



US Army Corps  
of Engineers®  
New Orleans District

# Riverside



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November - December 2004



**Senior leaders  
scale the spillway rock**

Saluting Sue Hawes

January exits: departing shots





## Hail and farewell

By Eric Lincoln

**J**ohn Saia, Project Management, has worked with the Corps for 36 years and will retire on Dec. 31.

Saia began with the Sacramento District, becoming deputy district engineer for Project Management, then moved to Savannah District in 1994 and finally New Orleans in July 2000 as deputy for Project Management.

He said that the most significant change he's seen in the Corps during his time has been the emphasis on Project Management begun in 1988, and in the last four years, the Project Management Business Process, 2012 and P2.

"This district will need to focus on environmental restoration and integrating coastal projects—navigation, flood control, hurricane protection. Employees should look at coastal consistency and management of the large watersheds, train for the new programs and be prepared to assist other agencies and partner with them on a larger scale."

Saia plans to take one month off after retirement, then go back to work in the private sector until moving to Mobile with his wife, Elizabeth, to be closer to their children and three granddaughters. He had planned to stay with the district another three years, but had an unex-



pected opportunity to move to Mobile.

Saia met his wife because of the Corps. Her father worked for New Orleans District in the 1940s, and she worked as secretary to chief of Project Management. When her father retired from Mobile District, Saia met his wife there, and the rest was history.

They have four children, in California and Mobile, and live across the lake. The daily commute has provided a few hair-raising moments for Saia.

"Once, a muffler flew off another car, under mine, and punctured my tire—that's how I first met Judith McGovern (Counsel), because she was commuting too, and helped me get the rest of the way home.

Another time, a pelican flew directly into my windshield—the glass didn't break. I don't think the pelican was so lucky. And a few weeks ago, I was stopped in traffic on the bridge and the whole line of cars was rear-ended by a truck."

Saia was lucky to emerge from the accident intact. His car was totaled, and the car in back of him, which received the initial hit, was "accordioned," he said. Saia went to the hospital afterwards and has more visits scheduled.

"It's not so bad, though. I'm alive, and get to end my

**"This district will need to focus on environmental restoration and integrating coastal projects."**

### Riverside

November - December 2004

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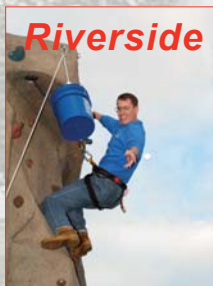
Elena Napolitano

**Winner:** The "J" Award, the highest Department of Army journalism honor, 2000 and 2003.

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**Col. Rowan, commander, tosses an egg from the top of a rock climbing wall during the Senior Leaders challenge at the spillway last month.**



time with the district by getting a new car!

“I’ll miss MVN, the people ... it’s a fantastic place to work and to end my career. I’ve cherished my time here.”

Saia’s last day was Dec. 23.

**Quinn Humphries**, Engineering, came to the district in 1966, one month after being discharged from a four-year tour in the Air Force. He started in the

soils lab and was promoted in 1972 to the old Gages and Observations Section, then moved into Hydraulic Design Section, H&H Branch, in 1984.

He recalled seeing some of the major changes at the district.

“I remember moving from the old buildings to the new building, using a main-

frame computer that took up a whole room in the ADP building, and going from one control structure to two at Old River,” he said. “The district has always been moving ahead and becoming more efficient.”

Similarly, he said, “I think the focus now should be on how to keep providing the services we do with less money and fewer people. It’s what is expected.”

Humphries also suggested that employees plan seriously for retirement.

“Save for your retirement starting as early in your career as possible, with investments such as TSP, IRAs, stocks and mutual funds. It will make the golden years a lot more enjoyable. I was halfway through my 42-year career before I took someone’s advice and got on the bandwagon, but at least I got on, and it will allow me to do whatever I want now.

“I have friends and family spread around the country and I plan to visit them and see the sights along the way. I’ll be back to

visit my Corps friends, too.

“42 years went by faster that I thought it would.”

**Phil Marchese**, Engineering, is retiring on Feb. 3 with 30 years at the district as a civil engineering technician.

He worked previously as a draftsman, and remembers going from hand-drawn drafting to automated computer drawing.

“Drafting by hand took some hand-eye coordination. Not everyone could do it. But anyone can do this computer drafting work,” he says.

Not everyone has had quite the same challenges, though.

Marchese is a “Jerry’s Kid,” having active muscular dystrophy since 17, and has been confined to a wheelchair for the last 10 years.

“When I walked, I had to use a cane. I was really slowing down in my 50s as the disease got worse. With the powered wheelchair, it’s actually easier to get around now.”

Besides his “moon buggy,” as his co-workers refer to it, Marchese uses a specialized van to drive. It has a special rotating knob for steering and buttons that trigger the normal functions of the van such as braking and turning lights.

“Everybody calls this the space shuttle. It’s all computerized, like flying an airplane. I can’t feel the road. There’s no key—I have to log on to pull out of the driveway.”

Technology has been the biggest change Marchese remembers experiencing at the district.

“At one time, no one had computers, back when the district was like a small town, just separate buildings made of Cypress. Now, everyone has a computer. Everything I used to do by hand,



Lane LePort



Eric Lincoln



Continued, next page



Continued from page 3

I do on a computer now.”

Marchese seems ready to put the computers behind him, though.

“I’ve been here a long time,” he says. “I won’t miss it. I’m going to take it easy.”

Marchese has two daughters, 20 and 16.

**J**udith McGovern, Counsel, is retiring after 32 years of government service, 22 of them with the district. “Yeeha! I’m real broken up over it,” she said sarcastically. “Can’t you see the tears streaming down my face?”

McGovern has worked as the district’s chief investigator her entire time here. When she goes, the job will go with her. There are no plans to fill her position.

“The work I do has to be done by someone, but I guess it’s nothing a trained bear can’t do,” she said.

McGovern came to New Orleans after working with the Drug Enforcement Administration. She’s worked with “tort and admiralty” cases for the district, usually involving lock damages and employee car accidents.

“Working for Office of Counsel has been great. I’ve seen the office go through different chiefs, from Joe Towers to Denise Frederick ... there’s a very nice

mix of people here, very intelligent, and most importantly, they have an exceptional sense of humor.

“It’s extraordinarily important to have that ... we’re a little irreverent sometimes, but it’s for the sake of accomplishing the job, which can be very stressful.”



McGovern says after retirement she might work with her husband, Harold, who has a bar and a private investigations firm.

She’ll also be busy with her greyhound adoption program.

As director of the Louisiana Chapter of “Greyhound Pets of America,” McGovern has spent the last 20 years caring for and finding homes for greyhounds that have finished their racing days.

In most cases, unless an adoption program takes them, greyhound dogs are put to sleep after they’ve gotten too old for the track, usually around three years of age.

McGovern has eight of her own greyhounds at home.

After Hurricane Ivan hit a track in Florida, the agency took in a record 50 dogs at once, spreading them throughout Louisiana and Mississippi to find homes.

The local chapter’s website is [www.houndsabound.org](http://www.houndsabound.org). “Make sure Randy Florent doesn’t block that site!”

McGovern warned.

She added that she remembers helping John Saia on the Causeway bridge.

“We didn’t know each other then. He couldn’t figure out why this strange woman was so willing to pick him up and deliver him to his wife. Now we’re retiring at the same time. I told him, ‘You’re just retiring because you’re scared I won’t be there to rescue you!’”

**R**achel Harvey, Internal Review, is retiring on Jan. 31 with 18 years of government service, 14 of them with the Corps. She started in Contracting Division as a contract administrator, moving up to auditor for Internal Review, then acting chief, and finally chief of Internal Review in 2001.

“Through the years, I’ve seen an increased emphasis on obtaining a financial statement opinion, and changes in accounting policies and procedures required to obtain an opinion.

“Introduction of new technologies and database systems and the opening of the childcare center stand out for me, as well.”

Harvey says the Corps needs to be careful not to oversaturate employees with new procedures.

“We’re continually adopting ‘new’ management methods. Over time, it makes the workforce develop a ‘here we go again’ attitude. I suggest employees be informed of



**“... take action to bring about a change. Life is full of opportunities. All we have to do is reach for them.”**

what the benefits and results of a method will be, besides just getting the sales pitch prior to implementation.”

She also has words of wisdom to offer incoming and current employees.

“Don’t do something just because it was always done that way. If you can see ways to improve, make a sug-

gestion tactfully to the person who can implement the change.

“If you are unhappy where you work, who you work for, or what you do - it is time for you to make a change. Do yourself and those around you a favor. Stop complaining and take action to bring about a change. Life is full of opportunities. All we have to do is reach for them.”

Harvey said she is looking forward to having the freedom of retirement.

“I plan to do things that there was never enough time to do while working, go on a couple of long trips and participate in volunteer projects.”

**Ron Legendre**, Construction, is retiring on Jan. 3 with 35 years of service to the district.

Legendre worked in Engineering for one year before transferring to Construction as civil engineer.

“I’ve been here long enough to see some major

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**“I’ll miss the people, the camaraderie. I’m closer to some people here than members of my family.”**

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changes,” Legendre said. “Automation and technology were the biggest, and the people. New hires now have to be a little smarter than they used to be. They’re expected to walk in prepared, with something to offer.

“I remember the cumbersome way we used to do dredge surveys. We’d take a 12-pound lead weight on a cable, put it down and read the depth, while another guy on land would read the distance from the bank. It was slow and took three people. Now, hydrographic surveys are done using sonar and one guy driving a boat. It used to take an hour or more to do it; now it takes a minute.”

His plans for retirement, he says, are, “to start working on my wife’s ‘Honey-do’ list. She’s been compiling it for years. We’ll also go visit our two granddaughters in Texas.”

“I’ll miss the job, though. I found something I was good at and enjoyed. And I’ll miss the people, the camaraderie. I’m closer to some people here than members of my family. But I’ll keep in touch.”

*Also retiring:*

**Joey Dykes**, Project Management.

**Vann Stutts**, Engineering.

**Brenda Weber**, Resource Management.

**Ronald Martin**, Engineering.

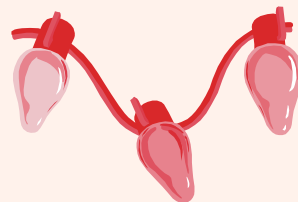
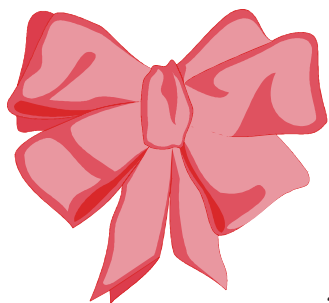
**Tiong Tan**, Engineering.

## Holiday hymn quiz

*Guess the original title behind these alternatives.*

1. Quadruped with crimson proboscis
2. 5 p.m. to 6 a.m. without noise
3. Miniscule hamlet in the far east
4. Ancient benevolent despot
5. Adorn the vestibule
6. Exuberance directed to the planet
7. Listen, aerial spirits harmonizing
8. Monarchical trio
9. Yonder in the haystack
10. Assemble, everyone who believes
11. Hallowed post meridian
12. Fantasies of a colorless December 25th
13. Tin tintinnabulums
14. A dozen 24-hour Yule periods
15. Befell during the transparent bewitching hour
16. Homo sapien of crystallized vapor

1. Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer
2. Silent Night
3. O’ Little Town of Bethlehem
4. Good King Wenceslas (or some say Jolly Old St. Nicholas)
5. Deck the Halls
6. Joy to the World
7. Hark the Herald Angels Sing
8. We Three Kings
9. Away in a Manger
10. Come All Ye Faithful
11. O Holy Night
12. I’m Dreaming of a White Christmas
13. Silver Bells
14. The Twelve Days of Christmas
15. It Came Upon a Midnight Clear
16. Frosty the Snowman





Lane Lefort

## Our award-winning biologist Hawes called to environment role

By Eric Lincoln

She uses a walker, at 68 years old, to get around. Her voice is harsh and low from having radiation for throat cancer four years ago. She can't stand upright because of crushed spinal discs, and she lost her husband in an accident 11 years ago.

She's also an icon at the district, working here for the past 32 years, distinguishing herself as a self-proclaimed "peacemaker," the person the district counts on for facilitating communication with outside agencies.

Then there's the environmental

award on her windowsill from the Louisiana Wildlife Federation for being the Conservationist of the Year in 2001, and another at home from the National Wildlife Federation.

**"For me and for some of us, it's almost what you'd term a spiritual calling. I love it."**

Suzanne Hawes, Environmental Branch, just keeps on truckin', doing what she feels called to do, saving the coast.

And in January, as a formal mentor for the first time, she'll have someone working directly with her on a new mission: project and permit consistency with coastal restoration.

### A role model

Hawes sweeps off a chair, her back stooped, and gently tosses a few stacks of papers where they need to go.

"I'm trying to clean the place up," she says, "because someone, I don't know who yet, will be sitting in this office with me, working on helping the district find consistency between coastal restoration, flood control and navigation projects and permits.

"I guess I'm looking forward to it. I'm comfortable now. But it's always good to do new things."

It's the attitude of someone who has had a long career with the district and knows how to adapt.

Hawes started with the Corps in spring 1971, in the Environmental Section, helping to write environmental impact statements.

"They didn't let biologists help with planning projects at that time," she says. "That's changed, thankfully."

She grew up in California and

graduated from Brown University, coming to New Orleans in 1967 with her husband, Jim, who had a chemistry teaching position with Dillard University.

"We had three children. When the youngest started pre-kindergarten, I wanted to do something for my career. I went to UNO and just took whatever biology courses they had in my two-hour window. These turned out to be mostly about wetlands ecology. UNO had just bid on a contract with the Corps to study Lake Ponchartrain, and if they got it, I was going to manage the contract.



“Right before Christmas, the professor directing the project called me and said, ‘That blankety-blank Corps dropped the contract. If you

“Right before Christmas, the director called me and said, ‘That blankety-blank Corps dropped the contract. If you want a job, why don’t you go work for them?’”

need a job, why don’t you go work for them?”

“My husband wanted to leave teaching and open a bike repair shop. Somebody needed a steady income, so I trotted over to the Corps and got a job. I was very lucky.”

She went straight into the Environmental Branch.

“It was ironic. I started out a GS-7 botanist. All the guys I worked with were GS-11s. One day we were taking a walk around the complex, and I found out we all had about the same amount of work experience and same education.

“I went to personnel and found out that one year of my work experience had qualified as zoology, not botany, and that’s why I wasn’t a GS-11. I eventually got that straightened out.

If I hadn’t taken that walk, I would have never known. I guess you can say it pays to exercise.”

In 1978, Hawes’ boss retired, and she became Environmental Section chief until 1990.

Then Hawes stepped into the project manager for the environment position, the first of its kind in the Corps, in 1990. CWPPRA (the Breaux Act) had just been passed.

“Colonel Diffley knew I’d worked with the Sierra Club for a long time,” says Hawes. “Plus, I’d

developed an excellent relationship with the Fish and Wildlife Service. We’d go into the field together, have lunch together and share boats and

equipment. It was unusual for this relationship to exist in the Corps.

“He asked me to be a facilitator, to develop a relationship with

personnel in the other Breaux Act agencies and also the Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana, the Audubon Society and Sierra Club. I started to do it and soon after the

Breaux Act Environmental Workgroup started, I became one of the district’s representatives. My role was to help make sure that no one agency dominated the group and that all projects were treated equally.”

## Coastal concerns

In 1993, the Breaux Act agencies had to create a report about saving the coast.

“It was called ‘the pink report,’ because it had a pink cover. We had people representing four agencies

working here at the district until midnight to make the deadline, and we did it. But the report ultimately went nowhere, stalling at the Office of Management and Budget ... c’est la vie.”

When Coast 2050 started, Hawes was, she says, the “peacemaker and second lieutenant,” helping to write parts of the report and ease interagency conflict. She has also helped write parts of the LCA draft and worked with the LCA project.

“I’m trying to extricate myself from the LCA now,” she said, “but it doesn’t extricate well.”

Hawes has good reason for wanting the change, considering her upcoming responsibility as a mentor. An assistant will work with her starting next year to learn about and help on consistency between coastal restoration and projects and permits.

“People ask me, ‘Why are we spending money to restore the coast while the Corps is granting every (404) permit that comes through here?’ We’ve got a good system for letting permits section know when a project needs to be



Scott Riecke

**Hawes’ bright red hat can only be fully appreciated in our color Riverside on the web, but even in black and white, it’s unusual decor. The hat serves a practical purpose. Hawes sodium level dropped after her stroke--subsequent antibiotics made her unusually susceptible to sunburns. “My son brought me the hat to protect my skin, but instructed that I couldn’t wear it without calling it like it is. Nancy Mayberry in Graphics dressed it up with the feather. It’s my pimpin’ hat.”**

See HAWES, page 9

A drawing of the “Ironclads” gunboat U.S.S. Chickasaw.

# Historic sunken vessels discovered near headquarters

By Eric Lincoln

Sunken vessels dating back to the late 1800s, including one previously used as a gunboat in the Civil War, have been discovered near the bank of the river between the district building and Bisso Marine Company.

Scouring along the bank originally prompted an investigation into the bank line, leading to the historic find.

Project Management postponed revetment work last month to determine the significance of the wrecks.

“We thought the scouring was because of a recent accident with a barge hitting the bank line,” said Joan Exnicios, Project Management, “but it wasn’t the bank failure causing it, it was the water being circulated around shipwrecks.”

Multibeam sonar, used to “view” the underwater scene, revealed 19 wrecked vessels lodged in the mud.

“We couldn’t begin rock placement until we could get a history on the vessels and get cultural resources compliance to continue,” said Exnicios.

The district has a shipwreck database going back to the 1980s, with historical research, maps and old newspaper articles, which Exnicios

and a small research team used to dig into the vessels’ history. Exnicios also contacted Bisso Marine for assistance, since they have a long history of marine activity in the area. R. Christopher Goodwin and Associates also helped compile a final report.

“Research indicated at least 30 vessels went down here from the late

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“...at least 30 vessels went down here from the late 1800s, at the Walnut Street ferry landing ...”

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1800s, at the Walnut Street ferry landing, which was located near the forested ‘dog run’ area between the district building and Bisso,” Exnicios said.

With multibeam sonar technology, an acoustic camera and a diver, the

team was able to survey the site and create an animated 3D image that showed them invaluable details about the wrecks. Also, a marine archeologist came in to examine the data and help determine what kind of vessels were there.

Of the vessels identified, the most historically significant were the Halliday and especially the Chickasaw.

The Chickasaw was built in 1861 by the famous architect James Eads as part of the new “Ironclads” gunboat design. It was one of four built in St. Louis and brought down to fight to Union victory in the 1864 Battle of Mobile.

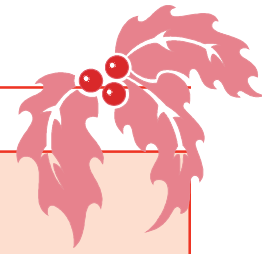
After the war, one of the boats was melted down and used to make part of the famous Eads Bridge, the first bridge to make significant use of steel, in St. Louis. The other three were brought to Algiers and eventually sold to local investors.

A railroad company obtained the Chickasaw and converted it to a rail ferry car to get trains and supplies across the Mississippi River. At the time, there was no bridge.

“Because of its role in the Civil War and as a relic of James Eads designs, the Chickasaw qualified to be registered on the list of National Historic Sites,” said Exnicios. “The







Halliday ‘potentially’ qualified, meaning it probably will ... so we had to preserve the site.”

Revetment work had to take place, too, but adding rock to the bank would have destroyed the vessels.

However, bringing the vessels out of the water for museum display would be an enormous project that would take years. Another solution had to be found.

Team members decided on “preservation in place,” and had a “wall”

of rock constructed around the vessels, allowing the revetment work to continue.

Exnicios said the district is now considering commemorating the site and vessels by having a display at the RiverSphere showing the wrecks’ history.

The RiverSphere is a museum and research center to be built near the convention center in the next few years.

**The three stages to adulthood:**

1. I believe in Santa Claus.
2. I don't believe in Santa Claus.
3. I am Santa Claus.

**HAWES, from page 7**

correlated with coastal restoration, but we can improve it.”

Looking back on the accomplishments of the district, she says that getting Coast 2050 out was a real success, both for the scope of the report and the amount of hands involved.

“Meeting the deadline and getting it completed was a huge triumph. There were so many diverse people involved, including folks from 19 coastal parishes.”

Hawes is especially proud of a unique centerfold for the Coast 2050 Executive Summary she created one evening in Baton Rouge with Denise Reed, a major academic scholar involved in Coast 2050. The map—the only one like it—shows all the major Coast 2050 Strategies.

**The negotiator**

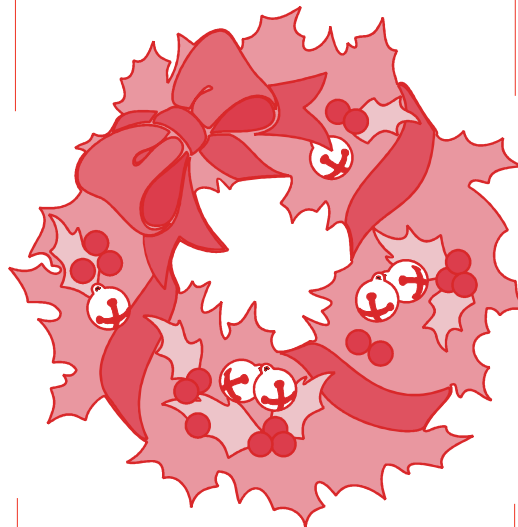
But Hawes’ most unique skill—negotiating—is one that came naturally to her.

“I’m a peacemaker. At meetings, you see, someone would get upset and walk out, and I’d go find them, put my arm around them and say ‘C’mon, you gotta come and explain to me what’s happening.’ I could usually get them to calm down and come back.

“A lot of the people working on

this project, or with environmental concerns, are very passionate about it. For me and for many of us, it’s almost what you’d term a spiritual calling. I love it. It’s just what we feel we’re supposed to do.”

Such a sense of purpose is probably what keeps Hawes coming to work every day, long after most employees would have retired. That,



and the diversion from her daily health concerns.

“I can’t sit around,” she says. “If I sit home and have a pity party, I’d start feeling what hurts. If I come to work, I forget about it.”

Hawes has had cancer on-and-off since 1982, lost her husband 11 years ago, and then had a recurrence of throat cancer in 2000 and had part of her tongue removed. Subsequent

radiation treatment caused her voice to change. Additionally, two years ago, she fell and crushed some spinal discs, and had a stroke last January, which caused her to start using a walker.

Not to be stopped, however, Hawes remains on the Barataria-Terrebone National Estuary Program Management Conference, the Board of Directors of the Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana, the Executive Committee of the Sierra Club and represents the Corps in various task forces.

And away from the Corps, Hawes teaches a Sunday School class and works with the women’s organization in her church

“I’m an active Mormon—I don’t have any free time,” she says, grinning. “My daughter lives across the street from me, too, with her family, so there’s a lot to do.”

In addition, Hawes’ two sons live in Massachusetts, one in the Air Force and the other a veterinarian “trying to successfully incorporate himself into New England,” she says.

At the end of the day, though, a great part of Hawes’ concern goes to the Corps.

“I hope the LCA study goes well. A lot of people worked on it, and it’s so important. We’ll have to wait and see what happens.”

C’est la vie.

# “Survivor” event challenges senior leaders

By Eric Lincoln

The district pitted 90 MVD Senior Leaders against each other in teams recently during a “Survivor” event at the Bonnet Carre Spillway. It had participants literally standing on each other’s shoulders to complete tasks.

The group was in town for the annual MVD Senior Leaders Conference, hosted by New Orleans District at the Bourbon Orleans, Nov. 16-18.

“There is usually a pre-conference event to help attendees get to know each other,” said Chris Accardo, Operations, one of the event organizers. “We wanted to do something a little more daring and challenging this time. In that aspect,

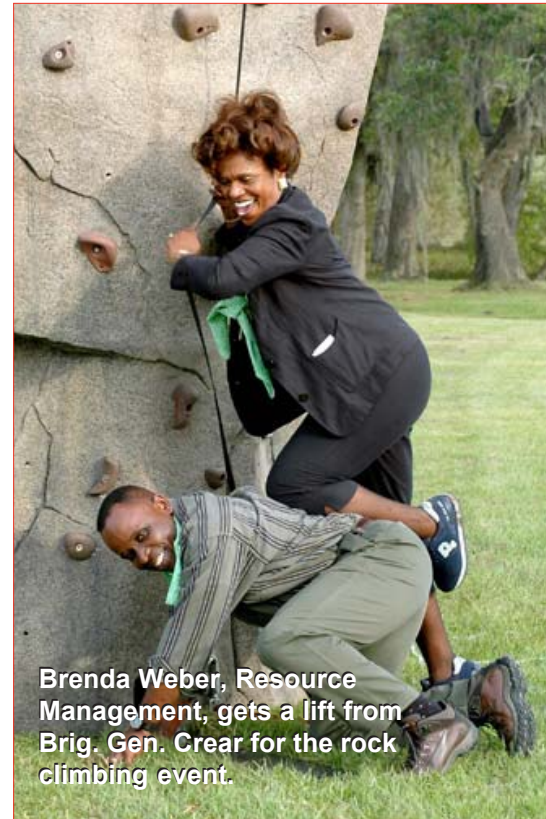
and judging from comments afterward, we succeeded.”

Several options were submitted for approval by Col. Rowan and Brig. Gen. Crear, who eventually selected the survivor-style exercises at the spillway.

Judi Gutierrez, Real Estate, and Jean Vossen, Engineering, the current active Emerging Leaders, planned the events. The scope of the project needed



Bridge building



Brenda Weber, Resource Management, gets a lift from Brig. Gen. Crear for the rock climbing event.



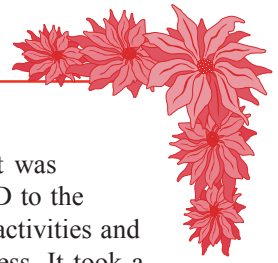
Channel surveying



Net casting

All photos, Lane Lefort





more than two sets of hands, though, so they enlisted the help of Phase-2 Leadership Development Program participants: Angela DeSoto Duncan, Chris Dunn, Amena Henville, Sharon Richarme, Ralph Scheid, April Villa and Stuart Waits.

Each of the ten groups had 10 minutes to complete a team-building event: bridge building, net casting, channel surveying, wall climbing and wetland determination.

Spillway personnel provided support, coordinated by Mike Stout, recreation manager, while Chris Brantley, Project Management, helped out with the net casting and Rob Heffner, Regulatory, helped with the wetland determination.

“It was a tremendous accomplishment for the attendees and the planners,” said Vossen. “The events were challenging, teams had to work together to succeed, and the partici-

pants raved about it at the end.”

“It sounds easy,” Accardo added, “but it was quite a test, getting 90 people from the CBD to the Bonnet Carre and back, completing all the activities and showing them some of the city in the process. It took a great deal of planning and energy to pull it off.”

Accardo said there was some concern that the event would be too physically taxing for some of the “senior” senior leaders.

“Col. Rowan had the idea for the wall climbing event. I wasn’t sure that would work. But the teams really attacked it, as they did all the events. They were real troopers. Brenda Weber (Resource Management) even stood on Brig. Gen. Crear’s shoulders to get over the wall. They were unstoppable.”

At the conference, Accardo said, Brig. Gen. Crear focused on the theme of “One Corps, Operating Regionally.”

“He wants us to blur the lines between districts in the coming years, to come together as one region and avoid some of the miscommunication that can occur being split into six districts.

“I think the Bonnet Carre event was a good first step.”



**Brig. Gen. Crear talks with emerging leaders.**



**Wetland determination**



**Ranger Adam Tarplee gives instructions on net casting.**



**Mike Bourgeois, Construction, and Toni Baldini, Project Management, enjoy some exercise fun in the district Fitness Center. Active for Life participants take advantage of normal work breaks to squeeze in 15-minute segments of moderate exercise.**





# Slimming down, shaping up, and staying Active for Life

By Jennifer Nall

The district's Active for Life exercise program is shaping up the workforce by inspiring employees to lose weight, win team awards and feel better about themselves.

Collectively, the 46 teams of eight to 12 members each have lost 1,200 pounds and 526 inches over the past five months.

Peggy Plaisance, Safety and Health Office, started the program after reading an article in Engineer Update about

another district doing it. She called the sponsor, the American Cancer Society, for details and pitched the idea to Col.

Teams include three to 10 people, each of which includes at least one "couch potato" who was inactive prior to the start of the program.

The teams have to exercise three or more times a week for 150 minutes per week. Walking in Audubon Park, bike riding and gym workouts are some of the routines.

A total of 396 participants, including 158 inactive

people, joined the program. At the 5<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> week celebrations, awards were handed out for the inactive person who exercised the most minutes, team spirit and best team captain.

Rachel Calico, Project Management, and leader for team "Phat Phat and All of That," says her team of 10 does activities such as walking, bike riding, basketball, pilates, yoga and taekwondo.

"The classes at the district are great. With them and the program, I now exercise four or five times a week."

Carol Burke, Project Management, was an inactive member of the program. She hadn't exercised for a year because of foot surgery.

"This gave me an incentive. The program has been wonderful and encouraging. I feel better and I'm more active."

"The program motivates me," said Carolyn Wilson, Equal Employment Office, and team leader of the 10-member "Castle Steppers," whose main activity is walking

around the district. "I'm energized, and I motivate others to get healthy."

"It's improved my quality of life and I've lost weight," said JoAnn Woods, Equal Employment Office. She had back problems, but says her muscles are improving from walking and exercising, and that she'll definitely continue exercising and is not giving up.

For more information about the program and improving your health, contact Peggy Plaisance, x1223.

**"The classes at the district are great. With them and the program, I now exercise four or five times a week."**

*Rachel Calico, Project Management*



The Mamas and the Papas started with eight inactive members, the most of any group.



The Good n' Plenty and WOW teams earned the highest overall exercise score.



Peggy Plaisance, Health Office, and American Cancer Society representative Cheryl Fourcade, during an Active for Life event.

Peter Rowan, commander.

As always, Plaisance just wanted to get people motivated to exercise.

"This program gives people a team to work with, motivation to have a lifestyle change, and a great exercise habit," she said.

It's hard to ignore the overall 56 percent decrease in sick leave days taken, compared to last year, since the program began.

Photos, Lane Lefort and Scott Riecke



# Around the District

## Congratulations

to **Bruce Terrell (CD)**, who was selected as Distinguished Engineering Alumnus at the University of New Orleans College of Engineering awards ceremony on Nov. 12.

to **August Martin (ED)**, on his promotion to chief of Relocations Section.

to **Lt. Col. Steve Jeselink (EO)**, who received the Bronze Star Medal, and to **John Hall (PA)**, **Jerry Stout** (lock operator), **John Fogarty (CD)**, **Robert Culberson (ED)**, **Kathy Borja (HR)**, **Mike Maples (IM)**, **Winifred Dyer (SB)**, **Suette Jackson (RM)**, **Darryl Broussard (PM)** and **Bill Klein (PM)**, who were awarded as district heroes by Lt. Gen. Strock, chief of engineers, at his Town Hall, Dec. 2.

## Kudos

to the employees and RAC members who raised \$1,634 for the American Cancer Society/ Breast Cancer Walk on Oct. 23.



Photos by Amanda Jones



**Retiree Day** – Retired employees reunite for a luncheon at the district, Nov. 9. The program attracted about 20 retired employees and included a district overview by Col. Rowan and briefings by Engineering, Operations and Project Management.

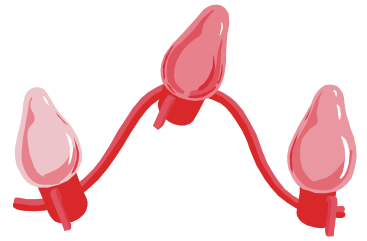


Photos by Lane Lefort





**Veteran's Day --** Corps representatives talk with visitors to the Corps display at the D-Day museum on Veterans Day, Nov. 11. Clockwise from top: Richard Tillman (ED), Joan Exnicios (PM), John Hall (PA), and Capt. Dan Hibner (CD).



### Farewell

- to **Joey Dykes** (PM), retiring Dec.31 after 35 years of service.
- to **Ronald Legendre** (CD), retiring Jan.3 after 35 years of service.
- to **Vann Stutts** (ED), retiring Dec. 31 after 37 years of service.
- to **Quinn Humphries** (ED), retiring Dec. 31 after 42 years of service.
- to **Brenda Weber** (RM), retiring Jan. 3 after 38 years of service.
- to **Tom Williams** (IM), who retired on Oct. 28 after 40 years of service.



to **Kirt Jacob** (OD), whose grandson, Justin DeBose, appeared on the

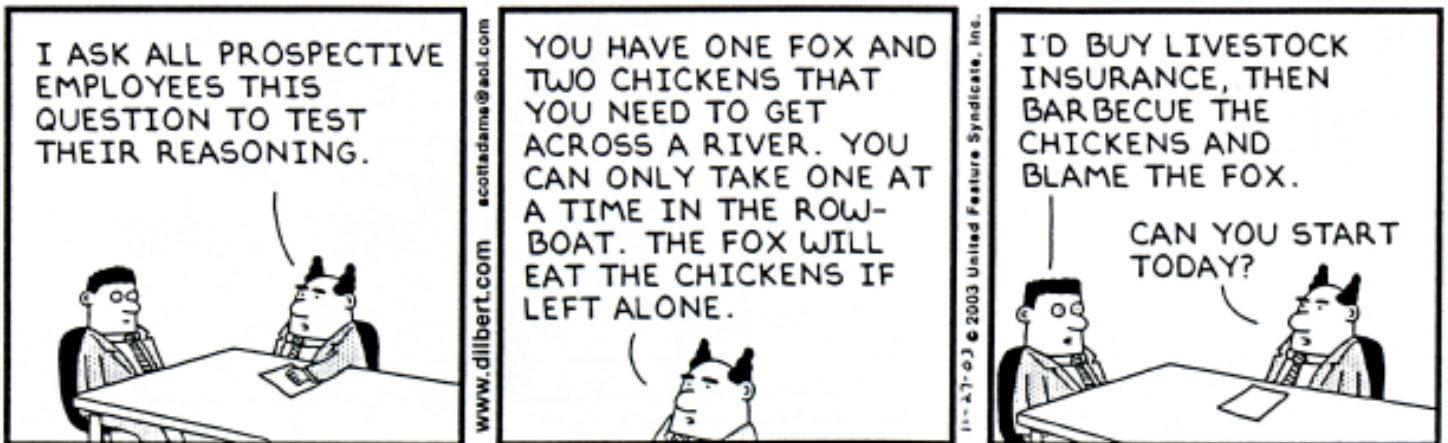
ABC television show "Growing Pains" on Oct.16 as Robby, Alan Thicke's grandson.

to **Steven Schinetsky** (OD), whose daughter, Johlee, 12 years old, was the 1<sup>st</sup> runner-up in the LADM Junior Miss Dance of Louisiana 2005, with three gold medals and one high silver. This is the second consecutive year Johlee has won the individual Acrobatics category. She will attend the national convention in July.

### Condolences

- to **Linda Champagne** (HR), whose daughter, Lori Champagne, passed away Dec. 9.
- to **John Agan** (ED), whose father, Jack Agan, passed away Dec. 7.
- to the family of Lucien Tujague, (former district employee), who passed away this month.
- to **Steven Patorno** (OD), whose mother, Marie "Betty" Hall Patorno, passed away Nov. 28
- to **Thelma Craig** (CT), whose father, Walter Craig, passed away Nov. 20.
- to **Jane Kulick** (CT), whose mother, Viley Bonnette, passed away Nov. 2.
- to **Patricia Kirts** (PM), whose mother, Laura Williams Desussie, passed away Oct. 28.

### DILBERT® by Scott Adams





# Corporate Cup Run

Runners and walkers from the district brave rainy weather for the annual YMCA Corporate Cup Run, Dec. 5. Proceeds from the race benefit YES!, the YMCA Adult Literacy Program.



Photos by Lane Lefort



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