



US Army Corps
of Engineers
Walla Walla District

Intercom

Serving the military and civilian members of the Walla Walla District

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January-February 2005



McNary rehabs spillway gates

FROM WHERE I SIT

Change: it's a good thing



Maj. Don Pincus
Deputy Commander

Life dramatically changed for my family and I this summer. We moved from the East Coast (New York State) to Walla Walla, Washington.

In New York, I primarily worked at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. The last five months of my assignment, I spent working in downtown New York City – trains, subways, hustle-bustle and two-hour commutes each way to and from work.

What a warm and welcome change it was to come here to live and work! Not only warm with 100-degree temperatures when I arrived in July, but more importantly, friendly folks, 10-minute commutes, and interesting and challenging times. I truly feel privileged to be here working together with you as

part of the Walla Walla team, the Northwestern Regional Business Center and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as we forge ahead to improve our organization in a changing world of USACE 2012, P2 and competitive sourcing.

It was a pleasure meeting everyone and learning about what you do as the commander and I “made the rounds.” You’ll be seeing more of the District’s senior staff out at the projects. I developed a plan to get key members of the District G&A staff out to visit the project sites. We want to learn more about the work our folks are doing at the projects and ensure that the District headquarters team is providing the effective and efficient support you need to accomplish our mission.

Now, a little more on 2012, P2 and competitive sourcing.

You all are aware that our organization as a whole (USACE) is transforming. Business process innovation equals true transformation – that’s why we are in the midst of implementing USACE 2012, P2 and competitive sourcing. As one senior leader at a recent conference put it, the Corps is taking measures to provide our customers, “Xerox quality at Wal-Mart prices and FedEx speed.” Bottom line – we’re going to provide better services at lower costs in a more timely manner. We will get rid of the notion that “the Corps takes too long and costs too much.”

USACE 2012

Key members of the Walla Walla District have been heavily involved and are continuing to assist in developing and standing up the Division’s Regional Business Center. We have 38 District employees on 40 project delivery teams that are exploring ways to gain efficiencies at the regional level. Leaders will keep you posted on the progress of this effort. The regional leadership is pushing to finalize the 2012 plan quickly and implement it in a deliberate manner.

P2

As many of you are painfully aware, we are currently operating in the P2 business software environment. Thank-you for your dedicated efforts and cooperative spirit in implementing this fledgling system. I recently attended the USACE District Commanders’ Course. There, I quickly learned that folks across USACE are struggling with P2 implementation. The general message was that P2 is currently a “sick puppy.” Users are encountering glitches with the software system.

However, the good news is that USACE senior leaders assured us that “the veterinarian is in the house.” In the long run, P2 will be a tremendous asset to the Corps. Please, continue your efforts to make it work.

Competitive Sourcing

The information management function is currently in the competitive sourcing process. Logistics management will begin the process in fiscal year 2005. Operations and maintenance of inland navigation is projected to be competed in FY 2006. A brief

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Commander: Lt. Col. Randy Glaeser
Public Affairs Team Lead: Joe Saxon
Senior PA Specialist: Nola Conway
Editor/PA Specialist: Gina Baltrusch
Public Affairs Assistant: Krissy Antes

For more information, contact:

Public Affairs Office
Walla Walla District
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
201 N. Third Avenue
Walla Walla, WA 992
Phone: (509) 527-7020
Fax: (509) 527-7824
E-mail: cenww-pa@usace.army.mil

On the Cover...

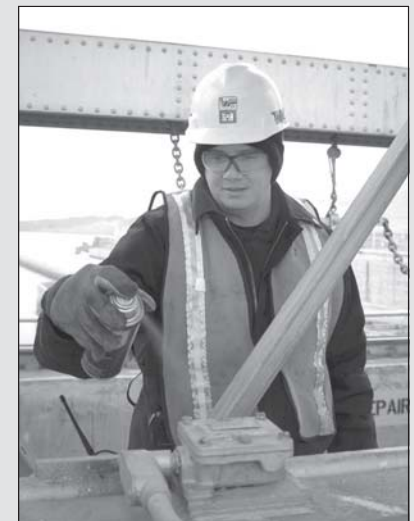


photo by Gina Baltrusch

Peter Stewart, a rigger at McNary Dam’s powerhouse, lubricates linkage mechanisms on the gantry crane’s lifting beam before hooking up and moving a refurbished spillway gate. Four of McNary’s 50-year-old spillway gates were rehabilitated with new seals and wheels during the winter work season. See story and more photos on pages 6-7.

See **Change**, p. 10

DoD seeks input on proposed personnel rules

from an OSD-PA news release and a HQ, USACE, Corps Points article

On Feb. 10, the Department of Defense and Office of Personnel Management submitted the proposed regulations for the National Security Personnel System for publication in the Federal Register.

The proposal offers rules and processes for a new human resources system for DoD civilian employees regarding pay and classification, performance management, hiring, workforce shaping, disciplinary matters, appeals procedures, and labor-management relations.

NSPS was signed into law on Nov. 24, 2003, and for the past year DoD and OPM officials have been working to design a modernized, performance-based civilian personnel system.

The conversion of employees to the new system will be done in groupings called spirals. Implementation of Spiral One includes approximately 300,000 U.S. - based Army, Navy, Air Force,

and other Department of Defense general schedule civilian employees, including about 8,300 Corps employees in three Corps divisions and their districts — South Pacific Division, Southwestern Division and Mississippi Valley Division. Other Corps divisions, districts and centers will be converted to NSPS in future phases of Spiral One over the next 18-months.



Corps organizations not converted in Spiral One will be covered in Spiral Two and Spiral Three, which will include DoD labs should current legislative restrictions be eliminated. The new system is to be fully implemented across DoD by the July 2007-January 2008 timeframe. DoD adopted a spiral strategy in order to manage initial implementation of NSPS and assess and evaluate its rules and

supporting systems so that refinements can be made prior to implementation throughout DoD.

NSPS will improve the way DoD hires, assigns, compensates and rewards its employees, while preserving the core merit principles, veterans' preference and important employee protections and benefits of the current system. The proposed regulations are the result of a broad-based effort that included input from DoD employees, supervisors, managers, senior leaders, union representatives and public interest groups.

At a press conference Feb. 10, Navy Secretary Gordon England, who serves as the Department of Defense's senior executive overseeing the National Security Personnel System, and Dan Blair, acting director of the Office of Personnel Management, called the publication of the proposed NSPS regulations a critical milestone in the development of this new personnel

See **NSPS**, p. 11

Printable W-2s online

from a myPay website information bulletin

Federal civilian employees, retirees and military personnel can view, print and save their tax statements using the myPay website, <https://mypay.dfas.mil>.

A printer-friendly version of W-2s or W-2Cs is available by clicking the "Printer-Friendly W-2" button located on the online display of your electronic W-2. It requires Adobe Acrobat Reader.

Before filing your W-2 or W-2C with your tax return, carefully separate the copies printed on a single page. When filing your tax return, you are not required to include/send the instructions on the back of the W-2.

Army Active, Army Reserve and Army Guard soldiers can also view, print and save their Student Loan Repayment Program (SLRP) tax statements on myPay.

Editor's Note: Walla Walla District's Information Management Office personnel have loaded Acrobat Reader software on all District computers. Always check with your organization's information technology experts before downloading any online software to a government-owned computer to be sure applicable security policies allow installation.

Congress passes FY05 omnibus bill

from a HQ, USACE, Corps Points article

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2005, (also known as the omnibus bill) was passed by Congress on Nov. 20 and signed into law by President George W. Bush on Dec. 8 as Public Law 108-447.

The consolidated act includes the Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act, 2005, which provides \$4.705 billion for the USACE Civil Works Program for fiscal year 2005.

In general, the Civil Works Program funding for FY05 is broken out as follows:

- General Investigations, \$144.5 million.
- Construction General, \$1.796 billion.
- Mississippi River and Tributaries, \$324.5 million.
- Operations & Maintenance, \$1.959 billion.
- Regulatory, \$145 million.
- Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program, \$165 million.

See **Omnibus**, p. 11

Character in combat –

observations of a deployed Corps volunteer

Editor's Note: Frank Scopa, a civil engineer from Walla Walla District's Construction Division deployed Oct. 3 to support the Corps' mission in Iraq. His original notes from this Jan. 3 experience were sent on Jan. 9 to stateside coworkers and friends as "an in-between" to his usual monthly correspondence. Intercom staff consulted with Scopa to approve edits made to his original letter for publication purposes.

Commentary by Frank Scopa

Early one morning about a week ago, I was at the gym (an entirely different kind of war). In the course of riding the stationary bicycle, about half way through the normal 30 minutes, I had difficulty getting my breath.

At times, I can be really intelligent, and this was one of those times, so I stopped pedaling. I sat and rested for about 30 minutes and finally felt better. One of the construction inspectors who works for me suggested that I should get my blood pressure checked. Again, I can amaze myself with my intelligence – I agreed to go.

Just before lunch, I headed to the hospital so they could check my blood pressure. It was up a little. Okay, just more than a little. Okay, okay, it was higher than it should have been. The next thing I knew, the overly cautious doctor had me being monitored in the intensive care unit.

I spent nine hours in ICU being monitored and annoyed by the circumstances. For four hours, I was the only patient. I did not lack for attention. When I tried to use the facilities, I was escorted by people who must have been extremely bored. I was not allowed to stand up out of the bed without at least one nurse or hospital medic on hand to help my balance.

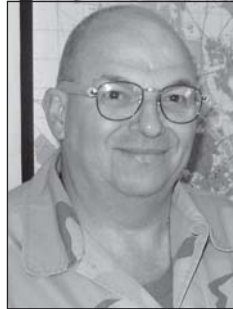
On one hand, it was flattering, the attention and all. On the other hand, my blood pressure had returned to the normal range, but "We don't want to take a chance that you could have had a heart attack."

To which I responded, "Excuse me, but my blood chemistry was normal. There was no sign of cardiac enzymes being out of whack, so I did not have a heart attack. Why don't you let me go?"

To which they responded, "Go lie down and don't get out of the bed until we tell you to."

These folks were driving me nuts. I don't *get* high blood pressure – I *cause* other folks to have high blood pressure. Everybody who knows me would accept this last statement as being the absolute truth. These doctors, nurses and hospital medics just did not understand my modus operandi.

Since I've been wearing this lovely matching ensemble in browns and tans, with such accoutrements as an equally lovely contrasting flak jacket and helmet, I've had to realize



Frank Scopa

that I have to accept orders and even follow them. I dutifully stayed in my bed, made caustic but endearing remarks to the hospital staff, and generally accepted that I could be spending the night in the ICU where there is absolutely no rest.

After four hours of relative bed rest (a real misnomer), another patient was brought in.

The patient was a four-year-old Iraqi boy whose family drove into the middle of an ambush. The boy's mother was killed in the exchange of gunfire, and his father was also wounded.

The boy was brought into the ICU to be monitored until the surgeons could operate on his hip to repair the damage. The boy was not told about his mother. An interpreter was on hand to assist with the translation so the hospital staff would understand how the poor little guy felt.

An hour or so later, an older cousin of the boy was escorted into the ICU. He was the nephew of the woman who was killed. He also talked with the child and the staff. Again, the child was not told about his mother. The child had numerous hospital staff around him at all times trying to comfort him, ensure that he had no pain, was distracted enough not to ask about his parents, etc. You must have a mental picture of this by now.

Into this world of pain and gunshot wounds on the innocent, a new patient came into the ICU. This patient had at least three surgeons assisting the hospital staff move the gurney into the ICU. This patient was unconscious. He had tubes coming out of every orifice, plus at least two out of his chest that I could see when they wheeled him past my bed. This was a dark-skinned man with very thick, dark, coarse hair. He was not tall and had a barrel chest. I could tell that he had received at least two gunshot wounds – one to the chest and one to the shoulder. He seemed to be stirring a little, completely disoriented after anesthesia and surgery. Perhaps, he was disoriented from the pain killers he must have been receiving.

After staring at him for several minutes, I could tell that he was an Arab. The doctors, nurses and medics work on this guy as if the future of the human race depended on his survival. After this newest addition to the ICU seemed to be settled in, a second patient was brought in from surgery.

This one was in much worse shape than the first guy and also an Arab. He also had tubes from everywhere plus some. He was on a respirator, unable to breath on his own. I watched the second set of doctors, nurses and medics work on this patient, too.

Since his bed was less than four feet from mine, I was able to observe everything that was done to ensure his survival. What seemed to be pandemonium around his bed had been rehearsed and perfected with previous patients. Fluid quantities were measured going in and coming out. Several of the operating room personnel listened to his chest at the same time comparing their prognoses.



Photos by Steve Brockhouse, deployed from Omaha District, serving as a quality assurance inspector in Mosul, Iraq

Frank Scopa, a civil engineer from Ice Harbor Dam, serves as a Resident Engineer/Assistant Area Engineer with the Gulf Region Division, North District, Mosul Area Office.

I was taking all of this in when I noticed that the patient next to me and the first patient brought in both had one hand attached to the head rail of the bed frame with a plastic handcuff. I also noticed that there were two armed Soldiers in the ICU. Each patient had an armed guard attached to them.

At this time, I sat up and observed that in black letters, approximately 1-1/2 inches high, on their foreheads were the letters AIF, which means Anti Iraqi Force. Both of these patients were insurgents. They had been wounded in the firefight of the ambush which they started that afternoon with the American forces in Mosul. I learned from one of the nurses that two American Soldiers had been hit in this ambush. One had died, and the other was still in surgery.

Here were two of the barbarians that caused an innocent child to nearly be killed by their attack on the Americans. The child's mother was dead, the child's father was wounded but expected to recover, one American was dead and one was wounded. What was accomplished by this attack? Did the insurgents drive the "crusaders" from Iraq? The insurgents showed, with too much zeal and hatred, that they would kill or cause to be killed anyone that enters their kill zone. One combatant dead – an American, one innocent civilian killed – an Iraqi mother, three combatants wounded, two non-combatants from the same family wounded.

At this point, I told the nurse that I had to get out of the ICU. I was offered another bed someplace other than the ICU. I informed her that I had to leave, that there was nothing wrong with me that a good night's sleep wouldn't cure, and that I *would* be leaving. I started to get dressed by myself, and the blessed nurse finally agreed with me that I needed to leave. She convinced the doctor that I was now extremely

agitated because of the insurgents, and it would be better if I was away from the ICU. A doctor on staff finally agreed that I would be better if I left.

I was overwhelmed with the thoughts of an American dead, a child wounded, his family destroyed and another American wounded. While my thoughts strayed to how simple it would be to unplug this foul excuse of a human being's respirator, there were Americans in the ICU exercising a basic human trait that I had put on hold. They believed in the sanctity of human life. To them it did not matter whose life it was.

This is difficult to accept when you have previously been a combatant in Vietnam. And, in your latest deployment endeavor, you are now a "legitimate military target," yet not a combatant.

I thought about the other Americans in the ambush who called in medical support for the two wounded insurgents, knowing that one American had died at those same insurgents' hands.

Think of the tremendous mental balance these American troops demonstrated. This easily could have been a period of time devoid of all compassionate emotion and human traits.

Instead, they allowed the insurgents to receive medical treatment and live. I wonder, would I have reacted the same way?

I finally left the hospital at 9:30 p.m. For the next couple of hours, all I could think of was how offended I was that two insurgents were alive and an American was dead. I know how he died, and I will not share it, but call it revoltingly violent.

Like the Americans who fought, suffered, died or were wounded in World War II, today's Soldiers, Marines, Airmen and Sailors are the moral equivalent of the WWII vets. They are here to improve the lives of the Iraqis – not to conquer, not to subjugate, not to violate their God-given rights. The parallels were the same for the moral purpose of World War II.

I am grateful to have a view on the actions of the U.S. military personnel that I have been able to observe. As a fellow American, I am so very proud of what I am seeing over here. The actions of these Americans can only enhance the reputation of the United States military.

Be proud of their actions. Be proud of their accomplishments. And most importantly, let them be proud of what they have accomplished. I look into their faces and see my generation under completely different circumstances in Vietnam – we were not allowed to be proud of our sacrifice, our effort. Let these young men and women stand proud.

Take care,

**Frank Scopa
Resident Engineer/Assistant Area Engineer
Mosul Resident Office/Mosul Area Office
Gulf Region Division - North, Iraq**

McNary renews spillway gates

by Gina Baltrusch

Walla Walla District maintenance staff and contracted workers will soon finish a six-month spillway gate rehabilitation project at the District's oldest multi-purpose project.

Fifty years of use and outdoor exposure took its toll on several of the 22 spillway gates at McNary Lock and Dam.

Maintenance inspections identified four vertical-lift, roller-type gates in need of immediate rehabilitation. Items on the fix-it list included rusted wheels and worn-out seals. Increased friction was overloading the hoists used to raise and lower the gates.

"New spill-passage plans to improve water quality in the river require the gates to be operated more frequently," said Bob Hollenbeck, gate project manager and structural engineer. "The rehabilitation was necessary to reduce friction and the overall effects of fatigue on the hoists."

Triad Mechanical, Inc., of Portland, Ore., was awarded the \$2.1 million contract to perform the spillway gate rehabilitation.

Contractors started the job in October, working on one gate at a time. Each 52-foot-high by 50-foot-wide gate consists of two leaves, upper and lower, connected with a horizontal joint. To work on a gate, workers removed it from the spillway bay in sections, placing one leaf in the repair pit and the other leaf in a storage pit. McNary operations and maintenance crews handled the movement of the gates, transporting the sections from the bays to the pits and back again with the dam's gantry crane.

Once inside the repair pit, contractors removed and replaced all gate seals. Eighteen 27-inch-wide wheel assemblies per gate were removed, disassembled, inspected and rebuilt. Workers also repainted all surfaces to help protect the rehabilitated gates from future rust development.

The project was not without challenges, according to District construction officials.

"The old paint that was removed had lead in it," said Terry Zerb, a District quality assurance inspector. "The contractor had to make sure it was contained and disposed of in a manner acceptable with Environmental Protection Agency standards."

Work on the last of the four gates should be done by the end of March, said Hollenbeck. The refreshed infrastructure will be tested before being placed in operation.



Above, Peter Stewart, a rigger at McNary Dam, moves a gate as it is moved by a gantry crane across the dam into a spillway slot. Left, Stewart (at left) and Terry Zerb, a representative from Walla Walla District's Construction Department, discuss the project which spillway to insert a newly refurbished gate.



photos by Gina Baltrusch

monitors a 160-ton spillway
p of the dam for installation
y Zerb, a quality assurance
struction Division, decide
e.



photos by Terry Zerb, Construction Division

Above, hundreds of rust-encrusted gate seal nuts and bolts had to be cut from the gates for workers to remove the old seals. Below, a Purcell Painting (sub-contractor) worker prepares a rehabilitated gate's 18 wheels for painting.



photo by Gina Baltrusch

Brian Lund, an ironworker with Triad Mechanical, Inc., grinds out existing welds to prepare a spillway gate for the installation of new wear shoes.



photo by Terry Zerb, Construction Division

Tom McMauley, superintendent of Triad Mechanical, Inc., grinds the gate guides in a spillway gate slot.

NWW reflects on 2004

by Gina Baltrusch

Walla Walla District met a number of challenges and successes during 2004. Employees tackled the District's routine missions while learning new project-management software, adapting to organizational restructuring, preparing for personnel system changes and responding to numerous requests to support regional and national objectives.



photos provided by GWOT

Fifty Walla Walla District volunteers deployed overseas during 2004 to serve in support of the Global War on Terrorism.

GWOT – The District continued its support of the Army, 50 District volunteers deployed during 2004 to serve the Corps in Iraq and Afghanistan. A total of 74, or roughly 12 percent of those eligible to deploy, have directly supported the Global War on Terrorism.



Kennewick Man – The United States Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit affirmed the district court's decision, and remanded the case back to the lower court for further proceedings consistent with the appellate court opinion. The 9th Circuit's conclusion: "Kennewick Man's remains are not Native American human remains within the meaning of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act and that NAGPRA does not apply to them. Studies of the Kennewick Man's remains by Plaintiffs-scientists may proceed pursuant to ARPA." Northwestern Division is coordinating the effort to work with the scientists to study the remains. Walla Walla District continues to serve as legal custodian of the ancient remains.

Environmental Summit – In March, the District hosted its first "Environmental Summit" with stakeholders. District staff made presentations on a variety of projects. Two non-governmental organization sponsors of continuing authorities program projects also made presentations.

Lease Signing – A lease signing ceremony on March 26 in Tri-Cities, Wash., capped a long and complicated process for four local governments and the 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 local governments. Almost all of the lands have been leased by the municipalities for many years. Difficulty

resolving cultural resources issues led the entities to consider a new lease option rather than conveyance.

McNary Prototype Fish Screens Installed –

McNary Dam moved one step closer to modernization during the spring when workers installed several styles of prototype turbine fish screens for initial testing. Three types of screens were installed for testing throughout the rest of the year to evaluate debris-handling characteristics and gather biological-impact data.

Employee Newspaper Earns Journalistic Honors – Walla Walla District's command newspaper *Intercom* took top honors in the Newsletter category during annual journalism competitions at USACE Headquarters and the Department of the Army. Winners were announced in March.

Lower Monumental Navigation Lock Gates Get New Gear

– During March, Lower Monumental Dam's navigation lock got a complete cable and hoist bearing replacement on both gates. 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.

ASA(CW) Visits NWW – In April, Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works John Paul Woodley Jr. visited Lower Granite Lock and Dam to learn more about the spillway weir operating there and to hear more about another weir being considered for Ice Harbor Dam, near Burbank, Wash. Woodley was also briefed on project funding, short- and long-term goals and objectives, recreation visitation and other District missions and issues.

Chinook Return to Mill Creek

– On May 3, District biologists celebrated the return of chinook salmon to Mill Creek when one was found in a fish trap operated by the Tri-State Steelheaders Association. It had

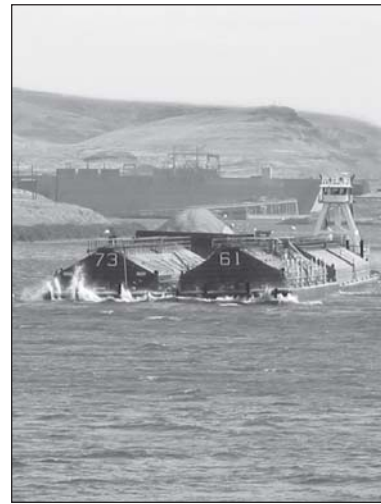


photo by Gina Baltrusch

More than 17-million tons of commodities were transported by commercial shippers via the navigation channel during 2004. The channel allows shipping more than 400 miles inland from the Pacific Ocean to Lewiston, Idaho.



photo by Gina Baltrusch

More than 100 adult chinook salmon passed through the fish ladder at Mill Creek project during 2004.

been about 75 years since anyone documented a chinook salmon in the creek.

First Woman Named Distinguished Civilian – Mary Lou Bollinger, a retired Walla Walla District contracting officer, was inducted into the Gallery of Distinguished Civilian Employees during a Corps Day ceremony on June 18. Her biography and photo hang on a wall in the headquarters' atrium as the first woman to join the District's DCE gallery.

Employees of the Year – Three District members were recognized as employees of the year during Corps Day ceremonies. **Bret Smith**, an electronic systems control repairer at Lower Monumental Project, earned the Outstanding Achievement Award (Trades and Crafts). **Sandy Simmons**, an environmental resource specialist, received the Outstanding Achievement Award (General Schedule). **Bruce Collison**, a structural engineer in Design Branch, was awarded the Outstanding Achievement Award (Engineering).

Change of Command Ceremony – Lt. Col. Randy Glaeser assumed command of the Walla Walla District at a ceremony held July 9. Maj. Don Pincus reported for duty as the new deputy commander at the same time.

CEQ Visit – On July 16, the District commander, and Paul Wemhoener, deputy for project management, and Chris Hyland, project manager for the Corps' Walla Walla River General Investigation study, participated in a basin tour for Jim Connaughton, chairman of the President's Council of Environmental Quality. Hyland gave a co-presentation with Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation staff on the purpose, need, schedule and potential outputs of the GI study.

Cost Engineer of the Year – Karl Pankaskie, a civil engineer from the District's Cost Engineering Branch, was named the 2004 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Cost Engineer of the Year during an Aug. 30 ceremony held in Omaha, Nebraska.

Jackson Hole PCA – The commander signed a Project Cost-share Agreement for the Jackson Hole Environmental Restoration Project on Sept. 13 to help restore fish and wildlife habitat lost as a result of construction, operation and maintenance of levees built by federal and non-federal interests. On Sept. 30, a contract was awarded for Site 9, the first separable project element

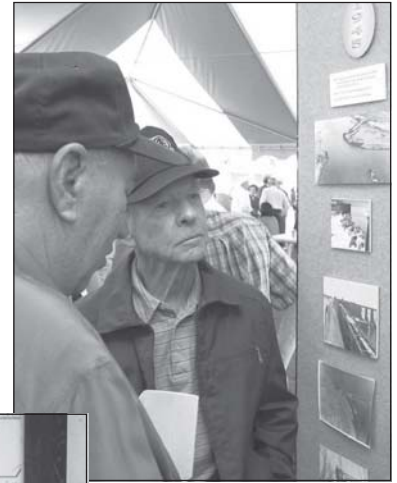
Dworkshak Timber Harvest – In August, loggers began selectively thinning about 1,300 acres of forestland designated for habitat improvement around Dworkshak Reservoir. The job will continue through 2005 using both conventional and helicopter logging methods.



Photo by Gina Baltrusch

Dworkshak Natural Resource staff monitor the selective harvest of timber.

McNary Celebrates 50th Anniversary – More than 300 people attended McNary's 50-year celebration on Sept. 23 at McNary's Spillway Park. Oregon State Senator David Nelson served as guest speaker for the event. Other activities included public tours of the project and a dinner social.



Photos by Gina Baltrusch

Many former Walla Walla District employees who helped build McNary Lock and Dam, attended a 50th anniversary celebration Sept. 23. Current employees prepared photo displays and offered dam tours.



Hurricane Support – During the fall, more than 38 District employees joined other volunteers supporting hurricane recovery efforts in Florida, Alabama and surrounding states affected by Hurricanes Charley, Francis, Ivan and Jeanne. Six volunteers were still in Florida at the end of December supporting the recovery mission there.

McNary Spillway Gate Rehabilitation – Rehabilitation of four spillway gates began in October. The project involves resurfacing wheels, installing low-friction seals and painting. Work should be completed by mid-February 2005, allowing the use of 22 spillway bays.

RSW – News reporters and several federal executives learned more about the District's new spillway weir on Nov. 16 at Thompson Metal Fabrication in Vancouver, Wash., where it is being built. The juvenile fish bypass structure, which helps fish pass safely through spillways with more efficient use of water, is an example of investments made to improve dams. The new \$20-million "fish slide," as NOAA-Fisheries calls it, will be installed at Ice Harbor Dam on the Snake River in 2005.



Photo by Nola Conway

A new spillway weir designed to improve passage conditions for juvenile salmon will be installed at Ice Harbor Dam in February.

Harvey named Army Secretary

by Dennis Ryan, from an Army News Service release

FORT MYER, Va. – The Commander-in-Chief’s Guard emerged from the dark, cavernous confines of Fort Myer’s Conmy Hall Dec.6 as part of the ceremonial review to welcome new Secretary of the Army Dr. Francis J. Harvey.

The colonial-uniformed Fife and Drum Corps and the Army Band played at the ceremony before Harvey reviewed the troops with Col. Charles Taylor, commander of the 3rd U.S. Infantry, known as the “Old Guard.”

Dr. Harvey praised the Army’s core values and rich tradition before relating some of his priorities for his stewardship of the Army. He stressed the need to use technology to help the transformation of the force, especially information technology.

Harvey also cited the need for “business transformation” to make better use of “finite financial assets” to provide more resources for the war fighter.

“As the chief has frequently said, Soldiers are the centerpiece of our formations,” Harvey said. “I could not agree more. As the Secretary of the Army, my top priority will be the well-being of Soldiers and their families. There is no more important aspect of our effort to win the Global War on Terrorism, than taking care of our people.”

The secretary said to ensure the nation’s security in the near term, the Army must meet its fundamental responsibilities to recruit, organize, train, equip, sustain and develop Soldiers and leaders. In the long term, he said there is much work yet to be done in business transformation and developing Network Centric Operations.

“Secretary Harvey brings a wealth of knowledge from private industry,” Army Chief of Staff Gen. Peter Schoomaker said. “These are challenging times for the Army. We ask a lot from our Soldiers and every single day they make us proud.”

Paul Wolfowitz, deputy secretary of defense, gave a brief history lesson – the 60th anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge – which he called the greatest battle ever fought by the Army.

“I mention all this because our troops today are fighting the same kind of battle,” said Wolfowitz. “The men and women of today’s Army are doing [this] generation proud.”

Wolfowitz went on to tell how the Army “deserves civilian leaders as selfless as themselves. President Bush realized how important this was when he appointed Francis J. Harvey.”



Dr. Francis J. Harvey
Secretary of the Army

Investment Board to eliminate TSP open seasons

from an Army Human Resources
Civilian Personnel Bulletin

Public Law 108-469, which was signed into law on Dec. 21, 2004, eliminates the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) open seasons. The Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board will implement this law on July 1, 2005.

Until then, there will be one more open season, April 15 through June 30, 2005.

Beginning July 1, contribution elections will be processed under the new rules. That is, the elections must be made effective no later than the first full pay period after they are filed.

Participants must continue to file contribution elections with their agencies or services, and the agencies and services must continue to implement the elections by deducting contributions from participants’ pay and reporting these amounts to the TSP each pay period. The law does not affect the waiting period new FERS employees must serve before they become eligible for agency contributions to their accounts.

Change, from p. 2

explanation and timeline of the information management competition is provided below to give you an idea of how the competitive sourcing process works:

Workforce announcement	June 1, 2004
Public announcement	June 2, 2004
Develop solicitation, including performance work statement	June 21, 2004 through May 5, 2005
Most Efficient Organization begins management study and agency tender	June 21, 2004 through Sept. 7, 2005
Issue request for proposals	May 6, 2005
Receive proposals	Sept. 13, 2005
Make performance decision (end date)	Nov. 29, 2005

Award contract	March 1, 2006
Begin transition activities	March 2006 through February 2007
Have MEO in place or begin contract operation	February 2007

As we progress, District leaders will continue to provide the workforce with updates on 2012, P2 and competitive sourcing.

I am truly proud to be part of this outstanding organization. I continue to be amazed by our team’s ability to provide talented and selfless service to support the Global War on Terror and hurricane recovery efforts in the Southeast while continuing to superbly perform the important mission we do here in our region each and every day. Keep up the great work.

Thanks for the warm welcome.
Essayons!

Maj. Don Pincus
Deputy Commander

NSPS, from p. 3

system that will emphasize performance rather than longevity as it provides more agile, flexible support to DoD's post-Sept. 11 missions. England stated, "NSPS is a win-win-win system...a win for our employees, a win for our military and a win for our nation."

Blair stated that NSPS will give DoD employees and managers "greater flexibility to accomplish their vital national security mission." He further stated, "True to the intent of the enabling legislation, the proposed regulations successfully balance the mission requirements of the department and the need to maintain core civil service principles and values."

The proposed regulations will be published in the Federal Register on Feb. 14, initiating a 30-day formal public comment period, providing all interested parties the opportunity to submit comments and recommendations on the content of the proposal.

After the comment period, DoD will initiate the statutory meet and confer process with employee representatives for 30 days to discuss their views and concerns regarding the proposed regulations and seek common ground. DoD will report the results and outcome of the meet and confer period to Congress prior to finalizing the regulations, which should occur this spring.

Both England and Blair emphasized

the broad-based effort to include all stakeholders in the design and development of NSPS and encouraged all interested parties to submit comments and continue to be part of that effort.

Implementation of the system will begin as early as July 2005, with full implementation in the July 2007/January 2008 timeframe.

DoD employees as well as interested parties are encouraged to visit the NSPS Web site at www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps to view and comment on the proposed regulations as well as for the most recent information and announcements regarding NSPS.

To view a NSPS slide presentation on the Internet, logon to: www.defenselink.mil/news/Feb2005/d20050210nsps.pdf.

Omnibus, from p. 3

- General Expenses, \$167 million.
- Office of Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works), \$4 million.

Total = \$4.705 billion.

The following are some Civil Works Program highlights included in the FY05 Consolidated Appropriations Act:

- Funds the Office of the ASA(CW) through Civil Works appropriations for the first time. The office had previously been Army-funded.

- Provides final guidance (in report language) on USACE reprogramming within appropriations accounts. The language clarifies the dollar limits at which USACE can reprogram internally without congressional notification and guidance.

- Provides guidance and expresses congressional concerns on USACE's use of continuing contracts.

- Directs that within 75 days of the date of the Chief of Engineers Report on a water resource matter, the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works) shall submit the report to the appropriate authorizing and appropriating committees of Congress.

- Provides \$13.5 million (GI) for Upper Mississippi River/Illinois River Navigation Study.

- Provides \$8.5 million (GI) for Louisiana Coastal Area restoration.

- Provides \$8 million for the American River Watershed (Folsom Dam Mini-Raise) with direction to use up to \$5 million for permanent bridge.

- Provides \$19 million for Missouri River Fish and Wildlife Recovery.

- Provides \$36.5 million for Southeast Louisiana.

- Provides \$119 million for Everglades-related projects.

NOTE: The dollar totals in the highlights above are the appropriations prior to application of Savings and Slippage. S&S is a congressional tool that reduces the appropriation for each of the line items in the Conference Report.

Project manager puckers up for CFC

Story, photo by Gina Baltrusch

Operations Manager Randy Ryan thought he was in the clear when he promised to kiss a pig if McNary Lock and Dam employees met his challenge for them to raise \$11,000 during the Combined Federal Campaign.

"Eleven-thousand is a big sum," said Ryan. "I was pretty sure I wouldn't be coming anywhere near a pig."

Much to Ryan's surprise, not only did the McNary team meet that goal, they exceeded it by almost \$4,000.

So, Ryan made good on his promise during the project's Dec. 18 holiday luncheon and puckered-up for Lulu Bell, a 7-month-old Hampshire pig.

Lulu Bell apparently did not find Ryan an appealing smooching partner. Cookies and candy couldn't sway her. It took two employees to hold down the 160-pound pig so Ryan could sneak the promised peck.

"It was a kind of unique first date," Ryan said. "Mary (his wife) brought the camera."

Last year, Dave Coleman, then acting project manager, put his foot-long ponytail up for cutting if employees met their CFC goal. Employees won the challenge, and Coleman lost his locks to the workers' scissors.

The money raised went to charities that rely on the Combined Federal Campaign, an annual fund-raising drive for federal employees and military personnel.



Charity marks holiday season

by Gina Baltrusch

Year-end holiday activities at the District headquarters focused on community involvement.

The Association of Corps Employees spearheaded efforts to gather food donations and clothing for Walla Walla community charities.

Employees selected cards from the holiday-decorated Giving Tree to provide more than 40 local children in need with clothes, shoes, coats and toys.

District Commander Lt. Col. Randy Glaeser judged a door-decorating contest throughout the headquarters building. Employees could influence the vote for their favorite door by donating nonperishable food items in boxes next to the doors. Contracting Division's door, complete with a cozy fireplace and holiday music, earned first place.

The contest raised more than 1,100 pounds of food for the Walla Walla Blue Mountain Action Council's community food bank. The ACE partnered with the Walla Walla-Columbia Chapter of Thrivent Financial which generated \$800 in a supporting corporate donation to the food bank.

Engineering Division earned recognition for serving the best holiday punch. Charlie Krahenbuhl earned the best food dish award for his cheesy potato casserole.

Glaeser wrapped up the festivities with a holiday toast to the District during a Dec. 17 Town Hall.



photo by Gina Baltrusch

Lt. Col. Randy Glaeser, Walla Walla District commander, evaluates Contracting Division's holiday-decorated door. Donated food items placed in boxes near the door serve as votes by headquarters employees. Contracting Division's 'home for the holidays' door, dedicated to the District's members deployed overseas, took first place.

Following the Town Hall, employees set out their favorite holiday foods for a building-wide potluck.

Employees visited other departments to sample their potluck fare and visit with building coworkers.



photo by Nola Conway

Above, Association of Corps Employees members, (from right) Juanita Roberson and Robin German, keep ACE President Jeff Sedgwick on his toes while they pack up more than 1,100 pounds of donated food items for local charities. Right, Bob Bonstead, safety specialist, helps decorate the ACE Giving Tree.



photo by Krissy Antes