



U.S. Army Corps  
of Engineers®  
Memphis District

## **Floodfighters get refresher training**

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## **District employees brag on grads**

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**A life well-lived ...  
Remembering Thomas George**

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COMMANDER  
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The RiverWatch is the magazine of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Memphis District and is an unofficial publication authorized by AR 360-1. It is produced monthly for distribution by the Public Affairs Office.

Views and opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army or the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Articles or photographic submissions are welcome and should arrive in the Public Affairs Office by the 5th of each month preceding publication. They can be mailed or e-mailed to the below addresses. If submitted electronically, all stories should be in Word document format. All photographs should be high resolution (at least 5x7 inches and 300 dpi), include photo caption information, and be submitted as separate .jpg or .tif image files.

The mission of The RiverWatch Magazine is to support the Commander's internal communication program for the Memphis District. It also serves as the Commander's primary communication tool for accurately transmitting policies, operations, technical developments and command philosophy to Memphis District team members.

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### On the cover ...

L to R, Royalle Woods, Ricco Chalmers, Sidney Parker, and George Brooks get the water pump ready for use in hand-ons flood fighting techniques for Floodfight trainees. See story pgs. 10-11. (Photo by Brenda Beasley)



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# Commander's Corner

## New labor forum to improve work life

story and photos by Jim Pogue  
Chief, Public Affairs Office

In the works for more than a year, a Labor-Management Forum Agreement between the International Federation of Professional and Technical Employees Local 259 and the Memphis District was signed July 9 at district headquarters.

The agreement's intent is to establish and maintain a cooperative, constructive working relationship which will provide a better quality of work life for employees, more efficient administration of District programs, and above all, better service for the District's customers.

The forum will meet quarterly and consists of three regular representatives and two rotating members from each party - district and union. Regular representatives from the district will be the district commander, commander's designee, supervisors



**Former Memphis District Commander Col. Vernie Reichling (left) and International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE) Local 259 President Melvin Tate (right) signed a Labor Forum Agreement.**

or other management officials as appointed by the commander. Regular representatives from the union will be the Union president and other Local 259 Memphis District stewards/bargaining unit employees, as appointed by the union.

Agenda items will be of Memphis District-wide scope and significance. Primary issues will be those of significance that affect personnel, policies, practices, and working conditions of employees represented by IFPTE Local 259 or other issues as agreed upon by the commander or commander's designee and the union president.

All members of the forum will have the authority to speak for their respective parties and have full and equal privileges and equal standing in all operations of the Labor-Management meeting.

Forum members and alternates will be provided training by the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service or the Federal Labor Relations Authority. **RW**



**Left to right, Deputy Commander Lt. Col. Dave Patton, former Commander Col. Vernie Reichling, IFPTE Local 259 President Melvin Tate, new Memphis District Commander Col. Jeffery A. Anderson, Civilian Personal Advisory Center Director Fred Grittman, and Marvin Roddy.**

# MITCHEM BRINGS WEALTH OF ARMY LEGAL EXPERIENCE

story and photos by Brenda L. Beasley



**Lt. Col. (Ret.) Suzy Mitchem**

**L**t. Col. (Ret.) Suzy Mitchem is the new District Counsel. She comes to Memphis following a distinguished career in war and in peace while serving in a succession of leadership positions at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels in the Army Judge Advocate General's Corps.

As Memphis District Counsel, Mitchem serves as the chief legal advisor to the Memphis District Commander, providing oversight in all areas of USACE legal services, including contract law, environmental law, fiscal law, real estate, torts, and admiralty claims, civilian personnel law and EEO.

The Office of Counsel works to ensure that USACE is respected as a leader in the Partnering and Alternative Dispute Resolution Programs, and practices preventive law - to get out in front in the planning and design phases of USACE projects to facilitate smooth and effective execution.

Before joining the Corps of Engineers, Mitchem served as the Chief of Administrative Law and Command Judge Advocate, Army Element, U.S. Southern Command.

Prior to that, she deployed as the Deputy Director of Legal Operations, Combined Joint Interagency Task Force 435, Afghanistan, where she supervised the execution of activities of 225-plus personnel and oversaw 1-800-plus detainee review boards.

Mitchem also served as an operational Staff Judge Advocate for the Criminal Investigative Task Force, Fort Belvoir, with detachments in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Guantanamo Bay, responsible for supervising the legal review of cases and products for attorneys, analysts, and investigators, ensuring quality products used by POTUS/DOD/OMC/DOJ (Presidents of the United States/ Department of Defense/Office of Military Commissions/ Department of Justice) in Military Commissions.

As Professor and Department Chair at the Judge Advocate General's Legal Center and School, Mitchem developed curriculum and planned and managed courses educating more than 5,000 attorneys annually.

During two separate tours, she served in numerous positions within the 25th Infantry Division including Deputy Staff Judge Advocate, Chief of Military Justice, and Chief, Administrative and Operational Law.

Prior to her assignments at the 25th Infantry Division, Mitchem served as a Litigation Attorney (Torts) where she served as a Special Assistant U.S. Attorney and agency counsel defending litigation filed against the United States.

Previous company grade assignments include Legal Assistance Attorney, Trial Counsel, Chief of Military Justice, Chief, Administrative Law, and Deputy Chief, Operational Law, at assignments in Camp Zama, Japan; Fort Jackson, S.C.; and U.S. Army Europe, Heidelberg. Upon entering active duty, Mitchem attended the 131st Judge Advocate General Officer's Basic Course.

Mitchem graduated from the George Washington University in 1988 with a bachelor's degree in Political Communications and Journalism. She graduated in 1991 from the St. Thomas University School of Law earning her Juris Doctorate.

Upon her completion of the Judge Advocate Officer Graduate Course, Mitchem earned a Master of Laws (LL.M) degree in 2000.

Mitchem's awards and decorations include the Legion of Merit Award, Bronze Star (2nd Award), the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal (4th Award), the Afghanistan Campaign Medal (2nd Award), Armed Forces Service Medal, the NATO Medal, the Army Commendation Medal (3rd award); and, the Army Achievement Medal (3rd Award).

Her interests include golf, soccer, and gourmet cooking. **RW**

**32nd Annual FEA Award Winners**

Deborah D. Griffith



Photos by Brenda L. Beasley

Wade Channell



James Randal Clark



Rick Ferguson



Jim Lloyd, left, and Jan Berry, right, accept the Outstanding Public Service Group Award for the BPNM-Confluence Area Project Delivery Team.

The Federal Executive Association held their 32nd annual Employees of the Year Awards Program for the Memphis Metropolitan Area at the Naval Support Activity Mid-South, Millington, Tenn.

Memphis District team members were selected in 7 of 15 categories. They are Kevin Woods, Outstanding Managerial/Executive; Regina Kuykendoll Cash, Outstanding Program/Project Manager; Wade Channell, Outstanding Scientific/Professional Employee; James Randal Clark, Outstanding Specialist; Deborah D. Griffith, Outstanding Technical; Rick Ferguson, Outstanding Wage Grade; and the Group Award for Outstanding Public Service recipients are Regina

Kuykendoll Cash, Jason Schaefer, Cory Williams, Chip Newman, Matthew Turner, Ben Tatum, Randy Lord, Shane Callahan, Derrick Brasher, Jason Flowers, Frank Mills, Jeromy Carpenter, Conrad Stacks, Jimmy McNeil, Alan Bennett, Mike Thorn, Bobby Porter, Ron Alexander, Hugh Coleman, Teresa Martinez, Estella Blackman, Judy Stallion, Jon Wilson, Maj. Jon Korneliusen, Barbara Key, Ann Bruck, Donny Davidson, Bobby Carlyle, Mark Broughton, Jack Ratliff and Lyndsey Sutton.

Congratulations to all who were nominated and all who were selected in their respective categories!


**Asian Pacific  
American Heritage**

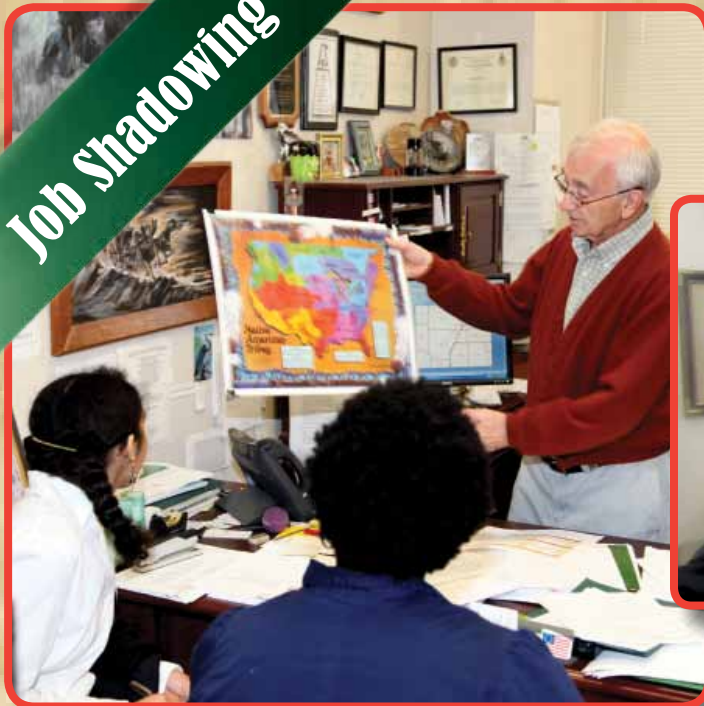


Hosted by the Special Emphasis Committee, a large group of Memphis District team members participated in the celebration of Asian Pacific American Heritage Month with a tour of the Belz Museum and lunch consisting of Asian style food. (Photos by Jim Pogue, Chief, Public Affairs) 



# Job Shadowing

Hosted by the Special Emphasis Committee, several Memphis District team members shared their skills by participating in the STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) job shadowing day with students from Girls, Inc. (Photos by Scott Riecke, ACE-IT, New Orleans District) 



# Keeping pace

## *My journey to the finish*

story by Maj. Joshua Eggar


I had the honor of running in the 117th Boston Marathon this year. During my 26-mile, 385-yard race I had the pleasure of witnessing how incredible people can be as well as the displeasure of seeing how despicably low people are capable of becoming.

Up until this point, I had never run in a race of more than about 3,300 people. Yes, that's a lot, but Boston had over 27,000 runners this year!

My idea of a race is showing up an hour prior, prepping my gear, getting back in my vehicle to warm back up, and then hopping out about 5-10 minutes prior to the start so I can get my blood flowing. By contrast, on April 15, I woke up at 5:15 a.m. so I could start my coffee and oatmeal. At 6:00 a.m. I walked out the door headed for the Boston Commons and the transport buses.

After waiting in line for about 20 minutes, I got on a bus and chatted with a guy from New York for the next 45 minutes, arriving at the Athletes' Village in Hopkinton around 7:20 am.

Two hours and 45 minutes until race start, what to do? After grabbing a couple Gatorade samples and a banana I quickly realized that I needed to get in the longest line around - the McDonald's coffee line. Next I collected Power Bars, Adidas shoelaces and Body Glide, and another banana. Now time to get in line for the porta-jon. One round complete and it was still only 7:55 a.m.



Almost to mile 17, Maj. Joshua Eggar maintains his target race time and smiles for his wife, Heather, near Beacon Street in West Newton. (Courtesy Photo)



I repeated this routine three more times, finally dropped off my gear bag, and started trudging the 0.8 miles to my starting corral at 9:40 a.m. After a last minute porta-jon stop near the start line I hopped into the back of Wave 1 Corral 6 and waited for the horn to sound the start.

After watching a verbal dispute between the corral organizer and a woman who was trying to rearrange the fences we finally started ... walking. I crossed the start line at about 10:04 a.m. and finally started to jog. Apparently a lot of guys got to the starting line early because the road was lined with last minute potty-break runners. Glad my timing was spot on, even if I had to slide into the very back of my corral. However, this meant that now I needed to pass at least a couple thousand runners since I should have positioned myself closer to the front of Corral 6. This would play out continuously as I passed more than five thousand other runners throughout the day.

Since we started at a walk, it took 3-4 miles to get on my target pace and then another five miles to bring my overall average back down to my target of 6:52 minutes per mile. Not too hard since it was a lovely 50 degrees or so with little wind and mostly flat to slightly downhill.

I was starting to feel better about my time at this point, I even ventured toward the right shoulder of the road to slap some high-fiving kids and college students. No one is in school on Patriot's Day in Massachusetts!

I stayed on the right side of the road, realizing after a time that even though the road was wide open, the commuter in me just wouldn't let me veer too far left of the double yellow center line. Not too much camber, so I gave up alternating at this point. Besides, strafing back and forth every mile was just a pain since 27,000+ runners is a lot of people and passing was easier for me on the right.

High fiving became a real motivation at this point and looking down at my watch while high fiving my way through the scream tunnel, I quickly realized that my pace wasn't diminished at all. In fact, the inspiration motivated me onward at a 6:30 minute mile!

Next feature of the run, Heather was supposed to meet me at mile 16.8, the last subway stop. At mile 16.5 I started scanning vigorously and by mile 16.9 I was dismayed that I had missed her. Then I heard someone call my name. Looking to my right I saw Heather and I charged over for a good luck kiss, showing all the young single guys that their scream tunnel trysts weren't the only passionate kisses that were going to happen during this race!

At about 17 miles into the race I spotted my first real hill climb. Not too horrible from a trail running perspective, but a hill nonetheless. I got my rhythm and attacked the hill, passing more runners as I went. Then my shoelace came untied at mile 17.6. Bummer. The real question now, do I stop to tie it or forge ahead? The elastic strap in my right Brooks PureDrift seemed to be holding nicely, so I ignored the slapping shoelace and kept on moving.

Another small hill and then I was off to Boston's notorious Heart Break Hill, an 88-foot vertical climb over 0.4 miles. Looking back in retrospect, Wilmar Drive in Manhattan, Kansas, prepared me for this. With 168 feet of vertical rise in less than a quarter of mile, it has four times the grade. However, Heart Break gets a lot of publicity and so I went into it with some trepidation. Realizing halfway up the hill that it wasn't going to be a deal breaker, I plowed onward toward the crest and cheerfully informed the local supporters that I had thoroughly enjoyed their hill.


My shoelace still flopped lazily about and I was borderline on my target of breaking three hours, so I had to make a decision: to tie my shoe or not to tie my shoe. As I passed another runner, he looked down at my right shoe and said, "Hey, your shoelace is untied." Glancing back over my shoulder I replied, "Yep, been like that for three miles!" Now it was a badge of sorts, perhaps a badge of luck, but at any rate I knew that as long as it wasn't bothering me too much I couldn't spare the few seconds it would take to re-tie it.

The final descent into Boston started to wear on my knees, so I popped my second ibuprofen of the day. There was no way I was going to let a little pain slow me down now. Pain is only temporary, three hours is forever - particularly when you're in pain! I pounded down the hills and started ticking off the final mile marker signs. Mile 23, only a 5k to go. I ratcheted it down to a 6:40 pace.

The massive crowd was screaming for us to go faster and my eardrums went to static. Awesome! Mile 24 - not quite an Army physical fitness test. Keep it below 6:45. Mile 25, make the turn, pass through the tunnels, stay below a 6:50 pace. Home stretch, go sub 6:40 and pick off a few more runners. Slow down and stop!

So I guess I was in ultra mode because for some foolish reason I wanted to keep going. There were runners depositing their Gatorade and gel on the sides of Boylston, flopping on the ground, limping along. Maybe I should have been going a little harder

the last five miles. On the other hand, my new minimalist shoes were taking their toll on my calves. I walked along, shaking hands with other runners as we congratulated each other. After a fifth of a mile we exited the procession and parted ways to get to our race bags. Shortly after finding my bag, I ran into a Vietnam Vet selling roses. Bonus! I bought a nice red one for Heather and, sneaking around the side of a building, I surprised her with a sweaty hug and kiss.

After taking some pictures and congratulating other runners, we eventually moved down a side street, headed towards the Old North Church. After about 3/4 of a mile of walking, limping, and occasionally stopping to stretch, we heard a loud thud and police sirens commenced. The events that unfolded were both tragic and altogether damning of humans as flawed beings. Regardless, the Boston Marathon is a spectacular event that will survive and we will be back to run another year and sample the very best that Boston has to offer. 



Courtesy Photo

**Heather Eggar and Maj. Joshua Eggar on Boylston Street for the Boston 5k race the day before the Boston Marathon.**

# Floodfighters get refresher training

by Brenda L. Beasley

After learning how to build a sandbag levee, floodfighters prepare to head to the next training station.



**W**hen the cold muddy water burst through the pump and hit him in the face, he threw back his head and laughed out loud.

"It's just part of a floodfighters job," said Chip Newman, a civil engineer from the Engineering Division.

He then shook off the Mississippi River remnants, wiped his face and returned his attention to getting the pump ready for Memphis District's bi-annually required Floodfight Training.

Held at Ensley Engineer Yard and Marine Maintenance Center, Memphis District team members got to experience classroom style and hands-on floodfight training.

With the "record flood of 2011" as the new standard, special emphasis was placed on extensive field reconnaissance in not only historically known problematic areas but along the entire levee system, said longtime floodfighter Whit Barton, a civil engineer technician in the Operations

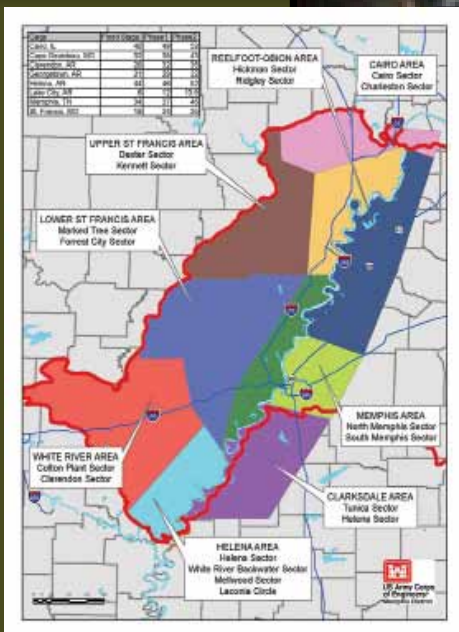
Division.

During the morning sessions, future and longtime floodfighters learned about floodfight authority, regulations and history, Field Assessment Reports and MICA, which is a Mobile Information Collection Application that provides for fully-digital data collection and rapid data transfer, eliminating the need for a wide variety of traditional equipment.

This is a handy tool when covering Memphis District's 8 Floodfight Areas and 18 Sectors. These include Cairo Area, Cairo Sector and Charleston Sector; Reelfoot-Obion Area, Hickman Sector and Ridgley Sector; Upper St Francis Area, Dexter Sector and Kennett Sector; Lower St. Francis Area, Marked Tree Sector and Forrest City Sector; White River Area, Cotton Plant Sector and Clarendon Sector; Helena Area, Helena Sector, White River Backwater Sector, Mellwood Sector, and Laconia Circle; Clarksdale Area, Tunica Sector and Helena Sector; and Memphis Area, North Memphis Sector and South



Above: At the end of the training day, Emergency Program Manager Kevin Woods, far left, passes on additional floodfight information. He's wearing the approved floodfighter field uniform of Red USACE shirt and cap. Background: Vickie Watson, left, and Randy Clark, far right, learn how to protect a levee from wave wash by deploying poly.



Memphis Sector.

They also learned of the Mississippi River and Tributaries system, common Geotech problems, historic problem areas, floodfight job positions and the role of the Geotech Advisor, said Memphis District Floodfight Manager Steve Sansone, an emergency management specialist in the Readiness and Contingency Operations Branch.

They heard how floodfight efforts don't begin until there is a declaration of emergency by the district commander or the command designated official and the Emergency Operations Centers is activated, said Kevin Woods, the acting emergency manager in the Readiness and Contingency Operations Branch. Then, the floodfight efforts don't end until the floodwaters recede below floodfight activation levels, assuming there is no threat of a return to flood conditions within the next 72 hours.

Once efforts begin, USACE has authority under PL 84-99, Flood Control and Coastal Emergencies (FCCE) (33 U.S.C. 701n) (69 Stat. 186) for emergency management activities to aid in quick and effective disaster preparedness, added Woods.

Under PL 84-99, the Chief of Engineers, acting for the Secretary of the Army, is authorized to undertake activities including disaster preparedness, advance measures, emergency operations (Flood Response and Post Flood Response), rehabilitation of flood control works threatened or destroyed by flood, protection or repair of federally authorized shore protective works threatened


or damaged by coastal storm, and provisions of emergency water because of drought or contaminated source, he added.

The intricacies of floodfighting also require the floodfighter to have some basic response knowledge. For instance, they need to know that the National Weather Service is the only official source for river stage forecasts and when referencing any NWS product, they must always state the product is provided by the NWS, said Woods.

Also, USACE only supplements local and state needs and is not the first resort for sandbags.

"Local government and/or flood control districts have the responsibility of maintaining a supply of sandbags that is adequate to cover anticipated emergencies. USACE maintains a limited stockpile," said Woods, "and should not be considered as the supplier of first resort for sandbags."

For the afternoon, sessions consisted of hands-on practical field exercises. Floodfighters were separated into five groups and given 20 minutes of hands-on training before rotating to the next station, said Sansone. Stations were set up to provide learning on how to ring a sandboil, how to use GPS units and receive a MICA demonstration, demonstration of Crisafulli pump operation, how to build a sandbag levee and how to deploy poly sheeting for levee protection.

"Today is needed to instill the importance and necessity of discovering potential problems before they become too great to effectively fight," said Barton. 

# Flooding season only reaches Phase 1 Floodfight activation


by Brenda L. Beasley

When the Mississippi River reached 38 feet on the gage at Cape Girardeau, Mo., Memphis District's Readiness and Contingency Operations Branch initiated Phase I Floodfight activities for the Little River Diversion channel. The Emergency Operations Center activated to level III and Crisis Action Team members were activated to the EOC, according to Emergency Program Manager Kevin Woods.

From April 22 to May 15, Memphis District floodfighters patrolled levees, identified and ringed sand boils, monitored levee seepage, and coordinated daily with locals from the impacted levee and drainage districts along with officials in Cairo, Ill., Mound City, Ill., and Dutchtown, Mo.

They issued 30,000 sand bags and two 16-inch Crisafulli pumps for Dutchtown, Mo.; 10,000 sand bags for Cape Girardeau County, Mo.; 1,000 sandbags for the Hickman, Ky., floodgates; two 16-inch Crisafulli pumps and one roll of poly for Tiptonville, Tenn.; and 1,000 sand bags for the Little River Drainage District.

The Dutchtown Emergency Operations Plan was reviewed in case construction of the emergency levee was requested by the state. According to the plan "With Phase I river stages and a projected rise approaching 43 on the Cape Girardeau gage, the following plan shall be activated. ... For a high water event projected significantly above 45 on the Cape Girardeau gage, construction of the embankment shall be completed before the gage reaches 44."

Although river elevations did not reach the levels at Cairo necessary to activate the Bird's Point New Madrid Floodway Operations Plan, the RCO also scrubbed the roster and reviewed materiel and equipment status. 



# Engineer Day 2013

Navy Lake, Millington, Tenn.

Photos by Jim Pogue, Chief, Public Affairs




**"Our 238th birthday was a huge success,"** said Castle Club President Doug Young, **"especially with the nice weather."**

More than 350 people turned out for this year's picnic. "There were a number of retirees and a large number of children who loved knocking Lt. Col. Patton, Tim Marshall and me into the water," said Young. "Thanks to James Permenter for redesigning the dunk tank."

Everybody enjoyed the free picnic and the food was exceptional.

"I want to thank all the volunteers who helped make this a special day for the entire Corps Family. I want to especially thank the hard working cooks Jeff Glass, Tony Reynolds, Barbara Pannell-Fowler, Eric Strauchler and Wade Channel for the great food."

Mark your calendar! Next year's Engineers Day picnic is scheduled for Friday, June 13, 2014, at Navy Lake. 


**Memphis-in-May**  
Tom Lee Park, Memphis Riverfront

Photos by Jim Pogue, Chief, Public Affairs

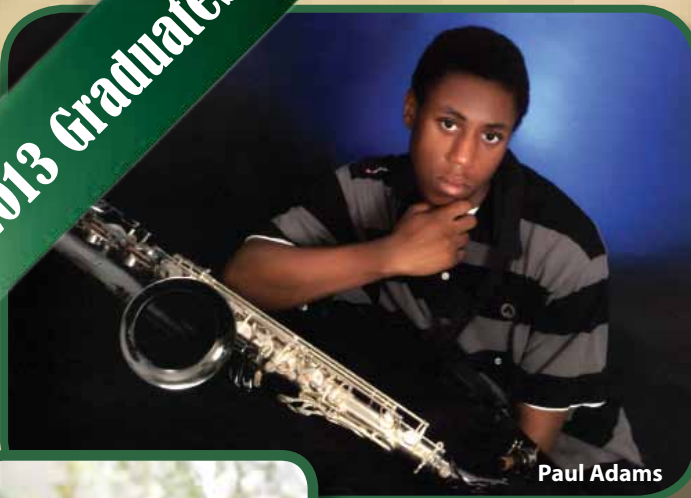


With time and energy donated by volunteers Doug Young, Wade Channel, Sara Waterbury, Jeff Glass, Delbert Schmand (retiree), Mary Ann Schmand, Frank Phillips, Barbara Fowler, Gloria Miller, Boyd Mann (retiree), Rob Ridinger, Joey H. Schafer, Mike Clark, Patrick Jones, Bobby Sims, Eric Mariani, Tony Reynolds, Jimmy Dodds, Sidney Parker, Tony Reynolds, Jackie Dixon, Joey H. Schafer, Earl Wilson, Arthur Miller, and Ron Bonnucci, this year's participation in Memphis in May was a success.

Held at Tom Lee Park (an MVM project) on the Memphis riverfront, team members had the opportunity to enjoy a barbecue lunch May 16 and May 17 prepared by Memphis District's cooking team, the Castle Cookers.

"Since it is physically impossible to get to the event and get lunch in our normal allotted lunch time," said Col. Vernie Reichling, "I am authorizing anyone going over to each lunch with our crew, 59 minutes in addition to their normal lunch time. Thanks for all you do!" 

## 2013 Graduates



Paul Adams



Ryan Barton



Jaylen Carter



Sarah Berry



Brittany Bidlack



Josh Billingsley



Jordan Burns

# District employees brag on grads

by Brenda L. Beasley

**Paul Adams Jr.**, nephew of Shellie McGee, graduated with honors from Lincoln Memorial University (Alpha Chi; Alpha Beta Epsilon). He was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the U.S. Marine Corps on May 17.

**Ryan Barton**, son of Whit Barton, graduated from Bethel University in McKenzie, Tenn. He received a bachelor's degree in General Studies with an emphasis in Christian Ministry. Ryan was a manager for the Bethel football team, winning one Mid-South Conference title and two Mid-South Conference West Division titles. He was active in Fellowship of Christian Athletes and other campus ministry programs. He plans to be a youth minister.

**Sarah Berry**, daughter of Jeff and Jan Berry, graduated from Bartlett High School with a 4.21 GPA and was

in the top five percent of her class. She was the president of the Student Council and National Honor Society. Sarah was selected as an Academic All-Star by the Commercial Appeal. She will participate in her third foreign mission trip this summer to Nicaragua. Sarah will be attending Mississippi College in the fall on a Presidential Scholarship with Distinction.

**Brittany Bidlack**, wife of Nicholas Bidlack, graduated from Union University with a Doctor of Pharmacy.

**Josh Billingsley**, son of Gary Billingsley and the late Carie Billingsley, is a graduate of DeSoto Central High School in Southaven, Miss. Josh was an Honor Graduate and member of the National Honor Society. He has been offered several college scholarships and has decided to attend Itawamba Community College in Fulton, Miss., this fall. He plans to pursue a career in

commercial aviation.

**Jordan Makenzie Burns**, daughter of Jeanne Burns, graduated from Southaven High School in Southaven, Miss. She is an honor graduate and will be attending Mississippi College in Clinton, Miss., this fall, majoring in music education. She received an academic and band scholarship. She was the only bassoonist at Southaven High School and will be only one of a handful at Mississippi College.

**Jaylen Carter**, grandson of Gale Carter, graduated from Escambia High School, Pensacola, Fla. He plans to enter the U.S. Navy in September.

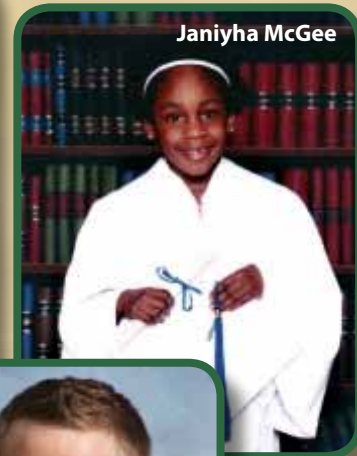
**Isabella Rose Cleveland**, granddaughter of Brenda Cleveland, graduated from Bartlett Elementary School. She was a member of the BETA club, accelerated reading 100 point club, and was on the principal's honor roll.



Isabella Rose Cleveland



Dearra Brown



Janiyha McGee



Sherry Ortiz



Benton Stacks



Katie Patton



Heather Williams



DeShun Martin-Taylor



**Dearra Brown**, niece of Rasalyn Davis, a supply technician in Revetment at Ensley Engineer Yard. Dearra is an alumna of the Junior National Young Leaders Organization which holds its annual conferences in Washington, D.C. She is involved in several organizations in her community of Belzoni, Miss., including Jobs for Mississippi Graduates, Humphreys County High School Student Government, Beta Club and the Mayors Youth Counsel. She's an active member of the award winning community choir, Youth with a Vision, which has won several awards including Mississippi Community Choir of the Year. Dearra will be going to Mississippi State in the fall to study Speech Pathology. Go Bulldogs!

**Janiyha L. McGee**, granddaughter of Shellie McGee, graduated from kindergarten and will be attending Willow Oaks Elementary in fall of 2013.

**Sherry Michelle Ortiz**, great-niece of Brenda Beasley, is a graduate of Bolton High School. She received an academic scholarship and plans to study radiology at Southwest Tennessee Community College.

**Katheryn "Katie" Patton**, daughter of Lt. Col. Dave Patton, is a graduate of Sacred Heart Academy, her family's Catholic home school. In her junior year, she received the Fort Leavenworth Volunteer of the Month Award and was nominated for the Fort Leavenworth Teen Volunteer of the Year Award for her community service activities. Katie will be a freshman in the Mays Business School at Texas A&M University in the fall and has been accepted into the Leadership Learning Community. Her extracurricular activities include piano, violin, ballet and ballroom dance.

**Benton Stacks**, son of Conrad Stacks, Cost Engineering, is a graduate of Center Hill High School in Olive Branch, Miss. Benton plans to attend college and major in business

administration.

**DeShun Martin-Taylor**, son of LaTasha Martin, Contracting Division graduated from Whitehaven High School. Deshun will be attending Tennessee State University where he will major in aeronautical engineering.

**Heather Williams**, daughter of Gregg Williams, received a bachelor's in Elementary Education with a minor in biblical studies and concentrations in fine arts and history from Blue Mountain College. Heather served as the Kappa Delta Pi (Vice President); Kappa Kappa Iota (Secretary); Alpha Psi Omega; Ezulian (Vice President) and MAEP (Chaplin for 3 terms). She is currently teaching second grade at Walls Elementary and working toward her masters.

# Security Awareness Tips

by Harold Harden, Chief, Security and Law Enforcement Office

## Control access to buildings and work areas

Each one of us has a responsibility to ensure that our building is secure. When you enter the building from a side door or after hours, make sure the door closes properly and check to see that no one has slipped in behind you. If you see someone you don't know wandering around, don't be afraid to grab a co-worker and ask which room they're looking for or who they're visiting. It's better to be safe than sorry!

## Change from a password to a passphrase

It's better to use longer and more complicated passwords, but they are hard to remember. Try using a passphrase like "I love getting to work at 8:00!" It's long, easy to remember, and has a mix of upper case and lower case letters and symbols. Don't use familiar or famous quotations. Don't use any real names, especially your own, your family member's, or your pet's. Nonsensical passphrases are the hardest to crack. Because password cracking time increases exponentially, a criminal with substantial computing resources can crack short passwords quickly; while a 31-character (the length of our example) passphrase would take 231,935,475,118,605,000,000,000 years to crack! Best of all, it's easy to remember.

*Always log off your own computer. Do not let anyone else offer to do it for you.*

## Posting Pictures

Think twice before posting pictures of yourself or your family and friends

Photographs often contain information that could be used to identify you or the places you visit frequently. Never post unflattering or embarrassing pictures (no matter how funny) that could come back to haunt you. Carefully examine photos for identifying information such as the

name of your school, the name of a sports team or organization you belong to, the address of the place you work or your favorite social hangout. Do not give out the full name of a child in your captions. One mother was very concerned to see her son's wrestling picture online with his full name. Pictures can also be copied or altered and used on other websites in ways that might be detrimental to your reputation.

## Be careful with cyber cafe computers

Cyber cafe's offer a convenient way to use a networked computer when you are away from home or office. But be careful. It's impossible for an ordinary user to tell what the state of their security might be. Since anyone can use them for anything, they have probably been exposed to viruses, worms, Trojans, keyloggers, and other nasty malware. Should you use them at all? They're okay for casual web browsing, but they're NOT okay for connecting to your e-mail, which may contain personal information; to any secure system, like the network or server at your office, bank or credit union; or for shopping online.

## Safer Online Transactions

1. Make sure that the URL of the website begins with https (not http). Https ensures that your username, password, credit card number, expiration date and other information are sent from your computer to the site in encrypted form. Encryption helps to make your connection secure and reduces the risk that malicious people may intercept the information you enter and make illegal use of it.

2. A yellow icon that looks like a padlock at the lower right corner of your browser window confirms that you have a secure connection.

3. Some websites present a certificate of authenticity when you browse to them as a way to assure you that the site is legitimate. Check to make sure the certificate is valid and has not expired. If you are satisfied with the validity of the certificate, click on the link that takes you to the site itself. An invalid or expired certificate may indicate that the site

neither authentic nor secure.

## Downloading free software

If you download free software ... make sure you don't get more than you bargain for.

Free software that you download could be just what you think it is — a single software package. However, many times free software comes bundled with other unwanted, harmful programs including spyware, viruses, or even Trojan horse programs. To help keep your computer free from unwanted guests, make sure the site you are downloading from is one you know and trust. Also verify that your operating system and anti-virus software have been updated and patched BEFORE you click the download button!

## Paper files have to Be Protected Too

You've probably heard that "To err is human, but to foul things up completely you need a computer." We know it's important to protect the big databases that we store, but we can't ignore paper records. The amount of information held on paper may be much smaller, but many of the most serious leaks happen through very human methods — reports stolen from desktops or read over someone's shoulder. Keep sensitive paper files locked away when they are not being used and don't read them in public places.

## Reporting identity theft


If you are a victim of identity theft, report it immediately. Here are some things you should do.

1. Contact the three major credit bureaus and have them place a fraud alert on your credit report.

2. If a credit card was involved, contact the credit card company and close the account.

3. Contact your local law enforcement agency and file a report.

4. File a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission.

5. Document all conversations so you know whom you spoke to and when. 

(Source: U.S. Army Cyber Command, <http://www.arccyber.army.mil>)



# Prevent heat-related illness

by Rodney Kellow, Chief of Safety

As we move through the dog days of summer, it's time to stress the importance of recognizing and avoiding heat related illnesses. This should be one of the top safety issues for discussion in the weeks to come. We are shooting for NO recordable heat-related injuries. Keep stressing hydration, hydration, hydration!

## Training

Employees and supervisors must be trained about the hazards of heat exposure, know the following:

- Risk factors for heat-related illness and how to recognize common signs and symptoms (visit [https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/heatstress/heat\\_illnesses.html](https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/heatstress/heat_illnesses.html)).
- Heat-related illness prevention procedures.
- Importance of drinking small quantities of water often.
- Importance of acclimatization, how it is developed, and how your work site procedures address it.
- Importance of immediately reporting signs or symptoms of heat-related illness to your supervisor.
- Procedures to follow when contacting emergency medical services.
- Procedures to ensure that clear and precise directions to the work site will be provided to emergency medical services.
- Employees need to inform their supervisor if they have existing medical conditions that may be aggravated by working in the heat.

## Engineering Controls

A variety of engineering controls can reduce employee's exposure to heat:

- Air conditioning (such as air-conditioned rooms and resting areas).
- Increased general ventilation and shade from the sun.
- Cooling fans.
- Reflective shields to redirect radiant heat.
- Insulation of hot surfaces (such as furnace walls).


## Work Practices

- Employees must report early signs of heat related illnesses to their supervisor and take action.
- Supervisors must have an emergency plan in place that specifies what to do if an employee has signs of heat-related illness, and ensures medical services are available if needed.
- Supervisors should take steps that help employees become acclimatized (gradually build up exposure to

heat), especially workers who are new to working in the heat or have been away from work for a week or more. Gradually increase workloads and allow more frequent breaks during the first week of work.

- Employees must have adequate potable (safe for drinking) cool water close to the work area, and should drink small amounts frequently (even when not thirsty).
- Supervisors should help employees distribute the workload evenly over the day and incorporate work/rest cycles.
- Physical demands should be reduced during the warmest part of the day and planned during the morning.
- Rotating job functions among workers can help minimize overexertion and heat exposure.
- Employees should watch out for each other and recognize symptoms of heat-related illness (visit [https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/heatstress/heat\\_illnesses.html](https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/heatstress/heat_illnesses.html)).
- Certain personal protective equipment (certain types of respirators and impermeable clothing) can increase the risk of heat-related illness. In some situations, special cooling devices can protect workers in hot environments. For instance, supplied air (blasting, painting) hoods provide cool air.

## Tips to stay hydrated

- Drink a lot. Water, pasteurized 100 percent fruit juices, milk, and low-sodium broth are good choices for staying hydrated.
- Drink caffeine in moderation. Drinks with caffeine, such as coffee, tea, colas, and some root beers, will increase your water intake. But caffeine acts as a diuretic, so it flushes water out of your system more than other drinks without caffeine. Don't rely on caffeinated beverages as your only source of water.
- Eat foods with high water content. Liquid in your solid food counts toward your daily total. Some fruits and vegetables are more than 90 percent water. Cantaloupe, grapefruit, strawberries, watermelon, broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, celery, cucumbers, eggplant, lettuce, sweet peppers, radishes, spinach, zucchini, and tomatoes are all at least 90 percent water. Low-sodium soups, popsicles, water ice, and gelatins are also high in water.
- Add some citrus to your water. If you don't like drinking plain water, try adding lime, lemon, or orange slices to your water.
- Keep a glass of water close to you during the day and night to remind you to drink it.
- Don't drink too much at once. Sip fluids slowly, gradually drinking more and more. 



# District accepting nominations for distinguished civilian employee

story by Linda S. Ross, Chief,  
Programs Management Branch/Executive Assistant

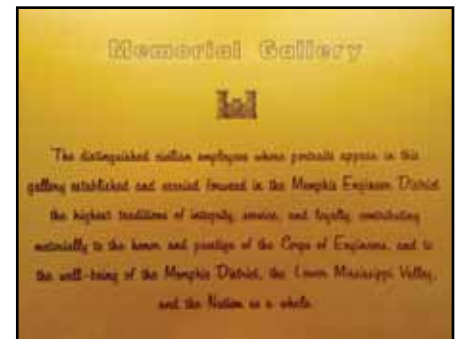
Since 1927, Memphis District has been recognizing Civilian employees for their extraordinary performance. A portrait of each individual hangs in the Gallery of Distinguished Civilian Employees, located on the 5th floor of the Memphis District headquarters, to honor these role models who've made significant contributions to the Corps of Engineers.

Are you, or do you know, the next one? Nominations are now being accepted for the next Distinguished Civilian Employee and may be submitted by any current or former Memphis District employee.

The award recognizes exemplary job performance and contributions to the Corps of Engineers in a manner as to



have been clearly exceptional and pre-eminent among all who have performed like or similar duties; developed and/or improved methods and procedures which produced extraordinary benefits for the Memphis District; contributed substantially to the reputation and honor of the Corps; and performed loyally and faithfully throughout the period of service.



Nominees must have had 30 years or more of federal service, with at least 20 of those years serving as a civilian employee of the Corps of Engineers (based on the service computation date) and the nominee will have been in a retired status, or deceased, for a minimum of two years prior to March 1.

Submit nomination in Word-document style in a narrative format. Limit text to no more than four double-spaced pages in 12-point font. Staple pages in upper left corner - do not submit in binders or folders of any kind. Include required information: nominee's name; nominee's service computation date; nominee's last job title, series and grade while in Memphis District; name, phone number, and e-mail address of Point of Contract; and no more than four double-spaced pages of narrative, which includes each of the following three elements: achievements (include dates); impacts (be specific), and recognition nominee received during career (include date recognition received).

Completed nomination packages must be delivered no later than close of business, Friday, Sept. 20, to Linda S. Ross, Executive Assistant, USACE Memphis, 167 North Main Street, room 590, Memphis, Tenn., 38103, or via e-mail to [Linda.S.Ross@usace.army.mil](mailto:Linda.S.Ross@usace.army.mil).



## A life well-lived ...

# Remembering Thomas George

story by Jim Pogue, Chief, Public Affairs Office

**T**homas George packed a lot of life into his brief 56 years with us. The former Memphis District employee passed away April 5 doing one of the many things he loved – being close to the river.

Thomas was Master of the Corps' Dredge Potter based in the St. Louis District. He died in his sleep aboard the dredge which was at Ensley Engineer Yard in Memphis for maintenance work.

Before assuming his duties as Master of the Potter, Thomas worked in the Memphis District aboard the Dredge Burgess, Dredge Hurley and Motor Vessel Mississippi. His service with the Corps of Engineers extended over more than two decades.

Before coming to the Corps he worked in the river towing industry beginning in 1974 for Brent Towing Company. He earned his river pilot's license in 1979.

Fellow vessel master Tony Johnston of the Memphis District's Motor Vessel Strong remembered his friendship with Thomas.

"I cannot count the times that Thomas and I collaborated on issues concerning navigation, personnel policies, safety issues, and just about everything involving floating plant," Johnston said. "We both started working on the old Dredge Burgess within weeks of each other, and immediately became fast friends. Even after he left us for the St. Louis District, we talked frequently about the various issues that we had to deal with as captains."

In addition to being a skilled river pilot, Thomas was also eager to share his knowledge with his fellow rivermen. Joe Schafer, Assistant Master on the Dredge Hurley, said Thomas helped him learn the ropes.

"I knew Thomas for over 30 years," Schafer said. "He was already working on the Hurley when I signed up in 1994. He immediately became my mentor. Boy, did I have a lot of questions! He was always there for me as I struggled to move up through the ranks. He taught me many things, but one thing really stuck, because I use it every day. He taught me when obstacles arose, pick the 'battles' that I had the best chances of overcoming, and let the rest run their course. I would not be in the position I am now, without persistence and guidance of my dear friend Thomas."

Thomas' love for the river extended far beyond his work for the Corps. He became part of river history by serving as navigator on three Mississippi River Challenge (speedboat) Races from New Orleans to St. Louis, a tradition dating back to the era of paddlewheel steamboats. His teams – led by Mike Reagan (son of the late President Ronald Reagan), actor Don

Johnson and inventor Howard Arneson – always won, each time setting a new record. Their team ultimately cut the previous transit time in half.

"When you're going over 100 m.p.h. and you hit a wave or the wake from a tow – man, you get airborne," Thomas said in a 1991 RiverWatch article. "Your entire body vibrates and your head bobs up and down like a mini-cam in a stock car. You don't feel it during the race because your adrenaline is pumping the whole time, but afterwards ..."

Being on the river was clearly something he loved, but it was not his only passion.

Thomas was also a former Eagle Scout and was particularly dedicated to that organization and the values it embodies for young men. He served for several years as a teacher at the Scouts' Camp Kickapoo near Clinton, Miss.

A devoted family man, Thomas is survived by his wife Dana Lyles George and daughter Emma Katherine George of St. Louis, and daughter Kayla Louise George Legons of Jackson, Tenn.

Laura Rowland, a civil engineer who works in our Project Operations Branch, has also served as the Mississippi River Commission liaison aboard the Motor Vessel Mississippi for several inspection trips. She got to see a side of Thomas that many others did not.

"When we worked on the Motor Vessel Mississippi together we would talk about what was going on, how we could improve, etc.," Rowland said. "He'd give me advice, or give me another resource. And he drank Diet Coke by the gallon. I'm not sure I ever saw him drink anything else."

"One of the highlights of my days on the vessel were Thomas' conversations with his daughter, MM (his nickname for Emma), the light of his life," Rowland went on to say. "If I happened to be in the pilot house when he called her – he called her each evening to talk and say good night – you could hear the love in his voice. He had a great sense of humor, a dry sense of humor. Just thinking about him makes me smile! I miss Thomas."

Devoted husband and father, skilled riverman, public servant, with a zest for adventure. Thomas packed all this and more into his brief time with us.

Frank Segree, Master of the Dredge Hurley did a good job of summing up Thomas' life.

"He was the 'go to Captain,'" Segree said. "He always had the answer or could point you in the right direction. His favorite saying that I remember was 'Water will seek its course.'"

Fair winds and following seas Thomas. We will all miss you. 