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Missions are focus of new USACE vision

Article by Bernard Tate
Photos by F.T. Eyre
Headquarters

After eight years with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, including the past year as Chief of Engineers, Lt. Gen. Carl Strock is adjusting the Corps' Vision.

"We've looked at our processes, at how we communicate, how we develop people, and so on," said Strock. "Now I think it's time for us to look outward, and focus on our missions and the people we serve. We've spent a lot of time talking about doing things right. We didn't talk much about *doing the right things*. That's what I'm attempting to do with our mission focus."

"We've spent a lot of time during the past year looking at the five basic mission areas of the Corps," Strock continued. "When we first developed that set of missions, the nation was not at war, and we had a spectrum of operations that ran from peace to war."

"On the peace side of the spectrum, we had our water resources mission, then our environmental mission and our infrastructure mission, which supports both Military Programs and Civil Works," said Strock. "On the hotter end of the spectrum there was disaster response, and finally contingency operations to support the war-fighters."

Overlap

As the Corps' leadership teams looked at the Corps of Engineers' five traditional missions, and talked among themselves, they realized two important facts.

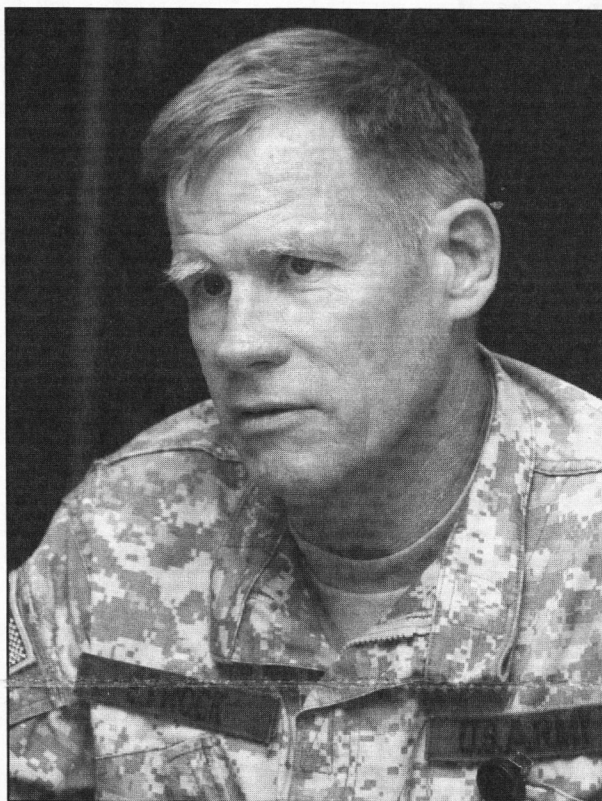
"First, we found that there is a lot of overlap among the mission areas, and second, we found that the nation today is at both peace *and* war," said Strock.

"So we recognized, for example, that our water resources mission will not be solely used in peace," said Strock. "One of the central missions we have in Iraq is helping them with their water resources. Our understanding of hydropower, irrigation, and water supply is being applied in a war-zone to help us win this war on terror, whereas before we just thought of them as things we do in peacetime."

"As we analyzed our missions we saw that our disaster response mission today overlaps our homeland security mission," said Strock. "The cause of a disaster might be a terrorist strike, or it might be a hurricane. But the consequences are frequently the same – debris removal, and displaced people needing shelter and water and food and other basic human services. We recognized that our response to both a disaster and to a terrorist act is pretty much the same, so we pulled natural disasters into the homeland security mission."

Campaign goals

As the Corps' leadership realized how much the five mission areas overlap, and that many of those missions apply equally well to both peace and war, they created three major campaign goals. They are



'We've spent a lot of time talking about doing things right. We didn't talk much about doing the right things. That's what I'm attempting to do with our mission focus.' -- Lt. Gen. Carl Strock, Chief of Engineers.

outlined in the *Strategic Directions* brochure released on June 16:

Support Stability, Reconstruction, and Homeland Security Operations. The Corps of Engineers is a critical part of the Army and joint team, both in peace and war, providing engineering capability and solutions for stability, reconstruction, and contingency operations.

Under the National Response Plan, the Corps responds to the Department of Homeland Security domestically and to the U.S. Agency for International Development internationally. The Corps will also implement Readiness XXI, a plan to apply its capabilities across the spectrum of operations from peace to war.

Develop Sound Water Resources Solutions. America's water resources needs are great. Increasingly, the Corps is called to provide comprehensive, innovative, sustainable, and integrated solutions to national and international water resources challenges.

As problem-solvers, the organization will focus its energy on developing and implementing solutions through collaboration with stakeholders (regions, states, tribes, local entities, other federal agencies, other governments, etc.) and playing a leadership or support role as appropriate.

Enhance Life-Cycle Infrastructure Management. The civil works infrastructure that the Corps of Engineers manages for the nation is at in-

Corps Logistics Management is a DoD High Performing Organization

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Logistics Management function was recently approved as one of eight Department of Defense High Performing Organization (HPO) pilot program candidates. At a glance, an HPO is similar to an A-76 competition except that once the in-house team has made itself as efficient as possible, that is when the process stops. In other words, the employees will not have to compete against the private sector. An HPO is limited to activities with less than 600 full-time employees (FTEs).

Originally scheduled for competition under OMB Circular A-76, the Logistics Management function will instead undergo a Business Process Review (BPR) to identify efficiencies and economies to implement an HPO.

"Much of the heavy lifting has already been done as part of USACE 2012 and the preliminary planning required by the circular," said Ray Navidi, the USACE Competitive Sourcing Program Manager. According to Navidi, these efforts were key elements in the approval of the Corps' proposal by the Department of Defense. "Also key was the progress the Corps has demonstrated in our Information Management/Information Technology, Directorate of Public Works, and Finance Center data entry competitions," said Navidi.

Congress passed legislation in 2004 for the Department of Defense HPO pilot program. The legislation allowed eight candidates. The DoD proponent undersecretary invited each service and major defense activities to nominate one candidate.

"Army supported our proposal after we presented what we'd learned from our preliminary planning for the Logistics Management competition," Navidi said. "It was clear that the HPO approach would allow the Corps to achieve more than it could through a competition." But, according to Navidi, the "heat is on" because the Corps must demonstrate it is moving to implement the HPO by the end of the fiscal year – in September – and complete transition to the new organization by April 2006.

What this means is that actions identified in the Concept Plan developed in June by the Director of Logistics Management and a team of logistics experts, must be moving toward showing actual efficiencies and savings.

"The HPO proponent office will expect us to report on our effort and show that the HPO is reaping actual savings to the government,"

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Insights

Make time for a summer vacation

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

The days of summer are now with us. Hopefully, all of us are giving some serious thought to taking a vacation. Better yet, I hope you already have that vacation date penciled in on your work and family calendars.

A humorist once said that vacations come in three stages – anticipation, participation, and recuperation. Well, there are times on vacation when we parents need a break from our children's recurring mantra in the back seat: "Dad, are we there yet?" Those of us who are grandparents can now laugh about those experiences of days gone by.

Still, I cannot overstate the critical importance of self-care – taking some time off from work to go on a vacation, to "chill out", recharge your batteries, and to reconnect with your family, God, and His beautiful world.

This is something we must be *intentional* about, something we need to put on our calendars without delay.

Many of us put off going on a vacation because we

believe the illusion that if we take a vacation the office mission will crash-and-burn. I hate to burst your bubble, but that is a bunch of baloney. Moreover, a vacation break will *enhance* the mission accomplishment of your office because you will be personally renewed and, therefore, much more productive.

Finally, we should *all* desire to live life to its fullest. Your job, as much as you enjoy it, is *not* your entire life. Rather, it is just one very important

part of your life. A wise believer and noted psychiatrist, Dr. Smiley Blanton said, "The truly balanced and fulfilled life gives ample attention to the four top priorities of life – worship, family, career, and recreation."

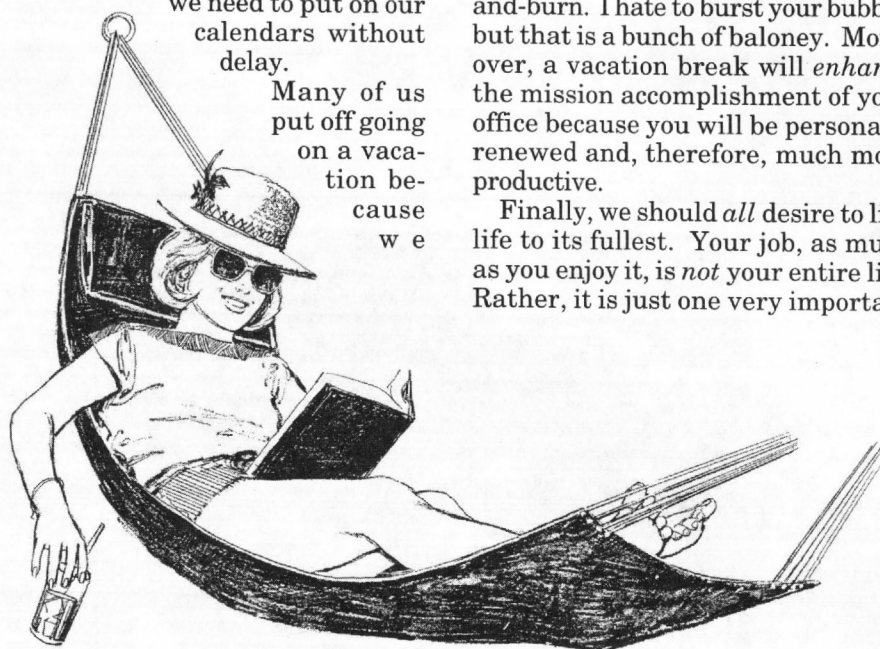
How are you doing with this "balancing act" of life's top four priorities?

Prayer – Lord God, we acknowledge that You want each of us to have a balanced and wonderful life. Help us to keep these four priorities in perspective so that we can delight in and enjoy every new day! – **Amen.**

I hope that you enjoy your vacation, and find the fun, balance, and renewal that we all need.

In faith and friendship,
Chaplain Mark

(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.)



Iraqi school is GRD's 1,000th project

Article by Denise Calabria
Photos by Harry Weddington
Gulf Region Division

The public spotlight recently shone on an unassuming, eight-classroom school in the town of Zakho, Iraq, and for good reason. Gulf Region Division (GRD), responsible for oversight of reconstruction in Iraq, announced it had identified Betas School as its 1,000th completed reconstruction project.

The Betas School, amid rolling hills on the outskirts of Zakho, in the northernmost province of Dahuk, is home to headmaster Ibraheem Nuri, 60 students, and seven classroom teachers.

When asked for his reaction to the school's renovations, Nuri was visibly pleased and proud.

"I've been the headmaster at Betas School for many years, but I never imagined it could be such a wonderful school," he said. "I'm very happy for the teachers and students."

Nuri and his students took part in the school's ribbon-cutting ceremony. The children presented flowers and refreshments to all invited guests, including local government and tribal representatives.

Col. Kurt Ubellohde, District Engineer of GRD's Northern District, numerous Corps staff members, plus members from Washington Group International, the company that performed the renovations, also attended the ceremony. Local Kurdish television and U.S. military media chronicled the event.

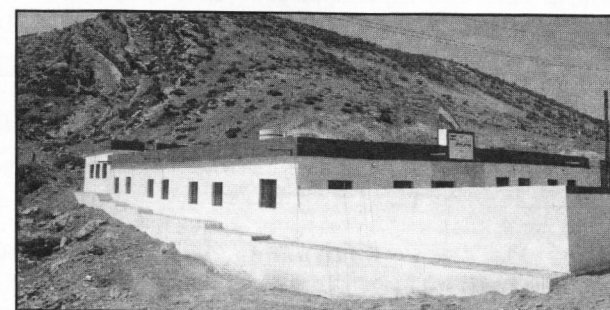
Renovations to the school included replacing water tanks, water piping, and sewer pipes; installing toilets, lavatories, and sinks; laying a concrete floor and terrazzo tiles; installing ceiling fans, interior and exterior lights, and a school bell. In the interest of both student and staff well-being, repairs were made to the school safety wall.



The children who attend Betas School gather in the courtyard after the ribbon-cutting ceremony.

While GRD honored Betas School as the 1,000th project, the pristine schoolhouse is also a symbol of the 840 planned school projects throughout the country. To date, 171 of these projects are ongoing, and 580 school projects are completed.

Spending on all reconstruction projects in Iraq has reached more than \$5.5 billion. Thus far, of the 3,200 total GRD planned projects countrywide, 2,389 have started, 1,215 are ongoing, and 1,174 have been completed in the sectors of Buildings, Health, and Education; Oil, Security, and Justice; Electricity, Transportation/Communications; and Public Works and Water.



The Betas School in Zakho, Iraq, is the 1,000th project completed by Gulf Region Division.

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Civilians treasure new pin

A number of Corps employees in Iraq have received the Civilian Pin for Combat Service, and their response is enthusiastic.

"Not many Civilians get to wear a 40-pound bulletproof vest and helmet and travel in the shooting gallery between Baghdad Airport and the Green Zone. They get exposed to so much, even if they're 100 percent office folks."

Bruce Barrett

"The most rewarding professional experience of my life was receiving the Combat Pin for Civilian Service. I will wear it proudly. What an amazing idea to recognize the Civilians for their contribution to the Iraqi reconstruction effort."

Laura Stiegler

"I appreciated receiving the combat pin. It serves as a physical reminder of the mission of GRD, my own deployment to GRD, and all the wonderful people I work with or have met."

Marc Kodack

"Unlike Soldiers, Civilians are not placed in harm's way, and that, of course, is understandable. But as the certificate states, we're in the Iraqi combat theater supporting the Soldier, and for this I'm very proud."

Joseph Minicz

"I was pleasantly surprised to receive this pin and certificate. It meant a lot that someone cared enough to recognize me for my service to the Iraqi people. This little pin will have a long-lasting effect on me because of how I had to earn it, and the sincerity in which it was given."

Landra Robinson

"I think it's an honor that the military service allows Civilians to wear the uniform. The pin and ceremony reflect the height of appreciation for Civilians, and means that we are *One Team!*"

Ella Snell

"I was proud to be in the Army in the '70s, and love wearing the uniform again as a Civilian. For the command to take the time to design a combat pin for Civilians shows that they value their entire workforce. I'm proud to have earned their respect, and a Civilian Pin for Combat Service."

LuAnne Fantasia

Special pin honors Civilian service in Iraq war zone

By Bernard Tate
Headquarters

This may be the first war zone recognition for civilians in U.S. history.

Civilians have always supported Soldiers at America's battlefields, all the way back to the camp followers of the Revolutionary War, and Molly Pitcher's historic turn with her husband's cannon crew.

But Iraq is different. There, Civilian volunteers from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers wear the same uniform, endure the same heat, eat the same dust, duck the same mortar rounds, ride the same vehicles, run the same gauntlet between the Green Zone and the Baghdad Airport, and travel in the same Red Zones as the Soldiers they support.

Some Corps Civilians have been shot at by snipers, caught in firefights, and injured by roadside bombs.

But until the Corps authorized the Combat Pin for Civilian Service (CPCS), they had nothing to honor their service like the ribbons or patches for Soldiers who serve in war zones.

The idea came from Kelly Brown, Deputy Director of Programs in Great Lakes & Ohio River Division. Brown recently returned from duty in Iraq, where he was the Deputy Director of Programs in the Projects & Contracting Office.

During a town hall meeting in Iraq, Brig. Gen. Thomas Bostick, Commander of Gulf Region Division (GRD), mentioned that he was looking for morale-boosting ideas. Brown e-mailed the idea of a civilian lapel pin to Bostick, who passed it along to Command Sgt. Maj. Jorge Gutierrez, GRD Command Sergeant Major.

"Army regulations and current policies do not authorize the wear of the combat patch by our dedicated Civilians," said Gutierrez. "Many of our Civilians served in combat in the past



Jan Fitzgerald's original artwork for Gulf Region Division's logo and command coin was adapted for the Combat Pin for Civilian Service. (Photo courtesy of Gulf Region Division)

and now proudly wear the uniform again as they serve our country and the Iraqi people. It was extremely difficult for me to ask our Civilians in uniform to remove their combat patches. I could feel their disappointment as they graciously complied and stripped the one item of clothing that linked them to their experiences and former units.

"So as an alternate I used Kelly's idea to replace the combat patch and recognize the wartime service of our Civilians," Gutierrez said. "As I thought it through and discussed it with colleagues, the name 'Combat Pin for Civilian Service' seemed appropriate."

The CPCS lapel pin is a miniature version of the GRD coin and logo, originally designed by Jan Fitzgerald, an artist with the Visual Information Branch of the Humphreys Engineer Center Support Activity. Tom Janiewicz and Marty Lowe of the Transatlantic Programs Center helped Gutierrez purchase a supply of the pins. "Marty did a great job expedit-



ing the process," said Gutierrez. "Without his help this would have been impossible."

Kelly received the first CPCS pin informally on April 28 as he left Iraq, but its official debut was May 31 during the regular hail and farewell ceremony at GRD headquarters in Baghdad.

"The idea was that Corps employees would receive the pin and wear it back in the States," said Brown. "If you see the pin, you know that individual has volunteered in Iraq and that you share similar experiences. Those without a pin might question the wearer, who could then share their Iraq experiences. That will give those considering an Iraq assignment information they might not otherwise receive."

All Corps employees who work in Iraq for more than 60 days are eligible for the CPCS, which also comes with a certificate. The lapel pin is not authorized for wear on the Desert Combat Uniform, but may be worn with any civilian clothing.

High Performing Organization

Continued from page one

Navidi said. "If the undersecretary is not satisfied with our progress or the results, we'll be required to compete the Logistics Management function as originally planned."

When asked if there will be organizational and personnel effects as a result of the HPO effort, Navidi said that there would be, and that human resource policies and protections would apply just as they would in any reorganization. When asked for more details, he said that more specifics would come from the human resource experts as implementation moves forward.

Gary Anderson, Director of Logistics Management, said the HPO pilot would enable the Corps to align the Logistics Management function with the reality

of contemporary demands.

"The competitive sourcing effort caused us to put on hold a lot of things we wanted to do under USACE 2012," Anderson said. "Now that we have the HPO opportunity we can take full advantage of the insights and recommendations from the USACE 2012 and competition preliminary planning."

According to Navidi and Anderson, the Corps and the Logistics Management community will both benefit. By not having to compete part of the work employees perform (work that is commercial in nature), and by not having to carve off another part (work that must be performed by government employees), fewer employees will actually be affected. Navidi and Anderson both believe this is a win-win for ev-

eryone — employees, the government, internal and external service recipients, and the taxpayers.

"There are so few positions, scattered across such a geographically dispersed function and performing such a wide array of logistics management work, that saying some are commercial and some aren't doesn't buy a lot of efficiencies in a competition," said Navidi.

Anderson added, "But when looked at holistically, with enhanced processes and staffing improvements, the potential savings are significant."

When asked if Logistics Management employees should be enthusiastic or concerned, Navidi replied, "Change is seldom welcome. I think most would agree that 'cautious optimism' is best."

Nashville diver saves life

Article and Photo
By Dave Treadway
Nashville District

They say that when we're under stress, we revert to our training. That's what Bill Bennett did, and it saved Christy Beuerlein's life.

Beuerlein was working in the kitchen of DJ's Cafeteria at the Estes Kefauver Federal Building in Nashville, Tenn., on April 28. She slipped and fell about noon and struck her head on a metal table.

"Right after she fell, we put ice on her head and sat her down in a chair," said Candy Shelhorse, Beuerlein's sister and co-worker. Beuerlein returned to work, but about 1:15 p.m. she began having seizures.

"Bill Bennett usually comes in about 11 for lunch," said Shelhorse. "He had been out all week, and that Thursday was his first day back. When he came in, I remember looking at the clock, thinking that is weird for Bill to be coming in for lunch at this hour. It was 10 minutes after one."

"When Christy started having a seizure I yelled for my co-workers, John and Cathy," Shelhorse continued. "As John came around the corner, she was starting to black out. I ran to get Dave, another co-worker, to call 911. Bill was in the dining room and heard me scream."

"Bill saved her life," insisted Shelhorse. "Her airway was blocked, and she wasn't breathing. I don't know what I could ever do to repay him."

Bennett, a Corps diver, recalled the events that day.

"John Tibbels and I went down to get lunch after I got in late from Kentucky because we were doing OSHA (Occupation Safety and Health Administration) inspections," he said. "When John asked, I said 'It's a little later than normal, but I'll go get something to eat.' I had just gotten my food and started to walk out to a table. Candy came running from the back scream-

ing, *'Please come help!'* I just turned around, set my tray down, and ran to the back with Candy."

"Christy was down on the floor and she was completely blue in the face," said Bennett. "Another man came up behind me and I said, 'Call 911 and get someone at the door to direct them in here when they arrive!' I then told someone else to get some towels to put under her head. I put a box under her feet."

"I kind of used my diving training to know what to do for someone who is down," said Bennett. "I checked for a pulse and didn't really get one. Her chest was not moving and she was blue, which told me her airway was blocked. I raised her eyelids and found that her eyes were rolled back. My next step was to open her mouth and clear her airway. When I did that, she just went 'SSSHHH' as air returned to her lungs and she started breathing again on her own."

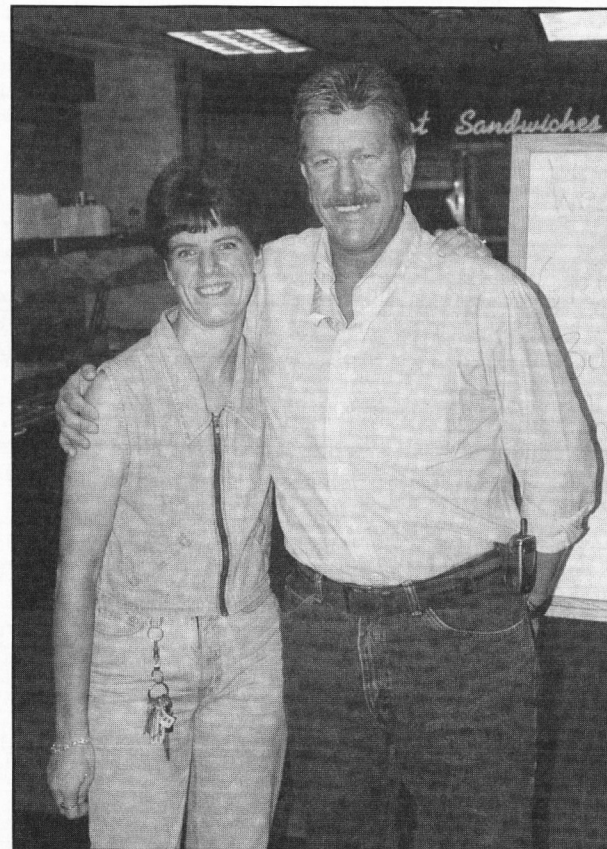
Occupational Health Programs Manager Melissa Cothron arrived moments later from her office on the fourth floor. "Bill did all the right things," said Cothron. "He stayed calm and attended to Christy. She had a knot on her head near her temple from when she had fallen and this was a concern."

"Within 30 seconds, her color was returning to normal," said Bennett. "It was after this that I learned she had fallen about an hour earlier, struck a table, and had a knot on the side of her head near her temple."

When the paramedics arrived about 10 minutes later, Bennett left the kitchen, but found he no longer had any appetite for the lunch he had just ordered.

A medical exam revealed that Beuerlein had fractured her skull. She was examined in Vanderbilt Medical Center's Head Trauma Unit, where she admitted and recovered. She returned to work nearly a month later on May 27 and finally met her rescuer.

A smiling Christy embraced Bill and said, "I'm so glad to finally meet you! I wouldn't be here today if it weren't for you. You saved my life!" Beuerlein plans



Christy Beuerlein meets Bill Bennett, the Nashville District diver who saved her life.

to return to work full time when her children go back to school in August.

The Nashville District Dive Team Member has attended several courses designed to teach him how to react in such situations. "I've had CPR, first aid, and dive training," said Bennett. "I just attended refresher training in March in Key West, Fla. Earlier that month, I attended similar training in the district with all our divers. So really, all this just came back. You talk about it in training and when it happens, you just do it. I'm just glad I was there to help!"

Actions after attack earn valor award

By Diana McCoy
Kansas City District

A Kansas City District employee received the Federal Executive Board Distinguished Valor Award in a special ceremony on May 5 for showing extraordinary courage, selflessness, and bravery in a war zone that saved a contractor's life during his tour in Iraq last October.

Mitch Frazier, Chief of Public Affairs for Kansas City District, volunteered to serve four months in Iraq in 2004 as part of Gulf Region Division. *(Since this article was written, Frazier has moved to the Public Affairs Office of South Pacific Division. —Editor.)*

"At about 1400 hours on Oct. 9, 2004, I was sitting at my desk in the Green Zone when I heard an explosion," Frazier said. "I grabbed my combat lifesaver bag along with other gear, and headed outside to see if I could do anything to help."

The Project and Contracting Office Compound in the Green Zone in Baghdad had been struck by a mortar attack. While many people were running away, Frazier and Jim Cullum, a lawyer from Little Rock District, ran 400 meters (437 yards) into the impact area to render aid.

Upon arrival, they found complete chaos. Cullum, who used to be a police officer, described the scene.

"There were several SUVs in the area," Cullum said. "The tires were shredded, the bodies of the vehicles were really chewed up with shrapnel, and windows were broken."

Frazier and Cullum went from one end of the area where the casualties were lying to the other end and counted them as they went, weeding out the dead from those with what Cullum described as "fish eyes," meaning they were "still alive but so nearly dead" he knew



Mitch Frazier (right) and Jim Cullum with Warda, the Egyptian contractor they rescued after a mortar attack in Baghdad's Green Zone. Warda's mother stands behind her. (Names withheld for security reasons.) (Photo courtesy of Tom O'Hara, Omaha District)

they wouldn't make it.

"To give you an idea of how quickly and unexpectedly these attacks happen, we saw one man still sitting in his lawn chair holding a Pepsi, even though he was already dead from the shrapnel in the back of his head," said Frazier.

Frazier was the first to reach Warda, a contractor from Egypt (last name withheld for security reasons). She was unconscious and kept repeating a continuous cycle of reviving and going back into shock.

Although it had been two years since Frazier completed the Army's combat lifesaver course, he recalled

the training and went to work applying bandages to the casualty's six shrapnel wounds on her back.

"She had fluid building up in her lungs, so I made sure she had a proper airway and kept talking to her and asking her questions to keep her from going into shock," said Frazier.

Warda kept complaining of abdominal pain, which was caused by shrapnel inside her body cavity.

"She could talk a little bit even though it was difficult for her," Cullum said. "She just wanted to close her eyes and go."

Frazier and Cullum were so focused on stabilizing Warda, they weren't fearful of follow-on attacks.

"My field of vision was narrow," Cullum recalled. "It was like I could only see what was immediately in front of me and nothing to the sides."

Even though the two worked diligently on Warda, and several casualties had yet to be attended to, military doctors wandered around the area in a daze.

"When I got to the area, it was so crazy with people walking around and not knowing what to do," Frazier said. "After Jim and I took care of Warda, I looked up and everyone was gone. The only people left were Jim and I, Warda and the casualties, which had all been placed in one area."

Frazier and Cullum lifted Warda onto a stretcher and prepared her for immediate evacuation. Once the ambulance arrived, Frazier gave the medical personnel a quick assessment of her condition and continued to load several other casualties onto the medical vehicles.

Warda still keeps in contact with Frazier and Cullum through e-mail. Talking through the ordeal helps the three get past the painful memories.

"I opened my eyes, and the two of you were there," she told Cullum. "I thought you must be angels."

Kabul firemen get new protective suits

By Carolyn Vadino
Afghanistan Engineer District

Mismatched firefighter uniforms, fire hoses that leak like sieves, and a graveyard of broken-down Soviet fire trucks is the plight of the Kabul Fire Department in Afghanistan. There are no training aids, books, or videos on how to fight fires. In fact, there is little gear at the main facility where they train more than 350 firefighters in Kabul.

The site was a call to action for Ed Quirk, who retired as a Fire Department New York (FDNY) fireboat engineer in 1984 and has been a boat engineer for New York District ever since. He is currently deployed to Afghanistan with Afghanistan Engineer Districts (AED).

Quirk's involvement began with the need to eliminate dust. Lt. Col. Herman Dick, the S-2 intelligence officer with AED in Kabul, enlisted the help of the Kabul Fire Department to wash down the parking lots where Corps people work and live.

"Lt. Col. Dick found out I was a retired FDNY, and asked if I would like to see the Kabul Fire Department," said Quirk, who works as a quality assurance representative in AED. "So, on a Friday, our half day off, he took me and Ritchie Bulvid, a New York District colleague, to the training center."

Most Kabul firefighters, who earn \$40 a month, don't have a full set of bunker gear (firefighting uniforms). Some have the fireproof jacket, some have the pants, but few have both. Many firefighters lack protective eyewear and use cheap sunglasses instead. Their Russian equipment is old and dilapidated, and there is no running water in most of Kabul.

"We saw their need," said Quirk. "It was so pitiful to see the lack of equipment, especially their old bunker gear. It was mismatched, and you could tell a lot of it was donated."

New York District has nine employees deployed to Afghanistan. Seven of them are from the Caven Point Physical Support Branch, and work on Corps boats in New York Harbor.

After the visit at the Kabul Fire Department, Quirk and Dick decided to tap their Stateside resources, first with a letter to the FDNY Chief of Operations. They attached some photos, highlighting the immediate need for resources, and requested any used equipment. Then, Quirk enlisted the help of his friend, Dan Reddan, also a retired engineer from the FDNY fireboats who works at Caven Point.

Both Quirk and Reddan worked near Ground Zero on Sept. 11, 2001.

"I called Danny Reddan and told him we needed major help," said Quirk. "He recently retired from FDNY, so I knew he still had a lot of communication with them. I asked if we could get old bunker gear donated."

"It is just like when I was in Vietnam," said Reddan. "When you're on the ground you can't help but get involved. Ed saw that the firefighters in Afghanistan had inferior gear, if they had any at all, and wanted to do something about it."

Around the same time, Col. John O'Dowd, AED Commander and former commander of New York District during Sept. 11, 2001, got a call from the Combined Forces Command-Afghanistan. The lab portion of a hospital was on fire after a rocket attack, and they wanted equipment to bulldoze through the flames. When O'Dowd mobilized to the scene with bulldozers ready, he realized the flaming building didn't need to be bulldozed. What was called for was extinguishing the fire.

Looking around, O'Dowd saw inadequate fire trucks pumping through leaky hoses and spraying water everywhere. He called on the International Security Assistance Force to mobilize their German firefighters on base to help.

O'Dowd walked away realizing that, like most in Afghanistan, the firefighters were operating with



The Kabul firemen stand in formation wearing their new bunker gear. (Photo by Sgt. Phillip Chang, Afghanistan Engineer District)



Members of Afghanistan Engineer District meet with the Kabul firemen. The Kabul Fire Department uses old Soviet-era fire trucks. (Photo by Maria Or, Afghanistan Engineer District)

inadequate equipment.

So when Quirk approached O'Dowd with the idea to get gear from the U.S., he was fully supportive. For two months, folks from New York and Afghanistan worked together to bring the gear overseas.

"We used key people — retired firefighters, public relations people, the head of special operations for FDNY, and Robert O'Brien, a retired FDNY consultant," said Reddan. "Quirk carried the ball over there, and got Col. O'Dowd and Lt. Col. Dick, key people over there, to help. And even with all those involved we still ran into legal problems! We couldn't get them to donate used gear because of liability issues."

Instead, VF Imagewear, the company that outfits the FDNY, donated 15 brand-new sets of bunker gear valued at \$1,200 each. New York District staff worked with the FDNY to acquire the gear and ship it to Afghanistan as quickly as possible.

"I could tell from the photos of the people over there how involved they got," said Reddan. "I give them a lot of credit. They did the right thing."

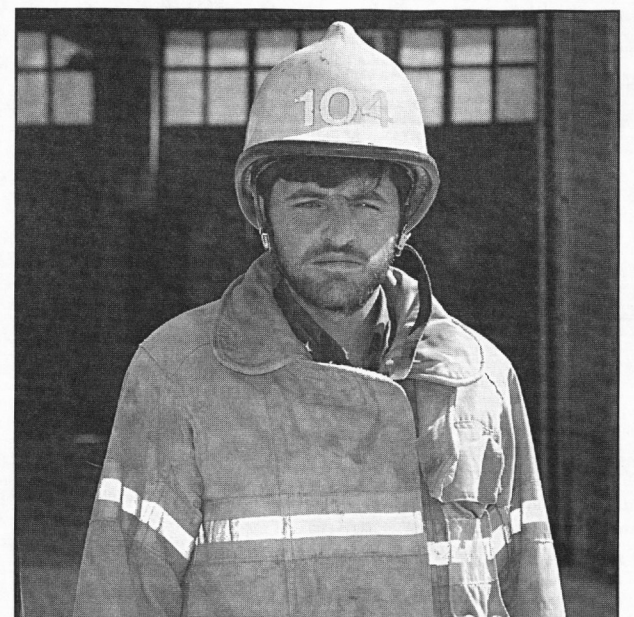
A few weeks later, the equipment arrived in Kabul where the Kabul Fire Department held a ceremony to thank the U.S. for the gear. Several Corps employees participated in the handover of the equipment, as well as Afghan fire chiefs and firefighters. The ceremony included prayer, traditional tea, several speeches, and a demonstration of the Kabul Fire Department's rapid response. Corps employees also toured the facility and met other firefighters.

"The thing about it is, so many of those involved have a tie to Ground Zero," said O'Dowd. "If you think about what the New York City Fire Department went through on Sept. 11 and the fact that they were willing to donate gear to the Kabul Fire Department, it's a neat thing to be a part of."

The Afghan firefighters were grateful for the do-



Lt. Col. Kurt Hoffman, New York District Deputy District Engineer, helps unload boxes of bunker gear that went to the Kabul Fire Department. (Photo by Pete Shugert, New York District)



A veteran Kabul fireman wears the Soviet fire clothing that the new bunker gear replaced, and shows the stress of fighting fires for years with worn-out, inadequate equipment. (Photo by Maria Or, Afghanistan Engineer District)

nated gear. Through a translator, Afghan Col. Mohammed Kazeem, Chief of the Kabul Fire Department, said "The gear has the worth of medicine for a sick person."

As for Quirk, he has extended his tour in Afghanistan. "It's an extra good feeling just being here, especially after 9/11," he said.

(This article includes information from a "New York Post" article dated May 29.)

Internet maps protect New Mexico forest

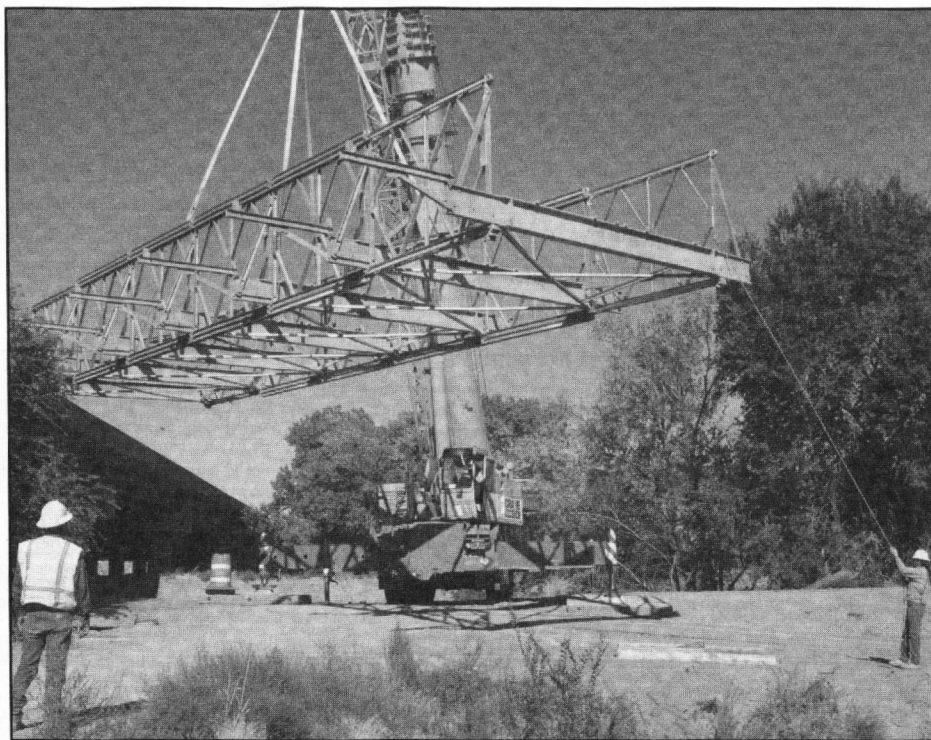
By Bruce Hill
and Frank Martin
Albuquerque District

Fire and smoke billow from the lush river tree line. Burning cottonwoods crackle as news helicopters circle, avoiding plumes of black smoke climbing high into the crystal blue sky. Hundreds of acres ablaze, residents flee their precious homes as emergency crews scramble to save lives and property.

That was the scene two years ago when parts of Albuquerque's bosque (Spanish for forest, pronounced *bah-skee*) along the Rio Grande burned away...a scene that may be curtailed in the future by a new internet-based mapping capability called the Albuquerque Bosque Internet Mapping System (ABIMS), unveiled to the public on June 22 by Albuquerque District.

"This gives us a birds-eye view of where we are going before we get there," said George Dahl, Fire Chief of Los Ranchos, N.M. "We go to strange territory every time we go on a mutual aid call. This way there is real continuity."

Dispatch officers can zoom in and pinpoint fire hydrants, jetty jacks (used to prevent the river from changing course), and access bridges using high-resolution commercial satellite imagery taken from more than 200 miles above the Earth. The system shows access points and depicts key spots for crews not familiar with the area.



The first fire access bridge is installed in the Rio Grande bosque (forest) in Albuquerque, N.M. (Photo courtesy of Albuquerque District)

District project manager Fritz Blake and geographer John Peterson gave the first demonstration and training of ABIMS on June 15 at the fire station in Los Ranchos for personnel from the Albuquerque and Los Ranchos fire departments.

"I think one of the big advantages for the fire departments throughout the

valley is that it's one set of maps," said Blake.

ABIMS is a mapping program based on satellite images and other relevant map information such as mile markers, levee contours, etc., that allow users to access critical firefighting and other emergency response information on an interactive Web site.

"All jurisdictional parties that reside within the bosque's area of interest either have or can take advantage of the technology online," said Peterson.

Public works personnel such as city and county planners, public safety personnel like EMS, and recreation planners can use it. ABIMS is also used by various government and partnering agencies for high water flows and spring runoff management.

The first of its kind in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, ABIMS was created in reaction to the devastating fires that swept through the bosque in Albuquerque in June 2003. At the time, the Corps was engaged in the Middle Rio Grande Bosque Restoration Project to improve critical habitat.

In response to the fires, U.S. Senator Pete Domenici and the New Mexico congressional delegation provided funds to help prevent the possibility of future fires. Increased funding has accelerated the removal of jetty jacks, and eliminated the brush and other debris that may fuel future bosque fires.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is installing fire access bridges that allow safer and more rapid response to fire in the bosque throughout Albuquerque.

Visit the Albuquerque Bosque Internet Mapping Site at www.bosquerevive.com and click on the Internet mapping link to take look at this cutting-edge technology.

HR Corner

DoD delays NSPS implementation

The Department of Defense (DoD) has announced a scheduling change for implementing Spiral 1.1 of the National Security Personnel System (NSPS) while it works with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to adjust proposed NSPS regulations based on public comments and the meet-and-confer process with employee representatives.

The schedule adjustments are for planning purposes, and are based on projected events. DoD anticipates publishing the revised regulations in the *Federal Register* later this summer. NSPS implementation could begin 30 days following publication, but that will not occur until implementing issuances are in place, and training is underway. The implementing issuances process includes continuing collaboration with the unions.

NSPS is a performance-based management system that will allow DoD to better support its critical national security mission by modernizing the personnel system while preserving the core, enduring values of the civil service. The initial implementation will apply only to General Schedule (GS) employees in the continental U.S.

NSPS implementation is broken into two primary systems – Labor Relations and Human Resources. The new NSPS Labor Relations system is planned to be effective across DoD in September. This includes such things as collective bargaining rights, scope of bargaining, bargaining process, and resolution of labor disputes.

The Human Resources system will be implemented in phases commonly referred to as Spirals. Spiral 1.1 involves about 60,000 DoD employees, including about 8,300 USACE employees in the South Pacific

Division, Southwest Division, and Mississippi Valley Division. Spiral 1.1 divisions will implement the HR system in phases. The first portion of the Human Resources system to be implemented will be performance management, which includes setting expectations, appraising performance, addressing poor performance, and communication and feedback on performance.

The performance management system was originally scheduled to begin this month, but has been delayed until October to allow for additional communication and planning. This will also allow Spiral 1.1 employees to work under the performance-based system for a total of one year (October 2005 to September 2006), with a mock performance evaluation and pay-out at the six-month mark. As a result, the first performance-based payout is planned to occur in January 2007.

The rest of the Human Resources system (i.e., pay banding, staffing flexibilities, classification, appeals system, etc.) will go into effect in January/February 2006 after any general pay increase. As employees come into the Human Resources system, their within-grade increases will be bought out at that time. When converting to NSPS, no employee will take a pay cut, and some employees may get raises.

Because of the delay in implementation of Spiral 1.1, it is highly likely that Spiral 1.2 organizations (Northwestern Division, South Atlantic Division, Engineering Support Center, Huntsville Engineering and Support Center, Transatlantic Programs Center CONUS) currently scheduled for April 2006, may implement with Spiral 1.3 organizations (USACE Finance Center, Headquarters, Institute for Water

Resources, Humphreys Engineering Center Support Activity, North Atlantic Division, Lakes and Rivers Division, Pacific Ocean Division-Hawaii and Alaska, Marine Design Center, and the 249th Engineer Battalion) in October 2006.

Training is a critical component in the success of NSPS. The Labor Relations System training is scheduled to start this month with specifics being provided by DoD and Army. Training on the HR System for Spiral 1.1 organizations will take place during the August to December time frame.

An interactive, computer-based course "Fundamentals of NSPS: An Overview of the Proposed Regulations" on the proposed NSPS regulations has been posted on the DoD NSPS Web site. This course is highly recommended for HR professionals, line managers, supervisors, and employees who are interested in learning more about the NSPS regulations. When the final NSPS regulations are published in the *Federal Register*, this course will be updated to reflect any changes. The "Fundamentals of NSPS" can be downloaded to your computer by going to <http://www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps/index.html>

In developing NSPS, Pentagon officials sought input from employees, supervisors, managers, union representatives, senior leaders, and public interest groups. More than 58,000 comments on the proposed regulations were received during the public comment period. Several recommended changes to the proposed regulation will result from this input.

For the latest NSPS information and resources, please visit these Web sites:

DoD: <http://www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps>

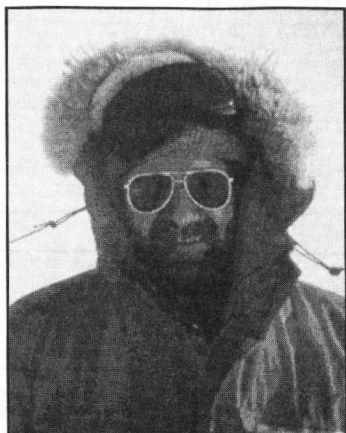
DA: <http://cpol.army.mil/library/general/nsps>

Around the Corps

Antarctic honor

A sea ice researcher retired from the Cold Regions Research & Engineering Laboratory (CRREL) was recently honored for his work in Antarctica. The U.S. Board on Geographic Names named Ackley Point for Stephen Ackley, who worked for Snow & Ice Division for 30 years.

The Advisory Committee on Antarctic Names recommended the honor. At least 12 others from CRREL have also had places in Antarctica named



Stephen Ackley in the Antarctic.

for them. Names are assigned based on a person's contribution to Antarctic research or history. The board said "Ackley is a sea ice specialist who worked in McMurdo Sound and diverse parts of the Southern Ocean for more than 25 years, dating from the 1976-77 austral season."

Ackerly Point is an ice-covered point of land on Ross Island, one mile southeast of Cone Hill on the east side of Hut Point Peninsula.

"For those who work in Antarctica, it's a privilege to be there," said Ackerly. "It's a magnificent place that we truly love. It's a great honor to be an Antarctic in its highest meaning by having a place there named after you. I'm happy to receive it, and grateful to the board for the designation."

Dive safety workshop

Portland District is hosting the Corps' annual dive safety workshop, "From Mark Vs to ROVs: Dive into the Future," Aug. 30 through Sept. 1. The workshop will be held in Portland, Ore. The goal is to promote program consistency across the Corps, and provide a forum for increasing technical knowledge.

Several critical issues will be discussed, including revision of Section 30, EM 385-1-1, "Contract Diving Operations", and the new training course offered next year for Diving Coordinators and Safety Officer Representatives.

This is a chance for all Corps divers, and those involved with diving operations, to make their opinions known, share information with peers, enhance technical skills, and develop a diving Community of Practice.

For more information and to register, please see the Portland District Dive Program Web site at www.nwp.usace.army.mil/op/diving, or contact Donald Hibbs at Donald.K.Hibbs@nwp01.usace.army.mil or 503- 808-4312.

Technology transfer

Researchers at the Engineer Research & Development Center received Excellence in Technology Transfer Awards from the Federal Laboratory Consortium (FLC). Dr. Phil Malone, Joe Tom, and Dr. Chuck Weiss of the Geotechnical and Structures Laboratory, and Bruce Sabol of the Environmental Laboratory received the awards at the FLC awards ceremony on May 4.

The award is presented to individuals who successfully transfer federal technologies to private industry. Malone, Tom, and Weiss received awards for the "Introduction of Bullet Trapping Foamed Concrete for Live-Fire Training Ranges." Sabol received

an award for developing the "Submersed Aquatic Vegetation Early Warning System," a sonar system to detect and map submerged vegetation.

Federal Employee of the Year

Cindy Barger, a project manager with Honolulu Engineer District, received the Federal Employee of the Year Award in the Professional, Administrative and Technical category from the Hawaii Federal Executive Board on June 8. The district nominated Barger for her work in completing the Styker Brigade Combat Team (SBCT) Environmental Impact Statement. The 2nd Brigade of the 25th Infantry Division (Light) in Hawaii is transitioning into an SBCT.

Earth Day cleanup

Thanks to about 200 volunteers, West Thompson Lake's 13th Annual Earth Day Celebration in New England District was a success. Accomplishments included building a mile of new trail and a handicap access ramp at the campground registration building, clearing an area for a new disc golf hole, and replacing the guardrail at the boat ramp parking area.

Besides individual volunteers, a number of private organizations that hold events at West Thompson Lake participated. The Yankee Flyers of Connecticut, a model airplane club, cut and split at least three cords of wood. Several dog-training groups built a three-sided closure for the portable toilet on the west side of the lake.

Six Boy Scout troops stacked wood and cleaned sites in the campground, and picked up trash along the roadways and trails throughout the property. Their haul included cans, bottles, scrap metal, plastics, and 49 tires.

When all the hard work was done, the volunteers and NED park rangers enjoyed a pizza and hot dog lunch.

Small business award

George Newman of Alaska District received the 2004 Secretary of the Army's Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization Award. Through his leadership, the district increased by 50 percent its awards to small businesses, doubled its percentage of awards to Historically Underutilized Business Zone firms, and tripled its awards to women-owned small businesses.

Newman and his team set a new benchmark for the Corps in awarding contracts of more than \$20 million and \$30 million to small disadvantaged businesses.

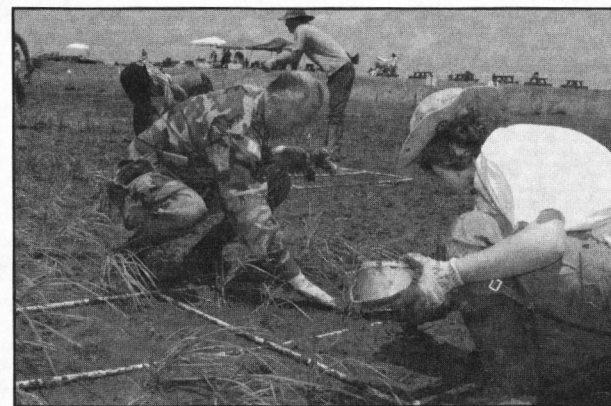
With the fast-tracked construction needed for the Army's Stryker brigades, and the stationing of an Airborne (paratrooper) brigade in Alaska, Newman worked closely with the Small Business Office and design teams to match the Section 8(a) Business Development Program for small disadvantaged business with contractor capabilities and mission requirements.

Embry Dam honors

For the first time, the Corps has competed successfully in the Department of the Army Community Relations Award of Excellence.

Norfolk District's Public Affairs Office placed second in the Special Events category for their work during the Embrey Dam Breaching.

The award was presented at the 2005 Worldwide Public Affairs Symposium Alumni Banquet in Washington, DC, to Diana Bailey and Nancy Allen of Public Affairs, and Doug Fawcett, Director of Public Works for Fredericksburg, Va.



Volunteers plant vegetation on Poplar Island.

Poplar Island

More than 50 volunteers and staff from Baltimore District and the National Aquarium in Baltimore kicked off a 10-day wetland restoration planting on June 16 at Poplar Island in the Chesapeake Bay. Recently on the verge of extinction, Poplar Island is a model for habitat restoration with dredged material.

"Poplar Island's footprint has been restored to its original size of 1,140 acres, half of which will be wetlands," said Chrissy Albanese, Maryland Environmental Service. "The entire western side will be upland habitats, including forest and meadows."

The island is home to more than 100 species of birds, and 185 terrapin nests were found on the island last year.

About six acres were planted during the 10-day wetland restoration spearheaded by the aquarium. Glenn Page, Director of Conservation at the aquarium, estimated that more than 1,000 volunteers planted six of the 33 acres of wetlands in Cell 3D. Volunteers from Environmental Concern will plant the remaining 27 acres.

Although there have been several wetland restoration plantings on Chesapeake Bay islands in the past few years, Cell 3D is the first planted without any sand brought in.

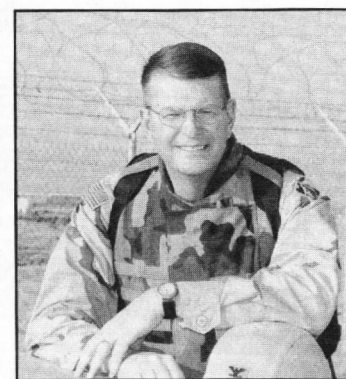
SAME award

Col. Thomas Koning, first commander of Southern District in Gulf Region Division, currently commander of New England District, has received the Society of American Military Engineers' Lt. Gen. Raymond Wheeler Medal.

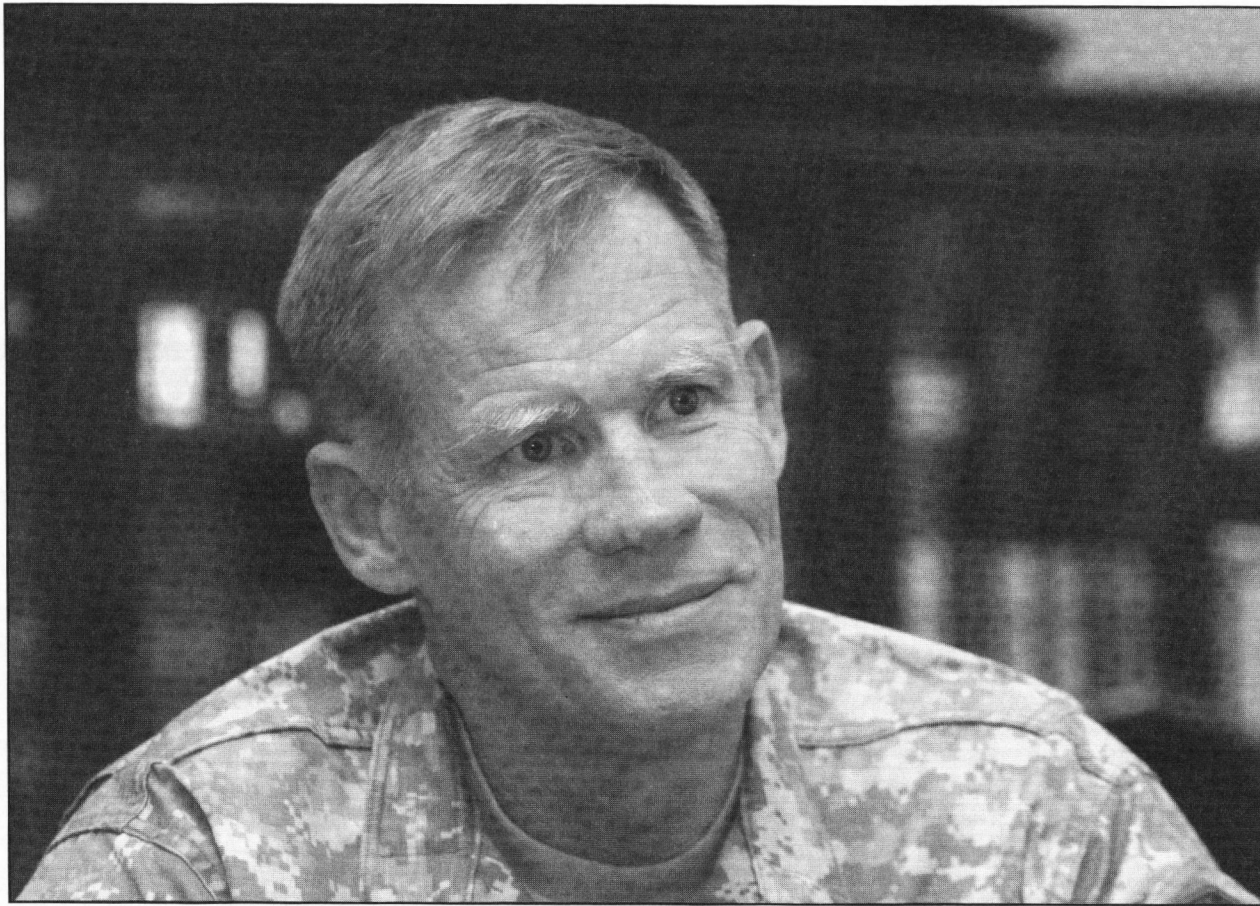
The Wheeler Medal is presented to a civilian or military member of the Army for contributions to military engineering. Koning received the award during the SAME National Joint Engineering Conference in Louisville, Ky.

According to the nomination packet, Koning deployed to Basrah in January 2004 to establish Southern District. There, he pulled together six separate forward deployed Corps sub-elements and formed them into a new district. Returning from Iraq in July, Koning continued to command New England District, overseeing missions in the six New England states.

Koning also maintained the public's perception of the Corps as an honest broker during the emotional, controversial debates over a proposed wind farm by focusing on the correct application of law and regulations, coupled with a plan that included federal, state, and local partners, interest groups, and the public.



Col. Thomas Koning in Iraq.



'The organization changes we have made during the past few years have us moving in the right direction...My intent is for us to remain prepared for what the future brings as we work on doing the right things and doing things right.' -- Lt. Gen. Carl Strock, Chief of Engineers.

Corps Vision

Continued from page one

creased risk from new man-made threats and the impact of time and wear. On military installations, the Corps must rapidly build quality infrastructure for our transforming military force. The agency will develop a sustainable, comprehensive approach to the way it provides and protects the nation's military and civil works infrastructure.

The environment

Strock pointed out that the environment is no longer considered a separate mission for the Corps of Engineers. "We knew that environmental work would be part of whatever we do, whether it's war-fighting or water resources," he explained. "So we felt it was more effective to fold the environmental mission into everything else."

Army values

The overarching values that have driven all of the Corps of Engineers' Vision Statements, past and present, is the fact that it is an Army major command.

The Corps' current Vision Statement reads, "*The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – One Team: Relevant, Ready, Responsive, and Reliable, proudly serving the Armed Forces and Nation now and in the future.*" Much of that comes from the Army Vision.

"We looked at the organization that we're part of, the United States Army, and built off of their vision," said Strock. "We took our words directly from the Army Vision...ready, relevant, responsive, and reliable."

Readiness. "Ready has a couple of connotations," Strock continued. "One is that we are prepared to carry out any missions given to us. A great example is Task Force Restore Iraqi Oil, which we created literally overnight to rebuild the oil infrastructure in Iraq. We're not in the oil business, but we were able to pull together expertise from within our ranks and from outside sources to take on that mission. We did a similar thing with Task

Force Restore Iraqi Electricity.

"The other aspect of readiness is that, whatever we're doing today, we're ready for it only because at some point in the past someone thought about the likelihood that we *might* be called upon to do that," said Strock. "So there's a futuristic aspect to readiness that we've got to be ready not only for what is expected of us today, but what we *might* be expected to do in the future."

Relevance. "And then relevance flows from that, because if we're not doing things that are relevant to the needs of the nation, then I guess by definition we're irrelevant," said Strock. "The former Chief of Staff of the Army, Gen. Eric Shinseki, once said, 'If you don't like change, you're going to like irrelevance even less.' So we've got to make sure we're doing the right things for the nation."

Responsive. "Then, we're a public service agency – we exist to serve others," said Strock. "So the next critical word is responsive. We respond to the needs of the nation – when there's a problem, we go after it, and we get it done."

Reliable. "And the fourth element is reliable," said Strock. "When the Corps of Engineers is involved, you can count on the Corps to do the right things and to do those things the right way. When we come up with a solution, you can count on that solution working. When we establish a process, you can rely on the Corps of Engineers following that process."

"So ready, relevant, responsive, reliable are the words that we took from the Army Vision and adapted to our Corps of Engineers' Vision," said Strock.

"The other thing that is representative of our new vision is that we know that we don't do it alone," Strock said. "We collaborate with a lot of different communities to get the job done. We don't do any construction, but we bring the construction industry to the table and work with them. We don't develop solutions in isolation; we work with local stakeholders to develop solutions."

"So there's a whole context of collaboration with others as we get the job done," Strock said. "That's an important part of our vision."

Process improvement

But there are some things that will *not* change with the new Vision. Strock said that he wants Corps' employees to know that he is still committed to process improvement, and to continuing the sweeping organizational changes that began under USACE 2012.

"I want to underscore that we will continue improving our processes, and our *Strategic Directions* brochure outlines a set of enabling capabilities to help us do that," added Strock.

These enabling capabilities include:

Sustainability Ethic – Consider the environmental, economic, and social factors in the planning, design, and operations of products and services.

Learning Organization – Continually seek improvement and share lessons.

Expeditionary Mindset – Recognize that Corps people will be called to deploy around the globe to support wartime or disaster recovery.

Strategic Alliances – Form and strengthen relationships with customers, stakeholders, and other agencies to better accomplish missions.

Consistent, Efficient, and Effective Business Processes – Deliver products better, faster, cheaper, safer, and greener.

World-Class Workforce – Develop and maintain the technical competency, knowledge, and leadership required to effectively serve the nation.

Interdependence – Increase cooperation among all levels of the Corps to best apply limited resources, especially through the Regional Business Centers.

Flexible Acquisition Tools – Expand the suite of acquisition tools used to deliver real property, design, construction, and other services to customers.

USACE 2012

All of those enabling capabilities work toward sustaining the momentum of USACE 2012, and the Chief of Engineers wants the entire workforce to know that he is dedicated to continuing the Corps' transformation program for the 21st century.

"I've held off looking at the direction of the Corps for about a year because I've been with the organization for about eight years now, so I had a good sense of where we were going," said Strock, who became Chief of Engineers in July 2004. "I believe that if you've done your vision and strategy and campaign right, then it should transcend leaders. And our previous Chief of Engineers, Lt. Gen. Bob Flowers, did it right."

"USACE 2012 had momentum going, and I wanted to sustain that momentum, then slightly change direction during my first year," Strock added. "So now at my one-year anniversary we've published a revision of our goals and objectives that is consistent with what has gone before."

"I think it's important for people to understand that I have a strong commitment to USACE 2012 and its elements, but with an open mind as we implement," Strock said. "The main elements of USACE 2012, the Regional Business Centers, Communities of Practice, Regional Integration Teams, and One Headquarters are what I call non-negotiables."

"But besides those four major building blocks, everything else is open, and I encourage people to continue to think of better ways to move USACE 2012 ahead," said Strock.

The Chief of Engineers summed up his philosophy in the "Commander's Intent" section of the new *Strategic Directions* brochure -- "The organization changes we have made during the past few years have us moving in the right direction. However, we must remember that an uncertain future may require us to adjust to future challenges. My intent is for us to remain prepared for what the future brings as we work on doing the right things and doing things right."