

# The New York District Times



Fall 2004 Vol. 29, No. 3

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

## Partnership agreement key to project success

By Ivan Damaso

Planning Division

On Sept. 30, 2004, the New York District and the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation signed a Project Cooperation Agreement to build an ecosystem restoration project at Gerritsen Creek, Marine Park, Brooklyn, N.Y.

The project's estimated cost is \$6 million, and will serve to restore aquatic and coastal grassland habitats within this portion of Jamaica Bay within the greater Hudson Raritan Estuary. This is hoped to be the first small piece of an ambitious harbor-wide ecosystem restoration effort. The Water Resources Development Act of 1986 armed the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers with the important new mission area of ecosystem restoration. This recent agreement represents the first such document to be completed by New York District.

The creek in the northeastern section of Marine Park has been adversely affected as a result of over 100 years of dredging and filling activities related to the construction, maintenance, and improvement of a large network of navigation channels within Jamaica Bay.

The project will restore 20.5 acres of salt marsh and 15 acres of rare coastal grassland lying near the junction of Gerritsen Creek and Mill Creek, immediately west of Floyd Bennett Field.

The recommended plan will increase the twice-daily tidal inundation across the project site and con-



Photo: Dan Desmet

Col. Richard J. Polo Jr., District Engineer signs the project cooperation agreement for the Gerritsen Creek ecosystem restoration project on Sept. 30. (l-r) Kerry Donahue, Robin Bergfore, Col. Polo, Dan Falt, project manager, Ellen Simon, Christopher Ricciardi and Paul Sabalis.

vert the phragmites-dominated areas to healthier tidal ecosystems. Planned improvements include careful excavation of filled areas, replanting of native species, and the creation of tidal creeks to benefit many fish and wildlife species in the area. The project will restore ecological functions and thereby promote overall increased levels of habitat diversity and value. The recommended plan maximizes the restoration of tidal salt marshes while minimizing total project costs. Subject to the availability of Federal funds in 2005, the final design will be completed and construction activities will begin.

The Gerritsen Creek project delivery team faced a number of challenges in preparing the restoration plan and completing the feasibility report and environmental assessment.

*(Continued on page 4)*



9-11-01  
Lest we forget

### New York District Times

Newsletter of the  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers,  
New York District

Fall 2004

September - October 2004

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US Army Corps  
of Engineers®  
New York District

## Regional Management Board a 'region-centric' model

By David Lipsky, North Atlantic Division

USACE 2012 was launched officially Oct. 1, when the Corps gave up 'stovepipes' and moved on to a new project-focused design.

One of the future key management tools will be for the organization to operate as a Regional Business Center through its Regional Management Board rather than as six separate districts and a division headquarters.

The North Atlantic Division Regional Management Board was established in May 1998 as a tool to balance workload, staffing and funding.

The RMB meets bi-monthly to address the issues facing the Corps in the northeast and Europe. Mohan Singh, who serves as the NAD Director of Regional Business, leads the RMB with Tom Waters, the NAD Director of Programs as the alternate chair.

Other members include the chiefs of the NAD business resource and business management divisions and the RMB executive directors.

Other members include the NAD Chief, Business Resource Division, the NAD Chief, Business Management Division and the RMB Executive Director. All six districts are represented by their deputy district engineers for Programs and Project Management. Currently, the New England and Baltimore District resource management officers also serve on the board. In addition, other district representatives may be appointed as approved by the division commander, which usually rotates every 15-24 months.

*(Continued on page 3)*



The RMB met Sept.13-15 in Egg Harbor City, NJ.

### REGIONAL MANAGEMENT BOARD

#### GOALS

- Implement Annual Work Plan as reviewed and approved by BOT.
- Assist the BOT in identifying long-term RBC issues and developing strategic plans, etc.
- Develop and maintain a Regional Business Plan.
- Develop effective, efficient, and consistent business practices.
- Advise the BOT on regional resource demands, workload forecasting, and management.
- Formulate recommendations to the BOT to facilitate division and district organizations acting as a single business entity.
- Promote and enhance teamwork.
- Create a corporate climate.
- Optimize the use of resources in the region.
- Develop work force needs and capabilities for the region.

## RMB (from page 2)

As the strategic arm for the NAD board of trustees (division and district commanders, SESs), the regional management board implements the focus areas established by the board of trustees.

The RMB met Sept. 13-15 in Egg Harbor City, N.J. The first item on the agenda was a ten-minute videotape, where Brig. Gen. Bo Temple, commander, North Atlantic Division, spoke about year-end execution, regionalized functions along with the milestones ahead, several future state studies and actualization of the Regional Business Center.

“We are shifting from a district-centric operation to a regional-centric operation,” he said, add-



ing, “Execution will not go away from the districts.”

Temple told the RMB members that they need to help define what the future RBC should look like and to flesh out the strategic communication plan.

“The NAD Regional Management Board is a great example of teamwork in action and serves as a model for being regional-centric and not district-centric,” said Paul Giovinco, executive director, RMB.

The records on all Regional Management Board meetings may be found at <https://rbc.nado.ds.usace.army.mil/RMB/rmb.htm>

## Veterans Day 2004

*The brave men and women of our Armed Forces have historically given their blood, sweat, and tears to protect and defend our rights to live free in our great country. From colonial times to the present, they have met and overcome every challenge to our freedom, both here and abroad. They remain vigilant 24 hours a day, seven days a week to ensure that freedom is never threatened.*

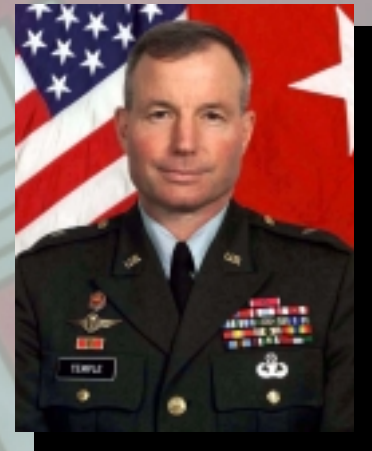
*They fully apply their time, their physical well being, their minds, hearts and souls. They endure physical hardships and long family separations. In some cases, they sacrifice their very lives, so that we can enjoy all the benefits of being Americans.*

*On Veterans Day, let's reflect on the efforts of all our veterans, past and present, pay tribute to their achievements and their sacrifices, and honor their memory. Take a moment to think about them, and give thanks for all that they do and have done for our great Nation. I wish you and yours a safe, happy, and healthy holiday.*

*Brig. Gen. Bo Temple*

*Commander, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers*

*North Atlantic Division*



Brig. Gen. Bo Temple



## Gerritsen Creek (from page 1)

Synchronizing the often very different roles and mandates of these two agencies required persistence, flexibility, and a great team attitude. Frequent team meetings and open lines of communication aided the team in surmounting policy and design issues to achieve consensus.



The project area lies within the Jamaica Bay watershed in Marine Park, Brooklyn N.Y. (Photo: Dan Falt)

The Gerritsen Creek project is being implemented under Section 1135, WRDA 1986 of the Corps' Continuing Authorities Program. The CAP is aimed at addressing water resources problems of limited scope and complexity on an expedited basis through a set of standing legislative authorities that do not require specific acts of Congress to set in motion.

"Restoration at Gerritsen Creek must be viewed in the greater context of the heavily developed and urbanized part of the New York Harbor," said Paul Sabalis, team leader. "It is a small but important step in advancing critical ecosystem restoration initiatives."

As such, Gerritsen Creek restorative measures constitute a first step for restoration of the entire New York Harbor area under the much larger Hudson Raritan Estuary feasibility study. The HRE study began in 2001, when acting under a specific authorization from Congress, the Corps signed a cost-sharing agreement with the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey to conduct a large-scale ecosystem restoration study for the port district, radiating outward 25 miles from the Statue of Liberty in New York Harbor.

"This study is a vital effort aimed at developing a holistic approach to restoration in the harbor estuary," added Sabalis. "The estuary is a partially enclosed body of water, influenced by tides, where salt water and fresh water mixing occurs. These transitional areas in nature tend to support unique, high-value communities of plants and animals. Resources in such settings are generally scarce, significant and interconnected. This study seeks to take a multi-pronged approach toward comprehensive restoration."

Short-term goals include the fast track construction of restoration sites under CAP or other

authorities, and the full development of alternatives for specific interim HRE sites. Another important goal is the completion of the Comprehensive Restoration Implementation Plan, which will act as a master plan for the overall restoration of the Harbor area.

"The Corps looks forward to continuing future work with the City of New York on other

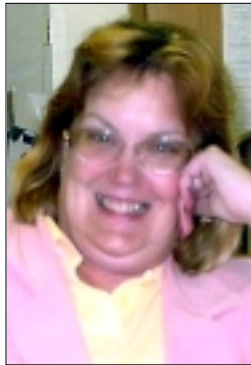
HRE study area sites as Spring Creek, Jamaica Bay Marsh Islands, Gowanus Canal, Sherman Creek, and Newtown Creek," said Sabalis. "As the HRE study area includes the tidally influenced portions of rivers including the Hackensack, Passaic, Raritan Shrewsbury, Harlem, and East Rivers and Long Island Sound, the results of other parallel study efforts may also be incorporated into the CRIP."

The project and the HRE feasibility study are supported by a broad consortium of resource agencies, interest groups and the public. The CRIP is far more complex in terms of understanding degradation mechanisms and potential solutions and will take additional time and resources to complete. Execution timeframes to bringing Gerritsen Creek to construction and the HRE CRIP to fruition will depend upon Federal funding constraints and Administration priorities. But the fact remains that progress is being made with resolve, and a master plan for the future beckons all to be responsible stewards for the environment.

"This Gerritsen team has developed a fantastic ecosystem restoration project, and we are all very excited to begin construction," said Daniel Falt, project manager. "We hope that this is just the beginning of great partnership between the USACE and the City of New York Department of Parks and Recreation."

Going a step further, there is much excitement in the air about HRE and the CRIP, of which Gerritsen Creek forms an integral part. And hopefully, the HRE and the CRIP will be the road map that all interested parties and partners can follow in a spirit of cooperation to bring the harbor closer to a restored, enhanced and sustainable environmental state."

# Taps



**Wendy Smith**

**Wendy Smith** of CENAN-CO passed away Sept. 14. She was a secretary with the Corps' Environmental Residency Office at Fort Monmouth, N.J.



**John Sasson**

**John Sasson**, of the Picatinny Field Office passed away Oct. 13, 2004. John is survived by his two brothers, Richard and Steven Sasson, and his long-time friend, Emily Springer.

# Announcements



Henry "Bud" Kiefer of Planning Division retired Sept. 30. Keifer was a long time member of New York District. Colleagues and friends made donations to the New York Firefighters Burn Center Fund in lieu of a parting gift per his request.

## Milestone

Tom Hodson has accepted the position as Chief Plan Formulation Branch, Planning Division, New York District.

# Autumn Departures

Corps Departures  
September 2004

- Rick Racklin, IM
- Ina Ohrwashel, CO
- Yip Ng, EN
- Isabelita Huerto, EN
- Nestor Lim, EN
- Joseph Gedeon, EN
- Henry Kiefer, PL
- Honesto Castanada, PPMD

## New Jersey nuptials



Jeffrey T. Fry and Lynn Rakos, both of Planning Division tied the knot Oct. 10 at a ceremony held in the First Presbyterian Church, Perth Amboy, NJ. "Our reception was held at the Proprietary House, home of William Franklin, Ben's son, New Jersey's last Royal Governor where I used to volunteer as a docent, also in Perth Amboy," said Lynn.



## Stork Club

Annette Austin of RMO is the proud mother of a 7 lb. 4 oz. baby boy. Joshua Austin-Dey was born Oct. 28.

# What a day it was!

By Col. Richard J. Polo Jr.  
Special Sports Reporter

In late August, the summer weather could not have been better. Clear, bright and 75 degrees, it was as good as it gets on planet Earth.

In the middle of the greatest city in the world stands an oasis. Affectionately known as Central Park, it's a famous refuge that is sacrosanct to New Yorkers and supports too many activities to list. Last night, in the middle of that park, the most important event ... which was free ... was the semi-final playoff game of the two-division, 18-team New York City Architect-Engineer Softball League.

The winner of that game would advance to the championship, gold-medal round. You guessed it, our district was playing and we fielded a magnificent team. With a regular season record of 12-2, I would have given a lot to have had my youngest daughter with me watching this great Product Delivery (softball) Team. Why? Because when I asked her if she might be an engineer someday, she laughed and said engineers are nerds and geeks just like her dad.

Well, had she been there yesterday, she would have seen how wrong she was, for every district ballplayer was an engineer (with a little e) and an athlete.

I was struck by how good they were, but then look at the record.

The last District team that was this good was the 1954 team; if you don't believe me, the trophy from the A-E league from that year is on display in our hallway.

Playing tough ball, I was inspired not only by their athletic ability but by their camaraderie and teamwork. It's always great to see people playing as hard as they work and having fun while they are at it!

Frank Verga, the coach and power hitter, could have chosen another profession. Lenny Houston, a senior branch chief,



**2004 Powerhouse.** (l-r) Top row: Cliff Jones, Franklin Rodriguez, Paul Sabalis, Jim Haggerty, John Downing, Frank Verga, Kevin Smyth. Center row: Juan Pineiro, Ron Pinzon, Howard Rubin, Brian Orzel. Bottom row: Freddie Bilbao, Lenny Houston, Jason Shea, Anthony Schiano, Ed Wrocenski.

led the way, with knees on his bandages as our ace catcher ... for the 23rd year in a row. Our PDT member from Division, was none other than Jim Haggerty. I could go on and on.

Though the score see-sawed back and forth, we lost a close one by only two runs. The loss was really, really hard ... especially since we had already beaten this team once before in the regular season.

The team did not advance to the championship round, but they walked off the field winners!

See you next year when we win it all!



Spectators cheer on the District softball team at the semi-final playoff game at Central Park.



Frank Verga, coach and power hitter at bat.



# District Engineer recognizes superstars at October ceremony

## COMMANDER'S AWARDS 2004

**EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR**  
David Rackmales

**COMMANDER'S LEADERSHIP AWARD**  
Allan Roos

**PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR**  
Joseph Valade

**ENGINEER OF THE YEAR**  
Kerry Anne Donahue

**SUPERVISOR OF THE YEAR**  
Lawrence Mazzola

**OUTSTANDING SCIENTIFIC ACHIEVEMENT AWARD**  
Jennifer Irish  
Brian Williams

**OUTSTANDING GOVERNMENT CONTRIBUTION AWARD**  
Raritan Arsenal Team  
Jim Moore  
Bob Gouze  
Maxine Colden  
Barbara Hebel  
Jim Kelly (CENAE)  
Rose Schmidt (CENAE)  
Ian Osgerby (CENAE)  
Cliff Opdyke (CENAB)

**HEALTH AND SAFETY AWARD**  
Michael Johnson

**SERVICE TO THE ARMY AWARD**  
Michael O'Sullivan

**WAGE GRADE EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR**  
Timothy Lafontaine

**COMMANDER'S MANAGEMENT SUPPORT ASSISTANT OF THE YEAR**  
Charles Monroe Jr.



**SPECIAL THANKS FOR ACHIEVING RESULTS AWARD**  
Ellen Simon

**PEERS OUTSTANDING SERVICE TROPHY AWARD 2003**  
Joseph Mulle

**NEW YORK DISTRICT CASTLE AWARD**  
Anthony Mustillo

**CERTIFICATES OF APPRECIATION HURRICANE ISABEL**  
John Canby  
Koko Cronin  
John Kenney  
Daniel Lee  
Doug Leite  
Milton Ricks

**SERVICE CITATION FROM THE COALITION PROVISIONAL AUTHORITY, IRAQ**  
Richard Bulvid  
Carolyn Vadino

**CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT FROM THE COLD REGIONS RESEARCH AND ENGINEERING LABORATORY**  
Michael Ganley

**U.S. AIR FORCE CIVILIAN PROJECT MANAGER OF THE YEAR**  
Stella Marco



## PROJECT DELIVERY TEAM OF THE YEAR

Fort Drum's Battle Simulation Project Team  
Dave Chew  
Claudio Sang  
Antonio Sian  
Ed Sim  
Thomas Sessa  
Regina Flynn  
Stan Bloom  
Richard Lavoie  
Janice Lauletta  
John Cimmino  
Elana Manno  
John Alaskewicz  
Freddy Bilbao  
Matthew Walsh  
Michael Williams  
Chi Lau  
Rodney Abrams  
Norma Smith

**TEAMWORK AWARD**  
Information Management  
Wardwell Leo  
Carolyn Carter  
Darrell Crawford  
Anastasiya Farber  
Khie Go  
John Griffin  
Jean Hui  
Harry Isom  
Walter Knoop  
George Lamboy  
Tyra McManus  
Thanh Nguyen  
Quangthanh Nguyen  
Vincent Perrera  
Juan Pineiro  
Rick Racklin  
Bhavesh Shah  
Gustavo Sierra-Gonzalez  
Maxine Sistrunk  
Alexander Sheldon  
Michael Soroka  
Wesley Terry  
Jerry Ye  
King Yee





## News Clips



### Major MOU signed

Col. Richard J. Polo Jr., District Engineer and Paul Rabinovich, executive director of the Long Island Chapter of the Nature Conservancy, signed a memorandum of understanding in August. The MOU documents a mutual commitment to work together to address Long Island's complex coastal and ecological challenges and to work in partnership to advance ecosystem restoration opportunities.

### Computers donated to school

Six Corps computers were donated in September to St. Joseph's School, West Orange, NJ. Lynda Wright, principal was on hand to accept the computers. People from Logistics arranged for the transfer.



(l-r) Col. Richard J. Polo Jr., District Engineer; Lynda Wright, Ann Hoffa, and Michael Murphy and Robert Goldfarb of Logistics who made the transfer arrangements.

(Photo: Ken Wells)



Photo: Vince Elias

### Women's Equality Day

Roz Li, architect and president of Li Saltzman Architects, was the guest speaker at this year's Women's Equality Program. Li spoke to a diverse audience of Corps employees about her early life and how she overcame challenges in the work force.

### Corps assist with documentary

In August the Corps assisted in filming a major news network documentary entitled, *The First Patient: Health and the Presidency*. It features Dr. Sanjay Gupta, a news medical correspondent.

The Corps provided assistance that enabled Dr. Gupta to film near Pier A at Battery Park City, the location where President Grover Cleveland had surgery - - which was revealed 34 years later.



(r-l) Lt. Col. Kurt Hoffmann, Deputy Commander, Sanjay Gupta, M.D., and Peter Shugert, chief, public affairs at the filming location.



# Corps and community celebrate Estuary Day

Early in the morning of Oct. 23 the Corps' Estuary Day PDT team loaded up a truck with poster boards and literature and headed to Elizabeth, N.J., to celebrate Estuary Day, an annual event.



Lt. Col. Kurt Hoffmann, deputy commander and 15 experts from PPMD, Construction, Operations, Harbor Programs Branch and Planning Division set up posterboard exhibits, with Public Affairs covering the event. Over 300 students from four area high schools participated.

Using three information stations, the District explained the importance of the estuary in the Port of New York and New Jersey and the role of the Corps in general, with emphasis on the Corps' environmental operating principles and civil works skill sets being used.

Hoffmann made the opening remarks and presented District coins to the mayor of Elizabeth and Future City organizers, who were the sponsors of the event.



Photos: Peter Shugert

Mark Lulka interacts with students during a poster board exhibit, a featured event.



Hal Hawkins and Rick Alvarez engage students in conversation about the Corps involvement in the estuaries program.



< Nancy Brighton educates students about the Corps relationship with the area estuaries.



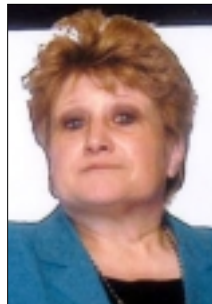
Ron Brattain speaks about the Corps and estuaries in the area during classroom activities.

## Corps Estuary Day PDT members

- Rick Alvarez, CO
- Ron Brattain, PL
- Nancy Brighton, PL
- Felix Chevere, CO
- Kingsley Findlay, CO
- Sherif Guirgis, CO
- Julie Ha, PPMD
- Hal Hawkins, PPMD
- Bonnie Hulkower, PL
- Jeff Kumor, CO
- Mark Lulka, PPMD
- Anthony Schiano, PL
- Pete Shugert, PAO
- Debra Smith, PPMD
- Thomas Wyche, OPS



## New York Federal Executive Board 2004 Federal Employees of the Year New York District Awardees



**Gayle Crisci**  
Program Assistant Award



**Marty Goff**  
Diversity Enhancement  
Award



**Michael Williams**  
Community Service  
Award



**Maj. Donald Pincus**  
Field Force  
Engineering Team  
Teamwork Award  
Maj. Pincus is now with Walla  
Walla District

## USACE Coin Recipients

Presented by Lt. Gen. Carl A. Strock  
Commander, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers



**Betsy Andujar, OP**



**Estelle Capowski, EEO**



**James Demetriou,**  
PPMD Mil Programs



**Bethany Bearmore, EN**



**Jerry Valade, CO**



**C. William Johnson, RE**



**Randall Hintz, OP**



**Kevin Smyth, PL**



**Frank Santangelo, EN**



**Elaine Shipman, RM**



## Hats off

### District supports hurricane response and recovery mission

Hundreds of Corps personnel nationwide, including staff from New York District traveled to the southeast, primarily Florida, in response to recovery efforts for four major hurricanes that made landfall in Florida during the months of August and September 2004: August 13, Hurricane Charley; September 5, Hurricane Frances; September 16, Hurricane Ivan; and September 25, Hurricane Jeanne.



Doug Leite of New York District, working with the Temporary Housing Team in the Hurricane Charley Emergency Response Operations Office.

#### District personnel involved in the success of the Corps' response and recovery mission:

James Cannon, Quality Assurance Roofing Inspector  
 Koko Cronin, NEPA Compliance Manager  
 Christine Delorier, NEPA Compliance Manager  
 Barbara Dindl, Logistic Assistant  
 Patricia Donohue, Mission Specialist  
 Marzena Ellis, Quality Assurance Roofing Inspector  
 Juan Escajadillo, Quality Assurance Housing Inspector  
 Michael Ganley, Asst. Emergency Support Team Leader  
 Bob Hass, Logistics Assistant

Fred Herman, Quality Assurance Housing Inspector  
 Joseph Humet, Quality Assurance Inspector  
 Douglas Leite, Mission Manager  
 Raymond Lo, Safety and Health Specialist  
 Abraham Portalatin, Safety & Occupational Health Manager  
 Brad Sherwood, Quality Assurance Roofing Inspector  
 Kevin Smyth, Site Engineer  
 Michael Vissichelli, Action Officer  
 Michael Wojcicki, Site Engineer  
 Jerry Ye, Database Manager

## Corps crew hoists plane from Jamaica Bay

The crew of the Corps vessel *Driftmaster* sprung into action in July following notification that a small airplane crashed into Jamaica Bay, Queens. The *Driftmaster* crew hoisted the plane out of the water by its tail section and placed it onto a barge.

The plane was flying along the Long Island shore and pulling an advertising banner when it crashed.

The plane was towed to Rockaway and turned over to the National Transportation Safety Board.



Photos: Caven Point Office



## Around the region

### Corps oversees water main relocation in Vermont

Richford, Vermont, was the site of an Oct. 23 meeting for representatives from New York District, the town of Richford and Engineers Construction, Inc. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss construction plans for a two-month project to relocate the town's water main. The present water main runs under the Missisquoi River and has been exposed to severe erosion. The two-month project is scheduled to be completed in late December.

A section of the water main will be replaced by a new pipe which will be installed far below the river. A directional drilling method will be used to install the new pipe. The project delivery team members are Marty Goff, Megan Grubb, Robert Hass, Jenifer Thalhauser, Karl Ahlen, Jason Shea, and Jodi McDonald. Construction is contracted to Engineers Construction, Inc., and is managed by Kevin Merenda and Donald Braun of the Corps.



Photo: Jason Shea

Corps at town of Richford, Vt. Bottom row (l-r): Jen Thalhauser, CENAN; Gary Snider, Margaret Larivee, and Gary Shover, Town of Richford. Top row (l-r): Donald Braun, CENAN; Mo Hail, ECI; Kevin Merenda, CENAN and Tod Cote, ECI.

### Corps teams visit two upstate N.Y. projects

Members of the Corps of Engineers and the New York City Watershed Environmental Assistance Program team visited a few projects in August. The team visited the Esopus Creek Stream in upstate New York.

They discussed the work being done on the stream located in Ulster County, N.Y.



Rifat Salim, project manager (center) speaks with Dan Davis of the NYC DEP as JoAnne Castagna, PPMD tech writer takes notes.

In October, team members with the New York City Watershed Environmental Assistance Program visited the Akindale Farm in Pawling, N.Y. As part of the program, the farm, which breeds and trains Thoroughbred race horses, is performing best management practices that will help to protect the water supply and at the same time sustain farm operations.

Rifat Salim, project manager interacts at the Akindale Farm, Pawling, NY.

# Two icons inducted into District Hall of Fame



Samuel P. Tosi

Samuel P. Tosi, long-time Corps and District employee now with North Atlantic Division, was inducted into the New York District Hall of Fame Oct. 15, 2004.



(l-r) Col. Richard J. Polo, Delores Tosi, Samuel Tosi. Tosi accepted the award accompanied by his wife Delores. He was inducted in recognition of his career with the Corps that spanned several decades.



John R. Hartmann

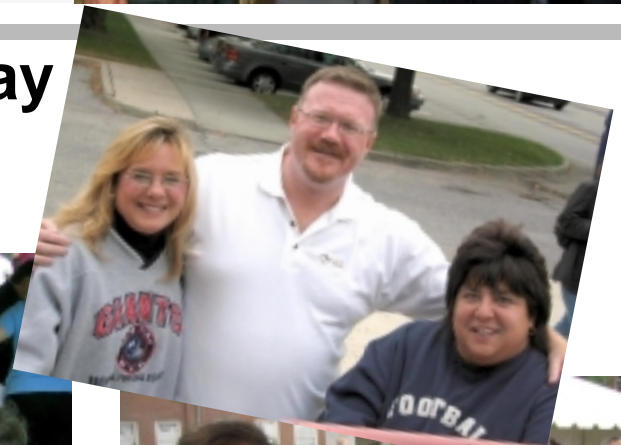
John Hartmann was inducted into the Hall of Fame Oct. 15. His wife Toba accepted the award with children Andrew, Paul, Karin and Valerie present. Also present were friends, Lawrence Perrotta, Lauren Ehrenbert and Nelson Dorado. Hartmann was the Chief of Operations for many years before he passed away in 2003.

Col. Richard J. Polo Jr. and Karin, Andrew, Toba, Paul and Valerie Hartmann at the induction ceremony.



## Employees gather for day of fun under the sun

### Picnic October 15 at Fort Hamilton



PHOTOS STEVE WEINBERG

## Construction Division gathers at annual meeting

Twenty-four resident engineers, team leaders and key personnel from New York District met in September at the annual Construction Division Area/Resident Engineer Conference held in Newburgh, N.Y.

Conference participants were from four of the District's area and project offices representing Northern New York, Metro, and Northern and Southern New Jersey.

Rick Alvarez, Chief of Construction Division made the opening remarks, and the featured guest speakers were Col. Richard J. Polo, Jr., District Engineer, and Anthony Levesanos, of Programs and Project Management Division.

Each year, the chief of Construction Division chairs the off-site conference in an interactive forum to discuss a myriad of topics that include global issues affecting the District and their impacts on Construction organization, manpower and resources, construction technical and contract administration focus areas, and to exchange lessons learned.

"Col. Polo shared his perspective of some the District's key mission areas, goals, and challenges to include the execution of the Civil Works program, most notably in the harbor, recruitment opportunities for overseas missions in Iraq and Afghanistan, hurricane relief missions in the South, and the Corps' 2012 initiative, among others," said Alvarez.

A future year Construction Division financial program overview was presented by George DeMarinis, chief, Administrative Services Section. DeMarinis was followed by individual area program briefs from each of the four area engineers beginning with David Leach of the Metro Area, John Sasson of the Northern New Jersey Area, Lt. Col. Taras Jemetz of the Southern New Jersey Area, and finally, Dominick Passantino of the West Point Area.

"The intent of the briefs were to highlight trends in the military, civil and Superfund programs within each of the areas, identify shifts in workloads, and to spur further discussion on potential resource sharing to efficiently execute the out-year construc-



Conference attendees assembled for a group photo prior to touring the U.S. Military Academy, West Point \$70 million plus Arvin Physical Development Center facility currently under construction.

tion program," added Alvarez.

Alvarez began the afternoon session with a team building exercise entitled "Sizing Up the Need for Team Building" using excerpts from the American Management Association, Executive Matters Newsletter, August 2004 issue. The exercise included a question and answer session with participants receiving a score on a scale of 1 (low) to 5 (high). Passantino of the West Point Area obtained the highest score, reflecting that his "work unit" was a well functioning team.

Alvarez also gave a briefing on reasons for volunteering that featured a five-minute video of a major project in Puerto Rico in which he had served in a two year voluntary assignment as project director.

As conference participants were unable to attend the District's "Recruitment Road Show" in support of the War on Terror, they instead benefited from this dissertation on volunteerism, including the personal satisfaction one gains as well as the good it does for the organization.

Alvarez embellished his brief with the example of the project in Puerto Rico, a \$2.1 billion heavy rail transit system presently undergoing commissioning for operations in that commonwealth, a project that brought him a wealth of personal satisfaction and achievement.

*(Continued on page 15)*

## Construction meeting (from page 14)

He concluded this part of the conference by encouraging the Construction Division leaders to be mentors to their staff in support for District missions as well as in developing and retaining a capable and flexible core of employees within their respective offices.

The afternoon session moved along with Alvarez discussing his focus areas as chief of the Construction Division.

On the contract administration front, Alvarez touched upon BCOE, an acronym he said stands for “bidability, constructability, operability and environmental” used for reviews with an emphasis on ‘operability’ and customer involvement and contract performance tools with emphasis on timely usage.”

With regard to resources, Alvarez provided his thoughts on management in the field with emphasis on roles and responsibilities of the area engineers, resident engineers, team leaders and project engineers, including District support from Contracting.

He explained how vital it is to achieve customer satisfaction and challenges faced in managing customers, users, stakeholders and their expectations.

Peter Destefano, chief of Quality Assurance gave a briefing on ACO warranting, red zone check lists, and systems commissioning. Rudy Khalil, also of Quality Assurance followed with a RMS/P2 interface briefing that generated much discussion.

“The most spirited exchanges ensued when the subject of balancing human resources with workload projections and finding opportunities for displaced positions was broached,” said Alvarez. “It was mutually decided that the area engineers would review their



(r-l) Col. Richard J. Polo Jr., District Engineer and Rick Alvarez, chief of the Construction Division. All participants received a Certificate of Successful Completion and were awarded 1.5 Professional Development Units or Continuous Learning Hours.

FY05 placement projections as it related to what contract awards were made.”

“Engineers are continually encouraged to pursue professional development to maintain their Professional Engineer credentials and to remain knowledgeable through various training opportunities, seminar attendance, on the job training in an effort to remain relevant to the industry and our customers. For his participation, Col. Polo was first to receive the Certificate of Successful Completion,” said Alvarez. “Thanks to the participants and to all of those that helped make this year’s conference a success, with special gratitude to Maj. Michael Clancy and Mr. Dom Passantino of the West Point Area who sponsored the event and managed all the logistics, and to Tom Harnedy, chief, Contract Administration Section, who developed and structured the conference agenda and the standard briefing content for the area program briefs. Next year’s AE/RE Conference is already being planned to be held at Fort Drum.”

## Army Suggestion Program

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If you have any questions please contact Elaine Shipman, Army Suggestion Program Administrator, 212.264.9046.



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