



US Army Corps  
of Engineers  
Walla Walla District

# Intercom

Serving the military and civilian members of the Walla Walla District

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# Living among giants: coworkers' loss spurs reflection

*"What I love the most about the law is that every now and again – not often, but occasionally – you get to be a part of justice being done. And, it really is quite a thrill when that happens."* - - a quote from Tom Hanks' character in the movie Philadelphia.



Linda Kirts

So also is it with public service. In it, you have the privilege, as well as the duty, to act with integrity in the public interest. And despite the strictures and frequent frustrations of working in a bureaucracy, every now and again, you get to be a part of something special, worthwhile.

Some public servants are giants in courage and spirit, sacrificing themselves in defense of others or a just and noble cause: firefighters

rushing into flaming buildings to save others, our military battling in defense of country, leaders willing to take an unpopular public stand on a matter of honor or principle. Some of these public servants make the ultimate sacrifice. Their dedication to duty and their courage make them giants, but they are not the only ones.

As we travel through life, there are many giants among us. We just don't always notice or identify them as such. Many giants never make the headlines, never save a life, never take up arms to defend freedom.

Many live so-called "ordinary" lives. They go through life, day by day, simply – even quietly – doing their jobs, fulfilling their obligations, respecting and accepting themselves and others, confronting their own demons and conquering their own personal challenges. In other words, living courageously.

You may know a few of these giants. I know I do. We share Army values and Corps experiences with some of them.

During this past month, our Walla Walla Corps

family lost two of its dear members – Nancy Wanderscheid and Jim Wallace.

Wanderscheid, a budget officer in the Resource Management Office, worked in Walla Walla District for 27 years. She suffered complications following surgery to treat an ankle injury incurred this past winter. Nick Moramarco, RM chief, said that Nancy was one of those employees who quietly served. "She always made sure her job got done right and on time," said Moramarco. "She was so dedicated to her duties. She hardly used any sick leave and never once scheduled annual leave when month-end reports were due." Her death reminds us how fragile life can be.

Wallace worked for 24 years as an office automation clerk in the Office of Counsel. A lesser person would have died years before. For all of his almost-60 years of life, he fought an illness that crippled him and would eventually paralyze his throat. But for all of the physical obstacles he encountered each day, his mind was clear and focused on how he could win the goals for each day rather than finding convenient excuses for failure. He was one of those giants I mentioned earlier. His passing reminds us how important it is to live life fully, with courage and dignity.

How does one live life fully? Well, the answer – being largely dependent upon one's own personal values, belief systems, talents and life circumstances – will be different for everyone. We have no control over the physical and mental potentialities present at our birth nor can we dictate the socioeconomic circumstances of our early lives. We can as adults, however, make choices and strive every day to grow in wisdom, integrity, compassion and service.

I urge you to look around, to seek out those giants among you who are unsung heroes. Not just the flashy headliners, but also those noble people of dedication and effort who live courageously. Those giants.

Linda Kirts  
Chief Counsel

## Real Estate Division wraps up multiple land leases

by Richard Carlton  
Chief, Real Estate Office

A lease signing ceremony on March 26 in Tri-Cities, Wash., capped a long and complicated process for four local governments and the Walla Walla District.

Negotiations had been ongoing since enactment of the Water Resources Development Act of 1996

to convey approximately 2,000 acres of land on the Columbia, Snake and Yakima Rivers to five local governments and a public port. The five local governments were Benton and Franklin Counties, and the cities of Kennewick, Pasco and Richland. The Port of Pasco ultimately opted out of the process.

Almost all of the lands have been

leased by the municipalities for many years and used for public park and recreation purposes. However, the lessees considered their leases too restrictive and thought they would be better off if they could get complete ownership.

Project team members

See **Lease**, p. 7



# 'Sick joke' targets Lucky Peak

## April Fools false broadcast alarms nearby citizens

### NWW Public Affairs Office

An early morning April Fools Day prank aired by a Boise, Idaho, radio station announcing that Walla Walla District's Lucky Peak Dam on the Boise River had failed prompted concerned citizens to call emergency services in the area.

Officials from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Walla Walla, Wash., and Boise reassured the public that Lucky Peak Dam was safe.

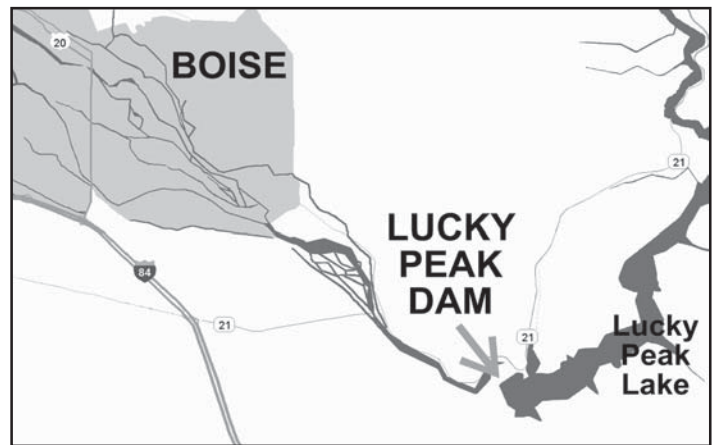
"This dam was secure and operating normally. The radio prank was absolutely false," said Dave Brownell, operations manager at Lucky Peak Dam.

This was not funny and definitely not taken lightly in the area as the public began contacting local law enforcement and emergency management officials, Brownell added.

"It was a sick joke, especially in light of our country's efforts to fight the global war on terrorism. Alarming the public, even for April Fools, was not funny," said Lt. Col. Edward J. Kertis Jr.

"Our 911 dispatchers recorded seven calls about Lucky Peak Dam breaking. Quite a few law enforcement officers in Boise reported they were flagged down by citizens asking about it," said Glenda Britz, Ada County Dispatch acting supervisor.

Britz explained that the total number of calls on the



topic was not available as several real emergencies in Boise that morning kept dispatchers too busy to log all calls they received on the radio hoax.

District Public Affairs officials contacted the radio station, KQXR 100.3 FM. Station officials said they would broadcast announcements throughout the rest of the day that their morning fake news report had been an April Fools Day joke. Public Affairs sent a flash release to news media outlets in the area to get the word out to the public.

Federal Communications Commission rules concerning false broadcasts can be found at <http://ftp.fcc.gov/cgb/consumerfacts/falsebroadcast.html>.

## Employees can make TSP changes through June 30

### from an ABC announcement

The next Thrift Savings Plan open season will run April 15 through June 30. Open seasons allow TSP-eligible employees to begin contributing to the TSP or change the amount of their existing TSP contributions.

During this open season,

employees covered by the Federal Employee Retirement System may elect to contribute to the TSP up to 14 percent of the basic pay they earn each pay period.

Employees covered by CSRS may contribute up to nine percent of their basic pay each pay period.

An employee may also reduce or drop contributions during this TSP Open Season.

These changes must be made through the Army Benefits Center website, [www.abc.army.mil](http://www.abc.army.mil), or call the ABC at 1-877-276-9287. Hard copy TSP-1 forms will not be accepted.

### On the Cover...

Jesse Bruke, a worker for Dix Corp., Spokane, Wash., guides new cables onto the wheel-like sheave in the navigation lock tower mechanical room. The \$415,000 contract included replacing the cables and bearings on the gates at both ends of Lower Monumental's lock.



photo by Gina Baltrusch

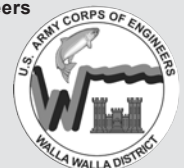
### Intercom



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# LoMo's navigation lock gates get new gear

by Gina Baltrusch

After more than 30 years of helping boat traffic travel up and down the lower Snake River, Lower Monumental Dam's navigation lock gates got a mechanical works extreme makeover in March.

Unlike the radical body re-dos done on television, the changes to the gates are difficult to see from the outside. However, Walla Walla District maintenance and lock operations workers at the dam noticed considerable improvement inside the mechanical rooms following a complete cable and hoist bearing replacement on both gates.

"We had all 32 cables tested last summer," said Tom Moritz, a mechanical design engineer at the District headquarters. "We used magnetic flux leakage measurement technology to measure loss of metallic area and detect broken strands.

"The testing indicated that all of the cables were significantly worn and corroded. Some of the wire strands inside the cables were even broken in places," he said.

Maintenance experts took particular note of the eight cables on the lock's upstream tainter gate. Wear and tear on that gate's cables was found in the same location as the cables that failed Nov. 16, 2002, at Portland District's John Day Dam navigation lock.

"It's the same type of gate, and the same kind of wear had occurred," said Ron Standring, LoMo's power plant

mechanic crew supervisor. "The risk was evident... we had to replace the cables."

The condition of the cables could have resulted in hoist failure – a serious safety issue if failure occurred during a vessel lockage, said Moritz.

An inspection of the mechanical components for raising and lowering the gates found considerable wear on the hoist bearings, too.

The District awarded Dix Corp., of Spokane, Wash., the \$415,000 contract to replace the cables and bearings.

During the first three weeks of March, Dix workers found themselves coated with a new type of grease as they strung new cables on the gates and put new bearings on the hoist sheaves.

"The new grease we found is pretty cool stuff," added Standring. "It's environmentally friendly, safe for fish and is better at staying where it's applied."

Dix workers spent the last few days of the job adjusting the cables to evenly distribute the weight of the gate. Like fine-tuning a piano's strings to perfect pitch, they tightened and loosened tension until the load was equal on each line.

"The gate runs much more smoothly and quietly," said Standring. "They really worked hard to get it done right."

Maintenance workers at the dam plan to monitor wear on the new cables and bearings, keeping the lock operational and safe for commercial and recreational river traffic.



photos by Gina Baltrusch

Above, Jim Belyea, a Dix Corp. ironworker foreman, guides new cables onto one of the downstream cable sheaves, wheel-like gears that align the cables used to raise and lower Lower Monumental Dam's navigation lock gates. Right, Scott Hoilman (blue hardhat) and Dale Brian, both Dix journeyman millwrights, replace the bearings on an upstream cable sheave.



photo by Sue Walton, Lower Monumental Lock and Dam

Workers used cutting torches to remove the 30-plus-year-old cables.







photo by Gina Baltrusch

Joe Oriano, left, and Bill Zimelman, Dix journeyman ironworkers, attach the cable yokes to the lock gate.



photo by Sue Walton, Lower Monumental Lock and Dam

Gale Morgan (blue plaid shirt), a District quality control inspector, and Dix representatives Mike Walter, left, and Craig Talbot, right, discuss drive alignment.



photo by Gina Baltrusch

Dix workers unwind a new, grease-coated cable to be raised by crane and lowered through the roof of the gate tower and onto the sheave.



photo by Gina Baltrusch

Jesse Bruke, a Dix journeyman ironworker guides a cable yoke down to the counterweights to be attached.





# Real estate specialist's hobby leads to international honors

by **Gina Baltrusch**

A District real estate specialist will be one of many who travel overseas this summer. But, this trip will be a bit different.

She's flying to Europe in June to judge the national deerhound club dog show in Oslo, Norway.

"The invitation came as a complete surprise," said Jana Brinlee, a 21-year career federal employee who also owns Jaraluv Kennel with her husband Ray Brinlee, a retired professional dog trainer-handler. "Being asked to judge internationally is a great honor."

Jana met Ray at a dog show in 1977 while she was showing a young Borzoi hound. Together, they chartered Jaraluv Kennel, raising and showing Scottish Deerhounds. Starting with quality stock, they selectively bred the dogs to emphasize the physical traits and temperament considered the ideal standard for the breed.

The Brinlees' reputation for producing quality deerhounds grew. Their dogs consistently placed well at regional and breed shows over the years. Last year, Jaraluv Kennel caused a stir in deerhound breeder circles. Champion Jaraluv Keep the Faith garnered a second-time win at the Scottish Deerhound Club of America National Specialty competition.

"We're very proud of Faith," said Jana. "She's the only deerhound to have won the club event two years in a row in the history of the breed."

In December 2003, the Brinlees' put Walla Walla on the American dog-world map when Faith earned high honors at the American Kennel Club/Eukanuba National Championship dog show.

The small-town hound lovers left this year's AKC national show with four awards: Best of Breed overall, Best of Breed in the bred-by-exhibitor class, a second

place in the hound group – bred-by-exhibitor class and a fourth place award in the overall hound group.

People watching the championship, simulcast on both Animal Planet and Discovery Channel television stations Jan. 31, may have seen Ray in the ring showing Faith to the hound group judges.

"That was really quite a success for us. We're not a high-profile kennel – we're the poor folks at a competition like that," said Jana, who handles property issues primarily in eastern areas of the District.

The Brinlees' patience and selectiveness with their breeding program caught judges' attention with comments like, "the Scottish Deerhound was very stylish with good movement... well presented... the dog was happy."

After the nationals, the Brinlees spent a couple of months at home with Faith and four other hounds that serve as the cornerstone of Jaraluv stock.

In March, they flew to England to compete two Jaraluv-bred dogs at the renowned Crufts competition in London. Both dogs took second place in their respective breed classes at what is touted by the Animal Planet website as "the canine World Cup."

Jaraluv Kennel's quality reputation garnered Jana the invitation to judge at the Norwegian show this summer.

"To me, the past year's shows and that invitation gave confirmation that our breeding program is on the right track," said Jana.

The Brinlees show dogs on a limited basis. They breed the hounds even less often, stressing quality over quantity.

"It's not about making money. In the 24 years we've run Jaraluv Kennel, our dogs have had only eight litters," said Jana. "It's about preserving the integrity of the breed standard into the future."



Photo by Dutch Meier



Photo by Gina Baltrusch

Above, Faith snuggles on the living room sofa with Jana Brinlee, a Walla Walla District real estate specialist and Scottish Deerhound enthusiast. Left, Brinlee guides a lessee through the lease-signing process during a ceremony held in Tri-Cities March 26.



Photo provided by Jana Brinlee

Ray Brinlee poses Champion Jaraluv Keep the Faith, nicknamed Faith, for her post-competition photo at the 2003 American Kennel Club National Championship dog show in December.

# District prepares for Engineer Regiment muster

by Gina Baltrusch

Walla Walla District officials plan to hold ceremonies during June to honor those who belong to the U.S. Army Engineer Regiment.



**Engineer Regiment Crest**

These aren't just more unfamiliar, rigid-protocol, flag-waving events for the "green-suiters," say ceremony organizers.

"Many U.S. Army Corps of Engineers civilian

employees don't even know that they are a part of the regiment," said Maj. Harry Cunningham, deputy commander. "Civilians play an important role in the history of the regiment, particularly on the civil works side of the house. This regimental muster ceremony will formally add them to the rolls as registered members of the Army Engineer Regiment."

The Army Chief of Engineers directed in June 2003 that every U.S. Army Corps of Engineers organization would establish a regimental rolls ledger, or "muster book," and conduct an annual Engineer Regimental muster ceremony.

There are two objectives to this program: first, to establish a standard annual ritual for recognizing excellence among the members of the Army Engineer Regiment; second, to collect and maintain the regimental rolls muster book and muster card documentation program.

The muster book will not be released for any purpose except to account for the number of Army engineers in the force, past and present.

The Engineer Regiment includes every engineer Soldier, every Corps civilian employee and every Army civilian employee performing Department of Public Works duties, regardless of rank or job skill. Soldiers and civilians who have held these qualifications and been honorably discharged or retired are also members of the regiment.

"I think it's great that there is a top-driven effort going on to formally record civilian members in the regiment's roles," said Cunningham. "The muster book will have historical value for the District, too."

The regimental muster is intended to become an annual tradition at all Army engineer organizations. The muster will provide the opportunity to update the members of the regiment

with essential information, identify, assemble and register its members, recognize achievements and honor past members.

A muster card will be issued as a permanent record of registration to the regimental rolls. Each person should safeguard the one-time-issue muster card.

All District members current and retired are encouraged to attend a regimental muster at one of the ceremony sites. Walla Walla District ceremonies are scheduled as follows:

McNary Lock and Dam, June 1; Ice Harbor Lock and Dam, June 1; Coeur D'Alene Regulatory Office, June 4; Boise Forward Office, Lucky Peak Dam and Idaho Falls Regulatory Office, June 15; Lower Monumental Lock and Dam, June 16; Little Goose Lock and Dam, June 16; Lower Granite Lock and Dam, June 16; Clarkston Natural Resource Office, June 16; Dworshak Dam, June 17; and the District Headquarters and Mill Creek Project, June 18, as part of Engineer Day activities.

Event organizers are still coordinating specific times for the ceremonies. Retired District members should call (509) 527-7700 to advise event coordinators of their intent to attend one of the ceremonies.

## Lease, from p. 7

encountered many hurdles during the conveyance process. The major obstacle proved to be compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

The lands include numerous Native American cultural and burial sites. That made the tribes important stakeholders in the process.

The tribes preferred that the lands stay under Corps jurisdiction to retain protections afforded by federal laws – particularly the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act and the NHPA. Conversely, the municipalities became concerned about potential financial liabilities if, as landowners, they became primarily responsible for protection of cultural resources.

To address these concerns, the municipalities asked that the District consider the possibility of new, long-term leases that could meet the objectives of both the entities and the tribes. Lengthy negotiations followed.

The team achieved success when cultural resource



Photo by Dutch Meier

**District Commander Lt. Col. Edward J. Kertis Jr. signs leases with Tri-Cities government representatives during a ceremony on March 26, wrapping up nearly eight years of negotiations.**

stipulations were negotiated and approved by the tribes and the State Historic Preservation Office. The stipulations were incorporated into the leases and include processes the lessees must follow to comply with Section 106 of NHPA and to handle inadvertent discoveries.



# Workers install 'McMod' prototype fish screens



Photos by Terry Zerb, Construction Division

Above, contractor workers from Oregon Ironworks rig a prototype vertical barrier screen to a crane for installation at McNary Dam. Below, the 19-by-60-foot screen is raised to a vertical position, then lowered into position in the gate well.



by Gina Baltrusch

While turbine prototypes are being designed overseas, Walla Walla District planners continue to work on other aspects of McNary Dam modernization, or "McMod."

The dam moved one step closer to modernization this spring when workers installed several styles of prototype turbine fish screens for initial testing.

"The new screens and turbines will work together," said Rick Emmert, project manager for McMod. "The new turbines will pass more water through the turbine, causing additional flow to be diverted into the fish collection gate well. That may cause an increase of debris entering the gate well where the fish screens are inserted. We're testing three different types of screens to handle the potential increase of debris."

Oregon Ironworks of Portland, Ore., won the million-dollar contract to fabricate and install the prototype screens.

One is designed with horizontal bars, another with vertical bars and the third with a plastic mesh screen that rotates on its frame for self-cleaning, called a traveling vertical barrier screen.

"Contract workers had to cut new slots in the dam's concrete deck to install the prototypes," said Terry Zerb, a District quality assurance inspector. "The screens are huge – 60 feet tall by 19 feet wide. Installing them was quite a feat."

Only the traveling screen mechanically removes the debris.

"The force of the water holds debris onto the plastic screen as it moves, like a perforated conveyor belt, on its frame," Emmert explained. "The debris gets pushed over the top of the screen and dumped into another gate well, then back-flushed into the tailrace on the downstream side of the dam. This self-cleaning design has potential to reduce maintenance requirements. We'll just have to wait and see how all of them work over the next year."

All three types of screens were installed for testing throughout the rest of the year to evaluate debris-handling characteristics and gather biological impact data, said Emmert.

"Based on what we learn from the test period, we'll decide which aspects of the screens should be incorporated into a final design," he said. "Our overall goal is to have screens that will improve fish passage, handle the McMod turbines' projected flow differences and reduce maintenance," said Emmert.

The project team intends to have a phase-two screen design manufactured and installed next spring for final testing.



Photos by Terry Zerb, Construction Division

Above, Dwayne Weston, left, a mechanical engineer in Design Branch, checks the traveling screen's controls. Right, Oregon Ironworks crewmen install the traveling vertical barrier screen.

