



Southwestern Division

Pacesetter

Spring 2013

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THE STRENGTH OF SWD:



OUR PEOPLE PACESETTER STRONG!

SOUTHWESTERN DIVISION PACESETTER

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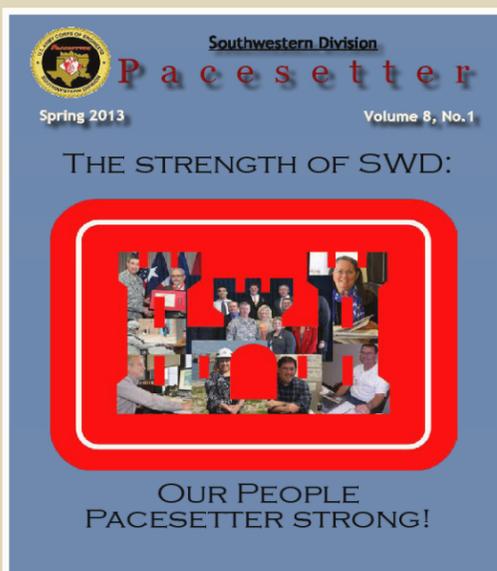
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In this issue, SWD celebrates what makes the Division so great, it's people- The Pacesetters. Our editors highlight all of the wonderful people that keep this organization working day in and day out. Our editors also take a look at how workforce reshaping will affect the people of SWD and how Division and District leadership are working hard to minimize the impact to the SWD workforce.

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Our people are our strength

Brig. Gen. Thomas Kula Southwestern Division Commander

People are the strength of the Southwestern Division. I see it every time I visit one of our facilities, every time I walk out my door and down the hallways of the Division headquarters. Whether at a park, a levee, or a lock, an office or a military installation, without our great workforce, there would be no projects completed, agreements signed, partnerships developed. Without our great workforce, there would be no SWD.

This has been a tough time for our people. The Districts have been through various scenarios with “workforce shaping,” and have had to face some tough decisions on personnel actions as budgets have shrunk and projects have become fewer or of a smaller scale. Ranging from early retirements to loss of term and contract employees to the potential for a reduction in force at one of our Districts, None

of these tough decisions have been made lightly, but with the longevity and relevance of the Corps, the Southwestern Division and our Districts for years to come in mind. Please rest assured that we are doing all that’s possible to take care of our people. The people of SWD, the Pacesetters, have taken on all of these challenges and come out just fine.

“Without our great workforce, there would be no projects completed, agreements signed, partnerships developed. Without our great workforce, there would be no SWD.”

There is a benefit to all these workforce shaping actions that is difficult to see while in the midst of it: we do have a hand in shaping the workforce of tomorrow. Because of the kind of work we do as well as the lightning speed changes in technology, we need more people than some organizations in the areas of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math. All our Districts and SWDO are currently engaged in STEM activities. The purpose is to stir, develop and maintain the

interest in these fields among young people so that we will have the workforce we need going through the 21st century. Of course we need all kinds of people to keep this organization a great one, but what would the Army Corps of Engineers be without engineers? Without biologists and environmentalists? Without hydrologists and mathematicians?

We would NOT be the Corps of Engineers without them.

If you envision a man when you hear that term “engineer,” have your vision checked out. Women have been in STEM careers for years. The month of March has been Women’s History Month, with the national theme of “Women Inspiring Innovation Through Imagination: Celebrating Women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics.” What a fitting theme for the Army Corps of Engineers! But we have some work to do not only when it comes to women, but also to minorities in recruiting the future generation

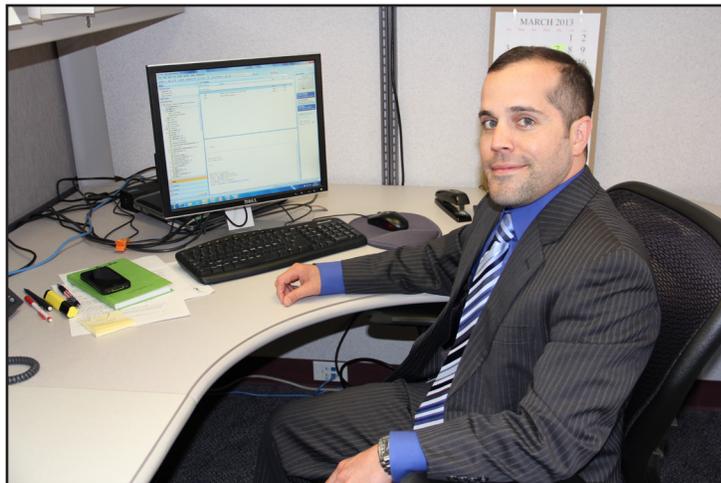
of the Army Corps of Engineers. According to a 2012 study by the Congressional Joint Economic Committee, only 14 percent of engineers are women, as are just 27 percent of individuals working in computer science and math positions. There is a similar under-representation of Hispanic and black non-Hispanic workers in the STEM workforce. Each of these groups accounts for only 6 percent of STEM workers.

Our aging infrastructure needs good engineers to ensure their maintenance for future generations to come. And we need good scientists, engineers, and mathematicians to build and maintain a new infrastructure for our Nation. We all have the opportunity to influence and shape the Corps leaders of the future—or, for some of you, to be one.

By the time you read this, decisions will have been made and actions set into motion, and some of you may be furloughed one day a week due to budget sequestration—a term that we have all become familiar with, meaning basically that the federal budget has been cut back to earlier levels. All of this has been tough on our people. I have promised to keep you informed, sharing all that we know, as we know it, about sequestration and furlough, and I and your District leadership will continue to do that. You can always find the most recent information, as well as links to documents and other websites for additional information, on SharePoint at <https://team.usace.army.mil/sites/SWD/PA/Sequestration%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx>

SWD's Pacesetters are very tough and resilient, and we will see this through and come out a stronger workforce. And we will be a workforce better positioned to carry out the great work of the Army Corps of Engineers, now and in the future.

Our Headquarters USACE has recently published a new brochure called Building Strong People. I encourage you to check it out at <http://www.usace.army.mil/Portals/2/docs/Media/BuildingStrongPeople.pdf>. Though you may not think that you recognize any of the people in the brochure, look again. The names and faces might be different but the brochure is a reflection of you and your colleagues, our leaders now and in the future. Like the people featured in the brochure, you are the strength of the Corps.



SWD welcomes new Human Resources Director, Ben Bracken

Ben Bracken joined the Southwestern Division family in early March as the Division's new Human Resources Director. Bracken comes to SWD from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Great Lakes & Ohio River Division where he served as the Director of Human Resources. While at LRD, Bracken significantly streamlined the honorary awards process, decreasing processing time and increasing utilization of the program.

Bracken's career with the Corps started at the Omaha District while he was attending college at Creighton University in Omaha, Neb., in 1998. While at the Omaha District, Bracken worked predominantly in the areas of training, management-employee relations, labor-management relations, and personnel systems.

Bracken's federal career has taken him to Stuttgart, Germany where he worked with the Civilian Personnel Advisory Center and the U.S. Africa Command, where he helped stand up operating functions for AFRICOM.

Bracken says he is excited to take on new challenges with SWD as they implement various workforce shaping scenarios and looks forward to getting to know the people of SWD.



Reshaping our workforce in uncertain fiscal times

Col. Charles Klinge Commander, Fort Worth District

Team Fort Worth – Every quarter I contemplate what I should relay to you in my commander’s column. I always want to address a topic that is both relevant and of interest to you as well as provide information that the entire workforce can benefit from. That was an easy decision this month and it should be no surprise that the topic of this column is workforce shaping.

It goes without saying that we are in a complex and uncertain international security environment and are facing fiscal uncertainty across the Federal workforce. We are being asked to do more with less and look at new ways to support our primary missions differently. The fiscal uncertainty does pose a challenge to our district, but like all other challenges SWF has faced over the past 63 years, I know that we will meet the challenge.

We are continuing our workforce reshaping efforts to ensure we are ready to face what now seems to be a certainty in terms of major reductions to our budget and the budget of most of the Federal government. Your senior leaders and I continue to meet, plan and discuss what our District organization needs to be at the end of Fiscal Year 14 based on projected revenue. There are still many unknowns, but we have looked at the ‘what-if’ scenarios and are moving forward with our reshaping tools to ensure we are postured for future success.

We expect to accomplish a large-portion of our workforce shaping through offerings of Voluntary Early

Retirement Authority (VERA) and Voluntary Separation Incentive Pay (VSIP) as well as regular retirements and attrition. We will initiate a mock Reduction-In-Force (RIF) this month to identify where we have risk in the District and the extent of the risk. Those of you that may be impacted (separation or downgrade) will be notified in person by your supervisor in April.

Although the results of the mock RIF will change with nearly every single personnel change in the District (departures due to VERA/VSIP, retirement and attrition), we want to provide you with as much notice as possible if you may be impacted. Near the end of this fiscal year, we will reassess our workforce and projected revenue and then determine whether or not we need to conduct a RIF.

These are challenging times but we will get through this together and will be an even stronger and viable District ready to meet the challenges of the future. We will continue to provide you with frequent updates to ensure you remain fully apprised of current information.

To-date our Human Resources team has hosted ten very informative webinars to tell you about the many facets of current and future fiscal constraints, processes involved due to those constraints and direct impacts to your careers. The webinars will continue through June, and we need your feedback to ensure we are addressing your concerns and providing information on what you want and need to know.

We all continue to hear about sequestration, and I think it is important that all of us know what the term means in its simplest definition and what impacts it has on the Department of Defense and the Corps. Sequestration is the practice of us-

ing mandatory spending cuts in the Federal budget if the cost of running the government exceeds either an arbitrary amount or the gross revenue generated during the fiscal year. In other words, it is the use of automatic, across-the-board spending cuts in the face of annual budget deficits.

Senior leadership in USACE is continuing to plan for and assess the impacts of sequestration on the overall program and our personnel. By the time this is published, we will likely have a definitive answer on furloughs. As of today (7 March), the current plan calls for furlough notices to be issued between 18 - 22 March if a furlough does occur.

As you read this column, I am preparing to provide even more specific information to you in our next town hall meeting set for 12 April. I see many of you in the hallways and out in the field offices, and what I know for sure is that even in the midst of much uncertainty and anxiety over the current fiscal climate, you continue to carry out our mission with the same energy and loyalty that has and will continue to make the Fort Worth District great.

I want you to feel free to communicate with me directly through the Ask the Commander tool on our intranet. Please ask me and your senior leaders the tough questions. As always, our commitment is to remain open and transparent with you so that you can make the best decisions for you and your families.

Lastly, we have established a repository for much more detailed information and specifics on the fiscal issues and processes, such as furlough and reduction in force, on our intranet at: <https://intranet.swf.usace.army.mil/Default.aspx>

Thanks for all you do every day to serve our country. Essays!



Meeting today's missions while investing in tomorrow

Col. Michael Teague Commander, Tulsa District

With all of the questions swirling around sequestration, continuing resolutions, budgets, and furloughs, we sent out a Workforce Update several weeks ago. Basically it said “we don’t know about this” and “we don’t know about that.” Hopefully we will have the answers to many of those questions by the time this edition of the Pacesetter is published. Throughout all of the current turmoil we fundamentally must always do two major things: we must meet our current missions and we must keep an eye on the horizon to invest in our future.

So how do we meet all of our current missions? For quite a while we have been looking at our workload and workforce analysis to make sure that we remain affordable. These three year forecasts are done by all of the districts in the region and presented several times each year. With all of the recent changes, and potential changes, we have gone beyond those forecasts and done quite a bit of planning lately to look at several scenarios. These “what if” scenarios have revolved around what happens if our funds are reduced, based on sequestration or other budget cuts, and what happens if our time is reduced, based on furloughs. For each of these scenarios we have identified the projects that would have the highest risks. We then looked at all aspects of each of those projects to identify ways that we could adjust to meet our missions. Again, we don’t know what is going to happen but we have now thought through several

courses of action so we are ready.

While we have been doing all of this planning, we continue to invest in our future. That investment is squarely focused on our People. Our people are the biggest asset for our District and we must continue to find ways to recruit, select, develop, and recognize our people. We recently conducted the graduation for last year’s LDP Level II class and there is a separate article in this Pacesetter to detail that event. We have also already started this year’s class with members from across the District. We continue our Ranger Training Program and recognize each graduate in a small ceremony in the District office. The first week of March also was the first graduation/recognition ceremony for our Hydropower Training Program. This training program has been incredibly successful and has been ongoing for several years. We had not done any formal recognition for the graduates until Hydro-power Section Chief, Beau Biffle took the lead in getting Klein Tool bags with a great patch for the hydropower program. We met at the Keystone Powerhouse for the ceremony and some fantastic barbeque to recognize the graduates who worked so hard.

Another area where we must invest in our future is with the uniformed members of the Engineer Regiment. While there are very few uniformed military members of our Districts, it is important that we bring in junior officers and train them for future assignments within USACE. Our District is very lucky to have Capt. Corey Burns, Capt. Chuck Koppernolle, 1st Lt. Jim Devereaux and 1st Lt. Mike Peaslee. These officers not only fill critical positions within the District but they are learning about how USACE operates.

Finally, we must really look deep into the future and develop the next generation of engineers and scientists through our Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) initiatives. In partnership with the Society of American Military Engineers (SAME) we assisted with events through the Tulsa, Oklahoma City, and Wichita Mountain Posts. The “Fetchinistas”, the all-girls team from the First Lego League, and the Owasso High School Robotics Teams, who compete in the FIRST Tech Challenge, were so excited to tell us about their robotics clubs and competitions. We participated in the Engineer Week activities, and Daniel Morales, a structural engineer with the Engineering and Construction Design Branch, gave a great presentation to the high school student breakfast. Morales, along with, Chris Strunk, also a structural engineer with the E&C Civil Design Branch, Civil Design, Adam Smith, a civil engineer with the Dam and Levee Design Branch, and Lt. Michael Peaslee, a civil engineer, also assisted in the 2013 Tulsa Engineering Challenge with the Ping-Pong Ball launcher competition. Several teachers commented how important it is for them to have “real engineers” help them out.

So, hopefully by the time you are reading this we will have lots of answers about the sequestration, continuing resolutions, budgets, and furloughs, and we can send out a Workforce Update about the things we know instead of the things we don’t know. Regardless of what happens in the short term, we will continue to look to the future and invest in our most precious resource: our People.



SWG celebrating 133 years of building strong!

Col. Christopher Sallese Commander, Galveston District

Happy birthday U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Galveston District! As the district turns 133 years old, let's take a moment to review some of our significant achievements.

In 1880, Congress authorized the first deepening of Sabine-Neches and Houston-Galveston ship channels to facilitate navigation along the Texas coastline and the construction of breakwaters known as jetties, to protect harbor and inlet entrances. The Houston Ship Channel was the first cost-share project in the history of the USACE.

The district continued its navigation mission and in 1900, the Great Storm hit Galveston Island Sept. 8, which reshaped the Gulf Coast forever. Tides as high as 15-feet swept the city, causing the death of more than 6,000 residents and approximately \$25 million in property damages. The nation quickly turned to the district and requested that a barrier be erected to save the city from further devastation – a structure now known as the iconic Galveston Seawall.

Fast forward to 1930 when historic catastrophic flooding in downtown Houston devastated farms and communities.

The nation turned to the district again and asked for assistance, which led to our flood control mission, partnership with the Harris County Flood Control District and the subsequent construction of the Addicks and Barker Dams and Reservoirs.

Today, the district continues to expand on its flood control and navigation

missions and remains fully committed to continuing our mission of Building Strong.

With the district still operating under a Continuing Resolution and the entire federal workforce faced with sequestration, I know you are concerned with the possible implementation of furloughs and want to share with you the following information.

The Department of Defense's budget comes from the National Defense Appropriations Act, which funds salaries for DoD employees worldwide. The USACE Civil Works budget is funded under a different piece of legislation known as the Energy and Water Act. Each appropriation is subject to cuts as directed by the laws governing sequestration. At this time, I do not know how those cuts will directly affect our program. I have been told to expect an 8-12% reduction in our overall program.

I cannot guarantee that we will not be subject to furloughs but I will do my best within our program and within my authorities to limit those impacts across this district. That is my job, that is my responsibility and that is what I promise you.

Regarding the strength of the district, I spent a lot of time in Austin in February and can tell you that the state leadership realizes the value of navigation along the Texas coastline and is looking at where they can make a strategic investment into the coast. In particular, the district is working closely with the Texas Department of Transportation to bring the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway to its full potential (from a nine-foot to a 12-foot channel). The state is also interested in how they can help the Sabine Neches Waterway.

These actions are notable as

it's the first time that I have seen the state representatives view water transportation on the same level as on land. In the past, TXDOT was concerned with how to reduce congestion on roads, bridges, highways and runways but now they understand the significance of this resource and are seeking ways to maximize maritime transportation.

In Dallas, leaders are working to finalize the Regional Planning Centers. Across the board, USACE study money is being cut and the amount of work is decreasing, therefore the Southwestern Division leadership is reviewing its planning capabilities and identified that we can no longer afford to fund planning in every district.

Instead, leadership is working to regionalize our skills in one center which will be located in Fort Worth (positions will move but the people will remain seated in the district). By the end of March, the center should be organized so that we'll know what the structure will look like and by August 2014 the center is scheduled to become operational.

The state of the district remains strong; we have an ambitious mission to accomplish and a lot of work ahead of us. I would ask that you focus your efforts on the work that you have in front of you right now as we have suspense dates to make and schedules to keep.

I encourage you to submit any questions or concerns you have using the district's online comment box at <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/2JXR5N9>

As we continue to manage these difficult issues, I want to thank you for your patience, hard work and continued dedication to the district, the Corps and the nation.



What is it that makes you different from your competition?

**Col. Glen Masset
Commander, Little Rock District**

The slogan used by so many “our people make the difference” is by far the most common answer to the question – “what makes you different from the competition?”

Let’s be honest “our people make the difference” is not a differentiation. Every

aren’t many places that require this type of commitment from their employees.

What makes you different is your innovation and ability to transform and make key business decisions; serve our constituents, support the team and maintain our infrastructure while the nation’s priorities are shifting around us.

is what sets you apart from the rest.

Most places can conduct business as usual, but that doesn’t really work for us. “Usual or normal,” is changing so fast for the Corps we’re uncertain what it looks like and what it will look like in the future. What makes you different is your unwavering ability to

“What makes you different is your innovation and ability to transform and make key business decisions; serve our constituents, support the team and maintain our infrastructure while the nation’s priorities are shifting around us.”

company and organization has talent that does a great job promoting their products or solving complex equations.

So what is it that makes the Little Rock District, as well as the Corps, different from our counterparts?

You started by taking an oath that binds you to hundreds of years of rich history of protecting the Constitution of the United States. You were willing to swear or affirm that you would take care of business for the sake of our nation. There

Right now you’re making the tough decisions, which nobody wants to make. Whether you’re deferring shoreline management, or reprioritizing projects, you’re setting yourself apart from the rest. It’s not easy to close a park that has been part of a small community for many years, and it’s not easy to work for an organization when budgets are flat and even declining in some areas. Your ability to make unselfish decisions for the good of our programs and business lines

do your job even when you’re not sure what the future of our organization holds.

You make the difference because you face adversity and push through uncertainty. It’s the way you adapt and overcome challenges that sets you apart and motivates me.

I cannot thank each and every one of you enough for your hard work and dedication. It’s truly what sets us apart from the rest.



Lt. Col. Andrew Liffing, Deputy Commander, Fort Worth District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and his pen pal Alvarado Garcia reminisce about their past letters and enjoy lunch at the Valentine's Day party hosted at H.V. Helbing Elementary School Feb. 8.

Fort Worth District 21-year partnership with elementary school still going strong

By Denisha Braxton, Fort Worth District public affairs

Anticipation built as 98 fourth grade students were about to meet their Fort Worth District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers pen pals for the first time at their Valentine's Day party.

As part of the Adopt-A-School program the District sponsors the party along with writing monthly pen pal letters to H.V. Helbing Elementary school students.

"One of our goals when we started the program was to provide our fourth grade students with a one-on-one relationship with an adult who can provide our students with a role model from the business world and to help build their self esteem," said Irma Morin, counselor, H.V. Helbing Elementary.

Since starting the program

21 years ago, Fort Worth team members have written letters to their pen pals discussing topics from their favorite school subject, to what they would like to be when they grow up. The program's purpose is to help the students increase their writing skills as they prepare for the new State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness test.

"I always look forward to writing my pen pal. I didn't think we would have so much in common and learn a lot from her too," said Destiny Garcia, fourth grade student.

H.V. Helbing, which is predominantly Hispanic, was "Recognized" last year which is the second highest rating under the Texas Education Agency's Academic Excellence Indicator System. According to Ebonie

Graves, Adopt-a-School program coordinator, many of the students are learning English as a second language which can be very challenging. Through the one-on-one communication, District team members encourage students to expand their writing skills by not only being creative but also focusing on grammar, spelling, and punctuation. The fourth grade students scored 88 percent on the writing portion of the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) in 2011 compared to the state average which was 90 percent and continue to improve.

Corps' pen pal Kelsey Beck, from Real Estate Division said she has seen a significant difference in her student's writing abilities. "I can see she's gaining more confidence through our correspondence and growth of our friendship. My pen pal is doing well in writing because she enjoys not just because it's a class assignment," Beck said.

The District also volunteer as science fair judges as part of the USACE Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) initiative to increase awareness, build interest and provide hands-on activities in the subjects at a young age before they enter high school and college.

"Our outreach through our Adopt-a-School program is one of our most important and rewarding programs. We want to help make a difference by keeping the students focused and motivated to be future architects, engineers and leaders," said Col. Charles H. Klinge, Fort Worth District Commander.

"This program has formed lifelong bonds with previous H.V. Helbing students and Corps employees and we want to continue that tradition."



A trolley car carries Table Rock Lake visitors to the dam for guided tours. In 2012 the Ozark Rivers Heritage Foundation guided roughly 7,700 tourists through Table Rock Dam and Powerhouse. (Photo by Little Rock public affairs)

Benefits = \$750,000 Partnership = Priceless

By Jay Townsend Little Rock District public affairs

You could put a price on the value added to Table Rock Lake from the Corps of Engineers partnership with the Ozark Rivers Heritage Foundation but it wouldn't be accurate because it's hard to measure dedication, enjoyment and enthusiasm.

"They have been great to work with and offer so much in terms of managing the new Dewey Short Visitor Center and providing dam tours," said Park Ranger Rod Raley. "Having them and all their volunteers around frees our rangers up to do things we wouldn't otherwise have time to do."

In 2012, the ORHF contributed \$755,227 in benefits to the Table Rock Project Office and surrounding communities. What cannot be expressed in dollars is the knowledge passed on from about 7,700 tours of Table Rock Dam, 10 different interpretive programs offered at the new Dewey Short Visitor Center and the foundation's community connections and more.

"This was the first year that we had eight campgrounds and the new Dewey Short Visitor Center, it was an adventure," said ORHF Executive Director Sheila Thomas. "As we go forward and take in to

account all the ways that we could save the Corps money the numbers will be higher."

Among the foundation's improvements in 2012 were the installation of a new well, purchase of furniture, installation of wireless Internet at the visitor center and Indian Point campground, advertising and other park improvements. The foundation also pays for staff and supplies to manage the visitor center, and recruits volunteers who provided more than 9,300 hours in free labor last year.

"The Corps can only do so much without having to create competition for a contract and accept bids. The foundation doesn't have to worry about threshold limits," said Raley.

The ORHF is a non-profit 501(c)(3) that was developed in early 2010 for the purpose of providing support for recreational facilities and projects determined to enrich the public's quality of life by providing special events, educational programs, volunteer opportunities, advocacy, technical assistance, stewardship, land/lake access improvements and research.

"We are still establishing ourselves, as we continue to grow we'll be

able to evaluate our programs and find out where we fit in," said Thomas.

The ORHF was also developed to provide financial and other support for the Table Rock Project recreational facilities and projects involving the general public.

The foundation's operation is financed through product sales, fees, and donations. Revenue collected by the foundation remains at Table Rock to enhance facilities owned by the Corps whose collections are returned to the U.S. Treasury.

ORHF's goal is to educate the public about the Ozarks waterways, promote stewardship of the natural environment, demonstrate the importance of water-powered production of energy, promote water safety and encourage responsible interaction with nature while providing for the enjoyment of the area.

ORHF currently operates the Dewey Short Visitor Center and eight campgrounds around the lake. The foundation's activities at the visitor center include providing staff for the information desk, operating the visitor center gift shop, providing public events and programs, and managing special event and room use requests. ORHF also partners with Ride the Ducks Branson and the Corps to provide tours of Table Rock Dam from March to October and select dates in November and December.

"My staff is amazing," said Thomas. "Just a few weeks ago they found a way to become certified interpretive guides." The certification will give them more credibility and help to expand the programs outside of the parks and into schools and other areas.

In 2012, the foundation saved the Corps \$140,000 in cleaning contracts, to include cleaning of the visitor center, project office and powerhouse.

The foundation currently leases Moonshine Beach Recreation Area, Indian Point, Cape Fair, Aunts Creek, Baxter, Campbell Point, Mill Creek, and Old 86 campgrounds. Fees collected in these areas are retained and used for park repairs and improvements not possible with current federal budgets.

To discover how you can partner with the foundation to fulfill their mission of enriching public life through education and stewardship of the beautiful Ozark Mountain Country lakes and rivers call 417-334-6394.



The sun rising over Table Lock Lake in Branson, Mo.

Scoping report complete: Table Rock Lake master plan moves forward

By Laurie Driver, Little Rock District public affairs

The Army Corps of Engineers Little Rock District recently completed the Table Rock Lake Master Plan for scoping report compiled from comments received during the public comment period and from workshops held in late 2012. Table Rock Lake is located in Branson, Mo.

“The scoping report captures all the public comments received during the scoping process,” Project Manager Dana Coburn said. “The report also provides an analysis of the comments and we will use this information to help draft the new master plan.”

The report is available for the public to view at <http://www.swl.usace.army.mil/Missions/Planning/TableRockMasterPlanUpdate.aspx>

The Corps’ will continue to work on the draft master plan through the spring and early summer.

“Our next step will be to hold focus group meetings to see if the draft master plan captures the comments and opinions of the public, partners and stakeholders in conjunction with the missions, guidelines and regulations of the Corps,” Coburn

said. Part of the master plan revision process has been educational. “Many interested people were not clear of the difference between a master plan and a shoreline management plan,” Coburn said. “We hope that our public workshops and outreach have helped people understand that the master plan provides the vision for how the lake should look in the future.”

Development of the revised Master Plan will include consideration of:

- Regional and ecosystem needs
 - Project resource capabilities and suitability for various purposes
 - Public interests and desires
- The Table Rock Lake Master Plan’s update main objectives are:
- Make maximum use of the resources of the lake within the current policies and guidelines of the Corps of Engineers
 - Accommodate current and projected use patterns with maximum efficiency
 - Identify and protect cultural

and natural resources
• Attract maximum participation by the general public and local government in project development

“The current master plan envisioned that Table Rock Lake would yearly host 2 million visitors by 2020 but we are already currently hosting 4 to 5 million,” Coburn said. “Throughout the process we are trying to determine if there are enough public recreation opportunities around the lake? Are the parks in the right location? Do we have enough public access points around the lake? What will the future needs be?”

The team will also look at land designation around the lake.

“All the Corps land surrounding Table Rock Lake is in several land use categories,” Coburn added. “Is the mix of these categories right? Are there enough places for commercial activities? Are sensitive natural areas protected appropriately?”

The master plan does not address the details of how and where shoreline use permits may be issued, however, it does set the stage for implementation of the shoreline management program. For that reason, the moratorium on shoreline management requests will remain in place until the master plan revision is completed by the end of 2013.

“After the master plan is revised, the shoreline management plan would be revised when funding becomes available to be consistent with the goals identified in the master plan,” Coburn said.

The draft master plan and environmental assessment should be complete by late July.

“Once these draft documents are complete, we will hold public workshops around the lake to again let the public provide input,” Coburn said. “We had tremendous interest by the public when we began the process and we hope that will continue throughout the process.”

For more information about the Table Rock Lake Master Plan Revision project visit <http://www.swl.usace.army.mil/Missions/Planning/TableRockMasterPlanUpdate.aspx>

CAP provides flood risk management and mitigation to Little Fossil Creek

By Randy Cephus, Fort Worth District public affairs

Flood risk management is one of the Fort Worth District's main priorities. This is evident with many of its major civil works projects in cities such as Dallas, Fort Worth and San Antonio. Assistance for these large projects is available under specifically named congressional authorization, where the costs often exceed several million dollars.

A second authority is the Continuing Authorities Program (CAP). CAP delegates general authority to the Corps to plan, design and construct, within specified funding limits, certain types of water resources development projects. In instances where issues are generally small in scope, cost and complexity, the Corps may act directly under the CAP.

"This program allows the Corps to respond more quickly than might otherwise be possible through the specific congressional authorization process," said Marie Vanderpool, who manages the Fort Worth District's CAP.

Projects pertaining to flood plain management, flood control, ecosystem restoration, erosion control and stream bank protection fall under the CAP. These projects

are usually cost shared 50/50 with a local sponsor and require no further congressional authorization to proceed to construction.

"I work directly with the communities, our non-Federal cost sharing sponsors, to define issues, evaluate possible correc-

of houses from the floodplain. Additionally, Haltom City plans to construct hike and bike trails and other recreation amenities on the vacated land.

The Corps awarded the contract to Kimrick Performance Group, LLC, of Houston, Texas at

approximately \$5 million last June. The project is scheduled for completion by the end of the year.

The project purpose is flood risk management. Invasive plant removal is an environmental measure implemented to mitigate for habitat lost due to the channel construction. Project design and mitigation features were developed in close coordination with Texas Parks

and Wildlife, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

"CAP is an excellent program for assisting small communities," said Vanderpool. "It fits the scale and budget often associated with small communities and without CAP, many of these smaller projects would never be constructed."



Little Fossil Creek project manager, Lee Epperson makes notes during current construction efforts at the project site. The project includes widening and deepening the creek channel, which will help ensure future flood waters are contained within the channel.

and Wildlife, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Little Fossil Creek Flood Risk Reduction project, located in Haltom City, Texas, is one of the Fort Worth District's CAP projects. The project includes widening and deepening the creek channel, which will help ensure future flood waters are contained within the channel, and removing a number

600 acres of Lake Texoma sold to city of Denison

By Ross Adkins, Tulsa District public affairs

In a ceremony held at Lake Texoma recently, a commemorative document celebrating the transfer of 600 acres of Lake Texoma shoreline to the City of Denison, Texas, was signed by Congressman Ralph Hall Texas 4th District, Jared Johnson, Mayor, City of Denison, Brig. Gen. Thomas Kula and Developer George Schuler.

The federal Water Resources Development Act of 2007 authorized the Secretary of the Army to sell land for improvement projects that provide for the development of water related resources.

But the transfer didn't come quickly. Hall, addressing the crowd who were there to witness the signing said, "I can finish my remarks with one word. Finally! It took twelve years, but it is finally done."

The city of Denison paid \$1.8 million for the acreage which includes nearly nine miles of shoreline. The city will in turn sell most of the property to Schuler Development who intends to invest \$215 million in infrastructure including restaurants, shops and homes.

"When you look at the big scope of this project, the impact is larger than anything that's ever been done in the state," said Denison Mayor Jared Johnson.

During the 12 years of development, Col. Michael Teague, Tulsa District Commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers said "Before the sale could go through, we looked at everything from archeological and cultural resources to endangered species to any wetlands." Teague was referring to the Environmental Impact Statement, paid for by the City of Denison.

"We've had other land conveyances that we've done with the Corps of Engineers, but nothing to this magnitude. I think it just shows how much the federal government is looking to move more towards public-private partnerships in the future," Teague added.

"It's been a great partnership that allowed this to occur," said Brig. Gen. Tom Kula, who is the commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Southwestern Division.



Brig. Gen. Thomas Kula, Southwestern Division commander, presents a memento to Denison Mayor Jared Johnson of soil from the former USACE property at Lake Texoma that's now owned by the city of Denison, Texas. (photo by Ross Adkins)



Brig. Gen. Thomas Kula, Southwestern Division commander signs a certificate commemorating the sale of 600 acres of Texoma lakefront property to the city of Denison as authorized by WRDA 2007 for improvement projects that provide for the conservation and development of water related resources. (photo by Ross Adkins)



Army Master Sgt Regina Leatherman anxiously waits to take a shot from a popup blind set up by rangers and volunteers. Each hunter received a free fleece jacket, hat clip light and a deer skin-nin' knife. (Photo by Tony Porter)

The healing power of hunting

By Jay Townsend, Little Rock District public affairs

Soldiers wounded in the line of duty often suffer from injuries, which have complex medical, personal and spiritual needs that exceed the care capabilities of their current units. Despite the tragedies thousands of injured Soldiers have endured, there comes the hope of spiritual renewal and empowerment made possible by family, friends and organizations that find unique ways to reintroduce the Soldier to social norms most of us take for granted.

Opening day of deer hunting season is considered a holiday by many Arkansans. It's a cherished pastime for locals endowed as much as baseball and cherry pie. If there's one way for a native good ole' boy from Arkansas to help wounded warriors heal, it's gonna' be to get them in the deer woods. Rangers from Army Corps of Engineers' Millwood Lake Project Office and the surrounding community set out to do just that.

On Nov. 30, 2012, seven Soldiers from Fort Sill Oklahoma's Warrior Transition Unit arrived at Millwood Lake to do some healin' and huntin'. Over the next three days all the hunters harvested a deer with a few of them doubling up. Each hunter received a free fleece jacket, hat clip light and a deer skinnin' knife.

"It was something we really wanted to do so we started planning it last year," said Park Ranger Dustin Thomason. "My best friend was stationed at Fort Sill with post traumatic stress disorder after two tours in Iraq. I talked to him about it and he said to contact Fort Sill, and that's how it got started."

Partnered with Millwood Lake Focus Commit-

tee, Thomason and fellow Rangers Justin Curtis and Brooke Kervin were able to gain enough local support to host the hunt and provide free hot's and a cot for the weekend at no cost to the Soldiers. The barracks for the weekend were a little nicer than most Army accommodations, considering the fact that they were at the Millwood Landing Golf and RV Resort. The food wasn't their normal run of the mill chow either. Thanks to dozens of local sponsors, grocery stores and The Marine Corps league, a 501 C4 organization, the troops were treated to several home cooked meals prepared by the project office and local volunteers. Deep fried catfish was on the menu Friday evening and Saturday dinner was prepared by The Association for a Greater Yarborough. On Sunday the Corps staff fixed up an all-game meal consisting of deer, duck, turkey and gator.

"I believe that was the best thing for all of us. I am glad that I got to meet everyone," said Army Staff Sgt. Sheri Kellner from the Fort Sill Warrior Transition Unit. "All of you are a great bunch of people and I hope to come back again."

The process of recovery for wounded warriors is difficult and confusing at times. "Bringing them out here is a great way for them to escape and get into the woods," said Thomason.

"I like the quiet and looking at birds and squirrels. I like listening to the trees when the wind blows. It reminds me there are places out there that are peaceful and calm," said Kellner.

For five of the Soldiers, hunting is an old hat that they enjoyed before their injuries. For two of them this was their first experience in the deer woods that resulted in a harvest.

Millwood Lake Rangers hope they can maintain the level of support from the community and make this an annual event for the WTU. Although it might be nice to see some of the same hunters next year the project office hopes these Soldiers will have transitioned back to their line units or gone home to serve their communities as veterans.

Supporters of the event included: The Marine Corps League of Texarkana, Millwood Landing Golf and RV Resort, Association for a Greater Yarborough, Savage Deer Processing, Southern Sportsmen Foundation Big Jake's BBQ, Regions Bank, Brookshire's, Domtar, Davis Feed of Ashdown, Gander Mountain of Texarkana, South Ark Electric, Madlock's Shell, Yocom Body Shop, Super 1 Foods, Hollis Heating and Air, Diamond Bank, Townsend Outdoors, Walmart, Rothwell Marine, Elliot Electric, Atwoods, First National Bank, Larry Phillips Marine, and GCR Tire of Hope. Personal contributions included those from Frank Cooper, John and Pat Head, Mike Stanton, and Jeff Stephens.

SWD prepares for organizational changes

By Dyron Jolly, SWD human resources specialist

Organizational change comes in many forms: new missions and projects, reorganizations, new business practices and processes, new leaders. Change is typically accompanied by anxiety, confusion, anticipation, and adjustment. Whether you've been with the Federal government for 1 year or 30, you've seen change. Some great, some good, some that you may wish hadn't happened at all! Everyone has a preference or opinion on change but there is at least one thing that we all know, if you live and work long enough, things will change.

We are living and working in fiscally constrained times and there is considerable anxiety about the economy and the realignment or loss of jobs in the private and public sectors. Accordingly, we anticipate Congress will not add projects (additional funding to the annual President's budget) for the Corps in fiscal year 2013 and the foreseeable future. Historically, these added funds provided additional work and enabled us to hire more staff to perform that work. The Federal Government is under great scrutiny to reduce costs due to a growing deficit. The Department of Army (DA) is not immune to this scrutiny, which could have adverse impact on subordinate organizations.

Similarly, USACE faces significant fiscal and workload challenges in the foreseeable future. Our primary challenge will be funding constraints and the ramifications this has on our workload. At best, funding levels could possibly continue at current levels; however, this is not anticipated. More realistically, SWD will sustain budgetary cuts and must adjust accordingly. A decrease in funding poses several specific challenges. These reductions could have an adverse impact on recruitment, development, and retention of employees across the Region. As such, enhanced strategies to shape our SWD regional workforce are being utilized to match projected funding and workload to minimize adverse impact upon our employees. In support of these efforts, we will use

all human resources flexibilities to reduce staff to meet authorized funding levels. These flexibilities consist of the following:

- Voluntary Reassignment
- Management Directed Reassignment
- VSIP (Voluntary Separation Incentive Pay)/VERA (Voluntary Early Retirement Authority)
- Separation of Temporary/Term Positions
- Hiring Freeze

In efforts to get the optimal use of the human resources flexibilities available, SWD will be implementing a Regional Placement Program. This program will ensure projected surplus and potential adversely impacted employees receive placement opportunities within SWD to retain our highly skilled, professional, technical, and administrative workforce. The SWD Regional Placement Program (SRPP) will be implemented prior to any formal Reduction-in-Force (RIF) process in efforts to manage workload shortfalls. It is a positive method that provides the opportunity for potentially displaced employees to have noncompetitive placement consideration for positions of interest and as a tool for SWD leadership to reassign impacted employees to other positions within the region.

The SWD leadership is working very hard to mitigate the possibility and effects of conducting a reduction in force, however, our primary objective is to foster an environment where all team members make informed decisions about their future and are able to leverage the tremendous opportunity that exists within USACE, even as things change. I strongly encourage all team members to take charge of their future and work with us to meet this challenge. We must be proactive rather than reactive. It is my intent to take a holistic and regional approach towards addressing our workload challenges. Additionally, we take these measures not simply because we want to solve our current workload/workforce imbalance, but also to "Build the Bench" of the SWD Team.



Small Business is a big deal at the Fort Worth District

By Randy Cephus, Fort Worth District public affairs

Not to be outdone by lofty achievements in 2011, where the Fort Worth District obligated approximately \$720 million and received the top rating within USACE for total small business dollars obligated, the Fort Worth District continued its big deal for small business in 2012.

There are three main reasons for continued success for the Fort Worth District. The first is its ability to leverage technology to make the Corps more accessible to small businesses.

“We have increased accessibility to visit our office by modifying the Small Business web site so contractors can schedule on line appointments to visit with the SWF USACE Staff members,” said Carolyn Staten, Deputy for Small Business Programs.

“We have also included information to the web site that is very helpful to contractors to support them in reaching their goals and obtaining work within our district,” added Staten.

Conducting highly productive business forums is another reason for the District’s success. These forums and workshops assists small business leaders in gaining skills needed to acquire work from Corps contracts. It is at these venues where large and small business representatives can also mingle, network and learn from each other.

These forums can be either a Corps sponsored event or one in which the Corps is invited to attend, such as with the Society of American Military Engineers.

“We offer networking forums bringing large business here to meet with small business. Here, small businesses can learn valuable insights on how to gain subcontracting work from the larger businesses.

The District also sponsors workshops where the District provides training on how to get work with the Corps. According to Staten, this is a very successful aspect of the Small Business programs.

Major 2012 highlights include:

- #1 in total obligation to HUB Zones, within USACE with a total of \$263M

- #1 in total obligation to Small, Disadvantaged Business within USACE with a total of \$381M



Fort Worth Deputy Commander, Lt. Col. Andrew Liffing, Deputy for Small Business Programs, Carolyn Staten and Small Business Administration representative, Paul Stone review District stats during a recent Small Business Forum in Fort Worth.

- #1 in total obligations to Women-Owned Small Business with a total of \$99M

- #2 in total obligation to Small Business, within USACE a total of \$621M

- #2 in total obligations within USACE to Service-Disabled, Veteran-Owned Small Business with a total of \$99M

Implementing the tools of technology and hosting forums are very important factors in the overall success of the program, but the intangible that sets the Fort Worth District apart is the great working relationships among its people.

“Teamwork within the Fort Worth staff is the primary reason for the continued success,” said Fort Worth District Deputy Commander, Lt. Col. Andrew N. Liffing,

“Our PMs, the contracting office, Office of Small Business and the Small Business Administration all work well together to add a synergistic effect to getting contracts awarded,” he said.

This synergy has led to setting aside approximately 50% of all Fort Worth District contracts to small businesses. And this feat is truly a big deal for small business.



Galveston District communicates cutback\$

By Galveston District public affairs

Following the release of the 2012 President's Budget in February, Galveston District Commander Col. Christopher Sallese tasked staff to develop a command information campaign to educate district employees about the Corps current fiscal climate and inform staff of necessary agency-wide budget cutbacks to avoid district-wide layoffs.

Staff conducted a variety of research to clearly define short-term planning requirements as well as define goals and objectives to include secondary research (web and media analysis) as well as primary research gathered through informal interactions during quarterly town hall meetings between the commander and staff; visits to district offices; weekly staff meetings and through a Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute Organizational Climate Survey conducted in January 2011, to provide the command with critical data to enable senior leadership to under-

stand the human relations climate within the district and assisted the team with employing communication methods that promoted open dialogue and encouraged feedback.

A primary take away from the research was the data that shows that the success or failure of a downsized organization depends on the workforce remaining after the downsizing—the survivors.

Staff initiated a series of planning meetings to establish goals and objectives necessary to develop a successful plan for communicating the need to reduce 25 full-time positions by Oct. 1, 2012.

The long-term goal of this campaign was to execute a well-planned and managed downsizing process, which the survivors perceive as having been fairly and humanely administered, one that promotes trust and faith in management, minimizes adverse impacts and empowers staff to

provide improved services.

The short-term goals were to achieve the following objectives:

Objective 1: To reduce the Galveston District's workforce from 352 employees to 327 employees by fiscal year 2013 (Oct. 1, 2012) through natural attrition, retirement and the expiration of temporary/term position contracts.

Objective 2: To implement at least two avenues for employees to participate in two-way communication with senior leadership that elicits feedback from at least 10 percent of the workforce.

Objective 3: To retain the district's subject matter experts to ensure uninhibited productivity in 2012 over 2011 and maintain the right people with the right skills in the right jobs to preserve a highly capable force within evolving budgetary constraints.

Staff collaborated with senior leaders to execute the campaign as follows:

1. Devoted a special section to the reduction of full-time positions in six of the 2012 monthly Sand Castle publication. The internal publication is placed on the intranet and e-mailed to the workforce and retirees, reaching a potential audience of approximately 400 people).

2. Produced two "Retiree Round Up" feature stories highlighting recent retirees. These were distributed to local newspapers, employee's colleges, hometown newspapers, posted online and on the district's social media sites, reaching a total potential audience of more than 1,000,000.

3. Build one web page dedicated to Corps retirees. The USACE Galveston District's website receives an average of more than 5,000 visitors monthly.

4. Created an online "Comment Box" survey where employees could anonymously ask questions. This survey was distributed to the entire workforce via e-mail and included in the monthly Sand Castle internal publication to reach an audience of approximately 400 people.

5. Developed key messaging that informed senior district leaders how to answer employee questions regarding the reduction.

6. Surveyed employees to assess interested VSIP/VERA candidates. The survey was sent out via e-mail and posted in the Sand Castle. It elicited 18 responses. These responses provided senior leadership with information useful in planning VSIP/VERA offers.

7. Scheduled two town hall meetings to address downsizing concerns. Provided call-in confer-

ence capabilities for district area offices' employees to participate live, as well as videotaped the meetings (posted to the intranet).

8. Hosted two Coffee with the Colonel meetings to address downsizing concerns. More than 30 employees attended each session. Additionally, the meetings were taped and placed on the intranet for district area office employees to view and a call-in conference call was established for employees to participate in "real time."

9. Informed 100 percent of district employees of the following available resources (through e-mail, town hall meetings, Sand Castle and the intranet): Career Transition Program; Outplacement Program; individual career counseling; job fairs and USA available jobs; and resume-writing assistance.

10. Ensured open communications with employees by using every available communication means (to include e-mail, bulletin boards, town hall meetings, intranet, web and the Sand Castle) to announce updates, VSIP/VERA incentives and options.

The campaign achieved or exceeded all campaign goals and objectives as follows:

Objective 1: Exceeded. The district commander's goal of achieving a reduction of 25 full-time positions by Oct. 1, 2012, was achieved without the need to implement layoffs. The district successfully reduced its workforce by 40 positions through retirement, the expiration of temporary and term contracts, natural attrition and management reassignment to move employees to understaffed departments where possible to fill strategic positions.

Objective 2: Exceeded. Staff provided open, honest and

timely communication to inform employees of the reduction in staff and alleviate rumors. During 2012, the PAO developed two anonymous online surveys and coordinated two Coffee with the Colonel meetings to elicit two-way communication from staff to management. These combined efforts contributed to 28 individual survey responses and approximately 60 Coffee with the Colonel meeting participants for combined total of a 25 percent participation rate.

Objective 3: Exceeded. A review of the district's annual fiscal year snapshot reports for 2012 over 2011 revealed no significant reduction in the productivity of USACE Galveston District following a 12.8% decrease in the workforce and saw the following achievements:

- 400% increase in division-level or higher awards earned
- 397% increased web traffic (new website migration occurred in 2012)
- 47% increase in Corps in the Classroom (science, technology, engineering and math) events conducted
- 31% increase in district blood donations
- 8% increase in 2012 public outreach events
- 8 district staff members deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom during 2012

Few events cause as much stress, confusion and uncertainty in an employee's life as downsizing. Although leadership can't eliminate the uncomfortable feelings employees have during these times, open communication significantly contributed to helping USACE Galveston District employees to cope with the rapid changes and keep morale steady through one of the most difficult economic periods in the district's recent history.



The *Women* of SWD

March is Women's History Month and this year's theme, "*Women Inspiring Innovation Through Imagination: Celebrating Women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics,*" could not be more apropos to the work that the female employees of the Southwestern Division office in Dallas, Texas do everyday.

SWDO employs 37 women in fields ranging from accountants, clerks, project managers, economist, and civil engineers. Of those 37, 12 are in managerial positions or are GS-14 or higher. We salute all of the women within SWD for their dedication, service, hard work and intellect.

SWL celebrates African-American History Month

By Kent Cummins, Little Rock District public affairs

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Little Rock District observed National African American History Month with several events in January and February.

The district kicked off its celebration with a special visit from a Tuskegee Airman.

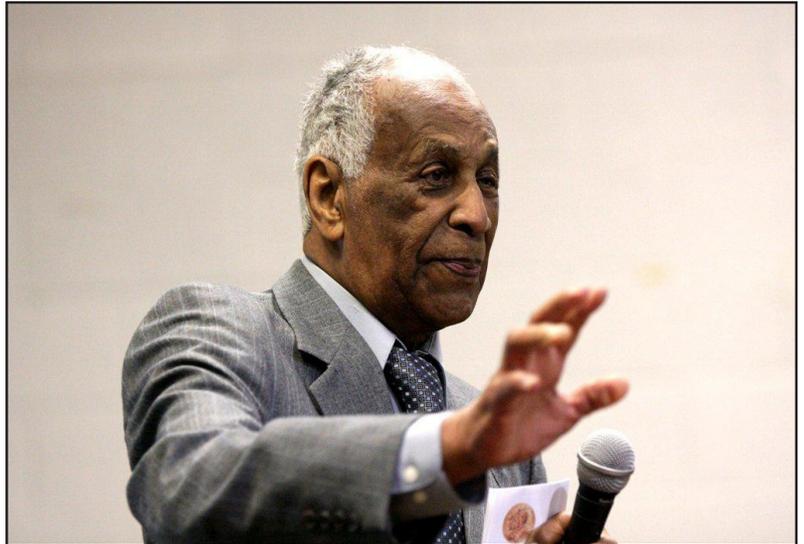
Milton Pitts Crenshaw, 94, spoke to members of the district about his life and the time he spent as a Tuskegee Airman. Crenshaw, a native of Little Rock, is considered the Father of black aviation. He was one of the first African Americans in the country, and the first from Arkansas, to be trained by the federal government as a civilian licensed pilot. He trained hundreds of cadet pilots while at Alabama's Tuskegee Institute in the 1940s. He overcame racism and bigotry to serve his country during World War II as a civilian flight instructor.

The district also hosted an African American History Month discussion panel with the theme "Today's Trailblazers...those who are contributing to the achievement, enhancement and empowerment of local African Americans in Arkansas." Participating panel members were William A. Cash Jr., Director of the U.S. Equal Opportunity Commission, Little Rock Area Office; Command Chief Master Sergeant Margarita Overton, 19th Airlift Wing, Little Rock Air Force Base; and William L. Walker, Jr., Director, Arkansas Department of Career Education.

Throughout February, the district also showed several lunchtime films for employees about African American heritage and history.

"This year's program focused on the recent or current progress that is being made by local Arkansans," said Shirley Bolden-Bruce, a member of the district's African American History Month committee. "We heard from local 'trailblazers' who have taken negative circumstances from the past and turned them into accomplishments that are positively impacting the future of all Arkansans."

The nation owes the celebration of African American History Month, and the study of black history, to Dr. Carter G. Woodson. Born to parents who were former slaves, he spent his childhood working in the Kentucky coal mines and enrolled in high school at age 20. He graduated within two years and later went on to earn a doctorate from Harvard. Woodson was disturbed to find in his studies that history books largely ignored the black American population, and when blacks did figure into the picture, it was generally in ways that reflected the inferior



Milton Crenshaw, a Tuskegee airman, makes a point during a presentation at a Black History event.

social position they were assigned at the time.

Woodson took on the challenge of writing black Americans into the nation's history. He established the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History in 1915. It is now known as the Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History. A year later he founded the widely respected Journal of Negro History. In 1926, he launched Negro History Week as an initiative to bring national attention to the contributions of black people throughout American history.

"We should emphasize not Negro History, but the Negro in history," said Woodson. "What we need is not a history of selected races or nations, but the history of the world, void of national bias, race, hate, and religious prejudice."

President Gerald R. Ford officially recognized Black History Month in 1976, calling upon the public to "seize the opportunity to honor the too-often neglected accomplishments of black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our history."

Since then, every American president has designated February as Black History Month and endorsed a specific theme.

"National African American History Month is a time to tell those stories of freedom won and honor the individuals who wrote them," stated President Barack Obama in his 2013 Presidential Proclamation. "We look back to the men and women who helped raise the pillars of democracy, even when the halls they built were not theirs to occupy. We trace generations of African Americans, free and slave, who risked everything to realize their God-given rights."

Southwestern Division builds STEM benchmark

By Melanie Ellis, SWD regional outreach coordinator

As the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers maneuvers its way through the current budget and funding crisis, teams across the country are addressing another crisis – finding the next generation of engineers.

Recent studies show that fewer and fewer students are graduating with engineering related degrees, specifically in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics or STEM. Engineering degrees in these fields make up about ninety percent of the Corps of Engineers workforce.

“Since the Corps of Engineers was created, it has been our mission to build and maintain the Nation’s critical infrastructure,” said Tom Hudspeth, chief, Business Management Division and Southwestern Division STEM Champion.

“It is up to us to engage students and let them know what our missions are and encourage them to explore becoming part of the engineering profession.”

And to do just that, the Corps of Engineers

has placed a deliberate focus on STEM outreach efforts and the SWD is off and running.

“We have always had STEM outreach across the region but we are making a concerted effort to track and document those events so we can see what areas and age ranges we are reaching and identify areas and age ranges that we need to focus on,” Hudspeth said.

STEM points of contact have been identified at each of the four districts in SWD and they are reporting weekly

engagements through the chain of command. Those STEM outreach efforts are a critical part to building the benchmark for SWD. This critical step engages students today so that when it comes time for them to make a decision about a career path they are well informed and aware of Corps missions and how they can make a difference.

In addition to the STEM engagements at the district offices the SWD office has established a STEM Project Delivery

already going on and also share suggestions for areas for the Division to focus on.

To take the outreach efforts a step further, the SWD is drafting a formal charter to show the level of commitment to STEM outreach and to ensure everyone is working toward the same goals across the region. SWD has also aligned its efforts through the Campaign Plan at headquarters, Implementation Plan at the Division level and Operation Plan at the District level.



Fort Worth District employees celebrated Engineer Week by participating in a science, technology, engineer and mathematics event in February at the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History. Students from grades kindergarten through high school built structures out of marshmallows and toothpicks with the help of several structural engineers and geologists from the District. (photo by Fort Worth District public affairs)

SWD has aligned its efforts to keep STEM outreach efforts on the front burner so that when team members are out working with students they are reminded to talk about the engineering and science and technology that is behind all the Corps does.

“You never know when you are going to talk about a subject that interests a student and possibly encourage them to explore the engineering world,” Hudspeth said. “Our overall goals are to increase STEM awareness, work together to leverage partnerships and be the Army’s leader in STEM.”

Editor’s Note: If you would like to become more involved in STEM

outreach efforts or are already involved and would like to share your experience contact your local STEM coordinator.

SWDO – Melanie Ellis – 469-487-7016

SWF – Lauren Fagerholm – 817-886-1514

SWG – Katie Parks – 409-766-3880 or Rose Caballero - 409-766-3920

SWL – James McKinnie – 501-324-5096

SWT – Nancy Crenshaw – 918-669-7159

Team. “This team is made up of folks that are passionate about what the Corps does and have a love for teaching others,” Hudspeth noted. “There are a lot of folks within the office that share that enthusiasm for teaching and I hope that they will engage with this PDT and let us cover all the areas that we need to reach.”

The team is made up of representatives from each division office and who attended the kickoff meeting on February 22. They were able to learn about a lot of the current outreach efforts that are

SWD STEM Charter



The Southwestern Division STEM project delivery team (photo by Andre Mayeaux)

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is a world-wide organization that supports our Nation by building and maintaining critical infrastructure. Every year there are fewer students graduating with engineering degrees related to Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics creating one of the Nation's greatest challenges for maintaining the critical infrastructure that protects the American people. In recognizing this challenge the Corps is increasing its outreach efforts to the engineering community to include the leading engineering education establishments to share our mission, vision, and experience in hopes of fostering partnerships within the education community.

To address this challenge, the Southwestern Division (SWD) office has created a Project

Delivery Team (PDT) of professionals from various engineering backgrounds to promote STEM with students and other professional organizations. This dedication is a commitment made by SWD to contribute to the development of a future workforce in the various STEM disciplines. We are committed as a team to working together to:

Support the SWD STEM Engagement Strategy:

Promote USACE to be a recognizable and desirable employer in the STEM community through measurable participation in outreach and recruitment events and by being the Army's leader in STEM.

Support the SWD STEM Objectives:

To improve on increasing the STEM pipeline within SWD by developing partnerships with historic accredited minority colleges and universities within our region and increasing our participation in STEM events with K-12 schools within our region.

Increase STEM awareness:

Promote STEM related activities and opportunities within our communities and professional organizations and associations.

Leverage key STEM partnerships within the region:

Work together to leverage and develop relationships across SWD to increase awareness of STEM activities and opportunities for students and professionals.

Galveston District hosts LSU students

By Galveston District public affairs

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Galveston District's Regional Environmental Specialist Janelle Stokes couldn't have been more pleased when she learned she would be presenting an overview of the district's Beneficial Use Program to a group of visiting Louisiana State University students who are just as interested in dirt as she is, and on their way to becoming the next leaders in the field of landscape architecture.

"There are a lot of design challenges and engineering requirements associated with the placement of dredged material," said Stokes. "One of the biggest difficulties is getting the elevation right so vegetation and marsh habitat can flourish. There is a tidal range of about 1.5 feet in the areas where we place material, which doesn't leave a lot of room for error."

The LSU students, enrolled in the Robert Reich School of Landscape Architecture, traveled to Galveston yesterday to visit one of the district's beneficial use sites known as the Corps Woods, to get a better understanding of infrastructure sustainability issues,

remediation and green infrastructure design in landscapes associated with maritime commerce such as the district's Beneficial Use Program.

"Within the context of the Houston Ship Channel and

ence, toxicity and contamination from industrial activities (particularly the petrochemical industry), non-industrial economies (fishing, shrimping, oysters) and coastal habitats."

Project Manager Byron

Williams, US-ACE Galveston District, provided students with an overview of the district's Beneficial Use Program and discussed the environmental requirements associated with using dredged material for projects.

"Annually, the Galveston District dredges approximately 30 to 40 million cubic yards of material," said Williams.

"While undertaking its mission of keeping America's waterways navigable, the Corps is often able to turn dredged material

into an added benefit for homeowners, tourists and businesses by employing environmentally and economically responsible methods to use the materials to improve eroded coastlines and renourish beaches."

LSU student Prentiss Darden, a second-year student in the Master of Landscape Architecture Program, was interested



Louisiana State University students enrolled in the Robert Reich School of Landscape Architecture take a moment to capture images of maintenance work conducted on a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Galveston District beneficial use site during a school trip to the district to learn more about how dredged material is being used for ecosystem restoration purposes.

Galveston Bay, the students have been looking at a broad range of sustainability issues," said Rob Holmes, visiting faculty at Louisiana State University's Robert Reich School of Landscape Architecture. "The beneficial use of dredged materials is one aspect of that range. Other issues include coastal erosion, storm surge, flooding, sea level rise, subsid-

in seeing the district's projects up close for a variety of reasons.

"In visiting the dredged materials site, we were able to see it within its context to experience the scale of it in relation to the surrounding landscape and understanding how it is built over time," said Darden. "Additionally, we gained a better understanding of dredged material sites that we otherwise would not have achieved through analysis of satellite photos and Internet research."

The students were provided a tour of the heavily wooded strip of land on the island's East End, which is part of the district's beneficial use site that was developed using dredged material extracted from the Houston Ship Channel. The site quickly became a pristine habitat for wildlife and serves as a model for responsible ways to use dredge materials to improve eroded coastlines through marsh restoration.

"One of the big issues that I've seen in relationship to dredging is a transition from viewing dredged material as a waste product toward viewing dredged material as a resource," said Holmes. "Part of this transition has come as a result of recognizing the ecological and aesthetic value of flora and fauna that take root on dredged material sites."

Williams explained the district's partnership initiatives with other federal and state agencies, non-governmental organizations and academic institutions to find innovative solutions to challenges that affect everyone – sustainability, climate change, endangered species, environmental cleanup

and ecosystem restoration, then acknowledged the importance of the students' studies and future careers in architectural landscape.

"In your career as a landscape architect, you will most likely work with agencies such as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to find solutions to restoring ecosystem structure and processes as well as be tasked with managing projects in a sustainable manner to leave the smallest footprint behind," said Williams.

According to Holmes there is a growing recognition that natural and human processes exist not in opposition, but in relationship with one another and therefore

sects in active industrial, infrastructure and logistical systems--places where natural systems cannot be divorced from human inputs, but must make use of and coexist with human activities," Holmes said.

From Galveston, the students will travel to the Port of Houston where they will visit with maritime industry leaders to learn more about active industrial and infrastructure sites that are associated with maritime commerce such as container terminals, refineries, tank farms and dredge disposal areas as well as discuss how designers can contribute to both the improvement of these places and the improve-

ment of their relationships to the cities that they are embedded in, through techniques like envisioning soft, biologically-based infrastructures and contributing to the remediation of pollutants with landscape systems.

The LSU School of Landscape Architecture is known for its rich and extensive off-campus educational opportunities. The school sponsors field trips throughout

the year to the northeast, west coast, Florida, Texas and Georgia. Beyond the United States, the school organizes opportunities for students to travel, study and work in Mexico, Asia and Europe.



USACE Galveston District Regional Environmental Specialist Janelle Stokes and Project Manager Byron Williams welcome a group of visiting Louisiana State University students enrolled in the Robert Reich School of Landscape Architecture. The LSU students traveled to Galveston yesterday to visit one of the district's beneficial use sites known as the Corps Woods, to get a better understanding of infrastructure sustainability issues, remediation and green infrastructure design in landscapes associated with maritime commerce such as the district's Beneficial Use Program.

it is imperative that future leaders in this industry find a balance between development and the environment.

"These realizations are key to our current studio project, which is particularly concerned with the potential role of landscape archi-

Kids on the Land:

A hands on STEM experience

By: Melanie Ellis, SWD regional outreach coordinator

Teachers are always looking for ways to capture their students' interest and to make the learning process fun and exciting. The "Kids on the Land" (KoL) program has found a way to do just that. They've moved the classroom to the great outdoors and have implemented a hands-on learning experience to teach student's science, math and land management practices.

This interactive experience has been in place since 2003 and has allowed more than 2,200 students to have an active role in the learning process. Bryon Haney, Business Technical Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Southwestern Division has been involved with KoL since 2009 and has witnessed the benefits of the program.

"The program is designed to have students participate in every activity and the activities support visual, auditory and kinesthetic learning styles," said Haney. The program was developed by Peggy Maddox, a veteran educator and landowner living in west Texas.

As a landowner, Haney utilizes holistic land management practices and understands the importance of taking what students are learning in the classroom and applying it in the real world. Haney has had an active role in extending the program to central Texas.

"The benefits of this program are multi faceted," said Haney. "Not only do the activities actively engage

the students, it meets the Texas science requirements and reinforces state standardized testing information curriculum (TAKS and Common Core curriculum), the added benefits include students getting excited about learning."

The KoL program was designed for the Trans-Pecos region of

quality down the road," said Haney. "They have an active role in the exercise and by having them spread out and act as rain drops we teach them how water enters into the watershed by having them walk a downhill path and focus on how they are all coming together at various points."

The KoL team has had such a positive response from students and teachers that they are looking for and being encouraged to expand the program. "The biggest response we get from teachers is to please do this training before the state testing takes place because it reinforces what the kids are learning." With current events scheduled in Era, Jacksboro, and Maryneal, Texas the KoL was excited to be invited to host an event at the Dallas Audubon Center in April.

"We are very excited and interested in expanding

this program because we believe in the value that it brings the students," said Haney. "I would like to see the program grow and progress over the next few years to the Corps hosting these learning events at our Operations project offices."

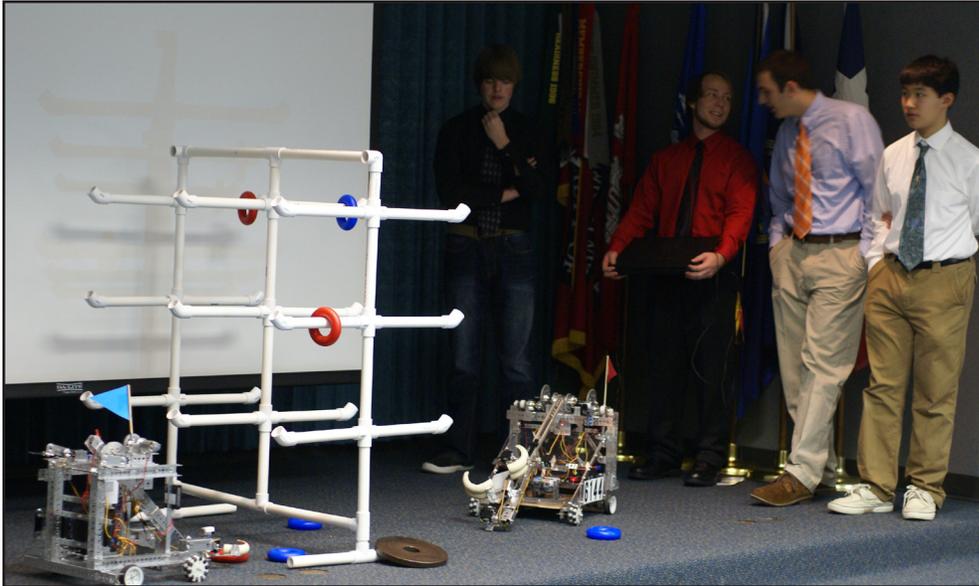
Editor's Note: For more information on how to get involved with the Kids on the Land program contact Kids On the Land, Inc. - a Texas 501c3 - Executor Director, Peggy Maddox -P.O. Box 694, Ozona, Texas 76943 westgift@hughes.net



Bryon Haney, a geospatial engineer for the Southwestern Division, talks to a group of fifth graders about watersheds, elevation model, water use and mapping in water cycle sessions on the ridge in Jack County between Brazos and Trinity Rivers. (Courtesy photo)

Texas and has been adapted for other regions including Cross Timbers and Grand Prairie. It focuses on kindergarten through sixth grade. Students from each grade learn different aspects of life on the land and how that land in turn sustains life. Haney has worked hands on with the fifth grade students in the learning module "Water Here, Water Tomorrow" which allows students to learn how land management helps improve the water cycle.

"This program teaches students how the land and water use impact water availability and water



Team members from the Owasso Robotics program demonstrate their robot during the SAME meeting at the Tulsa District. (photo by Nate Herring)

Local robotics teams recognized at meeting

By Nate Herring, Tulsa District public affairs

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Tulsa District and the Tulsa Society of American Military Engineer, or SAME recognized two Tulsa area robotics teams during their January meeting.

During the meeting, each team spoke about their program and demonstrated their robot. Both had received donations in 2012 from SAME to help fund their robotics projects and competitions. Each team built their robot, programmed it, and used remote controls to control the robot while performing certain tasks, which vary based on which competition circuit they were in.

The 2012 SAME Engineering the Future Grant was awarded to Owasso High School Robotics. The grant provides financial assistance to any program or projects composed of students in middle or high school in Eastern Oklahoma that advances Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math, more commonly known as STEM. The Owasso program has such a high level of interest among students that two separate teams

represent the school, the “Rambotics” and “Gnomeland Security.”

They compete in the FIRST Tech Challenge, a sports-based, friendly competition where opposing teams compete to win points. The competition consists of robots grabbing rings and placing them on pegs of varying heights. The objective is to gain the most points based on peg designation, right type, programming and driver controlled periods, and the robot’s abilities. The competition is sponsored by FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology), an organization dedicated to inspiring young people to be science and technology leaders. The Owasso program has qualified for the regional competition to be held in March.

The Fechinistas, an independent Tulsa area team of eight middle school girls, received donations from SAME in 2012 because of their outstanding performance at FIRST LEGO league competitions. The team received the Champion’s award at the local qualifying competition held

in Tulsa. This qualified the team to compete at the regional level and they ended up receiving third place for strategy and innovation at the state competition held in Edmond, Okla. in December.

The FIRST LEGO® league is a partnership between FIRST and Danish toy company LEGO®. Competing teams must build a robot from LEGO® pieces and NXT controller, motors, and sensors. They must then program the robot to interact with other competitors and the competition field.

The Fechinistas are a unique team because of their independent status. Three of the girls attend private school and five are home schooled. The team meets every Friday afternoon from the end of August through the middle of November. Each week they refine their mechanical design. In doing so, the team is challenged to develop innovative solutions using math and scientific research.

The Tulsa District works very closely with SAME to promote STEM initiatives to local schools. Two Tulsa District employees formally presented the Future Grant to the Owasso Robotics team. While there, they talked to the students about the engineering profession and their experiences working for the Tulsa District. In addition, two engineers from the Dam Safety Production Center and an intern from the Tulsa Resident Office helped judge group presentations and the Design and Programming component of the Tulsa FIRST LEGO® League competition in November. In addition, they helped coordinate student teams during head-to-head competition and they assisted the event photographer.

Dan Morales, one of the engineers participating the November event, attended the SAME meeting.

“The meeting was a way to formally acknowledge those exceptional students and to help promote volunteering by the SAME Tulsa Post at the next robotics competition,” he said. “Hopefully next year we can get even more volunteers.”

Floods, hurricanes and tornados...Oh My!

Fort Worth District Public Affairs Specialist, Clayton Church, gives a first hand account of his times deployed working with the external affairs planning and response team during natural disasters.



By Clay Church,
Fort Worth District public affairs

To parlay that infamous Wizard of Oz quote of “lions and tigers and bears, oh my!” is really done tongue in cheek but does give the imagination a run. I’ll no longer look again at a weather report without scrutinizing what and where the impacts may be. Throughout the last five years, I’ve deployed for more than 100 days in support of operations in the United States due to nature’s destructive power. Each time, I deployed as a member of the External Affairs Planning and Response Team, Emergency Support Function 15 under FEMA’s National Response Framework.

My first deployment was to the Recovery Field Office in support of recovery operations from Hurricane Ike to the Texas Gulf Coast in 2008 and specifically to the residents of the country’s fourth largest city, Houston. Ike’s widespread impacts resulted in the Corps of Engineers using several of the established PRTs including tem-

porary power, commodities, debris and temporary roofing (Blue Roof). Working through mission assignments from FEMA via the Joint Field Office in Austin the missions of the RFO were conducted out of rented suites in the Pasadena Town Square in Pasadena, Texas. Working from inside a mall presented some interesting contacts with the public but sure made it easy to take a break or meet someone in the food court.

Although I had not deployed with a team before Hurricane Ike, there were several hurricane seasons that brought experience which lead to a better understanding of emergency response due to a weather related event. The one season that stands out the most is 2004 when between August 13 and Sept. 25, Florida experienced four major hurricanes: Charley and Frances (both Category 4) and Ivan and Jeanne (both Category 3). One of my colleagues, Ed Rivera, deployed in support of Hurricane Frances recovery and then had to support recovery efforts when Mobile District was impacted by Hurricane Ivan. His

experience and reach back efforts to the Fort Worth District proved a wealth of experience for me in dealing with flexibility while at the same time supporting the mission.

My next direct response experience after Hurricane Ike was with the floods of 2011. The Mississippi and Missouri Rivers experienced historic levels and presented many challenges to response operations. There were also many first for the Corps of Engineers dealing with social media and using new technology in the form of the Mobile Information Collection Application.

From an article off of the Engineering Research and Development Center’s web page is this information about the MICA: “During the destructive floods in the Mississippi River Valley in spring 2011, the MICA system was deployed for rapid flood-related data collection. Instead of the standard field kit, over fifty Android-based smart phones installed with MICA software were distributed to field personnel in seven flood affected cities. Emergency Operations Center personnel used



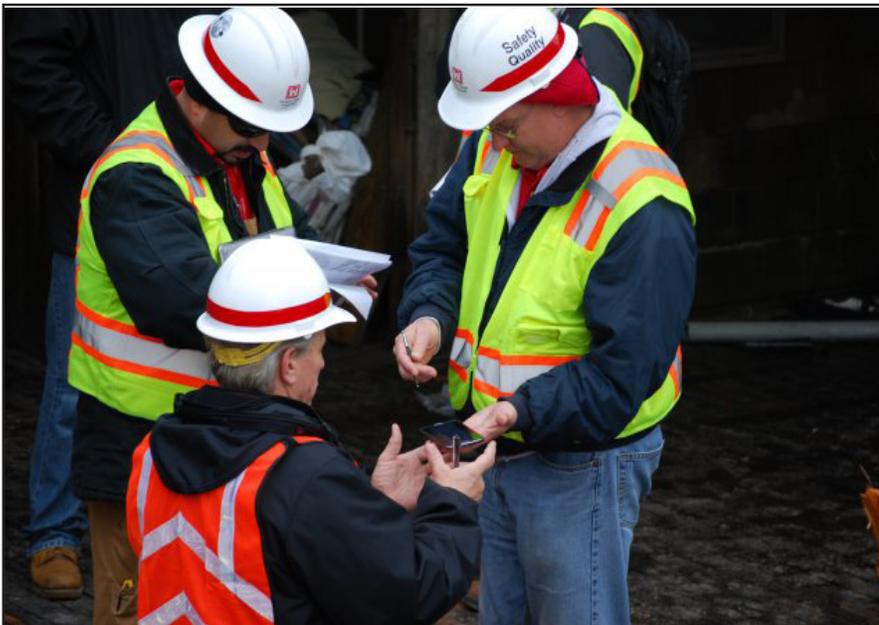
Clay Church, public affairs specialist from the Fort Worth District, looks up from working during emergency operations following the arrival of Hurricane Ike in 2008. The recovery field office was located in leased space at the Pasadena Town Square, Pasadena, Texas and supported emergency support function number three operations in the greater Houston area. (Courtesy photo)

the MICA system to collect valuable field information and data points during the flood event. More than 12,000 pictures, videos, and notes were captured, automatically geo-tagged, and transmitted directly from the field to the various command centers, allowing decision makers to review and analyze critical flood fighting data within seconds.”

In addition to the MICA a new Facebook page for the Missouri River appropriately named Missouri River Flood 2011 was created as part of outreach efforts communicating with all stakeholders. The Facebook page was well received and still today has over 13,000 people that have liked the page. The majority of my involvement in 2011 was dealing with news media representatives working out of the North Dakota State Emergency Operations Center in the capital city of Bismarck.

My most recent disaster response experience was with Hurricane Sandy recovery. Sandy hit the East Coast hard on Oct. 29 as one of the largest hurricanes, size wise, to ever hit the U.S., and the recovery mission continues to date. By the time I arrived on scene just before the New Year, the temporary power and unwatering missions were complete. Debris removal was in full swing and will continue for some time. Telling the story of recovery to the New York media market was a challenge but rewarding. Rebuilding and getting lives used to the new normal in New York, New Jersey and surrounding areas will continue for years to come.

Each disaster I have been involved with is unique. Each has its unforgettable moments and each builds on the experience of the one before. Helping those impacted from a disaster to recover safely and rebuild their lives keeps me on the External Affairs Planning and Response Team. For more information on becoming a PRT member, talk to your supervisor and contact your emergency management representatives. Another article that speaks about being a PRT member is available here: http://www.army.mil/article/94313/We_need_YOU_Even_as_an_Army_Civilian/.



Oscar Lopez (L) and Robbie Powers (R) both from the Baltimore District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers coordinate with Bill Kelly from FEMA while documenting assessments of property for debris removal on Fire Island, N.Y., Jan. 12, 2013, following the destruction from Hurricane Sandy. The assessment team is using the mobile information collection system that USACE created for greater efficiencies in debris site assessments. MICA allows for information on the nature of the debris to be immediately uploaded to a central database. FEMA tasked the mission of debris removal to USACE under the National Response Framework through Emergency Support #3, "Public Works and Engineering," to return the citizens of Fire Island to normalcy as quickly as possible. (USACE Photo by Clay Church)

A conversation with Peggy Grubbs, Fort Worth District Deputy of Programs and Project Management

By Denisha Braxton, Fort Worth District public affairs

Mrs. Grubbs you may have heard that the theme for this year’s celebration of Women’s History Month is “Women Inspiring Innovation through Imagination – Celebrating Women in STEM.” I’d say that the fact that you are the first female Deputy District Engineer for the Southwest Region, USACE shows that you are a true example of that theme. Can you comment on that theme and how you see yourself in this history making position as making an impact on those who serve with you now; that have served with you and what impacts you continue to have on the next generation of engineers that you are helping to mentor and nurture as future leaders?

I underestimate what people see in me and more so the respect for the position I hold. I’m very surprised by the comments and the impressions that it makes on people. That drives me to appreciate the responsibilities of this position and what it means to other women. I want them to know you have to work hard to be in a position like this while never losing focus of what is right. There are so few professional women attracted to government service. I really feel there is so much more I can do to help the women in our organization. When I graduated from high school, women, much like STEM, were encouraged to go into Engineering and Science but I feel that was not continued due to the gap that exists today. The fact that there are eight female DPMs in the Corps out of 42, it has taken us 25-30 years to be competitive for these positions and behind us there is a very limited number of women to succeed us. Not only do we not have students’ focusing on Science, Technology, Engineering and Math but the number of women is even less. We want to change that whole dynamic in our organization.



Congressman Michael Burgess, Fort Worth District Deputy District Engineer Peggy Grubbs and representatives of GCC Enterprises, Inc., gather prior to the start of a ground-breaking ceremony for an Army Reserve Center in Denton, Texas, on April 13, 2012. (courtesy photo)

Your bio is beyond impressive and a year later employees and other leaders throughout SWF and SWD are still talking about the moving address you gave at the 2012 Women’s History Month event. Can you give readers an idea of how your past assignments have brought you to this key leadership position as the Deputy District Engineer and any lessons learned from those assignments you can share? Any mentors you’d like to reference that were instrumental in your career success?

I just always looked for opportunities, didn’t wait for them to come to me. I was never shy about asking for those opportunities. I tried to learn a position well and do a good job in that position.

I looked for diversity and new challenges, regional and National team projects and assignments that allow me to understand the organization better as well as getting to network and work with members around the Corps. I was also willing to move, that made me a little more mobile in my career as well. From a mentor perspective, I really have had mentors that I sought in small ways, who weren’t with me all the time. Some of the best mentors I’ve had were my own peers because I went to them asking how I could do things better whether it was interviewing or looking at opportunities. If you work hard and do well it’s easy for people to take you on and bring you into their program.

The most significant mentor I’ve ever had was Darrell Alverson, former chief of Military and Design Branch, who went on to the Southwestern Division before retiring. He had a very diverse background with the Corps and he guided me, was my sounding board and taught me how to look at an organization, figure out the agenda, then guide the branch or section. He mentored a lot of women in the District and was very supportive. He gave me opportunities that helped me see the bigger picture in running an organization.



Peggy Grubbs, Fort Worth District, deputy district engineer and Congressman Michael Burgess share a laugh following a ground-breaking ceremony for an Army Reserve Center in Denton, Texas, on April 13, 2012. (courtesy photo)

Recently you gave what is now being referred to as one of the best and most open conversations to the Fort Worth District workforce on the downturn and reshaping of the workforce. You are seen as one of the critical persons responsible helping to ensure that the process of downsizing is done right for current and future SWF workforce. Tell readers what you see as your role in that process and how in general things are going with the process? Are you confident that SWF will endure the challenges of the downturn?

Essentially my role is guiding our CAB members to look at strategically where we need to be as an organization when this is all said and done. We started evaluating our situation over a year ago revising how we do revenue and getting the offices better at projecting, making assumptions and understanding the risks we were accepting with that revenue. We are very good at it now and I think we are more confident and transparent between functional elements as a result. My role is to chair the Commander's advisory Board and guide the this team toward where we need to be strategically and what competencies that we need to maintain to be viable and flexible for the future. So that really means that we have strong competencies but we also have a variety. My role is also to guide our Human Capital team that works together to strategize the next steps guiding not only the communication with the staff but the training we put on to educate team members. Our objective is to keep the employees informed but also provide them the assistance that they're going to need if in fact the mock RIF shows they could potentially be separated.

Like I said in my briefing in the Town Hall last month, I believe the District is going to come out strong from this effort. It's not that we won't have some rebuilding that we'll have to do but I think the District will be essentially shaped and right-sized for the missions to come, but the missions are going to be different. I think we have the right people to make the District strong and we'll want to take on new small programs and projects. The Fort Worth District has always succeeded or excelled when given the hard missions. I have all of the confidence that once we get past this we're going to be able to work with each other and come out strong in the long run because we're ahead of the game. It's not just the District but we're doing things regionally which will keep the regional strong. This helps our situation and I remain proud of the regional team and the courage they have had to make hard decisions.

We know from the example you practice every day just how much you care about the well-being of the district and how you help to teach, mentor and shape future engineers of both genders. That said as we celebrate Women's History Month, I do want to focus for a minute on the female workforce. What sound advice would you offer females who are considering careers in engineering, and the related disciplines of math, science and technology; including challenges and rewards they may encounter?

Women who are considering Science, Technology, Math and Engineering fields, I don't think they know how many doors and opportunities are out there for them that they wouldn't experience otherwise. When I started my career I just wanted to be able to have a family and still have a career, because that was my focus all the decisions that I made were based on keeping that balance. I looked for a woman that had a family, husband, career and family but never really found one and now I have become that person. I think there is a way to have it all and you really don't have to give up anything. It helps to have a great partner in life but it just takes some work and a whole lot of communication. I just think that women can have it all if they work at it, want it, and they're not going to feel like they fell short. It's all about how you measure success. Careers in the Corps provide for so many opportunities, overseas as well as program to program you really have a lot of flexibility in this agency. What you can you do and be a part of is only limited by yourself. As long as you perform and can be relatively successful at that, there is no limitation.

Is there anything additional you'd like readers to know about you and your many successes?

Follow your dreams and you really can have it all! You just have work hard just like anything else. Nothing comes easy. Just ride the rough times, stay to your values and have faith in something bigger than you. You have to believe that you are never alone in your pursuits.

Remembering Tulsa Hydrologist, Don Butler

By Nate Herring, Tulsa District Public Affairs



Don Butler (courtesy photo)

Employees in the Water Management Section of the Hydrology and Hydraulic Branch consider themselves family and when they lost one of their own, Don Butler, they were overwhelmed with shock and sadness.

Butler, who was a hydrologist and Tulsa District employee for nearly 42 years, unexpectedly passed away Feb. 4, 2013.

"He's family," said Scott Henderson, Butler's most recent supervisor. "We lost a family member. That's how we all feel."

Lisa Samilton, electronics engineer and Butler's coworker, said she was off work that day and read the e-mail sent out to employees about his passing on her Blackberry.

"I just couldn't believe it," she said. "I read it and thought 'that can't be right'. I was in disbelief"

Butler began working for the Corps in June 1971 and brought a lot of historical knowledge and

stability to the section, Henderson said. One of his biggest challenges was the tremendous technology shift in recent years.

"When he was going through college, we were still using pencils and slide rulers," said Kelita Stephens, hydraulic engineer. "Don came a tremendous distance."

Before that technological shift, field offices compiled daily hydrology reports that would be called in to the district office.

"When I first came to work for the Corps, staff would take measurements and I'd call it in," said Dawn

Oliphant, support services specialist at Big Hill Lake. "He was our go-to-guy and he was everyone's friend. Don Butler was an awesome individual."

Common words used to describe Butler are kind, patient, personable, polite, and friendly and he was very welcoming.

"To me, he was a real gentleman in that he treated people really well," said Stephens. "He made it a habit to talk to people on a pretty regular basis and that builds a community. He was a great influence in the Corps."

Samilton said that Butler was one of the first people to welcome her when she first started with the Corps. But his generosity didn't just stop there.

"My sister's house caught on fire and she lost everything," she said. "Don came to me and he talked to his wife and they gave her an entire living room set."

Butler was also very passionate about the African American Employment Program at the Tulsa District. He was a member of the program committee and often participated in the annual Martin Luther King Day parade in Tulsa. Each year, the Tulsa District has a water safety float in the parade.

Outside of the Corps, Butler was very active in his community. He served as a deacon at the Paradise Baptist Church in Tulsa and he worked with the church's homeless ministry. He was a devoted husband to his wife Delois and father to three children, Corey, Vincent, and Vashina. Butler planned to retire from the Corps later this year and he was looking forward to spending time with his seven grandchildren.

After the announcement of his passing, the outpour from Tulsa District employees was very strong. Henderson said he received a lot of phone calls and e-mails and the Corps family continues to grieve for the loss of their coworker and friend.

"There's a hole and a little emptiness," he said. "Don was always there and now he's not. I still expect to see him."

Samilton agreed saying she's going to miss him.

"When I walk down that way and I see an empty cubicle, she said. "It's hard."

Although Butler's cubicle now sits empty, his memory lives on.

"I can still hear his voice and I can still see him in ways," Henderson said. "He won't be forgot



Galveston District's Fred Anthamatten, chief of the Regulatory Branch, receives a Superior Civilian Service award from Col. Christopher Sallese, commander Galveston District during his retirement ceremony from 35 years of dedicated federal service. (photo by Galveston District public affairs)

Galveston Regulatory Branch chief retires after 35 years of federal service

By Galveston District public affairs

After 35 years of dedicated service to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Fred Anthamatten, chief of the Galveston District's Regulatory Branch, will close his office door for the last time today, trading in the district's regulatory program for retirement.

Anthamatten began his career with SWG in March 1977, working as a temporary employee in the engine room of the U.S. Hopper Dredge Gerig, then accepted a permanent position in the Regulatory Branch as a physical scientist technician processing permit applications.

"I worked in Regulatory Enforcement for four years, collecting water and sediment samples for Corps' dredging projects to ensure they complied with state water quality standards," said Anthamatten. "Little did I know that I would come to love this profession and remain with the Corps for the next three decades."

In 1981, he was transferred to the Corpus Christi Area Office to establish a Regulatory Field Office. By 1985, he was promoted to the position of chief of the Enforcement Section and returned to

the USACE Galveston District Office to become the first GS-13 regulatory supervisory biologist in the nation.

A lifelong learner, Anthamatten worked diligently to master every position he was selected to lead and by 1998 he was promoted to chief of the Policy Analysis Section, serving dually as the assistant chief of the Regulatory Branch. In 2006, he was selected as the Regulatory Branch Chief – a position he led until his retirement.

"Fred experienced many changes in the Regulatory program evolution during his 35 years of service to our nation," said Col. Christopher Sallese, commander of the USACE Galveston District. "As one of the original reviewers to develop the 1987 Wetland Delineation Manual, he continued to serve our nation as a leader in his field, whose work was often used in establishing new nation-wide rules and regulations."

Throughout Anthamatten's career, he was instrumental in countless noteworthy litigation cases that crystallized Corps Regulatory pipeline policy, resulted in a record-setting Clean Water Act

penalty, dealt with jurisdiction in coastal flats and mitigation, resulted in use of the Migratory Bird Rule as a basis for jurisdiction over isolated waters, refined wetland delineation methods in depressional wetlands and reaffirmed the National Environmental Policy Act's regulatory scope of analysis.

"Working for the Corps has been professionally and personally rewarding and I am thankful to have been given the opportunity to make contributions that will impact the future of the Texas coastal environment while working to balance development in the waters along the Texas coast," said Anthamatten.

A natural leader, Anthamatten was chosen as the sole Corps regulator to oversee the clean up for the 1979 PEMEX Oil Spill in South Texas. He additionally served as a Prospect lead Instructor to develop Regulatory III course materials (1986), organized the initial partnership for the Seaborne Conservation Corps (1986) and partnered with the Galveston Transitional Community (1993).

"Fred has been a catalyst for change and an integral part of this district for nearly four decades," said Sallese. "His departure will not only leave a void in the district professionally as he will be taking with him a wealth of institutional knowledge, but a void for us personally as he has been an incredible mentor to so many of our current and future district leaders. We are proud of his service to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and wish him the best of luck in his retirement."

A graduate of Lamar University with a Bachelor of Science in Oceanography, Anthamatten received more than 30 professional awards throughout his extensive career and co-authored numerous publications including the "Successful Restoration of Filled Wetlands At Four Locations Along The Texas Coast," *Journal of the Society of Wetland Scientists*, 1981; "Wetland Delineating By Means Of Tide Gauge, South Padre Island, Texas" and "Proceedings Of Wetlands Engineering And River Restoration," *American Society of Civil Engineers* (1998).

Following retirement he plans to enjoy his time with his wife of 35 years and his two sons, as well as continue to expand his skills as a self-taught drummer and pursue his passion as a Civil War re-enactor.

Marine veteran brings "can-do" attitude from one Corps to another Corps

By Edward Rivera, Fort Worth District public affairs

Cody Hammer graduated from Stephen F. Austin State University in 2005, but it would be seven years before the Geography major would find his way to the Fort Worth District as a Geospatial Information Systems Specialist with the Piney Woods Regional Project.

After earning his degree, Hammer enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps in May 2005. After graduating basic training he attended the School of Infantry where he would be assigned as a Marine Rifleman with Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 23rd Marines of the 4th Marine Regiment, a Marine Corps Reserve unit out of Shreveport, La.

Returning from his initial military training Hammer became a graduate student and worked as a GIS specialist for a company out of the Dallas-Fort Worth area until 2007 when he was called to active duty for a year to serve in Iraq. Due to under manning, he deployed as an attachment to Kilo Company, 3rd Battalion, 23rd Marines.

"I operated out of Combat Outpost Ellis that was named after a Sgt. Maj. Joseph J. Ellis who was killed in the village by a suicide bomber," said Hammer. "It was located in Barwanah, Al Anbar province on the Euphrates River three miles south of the now infamous village of Haditha. Our primary mission was to secure the village and surrounding areas."

After seven months Hammer would return home and continue as a GIS specialist in his hometown of

Longview, Texas. But it wouldn't be long before his country would call on him to deploy once again in 2010, this time to Afghanistan.

"We operated out of the Marjah District Center in Helmand province, the primary mission was to protect the district governor and any U.S. and allied interests in the city,"



Cody E. Hammer, Geospatial Information Systems Specialist for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Fort Worth District, Piney Woods Regional Project, prepares to trap an alligator Sept. 15, 2012 during a wounded warrior hunt at the Town Bluff Project.

he said.

On Aug. 19, 2011, Hammer would experience a life defining event. While on a resupply and transport mission Hammer, the lead

driver in a Mine-Resistant, Ambush-Protected vehicle equipped with a mine roller struck the switch for a victim operated improvised explosive device.

"We vary our routes to disrupt enemy operations as much as possible, but that morning we had a short turn around for a follow-on mission so we had to take the shortest route, which was one we had taken days earlier," explained Hammer. "I crested a small hill and started down the northern slope, aiming between two sandy areas into a spot where I could see there had been plenty of local vehicle traffic. As I slowed down to make sure the mine roller did not bounce and loose contact with the ground, reducing its coverage, the roller struck the switch."

The ensuing explosion blasted the mine roller upside down, blowing off all eight wheels. The size of the explosion was estimated at about 120 pounds, enough to sink almost any ship.

"The mine roller saved my life. It was just luck, or the hand of God on my shoulder, but I happened to be slowing down when the mine roller hit the trigger. A 500 pound piece of it was found 300 yards away," said Hammer.

After regaining his bearing an enraged Hammer opened his door to see a dust trail heading toward the horizon. It was a man on a motorcycle. The Marine corporal laid his rifle on the door to steady his aim.

"I looked through my optics and saw that he had no visible weapons and no visible wires, he simply did not meet the rules of engagement we were operating under. I had to let him go."

Later the Explosive Ordi-

nance Disposal team would inform him that there was a single set of motorcycle tracks bisecting the crater left by the IED.

"I knew it was him, my only regret is that I had to let him go." It's really hard to imagine that coward may still be out there, maybe killed some other Marine, some other American."

Hammer's vehicle commander and machine gunner both sustained serious injuries and had to be evacuated immediately. Their lone passenger sustained minor wounds and continued on his mission and was relieved the following week ending his tour in Afghanistan.

"I was admitted to the Regimental Aid Station at Camp Dwyer with a concussion and injuries to my right elbow, forearm and hand."

Shortly after returning home and still recovering from his injuries, Hammer applied for a GIS position with the Piney Woods Regional Office and began his career with a different Corps.

"When I returned from my last deployment I went back to work in the private sector, but realized my job satisfaction was very low," said Hammer. "I will always have respect for the private sector, but working for the American people is really very rewarding to me."

Far from his life driving an MRAP in hostile areas of the world, Hammer finds himself excited with the variety of tasks he can undertake on a daily basis.

"Due to the nature of my job I can expect any given day to turn out 100 percent different than the day before. Today it's incorporating edits into a database, tomorrow it's scanning the shoreline for Giant Salvinia, and next

it's putting out burning trees during a prescribed burn."

Although many of the skills he learned as a rifleman didn't quite equate to his current job, his time in the military ingrained a "never say can't or won't" attitude when it comes to accomplishing a task or mission.

"Even though I am a GIS Specialist, I believe my greatest asset is my wiliness to take on new tasks, even if it's outside of my comfort zone. I may be here serving in one role, but if I find an opportunity to pick up the slack in another role, well, that's just one more tool in my tool box I can use later."



U.S. Marine Cpl. Cody E. Hammer, now a Geospatial Information Systems Specialist at Piney Woods Regional Project, shortly after his Mine-Resistant, Ambush-Protected vehicle equipped with a mine roller struck an improvised explosive device in Afghanistan.

Raymon Hedges, Environmental Stewardship Business Line Manager, Piney Woods Regional Project and Hammer's supervisor said, since coming on board last

year, he has worked to adapt to the nuances and challenges of his job and is an eager team member for whatever, whenever, and wherever he is needed from his main duties as GIS Specialist to helping conduct archeological surveys and prescribed burns.

"I believe his service with the U.S. Marines has instilled a strong sense of duty that will benefit Piney Woods Regional Project and US-ACE for many years to come," said Hedges.

Not long after becoming a part of the Fort Worth District family Hammer was invited to take part in a wounded warrior hunt at the Town Bluff Project. He joined three other wounded warriors for a weekend hunting alligator. Additionally he has supported two other warrior hunts.

"When I was asked to join the Alligator hunt because one member could not make the trip, I was honored, said Hammer." There is a connection between veterans that transcends titles, and even backgrounds. The Soldier I hunted with had a very different military experience than I. He served as an Army Scout, different mission, different methods, yet during the hunt we discovered a mutual appreciation for the outdoors, and for shooting sports. We have stayed in almost weekly contact since then."

For Hammer, his experience with wounded warriors and thus far with the Fort Worth District has been of pride and satisfaction to be able to continue service to his country. His work is no longer carried out on a sandy battle field but in a forest of piney woods. Although he misses the Marine Corps and his brothers-in-arms, he and his wife Katie are now part of

another Corps family, the Fort Worth District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.



Capt. David Freeman provides a pen to a young Afghan boy while patrolling the area during his deployment to Kandahar in 2010. (Courtesy photo)

From the battleground to the Corps

By LaDonna Davis, SWD public affairs

Joining the Army is not a decision that is taken lightly. It takes a commitment, it takes courage, and it takes strength and confidence. But, staying with the Army once you've suffered a severe trauma to the brain while in a war zone takes more than just courage, it takes perseverance and leadership.

Capt. David C. Freeman embodies all those qualities and more. Freeman joined the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Southwestern Division as the camp-de-aide to SWD Commander, Brig. Gen. Thomas Kula in January. He came to SWD after an assignment at Fort Hood, Texas.

While Freeman may only be 26 years old, and has been a Soldier for less than 10 years, he has already earned the distinguished honor of being a Purple Heart recipient for his wounds sustained through enemy contact while serving in

Afghanistan.

"I joined the Army at 18 years old to get away from home, meet new people and get an opportunity to lead," the Van Buren, Ark. native said. "The amount of responsibility you get at my age is difficult to get anywhere else besides the Army."

Freeman studied engineer management and environmental engineering at the Military Academy at West Point. In



Capt. David Freeman receives a Purple Heart, November 2011 for wounds sustained while deployed to a war zone. Freeman's platoon was hit by an improvised explosion device while performing a routine inspection in southern Afghanistan in 2010. (Courtesy photo)

December 2010, Freeman was deployed to Kandahar, Afghanistan where he served as a platoon route clearance leader. It was while serving there that he got the unfortunate experience of a lifetime.

While performing a routine route inspection, Freeman and his platoon unit were struck by a 100 pound IED (improvised explosion device).

"I was sitting in the truck commander seat when the IED detonated under my seat," Freeman said. The explosion rendered Freeman unconscious and when he woke up

he faced injuries of broken teeth, lacerations on his face and arms, lower back injuries, and traumatic brain injury. "I have a gap in memory 20 minutes before the accident and about 45 minutes after," Freeman recounts.

Fortunately, the explosion did not result in any deaths and miraculously, Freeman recovered in Kandahar and within a few weeks, was back out patrolling with his platoon.

"The physical injuries, like my back and elbows, healed within a couple of months, but my memory took almost a year

to recover," Freeman said.

In spite of his accident, Freeman says the experience he had while deployed was amazing. "My Soldiers and NCOs were just unbelievable," he said. "That thing you hear about becoming a family, that's how it really was. We were all really close."

Now in Dallas, working for SWD, Freeman faces new challenges, such as working with a majority civilian workforce.

"The team here at SWD is excellent," Freeman said. "I knew it would be an adjustment going from working with Soldiers to working with civilians, but this is a great team that is easy to work with."

Working for USACE as an aide has also given Freeman the opportunity to see first-hand what being an Army leader is all about. "Working here broadens my perspective of how the Army operates," he said. "It allows me to see from the top down how decisions are made and the thought process that goes in to them. Not to mention, Brig. Gen. Kula has so many years of leadership experience, to get to learn first hand from somebody that's already been there and done that is invaluable."

Further, Freeman says working for SWD gives him a better understanding of what the Corps does. "I get to see the effects the Corps has on my hometown and the community I was raised in."

Freeman still has more than a year before his assignment with SWD is up, but he's already looking to the future and hoping the Corps will be a part of it. "It would be nice to come back to the Corps if I get the opportunity," Freeman said. "Everyone's been great and this has been a wonderful experience."



Employee Spotlight

Galveston District: *Sharon Manzella Tirpak*

By Galveston District Public Affairs

Q: Discuss your role at the Corps

A: I lead teams of Engineers, Biologists and Economists and project Sponsors through feasibility studies and construction of civil works projects. It is a leadership role with many responsibilities and challenges and requires knowledge of Corps processes. The biggest challenge is to keep the project on schedule and within budget.

Q: What do you enjoy most about working on your particular project(s)/tasks?

A: Being a Project Manager is never dull – there's always something that has to be taken care of. I like "putting out the fires". It makes the days go fast.

Q: What do you like about your current job?

A: I like the interaction with the project delivery team and the sponsors. I also like the learning aspect. Working on these projects you always learn something new.

Q: What's the most interesting thing you've encountered or who's the most interesting person you've worked with during your tenure at the Corps?

A: Working with the archeologists that helped bring up the remains of the USS Westfield from the Texas City Ship Channel is probably the most interesting thing I've worked on. Luis Saenz (retired) was very patient teaching this Marine Biologist all about dredging and engineering.

Q: What's your most memorable moment working with the

Corps?

A: Had to be while I was in Regulatory and on a site visit with a co-worker visiting with an applicant who wanted to put a pier on Lake Livingston. The water in the lake had been low for some time so we were able to walk quite a ways out through some knee-high grass to see where the applicant wanted to place his pier. There were a lot of Anoles (small lizards) in the

Bio Stats

Current Title/Position: Project Manager

How long have you held this position?
5 years

Number of Years with USACE: 19

Hobbies/Interests: Walking, watching a good movie, watching the Steelers, helping with my son's scouting and band activities and being involved with the local community

grass. Walking back to the truck I felt something crawling up my leg under my jeans. I started jumping around to get the lizard out of my pant leg – but to no avail. I started running into the woods to strip the pants off to get the lizard out and finally it dropped out of my pant leg. The co-worker I was with was laughing his butt off, as was I, while all along the applicant had this weird look on his face! There was another time in East Texas, with the same co-worker, but maybe another time.



Sharon Manzella Tirpak

Q: Why did you choose this field?

A: I actually chose Marine Biology, which I don't do much of at this point. But after coming to the Corps I have always thought it was the best professional move I could have made. I am much better at working and interacting with people than I was doing research.

Q: How do you feel your work is making a difference in the district?

A: I would like to think that by completing some of the long-term studies and positioning those projects for potential authorization and funding; or by completing a construction project, that the District and the Nation are benefitting, and I helped make that happen.

Tulsa District: *Helen Williams*

By Nate Herring, Tulsa District Public Affairs



Helen Williams

Q: What is the most rewarding aspect of your job?

A: Having the opportunity to educate people about the aquatic environment. I don't try to tell people that they can't do something. Instead, I tell them how they can fulfill their desired outcomes with little or no effect on the overall integrity of the aquatic environment.

Q: Why is the work you do as a USACE regulator so important to the nation?

A: It's been a long time since anyone has

heard of any horror stories that are similar to the "Love Canal," a New York neighborhood that was the center of controversy in the 1970s because a chemical company used an area to dispose of toxic waste and that's a great thing. As a result of the Clean Water Act, our nation has some of the cleanest water in the world. All of our environmental laws applied appropriately are essential to our environment and us.

Q: You've worked for the Corps of many years, How has the district changed:

A: There are a lot less employees than when I started. One of the good things that has changed is the increase of higher ranked females.

Q: What's the most interesting thing you've encountered while working for the Corps?

A: I enjoy working with my coworkers and the public can always be interesting to work with.

Q: You also organize the blood drives at the district. How did you get involved in that?

A: I started donating blood in high school. I continued donating our on-site drives. When the Wellness Committee blood drive coordinator accepted a position at another agency, I was asked to back-fill and I did. There are so many reasons to donate blood; cancer victims, premature babies, accidents, surgeries, the list goes on and on. If you ever need a transfusion there is no substitute for human blood.

Bio Stats

Current title: Regulatory Project Manager

How long in current position: 23 years in Regulatory

How long with USACE: 34 years, all with SWT

Hobbies/Interests: Gardening, fishing, reading, knitting.

Little Rock District: *James McKinnie*

By Jay Woods, Little Rock District

Q. How did you get to the Little Rock District?

A. I transferred from Little Rock AFB's Civil Engineer Squadron to Design Branch in May 2009, and I was permanently assigned to my current position in February 2013.

Q. What are the duties of this position?

A. The section serves as the maintenance engineering team for the District's civil works assets. We provide technical support to the project office staff, assist them with evolving management tools and business processes, conduct or support various inspections, and serve as a focal point for developing the navigation and flood risk management budgets.

Q. What challenges have you had to face in your new position?

A. There are a lot of changes underway in how the Corps funds, manages and operates its facilities. Some of these changes are internal, such as new work order and asset management systems and operational condition assessments. Others are more visible to the public and the navigation industry, such as the 4-hour daily maintenance closures at Ozark and Trimble and our draft recreation vessel lockage policy that is out for public com-



James McKinnie

ment. I am still working through the learning curve on a lot of these topics, but the section's staff and

Engineering & Math) Coordinator. How important is that program and what do you hope to accomplish?

A. The long-term security and economic health of our country will require a greater number of people in technical fields. The Defense Department is making a strong effort to help teachers encourage students to develop STEM-related skills and to consider a STEM trade or degree when looking at career options. As a District Coordinator I help get the word out on local opportunities such as science fairs, career days, and competitions like the Army's eCYBERMISSION, and I report to Southwestern Division on our efforts. My intent is to ensure that opportunities are available to those who are interested.

Bio Stats

Official Position: Chief, Navigation & Maintenance Section

Years with SWL: 3

Years of federal service: 25

Hometown: Portland, Texas

Education: BS Mechanical Engineering, Texas A&M University

other supervisors have been great at getting me up to speed.

Q. You also serve as the district STEM (Science, Technology, En-

Southwestern Division:

Vicki Dixon

By SWD Public Affairs



Vicki Dixon

program mission such an integral part of the Corps?

The permit decisions that are made in the regulatory program result in billions of dollars of economic development and energy production that impact millions of people across the nation. At the same time, the impacts to the aquatic environment must be minimized. Over 6,000 permit decisions are completed by the districts in SWD each year to authorize work

on private and public lands. This makes the Regulatory Program one of the most publicly visible and controversial missions in the Corps.

What have been some of the most interesting projects that you have been involved in?

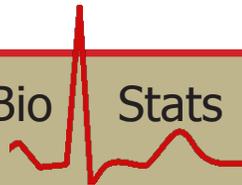
Assisting with development of the 1987 wetland delineation manual which was the first national manual used in the Regulatory Program and serving on 2 regional interagency teams that developed the national list of plants that occur in wetlands. This list is used in conjunction with the wetland delineation manual. These were opportunities to collaborate with some of the prominent national experts on wetlands within and outside the Corps. This exposure really motivated me to continue with my career in the Regulatory Program.

What is your role as the regulatory program chief for SWD?

I represent the Corps as the regional expert on the Regulatory Program in SWD. This includes ensuring regional consistency in implementing the Regulatory Program within SWD, proper application of national policy and guidance, execution of the regulatory budget to ensure the most efficient and effective program, and regional collaboration with other agencies and Corps MSC's.

What makes the regulatory

Bio Stats



Position: SWD Regulatory Program Manager; Biologist

Years at SWD. Since May 1983

Years with Corps. Almost 35 years. Began work as temporary summer ranger in 1976 and 1977 at Oologah Lake in the Tulsa District. Began full time employment with the Corps in the Tulsa District in 1978.

Hobbies. SCUBA, travel, bird watching

What has been your proudest moment in the Corps?

I can't think of just one. Watching the younger regulators grow into leadership roles within the Corps is rewarding. Seeing the professionalism that is exhibited by the Regulatory Program staff in interagency/public meetings makes me proud to be associated with this organization. Through the years, I have been very fortunate to have supervisors who were willing to invest in my development and to work beside individuals who willing shared their knowledge.



Fort Worth District's Water Resource Chief, Jerry Cotter operates the RiverWare program. The program helps to forecast a variety of scenarios such as historical droughts and floods to simulate a variety of hydrological conditions.

Managing water resources during both floods and droughts

By Randy Cephus, SWF Public Affairs

Meeting the demands of water resource management in an environment where periods of drought are followed by intense flooding is not an easy task. But that is the mission of the Fort Worth District's Water Resource Chief, Jerry Cotter.

Since assuming the role of chief, Cotter has focused much of his efforts on partnering and collaborating with stakeholders to ensure all parties understand the purpose of the Corps operated lakes. Cotter also works hard to ensure all stakeholders have a complete awareness of the needs and desires of the other parties.

Cotter has conducted several meetings with key stakeholders over the past two years to obtain concurrence and buy in on the use of water within several USACE projects during a severe drought which impacted all of the State of Texas. He cites constant communication and collaboration as integral parts to managing impacts of the drought within the state.

"The district will continue its collaborating efforts with numerous river authorities, Federal, state and local governments, and resource agencies on water resource issues, Said Cotter.

According to Cotter, there are three general levels to reservoir management; sediment reservoir pool, conservation storage and flood control storage. The sediment pool is the area from the lake bottom reserved for the accumulation of submerged sediment during the life of the lake; whereas, the conservation storage is the middle layer of the lake where a specified amount of water area is dedicated water storage, which may be used to meet water needs such as municipal, domestic, industrial, agricultural, environmental, and recreational purposes. The upper portion of the reservoir storage is flood control storage and is

defined as a volume of space in a reservoir reserved to minimize the impact of flooding.

Cotter oversees reservoir operations which include management of competing interests and the maximizing of benefits for each reservoir. As water accumulates and rises within the flood pool, the Corps must quickly evacuate the water from the reservoirs to keep it from reaching the top of flood pool. This allows the Corps to be prepared for the next rain event and to prevent overtopping of the dam.

"Our efforts prevent approximately \$2 billion per year in flood damages. Our record year was in 2007, where we prevented over \$9 billion in damages," Cotter stated.

But this means releasing precious water that many residents could use to hydrate withered plants and parched lawns which are prevalent throughout much of the state during the drought. The releases have caused concern just after the severe drought, especially for many local North Texas residents who do not understand that the primary purpose of the 25 USACE lakes in Texas is for flood control.

However, Cotter has taken the lead to educate the public and assure them that the Corps is considering the interests of flood control stakeholders and water users. This effort maximizes the water supply benefits of the projects, while still upholding the Corps' flood control mission.

The Water Supply Act of 1958 states the basic principle of current Federal policy where states and local authorities have the primary responsibility to plan, develop and manage water supplies. Additionally, the Corps has several authorities and means to assist the state and local authorities in developing water supply plans that address potential drought conditions.

"The key to success as we manage the effects of the drought is to keep all key stakeholders at the table to work out solutions as we share this limited resource," said Cotter. "We must maintain a balance and take into account the competing needs of all parties affected by a drought."

The affected parties include municipalities, industry, hydropower beneficiaries, the petroleum production industry along the coast of Texas, environmental interests, and agricultural interests.

The District's Water Resource Chief also provides guidance and resources to his staff so that they can perform their jobs. Among these resources is the use of gages along the river systems to monitor flow and water levels. Additionally, Cotter has introduced the use of the 'Riverware Model' to forecast a variety of scenarios such as drought impacts to simulate hydrological conditions. This simulation helps predict possible trouble areas during flooding and drought events.

Balancing the water resource demands in times of floods and droughts is a very challenging and demanding task. Everyone has a role in making necessary sacrifices to conserve our precious resource. Through the use of collaboration and technology, Jerry Cotter and his team is making a big difference in the time of dwindling resources.

"Our goal is to come up with a collaborative plan that meets the needs of all parties involved," concluded Cotter.

PACESSETTER POINTS



Congratulations

Congratulations to **Lance Speer** from the Fort Worth District for being selected as the 2012 Fort Worth District Construction Hard Hat of the Year for his exceptional performance and numerous contributions to quality management of Military Construction Program at the Central Texas Area Office in support of Fort Hood as a Quality Assurance Representative.

Congratulations to **Galveston District Public Affairs** office for their two Keith L. Ware awards placing first in the community relations individual achievement category and second in the community relations program category of the 2012 Army-wide journalism competition program. The annual competition recognizes military and civilian employees for professional excellence and outstanding achievement.

Please join the Little Rock District in congratulating **Jan Jones**, Hydraulics Technical Support Branch, Engineering and Construction Division, for being chosen as Engineer of the Year. During Engineer Week, Col. Glen Masset presented Jones with a plaque at a quarterly awards ceremony.

Congratulations to Park Ranger **Kristine Brown** for being recognized by the National Water Safety Congress with an Award of Merit for her water safety initiatives.

Please join the Little Rock District in congratulating **Bradley Myers** on his new position as Chief of Regulatory Enforcement Branch. Myers has more than 13 years of experience in the regulatory program, first in the Jacksonville District, and then in the Little Rock District. Bradley has a degree in biology from Ouachita Baptist University and a masters degree from Baylor Uni-

versity.

Congratulations to the **Pantex Resident Office** for winning the FY12 Tulsa District Eagle Eye Construction Office of the Year safety award. **Donnie Lankford** at the Pantex Resident Office also was selected as the Eagle Eye Construction Representative of the Year. Congratulations Donnie!

Arrivals

Galveston District would like to welcome **Michael O'Sullivan**

The Southwestern Division office would like to welcome the following employees: **Omar Duran, Gary Groeneman, Jim Fields, Paul Limvorra-tre, Ben Brackman** and **Nancye Bethurem**

Departures

Galveston District would like to bid adieu to **Kenneth Alvey, Fred Anthamatten, Thomas Bean Celia Cockburn (deployed), John Curtis, Wade Davis, Sara Jackets (deployed), Dale Race, James Worthington**

Little Rock District programs section chief, **Donna Stroud Davenport** retired after 33-years of federal service, all of which were in the Little Rock District.

Southwestern Division office would like to say goodbye to the following employees: **John Jettinghoff, Jeffrey Watts, Gary Goodwin, Maj. David Hamilton** and **Justin Johnson**

Tulsa District would like to bid farewell to the following retirees: **Mary Beth Hudson, Howard Davidson, Robert Walker, William Johnson, and Stephen Timmons.**

Photo



Review



The Little Rock District will be celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the Greers Ferry Dam Dedication Oct. 3, 2013, at the JFK Overlook in Heber Springs, Ark. The dedication ceremony was President John F. Kennedy's last dedication and one of his final public appearances before he was assassinated in Dallas Nov. 22, 1963.

The Greers Ferry Project is vital to the region with an extensive history starting with the Oct. 3, 1963 dedication of the dam by President John F. Kennedy. Greers Ferry Lake is consistently one of the Corps top three visited lakes in the nation for recreation with more than seven million visitors annually.

Galveston District Civil Engineer Franchelle Craft served as a subject matter expert to students wishing to learn about African Americans in marine

and coastal professions as part of Oppe Elementary Magnet Campus of Coastal Studies' upcoming Black History Month celebration. Students interviewed Craft to learn about the role science and math play in their everyday careers at the Corps for a poster project that will highlight both Galveston District employees. (photo by Galveston District)



From left to right, Col. Michael Teague, Tulsa District commander presents lifesaving awards to Trooper Danny Choate, Ranger Chris Gilliland and Ranger Eric Fassio. The three were recognized for their efforts to save two individuals that were stranded in the river below Eufaula Dam last summer. (Photo by Nate Herring)



A group of twelve Tulsa District emerging leaders completed a yearlong Leadership Development Program culminating in a graduation ceremony to commemorate their achievement.

LDP Class of 2013 graduates. Top row, Tyler Henry, Shawn Painter, Robert Steiner, Jason Northern; Middle Row, Jason Person, David Sconyers, Melinda Muse, Jeremie Evans, Laura Shoopman; Front Row, COL Teague, Michelle Lay, Diane Cianci (Tom Angel not present for photo) (Photo by Ross Adkins)