

SOUTHWESTERN DIVISION

R E G I O N A L

PACESETTER

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***The Corps Team pulls together for Hurricane Ike preparation, response and recovery.
See pages 4-14***



Pacesetter

Serving the men and women of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Southwestern Division

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On the cover: Brig. Gen. Kendall P. Cox, Southwestern Division commander, comforts Galveston Island resident, Sara Cutler, as she salvages items from her badly damaged home following Hurricane Ike's landfall. Sara is the wife of Casey Cutler, chief of Regulatory Policy in Galveston District's Regulatory Branch.



Task Force Pacesetters - prepared, ready, responsive

Brig. Gen. Kendall P. Cox
Commander, Southwestern Division

At 2:10 a.m. CST, Saturday, Sept. 13, Hurricane Ike rolled ashore as a CAT 2 hurricane with winds approaching 110 mph. The eye of the hurricane centered right over Galveston Island and the outer bands stretched as far away as 210 miles. The sea storm surge was approximately 15 feet in the center with swells reaching more than 25 feet at the outer northern edges in Orange County and the western edges of Louisiana. By the time the storm had rushed through Texas and up into Arkansas 15 hours later, Ike was destined to be one of the worst storms to hit the Texas coast in many, many years.

I was fortunate to have the opportunity to deploy to Austin Sept. 11 to set up the beginnings of Task Force Pacesetters. Working out of the Joint Field Office with our federal teammates from FEMA, I was able to link up with members of the initial national Emergency Support Function 3 cadre led by Pete Navesky, Disaster Program Manager, and quickly engage in coordination meetings with state officials and senior leaders from FEMA as elements all across the state prepared for the arrival of Ike.

It was during the next 36 hours that I witnessed the beginnings of the true professionalism and dedication of the many heroes within the Corps from all across the Southwestern Division family and practically every other organization within the Corps.

The nucleus of the Recovery Field Office from Fort Worth District deployed to San Antonio, ESF 3 Planning and Response Teams flowed in from several districts, and subject matter experts for many functions the Corps provides quickly moved to the area to be ready to respond as soon as the storm passed. All of this was second nature to so many who had responded to natural disasters repeatedly, and this was another chance for all to provide assistance and hope to those who would soon surely need it.

I remained in Austin for two full weeks, visiting the many affected areas a few times. My first visit included a flyover of the impacted portions along the coast, to include Galveston Island and some of the most devastated areas such as Bolivar Point and Rollover Pass.

One cannot really understand the true extent of the damage until you see it firsthand, and it was

truly heartbreaking to see how much many had lost and how much needed to be done to restore things to something affectionately known as "normalcy."

I also was honored to invest two days with members of Galveston District at their alternate emergency operations center at Addicks Reservoir. I saw several members of the staff working hard to ensure that all of the SWG family was accounted for, business and support to teammates and projects continued, and as many team members as possible were supporting the immediate ongoing response and recovery operations.

All this was done while many still did not know the fate of their homes and personal property because they could not go home to the island. What is so amazing is that none of them complained, no one hung their heads and asked for constant support ... but instead everyone focused on determining what they could do to provide for the needs of others. That is the true definition of selfless service and embodies the credo of "The Corps Cares."

I later visited Houston again, this time focusing on the efforts of the RFO led by Col. Chris Martin and several from SWF, augmented by many, many volunteers from across the Corps. It was from this location that the majority of the support operations were managed and executed as teams provided oversight for debris removal, power generation, roofing repairs (Blue Roofs), temporary housing, infrastructure assessments and water and ice distribution and delivery.

On the ground almost immediately after the storm hit, generators were installed within the first 24 hours, points of distribution set up and running within 48 hours, and the first Blue Roof installed 6 days after landfall. All of these activities exceeded the expectations of our federal partners but ensured everyone knew the Corps was there to provide any and all assistance we could for those unfortunate families who were suffering.

Task Force Pacesetters remains in operation as I type this message to all of you. Many have been away from home for more than a month, perhaps two, as they initially responded to help those in Louisiana after Gustav came ashore and then

See BG Cox thankful next page

A note of thanks to Corps for work on Brays Bayou

My brother, Steve White, works for FEMA and gave me this email address so I could let the Corps of Engineers know how very, very much we appreciate the work that has been done for flood control in Houston. We live one block off Brays Bayou and the flooding that occurred from Tropical Storm Allison in June 2001 flooded several miles and blocks of residential areas but, most devastatingly, flooded the Texas Medical Center, causing millions and millions of dollars of damage not only to property but destroyed years of data and research kept in the basements of the hospitals.

Because of the projected storm surge predicted with Hurricane Ike, we rode out the storm at home, fully expecting a flood of water. We watched from a neighbor's second floor window as Brays Bayou filled up to the street level with water and then the water started up the street - but then it stopped. The flood control measures implemented since 2001 worked! The retention ponds they have built all over west Houston handled the water. The water filling up on the street was due to construction debris from a home under construction blocking the storm drain.

Thank you for the efforts and your continued plans to widen the bayous. The damage in Houston was primarily due to downed trees and utility poles. Many, many of us are still without power after 12 days. But, we don't have water in our houses and we can camp with conveniences in our own houses without worrying about mold or water damage.

We appreciate the flood control efforts and are grateful for the project that has saved our homes.
THANK YOU!

Ann Elizabeth White
Counsel
Noble Energy
Houston, TX

BG Cox thankful *con't.*

moved to Texas to help with relief efforts there.

I was in awe when I saw just what so many could do for others while not looking for recognition. But I feel it important to let all of those who are participating in Task Force Pacesetters, whether down along the coast or back at home station, that I am forever thankful for your dedicated and selfless service, and I applaud you all for your focus on excellence.

Many suffered as a result of the impact of Hurricane Ike, but through the efforts of all across the team the overall effects of Ike were quickly reduced and life goes on in southeast Texas once again. God bless you all for your personal sacrifices and I look forward to sharing in the many stories yet to be told!

Pacesetters – Building Strong!!



Brig. Gen. Kendall Cox, commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Southwest Division, checks on a generator installation site in Texas after Hurricane Ike. After disasters like Ike, the Corps assesses critical electrical power needs and manages the installation of generators to provide power that keeps key community facilities like hospitals, water and sewer treatment plants and law enforcement facilities operable until the power companies can restore the utility power distribution network. (Photo by Robert Haynes, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers St. Paul District.)

‘Hurricane Heroes’ work to open waterways

Martie Cencki
Pacesetter Staff

Working out of a crammed office at the Addicks Field Office in west Houston, a small band of Galveston District employees performed a huge mission that had a tremendous impact for the Texas Gulf Coast region and for the nation. Johnny Rozsypal, chief of the Operations Division, Joe Hrametz, chief of the Navigation Branch, Tim Updike, district survey coordinator, and Department of the Army Intern Jantzen Miller worked literally day and night to help open the navigation channels and waterways after Hurricane Ike.

As the hurricane approached, and, initially after landfall, the group’s first order of business was close coordination with their partners on the Texas Joint Hurricane Response Team -- the Coast Guard, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association, the barge industry, pilot organiza-

tions and deep and shallow draft stakeholders. Telephone conferences with the team, as well as higher headquarters and sponsors, kept the ops tempo fast. Rozsypal was also frequently lined up as a spokesperson, including a couple of live on air interviews with MSNBC, as well as the Washington Post and the Associated Press.

“It was hectic, but reaffirmed the importance of the Corps’ navigation mission” Rozsypal said. “We had to line up assets so that we could begin survey operations as soon as possible after the storm had passed. Each day that went by with waterways closed had a huge economic impact not only on the Texas coast, but also on the country as a whole because of the petrochemical industry and other shipping on this part of the Texas coast.”

Joe Hrametz worked the survey mission hard.

“We set a rigorous schedule to conduct hydrographic

and side scan sonar surveys of the Houston/Galveston Bay complex and the Sabine Neches Waterway,” he said. “Our goal was to survey these waterways as quickly as possible and begin any necessary salvage operations.”

As a coastal district, the survey list was long. Using 17 survey boats, they surveyed both the Houston/Galveston Bay complex, which includes the Port of Houston, Port of Galveston, Port of Texas City, Green’s Bayou, Bayport and Barbers Terminals, and the Sabine Neches Waterway, which includes the Ports of Orange, Beaumont and Port Arthur. Also on the survey schedule were Freeport, Matagorda, the Corpus Christi Ship Channel, the Victoria Barge Channel and Chocolate Bayou.

Another milestone was surveying and opening the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway. Many salvage operations were necessary to open the GIWW. The teams pulled out everything from roofs of houses to shrimp boats to silos, evidence of Ike’s storm surge that relocated so many things. Salvage operations continue in other areas, but the GIWW is open.

“This has been a demanding time for all of us in Galveston District,” Rozsypal said. “Through a tremendous effort and great teamwork, we have met Ike’s challenges and are better trained and prepared for what the next storm will bring.”

What Ike produced in the final analysis was a group of ‘hurricane heroes’ who ensured that the Galveston District could continue its navigation mission — a mission vital to our Texas coastal communities and to our nation.

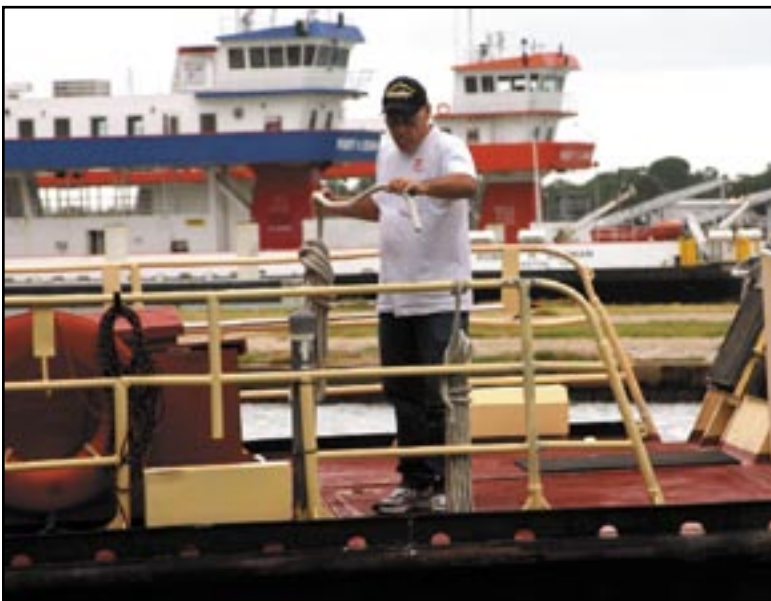


A salvage diver prepares to go into the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway as part of the salvage operations under way there. On this dive, they pulled out a large section of siding. (Photo provided by Galveston District.)

Galveston District takes on Ike



Undeterred by Hurricane Ike, Galveston District employees, primarily from contracting and resource management, deployed to the Joint Program Management Office in San Antonio to work on year-end closeout. (Photos provided by Galveston District.)



Galveston District employee Ryan Hatch prepares the SWG Survey boat Vollert to get underway for the Port of Houston in anticipation of Hurricane Ike. The district's area office took the Vollert and assets to Houston to ride out the storm.

Martie Cencki
Pacesetter Staff

Standing sentinel on Seawall Boulevard in Galveston, a pair of granite pillars frame a gateway of sorts to the Gulf of Mexico. The inscription on one recalls the building of the “Extension of the Sea Wall from 39th to 53rd Sts constructed under the direction of Captain Edgar Jadwin, Corps of Engineers, US Army Nov. 1904-Sep. 1905.”

The Galveston seawall, built after the Great Storm of 1900 came ashore on Sept. 8, 1900, has stood as a bulwark since that terrible event. More than a century later, Hurricane Ike came roaring into Galveston and the upper Texas coast, and once again, the Corps of Engineers responded.

As Hurricane Ike played an erratic game of where it would make landfall, the area prepared for possible evacuation. Once the Mayor of Galveston issued a mandatory evacuation order for the island, the commander of the Galveston District issued a Commander's Evacuation Order on Sept. 11 for “Galveston District employees and their families residing in the areas affected by Hurricane Ike.”

An advance team had deployed to Addicks Project Office on the west side of Houston the day before. Survey boats were moved to areas considered safer. With the Evacuation Order, the District headquarters and its employees began preparation for a possible strike on the island. Equipment was covered, items removed from window sills, electronics unplugged. Emergency kits—both work and personal—were packed in cars. For some, family members and pets piled into cars and hit I-45 to drive to their evacuation destination. Some, on the island and on the mainland, decided to batten down the hatches and wait out the storm.

Some district employees went to work in an emergency management mode. The Crisis Action Team—led by the deputy commander Lt. Col. Ed Feigenbaum and Chief of Emergency Management Gus Marinos— and the Crisis Management Team joined the advance team at Addicks, which became the

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SWG takes on Ike con't.

Galveston District's Alternate Emergency Operations Center.

Fort Worth District assumed Lead District responsibilities as Galveston District focused on personnel accountability—where were employees and were they safe—and any other preparations they could make to secure assets. After landfall, AEOC actions shifted. Personnel accountability was and continued to be the priority.

"Accounting for everyone in the District was Job One for us," said Col. David C. Weston, Galveston District commander. "We had trouble accounting for about four people for a little while, but we did get hold of everyone."

But storm damage assessment kicked in too. Helicopter overflights to see the damage not only to Galveston Island and the Jadwin Building (the District Headquarters Building), but also the rest of the impacted district areas lifted off. Addicks and Barker reservoirs were checked for damage, as were the Brazos River Flood Gates and Colorado River Locks. District officials couldn't get into the Wallisville Recreation Area—which did sustain damage—for several days. Port Arthur offices were (and remain as of this writing) severely impacted.

All this is an environment of "no's": no electricity, no water, no telephones, and no gas—the heating kind and the automobile kind.

Galveston Island was indeed desolate, and residents were not allowed to re-enter until Sept. 24—11 days after landfall—but even as far as Houston residents had to cope with a power outage that lasted for weeks, as well as

closed service stations, grocery stores, and restaurants.

The Addicks office fortunately had a generator for backup power and running water, as well as telephone lines and internet. The hotels where the AEOC staff stayed did not. Most toughed it out, while a few opted to just bunk down on a cot in the Addicks office.

Even while the assessments were going on, the AEOC entered yet another phase: how to return employees to work. Efforts began to make the Jadwin Building on Galveston habitable as soon as the island was opened up again. Damage seemed to be minor to the Jadwin Building, and the staff, led by facilities manager Eric Procter, started planning for how to open the building up again.



Norma Garcia, left, ACE-IT technician, and Kris Brown, Addicks park ranger, get set up for Alternate Emergency Center Operations at the Addicks Project Office. (Photo provided by Galveston District.)

Additionally, inquiries were begun about alternate headquarters locations in the greater Houston area. Though that did not work out, an alternate work site was established at the Sims Project Office in Houston that allowed some employees to return to work. Several employees, primarily from contracting and resource management,

were also deployed to the Joint Program Management Office in San Antonio to work on year-end closeout.

Going on at the same time was the critical navigation mission. Beginning the day after landfall efforts were under way to begin the coordination to survey the waterways. "Our goal was to get these waterways open as soon as possible," said Weston. "We knew how critical they are to our nation's economy and industry."

"Our goal was to get these waterways open as soon as possible," said Weston. "We knew how critical they are to our nation's economy and industry."

The operations section at the AEOC—Johnny Rozsypal, chief of the Operations Division and Joe Hrametz, chief of the Navigation Branch—led their small-in-numbers team to accomplish huge things, like getting the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway open again.

All told, about half of all Galveston District employees were working at some point during and after Hurricane Ike: roughly 50 carried out the District responsibilities from the AEOC, while 170 were working from other locations. Brig. Gen. Kendall P. Cox, Southwestern Division commander, visited several times, and gave coins to some extraordinarily deserving employees.

By the time the return to Galveston was in the works, innumerable Galveston District employees deserved accolades for a job well done. But accolades were secondary to them—they were merely doing their jobs, just as their predecessors in the Corps had done after the Great Storm of the last century. Building Strong, then and now.

USACE Recovery Field Office Part of the National Response Framework

*Penny Schmitt
Task Force Pacesetter Public Affairs*

Pasadena, Texas — Who are those disaster recovery workers in the red shirts imprinted with a big white castle on the back? They are U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Civilians from Galveston, Fort Worth and Dallas, Texas; Little Rock, Ark.; Norfolk, Va.; Seattle, Wash.; Saint Paul, Minn.; Pittsburgh, Pa. and many other points around the United States of America. They are all trained and ready to help any community in the nation recover from a major disaster.

Today, that disaster is Hurricane Ike, which devastated Gulf Coast Texas communities with a massive storm surge, and created widespread damage to power distribution networks and wind damage to homes and communities. The Corps' response, known in Southwestern Division as 'Task Force Pacesetters', has been under way since Hurricane Ike was still east of Cuba.

Even as a storm-threatened region made preparations to evacuate or weather the storm, trained responders packed their bags and flew toward the storm center to prepare for the needs they knew would follow the storm's passage.

Under the command of the Southwestern Division and Fort Worth District as the lead District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, these folks came together as they have many times before to form efficient, effective response and recovery teams. So far, 900 Corps employees have responded to Hurricanes Ike and Gustav.

Hurricane Ike's wrath visited coastal Texas, home of the Corps' Galveston District office, with special fury.

"That District was directly impacted, and is operating on a reduced scale to carry out its own critical missions," said Southwestern Division Commander Brig. Gen. Kendall P. Cox. "Col. David Weston and his team are doing an extraordinary job to survey critical navigation channels, clear waterways and reconstitute a district momentarily scattered to the four winds."

While Galveston District oversees recovery of its own operations and people, Fort Worth District stepped up to take command of the Hurricane Ike Recovery Field Office. This entity mobilized quickly to carry out Federal Emergency Management



The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers takes applications for the Operation Blue Roof program in Webster, Texas, and throughout 29 counties in Texas. The Corps manages the Operation Blue Roof mission for FEMA. This mission consists of installing plastic sheeting as a temporary measure for damaged roofs to assist storm victims. (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers photo.)

Agency directed missions that support individual and community recovery after a disaster.

The Corps missions follow a logical progression toward recovery, first addressing critical life support functions, and then helping the community and individuals to rebuild.

"This is totally characteristic of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, folks from everywhere come together and put resources and repairs on the street within hours or days after a storm event," said Fort Worth District Commander Col. Christopher W. Martin. "When we say 'one team, one fight, we mean it!'"

"We have a nationwide Civilian work force 32,000 strong, with the capabilities to meet many infrastructure and community needs," added Martin. "We are ready to bring those resources forward, working under FEMA's direction to help Texas and its people recover."

Commodities: Safe drinking water, refrigeration and food are top priorities for people left without electricity. Ike knocked out power for millions in the Houston metro area and in many other communities. The Corps of Engineers undertakes to procure and deliver water, ice and ready-to-eat meals to help people survive. Before a storm is even a gleam in the weather forecaster's eye, the Corps

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Task Force Pacesetters *con't.*

has contracts in place that can be activated at any time, and start supplies moving toward the forecasted disaster strike. Within 72 hours, and sometimes sooner, trucks are logged in by Corps workers and dispatched to sites around affected communities.

“This is totally characteristic of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, folks from everywhere come together ...” said Col. Christopher W. Martin. “When we say ‘one team, one fight,’ we mean it!”

Electrical power: Outages are a serious obstacle to ordinary living. But a power outage in a medical facility can be life threatening, and a power outage affecting utilities like water and sewer treatment plants can be a threat to public health. The Corps has teams of Civilians and support from the 249th Engineer Battalion, Prime Power, to assess power needs and install generators at key community facilities.

By Sept. 21, the Corps had installed more than 100 FEMA-supplied generators. As soon as the power companies are able to restore utility power, these generators are de-installed until they are needed in another location.

Debris removal: Although many communities may in the longer term decide to remove debris themselves, immediately after a storm it is critical to clear major transportation routes. After a disaster such as this, the debris burden can overwhelm state and local resources. At this time, the Corps debris mission is focused on major roadways in the most heavily impacted zones on roads leading into Galveston and the Bolivar Peninsula.

Temporary roof repair: Popularly known as “Operation Blue Roof” because of the bright blue material supplied by FEMA for roof repairs, this Corps-managed mission provides a free, temporary covering for storm-damaged homes that will provide protection until the homeowner can arrange for a permanent repair.

Advanced Contract Initiative contracts are already in place with qualified roofing companies, who stand ready to assist. The Corps sends volunteer workers with the roofing crews. The ‘red shirts’ with Corps Castles on the back are clear signs that the roofers working in a neighborhood are doing



Col. Christopher W. Martin, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Fort Worth district commander, talks to local media in south Houston at the site of the first Operation Blue Roof installation following Hurricane Ike. Martin, commander of the Task Force Pacesetters recovery field office in Pasadena, Texas, was working to spread the word about Operation Blue Roof. (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers photo.)

high-quality temporary repairs overseen by Corps Quality Assurance inspectors. The program, funded by FEMA, helps homeowners to have competent, bonded repairs made at no cost during those vulnerable days and weeks after a storm.

Hurricane Ike occurred Sept. 12 and 13, and Blue Roof repairs began six days later on Sept. 19. By Sunday, Sept. 21, there were 8,159 people who had already requested Blue Roof repairs.

Specialized missions: Every storm is different. The Recovery Field Office may call on the resources of the entire U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to provide support that answers the specific damage caused by the storm.

A critical road net repair followed Hurricane Isabel in 2003 when the storm cut Hatteras, N.C. off from all mainland contact. Corps repairs and strengthening of the levee and pump systems in New Orleans are now well-known around the world. Hurricane Ike may raise some special engineering needs that the Corps will be called on to answer.

Galveston employees endure Hurricane Ike

Martie Cencki
Pacesetter Staff

Loretta Buddenhagen remembers most the Beanie Babies, several hundred of them that she had collected over the years for her daughter Jillian, now 19. The stuffed toys were kept in her home in “Fish Village” on Galveston Island.

When the waters from Galveston Bay pushed inland, the 5 feet of bay water that rushed into her home claimed almost all of the Beanie Babies, along with most of her possessions and chunks of her home.

Buddenhagen, a program analyst in the Programs and Project Management Division of the Galveston District, is one of about 45 district employees — most living on the island — who sustained major damage during Hurricane Ike. Employees reported floodwaters, buckled floors, wet carpets, mold, wet sheetrock, missing shingles—you name it.

John Machol, a policy analyst in the Regulatory Branch, lost 12 guitars to the floodwaters, and much of his furniture and clothing. Gus Marinos, the Emergency Management chief, lost priceless antique collections.

Trish Brannan, a project assistant in Engineering and Construction, found out that her home was uninhabitable and the contents covered with sludge. Kenny and Cheryl Jaynes lost their motorcycles and many, many other possessions.

Many of them, like Marinos, Buddenhagen, Brannan and the Jaynes, continued to work round the clock, pulling duty in the Alternate Emergency Operations Center at Addicks or other alternate locations while trying to deal with the damage to their homes.



Loretta Buddenhagen, a program analyst with the Galveston District, holds some of the few lifetime memories that were not lost when Hurricane Ike floodwaters filled her home in Galveston. (Photo provided by Galveston District.)



This is a minute portion of the damage dealt by Hurricane Ike as it swept through Texas. (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers photo.)

In Buddenhagen’s case, her home had to be virtually gutted. Carpet, flooring, sheetrock all had to come out. Because of the way the home was constructed, the water and mold actually moved up the walls in some rooms, rendering the rooms just frames.

“Everyone worried about the seawall [on the Gulf of Mexico side of the island], but we were attacked by the bay,” she said. “I was here during Hurricane Alicia, and it was no big deal. This has been pretty bad.”

She and many of the other employees living on the island are known as BOI — born on the island. They have lived their lives on the island, enduring tropical storms and the occasional hurricane, and have no intention of leaving.

“Some people say we are crazy for living here,” she said. “But where do you go? This is my home.”

“Anywhere you live, there is something: earthquakes, tornadoes, blizzards — I plan to stay right here.”

Right now, she and her husband George and their two dogs and cat are staying with her mother in Galveston.

“We are fortunate to have a place to stay,” she said. “Many people in our situation are living in the shelter tents in town.”

“My ‘pity party’ is over. Most of what we lost was just things, and they can be replaced in time. We believe in counting our blessings.”

Still, the pain on her face was visible as she looked at a few family photos that had somehow managed to survive. They were photos of the young daughter Jillian, back when she collected the Beanie Babies.



Galveston: Battered but working strong

*Col. David C. Weston
Commander, Galveston District*

The confluence of Hurricane Ike's mid-September hit on the upper Texas coast and the end of the fiscal year could have been "the perfect storm" for the Galveston District. Timing could not have been worse for our work force to respond to a hurricane personally and professionally, while still carrying out year-end activities in the Resource Management and Contracting world. But Team Galveston came through in a remarkable example of dedication, teamwork, and commitment to doing the right thing for the Corps and for the nation.

About 50 of our work force responded at the Alternate Emergency Operations Center at Addicks. Through round-the-clock operations, the AEOC oversaw our district's response to Hurricane Ike. Accounting for our people and resources, checking out the status of our headquarters building and looking for fixes, finding alternate work locations so that some of our team could go back to work, assessing damage to our facilities all along the impacted area—these were just a few of the missions carried out at the AEOC.

The Operations team at the AEOC undertook the crucial task of surveying the waterways and coordinating the salvage missions so that the Coast Guard could re-open the navigation channels so critical to the economic wellbeing of our nation. Working with the Coast Guard, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the barge

industry, our ops folks took on this nonstop mission until the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway was opened.

Other segments of Team Galveston were working tirelessly at the Joint Program Management Office in San Antonio and the Sims Project Office in Houston for year-end closeout, and they scored big in the execution mission.

We finished the year at roughly 97 percent in General Investigations, 71 percent in Construction General, 89 percent in Operations and Maintenance, and 84 percent in Operations and Maintenance Supplemental—a tremendous end to the fiscal year.

We also awarded multiple contracts for Fort Bliss, which involves projects that are very important to the Army's efforts to reposition forces back in the United States from overseas. In addition, we awarded all the Rio Grande Valley segments for PF 225 border fence construction—a great achievement for a nationally strategic project for improving our nation's border security.

In the regulatory arena, this fiscal year saw great strides in streamlining our regulatory processes, implementing new General Permits, and processing even more regulatory actions than in previous years. Our regulatory folks accomplished all this with no decline in our commitment to upholding our standards.

All of these extraordinary efforts were accomplished against the backdrop of Galveston as the "impacted district." In addition to meaning that we could not carry

out our daily missions because of the impact of Hurricane Ike, that phrase also took on a human aspect.

"Impacted" had special meaning for our folks who live on Galveston Island. For example, Gus Marinos, our chief of Emergency Management, ran the AEOC while trying to recover from several feet of water in his home. He lost some priceless collections of antiques.

Loretta Buddenhagen from Programs Management kept pace with her work in the AEOC while trying to salvage a few belongings from the five feet of water in her home near the Jadwin Headquarters Building.

And Casey Cutler found himself showing the damage he had endured to Brig. Gen. Kendall Cox and me during a trip we made to the island.

These are just a few of the many Galveston District employees who were personally affected by Hurricane Ike, but continued their tireless dedication to the mission, and were the very definition of "professional."

And the work goes on. The Galveston District was very fortunate to have the Fort Worth District to fall back on.

As Fort Worth undertook our District responsibilities, including setting up the Recovery Field Office in Pasadena, Texas, we saw with each passing day the true teamwork and professionalism that makes the Corps of Engineers such an outstanding organization.

See Corps Teamwork next page

Corps Teamwork *cont.*

As the Galveston District returns to its home on Galveston Island, we extend a heartfelt appreciation to SWF and its commander, Col. Christopher W. Martin, for all you have done to ensure that the Corps continued to take care of its responsibilities to the nation and to the recovery effort. Every blue roof tarp is a testament to the outstanding work of those at the RFO.

In fact, Hurricane Ike revealed the true organizational strength of the Corps of Engineers. From the assistance we received from the USACE

Headquarters staff to the immeasurable support from the entire Southwestern Division team, the Galveston District thanks you all for helping to sustain us through very difficult times.

The new fiscal year has begun, and the new year of 2009 will be here before we know it. In the blink of an eye, we will be celebrating Thanksgiving with our families and friends, and then the holiday season will be around the corner. I know one thing I will give thanks for this year—my fortune at being the commander of the remarkable Team Galveston, who faced down a major hurricane and year-end closeout at the same time, and came out a winner. Thanks to every member of Team Galveston for all your great efforts!

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REGULATORY DIVISION
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ELMENDORF AFB, ALASKA 99506-0898**

Federal Employees Education and Assistance Fund
Lakewood, CO

October 16, 2008

To Whom It May Concern:

Enclosed is a check for \$699 for Hurricane Ike victims at the Galveston District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). This money was raised by employees of the Alaska District of the Corps of Engineers associated with a talent show benefit.

Sincerely,

Mary Lee Plumb-Mentjes
Project Manager

Little Rock helps 'blue roof' Texas after Ike

Cheri Dragos-Pritchard
Pacesetter Staff

Less than two weeks after Hurricane Gustav struck Louisiana and moved inland to dump rain and spawn tornadoes in Little Rock District, Hurricane Ike wreaked havoc on the coast of Texas. This sent Little Rock District's team into action helping the Federal Emergency Management Agency launch Operation Blue Roof.

As of Oct. 1, Little Rock had deployed 47 people in support of FEMA Region 6 for Hurricane Ike. This Operation Blue Roof team turned damaged roofs into blue roofs for free, placing temporary blue plastic sheeting onto damaged homes until the owners could return and find a more permanent fix. The material can last up to six months.

One of Little Rock's employees, Ron Helton, took the lead on Operation Blue Roof as the action officer.

"We received our mission tasking on Tuesday, moved out Wednesday, and installed the first blue roof Friday," Helton was quoted as saying in Engineer Update. "We set a high standard for ourselves, but when the entire team gives 110 percent, things get done."

Little Rock District Commander Col. Ed Jackson was one of the members deployed after the hurricane. His role was to support Southwestern Division Commander Brig. Gen. Ken Cox in the Joint Field Office and the State Emergency Operations Center during his absence.

"Ed Jackson is paying huge dividends spelling me at the JFO and State EOC and he has helped work some very key issues with FEMA and State the past two days," Cox wrote.

"It's nice having all four commanders downrange with me as all are true professionals who only know one standard, excellence, and all of Task Force Pacesetters are at that level."

Jackson commended the Little Rock team as a whole on their efforts during the storm – deployed and at home stations.

"We have many of our folks deployed for storm support," Jackson said. "The blue roof team is making a huge difference, but I also want to say thanks to all who are shouldering the load while they are gone."



Contractors working for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers install FEMA Blue Roofs on houses damaged after Hurricane Ike ripped through Texas. The Corps manages Operation Blue Roof for FEMA after disasters like Ike. (USACE photos.)



Jason Gramlich of Little Rock District takes an application for a Blue Roof from a Hurricane Ike victim in Webster, Texas. The Corps manages Operation Blue Roof for FEMA after disasters like Ike. The program provides free temporary blue plastic sheeting to hurricane-damaged roofs until homeowners can have permanent repairs made. (USACE photos.)



Corps strength is volunteers responding when needed

*Col. Christopher W. Martin
Commander, Fort Worth District*

I want to thank every one of you for the outstanding job you did this past fiscal year. This was by far our best year ever in execution. For the second year, we contracted out well over \$1 billion, and we met all our Civil Works, Military Construction and Base Relocation and Closure metrics.

Every day, the Fort Worth District contributes to our nation's well-being, from the border fence construction to our military posts, bases and installations to the civil works and lake projects we oversee. On top of all that, the district stepped in to help out our sister district, Galveston, after Hurricane Ike hit.

We continue to do a great job in support of the Hurricane recovery efforts. Every day, a few more of our people arrive in Houston to work various missions, and I appreciate everyone's support, from those deployed to the supervisors who allow them to deploy.

So far, we have supported numerous distribution points where more than 1,000 trucks of ice and 1,200 trucks of water were distributed to people as they waited for their power to return. We cleared several highways and major roads for the Texas Department of Transportation to allow access to Galveston Island and other places, removing almost 100,000 cubic yards of debris.

We have assessed hundreds of facilities for the state and local governments and installed more than 179 generators. We provided quality assurance for the installation of 144 Federal Emergency Management Agency trailers to date, a mission that will grow to potentially thousands of trailers. Additionally, we have signed up almost 34,000 people for blue roofs, and we've installed about 23,000 roofs to date.

Our debris team, along with the debris team from Louisville District, is also helping the 29 affected counties assess the amount of debris each county has, and working with FEMA to provide the counties/cities with money to remove the debris. We will then help the local governments with oversight on their individual debris removal contracts.

Our debris team has been very active this year – we have sent them to California for help after the

wildfires, to Oklahoma for help after ice storms and floods, to Hurricane Dolly and now to Ike.

The 30-day mark is coming up now for our deployed teammates on the debris team for Hurricane Ike. This is a great opportunity for us to get some new members, bring them in and let them get great on the job training and experience. If you are motivated, confident, can communicate with city and county officials, to include mayors and judges, and looking for a new challenge, then I encourage you to volunteer for our debris Planning and Response Team. We are looking for up to eight people to go to Austin, learn the mission, and carry on for the next 30 days.

If you are interested, get permission from your supervisor, enter your name in EngLink, and then let our Emergency Management shop know you want to help.

Staffing the debris team is one of our many missions in Fort Worth. It is not a year-round requirement, but PRT members have to be ready to deploy any time of the year because we never know when the next hurricane, flood, earthquake, wild fire, terrorist attack, etc., is going to occur.

Additionally, in support of the Global War on Terrorism and the Gulf Region Division's South District, headquarters has asked us to add additional over hire personnel to our functional staffs. This will allow us to hire people into the organization who want to deploy as part of their permanent role and build a stable scheduled rotation of personnel who plan to rotate for GRD with permanent positions here in the states.

The goal is to fill positions with qualified individuals, whether they are retired military, recent military, adventurous or duty driven to serve in that role. There are key positions available now, but if you desire to deploy for any other position, now or at a later date, contact the Southwestern Division point of contact Steve Crawford at (817) 886-1173 or e-mail him at Steven.G.Crawford@usace.army.mil.

The strength of the Corps is in our volunteers responding when there is a need. And because of all the hard work all of you do daily, the Fort Worth District is the best district in USACE. Thank you again and buckle up for another big year in 2009.

Army divers train in Tulsa District



Park Ranger Doug Wheeler from the Fall River/Toronto Project and two Army divers, one on the boat and one in the water, locate a leaking natural gas well at the upper end of Big Hill Lake. (Photo provided by Tulsa District.)



Portland District Dive Safety Officer Rick Benoit (in white) and four of his divers work below the dam at Elk City Lake during a stilling basin inspection. (Photo provided by Tulsa District.)

Tulsa District and the U.S. Army Dive Command from Virginia worked within a signed Memorandum of Agreement to perform scuba diving training/work exercises during the week of Aug. 11-15. This inaugural collaborative effort was facilitated by Rick Benoit, Portland District's dive safety officer, and Eugene Goff, Kansas Area Operations Project Manager.

The work was conducted at Big Hill, Elk City, Toronto, John Redmond, and Keystone Lakes. It included inspecting outlet channel spillway and stilling basin under engineer Dan Baumann's direction, pinpointing locations of leaking gas wells within the lakes, looking for buoy line anchors, inspecting the underwater portion of gate tower bridge deck concrete supports, determining silt loads/levels in front of dam low flow valve structure, and investigating concrete log boom anchors for potential future demolition with explosive charges.

The MOU allowed the district to get work done within budget constraints and provided positive training opportunities for the U.S. Army troops.

Five divers did the work and provided the Remote Operating Vehicle equipment. The ROV is a powered underwater camera that records video for staff to evaluate what is observed underwater. Benoit was present to oversee the diving operations.

The project allowed for continued partnerships with local government agencies. Creek County, Oklahoma Sheriff's Office, Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation Fisheries Team, Mannford Emergency Medical Services, Coffey County, Kans., EMS Team, and the Lake Division of the Oklahoma Highway Patrol directly assisted in the recon analysis and work.

Moreno earns Excellence Award

*Edward Rivera
Pacesetter Staff*

Taking on a major portion of the \$4.4 billion Fort Bliss Expansion Program, John Moreno, area engineer and administrative contracting officer for the Biggs Area Office, led a team with little history of working together to make “success” a common word on Fort Bliss.

Moreno was awarded the Construction Management Excellence Award at the Fort Worth District’s annual Engineer Day awards ceremony in June for his role in preparing and executing what is being called the largest peacetime military construction effort in the country.



Biggs Area Engineer John Moreno inspects a laundry room in the Brigade Combat Team 1 Barracks at Fort Bliss. (Photo by Edward Rivera.)

“I am honored and proud of all the folks working on this team as this is also recognition for their outstanding work,” said Moreno. “We executed our workload despite much adversity. The Biggs Area Office team did not have much experience in working together, but everyone pulled together and worked tirelessly.”

Humbly accepting his award, Moreno was quick to say he is just one member of an important Corps team of District employees and contractors.

“Troy Collins, the former program director, was

a great driving force for the Fort Bliss Program and deserves as much credit as do the outstanding project managers in our District and the districts responsible for each product line,” said Moreno. “In addition, Jack Clifton has been a positive mainstay and lead for the Land Development Engineer at Fort Bliss.”

According to his co-workers Moreno is an energetic leader full of enthusiasm for program and project management, who uses his ability to mentor and positively influence his team of government and contract employees.

His guidance led to mutually advantageous partnering relationships between contractors, customers and the Corps of Engineers. This approach continued to develop and has been maintained throughout the year and is postured to continue throughout the life of the program, resulting in completion being achieved ahead of schedule.

“It was a challenge assembling a team comprised of the LDE, government hires and military personnel to execute a massive and fast-paced construction management program, but once a team, the end-result of quality facilities delivered in record time,” said Moreno.

With Army Transformation and the new way of doing military construction projects, Troy Collins says Moreno represents the new face of the Corps.

“He is well educated, highly motivated, and comes with a diversified construction background,” he said. “His work at Fort Bliss is a small indication of his capabilities. As a future leader, John is setting a good

example in being results-oriented, while staying attuned to his customers, contractors and staff.”



FOSTER McCONNELL RETIRES AFTER 50 YEARS

Tammy L. Moody
Pacesetter Staff

When Foster McConnell began his career with the Army Corps of Engineers, Little Rock District in October 1958 his favorite singer, Elvis Presley, was in the Army in Germany, and Ike was president.

This year at Engineer Day, McConnell, his wife Shirley and his Little Rock District teammates celebrated his 50 years of service. This month McConnell retired after a remarkable career.

A half century ago after graduating high school, McConnell, who was interested in working with mechanical drawings, attended a junior college and started looking for work. For a short time, he worked for an appraisal company making maps in Little Rock, and then he returned to school. Not long after, he learned Little Rock District was hiring.

"There was an article about the Corps needing people as surveyors," he said. "I wasn't a surveyor yet, but I wanted to get involved in that so I went to see. They gave me a little drawing test to do. I passed that all right. I had to wait a couple of months to see if they had any openings, but then they hired me."

McConnell worked in Real



In December 1965, Foster McConnell, left, plays guitar with his band for a Little Rock District Christmas party in the Maps and Survey Office. McConnell retired in October 2008 after 50 years with the district. (Little Rock District Archive photo.)



After receiving his 50-year-pin during the Engineer Day Awards Ceremony, Foster McConnell, with wife Shirley by his side, tells his fellow co-workers how much he enjoyed working with Little Rock District all those years. (Photo by David Virden.)

Estate and Relocations, but the majority of his tenure was in Surveys, where he worked as a civil engineering technician. McConnell very succinctly summed up why he worked for the Corps for so long.

"I like most everything about the Corps, and everything I do here," he said.

The dedicated employee also served his country as a citizen soldier. He enlisted in the

Arkansas Army National Guard in 1961. During the course of his career he served in field artillery, personnel, combat engineers and the Air National Guard's 189th Civil Engineering Squadron. In 1986, he transferred to the Army Reserve. Staff Sergeant McConnell retired from the 416th Engineer Command of the U.S. Army Reserve in 1996 with 33 years of service.

"In the district, we are often measured by the projects we work," said Henry Himstedt, chief of Hydrology and Technical Services Branch. "A few of the major projects that Foster worked included the boundary surveys for the White River lakes, the Arkansas River Additional Land Acquisition, and the National Levee Database."

Himstedt explained that McConnell also

assisted the Corps with monumenting the boundaries around the White River lakes by laying out the monumentation scheme, locating the existing records, pulling all the tract descriptions and performing quality control on the finished plats for hundreds of miles of boundary during the '70s, '80s and '90s. This helped

See Foster Retires next page

Hat Day

End of Year stress relief

In September, Little Rock District's Contracting Division started taking a healthy approach to surviving fiscal year-end stress and heavy doses of overtime.

On "Hat Day" they brought in the humor by wearing crazy hats, and on "Fruit Day" there was fruit. They also used "comfort food" in the form of an ice cream cake from the local creamery. The all time favorite though was "Chocolate Day," when they treated themselves to chocolate delights from a sweets shop in the area. (Photo by Tammy Moody.)



Foster Retires *con't.*

ensure the integrity of government land.

"In the '90s, he worked hundreds of hours of overtime on Arkansas River Additional Land Acquisition and performed quality control on the aerial maps to make sure we had quality products to use to purchase land," he said.

Most recently McConnell located the as-built levee drawings from the '30s and '40s that were crucial to ensuring the National Levee Database project started on the right foot. These records had been scattered in various locations because of repeated relocations of the map file room during the past 25 years. Many of these maps and drawings are unique and irreplaceable.

Himstedt said there is likely not an engineer, planner, realty specialist or lawyer in the district today — young or old — who McConnell has not mentored while searching for a particular plane table survey, river cross section, plat or benchmark that was critical to their project.

"One of his most beneficial qualities is his tireless effort to preserve the district's historic engineering records," he added. "Foster diligently preserved many of the drawings and maps others had discarded, frequently removing original drawings from dumpsters where someone unaware of their value had thrown them. More than once, these records were later found to be critical to a project."

Steve Corley, who worked with McConnell for more than 18 years, said the map files room was his domain.

"Whenever we need to go down there to see Foster, we always say we're going to Foster Land," Corley said. "Foster could find anything in that room. He also had control over the surveys contractors did for us, and when they turned in their work for us, he redlined their surveys so much for errors that at least one contractor wanted to be here for his retirement party to celebrate that his redlining days are over."

District Engineer Col. Ed Jackson said he felt honored and privileged to preside over McConnell's recognition for his 50 years of federal service.

"Very few achieve this significant milestone, one that represents a true lifetime of dedicated service to the Corps and to our nation," he said.

"Foster joined the team at Little Rock District almost a decade before I was born, and he has witnessed many of the crowning achievements of our district that include the commissioning of many of our significant public works, including the opening of the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System.

"He is a virtual walking catalog of engineering plans and specifications, an invaluable asset to this district. Foster represents many of his generation who dedicated their lives to making a difference in the lives of others, in their communities and for their nation."

SWF employee trains guide dog at work

Megan Murphey
Pacesetter Staff

Of all the pairs of feet that walk into the downtown Fort Worth federal building each day, only one set is black and furry. The feet belong to Heidi, a seven-month-old black Labrador, who is considered just another co-worker to the employees of the Fort Worth District Office.

Chris Story, an Office Automation Clerk in Engineering and Construction Division, has been bringing Heidi to the office for the past six months while he trains her to become a guide dog. Story is part of the Southeastern Guide Dogs, Inc., "Puppy Walking" program, designed to teach working dogs the ropes of obedience and training.

"We are basically the dog's foster parents for her first year," said Story, adding that everyone at the Corps has been supportive of his bringing Heidi to work. The puppy spends most of her day dog-napping by Story's desk, but she also likes to accompany him to lunch and on his office errands. Heidi has become such a fixture in the office that everyone expects to see the two together.

"People here enjoy having Heidi around," said Story. "Even people I don't really know recognize me through Heidi."

Story has been active with guide dog training since August 2006 and said that "word of mouth" is the most common way people become trainers. He learned about the opportunity from a close friend who volunteered for a Denton area group and knew the agency's director. Story has since switched to another foundation, but continues to enjoy working with the dogs. Heidi is the second dog that he has trained under the program and among his respon-



Ed Foo pets Heidi, a guide dog in training, while his co-worker and her trainer, Chris Story, watches. (Photo provided by Fort Worth District.)

sibilities are "potty-training" and command recognition, which are the building blocks for all future training.

Story and Heidi also attend weekly classes with other program participants focusing on teaching the dogs important tasks that need to be learned at this stage in their career. All in all, Story estimates that he and Heidi devote about an hour each day to basic obedience training. The training is intensive and takes diligence on the part of both the trainer and the canine, with the goal that the animal will become a guide dog for a vision impaired candidate.

To become a trainer, interested persons must contact the Florida-based Southeastern Guide Dog Foundation and complete an application. A committee decides if the applicant is appropriate for the "Puppy Walking" program. Those selected are told to contact

the local branch, where they are put in touch with the area coordinator. The local committee decides if the volunteer will be given a Labrador puppy to train.

The puppies are bred twice each year and have corporate sponsors that pay the breeding expenses. The sponsor is also given the privilege of naming the puppy. Heidi's sponsor is BMW of Plano, and she was named for one of the company racecars.

The trainer and dogs alike are held to the highest standards. To produce the most capable of canines, the SEGDI adheres to strict training procedures. Each dog has to go through a graduated series of programs, beginning with the basic "Puppy Walking" course. Dogs are constantly evaluated to ensure they are medically fit and don't possess any fears that would inhibit their guiding abilities.

Story says he needs to be stricter with Heidi than he is with his own four dogs and has to discourage her from barking, whining and climbing on furniture. Guide dogs also have to adhere to a specific diet that is tailored to keep them fit and to minimize potty breaks. This is important because a working guide dog must always be at an arm's length of the person they are aiding. Guide dogs provide an invaluable service to their masters, who typically have 20 percent vision or less.

"Think of anything that you do during the day in terms of mobility -- and that dog helps them do it," Story explained.

Guide dogs are excellent at taking commands and can lead their owners safely down streets, aboard trains, off planes and a variety of other mobility-related tasks. They are also specially

See Dog Trainer next page

Dog Trainer *con't.*

trained to automatically go to the curb-cut when leading their owners across a street.

Someone who is visually impaired may obtain a guide dog by contacting the SEGDI and paying a \$1 fee. Although the foundation is non-profit, legalities require that it must charge some kind of fee for its animals. Other than this small charge, the animals are free and the foundation pays for their food and kennels.

Not every canine trained under SEGDI's "Puppy Walking" program graduates to become a professional guide dog. In fact, the standards are so high that there is a 70 percent failure rate in the program. Last year, more than 825 dogs went through the course and only 126 finished successfully. These rigorous standards ensure that only the highest quality dogs are assigned to vision impaired owners.

For the dogs that do not pass the curriculum, there are other options. Many have "career changes" after they fail to complete the course, some becoming "Capable Canines" assigned to owners who have less severe disabilities who are able to get

around on their own. Others may be used for therapeutic purposes and are sent to hospitals or given to individuals who have served in Iraq. Dogs that don't receive a "career change" may become household pets. These canines are put up for auction and the proceeds go to the SEGDI.

Story will have Heidi until next February, when she will return to the Foundation to continue her training. She and the 400 other dogs who have completed the "Puppy Walking" program will undergo behavioral and fitness tests to determine whether they will advance in the training process. Until that time, Story says they are enjoying the time they have together.

Story said he has enjoyed being a part of the "Puppy Walking" program and that he feels strongly about the purpose behind the SEGDI foundation.

Overall, volunteering as a guide dog trainer has been a great experience for him, but he says it wouldn't work for every personality, lifestyle and work environment.

"There are definitely a lot of jobs that wouldn't allow me to bring a dog to the office," said Story. "I am appreciative to work for an organization that believes in the benefits of such a program and a place where Heidi is so welcome."

Eufaula Lake volunteers plant trees toward one million goal

*Rick Smither
Park Ranger, Eufaula Lake*

Eufaula Lake accepted this year's call from National Public Lands Day to help plant one million trees. The challenge was issued to commemorate the 75th anniversary of Roosevelt's "tree army," the Civilian Conservation Corps and their contribution to the beginning of our nation's conservation movement in the 1930s and 1940s. (If you are not familiar with the CCC, please visit <http://www.publiclandsday.org/managers/trees-2008>.)

Beginning in April this year and ending on National Public Lands Day, Sept. 27, volunteers and the Eufaula ranger staff were able to add 500 trees and 100 shrubs toward the total count. Some of the trees planted were raised from acorn seeds collected the year before. The rest were purchased from area nurseries.

The event fit well with the Eufaula Lake Reforestation Plan. In recent years, winter ice storms, spring floods, and summer droughts have



A few of the many volunteers who help at Eufaula Lake prepare to plant three trees of the hundreds planted in answer to the National Public Lands Day challenge to plant one million trees. (Photo by Rick Smither.)

caused the demise of many old growth trees in the public use areas. The plan uses the efforts of volunteers and rangers to create nursery areas in the parks where seedling trees are raised. Along with additional trees which are purchased, the seedlings are planted to replace trees that have been lost.



Little Rock District: Making a difference

*Col. Donald E. Jackson
Commander, Little Rock District*

I am writing this column at the Federal Emergency Management Agency Joint Field Office and Texas State Emergency Operations Center. By the time you read this, I will have returned to Little Rock. I am one of many supporting response and recovery operations associated with Hurricane Ike. It was a privilege for me to participate in such a vast operation.

After the storm passed through Little Rock, I deployed to the region to give Brig. Gen. Ken Cox an opportunity to move forward into the devastated regions along the Texas coast. He was assisting the establishment of the Recovery Field Office by Fort Worth District and the reestablishment of Galveston District, hit hardest by the storm's wrath.

All four districts in Southwestern Division have participated, making it a truly regional effort.

Col. Anthony Funkhouser valiantly represented Tulsa as he roamed the areas experiencing power outages with his caravan of generators, providing juice for the most critical sites.

Col. David Weston did a tremendous job collecting his Galveston District team. The majority of his employees reside in the hardest hit areas of Texas. In short order, they were up and running, re-establishing the navigation conduits critical to the flow of the nation's petroleum products, and assisting local communities in the initial phases of storm recovery. They did all this with families living in shelters and hotels without power. Wow!

Col. Christopher Martin and his team at Fort Worth did a magnificent job wrapping their arms around the multitude of challenges and executed a plan to bring in hundreds of Corps volunteers from across the nation to stand up our Emergency Support Function 3 mission. Great job team!

Other than a few shifts in the Army Operations Center in the Pentagon during the initial operations following Hurricane Katrina in 2005, this was my first participation in an event such as this.

What a massive operation! I gained the greatest respect for the many of you who routinely volunteer your time to help others in need.

I am especially awed by the professionalism of the Emergency Management Team. In Little Rock we are blessed to have Charlie Tobin, Tony Hill and

Jane Smith to spearhead our efforts.

On the ground here, we had the members of our Roofing Team, led by Ron Helton, and others who volunteered in a multitude of capacities to help their neighbors to the south.

While all of this was happening, normal business continued in Little Rock District.

Thanks to the many of you who worked so hard to successfully close out the end of the fiscal year. As always, there are too many to name, but I want to especially thank Contracting Division, Resource Management Division, all the program analysts, program and project managers and project offices in the field for a job well done.

October held challenges as we continued to support ongoing recovery efforts in Texas, complete NSPS requirements, and hosted the annual Arkansas Governor's Conference on Waterborne Transportation.

Of note this year, we opened the conference by honoring the memory and service of former commander, Col. Charles D. Maynard, as we hosted a ceremony to name Lock and Dam 5 in his honor, the Col. Charles D. Maynard Lock and Dam.

We treated our family and friends to a fun-filled barge ride Oct. 7 during Family Fun Night. We honored our retired Corps family during a barge ride luncheon Oct. 9 on Retiree Day, and we had the S.A.M.E. dinner cruise Oct. 10. All these events happened this year the same week as the Governor's Conference. Great job to all who made them a success.

Let me end this by saying I appreciate all you do, and I thank each and every one for your dedicated service to the region and our nation. When your nation calls, you are there. Essayons, and may God bless you all.

SWL deployed members as of Oct. 20:

Win Hargis, Tony Hill, Miles Johnson, Elmo Webb, Tuan Dang, Ron Helton, Rod Raley, Tyrone Fowler, Steven Shaw, Mark Harris, Keith Loos, Rick Hightower, Bobby Smith, Denise Bauer, Kathy Metivier, Brandee Wright, Scott Corbitt, Scott Fryer, Amber Turnage, Mike Marlow, Billy Calloway, Tim Peters, Chris Howard, Derick Walker, Benjamin Bremer, Fred Esser, Bryan Westfall, Jason Gramlich, Shelby Joe Jackson, Mike Jacks, Patrick Bass, Frank Estrada, David Howell, Ronald Hudson, Melissa Jackson, Jan Jones, Terry Linnell, Douglas Stilts, Patricia Whitfield, James Wimberly, Ronald Jones, Robert Coke, Eric Small, Cedric Pelt, Sylvester Jackson, Lisa Yoakum and Bobby Rice.

SWL deputy retires after 22 years active service

Cheri Dragos-Pritchard
Pacesetter Staff

During a ceremony Aug. 29, Little Rock District Deputy Commander Lt. Col. Don Balch received his retirement papers from active duty Army. Little Rock District Commander Col. Ed Jackson presented Balch with various Army and Corps of Engineers awards, decorations and his own words of gratitude.

“Don, you have touched the lives of so many,” Jackson said. “You are a tribute to all of us who wear the uniform. As you close out this chapter of your life, I want you to know you have truly made a difference. Thanks for all you have done for our country. Thanks for all you have done for our Army. Thanks for all you have done for our engineer regiment, and thanks for all you have done for this district.”

“Don, you have touched the lives of so many,” Jackson said. “You are a tribute to all of us who wear the uniform.”

During the August ceremony Balch received the Silver Order of the DeFleury Medal, Legion of Merit, his Certificate of Retirement and a Certificate of Appreciation from President George W. Bush.

Balch has served as Deputy District Commander for US Army Corps of Engineers’ Little Rock District for the past two years, and he retired with more than 22 years of service to the US Army.

Prior to his assignment in Little Rock, Balch served in



Little Rock District Commander Col. Ed Jackson, right, presents Lt. Col. Don Balch with the Silver Order of the DeFleury Medal during Balch’s Aug. 29 retirement ceremony. (Photo by David Virden.)

Saudi Arabia. He has held several positions off and on in Saudi Arabia since 1997, primarily in support of the Saudi Arabian National Guard. He was involved with the Modernization Program, the Security Operations Training Site, security planning for over 34 secure sites in the capital city, contracting, and installation management.

From 2002-2006, while working in Riyadh, he was responsible for more than \$25 million in construction projects.

He has held a variety of command and staff assignments both stateside and abroad. His stateside assignments included Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri; the Trans-Atlantic Program Center in Virginia; Fort Hood, Texas; and more.

His overseas work in addition to his years in the Middle East includes Germany, Africa,

Turkey, Italy, Norway, and more. In all, since receiving his commission in the Army, he has traveled or worked in more than 65 countries.

Balch’s other awards and qualifications include the Army Meritorious Service Medal with four oak leaf clusters, Army Commendation Medal, Army Achievement Medal with two oak leaf clusters, and the Airborne Badge.

He is an active member of the Society of American Military Engineers. In the past four years, he has added golf to his list of numerous hobbies. He is married to the former Isobel Johnson and has two children, Maxwell and James.

Balch has switched hats since retiring as a Soldier and has since begun a new position as a Civilian in the district, chief of Little Rock’s Real Estate Branch.

Tulsa celebrates end of Bixby drainage project

*Mary Beth Hudson
Pacesetter Staff*

On Aug. 28, dignitaries, townspeople and visitors turned out to mark the completion of the downtown drainage project in Bixby, Okla. Sen. James Inhofe was one of the speakers as was Tulsa District Commander Col. Anthony Funkhouser and Bixby Mayor Ray Bowen.

The city has suffered drainage problems for the 100 years it has been in existence. In 2002, a master drainage plan was developed. In November of that year, the Corps of Engineers began work on the Bixby Creek Local Flood Protection Project that was completed in June 2004.

This downstream portion provided the outlet of storm water to the Arkansas River. Construction on the FEMA downtown drainage portion began in August 2005 and was closed out this August.

John Roberts, deputy district engineer for project management and a Bixby resident, said the drainage work has been a quiet success.

“People notice floods,” he said. “They don’t necessarily notice the lack of floods.”

One person who did notice was Jack Ramsey, former Bixby council member, who was on the council when the storm water tax was passed. Speaking of the flood risk management construction it has helped make possible, he said, “I tell you, it’s made such a difference. It’s really paid off.”

Everyone on the dais as well as those in attendance agreed.



Sen. James Inhofe speaks at the ceremony marking the completion of the FEMA downtown drainage portion of the Bixby, Okla., master drainage plan. (Photo provided by Tulsa District.)

“Aug. 28, 2008, will become a very important date to remember for our citizens now as well as in the future. On behalf of the citizens of Bixby, we are most grateful for everyone involved,” Bowen said.

Sue Morris is Tulsa’s Customer Care winner

Sue Morris, a secretary in Tulsa’s Executive Office, was chosen as the Customer Care Employee for the third quarter, fiscal year 2008, thanks “to her dedication in dealing with multiple offices and customers.” The nomination said she helped numerous offices on a daily basis even though it is not a part of her job.

Morris has collected duties as she has traveled through the agency and, even when she changes jobs, many duties stay with her. She helps the Executive, Public Affairs, Logistics, Safety, Counsel, Information Management and Equal Employment Opportunity offices with a variety of tasks from preparing CEFMS transactions to processing passport applications.

As the nomination says, “Sue has helped each



Sue Morris at her desk in the Executive Office. (Photo provided by Tulsa District.)

of these offices get a better understanding of the budget process and how to plan their budget out for the fiscal year.” She is also a special emphasis program manager for EEO.

According to the nomination, “Sue is a prime example of how one person can make a difference for all when it comes to customer service and the Corps image.”

SWD's Frank helps GRS team move Iraq forward

John Connor
Gulf Region South District

TALLIL AIR BASE, Iraq – A ton of essential work on U.S. Army Corps of Engineers projects in Iraq gets done before the first shovel-full of dirt is turned to get construction launched.

Among those first involved in a project are Andy Frank and his Engineering and Design Branch colleagues at USACE's Gulf Region South District: who are responsible for developing the plans and scopes of work in support of 200 active and future construction projects valued at over \$1 billion.

Frank is branch chief of a 16-person office that now includes eight Iraqi engineers.

"This is a great staff, all dedicated professionals, working together to help Iraq move

forward," he said. "The teamwork and camaraderie are the most satisfying aspects of my job."

The projects Frank and his mates have developed include schools, hospitals, universities, water treatment facilities, high voltage electrical lines, canal pumping stations, sewer systems, roads, bridges, health clinics, prisons, courthouses, slaughterhouses, police stations and Iraqi Army bases.

"Andy has a great attitude with a permeating positive approach which really gets the others going. He's been great at pulling together the team," said his boss Tom Eidson, GRS' Chief of Engineering and Construction.

Frank's staff assembles project information, performs site visits as needed, designs conceptual drawings and authors Independent Government

Estimates. The team has reviewed more than 35 design and construction project submittals, processed 84 contract modifications and performed 55 bid proposal price analyses in the last six months.

"Even though I miss my family, I feel I'm really doing something important to make the world a better place," said Frank.

"Even though I miss my family, I feel I'm really doing something important to make the world a better place," said Frank, who works at home as the Installation Support Program Manager for USACE's Southwestern Division in Dallas. He has a wife and three grown children. His oldest daughter is getting married in November.

Frank is nearing the end of his second tour in Iraq. His first tour was for a year; the current one for six months.

"It's been a huge advantage when Andy returned to GRS. He walked through the door and picked up where he left off and never missed a beat," said Eidson.

"Andy's experience has been a catalyst to improving the synergy and overall production in the office," he added.

Frank graduated from Oregon State University in 1983 with a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering. He likes to fly powered paragliders, is active in his church and enjoys exercising.

"There is so much that needs to be fixed, corrected or built over here and it is very rewarding to be a small part of a great effort to help the Iraqi people," he said. *(Editor's note: Frank recently returned and is back on staff.)*



A Gulf Region South Iraqi engineer and GRS Design Chief Andy Frank discuss plans for a new water treatment plant in Muthanna Province in southern Iraq. (USACE photo)



In Tulsa, we are *building strong*

Col. Anthony C. Funkhouser
Commander, Tulsa District

I recently returned from Task Force Pacesetters mission to support the Texas area impacted by Hurricane Ike. Tulsa District extends its thoughts and prayers to the Galveston District and their families impacted by the hurricane. The force of the storm could be seen for miles inland. It was great to see USACE rally more than 1,400 employees to the area to assist in missions such as commodities, power, blue roof and debris removal. Our efforts made a difference, and I am proud of everyone's efforts to assist or help carry the load while others deployed.

Our Corps of Engineers personnel work a broad range of missions but it's our support to the Global War on Terrorism and our rapid response to national emergencies that make us an enduring organization our nation depends on every day.

Lt. Gen. Van Antwerp recently announced the new Corps motto...Building Strong. It is directly linked to our Army's motto of Army Strong! Army Strong goes beyond the physical aspects of the Army that make it strong. Army Strong is about the intangibles and our Army values that give us strength. The same applies to the Corps of Engineers as we add our Building Strong maxim. We are highlighting our strengths in our professional and certified employees, our teamwork, our desire to accomplish enduring projects with innovative solutions that are best for our partners, communities and the nation.

Here in Tulsa District, we are building strong. In particular, with our people. Even with retirements and employees moving on to new positions and new teammates arriving, our organization continues to perform and execute our mission each day. To our new members to the Tulsa Team, we appreciate your contribution to the team. I invite each of you to take the time to welcome them to our team and provide friendship and mentorship as they seek to contribute to our continued successes.

This year, we are emphasizing the Army's new Civilian Education System and getting as many employees as we can through the various levels of education. We want to ensure our Tulsa Team members take advantage of this education opportunity and become more competitive for future

selections or promotions. We are also focusing on certification and involvement in our leader development programs. We must continue to focus on our technical competencies and develop leaders with confidence to take our district and division into the future. This is an important part of our legacy to the organization. These are the foundational materials of our district Building Strong.

Fiscal year 2008 was another successful year for the Tulsa District and for Southwestern Division. Special thanks to every employee who worked countless hours to ensure we executed our mission, met year-end commitments, and provided outstanding customer support and satisfaction. We are now looking forward to fiscal year 2009 and all the new missions we will encounter.

As I close, let me recognize a few employees who have stepped up and shown what Building Strong is about. The following individuals deployed in support of Hurricanes Gustav and Ike: James Ritter, Roy Long, Dale Davidson, Andy Kmetz, Steve Sanders, Michael Ware, Yvonne Brownrigg, Mike Kerr, Tim Adkins, Bobby Perryman, Lisa Lawson, Bill Smith, Steve Timmons, Robert Booker, Vickie Schiffner, Connie White, Ernie Martin, Mike Wingfield, Diane Cianci, Arlyn Hendricks, Ken Reznicek, Stanley Spirlock, David Hudson, Jim Miller, Richard McCanlies, Travis Miller, Laura Long, Richard Bilinski, Maj. Lora Carroll, Capt. (P) Eric Fladie and Roberta Lewis.

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Tiny Tims, a pig among ordnance cleanup stories

Little Rock provides update on Formerly Used Defense Sites projects

Tammy L. Moody
Pacesetter Staff

Investigations at some of the 85 Formerly Used Defense sites in Little Rock District have produced a few noteworthy tales. The stories involve a lucky pig, a few Tiny Tims and even a farmer's souvenir. Though the tales may sound lighthearted, rest assured, the work is serious.

At the former Southwestern Proving Ground in Hope, Ark, a wild pig escaped being turned into bacon bits by the hair of his chinny, chin, chin when it unearthed a live artillery round. Max Frauenthal, Little Rock's FUDS project manager, recounted how Huntsville District Safety Officer Bob Bohannon found a 105 mm round that appeared to have been left unguarded on the ground through the night in a wildlife management area where a study is under way.

Leaving unguarded unexploded ordnance is a safety violation. When Bohannon asked contractor personnel why it was left unguarded, they told him they did not leave anything unguarded but had detonated everything they found the day before.

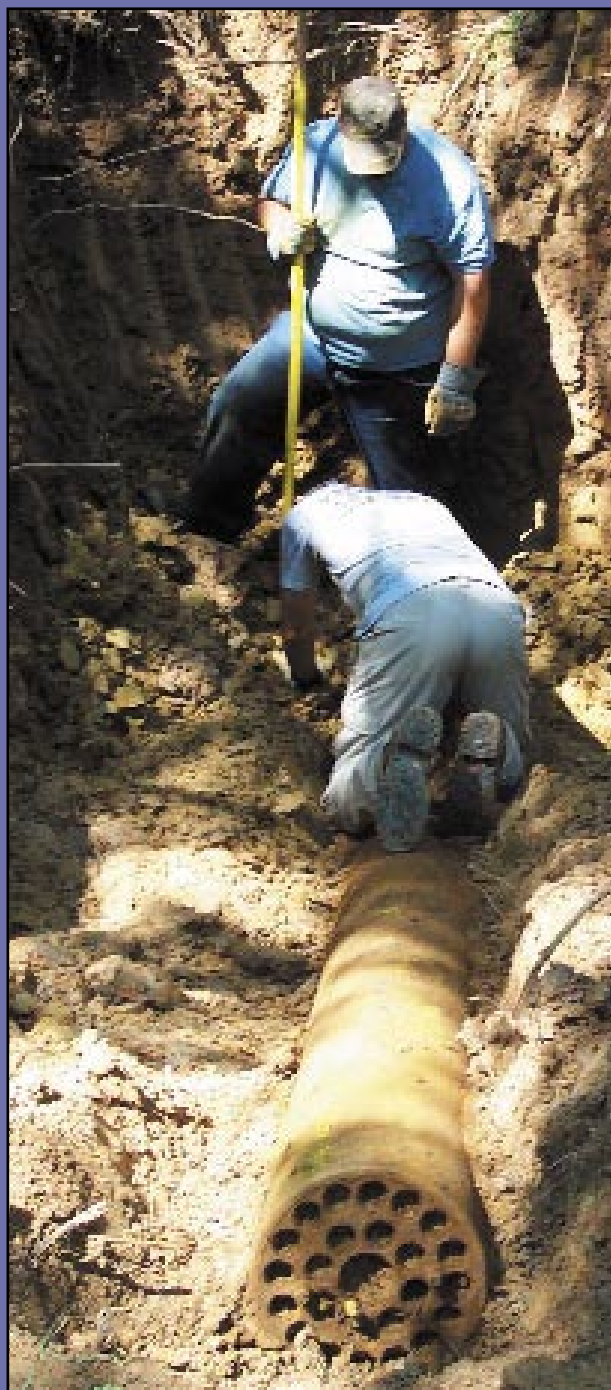
He pointed it out to them, lying near a wildlife food plot. Upon closer examination, the crew found pig tracks surrounding the round and determined the pig had rooted it up. When the crew detonated the round, it was live. The pig was lucky to survive one of the many unexploded rounds in the former proving ground.

The Army used the 50,078-acre proving ground between 1942 and 1945 to test munitions including small arms ammunition, grenades, mortars, artillery rounds, rockets and up to 500-pound bombs. After closing the proving ground, the Army cleared the land of unexploded ordnance found on the surface. The land was then conveyed to state, municipal and private owners. Some of the land was restricted to "surface use only."

In many cases, landowners have used their property for other purposes, and to this day people are finding unexploded ordnance in farm fields and around homes. More than 8,000 ordnance items have been found and removed from former SWPG property throughout the years.

Investigative and cleanup work started in the early 90s continues today with an investigative study at the state-owned Hope Upland Wildlife Management Area (a former target zone) and in the buffer area around the target areas.

See *Little Rock FUDS Update* next page



Zapata Engineering crew members unearth one of three "Tiny Tim" aerial rockets recovered in the middle of the wildlife management area at the former Southwestern Proving Ground near Hope, Ark. The Tiny Tim is more than 10 feet long and is a 500 lb bomb modified with a rocket motor and fins. It is fired as an aerial rocket. (Photo provided by Zapata Engineering.)

Little Rock FUDS update *con't.*

"These areas were not evaluated previously, so the current study is sampling them for type and quantity of munitions and explosives that could be found there," Frauenthal said. "This will help us develop plans for potential future cleanup efforts."

Zapata Engineering, a Corps contractor, is conducting the investigation, which also includes exploding any ordnance they find. Most of what they have found has been no surprise, for example 60 mm mortar rounds and 105 mm artillery rounds. But, in mid-July, Zapata found something they were not expecting – three Tiny Tim rockets.

Their name is deceiving. In reality, each Tiny Tim is nearly 12 inches in diameter, more than 10 feet long, weighs 500 pounds and has a warhead capable of deploying more than 150 pounds of TNT. Frauenthal was as surprised as the contractors.

"We have no record they ever tested Tiny Tims at the Southwestern Proving Ground," he said.

"They were probably produced at Shumaker Naval Ammunition Depot in Camden, Ark. Since the Naval Ammunition Depot had a test range, I don't know why these were tested at Hope."

The proving ground is just one FUDS project Frauenthal is working on.

"We have recently completed site investigations at three sites in Arkansas: Stuttgart Army Airfield, Arkansas Ordnance Plant and Maumelle Ordnance Works," he said. "More study was recommended for the AOP only."

He added that six projects in Arkansas recently were closed out at Stuttgart Army Airfield, El Dorado Army Airfield, Little Rock Communication Transmitter Site, Hot Springs Army Navy Hospital, Texarkana Air Force Station Z-91 and Southwestern Proving Ground Airfield.

"These projects were the removal of underground storage tanks or other containerized waste," Frauenthal said. He also has ongoing work at Camp Robinson in North Little Rock and Camp Chaffee in northwest Arkansas.

At Camp Robinson, Frauenthal explained that a contract for a Remedial Investigation/

Feasibility Study was recently awarded to Parsons Corporation.

"The investigation will be very similar to the work Zapata is doing at the Southwestern Proving Ground," he said. Soil will also be analyzed for chemical residues.

"At Fort Chaffee, we conducted an evaluation and cost analysis to determine appropriate actions to reduce people's risk. It recommended surface removal of unexploded ordnance in two areas and education for the community around another area called the Devil's Backbone," he added.

Along the education lines, Frauenthal, district public affairs personnel and Zapata Engineering members coordinated a media day during the summer. They talked to a number of reporters about the Southwestern Proving Ground and what they were finding, as well as explaining hazards ordnance can present and actions people should take if they encounter any.



Arkansas media watch as Charlie Galbreath, from Zapata Engineering, detonates one of three Tiny Tim rockets found at the Southwestern Proving Ground earlier this year during their investigation of the site. The Army used the 50,078-acre proving ground between 1942 and 1945 to test munitions. (Photo by Max Frauenthal.)

He talked about a local farmer who kept a souvenir from the proving ground for 40 years. It was a general purpose bomb with the remains of what appeared to be a fuse. It contained 57 pounds of TNT. When the experts blew it up, it left quite a crater in the farmer's field.

"Some of our most important work is educating the public about the potential hazards at all of these sites," Frauenthal said. New residents are being born and moving into these areas every day. Therefore public education is a non-stop job."

Worth Remembering ... Dreamers faced challenges of Arkansas River Navigation System

Judy Bullwinkle
Historian

When construction began in 1960 on the Arkansas River Navigation System, local advocates and congressional members from Arkansas and Oklahoma who persevered through a maze of seemingly endless challenges saw their dream of a navigable waterway begin to take shape.

In the 1930s, Little Rock District began to focus on a multi-purpose project for the Arkansas River. The project would ensure year-round access for river traffic, limit flooding, produce hydroelectric power and provide recreational opportunities. However, the road to the project was not an easy one.

As early as 1945, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Board of Engineers for Rivers and Harbors, a group operating outside of local political pressures, studied the project and concluded the economic benefits of navigation did not justify construction. By eliminating navigation, the group relegated the project to one of a flood control reservoir effort with a hydropower element.

Undeterred, Lt. Gen. Eugene Reybold, USACE chief of engineers, overrode the recommendation to say the navigation tonnage would exceed the estimate, and the project should be authorized. Following the chief's guidance, the project was included in the Rivers and Harbors Authorization Act of 1946.

The plans called for a nine-foot channel from the Mississippi River to Catoosa, Okla., 27 locks and dams and seven additional reservoirs, in addition to five previously-authorized reservoirs in Oklahoma.

To begin construction, the Corps had to complete three studies. One addressed the enormous sedimentation problems on the river and determined the engineers needed to reduce 80 percent of the silt through traps in upstream reservoirs. The other two studies focused on the location and route of the man-made canal connecting the White River to the Arkansas River and on hydroelectric power development in the region. These studies were some of the first funded elements of the system.



Ground breaking for Dardanelle Lock and Dam, June 12, 1959. From left: Senator John McClellan, Rep. Brooks Hays, Maj. Gen. Emerson Itschner, and Senator William Fullbright. (Archive photo from Little Rock District.)

The project faced opposition in Congress. Some congressional members wished to eliminate the navigation function and some feared the project would interfere with irrigation initiatives in western states.

Funding proposals swung from \$55 million to \$150 million. Arkansas Senator John McClellan lobbied his colleagues hard for the higher amount.

However, when the navigation system was authorized in the 1946 Act, it received only the \$55 million authorization.

Still, triumphant advocates celebrated, but quickly learned that authorized is not appropriated. The battle for the dollars would last almost 10 years. Many outside factors, such as government reorganization plans and the Korean War, affected the funding decisions. By 1950, only 20 percent of the first authorized funds appeared, and 30 percent of that was for bank stabilization work.

Also in 1950, the Arkansas-White-Red-Basin Interagency Committee was established to review water development projects. Appointed by President Harry S. Truman, the group of various federal agencies was instructed by Congress to develop an integrated approach to land and water issues in the three river basins. The group's report did not appear until 1955.

Meanwhile, a second AWRBIC was formed. This second group proved invaluable to the supporters of the Arkansas River Basin Association. This group built on the report of the first committee to emphasize the areas of consensus. This proved important as Congress had lagged in its appropriation for the river system in 1946, 1948, and 1950, and the Assistant of the Army for Civil Works had downgraded the project as "deferred for further study."

In 1955, supporters of the navigation project received the good news that the USACE chief of engineers had recommended reactivation. Although the 1956

See *Arkansas River* next page

Arkansas River *con't.*

Congress approved funding for the completion of the Oologah reservoir and construction at Eufala reservoir and Dardanelle Lock and Dam, the funds were withheld for Eufala. The lack of funding created engineering problems on sediment control, making the project “inactive” again.

Oklahoma Senator Robert Kerr found a way to get the project back on its way. He promised to push the highly popular new legislation for a federal highway system through the Senate, in exchange for votes for the waterway.

In 1956, Congress passed federal aid to highways that created a 41,000-mile four-lane road to connect 208 cities in the 48 states. In 1957, Congress passed the Public Works Appropriation that included the funding for Dardanelle Lock and Dam as well as Keystone and Eufala reservoirs.

Congress passed the appropriation without action from appropriation committees, without the Bureau of the Budget recommending it and without the chief of engineers lifting the inactive status from the project.

Several years of tackling the hard engineering problems preceded the actual start of construction in 1960. Once the sediment problem was solved, the Corps began the largest project it had ever undertaken. The final plan included 12 locks and dams and two upstream reservoirs in Arkansas as well as five locks and dams and seven upstream reservoirs in Oklahoma. President Richard Nixon dedicated the completed project June 5, 1971.

(Information for this article was gathered from Castle on the Rock; A History of the Little Rock District, US Army Corps of Engineers, 1881-1985 by Mary Rathbun; 25 Years Later; a History of the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System in Arkansas, by S. Charles Bolton.)

Groundbreaking marks beginning of new facility

Judy Marsicano
Pacesetter Staff

An October 1 groundbreaking at the Red River Army Depot kicked off the first phase of construction of the Maneuver Systems Sustainment Center, a re-manufacturing facility which will improve efficiency in the production of military combat vehicles, including the High Mobility Multi-purpose Wheeled Vehicle.

Fort Worth District will oversee construction of a 38,000-square-foot Paint/Prep building, which will provide immediate benefits to the Depot’s vehicle maintenance mission.

Ultimately, when all three phases of the MSSC complex are completed, all of the necessary work on the military vehicles will be done, including disassembly and assembly, prep, engine and body shop work, and painting within a 377,000-square-foot re-manufacturing complex. The facility will incorporate state-of-the-art equipment and technology and allow workers to use new improved techniques. Currently, these separate functions are spread out across the Depot. Having everything done in one facility will also produce a higher quality vehicle while saving dollars and time for the Army.

Lt. Col. Matthew S. Orenstein, Fort Worth District’s deputy commander, remarked at the event that he saw a slogan at RRAD that read,



Red River Army Depot Commander Col. Dan Mitchell speaks during the groundbreaking ceremony for the Maneuver Systems Sustainment Center. Fort Worth District Deputy Commander Lt. Col. Matthew S. Orenstein (seated left) represented the Corps of Engineers during the event. (Photo provided by Fort Worth District.)

“Build everything as if your life depends on it, because theirs (the Soldiers’) does.”

Orenstein’s observation was that the RRAD was hard at work preparing Soldiers for war-fighting. He said he could see it in the pride shown by the work force there and in the passion and dedication of their leadership.

Construction of the project is scheduled to be completed in 2013.

Tactical Infrastructure Program team recognized

At a recent Corporate Board meeting, members of the Southwestern Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Support to the Department of Homeland Security Tactical Infrastructure Program team were presented Certificates of Appreciation acknowledging their work.

The certificates, signed by Robert Slockbower, regional business director, said that team members' efforts were instrumental in the successful completion of the tactical infrastructure program.

In March 2007, Tulsa District was tasked by the commander of Southwestern Division to support the SWD Engineering and Construction Support Office's acquisition of multiple award task order contracts in support of ECSO's mission to execute projects for the Tactical Infrastructure Program mandated by the Secure Border Initiative of 2006.

The Corps has deemed this program and its included projects to constitute a mission of national significance that is directly monitored by the chief of engineers and the secretary of Homeland Security.

Tulsa District was initially tasked to staff and implement source selection evaluation boards, but the mission was augmented to include procurement of the contracts with Tulsa District as the primary contracting office.

The district was required to solicit, evaluate, and select contracts totaling more than \$3.4 billion in capacity to support the TIP in Office of Border Patrol Sectors ranging from California to the Gulf Coast of Texas. Fifteen separate solicitations were issued with more than 190 contractor proposals received and evaluated. Ultimately, 53 individual contracts were awarded.

This time-critical effort was conducted very rapidly. The multidisciplinary team comprised about



Team members shown with Lt. Col. Bernie Thomson are, from left, front row, Jean Eberhardt, Penni Walker, Michelle Lay, and Tammy Solomon. Next row, Robert Thurman, John Sturges, Scottie Fiehler, Colleen Diven, Ken Kebbell, Wyman Walker, Ramona Willig, Denise Henderson, and Jeremy Mulvaney. Not pictured were Randall Bratcher, Ivy Canole, Devin DaVee, Hazel Davis, Jeremie Evans, Keith Francis, Robert Goranson, Ricky Hedrick, Steve Lucas, Cliff Murray, Terry Rice, John Weather, Jane Young of Fort Worth District, and Brian Childers of Los Angeles District. (Photo provided by Tulsa District.)

30 individuals, most from Tulsa District, but included members from Los Angeles District and the Defense Contract Audit Agency.

Three Source Selection Evaluation Boards were assembled. Each of these evaluated proposals for five separate solicitations. These SSEBs were supported by contracting, financial, small business, and cost engineering advisers.

Other support to this effort included key team members from the Tulsa District Design Branch and the Hazardous, Toxic, and Radiological Waste Design Center. The proposals were received in late June, and all contracts were awarded before the end of the calendar year. The initial contracts were awarded in July 2007 and were already put to use with task orders awarded against them in a few weeks.

A testament to the quality of the effort is that from 190 proposals, only one protest was received -- and later dismissed by the Government Accountability Office. Not only did team members process an incredible amount of acquisition data and proposals in a short period of time, they did so in an unusually effective manner.

Tulsa District met a significant challenge to support a critical national security requirement. Most team members continued to juggle routine duties and assignments while contributing many hundreds of hours to this effort. As a result, the Secure Border Initiative construction is ongoing.

The rain couldn't stop Little Rock's Family Fun

On Oct. 7, Little Rock District hosted a Family Fun Cookout and Barge Ride down the Arkansas River. Rain threatened the outing at first, but disappeared shortly after the event started, leaving everyone to enjoy the company, the trip and the food.

The Family Fun Cookout and Barge Ride is one of many events coordinated by the Civilian

Recreation Association. Little Rock's CRA is a nonprofit organization that serves as the planning and promotion committee for social and fund-raising events within the district. The committee's efforts attempt to benefit the morale of the personnel assigned to the district.

For more information about the CRA or to join the team, contact Patty Watford at (501) 324-6503.



Photos
by
David
Virden



Fort Worth goes all out at Outdoors Expo

Fort Worth District park rangers and staff from Operations Division and Safety and Occupational Health Office produced and staffed an 800-square-foot booth at the annual Texas Parks and Wildlife Expo, Oct. 4-5, at the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department headquarters in Austin, Texas.

Employees and Corps volunteers interpreted multiple agency missions to the public through photographic displays, a functioning reservoir model, wildlife displays and a water safety educational game for the children. Of the 37,500 visitors reported attending the event, approximately 9,000 visited the Corps booth.



Eric Pedersen, Lewisville Lake site manager, uses a hydropower model to explain how the Corps of Engineers release floodwaters.

The District also partnered with the TPWD boater education department by providing staff to assist in running the Wet Zone. This area offered the public the opportunity to maneuver kayaks in an 8,100-square-foot tank constructed for the Expo.

Uniformed employees and Corps volunteers helped TPWD in managing visitor flow, delivering the pre-ride safety briefing, providing visitors with properly-fitted life jackets, assisting visitors safely in and out of kayaks and providing assistance in the tank for paddlers having difficulty. TPWD counted 4,424 Expo visitors who passed through the Wet Zone.



Keith Bond, Safety and Occupational Health Office, provided kayakers at the Texas Parks and Wildlife Expo a safety briefing before they entered the kayak tank in the Wet Zone.



Lewisville Lake Park Rangers Justin Berndt and Megan Conn talk to kids at the Natural Resources display at the Texas Parks and Wildlife Expo.



Courtney Hammonds, park ranger, Waco Lake, assists a kayaker in the Wet Zone at the Texas Parks and Wildlife Expo in Austin.

SWL's Marple sees improvement in Iraq

John Connor
Gulf Region South District



TALLIL AIR BASE, Iraq – Jim Marple, an engineer managing projects in excess of \$325 million and developing future projects valued above \$828 million for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Gulf Region Division, is finishing another tour.

In 2007, Marple served his first six-month deployment as a water project manager overseeing initiatives to bring clean water to Iraqi neighborhoods. Serving both tours with USACE Gulf Region Division South District, Marple provides reconstruction services in Iraq's nine southern provinces.

"The local atmosphere seems to be much improved over the 2007 tour," he said. "The indirect fire is much more infrequent and road conditions--IED's (improvised explosive devices)--seem to be much better. Iraqi workers tell me they also believe things have improved."

An Arkansas native who works for the USACE Little Rock District, Marple in recent years deployed twice to the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, Calif., and volunteered as a quality assurance representative along the Louisiana Gulf Coast and east Texas to work on the Hurricanes Katrina and Rita recovery.

He served six years active duty as an Army

CH-47 Chinook mechanic/Flight Engineer. He began his USACE career in 1995 in the Little Rock district as an Intern Park Ranger for the Greer's Ferry Lake Project Office's Recreation and Resource Management Section.

Later in 1999, Marple graduated from the University of Central Arkansas with a Bachelor of Science degree in Public Administration.

In 2003, he was tapped to be the Chief Park Ranger responsible for administering one of the Corps' largest recreation programs. His stateside administrative experience came in handy in Iraq, as he is now the Military Construction and Security & Justice Project Manager for Gulf Region South.

Marple's job involves developing and using project tracking tools, working with USACE resource management personnel to ensure adequate project funding; and providing the leadership, communication and coordination needed to resolve problems and issues in a timely fashion.

He said what he likes about his job is the satisfaction of seeing the projects take shape and putting into use the "interaction with his co-workers" and what he's "constantly learning about PM (project manager) roles and responsibilities."

Among the many security and justice projects, Marple worked a half dozen courthouse projects.

"These are important both practically and symbolically in terms of promoting the rule of law, a cornerstone of Iraqi society," he said.

He also manages the construction of a \$28.8 million prison near Nasiriyah that will house 1600 inmates.

"Security and justice – it's great to see things are improving in Iraq," he concluded.

Temporary hires attack John Redmond weeds

A herd of temporary workers is chewing its way through a noxious weed situation at John Redmond project. This month, 75 goats began their month-long assignment to take a bite out of the invasive plant species, *Sericea Lespedeza*.

Terry Lyons is facilitating the project, and Kansas State University plans to monitor it as they are working with the goat owner to conduct research. (Photo provided by Tulsa District.)



Two districts will benefit from SWL's Ozark Powerhouse rehab

Tammy L. Moody
Pacesetter Staff

Little Rock District's Ozark Powerhouse, with its unique inclined axis turbines, is undergoing a major rehabilitation. Lessons learned as work progresses on the first unit will be valuable in rehabbing remaining units at Ozark and at its sister plant, Webbers Falls Powerhouse in Tulsa District, which also has the inclined-axis turbines.

Rehabilitation of these 1970s vintage power plants consists of rehabilitating powerhouse cranes, redesigning and replacing the turbines, and replacing and rehabilitating supporting systems and equipment.

In April, Little Rock District celebrated a major milestone when contractors working on the rehab removed the runner, or the blade assembly, from turbine unit number four at the powerhouse located in west central Arkansas. It was a well-earned milestone as removing the runner was slow work. Installing the new unit is proving just as challenging.

"We're struggling with the first unit," Project Manager Lee Beverly said. "There are some extensive cracks in the stay vanes that hold the upstream end of the unit in place, so now we're in the 'stay vane repair' phase, instead of being further along."

Beverly and the others involved in this project view the unforeseen problems as a learning process.

"We are carefully documenting all the lessons learned to help improve the process for the next

seven units," he said. "The first one is the poster child for the next ones." The next ones will be the remaining four turbines at Ozark and three more at Webbers Falls Powerhouse.

"We have a team member from Tulsa who is working with us in the powerhouse, so he can watch how we're doing it. He can then go back to Tulsa to lead them through their work on Webbers Falls," Beverly said.

Dan Clemans, Little Rock's chief of Construction Branch and area engineer, explained that an inclined-axis turbine is mounted at an angle or on a slope, rather than the usual vertical position typical of most generator/turbine units. Mounting on a sloping axis was necessary to fit all the components within the height available.

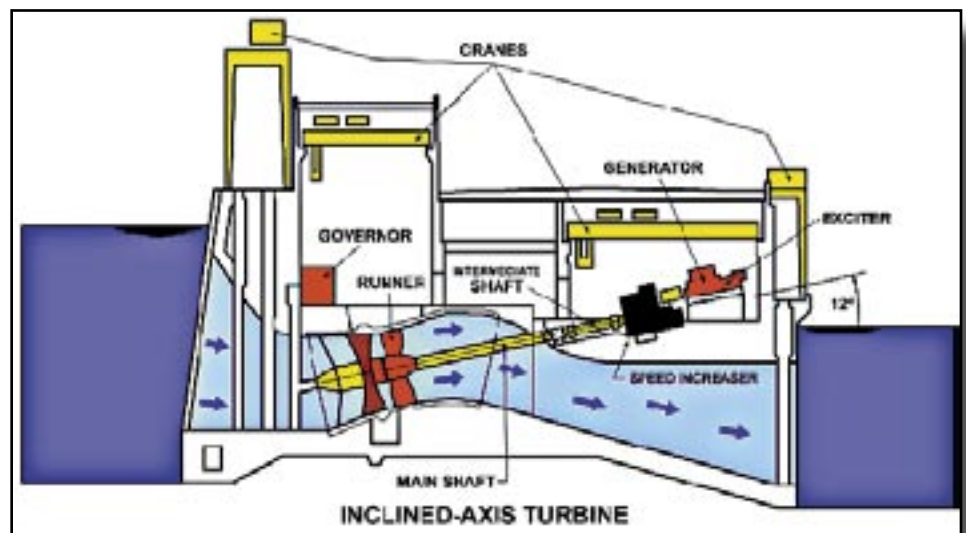
Dan Ramirez, a mechanical engineer with Portland's Hydroelectric Design Center, provided the technical portions of the contract specifications for the turbine redesign and replacement. He commented on the unique design of the powerhouses.

"At the time these were built, the economic savings resulting from the reduced power house excavation led to the inclined-axis design -- an innovative design at the time, and to this day," he said.

Ramirez explained that the Corps has three plants with inclined-axis turbines, Ozark, Webbers Falls and Kansas City District's Harry S. Truman plant. All three have had history of turbine and gearbox reliability issues, although not always the same types of problems.

Beverly said those issues are being addressed in the rehabilitation effort.

"We're building the new turbines from a new design, new materials and new technology, and we're using all the lessons learned from the past to get these turbines up and running again," he said. "When this project is done, it will restore the plant's output, reduce maintenance requirements and save the hydropower customers millions of dollars per year in lost power generation."



SWF's Schmidt, Corps Cost Engineer of the Year

*Judy Marsicano
Pacesetter Staff*

Milton Schmidt was named USACE Cost Engineer of the Year on Aug. 4 at the Summer Leadership Conference in Pittsburgh, Pa.

It's no wonder since he has left his mark on just about every major project there is.

Following his March 2006 selection as Chief of the Fort Worth District's Cost Engineering Section, Schmidt took charge of new and rapidly changing work environments including supervisory responsibilities to provide cost estimates for the \$4.1 billion Army Transformation program at Fort Bliss. This massive undertaking, involving more than 90 projects, 300 buildings, and numerous ranges, will provide barracks and other facilities at Fort Bliss for nearly 30,000 Soldiers and their family members. Award of construction projects within the past two years is valued at more than \$1 billion.

Schmidt has also been responsible for cost estimates and specifications for the San Antonio Base Realignment and Closure Program. His cost engineering duties in relocating administrative and medical training missions to San Antonio and consolidating existing missions involve more than \$2 billion in construction benefiting 9,000 Soldiers.

In September 2007 alone, he provided guidance and oversight for estimates used in awarding the first of the larger facilities at Fort Sam Houston that integrate the combat casualty care research missions and functions of all military services. These estimates, totaling \$92 million of construction, required coordina-



The Chief of Engineers, Lt. Gen. Robert L. Van Antwerp, presents Fort Worth's Milton Schmidt with the USACE Cost Engineer of the Year Award. (USACE photo.)

tion of Architect-Engineering cost estimates with the hired labor efforts of his section.

To accomplish these tasks, Schmidt has continued to apply the tenets of MILCON Transformation, as applicable to cost engineering, and adapted to the changing requirements.

Centers of Standardization guidelines for regional and nationwide construction responsibilities have required him to provide the cost basis for programming actions necessary to fulfill his customers' needs for the Fort Worth District's product line involving barracks and warehouses nationwide and for infrastructure support of those projects in the geographical district that includes much of Texas, Louisiana and New Mexico.

Working closely with the Cost Engineering Community

of Practice, he provided valuable input from December 2007 through February 2008 which formed the basis for programming costs nationwide for Unaccompanied Enlisted Personnel Housing, Advanced Individual Training, Basic Training and Warriors in Transition barracks complexes and warehouses.

It is through his supervision that the Fort Worth District provides estimates and specifications necessary for successful award of construction, as evident in the current fulfillment of the District's customer requirements under way at Forts Bliss and Sam Houston.

Schmidt provides cost estimating support for other installations as well including Fort Hood and Fort Polk with support to Lackland, Laughlin, Goodfellow and Dyess Air Force Bases.

In addition, his efforts extend to Red River Army Depot with estimates for \$50 million in programmed construction which is vital to the repair, overhaul, remanufacture and conversions of combat systems and tactical vehicles for the Army for the Global War on Terrorism.

Schmidt's success is due largely to his close working relationships with all team members, resulting in the elevation of the importance and awareness of the cost engineering profession within the Corps and other agencies. His professionalism in leading team members and role as a valuable Corps team member have produced fine examples such as the Brigade Combat Team complex 1 at Fort Bliss which was completed in September 2008, another which is under construction, and at Fort

See Cost Engineer next page

Cost Engineer *con't.*

Sam Houston, where construction is well under way even though the present economic climate and construction markets have created uncertainties and cost increases in both public and private areas of the construction industry.

By providing positive cost results enabling each customer project to be constructed, even when they may appear to have insufficient funds, Schmidt has served his customers well. His hands-on interaction with cost proposals submitted by contractors has been key to working out solutions to complex cost engineering problems.

Examples of this are the award of the Goodfellow Air Force Base Chapel, a \$3.5 million project, and the Physical Evaluation Board facility at Fort Sam Houston, a \$1.8 million project, both of which had inadequate funding. Working with the team members and contractors, Schmidt helped keep the designs within available funds and both projects were awarded.

Schmidt has served on multiple committees and workgroups to improve the quality of cost engineering by providing state-of-the-art software, databases and training opportunities. He has volunteered to be on the Cost FAC committee which has been resurrected to investigate a Cost/CAD/BIM interface. He has also been a strong supporter of the Bi-Annual Tri-Service Cost Engineering workshops and conferences, and during December 2007, he hosted a regional training session for Cost

Risk Analysis. He has provided Cost Engineering training for District team members to increase awareness of the value cost engineering adds to the Corps' mission. During his tenure as Section Chief, he has increased the staffing of his section by more than 30 percent, providing cost engineering training and advice to intermediate level engineers.

He provides cost engineering support to the Drug Enforcement Administration and also to the Department of Homeland Security for the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the U.S. Customs and Border Protection construction programs in the Southwest and across the nation. In 2007, he received recognition and a cash award for providing cost estimates for contracts relating to the construction of the United States – Mexico border fence.

And that's not all. Among the other highly visible Civil Works projects supported by Schmidt are the \$500 million Trinity River Central City project in Fort Worth, the \$200 million San Antonio River improvements restoration, and the Trinity River wetlands restoration in the Dallas Floodway. These projects will make significant, positive impacts on the lives of those in the surrounding communities and the environment.

"I was so humbled by being selected for this prestigious award at the District level, that when it was elevated to Division, then to Headquarters, I was so proud for the recognition," Schmidt said.

"I find it extremely challenging to play such an important role in the accomplishment of our missions and am pleased that my work makes a difference in the big picture."

Tulsa's Leadership Development members "Get Motivated"

On Sept. 22, Tulsa District's Regional Leadership Development Program Level 2 members attended the Get Motivated Business Seminar at the new Bank of Oklahoma Arena in Tulsa. Former Secretary of State Gen. Colin Powell, former New York City Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, and legendary motivational speaker Zig Ziglar were among the featured speakers.

The purpose of this event was to assist organizations and their leaders improve communication and management skills, increase productivity, and achieve goals. One of the more common topics among the speakers was maintaining integrity in all business practices.

Other themes were continuous learning and the importance of every job within an organization. All are traits which future leaders should

establish and maintain.

Team members attending were Aaron Goldner, Kim Jackson, Maria Wegner-Johnson, Laura Long, Daniel Morales, and Amanda Peters. Kerri Stark, Robert Booker, and Mike Kerr were unable to attend due to Hurricane Ike obligations.

To follow up on the seminar, a brown bag luncheon was held at the Tulsa District Office to discuss the ideas and topics that were presented at the conference. Division leaders and RLDP members attended.

The purpose of the meeting was to find ways to implement these ideas and topics that will benefit not only our organization, but also, the entire district and even the nation.

For the birds

Handshake project builds Millwood observation deck

Cheri Dragos-Pritchard
Pacesetter Staff

A newly-constructed bird observation deck was opened to the public in August at Beard's Bluff Park overlooking Little Rock District's Millwood Lake. The new deck offers bird watchers a vantage point to see hundreds of different species that travel through the area or make the lake home.

The deck was built in cooperation with Little Rock District's Millwood Lake Project Office, Audubon Arkansas and Larry Phillips Contracting. Built under the "Challenge Cost Share Handshake Project," the deck is an accessible way for the public to bird watch at a premier location on the lake.

According to the latest 2008 annotated checklist, 325 species have been documented around the lake," Dan Scheiman, Bird Conservation Director for Audubon Arkansas, said.

"Millwood Lake is not only an excellent bird watching location, it also plays an important role in bird conservation for the state." This translates to about three quarters of all bird species documented in Arkansas visit Millwood Lake.

The treated pine structure boasts three park benches and four interpretive displays that portray information about birds people might see at the lake. The displays are made so information on them can be changed periodically.

The Challenge Cost Share Handshake Project was developed as an incentive for businesses and organizations to partner with the Corps on worthwhile natural resources or recreation projects and stretch available dollars using the premise that "partnerships are a handshake, not a handout."

"With all the cuts in budget and manpower, projects like this one are hard to get funded but are still needed," Millwood Lake Park Ranger Derick Walker said. "So we reached out to our local businesses. Of course, Audubon Arkansas was a natural fit since its main mission is birding conservation, and then Larry Phillips Contracting, a local

contractor, helped along with many volunteers to construct it."

The result?

"This deck gives people who may not have access to a boat or who are just not able to hike through the trails a chance to see the many birds in this area," Walker said.

During the grand opening ceremony, Little Rock District Commander Col. Ed Jackson signed the partnership agreement and presented plaques of



Millwood Lake Operations Manager Mobie Price, left, and Ranger Derick Walker, right, show Little Rock District Commander Col. Ed Jackson the newly-constructed bird observation deck overlooking Millwood Lake. (Photo by Cheri Dragos-Pritchard)

appreciation to the partners and volunteers.

"I get the fun part," Jackson said. "I get to come up here and say thanks to all of these great people for their teamwork." He said it is "a wonderful thing" to give the public an opportunity to become more environmentally aware.

"We need the resources, the sweat and the volunteers," Jackson went on to say. "We depend so much on our partnerships with other organizations that are like-minded. So I am very grateful for our partners and volunteers here today. Thank you for what all of you have done and are doing to support us."

SWL hosts Corps-wide road repair workshop

Cheri Dragos-Pritchard
Pacesetter Staff

In October, Little Rock District's Operations Division hosted a day and a half training workshop, primarily for Army Corps of Engineers employees to learn the benefits of a Federal Highway Administration Program that pays for Emergency Repairs to Federally Owned roads.

All federal agencies are allowed to participate in the program when widespread disasters occur. The spring 2008 flooding at Little Rock's projects entitled the district to participate.

"Districts from as far away as Sacramento and as close as Tulsa attended the workshop to learn of this rarely tapped resource," Little Rock District Mechanical Engineer Billy Qualls said. "There are some constraints in the program. For example, each site must have at least \$5,000 worth of damage and collectively accumulate to more than \$700,000 per disaster to qualify."

While funding is provided by the Federal Highway Administration, the program is administered by Federal Lands Highway Division. There are



This flood-damaged public access area below Norfolk Dam is one area where a Damage Survey Report is applicable. One was prepared to determine repairs required to bring the area back to pre-disaster condition. (Photo provided by Little Rock District.)

three divisions: Eastern, Central and Western.

"While the Corps of Engineers, as a whole, has not participated in the past decade," Qualls noted, "it is the primary method for the Forest Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs and other agencies to maintain their public access roads after floods, fires, hurricanes, earthquakes and mud slides."

Qualls went on to explain that Little Rock District has received approval for almost \$1 million in ERFO funds to date and will continue to seek approval for

several million more because of damage incurred during the flooding.

"Record keeping is the backbone of this program. Without accurate records, we can't expect to receive reimbursements and approvals for funding," Qualls said. "The primary focus of the workshop was the preparation of Damage Survey Reports. These reports assess the pre-disaster condition of a site, the post disaster condition and the analysis of the repairs required to bring the site back to the pre-disaster condition."

State fair visitors taught water safety

Thousands of visitors to the Corps Kansas State Fair booth in Hutchinson were provided valuable water safety information. This fair education activity is a joint effort between Tulsa and Kansas City Districts each year.

Each visitor took a water safety quiz before rangers discussed safety and handed out water safety promotional items. The rangers worked with children to instill the importance of water safety.

They also had Tulsa District's popular Penny Pincher machine for participants to press out a choice of three safety messages onto coins - a fun way for children to receive important water safety messages. (Photo provided by Tulsa District.)



SWF celebrates National Public Lands Day with activities throughout district

Judy Marsicano
Pacesetter Staff

Navarro Mills

At Navarro Mills Lake, Rangers Chad Schaffer and Billy Wise coordinated projects around the lake. The work began Saturday, Sept. 27, at 8:30 a.m. and ended at noon, while one project finished up on Sunday morning.

Ranger Schaffer coordinated with the Navarro County Sheriff Department to paint restrooms in Liberty Hill Park. The volunteers provided four hours each of community service. This effort initiated a potential long-term partnership with the Sheriff's Department to accomplish minor maintenance and make other improvements around the Lake.

"We had a good turnout and have some groups that will be volunteering in upcoming months," Schaffer said. "In all, it was great weekend and a lot was accomplished."

Ranger Wise worked with 25 members from the Pathfinder Club, a Scout organization from the Seventh Day Adventist Church in Alvarado, Texas, to place 128 bags of pre-mixed concrete along 120 feet of park road shoulder in Wolf Creek Park at the Lake. The bags of concrete will be saturated and allowed to "set up" to provide erosion control and prevent further deterioration along the park road shoulder in a primitive camping area. The group also cleared some underbrush and cleaned up the primitive area in the Park and plan on returning two more weekends in November to do more work in the area.

Waco Lake

Approximately 60 volunteers turned out at Waco Lake on Saturday, Sept. 27, to celebrate National Public Lands Day.

Volunteers, including Boy Scouts completing an Eagle Scout Project, dispersed to various areas to clean, fix and otherwise improve lake facilities and the environment. They painted boat ramp lanes, directional arrows, and installed signage at Koehne Park, trimmed trees at Midway Park, removed Johnson Grass from the xeriscape (drought-resistant landscaping) at the Speegleville Campground



At Navarro Mills Lake 25 members from the Pathfinder Club, a Scout organization from the Seventh Day Adventist Church in Alvarado, Texas, cleared some underbrush and cleaned up the primitive area in the Park for National Public Lands Day. They plan to return in November to do more work in the area. (Photos provided by Fort Worth District.)



Approximately 60 volunteers turned out at Waco Lake on Saturday, Sept. 27th, to celebrate National Public Lands Day. They performed a variety of tasks, but at the Waco Wetlands they reinforced a concrete embankment and removed invasive cattail vegetation.

See *Volunteers clean up* next page

Volunteers clean up *con't.*

entrance, painted flood-damaged picnic shelters and BBQ cookers at Twin Bridges, and at the Waco Wetlands reinforced a concrete embankment and removed invasive cattail vegetation.

Channel 6, the local NBC affiliate, interviewed Ranger Eric Haskell at Twin Bridges Park and the Waco Tribune Herald interviewed Ranger Michael Serbanic at Midway Park and Wetlands Coordinator Nora Schell about the day's activities.

"This event gave the community the opportunity to be more invested in parks around the lake which they can now take pride in whenever our visitors enjoy them," Haskell said.

Somerville Lake

National Public Lands Day was held at Somerville Lake, Sept. 27-28, in partnership with one of the lake office's program partners, the Girl Scouts of the Central Texas Council. Girl Scouts from troops in Washington, Fayette, Colorado, Burleson, Lee, Travis, and Robertson Counties attended, camped out, and took part in environmental education and service. Girl Scouts ranging in ages from 6- to 18-years-old, planted grass seed and improved one of the lake's hiking trails.

The two-day event was a collaborative effort of the Somerville Lake Volunteer Program and the Girl Scouts of Central Texas. Girl Scouts learned about public lands, the

Corps story, invasive species of plants, and "soft fixes" for soil erosion. Sixty participants gave 94 volunteer hours. Each Girl Scout earned the Earth Matters patch for her participation in the Environmental Action Projects and a NPLD certificate.

Two events not sponsored by the Corps were held on leased land at Grapevine and Canyon Lakes.

The City of Flower Mound performed general litter cleanup and set up educational exhibits about water quality and other topics.

At the Canyon Lake Recreational Area, individuals from Randolph Air Force Base partnered with the Boy Scouts to plant trees and wildflowers.

Denison meeting well attended

Tulsa District hosted a public information open house, Thursday, Sept. 11, to request comments and questions, and to inform the public about the Denison Land Conveyance. More than 100 people attended.

The evening workshop was held at the Denison Senior Citizens Center. Members of the public were invited to attend, visit information tables, and discuss the Denison Land Conveyance. Two court reporters were there to take official comments.

In Section 1382 (J) of the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 2007, Congress directed the Secretary of the Army to offer to convey, at fair market value, to the city of Denison, Texas, all right, title and interest of the United States in and to approximately 900 acres of land located along the eastern shore of the Little Mineral Arm of Lake Texoma in Grayson County, Texas.

An Environmental Impact Statement is being conducted to investigate alternatives and environmental impacts of the land conveyance and associated potential future land uses.

The open house and request for comment are part of the environmental documentation scoping conducted in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act. Scoping is the process of identifying potential environmental impacts of proposed Federal actions by soliciting comments and questions from the public and government agencies.

Several representatives from the Corps were available to talk with people who attended. They included Pam Kelly, Steve Nolen, John Tennery, Ed Rossman, Maria Wegner-Johnson, Mary Beth Hudson, Mark Ellison, Joe Custer, Grady Dobbs, and Dave Jones.

Others attending included congressional staffers, resource agency representatives, City of Denison officials, the developer and staff, media, and the general public.



Maria Wegner-Johnson registers a visitor to the Denison open house. More than 100 people attended the scoping meeting. (Photo provided by Tulsa District.)

Postcards from Afghanistan



Above: Lt. Col. Floyd performs a road reconnaissance in an MRAP (Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicle) with the 420th Engineer Brigade in Salerno, Afghanistan.



Right: Lt. Col. Floyd visits with Afghan school children in Adraskan, Afghanistan.

Lt. Col. Kurt C. Floyd
Deputy Commander
Afghanistan Engineer District

To My Fellow Co-workers at the Ft. Worth District.

Greetings fellow Texans!

I just wanted to drop everyone a quick note to let you know how things are going over here in Afghanistan.

We had a great end of year and obligated over \$1.5B in new construction projects by Sept. 30. Our workload is increasing by leaps and bounds and we're in the process of standing up a new Program Office down south in order to handle the increased workload.

Winter will be here soon so our construction season is winding down in the northern and northeastern portions of Afghanistan. Next spring, April/May 2009, will be another great year for AED.

I don't get to travel nearly as much now that I'm "stuck" at the AED Headquarters, but I do get outside the wire every now and then. I was able to sneak away for a couple of days in September and

flew down to Salerno. We visited the 420th Engineer Brigade from Bryan, Texas. They took us to a road project in the eastern portion of Afghanistan and I got to ride in my first MRAP.

I hope that everyone back in Ft. Worth is doing well ... If you're interested in joining us, please drop me an e-mail and we'll try to find you a slot for the spring construction season!

Take care,
Kurt



Lt. Col. Floyd prepares to be the master of ceremonies at the weekly House Meetings in front of Qalaa House at AED Headquarters in Kabul, Afghanistan.

Pacesetter Points

Congratulations

Janet Embry, administrative assistant for the director, Programs Directorate, joined SWD headquarters recently. Janet brings to the Division a wealth of experience in the administrative and emergency management fields. She also has served in the Corps' Gulf Region Division, Iraq.

Maxie McAlpin, administrative assistant, Regional Business Directorate, joined SWD headquarters in September. Maxie comes to the Division from her last assignment as a Human Resource Specialist, University of Texas at Arlington. She also served in the U.S. Army for more than 21 years.

Paula Morris, supervisory administrative/training officer, joined SWD headquarters in September. Paula's most recent assignment was with the Corps' North Atlantic Division's NAU District, Wiesbaden, Germany, where she served as a supervisory employee support specialist. She also deployed to the Gulf Region Division for nearly two years as an administrative officer.

Regina Lee, customer service representative, Business Resources Division, Regional Business Directorate, joined SWD headquarters Sept. 29, after serving 20 years in the U.S. Army. Regina, currently on terminal leave, will be officially retired from the Army Nov. 30.

Little Rock's Operations Division selected two new natural resources specialists to begin

work in October or November. **Devlin Ridenour** comes from Nashville District's Wolf Creek Dam/Lake Cumberland Project in Somerset, Ky. **Titus Hardiman** comes from Fort Worth District's Proctor Lake in Comanche, Texas.

Little Rock's **John Balgavy** was selected as the new Deputy Chief of Engineering and Construction Division.

Brandy Thomas of Little Rock's Contracting Division received her master's degree in Business Administration from the University of Phoenix during a graduation ceremony May 10. In 2007, she graduated Cum Laude with a degree in Accounting from the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff.

Little Rock's **Courtney Dycus**, a student aide clerk in Surveys Section left the district Sept. 23 after more than seven years, during which time she worked in Surveys, the Map Files Room and Design Branch. She also worked at Beaver Lake Project Office. She worked in the district through high school, college and graduate school. She is now teaching speech communication at Pulaski Technical College and pursuing full-time employment.

Retirements

Michael Hutchinson of Little Rock's Pine Bluff Project Office retired Oct. 2 after 34 years of service.

John Garrett of Little Rock's Real Estate Branch retired Sept. 30 after 40 years of service.

Garland Yarbrough of Little Rock's Pine Bluff Project Office retired Sept. 1 after 26 years of service.

Condolences

Jake H. Cover, father of **Eugene Cover**, regional program manager for recruiting facilities program, Programs Directorate, headquarters, Southwestern Division, passed away in Arkansas Sept. 20.

Lester S. Wilson, Southwestern Division retiree, passed away in Plano, Texas, Sept. 11; burial was in Tulsa, Okla. Les, who retired in the 1980s and later returned as an annuitant, served SWD in the Resources Management Office.

Sharon Morris' husband, **Kenny**, passed away Aug. 2. Sharon is the administrative support assistant for Kansas Area Office, Tulsa District. The couple recently returned to the states from her temporary duty assignment in Japan.

Robert C. Maxwell, retired design engineer, Tulsa District, passed away Aug. 12.

Fort Gibson Powerhouse, Tulsa District, extends sympathy and condolences to **Richard and Karen Hobbs**. Richard's mother, Mary Lou Hobbs, passed away on Thursday, Aug. 28. The family requests donations to the American Heart Association in lieu of flowers.

Harold Chitwood, 71, Tulsa District retired civil engineer, died Sept. 12.

Continued on next page

Jayne Hopson, 84, retired Tulsa District office manager, died Monday, Sept. 29.

Lynette Hartsfield, sister-in-law to Little Rock's **Mary Hartsfield**, passed away Sept. 19 in Corpus Christi.

Paulette (P.K.) Fowler, mother of Little Rock's **Ty Fowler**, a ranger at Mountain Home Project Office, passed away Oct. 6.

Little Rock District Gallery of Distinguished Civilians Inductee and World War II hero, **Johnny Browko**, passed away Oct. 6.

Family Matters

Steve Harmon, acting chief, military branch, Programs and Project Management Division, Tulsa District, is happy and excited to announce the arrival of his new granddaughter, Cora Mae Wallenciak, born Saturday, August 10. Parents are doing well and grandparents even better!

Little Rock's Executive Office Administrative Assistant **Terri Shrum** and her husband Creston welcomed their new baby niece, Ella Madeline Moore, into the family Sept. 17. She weighed 6 pounds, 9 ounces and was 20 inches long.

Hannah Denise Clarke, daughter of Little Rock's **Louis Clarke** of the North East Regulatory Field Office, graduated Aug. 1 with a Master of Science degree in mathematics from Arkansas State University.

Michelle Simpson, daughter of Little Rock's **Lissa Simpson** of the Programs and Project Management Office, graduated Aug. 8 from the University of Central Arkansas with a bachelor's degree in Family and Consumer Sciences.

Outreach

Clean Water Act Presentation
Little Rock's **Timothy Scott** of the Regulatory Division was invited to give a Clean Water Act presentation Aug. 8 at the South Central Regional Stormwater Group meeting in Hot Springs, Ark. In attendance were 15 representatives from four counties, five cities (Texarkana, Benton, Bryant, Hot Springs, and Pine Bluff) and two Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality personnel. The gathering discussed how each city can improve its storm water program and work to comply with ADEQ standards. Scott presented a slide show about the Corps' authority on streams and wetlands under Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbor Act and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.

"Becoming an Outdoor Woman"

Little Rock's **Robert Ahlert** and **Jeff McCarty**, rangers from the Russellville Project Office, volunteered their time and boating skills for the fifth year at the "Becoming an Outdoor Woman" event, an outdoors skills workshop for women.

During the three-day program, women receive instruction on nature appreciation, how to use a GPS, rifle and shotgun use, canoe and kayak paddling, archery, SCUBA, ATV riding and many other skills.

Little Rock District's **Cherilyn Gibbs** of the Planning and Environmental Office, participated in the event.

Ahlert and McCarty provided hands-on boating techniques instruction, such as docking a boat and basic boat operation.

Vicksburg District personnel taught how to use trailer and boat ramp courtesy.

This is a joint venture between Little Rock District, Vicksburg District and Arkansas Game and Fish Commission. The event

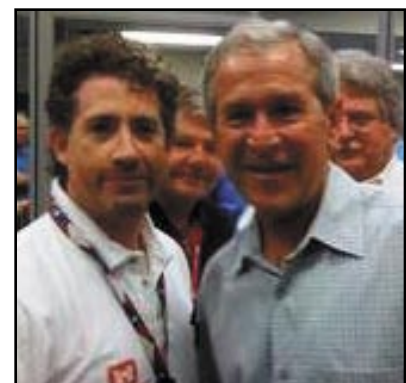
provides an atmosphere where women can have fun learning skills that will enhance their enjoyment of the Arkansas outdoors. It was held at the 4H center at Ferndale, Ark.

Interagency meeting

The **Little Rock District Regulatory Division** hosted an interagency meeting Aug. 20 to promote consistency in the regulatory program across Arkansas.

Discussions included recent mitigation rulemaking changes following the Supreme Court decision of Rapanos and Carabell, FEMA coordination efforts, Fayetteville Shale gas operations, and National Historic Preservation Act initiatives at Headquarters level.

Agencies involved in the meeting included U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Environmental Protection Agency, Federal Highway Administration, the Corps' Memphis District, Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality, Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department, Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission, and Arkansas Historic Properties Program.



Presidential Thanks

Seth Jones, Planning Lead with Galveston District, is thanked by President George W. Bush in Austin for his support of the Hurricane Gustav efforts. Jones is Galveston's liaison officer with the State of Texas Operations Center in Austin. (USACE photo.)

Longtime ranger, teacher influenced many

Decades of distinguished service recognized at ceremony

Cheri Dragos-Pritchard
Pacesetter Staff

Little Rock District Commander Col. Ed Jackson recently presented the Meritorious Civilian Service Award to David Small, who has one of the longest tenures in the Corps as a summer park ranger and who has influenced many while wearing two hats for three decades.

Small recently ended his 34 years of service as a temporary park ranger at the Nimrod-Blue Mountain Project Office. During those years, he not only provided experience and continuity to the summer ranger program, but he also touched many lives as a public school teacher who has taught math in five public schools in Arkansas during the past 38 years.

“He has made a difference to countless young people in their education, their growth and development,” the colonel said. “Equally important, he has made a difference to countless customers visiting and using Corps facilities over the past 34 years. He has helped make the Corps Army Proud.”

The colonel went on to say at the Oct. 1 award presentation that Small could have spent his summers off from teaching any number of ways, “but he decided to spend them helping others who visited the Corps parks. We’re proud to present him with this small token of our gratitude. He has truly helped the Army Corps of Engineers and his community, and we thank him for that.”

Hoover Willard, operations manager for Nimrod and Blue Mountain lakes, also voiced respect for Small’s many years of service to the Corps. He pointed out that Small provided advice, assistance and counsel to other temporary park rangers through the years.

“He possesses wisdom, common sense and a wealth of knowledge about people, their habits, expectations and actions,” Willard continued. “His ability to perform visitor assistance duties in the parks and on the lake during busy summer recreation seasons has contributed to the overall success of the natural resources and recreation missions here.”

Unfortunately, some of Small’s wisdom comes from being the victim of a tragic crime early in his career, a crime that eventually led to developing the ranger safety program into a better, more efficient program.



Little Rock District Commander Col. Ed Jackson thanks Summer Ranger David Small for all he has done during his careers with the Corps and as a school teacher. (Photo provided by Little Rock District.)

In June 1977, Small and fellow Park Ranger Opal James came upon two escapees from an Oklahoma prison who had taken a local marshal captive. The convicts killed the marshal, gravely wounded Small, and took James captive. James’ body was recovered a few days later.

“Mr. Small was shot, but thankfully survived to testify three times against the two convicts who were eventually executed for their crimes,” Willard explained.

“This tragedy caused the Corps of Engineers to take a good, hard look at the ranger safety program and found it lacking in many ways,” Willard said. “Mr. Small essentially helped set into motion the need for the development and establishment of a professional Visitor Assistance and Ranger Safety program.”

It is obvious Small has touched the lives of many people in many ways – school children he has taught, park visitors he has assisted, fellow rangers he has mentored, and even the safety training all Corps rangers receive.

***See the December Pacesetter for
more stories of the people
and activities of the
Southwestern Division.***