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Nashville District

DistrictDigest

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Building Strong

September 2008

Representative Zach Wamp Is Pleased by Progress at Chickamauga Project



Photo by Joanne Mann

Story on pages 8 and 9

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On the Cover



Photo by Joanne Mann

Lieutenant Colonel Lindstrom discusses the progress at Chickamauga Lock with Representative Zach Wamp. For complete story, see pages 8 and 9.

District Digest

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Lieutenant Colonel Bernard R. Lindstrom

Lindstrom Sends

Building the Nashville TEAM! What a GREAT summer! Taking a looking back over the past month, I feel that I have spent more time on the road than I have at home. Cara agrees! We are a busy organization that is part of a transforming Army.

When do you change the way we do business? The answer is: when you are at war and have the resources and 'real world classrooms' to test things out. When do you build great engineers, scientists, biologists, ecologists, archaeologists, and rangers (to name just a few) to lead Nashville into the next century? Please forgive me, because I shamelessly stole some of this article from LTG Van Antwerp's article titled 'Building the Bench' and applied his thoughts to our District. The answer to the question is: when you have the largest workload since the Tennessee-Tombigbee waterway, and maybe in our history, and the resources and 'real-world classrooms,' like Wolf Creek Dam, Center Hill Dam, Chickamauga Lock, Kentucky Lock, and Bristol projects (just to name a few), to train the next generation and test things out.

To move from "Good to Great" (we are defining as: delivering superior performance in all missions; setting the standards for our profession; having a unique, positive impact on our Nation and other nations; and building a Corps to last) we need "Level 5" leaders, and the right people, disciplined people, on the Dis-

trict bus and in the right seat on the bus.

The Corps as a whole is taking on a number of initiatives, and we are right in step with implementing those initiatives. First we listened to our workforce, and fully considered the challenges brought out in our command climate survey, and town hall meetings that address weeding out 'poor performers,' and how to recognize and promote great individual performance. I hope we continue to get great feedback from each employee, because your district leadership is listening and implementing ways to ensure we are changing to GREAT. Here are a few initiatives:

- We are developing training management guidance that addresses mentorship and leadership training from the entry to the mid-journeyman level. We are looking at ways to allow our young entry level workforce to envision what a USACE career path looks like and how to best match individual knowledge, skills, and attributes to potential future leadership positions so we can build a great future workforce. We are targeting the hiring actions for key critical skilled positions in Nashville through our human capital plan and succession planning. My hope is that we increase our technical competence and capability and that every employee can set a career goal that allows them to mature and grow with the organization to perform at the



maximum level of their God-given ability and talent.

- We are encouraging the disciplined act of counseling and ensuring that every employee is developing and communicating their Individual Development Plan (IDP) with their supervisor during their rating period. Also, we are checking to ensure our direct line supervisors are taking disciplined action to link individual development tasks to the District's organizational goals and objectives. My hope is that every employee understands what they need to be, know, and do to be rated as a valued employee and a top performer.
- We are championing efforts to promote an expeditionary mindset to incentivize and encourage new and current employees to deploy and serve our country overseas. We are now up to 11 deployed and I predict we will beat our initial goal of 15 before the year is done. We recently created six GWOT positions in Nashville, and we intend to offer sign-on bonuses for employees who

Continued on Page 5

August Employee of the Month

Tasha Alexander was selected as Nashville District Employee of the Month for August.

Park Ranger Tasha Alexander provided exceptional service in the stewardship of natural resources and operations of recreational facilities this year by performing a wide range of tasks and managing a variety of complex programs.

Tasha completed a temporary assignment with the Regulatory Division, where she provided outstanding support in reducing the backlog of permit applications. After returning to Lake Cumberland, Tasha implemented the new National Recreation Reservation Service satellite-based system, to include coordinating with staff and contractors to install equipment and resolve associated conflicts. Tasha also coordinated with Nashville District staff to

test and acquire new equipment to ensure compatibility with the new system.

Tasha has also provided outstanding service during the ongoing update to the Project's Master Plan. As the Project's point of contact, she performed a significant role in conducting site visits with the District staff, coordinating text revisions with other rangers, and participating in Project Delivery Team and public meetings.

Tasha was instrumental in resolving significant issues during the selection of this year's Park Attendants. Additionally, as Recreation Fee Cashier, Tasha ensured compliance with recreation use fee policy and provided guidance to other staff on proper use fee procedures.

Tasha carried out all these duties while still conducting routine inspections of her geographic area of responsibility



Park Ranger Tasha Alexander is the August Employee of the Month.

and performing daily visitor assistance duties. She provided accurate information in a professional manner when responding to public inquiries and promoted public safety by providing water safety information to campers and other visitors.

Tasha's professionalism and dedication makes her a valued member of the Nashville District Ranger Staff.

Wolf Creek Dam Moves Into Next Phase of Construction

Story by Kim Warner, Project Engineer

Grouting operations at Wolf Creek Dam are complete, and the focus is shifting to the barrier wall contract. Advanced Construction Techniques (ACT) has completed its grouting operations on the platform, and Arcadis and the drilling company Boart Longyear have installed additional instrumentation at the site, both in the roadway on top of the dam, and along the embankment in the same area.

A variety of extensometers, inclinometers, and piezometers have been installed. Readings

from the instruments will be collected and interpreted – any changes which may be warranted by the results, will be incorporated into the new contract.

The Wolf Creek Dam Rehabilitation is soon to enter its largest phase of work, the installation of a seepage cut-off wall along the entire length of the earthen portion of the dam, ultimately connecting into the concrete portion. The contract was recently awarded to Trevicos-Soletanche JV. Resident Engineer Tyrone Crear and his staff at Wolf Creek look forward to the challenges and ac-

complishments which will result from this effort.

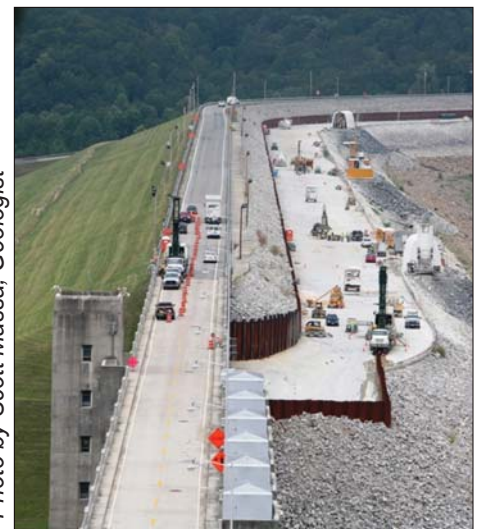


Photo by Scott Massa, Geologist

Aerial View of the work at Wolf Creek Dam

Lindstrom Continued

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- fill these critical slots to serve in Gulf Region South. This program is only a supplement to the GWOT mission, and will not replace normal needs from the field. My hope is that we are shaping a future workforce that is flexible and mission-oriented to serve our country and our region with an 'Attitude of Gratitude.'
- We are facing a large exodus of knowledge and talent as our senior 'Baby Boomer' workforce makes the decision to retire in the coming years. To address this we are balancing the need to keep some of our highly valued employees in key positions through the rehired annuitant program with those now empty more senior positions of leadership. This means more opportunities for promotion and development. My hope is that we can retain our institutional knowledge and provide awesome opportunities for leadership development and career advancement within Nashville.
 - We are looking at ways to encourage technical training. We are planning to be the USACE test pilot for a Dam Safety University, to share knowledge and experience with a 'hands on' approach and 'real world' learning on projects like Wolf Creek and Center Hill. The focus will be to develop future Dam and Levee Safety leaders in the Corps. My hope is that we develop people who are masters of their trade and also organi-

zation pentathletes. We need both.

- Normal attrition due to retirements will solve our workload to workforce issues. We need to discuss risks and take an active role to hire for the future. For the next fiscal year we identified thirty-nine positions to hire. Some of these are targeted GWOT positions, some are positions that have been empty for a few years, and some are part time and seasonal. We need to apply disciplined thought and action to streamline our hiring practices. My hope is that we get the right people in the right seat on the bus to resource the District with talent for future success.

In summary, Nashville District has the largest workload in history; an aging infrastructure; an aging workforce; and a predicted shortage of college graduates with degrees in science, technology, engineering, and math. We need to be 'Building Strong' at all levels, starting at the entry level to the most experienced, with a good balance of diversity – age, ethnicity, gender, and education.

To wrap this article up, I want to recognize a few high performing folks that are "Owning the Edge" and taking this organization from Good to GREAT!:

- Mike Wilson (DPM), Diane Parks (Operations Chief), and Joanne Mann (Executive Assistant) for conducting outstanding congressional visits during the last week of July in Washington, D.C. to provide

our legislative folks with an update on our current and future projects. Relationship sustainment.

- Barney Davis for successfully completing his tenure as a regional leader on the Regional Management Board for the Lakes and Rivers Division.
- All those who conducted two days of intense 'Advanced' Public Affairs training this month with the master of Public Affairs, Dr "Cajun" Joe Trahan. Whew! Tough stuff! I have a new-found respect for public affairs experts.
- Tyrone Crear, Allison Jarrett, and James Bilbrey for attending the Lakes and Rivers Division Risk Communication Workshop in Cincinnati. Please, pass on the great techniques you learned during the workshop.
- Janis Clark, Yvonne Hamilton, Jim Siburt, Amanda Burt, Angela Hamilton, Dee Rivera, Anita Jarrett, Ashley Klimaszewski, Pamela Schmaltz, Victoria Hooper, and Candace Hollingsworth. Thank you all for contributing to celebrate the Nashville District's Birthday. I also want to recognize the efforts taken by our field offices (Tom Hood) who took a few minutes to reflect on the meaning of the organization's legacy of accomplishment too. On August 18, 1880, COL John Barlow received order #191 from the war department that directed him to move from Chattanooga, Tenn. to Nashville, Tenn.

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Rapid Response Vehicle Responds to Hurricane Gustav

Story by Kathy Grimes, Readiness Branch, Chief

What did you do over the long Labor Day weekend? Did you know that Hurricane Gustav made landfall at Houma, Louisiana, 65 miles southwest of New Orleans, at 08:00 on September 1, 2008 as a category two hurricane (110 mph)? By the time this happened, James Byrd and Tim Dawson had already been at Maxwell Air Force Base for two days. They worked with a local repair shop in Nashville until 11:45 the Friday night before to have the Rapid Response Vehicle (RRV) ready to roll out first thing Saturday morning. Jonathan Jarrett joined them on Sunday. The team provided communications and office space for the Savannah Power Planning and Response Team for the State of Alabama.

While all this was happening, the Roofing Planning and Response Team was gearing up for a mission. The management cell: Cory Morgan, Doug DeLong, and Eleanor Ervin, packed up and drove to Baton Rouge, Louisiana early Sunday morning. They rode out the hurricane force winds and rains while getting their game plan together to begin covering damaged roofs with blue plastic as soon as possible.

When Hurricane Gustav



Photo by Jonathan Jarrett

The Rapid Response Vehicle provides communications and office space for the Louisiana power mission.



Photo by George Stringham, St. Louis District

(L-R) Larry Nash (Resource Manager, Cheatham), Bruce Boldon (St. Paul), Col. Jon Christensen (DE, St. Paul), BG Michael Walsh (Mississippi Valley Division) gather to discuss response plans.

made landfall in Louisiana, the Savannah Power Team began packing up to go home. The RRV Team began packing up to move to Louisiana. They left on September 2 and arrived at their new destination on September 3. They are still supporting the Memphis and Tulsa Power Teams today.

While the RRV Team was moving, so were the

other members of the Roofing Team along with our quality assurance inspectors. Our volunteers packed up and rushed to Baton Rouge in an effort to lean forward and prepare to execute the mission. FEMA issued the mission assignment on Friday, September 5 and the team established the Rights of Entry Centers on September 6. They collected over 500 applications the very first day. The first roof was installed on September 7 and another 1,500 Rights of Entry were collected the same day. The team managed two contractors and covered about 100 roofs on September 8.



Photo by Alfred Dulaney, MKV/IT

Homeowner Ms. Florence Stemley poses by her house which received the first Blue Roof in Louisiana in the town of LaPace.

October is Disability Awareness Month

On October 17, 2008, the Nashville District will be holding the National Disability Awareness Month Program at 10:00 a.m. in room A-640. The Guest speaker is Richard Graham, Regulatory Specialist in the Nashville District. Graham will share his experiences as a volunteer at Camp Dream. Camp Dream is the nation's most comprehensive program designed especially for persons affected by brain injuries.

Lindstrom Continued

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- and establish the Nashville District Corps of Engineers. This is a part of our GREAT Legacy.
- Don Getty, for coordinating the 1880's soldier's uniform that I was able to wear for the day. It was an enlisted infantryman uniform, not exactly like COL Barlow who was an engineer officer...and for most visitors who attended that day I honestly do not think most people recognized who I was. Surprise!
 - Mike Wilson, Major Teresa Straus, Patty Coffey, Christine Rossi, and David Hendrix for contributing to the RMB and/or Ohio Valley and Great Lakes Regional Conference, Huntington, West Virginia.
 - To all those who volunteered to deploy to provide MNF-I with highly skilled electricians and project managers to improve the safety of the living and working conditions of our Service members and Civilians working in Iraq
 - Cory Morgan, Doug DeLong, Eleanor Ervin, Larry Nash, Lori Larsen, Danny Ferrell, Jeff Hitchcock, John Boyett, Diane Frost, Yvette Walker,

Linda Lee, Bob Taphorn, and Bruce Johnson of the LRN Roofing PRT, ALSO, Eugene Hixon, Jason East, Bobby Enlow, Joe Britt, Daniel Reyna, Chuck Ervin, Dale Brewer, Rex Moles, David Robinson, and Gary Fleeman of the QA team; ALSO Jonathan Jarrett, James Byrd, and Tim Dawson of the RRV team, and the entire Readiness Operations TEAM for rapidly responding and serving the state of Louisiana for Hurricane Gustav.

- Lindsay Houchens, Trey Church, Chris Cantrell, and the J. Percy Priest TEAM for receiving the LRD 2008 Project Water Safety Award.... You are "Owning the Edge" and influencing our public to "Wear It." Great Safety is no accident. Outstanding! Thank you, Thank you, and Thank you for your efforts.

On August 4, we welcomed our new Division Commander, BG John Peabody to the Great Lakes and Ohio Rivers Division during the Change of Command Ceremony held in Pittsburgh. BG Peabody comes to us from serving as the Commander of the Pacific Division and has served in a multitude of engineer command assignments

prior to this one. He truly believes in promoting the collaborative effort of the TEAM, in a VALUE based organization that adheres to non-negotiable Integrity, Respect, and Safety. He challenges us to 'Lead from the Front, Be Visible, Take Charge, and Delegate.' We are looking forward to his leadership and guidance. We will be conducting a tour of a few of the District's key projects in late September, and then he will return to do a town hall with us in early December.

Your selfless service and dedication to our mission is continuing to promote a legacy of engineering excellence that will serve the future of this region as it has since 1888. One hundred twenty years of service on August 18, 2008! Thank you all for doing the right thing, even when no one is looking over your shoulder. Your efforts will take you and the District from Good to GREAT! We look forward to serving you with the passion and commitment to lead our organization and preserve our legacy of excellence and achievement that makes this organization GREAT. Again, Cara and I appreciate the opportunity to serve you. 'Building Strong!'

Representative Zach Wamp is Pleased by Progress at Chickamauga Lock

Story by EYDSS and Photos by Joanne Mann

A recent trip to the Chickamauga Lock by United States Representative Zach Wamp gave Nashville District Corps workers a reason to smile. After all, Rep. Wamp has spent much of his 14 years in Congress fighting for funding of the much needed lock replacement currently underway at Chickamauga. It's a project that he sees as critical.

He outlined the importance of the replacement in an interview with Jayne Andrews of the East Tennessee Business Journal. "If you look at our national security needs, all of our waterways must stay open. There are safety and health issues plus tremendous economic issues," said Rep. Wamp. In fact, over \$350 million worth of commodities flow through the Chickamauga Lock every year. And,

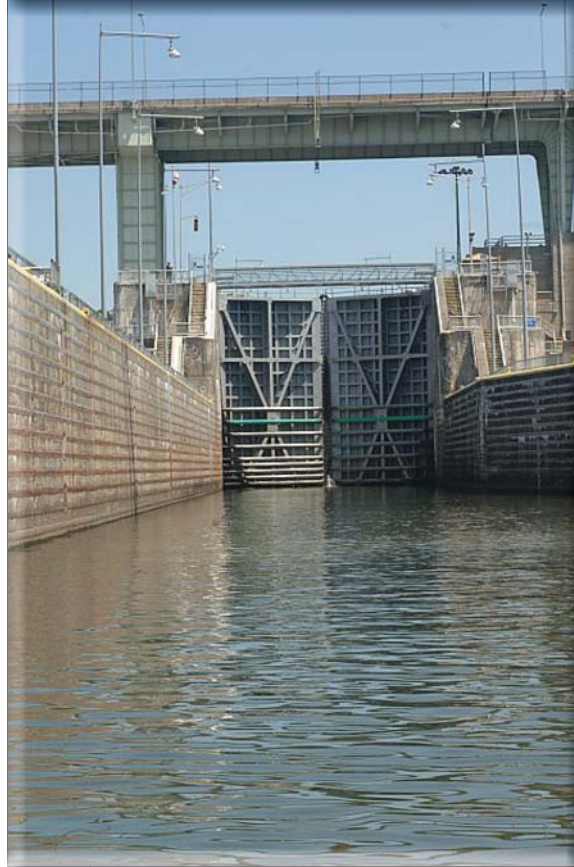
without a replacement, a lock shutdown would cost the area 1,000 jobs, with a total loss of

\$75 million in payroll.

Throw in the fact that over 25 states in the U.S. receive commodities that are shipped through the Chickamauga Lock, and it's easy to understand just how important the work of the Nashville District truly is.

The Chickamauga Lock has become a bottleneck in the Ohio River System. Its average locking time per tow of almost eight hours is among the worst in the region. Originally built to accommodate four standard barges (26 x 175 feet), the lock is unable to adequately process the jumbo (35 x 195 feet) and tanker barges (52 x 290 feet) that have now become common on the Tennessee River.

The current lock (60 x 360 feet) can only handle one jumbo barge at a time, but the new lock replace-



An upstream view of the existing Chickamauga Lock.



Tailwater construction of the cofferdam is underway at Chickamauga Lock.

ment (110 x 600 feet) will be able to process nine jumbo barges in one lockage. With annual traffic demand expected to rise at a rate of .8 percent per year, eventually reaching 11.3 million tons by the year 2060, expanding the capabilities of the Chickamauga Lock will be a major upgrade for the transportation industry.

As Project manager Wayne Huddleston told Dave Flessner of the Chattanooga Times Free Press, the new lock is expected to provide a 6-to-1 benefit-to-cost ratio.

After his tour of the estimated \$375 million project, Rep. Wamp was pleased to report that the cofferdam construction is both on time and on budget. That's an important fact; especially considering that the trend with similar projects across the country is just the opposite.

Completing the cofferdam is a crucial step. It will allow workers to drain river water from the lock, making it possible for crews to complete work on normally submerged structures.

Seemingly



Rep. Wamp gets an inside view of the Chickamauga Lock.

reenergized by the progress at Chickamauga, Rep. Wamp reaffirmed his commitment to seeing the project through to completion. "My goal is to keep working on this with all I have," he said. For a lock replacement project constantly fighting for funding, that's good to hear.



Five District employees received Commander's Coins in recognition of their work preparing for Cong. Wamp's visit. Left to Right: Paul Weaver, Keith Holley, Lt. Col. Lindstrom, Matt Emmons, Eugene Hixson, and Ryan Johnson

In May of 2008, Rep. Wamp outlined the tough task of finding necessary financial support for the project. On his website, wampcongress.com, he described the process as an "annual battle," citing earmark reform and decreased trust fund revenue (both major sources of funding) as causes for concern. With construction expected to continue until 2014, there is a lot of uncertainty ahead.

As reported by Flessner, Rep. Wamp hopes to form a coalition some time next year, in hopes of finding a new funding formula that allows the Army Corps of Engineers to complete necessary work on critical infrastructure, including dam, lock and other river projects. "We are going to

have to pursue other options and I believe we're going to be able to do that," Rep. Wamp said.

As the Nashville District continues to progress towards completion of the replacement at Chickamauga, it's nice to have Representative Zach Wamp 'battling' in

Washington D.C.

Nashville District's Deployment Diary

Ray Bess

Story by Victoria Hooper and
Photos by Ray Bess

In the Bess family, working for Nashville District, Corps of Engineers is a good thing!

In the 1950's, Arliss R. Bess, Sr. worked with Nashville District in the construction of the Old Hickory

Power Plant. In the 1960's Mildred (Micki) Bess came to work with the Nashville District and retired from the Operation Division, Regulatory Branch in 1997. In 1982, Arliss Ray Bess, Jr. came to Nashville District as a WG-5 Maintenance Worker with the Operations Division, Plant Section. In 1990, Ray moved to the Operations Division, Navigation Branch as a Civil Engineering Technician. Each family member has contributed so much to the Nashville team and



Bess' Dog, Gunnar

mission. Family support is something that Ray has thrived on. His lovely wife, Nicole, is one of his number one fans along with his Mom. Their blended family of Christina, Matthew and Matt's new wife, Erin, as well as step-daughter from Ray's first marriage, Amber, her husband Josh, and new granddaughter Brooke, are quite a fan club! We cannot leave out Gunnar, the beautiful German Shepherd, who makes sure the house-



Ray Bess in Afghanistan

hold is safe! Ray is a fortunate man. He stated, "I would like to say that when you deploy, your life at

home doesn't go on hold until you get back. During my deployment, my family experienced several difficult periods (hospital stays, a death of a family member) and if it wasn't

for the complete support of my family and Nicole's ability to handle all our responsibilities so completely, I would not have had such a successful deployment."



Bess with his family at his step-son Matt's wedding (from L-R, Christina, Ray, Erin, Matt, and Nicole)

Ray's deployment to Afghanistan in support of the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) started on October 27, 2007 for a one year

assignment in Afghanistan. Ray reached his duty station, Asadabad, Afghanistan, on November 6, 2007. He is currently serving at Camp Wright in Kunar Province. AED's mission there includes overseeing construction of five brigade-size compounds for the Afghan Border Patrol, nine roads totaling almost 265 kilometers through Kunar and Nuristan Provinces. When Ray first arrived, the AED mission had just started in Asadabad. He joined an active Army Chief Warrant Officer and a Staff Sergeant to form a three person Resident Engineer Office team. They did not even have office space. According to Ray, "We shared two work stations in an 8'x20' metal shipping container or "conex" with two other AED employees that were as-

signed to the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT). We've come a long way since then. The Team has now grown to five (three military and two civilians) and we have our own 16'x40' conex office with five work stations just for the AED mission." Ray continues, "The road mission is probably among the toughest missions the Corps has in Afghanistan. This is because we are building roads through the heart of the Hindu Kush

Mountain range. Of course, being on the border with Pakistan probably doesn't help matters either." Ray has provided pictures showing the narrow, rocky, and unstable

paths just wide enough for a single pick-up truck. The majority of the roads are on steep mountain sides and are so narrow that the smallest mistake can be disastrous. Ray says the biggest challenge is widening the roads; the second is securing the roads against



Bess enjoying time with his granddaughter, Brooke, stepdaughter Amber, and her husband Josh.

the seasonal flash flooding. Some of the flash floods washed boulders the size of cars across the roads.

“The work here is definitely demanding and rewarding. The Afghans really



A narrow mountain road in Afghanistan needs widening for easier travel.

appreciate the work we are doing here. And in the past year, it’s very visible how the local economy is growing because of it. Larger trucks can now carry food and supplies to more remote villages. The older Afghans especially appreciate the roads, because taxi services have started. Now Afghans that can’t afford a vehicle can go to the major cities to shop and visit doctors without having to walk. This country is funny because in so many ways it hasn’t progressed beyond the 1800’s; yet, almost

everyone has a cell phone.”

Ray’s accomplishments are many. Over the past year the

Asadabad Office has:

- * Overseen the completion of one road and brought one road to 80% completion. Five additional roads have reached or passed the 30% comple-

tion stage.

- * Completed one Border Patrol compound and brought a second to 85% completion stage.
- * Stood up the Resident Engineer’s Office.
- * Began construction of AED living quarters.
- * Created a new “Employee Welcome Guide.”

“I believe the best part of my deployment is I have been very fortunate to have worked with a great team here at Asadabad.

Our Officer in Charge is Chief Warrant Officer Steven Morrow. Chief Morrow is a Viet Nam Veteran and has 40 years of service to his country. He is one of a handful of people in the Army still authorized to wear the badge of the Military Assistance Group – Vietnam. And the other personnel here are just as colorful and fun to serve with as CWO

Morrow.”

When asked what he sees as continuing needs for the Afghanistan country, Ray said, “Afghanistan needs time to heal and grow. It’s been widely stated that Afghanistan lost an entire generation to fighting during the Russian Occupation and during the period the Taliban ruled. The generation of Afghans that should be leading the country now, were either killed by the Russians or the Taliban. And the ones that weren’t killed were prohibited from any higher learning by the Taliban. So you have a major segment of the population that cannot contribute to the development of a modern society. The Afghanistan that we are working for won’t be realized until the children in school today take their place as leaders of their tribe, province, and country.”

Nashville District has shared many capable and competent employees to support the GWOT mission. Ray, we are proud of you and your accomplishments. Afghanistan is a better place because of your work and dedication. Thank you.



Bess’ team works in Afghanistan to widen a road.

Counsel's Corner

Story by Pam Schmaltz

So you've been asked to serve on a Selection Panel.

Despite the title of this article, serving on a Selection Panel is much more serious than picking teams on the school playground. What is involved? What should you do to prepare? What should you know before you start?

For competitive positions in the federal government, the general process is to screen all applicants to determine which applicants meet the minimum qualifications for the job. This is generally done by the Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC). Thereafter, further screenings may sort the candidates into "highly qualified" or "best qualified" lists. The bottom line is that only a subset of qualified candidates tends to be interviewed.

What is your role?

There are a couple of key things to keep in mind if you are on a selection panel. First, look at the vacancy announcement. Ask for it if you don't have it. The vacancy announcement will set forth the basic requirements for the position. These requirements are the criteria against which you should evaluate each candidate. If the position being filled is for an electrician, the fact that one candidate can also type 90 words per minute is not particularly relevant. Similarly, having a Ph.D. degree does not necessarily mean that a candidate should be selected, if a col-

"Pick Me, Pick Me!" Serving on a Selection Panel

lege degree is not required for the position.

In other words, you should objectively evaluate the candidates against the stated criteria in the vacancy announcement. If two candidates have substantially the same qualifications for a position, some reliance on subjective factors may be appropriate. For instance, it may be appropriate to give weight to oral communications and interpersonal skills, even if they are not criteria listed in the vacancy announcement. Particularly for a supervisory position, interpersonal skills may be important. But subjective factors should only come into play as a "tie-breaker" where two candidates have substantially equal qualifications.

Paperwork – Documenting the Decision

During the interviews, take notes to support your recommendations. If everyone on the panel fails to document the rationale for evaluating one candidate better than another, the agency is at risk in the event a non-selectee cries "foul." Typically, each interviewee is asked exactly the same set of questions. By its very nature, however, an interview is not as objective as looking at a group of resumes and screening against the job criteria. That's why it is so important to document your thoughts as you interview the candidates.

One situation that sometimes arises is that a candidate that appears to be an "all star" – at least on paper – does not do as well in the interview. How should you, as a member of the selection panel, handle that situation?

Again, documentation is the key. You must not just document why you recommend this or that candidate; you must also make sure to link your analysis to the criteria set forth in the vacancy announcement. Writing down your thoughts at the time of the interviews is so much easier than looking back weeks, or months, later and trying to remember why a certain recommendation was made.

Keep the following points in mind if you serve on a selection panel:

- * Do look at the vacancy announcement and familiarize yourself with the criteria for the position (education, experience, skills).
- * Don't just "wing it" and walk in to the interviews "cold."
- * Do take notes and try to have an objective measurement of each candidate's qualifications.
- * Don't evaluate the candidates against criteria that don't appear in the vacancy announcement.

If you would like a specific topic addressed in the Counsel's Corner, or have questions about serving on a selection panel, see Bill Hill or Pam Schmaltz in the Office of Counsel.

Corps and Contract Divers Work Together to Ensure Safety

Story by Gary Harding, Navigation Branch

The Nashville District has long been a leader in the Corps diving community. The District leads in technical diving expertise and diving safety, and has played major roles in the original Corps diving safety regulations and the most recent major update of these regulations.

Overseeing diving operations is a function of the Navigation Branch working in coordination with the Safety office. This cooperative effort ensures the best possible dive procedures and safety precautions. All diving operation plans to be performed by Corps divers or by contractors directly or indirectly contracted by the Corps must be reviewed by the Designated Diving Coordinator (DDC) and the Dive Safety Representative (DSR) prior to the dive. A list of required pre-dive documentation is listed in section 30 of the Corps Safety Manual EM 385-1-1.

Over the years, in-house Corps

divers performed almost all of the diving work in the Nashville District. However, the "New Kentucky" and "New Chickamauga" lock projects have incorporated several contract commercial diving companies.

The Corps divers have identified and developed remedies for potential hazards associated with our structures, but the diving contractors assigned to work on the new lock projects may or may not be aware of these dangers. So, it is the duty of the DDC and DSR to ensure that the proper equipment, trained personnel, procedures, and safety documentation are in order. They educate people new to the hazards associated with the specific area of the dive. The facility supervisor and personnel protect the dive crew through their "Control of Hazardous Energy Program," or Lockout/Tagout. The lock personnel also give direction to vessels in the area to protect the divers.

A recent situation at Chickamauga Lock demonstrates the cooperative efforts required to

ensure a safe work environment. The changes work contractors are making to the areas around the locks create ever-changing diving conditions. To ensure the safest work conditions requires an open line of communication between all parties involved with the project. At Chickamauga Lock, the lower lock approach was reduced in width by cofferdams required for construction. To minimize the risk to divers, a meeting was recently held with the DDC, DSR, main contractor, diving contractor, and Construction Branch personnel. A site visit was performed by all parties to identify potential problems and develop solutions. And, a written safety and communication plan was developed by the Lockmaster and reviewed by the DDC, DSR and Construction Branch. As conditions change enough to warrant changes in the dive plan, all interested parties will be advised of the change.

The diver's motto is: "Plan your Dive and Dive your Plan"

J. Percy Priest Receives the 2008 LRD Project Water Safety Award

Story by EYDSS

Brigadier General John W. Peabody announced that the 2008 Great Lakes and Ohio River division (LRD) Project Water Safety award for the first half of the recreational season goes to the staff at J. Percy Priest Lake in the Nashville District. They promoted water safety with a variety of activities and initiatives. General Peabody gave special thanks to Lindsay Houchens, Trey Church, and Chris Cantrell for their outstanding efforts in avoiding a tragedy

at the project by rescuing 4 individuals in 2 separate incidents. He feels that their quick response undoubtedly saved lives.

The LRD Project Water Safety Awards recognize significant accomplishments that promote water safety in an effort to reduce public fatalities. General Peabody thanks everyone involved in supporting Water Safety here in LRD. He also said, "LRD has had an exceptional water

safety program and safety will be one of my strategic vectors." He congratulated all that were nominated and especially the staff at J. Percy Priest Lake.

General Peabody will be giving a second award for an outstanding project during the second half of the recreational season.

Please submit nominations to Mr. Kareem El-Naggar.

The Corps Crowd

Congratulations to...

...Wanda Coleman for being selected for the position of CPAC Supervisor in the Nashville District. Coleman started her new assignment on September 14.

...Mike Crowley, mechanical engineering technician in the Electrical/Mechanical Design Section, who graduated from Nashville State Technical College with an associate's degree. Mike has worked for the Corps for the past year while attending school."

Welcome to...

...Maritere (Terri) Gonzalez, Planning, Programs, & Project Management Division Administrative Assistant from NASA in Washington, DC.

...Candace Hollingsworth, Administrative Assistant for Project Planning Branch from Ft. Irwin, California.

...Valerie McCormack, Archaeologist, joins the Environmental Team from the New Orleans District.

...Kathryn Wall as a new ranger trainee at J. Percy Priest Lake.

...Frank Walkup as the new Contract Representative at J. Percy Priest Lake.

Baby Brigade to...

...Rob and Jessica Baulsir on the birth of their son, Robert William Baulsir IV, who was born on September 5 weighing 7 pounds and 13 ounces. Rob is a mechanical engineer in the Electrical/Mechanical Design Section.

Farewell to...

...Donny D. Davidson Jr., P.E. who has accepted an Area Engineer position at the Memphis District effective September 14.

...Janice Nelson, Park Contract Inspector, and Jewel Spivey, Park Construction Inspector, on their recent retirements from J. Percy Priest Lake.

...Vechere Lampley, Project Planning Branch, who is retiring after 31 years of service.



Trey Church, SCA Intern at J. Percy Priest next to Wear It! Stencil.

...Trey Church, Student Conservation Association Intern at J. Percy Priest, celebrated the end of a successful summer recreation season by taking the plunge to test one of project inflatable life jackets. Trey was an integral part in increasing water safety efforts at J. Percy Priest. Trey is returning to MTSU for the remainder of his senior year, and the staff at J. Percy Priest wants to wish him the best as he returns to school.

Thank you to...

...everybody. It has been a pleasure to serve here for the past "almost" two years in construction. I have sincerely enjoyed the experiences here and most of all, the chance to work beside some truly outstanding folks.

Best Regards,
Donny D. Davidson, Jr.

Sympathy to...

...the family of Mr. Charles Anderson, who passed away on August 28. Charles retired from the Hydro Electric Design Branch and Civil Structural Section in 1979.

...Bill and Karen DeBruyn. Karen's mother, Capitola Goss, passed away. Bill works at the Center Hill Resident Office.

...the family of Leona Delong on September 12. She was the wife of Robert Delong, retired electrician at Cheatham Lock.

...the family of Dorothy "Penny" Ezell, age 71, who passed away on September 15. She was the wife of Bobby "Bo" Ezell, former Chief of the Mechanical Section, Design Branch.

...Jeff Ross whose father, Mr. Dale Ross passed away on August 28.

...the family of Ellen Mai Tant who passed away. Ms. Tant, age 88, was a former Resource Management (F&A) employee.

...Johnny Wilmore on the passing of his father. Johnny is Chief of the Construction Branch.

Scarlett Leadership Institute Teaches Valuable Lessons to EAGLE Class

Story by Amanda Burt

The Nashville District EAGLE class met August 19-20, for two days of classes at Belmont University's Scarlett Leadership Institute. The first session gave us successful strategies for thriving at work and life, instead of simply surviving. Among the strategies were learning new skills, seeking additional education, understanding, and utilizing our talents, anticipating the future, asking for feedback and "paying it forward."

Another topic discussed was effective communication. We learned that only 7% of a message is portrayed by the actual words, while 38% is by your tone of voice, and 55% is visual. For effective communication, the way in which you present the message is more important than the actual words used. We were reminded to have open body language, make eye contact, and remove any distractions.

Outside of the classroom, the EAGLE students read the

book "Who Moved My Cheese?" by Spencer Johnson. This witty book teaches the best methods and attitudes when dealing with change. We will all experience change in our careers. So, it is better in the long run to focus on making the change happen and looking for creative solutions. It is important to understand the change, share ideas, and avoid unnecessary work. When put into action, these topics will enable all employees to soar, not just the EAGLE participants.

Nashville District Corps of Engineers Celebrates 120 Years

Story and Photos by Allison Jarrett

The Nashville District celebrated its 120th birthday, August 18, with a pot luck progressive lunch, historical exhibits, and a visit by Lieutenant Colonel John W. Barlow from the year 1888. A large number of current employees and ap-



The East Tenn. River Area Office held its own celebration, complete with birthday cakes made by Melissa Kear.

proximately 25 retirees attended the noontime celebration, held at the District Office.

Employees and guests traveled from office to office, collecting food

and historical facts about the District. The District's rich history was displayed through photographs, presentations, and artifacts depicting various points in the past 120 years.

The celebration was topped off with a visit from Lt. Col. Barlow, the first commander of the Nashville District. The District's current commander, Lt. Col. Bernard Lindstrom, donned a

late 1800's soldier's uniform and played the role well.

The Nashville District began



Operations Manager Jim Davis looks through handwritten Lock Operator log books.

its service to the region in 1888, when Lieutenant Colonel John W. Barlow became the first Nashville District Engineer. His task was to oversee the construction of a series of locks and dams on the wild Cumberland River.

Over the next 40 years, fifteen locks and dams were built on the Cumberland and kept in service until the modern, multi-purpose dams that are now in operation were constructed.



A display assembled by the Contracting Division highlights the completion of several District projects in the late 70's.

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Tennessee Regional Combined Federal Campaign

Previously Nashville and Middle TN CFC

Agency Fair

Door Prizes



Menu

BBQ
Coleslaw
Baked Beans
Drink

All for just \$5

Live DJ

Date: October 7, 2008

Time: 11:00 am - 1:00 pm

Come join us for the 2008 Tennessee Regional Combined Federal Campaign Agency Fair! Take time away from the office to enjoy lunch, music and prizes while learning more about how the charities participating in the campaign benefit our community!