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The tornadoes on April 2 damaged or destroyed hundreds of homes in Missouri. (Photo by Jim Pogue, Memphis District)

April tornadoes challenge Corps disaster response

It seems that responding to natural disasters is becoming common for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. When tornadoes struck on April 2, the nation again looked to the Corps for help.

"I got a call from the Missouri State Emergency Management Agency Monday morning," said Patsy Fletcher, Memphis District Emergency Manager. Although Missouri officials were looking for some equipment that the district did not own, it did give Fletcher an opportunity to talk with officials there.

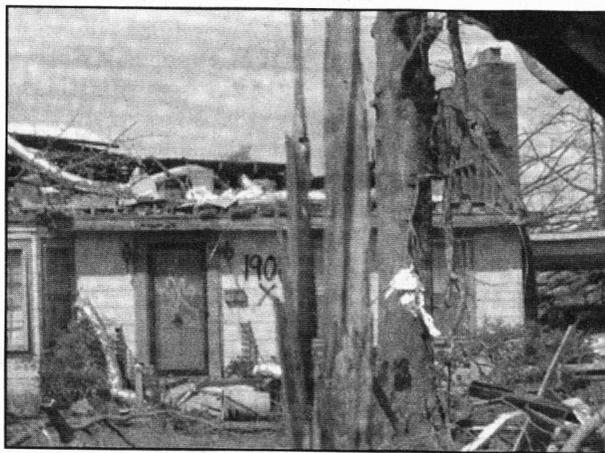
"Right after a tornado, the district engineer has some authority to respond under Immediate Response Authority (IRA) under DoD 3025.1M," Fletcher said. "However, that authority is limited. Once we receive a request from a state governor, we can send Corps personnel and equipment to save lives, prevent human suffering, prevent property damage.

"We also cannot contract for work under the Corps' contract authority until a presidential declaration of emergency is in place, and we've been assigned missions by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)," Fletcher added.

Fletcher said that declaration came April 6 and included Andrews, Pettis, and Pemiscot counties in Missouri. A presidential declaration was signed for seven counties in Arkansas (Conway, Cross, Fulton, Green, Lawrence, Randolph, and White) for individual assistance, public assistance, and hazard mitigation.

"Pemiscot County is the only affected Missouri county in Memphis District, but it was the hardest hit," Fletcher said.

She explained that Headquarters issued a warning soon thereafter detailing how the Corps' would respond. Mississippi Valley Division was assigned the lead in the response in Missouri, and Memphis



Rescue workers marked this severely damaged home to indicate that it has been searched for survivors. (Photo by Jim Pogue, Memphis District)

District became the lead district. Headquarters assigned Southwestern Division as the lead division for Arkansas, and Little Rock District became the lead district in Arkansas. All response following the tornadoes in Tennessee were assigned to Nashville District.

Fletcher said FEMA has assigned three missions to

Memphis District:

- Regional activation of an Emergency Support Function-3 (civil works) representative to the Joint Field Office in Columbia, Mo.

- Two subject matter experts assigned to assist local authorities in creating a debris removal plan and writing quality assurance contracts for the work. They are Whit Barton from Memphis District, and

Continued on page two

Readiness pays big in Red River floods

By Peter Verstegen
St. Paul District

Relationships, responsiveness, and recently completed permanent flood reduction projects paid big dividends for more than a half-dozen communities along the Red River of the North in Minnesota and North Dakota when floods struck in April.

It is estimated that permanent flood control projects and emergency response prevented about \$200 million in damages. The relationships and responsiveness teamwork among federal, state, and local emergency personnel made the response deceptively routine.

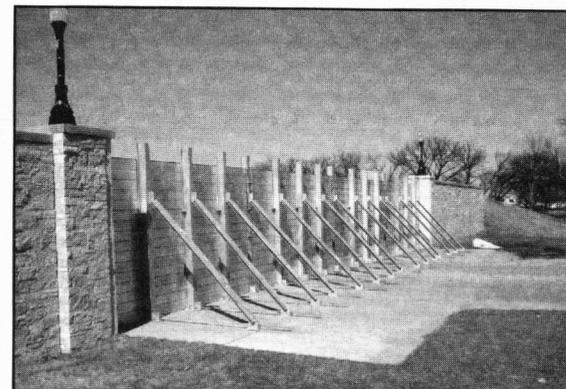
"There are many great stories to be told this spring," said Terri Smith, incident manager for Minnesota. "Some of my favorites are preparedness, mitigation, and the teamwork of government at all levels."

Tim Bertschi, flood engineer at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Western Area Office in Fargo, N.D., said, "The high water was more of a routine event compared to past years. What surprised everyone, though, was how quickly the flood materialized and how quickly it went away. The main stem of the river went up fast and down fast in the metropolitan areas."

The exception was an agricultural area by the Canadian border.

Corps emergency levees and existing flood

Continued on page eight



The 4th St, NW road closure in East Grand Forks, Minn., protected the city's downtown, including the public library and fire station, when the Red River of the North crested at 47.83 feet on April 5. (Photo courtesy of St. Paul District)

Insights

MacArthur, young Soldier both understood duty

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

(This is the second in a series of articles about the Army Values.)

On May 12, 1962, about two years before his death, Gen. Douglas MacArthur delivered his farewell speech to the Corps of Cadets at West Point. In it, he eloquently spoke of the meaning of the central values in the cadet motto "Duty, Honor, Country."

In that speech, MacArthur said:

"Duty, Honor, Country" – those three hollowed words reverently dictate what you want to be, what you can be, what you will be. They are your rallying point to build courage when courage seems to fail, to regain faith when there seems to be little cause for faith, to create hope when hope becomes forlorn."

"I'm going to heal..."

Notice that MacArthur said two things about these values. They are who the cadets will be, and they are their rallying point. Values are just words until we make them part of who we are. When we do, they become our center that gives us direction and purpose regardless of what is going on around us.

MacArthur would have been touched, as I was yesterday, when I met a young Soldier at Walter Reed Army Medical Center. She had been a mechanic assigned to an engineer battalion in Iraq. She was driving in a convoy near Ramadi when she drove over a hidden improvised explosive device, which was detonated electronically.

She lost her right foot, and her left leg was badly mangled.

I looked down at her lying there and asked how she was doing. She said, "I'm doing great, Sir."

I asked her how she was doing inside, how her spirit was. She said, "My spirit is fine." Then she looked me straight in the eyes and said with great

determination, "I'm going to heal up, get back and do my duty, and serve my country."

Her sense of duty not only sustains her in her painful treatment and recovery, it gives her an indomitable spirit to overcome her adversity. Her doctor told her that when her left leg heals, she will get a prosthetic for her foot, and will probably return to duty, although in a different military occupational specialty.

That young Soldier understood duty just as well as MacArthur did, so I would like to focus on the Army Value of "Duty" in this article.

Who we are

Webster's *New World Dictionary* defines "Duty" as "obedience or respect shown to one's parents, elders or superiors; any action required by one's position or by moral or legal considerations; service, especially military service; a personal sense of what one should do; a moral obligation; a calling."

All of these pertain to duty in the military. In these definitions, the actions of obeying, following the law, or doing what one should do are based upon the internal motivations of respect for superiors, a moral sense of what is right, a calling to service.

"Duty" is more than what we do...it is what we are, as MacArthur pointed out. When we internalize duty, make it a personal value, we become dutiful people. Our sense of duty motivates us to serve our country and compels us to accomplish our mission and do what is right.

A well-developed sense of duty to our country brings with it a set of characteristics that are indispensable to the well-being of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Army, and the nation. A sense of duty...

- Gives us a desire to fulfill our responsibilities to the best of our abilities.
- Makes us reliable and dependable because we will not shirk our responsibilities, and will put mission first.

Tornadoes

Continued from page one

Jim Garner from Mississippi Valley Division.

• Two housing experts. They are Leo Arbaugh and Jason Harrah from Huntington District.

Memphis District personnel at the Caruthersville Area Office are also playing a key role.

"The Caruthersville Area Office is serving as an ad hoc forward emergency operations center, assisting with coordination and communications with state and local officials," Fletcher said. "They're doing a great job, particularly since they have so many of their employees already deployed on recovery work in Louisiana."

Fletcher said the district continues to monitor the work in Missouri, and will assist in the recovery efforts there as assigned by Headquarters and FEMA.

FEMA has assigned a temporary housing mission to Little Rock District. The district has also offered technical assistance to the state if needed.

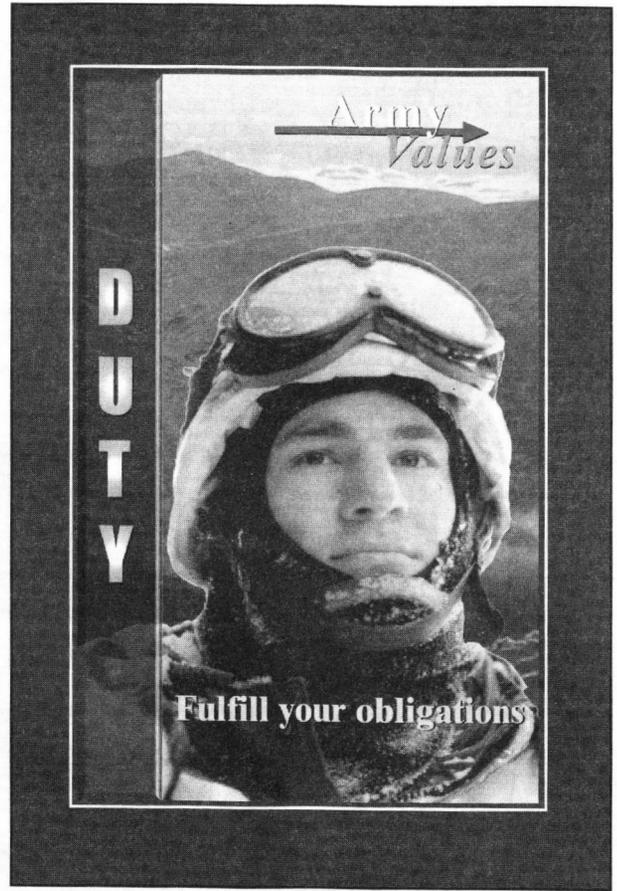
Little Rock District has awarded an Indefinite

Delivery/Indefinite Quantity contract to install FEMA-provided mobile homes to the three areas most affected by the tornadoes – Marmaduke, Wynne, and Raven counties. About 400-500 homes were affected by the tornadoes, with 200-250 destroyed or significantly damaged.

As of press time, 25 trailers had been moved into the staging area near Marmaduke, and installation began April 19. The total support effort will be based on applicants and eligibility requirements.

Nashville District immediately prepared a team to respond to tornado damage in Tennessee but, as of press time, that direction has not been given by FEMA, and the state of Tennessee has not requested federal assistance. FEMA has named Nashville District the lead district for recovery operations after future storms in the state.

(Jim Pogue of Memphis District, David Treadway of Nashville District, and Charlie Tobin of Little Rock District contributed to this article.)



• Motivates us to learn and train to become competent people able to accomplish our tasks.

• Fosters honesty and good faith that engenders trust in those who depend upon us.

• Brings a desire to be accountable for our actions and pride in what we do.

• Results in self-discipline, appropriate restraint, and an accompanying sense of moral rectitude and ethical behavior.

So it is easy to see why "Duty" is a core value of the Army, and so crucial to our personal and professional success and fulfillment.

Rallying point

As our rallying point, our sense of duty keeps us focused on what we must do. It gives a mission focus. It helps us to keep the objective in sight, and the target in our crosshairs. It helps us prioritize what is essential, what is important, and what can wait. It helps us define the tasks we must perform to accomplish the mission. It motivates us to take initiative, to move out and close with the enemy, whether that enemy is insurgents in Iraq or an important deadline in Washington, D.C. It stimulates us to reach for excellence in all we do.

Knowing our duty allows us to fulfill the admonition of Proverbs 4: 25-27, "Let your eyes look straight ahead, fix your gaze directly before you. Make level paths for your feet and take only ways that are firm. Do not swerve to the right or the left; keep your foot from evil."

As MacArthur taught, and that young woman in WRAMC shows, our values help define who we are as Soldiers and members of the great Army team. They give us a rallying point in times of turmoil. "Duty" is the value that keeps us focused on what is essential to accomplish the mission, spurs us to move out and do what we need to do with excellence, and motivates us to be the best people we can be.

(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.)



Commentary

'Slow down, you move too fast...'

Fast-paced, wired-up world interferes with communication

By Christina Swanson
Jacksonville District

I knew there was a legitimate reason to tell my boss why I don't want a Blackberry, business cell phone, or a PDA hanging around my waist, other than the fact that I don't need extra weight in that area. I just couldn't put my finger on the correct answer until today.

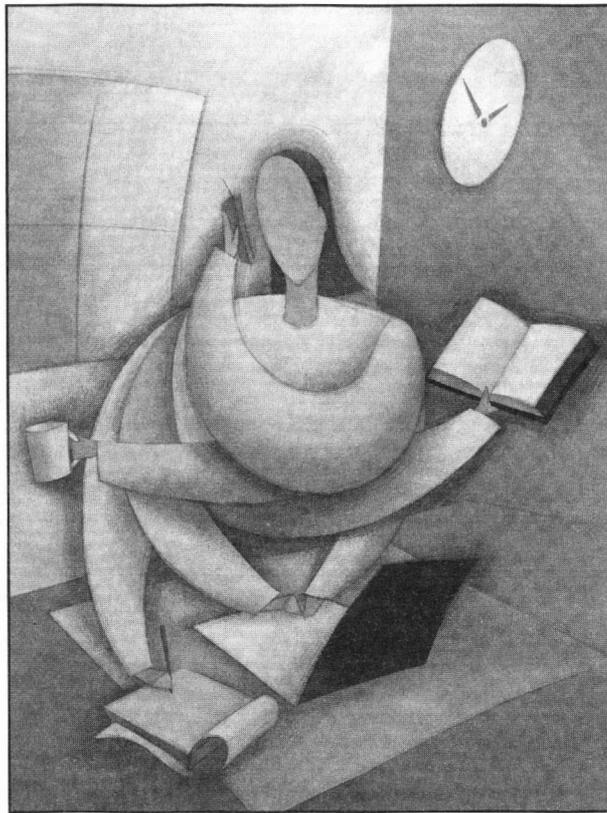
I look at employees juggling all that techno stuff in respectful wonderment and shudder. Part of me is in awe of how important they look and how dedicated they must be constantly "checking-in," being "in-the-know" and making "up-to-the-minute" decisions. But there was also something disconcerting about all this activity.

Now I know why.

I learned the reason and other tips at the Communication Skills Lunch and Learn Program, "Speak with Confidence, Clarity and Credibility – How to Get Heard and Get Results." At the end of the program, several employees also expressed some eureka moments, too, and most had pleasant expressions on their faces.

Having majored in communications "back-in-the-day" and leafing through a boat-load of self-help-type books on proper assertiveness in the past several decades, I went to the program more as a "refresher" than expecting to learn anything new or noteworthy.

But I was pleasantly surprised. Kudos to Connie Dieken, the originator of this Web-based program, and President and Founder of the On Point Com-



munication Training and Development Center.

Just her tone of voice emphasized the importance of monitoring your voice. Like she explained, it's easy for Type A people like me to come across hurried and snappy, which can easily be misinterpreted as being aggressive rather than caring. Dieken says to add warmth to one's tone by talking with an inner smile and to slow down those words.

Along with Type A's being prone to be motor-mouths, talking too fast or high-pitched can generate nervousness. Dieken says to deliberately slow your words to a normal pace and decibel by deep-breathing and you'll automatically project the *three C's...clear, confident and credible*.

It's that easy! Which brings me to my antipathy toward techno-stuff...it's how we appear to others when we fast pace.

When you talk deliberately, you act deliberately,

which forces you to do only one thing at a time. That's right...only *o-n-e* thing at a time! This in itself will keep you centered, and the other three "C's" will follow.

Multi-tasking by glancing at the Blackberry, scribbling notes, and nodding in agreement in a meeting all at the same time does *not* give the appearance of being on-the-ball. It does the opposite by making you appear scattered, disorganized, and not credible.

Imagine that...multi-tasking as a big no-no!

But tell that to anyone who's a parent of youngsters and your credibility may plummet with howls of laughter on the bottom end. That's because parents are already so programmed to multi-task that changing this behavior during the workday will take some concentrated gear-shifting effort.

So here's a bit of advice from a parent...try to focus on the key word "one" as you would the meditation word "om." Practice focusing on the word "one" and it will be ingrained in your workday method before you know it.

That will help you focus on slowing down and doing/talking deliberately, and might save what little bit of sanity you have left until you have to face the home-front at 6 p.m.

Other good tips from Dieken that parents already know are "suspend your response," "listen and wait," and "turn on the fog." In other words, pause and think before you respond, listen to the entire story before reacting and, to defuse criticism (or temper tantrums), say something generally positive to appease the "attacker" like, "I see your point, however..."

The bottom line is, according to Dieken, no matter your communication style, whether passive, assertive, or aggressive, be consistent. Of course, if you want to exude the three C's and be respected by your peers and bosses, you might want to keep in mind Dieken's points and Dr. Phil's immortal words of advice, "How's that working for ya?"

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Letter to the Editor



The role of chaplains

Col. Sherrill Munn, the chaplain of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, often quotes scriptures in his *Insights* columns, as he did in the March edition, quoting Psalm 145: 17, "The Lord is faithful to all His promises and loving toward all He has made."

I personally prefer Proverbs 14:15, "The simple believeth every word: but the prudent man looketh well to his going." Or 1 Thessalonians 5:21, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." Each person amongst us has their own personal belief, special inspiration, personal form of scripture, and personal code of ethics.

My point being that chaplains in government service should serve the needs of *all* government employees and service members. They should provide counseling to improve the morale of Soldiers and Civilians so as to help all government personnel with their per-

sonal problems.

I think it only fair, since they are paid government employees themselves, that *all* chaplains should protect the beliefs of *all* government personnel and ensure that there is no actual or perceived discrimination within the command based on a chaplain's statements and government employees' beliefs.

Unfortunately, while most chaplains can run worship services for one faith group, their ability to counsel, foster worship services, and advise the command on other beliefs and secular philosophies is far beyond what they get from their chaplain training or from seminary school.

The Corps is made up of many faiths, personal persuasions and secular outlooks. Thus, we need *secular* chaplains in our service; capable of running counseling sessions and writing morale-building letters for all employees without the perception of exclusion for per-

sons not belonging to a specific faith group.

This secular chaplain could just as easily assist in the organization of religious events. As a Christian chaplain assists the activities of Jewish soldiers, so a secular chaplain would assist the activities of any Soldier.

Whether chaplains become secular or not, chaplains must become more versatile and tolerant, and the government must ensure its chaplains serve all employees. To support a theistic chaplaincy is to support an unconstitutional government priesthood.

Fernando Aguilar
Walla Walla District

(Many Civilians are unaware of the full extent of the role of military chaplains. I passed your letter to Col. Sherrill Munn, the Corps of Engineers chaplain, for his comment. **Editor.**)

The constitutionality of the military chaplaincy has been upheld by our

courts.

Chaplains are in fact specifically trained to work with people of all faith groups and philosophies, regardless. Part of what we do as military chaplains is to protect the constitutional right to religious beliefs (or the lack of them) in the military community with its special culture.

We are also trained and educated to counsel with people regardless of their beliefs. As a matter of fact, I'm a certified reality therapist. Reality therapy is a secular counseling modality not faith-based at all. Chaplains have a great many skills beyond their theological training.

We also have the right to express our opinions, but that does not mean that everyone must agree. I have been invited to write these *Insights* articles. They will reflect the way I see things, but anyone is free to disagree with what I write. – Col. Sherrill Munn, Chaplain, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Ranger rescues Katrina's smallest victims

By Ann Marie Harvie
New England District

When Hurricane Katrina slammed into the Gulf Coast in last August it completely devastated the region. As the storm approached, those who could not make it out of harm's way fled to shelters. Many had to leave behind their pets because shelters could not accept them. Countless cats, dogs, and other pets were left to brave the heavy winds and deadly flood waters on their own. Those that survived the onslaught of Katrina were left without food, water, shelter, or their families.

As the call went out for volunteers to assist human survivors, the same call went out to help the pets left behind. Employees of New England District responded on both fronts – nearly 100 volunteered to accept the missions assigned by the Federal Emergency Management Agency to help rebuild, and one avid animal lover volunteered her own time to save the Gulf Coast's animal victims.

Jamie Kordack, a park ranger at Buffumville Lake/Hodges Village Dam, spent three weeks in Louisiana, one week in October and two in December, attending to the needs of rescued animals.

Ten times worse. "The disaster was terrible, the worst thing imaginable, and it changed the lives of humans in the Gulf Region," said Kordack. "But it was 10 times worse for the companion animals left behind, and 1,000 times worse for farm animals. Over one billion animals died, mostly chickens."

Ironically, most of the animals died from lack of clean drinking water. "No water in an area with too much water," she said.

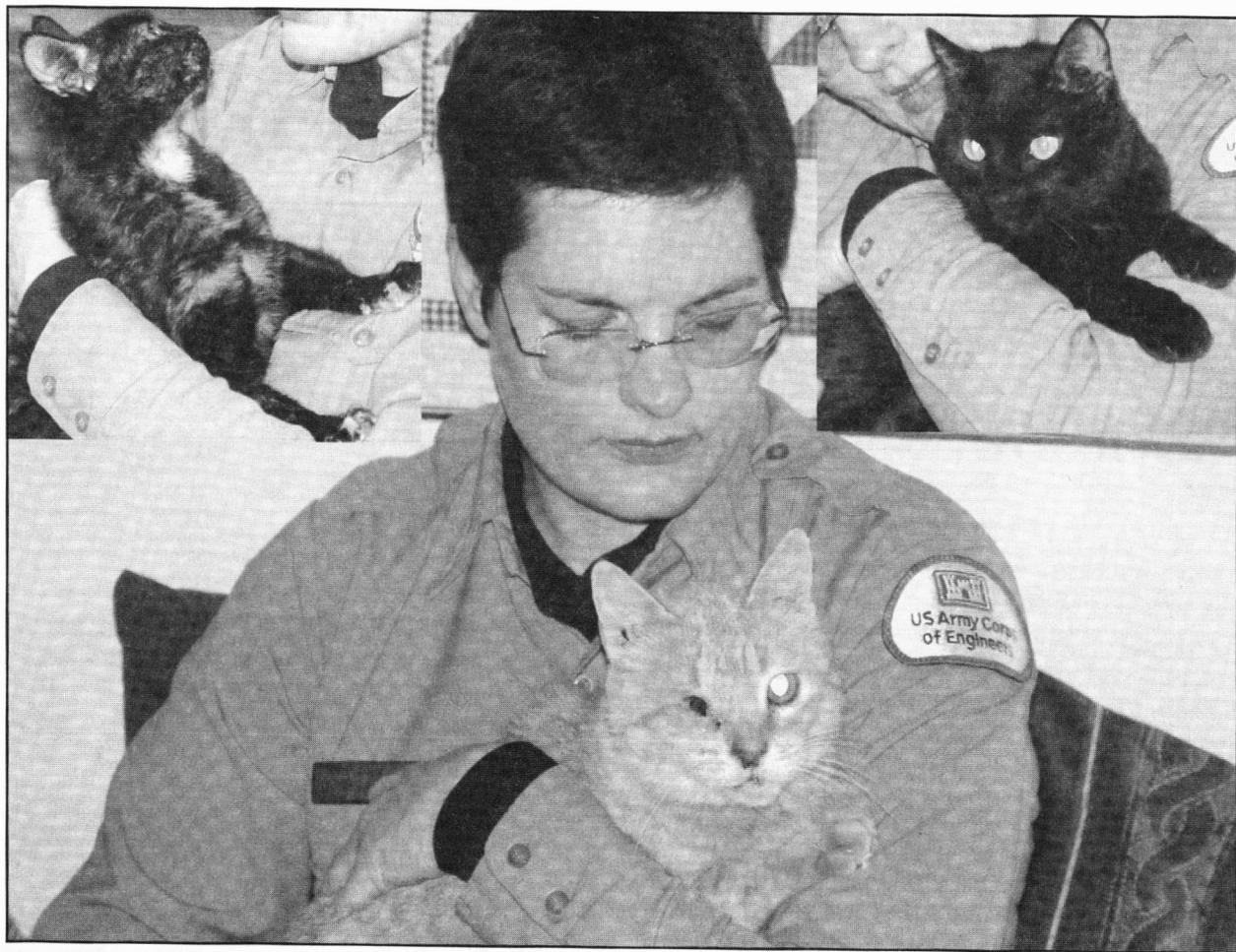
Upon hearing of the plight of the animal victims, Kordack knew she had to help. She originally volunteered to deploy to Louisiana through the Emergency Animal Rescue Service program, but was never called.

"By mid-October, Hurricane Katrina was pretty much out of the news here in New England, and I even began to think the animal situation was probably well in hand down there," she said.

Rescues. But Kordack learned that wasn't the case. Her sister, Jodie, works in Boston for an animal rights organization. She received an e-mail from the Association of Veterinarians for Animal Rights (AVAR) pleading for veterinarians, vet techs, and/or vet students to help in the Gulf. Kordack, who was a vet tech and is on the board of a no-kill shelter in Charlton, Mass., is experienced in animal evacuations, and has had rescuer training.

She contacted Best Friends, the largest no-kill-sanctuary in the U.S., which works with AVAR, and they gladly accepted her help.

Once in Louisiana, Kordack found herself in a fledg-



Jamie Kordack holds Mabel, an elderly one-eyed cat who lost her home in the hurricane. Kordack adopted Mabel, but photos of other homeless animals are on the wall. (Photo by Linda Allington)

ling animal sanctuary, St. Francis in Tylertown, which received rescued animals every day. At one point during Kordack's October trip, the shelter rescued 100 animals in a five-day period. According to Kordack, dogs and cats were not the only animals to arrive at the shelter. "We also rescued a flock of geese and an iguana," she said.

Kordack processed new animals and got them settled into their pens and cages.

"This included giving vaccinations, inserting a microchip, worming, bathing, cleaning ears, and performing minor surgery," she said. "I also took pictures of the animals and processed their paperwork."

Kordack spoke with rescuers and learned of the circumstances of the rescues. "They were still finding live animals in homes in places like closed bathrooms and attics," she said. "Rescuers would pick up slips of paper with addresses, or find spray-painted notes like 'one dog inside/friendly at window' on buildings left by the National Guard or other rescue workers."

Unfortunately, not all of the animals found survived the hurricane.

"When rescuers found dead pets, they brought us that information to log into the national database so if a family ever came looking, they might find closure," said Kordack.

Besides her other duties, Kordack worked with veterinarians each day and went on medical rounds with a vet tech during the morning and evenings. During her October trip, Kordack began organizing the pharmacy, a project that she finished in December.

Kordack and the other volunteers worked long hours with no days off. "An average working day was 7:30 a.m. to midnight," she said.

Although the hours were long, for Kordack it was a labor of love. When she was able to get a few hours of sleep, she slept with the St. Francis cats in the main building while others slept in tents or in their cars.

Desperate. On her second trip to St. Francis, Kordack found that fewer animals were coming into the shelter, but many were leaving daily. Animals were still being found alive, but their situations were becoming desperate.

"The animals were reverting back to feral and on the run on the streets," she recalled. "Cats were being live-trapped and dogs were running in packs. Rescuers were making food and water drops in areas

twice daily. They were also working with demolition crews to remove cats, kittens, and puppies from rubble and from under collapsed homes."

On her return trip, Kordack was in charge of the Isolation Room for cats and assisted in spay/neutering surgery. Although she saw many sad situations during her time in New Orleans, Kordack also witnessed some reunions.

"I was there when a mother and her two children were reunited with their small dog and nine-month old cat," she recalled. "Both animals were lucky enough to be found together and were obviously best friends. There was a lot of crying that afternoon."

Not surprisingly, when Kordack arrived back in Massachusetts from her travels in Louisiana, she did not come home alone. She adopted an elderly female orange tiger-striped cat named Mabel, as a gift for her husband, Vince.

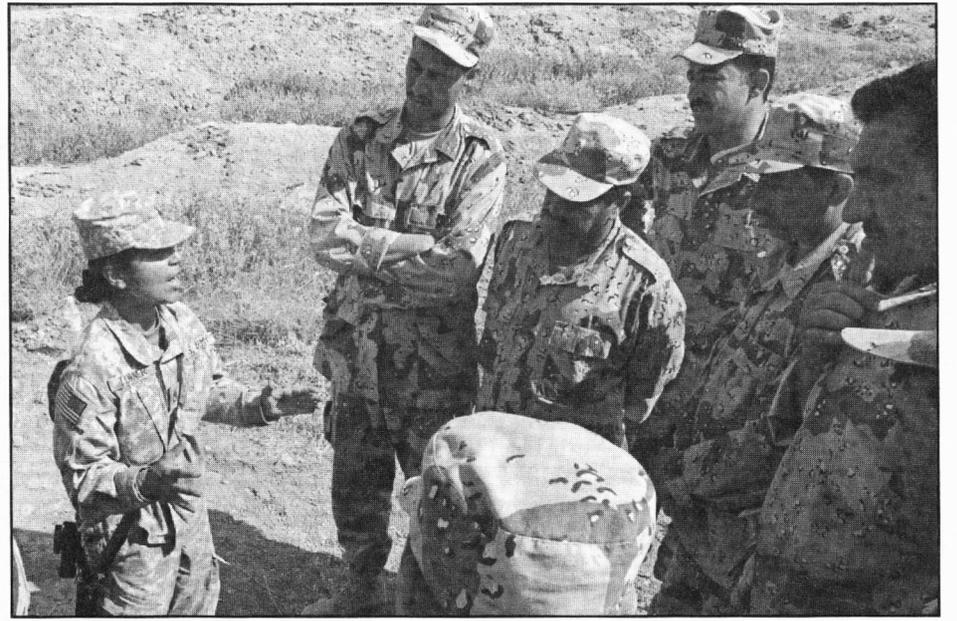
The shelter where she volunteers at also took in some animals. "The Charlton Shelter and I took five animals," she said. "Only one has been adopted so far."

Still working. Although it has been months since Kordack left Louisiana, her mind is still on those pets still to be rescued. "It's estimated that there are still more than 100,000 pets, and now their offspring, on the streets," she said.

Kordack is still working to help the animal victims of Hurricane Katrina. She organized a Trivial Pursuit Event at the Charlton Senior Center on Feb. 26 to raise money for the cause. She also hopes to find good homes for the animal victims she brought back with her.

Kordack has been an employee of New England District for 15 years and is a member of numerous animal rights groups. The Kordacks are companions to five cats (including Mabel); a dog, Jimmy Stewart; two rabbits; and one guinea pig.

(Editor's Note: Rescue operations at Tylertown are winding down, with responsibilities and supplies transferred to bigger shelters. However, the need to help displaced animals is still urgent. To find out how you can help, please go to the Best Friends Animal Society Web site at <http://www.bestfriends.org>. To learn more about the animals that are up for adoption from People for Animals League in Charlton, please contact them at 508-248-7324.)



In the left photo, Sgt. Yvonne Smith trains an Iraqi engineer soldier on the 20-ton dumptruck. In the right photo, Staff Sgt. Ingrid Turner briefs Iraqi engineer soldiers on operating a scoop loader. (Photos courtesy of 84th Engineer Battalion)

U.S., Iraqi engineer troops train together

By Spec. 4 Jason Thompson
4th Infantry Division PAO

A U.S. Army engineer battalion is taking steps to forge a bond with the Phoenix Academy, the Engineer School of the Iraqi army.

In April, engineer Soldiers of the 84th Engineer Battalion spent a day with their Iraqi counterparts at the Phoenix Academy in Taji. What started as a simple command visit to see two NCOs (non-commissioned officers) tasked to work at the academy turned into a golden opportunity.

In February, Lt. Col. Mark Toy, commander of the 84th Engineer Combat Battalion (Heavy), and Command Sgt. Maj. Dale Moran, the battalion command sergeant major, made the 45 minute trip from battalion headquarters at Logistics Supply Area Anaconda in Balad to Camp Taji to check the morale and welfare of their Soldiers.

Positive relationship

When Toy and Moran realized that the Phoenix Academy is Iraq's version of the U.S. Army Engineer School at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., they immediately recognized that they could develop a positive, lasting relationship with the Iraqi engineer school.

"Iraqi soldiers go through this school, which is set up similar to the U.S. Army's Engineer School at Fort Leonard Wood," said Sgt. Maurice Polite, an advisor from the 84th Engineer Battalion who is assigned to the Phoenix School. "The only setback we have here is the lack of equipment available for use in training."

During the visit, the 84th command team met with the Iraqi commander of the Phoenix Academy, Staff Col. Alaa, and the senior U.S. military advisor, Maj. Carey Bond. Together, they planned a future visit.

Round robin

On April 1, their vision became a reality as Soldiers from the Heavy Equipment Platoon of the 84th's Headquarters Support Company traveled to the Phoenix Academy to familiarize Iraqi soldiers with U.S. Army engineer equipment. Platoon leader 2nd Lt. Raymond Kangas, and platoon sergeant, Sgt. 1st Class Jeffrey Bushong brought a bulldozer, a scoop loader, a 20-ton dump truck, and a small contingent of Soldiers to Taji for the one-day training session.

The 84th Soldiers set up a round-robin training system for 35 Iraqi engineer soldiers. In the morning, Iraqi engineers rotated between three training sites where 84th NCOs familiarized them with each of the three pieces of heavy equipment. In the afternoon, Iraqi soldiers operated the equipment to get "stick



Iraqi engineer soldiers put a bulldozer through its paces under the guidance of Staff Sgt. Norman Magner. (Photos courtesy of the 84th Engineer Battalion)

time" under the supervision of the 84th Soldiers.

"We taught them the basic preventative maintenance checks and service steps, how to operate each piece of equipment, and its capabilities," said Staff Sgt. Ingrid Turner, a construction equipment supervisor with the 84th Engineer Battalion. "The students were really smart, and they quickly picked up what we were teaching them."

"I made a point to ensure that some of my female NCOs were instructors," said Toy. "I wanted the Iraqis to see the level of professionalism that exists in our NCO corps, including our women."

Valuable training

Iraqi instructors agreed that the hands-on experience was of considerable value to the soldiers training at the school. "We appreciate the Americans coming here and showing us their equipment," said Lt. Col. Khundar Khathim, an instructor at the Phoenix Academy. "The students here are anxious to learn as much as possible and become competent in their job. Because we're operating as a school for engineers, it helps to have this equipment that the soldiers can look at and become familiar with the equipment that our American brothers use."

The training was successful. Toy said that he re-



ceived many positive comments from his Soldiers about the experience, and that it was about much more than equipment training.

"This isn't just about the Iraqi soldiers operating the equipment, or us teaching them about it," said Toy. "This is more about cultural exchange. We're all one team in this war, and we'll interact with each other multiple times during this fight."

Just another step

This training is just another step for the Iraqis as they try to build a professional army engineer force. Toy said that he and his command are striving to make a positive difference every day in the lives of both coalition soldiers and the Iraqi people.

"Here we saw U.S. Forces and Iraqi forces working together with a common bond of engineering, working to make a better life for the Iraqis," said Toy. "Hopefully this will be the start of many exchanges where we can bring different equipment and other members of my battalion, together with the Iraqis so that everyone can benefit from the experience."

'Soft landing' will assist employees

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has always supported its highly trained and valuable workforce. To assist employees who have dedicated their careers to the Corps, transition services and assistance will be provided to USACE employees whose jobs may be impacted due to a competitive sourcing initiative.

This article provides basic information, and is not intended to be all-inclusive. Your local Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC) will provide you specific information and the timeline of events to obtain these services as the dates of the competitive sourcing initiatives are finalized.

A transition or "soft landing" process will be used to assist employees with both their professional and personal lives. As part of the "soft landing" process, a variety of flexibilities and programs may be used to assist employees with making the transition from government employment to private sector, or to another government position. These services will assist employees with taking charge of their career by providing the support that is needed.

We are committed to ensuring that employees have the tools and resources required. The priority is to minimize the impact of employees being involuntarily separated, as well as ensure mission accomplishment.

Transition services will be provided in partnership with the CPAC. Information and program opportunities will be announced during the expected period of transition.

Services may include any or all of the following:

DoD Priority Placement Program (PPP) is an automated referral program that matches eligible registrants with job opportunities at DoD activities.

Reemployment Priority List (RPL) is a government-wide program required by law and subject to OPM regulations, and is separate from the PPP. The RPL applies to positions within DoD within the same commuting area as the position from which the employee has been or will be separated.

Interagency Career Transition Assistance

Plan provides priority consideration for eligible applicants in other federal agencies.

Local Placement Options: Vacant positions may be used for placing adversely affected employees through reassignment or voluntary change to lower grade. In some instances qualifications may be modified or waived to facilitate placement.

Outreach Placement Options: Lists of adversely affected employees will be sent to nearby federal agencies requesting noncompetitive placement consideration.

Workforce Investment Act (WIA) is sponsored by the Department of Labor and administered by the various State Employment Security Agencies. Through WIA, separating employees may be eligible for career counseling, testing, retraining, placement assistance, financial counseling, and other services. Local CPACs can advise employees on their eligibility for these services.

Relocation Entitlements: Under certain circumstances, relocation expenses may be paid to move you from one duty station to another.

Severance Pay: Pay is determined by creditable years of service, basic pay at the time of eligibility, and an adjustment for employees older than age 40.

Unemployment Services: The appropriate Statement Employment Security Agency determines your right to unemployment compensation under the applicable unemployment compensation laws.

Voluntary Early Retirement Authority (VERA): The authority to offer VERA may be delegated to the installation commander and is an early retirement option. It allows an individual to retire at age 50 with 20 years of service, or retire at any age with 25 years of service. For individuals covered under the Civil Service Retirement System, retirees under age 55 are subject to an annuity reduction of 2% per year for every year under age 55.

Voluntary Separation Incentive Payment (VSIP): To reduce the number of involuntary separations, local commanders have the authority to offer VSIP, also referred to as buyouts or separation incentives. The buyout payment before reductions is either \$25,000 or the amount of severance pay an employee would receive under the standard severance pay formula, whichever is less. Local commanders may also request approval to offer VSIP along with VERA. The number of VSIPs that can be approved in DoD is limited to 25,000 per year. Local installation commanders must request and receive allocations to offer separation incentives on an annual basis.

In addition, the competitive reassignment process will be used to try to place directly affected employees. This process provides a mechanism to select USACE's well-qualified employees for the new organization before any other candidate from within or outside the Corps. (This process may be subject to some mandatory placement programs).

The directly affected employees must show interest in positions at their current or lower grade by submitting a two-page resume. Employees may apply to positions within or outside their geographic area.

One of the keys to successful career transition is individual initiative. Some measures employees can take to assist with the transition is to ensure that their personnel records are complete, resume is up to date, and to take advantage of the services available. It is important that you stay up to date on information by communicating with your managers, supervisor, and human resources advisor.

Please remember that confidential counseling and referral services are available to you for any personal difficulties you may experience. Should you find the need for advice assistance, please contact your employee assistance representative.

If you have any questions, you may contact a human resources specialist in your local CPAC who can provide in-depth counseling, advice, and assistance.

City recovering from Hussein's cruelty

By J. Anajar
and M. Alubeidy
Gulf Region Division

Formerly was known as Saddam City, Sadr City has always been a low-income section. Naming it "Saddam City" was a sarcastic joke...neglected under the former regime and occasionally punished for challenging Saddam Hussein's rule, the city is among the most impoverished and neglected in the country.

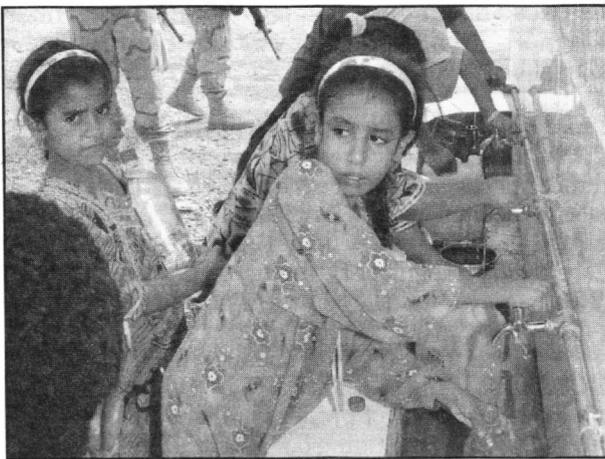
The run-down city of more than two million inhabitants was in urgent need of essential services. Broken pipes allowed both untreated and sewage water to inundate the streets.

This water also seeped into the pure water supplies through leaky pipes. Streets were unpaved, and mounds of garbage and debris were piled up in most of the neighborhoods of the city.

Redevelopment is part of the terms under which the militiamen agreed to lay down their arms and start to build.

Abu Yass, a resident, said there was a lot of frustration in the city mainly because of broken promises, mostly by the new government. He said the inhabitants, who suffered under Saddam Hussein, were hoping the new era would bring jobs and prosperity.

The Gulf Region Division and the Project and Contracting Office (GRD/PCO) has played an important role in the reconstruction efforts in Sadr City, cov-



Fresh water and paved roads are improving the quality of life in Sadr City. (Photos courtesy of Gulf Region Division)

ering all sectors, electricity, water, sewage, schools, surfacing roads with asphalt and clinics.

"Al hamdu liAllh (Thank God)," said Yass. "After a period of time we started to see our hopes getting closer and closer to reality such as drinking water, cleaner streets and better sewage thanks to those who participated in the reconstruction process, including the government and the multinational forces."

Abu Alaa said, "Our city has started to witness a tangible change — less trash in the streets, the sewage is improving, and the drinking water is better

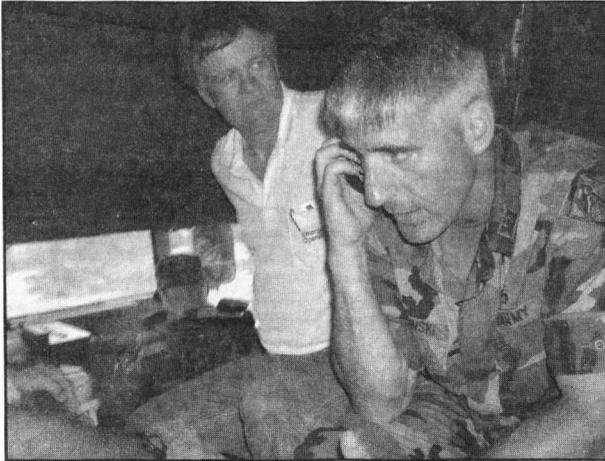


than last season."

Concerning water projects, GRD has completed about 27 compact water unit projects. Each of these water units produces 15,000 liters of clean drinking water daily in the city which helps to improve the living condition of all of the residents in Sadr City.

(J. Anajar and M. Alubeidy, are Iraqi local nationals working for the Gulf Region Division Public Affairs Office in Baghdad, Iraq. This article was originally written as a commentary for the Iraqi newspapers.)

Around the Corps



Col. Duane Gapinski works to coordinate the repair of New Orleans' levees after Hurricane Katrina.

Top 10 Federal Engineers

Col. Duane Gapinski, commander of Rock Island District, and Larry Smith, an engineer with Sacramento District, were selected among the Top 10 Federal Engineers of the Year by the National Society of Professional Engineers.

Gapinski was nominated for leading the Corps' mission to repair levee breaches in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina. Smith was nominated for developing the "Disk of Knowledge," a knowledge-based software library for contract administration.

The *Engineer News Record* also selected Gapinski as one of the top 25 individuals of 2005 for innovations and achievements in engineering.

Kaskia-Kaw Rivers Conservancy

The Kaskia-Kaw Rivers Conservancy (KKRC) Cooperating Association has been recognized by the Corps as the nation's top group for supporting our recreation and natural resources management programs. The selection was announced March 6 at an Association of Partners for Public Lands convention in Little Rock, Ark.

Cooperating associations are non-profit, tax-exempt, educational organizations, mostly volunteers who primarily operate gift and book shops in federal visitor centers. But many organize special events and programs that support community outreach efforts and help meet management objectives.

The KKRC is a small group, and a new one. It is only seven years old, and there are six members, but there were only three when the group was nominated. The KKRC supports Shelbyville and Carlyle lakes.

"We simply couldn't bring what we offer to the public without their support," said Andrea Lewis, Lake Shelbyville's Operations Manager. "They do so much that few people know about."

The KKRC has taken on numerous community outreach events including an annual Muskets and Drums Muster of Revolutionary War re-enactors; Spores 'N More to teach people about mushrooms; and the Tom Short five kilometer (3.1 mile) run/walk to support the planned 172-mile General Dacey Trail.

But the KKRC's crowning achievement came last May when they co-hosted the 2005 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Environmental and Natural Resources Conference in St. Louis. At the end of the conference, Lt. Gen. Carl Strock, Chief of Engineers, praised and thanked the KKRC, saying that no other cooperating association had ever undertaken such an event.

Clean water

The water supply at Kirtland Air Force Base near Albuquerque is cleaner and more reliable thanks to a project between Albuquerque District and the base. The \$6.96 million project decreased arsenic levels in

the base's drinking water.

The ground water at Kirtland AFB contains trace amounts of arsenic, like many municipal water systems. The levels were below the previous EPA drinking water standard of 50 parts per billion (ppb), but in Jan. 2001 EPA adopted a new 10 ppb standard, and set Jan. 23, 2006 as the compliance deadline.

Seven wells supply the base with 3.5 million gallons per day. Arsenic levels in five wells range from 1 to 4 ppb, with the remaining two wells ranging from 10 ppb to 16 ppb and 12.8 ppb to 24 ppb.

The best way to reduce the arsenic, according to a study by environmental contractor CH2MHill, was to combine the water from the seven wells into a two million gallon blending tank, and the Air Force asked the Corps to manage construction.

The antiquated water infrastructure included a labyrinth of pipes that crisscross the 51,000 acre base. The distribution system basically remained intact, with the only main addition of the new Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system, which conveys water from all wells to the blending tank.

The SCADA system calculates a continuous running arsenic level, and an alarm is triggered if the water blend exceeds the 10 ppb arsenic standard. Construction of the project occurred mostly underground with nearly 22,000 linear feet of new pipe installed and hundreds of feet of old pipe rerouted. The only significant above-ground construction was the two million gallon mixing tank, new pump station, and chlorination building.

Last barge

When Hurricane Katrina roared across the Gulf Coast last year, it swept hundreds of boats, from small pleasure craft to huge sea-going fishing boats far inland. Removing those boats so that repairs can proceed is just one of the many post-Katrina tasks facing the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Now, the Corps, working with the U.S. Coast Guard, contractors, and private owners, has removed the final vessel that was affecting levee repairs from a Plaquemines Parish area levee. The vessel, a barge,

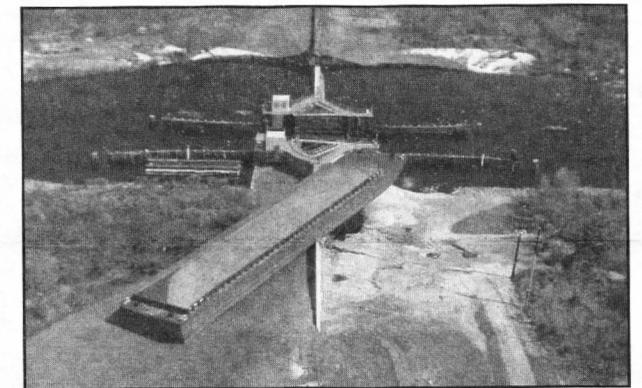
was moved from the levee by its owner.

Task Force Guardian, the Corps organization responsible for the recovery of the Hurricane Protection System throughout New Orleans, found more than 150 barges and ships impeding their recovery efforts as they lay stranded on various levees and work-sites. Removing the vessels allows Task Force Guardian to complete the repairs of the Hurricane Protection System to pre-storm condition by the start of the next hurricane season on June 1.

"This is great news for Task Force Guardian," said Don Rawson, the Corps' project manager for removing stranded boats. "The last barge was the only vessel that remained in the way of our construction work. There are still some boats and barges stranded throughout the area, but our mission was specific to our repair efforts and keeps us on track for meeting our June 1 goal."

Rawson also praised the Coast Guard, which helped remove numerous stranded vessels in the past five months. The overall removal effort was at a cost of more than \$3 million, and was coordinated between the Corps, the Coast Guard, the shipping/navigation industry, and private owners.

Task Force Guardian's repair work in the New Orleans area is more than 60 percent complete, and in Plaquemines and St. Bernard Parishes the work is approaching 80 percent completion.



Removing barges and other boats stranded inland by Hurricane Katrina's storm surge has been a major post-Katrina task for the Corps.



Hercules landing

A C-130 Hercules transport plane makes its final approach to land on the operational part of the runway at Kandahar Airfield in Afghanistan. Its flight path is across and directly in line with the runway's new concrete touch-down area, an Afghanistan Engineer District project currently under construction. (Photo by Dennis Campbell, Afghanistan Engineers District)

Corps repairs 1895 dam at West Point

Article by JoAnne Castagna
Photo by Milton Ricks
New York District

The history of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has always been intimately connected with the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, and remains so to this day.

In 1802, the Unified Corps of Artillerists and Engineers divided, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers was formed. At the same time, the U.S. Military Academy at West Point was founded under Corps supervision.

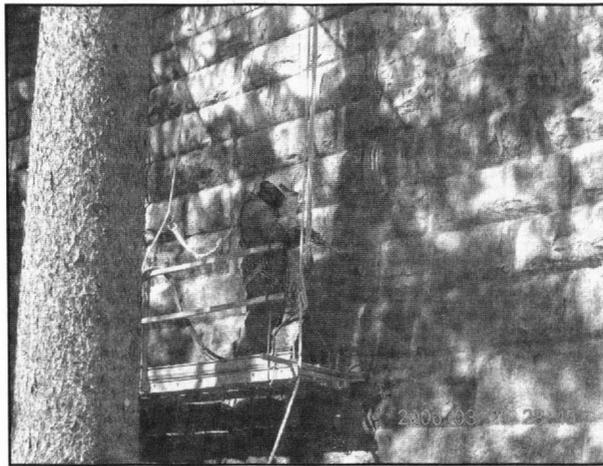
West Point left Corps control in 1866, but the Corps remains a vital part of the academy as we build, upgrade, and maintain its facilities. This past winter, New York District began restoring a historic dam and reservoir, near the shore of the Hudson River on the campus to ensure a continuous fresh water supply, and to prevent a potential flooding hazard.

In the late 1800s, the academy needed an additional source of drinking water. The Corps augmented the academy's drinking water system by building the Lusk Dam and Reservoir in 1895, now considered significant elements within West Point's National Historic Landmark property.

The dam was built under the direction of Captain James Lusk, a West Point graduate. Water is piped in from area ponds, creeks, and brooks into this reservoir, and the water is purified by the academy's water treatment plant.

The dam is a large arched masonry block structure, 225 feet long and 35 feet high. A few years ago a Corps inspection found leaks behind a build-up of efflorescence, which raised concerns that there could be a more serious future problem if the dam were left unmonitored.

Since the dam is upstream and beside several high-occupancy academy facilities, such as the Association



A contractor cleans calcite build-up from Lusk Dam's masonry stones with a high-pressure spray of silica suspended in water.

of Graduates building, any potential structural problems are unacceptable.

Last winter, New York District, assisted by Baltimore and Philadelphia districts, performed the dam's first cleaning in its 100 years of service. The joints on the downstream face of the dam were cleaned of efflorescence, which is crystallization that had accumulated on its surface. Leaks that had been covered by crystallization were located, cleaned, and sealed. The cleaning gave the Corps a "fresh face" to observe and categorize leaks currently present at the dam, and determine any further repairs that may be needed.

"Efflorescence is caused by calcium carbonate in the dam's mortar dissolving in the reservoir water," said Marty Goff, project engineer. "The water up there is slightly acidic so it reacts chemically with the mortar between the dam's stones. When efflorescence builds up on the stones, it becomes difficult to determine the location of leaks because water from the leak moves

under the efflorescence crust and away from the leak source. By cleaning away the efflorescence we're able to see the actual location of the leak."

Goff said that it took a month to clean the dam, and that the technique they used was like cleaning a shower stall with lime build-up. The dam's stones were sand-blasted with small coarse-grained silica (glass-like particles) under water pressure to remove the calcite build-up along the seams of the dam's stones.

Workers performed the cleaning on a platform, similar to those used by high-rise building window washers, which was lowered over the side of the dam's stone balustrade and eight-foot wide brick walkway.

Leaks were found when the cleaning was completed, and are being repaired. In the near future plans include inspections of the dam's upstream face. A team of divers will perform this inspection. Goff hopes to correlate the leak locations on the downstream face with the upstream cracks, which will allow them to determine future work.

Suggestions for engineers who plan on performing similar dam restoration work include:

- Work closely with your environmental and cultural resources staff on the project, because they can be invaluable in selecting the proper cleaning method. Even though the main focus of the project is dam safety, it's important to keep aware of the cultural and environmental resource impacts of the work.

- Ensure you have enough time to perform the project. For example, if the dam is located in a cold climate avoid the fall timeframe, which may cut short your restoration time.

"If we didn't clean the dam, we wouldn't be aware of the severity of the seepage problem, which could be the result of a more significant problem," said Goff. "The location and hazard classification of this dam makes it essential that we monitor and maintain it on a regular basis. If the dam were to ever breach, the potential for loss of life would be high."

Red River

Continued from page one

reduction projects in Fargo prevented an estimated \$50 million in damages during flooding on the river in early April, according to preliminary estimates by St. Paul District economists.

Praise for flood response

Emergency levees in the North Dakota communities of Drayton, Harwood, and Lidgerwood prevented an estimated \$4.1 million in damages. But the Corps' work had benefits beyond preventing damages.

At Lidgerwood, Jodi Fust-Birnbaum e-mailed Tim Grundhoffer, a sub-area flood engineer, to say "This flood is something that the town had never dealt with before, and you came in and handled everything in such a calm, cool, manner that made me feel as if everything was going to be just fine. I realize that you have worked on much larger projects than the one in Lidgerwood, but not once did you make the people feel like they were less important than any other area."

Grundhoffer also responded to high water at Breckenridge, Minn.

Officials at Drayton called Bertschi to praise work by Lowell Hanson from the Devils Lake Project Office.

"I received calls from both Carol Gardner, city auditor, and Becky Ault, Pembina County emergency manage-



Pat Duffney (left) and a contractor set the elevation of a temporary levee on the Red River of the North at Fargo, N.D. Duffney usually works as a park ranger at the Pokegama Recreation Area in Grand Rapids, Minn., but he worked quality assurance during flood duty in Fargo. (Photo courtesy of St. Paul District)

ment, complementing Hanson on his work in Drayton," said Bertschi.

At Grand Forks, N.D., and East Grand Forks, Minn., the district's economists estimated the Corps' emergency levees and recently completed permanent flood reduction projects prevented about \$150 million in damages. Corps' contractors built more

than 15,000 linear feet of emergency levees using more than 55,000 cubic yards of fill. One cubic yard is about the size of a kitchen dishwasher.

The Corps spent \$760,000 on the contracts to build the emergency levees and distributed more than a half-million sandbags and nearly a dozen pumps to communities along

the river and its tributaries. The Corps also distributed more than 11,000 feet of thick plastic to help prevent seepage through emergency levees.

Stored water cuts crest

Corps reservoirs helped to lower the crest of the flood. Reservoirs at Lake Traverse and Mud Lake five miles northwest of Wheaton, Minn., stored 89,000 acre-feet, lowering the crest at Wahpeton, N.D., by one foot. The reservoir at Orwell, six miles southwest of Fergus Falls, Minn., stored enough water to take a three inches off the crest at Wahpeton, N.D. The diversion channel at Breckenridge, Minn., across from Wahpeton, reduced the crest by 18 inches. Corps' reservoirs, combined with the diversion channel, lowered the crest at Wahpeton by about 2.75 feet.

About 35 St. Paul District people participated in the 2006 Red River of the North flood fight. More people provided indirect support behind the scenes.

At the conclusion of the flood fight, Smith said "Thank you for the daily conference calls, outstanding forecasting, products, meeting presentations and participation, consultations, patience and the good-natured confidence you share with so many."