

The New York District Times



June 2008 Edition

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

Ft. Hamilton Cuts Ribbon on new MP Station

By Ken Wells, Public Affairs

In today's world, the need for national security has become a major priority. With that thought in mind on May 23, 2008, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District, in partnership with Fort Hamilton conducted a ribbon cutting ceremony on a new Military Police Station.

The MP Station was dedicated in the memory of Staff Sergeant James D. McNaughton, who was killed in August of 2005 in Iraq.

The new MP Station, also referred to as the Directorate of Emergency Services (DES) Building, is a state-of-the-art facility. The upper two floors of the MP Station are home to administration spaces, interrogation rooms, an arms room, the lobby, two detention cells and a fully equipped control desk platform for 24/7 operation.

The control room is designed to monitor the facility as well as the entire installation, including the base-wide fire alarm system. The Fort Hamilton Fire Chief's office will also be relocated to this new facility.

Supporting facilities include building utilities and information systems as well as storm and sanitary sewer drainage. Site improvements for the MP Station included a secured personnel parking area with a card access control entry point. From an environmental stand-point, the project also included the demolition of two buildings, of which one was a four-story housing facility on post that required the removal of asbestos and lead paint prior to their demolition.



Staff Sgt. James McNaughton's parents unveil a plaque dedicating the new Ft. Hamilton MP Station in his honor. McNaughton was killed while on active duty in Iraq in August of 2005.

From an environmental stand-point, the project also included the demolition of two buildings, of which one was a four-story housing facility on post that required the removal of asbestos and lead paint prior to their demolition.

"It took a lot of hard work to get this project completed," said Stella Marco, project manager for New York District.

"But we're very pleased with the outcome."

Ms. Marco also went on to thank Brian Jackson, a construction project engineer for New York District. "Brian's excellent management, leadership skills and positive attitude were vital to the completion of this project," she said. "We couldn't have done it without him."

The MP Station's total cost is \$7.6 million. The contractor for this project is Geomatrix Services Inc., located in Middlesex, N.J.



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In this month's Issue

New York District Welcomes New Deputy Commander

Lt. Col. Kenneth W. McDonald is the new Deputy Commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District. McDonald reported aboard June 2nd, following a tour of duty as deputy commander in Iraq with the Gulf Region Division South District, USACE. During his time with the Corps of Engineers, McDonald has held a variety command and staff positions in the United States and overseas. McDonald replaces Lt. Col. Leonard Law who moved on to take command of the Portland Recruiting Battalion.



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Colonel's Corner

District Team,

I'm happy to be writing to you once again during a time when many of you have been involved in some very notable efforts –all of them designed to further enhance the Corps of Engineers reputation and foster goodwill with many of our shareholders. During the beginning of May, I was pleased to see so many of you involved with our Earth Day celebrations.

Over the course of three weeks, District personnel participated in the annual Earth Day celebrations in Elizabeth N.J. and Rockaway Beach. These events are vital to the Corps of Engineers mission because they allow us to interact with public directly and educate them about what we do and how we do it.

They also give us an opportunity to emphasize our role of stewardship, which is a vital part of New York District's mission. The month of May also saw us begin the transition to ACE-IT, in which many of our IT functions will be handled by an outside firm. Needless to say this transition will be difficult, but I have every confidence that we will be able to handle any problems that arise.

At the end of the month, I had the pleasure of giving the commencement speech at the ribbon cutting ceremony for the new MP Station at Fort Hamilton. The station was dedicated to Staff Sgt. James D. McNaughton, a brave military police reservist and NYPD officer who was killed while on active duty in Iraq in August of 2005.

This ceremony was attended by the garrison command as well as many of NYPD's finest and to say it was an honor to give the commencement speech would be an understatement. Staff Sgt. McNaughton's parents were presented with a plaque honoring his memory and as I watched this ceremony I was both proud and humbled to be in attendance. We should be very proud of delivering this new facility to the garrison and our part in dedicating it to Staff Sgt. McNaughton.

This month New York District also bid farewell to our deputy commander Lt. Col. Leonard Law, who will be moving on to take command of the Portland Recruiting Battalion. Having spent the past two years working with Lt. Col. Law, I can say that he is one of the finest officers I've ever served with and that his presence will be sorely missed within the district.

At the same time we are very pleased to welcome our new deputy commander, Lt. Col. Kenneth McDonald, who comes to us after spending the past twenty months working as deputy commander in Iraq with the Gulf Region Division South District, USACE.

We are now past the halfway point in FY08 and I am very pleased at where we are in executing our huge program for the year. We still have plenty to accomplish in FY08 but I'm confident we will meet all of our goals. 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!

Students soak up Army Corps workshops (with SpongeBob's help)

By JoAnne Castagna, Ed.D

A young female school student from New York Public School 43, stands on the Rockaway Beach boardwalk and gently pokes a lifeless yellow mound lying on the bottom of a water tank, "What's this?" she asks.

"It's a yellow sea sponge - like the cartoon character, SpongeBob SquarePants, but unlike Bob this sponge doesn't have eyes, legs, arms or a brain," explains Lisa Baron, a project manager with the Corps' Harbor Programs Branch.

The girl was stunned as were her classmates surrounding her. It seems the students didn't make a connection between the popular cartoon character and the marine life that live in the waters right behind their school that sits on Far Rockaway Beach, a peninsula on the south shore of Queens, New York.

This was the aim of the Rockaway Waterfront Alliance that asked the Corps to visit the students who are unaware of the beach protection work the Corps performs on Far Rockaway Beach. The Corps held workshops for the student's right on the beach.

A dredging workshop was provided by Douglas Leite, project manager, New York District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Leite informed the students about the dredging work the Corps is performing off their shore and how it's beneficial to their community.



Students learn about the marine life in the waters off Rockaway Beach courtesy of Lisa Baron, project manager, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District

Over the years Far Rockaway Beach has eroded due to a number of reasons including severe storms over the years. To help replenish the shoreline, the Corps dredges the East Rockaway Inlet and places sand back onto the beach.

In a Sea Life Workshop, Baron told the students that during dredging operations, the Corps does all it can to protect marine life in their natural habitat. The Corps uses deflectors to prevent sea turtles from getting caught in a dredge. Dredging work is done when species are not present.

Robert Smith, project biologist with the Corps' New York District collected the critters from the East Rockaway Inlet.

He talked to students along the beach about threatened and endangered species and how the Corps is taking measures to protect them.

One of these is the Piping Plover, a threatened shorebird due to beach erosion. Smith created a mock Piping Plover egg hunt for the students to show them what Piping Plover eggs and nests look like.

During their hunt he told the students that by the Corps building up the beaches with sand they are creating a habitat for the birds to nest and care for their young.

Federal Employees News In Brief (FENIB)

Federal employee news that you may have missed:

Telework: The Senate Appropriations Committee has approved a measure to expand telework for federal employees. The committee adopted an amendment by a voice vote on May 15th. The amendment would require agencies to allow eligible employees to work at home or at a telework center for at least 20 percent of a two week work period. The amendment mirrors the language of two pieces of telework legislation currently moving through the House and Senate. OPM had launched an interagency telework website, www.telework.gov. The site features a series of user-friendly improvements designed to make telework information more accessible and understandable to both Government employees and managers. The site was developed in partnership with the General Services Administration, OPM's telework.gov. partner.

TSP: The Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board announced that effective May 1, 2008 Thrift Savings Plan participants are limited to two interfund transfers per calendar month. Three House members who oversee the Thrift Savings Plan have proposed opening the program to new investment options, including a Roth feature that would allow tax-free withdrawals of retirement savings. The proposal, in the form of a bill drawn up for discussion purposes only, would also require agencies to automatically enroll new employees in the TSP and, if they did not select an investment, place them in an age appropriate "life-cycle fund" instead of the current short term government securities fund.

Military and Civilian Raises: House lawmakers are proposing larger than average pay raises for military personnel for the next five years. If approved, federal civilian employees will typically be given the same raise. The 2009 Defense authorization bill passed by the House Armed Services Committee would require military pay raises from 2010 to 2013 to be a half-percentage point higher than the employment cost index (ECI)—the annual increase in wages and salaries for workers in the private sector. For 2009, the bill would provide military services members would an average 3.9 percent pay raise. In nearly every year for the last 20 years, Congress has given equal raises to civilian employees and military personnel.

Dependent Health Care: The House Oversight and Government Reform Federal Workforce Subcommittee passed a bill increasing the maximum age under which children of federal employees can qualify for dependent coverage through the government's health benefits program. Currently, the federal government cuts off health coverage for dependents on their 22nd birthday. The measure would raise the maximum age of unmarried dependents up to age 25.

Parental Leave: A Bill was introduced and passed by a full House committee that would pay new moms and dads, including adoptive parents, for four of their 12 weeks of eligible leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act. The remaining eight weeks of available leave would remain as unpaid under the bill HR 5781, the Federal Employees Paid Parental Leave Act. Supporters are encouraged that this may be the year this important benefit is approved.

USACE Transactions

Retirements

Yuri Prizel, EN
David J. Brouwer, PP

Farewell

Jenine Gallo, PL
Alisa Pittman, RE
James E. Hill, RE
Joanne Crawford, CO

New Employees

James Cuilla, CO
Sandra Friedrich, CO
Kevin O'Brien, CO
Kam Yin Chen, CO
LaDonna Davis, PAO
Christopher Gardner, PAO
Perlita Cadawan, CT
Christina Carney, OP



David Brouwer of Environmental Branch has called it quits after 30 years of service. The New York District wishes him well in his next endeavor.

NOTE

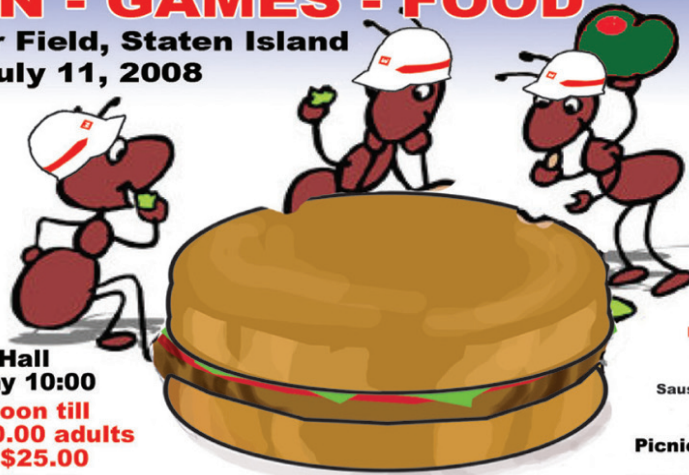
Please send achievements, births and obituaries to the editor at: kenneth.wells@nan02.usace.army.mil so they can be published in a timely manner.

 New York District

Employee Recognition Day

FUN - GAMES - FOOD

Miller Field, Staten Island
Fri. July 11, 2008



Town Hall Ceremony 10:00
Picnic Noon till 3:30pm \$20.00 adults at door \$25.00
\$7 Children(5 to 11)

Activities... Beach bathing (access 1/4 mile north of Picnic site) Volleyball, softball, basketball, children's playground, organized games, etc.

Menu... Burgers (Beef & Veg.)
Hot Dogs, Ribs, BBQ Chicken, Sausage & Peppers, Salads, Fruit, Soft Drinks

Picnic Tickets are available in RM Division Office. See Joe Hirschy or Annette Austin

Buses will leave 26 Federal Plaza at 08:45 and return after the Awards Ceremony 11:45 and after the picnic at 3:45. * Rain date: August 1 Miller Field, Staten Island, same bus schedule.



Around the District

CENAN Photos



New York District extends a fond farewell to Lt. Col. Leonard Law as he leaves to take command of the Portland Recruiting Battalion.

Maj. Trinidad Gonzalez Jr. has been reassigned to Ft. Leavenworth, KS. The New York District wishes him the best.



Stella Marco, project manager for New York District, gets an up close and personal view of the Ft. Hamilton MP station holding cell.

Congratulations to the 2008 FEB Award Winners



Attorney General
Michael B. Mukasey
Guest Speaker & Awards
presenter at the May 16, 2008
FEB Awards

Nancy Brighton, PL-E
Distinguished Scientific Achievement

Cheryl Mesa, CO-WD
Outstanding Administrative Support

New York City Water Supply Security
Enhancement Team
Outstanding Teamwork

Tidbits

Did you know?



James Brendan Connolly (1868-1957) was the first winner of an Olympic Gold Medal, a veteran of the charge up San Juan Hill during the Spanish-American War, candidate for Congress in 1911 (Progressive Party), and one of America's foremost writers of maritime tales, having authored some 25 full-length works and more than 200 contributions to journals and newspapers. He also served with the Savannah District, U. S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Born in Boston one of twelve children, he went South to join his brother Michael who worked for the Savannah District Army Corps of Engineers. With his help he obtained a position with the Corps. He served in various positions, including clerk, recorder of tidal and river current fluctuations, and dredge inspector.



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of Engineers®**
New York District

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