



January 2009

The Freedom **BUILDER**

MAGAZINE



Road project stretches from Kabul to Bagram



U.S. Army Corps
of Engineers®
Afghanistan Engineer District



The Freedom BUILDER MAGAZINE

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Articles or photographic submissions are welcome and should arrive in PAO by the 15th of each month preceding publication. They can be mailed to the below address or they can be e-mailed. If electronically submitted, all stories should be in Word document format and all photographs should be high resolution and include caption information.

All photographs appearing herein are by the Afghanistan Engineer District Public Affairs Office unless otherwise accredited.

The mission of The Freedom Builder is to support the Commander's Internal Communication Program for the Afghanistan Engineer District. It also serves as the Commander's primary communication tool for accurately transmitting policies, operations, technical developments, and command philosophy to the Afghanistan Engineer District.

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Cover Image:

AED Construction Representative Patricia L. Cason and quality assurance local national engineer Wahidullah Amin discuss the contractor's challenges for grading, leveling and compacting fill material for the foundation of the road from Kabul to Bagram, see story page 10. (Photo by Bruce J. Huffman)



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Postcards from Afghanistan

The Public Affairs Office is expanding AED's Internal Communications Program with "Postcards from Afghanistan."

The postcards will appear on AED's Internet Site in PDF format and a copy will be sent to your home District Public Affairs Office.

The postcards consist of a 3 to 4 paragraph write up along with 2 to 3 photos with a photo caption describing what is happening in each photo. The write-up is similar to a personal note from you to your family and friends, that focuses on a specific project or event, or that provides an overview of your total experience here in Afghanistan.

The Public Affairs Office will provide help needed to write these.



If you would like to be featured on one of these postcards, please contact the Public Affairs Office at 540-662-6578 or come visit us in the basement of the Azadi House, room 7, or e-mail Brenda.L.Beasley@usace.army.mil.

Thanks in advance for helping AED's Internal Communications Program.

From the Commander ...

Before we turn to face the challenges of 2009, I'd like to take a moment to review the accomplishments the Afghanistan Engineer District achieved in 2008. Along with an impressive execution of our programs, we awarded \$1.6 billion in contracts which was about 1,400 contract actions. Of that total amount, \$400 million was awarded in the last two months of the fiscal year. This was the highest amount of contract award dollars in the history of the Afghanistan Engineer District.

While I formally recognized the Contracting team for their outstanding performance, I would be remiss if I didn't mention all the team members that enabled Contracting to be successful. It takes a collaborated effort, from Project Management coordinating and preparing all the solicitation documents and information to Engineering reviewing and providing input. This work is critical to being successful, so I want to say to "Thanks for your outstanding service" to all of the AED employees.

The Afghanistan Engineer District has also made great progress with construction of projects and innovative engineering designs. The top priority projects include the Bagram Theater Internment Facility at Bagram Air Field, Gamberia Garrison at Jalalabad, Khair Khot Garrison, Camp Commando in Rish Khvour village, and Khair Khot Garrison for 2008.

As we look forward into 2009, we see an incredible work load to execute. In order to accomplish this, we have been authorized to hire additional personnel both Soldiers and Civilians to accomplish our mission. The programs have grown large enough in the South that we will be opening a Kandahar Program Office that will function as a full-service office with all capabilities of the District. KPO will begin to function from Kabul prior to any personnel movements. We anticipate standing up the office in mid January with initially about 30-50 people. Numbers will increase in March as we continue to fill positions and expand housing and office space. KPO will oversee three area offices, and ten resident offices in RC-South and RC-West. Upcoming work in the Kandahar area of responsibility will include the MILCON program which has identified about \$300 million of Contingency Construction Authority projects and \$500 million in GWOT projects. Both ANA and ANP programs have identified significant workloads that are slated for the KPO.

Additional work for AED includes the ANP program totaling about \$553 million.

This includes the National Police Training Center, National Logistics Center, Ministry of Interior Intelligence Directorate Regional Headquarters (three sites), Central Regional Command Headquarters, Uniform Police

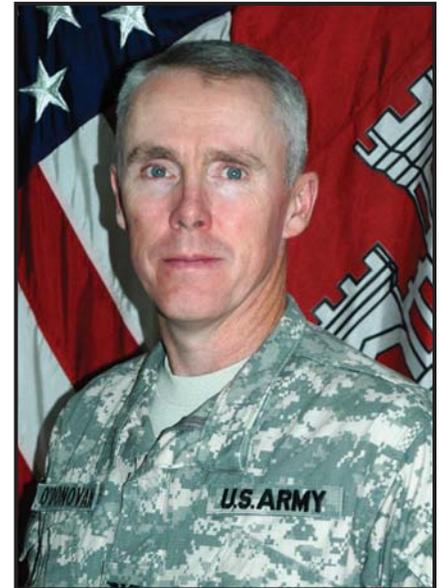
Provincial Headquarters (five sites), Uniform Police District Headquarters (seven sites), Border Police Company Headquarters (13 sites), and medical facilities (three sites).

The Roads Program is critical work needed by us, as well as the Afghans and the Coalition Forces. We have new strategies in place for security and synchronization to be successful with building roads. We are ready for the challenges of the water crossings, obtaining materials in country, and security. Our Capacity Development Program has made terrific progress partnering with Kabul University and National Military Academy Afghanistan. Many of you have volunteered to mentor cadets, helping to further their skills and advance this program. Our Water and Infrastructure Program is one of our fastest developing programs. We all know the importance of water in our daily lives. AED has much of the needed skill sets already in country to accomplish and execute this vital mission.

I am confident that AED will continue to be successful in 2009 because of the quality of employees volunteering to serve and because of the support they receive from their families and home Districts.

Let me be the first to say Happy New Year! Mission First, People Always! 🇺🇸

BUILDING STRONGSM
Essayons!



Col. Thomas E. O'Donovan



Completed three-cell Sand Filter.

Clean and Green environmentally impacts Gardez

Story by Brenda L. Beasley, Photos by Jon C. Allen

Few trees are on the valley floor. Rugged mountains make travel difficult. It's at an elevation of about 7,600 feet (nearly a half-mile higher than Denver). It's about the size of South Carolina. The terrain looks like a cross between the Badlands of South Dakota and the Painted Desert of Arizona. It's the city of Gardez, the capital of the Paktia Province in Afghanistan, where the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Afghanistan Engineer District, has established a successful Clean and Green program that is helping to sustain the environment, with a Horticulture and Re-

Forestation Program on the horizon that could help further economic growth.

At the Afghan National Army Garrison in Gardez, AED worked with the U.S. Agency for International Development, to collect and treat wastewater on the base for reuse in certain applications and to conserve clean treated groundwater – potable water. Instead of drawing down the aquifer, whose current status and health is unknown, recycled water is now used over and over and over again for watering gardens, washing vehicles and flushing toilets. “Fresh water in Afghanistan

is like gold,” said Jon C. Allen, the AED operations and maintenance manager of region five. “It's a precious commodity that needs to be protected.”

Completed in October 2007, the program consists of four functioning components – a sand filter, a wastewater retention reservoir, a vehicle wash rack and a recycling station. By reusing the treated wastewater for irrigation of plants and shrubs, the ANA realized a huge savings. Then reusing it for washing vehicles instead of fresh water that comes from their wells at a finite cost per liter almost doubled



Wastewater being diverted off the base and forgotten before the Wastewater Reservoir was built.



Jon Allen, pictured with the Sand Filter, an integral part of the Gardez Wastewater Reclamation Project.

their savings. “Altogether, we conserved two million liters of fresh water a month,” said Allen.

First, the sand filter purifies the wastewater generated by the ANA base. All wastewater flows to a Master Lift Station where it is then pumped into

the first stage of a four-stage wastewater treatment facility consisting of eight large lagoons, said Allen. These lagoons are equipped with aerators which add oxygen to the water and at the same time accelerate the process of separating solids which go to the bottom of the lagoons.

Secondly, by creating a wastewater retention reservoir to capture the water for storage until needed, they were able to further develop a valuable resource in the arid Gardez, where wastewater evaporates quickly, said Allen. Previously the water simply exited the last stage of the wastewater lagoons, entered underground piping and flowed outside the base where it was forgotten.

The third component, a vehicle wash rack, is a closed loop system, where excess water is captured, directed

through an oil/water separator and then pumped into the first stage of the wastewater treatment lagoons. “The closed loop system helps make efficient use of the wastewater by preventing an outlet for evaporation,” said Kathryn A. Carpenter, the program manager for water resources in AED’s Water and Infrastructure Branch.

And lastly is a recycling station. Located near the water reclamation project is a burn pit that is used by the ANA to incinerate garbage and other various undesirable materials. They took the program a step further and turned the pit into a recycling center where materials are segregated and then sold to the community in Gardez. “This not only brings useful materials back to the community, but drastically reduces the amount of materials being incinerated,” said Allen. “It also resulted in a marked decrease of air pollution.”

With the four components in place and functioning, there is a proposal that focuses on the next step, which is establishing a Horticulture and Re-Forestation Program, said Allen. This will require the support of all organizations involved in the ownership and authority of the real estate inside and around ANA Garrison Base Gardez and also includes non-government organizations that have expressed an active interest in being involved in an agriculture project at Gardez.



Wastewater from the lagoons.



Treated wastewater results.

If supported, the proposed benefits would include educating University of Gardez students on the complete growing cycle needed from germination to harvest; sustainability of not only food crops but also crops that can be harvested, processed, packaged and sold on the open



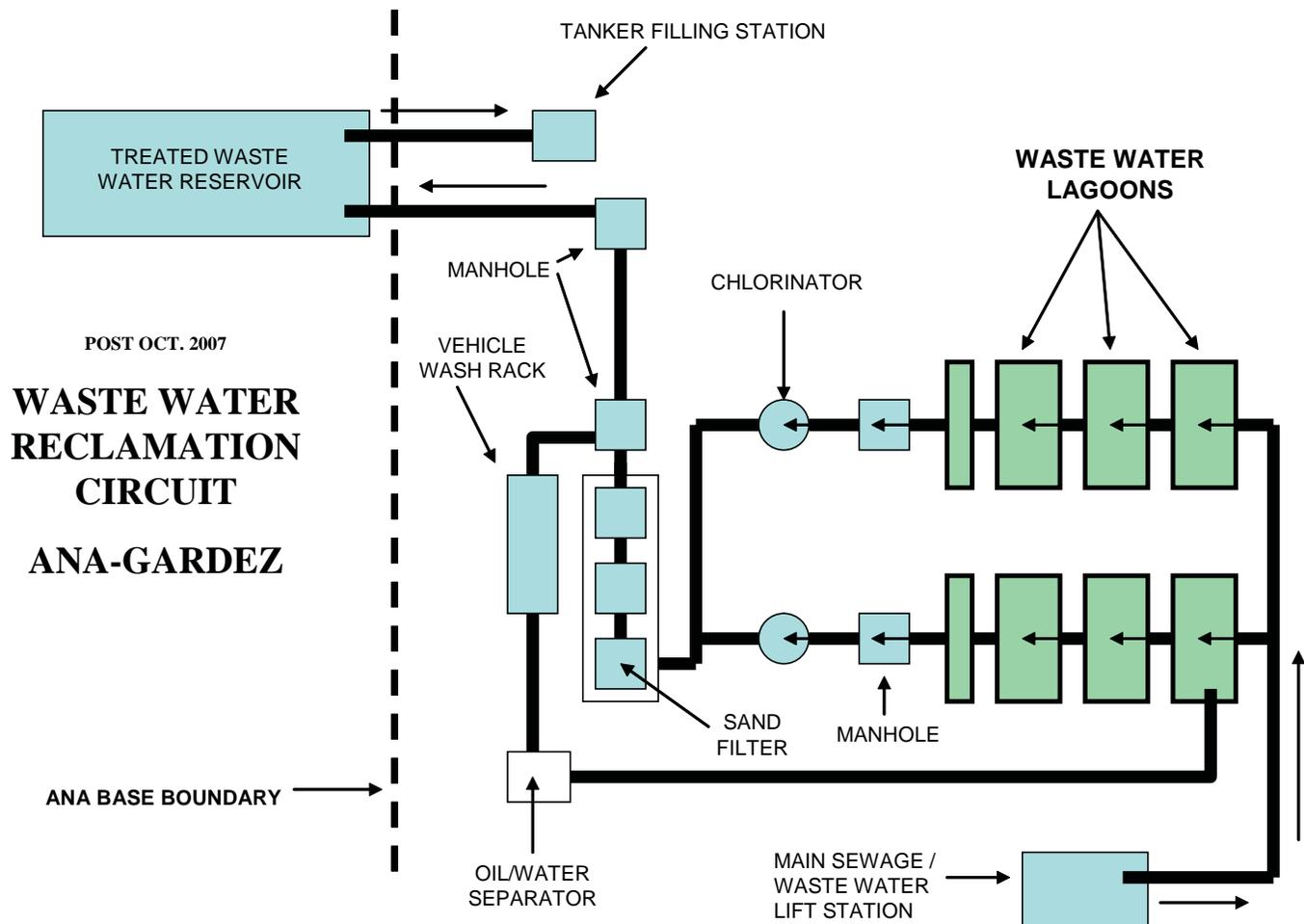
The now world famous “Gardez Rose Gardens,” which even bloom with ice hanging off of them in the dead of a below-zero Gardez winter, are attracting attention far and wide.

market to provide a means of income to the community; and turning a brown, desolate piece of land into a lush, nutrient-rich source of food and income producing agriculture, said Allen.

Like the rest of Afghanistan, Gardez has suffered from a decade-long drought. Even the heavy rains of the winter have not replenished the water table in this

area. Sustainable use of limited natural resources is extremely important to an arid country that only gets 250 millimeters of rain per year on an average. “The most readily available source of water is groundwater,” said Carpenter. “They’ve been in a drought since 1999, and the groundwater levels have been steadily declining.”

Right now there is very



little infrastructure to capture and hold water coming from the spring snow melt, which directly affects Afghanistan's agriculture. About 80 percent of Afghanistan's economy is based on agriculture, which relies on irrigation. Proper management of water resources supports irrigation, which in turn drives agriculture, which in turn boosts the local economy. "Water is the base of all life," said Carpenter. "You're not going to have a sustainable economy unless you manage your water resources."

Since Gardez is also a major lumber market, many of its natural forests are being

cut down. The proposed reforestation project will result from seedlings and produce forest products that will help provide food, wood, shelter and wildlife habitat. It will also help to bring the aquifer levels up and reduce soil erosion. "Plants hold soil in place and slows water down so it won't run off as quick," said Carpenter. "It percolates down into the ground and recharges the groundwater aquifer."

AED is continually bringing Western technology and ideas to Afghanistan. Some of them, the Afghans have been able to embrace, while others are slower to take

hold. Because it's been a struggle just to survive over the past 30 years, the culture in this country has never really embraced the idea of conserving natural resources. But the concept of treating and reusing wastewater is very low technology which they'll be able to easily keep using. "What we're doing with this wastewater is very simple. They'll be able to sustain use of this system after we leave," said Allen. "We're helping them develop their water resources, which is a cornerstone of living for the future." 📺

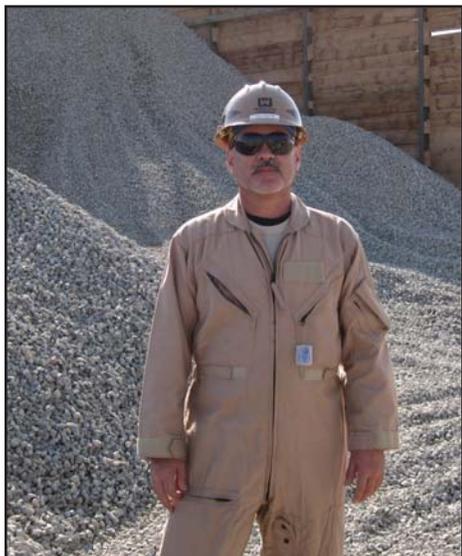
Story behind tan hardhat

Story by Dave Stanton

If you are a Corps employee you know that in the rest of the world we wear a white hardhat with red retro reflective tape and logo. There is even a Corps policy that states hardhats will be white with red. How is it that we wear a tan model here? Well sit down and take a load off of your feet and I will tell you the history.

Seems that I am the inventor of the tan hardhat. Back around five years ago I was the safety manager at Transatlantic Command. One of my roles was to support the Gulf Region Division and Afghanistan Engineer District as the reach-back safety dude. As the dust was settling and the Corps was about to embark on reconstructing Iraq, I was getting ready to order hardhats for GRD. It dawned on me that the white hardhat might not be the best color, considering the hostile environment we were working in.

I contacted Bullard, a major hardhat manufacturer, and asked them if they could make a special hardhat for the Corps in



David "Dave" L. Stanton,
AED Safety Manager



Ken A. Rochefort
Construction Representative
Kabul Central Resident Office

camouflage. They said sure, if I ordered 700 of them (they would need to set up their equipment for a special run). I have taken numerous fiscal law classes during my career and knew that me, a lowly safety dude, had no authority to commit the government to ordering 700 of anything.

A couple weeks later a Bullard representative showed up at my office in Winchester with a box full of hardhats in various shades. Normally, when it comes to picking colors I turn to my wife. When I saw the tan one, I said to myself "Self, that one looks a lot like the colors in the DCUs". I had one of the military members at TAC try on the tan model and it "pulled all of the colors of the DCUs together" and we took to calling it the Queer Eye for the Corps Guy hardhat. I asked the fellow from Bullard if they could make me three

sample hardhats with the black retro reflective tape (actually more effective than the red) and black logos. A couple weeks later I got the samples and sent two off to GRD for their opinion. A couple weeks after sending them downrange, I got an e-mail from Brig. Gen. Johnson wearing one of the tan hardhats giving me two thumbs up. I took that as my stamp of approval and started ordering the tan models. You are probably asking "Dave, how did you get around the Corps policy on white hardhats?" Well, I used my Just Do It Card, as it was the right thing for the customer.

Now for a little more trivia: A guy named Bullard was working on the Golden Gate Bridge and noticed that workers were getting injured, and sometimes falling to their death, when hit in the head by falling rivets. He came up with the first hardhat and we have been wearing them on construction sites since. 🇺🇸



John "Jack" S. Sztuk
AED Qalaa House Facility Manager

Safety Bits

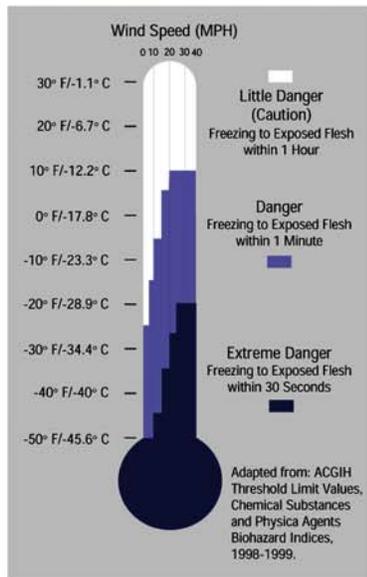


THE COLD STRESS EQUATION

LOW TEMPERATURE + WIND SPEED + WETNESS = INJURIES & ILLNESS

When the body is unable to warm itself, serious cold-related illnesses and injuries may occur, and permanent tissue damage and death may result.

Hypothermia can occur when *land temperatures* are above freezing or *water temperatures* are below 98.6°F/37°C. Cold-related illnesses can slowly overcome a person who has been chilled by low temperatures, brisk winds, or wet clothing.



U.S. Department of Labor
Occupational Safety and Health Administration

OSHA 3156
1998

How to Protect Workers

- Recognize the environmental and workplace conditions that lead to potential cold-induced illnesses and injuries.
- Learn the signs and symptoms of cold-induced illnesses/injuries and what to do to help the worker.
- Train the workforce about cold-induced illnesses and injuries.
- Select proper clothing for cold, wet, and windy conditions. Layer clothing to adjust to changing environmental temperatures. Wear a hat and gloves, in addition to underwear that will keep water away from the skin (polypropylene).
- Take frequent short breaks in warm dry shelters to allow the body to warm up.
- Perform work during the warmest part of the day.
- Avoid exhaustion or fatigue because energy is needed to keep muscles warm.
- Use the buddy system (work in pairs).
- Drink warm, sweet beverages (sugar water, sports-type drinks). Avoid drinks with caffeine (coffee, tea, or hot chocolate).
- Eat warm, high-calorie foods like hot pasta dishes.

Workers Are at Increased Risk When...

- They have predisposing health conditions such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and hypertension.
- They take certain medication (check with your doctor, nurse, or pharmacy and ask if any medicines you are taking affect you while working in cold environments).
- They are in poor physical condition, have a poor diet, or are older.

FROST BITE

What Happens to the Body:

FREEZING IN DEEP LAYERS OF SKIN AND TISSUE; PALE, WAXY-WHITE SKIN COLOR; SKIN BECOMES HARD AND NUMB; USUALLY AFFECTS THE FINGERS, HANDS, TOES, FEET, EARS, and NOSE.

What Should Be Done: (land temperatures)

- Move the person to a warm dry area. Don't leave the person alone.
- Remove any wet or tight clothing that may cut off blood flow to the affected area.
- **DO NOT** rub the affected area, because rubbing causes damage to the skin and tissue.
- **Gently** place the affected area in a warm (105°F) water bath and monitor the water temperature to **slowly** warm the tissue. Don't pour warm water directly on the affected area because it will warm the tissue too fast causing tissue damage. Warming takes about 25-40 minutes.
- After the affected area has been warmed, it may become puffy and blister. The affected area may have a burning feeling or numbness. When normal feeling, movement, and skin color have returned, the affected area should be dried and wrapped to keep it warm. **Note:** If there is a chance the affected area may get cold again, do not warm the skin. If the skin is warmed and then becomes cold again, it will cause severe tissue damage.
- Seek medical attention as soon as possible.

HYPOTHERMIA - (Medical Emergency)

What Happens to the Body:

NORMAL BODY TEMPERATURE (98.6° F/37° C) DROPS TO OR BELOW 95° F (35° C); FATIGUE OR DROWSINESS; UNCONTROLLED SHIVERING; COOL BLuish SKIN; SLURRED SPEECH; CLUMSY MOVEMENTS; IRRITABLE, IRRATIONAL OR CONFUSED BEHAVIOR.

What Should Be Done: (land temperatures)

- Call for emergency help (Staff Duty Officer: _____)
- Move the person to a warm, dry area. Don't leave the person alone. Remove any wet clothing and replace with warm, dry clothing or wrap the person in blankets.
- Have the person drink warm, sweet drinks (sugar water or sports-type drinks) if they are alert. **Avoid drinks with caffeine** (coffee, tea, or hot chocolate).
- Have the person move their arms and legs to create muscle heat. If they are unable to do this, place warm bottles or hot packs in the arm pits, groin, neck, and head areas. **DO NOT** rub the person's body or place them in warm water bath. This may stop their heart.

What Should Be Done: (water temperatures)

- Call for emergency help. Body heat is lost up to 25 times faster in water.
- **DO NOT** remove any clothing. Button, buckle, zip, and tighten any collars, cuffs, shoes, and hoods because the layer of trapped water closest to the body provides a layer of insulation that slows the loss of heat. Keep the head out of the water and put on a hat or hood.
- Get out of the water as quickly as possible or climb on anything floating. **DO NOT** attempt to swim unless a floating object or another person can be reached because swimming or other physical activity uses the body's heat and reduces survival time by about 50 percent.
- If getting out of the water is not possible, wait quietly and conserve body heat by folding arms across the chest, keeping thighs together, bending knees, and crossing ankles. If another person is in the water, huddle together with chests held closely.

Road project stretches from Kabul to Bagram

By Bruce J. Huffman

The passage between the cities of Kabul and Bagram is more than just a vital trade route between the nation's capitol and the largest Coalition base in Afghanistan; over the years it's also been a conduit for the spread of knowledge and culture. Since the time of Alexander the Great through the Soviet occupation and even now, this route, once a tributary of the famed Silk Road, has connected isolated tribal societies with other civilizations, their products and ideas. Decades of continuous war have severely damaged the road and the only maintenance that's been done since the Russians paved it 34 years ago has been by locals filling potholes with dirt. In support of Operation Enduring Freedom, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is rebuilding the tattered road, which will help extend Afghan governance and security to the people, and

stimulate economic growth.

According to Patricia Cason, an Afghanistan Engineer District Construction Representative responsible for the project,



During peak construction about 200 Afghan laborers are employed on the Kabul to Bagram road project. The road is scheduled to be completed late 2009.

the roadwork was broken into two main sections and awarded to two different companies. The southern portion near Kabul was awarded to Technologists, Inc. for \$15,635,842 and the northern portion to the Amerifa Company for \$18,330,000. The Notices to Proceed were issued in October 2007, and the entire road is scheduled to be completed by fall 2009. The total road length is about 40 kilometers and will be 10 meters wide with paved shoulders in some sections. According to Cason, in the original contract, workers were to construct a parallel temporary road east of the existing road to divert traffic, then grind up and redo the existing road. After negotiations with the Afghan Government, the contracts were modified and the existing road is being left in place, and the new road is being constructed alongside, essentially creating a four-lane road.

The companies began site preparation such as clearing, grubbing and constructing culverts in winter of 2007. According to Cason, throughout the construction, work was halted several times to ensure worker's safety while portions of the road could be demined and cleared of unexploded ordinance. "There were also a few delays because of Real Estate problems along the route, but the contractors worked closely with the villagers to resolve



Patricia Cason, AED Construction Representative, carefully documents daily roadwork activity in her field book.



An Afghan equipment operator prepares the substrate on the Kabul/Bagram Road using a Komatsu Motor Grader.

them," said John Wessel, another Corps of Engineers Construction Representative assigned to the project. According to Wessel, it's common to experience delays due to extreme weather and terrain, unexploded ordinance left behind from decades of war, and Real Estate disputes, because

there are is no centralized location to keep Real Estate records in Afghanistan.

Once work resumed, the existing road's culverts were extended under the new road, and areas were tarped-off and heated with wood burning stoves to keep the concrete from freezing. Special care

was taken to prepare the sub-base and base, and workers continuously water and test materials for the right consistency. “Problems with roads begin with what’s below the surface,” said Cason. Her experience as a geologist for the Corps of Engineers Sacramento District has been invaluable during the road’s construction, and she pays close attention as materials are tested and re-tested. According to Cason, the asphalt on the new road will be 15 centimeters thick, a lot thicker than the existing Soviet road which was built in just six months 34 years ago.

“There’s a lot of traffic on this road, ranging from military convoys and trucks hauling loads of aggregate,



An Afghan worker removes oversized rocks with a hand pick so the substrate can be rolled and compacted. A jingle truck loaded with bags of coal travels south on the existing road.

to horse-drawn carts and pedestrians,” said Wessel. “They have even begun building a city called New Kabul along the route and the Afghan Government is

giving land to people to help establish another community along the road near Bagram.” Additionally, the U.S. Agency for International Development is building a new power plant on the route and Department of Defense food supplier Supreme even has a major warehouse facility on the road. “There is great progress being made here, and this road is very important to the people of Afghanistan,” said Cason. “The quality is equal to that of roads being built in the United States, and the people driving by can see that there are Afghan workers on the project,” said Cason. “You get a lot of satisfaction out of what’s being done, and there’s a great sense of pride and accomplishment from the Afghans who are working very hard to rebuild their nation.” 🇦🇫



AED Construction Representatives Patricia Cason and John Wessel discuss the road project with Afghan Quality Assurance Representatives Wahidullah Amin, left, and Engineer Nazuk Mir.

“Veteran’s Day is a day designated to honor all the men and women who have served honorably in the armed forces of the United States of America, and to thank them for their love of country, patriotism and willingness to serve to defend and preserve the American way of life.

We owe a debt of gratitude to those veterans who are living and those who have passed; to those that served in combat and in times of peace. The price our veterans have paid and were willing to pay, have helped this great country to keep the flame of liberty burning from shore to shore.

As witnessed by our U.S. Army Corps of Engineer veterans, they seem to never lose their desire to serve their country. Currently there are 93 Afghanistan Engineer District Civilian personnel that are veterans. Of that, 53 percent have a combined 62 years of combat experience. They have a combined total of 566 years of active duty with an average of 7 years of duty per veteran. And a combined 165 years of Army Reserve and National Guard service.

As we celebrate today, take a few moments to remember all those veterans in your life. And we veterans should reflect on how grateful we are to our families. Their love and support during our service made those difficult times more bearable and gave us a reason to withstand the challenges we faced.

In conclusion, I salute veterans everywhere. They truly are a Band of Brothers and Sisters who have served with pride. Please honor those veterans today and in particular with a moment of silence at 1100 hours.” *(Excerpt from speech by AED Command Sgt. Maj. Gary W. Winkleblack at the Veteran’s Day Ceremony held Nov. 11, 2008, in Kabul, Afghanistan.)*



Qalaa House 5k Run/Walk

H O N O R I N G

Spc. Yairaliz Aponte

Retired Command Sgt. Maj. Larry T. Barney

Ned Burford (Vietnam)

Sgt. James Butler

Staff Sgt. Joseph D. Carl Jr.

Navy Chief Petty Officer Harold E. Craig

Retired Marine Corps Col. Al Faustino

Lt. Col. Jerry Ford

Army Maj. Leigh Ford

Sgt. Kevin Grieco

Retired Navy Lt. Cmdr. Frank Grubbs

Pfc. Clarence Heaton

Donald W. McAtee

Retired Navy Capt. John Sidney McCain III

Donald V. Moore, U.S. Navy Seabees

Capt. Steve Moore

Harry Lee Neely, World War II

Sgt. Norbert M. Padilla, Korean War

Retired 1st Sgt. Marion G. Panlilio

Air Force Master Sgt. Kenrick Phillip

Spc. Aleida Santana

Retired Sgt. 1st Class Sarasha Schmeets

Robert S. Sjulson, U.S. Navy, World War II

Clyde E. Stackhouse, U.S. Coast Guard, World War II

Retired Army Lt. Col. Len Tatum

Honey Virk, U.S. Marine Corps

Army Sgt. 1st Class Kathleen Wills

Richard Zup



VETERANS DAY

Afghanistan Engineer District

November 11, 2008



AED holds first Unit Olympics

Story by Sgt. 1st Class Eric P. Hailston

On a beautiful autumn morning in Kabul, the Afghanistan Engineer District held its first ever “Unit Olympics.” The event, designed to bring Soldiers and Civilians at Qalaa House together to help boost moral and team building through friendly competition, was a huge success.

Held in conjunction with the Military’s normal Physical Training or PT, the event began at 6 a.m., Nov. 2, 2008. The Soldiers normally get together every Sunday to participate in Army PT, which is expected by all Soldiers on Active Duty, except when they’re in a Combat Zone. We do it for the fitness benefit, but mostly it is to bring the Soldiers together as a Team.

As the coordinator, I try to break away from the monotony of structured Army PT and find something challenging but also fun for the Soldiers. I took the idea of a Unit Olympics from the Army Field Manual 21-20, Army Physical Fitness Training. Three of the six events came from the Field Manual but the other three were events that would be fun to do and watch. All six of the events were chosen for their fitness aspects, as well as for their competitive potential.

Each team consisted of six members. Teams one and two were 100 percent military put together by me so that they would be evenly matched. Teams three and four consisted of five Civilians with one Military team captain. The two Civilian teams came out of the Kabul Area Office with Maj. Leigh Ford, Area Office Officer in Charge, and Sgt. 1st Class Katherine Wills, Non-commissioned Officer in Charge, serving as team captains.

The first event was a team Sandbag Relay. Next was a Broad Jump relay, which had the contestants hopping around like frogs on hot asphalt. The third event was a Litter Carry where the teams were broken in half and they each had to carry and be carried on an Army stretcher.

The fourth event was the Crab Walk Relay. If you have never had the pleasure to witness Soldiers performing the Crab Walk you do not know how much fun this event was to watch. It took place in the deep “sand” of the AED Volleyball court for safety reasons. The sand made it the most challenging and humorous



Courtesy Photo

Sp. Carlos Benefield (center) showing his technique in the Broad Jump Relay. In the background, Ben Neely (left) and Dave Flynn (right) try to catch up.



Courtesy Photo

Sgt. 1st Class Eric Hailston (far background) keeps a watch on the turn around line during the Crab Walk event. Competing are, clockwise from front to rear; Dave Flynn, Sgt. 1st Class Katherine Wills, Sp. Carlos Benefield, and Sgt. Samuel Dean.

event of the morning.

The final event was the epitome of team work and team building – the Push-up Derby. This was by far the best event, because all of the teams had to work together to reach a common goal and support their fellow teammates throughout the entire event. The clock was set at five minutes and the teams were given their “proper Army push-up” demonstration. On



Photo by Bruce Huffman

Litter Carry Relay, from far left: Lt. Col. David Baker and Command Sgt. Maj. Gary Winkleblack carry Sgt. J. Ivan Minaya, Lt. Col. John Schultz and Col. Thomas O'Donovan carry Spc. Carlos Benefield. Larry Cole and Steve Smith carry Maria Cunningham, near; Dave Flynn and Greg Taylor (not shown) carry Maj. Leigh Ford.



Photo by Bruce Huffman

Team One celebrating their Push-Up Derby win, performing a combined 350+ push-ups in the five minute time period, clinching the over-all competition for their team. From left to right: Maj. Carl Cecil, Master Sgt. Michael Sage, Lt. Col. David Baker, with Lt. Col. John Schultz jokingly showing his disappointment.

the command of “go” one team member began by performing as many correct push-ups as they could and then hand off to the next team member. The only rule given to the teams was that they were required to stay in the same order throughout the race. Only five members of each team participated, as one team member had to



Photo by Bruce Huffman

Ben Neely (left) prepares to switch off with Maria Cunningham (right) during the Push-up Derby.



Photo by Bruce Huffman

The day would not have been as much fun if our Qalaa House Cheerleaders did not wake up to support their favorite competitors. From left to right: Pamela Amie, Leslie Wright, Sherry Masters and Linda Souza-Barney. Not shown are Michelle Thrift and Sarasha Schmeets.

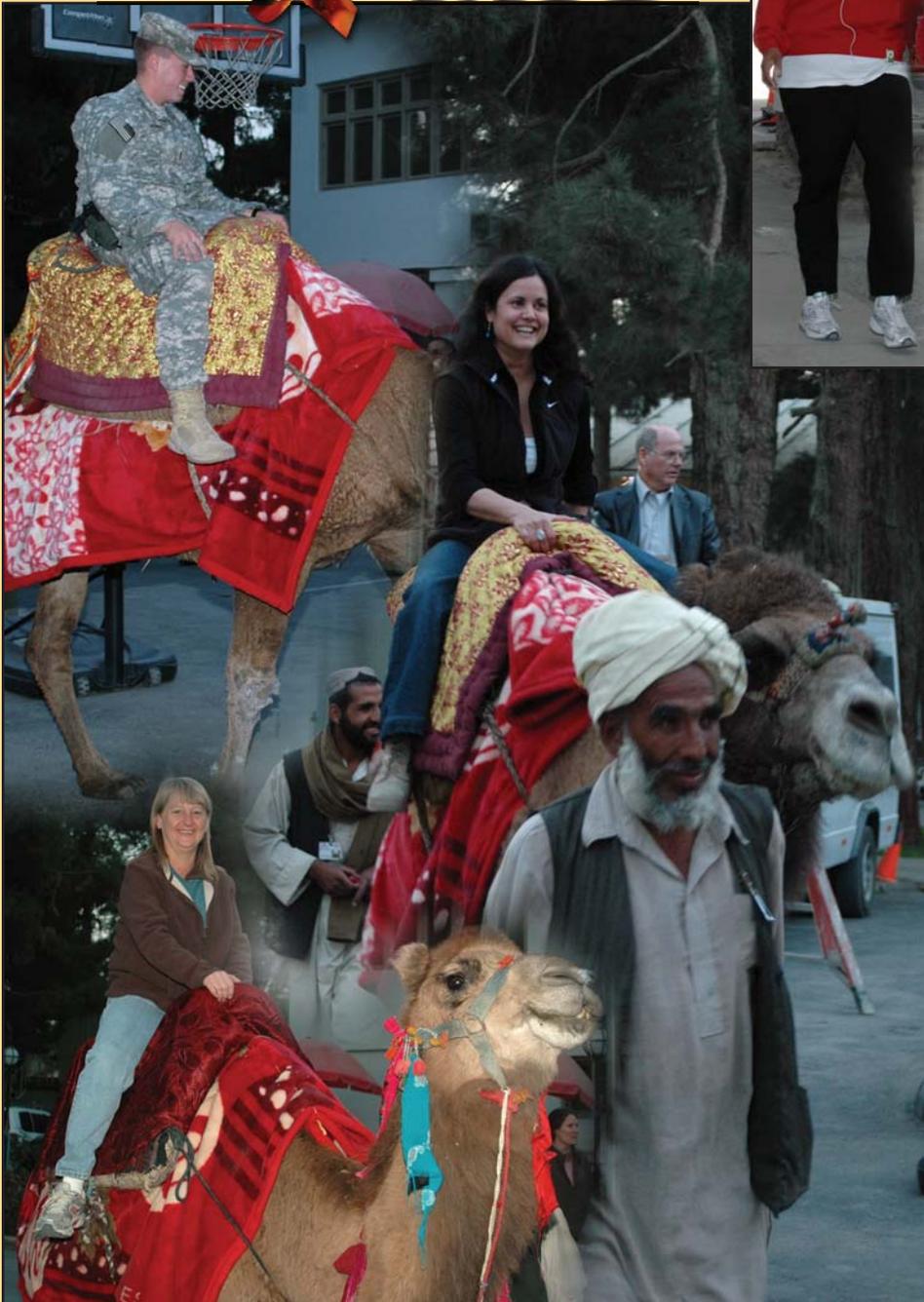
be the counter for an opposing team. After the first two minutes, some interesting techniques of energy conservation and quick turn overs were used by the teams once the muscle fatigue started to slip in.

In the end, as with all competitions, there can be only one winner, and on this day the winning team of the first ever AED Unit Olympics was Team One, which included Lt. Col. David Baker, Maj. Carl Cecil, Command Sgt. Maj. Gary Winkleblack, Sgt. Maj. Jon Beaulieu, Master Sgt. Michael Sage, Sgt. Jose Minaya and Sgt. Steven Wilson.

Congratulations to the winning team and a special congratulation goes to all of the Civilian participants. One Team, One Fight! 🇺🇸

AED celebrates Thanksgiving Day 2008 with full day of festivities

Camel Rides



Turkey Trot



Cornhole Toss



Santa's Sleigh



Thanksgiving Dinner

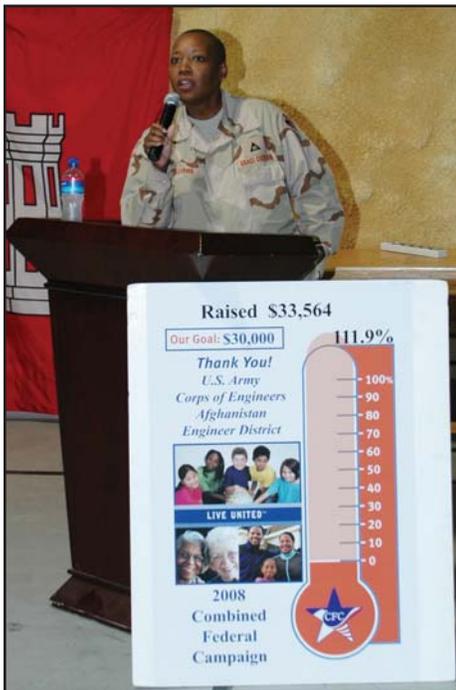


News briefs

2008 CFC roaring success AED Movement

Thanks to the generosity of Afghanistan Engineer District employees, the 2008 Combined Federal Campaign, which ran from Nov. 1-30, was a roaring success. "Not only did we meet our goal of \$30,000, we exceeded it by almost 12 percent, raising a whopping \$33,564," said Karen R. Williams, J1 Civilian Personnel and the 2008 Campaign Manager. "As someone who has personally benefitted from a CFC supported charitable organization, I thank you all from the bottom of my heart."

Key Persons whose efforts also helped make this campaign a success are Kevin L. Sanchez, Sherry D. Gilbert, Linda Souza-Barney, Eric J. Fry, Tracy M. Hunter, and Michelle C. Thrift.



Karen R. Williams, J1 Civilian Personnel, announces the final CFC numbers at the Housing Meeting Dec. 8, 2008.

Please send ALL movement related e-mail traffic to aed.movement@usace.army.mil.

USB Lock-Down

The following topics at Website

<https://ace-it.usace.army.mil/usb.html> provide key information for the USB Lock-Down and utilization of "Thumb" drives.

- Memorandum from USACE CIO on Thumb Drive Suspension
- USB Lock-Down Information Paper
- USACE CECI: USB "Thumb" Drive FAQ
- Approved USB Device List - (not yet available)

USACE-AED use of commercial aircraft

*Lt. Col. John C. Schultz
J3 Operations OIC*

Due to recently determined issues involving air transport certification and the legal aspects involved with current carriers, all USACE-AED employees, both civilian and military, will discontinue the use of non-CARB certified aircraft until further notice. This includes USAID and non-CARB certified private commercial aircraft.

Please direct questions concerning this policy to Maj. Clifford Conklin, DSN: 312-265-3087.



Pip ties the knot

Thamapol P. (Pip) Boonchan, an Office Engineer in AED's Kabul Area Office, was married Oct. 14 at a district in Bangkok. Pip and his new wife, Suchanya, honeymooned in southern Thailand while he was on R&R. They are looking forward to a formal reception with families and friends after Pip's Redeployment next year.

Employees get FEHB Belated Enrollment opportunity

For the Federal Employee Health Benefits, employees may now make an election/change via the ABC-C web or phone system; employees do not have to speak with a counselor unless of course they have the personal need to do so. The ABC-C can be accessed at www.abc.army.mil or by phone at 1-877-276-9287.

• As stated on the OPM web site, "OPM is taking this action in response to concerns over a change in coverage in the Blue Cross Blue Shield (BC/BS)

reimbursement that would have established a \$7,500 co-pay for out-of-network surgeries. The agency had negotiated this change to address situations where enrollees could be billed tens-of-thousands of dollars for non-emergency surgeries performed by out-of-network providers, a practice known as balanced billing.”

- The belated opportunity is open to all eligible employees, not only those who have (or elected to have) BC/BS. It is a consideration to allow employees the opportunity to carefully review plan literature and chose the coverage that will best meet their needs. While this opportunity is in the best interest of the employees, we must make the employees aware of the administrative issues that may accompany a retroactive benefits change.

- Belated changes for FEHB, FEDVIP and FSAs can be made through Saturday, Jan. 31. However, employees who wish to make an election/change are encouraged to do so as quickly as possible to avoid retroactive coverage and premium issues. It is important for employees to understand that FEHB changes will be effective as of the first full pay period in January (Jan. 4 for most employees) and FEDVIP changes will be effective as of Jan. 1 regardless of when the belated change is made. Therefore, employees who use their coverage in January and make a FEHB or FEDVIP change will be subject to retroactive coverage and adjustments if the prior coverage is used after the effective date of the new retroactive election. The health plans will reject or reverse



Personnel get mandatory shots

Staff Sgt. Myron C. Ward got a surprise Nov. 3, 2008, when Army Pfc. Kori E. Reis-ElBara gave him a shot on “two” when he was expecting it on the count of three. Reis-ElBara and Sgt. Russell J. Kosloske, from the Camp Eggers Aid Station, came to Qalaa Compound to ensure the Inactivated Influenza (also known as Flu) Vaccine was available to all AED employees who need one. According to Cpt. Phillip C. Williams, the Flu vaccine is mandatory for all AED personnel.

The Flu is a contagious disease that is caused by the influenza virus, which can be spread by coughing, sneezing or nasal secretions. The Flu vaccine may help prevent influenza, which can occur any time from November through may, but most often peaks in January or February. Once the vaccine is received, it takes up to two weeks for protection to develop and the protection lasts up to one year. To learn more about the Inactivated Influenza Vaccine visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Website at www.cdc.gov/flu.

payment of claims when made aware of the change. The new plan will pay the benefits subject to its coverage stipulations. This may result in a different level of financial responsibility to the employee and may cause administrative hassles/delays.

- Additionally, retroactive changes will result in adjustments to payroll withholding for premium deductions. If the new plan has a higher premium, the

employee may incur a slight indebtedness; if the new plan has a lower premium, a refund would be due. It is especially important for employees to check their Leave and Earnings Statements following a retroactive change.

-Again, it is up to the employee to determine if a belated election will be most advantageous to their personal situation.

For more information visit www.opm.gov/insure.

ON THE MOVE

Moving in



Michiel Holley



Carla Williams



Penny Mahaffey



Anton Klein



An Trang



Greg Altman



Floyd Stredwick



James Simonsen



Gary Smit



Michael McConnell



Robert Smith



George Lumley



Dave Stanton



Leon Lundy



John Richards



Richard Stephens



Lt. Israel Rios



Ray Tatro



Sgt. J. Ivan Minaya



Terry McClure



Maria Cunningham



Mark Hoague



Edward Vincent



Claudia Holmquist



Vicky Mauresth



Jack Pagano



Roger Bowen



Roger Green



Rixby Hardy



Jerry McCall



Kevin Lynch



Robin West



James Brown



Kathleen Harper



Lisa Hardman



Johnnie Saunders



Kenny Pham



Scott MacKinnon



Reginold Haywood



Diane Shepherd



Michael Butler



Britt Reed



James Jones



Ken Hiralsuka

Moving out

LTC Domenick Grazzone
SSG Louis Sosa
Tony Oby
Sheila Enclade
Paul Horvath
William Manwill
Sammy Alley
Steven Smith

Robert Clark
Glenn Matsuyama
Brian Gary

Photos unavailable at press time:

Sgt. Jeremy Burns
Staff Sgt. Michael Tomlinson
Andy Adams
Mitchell Moore
Peter Pettis