

# Yankee Engineer

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*Building Strong*



STEM activities for visitors at West Hill

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# Yankee Voices

Farrell McMillan, Mike Walsh and Ken Paton



## 2016 Federal Benefits Open Season

The 2016 Federal Benefits Open Season will be from Nov. 14 to Dec. 12. During this Open Season, you will be able to enroll in a new plan, change your current plan, or cancel your plan for the following benefits:

- Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB)
- Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA)
- Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP).

## Words worth repeating

"Real difficulties can be overcome; it is only the imaginary ones that are unconquerable."

- Theodore Vail

"Leadership is not about titles, positions, or flow charts. It is about one life influencing another."

- John C. Maxwell



Bridgeport Army Reserve Center in Branford, Connecticut.



Sen. Ted Kennedy, Jr. gets a tour of the Reserve Center from District Team Members Fred Pike and Kevin Anderson.

## State Senator Visits Connecticut Reserve Facility

by Christine Johnson-Battista

Deputy Chief, Construction Division

Connecticut State Senator Ted Kennedy Jr., State Representative Sean Scanlon, and town of Branford First Selectman James Cosgrove visited the Bridgeport Army Reserve Center in Branford, Connecticut, in June. Fred Pike is the District's Project Engineer. Kevin Anderson is the project's Construction Representative.

The \$17.6 million Bridgeport U.S. Army Reserve Center (ARC) includes the 39,000-square-foot ARC training building, 7,500-square-foot organizational maintenance shop (OMS), 1,500-square-foot unheated storage building, and organizational parking. Anderson was recruited from Germany in the fall of 2014 to perform quality assurance on this contract and will be leaving the District Oct. 20 to return to Germany.

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# Brian Valiton Retires

## 43 Years of Distinguished Service to the Nation

Brian Valiton, Project Manager, Regulatory Division, retired from the New England District with 43 years of service. About 65 family members, friends, co-workers and retirees attended a celebration of his distinguished service, Aug. 2. Bob Desista served as Master of Ceremonies for the official portion of the event.

"We are losing a distinguished gentleman, a man who has served our country with honor in several capacities, a fine friend, an outstanding teacher and mentor, not to mention our in-house counsel, resident historian and oriental food fanatic, and now most importantly, a full-time husband, father and grandfather," he said.

"I've known you my whole long career at the Corps and with you going, I am feeling pretty sad. You were always trying to keep the historic links to the Corps and Regulatory past alive for those who did not experience it all first hand. You brought it all to life."

Desista touched upon the



Photo by Bob Desista  
Brian Valiton receives his retirement certificate from Col. Christopher Barron during his lunch.

legendary friendship Valiton has with Richard Roach and how they were inseparable for many years. "We have all kidded about Brian and Rich and what a great friendship they have, their lunch group that often included Susan Mehigan and Mike Sheehan," he said. "These close relationships were important to Brian and I know he will continue to keep in touch with them and all of us in the years to come."

Other speakers included Crystal Gardner, Mike Elliott, Mike Hicks and Retiree Richard Roach. Col. Christopher Barron, New England District Commander, talked about Valiton's military career when he was a U.S. Army Captain, Military Assistance Command Vietnam, Advisory Team 88, Mekong Delta, during the Vietnam War. At the conclusion of his presentation, Col. Barron awarded Valiton a Commander's Award for Civilian Service.

"Brian demonstrated true leadership, initiative and dedication, making many innovative and important contributions to Regulatory policy and procedure," said Col. Barron. "He performed exceptional work on complex permits and enforcement cases and trained and mentored numerous employees, providing critical thinking skills and technical tools to ensure their success and that of Regulatory Division."

His efforts have led to a Regulatory program that is more professional and effective, and is firmly based on a solid foundation of law and regulation."

Valiton brought a broad background of environmental law and a granular knowledge of Regulatory history to his position. "He developed a groundbreaking legal approach that



Photo by Julie Valiton

Brian Valiton at his new job caring for his grandsons.

addressed civil penalty options," said Desista.

His work has been cited in noted legal journals, this legal instrument institutionalized the Corps' prosecution of Section 10 and Section 404 violations.

As a Regulator, Valiton permitted many important and complex projects. Of note was his contribution to the decision documents for the Cape Wind project, where he provided a critical analysis of the Section 10 implications for this project, drawing on his considerable knowledge of admiralty law.

Family members who attended the lunch with Valiton included his wife, Julie and her daughter Cynthia; his son Jonathon and his wife Despina and their two sons Christopher and Jonathan Jr., sister Charlene and her husband John.

Retirees who welcomed Valiton into the retirement community were Richard Roach, Michael Sheehan, Tom Fredette, Bill Mullen, and Susan Mehigan. Valiton plans to care for his grandsons during his retirement.



Photo by Mike Tuttle

Design work on a new dormitory to replace the above dormitory will take place in October.

## District to construct new dormitory at Hanscom Air Force Base

Beginning in October, design work will commence on a new, state-of-the-art dormitory at Hanscom Air Force Base in Bedford, Massachusetts.

The U.S. Air Force had authorized New England District to award a design and construction contract for the new, three-story, 66-room, 25,000-square-foot military dormitory at Hanscom Air Force Base. The existing dormitories located in Buildings 1510 and 1511 are deteriorating and need to be replaced as soon as possible. Once the new dormitory is built, the two existing structures will be demolished.

“The dormitory will consist of two 2-bed units, two 3-bed units and 14, 4-bed units,” said Project Manager Mike Tuttle. “Each unit will contain a shared common area, kitchen, laundry area and bulk storage.”

According to Tuttle, each bedroom unit will have its own full bathroom

and closet. At full capacity, the new dormitory will provide living quarters to up to 66 E1-E4 unaccompanied servicemembers on the base. The proposed building superstructure will be load-bearing, reinforced, cast-in-place, insulated concrete exterior walls. “Exterior wall finishes will be a combination of masonry veneer at the lower level and Exterior Insulation Finishing System (EIFS) above. The roof will be a light-gauge metal frame carrying a sloped, standing-seam metal roof assembly with full perimeter gutters,” said Tuttle.

The project manager said that one goal of the \$12.6 million project is to achieve the U.S. Green Building Council’s LEED Silver Certification. “The designer of record will integrate sustainable design strategies and features to minimize the energy consumption of the facility, conserve resources, minimize adverse effects to the environment and

improve occupant productivity, health and comfort,” said Tuttle.

According to Tuttle, the dormitory also will be designed and constructed in compliance with the anti-terrorism/force protection standards and architectural barriers act guidelines for accessibility.

The dormitory will reuse, with new stripping and handicap spaces, the existing parking lot to the east while maintaining current traffic patterns and does not add significant paving area or other impermeable surfaces.

In addition to Tuttle as project manager, Jim Conroy will serve as Resident Engineer and Michelle O’Donoghue will serve as Project Engineer.

BBIX, LLC of Boston, Massachusetts is the prime contractor for this project. Following the design work, construction is scheduled to begin in the spring of 2017. The project is estimated to take 24 months to complete.



Co-Coordinator Emily Murray.



Park Ranger Sally Carullo.



A Junior Ranger looks at a display photos during the event.



Park Ranger Viola Bramel and Level 1 Junior Rangers during the Nocturnal Animal Tracking presentation.

Photos provided by West Hill Dam.

## West Hill holds fun STEM activities for young visitors

West Hill Dam hosted back-to-back-events July 20 that focused on Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM).

The first event, Beginning Bridges Five Senses and Solar Power Day took place on July 20. The second event, for Junior Rangers only, featured Professor Brandi VanRoos from Framingham State University.

About 56 children and their families participated in the Beginning Bridges Event. Activities included building dams, learning the soil layers with Summer Park Ranger Sally Carullo who operated the auger to get down to the different layers, as well as building a solar shower and building and cooking in a solar oven.

“The kids made coffee for their parents, solar tea for the Park Rangers,

waffles, toast and popcorn,” said Viola Bramel, Park Ranger at West Hill Dam and the event coordinator.

The final activity for the Beginning Bridges event was identifying and aging trees. The participants sampled flavors from trees such as sassafras, birch soda and more.

Although this is the first time Bramel and Beginning Bridges coordinator Emily Murray brought the Five Senses and Solar Cooking event to West Hill, it is not the first time that the two agencies have worked together. Last year Bramel and Murray held a sand castle event at the project.

Later that evening Professor VanRoos showed Level 1 Junior Rangers how to track animals using technology during her Techniques for Observing Nocturnal Animals

presentation.

The session was one of five required sessions the Junior Rangers needed to earn their badges.

During the activity, the children pretended to be animals such as deer, mice and bears for about 40 minutes as Professor VanRoos tracked the “animals” using a camera and a mounted trip plate. She took the SIM card and downloaded the video and loaded it onto her laptop to show the children how she tracked them.

These two events were just a sampling of the interpretive programs that West Hill Dam hosts year round. For more information on upcoming programs, please go to: [http://www.nae.usace.army.mil/Portals/74/docs/Recreation/WHD/West\\_Hill\\_Events\\_2016.pdf](http://www.nae.usace.army.mil/Portals/74/docs/Recreation/WHD/West_Hill_Events_2016.pdf)



Michelle O'Donoghue talks with MassBay Community College students during a career panel.

Photo provided by Mark Anderson.

## New England District engineer sits on career panel during MassBay STEM event

New England District Project Engineer Michelle O'Donoghue, Construction Division, traveled to Wellesley Hills, Massachusetts to sit on a career panel at MassBay Community College, Aug. 23. O'Donoghue joined representatives from Sanofi-Genzyme and Mathcounts on the three person panel.

The career panel was part of the MassBay Community College STEM Starter Academy Summer Program. "The Starter Academy Program is designed for incoming first-year students," said Mark Anderson, New England District's STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) coordinator. "It includes a two-week intensive math review program, STEM activities, an introduction to college success skills, along with workshops on effective communication and stress management."

During the one hour panel, O'Donoghue described her role at the District and her education path. According to Anderson, O'Donoghue also answered questions from the panel facilitator and from attending students. "There were many well thought out questions and strong general interest in the panel discussion," said Anderson. "There was a very positive response from the students."

This is the second year that New England District team members participated in the MassBay Summer Bridge Program. "The event is an extension of and was developed

through our partnership agreement with MassBay," said Anderson.

According to Anderson, the program has been highly successful in preparing students for success as they enter the college environment and has improved student retention in the STEM academic programs.

New England District's involvement with the program allows engineers to talk about their chosen career path and possibly inspire students to enter the engineering field. "Ms. O'Donoghue's involvement in the career panel helped approximately 30 students identify potential academic and career paths, gain an understanding that not all paths to STEM are linear, along with insight into what civil engineers with the Corps of Engineers do on a regular basis."

O'Donoghue, who has been with the Corps of Engineers for seven years, has been a member of the New England District team since January 2015. Current projects she is involved with include Muddy River Phase 1, the Hanscom Dormitory Design-Build, and the Building 2200 and 2201 roof replacement at Westover.

MassBay Community College was chartered by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in February 1961, according to their website. It offers associate degrees and certificate programs. The college has campuses in Wellesley Hills, Framingham and a Technology Center in Ashland.

# Employee Spotlight: Jeff Teller, Real Estate

Jeff Teller is the Lead Appraiser in the Appraisal, Planning and Control Branch in Real Estate Division. He has been with the District for 11 years. "I administer programs via \$4 million delegation," he said. "My project responsibilities include real estate appraisal, acquisition and disposition, planning, cost engineering, contracting and Overseas Contingency Operations."

Teller supports civil and military missions to include installation requirements, Base Realignment and Closure and Hazardous, Toxic and Remedial Waste Programs. He administers contracts for appraisal services, mapping and survey work. Teller provides technical evaluation expertise support to interagency partners on complex projects, including EPA Superfund programs, Department of Justice and the Department of Homeland Security. "I coordinate technical issues with Programs and Project Management Division technical managers, suggesting solutions to complex project requirements."

He also supports Planning Division, coordinates with the Department of Justice and interfaces with Division and headquarters.

Teller has deployed all over the world in support of the Corps' role in the Overseas Contingency Operations. His exemplary service overseas has garnered many accolades and awards to include two Non Article 5 NATO Medals (Civil Service), DA Civilian Service Medal for Work in Central Asia, two Secretary of Defense Civilian Service Medals (Global War on Terrorism); Joint Civilian Service Achievement Medal (Combined Joint Task Force – Horn of Africa); U.S. Congressional Proclamations from former Sen. Scott Brown (Joint Special Operations Task Force – Horn of Africa and

RC(s) HQ Kandahar) and the Army Achievement Medal for Civilian Service.

The Lead Appraiser graduated with honors from Wilmington University where he received a Master's Degree in Business Administration. He achieved a Level 3 Certification in Facilities Engineering from Defense Acquisitions University and is a 2014 graduate of the New England District Leadership Development Program.

In addition to his work in Real Estate, Teller also serves as the Communicator for the National Federal Employees 1164. "My goal is keeping District personnel informed of pending legislation that impacts employees' rights and benefits," he said.

Teller says what he enjoys most about working for the New England District is the opportunity to work across multiple disciplines in both civil and military programs, developing relationships with

both military and interagency partners while accomplishing mission objectives.

When asked what was the most enjoyable part of working for New England District, Teller said, "The opportunity to serve and provide expertise to military overseas contingency operation programs, through deployments to Africa, Joint Special Operations Task Force-Trans Sahara (Engineer Plans Officer), Central Asia, Afghanistan, and the Middle East. Supporting STEM programs through student recruitment into USACE engineering fields."

When he's not at work, Teller enjoys fitness and sports and is a line official for the Association for Tennis Professionals (ATP Tour).



Jeff Teller, Lead Appraiser, Real Estate Division

# Dredging up the past



Lt. Gen. William F. Cassidy, Chief of Engineers, addresses the audience during the opening of Littleville Dam in Huntington, Massachusetts in this October 9, 1965 photo.

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