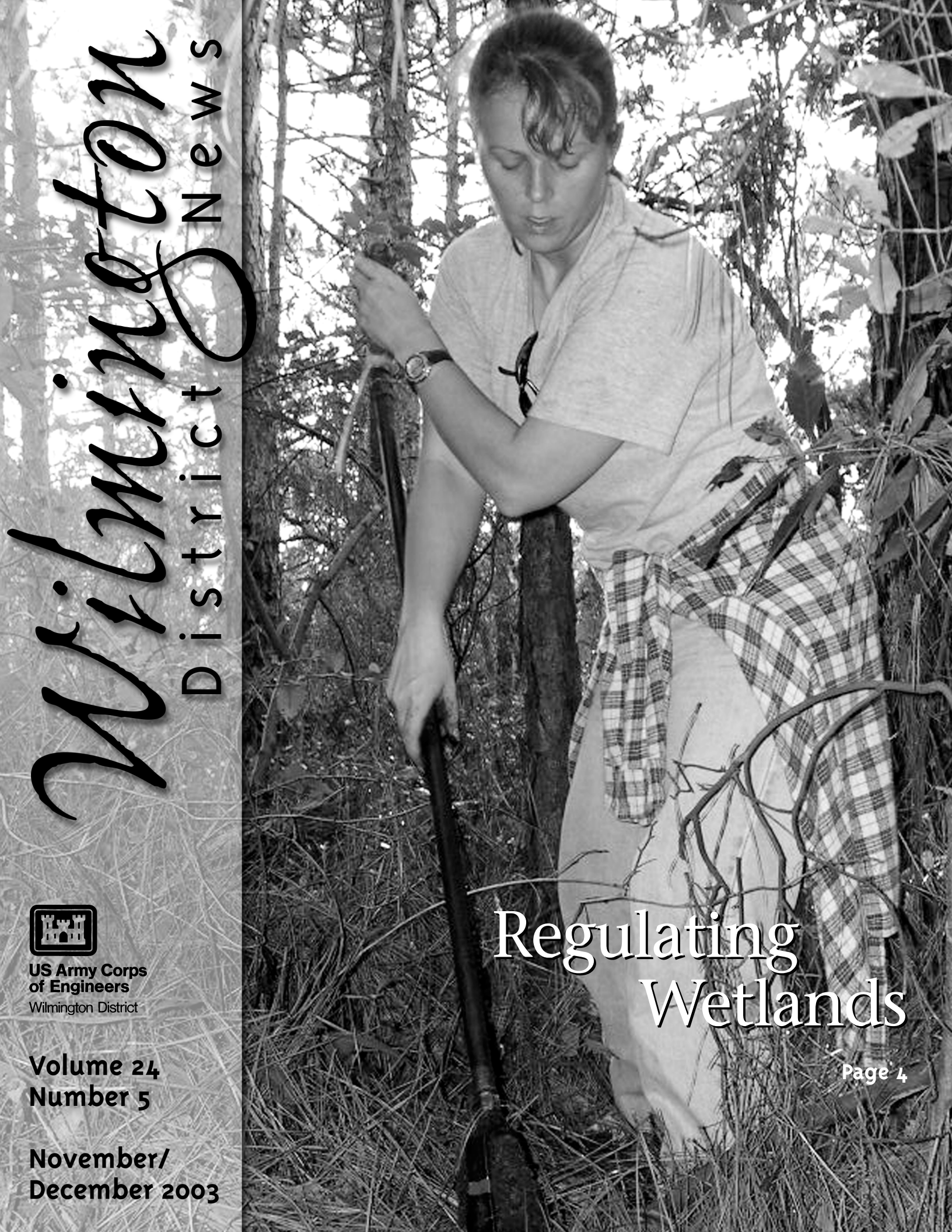
Wilmington District News



US Army Corps of Engineers
Wilmington District

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Regulating Wetlands

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On the Cover:
Angie Pennock checks the moisture content of an area of possible wetlands at a construction site.

Up Front – What a Year!

Wilmington Team,

As 2003 winds to a close, I want to share with you a few thoughts.

First, what a year! Who would have thought that USACE would so immersed in operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. Specifically, could any of us have forecasted that we would have team members deployed in support of these operations, both as Corps employees and activated reservists. The deployments continue and these missions remain our number one priority. There is no greater calling than selfless service for your Nation and I encourage you to consider volunteering if the circumstances support your doing so. South Atlantic Division is responsible for providing the interim headquarters for a USACE Provisional Gulf Region Division and over 100 volunteers are needed to fulfill this mission. The call to service overseas will not end anytime soon and this small Civil Works District will continue to have the opportunity to contribute to the global war on terror.

Second, a year ago outsourcing initiatives loomed over our heads and they still do. I expect some initial competitions to commence early next year with others to follow over the next several years. With outsourcing comes some anxiety over what the future holds. I understand. The best way to combat these initiatives is to strive to be the most efficient and effective organization on a daily basis. In the final analysis, if we already are that organization then we have nothing to worry about. If we are not, then we must review how we are conducting business so that we become better stewards of the funds that our government and those we serve provide us. You can help on a daily basis by being effective and efficient in all that you and we collectively do. I will continue to share with you information, as it is known, and a commitment to deal with challenges head on.

Third, USACE 2012; where did that come from? By now, you should know that USACE is reorganizing. The purpose is to better serve this Nation. USACE Headquarters will become smaller and the Division Headquarters as we know it will transform into a Regional Business Center. The focus remains on the District and the services we provide. There will be some realignment with national level services (i.e. Counsel, Internal Review, Human Resources, EEP, Small Business, and Safety) and we will move to provide regional level services in other areas (i.e. Logistics, IM, Safety, Contracting, Resource Management). For most of us, with whom you deal and where you sit will remain unchanged. To some degree though, those that we serve may live and work beyond our traditional boundaries. Again, more change and more anxiety, but I firmly

(Continued on next page...)

Chief of Engineers' Holiday Message

Take a Moment to Think About Corps Colleagues Overseas

The holidays are a time for remembering others, and for giving to others.

This year, I want us to remember that there are many in our Corps of Engineers family who are serving in harm's way in Afghanistan and Iraq. They are giving an expensive gift...willingly sacrificing their holiday with their families so that others who lived for decades under tyrannical rule might have a future of safety and freedom.

I'm enormously proud of them. They volunteered for an important cause, and they are doing excellent work under difficult circumstances.

Of course, Afghanistan and Iraq are not the only places where our Corps team members will spend the holidays. Our people are at work in 91 countries worldwide, and many of them will also be separated from their loved ones during the holidays.

Please take a few moments during these holidays to remember those in the Corps family who are serving overseas. If you are acquainted with some of them, please mail them a card or send them an e-mail letting them know that you're thinking about them, and that their service is appreciated.

I have also served overseas during the holidays under difficult conditions, and you can trust me on this...in the situations that our people face in Afghanistan and Iraq and elsewhere, simple gifts like those will be treasured.

For all of us, this has been a busy year. As in years past, the Corps of Engineers has taken part in events that made headlines, and made a difference.

When the space shuttle Columbia burned up during re-entry, Corps people took part in the search in Texas and other states to find debris that helped piece together what happened to the spacecraft.

During Supertyphoon Pongsona on Guam, Hurricane Isabel on the East Coast, and the wildfires in California, Corps emergency teams were on the scene to fight the disaster, and to clean up afterwards.

Whether it is helping clear landmines in Afghanistan, or advising the Iraqi Ministry of Water Resources in re-routing water to preserve the Marsh Arabs' way of life, or providing new facilities for the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, this year Corps people have continued making a difference in America, and in the world.

The holidays are also a time to look to the future, and the Corps of Engineers' future is bright. The plans for USACE 2012 have been released and are now being implemented. People throughout the Corps are learning the basics of the Project Management Business Process, cornerstone of the Corps' new way of doing business. And Corps people are learning the concepts of competitive sourcing, which will be our part in the President's Management Agenda.

LTG Robert B. Flowers, Chief of Engineers

These actions and others will give the Corps of Engineers the best possible gift...the ability to improve our service to the American people.

As always, I encourage all of you to take time off during this holiday season. Relax and have fun, and especially make time to enjoy your families.

And my family and I wish you all a safe and joyous holiday season, and a happy, prosperous New Year.

Essayons!
ROBERT B. FLOWERS
Lieutenant General, USA Commanding

(Continued from previous page...)

believe you will be pleased with the end result. We will remain a viable business entity for the future, fully prepared to tackle this Nation's water resources challenges while meeting the needs of national security, economic development, and environmental sustainment.

Fourth, our business processes and management systems continue to evolve. P2 will be fielded next May, PMBP instruction will continue, and other systems such as ORM in Regulatory will be implemented. More change to deal with, but all of it is again aimed at improving our efficiency and effectiveness.

Lastly, at the turn of the New Year, we will be losing our Deputy District Engineer for Programs and Project Management, Mr. Eugene Tickner. After 41 years of faithful and selfless service to this Nation as a commissioned Army officer and as a USACE employee, Eugene is retiring. Eugene is the consummate professional and I have immensely enjoyed our 19 months together. His most recent tour in Kuwait and Iraq serve as a capstone to a remarkable career. His shoes will be hard to fill and his departure adds to some of the turbulence and change we are all facing and dealing with.

Despite all this change, this Team has continued to execute every mission assigned. Our work in support of the Forward Engineer Support Team in Kuwait and Iraq, Hurricane Isabel operations and subsequent Hatteras breach repair, Wilmington Harbor execution, environmental outreach activities at our operations projects, Philpott's 50th anniversary celebration, and the successful processing of the Regulatory permit for the new FEDEX facility at the Greensboro Piedmont Triad Airport are but a few of the highlights. Every one of you is integral to our success in accomplishing our mission. This is exciting work at an exciting and challenging time in our Nation's history.

On behalf of my family and the District's senior leaders, I extend to you warm wishes for a safe and joyous holiday season. Thank you for what you do, who you are, and what you represent. It is an honor and privilege to serve with you and I look forward to the promises of the coming New Year. *Hoohah Holidays!*

Ray Alexander

Regulator Keeps Tabs on Wetlands

Angie Pennock checks jurisdictional boundaries on a map with a local contractor.

Story and photos by Hank Heusinkveld

It's around 3:30 on a typical afternoon for Angie Pennock. After spending most of the morning sifting through mounds of paperwork that are rapidly accumulating on her desk, she hits the road for an appointment with a private property owner's consultant near Monkey Junction. She's meeting with him to determine if there are wetland areas at a proposed construction site. Shortly after that she's off to another close-by area stomping through thick brush with another consultant for more of the same.

Pennock's job is filled with lots of travel and loads of paperwork. Her mission is to find out where the jurisdictional boundaries of federally protected wetlands are and to define what a wetland is. She works under guidelines of Section 404 of the Clean Water Act which safeguards the Nation's waters. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers issues permits to regulate the discharge of dredged or fill material into waters, which include wetland areas.

"The first thing that we do is find areas that are jurisdictional," she says. "That doesn't change based on what the project is. It's simply finding where the parameters are which describe what a wetland is. So, we walk through a tract looking at where we enter wetlands and where we leave them."

Defining a wetland can be tricky. A trained biologist like Pennock, however, uses three indicators; identification of plants that grow specifically in wetlands, soil composition and the amount of water in the soil.

"A lot of the wetlands that we see around here are called 'wetflats.' In those areas, you may not see any water expanding very often, maybe just in the early growing season. What we're really looking for is whether or not that water table comes within 12 inches of the surface for at least five percent of the growing season."

According to Pennock, what makes her job challenging at times is trying to explain wetlands regulations or simply helping people understand what a wetland is. She says on some occasions tempers have flared.

"I understand where that comes from sometimes. We're going on someone's private property saying, 'Oh, by the way the federal government regulates what you're doing here.' That can be a little uncomfortable and it makes people upset."

Pennock stresses the Corps of Engineers doesn't define buildable areas, but regulates the placement of fill into wetland areas.

"We tell people that if they're going to discharge fill material into a wetland to build a house, here's some things you need to keep in mind and you're going to need a permit. To get that

Jeff Richter: "If wetlands like this are damaged it sets off a disasterous chain reaction down river."

What makes her job challenging at times is trying to explain wetlands regulations or simply helping people understand what a wetland is.

permit you're going to need to avoid and minimize wetlands impacts and potentially provide compensatory mitigation."

Pennock says that means she works with folks as much as possible to resolve an issue within the bounds of regulations.

One easy way to identify wetlands is by the types of plants that grow in them.

"Because usually they don't know that our program exists and, in a lot of cases, once you tell them that it does exist, why it exists, and what the requirements are, they usually support it."

The public has various misconceptions about the Army Corps of Engineers as a steward for wetlands. Pennock says many of the people she meets in the field automatically assume everyone in the Corps is an engineer. They don't realize that it's comprised of many disciplines including biology, hydrology, archaeology and computer science to name a few.

As biologists, Pennock and her colleagues often see first-hand the damaging effects of wetlands loss. In addition to providing homes to various critters, wetlands act as a natural filter, likened somewhat to a human kidney filtering various toxins. But if wetlands are altered or destroyed the results can be drastic.

"Some of the results that you might see around here are closure for shellfishing, restricted fishing, areas where it's recommended that you don't swim because the chemical levels are too high in the tidal creeks."

Jeff Richter, another District biologist who spent several years in Regulatory, says wetlands are complex parts of nature that are often underestimated in their importance to overall ecology. Surveying the tidal wetland area of Whiskey Creek he knows what would happen if this area were left unregulated.

"You could take out one acre of this tidal creek, not that big a deal. It's just a cumulative effect that really jeopardizes the whole area. And that's where you see the water quality going down, closed shellfishing, erosion, sedimentation. Just downstream you'd start seeing all of the negative effects if the filtering functions were taken away from here and they'd overwhelm other wetlands farther and farther downstream."

It's a sometimes thankless and consuming job trying to regulate vast acres of wetlands. But Pennock's love of biology and sense of mission motivate her to keep hitting the road to tromp through the woods to help safeguard an invaluable piece of the environmental puzzle.

"I absolutely love my work. I think it's really, really rare that you find a job that you love. I love being in the field. Paperwork's not my favorite, but it has to be done. I can't imagine doing any other line of work because I think I've got it too good."

Pennock checks the moisture content in soil to determine if she'll consider it wetlands.

Henry Wicker faces another day of endless amounts of paperwork.

Veteran's Day 2003 at "The Wall"

Story and photos by
Hank Heusinkveld

This Air Force Vietnam Vet, overcome with emotion, remembers friends killed or missing in action in Southeast Asia.

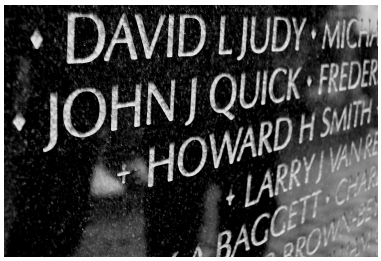
It's 8:45 PM on the eve of Veteran's Day at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial on the Mall in Washington, D.C. Gathered on this cold November night near a prominent statue of three "grunts" is a small group of Vietnam Vets who talk as though their time in Southeast Asia were only yesterday. Two in this group happen to be members of 2/5 Marines who in February of 1968 infiltrated the perimeter of a North Vietnamese and Viet Cong stronghold in the Battle for Hue City just after the beginning of the Tet Offensive.

"You remember runnin' down the hill n' crossin' the river?!"

"Yeah! And we made it all the way to the citadel. Man, I can still see Charlie shootin' at us. We gave 'em hell!"

One of the vets, with a slight smile on his gray-bearded face, turns and says, "This is a unique fraternity, brother."

The group soon meanders its way to the Vietnam Women's Memorial which marks its 10th anniversary this year. One of the vets looks at the bronze figure of a female nurse cradling a wounded GI. The vet gently clutches his Purple Heart that's dangling with other ribbons and medals he earned during his time in "The Nam."



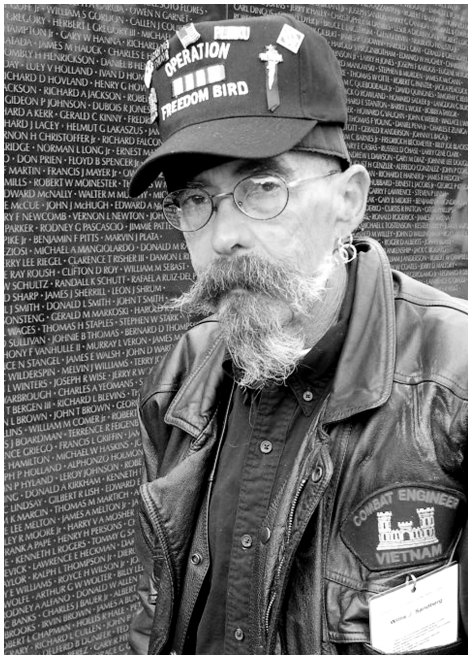
20-year-old John James Quick of Saginaw, Michigan served in the 101st Airborne Division and was killed in 1968.

"They took good care of us...they took good care of us."

Already it's nearing 10 PM. The Wall is barely visible, its black granite finish almost fully absorbed into the dark of the night. However, there are dozens of folks walking along the dimly lit memorial, some gazing at the overwhelming number of names on the middle section of the memorial, while others drop off a flower or some other type of memento. One person simply runs his fingers on a random name.

Throughout the next day, Veterans Day, thousands of people come to the area for one of the most unique pilgrimages in the metropolitan D.C. area. Vets proudly wear their old uniforms, some of which fit snugly while others are bursting at the seams. They're mixed in with sons, daughters, grandkids, uncles, aunts, wives and friends who inch along in a quiet procession along both ends of the Wall. It's very quiet except for an

Diane Evans, creator of the Vietnam Women's Memorial, talks at the podium in front of the Wall on Veterans Day.



This Vietnam Vet combat engineer came to the Wall to pay respects to fallen comrades and others who lost their lives.

occasional "There he is!" from a friend or relative who spots a name on the memorial. National Park Service employees stand at the ready to hand out pieces of paper and pencils for folks to etch a name.

More mementos fill the base of the Wall. There are framed pictures of GI's in basic training before shipping out to Vietnam next to recent pictures of the children of children whose fathers were killed. People navigate around dozens of wreaths honoring various

A typical memento left at the Wall.

Vets proudly wear their old uniforms, some of which fit snugly while others are bursting at the seams. They're mixed in with sons, daughters, grandkids, uncles, aunts, wives and friends who inch along in a quiet procession along both ends of the Wall.

elements like the 25th Infantry Division "Tropic Lightning" or the 1st Infantry Division "The Big Red One." And there's a can of chicken soup with a letter. It's from a former Army nurse who in 1969 was preparing a semi-romantic dinner for two at a field hospital for an aviator she had recently met. However, his helicopter was shot down, killing him, his copilot and crew members. It's taken her 34 years to fix that "dinner". The letter and can sit just inches below his name on the Wall.

This combat engineer officer completed his tour of duty in Vietnam. More than 58-thousand service members did not.

A statue of three infantrymen or "grunts" still receives mementos from well wishers.

In honor of SAW Vietnam Vets whose names are listed below, welcome home.

Allan McDuffie, USAF, 1967-68
Tom Corder, USA, 1968
Ron Stirrat, USMC, 1965-66
Len Farmer, USAF, 1966-67
Ronald E. Roberts, USMC, 1969-70
Fred Lehman, USN, 1967-68
Erwin T. Robertson, USA, 1970-71
Skip Vealey, USMC, 1969
Ron McBride, USN, 1969
Leroy Potter, Merchant Marine
*Bill Stahl, USAF, ***
Henry Spool, USA, 1969-70
*Raymond Bost, USN, ***
*Walter Evans, USA, ***
Barry "Fuzzy" Holt, USA, 1967-69
Jim Mann, USN, 1964-65
Gwyn Church, USA, 1969-70
Leon Sikes, USN, 1965-66
Willard Via, USA, 1968-69
William Lee, USA, 1968-69
Ralph Duckson, USN, 1972-74
Bernard F. Scerbo, USCG, 1967

In the Spotlight

H and H's Dan Emerson: "Aish-Tay-Yah"

Story by
Hank Heusinkveld

(Editor's note- This is the first of a regular feature on an SAW employee chosen at random who has a unique story to tell.)

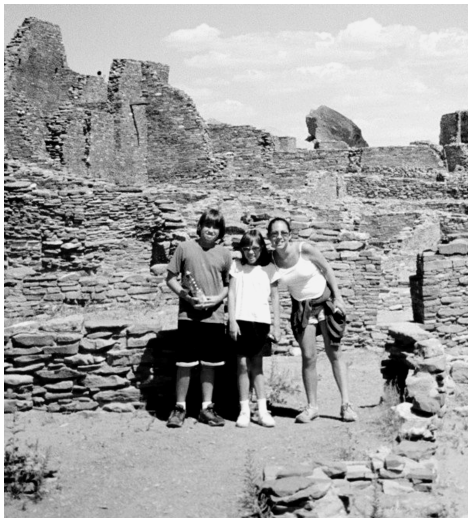
His name in the language of the Diné (dih-neh), commonly known as Navaho, is "Aish- Tay-Yah" or "The One With the Plan."

Dan Emerson's grandmother Lucy, a 93-year-old Diné who lives near Shiprock, New Mexico, gave him the name this past summer after a family visit. But getting it wasn't easy.

"I asked my grandmother to give me a name, but she refused," he says. "She said it wasn't a proper procedure because there's usually ceremonies and the like. I just left it at that, but my aunt was lobbying for me because I had come such a long way to see her that I think she convinced her to give me the name."

There was another barrier he faced before his grandmother conceded and gave him a Navaho name. He couldn't understand what she was telling him because she doesn't speak English.

"Not a bit of it!" he says with a chuckle. "Whenever I go to visit her, and I've only met her five or six times, I need to bring an uncle to interpret for me and sometimes that can be hard to do. If one uncle's not there I have to go search for about another 50 miles trying to find another uncle!"



The Emerson children pose for the camera before ruins of an ancient Anastasi village.

Dan Emerson with his grandmother, Lucy.

Emerson is proud of his Navaho name, something that gives him a tie to his Indian heritage even though he's geographically isolated from the rest of his family. He has no idea why she gave him this particular name, but it fits perfectly into Dan's journey in life, a road wrought with an abundance of emotional pain, yet laden with perseverance. In essence, Dan did in fact have "a plan."

His story begins with his father, a 10-year-old Navaho lad who was uprooted from New Mexico in the 1940s and sent away to a government-run Indian boarding school in Oregon. There he was thrust into a culture of a different language and customs, and he was far from home. He rarely made it back to New Mexico.

As time passed, Dan's father migrated to Seattle where he met his wife, a full-blooded Skokomish Indian whose tribe lived just west of Tacoma, Washington. He and a few other Navaho men and their families lived in a tightly knit Navaho community in Seattle. Dan played with other Navaho kids growing up, but lived a life unlike his father's. Becoming ever more distant from traditional Navaho life, Dan's father and other Navaho men turned to alcohol.

"I think that was a great tragedy and it...it showed up in our family. They lost their customs and they weren't taught parental skills passed on to family. I think my father was torn having lost his language and the customs."

And so followed a chain reaction. Dan's mother became drug dependent trying to cope with an alcoholic husband, and two of his siblings took their own lives having lost a sense of hope. It was a complicated situation that Dan can only figure was triggered by his father's loss of identity.

"So it was all about losing a sense of culture and being thrown into a culture that you didn't know anything about."

But "The One With the Plan" chose his own path in life. He entered the Marine Corps after graduating from high school and spent the next two years in Beaufort, South Carolina and Japan.

After military service he returned to the Pacific Northwest and decided to use his GI Bill to go to college. Jobs were tight so he figured he'd bide time at the University of Washington after consultation with an Indian guidance counselor.

"Just for the heck of it I took some college courses and continued looking for a job, but there was nothing to be had so I just stuck with college. I had no intentions of staying in college."

Part of the reason he was apprehensive about remaining in school was a feeling that plagued him while growing up with an alcoholic father.

"I felt inferior, I felt like a second class citizen, even in Seattle," he recalls. "I think a lot had to do with the family life. I just felt that I didn't have a lot of self esteem."

But Emerson eventually realized something when he was taking more and more difficult classes and when he began preparing for a possible career in medicine.

"After the first quarter of school I thought, 'Wait a minute...my grades are better than some of these people I'm taking classes with!'"

His path changed permanently after he realized that being in pre-med meant more time than he really wanted to spend in school. He had a solid background in calculus, chemistry, and other high-level courses, so an advisor steered him toward engineering.

"I like the outdoors, and the only engineering related to work outdoors would be civil so I chose civil engineering."

With his degree in hand, Emerson threw out resumes, primarily in the east. A woman he'd met in South Carolina during his time in the Marine Corps motivated him to try to find work there. He entered the Army's Internship program and was hired shortly after by the Wilmington District.

As an engineer in Hydrolics and Hydrology Emerson oversees the release of water from John H. Kerr and Philpott Dams, a job that involves various complicated decisions at times.

"It's a big responsibility because you could easily make a mistake and put people in danger who are downstream maybe kayaking or boating and you're releasing water pretty quickly."

Lucy Emerson sits outside her home near Shiprock, New Mexico.

The One With the Plan's life story twists and turns, but in the long run it has been a straight path. He has a strong sense of identity to his Navaho and Skokomish roots. Drawn on a tiny piece of paper tacked to the wall by his desk is an original design of a future wood carving that blends Pacific Northwest with Southwestern Indian art, a tie that helps him keep his cultural roots. It's something he's passing along to his own children who seem eager to keep a sense of their own identity to pass along some day to their children.

Dan's uncle, Harvey Emerson, translates from Navaho to English.

Elderly Folks Adopted by Christmas Angel Program

Diane Boswell says there's still time to donate food, clothing or toiletry items for the Christmas Angel Program.

For Diane Boswell the Season of Giving extends all the way from Thanksgiving into December.

For the past few years, the AFGE 0406 Local has sponsored the Christmas Angel Program which helps a needy family or person. This year the group is keeping its high standard of community support, but it's adding a new element.

"In the past, we have gotten names from the Social Service Agency for children in foster care, she says. "This year, we thought we might do something a little different."

In addition to helping children her group decided to help the elderly. One person already selected is a 74-year-old woman who lives by herself. Boswell says the woman isn't asking for anything extravagant, just basic items like washing powder, bleach, soap, and food items. The other elderly recipients are a diabetic husband with throat cancer and his wife who are also asking for simple items. The couple receives social security and a few food stamps each month, but Boswell says they'd be grateful for food items, cleaning supplies, body lotion and powder.

Boswell says she finds it "amazing" that all they ask for are simple things. She does, however, plan to surprise them with unexpected gifts from monetary donations. And so far she's seen donations pour in steadily.

"The ones (in the District) who don't want to go out and buy anything, they said they'd donate money. I've had people come in here with 20 dollar bills, 10 dollar bills...it's really heartwarming to see this."

Boswell says that there's still time to make more donations. The group will collect all goods on the 19th and distribute them shortly after.

Combined Federal Campaign Exceeds Goal This Year

The Combined Federal Campaign within the District exceeded its goal this year, beating last year's figure by more than $2,400 dollars.

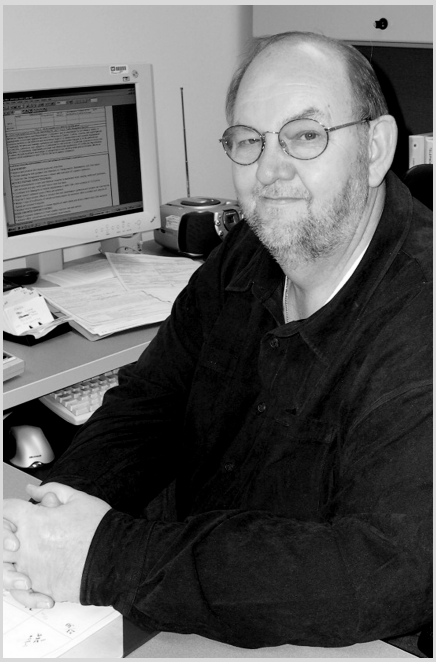
The goal this year was $26,410, but that figure was upped to $27,067. IM's Sharon Sutton, who coordinated the CFC drive, said the boost came from an outpouring of support for Information Management chief Larry Mitchell who was this year's designated CFC chairperson until he was stricken with medical problems.

"We did it for Larry. But we always come through during CFC to reach our goal."

Hale Wins DA Award

Harvey T. Hale received the Department of the Army's Outstanding Army Employee with a Disability for 2003 during a special ceremony at the Pentagon. The Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, the Honorable Reginald J. Brown, presented the award to Hale.

He was accompanied to the Nation's Capitol by SAW District Engineer Colonel Ray Alexander and SAW Commander Brigadier General Randal Castro.



Congratulations H.T.!!

Wally Byam Volunteers Support Kerr Reservoir

The end of October 2003 was a very fortunate time for John H. Kerr Reservoir when 58 campers from the Wally Byam International Caravan Club convened at North Bend Park for a week of volunteering. The group finished projects at four locations, putting in 1,735 hours of work, with a value of service to the United States of $18,704.

Mr. Chuck Gregory, HQ, USACE retiree, was the volunteer work leader for the group. Plans began in early April with on-site meetings and dialogue between the staff at Kerr, Cube (the O&M Contractor at Kerr), and the Wally Byam team.

Mike Large, Park Ranger, served as the Corps' team leader for the group. "The coordination that goes into this is extraordinary. We have face to face meetings as well as frequent contact; by the time the group gets here, they're ready to roll," said Large.

The Wally Byam Volunteers split into small work groups and were able to accomplish four major projects. The group landscaped the Joseph S. J. Tanner, II Environmental Education Center, which included plans developed by Master Gardner and volunteer Jean Tracy.

Workers smooth out concrete footings at the Eric W. Rogers Ampitheater.

The volunteers replaced old wooden seats in the Eric W. Rodgers Amphitheater with aluminum ones. This also involved building forms, pouring concrete footings, and attaching the seats. The Rodgers Amphitheater, constructed in 1975, has been inundated with floodwaters on several occasions, and the seat replacement was for safety as well as for maintenance reduction.

North Bend Park and Palmer Point received new, universally accessible, concrete walkways leading to the vault toilets. These projects improved safety and customer satisfaction.

The volunteer quarters, two old houses built in the 1940's during construction of Kerr Dam, received much-needed erosion and drainage improvements to the perimeter of the buildings. Another group painted the picnic shelters in Area A, North Bend Park.

"I just can't say enough great things about these fine folks," said Ranger Large. "They came here last year and built the deck on the Tanner Center and started the landscaping. We will miss them next year, when they have to move on."

Wally Byam was the inventor of the Air Stream trailer.

– By Sherrie Storm, Park Ranger

Thanks go to these volunteers who generously donated their time!

Team Kerr Spreads Christmas Joy

Team Kerr welcomes in the Christmas Season 2003 by joining the festivities in Christmas Parades in THREE local communities.

The theme for Kerr's 2003 entry is "Generating a Flow of Wishes for a Safe Holiday". The float is adorned with a replica of Kerr Dam, designed and built by Mickey Stepp who is a member of Kerr's O&M contractor TEAM-Cube, Inc. and Furguson-Williams.

The float also has a picnic/camping site with table, grill, and lantern holder set up on green "turf". Atop the gooseneck trailer will sit a tree, adorned with red, white, and blue ornaments and yellow ribbons honoring our Troops. On top of the tree waves the American Flag.

Joyce Taylor, chairperson for the three events, organized the volunteers, coordinated the schedules, arranged for the decorations, located places to get the float and parade crew together, and generally kept the TEAM on track.

"It is really a lot of fun," said Taylor. "Each of us does the work on our own time mostly, because we are doing this in the Spirit of Christmas."

Cube, Inc. and its sub-contractor Furguson-Williams supplied the float design and construction.

"We live here, we have raised our kids here, and the communities depend so much on the lake and the Corps of Engineers."

– Robert Dennis, Acting Operations Manager

Mickey Stepp poses with his replica of Kerr Dam. His wife created water effects and roads, complete with riprap and little cars.

Command Sergeant Major (Ret.) John Hemrick, Cube Project Manager said, "It is always a pleasure to work as a team with the Corps, and this time of year it is especially meaningful." Hemrick pointed out that each employee is part of the lake's communities and this brings ownership to the job. "It also brings us into the community," Hemrick continued.

"This is the third year we've participated in the parades in our communities, and we wouldn't have it any other way," said Rose Sullivan, Co-Chairperson of the Parade Committee.

"We live here, we have raised our kids here, and the communities depend so much on the lake and the Corps of Engineers," said Robert Dennis, Acting Operations Manager. "We do this because it is the right thing to do," he said, "And besides, it's just FUN!"

"We can't say enough about Cube, Inc. and Furguson-Williams," said Dennis. "We have not had an event yet that John Hemrick and Belinda Finley haven't jumped in 200% to help out," Dennis explained.

The Parade Crew consists of Powerhouse, Parks, Shoreline, Natural Resources, and Contracting personnel: Joyce Taylor, Rose Sullivan, Wayne Fussell, Shannon Boyd, Mary Wells, Buck Buchannon, Michael Womack, Alyson Parker, Iverson Ryland, Will Harlon, Sandra Lowe, Tyree Robertson, and Sherrie Storm.

The Staff at Kerr wishes a SAFE and Happy Holiday to all of Wilmington District!

– By Sherrie Storm, Park Ranger

Plan Focuses on Safety

A Safety or Risk Management objective has appeared in almost every Operations Plan since the program began in the Wilmington District. Why is that? Because safe working conditions and safety-conscious work habits are vitally important to us all.

This year's Risk Management objective focuses on the Safety Management Action Plan (SMAP), a plan that every district is required by Headquarters to develop and implement. In Bill Harris' own words "the SMAP is a tracker of statutory requirements of our Safety Manual, various old and new rules and regulations, our Division SMAP, and Safety Management Evaluation required from the Division". The SMAP insures that accidents are documented and that steps are taken to prevent accidents.

Completing Objective 2.3 does not depend on the District accident rate. However, we can certainly expect that there will be a positive relationship between completing and implementing a good SMAP and a lower rate of accidents. When it is followed carefully and consistently, a Safety Management Action Plan should influence and change the human behavior that causes most injuries.

In Safety Officer Bill Harris' own words this really boils down to "How do we stop people from committing unsafe (often referred to as stupid) acts?" The SMAP is a great tool-and making sure we have and use the best tool to prevent injuries is something we CAN control.

Only YOU can control whether the SMAP is effective – by following it and seeking opportunities to improve it if you see a need.

Where do most of our District's accidents happen? Most occur on our dredges and with our contractors. As we go to press, the most recent accident in our District involved a snapped cable striking a dredge worker in the face and breaking his nose. The incident – which could potentially have been fatal – might have been avoided by ensuring workers stay in a sheltered location when working around cables under tension. That change has already been made in the SMAP!

– By Debbie Wilkes and Genia Boswell, Internal Review

Safety is continually stressed on any type of job, especially when working with dangerous objects like the teeth of this dredge.

WebsiteHighlights@janwutkowski.wdn

A wide range of topics are included in the month's column including several engineering related sites, the Wright Brothers, the Federal Labor Relations Authority, and the beginning of a new in-depth topic of the month; this month the focus is sand dunes.

Remember to go the Technical Library's website at http://www.saw.usace.army.mil/library/bulletin-board.htm to hotlink quickly and easily to this month's highlighted websites-and to bookmark the ones that may be of future use to you.

WISE: Journal of Engineering and Public Policy [pdf]
http://www.wise-intern.org/research.html
"The Journal of Engineering and Public Policy is an electronic compendium of research papers prepared by engineering students participating in the annual Washington Internships for Students of Engineering (WISE)." Papers are currently available for the first six years of the program and include topics such as homeland security, ranging from critical infrastructure protection to computer and Internet security, as well as communications, transportation, engineering policy, and more.

New Challenges, New Tools for Defense Decisionmaking [pdf]
http://www.rand.org/publications/MR/MR1576/
This Web site provides full text of the 2003 book New Challenges, New Tools for Defense Decisionmaking. The book examines the transformation in U.S. foreign and defense policy prompted by the end of the Cold War and, the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. Attention is given to current and future technologies and information management including one chapter surmising the Soldier of the 21st Century and what advances in special operations could be seen in the future. The virtual battlefield and information warfare are discussed in another chapter.

Engineering Resources: The Engineers Forum on Sustainability [pdf]
http://www.asee.org/neic/efs/default.cfm
Co-sponsored by three prominent engineering societies, the Engineers Forum on Sustainability was founded to "help promote the principles and practice of sustainability." The forum's newsletter can be viewed at this site. It contains information on worldwide activities and developments in the field of sustainability, including educational initiatives, environmental protection programs, international conferences, and more. The newsletter is released roughly three times a year.

Federal Labor Relations Authority
http://www.flra.gov/
The Federal Labor Relations Authority (FLRA) is an independent agency that is responsible for administering the labor-management relations program for close to 2 million federal employees across the world. As noted on the Web site, their mission is "to promote stable and constructive labor-management relations that contribute to an efficient and effective government." The FLRA's site provides a host of information about recent cases decided by the Authority, along with information about its activities and current staff roster.

Wilbur and Orville Wright Papers
http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/wrighthtml/
The Library of Congress recently announced the resource of the Wilbur and Orville Wright Papers. This collection contains over 10,000 items related to the Wright brothers and includes correspondence, diaries, notebooks, drawings, and a collection of glass-plate photographic negatives. The collection can be searched by keyword or browsed by the seven collections, including "Diaries and Notebooks, 1900-19, undated" to "Glass negatives from the Papers of Wilbur and Orville Wright". Examples of pictures include the kitchen of the Kitty Hawk camp, and a picture of the 1901 glider being flown as a kite.

Hurricane Isabel Water Quality Impacts
http://mddnr.chesapeakebay.net/eyesonthebay/isabel_impacts.html

Hurricane Impacts on the Chesapeake Bay
http://www.dnr.state.md.us/bay/
Both sites, created by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, discuss how Isabel affected the Chesapeake and Coastal Bays region. In the first site, see how the hurricane affected water quality by viewing the assorted graphs demonstrating the varying wind speeds, water levels, salinity, turbidity, and chlorophyll amounts from September 16th to the 22nd. The second site explains how Maryland assesses hurricane impacts, how nutrient and sediment processes were affected, as well as how the Wastewater Overflows altered the Chesapeake Bay water quality.

Report Card for America's Infrastructure: 2003 Progress Report [Macromedia Flash Reader, pdf]
http://www.asce.org/reportcard/
In September 2003, the American Society of Civil Engineers published an update to its 2001 evaluation of U.S. infrastructure. The progress report found no improvement in any of the twelve categories (roads, bridges, transit, dams, and others) and the overall grade remained at a D+. Of these categories, ASCE reported no progress in five and a decline in the remaining seven. Visitors can browse the results online or download the seven-page document for offline viewing. State-specific information is available.

(Continued on next page...)

Corps Family News

SSG Jason Alexander and SGT Heather Alexander (above), daughter of Philpott's **Susan Traxel**, were re-enlisted by COL Jonathan Jaffin, the Walter Reed Health Care Systems Commander 09 September 2003 at Walter Reed Army Medical Center. This was the first re-enlistment that COL Jaffin performed where both husband and wife re-enlisted together.

Maksim Hromiak, his wife Amy and son Alex welcomed their newest member, a daughter, Ava Vinita to the world on Sunday, November 16 at 1001. Ava weighed seven pounds, five ounces and was 20 inches tall upon arrival. For those that do not know, Maks is an engineer at the Wilmington Harbor Resident Office, Construction Branch.

Reaching Out

On Saturday October 4, **Carmen Boyette**, **John Rochevot**, **Dana Lee**, and **Josh Davis** manned a bald eagle display at the annual Jordan Lake State Park Heritage Day Festival. Approximately 2000 people attended the event at the Seaforth Day Use Area.

On October 13, **Carol Banaitis** manned a COE water safety booth at a Hispanic health fair in Durham. Approximately 1,800 people attended the event.

On Sunday, October 19, the US Army Corps of Engineers hosted an environmental education event called "Walk With Wildlife" at the Indian Creek Wildlife Observation Area. The Corps, the New Hope Audubon Society, and the Carolina Raptor Center offered displays about, the history of the lake, bald eagles, native birds, and birds of prey. Participants also enjoyed an interpretive nature hike through the area. As the trail approached the wildlife observation platform, Conservation Biologist, **Michael Hosey** assisted visitors with bird identification. Other Corps rangers **Carmen Boyette**, **Dana Lee**, and student trainee **John Rochevot** assisted approximately 75 participants with trail and display information. The highlight of the event was the sighting of a juvenile bald eagle sitting on and flying close to a nest that was inactive last season.

Deputy District Engineer **Major Randy Powell** visited St. Marks Elementary School. He spoke about E cybermission, an Army sponsored math and science competition.

(Continued from previous page...)

Topic In Depth: Sand Dunes

1 Formation and Functions of Beaches and Sand Dunes [pdf]
http://www.ebop.govt.nz/coast/media/pdf/CCB02.pdf

2 Sand Dunes
http://www.mesa.edu.au/habitat/dunes01.asp#p1

3 Dune System [pdf]
http://museum.gov.ns.ca/mnh/nature/nhns/h2/h2-6.pdf

4 Geology of Sand Dunes
http://www.nps.gov/whsa/Sand%20Dune%20Geology.htm

5 GPR stratigraphy of a large active dune on Parengarenga Sandspit, New Zealand
http://www.nmt.edu/~rvd/pdf/tle2003.pdf

6 Vanishing Lake Michigan Sand Dunes: Threats from Mining [pdf]
http://www.lakemichigan.org/habitat/dune_report.pdf

7 Sand Dunes
http://www.michigan.gov/deq/0,1607,7-135-3311_4114—,00.html

8 Great Sand Dunes (Southern Colorado, San Luis Valley)
http://www.artec.uni-bremen.de/people/Eva/USA/Sand_Dunes.html

The Environment Bay of Plenty in New Zealand has an online brochure (1) dealing with the coastal processes that form sand dunes and beaches. From this site, users can obtain a general understanding of how dunes change with time. Ted Brambleby developed the second site (2) for the Marine Education Society of Australasia, Inc. This site gives a great overview of the functions and formations of dunes as well as describing their unique beauty and strategies on how to care for the dunes. Produced by Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History, the third site (3) is an online pamphlet discussing the physical features and locations of sand dunes in Nova Scotia. Visitors can also read about the ecosystem supported by these dynamic features. The forth site (4), created by John Mangimeli for the National Park Service, is a review of the scientific research completed throughout the years dealing with the geology of sand dunes. Visitors will find a more in-depth discussion about sand movement, sand accumulation, and sand dune features. The fifth site is a scientific paper (5) written by R.L. Van Dam, et al. Studying the long term evolution of the Parengarenga Sandspit, these researchers used ground penetrating radar (GPR) "to (1) explore the possibilities for mapping lateral continuity of the coffee rock, (2) study the sedimentary architecture and stratigraphy of the solitary dunes, and (3) reconstruct the wind regime on the sandspit." The next two sites discuss the threats to sand dunes and activities taking place to protect them. The Lake Michigan Federation addresses the issues of mining (6). Visitors can learn about alternatives to mining dune sand and the ecological values of dunes. The Department of Environmental Quality in Michigan created a site ({7—http://www.michigan.gov/deq/0,1607,7-135-3311_4114—,00.html}) that provides users with statistical information dealing with the amount of sand harvested, the regulations of mining, and maps of critical dune areas. After learning about the formation, processes, threats, and protections efforts; the last site (8), created by Eva Hornecker with the University of Bremen, will allow users to get a real sense of the beauty of the sand dunes. The site features a collage of spectacular images of the Great Sand Dunes in the San Luis Valley. From The Scout Report, Copyright Internet Scout Project 1994-2003. http://scout.wisc.edu/

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