

The

castle

Savannah District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

January /February 2008

**Corps builds
largest
church
complex in
the Army at
Stewart**

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

Commander and District Engineer Col. Edward J. Kertis

Chief of Public Affairs Billy Birdwell

Editorial Director G. Jeanne Hodge

Editor Rashida Banks

Staff Writers Rashida Banks Jennifer Small

Photographer Jonas N. Jordan

Layout Rashida Banks

Authorization: The Castle is an authorized unofficial news magazine of the Savannah District. It is published eight times a year in accordance with provisions of Army Regulation 360-1, under supervision of the Public Affairs Office. It is prepared on a desktop publisher and printed by offset.

Circulation: 1,700 copies/issue.

Submissions: News, features, photographs and art are solicited; publication depends on general interest as judged by the editor. Direct queries to the editor: e-mail: Rashida.u.banks@usace.army.mil Phone (912) 652-5756; FAX (912) 652-5944. Mail submissions to the Public Affairs Office, Savannah District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, P.O. Box 889, Savannah, Ga. 31402-0889. Contents, Views and opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the Department of Army or this command. News copy is prepared in accordance with AP (Associated Press) Style Guide. All photos, unless otherwise credited, are official U.S. Army photos. For more information about the Savannah District, visit our home page at www.sas.usace.army.mil/castle/index.html

FRONT COVER

Front view of new chapel at Fort Stewart Photo by Jonas Jordan

BACK COVER

Tangela Fox, Assistant Deputy for Office of Small Business, Savannah District speaks with Dewayne Jeffers of DJS Construction Services at the Service Disabled Veteran Owned Small Business Conference on Jan. 10. Photo by Rashida Banks



Maj. Jesse Curry, program manager, project management division, takes oath from Savannah District Commander Col. Edward J. Kertis during this promotion ceremony Jan 4.

From Where I Sit: Building the Corps' Leadership Pyramid.....3

By Jeffrey K. King, Ph.D., P.E.

District reflects upon lessons learned from first NSPS Spiral.....4

By Rashida Banks

Corps offers employees chance to quit smoking.....6

By Jennifer Small

Its all in the family: Savannah Deputy Commander continues legacy with promotion.....7

By Jennifer Small

Corps builds largest church complex in the Army at Stewart.....8

By Jennifer Small

Balancing Act: Clark balances civilian and military career.....10

By Jennifer Small

District holds Small Business Conference.....11

By Rashida Banks

Drought conditions affect district lake projects.....12

By Jennifer Small

District prepares to renourish Tybee Beach.....14

By Billy Birdwell

Welcome to the Savannah District.....15

Building the Corps' Leadership Pyramid



Jeffrey K. King, Ph.D., P.E.

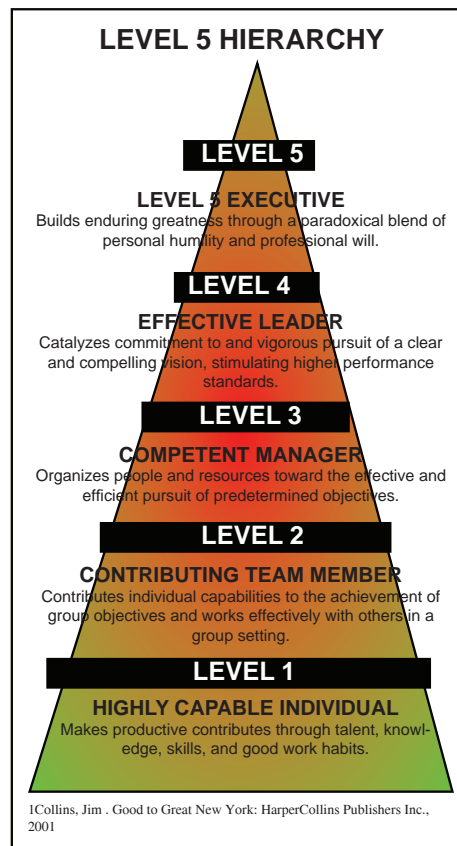
Hello Friends and Corps Family. For this issue of the Castle, the editor invited me to share my “take home message” from the US Army Corps of Engineers’ 2007 Senior Leaders Conference (SLC). I attended the conference as part of the Corps’ Emerging Leaders Program. Of the many “messages” from the SLC, Lt. Gen. Van Antwerp’s “Good to Great (G2G)” vision sticks in my mind. I will focus on that vision as well as the insight I gained about leadership after attending the SLC and reading Jim Collins’ book “Good to Great.” If you haven’t read this book, I encourage you to do so.

According to Collins, leadership is the starting point of the G2G transformation. His concept of “Level 5” leaders blends professional will and personal humility to get the ball rolling toward the greatness transformation. An interesting mix to say the least...not one or the other, but a blending of the two attributes. Collins’ examples of this professional will include individuals that: “(1) create superb results; (2) tackle the difficult with resolve in order to produce the best, long-term results; (3) set standards for building an enduring great company; and (4) look in the mirror, not out the window, to apportion responsibility for poor results, never blaming other people, external factors or bad luck.”¹ But that is just one side of the coin.

A “Level 5” leader also demonstrates personal humility. Collins suggests that characteristic includes: “(1) compelling modesty, shunning public adulation; (2) acting with quiet, calm determination;

(3) channeling ambition into the company, not self and setting up successors for even greater success; and (4) looking out the window, not in the mirror, to apportion credit for the success of the company”¹ So there you have it. G2G companies or organizations have these rare “Level 5” leaders moving their organizations toward greatness.

In addition to the attributes of a “Level 5” leader, Collins also introduces the “Level 5” Hierarchy Pyramid. Collins’ pyramid illustrates the progression from a highly capable individual (Level 1) all the way up to a Level 5 Executive (Level 5). The base of the pyramid consists of all the highly capable individuals. The top is reserved for the Level 5 Executive. The middle of Collins’ pyramid consists of the contributing team members (Level 2), competent managers (Level 3) and effective leaders (Level 4).



Simply put...Collins talks a great deal about leadership at the apex of a company’s organizational structure, but I believe that “Level 5” leaders don’t just exist at the top of the hierarchy pyramid

(i.e., Level 5 Executive). “Level 5” leaders within an organization can exist simultaneously at all levels of the pyramid. In an organization transitioning from good to great, that is exactly what happens...more and more people exhibit “Level 5” leadership.

There are many people in the Savannah District, at all levels of Collins’ pyramid, that demonstrate “Level 5” leadership on a daily basis. Make a mental note of the “Level 5” leader as defined by Collins, then think about with whom you interact that has those type attributes. I bet you will come up with a couple of names.

In Collins’ book, he hypothesizes that there are a large number of people with the potential to evolve into a “Level 5” leader. In the words of Collins, “the capability resides within them, perhaps buried or ignored, but there nonetheless. And under the right circumstances--self-reflection, conscious personal development, a mentor, a great teacher, loving parents, a significant life experience, a ‘Level 5’ boss, or any number of factors--they begin to develop.”¹

An individual must search out those opportunities that will unlock “Level 5” development. What are those opportunities? That I don’t know, because the stimulus that unlocks “Level 5” leadership will be different for different people. Knowing this, we should cast our net wide and capture many opportunities for personal growth. Increasing our knowledge base and expanding our reference world would certainly help in our pursuits. For many of us, that may include taking new courses, initiating greater exchange of thoughts and ideas, making time for personal reflection, seeking out “Level 5” mentors, and pursuing more leadership training/opportunities. No doubt there will be hard work involved but that is a good thing. Thomas Edison once said, “If we did all the things we are capable of, we would literally astound ourselves.” I agree.

Find that unique catalyst that propels you toward “Level 5” leadership. Seek it out. Who knows, maybe you are the “Level 5” leader whose professional will and personal humility is destined to carry the Corps to greatness.

District reflects upon lessons learned from first NSPS Spiral

By Rashida Banks
 Editor/Staff Writer
 Photo by Jennifer Small

As more than 300 Savannah District employees prepare to transition to the National Security Personnel System in February, district officials reflect upon the lessons learned from the previous Spiral.

For Savannah District, the implementation of NSPS began January 2007 with the conversion of 92 supervisors throughout the district. The next spiral of employees that will convert in February will be non-bargaining unit employees, including supervisors, team leaders, local interns, and professional series employees with positive education requirements, as defined by Office of Personnel Man-

agement qualification standards.

Although the 2007 transition posed challenges, it yielded a number of lessons learned that employees in the next spiral will be able to apply as they prepare to transition to NSPS in February, said Sheila Webb, Human Resources/Labor Management Employee Relations Specialist, Civilian Personnel Advisory Center

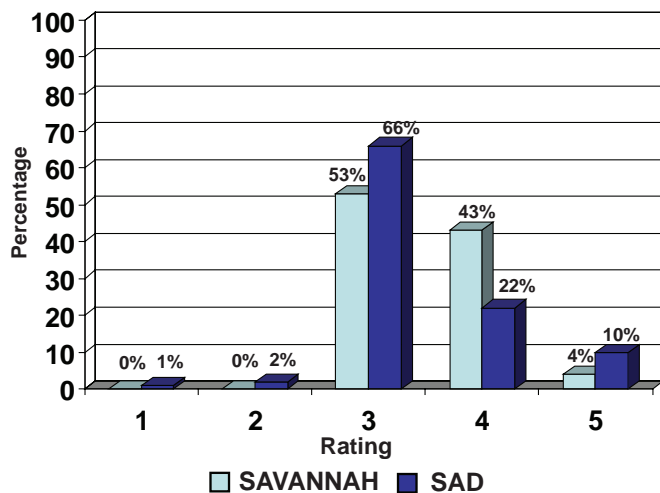
Employees who transitioned in 2007 completed their first performance close-out period on Sept. 30, 2007.

"I think the new system achieved its intent," said Lt. Col. George T. Shepard, NSPS Transition Manager and Deputy Commander, Savannah District. "The goal of NSPS is to reward the high-performers and when the final results of the pay pool were tabulated, those who excelled, particularly under challenging conditions, were appropriately rewarded."

Of the employees included in the pay pool for the district, 53 percent received a rating of three, which equates to "valued employee," 43 percent received a rating of four, which translates to "exceeds expectations," and four percent received a rating of five, meaning that they are a "role model." There were no employees within the Savannah District that received an "unsuccessful" rating of one or a "fair" rating of two.



RATING DISTRIBUTION CHART FOR SAVANNAH DISTRICT AND SOUTH ATLANTIC DIVISION



Of the employees included in the pay pool for the district, 53 percent received a rating of three which equates to "valued employee," 43 percent received a rating of four, which translates to "exceeds expectations," and four percent received a rating of five, meaning that they are a "role model." There were no employees within the Savannah District that received an "unsuccessful" rating of one or a "fair" rating of two.

model." There were no employees within the Savannah District that received an "unsuccessful" rating of one or a "fair" rating of two. [See SAD comparisons in graph.]

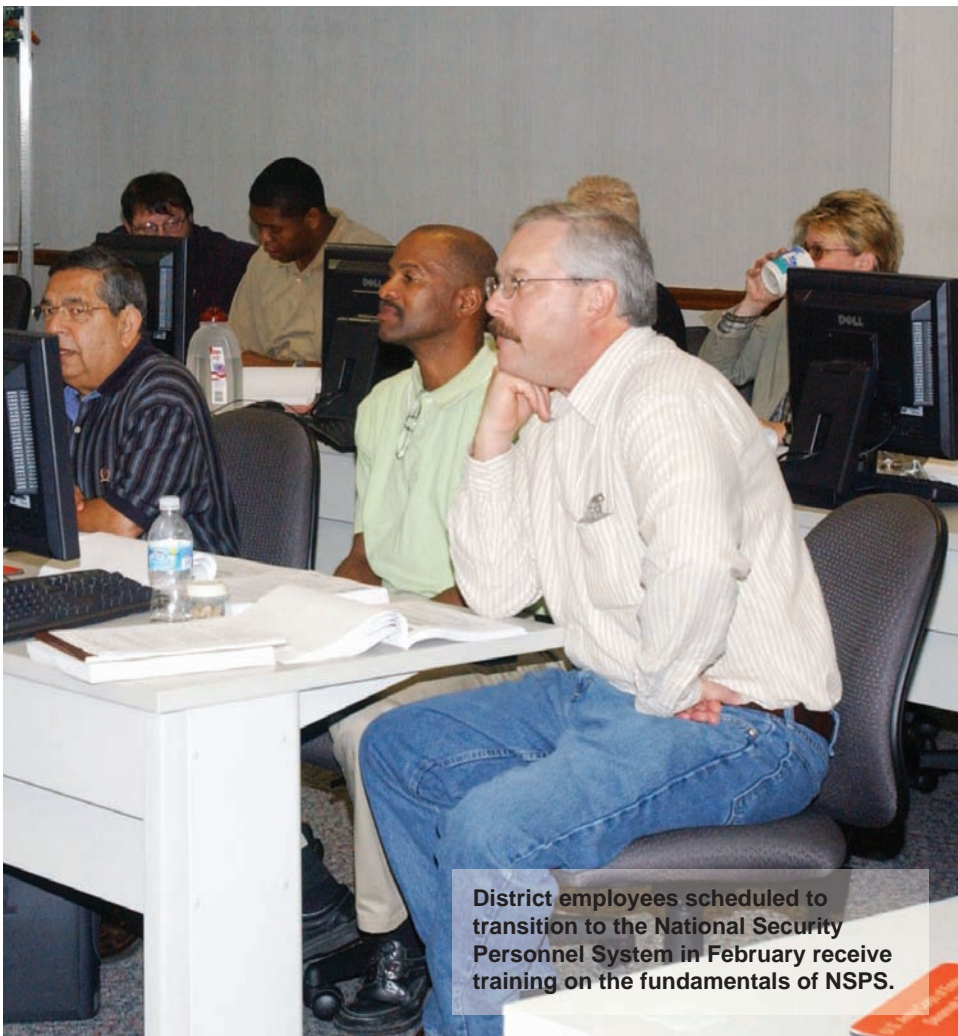
"Funding for pay pool performance payout comes from a combination of overhead and project funds," said Tami Garrett, chief, Resource Management Division.

Garrett said that performance-based salary increases are charged out as labor, and cash payouts are funded by the overhead of each department

Pay Pools are groups of employees who work in an organization and share funding for performance payouts. Pay pools vary in size from approximately 50 members to more than 300 members, and are typically structured by organization and function, as published on the NSPS website.

NSPS will eventually replace the General Schedule (GS) system where employees are rated on a scale of one to five, with one being the most successful rating.

Under NSPS, the rating system is in-



District employees scheduled to transition to the National Security Personnel System in February receive training on the fundamentals of NSPS.

expected of them,” said Frison. “Most importantly, NSPS requires more frequent communication between supervisor and employee.”

Webb agrees that writing SMART objectives is a critical aspect of succeeding under NSPS, but says that it is equally important to be able to write accomplishments to meet those objectives.

“One way to be successful at NSPS is to not wait until the end of the rating year to compile a list of accomplishments,” said Webb. “Employees should keep a running list of their accomplishments throughout the year if they want to get the fair and effective rating they deserve.”

Employees converting to NSPS in February will receive training on the fundamentals of the new system and will subsequently receive training on writing effective objectives that coincide with the Corps mission and goals, said Webb.

“We scheduled 11 sessions last year on writing effective objectives, but it’s evident that more training is needed,” said Webb. “Our goal right now is to provide employees converting over in February with a basic understanding of NSPS. The next step will be to provide more training on writing effective objectives.”

In addition to this training, there are many online resources available to employees who want to succeed under NSPS. For more information about NSPS, visit the web at <http://cpol.army.mil/library/general/nsps/>.

verted; a rating of five is now considered the most successful rating. An employee that receives a rating of five is considered a “role model,” said Webb.

“Employees who typically receive this rating are experts whose impact is so great that they change the processes for an organization,” said Webb.

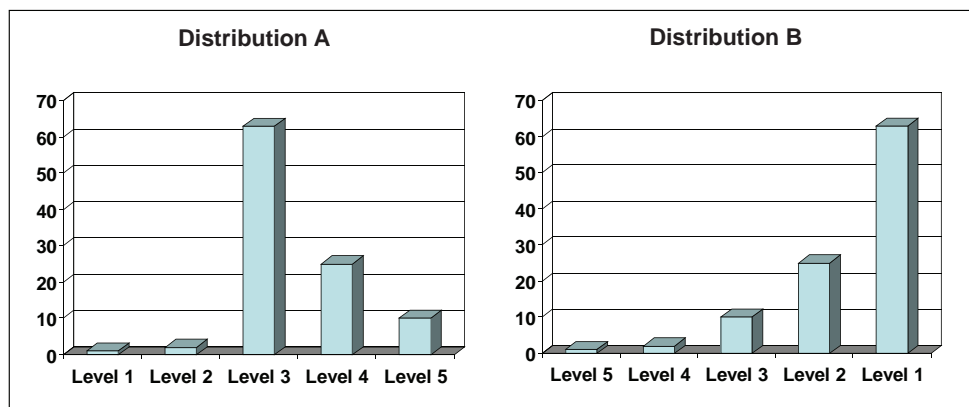
One of the biggest obstacles, according to Webb, has been changing employees’ mindset about the new rating system.

“With the old system, a rating of one was successful. Now under NSPS, the majority of employees will receive a rating of three, which translates to ‘valued employee.’ Employees have to understand that this is still a good rating,” said Webb. “There will be a few that will exceed that rating, but it will depend upon the mission challenges and demands for the organization.”

Of the many lessons learned from NSPS so far, Debra Frison, Chief, Civilian Personnel Advisory Center, said that one

of the most critical involves writing effective SMART objectives, meaning that they are Specific, Measurable, Aligned with the mission, Realistic/Relevant, and Timed.

“It’s important that they have good SMART objectives. It has to be something that is measurable and specific enough for an employee to know what’s



The two graphs illustrate examples of rating distributions under NSPS (Distribution A) and General Schedule System (Distribution B). “With the old system, a rating of one was successful. Now under NSPS, the majority of employees will receive a rating of three, which translates to “valued employee.” Employees have to understand that this is still a good rating.” said Sheila Webb, Human Resources/Labor Management Employee Relations Specialist, Civilian Personnel Advisory Center.

FEBRUARY IS BLACK HISTORY MONTH



Stan Kinmonth, former senior project manager, Programs and Project Management Division, Savannah District, drives former Tuskegee Airman, William Surcey, along with Surcey's wife and daughter in the 2007 Veteran's Day Parade in Jacksonville, Fla. Surcey flew the P-51 Mustangs in the Italian campaign of WWII. Kinmonth is the owner of the 1942 GPW, an original WWII Jeep.

ABOUT THE TUSKEGEE AIRMEN

The Tuskegee Airmen was the popular name of a group of African American pilots who flew with distinction during World War II as the 332nd Fighter Group of the US Army Air Forces.

Before the Tuskegee Airmen, no U.S. military pilots had been black. Those who possessed the physical and mental qualifications and were accepted for aviation cadet training were trained initially to be pilots, and later to be either navigators or bombardiers. The Airmen's success during World War II is a record unmatched by any other fighter group.

Facts obtained from <http://www.tuskegee.edu>.

Corps offers employees chance to quit smoking

By Jennifer Small
Staff Writer

Tobacco use is the leading preventable cause of premature death and a leading cause of chronic illness and disability in the United States. Since the 1960s, the US Surgeon General has mandated that smoking risks be made visible on each pack of cigarettes, smokeless tobacco and cigars; yet, nearly 50 million Americans smoke.

The Army Corps of Engineers now offers a Smoking Cessation Program free to federal employees, in collaboration with Federal Occupational Health. Linda Major, registered nurse and nurse coordinator of the Occupational Health Clinic, introduced the program, which has been in existence for 15 years, to the District in November.

"When I became a nurse, I was in surgical for 20 years, so I saw a lot of the effects of smoking," said Major. "All I want to do is make a difference in at least one person's life during my life."

The "Quit Plan" can be customized to meet each individual's needs.

To take advantage of the program, headquarters employees need only Sign-Up in the Occupational Health Clinic. Once submitted, the individual will be contacted by a FOH nurse, who will conduct a phone interview that will determine which individualized program works best. The program includes a group of counseling sessions, and, if it is determined that a nicotine replacement product is needed, the Corps will provide a four-week supply.

"Once you quit, you'll live healthier," Major said. "There's no guarantee that you'll live longer, but you won't be walking around with an oxygen machine for the rest of your life."

What many people don't know is that after quitting smoking, the body begins to reverse the negative effects of smoking.

"Your lungs and body can revert to what it was before," Major said.

According to the US Surgeon General, two weeks to three months after quitting, circulation improves and lung function increases up to 30 percent. Within nine months of quitting, coughing, sinus congestion, fatigue and shortness of breath decrease. One year after quitting, excess

risk of coronary heart disease is half that of a smoker. Five years after quitting, stroke risk is reduced to that of a non smoker, and 10 years after quitting, lung cancer death rate is about half that of a continuing smoker. The risk of cancer of the mouth, throat, esophagus, bladder, kidneys and pancreas decrease. The risk of coronary heart disease is that of a non-smoker after 15 tobacco-free years

For the Corps, the benefits of offering the program are plentiful.

"Some insurance companies will increase the cost of a policy if someone is a smoker," Major said. "Companies see fewer sick days with fewer smokers, and, though most buildings have banned smoking, secondhand smoke is still a major concern. [Smoking] puts a strain on the medical system, on Medicare, and on tax payers. Smokers pay the physical price, but the government pays the financial price."

For more information, or to sign up for the Smoking Cessation Program, go to the Occupational Health Clinic located on the 1st floor of the Juliette Low Federal Building, or contact Linda Major at 912-652-5060.

6 THE CASTLE www.sas.usace.army.mil/castle/index.html

'It's all in the family'

Savannah Deputy Commander continues legacy with promotion

By Jennifer Small
Staff Writer

Photo by Jonas Jordan

Savannah District Deputy Commander Lt. Col. George T. "Thatch" Shepard continues his family's three-generation tradition with his recently announced selection for promotion to colonel.

Shepard, the son of a retired colonel and the nephew of three retired colonels, is the grandson of a retired colonel and a retired general. With the upcoming promotion, he adds another generation to the family's service as a senior officer in the Army.

"It was a huge surprise," Shepard said of the promotion. "I was surprised, shocked; it's still sinking in."

"It's gone over real well in my family," said Shepard, who was promoted to lieutenant colonel on Apr. 1, 2003. "In the Shepard family, it's a big deal, it's a legacy."

Shepard was informed of his promotion Nov. 26, when he received a call from District Commander Col. Edward J. Kertis, Jr.

Shepard and his wife, Jennie, live in Savannah with their three children. The family received the news with some apprehension; just a month earlier, the Shepard family received approval to remain in Savannah through the high school graduation of Shepard's oldest daughter, who is currently a junior.

Becoming an O6 means that Shepard will now be considered a Senior Leader in the Army, and will transition to the Army's Strategic Leadership.

"The writing on the wall says I need to be in an O6 billet by August, so my next amazing feat is finding a way to keep everyone happy," Shepard said. "We love it here in Savannah; to stay local would be great."

Shepard was graduated from West Point in 1986, after which he was commissioned to the Corps of Engineers.

Before coming to Savannah in 2005, Shepard served as Director of Public Works for the 80th Area Support Group at Chievres, Belgium. In the fall of 2006



Shepard

Shepard was sent to Iraq for nine months to serve as the deputy commander of the Corps Gulf Region North District.

"I consider myself very successful as a lieutenant colonel," he said. "They always told us, that whatever job you're given, do your best. Being around civilians is sometimes considered, in the 'big Army,' as not an enhancer of your career, but the folks on the [promotion] board recognize that jobs like this are important to the Army."

Shepard said he would like to remain

on the engineering side of the Army, because that's where he feels he fits best.

"That's where I think I would be the most valuable – what I'm best suited for," said Shepard. "I want to be part of improving Soliders and their family's lives."

Despite the shock of his promotion, and the possible shake-up it could cause in his home life, Shepard said that he is honored by the opportunity afforded to him by his superiors.

"It would rank up there as a crowning achievement to a career that I already considered successful," Shepard said of the promotion. "I'm not at all taking this for granted. I hope that I don't let down the folks who entrusted this to me; I just want to prove them right, to show them that they made the right decision."

And, of course, his whole family will be watching.

Tractor trailer truck overturns on lake



This tractor trailer truck containing chicken feed grains overturned at the bridge at Little Beaverdam Creek in Townville, SC, spilling a large amount of grains and leaking a small amount of motor oil and hydraulic fluid into Hartwell Lake. According to Paul Wilkie with the South Carolina Dept. of Health and Environmental Control, the grain spill did not pose any negative impacts to the lake. The driver of the vehicle survived and was rescued by local authorities. (Photo by Anna George, Hartwell Project)

Corps builds largest church complex in the Army at Stewart

By Jennifer Small
Staff Writer
Photos by Jonas Jordan

As you drive down Hero Road at Fort Stewart, a 130-foot steeple now appears on the horizon.

The steeple is the apex of the 36,050 square foot Main Post Chapel, built by the Savannah District, which opened to the Fort Stewart community on Nov. 7. It is the largest chapel built in the Army, though the District is planning similar sized churches at Forts Bragg and Jackson.

The non-denominational chapel will hold services including Catholic, Protestant and Gospel, among others.

"The intended services are for the Soldier, whatever denomination they may be," said Steve Hill, project manager of the construction.

Located at the corner of Hero Road and Gulick Ave., the chapel complex is adjacent to the Post Exchange/Commissary complex, on what was formerly the Army Education Center.

"This was an existing site that used to house the Army Education Center, which

Photo (Right): The chapel complex boasts a 600-seat Sanctuary, and an adjacent activity center that is capable of seating an additional 579 people in a separate or combined service.



was a World War II construction," Hill said. "They had rebuilt that a year prior."

The chapel complex boasts a 600-seat sanctuary, and an adjacent activity center that is capable of seating an additional 579 people in a separate or combined service. The facility also holds 17 religious education classrooms, two multipurpose rooms, a Blessed Sacrament room, a sacristy/robing room, choir room, resource center, nursery, restrooms, kitchen, storage, and administrative space for two chaplains, an education director and an assistant.

The \$10,825,553 chapel complex will take over much of the usage of the older chapels on post, including Victory, Marne, Vale and Heritage Chapels, which couldn't fit the demand of worshipers, operating for many years with only the capacity to fit 22 percent of the base population.

"The existing chapels just didn't meet the demand," Hill said. "They met old Army standards, but would



MILITARY

PHOTO (Top Right): FORSCOM Chaplain, Col. Alvin "Sonny" Moore III, speaks at the ribbon cutting ceremony for Fort Stewart Chapel.

not meet ever-changing, updated standards, mainly due to increased population."

The new chapel has already seen an increase in those attending worship.

"I think one thing that we've noticed already is [increased] attendance," said Sgt. Tom Miller, chapel Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge. "The old facilities came nowhere close to accommodating the demand."

Miller said that the Gospel congregation previously worshipped at Victory Chapel, which held 150 people, but at their first service at the new chapel on Dec. 2, they had 299 in attendance.

Same goes for the Catholic congregation, which formerly worshipped at Heritage Chapel, which holds even fewer than Victory Chapel. According to Miller, at the third catholic service at the Main Post Chapel there were 197 in attendance.

"I think it's a great addition to the post and from what I've understood, this is happening Army-wide," said Miller. "I think it's very good to see the Army investing the funds and resources into the religious program."

In addition to increased space for worship, the other chapel complex facilities will benefit the entire Fort Stewart community.

"Apart from worship, this chapel complex provides another area for the entire post, for worship, for classes," Miller said. "It's going to definitely affect more than just the worshippers."

"[In the old facilities], there's often people who came to reserve space and were turned away because of room, or because something was already booked

up," Miller continued. "But with the new chapel, so many people can use it at the same time; it will accommodate so many different groups and needs."

The cost of the construction came in at about \$1.2 million over the Department of the Army award of \$9,654,000 in 2005.

Hill said there were increases along the way as modifications took place, as well as natural and expected cost increases over time, and that the main reason for the cost jump was the acoustical design.

"The users felt it necessary to increase the acoustics in the sanctuary based on lessons learned in the design and construction of a medium-sized chapel at Fort Benning," he said. "Normally, on most projects, cost growth should stay under 10 percent above budget, which this was right around."

The Chapel was a full design, from the ground-up, by architects Stevens and Wilkinson, Incorporated, of Atlanta,

Ga. The contractor for the project was Paul S. Aikins, of Statesville, Ga.

"We used a local contractor, which is good," Hill said. "We have the capability to pick any contractor around the world."

If first impressions mean anything, the Stewart community is pleased with the construction of the chapel complex.

"Positive feedback is all that I've gotten to be honest," Miller said. "People's first reaction is more of a 'wow.' It's far beyond what they've had up until this point. I think that was one of the draws, how nice the new facility is. Not only is there enough room, but everything is state-of-the-art, from the sound system to the six projection screens throughout the sanctuary. Everything they did, they did top of the line."



Col. Todd Buchs, Fort Stewart-Hunter Army Airfield garrison commander and his wife Renee; Diane and Gen. Charles C. Campbell, Commander, United States Army Forces Command; Sarah Lynch, 3rd Infantry Division Family Readiness leader and wife of Maj. Gen. Rick Lynch, Commanding General, 3rd Infantry Division, assist in cutting the ribbon to the new Fort Stewart Main Post Chapel.

Intern takes command



Lt. Col. Ellen Clark takes command of the 257th Transportation Battalion during her Change of Command ceremony at Camp Blanding in Starke, Fla.

District employee balances, family, career, and military service

**By Jennifer Small
Staff Writer**

Photo provided by 257th Transportation Battalion

Savannah District contract specialist intern Ellen Clark takes on life like a gymnast takes on the high bar – with a stable grip, balancing family, duty and a career.

When she's not in her civilian job at the District Headquarters, Lt. Col. Ellen Clark is battalion commander of the 257th Transportation Battalion (Movement Control) in Gainesville, Fla.

All the while, Clark is a wife and mother of three.

Clark entered the Army Reserves 21 years ago, out of ROTC at Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Va.

"First and foremost I wanted to serve our country," Clark said of her decision to enter the Reserves. "I'm a patriotic person – I believe in the Constitution and I believe in the Army mission. But I wanted to have a balance, to have a family."

And she has found that balance. Clark and her husband, Grant, whom she met

at officer basic course, live in Savannah with their three children. Grant, who was active Army for five years and a Reservist for seven, is also a Corps employee. He currently works as a geotechnical engineer in the soil section of the Savannah District Geotechnical and Hazardous Toxic and Radiological Waste branch.

"If I didn't have the family support [that I have], I wouldn't be able to have my military career," she said.

Clark took command of the 257th, a battalion of movement control units and palletized load system companies, on Oct. 14. This came only two months after returning from a 14-month mobilization with the Joint Task Force-Port Opening at Fort Dix and McGuire Air Force Base, N.J., where Clark served as executive officer of a theatre-opening element for U.S. Transportation Command.

Clark was selected for command of the 257th while she was deployed, and she took command immediately upon her return.

"I put in for a position vacancy promotion. Taking command meant I was promoted to lieutenant colonel," Clark

explained. "As soon as I got back [from deployment] they put me in the command position and I was promoted on the same day I took command."

The battalion moves units and Army equipment wherever the Army needs them, and maintains in-transit visibility.

Unfortunately for Clark, the only Reserve units in Savannah are medical detachments, so she has to travel, and often misses weekends at home when she is on duty.

"I have been in probably every transportation unit within 300 miles of Savannah," said Clark. "Officers have to move around to where the positions are. To get experience, you have to go into different types of units."

For Clark, the Reserves isn't just a "one-weekend-a-month, two-weeks-a-year" gig. As battalion commander, she serves year-round, with most weekends obligated to the unit.

"I work at least three weekends a month," she said. "It's quite a responsibility, getting troops trained and ready to go."

In 2003, Clark was deployed for one

year to the Port of Shuaiba, Kuwait, as the Terminal Chief with the Terminal Brigade out of Jacksonville. It was at this time that Grant left the military to focus on his civilian career.

"I had the deployment orders in my hand, and our family care plan fell through," Clark said. "We had a mutual agreement that I would continue [my military career], and he would focus on his civilian work. He has a degree in civil engineering, and he wanted to focus on that."

In the military, Clark is a multifunctional logistician, which translates well into her civilian career. After returning from her most recent deployment, Clark wanted to experience a different facet of the logistics acquisition force that she has dedicated her military and civilian life to. She applied as a Department of the Army intern, and was hired as a contract specialist by the Savannah District.

"The opening [at the Corps] appealed to me because I understand the need for contracting," she said. "Throughout my military career, I've needed contractors to get things done. I could see that this civilian position would compliment my military career."

And her military experience lends itself favorably to her civilian career.

"Certainly she has leadership skills, where she is a very proactive individual who doesn't sit back and wait to be told, but looks to find out what it is that she needs to do," said Clark's supervisor, Pat Williams, procurement analyst, Contracting Division. "I think her background will serve her well in contracting; her understanding of Army requirements will unquestionably help her."

As the battalion commander of the 257th, Clark is in charge of 11 subordinate units throughout Florida, in Orlando, Gainesville, Palatka, Lakeland and Jacksonville.

"I have units returning from theatre (Iraq), and also have a unit in pre-mobilization, which will be deploying this summer," Clark said of her Soldiers. "I have a lot of different things going on at one time [in my battalion]; but the bottom line is that the Soldiers are trained and ready to go, and ready to perform their mission."

Mother, leader, career woman ... Ellen Clark has found the perfect balance.

District hosts Small Business Conference



Homer McBrayer, Chief, Construction Division, speaks with retired Savannah District employee Elton Cobb, a consultant for Kadell Industries in Columbus, Ga., at the Service Disabled Veteran Owned Small Business Conference on Jan 10.

The Savannah District conducted a Service Disabled Veteran Owned Small Business Conference on Jan. 10 at the General Services Administration Building in downtown Savannah.

"The conference was an overwhelming success," said Leila Hollis, chief, Small Business Office, Savannah District. "We did not anticipate this many participants," said Hollis of the 100 business people who attended the conference.

Hollis said that the feedback received from conference attendees was very good.

"Some of the participants were not aware of how to conduct business with the federal government," said Hollis. "Many of them said that they were more knowledgeable after attending the conference."

Service Disabled Veterans Small Business owners who attended the one-day conference received pointers on acquiring loan assistance for their business, information on how to participate in services offered by the Office of Veteran's Affairs, and training on how to market their firms to the federal government.

During the conference, 12 SD-VOSB firms were given the opportunity to present their capabilities to district representatives in consideration for future contracting opportunities with the district.

More information on upcoming Small Business Conferences can be found on the web at <http://www.acq.osd.mil/osbp/conferences/index.htm>.

Hollis receives award



Hollis

Leila Hollis, Chief, Small Business Office, Savannah District, was awarded the Commander's Small Business Team of Excellence Award by Lt. Gen. Robert

L. Van Antwerp, Commander and Chief of Engineers, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Hollis was presented the award at the Small Business Conference in St. Louis, Mo. in November 2007 for her contributions, professionalism, and hard work in making the fiscal year 2006 Corps of Engineers Small Business Program a success.

Hollis has served as the Chief of the Small Business Office since July 2004.

Drought conditions affect Sav

By Jennifer Small
Staff Writer
Photo by Jonas Jordan

As drought conditions hit record lows in the Savannah District in 2007, impacting recreation, hydropower production and safety, Corps hydrologists dropped discharges from the Corps reservoirs to 3,600 cubic feet per second in October - the lowest rate of operation.

However, minor relief may be on the way, according to Corps hydrologist Jason Ward.

“The weather services are telling us that the best times for getting floods, statistically, is January to March,” said Ward. “Typically that is our refill period – there’s still a chance we’ll see a moderate recovery in that period.”

However, there is a contingency plan in case the historical statistics don’t turn out as hoped.

“If the drought conditions persist, we’re doing some planning with the states on how to address the impacts if we reduce flows below 3,600 cubic feet per second at [Lake] Thurmond,” Ward said. “We’ve never gone below [3,600 cubic feet per second], because we’ve never had a drought severe enough.”

On Lake Hartwell, the lake elevation has dropped by as much as 14 feet, causing recreational closures and potentially dangerous conditions.

“It’s just a different lake when the water is so low,” said Hartwell Park Ranger Sandy Campbell. “We had a lot of areas where the private adjacent docks were grounded, and a number of our recreation and launching areas were closed because of insufficient water.” The Level

2 drought was expected to be raised to Level 3 in mid-December, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, but some relief came in late December in the form of rain.

“We’re still in Level 2, and the recent rains have extended the point to where we’ll hit Level 3,” said Ward. “The recent rains look like they’ll prevent the reservoirs from hitting Level 3 [at least through mid-March].”

On Lake Hartwell, the rain increased the water levels 1.47 feet from Dec. 20 to Dec. 30, while at Thurmond Lake the water levels have risen about a foot.

“The lake coming up a foot, in terms of positive impact, in terms of usability, is not much change,” said Thurmond Park Ranger Jay Weidman. “Boat ramps are still out of service, it makes getting around the lake for boaters a lot more hazardous, and a lot of boat docks are



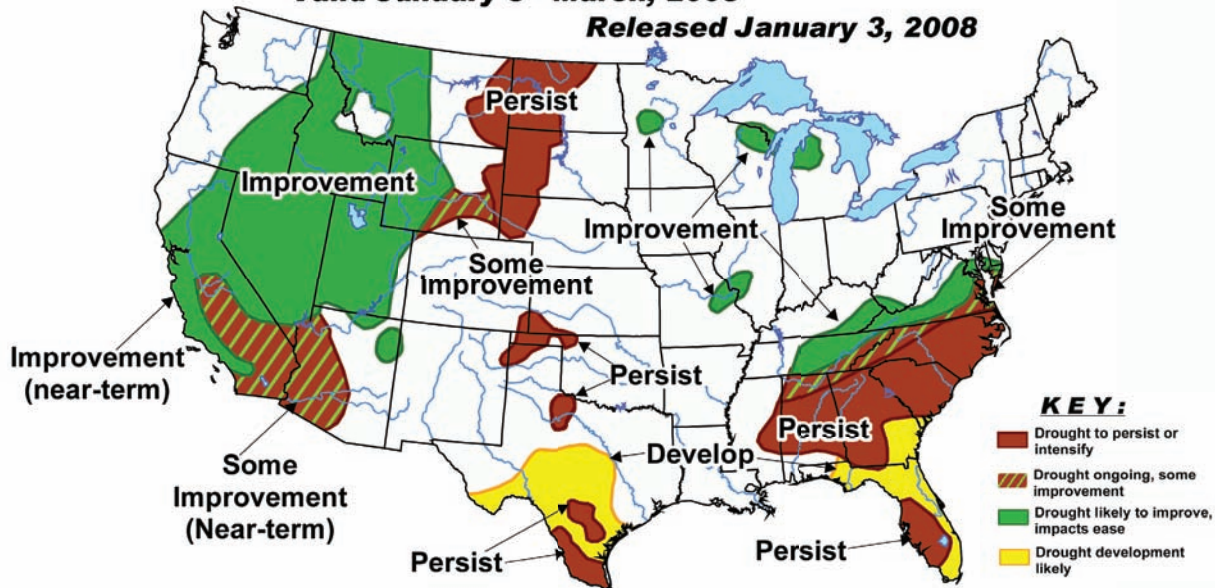
Savannah District lake projects

U.S. Seasonal Drought Outlook

Drought Tendency During the Valid Period

Valid January 3 - March, 2008

Released January 3, 2008



The forecast continues to indicate persisting drought across the Southeast through March 2008, with the odds favoring expansion into Florida and southeastern Georgia. Precipitation totals for 2007 were around 15 inches below normal in many of the exceptional drought areas that stretched across portions of Alabama, Georgia, and the Carolinas. Despite recent rainfall, the ongoing La Niña is expected to bring abnormally mild and dry weather to the region for most of the winter. In contrast, at least some degree of improvement is expected from Tennessee and Kentucky northeastward through the middle Atlantic states, including some areas of exceptional drought in the central and western stretches of this region. Small areas of moderate drought in the Midwest should be eliminated, but drought relief is not expected in drought areas covering parts of the western Plains from the Dakotas to northern Texas. Farther south, recently-developed drought is expected to persist in southern Texas, eventually expanding to cover a large portion of central and southern Texas by early spring. Meanwhile, drought improvement should continue across the interior Pacific Northwest and the northern and central Rockies. For the first half of January 2008, a series of storms is poised to bring heavy to excessive precipitation to much of California and, to a lesser extent, other areas across the Southwest and southern Rockies. As a result, drought improvement, at least in the near term, is forecast for western California and the Sierra Nevada, with some improvement anticipated in other parts of the Southwest and interior California. Forecast information and graphic obtained from the National Weather Service Climate Prediction Center website at http://www.cpc.noaa.gov/products/expert_assessment/seasonal_drought.html

high and dry.”

Corps water managers, with the states and other government agencies, try to forecast what the effects could be if discharges are decreased, specifically downstream.

“There are two kinds of effects; one is a habitat effect, impacting fish and wildlife in that river corridor, and the other is more along the lines of infrastructure, impacting water supply and water quality,” said Corps hydrologist Stan Simpson.

“It is very hard to go through the actual process of reducing the flow,”

Simpson continued. “We’d have to do an environmental assessment or a full Environmental Impact Statement, to see if there would be any negative impacts. If there were, we’d probably back off.”

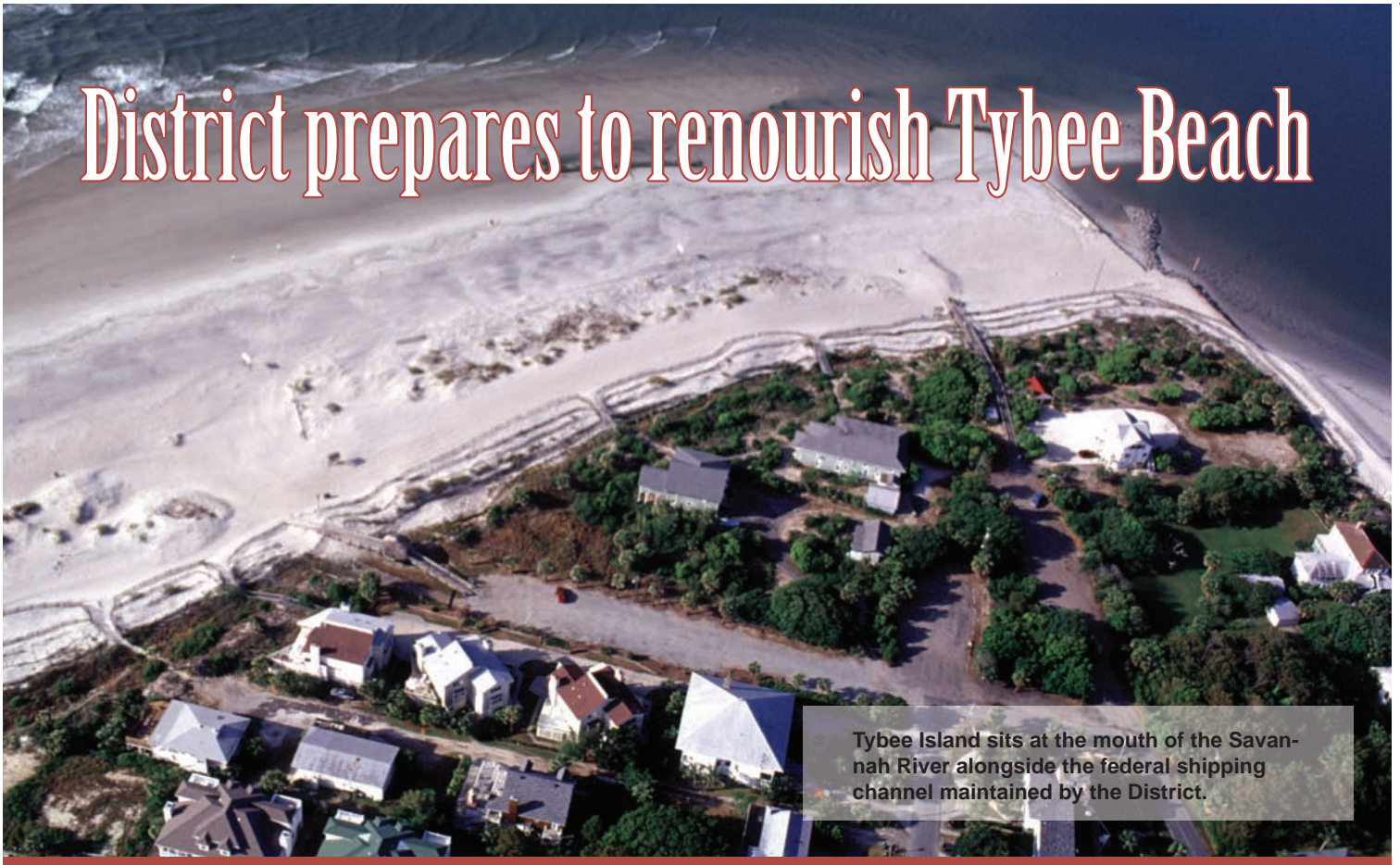
In order to inform the public about what they are doing in response to the drought conditions, the Savannah District held six public meetings in November and December in Augusta, Anderson, S.C. and Savannah.

“We told the public how our drought contingency plan works, and how we implement it,” Ward said. “We told the

public how we manage the multipurpose reservoirs during drought periods, and what the forecast looked like at that time. The forecast [in late November] looked like we’d hit level 3 in mid-December, but the recent rains have helped avoid that. But, currently, we have no plans to increase the outflow.”

For now, all the Corps can do is estimate and model how lowered discharges would affect those on the Savannah River if the drought conditions continue. Other than that, it’s in the hands of nature.

District prepares to renourish Tybee Beach



Tybee Island sits at the mouth of the Savannah River alongside the federal shipping channel maintained by the District.

By Billy Birdwell
Chief, Public Affairs
Photo by Jonas Jordan

Recent legislation passed by Congress will fund the Savannah District's plans to renourish the beaches at Tybee Island, Ga., long sought by local government leaders there.

The fiscal year 2008 Omnibus Appropriations Bill passed in late 2007 by Congress provides \$6.3 million in federal funds to the Savannah District to renourish the federal shore protection project in this coastal Georgia community, according to Hampton Spradley, the project's manager. Tybee Island sits at the mouth of the Savannah River alongside the federal shipping channel maintained by the District.

The project will take sand from an undersea "borrow site" of beach-quality sand and place it along the beach on the Atlantic side of the island, Spradley said. The City of Tybee Island must contribute an additional \$4.2 million to cover the local share of the renourishment, according to Dan Parrott, civil programs division chief.

"We expect to sign a project cooperation agreement this summer which will

formalize the joint effort between Tybee Island and the Savannah District for this project," Parrott said. Once work begins in late 2008, the entire operation should last 45 to 60 days, he said, with work continuing around the clock.

About 30 – 40 people in the Savannah, Mobile and Wilmington Districts will have involvement in the project, Spradley said. "This will be a real regional effort. Wilmington District will design the project, Mobile District will work on environmental clearances, and Savannah will handle the contracting and construction."

NO JETTIES

The project will not include jetties, Parrott said, because jetties prevent the natural settling of the sand on the beach and require constant maintenance. Jetties cause more problems than they solve, he said.

A contracted dredge will take sand from an underwater area and pipe it a mile or more to the beach. Crews on the beach, using heavy equipment will constantly move the sand and pipes, allowing the sea water in the sand to drain away without washing the sand back into the ocean, according to Parrott.

In order to accomplish the renourishment project, the project team must obtain necessary environmental and cultural resource clearances, secure needed permits, and award a contract before the opening of the best environmental window of November 2008 through March 2009. "We will have to have the contract awarded by Sept. 30," Parrott said.

DON'T FORGET THE TURTLES

"After the renourishment is complete, the city must maintain the beach until the next renourishment," Spradley said. Maintenance includes "snow fencing" to reduce sand dune loss, maintaining access to nesting areas for sea turtles and restricting lighting along the beach to protect migration of sea turtle hatchlings to the ocean, Parrott said.

"When sea turtles hatch, we believe they look for the reflection of the moon on the ocean to know the way to the sea," he said. The city must restrict lights along the beach which could confuse the turtles and prevent them from finding their way to the ocean.

This project, to stay on time and on budget "requires phenomenal effort by all involved," Spradley said.

WELCOME TO THE SAVANNAH DISTRICT



Cindy Avelar – Avelar joins the Savannah District as a Legal Assistant with the Office of Counsel. She has lived in Savannah for 10 years, and most recently worked for nearly four years with the Trustee's Office of Chapter 13 Bankruptcy. Before that, Avelar spent 10 years in the U. S. Army.



P. Bart Smith – Smith is a Civil Engineer, Site Development, ENDG. Before joining the Corps, Smith was a resident civil project manager at Kern-Coleman and Company in Savannah. Smith was deployed with the 108th IT US Army Reserve to Iraq from the summer of 2006 to the summer of 2007.



Laurie Pamiza – Pamiza joins the Savannah District as a Management Analyst in Project Management working with Project Management Information Systems. Pamiza comes to Savannah from the Jacksonville District, where she worked as a Program Analyst in Project Management, also working with P2.



Lisa Simmons – Simmons is a Contract Specialist in Contracting on the A&E Team. Before coming to the Savannah District, Simmons worked as a Contract Specialist at Randolph Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas.



Jessica Reath – Reath is a Quality Assurance/Civil Engineer in the Construction Division with the Savannah District. Previously, she worked as a Civil Engineer for the U.S. Air Force at Pope Air Force Base. Before her work with the government, Reath completed 27 months in the Peace Corps Service in Ghana, West Africa.



Lona Smith – Smith is a Human Resources Specialist for the Savannah District Civilian Personnel Advisory Center. Smith moved to Savannah from Fort Riley, Kansas where she worked for the Southwest Civilian Personnel Operations Center as a Senior Human Resources Specialist for the last nine years. She moved back to Savannah to be closer to family. Smith and her husband have a 12 year old son.

ON THE MOVE

Promotions

Pope, Curtis T.
Small, D'Lorah D.
Thomas, Timmy A.
Gonzalez-Tosado, Eidalia
Ricardson, Gwendolyn I.

Real Estate
Construction
Operations
Engineering
Real Estate

Retirements

Callahan, Robert A.
Froelicher, Franz
Maganini, Thomas W.
Jordan, Jonas N.
Carter, Les
Bowden, Charles
Hendrix, Jane D.
McDowell, Elaine S.
Harrison, Clark
Moody, Ronnie
Leach, Terry

Engineering
Engineering
Engineering
Public Affairs
Real Estate
Project Mgmt.
Real Estate
Real Estate
Construction
Engineering
Real Estate

Departures

Burgess, Edward E.
Szybura, Bernard P.

Small joins PA team

Jennifer Small joins the Savannah District Public Affairs Office as part of the Department of the Army Public Affairs Internship Program.

She will be serving at the District for one year, after which she will attend the Defense Information School at Fort Meade, Md., and then to Army Headquarters, Office, Chief of Public Affairs, at the Pentagon.

Small comes to Savannah from Fort Belvoir, Va., where she spent more than two years as sports editor for the post newspaper, "The Belvoir Eagle."

A native of Danvers, Mass., Small graduated from Boston University in 2005, with a Bachelor of Science in journalism, and a minor in sociology.



Small

CORRECTION:

In the October/November 2007 issue of the Castle, Megan Singleton from Regulatory Division was incorrectly identified as Megan Bennett. If you spot an error in fact in the Castle, please contact Rashida Banks, editor, at 912.652.5756 or email at rashida.u.banks@usace.army.mil.



Tangela Fox, Assistant Deputy for Office of Small Business, Savannah District, speaks with Dewayne Jeffers of DJS Construction Services at the Service Disabled Veteran Owned Small Business Conference on Jan. 10. Jeffers was one of more than 100 conference attendees who received information and training on contracting opportunities with the District.

