

# Yankee Engineer

Building Strong®

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*New England District assists after  
Hurricane Sandy  
Story on page 4*

# Yankee Voices

Terry Negron, Tameka Chapman, and Raushanah Muhammad at last year's holiday party.



## Holiday lights: How to stay safe

How to deck the halls without sparking trouble:

- Buy LED holiday bulbs. They won't burn your hands, and they're shockproof and shatterproof.

- Hang them safely. All outdoor cords, plugs, and socket should be weatherproof. Keep electrical wires off the ground and clear of drainpipes and railings.

- Check your light sets. Look for frayed wiring, damaged sockets, or cracked insulation before you decorate. If you find any of these problems, replace the entire set.

- Know what lights go where. Make sure you buy the kind of light set you need – indoor sets for indoors and outdoor sets for outdoors. Never use worn light strings

- Connect no more than three strands of lights together

- Never use an indoor extension cord outdoors

- Avoid overloading wall outlets and extension cords

*(First Draft Magazine)*

## Commander's Holiday Message

Happy Holidays and a joyous New Year to all! I hope everyone takes the opportunity during this cheerful season to spend some time with your families and friends. Personally, it is an honor to work with you and be a part of the New England Team. Appreciation for your sacrifices is sometimes unspoken. However, your dedicated service and contributions are indeed recognized at all levels. As we join together for this holiday celebration, I extend my heartfelt thanks for your devotion to duty, and especially your families' support and understanding.

The spirit of the season is made up of many things for many people. Celebrating our individual faith and our shared heritage, the warmth of our families and friends, the laughter of children, and the special feeling of good will for your fellow person. The holiday spirit is indeed one of giving and sharing. As we all remember our many personal blessings this holiday season, we should also take a moment to remember how truly fortunate our country is to have the many freedoms we've become accustomed to and the remarkable men and women of our armed forces who serve so selflessly.

Unfortunately, this is also the time for some to display a carefree attitude that can easily result in a serious mishap. Nationally, more accidents occur during the month of December than any other time and we all need to be careful and celebrate responsibly and safely.

In closing, thank you again for the outstanding job; we can all take great pride in the many things we have and in the things we have done this past year. As always, I encourage all of you to take time off during this holiday season. Relax and have fun, and especially take time to enjoy your families. And my family and I wish you all a safe and joyous holiday season, and a happy, prosperous New Year.

**Charles P. Samaris**  
**COL, EN**  
**Commanding**



# Commander's Corner:

## Hurricane Sandy and the Challenge of Change!

by Col. Charles P. Samaris  
District Commander



**"There is nothing permanent except change."**

~ Heraclitus (pre-Socratic Greek philosopher, Ephesus)

**"He who rejects change is the architect of decay. The only human institution which rejects progress is the cemetery."**

~ Harold Wilson (twice Prime Minister of the United Kingdom)

New England Team:

First, a belated, but certainly warranted, shout out to all our veterans...past and present...in recognition of Veteran's Day! Our nation's blood and treasure then forged and now secures our absolutely priceless freedom. So, to all veterans of all eras...THANK YOU!

And, Happy Thanksgiving and my wishes to you and yours for a wonderful Holiday season! We, as individuals and as a nation, have so much for which to be thankful! No, we're not perfect...not even close. But we do have a wonderful, innovative, energetic, diverse citizenry that is not afraid to apply a lot of elbow grease and invest a little sweat equity...all in a quest for their vision of the American Dream! And why do we all have the opportunity to achieve our vision...one word...FREEDOM!

We New Englanders must also be thankful that Hurricane Sandy turned so sharply to the West, resulting in a flank shot rather than a direct hit here at home! New York and New Jersey were not so lucky. I spent the past month with an amazing team of USACE experts running the Recovery Field Office in New Jersey. Our team observed the devastation first-hand. But disaster hits home more when you meet the people.

My first contact was a retired couple returning to the municipal bus that allowed them controlled access to their home and neighborhood. They carried what important possessions they could recover and fit on the bus. And although amongst the hardest hit were optimistic - willing to help themselves and their neighbors. Their biggest question - how would their lives change? I experienced the same with most folks

across New Jersey...an inspiring, CAN-DO ATTITUDE... with an eye towards unclear future. While for many life will change...New Jersey will certainly recover well!

The topic of change always brings to mind a few nuggets from Jack Welch: "face reality as it is, not as it was or as you wish it to be" and "change before you have to." You see, I love the beach...would retire to the beach in a heartbeat. But, serving as DE during Irene and Sandy forced me to reevaluate beachfront living through the lens of coastal engineering and disaster response. This new knowledge requires that I face the realities of the coast and change (at least moderately) my idyllic perspective. Because if I don't, there's a good chance I'll make a bad decision! It doesn't mean I won't retire to the beach, but I'll likely do so differently than I thought I would.

Individuals and organizations face the realities and challenge of change every day! New knowledge, new technology, new customers, fiscal change, workload change, workforce change...the list is literally endless. Simply, there are two COAs: 1) deny reality, hide or retreat from change; 2) accept reality, embrace change and advance. The best leaders in the best organizations invest significant mental energy in understanding current reality, projecting future reality, and positioning their team to "skate to where the puck is going to be." Continued relevance depends wholly on the individual and the organization selecting #2... "change before you have to!"

This YANKEE ENGINEER shares some great folks getting out of their comfort zone, and positioning themselves and their teams for success - an Awards ceremony, a WWII re-enacted parachute jump, rescues at the Canal, Hurricane Sandy and more. Consider the possibilities if we individually and organizationally accept reality, embrace change and advance. Remember... "change before you have to!"

**"Men are anxious to improve their circumstances, but are unwilling to improve themselves; they therefore remain bound."**

~ James Allen

Author of "As A Man Thinketh," 1903

**"If there is no struggle, there is no progress."**

~ Frederick Douglass

(American social reformer, orator, writer and statesman)  
Essayons!



Photo by Charles Ifft.

An infrastructure assessment action officer looks at building damage in New Jersey.

## *New England District lends assistance during and after Hurricane Sandy*

When Hurricane Sandy hit the New Jersey shore on Oct. 29, it brought massive flooding, extensive structural damage, power outages and worst of all loss of life all along the Eastern Seaboard. The super storm's massive reach smashed amusement parks and homes in New Jersey and dumped millions of gallons of sea water into New York's subway systems and left hundreds of thousands without power.

Although not directly hit by what the media dubbed, "Frankenstorm," the New England District's advanced preparation and utilization of its Flood Risk Management projects helped reduce flooding.

Prior to Sandy's unwelcomed arrival, all three hurricane barriers prepared

for closure with Rhode Island Governor Lincoln Chafee making a visit to Fox Point Hurricane Barrier to witness some of the preparation first-hand.

The District Emergency Operations Center sent representatives to the Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island emergency operations centers (EOC) to advise the states, and lend any necessary assistance. A Levee Safety Subject Matter Expert (SME) deployed to the Regional Response Coordination Center in Maynard, Mass. The National Water Team was activated and deployed to Washington, D.C., Lakehurst, N.J., and the Concord, Mass., EOC.

Other Emergency Support Function (ESF) personnel from all over the

country were also in place at the various state EOCs should any missions be requested by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

The outer bands of Sandy brought damaging winds, flooding rains, and significant storm surge and power outages throughout the region.

All three of the hurricane barriers – Stamford Hurricane Barrier in Connecticut, Fox Point in Rhode Island and New Bedford in Massachusetts, operated successfully during the storm. District Team members were on site monitoring storm surge and high tide levels at the barriers, closing them at critical times to reduce potential flooding in the respective cities.

The closures and operations efforts



The Fox Point Hurricane Barrier in Providence, R.I. operates during the storm event.



Rhode Island Governor Lincoln Chafee (left) gives Richard Patterson and the Fox Point Hurricane Barrier a thumbs up.

are estimated to have prevented \$29.7 million in flood related damages.

The U.S. Coast Guard closed down navigation traffic through all of Cape Cod Bay, Buzzards Bay and the Cape Cod Canal in southeast Massachusetts during the height of the hurricane from Oct. 28 until Oct. 30.

The team at the Cape Cod Canal office in Buzzards Bay, Mass., also managed operations at New Bedford and Fox Point hurricane barriers. They monitored wind speed in case sustained winds reached the level that would close down the Cape Cod Canal highway bridges to traffic. Although high winds were prevalent throughout the event, the bridges over the Cape Cod Canal stayed open.

Hydraulic engineers located in Concord, Mass., monitored the rainfall throughout the region and the water level in the region's major rivers to regulate Corps-managed dams and to minimize downstream impacts.

With the exception of a request for a subject matter expert to advise on a debris-related mission in Rhode Island and a hydrographic inspection

in Long Island Sound of outfall pipes to a wastewater treatment plant, the District's EOC did not receive any missions from FEMA.

Col. Charles Samaris, New England District Commander, Lt. Col. Steven Howell and a small team of New England District employees were deployed to New Jersey to set up a Corps Recover Field office there, which was co-located with FEMA in a large, abandoned building.

The team quickly went to work, coordinating with an ESF3 Team Leader to assemble a team of subject matter experts from the Corps' National Support Network. Engineer Support Function #3 provides technical assistance, infrastructure assessment, debris removal, temporary housing and rapid temporary repair.

Lt. Gen. Thomas Bostick, Engineering General, and New Jersey Governor Chris Christie were among those who visited the RFO and went on site visits to see the damage the storm wreaked on the area.

The RFO provided technical assistance and debris removal advice

through subject matter experts to New Jersey state personnel who were heading up their own clean up.

The state requested the use of Fort Monmouth, which closed in 2010, for temporary housing for qualified storm victims. The U.S. Army agreed and the RFO performed assessments and redesigns on the building to meet FEMA standards. The RFO closed on Nov. 30 after successfully completing its mission.

New England District Team members who deployed in the Hurricane Sandy event were: Col. Charles Samaris, Lt. Col. Steven Howell, Erika Mark, James Doucakis, Heather Sullivan, Mike Keegan, Dara Gay, Kane Turmelle, Megan Cullen, Mark Walsh, Brett Markure, Steve Wolf, Steve Dunbar, Cora Bertrand, John Astley, William Pumyea, Andrew Stamer, Jay Mackay, Wendy Gendron, Leanna Martin, Dave Goodrich, Sheila Winston-Vincuilla, Drew Cattano, Mark Anderson, Alex Garneau, Andy Jordan, Christopher Caisse, Mike Sheehan, Steve Umbrell, Tim Maynard, Todd Randal and Ben Lloyd.



Kevin Galvin, Larry Davis, Col. Kent Savre, Frank Fedele, Steve Dunbar and Col. Charles Samaris tour the Cape Cod Canal during Col. Savre's visit to the District.

## *New NAD Commander visits District projects*

Col. Kent Savre, North Atlantic Division Commander, met with some of New England District's customers and toured some projects during his visit, Oct. 23-25.

The NAD Commander spent the morning of his first visiting the Reservoir Control Center for a Flood Risk Management and Flood Control briefing. Topics of the briefing included how the RCC works, levee safety, interaction between the Reservoir Control Center and Operations Division and dam safety. Col. Samaris, Steve Dunbar, Scott Michalak, Jack Karalius and Joe Faloretti accompanied Col. Savre to the briefing.

Wendy Gendron presented a

briefing on fish ladders and the Broad Meadows Environmental Restoration Project located in Quincy, Mass. Dave Margolis rounded out the morning briefings with a presentation on the U.S. Army Cold Regions Research and Engineering Laboratory.

During a commander's lunch with the senior leaders, and members of the Executive Leadership and Leadership Development Program, Col. Savre presented Commander's Coins to Corps employees who assisted during the Hurricane Isaac Recovery Mission. Team members that received the coins either at the lunch or immediately following were Duban Montoya, Dave Goodrich, John Asseng, Dara Gay,

Richard Kristoff, Wendy Gendron, Rachel Fisher, Coral Siligato, Sheila Winston-Vincuilla, Steve Patchkofsky, Kane Turmelle, Shaukat Syed and Heather Sullivan.

Col. Savre concluded his packed first day by meeting with Col. Lester Weilacher, Hanscom Air Force Base Commander, Tom Schluckebier, Base Civil Engineer and touring the Corps worksites on the Bedford, Mass., base.

A trip to the Cape Cod Canal started Col. Savre's second day of his visit. While at the canal, he visited the Railroad Bridge, took a boat tour along the canal, and then toured the Marine Shop. Col. Samaris, Fedele,

Cape Cod Canal Manager Larry Davis, and Dunbar accompanied Col. Savre on his canal tour and briefings. Before leaving the Cape, Col. Savre met with Tom Cahir, Transportation Task Force, Cape Cod, and Secretary Richard Davey, Massachusetts Department of Transportation, to discuss topics such as the Cape Cod Canal Bridges, the mission of the task force and the Seasonal Rail permit application.

The NAD Commander's next stop was the New Bedford Resident Office. On the way, Gina Kaso, Programs/Project Management, gave him a briefing on the work being performed at the Massachusetts Military Reservation.

Col. Savre attended an informational briefing lunch given by Chris



Scott Acone briefs Col. Kent Savre in between visits during his visit to Hanscom Air Force Base.

Turek, Construction. Also in attendance were Col. Samaris, Kaso, Dunbar, Paul L'Heureux, Construction, and Jennifer Flanagan, Project Management, before leaving for a tour of the New Bedford

Hurricane Barrier.

The Commander's second day in New England ended in Providence, R.I. with a briefing of the Veteran's Administration (VA) Providence project by Flanagan, a tour of the facility by Jim Morocco, Construction, and a meeting with VA Medical Center Director Vincent Ng.

Meetings with more of New England District's customers packed the NAD Commander's final day. Customers included Acting Port Director Deb Hadden, Massport and Acting Region 1 Administrator Paul Ford, Federal Emergency Management Agency. Flanagan gave him a briefing of the Veterans Administration Medical Center Base, Jamaica Plain, Mass., Cryogenics Lab Project and Evamarie D'Antuono briefed him on the Small Business Program. Mike Keegan, Programs/Project Management, and Dave Schafer, Chief, Emergency Operations Center, accompanied Col. Savre, Col. Samaris and Dunbar during some of the visits.

Col. Savre ended his visit to New England District with a tour of the Muddy River project.



Wendy Gendron meets Col. Kent Savre prior to briefing him on the Broad Meadows Restoration Project.



The AGAWAM boat crew patrol the waters of the Cape Cod Canal in the summer of 2012.

Photos by Kevin Burke

## *Cape Cod Canal Emergency Response: Marine Vessel Safety is Priority One*

The sheltered waters of the Cape Cod Canal offer some of the most scenic and enjoyable recreational boating opportunities on Cape Cod. Yet swift currents, and a high volume of large commercial traffic, can make transiting the Canal a challenge for boat operators of any level of experience. Despite all safety precautions by the Corps and Coast Guard, a record number of 581 marine emergency incidents were successfully responded to over the past year by a Corps team consisting of Marine Traffic Controllers, Boat Operators and crew, and Park Rangers all working cohesively to make the Canal one of the safest waterways in the country.

### *Marine Traffic Control Center*

The Marine Traffic Control Center (MTCC) operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Eight highly skilled controllers monitor the surveillance cameras that line the 17.4-mile stretch of the Canal. They monitor the radar and the Automatic Identification System which identifies transponder-equipped vessels with numbers on one of the screens in the MTCC. The controllers also monitor Marine VHF-FM channels 13 and 16 for direct communications with vessel operators. "If someone is in trouble while they're in the Canal, they can call

us or we'll see them on the monitor," said Roger Mathurin, Marine Operations Officer for the Cape Cod Canal.

Controllers also coordinate "meetings" with larger commercial traffic so that they may pass each other safely in waters that are deep enough and wide enough for both vessels. Vessels that are 65 feet or larger must check in with the MTCC before entering the canal. It is estimated that 8,000 large commercial vessels will pass through the canal by the end of the year.

"Meetings" are common occurrences that can prove challenging in summer months when the Controllers not only have to coordinate the meets, but also watch the smaller recreational vessels to make sure everyone stays safe. "You look out the window sometimes and it looks a bit chaotic," said Paul Lyver, one of the Canal's Marine Traffic Controllers. "The patrol boats will keep the wakes and the speeds down and make sure that recreational boats stay out of the way of the larger commercial traffic. It's a little security for the larger vessel operators to know that if someone loses power there's a boat out there to take care of it. It gives them a certain level of comfort."



The MTCC has the additional task of monitoring water levels at the New Bedford (Mass.) and Fox Point (R.I.) Hurricane Barriers. “We’ve had responsibility for New Bedford since it opened in 1966,” said Mathurin. “We have cameras and radar there, too. We picked up the Fox Point Hurricane Barrier mission when the District took it over.”

Commercial and recreational vessels aren’t the only traffic the MTCC monitors in the canal -- an occasional whale has been known to go through from time to time. “When that happens, we have to hold large commercial traffic and then we have a patrol boat go out to keep the whale safe as it passes through,” said Mathurin.

Other responsibilities that the MTCC has besides the traffic in the canal and monitoring the hurricane barriers include dispatching the patrol boats, coordinating with Canal Park Rangers and monitoring the security cameras on the Railroad Bridge. “Our Controllers are now also responsible for Buzzards Bay Control since November 2007,” said Mathurin. “They make sure that all participating vessels follow the required route and have an assist tug if needed. They have had a very busy year,” said Mathurin.

All of the Controllers at the Canal’s MTCC have extensive marine backgrounds with most serving decades in the U.S. Coast Guard before serving at the District. “You’ve got

to have that type of marine training and experience for the Controller jobs,” said Mathurin.

### *Boat Crews*

The Cape Cod Canal has four boat crews that patrol the Canal in shifts. The crews currently work 365 days in 16-hour shifts.

When patrolling the Canal, the boat crews enforce the rules -- there are no jet skis, canoes or kayaks or other personal watercraft allowed in the canal due to the changing tide every six hours. There is also no speeding, waking, anchoring or fishing in the Canal. Enforcement contacts have gone up this past year, according to Small Craft Operator John McCarthy. He estimated that about 90-percent of enforcement contacts are due to wake, speed violations and vessels fishing in the channel. “This year we’ve had about 270 verbal and written citations and that’s up even from last year. Normally we’re low on having to issue citations.”

According to Sue McDonald, Small Craft Operator, the majority of the enforcement cases this year were people who have little experience traveling through the Canal. “The majority of them just don’t know. We give them a verbal warning and mark their boat numbers down so if they’re spoken to again, we’ll know they’re repeat offenders,” she said.

*Continued on next page*



The Boat Crew on the MARION assist summer vacationers after their boat breaks down.



The ONSET gives a disabled sailboat a tow to safety.

## *Cape Cod Canal monitors safety, emergency response*

*Continued from page 9*

If a vessel finds itself in trouble while in the Canal, the response time is anywhere from a matter of seconds to mere minutes, depending on where the vessel is located. “The response time could be 30 seconds if they’re out by the Railroad Bridge or it could be 20 minutes if they’re out at the other end. There have been times when the patrol boat is out and someone will have just lost power and the boat responds instantly. Either way, the response times are very quick.”

Seconds count in a medical emergency, and the patrol boats and their operators are well equipped to handle situations long enough to get a victim to a medical facility. All of the patrol and quick response boats are equipped with AED machines and first aid kits. All of the crews are first responders, with some of the staff former Emergency Medical Technicians. “If someone is in trouble, we’d take them into the Sandwich Basin into the Coast Guard Station and there would be an ambulance waiting. At this end by the Railroad Bridge, the response time is so fast, oftentimes there is an ambulance waiting before the crew can even tie up the boat,” said Mathurin.

Typically one boat responds to a rescue, but in situations such as a vessel taking on water, two or three boats could

be used with one or two being used to get the passengers off the vessel while the other tries to pump the water out of the disabled vessel or tow it to a dock. The Canal team has an excellent relationship with the U.S. Coast Guard, who are located only minutes away and can be counted on to assist as needed.

Discovery while patrolling, dispatches from the MTCC and coordination with Park Rangers who patrol the service roads on land make up the majority of ways that rescues come about. However, other boaters have been known to call in a vessel that it sees in trouble and the patrol boats will respond.

When not patrolling the canal, the boat crews perform duties such as maintenance, training and tasks that keep their facility in top working order. They also assist at the hurricane barriers when needed. “Sometimes we branch out and help other parts of our organization, like the hurricane barriers,” said Small Craft Operator Kevin Galvin.

Just like the Marine Traffic Controllers, the Canal’s boat crews have extensive marine experience, many with decades of service in the U.S. Coast Guard or other marine backgrounds. “The qualifications to become a boat operator are lengthy,” said Mathurin. “You have to have a Coast Guard license, you have to have an unlimited radar endorsement,

and you have to have a towing endorsement among others. We have some very qualified people on our staff.”

The Canal Team has a very close relationship with the Massachusetts Military Academy, located just down the street from the Canal Field Office located in Buzzards Bay, Mass. The MMA provides three cadets to the canal each year to help with boat patrols and other missions and the cadets get much needed training and experience operating small crafts. It is a partnership that has many benefits for both parties. “We have gotten some outstanding cadets, I’ll tell you that,” said Mathurin.

### *Maintaining the Equipment*

The equipment that the boat crews operate are vital to the success of the mission. They depend upon the fact that the vessels they operate are in prime condition and will not break down when needed the most.

Randy Mello is the Canal’s Marine Equipment Specialist and is responsible for the engine maintenance of one tug, four patrol boats and two quick response boats. “If an engine needs to be redone, that’s Randy,” said Mathurin. “The tug is 60 years old and two of the boats are 33 years old. This season he removed four engines on the two older boats, removed the gears and sent them to be inspected. Randy aligns the shafts and does all of the propeller work.”

In addition, Mello is also the only machinist welder for the entire Canal. “So anything that needs to be welded or machined at the Canal, the bridges or the hurricane barriers in New Bedford or Fox Point, he does it,” said Mathurin.

“The first thing I do in the morning is check the box for discrepancies,” said Mello about a typical day in the office. “If the guys on the night shift come up with anything, I need

to diagnose and fix them.”

According to Mello, the rest of the day is taken up with engine service that is performed at least every 200 operating hours, oil changes, and other maintenance work. Mello has one assistant – Dan Guiney – to help him with the work. Mello came to the Canal from D.N. Kelleys Shipyard where two boats were sent for extensive work. In fact, he installed all the new stainless steel piping, all new sea chests in the Tug MANAMET and repowered the patrol boat AGAWAM. “He was the guy who dropped in the new engines for us in the shipyard, so he was already familiar with two of our vessels. When there was an opening, he applied and we found him to be the most qualified,” said Mathurin.

Due to Mello’s expertise and diligence, none of the patrol boats broke down last summer.

The Canal staff credits Mathurin and Cape Cod Canal Manager Larry Davis with the successes the Team has had over the past year. “The reason that we are able to perform our duties is a direct result of the outstanding leadership and support that Roger provides us day in and day out,” said Galvin.” He is committed to taking care of his people and ensuring we have the resources to perform our duties. Without Roger, we do not function as proficiently as a team. In addition, we also have the support of the Canal Manager Larry Davis. He has a clear understanding of our mission set and is an extension of marine operations.”

Marine Traffic Controllers with watchful eyes along the Canal, the Park Rangers on land and the boat crews on the water that work as one cohesive unit all contribute to the safety and well being of mariners using the canal.

Larry Davis is the Canal Manager, with John MacPher-

son serving as his assistant. The Marine Traffic Controllers are: Brian Mulvey, Dennis Arsenault, Bob Blackwell, Paul Lyver, Don (Manny) Fillman, Dan Scott, John Parkhurst, Rich Uronis. The boat crews are: Operators: Bill Kane, Chris DeMello, Jay Deal, Kevin Galvin, Danny Bartolome, John McCartin, Al O’Connell and Sue McDonald. Deckhands: Marshall Lord, Rob Nawrocki Mass Maritime Cadets: Chris Phelan, Nick Hill and Brian Taylor. The Park Rangers are: Roger Hagen and John Westlund . Asst. Manager: Joe Mazzola, Natural Resources Specialists: John Pribilla, Samantha Gray, Michele Breen, Elisa Carey, Ann Cook and Jon Dumais.



The AGAWAM in dry dock awaiting maintenance.

## State of the District, honors presented at awards event

Col. Charles Samaris, New England District Commander, gave an update on the state of the District and recognized some New England team members for jobs well done during an Awards Ceremony, Oct. 15.

The Colonel said that although leaner times are ahead, smart fiscal management and the District's diverse portfolio of missions should keep the District fiscally fit, despite deep cuts in military spending. "We've got maintenance and a lot of smaller projects," he said. "That balanced portfolio saves us from problems. Last year was a great year fiscally and next year should be similar."

During his address, the Colonel talked about ongoing work the District is doing for customers such as the Department of Homeland Security and the Veterans Administration. "I'm not saying the picture is rosy, but we're doing all right," he said.

Bill Scully, Deputy District Engineer for Programs/Project Management, confirmed that the District has done well. "From my perspective, we had a really good fiscal year 2012," he said. "You should feel good about the work you do. You are one great organization. People are the organization and you have a great reputation. You ought to be proud of that – you have earned that reputation."

Col. Samaris talked about the recent climate survey conducted at the District. "I was surprised at the volume of responses that we received. I appreciate it," he said. "And I was really surprised at the 73 pages of comments, which were enlightening."

Regarding communication at the District, Col. Samaris said there was a lot of miscommunication going on. "Too much gossip and rumor spreading," he said. "We're going to try to mitigate some of that with Commo checks. I'm going to tell you exactly what I said to

clarify things. I have a list of things I want to address."

After the Colonel's comments, Bob Meader, this year's Combined Federal Campaign Manager for the District introduced Maureen Jerz of the Federation for Children with Special Needs, who made a presentation about her organization.

During the awards portion of the ceremony, Counsel's John Almeida and July D'Esposito received the E. Manning Seltzer Award for their delivery of outstanding services.

John Astley, Chief of Counsel, received the Lester Edleman Spirit of Arrowhead Award, which recognizes the Corps legal manager who best exemplifies excellence in service to clients, excellence in leadership and has made significant contributions to the Corps Legal Services Committee.

Terry Negron, Office of Counsel, was recognized for the vital legal assistance she provided in the important OCO mission while she was deployed to Afghanistan for three months.

Lt. Gen. Thomas Bostick, Engineering General, sent a letter of congratulations to Resource Management's Francis Fung for receiving his Lean Six Sigma Black Belt. There are only

five Lean Six Sigma Black Belts in the entire Corps of Engineers. Six Sigma is a process improvement set of tools and strategies to improve the quality of process outputs.

Diane Ray, Regulatory, received the 2010 North Atlantic Division Regulator of the Year Award for her selfless service and dedication in protecting the aquatic environment.

The Charles River Dam Team received Bunker Hill plaques in recognition of outstanding contributions to stewardship of the Charles River Natural Valley Storage Area in an effort to protect over 8,000 acres of scattered wetlands. The project was recognized by the International River Foundation and won the 2011 International River Prize from Australia. Awardees were Merlon Bassett, Matt Coleman, Grainne O'Grady and Luke Beasley. Jim Spihler accepted the award on behalf of Beasley.

Cape Cod Canal Park Ranger Elisa Carey received the 2012 New England District Interpreter of the Year Award for her outstanding work with over 40,000 direct contacts at the Cape Cod Canal.

The New England District newsletter, YANKEE ENGINEER, published by the Public Affairs Office, received



Photos by Brian Murphy

Mike and Irene Hicks receive an award for Hicks' overseas deployment.



New England District's Interpreter of the Year, Elisa Carey.



Bill McIntyre receives his Employee of the Month Award from Col. Charles Samaris.



Lean Six Sigma Black Belt Francis Fung.



Grainne O'Grady Matt Coleman, Jim Spiher and Merlon Bassett accept Bunker Hill plaques.

the Mangum Opus Silver Award for the article documenting the District's response to the June 2011 tornado, the Ragan Communicators Award for the Nacala Dam Rehabilitation Project article, and two APEX Awards, one of the most improved newsletters and the annual report.

Ann Marie Harvie, Public Affairs, received the Work Environment Association's Employee of the Month Award for July. Bill McIntyre received the same honor in August for his efforts and extended hours in support of year-end project awards and overall support of the District.

Mike Hicks, Regulatory, accompanied by his wife, Irene, received recognition for Hicks' overseas deployment. Col. Samaris thanked Mrs. Hicks for allowing the District to "borrow" her



2010 NAD Regulator of the Year, Diane Ray.

husband for the length of his deployment and presented her with flowers and a certificate of appreciation. Hicks received the Commander's Award for Civilian Service for the deployment, as well as a monetary award and a nameplate to be fastened to the Deployment Board in the hallway of Building 2. Hicks was deployed to the Baghdad Resident

Office for 18 months. Hicks expressed gratitude to both the Executive Office and the Regulatory Team for allowing him to have the experience. Col. Samaris concluded the ceremony by saying that the District is currently looking for volunteers to deploy overseas and employees should contact Emergency Operations for more information.



Parachutists in the air during the dawn jump.

Photos by Peter Hugh

## *New England District employee has a unique way to Remember, Honor, and Serve the WWII Veterans*

**By Peter Hugh**

Each man had endured a rigorous physical and mental training program to take on this mission. This is the moment. They are seated inside the aircraft as it approaches the drop zone (DZ) at 1,500 feet above ground level. The C-47A aircraft's door is open and it is loud amidst the rumblings of the twin Pratt & Whitney radial engines. The Jump Master screams out the commands "Get-Ready, Stand-Up, Hook-up, Check Your Equipment, Sound Off Equipment Check, and One Minute...!" With the adrenalin pumping, the command is given to "Stand in the Door!" We each have the same thought, no turning back now, "Go!!!" One-by-one, the men hurl themselves into the windy blast. With the aircraft traveling at 110 miles per hour and the effects of the prop blast and gravity, each trooper tumbles towards the earth as he braces himself for the shock. The tug of the static line rips open the parachute harness freeing the canopy which deploys violently and jolts him from the free fall. Laden with equipment, he descends to the ground at 20 feet per second. He is alert studying the ground, looking for the assembly point and the hazards that await him. Each trooper slams into the ground but successfully lands unhurt, quickly secures the parachute and arrives at the rendezvous point. They accomplished the mission, having successfully completed five jumps; these men have now earned their jump wings and are members of the World War II (WWII) Airborne Demonstration Team (ADT).

New England District employee Peter Hugh and the 14

other students had just completed the nine day parachute jump school in Frederick, Okla., in July 2012. Like the WWII paratroopers who made the jump on D-day behind the formidable Atlantic Wall defenses, these men are also volunteers and come from all over the country. The students are now members of this non-profit foundation whose mission is to "Remember, Honor, and Serve" the WWII veterans through education and airborne re-enactments. The WWII ADT hosts an open house twice a year and they invite the public and veterans to attend. They educate the public and honor those veterans. The men who reported to the jump school are a mix of military (retired) and civilian (airline pilot, police officer, martial arts instructor, CEO, restaurant manager, high school principal and civil engineer to name a few) volunteers. The students jump from a Douglas C-47A Skytrain aircraft that was built in 1942 and served in combat operations during WWII. During the Open House to be held at the Frederick Army Air Field (FAAF), the men will receive the coveted jump wings in the time-honored pinning ceremony.

What the paratroopers did back in WWII should not be ignored. In the early 1940s these men were young and most of Europe under Nazi occupation. Hitler's Third Reich had conquered most of Europe and vast territories in the east. The tide had turned in 1944 as the Allies were slowly gaining back ground. The Soviet Army had driven the German Army from the gates of Stalingrad and Moscow. In Italy, the German defenses at Monte Cassino had broken and Rome

had fallen to the Allies. It was time to begin the liberation of France. The Wehrmacht (German Army) had constructed 15,000 fortifications stretching along the shores of the North Sea, English Channel, the Atlantic Ocean and France's Mediterranean coast in anticipation of the Allied invasion. The largest military armada in the history was now assembling in England to breach Hitler's Atlantic Wall. Over 6,000 vessels would cross the English Channel and deliver over 132,000 Allied Soldiers and 50,000 vehicles in the amphibious assault. The landing zone chosen was a 50-mile wide beachhead along the Normandy coast. Spearheading the Allied invasion was the airborne assault, 1,000 Allied aircraft dropped 16,000 American and 8,000 British paratroopers into the fields and hedgerows of Normandy, inland of the landing beaches. This was D-Day (Operation Overlord) and one of the major airborne engagements of the war. The U.S. paratroopers of the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne and the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Divisions were the elite troops who's mission was to drop onto and secure enemy positions 6-hours in advance of the U.S. amphibious infantry landings inland of Omaha and Utah Beach heads. The Allied planners faced the stark reality that the losses amongst the airborne troops could be as high as 75 percent. Seven WWII veterans, including several paratroopers of the Normandy operation, were honored guests at the July 2012 Open House held at the FAAF.

The delivery platform for paratroopers was the C-47A cargo plane, the workhorse of the U.S. Army Air Corps. A precious few of these aircraft are still operational. It is a lifetime opportunity to be able to jump out of one of these surviving vintage planes. The aircraft can carry up to 20 combat-loaded paratroopers. The paratroopers use a static-line deployed main parachute. A metal overhead cable runs the length of the fuselage. The trooper attaches the hook of his static line onto the cable. Upon exiting the aircraft, the chute deploys as the jumper falls from the plane.

The course is intense. It requires students to start a strict physical training program months in advance of arriving at the school. Students were subjected to a rigorous ground preparation phase and were instructed in Parachute Landing Falls (PLFs); Drag Chute Training; emergency procedures (tree/power line/water landings, colliding with other jumpers, and being towed by the aircraft); emergency aircraft exits;

parachute steering, deploying the reserve chute, and understanding the Federal Aviation Administration rules.

The experience of stepping out the door the first time is difficult to describe with justice. Imagine yourself loaded down with combat gear as the plane approaches the DZ; the jump master has already gone through the jump commands and has given the order for the first man to "Stand at the Door!" Then the order to "Go!!!" is given. There are six troopers behind you who will trip over you if you stumble, and you struggle to keep up with the men in front of you. Your adrenaline is pumping as you shuffle to the door and at the precise point turn 90 degrees to make your textbook perfect

exit (failure will result in you tumbling and spinning as you fall from the aircraft increasing the possibility of injury or canopy malfunction). The aircraft's airspeed, the prop blast, and effects of gravity slam your body like a rag doll. I recalled the sound of my voice methodically counting "one one-thousand, two one-thousand" followed by a sudden violent tug jolting my body as the main chute deployed. Within a span of one second later I found myself suspended in the air with a beautifully deployed canopy above me.

Each of the graduates experienced the time-honored airborne tradition of having the jump wings pinned. The treat was each had a WWII Veteran perform the pinning. This was a moving and emotional ceremony

attended by visitors, aging veterans, family members of the veterans, and the hardened graduates. It was humbling that these men, these real heroes were thanking us for what we and the foundation were doing. Many did not think of themselves as heroes; they say the ones who never made it back are the heroes.

The veterans from that conflict are now in their 90's and the WWII ADT foundation and other veteran groups are endeavoring to keep their memories, sacrifices and legacy alive. That is the mission we have each taken on, to Remember, Honor, and Serve these members of the Greatest Generation.

Hugh's goal is to be active with the team and jump with them in France in June 2014 during the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the D-Day observance.

Hugh is a Senior Engineering Technical Lead, in the Environmental Engineering Section, Geotechnical-Environmental Engineering Branch.



Peter Hugh, in his World War II gear, gets ready to make a jump.

# Dredging up the past



Former Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney provided testimony to hearing officer Col. Thomas Koning, with Larry Rosenberg, Chief Public Affairs, James Hunt, Director of the Mass. Environmental Policy Act Office and Karen Adams, Chief, Permits and Enforcement Branch during the Cape Wind Public Hearings, December 2004.

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