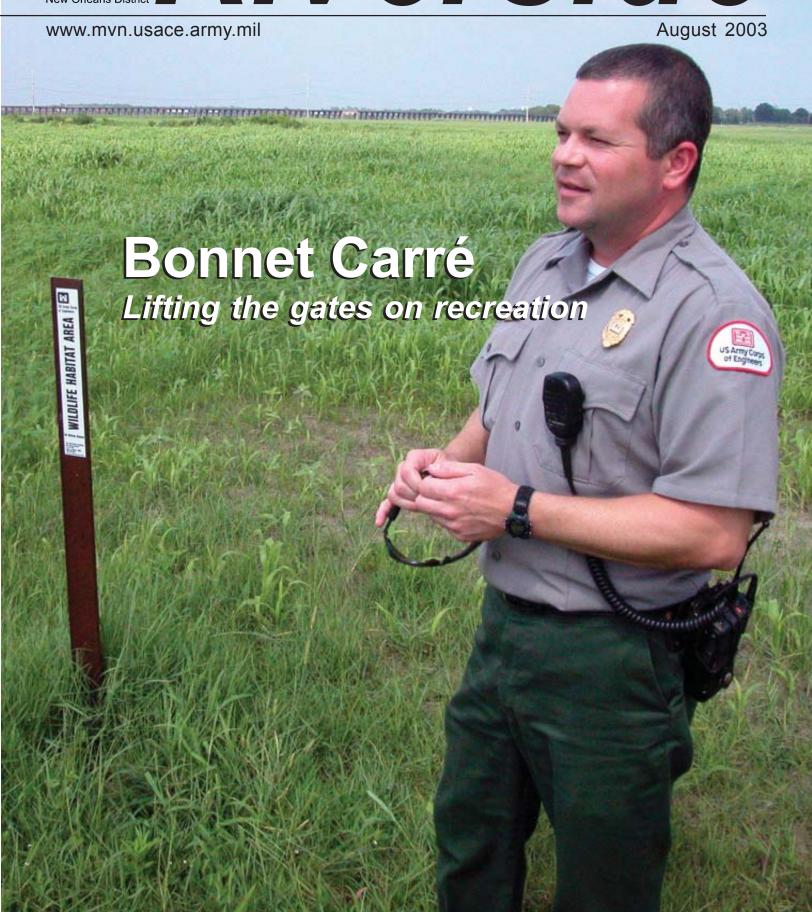


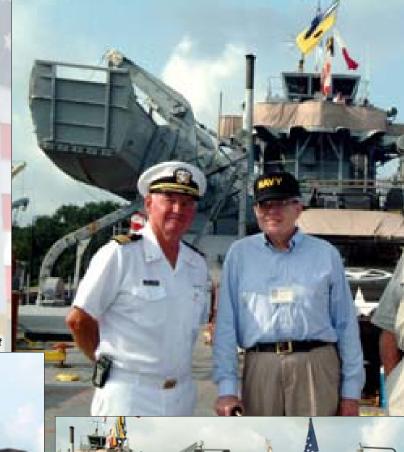
# Riverside



#### History at the lock

The WWII Navy ship LST-325 passed through the Industrial Canal Lock on Aug. 18 on its memorial voyage back to Mobile, Ala. Of 1,051 "landing ships, tank" built, only two are known still to exist in this country. LSTs made amphibious assaults, huge doors in the bow opening to discharge tanks, trucks and guns onto beaches. LST-325's WWII service included the Sicily and D-Day invasions. Clockwise from bottom: the ship arrives in the lock under the gaze of spectators; Capt. Bob Jornlin, John Hall (Public Affairs, former sailor and Navy father), retired Navy captain and port coordinator Hal Pierce and Lockmaster Mike O'Dowd on the main deck in front of New Orleans-made Higgins boats and the pilothouse; a Coast Guard Color Guard and Navy sailors stand beneath a Higgins boat; 40mm and 20mm antiaircraft guns on the stern; and the color guard, Navy sailors and (saluting) former sailors crewing LST-325.







#### Riverside

July 2003 Vol. 14 No. 5 Commander Col. Peter J. Rowan **Public Affairs Chief** Jim Addison **Editor** Eric S. Lincoln **Contributing Writers** Amanda McLain, Keisha McGee, Julie Morgan **Graphic Artists** Elena Napolitano

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Eric Lincolr

One member of the staff that maintains natural resources at Bonnet Carré, Ranger Keith Chasteen is in charge of the many wildlife food plots.





## Roundtable meetings open dialogue about coastal study

By Julie T. Morgan

oncerned about the impacts coastal erosion might have on their industry, executives from around the country recently attended roundtable meetings hosted by the Corps and state of Louisiana.

The meetings, in July and August, initiated a continuing dialogue with key decision makers of each sector of coastal stakeholders. They were designed to be small, comfortable working sessions to elicit concerns and questions from stakeholder group leaders.

"The state is very enthusiastic about the meetings," said Karen Gautreaux, executive assistant for coastal affairs.

Karen Gautreaux, special assistant to the governor for environmental affairs and acting executive assistant for coastal activities, attended the meetings and facilitated the one aimed at flood control executives. "The state is very enthusiastic about the meetings. We're continually looking for ways to better engage stakeholders and the public. This is the first step of an expanding process," she said.

Engaging the stakeholders is a long-range benefit for the Louisiana Coastal Area Study, the blueprint for comprehensive ecosystem restoration projects having an estimated implementation cost of as much as \$14 billion over the next 30 years. "We value their opinion," said Troy Constance, senior project manager, Coastal Restoration Branch. "Having the stakeholders identify and develop opportunities will guide us in the selection of the plan that best meets the objectives for coastal restoration. Their decisions will have an impact on what goes into the study and how it gets implemented over the next few decades."

The opportunity to voice concerns was appreciated by energy stakeholder Carleen Leonhardt, manager of regulatory affairs for the onshore business unit for BP America Production Company, Houston. "The dia-

See LCA, page 4

## Army cadets get district summer jobs

By Amanda Mclain

uring July and August, ROTC cadets Aaron McCullough and Anne Lero worked summer internships at the district, and spent their first time in New Orleans.

McCullough, a three-year cadet from York, Pa. said an internship with the Army led him here. One of his jobs was estimating a dredging job in Houma for Cost Engineering.

"It's great experience to be exposed to this menagerie of Corps projects," he said.

McCullough is studying mechanical engineering at Bucknell University in Pennsylvania. This coming May, he will be commissioned a second lieutenant in the Army. He plans to pursue his engineering goals through the military.

Lero said to qualify for the internship, she was required to complete



Raymond Newman, chief of Marine Management, explains the bridge controls to ROTC cadets Aaron McCullough and Anne Lero.

the National Advanced Leadership Camp and three years of study. This training program is only available to cadets the summer after their junior year.

Lero spent roughly one week each in Construction, Engineering and Operations, learning about the various responsibilities and projects. She said she enjoyed learning about the district's work and has a better

understanding of the Corps organization.

Originally from Bristol, R. I., Lero attends the University of Vermont, where she will graduate in May to become a second lieutenant. She is also studying mechanical engineering, and plans to serve as an officer in the Army.

The cadets last day here was August 15.

LCA, from page 3

logue opened up avenues for us as an industry to explore and change to methods that have less impact on the coast," he said. "We can implement new management practices that are in the best interest of the coast."

"I thought the meeting went well," said John Thompson, presi-

dent, Delta Commercial Fishermen's
Association, a 500-member fisheries group and attendee at the natural resources stakeholder meeting.
"It was productive and

everyone had good ideas. But the main thrust behind it was that we all need to work together to restore coastal Louisiana."

In addition to energy, flood control and natural resources, other stakeholder groups included business and industry; agriculture and forestry; navigation and transportation; environmental; recreation and tourism; state and local government; landowners; and finance, banking and insurance.



Executives from around the country are meeting with the Corps in small working sessions to discuss the Louisiana Coastal Area study.



# The spillway gates last closed for flood control in 1997. Since then, the nearly 8,000 acres of mostly dry land has been increasingly used for hunting, hiking, bike riding and other activities.

Thil recently, the Bonnet Carré Spill way was a mostly unregulated noman's land, where ATV users rode about wherever they pleased during the day, and firearm use and trash dumping went unchecked. Wildlife avoided the area during the day, and local police avoided the area at night. The Corps approach was to let the public do what it wanted as long as flood control wasn't affected.

But now, use of the 7,632-acre floodway has changed course. Partnerships between the district and local interests have provided regulated trails for ATV users, bicyclists and hikers. Hunters have returned as wildlife habitat has improved, with large sections of the spillway dedicated to wildlife food plots. Crime and trash dumping is down 90 percent from 10 years ago.

It's all due in large part, says Natural Resources Manager Mike Stout, to the combined efforts of the maintenance crew and park rangers.

"The rangers have a great natural resources program in motion," he said. "They're informing the public about the rules and enforcing them. Our maintenance

## Spillway gaining ground was Bonnet Carré S

by Eric Lincoln

crew is keeping flood control on track. Use has really taken off. There are hundreds of people out there on the weekends now."

Greg Malon, lead ranger and recreation manager, agrees that the spillway is a much safer and more enjoyable place these days. "We have a night patrol agreement with the St. Charles Parish Police Department, since we don't work at night, and they come out during the day, as well. That's really cut back on illegal activities like trash dumping and stolen cars being

"We see more parents and kids than we used to," says ranger Keith Chasteen.

burned. And there are hundreds of acres of wildlife food plots and ponds that we maintain, plus bird habitats. We're even getting interest from bird watching groups."

Keith Chasteen, ranger and natural resources manager, seeds and maintains the food plots. "Clovers are the target plants for deer, rabbits, wild hogs, that type of wildlife. We have black sunflower and sorghum, too. If you walk through the weeds you'll stir up hundreds of insects. The weeds might look bad, but they're actually doing a lot of good.

"We want to develop more of the area for recreation, but we're legally bound to do it only

Rangers Greg Malon, Keith Chasteen and "Skip" Jacobs, Maintenance Manager Kirt Jacobs and Office Assistant Wilson Touchet are helping to turn the Bonnet Carré Spillway into a recreation hot spot, while making sure its primary use as a floodway for emergencies is maintained.



#### ith hikers, hunters and wildlife

### pillway recreation takes off

when there's a partnership with an interested group," Malon explained. "Once someone contacts us, we go from there."

It takes a lot of work to fix up an area of the spillway for recreation, and not every group is up to the task. But one ATV user group, the South Louisiana Trailblazers, made the commitment, and with the help of the district, dedicated nearly 900 acres of the floodway for ATV trails that they helped build, complete with signage and policing of the area. Among other benefits, the work helped keep ATVs off the levees, which used to be a prime crash area.

St. Charles Parish is another recreational partner. It has leased 28 acres for camping and boat launches, and it's considering expanding to include a mountain bike trail and wash station.

#### The dirt men

No matter what vehicle you use, navigating the spillway is a hazardous proposition—unless you're riding with Kirt Jacob, maintenance manager. Jacob has worked at the site since 1970, and he knows every hill, pond and trail in the area. Along with other duties, Jacob's crew comes to the rescue of trucks and ATVs that get stuck in the mud.



"I don't have time to get stuck," he said, as we bounced through the spillway in his SUV. He pointed to some water ahead. "You don't see how deep those holes are because of the water. Iknow where they are. I have to



Grain sorghum is one type of plant grown in food plots maintained by the rangers. Sorghum is a high-energy food source for many kinds of wildlife, such as cardinals, quail, rabbits and deer. The Louisiana Chapter of Dove Unlimited donated the sorgham seed to the spillway, Atchafalaya Basin and Old River Control Structure.

tell contractors not to fill in the holes under the railroad tracks. They think they're helping, but those holes allow the shrimp boats to be towed under the tracks without breaking a mast."

Sand-hauling contractors work in the spillway daily, pulling material from designated areas. "We maintain the permits and give them a place to dig," Jacob said. "We give it away and they sell it. How about that? But the next time water comes in from the river we get a stocked fishing pond. It works out.

"Back when I started working here, my office was a barn," he said. "It was built in the late 40s and used to flood a lot. There was a four-person maintenance crew and we had some shovels. Now we have two bulldozers and two tractors running almost every day, keeping trees out of the floodway, hauling sand, mowing."

"We have about 250,000 visitors a year. We maintain about 3,500 acres, and we have 10 people to handle it all."

"And it still ain't enough," quipped Emile "Skip"

#### More in store for spillway

Jacobs, marine and interpretive services ranger. Jacobs has worked with the district for 30 years, the last two at the spillway. Besides speaking to clubs and school groups, and ensuring safety and compliance with federal water safety regulations, he also maintains signage and transportation. "You wouldn't think it to look around, but there's nearly 100 signs," he said. "Putting up those signs is a job in itself. But they make a difference."

Indeed, a day at the spillway is a tremendous amount of work for the rangers and maintenance crew. It can carry over to home, says Jacob. "We get one weekend off a month.

#### Informing the public

Chasteen says users are more aware of the program than they have been, and most of them are fine once they understand the regulations.

"We see more parents and kids than we used to. There used to be conflict

between horseback riders and ATV users, but that's

The spillway is "a great lab for environmental education," says Natural Resources Manager Mike Stout.

been mostly straightened out. People come out to train their hunting dogs and have field trials."

"For the most part, the 10 percent of problematic users we had have

moved on to something else," Malon added. "The rangers do as much enforcement these days as we did in the past, just differently. We say our goal is to protect the users from the hazards of the project, and vice versa."



Cooperation between the St. Charles Police Department and the Corps has increased safety in the spillway during the last two-and-a-half years.

It's tough on married life. We spend two-thirds of our time out in the field.

"The maintenance crew's priority is to provide flood control and protect the folks downriver. In the meantime, users are really getting a lot of recreational use out of the area. It's good to be a part of that. I enjoy seeing people out on the weekends."

#### Moving ahead

Stout says there's

more in store for the spillway. "We want to kick our natural resources program up a notch, to get more people interested in the project.

There are some good stories to tell about the history of the spillway.

Most people don't realize there are old African-American cemeteries out there, for instance. It's a great lab for environmental education, too—there's natural levees, non-forested wetlands, modified and disturbed

environments, borrow pits, cultural resources ... you can see almost everything there."

A master plan, completed in 1998, revamped the way the Corps handles the spillway for recreation. An operational management plan will be implemented early next year to define what happens over the next five years. Public meetings will likely

be held to help finalize the plan.

"The rangers aren't out there as policemen," Stout explained.

"They're resource managers, and they're primarily there to inform people."

"We didn't go into this heavy-handed. You can't tell people after 60 years that you've suddenly changed the rules. That's not what we wanted to do. And we still want to take it slow and do it right so the area remains safe and fun for recreation.

"The spillway is a fantastic cultural resource. With the ranger program in place, local partnerships, and our maintenance crew handling flood control, we're just beginning to utilize it," Stout said.

In December, the spillway will fall in the spotlight when ESPN-TV covers a retriever field event there.

For more information, contact Mike Stout, x2554, Operations Manager Steven Schinetsky, x2343, or the Bonnet Carré Spillway, 985-764-0126. Also, see the Web site for maps and up-to-the-minute status reports: www.mvn.usace. army.mil. Click on "Recreation."



he Wellness Program is looking for employees who want to take control of their health, break bad eating habits and increase their quality of living, says program coordinator and nurse Peggv Plaisance.

"There are so many people in the country today eating unhealthy and not exercising that we are facing diabetes in epidemic proportions," says Plaisance. "But pre-diabetic stages are often reversible through diet and exercise."

The program's purpose is to promote wellness, make employees more health conscious, boost morale and save on

medical costs. "Beginners fill out a onepage health history evaluation and get blood drawn for testing, then decide which of the program's offerings are most suitable for them," said clinic coordinator and nurse James Sturcke.

Presently, there are classes in karate, low impact aerobics, high impact tae-bo and yoga. Plaisance says she is excited about the new yoga class. "It's something different. The participants are really motivated and have a camaraderie going."

So far this year, there were two CPR classes, the Walk/ Run for Life event, monthly lunch and learn lectures, and a course in suicide prevention. Also, the Annual Health Fair is scheduled for October 16 with 22 vendors. There will be free massages and cholesterol screening, samples from health food stores and more.

Gene Taylor, chief of Safety, said involvement in the program has decreased lately. "We would like to see more involvement. If there is something employees want to see, they need to tell us."

Plaisance added that it's important for employees to

Participating in the Wellness Program's Walk/Run for Life Club with coworkers Jane Olivier and Yvette Leone helped Leah Farrell (background), Waterborne, lower her cholesterol from 279 to 171 in three months. "A lot of people think it can't be done without medicine, but it can," she says.

> exercise to help reduce stress and their chances for cardiovascular disease and osteoporosis.

"A close relative went in for tests recently after experiencing chest pains," she said. "He was not overweight, did not smoke and had no family history of heart problems, but he had high cholesterol he had left untreated, and he did not exercise. When they did the stress test,"—a procedure designed to reveal problems that a resting electrocardiogram does not—"it came back positive. They put him in the

hospital that day. He had a 95 percent blockage in his main artery in his heart."

He is now on a low-carb diet, walking every day and taking medicine. "But if he had watched what he ate, exercised and seen a doctor, he probably could have prevented the blockage to begin with," said Plaisance.

Leah Farrell, a statistical assistant in the Waterborne Commerce Statistics Center, had a blood test through the Wellness Program in March. She didn't expect to hear that anything was amiss, but when Plaisance checked the results, they found out that Farrell's cholesterol was 279 and her triglyceride level was 245. Both should have been under 200. Plaisance advised her to talk to a doctor.

"I faxed the lab results to my doctor. She put me on a 1,400-calorie, low-carb, low-fat, high-fiber diet for three months. I started walking three miles a day, using every break and lunch, with the Wellness Program's Walk/Run for

"You think you feel great, but you

Leah Farrell, Waterborne.

Three months later, Farrell's cholesterol had dropped to - 171, her triglyceride level had dropped to 135, and she had lost 18 pounds. don't know unless you check," says

"It was a heart attack waiting to happen," says Farrell. "The Wellness Program put up a red flag that told

me change was necessary. You think you feel great, but you don't know unless you check. A lot of people think it can't be done without medicine, but it can. I took it seriously and made it my goal to lose weight and reduce my cholesterol and triglycerides. It's just a matter of discipline about food choices and exercise ... though I do slip in a piece of chocolate now and then."

Plaisance and Sturcke kept up with Farrell's progress through personal visits and phone calls, encouraging her all the way. "She's our 2003 star of the Wellness Program," said Plaisance.

If you would like more information about the Wellness Program, contact Peggy Plaisance, x1223, or James Sturcke, x2206, or go to the InSight Intranet page and click on Wellness Program.

#### NOD at Work

#### **Operations**

HURRICANE EXERCISE — On July 21, the Corps sponsored the Hurricane Response Exercise 2003 to improve response and coordination among agencies. Participants included levee districts, mayors, parish presidents, emergency operations directors and state agencies. Jefferson, Lafourch, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard and St. Charles parishes were represented.

#### **Small Business**

ACQUISITION FAIR — Working with U.S. Rep. Richard Baker, the district sponsored the Corps of Engineers Acquisition Fair in Baton Rouge in August to show small companies how to do business with the Corps. Topics covered subcontracting opportunities, Department of Homeland Security and the Comite River Diversion Project New Baton Rouge. Baker's office funded the event.

#### **Project Management**

LCA MEETINGS — The district and the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources held a series of meetings in August in Belle Chasse, Larose, Morgan City and Cameron to update the public and get comments on the coastwide LCA ecosystem restoration study. The comments will be incorporated into a comprehensive plan for wetland restoration and coastal environmental management.

ST. MARY REFUND — St. Mary Parish received a hefty refund check from the district in June for savings on the Lake Palourde Beach Extension Project, which was completed for \$3.96 million, \$499,159 less than originally planned. Combining the project with the Atchafalaya River and Berwick Bay maintenance dredging projects, and construction efficiencies led to the lower cost.

WEST BAY PROJECT — The Great Lakes
Dredge and Dock Company was awarded a \$3.59 million
construction contract in August to build the West Bay
Sediment Diversion Project, the largest freshwater and
sediment diversion project in the world. Funded under the
Breaux Act, the project will create nearly 10,000 acres of
wetlands in West Bay, south of Venice. It is expected to
aid wildlife and fisheries and demonstrate the river's
power to restore coastal wetlands. Construction should be
completed by the end of the year.



LOCK GATE REPLACEMENT — Operations, Physical Support Branch, Maintenance and Facilities Section, began work on dewatering Berwick Lock in July. The first set of gates were removed on July 28 and later delivered to Bayou Boeuf Lock to be sand-blasted and painted. They will be replaced using divers and floating cranes. After all four gates are replaced, the lock chamber will be dewatered and chamber repairs and gate adjustments will be completed. The lock has not had any major maintenance since the early 1980s. A new control house is being installed, as well, that will operate both sets of gates. Total cost of the project is \$1.5 million with estimated completion in December.

#### **Engineering**

ISO STANDARD — Ten nations unanimously approved the ISO 19379 Standard for Electronic Charting System Databases on August 11. The standard will provide regulations for certifying privately made Electronic Charting System databases and the minimum requirements for equipment to maintain navigational safety. Ralph Scheid, Engineering, reviewed drafts for the Corps and participated in a meeting in Italy this past December.

#### **Around the District**

#### **CONGRATULATIONS**

- to **Quynh Dang** (IR), who received her masters of business administration with a concentration in management information systems in May from UNO.
- to **Richard Entwisle** (OD), who received his professional engineering license in civil engineering in July.
- to **John Grieshaber** (ED), on his promotion to chief of Civil Branch in Engineering Division.
- to **Alan Hunter** (CD), who was selected as the new area engineer in the New Orleans Area Office.
- to **Susan Hennington** (OD), whose daughter, Halley, is a student at Louise S. McGehee and is "Metairie's Junior Miss."
- to **Tonya Heskett** (OD), on the birth of her daughter, Emily Paige, on July 23.
- to **Maj. (P) Stephen Jeselink** (DD), whose name was recently added to the Army lieutenant colonel promotion list.
- to **Brook Brown** (CD) and his wife, Sherry, on the birth of their second son, Simon Weldon, July 21.
- to **Scott Blanchard** (CD), whose son, Jared, graduated cum laude from Holy Cross High School. Jared will attend LSU in the fall and major in mechanical engineering.
- to **Donna Gordy** (OD), whose son, Christopher, received a scholarship to attend the American Music and Dramatic Arts Academy in New York. He is a member of the Comedy Crew

in Metairie and just completed his first comedy CD.

- to **Steven Schinetsky** (OD), whose daughter, Johlee, won overall titles in acrobats, junior, and placed 4<sup>th</sup> runner-up in solo dance at the Dance Teachers United annual competition in July in Biloxi.
- to **Peggy O'Hara** (ED), whose cousin, Kevin, won first place for his "Meandering Mississippi" social studies project at Mandeville Middle. He then competed at SLU in March and won honorable mention. The project focused on coastline changes resulting from the last four river-course changes.
- to **Rachel Waldron** (Waterborne), who was "Employee of the Year" in 2002 for the Navigation Data Center.
- to **Nancy Mayberry** (IM), whose sister, Jaen, is Jefferson Parish Middle School Teacher of the Year and the first special education teacher to receive this award.
- to **Skip Jacobs** (OD), whose daughter, Brittany, performed in the play "Gypsy" at the Tulane Summer Lyrics and is a student at Meisler Middle with a 4.66 GPA.

#### **KUDOS**

to Beth Nord (OD), Beth Walker (OD), Sheila Boe (PM), Ione Cataldo (CD) and Angelica Bharat (OD), who all donated their hair to make wigs for disadvantaged children in the Locks of Love program. To participate, see the Web site: www.locksoflove.org.

to **Sheryl Austin** (RE), who has volunteered on Monday and Wednesday for three years as the aerobics instructor for the Wellness Program.

#### **CONDOLENCES**

to the friends and family of **Percy Rixner**, retired dredge Wheeler cook, who passed away on Aug 6.

#### ANSWER MAN, from page 12

spaces is based on the allocation of government vehicles to different offices. These reserved spaces are usually in close proximity to the area where the vehicle is assigned.

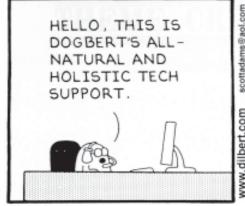
Based on the audit, there is sufficient parking.

Please keep in mind, we are fortunate to have free parking available, even if it's in the "back 40." Many government employees who work in the metropolitan area must fend for themselves. They usually have to pay for parking wherever they can find it and it is often not reimbursable. Some walk for a mile or more through downtown to get from where they park to where they work.

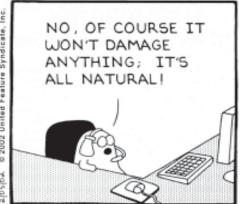
Otherwise, the Facilities Management Committee has been advised there's a parking problem, and recognizes that people want to be close to the building. However, only so much can be accomplished with the space currently available. There is a tentative proposal for a parking garage and an alternative plan possible for additional parking in an area outside the fence, but that probably won't happen any time soon due to current funding constraints.

Gene Taylor
Chief, Safety, Security
and Occupational Health Office

#### DILBERT® by Scott Adams







## Ask the Answer Man

The Answer Man received dozens of questions this month. Among the most common were questions about parking on the district. Thanks to chief of Safety Gene Taylor for helping The Answer Man offer some concrete replies.

Unless selected by an office

or division chief, employees

have to find alternative ways

to get a reserved parking

space.



Why are there so many reserved parking spaces in front of the district?

Based on Army and district regulations, reserved parking is authorized for official government vehicles, visitors, district and

office chiefs and some branch chiefs, executive staff, handicapped employees (long and short term) and car pools.

The allocation of reserved spaces was audited this year, in part by the commander, as part of the Mission Capability Assessment, and found to be adequate.



How does the district determine the number of

visitor spots to reserve? Why is more and more parking being reserved for visitors when we already have too little parking for all of the employees?

Visitor parking is based on what functions an office

carries out and how many visitors the office gets on average. Typically, it's a percentage of the overall spaces allocated to the district. Office of Counsel, Executive Office and Public Affairs, for example, get a lot of visitors, and so visitor parking is required. The number of visitor parking spots hasn't

increased for quite some time. The allocation of these spaces is determined by the security manager and is generally limited to the few spaces near the main entrance and along the river.

Additionally, whenever there is an event

in the DARM where a large number of visitors are expected, the Security Office must block off spaces for visitors for that particular event.

Most of the parking complaints the Security Office receives are from visitors, in fact, and not employees.



How does one get a reserved parking spot?

Why have some of the parking spaces been painted orange & numbered?

Fourteen spaces, lined in orange and numbered, are reserved as part of the Employee Incentive

Awards Program. These spaces are issued directly to district and office chiefs to issue to their employees based on criteria developed by each individual chief.

The award program was the only thing changed lately regarding parking, and it was revised after an audit.

TO HAVE YOUR QUESTION ANSWERED IN THE NEXT ISSUE

AND

WIN A RESERVED PARKING SPOT

SEND YOUR
QUESTION TO
THE ANSWER MAN!

WHAT DO YOU
WANT TO KNOW?
WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND?

#### LET THE ANSWER MAN HAVE IT!

FOR BEST RESULTS, PLEASE QUERY BY SEPTEMBER 12

SEND YOUR EMAIL TO: ERIC.S.LINCOLN @MVN.USACE.ARMY.MIL OR CALL (504) 862-2201.

THE EDITOR RESERVES THE RIGHT TO PICK WHICH QUESTIONS TO PUBLISH AND AWARD.

Why could there not be one specific area set aside for government vehicles instead of putting them all over the district?

Assignment of government

See ANSWER MAN, page 11

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