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# SECURITY EXERCISE AT JOHN H. KERR INCREASES INTEROPERABILITY, LESSENS VULNERABILITIES

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

*Up Front*
*Let's Keep Up the Momentum in FY '10!* 2

*Myers returns From Second Overseas Deployment* 3

*Year End Close Out Means Extra Hours to Crunch the Numbers* 6

*Wilmington District to Build New Dredge* 8

*District Welcomes New Emergency Management Specialist* 9

*Regulatory PM's Father Recalls World War Two Duty* 10

*District Members Serves as Judges During "Envirothon"* 14

Members of the Virginia State Police storm an entry point to John H. Kerr Dam during the exercise. (Barr Photo)

In order to thwart a potential terrorist attack you have to think like a terrorist.

That's exactly how it played out during a late September anti-terrorism exercise at John H. Kerr Dam and Reservoir. Wilmington District Chief of Security Greg Barr said assets like the Virginia National Guard's 34th Civil Support Team (CST) based at Fort Picket supported the exercise and added enough realism to create and carry out scenarios that would make the likelihood of a terrorist attack minimal.

"You really do have to think like a terrorist," Barr explained, "and that's one thing that the 34th CST is very good at. They're very good at thinking like

Con't on Page 4

# Let's Keep Up the Momentum in FY '10

Col Jeff Ryscavage

Wilmington District Team,

Congratulations on another successful year end close out! As we start the new fiscal year, I'd like to give special thanks to our folks in Resource Management for keeping things on track. Lou Smith and the team put in many extra hours, much of it on weekends, to keep the Wilmington District fiscally sound. Their loyalty, dedication and attention to detail was outstanding, and they definitely lived up to Army Values. In addition, I'd like to thank Sherrel Bunn and the Contracting Office. This year, the nine-person team awarded more than $97 million worth of work for the Nation. In September alone, the team awarded 188 contract actions, 32 in the last three days of year-end closeout. The team's outstanding effort put them in the 'green' column despite the delay of an anticipated award of several million dollars. Expeditious award of planned contracting work is doubly important as the District strives to execute ARRA (American Recovery and Reinvestment Act) funding. The work we are contracting is being awarded to many competitive small businesses, and putting a lot of people to work which is good for hard hit areas. It's important for our Nation's economy as well as for the well-being of our projects and programs, that this work get out on the street, contracted and started as early as possible.

The efforts of the Resource Management and Contracting teams are herculean in the amount of funds and contracts that were spent and awarded this year but none of it could have been done without the efforts of many of our team mates in all offices that were involved in the process as well. The folks we have in each office that handle planning, programming, entering PR&C's and approving the expenditure of funds are an integral part of this process and share in this success as well. A true team effort by all of you to insure that the funds appropriated to Corps projects are spent in a fiscally sound manner consistent with all of our regulations and policies.

I'm extremely proud of the efforts each and every Wilmington District member makes every day. We still have much to do so now that we're in Fiscal Year 2010, so let's make every effort to keep up our momentum and do great work for the State of North Carolina, Commonwealth of Virginia, and the Nation. ■

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***This is an online publication and open to the public.***

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U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Wilmington District

# Myers' Second Overseas Deployment Intense, But Still Full of Adventure

Acting Chief of Operations Neil Myers is now a Civilian veteran of two overseas deployments. His first was a six-month stint in Iraq, and he returned in September after a 13-month tour in Afghanistan. His second was a grueling yet exciting 13-month stay in a high-speed domain in Kabul.

"In Iraq, I was on a day to day field operation going out to construction sites and managing the construction process which was very exciting because you got a whole lot more exposure to the local national people," he explained. "In Afghanistan, though, I was a program manager for a team was a of nine project managers. We worked on a plethora of security updates and facility upgrades or repairs on Afghan Army bases, and existing Afghan police stations. We improved or added entry control points, sniper screens, guard towers, etcetera. There were a lot of different force protection projects."

Myers said that he wasn't out of the compound in Kabul as much as he was out and about inspecting projects in Iraq. There was simply too much administrative work to do.

"The day to day was long. One thing about Afghanistan was that every thing was ramping up as far as the amount of work which was more than you could possibly do in any given day. Working from 0500 to 1830 every day was pretty normal. And there was tangible feedback from the work you did and it was very obvious. You actually got to see things happening in the field daily. There was as pretty good flow of funds so you didn't have to worry about that. Time, construction and quality were more important than money in this situation. It was so interesting to see the projects evolve, and it was very fulfilling work, especially when you were directly involved with improving conditions for Soldiers and the Afghan policemen."

Neil Myers, right, inspects the Afghanistan National Police Headquarters in Kabul with two U.S. Navy officers. (Photo Courtesy Neil Myers)

One thing that Myers has plenty of is a sense of adventure. He's a Soldier at heart, and he took advantage of both deployments to satisfy his desire to help others. But at times he had to stand back and just figure what in heck he was doing so far from home.

"It's amazing. Sometimes I'd be in a helicopter flying over desert and mountains looking down and thinking 'Where am I? What made me want to do this?!' But it was an adventure. You think to yourself 'How many people in the world are doing this right now?' It's a pretty small percentage, and the fact is every day was a little different, especially when you leave the compound not knowing what to expect. There's a little element of danger that keeps you on your toes and it really lets you know how you fit in with the Corps in a war zone. It's sort of like being a fireman who gets the excitement from running into a burning building, but knows that he's helping someone get out." ■

# EXERCISE CON'T

A Soldier from the 34th Civil Support Team (right) practices decontamination with Virginia State Police at a mobile set up near John H. Kerr Dam. (Greg Barr Photo)

terrorists. It's the same thing that security managers in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers do: 'If I were a terrorist what would my objective be?'"

Barr said that each District in the South Atlantic Division has a division requirement to conduct one anti-terrorism exercise per year.

"That can be a tabletop exercise and doesn't even have to involve boots on the ground," he said. "But after we conducted the Philpott Dam anti-terrorism exercise earlier this year we knew we were on to something. When I was in the Army I learned that the best way to plan is on the desktop. But once you get out and actually put it into use a lot of the things you may have learned go right out the window."

Besides the CST, Barr said local and county agencies also participated in the exercise, and John H. Kerr Park Rangers helped by teaming up with the Mecklenburg County Sheriff's Department to direct traffic.

Wilmington District Deputy commander LTC Christian Sulit was impressed by the exercise. A combat engineer officer with two deployments to Iraq, he said all organizations involved were well organized and functioned similarly to Army combat units.

"Each team had its lane and they knew it very well," he stated. "The drug interdiction teams, fire departments, the 34th Civil Support Team…all were well organized and well funded. And during one of the briefings our powerhouse people showed their expertise by knowing the locations of all security elements and the layout of the dam. And talking with our engineers I found out that it would be very difficult to do any real damage to a dam. It would take a significant event to do any type of destruction. Our vulnerabilities are very minimal structurally. I felt the dam was very secure during the exercise."

One thing that both Barr and LTC Sulit discovered was an increase in awareness of particular assets that were available to local organizations.

"The local fire chief said he had no idea that the assets like the 34th CST were available or that he could call them directly," said Barr. "Initially, the fire department has

Con't on Page 5

# EXERCISE CON'T

the first decontamination responsibility, but the chief had no idea that he could call and ask for help."

"Now they have direct access without going through a bureaucracy," said Sulit. "That's a very good thing that resulted from this exercise. You need to have to have good communications with everyone, especially the local elements."

Complacency is the enemy of security. Sulit said that vulnerabilities can be exploited when your guard is dropped.

"Let's go with current events. Suspects were recently taken into custody for planning to destroy the infrastructure in some major American cities. They were all seemingly unrelated, but the threat is still out there. It's prudent for us to protect our infrastructure. This is a way of not being complacent."

Barr said that overall the exercise was extremely successful. A hand's on security manager, he feels the best way to strengthen force protection is to do in a real world scenario with real people.

"The state police were happy that they got to get in and see the inside of the dam. They've seen drawings and maps, but if they do get called there it will give them a feel for what's really in there. They found a few issues that they never would have found had they not been in there. You can role play it all you want on the outside, but once you get inside it's a different situation."

Wilmington District Security Specialist Linda Williams said that as an observer she liked how each organization meshed together to function as one security enforcement team.

Wilmington District Deputy Commander LTC Christian Sulit and John H. Kerr Park Ranger Josh Davis observe some of the specialized teams that took part in the exercise.

"It was really intriguing to watch the military do its portion as well as the tactical teams. They really worked together. It gave me a better feeling of security."

According to Barr, the South Atlantic Division Anti terrorism Office plans to use the Wilmington District's anti-terrorism exercise as a model. ■

Members of a Virginia State Police Tactical Team plan for their next mission. (Barr Photos)

# END OF YEAR CLOSE OUT MEAN$ EXTRA HOUR$ OF CRUNCHING NUMBER$

It's almost 1:30 on a Saturday afternoon at the Wilmington District headquarters. One or two people light up dimmed offices. They've come in to work on projects that couldn't wait to be finished on Monday. But in Resource Management, it's a really busy day. People have come in casually dressed; shorts and t-shirts or jeans. There's a pot of coffee brewing, and other caffeinated products on desks. A look of intense focus marks the faces of accountants whose eyes are glued to their computers. On most computer screens you can see CEFMS (Corps of Engineers Financial Management System). Elizabeth Kurkowski is crunching numbers in the system, and bringing up another agency's website to cross reference information. Across from her cubicle, Morgan Mounts shuffles through mounds of paperwork, keeping track of various sections' financial information. In about two weeks it will be a new year; Fiscal Year 2010 arrives on 1 October.

"Year end is about getting the books closed out," said Chief of Resource Management Lou Smith. "We have to go through and make sure all of the obligations are valid and the books are balanced, that we don't have orders with other organizations that are not outstanding, and that we haven't been billed for items inappropriately."

RM's Morgan Mounts sifts through stacks of documents on a Saturday afternoon. (Heusinkveld Images)

In mid-September, members of Resource Management hold a meeting to discuss final preparations for the year end closeout.

Smith said a lot of coordination takes place throughout the Wilmington District to tie up any loose ends. Members of his staff coordinate daily with people from Operations, Navigation, Project Management, etc.

"A big part of this is the undelivered order review. That's a 100 percent review of all outstanding items that we had where we've obligated our funds. So we have to validate that all of those are still active and ensure that we don't have some "dead" items sitting on the books."

Surprisingly, Smith said the process begins in mid-summer.

"It doesn't finish until we get all the obligations and expenditure accruals in by 30 September.

Con't on Page 7

# YEAR END CON'T

However, the reporting piece of it goes on for about another month while we're getting next year's funds."

The amount of money that's being looked at can be overwhelming to folks not accustomed to seeing figures in the millions of dollars. But no matter the amount, the meticulous nature of accountants means that all monetary items will be scrutinized down to the penny.

"We'll go through and look at all of the accruals and everything that has accrued over a hundred thousand dollars and I'll sign it off. Carolyn Brock signs off if it's at or under a hundred thousand dollars. At the same time we're looking at budget execution and we've got to make sure that all those rates that we've established in the revolving fund accounts are going to zero out our balances at the end of the year. It's takes tremendous effort to get it on target."

Weekend duty is standard for the year end closeout, and Elizabeth Kurkowski makes the best of it with her RM colleagues.

Smith added that military projects have not only increased the workload of Resource Management, but have given his team another way of accounting that can only be good training now for any future military-related work.

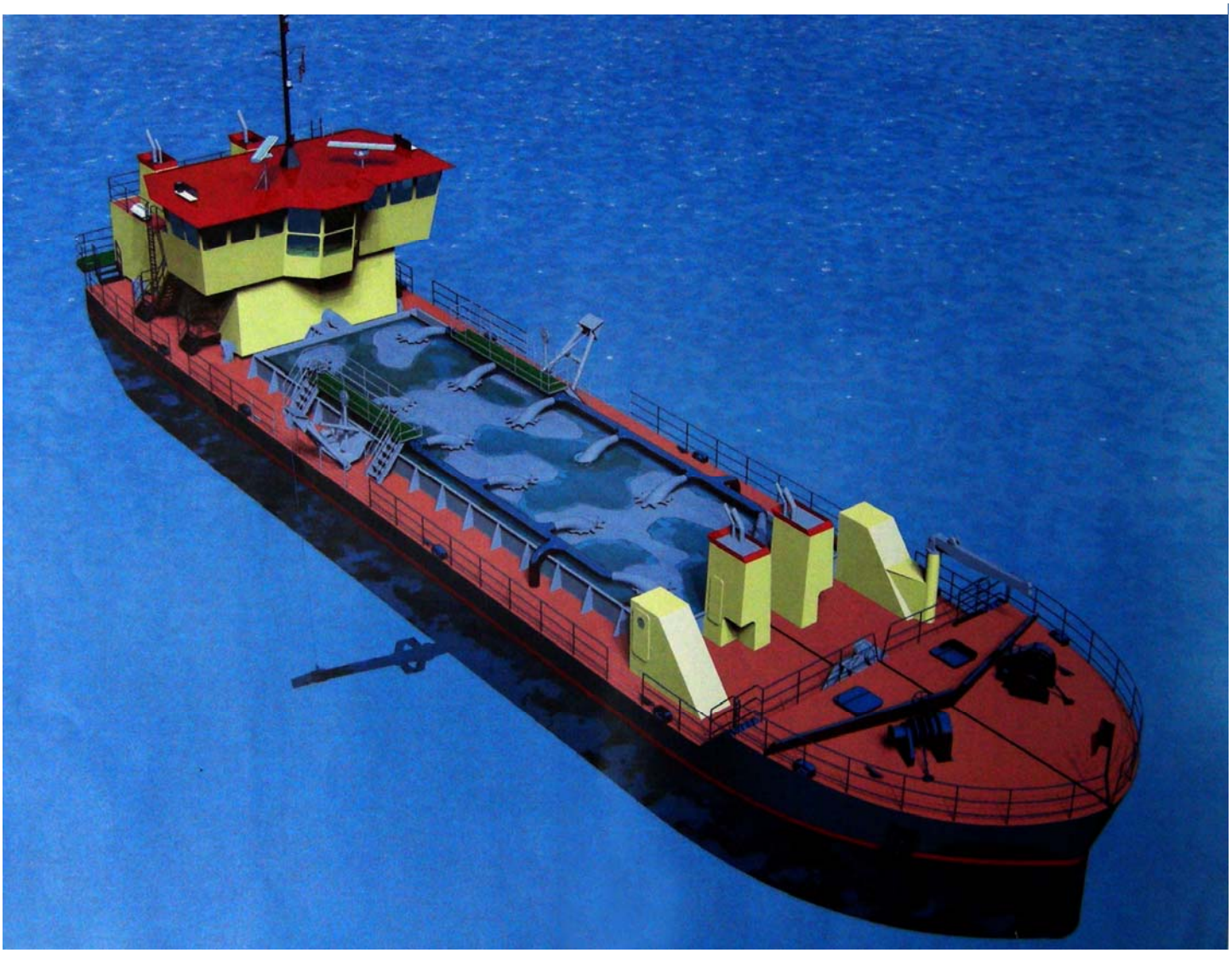
"We've only been involved with military accounts for about a year, so a lot of that's new. We're learning as we go, and calling sister Districts who've been doing military for a while. The primary difference between the military and civil works is that the military obligates money up front. They also are in a 'use it or lose it' situation meaning that if they don't use it this year they lose that money next year. A lot of our civil money can be rolled over into the following fiscal year and so it's got no year expiration date."

Paul Wicker crunches numbers in his cubicle. (Heusinkveld Images)

Working odd hours and on weekends means giving up personal time. A vacation in September? Not a chance. But Smith adds his team knows it comes with the territory, and their dedication never wavers until the books close.

"We've got an excellent team. We've got experienced veterans who provide leadership, and I've got new employees who been with us for less than six months...bright young employees who are eager to learn. They have the capabilities and skills and they're really learning a lot on the job." ■

# SAW TO BUILD NEW DREDGE



The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Marine Design Center awarded a contract for $13 million to Conrad Industries to build a new, split-hull dredge similar to the Dredge CURRITUCK for the Wilmington District. Delivery is expected some time in 2011. The new dredge's capacity, at just over 400 cubic yards, will be about 1/3 larger than the CURRITUCK, and it will boast a broader hull for increased oceangoing stability. But like the CURRITUCK, the new dredge will also be able to operate in shallow drafts of as little as four feet. The dredge will replace one of the District's two remaining shallow-draft side-cast dredges. About five years ago the SCHWEIZER, a third side-casting dredge, was retired from the Wilmington fleet after more than 30 years of service with us preceded by service in New Orleans District and Vietnam. ■

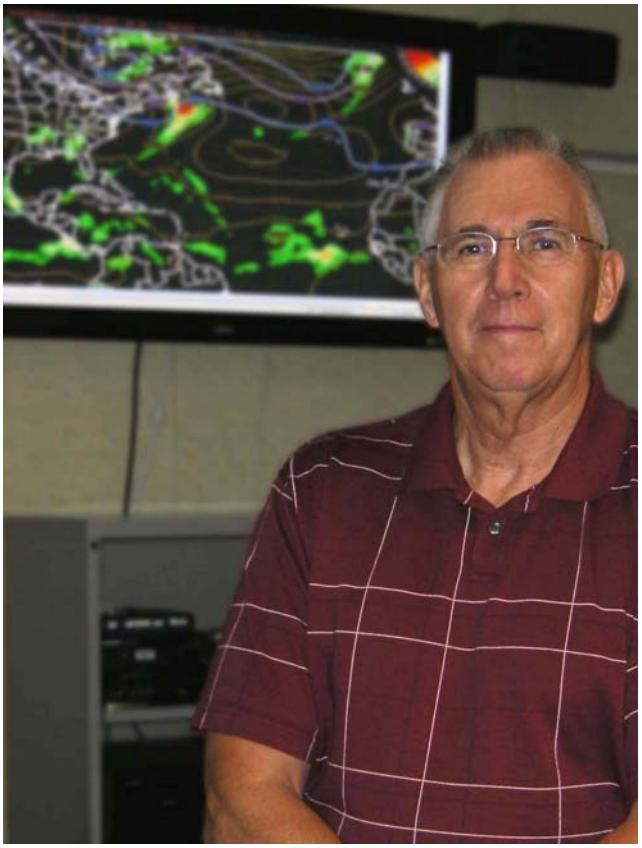
# WILMINGTON DISTRICT WELCOMES SEASONED EM SPECIALIST, WEATHERMAN

When it comes to forecasting, if Emergency Management Specialist Gary Faltinowski had a crystal ball there'd be a zero percent chance that he'd use it. He prefers to use hard science.

"I try not to do it sixth sense," he explained. "I use the tools that are available. There's more information than you know what to do with today. Guessing usually comes out wrong. TV weather guys are pretty accurate because of pressure from the public. People want to know exactly what the weather is going to be like. When they say it's going to be partly cloudy, they had better mean that it's going to be partly cloudy."

Faltinowski comes on deck with the Wilmington District after 10 and a half years working for State Emergency Management (NC), and a 30-year career in the United States Marine Corps with the Corps' weather service. He not only brings his wealth of weather forecasting experience to the table, but the type of unique organizing skills it takes to be able to do emergency management.

"Organizations are made up of people with families. So it gets down to preparing your family well in advance because you will have to go to work before, during or after that disaster. That's how we in emergency management think. And those with a military background also think that way; 'My family needs to be prepared. My organization needs to be prepared.' You do have to be forward thinking to be effectively and that requires being prepared at work and at home."



Gary Faltinowski brings 30 years of Marine Corps weather service and 10 years of State Emergency Management experience to the Wilmington District. (Heusinkveld Photo)

The field of Emergency Management continues to grow. Faltinowski said that it's becoming a field with credentials, not just from a weather perspective but an all-hazard plan. Many schools offer degree programs in emergency management.

"It teaches people how to plan for a disaster, how to manage the disaster, how to recover from it, and mitigate the effects," he said. "Having knowledge how to organize things is really one of the cornerstones of emergency management. You have to keep track of things that are going on during an emergency, to include planning for replacement of people and resources. You cannot take people and put them out into a post-disaster area and expect them to work 24/7 for six months. You've got to be able to think ahead so that you're already planning your demobilization for folks as soon as they show up. And that's not something that a lot of people are accustomed to doing. That's why you see this educational path being developed." ■

# REGULATORY PROJECT MANAGER'S WWII VETERAN FATHER RECALLS LIFE IN WAR

As a kid, Regulatory's Mickey Sugg used to watch World War Two movies with his father, a decorated WWII veteran. Mickey would ask him if scenes in a particular movie were real or not, and his father was always eager to give an honest answer. Unlike a lot of veterans from that war who were rather reserved about their wartime service, Raymond Sugg was and is more than happy to share his stories, not only with his family, but with the public. He had the opportunity along with several other World War Two Vets to do just that when they gathered at the Wilmington USO in early September for what might have been their last formal public gathering.

Raymond Sugg was 19 when he joined the U.S. Army in 1943. He'd had three years of ROTC and fit the bill of a clerk/typist, but the Army needed him elsewhere; on the front lines of Fortress Europe.

"I did my basic training at Camp Wheeler in Macon, Georgia in three hottest months of the year," he recalled. "I shipped out overseas and became a replacement, and my first combat was in November that same year with the Third Infantry Division. One of the first things they told me was that if I didn't get killed or wounded in the first two weeks I might make it, but I'd be lucky."

The 3rd ID that Sugg belonged to was one of the only American divisions that fought the Axis powers on all European fronts. It was among the first U.S. combat units to engage in offensive ground combat operations during World War II.

Regulatory's Mickey Sugg poses proudly with his father Ray during the Wilmington USO's salute to World War Two Veterans. (Heusinkveld Images)

Ray Sugg's collection of WWII photographs, newspaper clippings and other memorabilia help tell the story of his experiences from Italy to France and into Germany.

"We broke out of Anzio, we'd been there for four months, and I remember that night very well. We pulled out and we dug our foxholes, and the next morning all hell broke loose…artillery, mortars…even had a 50-caliber machine gun behind us firing over our heads. We broke out just enough to start chasing the Germans across a wheat field. We got caught in a cross fire and we had to jump back into a ditch. When I jumped in I hit a tripwire and a tank mine put me out of commission for awhile. There were several boys who got hurt. I got sent to an evacuation hospital in Naples where I had my rear worked on. In fact, I've still got a piece about the size of a bullet there."

Medics took Sugg to an evacuation hospital in Naples. While he was there he

Con't on Page 11

# RAY SUGG CON'T

said that his unit had lost 998 men.

"They sent word down that anybody that could walk had to leave because they needed more room for the bedridden wounded. They sent me out all plastered up. I could walk though! While I was gone in the hospital our boys had broken out and we were on the offensive."

Sugg soon recovered and by June 4th of 1944 the U.S. Army had taken Rome. Within weeks he found himself in Naples training for an amphibious landing, but he and his comrades had no idea where they were heading until they got to their location.

"We landed in southern France. We fought our way through Strasbourg and moved out around Nancy, then crossed the Rhein at Worms into Germany. I was a bazooka man at the time. I remember jumping into a little ditch and my tongue touched the bazooka. It tore part of my lip off. That's how cold it was."

The Normandy American Cemetery and Memorial overlooks Omaha Beach near Colleville-sur-Mer, France. 9,387 Americans killed during D-Day and other ensuing military operations are buried here.

While in France, Sugg earned the Silver Star. His citation reads: *At 1500 hours in France when an enemy counter attack threatened to dislodge a rifle company from defensive positions, S/SGT Sugg advanced to a housetop position from which point he engaged five enemy soldiers 40 yards below him in a fire fight. Although machine, rifle and pistol fire pierced his field jacket and glanced from his helmet, S/SGT Sugg remained in his exposed position and killed three enemy soldiers and wounded two.*

An 8th Army Air Forces Military Intelligence officer explains tactics used in the air war over Germany in 1943 and 1944.

A proud member of the 3rd ID, Sugg is a stickler for accuracy in how events of World War Two are portrayed in movies and other media. One controversial topic that is a playful sore spot for the 3rd ID is which organization made its way to the Nazi stronghold of Berchtesgaden in Bavaria. In the HBO series Band of Brothers, for example, the 506th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne reached the city first. Sugg disputes that.

"The 506th didn't take Berchtesgaden. We did," he said with a confident smile. "I don't even remember runnin' into 'em. I went up to the Eagles Nest and I have some pictures of it somewhere."

After the war, Sugg returned to North Carolina and earned a bachelor's degree in mathematics and history. He became a high school teacher and coached boys and girls basketball. As an educator, he stressed the importance of education to all eight of his children. The youngest, Mickey, received a full Veterans Administration academic scholarship as did two of his siblings.

Ray Sugg cheated death more than once during the war. He looks at life realistically, and fondly remembers the names and faces of some who never made it home.

"I was destined, I guess, to be wounded by a mine and put in someplace safe. I'm mighty fortunate, and I thank God every day, too. I came home. Had eight kids….five girls and three boys and got 'em through school somehow. I don't have anything in the world to be angry about." ■

*"EMBRACING THE URGENCY OF NOW"*

# WILMINGTON DISTRICT OBSERVES HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

*Submitted by Renita McNeill, EEO Chief*

This year's observance was celebrated with a corridor display of Hispanic countries and artifacts, with a concentration on Guatemala. Lucy Vasquez of el Centro Latino, Wilmington, North Carolina, served as guest presenter.

Vasquez began her presentation by stating that she was born and grew up in Los Angeles, California, a first generation American of Mexican parents. Her parents came to America, as most immigrants, in pursuit of the American dream. Her father became a very successful and wealthy businessman and her mother was very involved in outreach programs at her church.

As she grew up, she became involved in her community with anti-gang and anti-drug outreach efforts. Later, she visited North Carolina, enjoyed the warm beaches and slower pace of life and decided to stay. One of the first things she realized was the lack of Latino involvement in the community. "They were like a hidden population" she said, "they felt they weren't wanted and that someone was just out there waiting to grab them". She became very passionate about their struggle and wanted the Latino community *that she saw* to feel a sense of confidence and pride in the important role they play here in the United States as well. Wishing that all immigrants feel a part of the community where they live, she felt something needed to do be done.

She began by interpreting for anyone and everyone who needed it and organized the very first Latino Festival in 1998. It was a huge success; it accomplished what it set out to do, bring down the barriers and misconceptions that existed within the Latin community, brought unity among different cultures and a desire for everyone to learn more about each other's culture, and a sense of belonging to the Latinos that lived in Wilmington.

This year Wilmington will celebrate the eleventh annual Festival Latino. She is most proud of the work that Amigos Internacional (an outreach organization she founded) has been able to accomplish for the growing Latino community. Other programs that she has developed are "Radio Amigos" a one hour program for the Spanish speaking community, "Radio Latino" a half hour program of Latin music, people and culture for the English speaking community, "Cape Fear Latinos" a bi-lingual television program that highlights various agencies in the area and the Emergency Management Latino Task Force for Disaster Preparedness. All these have been very successful and have shown that Latinos are a much-valued part of our society and our community.

Pam Alonzo introduces guest speaker Lucy Vasquez of Wilmington's el Centro Latino. (Reisenbigler Photos)

District members enjoy an authentic Guatemalan meal prepared by newly appointed Hispanic Employment Program Manager Pam Alonzo.

Within her program, classes are conducted for English as a second language and Spanish as a second language. These classes are designed to bridge the language barriers that exist in the community. There are also mentoring and coaching sessions for educational advancement and employment prospects.

The presentation was climaxed with a cultural video of Guatemala and the sampling of authentic Central American foods.

Special thanks is extended to our newly appointed Hispanic Employment Program Manager, Pamela Alonzo. Her outstanding coordination and enthusiasm accentuated the effectiveness of the EEO Program. ■

# TEAM EFFORT AT JOHN H. KERR RESERVOIR SAVES DROWNING CHILD

**Compiled Reports Submitted by John H. Kerr Reservoir Park Rangers**

On Wednesday, September 30, the Wilmington District recognized three officers at a luncheon at Kerr Dam. They were commended by the Commander of the Wilmington District, Colonel Jefferson Ryscavage, and awarded a "Commander's Coin."

While on routine patrols for separate agencies **Brandon Harris and Mark Van Dyke** of the Conservation Police, Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, and **Paul Cox**, Deputy, with the Mecklenburg County Sheriff Department, responded to an emergency drowning at Rudd's Creek Day Use Area, a US Army Corps of Engineers' manned park, and saved the life of an 11-year-old girl.

*DETAILS: On Sunday, June 7, 2009, while swimming with her family at Rudd's Creek Park, John H Kerr Reservoir, 11-year old Kamilya Reavis disappeared under the water. Nearby, VA game wardens Van Dyke and Harris were in a boat checking fishing licenses and heard the resulting screaming and panicking. They responded to the area just as a man was pulling the lifeless body of the girl to the shore. She was not breathing; she had no pulse. Harris and Van Dyke immediately began chest compressions and breaths. About the same time, Deputy Paul Cox, who is an EMT and was driving his ALS (Advanced Life Support) vehicle was in the vicinity and immediately responded to the scene. Utilizing his suction bag, he removed vomit and other liquid obstructions from the airway as the wardens continued rescue breaths and chest compressions. They got a pulse, and then Kamilya began sputtering and trying to breathe on her own. She was taken by Rescue Squad to South Hill hospital and then air-lifted to Medical College of Virginia in Richmond, in critical condition. She remained as such for several days and then began to improve. She was released after five days, came home and made a full recovery.*

Mecklenburg County Sheriff Department Deputy Paul Cox receives a Commander's Coin from Wilmington District Commander COL Jeff Ryscavage.

# SAW STAFF SERVES AS JUDGES DURING 2009 CANON NATIONAL ENVIROTHON

During the week of August 2nd through the 8th, rangers and two regulatory specialists had the opportunity to participate in the 2009 Canon National Envirothon held this year at the University of North Carolina at Asheville. Those participating included **Dana Matics at Falls, Tara Arnette at Jordan, Craig Brown at John H. Kerr, Mary Lawson and Ernie Shepherd at Philpott, Carmen Boyette with Operations Support, and Scott Jones and Steve Chapin with the Asheville Regulatory Field Office.** For most of the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) participants, this was a once in a career opportunity.

The Canon Envirothon is the largest environmental education competition in North America. The event moves around the United States and Canada and is organized by the host state under the direction of a board of directors. In North Carolina, the Division of Soil and Water Conservation organizes the local, state, and national envirothons. This year North Carolina was very fortunate to be able to host the event. In addition to the manpower it takes to organize, raise funds, and run the event, there is stiff competition from other states to host the competition.

It was also a once in the lifetime opportunity for many of the 260 teenagers from across the United States and Canada. Participants at the 2009 Canon Envirothon worked hard all year long to win a chance to represent their state or province by winning local, regional, and statewide or provincial competitions. Once they reach the national level, the students compete to win scholarships provided by Canon that will further their education. At every level, students are trained and tested on subjects like soils, aquatics, forestry, wildlife, and current environmental issues. The national event also includes an oral presentation related to a current environmental issue.

The 2009 issue concerned the location of a new civic center in Asheville on top of a mountain. Students were asked to address the environmental factors of building the center at that location, identify alternate locations, and ultimately pick the best location based on their findings.

Students test their environmental knowledge during the event in Asheville. (Photos Courtesy Canon)

Con't on Page 15

# ENVIROTHON CON'T

Students stop at another test area to find out what they know about various types of soil.

Students were given the topic before lunch on Thursday, August 6th and worked into the afternoon and evening preparing their presentations in a sequestered room away from teachers, advisors, textbooks, and the internet. The only written notes they could use were field notes taken during the training sessions earlier that week. There were very specific guidelines they had to follow during the 15 minute presentation such as each team member had to take part in the presentation, resources had to be cited and used appropriately, and they had to create visuals using markers, construction paper, and poster board. That evening before the students returned to the dorms all of their visuals and note cards were collected and placed in a secured room overnight.

On Friday, participants from USACE were able to serve as judges for the preliminary round of oral presentations which consisted of 48 teams giving presentations in various rooms on campus. As judges we listened intently to presentations and prepared questions for the 10 minute question and answer period which tested the students on various points presented or not presented during their presentation. After listening to 4 presentations and thoroughly evaluating them, our part was complete. During lunch, the students anxiously ate with anticipation waiting to hear which 5 teams would be moving on. The teams moving on consisted of those that had the highest scores from the field testing and oral competition combined. Later that day, the top 5 teams presented for another set of judges. After presenting, everyone waited for the top 15 teams to be announced and of course to see who the overall winner of the competition was. In addition to scholarships, students and advisors took home Canon products like cameras and printers.

The US Army Corps of Engineers would like to extend our congratulations to all the event competitors. We are also very thankful that we had the opportunity to participate at the National Level. ■

First Place - Pinecrest High School, Pennsylvania

Second Place - West Johnston High School, North Carolina

For more information and to see the top fifteen schools, visit the Canon National Envirothon site.

http://www.envirothon.org/