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of Engineers®
Vicksburg District

THE Water's Edge

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PEOPLE

Willie J. Davis

PROCESS

Vicksburg District hosts R5 Conference

PROJECTS

Catahoula Lake



On the Cover

The Mat Sinking Unit working at mile 180.1 at
Marchand, Louisiana.

Photo by Kavanaugh Breazeale

Commander's Corner

with Colonel Jeffrey R. Eckstein



Happy New Year to Everyone,

First of all, thank you to everyone that made our Christmas season so special. We achieved and then exceeded our CFC goal; we found homes for all of our angels; and we continue to execute our mission. We also sent several folks into retirement with dignified and memorable events. We have a tremendous culture of community here in Vicksburg.

You are all doing a fantastic job in both executing our regular appropriation as well as accelerating our emergency supplemental appropriation. Every month we are buying down risk for the citizens that live behind the levees in the MR&T system. We also used it to keep the river open during the low water, and we are doing it on time. This is a true team effort that involves the entire District. For the channel improvement work, we had to hire additional temporary workers due to the extended season. It was another team effort to hire and train the new employees and then get back to sinking mat.

As we enter the New Year, we continue to implement elements of our Operations Plan. We focus on improving internal communications with our huddle up meetings, improving the quality of our Individual Development Plans (IDPs), documenting our continuity sheets, as well as documenting new Quality Management System processes. As part of the regional effort, we are implementing a Continuous Process Improvement (CPI) program. We trained the senior leaders just before Christmas. We will select a limited number of processes to improve this coming year. My intent is to select processes that cut across the entire District and can ultimately result in more funds executed on our projects. It will not be easy, but the potential benefit to our projects is there.

We also continue to have folks deployed overseas. I thank all of you who have deployed in the past and encourage the rest of you to consider it. There are great opportunities to learn, grow, and serve. I have been on many deployments in my career. All have involved sacrifices by my family and me. Some of these deployments have been the most rewarding times of my 28 years in the Army. It does not hurt to look into the opportunities.

We enter the New Year with much uncertainty and some turbulence. I assure you we will get through this together. I know our mission is important to the Nation and we, as an organization, will continue to deliver. Despite all the changes, possible negative outcomes, and uncertainty, we continue to provide value every day. We have been through this uncertainty before with expiring appropriations, government shutdowns, Graham-Rudman, travel restrictions, and many other items. We will work together as a team, talk to each other, and look back on this time with a sense of accomplishment. Thank you all for your sacrifices and efforts to serve our Nation.

District subject matter expert for debris receives assignment to support aftermath of Hurricane Sandy

By Shirley J. Smith
Photo by Lamar Jenkins

The Federal Emergency Management Agency has tasked the Corps to assist with the disaster relief mission underway in the areas affected by Hurricane Sandy. The Mississippi Valley Division and the Vicksburg District serve the nation by providing emergency response to natural disasters and emergency support to other agencies, particularly the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The Vicksburg District has the responsibility for providing federal debris removal expertise in the State of Mississippi, or any location, when tasked by Headquarters, and for providing technical expertise in examining and offering engineer solutions for problems with critical infrastructure.

Several Vicksburg District team members have deployed to support the FEMA assigned debris mission. Lamar Jenkins, at the District's Greenwood Area office, is a subject matter expert for the debris mission. He departed the Vicksburg District to support ESF 3 in preparation of Hurricane Sandy's landfall. Jenkins, an experienced debris removal expert, has served with other disasters such as Hurricane Katrina, and on a local and smaller scale, the tornadoes that ravaged Yazoo, Holmes, Attala, Choctaw and Monroe counties. This mission has taken him to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and then to Trenton, New Jersey.

Although a disaster is a disaster, each has its own differences. When Jenkins deployed to the Mississippi Gulf Coast during the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, there was nothing, no highway or street signs, no lodging facilities or restaurants, all public buildings were either destroyed or heavily damaged. The damage there was due to wind and water. To add to the misery, this was during the hot summer month of September in Mississippi. In some locations where you were lucky to have lodging, the power was on and off, which meant no air conditioning.

Regarding Pennsylvania, Jenkins stated, "Available lodging in the affected areas was at a minimum. We stayed only about two days at a time at each location; we relocated about four times during my deployment there. Also, it snowed there a week after Hurricane Sandy, which hampered the debris mission."

In New Jersey, the initial mission was to support the utility company in restoring power to the region by cutting and pushing debris in the utility Rights of Way. The Balti-

more District's debris team was deployed and tasked with this mission. This mission ended on November 9, 2012.

The next mission assignment was to provide technical assistance for debris where Lamar was assigned to the Joint Field Office in Lincroft, New Jersey. To accomplish the technical assistance mission, a subject matter expert was assigned to the hardest hit counties in New Jersey. Jenkins was assigned to Monmouth County which includes 52 townships. There he collected and provided debris data by performing field reconnaissance of the county and providing guidance as requested by the local townships.

The Corps (USACE) is prepared and ready to respond to natural and human-made disasters and overseas contingencies. When disasters occur, USACE teams and other resources are mobilized from across the country to assist our local Districts and offices to deliver our response missions.

USACE debris teams are in ports, waterways and coastal areas in New Jersey and New York clearing debris along the Atlantic seaboard. Thirty-five debris teams are assisting local New York and New Jersey authorities.

If you are within the Vicksburg District area and are interested in becoming a debris team member you may contact the Office of Emergency Management at (601) 631-5367, or e-mail Cemvk-eoc. ◀



Preparing for aerial reconnaissance of the New Jersey shoreline damaged by Hurricane Sandy are left to right, Hafford Barton, Jr., MVN, Richard Kaiser, RAO, and Lamar Jenkins, MVK.

District hosts Tribal Consultation

By Chris Koeppel and Sarah Koeppel

The District held its second Tribal Consultation meeting in November. Tribal Historic Preservation officers from the Alabama Coushatta Tribe of Texas, Chickasaw Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Jena Band of Choctaw Indians, Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, and Muscogee (Creek) Nation met with District Tribal liaison, Chris Koeppel, planning archaeologist Jennifer Ryan, and regulatory and operations archaeologist Sarah Koeppel. Senior leadership from the District and Mississippi Valley Division (MVD) attended the two-day meetings to discuss the identification and protection of archaeological sites on Corps lands, potential impacts to sensitive areas resulting from Civil Works projects, and regulatory permits. The discussion led to several creative actions and ideas that would improve and streamline tribal consultation across operations, regulatory, and Civil Works and, subsequently, improve the required environmental/cultural review processes for our projects.

Participants were treated to an after hour's tour of the new Lower Mississippi River Museum. District team members enjoyed highlighting the recent accomplishment of project management, natural resources branch, and the planning branch. After the tour, a very enjoyable dinner was held at Rusty's.

Tribal representatives were generally positive in regards to the relationship with the District. They expressed their appreciation to Colonel Eckstein for the work of subject matter experts and stated that in three years the District had gone from lacking in consultation efforts, to currently being one of the best partnering federal agencies. The District echoed this praise by thanking representatives for traveling from their homes to discuss current and future Corps projects.

Meetings such as these will ensure that the Corps continues to successfully partner with sovereign nations on proposed undertakings and potential projects into the future. ◀



Mat Sinking Unit's longer season affords more opportunities for showcasing

Corps' Command Sergeant Major visits Mat Sinking Unit

Story and photos by Kavanaugh Breazeale

Command Sergeant Major Karl J. Groninger recently visited the Vicksburg District's Mat Sinking Unit (MSU). CSM Groninger is the senior enlisted advisor to the USACE commanding officers and staff, headquartered in Washington, DC. His goal is to ensure safety, training, and adequate living conditions of the entire crew, especially the dozens of newly hired wage grade employees on the MSU.



CSM Groninger, left, discusses safety with left to right, COL Eckstein, Tommy Hengst, chief of river operations branch, and Joel Brown, acting chief of revetment section.



VLDP members visit Mat Sinking Unit at Gibson revetment site

By Brandy Morrow

Photos by Brandy Morrow, Viviana Berrios-Williamson, and LeeAnn Riggs



CSM Groninger, left, inspects a “tying tool gun” with Joel Brown and Tommy Hengst.

While visiting, he was given a complete overview of the operations of the MSU. “The unique capability provided by the Mat Sinking Unit is an example of USACE’s commitment to maintaining the integrity of the levee systems protecting the people, towns and infrastructure along the banks of the Mississippi River and the navigability of the river,” Groninger said. ◀



Photo by Alfred Dulaney

The 2012 Vicksburg Leadership Development Class (VLDP) traveled to the Gibson Revetment site in Louisiana to observe the unique work of the Mat Sinking Unit (MSU). We were greeted at the quarter’s barge by Joe Parker. The tour began with an informative video explaining the purpose of the MSU.

Basically, the purpose of the MSU is to stabilize the banks of the Mississippi River to maintain the current navigational channel alignment. Bank stabilization is achieved by laying large mats of concrete sections that are essentially tied together with wire.

In addition to the video, we also toured the quarter’s barge and got an up close view of the MSU crew in action. The tour around the quarter’s barge included a peek at the interworking of the barge. There were several processes that were developed especially for this barge. First, we were allowed a glimpse at the system developed to recycle used oil. Workers mix the used oil with diesel to decrease the amount of diesel used; as well as eliminate the need to pay an outside agency to dispose of the oil. Second, we were given an opportunity to see exactly how the ship purifies water. You can’t tell from tasting but the crew actually purifies Mississippi River water into drinking water, a very cost efficient method developed by crew members. Parker

also showed us the incinerator that is on board the barge. According to Parker, the incinerator burns so hot that law enforcement officials have brought confiscated illegal drugs there to be disposed of properly. He also explained how the incinerator was rebuilt this past year, at a fraction of the cost of buying a new one. A recurring theme aboard the barge is their constant effort to minimize operating costs and eliminate waste whenever possible.

The class was also allowed to take a peek at how the crew lives while onboard the barge: we saw an exercise room, laundry rooms, common areas with televisions and computers, and there is housekeeping service for the crew’s rooms. The class was treated to lunch onboard the quarter’s barge; the barge has a full service dining hall. With everything this barge has to offer, maintaining the quarter’s barge is a full time job for several people. Parker’s full time job is maintaining the quarter’s barge and very seldom is he on the work site of the MSU.

After lunch the class was ferried over to the MSU. After we arrived at the site of the MSU, Bill Kelly assumed the role of tour guide and explained the dos and don’ts of the MSU. As the VLDP class viewed from afar, the MSU operation

(Continued on page 17)

Vicksburg District hosts R5 Conference

By Shirley Smith and Ben Robinson
Photos by Alfred Dulaney

As we work and hear jargon such as strategic planning, MVD IPlan, etc., have you ever wondered what these plans are? Who develops them, where did they originate, and why?

Who decides what the plans will be for this FY?

Well, if you recall recently seeing more folks than usual in military uniform, and having a harder time finding a parking space, there were visitors here discussing these plans. The Vicksburg District was hosting Mississippi Valley Division's (MVD) R5 Conference. The R5 is a three-day conference which offers the opportunity for representatives from the five regional boards including the Regional Command Council (RCC) to engage in strategic dialogue, prioritize regional initiatives, and discuss major regional issues which impact the organization.

A chief responsibility of the RCC involves the establishment of the vision, strategy, and actions of the MVD IPLAN. The RCC is the primary organization for making decisions that require region-wide command-level attention and participation. Other regional boards in attendance at the R5 include the Regional Management Board (RMB), Regional Program Review Board (RPRB), Regional Program Budget Advisory Committee (RPBAC), and the Regional Acquisition Strategy Board (RASB).

MG John W. Peabody opened the first day of the conference by giving his Commander's intent, addressing Corps & MVD's strategic direction and future challenges while taking the opportunity to highlight key FY 2012 accomplishments within the Valley. Following the Commander's opening remarks, Eddie Belk, Glenda Jackson, and the District Commanders led a brief by the RPRB reporting on the previous year's program performance. This was followed by a presentation by the RPBAC focusing on the previous year's operating budget performance and another by the RASB which discussed the division's overall acquisition and metrics. Together these presentations set the tone for the rest of the day posing the very important ques-

tion "Did we do what we said we would do in FY 12 and are we on track for FY 13?"

The latter half of the day was focused on the FY 13/14/15 programs. The RPRB discussion was led by each District commander and focused on project delivery for their respective district. Each gave a rundown of their district's glide path and risk assessments including milestone delivery, known issues, and hotspots. This district level analysis helped frame a common sight picture of what the overall Division program will most likely resemble in the near future. This information is extremely important to consider when developing a consistent regional functional strategy that addresses an organization which is right-sized and capable of meeting current and future mission requirements.

The following day the Regional Program Budget Advisory Committee (RPBAC) focused on the FY 13/14/15 operating budget. Information presented to the RCC included analysis of MVD's performance among the other Divisions. Trends in labor rates and income were discussed as well as key factors impacting the development of the operating budget. These key factors include mandates for reduced travel expenses and increases in mandatory regional costs such as ACE-IT.



MG Peabody speaks at R5 Conference.

The final day of the conference focused on delivery of MVD's Regional Priorities and alignment with the USACE Campaign Plan and the Chief of Engineer's priorities. Strategic planning topics all resulted in discussions focused on a common understanding of MVD Regional Priority Actions and desired end states. None of this would be possible without the regional boards performing their key management functions allowing districts and regional functional groups to focus on increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of delivering products and services to our customers and stakeholders.

These folks were responsible for the 2013 planning for all Districts within Mississippi Valley Division. ◀



Participants prepare for the R5 Conference at MVK Headquarters.

Quality Management System is here to stay

By Jonathan Boone

The Quality Management System (QMS) is a method designed to document how we perform tasks, whether that is daily, weekly, or anytime. It gives "how to" directions; QMS is a top priority for the Vicksburg District.

It was developed as a library of key business processes that are vital to our Corps organization at Headquarters, Division and District levels. Many processes have been developed thus far. If QMS doesn't help you figure out how to complete a key business task, one can be developed and uploaded to help others in the future. This endeavor may seem challenging; however that is why we have a Quality Management Team (QMT) trained to educate you.

We are challenged by working in a dynamic organization and everyone must do his/her part to execute the mission. Everyone recognizes that in this type of environment processes do change. The District's QMT has the responsibility of validating processes to ensure they are current. This is done by interviewing the primary users of the process.

Other important functions of the QMT are to answer your questions, provide one-on-one training, and most importantly to promote the usage of QMS. The processes

captured in QMS will shape the future of the Corps. Remember, if you need directions go to the QMS to search for answers and if you have directions go to QMS to help someone in the future. We know we are on a mission to deliver vital engineering solutions for our Nation..... QMS will ensure we are on the right road to get there.

The leader of our QMS effort is our District Quality Management representative, Rick Shelton. The current members of our QMT are: Jeff Artman, Jonathan Boone, Randy Brown, Ed Bryan, Cody Eckhardt, Carolyn Harrison, Denise Kaufman, Sarah Koeppel, Donna Moulder, Darlene Robinson, Leslie Rodgers, Scott Stewart, Daniel Sumerall, Bucky Wall, and Leah Wheelless.

The long summer days are behind us and the fall weather is starting to greet us just about every morning as we leave our homes to come to work. The new fiscal year is in full swing and with that comes new challenges and goals. The 2013 Vicksburg District Operations Plan has been drafted to guide our District in the right direction to meet our Nation's needs. If you have not received a copy of the Operations Plan you can view it from the "kwik pick" list on the I-Net. ◀

District's regulatory branch hosts Regulatory Enforcement Conference

By Alice Bufkin

Photo by Alfred Dulaney

The mission of the regulatory branch is to protect the nation's aquatic resources while allowing reasonable development through fair, flexible, and balanced permit decisions pursuant to Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.

The regulatory branch hosted the Regulatory Southeastern Enforcement Conference at District headquarters building on 11 and 12 December 2012.

The two-day conference included attendees from Corps districts within the geographical boundaries of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 4, which included the Memphis, Mobile, Jacksonville, Savannah, Wilmington, Nashville, Louisville, Charleston, and Vicksburg districts. EPA Region 4 was also represented, as well as the Department of Justice and Mississippi Valley Division.

This year's conference provided the opportunity to learn through active participation with the goal of achieving greater consistency among Corps districts, the EPA, and the Department of Justice in performing their regulatory missions pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. The conference brought together the major players responsible for enforcing compliance with this authority.

The 29 attendees participated in discussions relative to past and present enforcement cases and program collaborations between EPA and the Corps.

Presentations and discussions were provided by EPA attendees, Molly Davis, Lisa Uhl, and Mike Wylie; Theresa Hudson, Jacksonville District; Beth Guynes, Mississippi Valley Division; Stacy Jensen, USACE headquarters; Shaun Blocker and Paula Feldmeier, Savannah District; Jacob Berkowitz, Engineer Research Development Center; and Charles Allred and Jennifer Mallard of the Vicksburg District.

Several conference attendees stated at the conclusion of the conference that they had a great time and appreciated all the work the District's regulatory branch had done to make the conference a first rate event. They did a fabulous job keeping all on schedule, and were great facilitators.

The first Southeastern conference was held in Atlanta in 2002 and hosted by EPA Region 4. The conference is to be an annual event, but due to budget and travel funding short-

falls in subsequent years following the original conference, there have been years that no conference was held. The conference should be hosted each year by one of the nine Corps districts that are within EPA Region 4 boundaries.

A Department of the Army permit is required for the discharge of dredged (excavated) and/or fill material into jurisdictional waters of the United States and/or the construction of any structure or work occurring in or affecting navigable waters of the United States under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899.

The Clean Water Act (CWA) was originally passed by Congress on October 18, 1972, to control water pollution, and was totally revised in 1972 to give the Act its current shape. The CWA set a new national goal to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the nation's waters.

The regulatory branch completes thousands of jurisdictional determinations and reviews hundreds of permit applications annually. Through an effective regulatory program, the branch's efforts contribute toward providing the nation with cleaner water, healthier environment, more jobs, and a stronger economy.

For additional information about the regulatory program, including a regulatory program information guide, please visit the District's regulatory website at www.mvk.usace.army.mil/offices/od/odf/main.htm. ◀



Jennifer Mallard speaks to participants at conference.

How to Respond When Police Arrive

- ★ Try to remain calm
- ★ Obey all Police instructions
- ★ Put down any items in your hands (such as backpacks, phones, jackets)
- ★ Raise your hands, spread your fingers, and keep hands visible to Police at all times
- ★ Avoid quick or sudden movements
- ★ Avoid pointing, screaming, or yelling
- ★ Do not stop to ask officers for help or direction while evacuating

Information

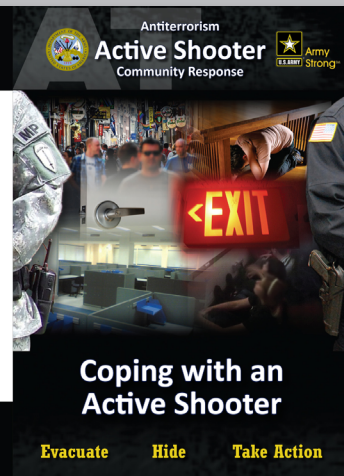
Call 911 (or other local emergency number) when it is safe to do so.

You should provide the following information to the Police or the 911 Operator:

- Location of the shooter
- Number of shooters
- Physical description of shooters
- Number and type of weapons the shooter have
- Number of possible victims

Coping with an Active Shooter

- Be aware of your surroundings and possible dangers
- Take note of the nearest exits in any facility you visit
- If you are in an office at the time of an attack, stay there and secure the door
- Only as a last resort should you attempt to take action against the shooter



Know How to Protect Yourself

Profile of an Active Shooter

An Active Shooter incident is when one or more subjects participate in a shooting spree, random or systematic with intent to continuously harm others. (Source: U.S. Army Military Police School, Active Shooter POI)

An Active Shooter may be a current or former employee associated with the U.S. Army (Soldier, Department of Army Civilian, Government Contractor, or Family Member).

An Active Shooter could also be an individual not directly associated with the Army who gains access to an Army installation, stand alone facility, or unit.

Characteristics of an Active Shooter Incident

- The event is unpredictable and evolves rapidly
- Victims are generally targets of opportunity
- Military Police or Law Enforcement direct action is usually required to end an Active Shooting incident

Recognizing Signs of High-Risk Behavior

Indicators of potential violent behavior may include one or more of the following (not all inclusive):

- ★ Increased use of alcohol or drugs
- ★ Unexplained increase in absenteeism or vague physical complaints
- ★ Depression or withdrawal
- ★ Increased severe mood swings and noticeably unstable or emotional responses
- ★ Increasingly talks about personal problems or problems at home
- ★ Increase in unsolicited comments about violence, firearms, and other dangerous weapons or violent crimes

How to Respond When Shooting Begins

- 1. Evacuate**
 - Have an exit route and plan in mind
 - Leave your belongings behind
 - Keep your hands visible
- 2. Hide**
 - Hide in an area out of the Active Shooter's view
 - Lock doors and block entry to your hiding place
- 3. Take Action**
 - As a last resort
 - Only when your life is in imminent danger
 - Attempt to incapacitate the Active Shooter

DISTRICT EXCEEDS COMBINED FEDERAL CAMPAIGN GOAL

Photos by Alfred Dulaney



CFC Kickoff program concluded with a chili cook-off.



AND MARKS 21ST YEAR ANNIVERSARY WITH SALVATION ARMY'S ANGEL TREE

Photos by Alfred Dulaney
Christmas program included
Twelve Days of Christmas
actors.



Committee delivers Angel gifts.

District exceeds Combined Federal Campaign 2012 Goal

By Shirley J. Smith

The District reached a total 105% of its 2012 Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) goal through payroll deductions and other monetary donations. The mission of the CFC is to promote and support philanthropy through a program that is employee focused, cost-efficient, and effective in providing all federal employees the opportunity to improve the quality of life for all.

The CFC is the world's largest and most successful annual workplace charity campaign. It raises millions of dollars each year through pledges made by federal, civilian, postal and military donors.

In recognition of this annual fund raiser, the District hosts a Kickoff program to begin the campaign. District's 2012 CFC chairperson, Tracey Lowe of Contracting Division, stated, "I am so grateful for everyone who supported the 2012 CFC Campaign. With our gifts, we are able to improve quality of life for the citizens of Vicksburg, MS, and surrounding communities. This is another example of our employees coming together to make a difference!" ◀

District adopts Salvation Army's Angel Tree for 21 consecutive years

By Shirley J. Smith
Photos by Alfred Dulaney

Do you agree that not much can compare to seeing the sparkle in a child's eyes when he or she receives gifts on Christmas morning? Have you ever witnessed the glow on an elderly person's face just because you gave them a hug?

Giving and caring is a way of life; here at the District it has become tradition. This tradition is exemplified through District employees' support of community relations projects such as the local Salvation Army's Angel Tree, having adopted Angels for 21 consecutive years. For the past 10 years the District has adopted 150 Angels during the holiday season, and before downsizing, has adopted as many as 240. The District's adoption of Angels and other community related projects are spearheaded by the District Outreach Committee. This committee's purpose is to give back to the community, and it reflects both organizational and demographic diversity.

During the past 21 years the Vicksburg District has been the leading organization within the Vicksburg Warren County area with the number of Angels adopted. Through the Angel Tree Program and other community projects, District team members have assisted approximately 3,000 children and 500 elderly citizens within Vicksburg and surrounding areas.

The 2012 chairperson for the Outreach Committee, Sarah Koeppel, stated, "The hard work of the Outreach Committee members and generous support of



Preparing to load gifts for delivery to the distribution center are, left to right, Brooke Southerland, Carl Hester and Sissy Carter.

PEOPLE

District employees, including senior leaders, makes this project successful year after year. It's a labor of love for us and we are very proud of this tradition."

Sissy Carter of the Engineering and Construction Division, the longest tenured member of the committee having served for 22 years, stated, "Christmas has always been my favorite season, but I could never bear the thought of a child waking up to find no gifts on Christmas morning. The Salvation Army Angel Tree Program allows us to provide gifts for these children as well as some of our elderly nursing home residents. Due to the many years we've participated with this project, it has been so rewarding to realize how many lives we've touched."

The Outreach Committee is an official component of the Vicksburg District's community relations program. Membership in this organization is voluntary and open to all current and former employees in the Vicksburg area of the Vicksburg District family. The District supports workplace volunteerism and community outreach activities through programs such as the Angel Tree, United Way's county-wide Day of Caring, Earth Day, and Relay for Life.

Having served as community relations coordinator for the District and as advisor for this committee for 20 years, my co-workers have shown time and time again that they truly care about those less fortunate. They have supported community relations projects in many ways including monetary donations, gifts, manpower, tutoring, mentoring, and much more. However, during the Holidays there is a special outpouring of gifts for less fortunate children and elderly residents of nursing homes. The Vicksburg District stands on a solid foundation of giving - a proud tradition. ◀



Committee members form assembly line to unload gifts at distribution center.



Committee members placing gifts at distribution center are, left to right, Tony Lobred, Johnathan Silas, Brooke Southerland, Sarah Koeppel, Betty James, and Vickie Barrett. Standing in doorway is Carl Hester (LM), driver of the delivery truck.



Committee members gather with Salvations Army's director after unloading gifts.

District team member's work traces from manual labor to operation of modern machinery

By Shirley J. Smith
Photo by Alfred Dulaney

Willie James Davis was born March 18, 1938, in Panola County on his father's property along Eureka Road east of Batesville; he still lives on that same property. On September 9, 1959, as an ambitious young man, he began work as a newly hired laborer for the Corps at Enid Lake. His starting wage was \$1.15 per hour and his first work assignment included manual labor. This labor involved the tedious task of dewatering the emergency spillway, which is a maintenance task performed to remove the water and allow for inspection of all components associated with this structure.

This was the first time this was done after the dam was

put into operation in 1952. The water was pumped back into the lake rather than pumped out of the emergency spillway basin and down the emergency spillway channel into the river, as it is done now. Davis stated that the pumps were set on the concrete slope (chute) of the emergency spillway and this had to be repeated as the water level was lowered.

Today this task is done with ease with the use of modern equipment as compared to the methods used in 1959 when it was done by manual labor requiring a large work force.

The term used to describe this process has changed from

'dewatering' to 'unwatering', and as stated by Davis, "Change is the government's way." There were only two pieces of equipment on the entire project, which consisted of two farm tractors with bush hogs. The laborers, including Davis, were trucked to Enid each morning from Batesville in a "labor wagon" (Dodge Power Wagon), which was driven by the project foreman, and returned at the end of their work day. The "labor wagon" was equipped with wooden benches in the bed and a canvas cover, and as Davis stated, "It would get pretty 'airy' in the fall and winter."

When reviewing Davis' personnel folder it is evident that he has always been a talented and valued employee. Some of the various job titles and duties he has held with the Corps include carpenter's helper, concrete finisher of family camping facilities, assistant surveyor and laborer responsible for policing public use areas and other duties. With the changing times, equipment became more abundant and more sophisticated. Due to Davis' eagerness to learn and his interest in the dragline, Buddy Martin, a co-worker, began to teach him to operate the dragline in 1971. This enhanced Davis' career as he was promoted in 1976 to the



Davis receives certificate from COL Eckstein in recognition of fifty years of service in the Government of the United States of America.

position of crane operator and continues in that position today. In a recent interview, when asked about the most memorable moments in his career he stated that there were two; his first raise (\$.20 per hour) and the day he became a crane operator.

Over the past fifty years that Davis has worked for the Corps he has worked in about every position known to man in relation to the maintenance and operation of a major flood control project. He is extremely proficient and knowledgeable in virtually every aspect of the dam's operation, and is currently Vicksburg District's longest-tenured employee.

When asked to recall his most frightening moments endured at Enid Lake Davis replied, "Fighting floods. Also that time in 1983 when I almost lost a bulldozer in the emergency spillway channel during a flood when we were attempting to save the north access bridge from the ravaging waters that had overtopped the emergency spillway by more than three feet."

Supervisors describe Davis as being very eager to learn, adapts to change, excellent attitude towards others and always an exceptional team member who shows an outstanding rate of progress in all tasks assigned.

In August 2012 Willie was awarded his 50th year service pin for his dedicated service not only to Enid Lake and the Vicksburg District but also for his loyal service to the surrounding communities during their times of need. Over the years he has unselfishly sacrificed his time to serve the needs of others during the most tragic of times including: Hurricane Katrina, numerous tornadoes, floods, and other events. Willie Davis has been and continues to be a tremendous asset, friend, and inspiration to all of his Corps Family.

Enid Lake park manager, Billy Samuels, stated that "Willie has always been the 'go to' person for any issues related to the dam and its other features. He has seen and done just about everything imaginable when it comes to maintaining these structures. His wealth of structural knowledge has proven to be a valuable asset to the Corps throughout his career at Enid Lake. He has always been and continues to be a valued and respected employee."

Through the years, to supplement his income, Davis performed other jobs such as farming, electrical work, cutting grass with a swing blade, painting, general maintenance, and operation of a number of hand tools that included Joe blades, axes, picks, pry bars and grubbing hoes, and eventually operating various types of equipment.

On July 29, 1967, Willie married Verleria Ford and they have two daughters and two grandsons. ◀

(VLDP visits MSU, continued from page 7)



Joe Parker discusses the layout of the quarter's barge and other facts about the barge with LeeAnn Riggs.



VLDP class members, left to right, Viviana Berrios-Williamson, Brandy Morrow, and LeeAnn Riggs, enjoy a visit to the Mat Sinking Unit.

appeared to be very chaotic. After getting a closer look it was obvious that the MSU ran like a well-oiled machine. Each person had a job to do and they completed their task with great efficiency. Kelly showed us how the mat is put together and how it is laid into the river. The group was allowed to walk out onto the mat as it was being "tied" together and laid into the river. Members of our group were even allowed to take a turn "tying" the mat together. From there we toured the underbelly of the MSU where the large cables, used to tie the mat together, are stored.

(Continued on page 22)

Official and Unofficial Travel

Be Prepared for the Unexpected

- Prior to Travel:
 - Ensure your Level 1 AT Training is current.
 - OCONUS - Receive AOR specific Threat Briefing (by security officer).
- Select an inside hotel room (away from the street-side window), preferably on the 4th–10th floors.
- OCONUS - Know the location of the US Embassy and other safe locations where you can find refuge or assistance.

Guard Information About Yourself and Maintain a Low Profile

- Avoid use of rank or military addresses on tickets, travel documents or hotel reservations.
- When possible, travel on tourist passports.

Mail Bomb Precautions

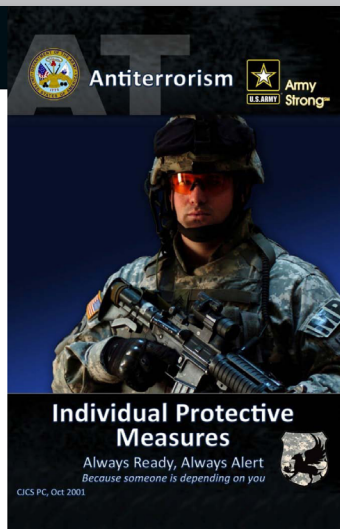
Be Prepared for the Unexpected

- Avoid opening or processing mail in close proximity to others.
- Check mail and packages for:
 - Unusual odors (shoe polish or almond).
 - Too much wrapping.
 - Bulges, bumps, or odd shapes.
 - No return address or unfamiliar return address.
 - Differing return address/postmark.
 - Incorrect spelling or poor typing.
 - Items sent “registered” or “personal.”
 - Protruding wires or strings.
 - Unusually light or heavy packages.
 - Excessive amount of postage.
 - Oily stains on the package.
 - Foreign appearing handwriting.
- Clear area immediately; notify your chain of command, local authorities, or FBI.

Terrorists Depend on YOU!

A dynamic threat environment demands our utmost vigilance and discipline. We must refine existing protective measures to prevent or substantially mitigate any threat.

This guide offers a number of proven security techniques and considerations that limit opportunities to be targeted by terrorists.



Always Be Vigilant

General Security

Guard Info About Yourself and Your Job

- Limit discussion and accessibility of any information (written or verbal) that may provide terrorists insights for targeting.
- Always use secure means when passing sensitive information.
- Destroy identifiable information.

Recognize and Report Unusual or Suspicious Behavior

YOU are the first line of defense against terrorism. Be aware of your surroundings. Write down license numbers of suspicious vehicles; note description of occupants. Report anything unusual to your chain of command, local authorities or the FBI.

Be Prepared for the Unexpected

Plan for the range of threat possibilities; avoid established or predictable patterns.

Personal Security

Maintain a Low Profile

- Destroy all items that show your name, rank, or other personal information.
- Instruct your family and associates not to provide strangers with information about you or your family.
- Be cautious about giving out information regarding family travel plans or security measures and procedures.
- Consider removing your name and rank on your home/military quarters.
- Avoid the use of your name and rank on answering machines.

Telephone Security

If you receive a threatening phone call or Bomb Threat, dial *57 (verify local procedures), wait for the confirmation message that traces the caller, and then report the call to local authorities immediately.

Home Security

Be Prepared for the Unexpected

- Brief family members on your residential security and safety procedures.
- Ensure family members learn a duress word and it is on file at your office.
- Advise associates or family members of your destination and anticipated time of arrival.
- Use peephole viewers before you open the door.
- Don't open the door to anyone until you know who it is.
- Ensure sufficient illumination exists around your residence.
- Be alert to strangers who are on government property for no apparent reason.
- Refuse to meet with strangers outside your work place.

Commuting/Local Travel

Be Prepared for the Unexpected

- Look for tampering. Look under and around your auto.
 - At all times, keep your doors locked and windows rolled up.
 - Alter routes and avoid choke points.
 - Alternate parking places.
 - Plan safe locations along your route.
- ### Guard Information About Yourself Maintain a Low Profile
- Consider wearing civilian clothing when riding on mass transit.
 - Avoid car markings that identify you as senior ranking DoD personnel (such as GO stars on vehicles).
 - Always remove base stickers if you are selling or disposing of your POV.

Vicksburg District leadership team visits Arkansas Lakes

By Marneshia Richard and Viviana Berrios-Williamson
Photos by Amy Shultz

It is not often that District employees have the opportunity to visit Corps lakes in Arkansas. The Vicksburg District Leadership Development Program (VLDP) team members traveled to Arkansas to visit Corps facilities and recreational areas and to participate in a community service project near Lake Ouachita. The team visited Blakely Mountain Dam and Power Plant and numerous recreational areas along Lake Ouachita and DeGray Lake.

Blakely Mountain Dam is an earth-filled dam containing approximately four million cubic yards of material. The storage capacity of the lake is 2,768,000 acre-feet. Blakely Mountain Power Plant has a generator capacity of 75,000 KW. During 2011 this power plant produced 196,840,000 KW hours of clean electric power, which amounted to a savings of 315,448 barrels of oil at a dollar value of \$26,175,875.

(Continued on page 20)



LAKES AND RECREATION

Pictured on the previous page is Ranger Mike Wade directing VLDP team members to planned viewing area along new trail at Avery Recreational Area.

To the right are VLDP members at Crystal Springs recreational area. From left to right are David Little, Chad Bounds, Lee-Ann Riggs, Randy Holder, Marneshia Richard, Brandy Morrow, Keith Flowers, Viviana Berrios-Williamson, Pam Smith, Dan Egger and Brad Brady.



The Arkansas lakes provide recreational opportunities for swimming, hiking, camping, boating, fishing, hunting, horseback riding, wildlife viewing, picnicking, and even disc golfing. DeGray Lake has a newly built 18-hole disc golf recreational area located a few hundred yards from the re-regulation dam. This project was made possible through funding by cooperative efforts from partners such as the nonprofit organization “Keeping DeGray Lake Beautiful”, the City of Caddo Valley and individual tee sponsors.

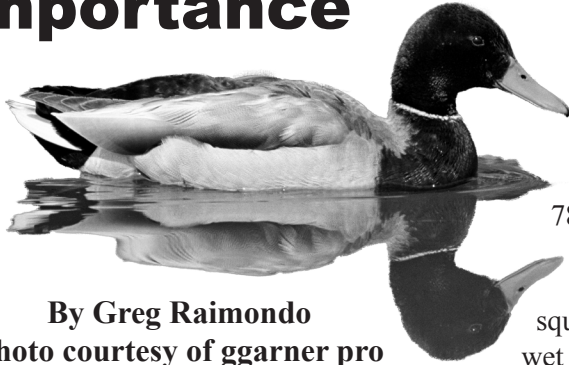
The VLDP team also toured Crystal Springs recreational area built by the Corps, Friends of Lake Ouachita (FOLO), and a group of hard-working retired volunteers affectionately known as the “Trail Dogs”. In this area, VLDP could see the ongoing projects being worked by the dedicated members of FOLO. This nonprofit organization has a cooperative agreement with the District to: 1) Move and Rehabilitate Campgrounds; 2) Build, Revive and Repair Facilities; and 3) Perform regular maintenance. The agreement allows FOLO to charge and collect fees for use of the premises or facilities constructed on the premises. The District is required to send such fees back to the U.S. Treasury, but the FOLO may use the revenues for administrative details directly related to the lake and maintenance, operation and development of the lake recreational areas. FOLO collected approximately \$120K in fee revenue for 2012. That money has been used for a variety of current projects

or set aside for future projects in surrounding areas of Lake Ouachita.

For their community service project, the VLDP team visited phase one of a hiking trail being developed in the Avery Recreational Area near Lake Ouachita that will be referred to as Wood Duck Slough. This trail is being constructed with the intent of leaving the area as natural and undisturbed as possible. All work completed on the trail thus far was done by hand, without the use of power tools. The VLDP group assisted the local rangers by clearing the trail of litter, debris logs and rocks. In addition to their physical labor, the group recommended site locations for viewing areas and offered solutions for phase II which will be the construction of a low impact bridge to cross the Wood Duck Slough, allowing the trail to continue.

The 2013 VLDP Class experienced firsthand the benefits offered to the Arkansas community by the Vicksburg District. Not only do the Corps lakes provide beautiful recreational areas for various activities, they offer hydro-power sources and flood control measures as well. Such resources are valuable assets to the locals and visitors in the Lake Ouachita and DeGray Lake areas. However, the Corps cannot do it alone. The VLDP team learned how civil works have been transformed through cooperating association agreements on current operations and how civil works transformation can benefit future Corps projects. ◀

Wetlands of international importance



By Greg Raimondo
Photo courtesy of ggarner pro

A wetland is a wetland, right? “No, no, no”, say the regulators. Some are more important than others and some are so important that they have been declared a “Wetland of International Importance”. Those are on the Ramsar List. There are only 32 such wetlands in the entire United States. Two are right here in our District and one more is in that “notch” in the top of our District map.

What is this Ramsar List? In 1971, in the Iranian city of Ramsar, the Iranian Department of the Environment hosted a convention. There, a treaty was born and came into force in 1975. The Convention on Wetlands is an intergovernmental treaty that provides the framework for national action and international cooperation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources. It is the only global environmental treaty that deals with a particular ecosystem.

There are 163 nations which are members of the Convention with 2,065 sites covering nearly 500 million acres or 780,000 square miles. The entire Vicksburg District is only about 68,000 square miles. That’s a lot of wet land! A site listed on the Ramsar List bestows upon it the prestige of international recognition and expresses the government’s commitment to take all steps necessary to ensure the maintenance of the ecological character of the site.

So, who do we have on the list? There’s Caddo Lake, which is on the other side of Shreveport, Louisiana. We share it with the Fort Worth District. The White River National Wildlife Refuge is in that “notch” at the top of the District map of the Little Rock District. And then, there’s our very own, Catahoula Lake, just northeast of Alexandria, Louisiana.

White River National Wildlife Refuge lies in the floodplain of the White River near where it meets the mighty Mississippi River. Long and narrow, three to ten miles wide and almost ninety miles long, the refuge is one of the largest remaining bottomland hardwood forests in the Mississippi River Valley. The refuge’s fertile forests and 300 lakes are interlaced with streams, sloughs, and bayous. The result is a haven for a myriad of native wildlife and migratory birds. The refuge has the largest concentration of wintering mallard ducks in the Mississippi Flyway. There are some who believe it hosts one of the last populations of the

Ivory-billed Woodpecker, a bird variously considered extinct or nearly so.

According to Caddo legend, the lake was formed by the 1812 New Madrid Earthquake. The lake was formed, either gradually or catastrophically, by the “Great Raft”, a 100-mile log jam on the Red River in Louisiana. This jam possibly allowed the filling of the basin that the intense uplift and shifting of the earthquake had created. It is a beautiful water garden of bayous, cypress trees, Spanish moss, lotuses and water lilies.

Catahoula Lake is an ephemeral water body. At flood times it is filled with waters of up to forty feet, and in other seasons so dry that cattle can be grazed on the lake bed and hay harvested from it, as well. The Catahoula Lake complex involves a variety of environments--lacustrine, riverine, bayou, back swamp, and marsh--each providing a separate ecosystem, and impacted by the activities of man. The importance of Catahoula Lake as a resource to waterfowl is hard to overstate. This vital area will continue to winter hundreds of thousands of waterfowl for generations to come if we are careful stewards of it and do not take for granted that it will always be there.

One river, one full-time lake, and one ephemeral body of water, wetlands come in all sizes and sorts. As you can see, not all wetlands are alike and definitely not all wetlands are significant enough to be on the Ramsar List. Wetlands are among the world’s most productive environments. They are cradles of biological diversity, providing the water and primary productivity upon which countless species of plants and animals, including humans, depend upon for survival.

BTW - 2 February is not only Ground Hog Day, more importantly, it’s World Wetlands Day! ◀

Arkabutla Lake hosts 22nd annual physically challenged deer hunt

By Kavanaugh Breazeale

Arkabutla Lake recently hosted its 22nd annual physically challenged deer hunt. Sixty four disabled hunters were chosen by a random drawing.

These hunts bolster support for the wildlife management practices in place and are an integral part of the plan for the area. They provide a unique opportunity to a very special group of participants coming from all over the southeastern United States.

The hunters were staged in foliage-covered plywood box stands within the 1000-acre natural area below Arkabutla Lake Dam. Some blinds are built specifically for hunters to drive 4-wheeled all terrain vehicles (ATV's) into the stand, which enables the hunter to hunt without dismounting from the seat of the ATV.

Christie Hill-Smith, president of the Mid South Chap-

ter of the Paralyzed Veterans of America, was one of the lucky hunters to participate in the hunt; she bagged a huge eight point buck. She used her lucky grunt tube to call the buck into her stand and took him with one well-placed shot.

Sponsors for this year's event were Arkabutla Lake Physically Challenged Hunt Association and the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation. Local citizens and businesses also donated time and food for the event.

The Corps' public lands offer an array of safe recreational opportunities that include fishing, boating, camping, hiking, bicycling, swimming, and photography. The four Corps lakes in northern Mississippi draw approximately 5.5 million visitors per year; support 1,500 jobs; and contribute more than \$130 million in regional tourism. ◀

(VLDP visits MSU, concluded from page 17)

We also saw what happens when the machines break down. There is a shop on board with a team dedicated to getting the machines operational again. This concluded our tour of the MSU.

Overall, the tour was very informative. The most basic fact learned on this trip is the exact purpose of

the revetment. Other aspects that we learned about this crew's work were how they purify their water, dispose of sewage, get rid of trash, and recycle used oil. The barge is very self sufficient. In general, these systems serve to keep the MSU's operating costs down.

The overall concept that amazed the group was the amount of pride this crew has for "their" MSU. Parker, Kelly, and everyone else we talked to were all very eager to show off what they do. The entire crew seemed to beam with a certain sense of ownership when asked about the Mat Sinking Unit. The tour was a great experience and the current VLDP class would like to thank the crew of the MSU for their hospitality. If you ever have the opportunity to tour the MSU we highly recommend that you do so.

During this longer, six months, revetment season the

MSU is expected to lay 442,786 squares covering approximately 1,018 acres of articulated concrete mats on the banks of the Mississippi River.

The MSU is the only one of its kind in the world and distributes articulated concrete mat squares on the banks of the Mississippi River. These concrete mats assist with the prevention of erosion and protection of submerged river banks. The MSU is composed of the Motor Vessel Benyaud with the quarter boats, the Motor Vessel William James with the mat sinking plant and the Motor Vessel Harrison.

This revetment season extends through February 2013 and includes a larger than normal program with critical repairs being made to sites damaged as a result of the 2011 historic flood. The next season will begin June 2013. To learn more about the Mat Sinking Unit and the Vicksburg District, visit www.mvk.usace.army.mil. ◀



VLDP members get close up view of the MSU crew at work.

Louisiana Field Office hosts annual physically challenged deer hunt

By Alice Bufkin

Photo by Mutt Buffington

The Louisiana Field Office (LFO) hosted the annual deer hunt for physically challenged hunters on December 10 and 11 at Columbia Lock and Dam in Columbia, Louisiana.

Ten hunters participated in the hunts. They were driven to plywood box stands by four-wheeled, all terrain vehicles by Corps rangers and volunteers to the 368-acre tract of the recreation area. A doe and a buck were harvested, both by Wayne Stogsdill of Senatobia. Although a Louisiana hunting license was required, there were participants from Mississippi and Louisiana.

The Caldwell Parish sheriff's office provided a delicious catfish lunch after the first day of hunting, which afforded the hunters an opportunity to fellowship with one another. According to LFO park ranger Joe Haller,

“These hunters teach us all to count our blessings and enjoy life. They show us every day in their actions and ‘can do’ attitudes that they truly are people without limits – everyone has potential in one form or another.”

The next annual hunt will be held in December 2013. For information regarding the hunts and dates, you may contact LFO park rangers Joe Haller at 318-381-0482, or Aaron Posner at 319-422-5157.

The thousands of acres that the Vicksburg District manages offer an array of safe recreational opportunities that include fishing, boating, camping, hiking, bicycling, swimming, and photography. The LFO encompasses over 200 miles along the Ouachita River from Camden, Arkansas, to Jonesville, Louisiana, and provides 24 parks and boat ramps. These parks host over 700,000 visitors annually and bring approximately \$13 million and over 200 jobs to the local economy.

To learn more about the many recreational opportunities offered, visit the Vicksburg District's page at <http://www.mvk.usace.army.mil/lakes/index.php>. ◀



Shown is hunter Wayne Stogsdill, seated, with park ranger Aaron Posner, kneeling, and back row, park rangers Joe Haller and David Oliver.

District Field Offices & Services

**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers,
Vicksburg District
4155 E. Clay Street
Vicksburg, MS 39183
www.mvk.usace.army.mil
email: cemvk-pa@army.us.mil**

Lake Ouachita (501) 767-2101
Lake Greeson (870) 285-2151
DeGray Lake (870) 246-5501
Sardis Lake (662) 563-4531
Arkabutla Lake (662) 562-6261
Enid Lake (662) 563-4571
Grenada Lake (662) 226-6391
Bayou Bodcau (318) 322-6391
JBJ Waterway (318) 322-6391
Ouachita-Black Rivers (318) 322-6391

Aerial Photography (601) 631-5709
Corps Wetland Permits (601) 631-5289
Apply, ask questions, or report violations
Contracting & Bids (601) 631-7706
Vendors, status of bids, specs
Community Support (601) 631-5223
Tours, speakers, volunteers
Historical Questions & Research (601) 634-7023
Mississippi River History Center
Real Estate Issues (601) 631-5220
Corps impacts to your property
Employment Questions (601) 631-5859
Vacancies, status, qualifications
Historical Photographs (601) 631-5021
Environmental (601) 631-5410

Other Vicksburg Engineer/Federal Organizations

Mississippi Valley Division
(601) 634-5760

Vicksburg National Military Park
(601) 634-5760

Engineer Research and Development Center
(601) 634-2504

U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Kickapoo
(601) 636-8304

412th Engineer Command
(601) 636-1686

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
(601) 629-6607

168th Engineer Group
(601) 313-5290

U.S. Army Recruiter
(601) 618-1203

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