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Nashville District

DistrictDigest

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Respected-Responsible-Reliable

April 2004

Just To Be On The Safe Side . . .

By John Tibbles

Since we are in the spring weather cycle, I thought it would be good to provide some safety tips concerning flood safety. Here are some recommendations:

Do not walk through flowing water.

Drowning is the number one cause of flood deaths. Most drownings occur during flash floods. Six inches of flowing water can knock you off your feet.

Do not drive through a flooded area.

More people drown in their cars than anywhere else. Don't drive around road barriers; the road or bridge may be washed out.

Stay away from power lines and electrical wires.

Electrocution is also a major killer in floods. Electric current can travel through water. Report downed power lines to your utility company.

Turn off your electricity when you return home.

Some appliances, such as television sets, can shock you even after they have been unplugged.

Look before you step.

After a flood, the ground and floors are covered with debris including broken bottles

and nails. Floors and stairs that have been covered with mud can be very slippery.

Carbon monoxide exhaust kills.

Use a generator or other gasoline-powered machine outdoors. The same goes for camping stoves and charcoal grills.

Take good care of yourself.

Recovering from a flood is a big job. It is tough on both the body and the spirit. Rest often and take good care of yourself and your family.

Remember, **Safety - It's a Team Effort!**

Ingram Barge Wants to Correct the Facts

Dear Editor,

I am sending this to correct a statement about a fatality and numerous man overboard incidents in the last paragraph of your article titled, "Pickwick Employees Help Rescue Deckhand Thrown From Barge" in the February, 2004 *District Digest*.

First, let me again express that we are very grateful for the quick and effective response of Corps employees at Pickwick Lock to rescue our associate from harm. They certainly deserve accolades as real professionals.

Unfortunately, Ingram Barge Company has experienced a fatality in the past, however, the last to occur was more than four years ago. I believe there was some confusion regarding a fatality that occurred in the New Orleans area involving another company, shortly before our associate fell overboard. We

had communicated the fatality incident to our crews in an effort to raise their awareness. (*Editor's Note: The Ingram worker who commented to the Corps, erroneously recalled that statistic.*) Overboard incidents are very high profile in our company and a great deal of time is taken to investigate each case to determine root causes so appropriate preventive measures may be taken. Although we have not completely eliminated such incidents, it certainly is our goal and we have made great strides in reducing the number of overboards.

We would very much appreciate a printed correction to set the record straight. Thank you and should you have any questions, please let me know.

Sincerely,
John W. Patterson, Director,
Corporate Safety and Security
Ingram Barge Company



Students Help Complete Project

See Page 6



Tennessee
Center
for Performance
Excellence

2003
Achievement Award

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April Facts in District History

April 12, 1780 - Settlers ascending the Cumberland River arrive at the mouth of the Red River and found a settlement that becomes Clarksville, Tenn.

April 24, 1780 - John Donelson's party of settlers reached the future site of Nashville after an epic four-month voyage down the Tennessee River, up the Ohio and the Cumberland.

April 1865 - Major Wilbur F. Foster, Confederate Engineers [later of the Foster Creighton Company a builder of several Corps projects] arranges the escape of the Confederate government from Richmond, Va.

April 1865 - General Godfrey Weitzel

and Major William R. King (later in charge of improvements on the Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers) lead the first Federal troops into Richmond, Va.

April 1, 1918 - Satellite district established at Florence, Ala., to manage the construction of Wilson Dam.

April 1936 - The Nashville District steam towboat *Warioto*, transports the 317th Field Artillery and 310th Cavalry (U.S. Army Reserve units) to Lock A, Ashland City, Tenn., for tactical maneuvers and weapons testing.

April 1943 - Work on Center Hill Dam is stopped by World War II. Work never resumed until after the war. 🏠



photo by Bill Peoples

On the Cover

Zach Matthews (left) and Nabil Saleh (right), both freshman at Montgomery Bell Academy, plant a tree seedling at Metro Center Levee Flood Damage Reduction Project under the supervision of Ranger Tadd Potter, conservation biologist at Cheatham Lake. The students helped complete the project by replanting trees as mitigation for those lost during improvements to the Levee. See page 6 & 7 for the complete story.

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Information about the Nashville District may also be found on the

Emerging Leaders Gather in Nashville

by Mike Looney

The LRD Emerging Leaders Focus Group (ELFG) is actually made of two groups; the Emerging Leaders who serve for the one year they are chosen to participate in the Senior Leaders Conference with the Chief and the Focus Group members who serve for two years.

The Focus Group was created to provide feedback to the Division Commander on issues facing both the division and the entire U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Many of these issues are directly related to improving processes and sharing best practices within and across (regionally) the division.

With an agenda to meet once per quarter, the group gets together with a different district hosting the gathering each time. A few weeks prior to each meeting, LRD Executive Officer Jeannie Hull e-mails each member a "homework" assignment. At the meeting, each district reports the findings of that assignment. To date, Learning Organizations, Outsourcing, Leveraging Technology and implementation of USACE 2012 have been some of the topics assigned.

The ELFG was most recently tasked with providing input for the Lessons



Emerging Leaders tour Old Hickory Power Plant Feb. 13.

Learned section of the 2012 Implementation Project Management Plan for LRD.

On February 13, Nashville District hosted the group at Music City's Hilton Hotel and formulated a plan to assess the 2012 organization to help determine if we are achieving the goals set for us by General Flowers. Several Nashville

members served on the last Functional Area Assessment (FAA) process. Current ELFG representatives from Nashville are Joanne Mann (Resource Management) and Mike Looney (Barkley Resource). Former members include Melissa Sager, Charlie Bryan, Sue Ferguson, William James, Vicky Caldwell, Ray Bess, and Tom Hood. 🏠

District Hosts Two March Training Events

by Judy Potaczek, Training Coordinator

The Nashville District hosted two training events during March and saved money in the process.

The Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) Course, taught by the Army Logistics Management College (ALMC) was held March 1-5 and the Construction Safety Course was held March 16-18 at the Sheraton Music City Hotel.

The first course trained 35 personnel; 18 from Nashville and 17 from other Districts, Fort Campbell, Redstone Arsenal, and the Umatilla Chemical Depot located in Oregon. The energetic students called the course an unqualified success.

Barney Davis, acting deputy commander, welcomed 27 Lakes and River Division students, employees from Detroit, Louisville and Nashville Districts, to the Construction Safety Course.

The LRD Regional Training Committee identified the course as a common training and cost savings opportunity based on review of the consolidated FY04 Automated Training Management Program (ATMP) data. The course met the committee's objectives for regional training opportunities and, since Nashville had the majority of students requiring this course, the District was named "Champion" and the host site. As the

host site, Nashville coordinated and executed the regional training event and saved \$7,500 in the process.

The Construction Safety Course is PROSPECT Course 215 which covers the major aspects of the Corps of Engineers construction safety and health program.

Course Instructors discussed and examined application of EM 385-1-1 to construction field settings and problem areas. Many of the students found the course informative, the instructors knowledgeable and felt that they benefited greatly from the information presented. 🏠

The Corps Crowd

Welcome to ...

...to David Denton who volunteers six hours a week at Dale Hollow Power. We could all use a dose of his enthusiasm for the job!

Congratulations to ...

... Sandra Breault, a staff accountant in the Finance and Accounting Branch. Grandson Trevor Breault won the State Championship for Arizona for Karate (Kumite), held in Scottsdale, Az. He won the National Championship in the U.S. Karate Association National Championship for Kumite held in Albuquerque, N.M.. He will participate in the World Championships in New Orleans, La., in July, quite an incredible accomplishment for a 5-year-old.

... to Rosa Nanette Boone, a senior at Tennessee State University, who was inducted into the Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi, on April 2, with a grade point average of 3.622. She is the daughter of James H. Boone, mechanic "A" at the Old Hickory Power Plant.

... to Lisa Boling and Chris Campbell on their promotion to senior power plant shift operators at the Old Hickory Power Plant. Both just completed their training program.

Baby Brigade ...

...the birth of twins to Billy and Shannon Cherry. Kyle Vance, 2 pounds, 11 ounces, and brother, Tristan Michael, 3 pounds, 6 ounces, March 11th. Proud Granny and Pa are Shirley Cherry, Dale Hollow Power office assistant, and husband, Travis Cherry.

... Elizabeth and Chad are the proud parents of a son, Addison Lyell Braun, born on March 22. Chad Braun is a Civil Engineer intern currently in the Hydrology & Hydraulics Branch.

...Sherry and Mark Herd, an environmental specialist ranger, Center Hill Lake, on the birth of their second son, Delton Lee, born on March 11.

...Dave Day is the proud grandfather of Brandon Joseph, who was born on March 18 and weighed in at 7 pounds, 5 ounces.

Get Well to ...

...Teresa Wilhite, a budget analyst with Engineering-Construction Division, who is recovering from shoulder surgery performed in December. She is currently undergoing physical therapy.

Sympathy to ...

...Donald Birdsong, whose mother, Vernice Birdsong, passed away March 18. Donnie is a lock operator at Barkley Lock.

...the family of Martha Patterson Brown, former employee of the Resource Management Office, Finance and Accounting Branch, died March 24.

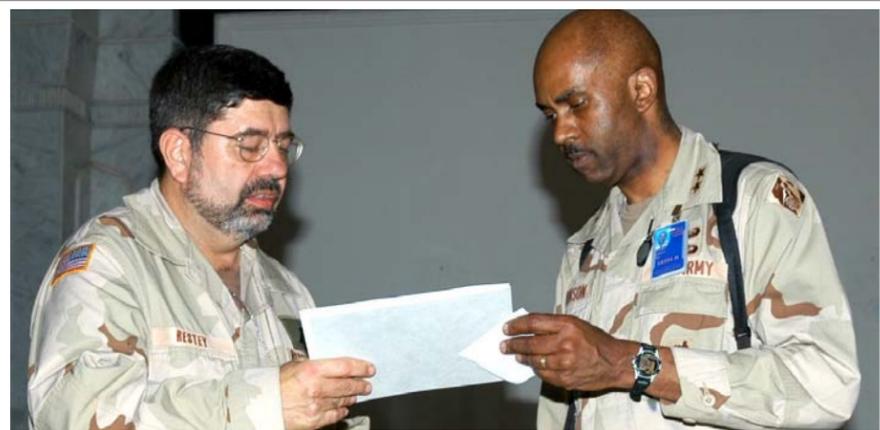
Free Arthritis Workshop

There will be a free Arthritis Workshop presented by the Arthritis Foundation on Tuesday, April 13th from 11:45 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. in Cafeteria A.

The presentation is called Arthritis Answers and is free of charge. The Arthritis Foundation speakers will offer other class alternatives at this session that may be scheduled at a later date.

If you had already expressed an interest in the six-week Arthritis workshop, plan to attend this session.

The class is offered free and is open to everyone!



photos by Ed Evans

John Restey (above) and Ted Ryon (below) are presented Certificates of achievement by MG Ronald Johnson, commander of the Gulf Region Division (Provisional) in Baghdad at the end of their 'tour of duty.'



Lieutenant Colonel Byron Jorns From Where I Sit



Folks, ...next month the District will deploy the P2 software operating system, which will be a significant change to the way we, and the entire Corps, does business. Of course, P2 is the successor to PROMIS. P2 applies to all aspects of project management and has far-reaching impacts throughout the Nashville District.

...to date, there has been a flurry of activity behind the scenes to posture Nashville District for success in P2 implementation. In March, representatives from each LRD District participated in the Local Configuration Managers course conducted here in Nashville. On the heels of this training, Nashville District sponsored a two-week P2 indoctrination targeted towards SME's (Subject Matter Experts) of the PMBP (Project Management Business Processes) from the entire Division. After the SME's are trained, they will aid a PSP (Primavera Solutions Provider) in

Communication

teaching each District's PDT (Project Deliver Team) or PDT Lite training. Others will receive an executive level or management analysis course. The bottom line is that our Corps and the Nashville District are making a heavy investment in P2. The reasons should be clear...P2 is here to stay. There's no going back to "the old way".

...our Division's P2 deployment date is right around the corner; May 24. Lots of lessons-learned have already been captured as we observe and gather feedback from SWD (Southwestern Division) and POD (Pacific Ocean Division). Local configuration managers will start our deployment by initiating selected projects into the P2 system and troubleshooting problems encountered along the way. All this will be done to prepare the District for successful deployment in May. LRD's deployment window will end on June 11. At this time, there will be a 90-day period whereby all of our projects will be entered into the system. We will enter each of our projects manually. This will accomplish

two goals: 1) gain additional experience with the P2 operating system and its capability, and 2) instill confidence in each manager that the data entered is accurate and trustworthy. Prior to the 90-day time period, all PR&C's must be initiated based upon schedules being developed by the Project Delivery Teams. At the end of the 90-day period, all District (and Division) projects will be in the P2 system. P2 will "talk" to other systems (CEFMS, RMS, etc.) we have in place. If a project is not in P2, work simply cannot be done. There are no work-arounds.

...we're clearly about to "cross the Rubicon". We, no doubt, will experience several challenges with P2 implementation. This can be expected when implementing a new and multi-faceted program throughout our 35,000 strong organization. The level of pain is largely left up to our attitudes about P2 implementation. As LTG Flowers says, it can be an ordeal, or an adventure...the choice is ours. I would hope that we all embrace the challenges ahead as an adventure and through teamwork and determination, we'll find ways around each obstacle that we find before us. I think we'll

March Employee of the Month

Avis Kennedy, chief of the Natural Resources Management Branch, Operations Division, is the March Nashville District Employee of the month.

Kennedy was cited for her exceptional performance during the past few weeks in moving the Recreation Excellence Program at Army Lakes (REAL) program from the planning phase to the implementation phase.

She was responsible for the review of comments and petitions from local government officials and members of



Avis Kennedy

all come to realize that P2 can and will serve us well into the future.

As we enter this volatile time of spring weather, I want to say a few words about precautions each of us should take.

Tornadoes are a real concern at this time of year. Each year about a thousand tornadoes touch down in the U.S. Only a small percentage actually strike occupied buildings, but each year a number of people are killed or injured.

One of the most important things you can do to prevent being injured in a tornado is to be **alert** to the onset of severe weather. Most deaths and injuries happen to people who are unaware and uninformed.

If strange clouds start moving in and the weather begins to look stormy, turn to the local radio or television station to get the weather forecast. Remember,

Safety - It's a Team Effort! 🇺🇸

Don't Be Frozen Change, Learn from Others' Mistakes!

by Dane Owens

Change is a problem for most people. Someone said the only person who welcomes change is a wet baby. Knowing my two granddaughters – I can see the wisdom in that statement. For the rest of us, change takes a little longer and is harder to accept.

Several models exist which explain how change should occur in an organization, and several case studies are available that show where an organization failed because it could not or would not change. One comes to mind right away. Early in the last century, the leader of a business in Detroit, Michigan, that manufactured buggy whips was asked by Henry Ford if the company could make radiator drive belts. The company executive told Ford the motorcar was a passing fancy and refused the business.

Today as I drive my pickup truck around Amish country, I still see an occasional buggy whip in use. But, of course, radiator drive belts are much more plentiful. So, "What does this have to do with auditing?" one might ask ... pretty much everything.

During the past year or so, the Internal Review team has studied several of Nashville District's operational functions and those studies have resulted in mutually agreeable recommendations. As implementation of these 'fixes' begins, something else occurs – change – the way things were done before stops and a new method begins. It's easy to ask everyone to effectively give up their buggy whip for a radiator drive belt, but it's not so easy to accomplish...

As we in Internal Review recommend change we are conscious of how change must occur, especially in an organization such as ours, if it is to stick.

In simple terms, auditors usually find practices, policies and procedures frozen in place. Auditors are really suggesting that you thaw out the old way and 'refreeze' the new practices, policies and procedures in place. Simple? Of course not! No matter who is recommending it, people do not usually want to change

something that has proven successful for many years.

One may ask the question, "How do we get change to stick?" or "How do we re-freeze the new 'normal' and create a new 'business as usual'?" After recommended changes are agreed upon, we must implement them using a simple six-step method.

These simple steps will help our most valuable assets overcome resistance and begin to change. Those assets, our people, are the ones who must change and begin any new process. It's obvious; the buggy whip is not used like the radiator drive belt.

1) Change is inevitable, both formally and informally, regardless of who advocates it.

2) There should be questions about newly recommended processes. People should be able to explain why recommended changes must occur.

3) Achievement or an expectation of benefits must be convincing to all who are part of the 'new way of doing day-to-day business'.

4) Expect naysayers to be everywhere awaiting the opportunity to sabotage any attempt to change the status quo.

Everyone must be listening for rational

and irrational disapproval of the methods, practices, and procedures and be prepared with solutions to counter objections.

5) Primary apprehensions and underlying concerns can be forces which prevent change from becoming permanent (frozen). Individual employees must take the initiative to quell rumors and distress during critical phases as change is implemented.

6) Everyone must have time to learn and adapt to changes - allow for it. "Rome," some wise man said, "was not built in a day and certainly not conquered overnight." We must give ourselves a chance to get used to the 'new (normal) way' of doing things. Remember, change is new and in time the new will be frozen and recognized as normal.

As we prepare to give up our ability to manufacture buggy whips and accept changes that mean retooling our shops to make radiator belts, think about this ... if the buggy whip manufacturer had a slogan painted on the outside of his factory that said, "We provide quality, cost-effective, timely and environmentally sound planning, engineering, construction, and operational products and services!" ... I wonder what they would have said to Henry Ford? 



photo by Dave Treadway

Employees from throughout LRD attend P2 "bootcamp" April 7 in Nashville to become subject matter experts in the new software, one of the most significant changes to the Corps' 'way of doing business' since the introduction of CEFMS in 1998.

Task Force RIE; Short Term, High Impact

Story and photo by Ed Evans

BAGHDAD, IRAQ — During September 2003, a small number of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers volunteers began their movement to Baghdad, Iraq, to be part of Task Force Restore Iraqi Electricity (TF RIE). That Task Force eventually grew to 90 members.

Each man and woman had one thought in mind, to apply his or her particular talent and skill to the mission of positioning Iraq to achieve stable and consistent electricity on the national grid. They were volunteering to spend three months in Iraq on a crash project, sometimes under fire, and always under a ticking clock.

The Task Force was commanded by Brigadier General (Promotable) Steven R. Hawkins, with Colonel Todd Semonite as his action-oriented deputy. The General had been there twice before. First he was deployed from December 2002 to April 2003 for Iraqi Freedom under U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) where he commanded Combined Joint Task Force-4, the forerunner of today's Combined Joint Task Force-7. Then from Apr – Jul 2003 he commanded Task Force Fajr.

Under BG(P) Hawkins, Task Force RIE took the 26 hardest projects and worked them so well that even as the team was headed out the door to go home in December, the Ministry of Electricity was asking for more. In the end, 55 team members went home on schedule, but 35 volunteered to remain behind to take on longer-range projects, folding into the new Gulf Region Division that was stood up in Iraq on Feb. 25. At that point all Corps of Engineers missions in Iraq became part of the new Division. For all practical purposes, Task Force RIE completed assigned activities on Feb. 25th.

But before their initial arrival, each member went through a weeklong crash course at the Transatlantic Command in Winchester, Va., on field procedures, using satellite telephones, video equipment, first aid techniques, medical examinations, and a battery of vaccinations. They also received lectures



Workers erect one of the many towers that will carry electricity throughout the country of Iraq.

on in-country procedures, Iraqi culture and customs, an Arabic language CD, and an issue of U.S. Army uniforms. For a few, it was their first time in the uniform of their country's armed forces. From there it was an intercontinental flight to Spain and finally Baghdad, Iraq, and on to the vital mission before them.

Task Force RIE was built with volunteers of specific skills such as mechanical, civil and electrical engineers; cost estimators, contractors, schedulers, and a wide range of support skills. They were operating as a "team within a team" asset of CENTCOM, in response to the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) request for immediate Corps expertise in restoring electricity and launching capabilities to assist the Iraqis in rebuilding their country.

They were a short-term, high-impact task force charged with making it possible for Iraqis to restore specific areas of high-tension lines and power stations critical to long-term restoration of the nationwide electrical grid. What

they were up against was 623 damaged or destroyed transmission towers and roughly 620 miles of 400KV and 132KV transmission lines lying on the ground that were needed to transmit power from deteriorating generation stations and substations to sabotaged distribution nodes.

It was into this mix the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers sent its very best with a "reach back" capability that brought to bear the latest wisdom and technology to a country that had been in technological limbo for the past 17 years. For every wheezing thermal transfer plant with eight generators sitting in various stages of disrepair, for every critical substation limping along so badly it was taking electricity from the grid, rather than adding it, for every generating station with a polyglot of French, Russian and American generators no longer working, the team members inspected, assessed, photographed, and brought in contractors with solutions.

But they had to hurry, for theirs was a short-term, high-impact mission. With a handle on the size and extent of the problem before them, their next task was to infuse the contractors with the same sense of emergency under which they labored. In the same way the Corps performs emergency recovery efforts within the U.S. after a hurricane or a flood, TF RIE was working as a responsive team within a team employing specific skills to deal with highly unusual problems on a national scale.

Soon, from all over the world, generators, parts, transmission towers, and electric lines began to flow to Iraq like that country was a magnet. They came by ship and by plane, some civilian, some military transports. Convoys of trucks began to unload necessary vital materials, and crews went to work putting an electrical grid together that would provide reliable service to all of the people of Iraq. Their accomplishments include:

- Rehabilitated generators at Dibis, Najaf, and Kohr al

For a complete list, go to <http://www.lrn.usace.army.mil/pao/digest/0404/0404TOC.HTM>, click on TF RIE.

“Wilfred Yesterday, Today and Forever”

Written and narrated by Charles E. Harris at the Retirees Luncheon in March at the Piccadilly Restaurant in Madison on the occasion of Wilfred Fischer's 99th birthday.

We are here to remember and pay tribute to Wilfred Fischer. Anyone who has studied the Bible will see that I am paraphrasing a Biblical passage. My title may sound a little ambitious but I only have three points. My first one is Wilfred Yesterday. . .

I worked 30 years or so with Wilfred and I have been retired for 30 so I have known him for more than 60 years. We worked together in the old Hydroelectric Design Branch. Some said that we worked behind the iron curtain, so called by some irreverent folks there.

You know, during that time we knew that Wilfred had accumulated a fair amount of this world's goods and a number of us would kid him at times with, 'You know Wilfred, you know you can't take it with you so how about putting us in your will?' His standard reply was, 'Well, if I can't take it then I'm not going!'

A little later on, Wilfred began to acquire a few more aches and pains and his vision of immortality began to dim a little bit and he kind of changed his reply. He would then say, 'Well, if it turns out I can't take it with me I'm going to leave it all to Hazel and she'll bring it when she comes.' But after that I heard that Hazel went and as far as I know, Hazel didn't take it with her. So I have wondered since then how Wilfred is going to get it up there? Knowing Wilfred as I do, I just had to believe that he was not going to give up. He had to have a plan.

That brings me to point number two, Wilfred Today. . .

Wilfred is a native Texan. He grew up around San Antonio and was educated at Texas A&M University, where he earned a

degree in Civil Engineering. While there he was a member of the ROTC and spent time with a horse cavalry unit. He learned there that you had to

take care of your horse before you take care of yourself. He remembered those days and he used to talk about them some. I've heard, and I've got this on pretty good authority, that Wilfred is leaving the bulk of his estate to Texas A&M University to establish a fund for needy students. Tuition rates continue to go up and so many students who try to get in just don't have the means to do it. So Wilfred is leaving the bulk of his money, and I expect it's a fair amount, in order to establish scholarships there. I hope I'm not violating a confidence in telling that, it's just such a wonderful story I felt like it needed to be shared. And you know even while he's doing that, I wondered how he was going to get the remainder of it up there when he goes because I don't believe he has completely given up on that idea. Then one day I heard a preacher talking, and this preacher was talking about storing up treasure in Heaven and he went on to say that you do this by helping other people while you are here on earth. That's the way you store up your treasure in Heaven. The preacher said, 'You can't take it with you but you can send it on ahead.' I believe that's what Wilfred has done. You can't send it in earthly dollars but you can send it in spiritual dollars, which are far more valuable and have a lasting benefit. That helped me understand Wilfred's plan.



photo by Robert Williams

Wilfred Fischer (center) is accompanied by Jack Hoffmeister (left) and Bobby Ezell last year on a tour of the Laurel Power Plant, a project he helped design but had never seen until then. He retired from the Nashville District 31 years ago on March 31, 1973.

He's going to send it on ahead, in fact he's in the process of doing that so it's waiting for him when he gets there.

This brings me to Wilfred Forever. . .

I know I can't see the future but as a famous orator once said, 'I have a dream.'

That dream is that I can see Wilfred someday, maybe in another 99 years, knocking on the Pearly Gates. When Saint Peter comes and sees who it is, I think he's going to throw the gate open and say, 'Come on in Wilfred, we've been looking for you for a long time. Your mansion is on the street of gold, down just a short ways and Hazel is sitting on the front porch looking for you.' He starts down the street and Hazel comes to meet him, walking or maybe flying on angel wings. She says, 'Oh Honey, I'm so glad to see you! Come on in, I want you to see the mansion, it's a little messed up right now because I've had to add on some rooms. Wilfred you have been sending so much treasure up here I've got to have extra rooms to store it all!'

Wilfred, I think there is a lesson in this for all of us. We get by giving, and the more we give, the more that comes back to us. I have a vision of Wilfred one day in eternity with Hazel up there and all of his spiritual treasures stored up forever and ever. I am proud to have known him and what he has done. We all wish him well. 🇺🇸

Team of Teams Core of 2012

I'd like to provide an update on our progress in implementing USACE 2012. As you've read and heard, becoming a team of teams capable of operating virtually in a Learning Organization is the core principle of USACE 2012. The Communities of Practice (CoP) concept is at the center of a true learning organization - CoPs ensure we maintain and expand our technical expertise.



Although the concept of CoPs may be new to many, the reality is that numerous CoPs are already thriving in USACE and are making substantial contributions to the professional and efficient performance of the Corps. The CoPs outlined in USACE 2012 will provide us with additional opportunities for mentoring, learning and sharing ideas.

In the coming weeks you'll be learning more about the actual implementation of the 24 main CoPs. Some communities

are already at work, but we formally began a series of CoP orientation seminars in late March and early April. The CoP implementation team is working hard to make sure orientation seminars provide teams with tools they need to be successful. Some of the critical factors for success include: bringing together key leaders; choosing a focus that has a sense of urgency; ensuring open communication; and fostering trust, respect and enthusiasm. As additional CoPs begin, we'll use the knowledge we've gained to make each implementation more effective - truly applying the Learning Organization philosophy.

I'm very proud of the work that's already been done to make USACE 2012 a reality. I appreciate your patience, your hard work and your positive attitude as we work to make the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers an even more responsive and effective organization.

Essayons!
Bob Flowers
Chief of Engineers

A Letter from Iraq . . . Thanks from the Entire Team

Dear Friends and Family, as of this moment, one minute after midnight on Sunday morning, I have just two days and a wake-up before I fly out of Baghdad, Iraq, to Kuwait, from there to Amsterdam, and then to good old Dulles Airport in the USA!

As family and friends you have been wonderful. Your many emails, packages, and encouragement have been shared with the team here as appropriate. I am truly the luckiest man on earth to have such a large number of support people behind me. You made a difficult tour of duty much more bearable. Thank you more than I can possibly express.

I have been asked if I would consider reapplying to come back over here after a few weeks at home. I have told officials here I would consider it. And I will. But right now my head and heart are in Tennessee. I just have to get my butt in the same place. Two days and a wake-up. Those

of you who are prayer partners, I urge you to continue to pray for the well-being and safety of the guys and gals who have volunteered to come to Iraq to give them a hand up. Despite what you are hearing from the news media, the majority of Iraqis appreciate our presence. They don't want us here permanently, but right now they don't want us to leave, either.

Iraq will turn out all right, I'm convinced of that. I'm convinced because I have worked side by side with these people and I know their commitment to their own future. Like you and I, they want a better future for their children. You see, fully 70% of the population of Iraq is under the age of 20. This is a very impressionable time for the future of Iraq, both in its children, and in its governing organization. They will come through it because they want to. Giving them room to breath and learn and take charge is the least we can do, while protecting them

President Nominates 51st Chief of Engineers

The President of the United States has nominated Major General Carl A. Strock to become the 51st Chief of Engineers, with an appointment to the grade of Lieutenant General. The U.S. Senate must confirm the nomination.



"MG Strock currently serves as the Director of Civil Works," said LTG Robert Flowers, the current Chief of Engineers, "and recently returned from Iraq, where he did outstanding work as the Deputy Director of Operations for the Coalition Provisional Authority."

MG Stock's other USACE assignments include serving as the director of Military Programs and commander of the Pacific Ocean and Northwestern Divisions. 🇺🇸

Academy Students Partner with Corps to Plant Trees

by Bill Peoples

On Saturday, March 20, eight students and two faculty members from Montgomery Bell Academy (MBA) in Nashville cut short their spring break to help four Corps of Engineers employees plant more than 650 trees. The project was a community service activity for the school and one of the last phases of the Metro Center Levee Project to be completed.

"We are always looking for ways to give the boys opportunities for community service," said Wendy Holmgren, 9th Grade biology teacher and assistant freshman class advisor. "Dr. Dwight Bailey, the freshman class advisor, contacted the Metro Greenways Commission who gave him a contact person with the Corps, Joe Morrison. Joe told us about the Metro Center Levee project and the need to plant replacement trees. Although this week was Spring Break, we had eight boys volunteer to come out here with Dr. Bailey and myself."

As part of the final phase of the Metro Center Levee project, trees were being planted as mitigation for trees lost during construction of the levee.

"We had to remove trees during construction because of safety considerations," said Joe Morrison, landscape architect, Nashville District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. "As part of the mitigation process, we were required to replace about as many trees as we had to remove and we replanted about half of those trees as part of our construction project. We ran out of space where we could plant what we had of bald and burlap stock. We worked it out with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife



Montgomery Bell Academy Students work in pairs March 20 and use a dibble to plant selected hardwoods as mitigation for trees destroyed when the Metro Center Levee Flood Damage Reduction Project was completed.

service to plant the rest as seedlings, and it is much more cost effective to do that with a volunteer group."

After receiving a call from MBA expressing interest in

helping the Corps, Morrison coordinated with Ecologist Ray Hedrick and Metro Center Levee Project Manager Dave Hendrix to select a site for the tree planting.

The fourth Nashville team member to get involved was Tadd Potter, ranger and conservation biologist at Cheatham Lake, since the Metro Center Levee backs up to the

Cumberland River in Cheatham Lake's area of the river. Potter showed the volunteers how to plant the seedlings.

"We were talking about it in biology class and it sounded like a good thing to do," said Russell Mack, 15, a freshman at MBA. "After we learned how to do it, planting trees is not hard, and I feel like I have done something to help the environment. It really is easy to come out here and get involved."

Because MBA got involved, Hendrix said it saved the Corps tens of thousands of dollars.

"We do appreciate the MBA students and faculty for coming out today," said Hedrick. "They had fun and they have certainly hit the ball out of the park for us. It has been a win/win for MBA and the Corps. I hope they will be motivated to do similar projects in the future."

One of the volunteers summed up the day well:

"It is great to come out here and do something for the environment that will last for a long time," said John Fontana, 14 and a freshman at MBA. "There are many service projects we can do, but I'll be able to bring my children and grandchildren by here and say 'I helped plant those trees when I was a freshman at MBA.'"



Project Manager Dave Hendrix plants a tree seedling.

Trousdale Elementary School

District Engineer Visits Fifth Grade Class

by Bracken Mayo (Reprinted with permission from The Hartsville Vidett)

Members of the United States Army Corps of Engineers visited a Trousdale County Elementary School classroom March 25, responding to letters students wrote regarding the Corps closing area recreation sites.

The Corps proposed closing numerous campgrounds and boat launching sites earlier this year including Goose Creek Launching Area in Trousdale County. When some of Liz Hurst's fifth-grade writing students discovered their intentions, they responded.

"We don't want the parks and launching areas closed," fifth-grader Ryan Cornwell said in his letter to the Corps. "My family and I like to go camping and fishing. Our favorite place to fish is Goose Creek, which is being closed."

Over 20 other fifth-graders wrote letters opposing the closings.

"They were really upset," Hurst said. "I told them Hey you guys are citizens, you should respond."

Students said they enjoyed participating in many activities at the recreation sites like jet skiing, innertubing and hiking.

"People like to go to a campground to swim, walk on trails and fishing," Abigail Cothron said. "People also like to have family reunions at every lake you're closing."

Colby Williams, like many students, said he was concerned that people would throw trash on and vandalize closed parks.

In a visit to the school, Nashville District Engineer Col. Byron Jorns said the students communicated their point very effectively.

"Thank you for the letters you've written, I've read every one of them," he told the students Thursday. "Your ability to write



photo by Steve Foshee

Lt. Col. Byron Jorns speaks to fifth grade students in Trousdale Elementary School March 25.

will serve you well in your adult lives.

"Unfortunately, over the last several years customer satisfaction has declined," he said.

He said the Corps was closing some areas so they could make improvements to others.

However, as a result of the public response, the Corps is working with local governments to keep the areas open, Jorns said. Trousdale County will assume responsibility for the Goose Creek area.

"It's not really going to cost us that much money to keep it going," County Executive Jerry Clift said. "It's worth it so the community can use it."

Jorns commended Clift's efforts to keep the site open.

"He has really stepped up to the plate, especially with Goose Creek, with the maintenance and cleanup," Jorns said.

While some areas may still be closed, the Corps has reduced its list of closings around Old Hickory Lake from seven sites to two, thanks also in part to the City of Gallatin assuming responsibility for Cedar Grove Launching Area.

"The Corps has actually scaled down their plans for the closings," Hurst said. "The

students feel like they're a big part of that, and they are."

The Corps still plans to close Shutes Branch Campground and Dickerson Chapel Launching Area.

"It pains us to have to close some sites," Jorns said.

When Jorns told the students the Defeated Creek area would remain open, many answered with a whispered, excited "Yes!"

Kenny Claywell, a park ranger at Old Hickory Lake with the Corps, said the students were not alone in their feelings for the sites.

"All of us, even myself, use these areas for fishing and swimming and for viewing flowers and taking pictures," he said.

Brianna Garrett, a letter writer, felt first hand that sort of participatory democracy.

"The Corps of Engineers said our letters influenced their decision," she said.

Claywell applauded the students' efforts and encouraged them to continue to work to make the environment better. He said they should do something beneficial for the environment on Earth Day, April 22.