

NEWS

no. 146 • fall 2004

ANERA

AMERICAN NEAR EAST REFUGEE AID

Inside

- Scholarship Profile: Ibrahim from the Palestine Women's Union in Rafah, Gaza 2
- Milk for Preschoolers: Growing Another Year 3
- In memory of: Georgiana G. Stevens 3
- Belkis: Empowering Women in Jordan 4
- In Honor Of 5

Palestinians Build an Oasis

By Robyn Long

This summer the first community park in Bani Na'im opened. The park replaces the dusty, gaping hole of an old stone quarry, abandoned for 15 years, with a site for local recreational activities. Located in the Hebron district, a southern region of the West Bank well known for strong building stones, the new park demonstrates a unique approach to land reclamation of stone quarries which otherwise remain abandoned and harm the environment and people's health.

The park was built as part of ANERA's Village Services Program, which included significant land reclamation throughout the West Bank. The idea of building a park in place of an old quarry came after ANERA and the

"We wanted to focus on what could be done with depleted quarries as a way to address the environmental damage. There are over 180 old quarries in this area—so this is a pilot project in a way."

—Jamal Tullab, Director of the LRC

Palestinian Land Research Center (LRC) surveyed the environmental damage resulting from stone quarrying. "We wanted to focus on what could be done with depleted quarries as a way to address the environmental damage. There are over 180 old quarries in this area—so this is a pilot project in a way," explains Jamal Tullab, Director of the LRC.

Stone quarries, abandoned and operating alike, have an immense impact on the environment and health of surrounding communities. "Dust from the quarries is a major issue. When it rains, the dust runs into the soil downstream and often mixes with agricultural soil. This affects the growth of produce and those who eat it," states Mr. Tullab. The calcification of the dust provokes asthma and kidney stones in people of all ages. Other hazards are the

continued on page 2

Palestinians build oasis

continued from page 1

holes left from the quarries. “They are very dangerous,” he explains. “They immediately drop 50-60 meters deep on average. It is easy for children playing in the area to fall in. Animals grazing are also at risk.”

The new park has a pool, garden, playground, and petting zoo with local animals. A 350-cubic meter cistern built adjacent to the park recycles water for the pool as well as the cascading fountain that flows down one of the quarry’s steep walls. “The park is sustainable because all of the water flows through a water treatment system for reuse. This provides water for the irrigation system of the garden and trees,” describes Mohammed Abu Rajab, ANERA’s engineer overseeing the park’s construction.

The park is generating much excitement within the community. Each day Mahmoud, a twelve-year-old living nearby, came to the park site to help his father who was part of the construction team. “We’re excited because there isn’t anything to do here. When I was working I thought of how nice the swimming pool would be,” he says enthusiastically. Mr. Tullab expects schools to bring students to the park for educational trips to learn about the environment and geology.

The Bani Na’im Park, once a hazardous site, is now a safe and pleasant place for community recreation and learning. “No one else is doing anything about the fact that these old quarries are a danger to people,” states Mr. Tullab. He and others hope the park will serve as an example for future projects in land reclamation. ▶



SCHOLARSHIP PROFILE

Ibrahim from the Palestine Women’s Union in Rafah, Gaza

Ibrahim, a kindergarten student at the Palestine Women’s Union (PWU) center in Rafah refugee camp in Gaza, has a smile that is unforgettable. But his smiles are usually tentative. Ibrahim and his family have lived in not one, but two homes that were shelled by artillery fire. In his short life, he has seen far too much violence and destruction.

Ibrahim is one of many children attending PWU kindergartens who fear going outside to play and regularly have nightmares and stress-related health problems. It takes a special place and special teachers to provide five year-old children with the skills they need to start public education and at the same time cope with the adult-sized trauma they are facing. The PWU kindergartens do just that.

Over 90 children from the Rafah and Khan Younis refugee camps attend PWU kindergartens from 7:30 a.m. to noon, Saturday through Thursday. One third of those children receive ANERA scholarships. Through this program, children who come from the poorest families of Palestinian society are getting the assistance they need to overcome the future challenges they will face.

ANERA’s Scholarship Program helps cover the costs of tuition, books, school supplies and medical expenses for 210 students in the West Bank, Gaza, Lebanon and Jordan. For more information about how you can help a child in the Scholarship Program, contact Adrian Loucks, Director, Scholarship Program, at (202) 347-2558 or adrian@anera.org. ▶



Remember **ANERA** during your workplace giving campaigns this fall. **Our Combined Federal Campaign code is 0307**. ANERA also participates in several corporate **workplace giving** programs. Check with your company's human resources department to find out more!

Milk for Preschoolers: Growing Another Year

As school gets underway around the world, 10,000 preschoolers in Gaza will be able to face it with the energy to learn. This fall, ANERA's Milk for Preschoolers project is expanding to cover 100 schools in Gaza, up from 26 last year. The project provides nutritious milk and biscuits each school day to Gaza preschool children who are at risk of malnutrition.

Milk for Preschoolers was initiated by ANERA in February 2003 in response to a joint study conducted by Johns Hopkins University, Al Quds University, CARE,

\$11 a month feeds one child with a box of fortified milk and nutritious biscuits every school day.

and ANERA, with funding by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The initial study found a large increase in cases of anemia and acute and

— continued on page 5



Belkis: Empowering Women in Jordan

ANERA just began a new project to empower Jordanian women through local grassroots organizations. The program is named Belkis, after the ancient Queen of Sheba, who was a champion of women in all three monotheistic faiths. Belkis will invigorate and transform the role of small and medium-sized women's community-based organizations in Jordan, enabling

Belkis will invigorate and transform the role of small and medium-sized women's community-based organizations in Jordan.

them to participate effectively in the process of women's empowerment, political dialogue, and democratic reform.

This project is funded by the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI), a U.S. Government initiative to support economic, political, and educational reform efforts in the Middle East and to expand opportunities for all people of the

— continued on page 5

IN MEMORY OF: **Georgiana G. Stevens**

We were deeply saddened by the death of Georgiana G. Stevens on April 25, 2004, just six months before her 100th birthday. "Georgiana", as she was affectionately known, was a friend and wonderful benefactor of ANERA for over twenty years. She was recognized at ANERA's 1998 Annual Dinner as our first honoree. Recently, Georgiana helped launch ANERA's endowment fund to secure the future of our work, and over the years her generosity made much of ANERA's work possible.

A graduate of the University of California at Berkeley, she served as a research analyst in the office of Strategic Services during World War II. Subsequently, she became a journalist and writer on Middle East affairs. She worked as a correspondent for the Economist and the Atlantic Monthly, and wrote four books on the Middle East.

Her philanthropy was widely known, both in the San Francisco area where she lived and among venerable American institutions supporting education and development in the Middle East.

She will be missed by many at ANERA who enjoyed her friendship over the years.



Belkis

continued from page 4

region, especially women and youth. The initiative strives to link Arab, U.S., and global private sector businesses, nongovernmental organizations, civil society elements, and governments together in developing innovative policies and programs that support reform in the region.

Over the coming year, Belkis will work to achieve its objectives in three ways:

- ▷ capacity building for women's community-based organizations
- ▷ training in issues relevant to women's empowerment
- ▷ small grants for social service and productivity projects

This project will be implemented in partnership with the General Union of Voluntary Societies (GUVS). Established in 1959, GUVS serves as an umbrella organization for charities in Jordan. An estimated 30 women's organizations from all over Jordan will participate in the Belkis training and capacity building workshops. ▀

Milk for preschoolers

continued from page 4

chronic malnutrition among Palestinian children age five and under, particularly in Gaza.

ANERA purchases boxed milk from Al Safa Dairy in Nablus, then transports and distributes it to selected Gaza preschools. ANERA currently is working with the dairy to fortify the milk. Sinokrot, a local Palestinian baker, is making a fortified biscuit to replace those previously purchased in Turkey. Together the two products will provide 50% of the vitamins and minerals these young children need daily. And, by using local companies, the Milk for Preschoolers program also better serves the Palestinian economy.

The director of Um Al Hanoon Preschool, Mrs. Muna Subu, describes how the milk and biscuit snack has lifted childrens' spirits. They ask throughout their classes each morning, "Is it time? Can we have the milk boxes yet?!" If you think Mrs. Subu is exaggerating the children's excitement, you only need to see them patiently wait for their favorite morning event. For many, the 'milk break' is the only meal they have in the morning. ▀

IN HONOR OF

Ann Indseth Torrey
Dr. Alfred Lillienthal
Frances Stickles
Anna Morelock
Mrs. Virginia Whitney Dorman
Mr. Yousef Khoury
Ms. Carole Sa'd
Ms. Barbara W. Hallowell
Dr. Nabih Amin Faris
George & Isabelle Corey
Corliss Cotton
Ms. Kathryn Panula
Mr. & Mrs. Simon Estfan
Seeham Badaro Omran
Ms. Victoria Lauzar
Mrs. Harley Stevens
Mr. Murray Gart
Mr. William R. Dade
Hana Barhoush & Marwan Dalloul
Ms. Helen Garrison
Mr. John Davis
Mr. Cyril Bindah
Mr. David Fader
Mrs. Ann Niewold
Amb. Bassam Kubba
Ms. Judy Jandron
Dot Batson
Senator James Abourezk
Mrs. Mary Penrose Copeland
Rev. Adrien Bernier
Robert E. Wallace
Termotto Family
Dr. Hafez Sami
Edward Said
Patriarch Sabba
Mr. & Mrs. Margaret S. and Lincoln Armstrong
Mr. Kyle S. Wilson

ANERA's Monthly Peace Plan

Help people in need:

- ▷ have access to education, employment and health care.
- ▷ increase their prospects for a better future.

Help ANERA:

- ▷ reduce administrative costs.
- ▷ plan for future projects.

Help yourself:

- ▷ by giving incrementally.
- ▷ by making the world a better place for all of us.

Use the coupon or visit our website to start helping today!

Because of the increased cost of processing these transactions, we ask that all monthly transactions total \$5.00 or more. ▶

Yes, I want to join ANERA's Peace Plan

Here is my **monthly** gift of:

\$100 \$50 \$25 \$10 Other _____

I authorize the transfer of the amount above from my account each month. A record of each contribution will appear on my statement and serve as my receipt. I understand that I may stop my contribution at any time by contacting ANERA at 1522 K St., NW Suite 202, Washington, DC 20005-1270, (202) 347-2558, or my bank.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

- I have enclosed a check for my first monthly contribution, made payable to ANERA.
- I want these donations to be charged to my credit card. (MC or Visa only)

My account no. is: _____ Exp. Date: _____

ANERA

AMERICAN NEAR EAST REFUGEE AID

The ANERA Newsletter is published quarterly by American Near East Refugee Aid (ANERA), a non-profit agency established in 1968 and dedicated to reducing poverty and relieving suffering in the Middle East.

Material in this newsletter may be reproduced without prior permission, provided credit is given and a copy of the publication in which the item is used is sent to ANERA. Subscriptions are free of charge. Any inquiries should be sent to the Editor at the address below.

ANERA Officers 2001-2002

Les Janka, Chair
Jean C. Newsom, Vice Chair
Peter Gubser, President
Philip Davies, Vice President
Nina Dodge, Vice President
Jane W. Schweiker, Treasurer
Cyril G. Bindah, Assistant Treasurer
Taichi Yamamoto, Secretary of the Corporation

Editor: Adrian Loucks

ANERA does exchange our mailing list with similar humanitarian organizations. We never rent or sell our list. If you wish not to have your name exchanged, please let us know in writing.
ISSN 1966-3584

ANERA

1522 K Street, NW, Suite 202
Washington, DC 20005-1270
Tel: (202) 347-2558 • Fax: (202) 682-1637
anera@anera.org • www.anera.org

ANERA

AMERICAN NEAR EAST REFUGEE AID

1522 K Street NW, Suite 202
Washington, DC 20005-1270

Palestinians Build an Oasis

Nonprofit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Permit No. 8530
Washington, D.C.