



## Corps employees speak out in survey

By Bob Anderson  
Memphis District

The results are in from the USACE 2012 Employee Survey conducted earlier this year, and the survey report clearly shows that our organization needs improvement when it comes to transformation.

The purpose of the last two 2012 surveys (a baseline in October 2003 and follow-up last January) was to determine potential barriers to transformation, and to determine enablers to help our workforce transition through large-scale change.

Specifically, the surveys were designed to see how ready we were to implement the changes, and how well we are currently implementing the changes needed to make USACE 2012 a reality.

A link to the full survey results report is <https://hqintra1.hq.usace.army.mil/usace2012/index.asp?newArray=usace2012/docs&newArray=Headquarters>, and readers are encouraged to review the data.

This article explains the rationale for the survey questions, and the different aspects of change readiness needed to successfully implement the USACE 2012 transformation. (*Editor's note — For more results, see sidebar article.*)

### Questions, results

Borrowing ideas from Fluor, a private engineering organization similar in size to USACE that had undergone a similar major transformation, the survey questions addressed eight key implementation factors. The eight factors and the answers each group of questions sought, plus the average score on a five-point scale for each category, included:

1. How well did the Corps' leadership create a compelling need for change, and how well did they establish expected performance outcomes? (Average score — 2.78)
2. How well did the Corps' leadership create a clear and compelling vision of the future organization? (Average score — 2.42)
3. How well did leadership provide needed resources to the change implementation teams, and did leadership at every level of the organization demonstrate active involvement in the change initiatives? (Average score — 2.45)
4. How specific were communications about who, what, when, and how the changes would occur? (Average score — 2.33)
5. How committed are USACE employees individually and collectively to make the change? (Average score — 2.3)
6. How well can individuals within the organization handle rapid and continuous change? (Average score — 3.04)
7. How well did the change implementation plan integrate people, processes, and technology throughout the entire organization? (Average score — 2.68)
8. How aligned are the proposed changes with the existing Corps' culture? (Average score — 2.23)

### Good news, bad news

The *good* news is that USACE leadership sought feedback to the implementation efforts that began last fall, and they are willing to grapple with the difficult issues involved with a major change initiative. The *bad* news is that the survey revealed several problems in both leadership communication and employee commitment.

### Problems

The remainder of this article will attempt to address those problems with specific recommendations for improvement. Again, each *Engineer Update* reader is encouraged to visit the Web site and interpret the complete survey results to gain a greater insight into the challenges of implementing a major change initiative.

**Problem one.** *Providing employees with data, information, ideas, and change concepts to create awareness, without providing an easily understood context.*

Future change communication should focus on creating context that helps employees process the information and to make it relevant to their situation. Putting information in context is important because meaning depends on shared context. Seeing the bigger picture also helps people to navigate through information sources and communication channels. After all, if you know where you are trying to get to, and you know where you are, reading a map is easier.

**Problem two.** *Face-to-face communication.*

The only way to communicate changes that affect how people do their jobs is face-to face. Videos, publications, and large meetings can be valuable, but will never work alone. And when a change manager *does* engage an employee in dialogue about the Corps's transforma-

tion, they need to provide hard facts about the change.

In the absence of facts, leaders must resist exhortations, badgering, and threats. Information about change is often upsetting to a person's sense of control, and management "spin" will only damage the credibility of other change information.

**Problem three.** *Directly interconnected with problems number one and two is a lack of support from middle managers and front line supervisors for the change.* Specifically, the survey results indicated a lack of communication support from this critical group of potential change agents.

People are most influenced by people they trust and whose opinion they value. Therefore, managers and supervisors need an even greater awareness of the transformation's context (see problem number one). Managers and supervisors must also be aware of the arguments and counterarguments for the changes so that they can be better prepared for face-to-face conversations with their people (see problem number two), and act as advocates for the change, rather than adversaries.

**Problem four.** *Additionally, write-in survey responses indicate that some senior managers are opposed to the USACE transformation, based on agreement with employee objections to the new organization, or a personal preference for the status quo.*

This quiet opposition from senior management causes greater contamination to change communication throughout the management cascade than opposition from more junior levels. Therefore, enrollment of senior management is essential for middle managers and supervisors to feel confident and comfortable leading discussions at the front line.

### Recommendations

The following steps will improve future change efforts. **Give managers and supervisors something to say, or they will make it up.** When it comes to

Continued on page three



## Survey offers insight into USACE 2012 acceptance

Here are some more results of what we learned from those who took the recent USACE 2012 survey:

- Almost 70 percent have some understanding about why we are implementing USACE 2012.
- 57 percent believe the transition is important or very important, and 43 percent have little or no belief that it is important.
- More than 50 percent have little or no confidence that they could explain USACE 2012. (21.4 percent said they had good or very high level of confidence that they could explain it. 24 percent said they were somewhat confident.)
- About 44 percent have little or no understanding about how USACE 2012 will affect them. (24.4 percent had good or high level, 26 percent had some understanding.)
- About 40 percent believe that performance improvements were not clearly defined. (19 percent said it was good or excellent. 26 percent gave average score.) The

same number responded that they have a low level of confidence that improvements will be achieved.

- About 50 percent said information about 2012 was not useful. Only 18 percent found information good or very useful. The rest said it was moderately useful, or they didn't know.
- About 60 percent said their concerns about USACE 2012 were not addressed, were somewhat addressed, or answered 'don't know.' (16.5 percent say concerns were addressed well, 23 percent gave a medium score.)
- 58.2 percent believe initiatives are somewhat good or highly aligned with USACE 2012 goals; 43.6 percent don't know or don't believe they are aligned.
- More than half believe their district/lab/center or division will be successful, but 45 percent have low or no confidence. About 47.1 percent believe that some level of performance improvements will be achieved, but 53 percent don't know, or have no belief or low belief.

Insights

# Even a little faith can move mountains

By Col. Mark Fentress  
Chaplain, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Many believers underestimate the awesome power and influence that can be released in one's life through their faith in God. Oftentimes as a pastor I hear the negative comment "My faith has about as much impact as a drop in the bucket."

Be careful of your words, for one drop of cleaning disinfectant can neutralize a whole bucketful of infected material. One drop of germ culture can turn a bucket of water into something contagious and deadly. One drop of water falling into a bucket of acid can trigger an explosion.

So a drop in the bucket can be something of great importance indeed.

No one less than the Man of Galilee underscored the supreme importance of just a little belief and theology. He said, "If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to the mountain, move from here to there, and it will move... Nothing will be impossible for you." (Matt. 17: 20-21). And wouldn't *that* be a useful skill in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers!

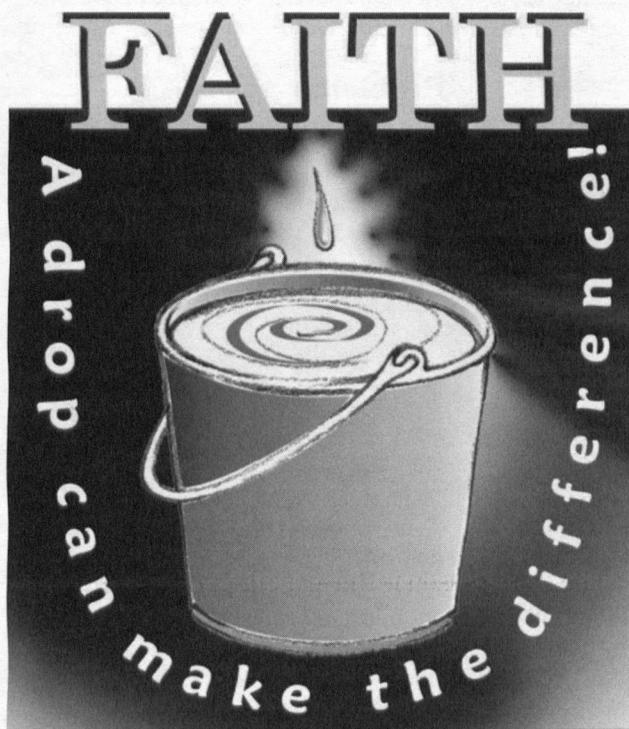
When you find yourself doubting the magnitude of your influence, or feeling that your efforts at making a difference for God in this world are for naught, dare to exercise your drop-in-the-bucket, mustard-seed-sized Faith in Him, and your mountains will become mole-hills, and the impossible will become possible. And that's an exciting place to live!

**Prayer** — Lord, give us a daring drop-in-the-bucket-sized faith, and we shall transform the world! Continue to bless and protect those transformers from our Corps of Engineers family who are working so hard to usher in a transformation for the Iraqi people. And keep their

loving families undergirded by Your eternal watch-care and strength. **Amen.**

In faith and friendship,  
**Chaplain Mark**

*(The opinions 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.)*



Artwork by Jan Fitzgerald

## Letters to the Editor



### Recruiting success

I read the February '04 article, "Recruiting program is a great success" with a deep sense of familial pride. Reflecting on my contracting career with New Orleans District, I was always struck by the high caliber of young engineers and scientists recruited to the agency. Not only did the district recruit well, but it also nurtured, trained, and challenged its best and brightest. Today, the Corps stands shoulder-to-shoulder with the very best in government and business.

Whenever I hear someone spewing negative blather about government workers, I'm quick to remind them that the government dwarfs the largest corporations, and that prosperity in America is measured first by those who make it possible for commerce to competitively flourish at home and productively abroad.

Today, retired from the Corps and going on 60, I compete effectively in business, not despite my tenure in government but *because* of it, not despite my age but *because* of my maturity. Businesses across America know that the Corps of Engineers is a first-tier incubator of productive human resource.

Is there an age or government worker bias in America? Sure, but there will always be those who think the world is flat, too! For those of us who have and have had the unique privilege to be a part of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the future is bright and opportunity abounds well into retirement.

**Jay Zavala**  
President, Employment Network  
for Retired Government Workers

By Shannon Bauer  
St. Paul District

You don't have to be armed, or even a Soldier, to save a life and be a hero in Iraq.

St. Paul District civilian employee Theresa (T.C.) Teed saved a Soldier from choking, and received the Department of the Army Achievement Medal for Civilian Service.

Lt. Gen. Robert Flowers, Chief of Engineers, presented her the medal during his recent trip to Iraq.

Teed has been in Iraq since February. She is an administrative assistant at the Victory Area District office on the outskirts of Baghdad.

The Soldier was guarding the building where Teed works, and he began choking on something he was eating for lunch.

He ran into Teed's office, making the universal sign for choking. Teed grabbed him, took off his flak vest, and applied the Heimlich maneuver, which dislodged the bite of food and saved the Soldier's life.

"Her willingness to come forth, paired with her ability to maintain composure during what was clearly a pressure situation, demonstrated bravery in its truest form," said Col. Robert Ball, the St. Paul District commander. "I'm enormously proud of her."

# Civilian saves Soldier's life in Iraq



Theresa Teed used the Heimlich maneuver to save a Soldier in Iraq from choking. (Photo courtesy of St. Paul District)



## Commentary

# Volunteer spends a year in Iraq

## Experience is 'a life-changing event'

By Nola Conway  
Gulf Region Division  
North District

*(Editor's note – This commentary does not mention that, about two weeks before, a roadside bomb damaged the armored SUV that the Nola Conway was riding in. Apart from a headache and ringing ears, she was unharmed.)*

This April marks a year since I first arrived in Southwest Asia to work with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on Operation Iraqi Freedom. As I look out my window at the Tigris River winding past our office at the Palace of Lances in Mosul, Iraq, I see the wheat fields and farms that meet the city. It is beautiful here.

My first tour, April through September 2003, I spent with Southwestern Division's Restore Iraqi Oil, known as Team-RIO. The first few months I lived in a warehouse in Kuwait with some 100 soldiers, driving almost every day into the southern Iraqi oil fields around the town of Basrah.

From there I went to Baghdad when we stood up the Oil Ministry, and then the rest of my time I was based in Kirkuk, in the northern oil fields.

My second tour I have spent helping stand up the new Gulf Region Division, specifically the North District in Mosul, Iraq. Our mission includes all the Corps' activities in Iraq, from repairing and building military facilities, government buildings, schools, roads, and bridges, to restoring oil and electricity.

### Professional rewards

I have found both tours rewarding for three reasons. First, professionally this work provides the most career-challenging opportunities I have ever encountered. There are the constant challenges — security, communication, and transportation.

Yet the progress we make in leaps and bounds here (that sometimes takes months or years at home) is very rewarding. Every day it not only gets better here for us as a workforce but, more importantly, for the Iraqi people.

Secondly, working with the coalition forces, the Iraqis, contractors, Soldiers, and members of the Corps of Engineers, you get an opportunity to learn from each other, and find out how to make things work. You find out how they do business here...how contractors work in this environment, learn how the Army does it, and how they do it in other Corps districts.

And you use what works. You learn. And that is also one of the biggest challenges here, the steep learning curve. It's one of the reasons I came back. Once you learn, it is time to leave and you have all this knowledge of how to get things done here. It is valuable to have people around that have been here before. And there are a lot of returnees. That speaks for itself.

### Dangers

There is no doubt that the news media focuses on unrest. It is very unrestful right now, and the messages people send home is focused on the incidents that occur here. Iraq is still very much a war zone. Working with small arms fire, mortars, and rockets in the background is an issue you must take into consideration.

But though we focus on these events, they are a small



part of our day, about one percent. Ninety-nine percent of the day we are doing the work of our district, much like home, but it moves faster. Very rewarding!

### Iraqi gratitude

The third reason is the most important to me. The biggest pull I have to this place is that I have seen Iraq. Walked down the village streets, shopped in the markets, visited homes, been part of restoring the schools, met the children and teachers, and sat and ate with the Iraqis and their families. They have such hope. I have talked with farmers, doctors, lawyers, engineers, shop owners, contractors, police, and soldiers. We work directly with the Iraqis, and you really get to know the people.

The knuckleheads they show on TV do *not* do justice to the people who have been through so much, have so little, and want a new Iraq. That, to me, has been the most powerful reward of this work. You really feel like you are doing something that makes a difference in someone's life.

And they never miss an opportunity to tell you how much they appreciate what you are doing. Unfortunately, they are being bullied into not telling that story as much, and the news media is not looking for those stories. The focus is on the destructive activities of a few, not on a nation that is moving forward in an historic time.

## Survey

### Continued from page one

dealing with the uncertainty of change, middle managers are on the front line. Their staff will ask them what they know, and they may find themselves in a situation where they know no more than their people.

Middle managers may then wish to create the impression that they do know more than their staff, or they may wish to protect their relationship with their people by joining in with the speculation. The solution is to give them something solid to communicate to fill the vacuum.

**Improve the feedback loop.** Survey responses indicated that many questions and suggestions from employees regarding 2012 never received an answer or return comment. The feedback loop must be connected to the people who are at the levers of change, so that they can change course if needed based on relevant, real-world feedback from the front lines.



Nola Conway (left) says, "You really feel like you are doing something that makes a difference in someone's life. And they never miss an opportunity to tell you how much they appreciate what you are doing." (Left photo by Pam Sisler, right photo by Alicia Embrey)

There is danger here, but there is a great reward in the work we are doing. Iraq is still going through the growing pains of a regime change. And it is not an event, it is a *process*. Even we who are here get frustrated and lose patience with it. The recent up-swell in violence was meant to dishearten both the Iraqi people and us. My feeling is to stay the course, see it through, and help make it happen.

### Life changing

I really encourage those at home to consider volunteering to support this effort...it really is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. It is a life-changing event, and it is one of the most rewarding jobs they will ever have.

Second, I challenge those who are deployed to tell about the progress we are making here. I know that I, too, have been caught up in the incidents that occur here, wanting to let those at home that I was safe and okay.

But we have done so many good things here...the Iraq I see now has so much more than it did a year ago. Not just more electrical power, medical care, food, water, but a real hope and vision for a new Iraq. We *are* making progress!

Whether you are part of it by serving over here, or by offering encouragement and support at home, you are needed. Thanks for all you do.

**Ensure that the words and music match.** Management credibility is determined by the extent to which managers do what they say they will do. A mismatch between words and actions also creates resentment and resistance to change in the workforce.

### Coherent communication

Most of all, the survey results indicated that change initiatives need coherent communications via every available channel that show clear links between the change and the organization's overall strategy. These coherent communications will help give people the bigger picture (context) of change.

Therefore, those leading change initiatives must plan and factor communications into the mix early in the process, or risk dragging out change initiatives because of employee uncertainty, resistance, and fear.

# Civil Works Strategic Plan

## Watershed principles give unified direction to Corps' CW program

*(Editor's note - The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Integrated Strategic Planning effort has four major components, addressing four of our major mission areas — Civil Works, Military Programs, Real Estate, and Research and Development. The following article outlines the Civil Works strategic plan, covering the first of those mission areas. In future issues of the "Engineer Update," we will profile the capstone document called the high-level USACE Integrated Strategic Plan, followed by the other three mission area plans.)*

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers recently released the *Strategic Plan for the Civil Works Program for Fiscal Years 2004-2009*. The strategic plan seeks to provide a unified, meaningful direction for the Corps' civil works program through five strategic goals and 13 objectives. The plan also emphasizes applying watershed principles as the guidepost for directing civil works activities.

### Praise

John Paul Woodley, the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works), praised the plan's release. "One of my top three priorities is to develop the civil works budget and manage the program based on objective performance measures," Woodley said. "The Civil Works Strategic Plan is an important step toward achieving that goal. This plan is a living document, subject to change, but it's important to put down this marker as the Corps places ever greater emphasis on working in collaboration with others in a watershed planning environment."

The fundamental principles of the plan were summarized by Lt. Gen. Robert Flowers, the Chief of Engineers, in a January speech at the 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Everglades Coalition Conference in Miami Beach. "Today's Corps has a broader perspective," Flowers said. "We've come to understand that national security includes having communities that are economically, environmentally, and socially healthy. We've also learned that to meet our nation's needs, we must take a watershed approach to solving water challenges."

### Water challenges

Through a series of listening sessions held in 2000, the Corps identified five major water resources challenges facing the nation in the years ahead. These are:

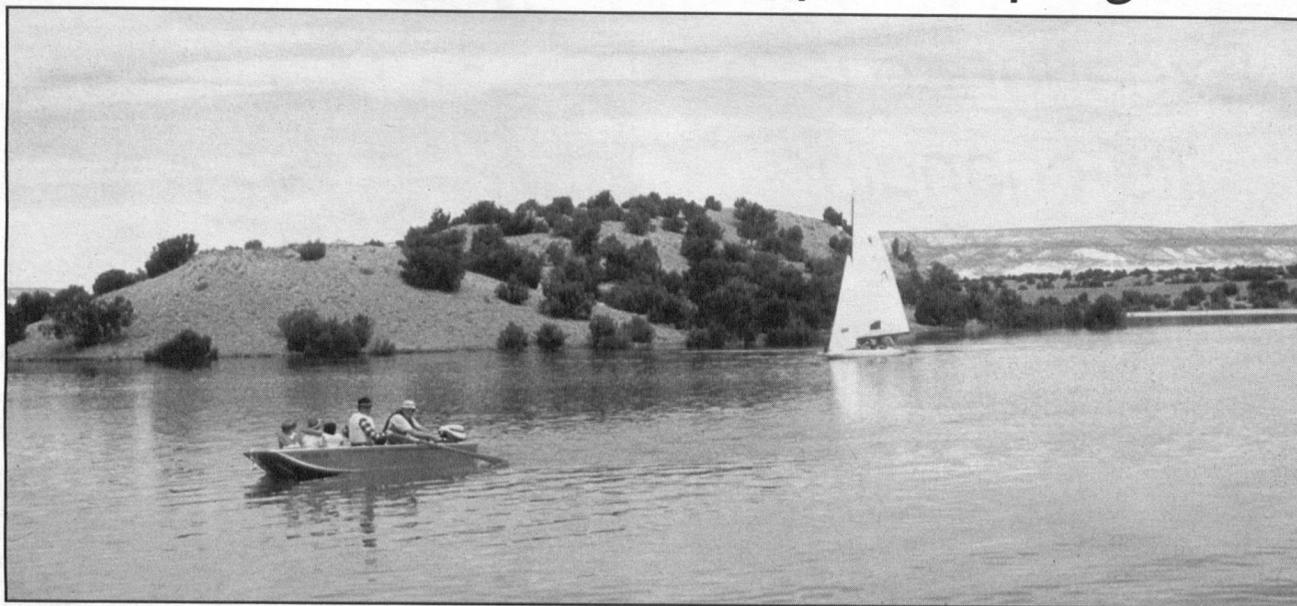
- Achieve greater balance between traditional water resources demands and environmental/ecosystem objectives.
- Restore the environment from degradation caused by past development.
- Address the performance and safety implications of an aging water resources infrastructure.
- Ensure the capability to respond to natural disasters and terrorism threats to water resources infrastructure.
- Minimize institutional barriers to efficient and effective water resources planning, decision-making, and management.

### Goals

The strategic plan addresses these challenges by identifying five strategic goals for the next five years:

**Goal 1:** *Provide sustainable development and integrated management of the nation's water resources.* The Corps will increase its role as a facilitator and collaborator in a systems approach to integrated water resources management. We will work with Native American tribes, federal, state and local entities, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector to design water solutions that better balance economic, environmental, and social objectives of stakeholders.

Traditional missions such as navigation and flood damage reduction will remain high priorities, but we should view them in the context of other competing and complementary functions to find win-win solutions. This philosophy can apply to new investments as well



The Corps' new Civil Works Strategic Plan will help the Corps continue its traditions of effective water management, environmental enhancement and protection, and providing recreation opportunities.

as other activities.

**Goal 2:** *Repair past environmental degradation and prevent future environmental losses.* The Corps will be a proponent of the repair and restoration of damaged aquatic and related land resources, and performance of regulatory activities to protect those resources for future generations.

**Goal 3:** *Ensure that projects perform to meet authorized purposes and evolving conditions.* This goal focuses on stewardship at Corps-owned and -maintained facilities. The Corps will ensure that projects function as they were designed and built so they will provide the justified level of service or outputs. We will work to integrate environmental considerations into the rehabilitation and modernization of existing Corps projects.

**Goal 4:** *Reduce vulnerabilities and losses to the nation and the Army from natural and man-made disasters, including terrorism.* This goal focuses on emergency management capabilities. The Corps will provide effective and efficient disaster preparedness, response, and recovery services in flood fighting, and by supporting missions assigned to us by the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Department of Homeland Security. We must be ready to respond to all types of hazards, and to protect critical water infrastructure from terrorism.

**Goal 5:** *Be a world-class public engineering organization.* The Corps will ensure its ability to accomplish civil works missions and to provide expert scientific and engineering technical assistance to the Army, Department of Defense, other federal and international agencies, states, tribes, and local governments. We will achieve this goal by maintaining a solid technical foundation in our core competencies in engineering and related sciences, and by promoting organizational effectiveness and fiscal responsibility.

### Watershed approach

The unifying theme that will tie these goals together is the increased application of watershed principles. Under these principles, the Corps will:

- Work in partnership with others to incorporate multiple perspectives.
- Use systems approaches to understand the connections between natural and man-made systems.
- Analyze water resources problems at larger scales such as the watershed.
- Strive to achieve multiple goals and functions using water and related resources in a balanced manner.

On a practical level, this approach can translate into a variety of activities:

- \* Sharing data and information

- \* Providing technical assistance, such as planning assistance to states.

\* Working with local watershed councils to as they develop watershed management plans, possibly in tandem with counties, states, federal agencies, and others.

- \* Improving watershed models or parts of models.

- \* Improvements in the regulatory program.

\* Developing, operating, and maintaining traditional Corps projects in a more integrated, environmentally sustainable manner.

The watershed approach recognizes that no single federal agency can solve all of the nation's water challenges. The plan envisions the Corps integrating its problem solving activities with others, and encourages collaborations that bring a variety of resources, authorities, and perspectives to the table.

There are already many examples in the Corps of using watershed principles. Regional sediment management, which has been successfully used in many coastal areas, takes a larger view of the movement of sediment, and integrates the needs of both navigation and coastal storm damage reduction projects to manage sediment resources more efficiently. The Kaskaskia River Watershed project in Illinois is another good example of the watershed approach, and is cited in the strategic plan.

### Implementing the strategic plan

The immediate objective in implementing the strategic plan is to promote using watershed principles in the Corps by creating a toolkit of case examples, lessons learned, models, and authorities. A Watershed Project Delivery Team has been formed at Headquarters to oversee this effort.

Additionally, the watershed homepage of the Natural Resources Management Gateway/Stewardship is being developed to share information about watershed activities.

Other implementing plans and actions will be forthcoming in the weeks ahead.

"The Corps is uniquely situated to provide assistance, from thinking of ideas during the scoping phase to implementing solutions," said Fred Caver, Deputy Director of Civil Works, who oversees the strategic planning process at Headquarters. "No other agency has the span of authorities and experience that we have. It is our duty to share our knowledge in partnership with others."

The complete strategic plan is available at [www.usace.army.mil/inet/functions/cw/hot\\_topics/cw\\_strat.htm](http://www.usace.army.mil/inet/functions/cw/hot_topics/cw_strat.htm).

(Donna Ayres, Linda Hicklin, Mark Dunning, Beverley Getzen, and Tim Hiltz all contributed to this article.)

# No one has 'a bad hair day' in this office

By Brian Temple  
Europe District

The place to be in Wiesbaden, if you need assistance, is the Employee Support Office (ESO). The brainchild of Col. Lee Staab, District Engineer, the ESO offers "One Stop Shopping" for U.S. Army Corps of Engineers employees who find themselves in-processing or out-processing in Germany.

Located in the Amelia Earhart Building, employees no longer have to wander the floors searching for the correct office to take care of their issues. To accomplish this, a specialized workforce was selected from different directorates such as Resource Management, Logistics, and Human Resources to staff a remodeled office centrally located on the first floor.

A timely concept for prompt and friendly service, the ESO staff handles issues of all types such as transportation, ID cards and passports, appraisals, ration cards, pay and leave issues, and overseas allowances. But, working in this customer service business has one prerequisite, Staab said... "No one here is allowed to have a bad hair day."

For those in-processing, the ESO saves a lot of time and energy, which enables new employees to spend more time focusing on the customer. The confusion faced in the past has been resolved by placing a new employee's sponsor in one central location. A relocation specialist creates a customized schedule for each new employee.

After being greeted at the airport, a new or returning employee is immersed in a



**Bridgett Brackett, Employee Support Office, assists Brig. Gen. Merdith "Bo" Temple, North Atlantic Division Commander. (Photo courtesy of Europe District)**

weeklong series of briefings and appointments from getting an ID card to a driver's license test. A tour of Wiesbaden and the surrounding area is included to help an employee acclimate to their new surroundings. The office staff even provides travel information or suggestions for family vacations.

One recent arrival, EEO Counselor Carol Haynes said, "I didn't have to struggle finding people and locations, or miss important appointments. I had my IDs, a list of potential apartments, facility tours, and even passed my driving exam, all in the first week!" Haynes added

that an ESO staff member "even rode the bus with me until I felt comfortable on my own."

"Taking care of the basic needs of the workforce up front enables them to focus on their jobs," said Bridget Brackett, an ESO relocation specialist. "Getting started over here can be stressful at times, and our goal is make sure a transition is seamless."

Resourcefulness was also a key in getting the office off the ground, Brackett said. The office needed to be equipped, and staffed, but there was no money to do the job.

Logistics Management staff supplied furniture obtained through the Defense Reutilization and Marketing Service. Information Management staff used phones from empty cubicles and provided a photocopy machine, a shredder, and other administrative materials. And one Europe District couple even donated a sofa for the building's quiet room, or sick room, which was collocated with the ESO.

German labor law requires all organizations to have a quiet room, and it was located within the ESO to give emergency personnel and ambulances easy access to personnel, said Monika Boivin, chairperson for the Works Council (a German committee similar to a U.S. workers' union). Boivin added that first aid is readily available from most local national employees because the training is required before a German national receives a driver's license. Although there is no requirement for U.S. employees to have the training, Bonnie Kunkle, ESO payroll customer service representative, attended both cardiopulmonary resuscitation and first aid training to be ready to help.

On a recent visit, Brig. Gen. Merdith "Bo" Temple, North Atlantic Division commander, praised the staff for their capability and cost effectiveness. He said he was also impressed with the centralized office concept and the fact that it took advantage of pulling employees from within Europe District, versus hiring from outside. As he toured the office, Temple said, "You made something out of nothing in a resource-constrained environment, and are providing a great service as a result."

## Invading Asian carp pose unusual threat

By Dan Wilcox  
St. Paul District

The reason Asian carp are in the news these days isn't just because they are invading northward up the Mississippi River, or because they look so strange, grow so big, or pose a threat to aquatic ecosystems.

They leap out of the water and smack boaters!

The invading Asian silver carp spend much of their time basking near the surface, sucking down plankton. When startled by an approaching motorboat, they can jump more than six feet out of the water and have hit recreational boaters and fisheries biologists.

Needless to say, these collisions make news.

### Invasive species

The four species of Asian carp poised to invade rivers and lakes in the St. Louis District region are silver carp, grass carp, bighead carp, and black carp. All these fish species were originally brought into the U.S. from Asia to manage water quality and vegetation in catfish aquaculture (catfish farms) in the South. These fish escaped into the lower Mississippi River and have spread northward.

Grass carp have been stocked widely, and are now found throughout much of the country and in some rivers and lakes in Wisconsin. Bighead and silver carp have invaded the Mississippi, Missouri, Illinois, and Ohio rivers. A bighead carp was captured in Lake Pepin last fall, the northernmost record in the Mississippi River to date. The leaping silver carp have invaded the Mississippi River as far north as Pool 18, upriver of Burlington, Iowa. Black carp have been found in a floodplain lake along the Mississippi River in southern Illinois.



**A silver carp, startled by the motorboat, leaps more than six feet out of the Illinois River. (Photo by John Chick, Illinois Natural History Survey)**

Unlike common carp, the grass, silver, bighead and black carp are not bottom-feeders, so they don't have a bottom-oriented sucker mouth or barbels. They are all elongated fish with big scales and eyes placed low on their head. And they can grow to more than 50 pounds.

### Threats

Asian carp pose many threats to native fish and aquatic ecosystems. Grass carp eat aquatic plants. Silver and black carp compete for plankton with native fish like paddlefish and gizzard shad. Black carp eat snails and clams. Although black carp may eat zebra mussels, another exotic invader that is causing a lot of problems,

they also eat juvenile native mussels and snails.

### Deterrents

A lot of people are trying to halt the spread of the Asian carp. St. Paul and Rock Island districts; the Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, and Illinois state natural resource agencies; the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; and the U.S. Geological Survey are cooperating to find effective ways to limit the invasion of Asian carp and other non-indigenous fish up the Mississippi River.

Various technologies are being considered to deter the fish from moving upriver — an electrical barrier, sonic bubble curtains (an air hose and a set of speakers that emit a sound that is annoying to fish), and pheromones (chemicals that attract or repel fish).

If any of these options are feasible, they may be implemented somewhere in the Upper Mississippi River. An electronic fish barrier is already in place on the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal to keep fish from moving between the Illinois River and Lake Michigan.

### They taste good!

However, the Asian carp do have something positive going for them. Unlike the bottom-feeding common carp, the Asian carp *taste good!* Private entrepreneurs are commercially processing silver and bighead carp caught from the Illinois River. Their flesh is firm, slightly translucent, and white and mild-tasting when cooked. Maybe chef Paul Prudhomme of New Orleans will invent a wildly popular recipe for Asian carp. If we can't stop these boater-smacking invaders, let's eat them!

(Dan Wilcox is a biologist with St. Paul District)

# Corps kids debut new fitness program

By Janice Meer

Children at the Castle Kids Child Development Center in New Orleans District "took a giant step" toward health and fitness on March 31 when they helped debut *Kids in Action*, a new children's physical activity initiative by the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports (PCPFS).

Rae Pica, a noted child movement specialist and author of *Your Active Child*, showed parents and childcare providers at the center how to help small children become active early in life. Pica led about a dozen "Castle Kids," who demonstrated how much fun it is to "follow the leader," "take tiny steps/giant steps," "jump like a rabbit and kangaroo," and play actively with their parents and caregivers.

Castle Kids is a YMCA child development center at district headquarters that provides childcare for Corps employees and families in New Orleans.

**Healthy start.** "We're committed to offering each child in our center a healthy start in life," said Col. Peter Rowan, New Orleans District Commander. "Regular physical activity is a habit we want to instill from the beginning, and we're happy to provide this opportunity to showcase active lifestyles for young children."

"Restricting children's movement teaches our youngest Americans to be sedentary and may start them on the path to obesity," said Dr. Dorothy Richardson, Vice Chair of the PCPFS, who spoke at the debut. "Adopting an active lifestyle early may decrease the likelihood that children will become obese later in life."

"For young children, physical activity is natural," Richardson continued. "*Kids in Action* is based on the premise that children love to move. Little ones are delighted to have attention from parents and caregivers. Playing actively gives pleasure to all. And you don't



Rae Pica, a child movement specialist, leads the Castle Kids through the *Kids in Action* activities. (Photo by Lane Lefort, New Orleans District)

have to be an expert on movement to promote a child's daily physical activity. No special equipment is needed to make meaningful activity part of children's lives. Being active from an early age will help children become physically fit later in life."

**Guidelines.** *Physical Activity Guidelines for Infants and Toddlers*, a 2002 publication by the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE), offers specific guidelines for parents and caregivers. Small children need several hours of unstructured movement every day; they should never be inactive for more than 60 minutes. Toddlers need at least 30 minutes of structured activities, and preschoolers need at least 60 minutes of structured activities, like those demonstrated at Castle Kids. The activities can be broken down into 10- to 15-minute units.

"Confining babies and young children to strollers and play pens and to car and infant seats for hours at a time may delay development of their ability to roll over, crawl, and walk and may even delay cognitive development," said George Graham, NASPE President, who also spoke at the *Kids in Action* debut. "Children are not small adults."

**Cost.** The cost of physical inactivity in children has become a national issue. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, obesity has doubled for American children and tripled for teens in the past two decades due to less physical activity, poor nutrition, and more sedentary pursuits like watching television and playing computer and video games.

The percentage of overweight children and teens is about 15 percent (about 20 percent for black, Hispanic, and American Indian youth), and one in 10 children ages two to five in the U.S. is overweight. This adds up to about nine million overweight children in America.

In addition, American children are developing type 2 diabetes, once considered an adult disease, and overweight children have increased risk for high blood pressure and cardiovascular disease.

These conditions are largely preventable through daily physical activity and good nutrition. To help reverse this trend, PCPFS personnel distributed *Kids in Action: Physical Activity for Children, Birth to Age 5* to all of the children who attend Castle Kids.

*Kids in Action*, based on the NASPE guidelines, was produced as a public/private partnership among the PCPFS, NASPE, and the Kellogg Company. The publication may be downloaded from "Publications" at the PCPFS's Web site [www.fitness.gov](http://www.fitness.gov)

(Janice Meer is the Director of Communications for the President's Council on Physical Fitness & Sports.)

HR Corner

## Jobs available in Iraq, Afghanistan

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is soliciting applications to serve in the Gulf Region Division (GRD) and Afghanistan Engineer District (AED) from all federal employees, interested citizens, and Corps employees.

The HECSA Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC) has the task of staffing a large number of positions immediately. A recruitment team has been organized that will disseminate job opportunities and deployment information to both internal and external candidates. The team has begun an aggressive marketing campaign to get the word out about the critical positions available in GRD and AED. USACE civilian volunteers have filled many of the positions in GRD and AED, but the workload is increasing. So we need to consider applicants from the entire Army, other federal agencies, and retirees.

**Announcement.** We are now filling these temporary vacancies through the same application procedures used to fill other permanent positions. Jobs are being announced on the Army Civilian Personnel On Line and Office of Personnel Management USAJOBS Web pages. The addresses for these Web pages are [www.army.cpol.mil](http://www.army.cpol.mil) and [www.usajobs.opm.gov](http://www.usajobs.opm.gov). You can search for all job announcements in Iraq or Afghanistan simply by selecting the country on the search screen.

Applicants submit their resumes or self-nominations through the Army Resumix system for a detail, 120 days of temporary duty, or a six-month or one-year temporary change of station. Managers in Iraq or Afghanistan will receive a referral list of the best-qualified applicants to make a selection. The HECSA CPAC will make job offers and begin the administrative procedures for the selectee's deployment to GRD or AED. All USACE

employees will have return rights back to their former positions in the Corps.

**Challenges.** Serving in GRD or AED provides unique opportunities for professional and personal challenge, adventure, national service, diverse cultural experience, and increased compensation. You will apply everything you know and do for the Corps, plus more. The work is challenging, but rewarding. You will see the benefits and results of your work daily. You will develop lifetime relationships with your team members and everyone you work with. You will be part of history, and you will make a difference! You will continue to serve the nation, represent America and the Army, and make a difference in the global war on terrorism.

**Pay.** The financial rewards were published in the February *Engineer Update*, but as a reminder some of those entitlements may include 10 percent or 25 percent relocation bonus, post differential, danger pay, hazard duty pay, separate maintenance allowance, overtime, and holiday pay. (See Web site below for specifics.) All of your meals, travel, and lodging will be provided. By applying for one of these positions, you may also be selected for a temporary promotion while serving in Iraq or Afghanistan.

**Research.** USACE has a civilian deployment information site on the HQUSACE Web page that provides general information and answers questions you may have before applying for a position in Iraq or Afghanistan. The Web site is [www.hq.usace.army.mil/cehr/Deployment/main.htm](http://www.hq.usace.army.mil/cehr/Deployment/main.htm). If you have questions that are not addressed on the Web site, please contact

your local HR office or CPAC.

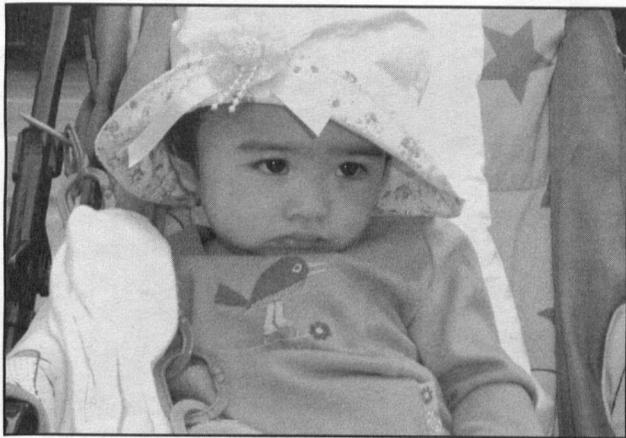
Take time to talk to or listen to Corps civilians who have already served in Iraq or Afghanistan. They are the best source of information and can tell you what it is really like to work in a foreign country. Most will tell you they have grown personally and professionally while making a significant and life changing difference to many.

**Jobs.** There are many job opportunities in all grade levels from GS-07 through GS-15 in GRD, and several openings in AED. The kinds of positions we are recruiting for include:

- Program managers
- Contract specialists
- Financial managers
- Administrative support assistants
- Engineering technicians
- Construction representatives
- Civil engineers
- Electrical engineers
- Mechanical engineers
- General engineers
- Budget analysts
- Program analysts
- Purchasing agents
- Safety and occupational health managers
- Human resources specialists

If you would like to serve your country and represent the Corps in an environment where you will make a real difference, consider applying for one of these announcements. If you know of others who have the skills we need and would be interested in working temporarily for the Corps, tell them about the opportunities we have in Iraq or Afghanistan.

# Around the Corps



Ryan Ma, 16 months, daughter of Dickson Ma and Lise Ditzel-Ma of Honolulu District, needs a bone marrow transplant. (Photo courtesy of Honolulu District)

## Bone marrow needed

Ryan Ma, 16 months old, suffers from a rare blood disorder, and needs a bone marrow transplant. Ryan is the daughter of Dickson Ma, Deputy Resident Engineer of Honolulu District, and Lise Ditzel-Ma, a project manager with the district.

Ryan has hemophagocytic lymphohistiocytosis, a disorder where white blood cells proliferate, attack organs and tissue, and leave her with no way to fight infections or diseases. She has been at Kapiolani Medical Center for Women & Children in Hawaii since the end of November. She is only the 114th person in the world documented with the disease, and current treatment includes chemotherapy and steroids.

Ryan's only chance for survival is a bone marrow transplant, but she is adopted from China and has no biological relatives who are matched donors.

You can help Ryan by volunteering to be a bone marrow donor. Donors will be asked to complete a registration form, and provide a small blood sample to compare with tissue types of patients worldwide searching for a matching bone marrow donor.

A volunteer marrow donor must be:

- Between the ages of 18 and 60.
- In good general health.
- Willing to donate to any patient in need.

Donors need to register only once. If you have already registered, please update your information.

If you want to help the Ma family directly, please call "Friends of Ryan Ma" at (808) 836-3333, or e-mail ryanma@tri-ldata.com

## Active Directory

Imagine traveling to *any* Corps location, sitting at *any* workstation, and logging on with one username and password. With nothing else, you use CEFMS, review a file from your home office, and then print to a printer in yet another location.

These are just some of the many advantages USACE will have after full deployment of Active Directory, the new centrally managed network operating system that replaces the many separate systems used in the past.

Initial planning for deploying Active Directory came from a need identified six years ago to centralize network operations. After the Army directive to run Windows 2000 or higher on all servers by the end of fiscal year 2004, the decision to migrate to one system across the Corps solidified. Deploying Active Directory will occur together with migration to Exchange 2003, providing faster, more user-friendly e-mail.

North Atlantic Division led the Corps in deploying Active Directory and Exchange 2003. NAD was selected as the Corps' Initial Operational Capability site because they had implemented the NAD Single Master Domain Model, which reflected Active Directory architecture and facilitated a common operating environment.

The NAD official migration began in January 2003

and concluded last October.

One benefit of Active Directory is its ability to disseminate information across diverse areas. Searching and sharing computers, files, and printers throughout USACE is user-friendly, and interfaces are customizable. On the admin side, network and security policies, display settings, and even software distributes centrally, eliminating many of the PC-to-PC helpdesk visits, and streamlining information management workflow.

Northwestern, South Atlantic, Mississippi Valley, Great Lakes & Ohio River, and Pacific Ocean divisions have begun the process, and the entire Corps will migrate by the end of FY04. The migration to Exchange 2003 will be complete by the end of 2004.

## Pounding pavement

Sixteen people from Central District and Gulf Region Division headquarters ran in a 10 kilometer (6.2 mile) race on March 28 at Camp Victory in Iraq. The group had people from 12 Corps districts. The 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division sponsored the race, and the first 350 finishers won a T-shirt.

It was sunny and comfortable at the 7 a.m. start as the GRD runners joined about 450 soldiers for the race. Although numerous weapons were available, the traditional starting gun was replaced by a verbal "ready-set-go." The course looped around the well-known palace on the lake, and then continued east around another lake.

The leader of the engineer pack was Dan Pridal of Omaha District, a 41-year-old grandfather who finished in 40:42 for an impressive 29th out of 460.

"Running is a stress reliever," said Ed Morente of Jacksonville District. "Going to Camp Victory and running that 10K was like R&R. It was a wonderful break from the long hours."

## Correction

The rock anchor bolts at the fusegate project in Sacramento District (*Engineer Update* February on-line edition) were locked off at a tension of 50,000 pounds, or 50 kips (kilo pound, a load of 1,000 pounds).

## Architect, Interior Designer of the Year

Grover Starbuck, Transatlantic Programs Center, is the Corps' Architect of the Year, and Lori Hoelting, Omaha District, is the Interior Designer of the Year. A six-person jury of their professional peers selected them from 11 nominations submitted by district commanders.

Starbuck was recognized for his accomplishments as the lead architect for the Afghanistan National Army program. Hoelting was selected for her overall academic, professional, and community service credentials.

They will receive a Pillars of Excellence medal from Chris Hinton-Lee, Chief Architect of USACE, during the annual American Institute of Architects Conference on June 8 in Chicago, and a plaque at the USACE Senior Leaders Conference in August. This award includes:

- A two-year appointment to the USACE Architectural Community of Practice Advisory Council, and their discipline's Design Advisory Committee.
- Public service speaking engagements.
- Serving as a judge for both the Chief of Engineer's Design and Environmental Awards, and the Architect/Landscape Architect/Interior Designer of the Year in 2005.

## Most Valuable Partner

Joan Stemler of St. Louis District received the Most Valuable Partner Award on March 16 from the River Industry Action Committee (RIAC) at the Inland Waterways Conference in New Orleans.

The region has been affected by a five-year drought. "The 20-year average is typically 12 days of zero or below reading on the St. Louis gage, but last water year we

experienced 112 days," Stemler said.

In past years, similar low water events have halted Mississippi River navigation. But this time, throughout the extended period of low water, barge traffic kept moving. "Joan's efforts helped stop many barges from grounding," said Raymond Hopkins, RIAC Chairman.

Stemler gathered extensive data from the district's data collection network on flow rates from the Upper Mississippi, Missouri and Illinois rivers, and made sensitive adjustments at the three district dams north of St. Louis. The award states, "Her accurate and timely information enabled industry, along with the Corps and the Coast Guard, to develop a proactive plan to adjust tow sizes, barge drafts, buoy placement, and dredging."

## Zoom into Engineering

Six engineers from New England District took part in ZOOM into Engineering on Feb. 21, sponsored by the WGBH-TV kids' show ZOOM and the Museum of Science in Boston.

This annual event allows kids and parents to play with kid-tested activities, and to interact with ZOOM cast members and real engineers. More than 9,500 people visited the museum to enjoy activity challenges that included building a gumdrop dome, hovercraft, cup tower, and paper bridge.

"It was a rewarding day," said Erik Matthews, who staffed the paper bridge table. "Hectic at times, but it was great to see the kids' faces when they understood what principles the activity taught them. One 12-year-old even showed me an effective technique for building a paper bridge that I hadn't thought of, and it was stronger than anything I had seen that day."

The cup towers caused many people to stop and watch.

"The kids I worked with built the tallest cup tower. It stood 10 feet, four inches," said John Wutzer. "We would have gone taller, but the staff stopped us because we were going to set off the fire alarms by breaking a laser sensor plane."

According to Susan Buckley, ZOOM Outreach Coordinator, "Last year, we planned for about 650 participants per activity. This year, we had about 1,100 per activity. We heard that the surveys filled out by participants were overwhelmingly positive. All in all, we're pleased and so is the museum staff. Thanks again for providing us with so many wonderful engineers."



Paul Howard measures a cup tower.

## Engineer Update Online

These articles are featured in the April edition of the *Engineer Update Online*. You can access it at [www.hq.usace.army.mil/cepa/pubs/update.htm](http://www.hq.usace.army.mil/cepa/pubs/update.htm)

**Mentoring** -- Two scientists at the Engineer Research & Development Center answer the question, "What can I do to make a difference?"

**Afghanistan** -- A 120-day assignment in Operation Enduring Freedom challenges St. Paul District man.

**Cold War aftermath** -- Cleaning up contaminated ground water takes time to solve complex issues.

**Sunken boat** -- Walla Walla personnel respond to emergency call to raise sunken cabin cruiser.

**The last gift** -- Sunday Pearson says goodby to faithful dog.

## Dining facility, Alaskan style

Photos by Chris Dalsfoist, Alaska District



The new Wilderness Inn Dining Facility at Fort Richardson features an Alaskan lodge theme. The \$8.7 million building opened Feb. 10, replacing a 1940s-era mess hall. The dining facility was an in-house design by



Alaska District. Unique features include four separate serving lines, a raised dining area, outdoor patio dining, Grab-and-Go service, and fireplace. The district also managed the construction.

# National cemetery gets more space

Article by Chris Augsburger  
Photos by Susanne Bledsoe  
Baltimore District

Four million people visit Arlington National Cemetery every year to pay their respects to more than 260,000 men and women interred in the graves, tombs, and columbaria (interment for cremated remains) on more than 200 acres of Virginia land overlooking Washington, D.C.

After 160 years of burials, and an average of 20 funerals a day, available space for ground interments may run out by 2029, according to the cemetery's master plan. During the past 10 years, Baltimore District has addressed this problem by researching new possible resources for initial interment, such as increasing the amount of available acreage, and designing and building additional facilities for cremated interments.

**Columbaria.** Last month, the district completed the seventh of nine planned columbaria, the second such building built in the past seven years. This newest structure has 7,627 niches where cremated remains will be placed.

Each columbarium is supported by an auger grouted pile system with an integral steel reinforced grace beam foundation. Above this, reinforced concrete walls are covered in limestone with pre-cast concrete caps.

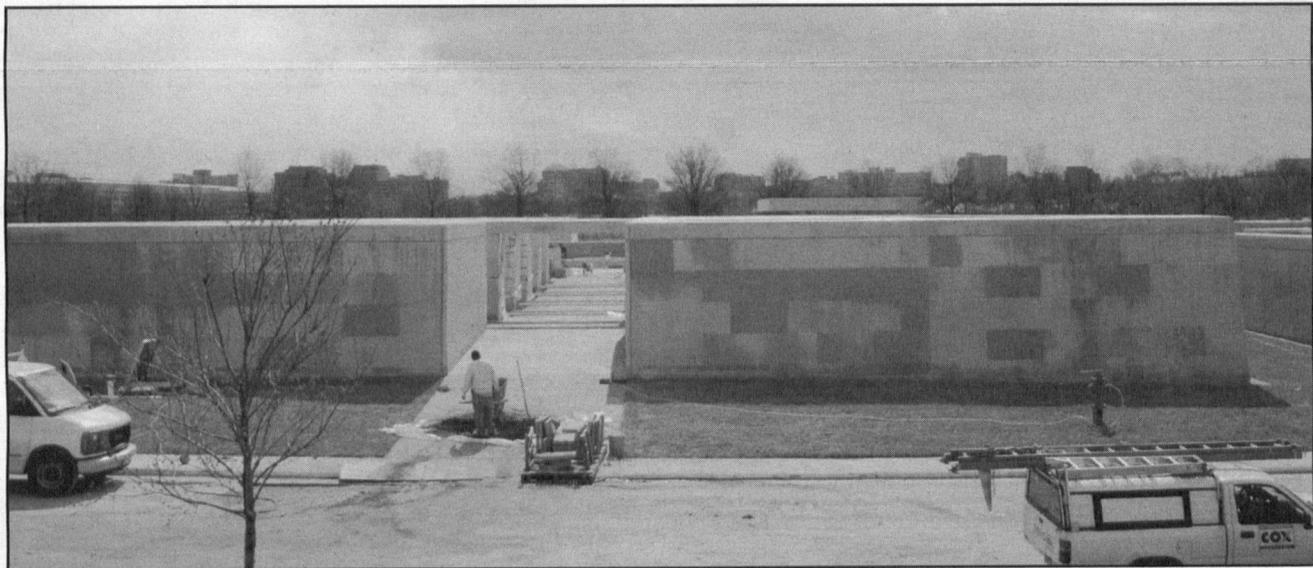
The niches stand about 14 inches high, 19 inches deep, 11 inches wide, and are sealed with a marble cover.

"Our goal is to eventually house about 50,000 niches," said project manager Katherine Welton, Engineering Division.

**Land Development 90.** In addition to the nine columbaria, Baltimore District will soon begin the construction phase of a project called Land Development 90, which will develop 40 acres of unused land from the southeast section of the cemetery, allowing between 20,000 to 30,000 gravesites.

Because the new land sits next to a major roadway and the Metro subway system, this development plan incorporates a revolutionary new drainage system.

"We're using a microtunnel system rather than a standard jack and bore system for storm water outfall," said



This new columbarium will give Arlington National Cemetery 7,627 additional niches for cremated remains. It is the seventh such structure planned for the cemetery.

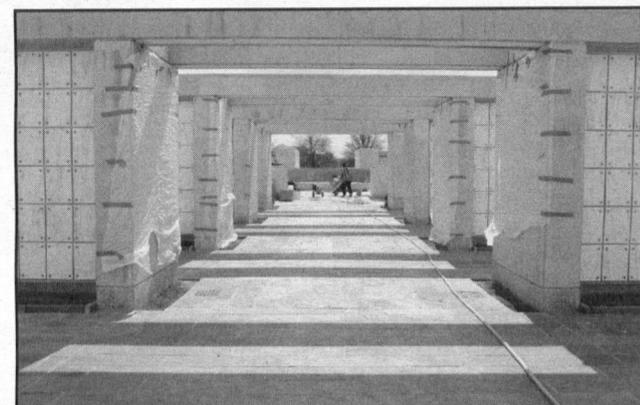
Welton. "It allows us to go under Route 110 and the Metro, resulting in minimal, if any, settling. And we won't have to interrupt any traffic to install this tunneling system."

According to Welton, current legislation allows Arlington National Cemetery to seek expansion opportunities to provide additional capacity, allowing for continued burial until 2100.

**Other work.** Another responsibility of the Arlington project involves repair work to the Memorial Amphitheater Reception Building. Thousands of people daily visit the amphitheater, which was designed and built before World War I. Problems in the structure have caused rainwater damage throughout the building.

"These are problems that can be expected in a building of this age, and one that is so frequently used," said Welton. Within the next year, the Corps will begin repairs and renovations at a cost of nearly \$6 million.

The Corps has also recently refurbished President John



F. Kennedy's gravesite, which included cleaning the marble stones and steps around the site.

While many of these projects can easily assume the identity of merely a simple construction project, Baltimore District team members said they feel a little more reverent and proud about contributing to the continued improvement of the cemetery.

"What we do today will be around forever, seen by millions of tourists, family members, and foreign dignitaries," said Welton.