



US Army Corps  
of Engineers®  
New Orleans District

# Riverside

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March - April 2003

## Environmental Principles *staying in sync*

US ARMY  
CORPS OF  
ENGINEERS  
*New Orleans District*

Dicharry retires

False River ecosystem study

# Carrollton Gage



**Col. Peter J. Rowan**

At this time we are engaged in a conflict that is being broadcast live and continuously into our homes. The images of war are all around us. The messages are many and varied. But in the end, it comes down to people who are willing to stand and make the sacrifices for freedom. Please keep the service men and women, the district employees, their families and the innocent people of Iraq in your thoughts.

## Thank the money managers

Spring has brought high water to the lower valley. With it has come the passage of the omnibus appropriations bill. We are halfway through the year and need to make up for lost time. When you get a chance, thank the budget analysts and resource managers throughout the organization who have tried their best to keep the funds flowing to where they were needed.

It has been a trying six months for them, but through their efforts most of our work has stayed on track. Again, the people who make up the Corps have worked wonders to make the right things happen for the citizens of Louisiana. Balancing appropriations during a continuing resolution may not make much of a special on the Discovery Channel, but it's every bit as important to the end product.

## Congressional kudos

When I made the rounds of the Louisiana delegation on Capitol Hill, they were unanimous in their praise of the district and the work you do. It's very gratifying to hear each of the offices relate their own stories about the good work you've done and how you've helped their constituents. They all have their stories about some hero here in the district who has done some great task to move the various projects forward. Keep up the great work.

Funds will be tight throughout the rest of the year. There are lots of competing priorities in our national agenda. When you get funding, be ready to execute; when asked to give up money for other higher priority tasks, do it. The Corps and the division will have to stretch to cover the vast needs of the nation. Here in the district, we have a lot to do on all our projects. Keep one eye on the details of your work, but be aware of the larger priorities of the nation. Thank you for what you have done and what you will continue to do. I know I can count on your best efforts.

## Editor's Note

Riverside was awarded the "J" Award in February (see photo, Page 18). The award is the most prestigious that the Army presents for journalism, and it's the second time in three years Riverside has received the honor. It is an accomplishment we are extremely proud of. Thanks go out to the staff that has helped create the magazine for the past year-and-a-half – without their hard work and understanding, it wouldn't be possible.

## Riverside

March - April 2003

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**Commander**

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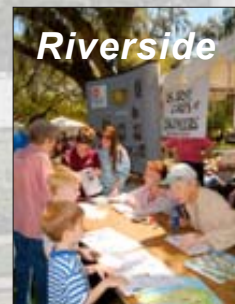
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**Winner:** The "J" Award, the highest Department of Army journalism honor, 2000 and 2003.

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Suzanne Hawes (PM) and Nancy Tullis (CT) talk with visitors at the annual Audubon Zoo Earth Fest on March 22.

# Dicharry and the Industrial Canal Lock changed each other

By John Hall

In more than 33-1/3 years of service to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, all performed in New Orleans District, Joe Dicharry had a hand in most of the projects of his era, which ended with retirement in January 2003.

But one stands out from all the others, the \$655 million Industrial Canal Lock Replacement Project in New Orleans.

The lock project transformed Gerald Joseph Dicharry Jr., just as the surrounding neighborhoods transformed the project and the project will transform a vital link in American's inland waterways.

Early on, "I was strictly a company man – by the book. I soon learned this wasn't going to work," Dicharry recalled over lunch at Dunbar's on Freret Street.

Beginning in the mid 1980s, Dicharry took over a lock replacement project authorized by Congress in 1956 that was at a standstill because of neighborhood opposition. For one thing, the Corps wanted to displace a large number of homes. Residents also feared that already congested traffic would be further disrupted.

"You've got to put yourself in their place, look at it from their side. Look at

how the 'Big Bad Corps' is coming across to them. You've got to understand what they wanted and were experiencing," he said.

Few questioned the Corps when Dicharry started in 1969. But times and the public changed, and a learning process began, he said, for him and the Corps of Engineers.

The experience was particularly intense for Dicharry. This writer can attest to that, having worked with him on the lock project for about 15 years, first as a Times-Picayune reporter and, in the past five years, a Corps public affairs employee.

One thing that made the lock project particularly unusual was its location in the midst of a densely populated urban area. The Corps' early ideas didn't help, and other factors got into the hotly

personal integrity, than many other senior project managers combined in the New Orleans District.

Through it all, Joe Dicharry maintained his dignity. He never responded in kind to the ugliness and insults heaped upon him by some citizens and elected officials. Joe is a gentleman and above all, an honorable man.

"People kept asking me, 'Why didn't you request another project?' Because of all the roadblocks and opposition." He said, "What kept me going was I kept looking on it as a challenge."

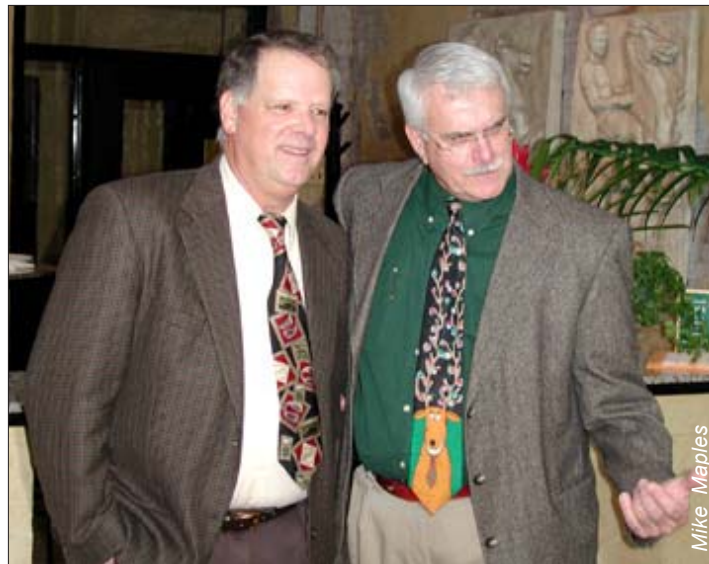
Congress approved lock construction in 1998 and the project has been moving along slowly. Since that time, neighborhood opposition has seemed to ebb. Dicharry was at the heart of changes that included no displacement of dwellings, shifting the new lock's

location north of North Claiborne, providing a Community Impact Mitigation Plan, and agreeing to install an \$18 million temporary bridge over St. Claude.

Significant help came from successive project managers who worked for Dicharry. First, there was Les Waguespack, now at Mississippi Valley Division in Vicksburg, who was important in shaping plans and changes. Later there was Michael Stout, now the district's Recreation Team leader, who starred in getting the Community Based Mitigation Committee going,

including hiring a consultant, GCR and Associates, to assist the independent committee.

"Until we get more mitigation done, including infrastructure, we will still have a lot of skepticism from the locals about the mitigation," Dicharry said. Much has been promised, but on mitigation, as well as on projects, money has been scarce.



**Christopher Alfonso, Engineering Division, gives a parting testimony to friend and colleague Joe Dicharry.**

oppositional stew: racial questions, anxious preservationists, concerned business operators and traffic questions surrounding the replacement of bridges on St. Claude and North Claiborne avenues.

Watching Dicharry over the years, I can tell you he is the epitome of the Army Corps of Engineers professional. He conceivably took more abuse, including publicly uttered slurs on his

See DICHARRY, page 16

## New chief focuses on streamlining training

# Taylor brings Navy touch to Safety Office

**G**ene Taylor is the new chief of Safety. Originally from Florida, Taylor now lives in Slidell. "New Orleans is not what I'm used to. I come from a small town. I've always enjoyed a small town environment," he said.

Taylor attended Columbia Southern University, where he obtained a bachelor's degree in Occupational Safety and Health Management. He served in the U. S. Marine Corps for three years and worked for many years as a construction superintendent.

"I think I bring a diverse background to this position. I've met and worked with the safety community through the Department of Defense for the last

20 years. I know a lot of people in the Army program," said Taylor. Since he joined the district, Taylor has been learning who people are and spending as much time as possible each week in the field, making sure he has a good understanding of where efforts need to be concentrated.

Taylor also wants to streamline employee training. "One of the first things I'm working on is trying to get all of our training, or as much of our training as possible, into a computer-based format," he said.

Taylor began his career in safety at the Navy Public Works Center in Pensacola. He has worked as an industrial safety specialist, safety manager, and as a headquarters safety specialist for chief of naval education and training. The Navy Public Works Center, according to Taylor, "is basically the equivalent in the Navy of the Army Corps of Engineers. Every industrial or construction trade that can be imagined, we had it."

Taylor received professional certification as a Certified Safety and Health Manager from the National Safety Management Society in May 2002. "I want to continue in that area with professional development," he added. "I think over time that the district will see a big change in the way the safety office has functioned in the past, and that change is going to be to the better."



Lane Lefort

## Kirk brings organizational ability to N.O. area office

By Amanda McLain

**C**aptain Jason Kirk is the new project engineer in New Orleans Area Office.

"After eight years of experience in combat engineer units, I am excited to serve in another important part of our engineer branch, the Army Corps of Engineers," he said.

Kirk's combat engineering has included serving as sapper platoon leader, company executive officer, battalion maintenance officer, assistant brigade engineer and company commander in the 3rd and 4th Infantry Divisions. He has been decorated with the Army Meritorious

Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal and Army Achievement Medal with four oak leaf clusters.

Kirk said he will bring organizational ability to the office and "the energy of someone who is new to the task and maybe has new ideas on how to interact with the different players on a project, such as contractors, local officials, and local citizens."

Kirk added that he has been impressed at the technical expertise and experience of district employees and looks forward to learning from them.

Kirk received a bachelor's of science degree in environmental

engineering from the U. S. Military Academy at West Point in 1993. He also has a master's of environmental engineering from University of Florida and a master's of science in engineering management from the University of Missouri-Rolla.

See KIRK, page 17



Lane Lefort

## New Roads



The oxbow False River Lake in New Roads Parish has experienced a severe decline in species diversity in the last few years, but a new study could help reverse the trend, said Project Manager Jackie Purrington.

### Improving fish habitat and water quality for New Roads Parish

# False River ecosystem study first step to restoration

By Eric Lincoln

A preliminary ecosystem study to restore False River in Pointe Coupee Parish is moving ahead and construction could start within two years. The study will look at how to deal with increased sedimentation in the lake and ways to improve the water quality and fish and wildlife habitat.

Project Manager Jackie Purrington said that about 28,000 tons of silt are deposited in False River each year, resulting in fish kills and decreased spawning grounds for fish. Also, continued residential development and loss of riparian habitat along the lake's edge is adding to an ecosystem decline.

The lake was a very popular destination for bass fisherman, but its popularity has fallen drastically in the last few years. "We hope to restore the lake and reverse the decline in species richness and diversity," said Purrington.

A focus of the study will be to identify the problems and take actions toward a long-term solution for the

lake and surrounding community. The first step will likely be the removal of hundreds of thousands of cubic yards of accumulated sediment in the shallow flats at the northern and southern ends of the lake. These areas are important because they provide habitat for fish resting and nesting and are potential locations to restore aquatic vegetation.

William Don Ray, the point of contact for citizens and chairman of the False River Lake Commission, feels that the biggest problem is the Gross Tete Drainage Project started in the late '80s. Over 35,000 acres of farmland, draining into more than 50 miles of canals and into the shallow areas of the 3,000-acre lake, then funneling out of the lake through one small drainage canal, destroyed the most productive area for fish.

"We used to get 120,000 Florida strand bass each year from Wildlife and Fisheries, but since we aren't a trophy lake anymore, we only get 35,000 a year. The lake's loaded with carp and buffalo right now; they thrive in poor water conditions and

eat the bass."

Don Ray said there are plans to stock the lake with bass once the project is underway.

"We've instituted a vegetation study to find the best types of grass for the lake, and we plan to put nurseries in and grow aquatic plants to re-establish vegetation," he said.

Gib Owen, Corps environmental manager, added, "We're concerned with re-establishment of the aquatic vegetation, as well as channel stabilization to reduce erosion."

Purrington said she has been impressed with the level of commitment from the Pointe Coupee community and the False River Lake Commission.

"I've never worked with a group more motivated and involved," said Purrington. "At our regular public meetings there are as many as 200 people. It's unusual...it speaks volumes about how concerned the public is. The community is looking to the Corps to improve their quality of life."

"Don Ray has been incredibly active with the study and has really pushed to get the lake cleaned up. There are several thousand residents around the lake and he is obviously very interested in improving their situation," said Owen.

"The lake has a big impact on our economy," said Don Ray. "It generates tourists and a lot of money for local business.

"We're very excited about working with the Corps. It's been a nice experience ... We really have a good team, and it's a great partnership between the state, Corps and locals; all the residents are on board. It's a win-win for everybody."

Don Ray said that residents are hopeful that benefits of the project may even extend beyond restoring the water quality.

"What we'd like to see is more

See FALSE RIVER, page 16



**Emergency Operations Center Team**



**Special Award: Debris and Response Team**



**Grand Isle Hurricane Response Team**



**Algiers Canal Flood Fight Team**



**Windshield Survey Team**

Photos by Lane Lefort

### **Emergency Operations Center Team**

This team handled the response to Tropical Storm Isidore and Hurricane Lili. They worked long hours under duress, managed planning and response teams from other districts, interfaced with FEMA, state, city and parish officials, loaned 29 pumps to 89 parishes, and coordinated mission assignments and \$4.5 million in labor and contracts. They exhibited initiative and successful accomplishment of the mission. *Dianne Allen, Jim Barr, Rebecca Ben, Ed Bernard, Jason Binet, David Blumer, Greg Breerwood, Chris Colombo, Lisa Crescioni, Kirk Dietrich, Brett Herr, Elaine James, Darrell Johnson, Michael Kitchen, Donna Lachin, Ronald Lee, Gary Lowe, Michael Lowe, Denise Morrison, Ron Olsen, Lennis Paray, Diane Pecoul, Pat Perkins, James Perry, George Popovich, Gloria Reeves, Billy Veillion, amuel Viola, Joey Wagner, James Walters, Brenda Weber, Barbara Windham, Dave Wurtzel and Charlie Zammit.*

### **Grand Isle Hurricane Response Team**

After Tropical Storm Isidore passed directly over the island and damaged a protective dune, leaving the area with no protection from upcoming Hurricane Lili, this team arranged emergency rebuilding of the dune with Hired Labor and the Lafayette Area Office, bringing the dune back to grade. They worked around the clock and used their knowledge and skills to rebuild in an efficient, timely and safe manner. *Donald Constantine, Willie Harris, Stacy Hodnett, Kirt Jacob, George Loupe, Marvin Manahan, James Moss, Robert Steib, Joe Valentour and Curtis Vicknair.*

### **GIWW Emergency Barge Removal Team**

When a barge sunk at the intersection of the Harvey Canal and the Algiers By-Pass Channel, causing a hazard to navigation, this team coordinated with headquarters, MVD and the Office of Counsel to select a contractor, performed sole source negotiations, and arranged for 24-hour inspections of barge removal techniques for future use. They also surveyed to insure complete removal of the barge. *Joseph Camarillo, Roger Cannon, Karl Clark, Michelle Daigle, Eileen Darby, Robert Dempsey, Alan Dixon, Gregory Dornier, Peggy Doxtater, Richard Entwisle, John Hoshman, Steven Patorno, Mike Rosales, Steven Schinetsky, Donald Schneider, Michelle Spraul, Michael Zack and Charles Zammit.*

# Team Achievement Awards

*Team Achievement Celebration, continued from last issue.*



Planning  
am



GIWW Emergency Barge Removal Te



Logistics Management & Response Team



Gordy Area Emergency Pumping Team

### Logistics Management & Response Team

During Hurricane Lili this team gave immediate response in the areas of ice, water, power, travel and transportation missions, arranging receipt and delivery of 1.8 million lbs. of ice, 623,000 liters of water and eight generators for the Planning and Response teams. They worked long hours and coordinated extensively with the Emergency Operations Center and parish representatives, supported lodging and secured air transportation to EOC members. *Rebecca Ben, Dave Blumer, Gayle Boone, Rudy Champagne, William Cook, James Davis, Randal Firmin, Howard Goldman, G. Gomez, Allison Hebert, Karen Kaylor, Shelton Kennedy, Ronald Lee, Glen Lemoine, Ernest Pitts, Herman Sirkis, Tihera Sullivan and Harold Trahan.*

### Algiers Canal Flood Fight Team

This team responded to concern by communities and state and local government officials during Tropical Storm Isidore, prevented levee overtopping during Hurricane Lili and established a flood-fight team with manpower and supplies at key locations on the levee system. *Chris Accardo, James Ball, Jerry Colletti, Tim Connell, Donald Constantine, Mark D'Antoni, Donald Davis, Kirk Dietrich, David Ferry, Robert Gauthreaux, Damien Harleaux, Quinton Johnson, Brian Keller, Robert Kelly, Adam McFarlain, Don Mitchell, James Moss, Herbie Petit, Carl Robinson, Steve Schinetsky, Henry Smith, Benjamin Stewart, Matthew Stewart, Chris Stipe, Larry Trout, Rex Wascom and William Zar.*

### Windshield Survey Team

With an overwhelming number of volunteers, this team provided immediate response to conduct windshield damage surveys in all of the south parishes affected by the storms, exhibited superb pre-coordination efforts, maintained direct contact with city, parish and levee officials, compiled information in over 50 separate "hard hit" areas, and provided immediate feedback to the EOC. *Robert Ariatti, Renato Basurto, Anthony Bertucci, Amy Blackstock, Scott Blanchard, Mike Bourgeois, Zane Bryant, Kristy Cancienne, Alvin Cloutatre, Kasey Couture, Kenny Crumholt, Perry D'Amico, Don Davis, Domingo Elguezabal, John Fogarty, Glen Gremillion, Robert Guillot, Alan Hunter, Vic Landry, Tony Lauto, Ronald Legendre, William Marsalis, George Popovich, William Rossignol, Mike Steagall, Candida Wagner, Chris Wagner, Kevin Wagner, Stewart Waits and Allen Ward.*

### Gordy Area Emergency Pumping Team

During Hurricane Lili, this team searched nationwide and found extra pumps in Florida that were brought in to prevent further damage to St. Mary Parish after storm surges there overtopped levees and inundated pumps. A concerted effort from Operations, Engineering, Contracting and the Lafayette Area Office personnel made it happen. *Chester Ashley, Jerry Colletti, Larry Hayes, Van Nguyen, Beth Nord, Mike Sanchez, Gerald Sanderson and Charles Zammit.*

### Special Award: Debris Planning and Response Team

These teams responded to disaster victims of the West Virginia floods of 2001 and Typhoon Chata'an on the island of Guam in July 2002.

#### West Virginia Floods

Commander's Award for Civilian Service:

*Howard Gonzales, John Fogarty and James St. Germain*

Achievement Medal for Civilian Service:

*Michael Bourgeois, Patricia Perkins, James Perry, George Popovich, William Rossignol and James Walters*

#### Typhoon Chata'an

Commander's Award for Civilian Service:

*James Sieffert (still in Guam) and William Rossignol*

Achievement Medal for Civilian Service:

*Kenneth Crumholt and Emily Mullet*

See TAC, page 13



The dredge Beachbuilder pumps material into the edges of Southwest Pass. Marsh creation is one way the Corps is helping to re-establish land in coastal areas that are eroding.

# Offices on track with environmental goals EOP is A-OK

By Eric Lincoln

The Corps' Environmental Operating Principles have solidified the direction for the environmental mission at MVN, according to leaders in four different areas.

The EOP "formalizes a lot of what we've already been doing," says **Troy Constance**, senior project manager for the Louisiana Coastal Restoration Study (LCA).

Constance, who is the head of a first-of-its-kind colocated team at the district, believes that the EOP integrates well with the Project Management Business Process (PMBP). "This is where the rubber meets the road," he said.

Project managers for the LCA study and members of the colocated team are



Lane Lefort

Troy Constance

working with others in the Corps and academia to develop a \$14 billion plan to save the coast within about 30 years.

The team expects to have a preliminary draft of the plan in June.

"Having a colocated team has changed the way we do business ... it's a very efficient way to operate; this level of involvement from other agencies is the wave of the future and will help us integrate PMBP with the EOP," says Constance.

**Ronnie Ventola**, chief

"The Corps will seek balance between projects and the environment."

of Regulatory Branch, said that the Regulatory Branch embodies the EOP. "This is already part of the regulatory landscape; part of what we consider and evaluate. The EOP validates and supports what the regulatory program has tried to do through the years."

Ventola said that the concepts in the EOP proclamation are familiar.

"The proclamation promises that the Corps will seek balance between projects and the environment by designing



Lane Lefort

Ronald Ventola

solutions to support both interests.

Regulatory is a balancing agency. We don't design the solutions, but we seek to balance the impacts against the benefits.

"We can fine tune and emphasize areas more based on the EOP, but more than anything, it shows us that we're going in the direction

"This formalizes a lot of what we've already been doing."



the chief wants us to go.”

**Linda Mathies**, chief of Environmental Functions in Operations, Technical Support Branch, agrees the EOP “reinforces what we’re already doing. We have a lot of coordination

“When that project is ready to be dredged, we’ll check the existing environmental documents written and obtained during the planning phase to see if what is proposed there is still covered,” said Mathies.



**Linda Mathies**

agencies on projects to ensure environmental compliance of all maintenance dredging projects and any other maintenance activities at completed projects.”

Last year, for example, after the Bayou Lafourche project was completed, it was passed to Operations Division for operations and maintenance.

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“The EOP says that we will listen to what people say, so if we aren’t doing that then we need to give them a good reason why.”

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with state and federal

“The EOP doesn’t really change anything for us. What it will do is give us backup for when project managers and operations managers say they don’t want to pay for something such as a cultural resources survey or pumping dredged material to a new disposal area to restore wetlands. We’ll be able to say, ‘We’re not operating within these principles if we do that.’ The EOP says that we will

listen to what people say, so if we aren’t doing that then we need to give them a good reason why.”

**Reuben Mabry**, Environmental Team, General Engineering Branch, said that his office, as well, is on track with the EOP.

“We’re actually doing a lot of these things already,” he said.

Recently, a workshop for engineers worldwide looked at the long and short-term strategies for incorporating the EOP into Corps culture, policy and guidance. One of the subjects discussed, Mabry said, were rating tools developed by the Army to determine how well environmental sustainability was integrated into project design.

“But military needs are different than ours,” noted Mabry. “They build barracks; we build levees. We need to develop a checklist for the civil works side so we know if we have environmental sustainability elements built into our projects. We can develop a tool similar to the military and we’ll be able to gage how effective we are.”

This checklist will be critical, said Mabry. “We need to develop it into everyday work processes so that it will be something everyone can use on a daily basis.”

Mabry said that the district might appoint an Environmental Operating Principles advocate who will keep an eye on how well the district is adhering to the EOP.

**A rock dike at Mile 51 along the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet prevents further damage to the shoreline from wave wash erosion.**



# Environmental goals for district utilize academia, roundtable discussions



*The New Orleans District proclamation on how we will implement the Environmental Operating Principles.*

Each district in the Army Corps of Engineers is unique in terms of geography, culture, ecosystems and many other factors. As Aldo Leopold wrote in 1949, "The life of every river sings its own song." Perhaps the New Orleans District stands out as the most fascinating of all the Corps districts with its connection to the mighty Mississippi River and its estuary, one of the busiest ports in the world, petroleum production, and 40 percent of the nation's coastal wetlands in the lower 48 states that are disappearing at an alarming rate. The songs of the rivers and bayous in the New Orleans District are still being written, but we are now the composers. What song will we create?

While the New Orleans District has a history, since the early 1970s, of blending environmental stewardship, commerce and economic development, the implementation of the seven Environmental Operating Principles (EOP) has brought the district to a new level of awareness and commitment to the environment. It was fitting that Lt. Gen. Robert Flowers announced the EOP at the dedication ceremony of the Davis Pond Freshwater Diversion Project.

What innovations will the New Orleans District put into practice to address the EOP? Read on!

**EOP 1: *Strive to achieve environmental sustainability. An environment maintained in a healthy, diverse and sustainable condition is necessary to support life.***

The New Orleans District understands this principle perhaps more than most, as we know how dependent we are locally, nationally and internationally on the environment. The district will implement a campaign each April in celebration of Earth Day to increase the awareness and use of environmentally friendly practices and materials in everything we do.

**EOP 2: *Recognize the interdependence of life and the physical environment. Proactively consider environmental consequences of Corps programs and act accordingly in all appropriate circumstances.***

The New Orleans District will send out a semi-annual message to all the project managers and operations managers to remind and reinforce this message.

All project managers and operations managers will not only be invited to the Environmental Roundtable meetings already held at the New Orleans District, they will be asked to give presentations on their projects.

**EOP 3: *Seek balance and synergy among human development activities and natural systems by designing economic and environmental solutions that support and reinforce one another.***

Historically, our contributions to the nation through improved navigation and flood control demonstrate we are the world's premier public engineering organization. However, many past accomplishments were realized with little consideration given to impacts on the environment, which is no longer acceptable. These days, better planning, more coordination with resource agencies, technological advancements in project design, and development of less environmentally damag-



ing construction methods allow us to continue to meet the nation's needs.

The New Orleans District has implemented and will

continue to embark on projects designed to help restore the environment.

We will continue to use dredged material for environmental benefits where possible and actively plan projects with designs that balance environmental concerns with human development activities.

**EOP 4: *Continue to accept corporate responsibility and accountability under the law for activities and decisions under our control that impact human health and welfare and the continued viability of natural systems.***

The New Orleans District will continue to utilize the Environmental Roundtable as a training vehicle to educate staff members on ongoing as well as new environmental regulations, policies and legal requirements.

We will continue to utilize the Office of Counsel to review environmental impact statements and planning documents to ensure adequacy from a legal perspective.

We will use independent technical reviews to facilitate environmental compliance.

We will identify and require core-unit training for environmental personnel to assure knowledge of the laws and regulations on all facets of environmental compliance including the National Environmental Policy Act, Historic Preservation Act, Endangered Species Act, HTRW, etc.

Language will be added to division chiefs' job descriptions and TAPES, defining their commitment to implementing the EOP.

**EOP 5: *Seek ways and means to assess and mitigate cumulative impacts to the environment; bring systems approaches to the full life cycle of our processes and work.***

We will continue to use the Regulatory RAMS database to consider indirect impacts and past, present and reasonably foreseeable impacts whether associated with the project or not.

We will monitor programmatic general permits activity to determine if individual permits with more detailed cumulative impacts analyses would be more appropriate.

**EOP 6: *Build and share an integrated scientific, economic, and social knowledge base that supports a greater understanding of the environment and impact of our work.***

We will continue to utilize academic expertise in planning, design, construction, operation and maintenance of our projects.

We will continue to strive to document the economic and social links to the environment,

We will keep the GIS system for threatened and endangered species updated, and continue to meet and dialogue with the public at special events, schools, conferences, etc.

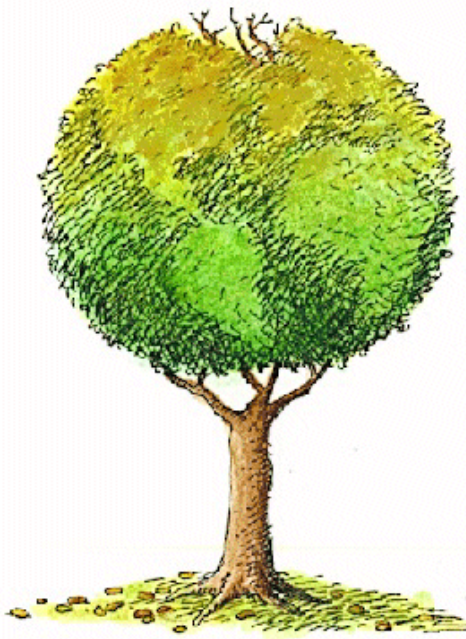
**EOP 7: *Respect the views of individuals and groups interested in Corps activities, listen to them actively, and learn from their perspective in the search to find innovative win-win solutions to the nation's problems that also protect and enhance the environment.***

We will develop a list of scientists, engineers, public interest groups, and others with expertise in local and state environmental issues to be used for mailing lists and to be consulted by project delivery teams. The list should include name, field of expertise/interest, address, fax, e-mail address and phone number.

The New Orleans District will sponsor seminars inviting individuals with expertise in local and state environmental issues to give presentations on their field of interest, an on-going study, current research topic, etc., to district personnel. State and federal natural resources/regulatory agencies will be invited. We will encourage MVN managers, engineers and scientists to attend (these seminars are in addition to the Environmental Round Table).

We will add to the district Web site lists of all district projects, including planning studies, O&M projects and pending permit actions that are accessible to public. These lists will include project name, status/schedule, brief description and point of contact with telephone number and e-mail.





By Amanda McLain

**E**arth Day, an annual worldwide demonstration for a healthy environment, took place on April 22. This year, for the first time,

## Earth Day features owl showing, tree planting

MVN participated in the celebration with environmental speakers and displays, a bird handler, and for the adventurous eaters, even a nutria cookoff.

Robert Martinson, Ecological Planning & Restoration Branch, said the idea to celebrate Earth Day came up at a meeting to discuss ways the district could integrate the Corps' Environmental Operating Principles into various programs. "We need everyone in the district thinking about these environmental principles and putting them into practice," said Martinson. "Earth Day gives us the chance to do this in a fun and informative way."

Speakers included Don Davis, administrator of the Louisiana Applied and Educational Oil Spill Research and

Development Program, Office of the Governor, for the past 10 years; and bird-handler Sally Farell, who brought a Great Horned Owl, Eurasian Eagle Owl, Mottled Owl, Mississippi Kite, Harris Hawk and an American Kestrel.

There was also a tree planting.

Although this is the first year MVN has recognized Earth Day, it is not the first year for the Corps. In 1995, the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Earth Day, the Army Earth Day Program was instituted as part of an initiative by the Department of Defense. Then in 2002, activities moved from the Pentagon to Fort Riley and Fort Bragg.

This year's activities are just the beginning, said Martinson. "There are a thousand things we can do for this. The sky's the limit."

## Committee wraps up hallway decorations

By Melissa Ybarra

**I**n case you haven't noticed, the district's hallways have a new look. The Hallway Modernization Team recently finished redecorating the interior of the building. The team was assembled because the building is now 16 years old and the wall coverings and pictures were showing signs of aging. "The wallpaper was dirty and ripped in places and the pictures have become faded, stained, torn and have even disappeared," said Donna Lachin, a member of the team.

The team established guidelines that required new wall coverings to be easily maintained and cost efficient. The team wanted a cleaner, more uncluttered look to the hallway pictures. "We really took a minimalist approach," said Julie Morgan, "We chose quality over quantity when selecting the pictures that would be on display."

**Images of ducks have been dispersed throughout the building on different floors.**

The team tried to choose pictures that will be enjoyable to those individuals who see them on a daily basis. They made several "field-trips" throughout the building to decide which pictures would be regrouped, rematted, reframed or removed. In addition to the current pictures, the committee chose to display landmark project pictures, such as 1928 Industrial Canal Lock construction, Old River Control, Bonne Carre Spillway, and the Caernarvon Freshwater

**See HALLWAY, page 16**



Lane Lefort

# Cruising provides ideal vacation for Pinto

By Melissa Ybarra

Mike Pinto, Levees Section, is the resident expert on cruising. Having been on 36 cruises to Alaska, Canada, Hawaii, Bermuda, Panama Canal and the Eastern and Western Caribbean, with two more planned this year, Pinto's affectionately known to many as the "cruise meister." Asked why he chooses cruising instead of other forms of travel, he replies, "You can get up when you want and go to bed when you want, without having to drive anywhere and get lost."

Pinto went on his first cruise rather reluctantly at the insistence of his wife in 1975. "It was a \$400 all-inclusive seven-day Cruise to the Caribbean, which at that time was a lot of money," he recalls. He loved it and has been cruising ever since.

"You meet a diverse group of people that you might not ordinarily come into contact with."

He and his wife became longtime

friends with many people from all over the world they have met through cruises.

Pinto also enjoys cruising because "you can loosen up and behave out of character." On one trip, Pinto agreed to participate in a drag beauty contest. He did not win, but all of the contestants got free drinks for the rest of the night. "I am the ugliest woman you ever want to see," joked Pinto.

On another cruise, he went on an Expedition three-man sub to a depth of 1000-feet off the Island of Grand Cayman. "The sights that deep are unbelievable," he said.

Not all of the cruises have been great. He remembers a cruise he took one year with the now defunct American Hawaii cruise line, where the majority of crew consisted of young American college students. The problem was that the crew was more interested in having a good time and seeing the sights than caring for the guests.

Pinto is always willing to offer advice to all who might be ready to embark on a cruising adventure. Among his best tips for first-time cruisers is to get traveler's insurance. Although most of his cruise experiences have been wonderful, there was a time when his mother-in-law, accompanying him and his wife on a

Eastern Caribbean cruise, had a heart attack on board.

Although they missed the rest of the cruise

while his mother-in-law recovered in a Nassau hospital ("We literally saw the ship sail by the hospital window," said Pinto), the insurance did reimburse them for the medical bills, lost cruise, room and board and their flight back home.

Pinto also advises visiting a travel agent. With the growing number of cruises available today, "A travel agent can really point you towards

**"You can loosen up and behave out of character."**



**Mike Pinto, Levees Section, has been on 36 cruises to vacation spots all over the world.**

one that caters to your specific needs."

Pinto's advice for saving money includes looking for a cruise line that offers gambling. "Cruise ships that have casinos will usually be less expensive since they expect to make their money there." Also, the first thing handed out to guests is a plastic card that serves as your room key, identification and charge card while on board. "This card saves you from carrying around money on the ship, but it can get you in trouble if you don't keep track of your spending," Pinto said. Another way to save money is to book your own flight or drive to the departure point, if possible. And if you book your flight well in advance of departure, you are likely to get the best deal.

## TAC, from page 7

### Induction Into Distinguished Gallery

*Herbert Juneau* (area engineer, Lafayette Area Office, 33 years of service); *Edward Coleman* (civil engineering technician, Soils Lab, 30 years of service); *Earl Sullen* (congressional correspondence, IMO, 44 years of service); *Joseph Towers* (second district

counsel, 30 years of service); *Albert Guillot* (various positions including acting chief, Operations Division, 40 years of service)



# NOD at Work



**Bonnet Carre Trail-Building** – Corps and public volunteers work with the International Mountain Bicycling Association on March 8 and 9 to build a 1-1/2 mile bicycle trail in the Bonnet Carre Spillway. Nearly 30 people each day participated, enjoying free lunch and a trail-building school by the Subaru / Bicycling Association Trail Care Crew. “The [event] was a great success,” said Mike Stout, chief of Natural Resources. “Our objectives ... were to obtain expert technical advice on trail design and construction, to energize local mountain biking enthusiasts to get involved and to develop a positive working relationship between the Corps and interested volunteers. All of these objectives

were achieved and more!”  
**Top and far left:** Volunteers remove overgrown brush to clear the trail, then help themselves to free jambalaya for lunch. **Left:** ATV riders deliver beverages to the work crew, but when finished the new trail will be reserved for hikers, bicyclists and horseback riders.



## Executive Office

**TWO-DAY OFF-SITE**— Division and office chiefs, emerging leaders, plus field and union representatives, convened in January for an off-site strategic planning meeting in Metairie. They reviewed the status of the district Operations Plan, established new goals for the future and agreed on performance measures to align with the Army Performance Improvement Criteria. Look for new information on the subject soon on *InSight*, the Intranet.

## Construction

**RAISING LEVEE**— The levee along the Algiers Canal (a 7-mile segment of the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway) will be raised from 5 feet to 7.5 feet by the end of June. The east side from Algiers Lock to Plaquemines

Pump Station No. 1, just past the Belle Chasse Highway Bridge, will be raised first; second will be the west side from the bridge to Hero Cut Off (the connection to Harvey Canal). Fourteen miles of the levee will later be raised to 9.5 feet. It was nearly overtopped during Hurricane Lili last year when water was 6 feet above sea level.

**ROTATING CHAIRS**— The district began a Rotational Training Program in February for new engineers and scientists, GS9 and below. Trainees rotate to different divisions on a 13-week schedule. Jim Miles, chief of Construction, said, “What we are going to try to do is balance. If a division is going to lose five people,

we’re going to try to send them five people from other divisions.” The trainees will do whatever jobs are done in the division they visit. Miles, the CP-18 program manager and rotation program lead, added, “We want to make sure we have people in the district who know people in other divisions and know what they’re doing, and how everything gets together.”

## Project Management

**GOING COASTAL**— Coastal restoration work on two multi-million dollar projects off the coast of Grand Isle is expected to begin in April. The projects, at the mouth of Barataria Bay, will help preserve a historical landmark, stopping gulf shoreline erosion, and protect marine fisheries and habitats. The Grand Terre



**Buoys Abound** — The district's Hired Labor Unit A has installed all of the mooring buoys at locks on the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway. The crew's expertise was again put to use as it began late in March to install nine mooring buoys in the Industrial Canal as part of the lock replacement project. The buoys were being placed at the site that the Galvez Street Wharf occupied before its demolition for the lock project. The \$80,000 buoy project will improve navigation safety in the canal. Completion is expected in April.

Restoration Project has a cost of \$16 million and is ready for phase-one work. It involves constructing 112 acres of dunes and 212 acres of marsh on East and West Grand Terre islands. The Fort Livingston project will cost over \$1 million for phase one. Both projects will increase marine habitat for various recreational and commercial species of fish.

**WEST BAY** — The West Bay Sediment Diversion Project is a step closer to construction. The Plaquemine Parish Council granted Chevron Texaco the right to cross parish property with barges to lower a 10-inch oil pipeline standing in the way. Chevron Texaco expects to finish by the end of the summer and the Corps can then begin construction. The project will divert a flow of sediment to build land for marsh. Plans call for it to create and nourish 9,831 acres of marsh in the next 20 years at an estimated cost of \$25 million, 85 percent federal, 15 percent state.

**WEST BANK WETLANDS** — An EIS public scoping meeting was held in January in Gretna to discuss a Jefferson Parish Army permit application to develop almost 4,000 acres, including about 1,300 acres of

wetlands, on the West Bank near New Orleans. The entire area is inside the hurricane protection levee and drained by pump. Because of the scale of the project, the Corps will prepare an environmental impact statement, to be completed in about 18 months.

**DUTCH DO DAVIS POND** — The Corps hosted a Dutch delegation and headquarters personnel in early February. The three-day visit included presentations and tours of Davis Pond, LaBranche wetlands and Bonnet Carre Spillway. The managing director of the Zeeland Director-



**National Engineers Week** — Science Club students from John Curtis High School visit the Industrial Canal Lock for National Engineers Week on Feb. 25.



## Public Affairs

**E-WEEK STUDENTS**—In celebration of National Engineers Week, 27 students in the science club at John Curtis High School visited the Corps and IHNC Lock in February. At the district, PAO and Engineering talked about Corps missions and the hydraulics and design principles of locks. The students went to the IHNC Lock and heard

Jackie Purrington (PM) explain the new lock replacement project. Lock personnel gave the students a thorough tour and Partners in Education sponsored a picnic lunch. Phillip Montgomery, a 17-year-old senior, said, "I liked the slide show best, because it was really interesting. I learned a lot." Other students commented that they really enjoyed watching the barges go through the lock.

**Comite Groundbreaking** — The Corps and its partners break ground on the Comite River Diversion Canal Project on March 17. The canal will reduce flooding by draining the Amite River into the Mississippi River upstream from Baton Rouge. James Construction Group is building the first features, including construction of the Lilly Bayou drop structure, one of several structures to be built along a 12-mile diversion channel to protect residents of the 348-square-mile Comite River Basin. The project is sponsored by LA DOTD, City of Baton Rouge-Parish of East Baton Rouge, and the Amite River Basin Drainage and Water Conservation District. Federal cost is \$115 million, non-federal \$48 million.

ate, a company that provides about \$3.5 billion in commerce to the U.S. each year, headed the delegation.

**PLANNING AWARD**—The Morganza to the Gulf of Mexico Habitat Evaluation Study Team has been nominated for the 2002 Outstanding Planning Achievement Award. The team, which includes state and local entities, is examining alternatives, recommending environmental improvements, determining habitat impacts and possible mitigation related to the project. The hurricane levee project will protect

1,700 square miles of southern Louisiana against storm surges, including deteriorating coastal wetlands in Terrebonne and Lafourche parishes.

**NIGERIANS VISIT** — The Corps and the Port of New Orleans hosted visitors from the Nigerian National Inland Waterways Authority in March. The group was briefed on the IHNC Lock Replacement, coastal land loss and Davis Pond Freshwater Diversion Project, then given a tour of the lock and Davis Pond.

### DICHARRY, from page 3

As for the project itself, "As we can get more contracts, people will see it's not the big bad monster that they thought it was going to be," Dicharry said.

Finally, does Dicharry have any advice for rising Corps leaders? "It might be good for young folks to move around a little more (than he did). But, I would not sacrifice family for personal development."

### HALLWAY, from page 13

Diversion Project, in the three main lobbies, feeling that these are good long-term choices.

Morgan said that still to be displayed are more landmark photos for the main lobbies, and Audubon images in the hallways opposite all the elevators.

Curtis Delaune presented the Executive Team with the committee proposal, which was accepted and

approved immediately. Shelton Kennedy, team leader, said the hallway committee members represented as many of the divisions as possible.

Members included Marie Burge (RE), Curtis Delaune (ED), Gonzalo Gomez (NDC), Shelton Kennedy (LM), Donna Lachin (OD), Judith McGovern (OC), Julie Morgan (PA), Scott Riecke and Viola Tolliver (IMO), and Jean Vallon (RM).





**Engineer Dean Arnold, Project Manager Jackie Purrington and Environmental Manager Gib Owen are working together on the study to restore water quality in False River.**

**FALSE RIVER, from page 5**

recreational opportunities; maybe use some of the silt from dredging in the south end to construct a state park that would give the public access to the lake for fishing and picnicking,

and maybe a better boat launch to help increase recreational use of the lake for visitors and residents alike.”

Construction will cost about \$7 million. The study is sponsored locally

by the Pointe Coupee Police Jury and the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources, and should take about one-and-a-half years to complete.

**KIRK, from page 4**

“I look forward to continuing a career in the Army and hopefully will make it back to the Army Corps of Engineers in future assignments,” he said.

Originally from Shreveport, Kirk now lives in Mandeville with his wife and children.

**We get letters**

Following are two letters received by Public Affairs in February: the first, from John Curtis High School, the other, an excerpt from a letter to Calcasieu Lockmaster Kevin Galley.



*Dear U.S. Army Corps of Engineers,  
On behalf of John Curtis Christian and my science club students, I would like to thank you for the very informative presentation and tour of the IHNC. We learned so much and all of the presenters were so helpful and professional. We all have a much better idea of the field of engineering and a great appreciation for all that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers does for our state! All of you have made a difference in the lives of my science club.  
Respectfully,  
**Cathy Boucuault and the John Curtis Christian Science Club***



*Dear Kevin,  
I want to tell you how much I enjoyed meeting and working with the outstanding professionals at the Calcasieu Locks. I worked two shifts at Vessel Traffic*

*Coordinator with Jim Baker and Clay Couvillion ... [who] were most helpful to me in learning the traffic management process and vessel coordination concerns, and they kept me from making some major mistakes ... It was inspiring in me to see the obvious level of dedication and commitment in these professionals. We in the towboat industry do not often get the opportunity to “go behind the scenes” and see what these men do for us, but I can assure you that I now have a great appreciation for the value they bring to our industry every day, especially during times when things are abnormal ... Administrative Assistant Tonya Heskett’s timely and accurate daily updates have been most valuable to the industry ... I did not have the opportunity to work with all of your lock operators, but I know from the continued outstanding daily progress that is made, they all share the same high degree of dedication and professionalism that I happened to witness first hand this weekend. Please pass my thanks to all for their help ... I look forward to continuing our partnership.  
Sincerely,*

**Raymond Butler**  
**Executive Director**  
**Gulf Intracoastal Canal Association**

# Around the District

**Elguezabal Retires** – Dom Elguezabal holds his grandson, Chandler, at his retirement luncheon on Feb. 26. Dom joined the Corps in 1970 in the rotational training program, starting in the New Orleans Area Office where he returned as chief in 2000. In 1978, Dom earned a master's in civil engineering at Stanford under the Corps Long-term training program. He served as assistant resident engineer at Red River Lock & Dam, and resident engineer at Old River Control Auxiliary Structure. In 1988, Dom was one of the first two project managers in the newly formed Project Management Office (Terrel Broussard was the other). He became Lafayette area engineer in 1996, and in 2000 he and Chester Ashley swapped jobs. Dom now works for the Orleans Levee District where he says, "Stress level is way down."



## Congratulations

to **Robert Martinson** (PM), who was nominated as MVD Planner of the Year.

to **George Popovich** (CD), whose daughter, Margaret, will graduate on May 19 from Salem High School as valedictorian. Popovich's other daughter, Claire, held the same honor in 2001. She has since maintained a perfect

4.0 GPA in the UNO Honors Program and is a UNO ambassador.

to **Steven Schinetsky** (OD), whose son, Philip, won the National Championship with the Rummel Raiders at the 2003 JAMFEST Cheerleading Competition in Biloxi in March.

to **Henry Hill Sr.**, Port Allen lock and dam operator, who reigned as King of the Krewe of Maringouin for 2003.

to **Patricia Broussard** (ED), whose daughter, Bria Monique, a second-grader at Jean Gordon Elementary, made straight A's in all subjects and behavior for the second time this year.

## Kudos

to **Michael Salyer** (PM) for his Feb. 21 presentation on water quality and wetland science at St. Georges High School. This lecture was given to help the 7th-graders prepare for the "Science Olympiad" competition.

to **Emile Jacobs** (OD), who gave the district overview and Bonnet Carré Spillway presentation to students at Meisler Middle School, New Orleans Charter Middle School, Mailer Middle School and later for Cub Scout Pack 317 in Destrehan.

## Farewell

to **Mike Rosales** (SS), who left on March 14 to be chief of Safety in the San Francisco District.

**Riverside: two-time winner** – The *Riverside* staff is proud to receive the "J" Award, or Journalism Award, for a second time. The award is the most prestigious that the Army presents to journalism publications. From left to right: Col. Peter Rowan, with

*Riverside* staff members Scott Riecke (administrative assistant), Anne Marino (graphic artist), Eric Lincoln (acting editor), Elena Napolitano (graphic artist), Lane Lefort (photographer), Amanda McLain (writer) and Jim Addison (Public Affairs chief).





**Dempsey retires** – Robert Dempsey (ED), second from right, shares a laugh with E.C. Coffee and Allison Randolph III of the U.S. Small Business Administration, Louisiana District Office, and Col. Rowan. Dempsey retired on March 21. He came to the district in March 1987 and worked in LMO and Contracting before becoming deputy for Small Business in March 1999.

to **Nathalie Vicknair**, whose daughter, Nicole, passed away on Feb. 24.

to friends and family of **Donald Clement**, former chief of Technical Support Branch (OD), who passed away on March 28.

## Condolences

to **Toni Baldini** (PM), whose grandmother, Bessie Guichet Accardo, passed away on March 4.

to **Allan Hebert** (PM), whose mother, Shirley Harp Hebert, passed away on March 6.

to friends and family of **Jerry Isham**, lock & dam operator at Berwick Lock, who passed away on Feb. 7.

to friends and family of **Alice Crawford**, retired Corps employee (OD), who passed away on Jan. 5.

to **Cindy Cruse** (ED), whose father, Richard Daniel Miller, passed away on Feb. 21.



**Earth Fest 2003** – Audubon Zoo Earth Fest volunteers Heloise Alphonse (CD) and Beth McCasland (PM) help kids earn a stamp by guiding them through a scratch-off sheet of animals that don't belong in a swamp. About 17,000 people visited the zoo on March 22-23.



**Looney Tunes Krewe** – Castle Kids 5<sup>th</sup> annual Krewe of Looney Tunes parade around the district on Feb. 28, marching in football costumes and tossing beads to employees.

DILBERT® by Scott Adams



# Talkback

*Last month, we asked readers what they felt the Partnering Conference accomplished. Our Talkback winner says that connecting the values of the public and the Environmental Protection Agency with the Corps was one of the best results.*

## A Community Culture and Sense of Place



There was a strong sense of the partnering conference's intent by many and great expectations by our customers, partners and stakeholders. It was a success on several planes. One of the most important strides made was a "growing together." The idea was fostered that our customers, partners and stakeholders add value to the project planning and execution process when they are treated as equals, participating in a way they desire and sharing in decisions the entire way.

With endeavors like this conference, we are moving past "public involvement" in planning and executing civil works projects. With the development of a "community culture," we give our project participants a sense of place – described in their terms, not the Corps'. We've advanced the process of defining and understanding the human dimension that describes a partnered project environment. Engaging this community is the most effective way to define project goals, reach out to a wide audience who will be affected and develop criteria by

which to measure progress and success.

As our water resources community culture develops, there will be ever-greater capability by the Corps to incorporate the attitudes and values held by individuals and groups in identifying sustainable solutions and taking the right actions. Reinforcing the partnering conference as a genuine step towards a community culture is that these concepts are perhaps less defined by the Corps and more by the EPA as one of our partner agencies. More details may be found in their recent publication "Community Culture and the Environment: A Guide to Understanding a Sense of Place." The Corps' image can and will change for the better with the adoption of this approach as the prime mechanism advancing the nation's water resources missions.

To request a free copy of the guide, visit the National Service Center for Environmental Publications (NSCEP) website at [www.epa.gov/ncepihom/index.htm](http://www.epa.gov/ncepihom/index.htm) or call 1-800-490-9198. The publication number is EPA 842-B-01-003.

**Edmund Russo**  
Operations Division

\*Edmund is the winner of our free parking space.

**RIVERSIDE WANTS  
YOUR SUGGESTIONS!**

**WHAT WOULD YOU  
LIKE TO SEE ON THE  
BACK PAGE?**

- DO YOU LIKE THE QUESTION-AND-ANSWER FORUM?
- WANT TO SEE MORE PHOTOS?
- MORE NEWS ABOUT PROJECTS?
- INFORMATION RELATED TO ... ?
- OR DO YOU HAVE A NEW IDEA?

**PLEASE LET US KNOW  
BY  
MAY 20**

**IF WE USE YOUR  
SUGGESTION, YOU MAY  
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PARKING SPOT FOR A  
MONTH!**

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