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Quinebaug River designated National Recreation Trail

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Story on page 4

Yankee Voices



Annie Chin and EAP Representative
Annabelle Chu Snyder

Congratulations

... to **Bob DeSista**, Regulatory on the birth of his granddaughter, **Lindsay Eileen**, on May 19.

...to **Drew Clemens**, Engineering/Planning, and his wife, **Michelle**, on the adoption of their son, **Ilan Jikang Clemens**.

Sympathy

...to **Raimo Liias**, Engineering/Planning, on the passing of his mother, June 7.

Be prepared when stress awaits you

Try this tip for overcoming stress when it threatens to overwhelm you: things you like to do, that you look forward to, and that help you relax.

When you're feeling stressed, take a look at your list and pick one that you can do right away, even if only for a few minutes. You'll feel better, and just knowing you've got options should help you maintain your cool.

(First Draft Magazine)

Change of Command ceremony for Corps of Engineers New England District July 29

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District (headquartered in Concord, Mass.), will be hosting a Change of Command Ceremony on Friday, July 29, 2011 in Boston, Mass. District Engineer Col. Philip T. Feir will pass the command flag to the new, incoming District Engineer Col. Charles P. Samaris. There may be limited seating available; non-District employees who wish to attend may contact Sally Rigione for additional information and protocols to include security requirements at sally.m.rigione@usace.army.mil or by calling her at 978-318-8237. Attendance is limited.

Go back to basics to ease back pain

Your parents told you to sit up straight, but if you slump in your chair, you could be putting unnecessary and painful strain on your back. Here are some basic tips to improve your sitting posture:

- Pick a chair that fits your body. The seat should fit the distance from your buttocks to your knees. And your chair should be the right height from your knees to the floor for your legs to be straight and comfortable.
- Support your lower back. Use pillows with office chairs (or the seat of your car.)
- Don't sit with your head forward. You'll put added strain on your spine. Sit up straight (Yes, Mom), and try not to lean your body to one side or the other.

(First Draft Magazine)

Words worth repeating

A different world cannot be built by indifferent people.

- **Peter Marshall**

I have no special talents. I am only passionately curious.

- **Albert Einstein**



Col. Samaris to take command of New England District in July

Col. Charles Samaris will assume command of the New England District on July 29, 2011. He graduated from the University of Miami, Fla., with a Bachelor's Degree in Architecture. He earned a Master's of Science in Foundations of Education (Health Promotion Programs) from Troy State University and a Master's of Science in Military Operational Arts and Sciences from Air University. His military education includes the Engineer Officer Basic Course and the Armor Officer Advanced Course, and the Air Command and Staff College.

In 1989 Col. Samaris was commissioned as a Regular Army Second Lieutenant in the United States Army Corps of Engineers. In March 1990, he was assigned to Company A, 20th Engineer Battalion (Corps Combat) where he served as Sapper Platoon Leader and Company Executive Officer, to include six months of service in the Persian Gulf during Operations Desert Shield/Storm. In 1992, Col. Samaris was assigned to the 2nd Infantry Division (Mechanized), Republic of Korea (ROK) where he initially served as the staff officer to the Assistant Division Engineer, G-3 Operations. He then assumed command of Company B, 44th Engineer Battalion (Divisional Mechanized), 2ID-ROK, serving as the Task Force (TF) Engineer for TF 2-72 Armor. He assumed a second command, serving as Commander, 50th Engineer Company (Assault Float Bridge), 2ID-ROK, providing river crossing support to the 2nd Infantry Division until September 1995. Colonel Samaris was then assigned to the United States Army National Training Center at Fort Irwin, Calif., where he served as an Observer/Controller (O/C) for engineer commanders and staffs at company, battalion and brigade level through 1997.

Following that assignment, he served as the Engineer Instructor and Deputy Chief of the Combined Arms and Leadership Division at the United States Army Infantry School, Fort Benning, Ga. While at Fort Benning, he served as the Operations Officer (S-3) and Executive Officer for the 317th Engineer Battalion (Divisional Mechanized), 3rd Brigade Combat Team (BCT), 3rd Infantry Division. During this time he deployed with 3BCT as the Engineer Battalion Commander (Forward) for Operation Desert Spring, and subsequently as Battalion Executive Officer during Operation

Iraqi Freedom and 3ID combat operations to liberate Iraq. Upon return from Iraq, he served as the Deputy Director of Operations and Training at the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation at Fort Benning, Ga., from August 2003 to May 2006.

Col. Samaris served as the Commander of the 35th Engineer Battalion, Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., for two years. Responsible for the initial military training (IMT) of all enlisted



Col. Charles Samaris

combat engineers (21B/Combat Engineer and 21C/Combat Bridge Crewmember), the battalion trained over 16,000 new Sappers, turning civilian volunteers into combat-ready Soldiers. After command, Colonel Samaris deployed to Iraq serving as the Division Operations Officer (G3) for the Gulf Region Division of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, synchronizing command and control for a multi-billion dollar, nationwide reconstruction program in support of Multi-National Force-Iraq (MNF-I) stability operations. Upon redeployment in July 2009, Col. Samaris served as the Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army Engineer School through June 2010, with primary responsibility for publishing, communicating and advancing the Regimental Campaign

Plan. Col. Samaris' most recent assignment is serving as the Senior Service College Fellow in the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Security Studies Program.

Col. Samaris' decorations include the Bronze Star Medal with two oak leaf clusters, the Meritorious Service Medal with silver oak leaf cluster, the Army Commendation Medal with two oak leaf clusters, the Army Achievement Medal with two oak leaf clusters, the National Defense Service Medal, the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, the Southwest Asia Service Medal with two service stars, the Iraq Campaign Medal with two service stars, the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary and Service Medals, the Korea Defense Service Medal, the Army Service Ribbon, the Overseas Service Ribbon with "two" device, the Kuwait Liberation Medal (Saudi Arabia), the Kuwait Liberation Medal (Kuwait), the Combat Action Badge, the Air Assault Badge, and the Parachutist Badge. His unit decorations include the Presidential Unit Citation, the Joint Meritorious Unit Award and the Meritorious Unit Commendation.



Kayakers participate in a paddle event on the Quinebaug River at West Thompson.

Photo by Alan Dabrowski

Quinebaug River Water Trail at West Thompson Lake designated as a 'National Recreation Trail'

The U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) announced that the five-mile, Quinebaug River Water Trail at the West Thompson Lake in Connecticut is one of four U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) trails designated as national recreation trails by DOI.

These trails will join the national network of more than 1,100 recreation trails that span from coast to coast and encompass more than 13,000 miles of existing trails and trail systems.

The DOI announced that the five-mile, Quinebaug River Water Trail located at the West Thompson Lake in Connecticut is one of four U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) trails that are among 41 trails designated as national recreation trails by DOI.

The national recreation trail designation recognizes those trails that

link communities to recreational opportunities on public lands and in local parks across the nation. The first national trails were established in the early 1970s.

The Army Corps of Engineers' dam at West Thompson Lake is located in Thompson on the Quinebaug River, about 1,000 feet upstream from the junction of the Quinebaug and French rivers. It is three miles north of Putnam, Conn., on Route 12.

Construction started in August 1963 and was completed in October 1965. West Thompson Lake contains a 200-acre conservation pool that has a maximum depth of 13 feet.

The flood storage area of the project, which is normally empty and is only used to store floodwaters, totals 1,250 acres and extends seven miles

upstream. The project and associated lands cover 2,033 acres in both Thompson, Conn., and Dudley, Mass. West Thompson Lake can store up to 8.34 billion gallons of water for flood control purposes. This is equivalent to 6.5 inches of water covering its drainage area of 173.5 square miles.

The West Thompson reservoir supports a variety of recreational activities. Facilities include a picnic area and three group shelters, boat ramp, nature trail, fireplaces, hot showers, drinking water, an amphitheater for weekend campfire programs, parking and sanitary facilities.

One of the main features of West Thompson Lake is a rustic camping area with 22 camp sites, two Adirondack shelters, and a trailer sanitary disposal station. Reservoir lands are

also available for snowmobiling and cross-country skiing.

The designation of 41 new national trails will add almost 650 miles of trails to the National Trails System.

These land and water trails will continue to connect people with nature and the great outdoors as part of a healthier lifestyle, a core principle behind President Obama's *America's Great Outdoors* and First Lady Michelle Obama's *Let's Move Outside!* initiatives. Each of the new trails will receive a certificate of designation, a letter of congratulations from the Secretary of the Interior and national recreation trail markers.

As the nation's largest federal provider of outdoor and water-based recreation, USACE's 422 lake and river projects in 43 states provide more than 4,500 miles of diverse trail systems. USACE officials credit the support of local public and private organizations and the thousands of volunteers annually in helping to make these trails available for public use. The following four USACE trails have been designated as national recreation trails:

**Old Post Mountain Bike Trail
Lake Dardanelle, Ark.**

The Old Post Road Park near Russellville, Ark., hosts a series of 12 interconnecting loops offering the mountain bike enthusiast more than eight miles of trail in one great place. The loops vary in difficulty. Easy Rider Trail is a great trail for beginning mountain bikers and also a perfect place to warm up or cool down from a great ride. All other trails interconnect and vary from modest to intermediate skill level allowing everyone the opportunity for a personalized ride.

**Springhill Park Mountain
Bike Trail, John Paul**

Hammerschmidt Lake, Ark.

USACE partnered with the Mercy Cycling Club (Mercy Cycling) to construct a mountain bike trail in Barling,



Photo by Catherine Dunlop

Participants prepare to launch their kayaks in the water during a paddle event on the Quinebaug River.

Arkansas' Springhill Park. The 10-mile route, with three loops, twists and winds like a spider web. Regionally known as a "fast" trail by experienced mountain bikers, monthly races are held for area riders and two annual competitions are sanctioned by the International Mountain Biking Association (IMBA). The trail provides an escape from the urban and congested Fort Smith/Van Buren metro area. Families, hikers and bikers benefit from the safe and healthy trail environment.

Low impact bridges, built to IMBA standards, cross gullies that empty into the Arkansas River. Volunteers maintain the trail. A long-lasting relationship has resulted between USACE, Mercy Cycling and the St. Edwards Mercy Medical Center in Fort Smith, Ark.

**Quinebaug River Water Trail
Thompson Section
West Thompson Lake, Conn.**

This five-mile water trail within USACE's West Thompson Lake project is an excellent three-hour outing for paddlers who are comfortable with moving water and enjoy seeing varied landscapes of forests and fields along with extensive wildlife habitat. The quiet, slow-moving Quinebaug River abounds with unique history and culture. This segment of the river

has moving water (but no rapids), flat water, and no portages. The upper three miles seem isolated except for two bridge crossings.

USACE and the Thompson Trails Committee work collectively to maintain the entire length of the trail, the put-in at the 1804-constructed Fabyan Dam, and the take-out at the West Thompson Lake Boat Ramp.

**Blue Marsh Lake Multi-Use Trail
Blue Marsh Lake, Pa.**

This 29-mile trail encircles USACE's Blue Marsh Lake project in Berks County, Pa. It is open to hiking, mountain biking and horseback riding. The trail travels through various habitat types ranging from open fields in grass and other crops, to shrubby or brushy areas, to mature forest.

The trail varies from wide open spaces to winding single-track through the forest. The trail was constructed by USACE employees, local scouting groups, school classes, civic organizations and community service workers.

For more information on National Recreation Trails visit <http://www.americantrails.org/nationalrecreationtrails/>. More information on USACE facilities in New England is available at <http://www.nae.usace.army.mil/index.htm> (under the Recreation tab).



Joe Potter sits with his mother, Kate Potter, in front of what is left of her home in Springfield on June 2, the morning after a tornado is believed to have gone through the area. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Jerry Saslav.) A tornado tears through the city of Springfield, Mass. (MEMA Photo.)

District engineers lend a hand in the wake of deadly tornadoes

In the aftermath of the destruction caused by two killer tornadoes in western and central Massachusetts, New England District emergency response team members quickly made their way to the FEMA Regional Response and Coordination Center (RRCC) in Maynard, Mass., and the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency's (MEMA) bunker in Framingham to represent the Army Corps of Engineers and coordinate any federal engineer response in the wake of a rash of thunderstorms that ignited the deadly tornadoes, June 1.

As the storm cluster shifted east, teams of urban search and rescue personnel were dispatched into the tornado zone. At 7 p.m., Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick declared a State of Emergency and activated 1,000 National Guard troops while the first responders began the initial

assessments of the damages within the deadly swath of destruction. The severe weather left four people dead, widespread power outages and extensive property damage.

New England District first responders Mark Anderson, assigned to the FEMA RRCC, and Thom Davidson to the Commonwealth's Emergency Operations Center in Framingham, represented the Corps under the Emergency Support Function 3 (Civil Works).

Both stood by to ensure the seamless coordination of Army Corps of Engineers support and assistance as required and requested.

Out at our project offices, Park Manager Keith Beecher made the boat ramps at East Brimfield Lake available to state and local emergency management for tree removal and relief effort staging; East Brimfield Lake and Long Pond are closed to recreational boating

until partially submerged debris can be removed. Buffumville Lake/Hodges Village Dam Project Manager Tim Russell performed an assessment of debris in the lake by boat. Park Ranger Tom Chamberland, who is also the Tree Warden for the town of Sturbridge, took leave to coordinate tree removal work for the town. Robert Casoli, New England District, Maria Delatore and Louis "Jim" Dash, Baltimore District, and Joe Hollshwander, Baltimore District performed Debris Estimating in Western Mass. Larry Rosenberg provided communications support to both MEMA and FEMA.

The New England District Team quickly accounted for each and every employee and reported them all safe, according to the New England District Emergency Operations Center. There was no property damage to any of the District's projects.



Lt. Col. Steven Howell (left) presents John Winmill with his retirement certificate.



Frank Fedele (left) presents John Winmill with a picture of the Cape Cod Canal.



John Winmill's retirement cake.



John Winmill addresses his guests at his retirement luncheon.

Photos by Christine Johnson

Winmill retires with 43 years of federal service

John Winmill, Construction Division, retired from the New England District with 43 years of distinguished federal service both civilian and military.

Over 100 friends, family and co-workers met at CJ's Steakhouse in Northborough, Mass., on May 1 to attend a retirement celebration hosted by Winmill's wife, Rosemarie, and to celebrate Winmill's long, outstanding career.

Jim Morocco served as Master of Ceremonies, and read letters of congratulations from Moe Beaudoin and Jim Doucakis, who were unable to attend the lunch. Other presenters were Ray Goff, Jim Conway and Frank Fedele. Former Division Engineer, Col. (ret) Carl Sciple, and Col. (ret) Martin Wood, both Winmill's former Commanders from his time in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War, also spoke at his luncheon.

Lt. Col. Steven Howell, Deputy District Commander, presented Winmill with his retirement certificate and pin. Winmill received many cards and gift cards that were packaged in a gift basket. Frank Fedele presented Winmill with a framed photo of the Cape Cod Canal.

Winmill began his career with the Corps in New England as a Planner in Planning Division. From there he moved to Construction Division where he moved through several departments over the years – EPA Support Branch, Devens Resident Office, Rivers and Harbors Office – until he became the Area Engineer for the Eastern Area Office. This position, the one from which he retired, gave him the responsibility of supervising all five Resident Engineers, who were in turn responsible for all the construction projects in New England.

Prior to joining the New England District, Winmill served seven years in the United States Army and served time overseas in the Vietnam War.

Distinguished Civilian Gallery member Fran Donovan and his wife, Rhonda, attended the event. Other retirees wishing Winmill the best were Col. (ret) Sciple, Craig Hysler and his wife, Diane.

Family members who accompanied Winmill to his luncheon were his wife, Rosemarie, his daughter, Kim, and her family. Gladys Leone assisted Mrs. Winmill in organizing the luncheon.

Dredging up the past



John Kenedly (from left) speaks with North Providence, R.I. Mayor A. Ralph Mollis, Rep. Patrick Kennedy and Sen. Jack Reed during a tour of Lymansville Dam in Rhode Island in this April 1999 photo.

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