US Army Corps of Engineers®

# Engineer Update

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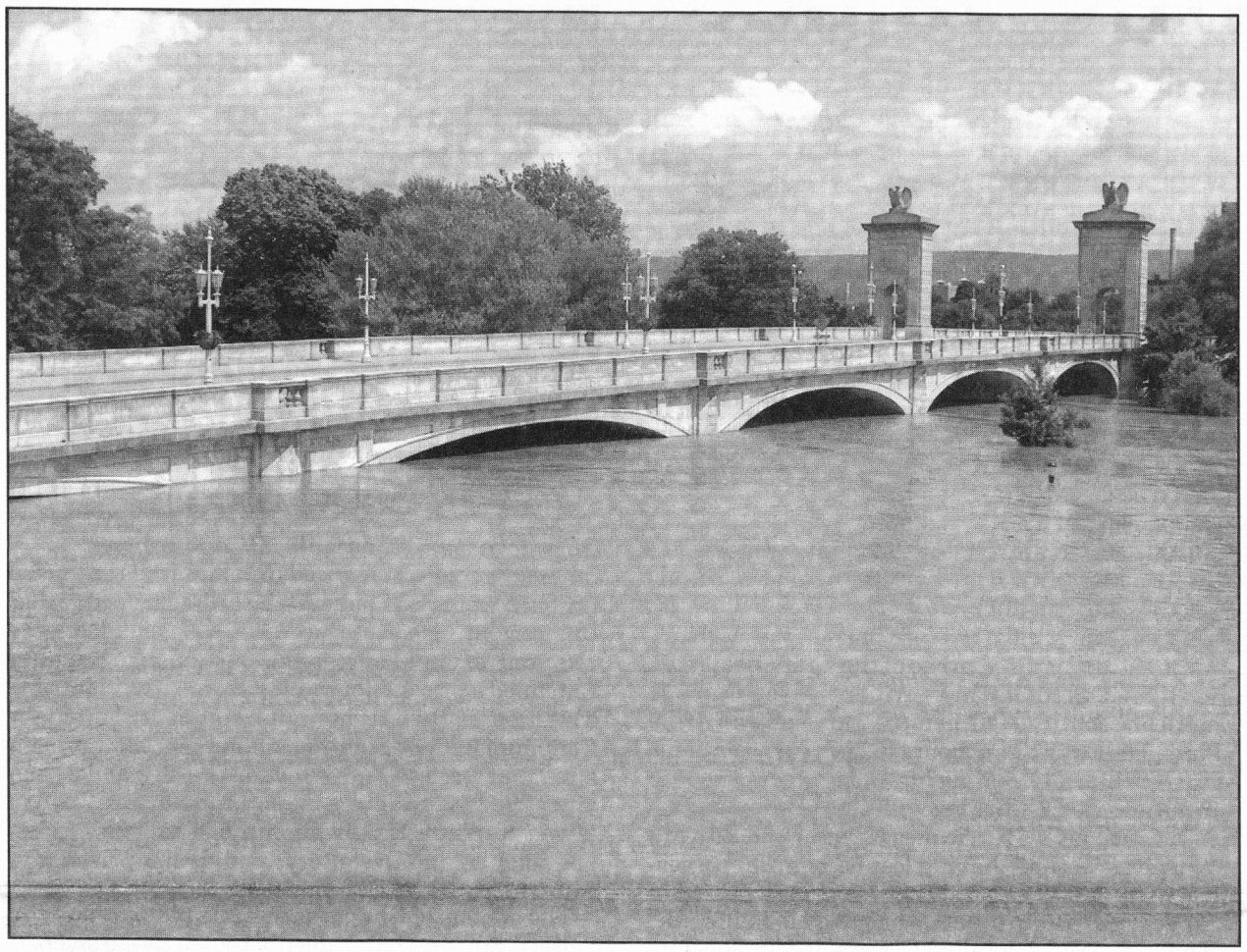


The Susquehanna River crests at the Market Street Bridge in Wilkes-Barre, Pa. City officials ordered mandatory evacuations after predictions that the river would rise to heights not seen since Hurricane Agnes in 1972.

## Levees protect Pa. town

**Article and Photos**
**By Christopher Augsburger**
**Baltimore District**

As the Susquehanna River at Wyoming Valley in Wilkes-Barre, Pa., reached near-record heights on June 28, the levee system built by Baltimore District did exactly what it was designed to do -- *it held.*

Consecutive days of heavy rain and thunderstorms throughout the Susquehanna River basin stretching from New York to Maryland caused record water levels at district flood reduction projects throughout the region, as well as local flooding in most low-lying areas, according to Julie Fritz, a hydraulic engineer with the district.

The dams at Aylesworth, Pa., East Sidney, N.Y., and Whitney Point N.Y., all experienced record or near-record pool levels. For the first time in its 56-year life, the dam at East Sidney had spillway flow – a function it is designed to do when water reaches the top of the pool and needs to be redirected. Levee and floodwall systems in New York and Pennsylvania also saw record and near-record water levels.

At the Wyoming Valley levee system in Wilkes-Barre, where Baltimore District recently spent about $200 million to raise the levee system, the project functioned as designed.

"That $200 million saved us a billion dollars today," said County Commissioner Todd Vonderheid at a news conference on June 30, the day after the river crested.

Baltimore District completed construction in 2003 that raised the height of the levees to prevent an Agnes-level flooding disaster. In the aftermath of Hurricane Agnes in 1972, the river reached 41 feet, causing $1 billion in damage. The next highest level came in 1975, when the river rose to 35 feet.

"The project performed near flawlessly during the flood event," said project manager Janet Harrington. Other than a broken relief well and some seepage, levee patrol teams did not identify any crucial issues.

With forecasts calling for the river to rise within one foot of the 1972 elevation, the Luzerne County commissioners ordered a mandatory evacuation on June 28 of about 175,000 residents from portions of 14 communities that experienced flooding in the Agnes aftermath. They also instituted a 9 p.m. curfew.

As it turned out, the river crested at 6 p.m. on June 28 at more than 34 feet, falling short of predictions from the National Weather Service. As a result, County Commissioner Chairman Greg Skrepenak announced at an early morning press conference on June 29 that he was lifting the evacuation order and allowing people to return home to areas protected by the levees.

The performance of the levees stood as a focal point in the aftermath of the June storms.

"Our citizens can feel safe and secure thanks to the work of the Army Corps of Engineers," said Wilkes-Barre Mayor Tom Laighton.

**Continued on page two**

## Corps IM/IT work to remain in-house

**By George Halford**
**Headquarters**

The performance decision was announced on June 21. After an 18-month process, the government's Most Efficient Organization (MEO) was selected to perform the Information Management/Information Technology (IM/IT) function in-house for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The total price for the PWS requirements is $447,336,253, which includes a one-year phase-in, a one-year base period, and four one-year option periods.

***Presidential agenda.*** The competition began in June 2004, and involved work performed by more than 1,300 employees and more than 500 contractors at Corps locations throughout the U.S.

The IM/IT competition was conducted in response to the President's Management Agenda, which requires all federal agencies to streamline and become more effective.

The IM/IT services included in the competition are:

- Automation services and systems support.
- Communications services and systems support.
- Information assurance service and support.
- Record management services and support.
- Printing and publication services.
- Visual information services.
- IM/IT administration and management.

***Two proposals.*** The Corps received two proposals under the solicitation, the Agency Tender and one private sector offer. The Agency Tender was selected based on lowest price technically acceptable proposal evaluation. "This wasn't just the Corps of Engineers making a decision on the competition," said Ray Navidi, the Corps' Competitive Sourcing Program Manager. "We had help from outside the organization to review and evaluate the offers, as well as oversight from Army."

Navidi added that the announcement of the performance decision had been delayed to allow a final review of the process. "This is the largest single competition in DoD under the revised A-76 circular, and there is a lot of interest in making sure everything is done correctly."

**Continued on page three**

***Insights***

# Selfless Service is the center of Army Values

**Col. Sherrill Munn**
**Chaplain, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers**

*(This is the fourth in a series about Army Values.)*

Selfless Service is the centerpiece of the seven Army Values, and rightfully so, because Selfless Service represents the heart and soul of who the Soldier is and what a Soldier does.

We need to understand that Selfless Service is more than an individual value. It involves the whole Army team, officer and enlisted, military and civilian, Soldier and family member alike. It means putting the nation, the Army, and subordinates ahead of personal interests or gain. It is a commitment to a higher purpose beyond oneself. It means knowing that you are making an essential difference and enduring contribution to your country.

This commitment and knowledge are basic to the high morale required to be a winning team, even while bearing the extreme hardships of war.

The Army Value of Selfless Service is not a religious value, but it is completely consistent with the Biblical example of self-sacrifice for the good of others. Gen. Douglas MacArthur, in his farewell speech to the West Point Corps of Cadets, put it this way, "The Soldier, above all others, is required to practice the greatest act of religious training – sacrifice."

The sacrifice that so many are called upon to make can only be done out of a devotion to the nation and to the principles of freedom and democracy that define America. Out of a profound patriotism, the men and women of our Army see the defense of their country as a sacred duty.

It is these internal attributes of the spirit that motivate them to lay their lives on the line selflessly to protect this great nation. It is certainly not for the pay. Such service cannot be purchased; it can only be given. Such a gift is priceless.

The U.S. has been blessed in every generation by those willing to answer the call when the nation was in peril. They willingly and sacrificially served without asking anything in return except the pride that comes with following a higher calling and knowing they were helping to make the world a better place.

Charles "Jack" Sigrist is a World War II veteran who typifies the American Soldier in every age. His story is told in *Tales of Heroism and Selfless Service* by Diana Sholley, published online in dailybulletin.com. Sigrist was in the Army Air Corps and a gunner in a B-17. He survived 32 missions over Germany and six crash landings.

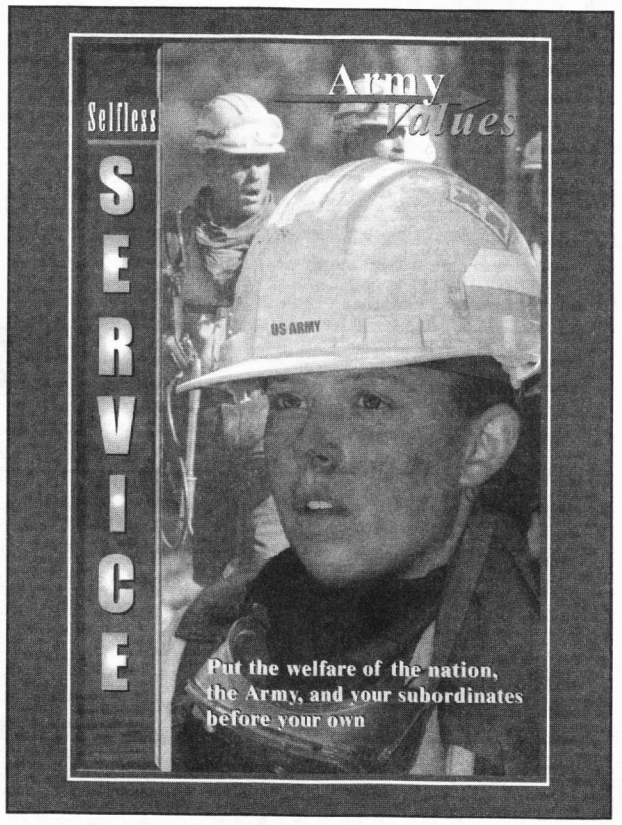
Despite his valor and sacrifice, he told Sholley, "I didn't do anything special, nothing that a million other guys didn't do. I'm an American citizen brought up to respect my country and my God. My country didn't owe me anything; if anything, I owed it. It's a privilege just to walk this land."

In this statement, Sigrist eloquently reflects the core Army Value of Selfless Service and the enduring spirit of the Soldier.

Today, from the battlefields of Iraq and Afghanistan to the devastated areas of the Gulf Coast, men and women, Soldiers and Civilians of the Corps of Engineers continue to live out this central Army Value. They work long hours in difficult situations. Many are literally risking life and limb in service to our nation. Some working with the cleanup and reconstruction after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita are themselves victims, having lost homes and possessions to these storms. Yet they have not wavered in their service to help others who have also suffered.

The U.S. Army Chaplain Corps was founded July 29, 1775, by the Second Continental Congress. Since we celebrate the Chaplain Corps' birthday this month, I want to conclude with the story of Chaplain Emil Kaplaun whose actions exemplified the finest tradition of selfless service to his fellow Soldiers, the Army, and the nation.

In 1950, Kaplaun, a Roman Catholic priest and World War II veteran of the Burma-Chinese theater, was assigned to the 8th Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division in Korea. On Nov. 2, 1950, his unit was at the




center of a massive assault of Chinese forces.

Chinese soldiers captured Kaplaun while he tended about 50 wounded Soldiers who he had helped gather in a dugout. He and the "walking" wounded were required to crawl across the battlefield. Kapalun remained a prisoner of war for six months in terrible conditions. During his imprisonment, he fought Communist indoctrination among his fellow prisoners, ministered to and cared for the sick and dying, and stole food from the enemy to help keep POWs alive. Kaplaun finally succumbed to a blood clot, pneumonia, and dysentery, and died a prisoner of war on May 23, 1951.

The actions of Chaplain Emil Kaplaun typify the Selfless Service that is deeply rooted in the spirit of the American Soldier. In a real sense, Selfless Service incorporates the other six values, and gives the Soldier the spiritual strength and motivation not only to do his duty in the most difficult of circumstances, but also to go well beyond what duty requires.

*(The opinions expressed in this article are those of the writer and do not reflect the official policy or position of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Department of the Army, the Department of Defense, or the U.S. government.)*

# Levees

**Continued from page one**

"We owe them a debt of gratitude," said Skrepenak.

While the river rose, crested, and remained above the flood stage of 22 feet, Baltimore District engineers performed levee patrols, walking the levees and examining the flood walls and pump stations to ensure proper performance. They also worked in partnership with state and local officials to provide technical assistance and support.

The Wyoming Valley levee system in Pennsylvania consists of four contiguous federal flood control projects at Plymouth, Kingston-Edwardsville, Swoyersville-Forty Fort, and Wilkes-Barre and Hanover Township. Together they function as one large flood control system. The levees extend about 15 miles with 21 pump stations beside the levees – 13 storm water pumps and eight sanitary pumps.

The four federal flood control projects in the Wyoming Valley were originally designed to protect

**Baltimore District's resident engineer Jim Moore receives sandbags from county volunteers to help repair a damaged levee relief well.**

against a flood equal to a March 1936 event, which had a peak flow of 232,000 cubic feet per second. After the projects were overtopped by several feet in 1972's Tropical Storm Agnes, the levee raising project was designed to avoid a recurrence of this tragedy.

The modifications included raising existing levees and floodwalls between three and five feet, modifying closure structures, relocating utilities, and providing some new floodwalls and levees to maintain the integrity of the flood control system. The district also modified mechanical, electrical, and structural elements of 13 storm water pump stations.

The flooding event in June was the fifth storm of record for the Wyoming Valley levee system. The other four include remnants of hurricanes Agnes in 1972, Eloise in 1975, Ivan in 2004, and the snow melt last January. Through September 2005, the levee system has prevented an estimated $2.27 billion in potential damages. Preliminary numbers show that the Wyoming Levee System prevented an estimated $425 million in potential damages during the June flood event.

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# Office of History debuts new book

## Capital Engineers: The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in the Development of Washington, DC, 1790-2004

**Article by Bernard Tate**
**Headquarters**
**Photo by Marti Hendrix**
**HECSA**

From the aluminum tip of the Washington Monument to the pipes that carry drinking water under the streets, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is woven into the fabric of the nation's capital.

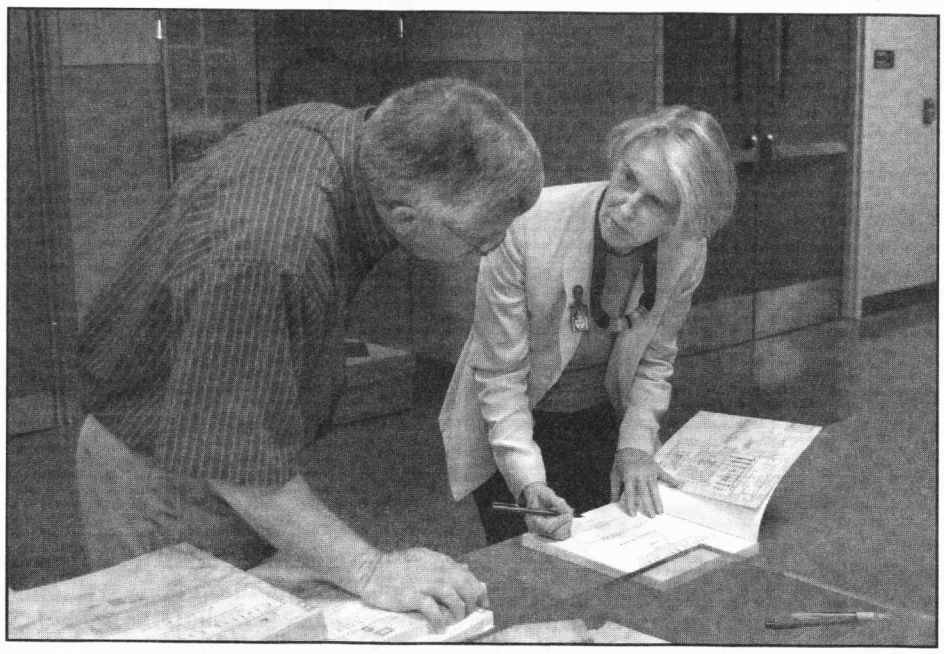
The Corps' role in building and maintaining Washington, DC, is detailed in a new book researched and written by Pamela Scott, *Capital Engineers: The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in the Development of Washington, DC, 1790 – 2004.* The book was published by the Corps' Office of History.

"It started out as a revision and update of an existing book, Albert Cowdrey's *A City for the Nation,*" said Dr. Paul Walker, Chief of the Office of History and the Command Historian. "It was published back in 1979, and is out of print. We decided it need to be updated because of new work the Corps has done in Washington since then, and because of new scholarship about the district.

"We had the opportunity to hire Pamela Scott, who is a well-respected historian of the District of Columbia, to write that update," Walker continued.

The project started about five years ago under Dr. Martin Gordon in the Office of History. After Gordon left the Corps, Dr. Bill Baldwin reviewed the manuscript, and "realized that this was really quite a story that went far beyond the earlier book, and there was a lot of new material that had come to light," said Walker.

So the Office of History expanded the project into a new book. *Capital Engineers* also features many new photos that have never been published before.



**Pamela Scott (right), author of *Capital Engineers,* signs a copy of the book during the debut ceremony at Corps Headquarters on June 6.**

"Pamela pointed out that whenever a new book comes out about DC history, there is a standard set of illustrations that keep coming up," said Walker. "So we made a conscious effort to find other photos that hadn't been used before."

The Office of History hired contract researcher Doug Wilson, who combed through little-known files of old photos and illustrations in the National Archives, Library of Congress, Smithsonian, the Historical Society of Washington, DC, and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Library.

"Doug found a treasure trove of maps, drawings, and photos that he organized, and from that we made the selection to illustrate *Capital Engineers,*" said Walker. "Plus now we have a great collection of material that was not used in the book."

Jean Diaz of the Office of History edited the book and did much of the cover design, including working with the Corps of Engineers' map that is the basis for the cover.

The 306-page book had two debuts. The first was a reception on May 23 at the Historical Society of Washington, DC. "We wanted to introduce the book in a venue that would include the larger DC community," said Walker.

The second was on June 6 in Headquarters. More than 200 Corps employees gathered in the foyer outside the Command Suite to hear about the new book, meet the author, and pick up complimentary copies.

"We wanted the Chief of Engineers to be able to attend our event, so it just worked out for the Historical Society event to be scheduled first," said Walker.

"It is essential for any large, long-standing organization like ours to remember our past contributions and activities, because they often inform us as we deal with today's challenges," said Lt. Gen. Carl Strock, the Chief of Engineers, during the ceremony. "This book that we are celebrating is a fascinating look at more than 200 years of the Corps' contributions to and involvement with the District of Columbia."

Both events were sponsored by the Meigs Chapter of the Army Engineer Association.

The book was printed by the Government Printing Office. "The first print run is going fast," said Walker. "So many people wanted them at our event that we ran out. They are distributed around the Corps to commanders, the Chief is giving them away as presentation copies during his travels, and they get mailed to depository libraries."

To get a complimentary copy of *Capital Engineers,* just fax a request to the Publications Dept in Hyattsville, Md., at (301) 394-0084, attention to Anthony Ellison. Include the Engineer Publications number, EP 870-1-67, and a street address to mail the book to.

"Our goal is to publicize the Corps' role in Washington, DC, to educate people about our organization, and to show that many of the things we do today have real roots in the past," said Walker. "For example, we still supply water to the District of Columbia today, but that's a story that goes back to the 1820s when we started supplying water to federal buildings."

# IM/IT

**Continued from page one**

"This is a good news story," said Will Berrios, Corporate Information Officer for the Corps. "This decision shows that we can compete against private industry and win."

However, an agency protest was received from the unsuccessful offeror following a debriefing by the contracting activity.

***Protest.*** The next steps are to resolve the protest and, if the protest is sustained, implement actions resulting from the agency's decision. The unsuccessful offeror has the option of filing a protest to the Government Accountability Office (GAO) for resolution.

A GAO protest process takes about 100 calendar days for a decision. The time to implement any GAO directed actions is uncertain, and the timing of the final decision will depend on the outcome.

The Continuing Government Organization (CGO) will monitor performance of either the contractor or MEO, and performs the quality assurance functions.

"We don't plan to fully stand up the CGO until the protest period is over and we have a definite way ahead," Navidi said.

***Phase in.*** The new organization will be phased in over one year. During the first six months, the service provider (MEO or contractor – in the event the performance decision is reversed) will begin to stand up its organization, conduct site visits, inventory equipment, and prepare a detailed transition plan. During the second six months, service provider stand-up will continue until full performance is reached at the end of the phase-in period.

At the end of one year, the service provider will be fully in place and responsible for performing all of the requirements in the Performance Work Statement.

***Impact.*** "We're concerned about the overall impact on our employees" Navidi said. "The MEO and CGO together are typically smaller than the existing government organization. There may be other differences, including a different mix of knowledge, skills, and abilities required to perform the work in the Performance Work Statement. There may be differences in the way the services are provided."

"While at this point in time we don't know the outcome of the protest, we'll be working closely with our employees so that they are ready when the service provider and CGO organizations begin filling positions," said Berrios.

***Help available.*** Berrios added that there will also be extensive help for employees who do not get positions in the new organization, including placement assistance, career transition, Voluntary Early Retirement (VERA) and Voluntary Separation Incentive (VSIP) programs, priority placement, and other programs. Details of the Competition Sourcing Human Resources Implementation Plan are available on the Competition Sourcing Web site at https://competitivesourcing.usace.army.mil/index.htm

***Other competitions.*** In addition to the IM/IT competition, the Corps completed two other competitions for its Finance Center data entry activity in Millington, Tenn., and the Directorate of Public Works (DPW) functions at two research facilities in Vicksburg, Miss, and Hanover, N.H. In both cases the performance decision was in favor of the MEO. The DPW decision was announced to the Corps' work force on July 5, and the Finance Center decision was announced on July 6.

# The man with the unusual job

## *Command sergeant major is a Soldier who takes care of Civilians*

**By Bernard Tate**
**Headquarters**

The command sergeant major of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has an unusual job. In most Army units, the sergeant major looks out for the welfare of the Soldiers. But there are few Soldiers in the USACE work force, so our command sergeant major is a Soldier who takes care of *Civilians.*

Command Sgt. Maj. Robert Winzenried recently shared his thoughts about working with a Civilian worforce.

"I've had a little more than a year to get out and see what the Corps of Engineers is all about, and I'm continually amazed at the diversity of our workforce and the dedication to their missions," said Winzenried. "The Chief of Engineers likes to call the command sergeant major his conscience, and I think that's an appropriate title for my job description. My primary job in the Corps of Engineers is to be another set of eyes and ears for the commander, to double his area of coverage.

"When Lt. Gen. Strock visits a site, he's usually looking at the big-picture stuff, whereas my role and responsibility is to look out for the Soldiers, Civilians, and the wage-grade workforce, talk to them and see how things are going with their health, welfare, and morale," Winzenried said.

***Wage-grade workers.*** The wage-grade workers are a special mission for Winzenried.

"The Chief of Engineers designated me to be the wage-grade champion, which means that I provide a voice for our wage-grade workers, so they have a pipeline to the leadership," he said. "I think they can sometimes be overlooked when we start talking about huge projects worth millions of dollars. We sometimes forget about the lock and dam operator on the Mississippi River because those guys do their job so well that they can be taken for granted.

"Our wage-grade guys are incredible," Winzenried continued. "When you get out on the project site, the ties aren't just financial. It's a way of life for them. In some cases, their fathers or grandfathers were the first lock and dam operator, or the first guys on that dredge. So there are even family ties to some of those sites. The pride they take in operating and maintaining their facilities is just incredible."

***War-stories.*** Every Soldier has war-stories to tell and, after a year with the Corps, Winzenried has several.

"In Walla Walla District I went to a dam where a generator was being repaired," he said. "I went down inside the belly of the dam where the impellers are, where water usually rushes through, to talk to one of the wage-grade guys repairing an impeller. Going down inside there with him was impressive.

"Another time I visited the crew of the dredge *Essayons,* our ocean-going dredge in Portland," Winzenried added. "It was just incredible to see the pride they had in taking care of that ship, in making it one of the best ships on the water.

"I visited the wage-grade guys working in Mississippi to re-open the roads in the area devastated by Katrina," Winzenried continued. "They were out there in 95, 100 degree weather, with 90 percent humidity, wearing all their safety gear and carrying chainsaws, and working their butts off to get those roads open so people could get in to see what was left of their property and to start the recovery process.

"And I'll never forget what I saw in Vicksburg, where people from New Orleans District had set up an operations cell with the help of Vicksburg District folks," said Winzenried. "They wouldn't leave their work stations, working 18, 20 hours a day to assist those working to recover their devastated city, and to locate all the folks from New Orleans District who weren't accounted for. Every time a person was located, they would shout out the name and cross that person off the list, and the room would erupt in applause. The dedication of those folks was incredible, to say the least."

**Command Sgt. Maj. Robert Winzenried (left) learns about the Deployable Power Generation & Distribution Sytem at the 249th Engineer Battalion (Prime Power). His briefer is Sgt. Lee. (Photo courtesy of CSM Winzenried)**

***High morale.*** In general, the command sergeant major gives the Corps' morale high marks.

"In Iraq and Afghanistan the morale is extremely high," he said. "There is tangible evidence of the value of what they are doing over there. An engineer normally works on a big project that takes 10, 15, 20 years to complete. But in a six month or one-year tour these guys can take a project from plan to construction to completion. So there is a great reward, and I think that's why we have so many volunteers going back for multiple tours.

"In the support to Katrina, I think those guys are getting a little tired," Winzenried continued. "They've been going 24-7 since the day Katrina devastated the area. But their motivation and dedication to accomplish the June 1 restoration of the levee system was incredible, and they moved an unbelievable amount of debris from Mississippi and New Orleans. Our wage-grade guys stepped up to the plate, got qualified as quality assessment representatives, and helped out in the QA mission.

"I don't think there's any doubt that the work they did down there was stellar," Winzenried added. "The people there knew that if they needed to get something done, they went to the guys in the red shirts. No matter what it was – get back to their house, get connected with FEMA, or ice, or water – all they had to do was find a guy or a gal in a red shirt."

***Stretched thin.*** With the combined workloads of the Global War on Terror and the hurricane recovery, the command sergeant major agrees that the Corps' workforce is stretched thin. "I wouldn't say to the breaking point; I don't think we're anywhere near that. But it's definitely stretching us thin."

Winzenried pointed out two efforts to reduce the demands on Corps employees. One is the Rehired Annuitants Cadre, a group of Corps retirees who volunteer for temporary assignments, especially on the Gulf Coast. And the Corps is accepting volunteers from other federal agencies. There have been about 150 volunteers from the Department of Reclamation, and about 100 from the Department of Interior.

***Decompression.*** "Another concern of mine is that when guys and gals come home, we need to make sure they're taken care of," said Winzenried. "If there are issues with what they've seen or done while they were deployed, if they need counseling, we need to make sure that we help them re-adjust to ordinary life. Especially the folks returning from Iraq and Afghanistan — on our Web site, we've got a redeployment/reintegration package with numbers they can call if they have problems when they redeploy.

"But it's when they get back to work that they may need to decompress…they have to ease back into the work environment," Winzenried added. "So the Corps' leaders need to watch out for that, and help these folks get the help they need, or some extra time off to take a deep breath before getting back into daily life in the district."

***Stressors.*** Corps employees deployed to Iraq, Afghanistan, and the Gulf Coast are not the only ones facing stress.

"The National Security Personnel System and the A-76 competitive sourcing are the two biggest worries out there," Winzenried said. "We need to make sure that supervisors and leaders are talking to their people and explaining what NSPS and A-76 will mean to them, and the opportunities and problems with both. Be honest and tell people what's going on.

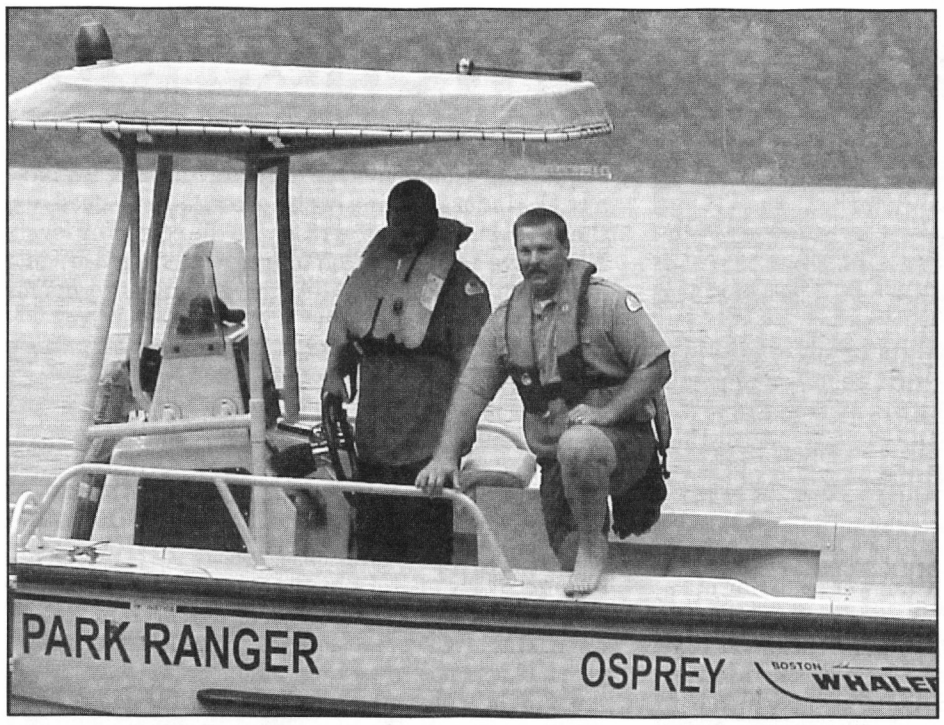
"Our wage-grade employees are still vitally important to accomplishing our missions," Winzenried continued. "But in some areas wage-grade people are seeing less and less wage-grade guys out there, in particular at some of our lake projects. We're not doing RIFs but, in a lot of cases, we're not re-hiring, either. When a wage-grade guy retires or leaves the Corps, we don't necessarily backfill those guys, for whatever reason — cost savings, usually. So there's growing worry out there that the wage-grade guys are being downsized, and in some cases it's true.

***Opportunities.*** "So my challenge is to look to the Corps for other opportunities," Winzenried added. "In some places, districts are helping their wage-grade employees convert to the GS system as QARs and other jobs that we need in the Corps. The Elm Fork Project in Fort Worth District has developed an excellent program to assist wage-grade workers to make the transition. I think that's something other districts ought to think about incorporating for those that wish to do this.

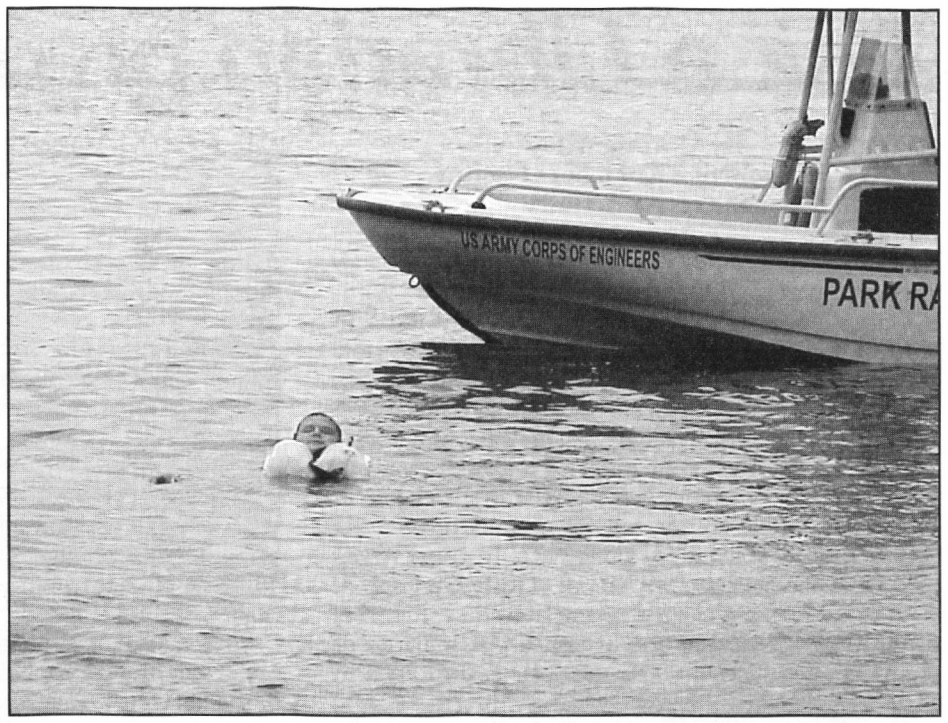
"The Emerging Leader Program is something else that I would ask our wage-grade workers to get into," Winzenried said. "I've met wage-grade workers in that program, and they're really excited about it. They see a value to them and to the Corps in being part of the Emerging Leader Program; I see it as an opportunity for them to interact with other emerging leaders from all areas of the Corps"

***Bragging rights.*** With everything he has seen in the past year, Winzenried is proud to be the Corps' command sergeant major.

"I really brag when I talk to the rest of the Army about how great our Civilian work force is," he said. "I've visited about 60 percent of our districts so far, almost all of our divisions, and whether it's Iraq or Afghanistan or the Gulf Coast or Port Allan Locks, it's awesome to see the work our Civilians are doing out there. I look forward to getting out there to see more of our great workforce in the future. I'm proud of all of you, and I'm proud to be a member of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers."




**Mark Meador, a park ranger at Holt Lake, prepares to dive in to test an auto-inflating life preserver. This photo show how compact that the designs are. (Photo courtesy of Mobile District)**




**Justin Sexton, a park ranger at Holt Lake, surfaces as his life jacket inflates. The vests deploy in 5-to-7 seconds, and turn the wearer face up in the water. (Photo courtesy of Mobile District)**

# Rangers test auto-inflating life vests

When Mark Meador steps aboard his patrol boat for a day on the water, he immediately puts on a life jacket.

"There are no questions about it," said Meador, a park ranger at Holt Lake in Mobile District. "Not only does the Corps Safety Manual require it, it's just part of the gear. Any good boater knows that."

On any given day, hundreds of Corps employees like Meador are out on the water performing their duties. Corps safety standards are specific about the requirements for life jackets (sometimes called personal flotation devices, or PFDs), even down to such details as U.S. Coast Guard-approval, inches of reflectivity, flotation capacity, vest color, and style.

But the list of approved devices does not currently include auto-inflatable life jackets, which only recently received USCG approval for commercial use.

***Field tests.*** "U.S. Coast Guard-approved inflatable devices have been on market for a number of years, but none could pass the Corps' stringent safety standards," said Stephen Austin, Acting Chief, Natural Resources Management. "Through a careful and methodical series of tests, our Headquarters safety engineer was able to determine three specific models that met or exceeded those standards. You could almost hear the round of cheers coming from our park rangers."

Earlier this year, Maj. Gen. Don Riley, Director of Civil Works, approved a one-season field test of the three auto-inflatable devices approved by Safety Office, to be conducted during May through September. Following the field test, the participants' feedback will be a valuable consideration in the Corps' approval process.

***Different.*** "The devices have already met UL and USCG approval for commercial use, so they're proven by the experts to be safe," said Lynda Nutt, manager of Headquarters' National Operations Center for Water Safety. "But because these devices are quite different from the traditional life jackets used by the Corps, we're testing to measure critical information such as employee comfort, maintenance burden, and affordability."

The devices require a fresh rearming kit following each inflation, something standard life jackets do not require.

"Through this field test, managers will have a better understanding of these PFDs," said Nutt. "We predict that these devices, which are only slightly larger than a set of suspenders, should prove less bulky and cooler for the employee to wear. They should improve maneuverability as well."

**Park rangers Diane Gruman (left) and Justin Sexton, both park rangers at Holt Lake, show how the auto-inflating life preservers look after inflation. (Photo courtesy of Mobile District)**

All 320 test participants registered for the test are from the Operations business line, including park rangers, biologists, engineers, maintenance workers, vessel crew, and others. Every Corps division has opted to participate on some level. Gerald Barnes, Chief of Operations, views the field test as a good way to get more information.

***Safety & comfort.*** "I'm very interested in learning of the test results," said Barnes. "Strengthening water safety is essential; improving work conditions for our great workforce will be a breakthrough plus!"

Many of the test participants, as well as their supervisors, look forward to improved comfort this recreation season.

"Management is all for this, and we wish availability would have happened a long time ago," said Tim MacAllister, a recreation management specialist at Elm Fork Project in Fort Worth District. MacAllister supervises nine park rangers who will be testing one style of inflatable during their duty hours this season.

"These products will not only provide required safety protection, but will also reduce any heat stress on our folks while working on or around the water," said Madeline Morgan, Fort Worth District's Safety Chief.

***Inflation.*** During a recent training session led by Morgan and James Murphy, a recreation specialist from Lavon Lake, the local participants not only learned how to properly arm their devices with fresh deployment devices, they also took a leap of faith into the water to experience the inflation sequence.

"I was concerned about how fast the device would inflate," admitted ranger Emily Tennill. "I thought it might be like an air bag going off. It wasn't like that at all."

Tennill and her co-workers were surprised by the 5-to-7 second reaction time of the inflator device. The underwater deployment is less powerful, but efficiently brings wearers to the surface, turning them face up.

***Feedback.*** While the test is managed by the NOC, the test criteria and training requirements were determined by a Headquarters team of Karl Anderson, safety specialist; Tom Verna, a civil engineer from Operations Navigation Branch; Austin; and Nutt.

Each field test participant will provide feedback to the team on unusual maintenance and deployment events experienced during their season of testing. Such information will be important for final recommendations on inclusion of the devices in the Corps safety standards.

***Role model.*** With park rangers wearing the smaller, lighter PFDs during patrols this season, Nutt sees great potential for role model safety to the recreational visitor. "It's a water safety teaching opportunity for our folks dealing with the recreation public," she said. "They can show that boater who refuses to wear a life jacket because it's too hot and bulky that there are more comfortable alternatives on the market these days."

*(This article was written by Lynda Nutt, manager of Corps Headquarters' National Operations Center for Water Safety.)*

# *Ask a Librarian* provides info worldwide

**By Connie Wiley**
**Humphreys Engineers Center**
**Support Activity**

How do libraries in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers support troops in Iraq and Afghanistan? What information do they provide to deployed units in Kosovo, Egypt, and other areas with few services? How do USACE libraries contribute to Gulf Coast recovery efforts?

They do this and more by taking part in a worldwide library system. The libraries of the Humphreys Engineer Center support Activity (HECSA) and Omaha District libraries provide reference assistance via the *Ask a Librarian* service, along with 18 other Army and DoD libraries in the U. S., Germany, and Korea.

This service supports Army active duty, Reserve, and DA civilian personnel who are the majority of customers. Other users include retired military and family members.

Users can enter a question 24/7, and quickly receive an answer from a library in the network. Questions that require specialized knowledge are referred to one of 15 DoD partner libraries, including the Corps' Omaha District Library.

*Ask a Librarian* is managed by William Hansen, Director of the Armor School Research Library at Fort Knox, Ky.

To use *Ask a Librarian*, customers log into Army Knowledge Online (AKO) and select the Army Libraries page, or they can follow this link: https://akocomm.us.army.mil/libraries/AskALibrarian.htm The service allows users to access the knowledge networks and webs of contacts traditionally maintained by librarians. Questions may be asked on any subject including official business, and personal and academic topics. Users receive a direct answer, or they are paired with a subject expert.

The focus is to provide support to Army personnel who do not have ready access to a library. Librarians compile a digital knowledge base from their answers, which helps them to efficiently answer recurring questions.

Since a high percentage of *Ask a Librarian* customers are deployed, they depend heavily on Internet-based services. Answers are provided with that in mind. Sometimes, questions cannot be answered with Web-based content, so the requester is put in touch with experts who have agreed in advance to assist.

Sample questions asked by deployed Soldiers:

- I'm currently deployed to Kosovo and have been appointed as Battalion Safety NCOIC. I need information on UNIT RISK INVENTORY. ARs and other supporting documents will be required. I already have a basic understanding of the process, but I need further documentation to present to the company level.
- I have been deployed to Iraq and could use some help with common Iraqi Arabic language terms for everyday use. Where can I find such a resource?
- We are at Tallil Air Base, Iraq, and we have some old Harris radios in our trucks and can't find any operator manuals or TMs for them. Do you have any training manuals in your library for Harris radios?
- I need to find a digital copy of FM 23-8 (M14 Rifle). I'm putting together a familiarization course for my Soldiers here in Afghanistan. Thanks.
- Hello. I'm looking for a specific manual on vehicle recovery operations that shows how to hook up and recover mired vehicles and overturned trucks. I'm in Iraq. We've had some accidents. and I need to give a class on recovery techniques. Thank you.
- I'm in Iraq and we will have a change of command ceremony. Could you please tell me were can I find some Army music for it? Thank you.

Do you have questions? The HECSA and Omaha District libraries, along with many other Army and DoD libraries around the world, are ready 24 hours a day to provide answers.

HR Corner

# New hurricane office seeks workers

Lt. Gen. Carl Strock, Chief of Engineers, has approved administrative reemployment rights for employees who are interested in a three year assignment (with possible extension up to five years) at the recently established Hurricane Protection Office (HPO) in Mississippi Valley Division (MVD).

This means that employees hired to work on the HPO project will have return rights to their previous jobs in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

The following positions are needed for the Hurricane Protection Office at New Orleans:

- Program manager, GS-15 *(already filled)*
- 2 area engineers, GS-14s
- Chief, Contract Administration & Technical Support Branch, GS-14
- 4-6 resident engineers, GS-13s
- Chief, Technical Support Section, GS-13
- Chief, Contract Administration Section, GS-13
- 2 program integrators, GS-13
- 14-16 civil engineers, GS-11/12s
- 2-3 mechanical engineers, GS-12s
- 2-3 electrical engineers, GS-12s
- 27-30 construction representatives, GS-9/11/12
- 7-11 civil engineer technicians, GS-9/11/12
- Safety officer, GS-12
- Contract specialist, GS-12
- Public affairs specialist, GS-11
- Administrative officer, GS-11
- 2 program analysts, GS-11s

The 2005 hurricane season proved to be a record breaking year. The U.S. experienced the most named storms, the most intense hurricanes, the most category 5 storms, and the most damaging hurricanes in history. Katrina caused more than $80 billion in damages and killed more than 1,300 individuals – the devastation this past year covered the Gulf coasts of Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida and extended inland through Tennessee.

MVD and the entire Corps responded to those in need. Thousand volunteered, and their efforts changed the lives of those impacted by these disasters.

Although much has been accomplished in the past few months, the Corps' mission continues. We are tasked with restoring the infrastructure in the affected area, and the Hurricane Protection Office will allow us to execute this critical mission.

We are seeking a limited number of top notch skilled professionals who are interested in working in a fast-paced, challenging environment. About 80 assignments will be available, offering unique and career enhancing opportunities.

The size and scope of Hurricane Protection Office projects has huge visibility within the Corps, the Army, and Congress. Assignments will give interested personnel the opportunity to work in close concert with a contract workforce and Corps colleagues, melding the talents within and across our Communities of Practice into cross-functional teams. Whether you are interested in a reassignment, a promotion, or even a change to lower grade, this is a truly exciting and challenging experience.

Recruitment has commenced. If you are interested in one of these assignments, be sure to visit CPOL and apply. Advertised positions will contain an annotation on the vacancy announcement advising when reemployment rights are being offered.

To be considered for these vacancies, in addition to meeting the requirements specified on the vacancy announcement, you must:

- Be serving in a competitive service career or career-conditional appointment in USACE.
- Have completed your probationary period.
- Be employed in a non-clerical position.
- Agree to relocate within 30-45 days.
- Be appointed without a break in service.

If selected, employees may be granted a permanent or temporary change of station move to relocate, along with their families. At the completion of their assignments participating employees will be returned to work at their former locations.

Should you need additional information, please contact Cheryl Weber at (504) 862-2791, or Cheryl.C.Weber@mvn02.usace.army.mil

# *Building imploded at Fort Myer*

**At 6:30 a.m. on June 4, Bldg. 501 at Fort Myer, Va., stood 12 stories tall against the morning sun. With a series of loud booms, the building imploded and in 15 seconds crumbled into concrete and brick rubble. Engineers from USACE and contract partners used 125 pounds of explosives to bring down the 40-year-old housing complex. More than 90 percent of the building has been or will be recycled. The remaining rubble will be crushed and used to level the area and become an extension of the Hatfield Gate entrance of Fort Myer. (Photos by Debra Valine, Engineering & Support Center, Huntsville)**

# Around the Corps

## Geraldine King Morris scholarship

A nursing scholarship has been established in the memory of Geraldine King Morris, wife of Lt. Gen. (ret.) John Morris, 44th Chief of Engineers. Mrs. Morris died on March 28 after several years of disability following a major stroke.

**Geraldine King Morris when she was an Army nurse in World War II.**

Mrs. Morris was a veteran of World War II, a registered nurse who served in the Army Nurse Corps from 1944 until just before to her marriage to then-Capt. Morris in 1947. Mrs. Morris retained a lifelong proficiency and interest in nursing, even as she supported her husband and their family, and mentored many military wives and soldiers during more than 33 years of Lt. Gen. Morris's military service.

Contributions may be sent to the Army Engineer Memorial Awards (AEMA) with a designation for the Geraldine K. Morris Award on the memo line of the check. The address is: Army Engineer Memorial Awards (AEMA), c/o AEOWC, P.O. Box 6332, Alexandria, Va. 22306-6332.

## Kite tubing ban

Little Rock, Sacramento, and Tulsa Districts have banned kite tubing at all lakes that they control.

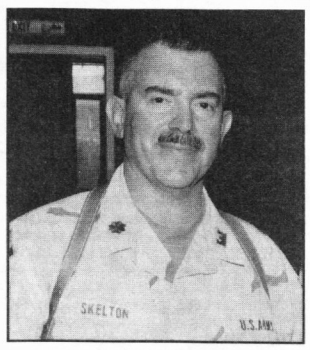
Kite tubing is a relatively new take on traditional tubing where a person rides on an inner tube towed behind a boat. In kite tubing, a 10-foot-diameter inner tube forms a disk-shaped "wing" and becomes airborne. The rider can fly at heights of up to 60 feet, changing altitude by pulling on the tow rope, and steering by shifting his or her weight.

Kite tubes are difficult to control, and several people have been killed or injured while flying them.

A Headquarters task force is reviewing the use of kite tubes on Corps lakes, and will make a recommendation to the Director of Civil Works.

## $100 million in projects

A National Guardsman will soon return to Missouri after a year in Baghdad where he managed 80 construction projects worth more than $100 million. Maj. Steven Skelton has been with the Missouri National Guard for 25 years.

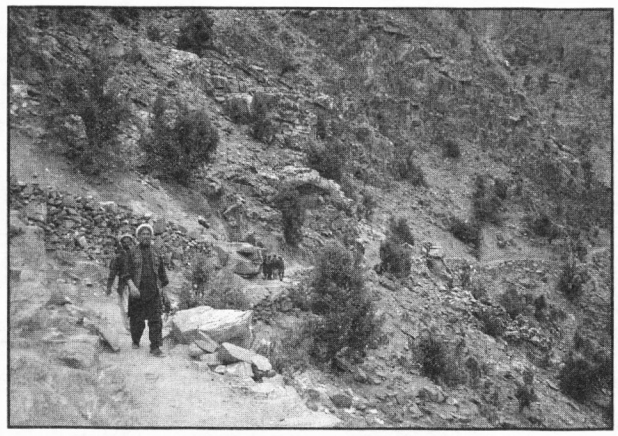



**Maj. Steven Skelton**

He activated with the 35th Engineer Brigade and arrived in Gulf Region Central District in June 2005. He was the Officer in Charge of the Victory Resident Office, and has overseen contracts involving thousands of workers completing high visibility projects at Camp Victory near Baghdad International Airport.

Skelton's boss, Lt. Col. Nicholas Katers, said he gained the confidence of his Iraqi contemporaries and helped them improve their performance and safety. "He understood what mentoring is about," Katers said.

"I've learned a lot from those in the office as well as those working at the sites," Skelton said. "We had a lot of challenges, but it's great when you see the projects completed and they benefit American forces and the Iraqis."



**The terrain of the Nuristan province of Afghanistan is rugged and nearly inaccessible.**

## Afghanistan partnership

Three leaders have signed a historic agreement to builds roads in Nuristan, an isolated province of Afghanistan. They were Tamim Nuristani, Nuristan's Governor; Dr. Sayed Noorullah Jalili, Chief Executive of AMERIFA Construction Company; and Col. Christopher Toomey, Commander of Afghanistan Engineer District (AED) and Director of Engineering for the Combined Force Command-Afghanistan (CFC-A).

They agreed to work together to develop road infrastructure in Nuristan. The province is a forested, mountainous, and nearly inaccessible area of eastern Afghanistan. The Nuristanis live in deep, narrow mountain valleys in isolated terraced villages.

The province suffers from a lack of infrastructure – roads, power, inadequate medical care, plus unemployment and poverty.

"We have to start from zero," said Nuristani. "My priority is to build roads between the villages and to the capitals of other provinces."

CFC-A Commander Lt. Gen. Karl Eikenberry heard the plea and responded with several CERP (Commander's Emergency Response Program) projects. CERP allows a commander to respond to urgent humanitarian relief and reconstruction requirements within his region.

"These roads will not only bring economic development to the province, they will also enhance the region's security," Toomey said.

## Wright Army Airfield

Wright Army Airfield (WAAF) at Fort Stewart, Ga., will soon have a new Airfield Operations Facility. The city of Hinesville, Liberty County Development Authority, and Fort Stewart have formed a Joint Management Board and developed an agreement to allow use of the airfield for commercial and personal aircraft, as well as military operations.

The agreement included refurbishing two runways, three taxiways, and extending one runway by 1,500 feet, adding parking aprons, and improving navigational aids and lighting at no cost to the government.

The Liberty County Development Authority is leasing the land from Fort Stewart to build the Airfield Operations Facility for joint use, and Fort Stewart is leasing back a portion of the facility for military use by means of a Build to Lease instrument.

## FED recruiting DVD

Far East District has produced a recruitment DVD and handbook to give potential FED employees an overview of life and work with the Corps in Korea.

FED is embarking on a major relocation project on the Korean peninsula, and potential for new employees in FY07-08 is great.

If you would like a copy of the recruitment DVD, send your complete mailing address, number of copies needed, and a point of contact (e-mail address preferred) to the Public Affairs Office of FED.

## Interior Designer of Year

Jane Ann Carter, interior designer for Omaha District, recently received the Interior Designer of the Year Award, a USACE award honoring the best interior designers in the Corps.

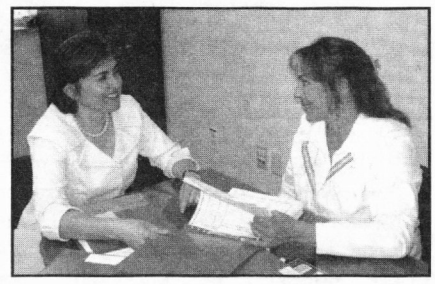
**Jane Ann Carter**

Carter has worked as an interior designer for the district for 22 years. Her contributions to projects such as the Missouri River National Recreation River and Resource Education Center at Ponca State Park in Missouri, the Armed Forces Recruiting Station at Potomac Mills Mall in Virginia, and the Fire/Crash Rescue Station at Offutt Air Force Base earned her the recognition.

She was also recently selected as the lead interior designer for the renovation of the Edward Zorinsky Building, the Omaha District headquarters building.

## Small business champion

An employee of Albuquerque District is the 2006 New Mexico Minority Small Business Champion of the Year for her efforts in awarding contract dollars to the state's small and minority-owned businesses.



**Theresa Armijo (left) and Rebecca Maloy.**

Theresa Armijo, Chief of Contracting Division and Deputy for Small Business, was honored for her achievements at the New Mexico Small Business Week Awards Celebration held at the Hotel Albuquerque.

Armijo was recognized by the U.S. Small Business Administration for her commitment to supporting and enhancing opportunities for success for minority-owned businesses, particularly Hispanics and Native Americans, throughout the state of New Mexico.

"The Corps has been the best in New Mexico for attaining the highest small business goal numbers," said Armijo. "What we do as part of our work process is to include small businesses in the total program. It's good for New Mexico, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the local economy to keep the work at the local level."

Of the $71 million contract dollars awarded to small businesses by Albuquerque District during fiscal year 2005, $31 million (45 percent) were awarded to minority small businesses. As a result, the district's minority small business program ranks as one of the top programs in DoD.

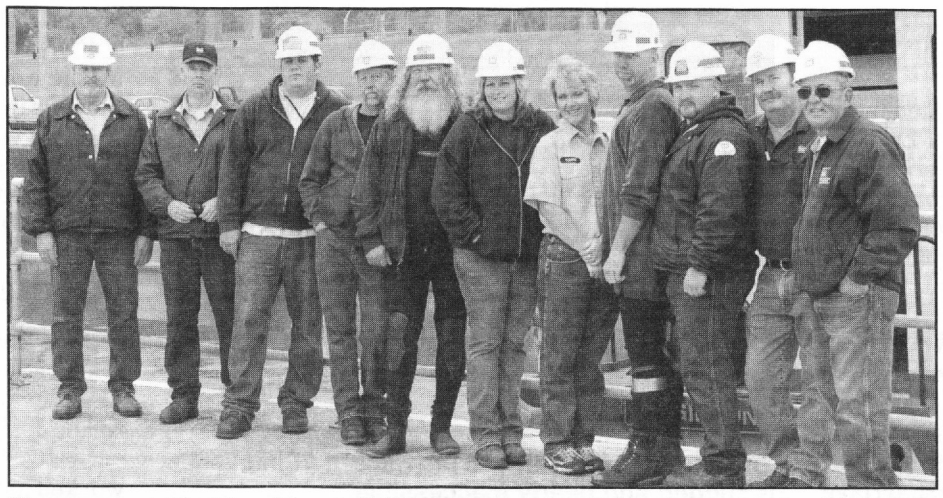
# Lock & dam, dive teams save fisherman

Article and Photo
By Lauren Solis
Louisville District

A fisherman owes his life to a lucky set of circumstances, the heroic actions of the Markland Locks and Dam personnel, and a well-trained Louisville District dive inspection team.

May 15 was an overcast average day of the week on the Ohio River. The water temperature was a cool 65 degrees, and the dive team was ready to start the first dive on the first day of the two-day annual inspection of the locks and dam.

At 10:35 a.m., as the diver was minutes away from entering the water, Gary Kinman, the Markland lockmaster, answered a call at the locks and dam power house.



**The crew at Markland Lock & Dam rescued a fisherman who had fallen in the river.**

***Cry for help.*** An employee from the Duke Energy hydropower plant reported hearing cries of help coming from the river below an overlook at the facility. The overlook is rarely visited, but members from Duke Energy management were in town for a site visit.

Kinman immediately radioed the dive team and requested assistance.

The diver was still on the Corps workboat and the crew was able to lock through upstream, gain access to the river, and begin searching for the man in distress.

About a quarter of a mile downriver, members of the crew spotted a lifejacket and an arm waving in the air. They approached and knew immediately they had to act fast if they were to make this a rescue mission.

***Another five minutes.*** "Looking at the guy, I knew there was no way he could get up on the boat under his own power," said Gary Birge, Cannelton lockmaster and one of the divers working with the dive team. The fisherman had been in the water for nearly 45 minutes before the team was able to reach him. "Another five minutes and he wouldn't have been alive."

Already suited-up and ready for an inspection dive, Birge put on a life jacket and safety line and jumped in the water to assist the fisherman.

Birge hoisted the limp fisherman up the ladder on his shoulder where Richard Hayes, Physical Support Branch electrician and diver, and Tom Sacre, Markland Lock and Dam equipment mechanic, pulled him up on deck.

Cheryl Schisler, a John T. Myers lock operator and a diver, was on the repair boat when the 36-year-old Ohio man was brought onboard. "Gary (Birge) piled clothes on him, talked to him, and reassured him that he would be OK."

Schisler began talking to talk to the man, reminding him to breathe deeply for fear he would otherwise go into shock. She said she used the team's medical oxygen knowing that the high concentration might save his life. Schisler said he had visible injuries, with many bruises and knots on his legs and body.

Suffering from hypothermia and exhaustion, the fisherman was rushed to the hospital where he later told Department of Fish and Wildlife officials that his boat had been drawn into the dam by turbulent waters and capsized. He said that he was able to don and inflate his life vest before being pulled under by the current.

***Warnings.*** Kinman said that people ignore the obvious warnings that fishing around the dam is restricted. "There are big, bright red signs that read keep back 150 feet," he said. When discharging water, the dam area becomes extremely dangerous. "Twenty-two years ago two fishermen died in the same place, doing the same thing."

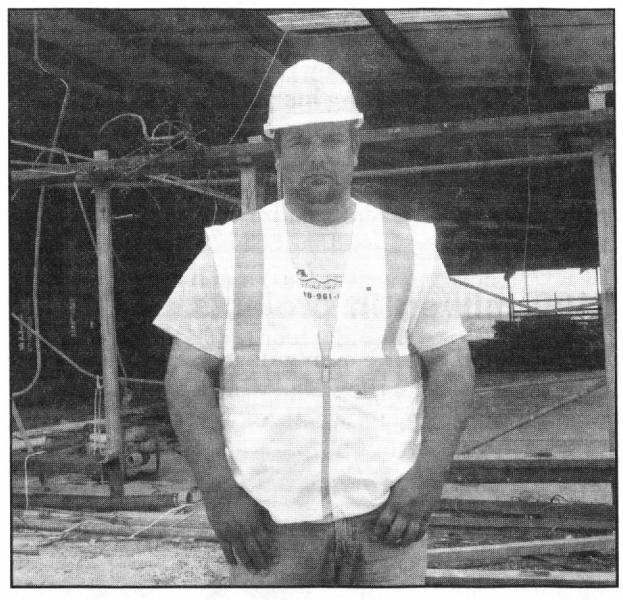
Birge credits the Corps dive training program for giving him the skills he needed to save the fisherman. "Safety and man overboard drills; it all just came together. It happens at every lock and dam at some point in time. It's all about saving lives and making people aware."

# Heat stroke victim owes life to QAs

By Russell Williams
St. Paul District

A truck driver owes his life to quality assurance (QA) personnel in the Gulf Coast debris removal mission. The observations and quick response of Debra Christie, a park ranger from Tulsa District; Robert McKechnie from Detroit District; and contract QAs Yvette Young and Justin Bolt saved a truck driver delivering white goods (kitchen appliance) debris to the Wilkerson Landfill in Cameron Parish.

"According to hospital attendants, if they had waited another 15 minutes, he would have been dead," said David Hudson, safety specialist at the Emergency Operation Field Office in Lake Charles, La.



**Yvette Young (left, above), Debra Christie, and John Bolt (left) rescued a truck driver suffering heat stroke. (Photos courtesy of LA-RFO)**

***Symptoms.*** The driver had stopped by the quality assurance tower after changing a flat tire in the dump and Young, the tower monitor, noticed his speech was slurred and that he was sweating profusely. She had Bolt call their supervisor and tell him what was happening.

Christie arrived on the scene and learned of the situation. She began watching the driver and suspected that he was suffering from either heat exhaustion or a heat stroke.

Shortly after they began to monitor the victim, they noticed he had stopped sweating, although his shirt was still very wet. Christie felt his skin and noticed he had become very clammy. She recognized the early symptoms of a heat stroke.

***Treatment.*** The QA team's life saving steps included:

- Use of an ice chest from Young's truck to wet paper towels and place them behind and in front of his neck and in the joints of his elbows to cool him down so he could sweat.
- Applied an ice pack from McKechnie.
- Fed him available Jell-O and gave him plenty of water.
- Young asked the driver if he was diabetic or did he take medicine, and he was unable to answer.
- Christie called 911.

***Treated & released.*** The emergency medical team arrived first and started an intravenous tube to rehydrate the driver. Three minutes later, an advance life support ambulance arrived and transported him to the Lake Charles Memorial Hospital where he was admitted, examined, and treated for the early stages of heat stroke.

He was released later that evening from the hospital, and was released to go back to work two days later. The driver made a full recovery, and should experience no future complications as a result of this near-fatal incident.

***Training.*** QA personnel involved in the life-saving experience had received emergency medical training from various sources, including the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Christie had just completed safety training that week where the Louisiana Recovery Field Office (LA-RFO) Safety Office covered heat injuries and actions to be taken.

Young had previously completed the same training, and the heat injury fact sheet and OSHA quick card distributed to the QAs from LA-RFO through the local Safety Office, was stapled to the wall of the tower, and served as a constant reminder of heat injury symptoms, and what actions to take.