

The

# castle

Savannah District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

May/June 2008

A large-scale construction project is shown in progress. In the foreground, a large, circular concrete pipe opening is partially buried in a sandy, excavated area. The pipe is dark, suggesting it is empty. In the background, a multi-story concrete structure is under construction. The structure is made of grey concrete blocks and has several rectangular openings. Scaffolding and wooden formwork are visible on the left side of the structure. The ground is sandy and uneven, with some construction equipment and materials visible in the distance. The sky is blue with scattered white clouds.

Savannah District  
helps warfighters  
with new techniques

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

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**FRONT COVER**

The new Urban Assault Course and Combined Arms Combative Training Facility provide Soldiers with the modern urban training they will need overseas.

Photo by Jennifer Small

**BACK COVER**

Jamie Sykes, District Fisheries Biologist, discusses the anatomy of fish with students during the district's annual Take Your Daughters and Sons to Work Day event April 24.

Photo by Jennifer Small



Megan Singleton, regulatory specialist, Savannah District demonstrates the floodplain model to students during the 5th Annual Children's Water Festival March 19 in Statesboro, Ga. The festival provides an educational and fun experience for students grades 1st thru 6th and teaches the importance of water and conserving natural resources. Singleton, along with Regulatory Specialist Darian Buchannon served as presenters during the event.

Photo by Darian Buchannon

**From Where I Sit: One Team, one Fight** .....3  
By Mike Hoffman

**District employee receives highest award in Toastmasters Communications Program**.....3  
By Rashida Banks

**Women's History Month program celebrates woman's visual arts**.....4  
By Rashida Banks

**SPOTLIGHT: Internal Review Office**.....4  
By Rashida Banks

**District offers employees new educational opportunity**.....6  
By Jennifer Small

**Savannah District to oversee branch of Regional Occupational Health Clinic**.....7  
By Rashida Banks

**Savannah District helps warfighters with new techniques**....8  
By Jennifer Small

**Savannah District is 'Serious About Safety'**.....10  
By Jennifer Small

**Biologist help shad reach historic spawning ground**.....12  
By Christine Griffiths

**Thurmond Powerplant Operator donates to worthy causes**.....14  
By Jennifer Vincent

**Welcome to the Savannah District**.....15

# One Team, One Fight



**Mike Hoffman**  
EEO Technician

On April 7, 2003, I was sitting outside Baghdad with the 3rd Infantry Division. In the flash, a large missile struck the operations center and destroyed the center where I was working. All of the soldiers pulled together and completed the mission in the face of the destruction caused by the attack.

Looking back to that event five

years ago, I am reminded about the diversity of the military. Combat is an equal employment opportunity event. When bullets fly, a soldier doesn't care about his or her co-worker's race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, disability or previous complaint activity. At that moment, it is a one-team, one-fight mindset. In the attack I described, the missile didn't target a specific race. Both genders worked to get the operations back into the fight. We were truly a diverse workforce.

Living the diversity life style can be a challenge. It takes a commitment to understanding and accepting that each individual is unique; recognizing, respecting, and learning from individual similarities and differences. As I look around the work place at the Savannah District, I see the same thing - a diverse workforce oriented towards a single goal of customer service.

We do that by making a commit-

ment to recognizing and using the unique beliefs, values, skills, attributes, and characteristics of our co-workers. To be a successful team, we must respect each other's differences and work together to achieve the mission of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. By understanding ourselves we can understand others. By embracing the diversity of the workforce we can orient towards the common goal - completing the mission of the Corps of Engineers.

May 26 was Memorial Day. I spent that time at Fort Stewart looking at the markers and trees that memorialize my fallen comrades. Discriminating factors do not separate these markers. Instead a desire to defend all Americans binds them together. Take a moment to look around the District. What have you done today to contribute to a diverse environment focused toward the mission of the Savannah District?

## District employee receives highest award in Toastmasters Communications Program

**By Rashida Banks**  
Staff Writer



**Ruth**

Mabel Ruth, program analyst, Real Estate Division, has achieved the recognition of Advanced Communicator Gold for completion of the Toastmasters International Com-

munication Program.

"Completing these requirements involves several years of study and excellent communication skills," wrote Donna Groh, executive director, Toastmasters International. "It also involves tremendous self-discipline and a strong interest in self-improvement. By achieving Advanced Communicator Gold recognition, Toastmaster Ruth has shown a commitment to excellence in communication and a desire to apply these communication skills in all facets of life."

Advanced Communicator Gold

recognition is the highest award in the Toastmasters' Communication Program, a self-paced training program that helps participants improve their speaking skills in a club environment. To achieve Advanced Communicator Gold status, Ruth had to complete a series of challenging speech assignments, conduct a training program, and mentor a new employee.

Overall, Ruth said that it took her five years to complete the communication track.

Ruth has been actively involved in the District Castle Toastmasters Club 7876 since November 2002, and currently serves as the division governor responsible for 10 Toastmasters clubs in Savannah, Albany, and Waycross. Before becoming the division governor, Ruth served as president, secretary, vice president of public relations, vice president of education, and area governor.

"I'm a Toastmaster for life," said Ruth, who was introduced to Toastmasters through the District's Bridge to Leadership Program "It [Toastmasters]

has helped me with my career and in everyday life. I enjoy talking to people and Toastmasters allows me to do that and it has also improved my communication skills."

Now that she has completed the Communications Program, Ruth said that her next step is to complete the Competent Leader Track.

"I want to be the first in the Castle Toastmasters Club 7876 to become a Distinguished Toastmaster, and hopefully it will inspire others to do the same," said Ruth.

Keith Crowe, operations project manager at the Richard



**Crowe**

of Toastmasters Club 326 in Augusta, Ga.

B. Russell Project, was the first Savannah District employee to achieve the recognition of Distinguished Toastmaster in November 2006.

Crowe is a member



# SPOTLIGHT

## the Internal Review Office

The Savannah District's Internal Review Program supports the Commander with in-house, state of the art, reliable, timely, professional reviews and consulting services that promote improved risk management and foster stewardship through best business practices. The office provides a full spectrum of audit and related services that helps the commander to accomplish mission objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control, and command oversight.

### Support provided to the district:

- The office assesses the adequacy and effectiveness of proposed and existing policies, systems, procedures and practices in all areas of command operations, and make constructive recommendations for mitigating identified risk.
- Provides professional reviews to management to solve real or perceived problems.
- Provides liaison services for external auditors to coordinate/facilitate the audit process and facilitate the commander's responses to findings and recommendations.
- Performs follow-up services to enable the command to reap the benefits from external audits and internal reviews by ensuring timely and appropriate corrective actions to agreed upon findings and recommendations.



Photo (LEFT to RIGHT): Chong Howsare, Sylvia Judge, Valjean Stellburns, Canton Gardenhire, Levoyn Vaughn

**For fiscal year 2008, IR identified \$ 210,000 in potential savings or questioned costs. In addition, the IR staff promoted operational efficiency and effectiveness that resulted in:**

- Improved performance on USACE Financial statements Audit (CFO)
- Improved readiness
- Improved management controls
- Improved business systems & processes
- Avoided violations of law or regulation
- Avoided adverse publicity
- Validated existing processes
- Initiated best business practices
- Provided analysis/data to decision makers

The office is headed by Valjean Stellburns and is staffed with two internal review evaluators, one audit technician, and one office automation clerk. For additional information about the Internal Review Office, call 912.652.5305 or visit the web at: [www.sas.usace.army.mil](http://www.sas.usace.army.mil).

# District offers employees new educational opportunity

By Jennifer Small  
Staff Writer

The Savannah District is now offering its employees the chance to further their higher education through the Professional Development Training Program.

The program, which is in its first year, allows funding to selected team members - four this year - to attend a university part-time in an academic study that supports of mission-related competencies and the District's strategic goals.

"This is the first year of the program," said Phyllis Lambert of the Civilian Personnel Advisory Center. "It was established to give employees the opportunity to go for a full degree as long as it pertains to their job, and as long as it's beneficial to the Corps and to themselves."

To be eligible for the program, applicants must be serving under a permanent career appointment, have a minimum of three years Federal civilian service, including one year of Corps civilian experience beyond the intern level. Each recipient has to sign a continuation of service to the Corps, and all degree work must be done outside of the 40-hour work week. Recipients can attend any university they wish, including Web-based universities, for a degree.

The program pays for entire degree-related coursework and requirements, including physical education requirements and elective coursework, to complete the degree requirements

One of this year's recipients is Katie Knowles, a regulatory specialist who is looking to get her master's degree in Marine Sciences from Savan-



Knowles

nah State University.

"For several years I've wanted to get my master's but it was cost prohibitive," Knowles said. "This was the opportunity to get a degree that will help further my career, without incurring those extreme costs."

Knowles has been with the Corps for four years, first with the Mobile District as a Park Ranger at Lake Allatoona in Cartersville, Ga., and joined the Savannah District in September as a regulatory specialist.

This year's other recipients are Lynn Nettles, Adrienne Nurse and Richard Dennis Ruscek.

Nurse, a management analyst in the Resource Management Division, has been working on her Master's Degree in Business Management, with an emphasis on International Business, with Walden University, an Online Degree University, since January 2005.

"I'd been wanting to get my master's for some time, but the main hindrance was cost," said Nurse, who is planning to graduate in January 2009. "My [Resource Management] office has helped out a lot, but they didn't pay the whole thing so the rest came out of my pocket. I think this program will help see more people going back to school because I think most want to go back but they can't because of the cost."

The recipients are evaluated competi-



Nettles



Ruscek

tively by the Savannah District Training Committee, a selection committee of managers from throughout the District, headed by Savannah District Deputy Commander Col. George T. "Thatch" Shepard.

Each submitted evaluation is based

on information provided by the nominee and the nominee's supervisory chain of command, including the nominee's experience, education, awards, and motivation attend the train-

ing. Evaluation will consider the contributions the selected participant will bring to the organization, the appropriateness of the training program to the team member's occupation and stage of career development, and the overall benefits the training will bring to the Corps. Army Performance appraisals and cost effectiveness are also considered.

"I'd tell people to go ahead and apply to school, be accepted and enroll, then apply for the scholarship," Lambert said. "You should have the commitment to go to school whether the government pays for it or not."

The application process for the 2009 fiscal year will open in October or November, Lambert said.

"We wanted to be able to give our employees the opportunity to advance in their career goals, and give them help with educational funding," Lambert said. "We want to help employees advance in the field they like."

"It also helps the organization to be able to retain enthusiastic employees who want to advance their careers in the Corps," she continued. "Kind of like 'Advance Your Own.'"

# Savannah District to oversee branch of Regional Occupational Health Clinic

**By Rashida Banks**  
Staff Writer

The Savannah District will oversee a branch of Mobile's Regional Occupational Health Clinic beginning Oct 1. The clinic will provide onsite immediate support and assistance with deployments, medical surveillance physicals, wellness programs, and health surveys to all Savannah District offices, including field offices.

"I think the district will benefit immensely from this transition because the onsite medical staff would be able to handle immediate workplace issues and look at the occupational health side of the workplace and employees," said Flo Meyers, Chief, Safety and Occupational Health Office.

The district headquarters employees currently receive health related services from the Federal Occupational Health

Clinic. Although housed in the District headquarters building, the clinic's services are not available to employees located at field offices. The Services currently provided by the FOH include: limited vaccines, periodic screening and well-

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***"The clinic onsite will provide more immediate constant wellness care for employees."***

***- Flo Meyers, Chief,  
Safety and Occupational  
Health Office***

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ness programs, basic emergency response services, and minor treatments prescribed by a physician.

After the transition, employees from the district field offices will coordinate

directly with an Industrial Hygienist from the Savannah District Safety Office to arrange for basic medical services such as CPR and first aid training, deployments, emergency response, medical surveillance, wellness physicals, and all required immunizations.

Meyers said that the benefits to having an ROHC onsite are two-fold.

"The clinic onsite will provide more immediate constant wellness care for employees," said Meyers. "The downtime and cost of offsite scheduling will be less, and it will keep people at work, cutting lost productivity.

The ROHC will be staffed with two nurses, and a doctor will be available once or twice a week, said Meyers.

Although district officials have not determined the location of the ROHC will physically reside, Meyers said that the clinic will be inside the district headquarters building.

## Information Management transitions to ACE-IT

The Information Management Office transitioned to the new Information Technology service provider for the Corps, ACE-IT (Army Corps of Engineers Information Technology), on May 15.

ACE-IT now assumes full responsibility for providing all IM support, products, and services, including helpdesk and visual information, said Juliet Jenkins, ACE-IT Customer Relationship Manager.

Jenkins said the biggest change that employees will see as a result of the transformation will be the way in which they will request services.

"Employees need to call the ACE-IT Enterprise Service Desk (ESD) at 866-56ACEIT (22348) for any and all IT support needed," said Jenkins.

Located in Madison, Ala., the ESD consists of 38 full-time industry certified analysts who focus on ensuring that customer incidents and service requests are handled in an efficient and consistent manner. The ESD will be available 24 hours, seven days per week, 365 days per year.

After calling the 800 number, Jenkins said that employees will be connected to one of the analysts who will focus on resolving the problem over the phone. "If the problem cannot be resolved over the phone, the call will be routed to the appropriate support group. If the problem requires 'touch labor' someone from the Helpdesk will be dispatched," said Jenkins.

ACE-IT operates under a new enterprise support model where everything including software, computers, blackberries, and cell phones will be consistent across the board. ACE-IT will conduct four separate equipment refreshes throughout the remainder of the year beginning in July with the replacement of all network infrastructures. Subsequent refreshes will include the replacement of all personal computers and wireless equipment.

Chief Information Management (CIM), once located at each Command is now the Regional Information Officer (RIO). Four Senior RIOs and 29 RIOs will be assigned to cover requirements of all Districts and Divisions. Customer Relationship Managers (CRMs) and Information Products Coordinators (IPCs) will ensure services are carried out in a timely, cost effective way.

For more information, view the ACE-IT "Countdown to Transition" guide at: <https://ace-it.usace.army.mil>.

\*Information obtained from the Countdown to Transition and Customer Guide to ACE-IT Services.

# Savannah District helps warfighters with new techniques

By Jennifer Small  
Staff Writer  
Photos by Jennifer Small

With the United States military fighting a different kind of war than they've ever fought before, the Department of Defense must prepare its military men and women prepared for the type of fighting they face in Operation Iraqi Freedom and the Global War on Terror.

"The training environment had to change to adapt to the new warfare," said Steve Hill, a Savannah District Project Manager. "Therefore we had to change, be flexible, and realistic."

The new Urban Assault Course and Combined Arms Combative Training Facility provide Soldiers with this modern urban training they will need overseas. The Savannah District is constructing both facilities at Fort Stewart, home of the 3rd Infantry Division, starting with the UAC.

"We now have to provide our Soldiers with urban operations training," said Hill.

The Urban Assault Course at Fort Stewart, which is roughly 75 percent completed, will be used to conduct the intermediate state of the Urban Operations training using the crawl, walk, run process and will provide initial training for the CACTF.

The UAC has five stations; an urban offense-defense trainer, a squadron and platoon trainer, an individual trainer, a grenadier gunnery trainer, and an underground trainer.

The 3rd ID and XVIII Airborne Corps units stationed at Fort Stewart, as well as various Reserve and National Guard units which train there under the installation's designation as a Warfighter Center will utilize the facilities. Currently, no facilities exist at Fort Stewart that can provide urban operations training similar to the conditions in Afghanistan and Iraq.

In the UAC, only the grenadier training station fires live rounds. Sand berms between the live-fire and the other stations protect Soldiers from any stray bullets or other ammunition.

Station 1 will train Soldiers in individual team training. A wooden structure, which consists of three inter-connected squares, trains Soldiers in the basics of room and building clearing.

Trainees then move on to Station 2, the squadron and platoon trainer, a lumber structure with different rooms, alleys, and stairs up to a small second story overlooking the rooms, which have no ceilings. The design of the structure allows Soldiers to



The Urban Assault Course at Fort Stewart, which is roughly 75 percent completed, will prepare Soldiers for the environment they face in Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom.



train in different scenarios, such as individual buildings on a narrow street, or rooms in a building with a hallway in between, and is practice for clearing multiple rooms and buildings.

Soldiers see grenadier gunnery training in Station 3. The trainees drive up a dirt road leading up to the façade of a building. Along the road they encounter Standard Infantry Targets, which the Corps constructed the infrastructure for.

“The Corps is not responsible for putting in the actual targets, but we prepare them to have [electrical] power,” said Thuan Swindler, UAC project engineer.

Swindler said the contract called for the installation of the concrete pads, but the targets themselves will be installed by local training officials.

At the end of the road stands a wooden building façade, which will be covered by black rubber, with pop-up targets in the windows.

The offense-defense training and underground training combine to make up Stations 4 and 5 at one location.

For the offense-defense trainer, a reinforced concrete structure resembles a building, with three floors including a basement, and complete with lighting and exhaust. Also part of An underground trainer consisting of a series of underground tunnels which begins in the basement and extends in three fingers to the exterior, about 100 meters out from the structure, completes the station.

Also constructed at the UAC site are an operations/storage building, and a dry latrine.

The Savannah District awarded the \$3.1 million construction contract to Astrid Contract Technical Services, and the design to Hussey, Gay, Bell & Deyoung International, Inc., in May 2007.

**Station 2 of the Fort Stewart Urban Assault Course, the squadron and platoon trainer, allows Soldiers to train in different scenarios such as individual buildings on a narrow street, or rooms in a building with a hallway in between, and is practice for clearing multiple rooms and buildings.**

**“The training environment had to change to adapt to the new warfare. Therefore we had to change, be flexible, and realistic.”**

**- Steve Hill, project manager,  
Savannah District**

# Savannah District is 'Serious About Safety'

Kent Earle, Territory Manager at Capital Safety –USA, in Clover, S.C., demonstrates proper fall protecting during a workshop at the Savannah District “Serious About Safety” Training and Awards Conference April 14-15 in Charleston, S.C.

By Jennifer Small  
Staff Writer

The Savannah District, along with the Charleston and Wilmington Districts, hosted its 2nd annual “Serious About Safety” Training and Awards Conference April 14-15 in Charleston, S.C.

More than 147 people attended the conference, including representatives from the Mobile and Baltimore Districts, with contractors making up almost half of the attendees.

“We had a fantastic attendance overall with 147 attendees, and there were 67 contractors,” said Flo Meyers, Safety Office Chief. “[The contractors] attendance was on their own dime, so it was great to have so many there. The Corps is unique in that our safety requirements are more stringent than industry under [the Occupational Safety & Health Administration], so sharing of information and working together is very important. Everyone is con-

stricted by budget and time, and if safety wasn't in place, that time and cost could skyrocket. We all have the same goal."

George Condoyiannis, Fort Benning area engineer, was the 2008 chairman of the Savannah District Safety Committee, and the master of ceremonies for the two-day conference.

After opening remarks from Lt. Col. Joseph R. "Trey" Jordan, Charleston District Commander, other safety experts gave their remarks. Chris Hinton-Lee, Director of the South Atlantic Division's Regional Business Directorate, Homer McBryer, Chief of the Savannah District Construction Division, Stan Clark, Operations Division, and Meyers each spoke of their position, and how they view and treat safety as a top priority.

Afterwards, Richard Wright, USACE Safety and Occupational Health Chief, updated the audience on Headquarters' initiatives and goals, including the current update of the safety manual, and the ongoing challenges that MILCON transformation is unearthing.

Mike Carroll, President and CEO of PROSAFE Solutions, a company of safety and risk consultants, analysts and teachers, closed the first day of the conference.

"Safety excellence is not having low accident rates, going a year without accidents or doing everything OSHA requires," he said to the group. "The absence of injury isn't the same as the presence of safety. We need to measure the presence and quality of safety itself. You need to diagnose underlying safety problems or issues, don't just fix or treat the symptoms, or else the problem will reoccur."

The second day of the safety summit consisted of six one-hour breakout training sessions, including Water Safety, Unexploded Explosive Ordnance Awareness, Silica Exposure in Construction, Modern Dredging Techniques and a interactive Safety Manual Review - Jeopardy Style, courtesy of Kevin Powell and Justin Versluis of the Mobile District's Florida Area Office.

"One thing we could have done differently was to allow more time for some of the segments, such as Silica Exposure in Construction or UXO Awareness, which both could have used two hours," Meyers said. "The only somewhat negative feedback I received was some would have liked us to offer certain sessions to them at two different times so they didn't have to miss out on anything."

There was also a four-hour CPR certification offered during the morning breakouts.

The last session of the day was a fall protection demonstration, given by an expert representative from DBI-SALA and PROTECTA, which included how to use and identify proper and improper safety equipment.

"I got a lot of positive things about the demonstration," Meyers said. "People would like to see if we could get another segment for that same type of thing next year - they like not just sitting in a chair."

The conference concluded with the "Serious About Safety" Awards Banquet. Brig. Gen. Joseph Schroedel, Commander, South Atlantic Division, hosted the event, and "The Safety Coach," David Sarkus, was the Keynote Speaker.

Annual awards were presented to the winning contractors by



**Chris Hinton-Lee, Director of Regional Business for the South Atlantic Division, practices life-saving techniques during a CPR workshop held at the Savannah District "Serious About Safety" Training and Awards Conference April 14-15 at the Marriott in Charleston, S.C.**

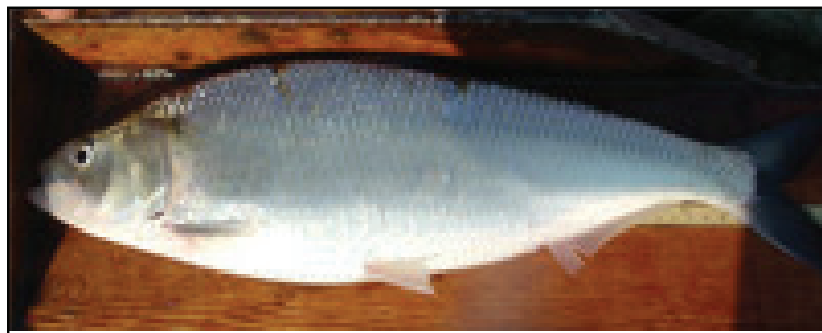
the Savannah District, Wilmington District, Charleston District and the South Atlantic Division for exceptional safety in fiscal year 2007.

"Safety is something that everyone lives with, and the lessons learned from every project help all of the contractors, and it helps them grow and expand, and get the job done safer and faster," Meyers said. "For the Corps, a conference like this is great because, what we are is construction management overseers, and if the contractor isn't in agreement, we spend half of our time correcting problems; when we work together, it just



Photo by Jennifer M. Koches, US Fish and Wildlife Service

## Biologists help shad reach historic spawning ground



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*“We had a great team of biologists from collaborating agencies which pulled together to make this project a success.”*

*- Bill Post, Fisheries Biologist,  
South Carolina Department of  
Natural Resources*

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Photo (TOP): Jamie Sykes, District Wildlife Biologist, Ken Boyd, conservation biologist, Thurmond Project, and Tripp Boltin, Fisheries Biologist, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, electrofish below the New Savannah Bluff Lock and Dam for American shad. They captured the shad and manually moved them upstream to their spawning grounds because the lock gates were temporarily out of order.

## By Christine Griffiths Special to the *Castle*

The largest species in the herring family, the American shad is an impressive fish. Like salmon of the North Pacific, shad are long-distance swimmers, traveling up to 12,000 miles to fulfill their sole purpose in life – to spawn.

Striking in appearance, with an accent of lavender along its tail and a metallic blue-green back, shad spend most of their lives navigating the waters of the Atlantic Ocean between southern Labrador and northern Florida.

When they are between four and six years old, shad will make a spring migration to the river of their birth, where they will release 200,000 to 600,000 eggs into the water.

Exerting a great deal of energy during migration, most shad will die shortly after spawning, never making it back out to sea.

### Migration Threatened

In Georgia, the Altamaha, Savannah, Satilla and St. Marys rivers are significant passages for spawning shad. Yet, the successful migration of shad in the Savannah River is impaired by the New Savannah Bluff Lock and Dam in Augusta, Georgia.

Typically, an attempt is made each year to pass fish through the lock, allowing some successful migration.

The lock is operated about three days a week, allowing the fish a chance to pass above the dam to complete their journey to the Savannah River shoals, a rocky freshwater habitat which provides ideal refuge for eggs and juvenile fish.

But this year the lock was unable to open, thereby completely blocking the shad – as well as the endangered sturgeon – from its historic spawning ground.

While the City of Augusta bids to repair the structure, biologists feared that the time delay, combined with current drought conditions, would have a dev-

astating impact on future populations of shad in the Savannah River.

“The effects of the broken structure may not be immediately noticeable, but in four years, anglers could notice a significant decrease in the number of shad returning to the Savannah,” said Amanda Meadows, Ph.D., Savannah River project director for The Nature Conservancy.

### Biologists Respond

Pooling staff and resources, biologists from the Georgia and South Carolina departments of natural resources, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, National Marine Fisheries Service, and The Nature Conservancy spent two days transporting a total of 835 shad upstream of the lock and dam.

“We had a great team of biologists from collaborating agencies which pulled together to make this project a success,” said Bill Post, a fisheries biologist with the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources. “But this was a one-time operation. Hopefully, the fish we transported will reproduce and contribute to the stocks of fish in the Savannah.”

In assembly line fashion, the team of 15 biologists worked quickly to capture and transport the fish. Using electro-fishing boats to send low voltage currents of electricity into the water just below the dam, experienced fisheries biologists carefully netted stunned shad and placed them in tanks of salt water.

Once they were transferred to holding tanks on the back of a waiting flatbed truck, biologists drove them a short distance to a landing above the dam and released them back into the water.

Slightly stunned, the fish were quick to revive and, within seconds of returning to the water, instinctively continued their swim upriver to fulfill their biological destiny.

*Christine Griffiths is a marketing specialist with The Nature Conservancy.*

### SAVANNAH DISTRICT'S ROLE

Allen Dean, chief ranger at Thurmond Lake, Ken Boyd, conservation biologist, Thurmond Lake, and Jamie Sykes, district fisheries biologist assisted biologists from the Georgia and South Carolina departments of natural resources, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Marine Fisheries Service, and the Nature Conservancy by capturing and transporting the shad upstream of the lock and dam. The District also provided an electrofishing boat to capture the shad.

### Shad: A Place in History

Historically, shad was one of the most important fisheries on the East coast – an ecological indicator of a healthy river system and an integral part of the culture and economy of river communities.

In fact, legend has it that George Washington's troops survived on shad at Valley Forge.

Revered as a tasty catch, shad remains popular among recreational anglers.

Even its Latin name, *Alosa sapidissima*, means “most delicious.”

Unfortunately, dams, pollution, habitat degradation and overfishing are taking its toll on this species.

# Thurmond Powerplant Operator donates to worthy causes

By Jennifer Vincent  
Special to *The Castle*

Tom Stocum, a power plant operator at the Thurmond Dam for 34 years, knows how important his gifts of time, blood donations and, of all things, his hair, are to others.

"I began donating blood in 1972 after I bought my first motorcycle," Stocum said. He initially thought that as a new motorcycle rider, he might be in an accident. "I thought I'd better give blood to cover my own needs," he admitted.

Luckily, he was never in an accident and never needed to receive any blood. But in the 35 years since then, he has continued to give blood on a regular basis totaling more than 28 gallons of blood in 227 separate donations.

After his mother died from cancer, Stocum switched from whole blood donations to apheresis, a special kind of blood donation that allows the donor to give specific blood components, such as platelets. Platelets are cell fragments in blood that enable blood to clot and are most needed by cancer, burn, and transplant patients. During an apheresis procedure, all but the needed components are returned to the donor.

"A platelet donation requires more time than a regular blood donation but can be given more often - about every two weeks" said Stocum, who spends about two hours at Sheppard Community Blood Center every time he donates.

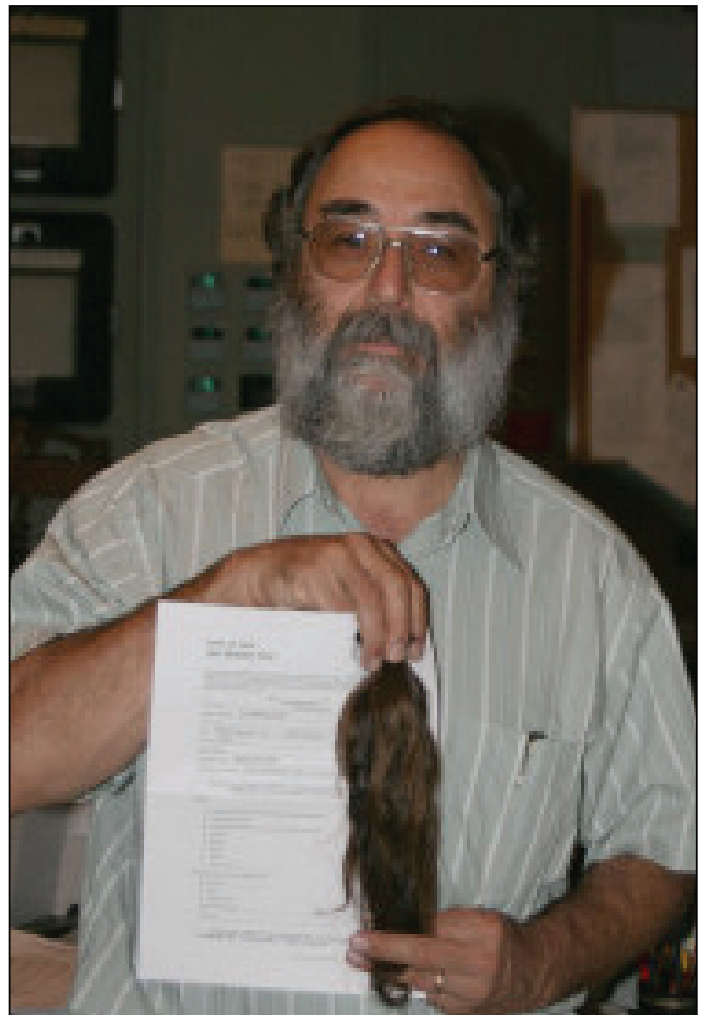
Tom has also found a fabulous purpose and meaning for his signature long hair.

"I've had long hair since the 1970s, but my honey kept bugging me to get it cut," said Stocum. In 2001, he made his first donation of hair to Locks of Love, a non-profit organization that provides wigs to children who have lost their hair due to various medical conditions. Tom must grow his hair to a minimum of 10 inches long, because the majority of recipients are young girls who want to have long hair again.

"Locks of Love will accept shorter lengths of hair and 'subtle' mixes of grey hair, but sells the shorter pieces and the grey to help offset their manufacturing costs," said Stocum. "Originally, I could go to [the barbershop] get my hair cut and tell them I wanted to donate it, and they would do all the paperwork and send the hair in for me. Now, they hand me the ponytail and I send it in myself. I just download a donation form from the [Locks of Love] website and mail it off."

It takes Stocum almost two and a half years to grow his hair to the length required by Locks of Love. He has made three donations to Locks of Love totaling about 35 inches of hair, the most recent one, of 15 inches, was in November 2007.

When Stocum is not at the blood center or brushing his long hair, he is a highly sought after, animated, volunteer reader. He had been a volunteer reader for the children's story time at the Nancy Carson Library in North Augusta since the 1980s, but now, when his work schedule permits him, he reads two days a week to about half of the fourth grade at his grandson's elemen-



**Tom Stocum, a powerplant operator at Thurmond Dam holds up hair that he plans to donate to Locks of Love.**

tary school.

"When my daughter signed him up for school when he was in the second grade, she mentioned to the teacher that I would come and read to the class. It's grown from just his class, to his class and a special reading class," said Stocum. "I just keep changing grades when he moves up every year."

Whether from his heart, his head, or his mouth, Tom Stocum really puts himself into volunteering.

## CORRECTION

In the April 2008 issue of the Castle, it was stated that Col. Edward Kertis' son 2nd Lt. Ryan Kertis is a student at Fort Bragg. However, he is a student at Fort Benning.

# WELCOME TO THE SAVANNAH DISTRICT



**Samuel Champion** comes to the Savannah District from the Marine Corps Recruits Depot, Parrish Island, S.C. where he served as the Deputy Safety Manager. Champion currently works in the district's Safety Office.



**Robert Kidd** is a Safety Specialist whose focus will be Military Construction projects. He has more than 35 years of military service, active duty and reserves, as a member of the US Navy Seabees. Kidd has done tours in Bosnia, Iraq, and Jordan.



**Gordon Langley** is a Civil Engineer at Kelley Hill Barracks at Fort Benning. Before coming to the Savannah District, Langley worked for West Point Stevens Corporate Engineering Department, West Point, Georgia.

## Around the District

**Stephanie Hall**, Senior Project Manager for Ft. Bragg was presented the IMCOM Installation Support Award on behalf of Savannah District in Kansas City at the IMCOM Conference on Apr 8.



**Mark Padgett**(Center), with new wife **Marcia Smith**, daughter **Glory Padgett**(Left), and step-daughter **Christy Fitzmaurice**(Right)

**Mark Padgett**, a Savannah District regulatory specialist, married Marcia Smith on May 5 in Savannah. The couple will reside on Tybee Island with their daughters Glory and Christy.

**NOTE:** If you received an award or have a birth, wedding, or graduation announcement, please let us know and we will place it in the Castle. Send your announcements to Rashida Banks at [rashida.u.banks@usace.army.mil](mailto:rashida.u.banks@usace.army.mil).

## ON THE MOVE

### Promotions

Bringman, Michael G.	Real Estate
Harrison, Carolyn A.	Real Estate
Campbell, Sandra M.	Operations
Dotson, Mark A.	Operations
Spiller, Christopher D.	Operations
Washington, Grace	Operations
Westerberg, Christina R.	Operations
Crawford, Kenneth	Operations
DeGarlais, Jereme R.	Real Estate
Baroy, Charlie P.	Construction
Short, Donna B.	Construction

### New Hires

Drawdy, Joseph C.	Safety Office
Kidd, Robert C.	Safety Office
Champion, Samuel E.	Safety Office
DuPrey, Gerd C.	Safety Office
Hosely, Andrea E.	Real Estate
Lawrence, Curtis Gregory	Construction
Vinson, Thelbert	Construction
Brotherton, Randy L.	Construction
Castillo Jr., Pedro	Construction
Dalby, Jesse J.	Construction
Ranson, Joseph A.	Construction
Schorn, Susanna M.	Construction
Diefendorf, Walter L.	Construction
Odom, Eugene C.	Construction

### Departures

Wheeler, Terry S.	Construction
Wood, Thomas D.	Project Mgmt.

## Hartwell employee receives Masters Degree with honors

Danielle Treadway, Natural Resources Specialist at the Hartwell Project, recently received her Masters of Science Degree in Parks and Resource Management from Slippery Rock University. She graduated in the top ten of the Masters Program and was awarded the Presidential Scholar Award for academic excellence with a 4.0 grade point average.

For the past two years, Treadway participated in the on-line Park and Resource Management program at Slippery Rock University. The program is designed to allow students to continue their education without affecting job performance. The programs flexibility allowed Danielle to combine many experiences and projects from the job with course work requirements.

Treadway decided to pursue her masters degree to broaden her knowledge and enhance performance in her current position, as well as improving her chances to compete for future career opportunities.

"It has been a very rewarding journey," said Treadway. "I would like to thank my coworkers at the Hartwell Project for assisting with various projects and for being supportive throughout the process," she said.

Jamie Sykes, District Fisheries Biologist, discusses the anatomy of fish with students during the district's annual Take Your Daughters and Sons to Work Day event April 24.

