



US Army Corps
of Engineers

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Huntsville Center

Bulletin

On page ...

- 2** *Commander's column*
- 3** *Earth Day celebrated April 22*
- 4** *Scholarships available*
- 6** *Imploding vs. traditional demolition*
- 10** *Blue Roof program ends*

Mark your calendar now...

[Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day](#)



Courtesy photo

The last major demolition under the Coalition Munitions Clearance Program in Iraq contained more than 248 tons of stockpiled ammunition.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers completes last demolition in Iraq

By Andrea Takash
Public Affairs Office

After almost three years of hard and dangerous work, the

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers celebrated the last major demolition under the Coalition Munitions Clearance Program in Iraq. Col. John Rivenburgh,

commander of the Huntsville Engineering and Support Center, Dr. John Potter, chief of the

See Demolition on page 4

Line of sight technology speeds process of modernizing Army training ranges

By Debra Valine
Public Affairs Office

As the Army incorporates new weapons systems into its inventory, training ranges must be updated to provide the best possible

and most realistic training venues to support the Army's "train as we fight" philosophy.

On the larger more complex digital ranges, the footprint or "baseline to target box" can comprise up to 6,000 acres of land. More challenging, Soldiers are required to acquire, engage

and hit stationary and moving targets at distances out to 2,400 meters in a time sequence/scored process.

"As engineers, we must ensure Soldiers can see or 'engage' specific targets at the required distances without visual obstructions (landforms and

See Line of Sight on page 8

Commander's thoughts

March Madness! Basketball fans are still rooting for their favorite teams or the teams that became their favorite in their pools. But you know, our favorite team continues to be made up of the Soldiers and their families that we serve every day we go to work.

We are working in difficult times and every time we open the doors, turn on the lights and boot up our computers, we add value to what our Corps is doing to support our Army and our nation. You do this directly when supporting the Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff for Installa-

tion Management (OACSIM) or the Army G-3 or the Installation Management Agency. Our Access Control Point, Facilities Reduction Program and Range and Training Lands Center of Expertise are good examples of direct support missions.

More often you do it by working quietly behind the scenes, not executing a new military construction (MILCON) project, but making it better. PAX and TRACES builds the DD1391 necessary for all new construction, and then they update

them for the Army staff as changes occur, usually over a weekend with no advance notice.

Our Centers of Expertise (CX) come in to help a supported district when they need help. Our Range CX recently sent tiger teams to Fort Benning, Ga., and Fort Pickett, Va., to do in-stride redesigns to get important ranges built without significant cost or schedule impacts.

No new range is constructed without cleaning up unexploded ordnance left from earlier training events.



Col. John D. Rivenburgh

The Bulletin asks:

What is your cure for Spring fever?



Getting to go outside — camping, going to the lake, etc.

Kim Everage
Chem Demil Directorate



Wake up at 4:30 a.m., rig my boat up, listen to Skynyrd on the way to the boat ramp and fish all day!

Brandon Price
Installation Support



My cure is taking a mini-vacation with my husband -- treating ourselves to spa treatments and eating everything my heart desires without a care in the world.

Katrina S. Carter
Pax Support Team



I like to get away with family and friends on country drives and admire the beauty of nature as it springs anew. Very seldom do we take time to "stop and smell the roses" so to speak. Spring fever brings on the desire to want to do so. I like to view nature's beauty as it seems to come alive this time of the year. I like to "fire up the grill" and enjoy the outside with hopes of the beginning of a long summer of outside activities and events, visits to parks, outside concerts, and weekend trips. Even the work of gardening and keeping the lawn brings a certain satisfaction and thus becomes a part of the cure of spring fever.

Robert Ager
Structural Engineering



Imagining I'm cruising the Hawaiian Islands!

Deanna Buford
Travel Office



US Army Corps of Engineers

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BULLETIN

Commander..... Col. John D. Rivenburgh
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April 22, Earth Day marks 36th annual celebration

**By Lt. Gen. Carl Strock
Chief of Engineers**

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers employees remain firm in their commitment to the environment and sustainability.

As our population and economy continue to grow, our nation and Army must carefully manage and enhance our environmental resources while ensuring prosperity for our children and future generations. This is a familiar challenge, one you have heard many times in the past and will continue to hear. We are ready, willing and able to provide both leadership and partnership in this important arena.

April 22 marks the 36th annual celebration of Earth Day, and once again this year the Army will use the theme “Sustaining the Environment for a Secure Future.” It’s a theme that continues to emphasize the need for the Army to move toward increased sustainability—focusing on our mission, the environment and our communities.

As Gen. Peter Schoomaker, the Army Chief of Staff, and the Honorable Francis J. Harvey, Secretary of the Army, note in their 2006 Earth Day Message, “... it is vital that we continue to implement innovative policies and practices that will protect and preserve our natural resources for future generations.”

We believe that the Corps is leading the way in doing just that. We are a full spectrum Engineer Force of high quality civilians and Soldiers, working with our partners to deliver innovative and effective solutions to the Armed Forces and the nation’s engineering and environmental challenges.

Our Environmental Operating Principles emphasize the need to embed sustainability in all our projects and are applied in everything we do, across the full spectrum of our operations from warfighting to water resources. I am pleased to note that preliminary results from an ongoing survey show that our employees believe the Corps is committed to embedding the principles in our work. However, they also say there still is more we can, and need, to do.

While we strive to incorporate the principles even more in our projects and activities, it is gratifying to know that our efforts are being noticed. On May 3, the Secretary of Defense will honor a team of Corps employees from our Sacramento District with a Department of Defense Environmental Restoration

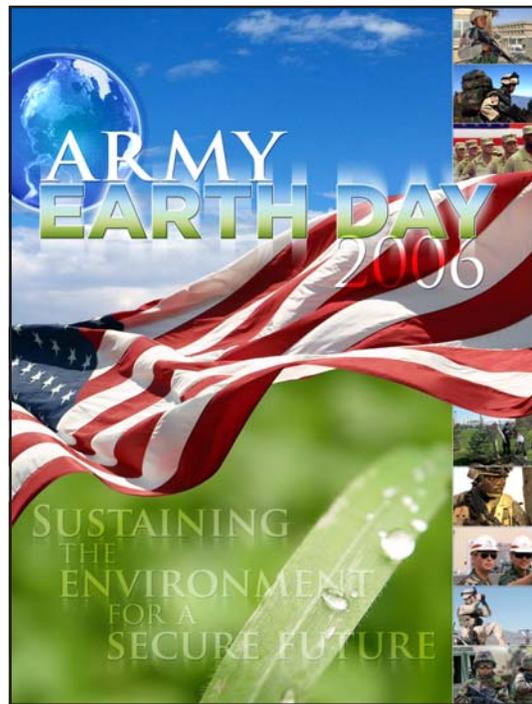
Team Award. The award recognizes the Pyramid Lake Torpedo and Bombing Range Formerly Used Defense Sites project team for its work in removing more than 13 tons of munitions from the 110,000-acre lake northeast of Reno, Nev.

The team, which included Corps employees, U.S. Navy divers, contractors and members

art technology advancing protocols for deep diving at high elevations to remove the World War II munitions. The Paiute Tribe members, who were funded through Native American Lands Environmental Mitigation Program, provided critical input and agreement on the project’s approach from the community’s viewpoint.

Through all of the efforts and teamwork, the team removed the munitions with minimal disturbance to the lake’s sensitive environment, home of the endangered Cuiui lakesucker and the threatened Lahontan cutthroat trout. They also helped build the tribe’s expertise in environmental cleanup, reduced costs and expanded the boundaries of known technologies. I am proud of the team’s collaboration and commitment.

The Corps is becoming known for our commitment to working openly and collaboratively, whether it’s along the Gulf Coast after the devastating hurricanes, in the Everglades as we strive to keep the River of Grass alive and vibrant, or as we work with others to remove decades-old munitions from a lake. That commitment is part of the Corps culture, not just on Earth Day, but every day. Keep up the great work. Essays!



of the Paiute Tribe, demonstrated the true sense of the seventh Environmental Operating Principle: “Respect the views of individuals and groups interested in Corps activities; listen to them actively, and learn from their perspective in the search to find innovative win-win solutions to the nation’s problems that also protect and enhance the environment.” The Navy divers provided state-of-the-

Scholarship applications now available

Looking for scholarship money? Applications are now available online to scholarships being offered by the Huntsville Post of the Society of American Military Engineers. The deadline for application is April 21. The winners will be announced at the May 18 S.A.M.E. meeting.

ELIGIBILITY (each scholarship has specific requirements)

- Son/daughter or grandson/granddaughter or stepson/stepdaughter of an active or deceased member of the Huntsville Post, S.A.M.E., or an active student member of the Huntsville Post, S.A.M.E.
- College undergraduate while scholarship is in effect.

SELECTION CRITERIA

- Required major in engineering, mathematics or natural science.
- Evidence of serious scholastic attitude, good character, leadership qualities and well-rounded personal development.
- Preference to student with military aspirations as exemplified by enrollment in an Officer Training program.

Forms and instructions are available at: <http://posts.same.org/huntsville/scholar.htm>.

Questions concerning the application or application process may be referred to Charles Joyner at (256) 885-7281 or cjoynerjr@aol.com

April 27 — Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day

Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day is April 27. This year's theme is "Shaping the Future."

Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day is designed to expand opportunities for girls and boys to gain exposure to what adults do during the work day. The program shows them the value of their education, and gives them an opportunity to share how they envision their future.

It is intended to be more than a career day. The program is intended to introduce girls and boys ages 8 to 12 to the vast range of potential job opportunities to give them an idea of how their future work/career will fit into their overall lives.

For more information about Huntsville Center's activities for the day, call Sonja Rice at 895-1575.

Demolition

Continued from page 1

Ordnance and Explosives Directorate, and Bill Sargent, program manager of the Coalition Munitions Clearance Program, traveled to Iraq to witness the last demolition and to initiate the next phase of the ordnance destruction work.

"The last demo consisted of over 248 tons of stockpiled ammunition," Potter said. "Even though this was the last big one, there will still be some minor demolitions."

The demolition of stockpiled munitions took place at the Arlington Depot, which was originally controlled by Saddam

Hussein's army before the war.

"When the U.S. Army started taking over control of the Iraqi depots, they experienced many challenges," Sargent said. "The Iraqis had no storage or compatibility procedures. High explosive items were stored with detonators, which could cause a big explosion. The Corps organized the depots and folded six depots into two."

The destruction of ordnance items was taking place almost every day. This demolition contained items that either the new Iraqi Army did not need or the insurgents could use during attacks, such as rocket

propelled grenades, hand grenades, landmines and other large ammunition.

The completion of the last demolition signifies a change in mission. Instead of a clean-up mission, the Corps will now oversee a depot operation mission.

"One Corps employee per depot will handle quality assurance, contract surveillance and oversee the depot operations," Sargent said.

The Corps hired a new contractor, Explosive Ordnance Disposal Technologies, Inc. The contractor will operate the depots and train the Iraqis to take over running them.

"The Iraq cadre will

learn how to maintain, pack and store ammunition, along with securing a depot. When they get it, we will leave," Potter said.

Both Potter and Sargent agreed that their trip was worthwhile and helps them to better understand what deployed employees are experiencing. They would go back if they were needed.

"The experience was eye-opening. I got to see first hand the security issues and appreciate the risks our employees deal with daily," Sargent said.

"There is a lot you can't appreciate from 9,000 miles away," Potter said.

It doesn't take much to make a difference in a child's life

Outings great fun for Russian orphans, Corps employees

**By Jo Anita Miley
Public Affairs Office**

It's the little things that can make such a difference in a child's life. For the children living at the Rassvet Orphanage, in the Shchuch'ye community of Rassvet, Russia, some of those little things are provided by sponsors such as U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' employees and contractors.

Huntsville Center and contractor partner Parsons Inc. employees join with others in the community to enrich the lives of the orphans by providing opportunities for recreation and fun. Huntsville Center and Parsons are in Shchuch'ye, working with the Defense Threat Reduction Agency and the Russian Federation's Chemical Weapons Destruction Program to build a chemical demilitarization facility.

It makes a tremendous difference in the lives of the 22 children living at the orphanage.

"The staff of Orphanage Russvet expresses gratitude for how employees from the Corps and Parsons have helped the children," wrote V.P. Stennikova, orphanage director in a letter to the sponsors. "You have formed bonds that make a difference

in the lives of the children, since many of the children have been disconnected with family and friends due to famine and disaster situations."

Corps employees Lance Lawton, Don Bollinger and Sanford Yeung took 25 children and eight staff members from the orphanage to Specialists Camp Feb. 12. The group toured the facilities, watched the movie "Madagascar" and ate American spaghetti, chicken and pizza with ice cream for dessert. The children also performed the Fantastic Music Show, devoted to the "birthday" of the house spirit Kusya, which they celebrate each year.

"After a long day of excitement, the children boarded the bus back to the orphanage with memories of a day filled with fun, food and fellowship and a smile on each face," said Lance



Courtesy photo

Children from the Russvet Orphanage in Russvet, Russia, visit the City Square with employees from Huntsville Center and Parsons, Inc. They saw ice sculptures, played on ice slides and rode carnival rides.

Lawton, the deputy on-site manager for the Shchuch'ye project site.

In January, Huntsville Center and Parsons took the children on an outing to the City Square where they saw ice sculptures, ice slides, carnival rides and the Oriental museum.



Courtesy photo

Lance Lawton, a Huntsville Center employee, plays games with children from Russvet Orphanage, in Russvet, Russia, while they wait for their first taste of American food.

"We also took them to dinner at the movie theatre complex, and got everyone hamburgers, French fries and cokes with ice cream for dessert," Lawton said. "This was the first time having American type food for many of the children."

At another outing in September 2005, the sponsors took the children shopping and allowed each child to select a toy at the toy store.

"Oftentimes the staff members add extra money for more expensive toys or something extra the child might need like gloves," Lawton said. "On that trip, we also bought each child shoes and a warm jacket."

During the past six years, Corps employees have led numerous efforts to collect money or provide food, clothing and building supplies and materials for the orphanage, which has been in operation since October 2000.

"Many of the children don't have family at all, and really need help from others," Lawton said. "We hope to do more for the children in the future."

"Let you be always surrounded by such a sensitive people as you are who are ready to help others in any time," Stennikova said. "And kindness will bring kindness back to you."

Imploding vs. traditional demolition saves time, money for Fort M

By Debra Valine
Public Affairs Office

With a sound similar to that of a large thunderclap, Bldg. 501 at Fort Myer, Va., will be reduced to rubble. The implosion, scheduled for sunrise in early June will take approximately 15 seconds.

Imploding Bldg. 501, Tencza Terrace, is part of an effort to reduce the number of outdated buildings on Army installations. Imploding the building will save \$100,000 and at least

a month of time compared to traditional demolition methods.

The Installation Management Agency and Fort Myer turned to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville, for guidance on the best way to accomplish the mission. As the Installation Support Center of Expertise for facilities demolition and reduction, Huntsville Center supports the planning, management and execution of the Army-wide facilities reduction program.

“The demolition of Tencza Terrace

demonstrates the great partnership between the Installation Management Agency and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers,” said Col. Thomas A. Allmon, commander of the Fort Myer Military Community. “We in the Fort Myer Military Community lean heavily on the Corps’ expertise for all our major projects. The partnership we’ve established between our installation staff and the Corps working our demolition is fabulous. An effort of this magnitude requires a synchronized effort by all involved for it to be a success, and I know the team we’ve established is up to the task.”

Bldg. 501 is a 150,449 gross square foot, 13-story family housing facility built in 1966 for junior noncommissioned officers. The cost to remove the building is estimated at \$1.6 million and will be complete by June.

“We worked with IMA to develop a contracting tool that did a couple of things — it got better prices for what was being done and met environmental goals of the Army,” said Michael Norton, a project manager in the Facilities Reduction Program.

IMA had found that installation Directorates of Public Works were using historic data — how much it cost to demolish a building before — rather than looking at demolition experts and nationwide costs for demolishing buildings, Norton said.

“We awarded an Indefinite Delivery, Indefinite Quantity contract initially for the IMA Northeast Regional Office



Photo by Gary Williams, Baltimore District Corps of Engineers

Work continues in Phase 1, the soft demolition of Bldg. 501 at Fort Myer, Va., to remove all interior fixtures, doors, windows, appliances and sheetrock for recycling. Once the soft demolition of the building is complete, Bldg. 501 will be imploded and the remaining brick and concrete will be crushed and used as landfill material to build up a slope in front of the existing building.

Demolition Fort Myer project

(NERO) to two small businesses: Bhatte Environmental Associates, Inc., of Birmingham, Ala., and Charter Environmental, Inc., of Willmington, Mass. These firms demonstrated that they have the knowledge and means to demolish buildings using industry demolition best practices,” Norton said. These industry best practices reduce the cost of demolition often as much as 50 percent from what installations have been paying.

“Bringing down the building should take about 15 seconds and sound like a large thunderclap,” said Tom Peck, a professional engineer with Bhatte Associates. “It will sound like the grand finale at an inexpensive fireworks display.”

There will be a test blast the Friday before the implosion actually takes place, said Raymond Zukowski, a field operations manager with Controlled Demolition, Inc., of Phoenix, Md. “We put the dynamite in place on Friday and do a test blast. On Saturday we go back in and install the caps and other items needed for Sunday. Once the sun comes up on Sunday, the building will come down.”

Bldg. 501 is constructed of brick and concrete and is located on a sloped site. Once the building is imploded, the brick and concrete will be crushed on-site, rather than removed to a landfill and the resulting rubble used to level the slope. Most of the materials that normally would have gone to a landfill will be recycled or reused, Norton explained.

“The new Army waste diversion standard is 50 percent by weight,” Norton said. “That is important

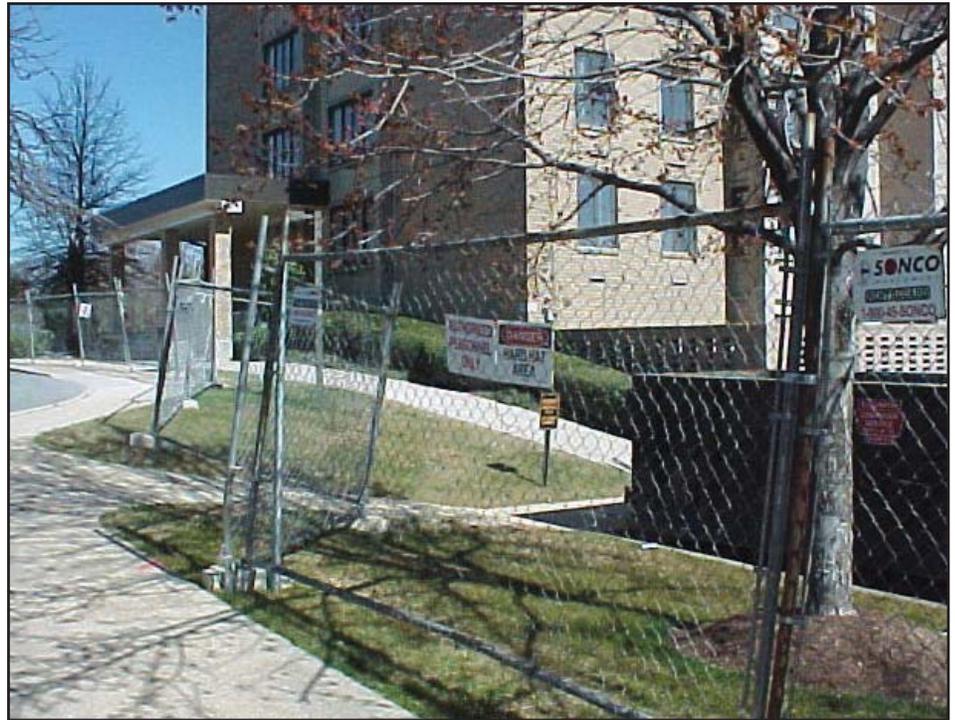


Photo by Gary Williams, Baltimore District Corps of Engineers

Fences and signs mark the perimeter of Bldg. 501 Tenza Terrace at Fort Myer, Va., to ensure unauthorized people don't enter the demolition area before the scheduled implosion in early June .

because the diversion standard is by weight, not volume. We will exceed that goal. Baltimore District is providing the contracting officer representative and quality assurance services for us. They have someone on the ground watching the contractor to ensure he is accomplishing his approved work plan.”

Work will be accomplished in two phases. In Phase 1, utilities will be disconnected and rerouted; asbestos abatement will be conducted; and soft demolition performed.

“Utilities such as water, sewerage, gas, TV, electricity, just like in a house, will have to be turned off,” Norton said. “When you tear a building down, you do not want a broken gas line, etc. The next part of it is that there is asbestos in the building — in the floor tile, in the adhesive, and on the hot water tank in the basement — that is considered hazardous. That asbestos has to go away, completely out of the building. It is critical that all asbestos-containing material be removed so when the remaining rubble is crushed

to use as fill material, it is not considered contaminated.

“Soft demolition is the stripping or gutting of the inside of the building,” Norton continued. “We will remove sheetrock, doors, cabinets, windows, piping, fixtures, metal, etc. Most of these materials will be recycled or salvaged. Bhatte has even found a company to recycle the sheetrock. The goal of Phase 1 is to reduce the building to a structural skeleton, so that when the building is imploded, the leftover rubble is suitable for crushing into material which is reusable.

In Phase 2, the contractor will implode the building and come in with a crusher to crush the brick and concrete rubble to a small diameter so that it can be used as fill and compacted. The metal rebar will be removed and recycled. The compacted debris will provide the right foundation to allow the Fort Myer DPW to use the site to build roads or small structures. The new slope shouldn't erode and shouldn't need a retaining wall, Norton said.

Line of Sight

Continued from page 1

vegetation) in order to achieve the strict training standards within the allotted time,” said Mark Fleming, program manager, Army Training Facilities Program Office at the U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center in Huntsville, Ala. “This is known as line-of-sight, a critical element in the design and construction of these large expansive range facilities.”

Target matrixes are developed by Army trainers during the early design process to determine minimum target engagements to meet Army Training Standards. In the past, it would take a long

and target objectives. In some cases, this iterative process could take weeks of combined dedicated effort from the trainers and the engineers working closely together to obtain a satisfactory design solution.

Today, Huntsville Center’s Range Center of Expertise is using a line-of-sight design analysis program developed by HNTB Corps of Kansas City, Mo., that runs much faster and incorporates the newest training requirements. Line of sight integrates planning, designing and building of larger, more complex ranges.

“Applying this tool saves time and reduces the cost of constructing military training

can run the 1/2 million profiles in less than five minutes. This is the software we are using with the three test ranges we are working on,” said Lary Quick, a technical manager in Huntsville Center’s Engineering Directorate. The test ranges — scheduled for construction in 2008 — are one each at Fort Riley, Kan., Fort Stewart, Ga., and Yakima Training Center, Wash. Each range will take about 18 months to build and then six months for instrumentation.

HNTB had written the existing software and, based on a strong partnership with the Huntsville Center, adapted it to fit Huntsville Center’s needs. Not only does it provide the profile between firing position and targets, it incorporates all the training tasks in the various Army Field Manuals. It provides the combinations that will need to be used to get the training task accomplished by helping lay out ranges that fit the requirements of the training tasks.

“We can run the analysis on existing ranges and tell them which ranges meet the training requirements,” Quick said. “Because we can run the profiles so quickly, we can run the analysis over and over and change it a number of times to meet training requirements. It costs about \$30 million to build a new range. This brings down the cost to build the range by avoiding massive quantities of earthwork for one example.”

Using this program, the range can be designed much faster than it could be using traditional design with computer-aided drafting (CAD).

“We can cut design time,” Quick said. Ranges get looked at for rebuilding on a cycle of every 10-15 years. There are always new training range requirements based on stationing of units, which changes with initiatives such as Base Realignment and Closure and military transformation.

These ranges support training on tanks, Bradley Fighting Vehicles, Strykers, HUMVEES and Scout vehicles. The software has the capability to be used for small arms range development, but has not yet been used by Huntsville Center for that.

In the past six months, armor training requirements and standards have changed dramatically, Quick said.

“We put in the new training requirements and standards. We now have the ability to go back to finished designs to ensure they meet current training requirements before the ranges are actually built.”

“The objective of the prototype effort is to introduce a new engineering design process leveraging computer technology to provide our Soldiers with a higher quality, more flexible training venue,” Fleming said. “The results will be apparent in approximately three years when these projects are turned over to conduct live-fire operations.”



Courtesy photo

Realistic training prepares Soldiers for future missions.

time to develop a line-of-sight analysis for the range simply because it took four to five days to run the computer modeling program. The answer would come back as a yes the engagement could be engaged, or no it could not be seen from that position. If the answer was no, it was back to the drawing board for the range designers to reorient the firing positions

ranges, reduces contact with unexploded ordnance, reduces environmental impact and optimizes training by making it more realistic,” Fleming said.

In the past 16 years, Huntsville Center has helped with the construction of more than 400 ranges.

“We are using software that we are leasing from HNTB. This software — True/Viz™ On Target —

Ribbon cutting held at Karbala government building

Base Camp Adder (Ali Base) Iraq — Dr. Rasool Hasn Abboud Al-Talkani, technical deputy for the Karbala governor attended a ribbon cutting at the Karbala Government Building following the monthly Provincial Reconstruction Development Committee meeting March 5. The local administration building received a full interior make-over and the exterior of the building was also upgraded. Representing the United States and Reconstruction efforts were Tom Cooney, U.S. State Department; Col. Larry McCallister, commander, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Gulf Region South District; Lt. Col. Lorenzo Valenzuela, deputy commander; and Cmdr. Richard Schnabel, area engineer.



Courtesy photo

From Missouri to Mosul: Delivering the goods

By Polli Barnes Keller
Gulf Region North

MOSUL, Iraq — The mission statement of the University of Missouri's Health Care (UMHC) program is to provide education, research and service to residents of Missouri with an emphasis on rural Missouri. It did say 'with emphasis on rural Missouri' didn't it? Then how does Iraq fit into the picture?

It fits in when you have a National Guardsman who works for UMHC called to active duty and deployed to Mosul, Iraq. Maj. Dan Crouch is from the Headquarters, Headquarters Detachment, Engineering Brigade, 35th Infantry Division out of Cape Girardeau, Mo., and assigned to the

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Iraq. In everyday life, Crouch is a husband, a dad to seven children and an employee of Integrated Technology Services (ITS) at the University of Missouri Health Care in Columbia, Mo.

When Crouch arrived in Mosul, his UMHC co-workers at home asked, "What do you need? What can we send to you?" Crouch responded that he personally needed nothing; however, he saw the Iraqi children had a need. School supplies were scarce, and he knew the positive effect school supplies would have on Iraqi students.

Lists were made, collection stations were set up for donations and the word was sent throughout the company. UMHC-ITS went to work. Boxes began to arrive loaded with pencils, paper, notebooks and other

school supplies, as well as candy. From Missouri to Mosul ... boxes were addressed and mailed.

Crouch along with other U.S. Army Corps of Engineer employees traveled to two schools located in the northern Iraq province of Dohuk, to deliver the goods. With anxious looks that soon turned to wonder, children

playing outside the school surrounded the vehicles as Crouch and the others began unloading the supplies.

A bag of candy was opened and the frenzy began. Bag after bag of sweets were passed out among the little ones. Smiles and words of thanks were spoken in Kurdish.

As the group moved into the classrooms, the reaction of the children was the same. Smiles, waves and words of thanks crossed the language barrier to warm the hearts of those who represented the donors of this worthy cause.

"The University of Missouri Health Care has always been a very giving organization ... much like a family," Crouch said. "It is my honor to represent UMHC and deliver these items to the children." Watching the children's faces light up as we passed out the supplies and candy made this trip worthwhile. I believe the children of Iraq are the hope for the future of this country."

Many good things are happening in Iraq. Despite the violence that often claims the media spotlight, reconstruction efforts are continuing throughout the country and things are getting better. The American investment in Iraq is yielding tangible results, and people like the employees of UMHC-ITS are making a difference, Crouch said.

For more information on the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Iraq, visit www.grd.usace.army.mil.



Courtesy photo

Maj. Dan Crouch, Headquarters, Headquarters Detachment, Engineering Brigade, 35th Infantry Division, Cape Girardeau, Mo., hands out school supplies and candy collected by his friends and coworkers in Missouri to children in Mosul, Iraq.

Entry into new civilian personnel system means slight pay hike for most

By Donna Miles
American Forces
Press Service

WASHINGTON, D.C.— Most of the first 11,000 Defense Department civilian employees to convert to the new civilian personnel system in April will receive a pay increase, an official said March 30.

About 85 percent of people will see an initial bump in pay when they are enrolled in the new National Security Personnel System, Joyce Frank, spokeswoman for the system, told American Forces Press Service.

The first employees to make the switch in “Spiral 1.1” of the phase-in process will automatically convert to the new system April 30, she said. “No one loses pay” as they convert from the old Civil Service System to the new pay-for-performance NSPS, Frank said. Most, in fact, will qualify for a one-time, prorated within-grade increase buy-in.

Employees in Step 9 or lower of

their current GS grade and with acceptable performance will receive credit toward their next scheduled within-grade step increase, Frank explained. The so-called WGI buy-in will be based on the number of days accumulated toward the increase and will be factored in for eligible employees before their positions are converted to pay bands.

The NSPS Web site will offer a conversion tool within the next few days so employees can determine where they will fall in the pay band system when their positions convert to NSPS, Frank said.

Another new feature on the Web site will be a Web-based training program for employees to learn about NSPS.

A new publication on the Web site, to be issued in hard copy to Spiral 1.1 employees, explains details of the new system, which ultimately will affect more than 650,000 DoD civilian employees. “HR Elements for Managers, Supervisors and Employees: A Guide to NSPS,” gives employees an

overview of the critical elements they need to understand as they convert to NSPS, Frank said. It covers pay increases and bonuses, pay bands and job objectives, among other topics.

On the guide’s opening page, Mary E. Lacey, program executive officer for the NSPS, encourages employees to work with their supervisors to establish job objectives and discuss evaluation criteria and how to improve their on-the-job performance.

“NSPS is a system that is good for the department and it is good for you,” Lacey wrote. “It will strengthen our ability to accomplish our national security mission and provide opportunities to enhance your personal growth and development.”

Implementation of the new system represents “the beginning of a long journey for all of us, and we will learn from one another,” she wrote. For more information about the National Security Personnel System, go to www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps/.

Blue Roof program for damaged Katrina homes ends

By Dona Fair
Army News Service

BATON ROUGE, La.— Another chapter in what has become one of the worst natural disasters in U.S. history came to a close as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, along with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) closed its Blue Roof program for victims of the devastation caused by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

A team of more than 700

engineers and other volunteers from throughout 41 Army Corps of Engineers districts worldwide wrapped up a seven-month mission to provide temporary repairs to both residential and public building roofs damaged by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, according to Kim Thomas, head of the blue roof operations based in Baton Rouge.

More than 81,000 roofs in Louisiana and more than 152,000 buildings within an

82,000-square-mile area stretching from Texas to Alabama received temporary roofing following the two hurricanes that pounded more than 500 miles of the Gulf Coast region.

“Hurricane Katrina hit the coast on Aug. 29 and by Sept. 5 we had assessment teams flying over the region to determine the extent of the damage,” Thomas said. “On Sept. 6 we began to set up our ‘blue roof’ operations.”

Working under the FEMA

umbrella, Thomas and her crews set up disaster recovery centers at large discount stores and home improvement centers where they issued ‘right of entry’ forms for hurricane victims. The forms gave permission for contractors to place the blue tarps on roofs as an interim measure before actual repairs were made.

Thomas believes that recovery in this region will be slow, but she seems

See *Blue Roof* on page 11

Protect your children from accidental poisoning

According to the American Association of Poison Control Centers, more than 1 billion children each year are exposed to potentially poisonous medicines and household chemicals.

In an effort to put an end to tragic accidents, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) requires child-resistant packaging for many medicines and household chemicals. But this special packaging is “child-resistant,” not “child-proof.” For this reason, it is essential to keep potential poisons locked up and away from children.

The following information should not be used as a substitute for the medical care and advice of your pediatrician. There may be variations in treatment that your pediatrician

may recommend based on the individual facts and circumstances.

Children can get very sick if they

are poisoned. Children between 1 and 3 are at highest risk.

Young children may put anything in their mouths. This is part of learning. Many household products can be poisonous if swallowed, if in

contact with the skin or eyes, or if inhaled.

Some common examples include
Medicines: Aspirin, acetaminophen, tranquilizers, sleeping pills, iron pills.

Household products: Moth balls, furniture polish, drain cleaners, weed killers, insect or rat poisons, lye, paint thinners, dishwasher detergent, anti-freeze, windshield washer fluid, gasoline, kerosene, lamp oil.

Safety Rules

- Keep harmful products locked up and out of your child's sight and reach.
- Use safety latches or locks on drawers and cabinets where you keep dangerous items.



- Take extra care during stressful times.
- Call medicine by its correct name. You do not want to confuse the child by calling medicine candy.
- Always replace the safety caps immediately after use.

- Never leave alcohol within a child's reach.
- Seek help if your child swallows a substance that is not food. Call the Poison Help Line at 1-800-222-1222 or

your doctor. Don't make your child vomit.

- Read labels with care before using any product.
- Keep products in their original containers. Never put non-food products in food or drink containers.
- Teach children not to drink or eat anything unless it is given by an adult.
- Do not take medicine in front of small children. Children tend to copy adult behavior.
- Check your home often for old medications and get rid of them by flushing them down the toilet.
- Keep the following telephone numbers by your phone:

DOCTOR:

HOSPITAL:

POISON HELP LINE: 1-800-222-1222

- Get rid of substances used for old-fashioned treatments such as oil of wintergreen, boric acid, ammoniated mercury, oil of turpentine and camphorated oil.
- There is more of a danger of poisoning when you are away from home, especially at a grandparent's home.

(This article was written by the American Academy of Pediatrics. To view the complete article, go to <http://www.aap.org/family/poistipp.htm>.)

The Poison Prevention Week Council is sponsoring a poster contest for next year's National Poison Prevention Week. If you would like to submit a poster for this, go to the Web site at www.poisonprevention.org/index.htm for guidelines and more information. The contest is open to everyone and the deadline for entry is June 1.

Blue Roof

Continued from page 10

optimistic that the Corps' involvement has made an impact despite media reports of a slow and insufficient response from the federal government.

“When people come up to us and thank us for what we do, it makes this job really mean something,”

Thomas said. “We wear the Corps of Engineers shirts and can feel proud for the impact that we make on individual lives. We've gotten some bad press, but you can't see it from the faces and the responses we get from those we help. We're here to do a job, but not because we have to, but

because we love to do it.”

Brig. Gen. Robert Crear, who heads the Army Corps of Engineers Mississippi Valley Division in Vicksburg, Miss., said it was just one of many projects the Army Corps of Engineers was involved with in an attempt to help a four-state region get back to a sense of

normalcy.

“You have an unprecedented storm with unprecedented destruction, so we have what I call an unprecedented response,” explained Crear.

“We have people from 41 out of 45 districts involved and those four not involved are in Iraq and Afghanistan.”

Ethics Corner

What type of items can be purchased with appropriated funds and then be distributed at forums and/or conferences as promotional items or recruitment giveaways?

By **Margaret Simmons**
Office of Counsel

Generally, appropriated funds cannot be used to purchase gifts that are for personal use.

Huntsville Center employees attend various forums, conferences and even trade shows that are important to our customers and their programs.

Huntsville Center will even send an exhibit or have a booth highlighting our programs and/or our capabilities.

When we participate in these events, we like for the attendees to have something to take home

with them. Generally, the types of items that can be purchased include pens, pencils, buttons, magnets and items of nominal value. The items must have information that relates to the Corps' mission or services — such as a point of contact (POC) and phone number, or our Web site address. This would meet the fiscal requirement of furthering our mission.

Before you get your credit card holder to buy nifty items, you need to check with the Office of Counsel (OC) on what you are purchasing and what message you are including on the item or items intended to be distributed. Nominal value means a

couple of dollars. Many agencies have found themselves facing anti-deficiency act issues for purchasing baseball hats or even candy, since those items were not somehow related to an “authorized agency purpose.”

You need to get a written opinion from the Office of Counsel that supports your purchase and keep it with your credit card file for audit purposes.

Also, similar rules apply if you are attending a “recruiting” fair. Items can be taken to give to potential recruits, but the items must be of nominal value and contribute to information sharing — which requires a POC or Web address be

included on the item being distributed.

This is an extremely sensitive area so please be sure to coordinate with OC before buying all that neat stuff and handing it out at the Corps booth. Just because you have seen other “Corps districts” give out certain items do not assume they have gotten the required legal opinion that the item is approved.

Many folks are just not aware there are very particular rules that apply to promotional items and recruitment giveaways.

Be proactive — Consult Your Attorney (CYA) and enjoy your next conference!

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