

Affairs Department

BỘ TƯ LỆNH THÁI BÌNH DƯƠNG HOA KỲ  
The U.S. Pacific Command  
CH2M HILL CONSTRUCTORS, Inc.

# The Pacific Connection

Vol. 43/No. 2  
Spring 2009

G TIỀN ĐƯỜNG TIỂU HỌC HOA PHÚ  
N HOA VANG, TP.ĐÀ NẴNG

ngày 23/11/2008

REMONY HOA PHU PRIMARY SCHOOL  
A VANG DISTRICT, DANANG CITY

3 November, 2008

,Ltd

HUA THIEN HUE CONSTRUCTION COM



**Providing PACOM Humanitarian Assistance in SE Asia**  
*“For people who don’t get a helping hand very often”*



U.S. Army Corps  
of Engineers  
Honolulu District

**BUILDING STRONG<sup>sm</sup>**

# Commander's Comments

## The Honolulu District

*The best place  
where the best people serve  
singularly focused on  
executing quality projects  
relevant, ready,  
responsive and reliable  
and having fun!*



Lt. Col. Jon J. Chytka  
District Commander

Aloha to all,

Another very busy quarter has passed and we've covered a lot of ground and been blessed with plenty of work.

During the last quarter, Chief of Engineers Lt. Gen. Robert Van Antwerp came here and had the opportunity to see some of the Civil Works projects we do for Hawaii, including the award-winning Kaunalapau Harbor breakwater.

New Pacific Ocean Division Commander Brig. Gen. Mark Yenter introduced himself to the District Ohana at a townhall meeting and later visited many of our Civil Works and military construction (MILCON) projects. You can read about Brig. Gen. Yenter's townhall in this issue of the Pacific Connection.

Both Lt. Gen. Van Antwerp and Brig. Gen. Yenter informed me afterwards that they were very impressed with your outstanding work and professionalism.

This quarter we also opened our doors and books to our Pacific Ocean Division extended family during the Command Assistance Visit so they could advise us on becoming

a better organization. During the process they discovered a few "Best Practice nuggets" which they will share with the rest of the Division. I think we all benefited from their efforts.

This quarter's corporate board review of our Operations Plan (OPLAN) objectives went well and we are making steady progress on District-level tasks.

For example, our Technical Integration Group has developed and demonstrated a Master Planning tool that allows planners and lay people alike to quickly see what information is available about a specific piece of land with GPS accuracy. Everyone who's seen the demonstration has been amazed - including Brig. Gen. Yenter. In the same way, we're making progress on many other objectives.

The Resource Management branch recently briefed the District Corporate Board on the 2009 Mid-year Budget Review. The bottom line is that District finances are sound, based on our forecasts, even though we are going through a hiring bonanza.

In contrast to hiring new teammates, we recently lost two great District employees when Val Lee and Colleen Holmes both left Hawaii for jobs on the East Coast. We'll miss them and their great contributions.

Finally, I wanted to mention the importance of the Honolulu District/Pacific Ocean Division Ohana and encourage us to stay in touch with those who have blazed the path before us.

Please refer to the information box below and let our Corps retirees know they are always a part of the Ohana and that we encourage them to receive our correspondence and partake in our special events.

Please continue to do the great things you do for Hawaii, the Pacific region and our nation.

Mahalo!

**BUILDING STRONG**

## Personal For: Army Corps Retirees

**From:** Lt. Col. Jon J. Chytka, District Commander

I would like to send you our monthly newsletter, *The District Communicator* and occasional invites to special events here at the District (for example, Organization Day, Safety Day, Pau Hanas, etc). My intent is to allow you and other alumni the opportunity to stay connected with our Ohana to the extent in which you desire. Honolulu District continues to build upon the outstanding legacy you were so much a part of during your time in the District.

I would like to add your email address to a consolidated list of our District alumni so we can better communicate current information on District activities, retiree benefits, invitations to special events, retired annuitant job opportunities and news on our team members.

If you are interested in receiving periodic emails from me, please send your email address to our Executive Secretary, Ms. Ximena Williams (nelly.x.williams@usace.army.mil) or call at (808) 438-1069. I also encourage you to forward this to other alumni who may not be receiving the *Pacific Connection*.

Honolulu District Commander.....	Lt. Col. Jon J. Chytka
Honolulu District Deputy Commander.....	Maj. John Henderson
Deputy for Project Management.....	Anthony Paresa
Chief, Public Affairs .....	Joseph Bonfiglio
<i>Pacific Connection</i> Editor.....	Dino W. Buchanan

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### ON THE COVER

Paul Bowen poses with school children at the Hoa Phu Primary School at a ground breaking ceremony. Bowen gave a short speech and passed out the soccer balls shown here at the construction site located in the highlands outside Da Nang, Vietnam. Courtesy Photo



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# District Names 2008's Best Employees

Honolulu District held its 2008 Awards Townhall in January in which five individual and one project delivery team were honored for their special accomplishments during the calendar year.

Photos by Dino W. Buchanan



## Project Delivery Team of the Year

*The Replace Hydrant Fuel System Project Delivery Team (left to right): Kevin Araki, Kalani Smith, Jennifer Ko, Kris Nakashima, Malcom Hirano of Defense Logistics Agency and Rick McKittrick pose with District Commander Lt. Col. Jon J. Chytka (center) and the District's PDT of the Year koa wood trophy. Editor's Note: Several of the PDT members were unavailable for the photo.*



**District Commander Lt. Col. Jon J. Chytka presents awards to:**

- (Top) Maria Billena for the 2008 Ikaika Loa Award for Administrative Support Employee of the Year.**
- (Middle) Brian Chung for the 2008 Ikaika Loa Award for Technical Employee of the Year.**
- (Bottom) Uyen Tran for the 2008 Ikaika Loa Award for Professional Employee of the Year.**
- (Left, Middle) Timothy Phillips for the 2008 Ikaika Loa Award for Leader of the Year.**
- (Left) Gary Shirakata for the 2008 Ikaika Loa Award for Project Manager of the Year.**



# District Engineers Join 2009 Engineer Week Activities

By Honolulu District Public Affairs

More than 160 members of Hawaii's engineering community gathered at the Hale Koa's Banyan Tree Showroom Feb. 17 for a luncheon to kickoff Engineers Week 2009, which was held Feb. 15 to Feb. 21.

"Engineers Week is a great opportunity to showcase the accomplishments of our professional engineers, architects, and surveyors," said Todd Barnes, chief of Engineering & Construction, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Honolulu District and post president, Society of American Military Engineers.

Jointly hosted by the Honolulu Post of the Society of American Military Engineers (SAME) and the Hawaii Council of Engineering Societies (HCES), the luncheon featured keynote speaker, Theodore A. Peck, administrator, Hawaii State Energy Office, Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism (DBEDT). Peck, a former naval engineer, consultant and energy management specialist discussed Hawaii's Clean Energy Initiative at the luncheon. Barnes and his staff orchestrated the District's Engineers Week activities along with HCES.

Engineers Week activities included: signing an Engineers Week Proclamation by Hawaii Gov. Linda Lingle and Lt. Gov. Duke Aiona on Feb. 10; signing an Engineers Week Proclamation and photo opportunity with Honolulu Mayor Mufi Hannemann, Feb. 13; Engineers Week exhibits at Kahala Mall where exhibits from many organizations were set up for display Feb. 14 to Feb. 21; Engineers Week Interactive Science and Robotics Exhibit at Kahala Mall held on Feb. 21; and the Engineers Week Awards Banquet Feb. 21, attended by more than 250 members, friends and family of the 15 organizations within the Hawaii Council of Engineering Societies.

The Hawaii Council of Engineering Societies (HCES) is composed of: the Association for the Advancement of Cost Engineering (AACEI); American Council of Engineering



**Hawaii Lt. Gov. Duke Aiona (center, right behind desk) poses with about 30 Hawaii Council of Engineering Societies engineers during the presentation of the 2009 Engineers Week Proclamation on Feb. 10 at the State Capitol. Lt. Governor Aiona and Hawaii Governor Linda Lingle proclaimed Feb. 15-21 as "Engineers Week" in Hawaii. Walter Billingsley, chair, Hawaii Council of Engineering Societies stands to the right of Lt. Gov. Aiona.** Photo courtesy of Office of the Lieutenant Governor, State of Hawaii

Companies of Hawaii (ACECH); American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE); American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME); Cold-Formed Steel Engineers Institute (CFSEI); Engineers and Architects of Hawaii (EAH); Filipino American League of Engineers and Architects (FALEA); Hawaii Association of Land Surveyors (HALS); Hawaii Society of Professional Engineers

(HSPE); The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers Inc (IEEE); Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE); Society of American Military Engineers (SAME); Structural Engineers Association of Hawaii (SEAOH); The Society of Fire Protection Engineers (SFPE); and the University of Hawaii College of Engineering.



**Honolulu Mayor Mufi Hannemann (center, back row) poses with Hawaii Council of Engineering Societies engineers during the presentation of the 2009 Engineers Week Proclamation in the mayor's office on Feb. 13. Attending the ceremony was Todd Barnes (third from right, back row), Honolulu District's chief of Engineering & Construction and Honolulu post president, Society of American Military Engineers.** Courtesy photo.



# 2009 WORLD WETLANDS DAY Corps Joins Activities at Kawainui Marsh

Oahu residents celebrated World Wetlands Day 2009 (WWD) in mid-February at Kawainui Marsh in Kailua where the transfer of the marsh from the City and County of Honolulu to Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) was officially completed. This year's World Wetlands Day theme was "Mauka to Makai -Wetlands connect us all."

The Kawainui and Hamakua Marsh Complex was designated a Ramsar Wetlands of International Importance in 2005. These wetlands are important as habitat for Hawaii's endangered waterbirds, significant as cultural sites and valuable as flood control features for Kailua.

The Kawainui Marsh transfer allows a major wetland restoration project by the Army Corps of Engineers and Hawaii DLNR to move forward and establishes the DLNR, Division of Forestry and Wildlife as the managers for the wildlife sanctuary at Kawainui and Hamakua for Hawaii's endangered waterbirds with community support in restoration and educational programs.

During the official ceremonies Honolulu District's Civil Engineer Nani Shimaburo (photo at right) gave a short presentation how the Corps of Engineers is transforming the unused marsh lands to valuable water bird habitat in support of the international wetland network and on the Corps Kawainui Marsh Restoration Project. She also provided information on Corps programs and activities in the Corps booth.

WWD patrons also listened to guest speakers Hawaii DLNR Chairperson Laura H. Thielen, State Sen. Jill Tokuda and State Rep. Cynthia Thielen, and later visited organization displays and took short excursions into various sites around the marsh.



Courtesy Photos

# ON THE HORIZON: A "TIDAL WAVE" OF CONSTRUCTION

## Division Commander Says District Workload Surging Rapidly

By Dino W. Buchanan  
Pacific Connection Editor

At a townhall briefing for Honolulu District employees in late January, Pacific Ocean Division Commander Brig. Gen. Mark W. Yenter said that the Division is about to be awash in construction work in support of local, host nation and national initiatives.

Brig. Gen Yenter emphasized that the Division's four Districts need to continue to execute the core competencies of military construction (MILCON), Civil Works, regulatory and Inter-Agency Support (IIS).

"Our number one priority is still to support the Global War on Terror," Yenter said. "We will continue to provide quality support as needed by Headquarters USACE."

Yenter explained that the workload facing the Division will expand rapidly in the very near future as will the optempo for the start of new projects.

"We need to start building the bench with quality engineers and support staff now to support the huge increase in workload," Yenter said. "I am urging all District commanders to aggressively recruit and hire personnel to meet our future needs."

Yenter added that many of the future recruits whom the District's will be hiring are those who'll help the Division "move from Good to Great as we execute the Pacific Ocean Division Implementation Plan."

Pacific Ocean Division's total workload over the course of the four years is expected to soar from a FY08 total of \$1.7 billion to a total of \$16.2 billion (FY09-12). The Division-wide workload doubles between FY09 and FY10 and then rises another 12 percent in FY11.

The largest portion of the construction wave is host nation construction – mainly for the buildup of the Army and associated infrastructure facilities at Pyeongtaek, South Korea as the Army moves from Yongsan Garrison in Seoul.

"We can't lose sight of our current



(Above) Pacific Ocean Division Commander Brig. Gen. Mark Yenter slices up the "tidal wave" of future construction work of the Division to Honolulu District employees during a townhall meeting in January at Fort Shafter Flats. (Below) Brig. Gen. Yenter explains what he foresees as the Division's key tasks as the Division braces for a significant increase in workload. Photos By Dino W. Buchanan



workload, but we must also start vigorously preparing for the tidal wave of construction which is about to envelop us," Yenter said.

Within the four year period Honolulu District expects to have about \$1.175 billion in Army projects; \$52 million in IIS projects; \$44 million in Air Force construction; \$71 million in Department of Defense (DoD) construction; and about \$100.1 million for civil works projects across the Pacific in Hawaii, American Samoa, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) and Guam.

Yenter added that while the U.S. Navy has control over construction for the impending U.S. force realignment

for the relocation of 8,000 Marines from Okinawa to Guam, he expects there may be some additional "spillover work" available to the Corps as well during the next few years.

"The total construction costs in Guam will be well over \$5 billion, Yenter said. "We may see some of the peripheral work heading our way. Any additional projects would just add to our increased workload."

Prior to highlighting some of the projects in the future workload, Yenter told District employees he pretty much "tells you like it is" and prefers that those under his command do the same with customers and stakeholders.

He added that he expects all employees – whether they're an engineer, secretary or office manager - to "think like (they're) a commander."

"When you're confronted with an issue, problem or an emergent situation all I ask is that you think - "what would the general do?" Yenter said. "Do your best to confront and solve the situation and above all be a team player. Remember that everyone in the Division can support you and that you can support anyone in the Division or District. Don't be afraid to take risks, but always remember that high quality construction is our Division's hallmark."

## District *'Building Strong'* at SAME Pacific Regional Meeting

The Society of American Military Engineers (SAME) held its Joint Pacific-Northwest Regional Training and Education Conference in late February at the Hilton Hawaiian Village in Honolulu.

Dr. David Pittman, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Engineer Research and Development Center (ERDC) presentation "Developing Technologies for the Warfighter and the Nation" highlighted heavy Corps participation and attendance at the annual conference.

This year's theme was "Century of the Pacific."

Twenty-three speakers from across the region gave informative talks on a variety of topics. Heavy emphasis was placed on energy and sustainability and how future military engineering projects have begun focusing on these important issues.

Special guest speakers included Senator Daniel K. Inouye's Military Liaison, Walter Kaneakua; State Director, Office of Senator Daniel Akaka, Mike Kitamura; and U.S. Pacific Command Chief of Staff, Maj. Gen. Stephen Tom

The event is the Pacific's premier military engineering conference bringing together government leaders, military engineers, and their engineering partners.



**Dr. David Pittman, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Engineer Research and Development Center (ERDC), gives his presentation "Developing Technologies for the Warfighter and the Nation" at the SAME Joint Pacific-Northwest Regional Training and Education Conference.** Photo by Joseph Bonfiglio

Subject matter experts briefed on plans for Pacific Rim infrastructure growth – focusing on Hawaii, Guam, Japan, Korea and Alaska.

"As our economy has continued to become more global and many of our

sustaining member firms operate in both the Pacific and Northwest Regions, the conference is an opportunity to bring together our various partners", said Todd Barnes, President of the SAME Honolulu Post and Honolulu District's chief of Engineering & Construction. "The networking opportunity for firms currently doing or desiring to do business with the Department of Defense and state and local governments is very valuable."

Other Corps of Engineers personnel also making presentations at the conference were: Cindy Barger, Project Manager Civil & Public Works Branch, Honolulu District on "Enabling Our Partner's Honolulu District's Civil Works Strategic Vision"; Far East District's Douglas Bliss on "Geotechnical Initiatives U.S. Forces Restationing in Korea"; Alaska District's Patricia Opheen on "Climate Change and Water Resources Challenges in Alaska/Arctic"; Pacific Ocean Division's David Lau on "Overview of Contemporary Trend"; Honolulu District's Chief of Civil Works Derek Chow on "Integrated Comprehensive Planning for Water Resources Development"; USACE Northwest Division Deputy Commander Col. Miroslav P. Kurka on "Northwest Division Future Work"; and Pacific Ocean Division Deputy Commander Col. Lawrence Sansone on "USACE-Pacific Ocean Division Future Work."



**Pacific Ocean Division Deputy Commander Col. Lawrence Sansone (left) and Col. Miroslav P. Kurka, current Northwest Division Deputy Commander and former Afghanistan Engineer District Commander, pose with former Pacific Ocean Division Commander Col. (Ret.) Robin R. Cababa at the 2009 SAME Joint Pacific-Northwest Regional Training and Education Conference held in Honolulu.** Photo by Joseph Bonfiglio

# Providing PACOM Humanitarian Assistance in SE Asia:

By Paul Bowen

Honolulu District Project Manager

*In this retrospective Paul Bowen shares his experiences while coordinating Humanitarian Assistance (HA) Projects for the U.S. Pacific Command (PACOM) in 2008 - 2009.*

A telephone call can change your life. When I heard my supervisor's voice on the telephone (Derek Chow, Honolulu District chief of Civil Works), I assumed he wanted a routine update on recent project activities on Palau.

Instead, he surprised me by asking if I wanted to take on project management duties in the planning and construction or renovation of 25 U.S. Pacific Command Humanitarian Assistance projects in Indonesia, Cambodia, and Vietnam.

Things haven't stopped moving since then.

These projects consisted of constructing and renovating schools, medical clinics and flood management operations centers.

The purpose of the PACOM Humanitarian Assistance mission is help the residents improve their lives and thereby enhance and create a positive image of the United States in Southeast Asia countries. Sites are selected with the assistance of the local U.S. Embassy country team and foreign governments in locations where the U.S. can provide assistance to developing countries in the region.

In Indonesia, most of the work was renovation or construction of new additions to primary and secondary schools. Construction of latrine facilities and water systems had a primary emphasis as they were deemed very important for the health of the students.

In Cambodia and Vietnam projects consisted of a combination of constructing new schools as well as large scale renovations of high schools and the construction of multi-story medical clinics and flood management operation centers.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is able to assist PACOM with project management oversight in the areas of contracting, funds management and oversight of construction. The Corps' objective is to provide quality construction at an affordable price.

I know most Corps engineers reading this have - from time to time - had projects or tasks they felt were so complicated and insurmountable that they wanted to just run away. My initial thoughts for taking on the management of these projects were that this was going to be difficult and a challenge.

The total budget for oversight and construction for the 25 projects was approximately \$7.2 million. The cost of construction for each project varied from simple school and latrine renovations in Indonesia at a cost of \$50,000 to major new construction and renovation projects in Cambodia and Vietnam at more than \$500,000.

Following a week of analyzing the suggested project budgets, cost estimates, construction costs and scopes of work, I realized these projects were in need of a lot of effort and creativity to make them successful. Based on the contractor bids, the budget was significantly short-funded for construction, but I believed that with



**Paul Bowen mugs with primary school children in the mountain village of Sutopati, Central Java, Indonesia where the PACOM team is building a new wing on the school as well as a new latrine system.** Courtesy Photo



**Workers assemble scaffolds at Kampot High School in Cambodia where an extensive renovation will replace and repair the concrete roof system and associated support structure.** Courtesy Photo

cooperation and teamwork the projects could be accomplished.

It took several months of intense work from multiple sources, including essential financial knowledge and funds management expertise from my co-worker (Honolulu District biologist) Cindy Barger and a plan was finally put in place. This was accomplished with key support from Derek Chow and Honolulu District Deputy Chief, Programs and Project Management Steve Cayetano.

There were numerous consultations and the willingness to provide additional funding from the customer, Lt. Col. Jeffery Harris. PACOM. PACOM Humanitarian Assistance Program Manager. This assistance proved invaluable. Technical support advice also came from Rod Markuten, Mark Schnabel and Senior Executive Jim Berrson of the Corps' Pacific Ocean Division.

In the end, a financial plan was put in place to build 24 of the 25 projects. The sole abbreviated project, a flood management operation

center in Vietnam was halted with a complete design and has a very good chance of being constructed with next year's PACOM HA funding. The process demonstrated to me the power of unrelenting perseverance and working as a team to accomplish a common goal.

A large amount of contract support was required from the Corps' Far East District (FED) to facilitate a very tight timetable of fund availability. The decision was made to use an existing Far East District indefinite delivery/ indefinite quantity (IDIQ) contract. FED contracting experts issued the contracts on short notice and obtained the services of CH2M Hill as the prime contractor. CH2M Hill served as the overall project manager and subcontracted the necessary quality assurance, design and construction contractors to execute the projects.

In October 2008, I scheduled inspection visits of the specific construction sites to observe construction methods, adherence of the work to contract drawings and overall quality of construction.

All of the new construction being built consisted of stone or concrete foundations connected to poured-in-place steel-reinforced concrete beams progressing to a ring beam for roof truss connections. An infill of locally made bricks or cinderblocks was used to fill in the area between the support columns and the foundation and ring beams. The infill was skim-coated with a mixture of sand and cement to create a relatively smooth finished surface. Windows were locally made wood with single pane glass and pivoted outward in an awning style. Roof trusses were made of locally-harvested wood and anchored to concrete ring beams at the top of the wall, while the roof materials were generally clay tile in Central Java and corrugated galvanized steel sheeting in Sulawesi due to necessity of material transport by boat. Roofing in Cambodia and



## *“For people who don’t get a helping hand very often”*

Vietnam varied depending upon the availability and existing style of the location.

Some of the larger school renovations in Cambodia were required due to concrete roofs that exhibited various states of failure. Remediation of the existing schools varied as some schools were 50 years old with solid brick walls and locking-peg wood joinery. Other more recently built schools had the same concrete post and beam construction as our present day construction. In addition to renovation inside the buildings, the construction/renovation of latrines and bathroom facilities was a large part of every renovation and construction site.

A few construction site locations in Indonesia were quite small and a constant point of consideration at these sites again was the location of the latrines in relation to water wells. In addition, inspections were conducted on site safety and personal protective equipment at every location with recommendations for corrective actions.

My first destination was Indonesia, which had 13 project sites divided into two regions, Central Java and Sulawesi. Most of the sites were a combination of construction of new and/or renovations of primary schools and associated sanitation facilities. One school site, Sutopati, is only 27 miles from the very active Indonesian Merapi volcano.

Nearly all of the schools were located in remote villages where western visitors are a rare sight. The Sulawesi locations were accessible only by boat as they were located on Lembah Island where villages are small and mostly reliant on fishing for a living. Many had colorful painted boats on the waterfront tied to rickety, old wooden docks which conjure picturesque storybook images.

When walking onto various school grounds children would peep over window ledges to see who the strangers were. Control of classes by the teachers became difficult and sometimes the teachers gave up and let the children come out to meet us and shake hands. Most of the children knew bits of English and wanted to impress me with their knowledge. “Good Day, Mister” in a loud boisterous voice was a favorite.

In anticipation of meeting the children at the different schools, I purchased a dozen soccer balls and bags of Halloween candy to hand out.

Because the children were very eager to play with a real soccer ball, the balls were first given to a teacher or principal to avoid a mini-riot over ownership. After an hour or so of inspections and meeting the students, each site visit usually ended with numerous good-byes by teachers and watching children wildly kicking soccer balls as possibly induced by a sugar high from the aforementioned Halloween candy.

After the Indonesia site inspections I flew via Bangkok - where I slept on the marble airport floor for five hours in transit - to Phnom Penh, Cambodia. This tactic is a bit normal for me as through my previous Asia travel experiences I’ve learned the best places to catch a few winks are at airports.

Upon arrival in Phnom Penh, I bypassed the taxi stand to take a “tuk tuk” to the hotel. This



**Paul Bowen poses with school children at the Hoa Phu Primary School at a ground breaking ceremony. Bowen gave a short speech and passed out the soccer balls shown here at the construction site located in the highlands outside Da Nang, Vietnam. Courtesy Photo**

is a small two-wheeled, open air carriage towed behind an often smoke-belching motorcycle. Using this transport has a distinct colonial feel as your senses are bombarded by all the sights and smells of the local population. I prefer the tuk tuk as it allows me to experience what an average person in Phnom Penh feels everyday.

In Cambodia, the seven project sites consisted of renovations and new construction of primary schools, high schools and medical clinics. I was pleased with work progress and the dedication of the workers. Issues such as how to evaluate bamboo scaffolding presented unique work site challenges.

Traveling from Phnom Penh to remote sites involved long trips on rough roads, past miles of rice paddies and small villages. The people are quite friendly and warm toward Americans and they often wanted to stand beside me to see how tall I was. The local quality assurance (QA) contractor for Cambodia and Vietnam - New Horizons Chief Executive Officer John Troha - was my guide. Troha is an architect by trade who hails from Pennsylvania and moved to Vietnam 19 years ago penniless. He has a striking resemblance to a pirate, a trait he did not hide and enjoys immensely.

Vietnam was the last stop for the trip and I didn’t know what to expect as it was my first time in country. Arriving at Da Nang International airport, the first thing I saw was the prominently displayed Republic of Vietnam red flag with the single star, which drove home exactly where I was. I soon discovered people are pretty much the same everywhere regardless of nationality or politics. As work was just getting underway, there was not much to inspect other than mobilization to sites and initial civil works issues.

In the small village of Hoa Phu (a commune just outside Da Nang) where a new school was to be built, the locals insisted on having a groundbreaking ceremony on very short notice. Since I was the only available U.S. government representative, I was requested to give a speech. I hurriedly assembled a 15 minute speech the night before and spoke to almost 100 people the

following day via a translator. My speech was well received and the post-ceremony handshaking went on afterwards for 30 minutes.

I spent my last night in the capital city Hanoi, discussing projects with the U.S. Embassy staff. At the end of the day, I walked around the back streets of Hanoi into the old section of the city which features a distinct French-flavored cluster of closely-encroaching buildings on cobblestone streets.

In this area I saw a motorbike repair shop where mechanic work was conducted on the sidewalk - grease included - and a carpentry shop with clouds of sawdust flying about while they were making shelving. In the middle of this beehive of everyday activity I sipped a Hanoi-brand beer at a narrow café no more than 10 feet wide watching the world go by. For a person like me who appreciates adventure, it didn’t get any better than this.

I left Vietnam on a plane bound for Tokyo for my return trip home to my office in Palau. A four hour nap on a familiar piece of tile floor at the New Tokyo International Airport (Narita) felt like my home turf already.

At some point during this trip I came to a realization I had the greatest Corps job in the world. It felt good providing assistance to other people of other countries while in the service of my country. I was having adventures most people only dream about. And while I was initially shell-shocked by the details and scale of these projects, I continue to now feel that your career and life’s opportunities are what you make of them, and I’m resolute in thanks for my life’s work opportunities - and those opportunities to help the less fortunate people of Southeast Asia.

While emptying my suitcase in Palau of assorted Indonesian Rupiah, Vietnamese Dong, Cambodian Riel and Thai Baht I visualized the fact that while I was in Southeast Asia I was part engineer, part Doctor Livingston and part diplomat - a surreal experience in providing valuable and tangible humanitarian assistance for people who don’t get a helping hand very often.

# District Volunteers Continue to Make a Difference

By **Dino W. Buchanan**  
Pacific Connection Editor

## Jon Hosaka: Adventure Awaits You

Honolulu District Mechanical Engineer Jon Hosaka returned in February from his 2008 deployment to Iraq where he worked as part of the Japan District's Forward Engineering Support Team - Advanced (FEST-A).

In the last *Pacific Connection* Hosaka detailed one of his reasons for deploying as "that he believes USACE's Iraq military construction program's ultimate purpose is to serve the Soldiers."

"I wanted to experience the Soldier's life and to do my part and support where they needed us most - the "rebuilding" of Iraq," Hosaka said in a recent interview.

Hosaka said deploying gave him added field experience while "learning International Building Codes and standards as well as being able to relay good construction practices to the local contractors."

"The results of our efforts were safer facilities and a higher quality level of construction. Our efforts made a big difference."

He added that the mission impacted the citizens of Iraq on several levels.

"In the short-term, the construction provided steady work for approximately 1,100 contract laborers on site from

Iraq and neighboring countries. We were primarily constructing a Theatre Internment Facility and Reconciliation Center (TIFRC), which is essentially a half-way house for persons caught doing questionable activities. The mid-term impact is the TIFRC is designed to take these people off the street, house, educate, train and reform the detainees who will eventually be released back as productive members of society. The short and mid-term benefits help the long term stabilization and positive growth of Iraq. A stabilized Iraq helps make Iraq and surrounding countries safer."

Hosaka said that no matter what job civilian personnel had, everyone worked to the best of their abilities.

"Many personnel were working in positions that were different from their normal jobs (at home). We had Design Engineers doing Quality Assurance, IT personnel doing construction inspections, project managers reviewing designs, unskilled laborers doing construction for the first time and using unfamiliar materials. Everyone pulled together, relied on individual strengths, covered each other's weaknesses and together we got the job done."

Hosaka said the FEST's "unique blend of experience served Task Force 134 (TF-134) well as we became the on-site engineering team with authority for inspection and acceptance of all portions of work within the TIFRC."

"Building the \$80 million TIFRC was like constructing a small city. The 90-acre TIFRC included administration and dining facilities, laundries, a medical facility, special detainee housing units and cells, dog kennel, classrooms, textile mill, brick factory, recreation areas, water, sewage treatment and electrical plants."



**Jon Hosaka prepares to inspect the roof of a dog kennel in the TIFRC under construction near Taji, Iraq.** Courtesy Photo

Despite the aggressive work schedule Hosaka said he always felt safe.

"Since the TIFRC was located on the secure compound, we didn't have to travel outside the wire. We did, however, have the opportunity to travel through Baghdad and visit and tour Saddam Hussein's various palaces and compounds."

Hosaka added that there were constant reminders all around - bunkers, armed guards and reports of incidences happening on and off base - that helped keep everyone vigilant.

"Once while taking a shower, I heard a garbled, incomprehensible announcement over the Big Voice intercom. After quickly finishing up, hair wet, toiletry bag in hand, shorts and T-shirt on and towel over the shoulder, I went outside to see Soldiers in full battle gear running frantically around the living area site and banging on doors to get others out. As I was about to duck into a Scud Bunker, one of the Soldiers poked his head out. He must have noticed the obvious concern on my face, then he smiled politely and said 'Oh...this is only an exercise.' I still laugh about it now."

"Generally the environment is not as bad as you see or read about in the news. Similar to back home, when you read about an incident that may have happened in your town or near your neighborhood, you may ask yourself 'Did that happen here?' You may talk about the incident at work, but other than that, you still feel safe at home. The same applies in Iraq - incidents may happen in your 'back yard', but you still feel safe."

Hosaka said although work hours were long and days ran into each other, "working with the local contractors, raising concerns, having the Corps and contractors implement your suggestions, and seeing that the facilities the team constructed met higher quality and life safety standards in comparison to other facilities on base, was very satisfying and rewarding."



**Jon Hosaka (left) smiles as Central District Commander Col. Ronald Light (a former Honolulu District commander) describes Jon's contributions to GRD before presenting Jon with a Central District coin for his efforts. Hosaka was deployed to Taji, Iraq as part of a FEST working on the Theater Internment Facility and Reconciliation Center (TIFRC). The Taji TIFRC is a \$71.3 million project of Central District, Gulf Region Division and a key part of the strategy for combating counterinsurgency.** Courtesy Photo



(Above, right) Cartographer Josette Pullen in full protective gear spends time in a bunker with a co-worker after a vehicle borne explosive device (VBED) detonated near her base in Afghanistan. No one in the compound was hurt during the incident. Pullen (top, right photo) works at her desk creating GIS products for the AED engineers and staff. Courtesy Photos

**By Dino W. Buchanan**  
Pacific Connection Editor

**Josette Pullen:  
Take 2 In Afghanistan**

Honolulu District Cartographer Josette Pullen recently returned to Afghanistan for her third GWOT deployment and her second tour at Afghanistan Engineer District in Kabul.

At home, Pullen works for the District's Technical Integration Group producing geographic information system (GIS) products.

"I volunteered to go back to the Afghanistan Engineer District as a Cartographer. I had deployed there before in 2006 as a volunteer (through the Honolulu District) and knew it was a place I would want to go back to and work at again."

Pullen currently works at the Qalaa House Compound in Kabul, Afghanistan.

"It's a smaller compound and we all live and work together. It really does become like a family," Pullen said.

"I hope to provide quality GIS support to the civilians and Soldiers at AED. Like data management and analysis for our programs as well as providing digital and hard copy cartographic products," Pullen said in a

recent email from Afghanistan. "It makes me feel good to be able to provide the GIS support and help our personnel to get their job done. As in any district, we are all parts on the same machine. Everyone working together is what makes the machine run. It feels good to do my part."

Pullen says getting to Afghanistan and the inherent deployment process "has become a lot easier.

"The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Deployment Center (in Winchester, Virginia, at the home of the Corps' Transat-

lantic Programs Center) was very good about giving a list of medical, training and administration requirements that needed to be completed before getting to their office. Because so many Corps personnel have deployed since we started going overseas for GWOT, the deployment center has learned what works best and developed a great process."

Pullen recommends that if you're a Honolulu District employee and are planning to deploy, you should notify Tripler Army Medical Center as soon as possible so that you can get on their schedule for the medical screenings.

"It can be difficult to get screening appointments at Tripler on short notice. But you can also go to non-military doctors and for the medical screenings and get reimbursed for it later."

She also adds that all of her deployments "have been exciting, rewarding experiences."

"This is my third deployment. To have the opportunity to work in this environment, which is not your normal day to day life, is an experience you will never forget. You can spend six months or a year at home and not really have much of that time stick out in your memory, but you will never forget the time you spent overseas deployed for GWOT. The work is exciting, the people are interesting and you get to see different places."



\*Afghanistan Engineer District\*  
Project Sites

**District Volunteers Continue to Make a Difference**

# EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH

December



**Paul Kai** is nominated for successfully passing the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) exam to become a LEED Accredited Professional (AP). Paul earned this title by having a thorough understanding of green building practices and principles and the LEED Rating System. As an Accredited Professional, Paul earns one point toward LEED Certification on “green” building projects. This is important for the Corps as since FY08, all Corps projects are required to achieve Silver level of LEED certification. Paul’s initiative and dedication on his projects helps produce the highest quality level of work.

January



**Jon Hosaka** is recognized for volunteering to serve with the POJ FEST-A team on a deployment to Iraq Sept. 2008 to Jan. 2009. Jon was able to transfer his project load, take care of all family matters, execute all pre-deployment training and medical screening and depart with in a 30 day period. While in Iraq, Jon served as the mechanical engineer subject matter expert on the team. Upon Jon’s return last month, the POJ FEST-A Team Chief sent laudatory comments about Jon’s performance stating that, “His technical expertise, attention to detail during facility inspections, and work ethic have contributed greatly to the success of our mission.”

February



**Loren Zulick** is recognized for his outstanding support to HED’s mission execution and Garrison-Hawaii’s Cultural Resources Program (CRP). The CRP has become a major focus in delivering critical programs and projects for Garrison-Hawaii, often marred by litigation. To ensure the CRP is synchronized with HED’s execution mission, Loren took the initiative to hold meetings with Garrison’s CRP team. In these meetings Loren carefully leads to identify project execution issues/mitigation measures to keep project construction schedules on track. In spite of challenges presented, Loren’s skills as a leader and team builder allow projects to move forward and his efforts have contributed to the overall success of the District mission.

February



**Maj. Matthew Luzzatto** is recognized for his exemplary service. His recent Real Estate brief to Brig. Gen. Yenter, Lt. Col. Chytka and Todd Barnes and his participation in the Command Assistance Visit clearly displayed his excellent leadership acumen and commitment to excellence. He skillfully managed & led the transition/transformation of Real Estate Division to a more efficient, higher performing office with improved mission executions & customer satisfaction. His creative, highly effective initiatives included restructuring of the branch, more productive/focused staff meetings, recruitment actions & implementation of the RE Action Tracker. He is truly moving Real Estate & Honolulu District forward from Good to Great.

March



**Roxane Iseri** continuously demonstrates teamwork, service & willingness to go the extra mile preparing PPMD’s operating budget. She has streamlined and simplified PPMD’s budget process. With little direction, she does much of the leg work ahead of time, utilizing historic information, anticipating new requirements, reflecting employees’ training and travel schedule before conducting face to face discussions with the branch chiefs. By completing these tasks ahead of time, she relieves branch chiefs of mundane administrative requirements allowing them to concentrate on project execution. Roxane’s positive can-do attitude and continued high caliber of support to the managers makes her a valued employee.

March



**Nani Shimabuku** is recognized for her outstanding service at community functions. During 2009 World Wetland Day activities at Kawaiinui Marsh, Nani spoke along with State Sen. Jill Tokuda, State Rep. Cynthia Thielen, DLNR Chairperson Laura Thielen and other dignitaries on the importance of wetlands around the world to about 150 people. Nani talked about how the Corps is transforming the unused marsh lands to valuable water bird habitat in support of the international wetland network. Along with her speaking on the Corps Kawaiinui Marsh Restoration Project, Nani provided information on Corps programs and activities in the Corps booth.

# Testing Oahu's Future Engineers

More than 20 Honolulu District employees spent a Saturday morning in early February providing outreach to more than 100 students from 31 public and private schools on Oahu who competed in the Oahu Chapter's 26th annual MATHCOUNTS Competition at Kamehameha Schools.

Corps employees served as moderator, proctors and scorers for the competition, running the competition, assisting in distribution and collection of test materials, monitoring student activities during the competition, and grading the completed tests.

"The Honolulu District has actively supported this outreach activity for the past 13 years and those who have previously participated found the competition to be a rewarding experience and an excellent opportunity to maintain the visibility of the Corps of Engineers in the engineering community," said District MATHCOUNTS coordinator, the Oahu MATHCOUNTS moderator and Chief, Construction Branch Louis Muzzarini.

Students wrestled with compounded interest, common fractions, palindromes, convex pentagons, word problems, probability and much more. The Oahu "mathletes" competed in a series of brisk "rounds" as a team or as individuals, with the top 12 challengers later facing off in a countdown match.

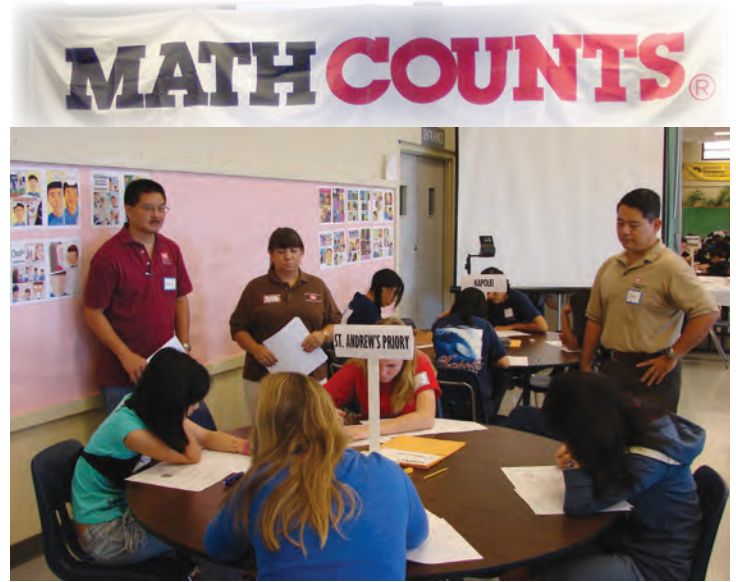
The MATHCOUNTS Program is sponsored by the National Society of Professional Engineers to emphasize the importance of mathematical skills in the development of future technology and encourage students to excel in these areas.

MATHCOUNTS builds skills, promotes strategic problem solving and challenges students to sharpen their analytical abilities by bringing together the sixth-through eighth-grade students in a lively exchange of mathematical ideas through competition. Standards are set by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics.

Similar to a school sporting event, students are coached throughout the year at the school level to participate as individuals and as teams in a series of written and oral competitions at the chapter, state levels until the final 228 students are selected from 57 states and territories for the national competition.

Each February four students are selected to represent their school at a local chapter MATHCOUNTS competition.

The winners of this competition progress to the state level competition in March for a chance to represent the State of Hawaii at the national finals. The Hawaii state competition was held March 7, with the top four individuals and coach representing Hawaii heading to the national finals in Orlando, FL in May.



*(Top) Honolulu District's Kevin Nishimura, JoAnne Brostrom, and Jon Yoshinaga proctor the MATHCOUNTS exam for St. Andrew's Priory school during the competition held in early February at Kamehameha Schools on Oahu.*

*(Center) Civil Engineer Ed Yoshimura (standing foreground) serves as a proctor during the MATHCOUNTS testing.*

*(Photo above) Civil Engineer Grace Nakaoka and Chief, Construction Branch Louis Muzzarini watch students from LeJardin Academy take their MATHCOUNTS tests during the competition. Photos Courtesy of Louis Muzzarini*



# Fighting Fire with Prevention

Preventing fire in the workplace can be easy; repairing the damage after a fire isn't. That's why it is important to be aware of the fire hazards in your surroundings and eliminate them before they cause serious or even fatal damage.

## Seven Ways to prevent workplace fires:

1. Practice good worksite housekeeping habits. Do not let trash and waste material accumulate. Empty trash bins regularly. Oily rags must be stored and disposed of in covered metal containers.
2. Do not store materials or allow clutter to accumulate around exits and stairways. Fire doors should be kept closed. Fire exits should always remain free and accessible.
3. A common cause of workplace fires is machinery or equipment which becomes overheated. Be sure to follow operating guidelines to prevent overloading. Follow manufacturer's instructions in using and maintaining equipment.
4. Electrical malfunctions are also a major contributor to fires in the workplace. Electrical equipment should be checked regularly for signs of trouble such as damaged cords or worn insulation. Never overload circuits, and never force circuit breakers to remain in the "on" position. Only qualified and authorized personnel should carry out electrical repairs and maintenance, but everyone is responsible for being alert to the signs of electrical malfunction.



5. It is important to understand the fire hazards of the materials with which you work. They may be combustible, flammable, explosive or reactive. Read the labels and know where to locate the Material Safety Data Sheet for further information. Carefully follow any instructions when you are using any materials which might pose hazards.

6. Be sure to observe any smoking restrictions. Smoke only in designated areas. Smoking in unauthorized areas such as storage rooms has resulted in serious fires. Do not empty ashtrays until smoking materials are cold.

7. Observe security policies and be alert to any suspicious persons or activities. Many workplace fires are set by arsonists; do your part to prevent these incidents.

Do you know what to do?

Are you ready to deal with a possible workplace fire? Make sure

your safety training answers these questions:

- ◆ What is your responsibility in case of fire - to report the fire, fight it, or leave the building?
- ◆ Where is the fire alarm located?
- ◆ Where are the fire extinguishers located?
- ◆ Do you know how to use the fire extinguisher and on what kinds of fires?
- ◆ Do you know how to use other fire emergency equipment such as fire blankets, hoses and sprinklers?
- ◆ What safety procedures should you carry out in case of a fire? Are you responsible for shutting down equipment or operations before you leave?
- ◆ Do you know where you and your co-workers are supposed to meet for a head count after leaving the building?

The best way to fight a fire is to prevent it from happening in the first place. Do your part to stop fires before they start.

## RM Chief Holmes Leaves District for Fort Belvoir

Resource Management Chief Colleen Holmes has left the District to become the Resource Management Officer for the 1st Information Operations Command at Fort Belvoir, Va.

Holmes had served as the Resource Management Officer for Honolulu District since August 2003.

Previously she had served in a wide variety of comptroller assignments, including serving as both a program and a budget analyst for the U.S. Army Europe and Seventh Army, ADCSOPS for Training. In 1996, she returned to Hawaii and served the 25th Infantry Division (Light) and USAR-Hawaii as Budget Officer and Chief, Resource Integration.

Colleen is a graduate of the Army Management Staff College and the U.S. Army War College. She was born and raised in Hawaii where she studied at the University of Hawaii. She received her baccalaureate degree in French Literature from the University of the State of New York and holds a Masters of Science in Business Administration from Boston University and a Masters in Strategic Studies from the U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Pa.

She recently was conferred a Masters in Public Administration from the University of Hawaii at Manoa. She is a Certified Defense Financial Manager and is a member of the American Society of Military Comptrollers. Good Luck Colleen!



**Resource Management Chief Colleen Holmes accepts her Commander's Civilian Service Award from District Commander Lt. Col. Jon J. Chytka prior to a recent staff meeting. Holmes recently left Honolulu District to become the Resource Management Officer for the 1st Information Operations Command at Fort Belvoir, Va. Photo By Joseph Bonfiglio**

## PM Chief Val Lee Departs for Corps NAD Job in New York City

After nearly 25 years of exemplary service to Honolulu District, Program Management Chief Val Lee is moving to the Corps' North Atlantic Division where she'll serve as the Division S & A Manager at the New York District.

Lee started as a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers intern in June 1984 and was promoted to Budget Analyst in Resource Management Office after internship in June 1986. She later became a Program Analyst in the Construction-Operations Division, Construction Service Branch, office Engineering Section in January 1990. Lee was promoted to Supervisory Program Analyst in Construction Management Division, Program Management Branch in July 1991 and then to a Corps of Engineers Financial Management System (CEFMS) Project Manager in May 1996.

In 2007 she became a founding member of the initial P2 Management Cell, which was being implemented as the new organization structure within the Programs and Project Management Division (PPMD). During the period of August 2003 to April 2009, Lee served as the Chief, Programs Management Branch, PPMD and was a highly valued counsel to the District Commander and key leadership within the District on financial matters related to program and project budgets, consolidated overhead accounts and other key District budget issues. Her expertise was always called upon on workload/budget/manpower related issues in the District and will be missed. Good Luck Val!

*(At left) District Commander Lt. Col. Jon J. Chytka talks about Val Lee's (right) career contributions to Honolulu District at her farewell luncheon in April. Photo By Dino W. Buchanan*



### *In Memorium: John S. Ravina*

**Honolulu District is saddened to announce that former Corps employee John S. Ravina, 78, passed away March 29, 2009 in Boise, Idaho, according to Tony Flanders, a former Pacific Ocean Division chief of Construction.**

**John Ravina was the head of the Foundations, Material and Survey Branch and retired in the early 1990s.**

**Ravina was a long-time resident of Kailua, HI. Funeral and services were held April 3, 2009 at the Cloverdale Funeral Home in Boise.**

**The thoughts and prayers of the Pacific Ocean Division and Honolulu District Ohana go out to the Ravina family.**

# Aloha

## Aloha to our GWOT volunteers

**“Ike” Borja, Sonny Sapida  
Farley Watanabe, Josette  
Pullen, Toni Agustin and  
Ray Kong  
who are deployed to  
Iraq, Afghanistan and  
Kosovo**

## Welcome

John Mueller  
Meris Bantilan-Smith  
Jonathan Swanson  
Bob Deroche  
Laura Rohrer  
Yvette Storay  
Amy Klein  
Cindy Nomura

## Welcome Back

George Olson  
Robert Ishihara  
Raymond Takamiya

## Goodbye

Val Lee  
Colleen Holmes



## Army Corps Chief Visits Pohakuloa Training Area

*Chief of Engineers Lt. Gen. Robert Van Antwerp (third from left) listens to a briefing about Pohakuloa Training Area construction projects on the island of Hawaii in January. Also listening are (second from right) Pacific Ocean Division Commander Brig. Gen. Mark Yenter and Pohakuloa Training Area Commander Lt. Col. Warline S. Richardson. Photo by 1st Lt. Susan Knapik*

## 2009 Corps of Engineers Workshop Theme: “A Year for Change”

The 14th Annual U.S. Army Corps of Engineers workshop for architects, engineers, construction contractors and others in related fields, interested in doing business with the Corps will be held April 21, 2009, from 7:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the Ala Moana Hotel in Honolulu. This year’s theme is “2009 – A Year for Change.” The focus is informing private sector companies about what they must do to successfully execute work with the Corps. The agenda includes updates on future Corps projects. Most of the day will be devoted to a wide range of breakout sessions covering various government initiatives and technical subjects. Honolulu District functional area specialists will participate and there will be ample time for questions.

**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
Honolulu Engineer District  
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Fort Shafter, HI 96858-5440**