



Open Channels

Mississippi Valley Division welcomes new commander



In his farewell remarks, Maj. Gen. John W. Peabody (above) said, "I have been thrilled to be

the Commander of the Mississippi Valley Division because it gave me the opportunity to live my dream of being a soldier, a leader and to make a positive difference for our Nation. I must give most of the credit to the thousands of talented civilians in the MVD workforce for their continuing and unfailing ability to get the job done."



Brig. Gen. Peter A. (Duke) DeLuca (above) assuming command of Mississippi Valley Division, Sep. 24, said, "I am excited to be here, and MVD is an assignment that I truly wanted. I am committed to doing a good job as your new commander because the Mississippi River Watershed is extremely important to our society and to our Nation's economic well-being."



Presiding over the change of command, Lt. Gen. Thomas Bostick (left) said, "Both MG Peabody and BG DeLuca are true Soldiers, scholars and statesmen," and he references the honor of being a Corps commander with a quote from Robert E. Lee, "The glory of duty done, and the honor of the integrity of principle."

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Meet the new guy - Brig. Gen. Peter A. (Duke) DeLuca

Brigadier General Peter A. (Duke) DeLuca will be the 37th or 41st Mississippi Valley Division commander.

It all depends on how you count commanders that served two tours leading the division.

DeLuca grew up outside Philadelphia, the son of a sports writer. He is a self-proclaimed "Philly sports nut" - Eagles, Phillies, 76ers, Flyers.

His love of sports is not limited to that of a spectator. "I love golf, skiing, and riding my bike," DeLuca said.

He likes kayaking and hopes he will have the opportunity to paddle his way along the rivers in the Division.

His sports dream list includes learning to shoot skeet; however, he has dropped the wish to summit Everest.

As division employees learned on the August Mississippi River Commission

Low-water Inspection Trip, the general is a voracious reader. He read every document, and annotated questions to garner a greater understanding of the division and the MRC.

DeLuca's other hobbies include cooking and increasing his skills as a mixologist.

The University of Pennsylvania graduate has dual bachelor degrees in economics and mechanical engineering as well as a masters in international affairs from Columbia.

He is an engineer, an Eurasian foreign area officer, a Defense Language Institute graduate and has served in fellowships at Columbia University, the George C. Marshall Center for European Security Studies and Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government.

His Army service has allowed him to work in 29 states and 23 countries, including three years in combat zones. These op-



Brig. Gen. Peter A. (Duke) DeLuca, incoming 37th or 41st Mississippi Valley Division Commander.

portunities offered remarkable experiences and the chance to work with the finest and most amazing American citizens and foreign partners.

DeLuca is married to Marianne Paciulli, with whom he attended his senior prom in high school. After a short gap of 35 years, they married, conceding to the force of destiny.

They have a son in college.



People, projects and partnerships highlight the Mississippi River Commission's low water inspection trip



Dr. Dale Chapman, President of the Lewis and Clark Community College, leads more than 50 stakeholders from the Community College aboard the M/V Miss at the St. Louis District's Lock #24. (US-ACE photo by Bob Anderson.)

With the theme of adding “Value to the Nation,” the Mississippi River Commission travelled more than 2,000 miles on its namesake river and flagship motor vessel, met with thousands of people, listened to stakeholders explain their projects and forged stronger partnerships with organizations dedicated to enhancing the world’s third largest watershed.

While conducting public meetings in La Cross, Wisc., Dubuque, Iowa, Alton, Ill., New Madrid, Mo., Memphis, Tenn., Vicksburg, Miss., and Morgan City, La., the MRC heard

testimony from 88 partners, stakeholders, and local residents. Additionally, staff members representing 30 state and federal congressional offices attended the meetings. The MRC members met 2,600 citizens during the semiannual inspection trip.

Trip highlights

- **Engaging** with 21 of the 59 mayors who have joined the Mississippi River Cities and Towns Initiative. The MRC also held

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ceremonial signings of the “Memorandum of Common Purpose” at every public meeting.

- **Christening** the USACE Motor Vessel GEORGE C. GRUGETT Aug. 20 in Memphis. George Grugett, who served two years as a World War II bomber pilot (47 missions), 35 years as a civil engineer with the Memphis District, and 33 years as Executive Vice President of the Mississippi Valley Flood Control Association, attended. The event was accentuated with a flyover by 3 World War II training aircraft, T-6 Texans. More than 200 people attended the event.

- **Touring** the U.S. Geological Survey’s Upper Midwest Environmental Science Center, a research and data management complex in Lacrosse, Wisc. The Center is working on ways to prevent Asian carp, invasive species, from entering the Great Lakes and other key waterways.

- **Listening** to the Iowa Economic Development Authority and Soy Transportation Coalition describe the economic value derived from Mississippi River navigation, and the projected economic impacts from the Panama Canal expansion.

- **Touring** the Rock Island District’s Mississippi River Project Office near Pleasant Valley, Iowa. The project office has massive infrastructure repair capabilities and serves as a repository for flood fighting supplies.

- **Signing** a memorandum of understanding with the National Great Rivers Research and Education Center, located near Alton, Ill. The MOU establishes our watershed vision partnership with the Center and the Lewis and Clark Community College.

- **Signing** the Lower Mississippi River Strategic Conservation Plan with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services and the Engineering Research and Development Center. The plan emphasizes collaboration on species data collection and river engineering science and will help protect three river species and serves as a model across the nation.

- **Discussing** the joint Mississippi River diversion research collaboration with Louisiana coastal protection leaders.

Call for Action issued

During the two week journey, the MRC also composed and issued a “Call to Action” asking for:

- A strong national vision for investment in infrastructure that compels the United States to unify watershed-level projects.
- New avenues for funding and executing water resources missions through more aggressive priorities and investment strategies.
- Streamlined water resource development processes that serve national economic and environmental improvements.

“Our transformation from a farming economy into the world’s preeminent world power – “the inevitable empire” – resulted from a strong vision and a massive commitment to develop the full potential of the Greater Mississippi Basin,” said Maj. Gen. John Peabody, Mississippi Valley Division commander and MRC president. “The incredible investment our nation made in transportation infrastructure allowed us to develop a unified system of rivers, canals, roads and railways that connect the riches of the American interior to its coastal ports and overseas markets.”

The MRC’s call to action comes when increasing global trade provides an opportunity for America to meet the world’s demands, while fostering economic security.

The Illinois Corn Growers’ Association acknowledged that over the next 40 years, the world will need to produce enough food to feed 9 billion people daily, which will equal the amount of food produced over the previous 10,000 years.

The MRC is chartered to recommend policy and work programs, report on flood risk modifications, navigational and environmental projects as well as make the semiannual inspections trips.



Home again

By Kavanaugh Breazeale
MVK Public Affairs

David Carraway, environmental specialist with the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, Vicksburg District, recently returned from deployment in Kabul, Afghanistan, in support of Overseas Contingency Operations.

While deployed, he was a cartographer and became the geographic information system team lead for the Afghanistan Engineer District-North. As a cartographer, he supported the Army through the analysis of geospatial resources. For his work during his deployment, Carraway was awarded the NATO Medal, the Commander's Award for Civilian Service, and the Secretary of Defense Medal for the Global War on Terrorism.

"Deploying in support of Overseas Contingency Operations resulted in an awesome opportunity to interact with a diverse team of talented professionals in a challenging environment," said Carraway. "Currently, I look forward to opportunities to contribute teamwork and geospatial skills refined during my deployment to help improve regulatory program efficiency and emergency management disaster response, recovery, and risk reduction capabilities for the Vicksburg District and, specifically, the people which we serve."

As a member of the Regulatory Branch, Enforcement Section, he will perform jurisdictional determinations of wetlands and other waters and addressing compliance issues pertaining to the Clean Water Act and the Rivers and Harbors Act.

"Deploying in support of Overseas Contingency Operations resulted in an awesome opportunity to interact with a diverse team of talented professionals in a challenging environment." ~ David Carraway.



David Carraway happily display his certificate from the Afghanistan Engineer District-North for his Civilian Combat Service Pin while deployed to Kabul, Afghanistan.

The Utica, Miss., native earned an associate degree from Copiah-Lincoln Community College and a bachelor's degree in forestry with an emphasis in wildlife management from Mississippi State University. He has also completed graduate courses from Pennsylvania State University in geographic information systems.

The Corps supports the U.S. Army by deploying civilian volunteers to support the army's mission worldwide. These civilians provide a unique expertise to the fighting forces, including a reach-back capability that taps the USACE expertise as a whole. The Corps continues to play a key role in defense operations as well as responding to natural disasters at home and abroad.

Since 2002, the Vicksburg District has deployed over 180 civilians to Iraq and Afghanistan.



Welcome home!

By Pam Vedros
MVD Public Affairs

Al Lee, Director of Regional Business for the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers' Mississippi Valley Division, recently returned from deployment to Kabul, Afghanistan, in support of overseas contingency operations.

While deployed, he was the Director for the Joint Program Integration Office, which is part of U.S. Forces Afghanistan Joint Engineers. Lee oversaw the program management and operations for water and infrastructure, military construction, environmental, real estate and operational energy divisions. The JPIO provides technical engineering and program management expertise in the areas of military construction, real estate, environmental, operational energy and water and infrastructure for U.S. Forces - Afghanistan, to support the International Security Assistance Force Campaign Plan in Afghanistan.

Lee is a member of the federal government's Senior Executive Service. The SES is comprised of the men and women charged with leading the continuing transformation of government.

As Regional Business Director, he advises the Mississippi Valley Division commander and the Mississippi River Commission president, on directing and managing the engineering, construction, operations and real estate activities for flood control, navigation, water supply and environmental restoration projects within the division.

Lee is a distinguished military graduate of Georgia Southern University and holds a master's degree in engineering management from St. Martins University. His military schooling includes the Engineer Officer Basic and Advanced Courses, the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College and the U.S. Army War College. He served as a fellow in the Secretary of Defense Corporate Fel-



Al Lee, Mississippi Valley Division regional business director, talks to Sabine Faltenbacher, regional business, during a welcome home ceremony. (USACE Photo by Bob Anderson)

lows Program, assigned to Caterpillar Inc., in Peoria, Ill.

The Corps supports the U.S. Army by deploying members of its civilian workforce who volunteer to support the Army's mission worldwide. Since 2003, the Mississippi Valley Division and its six districts have deployed 1,182 civilians to Iraq and Afghanistan – Several individuals have volunteered to return for subsequent deployments. This civilian workforce provides a unique expertise to the fighting forces, including a reach-back capability that taps the expertise of the Corps of Engineers as a whole. The Corps continues to play a key role in defense operations as well as responding to natural disasters, both at home and abroad.

The Mississippi Valley Division is responsible for water resources engineering solutions in a 370,000-square-mile area, extending from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico and encompassing portions of 12 states. Work is carried out by district offices located in St. Paul, Minn.; Rock Island, Ill.; St. Louis, Mo.; Memphis, Tenn.; Vicksburg, Miss.; and New Orleans, La.



579th Engineer Detachment (FEST-M) cases colors

By Marilyn Phipps
579th Engineer Detachment (FEST-M) Public Affairs

The Aug. 2 ceremony marked the sixth time that 579th Engineer Detachment inactivated after completing its mission.

The detachment's history encompasses service during World War II in the Pacific Theater, Vietnam, the European Theater during the Cold War and Afghanistan.

The unit was constituted March 9, 1944, in the U.S. Army as the 1797th Engineer Foundry Detachment and activated at Camp Claiborne, La. Much like the 579th FEST-M, the small foundry detachments had as few as 17 assigned personnel that produced molten metal for bomb and shell casings.

Six months later, on Nov. 1, 1944, the foundry detachment was reorganized and redesignated



579th Engineer Detachment (FEST-M) Commander Major Ronnie Davis and Command Sgt. Maj. Thomas Geddings render final salute to the unit's cased colors held by Sgt. 1st Class Jeffrey Moran during the Aug. 2 inactivation ceremony. (USACE photo by Alfred Dulaney)

ated as the 1797th Engineer Service Detachment. Six months later on May 1, 1945, the unit was redesignated as the 1797th Engineer Foundry Detachment. Following service in the Pacific Theater on April 15, 1946, the detachment was inactivated in the Philippines after fighting in New Guinea, Leyte and Luzon. The 1797th earned the Philippine Presidential Unit Citation Streamer em-

broidered "17 OCTOBER 1944 to 4 JULY 1945."

Following World War II, the Army underwent force reduction and reorganization. The 1797th was redesignated as the 579th Engineer Foundry Detachment on Nov. 18, 1948, and allotted to the Regular Army. Two months later it was activated at Fort Belvoir, Va., on Jan. 17, 1949.

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On Sep. 14, 1953, it was inactivated at Fort Belvoir.

The Army underwent another reorganization and restructuring, and the 579th was called up again. On Oct. 6, 1955, the unit was redesignated as the 579th Engineer Detachment and activated 23 days later on Oct. 29, 1955, at Fort Belvoir. On Dec. 21, 1955, the 579th was inactivated once again.

The 579th Engineer Detachment was activated at Fort Bragg, N.C., on July 1, 1955 and later sent to Vietnam as a terrain detachment. The detachment received campaign participation credit for Vietnam: Defense; Counteroffensive; Counteroffensive, Phase II; Counteroffensive, Phase III; Tet Counteroffensive; Counteroffensive, Phase IV; Counteroffensive, Phase V; Counteroffensive, Phase VI; Tet 69/Counteroffensive; Summer-Fall 1969; Winter-Spring 1970; Sanctu-

ary Counteroffensive; Counteroffensive, Phase VII; Consolidation I. The 579th earned the Meritorious Unit Commendation (Army), Streamer embroidered "VIETNAM 1966-1968" as well as the Republic of Vietnam Civil Action Honor Medal, First Class, Streamer embroidered "VIETNAM 1968-1969." Inactivation came again Oct. 16, 1971, in Vietnam.

During the Cold War the 579th activated again on Sep. 16, 1980, in Germany. The unit was inactivated once again on Aug. 15, 1988, in Germany.

It would be almost 20 years before the 579th was activated again. On Oct. 16, 2007, the unit was once again reactivated in Vicksburg, Miss. It The unit was designated as the 579th Engineer Detachment (Forward Engineer Support Team – Main) affectionately known as the 579th FEST-M.

The 36-member team of Soldiers and Civilians took its collective ar-

chitecture, engineering, logistics and resource management skill sets to Afghanistan in March 2010 to support the government of Afghanistan, International Security Assistance Forces, the United Nations and the U.S. State Department in operations to build capacity and support the government of Afghanistan.

The Aug. 2 ceremony saw the unit case the colors in preparation for the official inactivation on September 15, 2013, in Vicksburg, Miss.

It could be just a matter of time before the 579th Engineer Detachment comes back to life with a seventh activation ceremony.





Motor Vessel Grugett christening honors lifetime of public service

By Brenda Beasley
Memphis District Public Affairs

“Woooooh!”

The blare from the mighty air horn announces “I’m Motor Vessel George C. Grugett and I’m here to join the fleet!” A few seconds later, more horns blare in welcome response, filling the afternoon air with sounds reminiscent of early days on the Mississippi River.

In a ceremony steeped in maritime tradition, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Memphis District christened the Motor Vessel George C. Grugett at Beale Street Landing in Memphis Aug. 20.

“In the name of the United States, I christen thee Motor Vessel George C. Grugett. Bless her and all who sail her,” proclaims Judi Murray, the sponsor, and George C. Grugett, in unison. Then Murray, Grugett’s sister, shatters the ceremonial bottle of champagne against the gleaming capstan of the new towboat.

Memphis District Commander Col. Jeffrey A. Anderson orders the master of the vessel, Captain Tony Johnston, to place the vessel in service to the Memphis District, the Mississippi Valley Division and the inland waterways of the United States.

“Bring her to life!” he commands. Her colors are hoisted and her horn is blown to announce her arrival for duty.

Christening ceremonies for newly constructed vessels date back many centuries. Jewish and Christian ceremonies involved wine, water and the intercession of the saints, said Memphis District Deputy Commander Lt. Col. T. Dave Patton, the master of ceremonies. Ship launchings in the Ot-



As part of the ceremony a flyover by three AT-6 World War II era trainers paid tribute to George Grugett, a bomber pilot from 1943 to 1945.

toman Empire included prayers and often a sacrifice of sheep. The Vikings are even believed to have offered human sacrifices.

Traditions evolved. A female breaks a bottle of champagne, the most elite of wine, to christen the vessel. She becomes the sponsor of the ship.

Superstitions also evolved. It is a bad omen if the champagne bottle does not break. The ship is considered unlucky if does not receive a proper christening.

While cultures and customs dictate the tone and activities of the ceremony, the purpose remains unchanged: to ask divine protection for the vessel and its crew while navigating the powerful and often unpredictable ways of rivers and oceans.

“In keeping with tradition, specifically the wine and blessing tradition, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers celebrates new additions to our fleet with ceremonies like the one today,” said Patton. “We also use the occasion to celebrate honored and respected members of our Corps family.”

Named in honor of George C. Grugett, the \$12.4 million river towboat replaces the MV Strong and has an important role in ensuring the continued success of the district’s

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critical navigation mission, he added.

A prelude to the christening, the ceremony began in the hearing room onboard the MV Mississippi where Mississippi River Commission President Maj. Gen. John Peabody related the distinguished and extensive public service career of Grugett.

“George represents the greatest generation,” said Peabody. “The one that really secured our freedom against the greatest threat, by many estimates, that it has ever faced. The threat of fascism and totalitarianism that was a wave in the inner war years between World War I and World War II, and of course, George was born at the beginning of that period in 1924.”

The McConnell, Tenn., native attended school in Dyersburg, Tenn., for 11 years and graduated in 1942 from Byars Hall High School in Covington, Tenn. He attended the University of Alabama and the University of Mississippi.

Grugett served as an Army Air Corps bomber pilot in World War II from 1943 to 1945. As a captain with the 12th Air Force, he flew 47 bomber missions over Italy and Southern Europe. His early military background shaped his future pursuits and motivated him to strive for a lifetime of excellence, said Peabody.

During the next 35 years, he honed his understanding of the Army civil works mission as an USACE employee. He rose to oversee multimillion dollar projects, mostly related to flood control and navigation along the lower Mississippi River.

“He built a whole bunch of projects,” said Peabody. “The one I think of the most is the Huxtable Pumping Plant, which is the largest pumping plant that we have on the Mississippi River.” Located in Mariana, Ark., this plant is responsible for evacuat-

ing water from the St. Francis Basin and provides crucial to providing flood protection.

After retiring from USACE, Grugett served another 33 years as vice president of the influential Mississippi Valley Flood Control Association, where he was a tireless advocate of the Mississippi River and Tributaries Project. This \$13 billion program grew out of the Flood Control Act of 1928 - passed in response to the “Great Flood” of 1927 - and brought forth a new “room for the river” approach that incorporated natural features such as wetlands and floodplains.

On behalf of the MRC commissioners, Peabody said, “We can never possibly repay you the debt of gratitude that, not just this valley, but our entire country owes you for your service. You have truly built a legacy that will endure for the nation. I think it’ll endure forever. Others will build upon it, but you have established a foundation that is sound, secure and solid, and that will live, basically forever.”

Then Grugett humbly shared his past experiences and feelings on the event before moving to the pier for the vessel christening.

“When I was called - about two years ago - they asked me if I would be embarrassed. I said, wait a minute, I remember some of the regulations. The one I remember the most is that to have a Corps of Engineers vessel named after you, you had to be dead! I said I don’t want any part of that mess,” recalled Grugett with laugh. “But, they assured me all of that had been taken care of. So I told them I’d be greatly honored, and I am.”

And in honor of this man whose boundless work and devotion to duty has enriched and protected the lives of millions of people, said Peabody, the Motor Vessel George C. Grugett bears his name in continuation to his legacy of public service.”



And the award goes to...



Well done!

Maj. Gen. John Peabody congratulates Environmental Section Team Leader Chris Koepfel after presenting the FY2011 MVD Planning Excellence award to Koepfel for his work on the Interagency Education and Interpretive Center at Rolling Rock, Miss. He became the MVD liaison with the Choctaw and Chickasaw Indian Tribes after a Native American village dating back to the 1300 and 1400s was unearthed at the site.



Congratulations!

Maj. Gen. John Peabody (right), Mississippi Valley Division commander, presented a National Water Safety award to Carma Hanson, Grand Forks Safe Kids coordinator. Also in the photo is Col. Dan Koprowski (left), St. Paul District commander, and Scott Tichy, St. Paul District park ranger, who nominated Hanson for this award. (USACE photo by Shannon Bauer.)

Open Channels

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Mississippi Valley Division



Division Engineer

Brig. Gen. Peter A. (Duke) Deluca

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Around the bend

To the Professionals of the Mississippi Valley Division,

It has been an honor and a privilege for Kelly and me to have served with the wonderful professionals of this historic division, supporting the nation's interests in this vital region.

As I noted upon assuming command two years ago, what makes this division so critical is the character of the Mississippi River watershed that drains the vast natural and agricultural wealth of this great nation. Including the Intercoastal Waterway system, the United States has a larger navigable waterway system than the rest of the world combined. This unique combination of natural riches and interior navigable waterways provides the United States with a geopolitical advantage that is unmatched anywhere in the world. It provided the decisive basis for our nation's wealth, and our historical development into the world's pre-eminent power. Those of us fortunate enough to have been entrusted with managing the heartland of this system have a sacred duty to apply our best efforts - all of our intellectual and physical energy - to ensure this natural and national treasure delivers the greatest value, in both economic leverage and natural heritage, as is possible.

The specifics of our obligations are driven by the character of our responsibilities. The Mississippi Valley Division includes responsibility for an area stretching across the nation's borders from north to south, containing the nation's waterway navigation super highway, which is always and everywhere prone to flooding often on a massive scale. It contains enormous inherent environmental value and impact, and is the centerpiece of the largest navigable watershed in the

world encompassing over 40 percent of the continental United States. In addition to the constant threat of flooding, it faces two critical threats - the accelerating deterioration of its infrastructure, and rapid Gulf coastal land loss, both of which threaten the center of gravity for U.S. greatness.

Upon leaving command, it is important to reflect and consider not what has been accomplished - which I defer to others to determine - but more importantly what remains to be done. My reflections have caused me to conclude there are a few imperatives for this region that MVD's leaders might ponder, which I offer here for consideration:

1. Understand issues; convey value. The United States has progressed to such a stage of development that we have begun to take for granted that which was built out in the last century. As a result, today the vast majority of our citizens generally believe that the natural hazards which dominated - and just as frequently destroyed - the lives of our ancestors have all been solved by the water resource infrastructure the Corps has built out. It is up to us to understand in detail and with clarity the value of the water resource infrastructure we are responsible to manage. We must also understand the obstacles and challenges we face to sustain value for water resources the Corps historically delivered, and the value that could be delivered well into the future if the Corps is properly resourced. We must convey this in simple, clear ways that are so convincing that they compel collective national, but not necessarily federal, action that effectively addresses the most critical issues.

2. Re-invent operations. Eight years of command in three USACE regions have enforced and reinforced the reality that the nation's water resource infrastructure is

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deteriorating faster than our resources or capabilities enable us to maintain it. This reality is consistent across the nation, although various projects are realizing this deterioration at different rates and have reached different stages of decay. What is clear is that, given the state of the federal fiscal challenges and political debate, major significant infusions of funding to effectively address this challenge within the Corps' current management systems will not occur. Although a national plan for this challenge is important - and we have the such a plan in our "Asset Management" initiative - I have concluded that it is incumbent on each USACE region to take on this issue, as the details vary by region, and project. It is my belief that each region should objectively examine how we carry out our Operations and Maintenance responsibilities, determine how to more effectively and efficiently execute those responsibilities, and just as importantly decide what we can no longer afford to execute. Up to this point, all efforts in this regard have been tentative and inadequate. If we are to continue delivering the most important value for our responsibilities, then we must assess and make major changes to very nature of not just what we do, but how we do it. Nothing could be harder, for this requires that we challenge our very culture, and change that which with we are most familiar. It is impossible for most of us to imagine any alternative, yet nothing could be more essential to the future viability of the Corps to the nation.

3. Mississippi River watershed vision. The Mississippi River Commission's "200 Year Working Vision" is one of a few documents that encompass the entire central watershed of the United States. It is an extremely well-crafted effort, but one which will never achieve perfection until all inter-

ests agree with it, and act in concert to carry out its meaning. This is a Sisyphean task that can never end, but it can be successful through constant dialogue. To approach its full potential, the vision must be continuously emphasized in every possible venue, its details discussed and transparently subjected to critique, alternative variations tested and socialized, then periodically modified and improved. Most critically, all interests in the watershed must feel they have a stake in its development, and all interests must be willing to compromise on important details, so that a balanced outcome which addresses all interests in meaningful ways can be realized.

4. Leverage the power of the Mississippi River Commission. It took me five years to fully appreciate the full power of the MRC. Its broad authorities, breadth and depth of relationships with stakeholders and partners from every conceivable interest area, and the impact of its recommendations, decisions and periodic statements, all indicate that an expansive application of the MRC's influence is not only appropriate, but necessary. The impact of the recently published "Call to Action" on a host of decision-makers, including the Chief of Engineers, and the decision by the Commissioners to increase the regularity of trips into tributary river systems, are important steps in this direction.

5. Develop a More Comprehensive Approach to Manage the Mississippi River and Tributaries (MR&T) Project. The largest "project" in the Corps is really a massive multigenerational program with an astonishing 44 to 1 return on investment, preventing an amazing \$630 billion in damages, the vast majority of which are accrued in Louisiana. The vision of General Jadwin, as modified in the execution of many details over

Farewell (continued on page 14)



Farewell (continued from page 13)

the years, proved prophetic during the Great Flood of 2011, followed the next year by a historic drought, both of which garnered intense national attention. The natural temptation might be to effectively "declare victory" and assume that the vision has been achieved, and to rest on our laurels. Nothing could be more dangerous.

First, another even greater flood incorporating different meteorological conditions is lurking somewhere in our future, against which we must challenge ourselves to imagine and prepare. Second, we came perilously closer to catastrophic failure at multiple points along the MR&T system than is commonly realized outside of MVD. Third, only about 60 percent of the damages have been resourced for repair, and some damages - such as the massive impact to the Morganza Floodway - have yet to be confirmed because alternative solutions are still under study. Finally, the current MR&T programming and management system does not account for significant unfunded repairs due to a massive flood event; nor does it provide an ability to readily incorporate significantly changed conditions such as major unfunded damages, different flow lines, or a changed meteorological basis for design.

Therefore, it is incumbent on the leaders of this region to take account of the above realities. We should challenge meteorological imagination and scientific inquiry, complete a new flow line study, finish all damage assessments, then finally synchronize all of the disparate aspects of the MR&T Program - Channel Improvement, Dredging, Levees, Flood Repairs, Maintenance, New Construction, New Design Parameters, and so forth - into a comprehensive integrated approach (or plan) that is more than just the sum of its parts.

6. Complete the Hurricane Storm Damage Risk Reduction System (HSDRRS). Out of the searing destruction of the never-finished hurricane protection system wreaked by Hurricane Katrina in 2005, the Corps deliberately examined, studiously learned, and carefully applied all lessons to deliver the HSDRRS. Exactly seven years to the day following Hurricane Katrina, Hurricane Isaac tested the HSDRRS, with dramatically successful results inside that system, but with massive flooding to many areas outside of the system. That the Corps could deliver in less than seven years what we could not in more than 40 is a testament to the USACE's design, program management and construction prowess when fully funded up front and enabled by alternative environmental arrangements, as well as the intense scientific and sociological inquiry into Hurricane Katrina impacts and HPS decision-making. How and whether to address the residual flood risk outside of the HSDRRS involves national policy decisions that are under debate, but for which various study efforts by the Corps will inform and must be completed. Regardless, it is incumbent on MVD to deliver the HSDRRS to the state of Louisiana, including all major structures, the permanent pumps at the outfall canals, the Southeast Louisiana program, the armoring so essential for resiliency critical to preclude catastrophic failure from overtopping, the New Orleans to Venice levee system, and environmental mitigation, as effectively as the limits of physical planning, policy decisions, and engineering design and construction will allow.

7. Gulf coast land loss. The march of nature is ineluctable, and that march on a geologic scale is evolutionary, awesome and daunting. In the end, man cannot control nature, but we can influence how it evolves, and more importantly, how we adjust to it.

Farewell (continued on page 15)



Farewell (continued from page 14)

Nowhere is the impact of natural and man-induced changes more evident in the United States than on the Louisiana Gulf Coast. The Corps is closely collaborating with a host of scientists, academics, nongovernment officials, federal and local authorities, and especially the state of Louisiana to effectively address this. Many believe that diversions from the Mississippi River are the key, while others believe that current evidence cautions that reservations about diversions' adequacy are appropriate. What is not debatable is the rate of land loss, whose implications cause me to believe that all possible avenues must be explored. Any potential solutions which appear to be viable should be pursued, provided they address impacts to all interests that benefit from the Mississippi River, whether influenced by navigation, flooding, fisheries, property rights, land or industrial development, environmental factors, or other considerations. The thorough prosecution of the Corps' Hydro-Dynamic and Delta Management studies in cooperation with the state is pivotal to advancing the science and knowledge related to this challenge. By working collaboratively to develop the science related to diversions, fully considering MVD's diversion principles, applying knowledge gained from existing and any future diversions via adaptive management, and by balancing all interests and considering all views, we will have a chance to effectively manage this multigenerational challenge.

Upon assuming command I pledged to apply all of my energy and abilities to work with you to achieve the following:

- To serve the people of this region within the context of my oath of office, the broad interests of the United States, and the strategic direction of the Corps of Engineers;
- To collaborate with all stakeholders

and partners to develop and execute optimal solutions to water resource challenges under the law and within our authorities;

- To strive to deliver value to this region by devising engineering solutions for the challenges the Corps faces;

- To develop the full potential of the professionals who work in MVD, and to build strong cross-functional teams enabled to solve problems at the lowest appropriate echelon;

- To carry on the legacy of excellence of all of my predecessors, and to advance the Corps of Engineers' strategic direction in MVD;

- To leverage the full capabilities and influence of the MRC to advance solutions to complex problems;

- To work to make lasting improvements in our business processes and the way the institutional mechanisms of this region operate;

- And finally, for the ladies in my life, to attempt to find the best possible balance between professional obligations and personal requirements.

All any of us can hope to do is to leave a positive legacy of progress related to our responsibilities, so that those who follow may build upon our efforts and further advance solutions. I leave it to others to judge how well we did in carrying out the above, although I would like to believe we made reasonable progress to some imperfect degree.

In the end, our collective teamwork makes the critical difference for what we have delivered, for the successful partnerships we have deepened, and to what we may continue to achieve in the future. Col-

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laborating and working together as a grand "Team of Teams" - Mississippi River Commission (MRC) Commissioners and Staff, Mississippi Valley Division (MVD) Headquarters Leaders and Staff, District Commanders and Leaders and Staff, Local, Regional and National Partners, Supporters, and Elected Officials - we have applied MVD's unique Regional Integrated Business Model to synchronize our decisions and actions in a way that has brought USACE "regionalization" close to its full realization. Our deliberate and thoughtful discussions developed an exceptionally well considered regional implementation plan (IPLAN) to carry out the USACE Campaign Plan in MVD, providing an enduring basis for IPLAN improvements and adjustments to account for changing realities well into the future. Most importantly, we have collaborated and coordinated with stakeholders in a manner that treats them as full partners and ensures their willing support and assistance.

Finally, I am most proud that our thoughtful and candid deliberations on a host of challenging issues helped ensure that we always made the best possible decisions with the information available to carry out our legal and ethical obligations - doing

the right things for the right reasons - at all times. As Ronald Reagan remarked in one of his last public speeches at the Citadel in 1992, the relentless application of the principles of duty, honor, integrity, discipline, and self-sacrifice, in the end, makes the decisive difference in life.

I will never be able to adequately convey the depths of my profound gratitude to all of you for your advice and support these past two years. I am especially thankful to my personal staff, the MVD headquarters senior leaders, district commanders, and the MRC commissioners for their support, counsel, and encouragement. The leaders of this region were able to take my often vague notions, partially formed ideas, and unclear guidance to craft them into something tangible and useful that improved on the value to the nation that we deliver.

May God bless those who serve in the Mississippi Valley Division and with the Mississippi River Commission. I am a better person for the experience of having served with you.

With deep appreciation and respect,

John Peabody
Major General, US Army

Underway!

The Motor Vessel George C. Grugett leaves port for the first time after it was christened in September by the sponsor and sister of George Grugett, a retired Memphis District U.S. Army Corps of Engineers employee who watched the ceremonial breaking of the champagne bottle. (Photo provided by Horizon Ship Building Inc.)

