



# Southern Views



Produced for the Men and Women of Gulf Region South

Volume 1, Issue 3

November 2006

## **U.S. Officers Provide Lecture for Basrah Engineering Graduates**

By James Bullinger

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers plays many roles in shaping the future of Iraq for her people.

The big effort is the reconstruction of Iraq's infrastructure and the U.S. assistance projects helping to improve the quality of life for hundreds of thousands of Iraqis.

But sometimes it's the smaller, more personal interactions with the people that yield the bigger benefit.

Recently two officers assigned to the Army Corps of Engineers in the Gulf Region South District, stationed down near the port city of Basrah, served as guest lecturers to six Iraqi graduate engineering students and their professor from the University of Basrah.

Army Lt. Col. Kenneth McDonald and Navy Lt. Cmdr. Scott King covered the history of the Army Corps of Engineers and the new construction project to build the Basrah Children's Hospital.

*Lecture continued page 5*



**Navy Lt. Cmdr. Scott King discusses various aspects of the construction of the new Basrah Children's Hospital with university engineering graduate students Oct. 14. ARMY PHOTO BY LT COL KENNETH MCDONALD**

## **Training Eliminates Safety Violations**

By Mohammed Aliwi

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) faces many challenges in Iraq, but one of the most important ones that they focus on daily is the elimination of safety violations by the Iraqi workforce at their different construction projects.

Local nationals have endless complaints and excuses for not wanting to wear safety equipments. While many of these complaints are not valid, the USACE safety engineers patiently listen to them and make adjustments where possible.

Personal safety equipment such as goggles, safety shoes, hard hats, gloves, and other protective items eliminate, if not prevent, accidents and safety violations while performing various construction tasks.

Accidents represent inefficiencies and cause increased costs, lost production and time delays.



U.S. ARMY PHOTO

**Army Safety Officer Russell E. Fennema, center, and Project Engineer Margaret Williams, left, listen as an Iraqi contractor discusses safety issues at one of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers project sites in An Nasiriyah.**

Safety violations can waste money and time, and represents a failure by management to control construction operations.

According to Russell E. Fennema, the chief of the Safety and Occupational Health Office with the Gulf Region South (GRS) District, safety is why he came to Iraq.

*Safety continued page 6*

## In This Issue

- 1 U.S. Officers Provide Lecture for Basrah Engineering Graduates. *By James Bullinger*
- 1 Training Eliminates Safety Violation. *By Mohammed Aliwi*
- 3 Commander's Corner: It's a Matter of Perspective. *By COL Gary Johnston*
- 4 The "Word" from the Desk of the CSM. *By SGM Benny Hubbard*
- 7 GRS Launches "Employee of the Month" Program. *By James Bullinger*
- 8 Al Aziziyah Primary Healthcare Clinic Opening Holds Hope for Iraqi People. *By James Bullinger*
- 9 Alabama TV Reporter Covers GRS Reconstruction. *By James Bullinger*
- 11 The Importance of Primary Healthcare Clinics in Iraq. *By Mohammed Aliwi*
- 12 GRD's Maj. Gen. William McCoy Makes Farewell GRS Visit.
- 13 GRS People Notes: Pins & Patches, Awards, Hails & Farewells.
- 17 News Around the District. *Staff Report*

A shot thru Bulletproof Glass at 40 mph



"A smoke and a wave" A friendly young Iraqi man relaxing against a mud building and enjoying a cigarette gives a wave to a passing PSD convoy on their way home at the end of the day, Sept. 19. This shot, nearly distortion free, was taken out the side window of a bouncing and speeding armored SUV.



## Southern Views

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**Southern Views** is an un-official publication authorized under AR 360-1, published by the Public Affairs Office, Gulf Region South Headquarters, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Camp Adder, Iraq, APO AE 09331. The views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army.

# Commander's Corner

By COL Gary Johnston

## *It's a Matter of Perspective*

You know how you get a song in your head and can't remember the name of it, but you just keep running the lyrics through your head.

It just won't go away. Yea, you know.

Well that happened to me the other day and I still can't remember the song, and I'm too lazy to look it up. However some good came from it.

It made me realize how important the professional skills you bring to the plate are, but more importantly the other skills you bring just by being Moms and Dads, little league coaches, backyard mechanics, sports fans, or just simply being American or Iraqi.

How I arrived at this higher plain of mental awareness, was in trying to remember the words and name to a Kenny Rogers song I had heard.

Never could remember, but that's OK, I got more out of it than the words.

The song's storyline recounts a young boy playing in his backyard.

As with most children, he was in a place where only a child's imagination can take them, he was the greatest batter there ever was and playing in the game of his life.

He was "Casey at the bat" and determined to win the game with a single swat of his mighty bat.

Now I must confess to having the same fantasy. I grew up in the country with my nearest neighbor over a mile away and they were all "gurls."

So I spent many an hour batting rocks from our gravel driveway over the fence into our pasture for the winning run.

This caused my father much anxiety as he encountered the numerous rocks that didn't make it over the fence with his lawnmower and the driveway slowly turned to dirt.

But, I digress and back to the greatest batter in the most important game awaiting the first pitch.



The young boy tosses up the ball, cocks his bat back, and *"the ball goes up, the ball comes down."*

He takes a mighty swing and the ball hits the ground...*"Strike one."*

Not to worry the boy says to himself, "I am the mightiest batter that ever was."

He sets his feet, squints his eyes, and tosses the ball up a second time.

*"The ball goes up, the ball comes down,"* he cleaves the air with a mighty swing, and the ball hits the ground...*"Strike two."*

Down to his last strike, he remains resolute; he tugs his cap down, digs in with his "teeny" shoes and takes a few vicious test swings with the bat.

Again he tosses the ball up, *"The ball goes up, the ball comes down."*

He locks onto the ball with an eagle eye glare, he shifts his weight through his hips to transfer the greatest amount of energy from his weight into the ball, he starts his swing as far back as he can to generate the maximum bat speed. He swings. The ball hits the ground with a bounce, rolls a short distance and stops...*"Strike three."*

He looks down, staring, confused, unbelieving.

He is aroused from this catatonic state by his mother's call to supper.

He looks up with a look of amazement, reaches down and picks up the ball, smiles, tosses the ball up and catches it as he walks toward the house.

"Wow," he thinks, I must be the "best pitcher in the world," because I just struck out the "mightiest batter that ever was!"

You see, it's all a matter of perspective.



## The “Word” from the Desk of the Command Sgt. Major

By SGM Benny Hubbard

I bring you greetings from your district headquarters.

We had a very successful change of command ceremony on Oct. 14 and BG Michael J. Walsh is already hitting the ground hard to get in the groove.

Last month I wrote on your situational awareness.

We know we must be alert in order to stay alive.

Remember, we are not in our home state, so don't get complacent until you get back home. Stay alert, stay alive.

This month I would like to discuss safety, which is one of those subjects that is high on my priorities.

I look at our mission here and at what each of you bring to the reconstruction effort.

Then I look at what could cause us not to complete our mission, things that I label as mission “interrupters.”

Once this is done, I analyze the possible solutions and look at ways of implementing controls.

This will lessen the effects of someone getting hurt and causing us valuable time losses in our reconstruction efforts.

I know that 80% of all accidents are caused by human error.

That could mean several things, one in particular; we don't always follow proper policies and procedures.

As individuals we need to know about what is referred to as risk management.

The correct term is Composite Risk Management or CRM.

It's a way of evaluating a problem and implementing controls to lessen the severity of that particular problem.

We all unconsciously use this process when we detect any type of danger in our daily life.

For more on CRM go to [www.crc.us.army.mil](http://www.crc.us.army.mil) and click on the “**composite risk management.**”

Our goal is to have a 100% accident-free work environment.

This goal can be achieved if we follow the correct policies and procedures.

Take a look around you daily and recognize those dangers that can cause you harm or loss to your work equipment.

Once you realize the threat spots, try to come up with ways to lessen the severity of any accidents.

We should treat each day with caution as we continue to rebuild Iraq.

Remember, “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure” still stands true today.

I want each of you to go home the way you came...SAFE.

I would like to say goodbye to Mr. Russ Fennema.

Russ was our first district safety officer here and created the safety office we have today.

I thank him for his dedication and support to the mission.

I also would like to thank Ms. Margret Williams who's stepped up in Russ's absence and has done a great job in the safety arena.

This is a great example of two good people working hard for our mission here at GRS and making sure safety is first.

Together Each Achieve More.



**Lecture** *continued from page 1*

"The intent of the lecture to the civil engineering graduate students was to provide an understanding of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, its history and its current role in the U.S. and Iraq," said McDonald, the GRS deputy commander in the Multinational Forces–Southeast sector.

"The students really had no idea what the Army Corps of Engineers was all about," he said, "They were very impressed with the concept of a military and civilian run organization. I received a number of questions concerning our labs and our inner-coastal waterways mission."



ARMY PHOTO BY LT CMDR SCOTT KING

McDonald, pictured above, was joined by King, who is serving with the USACE as the resident engineer overseeing the massive \$32.3 million Basrah Children's Hospital construction contract.

"It helped to further build on our relationships within the Basrah community," King said, "It not only brought Iraqi and American engineers together, but also helped by educating them on a complex project that will bring critical medical care to their children."

"It was also intended to lessen the suspension of our intentions with the Basrah Children's Hospital," McDonald said. "At one time a good portion of the local Basrah population believed the hospital was a CIA headquarters. We needed to get information out to the local population so suspensions are alleviated."

"It's hoped that they will be able to counter or at least provide input when they engage with other Iraqis.

Another focus of the lecture was a discussion on the USACE capacity development initiative, which works with the Iraqi government to assess, analyze and determine what construction projects are needed and the priority for each one.

"This lecture is an engagement strategy. We have to leverage at different levels and angles to get this information out and this lecture was just one piece in that process," McDonald said.

McDonald also said it helps with ensuring security for the contractors and USACE people working at various construction sites.

"The more information they [Iraqis] have on us and our projects, the better. It is hoped that they will be able to counter or at least provide input when they engage with other Iraqis," he said.

McDonald said that he thought the exchange benefited the Iraqis in two ways, with the first being "Education...from the standpoint of understanding who we [USACE] are and what we do," he said, "and information from the perspective of knowing what is going on in their community."

King added by saying, "The knowledge gained by the Iraqi engineers will hopefully spread to the others in the community and help us to gain support for the hospital's construction."

**Commander** *continued from page 3*

All of you were recruited to come to the district to bring your unique professional skills to help execute our reconstruction mission.

You are the "mightiest batter there ever was."

I have asked each of you to do "what is right." Doing right requires much more than just doing your job, it requires your heart and conscience also.

You have responded generously, working to make the building into more than a structure.

You have made them into schools, hospitals, clinics.

Roads into a means of improving the areas economy and a collection of pipes, filters and tanks into clean, safe drinking water.

I need you to do this. Not just professional skills, some days those skills are not enough, but you realize this and give more.

You give the caring of a mother and father to the children of Iraq as you build their school and clinics.

You coach municipal workers on how to maintain and sustain their infrastructure.

You help repair the little things in the project that are just outside the scope of work.

You share your love of freedom.

You pitch in to help do what is right.

So keep your heads up, there will be days that my "mightiest batter in the world" will strike out, days the job will just not go like it's supposed to go.

On those days, remember you 'pitched' one heck of a game.

In sports much is made about winning or losing, for the athlete it is all about how much of him or herself they leave out on the field that determines if they are a winner.

To me whether you're batting or pitching today you are a winner, because I know you will give of yourself for the mission.

You see, it is all a matter of perspective, we win because of you.

*Essayons – "Let us Try!"*



**Safety** *continued from page 1*

"The aim of my safety training was to help Iraq become a safer place to work and build," he said, "I came here with the idea that as an American I needed to share what talent I have to better the lives of the workers in Iraq."

The time spent on safety training will actually save time. Accidents cause a far greater amount of lost productivity than the small amount of time required to be devoted to safety training and other accident prevention activities.

"The only way to do this was to teach and train workers. To show them that being injured on the job was not OK," Fennema said.

"I wanted to give to people the skills I have in order for them to be able to recognize hazards and the solutions to preventing injuries," he said.

One of the USACE's commitments towards the Iraqi workers is to purchase the best equipments possible and teach the local associates why it is necessary and how to properly use it, and consistently enforce the wearing of the equipment when and where it is needed.

Fennema said that he supplies safety equipment to his Iraqi associates the same as he does for any worker coming from the United States.

They are given hard hats, gloves, shoes, glasses, and in some instances face masks for dust control.

Any safety equipment that may be needed to help them do their jobs safely can be obtained by Fennema.

"There are instances where I spent my own [government funded] money to acquire the right equipment for the safety engineers. The reason I do, is the equipment I could get from supply may not be appropriate for them to wear in public, considering the threats to people for working with the Americans," Fennema explained.

The Gulf Region Division Chief of Safety and Occupational Health Daniel Fujimoto said, "The mission of the district safety officer is to provide technical guidance and direction to the command elements relating to safety and occupational health."

"Safety is a team effort. Everyone is a safety officer from top management to the personnel in the field," Fujimoto said, "Our mission is to review and observe the contractor's safety program and provide guidance to the contractor or Army representative about the safety program for the project."

"Sometimes we are viewed as the technical experts in the field and need to provide direction to correct an unsafe act or condition to allow the work to continue. Everyone is a safety officer and has the authority to stop work or phase of work for immediately dangerous conditions or environments to life and health that could cause serious injury, death or property damage," Fujimoto said.



U.S. ARMY PHOTO

**Gulf Region Division Safety and Occupational Health Chief Daniel Fujimoto travels frequently to conduct safety checks at construction sites.**

The GRD safety and occupational health office and the safety officers in the three district headquarters, work hard to train the Iraqi associates how to prevent safety violations and eliminate accidents at the construction sites, and ensure that training is provided for everyone involved in construction.

Jerry A. Cummings, a safety and occupational officer with Gulf Region North, said that he conducted two training sessions on construction safety in Kirkuk in October, and that he also provided construction safety classes at Camp Anaconda and the headquarters in Tikrit.

"We show the Iraqi associates what is wrong and why it is a hazard. Here in Iraq it is important to come up with alternatives to fix the problems," Cummings said.

"It may not be exactly like we would fix a problem at locations in the states because the locals don't have the same resources we have, but we always try to find some alternatives to help keep the job site safe," he added.

The USACE and the Iraqi safety engineers often ask the main contractors and the subcontractors to provide their workers with weekly safety training and to investigate and report on any accidents that may happen throughout the construction cycle.

Fujimoto said that all contractors are required by contract to implement a safety program that meets or exceeds contract requirements.

## GRS Launches “Employee of the Month” Recognition Program

The GRS Employee of the Month program was recently initiated in October by Sgt. Maj. Benny Hubbard, GRS Command Sgt. Maj.

Hubbard presented an honorary employee award to outgoing GRD Commanding General Maj. Gen. William M. McCoy on Oct. 4 during the general's farewell dinner with the GRS headquarters staff at Camp Adder.

According to Hubbard, the program will recognize outstanding employees through-out GRS.

“We will award an employee from each Area Office, to include the headquarters, on a monthly basis,” Hubbard said.

“The goal is to reward employees for their outstanding service and continue to boost the morale in GRS,” he said.

The EOM recipient will receive an authentic USACE flag flown at the GRS headquarters with a certificate of authenticity, a commander's coin, and their picture in the Southern Views newsletter.



ARMY PHOTO BY JAMES BULLINGER

Applicants must be nominated by their supervisor and submitted through their Area Office deputy commander for consideration to the Sergeant Major. GRS Headquarters staff will submit through the HQs executive officer.

Each office can submit up to three nominees a month. If an office has more than one, the GRS Awards Board will chose the most qualified applicant. The deadline for submission is the 15th of each month. For more information contact Sgt. Maj. Hubbard at (540) 665-1220.

Pictured above, Hubbard, center, assisted by Staff. Sgt. Jessica Harvey, presents a USACE flag autographed by the GRS staff and a certificate of authenticity to McCoy. 

### **Safety** *continued*

“Quality assurance representatives are the eyes and ears of the Area and Resident Offices for quality and safety,” he said.

“They're not the safety officers for the project, but they do report safety findings on their quality assurance reports. They also partner with the contractors to address unsafe acts or activities,” Fujimoto explained.

Fujimoto encouraged, in addition to filing accident investigation reports to supervisors, these reports also be coordinated with the appropriate safety officer to ensure safe guards, or better practices, are adopted. Otherwise, these reports provide only an account of the incident, and not an opportunity to prevent future similar occurrences from happening.

Fujimoto said that if the safety findings cannot be resolved in the field, then the Area or Resident Office usually gets involved to rectify the situation or issue.

He also explained that they have vital Iraqi assets for the USACE safety program. These Iraqi safety engineers travel all around Iraq to inspect project sites, while risking possible enemy attacks everyday for safety.

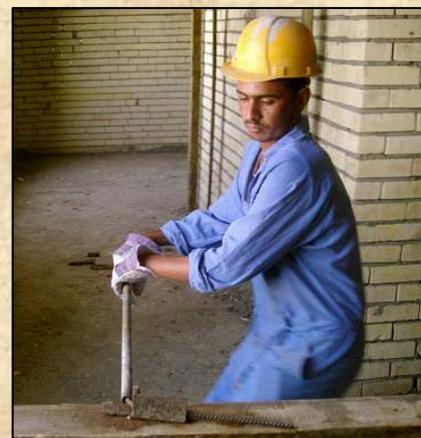
“That is truly amazing to me and I admire their dedication,” Fujimoto said, “I view the Iraqi safety engineers as pioneers and founders of establishing a safety culture here in Iraq.”

All accident investigators are taught that the purpose of the investigation is to determine the cause of an accident and to develop corrective actions to prevent similar accidents in the future.

The aims of the safety training are to improve safety performance, reduce accidents and injuries, and have better safety accountability. This is how one makes the workplace as safe as possible.

“There are many things that I have taught, but the most important one was teaching three Iraqi engineers who work for me in the safety office to go out and teach others,” Fennema said.

“They have gone from being students in safety to training many different safety topics on their own,” he said.



An Iraqi construction worker wears and uses his personal safety equipment on the job. U.S. ARMY PHOTO





## ***Al Aziziyah Primary Healthcare Clinic Opening Holds Hope for Iraqi People***

By James Bullinger

The opening of another new primary healthcare clinic is a joyous occasion for the Iraqi people, but the opening of the Al Aziziyah PHC was a special event for local residents and for one young girl given a great honor.

Koka Sabry, the daughter of Iraqi Engineer Hussein Sabry, was given the honor of being the scissor bearer for the Sept. 18 ribbon cutting ceremony at the PHC, located about an hour northwest of the city of Al Kut.

Koka's father works for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as the project engineer for this construction project.

For the ceremony, Koka carried the ceremonial scissors atop an ornate tray surrounded by rose buds for Wasit Deputy Governor Ahmed Abdu Salam, who formally opened the two-story facility with a snip of the ribbon.

Many local government and civic leaders attended the event, along with representatives from the USACE's Gulf Region South District.

Key GRS visitors included Col. Gary Johnston, commander; and Maj. Teresa Straus, the resident engineer of the Wasit Resident Office responsible for the PHC construction project.

"This project is the first PHC of seven in the Wasit Province to be completed," said Straus, an active duty engineer officer who arrived in mid-July from her duty station at Fort McPherson, Ga.

"It is not just a building. It is a place for Iraqi doctors and nurses to heal Iraqi citizens – all under the auspices of the Iraqi Government," Straus said.

For Straus, the opening of this facility renewed her dedication to the reconstruction effort.

"Seeing the excitement and happiness on the faces

Wasit Deputy Governor Ahmed Abdu Salam formally opened the Al Aziziyah Primary Healthcare Clinic with a snip of the ribbon.

ARMY PHOTOS BY JAMES BULLINGER

of the doctors and staff that will be working at the clinic was motivating. Seeing the children in the streets clapping because the clinic was completed was endearing. And knowing that soon the people of the Hai Al Askari neighborhood will have easy access to medical treatment was encouraging to me," Straus said.

"My thoughts now have turned to the remaining six clinics in the Wasit Province. I want to ensure the same quality and care is taken to complete them that is apparent at this clinic," Straus said.

This \$583,000 project will provide medical and dental care to some 100 to 150 patients a day when running at capacity, officials said.

An Al Aziziyah provisional council member attending the ceremony was appreciative of the efforts to help his countrymen. Requesting anonymity for security reasons, he spoke about the significance of this new facility and how people feel towards the American reconstruction efforts.

"This building is so important because it is the only health clinic that we have in town. Al Kut is so far from here, so when people get sick they get the necessary health treatment in this clinic," he said.

"In towns like Al Aziziyah the government clinic plays an important role in society. Not all the people are able to afford the expenses of the private clinics, so this clinic will help them to get almost free medical examination, x-ray, dental treatments, and very cheap medicines," he said.

"People know very well that the Americans are helping in Iraq reconstruction and they appreciate it. And this clinic is a good example for the support of the Americans to revive the society on all levels."

When the Al Aziziyah clinic is fully operational it will employ a staff of 27 doctors, nurses, technicians and support staff and provide services such as medical and dental x-ray capabilities, vaccination, a medical testing laboratory, a pharmacy, and public education.



Maj. Teresa Straus congratulations Koka Sobry on her great job as the scissor bearer, as her father Hussein watches.

## Alabama TV Reporter Covers GRS Reconstruction

By James Bullinger

In mid August a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers public affairs officer in southern Iraq approached TV station WTVY, a CBS affiliate in Dothan, Ala., on the idea of embedding a reporter to cover the ongoing reconstruction efforts in the newly democratic country.

The offer was to come and embed with the Gulf Region South district at Camp Adder from Oct. 7-19.

As it turned out, Lauren Davis, the 27-year-old anchor of *WTVY News Four This Morning*, jumped at the opportunity to travel nearly half way around the world.

"My News Director Katie McManus-Faye thought it would be a good idea, but I was concerned about costs and safety and liability and all that stuff, and actually thought the idea would go away," said Pat Dalbey, general manager of WTVY.



2nd Lt. Richard Hallon, a Dhi-Qar Resident Office project engineer, discusses the progress on the Nasiriyah Primary Healthcare Clinic during a site visit with Lauren Davis on Oct. 10.

"We wanted good news stories. Stories that showed progress and positive results," explained Dalbey on what WTVY wanted to accomplish.

"We can get all the bad news we want from the network and I didn't need any of those kinds of stories from Lauren," he said.

"I wanted to go to Iraq so I could see for myself what the rebuilding process was like and how the Iraqi people were accepting us," Davis said, "I knew there was a risk, but I was willing to take that risk to bring the people the real story about what's going on in Iraq."

"I was surprised to find out the violence that's going on in Iraq isn't the main story. The main story is the amount of money and effort going into rebuilding the country," Davis said, "I didn't know that the Iraqi people needed so many things from clean drinking water to basic medical care."

"The Army Corps of Engineers is a wonderful organization. They have respected, experienced staff members with the know-how to rebuild a nation and help the local nationals," she said.



Lt. Col. Ed Patterson, Adder Area Office Engineer, and Lauren Davis listen as J.R. Long, project engineer for the An Nasiriyah Water Treatment Plant, describes the water filtration process to cleanse water for half a million area residents on Oct. 8.

That wasn't the case. Davis is the station's beat reporter for all things military and for Fort Rucker, Ala.

"Then Lauren got after me and kept pitching me on what it would mean to the station, how she wanted to do it, that it was such a unique opportunity and we shouldn't let it pass, etc.," Dalbey said, "She was relentless, but she did make some good points and I didn't want to dampen her enthusiasm, but I still had my reservations."

Dalbey told Faye and Davis if they could do the trip for a set cost that he would agree.

"They got it done for less than what I gave them, so I decided to go ahead with it," he said.

The USACE offered Davis an opportunity to see some of its nearly 1,300 construction projects, worth \$2.6 billion, within their area of responsibility.



Dhi-Qar Resident Office Construction Representative Margaret Williams talks about her role in Iraq during a live satellite broadcast back to Alabama on WTVY's morning show Oct. 10.



Dothan, Ala. resident and Chief of Engineering and Construction Andy Adams also talks about his job in Iraq with Lauren Davis during a live broadcast back to Davis's morning show on Oct. 10.

Davis shot six news stories on USACE projects designed to restore and improve the quality of life of the average Iraqi. She toured the massive \$256 million Nasiriyah Water Treat Plant, traveled to the Nasiriyah Drainage Pump Station, visited one of the 109 primary healthcare clinics under construction and one of the 354 completed schools.

She finished her embed at Camp Blackadder II in Basrah. There Davis visited the North Rumalah Natural Gas Liquid Plant undergoing a \$54 million refurbishment, and the Port of Umm Qsar, where USACE is building increased capacity to receive more ships.



**Note:** To see Lauren Davis's news reports and more photos from Iraq, go online to [www.wtvynews4.com](http://www.wtvynews4.com) and click on "Mission to Iraq."

Iraq can be a dangerous place, but an acceptable risk to Davis who desired to cover the rebuilding.

"I did have several close calls. Our convoy came under attack by small arms fire and a roadside bomb," she said.

"There were times at the different camps in Iraq when I would lay my head down to go to sleep and worry about being rocketed in the night and it hitting my room," she said. "It made me realize our men and women go out everyday to help others despite the risks and the danger."

After nearly two hard weeks of filming stories, Davis said the following on her assignment.

**RIGHT:** SFC David Adlard, a construction NCO with the Oil Area Office, shows off the control room of the North Rumalah Natural Gas Liquid Plant to Davis on Oct. 17.

**BELOW:** Tom Eidson, Basrah Area Engineer tapes his interview on the Port of Umm Qsar capacity development on Oct. 18.



"My overall experience has been unbelievable. I feel like a different person. I leave a more well-rounded journalist than before I came," she said. "I didn't want to leave, but I was ready to come back and tell my stories."

When asked about what she would like the America people to know concerning the war in Iraq and the soldiers and civilians serving there, Davis had these comments.

"The Iraqi people are glad the U.S. and Coalition forces are there," she said, "They are glad Saddam Hussein isn't in power anymore, but they still live in fear of the insurgents, just like our soldiers do."

She noted that, "It's going to take time to rebuild Iraq. The Iraqis are glad we're helping them and soon the insurgents will see they're not going to run us out of there."

"The morale of the soldiers is good. These men and women go out everyday to help the Iraqis and face danger in their path -- I admire them," Davis said.

"They know they've a job to do and they have the support of the American people. The USACE people have great attitudes. They work hard everyday to build a better life for the Iraqis."



## ***The Importance of Primary Healthcare Clinics in Iraq***

By Mohammed Aliwi

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) continues to make progress with the construction of primary healthcare clinics (PHC) throughout Iraq.

According to U.S. Air Force 2nd Lt. Richard L. Hallon, a project engineer with the Thi Qar Residence Office of the Gulf Region South (GRS) District, the PHCs for Iraqis is something that is considered a high priority in the budget of the Iraqi Reconstruction Relief Funds.

"The improvement of medical services and the quality of basic healthcare of the Iraqi people is important to the new government and to us," Hallon said.

"The aim is to develop the medical services infrastructure and provide the environment, people and equipment to raise the quality of life for all the people," he said.

The primary healthcare clinics are regarded as something of importance on all levels.

An Iraqi physician, who requested to remain anonymous for security reasons, said, "Due to the fact that national policy has been geared toward most healthcare efforts are not directed at the rural areas, as the higher population lives in the cities."

Hallon reflected on this point also.

"The building of primary healthcare clinics in rural areas was neglected in the past and has created a shortage of quality medical care for many people," he said.

"Other reasons why rural areas have so few PHCs is that it is not commercially attractive to many health workers who are only interested in working in the larger cities," he said.

He also mentioned that humanitarian organizations like Red Crescent and Red Cross are usually more oriented towards the PHC providing vaccinations, educational and sanitation



**Dhi-Qar Resident Office Project Engineer, 2nd Lt. Richard Hallon, accompanied by Sgt. Maj. Benny Hubbard, in green uniform, conducts a construction site inspection visit with contractor representatives at the Al Rifa'ee PHC.**

training support, and are sometimes funded by foreign organizations to back up healthcare in Iraq.

"There is no question that the future will present a very different set of demands on the Iraqi healthcare delivery system to meet the rapidly growing medical needs," Hallon explained.

"The Army Corps of Engineers' efforts to increase the number of healthcare clinics and provide access to quality healthcare are critical to the Iraqis' future," he said. "The GRS is building 58 clinics in different areas in all the southern provinces."

Hallon said that the new clinics which are built in the rural areas would be more accessible to the urban population; moreover it will have a bigger impact and help eliminate people having to travel long distances to seek medical examinations and treatments typically provided in the cities.

"The standards services that will be provided include medical and dental examinations and X-ray services, an on site laboratory, a pharmacy, classrooms for providing local education and training, and a cafeteria for staff," Hallon said.

"The PHCs projects that the [Corps of Engineers] has been working on will integrate healthcare education with patient care, resulting in an overall improvement in community health," he said.



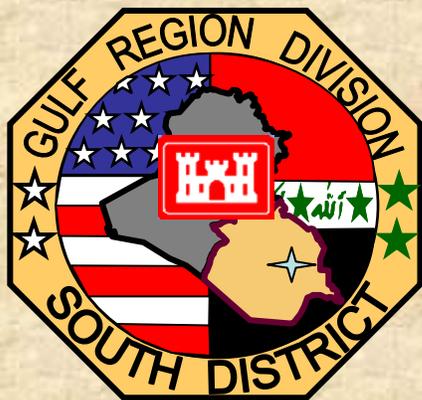
**The primary healthcare clinic in Qal at Sukkar, here in a Sept. 28 progress photo, will provide area residents with medical and dental services.**



# GRD's Maj. Gen. William McCoy Makes Farewell GRS Visit



Maj. Gen. William McCoy, commanding general of the Gulf Region Division in Iraq, paid one last visit to the GRS district before his Oct. 14 change of command. He dropped in on GRS Oct. 3-5 to gather notes and facts for his end of tour report and give his thanks to the women and men serving under his command. Highlights of his trip included: 1) A meeting with An Nasiriyah's Chief of Police Maj. Gen. Abdul Hussein Alsafi, with Col. Gary Johnston, left, and an interpreter, center. 2) McCoy and George Fowler, construction representative, listen to an Iraqi police commander discuss his new facility during a site visit in Nasiriyah. 3) Morgan Morehart, center, Washington International site manager, points out details of the massive Nasiriyah Drainage Pump Station to (l to r): Johnston, McCoy and Fowler. 4) McCoy tours the underground control room for the NDPS with Washington Intl. construction specialists. 5) Sgt. Maj. Benny Hubbard presents McCoy with two framed photo collages of photographs from various visits to GRS during his command. 6) Lt. Col. Lorenzo Valenzuela presents McCoy with a book and souvenir T-shirt from GRS as reminder gifts of his time in command of GRD.



## GRS People Notes

# Pins and Patches

ARMY PHOTO BY LT CMDR SCOTT KING



Lt. Col. Sherrell Crow, Maysan Resident Office Resident Engineer, received his combat patch and certificate from Col. Gary Johnston on Oct. 23 at the Basrah Area Office. Crow has served more than 30 consecutive days in a combat zone to qualify.

RIGHT: Natalie Sudman, BAO project engineer, received her combat pin and certificate from Col. Gary Johnston on Oct. 23 at the Basrah Area Office. She too has served over 60 days in a combat zone to qualify.



ARMY PHOTO BY LT CMDR SCOTT KING



LEFT: George Schmidt, GRS property book officer, received his combat pin and certificate from Col. Gary Johnston on Oct. 23 at the Basrah Area Office. Schmidt has served more than 60 consecutive days in a combat zone to qualify.

ARMY PHOTO BY LT CMDR SCOTT KING

ARMY PHOTO BY JAMES BULLINGER



Kaaren Geter, a project manager for Transportation and Communications with the Programs and Project Management Division at GRS Headquarters, received her *Civilian Service in a Combat Zone* pin and certificate from Col. Gary Johnston on Sept. 23. Geter served more than 60 consecutive days in a combat zone to qualify.



ARMY PHOTO BY NICK ASH

Pins and certificates for *Civilian Service in a Combat Zone* were presented by Col. Gary Johnston at GRS Headquarters on Oct. 21 to James Bullinger, Cheryl Hodge-Snead, Detriess Edwards, Kenneth Brown and Ethan Luke, who have qualified after serving more than 60 consecutive days in Iraq.



### More Pins and Patches...

ARMY PHOTO BY LT CMDR SCOTT KING



James Hodges, BAO construction representative, received his combat pin and certificate, after serving more than 60 consecutive days in a combat zone, from Col. Gary Johnston on Oct. 23 at the Basrah Area Office.

## Awards



Col. Gary Johnston presented the *Commander's Award for Civilian Service* to Dianne "DeDe" Pacheco, above, on her Sept. 27 departure from GRS. Pacheco served as the Contracting Division administrative assistant for six months. Then Russell Fennema, below, GRS safety officer, also received the Commander's Award upon the completion of his one year tour on his Oct. 22 departure. Thanks for a job done well.

## Purple Heart

ARMY PHOTOS BY JAMES BULLINGER



Maj. Gen. William Wallace, GRD commander, presented the Purple Heart to Lt. Col. Lorenzo Valenzuela, left, on Oct. 4 at Camp Adder. Valenzuela was wounded on April 19 as a result of hostile enemy actions. He was traveling in a 4 vehicle convoy from Karbala to Camp Duke when a powerful IED was triggered on the convoy at approximately 1220 hours. As result of that blast, which severely damaged two vehicles, Valenzuela suffered head injuries to include a moderate to severe concussion and perforated eardrums. After seven days of medical treatments he returned to duty at Camp Echo on April 27.



RIGHT: Col. Gary Johnston presented the *Superior Civilian Service Award* to Michael Costello, on Oct. 21. Costello served as a construction project manager in the Program Project Management Division during his one year tour.



# Awards



## Employee of the Month



Col. Gary Johnston, above left, presented Dan Klopp with two awards on the occasion of his end of tour on Oct. 30. Klopp, a logistics specialist with the GRS S4 staff, received the *Commander's Award for Civilian Service* for his accomplishments during his 6 months tour and received an impact *Achievement Medal for Civilian Service* for his actions with the move of the GRS property in Basrah from the KBR camp to Camp Blackadder II. And to top off his tour, he was named as the first recipient of GRS's *Employee of the Month* award for October. Pictured above right, Sgt. Maj. Benny Hubbard presented Klopp with a USACE flag, certificate and a commander's coin as a thank you for his outstanding service.



Please consider supporting the 2006 Combined Federal Campaign. Together we can help make a difference. Contact Staff. Sgt. Jessica Harvey at the GRS Headquarters about how you can contribute to a variety of quality organizations requesting financial support. Call (540) 678-3396.

Bernice Chavez was presented with the *Commander's Award for Civilian Service* by Col. Gary Johnston on Oct. 30. Chavez, an administrative assistant in the GRS S1 section, completed her 6 month tour and returned back to her home district in Albuquerque, N.M.



Col. Gary Johnston, left, assisted by Lt. Col. Kenneth McDonald, GRS deputy commander (MND-SE), presented Lauren Davis with a certification of appreciation and a commander's coin on Oct. 18 for her professionalism and fair and balanced coverage of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Davis, a TV reporter and anchor with WTVY, a CBS affiliate in Dothan, Ala., was embedded with GRS from Oct. 7-19. She covered a variety of projects with the Adder, Forat and Basrah Area Offices, and conducted four live satellite broadcasts back to her home station during her show "WTVY News 4 This Morning."

## New Arrivals

GRS welcomed five new arrivals on Sept. 23. Pictured here between Col.

Gary Johnston, left, and Sgt. Maj. Benny Hubbard, right, are (l to r): Paul Farley, Basrah Children's Hospital construction representative; Crystal Bond, GIS administrator; Norma Dean, senior program analyst; Frank Sanchez, contract specialist; and Michael Scott, construction rep. All are here on one year assignments.



ARMY PHOTOS BY JAMES BULLINGER



Col. Gary Johnston, left, and Sgt. Maj. Benny Hubbard, right, welcomed new arrivals to GRS on Oct. 9. A warm welcome was extended to (l to r) Robert Jackson, BAO construction rep.; Jenny Hughes, executive administrative assistant; Antonio Bastidas, Dhi-Qar construction representative; and Tosca Patchus, contracting administrative assistant.



Six more new members to the GRS family arrived Oct. 21. Pictured here with Col. Gary Johnston, left, and Sgt. Maj. Benny Hubbard, right, are (l to r), front row: Inhui Spann, program analyst; Julie Davis, administrative assistant; Ruth Richmond, contract specialist; back row: Tony Fox, construction representative; and Charles Bauer, project engineer.



**Give to CFC – Contact SSG Jessica Harvey**



The GRS Headquarters staff welcomed newcomers Brian Smith, left, and Michael Fellenz during their Oct. 1 hail. Smith is a construction representative in the Muthanna Resident Office here on a six month tour and Fellenz, a project management specialist in the Dhi-Qar Resident Office, volunteered for a full year.



ARMY PHOTOS BY JAMES BULLINGER

A hearty “welcome aboard” was given to more newcomers on Oct. 30. The GRS commander and staff welcomed (l to r): Natasha Priddle, S1 administrative assistant; Matthew Johnson, S1 administrative officer; Richard Holeman, chief of Engineering and Construction; and Robin Parks, a project management specialist. All will remain at the headquarters on Camp Adder providing support to staff and field area offices.

## Farewells



ARMY PHOTO BY MOHAMMED ALIWI

Greg Fillers, left, was one of many on hand to say “Farewell” to departing GRS Public Affairs Officer Ken ‘The Respected One’ Holder on Oct. 11. Holder returned to his home district in Portland, Ore., after a six month tour of covering and supporting reconstruction news.

## News Around the District



Air Force Maj. Gen. Del Eulberg, center, the U.S. Air Force Civil Engineer, receives a greeting from Lt. Col. John Balzano, background, a salute from Capt. Jason Campbell, and handshake from 2nd Lt. Richard Hallon, and Sgt. Maj. Benny Hubbard, left, on arrival at GRS Headquarters Oct. 23 during his theater tour to assess USAF engineering assets.