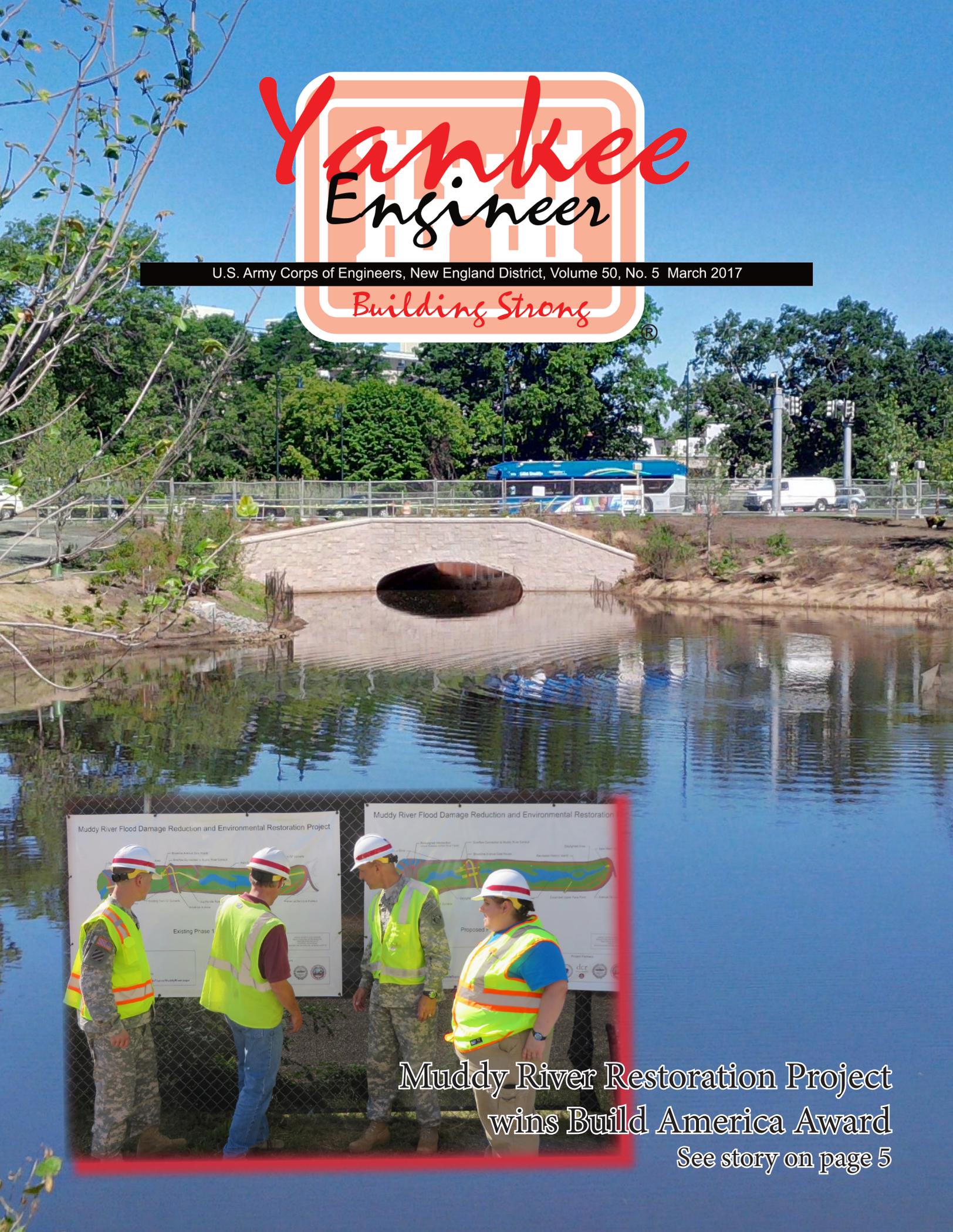


# Yankee Engineer

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District, Volume 50, No. 5 March 2017

*Building Strong*®



Muddy River Restoration Project  
wins Build America Award  
See story on page 5

# Yankee Voices



Mark Habel

## New England heats up during Chili 'Cook-Off'

Prior to the New England Patriots winning their historic, 5th Superbowl, the New England District team held their own competition – the annual Chili Cook-off, Feb. 2 in the Concord Park Cafeteria.

Six chefs competed for the title of best chili this year. Twenty-eight people paid \$2 to sample all of the dishes and the opportunity to vote for their favorite. Many more came down to enjoy this year's offerings but chose not to vote.

Jim White and Dan Sionni tied for first place, each earning a \$15 Amazon Gift Card. Debra Barresi and Maureen Davi both shared the second place title, earning a \$10 Amazon Gift Card. Joshua Mulvey took third place and also took home a \$10 Amazon Gift Card.

Kirsten Traver headed up the event for the Work Environment (WE) Committee. Proceeds from the cook-off go to future WE Committee-sponsored events throughout the year.

## District awards a fender replacement contract for New Bedford-Fairhaven Hurricane Barrier

by Timothy Dugan  
Public Affairs Office

A contract for a fender replacement at the New Bedford-Fairhaven Hurricane Protection Barrier in New Bedford, Mass., was awarded recently by the New England District.

Work on the \$178,880 contract will be accomplished by Asturian Group, Inc.,

of Virginia Beach, Virginia. The contract was awarded on Sept. 28, 2016 and the notice to proceed was issued on Nov. 18, 2016.

Work is anticipated to be accomplished in the spring of 2017 to take advantage of more favorable weather for replacing the fenders.

The work consists of the replacement of existing and damaged timber fenders with new composite timbers at the New Bedford Hurricane Barrier. Work tasks include the removal of the specified existing fenders and bolts, and installation of new composite timbers and bolts at both sector gates. The contract will be restricted to work on only one site (sector gate) at a time.

Underwater work is required for this project, including removal of damaged items, potential debris removal, installation of new components, and inspections. The work site is located in a navigation channel, which will remain open to traffic during the execution of the work.

Work requirements will be managed by Project Engineer Jim Veilleux and Resident Engineer Kevin Coleman to assure compliance with contract requirements.



## Employee Spotlight

# Erin Bradley, Contracting Division

Erin Bradley, Contracting Division, was recently promoted to District Contracting Officer after a year and nine months as Chief of Purchasing Branch.

“As a Contracting Officer for the Contracts Branch my primary focus is on negotiated procurements, to include best value procurements, claims and potential claims/Request for Equitable Adjustments/appeals,” she said.

Bradley, who has been with the District since June 2014, holds a Bachelor’s of Marketing from Marshall University and a Master’s in Integrated Marketing Communications from Eastern Michigan University. “I am working towards a Master’s in Building Construction from Auburn University,” she added.

The day-to-day changes in her career is what Bradley enjoys most about working for New England District. “I love the challenge in the breadth of contract types and customers we



Erin Bradley, Contracting Division

Photo by Ann Marie R. Harvie

serve in New England District,” said Bradley. “It makes for a challenging and exciting atmosphere. No two days are the same, and that helps keep me motivated to best serve our customers and our mission.”

Bradley is an avid animal lover and has an Airedale Terrier and a cat waiting for her to come home each day. “Someday, when I have more space and time, I want a few more dogs to add to the mix,” she said.



Photo by Michelle Cucchi

## Bald Eagles pay visit to West Thompson

West Thompson Lake in Connecticut had some special visitors arrive at the project, Jan. 25. Ten Bald Eagles, six immature and four adults, were seen frolicking in the water and hanging out in the trees. Since then the West Thompson Lake team has seen some of the immature eagles several times since first spotting the group. The team also received reports that the eagles have been spotted down river from the dam.

## Public Informational Meeting held on New Haven Harbor Study

Members of the New England District, the New Haven Port Authority and the Connecticut Port Authority held a Public Informational Meeting on the New Haven Harbor Navigation Improvement Feasibility Study and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), Jan. 24 at the Hall of Records, Hearing Room 200 Orange Street, New Haven, Connecticut.

“The feasibility study will evaluate whether navigation improvement so the existing federal navigation project at New Haven Harbor are warranted and in the federal interest,” said New England District’s Study Manager Barbara Blumeris. “The objective of the improvement project is to provide transportation cost savings and increase navigation safety.”

The meeting was held in New Haven, Connecticut. About 28 people, to include three speakers, attended the meeting.

Mark Habel, Chief, Navigation and Environmental Studies Section, Planning Division served as the moderator and facilitator for the evening. He also went over the meeting procedures for the audience. Judi Sheffele, Executive Director, New Haven Port Authority and Evan Matthews, Executive Director, Connecticut Port Authority welcomed attendees. Blumeris presented the overview of the New Haven Harbor Navigation Improvement Study. Blumeris’ detailed overview went over the purpose of the feasibility study, a discussion of the existing federal navigation channel, the study process, schedule, and cost sharing.

According to Blumeris, the three-year study will examine deepening the existing main ship channel from Long Island Sound to the head of deep draft navigation at the terminals seaward of I-95, together with the possibility of deepening the adjacent



Photo by Jess Levenson

Barbara Blumeris makes her presentation during the meeting.

maneuvering and turning areas abreast the terminals. “The feasibility study will include analyzing various incremental channel depths and widths based upon need, as well as alternative dredging methodologies,” she said. “In addition, the study will evaluate various dredged material disposal alternatives such as beneficial use, nearshore placement, open water placement, and upland placement.”

New England District Marine Ecologist Todd Randall briefed the audience on the National Environmental Policy Act process. “NEPA is a federal law that requires the identification and analysis of potential environmental and socioeconomic effects before those actions take place,” he said. “It is a statutory requirement triggered by major federal actions that could significantly affect the quality of the human environment.”

Randall described NEPA as a “full disclosure” law with provisions for public access to and public participation in the federal decision-making process as well as a mechanism for evaluating potential environmental impacts and incorporating public involvement into the federal decision-making process.

Other parts of the overview included the purpose of the environmental impact statement, major steps in the

NEPA/EIS process, the outline of the EIS, a time line from the scoping meetings to the record of decision and the ways that the public can participate in the process. Randall concluded by encouraging those present to provide comments on the proposed study by Feb. 23 and then provided them the information as to where they may submit their comments.

After the formal presentations, Michael Piscitelli, Deputy Economic Development Administrator, got up to speak. He said that the feasibility study is the next step of an important project that will make a better, safer harbor.

John Acampora of Clean Harbor had questions about the size of the project, which Habel answered for him.

When the registered speakers concluded, Charles Jones, a harbor pilot explained he has been bringing ships into the harbor for over 30 years. “Consider the size of the ships,” he said. “More cargo can be loaded onto larger ships. It will save time and money. We need to do dredging, 37-feet is the safe draft we can bring in now to New Haven. The pilots are in favor of the dredging and widening of the channel.”

Gateway Terminal submitted a written statement in favor of dredging. “GT strongly supports the proposed feasibility study regarding the potential to dredge New Haven Harbor to benefit the Port of New Haven and the region as a whole,” they wrote. “Improving the conditions in the port of New Haven by dredging the harbor to a depth in excess of the current 35 feet is essential if we are to compete with the larger and much deeper ports in Boston, Providence, New York/New Jersey and Philadelphia. Proceeding with this feasibility study is a prudent and necessary first step.”

The next meeting on the project, an alternatives informational meeting, will be scheduled in September.



The completed Phase 1 of the Muddy River Flood Risk Management and Environmental Restoration Project.

Photo by Jennifer Flanagan

## Muddy River Project wins Build America Award

The Muddy River Flood Risk Management and Environmental Restoration Project in Boston, Massachusetts has been honored with the Associated General Contractors (AGC) of America's Alliant Build America Award.

According to AGC, the award honors AGC members who build the nation's most impressive construction projects ranging across the building, highway and transportation, utility infrastructure and federal and heavy divisions. "These projects, with their vision, scope and grandeur literally dare to change," said AGC's past President J. Doug Pruitt.

The Muddy River is a small waterway located in the Boston metropolitan area. Most of the 5.6 square mile watershed is located in the city of Boston and the town of Brookline, with a small portion located in the city of Newton.

The 3.5 mile long Muddy River flows through the heart of Frederick Law Olmsted's famed Emerald Necklace, one of the most carefully crafted park systems in America and the oldest remaining linear urban park system in the United States.

As a result of multiple floods, Boston's Parks and Recreation Department, working with the Boston Water and Sewer Commission, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the town of Brookline, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and

non-profit community groups such as the Emerald Necklace Conservancy and Fenway Alliance developed a comprehensive master plan to identify and address issues affecting the Muddy River. The Corps of Engineers was authorized to study the Muddy River by a series of legislative acts, and resulted in the 2003 Feasibility Study.

"The recommended plan from the Feasibility Study consisted of a combination of the 20-year flood risk management plan and extensive environmental dredging," said Project Manager Jennifer Flanagan. Due to high unit costs of the proposed restoration, the decision was made not to support the Environmental Restoration element of the project in 2005.

According to Flanagan, the major features of the current federally approved plan include: protection against a flood with a return frequency of 20 years to include channel improvements, removal of undersized culverts, installation of two new culverts, and daylighting two sections (about 700 linear feet) of the Muddy River; dredging approximately 96,000 cubic yards of sediment from five areas in the Riverway, Leverett Pond, and in the Back Bay Fens (the material will be dewatered on site and disposed of in licensed upland landfills); required removal of Phragmites from wetland and riparian areas affected by dredging for the flood risk management channel;

and preservation and restoration of the historic park shoreline and vegetation in construction areas.

The project will be completed in two phases, with phase one already complete. Phase 1 is located from Riverway to Avenue Louis Pasteur. The work consisted of removal of undersized culverts with new Riverway and Brookline Avenue Culverts, daylighting of the former Sears Parking Lot and area upstream of Avenue Louis Pasteur to construct the FRM channel, removal of 2' of accumulated sediment from Upper Fens Pond, and the construction of the Avenue Louis Pasteur culvert extension. Construction of Phase 1 of the Muddy River project began in January 2013 and was completed in June 2016. Phase 1 was completed at a cost of \$35.2 million.

In addition to Flanagan, District team members currently working on the project are Steve Umbrell, Technical Lead, Michelle O'Donoghue, Project Engineer and Mike Penko, Biologist.

"The Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the city of Boston and town of Brookline are the local sponsors for the project and will be responsible for long-term operation and maintenance of the project," said Flanagan. "This will include monitoring water quality, removal of future accumulations of sediment to maintain flood control, water quality, and habitat benefits, and monitoring/treatment to guard against recolonization by Phragmites."

# The State of the District is focus of District Town Meeting

To begin the February Town Meeting, Col. Christopher Barron, New England District Commander, honored the District Team for its performance and updated everyone on current and future endeavors.

Col. Barron began by presenting several Combined Federal Campaign Awards to Deb Acone, Construction, Paul Minken, Regulatory, Marie Wojtas, Engineering, and Paul Lyver for their many contributions.

Mark Habel, Planning, received a Commander's Award for Civilian Service for his extensive navigation work on 171 harbors. Col. Barron praised Habel for his work and his expertise. "He is one of the rocks that the foundation of the New England District is built upon," he said.

John Winkelman, Engineering, received a Commander's Award for Civilian Service for his hard work and dedication to Coastal Engineering. Col. Barron said that Winkelman is a nationally recognized Coastal Engineer. Although he soon will be working for ERDC, Winkelman will still have a desk at New England District. Col. Barron said that the District's loss is the Corps of Engineers' gain.

Julie Carignan of Engineering and Planning received the New England District's Employee of the Month Award for November 2016. She received the honor for her invaluable contributions to Engineering/Planning.

After the awards, Col. Barron discussed the New England District's Operational Environment and the diverse and fairly balanced programs. "New England District is an important place to be," he said.

The move to Hanscom Air Force Base was the next topic the Colonel wanted to address. Col. Barron said the move has been approved and the funds for the \$30 million renovations of Buildings 1107 and 1102F are on the way. The new facility will provide a lot of space for a lot less money than the District is currently paying.

Col. Barron said that there will be some trade-offs, but he is confident the District can work through them. He said that other options such as Fort Devens and the Barnes Building in Boston were discussed, but ultimately the Hanscom option was the best. Col. Barron estimated that the District could move in as early as 2021.

Col. Barron moved on to the results of the Command Climate Survey. He said 105 team members responded. He said responders liked their jobs and are proud to work for the District. The Colonel had a list of areas that need to improve to include the hiring process, training and communications.

In his state of the district slide, Col. Barron highlighted areas that he felt good about such as the District's future workload, the Leadership Development Program, Supervisor Training and areas where he felt needed improvement such as internal communications, retention and transfer of knowledge and internal stability and success planning.

Col. Barron said topics of importance are always fluctuating, but some of the areas that were important to him on the day of the Town Meeting included Boston Harbor Dredging, EPA Superfund work, the 2017 Recreation Season, training and the Cape Cod Canal bridges.



Col. Christopher Barron presents Deb Acone, Paul Minken and Marie Wojtas with CFC Certificates.

The Colonel made five key assumptions for the future that included mission balance, remaining a full-service, semiautonomous district; bureaucracy will not get easier, workforce numbers and continuing to have positive relationships with other state and federal agencies.

In closing, Col. Barron said the New England District should be the kind of organization that is the kind of place customers and partners come to because they want to, not because they have to.

Before ending the Town Meeting, Col. Barren fielded questions regarding training and the LDP Program, questions about the new headquarters, the shortage of personnel in the CPAC, the 2017 Recreation Season, the current hiring freeze and the dam and levee safety program. "This is a great District," he said. "We are in a great place. I am humbled by your professionalism and proud to work here."



John Winkelman receives a Commander's Award for Civilian Service from Col. Barron.



Julie Carignan is the November 2016 Employee of the Month.



Col. Barron presents Mark Habel with a Commander's Award for Civilian Service.



## Nature Presentation at Uxbridge Senior Center

Viola Bramel, Park Ranger, West Hill Dam, served as guest speaker during Uxbridge Police Chief Jeff Lourie's monthly Community Policing Bureau presentation. The event was held Feb. 3 at the Uxbridge Senior Center in Uxbridge, Massachusetts. Bramel discussed the various wildlife seen at West Hill Dam and the programs that the project offers to everyone.

# Dredging up the past



James Bacon receives his 30 year certificate of service from Col. Thomas Rhen, New England Division Engineer, at the 1987 Founder's Day Ceremony held June 26, 1987.

First Class  
U.S. Postage  
Paid  
Concord, MA  
Permit No. 494

Public Affairs Office  
New England District  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
696 Virginia Road  
Concord, MA 01742-2751  
Meter Code 40