

# Yankee Engineer

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*Building Strong*

®



*Channel work completed at  
Union Village Dam  
Story on page 4*



# Yankee Voices

Retiree Greg Buteau and Susan MacDonald



## *Congratulations*

... **Matthew Bates**, Research Environmental Engineer, USACE Engineer Research and Development Center, and his wife, **Mary Ann**, on the birth of their son, **Asher Merrill Bates**, Dec. 26, 2011.

...to Operations retiree **Delia Vogel** on the birth of her grandson, **Bentley Richard Vogel**, Dec. 29, 2011.

## *Sympathy*

...to the family of Survey Section retiree **Alan C. Kingsbury** who recently passed away in early January.

... to Barbara Ingalls, Upper Connecticut River Basin, on the passing of her father, Kerry Stapleton, Jan. 15.

## *Words Worth Repeating*

"The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy."

- **Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.**



Brad Walley (center) receives his Commander's Award for Civilian Service from Thames River Basin Manager Bob Hanacek as daughter, Brittney and wife, Debbie look on. Photo by Joe Zanca

## *West Hill Park Ranger retires from service*

Brad Walley, Park Ranger at West Hill Dam, retired from federal service on Nov. 30, 2011 with more than 13 years on the job. Walley elected for a small send off in the form of a luncheon attended by only a few family members, friends and co-workers.

Walley's retirement luncheon was held Nov. 28, 2011 at Brian's Restaurant in Northbridge, Mass., with about 20 people in attendance. West Hill Dam Project Manager Merl Bassett served as Master of Ceremonies for the event. Among the presentations was a slide show chronicling Walley's career with the District in photos.

Bob Hanacek, Thames River Basin Manager, presented Walley with a Commander's Award for Civilian Service for his hard work and dedication to the District over the years. Hanacek also presented Walley with his retirement certificate and pin. As a parting gift, attendees presented Walley with a gift certificate so that he may indulge in his passion for fishing. Traveling to New York to see the sites as well as traveling to see his grandchildren and great grandchildren are on Walley's immediate retirement agenda.

Retirees Dave Hebert, Jan and Carol Szwed attended the luncheon as did contractor Jim Lamothe. Family members who accompanied Walley to the event included his wife, Debbie, and daughter, Brittney.



# Commander's Corner:

*Delivering superior results for the Nation, the Region, and the People!*

by Col. Charles P. Samaris  
District Commander



*"The achievements of an organization are the RESULTS of the combined effort of each individual."*

~ Vince Lombardi

*"I think one's feelings waste themselves in words; they ought all to be distilled into actions, which bring RESULTS."*

~ Florence Nightingale

Team,

Happy New Year! Hopefully, we've all fully recovered from the holidays and are all looking forward to a great 2012! Kicking off a new year is always exciting, especially if we love what we do! Why? Because...we are in control of purposefully forging the future through disciplined, yet creative, thought and action. And why would we do this? To deliver superior results to the people of New England and the Nation...because they deserve our very best!

Sure, there are aspects of our work that may seem beyond our control. But, the truly important things...attitude, expertise, urgency, creativity, collaboration...are well within it. In the monograph Good to Great and the Social Sectors, Jim Collins emphasizes that "Every institution has its unique set of irrational and difficult constraints, yet some make the leap while others *facing the same environmental challenges* do not."

So, rather than being distracted by the uncontrollable, we should instead focus on what really counts to our customers and stakeholders...results!

Defining *result* provides clarity: 1) [verb] to spring, arise, or proceed as a consequence of actions, circumstances, premises, etc.; be the outcome; 2) [noun] a desirable or beneficial consequence, outcome, or effect; 3) [idiom] **get results**, to obtain a notable or successful result or response; be effective. Pretty clear! And as you well know, our customers and stakeholders are not interested in our processes or

constraints, they are interested in one thing...results!

And it seems appropriate that we're addressing the concept of achieving results in January. It makes me chuckle about the concept of New Year's resolutions, most of which are overcome by events (OBE) by the first of February. Why? An article by Kristi Hedges in Forbes asserts, "We set all-or-nothing New Year's resolutions that we can't possibly keep, and frankly don't expect ourselves to. Then we can pull out all of our familiar excuses of being too busy, overwhelmed, or inadequate to face the challenge." But a resolution, whether at New Years or any time, does not have to become OBE... it's all in the execution!

The key is to identify where we want to be in some measure of time, establish clear and achievable goals and objectives, establish a timeline of milestones, and track progress. That's the only way to achieve great results. We'll be doing just that this month as we gather together a team to consider the direction, goals and objectives of the district for the next year. And, we'll be asking Jim Collins' hard question,

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"The key is to identify where we want to be in some measure of time, establish clear and achievable goals and objectives, establish a timeline of milestones, and track progress. That's the only way to achieve great results."

- Col. Charles Samaris, Commander

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"How effectively do we deliver on our mission and make a distinctive impact, relative to our resources?" But as we all know, the most important aspect of any plan is the execution...the discipline of getting things done.

So, as you peruse the pages of this month's Yankee Engineer, consider the results achieved by some great people across a wide range of specialties and projects. The New England District consists of great people, doing great work for the Nation, New England, and the People...and they deserve the absolute best results that we can deliver!

*"You don't concentrate on risks. You concentrate on results. No risk is too great to prevent the necessary job from getting done."*

~ Chuck Yeager

*"Forget about style; worry about results."*

~ Bobby Orr

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Contractor removes material from the intake channel at Union Village Dam.

Photo by Heather Morse

## *Channel work completed at Union Village Dam*

Members of the New England District Team and their contractor have recently completed a project at Union Village Dam in Vermont that fixed a problem affecting correct operation decisions at the project.

“A build-up of sediment in the intake channel over the years has resulted in an estimated six feet of sediment,” said Union Village Project Technical Lead Janet Patev. “It was creating delay problems with the float valve, which is how we can tell what the intake channel water surface elevation is.”

Funding became available in 2010 and prompted a brainstorming session by the Operations and Construction Divisions to identify the most efficient

and cost effective fix. The solution of disposing of the material at the nearby Elizabeth Mines Superfund Site was discussed, and Scott Acone, Programs/Project Management assisted in gaining approvals from the Environmental Protection Agency and the state of Vermont. With the landfill cap near completion, the project would have to move quickly to get the material to the site on time. According to Patev, team members in Programs assisted in obtaining out-of-cycle funds for early Fiscal Year 2011. “The project design team faced an aggressive schedule to complete the design so that construction could be performed during the low flow time of the summer, as well

as completing the contract prior to the Elizabeth Mines closing,” she said.

The \$425,000 project consisted of excavating 3,500 cubic yards of material from the dam’s intake channel, dewatering it and disposing of it at the Elizabeth Mines. The project also consisted of clearing, grubbing, road and pond construction, surveys and site restoration. Tantara Associates Corporation of Worcester, Mass., an 8(a) contractor, received the contract to do the work on Aug. 4, 2011. Understanding the tight time constraints, they went right to work. “The contractor mobilized to the site on Aug. 22 and by Aug. 25, 2011 the site was cleared,” said Patev.



Hurricane Irene washed out many roads like the one above, causing delays hauling out material from Union Village Dam. Despite the challenges brought on by the storm, the District was able to complete the project on time. File photo

The District and Tantara teams soon found that other challenges to get the project completed were before them: A near vertical wall in part of the channel blocked a clear line of sight; stirring up sediment in the water would cause too much turbidity; uncertainty over how quickly the sediment would dewater in the dewater ponds, and additional uncertainty regarding how much water it would produce. With each challenge came a solution: The contractor used a crane and a spotter to guide the crane operator; the contractor installed turbidity curtains and conducted turbidity monitoring, and an option (which was not required) was put into place for a pumping system to pump excess water onto the dam's

spillway approach channel.

There was one major hurdle that could have jeopardized the project that was truly a force of nature: Hurricane Irene. The storm roared into Vermont as a powerful Tropical Storm and ravaged the state, destroying roads and dumping incredible amounts of water. "The water from Irene was enough to completely inundate the project site," said Patev.

The storm also delayed the crane acquisition for the project. Despite the time crunch, everyone involved kept calm and focused. "Everyone kept a sense of humor about the weather delays," said Patev. "We recognized that hurricanes cannot be foreseen."

Patev said that although the storm

washed out many roads and caused a major inconvenience to the District, no team members or contractors were hurt. The state repaired the haul route and work was able to continue. And best of all, in spite of the storm, the project was completed and all the sediment was removed by Dec. 30, 2011 – in time to use the landfill at the Elizabeth Mines.

"The site will be restored next spring, once the high water season has passed," said Patev.

New England District team members instrumental in the success of this project were Patev, Bob Meader, Tom Marcotte, Mike Penko, Bill McIntyre, Heather Morse, Chris Johnson and Chris Caisse.





New England District VIPs enjoy a buffet lunch during the holiday party.

Photos by Brian Murphy

## *District team throws holiday bash with a Tinseltown theme*

*The New England District has always regarded its team members as stars, so it was only fitting that this year's holiday party was themed with a Hollywood slant.*

The New England District daytime holiday party titled, "Miracle at Concord Park," was held on Dec. 16, 2011 at noon in the New England District theatre, cafeteria and Massachusetts/Connecticut Rooms. This year's production was directed by Real Estate Division and produced by the Work Environment Association (WEA).

When the doors opened to decorations beautiful enough for a movie premier, more than 250 New England District stars literally walked the red carpet to their tables. Once there, the celebrities found each table uniquely decorated with pictures of screen legends from Marilyn Monroe to Eddie Murphy.

While guests waited for their tables to be called up to the luncheon buffet, they spent the time playing movie trivia while munching on theatre style popcorn. Many stars stepped out into the hallway to take their chances bidding on

the dozen holiday baskets prepared and donated by various New England District offices. Baskets varied in size with a range of theme from a chocolate basket to something for four legged friends. Many New England District celebrities used their star power (and some fantastic bids) to obtain the coveted baskets. All proceeds from the basket auction, which was sponsored by WEA, went towards the WEA event fund, which pays for most of the New England District activities. Earlier in the day, WEA held a Corps wear sale that allowed team members to pick up some last minute gifts. Lt. Col. Steven Howell also held a fundraiser by selling beverage bottles with a holiday theme. Proceeds also went to WEA.

After lunch, Real Estate screened holiday appropriate movies for attendees in the theatre. Silver screen legends who attended the gala included Distinguished Civilian Gallery Member Buz McDonald, Bob Batt, Joe Colucci, Paul

Cooper, Bill and Susan Holtham, Sue Mehigan, Ian Osgerby and Alexine Raineri. Tony Riccio, a former New England District employee, had a cameo during the event.

In addition to the daytime party, an after work holiday get together was held the night prior, on Dec. 15, 2011. Over 90 team members traveled to Hanscom Air Force Base in Bedford, Mass. after work to unwind and enjoy each other's company to kick off the holidays. Attendees danced to music played by Greg Penta as others munched on a variety of appetizers including chicken on skewers, grilled vegetables, mini-quiche, spanikopita, chicken fingers and meatballs, most of which was personally prepared by WEA.

Although Real Estate and WEA had starring roles in the success of the holiday events, best supporting actors and actresses were Penta, Maureen Davi, Donna Russell, Barbara Duffin, Josh Mulvey, Sally Rigione, Mary Christopher, Judy Antonellis, Tim Maynard, Ted Soter, Bob Webb, Andrea Clotz-Pittman, Janet Brayden, Susan MacDonald, and Leanna Martin. Antonellis also played the leading lady for the night time bash.



Retiree Joe Colucci takes a rest under the Distinguished Civilian Gallery.



Col. Charles Samaris and members of Regulatory play the Movie Trivia Game during the Holiday Party.



Quentin Walsh gets District Stars into the holiday spirit by dressing festively at the party.



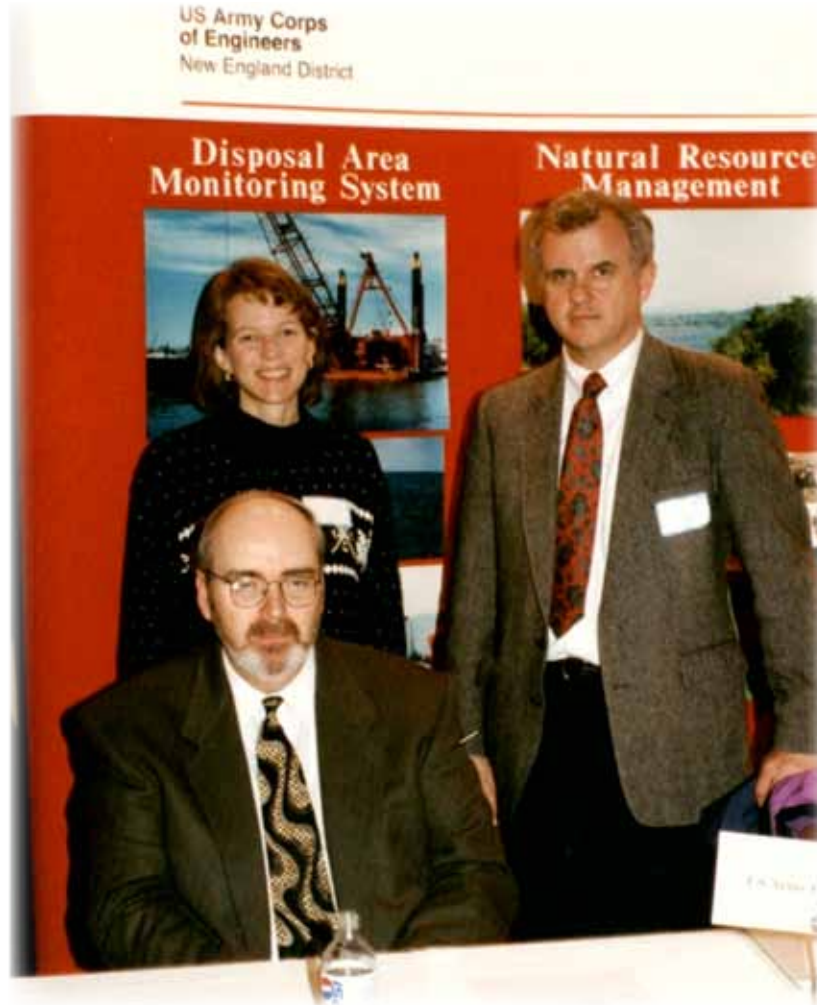
Robert Russo, Jr. and Silas Sanderson were two of the VIPs that attended the holiday party.



District stars Terry Negron, Tameka Chapman and Raushanah Muhammad shine in front of the Hollywood sign.



# Dredging up the past



Lauren Borocharner, Dick Carlson, and Nick Forbes during Engineers Week in this circa 1992 photo. Photo by C.J. Allen

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