



U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Lends a Helping Hand to the City of Hoboken

By LaDonna Davis, Public Affairs

Keeping the waters safe and the shorelines beautiful: that's part of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers New York District, mission. The Corps recently made good on the above statement by partnering with the city of Hoboken, N.J. to clean up driftwood and debris on the shoreline of the Frank Sinatra Park.

"Today we're here in partnership with Hoboken to help clean up the shore," said Johann Aguilera, an operations deckhand for New York District, who gathered and prepared driftwood for removal from the shoreline. "This is all part of what the Corps does and we're happy to help out the city."

Driftwood accumulates off the shoreline due to the disintegration of dilapidated piers and the movement created by rising tides. Removing driftwood and floatables each year saves the states of New York and New Jersey approximately \$25 million in damages to the many ships, vessels and commuter ferries that cruise the harbor throughout the year. The collection of driftwood is a multiple step process and takes a team effort.



A Corps of Engineers zodiac pulls driftwood off the shoreline of the Frank Sinatra Park located in Hoboken, N.J. The park is used for various community activities during the summer.
Photo Credit: LaDonna Davis, Public Affairs

Corps of Engineers personnel patrol the shoreline on foot, collecting driftwood and organizing it into small piles. The piles are then hooked to a small inflatable boat called a zodiac and pulled off the shoreline.

The driftwood is then towed to a larger Corps of Engineers vessel called the Driftmaster, which uses its crane to pull the debris out of the water. Once the Driftmaster is full, the driftwood is transported to a barge near the Corps of Engineers Jersey City-based Caven Point Facility, where it is separated and sent for recycling.

"The park is a focal point during the summer months due to the many concerts and shows here," said Bill Bergin, the Hoboken public safety director. "Cleaning up all the driftwood is beyond the city's capability, so we called the Corps to help us out and they did. This is a twofold operation; it makes the water safer for boaters and keeps the shoreline clean."

Introduced in 1989, the Corps' drift collection program runs year-round to keep New York Harbor free from floating debris. The peak floatables season runs from May through September.



In This Month's Issue

New York District Times
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U.S. Army Corps
of Engineers
New York District

New York District salutes its long-term service award recipients



Gen. Seminote, Col. Tortora and Joe Seebode present John Chew with an award in thanks for his 30 years of service at the New York District.

Employee Name:	Years of Service:
Chew, John Y.	30
Petronis, William F.	30
Tavolaro, John F.	30
Danner, Lawrence D.	30
Benard, Mary L.	30
Drayton, Raymond	30
Hoss, Thomas G.	30
Dabney, Alma	30
Gaffney, Sandra W.	30
Collins, Grace E.	30
Greges, Monte P.	30
Schumach, Steven A.	30
Karpel, Ralph	30
Ruiz, Nicolasa	35
Petrovich, John P.	45

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Colonel's Corner

District Team,

Summer is here again and what better way to kick off the season of warm weather and barbecues than to hold a town hall meeting and Employee Day picnic, which is precisely what the District did in early July. During the town hall event I was very pleased to have the opportunity to distribute years of service awards to some of our longest-tenured employees.

Thirty years or more is an incredibly long time to spend with one organization and I can firmly say that our District is extremely fortunate and grateful to have the kind of employees willing to dedicate so much of their professional lives to the Corps of Engineers' mission. Your loyalty and selfless service represent the best that the Corps has to offer. I would also like to say congratulations once more to everyone who received a 2008 Commander's Award. Those awards are a testament to all of the hard work you do and your tireless efforts and contributions to the District's mission is greatly appreciated.

As in the past, BG Semonite also took time out to attend our town hall, where he addressed the district staff and helped pass out the awards. After our town hall, came the annual picnic, which was also a rousing success. As District commander, I can say it really is a pleasure to be able to spend time with you in a setting where we aren't talking about budget numbers, project deadlines, PRB meetings, or any of the other tasks we participate in on a day-to-day basis. There was plenty to do, including a spirited game of dodge ball, a mummy wrap and a six-legged race.

We also witnessed the first crowning of the Driftwood Cup champions, which went to construction division. It'll be interesting to see if they can retain their title during next year's festivities. In terms of work-related developments, the beginning of dredging season is always a busy time for the District. The summer months represent an uptick in boating activity throughout New York Harbor and our Debris Collection Program plays a vital role in keeping the citizenry safe.

A highlight of those efforts included a recent feature story done by local media on the removal of driftwood from the New Jersey shoreline. This coverage was essential to the District's mission because it gave us a chance to show constituents precisely what we're doing to help keep the shipping channels safe and where we're doing it. I was also pleased to see New York District participating in a number of other events over the past few months including the People with Disabilities Career Fair, the Fireboat Blessing ceremony at Pier 17 by the South Street Seaport and the Corporate Challenge.

Lastly, I'd like to wish all of you a happy and safe summer season. Keep attacking to meet 100% of our milestones and obligate 100% of our funds so that we can award all of our FY08 projects. I am very proud of all of you and the great work you do. Thank you for your service to our country.



Col. Aniello L. Tortora
Commander

Essayons!



New York District Participates In Career Disability Fair

By Jean Lau, EEO

On June 26, 2008 the Federal Executive Board hosted an agency wide career fair for People's with Disabilities. The event was supported by a number of federal agencies, including the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Department of Homeland Security, Department of Consumer Affairs, General Services Administration and many others.

“This career fair provides federal agencies with an excellent opportunity to interact with qualified candidates.” Said Jean Lau, Equal Opportunity Specialist, New York District.

The career fair, which lasted from 10:30 a.m. until 3 p.m., is designed to educate disabled citizens and make them aware of the plethora of opportunities the federal government provides for employment. This was done by conducting resume workshops and mock interviews.

The career fair also offered a comprehensive orientation on the USA Jobs website and how to make use of its many features, including creating and submitting a federal resume for consideration of employment.

Frank Cambria, a Human Resources Specialist with the Corps of Engineers, New York District, attended the career fair with Ms. Lau. Together, they collected over 40 perspective resumes in hopes of identifying qualified people that can add to the richness and strength of the Corps.

“Bringing specific groups together in this type of setting not only benefits the individuals, but also the organizations.” Cambria explained. “Disabled citizens are usually very motivated and extremely hard-working. Sometimes I think people who don't have their physical and mental challenges take working for granted. Disabled applicants never do and that type of attitude allows them to excel.”



Frank Cambria, HR, & Jean Lau, EEO, New York District, discuss potential jobs openings with a perspective applicant. New York District was one of more than 16 agencies to attend the People's with Disabilities career fair on June 26, 2008.



A cash cow for dairy farmers and the environment

By JoAnne Castagna, Ed.D.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District, is funding a program that is educating dairy farmers in Delaware County, N.Y. on how to implement cow feeding methods that are keeping the state's watersheds free of pollution. As an added benefit they're also helping the farmers improve the quality of their milk and increase profits.

The Precision Feed Management Program is a comprehensive initiative being led by the Cornell Cooperative Extension of Delaware County.

"Dairy farms make up a large percentage of the farms in upstate New York," said Paul Cerosaletti, who serves as team leader for the Delaware County PFM Management Program. "Presently almost 50 out of the 200 dairy farms in Delaware County are in the program."

The program is showing dairy farmers new ways to reduce the amount of phosphorous and nitrogen in their cow's feed. Cow excrement is a prime source for these contaminants and can run off into nearby water sources, causing algae growth.



Dairy farmer, participating in the Precision Feed Management Program, feeding his cows their feed ration.
Photo Credit: Paul Cerosaletti, Team Leader, Delaware County N.Y. Cornell Cooperative Extension.

This kind of algae growth needs to be controlled with chlorination but that process can create cancerous substances and be dangerous to humans.

To reduce these risks, the program is encouraging dairy farmers to create better feed mixes for their cows by relying less on commercial feed and more on homegrown crops.

To grow their own feed, the program works with farmers to adopt crop production methods, such as no-till crop planting. This method eliminates the need to use gas-guzzling machinery.

By undertaking this method of soil tillage, farmers are able to increase harvest production, provide better feed for their cows, and increase the quality of milk production.

Hager Farms is benefiting from the program. Owner, Ellen Hager said, "The PFM people helped us to see where we may not have been as attentive as we should be. In a business that is environmentally sensitive, we need to pay close attention to all aspects of farming. New regulations are coming very frequently, so having the program as a resource has been great."



Federal Employees News In Brief (FENIB)

Federal employee news that you may have missed:

2009 PAY RAISE: The House Appropriations Committee voted in favor of a pay raise for civilian federal employees of 3.9 percent as part of the fiscal 2009 financial services and general government appropriations bill. The adjustment is 1 percent higher than the increase proposed by the administration, which in February called for 2.9 percent hike for civilian workers and 3.4 percent for military personnel.

TSP: The Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board is moving forward with a proposal to allow the spouses of deceased federal employees to continue managing their TSP funds instead of withdrawing them within 60 days. This would bring the TSP plan in line with many private sector plans. However technical upgrades would need to be implemented and research on tax ramifications of spousal accounts, in addition to timelines and real costs, need to be investigated.

MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT: The IRS announced that beginning July 1, the standard rate used to calculate the deductible costs of operating an automobile for business purposes will be increased to 58.5 cents per mile. This new rate will be in effect until December 31. The rate agencies use to reimburse federal employees who use their own cars for work could go up by 8 cents if the government continues its pattern of using the IRS figures. According to federal travel regulations, employees may use their personal vehicles for official travel if permitted by their agency. The mileage reimbursement does not pertain to employee transfers or relocations.

DEPLOYED CIVILIANS: A new provision in the 2009 Defense authorization bill, according to the Congressional Budget Office concerns civilian employees who are deployed to war zones. Those who previously declined coverage under the Federal Employees Group Life Insurance program could opt back into the plan. According to the Congressional Budget Office 5,000 employees are currently deployed and 5 percent of those said they would sign up for coverage.

Also affecting some civilians deployed to a war zone is a 12 month pilot program that will be launched in December to determine whether the Army should develop a distinctive uniform for civilian employees who serve in a combat zone. These civilians serve mostly in acquisition, logistics and technology. The test group will wear the Army Combat Uniform with insignia that identifies them as civilians. The test group will be the roughly 1,300 Army Materiel Command employees serving in the U.S. Central Command area of operations.

PARENTAL LEAVE: The House approved a bill that would provide federal employees with four weeks of paid parental leave when they have or adopt a child. It would also allow them to use their accrued leave to take an additional eight weeks off. The bill could still be vetoed by the president if it passes the Senate.



Ready to deploy

By Hector Mosley, Public Affairs

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District, is gearing up to deploy to the Midwest. Recent flooding in that region has caused significant damage both financially and emotionally, but New York District's Emergency Operations Housing Team is ready to lend a hand.

Michael Ganley, chief of emergency operations, and Marty Goff, project engineer, serve as co-leaders of the District's Housing Team. Both recently took a trip to USACE headquarters to evaluate levees in the Midwest. As of right now New York District's Housing Team is next in line for emergency response duty around the nation.



Once there, the team can set up trailer communities for citizens that are unable to move back into their homes. They will also provide additional trailers for state and federal facilities that have suffered from flood damage. The trailer communities can last up to two years or more, giving victims' time to recover both mentally and financially.

New York District can also provide additional sandbags, if heavy rains return. Whatever the emergency, New York District is geared up and ready to serve our nation as quickly and efficiently as possible.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District, Emergency Housing Team provides assistance to citizens who are displaced by natural disasters such as flooding and hurricanes.

"The purpose of our visit to headquarters was to determine where New York District would go if deployed," said Ganley. "These levees are located on and around the Mississippi River from Iowa to St. Louis."

Ganley went on to explain that if deployed, New York District's Housing Team will probably head to Wisconsin or Illinois, where flooding has done a considerable amount of damage.





Commander's Awards 2008

Matthew Emigholz

Employee of the Year



Phillip Favret

Engineer of the Year



John Chew

Supervisor of the Year

Richard Thorsen

Professional of the Year



Anita Tulsiram

Administrator of the Year

Peter DeStephano

Leadership Award

Bruce Gardner

WG Employee of the Year

Allan Roos

Team Leader of the Year

Olivia Cackler

Outstanding Scholarship Award

Diane Rahoy

Robert Alpern

David Rackmales

Outstanding Scientific
Achievement



Mercedes Fernandez

Justin Fairly

District STAR Award

David Gentile

Ken Johnson

Spotlight Award



Teamwork of the Year Award

**Federal Creosote
Superfund Site PDT**



Evangelos Antzoulis
Gamal Awad
Thomas Cimarelli
Michael Johnson
Neal Kolb
Thomas Roche
Mandeep Talwar
Eugene Urbanik



**Project Delivery Team of the Year
NYC Hurricane Preparedness Study PDT**

Steve Berry
Thomas Creamer
Donald Cresitello
Mike Ganley
George Lamboy
Joseph Seebode
Terry Siesmen
Russell Smith
Paul Tumminello



**Outstanding Contribution
Jones Inlet Project Delivery Team**



Millie Alexoudis
Anthony Ciorra
Thomas Creamer
Donald Cresitello
Francis Postiglione
Randall Hintz
Clifford Jones

William Vanterpool
Stan Michalowski
Sandy McDonald
Diane Rahoy
Mark Forte
Alpert Rumph
Ellen Simon

Joseph Olha





USACE Transactions



Rick Alvarez of Construction Branch recently retired from the District after 30 years of Service. New York District wishes him well in his next endeavor.

Retirements

Edward Nerges, OP

Johnny M. Brunson, RMO

Richard Cicchetti, CO

New Employees

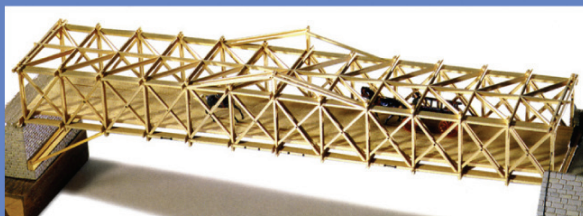
Robert Hanna, CO

Michael Scarano, OP

Farewells

Janet Fallo, PP

Corps of Engineers Historical Perspective



A Smithsonian Institution model of a Long Truss Bridge. Photo Credit: Office of History, U. S . Army Corps of Engineers.

Although the Corps is primarily an engineering and construction organization, historically it has been committed to research and development. The inventive Stephen Long, an officer who served with the U.S. Topographical Engineers, also developed a new design for railroad bridges in the mid 1830's. Although it was a private venture, he sold 20 copies of his design to his chief in Washington, Colonel John J. Abert, but it reflects the capability and industry of the engineer officer. The Long Truss Bridge was widely used and played a role in the transition from wooden to iron bridges.

*For more information about Stephen Long's work or other Corps of Engineers historical facts, please consult the Office of History, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.



Around the District

In June, New York District participated in a Fireboat Blessing Ceremony at Pier 17, South Street Seaport.



Lt. Col. Ken McDonald, Deputy District Commander, escorts future District Commander, Col. John Boule on a tour of the New York District. Col. Boule is scheduled to take command of the District in the Summer of 09.



▲ Dredging continues at Pier 86 to prepare for the return of the USS Intrepid in Oct. 2008
Photo Credit Chris Gardner
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers



Photo Credits: Dan Desmet,
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

◀ Employees aboard New York District's Gelberman, patrol New York Harbor 360 days a year in search of floatables and other debris that could be harmful to navigation.



▲ Bill Kozak and "Bobber", the Corps safety Dog, enjoy the cuisine at the Corps Annual Picnic.



Tidbits

Did you know?

By Frank Cambria



Henry Martyn Robert (May 2, 1837 – May 11, 1923) had a distinguished career in the US Army. In 1857, he graduated fourth in his class at West Point as an engineer. During the American Civil War he was assigned to the Corp of Engineers and worked on the defenses of Washington, Philadelphia, and several New England ports. He was promoted to brigadier general on April 30, 1901, and was appointed Chief of Engineers. He served until May 2, 1901, when he retired from the Army. However, BG Robert is better known as the author of Robert's Rules of Order, which became the most widely used manual of parliamentary procedure and remains today the most common parliamentary authority in the United States.



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