

WILMINGTON DISTRICT NEWS
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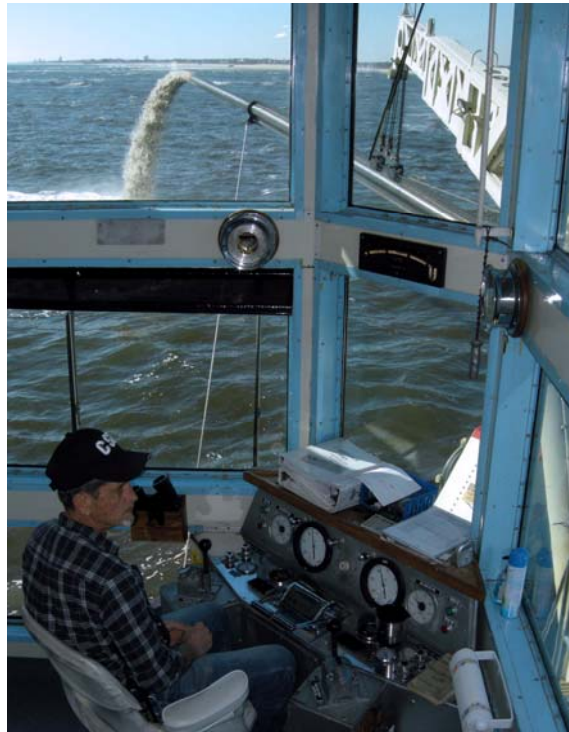
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DISTRICT KEEPS UP PACE OF DREDGING COASTAL NORTH CAROLINA INLETS



Skip Vealey mans the controls to the discharge pipe on the sidecaster dredge vessel FRY at Carolina Beach Inlet. (Heusinkveld photo)

Getting out of Carolina Beach by boat to open ocean can test the skills of the most seasoned mariner, especially when the federal channel at Carolina Beach Inlet needs dredging. The U.S. Army Corps of

Engineers helps ease those mariners' concerns by making the channel free of shoaling by dredging, but only when there's available funding.

"The inlets shoal in on a regular basis, but we can't schedule dredging on a regular basis," said Chief of Operations Bob Sattin. "We develop dredging schedules using past information to determine the best time to do dredging. But that can vary depending on which inlet is in worse shape at which particular time."

Keeping the federal channel open is similar to keeping stretches of roads open for automobiles. Commercial and recreational boat traffic intermixes every day at Carolina Beach Inlet making it a well used "highway" to the Atlantic Ocean.

"There are several types of traffic that

UP FRONT

BE SAFE DURING THE HOLIDAYS & REMEMBER OUR COLLEAGUES OVERSEAS

Wilmington Team,

The holidays are a wonderful time of year to reflect and be thankful for all that we have and enjoy in this great Nation of ours. I want to



COL Jeff Ryscavage

thank you for your Service to the District, the Corps and our Nation. We also very much appreciate the understanding of your friends and families as they support each of you as you go on numerous TDY's, disaster support missions and deployments in support of the continued efforts in the Global War on Terrorism.

I do ask that you remember the folks in the District that are not able

to spend time with their families during the Holiday Season. We have some teammates who are deployed and who are doing some great work supporting recovery operations due to Hurricane Ike and in support of on-going operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. I would ask that you remember them and their families as you feel appropriate.

Please be safe and watch out for yourself, your loved ones and those around you as you travel and spend time relaxing over the Holidays. This is a time for celebration and relaxation, but---never let Safety take a break. If you are out traveling please do so safely. We all look forward to seeing each other in 2009!

Lastly, it is fitting that you all re-

member the contributions that you have made to the District and Corps mission over the last year---they are each unique and important. I see first-hand the results and on-going impacts that each of you have on one another, our communities and what the Corps does for our country. My hope is that you all take time to recognize and appreciate what each of you do every day to make a difference in the quality of life of those around you and in 'Building Strong' for the future of our great Nation.

Alison, the boys and I all wish you all a wonderful and safe Holiday Season and a Happy New Year. Look forward to seeing everyone safe and sound ready for a great 2009. ***ESSAYONS!***

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District Commander: COL Jefferson Ryscavage
Chief, Public Affairs: Penelope Schmitt
Managing Editor: Hank Heusinkveld

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Wilmington District

CALL TO DUTY

A SALUTE TO THOSE WHO'VE VOLUNTEERED AT HOME AND ABROAD



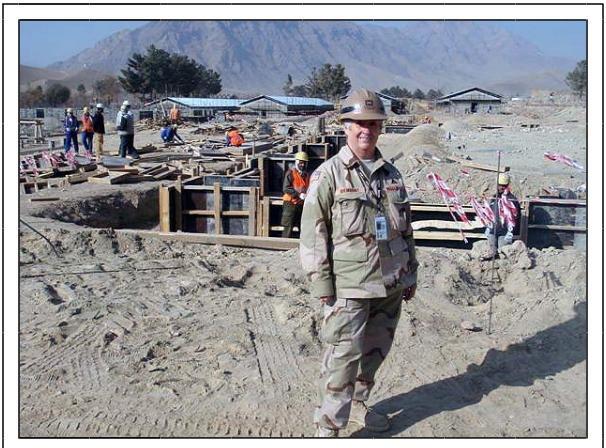
Stacey Smith, above, left the Wilmington District in October to help with recovery efforts after Hurricane Ike hit Texas and other areas of the Gulf Coast. As part of the Blue Roof Mission team, he helped get temporary roofs on more than 3,000 homes.

Wilmington District Commander COL Jeff Ryscavage, above right, presented congratulatory plaques from SAD Commander BG Joe

Schroedel to Debra Rowell, left, and Noel Clay. Debra deployed to Afghanistan, and Noel to Iraq.

Claudia Holmquist, right, is currently deployed to Afghanistan at the Kabul Area Office.

A special salute goes out to our other colleagues currently deployed : Cheryl Parks, April Ward, Neil Myers, Kim Jewell, Mattie Jones, Lisa Hardman and Melissa Blackburn-Walton.



DREDGING CON'T

go through the inlet. There are the recreation users who will mostly use the inlet on weekends, and you have charter boats and head boats on a regular basis. There is also some commercial fishing boat use. But the traffic you see is on weekends is mostly recreational traffic going in and out.”

Sattin said there is a lot of strategy involved in dredging. It’s not simply moving sand out of the federal channel with a sidecaster dredge vessel like the FRY. They must work *with* Mother Nature, not against her.

“They teach you in school that the shortest distance between two points is a straight line. Mother Nature very rarely works in straight lines. The inlets are subject to all the natural forces which are wind, waves and currents. The channel migrates on a regular basis, and it can change quickly or it can change slowly. There’s no way of telling. There could be one major storm event that will end up moving the

channel to a different location. What we do regularly is find out where the deepest natural alignment is and dredge along it and reshape it so that it’s navigable.”

Sattin said the Wilmington District Navigation Branch tries to make navigation as easy as possible for the public.

In the past after the channel was dredged, a survey was taken and sent to the Coast Guard which would schedule a buoy tender to go in and move the buoys.

“Over the years we’ve determined that a better way is to publish this information on our webpage to let people know where the deep water was. Then, to make it easier to



FRY Captain Mitch Tillyard, center, and Lee Willis chat with Wilmington District Commander COL Jeff Ryscavage during his visit to the sidecaster vessel. (Heusinkveld photo)

navigate, we marked center line waypoints on the surveys to allow users to take those coordinates, put them on their chart plotter and connect the dots to follow the way out through the channel. They now get all that information the same time the Coast Guard does. You’re now getting more up-to-date information to make it safer to navigate the channel.” ■

LIDAR HELPING TO MAKE WETLANDS IDENTIFICATION EASIER

Going to the field for U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Regulatory Specialists can mean checking a mere quarter-acre wetlands boundary to searching for a possible violation in a tract of land that's hundreds of acres. Thanks to technology, finding wetlands or violations to wetlands can be done on a computer.

David Schaeffer is a co-op at the Washington Regulatory Field Office in Washington, North Carolina. He just completed his master's thesis at East Carolina University on Lidar, a device similar in operation to radar that uses pulses of laser light to analyze atmospheric phenomena.

"I saw somebody in a department at ECU using Lidar, so I decided to produce an image that could iden-



David Schaeffer, left, chats with Spencer Roylance about mapping trends.

tify wetlands which I thought would be useful to the Corps of Engineers," he said.

"North Carolina has the largest Lidar data set in the world. It gives the Wilmington District the opportunity to see how we can use the data to quantify it statistically to provide support in terms of enforcement cases or documentation and researching within jurisdictional wetlands. That's the idea that I had for the research project."

Lidar works by a laser from an airplane that shoots down and receives back-scattered light rays that come from the terrain and converts into a three dimensional form. Schaeffer is eyeing several benefits for use in the Corps, especially in enforcement.

"There was a situation where a violator had maintained a ditch and poured spoils in wetlands claiming that a spoil pile was already there. All you had to do was look at the elevation data to see if there was a



Regulatory Specialist Ronnie Smith uses Lidar to check for various wetlands elevations. (Heusinkveld photos)

continuous spoil pile there before. We couldn't find any. Piles like that come up pretty clearly on the Lidar. The violator had to take the spoils out of the wetlands. It's really good for enforcement."

Schaeffer hopes that Lidar will take off Corps-wide. He feels North Carolina is the best area to be using it because of its extensive data collection.

"We're still new into it, but so far it's been pretty amazing. Even foresters are using it to estimate tree canopy height to find where good timber is. And USGS is working to put together nationwide Lidar site." ■

CORPS BUILDS STRONGER IN ROANOKE

By Penny Schmitt

In 2002, Wilmington District completed designs for two flood walls that will be part of the Roanoke River Flood Damage Reduction Project now being built in Roanoke Virginia. Since then, a virtual ocean of storm water has

flowed over levees and flood walls in New Orleans and down the main stem of the Mississippi River. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is still gathering data and creating new guidance based on lessons learned during Hurricane Katrina and the 2007 Midwest Floods.

But *now* is the time to enhance designs for projects under way so that we can build them stronger. Corps headquarters has directed that ongoing projects be reviewed now, to take advantage of any new information that has become avail-

Con't on Page 7



ROANOKE CON'T

able.

That's why the Wilmington District has made several design revisions to one of the flood walls, known as Training Wall 298, now being built in Roanoke. "Risk assessments from the past few years indicate several vulnerabilities in this flood wall that can be addressed with relatively little expense. It is just the right thing to do, to fix these design problems right now, and build a project that will stand up to flooding the way we expect it to," said Greg Griffith, the District's Chief of Geotechnical Engineering and manager of the District's levee inspection program.

The earthen levees for the Roanoke Project are built of compacted clay material, which is fortunately one of the materials that withstand floods quite well. However, Training Wall 298 is about six feet high above ground level, which makes it more vulnerable to flood erosion should the wall be

overtopped in a severe flood.

"Water could pour over the wall and erode the earth levee from the rear of the wall, and then make it possible for the pressure of flood water against the front of the wall to cause a wall failure. This type of failure can cause a sudden inundation," Griffith said. The design fix for this problem is to armor the earth embankment on the protected side of the flood wall with concrete pavers.

Other design vulnerabilities include areas where the wall angles toward the river's flow, and allows swift flood waters to eddy and erode the earthen levee on the river side of the flood wall. In three areas vulnerable to this type of damage, the Corps will place a limited amount of stone armoring, or riprap, atop the vulnerable area. Transition points from the earthen levee to the concrete I-wall, and a bridge crossing with an earthen embankment in front of the flood wall also present erosion hazards.

"We are aware that the City of Roanoke places a high value on the aesthetics of the flood wall and the adjacent land and recreation trail. We have confined the stone armoring on the front of the flood wall and at other vulnerable transitions to precisely those areas that need extra protection from erosion," Griffith said.

The Wilmington District presented its modification plan to the Roanoke City Council even as construction of the I-wall was underway. "We are negotiating now with our contractor to modify the contract and include these improvements," said Project Manager Jan Brodmerkel. "While we know that our project is not designed to eliminate every risk of flooding in Roanoke, we will do everything we can to ensure that the project meets standards that will make it strong against the risks we have designed it to meet. We believe that for a relatively minor investment now, we can prevent major problems in

BUILDING UPDATE- TAKING A CLOSER LOOK AT FUTURE PLANS

**By Debbie Willis,
Project Management**

Thanks to all of you who participated in the Building Survey. We had 140 responses.

The top vote getters for this survey were:

Current Building Suggestions:

Upgrade restroom

Noise Reduction

Upgrade Snack Bar

Improve HVAC

New Building Suggestions:

Parking

Office Layout

Noise Reduction

Security/Safety

The responses will be used to guide our plans for a future Wilmington District Headquarters. As you may recall, our exploration for a new site and a new building included a plan to team up with the U.S. Coast Guard. That would have required a bigger facility, and empowered us to plan for and share some enhanced building features with our new 'housemates'. However, the Coast Guard has decided that collocating with us is not the right option for them. Thus,



Project Manager Debbie Willis, left, Nancy Cox, center, and Chief of Logistics Management Nikki Schwartz look over the blueprints of District headquarters building.

our planning effort is literally back on the drawing board.

Our current lease expires in October 2010. GSA has indicated that we need to include the new Unified Facilities Criteria in our new lease requirements since they become effective for lease renewals as of 1 Oct 2009. GSA cannot guarantee that a new lease will be in place prior to that Oct 2009 date.

Our current facility does not meet 4 of 22 standards including:

1. minimum standoff distance -- 82' required for a controlled perimeter such as ours. The north side of our building does not meet this standard with the closeness of the China Buffett parking lot.

2. unobstructed space -- vegetation is considered obstruction, as are the parking spaces against the building
3. windows and glazed doors -- windows need to be upgraded
4. mass notification - we do not have a mass notification system for the exterior of the building

GSA is in the process of putting together a statement of interest to determine who may be interested in providing leased office space that meets our needs.

Once they have a list of interested providers, we will work with them on reviewing the statements of interest.

We will provide more information as it becomes available. ■

NEW FACES IN THE DISTRICT

Barbara Bonaparte is a Forth Worth District employee on temporary assignment to the Wilmington District. The Burgaw, NC native is a budget analyst and her alma mater is Columbia Union College of Takoma Park, MD. In her spare time she volunteers in the recreational services activity of her church for the elderly and children.



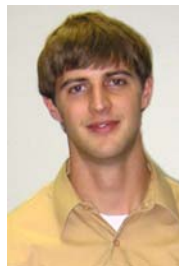
Powell Hughs IV is the District's new Dam Safety Coordinator. Before coming to Wilmington he was a project coordinator with English Construction in Lynchburg, Virginia. A graduate with a civil engineering degree from the Virginia Military Institute, he is married to wife Debra who is a postmaster in Lowry, VA. They have three children with one in high school in Lowry and a son who is a U.S. Army military intelligence Soldier stationed at Fort Belvoir and who is planning to go to Officer Cadet School. Powell enjoys classical music, and is interested in sports cars and the activities of his church.



Greg Firth is a mechanical engineer working in the Maintenance Section. He is a graduate of the California Maritime Academy, and comes to Wilmington from the Military Sealift Command in Charleston, SC. He and his wife, Lauren, are expecting their first child at the end of May. Greg enjoys running and other outdoor activities.



Paul Wicker works in SAW's Resource Management. He is a UNCW graduate with an undergraduate degree in accounting, and an MS in Accounting. He hails from Roanoke Rapids, NC and enjoys kayaking, surfing and biking. He and his wife, Meagan, are expecting their first child in February. Paul is a nephew to Henry Wicker, and cousin to Christy, both of Regulatory.



David Bailey is filling a cubicle as a Regulatory Specialist after working for North Carolina Department



of Transportation. He is a graduate of NC State, and got his master's degree from William and Mary. His wife, Jennifer, is a veterinarian, and he enjoys mountain biking and botanizing, the collection of various plants.

Tracy Gates comes to the Wilmington District after five and a half years at the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center located in Monterey, California. She is a University of Colorado graduate and a U.S. Navy veteran. She works for the District's Special Projects office. She has two children and enjoys being a grandmother to her granddaughter.



Brad Gregg works part time as a co-op in CPOC. A junior at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington, he is studying criminal justice and psychology. Originally from Norfolk, Virginia, he enjoys swimming and biking.



NEW FACES CON'T

Teresa Russell is a Regulatory Co-op. She is UNCW graduate with a BA in Environmental Studies with emphasis on coastal Management. She's currently working on a Masters Degree in Environmental Studies at UNCW. The Charlotte, NC native enjoys kayaking and scuba diving.



on entrepreneurship. Originally from Durham, she belongs to UNCW's Business Club.

Charleston District member **Mark Messersmith** earned a B.S. in Biology from Old Dominion University in Norfolk, VA in 2001.



After moving to Charleston and working for a few years in an analytical lab, he went on to obtain his M.S. in Environmental Studies from the College of Charleston. Mark is currently in the DA Career Intern Program as a Biologist in the Charleston District Planning Division. He has been married to his

wife, Stacy, for three years.

Crystal Renee Taft works as an office automation clerk at the Washington Regulatory Field Office in Washington, NC. Previously, she was employed by the Pitt County Memorial Hospital Information Systems Division. She is currently enrolled at East Carolina University working toward an undergraduate degree in MIS. She is interested in dance and the fine arts to include ballet, jazz, and modern dance as well as nature and scenic photography.

**WELCOME TO ALL NEW
EMPLOYEES AND CO-OPS!**

Laportia Paulk is a UNCW student who works in CPOC as a co-op. She is a senior majoring in Business Administration with a concentration



WHAT IN THE WORLD?!

Jessica Mallindine, a Wilmington District Co-op and recent UNCW graduate in Marine Biology and Environmental Science, tickles a green moray eel at the North Carolina Aquarium at Fort Fisher. Mallindine, who nearly has her Master Diver certificate, volunteers at the aquarium to educate the public about marine life.

JOHN H KERR MEMBERS JOIN LOCAL PARADES TO SPREAD HOLIDAY CHEER

By Bob Burick, Park Ranger

This holiday season the John H Kerr Reservoir entered a float in the local parades of three towns surrounding the lake. Employees volunteered their time to construct a float and participate in the three parades in the Virginian towns of Clarksville, South Hill, and Chase City. The parades fell on a cold weekend this year, but the wind could not diminish the spirit of local residents. Hundreds of people were in attendance at each parade, lined up along sidewalks in little Santa hats waving and cheering as the floats and bands passed by.

Many local marching bands, fire departments, youth groups, government agencies, and community clubs gathered their efforts to put on spectacular parades for the local populace. Fires trucks and ambulances were covered in Christmas lights while high school bands played beloved classic holiday songs as they marched down the main streets of town. Each float

that made its way down the street was more creative than the last and one could feel a real sense of community pride as the participants waved and children cheered.

Park Rangers and office staff from John H Kerr had spent the last few weeks planning and constructing a float to enter into the parades. This year's theme was "Managing Resources for the Past, Present, and Future." The float portrayed this theme by displaying the key aspects of local resource management that the Corps deals with on a daily basis. On the front of the float was a model of the John H Kerr Dam representing flood control, hydroelectric power, and water resources. The center of the float was a mock campsite depicting all of the recrea-



The John H Kerr float featured a model of JHK Dam, campsite and forests and wildlife.

tional opportunities around the lake. The final third of the float portrayed the forests and wildlife of the large areas of Corps managed land surrounding the lake.

Park Ranger Shannon Crews became her alter ego, Bobber the Water Safety Dog, for all three parades. Bobber along with Buddy the Beaver, played by Rangers Tom Charles and Josh Deal, were a parade favorite of the younger kids. The parades were a huge success and allowed the staff of John H Kerr a great opportunity to bond with the communities that spend their lives on our lake. ■

OSAGE ORANGE TREES ON THE AMERICAN FRONTIER..AND JOHN H. KERR RESERVOIR

By Craig Brown

John H. Kerr Park Ranger

The Osage Orange tree, sometimes called Osage Apple or Hedge Apple, was named after the Osage Indians who lived along the Osage River in Missouri and Arkansas,

which is the native range of the Osage Orange. The branches of the Osage Orange were prized by Native Americans for their strength and flexibility, and were used in making bows and war clubs. Before the advent of barbed wire, farmers planted hedgerows

of the thorny Osage Orange to contain livestock and use as windbreaks. Surprisingly, they were once the most planted tree in America. The Department of Agriculture estimates that 60,000 miles of

Osage Orange hedgerows were planted in 1868 alone. Today, they are considered a nuisance and are an uncommon sight. Osage Orange are not native to Virginia, and when found they are usually located near old farmsteads and settlements.



John H. Kerr's Osage Orange Trees

The large Osage Orange at John H. Kerr is estimated to be from 150-200 years old. Encircling the gnarled trunk and twisted limbs of

this old tree, and along its drip line, are four smaller Osage Orange trees – presenting the image of a parent surrounded by its children. Oral history, old deeds, wire embedded within its trunk, and ceramic chards found near the tree tell us that this Osage Orange is located near the

homestead of the old North Bend Plantation. This makes it likely that the tree was planted as a windbreak by an early settler. There are other Osage Oranges in Southside Virginia, but not many are as large, as old, or as majestic as

this one. Nor are they located in such a serene and beautiful location as this Osage Orange, surrounded by its progeny on the shores of John H. Kerr Reservoir in North Bend Park. ■

A YEAR-END WRAP UP FROM JORDAN AND FALLS LAKE

Jordan Lake Nature Festival

Held on November 1st at White Oak Recreation Area, the first annual Jordan Lake Nature Festival was a huge success and fun for all. With nature crafts such as fingerprint animals, the handprint tree, an acorn count, make your own fall leaf, insect rubbing and play-doh bird nests, there was plenty of hands on learning. Special presentations were lead by Buddy the Beaver, the Travelling Teacher Show, Timber Poe and the Chatham County Sheriffs' K-9 unit. With an estimated 200 people in attendance, we look forward to having another event next year.

Handicapped Hunt

This November the Corps teamed up with North Carolina Handicapped Sportsmen (NCHS) and the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC) to host their first Handicap Hunt at Jordan Dam. The hunt was held on four days during the last day of muzzle loading season and the first week of gun season giving the hunters ample opportunity to harvest deer of either sex.

Two hunting blinds and food plots provided by Chris Teague of the NCWRC were set up in the Jordan Dam spillway. On the first weekend, blinds were assigned to best accommodate the hunters. A coin toss was used to determine first pick of the blinds during the second weekend and then were switched out the following day.

The hunters which were selected by Ed Mays, President of the NCHS were treated to dinner on Friday, 14 and 21 November and then an early breakfast the following mornings. Meals were provided in part by the staff of B. Everett

Jordan Dam; but, the outstanding home cooked deer meat spaghetti sauce which was provided by Linda Shoe, wife of Operations Manager Craig Shoe, was a hit with the hunters.

Although the weather was not ideal for the first 3/4 of the first weekend, being too warm and wet; seven deer were sighted. The following weekend brought cold dry weather making the deer more active. Even though the one cow-horned buck harvested by Bill Gaskins Sr. was no trophy the hunts were a success. The good food and camaraderie among the hunters made it an enjoyable experience for all.

Raleigh Christmas Parade

The rangers of Jordan and Falls Lakes took part in this years 64th annual Raleigh Christmas Parade, towing a brightly decorated Corps of Engineers boat in front of an estimated 50,000 people. Presented by the Greater Raleigh Merchant's Association, this annual event is the largest parade between Atlanta and Washington, DC. With temperatures in the low 20's on

Saturday morning, it was also the coldest parade in 30 years.

We all arrived in Raleigh on that chilly morning, bundled up and ready for the parade start. Being float number 121 of 123, we had plenty of time to take in the holiday cheer and watch the other floats venture into the crowds. Finally, it was our turn, just a short distance in front of Santa himself. With a "Let the good times float" banner, a couple people handing out Frisbees, and Buddy Beaver, a fisherman, a hunter and some children in the boat all wearing their life jackets- we started down the parade route. After standing in the cold for four hours, we quickly made our way through the downtown streets as the crowd cheered and waved at Buddy.

It was exciting to be part of such a large event and hopefully our float was able to educate as well as entertain. From an inflatable to a paddling jacket, each person on the boat wore a different style of life jacket. ■



Despite cold temperatures, the Falls and Jordan Team had a great time taking part in the annual Raleigh Christmas Parade.

LDP BRINGS NEW GROUP OF LEADERS INTO THE RANKS



Congratulations to “X Factor LDP 2008” who managed to work together to accomplish their leadership mission. Standing with Wilmington District Commander COL Jeff Ryscavage, left, and Charleston District Commander LTC Joe Jordan are;

First Row- Dee Dee Fauser, Liz Fiocchi, Scott Aiken, Apryll Gill and Brad Shaver.

Second Row- Jeff Fersner, Amy Capp, Shelly Thompson, Stephan Vithalani and Henry Wicker.



CONGRATS!

DISTRICT ENDS YEAR ON FESTIVE FEAST, AND SANTA CLAUS CAME TO TOWN!



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SANTA CON'T



*Season's
Greetings!*

