

Big E!  
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US Army Corps  
of Engineers  
New England District

Volume 40, No. 1

# Yankee Engineer

October 2003

## Environmental Restoration: District turns eyesore into environmental thing of beauty

A dilapidated Rhode Island drive-in that once brought fun and entertainment to its residents will now provide a rich environmental habitat in which wildlife will thrive, thanks to an environmental restoration initiative undertaken by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District, and its Coastal America partners.

The Honorable John Paul Woodley, Jr., Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works, represented the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at the Lonsdale Wetlands Restoration Project dedication ceremony at the project site, Sept. 15.

The ceremony marked Mr. Woodley's first official function in his

new position. The New England District took the lead in design and construction of the project.

"I am proud of the partnership the New England District of the Corps formed with the state, local government and the private sector to turn the site from an eyesore into a piece of productive marshland habitat," said Mr. Woodley.

Senator Jack Reed, Senator Lincoln Chafee, Congressman Patrick Kennedy, and heads of federal, state, and local agencies joined Mr. Woodley in praising the New England District and its Coastal America Partners on a job well done.

"I have a certain partiality to the Army Corps of Engineers," said West Point Alumni, Sen. Jack Reed. "Our Corps is doing a great job here. This is a wonderful project."

In the 1950s and 1960s, Lonsdale Drive-in in Lincoln, R.I., provided entertainment to many local residents. But when the drive-in closed down in the 1980s, the 37-acre site was left to decay. The Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management, the



Photo by Mark McInerney

*The Honorable John Paul Woodley, Jr., gets a tour of the Lonsdale site from Project Manager Duban Montoya and Col. Thomas Koning, District Engineer.*

*Continued on page 5*

# Yankee Voices

Heather Morse  
North Hartland Lake



## Combined Federal Campaign

The Combined Federal Campaign is upon us again.

The CFC Mission Statement is: to support and promote philanthropy through a program that is employee-focused, cost-efficient, and effective in providing all federal employees the opportunity to improve the quality of life for all. The annual drive will begin on Oct. 10, and run for six weeks through Nov. 21.

Office representatives have been identified and have distributed the booklets.

There are over 2,000 charities listed this year covering a wide variety of services.

Over \$2 million was raised in the Massachusetts Bay area last year, and the New England District had almost 150 people pledge \$25,000.

Please contact your CFC Representative for more information on what charities are listed in the booklet.

## Congratulations

...to three staff members from the District's Western Mass., Office who earned spots as finalists for the Federal Executive Association's Excellence in Government Awards that were presented Sept. 22. **Jeff Perchak** competed for Technical & Scientific Employee of the Year; **Susan Loubier** for Support Person of the Year; and **Patricia Devine** for Outstanding Individual Customer Service Effort honors. Although the District didn't capture top honors, Col. Thomas Koning, District Engineer, and the rest of the New England District family are extremely proud of the work and contributions made by these top performers.

...to **Kathleen Atwood**, who was named as the WE Committee's Employee of the Month for October 2003. Kate was nominated for her exceptional service on the Joe English Pond Rehabilitation Project.

... to the **New England District Reservoir Regulation Team** for being named as the WE Committee's Team of the Month for October. Team members include **Paul Marinelli, Steve Simmer, Brian Waz, Greg Hanlon and Dan Stenstream**. This team has done an excellent job in maintaining flood regulation at our dams and hurricane barriers. The team's efforts in 2003 prevented \$4,388,000 in flood damages.

## Best wishes

...to **Donna Craig**, Resource Management, on her retirement. Donna had 32 years of federal service. A retirement reception was held for Donna on Sept. 29 in the New England Conference Room. "Thanks to all for a wonderful send off for my special day," said Donna at her retirement. "It is both exciting and sad after working 32 years for the Corps."

## Welcome

**Willis Loper**, Construction/Operations

## Words worth repeating

**Find reasons to do the important things, instead of reasons not to do them. Risk, experiment, and don't forget to have some fun while you are at it.**

- *Ernie J. Zelinski, Consultant*

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# Commander's Corner:

## 'The only thing we have to fear is fear itself.'

by Col. Thomas L. Koning  
District Engineer



The title of this month's article is a quotation from President Franklin D. Roosevelt's first inaugural address in 1933. He was speaking of the fear many people had about the depths of the economic depression that America was in when he took office. Roosevelt was warning the American people not

to let the economy be paralyzed by their fears.

Throughout the Corps, there is much fear today -- fear about USACE 2012, fear about competitive sourcing, fear about the Third Wave and fear about whether each of us will

have a job in the future. I think fear is too strong of a word, but I, and the rest of the Corps leadership, have heard your concerns over the uncertainty all the much-hyped changes will bring. Over the next several months, I will talk to you and write to you all that I know about changes the future will bring. If I do not give you my best answer, ask me again until I can satisfy the question. It may not be the answer you wanted to hear, but it will be truth as I know it.

In early October, the Chief called all the Division and District Commanders to Washington, D.C., to discuss USACE 2012. His message was simple - 2012 is not about function, 2012 is not about structure, 2012 is about better service to our customers. If 2012 will allow us to provide our service better, faster or cheaper to our customers, it is a good thing. Yes, there are functional and structural changes in the 2012 document, but they are all aligned to bring better support to the American people.

Do not believe the rumors I have heard regarding the plan. As I did last month, I encourage you to read the documents for yourself that are posted at [www.hq.usace.army.mil/stakeholders](http://www.hq.usace.army.mil/stakeholders) and follow the links to 2012. The final version of the plan is dated October 2003.

Ensure you understand where we are in the 2012 process. We are one year into a 10-year vision. The Chief emphasized to us in Washington, D.C., that 2012 is a concept and there are many more pieces to be put into place before it is all a reality. Within USACE, there still needs to be developed the Implementation Plan, PGMP and PMP, Communication Plan, and Implementation Timeline. External to USACE, there are several legislative actions to complete

before all the process initiatives can be realized.

In 1961, President John F. Kennedy said, "I believe that this nation should commit itself to achieving the goal, before this decade is out, of landing a man on the moon and returning him safely to the Earth."

He gave the nation a concept, a vision of where we needed to go. He did not know how we would get there. In fact, at the time, most U.S. space rockets were still blowing up on the launch pads. But during the next eight years, the details of the plan came together and by 1969, we had accomplished that goal.

I will grant you that 2012 is not quite as ambitious as landing a man on the moon, but it is a worthwhile goal nonetheless. The new buzzwords will be "mutual interdependence." No one organization will have all the resources to

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## 'I understand change is difficult, but this change is for the right reasons.'

-Col. Thomas Koning, District Engineer

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complete its mission. All of us will have to rely on each other through horizontal and vertical teams to execute our jobs. The teaming aspects of PMBP will have to be fully realized. Within USACE, small examples of the success can already be seen within the Finance Center and ERDC's operations. As promised from the beginning of the Stockton Study, through the Functional Area Analysis, and now into the 2012 plan, the vast majority of the proposed changes occur at the Division and HQ level.

At District level and below, most things with respect to funding streams, rating chains and workload assignment will not change or will only change slightly. Efficiencies will be realized, but they will be efficiencies we should be doing anyway to be a learning organization.

I understand change is difficult, but this change is for the right reasons. I stand available to answer any questions I can. Remember, the difference between an ordeal and an adventure is "Attitude." That "Attitude" is the "A" in my command philosophy of TEAM (Teamwork, Expertise, Attitude and Management). For more information on USACE 2012, please go to the following website:

[mms://nad-ws1fth.nado.ds.usace.army.mil/USACE 2012 The Way Ahead.wmv](http://mms://nad-ws1fth.nado.ds.usace.army.mil/USACE%2012%20The%20Way%20Ahead.wmv)

# District, EPA sought comments on new draft EIS for Long Island Sound

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released a draft report recommending the designation of two dredged material disposal sites in the western and central regions of the Long Island Sound, Sept. 12.

Joining together to solicit public comments on the draft report, the two agencies held four public hearings in two locations. The first two were held on Sept. 30 in Stony Brook, N.Y., and the second two were held on Oct. 1, in Stamford, Conn.

Melville Cote, Jr., Manager Water Quality Unit, Office of Ecosystem Protection from EPA served as the hearing officer. "We are here to present information on the draft EIS that evaluates disposal options for the western and central regions of Long Island Sound and to solicit feedback on this document and federal action it proposes in the form of oral and written comments," he said.

The draft environmental impact statement (EIS) identifies two sites, the Western Long Island Sound and the Central Long Island Sound sites, as the preferred long-term disposal sites for Long Island Sound.

The two sites are located in Connecticut waters approximately 2.5 nautical miles south of Stamford and 5.6 nautical miles south of East Haven. The two sites were selected from four evaluated sites.

"This study focused on consideration of impact on the natural and human environment, including natural resources and economics," said Mark Habel, New England District Project Manager. "It was concluded that the capacity of non-in-water disposal alternatives cannot meet the dredged material disposal needs of the Central and Western Long Island Sound region. While individual projects must assess non open-water alternatives on a case-by-case basis, designation of one or more open-water dredged material disposal sites in Long Island Sound is necessary to meet the long-term regional needs of navigation in the Sound."

The draft EIS was prepared by the EPA, in conjunction with the New England District, as a response to the need for a long-term disposal site for dredged material from rivers and harbors in the central and western regions of Long Island Sound.

Work on the EIS began in 1999

when the federal government published its intent to designate one or more dredged disposal sites in Long Island Sound. Periodic dredging and disposal of dredged material is necessary to maintain safe navigation and marine commerce.

There presently are no disposal sites designated for long-term use.

The scope of the project was modified from all of Long Island Sound to just the central and western portions of Long Island Sound in 2002. A review of the eastern region was deferred until the completion of the first phase of the project, which is scheduled for mid-2004.

Larry Rosenberg, Chief, Public Affairs, served as the moderator for the public hearings. In addition to remarks made by Mr. Cote and Mark Habel, Dr. Carlton Hunt of Battelle and Dr. Drew Carey of Coastal Vision also discussed the EIS before comments were received by the public.

In order for more members of the public to voice their opinions on the EIS, the comment period has been extended to Nov. 17, and another public hearing is set to take place in Stamford, Conn., on Nov. 13.

## Taking the green house tour

*Col. Thomas Koning, District Engineer, tours the tribal green house of the Aroostook Band of Micmac Indians with Fred Corey during a visit in Presque Isle, Maine, Sept. 29. Mr. Corey is the tribe's Environmental Director. The greenhouse grows wetland plants, including brown ash which is culturally important for making tribal baskets.*



Photo by Bill Hubbard



*Lonsdale Drive-in was an eyesore before the restoration work began.*



*The restored wetlands on the Blackstone River has been fenced for the protection of the newly planted wetland vegetation.*

## District turns eyesore into environmental thing of beauty

*Continued from page 1*

project's non-federal sponsor, purchased the site in 1998 with the intention of restoring the site to wetlands and riparian habitat, and requested the New England District and their Coastal America partners to assist. A project cooperation agreement was signed between the District and the RIDEM on May 16, 2002.

Work in restoring Lonsdale involved removing about 13 acres of asphalt; demolishing a movie screen, speaker posts, and other associated features; excavating approximately 60,000 cubic yards of material; placing organic rich topsoil; and planting wetlands and uplands.

At the RIDEM's request, the New England District also removed an abandoned excavator on a man-made island in the middle of the Blackstone River.

"So many people enjoyed the Lonsdale Drive-in, but now there will be a new enjoyment for people to come here to see the wildlife and all the natural activity that is taking place in a very urban setting," said Sen. Lincoln Chafee.

Mr. Woodley told the audience why he thought the \$2.6 million dollar project was a success. "About seven acres of wetlands are now connected to the Blackstone River," he said. "About 13 acres of the riparian buffer/grassland habitat were created and now the project provides shelter to waterfowl and habitat for declining grassland bird species."

Numerous deer, foxes, and coyotes have also been sighted on project land, he said.

The Lonsdale Drive-In wetlands restoration project is unique in several ways. The project is the first aquatic ecosystem restoration effort within the Blackstone River watershed, which is an American Heritage River. It is also the very first Corps of Engineers project with cost sharing from the newly formed Corporate Wetlands Restoration Partnership in Rhode Island.

"I want to acknowledge the Army Corps of Engineers, the EPA, and others who made this day possible," said Congressman Patrick Kennedy. "I'm happy that I am able to work on the house side to secure the funding for the Army Corps so they can continue to do these very important projects that make a difference in the quality of life for our citizens in our state."

Charter Environmental, Inc., of Chelsea, Mass., performed the work under a construction contract. Work began in early 2003 and was scheduled to be complete this fall, plus two growing periods. The work was completed ahead of schedule.

In the fall/winter time frame, Rhode Island Department of Transportation will build a bicycle trail within and adjacent to the project site that will take up about three acres of paved space. The state's project, which is separate from the District's restoration project, will benefit the aesthetics and public usability of the site. The project is expected to take about 18 months to complete.

Jan Reitsma, Director, Department of Environmental Management, served as Master of Ceremonies. Other speakers included R.I. Lt. Gov., Charles Fogarty; Robert Varney, Regional Administrator, New England Office, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; Michael Bartlett, Supervisor of the New England Field Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; Michael Tikoian, Chair, Coastal Resources Management Council; Robert Billington, Chair, John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission; and Charles Natale, EES Group and Sally Yozell, Batelle, Rhode Island Coastal America Wetlands Restoration Partnership.

Col. Thomas Koning, District Engineer, Dubán Montoya, Project Manager, and Bill Hubbard, Engineering/Planning, accompanied Mr. Woodley to the ceremony.

## New England District teaches public about Lewis and Clark at Western Massachusetts fair

There were lots of things to see and do at the 2003 Eastern States Exposition. Vendor stands and exhibits abound at the 86-year-old fair, also known as the Big E!, located in West Springfield, Mass. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District, is almost as much a fixture at the fair as the famous cream puff pastries and petting zoos.

District representatives celebrated their sixteenth year at the Big E! by sponsoring an exhibit and a series of presentations that celebrated the Lewis and Clark Expedition. The Corps of Engineers presently has direct stewardship of 22-percent of the Lewis and Clark route, and is commemorating the bicentennial with presentations and exhibits all over the country.

In keeping with the Lewis and Clark theme, this year's District exhibit was titled, "The Wonders We Have Seen," located at the Big E!'s New England Center. The exhibit featured the natural history discoveries of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. District representatives also held interpretive presentations at the center and on the stage at Storrowtown Village.

"The theme for this year's exhibit is consistent with the Corps' celebration of the Lewis and Clark expedition," said Col. Thomas Koning, District Engineer. "The exhibit looked great, and the volunteers did a wonderful job passing on their knowledge to visitors."

Stephanie Grimelli and her four-year-old son, Mark Tiriak, of Wilburnham, Mass., agreed with Col. Koning. "I think it's amazing," she said. "The exhibit is wonderful and very educational."

In addition to the interpretive presentations on Lewis and Clark, District Park Rangers also held touch tank activities throughout the duration of the fair. Cape Cod Canal Park Ranger Tom St. Denis has worked the touch tank at the Big E! for about five years. "I like what I'm doing," he said about



*Park Ranger Samantha Mirabella and a young visitor play with the touch box to discover what's inside during the Big E! fair.*

the touch tank. "It's a fun job. The kids and the adults get very interested in the marine life."

One of Tom's favorite things about working the tank is getting an audience member wet with a sea squirt. "You tell them to look right at it and you give it a little squeeze," he laughed. "It's a lot of fun."

The retired high school science teacher turned Park Ranger believes that exhibiting at the Big E! is a worthwhile effort for the Corps. "A lot of people actually learn about the Corps, about our projects and what we do," he said.

Samantha Mirabella, also a Park Ranger at the Cape Cod Canal and a third-year Big E! veteran, took a turn operating the exhibit and greeting people as they visited. "It's a lot of fun and a different scene," she said. "I like being able to work with other people at the District."

According to Samantha, reaching a variety of people is the best part of exhibiting at the Big E!. "The audience is amazing," she said. "A lot of people seem to be relating to the Lewis and Clark theme. I've had people tell me that they've been in Oregon and Montana and have had some experience

with the Lewis and Clark expedition this past year.”

Carol Garek of Southwick, Mass., has been coming to the Big E! exhibit since she was a little girl. She said that she enjoyed the Lewis and Clark exhibit. “The pictures on the exhibit attracted me. I have read books on Lewis and Clark, and seeing an exhibit about them made me interested,” she said. “The young lady (Samantha) that talked to me was very knowledgeable.”

The Eastern States Exposition is a not-for-profit educational institution committed to excellence in providing year-round opportunities for the development and promotion of agriculture, education, industry and family entertainment while preserving New England heritage.

Marcy Selinski, the coordinator of the Eastern States Expo for the New England Center, praised the Corps exhibit and their contributions to the fair. “They’re wonderful -- we love the Army Corps of Engineers,” she said. “They make a great contribution to all the children on the grounds. We really appreciate their cooperation and help.”

Many of the District employees worked on making the Big E! exhibit a success. Some of them include Mark McNerney and his Visual Information staff, Rick Magee, Tim Russell, Delia Vogel, Tom Wisnaukas, Jamie Kordack, Jim Holbrook, Diana Errico-Topolski, Pat Tetrault, Michelle Dwyer, Jason Robinson, Mark Wilmes, Vinnie Gualtieri, Donna Vondle, Roxanne Barbeau, Tim Flynn, Samantha Mirabella, Tom St. Dennis, Beckye Tibets, Joe Faloretti, Merl Bassett, Doug Helman, Will and Cathy Rogers, Gladys Leone, Laura Lally, Jessie Smith, Bob Hanacek, Zach Koziol, Steve Dermody, Ken Hester, James West, Viola Bramel, Randy Sujat, Sue Loubier, Jean Hixson, and Jackie Simonis.

Over one million people attended the largest fair in the northeast – the ninth largest in the nation. The Big E! ran from Sept. 12 through Sept. 28.



Photos by C.J. Allen

*A visitor at the touch tank touches a starfish with the help of Tom St. Denis at the New England District touch tank.*



*Children and adults learned about marine life at the District's touch tank.*



*Park Ranger Samantha Mirabella answers Lewis and Clark questions at the District's Big E! exhibit.*



*Visitors of all ages marvel at the artifacts exhibited at the New England District's Lewis and Clark exhibit at the Big E! fair.*

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## Cub Scouts' gift chronicles world history during this tree's life

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Story and photo by Claudia Hixson  
Park Ranger, Buffumville Lake

*In September of 2003, while hiking back from a trail-refurbishing project at Buffumville Lake, a Cub Scout troop stopped to marvel at a huge, fallen tree. The old, red oak was massive – 19 feet in circumference near its base. It was likely once a subject of King George, III.*

On Oct. 11, Cub Scout Pack 128 of North Brookfield, Mass., presented to Buffumville Dam a wooden cap to affix to the rings to indicate when major historic events occurred. Passing hikers and riders can contemplate the long, solid endurance of the tree as human events played around it.

How had this tree manage to avoid the ravenous fireplaces of colonial homes or the bite of early sawmills? Perhaps it was too slender to bother with before people began to switch to coal or perhaps it provided valuable shade for livestock.

Think what this giant lived through. As a sapling, it had to struggle and compete successfully for sunlight and nutrients. By the time Napoleon was defeated at Waterloo, thousands of squirrels and birds, maybe even the long-gone Passenger Pigeon, had found cover and food in its 50+-year-old boughs. How many Nipmucks, farmers, hunters, travelers and lovers had

paused near the tree by the time of the Mexican War in 1846?

The tree was already large when Americans began to quarrel in deadly earnest about how much longer one man could buy another. It was mature when Lincoln was in the White House and local hero Clara Barton was nursing Civil War soldiers at Antietam.

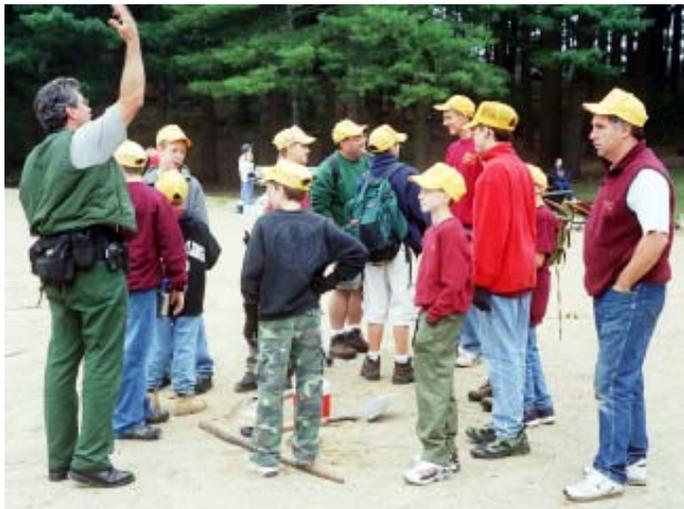
The same oak was witness to the age of the first automobiles, radio, airplanes, and moving pictures. It was still flourishing when Hitler was merely a bad art student in Vienna. It looked on silently as the lake formed behind Buffumville Dam in 1955.

During the summer of 1969, it continued to grow under the moon where an American astronaut was planting the American flag. After that, it cast its acorns for 30 more years.

Pack 128's gift to the local community reminds us of the opportunities our dam project have to offer young people who wish to grow and serve.



*Cub Scouts Lucas Morin, Justine Hart and Andrew Paquette help Scout Leader Fran Hart install the wooden cap on the stump of the old tree thought to be about 300 years old.*



*Team leader Bob Hanacek calls the rest of his team over so they can begin work on their project.*



*Teams of volunteers wait to be given instructions during National Public Lands Day at Buffumville Lake and Hodges Village Dam.*

## National Public Lands Day celebrated at Buffumville Lake and Hodges Village Dam

Volunteers of all walks of life rolled up their sleeves and joined together to preserve and maintain the recreational facilities they love during National Public Lands Day. The event, which was held at New England District's Buffumville Lake and Hodges Village Dam, drew nearly 300 volunteers that worked on 15 projects around the Corps facilities. The volunteers' donated labor saved the U.S. Government thousands of dollars.

This year marks the New England District's twelfth year of participation in National Public Lands Day. Buffumville Lake and Hodges Village Dam were chosen for the seventh year in a row as one of 500 locations in all 50 states to host the event. National Public Lands Day 2003 focused on improving and preserving public lands in the United States. It is a unique public-private partnership which involves many

federal, state, and local agencies that work closely with businesses and numerous non profit organizations.

Projects that volunteers at Buffumville Lake and Hodges Village Dam worked on included trailblazing, trash clean-up, weeding plants, habitat work, Disc Golf course upkeep, painting, installing posts, installing benches on top of the dam, and much more.

Park Ranger Jamie Kordack coordinated this year's event. Other New England District team members who participated were Viola Bramel, Joe Faloretti, Bob Hanacek, Rick Magee, Tom Chamberland, Jean Hixson, and Ken Hester.

Jim Hachigian, seasonal maintenance worker, and the recently retired Dave Stiddem also played important roles in the success of the day's events.



*Volunteers come back from finishing a project across the lake.*

Photos by C.J. Allen



*Volunteers pick out safety gloves before they get into their project teams during National Public Lands Day.*

# Suspected military ordnance unearthed at environmental remediation site at Blue Beach

by Timothy Dugan  
Public Affairs

During the course of an environmental remediation project at a former defense site in September, a contractor for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers unearthed several pieces of suspected ordnance at the Blue Beach property at Quonset Point in North Kingstown, R.I.

The site is adjacent to the former Navy/General Dynamics Salvage Yard. The Corps' contractor, Conti Environmental, Inc., is conducting an environmental remediation at the Blue Beach site. During the course of this work this ordnance was unearthed.

When the larger pieces of ordnance were unearthed the U.S. Navy Explosives Ordnance Disposal (EOD), from Newport, R.I., and the State Fire Marshal were called in to investigate. The Fire Marshal closed the site and two adjacent construction sites for safety reasons while investigations were being conducted.

On Sept. 22, the Navy EOD determined that all pieces unearthed up to that point, except one sea mine, were inert. Another sea mine was unearthed later that day and Navy EOD determined it to be inert on Sept. 23. The inert pieces

were filled with concrete or were empty. They ranged from small pieces of ordnance like rocket warheads to larger pieces like sea mines. To date, about 20 pieces have been unearthed at the site.

The investigation of the one remaining piece of ordnance, a Naval sea mine, proved inconclusive. It was treated as hazardous material and removed from the site for disposal. The piece of ordnance had no fuse so did not pose an immediate danger. The Navy EOD approved removal of the piece of ordnance from the site, and escorted its transport. The suspect ordnance at Blue Beach was removed from the site out of state on Sept. 24. It was detonated on Sept. 25 and found to be inert. The Corps is developing a site safety plan to address any further incidents that may involve the discovery of suspected ordnance during the course of the remediation work on this site. The site was secured for safety reasons with security fencing and security guards.

In the 1940s, two naval facilities were developed and named the Quonset Point Naval Air Station (NAS) and the Naval Advanced Base Depot. The facilities were used for training and support of naval activities during World War II and the Korean and Vietnam conflicts. Quonset Point NAS remained active until 1974, when it was deactivated and closed.

## New England District employees meet in Iraq



(from left:) Dave Kratz, Phil Morrison, Lt. Col. Brian Green, and Bob Govero meet up to pose for a snapshot using the Tigris River as a background.

It really is a small world after all. New England District employees Dave Kratz, Phil Morrison, and Bob Govero, who have been deployed to Iraq, found themselves working right next door to Lt. Col. Brian Green, New England District's Deputy District Engineer.

Dave, Phil and Bob are all working for Task Force Restore Iraqi Electricity (TF RIE) in Baghdad. Lt. Col. Green is currently serving as the Chief of Staff of the USACE Iraq Provisional Command.

Lt. Col. Green reports that everyone is doing well. The group gathered for a photo, taken by Maj. Flip Secrist of Sacramento District, on the back patio of the Essayons Base villa house. The Tigris River is in the background.

Other New England District employees who are working in Iraq are Nick Iaiennaro and Steve Waite.

# West Hill Dam hosts annual Work Day



*A team saws away branches during the West Hill Work Day.*



*Volunteers seal a trail bench as part of their team project.*



*Park Rangers paddle their way to a project at West Hill Dam.*



*Park Rangers Viola Bramel and Brad Walley cook up some lunch for hungry volunteers.*

*Over 40 volunteers decided to spend a beautiful sunny day getting their hands dirty helping out the New England District when West Hill Dam hosted its fourth annual Work Day at its flood control facility, Sept. 20.*

The event was held so that volunteers could assist the stewards of West Hill Dam in improving and maintaining the surrounding property.

Work that the volunteers performed included improving an open field habitat for ground-nesting birds and turtle habitat; reseeding for erosion control; top dressing the playground; resurfacing the accessible wheelchair picnic pad; sealing the Woodland Trail Bridge Deck and Playground and Trail Benches; clearing brush in the Scout camping area and picking up trash.

In four hours the crews contributed a savings of \$2,352 to the U.S. Government. "These projects could have taken staff or small crews about a week and all

of this was accomplished in four hours," said West Hill Dam Park Ranger Viola Bramel.

Volunteers were rewarded for their time and effort with blue ribbons and a barbecue lunch. Linda Lovalinka, an environmental science teacher, educated volunteers about turtles and other habitat information during lunch.

New England District employees who participated at the West Hill Dam Work Day were Viola Bramel, Jamie Kordack, Bob Hanacek, Joe Faloretti, Merl Bassett, and Brad Walley. Jamie's husband, National Park Service, Charlestown Navy Yard Park Ranger Vince Kordack, and photographer C.J. Allen also pitched in and helped out.



*Park Ranger Jamie Kordack and her team seal a fence.*

Photos by C.J. Allen



*Brad Walley pitches in during West Hill Dam Work Day.*



*Volunteers set up a welcome sign for fellow workers during West Hill Dam Work Day.*



## Yankee Engineer celebrates 40 years of telling the Corps story

This issue of the Yankee Engineer marks the 40th anniversary of the newsletter. And like the District it serves, the unofficial Department of Defense publication has gone through many changes.

In the early days, the Yankee Engineer was known as the Information Bulletin. More like the old printed version of the Weekly Bulletin than a newsletter, the monthly paper's first issue consisted of four typewritten pages in a 8-1/2" x 11" format.

The Information Bulletin had no pictures and no graphic elements with the exception of the Corps Castle on the first page. The front page news of the day consisted of military news and training opportunities.

The Information Bulletin kept its name and format until November 1979. At that time, the newsletter went through an extreme transformation and expanded

to a megatabloid format with pictures.

The name "Information Bulletin" no longer fit the needs of the newsletter and it was time for a better, snazzier name to go with the new look. A call went out throughout the Corps in New England for suggestions for two issues. Then, in the third issue, a list of 55 names were published and readers were asked to vote for their favorite.

It wasn't an easy decision – in the next issue, the choices were whittled down to nine finalists.

Finally, in the first bimonthly issue, March/April 1980, the paper's new name, "Yankee Engineer," graced the top of the front page with a minuteman at the upper left hand corner. Col. Max Scheider was the Division Engineer at the time.

Walter Mackie was the Public Affairs Officer. Sue Douglas, retired Media Relations Officer, was the first editor of

the Yankee Engineer.

The Yankee Engineer returned to a monthly newspaper in 1981 when Warren Nordman became the Chief of Public Affairs.

In 1982, the title page was changed with the addition of the Corps castle to the minuteman graphic. The information inside the paper, however, remained up-to-date and stayed a constant source of reliable information to its readers.

From 1983 to 1990, the paper kept shifting its format from tabloid to megatabloid. In 1990, the Yankee Engineer received a new editor, Catherine Ravens. Catherine continued in the tradition of keeping her readers abreast of current events and information pertinent to the Corps mission until her retirement in June 1992.

Bad times fell on the paper in 1990. Budget cuts and personnel reductions

effected everyone in the New England Division, and the Yankee Engineer was no exception.

The high quality newspaper trademarked by its megatabloid format and entertaining photos ceased to exist.

To comply with rigid spending restrictions, the Yankee Engineer was reduced to its former "Information Bulletin" appearance with hardly any graphic elements and no pictures. Although the look of the paper devolved, the quality of writing and current information stayed unchanged.

In May 1992, under Larry Rosenberg, the new Chief of Public Affairs, the Yankee Engineer rose from the ashes with a new exciting look that included a new editor (who continues today) and photographs and modern graphics.

The publication took on a more magazine-like format with impressive layouts and continued up-to-date information.

In 1999, the Yankee Engineer expanded its reach to tell the New England District's story with the edition of the Yankee Engineer Online, located at <http://www.nae.usace.army.mil/news/yankee.htm>.

Since 1995, the Yankee Engineer has won awards every year in the Herbert A. Kassner Print Journalism Competition to include photojournalism, news, journalism, web page, and features. In 2001, the Yankee Engineer's World Trade Center Edition received top awards in the Special Achievement in Print Media.

And finally, the Yankee Engineer took first place in the Army-Funded newspaper category in 2002.

In its 40 years of existence, the Yankee Engineer has gone through good times, and bad times, as did its readers, who number over 1,700 strong.

From announcing the death of John F. Kennedy in the 1960s to moving lighthouses in the 1990s, to telling the great things the New England District team does today, the Yankee Engineer will continue to remain something that its readers can rely on for another 40 years and beyond.

## Hispanic Heritage program educates the District team on gang violence

Michael Ortiz, staff Counsel for Student Services, Lowell Public Schools educated an interested audience on how to tell if their child was a member of a gang during the Hispanic Heritage Celebration, held Oct. 14 in the theatre.

This year's Hispanic Heritage theme was, "Hispanic Americans: Honoring our Past, Surpassing our Present, and Leading our Future."

Dick Carlson, Chief, Construction/Operations served as Master of Ceremonies for the EEO-sponsored program. Dick let the audience know that the New England District has long standing educational programs for inner city and at risk children. He used the Hodges Village Dam and Buffumville Lake's project COFFEE as an example in which kids get an education in nature as well as academics. Dick also mentioned that there is a Hop Brook Lake Junior Ranger Program that is conducted in Spanish to reach children who speak English as a second language.

Jacqueline DiDomenico, the Hispanic Heritage Program Manager, introduced the keynote speaker. She said that she had heard of Mr. Ortiz through the Lowell Public Schools where her children attend and thought that his knowledge of gang violence would benefit the District.

Mr. Ortiz told the audience that he was familiar with the ways of gangs not only because he had been a juvenile prosecutor, but also because he was in a gang himself when he was growing up in Brooklyn, New York.

Mr. Ortiz began the audience's education by saying that the more parents know about the way gangs recruit, the better they can use that knowledge to work against those who want their children to join. Gang

violence, according to Mr. Ortiz, spans all ethnic and social backgrounds.

The keynote speaker touched on how organized some of the gangs are, and the fact that a lot of them have web sites that contain the organization's rules and codes. He urged parents to be aware of what web sites their children surf. He touched upon some of the signs that parents should look out for if they suspect their child is in a gang. They include truancy, drug use, apathy, changes in speech and dress, tattoos, colored bandanas, baseball caps that are different colors than the official team's colors, the use of sign language, wearing rosary beads without the crucifix, and new nicknames.

Mr. Ortiz concluded his remarks by encouraging parents to ask a lot of questions of their children. He said that if kids are in a gang, they would either not answer questions or come right out and admit it when pressed for detailed information.

Mr. Ortiz is responsible for handling all legal matters of an educational nature on behalf of the school system. He is also involved in the development of alternative educational programs, community outreach and disciplinary matters.

Prior to his current position, Mr. Ortiz was an Assistant District Attorney for the Middlesex County District Attorney's Office, supervising the prosecution of juvenile cases for the Lowell Regional office. He was responsible for the community-based justice program in Lowell, served as a Spanish language translator, and worked closely with victims and law enforcement officials.

Mr. Ortiz is also an adjunct Professor at Middlesex Community College. He teaches several criminal law courses, including juvenile law.

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## James R. DeLong retires after 33 years of service

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Story by Vincent Gualtieri  
Photos by Chuck Whitehead

*James R. "Jimmy" DeLong retired from New England District, Sept. 30, after 33 years of federal service. A pizza luncheon was held in his honor at the Black Rock Lake Office.*

Jim has had a long and distinguished career with the Corps in New England. He started as a dam operator helper at Thomaston Dam in 1971 after his service with the U.S. Army in Vietnam. He then served as an assistant project manager, flood control facilities maintenance and operations manager at Hop Brook Lake in Middlebury, Conn., from 1973 to 1987. Jim came to Black Rock Lake as assistant Project Man-

ager in 1987 and was promoted to Park Ranger in 1990.

Jim is skilled in equipment operation of tractors, backhoe and dump trucks. Some of his accomplishments include the initial setup of the recreation area and management road system at Hop Brook Lake, as well as access control measures in Black Rock Reservoir, and the enhancement of the Northfield Brook Lake Park with stone walls, a wishing well at Humiston circle.

He has operated the reservoirs through many high water events and has cleaned up debris after all of them.

Jim displays great pride in the operation of our public use areas and the safety and aesthetic improvements he has made will benefit generations to come.



*James DeLong operating the crane at Black Rock Lake Dam during float well repair operation.*



*Rangers Mickey Howe, Jim DeLong and Laborer Tim Titus plant wildlife food plots at Thomaston Dam in May 2003.*



*Reese Morgan presents Jim DeLong with his retirement pin and certificate.*

# Pie Fest 2003:

## WE Committee throws dessert celebration for Year-End success

*Another Fiscal Year has come and gone, and thanks to many people at the New England District, the year-end close out was a complete success. As a thank-you to the District, the Work Environment (WE) Committee sponsored a Year-End Pie Fest, Oct. 15, in the Maine/New Hampshire Conference Rooms.*

The 28 pies that were set out for the after lunch dessert frenzy ranged from apple to pumpkin with everything in between. The WE Committee also provided hot apple cider and coffee to wash down the baked goodies. Apples were also available for those employees who were strong enough to keep to their diets.

Those who indulged and had some pie raved about them. Col. Thomas Koning, District Engineer, went for the apple and blueberry pies topped off with a little ice cream and whip cream. "They were decadent!" he said. "I will have to run many extra miles to work off my momentary weakness for pie!"

"I tried the coconut cream and the chocolate pies," said Bob Russo. "They were both very nice. The WE Committee folks were very thoughtful and kind putting together this unique get-together for us."

Laureen Borocharer sampled the mixed berry and the pumpkin pies and



Photo by Mark McInerney

*District employees dig into the pies. The WE Committee Pie Fest celebrated a successful year-end closing.*

described them as sublime. "I didn't realize that there were so many talented chefs in our organization," she said of the event.

In years past, the WE Committee had sponsored after-work cookouts to celebrate the super stressful end of the year. But this year, the Committee

decided to do something different and appealed to District employee's sweet tooth. "We hoped we would get a lot of people to participate, and they did!" said Christine Godfrey, WE Committee Chair.

"I am always very impressed with the efforts of the WE Committee to support the employees of the District," said Col. Koning. "They go above and beyond all expectations to make our workplace better. I thank them for their selfless service to the rest of us."

Shari Valente headed the organization of the event and said that its success was a total WE Committee team effort. Shari said that the committee received a great deal of assistance from Sue Mehigan, Laura Lally, Gladys Leone, Ralph Mallardo, Trish Sumner, Sue MacDonald, Bonnie Ortiz, and Joe Ferrari. The bakers who donated the blue ribbon-worthy pies were Christine Godfrey, Shari Valente, Bob Meader, Donna Russell, Mike Tuttle, Sue Mehigan, Angie Vanaria, Sue MacDonald, and Bill Gladman.



Photo by Ann Marie Harvie

*Twenty eight pies were baked and donated for the Pie Fest. Fruit was also provided for those strong enough to stay on their diets.*

# Dredging up the past . . .



*Massachusetts Senator Ted Kennedy shakes hands with Division Engineer, Col. Thomas Rhen, during the New Bedford Superfund Site Pilot Test in this 1988 photo. The District performed what was called the "Hot Spot Removal," which was the removal of the most highly contaminated sediments from the harbor.*

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