



January 29, 2008

Some quotable quotes from Iraq

By John Connor
Gulf Region South District

Different folks collect different things during their tours in Iraq, from memories and stories to scarves and rugs.

At the public affairs shop of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Gulf Region South district, we collected some quotes. Here, in no particular order, is a sampling:

--"The kids wouldn't leave home, so we did," said John Biltoft in joking about how he and his wife Pat came to be a husband-wife team working for the Corps of Engineers in Iraq at GRS headquarters

--"The work we do now will stand for years, decades, and generations to come," said Brig. Gen. Jeffrey Dorko, commander of USACE's Gulf Region Division.

--"Jimmy Hoffa is on the T-Drive," said GRS Sgt. Maj. Timothy Freitag, commenting on the slew of material placed on the computer T-drive, some of which is elusive and some of which is downright unfindable.

--"Don't do math in public," said Col. Steve Hill, the GRS commander, dispensing sound advice, even for the mathematically gifted.

--"Think minimum security prison," said GRS Provincial Reconstruction Team Engineer Art Patterson in counseling a newcomer on how to deal with the confining nature of life on the base in Tallil in southern Iraq where GRS is headquartered.

--"All I know is that if you don't fish, you won't catch anything," said Bill Zett, GRS' internal review specialist and a regular at the Lake Wisconsin fishing hole at Tallil.

--"Iraq causes a searching in your soul," said Art Bennett, project manager for the Basrah Children's hospital. "There is something about a society that is struggling to stand



GRS' Bill Zett says "All I know is if you don't fish, you won't catch anything." (USACE photo by John Connor)

up in the face of life and death issues.”

--“The days can be very long, but the weeks go by very quickly,” said Brig. Gen. Michael Walsh, former GRD commander, in a comment that made no sense when I first heard it, but does now.

--“There is nothing we do that requires unsafe acts” said GRS Safety officer Ralph Youins.

--“Iraqi people are one of the most courteous, respectful, and hospitable people and I was honored and privileged to have the opportunity to work with them,” said Fitsum Kerebe, a GRS project and resident engineer who worked out of Kalsu.

--“Living the Dream,” said the USACE contingent at Camp Blackadder at Basrah, voicing their collective slogan.

--“Sometimes you just have to take a nap,” said Capt. Bill Delucchi, the GRS S-2.

Note: John Connor is a public affairs officer with the Gulf Region South district, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Iraq. For more information, contact him at 540-665-2656 or email requests to CEGRD.PAO@tac01.usace.army.mil. For more information on the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Iraq, visit www.grd.usace.army.mil.