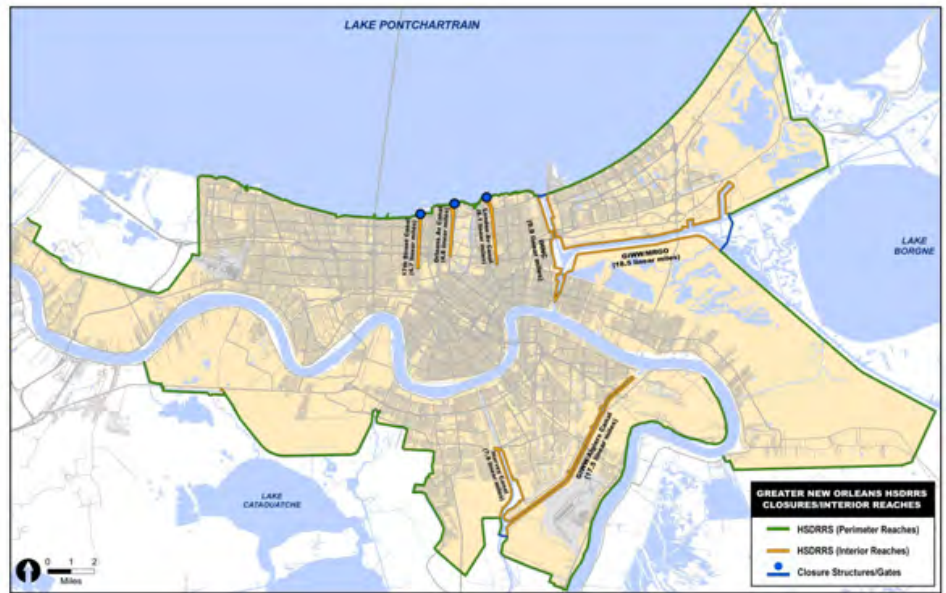


FEMA accredits Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System

February 20, the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) accredited the greater New Orleans Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System (HSDRRS). The federal levee system will be represented on the new Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) as reducing risk within Jefferson, Orleans, St. Bernard, St. Charles and Plaquemines parishes. FEMA issued the accreditation following a formal and comprehensive process, after which the agency determined that the HSDRRS levee improvements will reduce the risk from the effects associated with a 100-year storm.

“We are pleased that FEMA has accredited the greater New Orleans Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System,” said Col. Richard Hansen, commander of



Map of the Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System in New Orleans, La. In a letter to the New Orleans District’s Mark Hoag, the District’s Levee Safety Manager, the Federal Emergency Management Administration declared the New Orleans area levee system accredited. This is great news for the citizens of New Orleans who will be able to eventually lower their flood insurance rates.

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the New Orleans District. “This marks a historic moment for the city of New Orleans, the state of Louisiana and the United States of America. For the first time in its long history, the greater New Orleans area will have a certified and accredited system in place that can defend against a 100-year storm surge. This accomplishment is significant in that it validates the work done not only by the Corps, but also by our partners at the state of Louisiana, in the five-parish area for which this system reduces risk, the levee districts and the army of private

contractors that mobilized to meet the challenge of completing the system and getting it ready for this accreditation in record time.”

The HSDRRS is better than at any time in history; nearly 133 miles of levees, floodwalls, gated structures and pump stations have been strengthened and improved. Construction of surge barriers at Lake Borgne, Seabrook, the New Orleans Outfall Canals and West Closure Complex have pushed the line of defense outside of the city, effectively removing about 68 miles of interior levees and flood-



Around the Bend



Brig. Gen. Duke DeLuca
Commander
Mississippi Valley Division
President-Designee
Mississippi River Commission

MVD Team,

Over the past four months, I've had the pleasure of visiting many of you within the division, and I'm dedicating a big portion of my energies to describing and preparing MVD for future challenges, while also executing our day-to-day missions.

I'm still developing my regional vision as I make my way around the division and conduct my initial assessments working with your commanders and teams. Our team has been busy replacing key leaders due to moves or retirement. Early this year, the command team will have the vision and guidance ready for the regional team.

In December, I participated in the Mississippi Valley Flood Control Association meeting in New Orleans - the largest single gathering of partners and

congressional leaders within MVD. These face-to-face meetings are critical because they give our key partners and stakeholders the opportunity to make sure we understand their concerns and priorities, while also building trust within our working relationships.

For example, Louisiana recently announced a significant investment in a research center in Baton Rouge to investigate the causes, cures and/or mitigation for coastal land loss. This is a bold \$45-million step that is overdue, and we will be sure to garner the right USACE collaboration for the long war to adapt our nation to sea level rise. I believe that USACE is unique in its abilities to marshal a coordinated federal response that is integrated with the state plans and capabilities to address climate change adaptation for all of our watersheds. I also believe USACE's finest hour and greatest achievements lie ahead of it in this rapidly growing civil works challenge area.

Additionally, I attended the Small Business Conference in Kansas City and I was proud of our multi-award winning MVD team (please see the Small Business success story article on page 4). During the conference, I was excited by the potential new opportunities to support other agencies like the Veteran's Administration and the Department of Energy within our "federal engineer" role. I believe the future national value of high return water resource investments will be critical to our nation's success as it relates to our homeland defense and economic vigor, as well as our ability to help other nations with essentials (food/water/energy/security).

In terms of opportunities for the 'Value to the Nation' delivered by USACE, the issue of replacing ground water irrigation with surface water irrigation systems is a huge issue in America's heartland, and USACE is uniquely positioned to deliver positive results within non-Bureau of Reclamation supported states. All the major aquifers in the Midwest from the Gulf to Canada are not recharging fully, and our use is not sustainable in the near term. Since drinking water for communities comes from these aquifers, the issue is of high importance and visibility throughout the Midwest. I recently visited Bayou Meto, Ark., and Grande Prairie, Ark., to check progress and gauge support (the largest \$1 billion+ program in USACE that no one has ever heard of outside the region). All parties (from environmental to commercial navigation to agriculture to academia to state governments to non-government organizations) support these projects and what they do. Universal support is unique when it comes to civil works projects, as you all know.

One final note for this month's column is a "Hooah!" to the Mat Sinking Unit. The unit completed its season in late December (with the exception of two special projects ongoing now). Despite the shortened work season, the Unit sank 191,000 squares, a 15,000 square increase over an average year. Congratulations to a great team of professionals who work under a wide-variety of weather conditions to meet our navigation and flood risk reduction mission requirements.

Essayons, Building Strong and ... Army Strong!



FEMA accredits HSDRRS *(continued from page 1)*

walls from exposure to storm surge.

“This is a very important step in our recovery, but it doesn’t mean we are done,” said Jerome Zeringue, executive assistant to Gov. Bobby Jindal for coastal activities. “We will continue to work with the Corps and the local levee districts in order to maintain and exceed this level of protection within the HSDRRS. This is an important milestone. However, there is a significant amount of work to be done across our coast to reduce risk and increase resiliency for our coastal communities.”

Col. Hansen noted, “the monumental commitment to this task by two administrations was due in large part to the state’s senators and representatives. While today is certainly a day that we have looked forward to since Hurricane Katrina struck the area in 2005, it is not a day to be boastful – but rather to give thanks and to press on with the work that remains. It is a time to remember what we have all done together, as well as

Division leader tours district

By Shannon Bauer, St. Paul District

Brig. Gen. DeLuca made his first tour of the St. Paul District, Feb. 3-5.

The three-day visit included stops in Fargo, N.D.; the upper three locks in Minneapolis; the district office; La Crosse, Wis.; and Lock and Dam 8 near Stoddard, Wis. In addition to receiving briefings from district employees on such projects as the proposed Fargo, N.D./Moorhead, Minn., diversion channel; Asian carp on the Upper Mississippi River; and the dewatering of Lock and Dam 8, the general met with a number of stakeholders to include Fargo and Moorhead elected officials, the Upper Midwest Environmental Center partners and Upper Mississippi River Basin Association representatives. While visiting, he also used the opportunity to recognize a number of district employees for good deeds by presenting a number of commander’s coins.

Bob Edstrom, project management, coordinated the visit. “Brig. Gen. DeLuca’s visit to the St. Paul District went extremely well,” he said. “Despite the cold weather, the Mississippi Valley Division contingent witnessed many unique aspects of the work we do

to renew our commitment to vigilantly serve this great city and great state.”

To date, the Corps has obligated \$11.8 of a total \$14.45 billion for work on the HSDRRS. Remaining work includes the Southeast Louisiana Urban Flood Damage Reduction project, the Permanent Canal Closures & Pump Stations, the New Orleans to Venice / non-federal levee project, the Mississippi River Levees, Mitigation and Armoring.

The safety of the public continues to be the top priority for the Corps. “I would be remiss in my duty if I did not say that even with this FEMA certification in place, we must remain prepared when facing a major storm event,” Col. Hansen emphasized. “If given an evacuation order by our local officials, I encourage everyone to heed those orders.”



Brig. Gen. Duke DeLuca is interviewed by WDAY-TV in Fargo, N.D., Feb. 3. This interview took place after a meeting of the general with local elected officials in the Fargo/Moorhead, Minn., area.

across the region. They were impressed with the sense of productivity and diligence our workforce exhibits, as well as our natural hospitality.”



Four MVD districts win in Top 10 USACE Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business awards

By Victoria Prevost, MVD Small Business Program, and Pamela Harrion, MVD Public Affairs

Four Mississippi Valley districts won awards in the Top 10 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business category at the annual Small Business Conference, Nov. 19-21, 2013, in Kansas City, Mo. The conference was hosted by the Society of American Military Engineers.

These awards, presented during the SAME awards luncheon, are determined by two criteria: percentage of contracting actions and contract dollar amount. The Top 10 USACE SDVOSB offices by percentage were: (1st place) Rock Island District - 29.1 percent; (3rd place) St. Louis District - 13.1 percent; and (6th place) Memphis District - 12.4 percent. In the Top 10 USACE SDVOSB offices by dollar amount was (3rd place) New Orleans District - \$53.82 million.

The conference enables match-making with USACE leaders and interested contractors who seek information from small business and contracting persons and commanders. Also during the conference, there are networking round table discussions, which allow contractors to direct their questions and comments to knowledgeable small



Four MVD districts (including Rock Island, St. Louis, Memphis and New Orleans) won awards in the Top 10 USACE Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business category at the annual Small Business Conference, Nov. 19-21, 2013, in Kansas City, Mo. The following Mississippi Valley district commanders are pictured with Lt. Gen. Thomas P. Bostick, USACE commander: Rock Island District Commander Col. Mark Deschenes, St. Louis District Commander Col. Chris Hall and Memphis District Commander Col. Jeffery Anderson. Not pictured is New Orleans Deputy Commander, Lt. Col. James Handura. Also pictured is ERDC Commander, Col. Jeffrey Eckstein.

business and contracting persons. Members of this panel were Ned Foley, New Orleans District SB specialist; Karen Brady, Memphis District SB specialist; Brunson Grothus (Rock Island District); and Judith Kibler, St. Louis District contract specialist.

Those in attendance who represented the Mississippi Valley District and the districts were: Brig. Gen. Duke Deluca, MVD commander; Col. Daniel Koprowski, St. Paul District commander; Col. Mark Deschenes, Rock Island District commander; Col. Chris Hall, St. Louis District commander; Col. Jeffery Anderson, Memphis District commander; Col. John Cross, Vicksburg District commander; Lt.

Col. James Handura, New Orleans deputy commander; Victoria Prevost, MVD Small Business division leader; Gwendolyn Davis, St. Paul District SB specialist; Glenn Chatman and Karen Fountain, St. Louis District SB specialists; Karen Brady, Memphis District SB specialist; Demetric Erwin, Vicksburg District SB specialist; Ned Foley, New Orleans District SB specialist; Brunson Grothus, Rock Island district contract specialist; Barrietta Killiebrew, St. Louis District contracting officer; and Judith Kibler, St. Louis District contract specialist.

Jackie Robinson-Burnette, Associate director of Small

Business Programs at USACE, stressed the importance of SDVOSB contracts. "Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business contract opportunities are key to balancing the economic strength of the nation and providing jobs to veterans," Robinson-Burnette said. "Veterans consistently hire other veterans. We owe SDVOSB firms an opportunity to compete for contracts in return for the sacrifices veterans have made for the security of our nation. Freedom is not FREE, and our veterans and their families have borne the brunt of the sacrifice."

MVD and the districts have placed a great amount of emphasis



Four MVD districts win in Top 10...*(continued from page 4)*

on the SDVOSB program. In FY 2013, all exceeded the statutory goal established in Executive Order 13360 of 3 percent and the USACE goal of 4.5 percent.

Rock Island District Commander Col. Deschenes said that “Small Business is the key to success of the Rock Island District mission. We could not deliver the billions in value to our region and the nation without our partners in small business. The Rock Island District was honored to be recognized for exceeding goals for employing small-disadvantaged and veteran-owned businesses in fiscal year 2013 and is committed to sustaining all the critical partnerships we require to deliver for the American people.”

Doug Davis, SB specialist for the Rock Island District, works hand-in-hand with contracting, program management and engineering and construction divisions to identify potential work for the SDVOSB program. He accomplishes this by conducting market research, conducting and attending presentations, conferences and Procurement Technical Assistant Centers sponsored events. Because of Rock Island’s outstanding dedication to the SDVOSB program, they reached the goal of number one of the top ten USACE offices by percentage.

“Small Business is in the Rock Island District’s DNA,” said Davis. “It is truly the dedication of the entire district that has made my job easy over the past 10 or more years, and serving the district has been the most rewarding journey of my 40-year career. We could not have exceeded any of our goals without everyone’s efforts and dedication. The credit really should go to all involved.”

Placing third in the percentage category, St. Louis District Commander Col. Hall said it was a privilege to receive the award. “It is an honor to receive this recognition and a blessing to work with a cadre of excellent veteran-owned small-business contractors. I’m proud the St. Louis District has a program led by professionals with a passion for building small business contracting opportunities in service to the nation.”

In the St. Louis District, SB specialist Glenn Chatman says that he attends workshops, conventions and symposiums to network with potential SDVOSB contractors. He also says that one-on-one meetings are scheduled in the SB office with interested SDVOSB contractors for detailed discussions on the district’s requirements and how the contractor can meet those requirements.

“In addition, the key to our overall success is predicated on our relationship that the district developed with the VA on a regional basis established over 10 years ago,” said Chatman. “It is truly a team effort with the VA, Contracting and the Small Business Office who agreed in principle to provide contracting support to the VA and in return utilize the SDVOSB set-aside competitive process for actions over \$4 million and utilizing 8(A) negotiated process (when applicable) for certified 8(A) SDVOSB firms for actions under \$4 million. As a result, this created a win-win situation for the VA and the St. Louis District enabling us to exceed our floor in the SDVOSB category and support the SDVOSB contractor base. It’s an honor for the district winning in the percentage category but it is more rewarding just knowing that we (as

a team) have helped SDVOSB entities grow and become a long-term contractor in support of St. Louis District requirements.”

Memphis District also won in the percentage category. Karen Brady, SB specialist for the district, stated the Memphis District’s strategy is to make the SDVOSB program a priority early in the fiscal year and that they target contracts that are at least \$1.0 million, and Blanket Purchase Agreements. “It was an honor for the Memphis District to be recognized with this award,” said Brady. “It was fantastic that my new Commander Col. Jeffery A. Anderson had an opportunity to accept this award at his first SAME/USACE SB Conference. Our SB program is so successful because it is supported by the commander and the whole district as a team.”

New Orleans District was awarded the SDVOSB in the contract dollar amount. Ned Foley, SB specialist for the district, says he contributes part of their success to the Multiple Award Task Order Contracts (MATOC). Also, conferences such as the SAME SB Conference enable the small business and contracting offices to meet a large number of interested contractors at one time.

“New Orleans, USACE District, utilizes the MATOC where a DoD agency seeks RFQ’s (Request for Quote) RFP’s (Request for Proposal) from many contractors/vendors for construction services,” said Foley. “Multiple awardees will be chosen from an initial project solicitation, to provide services to the government within a pre-defined dollar amount contract. Usually, this is a one-year contract plus two or more option years.



Four MVD districts win in Top 10...(continued from page 5)

The awardees constitute a pool of contractors who then compete for subsequent task orders. By creating a group of pre-screened/qualified contract awardees, it enables the government to move quickly in the acquisition process, reducing down the time it takes for a project to begin and proceed to completion. The MATOC acquisition addresses and enables a government agency to set-aside these contracts to small business sub-categories, i.e., SDVOSB, Hub-zone enterprise areas throughout the United States, and companies within the Small Business Administration 8(a) Small Disadvantage Business Program.”

Foley added: “It is an important consideration that the small business programs office staff, USACE New Orleans, in creating a more fair and competitive arena, attend major national small business conferences, regional/local small business conferences, reaching out to small businesses, ones that could never have the opportunity, or make the connection with the New Orleans District of the Army Corps of Engineers, regarding contract awareness and award success.”

As in previous years, MVD is striving this year to exceed all small business goals. Again, an emphasis is being placed on the

Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business category in the acquisition planning for MVD. This is one way the division and the districts can pay sincere respect and honor for the sacrifices of the brave men and women who courageously served in our Armed Forces.

Children’s book author visits MVD to learn how to “Foil a Flood”

By Bob Anderson, Public Affairs

Children’s book author and educational entrepreneur, Vicki Cobb, visited the Mississippi Valley Division Headquarters Jan. 15 to interview Chuck Shadie, chief of the Watershed Division. The interview with Mr. Shadie focused on MVD’s “Room for the River” concept and will help inform Vicki as she works on her newest book project that has the working title “How to Foil a Flood.”

“My main goal is to make learning science fun for as many students as I can,” Vicki said. “I also want teachers to have fun sharing science lessons with their students through the use of the exercises and experiments in my books, videos and workshops.”

Since 1972, Vicki has published more than 90 books, including the perennial best seller “Science Projects That You can Eat.”

Following her visit to MVD, she also toured the Engineer Research and Development Center, the Old River Control Structure and the Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System in New Orleans.

As a result of her visit, she recently published an



Vicki Cobb, children’s book author and educational entrepreneur, interviews Chuck Shadie, chief of the Watershed Division, for the Mississippi Valley Division, about MVD’s “Room for the River” concept.

article in the Huffington Post titled, “Protecting New Orleans from the Next Katrina.” This article can be accessed at http://www.huffingtonpost.com/vicki-cobb/protecting-new-orleans-fr_b_4639874.html.

We look forward to reading her “How to Foil a Flood” book when it is released later this year.



Corps submits report to Congress with alternatives to prevent Asian carp and other species' transfer between the Great Lakes and Mississippi River basins

By Sarah Gross, LRC, and Moira Kelley, ASA (CW)

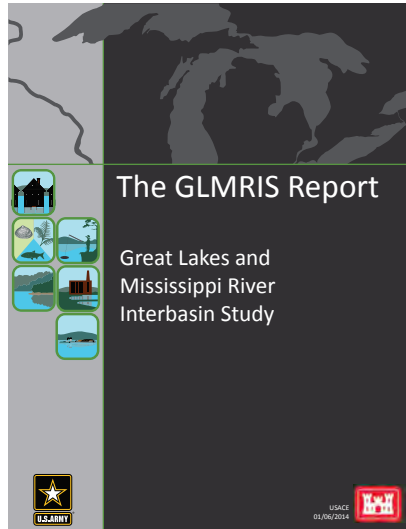
The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) submitted to Congress the Great Lakes and Mississippi River Interbasin Study (GLMRIS) Report Jan. 6, 2014. View the report at www.glmris.anl.gov.

The GLMRIS Report was authorized by Section 3061(d) of the Water Resources Development Act of 2007 (WRDA 2007), and modified by Section 1538 of the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21), directing the Corps to look at a comprehensive range of options and technologies available to prevent the inter-basin transfer of aquatic nuisance species (ANS) between the Great Lakes and Mississippi River basins through aquatic pathways.

The report contains eight alternatives, each with concept-level design and cost information, and evaluates the potential of these alternatives to prevent, to the maximum extent possible, the spread of 13 ANS, to include Asian carp. The options concentrate on the Chicago Area Waterway System (CAWS) and include a wide spectrum of alternatives ranging from continuing current activities to complete separation of the watersheds. The CAWS is a complex, multi-use waterway and is the primary direct, continuous inter-basin connection between the Mississippi River Basin and Lake Michigan. Each alternative includes mitigation measures evaluated for potential impacts to water quality, flood-risk management, natural resources and navigation. Eighteen locations outside of the CAWS were also identified for potential intermittent connections during flood events.

“It is my expectation that the GLMRIS Report will provide valuable information for decision makers, including insights regarding available options to control ANS of concern as well as the identification of potential impacts that alternatives may have on existing uses and users of the waterways,” said Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works) Jo-Ellen Darcy.

“This report is unique because it identifies a range of options, allows for the incorporation of future technologies and presents courses of action that may be incorporated now to reduce short-term risk,” said Corps Great Lakes



and Ohio River Division Commander Brig. Gen. Margaret W. Burcham. “ANS prevention is a shared responsibility, and continued engagement will be an essential next step to try to identify and build consensus toward a collaborative path forward.”

The Corps hosted public meetings in Chicago, Cleveland, Ann Arbor, Traverse City, St. Paul, St. Louis and Milwaukee in January to discuss the contents of the report and allow for public comment. To view the report, summary book and details on the public meetings or to make an online comment, visit the GLMRIS website at glmris.anl.gov. Comments will be accepted until 30 days following the last public meeting, or by March 3, 2014. The comments solicited will be collected

for the administrative record.

The alternatives presented in the report range from continuing current efforts to hydrologic separation with physical barriers. Although the report is not a decision document, it contains design and cost information at the five percent design level and includes an evaluation matrix of the alternatives to provide as much detail for decision makers as possible. Several actions would need to be completed prior to the recommendation of any specific alternative for implementation, including further site-specific design analyses, model certification, detailed evaluations of impacts and mitigation requirements, completion of an environmental impact statement under the National Environmental Policy Act and submission of the report for independent external peer review.

Throughout the GLMRIS development process, the Corps released numerous interim documents to keep the public informed and to gather input. The Corps also worked extensively with inter-agency partners to get input from federal and bi-national agencies, tribal agencies and state and territorial regulatory agencies to ensure study intent was met.

View a message regarding the release of the [GLMRIS Report](#) from U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Great Lakes and Ohio River Division Commander/Mississippi River Commission member Brig. Gen. Margaret Burcham at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rcKA3iRR-PQ&feature=youtu.be>.

In addition to GLMRIS, the Corps continues to vigilantly address the issues of invasive species by participating in the Asian Carp Regional Coordinating Committee, extensively monitoring the CAWS and conducting research with our partners and operating the electric barriers.



BG DeLuca shares leadership lessons with Vicksburg District's rising stars

By Bob Anderson,
MVD Public Affairs

During a recent visit to MVD Headquarters, members of the Vicksburg District's Leadership Development Class gleaned valuable advice from Division Commander, Brig. Gen. DeLuca. The class shared the following leadership ideas that stuck with them:

Katy Breaux, project manager for the Modeling, Mapping and Consequences Production Center, said the general's discussion about problem solving left a positive impression on her. BG DeLuca said that within large organizations, many problems are already known. To solve these problems, he recommended unleashing the creative power of your team by giving them the freedom to be innovative.

Scott Brown, contract specialist for the Construction, Architect and Engineering Contracting Office, said the general's idea that we should view criticism as an opportunity to improve had real meaning for him. By not taking criticism personally, and by using it as an opportunity to learn and improve your performance, was something Scott said he planned to practice in his own career.



Vicksburg District's Leadership Development class recently visited MVD Headquarters. Leadership development members include First row (L to R): Lane Vargas, Heather Sibley, Alyshia Selmon and Rob Hoff; second row: Katy Breaux, Scott Brown, Cindy Tucker, Ivan Esquilin-Diaz; and third row: Sandy Gerbitz (advisor), Cori Shiers and Charles Stokes. Not pictured are Greg Jackson, Lamar Rutland and Brandon Davis.

Alyshia Selmon, program analyst for the River Operations Branch, said the general's view of success and failure made an impression on her. He said the definition of success is in the eye of the beholder, and the definition of failure is when you have stopped learning. BG DeLuca also said that everybody fails at some point. The measure of a good leader is what you do after you fail.

Cori Shiers, senior environmental specialist with the Regulatory Branch, said the general's message to value and recognize talent so that the organization can retain it was an important message. She repeated the general's belief that we all have three phases to guide us in career

development, including the initial phase where we demonstrate our capabilities within our field; next, when we seek opportunities outside of our field; and finally, when we master our field and craft a future vision for our team.

Heather Sibley, civil engineer in the Analytical Section of the Geotechnical Branch, said the general's advice to give your mentor positive feedback when they make a big impact on your work resonated with her. The positive feedback may be what your mentor needs to hear from you to know they are doing things right. The mentor may

be feeling burnt out and your feedback may keep them motivated to keep going.

Charles Stokes, Jr., civil engineer in the Design Branch of the Engineering and Construction Division, said the general's philosophy about learning had the most meaning for him. He said that having a spirit of inquiry is critical to opening up new avenues of learning. It's important to be a lifelong learner, and that we can learn from other people, books, formal and informal training and that we should view our sources for learning as limitless.



Mississippi Valley Division congratulates departing team members for their service



Brig. Gen. Duke DeLuca, commander for the Mississippi Valley Division, presented Alvin Lee with the *Superior Civilian Service Award* for superior service as Regional Business Director for the Mississippi River Commission and MVD during the period Sept. 7, 2011, through Dec. 28, 2013, during Lee's farewell celebration Dec. 20, 2013.



Col. John Dvoracek, deputy commander for the MVD, presented James E. Merritt, Jr., with the *Superior Civilian Service Award* for his 39 years of service to the U.S. Corps of Engineers during the period May 1, 1974, through Dec. 28, 2013, during Torrey's retirement ceremony on Jan. 8, 2014.



Col. John Dvoracek, deputy commander for the MVD, presented Cecilia Robertson with the *Superior Civilian Service Award* for her exceptional service as a management analyst for the Regional Business Directorate in the MVD during the period of June 1978 through January 3, 2014, during Robertson's retirement ceremony Jan. 10, 2014.



Brig. Gen. Duke DeLuca, commander for the MVD, presented Greg Ruff with the *Bronze Order of the de Fleury Medal*, during Ruff's retirement ceremony Jan. 17, 2014. Ruff retired with 36 years of service.



Brig. Gen. DeLuca, commander for the MVD, presented Ralph C. Young, logistics management specialist, with the *Commanders Award for Civilian Service* for exceptional meritorious service for 38 years of faithful and honorable service in various positions of military and federal government service, during his retirement ceremony, held Feb. 20, 2014.



Col. John Dvoracek, deputy commander for the MVD, presented James E. Merritt, Jr., with the *Bronze Order of the de Fleury Medal*, during Merritt's retirement ceremony Jan. 9, 2014. Merritt retired with more than 27 years of service.

(*Photos by Alfred Dulaney)



The history of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

By Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day is an American federal holiday marking the birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr. It is observed on the third Monday of January each year, which is around the time of King's birthday, January 15. This year, MLK Day was observed Jan. 20, 2014.

King was the chief spokesperson for nonviolent activism in the civil rights movement, which successfully protested racial discrimination in federal and state law. The campaign for a federal holiday in King's honor began soon after his assassination in 1968. President Ronald Reagan signed the holiday into law in 1983, and it was first observed three years

later. At first, some states resisted observing the holiday as such, giving alternative names or combining it with other holidays. It was officially observed in all 50 states for the first time in 2000.



Two Vicksburg District engineers achieve licensing

By Vicksburg District

Heather Sibley and Taylor Bradley of the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers Vicksburg District (Corps) recently obtained their professional civil engineer license. Only a licensed engineer may prepare, sign, seal and submit engineering plans and drawings to a public authority for approval.

Heather Sibley began her Corps career in the Analytical Section of the Geotechnical Branch in June 2009. She was born in Jackson and reared in Phoenix, Miss. She graduated from Yazoo County High School and earned a bachelor of science degree in civil engineering from Mississippi State University. She is married to Caleb Sibley and they reside in Bentonla.

Taylor Bradley began his career in the Investigation and Inspection Section of the Geotechnical Branch. He is a graduate of St.

Andrews Episcopal High School in Ridgeland and earned a bachelor of arts degree in biology and a bachelor of science degree in civil engineering from the University of Mississippi. He resides in Jackson.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is the world's largest public engineering organization and it has a firm commitment to preserving and enhancing our natural environment. Its strives to manage and conserve natural resources and is an organization in which you can build a career to match your hopes and aspirations. Now more than ever, there is a need for people who can respond quickly and effectively to challenges. For more information visit the Vicksburg District website, www.mvk.usace.army.mil.



Heather Sibley



Taylor Bradley



Welcome Aboard!



Jonathan (Andy) Ashley
MVD Deputy Chief for
Watershed Division

Mr. Jonathan (Andy) Ashley graduated from Mississippi State University in August 2003 with a bachelor's degree in civil engineering. He also earned a master's degree in civil engineering from the University of Florida in 2007. He holds a professional engineers license from the state of Alabama.

Prior to coming to MVD, Andy served as chief of the Hydrology and Hydraulics Branch for the Savannah District and chief of Water Management for the Mobile District.

Andy is married to Ashley, and they have three children, Sutton, 6; Thomas, 4; and Kate, 1.

Andy's hobbies include spending time with family, church, making music with his kids and hoping to learn how to grow peas and corn.

If you have a new employee in your office, or if you ARE a new employee to the Mississippi Valley Division, please contact the Public Affairs Office at cemvd-pa@usace.army.mil, so that we can introduce you to everyone in Open Channels.



Richard Feibelman, Jr.
MVD Deputy for Civil Works
Integration Division

Richard Y. Feibelman, Jr. was recently selected as the MVD Deputy for Civil Works Integration Division.

Mr. Feibelman comes to MVD from the Vicksburg District where he served as the deputy chief of the Programs Management Branch and had been serving as the acting chief for the past 18 months.

Mr. Feibelman is a graduate of Mercer University with a bachelor's in engineering and is a certified project management professional. Rich has been with the Corps for four-and-a-half years and was previously a project manager on the Red River Basin Louisiana/Southeast Arkansas Project Team and has also served in the Engineering and Construction Division, Technical Support Branch.

Prior to joining the Corps, Rich spent seven years in manufacturing in Georgia, South Carolina and Mississippi, serving as a product and process improvement engineer and a production manager. He is a 2001 graduate of Mercer University with a bachelor's degree in engineering.

Rich and his wife, Katie, are both natives of Vicksburg, Miss. They have two daughters, Grace and Lilli Clare, and another one on the way.



Fay Lachney
MVD Deputy for Planning
and Policy

Fay Lachney recently joined the Mississippi Valley Division staff as the Deputy for Planning and Policy. In this position, she serves as a senior expert on plan formulation and policy for civil works water resources projects.

She began working in Real Estate Division of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New Orleans District, in 1998 as a real estate appraiser and functional team leader. Fay transferred to the Coastal Restoration Branch of Project Management in 2006. She served as the project manager for Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act (CWP-PRA) and Louisiana Coastal Area (LCA) projects. Fay has been the project manager/plan formulator for two large-scale barrier island restoration projects.

She is a member of the Planning Associates Class of 2012. She is also a member of the National Charette team and has participated in four SMART Planning charettes.

Fay is an instructor for PCC6 and developed the Coastal Storm Damage Reduction module utilized in the class. She also teaches a module in the Planning Associates' Coastal Storm Damage Reduction class. She taught the regional PCC1/PCC2 course.



Welcome Aboard! *(continued from page 11)*

As a section chief in the Plan Formulation Branch of the Regional Planning and Environment Division, South, her projects included the Westshore-Lake Pontchartrain, Louisiana Hurricane Protection feasibility study, the first SMART Planning study to complete the Tentatively Selected Plan and Agency Decision milestones. Fay was awarded the MVD Planning Excellence Award for FY 2012.

Lachney attended Louisiana State University receiving a bachelor of arts in history. She received a master of business administration from the University of New Orleans.

Fay is married to Fred Lachney, a retired USACE employee, and has three children and four grandchildren.

She is a member of U.S. Masters Swimming, and enjoys traveling and reading.



Alicia Bounds

MVD Procurement Analyst,
Regional Contracting Office

Alicia Bounds was recently selected as a procurement analyst in the Regional Contracting Office of Mississippi Valley Division. Prior to coming to MVD, Alicia was a procurement analyst for the Business Oversight Branch at the Engineer Research and Development Center (ERDC) where she was responsible for contract oversight and compliance for a billion dollar acquisition program.

In 2009, Alicia started her contracting career as a contracting specialist intern, performing contract execution for the Geotechnical and Structures Lab. After this, she contin-

ued execution by helping administer the Army Corps of Engineers - Information Technology (ACE-IT) program.

She received her bachelor's of business administration from the University of Arkansas at Monticello in 2009 and is currently pursuing her master's of business administration from Mississippi College. She is also Level II Certified in Contracting by the Defense Acquisition University (DAU) and is currently pursuing Level III Certification.



Cindy Simmons

MVD Administrative Assistant for
Regional Business Technical and
RB Management Divisions

Cindy Simmons recently joined MVD as the administrative assistant for Mr. Mike Turner, Regional Business Technical Division chief, and Mrs. Joni Nichols, Regional Business Management Division chief.

Her career began with the Corps in 2001 as a contractor in the Logistic Management Office at the Vicksburg District. She spent more than five years as administrative assistant to the deputy at the Vicksburg District. During that time, Cindy was hired as a federal employee and went on to spend four years in Emergency Management at the Vicksburg District.

Cindy has been a resident of Vicksburg for 36 years, and has two sons, a granddaughter and is expecting two grandchildren this summer.



Jared Gartman

MVD Chief for
Readiness and Contingency
Operations

Mr. Jared Gartman was recently selected as chief for MVD's Readiness and Contingency Operations Division. He is responsible for disaster preparedness planning and training, coordinating emergency response and recovery operations and support to Overseas Contingency Operations for the division.

Prior to this assignment, he was the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers liaison to U.S. Army North at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio, Texas, where he served as the coordination point between HQUSACE and the U.S. Army for homeland defense and civil support operations.

He is a former Vicksburg District Emergency Manager and is retired from the Mississippi Air National Guard with almost twenty-six years commissioned and non-commissioned service in the U.S. Air Force, U.S. Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard.



Around the Division



(Right) Col. John C. Dvoracek, deputy commander for the Mississippi Valley Division, recently presented Jamie Baker, USACE Logistics Activity emergency logistics planner, with the Achievement Medal for Civilian Service, for exceptional achievement from February to September 2013. Mr. Baker stepped forward to assume responsibility for management of the Mississippi Valley Division and Mississippi River Commission headquarters facility maintenance program. His leadership revitalized life-cycle maintenance of this historic building and resulted in resetting the clock on building systems.



Brian Anderson, MVD hydraulic engineer and president of the Mississippi River Commission Benefits Association, prepares pancakes for MRCBA's Valentine's Day Pancake Breakfast Feb. 14. This yearly event helps encourage MRCBA membership among employees.

Open Channels

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Mississippi Valley Division



Division Engineer

Brig. Gen. Duke DeLuca

Editor

Pamela Harrion
Public Affairs Specialist

Chief, Public Affairs

Bob Anderson

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Send articles to:

Editor,
Public Affairs Office,
U.S. Army Engineer
Division,
Mississippi Valley
P.O. Box 80,
Vicksburg, MS, 39181-
0080
pamela.g.harrion@
usace.army.mil



2014 Engineers Week Luncheon



The 2014 Engineers' Week luncheon took place at the B'nai B'rith Literary Association (BB Club) Feb. 13, 2014. Pictured attending the event (l. to rt.) are Brig. Gen. Duke DeLuca, MVD commander, Mayor of Vicksburg George Flaggs, Jr. and Vicksburg District Commander Col. John W. Cross. Robert Green, president of the National Society of Professional Engineers, was the guest speaker. Katy Breaux, president of the Society of Women Engineers, welcomed the guests and attendees; Patricia R. Hemphill, deputy for Programs and Project Management for the Vicksburg District, gave the Invocation; and Mayor Flaggs gave the Proclamation. (Photo by Joe Savage)

Planning Associates of 2014 visit MVD

The Planning Associates of 2014 visited the Mississippi Valley Division Feb. 4, 2014, to be introduced to MVD's vision for the region and to highlight the program, its unique challenges and its regional planning delivery model. Pictured (back row, left to right) are Kendall Zaborowski (Chicago District), Athline Clark (Honolulu District), Charlie Hanneken (St. Paul District) and Robert Needham (Galveston District). Pictured (front row, left to right) are Rayford Wilbanks (MVD), Charyl Barrow (Seattle District), Joél Benegar (San Francisco District), Cindy Upah (Omaha District), Gigi Coulson (New Orleans District), Angela Dunn (Jacksonville District), Katie Opsahl (St. Paul District) and Fay Lachney (MVD).

