

Yankee Engineer

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Building Strong



Former Defense Property Restored to Commonwealth

Story on page 4

Yankee Voices

Phoebe Chu, Samantha Gray and Elisa Carey



Keep working safely when cold weather comes

Think warm thoughts and follow these guidelines:

- Dress in layers. You want to dress warmly enough for all conditions.

- Stay covered. Make sure your skin and face are fully covered in subzero temperatures to avoid frostbite. Wear goggles to protect your eyes.

- Invest in long underwear. If you'll be outside for any extended period of time, get long underwear that will pull sweat and moisture away from your skin.

- Wear mittens. Your hands will stay warmer if your fingers aren't separated.

- Take frequent breaks. Don't stay out in the cold too long or overexert yourself. Get inside to warmer, dry conditions.

- Work in teams. Don't go out alone if conditions are hazardous. Take a buddy so you can watch over each other for signs of distress.

(First Draft Magazine)

Ethics Rules During the Holiday Season

Gifts to a supervisor. DoD employees generally may not give gifts to a supervisor. [5 CFR 2635.302(a)] There are some exceptions. For example, a subordinate may, on an occasional basis, give a gift (excluding cash) to a supervisor if it has a market value of \$10 or less. [5 CFR 2635.304(a)(1)] Also, a subordinate may bring food and refreshments into the office, if they will be shared among several employees. [5 CFR 2635.304(a)(2)] Finally, if a subordinate is invited to a social event at the supervisor's residence, the subordinate may give the supervisor a hospitality gift of the type and value customarily given on such an occasion. [5 CFR 2635.304(a)(4)] For example, a \$15 bottle of wine or a plant would be acceptable as such a hospitality gift.

Gifts to a subordinate. No ethics rule prohibits giving a holiday gift to a subordinate, but giving a gift to just one or some of your subordinates may create an appearance of favoritism.

Gifts from a contractor employee. DoD employees generally may not accept gifts from a "prohibited source" (e.g., a DoD contractor or a DoD contractor employee). [5 CFR 2635.202(a), .203(d) & .102(k)] There are exceptions. For example, under the \$20/\$50 rule, you may accept a gift (excluding cash) with a market value of \$20 or less, as long as the total value of the gifts you accept under this rule from one source in a calendar year does not exceed \$50. [5 CFR 2635.204(a)] Also, under the personal relationship gift rule, you may accept a gift if it is clear that it is motivated by a family relationship or a personal friendship, and if the donor pays for the gift with personal funds. [5 CFR 2635.204(b)] Senior leaders should be cautious of using this exception with friends who are your friends because of your official position.

Gifts to a contractor employee. There are no ethics rules that prohibit giving a holiday gift to a contractor employee. However, be aware that the DoD contractor may have a policy that prohibits accepting gifts from government employees which should be taken into consideration.

Gift exchanges. If your office wants to have a gift exchange, where all the gifts will have approximately the same value, this is permissible, since all participants will receive an item that has approximately the same value as the item they gave.

Your office's holiday party. DoD 7000.14-R, Volume 12, Chapter 30, para. 300502, states: "Department of Defense personnel shall not solicit, fundraise for, or otherwise request or encourage the offer of a gift. Acceptance Authorities shall not accept gifts offered contrary to this policy." A November 2014 DoD Standards of Conduct Office memo entitled "Holiday Guidance" states: "You may not solicit outside sources for your party. This includes funds, food, and items." This memo, which has additional guidance on holiday issues, is at: http://www.dod.mil/dodgc/defense_ethics/resource_library/dod_holiday_guidance.pdf





Lt. Col. Charles Gray presents Rosemary Schmidt with a plaque of appreciation for her contributions to the International Levee Handbook. (Thames River Barrier in London.)

Schmidt Earns Praise On Work For International Handbook

Rosemary Schmidt, Chief, Geology and Chemistry Section for Engineering/Planning, received a plaque from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Levee Safety Program during the Nov. 6 Command and Staff Meeting held in the Concord Park theatre in Concord, Mass.

Schmidt, who is a supervisory geologist and has been with the New England District since May 1992, received the award for her outstanding contributions to the International Levee Handbook. She was one of many contributors to the manual throughout the Corps. "My involvement on the International Levee Handbook began in the fall of 2010," said Schmidt. "At the encouragement of my former supervisor, Dr. Raimo Liias, I replied to an e-mail that had been sent out from Corps Headquarters, and I was selected to serve as the U.S. point of contact for "Chapter 7 on Site Characterization." I worked closely with the overall Chapter Lead, Shaun Wersching, a geotechnical engineer with CH2M Hill in the United Kingdom, and was responsible for coordinating input from all U.S. contributors, and ensuring linkage with the other related chapters on levee inspection, design, and construction."

The handbook was published by CIRIA (Construction Industry Research and Information Association)..

"This handbook was a collaboration between the United States, France, the United Kingdom, Ireland, the Netherlands and Germany," said Schmidt's supervisor Dave Margolis, Chief, GeoEnvironmental Engineering Branch.

According to Margolis, the governments of these countries realized a need for a single reference on good practice

in the management and design of levees. "Rose was a major contributor to Chapter 7."

Chapter 7 was over 300 pages on its own. Writing something so massive and on such a global scale didn't come without challenges. "Our first big surprise was that our chapter included characterizing both subsurface conditions and site hydrology/hydraulics, which required close collaboration with H & H team members," said Schmidt. "What we discovered is that universally there is relatively little interaction between the two fields, as the hydrology/hydraulics effort is primarily up front, in determining the height required for a given level of protection (storm event), while the geotechnical engineering and geology effort is much later." "Without Andy Gaines (MVM) covering the hydrology and hydraulics, we would have been adrift without a paddle," she said.

According to Schmidt, unlike siting a dam, where a move upstream or downstream may be feasible to avoid poor ground conditions, there is not the same sort of flexibility with levees, and so potential problem areas are best identified during site characterization and accounted for during design

Another challenge was that although many people from all over the globe were writing Chapter 7, it had to have a uniform style. "It was a mammoth effort to draft an outline, showing a logical sequence of topics, and then identify the proper individuals who could make contributions for each topic, and then at the end of the day, still ensuring that the writing style reflected 'one voice,'" said Schmidt. "Chapter 7 was truly an international collaboration, with roughly 40

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Watertown FUDS Property, Remediated, Returned to Residents

The successful remediation of the General Services Administration (GSA) Watertown Formerly Used Defense Site, marks the completion of the last remaining site associated with the Watertown Arsenal, Massachusetts cleanup. The site was restored from a hazardous waste site to a lush, green recreation space allowing the federal government to return the property back to the people of Massachusetts after 94 years. The New England District was the lead agency for the cleanup and worked closely with the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), and GSA to ensure the site was suitable for its future use as park land.

A ribbon cutting ceremony to mark the occasion took place at the Commander's Mansion in Watertown, Dec. 3. Col. Christopher Barron, New England District Commander, joined congressional, federal, state and lo-



Col. Christopher Barron addresses the audience at the Watertown Arsenal ribbon cutting ceremony.

cal partners in celebrating the land turnover.

Anna Shpigel, Special Assistant to the Regional Administrator, U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) served as Master of Ceremonies. She welcomed the audience and led them in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Natalie Kaufman represented Congresswoman Katherine Clark during the event. "The Congresswoman is so pleased the project came to fruition – there was an incredible partnership to make it happen," she said.

Col. Barron told the audience that the New England District became



Buildings are demolished as part of the remedial action plan for the Watertown GSA Formerly Used Defense Site.

Photo provided by Charter Environmental

involved with the project in May 1991. "That was when the site was determined to be eligible for remedial investigation under the Formerly Used Defense Site (FUDS) program," he said. "We have been involved since that time."

The Colonel thanked Anne Malewicz, Massachusetts DEP, calling her, "a great friend of the Corps."

Col. Barron concluded by thanking the entire team of partners for the success of the project. "You made the transfer of a 13-acre hazardous waste site into usable green space possible," he said.

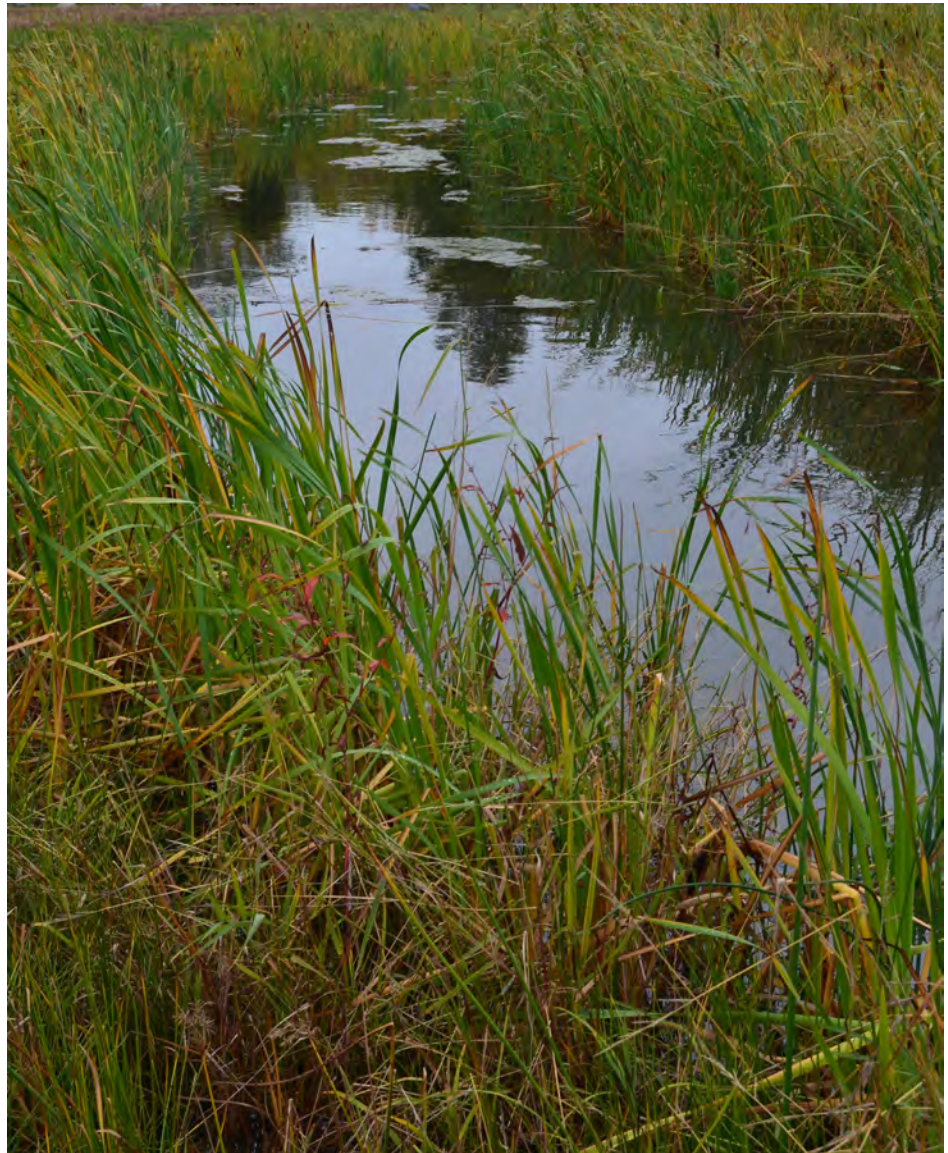
Other speakers included Gary Moran, Deputy Commissioner for Operations and Environmental Compliance at Massachusetts DEP, Kevin Whalen, Deputy Director for the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation, and Robert Zarnetske, GSA's Regional Administrator.

Glenn Rotando, GSA's Regional Commissioner for the Public Buildings Service New England Region, closed the ceremony. "In 1920, the U.S. Army acquired this site from the state of Massachusetts with the promise to return it to the state when it was no longer needed," he said. "Now, 94 years later, the property is being returned. Job well done by everyone. Enjoy the parcel."

Following the speeches, the partners gathered in the foyer for the official ribbon cutting. The New England District was responsible for completing remedial activities at the site, under the FUDS program. With the exception of one building that was demolished with GSA funding, the \$3.68 million project is completely funded under FUDS.

The property was part of Watertown Arsenal and during World War II, the U.S. Army constructed five structures on the GSA property to store various materials and equipment. As part of the Manhattan Project, the site was used to stabilize depleted uranium to allow for it to be shipped for disposal offsite.

From 1991, a variety of investiga-



The final constructed wetland at Watertown.

Photo provided by Maryellen Iorio

tions and removal actions were performed by the New England District. In May 2012, the Decision Document was signed, paving the way for the remediation of the site.

Charter Environmental of Boston, Massachusetts, and its subcontractor, Nobis Engineering of Concord, New Hampshire mobilized to the site in November 2012. Remedial action work on the site included demolishing all of the structures that were unoccupied and deteriorated, excavation and off-site disposal of 450 cubic yards of PCB contaminated soil above 50 parts per million, construction of a 2-acre soil cover, and 2-acre compensatory wet-

land. All work was completed in July.

As part of long term monitoring to ensure the remedy performs as designed, the New England District will perform inspections of the wetlands twice a year for five years and inspections of the soil cover annually.

The Commonwealth plans to use the site for passive recreation such as walking trails and bird watching.

New England District Team members who accompanied Col. Barron to the event were New England District Deputy Commander Lt. Col. Charles Gray, Gary Morin, Maryellen Iorio, Joel Bloom, James Morocco, and Sally Rigione.

District Team Attends Local STEM Event to Listen and Learn

Getting young people interested in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) careers is a high priority for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Engineers and scientists make great efforts to expose future

employees to STEM by speaking at schools, judging events and mentoring. But what about the here and now? What about the current employees who are in STEM careers? How do we inspire them – particularly women -- to stay in these worthwhile positions?

That was some of many questions 15 New England District team members brought with them to the Women in STEM conference held Oct. 21 at Bentley University in Waltham, Massachusetts. New England District team members that attended the conference consisted of six male supervisors and nine female employees from Engineering/Planning. Businesses such as Tata Consulting, Raytheon, Battelle, Dassault Systemes and educational institutions to include Bentley University and Northeastern were all either attending the program or were speaking on a panel.

Mark Anderson, New England District's STEM coordinator, heard about the event in a forwarded e-mail and thought it could benefit the District. "It wasn't one of the volunteer efforts we've been doing where you go out and coach or make a presentation," he said. "This was more of a conference setting where speakers came in to make presentations and



we were there to observe, listen and engage in the discussions."

Scott Acone, Chief of Engineering/Planning, also thought it was worth attending to hear about STEM in the work place. "For Engineering and Planning, I wanted to know

how we can create an environment that is more welcoming and open for both attracting and retaining qualified women doing engineering and science activities," he said.

The featured presentation was entitled, "The New Frontier of Engaging Men as Full Partners in the Advancement of Women," by Betsy Myers, Center for Women and Business at Bentley University.

According to the conference coordinators, the goal of her presentation was to help attendees understand how to continue to close the confidence gap for women, how to address the balance question, the different leadership styles of men and women and the leadership necessary for the next generation of women. "I enjoyed the feature presentation," said Megan Cullen. "Historically, women have had hundreds of internal conversations about women's equality and advancement, but history has proven these conversations to be marginally successful. Myers suggests that the stalemate occurs because men have not been involved in the conversation."

In a panel discussion entitled, "Strategies for Leveraging Partnerships Between Key Stakeholders: Business, Government, Education and Philanthropy," panel members moderated a discussion in the art of fostering and connecting local innovation with state leadership for national impact. Other relevant topics that were presented during the conference included: "Thinking BIG about girls in STEM and Million Women Mentors"; "Smart STEM Investing: What to Measure"; "Broadening the Breadth of STEM Workforce Through Racial and Ethnic Diversity"; "Employee Engagement: Programs that Work to Engage and Retain Women in STEM"; and "Future of the American Workforce; How to Recruit and Retain Talent in the New Generation of STEM Graduates".

"My favorite presentation was 'Broadening the Breadth of STEM Workforce Through Racial and Ethnic Diversity,' by Dr. Uma Gupta, Founder and Executive Director, STEM-Smart.org," said Angela Frisino. "Her presentation was about the neurobiology behind stereotypes and how we can recognize our unconscious prejudices, both racial and gender to use



Photos by Elizabeth Cutler

Participants in the Women in STEM conference listen to one of the many presentations that occurred during the event.

that to change our behavior. It was the most interesting topic presented throughout the day.”

Attending the Women in STEM Conference provided insight to the District team, not only from the presentations, but also from the District team themselves. “People felt comfortable enough to have a conversation,” said Anderson. “We sat and had about a 20-minute group recap. There were some really honest opinions that were going around the table at the end.”

“We got good feedback from everybody,” Acone agreed. “I also think it got some of the folks that maybe haven’t been all that engaged more interested in doing some outreach. I think there were definitely some there that never would have considered themselves a mentor that maybe now they would be interested in taking on that kind of role, and that’s a benefit.”

According to Acone and Anderson, the conference also led to serious conversations on how to establish a better mentoring program in Engineering/Planning and to be able to mentor both the young and older employees in terms of career development.

For those who attended the conference, it was a worthwhile experience. “I think the men in the audience became more aware of the female perspective and more thoughtful participants in ensuring female success in the workplace,” said Cullen.

Anderson said he would consider attending again next year. “I think it would be an interesting follow on to what we heard this year,” he said.

Acone suggested that if they did attend next year, that Engineering/Planning might not be the only Division to go. “It would be good to get other District chiefs involved next year to see if we can get more participation,” he said.

New England District Team members attending the Women in STEM conference supports the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Campaign Initiative, “Prepare For Tomorrow.”



Conference attendees ask questions and get information during the networking session.

Schmidt Earns Praise On Work For International Handbook

Continued from page 3

individuals representing five countries, from both government agencies and private sector, contributing to the chapter. It was also a fantastic opportunity to meet and work with the other U.S. chapter leads, such as Christina Neutz (LRL) and Jamie McVicker (MVS), as well as the international team leading the effort, especially Jonathan Simm (HR Wallingford, United Kingdom) who helped guide the overall effort. Corps Headquarters support from Eric Halpin and Tammy Conforti was also greatly appreciated.”

Even language sometimes had to be defined. “It was interesting adapting to British English, and use of terms not normally used on U.S. levees; for example, ‘hidey-holes’ instead of animal burrows,” said Schmidt.

Working on the chapter provided Schmidt and the team some unique opportunities as well. “We introduced the term ‘Conceptual Site Model’ to the levee community,” she said. “The CSM is a common term used in the environmental field to express the conceptual understanding of site subsurface conditions, and how the geologic depositional environments and the resulting material properties (strength, permeability) in turn impact project performance (stability, seepage and piping, etc.). It’s an opportunity to get inside the designer’s head, to understand how the designer perceived the site, and how this understanding was translated into design assumptions.”

When Chapter 7 was completed, it joined nine other chapters to complete the massive manual. “The first six chapters are geared to an audience of levee owners and operators, while chapters 7 through 10 will be of interest to those responsible for designing and constructing levees,” said Schmidt.

Looking back at the experience, Schmidt said that she enjoyed the tours of the Thames River Barrier and the Sacramento levees. “One of my favorite memories was coming into the office for a 4 a.m. conference call,” she said.

The award Schmidt received during the Command and Staff Meeting was signed by James Dalton, P.E., SES, Chief Engineering and Construction Division, Directorate of Civil Works; Eric Halpin, P.E., Special Assistant for the Dam and Levee Safety Program; and Tammy Conforti, P.E., Levee Safety Program Manager.

New England District holds Hispanic Heritage Month Observance

In observance of Hispanic Heritage Month, Ruth Ann Brien, Hispanic Heritage Program Manager and Jacqueline DiDomenico, EEO Officer, invited Haxel Estavillo to serve as keynote speaker for this year's District event.

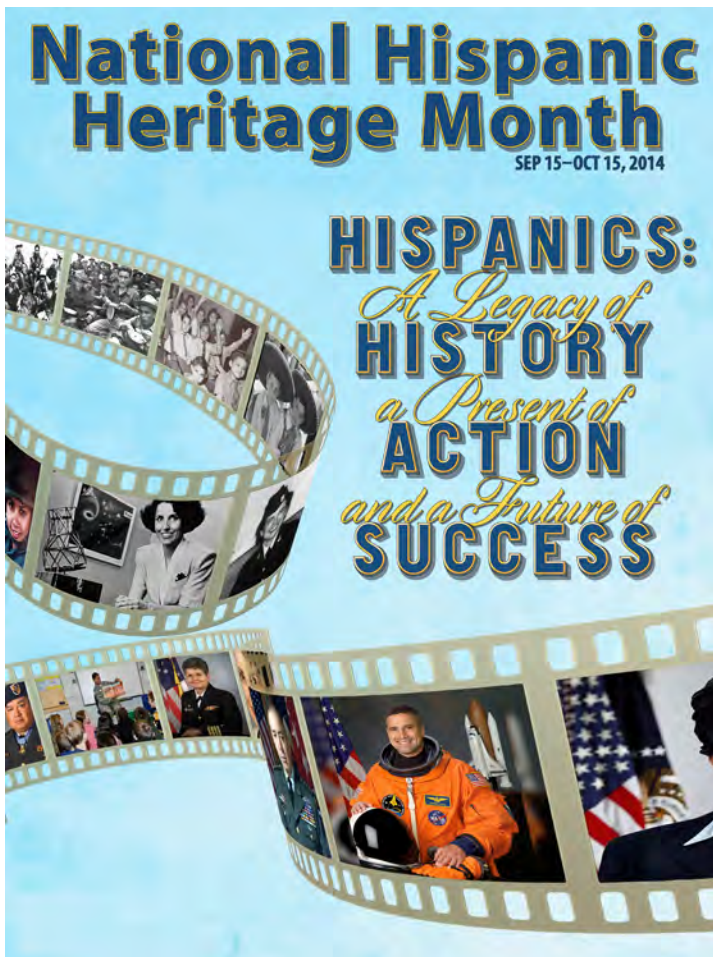
Estavillo is a technical expert in Reliability, Availability and Maintainability Analysis and Life Cycle Sustainment for Raytheon Company's Integrated Defense Systems. He joined Col. Christopher Barron, New England District Commander, and dozens of District team members in the theater on Oct. 21 for his presentation entitled, "Closing the Gap."

Estavillo began his discussion with diversity and its value in the workplace. "Industry and government recognize that a diverse work force delivers better performance and customer satisfaction," he said. "A diverse team provides diverse thoughts and ideas, embraces different perspectives and experiences and delivers superior solutions."

The keynote speaker talked about how Hispanics are underrepresented in leadership roles and how important it was to change that. "With the economic future more uncertain than ever, it is critical that our pool of potential leaders be as large and varied as possible," he said.

Estavillo listed a lack of guidance and role models, Hispanic cultural trades, limited social capital and institutional trades as possible reasons for the underrepresentation. A culture of inclusion is the solution, according to Estavillo. "We need a culture where everyone is fully engaged -- with all their differences and similarities -- in problem identification, problem solving, creativity and innovation," he said. "Only by sustaining a culture of inclusion, we maximize our people potential."

Urging the audience to be part of the solution, Estavillo



gave examples of how they could become involved: be a role model, becoming a mentor, promote STEM and master diversity and inclusion. "Underrepresentation of minorities in leadership roles limits the advantages of diversity," he said. "A culture of inclusion creates an environment of empowerment, a sense of belonging, self motivation and high morale that maximizes people's potential. Creating a culture of inclusion starts with you. You can make a difference by getting involved."

After Estavillo's discussion, Col. Barron presented him with a New England District Bunker Hill plaque.

Haxel Estavillo is a native of Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico. He graduated from the University of Puerto Rico, Mayaguez, with a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education. He obtained his Master of Science in

Elementary Education from Northeastern University, Boston.

Throughout his career with Raytheon, he has been very involved with the company's diversity, business culture and community outreach efforts. One example includes a membership of the IDS President's Cultural Initiative, which is an elite program designed to accelerate the establishment of a results-based work culture and to reinforce the behaviors defined by the values of the organization.

Estavillo is a member of the Diversity Game Changers Team which promotes diversity behaviors and building an inclusive culture. He is the co-founder, first president and currently active member of the Raytheon's Hispanic Organization for Leadership and Advancement, New England Chapter. As a promoter of STEM, Estavillo held a position at the McAuliffe Regional Charter Public School board of trustees, where he served for more than three years. He currently supports recruiting efforts at the University of Puerto Rico and is a promoter of STEM among minorities through Raytheon-sponsored programs.

New England District team observes Native American Heritage

Shelly Lowe, Executive Director of the Harvard University Native American Program, visited the New England District to serve as keynote speaker at the Equal Employment Opportunity's Native American Heritage Month event, Nov. 4. Lowe's presentation, held in the Concord Park theater, was titled, "Native Americans in Higher Education."

The keynote speaker began by talking about values that are found in the Native American culture. "Identity and location matter," she said. "Difference is not a problem. Education is important. Our history and future are equally important."

According to Lowe, Native Americans are diverse. They are practitioners and scholars that fill multiple roles. "We are dedicated to access and success," she said. "We want indigenous epistemology and methodology."

Lowe talked about the invisibility of Native Americans in the higher education system. "One percent of total college students enrolled are Native American," she said. "In the fall of 2009, 0.5-percent of full-time college faculty identified themselves as Native Americans and only 0.3-percent were at full professor level."



Lt. Col. Charles Gray presents keynote speaker Shelly Lowe with a Bunker Hill certificate.

Photos by Brian Murphy

Continual crises that the Native American Community addresses include student retention, loss of language, culture and tribal knowledge, poverty and historical trauma. Lowe said that Tribal colleges and universities, first established in 1968, are starting to offer Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science degrees to Native American students. Accord-

ing to Lowe, the Tribal colleges and universities currently offer community centers and active memorandums of understanding and transfer programs with non-indigenous institutions. "University cultural spaces provide a place to be and student support," she said. "They maintain community and cultural health and provide history and sense of belonging."

Lowe concluded her presentation by challenging the audience to get to know indigenous communities and increase a Native American presence in the District. Lt. Col. Charles Gray, Deputy Commander, New England District, presented Lowe with a Bunker Hill plaque for coming to speak with the District team.

Prior to her work at Harvard, Lowe was an Assistant Dean at Yale University. She is an enrolled member of the Navajo Nation and grew up on the Navajo Reservation in Gando, Arizona.

Lowe has served on the board of the National Indian Education Association and as a trustee on the Board for the National Indian Education Association.



Native American Heritage keynote speaker Shelly Lowe presents, "Native Americans in Higher Education."

Boy Scout Completes River Trail Parking Lot Upgrades

Story and photos by Tom Chamberland
Park Ranger, East Brimfield/Westville Lake

Sturbridge Boy Scout Chris Sutter has taken a major step towards earning the rank of Eagle Scout by completing his required service project -- making upgrades and repairs to the Quinebaug River water trail and Lake Siog Pass hiking trail head parking lot located at 20 Pond Bridge Road in Holland, Massachusetts.

This trail head parking lot is owned and managed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in partnership with the town of Holland Trail Committee and The Last Green Valley. This trail head parking lot is the start of the 5-mile section of the nationally designated recreational Quinebaug River Water Trail, and the starting point for the 2-mile Lake Siog Pass hiking trail that connects to the Grand Trunk Trail, a part of the regional 66-mile Titanic Rail Trail. Sutter's project, which took a little more than four Saturdays to complete, included brush and invasive plant removal, creation of a 40' x 25' grassed canoe and kayak set out area, sign relocation, and installation of 50 feet of wooden guard rail and an interpretive kiosk. Sutter was assisted by family and friends along with members of Boy Scout Troop 161 of Sturbridge.

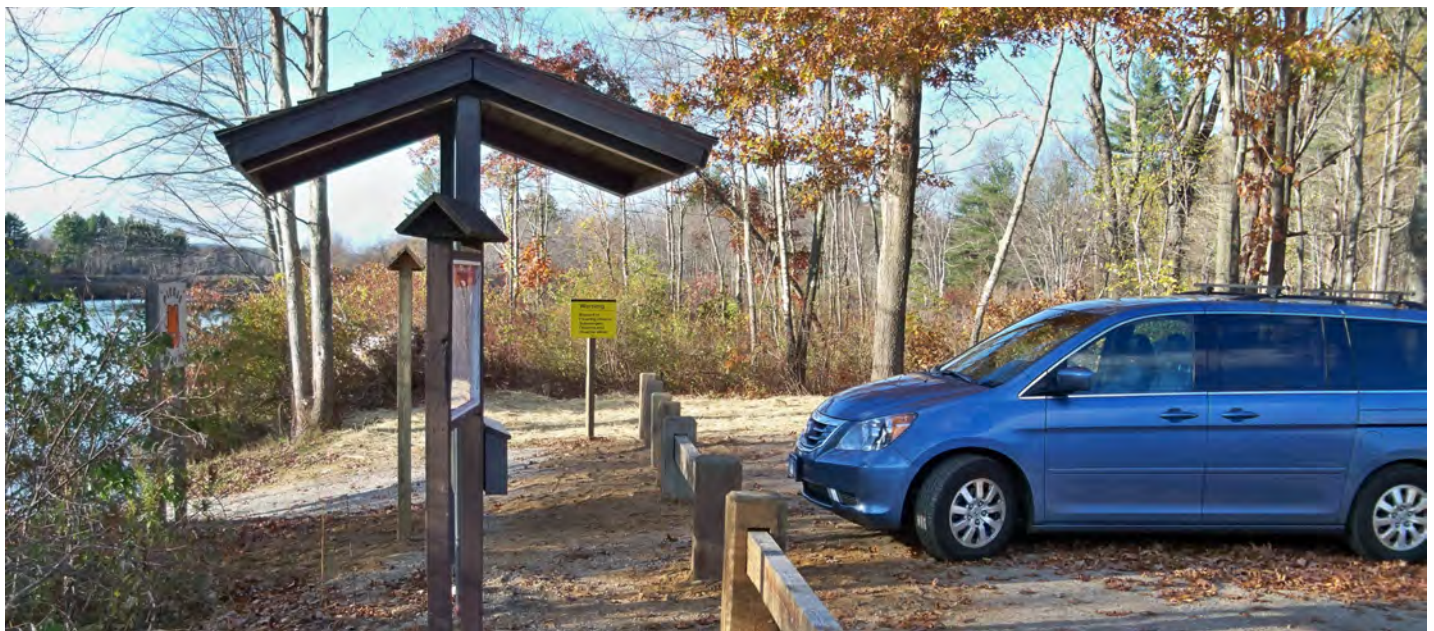
Park Ranger Tom Chamberland, who worked with Sutter as the project collaborator, said, "because of the varied nature of this project, Chris was challenged to make sure all aspects of this project came together on one completion day. He was determined to see that that this project was finished this year and not carried over into next spring. The new guard rail looks great and the newly installed lawn area



A completed project, from left to right: Troop 161 Scoutmaster Bruce Sutter, Scouts Ryan Campbell, Chris Sutter, Tim Taudel, Ben Ouellette, and troop Committee chair Dave Ouellette (standing) around the newly installed water trail map and kiosk.

will create a safe area for water trail users to set and prepare to launch without being in the way of traffic using the parking lot. I congratulate Chris on a job well done."

The guard rail, loam, seed and new signs were supplied by the Corps of Engineers. The new interpretive panel and trail map for the Quinebaug River water trail kiosk was provided by The Last Green Valley.



Completed project area showing newly installed wood posts and rails along with new lawn area. Newly installed Kiosk (side view) is third in row.



Wendy Gendron is all smiles after getting some pie at the Pie Fest.

Photos by Brian Murphy



New England District team members look over the variety of pies at the Pie Fest before making their choice.



Mike Elliott (left) and Adam Burnett head over to a table to eat after picking out some pie slices.

Annual Pie Fest 2014 event celebrates successful year-end

The Work Environment Association Committee held its annual Pie Fest, Nov. 20 in the Concord Park cafeteria. This year, as with all the years prior, New England District Team Members lined up to have a slice of their favorite pie during their afternoon break.

WEA holds this free annual event to celebrate the successful Fiscal Year End and to usher in the new Fiscal Year. The classic apple and pumpkin pies were prominent fixtures on the pie table, but other varieties included banana cream, blueberry, berry, lemon, lemon meringue, sweet potato,

peanut butter and a host of others. Some savory pies such as Shepherd's Pie also appeared this year. Dozens of people helped themselves to over 50 pies donated by their coworkers this year. In addition to the pie, cake, ice cream, whipped cream, cider and coffee were also served.

Drew Cattano headed up this year's event. His assistants were many, but included Judy Antonellis, Marilyn Ortiz, Mary Daley and Grace Bowles. Former pie man and engineering retiree Bob Meader stopped by to have some pie and to visit.

Dredging up the past



Marie Pinede, retired Chief of Audit, selects a gift from the Yankee Swap Table during the District Holiday party in this December 12, 2003 photo.

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