



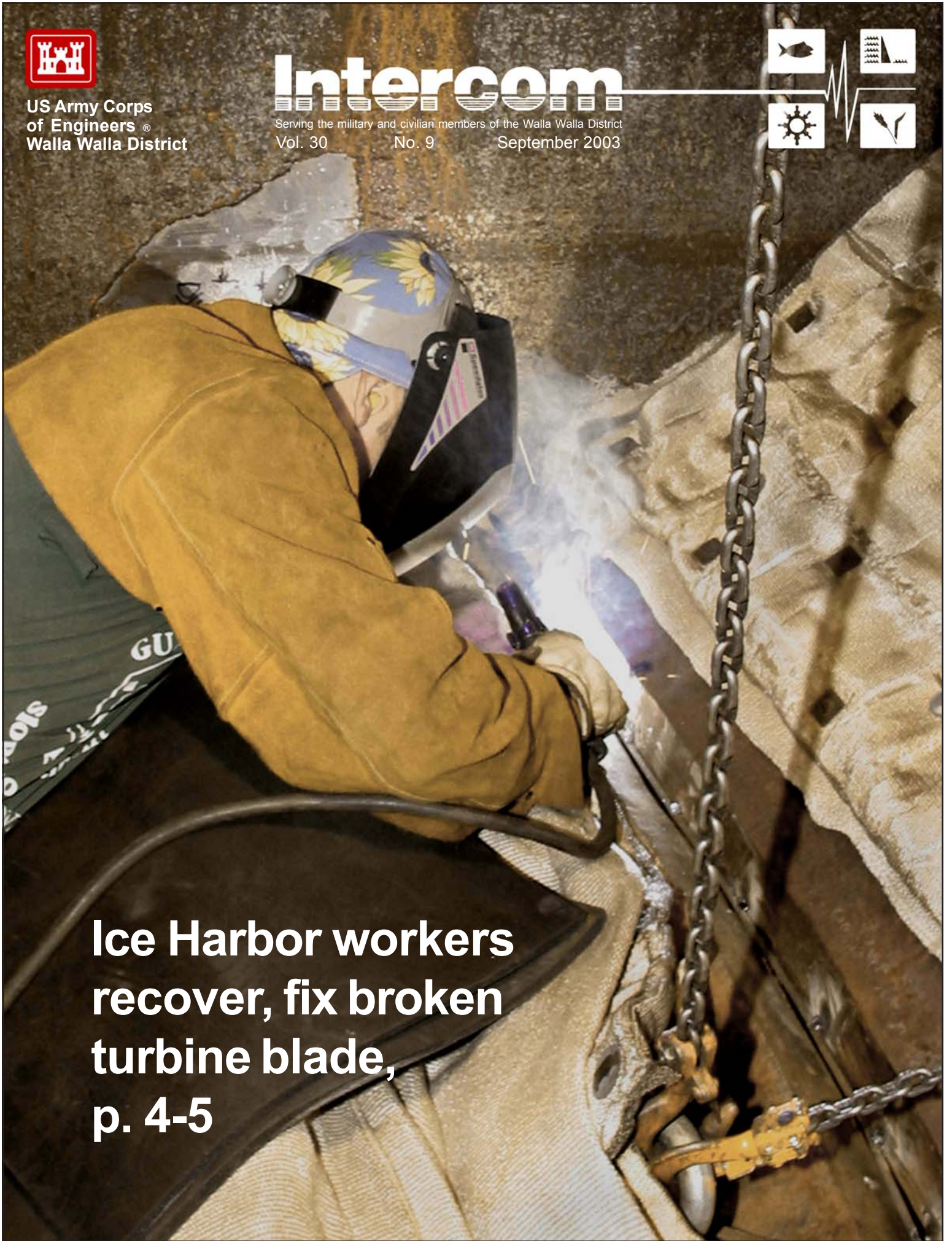
US Army Corps
of Engineers®
Walla Walla District

Intercom

Serving the military and civilian members of the Walla Walla District
Vol. 30 No. 9 September 2003



**Ice Harbor workers
recover, fix broken
turbine blade,
p. 4-5**



Diversity of all types brings new ideas to Corps table

The opinions in this article are mine and only mine. If I got a nickel for every opinion I have (and felt the need to express), I would not be working for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

It's the ninth annual Freedom from Discrimination Month in the Walla Walla Valley. All three area colleges and the Race Unity Coalition are sponsoring local events to encourage an awareness of discrimination issues and promote acceptance of



Diane Karnish

diversity. I applied to attend a workshop offered in support of the event, and started thinking about diversity and what it meant to me.

The Army's Equal Employment Opportunity program vision aims at being the "model employer with a diverse work force founded upon equality of opportunity." But, I think the value of diversity extends beyond race, gender or religion. Diversity

can be found all around us. It is an ever-changing constant of our lives.

Most people don't seem to like change and seem resistant to it. However, change and diversity can be good things and often improve upon the status quo. Diversity of thought, experience and strategy in the workplace can open doors to new ideas and options that would otherwise have been overlooked or ignored.

Each one of us adds diversity to the organization. I add diversity to the Corps. I am usually one of very few females in most meetings. I am usually one economist in a meeting full of engineers. I am usually one of very few people in meetings who have been employed in another district or division.

The Corps strives to be the nation's premiere engineering agency, maintaining a strategic vision and promoting a "learning organization" atmosphere. However, in my opinion, we continue to make decisions based on how we have always done things. As an organization, we stay in our comfort zone. People who are different from us make us uncomfortable. We continue to hire people who are like us because it makes us comfortable. We don't like

to get out of that "comfort zone."

It all reminds me of a story. I don't know the author otherwise I would give them some credit. And, if you are the author, forgive me for copying. I will give you some of those nickels, if I get any.

A daughter was putting the Christmas ham into the oven. As she prepared the ham the way her mother and grandmother before her, she stopped and asked her mother, "Why do we cut the ends off the ham before we stick it into the oven? Does it help the flavor? Does it cook faster? Why do we do this?" To which the mother answered that it was the way her mother had taught her and they had always done it that way. When Grandma entered the room the two women asked her, "Grandma, why do we cut the ends off the ham before putting it into the oven?" Grandma answered, "Because when I baked my first Christmas ham, I only had a small roasting pan. The ham would not fit."

Do you continue to cut the ends off the ham without asking why? Does it make you comfortable?

The importance of diversity – what does that mean?

To me, diversity means variety. It means that when I hire a person who is different from me, I get a variety. I get different views from a different background. If the Corps has a room full of people with similar backgrounds and similar experiences and they are tasked with solving a problem, they will quickly come to the "right solution." Of course they will. They all think alike. It has to be the "right" answer.

When we add diversity to our work force we add value to our decision making process. We add different views from people who have different backgrounds and experiences.

Charles Darwin said, when talking about survival of species, that it is not the strongest or the smartest that survive, it is the one who is able to adapt to change that survives. He also went on to say it is genetic diversity that allows the species to become better at adapting to change.

We should learn from genetics. Diversity is important in our organization. It adds sustainability to our organization. It adds value to our decision-making processes. It adds new ways of thinking. It adds to our effectiveness. It creates a culture that can withstand time, can adapt to change and can succeed and sustain into the future.

Diane Karnish
Chief, Plan Formulation
Planning Branch, PPPMD



Corps seeks retirees for deployment, backfill

The Department of Defense has received authority from the Office of Personnel Management, under the provisions of the Homeland Security Act, to reemploy retirees without a salary offset.

That means that retirees can come back to work and receive all of their retirement pay and all of the salary of the positions to which they are assigned.

But, there is a catch, said Ray Quinn, Walla Walla District's human resources chief. To receive this benefit, retirees must be deploying to Iraq or Afghanistan or filling behind someone who has deployed to those mission areas.

The District is particularly interested in recent retirees – five or fewer years retired. Although, all interested retirees will be considered.

Retirees who are willing to deploy will be required to pass the appropriate physical exams and get mission-specific vaccinations.

"We hope that current employees will share this information with folks they know who are federal retirees," said Quinn. "They don't have to be former Corps employees, although that past experience would likely be very helpful. Spreading the word on this opportunity will provide important information to those retirees who would like to contribute to our reconstruction efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan and support the Global War on Terror."

District personnel officials expect the local need for retiree services will extend into the new year.

For more information, call Quinn at 529-7036 or Debbie Mallard at 527-7024.

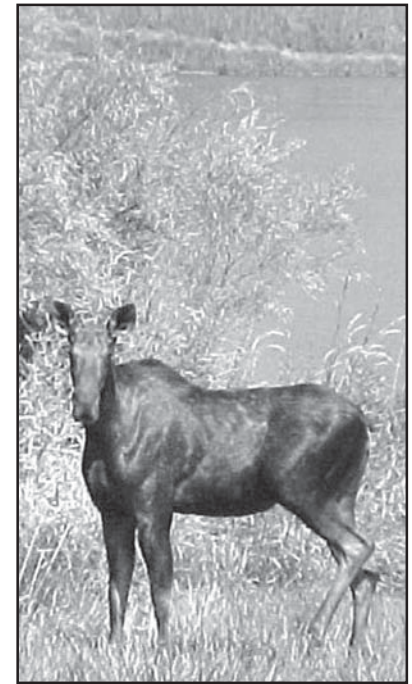
Moose country?

Visitors to Chief Timothy Park near Clarkston, Wash., caught a rare sighting Aug. 4 of a young cow moose.

The moose spent several hours wading in shallow areas of the Snake River surrounding the island-bound Corps park,

Scott Patterson, on-site operations manager for Northwest Land Management who leases the property, captured several photographs of the cow as she nibbled on water plants and shoreline grasses.

"I've never seen a moose in the wild before," said Patterson. "She was beautiful."



On the Cover...

Rich Johnson, a utility-man at Ice Harbor Lock and Dam, works on reattaching a turbine blade that broke off from generator unit number 3 in August. He wears leather welding sleeves and a welder's hood to protect his skin and eyesight as the sparks fly. (photo by Gina Schwetz)



Intercom



The INTERCOM is an unofficial publication authorized by the provisions of Army Regulation 360-1. It is published by the Public Affairs Office, Walla Walla District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. It has a distribution of 1,500 copies. It is digitally printed by the Document Automation and Production Service. Contents of the INTERCOM are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, or the Walla Walla District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Commander: Lt. Col. Edward J. Kertis Jr.
 Chief, Public Affairs: Dutch Meier
 Editor: Gina Schwetz
 Student Aide: Krissy Antes

For more information, contact:
 E-mail: cenww-pa@usace.army.mil
 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
 Walla Walla District
 Public Affairs Office
 201 N. Third Avenue
 Walla Walla, WA 99362
 Phone: (509) 527-7020
 Fax: (509) 527-7824



Blade breaks off; workers find, fix

by Gina Schwetz

Maintenance workers weren't sure why the guide bearings on Ice Harbor's generator unit number 3 were getting hot on June 13.

Once they shut down and unwatered the unit, workers returning from the turbine scrollcase concluded a blade had broken off and was missing.

"Losing the blade had shifted the weight balance on the bearings – the friction made them hot," explained Scott Sutliff, operations manager.

It took divers several weeks to locate the blade section. It had washed out of the turbine and was found about 75-feet underwater in the tailrace below the dam. The section was pulled out of the water on Aug. 8 by a crane. Workers then started a nearly two-month welding job.

The broken blade edge was shaped in a V-like point in an outside work area. Welders did the same to the stump of blade still attached to the turbine.

"That V-shape lets us set them point-to-point and reattach them by welding fill material onto the top and bottom," said Jim Hay, power plant mechanic crew foreman.

Once the prep work was done, workers tackled the most difficult and dangerous part of this job on Sept. 2 – moving the blade section into the scrollcase.

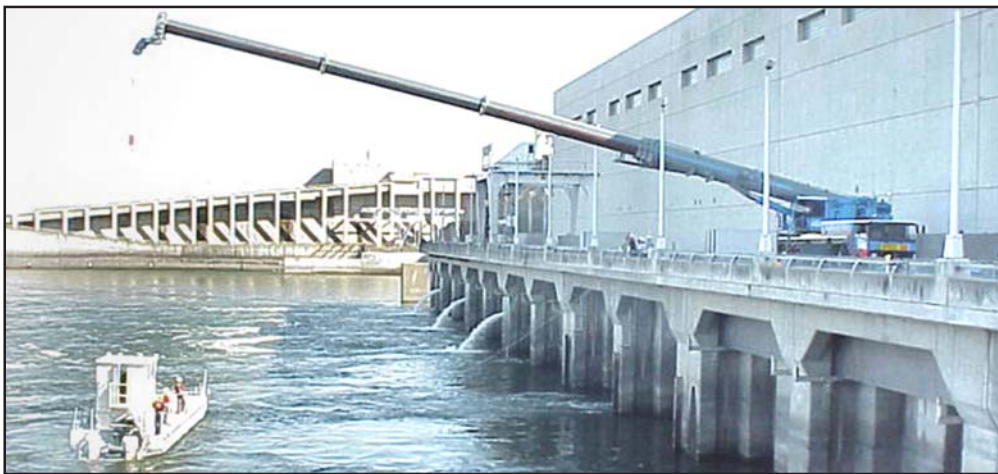
"We lowered it by crane 150 feet into the scrollcase from the intake deck of the dam," said Sutliff. "The crane operator couldn't see his load; something very dangerous to folks inside the scrollcase. They communicated movement instructions to the crane operator by radio. No one was hurt."

"Once it's down inside the scrollcase, you can't use the crane to move it anymore. Our crew rigged up the blade and moved it with old-fashioned manpower over to the turbine," said Hays.

Workers suspended the section by chains to position it for reattachment. Four weeks of welding followed, with the job finished on Oct. 2.

"Almost everyone who works in the powerhouse played a part," said Sutliff. "It was a great training opportunity for our less-experienced workers."

It will be several more weeks before the turbine produces power again, according to Hay. Maintenance workers are taking the opportunity to perform periodic maintenance while the unit is already unwatered.



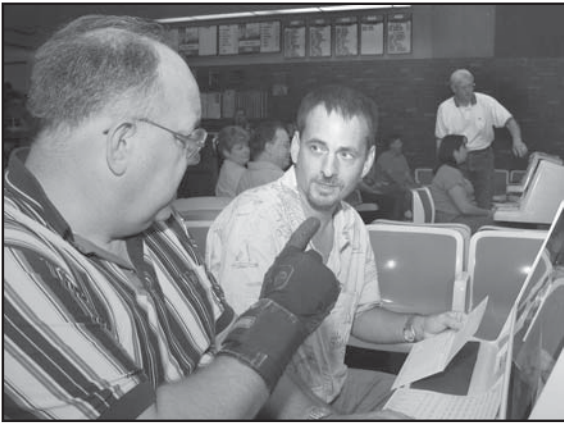
Ice Harbor maintenance personnel stand by in a 40-foot work barge as workers prepare to hoist the blade section out of the 75-foot deep tailrace waters with a 150-ton crane (photo by Floyd Stredwick).



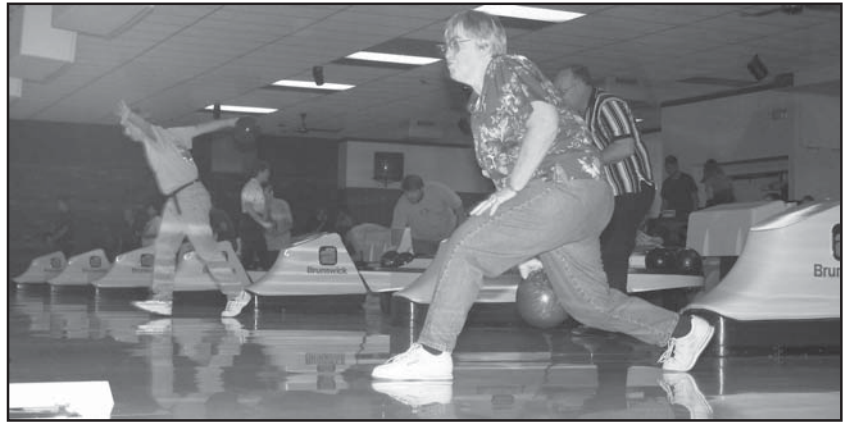
Above, Pat Marsh, crane operator, uses a forklift to take the recovered blade section to a nearby welding area (photo by Jim Hay). Left, Carey Basel, welder, grinds and welds on the blade section, shaping the broken edge for reattachment to the turbine (photo by Sam Liming).



Above, Rich Johnson, utilityman, adjusts the chainfalls from above while Carey Basel, welder, monitors the position of the blade section as they suspend it and lock it in place for welding (photo by Gina Schwetz). Left, Carey Basel uses a peener to flatten and smooth-out a spot in the welding. Once workers got the broken section back into the scrollcase, it took only five weeks for them to reattach the blade, welding it from the top and bottom back onto the turbine (photo by Sam Liming).



Bob Minden, a supply technician from the headquarters' logistics office, (left), and Rick Weis, a biological science technician from Little Goose Dam's fish facility, chat about score averages.



The District's Bowling League draws employees, retirees, and family members from outlying project areas and the Walla Walla headquarters for fun and comraderie every Friday at the bowling alley on the corner of Ash Street and Walla Walla Avenue.

Project, HQ bowlers team up for league play

Story and photos by Gina Schwetz

Shine-up your bowling ball or just come out to socialize during the Walla Walla District Bowling League's 2003-2004 season.

Ten teams of District bowlers lace up their leather-soled, multi-colored shoes and hit the lanes for league play every Friday from 4:45-6:45 p.m. at the bowling alley on the corner of Ash Street and Walla Walla Avenue in Walla Walla's Eastgate business sector.

The teams compete against each other, each bowler trying to improve his or her score while boosting the team's average. In between turns throwing, bowlers often chat, compare scores or swap best-score-ever stories. Most players list socializing at the top of their "why I joined the office league" list.

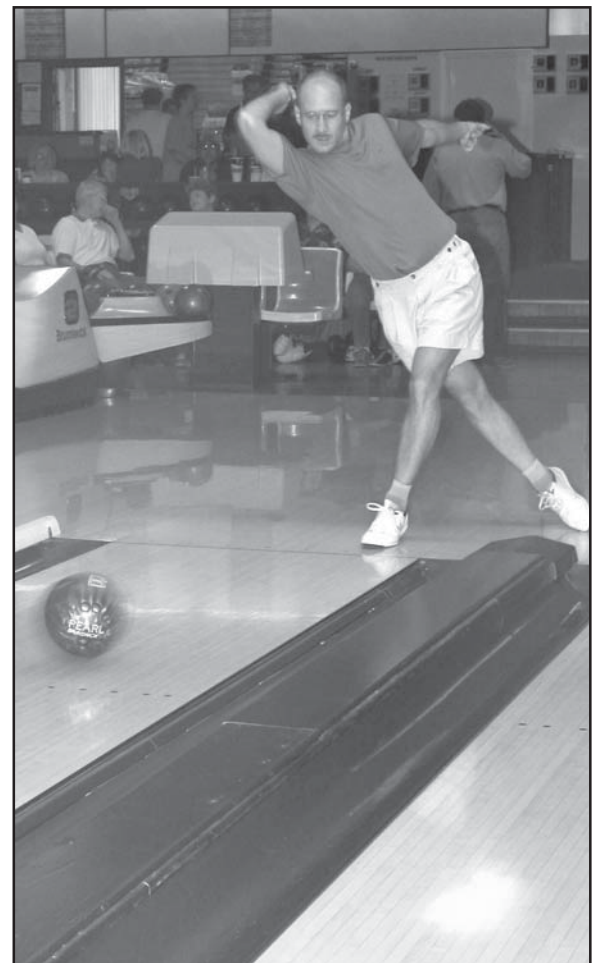
"My favorite part of bowling with the league is meeting regularly with coworkers from all across the District in a fun setting and keeping in contact with the retirees," said Donna Hansens, league secretary-treasurer and District bowler for more than 15 years.

The league also serves to bridge the distance between the projects and the headquarters by providing an opportunity for employees to get together in a recreational setting.

"I seldom see many of the project employees at the headquarters. You see names on employee rosters, but they don't really mean a lot until you actually meet and get to know them," said Hansens.

"I've been bowling with the District league for eight years and have made many good friends with folks outside the headquarters building that I never would have met otherwise." added Brenda Jones, last year's league secretary-treasurer.

The league is open to all District employees, retirees and family members. Other federal agency employees in the area can join the league.



Above, Jeff Sedgwick, an environmental resource specialist from the District headquarters' environmental compliance section, practices a few throws down the lanes. Left, Bob Minden receives congratulations for throwing a strike from teammates, Fred Miklancic, a District retiree, and Sherri Miklancic.

Former District family member returns as new logistics chief



Gayla Ernst

Story and photo by Gina Schwetz

Taking a job with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers put the Walla Walla District's new Chief of the Logistics Management Office back on her home turf.

Gayla M. Ernst, a Walla Walla High School alumnus, joined the District in September.

She left a position with the Bureau of Land Management in Baker City, Oregon, where she served as Director of the National Historic Oregon Trail Interpretive Center.

Ernst's early years were spent here as part of the extended District family.

Her father, Marvin Shollenberger, a civil engineer, retired from Walla Walla District in 1984 as operation division's

outdoor recreation supervisor.

After high school, she attended Washington State University, majoring in physical education, and later attended Eastern Oregon University, studying natural resource management.

Ernst brings 27 years of federal government experience, most of which was spent with the U.S. Forest Service. During her career, she has served as a recreation staff officer, district ranger, operations chief (a job that is similar to a Corps logistics position) and in public affairs.

Ernst and her family are building a new home in the area where she plans to take up her off-duty interests of gardening, collecting antique cookie jars and lifting weights and exercising.

Lights – Camera – Action!

District employees get '15 minutes'

by Lynda Nutt, USACE Water Safety Program manager

Lenses and spotlights captured several District employees as filmmakers hit Walla Walla Sept. 3 to tape a national marketing video about the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Water Safety Program.

TRF Productions of Arlington, Vir., shot interviews and illustrative footage for the video, "The Corps Water Safety Story." The educational film showcases some of the approaches used nationwide by Corps park rangers, lake managers, public affairs officers and safety specialists to teach water safety to the public.

Local personalities who got their "15 minutes of fame" in the video include Lt. Col. Edward J. Kertis, Lynda Nutt, Phil Hixson and Seamoor the Sea Serpent.

Student aides Krissy Antes and Keith Spring, public affairs, Karen Bengé, operations,



and Helpdesk's Ryan Pierce, information management, showed their faces and acting talents as extras during the taping.

The video is due for release this winter and will be distributed throughout the Corps, as well as to Corps water safety partners.

Volunteers improve Dworshak boating

Story and photos by Torrie Hicks, park ranger

Boaters visiting Dworshak can tie up to new recreation docks recently installed on the reservoir.

The Dworshak maintenance crew, dozens of volunteers and several manufacturer representatives, installed several new destination docks on the reservoir, improving facilities just in time for the autumn recreation season.

They began assembling the new docks on Aug. 22. The team completed two docks that day, and another on the next day. Once configured, Corps maintenance workers towed the docks to popular locations on the reservoir. The first was placed near Merry's Bay on Aug. 25, before the Labor Day holiday.

"That's one of our biggest recreation weekends," said Mike Deitrick, park manager at Dworshak. "Visitors were all over the new dock."

The second dock was placed in Elk Creek on Sept. 4. Natural Resources workers installed the third dock across from Cranberry Creek on Sept. 15.

Dworshak officials credit volunteers for the quick assembly and installation of the new docks.

"We've worked hard to involve the public in our recreation planning," said Deitrick. "In recent years, we've enjoyed great support from the local community. They care about their recreation assets, and we appreciate their support and involvement."

The Corps purchased 110 of the floating dock sections last year. Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation Waterways Improvement Fund gave a grant for anchoring systems, lights, ladders and benches needed to complete the destination docks and the handling dock improvements. Another dock is planned for assembly and installation near Drift Creek in the spring.



Right, Caleb Hall, a District family member (wearing the orange shirt), helps E-Z Dock representatives assemble dock sections for installation on Elk Creek.



Volunteers, manufacturer representatives and Dworshak personnel, assemble the new docks at the Bruce's Eddy boat ramp.