

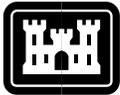
Halloween
Costume
Contest
Page 5



Joe
Bocchino
Retires
Page 6



Yankee Voices.....	2
Toys for Tots.....	2
Commander's Column.....	3
Special Accommodations.....	3
Dredging Up the Past.....	8



**US Army Corps
of Engineers
New England District**

Volume 41, No. 2

Yankee Engineer

November 2005

District, partners break ground on Allin's Cove project

New England District officials have once again confirmed the Corps of Engineers' commitment to environmental sustainability and coastal ecosystem restoration. Recently, the Corps joined their Rhode Island project partners at a groundbreaking ceremony for the Allin's Cove, Wetland Restoration Project.

The event, which was held Oct. 31, at the project site in Barrington, R.I., and celebrated the construction of the \$1.3 million project that will restore Allin's Cove to its former beauty.

"This is a significant moment for the state of Rhode Island and the town of Barrington," said Col. Curtis Thalken, District Engineer at the event. "The project will restore the area where we are standing and provide about four acre of improved coastal wetland habitat."

Continued on page 4



Sandra Wyatt expresses glee during the groundbreaking ceremony that marks beginning of the Allin's Cove Wetland Restoration Project.

Photo by Jan Freedman, RI CRMC

Corps of Engineers delivers wind energy DEIS to MMS New agency to take lead, Corps continues permit process

The federal responsibility of determining whether or not a controversial energy producing wind facility will be located in Nantucket Sound has been transferred to the Department of Interior.

The 2005 Energy Policy Act calls for the Department of Interior's Min-

erals Management Service (MMS) to be the lead agency for renewable energy projects in federal waters on the Outer Continental Shelf.

The New England District will continue to be involved in these MMS lead processes as both a cooperating agency and as permitting authority under Sec-

tion 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act.

The Corps of Engineers, New England District, once the lead agency for the controversial permit application, began coordination of the transfer of federal responsibility October.

"While the initial approval or de-

Continued on page 4

Yankee Voices

Jerry Nunziato
Security Office



Toys for Tots

The annual Toys for Tots campaign will run through Dec. 16. The boxes for collecting the toys are located in the front entry.

On Dec. 16 the toys will be collected and taken to a fire station in Concord for delivery to the Marine Corps Reserve who will distribute them to needy children in the area. Please help make a child's Christmas happy and donate a new, unwrapped and non-violent toy to the toy drive.

For more information contact Jerry Nunziato x589 or Janet Brayden x388.

Words worth repeating

"What we hope ever to do with ease, we must learn first to do with diligence."

- *Samuel Johnson (1709-1784)*
Lexicographer and writer

"Learn when to let go and walk away."

- *Odette Pollar, writer*

Congratulations

... to **Richard Riley**, Park Ranger at the Franklin Falls and Blackwater Dams who has been selected as the WE Committee's Employee of the Month for November 2005. Richard received the honor for consistently working well above his grade level.

... to **the Otter Brook/Surry Mountain Dams Flood Emergency Response team** as the WE Committee's Team of the Month for November 2005. This team is being recognized for its outstanding response during the recent rainstorms that resulted in over 15 inches of rain in the Keene, N.H. area. Team members include **Jim Lewis, John Asseng, Christie Baker, Jason Tremblay, Mike Curran, Greg Hanlon and Paul Marinelli.**

... to **the New England District family** on their generous donation of food to the Worcester County Food Bank. During the November Food Drive, the WE Committee collected nearly 80 pounds of food. Although totals did not exceed the 102 pounds donated earlier this year, the WE Committee had much more pasta donations and were able to provide the Food Bank with an extra box full of food. Many hungry people will now be fed with the food given by New England's employees. This donation is just another excellent example of the generosity that the New England District family continues to show to those less fortunate. Thank you very much!

Sympathy

... to **Donna Russell** of the District's Real Estate Office, on the passing of her father, **Ed Russell**, Nov. 1.

... to the family of retiree **Theresa Occhiolini**, who passed away Oct. 15. Occhiolini retired from the New England District in 1973 with 20 years of service.

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Commander's Corner:

Giving thanks to District employees for all they do

by Col. Curtis L. Thalken
District Engineer



I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone and their families a happy Thanksgiving. Tradition dictates that we examine the many things we have to be thankful for and I would like to take the opportunity to thank you all for your efforts to make the world, our nation and the District a better place.

Terrorists continue to attack the peace loving people of the world, but their actions are becoming more and more desperate. Our actions and those of our allies in Iraq and Afghanistan are paving the way for democracy and peace in the Middle East.

The recent elections in Iraq and the rejection of terrorist cowards by the brave people of Jordan demonstrate that the terrorists are no longer welcome and that their defeat is inevitable. The work being done by the Corps of Engineers, in Iraq and Afghanistan is instrumental to this success and volunteers from the New England District have played a critical role in that success.

When natural disasters struck our fellow Americans along the Gulf Coast, New Englanders rushed to their aid. Nearly 63 members of the District have deployed to support hurricane Katrina and hurricane Rita recovery efforts and 23 members of our District family remain deployed today. The devastation our fellow countrymen face is nearly unthinkable, but the economic might of America and the resolve of her people will allow the region to be rebuilt and the lives of those affected to recover.

This past month, our District's flood reduction projects helped to prevent significant damage from occurring locally. While flooding did occur in many locations large scale flooding was avoided. Our dams and the action of our project operators in the field, reservoir control personnel and dam safety team here in Concord prevented millions of dollars in damage and protected the lives of scores of people.

Thank you for all that you do, day in and day out. Your service in response to the nations call, whether in time of war, response to national disaster, or support to our local communities is what makes America great. Your service also demonstrates the relevance of the Corps of Engineers today and into the future.

Essayons!

New England District's Disability Program Reasonable Accommodations Process

By Jacqueline D. DiDomenico
EEO Office

Let me introduce myself, I am the designated District's Individuals with Disabilities program manager. The program for Individuals with Disabilities is one of the responsibilities of the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Office. Executive Order 13164 is our guiding policy.

Do you know how to request a reasonable accommodation due to medical issues, what office to contact for guidance, initiating a request, etc.? We hope this article will assist you in the event you are in need of reasonable accommodations and understanding your responsibilities, and the agency's responsibilities as well.

What is a reasonable accommodation?

A reasonable accommodation is any change in the work

environment or in the way things are customarily done that would enable a qualified individual with a disability to enjoy equal employment opportunities. This does not mean that the manager must lower the standards of work for the position or change the job requirements.

The employee must be able to perform the essential functions of their position description. There are three categories of reasonable accommodations:

- Modifications to the application process to enable an individual with a disability to be considered for a job (such as providing application forms in alternative formats like large print or Braille);
- Modifications to enable a qualified individual with a disability to perform the essential functions of the job (such as providing sign language interpreters, readers, large print material, etc.); and
- Modifications that enable employees with disabilities to

Continued on page 7

Corps of Engineers hands wind energy project to MMS

Continued from page 1

nial of a proposed energy-producing wind facility in Nantucket Sound rests with MMS, the permitting authority of the Corps of Engineers has not changed," said District permit manager Karen Adams.

"The Section 10 regulatory authority does not change -- structures on the Outer Continental Shelf will still require a Corps permit. In the case of Cape Wind, permitting 130 structures in federal waters, our processes will continue to run concurrently with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process (as it always has) -- only the lead federal agency has changed, not NEPA, not the Corps permitting processes."

The 2005 Energy Policy Act does not supersede or modify the existing U.S. Army Corps of Engineer's regulatory authorities such as Section 10 of Rivers and Harbors and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.

In compiling data and information during the initial phases of the Corps-led NEPA processes that eventually led to the release of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) in 2004, the New England District identified issues

regarding operational impacts of such activities in federal waters not addressed in current law. The Corps brought this to the attention of the Ocean Policy Commission at a July 2002 hearing in Boston.

The Ocean Policy Commission agreed with the Corps assessment and made recommendations to Congress in 2003. The Congress added the recommendation of the Ocean Policy Commission to the Energy Policy Act of 2005.

President Bush signed the bill into law on Aug. 8, 2005.

The applicant, Cape Wind Associates, LLC proposed two projects and submitted permit applications in 2001. The first project was for a single scientific data-gathering tower on the Outer Continental Shelf outside of state waters. The District issued that permit on Aug. 19, 2002.

The second project is for the construction of 130 energy producing wind turbines on monopole structures spread throughout an ocean area of approx. 24 sq. miles in Nantucket Sound.

Concerns over the project have been raised during a series of public

information meetings and hearings. Concerns regarding the project involve the lack of property rights, the "precedent" of private gain in public waters without compensation, and a need for broader planning.

"Other major issues include potential impacts to birds including endangered Roseate Terns and Piping Plovers, marine mammals including some endangered species such as Right Whales, the economy (tourism), fishing, boating, aviation and changes in the seascape," said Adams.

Not long after receiving the permit application, the Corps of Engineers determined that an Environmental Impact Statement would be needed before making a decision on the project.

The agency had completed a DEIS on Nov. 9, 2004 and had accepted comments on the document through Feb. 24, 2005.

At the time of the enactment of the Energy Policy Act, the District was summarizing and evaluating comments on the DEIS. The MMS plans to use the DEIS and add the information needed for their new program to formulate a new EIS.

District, partners break ground on Allin's Cove project

Continued from page 1

In 1959, dredged material from the Bullocks Cove navigation improvement project was placed at the mouth of the cove.

This material increased the elevation above the intertidal range. The change resulted in conditions suitable for the growth of an invasive species called *Phragmites australis*, or "common reed", which took over the area and destroyed the salt marsh.

Work to remove the unwanted phragmites and restore intertidal elevations has already begun. The project will also realign the inlet channel to the south and provide for a north and south sand spit with sand excavated at the

site.

Green Seal Environmental, Inc., of Sandwich, Mass., is performing the work. Their subcontractor is RC&D, Inc., of Providence, R.I.

Col. Thalken contributed the success in getting the project underway to the hard work and dedication of the District's nonfederal partners. The project is being cost-shared between the federal (75 percent) and the nonfederal (25 percent) project sponsors.

"Hard work and partnering of many interested supporters is always essential for restoration projects like these to be successful," said Col. Thalken. "I look forward to working with our partners in Rhode Island on important future project

that will continue to benefit the Ocean State."

Rhode Island Senator Jack Reed and Senator Lincoln Chafee and Congressman Patrick Kennedy, who were instrumental in securing the federal funding for the project, made remarks during the groundbreaking ceremony.

Other speakers included Michael Tikoian, Rhode Island Coastal Resource Management Council; Ken McKay, Rhode Island Governor's Chief of Staff; Peter DeAngelis, Barrington Town Manager; and Sandra Wyatt, Barrington Land Conservation Trust/Allin's Cove Neighborhood Coalition. The project is expected to be completed by early 2006.



Contestants in the WE Halloween costume contest line up to be judged by their peers.

WE Committee

Costume contest scares up creativity, lunchtime fun

Imaginative creativity was the order of the day Oct. 31 when six brave souls and extremely good sports donned costumes for the Work Environment Committee's annual lunchtime Halloween costume contest.

New England District employees dining in the Concord Park cafeteria watched a small introduction of each contestant before voting for their favorite costume via secret ballot.

The costumes were creative and the competition fierce, but in the end Mary Christopher of Information Management took home the top prize for her original Peter Pan costume.

"I arrived at the fairy-tale theme of my costume matter-of-factly," said Christopher. "I looked around for a Halloween costume in a storage box at home when I found my son's costume. Then I weaved the string belt out of my craft collection. I hunted through my daughter's wardrobe and found a pair of green shorts that matched my son's costume. I found a pair of stockings in the drawer that matched the outfit."

Martha Labbe of Human Resources took second place with her costume entitled, "Butterfly with an Identity Crisis."

"It's not very exciting," said Labbe when asked what inspired her for her innovative costume. "I saw the wings in the store and I liked the bright colors. And it was on sale!"

Employees judging the contest enjoyed the event and picking their favorite costume. "I looked for originality and personality when I voted," said Cheryl Kassoy.

The WE Committee's Halloween contest is only one of many fun lunchtime and break time activities held during the year. WE Committee-sponsored contests and activities are open to everyone. Employees can check out the "WE Committee News" section in the Weekly Bulletin or go to the WE Committee web site on the District's intranet page for up-to-date information.



Martha Labbe's "Butterfly with an Identity Crisis" took second place in the contest.

Photos by Brian Murphy

Bocchino retires with over 30 years of federal service



Photos by Brian Murphy

Joe Bocchino says a few words during his retirement party.

Executive Assistant and longtime New England District employee Joe Bocchino has retired from the Corps of Engineers to pursue a second career as a consultant at Clean Harbors Environmental Services.

Over 80 friends, coworkers, and family members joined Bocchino for one last round of golf as a federal employee and a retirement party to celebrate his 30-plus year career. The event took place Oct. 27 at the Sandy Burr Country Club in Wayland, Mass.

"It started out with a 9-hole golf scramble," said Bocchino of his party. "Records are sketchy, but this can be considered a first for us (I mean you ...gotta get used to that). Scott (Michalak) did a marvelous job getting the whole thing together including prizes, free Sandy Burr hats for all golfers, and perfect weather (for late October). The best part was my foursome because it included my two boys, Joseph and John, and my Father-in-Law 'Diamond Jim.' Playing golf with them as part of my retirement was special to me and I thank Scott for doing that."

Bobby Byrne served as Master of

Ceremonies for the event. Other speakers included Distinguished Civilian Gallery Member Joseph Ignazio, former New England District employee Tony Riccio, and Bocchino's daughter, Elizabeth. "The highlight was when my daughter Liz stole the show from MC Bobby Byrne by talking about the family that is the Corps," said Bocchino. "She brought tears to many eyes because she pointed out how different we are. We are as close as sisters and brothers. We are in each other's lives and share good

and bad times."

Bocchino received a Concord minuteman statue and a gift certificate for golf equipment as parting gifts from attendees.

Col. Curtis L. Thalken, New England District Engineer, presented Bocchino with a Superior Civilian Service Award. Shortly after, Col. Thalken officially retired Bocchino by presenting him with his retirement certificate.

In addition to his daughter, Elizabeth, other members of the Bocchino family that attended the party were wife Marianne; twin sons Joe and John; brother John and Bocchino's inlaws Mr. And Mrs. Vincent Papia.

Distinguished Civilian Gallery members who attended were Larry Bergen, Richard Reardon, and Nick Avtges. Other retirees at the party included Jack Caffrey, Ed Fallon, Don Martin, William Coleman, Leo Milette, and Bruce Zawacki. In addition to Michalak, Kathy Bucciarelli and Judy Antonellis helped organize the event.

"Thank you for a magnificent 30 plus years," said Bocchino. "Thank you for your friendship, support, and love. I look forward to seeing all of you at the various things we do together. That will not change. And ... for one more time ... Essays!"



Joe Bocchino receives his retirement certificate from Col. Curtis Thalken.

New England District's Disability Program Reasonable Accommodations Process

Continued from page 3

enjoy equal benefits and privileges of employment (such as removing physical barriers in an office).

Who is an individual with a disability?

An individual with a disability:

- has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the person's major life activities;
- has a record of such an impairment; or
- is regarded as having such impairment.

What is a major life activity?

A major life activity is a function that the average person in the general population can perform with little or no difficulty. Major life activities include activities such as caring for oneself, seeing, hearing, walking, breathing, speaking, learning, sitting, standing, lifting, reaching, and working.

What are examples of a reasonable accommodation?

Reasonable accommodations must be coordinated with the Individuals with Disabilities program manager. Examples of reasonable accommodations include but are not limited to the following:

- making existing facilities accessible;
- requests for the removal of an architectural barrier(s);
- reconfigured workspaces;
- restructuring the job;
- utilizing part-time or modified work schedules;
- allowing employees the use of telework arrangement with a reasonable accommodations agreement;
- adjusting or modifying tests, training materials, or policies;
- providing qualified readers and interpreters;
- procuring or modifying equipment to include adaptive equipment;
- reassigning an individual to a vacant position for which the employee must be qualified.

How do you request a reasonable accommodation?

Not sure where to start? First talk to your first line supervisor. The interaction and exchange of information between the employee and management is critical. Many

accommodations can be made and approved by your supervisor. However, management may deny a reasonable accommodation if the accommodation would create an undue hardship to the District or if the accommodation would not be effective.

The supervisor should notify the Individuals with Disabilities program manager that an accommodation has been made.

Examples of recent accommodations that have been made include: Adjusting the lighting in a cubicle for an employee that suffered from migraines; requesting a review of a workspace by the Safety Office to ensure that the set-up is ergonomically correct; purchasing ergonomic equipment (mouse, keyboard) entering into a reasonable accommodations flexi-place agreement to allow individuals to work at an alternative work site or alternative, purchasing a new desk chair, etc.

Many times the employee has discussed various options with their physician and will approach management with a potential remedy. Understand that management is not obligated to provide the exact item that is requested if a similar item is available that will meet the needs of an employee are available or economically more cost effective for the agency.

Reasonable accommodation telework agreements

We receive many inquires regarding the recently published telework agreement policy. EEO is using forms similar to those provided in NAEER 690-1-400, dated Oct. 11, 2005. Employees are still required to complete the dependent care, self-certification form and provide pictures of their designated work area. Please contact the EEO Office for a copy of the Reasonable Accommodation Telework forms if you and your supervisor are contemplating such an arrangement.

The EEO Staff is always available to provide assistance. Many employees find it helpful to discuss the reasonable accommodation process with our staff prior to meeting with management in order to understand the procedure. Please contact us at any time. Jackie DiDomenico, Individuals with Disability program manager, can be reach at 978-318-8448, and/or Dianna Barela, EEO Manager, can be reached at 978-318-8215. We may not have an immediate answer, however, we have several valuable resources available to assist us in providing effective reasonable accommodations. These resources include the job accommodation network and the computer electronic accommodations program.

We also seek assistance from the Office Counsel, Civilian Human Resources Agency, Safety and Health Office, subject matter experts, as well as from the employee and/or leaders themselves.

Dredging up the past . . .



Park Ranger Jason Tremblay assists a young volunteer install a bird box during National Public Lands Day in this September 1998 photo.

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