

Nov 5

I am again preparing a journal regarding the trip to Afghanistan Fary and I are presently on. You are on the e-mail notification list but if you would like can be taken off by letting me know by sending an e-mail to me at StephenRBrtown@att.net note- this is different than replying to the e-mail notification.

It is now Nov 5 and Fary and I are in Kabul. It takes four days to get here and that all went well traveling through London and Dubai. Our first order of business was to purchase some beer to take to Jalalabad. We found some at a U S military facility that is the best guarded beer anywhere in the world. After going through several checkpoints I am happy to report our mission was a success.

We stayed overnight at the office and guest house of IF Hope a US based NGO. The weather is pleasant during the day but it is cold at night and the electricity goes off which means no heat during the night or hot water in the morning at least in the part of the facility where our rooms are located. But it is quite pleasant.

Last night we had dinner with Tom Little and his family—an outside barbeque at their daughter's home. Tom and his wife have lived in Afghanistan continually for the last 28 years, witnessing the Russians coming in and taking over, rule under the Taliban and followed by what I think of as the American Liberation of the country. Through his organization-AIM/NOOR he has established several eye clinics where all types of eye care is provided by ophthalmologists he has arranged the training for. As a result of the efforts of Tom and his wife Libby, sight has been restored to thousands of people in Afghanistan and many thousands more have improved vision through glasses they have provided.

Through Rotary new lens grinding machines are being donated to his organization which will increase the capacity to provide more eye glasses and improve their quality as well. Also Fary and I are exploring the possibility for Tom to expand his facilities to Jalalabad. If that can be done, this will bring eye care/surgery services to a population of about 5,000,000 persons who presently have no good quality eye care available except for those fortunate enough to have the resources to go Pakistan or Kabul for the services.

To accomplish this, funds need to be located to pay for an out of area ophthalmologist for about two years (about \$18,000 per year) while a local Jalalabad physician can be trained to take over the facility. I believe Tom's organization may be in a position to cover most of the rest of the costs. Not sure where this is going, but it is worth exploring.

We are now off to a meeting at the US Embassy to meet with a person who can advise regarding potential funds to help with some urban planning issues in Jalalabad whereby the City of San Diego can provide some technical assistance.

Nov 7 4:30 AM

Things are incredibly busy and we are making good progress. Because of the EIDS holiday our internet labs at the main campus and medical school are shut down. Since my last journal entry we have had the following meetings:

- Eric Richardson at US Embassy regarding USAID funding for Jalalabad urban planning
- Jim at IF Hope regarding setting up a special grove of trees with related amenities in memory of Ann Willies deceased husband Wayne
- Meeting with Sweden Assistance Committee regarding providing for female teachers at our Rotary School
- Meeting with Director of Nangarhar University Medical School regarding five topics
- Meeting with Chancellor of Nangarhar University regarding numerous topics
- Meeting with USAID/DAI representative regarding alternative livelihoods program for Nangarhar Province.

I will address these topics in order.

Our meeting with Eric Richardson was extremely productive. We updated Eric on the urban planning activities since our last meeting which included the meetings I had (Fary at the second one) with John Bormet and Melissa Speed of ICMA in Washington D.C., Chuck DuVivier's urban planning analysis provided for City of Jalalabad (copy of which I had previously provided to Eric), meeting with Elmer Heap of City of San Diego Environmental Services Department. We spelled out the reasons why we have identified solid waste management as the number one priority for urban planning issues as follows:

- As noted in Chuck's report, Jalalabad municipal leaders identified this as their number one priority--subsequent to Mayor Arsalai's visit to San Diego, he decided he want to see if there was a way to clean up his city and I believe has formed a merchant's association to assist in this goal.
- Solid waste management is an issue that can invoke widespread community support at all levels, residential, business, etc.
- There is a successful program already underway in Kabul dealing with solid waste and the CityLinks program has a history of dealing with solid waste issues in developing countries.
- The City of San Diego's Environmental Services Department (ESD) has been providing advice and lending expertise to cities in developing countries regarding solid waste management for the last 20 years, starting with the bordering cities in Mexico but also in the Marshall Islands, Saudi Arabia and recently has just finished a major project in Hyderabad, India. Fary and I met with Elmer Heap head of ESD who indicated enthusiasm to provide technical assistance to a similar effort in Jalalabad.
- There is an Afghan Civil Engineer educated at SDSU willing to spend several months time (if salary can be provided) to return to his home city of Jalalabad to assist.

He said that he (Eric) has been with USAID for many years and rarely gets excited about anything any more but he is very excited about proceeding along the lines we are suggesting. I pointed out the strength of expertise we have in the San Diego~Jalalabad Urban Planning sub-committee which could be the facilitating partner in going forward in developing a plan. He liked that idea as well as having sister Cities involvement from Washington D. C. and Rotary involvement. Eric's reaction was we need to meet with the USAID Mission Director at the Embassy as soon as possible.

I then inquired if that would be the appropriate person to talk to about San Diego State's anticipated involvement with Nangarhar University regarding funding for certain matters like assistance with teacher training. Eric responded most definitely. He will attempt to set up a meeting in Kabul on Nov 17 or before. We definitely want to meet with this person on both topics. Eric cautioned that Condoleezza

Rice had recently come to the Embassy and rearranged about \$600,000,000 in their priorities putting that money towards hard infrastructure like roads and security so he was not certain of the implications that may have on what we are proposing. He concluded if the mission Director likes what we are proposing he can find the funds.

We then hit the road to Jalalabad. Because the main road through the mountains is shut down for construction we went through an old road that has been carved out of the mountains but that is all it is—something carved out made up of boulders and dust. Three hours later we hit a newly paved road where unfortunately everyone drives like a maniac. So it was a combination of three hours of hell followed by one hour of terror and then as the cloud of dust and smog was approaching we knew we were coming to our Afghan paradise of Jalalabad.

We dropped our stuff at the Abdul Haq Foundation where we are staying and went to IF Hope's facility to use the internet. The road there is under construction so it is about 45 minutes of hell to get there. (My electricity just went off but I now know to always have my headlamp within reach.) At IF Hope we met with the two Jims (not to be confused with James who is coming later). They have their hands full with a large contract under the alternative livelihoods program. That is not about gay lifestyles but is about finding new ways for farmers to support themselves who have voluntarily reduced poppy production. One problem is that the many farmers were getting a total of \$200,000,000 and this US program only provides about \$20,000,000 in quick fix cash support payments but does provide funding to develop different crops which over time will provide a sustainable income. The two Jims will help us design the special grove and amenities in memory of Anne Willie's husband and will be able to cost out a proposal which we can use to submit a grant application to The Rotary Foundation.

The next morning we met with Mr. Haroon of the Swedish Assistance Committee. His English was relatively good but it took over two hours to figure out what the SAC could do to assist us in getting more female teachers at our school. Much of the problem related to the fact that SAC's primary focus is to provide in service training to females presently teaching and have them return to their schools where they are employed. The SAC program has two components—one month training re pedagogy and two months training for subject matters. The conclusions reached were as follows:

- Adding female teachers will increase female student enrollment.
- They should be able to recruit females not presently teaching but who have the basic qualification—i.e. twelve years of education—who could go through their program and thus be qualified to teach at our school.
- The cost of each month of training in their program is about \$120 or \$180 if transportation is to be provided.
- It is possible for these teachers to not be officially registered with the government and teach at our school if registering with the government proves to be a problem as it sometimes is.
- If a teacher is unregistered then it costs about \$60 per month to support the teacher.
- We should have follow up meetings with three persons or groups of persons:
 - The Nangarhar Director of Education –Gardiwal and Deputy Director Golpacha and Administrative Director Mohammad Abraham
 - SAC's Director in Kabul Mr. Jasper 079 003014 re administrative and financial issues if we wish to contract with SAC to provide the above services
 - Mr. Abdul Zaire 079 316378 in Kabul who is in charge of the Eastern Region including Jalalabad to obtain his support to use SAC's two local consultants to find the female teachers

From there we went to Nangarhar Medical School to see if we could use the internet lab we recently constructed and set up an appointment with Dr. Shinwary, the Director of the medical school. We were met at the door by Dr. Khalil who had traveled to San Diego with the GSE team. Dr. Shinwary was available to meet with us with one of the Vice Chancellors at the lab as though this had all been pre-arranged.

He first thanked us for providing the computer lab and advised that the students are using it day and night. He advised that the faculty and students are in desperate need of computer/internet training and inquired if we could be of assistance. We will explore possible resources in including Mayor Arsalai's son who is studying something related to computers at a university in Peshawar, Pakistan or perhaps have someone for the US come over.

We then advised of the two scholarships University of California is providing for an internet based class for learning English in the medical profession. That program will ramp up in January and will be available for students or faculty. If successful, funding may be sought to provide a larger number of scholarships on an ongoing basis. Dr. Khalil will be the point of contact for this.

We then passed on Tom Little's inquiry regarding if the offer remained open to use the facilities of NU Medical hospital for AIM/NOOR to set up an eye clinic and surgery unit in Nangarhar Province. Dr. Shinwary advised us that as far as he was concerned, this is highly desirable but must be cleared with the NU Chancellor, the Afghan Ministry of Public Health and the Afghan Ministry of Higher Education. We will report back on this to Tom and bring this up with our meetings with the Chancellor and our meeting with Dr. Rabbini –Special Advisor to the Ministry of Public Health. If we get a meeting with someone in the MOHE we will bring this up there as well.

We then turned the discussion to our upcoming meeting with Dr. Rabbini where we will talk further about developing a program to bring doctors from the US to Nangarhar Province to provide continuing education to physicians working in the province. I mentioned that I had asked Dr. Rabbini how such a program may fit into the NU Medical School faculty and students and that Dr. Rabbini advised that although the School reports to a different Ministry he thought that something could be worked out since the Ministries do work together on some things. Dr. Shinwary bristled a bit and we quickly learned there is substantial tension between the two Ministries relating to education in the medical field. But in the final analysis if a lecture series is to be provided it could be well publicized and made open to public sector existing practitioners, NU Medical School faculty (all of who are also existing practitioners in private practice) and NU medical students.

We then went to the internet facility but it as not turned on because the technician responsible was away for EIDS. We were assured we would have open access to it during our stay. It is only a few minutes from where we are staying and will be much more convenient if it is up and running when we want to use it.

Finally we inquired about the 75 boxes of medical books we have shipped over but they have not arrived at the medical school. When we go to Relief International today we will inquire about this. (Hooray—the electricity just came back.)

From there we grabbed a bite to eat at Abdul Haq Foundation and then went to Nangarhar University to meet with the Chancellor. I am out of time to provide the details which I will do later but suffice it to say that he is very interested in submitting a proposal to World Bank regarding a partnership proposal

between SDSU and NU to build capacity for their English as a Second Language Department. The demand for ESL is so strong by the students that it is creating problems for the university. They also are in desperate need for Technology training. These are the two primary components of the protocol agreement entered into between SDSU and NU by the Chancellor's predecessor. He will try to arrange a meeting with someone in the Ministry of Higher Education in Kabul to meet with Fary and me and himself for the purpose of pursuing having the MOHE propose that the SDSU/ NU partnership receive World Bank funding pursuant to their RFP.

Out of time—to be continued.

Nov 8 6:00 AM

No electricity but life is good. More on the meeting with the Chancellor. NU is working on a strategic plan (SP) but they have no expertise regarding how to develop one. It will be necessary to have a SP to effectively compete for the WB Block Grant funds. The Chancellor believes that competition is not necessary for the WB partnership funding. No other organization has expressed an interest in partnering with NU for the Partnership funding. He did note that WB has encouraged partnering with regional universities such as ones in India. I pointed out that SDSU does have existing relationships with at least two universities in India and if it made sense a proposal could include a university in India. Perhaps Bonnie can provide me some more info on those relationships-- Names of universities, programs /disciplines involved and contact info. We should get a good feel if it is necessary to go down that path after a meeting with the MOHE office if we do get such a meeting.

I presented the letter from SDSU President Weber to the Chancellor. He was especially pleased with the invitation to visit San Diego and his preliminary reaction was to have the trip take place in the second half of January 2006. He may wish to include his wife who resides in Maryland. He mentioned he may wish to talk to Duke University about getting assistance from their Public Health program. I mentioned that SDSU has a strong Public Health (PH) program and we already received input from representatives of that program that there is interest to become involved in public health initiatives in Nangarhar Province. (Those discussions took place with representatives who were present when Fary and I provided feedback to representatives of the Hansen Foundation and SDSU PH representatives were there to talk about their program, I believe in Nigeria.) The Chancellor's immediate reaction was that it would be desirable to have as many relationships with one university as possible to he would be interested in learning more about SDSU's PH program and how a partnership could be developed in that area as well.

We next provided the Chancellor a copy of the Concept Paper SDSU has developed to lay out the general parameters of the partnership. He was pleased with what was in the document.

Then we showed the Chancellor the plans for the proposed Center for International Learning and three bedroom Guest House. We advised that we thought we could line up private funding for this if the WB funding is forthcoming to support a partnership between SDSU and NU as outlined above. He is very interested in this and advised that where should be sufficient land near the computer lab we previously established to site those structure there. That way we can link up both buildings to the computer lab. He advised that NU would cover the operating costs associated with these structures.

We then mentioned that the operating costs for running the computer center run out this December 31. He was not aware of the \$450 per month connection fee. He was uncertain how that could be covered

but we agreed if we have a meeting with the MOHE funding should be requested. Apparently they can submit a budget that starts around March and funds can be included in that budget but he was not sure how to cover the gap. He pointed out that the MOHE should be receptive to requests from him since they were the ones who asked him to leave his life in comfort in the states to be the NU Chancellor.

We also talked about bringing the Internet to the auditorium and that SDSU President Weber has provided funds for that. We described how the internet can then be used in a large classroom environment and other Distance Learning tools such as DVD's and CDs can provide for group presentations. We advised that we have brought with us a laptop donated by SDSU, and external DVD player and a powerful projector for this purpose. A large screen will need to be installed and we are waiting for Janet MacDonald's company to come from Kabul to set up the link. Not sure if that will be done while we are here.

We also talked about SDSU's interest to help build capacity in NU's College of Education and was in the process of analyzing USAID's RFPs and unsolicited funding opportunities in this regard. The Chancellor advised that teacher training is his number one priority and no other institution has offered any assistance to NU in this regard.

We then mentioned Tom Little's request to set up the eye care and surgery center at the NU's hospital and that Dr, Shinwary had approved the same but other approvals were necessary including the Chancellors. He advised he fully supported the proposal. He also mentioned he has been in touch with a highly qualified ophthalmologist from Peshawar, Pakistan (Dr. Nasrullah Stanekzai who will be relocating in Jalalabad and that person may be well suited to run the clinic. I had explained the need to have a well qualified person in place before AIM/NOOR could consider setting up the clinic in Jalalabad.) We will follow up with Tom Little regarding this.

We mentioned that an Afghan in San Diego may be able to arrange for a land donation for a women's dorm at NU but the Chancellor confirmed our guess that NU has plenty of land. They need funds for construction and operations. The requests he is pursuing for WB funding at the moment are to build an additional auditorium and a library.

We also provided the Chancellor a cashier's check for \$2,000 which was given to me by the President of the Afghan Physicians Association of America. The funds are to be used to help three families who lost their homes in the recent earthquake. The Chancellor's office had some major cracks caused by the earthquake. GSE team member Hamid Kadwal was present for the entire meeting.

The meeting lasted close to three hours. The Chancellor advised that he is available to us any time we are here. We plan to return tomorrow afternoon to use the computer lab and meet with GSE team members Safi and Hamid. We then went to IF Hope to upload and down load e-mails. There system had a power surge in the middle of things so we were only partially able to accomplish what we desired.

Driving back to AHF I received a call from a Mr. Said who advised he wanted to meet with us. He joined us after dinner. Mr. Said is an Afghan American based in Los Angeles. He presently works for DAI which has a hundred million contract from USAID to provide support for the alternative livelihoods program in Nangarhar Province. He was very familiar with the various things we are involved in. He is highly educated and seems to know everything that is going on. He advises that he is the only DAI employee in Nangarhar Province allowed to leave their compound and that is because he is Afghan. They are requesting that he implement some programs in some of the hot spots here but he is

uncertain if he can do that because of security reasons. He suggested that we come over and meet some of the DAI folks on Friday which is the one day off in Afghanistan. We hope to do that. It was a very friendly and informative meeting with no apparent purpose except for being social. Mr. Said had been a close friend of Abdul Haq and his family having gone to school with Abdul Haq going back to grade school.

The next morning-Nov 7, we went to the Rotary School arriving around 7:45 as the students were coming in. Our plan was to spend the entire morning there until after the students left. Our visit was intentionally unannounced since we wanted to see how things are under normal circumstances. We knew attendance would be on the light side since families are still returning following the EIDS holiday. We also know we needed to be prepared for some probably disappointments. It proved to be a very productive day but many challenges—most of which were anticipated—were apparent.

One objective was to get demographic info regarding the student body. We wanted to get the official figures, the actual figures and do head counts for what we could personally observe. The principal advised that total official enrollment is 2,180 but some of those students do not attend because of shortages of teachers. The actual enrollment is 1,682 with 615 girls and 1067 boys. The grade breakdowns are as follows:

Girls

Grade 1	163
Grade 2	134
Grade 3	50 +75 (there used to be two separate classes but due to teacher shortages they have been combined)
Grade 4	105
Grade 5	50
Grade 6	35

Boys

Grade 1	A 100 B 95 C 90
Grade 2	A 80 B 71 C 80
Grade 3	A 113 B 122
Grade 4	A 76 B 122
Grade 5	69
Grade 6	65
Grade 7	80
Grade 8	50

Our own head count was only completed for the girls as follows:

Grade 1	86
Grade 2	59
Grade 3	52
Grade 4	44
Grade 5	15
Grade 6	9

The teachers told us that the typical girl's attendance was as follows:

Grade 1	140?
Grade 2	130?
Grade 3	not known-no teacher present
Grade 4	80
Grade 5	40
Grade 6	25

The school has only 16 teachers but the above configurations show 20 classrooms with students. We did not have time take inventory of the boys' classrooms.

While we were at the school representatives from Relief International's Schools-on-Line program (Eng. Naseer Ahmud "Habib" on site educator nasser_ns3@yahoo.com 070 621579 and Zai Mohammad Monitor of GCEP-project Zaimohammad@hotmail.com 079 377367) showed up as did representative of AHF to work on setting up the computer lab. After much commotion it was decided to set it up in the library. It is necessary to seal the windows with boards so that the computers are not visible from the outside. That work will be done tomorrow as will the laying of carpet in the room. It is not clear if electrical work needs to be done. The plan is for all work but electrical to be complete today with the computers put in place today as well. We noted that there were only eight computers and monitors when ten had been ordered and delivered to the AHF guest House. Apparently Zamarud Shah had brought this discrepancy to Mohammad Ishaq but this is the first we have learned of it. It seems that the two computers may have disappeared while at the guest house. We will discuss this with Ishaq. For now the school will have its hands full with the eight computers it has.

There is also substantial science laboratory equipment that has been delivered and carpenters were present assembling the same. It is probably that these tables will be set up in the space originally identified for the medical clinic. There will still be room for the clinic but it is clear that no medical clinic has ever functioned at the school. We will discuss this with representative of the Ministry of Public health when we meet with them tomorrow.

We also surveyed the school grounds. It does not appear that the work contemplated for the soccer field and volley ball courts had ever been undertaken. We need to talk to Ishaq about that. Further the wall enclosing what we thought would be used as a cricket field had partially collapsed as a result of the recent earthquake. It is essentially a mud wall and would not be difficult to repair. There are also substantial cracks in the bleacher we have built in this enclosed area but they are still functional.

We found that all of the sports equipment we had purchased had not been utilized—it was still in its original wrappings. We were not given a satisfactory explanation. After we left the school, Fary remembered that we had not seen any of the 10 bicycles purchased for the faculty. We need to investigate where they were. That should be interesting.

When we were in the girls sixth grade classroom we were advised that none of the girls would be able to attend seventh grade since there was no female teacher for grade seven. We asked how many of the girls would like to attend grade seven if a female teacher would be present and all girls raised their hands. I have a picture of this.

We met with the principal and requested a meeting with all faculty and staff following the end of classes this Saturday. We want to talk to them about the two Sister Schools relationships we are establishing—with Doyle elementary for the primary grade students and with Preuss Middle School for the Middle school students. We also want to hear their concerns and find constructive ways to assist if possible. They do not report to us and it is not clear if we will have any influence with the Nangarhar Director of Education to address their concerns and our concerns. Clearly the quality of teaching is very low. We interviewed all of the teachers teaching girls and with one exception the highest level of educating was grade twelve and most had only received one or two months of teacher training.

After leaving the school we went to AHF for lunch and then visited the office of Relief International (RI) to talk about the School-on-Line Program. The person who runs the program was on vacation in the states so we met with the two RI representatives who we had met earlier in the day at our school. They had only been hired as of Nov. 1 and were not very familiar with the program. In fact neither had seen the narrative description of the proposal so I left my copy with them.

This program has many challenges and is not well funded but it still has good potential if administered well by dedicated individuals. The intention is to set up a V-SAT system at the NU College of Education and provide a wireless link to our Rotary School. I do not think a technical study has been undertaken to determine feasibility for the 14 kilometer link—is there line of sight? Perhaps a tower could be set up between our school and the college of ed to have a hub at both places. We now found out there is no transportation for students in the SOL grant so if the internet connection is not hot at our school it may be difficult to have students from our school participate in the program. Also, the NU Chancellor had severe reservations about providing the main V-SAT system at the School of Ed. particularly if there would be substantial outside use. The SOL program contemplates using the center about 7 hours a day for their own program leaving very little usage time for the School of Ed. Not sure how this will sort out.

Once the V-SAT is established, then they must train teachers at the participating schools. Fary and I have a recommendation as to who that teacher should be for our Rotary school. A young man who teaches in the morning and attends NU's college of Ed in the afternoons. But he presently teaches girls at grade 3 so some shifting would need to take place.

Once the teachers are trained, then students will come to the V-SAT Center for basic computer training. Once that is well underway, then the students will start the process of communicating with their counterparts at schools in the states. The RI representatives did not know how to deal with the language issues but thought there might be translation software available to assist.

We then met with Alan Paul at RI regarding several topics. They presently have our two ultra-sound machines in storage. Alan advises the one set up for OB/Gyn and Pediatrics will be well utilized at the Nangarhar Public Hospital. He had conflicting info regarding where to best site the second machine. There may be a fair amount of self interest rather than public interest on account of the persons making recommendations. We decided to first consider an area of Nangarhar Province in the Eastern region where there is a medical hospital with no ultra-sound machine. The local officials advise that they have staff that has been trained on ultra-sound. We will request that whoever is to be responsible for using the machine must first go to Kabul and take a test at the US training center to satisfy us that they are qualified to use the machine. If they fail then we will suggest the same approach for a person from a hospital in a western region of the province. If no one qualifies, then we will consider other alternatives

or may keep the machine on hold until a person from one of these two areas successfully completes the Ultra sound training course offered in Kabul—about a 6 month program. We hope to meet with the local Director of Public Health day after tomorrow to discuss the two ultra sound machines.

Alan advises that RI still has about 100 boxes of books—75 of which are medical books that need to be distributed. We will look to Dr. Khalil to take care of the medical books and probably Hamid and Safi to see that the others get to NU.

Alan advises that RI is still ramping up preparation for micro-credit funding. They have received grant money to train personnel to administer micro-credit but that money can't be used for actual lending. They have received \$37,000 plus of Rotary funds to be used for micro-credit lending but won't be in a position to start the lending until they have people go through the training course.

Alan advises that the \$20,000 provided by Rotary for pediatric equipment, medications and supplies has been fully spent and will soon provide me an accounting for my final report.

We talked briefly about the status of the reconstruction of the Afghan Women's Development Center. Alan advises it is partially up and running. He is not certain of any needs to equip the same. I mentioned that the Chuck DuVivier had mentioned to me several months ago that there may be a possibility for his club to again assist with that. However, I had no info today if that is the case.

I then learned that RI set up a wireless connection on that day and did a quick download of e-mail.

Upon returning to AHF and sorting through my e-mails I learned through an e-mail from SDSU President Weber that John Moores had agreed to be a 50% partner with me in providing the funds for building the NU Center for International Learning and the Guest House. (John and I went 50/50 in setting up the V-SAT computer lab at NU a couple of years ago.)

We are off to meet with the head of NU's college of education this morning followed by an appointment with the Director of Education for Nangarhar Province this afternoon.

Nov. 9 6:00 AM

Still no electricity at AHF but we had some for a couple of hours last night. It means no hot water but fortunately the beer is staying cold in the refrigerator.

Yesterday was another good day and a little slower pace although we did end up going to five locations and travel within Jalalabad is a bit difficult. The smog and dust is worse than before and it has had an affect on Fary—but she is pretty tough and doesn't complain.

Our first meeting was with Mr. Farmanulla who is head of NU's education faculty. The Chancellor joined us shortly after the meeting started. That re-affirms to us the deep interest the Chancellor has in what we are doing. We used the first part of the meeting to better understand how the Ed faculty works and it explained some mysteries. When we were first here we were told there were two Ed faculties but they have since been merged. The Ed faculty has five programs:

- Chemistry & Biology
- History & Geography

- Pashto Literature
- Math & Physics
- Psychology and Methodology

All instruction and materials are in Pashto. ESL is taught throughout all five programs. They have a morning program for persons who have not taught—pre-service and they have an afternoon program for in-service teachers. The former program is four years and the latter four and one half years. Pre-service is in the morning and in-service is in the afternoon.

There are 533 students in the pre-service program 525 males and 6 females. The in-service program had 530 students—363 males and 167 females. We are told the reason there is so few females in the pre-service program so that there is no dorm for females and thus only those who live close by attend. That doesn't seem to totally explain things to me since there must be more than 8 females living in Jalalabad—a city of 400,000 who would like to be in the program.

I think in service probably refers to those who are teaching below the secondary level. All teachers who graduate for the HU Ed. Program go into secondary schools. It does not appear that the presently is any program for training teachers who teach grades one through 8 although the Dean advised that a two year teaching college is in formation. My guess is that will be for training teachers below secondary level. That college will be independent of NU. We should learn more about it if possible.

The Chancellor and Dean advised that there are two areas in which the Ed. faculty would appreciate assistance from SDSU—ESL and methodology. I advised that I would pass on that request. They would be interested in pursuing a USAID proposal whereby SDSU provides assistance to NU in this regard.

We then talked about the possibility of placing a V-SAT system at the School of ED for joint use by the RI-Schools-on-Line program and the Ed faculty. The RI-SOL program wants to use 7 hours a day six days a week and the use of the Ed's faculty's computers. The Dean and Chancellor do not want that much outside use and needs some more computers if the RI-SOL program will be using so much of their computer capacity. I pointed out that through some compromises both sides may be able to get most of what they want. I asked the Dean and Chancellor if they would be pleased to have a V-SAT system in place at the College of Ed, if the College would have use of the facility 50% of the time, have all operating costs of the same paid for, and have five new computers? I aid I thought there was some chance I could arrange that. They said they would be very happy with that. We will discuss this with RI-SOL people and they should agree as well. The computers they were planning to use for this program were destroyed in the May 2005 mob activity and they have no money in the budget for computers nor money for rent. We have some unspent funds from the grant used to set up the V-SAT system at the medical school and I probably can get permission to reallocate those funds to fill in the gaps to get the V-Sat system at NU. We can buy five computers and provide funds for a full time administrator for 18 months. The admin person may cost about \$100 per month and the computers can be purchased for less than \$1,000 each. I have access to many free copies of Microsoft Word 2000 Student and Teachers Edition I can donate and send over here through the US Military mail system.

We then went to visit the computer lab at the Ed faculty. But it was locked and the only guy with a key had gone home since the electricity was off. Such is life in Jalalabad.

We stopped by AHF for a snack and then went on to our meeting with the Director of Education for Nangarhar Province—Mr. Harif Gerdiwal. I should point out that for most of these meetings all of the

discussion is in Dari, a language similar to Farsi which Fary speaks. But some of the people at the meetings speak only Pashto. So if that is the case then in a typical meeting a conversation takes place in Pashto between say the director and one of his staff, he then communicates in Dari to Fary but the sentence structure is very different in Dari than Farsi—that is the words are organized in a different sequence and some of the words are different as well, and then Fary translates what is said to me in English and then I respond and the words work themselves backwards through the chain. This adds about three times to what would take in a normal meeting environment and we know some information is lost in the translation. Thus we are always trying to re-confirm our understanding before relying on a point. Also there is a big tendency for people to agree with a statement they don't understand. Such is the way for us to do our business in Jalalabad. The bottom line is that Fary is not only deeply involved in the projects and understands what is needed and comes up with her own ideas as well, but also she is essential for the interpretation process. She is both an interpreter and a partner in moving things forward and coming up with new ideas.

Back to the meeting with the Director of Ed, we expressed three concerns regarding our school, shortage of teachers evidenced by four classrooms full of students and no teacher for them, shortage of female teachers resulting in shortage of female students, and poor quality of teaching and in some instances poor motivation by the teachers and administrators at our school. We acknowledged that these problems are not likely unique to our school and result from shortages throughout the country. Yet, we want our school to be a model for others to follow but if we just build a beautiful building and equip it with high quality things, but don't have appropriate teaching and administration we have not realize the full potential of the investment and it does not make a very good model for others to emulate.

The Director, a relatively young man and highly recommended to us, responded that he is new to his position and just learning the ropes. He has some but limited familiarity with our school. He advised that he is soon to get some addition funds in the budget and should be able to provide more teachers including more female teachers—we only have one female teacher at this time and she teaches first grade.

We inquired if our school could also be used as a secondary school and he advised that it could run it in shifts. He seems interested in exploring that. We pointed out that the computer lab—which may end up with an internet link—and the science laboratory materials would be best utilized if we have secondary school students at our school.

I suggested that he consider meeting us at the school when we will be there this Saturday and he agreed to do this. In the past we have had dignitaries at our school like the Governor, Mayor and previous people from the Department of Education but that was for ribbon cutting type of things. This time it will be specifically to address administrative issues.

We also talked about the feasibility of using the Swedish Assistance Committee to locate and train female teachers for our school and place them there as unregistered teachers. We indicated we wished to explore that option if things don't improve. He advised that would be permissible and he suggested providing additional incentives for such teachers. They would be paid outside the government system and we could contract with SAC for this.

Fary and I felt it was a very good meeting.

We then went to the computer lab at the NU main campus. The Chancellor was there to greet us as were GSE members Hamid and Safi and the head of the NU Engineering faculty. For some reason the lab could not access the internet but it had been in use the previous day. They showed us records of the lab utilization and advised that often people are waiting for a computer to use.

We looked at two potential sites for the Center for International Learning and Guest House. One is across the street from the lab and the other is next to the auditorium. The Engineering head liked the site across from the lab and the Chancellor liked the site next to the auditorium. The latter site seemed better to Fary and me as well. It was a little more secure. It has some big trees that would have to come down and we think the Engineer did not want to lose the trees.

The campus used to be beautiful. It was built by the Russians to provide accommodations for the workers who built a large dam nearby. When the dam was complete the Russians abandoned the facility and the government took it over and turned it into a university.

We then walked to the Chancellor's house where he renewed his request to see if we could extend the internet to his home. We had previously been advised that would not be possible but it did not seem to be as difficult as I thought it could be, but what do I know about those things?

I should also mention that the head of the Engineering Department inquired if SDSU had an Engineering Department and I advised that they did. It may be that he would be interested in assistance from SDSU as well. Also previously the Chancellor gave me a copy of document that contained what I would describe as an expression of interest in a proposed partnership with the Veterinary Medicine faculties between NU and Kansas State University.

We did not stay for tea since I wanted to get internet access. We went to the medical school but got there too late—about 4:10 and everyone had gone home. So we went to RI and used their wireless system.

Alan Paul at RI had followed up on some items we had talked about the previous day and had set up an appointment with the Director of Public Health for Nov 9—today-- to talk about location of the ultra sound machines.

Fary and I then returned to AHF and had a bite to eat. After dinner Mayor Arsalai showed up. He had just returned from Peshawar that day and learned we were in town. Somehow information travels faster here than in the States.

It was good to see him and he was OK with turning the evening into a business meeting.

We first talked about the CityLinks program and our desire to target funding to develop a trash system. I provide him a copy of Chuck's report and two Dari translated versions of the same. He re-confirmed trash issues as a top priority and set up a meeting for 4:00 tomorrow with himself, his deputy mayor and the top trash executives in Jalalabad. We reviewed with the Mayor our meeting with Eric in Kabul re potential USAID funding and Eric's request for us to return and meet with the USAID Mission Director. I then called Eric Richardson to see if the meeting had been set up. It had not since Eric had taken a nasty fall. I advised Eric of our immediately upcoming trip to Kabul and gave him three potential meeting times. We want to have this meeting if at all possible. We also talked about the meetings I had had in Washington D. C. with ICMA and with the meeting Fary and I had with the San Diego trash

folks. I forgot to review with the mayor the potential for World Bank funding for trash or other municipal services and will try to do that at our meeting later today.

We talked about Ann Willie's project for a grove of trees in a city park and will get together with him on Monday to review possible sites.

The Mayor also offered to set up a meeting with us with the new Nangarhar Governor and we will see what develops there.

I also mentioned that Sister Cities International will be celebrating its 50th anniversary at its International Convention in Washington D. C. in July of 2006 and they have expressed an interest to have him attend that convention—although funding is not available through SCI to cover this cost. I asked if the airfare could be raised, could he cover the additional costs primarily by staying with relatives and he advised that he could and that he would be interested in attending.

I then mentioned that some individuals from San Diego have expressed an interest to come to Jalalabad someday and see what we are up to. I inquired if there is a high quality bus that could be used for this with two or three days of sightseeing in Kabul and three or four days in Jalalabad. The time frame would be over a year from now. He said there are high quality busses available and he would help in making the arrangements.

We finally talked about when to have a Jalalabad Sister Cities meeting but we can't pin down a date until some of our other meetings are confirmed—particularly in Kabul.

Thus concluded another day in Jalalabad.

Nov. 11 Kabul 7:00 AM

On November 9 we had three meetings. The first was arranged by Dr. Rabbini, who is an Advisor to the minister of Public Health. The Minister is very interested in some of our activities and is asking for assistance if possible.

I first asked for an explanation regarding how the delivery of medical services is administered in Jalalabad. There are two hospitals here—one is for the medical school and reports to the Ministry of Higher Education and the other is a public hospital and reports to the Ministry of Public Health. The public hospital sees many more patients. There is also a school of nursing and a mid-wife school. These seem to be under the Ministry of Public Health. Almost all of the doctors at both hospitals have private clinics as well which are needed for their economic survival. Services at the hospitals are free. Some senior doctors have only private clinics and some junior doctors have not yet developed private clinics.

We talked about developing a program for physicians from the US to come to Jalalabad to provide continuing education to physicians in practice. These lectures may also be attended by medical students. We were joined by three other individuals and then the four of us went to meet with Dr. Ajmal, the Director of Public health for Nangarhar Province. He is a young man with excellent English, high energy and innovative. He wants to explore how some of the services in the public hospital can be provided on a cost recovery basis but still seeing that services are available for anyone who seriously needs service. He pointed out that because service is free people come in for an aspirin for a headache but at the same time the hospital is so busy the doctors there don't take time to see if something serious

may be causing the headache. The patient should go to the private clinic for that. He knows that is not a good system and needs to be revised.

They would like professional assistance in hospital administration and the administration of medical services generally. Presently physicians are used for this rather than professional administrators. They would like an assessment undertaken of their present system and recommendation for changes/improvement. Perhaps we consider as a model how the Children's Hospital in Tijuana is run. Not too sure where to go with this topic since in the US we have very different issues such as insurance, hospital privileges for doctors, Medicare/Medical etc. in the US but we can talk to those in the field to see if there might be a willing participant with appropriate expertise to undertake an assessment with the follow-up step to be to provide recommendations perhaps through a lecture series.

Topics they would like discussed include: Effective leadership for health managers, clinical research plan and clinical trials, monitoring and evaluation of health care programs, effective management in hospitals, hospital waste management, sustainable financing for health care, disaster management in hospitals, health survey research and methods and data management, social-demographic and health implications of population aging, health management and information system, immunizations.

They also would like visiting physicians to provide lectures on a variety of medical topics.

We then visited the proposed accommodations they would provide for visiting lecturers. Security was excellent. The arrangement was rather basic but we were assured there was 24 hour electricity and hot water since it is tied to the hospital. It is on the same campus as the hospital so internet transportation would not be an issue.

They would also like us to determine if an internet link could be provided from the V-SAT system we set up at the Medical school to the public hospital. I have asked Janet MacDonald to check into this. If that could be done, the internet could be brought to the location of the visiting physicians and be available to the Director. Right now he has no internet access.

We advised that our San Diego~Jalalabad Sister Cities Sub-committee will look into the forgoing requests. We will also have the assistance of the Afghan Physicians Association of America to help develop this program. I have been in touch with its president, Homaira Behsudi in this regard who has assured cooperation. The secretary of that association, Dr. Habib, lives in San Diego.

We visited the nursing school and mid wife facility. The nursing school is in need of things like charts and skeletons. I suggest that in Fary's next visit she bring a skeleton over.

Those meetings took all morning. We grabbed a quick bite to eat and then met again with Dr. Ajmal and Alan Paul from Relief International regarding the appropriate placement of two ultra sound machines we have provided. The machines are presently in storage at RI's Jalalabad office. It was concluded both machines would be placed at Nangarhar Public Hospital. A machine they presently have there will go to a regional hospital that has no US machine. That hospital only has electricity provide by a generator and would not be a good location for one of these donated machines. The donated machines have a value of \$50,000 each. One is set up for Ob/Gyn and the other for both OB/Gyn and pediatrics. There will be a formal ceremony with media coverage for the turning over of these machines on next Monday.

From there we went to the office of RI and looked at the machines and also the boxes of 100 books we have sent over which are in storage at RI. We need to arrange for 75 boxes of medical books to go to the medical school with the rest to go to the NU main campus.

Did a quick upload and down load of e-mail at RI and from there went to Mayor Arsalai's office. He arrange for about 15 of his municipal leaders to come to his office to be briefed on the results of Chuck DuVivier's urban planning preliminary assessment of Jalalabad. We spend most of the time talking about our efforts to seek funding for trash collection through a CityLinks program funded by USAID. The group was very thoughtful in their comments, noting how trash collection involves everyone and suggesting Jalalabad would need community forums, support from the media, etc. to get everyone involved in the effort. I believe the municipal leaders will be fully behind this initiative if we are able to obtain funding for the same.

The next morning (Nov. 10) we left for Kabul at 5:00 AM and drove in tandem with the Chancellor for Kabul. About 45 minutes out of town we were stopped by the police to ask us if we could help get some bodies out of the Kabul River that were there because of an auto accident. Apparently a van with out 15 people had gone over a cliff and all were killed. The Chancellor told the policeman that we were too old to go down the cliff and assist so we were allowed to pass.

When we got to Kabul Fary and I went to the Ariana Airline office to get our tickets changed to a Nov. 18 flight to Dubai. Once we found the office it took five minutes to make the change but it took over an hour to find the office. This has been a process that for several preceding days has taken numerous phone calls and visits to Ariana offices only to be given different information at each turn.

We then went to the office of the Minister of Higher Education and met with the Chancellor and the Minister, Professor Said Amir Shah Hassanyar. The minister speaks excellent English. He is past president of Kabul University and has lectured throughout the US. He has been to San Diego twice. The Chancellor asked that I provide background info regarding the SDSU/NU partnership. I did that and then talked about the desire to secure World Bank funding for ESL, technology training and perhaps other programs such as Public Health and to seek USAID funding for teacher training under the proposals presently out by both funding entities.

The Minister then gave us some useful background information. He advised that his ministry has developed strategic plans 2 year, 5 year and 10 year for higher education each with the following Vision and Mission: (Paraphrasing from my notes) *We want to develop a system of higher education in Afghanistan with international quality and with local accessibility. Our universities should be the producers of knowledge and technology not the consumers as we are today.*

He mentioned that they want to develop long term university partnerships not a quick in and a quick out.

It sounds like it is his Ministry that convinced World Bank to allocate the \$40 million for higher Ed. and also convinced USAID to allocate another \$40 million. (When Fary and I were here last January there was no money of consequence allocated to higher Ed.)

He also wants to expand higher Ed out of Kabul and take it to the heart of the people. 80% of Afghans live outside of Kabul and he pointed out that NU is the second largest university in the country.

He advised that NU is a high priority facility for higher ed. At the six universities targeted, including NU, he wants to build two faculties (departments in our nomenclature) at a time.

He notes that there is an acute teacher shortage and that those who teach at high school are not really teaching.

He said his Ministry's objectives are capacity building at the institutional and individual level and to develop infrastructure. He said his Ministry is getting many proposals for a variety of universities. The Germans are interest in developing the economic departments and Purdue has a strong arrangement with Kabul University.

He said his Ministry has developed criteria for university partnerships but I have been unable to learn what those are or to get a copy of the document. Perhaps the Chancellor can assist in that regard.

I mentioned to the Minister that SDSU has extended an invitation to the NU Chancellor to visit SDSU. The Minister said that was an excellent idea. It is important for these types of visitations. I mentioned that I was sure we could arrange for the Minister to also visit SDSU if he was so inclined but he did not respond to that.

I asked if the partnership proposals for WB funds were competitive in nature and he responded that only to some extent. He advised that decisions will be made in the near future regarding funding of partnerships. Decisions will be made through a committee in his Ministry. He made it clear that his Ministry has ownership of the decision making process regarding WB funds and WB representative will oversee that process.

After the meeting Fary and I asked the Chancellor how he thought the meeting went. He thought it went very well. He repeated what he had told us earlier. The Ministry –and I think the Minister specifically— had recruited the Chancellor to leave Maryland and come to NU with the understanding that the Chancellor's requests will receive special consideration. The Chancellor is 100% behind proceeding with the SDSU/NU relationship and encourages a proposal to be developed and submitted to the MOHE as soon as possible.

After that meeting Fary and I met with Jeremy Maurer and Dr. Ahmad Khalid Ramin Mohammad from Relief international's Kabul office. They oversee the Schools-on-Line program. We talked about siting the V-SAT facility in Jalalabad and the issues raised by the NU Chancellor and Dean of the College of Ed about using their facility. They were not aware that issues remained regarding the site. I believe with the information we provided, they will work out an arrangement with NU to put the V-SAT at the college of Ed and that they will be able to relay a relatively weak but sufficient signal to our Rotary School so that there will be internet access at our school. I am not sure a technician has fully explored the obstacles but they seem to think it will work. The also advised that transportation funds for our students will be provided if the link does not work. If we have a link at our school it will probably be the only school in Nangarhar Province with internet capacity and one of few if any that even have computers.

We will review all of this when the Director of Education for Nangarhar Province visits our school tomorrow to encourage him to place better qualified teacher at our school. We also learned that the SOL program all is in English so a participating school needs to have teachers who speaks some English and

the participating students need to speak some English. English we are told is now suppose to be included in the curriculum starting at grade four but we doubt that is the case for our school.

Time to close and hit the road from hell to Jalalabad.

Nov. 13

The pace has definitely slowed down. On Nov. 11 we traveled from Kabul to Jalalabad. The ride was more exhausting than usual for some reason. Between losing a filling and part of a tooth, a touch of gout and getting what I call the Afghan flu, I chatted briefly with Diana Tacey and Dr. Ruth Lie who just arrived and are staying at AHF and then went to bed. We had nothing scheduled that day anyway.

Yesterday I still felt bad but good enough to function. We went to the Rotary school and helped set up the computer lab. Fortunately, all of the software but Rosetta Stone had already been loaded since the school did not have electricity when we were there. We have purchased a power storage unit that can be charged when the electricity is on and it will run the lab for six hours without the regular source of energy.

When the students left we had a meeting with the teachers and administrators to hear their concerns. Shortages of teachers and lack of training are at the top of their lists. We then explained in detail how the computer lab is to be used including the anticipated internet connection, training and sister school relationship with Preuss Middle School for grads 6-8 at our school. We then talked about the sister school relationship for grades 1-5 with Doyle Elementary School. I handed out the letters written by the Doyle students and asked that our school respond to these letters. We will see if the PRT (US military) can help in the mail delivery in both directions.

When our meeting was concluding the Director of Education for Nangarhar Province arrived. He had not been to our school before—he is relatively new on the job. We gave him a complete tour of the school emphasizing the computer lab and the science lab we are setting up. He commented that of the 400 schools in Nangarhar province ours is clearly the best. He gave the faculty a hard time for not keeping it in better shape. He stated because the facility was so nice he would immediately add three of the best qualified teachers, bring in female teachers and run the school in two shifts so that it can accommodate high school students as well. The Director is young and full of enthusiasm and we believe he will follow through on these promises. This is the type of visitation that we need. He is the decision maker regarding staffing of schools.

We then went to the computer lab at the medical school but the staff had left by 3:00 PM. We will go there again in the morning.

Upon return to AHF, Zamarud Shah and Ann Mickey were there along with Diana Tacey and Dr. Ruth. I wasn't very social and took a nap. I'm feeling better this morning. We will see how the day progresses.

Nov 14

Feeling better every day. Yesterday we went to the Medical School and used the computer lab. It works great. They opened it up for us. There was no electricity but it is hooked into their generator so they

were able to fire it up. It appears that the lab is being under utilized. A training program needs to be put in place—probably as part of the curriculum for the lab's potential to be utilized. Dr. Shinwary—the Medical School Director suggested that when we met with him.

We stopped off to see Dr. Khan former GSE team member. It appeared that he was the only doctor on duty at the pediatric hospital. It was good to see him again.

We then went to Relief International to sort out about 100 boxes of books we had shipped over. 32 boxes contain medical books which Relief International will send on to the medical school. The rest will go to Nangarhar University. The boxes were pretty beat up and the rats had had some fun but 95% of the books are in good shape. We believe the medical books will probably get put to good use but doubt that the other books destined for NU will be. Donated books need to be integrated into their curriculum and we don't see that happening at this point of time. Fary and I strongly discourage further book projects until they are set up on the administrative side to deal with them.

We then returned to AHF and had lunch. Diana Tacey joined Fary and me for a meeting with Michelle Parker, Jalalabad USAID representative housed with the US Military PRT. We briefed her on our various projects and Diana Tacey gave some background info about her foundation and their plans to build a public library.

We learned that the PRT will soon be phased out and replaced by a UN group. This has already happened in most of Afghanistan. The mission changes from peace keeping to peace building. The personnel involved will thus be from a variety of countries and no longer under a US command.

Michelle was not receptive to using the PRT to send letters back and forth with the Doyle School at least using her address. We may approach Brian mentioned below regarding this.

We were joined by Brian Weber, Brian.P.Weber@us.army.mil from the Texas National Guard. He is the chief medical officer at the PRT. His background is that of a Physician's Assistant and holds a PhD in Public Health. He serves on a local board that deals with administrative issues relative to the delivery of health services. He is very eager to help us with the visiting physicians program. He can be an excellent practical resource in assisting us develop the appropriate curriculum. For example, he knows the Public Hospital has received a donation of gastrointestinal endoscope equipment for colonoscopies and esophagus examination but they have no training how to use it. He points out that pathology training is necessary relative to this. We mentioned the internet microscope we donated to Dr. Khalil and Brian asked if Dr. Khalil has the appropriate tools to prepare the specimens to photograph and send through the internet. We do not know. Brian also mentioned the PRT might be able to assist in organizing the computer/internet training for the medical school. He is a rare and valuable resource and will be at the PRT until May 2006.

Today we have five appointments and more may develop. Time is running out.

Nov, 15 6:00 AM

Today will be our last day in Jalalabad. Life is good. I am feeling 100% but am a little behind on my beer drinking due to not feeling 100% for the last few days. I have probably lost a little weight—at least I hope so. This is part of my dieting plan to come to Afghanistan to lose weight. It's more attractive to

me than the other programs involving lots of exercise, joining weight loss groups, drinking powdered stuff. etc...

Yesterday was perhaps the richest day to date. We started by shopping for some extra items for the computer center at the Rotary School. We purchased speakers for lab and some technical electrical stuff, paper supplies, markers etc. We just learned that through the efforts of Cynthia Villis, a grant has been obtained through Sister Cities to support the Doyle Elementary Sister School relationship with our Rotary school. One of the items that grant will fund will be a video projector for our school. That will be useful in the computer lab to allow for classroom instruction of English as a Second Language using the Rosetta Stone software purchased. ESL is now supposed to be taught from grade four on yet there are very few elementary teachers who can teach English. We have the facility to have it taught at our school using the software we brought and the equipment at the computer lab. When we visit the school again today we will advise of the success of the grant. Thank you Cynthia.

After shopping we went to the city park with Mayor Arsalai. He walked us through the plans for rehabilitating the park. The mayor showed us the area where the Rotary Club of Jalalabad had its first project which was to plant some trees in the park.

At one time the park was the private garden for a king who had 99 wives we are told. I figure that is why the park was so big. If each wife had the typical average of about 10 kids in the old days, then he needed a park for 1,000. I don't know how big the park is but I would guess at least 30 acres. We looked for possible sites for the memorial area we want to develop for Ann Willie's deceased husband. The Mayor is totally supportive of whatever we want to do in that regard.

We noted in the park there was a USAID/DAI sign next to a small area that was being improved. DAI is a large contractor with USAID that has over \$100,000,000 it is disbursing in Nangarhar Province for economic development. I remembered the two Jims at IF Hope had advised that we had a lady by the name of Susan who works for DAI in Jalalabad who is a landscape architect and might take an interest in the memorial grove project. I had a phone number of a contact at DAI and was able to get Susan on the phone. She agreed to meet us at the park later in the afternoon. More on that in a moment.

We then went to a restaurant for the Sister Cities meeting. The Mayor assembled 32 village leaders for the meeting—many of whom have attended previous Sister Cities meetings we have attended. After a large lunch hosted by the Mayor, he gave a tremendous speech without prepared notes. He advised that he has been invited by us to attend the Sister Cities International Conference which is its 50th anniversary celebration in Washington D.C. He talked about how much he has learned from the Sister Cities experience and his visitation to San Diego. He talked about how friendly people in San Diego are and how much everyone in Jalalabad appreciates the interest people in San Diego have in the people in Jalalabad. He talked for about 20 minutes and one could not have scripted a better description of what the Sister Cities program is all about I made a few brief comments pointing out the need for the program is a great one as when President Eisenhower first established the program. Several of the elders present provided further comments often emphasizing how much the Mayor has changed things since his return from the San Diego visit. The remarkable thing to me is that they are not asking for money or other things. They simply want us to help show them how to do things. They emphasize they must become self reliant and they want us to see their progress. The lunch and meal lasted a couple of hours.

After this meeting the Rotary meeting was held in the same restaurant but attended by about 35 people all of whom were different except for Mohammad Ishaq and the Mayor. The Mayor could only attend

part of the meeting. There were two individuals who attended who are helping train the local police force. Ishaq asked Brian Kelly (retired Illinois State Police) to describe their activities. The meeting was conducted in English since most of the Rotarians could speak English. Fary and I and the three ladies from Arizona also spoke at the meeting. It was also attended by GSE team members Professor Torakay and Dr. Khan who talked about their GSE experiences. I videotaped some of Torakay's comments that will be worth quoting. He could not have been more praiseworthy regarding the friendliness that was provided towards him by the people in the US. The meeting concluded with Club Secretary Wali providing a brief listing of the projects in which the club is involved.

The meeting lasted about an hour and a half and from there Fary and I went back to the park and met Susan Anderson. Her husband runs DAI and they will be in Jalalabad for four years. She is a professional landscape architect and knows all aspects of the park. She knows what is planned for where and what areas need further attention. She took us to an area she thought would be ideal for what we have in mind and Fary and I quickly agreed regarding the appropriateness of the site. It is a large circular area surrounded by some brick work but the circle is presently just a gravel pit. They do not have funds to do much with it but it is clear that it can be made to be beautiful. Susan agreed to use her free time to prepare a landscape design for review by Ann Willie. It can be sent by e-mail through a program called something like auto cad. Once it is agreed to we can contract with IF hope for installation of the same. She will help us prepare a rough budget to get the project started. We believe there will be sufficient funds to help Susan with some other vegetation in the park which is a priority to her as well. We could not have developed a better contact for this. Sometimes you wonder how these things seem to fall into place.

From there we went back to AHF for a meeting Dr. Rabbini had requested. He had with him a Dr. Ahmad Zai and one other gentleman who we had met before. It took me a while to figure out why we were having the meeting. The bottom line is that Dr. Zia has received some training for laparoscopic training in the UK and the Ministry of Public Health would like for him to receive some more training to be able to undertake laparoscopic surgery in Afghanistan. Apparently no one in Afghanistan has received such training or at least is qualified for performing this surgery. They wanted us to see if we could arrange this training. The discussion was brought up in the context of the GSE medical professors who we brought to the US and perhaps we should give more thought next time regarding the selection of such individuals and the training needed in the US working with the Ministry of Public Health. I explained that the GSE program was not an academic program but a relationship building program and then moved the conversation on.

Afghanistan presently does not have any equipment to perform this type of surgery. They said that it would cost around \$100,000 and it should not be difficult to find funding for this. I advised that if they provide me a letter from the Ministry committing to purchase the equipment, I would ask our Sister Cities Medical sub-committee to make inquiries to see if there is a physician in the US willing to provide the additional training requested. I advised that would be the hard part. If such a physician can be located and the commitment to purchase the equipment can be verified, it should not be too difficult to find funds for the airfare and accommodations assuming the training would only take about one month as they had advised. They seemed happy with that proposal.

That's all for now. (No electricity or water of any sort this morning.)

Nov 16. 7:00 AM

We leave for Kabul shortly.

Yesterday was another full day. We started by going to the office of SVA a Japanese NGO that has published Pashto picture books to be used in elementary schools here. Picture books had been banned under the Taliban and thus are a little hard to come by. The person we were supposed to meet with had been delayed in her return from Kabul. So we place our order and then went on to Relief international to say good-bye to Alan and to upload and download e-mail. I'm getting about 100 a day but most are junk and some are large files that take forever to download.

We then went to the Rotary School and set up the tables for the science lab in the area we had originally designated to be for the medical clinic. Without staffing, it is impossible to have a clinic there at this time and it is a very good room to use for the science lab. We delivered some children's books that had been included in the large shipment from the states and some books Michelle Parker (USAID PRT) had provided for us. We also delivered the TV and VCR Farid had provided through the donation from United Association of San Diego—this had been stored at the AHF. A metal gate was installed on the door to the computer lab and we are keeping the TV and VCR there as well. We also delivered the computer supplies we had purchased the previous day and turned them over to Habib who met us there. At all times we were at the school there was no electricity. The classrooms are bright so it does not make much different but for the computer lab it obviously needs electricity. Apparently the electricity does come on sometimes and it should be enough to charge up the power source that Zamarud purchased for us. He is sending an electrician from Peshawar to wire the power source into the lab. If that does not provide enough juice we will need to purchase a generator.

We met with the principal and he provided us some letters written by fourth and fifth grade girls to give to the students at Doyle Elementary School.

We believe our school is well positioned to be one of the best in the country. By having Habib and Zai Mohammad from Relief International to attend regularly and report back and provide some additional assistance we should be able to monitor its progress. The two unknowns at this point are the electricity to the lab and if they will be able to provide the V-SAT link.

From there we went to the Spingar Hotel for lunch with the NU Chancellor and the Director of the Medical School. We were joined by GSE team members, Dr. Khalil, Dr. Khan and to our surprise Dr. Maryam. The meeting was strictly social in nature.

From there we went to the university and again met with the Chancellor.

At that time the technician from Janet MacDonald's company were on site installing the V-SAT link to the auditorium. I let them know how much cable we needed to be able to project from the middle of the room. Engineer Professor Safi was also there who oversees the computer lab. I suggested that NU also bring an electrical connection from our lab's generator to the auditorium to deal with the electrical issues and they said they would do that. The technician confirmed that we would be able to further extend the V-SAT link to the guest house if we build it next to the auditorium. The second location next to the water tower will also be close enough for the link.

We then demonstrated the equipment we brought—the laptop, external DVD drives and video projector. We set it up in the computer lab. I could not get the video feed to work off of the external DVD drive. I was able to demo a DVD off of my laptop. It may be that the combo rebuilt laptop and DVD player are

not ideal and it may make sense to instead buy a new laptop with a DVD drive build in. We will wait and see on that.

I then did a brief video tape interview of the Chancellor describing the university and its challenges.

From there we returned to SVA and met with Eri Yamamoto regarding the picture books. They had filled the order we placed and had the books in stock. They will deliver the books to Alan Paul at Relief international who will then give them to their computer guys to take to our school. The books have all been approved by the various ministries. They cost \$400.

From there we returned to AHF and I met with Ishaq regarding some financial issues. There are some open issues that need more research.

I think we have accomplished all we wanted to while in Jalalabad. A couple of minor disappointments are not being able to demo the V-SAT link to the auditorium and not being around for the formal ceremony for the dedication of the ultra sound machines. We also had hoped to meet with the new Governor but that was not a priority for us. Don't know about his schedule but we were pretty busy with things most of the time.

I am ready for some reliable electricity and hot water and look forward to less dust. But the charm of Jalalabad is still with me and probably would have remained so for about another week.

On to Kabul.

Nov 17. 4:30 PM

Yesterday we stopped at NU and said good-bye to the Chancellor. He gave me a letter to pass on to SDSU President Weber. He would be interested in assistance from SDSU for his faculty of Engineering and faculty of Economics. These are the priorities of the MOHE. I need to talk to the SDSU folks about how ESL fits into all of their faculties and see if a proposal can be developed to cover ESL in all of NU's faculties.

We then visited two of the engineering classes and did some video taping for the San Diego TV station that has requested some footage.

The drive to Kabul was the worst ever, once the pavement ended it was a four hour dust bowl on unpaved roads dodging trucks and hoping the car would not go off the cliffs but we made it by late afternoon.

We had dinner at the Kabul Inn (where we are staying) with Hamid and Safi.

Today we sent to the US Embassy around 10:00 and met again with Eric Richardson. He wanted us to meet some different folks from the Embassy and have us tell them about the various things we are involved with regarding NU and regarding urban planning. Fary and I are not sure of the roles of the various individuals who we met with. The first meeting involved three people (Steve Shmida, -Synergy Strategies Group, Deborah Prindle USAID Program Design Advisor, Maria Beebe Washington State University Extension) and lasted about an hour and a half. They were interested in both initiatives. They talked about some programs that are still on the drawing boards that may involve higher education and

urban planning. Too many acronyms and buzz words for programs were thrown around to be able to understand things. We think the important this is that they know what we are working on and they may get back to us for further developments.

We then had lunch and met with Thomas Johnson Supervisory Program Officer USAID to talk about Chuck DuVivier's report. We left a copy with him. Eric believes Thomas has access to funds if he finds an urban planning issue of interest. He is particularly interested if SDSU may be interested in helping to provide urban planning expertise in Jalalabad through NU.

We then met with Steve Farkus who is with the Army Corps of Engineers but has a USAID card. He is working to help build an extension program at NU for construction trade skills. He took us to meet Barbara Burroughs (of the Embassy premises) who works for International Relief and Development. IRD is developing the trade skills vocational training program in Jalalabad and they want NU to eventually take over the program and run it as an extension program at NU. They are preparing a proposal and want a university to help them set up the administrative side for the extension program. They are hopeful SDSU is willing to step into this advisory role and were interested in writing SDSU into their proposal. It has a very short time frame and they would like someone from SDSU to come to Jalalabad in December to provide an initial assessment regarding what SDSU would need to do to help develop the administrative side of an extension program and then write that into the grant request.

I am hopeful we can have a debriefing session with the SDSU folks followed by a meeting with President Weber soon after our return. This last topic offers SDSU a good opportunity to jump in to assist NU to show the commitment SDSU has to help NU.

Meanwhile back at the Kabul Inn where we presently are, the place is torn apart for installing a central heating system. Our rooms are full of workers and clouds of dust resulting from the sawing apart the concrete in the walls and floors. It is getting concrete dust all over the tops of the cans of beer in my room which has had the fortunate side effect of slowing down Fary's consumption.

Tomorrow we go to the airport mid day to catch our flight to Dubai. We are there about a day and a half and catch a 3:00 AM six hour flight to London with a short layover and about a 13 hour flight to LA. Susan will pick us up from there.

This likely will be my last journal entry for this trip.

Steve

Nov 21 Back in San Diego

Fary and I arrived in LA yesterday afternoon. Susan met us at the airport and we returned to San Diego. I have a few reflections on the trip. It was the most difficult of the four trips. Most of the time there was no electricity at the Abdul Haq Foundation. That meant dealing with darkness in the evenings using head lamps and it was difficult to keep batteries charged for the computer. It also meant that we rarely had hot water and on some occasions no water came out of the tap. There was much less activity at the AHF. In the past there had been a constant parade of people there. AHF activities have definitely decreased and likely will remain so—particularly with Mohammad Ishaq increasing his activities with

IF Hope. Generally speaking it was much more difficult doing internal travel in Afghanistan. This is primarily because of road construction.

The driving trips between Kabul and Jalalabad were close to unbearable. It should be better in the next few months when the road work is complete. But with new roads, traffic is particularly dangerous because of the way they drive there. It seems worse than my other travels in the developing world. Pollution is a huge problem in the cities as is congestion—much worse than the previous trips.

Having made these negative comments, Fary and I think this was the most productive trip ever. We believe we are on the verge of accomplishing much. The trip was less ceremonial and more administrative than previous trips. Substantial follow up will be necessary involving many people here in the US. Activities will be more the responsibility of Sister Cities sub-committees and less responsibility on just Fary and me. Also, personal safety again did not seem to be a concern to us in Afghanistan. There are thousands of Westerners working there—primarily in Kabul. Fary and I felt comfortable walking around in Kabul in the area near our hotel and it did not create any commotion. In Jalalabad we still attract much attention when out by ourselves. We had little occasion to be in public by ourselves in Jalalabad so this was not really an issue.

Wherever we were in Afghanistan, the people could not have been nicer to us. We had no problems of consequence. Fary and I made a good team—each supporting the other in different ways and each bringing something different to the table. We believe we have set the stage for more good things to come and appreciate the support we have received from everyone back home.

Now I must get back to reality.

Steve