministry of Electricity is doubling its 2006 reconstruction budget in 2007 and other Government of Iraq Ministries are doing the same.

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Terry F. Bautista and Azza Khalil-Humadi



Azza Khalil-Humadi is interviewed by Iraq's Al Hurria TV



Teely Shaffer, Terry Bautista, Susan Newby



13 Iraqi media reported on the event

Contracting, Networking Day draws large Iraqi turnout ...

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He asked all attending to continue to be leaders and seize the opportunities that are in the new Iraq. "I encourage you to stay motivated and network with the people, companies, and government representatives here today. You are making Iraq a better place ... for yourselves, your children, and your children's children."

Also speaking was Colonel Debra M. Lewis, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Gulf Region Central District Commander whose staff oversees projects in Baghdad and Al Anbar Provinces. "We're on your team. I want you to know I've been in this beautiful country for six months. I've been allowed to meet and work with a number of you on some very important projects. What has inspired me the most is that we see so much potential in your ability to be the most prosperous nation in the Middle East. I would like you to consider one thought as we work together ... it takes each of us to make a better world for all of us. One person with one idea has the power to change the world. The way you will do that, I hope today, you will find people here who can help you."

Organizing the event was Azza Khalil-Humadi (Project Manager of the Women's Advocate Initiative with Stanley Baker Hill LLC.) She told the audience that turning the economy around was the way to improve security. "It is clear that if people are employed they will be involved in their daily work and will not participate in terrorism."

Also attending was her husband, Dr. Zuhair Humadi (Senior Advisor to Iraq's Vice President, Ms. Kathy Johnson (GRD's Director of Transition), and Sidney Hymes (Program Manager with Stanley Baker Hill LLC.)

For those unable to attend the conference and who want additional information about contracting and construction opportunities, visit www.baghdadbusinesscenter.org.

About 300 Iraqi contractors attended the Iraqi Business Forum Contracting and Networking Opportunity Day sponsored by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Gulf Region Division (GRD) Nov. 4 at the Al Rasheed Hotel in Baghdad.



Gulf Region Central District's Chief of Contracting Sherry Gaylor and Major Robert Nash answer questions at the Contracting and Networking Opportunity Day Nov. 4.



GRS Contract Specialist Keith A. Loos

GRD hosts Engineer Summit



Gen. George W. Casey Jr., MNF-I Commander, spoke at the Engineer Summit Nov. 11. He quoted T.E. Lawrence who in 1917 advised, "Do not try too much with your own hands ... it's their war, and you are to help them, not to win it for them."



Ambassador Joseph A. Saloom, Director of Iraq Reconstruction Management Office, told the engineers "everyone appreciates what you're doing and realizes how much it matters." He pointed out he'd visited some of the Baghdad Security Plan projects and appreciates the energy, creativity and courage such work requires. He also said their focus in coming months is capacity building.



Lt. Gen. Peter W. Chiarelli, MNC-I Commander, said the Baghdad Security Plan "rests on your shoulders." It is dependent on real things happening on the ground so people on the street see that their lives are getting better.



Maj. Gen. Steven Abt, IRMO's Director of Operations, and Brig. Gen. Michael J. Silva, Commander 411 Engineer Brigade.



Eric T. "Rick" Olson, Director of IRMO's National Coordination Team, spoke about the important work of Iraq's PRTs. (He is a retired Army Major General.)



Michael T. Harvey, Deputy Mission Director USAID/Iraq



Ms. Kathye Johnson, GRD's Director of Transition, talked about the Reconstruction Task Force (empowering Iraqi funding).



Col. Tim Clapp, LTC Charles Tosten, LTC Fred Jackson



Cpt. Candace Hurley and Paula Morris with GRD's G-1 office, Col. Billy Tollison (GRD's Chief of Staff), and Bonnie Corbin (GRD's Executive Assistant) prepare to cut the cake at the Engineer Summit.



Maj. Gen. Darryl Scott, JCC-I/A Commanding General



Lt. Col. Dwight Webster



Col. Tim Clapp



Lt. Col. David Bailey



LTC Mike McMunn and LTC Thomas Murray, 1169th Engineer Brigade



Cpt. Watson, Col. Neil Greet (MNC-I Deputy C-7), and Cpt. Harper



Col. Derrick Wolf (GRN Commander), Brig. Gen. Michael Walsh (GRD), Col. Debra Lewis (GRC Commander) and Col. Gary Johnson (GRS Commander)

Engineer Summit



Donn Booker discusses MILCON



GRS CSM Benny Hubbard, GRN CSM Richard Mefford, , Brig. Gen. Michael Walsh (GRD), GRD CSM William McDaniel, GRC CSM Randall Cady.



Col. Timothy Curran, MNF-I Effects



Brig. Gen. Michael Walsh



GRD reads the list of OEF/OIF Engineer casualties.



Col. Billy Tollison

GRD Regimental Engineer Muster



LTC Reinhard Koenig



Event drew a full house with standing room only Nov. 10.



Maj. Mark Stimer



Maj. Ron Ford, GRC CSM Randall Cady, Col. Debra Lewis sign Army Engineer Regiment Muster Book.



Col. Ken Cox (left) signs in and is issued a Muster Card from Bonnie Corbin.



Felix Guzman



Cdr. Jerry Gompers



David Newman



Kathye Johnson talks to Australian Major Potter.

GRD's Senior Leaders Conference



Cpt. Candace Hurley and Mary Kohler



Conference format allowed for some light moments as well as serious discussion regarding GRD's ongoing mission in Iraq.



Tom Waters, Paula Morris & Col. Michael Herman



Larry Vogan, Daniel Fujimoto, and Catharine Bosold



Greg Fillers and Lt. Col. Danny Hassell



Lt. Col. Garry Hines



Deborah Rogers



LCDR Jacqueline McElhannon and Michael Segi, GRD G6



Brig. Gen. Michael Walsh

Senior Leaders Conference



BJ Fagan and Lt. Col. Frank Holinaty



Cpt. Asfandyar Khan and Col. Tim Clapp



Col. Gary Johnston, Brig. Gen. Michael Walsh, Col. Debra Lewis, and Col. Derrick Wolf cut the cake following a working lunch.



*Lester Dixon
GRD's Director of Programs*



Those "behind the scene" workers at GRC helping host the GRD Senior Leaders Conference Nov. 10 and Engineer Summit Nov. 11 included (left to right) SSG Zane Martens, James Upton, Dan Markwick, Russ Wood, Mary Bowman, Ross Marris, Jose Gonzalez, Stephen Grandison, and Doc Cole. Not pictured were Monique DeZiaueto, Ed Sullins, SFC Leai Toeli, Louis Alfred, MSG Dale Dupree, Dennis Henley, LTC David King, Victor Garcia, Roy Harris, and Romulado Pena.

HELLO TO OUR ARRIVING MEMBERS



**NAVY MMCS (SS)
BRUCE WHITE**
Fallujah NCOIC
MEPS Memphis



LCDR JAY MITCHELL
OIC VAO Public Works
NAVFAC Washington



SHERRY GAYLOR
Chief of Contracting
Wilmington District



LARRY KING
IZ Resident Engineer
Ft. Knox Resident Office
Louisville District



**CDR JERRY
GOMPERS**
GRC Deputy Commander
Portland, OR



GEORGE AFRAM
Project Engineer
Al Asad
Ringwood, NJ



SABER QADER
Fallujah Bilingual
Bi-Cultural Advisor
Oshkosh, WI



**LTjg ROBERT
McCHAREN**
OIC Taji
NAS Pensacola, FL



SHIRWAN ARAN
GRC HQ Bilingual
Bi-Cultural Advisor
Jonesboro, GA



**LCDR JEFFREY
POWELL**
OIC Loyalty
MCAS Beaufort, SC



JAMES FOSTER
Al Anbar
Logistics Specialist
Weisbaden, GE



**STEPHEN
GRANDISON**
IT Specialist
Wurzberg, Germany



ROGER NOWICKI
Contract Specialist
Hanscom AFB, MA



JEREMY WAY
Project Engineer
Loyalty
Klamath Falls, OR



**NAVY MA1 (SW/AW)
ROBIN JONES**
Ramadi NCOIC
Little Creek, VA



Ensuring it's done right ...

Penny Coulon concluded her four-month tour in November. She was assigned to GRC's Victory Area Office where she performed Quality Assurance on weekly work orders, generator maintenance, and Minor Construction Projects throughout Victory Base Complex (verifying the various tasks were completed as required by contract standards). She says one of her top priorities was ensuring the customer's expectations were met. She hopes that in some small way she has helped contribute to the Mission. She wants to remind everyone that "we are making a difference by being here, to please not loose focus of that." She served eight years in the Navy as a Damage Controlman. She is originally from Harahan, LA and now resides in Visalia, CA. Her stateside job is with the Sacramento District as a Maintenance Worker at Lake Kaweah.



BG Michael J. Walsh, Commanding General U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Gulf Region Division, visited I MEF Area Office and Fallujah Resident Office Oct. 22. He assumed command of GRD Oct. 14.

DEPARTING MEMBERS



LT MICHAEL CHUCRAN
OIC Loyalty
NAVSUPACT
Naples, Italy



CELESTINO MERCADO
Project Engineer
Al Asad
Las Vegas, NV



JOSEPH MOODY
Contracting Specialist
Mobile District



CDR KEITH WHITE
GRC
Deputy Commander
Muscatine, IA



STEPHEN GIBBS
Chief
Logistics Management
Helendale, CA



BONNIE TUDOR
Budget Analyst
Fredericksburg, VA



LCDR GREGOR BO
OIC VAO Public Works
Washington Navy Yard



STEVE STRENGTH
Al Asad QA Rep
Annapolis, MD



THOMAS WEBER
Electrical
Project Manager
Tampa, FL



JAMES RUYAK
Al Asad
Project Engineer
Remer, MN



MARTIN MUNOZ
Ramadi
Construction Rep
Fayetteville, NC



**NAVY CHIEF
AUTUMN TRAINER**
Ramadi NCOIC
Virginia Beach, VA



**NAVY CHIEF
MICHAEL YULE**
Fallujah NCOIC
Norfolk, VA



**LTC JONATHAN
REVOLINSKY**
Baghdad Area Office OIC
Sacramento District



FRED NIGHTENGALE
Resident Engineer
Taji Resident Office
Mauston, WI



Alwaiya Children's Hospital Administrator Dr. Tariff Rahman speaks to reporters Nov. 12.



Reporters visit Children's Hospital

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers hosted a media visit Nov. 12. Major Robert Nash, Officer in Charge of Gulf Region Central District's office in the International Zone, escorted Michele Farina (reporter for Italy's leading newspaper Corriere della Sara), David Kelso (reporter from KRXO 107.7FM Oklahoma City), and Mark Finkelstein (Contributing Editor NewsBusters.org, Ithaca NY), to the \$2.8 million renovation of Alwaiya Children's Hospital in east Baghdad. Kelso summed up the reporters feelings when he said, "Those I talked to today are some of the most amazing people I've seen in a long time." The reporters interviewed Alwaiya Children's Hospital Administrator Dr. Tariff Rahman.

Major Robert Nash passes out pencils and crayons to youngsters at Alwaiya Children's Hospital Nov. 12.



Iraqi crew at work at Alwaiya Children's Hospital.

Iraqi engineers work on Baghdad

Despite getting knocked down by back-to-back bomb blasts, he still reported for duty that morning.

And when he arrived, his fellow workers at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers got him to the hospital to have his facial cuts, black eye, and contusions treated.

Engineer Abdul-Kareem says he was in a taxi on the way to a project site in downtown Baghdad two months ago when an improvised explosive device was detonated killing a bystander and wounding several others. He was exiting the cab to provide first aid when a vehicle drove into the crowd and triggered a second explosion killing at least a dozen more people.

"Despite that incident and many more every day, the insurgents aren't going to discourage us from doing the right thing for our country and our people," engineer Abdul-Kareem said. "Yes, it's a difficult time. But those in need are looking for help and we're going to continue to do everything we can to offer it to them."

His team of 30 fellow Iraqi engineers are in charge of rebuilding worn out water treatment plants, renovating hospitals and schools, installing new neighborhood electrical networks, replacing old sewer mains, building new courthouses and fire stations.

"We need to keep the wheel of reconstruction moving to ensure basic essential services are restored in Iraq, defeating the insurgents' goal of demoralizing the residents here. It's a noble
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Youngster stands with his dad who works at a sewage pump station currently being rebuilt in Baghdad.



Engineer Abdul-Kareem is interviewed by Al Hurra TV reporter Ziad Zubaidy on a visit to some of his Baghdad projects with Maj. Robert Nash (background).



Major Robert Nash, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers International Zone office OIC, passed out candy and soccer balls to area school children in northwest Baghdad Nov. 28. Washington State's Daughters of the American Revolution collected items and mailed them to GRC. Apart from the soccer balls, that chapter has collected fabric and thread to give to area orphanages. Washington State Regent Jacque Perry named the drive, 'Operation Clothe the Children' and numerous boxes have already arrived.

Iraqi engineers work on Baghdad

(continued from preceding page)

cause and by working shoulder to shoulder with the Americans, we'll accomplish the mission."

The 33-year-old has a Masters Degree in civil engineering and is working on a doctorate degree. His fellow Iraqi engineers have degrees in a variety of fields including structural engineering, mechanical engineering, and electrical engineering. And they're out in the red zone every day visiting projects ensuring they're being done right.

Engineer Abdul-Kareem started working for the Coalition in 2003 as an interpreter but when U.S. forces discovered he was an engineer they asked him to do a lot more than just translations. He was part of Task Force RIE (Restore Iraqi Electricity) and eventually got his job with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Today he is Deputy Resident Engineer of Gulf Region Division Central District's International Zone office and his two favorite projects are Baghdad Central Train Station and Alwaiya Children's Hospital

"Baghdad Train Station was my first huge project, a \$5.9 million contract. We replaced all the electrical, water and sewer lines, repaired the roof, installed two new seven-passenger elevators, rehabilitated the restaurant, new fire alarm system, new entrance, new partitions, new windows, new bathrooms, refurbished the station's eight exterior platforms, put in two new 1.25mva generators, two 500-ton boilers, two air conditioning chillers, and added a VIP hotel with 13 rooms," he continued. "The Train Station is where I learned the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers QA responsibilities and the western way of overseeing construction. It's been a great experience. Prior to our work there, the Train Station was notorious for non-functioning restrooms and a foul odor from

standing sewage in the basement. I'm proud of our role in correcting these problems. That facility has the potential to generate a lot of jobs; it's important to this area."

Regarding Alwaiya Children's Hospital, "it touches your heart every time you walk through their door. It comes down to the basics of humanity and helping save people's lives. Doctors and nurses there are now using equipment that was simply not available two years ago."

That \$2.9 million project involves upgrading and modernizing a 217-bed facility including a new water purification system, new mechanical system (both air conditioning and heating), medical waste incinerator, oxygen plant and central vacuum system, nurse call system, intercom paging system, data communications network, new toilets, showers and sinks, new exhaust system to remove unhealthy air and odors, a new generator for emergency power, new lighting, and structural repair.

"This hospital takes care of the poorest people in Baghdad. The medical staff was working in miserable conditions. Newborns and young children were dying there every day. We've made a difference and I'm pleased to have been a part of it. Alwaiya Children's Hospital is now providing health care at the same high standard as private hospitals here. It's great to see these youngsters benefiting from our efforts."

Maj. Robert Nash (OIC of GRC's IZ office) points out, "It's professional engineers like Abdul-Kareem who will be in charge long after we've gone home. It's our goal to work ourselves out of a job as they march forward with the construction management techniques they're now utilizing." Maj. Nash's office is currently overseeing 135 projects worth over \$500 million and most of that work is being done by his Iraqi staff.

HELLO TO OUR ARRIVING MEMBERS



JOSEPH NOLIN
IZ Project Engineer
Ft. Wainwright, AK



**MAC(SW) MATT
SUTTERLUETY, NCOIC**
Victory Resident Office
Oak Harbor, WA



**CDR GEOFFREY
SCHULLER**
Incoming PRT LNO
Al Anbar Province



JOE ROFRANO
Contracting Specialist
Washington, DC



CAROLYN WARDELL
Contracting Specialist
Ft. Hood, TX



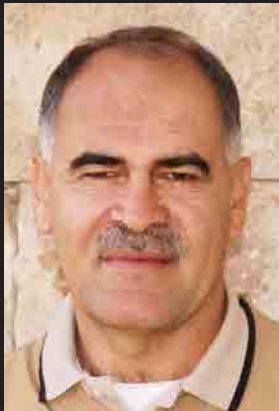
JOE RATH
Construction Rep
Victory Resident Office
Mechanicsburg, PA



CHERITA WILLIAMS
Contracting Specialist
Philadelphia District



TROY ROLAN
GRC PAO
Rome, GA



MUHAMAD AZIZ
IZ Office Bilingual
Bi-Cultural Advisor
Richardson, TX



BRUCE NESTOR
QA Rep
Al Asad
Seattle District



**NAVY BMCS (SW)
WILLIAM MARTIN**
Al Asad NCOIC
Little Creek, VA



**NAVY AMC (AW/NAC)
PHILIP WRIGHT**
Fallujah NCOIC
Tinker AFB, OK

FAREWELL



JESSE DALBY
Proect Engineer
Fallujah Resident Office
Ft. Bragg, NC



LISIS BATISTA
Baghdad Area Office
Proect Engineer
Miami, FL



Special recognition

Lt. Cmdr. Jeffrey Powell and Sgt. 1st Class David Garcia were presented Joint Achievement Medals Dec. 2 by Brig. Gen. Michael J. Walsh for their response in battling a fire for six hours Nov. 26 that threatened to consume critical materials for the ongoing Sadr City electric distribution network including transformer kiosks, power cable, street lights, and utility poles.



Ramadi bridge under construction

Work has recently resumed on the Omar Bin Abdul Aziz Bridge in Ramadi. The project had shut down for several months over funding concerns, but a recent injection of \$2.9M has allowed the contractor, Cape Environmental Management of San Antonio, to return to the site. A new completion date has not yet been negotiated, but the contractor expects to finish the \$18M bridge before March 2007. The contract is managed by Air Force Center for Environmental Excellence, with USACE Ramadi Resident Office providing local QA.

Holiday cheer



Susan Newby



David Schmidt, COL Debra Lewis, CSM Randall Cady



Wayne Taylor



Theresa Esplain



SSG Jacqueline Johnson



CDR Jerry Gompers & BG Michael Walsh



B.J. Fagan



COL Debra Lewis



Mohammad Dadkah



Barbara Windham



Valarie Albrecht



Jeremy Way



Cherita Williams & Carolyn Waardell



Wenda McGilberry



Roger Nowicki



BG Michael Walsh



Catharine 'Cat' Bosold



John Thompson



Ssg Zane Martens tries out the steak.



Bill Kiddy and Chip Nieman



Monique Deziauto



Mary Bowman



Carolyn Steuart



MAJ Angel Ortiz



Staff enjoys Holiday get-together

Gulf Region Division Central District hosted its Holiday Party Dec. 9 featuring lobster and steak. Those manning the grill included SFC Leai Toele, Louis Alfred, and Jose Gonzalez. Barbara Windham and Dan Markwick helped organize the event and others assisting included Lisis Batista, Mary Bowman, SFC David Eckert, MSG Curtis Freeman, Stephen Grandison, SGT Jacqueline Johnson, LTC Ken O'Connor, Wenda McGilberry, Gloria Markovci, Susan Newby, Roger Nowicki, Debra Ramirez, Tom Semotuk, Sandy Williams, Elena Famie, Rebecca Vineza, and Josefa Belleza. Others who should be recognized are those who contributed money, everyone who made DFAC runs to bring food, everyone who made PX runs, everyone who took the time to respond to the "fun facts" request, those who helped set up and take down the tables, and a big thank you to CSM Randall Cady who hauled back 30 boxes of Christmas lighting from California when he returned from R&R.



Leader's conference

GRC conducted a leader's conference Dec. 8-9 with about 40 in attendance including HQ staff, Area Office and Resident Office OICs and Resident Engineers. The event was highlighted by break-out sessions identifying key obstacles, the way ahead, and communication messages and strategy.



Bill Kiddy & Stanley Reese



LTC Danny Thurmond and CDR James Lee



**MAJ Robert Nash, LCDR Chris Via,
Don Hendrix, and Stanley Reese**



BG Michael Walsh, Gulf Region Division's Commanding General, discussed his priorities and philosophy at GRC's leaders conference Dec. 9. He pointed out the contracts may have been awarded but with \$4 billion in construction yet to be completed "we're not done yet." He also emphasized that the Baghdad Security Plan is keeping soldiers alive.



MAJ Steve Martinelli



LCDR Jay Mitchell



Terry Stuart



Braven Dyer



Joe Nolin



MAJ Quay Jones

GRC leaders conference



Kevin Addison & Zach Kluckowski



MAJ Angel Ortiz & MAJ Steve Martinelli



Dan Markwick & Catharine 'Cat' Bosold



COL Debra Lewis



CDR Jerry Gompers & LCDR Theron Colbert



LCDR Chris Via



David Schmidt



Helping Baghdad residents

With the help of GRD donations to the *Aegis Foundation*, Aegis Reconstruction Civil Affairs (RCA) partnered with MND-B Civil Affairs (CA) to distribute school supplies, clothes, toys, hygiene kits and medical supplies to local councils so they can benefit their communities in need.

As Major Longfield, CA points out, "You go into these places, amidst all the chaos and you talk to these people. They have a vision of building a new Iraq and making life better for their community. You see they do not have the means to accomplish it, so it only remains a dream, a shared hope. Together, with the *Aegis Foundation*, we provide them with the tools to succeed;... a realization that it's not a dream anymore. Now it's an attainable reality."

Groups and individuals in the US donated goods and supplies to GRD staff who, in turn, made the donation to the *Aegis Foundation*. Aegis RCA donated goods are stored until MND-B CA units distribute them to local councils who have a list of recipients in their communities who can use the donations. Local councils gain credibility with their communities because they can address needs, while relations between CA and local authorities are strengthened. In the end, Iraqis lives are made better.

Paula Morris with GRD and her network provide a large part of the donations the *Aegis Foundation* receives in Iraq. She explains, "I believe we're put on this earth to help others and I think most Americans feel the same way. They have huge hearts; they want to help; it's in their soul to help. I don't believe GRD is just here to rebuild Iraq, we're here to win the hearts of the Iraqi people. Those that send the donations feel in some small way they are helping those in need and winning hearts at the same time."

Aegis RCA works with CA on other projects including specific equipment to schools and clinics, as well sports and office equipment to youth centers and communal buildings.

Through the Aegis Reconstruction Liaison Teams (RLTs), small projects are being identified in neighbourhoods where larger GRC construction is taking place.

If a community needs to see immediate benefits prior to the larger reconstruction efforts coming on line, Aegis RCA can help improve perceptions and attitudes by addressing a local need now. RLTs provide that information and Aegis RCA develops the right project to meet a particular need. As a tool for GRC, RCA Director David Cooper says, "RCA and RLT are designed to complement each other in forwarding the progress of reconstruction."

Aegis RCA's low cost, high impact projects average \$3,000 and either directly or indirectly complement GRC activities. In addition to these more construction and equipment related projects, Aegis RCA also helps distribute donated goods and supplies made to the *Aegis Foundation* to communities like those the CA is helping. For more information about Aegis RCA or the *Aegis Foundation*, email G7@AegisIraq.com, or visit the *Aegis Foundation* website at www.Aegis-Foundation.org.



Aegis Reconstruction Civil Affairs is working with MND-B Civil Affairs to distribute donated clothes, toys, hygiene kits, school and medical supplies.



Al Asad Airfield parking ramp

Al Asad is looking to alleviate some airfield access congestion problems involving the MedEvac UH-60 BlackHawk helicopters. A \$1.4 million concrete MedEvac parking ramp is nearing completion. Serka Corp. LLC was awarded the contract to construct the steel-rebar-reinforced 700-foot long, 100-foot wide and nearly 10-inch thick pad, requiring over 200 truckloads of concrete. 48 tie-down points and 24 grounding rods are being installed. The contractor expects to complete this job by mid-December, ahead of schedule.



Iraqi crew helps renovate a school in Ghazaliya, northwest Baghdad.

Iraqis see definite benefits from ongoing construction

“Hundreds of projects are currently under construction and Iraqis are seeing the results,” says the individual responsible for helping upgrade Baghdad’s essential services.

“We’re employing thousands of Iraqis. They need to put food on the table just like anyone else and those with a job are more likely to be supporting their government,” commented Lt. Col. Jonathan Revolinsky, Officer in Charge of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Baghdad Area Office.

He works with a number of different entities including the Baghdad city government (Amanat), District Advisory Councils and Neighborhood Advisory Councils. “This nation is used to one person issuing orders from the top down. That mindset is now changing and Iraqis are understanding the value of hearing from people on the street, getting feedback, developing a dialogue, encouraging an interaction. It’s what democracy is all about.” He says the real story not being told is the one about ordinary Iraqis putting up with extra-ordinary challenges, but reporting to work none-the-less every day in an unassuming way just trying to make life better for their families.

He directs a staff of 30 U.S. military and civilian personnel along with 50 Iraqi engineers with the goal of turning Baghdad back into a great city. “It was the birthplace of civilization and today we’re investing huge amounts of money to rebuild 30 years of neglect as residents regain their confidence that this city has a future. It’s hard when you’ve been repressed for that many decades to stand up for what you believe and that’s the challenge we’re facing.”

But Revolinsky is optimistic and that viewpoint starts with the Iraqis on his staff. “They’re awesome individuals. They put their lives on the line every

day going out in the community to oversee the work going on. They sincerely want to help their country, they want to do a great job, and it’s a shame the hardships and danger they and their neighbors have to put up with. I respect them immensely. They want to make Baghdad a better place.”

Most of the Iraqis working for USACE are educated engineers trained at Baghdad University. “They visit the projects, write the reports, provide recommendations and suggested courses of action, and our intent is to eventually transition our office over to them as we work ourselves out of a job. They’re breaking the mold of listening to dictatorial orders that they grew up with and today are solving problems on their own. I’m very pleased with the direction we’re going.”

Throughout Baghdad Province, Revolinsky’s team is managing over 300 projects valued in excess of \$1.2 billion. That work includes

\$300 million for three major sewer trunk lines, over \$100 million for replacing the electric distribution network in Sadr City, refurbishing 18 gas stations, renovating hospitals, building new primary healthcare centers, new courthouses, new water distribution networks, repaving roads, repair of area schools and the construction of several new ones. Nine new fire stations have been built in Baghdad decreasing response time from an average of 15 minutes to 5 or 6 minutes. “Residents can see first hand that their government is working, that improvements to their neighborhoods are taking place, that there’s reason for hope.” Following a six-month tour in Iraq in December, Lt. Col. Revolinsky returned to the Sacramento District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. He and his wife Valerie have five children and reside in Pollock Pines, CA.

