



US Army Corps
of Engineers
New England District

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Bringing Down Smelt Hill Dam
See story on page 8

Yankee Voices



Peter Quinn
Real Estate

Sympathy

...to **Dorothy Bolduc**, Regulatory Division retiree, on the passing of her husband, **Joe**, July 18.

...to **Odias Laroche**, retired project manager at Franklin Falls Dam, on the passing of his wife, **Dorothy**, Oct. 5.

Mystery Man identified

The unidentified worker in the September issue of the Yankee Engineer's Dredging Up the Past has been identified.

The late **Carl A. Buswell, Jr.**, was the Project Manager, of West Thompson Lake from 1965 until he retired in August 1988.

Appreciation goes out to those who helped identify him.

Welcome

Donald Hassett, Eng/Plng



Cover: Employees of the New England District take a tour of the soon-to-be-demolished Smelt Hill Dam. (Photo by Mark McInerney)

High praise for Smelt Hill Dam

Thank you very much for the kind invitation to join you on this very exciting occasion. Although my duties in Washington will not allow me to attend, I do want to send along my hearty congratulations and very best wishes.

The removal of the Smelt Hill Dam like so many truly worthwhile projects, is the product of many hands. I commend the Corps, the state of Maine, the Maine Corporate Wetlands Restoration Partnership, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, NOAA and my hard working friends at Coastal Conservation Association of Maine.

This is the culmination of many years of committed effort and advocacy on behalf of habitat restoration and free-flowing waters. Partnerships like this prove again and again what great works can be accomplished through collaboration and hard work.

The Coastal America Partnership has proven to be a powerful and effective tool here in Maine and around the country in restoring wetlands and enhancing fish and wildlife habitat.

We all benefit tremendously from this important work and Smelt Hill Dam is an excellent example of that program's effectiveness.

Please add my thanks to all those in attendance for a job well done. The Presumpscot River estuary is about to have its biological clock turned back a couple of hundred years and that is remarkable and historic.

Congratulations!

Susan M. Collins
United States Senator

Park Ranger, private citizen honored for saving a life

Richard Devries of Westfield, Mass., and Littleville Lake Park Ranger Thomas Wisnaukas were recently recognized by the District Engineer for saving the life of Morgan Parsons when he fell into the water at Littleville Lake last April.

Mr. Devries pulled Mr. Parsons from the water and brought him to safety. Ranger Wisnaukas, trained in First Aid, recognized that Mr. Parsons was suffering from hypothermia and called an ambulance. Because of the quick action by both men, Mr. Parsons was treated and released from the hospital the same day.

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Commander's Corner:

The state of the New England District

by Col. Thomas L. Koning
District Engineer



I know the President does his State of the Union address in January, but I thought as we close out Fiscal Year '02 and start Fiscal Year '03, now would be a great time to recap last year and see what is in store for the next year. Bottom line, the state of the District is good. That is because we have so many talented, dedicated and

professional people working everyday to support New England, the Army and our nation.

Recap of FY02 - The end-of-year reporting is still being done, but from the financial perspective, we did very well. Our obligation rates in all categories were at an all time high. We hit the exact targets we said we were going to in Civil Works, Construction General, Continuing Authorities Program, and Operations and Maintenance expenditures.

We were very successful in both our Military and Interagency and International Support programs. Even with big-project delays in several of the above-mentioned areas, the hard work of District employees to execute jobs in the most efficient manner led to outstanding results. We surpassed all USACE Small Business goals in contract awards.

The District's achievements were highlighted in several events of the past year including: the continued support and response to the events of September 11; the preparation work for Providence River dredging; the completion of the water supply at Massachusetts Military Reservation for the town of Bourne; continued work on the canal and railroad bridge at Cape Cod; and construction on many projects for the Air Force Reserve at Westover.

The District also eliminated the Corps nation-wide permit

system in New England and replaced them with six-state programmatic permitting processes; supported diversity celebrations; hosted the Mansfield Hollow Dam's 50th anniversary; and celebrated its role in preserving the 200-year-old Faulkner's Island Lighthouse in Connecticut. We all appreciate those who participated in National Public Lands Day and support the three-year bicentennial activities of Lewis and Clark.

District employees received numerous awards for journalism excellence, leadership, Army support, and NATO support. And we always recognize outstanding achievements through our Team and Employee of the Month awards.

The above list is only a small portion of the great accomplishments the District has achieved over the last year. I thank you for your support to the successful accomplishment of our mission.

The Future of FY03 - As we begin the next fiscal year, let us first remember those of the District who are deployed overseas in support of the District's mission; specifically Maj. Mike Fitzgerald in Europe and others on voluntary assignments world-wide. Additionally, I appreciate all of those supporting from Concord, in any way, the larger USACE mission worldwide.

The new fiscal year promises to be full of excitement and adventure. In the near term we will progress on a host of environmental issues at the Massachusetts Military Reservation, forge new territory on permit actions in regards to wind energy, and start technically challenging construction at the Cape Cod railroad bridge, Fox Point Hurricane Barrier and at the Providence River dredge site.

The work of the District has been superb, but we cannot rest on our laurels. The future will be full of opportunities; let's make the best of them together. I know the New England District will provide outstanding service to our nation whenever and wherever it calls us to do so.

ESSAYONS.

District Engineer's 30-second commercial

Hello, I am Tom Koning, Commander and District Engineer of the New England District of the United States Army Corps of Engineers.

The New England District is a full service district supporting the six New England states with world class water resources management and engineering support to the Military, Civil Works and Interagency and International Support programs.

I provide vision, guidance and emphasis to key pro-

grams and initiatives in the organization. I am personally responsible for the relationships with our strategic customers and the opening of new business opportunities.

The District is 550 people strong providing services in Engineering, Planning, Design and Construction; and support services in Real Estate, Contracting and Installation Support.

How may we help you?

District donates sand table to Children's Home



James Bastion, Brightside representative, Marci Alvis-Slinski, Big E! representative, Delia Vogel, Rick Magee, Farrell McMillan, Joan Gardner, and G. Wayne McCary, Big E! representative show off the sand table built by the District.

The children of the Brightside Home of the Sisters of Providence will be able to spend countless hours of enjoyment playing with a pentagon-shaped sand table built by the Park Rangers of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District.

The Brightside Children's Home was the beneficiary of the sand table that was created by the members of the District's Interpretive Service and Outreach Program Committee.

The committee donated the materials and built the sand table as part of an exhibit focusing on the construction history of the Corps of Engineers. The exhibit was on display at the Big E! in Springfield, Mass. from Sept. 12 through Sept. 29.

For nearly 15 years, the interpretive services committee has created exhibits with enjoyable themes for display at the Big E!, formerly known as the Eastern State Exposition.

According to Will Rogers of Technical Services, the idea for the sand table came up during last year's Big E!

"There were some empty planter boxes that had sand in them - the kids were drawn to the sand like a magnet," he said. "The boxes were being used as a divider between the display and the walkway. The kids couldn't keep their hands out them. We thought it would be great to have a real sand table for kids to play in."

The interpretive services committee discussed the idea of donating the sand

table to an organization devoted to children in need with Ms. Marci Alvis-Slinski, Director of CraftAdventure and the New England Center for the Big E! She contacted the non-profit Brightside Children's Home in West Springfield and learned that they would happily accept the sand table for their children.

The Brightside Children's Home of the Sisters of Providence Health System, is a human service organization. It was founded in 1881 and is committed to meeting the adoption needs of children and families.

Farrell McMillan, Joan Gardner, and committee members Rick Magee and Delia Vogel represented the New England District during a donation ceremony held at the New England Center of the Big E! on Sept. 26.

In addition to the sand table, members of the Big E! donated a dollhouse to the children's home. "It's a great donation," said Farrell of the sand table. "It is something the kids will spend hours playing with."

Members of the ISOP include Rick Magee (Chair), Will Rogers, Samantha Mirabella (Cape Cod Canal), Diana Errico-Topolski, (Hop Brook Lake / Naugatuck River Basin), Tim Russell (W. Thompson Lake / Thames River Basin), Delia Vogel (Barre Falls Dam / Lower Connecticut River Basin), Roxanne Barbeau (North Hartland Lake / Upper Connecticut River Basin) and Steve Dermody (Franklin Falls Dam / Merrimack River Basin)



Park Ranger Delia Vogel and children play with the sand table at the Big E!

Business cards:

Several options available for District employees

by Col. Thomas Koning
District Engineer

I have received several questions regarding business cards and discovered that there are a number of options you can pursue to obtain them.

The first is to print the business cards yourself on an office printer. There is a template available on the shared drive (/CENAE-Shared Naedc2/business card) that you can type in your information to print.

The second option that has been researched is to purchase your business cards through a printer at your own expense. STAPLES will reproduce the Business Card, to spec, for \$36.99 per thousand. Accompanying the text should be a sample showing the layout, font and color of logo and a black and white copy of the castle.

Samples can be found in your office Graphic Standards Manual. Cards will take approximately three weeks to come back.

The third option is to go online and order your business cards. Going to the website <http://www.copymax.com> is one option. Prices vary depending upon quantity and quality of paper.

The cost of business cards that you order from a printer are at your own expense.

Please remember that whether you print your cards inhouse or use an outside printer, your business cards should meet U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Graphic Standards. The ink colors are



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Communication Red (Pantone red 032) for the Corps castle and Communication Gray (Pantone 408) for all type. One-color business cards should be printed in Communication Gray. The paper stock to be used should be bright white 100 lb Vellum Bristol, with a medium plate finish.

For other graphic specifics, please refer to your office Graphic Standards Manual.

WE Committee, District employees celebrate year-end with barbecue



Col. Koning (left) and Tim Winter get in line at the WE Committee barbecue. This is the second year that the WE Committee has held a year-end celebration at Concord Park.

New England District employees took advantage of the beautiful fall weather and celebrated the end of another successful fiscal year by attending a WE Committee sponsored cookout, Oct. 2. About 65 people attended this year's celebration, which was catered by Mr. Jack's of Billerica, Mass.

According to Col. Thomas Koning, District Engineer, the New England District was "green" in many financial and contracting stats that we had not been "green" in before. "I appreciated everyone's hard work and dedication to duty during the rush of activity at year-end-close," he said.

This is the second year that the WE Committee utilized Concord Park's beautiful grounds in a show of appreciation for their co-workers. For a small fee, District employees were treated to clam chowder, hamburgers, hot dogs, potato salad, cole slaw, green salad, corn on the cob, rolls, soft drinks, water, coffee and cake.

Because You Asked...

Col. Koning addresses work force concerns and questions

by Col. Thomas L. Koning
District Engineer

As I continue to work my way through all the great feedback I received after our first Town Meeting, I wanted to update you on what I have already found out. I told you last month I was setting up a suggestion box. This is still coming. For the electronic (e-mail) option, we are still working out the system that will make suggestions anonymous. I will let you know when it is up and running. Last month, I focused on the responses about issues in the Logistics area. This month, I will focus in the Human Resources area.

Issue: How do I get involved in a “work at home” arrangement?

Some of you have expressed a concern over why “working at home” is not an option under Alternate Work Arrangements (telecommuting). AWA is the result of an executive order, which required all federal agencies to review at least 25 percent of their workforce for potential AWA situations. This District reviewed 100 percent of its work force. A Process Action Team (PAT) then spent nearly a year reviewing information, taking surveys, researching information and finally presented a proposed “pilot” program, which only included two out of four possible AWA alternatives. The four alternatives include using an agency developed telecommuting center, using another federal agency’s owned or leased facility, working at home and telecommuting on an “ad hoc” basis. The two alternatives chosen by this District to pursue were the agency-developed center and “ad hoc” telecommuting at the agency-developed center.

The “work at home” was not proposed because it requires extensive pre-planning and coordination. There are a number of issues that involved the safety of work at home environments. Additionally, there is concern with conducting government business on personal computers, the security of home Internet service capabilities and other issues. Hopefully, moving towards laptops and “soft phones” will solve some of these issues. But there are many more variables that have to

be worked out before an AWA “work at home” pilot is begun. It is not out of the question and may be revisited upon evaluation of our first AWA adventure. If you would like to read more about the AWA program and the requirement of “working at home,” you can view the related DoD regulation on our AWA web site. Go to the District Intranet, “Resource Management,” “Tools & Resources,” “Timekeeping,” “Alternate Work Arrangements,” and you will find the policy and guidance statements.

Do not confuse the official terminology of “work at home.”

The District does have a limited number of temporary “home workplace” arrangements that are in compliance with our NFFE Local 1164 contract flexiplace program. These arrangements are under contract, are for specific limited durations and circumstances deemed “exceptional” by the agreeing supervisor. If you have needs that might be met in this manner please contact your supervisor.



Col. Koning tries out one of the computers at the new AWA facility at Devens, Mass.

contact your supervisor.

How do I get involved in current AWA opportunities?

In the August edition of the Yankee Engineer, folks read about a huge success story -- the opening of the Devens Telecommuting Center. The facility was a year and a half in the planning and has become a true portrayal of management and employees working together to improve the working environment.

Our current pilot program includes a District-owned and maintained facility at Devens, Mass., and space at our New Bedford Resident Office in New Bedford, Mass. The Devens facility can accommodate 12 people daily and the New Bedford space accommodates two people daily. I have tasked Human Resources (HR) to provide me quarterly updates on the progress of both these AWA centers and I expect my first briefing in early December. At this time there are no definite plans to extend our AWA facilities beyond these two. Our goal in selecting AWA locations was to minimize costs to the District. In both the Devens and New Bedford arrangements, the AWA Centers are located in facilities already owned or managed by the New England District.

In August 2003, I will assess the success of our first AWA program. If the benefits are as evident as I hope them to be,

I may then task the AWA PAT to explore possible other AWA centers in strategic locations. I am always open to possibilities that meet our financial, safety and security concerns. If you know of a facility that may meet our needs for a possible AWA arrangement, please provide that information to the Chief of HR for future reference.

My half hour lunch is too short for me to walk or workout.

You are in luck! The benefit of our current flexible work schedule allows all employees to adjust their workdays to have extended lunch hours by simply adding the time to the beginning or end of your normal workday, whichever is appropriate. You of course need to let your supervisor know that you are exercising a flexible work schedule to take additional time during lunch to meet your physical workout needs and record your time appropriately on your time and attendance sheets. Lunchtime is unpaid time regardless of its length.

How can I get Disability Insurance? Is the new Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program (FLTCIP) the same thing?

Unfortunately, the federal government does not offer Disability Insurance to the federal workforce. This would take a congressionally supported change to the Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) administration of the Federal Benefits Program. When we asked whether the new Long Term Care Insurance is anything like Disability Insurance, OPM answered no. Long Term Disability Insurance or Disability Income Insurance pays you a percentage of your gross income (for example, 45 percent or 60 percent) should a sickness or illness prevent you from working for an extended period of time. A Long Term Disability Insurance benefit helps replace part of your lost income (salary).

The Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program (FLTCIP) provides insurance to help you pay for medical care you may need due to a chronic illness or injury (such as bathing, getting in and out of bed, etc.) either in your home or a nursing home. The FLTCIP benefits help you pay for long term care you may need because you are unable to take care of yourself. Please look in the March 2002 issue of Yankee Engineer for more information and several good web sites.

With this said, there are some benefits you have as federal employees that are important for you to consider. First is your accumulated sick leave accounts which you can carry over from year to year virtually allowing you to have thousands of hours in paid leave for health related reasons. You also have the federal leave donor program which allows for you to request donated leave from other federal employees to cover your salary needs during times of medical related situations. Lastly, if your medical condition is expected to last a year or longer, you can apply for Disability Retirement through OPM. To find out more about these benefits you can visit the OPM

web site at www.opm.gov.

My current health insurance plan has poor dental benefits.

There are numerous national and local health care plans available to the federal workforce, many of which include dental benefits. These benefits vary depending upon your plan and your election within those plans. Typically, High Option Plans carry more dental coverage; however they also cost more and there is a deductible. To review your dental benefits, you can go to the FEHB (Federal Employee Health Benefits) section of the OPM web site at www.opm.gov. OPM is the federal agency responsible for administering the FEHB for all federal employees.

I know there has been an issue with dental benefits for folks living in New Hampshire and having Massachusetts Blue Cross Blue Shield. Apparently Dental Blue does not cover folks living in New Hampshire -- only those living in Massa-

'The District cannot specifically pay for professional registration/certification and/or membership in professional organizations because they are considered a personal expense.'

- Col. Thomas Koning, District Engineer

chusetts. It is an issue that has been addressed all the way up the chain. It is working, but has not been fixed yet.

If you are unhappy with the dental benefits of your current plan, consider changing to a plan that better suits your needs. You can make a change during the next health benefits open season, Nov. 11 through Dec. 9.

Why doesn't the District pay for my professional registration and membership in professional organizations?

The District cannot specifically pay for professional registration/certification and/or membership in professional organizations because they are considered a personal expense. That means the official policy is that the primary benefit for licensure and/or membership is for personal gain and the government will not pay for it.

However, we highly encourage registration/certification/licensure because it is an important measure of the competency of the USACE workforce. To that end, the District offers a \$250 special act award to anyone who obtains a new professional registration/certification/licensure. If you can claim an award, submit your registration/certificate/license with a DA Form 1256. Your second level supervisor is the approving authority.

Thank you for the opportunity to answer some of the questions that are on your mind. I have more questions from you and will address them in the next issue.



Workers discuss the progress on the Smelt Hill Dam removal.

District, partners break ground on Smelt Hill aquatic habitat restoration project

The New England District joined its Maine Corporate Wetlands Restoration partners at the site of the Smelt Hill Dam in Falmouth, Maine, to break ground on another aquatic habitat restoration project.

The ceremony, which took place on Sept. 27 at both the construction site and at the Falmouth Town Hall, marked the beginning of work to remove the dam and restore natural habitat and fish passage conditions to seven miles of the Presumpscot River from Falmouth to Westbrook.

The removal of Smelt Hill Dam is only one of many



Col. Koning and other partners break ground on the restoration project.

restoration projects being accomplished in the country under the Coastal America Program.

“This event today provides a meaningful and important opportunity to highlight what is possible when people and organizations work together collaboratively, partnering to preserve the environment for future generations,” said Cheryl Leeman, representing Sen. Olympia Snowe.

The Smelt Hill Dam was used for hydroelectric power generation until generating facilities were severely damaged during an October 1996 flood. The fish passage facility at the dam was also damaged to the point that it was non-functional. As a result anadromous fish species have been unable to freely bypass the dam.

“Sometime back in the 1700s, private interests began to construct dams on this river to harness its hydropower and produce energy,” said Col. Thomas Koning, District Engineer. “The value of that effort for this portion of the river has long since passed away and today, we see a much more valuable use of this water system.”

“Through the Maine Corporate Wetlands Restoration Partnership (CWRP), Maine businesses have the unique opportunity to work closely with state and federal agencies as well as environmental organizations on important projects, such as the Smelt Hill Dam removal, that restore critical water bodies and fish passages,” said Maine CWRP Advisory Board



Water flows through the damaged Smelt Hill dam.

Chair and corporate leader Patrick J. Hester.

The restoration project entails the removal of that 151-foot long, 31-foot wide and 15-foot high stone filled timber crib dam and its appurtenant structures. The dam removal will allow migratory fish -- including shad, blueback herring, alewife, rainbow smelt, and striped bass -- to swim through the fish passage previously built by the Maine Department of Marine Resources to a fish ladder located at Highland Lake on Mill Brook, 12 miles upstream.

“The benefits of providing unrestricted fish passage are many, including restoring the natural river ecosystem, enhancing water quality in the Presumpscot River, and increasing population of important forage fish species,” said Col. Koning. “These species provide a food source for recreational and commercially important fish species, both inshore and offshore, in the Gulf of Maine.”

The increase of fish will also benefit wildlife such as ospreys, eagles, herons, and kingfishers, as it will supply an abundant food source. “In addition, dam removal at this site will increase scarce riverine fishing opportunities adjacent to Maine’s largest population center,” said George Lapointe, Commissioner of the Maine Department of Marine Resources. “The project will increase access to the river to fishermen,



Leslie Jacobs and Larry Oliver look over project plans of the dam.

canoeists, and kayakers within a short distance from Portland and its surrounding communities.”

The New England District awarded a \$245,105 contract to A.C.T. Abatement Corporation of Lawrence, Mass., on Aug. 19. The removal of the dam is ongoing. The dam removal is being conducted under the Corps Section 206 Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration Program. The project is cost shared between the New England District, and the Maine Department of Marine Resources. The Coastal Conservation Association of Maine and the Maine Corporate Wetlands Restoration Partnership have assisted the Department of Marine Resources with their financial requirements for the project.

Other partners who spoke during the ceremony were Edward Kitchel, Chairperson, Falmouth Town Council; Cheryl Leeman of Sen. Olympia Snowe’s Office; Bill Vail, Portland State Office Representative for Sen. Susan Collins; Congressman Thomas Allen; Martha Kirkpatrick, Commissioner, Maine Department of Environmental Protection; Rick Bennett, Deputy Regional Director, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service; Chris Manzaris, Deputy Regional Administrator, National Marine Fisheries Service; Pat Keliher, Executive Director, Coastal Conservation Association; and Dick Anderson, Coastal Conservation Association.



The New England District's contractor uses heavy machinery to dismantle a building on top of the dam.



The project to tear down Smelt Hill Dam is ongoing.



(Above) A crane places the bridge in its final resting place along the Grand Trunk Trail. (Upper right) As local officials look on, Ed Calcutt fastens the last plank to complete the bridge. (Lower right) Dick Carlson presents Mr. Calcutt and District employees with a District coin.

Westville Lake, volunteers dedicate new bridge

A dedication ceremony for a new bridge that connects the towns of Southbridge and Sturbridge, Mass., through New England District's Westville Lake took place, Oct. 2. The District hosted the ceremony that named the 85-foot structure the Ed Calcutt Bridge. Approximately 55 people participated in the event. Dick Carlson, Chief, Construction/Operations, represented the New England District during the ceremony.

The Ed Calcutt Bridge is a major component of the Grand Trunk Trail. The trail is managed and maintained by Westville Lake Park Rangers with the help of the Grand Trunk Trail Blazers and local volunteers.

The trail begins in the town of Southbridge and follows the old Grand Trunk Railroad bed through a variety of landscapes. With the bridge complete, the five-mile trail now connects to historic Old Sturbridge Village via a bicycle trail along the Quinebaug River.

The Quinebaug and Shetucket River Valley Heritage District and Commission provided funding for the project through the Office of the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, Department of Environmental Management.

The bridge is named after Ed Calcutt, who has been the President of the Grand Trunk Trailblazers since it was organized in 1992.

Since its inception, the non-profit organization has been working on trail development in the area. Mr. Calcutt started the organization in response to his long-time interest in biking and trails.

The bridge was moved into place on Sept. 23. Duallanes Fabrication and Welding Services of Southbridge, Mass., provided the labor and the crane to move the bridge into place at no cost. A week later, volunteers Dave Aho, Dave Rose, Dave Peterkin, and Dick Caouette prepared the steel so that planks could be installed.

The day before the ceremony, guests were invited to attach the planks on the bridge. The last plank was left to be attached during the ceremony. Mr. Calcutt placed the final screw in the plank to complete the bridge and conclude the event.

In addition to his work on the Grand Trunk Trail, Mr. Calcutt has also been successful in performing a road widening project on Old Route 15 in Sturbridge.

"He is dedicated to trails," said Merl. "He believes in making things better for the future – something to be used long after we are gone."

Michael Coughlin, Chairman of the Quinebaug and Shetucket Rivers Valley Heritage District Commission and Southbridge Town Manager, served as Master of Ceremonies.

Speakers included Senator Steven Brewer, Senator Richard Moore, State Representative Mark Carron, State Representative Reed Hillman, Dick Carlson, Westville Lake Park Manager Keith Beecher, Park Ranger Merl Bassett, Park Ranger Tom Chamberland, Larry Lowenthal, Carol Childress, John Desmond, Thames River Basin Manager Robert Hanacek, and Ed Calcutt.

In Memory:

Maj. Gen. Robert Ploger was a former Division Engineer and decorated war hero

The New England District was sad to learn of the passing of former Division Engineer Maj. Gen. Robert R. Ploger, Sept. 7. General Ploger was Commander of the Corps in New England in 1965.

Though he was only in New England for a short time, he had an impressive 40-year career with the U.S. Army. Ploger began his distinguished military career by joining the Michigan National Guard after he completed primary school.

After graduating from West Point in 1939, he became a 2nd Lieutenant in the Corps of Engineers and was assigned to a combat engineer battalion in Fort Lewis, Wash., as platoon leader. From there he was transferred to Fort Belvoir, Va., where he was promoted to the rank of Captain and then Major.

Ploger was deployed to England in 1943 to General Bradley's First Army Headquarters. He then transferred to the 29th Infantry Division to become both Division Engineer and commander of the 121st Engineer Battalion.

When he was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel, Ploger led his battalion ashore on Omaha Beach on June 6, 1944. He continued a command role through three European campaigns.

In 1945, he was reassigned to the Pentagon. After various staff and command positions, he was selected to be promoted to Brigadier General and took the position of Division Engineer at the Corps in New England in 1965.

His command of the New England Division was cut short when he was deployed for a two-year tour as Head Army Engineer in South Vietnam. During his time in this position, Ploger oversaw massive, war-time construction build up in the region.

Ploger's final military assignment was a double assignment as commander of Fort Belvoir and as the Commandant of the U.S. Army Engineer School. Ploger authored a book about the story of Army Engineers in Vietnam entitled, "U.S. Army Engineers 1965-1970."

Ploger held graduate degrees from Cornell and George Washington Universities. He was also a graduate of the Army War College and the Industrial College of the Armed Forces.

His military decorations are numerous and include two Distinguished Service Medals, two Silver Stars, two Bronze Star Medals, Air Medal, Purple Hearts, Defense and Army Commendation Medals, and three foreign government awards. Two of the units that he commanded received special government recognition: the 121st Engineer Battalion received a Presidential Unit Citation for its performance on D-Day, June 6, 1944, and the 18th Engineer Brigade received a Distinguished Unit Citation for its performance in South Vietnam, 1965-66.

He was also the recipient of the Wheeler Award of the Society of American Military Engineers, the Silver de Fleury medal of the Army Engineer Association, and the Silver Beaver Award of the Boy Scouts of America.

After his retirement from military service in 1973, he continued to serve the American people by performing extensive community service. He was a volunteer counselor with SCORE since 1983, and most recently he served as president of the Glacier Hills Residents Association.

Ploger was a registered Professional Engineer in the District of Columbia.

Five living children, three stepchildren, seven grandchildren and five great-grandchildren survive him.

Ploger's second son, Robert R. III, was killed on Sept. 11, 2001. He was aboard Flight 77 during the terrorist attack on the Pentagon.



New England Division Command photo of Col. (soon to be Maj. Gen.) Robert R. Ploger

Cultural Diversity:

The New England District celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month

The New England District's Equal Employment Opportunity Office hosted a Hispanic Heritage observance Sept. 26 in the theatre. The theme was, "Hispanic Americans: Strength in Unity, Faith and Diversity." Mr. Oswald Mondejar, Manager of Executive Recruitment/Development for Massachusetts General Hospital, served as the keynote speaker for the event.

While growing up in a diverse New England neighborhood, "I'm as Latino as my home has been," said Mr. Mondejar. "We were only Cuban when we came through the door. When we went outside we were about as Irish as our next door neighbors."

The keynote speaker told the audience that his family moved from Cuba to New York City in the 1950s looking for better educational opportunities for their children. Mr. Mondejar was born in New York a few years after his parents arrived.

Some years later, his mother brought her children to Cuba for child care reasons. Under Fidel Castro's dictatorship, his grandfather, who was a landowner, and his great uncle, who was the mayor of the small town in which they lived, were imprisoned. His great uncle was murdered and the family property was confiscated. "We lost everything," he said.



Oswald Mondejar discusses Hispanic culture during his presentation.

According to Mr. Mondejar, his mother was able to bring her children back to the United States under a special dispensation. They arrived in Boston in 1966.

He said people who lived in his neighborhood became their extended family. His neighbors consisted of Italians, Greeks, Irish, and Jewish people. "We were all immigrants," he said.

As an adult, Mr. Mondejar returned to Cuba on a humanitarian effort and was able to bring his family. He said that the trip gave him an appreciation for his Cuban heritage and an even deeper appreciation and respect for this U.S. Citizenship. "We are very fortunate people," he said of Americans.

The keynote speaker explained that although Hispanics come from different countries and cultures, there are several things that they have in common.

The first common thread is family, which includes extended family. "Our identity is within our family," said Mr. Mondejar. "It is not uncommon for Hispanics to introduce another person as their cousin even though they have no blood tie. Godparents are very impor-



Participants in the celebration sample authentic Cuban cuisine.

tant.”

Elders are honored and respected in the Hispanic culture, according to Mr. Mondejar. He said that the grandmother is the central figure of the family as she provides a cultural tie to the past.

Children are taught to be well behaved, and are expected to interact with adults and authority figures with respect and dignity.

Religion is also important in the Hispanic culture. A good number of Hispanics are Roman Catholic, but according to Mr. Mondejar, different countries bring their own flavor to their faith.

Communication among Hispanics is not limited to the spoken word, said Mr. Mondejar. “We all speak Spanish, but we also use facial expressions and body language to express ourselves such as touching. Hugging someone and shaking their hand is part of the language.”

“More and more we see Hispanic Americans becoming more prominent in all aspects of society,” said Col. Thomas Koning, District Engineer.

Col. Koning listed some areas where Hispanic American citizens have become more visible: media, elected officials, Medal of Honor winners, corporate America, firefighters and policemen. “It’s a great show of our diversity,” he said.

The District Engineer shared some census figures with the audience, including areas where Hispanics are under represented.

According to the Colonel, Hispanic influences are felt in trade issues, immigration, foreign policy, and other political arenas. He concluded his portion of the presentation discussing Hispanic history in the United States, beginning with Christopher Columbus landing in America and ending with current times.

Mr. Mondejar finished his presentation by offering handouts on Hispanic Heritage.

Col. Koning presented Mr. Mondejar with a scroll of appreciation for this participation in the District’s celebration.

A presentation of authentic Hispanic food by El Oriental de Cuban in Jamaica Plain, Mass., ended the celebration.

Construction to begin on phase two to eliminate combined sewer overflows in Lebanon, N.H.

by Timothy Dugan
Public Affairs

The second construction phase to eliminate combined sewer overflows in Lebanon, N.H., to improve water quality in the Mascoma and Connecticut rivers began Sept. 16. This phase is scheduled for completion in the spring of 2004.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will perform all construction management services required to separate the sewer lines from storm water lines to eliminate sewage discharges to surface waters for the city of Lebanon under the terms of a project cooperation agreement signed in June 2002.

The Lebanon sewer separation project was mandated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to eliminate combined sewer overflows in the city to improve water quality in the Mascoma and Connecticut rivers. Contract (or phase) two represents one of a proposed eight or more contracts to upgrade the sewer and storm drain systems throughout the city of Lebanon by 2012.

Work on phase/contract one was awarded by the city of Lebanon and is scheduled for completion in October 2002.

“Currently parts of the city have combined sewer overflow systems, meaning that storm drains (rainfall runoff) and sanitary sewers (household wastes) are not in separate pipes,” said Project Manager Thomas Rosato. “Under this system, there is a potential that sanitary waste ends up in local rivers and streams during heavy rain events. This situation is having nega-

tive impacts on the water quality in the Mascoma and Connecticut Rivers; hence EPA has ordered the city to correct the problem.”

The Army Corps, New England District awarded this \$3,389,180 contract to Paragon Construction, Inc., of Orford, N.H., to eliminate combined sewer overflows on portions of: Eastern Area – School, Messenger, and Perley Avenue, and; Main Work Area – Mascoma, Water, Spring, Abbot, Chestnut, South, Calvin, College and Lewis Court.

The contractor will be required to eliminate combined sewer overflow pipes and replace them with separate pipes – one for sanitary sewer and one for storm drainage.

Funding for the project is coming from three sources: the federal government, the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services, and the city of Lebanon.

The New England District is involved due to the large federal share of the funding, which totals \$3.5 million to date. The city of Lebanon is required to cost-share this project at a 75-percent federal / 25-percent city ratio. The state of New Hampshire contributes towards the city share.

The city is also using this project as a chance to upgrade aging water lines, construct retaining walls, and construct sidewalks.

The city is paying the majority of the costs on all these items. Drainage improvements including curbing are part of the contract as well.

Wright-Pierce Engineering of Topsham, Maine designed the project, and will provide technical support to the Army Corps during construction.

Lewis and Clark:

Corps of Discovery on the Connecticut River

Story by Rick Magee
Photos by Joe Faloretti

Alexander Hamilton Willard returned to his hometown of Charlestown, New Hampshire, with his commander, Capt. William Clark, and several of his friends. He had left to join the Army more than 200 years ago.

During the weekend of Sept. 6-8, history enthusiasts and reenactors explored the Connecticut River. Called the "Journey of Discovery," the event was a prelude to the upcoming commemoration of the Bicentennial of the Lewis and Clark expedition.

Around the campfire on Friday night, the original expedition was brought alive with stories and songs by living historians and park rangers. Abraham Shields told what it was like to have two sons, Reuben and John, away on an expedition into the unknown. Capt. Clark read the letter of instructions from President Thomas Jefferson. Alexander Hamilton Willard told of his experiences as a member of the Corps of Discovery. There was music and a water safety message.

Saturday and Sunday mornings were spent on the river reenacting the voyage.



Craig Rockwell (standing) of Walla Walla District portrays Capt. Clark and Richard Scott, Harold Parker State Forest, symbolically unite the Columbia and the Connecticut Rivers.

Reenactors in period clothing rowed bateaux and dory. Visitors in modern dress paddled canoes in the watery path of explorers Lewis and Clark as they searched for the Northwest Passage. Events and sights were noted in a journal.

Saturday morning the journey began. Leaving from Wilgus State Park in Ascutney, Vt., Rick Magee and Ray Nelson (St. Paul District), dressed as

Army Infantry crew members, and Craig Rockwell of Walla Walla District, dressed as Capt. Clark, joined the "Corps of Discovery" and other canoeists as they paddled down the Connecticut River. Their destination was the Student Conservation Association (SCA) Headquarters in North Charlestown, N.H., about seven river miles.

Upon arrival at noon, members of the Journey of Discovery visited a reconstructed Native American encampment. The Abenaki village represented the many nations encountered by the original Corps of Discovery nearly two centuries ago. During a reenactment ceremony, Capt. Clark greeted and exchanged gifts with Native Americans on behalf of the President of the United States, Thomas Jefferson. Following the ceremony, Craig Rockwell spoke about the national significance of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, and noted historian Dayton Duncan spoke about the enlisted men of the Corps of Discovery, particularly Charlestown native Alexander Hamilton Willard.

All those who came by river and those who arrived by land were able to



Reenactors make their way down the Connecticut River as part of the "Journey of Discovery."



Reenactors cross the Connecticut River and land at the Fort at Number 4.

walk around and ask questions of the reenactors. The New England District and the sponsoring organizations each had informational displays. Saturday evening, following an Abenaki campfire program at Wilgus State Park, participants were treated to a display of the Northern Lights.

On Sunday, the river adventure continued from SCA Headquarters to the Fort at Number 4. A brief ceremony welcoming the Corps of Discovery to the Fort included a symbolic pouring of waters from the Columbia River onto a black walnut tree to be planted at the Fort to mark the bicentennial in memory of Pvt. Willard and the entire Corps of Discovery. Water came from Fort

Clatsop National Memorial, winter home of the Corps in 1805- 1806 in Oregon, Fort Camby State Park at the mouth of the Columbia River in Washington, and from the Bonneville Dam, where the party camped on "Strawberry Island" and wrote of nearby Beacon Rock.

USACE North Hartland Lake donated the tree for the event. More water was poured into the Connecticut River, symbolically uniting the Columbia and the Connecticut Rivers. Later that afternoon Richard Scott, portraying Alexander Hamilton Willard, reminisced to visitors at the Fort about what it was like to travel to the West with Captains Clark and Lewis. Later he led the public to Willard's parents' grave site in Charlestown. A



Rick Nelson, St. Paul District, takes a break at the Fort at Number 4.

ceremonial wreath was placed at the site, concluding the events.

The New England District coordinated the event sponsored by Vermont State Parks, the Student Conservation Association, and the Fort at Number 4. Massachusetts Forests and Parks served as a cooperating agency. Park rangers from the New England District took responsibility for water safety and first aid during the event and had two vessels on the river in case of emergency.

Maj. Brian Green, Deputy District Engineer, represented the New England District on Saturday at the SCA Headquarters. Park Rangers and managers who participated in the event were Roxanne Barbeau, Delia Vogel, Mike Currie, Brad Clark, Richard Riley, Rick Magee, Kate Higgins, David Kratz, Joe Faloretti, and Mike Curran.

Alexander Hamilton Willard returned home for only the second time in the 199 years since he became part of the expedition that continues to define scientific exploration for the United States, the mission that firmly solidified the claims of the young nation to the Louisiana and Oregon Territories.

The Corps of Discovery accompanied by Capt. Clark and many others interested in our heritage explored a part of the Connecticut River.



Reenactors listen to Capt. Clark give a speech.



Volunteers spread mulch around the shrubs during National Public Lands Day at Buffumville Lake/Hodges Village Dam.



Volunteers use heavy equipment to move a sign at Buffumville Lake/Hodges Village Dam.

Volunteers make improvements to District projects during National Public Lands Day

The sounds of hammers banging and clippers trimming could be heard loud and clear at the Buffumville/Hodges and Franklin Falls Dams during National Public Lands Day, Sept. 28.

About 371 volunteers visited both Corps of Engineers projects ready to improve the public lands they enjoy throughout the year. The theme for National Public Lands Day was “Explor-

ing America’s Backyard.”

National Public Lands Day is a unique public-private partnership of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Bureau of Land Management, Environmental Protection Agency, National Park Service and U.S. Forest Service. The National Environmental Education and Training Foundation in Washington coordinates nationwide National Public Lands Day

efforts. Begun in 1997 with only 29 sites and 15 states, National Public Lands Day has grown to 277 sites across all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.

Col. Thomas Koning, District Engineer, rolled up his sleeves and joined the Park Rangers and volunteers working at Buffumville Lake/Hodges Village. To honor the efforts at Franklin Falls, New Hampshire Governor Jeanne Shaheen proclaimed Sept. 28, 2002, National Public Lands Day in her state.

At Buffumville Lake/Hodges Village Dam, Mass., volunteers worked on about 18 projects that included trail maintenance, rehabilitation and blazing; planting shrubs; trash pickup; Disc Golf and Buffumville Park upkeep; kayak/canoe rack building; relocating a large bulletin board; building concrete stairs, and trimming pine deadwood at Buffumville Dam. Volunteers were assigned to groups and each group was assigned a project for the day.

The work that the volunteers performed at Buffumville Lake/Hodges Village Dam is estimated to have saved the government over \$18,000. This year marks the project’s 11-year participation



Park Rangers Marty Curran (left) and Steve Dermody (right) supervise a young volunteer as he inventories a blue bird box at Franklin Falls Dam during National Public Lands Day.

in NPLD.

At Franklin Falls Dam, N.H., work included clearing trash; inspecting and cleaning 22 inventoried blue bird boxes; brushing and clearing 3.8 miles of the New Hampshire Heritage Trail; performing new drainage work on a section of the New Hampshire Heritage Trail; planting shrubs; and installing new bluestone walkways. The volunteers at Franklin Falls are estimated to have saved the government \$5,000. This is the first year that Franklin Falls has participated in NPLD.

After a long day of hard labor, volunteers at both sites were treated to lunch donated by local sponsors of NPLD. While volunteers were munching at Buffumville Lake/Hodges Village Dam, the Park Rangers held an appreciation ceremony. Park Manager Dave Stiddem served as Master of Ceremonies and introduced the groups and their projects. Both Corps sites mailed out certificates in appreciation for the groups' efforts. Franklin Falls Dam volunteers also received National Public Lands Day t-shirts.

New England District employees who participated in NPLD at Buffumville Lake/Hodges Village Dam were: Col. Koning, Dave Stiddem, Jamie Kordack, Jim Hachigian, Rick Magee, Ken Hester, Jackie Simonis, Joe Faloretti, Keith Beecher, Merlon Bassett, Claudia Jean Hixson, Beckye Tibets, Dave Hebert Robert Hanacek, Tim Russell, and Gerald Michaud.

Special volunteers included Clifford Reiss, Buffumville Office Clerk; Pat and Howard Southern, Park Hosts; Jim Hachigian's wife, Melanie; Jamie Kordack's husband, Vincent; Dave Stiddem's children, Lina, David, and Youli; and Bob Hanacek's son, Mark Hannon.

Employees who participated at the Franklin Falls site were Stephen Dermody, David Kratz, Richard Riley, John Parenteau, Victor Ranfos, Rob Shanks, Brad Clark, and Marty Curran.

Special volunteers included Mike Thompson, Franklin Falls Park volunteer, and Steve Dermody's wife, Beth.



Children place plants in various areas of Buffumville Lake/Hodges Village Dam



Workers unload materials from their truck to begin their project at Franklin Falls Dam.



Park Ranger Brad Clark and volunteers unload the front end of a multhoe at Franklin Falls.



Volunteer groups gather mulch to spread around shrubs at Buffumville Lake/Hodges Village Dam.



Planting shrubs around the Franklin Falls gazebo was only one of many projects performed during NPLD.



Col. Koning and Girl Scout Troop 1009 roll up their sleeves at Buffumville Lake/Hodges Village Dam.

Upgraded Information Management systems come to the New England District

by **Tim Winter**
Chief, Information Management

For several months Information Management, in partnership with Resource Management and with District Leadership support, has been in the process of upgrading the New England District's information systems.

This systems upgrade includes a new network infrastructure, a new phone system, local phone service provided through one vendor, new voice T1 service, an upgraded frame relay system, upgraded and new network servers, a new server backup system, the addition of a network-attached storage (NAS) system with a terabyte of storage, new uninterruptible power supplies (UPS), upgraded operating systems for the servers and personal computers (PCs), upgraded software suite for the PCs, and maintenance licenses.

The new network infrastructure includes new Cisco network equipment as follows:

- Routers and switches (replacing Bay Networks (Nortel) and 3Com equipment). The network speeds are now 10 times faster and more reliable.
- Call managers (replacing the GSA owned Avaya Definity PBX system)
- Unity messaging (replacing the GSA owned Avaya Intuity voice mail system)
- "Remote Access Server" (RAS) (replacing the Shiva). This upgrade includes connection via a new T-1, ISDN, PRI line. This provides 21 available lines (there were eight available with the Shiva) and a high quality connection providing speeds approaching 56 kilobits per second (Kbps). I have been consistently connecting at 49.2 Kbps; the prior connection speeds were approximately 24Kbps.

The new phone system includes Cisco Internet Protocol (IP) phones. Voice and data are now delivered over the same infrastructure. This system provides many new features including e-mail interaction, the corporate directory, speed

dialing, three digit dialing, conferencing, least cost routing, etc. Soon we will be able to place calls from our Outlook contact list. Please access the "Cisco IP Phone" link on the District's intranet (upper right hand corner) and select "Tutorial and Features" to learn more about the phone features.

Local telephone service for Concord Park and the majority of the remote sites is now being provided through one vendor, CTC Communications, with headquarters in Waltham, Mass. In addition to cost savings, we are now able to view our bill, including reports and sorting capabilities, via the Internet. At Concord Park there are three new T1 trunks (CTC's "power-path") designed for voice over Internet protocol (VOIP) communication.

Also, we now have an upgraded "frame relay" system, the District-wide area network (WAN) provided by Global Crossing. In most cases the band width (speed) has been increased by at least four times.

Many of the existing servers have been upgraded and in other cases new replacement servers have been ordered from Dell. The operating systems have been upgraded to Windows 2000 server and over the next few months, as a pilot for the Corps, the North Atlantic Division "domain" servers will be replaced with new Dell servers operating with Windows 2000 Active Directory Service.

All PC operating systems have been upgraded to Windows 2000 and the Office suite to Microsoft Office 2000. We are in the process of upgrading the wiring (Cat 5 and telephone) at the 42 remote sites on the NAE WAN. Connectivity Inc., of Salem, N.H., the same contractor that installed the wiring at Concord Park prior to the 1998 move, is providing this service. The wiring at approximately half of the sites has been completed and completion at the remaining is expected by the end of October. Northrop Grumman's completion of the phone installations at the remote sites and final-

ization of the hardware configurations throughout the District will follow and should be finished by the end of November. Also expected soon from Dell is a "fiber channel" tape backup system, capable of a complete system backup at high speed, and a Network Area Storage (NAS) with a terabyte of space. "Desktop" personal computers are also being replaced (life cycle) by notebook PCs as we transition to a more mobile working environment. In an attempt to increase our return on investments we are striving to standardize and reduce our total cost of ownership (TCO). In addition to evaluating the costs of purchasing the hardware, we consider other associated costs including the following:

- Additional Capital Costs - software, IT support software and network infrastructure.
- Technical Support Costs - hardware and software deployment, help desk staffing, system maintenance.
- Administration Costs - financing, procurement, vendor management, user training, asset management.

Our goal is to provide and maintain one PC per individual. In addition to travel and alternative work locations/telecommuting sites, notebooks will allow users to bring their PCs to various on-site venues (e.g., conference rooms for use with presentations or training and meetings for note taking).

Maintaining one PC per individual considerably reduces the associated costs. In this versatile environment it is also important to provide compatible associated equipment (e.g., docking stations that seamlessly function for the ever-changing (daily) technology throughout the lifecycle of the product as well as different models supporting the differing workforce needs). We are also able to minimize the number of "images" we need to maintain and configurations that we need to support. We continue to maximize our resources and non-standardized hardware is counterproductive to that effort.

West Hill Dam holds Volunteer Work Day

Volunteers banded together and joined New England District employees at West Hill Dam to do a little clean up work. The event, called Volunteer Work Day, was held on Sept. 21 at the flood control project. Participating in Volunteer Work Day allowed people who enjoy the recreational areas of West Hill Dam to “give back” by keeping the facility in good working condition.

“Residents have always respected West Hill as if it was their own back yard,” said Viola Bramel, coordinator of the event that has been held annually for the past three years.

Approximately 65 volunteers took time to enjoy a beautiful day and get some improvement projects completed.

Work that volunteers performed included clearing brush out of the river channel for canoe and kayak access; constructing benches with flower plants attached for the office greeting area (Park Host Andy Anderson designed the benches); clearing the Mendon Road canoe launch area for wheelchair access to the river; and sealing park and trail benches for annual protection. In addition, Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops made improvements to the Scout camping area. “Boy and Girl Scouts can now camp in an area they helped create,” said Viola.

According to Viola, nine graduates from the Junior Ranger program and their parents worked on the river access project, the scout camping area and the canoe launch access projects. Volunteer and Eagle Scout Jason Riendeau took on the task of creating a fitness trail at West Hill Dam.

The volunteers worked four hours during Volunteer Work Day, which equates to a total savings to the government of \$4,420.

For their efforts, volunteers were presented blue ribbons at a ceremony that concluded the event. In addition, the Junior Ranger graduates -- seven Level 2 and two Advanced --



Seamoor the dragon “talks” to volunteers about water safety.

received their Junior Ranger patches. Now that the hard work is over, volunteers will be able to enjoy a Corps of Engineers facility that is in top condition.

“Volunteers along with guests and visitors can now enjoy the trails, river, Scout camping area and other areas they helped improve,” said Viola.

New England District employees who also participated in the event were Joseph Faloretti, Robert Hanacek, Jamie Kordack, Dave Stiddem, Brad Walley, Dave Hebert, Michelle Dwyer, and Viola Bramel.

In addition, Vince Kordack, National Park Service Ranger, took part in Volunteer Work Day. Park Hosts Betty and Carl Soderlund and Nancy and Andy Anderson, West Hill Dam volunteer JoAnn Kennedy handled the registration, cooked and served hungry crews after a hard day’s work.

During open season, West Hill Dam offers many activities to wile away a summer day. There is stream fishing along two miles of the trout-stocked West River as well as hunting.

West Hill offers a swimming beach, hiking trails, a mountain bike trail, and a wheelchair accessible playground. A sandlot volleyball court and horseshoe pit are located near two picnic shelters that are available with a reservation.



Park Ranger Viola Bramel prepares to remove brush at West Hill Dam.



A volunteer cuts tree branches during Volunteer Day.

Dredging up the past . . .



Contractors engage in hand finishing of black concrete on taxiway at Dow AFB in this Oct. 22, 1958 photo. This project was one of many military projects undertaken by the Corps in New England.

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