



US Army Corps
of Engineers •
Walla Walla District

Intercom

Serving the military and civilian members of the Walla Walla District

Vol. 32

No. 2

March-June 2005



District installs
2nd spillway weir

FROM WHERE I SIT

Chief sends Engineer Day message



Lt. Gen. Carl A. Strock
Chief of Engineers

Every June, we celebrate Engineer Day to honor the contributions of U.S. Army Engineers, which began when Col. Richard Gridley became the first chief engineer in June 1775. His fortifications at Bunker Hill began a long heritage of service by Army engineers that continues today.

Although much has changed during the centuries, the commitment, courage and competence exhibited by Army engineers have never changed.

During the past year, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the entire Engineer Regiment have accomplished terrific work.

Thanks to the Corps of Engineers team, we accomplished our daily, important work at home on the nation's waterways and recreation areas, on our military facilities and in our research facilities. This past year, when our fellow citizens needed aid after four hurricanes struck the Southeast, you rushed to help them.

Around the world you supported the armed forces with quality facilities, and you helped to improve the quality of life in Afghanistan and Iraq. Thanks to your contributions, the Gulf Region Division passed its one-year anniversary in January. Later that month, Iraq held free elections. Many people will never forget the photos of smiling Iraqis leaving polling places, showing their fingers stained with purple ink like badges of honor. Be proud that *wherever* you served, you contributed to that important milestone.

Sadly, many in the Engineer Regiment have paid the ultimate price.

In March, the nation awarded the Medal of Honor posthumously to Sgt. 1st Class Paul Smith of the 11th Engineer Battalion. His extraordinary, unyielding courage during a firefight outside the Baghdad Airport in April 2003 saved many of his fellow Soldiers' lives.

His award reminds me that the regiment is blessed with Soldiers and Civilians who live the Army values, and who are dedicated to public service. As a member of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, you are part of a great team that has made many contributions to the nation's security, economic prosperity and environmental quality. With your help, we will do more.

We will publish our campaign plan on June 16, and I ask that you read it at www.usace.army.mil, so you can help us become "One Team: Relevant, Ready, Responsive and Reliable." The campaign plan describes goals, supporting objectives and enabling capabilities that will help us achieve our vision. As you read the plan, remember that our goals and objectives are connected, and *every* Corps member has a role to play in making our vision a reality.

Thank you for your service to our nation, and thank you for being part of the Corps team. With your help, we will add to the long, proud heritage of service that began more than two centuries ago.

Essayons!

Carl A. Strock
Lieutenant General, USA
Commanding

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On the Cover...

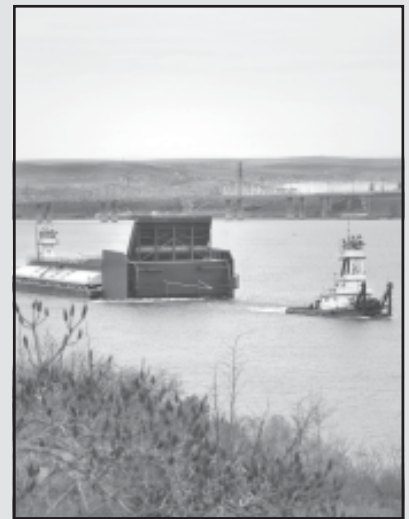


photo by Gina Baltrusch

Walla Walla District's second spillway weir, a bypass structure designed to improve dam passage for juvenile salmon, arrives at Ice Harbor Dam on the lower Snake River Feb. 27. The weir, nicknamed a "fish slide," was installed on one of the dam's spillways and will be tested during the year. See story and more photos on pages 8-9.

Strock visits NWW

The Chief of Engineers Lt. Gen. Carl A. Strock stopped to visit two Walla Walla District dams May 24 on his way to the Northwestern Division senior leaders' conference in Portland, Oregon.

Kevin Crum, project manager, showed the chief the latest in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' fish passage technology at Ice Harbor Dam – the removable spillway weir.

At Lower Monumental Dam, Margie McGill, project manager, briefed Strock about concrete deterioration in the navigation lock.

During his visit, the chief met and chatted with District workers he encountered at the dams.



Photo by Joe Saxon

Michael Bart, (right) Walla Walla District's chief of Engineering Division, took Chief of Engineers Lt. Gen. Carl A. Strock to Ice Harbor and Lower Monumental dams May 24.

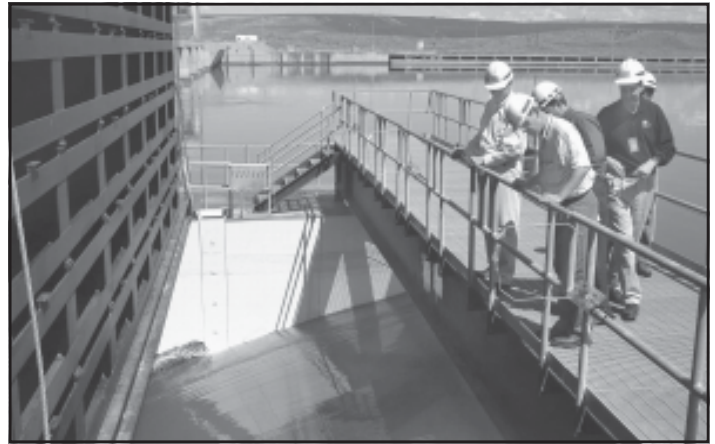


Photo by Joe Saxon

Kevin Crum, project manager, explains how the District's second removable spillway weir provides a slide-like route for juvenile salmon to pass over Ice Harbor Dam.

Dear Readers,

It's been a while since the *Intercom* was published. I wanted to be sure you knew why.

Public Affairs didn't forget its command information audience. However, the PAO staff did pick up additional duties to allow one of its members to attend a nearly nine-week-long public affairs course.

This issue of the *Intercom* covers District events that occurred during February through May, getting us back on our normal publication cycle.

My thanks to Joe, Nola and Krissy for picking up my other duties, so I could attend training. And, thanks to the readers who emailed to let me know the *Intercom* was missed.

Sincerely,

Gina Baltrusch, *Intercom* editor

NSPS: DoD changes schedule

from a HQ, USACE, *Corps Points!* article

The Department of Defense announced June 15 a scheduling change for implementation of Spiral 1.1 of the National Security Personnel System while it works with the Office of Personnel Management to adjust proposed NSPS regulations based on public comments and the meet and confer process with employee representatives.

The schedule adjustments are for planning purposes and are based on projected events. DoD anticipates publishing the revised regulations in the Federal Register later this summer. NSPS implementation could begin 30 days following publication; however, that will not occur until implementing issuances are in place, and training is underway. The implementing issuances process includes continuing collaboration with the unions.

NSPS is a performance-based management system that will allow DoD to better support its critical national security mission by modernizing the personnel system while preserving the core, enduring values of the civil service. The initial implementation will apply only to general schedule employees in the continental United States.

NSPS implementation is broken into two primary systems – labor relations and human resources.

The labor relations system is planned to be effective for all DoD bargaining unit employees in September. This includes such things as collective bargaining rights, scope of bargaining, bargaining process and resolution of labor disputes.

See **NSPS**, page 12

NavLock outage provides fix-it opportunities

by Gina Baltrusch

River traffic stopped March 5-19 so workers could do annual inspections and maintenance on the navigation locks at the eight U.S. Army Corps of Engineers dams between Portland, Ore., and Lewiston, Idaho.

Two Walla Walla District dams extended the closure period through March 26 to tackle several non-routine maintenance projects.

At Lower Monumental Lock and Dam, repairs were made to the navigation lock's downstream miter gate. After about 35 years of use, many cracks and broken welds developed in the gate's steel structure. Inland Industrial Rigging, from Pasco, Wash., was awarded the \$287,463 contract to repair the gate. The contract included replacing the gate seals.

The gate withstands nearly 43 million gallons of water weighing more than 360 million tons each time the lock is used, and "over the years, things wear out," said Matt Allen, operations manager at the dam.

The gate is in need of a major overhaul or replacement, said Bruce Collison, project manager for the gate repair. This year's repair job was considered an interim fix to address the most serious cracks.

Other fix-it projects at Lower Monumental performed during the maintenance period included repairing broken concrete in the upstream lock guide wall where a commercial vessel had struck it about a year ago and taking core samples of concrete from the lock walls to be analyzed for upcoming stabilization work in the navigation lock.

Little Goose Lock and Dam personnel used the maintenance days to repair a leak in the north navigation lock wall with a new water-stop seal designed by District engineers (see story and photos on page 6).

Each year, the Corps districts coordinate the annual outage with inland shippers and cruise lines. The navigation route in the lower Columbia and Snake rivers allows commercial river traffic to travel more than 400 miles inland to Lewiston, Wash.



photo by Gina Baltrusch

Welders from Inland Industrial Rigging repair cracks and broken welds in the downstream navigation lock gate at Lower Monumental Lock and Dam.



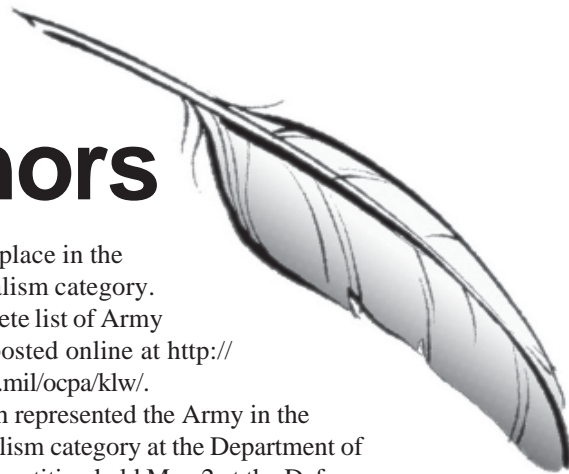
photo by Gina Baltrusch

Above, Margie McGill, project manager, marks the walls inside Lower Monumental Dam's navigation lock for drilling core samples. Right, Little Goose Dam workers, Tony Sijohn, (left) powerhouse mechanic, and Tim Collier, (right) rigger, guide a diver into the downstream navigation lock channel to inspect for debris.



photo by Lisa Huston, engineering technician, Little Goose Lock and Dam (stringer)

Intercom, PAO staff earn journalistic honors



by Gina Baltrusch

Walla Walla District's command information publication, *Intercom*, and its staff members earned high honors during the annual public affairs journalism competitions at Headquarters, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the Department of the Army.

The awards program, established in 1968, recognizes military and civilian employee print and broadcast journalists for outstanding achievements in furthering the objectives of the Department of Defense internal information program.

Walla Walla District placed in five categories at the Corps' Herbert A. Kassner journalism competition, held Feb. 11 in Alexandria, Vir.

For the second year in a row, *Intercom* earned first place in the Newsletter category.

District members earned awards in several individual categories as well. Nola Leyde, senior public affairs specialist, took first place in the Editorials/Commentaries category. Editor Gina Baltrusch earned first place in the Photojournalism and Sports Articles categories. For the first time, District stringers, a journalism nickname for volunteer writers, dominated the Stringer-Writer category. Toni Fisher, who served as a seasonal park ranger at Lucky Peak Dam, took first place and Mike Reser, a safety and occupational health office intern at the District Headquarters, earned a second-place award. First place entries advanced to the Army-level competition.

The Army's 2004 Keith L. Ware journalism awards program, was held March 2-3 in Alexandria, Vir., where a panel of 22 judges reviewed more than 400 entries.

Intercom placed third in the Newsletter category. Baltrusch

earned first place in the Photojournalism category.

A complete list of Army winners is posted online at <http://www4.army.mil/ocpa/klw/>.

Baltrusch represented the Army in the Photojournalism category at the Department of Defense competition held May 2 at the Defense Information School at Fort Meade, Md. Her entry earned complimentary comments from the judges, but was edged out by the Marine Corps entry by Cpl. Joel A. Chaverri, Marine Corps Air Station Miramar Public Affairs Office, Miramar, Calif.

DoD competition results are posted online at <http://events.dinfos.osd.mil/tjweb/>.

The competition is progressive. At each level of competition, a panel of professionals from the commercial media, academia and military public affairs communities reviewed submissions produced by public affairs offices during calendar year 2004. At all levels of competition, judges were under no obligation to award all three places if the quality of entries in a category did not warrant awards.

Corps entrants initially submit to the USACE headquarters journalism competition. Winners are selected in 19 print and 18 broadcast categories. Public affairs officials there forward the first place entries to the Army's competition. Army winners advance to compete in the DoD Thomas Jefferson awards program. The DoD competition judges select an overall winner in each category from among branch-level winners representing the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force and Coast Guard.

PAO training develops stringer skills

by Gina Baltrusch

Twelve newly selected stringers attended Walla Walla District's Stringer Training held Feb. 29 at the headquarters in Walla Walla, Wash.

During the day-long workshop, they participated in writing exercises and learned photojournalism techniques.

What is a stringer? It is a newspaper-industry term for a person – not a member of the permanent staff – who contributes articles and photographs to a newspaper.

District stringers serve managers at the dams by acting as the eyes and ears of their project. They are an essential part of the District's public affairs communication team. Stringers provide stories and photographs for the command

newspaper and public information products. Sometimes, as stringers become more experienced, they help facilitate media coverage of project activities and events. The public affairs office manages the program, providing guidance and training for stringers located at each of the District's eight dams.

When public affairs personnel approached supervisors about establishing a stringer program for the district, the responses were enthusiastic.

Supervisors promoted the campaign for volunteers throughout their projects and sections, and supported employees' attendance at stringer training. Two managers, from Ice Harbor and Little Goose dams, each sent three people to

learn how to be stringers.

This kind of supervisor support for public affairs' communications goals was cultivated long before the district's stringer program was officially established in January.

"The field projects are often several hours away from the public affairs office in the District headquarters. We have the responsibility to help PAO keep the public informed with accurate up-to-date information in a professional and timely manner," said Paul Pence, natural resource manager at Dworshak Dam and Reservoir in Orofino, Idaho. "A trained stringer can gather pertinent information,

See **Stringers**, page 10

Little Goose repairs lock leak

by Pat Thomas, clerk,
and Lisa Huston, engineering technician,
Little Goose Lock and Dam (stringers)

A joint effort by District headquarters, Little Goose Lock and Dam and Knight Construction personnel made repairing a leak in Little Goose Dam's navigation lock seem easy.

A joint between monoliths 24 and 26 sprang a leak in April 2004. A temporary repair was done to decrease the flow until a more permanent fix could be coordinated.

Repairing the navigation lock water-stop represented a large part of the work done at Little Goose during the annual lock maintenance outage March 5-26. Knight

Construction, from Deer Park, Wash., was awarded the \$225,000 contract to repair the damaged joint.

A two-man team from Pro Cut, a subcontractor for Knight, from Pasco, Wash., used a sky-climber apparatus resembling a high-rise building window-washing platform to make concrete cuts along the inside of the navigation lock wall. The cuts allowed workers to install a new 140-foot-long water-stop seal designed by a team of engineers at the District headquarters.

"I got the idea for a rubber water-stop seal from something Tom Moritz in Mechanical Design Branch was working on," said Simeon Francis, a structural engineer in the District's Structural Design Branch.

Francis enlisted the help of Moritz, Steve Tatro, a materials engineer, and Bob Hollenbeck, Structural Design Branch chief, to design a double-domed seal that ran the entire height of the monolith joint on the interior of the navigation lock.

On the river side of the lock wall, workers repaired an area where the water pressure from the leak had created a void in the concrete structure. Knight workers engineered a unique 15-foot-high elevated platform to hold a track-hoe excavator to work on the hole. They excavated and cleaned the almost-84-

cubic-foot hole, installed rebar and placed new concrete to fill the void.

The project had a March 9-23 schedule. Knight Construction crews worked two 10-hour shifts to complete the work on time.

Kyle DeSomber, Little Goose's mechanical engineer, performed quality assurance inspections for Construction Division, working seven days a week to oversee the repair project.

"Knight's workers' ability to adapt to changing weather, their flexibility working around the dam personnel doing annual maintenance and their awareness of environmental concerns on the job made the repair project go smoothly," said DeSomber. "Teamwork between the contractor and District personnel turned any obstacle we encountered into a mere speed bump."

The navigation lock – now repaired – reopened to river traffic on March 26.



photo by Lisa Huston

District engineers design a new water-stop seal to fix the navigation lock leak at Little Goose Dam.

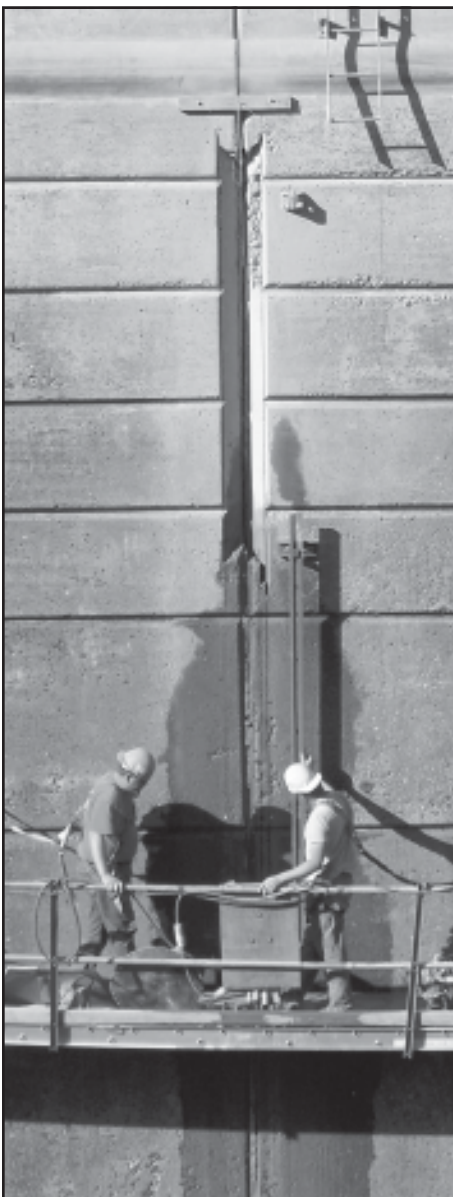


photo by Simeon Francis, structural engineer, Engineering Division



photo by Kyle DeSomber, mechanical engineer, Little Goose Lock and Dam (stringer)

Above, Knight Construction workers repair a hole inside Little Goose Dam's navigation lock wall by crawling inside the blow-out point to install rebar and place new concrete. Left, Pro Cut workers cut a groove into the concrete on the navigation lock wall, preparing for Knight workers to install the new water stop seal.

Woodley confirmed as ASA (CW)

from a HQ, USACE, *Engineer Update* article

John Paul Woodley, Jr. was unanimously confirmed by the Senate to be the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works) on May 12.

In this position, Woodley oversees the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' execution of the Army's Civil Works program for conservation and development of the national water resources, including flood damage reduction, navigation, shore protection and other related purposes.

The ASA(CW) also oversees the budget of the Arlington National Cemetery and the Soldiers' and Airmen's Home National Cemetery.

Lastly, in coordination with the Army Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, the ASA(CW) has responsibilities for directing the foreign activities of the Corps, except those foreign activities that are exclusively in support of U.S. military forces overseas.

Before his appointment as the ASA(CW), Woodley served as the Assistant Deputy Undersecretary of Defense (Environment). He was also the principal advisor to the Secretary of Defense on environmental, safety and occupational health policy and programs.

Prior to serving the DoD, Woodley had served as Secretary of Natural Resources in the Cabinet of Virginia Governor Jim Gilmore from January 1998 until October 2001 and as Deputy Attorney General of Virginia for Government Operations beginning in 1994.

Woodley attended Washington & Lee University in Lexington, Va., on an Army R.O.T.C. scholarship where he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1974. Woodley also attended the Law School at Washington & Lee, where he received his Juris Doctor degree cum laude in 1977.

Woodley served on active duty with the U.S. Army Judge Advocate General's Corps 1979-85, and retired from the Army Reserve in August 2003 as a lieutenant colonel. He has been awarded the Legion of Merit, three Meritorious Service Medals, two Army Commendation Medals and the Army Achievement Medal.

His civilian awards include the Secretary of Defense Medal for Outstanding Public Service. Woodley is a native of Shreveport, La.



John Paul Woodley Jr.

E-Week introduces students to trebuchet

story and photos by Gina Baltrusch

Walla Walla District engineers wanted to try something different for their annual celebration of Engineer Week in February.

Each year, Engineering Division has sponsored a structural design familiarization event among participating Walla Walla-area middle schools and high schools. For as long as some folks remember, the students have built bridges with a variety of materials and District personnel have load-tested them.

This year, Engineering Division changed the game and went "mechanical" with scaled-down models of a trebuchet – a medieval siege weapon.

"We wanted to introduce the students to concepts in mechanics, kinematics, dynamics and computer modeling," said Bob Hollenbeck, Structural Design Section chief at the District. "The trebuchet model offered a fairly simple design for students to work with."



Walla Walla District's Jon Lomeland, structural engineer, and Edwin Kim, hydraulic engineer, assemble a target for the Engineer Week event.

The trebuchet is a mechanical version of a human using a sling, a device that hurls a projectile with great amounts of kinetic energy through simple biomechanical motion, Hollenbeck explained. The key components of the trebuchet are the base structure, the throwing arm, the counterweight and the sling.

District engineers provided the trebuchet kits for students to assemble and make design modifications. Competition rules limited the length of a trebuchet

See **E-Week**, page 14



Mark Lindgren, (far-right) Hydrology and Hydraulics Branch chief, and Jon Lomeland, structural engineer, advise a DeSales Catholic School student how to improve the throwing distance of his trebuchet.

Going with the *flow*

by Nola Leyde

Engineers and biologists for the past several years have pursued new technologies that would provide more surface-oriented, less-stressful passage routes for juvenile fish.

The biggest challenge to federal fisheries managers is guiding fish through a dam, attracting them to the right passage way, moving them through without injury and moving them quickly out of the area below the dam, said Bob Lohn, Northwest regional administrator of NOAA Fisheries.

Most Columbia River Basin juvenile anadromous salmon and steelhead tend to stay in the upper 10 to 20 feet of the water column as they migrate downstream to the ocean. Normally, juvenile fish must dive 50-60 feet to find the passage routes at U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' dams on the lower Columbia and Snake rivers because of the dams' configurations.

Now, juvenile salmon on the lower Snake River have help passing two of Walla Walla District's dams. A prototype spillway weir, nicknamed a "fish slide," was installed in 2001 at Lower Granite Dam. The weir worked well, and a second weir was installed Feb. 19, 2005, at Ice Harbor Dam.

The spillway weir allows juvenile salmon and steelhead to pass the dam near the water surface under lower accelerations and lower pressures, providing a more efficient and less-stressful dam passage route.

The Lower Granite Dam spillway weir was tested extensively, and it sent the right biological cues, said Lohn.

"There was no delay, no apparent stress. The water flow was smooth, moving fish rapidly and easily. The mortality rate was close to zero," he said.

The new spillway weir at Ice Harbor Dam will be tested throughout the year. Additional weirs or other surface bypass alternatives are being considered for installation at other Corps dams.

"The spillway weir offers an opportunity for juvenile fish to pass more quickly and efficiently at the dam. The reservoir attraction flow required to pass juvenile fish may be reduced, resulting in better passage conditions and lower dissolved gas levels in the river system," said Kevin Crum, spillway weir project manager at Walla Walla District.

The structure also is designed to be removed by controlled descent to the bottom of the dam forebay. This capability permits returning the spillway to original flow capacity during flood events, said Crum.

The spillway weir was named the nation's best engineering achievement in 2003 by the American Council of Engineering Companies.



photo by Nola Leyde

Mark Plummer, a fisheries biologist at Ice Harbor Lock and Dam, checks out the new spillway weir installed in February.



photo by Chris Koch, graphic artist, Rome Research Corp. (contractor)



photo by Nola Leyde

Above, researchers at Ice Harbor Lock and Dam balloon-tag juvenile hatchery salmon to test the effectiveness of the new spillway weir for fish passage on May 26. Additional spillway weir research and tests will be conducted throughout the year. Left, workers at Swan Island near Portland, Ore., prepare the spillway weir Feb. 16 for movement up the lower Columbia River to Ice Harbor Lock and Dam on the lower Snake River. It took three days to transport the five-story-tall, 1.7 million-pound fish passage structure.



photo by Nola Leyde

A towboat operator uses a grain barge to gain better maneuvering ability while pushing Walla Walla District's second spillway weir into place Feb. 21 at Ice Harbor Lock and Dam.

Hitting the ground running in Iraq



Billie Guille

I arrived at my duty station, Forward Operating Base Speicher, Thanksgiving Day, planning to spend the day in my room because of the long trip and the fact I didn't know anyone. I didn't want to feel like an outsider.

I didn't have to worry though. I was shown my room and taken to lunch where I met the people who would become my new coworkers. They even dragged me off to play volleyball, and I discovered immediately that I wouldn't be

allowed to hide in my room! It didn't take long before I realized I had met not only my new coworkers but people who would become good friends.

The work is interesting because I've never helped build a project from the ground up. The main project I am working on is a division headquarters building for the U.S. Army. I am doing the quality assurance (QA) on the project. This involves working with the contractor to ensure the specifications are followed, checking test results and verifying progress.

The project consists of a 35-by-150-meter steel fabricated building, built with concrete masonry block sides. It will house offices for the division staff and will have a state-of-the-art information distribution system.

Doing the QA on this project is a real learning experience. Both the contractors and my fellow U.S. Army Corps of Engineers coworkers are professional and a pleasure to work with.

I'm looking forward to starting a new project in the vicinity of Tuz, Iraq, where my job will be the same, QA, but with a much broader scope. Soon, we will be building a division support complex for the new Iraqi Army. This will include a headquarters, barracks, shower buildings, as well as fencing, berms, security lighting and new roads. The first phase of construction is expected to be complete in July, so it will be a very fast paced

project and will offer many challenges. The result will give the new Iraqi Army a secure place to train and work.

Working with people from other cultures and learning to work around the language barrier is challenging, rewarding and often amusing for everyone involved. While there are many things I will remember about my trip to Iraq, it will be the laughter and teamwork of everyone involved working to make a difference that I will keep with me.

Billie Guille

Editor's Note: Billie Guille is a power plant shift operator at Little Goose Lock and Dam, Walla Walla District. She's currently serving the Corps in Iraq with North District, Gulf Region Division. More "Postcards from Iraq" written by deployed Corps employees are posted on the GRD Web site www.grd.usace.army.mil/news/postcards/index.html.



photo provided by the Gulf Region Division, North District, Iraq

Local Iraqi workers smooth concrete footings for a new military facility in Iraq.

Stringers, from page 5

prepare it, understand the message and the target audience, and forward ready-to-go information to the PAO for review and media distribution. This saves time and helps to meet the goals of accurate, timely and professional communications with the public."

District public affairs staff members hold stringers in high regard.

"There are parts of six states for us to cover," said Nola Leyde, senior public affairs specialist. "We couldn't do it without the stringers at the dams. They're often our best source of information on what's happening out in the field.

"Even if all a stringer can provide is

the bare facts of an issue, a point of contact and one publishable photograph, they've obtained the nuts and bolts for a story we can put together," said Leyde. "When a project is located 300 miles from our office, it not only saves the District travel dollars, it saves time. Time is a big factor in being able to market a story to the media. After all, it's called *news*, not *olds*."

Anyone can be a stringer – biologists, archeologists, park rangers, engineers and timekeepers. All one needs are some basic writing skills, and an interest in their organization and its people. They can help ensure that much that deserves visibility and recognition in the District will find its way into print rather than go

unpublished, unrecorded and unknown.

District stringers: *Pasquale Anolfo, McNary Natural Resources; *Joyce McDonald, Ice Harbor Lock and Dam; *Jeanne Newton, *Don Disbo, Lindsay Dummer, *Mike Swenson and *Ken Lloyd, Ice Harbor Natural Resources; Sue Walton, Lower Monumental Lock and Dam; *Pat Thomas, *Lisa Huston and Kyle DeSomber, Little Goose Lock and Dam; *Jean Morrow, Lower Granite Lock and Dam; *Craig Rockwell, Lower Granite Natural Resources; Deb Norton, Dworshak Natural Resources; *Jamie Howard, Lucky Peak Dam; and *Mike Jaroski, Mill Creek Dam.

* – attended District stringer training Feb. 29.

NWW fish barge personnel learn seamanship essentials

story and photos by Joyce McDonald, fisheries biological science technician, Ice Harbor Lock and Dam (stringer)

A summer day on the lower Snake River finds a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers juvenile salmon transportation barge being pushed downriver by a towboat.



Jon Selland, a maintenance worker at Lower Monumental Dam's Juvenile Fish Facility, demonstrates the use of a hand flare.



Larry Lundberger, a maintenance worker at the Juvenile Fish Facility at Lower Granite Dam, demonstrates the use of a Type-1 personal floatation device (PFD) that is required on every vessel and would be used in an abandon-ship situation because it is the only PFD that will keep an unconscious person's face out of the water.

The Corps barge rider performs his duties on the vessel, monitoring the fish and water circulation systems, while the deck hand applies a new coat of paint to the boat. Suddenly, the deck hand falls overboard.

What should the barge rider do in this situation? What can a barge rider do to help in other emergency situations such as a fire, or if there is a need to abandon ship?

These types of questions prompted Marty Mendiola, operations manager at Lower Granite Lock and Dam, to initiate a Barge Rider Safety Training Program for Walla Walla District.

Patrick Boyle, an instructor with the Seattle Maritime Academy, spent March 29-30 at Lower Granite teaching 16 fish facility personnel seamanship essentials and safety skills.

"Emergencies happen fast and are unexpected," Boyle pointed out. "Barge riders must already know what to do, what equipment to use and where it is located."

The students learned the rules, equipment and terminology used on towboats and barges – marlinspike seamanship, pollution prevention, procedures for working on vessels in tow in adverse weather conditions and abandon-ship procedures.

Hands-on training included using personal floatation devices, immersion suits, life rafts, distress signals and fire



Patrick Boyle, an instructor from the Seattle Maritime Academy, Suzette Frazier, a biological technician from Lower Granite Dam, Barbara Rowdon, a barge rider from Lower Granite Dam, and Sydney Hudson, a biological technician from Lower Monumental Dam, demonstrate the energy conserving technique of 'rafting' in an abandon-ship scenario.

See **Barge**, page 13



photo by Clark Simpenderfer, power plant operator, Little Goose Lock and Dam

Whooo... ...are you looking at?

A family of Great Horned Owls nests in the navigation lock's downstream miter gate at Little Goose Lock and Dam. The birds did not appear to be disturbed by recent work at the lock to repair a water-stop leak.

NSPS, from page 3

The human resources system will be implemented in phases commonly referred to as Spirals.

Spiral 1.1 involves approximately 60,000 DoD employees including about 8,300 USACE employees in the South Pacific Division, Southwest Division and Mississippi Valley Division. Spiral 1.1 divisions will implement iteratively. The first iteration of the human resources system is performance management, which includes setting expectations, appraising performance, addressing poor performance, and communication and feedback on performance.

Performance management was originally scheduled to begin in July, but has been delayed until October to allow for additional communication and planning. This will also allow employees to work under the performance-based system for a total of one year (October 2005 to September 2006). As a result, the first performance-based payout is planned to occur in January 2007.

The rest of the human resources system (pay banding, staffing flexibilities, classification, appeals system, etc.) will go into effect in January-February 2006 after any general pay increases. As employees come into the human resources system, their within-grade increases will be bought out at that time. When converting to NSPS, no employee will take a pay cut and some employees may get raises.

Because of the delay in implementation of Spiral 1.1, Spiral 1.2 organizations (Northwestern Division, South Atlantic Division, Engineering Support Center, Huntsville Engineering and Support Center and Transatlantic Programs Center CONUS) currently scheduled for April 2006, may implement with Spiral 1.3 organizations (USACE Finance Center, Headquarters, Institute for Water Resources, Humphreys Engineering Center Support Activity, North Atlantic Division, Lakes and Rivers Division, Pacific Ocean Division-Hawaii and Alaska, Marine Design Center and the 249th Engineer Battalion) in October 2006.

Training is a critical component in the success of NSPS.

The labor relations system training is scheduled to start in July with specifics being provided by DoD and Army. Training on the human resources system for Spiral 1.1 organizations will take place during the August to December timeframe.

In developing NSPS, Pentagon officials sought input from employees, supervisors, managers, union representatives, senior leaders and public interest groups.

More than 58,000 comments on the proposed regulations were received during the public comment period. Several recommended changes to the proposed regulation will result from this input.

The latest NSPS information is posted on the Department of Defense's Web site: www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps, and the Army's Web site: cpol.army.mil/library/general/nsps.

AED builds bridges between nations

District deputy serves on \$28M Afghanistan bridge project

by Maria Or, Afghanistan Engineer District

A \$28 million contract to build a bridge between Afghanistan and Tajikistan was awarded March 21 by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Afghanistan Engineer District.

The bridge will enable economic development and integration in the region.

“The Afghanistan-Tajikistan Bridge is a start in developing a new form of cross-border cooperation between the countries of Afghanistan and Tajikistan which ultimately will enhance the market economy and democracy of both countries,” said Maj. Don Pincus, Walla Walla District’s deputy commander deployed to Afghanistan and serving as the resident engineer for the project.

Expected to carry more than 1,000 vehicles per day between the two countries, the bridge will replace a barge system that can ferry only 50-60 cars per day over the Pyandzh River. The ferry is also not operational several months of the year due to unsafe water conditions.

The proposed bridge will provide a two-lane vehicle bridge with a pedestrian walkway connecting Afghanistan and Tajikistan, spanning the Pyandzh River at Sher Khan, Afghanistan, and Niznji Pianj, Tajikistan.

Scheduled to be completed April 2007, the contract was awarded to Rizzani de Eccher S.p.A. of Udine, Italy.



photo provided by the Afghanistan Engineer District

Maj. Donald Pincus, Walla Walla District’s deputy commander currently deployed in support of the Global War on Terrorism, explains how the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers does business in Afghanistan.

Barge, from page 11

extinguishers, as well as an in-water, abandon-ship scenario.

“The ‘what if’ scenarios were the most helpful,” said Suzette Frazier, a fisheries biological technician at Lower Granite, who attended the training. “They allowed students to become comfortable with the equipment used in an actual emergency.”

The typical barge rider usually has no experience with industrial barges or working on flowing water. Boyle’s goal was to make the barge riders aware of their new environment and its inherent dangers.

He said he believes that a heightened awareness not only keeps barge riders safe, but also allows them to be an asset in the event of an emergency.



photo by Joyce McDonald, fisheries biological science technician, Ice Harbor Lock and Dam (stringer)

Walla Walla District barge riders practice getting into an emergency raft during training March 29-30 at Lower Granite Lock and Dam.

Free fitness evaluations scheduled for July

story and photo by Gina Baltrusch

Fitness experts from the YMCA in Walla Walla, Wash., will conduct on-site fitness checks at the Walla Walla District Headquarters, July 13 and 27.

The YMCA contacted the District's human resources department to invite employees' participation in a corporate fitness evaluation program the YMCA is conducting throughout the Walla Walla Valley.

"When I found out they would come do this for free, I didn't hesitate to pass on the offer to our workforce," said Ray Quinn, Civilian Personnel Advisory Center chief.

"In past years, large numbers of our employees have participated in similar events," Quinn said, "so I wasn't surprised when more than 50 people signed up within two days of the announcement."

The YMCA fitness check includes 10 minutes of non-cardio exercise, gathering information such as height, weight, body-fat measurements, blood pressure, resting heart rate, strength and flexibility.

"This is a great time of year for all sorts of fitness activities," said Quinn. "We encourage our employees to raise their awareness of their personal fitness level."



District employees (from right) Alex Kwan, Krissy Antes and Ray Quinn, and his dog, Max, get some exercise during a five-kilometer Corps Day 'fun run' June 17.

Time slots are available for the July fitness tests. Employees who want to participate on those days should add their name to the sign-up sheet posted in the Harvest Room.

E-Week, from page 7

throwing arm to 30 centimeters and the counterweight to one-quarter kilogram.

The District also provided trebuchet simulation software, which students could use to refine their designs by testing them on the computer.

"The software helped students speed

up the optimization cycle and encouraged them to refine their designs for better performance," said Hollenbeck.

Students demonstrated their trebuchets during in-school competitions judged by District personnel. Soft clay projectiles weighing about 1 gram made throwing distance results dependant upon how students designed various

components of their trebuchets. Scores were determined by how far a trebuchet launched its projectile and where the ball landed inside the ringed, archery range-like target lying on the floor.

Students from three schools participated in the Engineer Week challenge: DeSales Catholic School, Garrison Middle School and Walla Walla Valley Academy.

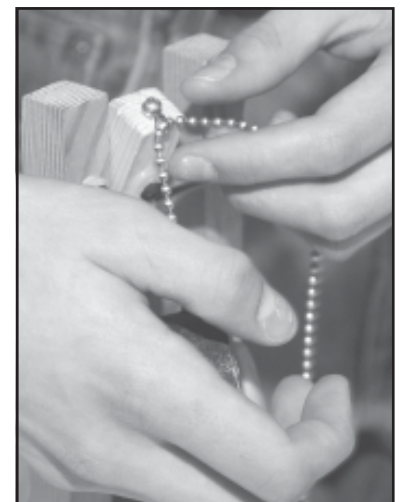


Photo by Gina Baltrusch

Above, a DeSales Catholic School student connects the counterweight on his trebuchet. Left, a team of DeSales students assemble a trebuchet to use in the school's Engineer Week competition. Teams competed for accuracy and distance.

World War II vet makes Memorial Day fishing debut

commentary and photo by Craig Rockwell, park ranger,
Lower Granite Natural Resources (stringer)

Memorial Day 2005 (May 30) – Today, I met a woman who, at the age of 80, had come to Swallows Park in Clarkston, Wash., to go fishing for the first time – ever.

I was curious as to why “Jo” had chosen today to start fishing at this U.S. Army Corps of Engineers park.

“Because I’m tired of sitting at home with everyone telling me I’m too old!” was Jo’s defiant, yet humorous answer. “When New York was attacked, I wanted to go and help, but I was too old. I would love to have a job, but I am too old. But, I am not too old to go out and fish!”

More reflectively, Jo replied, “I went to the cemetery yesterday and then worked around my yard...I like to keep my yard looking nice...and I fly a flag every day. So, today was a day I could go out and play.”

It wasn’t long before Jo told me more about herself.

Her real name is Euretta Mistretta, but she prefers to be called Jo. Jo says she is not sure if her name was a practical joke by her mother naming her Euretta, or her husband from whom she gained the married name of Mistretta. Either way, she still gets a chuckle out of it.

It seems Jo has a special tie to Memorial Day and the valley here. She was born in Lewiston, Idaho, on Oct. 18, 1924. As we chatted, I learned that Jo has lived most of her life in the Lewiston-Clarkston area, except for a short time in California, and while she served the U.S. Army during World War II.

Jo said that during the war, her husband went to Europe with the Army.

“I would listen to the radio,” she recalled. “I couldn’t stand the things I was hearing. I had to enlist – I had to! I couldn’t live here and listen to this mess that was going on over there. I had a daughter...so, I asked my mother, ‘Would you take care of my baby while I go to the service?’ And, that’s what we did.”

She became a discharge clerk with the Army Air Corps at Andrews Air Base outside of Washington, D.C.

After the war, Jo continued a life of service. She worked as a word processing supervisor for Trends Western. She said, “I helped put the first man on the moon,” as her work there was for a number of companies in the aerospace industry.

For the past 15 years, Jo has volunteered at the Clarkston Food Bank, currently working three days a week there. Having suffered a stroke about five years ago has not quenched her desire to help others.

So, what happened to the daughter left behind during the War? Mandy is now the manager of a convenience store and gas station in Asotin, Wash., just south of Clarkston – close to her mom.

It was a privilege to interview Jo – Lewiston native, World War II veteran and first-time fisher at one of our Walla Walla District parks. I felt a sense of pride knowing, that as a member of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers’ natural resource management team, I was helping to make recreation areas like Swallows Park available to meet the recreation needs of people like Jo who have spent a lifetime serving others.

And, if you’re in the area and know where Jo might be able to catch some Pikeminnow from the banks of the lower Snake River, she’d sure love to hear about it.



Euretta Mistretta, World War II veteran, goes fishing for the first time on Memorial Day, May 30, at Walla Walla District’s Swallows Park in Clarkston, Wash.

District draws VIPs

May seemed to be the month for distinguished visitors coming to learn about Walla Walla District’s operations and facilities. Right, on May 24, Wayne John, Operations Division chief, explains to congressional staffers how the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers balances the needs of threatened species with people’s need for power, irrigation and inland navigation. The staffers toured Lower Granite Lock and Dam and its fish-handling facilities, then rode on a juvenile fish transportation barge to Little Goose Lock and Dam. That same day, Lt. Gen. Carl A. Strock visited Ice Harbor and Lower Monumental locks and dams (see story and photos on page 3). On May 26, Oregon Governor Ted Kulongoski and Northwestern Division Commander Brig. Gen. William T. Grisoli visited Ice Harbor Lock and Dam to observe initial testing of the District’s new spillway weir (see related story and photos on pages 8-9).



photo by Nola Leyde



photo by Tony Sijohn, power plant mechanic, Little Goose Lock and Dam

Upgrades made to the original, 1960s-era lighting system on Little Goose Dam's navigation lock provides almost 17,000 watts of illumination for barges transporting commodities on the lower Snake River.

New lights improve lock safety

by Gina Baltrusch

About six months ago, nighttime lockages at Little Goose Lock and Dam could often be unsettling for lock operators and vessel crewmembers.

Lights mounted along the top of the lock provided sufficient illumination for watercraft floating inside the lock at the headwater, or upstream, level. But, as the lock drained, lowering the water inside almost 100 feet to the tailwater, or downstream, elevation, vessels seemed to disappear into the darkness.

"It was a safety issue," said Jason Pope, an electrical engineer in Engineering Division's Design Branch at the Walla Walla District headquarters. "The original lighting system was put in during the 1960s when the dam was built. It just wasn't powerful enough to get light down to the vessels when they were at the tailwater level. We upgraded the system and installed modern lights with increased wattage, improving safety conditions for all vessels locking through during low-light or nighttime hours."

Coming up with a cost-effective replacement plan that would illuminate the bottom of the lock wasn't easy, Pope noted.

"The biggest challenge was finding the right kind of lighting for the constantly varying amount of cubic feet inside the

navigation lock," he said. "The light had to be bright enough when vessels were at tailwater level, but as the lock filled and vessels rose on the water to the upstream level, we didn't want the light to blind everyone."

The 6,000-watt, 12-lamp system was upgraded in December with new floodlights providing about 16,500-watts total output. Planners aimed for tailwater-level lighting similar to that of a retail parking lot. Optic techniques used in modern floodlights resulted in superior illumination, without creating an over-lit area at the headwater level, said Pope.

The upgrade cost about \$4,500. Maintenance workers at the dam installed the new lights. The increased visibility improved safety for vessels in the lock and made low-light work conditions easier for lock operators, said Carl Knaak, operations manager at Little Goose Lock and Dam.

"It used to be completely black down there when you looked in from the top," said Knaak. "Now, operators can easily see if the barges are tied up correctly for a safe lockage."

Power produced by the dam's six, 135-megawatt, hydroelectric generators also supplies its on-site electricity needs, including the new lights.