

RIVERSIDE

COMBINED FEDERAL
CAMPAIGN KICKED OFF

GEOTECHNICAL
ANALYSIS IN ST.
BERNARD PARISH

SAFETY INCIDENTS
LOWERED IN 2008



**US Army Corps
of Engineers**
New Orleans District

DEWATERING THE INNER HARBOR NAVIGATION CANAL LOCK



RIVERSIDE

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On the Cover: A diver exits the water after searching the floor of the IHNC Lock where the stoplogs will be placed. He ties a strap, rope, or cable to any debris, which is then lifted out by a crane. Photo by Kirk Dietrich

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IN THIS ISSUE

Carrollton gage

1

A regional team effort is necessary to meet the 2011 deadline

Geotechnical analysis in St. Bernard

2

Before the construction of a floodwall in St. Bernard Parish can begin, extensive geotechnical analysis must be completed

Dewatering the Inner Harbor Navigation Canal Lock

4

Preventative maintenance of the IHNC Lock is necessary, especially in preparation for the closure of MRGO, to prevent navigation from becoming a “giant log jam.”

Safety incidents lowered in 2008

6

When Colonel Lee arrived in 2007, he instituted a “Vision Zero” Safety Policy. As a result, there has been a significant reduction in the number and severity of incidents in 2008.

America’s People, America’s Talent... America’s Strength

8

October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month. This year’s theme recognizes the contributions made by American men and women with disabilities to help keep our economy strong.

National Hispanic American Heritage Month

9

National Hispanic American Heritage Month is from 15 September to 15 October. In recognition of this month, we celebrate the heroics of a true American.

Pinpoint

10

Riverside sat down with Lisa Crescioni about her career, the district, and motherhood.

2008 Combined Federal Campaign kickoff

12

The district kicked off its CFC pledge drive with a *MUST-SEE* program.

Meeting our Goal of 2011 demands a team effort

As we all know, when Hurricane Gustav struck a little over one month ago, the Greater New Orleans Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System (GNHSDRRS) underwent a serious test. While I am proud to report that the current structures in place performed as designed, this test further heightened the urgency for the completion of the system.

Our GNHSDRRS mission is the Corps' number one domestic priority and we have thirty months and counting to deliver the system by June 1, 2011. While moving forward, we continue to advance the science and technology of levee and floodwall engineering. These new and emerging methodologies require additional support. Furthermore, as we ramp up our program of design and construction, we require more resources. In other words, we can reach our

goal on time, but not by ourselves.

With this understanding, the Regional Command Council (RCC) and the Regional Management Board (RMB) met in Vicksburg, Miss. to discuss and determine how we are going to complete our 2011 mission. These discussions were the result of various contributions by many of you that participated in the regional Quality Assurance Report and a memo that I forwarded to Brig. Gen. Walsh requesting three teams to support our efforts for design criteria and application, project execution, and innovation. Additionally, the region conducted an abbreviated Lean Six Sigma review of four key pre-award processes (initial environmental reviews, environment assessment reports, project design documents, and real estate processes) that are causing delays in execution.

The results of these inputs helped provide the situational awareness for our regional leaders to first understand and then make informed decisions to best address the current opportunity.

The RCC/RMB meeting was very productive. The results of these discussions and the decisions made by our regional team will bring the necessary command responsibility and resources to ensure execution of our number one domestic priority by June 1, 2011.

The Course of Action # 3 was approved. Each district in

the Mississippi Valley Division, plus the Northwest Division and Chicago District will have a role in completing the GNHSDRRS, making the entire region responsible for delivery of this mission.

With only thirty months left, a single Corps- no "us" versus "them"-approach is needed to complete our important mission; the New Orleans District and Hurricane Protection Office simply do not have the resources to go it alone. But as a team of teams, "we got it, we own it, and we believe." Because, in the words of Brig. Gen. Walsh, "Success is the only option."

Building Strong! Essayons!

Colonel Alvin (Al) Lee





What lies beneath?

Geotechnical analysis underway in St. Bernard Parish

By Karen Collins

Photographs by Karen Collins and Stacy Mendoza

Crews from Michigan to Mississippi are gathered on a stretch of levee in St. Bernard Parish. Working under the FFEB Joint Venture, LLC (FFEB) contract, they are collecting soil samples in preparation for the future building that is necessary to reach 100-year level of risk reduction for this part of the Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System. At this time, the potential proposed action is to build a T-wall on top of the existing levee with a final elevation of 29'-32'. The approximately 23-mile-long wall will stretch from the eventual Inner Harbor Navigation Canal Surge Barrier southeast, where it

will turn back and end near Caernarvon. This measure will reduce the risk of storm surge to all of St. Bernard Parish.

But before the Corps can build that wall (or any of its projects), they must first find out what lies beneath the surface. That is why there are four crews currently drilling 76 new borings along the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet stretch of levees in St. Bernard. These borings will range from 70' to 150' in depth. When complete the crews will have mined over 1.5 miles of dirt. FFEB will then perform nearly 12,000 tests on the borings at its lab in St. Rose, La.

According to Grant Riddick, St. Paul District geologist in New

Orleans on temporary duty assignment, geotechnical investigations are typically done in phases or stages and these borings are being done to fill in gaps left over from the initial program. These borings will also facilitate pile design for this T-wall.

"Once the necessary data is collected, it is used by the geotechnical engineers to design the risk reduction system," said Riddick.

Perhaps the most important tests are the ones for shear strength.

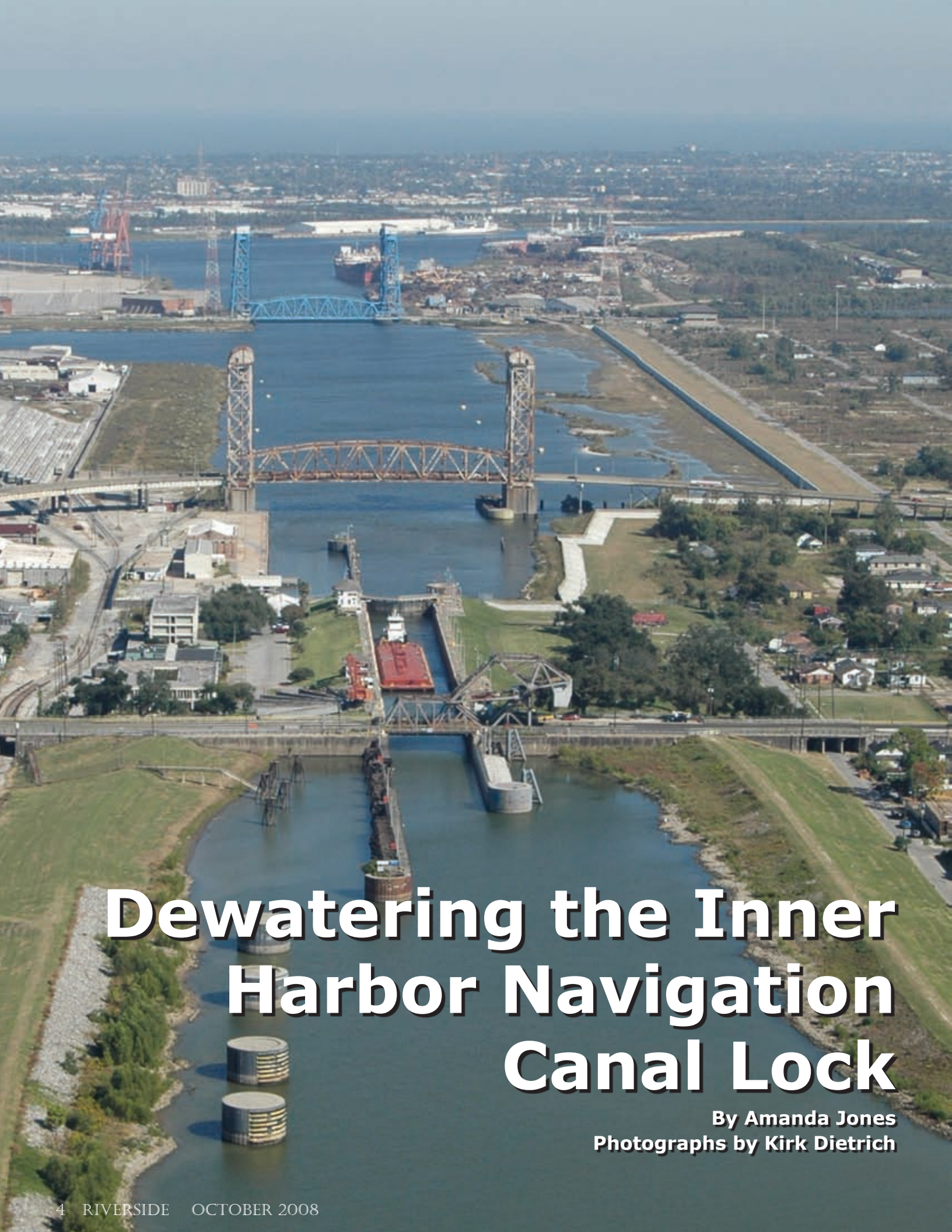
"That's the tests that tell us the ability of the existing founda-

(Continued on page 13)



The subcontractor Walker-Hill Environmental crew takes a break (preceding page). Crews work ten days on and four days off through the duration of the contract. A map of the area (above) currently under analysis for a potential 23-mile T-wall that will reduce the storm surge risk for all of St. Bernard Parish; A soil sample is obtained in a single motion push (top right), if possible, with a fixed-piston-type sampler. The samples are 5" in diameter by 4' long. It takes one to three days to complete each bore, depending on the depth of the samples needed; After the soil samples are collected, ground water levels (middle right) are measured throughout a 24-hour period and then the bore-hole is filled with a cement-bentonite mix and capped with an earthen plug; Subcontractor Stern's Drilling Inc. carefully raises the soil sample (bottom right). Crews must keep the shaft from collapsing as the samples are collected (from up to 150' deep in this case); Aubrey Wilkerson, Corps contractor, (below) checks the soil sample as it is pulled from the ground. FFEB is required to have a quality control plan in place for all aspects of drilling, sampling, and testing. These samples are sealed from moisture and carefully taken to the testing facility where they will be removed from the tubes. This task order states that all testing must be complete within 60 days of the sample collection completion.





Dewatering the Inner Harbor Navigation Canal Lock

By Amanda Jones
Photographs by Kirk Dietrich

It takes about 100 people to do it, but it will increase the reliability of the aging infrastructure for a significant number of years.

This routine maintenance is being done on the Inner Harbor Navigation Canal Lock, built between 1918 and 1923 by the Board of Commissioners of the Port of New Orleans, is necessary prior to the closure of the alternate route—the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet (MRGO).

Critical parts, including gates, gate seals, and valves, are showing signs of wear and could lead to

unscheduled lock shutdown if not addressed.

The dewatering of IHNC Lock can only be done when the Carrollton Gage reads 6 ft. or lower in the Mississippi River because of the potential that the lock could actually lift from its position when the water is being sucked out. Unfor-

tunately, low-water season on the Mississippi River also happens to be hurricane season.

Dewatering of the lock began Aug. 18 and it was completely drained by Aug. 20. However, Hurricane Gustav hit Louisiana shortly after, rewatering the lock again Sept. 1. The water was completely pumped out for the second time four days later, and cleaning crews immediately began working.

“It actually worked out to our benefit,” said Vic Landry, operations manager, “because typically we don’t have stop logs in, which is the bulkhead system on the river end. And



(Continued on page 13)



Clockwise from top: *The Brownlee holds the end of the gate while the turnbuckle is being adjusted; Pulling on taglines, the men assist in guiding the setting of the stoplogs; Once all of the stoplogs are in place, maintenance can begin; and the crew must climb eight flights to exit the dewatered lock.*



SUCCESS!

Safety incidents lowered in 2008

by David Hickman

When Colonel Alvin Lee arrived as District Commander in 2007, he made it known from the start that safety was a high priority for him. This heightened awareness has resulted in a significant reduction in the number and severity of safety incidents to team members.

In his policy letter on safety, he wrote “My last assignment was at a place where the corporate safety culture revolved around the goal of zero safety incidents; while this goal is lofty, I believe it is attainable with every employee of the district doing their part to reduce the number and severity of

incidents.”

This policy is known as “Vision Zero” and is the guiding principle of how we do business at the New Orleans District. At every all-hands meeting, Col. Lee points to a row of empty chairs and uses them to represent employees not at work due to safety incidents and how that impacts our mission. He always asks employees, “Who will volunteer to be hurt at work?” He uses this question to illustrate that we all have a choice to work safely.

The word accident has been removed from our official vocabulary because accident means an incident could not be prevented and

Col. Lee stresses that incidents can be prevented with knowledge and responsibility. The New Orleans team has bought into “Vision Zero” and the number of safety incidents for fiscal year 2008 shows the results that can be achieved with every employee’s help.

This month, we announced that there has been a significant reduction in the number and severity of safety incidents across the district for fiscal year 2008. Government civilian lost time incidents were down 34 percent and contractor lost time incidents were down 38 percent. Total workers compensation costs were reduced by 21 percent from fiscal year 2007. What makes this reduction even more significant is the increased workload for the district because of Hurricanes Gustav and Ike. These events required more employees in the field supporting the recovery while maintaining the high operational tempo of hurricane and storm damage risk reduction.

The number and severity of on-duty vehicle incidents and the number of non-lost time safety incidents were also reduced.

I believe the reductions would not have been possible without the hard work of every employee in the district. With the small number of safety employees and the huge scale of our mission,



Safety is a job requirement
Vision "Zero" for safety



Years without a lost time incident	0
Total days worked this year	240
Days without a lost time incident this year	207
Lost time injuries	1

number and frequency of safety incidents, there will be new training initiatives for employees this fiscal year. These new programs will leverage state of the art computer training to save time while educating employees on subjects such as office ergonomics and risk management on and off duty.

This month, we're starting a new fiscal year and need to keep our eyes on target to reduce the number of injuries to our employees, which takes the dedication of every employee. Let's end next fiscal year better then the last.

David Hickman, district chief of Safety, Security, and Occupational Health, and Larry Plaisance, senior safety specialist, (preceding page) during a site inspection. With greater attention and respect for a safe working environment (below), government civilian lost time incidents were down 34 percent and contractor lost time incidents were down 38 percent from the previous year. An example (left) of the information on our new awareness boards that greet each person as they enter a district site.

every employee is a safety officer. This is vital to the success of Vision Zero. We've used the heightened awareness and improvements in our safety program to provide the tools necessary for all employees to not only work safely, but protect their co-workers.

One major improvement in the safety program is the mandatory safety orientation for all new district employees, which gives them a solid foundation of safety. This training includes on and off duty safety, consolidated risk management, and driver safety awareness. The message of safety is publicized through the Safety Page, a newsletter sent to all employees that covers safety and health topics selected based on incident trend analysis. In addition, there are new awareness boards at the entrance to every district site. These boards show the number of days since the last lost time incident and the total number of lost time incidents for the current fiscal year. Getting the message of safety out to every employee as often as possible keeps safety in the forefront of employee's minds.

Larry Plaisance, district senior safety specialist says, "Employees want to do the right thing when it comes to safety and if you give them the tools and motivation, they'll come through for you."

In an effort to continue progress in reducing the





IN CONGRESS, JULY 4, 1776.

OCTOBER IS
NATIONAL DISABILITY
EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS
MONTH

America's People... America's Talent... America's Strength!

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR | OFFICE OF DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT POLICY
WWW.DOL.GOV/ODEP



Millions of Americans live with disabilities, and many others will become disabled at some point in their lives. To integrate people with disabilities more fully into every aspect of life, our country is working to advance greater freedoms at work, in schools, and throughout communities. By expanding employment opportunities and fighting false perceptions that hinder people living with disabilities from joining the workforce, we can uphold America's moral values, strengthen our economy, and make America a more hopeful place.

In 1988, Congress designated each October as National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM). This designation serves to reaffirm America's

commitment to ensuring equal opportunity for all its citizens while acknowledging the contributions men and women with disabilities make to keep our economy strong.

Each year, the US Department of Labor selects a theme for the month. Typically, the private sector; federal, state, and local government; and advocacy organizations use this theme to tailor the events and programs that showcase the abilities of employees and job candidates with disabilities.

2008's theme is "America's People, America's Talent... *America's Strength!*" This theme captures the accomplishments highlighted in the 2007 progress report on President Bush's New Freedom Initiative for people with disabilities.

"Full access to community life

for Americans with disabilities is an imperative and this year's theme conveys the tremendous contributions that these Americans can make in the workplace," said U.S. Secretary of Labor Elaine L. Chao.

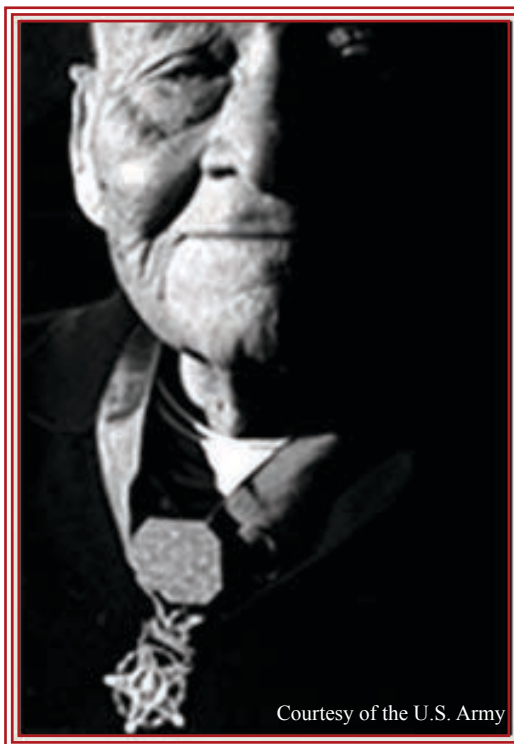
This effort to educate the public about issues related to disability and employment actually began in 1945, when Congress declared the first week of October each year as National Employ the Physically Handicapped Week. In 1962, the word "physically" was removed to acknowledge the employment needs and contributions of individuals with all types of disabilities. Twenty-five years later, Congress expanded the week to a month and changed its name to National Disability Employment Awareness Month.

HISPANIC AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

Sergeant José López is just one example of the many Hispanic American Heroes

On a cold winter day in Belgium in 1945, Sgt. José López, a native of Mission, Texas, saved his entire company, which was surrounded by enemy troops. Under intense tank and artillery fire, López manned a heavy machine gun by himself, holding off two groups of Germans and protecting his badly outnumbered company.

Then for a second time, the Germans tried to outflank his company, forcing him to move his machine gun to a more favorable defensive position. He was momentarily blown over by the concussion from enemy fire, but



Courtesy of the U.S. Army

soon reset his gun and continued his deadly and effective fire.

As his company was pulling back, López held off the Germans yet again, continuing to fire the machine gun, amidst a hail of enemy fire. López remained at his position, firing until his ammunition was exhausted. At this point, he returned to his company and they withdrew successfully, were reinforced, and then returned to successfully repel the German advance.

Medal of Honor recipient SGT. José López, single-handedly held off a German horde and killed over 35 Nazi soldiers in Belgium on 17 December 1944.

Durante un frío día de invierno en Bélgica, en 1945, el Sargento José López nativo de Mission, Texas, salvó a toda su compañía, que se encontraba rodeada por tropas enemigas. Bajo un ataque intenso y fuego de artillería, López cargó una pesada ametralladora por sus propios medios, resistió a dos grupos alemanes y protegió a su compañía enormemente superada en número.

Luego los alemanes intentaron por segunda vez flanquear a su compañía, obligándolo a mover

su ametralladora a una posición defensiva más favorable. Fue derribado momentáneamente por la conmoción provocada por el fuego enemigo, pero rápidamente volvió a poner su arma en posición y continuó el fuego de manera mortal y efectiva.

Mientras su tropa emprendía la retirada, López nuevamente resistió a los alemanes, abriendo fuego con su ametralladora, en medio de una lluvia de fuego enemigo. López permaneció en su posición disparando hasta que se agotaron sus municiones. En

ese momento fue cuando regresó con su tropa, se retiraron exitosamente, buscaron refuerzos y luego volvieron para resistir con éxito al avance alemán.

Sargento Jose Lopez, sostenido sin ayuda de un horde alemán y matado sobre 35 soldados nazis en Bélgica el 17 de diciembre de 1944.

National Hispanic American Heritage Month, from 15 September to 15 October, celebrates the contributions to their nation by Hispanic Americans.

It may have taken a lot of convincing, but finally...

Lisa Crescioni agreed to a time-out with Riverside

by Amanda Jones

She's often referred to as everyone's mother and anyone who spends ten minutes with her immediately becomes her best friend.

But Lisa Crescioni is more than just a friendly face; she exemplifies the fortitude of the Corps of Engineers, with 26 years of institutional knowledge at the New Orleans District.

"I was an office automation clerk, a GS-2," said Crescioni of her first position in September 1982.

She began her career in Contracting Division and then spent 18 years in Operations Division. She moved to the Project Management Division in 2002 and has been there for the last six years.

"It's a good place to work," said Crescioni of the New Orleans District. "I can't think of any other place I'd rather work than here."

Her time on Task Force

Guardian is the most important to her as far as the positions she's held here.

"If you were a part of it, the leadership was awesome and the people were amazing," said Crescioni. "Everybody just came together and worked as one. It was people that you don't normally deal with every day, like people in Engineering Division and Real

Estate Division, and I got to work with them.”

How many people get this excited about working with new people? For Crescioni, this is just one small part of what makes her a great asset to the Corps.

“Lisa is an outstanding employee who makes a big, positive impact on whatever office she is in,” said Crescioni’s supervisor Tom Podany, chief of the Protection and Restoration Office. “As office secretary for Task Force Guardian and now the Protection and Restoration Office, she has a talent for positively impacting the culture and morale of an organization, particularly in hectic situations. She’s engaging, personable, productive, and conscientious; these are qualities that are very much in demand. I think that is the reason that the PRO, EOC, RM, Executive Office, OC and others who are looking for assistance in a high pressure situation turn to her as often as they do. The district is very fortunate to have her on our team,” said Podany.

Crescioni is also continuing her education at Delgado, where

“If you were a part of it, the leadership was awesome and the people were amazing.”... “Everybody just came together and worked as one. It was people that you don’t normally deal with every day, like people in Engineering Division and Real Estate Division, and I got to work with them.”

she’s working toward a business degree.

“I’m only taking about two classes a semester right now,” said Crescioni of her so called baby steps toward advancing her career. “The best part about all of this is that I feel like I have to compete with my kids to see who has the highest GPA. I don’t know what’s up with that,” she laughed as she said her daughter is winning right now, with Crescioni and her son just behind her, all with very high averages.

“Hopefully it will help me

advance here because I’m working my way out of the secretarial field and want to get into the program analyst field,” said Crescioni.

But what most people know about Crescioni is that she is a great mother.

“Anybody who knows me knows that I love my family,” Crescioni said. “My kids are the best thing that ever happened to me. I couldn’t image life without them.”

Crescioni’s daughter Angela said, “I couldn’t have asked for a better mother. She is humorous, supportive, dedicated, and more importantly, she is affectionate. So many people used to tell Steven and me how lucky we are to have such a cool mom and all we could say is, ‘I know!’ We love her and are truly proud of her accomplishments.”

Crescioni said, “I hope that people know that I try to be considerate of other people’s feelings. I hope they know that I’m a team player.” Of course, the most important thing to know about Crescioni is that she’s an avid sports fan and misses the days of watching her kids play ball.



Combined Federal Campaign Kickoff a **MUST-SEE**

Photographs by Nancy Mayberry

To celebrate the kickoff of the 2008 Combined Federal Campaign (CFC), New Orleans team members were treated to a terrific afternoon of *Must-See* programming. An Emmy-worthy cast entertained the audience with uncanny spoofs of long-time favorite television shows and commercials.

From *I Love Lucy* to an All-Star game of “hoops,” the talented screen writers deftly bombarded the crowd with one laugh-out-loud joke after another. Perhaps most impressive though was their ability to seamlessly intertwine the event’s important message with the farce and tongue in cheek.

Included within the lineup were representatives of local and national organizations eligible for

CFC contributions. Bob Marye of Habitat for Humanity, Biagio DiGiovanni of Ozanam Inn, and keynote speaker Nick Felton of the New Orleans Fire Department spoke of their organizations’ missions and of what can be accomplished with the type of help and support provided by the CFC.

The CFC is the largest and most successful annual workplace charity campaign in the world. Its mission is to promote and support philanthropy through a program that is an employee focused, cost-efficient, and effective opportunity to improve the quality of life for all.

During the campaign season (September 1st to December 15th), pledges made by federal civilian, postal and military donors support eligible non-profit organizations

that provide health and human service benefits throughout the world.

They say that children laugh 300 times a day, while adults only laugh 15 times. For one afternoon, the New Orleans District CFC Committee and key workers allowed us all to be children again. And there are very few things in this world that can lift one’s spirits like laughter. Except, perhaps, the feeling you get when you know that you have helped make life a little better for someone else. Contributing to the Combined Federal Campaign during this pledge season can give you that feeling.

After all, if Mikey likes it, *it’s got to be good!*



Following page: *The New Orleans Pips (top right) help a teammate explain his experience after being overwhelmed with a “burning” desire to get back to the district. Our poor bachelor (bottom right) is having an unusually difficult time wooing the bachelorettes; it may be that all of his previous television experience makes them a little nervous. After the taping (left), craft services gave the regular folks a chance to rub elbows with the stars.*

Lucy and Ethel (left) are pushed to tears by the simply unbearable demands of their boss.

(Dewatering, continued from page)

we had that, and the canal was able to flow into the river. So, it actually acted like a great safety valve relieving pressure on the floodwalls and preventing additional overtopping.”

But eight days after Gustav, the lock filled up again as Hurricane Ike passed, requiring a third dewatering and subsequent clean up. However, even with all of these interruptions, maintenance completion is only expected to be set back by twenty-one days, wrapping up the project by Oct. 31.

“The navigation industry has been real cooperative,” said Landry. “They understand the impacts.”

During the maintenance period, an alternate route for shallow draft navigation is available via the Mississippi River, Baptiste Collette and the MRGO.

This maintenance work is very important because, according to Landry, the lock may never be dewatered again.

“The issue is, once MRGO is totally closed off with the closure structures, we’re losing the alternate route,” said Landry. “Once we lose the alternate route, if the lock is ever rendered inoperable, there’s no way for traffic to go anywhere. It would basically become a giant log jam.”

The IHNC Lock was last dewatered in 1998 and this maintenance was typically scheduled every 10 to 15 years.



(Analysis, continued from page 2)

tion to hold back storm surge, and in this case, the ability to hold piles in place,” stated Dr. John Grieshaber, the Hurricane Protection Office chief for Execution Support.

While the boring crews say their biggest challenges are the mosquitoes – especially in the mornings – Grieshaber states that the Corps’ challenge is “adapting the pile designs to any sub surface anomalies in the area. These tests are part of the sound engineering the Corps uses to build the best system for the area.”



RIVERSIDE

Special Edition

EXISTING LOCK

HISTORY OF THE
LOCK REPLACEMENT
PROJECT

SUMMARY OF THE
SEIS

IHNC LOCK REPLACEMENT PROJECT



ARTIST RENDITION



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