The Seattle District
Vol. XII, No. 1
April-June 2002

Flagship

Hydro Diversity

April-June 2002
Vol. XII, Issue 2

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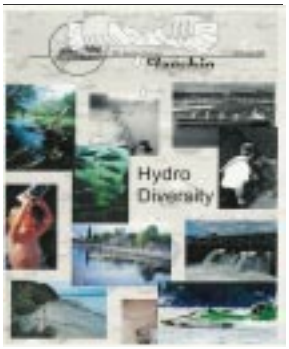


Hydro Diversity: you'd think that there is abundant water for the many competing needs in the Pacific Northwest. Not so. We are stewards of every drop. Hydro references appear throughout this issue of *Flagship*.

Col. Ralph H. Graves, Commander
Dave Harris, Chief, Public Affairs and Editor
Patricia Graesser, Contributor
Steve Cosgrove, Contributor
Leslie Kaye, Contributor
Maria Or, Contributor
Shannon Chenoweth, Editorial Assistant and Photographer
Kim Carlson, Photographer

US Army Corps of Engineers
Seattle District

Flagship is your news and feature magazine, published quarterly. If you have news, suggestions for articles or ideas you think would be useful for ***Flagship,*** we'd like to hear from you. Send your ideas to the editor at the address below or call the Public Affairs Office at (206) 764-3750.

Flagship is an unofficial publication authorized under AR 360-l, published by the Public Affairs Office, Seattle District, U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, P. O. Box 3755, Seattle, WA 98124-3755.

The views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army. Questions may be sent to the above address or by e-mail to: david.g.harris@usace.army.mil

This issue was especially prepared with best wishes and a fond farewell to Anita Wong.


Col. Ralph H. Graves

Commander's Notebook

An age-old puzzle

Capt. Harry Taylor, the first Seattle District Engineer, complained in 1896 that "it is quite a puzzle" to find qualified and experienced people to fill district positions. Today, with much of our veteran cadre retiring and our workload expanding, we are back in the hunt for talent. The good news is that we offer attractive and rewarding work, and with proper efforts we can sustain the essential element of district success: our capable workforce.

Seattle District offers varied work on missions serving the region and the country. We strive to stay current with the latest technology. Lately the Corps has been at the forefront of environmental remediation and restoration activities. These cutting edge efforts offer a high-energy challenge for those who choose to compete. At the same time, many see the security and benefits of federal employment as competitive with the private sector.

People today with valuable skills and expertise have many job choices, and the Corps actively publicizes our opportunities. Seattle District supervisors cultivate relationships with local schools. A new Northwestern Division website describes benefits and opportunities across the region. It provides links to our district site, so we need to have clear and accurate information there. At a recent job fair for Boeing employees, we offered positions not only in Seattle but in other districts as well.

To attract at the entry level we must understand the priorities of young folks today and demonstrate how they can realize them in joining the Corps. We must especially reach out to minorities in order to broaden and maintain diversity. We focus our recruiting efforts for surges in workload (construction representatives at Fort Lewis), major personnel turnover (military project managers and hydroplant operators) or hard-to-find skills (economists).

After we inform people about opportunities, we still have to hire them. We often complain about Resumix, but more productively we are teaching supervisors to write position descriptions and applicants to write resumes so that the system can make the best matches. The CPOC—Civilian Personnel Operations Center—is trying to improve the availability rate of people appearing on selection lists. We can use hiring and relocation bonuses to make our offers more attractive. We seek to hire more quickly in order to fill our vacancies faster and to shorten the wait for interested applicants.

We start off right on retention by welcoming new arrivals

(Please see bottom of page 3)

CorpsUs

I want to be like Bill

By Dave Harris

Few people touch my life on a day-to-day basis like Bill, a ferry worker on my 5:30 a.m. boat on the way to work.

Virginia Young touches my life. When she speaks, I listen. Wisdom inbound.

And after my encounter with Bill, my spirit soars. Every day. He puts a spring in my step. Not just on Monday, but every single day. I slow down to drink Bill in. I linger in his presence. He fills me with joy, and often I leave him with a tear in my eye.

I don't think I'm alone in the way I feel about Bill.

Bill doesn't seek fame. But he is famous among the many ferry boat commuters.

Bill has had his troubles and probably more than his share of brush-offs. He suffers from painful knees and has undergone surgery more than once. So, what does he do about it?

Bill makes a point of greeting every one of the 500 or so walk-on passengers on the Bainbridge Island Superferry. That's no easy task, especially when people are in such a hurry to get to work and focused on anything but ferryboat niceties. He stands at the end of the "plank." Ferry's about to dock. Plank down. The throngs start to disembark.

Then he starts.

"Good morning! Good morning! Good morning! Good morning! Good morning! Good morning! Good morning! Good morning! Good morning! Good morning! Good morning! Good morning!....."

Bill, making a difference every single day.

Yes, five hundred times, every morning. Cheered stockbrokers and public affairs officers strain to grab his outreached hand. He gives you a warm, firm handshake and smile near the end of a two-hour commute that hasn't even begun when the alarm goes off in my house at 3:40 a.m.

I've shaken the hand of a U.S. Vice President and other celebrities. None has touched my life like Bill.

If I said, "Today I want to be Bill," I'd fall far short of the mark.

Anyone can live one moment gloriously.

To Bill, it's an every single day thing. Because of him, I look forward to the commute.

Yes, if it is possible, I want to be like my good-hearted friend Bill.

(***Commander's Notebook***, continued from page 2)

with helpful sponsorship and effective inprocessing.

The same up-to-date equipment, efficient processes and productive culture that effectively deliver products and services to our customers make for a satisfying work environment. Opportunities for personal development and advancement allow one to grow through a career. The Learning Organization seeks to maximize individual capability through training, education and experience.

We'll soon publish our policy and guidelines for telework and encourage expanding opportunities to work away from the office. Outside work itself we ease commuting with transit subsidies and carpooling. Childcare, gymnasium facilities, food service and other amenities make the workplace and the job more attractive. And we must provide the same benefits to our operating project and field office people.

Each of the above steps to sustaining our workforce can be improved. Four of our five improvement teams are focused directly on the issues of recruiting and retention, training, telework and facilities. We can all help. Think of the things that brought you to the Corps and keep you here; now think how we can make them better and join the improvement efforts. Finally, if you know someone who would be an asset to our team, suggest that they consider joining!

Love what you do for a living, Kiddo

By Leslie Kaye

Contrary to popular myth my famous father is not Danny Kaye. What would a showbiz entertainer's daughter be doing in a federal engineering organization?

From roughly the same era, my famous father *is,* however, a Northwest icon known for broadcasting the hydro races on Seattle's first radio and television station—KING TV—at a time when rooster tails and broadcast announcers were a big deal. His pioneer work almost single-handedly put Seattle on the map. And looking back a few decades to Dad's youth, a time did exist when the image truly applied of one horse, with one rider, hoofing down a barren street with salty waves of water crashing at his side. This town has not always been a top-10 city with the major-league problems it is today. But I digress!

One piece of sage advice from the famous father—and perhaps it is the only actual piece of *advice* I have ever received from him—is that you better love what you are going to do for work, because you are going to do it for a very long time. This idea floats even more boats when you realize that at 85 years of age he is still working full-time, on-air, at a Northwest radio station, as a sportscaster doing live play-by-play broadcasting.

If there is only one thing to be said about Bill O'Mara, it is that he loves what he still does.

In my six years of experience here at the Corps, I see this philosophy in action.

Treading the worn paths of the cube farm on break, the sentence keeps rolling around in my head. This place epitomizes the words, "You better love what you do for a living, because you're going to do it for a very long time, Kiddo." Not merely because there is a retirement many days and that a number who retire come back as contractors. Not even because most of the workforce is here for at least 10 years and is, on average, 48 years old.

I don't think it's even because of the so-called golden handcuffs. It's something else, perhaps indescribable to the outside world.

Bill O'Mara, first in the Northwest KING-TV hydro sportscaster.

People are happy here.

I believe there is a gaggle of people who love what they do here; that's why they have been doing it so long.

In the January-March issue of *Flagship*, our commander writes on the issue of capable workforce: two "R's"—recruiting and retention. Retaining Corps of Engineers public service talent is more challenging than ever before with a third "R"—retirement.

Did you know that "out there," people only stay with one company for an average of three years? Did you know on the average most people are only happy two days out of every seven? How about that dot-com deal?

Dad Bill and daughter Leslie today.

Here's what I think is the reason for this: there is nowhere else in the world like the Corps.

Nowhere else in the national job market can you find the flexibility, earning potential, advancement opportunity, accrued annual and sick leave, and most importantly *people*. I love what I do here because of the group of people I work with, and because there isn't another place where I am as appreciated. I don't know of any other place where they even entertain the idea of retention, let alone have their executive level management write about it in the employee news journal.

It is common where I come from (the media industry) to compete with a few hundred applicants for a single job. It is common to have younger, smarter, more physically attractive people standing in line for your current job. They would gladly work longer hours and for less pay, too. You can be fired at a moment's notice for the remotest of reasons. In America we do not have a "right" to a job; we have the privilege of working. Barring any Washington State labor laws, private enterprise can do what it wants according to "company policy."

While most of the rest of the 7.6 million baby-boomers were out partying, I propose that YOU, the cogs in the Corps wheel, the dependable, churning-at-all times civilian few, the dependable, conscientious core who knew how to show up no matter what … YOU are the ones who make this a happy place. YOU are the ones who are the backbone of this nation. Telling your story is an honor. It is a small public service I feel prepared to perform. It is a task that is more enjoyable than any article I write, any segment I narrate, any video I produce, any public event I organize, any audience I entertain. And if they let me, I hope to do this a long time because I am forever a champion of your efforts.

All showbiz aside, for me the Corps best exemplifies that one piece of old salt advice announced to me over the airwaves of life: *Love what you do, 'cuz you're gonna to be doin' it for a very long time.*

Gentlemen & gentlewomen, start your engines

Seattle Outboard Association flies low over Rufus Woods Lake, launches outboard racing season

By Steve Cosgrove

The air around the Chief Joseph Dam's upstream boat ramp was crisp on the morning of April 20, laced with aroma of coffee. A light mist rose from the lake as the sun broke the clouds apart. There was hardly a ripple in the water. It was shaping up to be a good day to race. The Seattle Outboard Association's first regatta of the season – two days of powerboat racing – was underway.

"Overall, conditions are very good," said Dick Rautenberg, regatta organizer for the Seattle Outboard Association, an affiliate of the American Power Boat Association. "There's very little current, and the Corps rangers and Douglas County sheriffs are doing a great job of keeping other craft off the course. That's very important. When one of our boats is doing 80 or 90 miles an hour, even the wake from a jet ski can send them spinning."

Did he say "90 miles an hour"?

"Oh, yes," Dick replied, "PRO racers regularly hit 100 miles per hour."

PRO racers – that would be the American Power Boat Association's Professional Racing Outboard category of racers. These are sophisticated world class boats, with unlimited engine modifications. Very fast. This is but one of several racing categories, with many classes within each category.

For example, the Stock Outboard Category has 18 classes, and the Modified Outboard category has 16 classes. Classes are dependent on weight, horsepower and hull design. Racing is done within classes, never against other classes, just to keep competition on an even keel.

Another category is the Junior Class. This is a class for boys and girls ages 9 through 15. Don't worry, Mom, they're not going 100 miles per hour. Though the 13.2 cubic inch engine used in this class is also used in adult racing, speed is limited to 40 miles per hour. In addition to these kids having an absolute blast racing boats – major fun – they learn the many lessons of competition and sportsmanship, as well as keeping their boat right side up and running. It's also a great family sport, with a built-in pit crew: Mom and Dad.

Racer Pat Gleason explained, "Many families have three and four generations of speedboat racers. Kids start out with the Junior Class and work their way up. It's not an expensive sport to get into; as little as a couple thousand dollars will have you in the water and racing. It also attracts a wide cross section of people from all walks of life – for example, I'm a Microsoft project manager."

Pat is also the Webmaster for the Seattle Outboard Association. For detailed information about outboard racing, visit www.seattleoutboard.org. Racing schedules and results are there, as well as information ranging from the history of the sport to tips on getting started.

You'll also find information on the website about safety – the association is very safety-conscious. As Dick Rautenberg pointed out, "Dangers exist. Though every racer wants to cross the finish line first, our primary concern is safety. We have a system of procedures in place to protect our racers, from making sure the course is properly set to having our rescue boat in the water to assist those who might get in trouble."

Safety is also foremost in the mind of Laura Beauregard, the Corps' chief of the Recreation and Natural Resource Section at Chief Joseph Dam and Rufus Woods Lake. Laura coordinated with Dick Rautenberg on all aspects of setting up and running the regatta. Laura's no stranger to water safety. She was awarded the April 2001 National Water Safety Congress Regional Award and the year 2000 Lifeline Award for her contributions to the Corps' National Water Safety Program. She is currently the Seattle District representative to the National Corps Water Safety Committee.

Laura Beauregard

"The first step for the association was to apply for a Corps permit," Laura said. "Once that was approved, we helped them coordinate with the sheriff's department and a local ambulance crew – an ambulance is required to be on the scene when there are boats in the water. We also have a Corps craft in the water at all times, as does the sheriff's department."

Does an organization have to jump through all sorts of bureaucratic hoops to set up an event like this on a Corps lake? "Not at all," Dick said, "Laura Beauregard gave us prompt and professional assistance and advice every step of the way. Organizing this regatta was no more difficult or complex than any other – in fact, everything went very well. We really appreciate the Corps hosting our regatta and assisting us."

From Laura's perspective: "We were very impressed with the Seattle Outboard Association. Their dedication to the safety of their members and the spectators made our job easy and contributed to a wonderful event."

"And they're off" at Rufus Woods Lake behind Chief Joseph Dam.

'Aha!'

Discoveries lurking in the deep motivate Nearshore Science Team

By Maria Or

Oohs and ahs are good. Whoa's and wow's are even better. But ask a scientist what makes him tick, and he'll say it's all about the Aha's!

"It's always the Aha's that get me," says Fred Goetz, a lead scientist for the Puget Sound Nearshore Science Team – NST. The Aha factor is the gratifying and satisfying response a scientist gets when making a discovery or learning a new thing. The only other thing that makes an Aha even better, says Fred, "is being able to change the world around you, like being able to use your research for the benefit of the environment."

Spencer Spit, Lopez Island, has many nearshore features.

Perhaps that's why this team is so exciting to scientific communities. The promise of great Aha's to come has attracted esteemed scientists from many different disciplines to share their talents and knowledge. The really cool thing about this team, Fred says, is not only will that they be able to study the Puget Sound in breadth, but also that the research will probably result in action, thanks to the Army Corps of Engineers civil works program. On the Richter scale of Aha's, something like this presumably tops the charts.

From the high bluffs of the coastline to the depths of the Puget Sound's photic zone, where light ceases to penetrate, this team will seek to understand the processes of the nearshore. They will study 2,500 miles of shoreline area to uncover how the nearshore works.

Among the spectrum of study, they will examine existing data and pinpoint nearshore problems caused by urban development and other human modifications. Subsequently, they will use that information to formulate, evaluate and screen potential solutions to these problems. Finally, they will recommend a series of actions and projects to restore, preserve and conserve the nearshore to a state of healthy, natural productivity.

If this sounds like a big task, no doubt the knowledge yet to be uncovered is vast. Although there have been many studies done within the Puget Sound, none has been as comprehensive and extensive as what the team is eager to accomplish. Consequently, this study will result in bountiful Aha's for the science community and especially for the 13 members of the team.

Maybe that's why Dr. Guy Gelfenbaum, from the U.S. Geological Survey, says it's "well worth the flight" from Menlo Park, Calif., every two weeks to join the team. Representing the discipline of marine sediment dynamics and oceanography, Gelfenbaum's expertise is leveraged because of his access to other Geological Survey scientists.

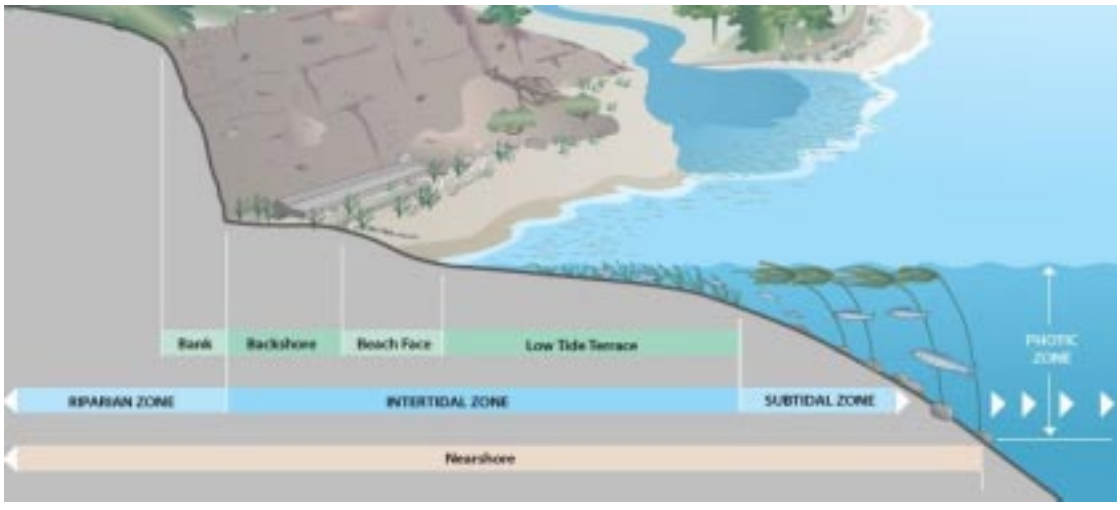
Each member of the team, composed of interdisciplinary and interagency scientists, has been tasked to pool their scientific resources and network with the whole science community to produce the best science possible for this study. Members of the team represent different disciplines, including shoreline geology, marine sediment dynamics, sediment geochemistry, nutrient dynamics, biology, spatial modeling, data management, restoration, benthic processes, intertidal ecology and habitats. Evidently, the success of this project will depend on the support generated from outreach and access.

Co-sponsored by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, this project is also supported by many other local, state and federal agencies; tribes; industries; and environmental organizations.

Because of the magnitude of the project, however, additional support is still needed to restore the nearshore that is in peril. Used by nine out of 10 species listed as endangered or threatened, the nearshore has shown dire need for restoration and preservation. From habitat to countless other organisms and flora, and egress to 14 of Washington's largest rivers, it is apparent the nearshore is an integral part of the Northwest.

"The nearshore is very complex," Gelfenbaum says, "and we won't have a perfect understanding of it, but our goals are achievable."

Going back to the Richter scale of Aha's, stakeholders hope the seismic benefits of nearshore discoveries are within grasp—lurking in the deep and its environs right next door.



The nearshore is more than simply the shoreline. It can be best defined as the area from the high bluffs of the coastline to the depths of the photic zone of the Puget Sound. (Courtesy, King County)

Chehalis: What's brewing? Morris-Coffey

Stories by Leslie Kaye

Want to know what really makes a Corps project twist and shout? The power of women.

The Chehalis River and surrounding basin area are currently under the care and guidance of two energetic project managers, Beth Coffey and Lori Morris. The combined community outreach effort on the topics of flood damage reduction and environmental restoration has turned a pessimistic community positive.

Citizens and community groups in this basin—and even some select individual residents—have recently had the unusual opportunity to go to public meetings that are really listening sessions. The meetings are designed to encourage community comment, whether positive or negative. The public can meet with subject-matter experts on the area's hottest issue: flood control. Participants can visit a variety of exhibits and booths during the open house part of the evening. The booths are artistically presented by agencies such as Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Chehalis Basin Partnership, Chehalis Watershed Planning Committee, Department of Natural Resources, Department of Ecology and, of course, the Army Corps of Engineers.

Lori Morris, project manager for the Chehalis Basin Ecosystem Restoration Study says she travels down to the area at least once a week, if not twice. There has been a representative from the Corps at every monthly partnership meeting for the last two years. Authored by both project managers, regular articles appear in the feature publication, *Drops of Water.*

Beth Coffey, project manager for the Centralia Flood Damage Reduction Project, is gearing up for several public meetings over the next two months. These meetings will give citizens a chance to understand and explore the proposed selected alternative, which is building set-back levees and modifying Skookumchuk Dam. Beth says this solution provides the best reduction of flood damages for the cost during the evaluation process. The meetings are leading to the release of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement and public comment period in July. Her project is officially fast-tracked in an effort to get a flood solution constructed as soon as possible.

Chehalis River flood damage like this mess should decrease by the time Project Managers Beth Coffey and Lori Morris get through with it.

"The goal is to take this show on the road as much as possible," Lori says. "We are here to listen and want to hear from citizens."

Local sponsors, the main organizers, offer creative and supportive ways to enhance the community outreach effort. Incentives to attend include recycling crafts for children, childcare and pizza.

With this much interactive exchange and focused endeavor in Southwest Washington, you can confidently add these two women's names to your list of movers and shakers around the district.

Aging: High time for a Mud Mountain face-lift

Like an aging actor in need of plastic surgery, Mud Mountain Dam is getting a face-lift.

New Project Manager Stephen Pierce says work is moving right along on rehabilitating the aging flood control and recreation-area structure. The right bank slope stability project is currently underway and dramatically changing the 50-year-old look of the dam.

Dam safety is a controversial Corps issue, and Mud Mountain has not escaped the critics. Some say the work is long overdue. Whether it is or not, the $100 million updating construction will restore the fish passage facility and make the dam considerably safer for the public as well as for employees in close contact with day-to-day operations. The Corps does its homework and Congress appropriates money for studies and designs, which conclude in the construction of nationally significant infrastructure. That process can take a long time, but has a high payback.

"The dam safety construction helps the local economy, says Bernie Hargrave, former Corps project manager. "Over the last 50 years the dam has prevented over $300 million in property losses. The new fish passage facility is part of a regional effort to preserve Lake Tapps."

ON TRACK AT FORT LEWIS: POW

Seattle District experts move out smartly building behemoth facilities to ready Fort Lewis s

By Dave Harris

It's one of the last scenes in *Raiders of the Lost Ark*. You see a forklift dwarfed by massive towers of goods in a seemingly endless government warehouse. Somewhere amidst the containers, the precious artifact finds a home, unnoticed by adventurous seekers.

Seattle District will build a similar, but more sophisticated state-of-the-art structure at Fort Lewis as part of a massive, automated $31.9 million quick-response deployment facility. It's part of the $100 million military engineering and construction program awarded by the district ahead of schedule in February and March, says Jim Clark, Chief, Military Programs. That represents a major part of this year's $140 million Army program. It includes Enduring Freedom support at Fort Lewis and a good portion of this year's $70 million Air Force program at Malmstrom (Mont.), Mountain Home (Idaho), Fairchild and McChord (Wash.) Air Force Bases.

The accelerated deployment facility effort addresses mission-critical work in support of Army Transformation at Fort Lewis in response to the terrorist attacks on New York and the Pentagon. The concept: pre-packaged goods and equipment configured to deploy within 96 hours with Army teams on distinctive missions anywhere in the world.

The Austin Company will construct the new deployment facility, which includes a railhead providing eight new rail spurs, a deployment vehicle inspection facility supporting Initial Brigade Combat Teams, and a 70,000-square foot container/pallet handling facility, resembling an upscale *Raiders of the Lost Ark* warehouse. Joyce Aldridge of the Fort Lewis Joint Transportation Directorate provided the project's operational vision.

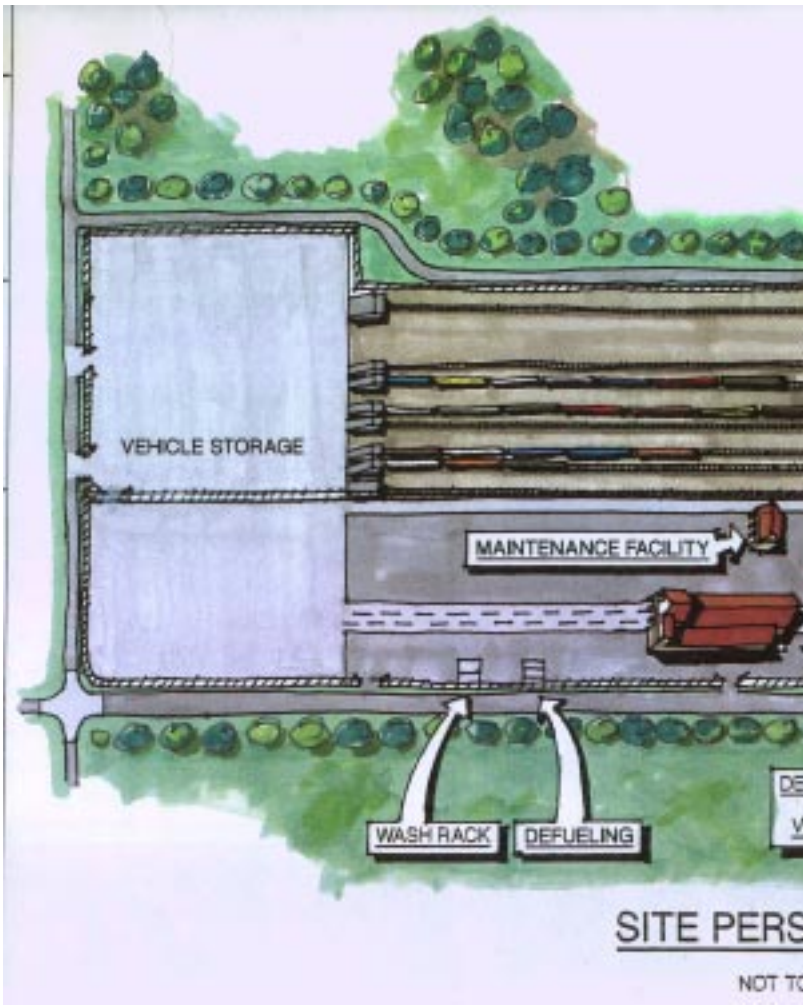
Meanwhile, a computer operator keys in a code for the specific deployment mission category. Forklifts spring into action, buzz down the interminable rows in the warehouse and select pallets—already bar-coded—that will fit the specific mission like a glove. The containers are loaded on trucks or trains and head for C-17 cargo aircraft waiting at McChord.

Speaking of Air Force, Seattle District's Rick Ulrich is busy with C-17 nose docks at McChord, Jim Nakamoto is working a $30 million family housing project at Malmstrom, and Jill Gough is managing the athletic training facility at the Air Force Academy. Amy Brandt and her project delivery teams have been hard at work coordinating fast-action apron and critical runway repairs at Mountain Home during a narrow 60-day window when aircraft were to be deployed. Amy is also working to replace aging family housing units at Mountain Home through a coordinated, innovative division-wide family housing acquisition plan. Nurhan Tan is initiating projects at the Air Force Reserve Center supporting the KC-135 beddown at Portland. Andy Maser is managing work at Fairchild and environs.

"It took a large segment of the district focused on military program execution to make this happen," Jim says. He credits the district military project managers, project delivery teams, support offices, and engaged military customers with program success.

Three lines of vehicles will queue up at this inspection facility.

The Northwestern Area Office has actively participated in project scope discussions and design reviews and has already ramped-up to provide construction management services for the FY02 program. The district's Contracting Division staff has done "incredible things" in acquisition innovations (see story, page 9).



Massive deployment center will launch equipment pallets and vehicles o

VER PROJECTION PLATFORM

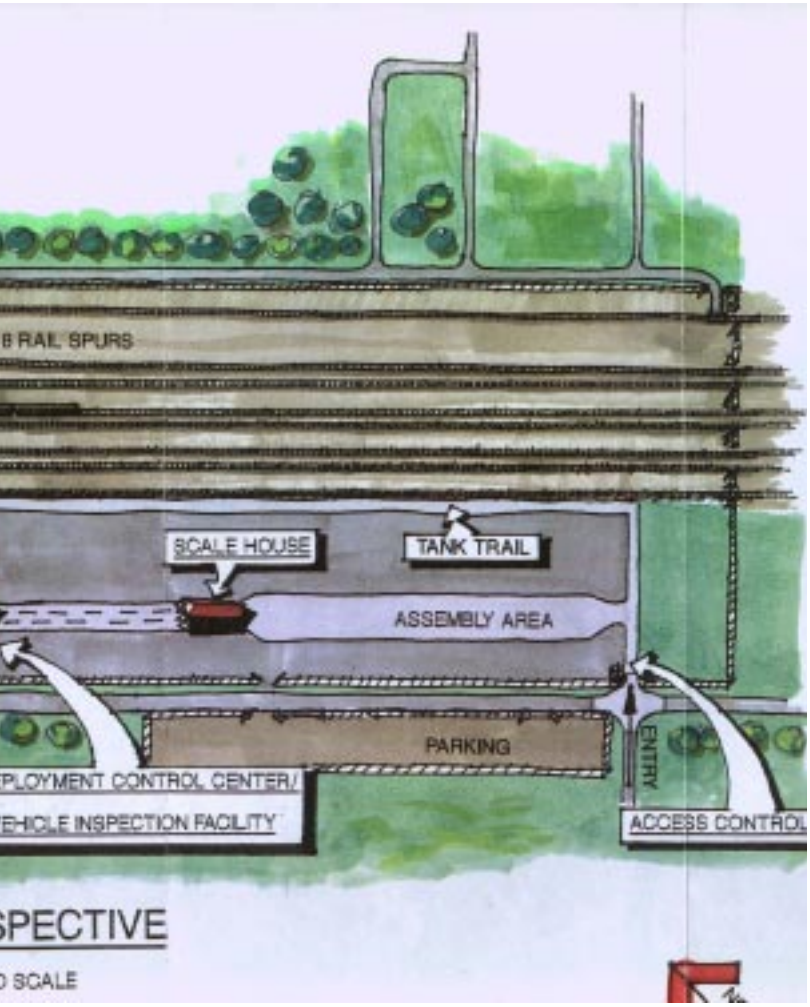
oldiers and equipment deploying within 96 hours for Enduring Freedom and future conflicts

"Our financial managers have been extremely busy shuffling millions of dollars through our system to support the awards."

Russell Davis, on loan from Headquarters, and Maj. Steve Ward, transferred from the district's Fort Lewis Business Center, have hit the ground running as new project managers in Military Branch. George Henry's small projects team; the hiring of a railroad specialist, Ron Harris, to oversee track installation; and Business Center support are all contributing to program success. "And when you think about the impact of salaries and purchase of material on the local economy, and how that money is recycled through the economy, you have a multiplier effect—studies show that the community benefits three and four times over again as a result of those expenditures.

"We're fulfilling the military mission to provide specialized facilities in order to respond to the threat of terrorism, while also stimulating local economies," Jim says.

"In many ways, this is how we are a corporate citizen—a member of the larger community. We are very proud of our military programs teams, their accomplishments in serving the nation, and contributions to the economic viability of our local communities."



n trucks and by rail to waiting aircraft at McChord Air Force Base.

Firsts: Basics of innovation

Vince Lombardi achieved multiple records and "firsts" in the business of football. How? Back to the basics. Contracting Division's Mary Mitton teamed up to work on innovative acquisition actions on behalf of Fort Lewis' deployment facility; but to nail it down, she said it was back to the basics.

She describes Seattle District "firsts" as requiring oral presentations from potential contractors; using adjectives to rate the submittals instead of a numerical system; and combining pre-qualification, technical evaluation and solicitation into one package.

Mary says requiring oral presentations was "an effective tool to see how firms differed from or matched what they put in writing." If a firm writes, for instance, that they are a smooth-functioning, harmonious team, the oral presentation might prove or disprove the notion. It enabled the district to see if the firm's staff "lived up to what they said or better—we found in some cases they knew more about their capabilities than they were able to impart in writing. Kim Carlson video-taped the presentations and each firm could ask for a copy."

"This was a big, complicated project," she says, involving a transportation inspection point, a rail head improvement plan and a container/pallet handling facility. She praises other members of the team in Contracting Division who had key roles: Susan Sherrell, who did much of the groundwork; Cheryl Anderson, who awarded the contract; and Vincent Daniels and Patty Ortiz, procurement technicians, who put together all documents for the solicitation and award.


Mary Mitton

This is a design-build project "where the successful contractor is responsible for the design and construction of a complete and usable facility," Mary says. This avoids conflicts between separate design and construction firms. "It gives the government less hassle with administration headaches and fewer modifications."

As for the team, Mary says, "I love the people I get to work with in the district, pulling off miracle upon miracle. It's fun to do new things and give the customer what they want."

To pull off the miracles, for the most part, as in any acquisition, "the steps are the same," she concludes.

Back to the basics.

Serving in the other Corps

By Patricia Graesser

Home repair guru Bob Villa, former Health & Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala and Seattle District geologist Steve Meyerholtz share one thing in common; they each served in the Peace Corps.

These days President Bush is encouraging Americans to provide service to their country. As civil servants, Corps employees serve their country every day. Moreover, many employees have already served in the military for a tour or a career, putting their lives on the line defending their country.

Less well known perhaps are those District Peace Corps veterans who served two years or more in countries from Paraguay to The Gambia. Their stories are each unique, but all of their faces broaden and their eyes brighten in the same way when they talk about their days in the Peace Corps.

Steve Meyerholtz, Geology and Instrumentation Section, joined the Peace Corps in 1973—a year after college. With a commercial pilot for a father, Meyerholtz had always enjoyed traveling and wanted to continue to travel and to learn another language.

First the Peace Corps provided him with language instruction in Puerto Rico, and then off he went to Peru. He lived in two mountain cities, Huancayo and Huaraz, which are both about 2 miles above sea level.

Meyerholtz put his surveying experience to good use, supporting Peru's work to rebuild after its 1970 earthquake, in which tens of thousands had died.

He worked in Peru from 1973-'74, serving 16 months, rather than two years. His time was cut short when Peru severed ties with the program in November 1974, leaving volunteers three days to pack up and go.

Nevertheless, "It was a great experience, and I would do it again," Meyerholtz said.

Elsewhere, Steve Babcock, at 27 and with a master's degree from Southern Illinois University, was facing layoffs and looking into other jobs, when he thought about the Peace Corps.

"My family wasn't sure about it, but I sold everything, gave up my apartment and headed to Atlanta for orientation," he said.

Babcock, Planning Branch, worked in the Kingdom of Morocco from 1976-'78.

He said he researched countries and specifically requested Morocco. "I was looking for a country without volcanoes and with a stable government."

Steve Babcock, second from left, decades ago in Morocco.

Babcock's job with Morocco's Ministry of Urbanism and Housing was to travel into regions and help plan development and zoning. His travels through the North African desert, mountains and farmlands formed pictures obviously still vivid in Babcock's mind.

"It was the best experience of my life," he said. "I felt so lucky to be able to experience another culture from the inside."

Like Steve Babcock, Craig Brengle served in Morocco, but in 1982-'84. Brengle, now a park ranger at Albeni Falls Dam, was finishing college and looking for a job in which he could apply his range management degree; the Peace Corps offered him that job.

Based in Azrou, a town in the mountains of north central Morocco, Brengle served as a range technician, advising and demonstrating effective range management techniques for local herdsmen.

"We built exclosures to allow sections of land to lay unused for a time, and we planted more suitable grass varieties," said Brengle.

"The Peace Corps can be a real culture shock, but they do a good job preparing you for your assignment," he said. "Anybody should at least look at it as an option. It would be great for a new retiree."

David Fox, Information Management Office, joined the Peace Corps in 1985. "In college I knew I wanted to do something to contribute." With a bachelor's degree in biology and psychology, he went back to school for a civil engineering degree, specifically to use in the Peace Corps.

Fox served in The Gambia from 1985-'87, providing water supply projects. "The community appreciated the effort to bring them a clean water supply," he said. He dug concrete-lined wells, covered wells, deepened wells, and built water towers and supply lines.

"The Peace Corps was one of the watershed events of my life," Fox said. "Even now, if things are difficult in my life, it gives me perspective to think of how the rest of the world lives their lives. Most people are just struggling to put food on the table."

Marian Valentine said she grew up with the John F. Kennedy-inspired dream of service overseas and actually signed up at the University of Michigan Student Union Building—where President Kennedy first suggested the idea of the Peace Corps.

With a chemistry degree, she ended up in Thailand from 1982-'84 providing medical laboratory technician service in a small town hospital, which serviced surrounding villages.

In Thailand she found the people warm and friendly, sharing with her and each other.

"It was a great adventure," said Valentine, Hydraulics & Hydrology Section's senior water manager. "It was the best experience of my life—a life shaping experience. I gained a real

understanding of another culture and how to get along with a lot less." However, she said she wouldn't recommend it for the inflexible.

Mark Ziminske joined initially to give something back, to have challenge and responsibility, and for the adventure. With a degree in limnology (study of the life of lakes, ponds and streams), he was sent to Gabon, where he worked as an extension agent, helping farmers establish fish ponds.

"It was a wonderful, fantastic time," Ziminske said. "I loved it to death and formed a lot of relationships."

Moreover, Ziminske not only signed up for an additional year, he became a Peace Corps employee as an assistant director in Africa for half a dozen years.

His stories of life in Gabon are much more idyllic than his stories of being a director, evacuating Peace Corps volunteers from war-torn Burundi and Sierra Leone.

"We didn't even give one guy a chance to get his backpack. The helicopter was hovering, and all he could grab was a walking stick," Ziminske said.

Ziminske has been in the states eight years now, but still returns to Africa every few years and considers retiring there.

Alicia Austin, fresh out of college, joined the Peace Corps "to learn to love another people."

Unlike Babcock, who researched potential locations and specifically requested Morocco, Austin just wanted to go to a Spanish-speaking country.

"When I was accepted for Paraguay, I had to look it up on a map," she said.

With a degree in watershed hydrology, she quickly set to work on watershed restoration/reforestation in the rural community to which she was assigned. However, Austin also had the initiative to involve herself in the 20-family community, teaching at the community school, and helping the town's women join together to learn skills like plant grafting and soap making.

"I gained an appreciation for how hard people can work just to meet their basic needs," said Austin, Planning Branch. "One of the main things I learned was that you can't decide what other people need. You ask them and then work together to meet those needs."

The local watershed had been depleted through slash and burn agriculture and grazing, and the communities faced water problems. She vividly remembers watching a truck full of excited school children with thousands of seedlings ready for planting. While Austin was there, the community was able to plant six hectares of trees.

Each of the district's Peace Corps veterans was able to provide something significant and tangible to the communities in which he or she served. However, even with this contribution, Austin echoed the others when she said, "I still feel like *I* got the most out of the experience."

Alicia Austin and "Mama" in Paraguay.

AmeriCorps, too

Although she didn't know it at the time, historian Stephanie Stirling was making history when she worked for Volunteers in Service to America—VISTA (now part of AmeriCorps).

While studying international ethnic relations in college, Stirling was asked if she'd be interested in VISTA's "University Year for Action." She agreed and went to work as a historian for the Puyallup and Nisqually Tribes in 1971-'72.

She conducted research that supported the government's case for the tribes in the landmark 1974 Boldt decision, forever changing how governments and Indian Nations interacted.

"I don't think we had any idea of its impact," Stirling said. "It was a place where history could make a difference."

The unique program gave her a year of college credit, on-the-job experience and federal hiring rights. Stirling went on to work as a historian for the National Park Service in Alaska and now is a biologist with the District's Dredged Material Management Office.

"It's so much better than just sitting in a classroom," she said of VISTA. "I'd recommend it for somebody with a sense of adventure who wants to make a difference or just try something out."

For hydraulic engineer Ted Perkins, AmeriCorps was a way to provide service to the country while also earning money to help pay for graduate school.

Perkins worked six months in southwest Washington on restoration projects. He put up livestock fencing, planted riparian areas, taught forest education to elementary school children, studied macroinvertebrates, and numerous other tasks.

With a bachelor's degree in math and a background in environmental field work, the additional hands-on work in AmeriCorps gave Perkins an idea of "what you actually run into" when doing planned restoration work.

AmeriCorps workers earn a modest stipend and room and board while they are working. If they complete the entire tour, they get a lump sum payment to put toward education.

"It's great for someone right out of college because it lets you work on things that make a difference while earning an education award," Perkins said.

Ranger Craig Lykins and Reed Waite, Executive Director, Washington Water Trails Association, with the Blue Ribbon Trail of the Year Award.

Lakes-To-Locks Trail wins 2 awards

By Patricia Graesser

The Seattle area's Lakes-To-Locks Water Trail sailed away in March with the 2002 National Park Partnership Award in Recreation. The Partnership Awards recognize outstanding partnerships that further the preservation, conservation, education, and recreation mission of the National Park Service.

The award was one of only five national awards presented at the Association of Partners for Public Lands conference.

The Hiram M. Chittenden Locks is the gateway to Puget Sound, and Locks ranger Craig Lykins played an active role in supporting the trail. He found and shared information about the area and the Locks and presented information on locking through the locks for small craft.

The Lakes-To-Locks Water Trail stretches from Lake Sammamish, north along the Sammamish River, around Lake Washington, through the Montlake Cut to Lake Union, and west to the Chittenden Locks. Designed for small, non-motorized boats, the freshwater trail features more than 100 miles of shoreline to explore and a chain of 100 launch and landing sites.

Three key values attributed to the trail were building a strong regional partnership; creating education and stewardship opportunities; and providing enhanced recreation, health, and a local sense of place.

The National Park Service Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance program and Washington Water Trails Association worked with 14 local partners over the last three years to build support for the trail, design a logo, select trail signs, publish brochures, and plan a stewardship program. Lakes-To-Locks Water Trail partners include the cities of Seattle, Renton, Mercer Island, Issaquah, Bellevue, Redmond, Woodinville, Bothell, Kirkland; King County; Washington State Parks; Washington Department of Fish and Game; the Port of Seattle; and Army Corps of Engineers.

Additionally, in September 2001, North American Water Trails presented the Lakes-To-Locks Water Trail with its Blue Ribbon Trail of the Year Award at their biennial conference in Portland, Maine.

In his own words...

David Wigle called up to active duty

The short story is I was called to active duty Nov. 30 to report to the Naval Reserve Center, Bangor, Wash., for processing Dec. 4. My orders indicated my ultimate duty station to be Commander in Chief, U.S. Naval Forces Europe, detachment Naples, Italy. The orders did not include a description of my job. I arrived in Naples on Dec. 10 and reported to the Force Protection Assessment Group (FPAG) for Naval Forces Europe. The purpose of the FPAG is to visit foreign ports where U.S. Naval ships make port calls and to evaluate the capability of foreign nations to lend security assistance.

The FPAG area of responsibility is all of Europe and most of Africa. I have already spent a week in Germany conducting security assessments. My assignment is for one year. It goes without saying this has been a disruption of my civilian life. I have encountered many Naval reserve personnel recalled to active duty during my short stint here in Naples. We are just ordinary people fulfilling our commitment to national defense.

Sincerely,
CDR David Wigle

David Wigle - call him "Commander"

Jim Renick (white hardhat right of center) teaches one of several sessions of Air Force Academy cadets. Assisting was Tom Carll (QA working under contract for the Corps); 79 cadets from a senior level construction management class learned how the Corps does business and toured the site. Ben Lazo and Renick also taught a foundations class. The James N. Gray Company (construction contractor) assisted during the class and tours.

Teacher-builders at AF Academy

Some 70 cadets attended four classes taught by Seattle District experts, Jim Renick and Tom Carll, the latest over May 1-2. This was the second time for these cadets to visit the construction site. Their first visit to the site was in late February. The cadets are from a senior level construction management class. The cadets' class project is to bid a design/build warehouse.

On Feb 7, 2002, Ben Lazo and Jim Renick spoke to a foundations class during the installation of foundation piers. Eight cadets attended.

Seattle District is adding a new athletic facility and renovating the existing field house at the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs. This is the largest new construction project at the Academy and provides valuable learning opportunities for future Air Force officers specializing in engineering and construction management. Jill Gough is Project Manager.

Carried by runners, the Olympic torch makes its way to Salt Lake City for the Winter Olympics, passing the Seattle District project site at the Air Force Academy.

Superman vs. Supersalmon

By Maria Or

Superman may be the invincible man of steel in Metropolis, but even he is no match for the true ageless superhero of the Puget Sound. Supersalmon could take on Superman any day – largely in part because he is real and his counterpart is a fictional character in a made up town. All joking aside, who would have thought that salmon could have all the same attributes and villains of the famous fictional superhero?

In a side–by–side comparison, however, it's easy to see that salmon are descendents of a long line of superheroes or as we call them - Supersalmon!

Faster than a speeding row boat.
More powerful than a raging dam.
Able to leap tall waterfalls in a single bound.
Look, up in the sky! It's not a bird. It's not a plane.
And it's not Superman either.
It's Supersalmon!

Superman	Supersalmon
•Can peer through walls with x-ray vision	•Can peer through concrete dams with vision and extraordinary motivation to returning to their original spawning grounds
•Can smell fear (probably)	•Can smell their home stream from thousands of miles away
•Is faster than a speeding bullet	•Is faster than a speeding rowboat, a skilled kayaker, and the UW Crew team– salmon have been known to travel up to 26 feet in a second – that's 15.4 knots They can definitely go faster than any human can swim
•Is the Man of Steel	•Is a Fish of Steel-coloring
•Must battle Lex Luthor	•Must battle Locks (Luthor) – as both a young smolt and an adult
•Wears a watch	•Watch? Who needs a watch? Has an internal clock that naturally tells them when to go home
•More powerful than a locomotive	•More powerful than a raging dam – can swim against a current equaling 26 feet per second
•Walks on water	•Swims in water – let's see Superman hold his breath as long as a salmon can swim under water
•Can fly	•Eats flies as a youngster. To see the adults fly, go to the Chittenden Locks in July – and they don't even need a red cape to do it
•Has no children	•Can lay 2,500 to 7,000 eggs depending on the species and size of the fish
•Can leap tall buildings in a single bound	•Some say that they've witnessed salmon leaping 20-foot waterfalls – and that Sockeye are the best jumpers out of all salmon
•Is weakened by Kryptonite	•Could care less about Kryptonite
•Can't go home to Krypton	•Goes home every three years or so – overcoming great distances and river conditions to reach their home
•Also known as Clark Kent	•Saved the lives of Lewis and ***Clark*** by providing them sustenance for their long journey to the Oregon coast
•Started as a reporter then Editor-in-Chief of the *Daily Planet*	•Rumored to be a retired reporter then Editor-in-Chief of *Flagship*
•Landed on earth in the late 1910s	•According to fossil findings, salmon have been on earth for at least 60 million years

The best viewing times for adult salmon are just around the corner again. Go see them en masse at the Chittenden Locks starting June to early October. The sockeye run is the largest, and sockeye can be seen daily—in the thousands—during peak season. There is a viewing gallery, where the public can watch fish swim by or rest before continuing their journey home. Visit the locks from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m., seven days a week, located at 3015 NW 54th Street in Seattle.

Disclaimer: *The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers strives to be a national leader in environmental stewardship for present and future generations. Salmon are undoubtedly fascinating and powerful creatures that are an icon of the Pacific Northwest, but many species of the salmon are threatened or endangered. Since early settlement in the region, native salmon populations have declined. Fishing, logging, farming, urban development, dams, acid rains—the list goes on—have taken a serious toll on the salmon.*

What's PMBP?

Shaw: State-of-the-art practitioner in shoes

By Maria Or

Travis Shaw is PMBP with skin on. And changing hats.

While the district prepares for a two- to three-year cultural change to learn and adopt the Project Management Business Process, you can put the manual aside for a day and see and touch not just a concept, but an actual walking, talking life-cycle "practitioner in shoes." How? By shadowing Travis.

"Travis embodies the spirit of teamwork in the PMBP matrix environment," says Kathy LeProwse, Project Manager of the Wyckoff/Eagle Harbor Superfund effort.

As the Wyckoff/Eagle Harbor Superfund Project moved from the investigation to the design to the construction phase, Travis' role—or "hat"—changed from that of an investigator to designer to construction manager. Travis has also been designated the Site Manager under Superfund during all phases by EPA as their representative for site activities, including overall site safety.

As a senior scientist in the Environmental Engineering and Technology Section, Engineering/Construction Division, Kathy says, his actions, values and behaviors exemplify the role of a technical specialist in the PMBP. "He ensures a systematic planning process is used that identifies the client's quality goals. And he has been the key to the planning, site investigation and design of remediation activities."

Travis is also the Project Engineer as designated by Resident Engineer Bill Brooker of the Northwest Resident Office. As such, he performs the main communication with a bunch of contractors working on site all at the same time.

He leads the quality team with the main Quality Assurance representatives of Tom Wilkin (Construction), Brenda Bachman and Sarah Bates (Engineering). Travis is also the project chemist/scientist for the team.

In addition, Travis serves as the Corps representative to the community, dealing with local citizens as well as local politicians. "His quest for excellence and his outstanding ability to work with people has given the district a reputation for excellence among customers, regulators and the public," Kathy says.

According to Ron Bush, Acting Chief, Technical Services Branch, Engineering and Construction Division, "Travis is a visionary who makes the most of the tremendous potential of the team. He knows the success that can be achieved when the project delivery team is aligned toward a common goal, focused on serving and pleasing customers."

Congressman Jay Insee, left, and Travis Shaw confer at Wyckoff/Eagle Harbor.

Speaking Outreach

Dave Martin made a short presentation titled "Mitigation Banking, Important Considerations from the Federal Perspective" and then served as a panel discussion member during the Vancouver, Wash., Planning Commission's May 7, 2002, First Tuesday Presentation, "Wetland Mitigation Banking."

Cindy Barger spoke March 7 at the Marine Trade Association on "ESA Issues for Piers in Marine Waters" and April 30 at the UW School of Marine Affairs on "Environmental Careers in Government."

Jeff Laufle delivered three talks at a large conference April 29-May 1 in Spokane, "Toward Ecosystem-Based Management: Breaking Down the Barriers in the Columbia River Basin and Beyond." Talks concern the VARQ EIS, dissolved gas abatement and anadromous fish passage at Chief Joseph Dam.

He spoke April 3 to a UW Environmental Certificate class. His topic was Dams, Fish and Public Policy; it was an overview of the Columbia basin situation. His talk for this class recurs annually. He works with the class on a breakout role-playing exercise following his presentation.

Tom Mueller spoke April 22 to about 100 attorneys at the Washington Land Use Law Conference on the new Corps permit requirements relating to isolated wetlands, the nationwide permit changes, mitigation guidance and an upcoming change in the definition of fill. On April 25 he spoke to 50 people attending a Salmon Summit Conference on streamlining the permit process in compliance with the Endangered Species Act - what the Corps is doing.

Tina Tong and John Pell spoke to the City of Bainbridge Island Public Works and Planning Department April 24 regarding the Regulatory Program.

Patricia Graesser gave a presentation to a University of Washington communication class. She told about the benefits, challenges, working conditions and requirements for a career in public affairs with the Army or government.

In Memory

Harold Imbery
Oscar Johnson
Esther M. Kelley
Eugene L. "Sandy" Saindon
Frank Weidenbener

Mitch MacGregor closes gate, opens another

By Patricia Graesser

Mitch MacGregor retired as a Construction Representative in Emergency Management Branch May 1.

"We knew eventually we would lose him," said Paul Komoroske, MacGregor's supervisor for more than a decade.

Mitch has had an illustrious federal career of more than 43 years, building all sorts of projects such as levees, tank turning pads, bank protection, and more.

MacGregor came to work for the District in 1960 as a survey technician. He joined what is now Emergency Management Branch in 1975 as a civil engineering technician. He became a construction representative in 1995.

"He worked in every basin and at every facility in the district," Komoroske said.

With a career spanning more than four decades, MacGregor fought floods and rebuilt after them. He served under 18 District Engineers, and received the Commander's Award for Civilian Service upon his retirement along with a Certificate of Appreciation.

What are his plans for retirement? MacGregor said, "Mow my lawn." However, he also has a knee surgery in his near future and with his interest in sports and cars, he's sure to keep busy.

Mitch MacGregor

Surrounded by loved ones, Virginia Young, foreground near right, is honored at her retirement coffee. Virginia has been instrumental, among other achievements, in teambuilding, communication, facilitation and Army Communities of Excellence. She retired, but the district has called her back as a part-time contractor.

From 1 kind of service to another

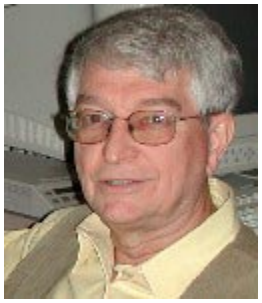
Tom Murphy will retire after 40 years July 8, after first serving as an aviation meteorologist, retiring as a lieutenant colonel in the Air Force—his first 20 years—and then serving 20 years in Seattle District.

As other retirees, Tom recalls both frustrations and warm memories at Seattle District. He says that the jobs of meteorology and hydrology are "24/7—so many things happen on weekends and holidays."

Tom says in his line of work, "I'll never get rich, but I have psychic income." As an example, he would sometimes work until midnight, exhausted after a 12-hour shift, and say to himself, 'We did a good job; we knocked 3 feet off the crest of a wave and prevented a lot of grief.'"

He says he is proud of the way Hydrology and Hydraulics section approached water management as a team, and the psychic income after a tough shift meant, "I could sleep very good after that."

Tom says he enjoyed an action-packed Air Force career before coming to Seattle District. As an Air Force weather officer he conducted special operations on behalf of the president from "the premier place for weather," Global Weather Central at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb.



Tom Murphy

Now, Tom says he is ready to move on to a greater involvement in his third career; he has been a pastor for the past 10 years, and will continue to serve, now in Grants Pass, Ore.

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Seattle District,
Corps of Engineers
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