

The

# castle

Savannah District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

October/November 2005



Nature Preserved

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News magazine of the Savannah District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

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## FRONT COVER

Wading birds frequently visit the 10,165 acres of land, located in the ACE Basin, that the Savannah District recently transferred to the state of South Carolina.

Photos by Jonas Jordan



## Uga and the Corps endorse water safety

University of Georgia mascot, Uga, demonstrates his support of water safety by wearing a lifejacket.

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## Letter to the Editor

I am so impressed with the latest September Castle and am thrilled you will be editing!

I especially liked your tribute to Verdelle Lambert, who I worked with on many projects as the public outreach ranger at Thurmond Lake from 1994-2001. She was my co-editor on our own Lake Times from 1997-2003. She was the one who was responsible for making it the professional publication we wanted. I will never forget Verdelle – and her passion for good writing, detail, and getting just the right layout. You are off to a great start – one she would be proud of!

Best of luck to you!

Annette Carter  
Shoreline Management/Real Estate Section  
J. Strom Thurmond Project



**COL Mark S. Held**  
**District Commander**

With the close of the 2005 fiscal year, I want to thank each of you for the hard work and dedication that helped make the year a resounding success. There are so many things big and small that went well in the district this year that I don't know if you can ask the Savannah District to perform at any higher level. Your 2005 report card is an "A+" in my book.

I'll start with how pleased I am that we cut our recreation drowning by 70 percent. This remarkable feat didn't happen by luck. It happened as a result of the hard work and dedication of the people who work at our three lakes as well as the members of the water safety project delivery team. These teams developed a fierce water safety campaign to strengthen our bond with the recreating public. The rangers went out and made face-to-face contact with thousands of people who visit our lakes. Now when the recreating public sees our rangers, they view them as friends rather than enforcers and are more willing to receive their message.

Our military program executed 100 percent of its Army, Air Force, and Department of Defense projects, 21 of which were in the Army Military Construction program. Our execution kept the Army program from going down. This district's military program continues to excel because we have program and project managers that make it happen regardless of the task. A prime example of this is the \$133 million modularity project at Fort Bragg. Catherine Applegate and her team executed the task despite complicated national protests, price escalations, and labor pool reductions. As a result of their efforts, the Soldiers at Fort Bragg fighting the global war on terror will return to new barracks.

We are working hard in our safety program and will continue to come in strong. With almost a billion dollars worth of work and hundreds of workers, there were some

# You earned it - You get it - An "A-Plus"

accidents on the work site, but we still managed to come in strong. Our aggressive daily safety program, in partnership with dedicated contractors, kept us well within safety standards.

Our Civil Works program shines as yet another example of this district's success. Military construction may be large in the district, but Civil Works does not take a back seat. We executed 99.8 percent this year for a total program amount of \$96 million.

Our environmental program executed 150 percent. Mike Sydow, chief of the environmental program, was scheduled to execute \$29 million, but actually executed \$45 million. When you execute 50 percent over your budget, it tells you how great you are doing. Our customers know they can always rely on this district to get the job done, because we are the best at what we do.

Real Estate's Armed Forces Recruiting Command and timber harvesting programs are in the green as well. We executed 95 percent for a total program of \$20 million.

In the midst of carrying out our daily mission, we had 70 team members supporting the Gulf Region Division, and 86 people deployed to support hurricane recovery. We were also introduced to regionalization, P2, A76, and the National Security Personnel System. Tami Garrett, our resource manager, and her team in resource management kept our financial indicators completely healthy despite the impacts of these completely different ways of doing business.

Despite all of the moving parts, we were still able to accomplish our mission. This proves how effective we are as an organization. This is the best district in the Corps of Engineers - I'll put our 2005 performance measures up against any program - that's how strongly I believe in this district!

As we close out 2005 and position ourselves for the new fiscal year, I ask that everyone continues to put their best foot forward.

The FY06 program is going to be our most challenging workload ever. We are looking at billions of dollars based on the President's agenda. We have never seen such a phenomenal increase in a program in one year. We have to be ready. As a workforce, we are not going to get bigger to execute more work. We have to execute the program no matter how large it is - with the people that we have.

Once again, thanks for an exceptional

job in 2005. I know you will do more of the same this year, because that's the standard of excellence that you have grown accustomed to setting in this district. The Savannah District leads in everything that we do. There is nothing more indicative of our reputation than that.

With the holidays just around the corner, I realize just how wonderful the people in this district are. I am truly thankful to work with such a talented and dedicated team. I wish each of you a happy and safe Thanksgiving holiday and urge you to spend time with your family this season.

Our tasks may challenge you, but your talents surpass the challenges. I expect this year you will score "A++" at report-card time.

## ***Corps Partners to Improve Wildlife Habitat at Thurmond***

This year, the Corps partnered with the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWF), Quail Unlimited (QU), and Georgia Power to improve wildlife habitat at Thurmond Lake. Through this partnership, funding was provided to clear and plant approximately 10,000 linear feet of wildlife openings at the lake.

"We strategically located these openings to achieve our wildlife and forest management goals in the most cost effective manner," said Jeff Brooks, district wildlife biologist. "They will serve a dual purpose as both wildlife food plot and permanent firebreak during the prescribed burning season," said Brooks.

Rather than develop square or rectangular wildlife openings, linear openings were created because they increase the amount of "edge" which increases available habitat in a given area.

The 30-to-60-foot wide linear strips were cleared and a mixture of wheat, oats, and clover were planted in order to provide a good source of food for deer, turkey, and a variety of other species.

Although these areas improve the habitat for game species, Brooks says that recent studies show that a wide variety of non-game species, particularly birds, use the openings.

The openings will improve habitat on approximately 2,500 acres, said Brooks.

# Ron Ogden



**1947-2005**

Ron Ogden, a retired assistant Real Estate chief with the district succumbed to brain cancer on Sept 9. He leaves behind a loving wife – Shirley.

An “outgoing and energetic” person, Ogden will be remembered by many for his upbeat personality.

Ogden had a rare form of brain cancer, called Lymphoma. In spite of this illness, Tommy Hill, chief of Real Estate division, said that Ogden kept a positive attitude the entire time.

“He was always on the bright side of things,” said Hill. “I knew that he had a lot of friends around the Corps, but once he got sick, people would continually ask about him. They cared a lot about him,” said Hill.

Ogden served as chief of Real Estate Division from Sept 1999 until Dec 2001 and then as chief of the Regional Management Branch Management Branch from Dec 2001 until his retirement in 2004. He was instrumental in developing innovative new business processes including the Real Estate Action Tracking System now used throughout the Corps. Ogden also volunteered his time to local charities, such as Habitat for Humanity and the Marine Corps League.

He served twice as chairperson for the Combined Federal Campaign and also as lead chairperson for all the federal agencies.

“He approached life with great enthusiasm and never let his physical problems get him down,” said Denise Titus, chief, Regional Management Branch, Real Estate Division and one of Ogden’s co-workers.

Ogden was also instrumental in reenergizing the district’s Bridge to Leadership Program.

“He had a real passion for BTL and what he was doing and that enthusiasm spilled over into the group,” said Marcy McLendon, a 2003 participant of the program. “He had a personality that wasn’t like anybody that I’ve ever met and that is something that I will miss most about him.”

Memorial services were held for Ogden at St. Paul’s Catholic Church on Wilmington Island on October 21.

# Inflatables pass



**Steve Seybold, a representative from Mustang Survival assists Amy Cobb, a parker ranger from Russell Lake with putting on her inflatable lifejacket.**



# the test

By Rashida Banks

Editor/Staff Writer

Photos by Jonas Jordan

**H**artwell Lake recently hosted a reliability test of several different models of inflatable lifejackets for use by on duty park rangers and Corps personnel.

Although the inflatable lifejackets have received U.S. Coast Guard approval, Testerman says that the Corps wanted to conduct their own test to ensure that the lifejackets were adequate for use by Corps personnel that work on or around the lake.

“We have been studying the inflatable lifejackets for a long time,” said Testerman. “We were concerned that they would not provide the level of reliability with which we felt comfortable, he said. “Unlike the “old” inherently buoyant PFDs, we could not be sure that they would inflate every time.”

Testerman said that initially, the inflatable PFDs were available only in the manual pull mode, which would require the user to be conscious to operate.

“We were concerned that users falling out of a boat or off a dock might strike their head on the gunnels or other obstruction that would render them unconscious and unable to operate the manual activation device,” said Testerman. “We were also concerned about the reliability of the CO2 bottles being charged and ready for use since they are the catalyst for inflating the chambers, which provides buoyancy.”

As designed at the time, the CO2 bottles were not readily available for inspection and

required a lengthy charging process to assure that they were fully charged and ready for use.

“We did not feel confident that this process would take place before every use, which would be necessary if we wanted to assure their functionality,” said Testerman.

This is the fourth of a series of tests that have been hosted and conducted by Corps officials, under the direction of Sam Testerman, Systems and Engineering Program Manager, Safety and Occupational Health Office, HQUSACE. Lynda Nutt, Tom Verna, and Steve Austin also played significant roles in the development process. This is the first test involving the manufacturers Stearns and Mustang Survival, Inc. Previous tests have only involved SoSpenders, Inc., a lifejacket manufacturing company recently bought out by Stearns, Inc.

The Corps worked with the PFD manufacturers for several years explaining their requirements, which resulted in new designs that addressed many of the concerns.

For example, an actuator device was developed to indicate whether or not the CO2 cylinder is properly charged and available for use via a simple red/green indicator.

“This was supplemented by integrating a plastic window into the PFD that would allow the user to easily determine whether or not the PFD was properly activated,” said Testerman.

The first test conducted by the Corps resulted in a recall of the product after 20 to 30 percent of the inflatable lifejackets failed the tests, according to Testerman. Consultation with the manufacturer resulted in some additional improvements to the PFDs. The second test resulted in some additional improvements and the third, some excellent results worthy of allowing for field-testing.

Unfortunately, the company was sold to another PFD manufacturer about the time the Corps was ready to commit to field-testing and the process had to be started again.

Testerman says there were other concerns about the inflatable lifejackets. They were approved only for recreational use, not commercial use and not recommended for non-swimmers.

“The Stearns and Mustang PFD manufacturing companies took up the challenge of providing an inflatable PFD that would meet

our level of comfort and made some PFDs that appeared to do so. So we suggested that they meet us at Hartwell Lake to test their units,” said Testerman.

Park rangers conducted the tests in full uniform, which consisted of long pants and steel-toed safety boots, making the scenarios as realistic as possible.

The factors used in rating the lifejackets included fit, comfort, activation time, rollover, rollover time, buoyancy, maneuverability in the water, and visibility.

For many Corps personnel, the conventional lifejackets are bulky and uncomfortable.

Nathan Dinehart, a park ranger at Hartwell Lake was one of the testers.

“I feel confident in them, because of the testing we performed,” said Dinehart.

Inflatable life jackets, which are similar to a pair of suspenders, are cooler and more maneuverable, said Dinehart.

“They would be great during the summer months during boat duty when the temperature and humidity is high,” said Dinehart. “In the winter time, I would prefer the standard lifejacket.”

## Care and maintenance

Although some of the advantages of wearing the inflatable lifejackets are increased comfort and range of motion, they require a higher level of responsibility by the user.

“Inflatables have to be treated fairly carefully,” said Testerman.

Unlike conventional lifejackets which are usually thrown in the corner of the boat until they are used, inflatable lifejackets have to receive regular maintenance.

“They must be inspected on a regular basis to ensure that the CO2 cartridge is loaded properly,” said Testerman. “Personnel using the lifejackets must also receive training on the proper care and maintenance for them.”

With an average price range of \$125 to \$150, the inflatable lifejackets are relatively expensive compared to conventional lifejackets which are about \$50. The CO2 cartridge also has to be replaced after each use, which is an additional cost to the user.

Because there is a slight delay from immersion to inflation, the inflatables are not recommended for inexperienced swimmers.

As a result of the testing, Testerman says two models, one from Mustang and one from Stearns, performed with high consistency and were deemed to adequately meet Corps safety requirements for inflatable life jackets. This determination is tentative based on further practical field testing. Testerman says that he will make a recommendation that the two be approved for limited testing at designated Corps sites throughout the US, to allow for practical field use feedback.



**Nathan Dinehart, a park ranger at Hartwell Lake and one of the inflatable lifejacket testers is shown falling off of a boat wearing an inflatable lifejacket. (2) As Dinehart makes contact with the water surface, the CO2 cartridge is triggered by the water pressure. (3) Dinehart is shown in the water after the lifejacket has fully inflated.**

# Hispanic Heritage Month observed

By Craig Janhrette

Stringer

Photo by Jonas Jordan



**José Gonzalez, civil engineer, construction division, demonstrates to Denise Degraffenreaidt, facility manager, logistics management, Salsa and Meringue dance steps during the district's observance of Hispanic Heritage Month.**

The Savannah district promoted the theme "Hispanic Americans: Strong and Colorful Threads in the American Fabric" during Hispanic Heritage month celebrated Sept. 15 – Oct 15.

"It's [Hispanic Heritage Month] a chance to share with my co-workers and friends my culture and traditions and help them better understand what is important in our lives as Hispanic individuals," said José Gonzales, civil engineer, construction division. "I try to emphasize the fact that we are happy people that love to work hard and play hard."

Ana Vergara, Project Manager for the environmental, inter-agency, and international Services Branch, Program Management Division said that the committee wanted to do a food tasting event, but because of guidelines they couldn't.

"We wanted to show what really makes our culture fun, happy, and colorful," said Vergara. "We wanted to do something with music...that's what brings everybody together in the Latin Culture: food and music."

A collage highlighting family members and friends of Hispanic-American team members who served or are serving in the armed forces was displayed in the Employee Information Courtyard throughout the month.

Vergara and Gonzalez also gave Salsa and Meringue dance lessons to district team members.

"We wanted to highlight what Hispanics are doing throughout the world. I'm happy with the turnout," said Torres-Perez, project manager, Environmental and I2s Branch.

Since 1968 Hispanic Heritage Month has become a significant beacon of pride and a true vehicle for the promotion of the Latin Culture. With this year's celebration ended, Torres-Perez, said that plans are already underway for ways to improve the program in 2006.

## District says farewell to Myron Yuschishin



**Yuschishin**

Myroslaw Jacob "Myron" Yuschishin, former chief of Planning Division, Savannah District died on Oct 21 at the age of 59.

Yuschishin served as chief of planning division from 1986 until

his retirement in 2002. Before working for the Savannah District, he served as a Legislative Specialist in the Policy Division at headquarters from 1983 until 2002 and as Regional Planning Engineer, Planning Division, Headquarters

from 1976 until 1983. He honorably served our country as a captain in the U.S. Army from 1969 until 1972.

He graduated from the Citadel in 1968 and received a masters degree in engineering from Penn State.

A native of Austria, Yuschishin is survived by his wife Angeline "Angie" Yuschishin, also a former Savannah district employee, and three sons, Terry, Tony, and Mikel.

Joan Moore, operations division secretary, who served as Yuschishin's secretary during his tenure with the Savannah district said that he was an enjoyable person to be around.

"He had a very distinctive voice, and he was always laughing. I really enjoyed working with him," said Moore.

A memorial mass was held for Yuschishin on Oct. 25 at St. Joseph Catholic Church in Charleston, S.C.

## ON THE MOVE

### Departures

Coleman, Gary C.	Real Estate
Dyal, Eric J.	Resource Mgmt.
Hackney, Judy I.	Resource Mgmt.
Wester, James E.	Construction

### Arrivals

Pagano, Lester A.	Contracting
Reinhardt, Christopher D.	Contracting
Salt, Lupe L.	Construction
Szabo, Richard M.	Construction
Youins, Ralph L.	Safety Office



Kevin Ionno, a vocational rehabilitation specialist with the Georgia Department of Labor educates district teammembers on the stereotypes associated with being disabled. Inno was one of the keynote speakers during the district's National Disabilities Awareness Month Program on October 12.

America's workforce.

Keynote speaker Kevin Ionno, a vocational rehabilitation specialist with the Georgia Department of Labor said that one of the main barriers that people with disabilities face is being stereotyped. Ionno urged district team members to educate themselves on the stereotypes associated with being disabled.

"Every person with a disability is an individual. People with disabilities have different interests, skills, and abilities. We all have reactions –it's human nature. It's important to be aware of our attitudes and reactions, because they affect the way we interact with people who are disabled," said Ionno.

Paul Ward, an assistive technology engineer with the Georgia Department of Labor demonstrated some of the technology available to assist people with disabilities. Ward said that he tries to focus on specific barriers and then find solutions.

"Technology has changed and improved to meet the needs of people with disabilities, so they are more capable of doing a lot of things," said Ward.

The technology demonstrated ranged from voice dictation and screen enlargement software to note teller machines that distinguish between money.

Ward said that by providing this type of assistance, disabled employees are allowed to become a productive component of the workforce.

## National Disabilities Awareness Month

*Program focuses on the barriers that people with disabilities face everyday in the workplace*

**By Rashida Banks**

Editor/Staff Writer

Photo by Jonas Jordan

Deputy Commander, Lt. Col. George "Thatch" Shepard rededicated the Corps' efforts to helping qualified disabled Americans reach their full potential during the district's National Disabilities Awareness Month Program on October 12.

"The employment rate of people with disabilities has historically been the lowest

of any minority in the nation, yet these individuals represent a skilled pool and a national resource that is largely untapped by corporate America," said Shepard. "In order to address the shrinking conventional labor pool, added emphasis must be given to recruiting and maintaining a productive, diverse, and skilled workforce."

The theme for this year's program "Workers with disabilities: Ready for tomorrow's jobs today," emphasized that people with disabilities form a vital part of

## Spanish safety training seminar held at Fort Bragg

**By Rashida Banks**

Editor/Staff Writer

The Hispanic contractors working at Fort Bragg and Pope Air Force Base construction sites had the opportunity to interact with each other and receive safety training in their native language during the first ever "Saving Lives: Safety and Health in the Construction Industry" seminar held at Fort Bragg on August 31.

"This is a win-win situation for everyone – the installations, the contractors, and the state," said Nelson Mora, an electrical engineer at Fort Bragg. "They will be trained in a language they understand, and safety will improve."

Mora, who spearheaded the efforts to conduct the seminar in coordination with the North Carolina Department of Labor and the Occupational Safety and Health Admin-

istration, said that he was inspired to do so when he read the statistics published by the Department of Labor which showed that a larger percentage of Hispanics are injured on the job.

"Since the Hispanic community has increased in the state and they work on most of the projects, I wanted to educate them," said Mora. "The Hispanic contractors have problems communicating in English. Some of them can speak English fluently, but many of them feel more comfortable communicating in Spanish," he said.

Jorge Faber, safety consultant, North Carolina Department of Labor, presented the training to 17 "eager" participants from different contracting companies in the state of North Carolina. The topics discussed included: electrical safety, excavation and trenching, scaffolds, stairways, and ladders. Other speakers for the seminar included Alexander Steel, compliance safety and

health officer, occupational safety and health administration who discussed OSHA and its mission to prevent accidents in the workplace and Axel Lluch, director of Hispanic/Latino affairs, North Carolina office of the governor.

The seminar, which is free to contractors who work at Pope and Bragg, was well-received, according to Mora.

"The Spanish speaking contractors were very pleased that we offered this type of training," said Mora.

Mora prepared a brochure in Spanish and English in order to promote the program to different contractors. He says that the number of participants will increase in the future. There are plans to offer the training every six months.

For more information about the program, contact Nelson Mora, P.E., Hispanic safety manager, Ft. Bragg Area Office at 910-432-8121.

# Corps transforms living conditions for Soldiers at Fort



Soldiers at Fort Bragg march in formation in front of the SEP Barracks as they prepare for physical training.

**By Tiffany Holloway**  
Staff Writer  
Photos by Jonas Jordan

“Support our Troops” isn’t just another catchy slogan to Savannah District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the Fort Bragg Public Works engineer team. The District and the Public Works team are dedicated to ensuring that the Soldiers at Fort Bragg are rewarded for their work. Their units are deployed from Africa to the hurricane relief areas to fighting the global war on terror in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Savannah District’s mission: to upgrade the living standards for Soldiers stationed at Fort Bragg. This transformation will be

accomplished under three initiatives; the Barracks Improvement Program, the Barracks Upgrade Program, and the last part of the construction is based on the new 1+1 standard. The improvement program will consist of renovating existing barracks and providing temporary use as swing space (there’s limited space at Fort Bragg). The upgrade program will complete renovations to covert existing barracks built in the 1980s.

When Savannah District and the Public Works team complete the 1+1 transformation, Soldiers will enjoy the privacy of sleeping in their own room with many of the same amenities they would have if they had an apartment off-post. This will improve the Soldiers attitude regarding military service and keep them in the Army according to Digo Martinez, chief, Army program manage-

ment section, military programs and project management branch.

Within the next six years, the team will complete the \$2 billion state-of-the-art barracks program.

“We want to transform Fort Bragg into the premiere military installation in the country,” said Martinez. Savannah District and the Public Works team want to show their appreciation of Soldiers fighting the GWOT said Martinez.

“When the Soldiers come back from Iraq and Afghanistan, we want the Soldiers to enjoy state-of-the-art facilities and be proud to be a part of the U.S. Army,” said Martinez.

Glen Prillaman, chief, real property and planning branch said, “It does a lot for the morale of the Soldiers and their family.”

Barracks projects make up 70 percent of



# ragg



Photos: (Above): Old D-Area Barracks at Fort Bragg during the demolition process. (Right): 16th Military Police Barracks shown during the construction process. With the new barracks, Soldiers will enjoy the privacy of sleeping in their own room with many of the same amenities they would have if they had an apartment off-post. The transformation is scheduled to be completed within the next six years.



the Corps' entire military construction program. The \$300 million program underway at Fort Bragg includes a battalion/brigade complex for the Separate Battalion Phases III and IV 16th Military Police Barracks phases I and II, XVIII Airborne Corps Support Command (COSCOM) phases I and II, D-Area phases IV and V, Barracks Improvement Program, and modular Brigade Combat Team (BCT).

The \$350 million barracks program under design will add rooms for three brigades and a medical unit. Prillaman said that the new Army barracks program will allow Soldiers to have complete privacy in their living quarters.

"The Soldiers don't have to worry about the tight space anymore," said Martinez.

Martinez described the barracks as a U-shaped design that will hold up to 40 Soldiers per floor. Each wing of the barracks

## 16 Military Police Brigade barracks at Fort Bragg.

accommodates up to 384 Soldiers. Men and women have their own floor. Barracks amenities include an individual sleeping area, full kitchen with a refrigerator, microwave, range and dining facility. The common areas include: picnic table, washers and dryers, a physical fitness center for indoor exercises and a 10-foot wide sidewalk for outside physical training. The sidewalk ensures that the Soldiers remain safe during their physical training when vehicles drive by.

"The barracks program is long overdue. The barracks have long outlived their useful

lives," said Greg Bean, the director of public works.

Most of the old barracks date from the 1950s, said XVIII Airborne Corps Division Master Sgt. Timothy Reick.

"Back then four Soldiers shared a room with gang latrines," said Reick.

Special features of the new barracks include fiber optics for DSL internet connection, rooms wired for cable TV and bigger storage areas for the Soldiers to store their equipment and personal belongings.

**SEE BRAGG, page 10**

Savannah District area engineer, Ken Gray, said the new barracks look like a college campus, but better. "The barracks have a college campus arrangement. You have an apartment, you get your quiet time and have good living conditions for training," said Gray. "We are building the future barracks of tomorrow today."

He also said that the single Soldiers will more likely stay on post because it would be difficult to find housing off post that offers them as much as the new barracks.

With the advent of the new Army transformation and the new construction team (Savannah District, Fort Bragg Public Works, and contractors such as Bill Harbert, Archer Western, McCardy, and Caddell), the goal has changed to building barracks with more amenities.

"Savannah and Fort Bragg have a great working relationship. There's a lot of communicating," said Prillaman. He also said that the construction team bends over backwards to help solve problems. "Savannah District understands our installation design guide."

The construction team has made progress with their goal.

Reick said, "With all the new construction on this installation, it shows that the Army does care for the Soldiers." He also said, "It brings a smile to the face of all the Soldiers that are moving into the new barracks. Units commanders are always looking to enhance living conditions for their Soldiers."

He said there was a need for new barracks with the number of Soldiers being required to move off post because of lack of space. Plus, with the Army's transformation, "this installation will desperately need new barracks."

The barracks program hasn't gone without its challenges.

"The biggest challenge is swing space," said Bean.

Fort Bragg has been faced with limited space and the feat of renovating the current barracks so that the Soldiers have somewhere to live while the new barracks are under construction. The barracks improvement program extends the barracks' useful life until the new barracks are constructed. The barracks upgrade program consists of "gutting" the 1980s barracks buildings and converting them to the new Army

standard. Having the barracks ready when the deployed Soldiers return to Fort Bragg is becoming a challenge according to Gray.

The Savannah District's other projects at Fort Bragg include the Army Multiple Force barracks (AMF), which have been designed for combined forces to rapidly deploy for missions. In the past, Soldiers were housed with their own brigade, making it harder to mobilize Soldiers and their equipment. Now, Soldiers from the different brigades can live in one building. Also, facilities are being built for Soldiers such as Special Operations and Green Berets. The old Womack Hospital is being renovated for the Soldier Support Center for the in-and out-processing of Soldiers and their families. This \$20 million project will consolidate all personnel processing actions in one facility and therefore improve the efficiency of the process. Currently, this mission is spread throughout several buildings at Fort Bragg.

"We see the barracks construction program as a physical manifestation of the commitment and appreciation our nation has for the Soldiers that are fighting the global war on terrorism," said Bean.

Supporting our troops by providing them with better facilities not only rewards the Soldiers at Fort Bragg, but Savannah District team members and the Public Works engineer team as well.



Contractors reroute infrastructure on Second Brigade Barracks at Fort Bragg.

# 'Oktoberfest captures

By Tiffany Holloway  
Staff Writer

Autumn—the leaves change, the weather cools, the days shorten—and Oktoberfest begins for German-Americans in the Savannah District.

This year marks the 397th anniversary of the first German immigration to the United States. President Ronald Reagan dedicated Oct. 6, 1987, as German-American Day. In 1995, it transformed into German American Heritage Month celebrated from Sept. 15 through Oct. 15.

One of the most popular ways to celebrate German-American Heritage Month includes Oktoberfest, actually celebrated in September. Munich, Germany has the largest Oktoberfest celebration with an estimated six million people. Although on a smaller scale, Savannah's celebration is no less exciting and fun.

Oktoberfest captures the essence of German culture: socializing, eating, drinking, and being merry, according to Heidrun Seti, a procurement technician in Contracting Division.

Franz Froelicher, chemist in the engineering division has an American/Swiss dual citizenship, and his wife has a German/Swiss dual citizenship. Froelicher said that Oktoberfest historically was a celebration of the marriage of the Bavarian Prince Ludwig to the Bavarian Princess Therese of Saxony Hildburghausen. Also, it was the time of year of the grape (wine) or barley (beer) harvest.

Now, the celebration of Oktoberfest is "to let off stress and steam," said Froelicher.

Froelicher and Seti reflect back to their days in Germany eating bratwurst, sauerkraut, schweinshackse (pig knuckles), bier pretzels and lebkuchen herze (gingerbread hearts) during Oktoberfest.

Gabriele Supon, environmental support assistant, Planning Division, participates in Oktoberfest in Savannah occasionally, and said the atmosphere isn't the same as German social events.

"There's no singing, dancing, and swaying to the music here," said Supon.

Supon and Froelicher didn't think the food on River Street was authentic but enjoyed the food that the Westin Hotel provided, especially the potato salad.

"Real German potato salad is made without mayonnaise," said Froelicher.

Froelicher, Seti, and Supon agree that there's still something missing—the camaraderie they experienced during celebrations in Germany.

Froelicher has observed more socializing and eating while sitting down at tables where-

# the essence of German culture' for German-American Team members

as people celebrating Oktoberfest in Savannah stand or walk around with food in their hands.

He also noticed that there were only a few benches to sit down and talk.

"Here you can sit down by someone and not even speak to them," said Supon.

It's not enough to celebrate Oktoberfest to try to experience German culture. German-American heritage month is also about knowing "where you come from," said Froelicher.

Froelicher said that everyone should know and understand their ancestry.

"You are poorer if you don't and richer if you do," said Froelicher.

The Froelicher family speaks German in their household to maintain their European heritage.

He also added that it's important to learn about other cultures so that you are more compassionate for others and better able to understand others.

Seti, a U.S. Army retiree, has embraced many cultures in her household.



Seti



Supon

"I run a German/Polynesian style household, with plenty of Aloha spirit," said Seti.

She speaks German, cooks German food, and uses German household goods, but shoes must stay at the front door, and family and friends are encouraged to have fun when visiting.

"It's important to never forget where you came from," said Seti. "We have to understand that so that we can progress and become better people," said Seti.

To maintain her German heritage, Seti watches German newscasts at home and often speaks German to family and friends.

Household goods such as cuckoo clocks and porcelain dinnerware exhibit her ethnicity.

Seti and Froelicher agree that German-American heritage month is important to learn about and fun to celebrate.



Franz Froelicher enjoys Oktoberfest celebration in Germany.

## Corps supports GWOT with modern recruiting facility

By Tiffany Holloway  
Staff Writer

Can a realty specialist really have an input on the Global War on Terror? Yes-especially when providing Armed Forces recruiters with modern facilities to talk to potential new recruits.

"Few people know that the Corps builds, leases, pays rent and utilities as well as provides janitorial services and maintains the space utilized by all of the Armed Forces Recruiting Command," said Scott Mason, Corps real estate recruiting team member.

Other than the traditional real estate skills, the leasing branch's recruiting team realty specialists must have additional skills to perform the mission they are given. For example, they must understand the military structure. They must be able to design the recruiting stations with an understanding of the building codes while also maintaining flexibility with floor plans that accommodate the Armed Forces with their wants and needs. Army Recruiter, 1st Sgt. Robert "Red" Martin said he likes the recruiting station because it is centered around the recruiter. "It is recruiter friendly," said Martin.

Since recruiters are always on the go, the kitchen and the break room are helpful, said Martin.

Martin said he liked the motion sensors and door chimes that were installed. The motion sensors, which are environmentally friendly, help with high utility costs. When a person enters the room, the lights come on and the person leaves the room the lights turn off. Hearing the different door chimes lets him know when someone has stepped into his area or the recruiting station itself.

"I think that transforming the recruiting station will help us in establishing a place within corporate America. It is very important that potential recruits see our professional look," said Martin.

The district's realty specialists face many challenges when planning for recruiting stations such as ensuring that one military service does not have an advantage over the other three when potential recruits walk in their office.

In the last office location, potential recruits had to walk past one military service to get to the other which was a disadvantage said Staff Sgt. Thomas Garcia, Air Force recruiter. Now, the offices are all in one row with the same size signage in front of each door.

"This office gives us all an equal chance at potential recruits," said Garcia. Garcia, pleased at the new office said, "It's very nice. I felt like I was trapped in a closet

at the last office," said Garcia, "This office is three times as big as the last office."

The former recruiting station was 3,200 square feet and the new one is 4,500 square feet.

All military services must approve and sign the proposed floor plans before submission to the contractor for proposals. Additionally, local codes, local ordinances, and dividing the space based upon the number of recruiters presents additional challenges, said Mason.

Since September 11, 2001 the recruiting team has taken special security measures. Realty specialists have to balance the need for high visibility and security concerns.

"This is often challenging since the recruiting stations best serve their purpose in high traffic zones and heavily populated areas," said Mason. Realty Specialists have contractors install a variety of security measures as the solution.

After months of planning and hard work, it only took a day to move from the old station to the new one.

Mason said that it was fun to see the project completed from getting the funding to handing the keys to the recruiters.

"I smiled as I watched the recruiters move into their new recruiting station without problems," said Mason.

# NATURE PRESERVED

**“The lands will be pristine, the wildlife will enjoy them, and the people of the nation will enjoy them for generations to come.”**

**- Col. Mark S. Held, Savannah District commander.**

**By Rashida Banks**  
Editor/Staff Writer  
Photos by Jonas Jordan

**N**atural beauty, serenity, and distinctive habitat highlight some of the many characteristics that outdoor enthusiasts enjoy when they visit the 10,165 acres of land that the Savannah District recently transferred to the state of South Carolina.

Undeveloped, the land holds many natural and cultural resources that are important to the community and wildlife of the area.

“It’s truly the right thing to do because it transfers responsibility of a national asset to the state that’s going to best manage it now and in the future. The lands will be pristine, the wildlife will enjoy them, and the people of the nation will enjoy them for generations to come,” said Col. Mark S. Held, Savannah District Commander.

Authorized by the Water Resources Development Act of 2000, the transfer is the first of its kind for the Savannah district.

The lands, purchased by the Savannah District as mitigation for lands used in creating Richard B. Russell Lake sits in the South Carolina lowcountry. It encompasses four land tracts: Donnelley (Mary’s Island – 3,408 acres), Manor (297 acres), Palachucola (5,878 acres), and Treadwell (582 acres), which lie in an area known as the Ashepoo, Combahee, and Edisto (ACE) River Basin.

“For many years, DNR and the state of

South Carolina have enjoyed a beneficial and productive relationship with our friends at the Corps,” said John Frampton, SCDNR director. “Since the early 1990s, the SCDNR and the Corps of Engineers have worked together to fund the operation and maintenance of these public lands for the benefit of wildlife, habitat protection and outdoor recreation.”

Under the Memorandum of Agreement with the Corps, South Carolina’s Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) will continue to operate and maintain the land for nature

and wildlife preserves.

Along with the land transfer, the Corps made a one-time lump sum payment of \$4.85 million to South Carolina, relieving the district of its obligation of making \$200,000 annual operations and maintenance payments.

According to Frampton, the funds will be placed in a management trust, with interest revenue used to operate and manage the 6,757-acre Palachucola Wildlife Management Area (WMA) in Hampton and Jasper counties and a 3,408-acre portion of the Donnelley WMA in Colleton County

William Lynch, senior project manager, Richard B. Russell South Carolina Mitigation Lands Conveyance Project, said that the decision to transfer the land was economically justifiable for both the Corps and the state of South Carolina.

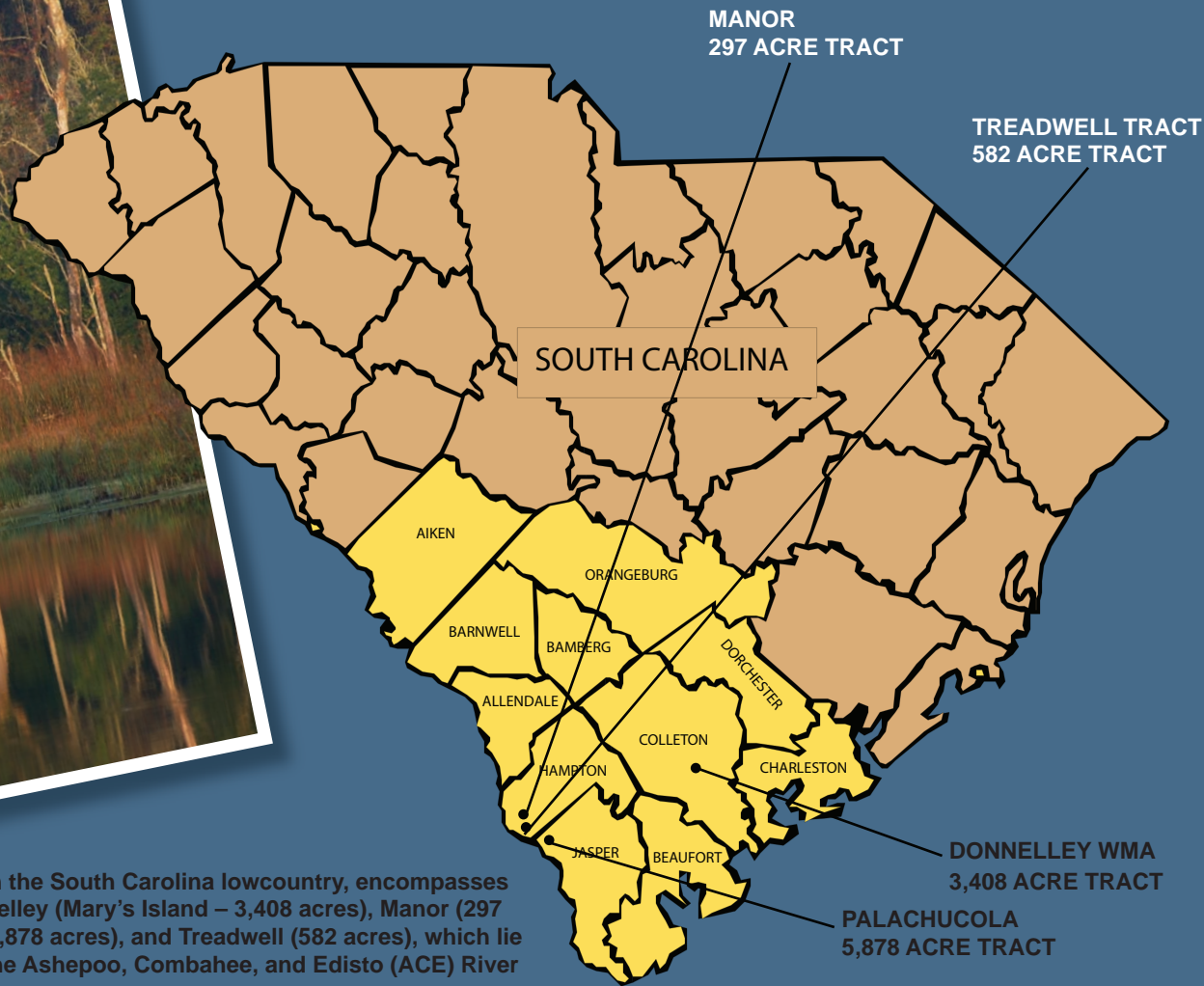
Lynch said that the adjoining 4,000 acres of land at the J. Strom Thurmond Project were originally a part of the deal. However, after conducting an economic analysis, Lynch said that the Corps determined that it would not be economically feasible to transfer that portion of the land because it would result in the loss of valuable timber revenues.

“It’s a win-win situation for both agencies. The lands will continue to provide excellent wildlife habitat under the management of the Department of Natural Resources, plus the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will be able to focus resources on other aspects of the Lake Russell project,” said Held.





## PROJECT LOCATION



The area, which sits in the South Carolina lowcountry, encompasses four land tracts: Donnelley (Mary's Island – 3,408 acres), Manor (297 acres), Palachucola (5,878 acres), and Treadwell (582 acres), which lie in an area known as the Ashepoo, Combahee, and Edisto (ACE) River Basin.

# Population increase of rare plant at J. Strom Thurmond

**By Rashida Banks**  
 Editor/Staff Writer  
 Photos by Jonas Jordan

A plant listed on the federal and state endangered species list has increased in number at Thurmond Lake this year.

The plant, called Michaux's sumac, is an endangered shrub that grows on one isolated ridge at the Broad River Wildlife Management Area (WMA). Broad River WMA is a 1,550-acre tract of land that the Corps has licensed to the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (GADNR) as partial mitigation for construction of the Richard B. Russell Lake. The Broad River population is one of only two populations in Georgia.

Jeff Brooks, district wildlife biologist said that in 1949 the plants formed a dense compact colony at WMA. By the 1990s, Brooks says there were only four of the plants remaining. That number dwindled to one by 2003.

To increase the population, Corps natural resource team members discussed manage-

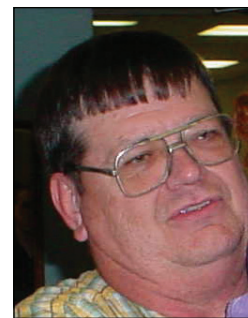
ment options in 2004.

"Because the plant prefers open areas with some disturbance of surrounding vegetation, we recommended a prescribed burn with some limited hand clearing of vegetation," said Brooks.

In May 2005, the GADNR with assistance from a Boy Scout troop, cleared some of the competing vegetation and conducted a prescribed burn in the area. In August, ten plants were recorded at the site. Recently, representatives from the GADNR, U.S. Department of Agriculture(USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service, and the Atlanta Botanical Garden visited the site to evaluate the population.

Brooks said that although the increase is encouraging, the plant has one characteristic that limits an increase in population.

"Individual plants bear either male or female flowers (dioecious) and some groups of the plant may only be of one sex, so the ultimate increase in population remains to be seen," said Brooks.



**Henry Robinson**

## Robinson succumbs to cancer at age 59

Henry "Buddy" Robinson, a journeyman electrician with the Richard B.

Russell Power Plant passed away on Sept 2 of cancer.

A Benjamin Franklin of his time, Robinson matched his adventurous passion with the dangerous work that electricians go through daily.

He leaves behind his wife Beth, three adult children, and two grandchildren.

Robinson spent 32 years in federal service, four of those years in the U.S. Air Force and 28 years with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Miller Mercer, senior electrician, noted, "He was a gregarious person who enjoyed meeting and talking with people. He was a good worker who paid close attention to details."

# TRAINING FUTURE LEADERS

## Bridge to Leadership program graduates class of fifteen

By Rashida Banks

Editor/Staff Writer

Photo by Jonas Jordan

Participants of the district's FY05 Bridge to Leadership Program completed their year-long requirements on Oct 13.

As a culmination of the program, participants presented their group projects to Col. Mark S. Held, district commander and other key senior leaders.

Denise Titus, chief regional management branch, Real Estate Division, said that Bridge to Leadership (BTL) is important because it focuses on the knowledge and skills needed to develop a basic proficiency for meeting leadership challenges both in the Corps community and in a participant's personal life.

"Our goal is to grow leaders at all levels acknowledging that leadership skills can be used by everyone both personally and professionally, regardless of their grade or role in the organization," said Titus.

Titus said that the program focuses on basic business communication skills and self awareness, and is designed to provide an overview of the current Corps doctrine and expose the participants to information about the broad range of mission areas of the Corps.

That goal was accomplished through several enhancements to the program this year.

Participants visited Thurmond Lake and Fort Bragg during the field trip portion of the program. Other new additions to the program involved the completion of the LEAD course, and facilitated group book discussions led by district senior leaders.

Lynn Nettles, program and project management assistant, said that the field trips helped her to make a better connection with some of the field offices.

"I didn't know about Thurmond," said Nettles. "The day trip there helped me to make a better connection - I was able to put a face with a name," she said.

Joe Rivera, regulatory specialist, said that BTL opened his eyes to the whole picture of what the Corps is about.

"The program gave me the opportunity to network, and meet many interesting individuals that work in other places outside of the district office," said Rivera. "You are exposed to learning about both the military and civil works side of our organization. This gave me a better understanding of exactly what our mission is, outside of the regulatory office's environmental responsibilities."



2005 Bridge to Leadership participants pictured left to right: Jeff King, Megan Bennett, Johnny Grandison, Joseph Rivera, Hasina White, Ifford Taylor, Anna Butler, Renee Thomas, Keith Ranker, Jeremy Wilson, Jill Davis, Lynn Nettles, Mike Martin, Angela Vaughn, and Carey Vann.

Throughout the course of the program, participants are encouraged to interact with each other through group discussions.

The programs requirements entailed completion of 48 hours of self-study, during off duty hours, consisting of books, videos, and tapes. Participants were also required to read four books, and submit a written book review for each book.

In addition they were required to join Toastmasters, attend a minimum of eight meetings, and complete a minimum of three speeches.

Based on feedback, Titus said that the field trips, the LEAD Course, and Toastmasters were the most beneficial to participants.

"The opportunity to work in a team environment with individuals at all grade levels, technical disciplines, and job responsibilities provides a great opportunity to learn from others in an environment that participants would not normally have," said Titus. "Most participants were glad that they were involved in Toastmasters and have improved their public speaking abilities and their self confidence."

Although the basic structure and require-

ments for the Bridge to Leadership Program will remain the same, Titus says that there will be a few minor adjustments to the FY06 class.

"The next BTL class cycle will run from April 1, 2006 through March 31, 2007," said Titus. "We decided to make this change to get away from both the fiscal and calendar year ends, since both are normally busy times for people professionally and personally."

Titus said that applications will be accepted for the FY06 class beginning in January 2007.



David Quebedeaux, a parker ranger at Thurmond Lake gives Bridge to Leadership participants a tour of the inner workings of Thurmond Powerplant during a recent day trip.

# Rejuvenating a National Treasure

More than 100 volunteers from the Savannah District and other community organizations devoted their time to rejuvenating Fort Pulaski National Monument on Sept. 24 in observance of National Public Lands Day.

Volunteers from local scouting groups, sportsmen's clubs, churches, businesses, and families painted bridges, cleared trails, and conducted various cleanup activities around picnic areas and inside of the fort.

Fort Pulaski National Monument, located on Cockspur Island, approximately 15 miles outside of Savannah, is one of 378 sites within the National Park Service. The fort is named after the Revolutionary War Hero Casimir Pulaski.

J. Strom Thurmond and Hartwell Lake Offices also held events in conjunction with National Public Lands Day. Volunteers supported the lake offices by building bird boxes and fish attractors, refreshing bulletin boards in the parks, and general cleanup activities.

Now in its 11th year, National Public Lands Day is the largest hands-on volunteer effort to improve and enhance public lands across America. It gives Americans an opportunity to lend a hand to the public lands they use to hike, bike, climb, swim, explore, picnic, or honor and cherish.

Photos by Jonas Jordan



Patricia Gibbs, a procurement technician with the district lends a hand at Fort Pulaski National Monument by painting a bridge in observance of National Public Lands Day on Sept. 24.



Photos: (Above) Stan Knight, project manager, Operations Division and several volunteers participate in cleanup and maintenance activities at Fort Pulaski National Monument. (Left) Frank Huff, chief operations division prepares food for the volunteers. Huff was assisted by Joan Moore, Susan Kaynor, and LeAnn Owens (not pictured) of Operations Division. (Right) Mia, Asha, and Cailin, daughters of Eldries "EJ" Colbert, assistant district counsel, pick up trash along a trail.



Valerie Kennedy, environmental compliance manager, operations division, was one of many district team members, who volunteered to participate in the National Public Lands Day observance at Fort Pulaski National Monument on Sept. 24.

