



Getting the word out

Lt. Gen. Robert B. Flowers, Chief of Engineers, gets the word out to the District staff on Project Management Business Process at a town hall meeting held Jan. 15. Flowers also spoke at the Northwestern Division Vision Conference held here. Stories and photos on pages 4 and 5. *Photo by Gina Schwetz*

New resource manager

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Trying to see others' points of view

by Scott Ross, Operations Manager,
Little Goose Dam

I started my engineering career at Walla Walla District as an engineer in training. I've worked at the old WW II facilities at the Airport, in the cubicles at the new building, at Lower Granite Dam and now at Little Goose. Though I've only moved around the District, I have found that "from where I sit," that's how I tend to see things. And that's the problem. When I look from that perspective, I miss the big picture.

If I don't take an occasional reality check, I can convince myself that my job is overwhelming and I've really got it bad. I already have so much to do. "How on earth are you going to get it all done?"

I might think: "If only I had a cushy job like the District Office staff," or "only if I worked at one of the dams." The reality is, as I have realized, is that everyone is as busy as I am.

An engineer on the second floor has five jobs he's working on at once and he's been asked to design something that's never been done before. No textbook shows how to do it and it has to be right the first time.

That contracting specialist on the first floor has a 6-inch thick stack of documents that need to become contracts and she must comply with the Federal Acquisition Regulations while doing so. Have you seen the FARs? I've had a few glimpses – and it makes me appreciate the knowledge they must have to get a government contract completed.

Working at a dam has given me appreciation for the daily drive that has to be made on the curvy, icy back-roads that lead to the job-site, being careful to dodge deer on the way. Just getting to work is a challenge, and now a full day of work outside in the wind and cold is followed by more "adventure" on the drive home.

There are great people working for the Walla Walla District. Good, honest, hard-working, smart, "I hope my kids grow up to be like them,"

kind of people. You know who I'm talking about:

- Physically challenged people that are so effective and positive you simply forget they're handicapped.
- Craftsmen that can make or fix almost anything and quote you Shakespeare.
- Engineers who are the best in their fields and who have developed new technologies.
- Managers and leaders that listen and who actually remove the barriers that prevent their staff from accomplishing work.
- Technicians who perform like wizards on the computer.
- Office professionals who help us in so many ways.

I have to remind myself to remember this first — outstanding

people are scattered throughout the District Office and Projects. I try to see it from their point of view.

The best examples of teamwork that I've seen has involved people who try to see things from the other person's point of view and people who maintain a positive outlook.

In cases where the teamwork has been poor and when "emotional explosions" have occurred, there have been misunderstandings and negative spin that went out of control.

From where I sit, in order for us to succeed, I need to see things from where you sit. If I'm missing the big picture, just let me know. I'll do the same for you.



Scott Ross, right, explains operations at Little Goose Dam to Homer Perkins, Northwestern Division chief of Public Affairs. Photo by Gina Schwetz.

"...The best examples of teamwork that I've seen has involved people who try to see things from the other person's point of view ..."

Scott Ross

Clarkston welcomes new natural resources manager

Story and photo by Gina Schwetz

Walla Walla District's Eastern Area Office officials selected a long-time northwest resident to serve as the area's new natural resources manager.

Relocating from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Albuquerque District, Rebecca Miner – Becky, as she prefers to be called – said she considers her service as an outdoor recreation planner in New Mexico as a “stepping stone” in her career development plan. She realized her goal of returning to the Northwest on Jan. 17 at the area's office in Clarkston, Wash.

“I've worked for the Corps for 27 years,” said Miner.

“I first started as a student-trainee tour guide in 1975 at Bonneville Dam's newly-built visitor center. I loved the job and just stuck with the Corps from there on out as a park ranger. Most of my service has been in Portland District at various field offices.

“Except for my most recent



Becky Miner, Natural Resources manager, Clarkston, Wash.

job in New Mexico, it's all been in the Northwest. Washington, Oregon or Idaho – that's home territory to me,” she said.

On duty, Miner finds herself immersed in learning the particulars of her new job. In her free time, she enjoys visiting her relatives and

rooting for her alma mater's sports teams – the University of Oregon Ducks. A season ticket buyer, Miner said to expect her new office to soon “be covered with UO Ducks fan stuff.”

“I was so happy find a position that offered career development so close to my family,” she added that most of her family lives on the Oregon side of the Columbia River just a few hours' drive from Clarkston.

Given her degree in anthropology, Miner said the cultural resource aspects of Eastern Washington provided an additional lure for her to compete for the Eastern Area position.

“I find the cultural history of the area very interesting ... it's definitely a plus in moving here,” she said. “Mostly, I wanted to get back to a position where I could get out in the field again, working the natural resources mission.”

Minimum holding period for Savings Bonds extended

The Treasury Department announced Jan. 15 that the minimum holding period that applies to United States Savings Bonds will be extended from six to twelve months, effective with issues dated on and after Feb. 1. The minimum holding period is the length of time from issue date that a bond must be held before it is eligible for redemption. Both Series EE and I bonds are affected. Series EE and I Savings Bonds bearing issue dates prior to February 2003 retain the six-month minimum holding period in effect when they were issued.

Individual investors who are saving for the longer term will not be affected by the lengthened holding period. The new holding period will prevent purchasers from taking advantage of the current spread between savings bond returns and historically low short-term interest rates by cashing in bonds after six months. Savings Bonds are designed to be a long-term savings vehicle.

All other terms and conditions that apply to Series EE and I bonds remain unchanged. Both series are accrual securities, earning interest and growing in value as they are held, up to a maximum interest-bearing life of 30 years. EE bonds earn market-based interest rates at 90 percent of an average of five-year yields of marketable Treasury securities. I bonds earn a composite rate (a combination of a fixed rate set at purchase for the life of the bond, and an inflation rate that is adjusted semiannually based on the consumer price index for urban consumers). Interest on both series accrues monthly and compounds semiannually. Bonds held less than five years are subject to a three-month interest penalty.

More information about United States Savings Bonds can be found on the Web at www.savingsbonds.gov.

Intercom



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Northwestern Division Vision Conference attendees experience Walla Walla culture

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Northwestern Division Vision Conference was held Jan. 13-17 at the Whitman Hotel in Walla Walla, Wash.

More than 100 members of the senior leadership from throughout the Division were focused on “creating a learning organization” during the conference, according to Allen Pomraning and Sharon White, project managers for the conference.

With a western theme, the conference attendees had an opportunity to hear presentations from the Northwestern Division Commander Brig. Gen. David A. Fastabend; Corps Commander Lt. Gen. Robert B. Flowers; and perspectives of Corps activities from a tribal and environmental action group.

“The week included a hard look at learning organizations; including case studies, listening to our critics, lateral learning from other industries, and team building,” said Pomraning.

“We focused on planning how to sculpt the Division and the Corps for our future,” said White. Walla Walla District Leadership Development Program participants were offered the opportunity to attend most of the conference.



Homer Perkins, NWD chief of Public Affairs, left, and Richard Carlton, chief of Walla Walla District Real Estate, center, share a moment with another attendee at the Vision Conference.



District Commander Lt. Col. Edward J. Kertis Jr. reassures his steed “Cody” before making their grand entrance to the Vision Conference, hosted by the Walla Walla District Jan. 13-17. Cody’s owner, Keri Schenter, a paralegal specialist in the District’s Office of Counsel, provided Cody’s visit to enhance the conference’s Western theme.



Attendees participated in tours of local businesses as part of the learning experience during the Vision Conference.

District heroes

Corps' top engineer awards commander's coins

Ten District employees were selected to receive commander coins from Lt. Gen. Robert B. Flowers, chief of Engineers, at the Town Hall meeting held Jan. 15. The awardees included:

Shawna Schafer – Shawna is an Administrative Officer at Lower Monumental Project who is extremely dedicated to her duties and regularly devotes extra time and effort toward solving administrative and budgetary issues. She continually takes the initiative to find new and improved ways of performing tasks.

Jim Wallace – Jim has served the Walla Walla District with pride and unselfish determination for more than 20 years. He is admired by many of his colleagues for his great courage and consistent performance. He is a person who always puts the needs of others ahead of his own.

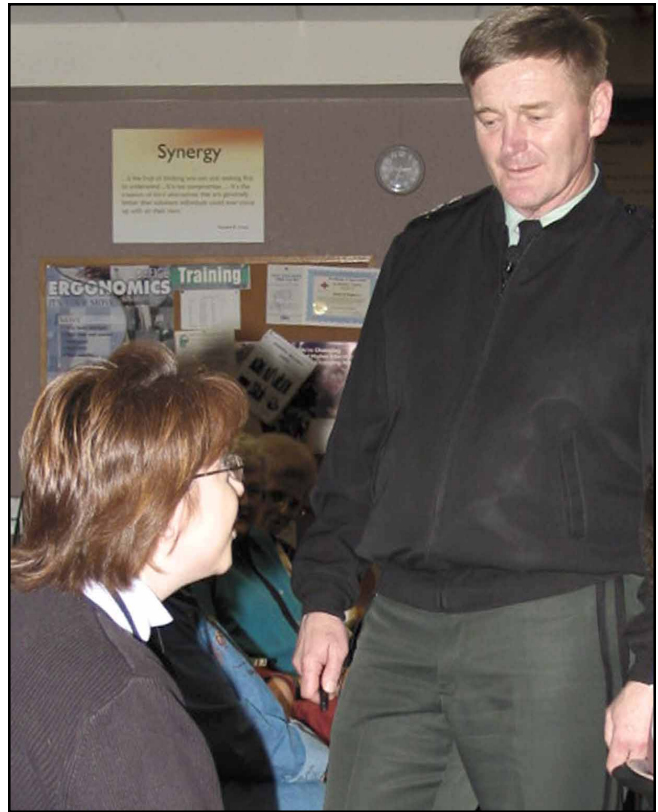
Debra Mallard – Deb, as the senior recruitment specialist in the Civilian Personnel Advisory Center, has spent countless hours, often on her own time, providing advice and assistance to managers and employees on all aspects of recruiting activities. She has helped employees develop resumes and has counseled them on both professional and personal goals. She serves as the CPAC project manager for the Capable Workforce Initiative identifying District needs and developing strategies to meet the immediate and long-term goals.

James Weaver – Jim is a Power Plant Electrician at Ice Harbor Dam. In addition to his normal duties, he quickly assumed the duties of lead electrician in automating the Project's four entrance gates and all aspects for the District's mandated vehicle barriers after September 11. His concern for safety and security and well as his enthusiasm have earned him the respect of his fellow workers and supervisors.

Robert Wall – Rob joined the Walla Walla District Construction Division in September of 2001. In less than one month (and before getting his family settled) he was activated as an Air Force reservist. He spent 11 months in Texas and Italy serving in the defense of his country. Upon his return, Rob's education, experience and personal drive have allowed him to quickly assume the responsibility for management of multiple contracts, and he has gained the respect of all contract parties in his position as Contract Manager.

Ray Eakin – Ray became Walla Walla District's Project Manager for Risk Assessment Methodology-Dams (RAM-D) following the events of September 11th. He and his team completed the assessments for 9 Walla Walla projects ahead of schedule and under budget and developed methods that set many of the standards used by other districts. He also recently served in support of Hurricane Lilli.

Nancy Greene – Nancy is frequently called upon to assist personnel at both the projects and District Headquarters in her position as Administrative officer of the Eastern Operating Area office. She is a team player who can be counted on to provide sound analysis



Lt. Gen. Robert B. Flowers asks Shawna Schafer, an administrative officer at Lower Monumental Dam, for her 30-second commercial during the Town Hall meeting. Photo by Gina Schwetz

and recommendations on a full-range of administrative, budgetary and personnel management issues.

John Hendergart – John, a painter at McNary Dam, was selected by his peers for the Project's Safe Worker award. He often works alone and can always be relied on to complete difficult tasks in a safe manner. He is a member of the confined space rescue team, has served on the safety committee, and was recently a captain on the McNary team for 2002 CFC Campaign.

Holly Reilly – Holly is a relatively new member of the Walla Walla District team. As an administrative assistant for the Mill Creek Project, she energetically takes on a multitude of diverse administrative tasks and demonstrates the outstanding talent and future for the Walla Walla District.

Lisa Rodighiero – Lisa is a program analyst with the Planning, Programs and Project Management Division. Besides her regularly assigned duties, she has served diligently as the CFC Chairperson for the last several years, and this year volunteered as Chairperson for the Fair Committee. She exemplifies the Army value of "selfless service."

Dworshak's gantry crane overhauled

Story by Gina Schwetz

Photos by David A. Tucker, Dworshak

When controllers on Dworshak Dam's 30-year-old gantry crane quit working last fall, the powerhouse maintenance team saw the opportunity to give the entire aging structure an overhaul.

Not only have the control systems been repaired, they're being modified to work more efficiently, according to Dworshak maintenance officials.

The cranes motors will be rebuilt to increase longevity and the operator cab on top of the structure will receive additional safety modifications.

The gantry crane is a four-legged-like structure sitting on rails that run atop the length of the dam. Dworshak officials estimate better than 50 percent of the work this crane does occurs throughout the year assisting the natural resources folks with day-to-day maintenance on the reservoir side of the dam. This includes dry-docking boats and barges for repair and maintenance, and loading cargo and equipment onto the barges. The powerhouse team also uses the crane to place bulkheads on and off the reservoir intake outlets, shutting off the water to work on turbines.

"It's not surprising that all of the crane's controllers burned out – they've been in use since the dam was built in the early-1970s – mechanical things eventually wear out and quit, no matter how well you maintain them," said Bill Shaw, Dworshak's mechanical crew foreman. "But, instead of just replacing the controller



Dworshak Dam's gantry crane helps natural resources personnel with day-to-day maintenance on the reservoir side of the dam like dry-docking boats and barges for repair and maintenance and loading cargo and equipment onto the barges. The powerhouse crew also uses the crane to move bulkheads on and off the reservoir intake outlets to work on turbines.

drives, we're reconfiguring the system to be more versatile and last even longer."

Dworshak's electricians and electronic instrument technician will replace the controller drives and rewiring, said Shaw.

Since the crane will be unusable while the controller were repaired, the down-time presented the opportunity to have the crane's five

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Steve Nobels, a Dworshak mechanic, uses hand signals to instruct the boom truck operator how to maneuver the motor off the top of the gantry crane.



A Dworshak utilityman, Sonny Mitchell, unhooks a gantry crane hook motor from the boom truck's rigging.

Good deeds: Boy Scouts create wildlife habitat with discarded trees at Mill Creek

Story and photo by Gina Schewtz

Boy Scouts from Troop 305 kicked off the New Year by collecting discarded Christmas trees throughout Walla Walla and using them to create new wildlife habitat around the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Walla Walla District, Mill Creek Project area.

"This is our thirteenth year doing the tree drive," said Jay Jesse, Scoutmaster for the troop.

"We cart away the trees on a donation basis. Trees that are flocked or have tinsel will be chipped for fertilizer and mulch. We bring the clean trees out to Bennington Lake for the Corps to use in their habitat areas," he said.

"The Scouts' volunteer project fits right in with the Corps' environmental stewardship mission.

"Rather than throwing them in a landfill somewhere, we placed the trees around the lake to replenish existing habitat for birds and small mammals. We also used some of the trees to block unofficial trails that were created when the lake was flooded in 1996," said Dave Hays, Mill Creek Project operations manager.

Jesse said the Scouts volunteered more than 1600



Mill Creek Operations Manager Dave Hays, left, directs the tree-placement efforts of volunteers from Boy Scout Troop 305 as they block an unofficial path near Bennington Lake.

hours to this year's tree recycling program. The donations received by the troop will help Scouts offset the costs of troop activities like campouts, field trips, uniforms and equipment.

"The tree program is our biggest fund raiser of the year," said Jesse. "Last year, we collected almost \$4,000. The boys also earn credit for volunteerism with this project."

The trees and volunteer hours have a positive impact on operations here, said Hays.

"We always welcome volunteers out here, and the Scouts' tree project enhances other visitors' recreation experience out here," Hays said.

"More habitat equals more birds and critters for people to enjoy watching when they visit our facilities."

Some of the species that often use the new habitat sites include: rabbits, fox, mice, skunks, voles, snakes, pheasant, quail, woodpeckers, and a variety of sparrows and song birds.

Wanted! District stories, photos

Ever wonder how the stories make it to the INTERCOM? Most come in as ideas by staff offices and employees.

Do you know someone that has an unusual hobby, supports their community or found a way to the job that would be great to share?

The Public Affairs Office accepts stories, photos and story ideas for publication in the monthly INTERCOM.

Digital photos should be shot at 1200x1600 pixels. Most digital

cameras more than 2 megabytes will accommodate this setting. Everyone in the photos should be identified, with their work location and job title. Posed photos or presentation photos should be avoided. People working or performing a task are more interesting. Be sure we can see their eyes. Stories should have the basic information of who, what, where, when and why?

For more information, contact the Public Affairs Office at (509) 527-7020 or cenww-pa@usace.mil.

Troubles with traveling on electron highway noted

by Ray Quinn, Chief
Civilian Personnel Advisory Center

To paraphrase a line from "The Music Man," we got trouble (sometimes) here in the river city, and it starts with "T" and that rhymes with "C" and that stands for computers.

Yes, incredibly, some folks actually have trouble with computers, and our wonderful help desk staff are always ready, willing and able to assist.

But what we are talking about here is not how to use them: it's what we can use them to do.

Just as there are places we shouldn't go and things we shouldn't do with our cars, and that's especially true if the cars belong to Uncle Sam, there are some inappropriate places to go and things to do on the electronic highway too. And, in both cases, the results may be unpleasant.

We all know, for example, that we should know where we're headed before we begin the journey.

Starting a browsing trip on the Internet without a good address can easily take us to the seamy side of cyberspace, where "explicit" doesn't mean clear explanation, and a good explanation will be REALLY necessary when the site shows up on our usage records.

So, know where you're going and why you're going there. Being in the wrong place, especially if you stay there, could result in some punitive action.

Now, if you do go, in your non-duty time, to L.L.

Bean or Lands End land, be sure you just look.

All those nifty things they have for sale can easily be purchased 24 hours a day at a convenient 800 number. Write it down and call from home (try 2 a.m. just to test them).

Do not order on-line, using District computers, at any time of the night or day, even 2 a.m. Ordering on-line in those circumstances is misuse of the computer and, once again, could result in punitive action.

Speaking of a chain of events, chain letters sometimes show up in your e-mail. And, of course, some of us superstitious folks are inclined to send them on. But, we can't. Forwarding chain letters on District computers (or in the District mail system, for that matter) is strictly prohibited and could result in disciplinary action. As my doctor often says to me, "Just don't do it."

While we're talking about doctors, have you heard the joke about the doctor who forgot to.... Oh-oh, better be careful. Using our computers to share offensive jokes or anecdotes is a violation of our policies, regardless of the intended audience.

Finally, enjoy your job here, and please don't use our time or computers to do any other job. Using our equipment, computers or other resources, to do work for your personal gain is a serious violation of our rules and the Code of Conduct for federal employees. Don't make your other job your only job.

We hope these reminders aren't very necessary, but just in case, let's stay out of e-jail.

Dworshak crane overhaul

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aging motors overhauled – two drive wheel motors at the bottom of the crane to push it along the length of the dam, one trolley motor on top that moves the hook carriage across the width of the dam and two hook motors on the trolley.

The \$4,400 motor rebuild contract was awarded to Strom Electric from Troy, Idaho. The motors were removed by a boom truck's crane and should be rebuilt and returned to the dam in February, said Shaw.

"In addition to the motors and controllers being refurbished, we plan to extend the crane operator cab about four feet over the reservoir side of the dam and

install dual controls so the operator can move from either side of the cab to see where he's moving his load," Shaw added.

That cab extension will tremendously improve safety functions of the crane – as it was originally designed, there are times when the operator can't see where the load hook is and has to rely solely on another person's hand signals to direct the crane.

Once all the repairs and modifications are complete, the crane must be load-tested and certified. Time is ticking on the project, said Shaw, as maintenance requirements at the dam need the crane back in operation by June.



After unloading the gantry crane motors, Sonny Mitchell, a Dworshak utilityman, guides the shackles as a 20-ton boom truck lowers its hook