

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Nashville District
P.O. Box 1070
Nashville, TN 37202-1070

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Nashville District

DistrictDigest

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October 2004

Just To Be On The Safe Side . . .

Boating Tips For Hunters

contributed by Water Safety Task Force

Nationally, more hunters are killed in boating accidents each year than fall victim to gunshot wounds. Hunting-related drownings are usually the result of an overloaded boat or an improperly dressed boater. By preparing for cold water and taking steps to minimize its risks, hunters can greatly improve their chances of a safe hunt. Here are some important tips for those planning to hunt by boat:

Wearing a life jacket during fall hunting or boating outings is a must. There are many styles of life jackets available in various camouflage patterns that complete the hunting ensemble. Life jackets also provide excellent insulation against the cold, wind and rain.

Hunters using a boat must follow all boating regulations regarding capacities and required equipment. This includes having a wearable, Coast Guard-approved life jacket for each person on board. Check the capacity plate of the vessel and be certain not to overload. Remember decoys, dogs and hunters add a lot of weight quickly. Do not exceed capacity plate limits for weight or for the number of persons. Dogs should be counted as



the rapid reduction of body temperature which occurs when boaters fall into cold water. Any water with a temperature below 70 degrees is considered cold enough to trigger hypothermia. In cold water, body heat is lost 25 times faster than in air of the same temperature. Dress in layers of

persons when considering the number of persons on board. Spread the weight of the load evenly through the boat. An unbalanced boat can easily capsize or shift suddenly and cause a person to fall overboard.

To set decoys, simply toss them over the stern, or the back end of the boat. Retrieving decoys safely is best done from the stern, using a pole with a hook that can snag the anchor line of the decoy to avoid leaning out over the water. Remember, to prevent capsizing, stay low and in the center of the vessel. Stay seated or kneel when shooting from a boat. Standing to shoot can unbalance and possibly capsize a small boat.

Dress to protect against hypothermia,

clothing that will trap body heat even when wet. Polypropylene or wool are good materials for such conditions. Avoid cotton fabrics.

If you should find yourself in the water, relax and stay with the boat. Try to climb out of the water and on top of your capsized boat to wait for someone to rescue you. Do not worry about trying to salvage gear. Anything that falls overboard is of less value than your own life.

Do not drink alcohol. Alcohol not only impairs judgment and reflexes, but also dilates blood vessels, which can speed up the effects of hypothermia.

Boat Smart. Boat Safe. Wear Your Life Jacket.

Hurricane Recovery Mission

See Pages 6 & 7



Tennessee
Center
for Performance
Excellence
2003
Achievement Award

Contents

From Where I Sit 3
 September Employee of the Month 3
 EAGLES Help Build Habitat Home 4
 Wisdom Wins Corps O&M Castle Award 5
 Army Helping Nation Recover After Fourth Hurricane 6
 Yvette Walker Plays Key Role In Florida Relief Effort 6
 Do You Know What Your Customers Think? 8
 Archery Range Revamped At Old Hickory Lake 9
 'Friends' Help Clean Lake Cumberland 9
 The Corps Crowd 10
 Daughter Wins Chancellor's Scholarship 10
 The Leaves of Autumn 11
 Chirstmas Comes Early for Middle School 11
 Just To Be on the Safe Side 12



photo by Ranger Mark Willis

Two students paddle a canoe on the Caney Fork River during the 2004 Environmental Awareness Camp at Center Hill Lake.

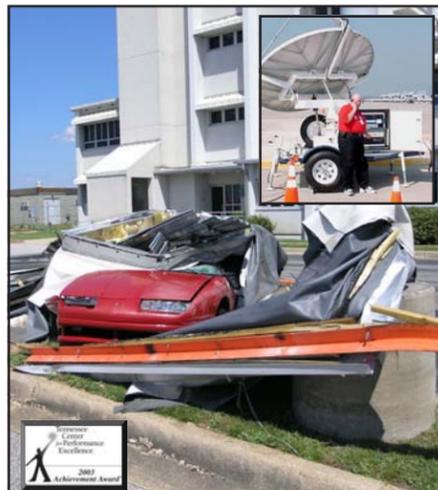


photo by Cleo Howard

On the Cover

George Groghan, Information Management (inset), ensures communications equipment is working properly at Jacksonville Naval Air Station in September. He is deployed as a member of Rapid Response Vehicle Team-03 in support of USACE recovery efforts for Hurricane Frances. Four recent hurricanes wrought destruction like that pictured here all over Florida and southern Alabama. For complete story, see pages 6 and 7.

District Digest

Commander
Lt. Col. Byron G. Jorns

Public Affairs Officer
Ed Evans

Editor
Dave Treadway

Online Editor
Steve Foshee

Circulation
IMO (Mail Center)

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Written material may also be sent electronically to the editors at the following e-mail addresses:
david.s.treadway@usace.army.mil
steven.c.foshee@usace.army.mil

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

The Leaves of Autumn

by Park Ranger, Troy Hawks

One of the greatest spectacles of nature is upon us...the colors of fall are arriving. Have you looked at the surrounding woodlands? The forest plumage is slowly changing color with gold, reds, oranges, and yellows escaping from multi variations of green.

The dogwood and sumac are some of the first to "fall" in line, offering signs of

the season to come by revealing their underling shades. The fall colors of leaves differ from one species to another. Hickories, birch, poplar, and many maples and oaks display yellows, oranges, gold, and bronze, while sweet gum, sumac, dogwood and some oaks exhibit red, purple, and burgundy.

During the spring-summer season, chlorophyll is the primary pigment produced in leaves giving us the greens with which we are most familiar. By autumn, photosynthetic processes are beginning to slow, and with this, less and less green (chlorophyll) is being produced allowing the ever-present yellows (carotenoids) to shine through.

As the green mask subsides, reds (anthocyanins), which are more weather dependent, also begin to de-cloak in some tree species.

This year marks an almost perfect combination of factors for the colorful season ahead. We have been blessed with a warm spring and an abundance of rainfall; our summer was not too hot, nor

too dry; and thus far our entrance into the post-summer season has been met with cool nights (above freezing) and warm sunny days. If these factors remain on track, the regional landscape should be overlain with a canvas of colors that only the Masters' palette could provide.

Our forests have labored many months in preparation for their winter slumber. With their food stores almost complete for the season, leaves will begin to turn as if to offer us one last glimpse of their wooded beauty. Quickly now, the splash of autumn color will reach its apex. And just as quickly it will be over...then the broadleaves will sleep.

It has been said, "Understanding nature begins by studying the simplest of things, a track, a flower, a leaf." Take a day...an hour with your family and go for a ride, a walk, a hike, and enjoy this, one of the most vivid times of year for our landscape...Autumn.

For more information contact Park Ranger Troy Hawks at 606-679-6337.

Christmas Comes Early for Middle School Children

by CARMEN MUSICK, reprinted with permission of Kingsport Times News

FALL BRANCH, Tenn. - A year ago, reading teacher Melinda Upchurch started the wheels turning on a process that would get more computers into the classrooms at Sullivan Middle School.

On August 10, a flatbed truck from the Nashville District U.S. Army Corps of Engineers rolled into town to deliver 15 computers and a couple of extra monitors to the school's doorstep.

"It's just the second day of school, and we've got 15 new computers, so that's not a bad way to start the year," Upchurch said.

The best part is there are 20 more where those came from scheduled to be delivered to the middle school later this year.

"It's going to make a huge difference here. It'll make a huge difference in my class alone," Upchurch said.

The teacher initiated the connection between the Army

Corps of Engineers and Sullivan Middle School by registering the school at the Computers for Learning (CFL) web site at the start of the 2003-04 school year. The web site connects the registered needs of schools and educational nonprofit organizations with available computer equipment from federal agencies and private-sector entities.

"It is a long process. It takes a while to get everything in, and then they have to approve it,

and then you have to wait until computers become available," Upchurch explained.

But the payoff is worth it for the nation's schools as they struggle to offer the latest technology on increasingly limited budgets.

When Upchurch started the process last year, Sullivan Middle School had 30 computers. After the next shipment arrives, the school will have twice that many.

"The students were thrilled. They were excited because (the computers) are going throughout the school," Upchurch said. A science teacher who doesn't have a single computer in her classroom will benefit from the program, as will others. But the greatest benefit is to the students - many of whom have little or no access to computers at home. "I feel like it's important because it'll help the students down the line," Upchurch said.



photo by Dane Owens

A student carries a monitor donated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers into Sullivan Middle School Aug. 10.

Go to <http://www.lrn.usace.army.mil/> for complete story

The Corps Crowd

Welcome to ...

...Althea Rudolph, new administrative assistant in the Executive Office.

Congratulations to...

...Janet Hines, Navigation Branch, whose daughter Heather recently graduated from Tennessee Technology School with a diploma in surgical technology. The new graduate has accepted a position with the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn., and will be moving there in January.

...Scott Fanning, Center Hill park ranger, who placed first in the Fiddler's Jamboree 5K race July 6 in Smithville, Tenn., and on his sixth wedding anniversary. He and wife Jeanie were married Aug. 8.

...Richard Puckett, Mid-Cumberland Area operations manager and wife, Ann on their 45th wedding anniversary July 29.

Baby Brigade to...

...Robert Love, a mechanic at Barkley Lock, is the proud grandparent of his fourth grandchild and first grandson, Jonathan Lynn English, born on Sept. 3 weighing 9 pounds, 3 ounces, and measuring 23 inches long.

...Grandparents Tom and Joan Pirkle were blessed with the birth of their third granddaughter, Hannah Michelle, born Sept. 16 to parents Aaron and Karen Pirkle. Tom is a civil engineer in the Construction Branch.

Sympathy to...

...the family of former employee Juanita E. Nicholson, who passed away Aug. 14.

...the family of Larry Neal, retired lock operator at Watts Bar Lock, on the loss of his daughter Lisa Ann (Neal) Atkins. Lisa passed away Sept. 4 after a long battle with Lupus. Memorial contributions may be made to the Lupus Foundation of America, Inc. 2000 L Street NW Suite 710 Washington, DC. 20036 or online at www.lupus.org.

...Steve Daniels, an electrician at Cheatham Power, who lost his 19-year-old son, Taylor Allen Daniels, in an automobile accident Sept. 17.

...Janet Hines, Navigation office assistant, who lost her stepfather, Alton (Peck) Bradley Sept. 24.

... the family of William "Bill" Vecchione, Engineering Construction Branch, whose mother passed away in early September.

Thank you to...

...the Corps employees who donated sick leave to me following my recent accident. *Russell M. (RM) Campbell, Pickwick Lock maintenance worker*

...I would like to thank all of my Corps family for the support and concern that was offered to me during my stepfather's hospitalization in Vanderbilt and during his funeral. It was greatly appreciated by all of my family. Thank you. *Janet Hines*

...I want to thank everyone for the visits, flowers, donations, cards, and kind words following the loss of my father on August 18. My family and I sincerely appreciate your thoughtfulness. *Philip Burney*

...I would like to thank you all for making this time (in the Nashville District) professionally and personally rewarding for me. Some of my supervisors were wonderful. I will mention a few; Bill Fisher, Carol Warren, MAJ Haggerty, Joe

Cathy, and Ed Evans. Those people gave me an opportunity to prove myself and believed in me that I could do the job. You all made my retirement reception so memorable. All I can say is that I am the luckiest person in the world to work with such caring wonderful professional people. A special thank you to the retirement committee and planners. I cannot mention everybody because there were too many. I am sad to leave you but like the saying goes, I WILL BE BACK. I LOVE YOU ALL, GOD BLESS EACH AND EVERY ONE OF YOU. *Brigitte Rugare and Family*

... on behalf of the family, thank you and all of your associates for the incredible party you put together for our Mother. We were all blown away by the sheer program and number of participants. We were very touched by the level of sentiment demonstrated toward my mom. We truly cannot thank you enough for all you did to make this a very special day for not just my mother, but the whole family. It was a day that we will never forget and one that touched my mother very much.

John A. Rugare

Daughter Wins Chancellor's Scholarship

Laura Gibson, daughter of Paula and Mark Gibson, a civil engineering technician working on the Kentucky Lock Addition, and a 2004 graduate of Carterville, Ill., High School, was named the recipient of a chancellor's scholarship from Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

The award provides tuition and fees for four years at SIU Carbondale and is valued at \$6,340 for the current school year. Gibson plans to major in chemistry.

Both parents are very proud of Laura, one of nine freshmen who make up the 2004 group of Chancellor's Scholars.



Laura Gibson

"She is a very unique individual," said Paula. "When selected for the scholarship, she was given a dorm room and turned it down. She told the selection committee they could

give the room to someone who needed it. She would live at home with her parents. We never had to tell her to study or to do her homework, she just did it."

Mark had another reason to be proud. "She had a scholastic bowl question," said Mark, "having to do with concrete and she answered it, correctly. When the judge asked her how she knew so much about concrete, she replied, 'My dad works for the Army Corps of Engineers.'"

Gibson's honors included; selection as an Illinois State Scholar, selection as one of the honorees in the John A. Logan College Top Seven Juniors, and recipient of a good citizen award from the Daughters of the American Revolution.

She was a member of the National Honor Society, Beta Club and Spanish Club and participated in the Scholastic Bowl team, as well as ALPHA peer counseling.

Minimum eligibility requirements were an ACT score of 29, and GPA of 3.75. 🏠

Lieutenant Colonel Byron Jorns

From Where I Sit

Folks,...Happy New Year...welcome to FY'05!

...I want to congratulate everyone for each of your efforts on a successful year-end close out. In almost all categories, Nashville District executed at the near-100% range. This does not happen easily...and not without a lot of intense management and cross-communication throughout the organization. Thank you!

...as a reminder, Nashville District has four folks currently deployed to Iraq (Joe Faustina Jr., Hugh Lowe, Elaine Bustillos, and most recently Holly Taylor). Please keep them in your thoughts and prayers as they support the Gulf Region Division's mission to help rebuild Iraq's infrastructure and sow the seeds of hope for a brighter future.

...an additional 29 folks are currently deployed in support of Hurricane recovery efforts in Florida and Alabama, and related flooding in West Virginia.

Communication

Thank you for your support to meet the urgent needs of our fellow Americans impacted by these storms. I appreciate your sacrifice to help others in need. The Rapid Response Vehicle (RRV) team continues its rich tradition as the "go to" response team within the eastern United States. I appreciate their professionalism and competence when asked to "roll" with nearly no-notice. Great job.

...fortunately, the storms did not affect our local ability to conduct the Cheatham Lock dewatering. Once again, the dewatering team did a tremendous job that minimized the lock closure period while maximizing repair and maintenance efforts. Thank you for keeping safety at the forefront of your efforts.

....P2 has not gone away. We are now at 36% complete. This is a great accomplishment...please continue to press towards our 100% goal. The month of October offers the most opportune time to surge in this area.

...wanted to point out that October is National Fire Safety Month. With that in mind, I would like to talk about smoke

alarms. In the 1960's, the average U.S. citizen had never heard of a smoke alarm. By 1995, an estimated 93 percent of American homes were equipped with alarms. The cost of smoke alarms has come down to as little as \$10 per alarm. When fire breaks out, the smoke alarm, functioning as an early warning system, reduces risk by nearly 50%. Smoke alarms should be installed on the ceiling or 6 to 8 inches below the ceiling on interior walls. Smoke alarms are very easy to maintain, simply replace the batteries once each year. If the alarm makes a chirping sound, then it's time to replace the batteries. It is also important



to keep smoke alarms clean. Dust and debris can interfere with their operation, so vacuum over and around your smoke alarm regularly. Remember, don't take your smoke alarms for granted. They could save your life.

...have a great day! 🏠

September Employee of the Month

Kim Franklin, a biologist in the Project Planning Branch, was named the Nashville District Employee of the Month for September.

Franklin was instrumental in obtaining the long-awaited water quality certification from Kentucky Division of Water for the City of Cumberland. This allowed the District Engineer to sign the Finding of No Significant Impact and forward the report package for City of



Kim Franklin

Cumberland 202 to Division and Headquarters for review and approval.

She coordinated a meeting with state and federal resources agencies to resolve outstanding environmental issues on the Bristol, Tenn., and Virginia Flood Control Project. This will allow Tennessee's Department of Environment and Conservation to issue water quality certification for the proposed project.

Franklin played a key role in arranging an offsite meeting at Ellington Agriculture Center which produced noteworthy discussions. At that meeting, a representative from the State Historic Preservation Office explored 'new' regulations for integrating Section 106 into the Corps' planning process. A representative from the Tennessee Department of Agriculture described the Section 319 program and how the District might incorporate it into watershed studies. Kim's expertise is consistently sought by different Corps teams and even other organizations.

Senior leaders select the Employee of the Month from the many excellent employees identified by the District's chain of command. Selected individuals personify the seven Army values of loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity, and personal courage. 🏠

EAGLES Help Build Habitat Home

photos by Dave Treadway
story by Mary Brannan and Dave Treadway

Jerry Lindsey (left) applies glue and Mark Vaughn cuts a timber Sept. 23 while helping construct a Habitat for Humanity project.



construction director with Habitat For Humanity.

"We have built a relationship with all these people who live here before they even move in," said Bigelow. "They have worked on each other's house, they know each other's kids, they know where everyone works. They even watch each other's kids. This is so much better than other places where the city calls us up to tell us they are knocking down a house and we go in and build only one and turn it over to the new family. There they don't know anyone else in the area, and have no relationship with them. When we finish here this will be like an old-fashioned neighborhood. We have

dedicated about six acres for park development, and total in the 40-acre development will be eight acres of green space. We will wind up with 136 lots on which to build, with a completion date of 2008. And we plan to construct other developments like this model."

Residents get to choose the colors for siding, shutters, carpet and vinyl. Each resident must contribute 300 hours of labor to Habitat For Humanity before they move into their own new home.

Members of EAGLE found the building experience rewarding.

"I have really enjoyed this," said Aaron Gillespie. "It's nice that we can get out as a group and work together to start a dream for someone."

Butch Witcher agreed. "I think this is a very good project," said Witcher. "Any time you can do things to help people it's always good. When I mentioned this to my wife she said she would like to work on one sometime as well."

"I was very impressed with Providence Park," said Ariana Beck-Scott, "because the community even has sidewalks." 🏠



Butch Witcher (left) and Gary Davis lift flooring up to Kayl Kite on the Providence Park job site.

Members of the 2004 EAGLE (Employees Achieving Greatness in Leadership Excellence) class added their muscle to Habitat For Humanity Sept. 23 as their community project for the program.

Instead of building outdoor storage sheds for four different homes, the EAGLEs were charged with building the floor of a new house. The concrete block foundation had already been built, so the first task was to slope the ground inside the block to a gentle grade for storm water to drain away from the structure. Meanwhile some began placing termite and moisture barriers on top of the block walls.

Two-by-fours were placed on top of the barriers to support floor joists. Next came the support beams followed by the properly sized floor joists, and all this before lunch. The final, but most time-consuming task of the day was to cut and lay the subfloor. A dozen blisters, a few achy backs and about a million nails later, the job was complete.

Providence Park is a unique concept for the organization, according to Gary Bigelow,

Archery Range Revamped at Old Hickory Lake

story and photos by Dave Treadway

Despite rain from Hurricane Ivan in the Tennessee Basin and early predictions of a postponed event, Old Hickory Lake held shoreline cleanup activities under a gorgeous sky Sept. 18 and revitalized the archery range.

With the help of 15 members of the Pine Creek Archery Club and 10 from the Old Hickory Ski Club, the pavilion was given a new coat of paint, old targets were replaced with new ones made of different material, and two target frames that were victims of time and weather were replaced with new structures designed to last longer.

"Several of the frames," said Old Hickory Lake Resource Manager Carl Crews, "are more than five years old and are falling apart. We have some targets that are made of

compressed cardboard, some are bales of cotton fiber and when they get wet those materials deteriorate. We are replacing them with targets made of a different material which we hope will last longer."

"Some target frames have lasted for five years," explained Ranger Gary Conley, "and some last longer, depending on their composition. The frames we are building today are interlocking and that type should last longer."

Crews said the range gets a lot of use. "It's a public range," Crews pointed out, "so in addition to the use it gets by archery club members, many more people use it for target practice or to hone their skills in preparation for bow hunting season, which begins Monday. Archery club members provide a great service by assisting and advising anyone who might be shooting at the range."



Michael Hull applies a new coat of paint to the pavilion at the archery range.

Workers replaced 10 deteriorated targets with new excelsior bales which appeared to contain a fibrous material that might be more weather resistant.

Twentyfive Boy Scouts from Troop 204 at Old Hickory were dispatched to Hendersonville where they collected garbage from the shoreline adjacent to Shutes Branch Recreation Area.

Michael Hull, son of the Corps' Ken Hull, helped paint the pavilion even though one hand was bandaged to protect an injury that required several stitches, the result of a cut he suffered while building cabinets.

"I've got one good hand," said Hull, "and that's all I need to use a paintbrush."

Workers also installed new signs along the entire length of the nature trail.



Corps Ranger Gary Conley assists two members of the Pine Creek Archery Club Sept. 18 in construction of a new target for the range. A total of 50 volunteers helped make NPLD at Old Hickory a success.

'Friends' Help Clean Lake Cumberland

by Ranger Judy Daulton

Great weather on Sept. 11 and a determined group of volunteers combined to make the 15th Annual Friends of Lake Cumberland (Friends) Cleanup an important community event.

The Friends 15th annual one-day cleanup produced some terrific numbers. A total of 553 volunteers, many of them representing a wide variety of groups, participated. Those willing volunteers collected a total of 3,509 bags

of trash and 747 old tires, bringing the total trash collected since the cleanup began in 1990 to more than 74,000 bags of trash and nearly 12,000 tires.

Individuals and groups began arriving as early as 8 a.m. Registration started at 9 with volunteers departing by land and water throughout the morning and into the afternoon to gather trash and debris. Marinas on the lake donated the use of 14 pontoon boats, an invaluable asset to help with the collection effort. Local high school Junior ROTC units, Cub Scout packs and conservation groups were well represented.

Go to <http://www.lrn.usace.army.mil/> for complete story 🏠

Do You Know What Your Customers Think?

by Dave Treadway

A tool used increasingly by the Nashville District is designed to help answer that question.

The Nashville District serves a wide variety of customers in the Cumberland and Tennessee River Basins.

Expectations of those customers are as varied as their uses for water, the element around which much of our mission revolves. The varied uses for water define our mission areas and ultimately our customer base. Skills developed in response to customer requirements equip us to respond to national disasters and provide support for other agencies.

Authorities under which we operate, provided by Congressional legislation, define our incredibly diverse and varied line of products and services. Under these authorities, the District has nine structured business lines: Navigation, Flood Damage Reduction, Hydropower, Recreation, Environmental Stewardship, Emergency Response, Regulatory, Water Supply, and Interagency and International Services (IIS). These provide the basis to define our customers and the rationale for our organizational structure.

In short, the District defines a customer as an external organization, agency, group, cost-sharing sponsor, or individual who requests and receives Corps services or has a water-related concern.

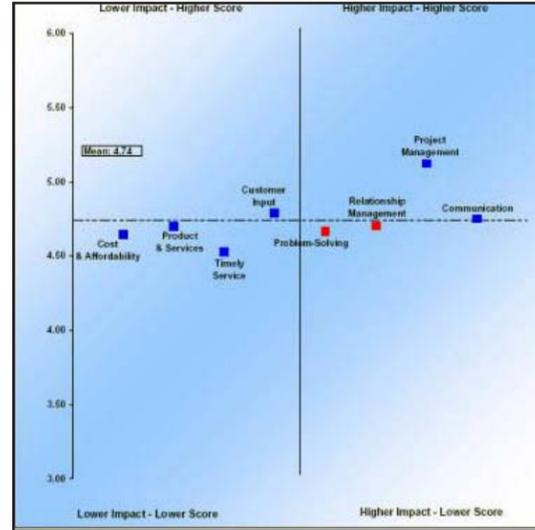
"We ask our customers to complete a survey," said Executive Assistant Carol Warren, "that will give us feedback. This feedback gives us an idea of what customers think of our service, something very important to us. It allows us to improve the product we deliver and the processes used to create that product."

This is important, according to Warren, to attain Goal Three of the Nashville Business Plan.

"We have been working with Virtual CEO to conduct surveys semi-annually," Warren explained, "respond to our customers, and establish a process for incorporating feedback into lessons learned. A team is now working on how

we should respond to customers after we receive completed surveys and to establish a process to improve even while we capture this feedback. We have completed two surveys, one in October 2003 and one in April 2004."

Questions on the survey deal with relationship management, products and



This section plots the eight areas within the Customer Service Assessment. The vertical axis represents the performance score and the horizontal axis represents the order of importance priority, with the highest importance priority to the right. The importance-ranking table reflects the assessment topics in order of weighted priority, as determined by the group, and indicates the performance mean score.

services, project management, timely service, problem solving, cost & affordability, customer input and communication.

All District work is executed by knowledgeable teams that provide expert service to the customer segment they serve. Policies and regulations issued by higher authorities govern the geographic area in which those teams operate, as well as the level of involvement in responding to water resource needs. Two missions areas, emergency response and IIS, often involve work by District employees outside of the Cumberland and Tennessee River Basins.

"Customers were asked to rate us on a scale of one to six," explained Warren, "with six being the best possible score. Average overall scores in 2003 for our

business lines ranged from 4.86 to 5.23. That range dropped this year to 4.53 to 5.12. We also asked customers to rank areas in level of importance to them. Communication was most important to customers in each survey and last year the score we were given fell below the mean which tells us we should focus more of our time and attention in this area. Perhaps as a result of that attention, our score received this year for Communication rose above the mean. Scores received for Problem Solving and Timely Service, two areas ranked two and three in importance overall to customers, were also below the mean in 2003. This year, Relationship Management and Problem Solving, ranked three and four respectively by customers, received a below-mean score.

"This tells us that any area on the right side of the chart (importance) and below the mean level (our performance) may warrant some extra attention from us because that may be a weakness upon which we can improve."

The District learned from the surveys what customers consider most important and their scores told the leadership where to focus more attention.

"But keep in mind," said Warren, "that each business line customer's priorities might be different. So we need to evaluate each business segment on an individual basis. On one survey, we compared the priorities of our customers with those of management and staff. This proved very interesting because management and staff rated the importance of products and services high but customers rated it low. The same was true for customer input.

"We attempt to survey every customer," concluded Warren, "but we are striving to improve our return rate for those surveys and to gather a more complete customer list. We will share the results of the survey with each customer and thank them for participating. We will also ask them how they prefer to receive future assessments."

Go to <http://www.lrn.usace.army.mil/> for complete story

Wisdom Wins Corps O&M Castle Award

by Dave Treadway

Jerry Wisdom, lock and dam equipment mechanic at Barkley Lock, was presented the Corps of Engineers 2004 Operation & Maintenance Castle Award in St. Louis, Mo., August 9.

Chief of Engineers LTG Carl A. Strock presented the award.

"Jerry Wisdom," said Operations Chief Mike Ensich, "was selected for the equivalent of the Hardhat of the Year or Planner of the Year in the Corps' nationwide recognition program. It's a significant accomplishment for a noteworthy individual."

Wisdom's accomplishments in research and development of innovative navigation lock electronics are noteworthy and symbolize the highest level of craftsmanship within the Corps, according to his recommendation for the prestigious award.

The craftsman is frequently referred to as a team player who is focused on safety, professionalism and accomplishment of the mission. His knowledge of electrical and electronics maintenance, repair and design, his troubleshooting skills, and his ability to complete work assignments on time and with accuracy have become so renown that he is frequently requested to assist in unique and challenging projects. The Tennessee Valley Authority requested his assistance with installation and monitoring load cells for Kentucky Lock's gate anchorage system. His help with installing program data-loggers for load cells at Pickwick and Wilson Locks contributed to the success of those two projects.

Wisdom is widely regarded as the District's technical expert in the electrical/electronics arena, especially with regard to implementation of new, state-of-the-art technology, including Personal Computer and Programmable Logic Controller lock operating systems.

The Caldwell County native, who is certified as a high school football official, began his career with the Nashville District in 1994 as a lock and dam operator trainee, WY-05. Upon graduation from the District's Lock Operator/Mechanic Training Program, he was assigned to the Physical Support

Branch, Maintenance Section, Nashville Repair Station, as a lock and dam equipment mechanic. In that capacity, he participated in major navigation lock maintenance and repair activities at each of the District's 14 navigation locks and related structures.

Although Wisdom loves his work, he also enjoys his hobby.

"I've officiated at 13 football games so far," said Wisdom, "for varsity, junior-varsity, and middle school and may work as many as 30 games a season." When compared to his work and his own time spent doing research, one wonders where he finds the time.

The Princeton, Ky., resident was promoted to the journeyman level, lock and dam equipment mechanic, WY-11, in only three years. He earned an Associates Degree in Electronics/Robotics from Western Kentucky Technical College in 1995, and then added an additional degree in Instrumentation Controls in 2002. Applying what he had learned, Wisdom won a Gold Medal from the Instrumentation Society of America as a student in the 13-state regional Academic Bowl in 2002, a national science competition in electronics.

The lock and dam equipment mechanic (electrician) has made his mark on the District in many ways. Subsequent to his selection to work at Barkley Lock, he worked with the repair party and at other locks when additional manpower and expertise were required.

He participated with Corps of Engineers' Research Laboratory representatives in completing extensive reviews of lock innovations for Corps of Engineers facilities. His involvement was instrumental in the successful accomplishment of this valuable project.

He is responsible for Barkley Lock's Occupational Safety & Health Administration/Ergonomics health and compliance program and the Corps' Seven Castle Program.



Jerry Wisdom, lock and dam equipment mechanic (electrician) at Barkley Lock, receives the O&M Castle Award from Chief of Engineers Lt. Gen. Carl A. Strock Aug. 9 in St. Louis, Mo.

He has been a major contributor in concepts and designs for the Critical Projects Security Program. Additionally, Wisdom was instrumental in the design and configuration of electrical rehab projects at both Cheatham and Nickajack Locks.

Never satisfied with the status quo, he recently completed courses in surveying, automated electronic controls, word-processing, and electronic instrumentation to prepare himself for changing technology in the Corps. He even completed the District's Crane Operator Training Program so he could operate Barkley Lock's 40-ton mobile crane. Much of the course work for some classes was at his own expense and on his own time. He even finds time to volunteer as an adjunct instructor for Western Kentucky Technical College and mentors students at that facility.

You could even say his work is one of his hobbies. He independently investigates new electronic instruments and controls, products and innovative technology through his association with the Instrumentation Society of America (ISA). He has provided extensive research and development for the Corps' Engineer Research and Development Center on various lock control automation technologies. Examples of his research and development include trending sensors for condition

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Army Helping Nation Recover After Fourth Hurricane

by Lt. Col. Stan Heath, USACE

WASHINGTON (Army News Service, Sept. 28, 2004) — More than 1,300 Army Corps of Engineers employees are now supporting hurricane recovery efforts in Florida, Alabama and surrounding states affected by Hurricanes Charley, Frances, Ivan, and Jeanne.

The recovery operation is the largest of its type ever undertaken by the Corps of Engineers, officials said, and it extends to areas flooded by the storms' aftermath.

For many residents living along the eastern Florida coast, Hurricane Jeanne Sept. 26 was

another punch that they could not afford to take.

The Corps' emergency response to the destruction has been to provide ice, water, power, temporary roof covering, and technical oversight of debris removal at various locations hit hard by hurricanes. All of the Corps' effort is carried out in support of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, or FEMA, officials said. They said the mission is a complex and tiring logistical operation shared by FEMA, Corps personnel and numerous other organizations such as the Red Cross and state and local emergency responders.

Chief of Engineers Lt. Gen. Carl Strock is now visiting the Corps' Emergency Response and Recovery Organizations in Mobile, Ala., and in Pensacola, Fla. His staff is planning a subsequent visit for him to see Corps operations in eastern Florida this weekend.

One of the most widely known efforts assigned to the Corps by FEMA is the temporary covering of roofs damaged by the storms. Corps contractors are placing plastic sheeting over the roofs. The project was coined "Operation Blue Roof," for the color of the plastic sheeting.

More than 25,000 roof covers have been installed so far throughout Florida. The day after

Hurricane Jeanne roared through Florida, Corps and contractor teams installed 54 "blue roofs" in St. Lucie county. Many more are being installed now, officials said.

Corps teams have delivered more than 150,000 self-help tarps to counties in Florida, and 30,000 in Alabama for residents to install themselves.

In Alabama, three counties have asked for Corps assistance with debris removal. Working through the Advance Contracting Initiative, the Corps activated its contract with Phillips and Jordan to remove close to

one million cubic yards of debris, an amount of material equivalent to about 33,000 large truckloads.

For some 200 east-coast Florida residents affected by Frances and Jeanne, FEMA is providing temporary housing at Saufley Field, adjacent to the Pensacola Naval Air Station. The Corps of Engineers provided logistical support for the housing by setting up and connecting temporary utilities.

The units each have a small bedroom, bunk-bed area, kitchen/living room area, bathroom with a shower, air conditioning, refrigerator and stove.

This is the first time the Corps of Engineers has used the Expedient Housing plan which allows the Corps to provide logistical support for the housing very quickly. The Corps and its contractors agree to provide full logistical support within 72 hours after the needed materials arrive on site.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers teams have been working in Florida and Alabama for six weeks for Charley, Frances and Ivan and are now responding to their fourth hurricane. USACE's effort, as are the hurricanes, are unprecedented, officials said.

"The Corps is very adaptable," said Col. Ray Alexander, leading the response and recovery effort in Alabama. "I know our folks are tired, but they keep on demonstrating their flexibility."

Deployed District Personnel

A number of District employees have answered the call to help clean up in the aftermath of the recent Hurricanes. At press time, some have returned after being deployed for more than a month.

Two employees, Bob Taphorn and Bill Bennett deployed to Florida in response to Hurricane Charley.

A total of 18 employees deployed to Florida, Georgia, and Headquarters, USACE, in response to Hurricane Frances.

Nine employees stepped forward to help in the aftermath of Hurricane Ivan. Three were dispatched to Alabama, one, Donald Pambianco, joined the already large contingent in Florida, and five went to West Virginia in response to flooding in that state as a result of rains dumped by Hurricane Ivan after it was downgraded to a Tropical Storm.

Rapid Response Vehicle-03, deployed to Florida early in September, and is scheduled to return to Nashville mid-October, barring the development of further hurricane activity.



photo by George Groghan

As driver, it's Cleo Howard's job to make sure RRV-03 is ready to go when asked to move to a new location.



photo by George Groghan

Cleo Howard (left) and Luke Ditto prepare to perform routine maintenance on RRV-03 in Florida after the long drive from Nashville.

Yvette Walker Plays Key Role in Florida Relief Effort

by Nicole Dalrymple, St. Louis District PA Specialist

Yvette Walker was not given much notice about her emergency deployment to southwest Florida following Hurricane Charley. But she quickly became an important person to know in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Emergency Response and Recovery Office, command center for the Corps' hurricane relief efforts. Walker helps you find a place to sleep. She is definitely one person you want to know on a first-name basis.

Walker, who has been working for the Nashville District since 1998, was attending a training course in Mobile, Ala., when she got the call for deployment August 17. Two days later she left Mobile and flew into Tampa, Fla. Walker once traveled 21 hours to get from Hawaii to Guam for a super typhoon emergency response mission, but said flying into Tampa was a breeze.

Emergency response for Hurricane Charley is her fourth deployment.

Walker's current assignment in the ERRO is working the reservation desk. This has been a unique deployment because this is the first one she's worked from the ground up. She's worked hard to establish a list of vendors and is building relationships.

The stress of finding people lodging is always there, she said. Complicating the process is that thousands of relief workers are in the area, including workers with the Federal Emergency

Management Agency, the Red Cross, the Salvation Army and electrical crews in from all over the country. And everyone is looking for a place to sleep.

Right now the priority is to get workers lodging as close to their work site as possible.

"At this point it's a safety concern," Walker said. "Folks are working 12 to 15 hour days and they are driving up to two hours to and from the hotel. With maybe 4 to 5 hours of sleep, these people are exhausted."

A huge break came when a Fort Myers hotel had thirty



Yvette Walker as reservations clerk.

rooms open up because a convention was cancelled. Walker begged for the rooms and within thirty hours she had them all filled.

While Walker says she would have preferred working in the field, she's happy to stay and work as long as they keep her busy. Being flexible with the day-to-day changes of an emergency operation is a necessary part of any deployment.

Walker is on a 29-day deployment although she's been asked to consider extending. She is willing to stay as long as necessary. Her past deployments have ranged between 30 and 45 days. 🏠

Thank You!

While on disaster duty in Florida I received a call from my brother stating that I needed to come home! My mother had a massive stroke and she passed away Sept. 22. I did not know if I was coming or going...the only thing I could think about was getting home to be at her side. Thanks to Bill DeBruyn and Cullum Miller, I made it home! What a great family the Corps of Engineers is! I would like to thank all of you for your prayers, thoughts, cards, phone calls, and flowers. It meant so much to me when I saw the beautiful flower arrangements that were sent. One of mother's great loves was flowers! *Delia (Dee) Rivera, Administrative Assistant, EC-C*