



US Army Corps  
of Engineers®  
Nashville District

# DistrictDigest

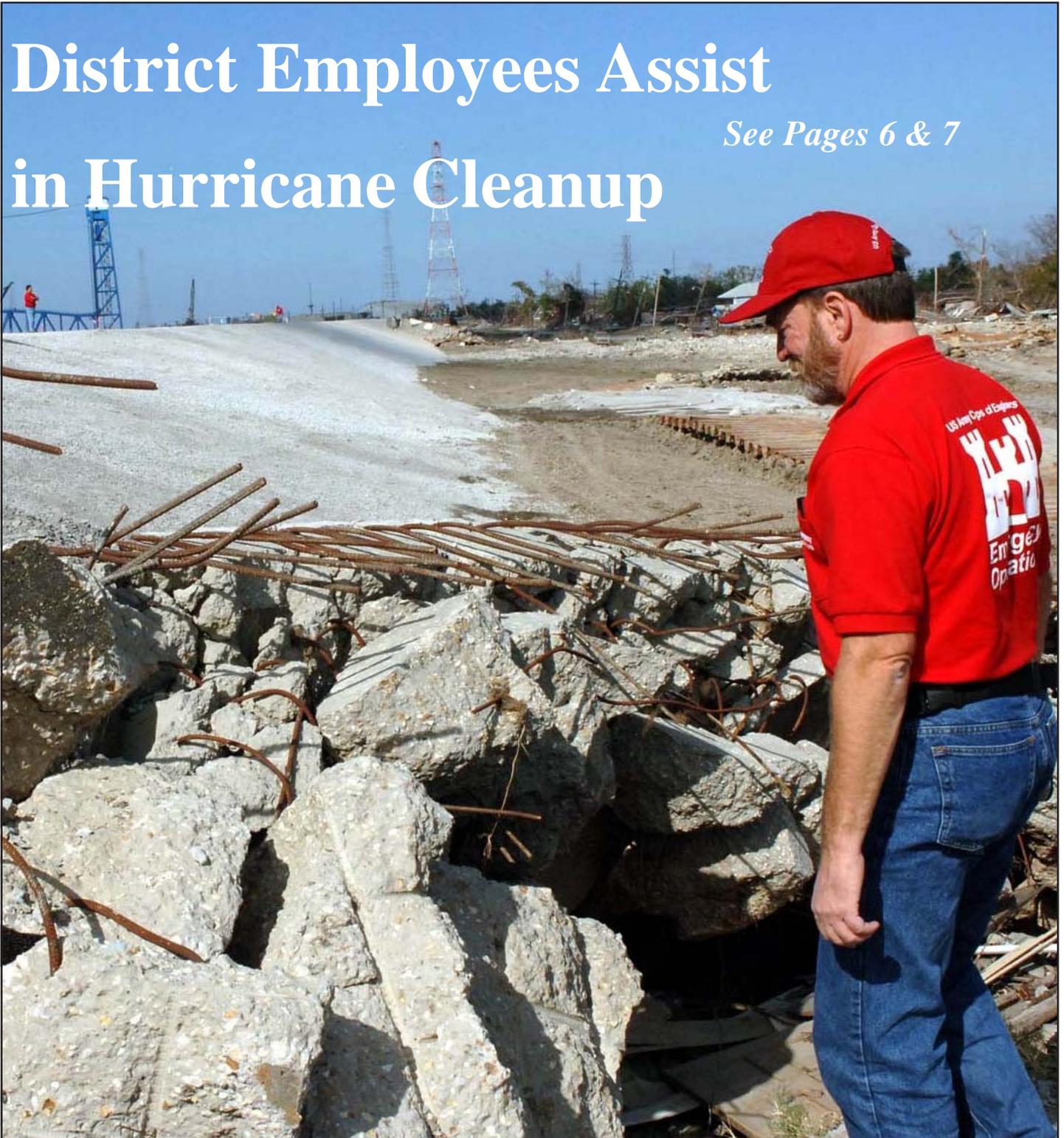
Volume 105, Number 10

*Respected-Responsible-Reliable*

November/December 2005

## District Employees Assist in Hurricane Cleanup

*See Pages 6 & 7*



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## *NSPS Now Finalized, Will be Positive Force*

I am pleased to announce the Department of Defense has finalized the National Security Personnel System (NSPS) enabling regulations and will post them next week to the Federal Register for public review. These regulations mark a major milestone in a collaborative effort between the Department of Defense, Office of Personnel Management, labor organization representatives, and employees and managers.

A link to the regulations will subsequently be available on the official NSPS website at [www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps](http://www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps). I encourage each of you to visit this web site and review its content for this new human resources and labor relations system. Taking an active role in understanding this system will be essential to successful implementation. DoD has created an Employee Fact Sheet

to serve as an outline for reading the regulations. The fact sheet, along with memorandums from the Department of Army and Acting Deputy Secretary of Defense, can be viewed online at [www.hq.usace.army.mil/cepa/nsps/nsps.htm](http://www.hq.usace.army.mil/cepa/nsps/nsps.htm).

I appreciate your daily contribution to accomplishing our critical national security and emergency response missions while continuing to deliver for our customers around the world. Our success is critical to the American people we serve, and I thank each of you for your continued support.

I look forward to working together to make NSPS a positive force in maintaining our reputation as the premier public engineering organization.

*Essays!*  
Carl Strock



photo by Dave Treadway

## On the Cover

Wayne Stroupe, Engineering Research and Development Center Public Affairs, examines what remains of the floodwall along the Inner Harbor Navigation Channel on the east side of New Orleans Oct. 26. The wall failed Aug. 29 as Hurricane Katrina devastated the city which allowed widespread flooding of the 9th Ward. More than 41 miles of levees and floodwalls were damaged and must be repaired before June 1, 2006, the start of the next hurricane season. See pages 6 and 7 for complete details.

## District Digest

### Commander

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Story ideas and articles may be submitted to P.O. Box 1070, Nashville, TN 37202-1070. Details may be obtained from the editor at (615) 736-7163.

Written material may also be sent electronically to the editor at the following e-mail addresses: [david.s.treadway@usace.army.mil](mailto:david.s.treadway@usace.army.mil)

Information about the Nashville District may also be found on the District's homepage at: <http://www.lrn.usace.army.mil>.

# Commander's Corner

I recently returned from a two-day conference in Louisville, Ky., where we convened the Command Council. This council is typically conducted once a quarter, alternating locations between Cincinnati and a host district and members of the council consist of the Division Engineer, the two SESers at division, all the District Engineers and all the District Programs and Project Manager Chiefs.

The Command Council is typically held immediately after the Regional Management Board (RMB) which is also a quarterly conference comprised of the two SESers, District Programs and Project Manager Chiefs and one technical representative from each district.

Mike Wilson and I attend the Command Council while Mike and Barney Davis attend the RMB. The RMB typically

### Communication

discusses regional business issues and internal operating procedures while the Command Council has a more broad-based perspective typically focusing in on those issues that affect the division and district commanders. This conference, one of the main topics we discussed was the implementation of the National Security Personnel System (NSPS) and the effect it will have on our workforce.

First of all, I am a big believer in NSPS and think it will have a great effect on our employees in that it will provide a better system for awarding those high-achieving employees. NSPS is a new civil-service system that provides pay and awards based on employee performance and contribution to mission as opposed to the old General Schedule (GS) system which primarily rewarded the length of time an employee had with federal service. For USACE, the new system will bring about substantial change in the way employees are hired, rated, compensated and promoted.

We will convert over to NSPS in states and begin this process with our salaried employees. Conversion for our salaried employees is slated for October 2006 while the rest of the wage-grade employees will convert in 2007 or 2008. Between now and

Christmas, we will be receiving implantation regulations and detailed information on system components to include pay bands, performance rating system and other facets of the program.

After the New Year, we will conduct various training courses for affected employees and supervisors and you can expect a town-hall to address concerns/questions directly with me when I will be able to pass out the latest information on implementation.

There are many details to the implementation plan that will soon be forthcoming; however, I want to pass along a few facts:

- No employee will lose pay as a result of the transition to NSPS. Salaries and wages for existing employees will not be reduced under the new system.
- Although NSPS reflects a shift to pay based on performance, the basic aspects of the federal civil service will not change. Protections for whistle blowers, the right to make EEO or anti-discrimination complaints and veterans' protections are among the things that will not change.
- Upon conversion to NSPS, employees will receive a salary increase equal to the amount they



have already earned toward their next within-grade increase. After that, the old system of GS grades and steps will be replaced by pay banding. Under NSPS, automatic salary increases under the old grade and step system will be replaced by salary increases based on performance factors.

- We will conduct a comprehensive training program to ensure that managers and supervisors have clear guidance, training and the tools to communicate this program.

I am excited about this program and encourage you to visit the USACE NSPS website, <http://www.hq.usace.army.mil/cepa/nsps/nsps.htm> for more information. I really believe this is the personnel system that will allow us to recruit, retain and reward the best workforce possible.

(See Commander on page 11)

## October Employee of the Month

LaNita Bonds was named Employee of the Month for her excellent work helping to expedite the processing of project cooperation agreements through Washington level review.

Headquarters USACE was having difficulties processing PCAs because they did not have sufficient resources that would allow them to meet schedules. Bonds volunteered to serve a four-month



LaNita Bonds

assignment in Headquarters to ensure they met commitments to sponsors. She worked tirelessly to make sure not only PCAs from LRN were approved on schedule but all other LRD districts as well.

When she returned after successfully completing that assignment, she was requested to assist Dan Hitchings, the senior MVD SES manager, in his efforts to help in the recovery from hurricane Katrina. She spent two weeks helping to coordinate Corps of Engineers relief activities. Bond's "can do" attitude and work ethic was considered highly deserving of this recognition.

# Serving Veterans in Operation Stand Down

story and photos by Dave Treadway

**F**our a.m. came far too soon October 15. But a promise is a promise so I turned off the alarm clock and rolled out of bed.

A half hour later I backed my truck out of the driveway and headed for town, a little bleary-eyed but alert after shaving and washing my face.

With directions on the seat next to me, I made my way to Sidco Drive and the Tennessee Army National Guard Center where members of the Leadership Development Program were to cook breakfast and lunch for American veterans assembled as part of Operation Stand Down.

Shortly after the appointed 5 a.m. start time, I rolled through the main gate and showed the sentry my driver's license. He directed me where to park just outside the open doors of what had been turned into a massive dining hall/meeting place.

Others had beaten me there, evidenced by the aroma of coffee as I entered the well-lit area while dawn streaked the eastern sky.

Richard Rieger, Carol Warren and Mark Klimaszewski were already taking

orders from retired Army Sergeant Major Dan Bleichner. Our first job was to break eggs into a container so they could be scrambled. Freddie Bell, Tim Dunn, Joanne Mann, and Joy Broach soon joined us and the containers soon filled. Klimaszewski put everyone to shame as he broke eggs two-at-a-time, with each hand! Then he told us he learned the technique while working at McDonald's. Meanwhile Bleichner laid out trays and told us fill half with canned biscuits and the rest with frozen sausage patties. He lit the ovens and heated them to the proper temp.

It didn't smell like Mom's kitchen but in short order we were pulling brown biscuits and sausages out of the oven and putting them in the warmer for a 7:30 serving time. Scrambled eggs filled two large containers, courtesy of Chef Klimaszewski. By 7 a.m. we were taking a break and patting ourselves on the back for 'whuppin' up a fine breakfast. Broach took charge of the coffee-making chores to the delight of all who lined up for a cup of 'java'. Veterans of the Korean War then served the meal until containers were empty.

As soon as utensils were washed and put away from the



**Carol Warren, Executive Office prepares 'french fries' as part of the lunch meal for the Veterans.**

morning meal, we were given jobs preparing for the next one, to be served promptly at Noon. All of us sliced large ripe tomatoes and separated heads of lettuce. Mann and Dunn then flipped burgers on a huge grill as Rieger, Warren and I worked the 'fries' cookers.

Other agencies prepared Photo ID cards, conducted job interviews, performed medical screening, gave free haircuts, recorded oral history

segments, and many other functions at booths set up in the National Guard Armory for the three-day event, the 15<sup>th</sup> year it has been hosted by the the Nashville unit.



**Joy Broach serves fruit to those in line for breakfast.**



**Tim Dunn, Center Hill Lake resource manager, and Joanne Mann, budget analyst, fry hamburgers for lunch.**

# Volunteers to the Rescue at Center Hill Lake

story and photos by Dave Treadway

Center Hill staged a shoreline cleanup on a beautiful fall day October 1 at Ragland Bottom and Floating Mill Recreation Areas.

Volunteers were greeted and registered at the Ragland Bottom and Floating Mill Picnic Shelters by Resource Management Staff before boarding pontoon boats donated by Center Hill Marina, Hurricane Marina and Sligo Marina.

They were then taken to areas designated by Ranger Mike Adcock, who was in charge of the '05 effort.

Thirteen-year-old Alisha Davis, from Smithville, joined the cleanup with her mom, Gayle Pack.

The Dekalb County Middle School 8<sup>th</sup> grader planned to join other members of Girl Scout Troop 1163 for the day.

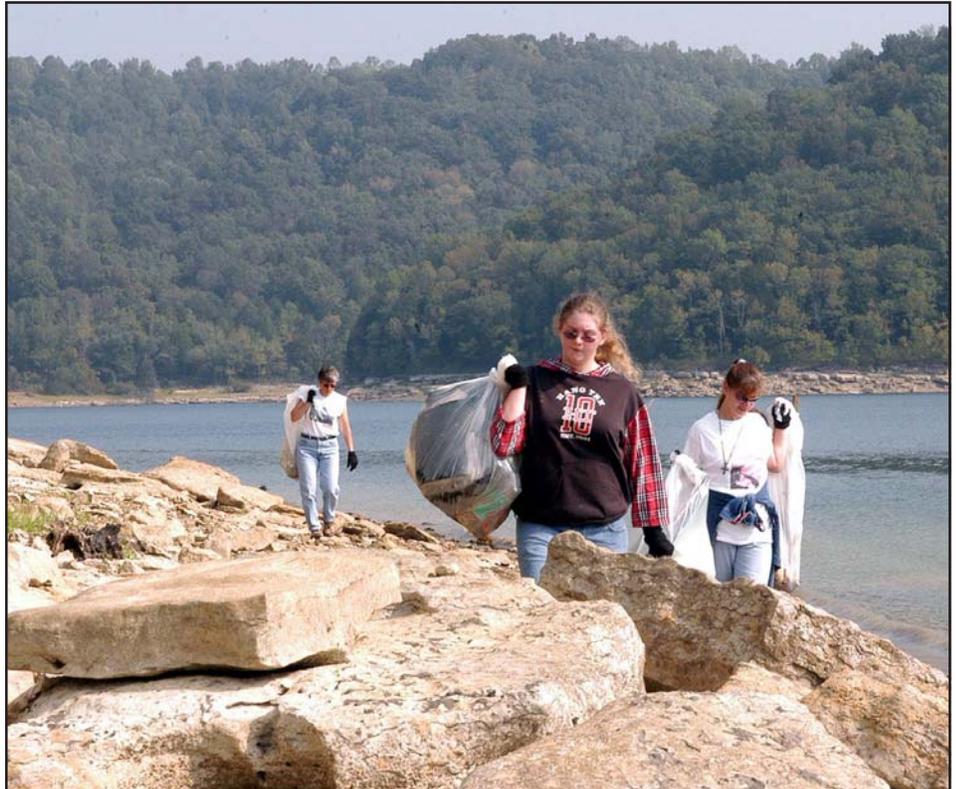
"I just came to help clean up," said Davis. "Our whole Girl Scout troop was supposed to come out but other things came up that prevented them from coming today. I like to do things like this."

Davis and Pack rode the pontoon boat to the Hurricane Bridge Recreation Area with a dozen other volunteers where they filled garbage bags with small items and placed larger items where they could be easily picked up later by Adcock and crew. 110 volunteers working that day filled seven large garbage dumpsters with trash collected from various locations.

And they did it all by noon when they gathered to enjoy a lunch put together by, you guessed it, volunteers. 🍷



Dekalb Middle School 8<sup>th</sup> Grader Alisha Davis (left) and her Mom, Gayle Davis, collect refuse along the shoreline.



Carolyn Bauer, Natural Resource Management Branch (from left), Alisha Davis, Dekalb County Middle School, and Gayle Pack collect garbage along the shoreline of Center Hill Lake Oct. 1.

*In FY05, 2,256 people volunteered  
54,893 hours of their time at Nashville  
District lakes, services valued at more  
than \$963,372.*



Resource Manager Tim Dunn and staff welcome volunteers to the fall shoreline cleanup.

# District Members Speak From the Field

by Dave Treadway

Hurricanes Katrina and Rita wreaked havoc on Gulf Coast communities in August and September which brought a monumental response from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers that continues today.

Nashville District has deployed more than (get number from Jared Gartman in EM) employees to help Texas, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Alabama recover.

Responses from those sent to faraway places to lend their skills to the recovery effort were varied. But all were glad to help those in need.

J. Percy Priest Park Ranger Mark Vaughn was tasked as a Logistics Specialist at the Louisiana –Regional Field Office.

Working out of Port Allen, La., he was responsible for receiving and shipping roof plastic and other materials in support of temp roof mission.

As October drew to a close, Vaughn reported, “We have shipped out more than 80,000 rolls of temporary roof plastic, and have more to disburse. I am getting plenty of operating time on the forklift, and learned a new line of work to take back to Priest, if needed.”

He has made many new friends.

“My experience in Baton Rouge has been very positive,” said Vaughn. “The Cajun food has been terrific, and we have met some wonderful people doing our job. We have also been in contact with a number of volunteer organizations who are helping to

complete roofing mission (Southern Baptists, Jehovah’s Witnesses, Americorps).

“It has really hit home how important this region is to the vitality of our country. In my own small way, I felt compelled, as many others have, to do something to support our mission and to help the people who live in this area. I have also

## Process

met some great Corps folks while in Baton Rouge, and have gained a much better understanding of the Emergency Management response mission in which the Corps plays a part.

“This experience has given me an opportunity to get out of my comfort zone, and to experience a number of things new to me. This experience, along with the LDP class, has made for my most interesting year working with the Corps.”

Information Management Specialist Vicki Isham captured digital photos of the destruction she witnessed along the Mississippi Gulf Coast and posted them on the FTP server to share with other District employees: <ftp://www2.lrn.usace.army.mil/pub/Katrina-Pictures>.

“Almost all of the pictures are of the Biloxi and Gulfport areas,” said Isham. “Some of them are not for the weary. It is still real bad down here, and it will take years to replace what was destroyed.”

LaNita Bonds, Programs and Project Management Division, served as an Assistant to Dan Hitchings (SES from MVD).

“I created a powerpoint slide show,” said Bonds, “kind of a chronological account of the major events, up to this point.” She returned to Nashville Oct. 25.



The Nashville District Rapid Response and communications capability for



Jo Miller, administrative assistant, Engineering / Construction Division, helps Jerry Carpenter, New Orleans District, provide supplies to go for field personnel who report to duty at the Louisiana Recovery Field Office, Baton Rouge, La.



Linda Lee, (inset) Cordell Hull POW she visited during relief duty there this near Grand Casino 5.

# Readiness Update

by Jared Gartman, Readiness Branch

**T**hank you for your continuous support to USACE missions overseas and at home. The Nashville District epitomizes 'The Volunteer State' attitude! By mid-December almost 15% of the Nashville District will have deployed in support of disaster operations. **Deployed Personnel:** Civil Emergencies: 33 GWOT: 5 Total Deployed: 38 Support to Civil Emergencies (Katrina/Rita/Wilma): Over 2,300 USACE employees continue supporting disaster operations from TX to FL. Currently 33 persons are deployed. 66 others have completed tours and returned home. Four others are awaiting deployments. Global War on Terrorism (GWOT): Currently four in Iraq and one in Afghanistan

**Returning Personnel:** All disaster TDY travelers are responsible to ensure the official record file of their personal travel and time contain copies of all timesheets and travel records (orders, vouchers, and all receipts) for each of their disaster travel periods. It's VERY probable you will be audited at some point in the future. Helpful hints for preparing the official records:

- a. Review each travel voucher settlement statement and verify correctness. Immediate corrections must be made to vouchers that are funded by FEMA before the money is withdrawn from the district.
- b. Keep original receipts, travel orders, and vouchers with original signatures in the official records. A copy of this travel record will be requested when audited. The traveler is responsible for the completeness of this record. Don't leave it up to someone to see that all documents are included. This official record will remain in the traveler's official duty office and should be maintained under regulatory guidelines for official files.
- c. The official record file should contain at a minimum:  
(1) Orders w/ amendments, (2) Travel Vouchers, (3) Lodging Receipts, (4) Rental Vehicle Receipts, (5) Travel Voucher Settlement Statements, (6) and all other receipts over \$75 being claimed for reimbursement.
- d. Timesheets and Tour of Duty Letters should also be reviewed for correctness, and a copy kept with your travel records.

**It's over, but it's not over yet.** The 2005 Hurricane season has officially ended November 30 with a record-breaking year. The most storms on record - 26, beating the previous record of 21 set in 1933. The most hurricanes at 13, beating the previous record of 12 set in 1969. It was also a record number of three Category 5 hurricanes.

USACE continues and will continue supporting FEMA missions from the southern tip of Florida to Texas for as long as necessary. Opportunities for deployments are projected to continue possibly until June 2006. Your continued support is very much appreciated.

**Persons interested in deploying must do the following:**

- a. Get your supervisor's approval,
- b. Complete your Personal Data Sheet (PDS) and Medical Screening in ENLink <https://englink.usace.army.mil> (We have instructions in the EOC),
- c. Get the Hepatitis A and Tetanus shots {Contact the Safety Office for assistance},
- d. Get Personal Protective Equipment: Hardhat, safety boots, safety glasses, etc, and
- e. Hold a government credit card in good standing.

Request all Supervisors, Timekeepers, and Travel Clerks complete the 'Phone/Commo' section of their Personal Data Sheet. This

(See Readiness, page 12)



photo by Melissa Cartwright

Emergency Vehicle (left) is positioned in Biloxi, Miss., to provide command and support for Hurricane Katrina/Rita Relief teams deployed there.



Power Plant, stands on a debris-laden beach in Gulfport, Miss., which was destroyed by Hurricane Wilma. Most District employees were greeted with devastation such as

# Hispanics Declared ‘Strong and Colorful Threads’

by Dave Treadway

President George W. Bush proclaimed on September 16 that, “The contributions of Hispanic Americans have made a positive impact on every part of our society. The hard work and determination of Hispanic Americans continue to inspire all those who dream of a better life for themselves and their families.”

The President called upon everyone to observe the period September 15 – October 15 as National Hispanic Heritage Month with appropriate ceremonies, activities, and programs.

The Nashville District Special Emphasis Programs Committee did just that when they hosted a program October 12 based on the Army’s theme: ‘Hispanic Americans: Strong and Colorful Threads in the American Fabric’ and used five examples of Hispanics revered today by Americans of every background.

Robert Brimm, Engineering-Construction Division, recalled how Luis Walter Alvarez worked in the Radiation Laboratory at the University of California at Berkeley and helped run the cyclotron, a machine that studies atoms. In World War II, he helped build a radar system to guide airplanes through fog or darkness. He then worked on a secret project for the government, the creation of a powerful new weapon, the atom bomb. He was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1968.



Elaine Bustillos reads about de Gautier.

Elaine Bustillos, Security Management Office, read about Felisa Rincon de Gautier of Puerto Rico, who moved into the political arena in 1932, the same year women there received the right to vote. She was the first woman to be elected *alcaldesa* of San Juan and co-founded the Popular



Robert Chavez, President of the Tennessee Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, speaks to District employees.

Democratic Party. In 1954, the United Women of America declared her “Woman of the Americas.” She accepted honorary degrees in law, humanities, and arts from Mount Mary College, Temple University and the University of Puerto Rico.

David Claussen, Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Office, recalled how Mario Moreno, born in the city of Mexico, became a famous comedian by impersonating a humble and ingenious rascal that was acclaimed by the whole world. Charlie Chaplin once called him the “funniest man in the world.” He went on to appear in more than 50 feature films, has a star on the Hollywood Walk



David Claussen reads about Mario Moreno.

of Celia Cruz, the Cuban-born singer who used her powerful voice to bring the primarily male-dominated music known as salsa to the American scene. She is recognized as the undisputed queen of salsa.

James Sowell, Operations Division, read the biography of Roberto Clemente Walker, the baseball star well-loved by Puerto Ricans, who became the first Hispanic/Latino to be inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame. Clemente died in a plane crash while flying relief supplies to Nicaraguan earthquake victims on New Year’s Eve, Dec. 31, 1972.

The audience then heard from guest speaker Robert Chavez, President of the Tennessee Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.

“Hispanics have made many contributions to the American culture, and continue to do so



Marva Morris reads about Celia Cruz.

today,” said Chavez. “Today, 60 percent of the laborers building homes in Middle Tennessee are Hispanics, who continue to leave their mark on this state and this nation,” concluded Chavez.

Chavez focused on the fact that we are all one community, and shared his philosophy of treating one another with both dignity and respect. 

# Corps Employees “Fight Fire” to Learn Safety

story and photo by Steven Foshee

Members of Old Hickory Lake Resource Manager’s Office partnered with the Hendersonville Fire Department on a cool fall day to train Corps and contract employees on the use of fire extinguishers - the highlight of Safety Awareness Week, Oct. 11-14.

“You need to know the types of fires and what extinguisher would be best to fight the particular flame,” said Captain Tommy Jenkins, Rescue Company 2, Hendersonville Fire Department. “The fire we are demonstrating today is a Class “B” fire which is a mixture of diesel and gas.”

Park Ranger Trainee Tasha Alexander stepped forward first to try her hand at extinguishing a blaze. The intense heat caused the flames to jump from the burning pan to the surrounding grassy area.

Jenkins advised Alexander to pull the pin to unlock the operating lever, and to not get too close to the fire. He then instructed her to aim at the part of



## Process

the fire closest to her and advance with a sweeping motion.

“Within seconds she had the fire under control, which is excellent,” said Jenkins, “since an extinguisher discharges completely in less than a minute.”

Although Alexander didn’t make any mistakes, Jenkins used the occasion to remind everyone that aiming at the middle of the fire was a common error which could actually cause the liquid to splatter. Critical to fighting fires, Jenkins said, was to always keep your eyes on the spot where the fire is burning.

Each Corps employee and contractor was afforded the opportunity to gain experience in fighting the blaze of a Class “B” fire. Fires are classified A, B, C, D, or K based on the type of material fueling the blaze.

Captain Jenkins inspected the shop facilities at Old Hickory Lake before he began the demonstration. He

**Park Ranger Trainee Tasha Alexander uses a fire extinguisher to suppress a training blaze at Old Hickory during Safety Awareness Week in October.**

determined the types of extinguishers the Corps uses were the dry chemical type (“ABC”).

The letter “A” in a Triangle means the fuel is ordinary combustibles such as wood, paper, cloth and rubber. The most common extinguisher is one with pressurized water which Captain Jenkins carries on the fire engine. It has two and half gallons of pressurized water but isn’t good on electrical fires.

The letter “B” in a Square is for Flammable liquids/gases such as gasoline, oil and paint. This type of extinguisher suffocates the fire with carbon dioxide.

The letter “C” in a Circle is for fires with electrical equipment, appliances, panel boxes and power tools. Both CO<sub>2</sub> and a dry chemical can be used to extinguish such a fire.

Water is usually a dangerous medium for extinguishing a class C fire because of the risk of electrical shock unless a

specialized water mist extinguisher is used.

Jenkins said if a person can safely unplug the burning equipment the classification changes to the type of material burning. A computer, for instance, would become a Class “A” fire due to the plastic. He said the class “C” fire also includes flammable metals.

Jenkins explained that a new fire extinguisher type “K” can be used for fighting cooking oil fires in restaurants to reduce the mess associated with cleanup and reduce the number of days the kitchen may be out of service.

Identifiable graphics are placed on all fire extinguishers to assist users regardless of the language they may speak.

Crews told everyone “the burned grassy area should be a reminder to all what we have learned today during this fire safety demonstration.”

# The Corps Crowd

## Welcome to . . .

... Hannah Whitney, a senior at Hume Fogg High School who is working in the Water Management Office as part of the school's Senior Internship Program. She works about an hour each day in a volunteer (no pay) capacity.



## Congratulations to . . .

... Lynn Bowden, A/V production specialist, who was recognized by the Circle Players and presented an award for best sound design for the Play "Misery".

... Kari Karwedsky, daughter of Rob Karwedsky, Project Planning Branch, a senior electrical engineer, has been chosen "Outstanding Young Engineer" by the New Hampshire Section of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE). She was honored at the IEEE annual banquet at the Yard Restaurant in Manchester, N.H., on Nov. 3. Karwedsky joined BAE Systems' Engineering Leadership Development Program (ELDP) in 2000, and earned her master's degree in electrical engineering from UMass-Lowell, achieving a 4.0 grade point average. She has filed two patents and presented at the IEEE Wireless Communications and Networking Conference in 2004. She is currently working on the Compass Call program as the lead systems engineer for the Spear subsystem and as a Systems Engineering section lead.

... Leonard Rankins, Wolf Creek Power Plant, submitted a suggestion to build a skid plate to be bolted to the base of a submersible pump. This adopted method of putting the pump in place reduces the risk of injury to employees.

... Glenn Harriman, Dale Hollow Power Plant, Stanley Young, Center Hill Power Plant, Charles Ervin, Center Hill Power Plant, Fred Messerschmitt, Center Hill Power Plant, and Dow Williamson, Center Hill Power Plant, submitted a group suggestion to install a caged ladder which will provide for safer access to the Center Hill Dam spillway gate.

... Andrew Sneed, son of Bob Sneed, chief

of the Water Management Section, recently graduated as the class valedictorian from Springfield High School. Just to show he wasn't all about books, he was also selected as the District 10 Boys Soccer Offensive Player of the Year - who also won this award last year. He was also presented with the Army Scholar Athlete Award as the male athlete at his school who best exemplified excellence in both academics and athletics. He will attend the University of Tennessee this fall.

... The following employees have been selected to serve on the Commander's Focus Group:

Jim Siburt - IM, Brenda Simpson - LM, Deborah Fletcher - RE, Brad Long - EC, David Claussen - EEO, Sandy Breault - RM, Ray Kendrick - CT, Amy Robinson - OP-F, Matt Radke - OP-M, Eddie Dale Taylor - WHE/L, Greg Raleigh - LAU/P, and Mike Ezell, OLD/P.

## Baby Brigade to . . .

... Christopher and Jennifer Meeks on the birth of their second child, Nicholas Ryan Meeks. He was born on October 24, weighed 7 pounds, 4 ounces, and is 18 inches long. Christopher Meeks is an Electrician Trainee at Barkley Power Plant.



## Thank you . . .

... I sincerely appreciate all that the Corps family did during the recent loss of my Dad. Your flowers, cards, prayers, and just being there to listen to me was a great comfort to me. The first flowers that I saw when I got to the funeral home was from the Nashville District - it just filled me with such peace to know that you all were thinking of me and my family. My Dad was a wonderful man and I know he was so proud of all the folks from Tennessee that were thinking of him and his family. Thanks to everyone for your friendship and support. Thanks so much, *Carol Warren, Executive Assistant*

... I want to express my heartfelt thanks to the Nashville District for your many thoughts, prayers, cards, flowers and other expressions of sympathy in memory of my mother. God blessed me with wonderful parents and extended family, but I'm especially blessed to be part of this great Corps family whose members continue to amaze me with the outpouring of your love, caring and compassion. I pray that God will bless each one of you and keep you safe.

*Ralph L. Ownby, Jr., Assistant Chief, Operations Division*

... I would like to thank everyone for the heartfelt calls, cards and emails that I received in memory of my mother. That shows that the Corps family cares about its members. Thank you from the bottom of my heart. *Robert Love, Mechanic, Barkley Lock*

... I want to express my thanks to the Corps family for their cards and prayers after the passing away of my father, Earl Murry. *Paul Murry, Ft. Loudoun Lock*

## Upcoming Events. . .

### Red Cross Blood Drive

The Red Cross will conduct a blood drive Friday, December 9 in Cafeteria Conference Rooms A and B from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Call or e-mail Jim Fleming at 615.695.6816 / james.fleming@gsa.gov for an appointment. All donors will receive a calendar on the day of the drive.

### Toys for Children

It is that time again. . . the Nashville District will be collecting toys for the children in Harlan, Whitley, and Bell County again this year (indications are that the need is great this year and the Nashville District is their biggest helpers).

Danny Ferrell and Anita Taylor will be picking up the toys December 9. Collection boxes are located in the Executive Office, Operations, Engineering-Construction, Contracting, and Real Estate. There are some pictures in the Executive Office of the children receiving their gifts last year. 

# Let the Good Times Roll

Story by Karin Beuerlein, reprinted by permission

Photo by Brian McCord

The game of marbles is one of the most old-fashioned of pursuits, and I do mean old: It can be traced back well before the dawn of the Christian era.

They haven't been playing quite that long in Clay County, but they've been playing long enough to become legends in the world of competitive marbles. The game known as Rolley Hole is king in this area, which includes Overton County and Monroe County, Ky. (that's roll-ey, by the way, as in what you do to the marble). Marbles enthusiasts from all over the world gather each September for the National Rolley Hole Marbles Championship at Standing Stone State Park in Hilham.

Despite what you may remember about playing marbles in your formative years, Rolley Hole ain't kid stuff. In Clay County, they turn out some serious marbles players. Witness one Travis Cherry of Moss, a mean shooter who also coaches local high school students to compete in tournaments.

"I've been playing since I was little," Cherry says. "Most everybody here has."

Cherry, in fact, was one of a team of six Tennessee marbles players who competed in Britain's national championship and the first international marbles championship in London in 1992. As for the outcome of the contests, er, let's just say our hometown team won handily. So handily, actually, that their British hosts decided it was high time they traveled to Clay County to see what Tennessee Rolley Hole was all about.

## Commander

(Cont. from page 3)

As always, I would like to close with a word on safety. As we approach the holiday season, I truly hope that everyone takes the time to celebrate and give thanks for all those things that you value; however, in doing so, please remember fire and vehicle safety. Ensure that you never leave an unattended fire in the fireplace and that your smoke alarms are fully functional with fresh batteries. Have a safe and joyful season as we approach the holidays.

Ever since, Cherry says, English and French contingents have made frequent appearances at the Standing Stone tournament, and the Tennessee players enjoy having them over. And beating them.

Rolley Hole players like to get down and dirty. Literally. The players squat in a 40-by-25-foot marble yard filled with soft clay dust that sends little puffs into the air each time two marbles crack against each other. The game is played with flint marbles, usually made by local craftsmen, and is actually quite similar to croquet, as you'll see in a moment. By the time the game is over, everyone's happily coated with grime.

For starters, form is very important. The marble is held tightly, pinned in place by the index finger, with the thumb under and behind the third finger. You aim, knuckles pressed into the dust, and flick sharply with the thumb to send the marble exactly where you want it to go – in theory, anyway.

Practically speaking, the movement can take some getting used to. When he's teaching youngsters to play, Cherry sometimes has a hard time making his instructions stick.

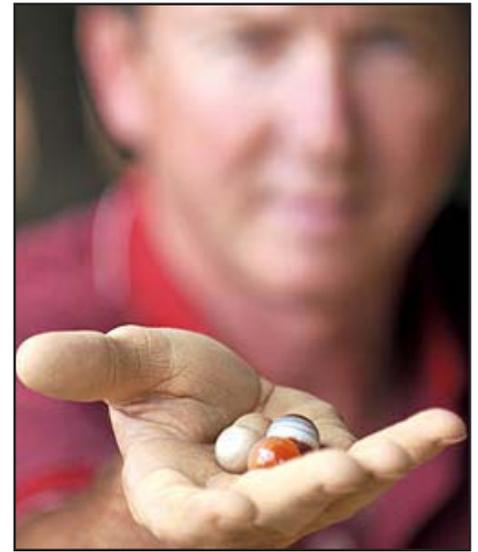
"I mark the thumb with an ink pen," Cherry says, "where the marble is supposed to go." Fierce Competition

The playing field is deceptively simple, consisting almost entirely of three marble-sized holes lined up north and south, with 10 feet between each. Two teams of two players compete at a time, each player with one marble. The object is to roll your marble into the holes going one way and then coming back a total of three times.

The game is won by whichever team's two players accomplish this goal first.

But don't be fooled, Cherry says. Get two teams of ace marble shooters out there and a single round can last for hours as players compete fiercely for those three little holes.

The hard part, of course, comes as players try to knock each other out of contention. Shooting someone else's marble is an acquired skill; with the right spin (as Cherry says, "putting some English on it"), your opponent's marble goes flying to Kalamazoo while yours stays put or even rolls obediently back to you. Expert Rolley Hole players routinely dispatch their opponents with shots of six feet or more.



**Travis Cherry, the husband of Shirley Cherry, Dale Hollow Powerplant, is a two-time member of the winning team of the International Marbles Tournament held at Tinsley Green, England. Shirley accompanied him on one of these trips. The accomplished coach has worked with two girls who went on to wins there, both received \$2,000 scholarships. Shirley has always been her husband's greatest fan. "His participation as a team member, marbles coach to numerous great Clay County Youth who have gone on to make new friendships in many states," explained Shirley, "and a member of the National Marbles Committee, has enriched our lives with so many new friends and experiences at home and abroad."**

"If you can't hit from three feet," Cherry says, "you won't last long at the Rolley Hole tournament."

The marble yard at Standing Stone is covered with a pavilion and flanked by bleachers for spectators. The field itself is dedicated to late marble maker and blues musician Bud Garrett, whose marble-making techniques and improvised songs about Rolley Hole made him a local legend. (Garrett died in 1987 while playing marbles, according to the Tennessee Historical Society.)

The cash prizes and plaques awarded at Standing Stone total in the thousands of dollars, but players don't come for the money. The prizes wouldn't even make airfare for the European contenders. People come to the Rolley Hole championships because in an age of breakneck paces and high technology, this game of skill is a link to the simplicity and togetherness of times past.

They come just because they love it.

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## *Just To Be On The Safe Side . . . Winter driving*

by John Tibbels

**D**o you know the difference between snow tires and all season tires? Here are the key differences between all season and snow tires.

All season tires are designed to handle wet and dry surfaces, and some snow. Snow tires are specially constructed to grip snowy surfaces. Even the rubber is specially formulated to stay pliable in the cold and give you better traction on icy roads.

Snow tires are more prone to rapid tread wear. They also need to be stored on a cool, dry place. Stacking them on top of each other is recommended.

Here are some other factors that might help you decide whether you need snow tires.

Think about what type of roads you usually drive on, especially if you live in a rural area.

Do your streets get plowed when it snows?

How urgent is it that you get out and drive if it snows?

### **Tips for driving in snowy or icy conditions**

Keep your gas tank and windshield washer fluid reservoir full.  
Slow down.

Allow additional stopping distance in any road that I not dry.

Don't be overly confident in a four-wheel drive vehicle. Four-wheel drive doesn't mean you can stop more quickly. "Counter steer" to regain control in a skid. Steer the car in the same direction the back end of the car is going.

Check with the National Weather Service if you are planning on driving a long distance or in another part of the country. It's always good to know what weather to expect.

If you decide to pull over in a snow storm, here are some tips to follow. Turn on your hazard lights.

Raise the hood to indicate trouble once it has stopped snowing.

### **(Readiness cont. from page 7)**

information is required because it is displayed on the deploying person's PDS.

**Tornado Tips:** Closer to home, we've seen tornado activity in Tennessee and surrounding states. Some tips from FEMA that could help you asurvive.

### **DURING A TORNADO**

**If at home:** Go to a windowless, interior room; basement; or lowest level of the building. If there is no basement, go to an inner hallway or a smaller inner room without windows, such as a bathroom or closet.

Don't set out on foot unless you see a building close by where you know you can take shelter. Remain in your vehicle; rescuers are most likely to find you there.

Do not leave your car and proceed on foot until it has at least stopped snowing. Follow the road, so rescuers will see you. While you wait for rescue or the end of the snowfall:

Conserve fuel, but run the engine and heater about 10 minutes each hour to keep warm. Be sure to crack a window and keep the exhaust pipe clear of snow to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning.

If more than one person is in the car, take turns sleeping so that someone is always alert. 🏠

Get away from the windows. Go to the center of the room. Stay away from corners because they tend to attract debris. Get under a piece of sturdy furniture such as a workbench or heavy table or desk and hold on to it. Use arms to protect head and neck. If in a mobile home, get out and find shelter elsewhere.

**If outdoors:** If possible, get inside a building. If shelter is not available or there is no time to get indoors, lie in a ditch or low-lying area or crouch near a strong building. Be aware of the potential for flooding. Use arms to protect head and neck. 🏠