



NEWS RELEASE

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

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Laissez les bons temps rouler even on deployment

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan — Far from home, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers personnel deployed in southern Afghanistan celebrated Mardi Gras with music, a parade, dancing, costumes and a Cajun-inspired dinner complete with King Cake at Kandahar Airfield Feb. 12.

Laissez les bons temps rouler, 'let the good times roll' in French, was in full effect for three brief and much-needed non-duty hours on Fat Tuesday.

Louisiana residents and Afghanistan Engineer District-South teammates, Mike Hatchett, Karla Marshall, Angela May and Tammy Washington, led a crew of USACE volunteers and revelers in a celebration that toured parts of Kandahar Airfield including the Liberty House Morale, Welfare and Recreation Center and the Warrior Recovery Center, a medical facility where wounded troops recover and rehabilitate. Army Col. Vincent Quarles, the district commander, served as the parade's grand marshal. District teammates Verna Nelson and Hector Vega were selected as the event's king and queen and both tossed candy and beads to parade spectators as they rode along in a special parade float- a motorized utility cart decorated with beads, masks and streamers. District teammates Ruth Townley and Washington choreographed a performance and dozens danced the streets of Kandahar Airfield.

"It was important for me to share a little bit of my state's history and culture with my USACE buddies," said May, who helped prepare Cajun food and Mardi Gras decorations. "I was thrilled to see so many people laughing and dancing and having such a great time!"

May is a resident of Abita Springs, La. and deployed to Afghanistan from the USACE New Orleans District.

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U.S. Army Corps of Engineers personnel deployed in Afghanistan celebrated Mardi Gras with music, a parade, dancing, costumes and a Cajun-inspired dinner complete with King Cake at Kandahar Airfield Feb. 12. (USACE photo by JC Delgadillo)