

# Palmetto Castle



The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
Charleston District

Spring 2012

*Corps Conservation for the  
Good of the Nation*

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Army Corps of Engineers,  
Charleston District

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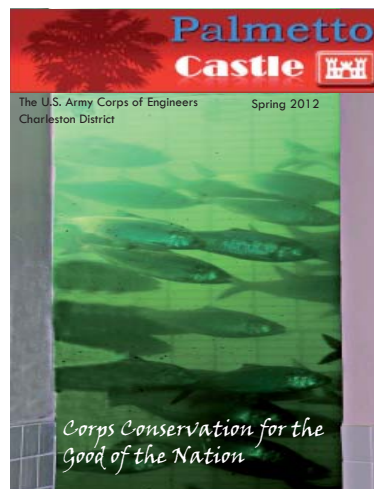
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On the cover....



This issue features several of the Charleston District's initiatives in conservation and being "green." The cover photo shows fish passing by the viewing window at the St. Stephen powerhouse. Last year, more than 600,000 fish were passed. Learn more about this and our partnership with SCDNR on page 8.

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# From the Commander

Greetings!

We welcome you to our Spring edition of the Palmetto Castle. In the spirit of Earth Day, this issue will focus on some of our conservation measures in conjunction with the delivery of outstanding facilities and solutions for our customers. To help illustrate this, I'd like to share with you a trip I made recently visiting our regulatory division field office in Columbia, our Fort Jackson resident office, and our hydropower facility at St. Stephen.

I started my trip with an early morning boat ride aboard *Regulator II* observing some of our recent permit actions along the shores of Lake Murray. We then drove over to Fort Jackson where our team was in the process of delineating the wetland boundary in the vicinity of the main reception battalion in conjunction with representatives from the Fort Jackson Department of Public Works (DPW) Environmental Branch. The delineation will assist in the development of plans for future infrastructure upgrades and expansion at Fort Jackson. Following a few hours of hiking through the woods and wetlands (and picking up a few ticks on the way), we then toured the Quad Dining Facility. The building is filled with some of the most modern appliances and advanced energy conservation measures in the world, which you'll read more about in our article featured on page 12.

After thanking our hardworking team for their efforts, I drove down to St. Stephen where we operate a hydropower facility in cooperation with our partner Santee Cooper. The purpose of my visit, however, was to show-off our fish passage facility that is operated by the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR). On this day, I invited representatives from the Charleston area Federal Executives Association to meet me at the facility so they could get a better understanding of some of our responsibilities and functions. Our fish passage facility is responsible for allowing millions of fish to swim upstream, through our dam, and spawn in the freshwater habitat upstream of Lakes Marion and Moultrie. At this time of year, it is an amazing sight to see and is pictured on the cover of this edition of the Palmetto Castle. We ended the visit with a tour of the nearby fish hatchery, also operated by SCDNR, which is featured in an article on page 8 of this issue.

I am very proud of our District's dedicated professionals that provide excellent support to and maintain strong and healthy relationships with our customers, partners and stakeholders. Hopefully my short story of my two-day journey



from Lake Murray to Fort Jackson to St. Stephen highlights that for you. This trip also highlights our efforts to protect our natural resources by promoting balanced development, protect our wetlands and aquatic wildlife, and enhance our energy conservation measures. Thank you for the continued opportunity to serve you and the citizens of our nation.

**BUILDING STRONG** across SOUTH CAROLINA and BEYOND!!

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**In Honor of Earth Day- Be Green, Save a Tree!**

In an effort to reduce costs and save environmental resources, please let us know if you would rather receive an electronic soft-copy version of this publication. Just send a quick email to [PalmettoCastle@usace.army.mil](mailto:PalmettoCastle@usace.army.mil).

# Charleston District Meets with SC Delegation

By: Lisa Metheney, assistant chief of programs and project management division

Every February, the President delivers his annual budget to Congress. That budget contains the funding for numerous federal agencies and programs, including the Corps of Engineers. Once the President's Budget has been released and the members of Congress have had time to review it, leadership from the Charleston District travels to Washington, DC to discuss the budget with the South Carolina Congressional delegation and answer any questions they may have about the projects. This year, Lt. Col. Ed Chamberlayne, deputy for project management Bill Stein, and I met with the Congressional members and their staff on March 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> to discuss the \$26 million provided to the District's civil works program in the fiscal year (FY) 2013 budget.

"When the Congressional staffers meet with us, it's a bit different from many of the meetings they are usually involved with," said Stein. "So many meetings they have are with people who are asking them for funds or asking them to do something specific. We are there to provide updates on Corps projects in South Carolina and answer any questions they may have."

As the lead for the District's Congressional Liaison program, I have been visiting Washington regularly for six years. Our goal with the visits is simple – to answer questions the members of the delegation have about our projects. Since the Corps is part of the Administration, the President's Budget is our budget. We don't advocate for projects that aren't funded.

Preparation for the Congressional visits starts with the release of the President's Budget. My staff and I review the President's Budget to identify what projects and programs within Charleston District have been funded and for what amount. Using this information, fact sheets on each of the Corps' studies and projects are developed or updated to reflect the information in the budget and to give the current status, highlighting any work that is ongoing in the current fiscal year.

For the FY 13 President's Budget visit, the District prepared or updated 30 project and program fact sheets in addition to updating a map of our projects. Of the \$26 million in the President's Budget for Charleston District, \$3.5 million is for the Charleston Harbor Post 45 feasibility study, \$15.9 million for operation and maintenance (O&M) of Charleston Harbor, \$4.6 million for O&M of the Cooper River Rediversion Project, and \$400,000 to complete plans and specs and environmental compliance for Folly Beach in preparation for the next renourishment cycle.



Although each member has different questions about different projects, each

Lt. Col. Chamberlayne meets with Andrew King of Sen. Lindsey Graham's office and discusses the projects currently being worked on by the Charleston District.

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The annual journey to Capitol Hill is a very worthwhile and necessary function of the Charleston District. Here, Lt. Col. Chamberlayne meets with Delores DeCosta of Rep. Tim Scott's office.

briefing given by the District covers the same general areas – civil works and the President's Budget, a brief update on major international and interagency support (IIS) projects and military workload, and a brief status update on major regulatory actions under review. While the meetings center on the President's Budget and the civil works program, the District's support to the Veteran's Administration, Department of Energy and Department of State through IIS for construction projects is of interest to the members and they often ask questions about the Corps' role and what services we provide.

"Congressional members and their staff are very interested in how the Corps supports our sister federal agencies and in understanding how that support can help stretch scarce federal funds," said Chamberlayne. "We are very proud of the work we do for our federal customers and are happy to update any of the members on where we are with various construction projects."

Because South Carolina has such a large percentage of area that is wetlands, the District's regulatory division always has several large and complex permit applications under review. The goal of the regulatory division is to make fair, balanced and reasonable permit decisions that balance development needs and the needs of the environment while enforcing the Clean Water Act. For this visit, regulatory permit topics included I-73, the VC Summer and

Lee nuclear facilities, and the Haile Goldmine.

For the Charleston District team, Congressional visits don't just represent another briefing or meeting. It's part of the roles and responsibilities of being a public servant.

"As a Corps of Engineers' employee, I take our role of being stewards of the taxpayer's money very seriously," explains Stein. "Updating Congress on what we are doing with the federal funds we are provided, regardless of how large or small the project is, helps ensure accountability and transparency in government."

ency in government."

Personally, I find that coming to Capitol Hill and walking the same hallways that have been used by generation after generation of elected officials as they developed the laws of our nation is still awe inspiring. When we meet in the representatives' offices in the Capitol, I can't help but sneak a look out the window and wonder what previous occupiers of the office saw from the window as they worked to support their constituents and develop the nation.



(From left) Pat O'Donnell, planning chief; Metheney; Rep. Joe Wilson; Lt. Col. Chamberlayne; and Stein meet in Rep. Wilson's office.

# Safety and Life at Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan



By: John Lindsay, base safety officer

Normally, I am the safety officer for the Charleston District, but I am currently deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. Here at Bagram, I do not work for the Corps. I deployed as a part of the Civilian Expeditary Workforce where my job is working for the Combined Joint Task Force as the construction base safety officer. In my office, besides me, we have people dedicated to ground safety, explosives safety and radiation safety. Our safety team is heavily involved with

many operations on base ranging from setting policy for head phone use to inspecting the Bazaars (local trading posts) for contraband cigarettes and illegal power strips.

Construction safety in Afghanistan is somewhat different than in the United States. The language barriers, construction techniques, equipment and availability of skilled workers can present some unique challenges. On a normal day, friendly and smiling Afghan locals come in from the villages in the morning and go through a thorough screening process. They then go with the local construction companies to the

job sites to do whatever work is necessary for a payment of \$5.00 a day. A lot of these construction companies come from Turkey and Pakistan as well, so not only do you have the local dialect, but some from other countries as well. I'm sure it's just as tough for the workers to deal with as it is for us.

I also deployed in 2010 working for the Corps in Kabul and travelled all over the northern section of Afghanistan to the different forward operating bases (FOB) as well as throughout Kabul. I will say that, in the two years since I have been here, I have seen a marked improvement in construction safety and safety in general. This shows me that the Corps of Engineers is truly making a difference and



makes me feel proud to be a part of it.

Here at Bagram, life is much different than working at the FOBs or in Kabul. There are more than 30,000 Soldiers and civilians here. Several gyms, dining facilities, Post Exchange's, etc., are available for use. There is even a Burger King and a Pizza Hut if you get that craving. It's like a small city that never sleeps.

This base is surrounded by beautiful mountains that seem to always have snow covered peaks no matter how hot it seems where we are. Unfortunately, because of the dust caused by the wind and so much traffic on the road, they become hard to see at times. There is one perimeter road that circles the whole base, with several access points that are heavily guarded.

There are some villages close by where you can see the locals tending their sheep herds and working the fields. Most of the locals seem to use donkey's (at least to me that's what they look like) more often than not for work animals, but I



have seen my first camel by one of their huts.

We work 12 hours per day, seven days a week. At first I didn't know if I could handle such long hours but you get used to it fairly quickly. The time goes by fast and soon I'll be back in the District, a few pounds lighter, and hopefully having made a difference here in support of this mission.



# Spawning a Continued Relationship

By: Sean McBride

In St. Stephen, SC, the Charleston District finished construction of the Cooper River Rediversion Project and St. Stephen Dam and Powerhouse in 1985 in order to reduce flows into the Cooper River and thereby reduce the sedimentation rates in Charleston Harbor. This rediversion of the water flow back to the Santee River saves the taxpayers \$14-18 million in annual dredging costs in Charleston Harbor while the energy created at the powerhouse is enough to provide for about 40,000 houses in the Santee Cooper power grid.

Because the dam blocks fish from being able to pass up the river, the Charleston District constructed a fish lift that, at regular intervals, coaxes fish into the lift, floods with water and prompts them to exit out of the lift by a slowly rising basket. As they exit the lift, the fish swim by a series of viewing windows where they can be identified and counted by on-site South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) personnel. This allows them to collect data on the hundreds of thousands of fish, such as blueback herring and American shad, that are migrating each year.

Also on the 2,493 acres of project grounds is another unique facility that showcases the Charleston District's partnership with SCDNR. This facility, called the Jack D. Bayless Hatchery, is an on-site fish hatchery where biologists tend to anadromous fish; fish that spend most of their lives in saltwater, but return to freshwater and streams to spawn.

Here, many fish are collected and spawned. Fish hatcheries



play a vital role in the management of our state's fishery resources. SCDNR's goal is to reproduce various species of fish in amounts required to meet the recommendation of their biological staff. The Bayless Hatchery was originally constructed for producing striped bass and their hybrids for public water stocking.

Within the facility are 54 production ponds that each serve as a different part of the reproduction process. Each female fish produces up to three million eggs which are fertilized. These eggs are hatched fairly quickly and moved to a new pond where they begin to grow while being nourished by a self-sustaining yolk material. Once the fish are a few days old, they are moved to another pond to continue the maturation process and begin to feed on zooplankton. After just a few weeks into the process, the fish are released into the river. Years later, these same fish will hopefully return to the area to spawn.

On April 5<sup>th</sup>, the Charleston District hosted the Federal Executives Association (FEA) for their monthly meeting, but this time hosted the meeting inside the powerhouse. FEA members were thrilled to have the chance to view the fish passing by the viewing windows. SCDNR staff also did a great job explaining and giving a tour of the hatchery and showed the FEA members many things they were not expecting to see, including a few ducks going through the lift.

The Charleston District is committed to managing all natural resources and lands in an environmentally sound manner, which makes for a perfect partnership with SCDNR. The powerhouse personnel enjoy working alongside SCDNR staff every day on the grounds of the project and look forward to continuing this partnership for decades to come.





# United States' Largest Hopper Dredge Takes Charleston Harbor



By: Sean McBride

Recently, the United States' largest trailing suction hopper dredge, the *Glenn Edwards*, spent several weeks in the Charleston Harbor entrance channel performing maintenance dredging. The *Glenn Edwards* collected more than 1.5 million cubic yards of sediment during her time in Charleston, ensuring that the entrance channel remains at its federally authorized depth of 47 feet.

A hopper dredge is capable of dredging material from the harbor floor, storing it onboard the ship and eventually transporting it to the disposal site where it is dumped. The *Glenn Edwards* has two large arms that come down, suck up material off the harbor floor, and bring it to the center part of the ship. When the ship is full, the ship moves to the ocean dredge material disposal site (ODMDS) and opens the doors on the bottom of the ship, releasing the material back into the ocean.

How often does a hopper dredge have to make trips to the ODMDS? That depends on how much material the ship can hold. A standard hopper dredge tends to hold a few thousand cubic yards of material per load. The *Glenn Edwards* can hold up to 13,500 cubic yards of material. Since the *Glenn Edwards* can hold so much more material, this makes the process more efficient and less costly.

While maintaining optimum efficiency, the dredge team is also charged with keeping watch for endangered species. Dredge companies that have contracts with the Charleston District must have an observer on their ship that monitors endangered species life. During each dredging cycle, the wildlife observer is looking to see if any whales are in the area. If they are, the dredge ship must slow down and take precaution. After each dump cycle, the observer checks to see if the ship caught any endangered turtles. Most often, there are minimal issues with encountering endangered spe-

cies, but if dredging operations do encounter one, there is protocol that must be followed during the next cycle.

Economically, hosting the crew of the *Glenn Edwards* in Charleston also brings numerous fiscal benefits to the city. During its time in Charleston, the *Glenn Edwards* fills its 200,000 gallon tank with gas at local stations and the 18 man crew spends approximately \$4,000-6,000 weekly on groceries from local stores.

While the *Glenn Edwards* can hold a large capacity of dredged material, this is not the type of dredge that would be used in a harbor deepening. This type of dredge specializes in maintenance dredging and beach renourishment as it is not as effective when digging into new material.

The Charleston District is charged with maintaining the federally authorized depths of 45 ft in the harbor and 47 ft in the entrance channel.

To do this, a dredging cycle is utilized consisting of dredging the entrance channel every 24 months, the lower harbor every 12-15 months, and the upper harbor every 18-21 months. The Charleston District's maintenance of the harbor began more than 130 years ago and will continue strong into the future.





# Joe Moran

## Fishery Biologist

Meet

**What is your position?**

Fishery Biologist, Charleston District Operations Division

**Describe your job.**

Initially, I will be working on fish passage issues related to the St. Stephen Powerhouse and the Santee Cooper system, coordinating closely with state, federal and private entity partners. I will be working hard to help facilitate an agreement that will deliver the Corps' engineering, environmental and emergency management missions. Concurrently, I will be getting up to speed with projects and the USACE professionals in the other South Atlantic Division (SAD) districts.

**What is the most unique thing you bring to the District?**

The past 13 years in a managerial position at the Washington, DC headquarters level helped me to understand the necessary balances between a wide-range of inter-related political, fiscal and natural resource pressures to build consensus on tough issues. As I am one of only two fish biologists in SAD, I think this experience will help me a lot.

**What is the most rewarding part of your job?**

Solving an issue and moving on to the next one. Few people are smart enough to do everything alone, so building personal and professional relationships while working to deliver a product or process is very rewarding. Some of the folks I met when I started in the fisheries management business in 1984 are still close personal friends today.

**Highlight a notable milestone or memory in your career.**

There have been many, nearly all of them resulting from collaboration with the unbelievable professionals and friends I have had the honor of knowing and working with. I was also published in *Chicken Soup for the Ocean Lover's Soul* for a story about going eye to eye with a pygmy sperm whale. However, the basis for any work-related milestones is the encouragement and support of my wife, son and daughter.

**What goals do you hope to accomplish in your new position?**

1) Work hard with our partners to facilitate workable solutions at St. Stephen and in the Santee Cooper system; and 2) I want to do my part to contribute to the tremendous expertise and collaborative teamwork that is readily apparent here in the Charleston District, SAD and in USACE as a whole.

# Jon Jellema

## District Counsel



Our...

**What is your position?**

District Counsel for the Charleston District.

**Describe your job.**

I lead an office of three attorneys and one paralegal. I am responsible for the provision of legal advice to the District Commander and his staff across the full spectrum of programs and projects carried out by the District.

**What is the most unique thing that you bring to the District?**

I've had some great opportunities to serve in various capacities in my 20+ years with the Corps. Prior to this, I served as Deputy Division Counsel for the South Atlantic Division in Atlanta. Other opportunities include serving as District Counsel for the Afghanistan Engineer District (South), Acting Division Counsel for the Pacific Ocean Division, Acting District Counsel for the Savannah District, and an assignment in the former Office of Congressional Affairs in Washington, D.C. Also, I got my start with the Corps here in Charleston in 1992 after several years in private practice. All of that has given me both a breadth of experience and a high degree of familiarity with the Charleston District.

**What is the most rewarding part of your job?**

It is really three-fold. One, I enjoy the public service aspect of the position. That's one of the reasons I went to law school. Two, I thrive on the broad and varied mission of the Corps, which translates into interesting and challenging legal work. Three, I like working with the people of the Corps. They're a highly-professional workforce. I think that the military-civilian combination of the Corps contributes to that professionalism.

**Highlight a notable milestone or memory in your career.**

Two come to mind. I already mentioned my assignment with the Office of Congressional Affairs. The time frame of that assignment in D.C. included Sept. 11. My family and I were living across the interstate from the Pentagon when the attack on that building occurred. Needless to say, that radically altered the priorities at work. Life at home on the day of and in the days following the attacks included smoke from the still-burning Pentagon, the flashing lights of emergency vehicles and sound of circling helicopters at night, and the silence at nearby Reagan National Airport. It is still a somewhat vivid memory, and a good lesson for me in realizing how much we take for granted. As a nation, I think some of the valuable perspective we gained from that costly experience has been eroded since then. The second notable memory relates to the first - it was the opportunity to serve in Afghanistan. While people back home expressed concern about my well-being, the reality is I wasn't laying my life on the line in any way comparable to the way that our troops were doing on a regular basis. It increased my respect and gratitude for their sacrifice, and really brought home the reality of the sacrifice that they make on our behalf.

**What goals do you hope to accomplish in your new position?**

My goals are not really specific to my position. My goals are for the District to succeed in the execution of its mission, to contribute to providing the people of the District with the quality of leadership they deserve, and to remember that we're here to serve the citizens of South Carolina and the United States.

# Harnessing the Energy of the Sun



Jason Hinton, David Dodds, Cole Gatewood, Lt. Col. Ed Chamberlayne, Bryan Tempio and John Strommer on the roof of the Quad DFAC where the solar panels provide energy to produce hot water for the Soldiers at Fort Jackson.

By: Ashley Rogers

The Quad Dining Facility (Quad DFAC), a \$31 million project, began in June 2010 with an expected completion date this summer. The Quad DFAC is surrounded by four “starships” that house 1,300 Soldiers each and include barracks, classrooms and offices. With its massive capacity and efficiency, the Quad DFAC will be able to feed all 5,200 Soldiers from the four starships three meals per day, in only 90 minutes.

While this is impressive, the most distinctive feature of this building is its ability to produce hot water for the Soldiers by harnessing the sun’s energy.

In an effort to save energy associated with domestic hot water usage, the contractor for the Quad DFAC constructed a solar water heating system known as the Sun Equinox, which uses a vacuum tube array-type solar panel that will provide a 30% savings in energy costs. This system was chosen for its ease of maintenance, simplicity of design, efficiency and positive life-cycle cost characteristics. This technology is new to Fort Jackson, but is becoming more common throughout the nation with the push for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification in newly constructed government buildings.

The LEED program provides a guide for design and construction of green buildings. Using green technologies, companies can reduce negative environmental impacts, while jointly saving money on energy costs. LEED certification is a tiered rating system that evaluates buildings on green sustainability.

“All new military buildings must have a LEED silver rating or higher,” stated Max Carroll, Quad DFAC project manager. “This solar water heating system contributes to the Quad DFAC’s certification. While initial installation costs are higher, these technologies are expected to save money over time and reduce dependence on fossil fuels.”

The American military is leading the race to renewable energy sources. The U.S. Army’s goal is to reach 25% clean power by 2025. To help this initiative, the Army Corps of Engineers has created an Energy Initiatives Task Force (EITF) to attain this goal.

“The military has recognized its overreliance on fossil fuels,” said Jon Powers, director of outreach for EITF. “The significant strides toward renewable power are seen as operation-necessary, financially-prudent, and mission-critical.”

The Charleston District looks forward to continuing to find ways to eliminate the carbon footprint left by construction.

# Celebrate Earth Day with the Corps of Engineers

Earth Day was founded 42 years ago by U.S. Senator Gaylord Nelson, and now, April 22nd has become a day when countries and people all across the globe celebrate the Earth's environment and focus on developing an awareness of how we affect it. These efforts led to the creation of the United States Environmental Protection Agency and the passage of the Clean Air, Clean Water, and Endangered Species acts. Here are some interesting facts to make you think about your environmental footprint-



- A plastic bottle takes around 1,000 years to biodegrade
- One ton of recycled paper can save:
  - 17 trees
  - 380 gallons of oil
  - 7,000 gallons of water
  - 4,000 kilowatts of energy
- Enough plastic bottles are thrown away in the United States each year to circle the Earth four times
- It takes 90% less energy to recycle aluminum cans than to make new ones
- The energy we save when we recycle one glass bottle is enough to light a traditional light bulb for four hours
- 14 billion pounds of trash are dumped into the

ocean every year

- Most families throw away about 88 pounds of plastic every year
- Each person throws away approximately 4.6 pounds of garbage every day
- 84% of all household waste can be recycled
- Americans throw away enough aluminum every month to rebuild our entire commercial air fleet
- A dishwasher uses 11 gallons of water per use
- Enough plastic is produced in the United States each year to shrink wrap Texas

# HERE TO HELP!



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# C O R P O R A T E

## CofC Students Trained On-board the *SV Evans*

College of Charleston students, participating in an elective class, spent their spring break getting hands-on training and skills in oceanography and surveying. As a part of this course, the students collaborated with the Charleston District's technical services department on a trip that provided quality training and enhanced the skills of a potential workforce. Dr. Scott Harris, professor of the Coastal Mapping and Visualization Course, coordinated the trip to arrange for the students to participate in a routine survey of Charleston Harbor.

In March, the students boarded the *SV Evans*, Charleston District's surveying vessel, and were greeted by survey technicians Matthew Boles and Shawn Dendron, and Brad Schultz, the captain. The *SV Evans* steamed into Charleston Harbor to begin gathering data using the multi-beam sonar and laser technology. Students worked alongside an associate from QINSy software that showed them how to gather data about the harbor and analyze it. This technology gathers data on the depth of the harbor so that the District can make sure that it is maintained at the federally authorized 45 ft. depth.

"My primary goal as a professor of undergraduate students is to get them training on these software systems so that



they possess a valuable skill set for the work force," stated Dr. Harris. "Training aspects are very important. I am very happy that the Army Corps provided us with such an opportunity."

This outing was an excellent way to strengthen the Charleston District's relationship with the college and community, educate a prospective workforce, and conduct Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) outreach.

In February, the Charleston District hosted 40 students from Charleston Charter School for Math and Science at the Charleston District's headquarters in honor of National Engineers Week.

The students used the occasion to learn from District engineers and biologists. They participated in a wetlands practical exercise, engaged in general engineering practices, learned about morphological adaptations of plant species, and watched an informative presentation on structural engineering as well as learned how a GPS system and Google Earth are used daily in the engineering field. The students discovered many of the vital contributions engineers make to the economy, environment and quality of life.

Engineers Week is a national event that highlights the contributions engineers make to society and emphasizes the im-

## TEACHING FUTURE ENGINEERS



portance of math, science and technical skills. It was started in 1951 by the National Society of Professional Engineers in conjunction with President George Washington's birthday, as he is considered the country's first engineer. The USACE partakes in the event every year as a way of reaching out to engineer hopefuls.

# CITIZEN

By: Ashley Rogers

## Grazing at C.O.W.

Tracy Sanders and Andrea Hughes visited Fort Johnson Middle School on April 5<sup>th</sup> for the Careers on Wheels (C.O.W.) career fair. Throughout the morning, these two regulatory employees engaged students in discussions with their display. Students inquired about a variety of topics ranging from the benefits of a job in the biology field to the necessary education. The students were taught the importance of protecting wetlands and the Corps' role in this mission.

"I emphasized that science careers do not have to be in a laboratory setting as the Corps allows for employees to work both outdoors and in the office on environmental impact issues," said Sanders. "This was a great event to reach



out to the community and provide support to the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) initiative."

"The main goal is for students to connect classroom learning to real world applications as well as to learn more about careers in our community," said Erica Ciucci, a school counselor at Fort Johnson. "Thank you very much for your dedication to making a difference in our future workforce!"

Thanks to Fort Johnson Middle School for allowing us to graze and spread the word about the Corps!

## Collecting Toiletries for Homeless Veterans



**Who:** Veterans Administration's "Standdown against Homelessness"

**What:** Collecting and donating small toiletries, like the kind you get from hotels

**When:** Now through September 2012

**Where:** Charleston District headquarters building and participating Federal Executives Association offices

**Why:** In support of our local, homeless veterans, the Charleston District team is collecting toiletries for the 13th annual Standdown against Homelessness event. The event, which offers medical and dental screenings for homeless veterans, also gives away clothing, food, haircuts, personal hygiene supplies and much more.

# TIDBITS

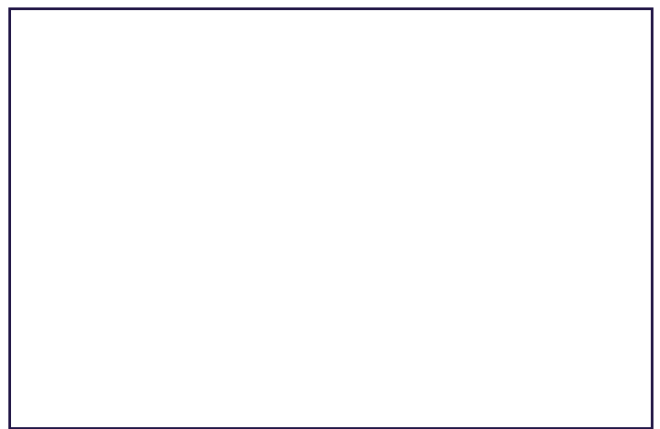
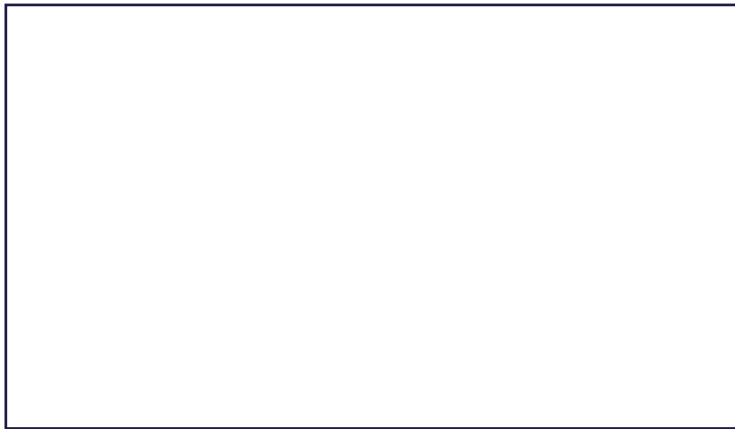
## Maj. Gen. Todd T. Semonite Moving Forward



The Charleston District would like to thank Maj. Gen. Todd T. Semonite for his valuable leadership for the past three years as Commander of the South Atlantic Division (SAD).

On May 4th, he will be leaving to become the Deputy Commanding General of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Washington, D.C. Col. Eric Conrad will be taking Semonite's place as the SAD Commander.

Good luck to Maj. Gen. Semonite in his new role!



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