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Building Strong

®



District breaks ground on new FDA facility

Story on page 11

Yankee Voices

Col. William Conde and Lt. Col. (ret.) Brian Baker



Stay safe during the summer boating season

Summer is when lots of people take to the lakes and rivers for recreation. Remember that the No. 1 rule for boating safety is this: Always use your common sense. Here are some basic guidelines from the Safe Boating Council:

- Always wear your life jacket
- Never mix alcohol and boating
- Learn and follow the nautical rules of the road
- Never stand in a small boat
- Check the weather forecast before you get underway

If bad weather unexpectedly occurs when you're out on the water, follow this advice:

- Get below deck, and stay there if possible
- Keep away from metal objects that are not grounded in the boat's protection system
- Do not touch more than one grounded object at a time, or you could become the shortcut for electrical surges passing through the protection system.

Charette named Employee of the Month for March

Congratulations to Carol Charette, Engineering, who was named "Employee of the Month" for March 2019 by the WE Association. Co-worker Sarita Martinez nominated her for the honor. "Carol embodies what it means to be a leader, a team player and a role model," she said. "She not only is a very knowledgeable project manager but also has exhibited continued and unwavering professionalism, dedication, and compassion in the face of incredible adversity."

According to Martinez, Charette diligently works countless hours and exemplifies what a role model is and is always ready to lend a hand as she continuously displays professionalism and does her work with great honor and with a sense of humor. "Her dedication and professionalism is a great asset to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and continually leaves a lasting impression with everything and everyone she works with," she said.

Silver Jackets unveil high water mark signs in Maine

Maj. Eric Patton and Brian Balukonis of the New England District joined officials from the city of Portland, town of York, and officials from the state and congressional delegation in Maine to unveil High-Water Mark (HWM) signs placed in various locations along the waterfront to increase awareness of flood risk. The unveiling took place at Portland Pier and town of York's Town Dock on May 17.

The project is in support of outreach and mitigation efforts as part of participation in the Federal Emergency Management Agency's High-Water Mark Initiative. This project was a pilot program focused on the city of Portland and town of York. Balukonis, the District's Silver Jackets Program Manager, and the Maine Silver Jackets team located and validated the accuracy of the existing HWMs, resurveyed and/or re-established better locations when appropriate and photographed and provided the data to the city. The Maine Silver Jackets team identified eight sites that received HWM signs – in Portland: Portland Pier, Eastern Prom Trail, Back Cove and Stroudwater (Fore River Trail); and in the town of York: Town Dock, Long Sands Beach Bathhouse, Cape Neddick Beach and York Beach. Outreach websites are also being established for both communities.

The USACE Silver Jackets Teams are state-led, providing a multi-agency collaboration using technical expertise, data and funding for strategic life-cycle flood risk management.





Paul Young wows middle schoolers with Geology presentation

Paul Young, geologist for the New England District, visited the All Saints STEAM Academy in Middletown, Rhode Island, April 26, to give a mineral and fossil presentation to 40 elementary school students.

Young spent two hours with the curious and attentive 3rd-5th grade students discussing the various rocks, minerals and fossils he brought with him for the event. "Typically my presentation is an hour with about 45 minutes for the lecture and 15 minutes for questions," he said. "This time it went two hours which included a mineral raffle followed by students selecting free samples from seven boxes of minerals and fossils I brought."

Young attributed his extended stay to the enthusiasm of the students and their wanting to learn more about Geology. "There were a lot of good questions and enthusiastic participation by students," he said. "They were really good students, very attentive and were obviously very interested."

Over a dozen students received the special fossils and minerals from Young's personal collection in the raffle. All the students were invited to take as many of the more common minerals and rocks they wanted from the supply Young brought with him. The students were excited to be able to receive the special treat.

"There wasn't much left after a short feeding frenzy and the remainders of the specimens were donated, along with some mineral books I brought, to the teachers," he said.

The invitation to visit All Saints came after a chance meeting with one of the students at Harvard University's "I Heart Science" event. "I had met one of the All Saints 4th grade students there in February 2018," he said. "I am a member of the Boston Mineral Club and I was doing mineral identification and giving away free samples."

Young learned that the student brought his entire mineral collection with him to the event and was trying to organize a mineral club at his school. "I immediately realized this kid was serious, so we talked for a few minutes, looked at his collection and added some minerals to his collection."

Young gave the student's parents his contact information and the next thing he knew, he was invited to the school to do a presentation.

All of the students present for Young's All Saints presentation had an interest in minerals and fossils. To thank Young for coming and for sharing his collection, the students wrote letters to him expressing how much they really enjoyed the presentations with a couple hoping for a return visit.

"I hope you come again," wrote a student named Francesca. "I appreciate you coming to teach us about the wonders of rocks and fossils. I believe you inspired many lives to have a love for rocks."

Quinn, who was a raffle winner, wrote to Young to thank him for his prize and his presentation. "Thank you for coming to our school and showing us your amazing rocks," said Quinn. "You helped me learn a lot about geology. Thank you for the really cool gold!"

The teachers also enjoyed the presentation. "We just wanted to thank you for coming to share your knowledge with our elementary students," said Tracey Clarke, 4th grade teacher at All Saints. "Your enthusiasm was evident and the children greatly enjoyed your demonstration and your samples. They are still talking about it and were particularly excited to be able to take home some minerals. Thanks for taking the time and making the effort to come to our school. We all enjoyed the wonderful presentation."



Five year certificates



10 year certificates



20 year certificates



25 year certificate



30 year certificates



35 year certificate

Photos by Brian Murphy

State of the District, awards mark 2019 Founders Day ceremony

The New England District Team celebrated the 244th founding of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers with an awards ceremony and picnic, June 21.

Beth Gosselin, Chief PAO, kicked off the official ceremony, held in the Concord Park cafeteria in Concord, Massachusetts. She welcomed everyone and gave a brief history of the founding of the Corps of Engineers. "Founder's Day commemorates a moment in time when we, the United States Army Corps of Engineers, celebrate our contributions to the nation, contributions that began some 244 years ago when Col. Richard Gridley was designated the first Chief of Engineers by Gen. George Washington and then designed the fortifications on a hill overlooking the Boston Harbor, fortifications on a hill now known as Bunker Hill," she said.

After Gosselin's remarks, Col. William Conde, New England District Commander, began his remarks by thanking the Founder's Day Committee for hosting the day's events. In particular, he thanked the Regulatory Division team, who sponsored the picnic

and activities portion, and the Public Affairs team who organized the official ceremony. He expressed appreciation to those who took time before the official ceremony to complete the FEVS survey.

"Your feedback is important and we have actioned your comments from last year," he said.

Mid-July will be the Conde family's second year with the New England District Team.

"It's gone by in a flash, but we are truly enjoying New England and I couldn't be more proud of the superb team of professionals we have at the District," he said. "I know now why we have the lowest turnover of any District in the Corps. You folks are true New Englanders, you love what you do and you are passionate about delivering quality projects to our New England stakeholders."

Col. Conde gave a summary of some of the accomplishments the District had made in the past year. He said that Maj. Gen. Jeffrey Milhorn, North Atlantic Division Commander, paid a visit to the District in October 2018, and held two virtual town meetings

this year to brief team members on the goings on around the Division.

In April, members of the New England District Team traveled to Washington, DC to brief the region's members of Congress on current and proposed future projects. "I can tell you that our District has a great reputation across the entire Congressional delegation," he said.

According to Col. Conde, many New England District teammates answered the call for assistance in supporting operations both home and abroad. Some of the missions team members assisted with included Hurricane Florence, the Midwest Flooding and the West Coast Wildfires. He referred everyone to the Founder's Day booklet for the complete list of names and assignments.

"I wish to express my special gratitude to all those who deployed and to those who backfilled for them while they were serving these vital roles," he said.

Speaking about this year's workload, Col. Conde said the District accomplished an incredible amount of work, with a total program of over

\$600 million for Fiscal Year 2019. "Our Fiscal Year 2020 program is projected to be even larger as we continue to deliver the region and stretch to hire more talent," he said.

The District Commander thanked the Cape Cod Canal team for the Bourne Bridge joint repair work.

Dredging work completed this past year include Saco River, York Harbor, Green Harbor, and Wells Harbor. Work was also completed on the Scituate Harbor and the Green Harbor Jetties. Col. Conde said that work at Block Island and Clinton Harbor would be completed in the near future.

Boston Harbor deepening and Plymouth Harbor dredging is still ongoing.

The District is finalizing the New Haven Harbor improvement study, completing the Pawcatuck River Coastal Storm Risk Management feasibility study and is working to award a contract for Muddy River Phase II efforts.

Col. Conde spoke in detail about storm preparation during this Hurricane Season, the Draft Major Rehab Evaluation Study of the Bourne and Sagamore bridges, recruiting facility upgrades and military leased housing, contracting and the 4th quarter of the fiscal year, Regulatory work, supporting the nation's Armed Forces, the Operations team, especially the Park Rangers and Managers and their work out in the field, the recent and successful Career Fair held at the District and the new District Headquarters at Hanscom Air Force Base.

The New England District commander said that although the District works best as a team, there were individuals who stood out this past year and many would be recognized during the day's ceremony. "My thanks go out to each and every team member for contributing to the success of this District and the Corps of Engineers," he said.

Col. Conde welcomed the new



35 year certificate

team members and wished the recent retirees the best in the new chapter of their lives. He said that there were going to be new challenges in the coming months, but he said he knew the Corps team would find solutions. "That's what we do," he said. "The Corps 'can-do' spirit is impressive."

The colonel concluded by thanking the District team for all that they do each day every day. "We're blessed to have such a passionate, dedicated and knowledgeable team to tackle today's challenges and I am certainly proud to be part of this outstanding New England Family," he said.

Scott Acone, Deputy District Engineer for Programs and Project Management, followed Col. Conde and inducted Beverly Lawrence into the Distinguished Civilian Gallery. (See article on page 8.)

Jackie DiDomenico, EEO Officer, presented Jay Mackay the 2019 Supervisor of the Year award. (See article on page 9.)

Dave Margolis, Chief, Engineering Division, presented Gary Lacroix with a Civilian Service Commendation Medal. (See article on page 10.)

Will Burgess, Knowledge Management, presented New England District team members with the Civilian Award for Humanitarian Service. (See article on page 10.)

Burgess handed out honorary



35 year certificate

awards to the Holiday Party Committee members for their hard work on the successful event enjoyed by many. They were awarded exclusive New England District bags filled with the latest coffee tumbler, water bottle and other items. The Holiday Party Committee were: Judy Antonellis, Amanda Black, Carol Charette, Crystal Daley, Mary Daley, Don Hassett, Loredana Koffman, Cesar Lopez, Leanna Martin, Sarita Martinez, Joe McNerny, Janet Patev, Maj. Eric Patton, Greg Penta, Katelyn Rainville, Charlotte Skolnick, Sara Turner and Bob Webb.

Burgess also presented the award to members of Regulatory Division who headed up this year's Founder's Day event. They were: Tina Chaisson, Lindsey Lefebvre, Greg Penta, Katelyn Rainville and Charlotte Skolnick.

Jon Belmont, Chief of Staff, awarded the Length of Service Awards. He awarded five, 10, 15, 20, 25 and 30 years. He paid special attention to the employees who received their 35-year pins, calling them up separately and presenting them with their certificates. They were Viola Bramel, Bob Casoli, Jr., Jacqueline DiDomenico and Robert Morrissey.

Bob DeSista, Acting Chief of Regulatory, concluded the official portion of the ceremony by giving an overview of the activities that would take place for the remainder of the celebration.



Park Ranger Brooke Morgan, Birch Hill Dam, hosts a pollinator party during the Founder's Day celebration at Concord Park.

Photos by Brian Murphy

Fun, Food and Friendship fill Founder's Day Festivities

After a morning plagued with clouds, practically promising a day filled with rain, the skies cleared up and made way for another beautiful Founder's Day celebration June 21 at Concord Park. Rain or shine, there were plenty of activities and the Founder's Day Committee was prepared for any weather-related scenario.

Prior to the 10 a.m. awards ceremony, kid's movies played in the theatre for early birds who wanted to kick back and watch some of their favorite characters. The movies stayed on until after the awards ceremony to entertain the younger crowd. Belly laughs and the sound of little feet running through the corridors could be heard throughout the morning.

The WE Store was open for business at 8 a.m. with all of the latest New England District merchandise. District team members, retirees and family members crowded the selling space to fill their closets and shelves with the latest gear. Originally set to close at 9 a.m., the store was so busy it stayed open until the official awards ceremony started.

Before the festivities kicked into full gear and the draw



Michael Kulbersh takes a swing during the Pitch and Putt event at the Founder's Day celebration.



Greg Penta oversees every detail of the barbecue lunch.

of the outdoors became too great, New England District team members were given the opportunity to take the Army Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey from 9 to 9:30 a.m.

District team and family members crowded the Concord Park cafeteria at 10 a.m. for the official awards ceremony. For full details, see article on page 4. After the ceremony, activities for young and not so young were located all over Concord Park for indoor and outdoor fun. Children's activities included a bouncy-house, rock painting, water balloon toss, hop scotch and four square. Park Rangers came in from the field to join the festivities by throwing Pollinator Parties every 15 minutes in the Maine/New Hampshire Conference Rooms.

The kids weren't the only ones having fun – the adults had their own amusements. They included ladder toss, Kan Jam, and Badminton. Several tournaments took place for the District's natural competitors. Tournaments included corn hole, horseshoes, pitch-n-putt golf and volleyball.



Corn hole was only one of many tournaments held throughout the Founder's Day celebration.

People filled the Concord Park Quad and were laughing and cheering for their favorite competitors. DJ Greg Penta of Regulatory had music playing in the background, completing the celebratory mood.

All this fun can work up an appetite and the Founder's Day Committee was ready for the hungry participants. They delivered a classic barbecue menu that included barbecue chicken sandwiches, brisket, pulled pork, potato salad, green beans, coleslaw, baked beans and corn. The Founder's Day Committee provided a vegetarian meal for those who requested it. Kids even got their own kid's menu of hot dogs and mac and cheese. There was something for everyone. Cake, ice cream and watermelon ended the meal. After all the activities and the meal, there was still plenty of time to just hang out with friends and co-workers and enjoy the beautiful day.

Regulatory Division sponsored this year's picnic.



Games and tournaments took place just behind the Concord Park Quad during the Founder's Day celebration.



Beverly Lawrence receives her Distinguished Civilian Gallery plaque from Col. William Conde during the Founder's Day ceremony.



Col. William Conde and Beverly Lawrence unveil her temporary photo and citation that will be placed in the Building 1 hallway. Photos by Brian Murphy

Lawrence inducted into the Distinguished Civilian Gallery

Beverly Lawrence, Architect-Engineer Coordinator, Engineering Division, was inducted into the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Distinguished Civilian Gallery during the Founder's Day Awards Ceremony, June 21 in the Concord Park cafeteria.

Lawrence's nomination, penned by David Margolis, Chief, Engineering Division, qualified under a strict criteria and she was selected by a special selection board.

Scott Acone, Deputy District Engineer for Programs/Project Management presided over the ceremony. "Each year, the New England District recognizes former employees who have distinguished themselves from their peers," he said. "The members of the Distinguished Civilian Employee Gallery have accomplished their duties to a level that is clearly exceptional and preeminent among others in that position."

Acone said that Gallery members have developed methods and procedures which produced extraordinary benefits for the Corps of Engineers, they have contributed substantially to the reputation and honor of the Corps of Engineers and have done so loyally and faithfully throughout their careers.

Lawrence began her career with the Corps in New England on Feb. 5, 1989, after three years as a DoD civilian engineer at Fort Devens. Once at the District, she began working on Dam Safety and Civil Works projects before moving on to military projects in support of Fort Devens and Natick Soldier Systems Center.

In 1991, Lawrence began working on Hazardous Toxic and Radioactive Waste (HTRW) projects. Most notably, she was the Engineering Manager for the \$65 million Base

Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Project at the Watertown Arsenal, decommissioning and demolishing the Army's first nuclear research reactor and several associated buildings. Other HTRW projects she managed worth noting include the Centredale Manor Superfund Site and the Combustion Engineering, Sylvania Hicksville and Shpack Landfill Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program (FUSRAP) projects. Lawrence was one of only a few resident experts in radioactive waste investigation and remediation at the District.

In 2010, Lawrence joined Design Branch, mainly working as the technical lead for the design, fabrication and installation of the exhibits for the National Museum of the U.S. Army. In 2014 she was promoted to the position from which she retired, Architect-Engineer Coordinator for the District. In this position, Lawrence facilitated the procurement and management of all A-E contracts at the District. In her first year in the position, she lead a substantial effort towards procurement of 13 new A-E Indefinite Delivery/Indefinite Quantity Contracts and several sole-source contracts, all while continuing to manage the Museum project. Lawrence retired on July 31, 2018.

Lawrence's husband Dan and her friend Priscilla Bergman accompanied her to the ceremony.

"Thank you for the nomination," she said. "I know there were a lot of worthy people who were nominated with me. I loved working here."

The newest inductee said her selection came as a total surprise to her. "I am truly honored and truly overcome by this whole thing," she said. "I really appreciate it. Thank you very much."

Mackay named 2019 FWP Supervisor of the Year

Joseph "Jay" Mackay, Chief of Environmental Resources and Marine Programs Section, Planning Division, was named the Federal Women's Program's 2019 Supervisor of the Year. Jackie DiDomenico, Chief, Equal Employment Opportunity Office, announced the award during Founder's Day, June 21 in the Concord, Massachusetts.

"The Supervisor of the Year Award recognizes a supervisor who has significantly promoted the employment and advancement of women, minorities, and/or individuals with disabilities and supported the principles of EEO during the period June 2018 to present," said DiDomenico.

Mackay was

nominated for many reasons. According to the Environmental Resources and Marine Programs Team, Mackay hired two highly qualified female interns. He supervised and maintained a great working environment for a total of five female technical staff during the nomination period. "Jay did this while expertly balancing workloads, resolving high level matters, and ensuring sufficient training and resourcing of 13 total employees," his team wrote.

The nomination stated Mackay encourages EEO programs such as alternative work schedules and recurring AWAdays to ensure his employees have an appropriate work-life balance. He supports employees willing to participate in special emphasis programs such as the Work Environment Association, Black Employment Program, Federal Women's Program, Take Your Sons and Daughters to Work Day, and the Leadership Development Program to foster well-rounded employees and high morale. "Jay also supports and encourages developmental assignments, such as temporary details and deployments for emergency relief missions, and acts as a mentor during those assignments while maintaining his normal duties," they wrote.

They nominated Mackay because he doesn't just support and encourage the development of his employees, but that

he actively engages with his staff to ensure their personal and professional goals are achieved. "This engagement has helped his staff expand their knowledge by pursuing graduate school coursework, developing innovative and unique programs at the District, and creatively solving problems

that achieve the mission while enhancing vital resource agency relationships," the team wrote. "In one instance, Jay supported the alternate work schedule of a female employee so that she could serve as a volunteer mentor for the STEM-focused 'Science Club for Girls,' which promotes confidence and literacy in STEM for girls particularly



Photo by Brian Murphy

Joseph "Jay" Mackay receives a certificate naming him Supervisor of the Year from Col. William Conde during the Founder's Day official ceremony.

in minority and low-income communities."

Mackay's nomination had to pass a strict criteria in order for him to be eligible for consideration:

- The nominators had to cite Mackay's activities and the results related to maintaining or hiring qualified women, minorities or individuals with disabilities at the District during the nomination period.

- The team had to explain how Mackay supported and encourages developmental assignments and educational opportunities for women, minorities, and individuals with disabilities by fostering team work, mentoring and cross-training, etc.

- The Environmental Resources and Marine Programs team had to explain how Mackay endorsed programs and/or work alternatives for employees to manage careers and personal priorities, i.e., professional organizations, community outreach, AWA, and allowances to participate in special emphasis programs.

- And finally the nominators described how and what EEO programs and principles Mackay supports and fosters in their organization.

According to his team, "For all of the aforementioned reasons, Jay Mackay is the most deserving of this award."

District team members honored for deployment efforts

Mother Nature can be unkind to the earth sometimes, unleashing deadly hurricanes, floods and earthquakes. When a disaster event happens, more often than not the call goes out to the New England District team to assist in clean up and recovery efforts. Deployments are tough – the hours are long and the deployments are at least 30 days. Yet, many New England District team members are willing to sacrifice time with their loved ones and go to help others in need. A group of such selfless people were recognized for their work during recent hurricane deployments at the annual Founder's Day ceremony, June 21 at the District Headquarters at Concord Park.

Col. William Conde, New England District Commander, assisted by Will Burgess, Knowledge Management, presented Mark Anderson, Jeff Mangum, Erika Mark and Brent Smith with Civilian Awards for Humanitarian Service. He also presented Mark and Steve Wolf with certificates of appreciation.

"All of these dedicated professionals sacrificed their time and deployed to help with the disaster assistance following Hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria," said Burgess. "Their expertise and efforts directly improved the well being of



Jeff Mangum, Mark Anderson, Steve Wolf, Brent Smith and Erika Mark

Photos by Brian Murphy

countless souls affected by those disasters."

Those who were not present to receive awards but were still recognized for their service were Steve Dunbar, Amy Hamilton, Robert Leach, Joe Mazzola, Joe McInerney, John Pribilla, Mike Tuttle, Keith Goulet and Andrew Jordan.

For a complete list of those who deployed and the disasters they were called to, please see the Founder's Day brochure that was handed out during the ceremony. Additional copies of the Founder's Day booklet are available in the Public Affairs Office.

Lacroix receives superior civilian service award

Gary Lacroix, Chief of Design Branch, received a superior civilian service award for his tireless leadership and dedication to federal service from September 2003 to February 2019. Lacroix received the award from Dave Margolis during the Founder's Day ceremony, June 21 in the Concord Park cafeteria. Maj. Gen. Jeffrey Milhorn, North Atlantic Division Commander, signed Lacroix's award.

"We often give awards to people who are moving on or retiring, but today I wanted to recognize someone who actually still works here," said Margolis.

Margolis said he wanted to recognize Lacroix for his concerted effort to develop a technically competent organization. "In just six years of being chief, he completed over 30 hiring actions as the organization grew by about 20 percent and included a turnover of all the section chiefs," said Margolis.

According to Margolis, Lacroix improved the reputation and the technical competence of the branch, improved workload tracking and resources, improved cross-district collaboration and developed relationship with branch chiefs across North Atlantic Division and much more. Margolis

said Lacroix initiated a long-range plan to enhance vertical design and building information modeling capabilities, and has served as a mentor to Leadership Development Program candidates. Lacroix has also served as acting Chief, Engineering Division.

Lacroix holds a Bachelor of Science degree in civil engineering from UMASS Lowell and a Master of Science degree in civil/environmental engineering from Tufts University. He is a Professional Engineer in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and is certified as a Project Management Professional.

Lacroix has been an active member of the American Society of Civil Engineers since 1988 and the Society of American Military Engineers since 1995. He performs extensive community service to include volunteer positions in his church and the Boy Scouts. Lacroix has also coached a variety of youth sports. "His tireless leadership and dedication to federal service reflect great credit upon himself, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineer and the U.S. Army," said Margolis.



Gary Lacroix receives a superior civilian service award from Col. William Conde during the Founder's Day award ceremony.



Above: Artist's rendition of the new building. Right: Col. William Conde speaks at the ground breaking ceremony.

Photos by Brian Murphy

District team breaks ground on new FDA facility

When the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) needed a new facility to house its new lab and office space, they called the New England District and requested the agency build the facility for them.

Col. William Conde and New England District team members joined FDA representatives for a groundbreaking ceremony June 20 at the Winchester Engineering and Analytical Center (WEAC) in Winchester, Massachusetts.

Lt. Col. (ret.) Brian Baker, who once served with the New England District is now the Director of the Winchester Engineering and Analytical Center. He opened up the ceremony with a Call to Order. He was followed by Jim Sigg, Chief Operating Officer, who offered welcoming remarks.

Col. Conde served as the first guest speaker. He reminded the audience that the Corps in New England has had a good relationship with the agency in the past, saying that the Corps (NAD) was involved with the Atomic Energy Commission in its work back in 1951, prior to the FDA using the building for its labs. "It's only fitting that we're back here, almost 70 years later through an

interagency agreement, to build your new center," he said.

According to the public notice issued July 31, 2017, the \$54.3 million project involves the construction of a new building for the FDA-WEAC of approximately 75,000 square feet and demolition of the current, 60-year old building which no longer meets the FDA-WEAC standards for size, configuration and amenities. The old building has outdated electrical and mechanical systems as it has reached its size and capacity for the technical equipment needed for the facility to perform its analytical work. "The project includes the design and construction of the new center," said Col. Conde. "The construction contract was awarded to Whiting-Turner Contracting Company on July 31, 2018. The designer of record is ZGF Architects and Affiliated Engineers, Inc."

Col. Conde said the Notice to Proceed was issued on Aug. 24, 2018 and that the project is moving along. "The design is currently in progress with an initial design conference held in early October and detailed user meetings conducted in late October 2018," he

said. "Design packages are expected in July with construction mobilization set for early fall."

The new facility will be designed and constructed in accordance with the 2015 International Building Code and the National Institute of Health Design Requirements manual. The contract duration will be three years.

Col. Conde concluded his remarks by thanking all of the partners who worked together to plan, organize and execute design and planned construction of the project. "Your combined efforts will bring this project from the initial concept, to the drawing board, to make it a physical reality of concrete and steel on this construction site," he said.

Melinda Plaisier, Associate Commissioner of Regulatory Affairs rounded out the speakers. Col. Conde joined Baker, Sigg, Plaisier and other stakeholders in the ceremonial ground breaking.

The event concluded with Col. Conde, the New England District team and other invited guests touring the Winchester Engineering and Analytical Center.



The Water Safety Trailer and Bobber the Water Safety Dog greeted hundreds of visitors during the TrailsFest event.

Photos courtesy of Tully Lake and Barre Falls Dam

District Water Safety Program featured at TrailsFest

When the Appalachian Mountain Club, Worcester Chapter, held its first ever TrailsFest event June 1 at the Wachusett Mountain Ski Area in Princeton, Massachusetts they asked the teams from Tully Lake and Barre Falls Dam if they wanted to be a part of it. "In the spirit of National Trails Day, we brought together Worcester County's outdoor community to celebrate all trails – hiking trails, bike paths, waterways climbing routes and more," said event organizer Shalin Desai.

Park Ranger Bill Mehr and four summer rangers, always willing to share the Corps water safety message, readily accepted the invitation. They traveled the 45 minutes from Tully to Wachusett with the Water Safety Trailer and mascot Bobber the Water Safety Dog in tow. The summer rangers were Ashley Casello and Samantha Hutchins from Tully Lake Dam, and Jeremy Kincaid and Cole LaRose from Barre Falls Dam. The event drew more than 350 people, with many

of those stopping by the trailer and the information booth Mehr set up. "I had 100 child and 100 adult goodie bags packed with water safety products and brochures and we ran out," he said. "We were told to expect about 200 participants and we definitely exceeded that!"

Mehr said that his information table

got mostly adult visitors who were interested in hearing about some of the historical floods that occurred in the area. "I started my presentation with the Corps mission and focused on the flood events of 1936 and 1938," Mehr explained.

The Park Ranger showed visitors



Park Ranger Bill Mehr talks history and answers questions at the District's information table.

some local historical flooding photos and that led him to talk about how the Flood Risk Management Mission led the Corps to build the dams. "As a by product of those projects being created, the Corps now has a lot of property that is available for recreation when not in a flood status. That led me to talk about the recreation opportunities at New England District projects," said Mehr.

The kids at the TrailsFest event flocked to the Water Safety Table for the goodie bags, fun activities and for the star of the District Water Trailer Exhibit – Bobber. Bobber spent his time hi-fiving the children and posed for pictures while his human teammates talked to the kids about water safety. He also cheered on kids who were participating in activities brought by the Park Rangers such as the flying ring toss game.

The summer rangers snuck in some water safety education by showing the kids how to properly fit a life jacket. They also went over the Reach, Throw, Row but Never Go principles. "There were a lot of kids," said Mehr. "They were very receptive to Bobber and the Water Safety Trailer with its colorful graphics. I would say they were very receptive to their first exposure to the Corps."

Other activities during the four hour event included hiking, trail maintenance, climbing, paddling, outdoor yoga, birding, geocaching, outdoor art classes, paddle boarding, road biking and mountain biking.

This was TrailsFest inaugural debut and according to Shalin Desai, it was a big success. "There were so many smiles and the feeling that folks were part of something big was palpable," he said. "If we can get 350 people to come in 2019, we can get 500 people in 2020!"

Mehr agreed that the event was a success. "We will be looking forward to next year's invitation!"

District awards contract for electrical upgrades at Black Rock Lake

**By Timothy Dugan
Public Affairs Office**

Electrical upgrades at Black Rock Lake in Thomaston and Watertown, Connecticut, will be completed under the terms of an \$117,529 contract recently awarded by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District.

W o r k will be accomplished by Grot, Inc., of Lexington, Kentucky. The contract was awarded on May 17, 2019.

O n c e a notice to proceed is issued by the Corps of Engineers, work will be authorized to start. Construction will extend over a one-month period occurring in the summer or fall of 2019.

Work on this project includes demolishing three existing pole-mounted transformers; contracting with the utility to provide pole mounted transformers on the utility pole; providing meter socket; providing overhead conductors from the utility transformers to the meter socket and from the meter socket to the project office; replacing the single phase generator enclosed circuit breaker with a non-fused disconnect; replacing the transformer switch and panel board located in the project office; providing circuit breaker in panel MDP-1; providing feeder splice

in a new pole-mounted junction box; replacing the service entrance enclosed circuit breaker located in the gate tower; providing a main circuit breaker in Panel-B; and installing a new grounding system to provide for lightning protection.

The project will be managed by the Corps and all work will be accomplished under the supervision of a Corps' Quality Assurance Representative to assure compliance with contract requirements.

Black Rock Lake on Branch Brook in Thomaston and Watertown was completed in 1971 at a cost of \$8.2 million. More than 2.8 billion gallons of water can be stored behind the 933-foot-long, 154-foot-high dam.

To date, \$217.1 million in damages have been prevented.

An estimated 150,000 visitors annually enjoy hiking, fishing and hunting on the 319 acres of land and water at Black Rock Lake.

Visitors spend an estimated \$0.95 million within 30 miles of the lake. An estimated 27 jobs in the local community are supported by visitors to Black Rock Lake.

For more information call 860-283-4900 or 860-283-5540 or visit. <https://www.nae.usace.army.mil/Missions/Recreation/Black-Rock-Lake/>.





Zachary Koziol and Jennifer Samela demonstrate self defense techniques during the training.

Photos by Brian Murphy

Summer Rangers get specialized training at Surry Mountain Dam

The New England District Park Ranger team is often referred to as "The Face of the Corps." Often times, they are the first and only contact the public has with the Corps of Engineers, so it is important for everyone who wears the uniform – seasonal Park rangers included – to have the latest training in visitor assistance and public interaction.

A three-day training session, known as Visitor Assistance and Citation Authorities Procedures, or VACAP, for seasonal Park Rangers took place June 11-13 at Surry Mountain Lake in New Hampshire. "This three-day training prepares the seasonal Ranger staff in New England to perform visitor assistance duties in a safe and professional manner," said Eric Pedersen, Chief of Operations. "The training included visitor assistance policy/authority review, self defense, OCAT (pepper spray) certification, and field-based scenarios.

After opening statements and some housekeeping details, Knightville/Littleville Project Manager Matthew Coleman kicked off the training with the History and Development of the Corps of Engineers and Visitor Assistance Policy."

Coleman went over the history of the Corps of Engineers and how the agency got its beginnings in Massachusetts. He also highlighted the organizational structure and major legislation that authorized the construction of USACE dams and the start of the Park Ranger program. "I think that it's important for the summer rangers to have a good

understanding of both the history of the Corps, and how our civil works program originated and evolved over the years, and also of the history of the park ranger as a profession," he said. "Being able to connect the work they are doing this summer to being a part of the larger mission of the Corps and part of the over 150-year history of government land stewardship can help develop a sense of pride in the important role they play at our projects and the service they provide to our communities."

Park Ranger Brian Hornbecker reviewed a variety of important topics such as regulations governing the VA Program, identified program boundaries and scope of employment authority, defined terms and placed emphasis on the lowest level of enforcement and related experiences.

Contract Specialist and former Park Ranger Jennifer Samela presented, "Title 36 Code of Federal regulations and did a full review of Title 36, focusing on proper application of the regulation and defining limits of authority to provide alternative solutions to various situations.

Lower Connecticut River Basin Operations Manager Steven Lehmann discussed the Ranger Image, the importance of maintaining a professional appearance and the benefits that come with the proper wear of the Park Ranger uniform. Lehmann also discussed Ranger actions and responsibilities while in uniform as well as the ethical concerns and general

information about the uniform. "The Park Ranger carries the Public Trust in a much larger community of practice and each individual needs to understand and acknowledge what their part in a larger community of professionals," he said. "The Park Ranger is often referred to as 'The Face of the Corps' to the visiting public and when each Ranger executes the mission with the knowledge of that responsibility, the professional responsibility is held at the correct standard of excellence."

Barre Falls Project Manager Zachery Koziol ended the first day's events with a verbal defense and influence module, covering topics such as the Universal greeting. "The Universal Greeting is what we encourage our Rangers to use when greeting individuals for any occasion," he said. "Ideally used on what I would call a 'Cold' contact, or someone that they've never spoken to before. The components are an appropriate greeting, identify self and agency, explain the reason for the contact and ask a relevant question. It's designed to answer what are called the Four Great American Questions which are; Who are you? Where do you get your authority? Why are you talking to me and what's in it for me? The intent in answering these questions is to take away any question or speculation as to why the Ranger has engaged them."

The second day began with a two-hour lesson on personal protection. Park Rangers received instruction in and the practice of basic self-defense. Jennifer Samela and Zachery Koziol served as instructors for this part of the training. "Zachery I am certified instructors for the Empower Personal Protection self-defense training that was specifically designed for the New England District by the company president Tim Rochford," said Samela. "The training we teach is a defensive form of personal protection designed to facilitate escape from a situation. We had a great group of seasonal rangers that were very enthusiastic about the training and put their all into everything from the classroom training to OCAT (Pepper Spray), self-defense, and scenario based training."

Samela and Koziol also discussed and demonstrated proper vehicle approaches. The instruction was repetitive to maximize retention and recall should Park Rangers ever be called upon to employ the techniques.

Park Ranger Dylan Dickson gave a presentation of history, policy and instruction concerning requirements of the Corps' authorization for rangers to utilize pepper spray for self-defense and instruction in the use of the product. There was a written test that followed the instruction. Rangers were taught the proper technique for use, and were also voluntarily sprayed in order to feel the effects and understand the impacts.

Koziol started the final day with a verbal defense and influence session. The class consisted of redirections,



Dylan Dickson gives remarks at the ranger training.

communicating under pressure, how to prepare for difficult or uncomfortable situations, and how to professionally close out conversations and encounters.

The training ended with enforcement and real life scenarios. During this final session the USACE policy on enforcement priorities was defined, methods for effective patrols and for observing and reporting facts were identified. Responding to various enforcement situations were discussed and then real life scenarios were played out at the park in Surry Mountain. "I think the scenario portion of the training provided solid practice time for the students in a controlled environment," said Koziol. "It gave Instructors a fair amount of time to monitor and offer feedback as the situations unfolded."

After the training, students were asked to provide feedback about the course and any suggestions they would have for future training. Instructors were pleased with the attentiveness and participation of their students. "It was very rewarding to be a part of the first three day long Seasonal Ranger Visitor Assistance and Citation Authority Procedures (VACAP) training held by the District," said Samela. "I look forward to reviewing the feedback from the evaluations, but the responses we have gotten so far have been very positive."

"We did give them a lot of information and it can seem overwhelming at first, but the more they practice it, the better they'll be," said Koziol. "In addition, we gave them some great student manuals to reference and made it very clear that as Instructors, we are available to help anytime should questions come up during the season. Everyone that participated performed pretty well and I feel confident that as the summer season progresses and they're able to get out there and talk to people, they are going to refine their skill sets and become solid representatives for the Corps of Engineers."

Dredging up the past



From left: Farrell McMillan, William Kavanaugh and Richard Reardon fire up the Engineering Division grills during the 1990 Founder's Day cookout at the Waltham Federal Center. Photo by Janet Brayden.

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