

# ESSAYONS

*Forward*

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

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**A season of progress, promise —  
A reason to be hopeful, thankful**





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*Commander's  
Column*



As we closeout this year for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Operation Iraqi Freedom, I would like to first wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Joyous New Year. The Gulf Region Division has made a difference in this mission through the hard work, determination, and the volunteerism of the Corps. We thank you for your service...service past, present, and those who will follow. Only through the volunteers of this great organization are we able to execute this mission, and we are delivering. With nearly 1250 projects started to date, we are well within reaching our goal of 1400 by the end of the year.

These new project starts will bring jobs and essential services back to the Iraqi people. It will continue to build the economic infrastructure of the country. Most importantly, it will give hope to the Iraqi people. Hope for a better life, free from tyranny and oppression, with freedom and opportunity for all. Elections are just more than a month away, and the Iraqi people intend to vote.

As the PCO program moves forward, we're seeing many other acquisition strategies being utilized with work going to the Major Subordinate Commands, to MNSTC-I, to AFCEE, to GRD, and even a few projects to the Ministries. We are working every available strategy in order to move projects along, put Iraqis to work, and help build the capacity in Iraq to rebuild itself. GRD will receive approximately \$1 billion directly, for Design, Program/Project Management, and Construction. We're looking at hiring the Minister of Housing and Construction A/E State Owned Enterprises for design work. This environment demands creative solutions that expand well beyond the normal practices of construction, and we're seeing this throughout the division each day.

Also joining the Corps team are Iraqi employees that we are now hiring directly using our personal services contract. Over 40 Iraqis have joined the team through direct hiring. We've also added 30 Interns to our team from the Ministry of Municipalities and Public Works, and the Ministry of Water Resources. I met several ministers this past month including the Minister of Water Resources and the Minister of Housing and Construction. Both are very excited to work directly with the GRD in the reconstruction effort.

The Deputy Chief of Engineers, MG Griffin, was able to visit this month, and he had a great visit with the GRD team. Beyond visiting with GEN Casey, AMB Taylor, MG Chiarelli, the Minister of Water Resources, and many others, he was able to visit projects with GRC in Sadr City to gain a first hand view of the challenges and successes of construction in this environment. The USACE team providing our reach back support remains vital to the success of our mission.

I especially want to thank our Soldiers and civilians deployed during this holiday season. Also wish to pass on my thanks to your loved ones for their support of our efforts during this very special time of the year. Rest assured, we are making a difference. We are delivery. We are enjoying the opportunity of a lifetime...to make things right for the Iraqi people. This is a mission of enormous proportion, but with each passing day, we move forward in making the environment here better for the children of today and tomorrow.

We must win this fight, and winning is delivering. Together with the men and women in uniform, our great civilians, our coalition partners and our Iraqi friends, we will win!

Thank you for your service.

God Bless you all.

**Thomas P. Bostick**

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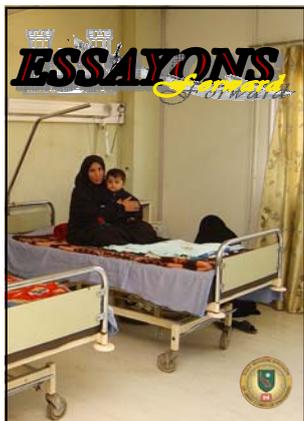
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**COVER: Patients at the Nasiriyah Maternity and Pediatric Hospital. Corps officials recently visited the facility to discuss the renovation with the staff. (Photo by BJ Weiner)**

# Fallujah reconstruction to begin

## Commanders assess what will be needed

It's a scene straight from the movie *"Escape from New York"*. Mounds of rubble choke the streets causing the small six vehicle convoy of Hummers to wind through city blocks to reach its destination. First one street, then another, always dodging the remnants of buildings now blocking the roads. Scorched and potholed streets are filled with debris; power lines droop in tangles or lie on the ground.

Sporadic gunfire can be heard, but the acoustics are misleading and you never really know from which direction it is coming, or how far away it is. Aside from the gunfire though, Fallujah appears to be a ghost town. Occasionally, another small convoy passes on a cross-street, but no where are there any people.

This was the scene that greeted Brig. Gen. Thomas P. Bostick, commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Gulf Region Division, and Rear Adm. Raymond K. Alexander, commander of the Marine Engineer Group, 1st Marine Expeditionary Force, as they surveyed the damage in the war ravaged town of Fallujah. The two commanders were assessing what would be needed to assist the Minister of Industry and Minerals to restore the basic infrastructure to allow residents to begin returning to their homes.

A food distribution system must be reinitiated. Shops and stores must be reopened; commerce resumed. Battered hospitals, clinics and schools must be patched up and reopened.

But, Bostick said that the reconstruction will likely begin with projects that will restore basic services. He identified an immediate need to repair power distribution lines, sewage lines and water treatment facilities.

Once the basic services are restored, reconstruction efforts will turn to hospitals, schools, clinics and solid waste management, he said.

But even restoring basic services will be a challenge. Most of the city's basic infrastructure was damaged, not only by fighting but also by years of neglect, and sanctions.

Even where there are electrical lines still in place, they are still suffering from years of neglect, said Army Maj. James Orbock, of the 445th Civil Affairs unit. Wires need to be stripped and replaced. Much of the technology and materials used in the infrastructure are from the 1950s, and it needs to be replaced, he said. The same holds true for much of the other basic services as well.

But getting the basics up and running again quickly is essential to building good will with the residents of Fallujah. There will be only a short time, to start reconstruction in the city and persuade residents that the interim Iraqi government is there to

help them, before human nature takes over and they become resentful about what happened to their city.

Military engineers are drafting plans to begin making repairs to the city's infrastructure as soon as Fallujah was secure. As with any construction in a combat zone, security will play a large role in time table for getting these services functional again.

"... security is still a serious challenge. But ... , we are still moving forward, and we are still working to achieve our three main goals: one, to improve the infrastructure of Iraq; second, to improve Iraqi employment through the use of local Iraqi firms and subcontracting to the maximum extent we can to Iraqi firms; and then, finally, to build capacity within the ministries and within the interim Iraqi government, so that they can in fact do much of this work in the future themselves," said Charles Hess, director of the Iraq Projects and Contracting Office, in a recent press interview.

Ambassador Bill Taylor, who is the director of the Iraq Reconstruction Management Office, echoed the need for a rapid start to reconstruction.

"The successful military operation needs to be followed by an equally successful reconstruction operation. The Marines, who have been doing most of the work along with Army and working very closely with the Iraqi forces, have done a lot of preparation for the reconstruction in Fallujah. They have focused their attention on preparing for humanitarian work. They've pre-positioned a lot of stocks of food and water and medicine. They have been preparing to start up on small reconstruction projects, in particular those that will restore essential services. So people are taking a look and assessing what the problems are with electricity distribution lines, for example, and sewer lines, water treatment in order to get clean water to people. We will then be able to move into the smaller projects of schools and clinics, and then eventually get to the larger projects that will -- that have been planned for some time but have not been able to move forward during the past several months," Taylor said in the same interview.

"We are working very closely with the Iraqi government. The Iraqi government has designated a Cabinet minister, Minister Hasani, who is the Minister of Industry and Minerals, to be the lead for the Iraqi government in this reconstruction effort. So he and I have met now two times. Our staffs have gotten together. The ministries of electricity and health and water resources, municipalities have gotten together with our folks in terms of the Marines and the Army, who are going to undertake these efforts, to coordinate that work," Taylor said.

Taylor pointed out that military action must be completed first for the reconstruction to begin.

"...as you've seen, there are still some problems there. It's not totally done. I think we are in full control, but there are still pockets of resistance. And there's a lot of booby traps and of other explosives that are around that will inhibit our work," Taylor said.

Bostick pointed out that once the security situation allows the rebuilding to begin most of the work will be done by Iraqi construction firms.

"This will provide work for the local businesses and it will put money directly into the local economy. Not only will this give thousands of people much needed jobs, but it will give them a clear picture that it will result in a safer, more secure life," said Bostick.

**Pat Jones**

**(Left) Years of neglect, lack of maintenance and illegal electrical taps are as much a problem in distribution of electricity as any battle damage. (Watermark) Multinational forces and the new Iraqi government hope this typical Fallujah street will one day return to promise. (GRD Photos)**







## Basrah International Airport to Open in July

*Airport considered as first step to  
return Iraqi tourism*

A British soldier browses at one of the small gift stores now open at BIA. The British military and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers are working together to get the airport up and running by July 2005. (Photos by BJ Weiner)



The airport that never was, at least, not officially. Rumors have it that, in the past 10 years, Basrah International Airport opened only when VIPs were visiting the country, and people worked at the airport only on those occasions. But, in July 2005, Basrah International Airport will officially open for commercial air and passenger traffic.

“The airport was never really functional,” said Nolan Smith, assistant area engineer for the Basrah office, Gulf Region South, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. “It was never formally opened to large commercial flights, primarily because of war. But now, it could open up to cargo flights in the very near future.”

The \$4.9 million renovation of the terminal includes the air traffic control tower, according to Erick Bush, construction services for the Transportation & Communications Sector of the Corps’ southern district. The NAV Aids (navigational aids) contract has not yet been awarded, but it is out for bid, according to Bush. Construction needs not yet funded include upgrades to the fuel farm and electric feeder lines. A Native Alaskan firm, Nana Pacific, won the bid and will start work around Dec. 6.

“The airport is one of highest profile projects we have here, with high likelihood of success: being on schedule, on budget and being fully functional when complete,” Bush said. “The timeframe for completion on the NAV Aids and the terminal is July, which would enable commercial and civilian air traffic to begin.”

The airport has managed to avoid the 10 years of war, embargo and looting that have devastated other places in the country, according to Smith. “The art is still there,” he said, “and there is a lot of it. The facilities are old and suffer from neglect, but we are hoping that some may be reparable. With that we have to bring up chillers (water cooling units), so they have air conditioning, electrical, plumbing – we’ll be doing the elevators and escalators, the baggage claim areas, the conveyors, the architectural work, the floors, the ceiling and some pavement marking and striking.”

All systems have to be brought to international standards before any cargo or commercial planes can land, said Smith. Other projects, for which the Corps is not responsible, include providing fire engines and training firemen for the requisite fire station.

“These systems there are good systems, and we are bringing them and the airport back to life,” he said. “And, when we do, we’ll bring this area of Iraq back to life. Part of our project is to bring in all the security issues at the airport – baggage claim, scanners – and customs through the Security and Justice Sector – to keep the insurgents out. Once the security issues are gone, people will find friendly knowledgeable people with a rich history.”

Smith explained that Nana Pacific intends to work with the airport authority to hire those people who used to work at the facility. “They will rehire the laborers, the cleaning crews – all the people who used to work this place. The people will bring this airport back to life – be trained on the new systems, and they’ll operate these systems when we’re done. I believe between 800 and 1,000 people used to work here. They sit at home now because there is no work in the area. Their jobs are coming back.”

Once the airport opens, the tourism industry will find a welcome home in Iraq. Smith acknowledged that part of that equation depends on the combination of the ports and the airport.

“This country has tremendous assets,” he said. “And it depends on commerce – the kind of commerce the airport and the ports will bring. Before the wetlands were drained, there were 300 million date palms in this area and the fruit was exported. Agriculture was one of this country’s biggest exports. Dates in Iraq were the best in the world. The trees were all dug up or moved – by the former regime.”

“Several major religions have the same center, and it is in this area – the history is all around us. Mesopotamia is second to Israel in that regard – there are tremendous places to see. I intend to bring my family back to this area one day,” he said.

Bush said he can’t predict the kind of impact the airport will have on the region, or what kind of need the Iraqi people of Iraq will have for the facility. “It will definitely help the infrastructure,” he said. “No matter what they want to do with, they will be able to make it happen. Opportunities are what they will have – results are hard to predict. But whatever they decide, system will be in place.”

**BJ Weiner**

**Watermark:** Much of the artwork that Saddam had in BIA is intact, while other areas of the country were ravaged by looters and destroyed before, during and after the war. These mosaic tiles are a small example of the elegance planned for the airport refurbishing.

# Contractor Cleared for Takeoff for Mosul Airfield Upgrade

## Airport in Mosul gets new control tower and navigation equipment

In spite of recent insurgent activities in Mosul, Iraqi and multinational officials are moving forward with plans to upgrade Mosul's Airfield to a Category I airport. The International Civil Aviation Organization designates Category I airports as those properly equipped to host international commercial flights.

On November 27 officials awarded a \$10.3 million contract to construct a new air traffic control tower and install new runway lights and navigational aid equipment, all critical components that will help bring the airfield up to international standards. Renovations at the airfield's terminal have been underway since July. There are also plans to renovate the airport taxiway and update the weather forecasting equipment.

The multi-million dollar fast-track design-build contract is structured to move forward quickly. A preconstruction meeting is scheduled and work could begin once thirty percent of the design is complete. "The goal at thirty percent design is to know what the foundation looks like so work can begin," said Rich Maskil, construction support engineer with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. "This type of contract is designed to move out fast."

During design and construction, Corps engineers will be responsible for construction management and quality assurance.

"The contractor will be encouraged to use as many local laborers and subcontractors as possible," explained Frank Scopa, Mosul-area resident engineer with the Corps. "This project is serving the people of Iraq. It's important they are part of the process. Plus, this keeps work and monies within the local area."

The airfield, originally constructed in the 1920s by the British, was strictly for military operations up until the early 1990s when a public terminal was built and Iraqi Airways was permitted to bring in flights for one hour a day, explained G. K., a former member of the Iraqi Air Force.

G.K., an alias being used for his protection, is providing Iraqi and multinational officials invaluable knowledge and assistance during the airfield renovations. Unfortunately his assistance has made him a target of the anti-Iraqi forces. He lives and works in a secure area and has sent his family out of the country. When asked why he would risk so much, he said, "It's my country. Unless I work there is no one to help."

A Category I airport in Mosul would bring business and trade from around the world into northern Iraq, providing many economic opportunities for the local people. The presence of an international airport is important in the development of the northern Iraqi economy as it steps into the world as a new, free and democratic nation. The insurgents know this and are trying to prevent progress from coming to the North.

**Nicole Darlymple**



(left) Exterior of Mosul airfield terminal.  
 (watermark) Interior lobby.  
 (Photos by Nicole Darlymple)

# Qarmat Ali Water Injection Facility Turned Over to Southern Oil Company

## *Iraq Water Injection system key to crude oil production*

**P**reserve the reservoir. That's what water injection systems are for – to maintain oil reservoir pressure by replacing the oil that is withdrawn with treated water.

This past month, the Southern Oil Company of Basrah took ownership of the restored water injection system at the Qarmat Ali Water Treatment Plant on behalf of the Ministry of Oil in the new Iraq government.

To understand the process, one has to understand Oil 101, said Marcia Meekins, oil area engineer. Oil does not sit in large pools beneath the ground; rather, it is embedded in porous rock. "It's not like the 'Beverly Hillbillies, it doesn't just bubble out of the ground. You have to drill down into these oil deposits through the rock," she said.

As the oil is extracted, the reservoir loses pressure, according to Meekins. To preserve the life of the reservoir, water is injected into the rock to replace the pressure created by the oil.

"You have to strategically do this," she said. "You have to inject the water in the right place, using the right amount of water, and you have to drive that water to the wellhead to equalize the pressure as you move the oil. That's the object of the game."

Meekins said that the Qarmat plant feeds Iraq's Rumaylah Reservoir. First tapped in the 1950s by the British, the reservoir splits into two fields; one in the south or and one in the north, Rumaylah South and North respectively.

"We spent about \$225 million dollars which includes the power to do the water injection work, and there is talk about spending more money because the water injection is Iraq's first priority," said Meekins.

Designed to process raw river water from a tributary of the Euphrates River, Qarmat Ali plant works as follows.

Treating the water first removes small solids from the river that could plug the reservoir pores if it builds up. Water treatment also controls the acidity level and stymies bacterial growth. Left untreated, the reservoir could clog, not only reducing the oil flow, but requiring well repairs, re-perforating the well or, at worst having to redrill the well, according to a report done by Kellogg, Brown and Root (KBR), which began construction on the treatment plant in March 2003 at the direction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Qarmat Ali uses several pumps to draw, treat, and inject water. Stage One pumps draw the water from the river and pump it to elevated holding tanks. After being mixed, settled and filtered, the water is stored. Stage Two pumps shoot the stored water from the plant to a series of cluster pump stations to be injected into the oil reservoir.

Restoring the Qarmat Ali plant marks the largest project completion in the oil program thus far, said Meekins. "Most of our projects are centered on two goals," she said. "One is to increase the export of crude oil to three million barrels a day. Right now, it puts out less than two."

The second goal aims at increasing the production of liquid petroleum gas (LPG) to 3,000 metric tons a day, according to Meekins. Iraq's current LPG production rests between four and six metric tons, depending on the time of year. "Right now, they have to import LPG," she said. "LPG is what we would call propane. And that is used for cooking and for heating."

Meekins emphasized that all projects in the oil sector forecast a good economic future for Iraq. "We don't have any project here that's not potentially a winner," she said. "Not one."

**BJ Weiner**



The complete pump house facility . (Photo by BJ Weiner)

## Safety and Construction Standards Challenge Entire Workforce at New Iraqi Army Military Base



**(Above) Worker gets medical attention: The safety and welfare of K1 NIA MB workers has been very important. A medical clinic was opened onsite to provide first aid to workers and contract personnel. (Watermark) After several workers got chemical burns on their shins doing concrete work, a safety standard was set that workers would tuck their pants into their boots and tape around the tops.**

*(Photos by Nicole Dalrymple)*

Wide variances in building processes, and almost non-existent safety rules and regulations have made ongoing reconstruction efforts in Iraq dynamic and complex. The multinational construction team building the new \$100 million K1 New Iraqi Army Military Base has encountered and addressed many of these challenges. It's an environment that has required proactive efforts by the prime contractor and patience, innovation, and initiative from all involved.

ECCI, the project's prime contractor, has awarded much of the K1 construction work to four local companies. They have distributed work to over fifty Iraqi subcontractors. The large scale project has employed as many as 2,600 workers a day and has surpassed two million labor hours.

"This project is providing more jobs for people and we are all gaining experience," said Ali Ali Raof, a local Iraqi civil engineer assisting with quality assurance at K1.

Originally, ECCI had planned on using pre-manufactured or modular buildings for K1, but the decision was made early on to use block and mortar construction. This decision kept the majority of labor in the local area and helped grow the economy, explained Keith Pushaw, program manager with ECCI.

Phase One construction, which consists of 120 buildings, roads and utilities, is scheduled for completion in Janu-

ary. The base, designed to support a brigade of 3,000 soldiers, will include officer and enlisted barracks, dining facilities, headquarters buildings, maintenance facilities, a laundry, fire station, medical clinic, mosque, motor pool and firing ranges.

Because of all the required permits and building standards, a construction project of this size could have taken two or more years to build in the States, Pushaw explained. Phase One construction is taking less than one, but it has been a challenging nine months.

"Many of our subcontractors have limited resources and are unable to provide the workforce with the tools we so commonly take for granted in America," Pushaw said. "They also have little exposure to the safety culture and workers often lack some of the basic essentials such as closed-top shoes."

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers construction reps, providing quality assurance oversight on the project, have seen workers using rebar as C clamps and hammer drills, and when mortar mixers were not available, mortar was mixed one bucket at a time using old Russian steel pots as mortar boxes.

The Iraqis have spent years holding their country together with whatever resources were available. If there's no hammer they will make one. "The last regime tried to get everything for themselves," explained Raof.

"The Iraqis are very innovative with the tools they use," said John Bartel, former area engineer for the Corps' Mosul Area Office. "Their engineers have really impressed me. They are a very capable people."

"We have always done the best with what we had," Raof added, "but now we are being shown new ways." Raof and forty other Iraqi engineers were brought in by the Ministry of Housing to help provide quality control at the project.

"The Iraqi engineers play a significant role in the construction process," said Wayne Elliott, the Corps' resident engineer there. "They have an assigned number of buildings where they are responsible for quality control and they assist us with the language barrier, communicating our intentions and requirements to the workers."

During construction Corps and ECCI personnel have been able to share knowledge with the local contractors, as well as introduce new technologies and processes. For example during foundational work, cracks were appearing in the freshly placed concrete. Masterkure 106, a water-based concrete curing compound, was brought in and eliminated the problem.

At first, dump trucks carrying in neatly stacked cinder blocks would be unloaded by simply 'dumping' the blocks out. Since many of the blocks were breaking, a new procedure was introduced requiring that all trucks be unloaded by hand and that the blocks be neatly stacked on the ground.

ECCI also performed classroom training and site instructions for the local subcontractors and engineers. "We have worked at establishing standards," Pushaw said. "Safety has been a big issue on the work site too. We stress safety and quality but it has been very challenging."

The safety and welfare of the workforce is very important. An onsite medical clinic provides first aid treatment for workers and contract personnel, and hard hats and safety glasses have also been issued to workers. As issues arose, preventative measures were quickly taken.

While placing concrete many of the workers were getting chemical burns on their shins. To help reduce the chance of additional burns, workers were given knee-high rubber boots that their pants were tucked into and tape was wrapped around the top of the boot. Providing the workers with clean drinking water quickly became a priority when it was noticed that unsanitary, used vegetable oil cans were being used as water coolers. ECCI mobilized quickly and brought in potable water coolers and tanks.

"This has been a learning process," Raof said. "Maybe we have some problems and mistakes but these are standards we are not use to. We are working through the challenges."

"We are building up our skills for the next phase," he said referring to Phase Two, which will include twenty additional buildings. "We will have to be tougher on the workers and local contractors and make sure we are learning continuously." Initial clearing and grubbing has begun for Phase Two and construction could start by January.

The construction of the K1 New Iraqi Army Military Base is important to the continued growth and strengthening of Iraq's military and security forces. A strong and capable military will help ensure a peaceful future for the people of Iraq.

**Nicole Dalrymple**

**York reflects upon a year of change and progress. Looking out across the Lewis & Clark Lake in Yankton, S.D., he remembers his experience a year ago.**

*(Photo by Harry Weddington, CENWO)*



# A Reason to Be Thankful

As Gary York drives into work as the senior power plant controller at the Omaha District's Gavins Point Dam in Yankton, S.D., he looks out across the sprawling Lewis and Clark Lake. The slow sprinkle of snow stands as a stark contrast to his world a year ago. As a construction rep serving for the Restore Iraqi Electricity Task Force in December 2003, Gary York's world then and now is as different as day and night.

On Christmas Eve 2004, surrounded by friends and family and the scenes of the holiday season, York often catches his thoughts wandering to his world and experience exactly a year ago, half a world away.

York, 48, had been in Iraq for nearly four months and was near the end of his tour as part of the effort to add electrical capacity to the Iraqi power grid. Originally scheduled to be home by Christmas, he extended through the holidays to help bring some projects along that had been impacted by the loss of Korean contractors who had left after being attacked in early December.

Spending the week before Christmas surveying and inspecting various transmission projects north of Baghdad, York, fellow Corps employee Ron Church and their security team were traveling back to their base near Baiji, about an hour north of Baghdad. Throughout the week they had on occasion been in the area of sporadic gunfire and resistance. At times they would encounter hostile fire and find shelter, but often the gunfire was nothing specifically directed at them so, as described by York, became more or less just part of the environment.

The eleven members of the convoy were returning to their base camp, K2, in hopes to spend the next day winding down in a brief break from the non-stop mission in Iraq. They had dropped two of their Iraqi security members off in Baghdad so they, too, could be with their families during the holidays.

As the hours crept towards evening, the three vehicle convoy raced north in hopes of reaching their destination before night fell.

With a gunner truck in the front, York drove the middle vehicle, with Church, and two Iraqi security guards. In the rear was the trail security vehicle full of contract and Iraqi security. As the convoy raced at typical speeds of 70 to 80 miles per hours, against the fading desert sun, York became aware of an unidentified vehicle in his rear-view mirror.

"Somehow they had gotten past our rear guard," said York. Unknown to York and his passengers, the assailants had already overtaken the trail vehicle, killing the rear gunner, and was now aiming their sights on them.

As the vehicle pulled up along side his Nissan Pathfinder, automatic weapons became visible and the attackers, leaning out of their vehicle, began to open fire on York and his team.

"It happened so fast," said York. Armed with nothing more than the SUV he was driving, York said he did not have time to steer the vehicle into the attackers. A shower of bullets hit their vehicle and killed one guard sitting directly



(Far left) York in 2003 at the Haditha hydropower Dam in Iraq. (Photo provided by York) (left) York, currently home in Yankton, S.D. at the Gavins Point Dam in the Omaha District. (Photo by Harry Weddington, CENWO)

behind York, struck another, and (although he was not aware of it at the time) also hit York in the head and sprayed shrapnel through the door and into his side. “I thought to myself, something is wrong here but I really don’t know what it is.” Either the situation or the adrenaline, said York, caused the whole experience to seem like slow motion.

York would momentarily lose control of the vehicle during the assault and it left the road and eventually slid down into a ditch.

While the attackers’ vehicle circled around to take position for another strike at York’s team, a second group of attackers, seemingly appearing out of no where, began firing on the vehicle in the ditch.

Meanwhile the lead security vehicle had already spun around and returned to defend the exposed Corps team. The surviving members of the trail vehicle, which had been shot up in the initial attack, had caught up to the scene and they, too, engaged in defending the team in the ditch. Some of the returning security forces raced into the ditch to help retrieve the stranded members of York’s team which were exposed to the turkey shoot set up by the insurgent forces.

“All I remember was one of the security team members pulling me out of the vehicle yelling, “We gotta go!” said York.

“The collision with the attackers’ vehicle, going into the ditch, and the bullets disabled our truck,” said York. “We had to get out of there and up to the others on the road.” The guard sitting behind York in the back seat had been killed during the initial at-

tack. Only York, Church, and another security guard, Richard (last name withheld), remained and began crawling up the hill to the road.

Bullets ripped around their heads. “The ground seemed like it was moving with you as it exploded with bullets and rocks,” said York. As the crew crawled from what seemed like their eventual roadside grave, security teams engaged the attackers from the road, exchanging small arms fire. Richard would be hit as they made their ascent up the hill and his automatic weapon would be kicked back to York, who trailed the group. “They blew it out of his hand and it ended up on top of me. As I pulled it in, I saw the handle was all shot off the gun,” said York. “All you could do at that point was to stay hunkered

raced away from the attack scene. As the deafening roar of the attacker continued, York silently gave a quick prayer to those who were left behind, and another prayer that they would quickly find friendly forces and medical care for those who remained.

For whatever reason, the original attacking vehicle and those roadside attackers did not pursue York’s team, but they were not out of danger yet.

“The vehicle I was in was sputtering,” said York. At that point they were all highly suspicious of anyone and any vehicle they would encounter. As they moved north towards Samarah, the vehicles limped to an Iraqi checkpoint that the crew prayed would be a legitimate security point, and not another insurgent cover. “We had no choice,” said York.

**“The ground seemed like it was moving with you as it exploded with bullets and rocks .... Inside you just knew one of those rounds was going to find you.”**  
—York

The Iraqi checkpoint guards quickly took their injured Iraqi countrymen in their Nissan trucks to a nearby hospital, in either Samarah or Balad, according to York.

The vehicle York was in was dead – the transmission, radiator, etc, all shot up. The American team, York, Church and two security members, “Doc” and injured,

Richard, then reassembled in the one surviving vehicle. At first, the security team, who had only been in country for a week, figured they’d head to Tikrit as the nearest life support area. York, who was more familiar with the area, convinced them to head towards nearby forward operating base Brassfield Mora. “I had been there about ten days earlier,” said York.

Richard, then reassembled in the one surviving vehicle. At first, the security team, who had only been in country for a week, figured they’d head to Tikrit as the nearest life support area. York, who was more familiar with the area, convinced them to head towards nearby forward operating base Brassfield Mora. “I had been there about ten days earlier,” said York.

With the sun scratching the horizon and the desert terrain becoming

With the sun scratching the horizon and the desert terrain becoming

**Continued next page**

## York

more and more hauntingly dark, the crew raced full speed to their hopeful sanctuary.

As fate would have it, they would encounter another hurdle as an Iraqi vehicle in the driving lane would unexpectedly enter their lane as they approached. York's vehicle smashed the Iraqi vehicle, sending it and its passengers into a spin and destroying most of their own vehicle. "I can still see them in slow motion going by with the passengers spinning," said York who again prayed for the family they would not have time to check on.

Sparks sprayed from underneath York's truck. Blown tires were running on nothing but their rims. The hood was smashed into the windshield. While the group would survive the accident on the road, their vehicle would not, eventually sputtering to a halt short of FOB Brassfield Mora. Shot, stranded and alone in the desert, with satellite phones unable to reach support, the crew reluctantly decided they had to commandeer a passing Iraqi vehicle to provide them safe haven. The first vehicle filled with an Iraqi women and children they allowed to pass, still paralyzed by the decision they were being forced to make.

Another vehicle appeared "out of Heaven", according to York. For whatever reason, a white American Caprice full of Iraqi men stopped. Numb or tired, York's team didn't even take up defense against the new Iraqis. Fortunately for the Corps team, these were friendly countrymen.

The uninjured security guard, "Doc", tactfully lined up the Iraqi men from the car and conveyed the emergency as best that two different languages and cultures could understand. "I fully believe they understood the reason we did what we had to do in taking their vehicle," said York. Leaving their unknown Iraqi saviors behind, the crew loaded into the caprice and headed to Brassfield Mora.

Soon after arriving at the coalition base, a black hawk helicopter medivac-ed York and the injured guard to Tikrit and its combat support hospital at Camp Speicher.

"I had surgery that night and the next morning I was being flown to Ramstein, (Germany)", said York. His wife, Jane, soon joined him in Germany and within weeks he was back home in South Dakota.

York and the others would recover and last spring, York received the Secretary of Defense Defense of Freedom medal (civilian equivalent for the military Purple Heart) for his wounds.

Since that day, the brotherhood which was formed from the experience continues and York, Church and the others keep in contact. The holiday season, and first anniversary of the ordeal, has brought the event closer to home. "All of us that were involved in it, we're thinking about it," said York.

Balancing the thankfulness of being alive is the sadness still felt for their Iraqi defenders who lost their lives and were left behind that day. "We ran with those same Iraqi guards for months before that happened," said York. "We knew each other as best we could as strangers in a foreign land."

What is more incredible than the story of Christmas Eve 2003 for Gary York is that this Christmas Eve 2004, he prepares for his second volunteer stint in Iraq. York is scheduled to return to assist RIE effort in the spring of 2005. "It's just something I have to do," he said.

Despite news reports of security situation worsening, York is convinced the mission is the right thing to do. The northern area, recently in the news regarding a bombing of a dining hall in Mosul, is where York is slated to return to. "We have to finish," said York. "The first time I went was sense of patriotism. Now, it's more to finish what we started."

The projects York worked on at the time have been completed, but he still yearns for the satisfaction of being on the ground when the ribbon is cut, and to be a part of the completion of one of the projects. "We're living a part of history," said York.

"My wife is really supportive," said York. "Without her taking care of things back home, I could not even consider going back to Iraq."

"My daughter, on the other hand, thinks her father is going through some sort of mid-life crisis," York joked. "In the end, they all understand it is something I have to do. I am very lucky to have such a supporting family."

"At times being back here in the states can be frustrating," said York. With the knowledge of the direct impact his mission has on helping the millions of Iraqis, York yearns for the opportunity to return. "There is such a sense of relevance to the work over there that is difficult to convey to those who have never been," he said. "The country sort of gets a hold of you."

While he returns with a heightened sense of the dangers that are involved, he is fortified by the resolve of his contribution to the mission, and confident the portrayal of the effort there is not as dire as seen on television. "I think the media at times sensationalizes the activities going on over there, it gives the impression these sorts of things (attacks) are happening everywhere, every day." Even with that, however, York realizes, "You have to be aware of your surroundings."

York will join the currently 400 civilian volunteers, more than 2000 to date, from U.S. Army Corps of Engineer districts and divisions from around the globe who have served in Iraq rebuilding infrastructure systems, facilities and other services. He is slated to serve another four to five month TDY assignment again with the Restore Iraqi Electricity effort.

**Thomas O'Hara**

**Watermark: York will rejoin the thousands of workers from all over the world working long hours under tenuous circumstances in order to turn the lights back on for the Iraqi people. (GRD Photo)**

# Basrah House of Justice Reconstruction Begun

## *Raising the roof and renovating the interior*

**T**he Judge waits, watches, and hopes. His patience has persevered. Construction began in late November on the roof of the Basrah House of Justice.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers awarded a contract to a local Iraqi firm to replace the dilapidated old roof on Nov. 21, according to Anton Datillo, construction manager for the Security and Justice Sector, Gulf Region South (GRS).

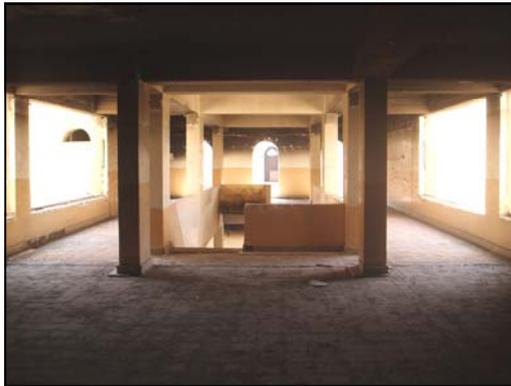
The roof replacement represents about \$285,000 of the \$5 million courthouse project, according to Woody Bargar, Basrah area engineer. Additional projects include replacement of the heating, ventilating and air conditioning, the electrical systems, renovation of the interior and exterior architectural features, and renovation of some ancillary buildings.

The roof replacement involves removing the old roof and replacing it with a post and beam reinforced concrete structural frame with brick veneer. "These courthouses are true people houses, whether they are in large metropolitan areas or small towns," he said. "They need a roof and we are starting there to provide protection this winter to the people conducting business in the building."

"There are whole groups of people sitting at tables with umbrellas doing paperwork. It's fascinating because they still do a lot of hand-ledger type stuff. I've been in with the judges in the chambers and someone will walk in and ask a question and they'll bring this huge book in and he'll flip through it. It's fascinating," Bargar said.

Datillo said Coalition Provision Authority renovated the first floor of the gutted building before the new Iraqi government took control of the country. "The CPA's initial push was to get some of these facilities going, to get them renovated," he said. "They finished the first floor of three. We started the basic cleanup and now we want to get a roof on the building so we can work on the inside."

Similar to Western society, Iraq has its own justice



**Interior of courthouse building.**

system. Like any other country, he said, the courts deal with land acquisitions and recordings. "Their provinces are similar to our states," he said. "They have a real need for these courthouse facilities. The ministry system is a little different than what we are used to - there are certain ministries for the courts, for example, but the money is disbursed through their central government in Baghdad as our is in Washington, DC."

The difference between the two societies is incentive, he said. "People have to have some motivation to perform well," he said. "There hasn't been incentive in Iraq for awhile. They still have to pay themselves and the local labor force and there hasn't been a way to do that for a while. Because this project is a direct contract action, the Corps can and will provide oversight through all aspects of the project, from the awarding of the bid to the quality assurance, quality control aspects of the final work," Datillo explained.

Engineers from Basrah University assessed the structural requirements for the building, according to Datillo. "Iraq has some excellent engineering schools,"

he said, "both in Baghdad and in Basrah. There are labs for testing samples (of concrete, sand and gravel) to make sure the mixture is correct. These people best understand how their country is constructed and they will rebuild it."

Khalid, whose construction firm received the contract award, assured Corps officials that he would test the samples to ensure good quality, and would, if necessary, import the goods. "I know how to ensure a good product," he said. "I am extremely enthusiastic about this and can't wait to get started. Our people's needs are immediate."

The first thing Khalid proposed doing was to cover the windows, the main hall and the roof to stop the impending rain. "After that," he said, "we will prepare the worksite and bring in our equipment." Both Khalid and the Judge agreed to weekly safety meetings to ensure that people using the facility during the reconstruction would be protected. The Judge told Khalid that he was "ready and waiting for the work to be finished ASAP."

Datillo said that by April 2005, the people should be able to "fully use the facility. It's a renovation project and as long as the flow of money goes well and these people get paid in a timely fashion - that'll work," he said. "It should happen really quickly. Part of this is through building these relationships with these people. They want to do this. They want to rebuild their country. Hopefully this is the nudge they need to get their own system working again."

**BJ Weiner**



**Basrah House of Justice.**  
*(GRD Photos)*

# Corps of Engineers Helps Restore Police Stations, Border Forts and Iraqi Military Training Facilities

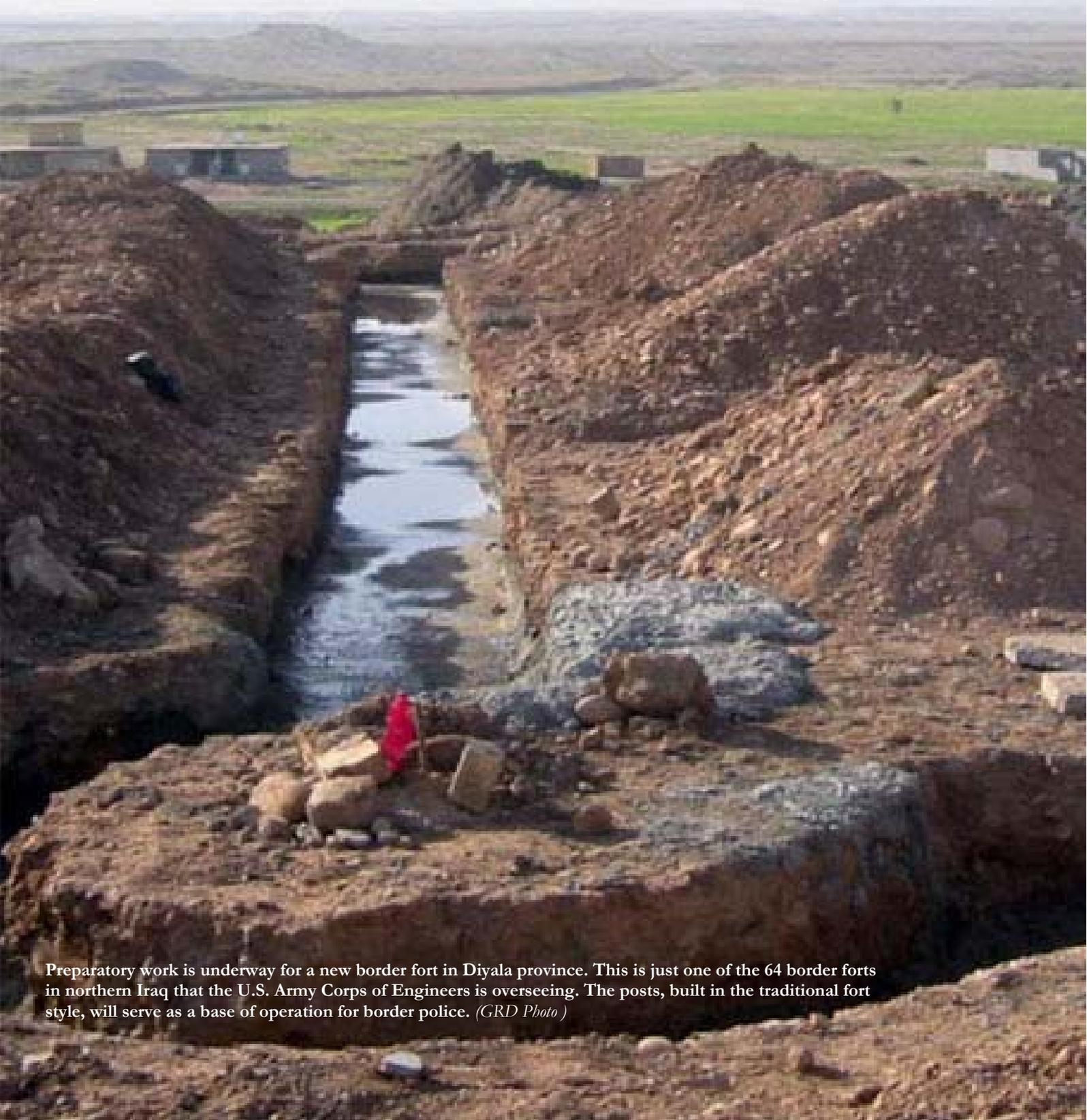
## *Construction gives boost to law and order*

**I**raq's interim government took its country back June 28 to establish security and justice for law and order and for its people.

To help Iraq, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers stands firm in its resolve to

help rebuild the country's infrastructure and to help restore law and order through the construction and refurbishing of the military, border posts, and police stations and fire stations according to Col. Roger Gerber, Commander, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Gulf Region Southern District.

Anton Datillo, construction manager for the sector in the southern district said, "There are some aspects of military training that falls under the Security and Justice Sector (S&J)." he said. "There is a big push for training and prisons. The military funding started during the Iraq



Preparatory work is underway for a new border fort in Diyala province. This is just one of the 64 border forts in northern Iraq that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is overseeing. The posts, built in the traditional fort style, will serve as a base of operation for border police. (GRD Photo)

Restoration and Reconstruction Fund period. That funding was already in place, and there was – and is – a big push to get the country’s security in place.”

He explained that there is a regional training center for the Iraqi National Guard (ING) in southern Iraq, and another large facility in the south central region and the north. “We now have to rebuild Iraq’s strength,” he said. “We are already using the new Iraq army in Fallujah and other hot spots. Their military is strong – every bit as good as our special forces. The perception that somehow the culture is lax – slow – is simply wrong. I don’t know if they actually believed in what they were fighting for before Saddam’s regime fell.”

He cited the border post project as an example of the first step to protecting the country from the influx of insurgents. The construction continues on the borders between Iraq and Iran, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia in the south; roughly 94 border posts are either under construction or complete.

Iraq’s border posts along the Saudi border are manned on a rotational basis, Datillo said, adding that the Iraqi border police seem to be “very self-reliant. I’m amazed how anyone is able to facilitate himself at these locations. We were visiting a site and got a flat tire. They fixed it for us, with seemingly no tools, in the dark and got us on our way again very quickly.”

The head border officer, a brigadier general, makes final selections of the sites, according to Datillo. His assistants and he involve themselves in all aspects of the project, and make the final site and construction selections, within the funding limitations.

“The general has asked the primary contractor for construction that would allow supply loading and unloading at the entry points for the posts,” said Datillo. “He would also like to see the roads refurbished and built

to allow easier access for the border police to patrol the borders. He remains very involved in the construction process.”

Refurbishing police stations also remains a big focus of the reconstruction, according to Datillo. At least 27 stations and 10 vehicle check points have been identified in a province in southern Iraq. Moreover, police cadet training has started on a military base in south central Iraq, and work continues on the many police stations in the southern district. Teams have started to assess the needs in different areas, and a direct funding apparatus has been put in place in order to enable rapid construction of the facilities.

Five fire station sites have been identified, and 13 more are being assessed in both the Maysan and Basrah provinces. “One is a new project and the other four are renovations,” Datillo said. “As for the others, we need to wait until the assessments come in.”

He added that the Corps “is currently working with the MND-SE (Multi-National Division Southeast: British forces) to prioritize these facilities.” One of the privileges I have had is being able to organize and attend project delivery team meetings in the provinces. We are starting to meet the people who are in the ministries and government. It’s starting to pay off, because now we can go into an area and adjust our construction strategy to where it is needed. It is all about developing relationships and listening to the people tell us what they need and where they need it.”

Datillo said there areas in which sites have already been identified, and that the leaders of the different provinces and



**Police stations like this one in the Muthanna province will be renovated. Many stations are in poor shape and lack the basic necessities. When they are on duty, Iraq’s police officers work 24 hours on and 24 hours off, or 48 on/off depending on the needs. (Photo by BJ Weiner)**

ministries have given lists of areas where their concerns lie. “Now we can expedite things and have gotten some of the restrictions, at least from our organization, lifted on some of these projects. Before now, the process hadn’t been clearly defined on either side – not by our process or by the Iraq process. But now, I think hopefully, we’re getting quick results.”

**BJ Weiner**

**Holding facilities, like this one, will receive a facelift so that while they are awaiting trial, those who are confined will have far better living conditions. (Photo by BJ Weiner)**





A doctor tends to his patients at the Nasiriyah Maternity and Pediatric Hospital. Corps officials recently visited the facility to discuss the renovation with the staff.

(Photo by BJ Weiner)

## *Naysiriyah Hospital Project Moves Ahead*

The Al Nasiriyah Maternity and Pediatric Hospital, badly in need of renovation, will get its new face-lift beginning this month with the installation of new incinerators and elevators systems, according to a report by the Project Contracting Office (PCO) in Baghdad.

An assessment by the contractor was done in September and included the needed medical equipment, painting, exterior fence repair and elevator work.

The hospital, built in 1984, serves the public needs in the Thi Qar province. On Dec. 13, Ron Rowland and Farrell McMillan, Tallil area engineers for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Gulf Region Southern, met with hospital officials to prioritize the hospitals' needs.

Hospital staff told Rowland and McMillan that they were experiencing trouble with the hospital's electrical generation system, getting power intermittently. They also emphasized the need for a separate wing for the overcrowded facility. After the meeting, the officials toured the hospital so staff could underscore its needs.

The hospital's equipment is antiquated and much of it needs to be replaced, said hospital officials. They also pointed to the air conditioning and the water systems as priorities. "There is a great need for this renovation," said the hospital's administrator. "We are overcrowded as it is."

The Italian Brigade, Multi-National Forces Division - South East, are also involved in the hospital's renovations, and have projects scheduled that will put additional wards on the hospital's third floor.

The hospital gained public attention in April 2003 when Soldiers from the U.S. Army, Air Force and Marines, as well British Army Engineers, brought truckloads of food and water to the pediatric and maternity facility.

**BJ Weiner**

## *The RIO Effect: The New Oil Program Iraq plans to double its LPG output*

“The Times, They Are A’Changin’.”

Under the program umbrella Restore Iraqi Oil (RIO), two goals prevailed. One of the goals, to get the old oil refineries and facilities up and running, has been accomplished. The second goal, to increase Iraq's ability to export fuel, ties the old RIO program into the new Project Contracting Office's Oil program.

"RIO's motivation was more about getting these facilities running. They were barely functional," said Marcia Meekins, oil engineer for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' southern district. "Part of what we did under RIO, and have extended into the current program was to rehabilitate these old facilities. You see, at one time, Iraq was in the export business. The facilities were designed to export. But right now, because of the dilapidation, Iraq has to import fuel, an anachronism because Iraq has potentially the second largest amount of oil reserves in the world."

The new program goal is to increase liquid petroleum gas (LPG) production to 3,000 metric tons. "This is what we think of as propane," said Meekins. "And, of course, the reason they (Iraq) want to increase their production is that now, they have to import it. They want to decrease their reliance on imports."

The Corps' role in the new program, involves managing the construction; making sure make sure it's done on time and correctly.

"Our projects are on a longer timeframe, but then again we will produce some amazing results," said Greg Waner, Project Contracting Office, Basrah area project manager for the oil program. "Our program will have the potential of having the biggest effect on the Iraqi people than any other money spent by PCO because we are going to create jobs and pump a lot of money into the economy when it's all said and done."

Waner said that the project has several goals, one of which is to work toward increasing Iraq's crude oil production to three million barrels a day. The average crude production now is roughly two million barrels.

"One of the things you have to understand is that since about 1990s and the first Gulf War, a lot of the latest and greatest technology was been banned from Iraq when it was sanctioned by the UN (United Nations)," he said. "The reason for this is that a lot of this technology was deemed to be dual use – military and industrial."

Iraq also missed technological advances in modern logging techniques because of the sanctions, he said. Iraq could have made unbelievable advances during the past 14 years had it been able to access this kind of equipment, he said, citing the computer technology as the main example. The problem, Waner said, is that private industry will not take the security risks associated with Iraq at the present time.

Iraq's new oil program will create revenue for the country, Meekins said, and that will be a boon to its economy. One hundred percent of the money will be returned to country for whatever purpose the government chooses. "We are here to create revenue," she said.

Currently in the design phase, but by the first quarter of next year, "all I got to say is you better fasten your seat belt," said Waner. "All these projects are all going to start during the first quarter of next year. And in fact, that's the good news."

Waner added that the oil and gas business, in general, is not labor intensive; however the plan is to hire as many local firms as possible to provide employment in the area. "It's not unfeasible to say the Iraq government could be looking at a revenue increase of 10-15 percent within the next year or two," he said. "One hundred percent of the money from the oil that is sold – 100 percent goes to the Iraqi people. It will help with food rations, balance of payment, education, everything. Every barrel of that goes to them. We'll create jobs for sure, but it won't have a strong effect. What we are going to do is create revenue for this country. And that can be used wherever they wish."

**BJ Weiner**

# Multi-Million Dollar Water Project Coming to Erbil

## *Much needed potable water project system construction just beginning*

**W**ork has begun on a \$100 million water project that could bring 6,000 cubic meters of clean drinking water to the people of Erbil every hour starting the end of next year. The water project is designed for an ultimate capacity of 10,000 cubic meters per hour.

The project which will be built in multiple phases includes a potable water treatment plant, an intermediate booster station, a storage tank and pipeline. The city has wanted a new plant for twenty years.

Since the summer five Iraqi contractors have been laying the ground-work for this multi-million dollar project. So far workers have completed base camp construction, geological and topographical surveys, and grading work for the new pipeline.

Currently the project employees close to 140 Iraqis but the goal is to get up to 1,000, said Salar Said, the Project Contracting Office's Erbil representative.

The prime contractor has worked closely with the Ministry of Municipalities and Tourism to identify competent, quality, local contractors for this project.

"This has been a fantastic experience," said Raymond Strain, on-site project engineer for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. "My purpose here is to ensure a good, solid product is built for the Iraqi people and that it comes in on time and on budget. This is all about improving the quantity and quality of water for the people of this area."

The Ministry's Department of Water and Sewage, which covers the governorates of Erbil and Dohuk, has been partnering with area engineers to formalize plans to link the new pipeline into Erbil's existing water distribution system.

The city of Erbil's population is fast approaching 1 million. Two older water plants and natural deep water wells struggle to support the growing populace.

The new plant would take the pressure off the existing plants and would allow the city to shut off the wells. This would allow the natural aquifer to rejuvenate and be used exclusively for agriculture.

A new Iraqi subcontractor has mobilized to the site and will soon begin work on the early construction package, which includes excavation, grading and concrete work.

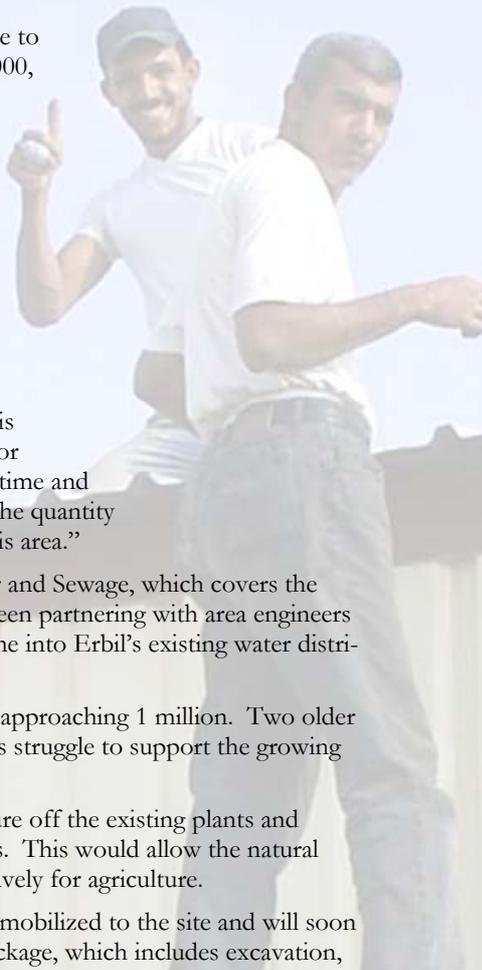
"We are very excited about this project," Said stated. "The city is just booming. Construction is everywhere. This water project will bring needed water to our growing community."

Said, who was born in Iraq, moved away in 1977 to attend college in the United States and has since been living in Canada. He returned to Iraq a year and a half ago to work as an advisor for housing and construction work. "I was born here," he said. "It is an honor and privilege to be a part of reconstructing Iraq. This is a noble cause."

**Nicole Dalrymple**

**Watermark: Workers perform roof repairs at the water project's base camp. (Right) Workers set the camp's diesel storage tank into position.**

*(Photos by Nicole Dalrymple)*



**Below: In preparation for inclement weather, road repairs were done at the base camp so work would not be impacted.**



# Conference targets woman-owned businesses

## *Session gives boost to culture shift*

**Shirley Wilson, deputy director of the contracting office for the Gulf Region Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and translator Esra Naama, give a presentation at the Woman-owned Business conference in Baghdad, Iraq.**

*(Photo by Eileen Padberg)*



**T**he Iraq Projects and Contracting Office and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers held a conference for woman-owned businesses at the Baghdad Convention Center Nov. 29 to outline procedures they need to follow to learn about potential contracts in Iraq and for bidding on them.

“This is a huge culture shift for most businesses in Iraq. We want to give owners and managers of woman-owned businesses an understanding of our processes and procedures so they will have an equal opportunity to bid on the various contracts for construction and services that we have available,” said Shirley Wilson, deputy director of the contracting office for the Gulf Region Division of the Corps.

Wilson said she admired the courage of the women who came to the conference. Not only are women breaking new ground, they are doing it in an environment where working for the Iraqi Interim Government and the multinational forces could get them killed because of insurgent violence.

“When my friends ask me why I am doing this? I ask them, ‘If you do not do it, and you do not do it, and I do not do it, then who will?’ I believe in what I am doing, and I want to help my country,” said Biekhal F. al Khalifa, a young civil engineer attending the conference.

More than 45 woman-owned businesses were identified and recruited for the construction and construction related contracts. The opportunities for establishing and expanding these woman-owned businesses will be enhanced by the

various contracts available through the Corps of Engineers and the Seabees in the next few months, said Eileen Padberg, of PCO’s Water Sector.

To qualify as a woman-owned business at least 51 percent of the company must be owned by one or more women; or, in the case of any publicly owned business, at least 51 percent of the stock of which is owned by one or more women. In addition to ownership, the management and daily business operations have to be controlled by one or more women, said Wilson.

In addition to having a woman-owned business, attendees had to meet several other criteria. The company had to be an established and licensed business, and had to have the ability to meet the requirements of providing construction or related services. The firm also had to show work history and identify geographic areas in which it could do work.

“In many cases, especially in Iraq, a woman-owned business is very new and therefore won’t have much of a work history. In those cases we look to the references provided to determine the company’s ability to perform the work,” Wilson said.

While all most all contracts are open to bidding by woman-owned businesses, the target of the conference was contracts under the Simplified Acquisition Process where the projects are under \$1 million.

These smaller contracts present a unique opportunity for women owned businesses in Iraq because the capital needs are not so insurmountable, said Padberg.

“Women everywhere face the same general obstacles as (Iraqi women). There are no set asides for the program, and we can’t guarantee them a contract, but we can help them understand the process,” said Wilson.

In addition to financial concerns for a fledgling firm, breaking into a traditionally male dominated arena is a huge culture shift for Iraqi women.

“The women in Iraq are not used to competing with men, and they are not likely to show up at bidding conferences that are occasionally conducted by the Corps of Engineers or by design build contractors because they feel uncomfortable walking into a bidding seminar that is full of men,” Padberg said.

Women are 62 percent of the population and represent tremendous intellectual and human resource pool. It is imperative to grow this resource by providing opportunities for women to develop new businesses and participate in the growth of Iraq’s economy, she said.

Presenters included Wilson, and Lt. Cmdr. Sharon Vaninger of the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force Engineer Group, Seabees. Both presentations included how to prepare effective bids and what requirements were needed. In addition web sites and contact information were distributed to all participants. These seminars will help women entrepreneurs start and expand their small businesses.

Padberg said planning is underway for Basra and Mosul bidding seminars for women owned businesses.

**Pat Jones**

## Captured Enemy Ammunition Program moves forward

**B**etween September 2003 and October 2004, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers received and stored about 369,000 tons of captured enemy ammunition collected throughout Iraq and destroyed nearly 165,000 tons. Other coalition forces destroyed 82,000 tons of CEA.

Combined Joint Task Force-7, now the Multinational Corps Iraq, selected the Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville on July 28, 2003 to conduct the mission. Six weeks later, the first ton of CEA was destroyed.

The program also blasted through its biggest challenge – transitioning from military control to a civilian-managed working environment, said Glenn Earhart, Huntsville Center’s chief of international operations. The transition freed military resources to return to their war-fighting duties.

“When the program first began, we were facing quality of life issues, security difficulties and how best to use the local national workforce available to us,” he said. “Now, all that has changed. We have installed base camps at each of our six sites and employ more than 1,000 citizens of Iraq as laborers and security forces. Contractors now employ professional security companies from the U.S. and our team controls site security. The only responsibility the military still has is providing convoy security.”

Another goal of the mission is to ensure a quality local national work force and to keep pace with the demands of an improving economy in Iraq.

“As the people working for us become more skilled,” Earhart said, “we will have to keep up with the demands for more competitive wages in accordance with the local economy. Our goal is to eventually return a safer Iraq to its people.”

Although the CEA program has been funded through fiscal year 2005, Earhart said he hopes to complete the CEA portion of the mission by December 2004.

Although the CEA mission was not complete, in October 2004, the program’s name was changed to Coalition Munitions Clearance and unexploded ordnance clearance was added to the mission.

The Huntsville Center recently received \$525 million to perform worldwide Munitions Response Services and Other Munitions Related Services (MMR). Ten contractors will share capacity in this contract. Another \$250 million for fixed-price response and insurance contracts was awarded for other MMR services.

“About 75 percent of the work awarded under the \$525 million contract is expected to be performed as part of the U.S. Army’s Captured Enemy Ammunition mission in Iraq and possibly in other areas outside the United States,” said Dan Coberly, the Huntsville Center public affairs officer.

Huntsville Center employees are committed to providing quality services and products in the most cost-efficient way possible, said Col. John Rivenburgh, Huntsville Center commander, and added that the mission in Iraq is no different. “Our soldiers, contracting employees and DA civilians serving in Iraq are magnificent,” he said. “They are diligent in their execution and professional in all they do. Their sacrifice is no less than it is for our soldiers, and we should never lose touch with that.”

BJ Weiner



Small, easily pilferable explosives such as these are the main focus of the captured enemy ammunition demolition program of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Engineering and Support Center in Huntsville, Ala. These smaller items are preferred by terrorists for making improvised explosive devices (IED) of the kind used to attack coalition troops and the people of Iraq. (USACE Photo)



Another example of the types of captured enemy ammunition being found throughout Iraq. Munitions being found were manufactured by various countries such as France, Jordan, China, the United States, and Russia to name a few. (USACE photo)

Watermark: demolitions occur in remote locations to ensure the safety of the local population. (USACE Photo)

## Hail and Farewell

### Hailing:

Jerel Autrey, GRN Construction Rep (Anaconda Resident Office), Walla Walla District  
 MAJ David Bailey, Deputy Area Engineer (Anaconda), Albuquerque District  
 John Binford, GRN Construction Rep (Dahuk Resident Office), Walla Walla District  
 Teresa Blondin, Logistics Specialist (GRN-HQ, Mosul), Seattle District  
 Stephen Brockhouse, Construction Rep (Mosul Area Office), Omaha District  
 Linda Carter, Construction Rep (Kirkuk) GRN, Walla Walla District  
 Cristy Chavez-Ortiz, Program Analyst (GRN-HQ, Mosul), Seattle District  
 Su-Chen Chen, Project Engineer (Tikrit) GRN, Seattle District  
 Jim Conroy, Acting Area Engineer (Mosul Area Office) GRN, Omaha District  
 Nicole Dalrymple, Public Affairs Specialist (GRN-HQ, Mosul), St. Louis District  
 Joaquin Duenas, GRN Construction Rep (Bacubah Resident Office), Portland District  
 Onisem Gomez, GRN Project Engineer (Tikrit Area Office), Walla Walla District  
 Billie Guille, Construction Rep (Tikrit) GRN, Walla Walla District  
 Wendell Hardwick, Logistics Specialist (Mosul, GRN-HQ), Savannah District  
 Reginald Haywood, GRN Construction Rep (Tikrit Area Office), Seattle District  
 Carolw Hewes, Construction Project Manager (GRN-HQ, Mosul), Seattle District  
 James Jones, GRN Construction Rep (Bacubah Resident Office), Seattle District  
 Karen Jordan, Administrative Assistant (GRN-HQ, Mosul), Portland District  
 Marlowe Kulseth, Construction Rep (Kirkuk) GRN, Los Angeles District  
 Kim LaDuke, Construction Rep (Erbil) GRN, New hire

LTC John Leighow, DDE Forward (GRN-HQ, Mosul), Seattle District  
 Bobby Lingerfelt, GRN Construction Rep (Bacubah Resident Office), Omaha District  
 Martin Monnig, GRN Electrical Engineer (Bacubah Resident Office), Portland District  
 Jimmie Moore, GRN Project Engineer (Sulaymaniya Resident Office), Far East District  
 Philip Morrison, GRN LOGCAP (Kirkuk Area Office), New England District  
 LTC Andrew Nelson, DDE Forward (Tikrit) GRN, New England District  
 MAJ Mathew Orenstein, Deputy Area Engineer (Mosul Area Office) GRN, Huntington District  
 Jonathan Petry, Project Engineer (Mosul Area Office) GRN, Kansas City District  
 LTC Brett Perry, DDE Forward (Kirkuk) GRN, Tulsa District  
 Kim Robinson, Contracting Specialist (Tikrit) GRN, Japan District  
 Roy Ruff, Construction Rep (Kirkush) GRN, TAC  
 Jack Sheldon, Construction Rep (Anaconda) GRN, Walla Walla District  
 SGM Thomas Sigce, (Mosul, GRN-HQ), Regular Army  
 Tom Urbaniak, Project Engineer (Bacubah) GRN, Kansas City District  
 SFC James Varenhorst, Operations NCO (GRN-HQ, Mosul), USAR

### Farewells (Photos not available):

Dede Pacheco, GRD, Albuquerque District  
 Dean Talley, Project Engineer/Con. Rep GRN, Omaha District



**Mark Cunningham**  
 Con. Rep. GRN  
 Returning to:  
 Far East District



**Larry Chamberlain**  
 Con. Rep. GRN  
 Returning to:  
 Portland District



**John Piggott**  
 Area Engineer GRN  
 Returning to:  
 TAC



**Dawn Sonju**  
 PBO GRN  
 Returning to:  
 Seattle District



**Michael Stanka**  
 GRD RM  
 Returning to:  
 US Navy (Washington DC)



**Marcia Washington**  
 GRD RM  
 Returning to:  
 New Orleans District



**LTC Vance Purvis**  
 GRD  
 Returning to:  
 South Pacific Division



**Lourdes Pastrana**  
 GRD  
 Returning to:  
 Far East District



**Larry Lynch**  
 GRD  
 Returning to:  
 ERDC



**Manual Bejarano**  
 Admin. Asst. GRN  
 Returning to:  
 Seattle District



**Mike Welch**  
 QA Electrical GRN  
 Returning to:  
 Omaha District



**John Kasbar**  
 GRD Counsel  
 Returning to:  
 Jacksonville District



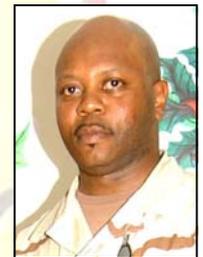
**Jeff Sedey**  
 Area Engineer GRN  
 Returning to:  
 Portland District



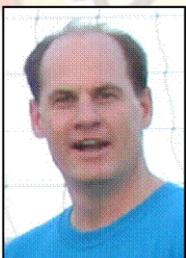
**Milton Switanek**  
 Con. Rep. GRN  
 Returning to:  
 Albuquerque District



**Jo Robinson**  
 GRD  
 Returning to:  
 Huntsville Center



**Rod Hill**  
 GRD  
 Returning to:  
 Savannah District



**Dennis Christensen**  
 Const. Suppt Eng. GRN  
 Returning to:  
 Albuquerque District



**John Bartel**  
 Area Engineer GRN  
 Returning to:  
 Omaha District



**Connie Byer**  
 Admin Asst GRN  
 Returning to:  
 Portland District



**Chris Tew**  
 GRD Contracting  
 Returning to:  
 Huntsville Center



**Jeanie Klingman**  
 Admin Asst GRN  
 Returning to:  
 Seattle District



**Russel Trueax**  
 Con Rep GRN  
 Returning to:  
 Portland District



**Carol Williams**  
 GRD  
 Returning to:  
 Humphries Eng Center