



US Army Corps
of Engineers®
New Orleans District

Riverside

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November - December 2002



Readiness Branch tackles Hurricane Lili

Schroeder looks back

Van Nguyen's
escape to freedom

Carrollton Gage



Col. Peter J. Rowan



Fall has arrived in the Crescent City. I would like to personally thank everyone for their work and patience during the onslaught of

Tropical Storm Isidore and Hurricane Lili. The teamwork and dedication of the individuals involved in preparing for and responding to those events were truly professional and caring. Your patience was evident as I worked through some “rookie DE” mistakes, learning the ropes of how and why we do what we do.

I have almost finished my first round of low-water levee inspections. The best part of the inspection trips are the time I spend with some of the district’s greatest fans. I can’t tell you all the complimentary things the stakeholders have to say about the folks here in New Orleans District. Suffice it to say, it is very gratifying to hear from outside the district the

great things you do.

What about all the out-sourcing, privatization, non-core competency talk? I met with supervisors when I got back from the New DE course in Washington, D.C. My bottom line for us in New Orleans is just continue to do the best job you can in your piece in one of the larger organizations of the Corps, the Army and the federal government. Our worth to the nation is inherent in the strengths we bring to our customers and stakeholders. We will continue to deliver the best value we can to those folks that count on us to provide world class engineering, construction, navigation and environmental services. Ask yourself, “If I was in need of the services of my organization, would I hire us?” If the answer is “Yes,” then keep on doing what you’re doing. If the answer is “No,” then work to fix it.

I don’t know what the Corps will be instructed to do. But I do know that the Corps’ goals of People, Process and Communication will very much be a part of whatever the upcoming procedure is for evaluating the future organization of the Corps. Our People are our strength, and we should relish an opportunity to demonstrate that in any evaluation. The Process we will follow in this won’t be much different than any of our other delivery team processes. The solution to any complex problem lies in bringing together teams of competent individuals and leveraging their strengths and synergy to find a solution. And Communication is at the heart of everything we do. Teams cannot survive and function without clear and forthright communication.

Some change is inevitable, and it usually makes us stronger. We’re seeing that as some of the senior leaders of the district move on to the next stages of their lives. There is life after the Corps - just ask Bob Schroeder. Some other division and office chiefs are moving on in the near future. Celebrate with them. Learn from their wisdom and experience. In a lot of cases they have “Been there, done that.” We’ll also celebrate several new additions to our Gallery of Distinguished Civilians in December. Come join in the festivities as we recognize them and the current team awards. Don’t fear change in and of itself. Organizations

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Riverside

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Col. Peter J. Rowan

Public Affairs Chief

Jim Addison

Acting Editor

Eric S. Lincoln

Contributing Writers

John Hall, Amanda McLain,

Randy Isgriggs, Julie Morgan

Graphic Artists

Elena Napolitano, Anne Marino

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Members of the Emergency Operations Center during a quiet moment in Room 292. The team manages numerous disaster recovery operations.



Schroeder retires, looks back

By John Hall

Robert Schroeder joined the Corps of Engineers in January 1963. John Kennedy was president, the Vietnam War was only a gathering cloud and the New Orleans District had yet to plunge big-time into hurricane protection. The word “environment” was heard far less often.

Many changes occurred by the time Schroeder retired in August 2002, including the color of his hair. In 39 years of service to this district, one event stands out from all the rest to Schroeder. It was the making of the Atchafalaya Basin Floodway System (ABFS) project and, he said, it was the agent of historic change.

More than 20 years ago, “There was not a lot of interplay among divisions. Each did its own thing,” Schroeder said. “We were a lot of independent fiefdoms.”

However, the ABFS, on which Schroeder was “the point man,” cut across not only the district’s organizational lines but also affected a large cross-section of public interests: Just for starters, these included landowners, navigation, commercial and recreational fishing, oil and gas, the environment, timber and flood control.

“On the [ABFS], the Corps went into being a team for the first time,” Schroeder said.

Around 1980 it all came together, an attitudinal change, away from single-minded construction of navigation and flood-control projects at the lowest possible cost, he said.

“One of the main things I think about [in the change] is the transformation of the Corps from pouring concrete structures, to environmental things,” Schroeder said.

This involved not only building environmental projects such as the Davis Pond Freshwater Diversion Project, but also building navigation and flood-control projects that are environmentally friendly.

Schroeder liked and supported the new directions: “I came along at the right time.”

The ABFS involved buying land for recreation and for environmental and flood-control easements, water management units and recreation projects. The project brought together Planning, where Schroeder was assistant division chief; Real Estate; Engineering; and others.

“We began to think more like a district as a whole, rather than as its constituent divisions. The world was changing. The construction industry was changing. It wasn’t just the Corps,” said Schroeder,

who later became Planning Division director. At the same time, the Corps was adapting.

“The Corps began to move a lot more into the generalist, the project manager who could manage a project working

with a lot of specialists to get a project built,” Schroeder said. “Not somebody who knew everything about foundations, but knew a little about foundations, a little about hydraulics and so on, and could get people to work together.”

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Lane Lefort

“We’ve got to be careful that we don’t go too far. The Corps is still an engineering organization.”

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change to adapt and grow stronger. Our toughest challenge will be to meet change head on, and overcome the new while keeping our foundation values of loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity and personal courage.

Some more thoughts as we close

out calendar year 2002:

- Execution in FY 2002 was great. Largely through your hard work, Mississippi Valley Division ranked in the top three divisions in the Corps in every Civil Works category or appropriation. Great job!
- Make sure you schedule and TAKE your leave time. The holidays

are upon us — now is the time to relax and celebrate with family and friends. The deadlines will be there, emergencies happen with or without you.

Finally, congratulations to the Combined Federal Campaign crew. I’ve always wanted to say, “I gave at the office.” And here, we really can.

Nguyen sailed for freedom at age 20

Escape from Vietnam

By Randy Isgriggs

Van Nguyen has traveled across an arduous road to get where he is today. In 1960, he was born an unwitting victim of the Vietnam War. In Saigon (now Ho Chi Minh City), Van was indoctrinated into a world that most of us are unable to wrap our minds around.

Explosions, cannon-fire, the spinning of helicopter blades and the firing of machine guns infiltrated his early life, and to this day, reverberate clearly in his mind. In the early 1950s, during the war with the French, Van's parents fled the danger of living on their rice farm in Go Cong to the

relative safety of Saigon. A short while after the move, Huynh Huu Nguyen, Van's father, became a freedom fighter. The Vietnamese-French war ended in the defeat of the French at the battle of Dien-Bien-Phu in 1954. Huynh Huu died 11 years

In Vietnam, "I could not go to church or anywhere freely."

later in 1965 when the United States was just getting militarily involved in Vietnam. Van was 5 years old.

The responsibility for survival fell

into the hands of the rice farmer's wife, who had no education, no job skills and 10 hungry kids to feed. Hoa Thi Nguyen worked several jobs in order to feed her children; one of them was in a metal extraction factory. This was her last job. She was killed accidentally while attempting to extract aluminum from a highly explosive piece of ammunition. Van recalls being there at 13 to clean up his mother's blood and then carrying her body away to be buried.

Van's oldest sister was suddenly thrust into the role of provider. Under

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But doesn't the Corps still have a great, maybe even greater, need for specialists, such as foundations people? "Absolutely," says Schroeder.

"We've got to be careful that we don't go too far. The Corps is still an engineering organization. Engineering is our stock and trade. That's what we do," he said.

"We function as a project management organization, but we are about building projects. But be careful not to get so wound up in the process that we forget the product. Some think of PM as too much of a process and lose sight of the fact that the reason for having project management is to produce a product," Schroeder said.

The ABFS provided for the Corps to buy 388,000 acres, 50,000 outright for public access and the remainder in easements for flood control and the environment, to create water management units to restore flows for fish and wildlife, and to partner equally with the state of Louisiana on recreation projects.

The basin's interests were often in conflict.

"A major step came when people realized that change was taking place, and there was not a thing people could do about it. The basin was filling up [with sediment]," he said. That was the unifying starting point.

"We and the resource agencies [such as EPA and U.S. Fish & Wildlife] realized that there was more to be gained by cooperating, in order to get something done.

Today the New Orleans District has the best relations with the resource agencies of any Corps district," Schroeder said.

Finally, from 1998 to 2002, Schroeder was chief of Operations, a world where "long term is the end of the week." A memorable experience was the June 2000 sinking of a dry dock in the Calcasieu Ship Channel that blocked access to big refineries and other industries at Lake Charles.

The Corps averted thousands of layoffs and a worsened U.S. summer gasoline shortage by dredging a bypass channel. The Corps' own dredge Wheeler took the lead, joined later by contract dredges.

"I have never seen the Corps cooperate internally like that – Contracting, Public Affairs, Construction, Engineering, Executive Office support. EPA could have shut us down. If not for the relationship previously established, we could have never gotten it done so quickly," he said. "Things got under way on the phone, came together in hours.

"It showed how good it was to have the dredge Wheeler. We sailed the Wheeler while we sought approval from headquarters. We had to go to the chief [of engineers]. Finally, we got hold of his assistant at a wedding."

In the future, Schroeder said, the Corps will need all the lessons it has learned about teamwork, the environment and much more for two great tasks: saving coastal Louisiana and better defending it against hurricanes.

her care and the guidance of an American Catholic priest, Van remained in school, even through the collapse of the South Vietnamese government. Van recalls having very little freedom. "I could not go to church or anywhere freely. I could not talk in a group with more than three people at a time. I could not listen to VOA [Voice of America]. I no longer had the freedom I used to have when the American GIs were with us. I decided to escape the country." He was 16 years old.

Van's plan for escape started in 1976, but did not materialize for many years later. Cooperating with 30 others, Van bought a small fishing boat to help them leave the country. It took them three years of strict rationing to acquire enough fuel and food for escape. The punishment for this type of "treason" was execution. Other obstacles were the stormy Pacific Ocean and the Thai fisherman. The seas were reasonable, but the Thai pirates robbed them of their possessions 13 times. Gold fillings and eyeglasses were stolen when there was nothing left to take. The women onboard were raped each time a robbery took place. But they refused to be demoralized. In fact, they sailed with more determination toward their destination, freedom.

The battered fishing boat reached the port city of Songkhla, Thailand, in 1980, where the United Nations had set up a refugee camp in 1975, after the fall of Saigon. Van was 20 years old.

The United Nations allowed the

refugees to choose where they would resettle. Van got his first choice and moved to Seattle, Wash., with a sponsor family, in 1981. "I had never seen snow in my life," said Van, describing the cold climate in Seattle. "My first impression of the U.S. was that it was so beautiful."

Despite the language and cultural barriers that Van faced, he graduated with a degree in drafting within just four years of living in the United States. Van moved to New Orleans in 1985 as a drafter. He was laid off when his company decided to downsize in 1992. This was serendipitous for him and the Corps because he went back to college to get a civil engineering degree. Van was hired full-time in 1996 as an engineer in Operations Division.

Van and his wife, Hien, have three children, Thuyan, Diane, and Michael. He loves New Orleans for the weather and food, but mostly for the



Lane Lefort

Van holds a picture of himself at 20 years old, taken when he entered Songkhla, Thailand, in 1980, in a bid for freedom that eventually landed him at New Orleans District as a civil engineer.

people. The weather, he claims, is similar to Vietnam's. He enjoys the tropical fruits, vegetables, and seafood that can't be found most places in the United States. The city's greatest asset, however, is the "friendly and caring" people that has made the trip worthwhile.

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expansion to a multi-objective scope, plan development could include the promotion of deltaic vertical accumulation for ecosystem sustainability, as described in the Coast 2050 Plan. These sustained wetlands would also aid in buffering destructive storm-related wave fetch in the basin.

The synergistic effects of a multi-objective plan could promote a wide base of support in society, as well as provide a more efficient benefit-to-cost ratio.

Edmund Russo

Operations Division

*Edmund is the winner of our free parking space. Again.





Riders capture top awards in Tour for Cure

By Randy Isgriggs

On Oct. 5 and 6, Corps employees donned their bicycle gear and made the scenic 150-mile trek from Hammond to Percy Quin State Park in

coveted awards: largest team and top fund-raising team. Breaux is optimistic about the 2003 event, as well, "We are looking to break a hundred riders next year," he said.

"It's nice to get the Corps name out there to show people that we care. Sometimes we get a lot of flack in the press...so it's good to put a good face on things."

The number of miles may seem daunting, but, "It's not so much if you do the MS practice rides and pace yourself," said Paul Oakland,

Engineering Division. "I think anybody can finish if they do the practice rides, and there are always the SAG wagons available to pick up anyone who wants a lift."

Angela Adams, Information Support Services, a first-time rider, said she did not train like she should have. Still, she completed 120 miles

on her mountain bike. "I was going up the hill at 4 miles per hour...but coming down 25 to 30, maybe even 35 miles an hour...I thought, wow, this is easy. I get down, look up, and there was another hill. It reminded me of labor pains, all these ups and downs." She will try it again next year on a more appropriate bicycle.

Margie Rankin, Construction Division, another rookie rider, set out to do only 75 miles, but completed 120 miles, as well. She was tired after the first leg of the ride, but kept going when she remembered one of her friends that died from Multiple Sclerosis. Margie said, "Every time I would go up a hill, I would say, 'Come on Paulette, let me be as strong as you were.'"

Robert Martinson, Project Management, joked, "I didn't make my secret goal for finishing time on either of the 75-mile legs. But I didn't wreck like last year, so I'll take it."

John Fogarty, New Orleans Area



Mike Maples

McComb, Miss. Team Essayons has grown from 21 riders in 2000 to 61 participants this year. The 2002 team raised \$16,346 to help fund research to cure Multiple Sclerosis.

Rookie Team Captain Michael Breaux, H & H Branch, is justifiably proud of this year's numbers. His team competed with 85 other teams to capture the event's two most

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Mike Maples



Coastal projects reinforce Louisiana's coastline

By Julie Morgan

Lane Lefort

A rock dike protects the north rim of Lake Sand and the interior wetlands of Marsh Island from West Cote Blanche Bay wave action.

portion of the Marsh Island State Wildlife Refuge and surrounding Lake Sand, will benefit about 367 acres over its 20-year life span. Engineers designed the project to stabilize the northeastern shoreline of Marsh Island, including the northern shoreline of Lake Sand, and restore the historic hydrology to the marsh.

Beautiful Avery Island, home to the McIlhenny family and their world-famous Tabasco sauce, was the setting for a recent dedication ceremony of the district's Marsh Island Hydrologic Restoration Project. Hosted by the Breaux Act Task Force and the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR), the ceremony also highlighted five other coastal wetland projects to restore the state's vanishing coastline.

Marsh Island, located in Iberia Parish on the eastern

Work consisted of seven

closures for oil and gas canals, and the protection of the northeast shoreline and the isolation of Lake Sand from West Cote Blanche Bay with a rock dike. Natural bayous will provide fisheries access into the area marshes.

The project was completed in December 2001 at a cost of \$5.1 million.

The Environmental Protection Agency, National Marine Fisheries Service and Natural Resources Conservation Service, members of the Breaux Act Task Force, were federal sponsors of the other projects. These agencies, partnering with DNR, have completed 53 coastal projects to date. There are 119 future projects scheduled. When completed, they will restore, protect and nourish about 125,000 acres of wetlands.



Courtesy photo

Hughbanks tackles Death Valley

Besides the Tour for Cure, Paul Hughbanks, Environmental Branch, also completed a one-day, 105-mile charity ride in Death Valley, Calif. on Oct. 26 to help cure juvenile diabetes.

Hughbanks, a diabetic, wants to serve as a positive role model for other diabetics. "I hope to be an example to show that a diabetic can be healthy and active," he said. Above: Hughbanks rests at Jubilee Pass in the Amargosa Range, the turn-around point and highest elevation after a 1,300-foot climb in seven miles.

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Office, pointed to the camaraderie, "The most enjoyable part...is being able to ride with friends and co-workers. I have been able to meet people from around the district that I would not normally encounter," he said.

This sense of team unity was demonstrated in a comment by Rodney Mach, Engineering Division, "About 20 of us waited for each other at the entrance to Percy Quin Park. We then all rode up and crossed the finish line together screaming 'Essayons!' We weren't the first to finish, but it was great arriving with a big part of the biggest team out there," he said.

If you would like to have fun and help break records in the upcoming MS Tour for Cure, the team would love to have you. Breaux emphasizes the fact that it is not a race—you don't even have to finish the entire 150 miles—but a great way to raise a lot of money and awareness for a worthy cause.

Emergency Operations Center in control during Hurricane Lili

By Eric Lincoln

As Hurricane Lili barreled into the gulf in late September, most residents of southern Louisiana were packing to head north. But at MVN, an emergency response team manned the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) in Room 292, carefully planning the district's next move.

With storm surges and 145-mph winds sweeping inland, the team—led by emergency managers Joey Wagner, Jim Walters and Jim Perry of Operations Division, Readiness Branch—was activated. They began coordinating operations with seven other districts: Memphis, Vicksburg, St. Louis, Walla Walla, Savannah, Rock Island and Mobile.

Beauregard, outside the predicted impact area.

At the same time, Brett Herr, the Corps liaison to the Louisiana Office of Emergency Preparedness, deployed to Baton Rouge to coordinate tasks between the Corps and other federal, state and local agencies.

Col. Rowan then prepared the required Declaration of Emergency.

Perry explained that in addition to activating the EOC, the declaration enables funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The day before Lili hit, \$415,000 in emergency funds had been set aside for mission assignments; by the day of landfall and the signing of the Presidential Disaster Declaration, that figure had increased to \$4 million.

Response activity kicked in on Tuesday, said Wagner. "We sent a hired labor crew to Grand Isle to rebuild a portion of a hurricane protection dune, met with levee board presidents to brief them on flood fighting activities at the Algiers Canal and pre-positioned a hired labor flood-fight team there, held conference calls with MVD and headquarters and prepared the district to receive all the Planning and Response Team (PRT) management cells consisting of Power, Water, Ice, Debris, Housing, Logistics and the Deployable Tactical Operations System."

"FEMA started tasking MVD with missions 48-hours prior to

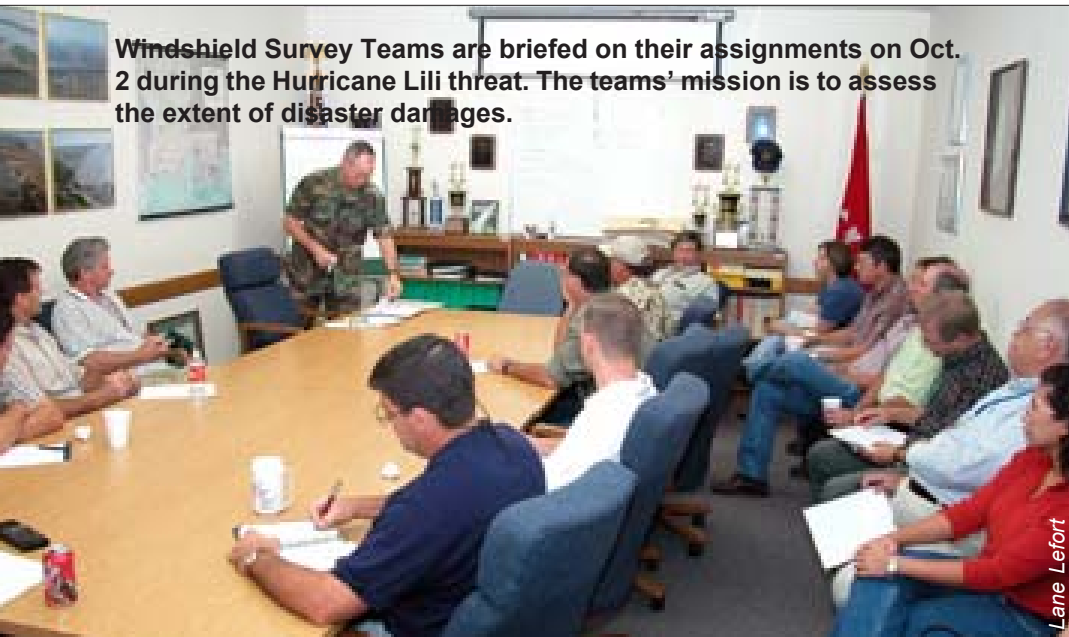
landfall," said Wagner. "Memphis was executing the tasks and we were briefed on the actions."

Prior to the storm, locks and bridges in the predicted path of Lili were closed, thousands of sand bags and a barge load of stones were positioned at the entrance to the Gulf Intercoastal Waterway at the Algiers Lock, and "Windshield Survey Teams" were assigned to check post-storm conditions.

The district retains control of response missions unless it becomes a victim district. Once it was determined that the MVN would not be a victim, however, the PRT management cells were shifted from Memphis to New Orleans.

"During the hurricane, we're basically making sure everyone is in the right place," Wagner said. "As soon as

Windshield Survey Teams are briefed on their assignments on Oct. 2 during the Hurricane Lili threat. The teams' mission is to assess the extent of disaster damages.



Lane Lefort

Simultaneously, the Crisis Management Team, which includes the division chiefs and district commander, met to discuss the hurricane's projected path and conditions.

When the district was ready to begin emergency operations, Memphis was assigned the "pre-dec," or pre-declaration of emergency, tasks by Mississippi Valley Division (MVD).

"Memphis was given the lead because MVN could have been the victim district," Walters explained. "The district would have been unable to perform its regular duties and respond to the emergency. There could be up to 15 feet of water in the greater New Orleans metropolitan area."

Officials from the other supporting districts deployed to Memphis and setup pre-staging teams in Pineville, at Camp



Mike Lowe, Jim Walters, Joey Wagner and Ron Lee discuss the district's next move during the Hurricane Lili threat. The EOC operates during emergencies as well as year-round, creating catastrophic disaster response plans, coordinating with parish and state governments for advance preparedness, and updating existing emergency plans.

the hurricane makes landfall, the district takes over all missions, transitioning control from MVM to MVN.”

“Once the hurricane hits, things go into full gear.”

Lili hit Vermillion Bay on Oct. 3. The next day, the EOC coordinated with Walla Walla and the 249th Engineering Battalion on the distribution and setup of seven power generators. Rock Island purchased and distributed 1.63 million pounds of ice and Vicksburg purchased and distributed 624,000 liters of water to the impacted parishes. Also, Mobile sent a Deployable Tactical Operations Center and support team to Abbeville Parish, where the hurricane struck hardest.

Additionally, Information Management offered support throughout the week with the conversion of the Computer Training Room into a design and support headquarters for the EOC Planning and Response teams.

During the height of the storm, nearly 50 miles of roads in Pointe-aux-Chenes (right), Montegut, Dulac, Cocodrie and Dularge parishes were flooded.

During an emergency, the EOC remains in 24-hour contact with everyone in the field and maintains up-to-the-minute reports.

“For Isidore, we all stayed here for 24 hours; and in 1998, for Hurricane George, we slept here for three nights,” Perry recalled.

All through the year, Readiness Branch coordinates with parish and state governments for advance preparedness, attends levee inspections, creates catastrophic disaster response plans, and updates existing emergency plans. District regulations are constantly updated and debris teams are trained.

“In the event of a major hurricane and storm surge, it could take a minimum of eight weeks to dewater the city of New Orleans,” he said. “We need to always be prepared.”

Also, emergency pumps are pre-positioned at various locks and maintained during the year, from Morgan City to New Orleans. “We distributed 28 of those pumps for the Lili event,” said Perry.

On average, about nine people work in the EOC during an emergency. With the exception of Wagner, Walters and Perry, team members volunteer for the position, agreeing to be ready for deployment. “In times of need we request more people,” said Perry.

All divisions of the district contribute to the emergency response, said Walters. “Without everyone participating as a unified team, we could not respond in an efficient and expedient manner.”

“The district stands ready for any event,” said Perry. “It’s one way the Corps helps the nation.”





Helping hands

Gerard Giroir, Engineering, looks on as co-workers (left to right) Ell Pilie, Tom Hassenboehler and Dennis Strecker put the final touches on a wheelchair ramp for Gerard's raised house. Gerard is recuperating from a recent stroke. Also helping in the weekend ramp-building job were Engineering's Glen Matsuyama, Don Jolissaint, John Interanto and Rick Tillman, and Construction's Larry Yorke.

NOD, from page 13

at the Riverside Hilton. Sanchez and Chopin said they found it to be an interesting, rewarding experience, and feel they had a positive influence on the students. Congressman Jefferson was the luncheon speaker for the annual "Power Ties" event. Chopin said, "I did this last year, and if the kids had been half-stepping, I wouldn't have gone back. But then and now, they were completely prepared for the interview."

MATT-SINKING TOUR — PAO arranged a Nov. 13 media tour for seven Lake Charles area reporters during the mat-sinking unit's first-ever trip to Lake Charles and the Calcasieu Ship Channel. The event helped the media to understand how revetment controls erosion, preserves the area and reduces dredging costs.

KAYAK TRIP — On Nov. 7, kayaker Corrado Filipponi passed by the district on the last leg of his trip down the Mississippi River from Lake Itasca, Minn. Corrado, who is from Switzerland, decided to see the United States by paddling the entire length of the river. He said that instead of seeing the East or West coasts, "I thought I'd see the third

coast, the Mississippi." Corrado, who had never kayaked, learned how to use a kayak in one day and then went to Lake Itasca and started down the river. "I thought it would be a different way to see a country, and I can tell you, it is," he said.



COMPUTER DONATION — The Corps received this thank you letter in October from P.G.T. Beauregard Middle School:

Thank you for the fine Gateway Pentium II computers you donated to our school. They have been placed in science, math, reading and social studies classes. St. Bernard Parish schools are working hard to integrate technology throughout their curriculum. These computers will allow our students and teachers to use Power Point, Excel, Word and

many other software programs in their classrooms. Please extend our gratitude to everyone at the Corps of Engineers in New Orleans!

Sincerely,
Patti Satterlee

On behalf of the faculty and staff of P.G.T. Beauregard Middle School

SCIENCE FAIR — Col. Peter Rowan, Maj. Steve Jeslink (CD), Chris Alfonso (ED), Greg Breerwood (OD), Micheal Stout (OD) and Maurice Falk (PM), spoke to students during McMain Secondary School's Science Career Awareness Week on Nov. 18 and 19.

Information Management

LIBRARY DATABASE — Searching for scholarly publications? The library has a temporary, multi-disciplinary online database that includes full-text articles and the Water Resources Abstract database with scientific literature on water-related topics. Call x2559 for more information.

Shrimp and Crabmeat Soup

by Inez Siegrist, Project Management

3 cups water
1 can Rotel tomatoes
4 toes garlic (minced)
2 large carrots (diced)
1 small onion (chopped)
2 bay leaves
1/8 t. thyme
1 lb. shrimp (peeled and deveined)
1 lb. crab claw meat (cartilage removed)

4 cans Swanson Chicken Broth
1 large red bell pepper (diced)
1 large green bell pepper (diced)
1 cup celery (diced)
3 shallots (sliced thin)
1/4 t. turmeric
1/4 t. red pepper flakes

Have all ingredients prepared and waiting. Bring water and broth to a boil. Boil for 10 minutes. Reduce to a simmer. Add everything except shrimp and crabmeat. Simmer for 30 minutes. Bring back to a boil. Add shrimp and let boil for exactly 2 minutes (any longer will make shrimp tough). Reduce to a simmer. Fold in crabmeat, being careful not to break it up. Simmer until crabmeat is heated through. Serve with French bread or crackers.



Holiday Recipes

No Bake Pumpkin Cheesecake

by Christina Montour, Engineering

Really simple and quick too!

Let a brick of cream cheese to come to room temperature (mixes much easier)

1 15 oz can of pumpkin
1 tbs pumpkin pie spice
2 packages vanilla instant pudding
1 already made graham cracker crust
1 bowl whipped topping

Mix cream cheese, pumpkin, vanilla pudding, and pumpkin pie spice together in a bowl. Mix until well blended. Pour into the graham cracker crust. Top with whipped topping.

Special Bonus Recipe

Jimmys Holiday Brownies

by James Addison, Public Affairs

1. Select your favorite box of brownie mix; recommend double fudge!
2. Mix and prepare baking pan exactly as directed; pre-heat oven to 350.
3. Follow instructions for baking time; recommend "chewy" time.
4. Remove brownies immediately.
5. Sprinkle liberally with red and green jimmies.
6. Dust lightly with powdered sugar for that snowy effect.

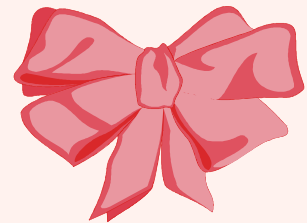
ENJOY!!!

Yvonne's Coconut Cake

by Yvonne Earls, Contracting

1 box white cake (not Angel Food)
1 bag of 16 oz. coconut flakes
1 container of Cool Whip
1 can condensed milk
1 can Coco Lopez (coconut milk; usually found in the Hispanic, not Mexican, section)

Prepare, add ½ bag (8 oz.) of coconut flakes and bake cake to box specifications, preferably on a rectangular mold. While cake is baking, mix both milks in a blender, then cover and keep mix on room temperature. When cake is done, poke it all over with a fork and pour milk mix on top while cake still hot. Let it cool and refrigerate overnight. When ready to serve, mix rest of coconut flakes and Cool Whip and pour the mixture on top. It tastes better when the cake is cold!



NOD at Work

Construction

SMOOTH CUTS — Levee cuts made in St. Mary Parish to alleviate flooding during Hurricane Lili went very smoothly thanks to Lafayette Area Office personnel and LAO Chief Chester Ashley. William Marsalis commented, “All of us can have confidence in Chester and the

LAO. In fact, if Chester tells you that tomorrow is Christmas, you had better hurry home and hang your stockings cause Santa is coming tonight.”

DAMAGE ASSESSMENTS — Maj. Stephen Jeselink organized and directed damage assessment teams from New Orleans to assist the

LAO in preparing damage assessments after Hurricane Lili. The teams traveled to Baton Rouge on Oct. 4 and worked through the weekend with LAO personnel.

LEVEE ENLARGEMENT — Work began on Oct. 17 for the second enlargement of the New Orleans to Venice West Bank Hurricane Protection Levee in Plaquemines Parish. The contract is worth about \$7 million and must be completed by early 2004. The Construction team leader is Ronald Legendre, and Alvin Cloutre and Chuck Freeman will be working on the project as project engineer and project inspector, respectively.

Operations

BAPTISTE DREDGING - Maintenance dredging continues at Baptiste Collette Bayou and Tiger Pass, where the dredged materials are being used to build bird islands and wetlands. The operation is part of the Mississippi River Outlet, Vicinity of Venice project, which has been involved in more wetland creation than any other district project (6,600 acres from 1985-2000). In fact, says Tracy Falk, “Each time one of the waterways is dredged, 100 percent of the dredged material is used beneficially for wetland or bird island creation. It’s one of the few maintenance dredging projects in the district where all of the material can be used this way.” Baptiste Collette, named a “Globally Important Bird Area” by the American Bird Conservancy in 1998, requires dredging on an annual basis, and Tiger Pass requires dredging about once every three years.

BONNET CARRE ADVENTURE — Elmwood Fitness Center, a division of Ochsner Hospital, held their “Spillway Adventure Challenge” race at the Bonnet Carre Spillway



Rebuilding Together — The Corps participated in Rebuilding Together (previously “Christmas in October”) for the fifth year. Almost 40 people, including employees, their children and friends, were on the team. They worked in the Riverbend neighborhood off Carrollton Ave. The co-house captains were Harley Winer, Martha Lucore, Marco Rosamano, Frank Vojkovich and David Wurtzel. “I have been doing renovations for years and I wanted to do something for others,” said Vojkovich. “I was impressed with the dedication of the other co-captains in the time they spent beyond the two Saturdays in October and so I volunteered to be a co-captain.” Rebuilding Together is a Preservation Resource Center program where volunteers repair homes with low income, elderly or handicapped owners -- everything from giving the homes a new coat of paint to building a wheelchair ramp. Other employees pitching in were: Helois Alphonse, Sheryl Austin, Stephen Bland, Lt. Col. Burt, Richard Cordes, LaToya Davis, Cerio Di Marco, Ronald Granier, Susie Hennington, Maj. Stephen Jeselink, Maurya Kilroy, Linda Labure, Dawn Lambert, Marti Lucore, Bob Martinson, Nancy Mayberry, Gib Owen, Randy Persica, Charlie Rome, Alan Schulz, Jan Sutton, Robert Thomson, Alberto Velez, Trudy Vinger and Elizabeth White.

on Nov. 2. The event was a fundraiser for pediatrics at Ochsner. The course traversed nearly 26 miles of pathways in the spillway. Larry Conner, Elmwood race organizer, expressed appreciation of the Bonnet Carre natural resources management staff for helping to make the event a success and said that Elmwood anticipates utilizing the spillway for future races.

PARKED BARGES — Edmond Russo explained why all that articulated concrete mattress is moored on the river in front of the district: it's part of a shore protection test on the south bank of the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet, between miles 38 and 39, planned in February.



Project Management

SCOPING MEETINGS — The Corps initiated scoping meetings in November at Gheen and Chackbay to receive citizen input and answer questions regarding the Donaldsonville to the Gulf feasibility study. The project will close a major gap in the hurricane protection levee system of Southeast Louisiana that stretches from the New Orleans West Bank (west guide levee of Davis Pond) on the east to the proposed Morganza to the Gulf levee on the west. It will also protect the evacuation route on U.S. 90. The 57 miles of hurricane protection would cost about \$188

million including a major control structure at Bayou des Allemands.

HURRICANE STUDY MEETING

— The Corps held an Oct. 9 meeting in Metairie to discuss the Hurricane Protection Louisiana study. Officials from southeastern Louisiana, the governor's office and levee districts attended. The feasibility study, which will look at the possibility of protecting southeast Louisiana from a Category four or five hurricane, could cost up to \$9 million and take six years.

INDIAN VILLAGE PRESENTATION

— Archaeologist Bryan Guevin gave a slide presentation on Oct. 23 in Gonzales about the Houma Indian village behind Houmas House Plantation. The presentation was requested by the Louisiana Division of Archaeology and was based on Guevin's graduate work at LSU in 1983.

COASTAL TOUR FOR OFFICIALS — The Corps hosted a group of officials from the White



Comparing Rivers conference — Corps representatives Jay Sherman and Baxter Mann talk with King Patrick Okoski during a break at "Comparing Rivers: Mississippi and Niger," a Tulane-Corps sponsored conference held Nov. 7-8 at the Old U.S. Mint. In addition to many scholars and officials from Nigeria, Corps participants included: Col. Rowan, Edwin Lyon, Jay Gamble, Cyril Mann, Joaquin Mujica, Troy Constance, Joan Exnicios and Howard Bush.

House and the National Audubon Society, Nov. 6–10, for a tour of current projects. The itinerary included a stop at the Caernarvon and Davis Pond freshwater diversions, the Barataria Waterway and a helicopter tour of the coast.

Public Affairs

POWER TIES FAIR — Mike Sanchez (ED) and Terry Chopin (EEO) "interviewed" eighth grade students from New Orleans Charter Middle School on Nov. 6

See NOD, page 10



Taryn Ramsey and Meagan Mire, and 23 other Hurst Middle School eighth graders plant trees in the Bonnet Carre Spillway on Oct. 22 as part of the Labranche Wetland Watchers Project. The students will plant over 1,000 trees this year to improve the environment around the spillway.

Around the District

Congratulations

to Amanda (IM) and Heath Jones (ED) on the birth of their first child, Georgia Grace, on Oct. 4

to Wilson Maloz (PM), whose daughter, Lisa Marie, received her

on the birth of their daughter, Isabella Lillian, on July 22.

to Stuart Waits (CD) and his wife, Tanya, on the birth of their first child, Zachary Shane, on Nov. 16.



Retired officers visit — MVN received a visit on Oct. 28 from three of its former military officers, their wives and one former civilian employee, all retired: (left to right) Vic Landry (former executive assistant), Linda Willis, Mary Lou Lee, Nita Rutz, Brig. Gen. Robert Lee (district commander, 1981-83), Col. Ed Willis, Project Manager Jack Fredine and Col. Stephen Rutz. Both Willis and Rutz were DDE's during Lee's command. The visitors were briefed on the status of the district and then taken on a tour of Davis Pond and several Southeast Louisiana Urban Flood Control project sites by Jack Fredine and Stan Green (behind the camera), respectively, of Project Management.

Brianne, was placed on the Principal's List for making all A's the first nine weeks at Garyville Magnet School. She has also been selected as Student Council representative.

to Misse Koehn (CT) and her husband, for their adoption of a five-day-old baby girl in October.

to Steven Schinetsky (OD), whose daughter, Johlee, recently won the Acrobats Scholarship audition at the annual Louisiana Association of Dance Masters Petite Miss Dance Pageant. Johlee won the acrobats title for the third year in a row and placed sixth overall in the Petite division for 9-10 year olds. She also won a gold trophy for her acrobatic duo and is eligible to compete at the Dance Masters of America national convention in Las Vegas.

to James Darby Jr. (ED), who coached the King's Grant Crusad-

masters in business administration from Loyola University on Dec. 15.

to Katelyn Schneida (PM) and her husband, Mike, on the birth of their daughters, Mikayla Rose and Ashlyn Rose, on Nov. 14.

to Tommy and Jane Brown (OD)

to Chris Dunn (ED) and John Grieshaber (ED) on the birth of Chris's daughter and John's granddaughter, Margaret Adele, born on Oct. 26.

to Glenn (ED) and Shenetta Brown (PM), whose daughter,

PEANUTS® by Charles M. Schulz





Bosses Day — Operations Division held their Bosses Day luncheon on Nov. 5. Bosses in attendance were Greg Breerwood, Ronnie Ventola, Mike Park, Mike Lowe, Edmond Russo, Steve Schinetsky, Chris Accardo, Cary McNamara, Robert Morgan, Jim Gautreaux, Joaquin Mujica, Pete Serio, Ken Broussard, Ronnie Duke, John Bruza, Jerry Colletti, K.C. Clark and Beth Nord. Secretary Donna Gordy said, “I have worked in many divisions during my 28 years with the Corps. I think I can honestly say on behalf of everyone here, ‘Thank you to our bosses.’ They are truly winners in our book.”

ers, 9 and 10-year-old, football team to a West Jefferson National Minor League Championship on Nov. 9 at King’s Grant Playground on the Westbank.

to Jay Gamble (PM), on the birth of grandchildren: Harbour-Anne Gamble, born Feb. 4 to Jason and Valiere Gamble; and Dacie Rebekah Gamble, born July 22 to Aaron and Tara Gamble.

Kudos

to Bruce Terrell, Ward Purdum, Tim Roth and Dom Elguezabal, who participated last month in “Professional Development Day,” a training event sponsored by the Project Management Institute of New Orleans. The Corps is stressing increased emphasis on PMBP and is conducting formal training here and around the country.

to Ione Cataldo (CT), who recently donated her hair to Locks of Love, a non-profit organization that provides hairpieces to disadvantaged children across the country suffering from long-term medical hair loss.

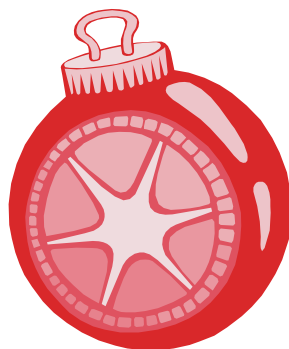
to Ken Ashworth (OD) for his Oct. 5 presentation about Telegraph Road, where the Port Hudson Confederate garrison was attacked by the 1st and 3rd Louisiana Native Guards on May 27, 1863.

to the Lower Mississippi River Chapter of Blacks in Government and Partners in Education for their



Castle Kids brought out about 150 ghosts and goblins to visit with employees and get treats on Oct. 31. Above: Susan, wife of Mike Stout (OD), holds their son, Matthew, while he gets a greeting from Sponge Bob Square Pants (Sally Leingang).

combined \$280 contribution to purchase classroom supplies for Samuel J. Green Middle School students.



Farewell

to Leroy Brown Sr. (IM), who will retire on Jan. 2 after 38 years of service.

to Gerard (Gerry) Satterlee (ED), retiring on Jan. 3.

to Joe Dicharry (PM), also retiring on Jan. 3.

Condolences

to Keith O’Cain (ED), whose father, Edward, passed away on Oct. 31.

TalkBack

Last month we solicited your comments on "Hurricane Protection." This month's winner suggests taking another look at the dismissed Barrier Plan because of its potential benefit to areas such as the Lake Pontchartrain Basin.



Re-visit "Barrier Plan"

The "Barrier Plan" should be re-visited for greater hurricane protection of the New Orleans metro area and the North Shore of Lake Pontchartrain. The original Barrier Plan was dropped from consideration for environmental reasons years ago, in lieu of the "High Level Plan." Also, the North Shore was nowhere near its present state of development to compel more extensive consideration. The High Level Plan has great value for protecting a large portion of greater New Orleans, but it does not fully address the current state of regional development.

At present, storm surges can enter the lake and elevate its level. This condition, in combination with the effects of passing storms, could act to cause greater risk of levee overtopping on the South Shore. With a Barrier Plan enacted against storm threats, the basin could be protected from surge influxes and outflows; water surface elevation; and seiching (pendulous motion of the water surface by wind). Under this condition, the present South Shore levee system could be re-evaluated for adequacy

in effectiveness at higher storm intensities. The North Shore, experiencing tremendous development in the last 20 years, would benefit greatly from a reduced risk of rising water and wave damage along the lake rim. It would also benefit from lessening of the control that heightened lake levels placed on North Shore rivers during drainage of excessive runoff. Recent storm activity from Tropical Storm Isidore and Hurricane Lili demonstrated that North Shore developments are vulnerable to these impacts. A new Barrier Plan might also provide South Shore residents more time to exit the area later in a storm's progression, since the barrier would shield interstate highways from rising water levels and waves.

A new Barrier Plan could also establish measures to blockade storm surges from entering the Lake Pontchartrain Basin. The plan would have to be formulated in an environmentally sensitive manner. Important ecosystem considerations of the region are to strive for sustenance of: (1) the estuarine gradient between the lake and the Gulf, which supports biodiversity in the region, and (2) the exchange of energy and organisms between the estuary's ecosystem linkages. With

See TALKBACK, page 5

TO HAVE YOUR IDEAS
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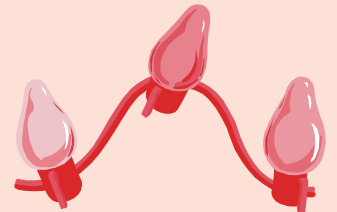
WIN A RESERVED
PARKING SPOT FOR
AN ENTIRE MONTH

**RESPOND BY
JANUARY 12**

LET US KNOW WHAT
YOU THINK ABOUT
THIS MONTH'S
TALKBACK TOPIC:

HOLIDAY MEMORIES

>WHAT WILL YOU CHERISH THE MOST FROM 2002 AND HOW WILL YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN 2003?



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