

The

# castle

Savannah District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

March 2006

A man in a tan jacket and blue jeans is using a soil probe in a wooded area. The ground is covered in fallen leaves and pine needles. In the background, there is a red building and several trees.

Life as a  
regulatory  
specialist

Plus, Cold War to  
Global War, HAAF gets  
modern facilities



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ON THE COVER

Shaun Blocker digs up soil sample in Fayette County, Ga.

Photos by Jonas Jordan



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Hunter Army Airfield makes way for more Soldiers by providing housing. - Photo by Jonas Jordan

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# A Culture of Service leads to success with District's customers

Last month I talked about our moving from 18th place to first place in military customer satisfaction – in only one year. This is an enormous accomplishment because we are one of, if not the largest, military construction district in the Corps. Since then, we have the distinct honor of being nominated for and selected by the Army's Installation Management Agency as the Support Agency of the Year for the work you accomplished at Forts Bragg and Stewart.

While these are outstanding accomplishments, they can't be the end goal for the Savannah District. Now that we are on a successful course with our customers, we must work just as hard to remain committed to achieving excellence in customer care and communications.

The item that most impressed our customers was our commitment to improve communications throughout the project delivery team. In 2005, we placed such an emphasis on communication, that customer-after-customer responded positively. This means that communication must continue – and even increase. We will start by responding to each customer – those 50-plus customers who rated us and those 50-plus who, for whatever reason, did not return their surveys. Each customer wants the entire team to succeed, but each one also wants to know that we have the entire strength of the Savannah District focused on meeting their needs.

This is where the feedback from

our customers enhances our work. Each survey tells us what the customer thinks of us, but more important, it lets us see ourselves through the customers' eyes. The feedback allows us to make changes to our business processes much faster than has been typical for the Corps of Engineers. The feedback we received from our customers in 2005 proved successful because we engaged customers at all levels of the organization. From the quality assurance person to the commander, everybody is a part of the process. Bottom line, when open dialogue becomes routine everyone wins.

## Putting the District's strength to work

I see you at work. Everyone is engaged here, putting out tremendous effort. Your efforts show, whether you work in military construction, civil works, regulatory, resource management or any of the other divisions. You can be proud of the esteem our customers hold you in.

It will not be easy to remain at the top because we face lots of change in the next year. We face tremendous change with military transformation, BRAC, and reduced civil works budgets. Military construction will jump for some installations from \$50 million a year to \$300 million the next year. BRAC will bring huge changes to the Army, especially in the Southeast. In the Southeast, Army BRAC means more business for the Savannah District – to the tune of about \$4 billion marked for the program.

In civil works, we must continue to meet the expectations of our customers,



**COL Mark S. Held**  
District Commander

while remaining within our budget. We must communicate with the customers on what we can and cannot do. We must sit down with our civil works customers and determine together the best course to take.

Our strength is in our ability to adapt to meet the ever-changing needs of our customer. Yesterday's Army won't fight tomorrow's wars. By the same token, yesterday's business practices won't meet America's needs of tomorrow. Rapid response to a rapidly changing environment will make this District stronger each year. Rapid change can only come about when we have good communication with our customers and among ourselves.

I've said it many times, and I'll say it again, "This has always been and will continue to be one of the finest districts in the Corps of Engineers."



# Town hall meeting displays Savannah District's Successes

Brig. Gen. Michael J. Walsh, South Atlantic Division Commander, greeted Savannah District team members with Kool and the Gang's "Celebrate" as an introduction to his presentation at the town hall meeting Feb. 14.

"Savannah District is number one in customer service," said Walsh.

Walsh focused on other successes that Savannah District team members have accomplished.

"Savannah District is 100 percent in its execution with its military construction which is the largest among the divisions. It was the only district to do so last year. Savannah District's civil works projects provided 100 percent execution three years in a row," said Walsh.

Walsh also discussed the successes of the Savannah Harbor, Brunswick Harbor deepening, and the recreational/water safety program.

Results from the 2005 customer survey had just been released.

He pointed out that Savannah District has 13 team members deployed to Gulf Region District/Afghanistan Engineer District and their contributions toward supporting the global war on terrorism. He said that the "power of idea" is what keeps us together.

Walsh later talked about the Corps' campaign goals which are to support stability, reconstruction, and Homeland Security, develop sound water resource solutions, and enhance life-cycle infrastructure management.

He concluded the meeting with question and answers and handed out awards to team members.

**-Tiffany Holloway, Editor/Staff Writer**

// Savannah District is number one in customer service. //

- Brig. Gen. Michael J. Walsh





# 'WORK TO SHADOW'

## Program showcases promising future

Still thinking about what he wants to be when he grows up, high school student, Mark Joseph, 15, has a head start on his future. Savannah District's Graylan Quarterman, realty specialist, was able to help the student's vision come true.

Joseph attends Bradwell Institute High School in Hinesville, Ga. He was selected to participate in the Liberty County Board of Education Work-to-Shadow program. Quarterman volunteered to participate in the program after reading about it in the local newspaper. He said that it would be a great way to give back to the community by serving as a role model as well as promote the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Joseph visited the District on February 2. Quarterman let Joseph ease into the work environment by letting him work on updating the acquisition data on the J. Strom Thurmond Lake Project.

Joseph said that he plans to study mechanical engineering in college.

"I like using tools. I like to build and fix things. In the future, it would be cool to fix cars or computers," said Joseph.

Throughout the visit, Quarterman introduced Joseph to team members in different offices. Some of the team members included: the real estate team, Thomas Harris, human resource specialist,

Vicky Gaitling, senior project installation support, and Lt. Col. Thatch Shepard, deputy commander.

Harris talked with Joseph about what the Corps has to offer such as the cooperative education program as well as different internships.



Mark Joseph inputs acquisition data for the J. Strom Thurmond Lake Project.

Quarterman's goal for Joseph was to get him thinking about his long term goals about his long-term future goals.

"I wanted Mark to be around positive and influential people that would talk about the positives and the negatives of planning his future as being a mechanical engineer," said Quarterman.

Quarterman introduced Joseph to Gaitling to discuss how to get prepared to be a mechanical engineer while in high school and what to anticipate in college.

Joseph said that he learned more about the engineering profession throughout the day.

After working four hours, Joseph said, "I learned that this profession is not going to be easy. I learned that it takes determination and commitment."

At Savannah District, visions come true whether it is building modular units for incoming troops, designing a nine-bound lane gate, or wanting to be an engineer.

-Tiffany Holloway, Editor/Staff Writer

- Photo by Jonas Jordan

"I wanted Mark to be around positive people..." said Graylan Quarterman.

Lt. Col. Thatch Shepard discusses Mark Joseph's future.

# HAAF makes room for more Soldiers

Savannah District plans on accommodating the growing number of Soldiers at Hunter Army Airfield by building modular units until they can build permanent facilities.

HAAF expects 414 more Soldiers to work and live at the installation throughout the year, plus the already growing number of 3rd Infantry Division Soldiers returning back to their duty station.

Derek Cudd, project manager for Fort Stewart/HAAF, said that the units would house a new aviation battalion due to the airfield. Existing facilities are occupied.

The project started in December 2005.

"The biggest challenge has been the short duration we have to complete the project," said Cudd. "Phase one should be completed this February and phase two should be completed in April."

The units will total 230,716 sq. ft. of administration office space and barracks among other facilities.

There will be two battalion headquarters complexes (administration, supply and classroom modules each), company operation facilities (administration and storage modules) and arms vaults, vehicle maintenance facilities, an administration facility, tool storage building, maintenance storage buildings, and fuel storage building.

"The barracks will be set up like duplexes where three Soldiers will live on one side and three will live on the other side," said Cudd.

The Soldiers will have separate bedrooms and closets but will share a kitchen, common area and bathroom.

The District will continue to accommodate Soldiers who are already stationed at HAAF, returning back from Iraq, and the 3rd Battalion from Fort Bragg and 4th Battalion from Fort Campbell with the 3rd Aviation Regiment that will be stationed at HAAF.

-Tiffany Holloway, Editor/Staff Writer



Shown are the stages of how the modularity units are set up. Soldiers began to move in March 6.



- Photos by Jonas Jordan

# Fort Bragg opens new Main Gate

More than 38,000 drivers entering Fort Bragg daily will have it easier now, due to work done by the Savannah District. The District is putting the finishing touches on the main gate in an effort to ease access on to the post.

"In response to the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, the military wants controlled access at gates," said Cleveland Harding, a Savannah District project manager for Fort Bragg. "It will help make the installation more secure."

The ninth lane, the result of an off-ramp closure, will assist with personnel getting on post faster in case of a Delta threat.

"All-American Highway widens from two to eight lanes in variable stages. There are two outbound lanes in the south direction exiting the installation. At the checkpoint plaza each entry lane has two checkpoints with associated guard booths and protective barriers in tandem, which allows the capability to provide up to 16 checkpoints within the eight-lanes entering the installation," said Harding.

The \$5.4 million gate has a visitor control center that includes turn-around lanes for trucks as well as privately owned vehicles, a

parking area for POV, and a covered POV inspection area.

The safety features include: state-of-the-art security such as cameras, files that keep faces and license plates, x-ray machines that can locate bombs inside a truck that may be hidden, and barricades that can stop an automobile traveling 50 mph, as well as sensors that can detect if a vehicle traveling too fast or going the wrong way.

"Before the gate opened, there wasn't a visitor center or welcome center at this location. It's a completely new facility," said Marcia Meekins, resident engineer at the Fort Bragg office. "There are 38,000 travelers that come on and off of Fort Bragg everyday," said Meekins. "The All-American gate will speed up access on to the post, and it will eliminate three other temporary access control points currently being used."

-Tiffany Holloway, Editor/Staff Writer





**Program and project manager for Formerly Used Defense Sites, David Roulo (right) receives an award for his outstanding leadership in support of the FUDS program from the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army, Addison Davis (left). - Photo by Jeannie Skillman, USAEC**

## Assistant Secretary of Army recognizes Roulo for FUDS support

Keeping communities safe from environmental contamination, hazardous, toxic, and radioactive waste sites is David Roulo's main focus and he does it with passion. Roulo, program and project manager for Formerly Used Defense Sites received recognition from Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army (Environment, Safety and Occupational Health), Addison "Tad" Davis at the 2006 Army Environmental Cleanup Workshop in San Antonio, Texas Jan. 31. Roulo's work on the FUDS program and on the former Camp Wheeler led to the award.

"David Roulo is an excellent Project Manager and Team Leader. Dave has served on many working groups at the local and national level to make this program a success – he leads by example," said Mike Sydow, chief of environmental, interagency, and international service management branch.

In 1987 the FUDS program started to identify and clean up properties formerly owned, leased, possessed, or used by the military services. The Army is the Department of Defense Executive Agent for FUDS, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is responsible for carrying out the program. At Camp Wheeler, Roulo's team coordinated a wide range of investigation activities that recommended clean-up of several areas of the 14,000-acre former base.

Investigators discovered some live ordnance in residential area.

Roulo said that the FUDS program, made up of multi-disciplined team members, such as chemists, geologists, safety specialists, and ordnance specialists are needed for the job.

"My job is to push the aspect of safety. I instill in the community to 'recognize, retreat, and report' when they see an ordnance," said Roulo.

Roulo has been working with the FUDS program for 12 years and has seen an increase in the number of properties that have munitions or ordnances go up.

"We're just trying to make things right with communities that did or did not know their property was on a former military installation," said Roulo.

Camp Wheeler was established in 1917 as a training camp and closed in 1919. It later re-opened as a 1940 Infantry Replacement Training Center. In 1946, remaining munitions that were found were "dedudded" and the land was returned to the owners. Other clean-up operations followed, including the one currently being led by Roulo.

"Dave deserved this award because of his dedication to the success of the FUDS Program within SAD, and it's long overdue," said Sydow.

**-Tiffany Holloway, Editor/Staff Writer**

## Real Estate pickin' up the Air Force's slack

Surprised to know that Savannah District has a role in the Middle East pickin' up the Air Force's slack? Well, the real estate team has been supporting the Air Force since 2001 by helping out with various leases such as housing and billeting, offices, land, and airport facilities in four countries in the region.

"The Air Force can do their own leases, but they would rather have the Corps handle them," said Tommy Hill, chief of the Real Estate Division.

There has been a change in how the Air Force and the Corps work together. The Air Force now depends on the Corps to take on real estate account accountability. This means "all real property has to be in the books now. The Air Force needs the cost and condition of all leases and buildings. The Corps will help obtain the information and the Air Force will do the input," said Hill.

*"The Air Force can do their own leases, but they would rather have the Corps handle them."*  
- Tommy Hill, chief of the Real Estate Division

The two entities that real estate supports are: the Trans Atlantic team and the Afghanistan Engineer District.

"The Trans Atlantic team does construction and usually asks the real estate team for support. The contingency real estate support team in the Afghanistan Engineer District has real estate specialists and appraisers," said Hill.

At the Manas International Airport, also called Ganci Air Force Base, located in Kyrgyzstan, Central Asia, located west of China, there are 47 leases that the three-person real estate team maintains. Meanwhile, in Afghanistan, there are 424 leases which two staff members handle.

Transferring from "Air Force Blue to Army Green" is not only a military thing, but also a Corps thing.

**-Tiffany Holloway, Editor/Staff Writer**

# Life through a regulatory specialist's eyes

A typical day for Shaun Blocker, Alan Miller, and Joel Strange involves following up on enforcement allegations, verifying jurisdictional determinations, accessing impacts, reviewing mitigation plans and sometimes slogging through the creeks.

Blocker and Strange, regulatory specialists and Miller, a project manager, work for the district's northern section regulatory office in Morrow, Ga.

Charged with protecting the nation's wetlands, regulatory specialists have to be knowledgeable in a wide variety of areas.

"We have to do delineations, which require some knowledge of hydrology, soil science, botany, and engineering. We also need to have some knowledge of civil and environmental engineering to review mitigation banks. We are really jacks of all trades," said Miller.

Regulatory specialists also have to interpret federal laws.

"Part of the job is playing paralegal with lawyers if we go to court," said Miller.

Blocker said that everyday is different. "You never know what to expect. Everything is handled on a case by case basis," he said. "Generally, you plan your day, but 95 percent of the time it doesn't turn out that way."

Strange said that 50 percent of the job is paperwork.

Miller, who has been in the profession for 12 years, said that he likes the variety of the job. "I do different things each day," he said. "Two to three days out of the week, I may be handling violations, but the rest of the week I am issuing or denying permits. You could do this job for years and not know everything, because regulations and laws change," said Miller.

One aspect of a regulatory specialist's job is mitigating or restoring wetlands. Miller said that this is the most interesting part of the job for him because he enjoys seeing wetlands restored.

The first stop the three make is to a 75-acre tract mitigation sites known as the Big Cotton Indian Creek Mitigation Bank located in Clayton County, Ga.

The area, formerly an old cow pasture, is being restored to its preexisting state as a wetland to compensate for previous impacts.

"If you have an environmental impact, you need to pay the impact back," said Miller.

"When people say that are going to build on a wetland, we make them go to another wetland that has been drained through agricultural or timber activity, and restore it back to its natural function. We can't stop all of the impacts, but we can try to preserve the overall function of aquatic resources within a watershed scale."

Miller said that the Corps has developed a standard operating procedure for accessing how many mitigation credits are owed or how many debits are generated by unavoidable impacts.



**Big Cotton Indian Creek Mitigation bank site in Clayton County GA.**  
- Photo by Jonas Jordan

"This is how we get compensation for the environmental impacts that we sustain from the permitting that we do. The owner of this site chose to mitigate a large site in anticipation of selling the credits and making a profit from the investment."

Miller said that it will take several months for the process to be completed. Under the agreement, the Corps requires the owner to monitor the site for seven years to ensure that it's thriving.

Another aspect of the job is making wetland delineations.

Blocker said this is accomplished by examining the soil, vegetation, and hydrology of an area.



“Soil samples are taken and the Munsell Soil Determination color chart is used to determine the hue, value, and chroma of the soil. An analysis of the plant life in the area is then taken. Certain plant types are common in wetland areas.”

Blocker said that all of the three indicators must be present for the area to be deemed a wetland.

“No site is the same, but after you have been doing this for years, you can easily tell if it’s a wetland or not,” said Blocker.

If a site is determined to be a wetland, then it is within the Corps’ jurisdiction and is subject to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, which means that the owner must get a permit to do any type of work or developing on the site.

Miller says that many laws must be researched before a permit can be issued or denied.

Blocker and Strange said that the most interesting and toughest part of their job is handling violations.

“When we do enforcements, it gets very controversial,” said Blocker. “The most common way for violations to be reported is through neighbors,” said Blocker.

“We are really jacks of all trade,” said Alan Miller.

When a violation is reported to the Corps, Miller said that a site visit is mandatory.

Miller said that some property owners are not aware of the regulations of filling in wetlands, and don’t always fill in or develop these areas intentionally.

“These are very delicate situations,” said Miller. “You get a lot of shock and confusion from the property owners.”

After it is determined that a site is in violation of the Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, the property owner is issued a cease and desist letter.

Blocker and Miller said the next step is to try and get the owner in compliance with the regulations by issuing a restoration plan. The owner is usually given a certain amount of time to comply.

For Miller, Blocker, and Strange the most fulfilling part of their job is knowing that the work they do everyday is helping to secure a legacy and protecting many important resources for future generations to come.

- Rashida Banks, Staff Writer



Joel Strange, Ray Lambert, (The Lambert Company) and Shaun Blocker review a blueprint of the Big Cotton Indian Creek Mitigation Bank in Clayton County, Ga.



# Electric dredge at the Brunswick Harbor

Story by Alan Garrett, senior project manager coastal and navigation projects/civil works project management branch

The dredge Florida began work in Brunswick Harbor Feb. 20 in what has turned out to be the third of five possible phases required to complete the \$102 million harbor deepening project.

"Savannah District will hopefully keep the dredge until its anticipated deadline of 2008 or 2009," said Bill Hanson, manager of U.S. Business Development.

Originally slated to be a two and a half-year construction project when authorized in 1999, the project construction will likely take until 2008 or 2009 to complete due to limited funding in the Civil Works program. The Savannah District still needs \$16.3 million of federal funds to complete the East River deepening and construction of the new turning basin.

Upon learning of the Congress' additional funds of \$19.1 million dollars for Brunswick Harbor in FY '06, the Savannah District's Civil Works Senior Project Manager notified Great Lakes Dredge and Dock Company of Chicago, who then began the long process to mobilize the dredge Florida to the site.

The dredge had been working in California and was transported from the west coast through the Panama Canal.

"The Florida is one of two electric dredges in the U.S. and this is the first time since it's been off the West Coast," said Hanson.

The goal of this dredging phase is to deepen the remaining channel deficiencies in the South Brunswick River Channel and to provide a 36-foot deep, 19-mile long channel from the sea buoy to the Colonel's Island Automobile Processing facility.

The interesting aspect of the dredge is that it is powered by electricity instead of diesel generators. To accommodate the dredge, Georgia Power installed a dedicated substation on the west side of the Sidney Lanier Bridge. The dredge is actually powered through an 8-inch diameter electrical umbilical cord that runs from the substation along the river bottom to the dredge.

In areas where substations are not available, the Florida can be powered by a power generation barge equipped with six generators capable of producing the 14,000 volts and 18,000 horsepower needed to operate the dredge. The Florida is a versatile piece of equipment, being used for beach renourishment projects and other offshore work that requires sturdy construction and maximum freeboard. The dredge can dig to depths of 101 feet and can pump materials 25-30,000 feet without the assistance of booster pumps.



The Florida is getting ready for work at the Brunswick Harbor.

- Photo by Billy Birdwell, chief of public affairs





Ducks migrate to the managed waterfowl area at lake Russell.

## Annual mid-winter survey conducted at the lakes

Story and photo by Jeff Brooks, Wildlife Biologist at Lake Russell

According to a wildlife survey conducted by park rangers and biologists, waterfowl around the three Savannah District lakes (Hartwell, Russell, and Thurmond) increased 20 percent while the bald eagle total stayed the same in 2005.

A crew of five park rangers took boats and surveyed the shoreline, a crew of seven park rangers took vehicles to predetermined points around the lake, and a contractor flew the entire shoreline. The observations of eagles and waterfowl were recorded and sent to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and state agencies as part of a nationwide eagle survey.

“Every year, around early to mid-January, the lakes conduct a mid-winter eagle survey,” said Lori Brewster, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers conservation biologist at Thurmond Lake.

As far as the bald eagle surveys, there were a total of 15 bald eagles observed at Thurmond; 10 adults and 5 juveniles. Many of these birds migrate but the number is similar to last year’s total of 16 eagles. Nesting surveys will be conducted through the spring to determine how many eagles have established territories around Thurmond. Nest surveys provide a basis for comparing population changes from year to year.

“The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services are interested in the results because bald eagles are a threatened species and they are close to being de-listed,” said Brewster.

Meanwhile, the bald eagle surveys at Richard B. Russell and

Hartwell Lakes located one and four eagles, respectively. A new bald eagle nest was located below Hartwell dam this year. Biologists and park rangers will make observations through the spring to determine if the new nest is successful.

Brewster said that the lakes provide good nesting because eagles like to nest around water.

Coots dominate the counts followed by Canada geese. Most of the ducks are predominately diving ducks such as Ringneck, Bluebill and Bufflehead. Diving ducks are more common in “open” water and are capable of diving to feed. The numbers of dabbling ducks were much lower with Mallards and Wood ducks dominating the count. Dabbling ducks typically feed in shallow water (less than 18 inches deep), but will feed in deeper areas if aquatic vegetation is near the surface. Waterfowl counts at Russell and Hartwell are considerably lower than at Thurmond. This is due in part to size, but also at Thurmond there is more shallow water and aquatic vegetation. Hartwell rangers observed 482 ducks and 338 geese, whereas less than 100 waterfowl were observed at Russell on the lake. Russell does have one advantage; the approximately 30 acres of intensively managed waterfowl ponds. These three ponds witnessed several hundred to a thousand ducks on a good day.

The lack of aquatic vegetation is one factor that limits waterfowl habitat at the lakes. To improve waterfowl habitat at the lakes, rangers will continue to establish native aquatic vegetation.





# Cold Warrior barracks receive upgrade and take on a new life

From the Cold War to the Global War on Terror, the Saber Hall Project breathes new life with upgraded facilities and new additions.

"The Saber Hall Complex will be used to conduct military aircraft staging and to provide temporarily housing for personnel, while working and training," said Robert Sauntry, a military programs project manager for Hunter Army Airfield.

This project was designed in-house by Savannah District's Engineering Division. Saber Hall barracks was completely "gutted" for renovations. The \$26 million, two phase project started May 2003 and was completed February 2006. Phase I consisted of building an immediate ready company facility, a 100,000 sq. yd. concrete aircraft parking apron, guard shack, ammo shelter, warehouse and rigging facilities, 200,000-gallon water tank and two mock-up for C-17 and C-5 aircrafts. The aircraft mock-ups will be used to practice loading vehicles and equipment into the planes. Phase II consisted of renovating Saber Hall, constructing a scale house, and a 25,000 sq. yd. concrete parking apron. With Savannah District's work (on

the concrete apron) it more than doubled in size, so that the planes don't have to turn around.

"My goal as being the project engineer with my first project was to finish on schedule. I wanted the customer to be happy and I didn't want the user to have any major complaints," said Troy Funk, a Savannah District project engineer at Hunter Army Airfield.

Sauntry said the barracks are unique in that the entire sleeping quarters is located underground. Air Force pilots lived there while on duty during the cold war. Saber Hall barracks were built in the 1960s. Therefore, bathrooms were moldy and had drainage problems, as evidenced by the cracked concrete blocks walls.

"We had concerns with the structural soundness of the facility so when we excavated the soil from around the building, I made everyone get out of the building for safety purposes," said Funk.

The barracks will be able to house 240 military members.

"Saber Hall Project will be used as a joint planning and deployment facility," said Rick Mansford, an airfield operations officer, also a customer who will be using the facility. He also said that the facility



*Renovated Saber Hall barracks will be used to temporarily house different training groups such as the ROTC. During the Cold War, Saber Hall was used as barracks where pilots lived ensuring they were able to fly the planes when needed.*

- Photos by Jonas Jordan



***“The unique feature to this project was that it was a full in-house design by the Savannah District engineering division.”*** ***-Robert Sauntry, project manager, Hunter Army Airfield***

was in poor condition before the renovation.

“It was a two year project and Troy and his team did a great job. We are happy with the progress. It was on schedule,” said Mansford.

“When the furniture is installed, there will be beds in the bedroom and end tables. It sounds plain but the focus of this is that the team staying in the facility can rapidly deploy within 24 to 72 hours,” said Funk. There will be computer rooms, operations and planning offices, briefing areas, bathrooms and shower stalls, and a laundry area as well as microwaves and refrigerators throughout the building.

The facility upgraded its use for technological advances. Throughout the building there is an “occupancy sensor” which means the lights come on when someone enters. The VIP rooms (for higher ranking officials) have internet capabilities.

Some of the challenges were the electrical wiring and the piping. Funk said that they had to lower the ceilings in the dining facility in order to fit all of the duct work and fire suppression systems above the ceiling. There was a little structural support problem in two of the hallways and the engineering team designed a steel support system to address the problem.

“As far as site work, there was a lot of unsuitable material. Inside, the existing structure prohibited the installation of all of the mechanical systems



**Troy Funk, (left) project engineer, William Phipps (center) and Rick Mansford talk about the challenges that went along with working on Saber Hall Project.**

above the ceiling, so the ceilings on the lower level had to be lowered. The existing facility had a major water problem, we had to completely excavate the exterior of the building and install a waterproof membrane. We also installed a new drainage system that carries the water away from the facility via the storm drain system,” said Funk.

Funk said that Savannah District’s engineering team dealt with the issues of the unsuitable material which was very helpful.

“If we ran into problems, Bill Montgomery (airfield design) and Ben Foreman (chief of soils section) were at the site in a days notice,” said Funk.

“I give a lot of credit to the quality assurance team: Jose Gonzalez, James Cook, David Vaughan, James Moody, Brian Mock, Andre Wright, and Walt Hohne for finishing on time especially with the renovations. The contractor also contributed immensely and worked with us to resolve any issues that arose,” said Funk.

Hunter Army Airfield was able to make the transition to the 21st Century with the aid of Savannah District’s team work and drive to get the job done on schedule.

**-Tiffany Holloway, Editor/Staff Writer**



**Saber Hall has new bathrooms sinks, toilets and shower stalls for the facility to add comfort to the temporary tenants.**



**John Roberts**



**Gary Close**



**James Carter**

# 170 years leaves the District

**J**ohn Roberts, a lead structural engineer at the District remembers when engineers used a calculator so big that it needed a table, and forget the convenient desktop computers, they used a computer as big as four cubicle spaces that only stored 16K worth of memory.

Roberts is one of three who retired from the civil engineering division. Two retired early January, which makes a total of 170 years of experience, history, and wisdom out of the door. Perry Rountree, and Horace Fulcher, Jr., drill operators, retired respectively with 38 and 30 years of service under their belt; Gary Close, structural engineer retired after 33 years; John Roberts worked 35 years and James Carter, civil engineer, worked 34 years with the District.

"Computers really made a difference in the way we work and reproduced blue-prints," said Roberts.

He always wanted to be an engineer. "As a kid, I liked to build things plus, I had a knack for math and science."

Roberts said that he has seen the District go through many changes, one being the location of where they worked on St. Julian's Street. Another big change is how engineers did their work. Back in the day, they would use pencils and paper and even write their own programs for the computer

which might take a day to compute the data out. Corps workers also had to take a written driver's test to receive a government license to drive a government car.

Roberts was at the District when designs were being made for the Richard B. Russell Dam.

"The Dam was an in-house design. We did a lot of Civil Works in-house designs, now the way to go is design build. This will be a challenge for future engineers, but I've learned that things come in cycles," said Roberts.

Another thing learned at the District that Roberts will take with him in future endeavors: do a good job in planning. "If you do a good job in planning then you won't have any surprises." He also learned that things will take longer than you think they will.

Close shared his scrapbook. He had a photo with every commander that has been at the District. He also had photos of team members who have moved and some who had retired. He shared photos of various recovery operations he participated in, including Hurricane Hugo in 1989.

Close will take with him the mantra: Don't sweat the small stuff. He advises new employees to participate in the Thrift Savings Plan.

Carter said the biggest change throughout the years has been the way he has done drafts.

"I started off in drafting and the engineers would give us the drawings and we would do everything in ink and freehand. Then we started using computers which changed how we did things," said Carter.

With 34 years of experiences, Carter learned thoroughness goes a long way.

"I have a tendency to not cut corners and I will take that with me in my future endeavors," said Carter.

He also advises the future generation of workers taking over leadership positions to listen to people who have longevity and a lot of experience. "Managers need to take advantage of the experience."

Savannah District has endured many changes, but what remains the same throughout the years are the lessons learned, camaraderie, and still using pencil and paper.

**-Tiffany Holloway, Editor/Staff Writer**

**- Photos by Jonas Jordan**



# Keepin' the District healthy

The Safety and Occupational Health Office sponsored its first Health and Wellness training fair which focused on various topics that affect women.

Scott Wendt, acting chief of safety and occupational health said that the safety office plans to sponsor speakers on a monthly basis to discuss various health topics that people are confronted with everyday.

"The command realizes that its greatest asset is the employees," said Wendt. "Therefore, we are placing emphasis on programs like this to ensure that employees are being taken care of."

Wendt said that the meetings will be held the first Wednesday of every month.

During the meeting, representatives from Memorial Health Medical University discussed various topics, such as osteoporosis, stretching, and holistic healing. A drawing was held for a health and wellness basket and pamphlets and bottled water were given away. Kitty Keyes, a licensed massage therapist from the Center for Holistic Healing gave chair massages to district employees.



Team members sit in on a presentation by Rebecca Haynes, registered nurse, cardiovascular pulmonary rehabilitation at Memorial Hospital.  
- Photo by Jonas Jordan

## ON THE MOVE

### New Arrivals

Cunningham, Ashley R.  
Fortune, Peter D.  
John, Joyce B.  
Kinsey, Jason R.  
Melton, Joseph W.

### Office

Operations  
Construction  
Equal Employment  
Operations  
Operations

### Departures

Anderson Jr., Robert M.  
Brown, Christopher Scott  
Carter, James  
Close, Gary  
Crosby, David  
Fulcher Jr., Horace  
Geiger, William L.  
Hall, Eugene S.  
Hill Jr., Thomas J.  
Manili, James M.  
Mclallen, Dewayne D.  
Roberts, John  
Rountree, Perry  
Sauceda, Simon  
Strange, Joel  
Pawloski, Kristine  
Zoucks, Patricia P.

### Office

Engineering  
Construction  
Engineering  
Engineering  
Project Management  
Engineering  
Engineering  
Operations  
Construction  
Construction  
Construction  
Engineering  
Engineering  
Construction  
Regulatory  
Construction  
Real Estate





Sheet piles on Big Cotton Indian Creek Mitigation bank site in Clayton County, GA.

