

The New York District Times



Fall 2006 Vol. 31, No.4

'Cradle of the Corps'

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

New York District welcomes its 49th District commander and District engineer

New York District welcomes Col. Aniello 'Nello' L. Tortora, the 49th commander and district engineer. He relieved Col. Richard J. Polo Jr., at a formal ceremony Aug. 25 in the U.S. Custom House in Lower Manhattan.

Col. Tortora accepted the command flag from Maj. Gen. William T. Grisoli, North Atlantic Division commander at the time, and with it full responsibility for the District's operations and personnel.

Tortora, who imagined his father arriving at Ellis Island in New York Harbor and recalled his own journey to begin his Army career "up the Hudson," noted that the Corps of Engineers has "a very special mission to create, to maintain and to safeguard the infrastructure that makes America work.

"This is a special contract with the American people," he said.

Col. Tortora emphasized that "the greatest asset we have in fulfilling our mission is the people assembled here today.

"I want to focus on the success of our people and customers," he said. "I want to be a champion for the District's employees."

Col. Richard J. Polo Jr., who had led the District since 2004, retired during the ceremony.

In the weeks following, it was a seamless transition. Col. Tortora immediately made his rounds and met with District employees and toured and inspected New York District project sites, ongoing civil works and military programs construction projects.



Photo: Vince Elias

Col. Aniello "Nello" L. Tortora grasps the Corps flag at the change of command ceremony held August 25, 2006 in downtown Manhattan.



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**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**
New York District

New York District Times

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

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**Commander and
District Engineer**
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9-11-01

Lest we forget

About Col. Aniello L. 'Nello' Tortora

Commander, New York District

Colonel Aniello L. Tortora took command of the New York District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Aug. 25.

The New York District is responsible for the Corps' water resource development, navigation, and regulatory activities in northeastern New Jersey, eastern and south-central New York State, including the New York Harbor and Long Island, and parts of Vermont, Massachusetts, and Connecticut. The District is also responsible for design and construction at Army and Air Force installations in New Jersey, New York, and overseas in Greenland.



Col. Aniello L. Tortora

Tortora also holds the title of Supervisor of New York Harbor.

Tortora, a native of southern Florida, was commissioned an engineer officer from the United States Military Academy at West Point, N.Y., in 1985. He holds a bachelor of science degree from the U.S. Military Academy, a Master of Science in Engineering from the University of Texas, and a Master of Science in National Security Strategy from the National Defense University.

Throughout his career, Tortora has served in a variety of operational, command and staff assignments in the United States and overseas. He has commanded at every level from platoon to battalion. His most recent assignment was Senior Joint Engineer, Defense Continuity and Crisis Management, Assistant Secretary of Defense (Homeland Defense) in Washington, D.C.

His previous assignments include: platoon leader and company executive officer, 43rd Engineer Battalion (Combat) (Heavy), Fort Benning, Georgia, and Honduras; B Company commander, 16th Engineer Battalion (Combat), 1st Armored Division in Nuremberg, Germany, and for Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm; project engineer, Omaha District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; battalion S-3, 588th Engineer Battalion (Combat) and brigade S-3, Engineer Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, Fort Hood, Texas; and staff officer, Futures Directorate, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, Fort Monroe, Va. He also commanded the 2nd Engineer Battalion (Combat), 2nd Infantry Division, at Camp Castle, Korea.

He is a graduate of the Engineer Officer Basic and Advanced courses, the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, and the National War College. He is a member of the Association of the United States Army, the Society of American Military Engineers, the Army Engineer Association, and the National Engineering Honor Society, Tau Beta Pi.

His awards and decorations include the Legion of Merit, Bronze Star Medal, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, three awards of the Army Meritorious Service Medal, three awards of the Army Commendation Medal, Army Achievement Medal, Kuwait Liberation Medal, and Saudi Arabia Liberation Medal.

Commander's Philosophy

By Col. Aniello L. 'Nello' Tortora

People are precious ... people want to be part of a winning team ... leaders create winning teams ... do the right thing—always ... treat all with dignity and respect ... life is short—be positive and have fun!

VISION

The Army's best engineer district...ready for all contingencies...a proud, winning team of teams...executing all missions to standard in: Support Stability, Reconstruction and Homeland Security Operations; Develop Sound Water Resources Solutions; Enhance Life Cycle Infrastructure Management.

WHAT I VALUE

Character ... people who: live Army values; are innovative and hard charging—on top of their game; balance their lives; are team players (within the District and outside of the District); take the initiative; have a positive attitude; live by the golden rule.

WHAT I EXPECT FROM EACH OF YOU

Safety ... know/live Army values ... know/do your job ... do the right thing ... treat all with dignity and respect ... accomplish our mission: project delivery *on time, within budget, and safely in order to delight our customers, partners, and stakeholders, while always prepared to respond to civil emergencies, disasters and support the Global War on Terrorism*

KNOW AND PERFORM YOUR JOB

Be technically proficient and stay current in your field.

Credibility starts with our customers knowing we have the knowledge and skills to get the job done and then executing to standard.

UNDERSTAND INTENT AND MISSION TWO LEVELS UP

Know your customers -- vision, expectations, needs, metrics; look for win-win solutions.

Think regionally and nationally; seek opportunities; be aggressive in solving problems and executing all missions on time.

DO THE RIGHT THING

Legally and morally -- the "look in the mirror test". Live the Army values: Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity, and Personal Courage. Set the example for others to emulate. Express pride in public service. Review the "Just Do It" card.



BEING THE BEST - TEAMWORK IS KEY

People want to feel that they are part of a winning team. Each and every one of us is a valuable team member who must contribute in order for all of us to be successful. I expect all of us to give 100 percent every day to making our part of USACE and the Army GREAT! Epitomize teamwork and be a team of teams that sacrifices for the common good. Take pride in the District. Resolve District issues inside the District - use the chain of command; open door policy; do not make negative comments about the District or its members in public.

READINESS

Our nation is at war. We play a significant role in support to the war fighter and make strategic contributions to protecting our homeland and keeping our economy strong. All of us must be prepared in the event of a natural or man-made disaster. Each team member must know their role and be ready. As a team, we must know and practice standard procedures. This includes establishing relationships with our federal department counterparts and how we support them.

TAKE CARE OF PEOPLE

Safety first. Caring leaders define expectations and enforce standards. Developing future leaders is one of our most important obligations to the future of USACE. Positive coaching and mentoring are critical. Schedule and conduct counseling of your subordinates -- critical to ensuring people sustain success and are given the opportunity to improve. The METL should drive our team and individual training. Use the after action review process.

HAVE FUN

Balance your life -- we all face competition for our time. Individual goals, the needs of our families, and the requirements of our job all demand our attention. The key is to strike a balance.

Attitude is everything. Each day we have one of two basic choices: to enjoy what we are doing or the opposite. I intend to do everything within my power to make your service positive and professionally rewarding. Be positive and have fun!



Top leadership inspects District Harbor projects

The New York Harbor is a major shipping port and center of commerce. Key channels have to be dredged to meet the growing demands of the port. It is the nation's third largest container port, indirectly and directly supporting more than 230,000 jobs in the region. Important navigation projects for the Port of New York and New Jersey include the recently completed 45-foot Kill van Kull Channel, the 41-foot Arthur Kill Channel -- Howland Hook Marine Terminal Deepening and the 41-foot Port Jersey Channel Deepening.



Photo: Carolyn Vadino

District personnel board the dredge *Maricavor* and the drill boat *Fractor* during a Harbor inspection in August.

New York District has played a major role in the navigation, development and maintenance of water resource activities in the New York and New Jersey Harbor Estuary for more than 200 years. The District is faced with the challenge of deepening the New York and New Jersey Harbor while preserving its natural estuary.

On Aug. 29, NY District personnel from Harbor Branch, Operations and the Kill van Kull field office provided a harbor inspection and briefing for Col. Aniello L. Tortora, commander, New York District. Col. Tortora inspected ongoing harbor deepening projects, boarded the dredge *Maricavor* and the drill boat *Fractor*.

The inspection included an overview of the Port Jersey Channel, the Kill van Kull, the Arthur Kill and Newark Bay and its relevant container terminals.

Lt. Gen. Carl A. Strock, Chief of Engineers, and staff from HQ, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers visited New York District Aug. 31 for a media tour arranged by New York District's Public Affairs staff.

Following an entire day of meeting with the media ranging from the Associated Press, New York Times, Fox television network and Time Magazine, Lt. Gen. Strock boarded a Corps vessel and conducted a harbor inspection where he was briefed by District personnel on key navigation, operations and maintenance projects in the Port of New York and New Jersey.



Photo: Peter Shugert



Maj. Gen. Don Riley, director of Civil Works, HQ, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers visited New York District and boarded the corps vessel *Hocking* for a harbor inspection Oct. 4.

(l-r) Col. James Rowan, Col. Aniello L. Tortora, Commander New York District; Maj. Gen. Don Riley, Director of Civil Works, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and Capt. Clay Morgan.



Recruiters get new Brooklyn digs

Article and Photo by Kenneth Wells

In August, personnel from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in conjunction with the U.S. Army Recruiting Battalion, New York City celebrated the grand opening of the U.S. Army's recruiting center in the Brownsville section of Brooklyn, N.Y.

Army recruiters immediately set up their new offices to enable them to continue their recruiting mission. The cost of the build out for the new center was \$57,730. SLMGI Construction Inc. of Elmhurst, N.Y. was the contractor.

The center replaced an older facility located on a different block in Brooklyn just four blocks from a major traffic intersection. The older facility was deteriorating, had pest problems and was not visible to foot traffic.

According to one recruiter, because of a lack of foot traffic in front of the building, it made recruiting tougher to attract new candidates for enlistment.

The new recruiting center is at the intersection of Pitkin and Rockaway Avenues, which happens to be one of the busiest areas in Brownsville.

"In recruiting, just like in any commercial real estate venture, the most important thing is location, location, location," said Alex Litvak, realty specialist, with the Corps Real Estate Division, in New York District.

"Pitkin Avenue is a major commercial hot spot in Brownsville. The new office is located on the same block as a cell phone store, athletic footwear store, various sports shops and electronic stores. These businesses attract the kind of age demographics the Army is trying to recruit."

Litvak went on to say that the new recruiting center's commander, Sgt. Pedro Santiago informed him that four days into the initial opening, he was about to sign three new recruits. Santiago believes this is an extremely good sign and shows off the importance of being located in a highly visible portion of the neighborhood.

Santiago's commanding officer, Capt. Katia Collette echoed his sentiments.

"This facility is a lot better than the last one," said Collette, "because it puts us closer to the target



Pvt. Gregory Parris, Sgt. 1st Class Pedro Santiago and Capt. Kaita Collete, company commander of the U.S. Army Recruiting Battalion, New York City cut the ceremonial yellow ribbon signifying the official opening of the Army Career Center in Brownsville, Brooklyn, N.Y.

population we're seeking to recruit from."

The recruiting center is equipped with a testing office for new candidates, state-of-the-art office spaces and is one of the largest single service recruiting centers in the city at over 2,000 square feet. It is also completely accessible for persons with disabilities.

Two challenges in getting the facility built involved the HVAC climate control system to maintain comfortable temperatures throughout the year, in addition to a mold problem in the basement. New York District's contractors rebuilt the HVAC climate control system from scratch. Litvak worked closely with the landlord on the mold issue and used a professional mold removal company to take care of it.

"The challenge a realty specialist faces," he explained, "is to negotiate as much of the initial build-out construction cost into the lease itself and shift maintenance responsibility to the landlord. This way, the government saves money on future spending when it comes to maintenance and material costs and structural repairs."

"We're always looking to increase the Army's visible presence in a neighborhood, as well as selecting commercial areas that provide high traffic in the Army's recruiting age demographic," said Litvak. "We aim to establish recruiting centers near convenient means of available transportation such as buses, trains and major highways; select sound structures with long tenancy potential and find amicable landlords that support our effort and are responsive during times when maintenance issues arise."

48th District Commander honored

Col. Richard J. Polo Jr. retired after more than 26 years of service. Polo was honored at the change of command ceremony in August for his Army career just prior to his retirement.

Polo was honored with the Legion of Merit for his outstanding service to the nation, the Silver Order of the de Fleurry Medal on behalf of the Engineer Regiment for inspirational leadership in the Corps of Engineers, and received tributes from the U.S. Coast Guard and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region II. He also received letters of commendation from Sens. Robert Menendez and Frank J. Lautenberg (N.J.), and Reps. Timothy Bishop (N.Y.-1), Bob Ferguson (N.J.-7), Rodney P. Frelinghuysen (N.J.-11), and William J. Pascrell Jr. (N.J.-8) in addition to an award from the New York Chapter of the Society of American Military Engineers.

His wife received the Commander's Award for Civilian Service in recognition of support given to her husband and his command personnel during his Army career.

In his farewell remarks, Polo said he was proud to finish his career "in the greatest city in the world." He recalled a speaker at a command course advising that "long-serving Civilians take pride in the Corps...even if we [military commanders] screw up, the Civilians will make it all right." Polo said he had come to think of Civilian employees of the Corps as Soldiers, "only with long hair," who are dedicated to their mission of serving the nation.

Polo's first task in retirement is to literally ride into the sunset, taking a motorcycle journey to the American West with fellow Corps retirees who are members of his motorcycle club.



Photo: Vince Elias

Maj. Gen. William T. Grisoli, North Atlantic Division commander at the time, presents Col. Richard J. Polo Jr. with the Silver Order of the de Fleurry Medal on behalf of the Engineer Regiment as his wife looks on.



Former District Engineer retires

Col. John B. O'Dowd, former New York District Commander and District Engineer retired in July following a 28-year career in the U.S. Army. O'Dowd served from 1978 to 2006.

O'Dowd was commander and District Engineer of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers New York District from July 2001 to August 2004. He took command of the Corps' Afghanistan District in August 2004. Following his assignment in Afghanistan, he served as chief of staff, U.S. Military Mission at the United Nations in New York City.

Former deputy commander commands Honolulu District

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Pacific Ocean Division Commander Brig. Gen. John W. Peabody (left) passes the ceremonial Honolulu District colors to Lt. Col. Charles H. Klinge symbolizing the official change of command for the Corps' Honolulu District. Klinge became the 65th Honolulu District Commander.

Col. Charles H. Klinge, former deputy commander, New York District took command of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Honolulu District July 21.



Photo: Bill Erwin

Archaeologist serves as deputy director on investigation team

Nancy Brighton, an archaeologist with New York District, recently deployed to Iraq as part of the forensic labs mass graves team. Brighton is the deputy director of the Mass Graves Investigation Team, Regime Crimes Liaison Office.

As deputy director, she works with technical specialists, who are contractors, and ensures they carry out the analyses and prepare reports, as well as reviewing reports and technical products. At the team's forensic analysis facility, she briefed Lt. Gen. Stroock, Chief of Engineers; Maj. Gen. William H. McCoy Jr., Commander, Gulf Region Division, and Brig. Gen. Michael J. Walsh, the new division commander for the Gulf region, on the work at the facility, which included taking them on a site visit.

They met with the archaeology, cultural objects and anthropology teams to observe analyses. The mission of the teams, under the direction of program director Michael K. Trimble, St. Louis District, identifies, excavates and analyzes mass graves and gathers evidence for the Iraqi High Tribunal for use in the prosecution of crimes.

In addition to working with Trimble, she works with logistics director Wade Ricard, St. Louis District to ensure the facility has the equipment and personnel required to support the technical staff.



Nancy Brighton explains to Maj. Gen. William H. McCoy Jr., Commander, Gulf Region Division, and Lt. Gen. Carl Stroock, Chief of Engineers, the set up of the Forensic Analysis Facility and how it operates as an introduction to entry into the cultural objects laboratory tent.

Coastal engineering panel meets in New Jersey

The 82nd meeting of the Coastal Engineering Research Board was held at the Ocean Place Resort and Spa, Long Branch, N.J. Oct. 11-13. The board meets semi-annually at various coastal and Great Lakes locations. The meeting was hosted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, North Atlantic Division, and New York District.

Over 90 participants attended the symposium, whose theme was "Challenges in Coastal Protection and Restoration."

The CERB provides guidance to the Corps for coastal engineering research. The CERB is a congressionally authorized advisory board that provides policy guidance and review of plans and funding requirements for coastal research and development to the Chief of Engineers.

The board is comprised of four U.S. Army Corps of Engineers senior officers and three civilian engineers or scientists who are ex-

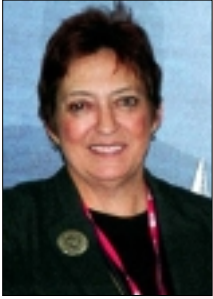
perts in the field of coastal engineering.

Presentations were made by the New York and Philadelphia District Corps of Engineers staff members, and representatives of sister federal agencies, coastal engineering firms and New York and New Jersey state agencies.



CERB Board Members -- (l-r) Col. Richard B. Jenkins; Brig. Gen. Todd T. Semonite, Commander, North Atlantic Division; Richard J. Seymour; Maj. Gen. Don Riley Director, Civil Works, USACE; Joan Oltman-Shay; Brig. Gen. Joseph Schroedel, Commander, South Atlantic Division; and R. Bruce Taylor.

Retirements



Kathy Hirschy, retired in September following 30 years of government service. Hirschy was the deputy chief for Small Business from 2000 to 2006. Her career stems from 1976 where she worked for the U.S. Coast Guard at Governors Island, N.Y. She also worked in the District's Contracting and Real Estate sections, following a stint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Barbara Crawford of Operations retired in September following 30 years of government service. She worked as a secretary in the Compliance and Enforcement section of the the Regulatory Branch.



James "Jim" Riley, hydraulic engineer of Engineering Division retired in September following 46 years of service with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Riley worked in the Civil Resources Branch of the Engineering Division. Riley began his service with the Army in 1962. He is also a Korean War veteran. He is a member of the Hydrology and Interior Drainage Team. He has worked on hydrologic studies.



Johnny Martinez, construction manager, Military Programs Branch announced that he will retire Nov. 3 following 28 years of service with the Corps. As a construction manager in New York District he was responsible for military projects at the U.S. Military Academy, West Point, and at Picatinny Arsenal, N.J. He was also involved in projects for the NYC DEP and the restoration project of Fort Slocum, David's Island, Long Island, N.Y. Prior to working at New York District in 1979 he worked in Savannah, Ga., Jacksonville, Fl., and duty in Saudi Arabia and Germany.

Joe Daskalakis, deckhand in the Operations Division at Caven Point received an admiral's salute in September in honor of his 30 years of service. Daskalakis served at the Caven Point facility aboard various Corps vessels.



Taps

Brig. Gen. Gerald C. Brown



Brig. Gen. Gerald (Jed) C. Brown died July 28. He was accepted by the U.S. Military Academy; at age 17 he departed to enter the Class of 1964 at West Point. In June 1964, he was commissioned as an officer in the Corps of Engineers and attended the U.S. Army Airborne and Ranger school. His initial assignments were as platoon leader, battalion staff officer and company commander in Munich, Germany. He served with the 27th Engineer Battalion in Vietnam. In 1967, he earned a master's degree in civil engineering at the University of Illinois, and then served a second combat tour in Vietnam with the 1st Cavalry Division.

Subsequent assignments included Fort Sam Houston, Texas; Fort Leavenworth, Kan.; instructing military history at West Point; command of the 82nd Engineer Battalion in Bamberg, Germany; the U.S. Army War College in Carlisle, Pa.; Fort Belvoir, Va.; Commander, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District; studies at the Harvard University Center for International Affairs; Commander, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, North Atlantic Division, and two assignments in the Pentagon.

He was promoted to brigadier general in 1989. Brig. Gen. Brown retired from active duty in June 1994.

9/11

Reflecting on America's darkest day and the Corps' finest hour

On the day of the attack on the World Trade Center in Manhattan, it was virtually impossible for people to get out of Manhattan by any type of ground transportation during and in the aftermath of the collapse of the buildings at the WTC complex.

There was a virtual armada of boats that came together, crossing the water of the Hudson River to reach stranded people and get them safely out of the area.

Among the boats were seven vessels operated by boat crews from the Corps. These crews and vessels ferried thousands of stranded people, some of who were injured, from Manhattan.

On return journeys, the crews ferried emergency response workers into the smoke-filled area of Manhattan. The fleet of NY District vessels consisted of the *Hocking*, *Hatton*, *Hudson*, *Hayward*, *Gelberman*, *Driftmaster* and *Survey Boat number 1*.

Liz Finn was one of several Corps crewmembers who jumped into action. Finn was in training at the time and joined her fellow crewmember classmates on the pier at New York District's Caven Point facility. Captain Billy Cuthrell, Captain Ray Bleam, and Assistant Master George Loveless, three Wilmington District Fleet crewmembers, happened to be attending the same training class.

They assisted through the night, supplying fireboats and fire trucks with fuel, lube oil, passing it in 5-gal. buckets, along with food and water. Their efforts enabled the fire boats and fire trucks to remain on station performing their rescue mission without having to leave the area to refuel, thus saving valuable time.

Finn and her crew were aboard the *Gelberman*. Finn's crew of Eddie Quirk and Eric Gundersen of New York District and Jim Holcroft and Mitch Tillyard of the Philadelphia District's dredge *McFarland* ferried over 500



As smoke fills the air in lower Manhattan, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers boat crews performed evacuations of people from Manhattan and delivered desperately needed supplies and personnel to Ground Zero.

people from Manhattan and also took supplies and medical personnel to disaster assistance centers in the city.

"Everyone volunteered to help. Without a second thought, they placed themselves on duty," said Joe Meyers of Caven Point. "When we arrived, people on the pier were covered in dust from the crumbling buildings."

"They were passing five-gallon cans by hand. There was no other way to access the site," said Joe Daskalakis of Caven Point.

The *Hayward* crew helped keep firefighters on the job by supplying them with more than 16,000 gallons of fuel and water, in addition to flashlights, batteries, protective gear, food, water, lanterns and shovels, according to Meyers.

The *Hocking* became the command vessel that transported the North Atlantic Division commander to the site to assess the situation and offer Corps assistance.

(Editor's note: Justine Barati, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers contributed to this article).

North Atlantic Division changes commanders

New York District welcomes Brig. Gen. Todd T. Semonite to the region. Semonite took command of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, North Atlantic Division Sept. 18. He relieved Maj. Gen. William T. Grisoli who moved on to a new assignment at the Pentagon. The ceremony was held at Fort Hamilton, Brooklyn, N.Y.

“I’m proud to be joining the great North Atlantic Division team and am looking forward to the challenge of leading the division,” said Semonite.

“It is one of the Corps’ elite divisions in one of the most unique and visible regions in the world, and it has an outstanding reputation of performance and achievement that sets the bar high. It’s going to be an exciting tour.”



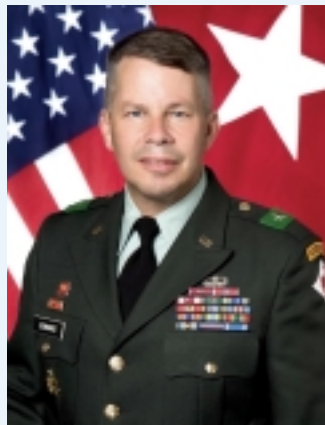
Brig. Gen. Todd Semonite (right) accepts the Corps flag from Lt. Gen. Carl A. Strock, Chief of Engineers, during North Atlantic Division’s change of command ceremony at Fort Hamilton Sept. 18.

About the North Atlantic Division commander

Brig. Gen. Todd T. Semonite is a native of Bellows Falls, Vt., and is a registered professional engineer in Virginia and Vermont. He graduated from the U.S. Military Academy, West Point, N.Y. and was commissioned into the Corps of Engineers in 1979.

As commander North Atlantic Division, Semonite oversees the planning, design and construction of projects to support the military, protect America’s water resources, and restore and enhance the environment within a 180,000-square-mile area along the Atlantic Coast, including 13 states from Maine to Virginia and the District of Columbia. He is also responsible for a variety of Division engineering and construction activities for international, Federal, state and local governments and agencies in the United States and overseas.

Before becoming the commander, North Atlantic Division, Semonite served as Commanding General, Maneuver Support Center and Fort Leonard Wood, Mo. Before that he served as Assistant Commandant, U.S. Army Engineer School and Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., and in a wide variety of command and staff positions including: Director, Office of the Chief of Engineers, HQDA at the Pentagon; Deputy Commander, Task Force Restore Iraqi Electricity (responsible for designing and executing a \$1.1 billion reconstruction program); and Executive Officer to the Commanding General, U.S. Army, Europe, and 7th Army.



Brig. Gen. Todd T. Semonite

Semonite has also served as Commander of the 130th Engineer Brigade and the V Corps Engineer at Hanau, Germany; Chief of Military Operations and Topography, and Chief of International Operations, both with U.S. Army, Europe; Battalion Commander, 23rd Engineer Battalion, 1st Armored Division, Friedberg, Germany (with a one-year deployment to Bosnia); Construction and Design Supervisor, 416th ENCOM, Chicago, IL; S4, 937th Engineer Group, and S3 and Executive Officer, 1st Engineer Battalion, both at Fort Riley, Kan.; and Operations Officer, Corps of Engineers Office, Fort Drum, N.Y.

He holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering from the U.S. Military Academy, a Master of Science in Civil Engineering from the University of Vermont, and a Master of Military Arts and Sciences from Fort Leavenworth. He is a graduate of the Engineer Officer Basic and Advanced Courses, the Combined Arms Services Staff School, the Command and General Staff College, and the Army War College.

His awards include the Legion of Merit (4 Awards), Bronze Star, Meritorious Service Medal (7 awards), Army Commendation Medal (3 awards), Army Achievement Medal, Army Superior Unit Award (2 awards), NATO award, Ranger tab, and Parachutist Badge.

Forward Engineer Support Team A returns

Kevin Smyth, of Planning, David Rackmales, and Fernando Baustista, both of Engineering returned to New York District in August following three months of support to the Forward Engineer Support Team, or “FEST” in Fort Irwin, Calif. It was the second time they deployed in support of FEST operations to support armed forces units training in a desert scenario.

Their mission was to gather data from the field, process the same in accordance with building codes, building regulations, program requirements, Army requirements, and Army regulations. They then delivered the end product to the customer with a brand new design with construction documents ready to be built. prototype designs are created due to FEST-A team has the expertise and flexibility to graphically visualize the customer’s needs on site. According to Bautista, the Fest-A Mission from the supported unit, is the FEST-A team gathers requirements and accepts missions for execution. The FEST team works directly for the supported unit, rather than just in a limited liaison role. The team’s value is far more than just additional engineer staff. “My direct participation had to do with the full architectural design cycle for new Army facilities,” said Bautista.



FEST A members at Fort Irwin, Calif. interviewing a contractor at a bid opening.

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Lou Benard, executive assistant and physical scientist (center) and a group of participants of East Hampton Town Shellfish Culture Workshop on Long Island, N.Y.

(Photo: East Hampton Town Shellfish Hatchery).

Executive assistant participates in shellfish culture workshop

Lou Benard, executive assistant and physical scientist, New York District is involved in a variety of community activities and events. Recently she participated in the first annual East Hampton Town shellfish culture workshop. The first of a series of workshops was sponsored by the East Hampton town Shellfish Hatchery, Long Island, N.Y.

The rain-or-shine events consisted of the history of shellfish enhancement and aquaculture in New York, shellfish biology, spawning and hatchery culture, harvesting, field grow out, seeding and experimentation.

Corps Kids

Becky Barth, daughter of Bill Barth of Engineering, plays one of the main characters of the Wizard of Oz at The Land of Oz theme park in North Carolina. The cast is from Freehold, N.J., and South Carolina.

Becky has played the part of the Wicked Witch of the West at the annual event, which is staged at the theme park at Beech Mountain, Banner Elk, N.C. The performance is typically on the first weekend of October. She began portraying the character when she was invited to work at the park for the weekend.



District competes in Army Ten-Miler

On Oct. 8, five participants from New York District ran the Army's ten-miler foot race in Washington, D.C. The 2006 New York team was comprised of Col. Aniello L. Tortora, district commander, Maj. Charlotte Rhee, Larry Rosenkranz, Rodney Abrams and Jeffrey Gross. According to Rhee, the team placed 9th out of 24 in the government agency category with a group time of 5:20:08.

The Army ten-miler is an annual Army tradition which begins and ends at the Pentagon and winds through the streets of Washington. It is the largest 10-mile race in America. A total of 15,589 runners crossed the finish line.



New York Army Ten-Miler team sporting T-shirts with the Big Apple District corps logo (l-r) Rodney Abrams, Jeffrey Gross, Col. "Nello" Tortora, Maj. Charlotte Rhee, and Larry Rosenkranz.

EEO wall display honors Hispanic-Americans



Photo: Vince Elias

New York District observed Hispanic Heritage Month Sept. 15 to Oct. 15. A hall of fame display was created in the corridor near the Executive Office in New York City that noted Hispanic American achievements and culture.

(left) Aleksander Petersen of Planning Division reads about Hispanic-Americans at a wall display arranged by EEOs, Jean Lau.

District history book to be published

As one of his last official acts before relinquishing command in August, Col. Richard J. Polo Jr. signed the transmittal letter forwarding the New York history book to Headquarters USACE.

The history book, entitled "Continuing the Mission" chronicles the history of New York District from 1976 through 2005 and picks up where the "Cradle of the Corps" history book ended in 1976.

The winner of the history book cover contest is Vincent Perrera of the Art Department of Information Management. The cover was selected by the project delivery team. It will be unveiled at a later date.



Photo: Dan Desmet

Col. Polo signs the transmittal letter of the history book. Project Delivery Team: Col. Richard J. Polo, Jr., former District Commander (seated); (l-r) Leonard Houston, Chief, Environmental Analysis Branch; Howard Green, author; Christopher Ricciardi, archeologist; Carissa Scarpa, archeologist and project manager, and Lou Benard, executive assistant.

Corps project reduces erosion at recreation area

By JoAnne Castagna, Ed.D., PPMD

Each year, primarily during the summer months, hundreds of visitors, nature enthusiasts, recreation seekers, and local residents make a trek to Vermont's 850-acre Waterbury Reservoir campsite. They make the journey to enjoy the outdoor activities available along the 19 miles of pristine shoreline. They find the popular area to be perfect for camping, fishing, hiking, and water sports.

However, during recent years, the sloped banks along the shoreline had become unstable due to erosion and posed a safety hazard.

In response, the Corps used traditional and innovative engineering techniques to make the banks of the reservoir safer.

The erosion is believed to be due to a number of factors including the drawdown of the reservoir that is performed every winter when the campground closes and wave action from recreational boats impacting the previously exposed shoreline.

In 2000, the State of Vermont lowered the reservoir due to safety concerns at the nearby Waterbury Dam and lowered it again in 2002 when the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers began construction work on the dam.

The Corps designed and managed the construction of the dam in 1935 in response to a flooding disaster and since then has periodically modified it.

In recent years, the dam has experienced seepage problems and the Corps' New York District, with the assistance of other Corps districts, has been making repairs that are expected to be completed this fall.

To perform these repairs the reservoir was lowered in 2002 to 520 feet, which is normally at 590 feet, summer pool level. Presently, the water is at 550 feet, and will be back to summer pool level when the work is completed.

The sloped banks of the reservoir are vegetated. When the reservoir was lowered it exposed the lower portions of the bank that are not vegetated.

This exposed bank causes the soil on the upper part of the bank to erode and uproot vegetation,

especially during rainfall. When the vegetation is lost, this leaves upper portions of the bank exposed and subject to erosion.

When the ground is exposed it makes it easy for groundwater to percolate out of the soil and contribute further to the slope's erosion and adding additional soil to the reservoir.

If this runoff continues the campground can lose large portions of land and the water quality of the reservoir and downstream river will be adversely impacted.

In addition, the flow of sediment into the reservoir creates turbidity, muddy water, reduces the



Photo: Marty Goff

View from the crest of the dam looking out over the reservoir as it is being refilled.

water's oxygen level and increases the water's temperature, which can harm water habitats.

This summer, the Corps in collaboration with the State of Vermont constructed a shoreline stabilization project for 1,100 feet of reservoir shoreline using both traditional and bioengineering methods.

"Traditional techniques are being used to stabilize the bottom of the slope," said Marty Goff, project engineer, New York District. "This includes using stone, or riprap, on the toe, or the bottom, of the slope."

Continued on page 14

District attends Passaic River Symposium

Col. Aniello L. Tortora, Commander, New York District along with Peter Weppler and Paul Tumminello participated in the Passaic River Symposium Oct. 13 at Montclair State University, N.J.

They spoke to over 200 attendees including individuals from academia, the private sector, partnering agencies, and congressional representatives.

They discussed the Corps' efforts in the Passaic River Basin including the ecosystem restoration, federal navigation and flood damage reduction.

"We are long on the way to restoring the Passaic River as a critical component of a world class estuary," said Tortora.

"This symposium was an opportunity for the Corps to present our ongoing projects to the public, to communicate and share ideas with project partners and stakeholders and to have a forum to learn from researchers in the field studying the Passaic," said Megan Grubb, District project manager of the Lower Passaic Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study.



Passaic River Symposium attendees (l-r) Dr. Kirk Barrett, director, Passaic River Institute, Montclair State University; Alan Steinberg, Administrator, U.S. EPA Region 2; Lisa Jackson, Commissioner, NJ DEP; Lisa Baron, project manager NJ DOT and representing the Hudson-Delaware Chapter, Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry; Col. Aniello L. Tortora, Commander, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District; and Mark Stout, assistant commissioner, planning and development, N.J. DOT.

Corps project reduces erosion at recreation area *(cont.d from page 13)*

The weight of the stone prevents wave action from moving or removing the stone and prevents scarring or erosion of the toe of the slope. This part of the slope must remain stable in order for the upper reaches, which were stabilized using bioengineering techniques, to remain in place and function properly."

Bioengineering techniques are a variety of methods that use dormant plant cuttings from woody plants to alleviate soil erosion. The plants are placed in specific arrangements in the soil depending upon the technique. The cuttings come from plants that root easily. The root system of the plants helps to hold the soil together preventing sediment loss.

Only native plants are being used. The toe, or bottom, of the slope will be planted with willow, dogwood and alder species to provide quick rooting. The remaining slope will be planted with a mix of low growing to medium sized shrub species.

Along the top of the slope white pine and eastern hemlock are being planted to maintain the aesthetic consistency of the camping area.

"The State of Vermont has been a strong proponent of bioengineering and they encouraged us to use it in this project," said Goff. "The Corps has used bioengineering in the past, but just using grass. This is the first time we used native plants. This is a departure from the more traditional approach, which typically involves steel sheet pile and back-filling. The result is a more natural and sustainable slope."

Combining traditional and bioengineering techniques is beneficial because a stable slope is being achieved without diminishing the natural appearance of the area. The project will not have the "engineered" look of many slope stabilization projects.

The toe stabilization at the bottom of the slopes is completed. Grass seed is now being laid down on the tops of the slopes for immediate slope stabilization. This fall a mix of live cuttings and containers of woody vegetation, such as shrubs and trees, are being planted on the slopes for long-term stabilization. Planting in the fall is more conducive to plant survival than planting during the summer.

New York District kicks off Combined Federal Campaign

By Kenneth Wells



New York District contributed over \$2.8 million in 2005-2006.

In today's world, the number of people who need help is rising exponentially and the Combined Federal Campaign gives federal employees a chance to combat these issues by providing a focused, cost-efficient opportunity to improve the quality of life for all.

The CFC campaign for this year kicked off Sept. 1 and will end Dec. 15.

Employees are given quite a bit of freedom when it comes to choosing which charities they wish to support, providing a personal touch should that allows them to focus their donations on areas of interest such as cancer research, helping the homeless or combating world hunger.

CFC isn't a program that requires major cash donations in order for someone to make an impact.

For instance, contributing \$1 per pay period

for an entire year can help provide innovative, patient-focused cancer research or hot nutritious meals every day for a week for a senior citizen who otherwise might go to bed hungry. Figuring out how to give is also easy.

A volunteer from each office will ensure that all employees receive a catalogue listing the international, national and local charities that are eligible for the CFC.

The volunteer will also provide a pledge card that asks that you specify the amount of your gift and the organization to receive his or her support. The CFC catalogue includes a brief statement written by each participating group describing its work, a phone number, web site address to learn more about the charity, and a percentage figure stating what portion of the group's total income is spent on management and fundraising activity.

CoP Road Show paves path for PM success

By JoAnne Castagna, Ed.D., PPMD

Mary Gauker, deputy for the program and project management community of practice facilitated an information session at New York District in July for project managers. It was held to increase awareness of the program and the importance of becoming certified, and to provide information resources available through the PPM CoP. Also covered were the history, functions and activities of the PPM CoP.

Gauker has been performing the "PPM CoP Road Show," as she refers to it, since last year, and her goal it to take the road show to every Corps division and district.

She gave an update of initiatives with an emphasis on career development and efforts to professionalize the USACE project manager discipline through a formalized certification process.

PMP certification shows that the project manager is committed to their profession, and the credential lends credibility to the discipline of project management.

"Project managers who are interested in becoming certified now have clear priorities for their

training and development. By following the new career development plan they will become more effective project managers and their work will enhance the effectiveness of the Corps as an organization," said Gauker.



Mary Gauker, P.E.

Photo: JoAnne Castagna

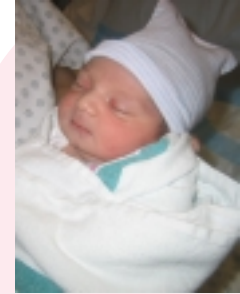
"PM certification is a clear demonstration of an individuals' professional competency that is recognized not only in the project management arena, but also the entire industry," said Anthony Levesanos, Deputy Chief, Programs and Project Management.

"I found out the purpose of the PPM CoP and how it can benefit us – it's a large network out there for us to obtain and share information. I learned about the Army Corps Career Development Program and that the Corps is encouraging project managers to enhance their careers and obtain PM Certification," said attendee Rifat Salim, project manager, PPMD.

Corps project managers seeking additional information should visit: <https://eko.usace.army.mil/usacecop/ppm>



Stork Club



Jamal Sulayman, EN and Rifat Salim of PPMD are the proud parents of daughter Zahra Reem Sulayman born Oct. 13. Vital stats: 6 lbs., 4 oz.

A reminder for all employees

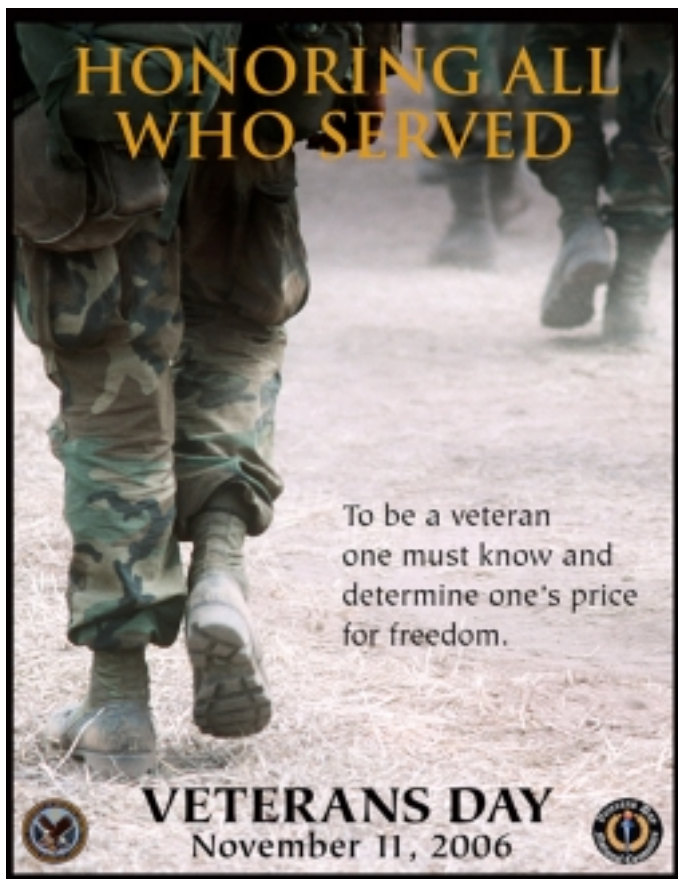


Personnel accountability procedures in the event of an emergency:

In the event of an emergency, New York District personnel should first make every effort to contact their supervisor in accordance with locally established plans.

For some reason, if personnel are unable to follow local personnel accountability procedures, employees should then use the USACE toll-free phone number or alternatively use the e-mail address within 72 hours of an emergency or an evacuation. Toll free phone number: 1-877-HI-USACE 1-877-448-7223

E-mail address: 877.hi.usace@usace.army.mil



Town Hall Meeting

Thurs. Dec. 14

U.S. Court of International Trade

Holiday Party

Thurs. Dec. 14

Albella's

10 Reade Street
Manhattan

2:30 to 6:30 p.m.

\$25 per person