

# ESSAYONS

*Forward*

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Gulf Region Division (Provisional), Iraq - Volume I, Issue 4

May 31, 2004

**Destroying massive stockpiles  
of weapons in Iraq**





*Commander's  
Column*

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I take pause this Memorial Day weekend to salute the military services of our great country and to remember the sacrifice of those who are no longer with us. I pause, not only to salute those serving or have served here in Iraq, but also for the many others who are performing or have performed missions around the world.



With the added mission of Operation Iraqi Freedom, the roll call of those who have sacrificed their lives for others has unfortunately grown.

Let us not forget the selfless service of our Civilians working in this theater of war. Corps employees like yourselves, and those the Corps have contracted, are placing personal safety aside for a greater cause. It is an honorable thing.

I know many wonder why our Civilians are wearing the Soldier's uniform, the desert camouflage uniform (DCU). The DCU is the desert version of the classic army battle dress uniform (BDU) that many Soldiers have worn, served, and died honorably in. I know you all feel the weight of that honor when you put yours on every day.

That is why those of us in the military take so much pride in the wear of the uniform. We correct each other when we note a deficiency, not to be picky, but to remind each other of the significance. This isn't some costume, it is a uniform that has meaning.

When you wear the uniform you become the personification of Army values, tradition, morals and its heritage. You bear a responsibility to Soldiers we sit next to in the dining halls, and those risking their lives outside the wire every day, to execute your mission like they do.

And you are doing this.

So the next time someone wonders out loud, tell them wearing the uniform is not a burden but a privilege and an honor.

Perhaps unlike ever before for this generation, our Nation is embracing this national day of remembrance because they appreciate the sacrifices of American's sons and daughters, like you. This year, Memorial Day was not just another day off, but a reflection and realization of the ultimate price that has been paid by hundreds of thousands of Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Coast Guardsmen and Marines. I believe I can say with confidence that the meaning of this day isn't lost on those of us -- both Soldiers and Civilians -- serving here today.

You are all demonstrating the sense of urgency that Soldiers do to accomplish the mission diligently, quickly and completely. The better we do this, the sooner our mission will be accomplished and the sooner our brothers and sisters outside the wire can go home.

I thank you for your dedication to the mission at hand. I am honored to count you as my Soldiers. And I hope in the future, when this day comes year after year, you include yourselves in honoring those who have served their country.

**ESSAYONS FORWARD**

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Photo: (top) Castle in Kirkuk (Photo by Maria Or). (Inset) Commander photo illustration by Tom Hudson, CENWO-IM.



**Cover: Detonation of a SAM 6 (surface-to-air missile) by RIO UXO members in the Ramaylah Oil Fields. Several tons of UXO were destroyed as part of the RIO program in addition to the current CEA program .**

*(Photo provided by Huntsville Engineering and Support Center)*

**Corrections:** In issue #3 Sharon McDonald was incorrectly listed as Sharon Howard in the Contracting story. In Issue #1 Marcia Washington was incorrectly listed as Marisa Washington in Hail & Farewell

## Corps of Engineers officer commissions daughter from Iraq

**G**raduation from college and being commissioned a U.S. military officer is a special occasion for anyone and her family. A recent commissioning, however, was even more poignant and memorable than most. David Conboy, a reserve lieutenant colonel, read the oath of commissioning from Iraq and welcomed his stepdaughter, Sarah Elizabeth McMahon, into the U.S. Army as a second lieutenant.

McMahon, a graduating senior at the University of Notre Dame, South Bend, Ind., was a scholarship recipient in the University's Army Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) program for the last four years.

Through the wonders of technology and courtesy of a U.S. Army video teleconference connection, Conboy was able to participate in the ceremony while deployed to Iraq. There he is serving as a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers civilian overseeing reconstruction and rehabilitation of the oil infrastructure throughout southern Iraq. Conboy was also commissioned an officer through the ROTC program at the University of Notre Dame.

During the ceremony, one month before the Army's 229th Birthday, Conboy, noted three important words that appear on the U.S. Army flag. "This We'll Defend," and offered these thoughts to

his daughter, the newly commissioned officer. "These words, 'This We'll Defend,' represent our unconditional call to selflessly and ethically defend our Nation, our values, and our way of life. A call that you have answered individually - and perhaps more importantly a concept that through your example and leadership you will instill and foster in the soldiers the Army will entrust to your care."

McMahon thanked her family for their continuous support and encouragement and noted that she looks forward to the opportunity to serve her country as an engineer officer in the U.S. Army. After graduation from the University of Notre Dame, McMahon will have a month's leave at home in Grand Island, N.Y. prior to assignment to Fort Lewis, Wash., this summer to assist with ROTC training, and subsequent assignment to Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., for engineer training, following in her father's footsteps.

Conboy said the entire family is looking forward to being together in early June when he returns from his deployment to Iraq and before his daughter departs for her assignment with the Army.

—Patrick J. Jones , CELRB



**While in Iraq, Army Reserve Lt. Col. David Conboy administers the oath of allegiance to his daughter, Sarah McMahon, during her commissioning ceremony at Notre Dame University.**

*(Photo provided by CENLRB)*

**Dave Conboy (right) surveys work at the Basra Refinery in southern Iraq with Mike Doherty, resident engineer (left).** *(Photo provided by Dave Conboy)*



## *Eyes of a Hawk : A Profile of Personal Courage*

**P**ushing the envelope of personal comfort zones is almost status quo for those serving in Iraq. Civilians and Soldiers with the Corps work night and day to rebuild the damage caused to this country after thirty year of neglect under Saddam Hussein. Often they are challenged in an understaffed, uncertain, fluid and over-worked environment. But like coal turns to diamond under pressure, the gems of the Corps of Engineers are being discovered as they handle their own form of pressure to build a better country.

Meet Christian 'the Hawk' Hawkinson, the Corps newest weapon of mass construction.

As a GS-7 civil engineer from Rock Island District, only a year and a half into the engineer-in-training program, you wouldn't expect Hawkinson to be the driving force for one of the major electrical construction sites in Iraq. But he is.

Hawkinson is serving as the project engineer for the Qudas Power Plant that resides near the East Baghdad Oil Fields, supervising the construction of six new generation units. The estimated \$130 million project, once completed, will provide 422 MW (ISO), 324 MW (derated) of new capacity to the Iraq power grid. "This project alone represents twenty five percent of Restore Iraqi Electricity's portion of the 6000 MW plan," said Doug Plachy, senior program manager for RIE. "That's a ton of responsibility for a young GS-7 and this guy is getting the job done."

"It's another example of the engineering management dynamic demonstrated in Iraq," said Plachy. "With engineering expertise and project management at a premium, and transition of project teams happening every four months, many Corps employees have had to cross-train and broaden their responsibility as a mission necessity."

"We constantly kid about who is in charge," said Hawkinson, who got his nickname "Hawk" growing up in Hawaii. "The park ranger who has the most experience with the Corps, the electrician who has the expertise, or myself who just happens to be the guy who had gotten here first."

While very capable higher-grade quality assurance reps Jerry Schutte, park ranger from St. Louis District, and Mark Ross, an electrician from Seattle District, are also a part of the team, they readily admit that the Hawk has kept his birds-eye view sharp on the overall progress of the mission.

"Everything about Christian's work and the way he deals with contractors made me think that he was a veteran engineer with years of work experience," said Schutte. "I didn't find out he was only two years out of college until after I'd been working here for a couple of weeks and when I did, my immediate response was, 'you've got to be kidding me!'"

The pressure is on for the Hawk, who arrived in Baghdad Feb. 4. Qudas represents a major addition of new generation for one of the highest profile engineering challenges in Iraq.

"This has to come through and quickly -- there's no bigger milestone on the calendar than Qudas," said Plachy.

Hawkinson is first to admit the compliments he is getting from the RIE team are really due to the top-notch people working on the project. "The people here are the professionals of professionals and I learn more from them every day."

"The pipe welder here was a pipe welder in 1991 cleaning up Kuwait during the Persian Gulf War. Our electrician has built power plants as large as 1,800 MW back in Texas. He's overseen projects three times this size. To some of these guys Qudas is small potatoes."

And that expertise is not unique to the Fluor contractor or Corps personnel. The sometimes nearly 500 Iraqis employed on site are the backbone to this effort says Hawkinson. "You definitely

can see, between the tradesmen, the real camaraderie between the Iraqis and the contractors. It crosses the language barrier. I really enjoy seeing that."

Hawkinson tried to learn Arabic when the project began. "I tried to learn a new word each day.

I probably know only five," he said. "But a smile can communicate a lot."

Hawkinson joined the Corps

to get into third world development. "I figured you would have to be an expert or at least willing to volunteer. Well I don't consider myself an expert, but I was willing to afford volunteering. This is definitely where I want to be, helping infrastructure internationally," said Hawk who extended his tour a month to help move the project closer towards completion. "I hope to see sparks before I leave."

Like a rookie baseball player who hits a homerun in his first at-bat in the major leagues, topping the satisfaction of his accomplishments here will be tough for 'the Hawk' to beat.

"My experience here has been incredible," said Hawkinson. "I'm not looking forward to leaving when my time ends."

—Thomas O'Hara

**Inset/watermark: Christian Hawkinson (left) gets a birds-eye view of Qudas with Maj. Erik Stor, G-3 for RIE. Below: Hawkinson (left) and Lt. Col. Steve Jeselink, deputy commander for Central District, tour the project site.**

*(Photos by Thomas O'Hara)*



## Corps in Kirkuk

# *Connecting the Dots on the Pipeline Map*

**D**edicated and hard-working engineers and technicians from the State Company for Oil Projects (SCOP) continue the daunting task of constructing a new pipeline stretching from Kirkuk to Bayji.

A tremendously difficult job under any circumstances, enemies of the people of Iraq continue to make it even more challenging with their effort to impede progress. Completion of the new pipeline is anticipated for later this year. Once completed, the pipeline will stretch for over 90 kilometers from the rich oil fields of Kirkuk, down to the critical crossroads at Bayji.

Oil is Iraq’s most precious resource and belongs to all the people of Iraq. This new pipeline will allow the Northern Oil Company to increase production of crude oil because of the availability of a more reliable means of transferring oil to the South. The Ministry of Oil will be able to export much of this additional oil abroad and generate revenue critical to rebuilding and shaping the future of Iraq.

The ability to produce and export more oil means more jobs will be generated and this will benefit the entire community. Completion of the pipeline will also help ensure a sufficient supply of the fuels such as benzene, diesel, and propane are readily available to the citizens of Kirkuk and the At Tamin province.

SCOP is performing a vast majority of the work, but is receiving assistance from their U.S. partners: KBR and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

This tremendous team is committed to improving the lives of all Iraqis, especially the citizens of the City of Kirkuk.

—**Capt. Sean D. Egan, Kirkuk Area Office**



**HHC/1-21IN (2/25 ID) provides support to all Kirkuk Area Office site visits to the 50 KM pipeline project.**

*(Photo by Capt. Sean D. Egan)*



**Children at the El Somood Kindergarten held a celebration to thank local Corps employees for the work they have done for the school located on the Northern Oil Company compound. Unfortunately not all of the area office personnel could attend due to ongoing reconstruction demands, but the gesture shown by the children and their teacher was very much appreciated by the staff in Kirkuk.**

*(Photo provided by Kirkuk Area Office)*

# Memorial Day in Iraq:

## *A perspective from the Corps' Command Sergeant Major*

*NOTE: In preparation for the Memorial Day in Iraq, I had a chance to speak with the Corps Command Sergeant Major, Michael Balch as he was preparing for the next day's ceremony and wanted to talk. What he said gave me a view into his world, a view I would like to share with you.*

*This article is not a focus on Command Sgt. Maj. Balch., but to put into perspective, a special debt our country owes to the military men and women who serve in harms way.*

Almost my whole focus has been on our Nation at war. It's the number one priority with the Chief (Lt. Gen. Robert Flowers). It is how he feels and it's how I feel. This is why I am serving in Iraq today. When I was selected by Gen. Flowers to be the Command Sergeant Major and moved to Washington, D.C.—the Beltway became my perimeter. Engineer Soldiers that come to Walter Reed Hospital are in my perimeter and they are going to need help. I spend a lot of time trying to look out for those troops and their families. I work hand in hand with our command Chaplain, (COL) Mark Fentress. Between the two of us I believe we've helped.

We knew we were going to lose engineer Soldiers in this war and the Chief made a commitment that the Corps would be represented by a General Officer at the funeral of every Engineer Soldier. I made a personal commitment to make sure these Soldiers were honored with greatest respect possible by our Nation.

Since our generals present the American Flag to mothers or wives on behalf of a grateful nation, I want them to personally know about the Soldier whose funeral they attend. I sent messages to each of their Commanders and Sergeant Majors to gather information about the Soldier from those in his unit and then forwarded their responses to the appropriate General Officer. I received a message back from Brig. Gen. Randy Castro with a story that had touched him deeply:

*I went to Lt. Doyle Hufstедler's funeral on Friday. A week prior when a 113 (Armored Personnel Carrier) was hit by an IED (Improvised Explosive Device), I knew it would turn out to be engineers. It was, and five engineers died. One was a 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. who was at Engineer Basic when I was at Leonard Wood. When the word went out for someone to be at the funeral in Abilene, I really wanted to be there.*

*When I passed Doyle's flag to his wife, Leslie, who was eight months pregnant, she leaned over and whispered in my ear that she had met me three times earlier at Ft. Leonard Wood at a class reception, a dining in and then graduation. "I knew it would be you, and that you would give me the strength I needed," she said.*

One of the funerals that I wanted to attend but couldn't be there was for Private First Class Jason Meyer. General Griffin represented the Nation at his funeral and he was buried in Arlington National Cemetery. I live at Ft. Meyer, within walking distance of the National Cemetery, and on last Memorial Day I wanted to walk there with my wife among the common head stones and be among our Nation's heroes. It was a good day to check in on our Soldier, Jason Meyer. It's a good place for a Soldier to get grounded in why we serve. My wife, Marilou and I walk there often. It gives me peace of mind. We walked to Private Meyer's grave and as we were leaving we saw a couple about

our age coming toward us. We knew that they were there to visit someone from Afghanistan or Iraq. Lo and behold, it was Jason Meyer's parents, Loren and Deb. What can you say to a family that has lost a son? Only that their son died for a cause bigger than any one citizen and he is one of our Nation's heroes. And I, a complete stranger, could tell them that I cared, his fellow Soldiers cared, and our Nation also mourns his loss that Memorial Day weekend.

But, when a loved one is killed, they are in God's hands. The family can try to pick up the pieces and move ahead, but never forgetting the one they have lost. We as a Nation and a people owe them everything.

It's the severely injured in war that are so difficult to me. You see visually the results in the wounds. Today, we have Soldiers protected by body armor. They have sapi plates that will protect them from a 7.62 rifle bullet and shrapnel. It is their arms, legs, and eyes they are losing. They probably would have died of wounds to other vital organs on any other battlefield if it wasn't for this technology.

The first seriously injured Soldier I saw at Walter Reed Hospital in Washington was Sam Ross. Sam is a high-energy guy who lost both eyes and a leg. He had been hit everywhere by shrapnel. After several days he started to respond to treatment. I visited him and met this guy, a friend of the Army, by the name of Eric Beve. He told me the story about Sam. Beve said his grandfather and aunt raised Sam, that they lived near Pittsburgh, and didn't have a lot of money.

So I asked Mr. Beve to help them make sure lodging was arranged at the Fisher House. Almost every military hospital has a house built by Zachary Fisher, a philanthropist and friend of the military. Families of hospitalized military, that need help, can stay there free.

I was able to get someone else to help me with Sam when he recovered enough to return home. I called the Civilian Aide to the Secretary of the Army for western Pennsylvania John Spisso and asked him to help me help Sam. I wanted his home town to know that a hero was coming home. Spisso with the help of Sam's Army Recruiter helped organize a parade in Sam's honor and to welcome him, an American hero back home.

Since he returned home, Sam went to a course in Chicago to teach him skills to cope with being blind. But the course was too slow for him and he didn't finish. I think he just needs someone to put an arm on his shoulder and help lead him out of the forest. He can't even see that he is in the forest. He really needs a home town mentor.

James Fair is another Soldier that I think about a lot. He lost both eyes and both arms above the elbows. When I went to the hospital his wife was by his side. She never left his side for months on end. She was pregnant with their fourth child, all under the age of five. We as a Nation owe these kids, these young men and women who stand guard and protect our peace and our freedoms. What does our Nation and we as a people do to help this family?



Under the Hussein regime, Iraqi sculptor, Kalat, was forced to produce statues of Saddam, including two that stood at the gates of a palace in Tikrit that the 4th Infantry Division took as its temporary HQ. The 4th ID tore down those statues and sent the scrap bronze to Kalat, who took a picture of an American GI and used it to create his own design of an Iraqi child comforting a Soldier mourning a fallen comrade. The \$18,000 cost to produce the statue was provided by the members of the 4th ID out of their own pockets. Once displayed at the palace, it has been moved to Ft. Hood, Texas to be placed in its museum.

*(Photo provided by 4th ID)*

When I was visiting 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division in Bamberg, Germany, I shared a few of these stories and specifically James Fair. First Sergeant Chris Rafferty, a great Leader I've known for a few years came up to me afterwards and said his Soldiers would like to help. I said, 'if you're talking about helping their financial needs then please package it with a nice card and a note in an envelope'.

The next morning much to my surprise, First Sergeant Rafferty gave me an envelope with \$1500 in it from his company with 105 Soldiers. These are the kind of people that we have in the Engineer Regiment. There is camaraderie, teamwork, and care that are always an example for others in service to our Nation to follow. We take care of each other. Our people truly care. I'm so proud of their service. They are an honor to serve side by side with every day. This conflict isn't over and we will need more Soldiers and Corps Civilians to serve here. My prayer is that they come, serve safely, and make a contribution to Iraq.

Freedom's not free and war's not easy. Command Sgt. Major Ioakimo Falaniko has been my friend since 1987 when we were with the Sapper Leader Course at Ft. Leonard Wood together. I've known his son Jonathan since he was four.

I got a call last year that the Sgt. Major's son was killed in combat. I believe it hurt me almost as much as hurt his dad. He joined the Army in May 2003. After his training he was sent to Iraq. His father picked him up the airport and they got to spend some time reminiscing. He was the Command Sgt. Major's kid and everyone looked up to his dad. He told his dad that he must have been a heck of a Sgt. Major to have everyone look up to him they way they did. It wasn't too long afterward that we buried Jonathan in Arlington.

Memorial Day is a very important day for those of us with the US Army Corps of Engineers Gulf Region Division in Iraq. As others did across the globe, we stopped our work at 1500 hours to pay tribute to all of America's fallen heroes in every war since the Revolutionary War. We will also remember our veterans and our Military members now serving their Nation. Earlier in the day we held a special ceremony to honor those who have fallen here in Iraq, to support the cause of freedom.

We will, Civilians and Soldiers, wear our Desert Camouflage Uniforms and know together the sacred nature of this day. God Bless America and may God bless our efforts to help rebuild Iraq for the Iraqi people.

**-CSM Michael Balch** *(reported by Steven Wright)*

## Fallen Engineer Regiment Soldiers from Operation Iraqi Freedom

MAJ CHRISTOPHER J. SPLINTER - HHC, 5 EN BN  
 CPT MATTHEW J. AUGUST - B CO, 1 EN BN  
 CPT ERIC T. PALIWODA - 4 EN BN  
 CPT CHRISTOPHER F. SOELZER - HHC, 5 EN BN  
 1LT DOYLE M. HUFSTEDLER - B CO, 1 EN BN  
 1LT JOSHUA C. HURLEY - A CO, 326 EN BN  
 SFC DAN H. GABRIELSON - 652 EN CO  
 SFC JAMES T. HOFFMAN - B CO, 1 EN BN  
 SFC PAUL R. SMITH - B CO, 11 EN BN  
 SSG THOMAS W. CHRISTENSEN - 652 EN CO  
 SSG STEPHEN C. HATTAMER - 652 EN CO  
 SSG LINCOLN D. HOLLISAID - B CO, 11 ENG BN  
 SSG SEAN G. LANDRUS - B CO, 1 EN BN  
 SSG MARK A. LAWTON - A CO, 244 EN BN  
 SSG EDDIE E. MENYWEATHER - C CO, 588 EN BN  
 SSG ABRAHAM D. PENAMEDINA - B CO, 20 EN BN  
 SSG OSCAR D. VARGAS - MEDINA - A CO, 84 EN BN  
 SGT BENJAMIN W. BISKIE - HHC, 5 EN BN  
 SGT CHRISTOPHER D. GELINEAU - HSC, 133 EN BN  
 SGT TRAVIS A. MOOTHART - B CO, 1 EN BN  
 SGT DENNIS B. MORGAN - A CO, 153 EN BN  
 SGT BRIAN M. WOOD - A CO, 9 EN BN  
 SPC KYLE A. BRINLEE - B CO, 120 EN BN  
 SPC PHILLIP D. BROWN - B CO, 141 EN BN  
 SPC ERVIN CARADINE, JR - B CO, 91 EN BN  
 SPC JAMES A. CHANCE III - C CO, 890 EN BN  
 SPC RAPHAEL S. DAVIS - B CO, 223 EN BN  
 SPC JON P. FETTIG - 957 ENG CO  
 SPC CHARLES G. HAIGHT - HHC, 14 EN BN  
 SPC JAMES J. HOLMES - B CO, 141 EN BN  
 SPC MARLON JACKSON - A CO, 94 EN BN  
 SPC MICHAEL G. KARR, JR - HHC, 1 EN BN  
 SPC SEAN R. MITCHELL - HHC, 1 EN BN  
 SPC ISAAC M. NIEVES - A CO, 82 EN BN  
 SPC JOSEPH C. NORQUIST - HHC, 588 EN BN  
 SPC RAMON C. OJEDA - A CO, 84 EN BN  
 SPC GABRIEL T. PALACIOS - HHC, 588 EN BN  
 SPC RICHARD K. TREVITHICK - C CO, 9 EN BN  
 SPC JAMES R. WOLF - HHC, 52 EN BN  
 PFC JONATHAN M. CHEATHAM - 489 EN BN  
 PFC BERT E. HOYER - 652 EN CO  
 PFC RAYSHAWN S. JOHNSON - C CO 299 EN BN  
 PFC JASON M. MEYER - B CO, 11 EN BN  
 PFC JAMES D. PARKER - HHC, 588 EN BN  
 PFC CLESTON C. RANEY - B CO, 1 EN BN  
 PFC WILLIAM R. STRANGE - A CO, 91 EN BN  
 PV2 BRANDON L. DAVIS - B CO, 1 EN BN  
 PV2 JEREMY L. DREXLER - B CO, 91 EN BN  
 PV1 JONATHAN I. FALANIKO - A CO, 70 EN BN

*This is the fourth of a multi-part series highlighting the achievements and advancements made by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. This series will continue up to June 30, 2004, the scheduled date for the transfer of authority from the Coalition Provisional Authority to the new interim government of Iraq.*

## *One Year Later: Massive Destruction of Weapons Continue*

**I**n addition to restoring Iraqi infrastructure since the liberation of Iraq, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has also been quietly securing and destroying a significant stockpile of captured enemy ammunition that litters the country of 25 million people.

In less than ten months, the Corps has destroyed 110,000 tons of captured enemy arms and ammunition in Iraq that could have been used as improvised explosive devices (IED), and has stored 139,000 tons for potential defensive use by an Iraq government.

Getting the IEDs off the streets and “out of the hands of the bad guys,” has been the focus of the Captured Enemy Ammunition (CEA) mission since it began, said Glenn Earhart, chief of international operations and CEA program manager for the Corps., July 28, 2003.

Last year, Combined Joint Task Force-7 selected the Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville in Alabama, to conduct the CEA. Mobilizing rapidly, the first teams were on the ground in Iraq and destroyed the first ton of CEA Sept. 11, 2003.

The program also blasted through its biggest challenge – transitioning from military control to a civilian-managed working environment faster than anyone expected, said Glenn Earhart, chief of international operations and CEA program manager. In less than four months, the military-to-civilian transition freed hundreds of Soldiers to return to their war-fighting duties and reduced the amount of military resources required to support CEA.

“When the program first began, we were facing quality of life issues, security difficulties and how best to use the available local national workforce,” Earhart said. “Now, all that has changed. We have installed base camps at each of our six sites that have air conditioning, hot meals, showers and laundry facilities. We employ over 1,700 local nationals as ammunition handlers, laborers and as security forces. Contractors also employ professional security companies from the United States and we control our site and convoy security.”





**Left: Mines and mortars are being prepared for demolition by a certified Unexploded Ordnance technician**

“...aimed at returning a safer Iraq to its people.”

— Glenn Earhart, chief of international operations and CEA program manager

“Without the contract workers, the mission would have taken up to two years the quicker the insurgents get organized,” he said. “Now we will be able to finish 30 percent faster.”

“Our challenge from now until September 30 will be to clear remote caches scattered throughout Iraq,” Earhart said. “Teams will be assigned regions. Each contractor will schedule assets and time to accomplish that mission, which is more efficient and less dangerous than transporting via convoys CEA to the main sites.”

The CEA program has also reached another milestone; to ensure a quality local national work force is maintained and keeps pace with the demands of an improving economy in Iraq. Earhart noted that the previously unskilled labor force is now in a position to conduct its own CEA cleanup of the country.

“We have always aimed at returning a safer Iraq to its people,” he said. “Now, we have a skilled workforce, not only as UXO handlers, but as security forces as well. The local nationals enjoy their freedom to earn a living, and they seem more willing to take the risks associated with working for the coalition. They want to be able to feed their families and carve out new lives for themselves as they look to the future”

Although the CEA program has been funded through September 2004, the Corps’ Huntsville Center recently received an additional \$525 million to perform worldwide Munitions Response Services and Other Munitions Related Services. The Center awarded contracts to seven businesses to do the work.

“About 75 percent of the work awarded under the contracts is expected to be performed as part of the U.S. Army’s CEA mission in Iraq and possibly in other areas outside the United

Things have progressed so well, Earhart said, that he anticipates all the captured enemy ammunition now within the boundaries of the six sites will either be secured or destroyed by Sept. 30 of this year. This includes the total collection and demolition work through the summer at all sites of an additional estimated 30,000 tons per month.

All contract workers, both U.S. and local national, serve as force multipliers and are one of the reasons the program has accelerated so rapidly, said Curt Murdock, chief of Iraqi CEA operations.

**Seas of empty 122 and 130 mm Russian projectiles are among the millions of items being destroyed at various locations in Iraq by the Captured Enemy Ammunition program of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Engineering and Support Center in Huntsville, AL. Once found, the captured enemy ammunition is separated. Some pieces will be stored for future determination by Iraq's new army. Some of the ammunition will be transported to demolition points and destroyed.** *(All photos provided by Huntsville Engineering & Support Center)*



**Above: Deterioration of the devices such as the one shown here, add to the dangers of munitions throughout Iraq.**

**Left: Triple detonations help maximize destruction of captured enemy ammunition (100 tons shown here) while minimizing exposure to personnel.**



## *What a difference a year makes...*



Above: Double explosions are not only spectacular, they also represent another controlled destruction of significant stockpiles of captured enemy ammunition and a safer Iraq.

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.

“The bottom line,” he said, “is that the safety of our contractors, employees and government civilians takes priority over all other considerations.”

“Our soldiers, contracted workers 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.”

—B.J. Weiner, Huntsville

*(More information on the Corps Captured Enemy Ammunition program, with additional photos, can be found online at <http://www.hnd.usace.army.mil/pao/>)*

## *Oil meets Ordnance under RIO UXO*

Corps of Engineers involvement in collection and destruction of enemy ammunition began even before the advent of the current CEA program. Last year, Task Force Restore Iraqi Oil had its own Explosives Ordnance Disposal (EOD) and Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) mission immediately after the start of the Iraq War in 2003.

RIO EOD contractors were hired through the Corps of Huntsville Center. A number of Huntsville employees deployed to work in Iraq’s southern and northern oil fields.

Iraq’s miles of pipeline required many repairs and each area to be repaired required careful examination for possible unexploded ordnance. Many of the oil facilities contained caches of weapons and ammunition. Some of the caches contained as many as several thousand ordnance items.

Munitions on site were as a result of war fighting devices that did not explode as they were designed to do. They might be called duds, but are still unstable and extremely dangerous. They were dangerous to any oil workers or Corps workers repairing the oil infrastructure. They were especially dangerous to civilians unaware of the immediate danger from these munitions. Corps contractors often exploded unexploded munitions in place.

Less dangerous were the stored weapons and ammunition found at oil facilities or in areas nearby. These materials were relocated to a safe area and detonated. Among the weapons found in the oil facilities were missiles. The mission of collecting and exploding EOD and UXO is now being carried on as the Huntsville Centers mission.

—Steven Wright

## *Iraq MILCON Program Manager Leaves Big Shoes to Fill*

**M**ilitary construction would not have been her first choice but Taunja Berquam also didn't expect that she would work within her comfort zone in Iraq.

Flexible and able to adapt to change, Berquam started her Iraq tour in the North District at Mosul. When the division needed her to fill the MILCON program manager position — Shazam! — she headed south to Baghdad.

It is almost a recurring theme that exceptional performers in the Gulf Region Division (GRD) are pushing their personal envelope by taking on a higher level of responsibility and depart from their stateside job description.

In Iraq, Berquam was the Military Program Manager with responsibility of a \$350 million program that included 30 military bases throughout Iraq. Included in this work are power plants and electrical distribution systems, jet fuel storage, water, waste water, operations buildings, and installation camps. Some of this work was to rehabilitate existing structures, but most of this program will be new construction.

At home in the Portland District, Berquam's job has a different flavor.

"I'm the lower Columbia River Coordinator and the Program Manager for the Lower Columbia River Restoration. I really love my work there. It's interesting and exciting and involves working with many different people," Berquam said.

"Here the work is very different, we're master planning 14 bases and identifying future camp needs. In the beginning these bases will be used by US troops and then will be turned over to the Iraqi Armed Forces. We are still in the beginning stages of this program and only have five contracts awarded, but it will accelerate just as everything else in Iraq. The workload is going to be massive," she said.

"The Corps will handle this work like we would at home. We will improve our internal communication, our business processes, and even our infrastructure. Now we are working in this palace on the Tigris River. It's nice, but not too practical. Soon we are going to move to Camp



**Berquam, who managed the Gulf Region Division Military Construction program, takes a moment to help deliver donated school supplies to an elementary school located in the Green Zone in Baghdad. (Photo by Thomas O'Hara)**

Victory near the Baghdad Airport. It will be more convenient and oriented to work place requirements," Berquam said.

An asset to doing the military construction program manager job is that program management can be universally applied.

"Even though the circumstances are very difficult here and the work is different program management is program management the world over," she said. "Once you manage a program the business processes are enough alike that you can manage something entirely different."

Berquam said that any success she had was a direct result of help from the great people who supported here. She said this help came from her fellow military program manager Mark Moody and from project managers back at the Transatlantic Center and Europe District.

Berquam came to Iraq for a variety of reasons. "I wanted to see first hand what the circumstances were. I think the adventure of being here was a definite reason. I knew I would grow professionally, and I guess it was based a little on being patriotic. Did I get what I came for? Yes, absolutely, my experience here met my expectations," she said.

"But we need people and I plan to come back in January. I would like a chance to work in the civil side of our program here, but I'll go wherever they need me the most."

Berquam will be needed. Command Sgt. Maj. Mike Balch said she will not easily be replaced at GRD. "She leaving and someone will have to fill some large shoes when she's gone."

—Steven Wright



# Hail and Farewell

(May 18 — May 31, 2004)



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**LTC Darren Carpenter**  
Dep. Cmdr, UPO  
Returning to:  
Japan District



**Michael D. Hlady**  
GRC Const. Mgr.  
Returning to:  
St. Paul District



**Carrie Loy**  
GRD-Admin  
Returning to:  
TAC



**Dennis Thomas**  
Sr. Proj Manager  
Returning to:  
Galveston District



**CPT Christopher Grose**  
GRC-G3  
Returning to:  
St. Louis District



**Ron Plante**  
Const. Manager  
Returning to:  
Rock Island District



**Jason L. Foust**  
GRS  
Returning to:  
Nashville District



**Darrel L. Johnson**  
GRD-RIO  
Returning to:  
Little Rock District



**Charles B. Zelinske**  
G-4 Log. Officer  
Returning to:  
Albuquerque District



**Gabriele Supon**  
GRD-RIE-Admin  
Returning to:  
Savannah District



**James S. Beaujon**  
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**Daren Brown**  
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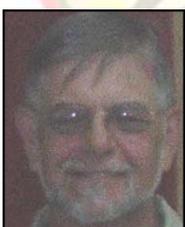
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**CPT Rich McPhillips**  
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**Mike T. Jaroski**  
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Walla Walla District



**John N. Briggs**  
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**Jarod C. Gartman**  
GRS  
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Nashville District



**COL Emmett Du Bose**  
GRD-RIO  
Returning to:  
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**Gale A. Ross**  
GRD Cont. Officer  
Returning to:  
Kansas City District



**MAJ Raymond Hart**  
GRD-G3  
Returning to:  
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