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of Engineers.

wilmington District News

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August 2000

Corps, NC Department of Transportation cooperate to speed regulatory process

By Penny Schmitt

North Carolina's roadways stretch from the Appalachian Mountains to the Atlantic seaboard, and many miles of Carolina roadway have repeatedly been under water or threatened by hurricane winds and waves. The Wilmington District is challenged to keep up with the wetlands regulatory workload that goes along with maintaining and modernizing a road net and repairing the damage done to roads by severe weather.

That's why Wilmington became one of the first US Army Corps of Engineer Districts to propose a partnership with a state Department of Transportation. "We have been working on this cooperative agreement since about 1995," said Dr. Wayne Wright, Chief of Wilmington's Regulatory Division. "We are still one of only a few Districts that have set up agreements."

What good does such an agreement do? Both state and



Preserving wetlands goes hand-in-hand with building and maintaining North Carolina highways.

federal officials agree, working together throughout the project development process prevents permit denials from halting a project after a lot of time and money have been invested. "In the past, the state has gone so far as to acquire land, draw plans,

and let contracts, only to find that the Corps cannot permit the project to go forward. That causes immense frustration, and costs manpower, time and money," Wright said.

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Capable Work Force Objectives moving forward

By BJ Suggs

Year 2000 Operations Plan objectives in the “Capable Work Force” sector of our balanced score card are on track. Here’s what we’ve been accomplishing this year:

Objective 1.1: Why do we need to identify development assignment opportunities? We have some positions that are one deep, or involve critical technical skills needed for current/future missions. Many of our TEAM members are looking forward to retirement in the next 5 to 10 years. This is also the work force situation of many other public agencies and even corporations.

Thus, identifying positions and preparing and training others to also perform those duties not only benefits TEAM members by providing career enhancement opportunities, but addresses the organization’s need to be prepared to execute our mission. The better we perform our mission, the happier our customers are—which has a most positive impact on our future customer base and our future work load.

This year, the District has committed to hiring a new EEO officer in advance of our current EEO officer’s retirement, to ensure this critical job is covered by an experienced person. We encourage all TEAM members who are seriously contemplating retirement to share their plans with their supervisors in time to let us start the recruitment process before your desk becomes vacant!

Objective 1-2: A recruitment strategy to attract new talent ensures we can continue to accomplish future missions. While we rejoice when we can fill positions

from within, we must also bring in new talent with fresh ideas and different experiences. Our workload is growing! While some additional work efforts can be contracted out, the District is doing some careful new hiring. We must begin to establish relationships with universities, schools, and potential TEAM members to facilitate recruiting new people as positions become available.

The District has made great progress in this area, establishing closer ties with UNC Wilmington, and with schools like Texas A&M, which has an excellent program that can support our dredging mission.

Objective 1.3—District leaders have identified jobs that can be considered for inclusion in the upward mobility program when vacancies occur. This strategy focuses leadership’s attention on the possibility of providing career advancement opportunities for TEAM members, balanced with the need to ensure capability for mission accomplishment. The strategy identifies positions with the potential for inclusion in the program, and also recognizes that a significant ratio of positions in an organization must have fully performing personnel to accomplish the mission. We believe this strategy will encourage increased utilization of the upward mobility program by managers, and foster career advancements for TEAM members.

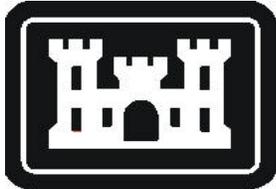
We are happy to announce that Brenda Willett has accepted our first upward mobility position—a GS 1082 technical editor position. Congratulations on your new career path, Brenda!

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Corps and NCDOT work together continued

(Continued from page 1)

To avoid show-stopping conflicts and to ensure that projects move toward completion in an orderly fashion, the two agencies have come up with a merger plan in which they jointly address five crucial concurrence points. “These steps address compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act, and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, which is designed to address loss of national wetlands assets,” Wright said. “We must grant a permit for any activity that would disturb waters or wetlands. Naturally, road building and the infrastructure related to roadways often forces the state to work with wetlands and waterways.”

When the Corps approves a project, the approval is often contingent upon the creation, protection, or restoration of wetland habitat to compensate for the amount of wetland habitat that will be disturbed or destroyed in the course of building the project.

In the past, the state made its best proposal, and then the Corps responded with approval or disapproval of the plan. The two agencies didn’t consult until late in the process—sometimes too late for a proposed site plan to be salvaged.

Now, the agencies have agreed to reach a mutually satisfactory concurrence at each critical development step, ensuring that projects move toward approval, not denial.

These steps are:

First: Purpose and need—All parties agree that there is a need for the proposed project, and define the purpose of the project. Alternatives are identified that might fit the purpose and need for the project.



Restoring, preserving and creating wetlands balances growth and development.

Second: Alternatives carried forward—All parties agree on alternative routes and designs that would satisfactorily meet the design purpose and need of the project. Less satisfactory proposals are scrapped at this time, and not revisited again.

Third: Selected corridor—All parties agree upon the one best alternative way to meet the purpose and need of the project. All other proposals are scrapped at this time and do not need to be revisited again.

Fourth: Impact minimization—All parties work together to adjust the project design to make sure that impacts on surrounding wetland areas are kept to a minimum. Designers may, for example, decide to narrow a median strip or add protective project features.

Fifth: Approval of a compensatory mitigation plan—All parties work together to identify the extent of mitigation required and to select sites that will be created, protected

or restored to provide mitigation, and any design or needed work to ensure the success of the mitigation portion of the project.

The Corps supports the new process

“We’ve taken several steps to make sure that our merger agreement works successfully,” Wright said. “We think this process is critical to making us responsive to our state customer, the NC Department of Transportation. It saves us thousands of hours in revisiting site plans and re-reviewing project proposals. It also helps the NC Department of Transportation by insuring that they do not waste time and money developing plans which will not withstand the permit review process. It is well worth while for us to put effort forth to make this process work well.” Here’s what the Wilmington District has done:

(Continued on page 4)

Corps and DOT work together continued

- *Doubled the number of regulatory staff assigned to NC DOT projects. In the past two years, the Corps increased its NCDOT team from four to eight regulators working full time on state projects.*
- *Improved communication with the NCDOT. Regular monthly meetings with state officials track critical projects.*
- *Set up standing operating procedures to move projects forward predictably.*



The Corps and NCDOT work together to expedite repairs of damage caused by Hurricanes (Hurricane Dennis, Outer Banks, 1999).

North Carolina contributes greatly to program success

“Governor Hunt was one of the first to promote cooperation in this area,” Wright said. “In 1995, when we had been at work for two years on the Manteo Bypass project, Governor Hunt committed the state to full interagency cooperation. From that time forward, our work on that project moved forward steadily, and the project is under construction today. We all saw that project as a model for what we could accomplish.”

“North Carolina DOT officials are now consulting with us about applying the process to projects that were initiated before we began working together from concept to construction and mitigation. They are also considering ways to expand this five-step procedure to cover their statewide transportation planning program.”

Wright and his Corps colleagues

also see great potential for the state to enhance the mitigation part of the process and to improve the quality of post-storm repair by expanding the role of the state agency’s environmental officers. “We have worked jointly with them in training staff on the lessons learned from Hurricane Floyd repairs. We think these folks have a lot to offer the overall program,” Wright said.

The results:

Both the Corps and the state of North Carolina are already beginning to reap the benefits of the cooperative agreement. “Where the mitigation portion of our program is concerned, the process is moving us toward better, more successful choices of mitigation sites and construction to create or restore wetlands,” Wright said. “Overall, the process leads to swifter completion of projects, avoids the need to revisit sites, plans, and acquisitions

of property or contracts, and helps to forestall the need to do work a second time to correct or repair errors in design and construction. The environmental benefits are most rewarding of all.”

At the end of the cooperative journey, the Corps and the state achieve more by working as a team—

- *Quality transportation projects that maximize environmental protection.*
- *Quality compensation for impacted resources.*
- *Emergency work that is responsive and sound.*

We are proud of what we have accomplished together thus far,” Wright said. “We look forward to continuous improvements in this process over the coming years.”

MG Robert G. Flowers Nominated as Chief of Engineers

MG Robert Flowers has been nominated as Chief of Engineers, to succeed LTG Joe N. Ballard, who retired in early August.

As Commanding General of the U.S. Army Maneuver Support Center and Fort Leonard Wood and Commandant of the U.S. Army Engineer School, Major General Flowers led soldiers of all ranks attending Initial Entry Training up through Battalion and Brigade Pre-Command Courses. He also directed the formulation of Army engineer doctrine, force structure, battlefield tactics, training, and materiel development. In addition, he oversees the training of airmen, sailors and Marines attending courses for civil and construction engineering; law enforcement; chemical, biological and radiological defense; and motor transport operators.

Following graduation from the Virginia Military Institute and his commissioning as a second lieutenant

in 1969, General Flowers completed ranger and airborne training. His civilian and military education includes a master's degree in civil engineering from the University of Virginia, the Engineer Basic and Advanced Courses, Command and General Staff College, and the National War College. Additionally, General Flowers is a registered professional engineer in the state of Virginia.

His recent prior assignments include : Commander of the Mississippi Valley Division (MVD) of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and was president of the Mississippi River Commission. In addition to his duties as MVD commander, General Flowers was deployed to Bosnia from January 3 through March 17, 1996, as the Deputy Chief of Staff for Engineering (Forward), U.S. Army Europe. He was responsible for U. S. Forces construction in the Theater of Operations.

Other assignments include serving in South Korea as Assistant Division Commander, 2nd Infantry Division (Mechanized), Eighth U. S. Army. Deputy Commanding General, U.S. Army Engineer Center, and Assistant Commandant, U. S. Army Engineer School, Fort Leonard Wood. Joint Task Force Engineer for the Joint Task Force in Somalia.

He was Commander of the 20th Engineer Brigade (Combat) (Airborne Corps), Fort Bragg, North Carolina, 1990-92, and led the brigade during Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm as an expanded force of ten battalions (7,700 soldiers).

General Flowers was born in Pennsylvania and resided in several areas of the world as his family moved during his father's military career. He and his wife Lynda have four sons: Rob, David, Billy and Matthew.

PMBP's second imperative is one project—one project manager

By Sharon Haggett

Last month, we featured the unified focus we keep on our projects in the Project Management Business Process. The second key element in the PMBP is: **One PM for a Project.**

From a corporate view, the Commander or Deputy for Programs and Project Management assigns individual project managers. There is a single PM for a project regardless of how many

different organizations are represented on the team. The PM is responsible and accountable for successful completion and delivery of a project to the customer. This must be accomplished within established costs, schedules and quality parameters. A single PM provides for consistency throughout the life of the project and ensures, through coordination, that the organization speaks with one

voice on all matters relating to a project. A single PM enhances the Corps's ability to ensure that project requirements and commitments are communicated, understood and milestones are attained. Although a single PM has these responsibilities, ultimately it is through the very vital feature called teamwork that a finished product is delivered.

MG Anderson to assume command of SAD



Major General Phillip R. Anderson, Commander of Mississippi Valley Division and President of the Mississippi River Commission since July 1997, will assume command of the South Atlantic Division on October 17, 2000.

MG Anderson's previous assignments include Director of Military

Programs, Headquarters, US Army Corps of Engineers; Deputy Commanding General of the US Army Engineer Center and Fort Leonard Wood, Director of Training at the Engineer Center at Fort Leonard Wood. He was Land and Naval Facilities Program Manager, Supreme Headquarters, Allied Powers, Europe; Executive Officer for the Chief of Engineers. He has also served as the project engineer for the Taylorsville Lake Project in Louisville District, and as Liaison Officer and Assistant Resident Engineer, Saudi Arabia District.

He has been involved in many humanitarian relief operations, including Hurricane Andrew as Deputy Joint Task Force Engineers, Operation Restore Hope in Somalia as Army Forces Engineer, and United Nations Mission in Haiti as Deputy Commander, US Forces.

MG Anderson is a graduate of the Virginia Military Institute, Lexington, Virginia, where he was commissioned in 1970 into the Corps of Engineers. He holds masters degrees in civil engineering from the University of Illinois in Champaign/Urbana and international relations from Salve Regina University in Newport, Rhode Island. He is a licensed professional engineer in the state of Virginia, and is a member of the National Society of Professional Engineers, The American Society of Civil Engineers, the Society of American Military Engineers, and the Army Engineer Association.

MG Anderson was born in San Diego, California. He is married to the former Elizabeth Allen Bartley. They have one daughter, Sarah, who resides in Eatonton, Georgia.

Don't lose your job because of political activity!

By Caroline Struthers

As we approach the busiest time of the political cycle, it is important that all Wilmington District employees recall the limits on our political activities as federal employees. We can do a lot of things to promote our beliefs and support our candidates, but some activities can cause you to be removed from your job and permanently barred from federal employment.

Recently, a Huntsville Center employee was disciplined for leaving a message about his school board candidacy on his office phone, and distributing campaign literature at work.

To learn details, visit the web site for Hatch Act information sponsored by the Office of Special

Counsel. The site can be found at <http://www.osc.gov/hatchact.htm>

Here are some tips from the site:

Contributions—You may contribute to a campaign, or to a political party or organization.

Bumper stickers—You may display bumper stickers on your car even when it is parked in a federal parking lot.

Organizing a fundraiser—You may organize a fundraiser, and even supply names for the invitation list, but you may not personally solicit, receive or accept contributions.

Speaking at a fundraiser—You may speak at a fundraiser as long

as you are not on duty and do not solicit contributions. Your name may be shown on a program, but the reference must not be used to solicit contributions, nor may the information include your federal title.

Conventions—You can serve as a delegate, alternate or proxy to a state or national party convention.

Running for office—You can run for public office in a nonpartisan election, and as a nonpartisan candidate you may solicit, accept or receive political contributions for your own campaign. You may not, however, conduct such activities at work.

Distributing brochures at election sites—You may hand out brochures at a polling place on behalf of a political candidate or party.

Hats off to Federal Women's Program

By Susan Dwyer

A good time was had by all at the July meeting of the Federal Women's Program. Men and women showed up in every type of hat available to them. Chuck Wilson, environmentalist, came to the meeting in a hard hat. Some wore their favorite sports team hats, many paraded through the halls in their best "Sunday go to meeting" headwear. The meeting was not only entertaining, but it was educational as well.

- *The National Audubon Society was established because of the impact of the Millinery trade (hat industry) on bird populations.*

- *Boston socialites Harriet Lawrence Hemenway and her cousin Minna B. Hall founded the Massachusetts Audubon Society, the longest-lived organization dedicated to bird conservation and public education. After reading about egret hunting practices in 1896, the two women were determined to persuade and convince other prominent women that they were committing a deadly and*

tragic wrong by wearing birds or bird feathers on their hats.

Through boycott and tea parties, they convinced some 900 women not to wear feathered hats and to work with their new group to promote bird protection.

www.americanhistory.si.edu/feather/ftamex.htm

Jan Davidson, Wilmington district librarian, who is an accomplished milliner (hat maker), gave the FWP a lesson on the history of the hat industry and demonstrated how to make a hat. Jan said the most famous hat she has made to date was sold to Oprah Winfrey's production company. It can be seen in the film "The Wedding". Some of Jan's creations can be seen on her web site www.hatshatshats.com.



Women and men alike, lined up in their favorite headwear for their favorite summer salads.



Jan Davidson demonstrates how hats are made with a display of some of her own favorites.

United Way hosts Hispanic Hurricane Preparedness Forum-

By Susan Dwyer

Tuesday, July 25th, at the Warwick Center on the University of North Carolina at Wilmington campus, representatives from emergency response teams met to discuss how to get "The Message" to the growing Hispanic community in North Carolina.

The United Way sponsored the gathering, and Joey Garcia, from the Catholic Social Ministries, spoke on the problems with finding and contacting many of the migrant families. Groups from Red Cross, Social Services, The U.S Army

Corps of Engineers, and many others came together in a brainstorming session.

Topics ranged from how to get hurricane information distributed in different dialects of Spanish, literacy, and the concerns of Hispanics (whether they are in the U.S. legally or illegally).

After four hours of intense discussion, many problems were brought out, and many resolutions were produced. There will be much more information to give out to people so they will be ready

when, not if, the next hurricane hits our coast.

Information is in the process of being translated and distributed.

One lost life is too many, when it can be avoided. Information will be found in churches, grocery stores, health clinics, and anywhere else that caters to the Hispanic community.

If anyone has more information, or wants to help with the distribution of literature, contact the Wilmington Social Ministries on Princess Drive.

Dave Lekson enjoys prize-winning avocation

By Henry Wicker

In just four years, David Lekson of the Wilmington District's Washington Regulatory Office, has turned inspiration into blue ribbons. While visiting an East Carolina Wildlife Festival in 1996, Lekson saw some hand-made decoys. "One look at those incredibzzzzly life-like carvings and I was hooked," he says. By the 1997 festival, David was competing against professional carvers in the open gunner class. "I gave them a run for their money!" He has since received numerous blue ribbons, including several best-of-show rosettes for his shorebird decoys at the Washington and Currituck shows.

David carves all of his competition birds from North Carolina tupelo, and his hunting decoys from juniper. He paints at the kitchen table. "My wife, Grace, is a very patient person!" he said. Sitting under the pecan tree in his back yard as the sawdust flies, David finds a welcome diversion from the rigors of his regulatory work.



Some of Dave Lekson's prize-winning decoys.



Some of Dave Lekson's prize-winning decoys.

Relay for Life raises funds for cancer research

By Susan Dwyer

Very few of us have escaped some sort of exposure to cancer. Either you yourself have fought the battle, or someone you know has. Thirty years ago, a diagnosis was almost certainly a death sentence, but times and medical technology have changed. Research has stopped many forms of the disease in its tracks. But research is costly. One fundraiser that responds to the need is the Mecklenburg and Brunswick County's 5th Annual Relay for Life.

Peggy Conner and Rose Sullivan, both from John H. Kerr Reservoir, participated in a relay at South Hill, Virginia. Both were diagnosed with cancer, and sup-

ported each other throughout treatments and recoveries. Rose has been cancer-free for six years. Peggy has recently experienced a recurrence of her cancer. Every year, the two walk side by side in the relay, the same way they have fought the disease.

At the culmination of the evening's events, luminaries are lit in honor of survivors, and in memory of those who have lost the fight. Each luminary represents a \$10 donation to the American Cancer Society. "There were over 1700 luminaries lit at dusk, and every heart was touched," Rose said. The goal for this year's relay was \$80,000, and \$113,000 was collected.

AFGE inducts new officers

By Susan Dwyer

A meeting of pride and celebration took place Saturday, July 28th 2000, at the Hilton Inn on the Cape Fear River. The members of the American Federation of Government Employees held a swearing in ceremony for the new officers (Diane Greene, President. Susan Dwyer, 1st Vice Pres. June Pauley, 2nd Vice Pres. Darryl Kruse, Vice Pres. Field Office. Oweita Freeman, Chief Steward. Diane Lastinger, Steward. Diane Boswell, Secretary/Treasurer. Gwen Dye, Sergeant at Arms). There was also a goodbye and thank you to each out-going officer.

The Local 406 has only been established for a few short years. Some of the officers have served our union since it's inception. They have put in countless hours for no pay. They have given a voice to the "little guy", and it has been heard. Outgoing officers were: Nancy Watkins, President; Gloria Harris, 1st

Vice Pres.; Sharon Day, 2nd Vice Pres.; Wick Westmoreland, Vice Pres. Field Office; Diane Lastinger, Chief Steward; Owieta Freeman, Steward; Diane Boswell, Secretary/Treasurer; Gwen Dye, Sergeant at Arms. Each officer received a single red rose, and a card of appreciation for all their hard work.

As the official business ended, the celebrations began. The dinner buffet had chicken, ribs and steak, as well as veggies and breads. The most popular table was the desert table, with fresh fruit and cheesecake. The best way to work off all that food was to dance. Especially since there was music, a DJ, and a dance floor.

Diane Boswell and husband David were the first to hit the floor. They were "cuttin a rug" like they had been practicing for 28 years or more. Sharon Day and her friend John bounced to the beat until the beat didn't bounce anymore. Everyone joined in for the Electric Slide. The evening emphasized our unity. We work as a team and we play as a team.

Our thoughts and prayers were with Oweita Freeman, absent because of a death in her family.



Nancy Watkins swears in new officers left to right Diane Greene, Susan Dwyer, June Pauley, Diane Boswell, and Gwen Dye.

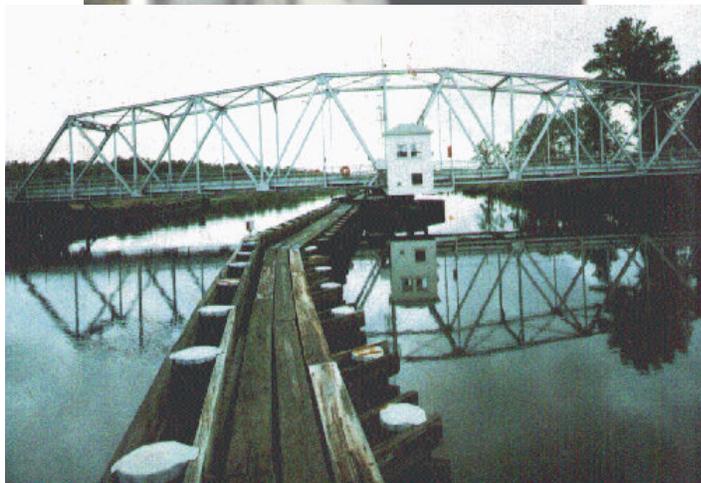


New President Diane Greene gives flowers to outgoing officers.

Rufus Cutrell served at Fairfield Bridge nearly 40 years

This June, the Wilmington District lost a faithful employee and friend of nearly 40 years. Rufus Cutrell, who served as Bridge Tender at Fairfield Bridge for 22 and one half years until his retirement, then continued to serve as a contractor, died on June 21 a few days after receiving surgery. Mr. Cutrell's service at the bridge totaled 39 and one half years. For much of this time, Mr. Cutrell was the lead operator and supervisor of the Bridge Tender crew. He was dedicated to his family, job and co-workers, and will be greatly missed by all who knew and worked with him.

The Fairfield Bridge, ironically, is due to be the last of the Corps' swing bridges on the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway to be closed and demolished later this fall. As Mr. Cutrell's daughter said "this old bridge was his life." Perhaps we may hope that both Mr. Cutrell and the Fairfield Bridge will be clearing the path for those sailing on a more heavenly passageway.



NEW GRANDPA!

Bobby Willis and his wife Cathy, are new grandparents! On July 23rd, the Willis's older daughter Melissa, gave birth to Peyton Mackenzie Wallace, a 6 lb. 5 oz. beautiful baby girl. Mom and baby are doing fine (as is Dad), and Grandma and Grandpa are still floating!

Beaver visits District building

Wilmington District Field Offices are no strangers to wildlife, but a big beaver at the headquarters building was a novelty! This big guy scratched on a side door, trying to gain entrance for the beginning of a work day on July 26th. Fortunately, he—or was it she?—ambled away after finding the door locked.



Put a little Sunshine In someone's life...

DONATE BLOOD

American Red Cross Bloodmobile

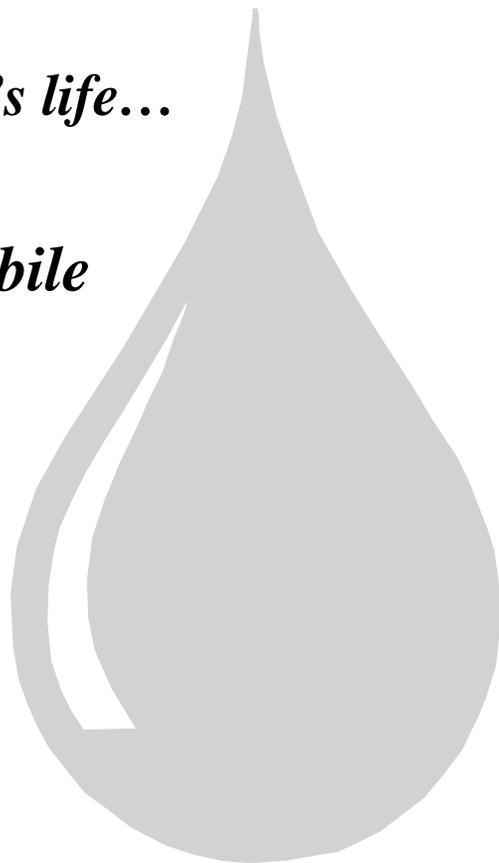
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

TUESDAY, AUGUST 29

8:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Call *Penny Schmitt* at 251-4626
to schedule appointment

T-Shirts for donors!



RETIREE

NEWS



There was a fair crowd of 16 attending this month's luncheon. The following retirees and spouses were present: Virginia Uzzell, Jean and Dan Grimsley, Lawrence Crawley,

Paul and Gloria Woodbury, Buddy Johnson, Dorothy K. Everette, Edith and Jim Vithalani, Joe Lewis, Sylvia Phillips and her granddaughter Lauren (a permanent fixture this summer), Bob Doetsch, Eric Matzke, and Paul Denison. I was certainly glad to see that Paul Denison was in attendance this month. I hope you caught that "old" part. Just a little dig at Max since he will be catching me toward the end of this month. There appeared to be a lot of activity about grandchildren this month with Lawrence bragging about a new grandson, Landon Summers and the Vithalanis looking forward to being grandparents again in April 2001, with Ginger, Roger's wife expecting. Eric and Betty Matzke had

their 15 year old twin granddaughters in from California for two weeks in July, and Betty indicated that they were a handful. Bob and Bettye Swart were in Florida checking on Missy and her family. That's just some of the nice things about being retired.

Dorothy expressed her appreciation of Mr. Tickner's and Penny's visit with us last month and would like for them to come back to see us soon. We would still like to hear from you folks out there in the field offices. I had received a nice note from Audrey with a picture of her new home in Asheville, her address is 55 Tiverton Lane, Asheville, NC 28803: telephone 828-274-1932. Y'all come by to see us once in a while or drop us a line to let us know how you are getting along. My address is 127 Pilgram Circle, Wilmington, NC 28401.

Congressman Mike McIntyre will speak on long-term care legislation at the September 6 meeting of NARFE, 11:00, Wilmington Elks Club. District Retirees are welcome!

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**Wilmington
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