



U.S. Army Corps
of Engineers®
Memphis District

Teammates share Overseas Contingency Operations adventure

Memphis District celebrates 130 years of service

District observes Hispanic American heritage month

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On the cover ...

Lawrence Thomas is one of five Memphis District teammates who shares what it's like to be a part of the Overseas Contingency Operations in Afghanistan. (USACE photo by Karla Marshall, Chief, Public Affairs, Afghanistan Engineer District South) (See story, Pg. 8)



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The RiverWatch is the magazine of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Memphis District and is an unofficial publication authorized by AR 360-1. It is produced monthly for distribution by the Public Affairs Office.

Views and opinions expressed in The RiverWatch Magazine are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army or the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Articles or photographic submissions are welcome and should arrive in the Public Affairs Office by the 10th of each month preceding publication. They can be mailed or e-mailed to the below addresses. If submitted electronically, all stories should be in Word document format. All photographs should be high resolution (at least 5x7 inches and 300 dpi), include photo caption information, and be submitted as separate .jpg or .tif image files.

All photographs appearing herein are by the Public Affairs Office unless otherwise accredited.

The mission of The RiverWatch Magazine is to support the Commander's internal communication program for the Memphis District. It also serves as the Commander's primary communication tool for accurately transmitting policies, operations, technical developments and command philosophy to Memphis District team members.

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Commander's Corner



Col. Vernie Reichling

The Spirit of Memphis

by Russ Davis, Chief, Operations Division

Memphis District is known for mission accomplishment and working with its stakeholders to develop collaborative engineering solutions. Over the last year, Operations Division has embodied this "Spirit of Memphis" with a series of accomplishments. Working through adverse conditions – at times against the odds – the "foot soldiers" of the Memphis District have answered each challenge and led the way to success.

In the fall of 2011, the focus of the district and the Mississippi Valley Division was the interim reconstruction of the levees at the Bird's Point New Madrid Floodway. Operations Division met this challenge with 24/7 construction operations. Working through adverse conditions caused by above-normal rainfall, we were able to do provide interim protection that was critically important to the residents of the floodway and the economic vitality of the "boothel" region of Missouri.

"... the 'foot soldiers' of the Memphis District have answered each challenge and led the way to success."

Beginning in the summer of 2012, the challenge was production: the need to support a "super season" of channel improvement work to support the reconstruction of revetments that were damaged in the Great Flood of 2011. One project at a time, the Clearing and Snagging Unit, the Bank Grading Unit, and the Mat Loading Unit have maintained an exceptional level of output to prepare the way for our partners in the Mat Sinking Unit. One project at a time, Revetment Section has met the challenge, supporting the Division-wide reconstruction effort on the Mississippi River.

As nature would have it, flooding last year was followed by drought this year

and Navigation Section had its turn at bat. Leading division-wide efforts to respond to the low water event of the summer of 2012 through the Shallow Draft Dredging Project Delivery Team, Navigation Section has led the coordination of division-wide assets to deliver dredging capability where it was most needed. Within our own footprint, the team effort of the dredge Hurley, the motor vessel Strong, and other survey assets within Navigation Section have produced a remarkable record for the conditions. Within the confines of the Memphis District, there has not been a single closure on "our river" that was due to a failure to maintain minimum project depth. Coordination of harbor dredging assets has been a particular challenge this year. To their credit, Navigation Section has maintained access to the Port of Memphis - the most important port in the Mid-South - during near record low water conditions.

The "quiet professionals" of the Regulatory Branch also had a hand in the District response to the low water event, leaning forward to ensure that permits required by industry to maintain access to critical riverside facilities were available when needed.


But this was only business as usual for the regulators who have a reputation for flexibility and innovation, working in cooperation with the regulated community to support economic development while also protecting our precious ecosystem.

Project Operations Branch has also had a banner year. Whether it was executing a delivery order for full restoration of the Bird's Point New Madrid Floodway levees, working with our local sponsors to pave the way for a Disaster Recovery Act project, working with our port and harbor stakeholders on dredging projects, or leading the majority of the construction projects that have been contracted by the district, Project Operations Branch gets the job done.

The year would not have been complete without a hurricane response, and Readiness & Contingency Operations was there when called to action. While it was fortunate for the citizens of southern Louisiana that Hurricane Isaac was not "the perfect storm," our emergency management professionals mobilized the resources of the district, the division and the Corps to execute the missions that we were given with dispatch and expertise.

But if you want to talk about setting the standard for excellence, you have to turn to the marine maintenance professionals of the Ensley Engineer Yard. Whether it's fabrication of the crane barge Leonard, or delivering support to the crew of the dredge Jadwin to keep them ready for the fight, Plant Section has maintained an enviable standard of success. In a recent publication of the USACE Marine Design Center the author wrote, "The Memphis District owns the best kept secret in the Corps – Ensley Engineer Yard."

We will sincerely miss Terry Phifer and Jimmy Dodds, both retiring later this year, who have been the heart, soul and leadership behind the marine maintenance capability that has earned a stellar reputation for the Memphis District in the inland navigation community.

So how do we do it? It is sometimes said that while the Army may be led by officers, it's run by noncommissioned officers. The "senior NCOs" of the Memphis District - our wage grade supervisors and leadermen - and our "warrant officers" - the masters and chief engineers of our floating plant - are the on-the-ground leaders of the industrial capability that makes the Memphis District a unique asset on the Mississippi River and within the Corps of Engineers. Together with the professional, administrative, technical and skilled trade staff of Operations Division, we are the ground force that is first in the fight. Whether it's loading explosives on a levee, at night and in the rain, responding to a hurricane disaster in Louisiana, or keeping the commercial navigation lanes open on the Mississippi River, we answer the Nation's call to service with the Engineer motto, Essayons – the true "Spirit of Memphis." 

Good weather, low river aids repairs



Pictured left to right, James Coffey, president, Harold Coffey Construction; Regina Kuykendoll Cash; Ben Coffey; Donny Davidson, Area Engineer, USACE Caruthersville Area Office; and Bobby Joe George. Second row is USACE Construction Inspector Bobby Carlyle, left, and Johnny Tindle, dozier operator, on right. (USACE photo)



Hydraulic side dump trailers place clay embankment material at the upper crevasse to restore the Birds Point-New Madrid Floodway frontline levee to its full height equivalent to 62.5 feet on the Cairo gage. (USACE photo by Donny Davidson)



Contractors make pilot hole borings to test the soil before drilling relief wells at Island 8 in Kentucky and Tennessee. (USACE photo by Donny Davidson)



Installing pipes as part of the operating mechanism at the upstream end of the upper levee crevasse. (USACE photo by Donny Davidson)

story by Jim Pogue, Chief, Public Affairs Office

Work to repair 2011 flood damage in the Mississippi-Ohio River confluence area continues to progress well. A combination of favorable weather, low river stages and innovative engineering – coupled with good contractor performance – has allowed the restoration and repair efforts to stay on track.

“Several construction projects aimed at reducing levee underseepage in the Cairo, Ill., area and in Fulton County, Ky., are underway now,” Project Manager Jason Schaefer said. “Most of these projects will be completed in the second half of 2013.”

At the Birds Point-New Madrid Floodway, where the goal is

full restoration of the frontline levee by the end of this year, the forecast looks very good.

“The Birds Point-New Madrid Floodway Project continues to be a good news story and work is continuing in the reconstruction of the levee system,” Project Manager Regina Kuykendoll Cash said. “Phase 1 of the upper and center crevasses is complete. Phase 2 work at the upper and center crevasses is underway and construction crews are installing pipe for the floodway operating system. Phase 1 of the lower crevasse is nearing completion and we are awaiting the Notice to Proceed for Phase 2.”

The cost of the Floodway restoration work is valued at approximately \$11.5 million. **RW**

Interagency team gets firsthand look at St. Johns Bayou and New Madrid Floodway Project

by Jim Pogue, Chief, Public Affairs Office

Members of a federal interagency team working on the St. Johns Bayou and New Madrid Floodway Project in southeastern Missouri visited the project site Oct. 2. They were there to get a better understanding of the project's purposes and get a "boots on the ground" perspective.

The purpose of the St. Johns Bayou and New Madrid Floodway Project is to manage flood risks in the Missouri bootheel.

"The project's objectives are to manage socio-economic flood risks while recognizing the ecological importance the flood pulse provides to the remaining natural habitat in the project area," Danny Ward, project manager for the Memphis District said. "The team is evaluating alternatives including flood control structures and management techniques that we believe will accomplish the objectives."

The recommended plan for the project addresses flooding problems in two drainage basins adjacent to the Mississippi River. They are the 450-square-mile St. Johns Bayou Basin and the smaller New Madrid Floodway at 180 square miles. The first phase of the plan includes 24 miles of channel improvements, pumping stations, ponding easements and appropriate mitigation to compensate for any impacts caused by the project work.

The Corps is now completing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to address previous concerns. To ensure the EIS was conducted in the most accurate and unbiased manner they also integrated a multi-phase Independent External Peer Review process into the study process.

Those participating in the site visit Oct. 1 included Missouri Congresswoman Jo Ann Emerson who represents the people in the project area, and staff representatives from Sen. Claire McCaskill and Sen. Roy Blunt.

Senior officials from the U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency attended. Representing their respective agencies were Michael Been of the Interior Department, Charles Wooley of the Fish and Wildlife Service and Ken Kopocis of the EPA.

Representing the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works was Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary Terrence C. "Rock" Salt. Also present were senior staffers from the Corps' national headquarters, Mississippi Valley Division and Memphis District.

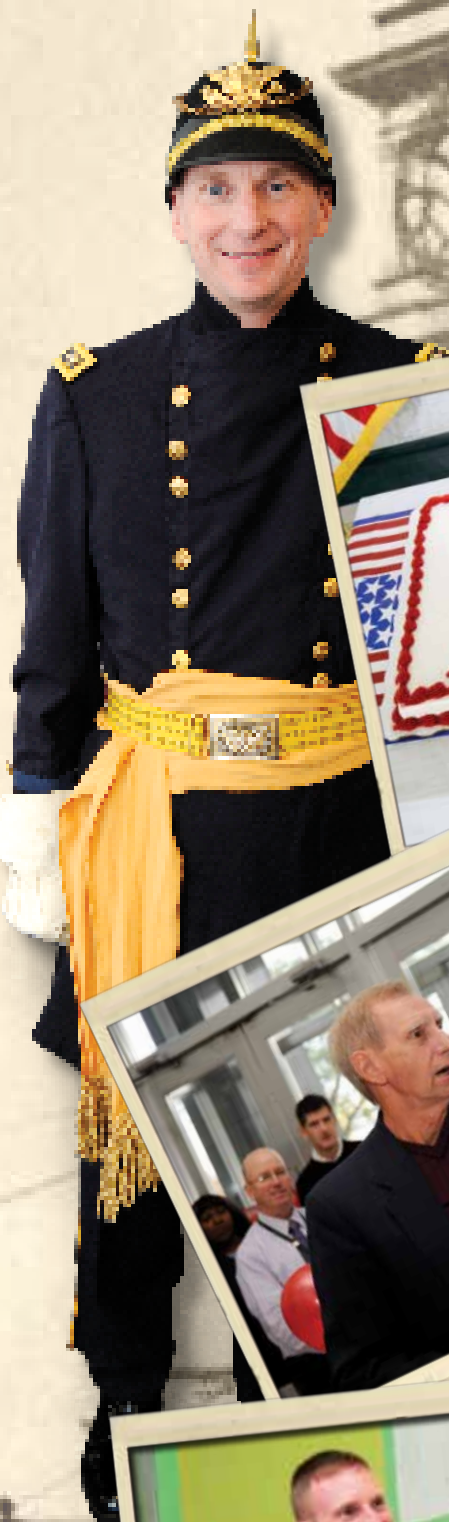
Members of the St. Johns Levee and Drainage District, led by district President Furg Hunter, were also present to answer questions from the group. **RW**



Project Manager Danny Ward points out a feature of the St. Johns Bayou and New Madrid Floodway Project during a stop near the 1,500' gap in the St. Johns Bayou water control structure.



In red ball cap, Terrence "Rock" Salt, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works) and U.S. Representative Jo Ann Emerson (blue scarf) listen as Danny Ward describes the St. Johns Bayou and New Madrid Floodway Project.



Retiree Shirley Fite, standing right, greets the group.



Deputy District Commander Lt. Col. Dave Patton served as master of ceremonies.



Retiree Gene Dodson, left, and Memphis District Commander Col. Vernie Reichling, right, carefully cut the birthday cake with a saber.



Retiree Dennis Kamper



L to R: Corps teammates Jackie Whitlock, Teresa Moore, and Shawn Phillips join in singing.



Memphis District Commander Col. Vernie Reichling, dressed in a replica 1880s Army uniform, shares highlights from the district's early history.



Retiree Lake Sedberry, standing center, greets the birthday celebrators.



Retiree Curtis Stansberry, right, checks out the reception goodies. To his left are retired couple Odean and Charles Berry.



Memphis District celebrates 130 years of service

by Jim Pogue, Chief, Public Affairs Office

It was the fall of 1882 and the people of the Mississippi Valley were still recovering from a great flood that crested twice. The first crest came on Feb. 3, and the second and higher one on Feb. 26. River was above flood stage for 81 continuous days.

With the exception of a couple of ridges, water covered the area from Memphis west to the St. Francis River in Arkansas. The levees broke in nearly 300 locations for an aggregate length of 59 miles. So much water covered the land that a steamboat could have gone from Pine Bluff, Ark., to the Gulf of Mexico without ever entering the Mississippi River.

In terms of human suffering, at least 10 people lost their lives and 3,600 families in Crittendon County, Ark., alone were

left homeless.

Washington decided enough was enough. On Aug. 2, 1882, Congress passed a Rivers and Harbors Act and gave the Mississippi River Commission (MRC) \$1.3 million for levee construction and repairs. That same year, the MRC also created the Second Engineer District with headquarters in Memphis.


Now jump ahead to the present. Last year we experienced a tremendous flood in the Mississippi River Valley, but what a difference. No lives were lost, no uncontrolled levee crevasses occurred and no areas protected by the Mississippi River and Tributaries Project flooded.

Memphis District Commander Col. Vernie Reichling shared this and other stories of contrast and comparison with the many employees, retirees, guests

and partners who gathered Oct. 11, to celebrate the Memphis District's 130th birthday.

Col. Reichling truly got into the spirit of the day by representing the first district commander and dressing in a replica 1880s Army uniform. Former District Commander Col. Ted Fox (1993-1995) and current District Counsel Dave Sirmans joined him in sharing highlights from the district's rich history.

Col. Reichling noted how the district's original missions – flood control (now called flood risk management) and navigation – are still at the top of our list.

A round of the happy birthday song led by ACE-IT chief LaQuetta Glaze and a reception hosted by the Castle Club rounded out the celebration. 

Teammates share



Contingency

He stood straight and tall, surrounded by an aura of strength and confidence.

He wore the colors of red, white and blue in his spirit.

He was proud, brave, and compassionate.

He was a U.S. Army Soldier.

Although he didn't grow up to become one, the memory of wanting to be one was still in his heart. This and the desire to serve his country drove his decision to deploy to Afghanistan.

"I'm getting to live one of my childhood dreams," said Lawrence Thomas, who is serving as an Operations and Maintenance (O&M) program manager at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Afghanistan Engineer District - South. "This is a tremendous experience; it's just unfortunate that I waited so long to serve."

Through the Overseas Contingency Operations program, USACE plays a vital role in helping the Afghan people build a secure, sustainable infrastructure. Five Memphis District teammates are currently living this adventure, which is winding down with the President's decree for it to be completed in 2014.

"I decided to deploy because I knew our time in Afghanistan was coming to an end," said Terrence Brown, who is serving as a Contracting Officer Representative (COR) for O&M execution at the South District. "My O&M contractor is over training the Afghan National Security Forces to take over maintenance of their facilities after the United States pulls out of the country."

Although a tremendous

experience, no job is without challenges. "The biggest challenge I have is translating Military to USACE Civilian," said Mark Harkison, who is serving as a real estate liaison officer at the North District. "I communicate to each side in a manner that they will understand and try to give realistic expectations from the other."

For Thomas, remaining fluid in a contingency environment is important. "Nothing is for certain," he said. "You have to be able to take what you can get and run with it. The culture here makes it extremely difficult to nail down a solid schedule or plan for your project delivery team to follow."

These Civilian volunteers are "Soldiering up" and meeting these challenges head on. Being able to communicate

with their families is a big help. This is accomplished using Voice Over Internet Protocol, a category of hardware and software, which enables deployees to use the Internet as the transmission medium for telephone calls.

"It helps to be able to talk with my family," said Harkison. "Sometimes I think my family needs more emotional support than I do. I stay busy enough that I don't worry about much, but my family worries about me quite a bit."

Being in a foreign country, away from family and friends is hard, but support from home is helping these deployed teammates make a difference in the lives of the Afghan people. "Although cultures are different, most people are just like Americans," said Eric

Overseas



Operations adventure

story by Brenda L. Beasley

Valentine, who is serving as a project engineer for Afghan National Police projects at the South District. “They work to support their family.”

Working in Afghanistan is allowing deployees to deepen their knowledge base about how USACE works as a whole, and expanding their professional network. “Before, I just knew about Ensley Engineer Yard,” Brown said. “Now I’m working with base leadership, contractors, and the Afghan Department of Public Works division, and their mentors.”

Harkison said getting to work with people throughout USACE in solving complex real estate issues has given him a greater depth of knowledge to use back in Memphis. These experiences are allowing him to see a completely different side to construction,

contractors and stakeholders.

On his second deployment, Gerald Townsell is doing work similar to his Memphis District job as facility manager for Yards and Docks. He’s serving as an O&M program manager and a COR for a road project – helping to pave the way to Afghanistan’s economic growth.

In a land-locked country devastated by warfare, civil disorder and drought, this work is made easier by the living conditions USACE provides. The majority of accommodations are designed using re-locatable building container modules or “conex” boxes (container express - large metal cargo containers used by the Army for shipping supplies).

“I was pleasantly surprised about the living arrangements,” said Harkison.

“I deployed twice as a Soldier, and I was used to living in a tent packed with other Soldiers. I always had a long walk to the bathroom, and had to wait in line for a shower. Now I have a conex apartment of my own on the second floor, with clean bathrooms at the end of the hall, and no waiting for a shower. We even have a clothes washer and dryer in the building!”

Although it’s no day in the park, these five Civilian teammates are helping rebuild a country. Helen Keller once said true happiness is not attained through self gratification, but through fidelity to a worthy purpose.

“Being deployed makes you appreciate the skills and experiences you have learned from in your normal job and allows you to apply them in a contingency environment,”

said Thomas. “Personally, I know how hard it is to be away from my family and friends. I also have a new appreciation for the deployed U.S. Troops. This is no picnic and my heart goes out to the families of our fallen heroes!” **RW**

Photos, left to right: 1) Gerald Townsell processes in at the USACE Unit Deployment Center in Winchester, Va., before departing for Afghanistan. 2) Mark Harkison (right) enjoys an Afghan style lunch with Savannah District’s Yadira Gill on his first field trip to Ghazni province. 3) Lawrence Thomas inspects power supply at a project site. 4) On his fifth deployment, Eric Valentine oversees a pipeline project when he was deployed to Bagram. 5) Terrance Brown at work in his office at the South District. (USACE Photos)

DISTRICT OBSERVES Hispanic American HERITAGE MONTH

story by Jim Pogue, Chief, Public Affairs Office



Hispanic residents make up roughly five percent of the population of Shelby County, home to the Corps of Engineers Memphis District. That number has doubled in the last ten years and non-Hispanic mid-southerners are becoming more aware of the richness that Latino culture brings to their communities.

One way that awareness increases is through Hispanic American Heritage Month, observed every Sept. 15 through Oct. 15. Founders chose Sept. 15 as the starting point for the celebration because it is the anniversary of independence of five Latin American countries: Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. They all declared independence in 1821. In addition, Mexico, Chile and Belize celebrate their independence days on Sept. 16, Sept. 18, and Sept. 21, respectively. This year's theme is "Diversity united, building America's future today."

Here in the Memphis District, the observance of Hispanic American Heritage Month kicked off on Sept. 18 when civil engineer Kandi Waller and Internal Review chief Leonardo Ramos made a presentation on riverbank stabilization, flood control and associated topics to 75 farmers and agriculturalists from Colombia, Guatemala and El Salvador. The group was on an official visit arranged through the University of Arkansas at their Lon Mann Cotton Research Station in Marianna, Ark.

"The information provided was well received," Ramos said. "The questions and answers section was excellent. Kandi, as expected, did an excellent job."

The observance continued on Sept. 25, when about 40 Memphis District employees gathered at a downtown Mexican restaurant for a "Lunch 'n' Learn" with noted educator, musician and translator Dr. Pablo J. Davis.

Davis spoke about the different aspects of culture that we are exposed to:



Top and above: Dr. Pablo J. Davis (in suit) spoke about Hispanic culture to a large group of employees following a luncheon at a local restaurant. (Photos by Jim Pogue)

- **Material culture:** Best described as the solutions we find to the problems of living. In other words, how we survive and prosper.

- **Expressive culture:** Music, dance, fashion, all of which are constantly changing.

- **Cognitive culture:** Our perception of reality, concept of time.

- **Social culture:** Perhaps the most important, this is best described as the ways we relate to each other.

"Social culture is the most important," he said. "What is rooted in you is the hardest to change, but it can happen."

Davis also described the importance that family relationships hold in the Latino culture.

"Family is the metaphor for everything," he said.

In closing, Davis said he believed that Americans were hungry for more connectedness, for closer families and have a desire to slow their lives down a little.

"The Hispanic culture can help everyone," he said. "It can help deepen and strengthen the fabric of America."

Later in the month, one of Memphis'



Left to right, two agriculturalists from Latin America join civil engineer Kandi Waller from River Engineering, Prof. Leo Espinoza, and Internal Review Chief Leonardo Ramos at the University of Arkansas Lon Mann Cotton Research Station. (Courtesy Photo)

Spanish language newspapers will publish articles on the Memphis District's response to the current low water and our contribution to the Hurricane Isaac recovery efforts.

The Hispanic American Heritage Month observance – along with many other cultural events – is organized by the Memphis District's Special Emphasis Program Committee. **RW**



District kicks off CFC campaign

by Brenda L. Beasley

Touching Lives ... Making a Difference

In support of this year's theme, Memphis District kicked off its 2012-2013 Combined Federal Campaign Oct. 18 at the Clifford Davis/Odell Horton Federal Building.

"All of the key workers have done a great job in preparing our CFC kick off ceremony for you today," said Deputy Commander Lt. Col. Dave Patton in his opening remarks.

CFC Campaign Chair Cherrie Smith, of the Regulatory Branch, served as master of ceremonies. "Please participate today and consider giving generously," said Smith. "We are very happy you are here to help!"

Guest Speaker George Edwards provided humor alongside a serious message about the CFC. Edwards is the president of the Loaned Executive Alumni Association, a group of highly-trained volunteers who have already served as Loaned Executives in the United Way and CFC fund-raising campaigns coming together to make a greater impact on the Mid-South.

"As you know, it takes an act of congress for civilians to come onto federal property," joked Edwards, a retired U.S. Postal Service employee who has been a champion of the CFC drive for more than 18 years.

In the early 1950s, President Dwight Eisenhower wanted to make contributions legal. In the early 1960s, President John F. Kennedy established the Combined Federal Campaign. "The CFC is our campaign and we only have two months to run it," said Edwards. "If you don't support it, you're only hurting yourself."

This year represents the 51st Anniversary of the Combined Federal Campaign and a significant milestone for the campaign, its supporters and charitable giving. CFC has led the way in the restoration of the lives of victims of natural disasters, contributing to the cure of diseases, helping to provide shelter for the homeless, providing food for the hungry, and assisting in the protection and rescue of animals and the environment, and providing support to our military personnel in need. This is due in large measure to the consistent charitable giving of federal employees.

Representatives from New Hope For You, Blue City Runners' Track Club, Mid-South Paralyzed Veterans of America, and CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates for children) set up information booths and were on hand to discuss their charitable organizations.

Attendees were invited to partake in an inexpensive lunch of hot dogs, chips and nachos, which helped to raise \$431. The food was donated by Doug Young with all of the proceeds going to CFC.

Historically, campaign costs nation-wide average ten percent, however, this cost is low compared with other fund-raising campaigns; therefore, every dollar you pledge goes a very long way toward helping others.




District teammates get ready for the kick-off ceremony. Left to Right: Deputy Commander Lt. Col. Dave Patton, Karen Brady, Alexandria Cooper, Carla Wells, CFC Chair Cherrie Smith, Mary Collier, and Vernica "Nikki" Brown.



Happy to donate, EEO Manager Shelly McGee (far right) picks a lunch of hotdog with coleslaw and chips. CFC key workers, left to right, Carla Wells, Kendell Riley, Karen Brady, and Nikki Brown.

CFC provides federal employees with the opportunity to improve the quality of life for all. "Take the opportunity to contact your department's key worker for more information on how you can make a difference and touch a life," said Smith.

Key Workers are Karen Brady, Steve Williamson, Rodger Funderburk, Phoebe Rucker, Matthew Davis, Kendell Riley, Frank Phillips, Vernica "Nikki" Brown, Carla Wells, Mary Collier, Shirley Lewis, Cory Williams, Kai Alimayu, Alexandria Cooper, and Lauren Graves.

"Last year the Memphis District raised \$40,781.20," said Smith. "This year, our goal is \$43,000. With your help, our expectation is to not only meet it, but to exceed it!" 

Avoiding organizational complacency

by Rodney Kellow, Chief of Safety

Team, every day in the United States, 15 workers lose their lives as a result of injuries or illnesses related to their work. That's over 5,000 people every year (e.g., the size of a full Army brigade). These people leave behind families, friends and co-workers! The single most common cause is complacency - an attitude that "it won't happen to me."

Complacency can kill an entire organization

Too often, individuals and organizations become complacent when it comes to safety. Leaders become satisfied with mediocre safety performance and do not work to improve the environment by raising safety awareness and eliminating the potential for injury. Employees become content and are not attentive to their work environments. They may become convinced that management is not concerned about safety. They may begin to think they are not responsible for their own safety. What can happen over time is the entire organization giving little meaningful attention to safety.

The normal result is that employees begin to get in a hurry and take shortcuts on the job. They are more focused on production and getting the job done than getting it done safely. That attitude often becomes an organizational norm. Near misses may go unreported. No one wants to take the time to fill out forms and employees don't understand the connection between sharing information and eliminating/minimizing accidents. Leaders may not pay much attention to reports, so they may seem unimportant. As the number of injuries increase, they will become more severe. This usually results in the entire team becoming frustrated. Employees may blame management and management may feel employees are at fault, yet no one is willing to take action to improve the situation. Much too often it takes a fatal injury to cause the entire team to focus on safety. Don't let this happen to our organization!

"... complacency is a dangerous thing and can be fatal!"

The complacency trap

Don't become distracted by pressing issues. Research shows that many accidents occur because people are distracted and do not pay attention to their environment and what is going on around them. Leaders often fall into the same trap as they become distracted by pressing issues such as the organization's need to increase productivity, improve quality and meet schedules. They stop paying attention to the importance of safety in the organization and become blinded to the fact that the lack of attention to safety performance is injuring the organization in the long run. In other words, they become complacent.

When leaders do not make safety a top priority in the organization, it is easy for employees to make personal safety a low priority, thus allowing accidents and injuries to occur with increased frequency. There are two things that must happen to avoid this potentially deadly situation:

- Leaders must renew their commitment to the safety process
- Employees must get involved in meaningful safety activities

Leaders - get committed!

It takes more than just saying you are committed to safety; you have to put actions behind your words. Leaders can demonstrate their commitment to safety in a number of ways. First and foremost, you must know and follow our safety rules such as those found in EM 385-1-1. Then, regularly cover safety issues at meetings or when hazards are spotted. Also consider the following ideas.

- Take time to walk around and talk to your team members.
- Visit employees in their workplaces whether on the shop floor, in the field or in the office. Talk about your personal concern for safety, and then listen to their concerns. Take personal action to correct unsafe situations and follow up to let employees know the outcomes.
- Make it a point to personally review all reports of near misses and injuries. When leaders review reports of injuries and near misses, it demonstrates the information's importance. Follow up on the reports to ensure that appropriate actions are taken to eliminate the causes of accidents in our organization that could result in larger, bigger direct hits.
- Enable employees to get involved in the safety process. Identify areas where employees can become actively involved in the safety process and encourage their participation by allowing work time for appropriate activities. Ask employees with specific skills or interests to participate in safety improvement projects. Then recognize their involvement and efforts.

Leaders at all levels of the Memphis District can have a profound effect on the safety culture of our organization by following these suggestions. Once our team sees the leaders' recommitment to safety, employees in turn will be more committed than ever. I truly believe nothing energizes an organization's safety improvement efforts more than employee involvement!


Other ways to get employees involved

First, make employees aware of how they can get involved in the safety process. Involvement can come in many different forms. Encourage employees to get involved in the following activities and others:

- Reporting all unsafe conditions
- Attending PRECONS, preparatory meetings and safety meetings
- Planning and leading a Toolbox Safety meeting
- Participating in accident investigations, after action review's and facility walk-through's
- Engaging in conversations with leaders to share improvement ideas

Employees whose ideas and involvement are valued will increase safety performance faster than employees who are just simply following the rules. Create opportunities for employees to contribute ideas and information that will lead to safety improvement!

Stamp out complacency

Team, to create a culture in our organization where injuries are a thing of the past, we have to remind ourselves that complacency is a dangerous thing and can be fatal! Let's all make a vow to "think safety not just compliance." 

Responding to Active Shooter

by Harold Harden, Chief, Security
and Law Enforcement Office

HOW TO RESPOND WHEN AN ACTIVE SHOOTER IS IN YOUR VICINITY

QUICKLY DETERMINE THE MOST REASONABLE WAY TO PROTECT YOUR OWN LIFE. CUSTOMERS AND CLIENTS ARE LIKELY TO FOLLOW THE LEAD OF EMPLOYEES AND MANAGERS DURING AN ACTIVE SHOOTER SITUATION.

1. EVACUATE

- Have an escape route and plan in mind
- Leave your belongings behind
- Keep your hands visible

2. HIDE OUT

- Hide in an area out of the active shooter's view.
- Block entry to your hiding place and lock the doors

3. TAKE ACTION

- As a last resort and only when your life is in imminent danger.
- Attempt to incapacitate the active shooter.
- Act with physical aggression and throw items at the active shooter

**CALL 911 WHEN IT IS
SAFE TO DO SO**

HOW TO RESPOND WHEN LAW ENFORCEMENT ARRIVES ON THE SCENE

1. HOW YOU SHOULD REACT WHEN LAW ENFORCEMENT ARRIVES:

- Remain calm, and follow officers' instructions
- Immediately raise hands and spread fingers
- Keep hands visible at all times
- Avoid making quick movements toward officers such as attempting to hold on to them for safety
- Avoid pointing, screaming and/or yelling
- Do not stop to ask officers for help or direction when evacuating, just proceed in the direction from which officers are entering the premises

2. INFORMATION YOU SHOULD PROVIDE TO LAW ENFORCEMENT OR 911 OPERATOR:

- Location of the active shooter
- Number of shooters, if more than one
- Physical description of shooter/s
- Number and type of weapons held by the shooter/s
- Number of potential victims at the location

RECOGNIZING SIGNS OF POTENTIAL WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

AN ACTIVE SHOOTER MAY BE A CURRENT OR FORMER EMPLOYEE. ALERT YOUR HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT IF YOU BELIEVE AN EMPLOYEE EXHIBITS POTENTIALLY VIOLENT BEHAVIOR. INDICATORS OF POTENTIALLY VIOLENT BEHAVIOR MAY INCLUDE ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING:

- Increased use of alcohol and/or illegal drugs
- Unexplained increase in absenteeism, and/or vague physical complaints
- Depression/Withdrawal
- Increased severe mood swings, and noticeably unstable or emotional responses
- Increasingly talks of problems at home
- Increase in unsolicited comments about violence, firearms, and other dangerous weapons and violent crimes

Reliford receives Seltzer award

by Jim Pogue, Chief, Public Affairs Office

Janita L. Reliford, an attorney with the Memphis District, has received the prestigious E. Manning Seltzer Award for her work in the labor relations arena.

The Seltzer Award is named after the Chief Legal Advisor to the Army's Chief of Engineers and General Counsel of the Corps from 1956 to 1977. It recognizes an attorney who has made one or more special contributions to the Corps' legal services mission through the development of a legal theory, a legal management innovation or practice or outstanding performance in solving a legal or management problem.

In the citation accompanying her award, attorney Reliford was recognized for her performance, training efforts and written publications which reflected positively on the Corps' Labor Relations program, both locally and throughout the Corps.

It further stated that her ability to relate to both management and labor representatives has been instrumental in resolving many long standing complaints and in restoring a cooperative working relation between parties.

Attorney Reliford is originally from Ringgold, La., and graduated from the Tulane University School of Law in 1999. **RW**



Janita L. Reliford

New motor vessel named after Corps retiree

The motor vessel George C. Grugett is currently under construction at Horizon Shipbuilding in Bayou La Batre, Ala. The 114-foot-long towboat is named for a retired district employee and member of the Memphis District Gallery of Distinguished Civilian Employees. It will serve as a replacement vessel for the M/V Strong, which will assume other duties in the Memphis District. The M/V George C. Grugett is expected to join the Memphis District fleet in March 2013 and a christening ceremony is planned for April 5, 2013. **RW**



Angel becomes longest serving member in 133-year Mississippi River Commission history

story by MVD Public Affairs Office

The Honorable Sam E. Angel became the longest serving member in the history of the Mississippi River Commission on Oct. 2, breaking the previous record of Mr. Robert S. Taylor (Indiana) who served as an MRC civilian commissioner from 1881-1914.

In recognition of this significant occasion, Maj. Gen. John Peabody, President of the Mississippi River Commission, stated: "Sam's legacy of life-long service to the nation through the MRC is an amazing testament to his knowledge, dedication, and perhaps most importantly for this occasion, his stamina. He has set an example of selfless service."

Mr. Angel is president of the Epstein Land Company and Epstein Gin Company in Lake Village, Ark. He was first appointed to the MRC by President Jimmy Carter in September 1979. After his first nine-year term, he was reappointed in October 1988 by President Ronald Reagan; in November 1999 he was appointed for a third nine-year appointment by President Bill Clinton; and President Barack Obama appointed him to his fourth nine-year term in December 2010.

The civilian members of the Mississippi River Commission:

Ensure knowledge and relationships continuity (29 civilians have served on MRC since 1879)

Have a combined 80 years on the commission

Provide engineering and business expertise from the private sector (today's civilians have a combined 165 years of experience)

Have long-term proven relationships with legislators, partners and local interests

"Thank you for your support to the MRC and the nation these many years," Peabody added. "Your passion for the commission's mission, and your ability to simplify the complex problems it addresses into understandable elements, is simply unsurpassed."


To date, all MRC members are nominated and appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate of the United States.

The commission was created by an Act of Congress on June 28, 1879, to plan and provide for the general improvement of the entire length of the Mississippi River. This includes improving



(left to right) The Hon. Sam Angel and Hon. R.D. James, MRC Commissioners; George Grugett, Executive Vice President, Mississippi Valley Flood Control Association; the Hon. Marion Berry, former Arkansas U.S. Representative, and his wife Carolyn, at Mr. Angel's recognition event in Memphis, Tenn., Oct. 2. (Photo by Stephen Gambrell, Executive Director for the MRC)

navigation, preventing destructive floods and facilitating commerce. The presidential appointees consist of three officers from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, a representative from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and three civilians, two of whom must be civil engineers.

The commission itself is an advisory body. Its general duties include recommending policy and work programs, studying and reporting on modifications or changes to the Mississippi River and Tributaries project, commenting on matters authorized by law, making inspection trips, and holding public hearings that facilitate exchanges of viewpoints and ideas between the public and the MRC. Since 1879 the commission has been "listening, inspecting, partnering and engineering" with water resource interests in a watershed that is influenced by the drainage of over 41 percent of the United States and two provinces of Canada. 

New professional roster

The Memphis District recently completed this new Professional Achievement Roster recognizing the many accomplishments of our diverse workforce. In addition to Professional Engineers and Engineers in Training, it also includes those team members who have successfully completed a variety of Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA) training courses, are licensed attorneys, USACE divers and much more. In this photo, Civil Engineer Elizabeth Burks, Hydraulics and Hydrology Branch, places her Project Management Professional plate on the board. The terrific display was built and installed on the fifth floor of the Federal Building by team members from our Ensley Engineer Yard. (Photo by Brenda Beasley) 