



US Army Corps
of Engineers®
Far East District

FAST GATE EDITION

VOL.23, NO.4
WINTER 2014

District exposes
engineering to students

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**US Army Corps
of Engineers®
Far East District**

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On the cover



Doug Bliss, chief of Geotechnical and Environmental Engineering Branch, talks to Seoul American High School students about science of engineering materials during engineer day, Feb. 20. (Photo by Stephen Satkowski)



By Sgt. Maj. David Breitbach
FED Sergeant Major

It's hard to believe that spring is just right around the corner. Back in the United States, proof that spring is only weeks away, under the bright, warm, sun in Arizona and Florida, Major League Baseball spring training is in full swing.

Every team has high expectations and goals: Winning their respective divisions and competing for a World Series crown. Everyone on those teams has roles and responsibilities, from the general manager down to the locker room attendant. Each and every one is doing their best to help the team reach their goals.

Here in Korea, the Far East district will also begin a new season: A season of new construction springing from the ground. As

Sgt. Major's Corner

the weather heats up so will the pace of construction at U.S. Army Garrison Humphreys.

The Far East District team, like any team, is dependent on everyone on the roster to perform at a high level to reach our goals. We don't measure success in wins and losses. We measure success on quality, safety, and timely delivery to our customers.

For those of you who know me, you know that I am fanatical about three things; baseball, golf and construction. It's the construction that has financed the other two for many years. I am always fascinated about the really large construction projects that make headlines, and recently one in particular caught my attention.

In Los Angeles, a Guinness world record was set for the largest continuous placement of concrete. I have worked on a couple of really big projects but nothing as massive as what took place in Los Angeles.

The developers of the project in LA are building what will be the tallest building west of the Mississippi river: A 73 story skyscraper.

The foundation for this future structure required an excavation of a site the



size of a football field and 106 feet deep approximately 210,000 cubic yards of soil. That's an impressive site. So, what does that have to do with us?

Continued on the next page



US Army Corps of Engineers
Far East District



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Sgt. Major's Corner

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When the last of the ramp to the pit is removed and the wall stabilization completed approximately 410,000 cubic yards of soil will have been removed. That's nearly twice the amount of the job in Los Angeles. Now that is impressive!

To appreciate the magnitude of the first phase of this project one has to see the sheer size of the excavation site. When you look down into the site you see the walls of the site dwarf the digging machines. It's an extraordinary construction site.

Could the project break the new Guinness record for the largest continuous concrete placement? Setting the record took six concrete batch plants supporting 2,120 trucks delivering 21,200

(right) The excavation site of the Wilshire Grand Hotel in Los Angeles, a Guinness world record holder for the largest continuous placement of concrete. (Photo courtesy of The Turner Construction Company)

(below) U.S. and Republic of Korea officials broke ground on the U.S. Korea Command Operations Center July 18, 2013 at U.S. Army Garrison Humphreys. The operations center will be the first building of the U.S. Korean Command headquarters complex. (FED file photo)

cubic yards of concrete, a dozen concrete pump trucks, hundreds of workers and 26 straight hours; all without a single mishap or injury.

Clearly, the engineers developed a meticulous plan and all the moving pieces were well choreographed. Breaking the record would be a monumental feat.

The Far East District will be making its own history this year. By the end of April over 90 percent of the programmed construction for Humphreys will be

under way.

Soon the sound of pile drivers hammering thousands of piles deep into the earth will echo throughout the area, piles that will eventually bear the concrete and steel of more than 300 structures as they rise from the ground.

Success in our line of work is not the product of a few people but by everyone doing their part, doing the best they can do.



Building a strong foundation

By Stephen Satkowski
FED Public Affairs

A building is only as strong as its foundation. “Before you build on the surface you have to look below it,” said Tu Nguyen, chief of the Far East District’s geotechnical section.

District geotechnical engineers look beneath the earth’s surface and test the soil. These tests determine if the soil is strong and stiff enough to build upon or whether additional foundational support is required. Nguyen said they do this work to make sure the final product is safe.

“We mitigate risk. Without an adequate geotechnical program you introduce a lot of risk into a product,” Nguyen said. “Without knowing what’s out there you can over design or under design. Over designing will cost you more money, manpower and adds additional risk, under designing can mean structural failures.”

Geotechnical engineers are often tasked with the responsibility of recommending the proper foundation solution for a building. The strength of the soil is determined by something called a standard penetration test.

“We drill down and sample at certain depths to find out what’s there. We perform tests in the ground as well as run tests on samples we unearth. Certain soils behave a certain way,” said Nguyen. “You drive a pipe 12 inches into the ground. If it takes 30 blows of the hammer, as opposed to five, then it means you have better soil and a stronger foundation.”

Two drill rigs operated by two drill crews conduct

their subsurface investigations. Couple this with their materials testing laboratory – one of six district laboratories validated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers materials testing center in Vicksburg, Miss. – and it allows them to expertly characterize a site and recommend the proper foundation for a building. The soil profiles are used by design engineers to improve their design and construct a better project.

“Without the critical work of the geotechnical branch the district’s mission could not be done,” said Son Ha, design branch chief.

Without a proper design, said Ha, roads would fail prematurely and the buildings can actually sink into the ground, rendering them useless.



From left to right, Chang Ho-chung, Ku Chon-wan, and Yim Tok-nung of the exploration unit, geotechnical section, geotechnical and environmental engineering branch drill a borehole to test soil for the hardened aircraft shelters on Kunsan Air Base, Republic of Korea. (Photo by Pak Chung-su)

District presentation exposes engineering field to students

By Stephen Satkowski
FED Public Affairs

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Far East District participated in Engineer Day at Seoul American High School on U.S. Army Garrison Yongsan Feb. 20.

The Far East District presented 11 technical demonstrations, each delivered by subject matter experts, with a concentration on real-world engineering currently taking place on U.S. military installations in Korea.

Sophomore Sam Mitchell, an aspiring future engineer, took a keen interest in the event.

"It's a good way to get a basic knowledge of the different engineering jobs," said Mitchell. "I like building things. Building bridges and architecture interests me. I'm interested in having engineering as my major in college."

Mitchell was most interested in the 'sustainability in engineering

design' presentation by civil engineer Jennifer Yoon and architect Shim, Ka-young, part of the "green" efforts by the district.

"They (Yoon and Shim) were really friendly and gave a really good presentation and I'm very environmentally conscious," said Mitchell. "Engineering can be a bit overwhelming but they made it easy to understand and it was good to see how they are modernizing engineering and are making it greener."

Yoon and Shim's presentation concentrated on new ways engineers are designing buildings, making them more efficient and earth friendly.

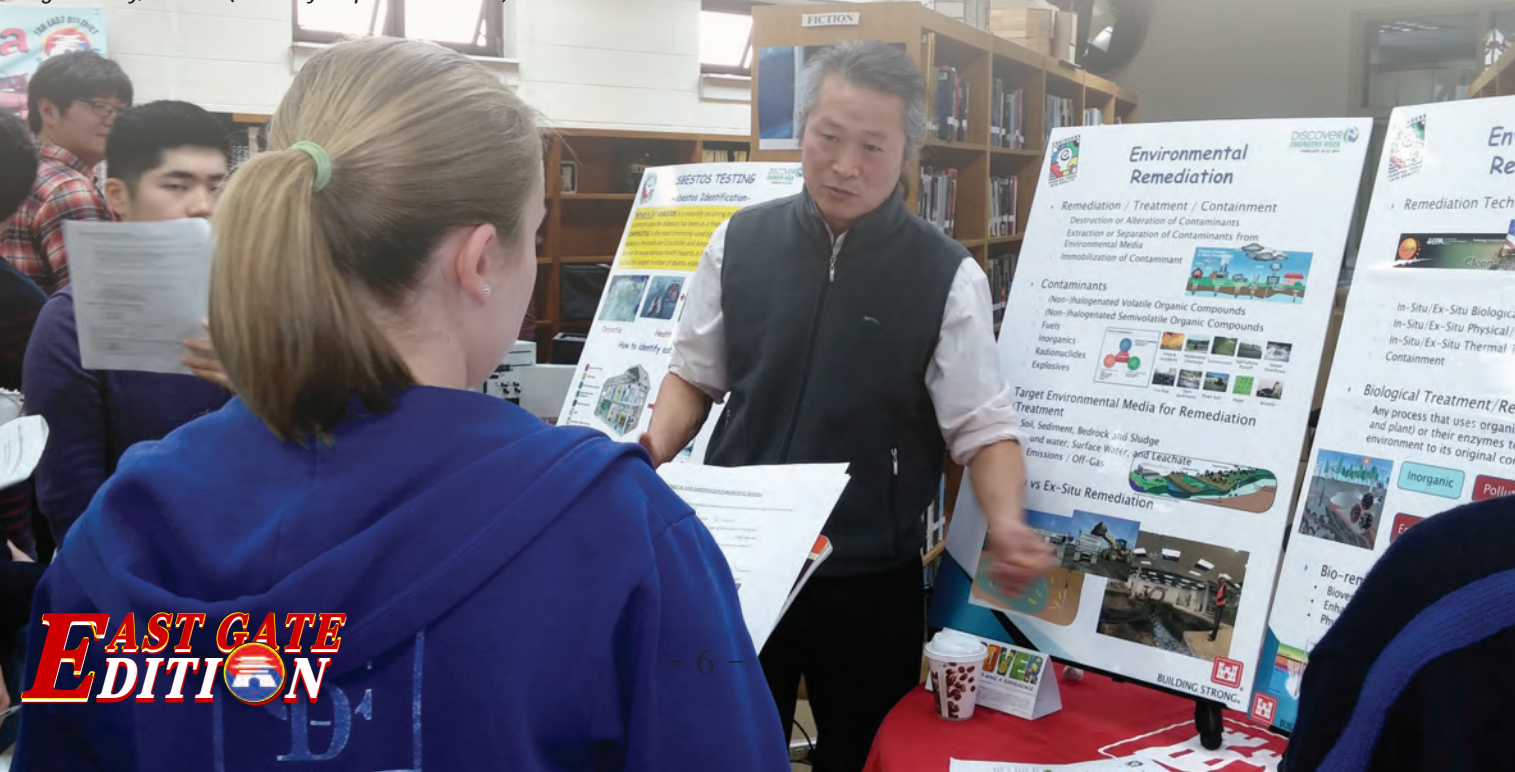
"By applying sustainable design methods into new and existing developments we increase the efficiency with which buildings and their sites use energy, water and materials and reduce building impacts on human health," said Yoon.

Irby Miller, superintendent of schools for the Korea district, said presentations like these expose students to what life is like as an engineer and was appreciative of the effort by the Far East District.

"I want to thank the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for doing such an outstanding job in promoting engineers day," said Miller. "This is a true hands on experience where the Far East District is rolling up their sleeves and being an active participant in the education of our students."

This presentation was part of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Department of Defense Schools Korea District education partnership agreement signed on March 7, 2013, at Seoul American High School. The partnership centers on support for the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics initiative.

Dr. Chon Song-u, Geologist, Environmental Section, talks to Seoul American High School students about environmental remediation during engineer day, Feb. 20. (Photo by Stephen Satkowski)



(above) Pak Song-hyun, Geotechnical and Environmental Engineering Branch, talks to Seoul American High School students about earthquakes on the Korean Peninsula during engineer day, Feb. 20.

(above right) Seoul American High School students make notes during engineer day, Feb. 20.

(right) Lt. Col. Julie D'Annunzio, Far East District deputy commander, answers questions from Seoul American High School students during engineer day, Feb. 20. (Photos by Stephen Satkowski)



F-16 Fighting Falcon training simulator opens at Kunsan Air Base



U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Far East District Chief of Construction Sam Adkins (far right) and leadership from the 8th Fighter Wing cut the ribbon opening the F-16 Fighting Falcon training simulator at Kunsan Air Base, Republic of Korea, Dec. 12. The training center provides realistic, cost-effective training scenarios according to Donny Davidson, the district's deputy chief of construction. This replaces a facility built in 1972 that was not large enough to support the four new simulators. The new facility is about 60 percent larger and provides capacities not available elsewhere on the peninsula. (Photo by Senior Airman Armando A. Schwier-Morales)

Claros triplets 'engineer' a family bond

By Stephen Satkowski
FED Public Affairs

The chances of being an identical triplet are more than a million to one. The odds those triplets would join the Army and become engineer officers are even more astronomical.

"When people tell me something can't be done I always tell them nothing is impossible. Our whole life story has been about beating the odds," said Capt. Joseph Claros, one of three identical brothers and an engineering officer at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Far East District Pyeongtaek Resident Office.

Capt. Joseph Claros, along with his brothers Maj. Donald Claros and Capt. Jack Claros were born in San Salvador, El Salvador, during the Salvadoran civil war. Their parents, searching for a better life, moved the family to the Los Angeles area and eventually to Spokane, Wash., where they all initially enlisted in the Washington Army National Guard in 1998.

"After a few years being enlisted we liked it and then it became a sense of repaying back this great nation of ours for allowing my parents to emigrate from El Salvador to provide a better life for us," said Joseph.

They attended Washington State University and were commissioned in 2002.

"The Claros brothers are extraordinary individuals. We were fortunate to have them in WSU's Reserve Officer Training Course program for almost four years," said Jim Zuba, the unit's former commander. "Those three made an unbelievable difference in both their leadership and everything they provided to their peers and our university."



Joseph (left), Donald and Jack Claros in 1986. (Photo provided by Capt. Joseph Carlos)

When it came time to choose a military specialty the engineering field appealed to all three.

"Donald and I liked the diversification of the [engineering] corps. You have the ability to do a multitude of tasking/missions as opposed to other branches. Jack has an architecture degree so it was a great fit for all of us," said Joseph.

After graduation they separated due to the needs of the Army and individual goals. Donald moved to Phoenix and joined the Arizona Army National Guard. Joseph was assigned to active duty at the 1st Cavalry Division in Fort Hood, Texas. Jack joined the Washington Army National Guard.

All three served in Iraq at various times between 2003 and 2005. Jack and Joseph have also been deployed to

Afghanistan, while Donald supported the Task Force Diamondback mission, providing tactical infrastructure support to U.S. Customs and Border protection security efforts stateside in Arizona. This experience has allowed them to maintain close ties and the ability for reach out to each other when needed over the years.

"Having the ability to tap one of my brothers on the shoulder, to gain insight into how to deal with specific situations or bounce an idea around, it is something special because you know with full certainty that your brothers will be candid and honest about the advice they provide you, based on their perspective and experience," said Jack.

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KORCOM Operations Center

Construction start: June 2013
Expected Completion Date: Late 2015

Scope of project: The Korea Command Operations Center will support the U.S. Korea Command and United Nations Command headquarters. Will support the Armistice monitoring mission, joint staff and various component commands with operational, administrative and support space.



Dental Clinic

Dental Clinic: Start: Jul 2012
Expected Completion: Late 2014

Scope of project: The Dental Clinic when completed will support over 40,000 beneficiaries. The clinic will have 79 dental chairs to support a variety of general and comprehensive dental surgeries, orthodontics and periodontics requirements. Construction is about 50 percent complete.



Vehicle Maintenance Facility 060

Construction start: Nov. 2012
Expected Completion Date: Early 2016

Scope of project: Tactical equipment maintenance facilities for company/battalion operations. Several of these facilities are completed and others in various stages of completion. Project 060 is about 12 percent complete.



Child Development Center

Construction start: Dec. 2012
Expected Completion: Mid 2014

Scope of project: The new Morale, Welfare and Recreation Child Development Center is about a third of the way complete. Recent work included exterior insulation and the standing seam metal roof.

ARMY

Army projects are numerous across the peninsula this year, mainly centered around the enduring hubs at U.S. Army Garrison Humphreys and U.S. Army Garrison Daegu. The majority of the facilities being built as part of the Korea Relocation Program have either been completed, are in the construction phase, or have had contracts awarded for construction to begin. At Humphreys, work at the U.S. Korea Command Operations Center is progressing, with the foundation almost completely excavated in preparation for the facility's construction. At the new Brian Allgood Army Community Hospital site, concrete work was being done on the second and third floors of the facility recently. Construction on the dental clinic, which is co-located near the hospital, is about halfway finished, with an expected project completion later this year. Work on the numerous vehicle maintenance facilities at Humphreys is progressing, with several complete and others in various stages of completion. Groundbreaking on the 2nd Infantry Division Headquarters is set for early April and the Far East District Headquarters in May.



Air Force projects on the peninsula are centered at Osan and Kunsan Air Bases. The Far East District and Ministry of National Defense – Defense Installations Agency awarded six projects at Kunsan Air Base worth more than \$57 million in late 2013. These projects include a 3,600-square-meter communication squadron facility; a 5,341-square-meter security forces facility, and a 1,349-square-meter munitions maintenance facility, among other projects. The district is also coordinating closely with the 8th Civil Engineering Squadron and the 8th Fighter Wing to improve the quality of life for airman with the renovation of three dormitories at Kunsan. Additional quality of life project at Kunsan and Osan Air Base, are \$33 million for the Osan hospital addition/alteration as well as the \$11.9 million new medical/dental clinic addition at Kunsan. In addition to this, a new elementary school project valued at \$33 million was awarded at the end of last fiscal year to replace the existing 30-year old elementary school at Osan.

AIR FORCE



U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Far East District



Project Update
Winter 2013/2014



MARINE CORPS

The Far East District and Ministry of National Defense – Defense Installations Agency finished the Yechon aircraft revetments replacement project on time and turned over the facility to the Marines in Dec. 2013. The project scope for this Yechon aircraft revetments replacement project is to remove and replace deteriorated metal bin on 44 revetments in the designated combat aircraft loading area. The airfield at a Republic of Korea air base in Yechon is a joint-use facility, as well as a point of delivery and departure for prepositioned supplies. The district and agency have been working on the Pohang aircraft revetments replacement project since December with the estimated construction completion date of Oct. 31, 2015. The district's Programs and Project Management Division staff is responsible for overseeing work with the Marine Corps on the peninsula.



The Far East District and Ministry of National Defense – Defense Installations Agency finished the Camp Mujuk 110-person Navy barracks project on time and turned over the facility in February. This barracks consists of a first-floor open bay living area, bathroom facilities, kitchen, day room and supporting mechanical and electrical rooms. The second floor will have a combination of private rooms with restroom facilities for officers and semi private rooms and open bay rooms with shared bathrooms for senior enlisted personnel. The 100 percent design documents for Fleet Activities Chinhae's consolidated communications facility were forwarded to the Defense Installations Agency in early January for contract awarding in April, with an estimated construction completion around Oct. 31. This projects is a two-story, 12,200-square foot facility that includes spaces for the computer and telecommunications staffs of three Navy commands.

NAVY

Korea Relocation Program

U.S. Army Garrison Humphreys

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"Life is full of complexities and though it can be difficult sometimes family will always be there to get you through anything. The bond of family should be valued even when there are differences of opinions."

- Capt. Jack Claros -



38

Percentage of completion for the entire program

By the Numbers



Original acreage

1210

655 buildings under construction or planned.

The number of buildings being demolished is

339

\$10.7

Billion total value

New total acreage

3,528

Los Angeles International Airport is 103 acres smaller

17.6

million cubic meters of engineered soil in place, raising the land by about 8 1/2 feet, providing protection from

a potential 100 year flood.

The original square footage of space at U.S. Army Garrison Humphreys was 4 million.

Once construction is complete, this will rise to million square feet.

29



Enough soil is in place to fill the 7,040 Olympic swimming pools.

"You have other peers to also run ideas by but nothing as strong as that of your brothers."

"We all have deployed with engineer units and have all had different experiences come up throughout our careers. I have mostly done survivability and mobility missions, horizontal construction and my other brothers have done other primary missions, but asking each other for help or exterior view point has helped out," said Donald. We have all been company commanders at different times and have provided input to one another."

Joseph transferred over to the logistics branch in 2013 is now able to do cross functional jobs in logistics and engineering. He says he values his experience as an engineering officer and said the time was special for all three brothers.



Jack (left), Joseph and Donald Claros; picture taken in 2003. (Photo provided by Capt. Joseph Carlos)

"We have all met Soldiers from each other's command time. It's good to hear them say great things about

your brother like, 'sir your brother, he is a great commander.' said Joseph. "It's great to see that we all do great things in our own way. Yet the corps is small when you hear stories like the one above."

All three brothers intend to retire from the Army saying their devotion to serve is something they strongly believe in. Something else they strongly believe in is keeping the binds close that tie each other to family.

"Life is full of complexities and though it can be difficult sometimes family will always be there to get you through anything," said Jack. "The bond of family should be valued even when there are differences of opinions. Most importantly never hold grudges when it comes to family, always learn to forgive."



Washington State University President Elson S. Floyd, Capt. Jack Claros, Capt. Joseph Claros, Capt. Donald Claros (Now Maj.), and sister Bella Claros. (Photo provided by Capt. Joseph Carlos)

A flight to the past:

District aviation unit remembered

By Stephen Satkowski
FED Public Affairs

The echo of aircraft flying through the air was a familiar sound for many at the Far East District for nearly two decades.

From 1969 to 1988 the aviation group supported the district by transporting people, parts and anything else a helicopter could carry to every district field office in the Republic of Korea. The section had two UH-1H Huey helicopters and a C-12 Huron aircraft based at K-16 Air Base and a team of four pilots, two mechanics, who also served as crew chiefs, and a senior noncommissioned officer.

Retired Army Lt. Col. Edward S. (Sid) Chambers, Jr. was a pilot for the aviation section from 1978 to 1980 and has fond memories of his time with the district.

"All of our pilots were certified to fly north of Seoul along the Demilitarized Zone. One of my more memorable missions was landing in the mountains near the DMZ to provide landing

instructions to a CH-47 Chinook helicopter," said Chambers. "The Chinook was sling loading a well-drilling rig since the location was not accessible by vehicle. This well-drilling rig was used to locate new tunnels that were being dug from North Korea under the DMZ into South Korea."

Chambers said most of his missions took him to Kunsan, Pusan and Taegu.

"When I arrived, it seemed that all flights followed the major highways headed south. By flying a straight line to Taegu, I calculated that we could save 30 minutes of flight time one way," said Chambers. "That straight line took us directly over a very large statue of Buddha which became a reporting point for us."

Spc. Bernadette Hagenow Lastowski was a crew chief during the same period and remembers one assignment that stood out from the rest.

Continued on the next page



(above) Retired Army Lt. Col. Edward S. (Sid) Chambers, Jr., pictured outside the district engineers aviation office in 1979.

(left) Retired Army Lt. Col. Edward S. (Sid) Chambers, Jr., pictured in the UH-1H Huey helicopter with fellow Soldiers and district engineer. (Photos provided by Retired Army Lt. Col. Edward S. (Sid) Chambers, Jr.)



“One very special mission was to Jeju Island off the south coast. We had to outfit our helicopters with auxiliary fuel tanks purchased specifically to be able to make that flight,” said Lastowski. “I was lucky enough to have been the crew chief on that mission. My pilots even flew up a volcano on the island above the crater top, it was incredible.”

Chambers said what made the district aviation section special was the camaraderie among the team.

“We had to help each other do jobs whereas the larger aviation units had full time assigned personnel. Everyone was willing to stay and work as long as needed to ensure we had the aircraft ready for the next day’s mission,” said Chambers. “There was a lot of pride in what we did and we had an outstanding aviation safety record. I do not recall a single

aircraft incident or mishap while I was there.”

Chambers said they usually had at least one and or two flight missions every day. His flight records indicate he flew more than 700 hours during his two years at the district.

“For an aviator, that is a lot of flight time in a non-combat arena,” he said.

The aviation section was deactivated in 1988 in a cost cutting measure. The district now relies on other aviation units for travel on the peninsula. Chambers said he was glad to be able to spend part of his career here before the aviation group went away.

“It was a special time in my career,” said Chambers. “Besides the flying, it was amazing getting to see the projects that FED (Far East District) was doing all over South Korea.”

Spc. Bernadette Hagenow Lastowski, crew chief for the district's aviation section in 1978-79, pictured here on her last day at the district compound in 1979. (Photo provided by Retired Army Lt. Col. Edward S. (Sid) Chambers, Jr.)

This winter in FED History

- **January** 1984: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers helicopter evacuated a sick Republic of Korea airman from Kunsan to Seoul.

- 2009: FED awarded the largest single contract in its history to SK Engineering and Construction Co. Ltd. for the new land development, new and existing utilities and infrastructure for U.S. Army Garrison Humphreys.

- **February** 1983: Daegu American School at Camp George opened.

- 2005: Enlisted dormitory and golf course at Osan Air Base opened.

- 2012: The new humidity-controlled warehouse opened at Camp Carroll.

- **March** 1969: Petroleum distribution pipeline was built jointly by the Republic of Korea and the United States.

- 2002: Land Partnership Plan signed.

- 2005: Humphreys Commissary opened.

- 2013: FED signed a science, technology, engineering and mathematics education partnership agreement with Department of Defense Dependent Schools Korea District.



Pfc. Melvin L. Brown Maintenance Facility at Camp Carroll opened, February 26, 2008. The facility is dedicated to an engineer who received the Medal of Honor posthumously for his actions in September 1950 against North Korean troops north of Daegu.



Bang Jeong Hwan Child Development Center opened at USAG Humphreys January 23, 2008. It is named after the founder of Korean Children's Day holiday.



By Sgt. Maj. David Breitbach
FED Sergeant Major

Sgt. Major's Corner

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마지막 흙이 구덩이로 옮겨지고 외벽이 안정화되면 약 410,000 입방야드의 흙이 제거된 공사가 됩니다. 이 수치는 로스앤젤레스 공사의 두 배가 되는 것입니다. 이것이 바로 인상적인 것입니다!

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상의 직원이 쉬지 않고 26시간을 사고없이 진행했다는 기록입니다.

이것은 당연히 엔지니어들의 치밀한 계획 아래 모든 것이 정확히 맞아 떨어졌기 때문일 것입니다. 기록을 깨는 것은 기념비적 개가 될 것입니다.

올해 극동공병단은 새로운 역사를 쓸 것입니다. 4월 말이 되면 계획한 험프리즈 공사 중 90%가 진행될 예정입니다.

머지않아 파일 드라이버 기계를 이용해 몇 천 개의 파일이 땅에 박히는 소리가 메아리처럼 울릴 것이며 이 파일은 콘크리트와 철을 더해 300개가 넘는 새로운 시설을 건축하는데 기반이 될 것입니다.

공병단이 말하는 성공이란 몇 명의 사람들이 일궈낸 것이 아니라 모두 함께 각자 주어진 역할에 최선을 다해 함께 이뤄내는 것입니다.



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