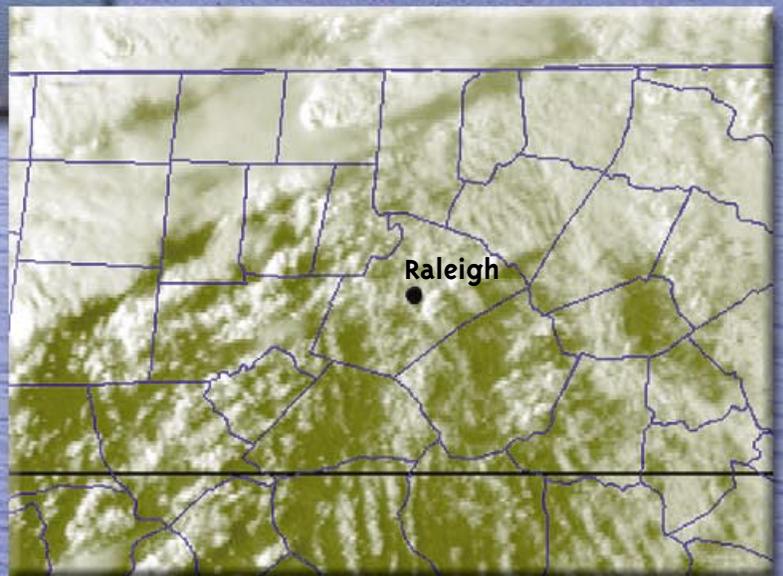


Wilmington

District News

Volume 26 • Number 9

October 2005



Drought!

*A Hole in the Rain Pattern Brings
Drought to the Raleigh Area*

Pages 4 & 5

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On the Cover:

Though hard to believe, North Carolina is suffering through another drought. Details on pages 4 and 5.

Up Front

Some good 'resolutions' for our Fiscal New Year

Happy New Year! Wow, with the dedicated efforts of many in Resources Management and all through the District, we have successfully closed the books on another Fiscal Year. At the same time we handled the biggest emergency water supply mission ever. And major projects like the Wilmington Harbor Channel Deepening, the Kerr rehab project, and the Roanoke Flood Reduction project are making big gains.

Wilmington District has every right to be feeling a little buzz of excitement, like the one that comes with cooler weather and the opening of a new football season. It's a good time to grab onto that excitement and carry it forward into the coming months.

That new-year push forward is one sign of increased energy. We can also draw some power from the clearer signals we're starting to get on work force initiatives like the National Security Personnel System (NSPS), the logistics High Performance Organization (HPO) and the A-76 privatization competition under way in our Information Management arena. None of these initiatives look as catastrophic now as we might have feared they would be a year ago.

We can live through these changes and adjust, because of the lean, excellent organization we already have. We have a lot of work to do. In fact, we truly have a medium-size district workload and a small district size work force. If new initiatives face you with the prospect of change in your career, I urge you to consider all the opportunities that may come up within our District. I'll say it again . . . we have a lot of work to do, and we will need the kind of great talent and dedication you all bring.

I know there's enormous talent and dedication in this organization, because over the past few months, I have visited every lake, lock and dam, regulatory office, our engineer yard, and our vessels the FRY, the MERRITT and the GILLETTE. I also met with the crew of the SNELL. I look forward to visiting the SANDERSON and the CURRITUCK. When I do, I know what I will find. The same thing I have found wherever I go in Wilmington District-excellence, big-heartedness, and dedication. Your work is known and valued in many small towns and high state offices. I have talked with local mayors and with the Secretaries of DENR and DOT and the Adjutant General and the Chief of Public Safety. You have an incredibly strong reputation as a force for good. You are known and loved!

With people like you working together, FY 2006 is certain to be a great year!



COL John Pulliam

Time and Patience Needed to Rebuild Iraq

Wilmington District Deputy District Engineer Lieutenant Colonel Bud Jones moved to the Gulf Region Division in April to begin his six-month deployment. As the new Deputy District Commander and Tikrit Area Engineer of the GRD Northern District he was in charge of \$300 million in projects and had 25 employees.

According to Jones, he witnessed progress being made daily. However, he felt that things could progress further if the Iraqis could break down their own historic cultural barriers and begin working as one team.

“I worked with Kurds, Sunnis, and Shiites,” he said. “A lot of the work force were Shiites who really wanted to work and had good skills, but Sunnis were used to being in charge and wanted to be in charge.”

Jones slowly learned how the Iraqis interacted with each other to rebuild their country. He said that building schools, clinics and police stations was



CJ McCann evaluates bids with two Iraqi contractors as LTC Doug Vicot looks on.

the easy part. Building relationships was more of a challenge. To get the point across that teamwork was essential, he sometimes resorted to “creative” supervision.

“We took away their pay. Money still talks, and if they weren’t working well together we didn’t pay them. Eventually they started talking with each

other.”

Despite the dissimilarities among the three main sects in Iraq, Jones said it was fascinating to witness nation building as it happened. He noted that pushing the “American way” of doing business sometimes wasn’t well received. He referred to USACE methods as “alternate.”

“They’re taking what makes sense to them, what they’ve always done. We’re trying to change culture and you can’t expect to do that overnight. It’s not fair. You have to let them see for themselves what is better, and if they see that it’s better then they’ll be willing to try it.”

Jones said he saw some construction methods that were “really quite good.” He said they built things that didn’t require high-tech and state-of-the-art materials.

“That’s pretty interesting to see some of the basic engineering techniques that we’ve long forgotten that had to be used by necessity. Some of the things they’ve built looked like houses of sticks that were being used for scaffolding to support the buildings. So, who’s to say that having prefabricated aluminum scaffolding that we use in America is the answer? There are other answers



LTC Bud Jones poses with members of the Tikrit Area Office Erynis security team.

– continued on page 10

Rainy Summer Skips Over Two NC River Basins

By Penny Schmitt



Because of the low levels of water at Falls Lake Raleigh residents have had to change the way they normally use water. Raleigh city leaders imposed mandatory water restrictions after the city's main water supply reached its lowest level since 2002.

Drought? In a summer marked by staggering floods, a record number of hurricanes and tropical storms, and a distinctly soggy fall along the east coast, the shrinking shorelines of two Corps reservoirs seem illogical. But there's been a year-long 'hole in the rain pattern' over the upper Neuse and Cape Fear River basins, parching two reservoirs that provide supplemental flows to downstream areas and also serve as primary water supplies and provoking mandatory water use restrictions in the City of Raleigh and surrounding municipalities.

"Ironically, the current drought is very similar to the drought that affected the same area in 1933 to 1934. The very active tropical season this year has also been compared to the tropical season that occurred in 1933." said Terry Brown, Wilmington District's water control manager

By the end of October, Falls Lake, which serves as Raleigh's main water supply, was more than 7 feet below guide curve. B. Everett Jordan Lake, which supplies drinking water to many piedmont cities, was more than 3 feet low.

Every drought, like every major storm, has its own personality. This

"When drought or flooding hits, our ability to share information helps us to make the best possible decisions.."

year's drought affects a more targeted area, while other parts of North Carolina have received unusually high amounts of rainfall. Also, this drought is becoming intense later in the year. "The concerns for degraded

water quality are somewhat lessened as temperatures are becoming cooler." said Brown. "On the other hand, the storage in both lakes that is used to keep water quality conditions in downstream rivers healthy is decreasing to critical levels. Additionally, the storage in Falls Lake used to supply the City of Raleigh with drinking water, is also decreasing at an alarming rate. This drought is reaching a severe level at a time of year when we can't expect a temporary reprieve from a tropical system to move in and refill the reservoirs over a few days. Both November and December tend to be dry months so we can't expect a lot of rain anytime soon."

Hydropower generation, an important issue in the 2002 drought, has not been an issue for this season. "Both Falls and Jordan Dams do not have hydropower facilities," Brown



TERRY BROWN PHOTOS

"Ironically, the current drought is very similar to the drought that affected the same area in 1933 to 1934."

said. "Fortunately, our decisions about releases can be focused just on balancing upstream and downstream water needs. We do not have to factor in the requirement to release water specifically for the purpose of making electricity."

"Our stakeholder water management group, established during the drought that culminated in the summer of 2002, has been an invaluable asset during these dry months," said Brown. "As soon as we began to see the signs of drought setting in last July and with little rainfall being forecast, we began stepping up our conference calls and meetings."

The group includes not only U.S. Army Corps of Engineers personnel responsible for managing water flows and lands around Corps lakes, but also other Federal, State, and local governments, volunteer groups, and businesses. "When drought or flood-

ing hits, our ability to share information helps us to make the best possible decisions for conserving resources while minimizing negative effects on any stakeholder," Brown explained.

In October, the group met at the Falls Lake Visitor Assistance Center. After seeing the dry forecast and assessing the lake situations, the utilities director for Raleigh moved forward with a request to his City Council to consider moving to mandatory water conservation measures.

The group discussed a variety of ways to maintain the best possible lake

levels, water quality conditions and stream flows.

"We consider everything from the health of fish stocks both upstream and downstream of our dams, impacts to recreation including the effects on marina operators, and how to best maintain water supplies so that industrial and household needs are met for the urban areas served by our reservoirs," Brown explained. "We greatly appreciate the participation and knowledge of all our stakeholders as we strive to maintain the best possible balance through the dry period."



Terry Brown stands in an area of Falls Lake where at one time he would have been standing in eight feet of water.

New Orleans District Members Dedicated to Helping Their Fallen City

Story and Photos by Hank Heusinkveld



New Orleans District members Dave Wurtzel (right) and Greg Breerwood (center) stand atop the interim repair to the breach at the 17th Street Canal to inspect unwatering progress.

Within an hour of arriving in the New Orleans District on September 14th to begin my month-long deployment as part of the Task Force Hope-New Orleans public affairs team I was airborne and flying over Plaquemines Parish shooting aerial video of heavily-flooded areas southeast of the city. Coming into the city three hours earlier by car, I had seen wind damage to buildings and

homes, uprooted trees, and material strewn everywhere. From 500 feet in a helicopter I saw all that, plus forests that had been flattened.

Also on board the chopper was Rich Varuso, a New Orleans District geotechnical engineer whose job was to help unwater Plaquemines Parish. We landed near a levee with an interim-

repaired breach where Hurricane Katrina's storm surge knocked a hole in it and floodwaters destroyed nearby towns. We saw that water marks had reached more than nine feet on nearby trees. I shot video as Varuso inspected the repairs. Rich told me he was a lifelong resident of New Orleans. He had moved his wife and two kids from their flooded home to Lafayette and stayed with his parents in New Orleans. Here he was, away from his family, knowing his home was partially destroyed, but still putting in a long day's work on the desperate mission to pull New Orleans back from the wrath of Mother Nature.

Varuso is just one of many "internally deployed" New Orleans District employees who, despite personal losses, made the commitment to help unwater the city and battered Plaquemines Parish. Every morning began with an



Task Force Unwatering Commander COL Duane Gapinski shields his eyes from rain carried by 40-knot winds from Hurricane Rita. COL Gapinski called in information to the Emergency Operations Center as water began overtopping at an interim repair to an Industrial Canal breach that was caused by Hurricane Katrina two weeks earlier.

assembly in the New Orleans District Emergency Operations Center to pick up the day's missions. Those of us who deployed to New Orleans were certainly witnessing and living in the aftermath of disaster. But New Orleans District members were facing the reality that their city was still flooded and we could tell that they were trying hard not to think about their personal tragedies. Team leader Colonel Duane Gapinski, who deployed from the Rock Island District, sensed this and kept everybody in good spirits to keep his "Soldiers" motivated. Everyone needed motivation through days that were sometimes up to 20 hours long. Those who could went home instead of camping out on cots in the District's vacant cubicles or in the conference room that was used as an open bay. Meals Ready to Eat were abundant, but not relished. Cases and cases of bottled water sat in a main entranceway of this District's headquarters building. To us they were the staples of deployments. To the New Orleans District members they were reminders that the local restaurants and convenience stores were closed indefinitely, destroyed or looted.

Each day brought new challenges. Stuart Waits, a reserved and unassuming civil engineer I tagged along with one day, pointed out various parts of



Rich Varuso talks with Dolf Pasma in Plaquemines Parish. Pasma is a member of the Dutch water pump team that was sent over by the government of the Netherlands to help the Corps of Engineers unwater the parish and New Orleans.



This concrete foundation once held a house in the lower Ninth Ward of New Orleans.

the city on our way to the Industrial Canal. His favorite nightclub near the French Quarter was closed as were dozens of other stores and restaurants along Tchoupitoulas Street. At the Industrial Canal he surveyed the damage to a levee caused when a barge smashed its way through. The barge floated about 100 meters into the Ninth Ward, dwarfing a house that it settled next to. The smell there was overwhelming, and the tracks from our pickup truck were black after having disturbed the top layer of muck. The scene was surreal. At a place where there should have been children riding their bikes or neighbors simply hanging out on their front porches were overturned cars, concrete foundations that once held houses, and household items that appeared to have wandered blocks away from home. On the way back to the District, Waits and I visited the residence of his colleague and friend. She happened to be on vacation when Katrina hit. It was hard to tell whether Stuart was indifferent to the situation or keeping his emotions in check to concentrate on his overall mission. I quickly found out it was the latter. Reading a look of dismay on a person's face is fairly easy. It was becoming easier to see why the New Orleans District members tried hard to not let the devastation consume them



New Orleans District mechanical engineer Mike Sanchez stands in the ruins of his home moments after kicking in a damaged door.

- Continued on back page

Roanoke Celebrates as Flood Reduction Project Gets Underway

By Penny Schmitt

On a sunny October day after a long dry spell, the low-lying brown waters of the Roanoke River seem just a thread in the cityscape. Long-time Roanoke residents know better. Rains from hurricanes and other major weather systems have repeatedly pushed the swollen Roanoke River out over city streets, wreaking havoc on a large part of the downtown area. Especially severe flooding hit the area in November 1985, and in September of 1992 and 2004.

For more than 20 years, the city has been working with its Congressional Representatives and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers toward a project to reduce damaging floods in the downtown area.

On October the 4th, 2005, long-time supporters of the project joined with John Paul Woodley, the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works and officials from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Wilmington Dis-



Project Manager Jan Brodmerkl explains project features to Wilmington District Commander Colonel John Pulliam, City of Roanoke Vice Mayor Beverly Fitzpatrick, Jr., (second from left) and ASA for Civil Works Assistant Elwyn Darden.

trict, to break ground on a project that will make alterations in almost 10 miles of channel to render small floods harmless, and reduce the amount of flooding from major storms.

The Corps contractor, Branch Highways LLC, is hard at work clearing and reshaping six areas along the river to create 'bench cuts', terraced areas that make more room for floodwater. These areas will be landscaped



Work is already under way to create bench cuts that will allow the channel to carry heavier flows during flood times.

with native trees and grasses, and in normal conditions, will add a park-like greenway to the downtown area. When heavy rains fall, these areas will be under water, and they will let the river channel carry more water safely through the city without flooding, lowering flood stages by one to three feet.

“Although this is not a flood elimination project, it will decrease the frequency and severity of flood events in the city,” said Wilmington District Commander, Col. John E. Pulliam.

Secretary Woodley pointed out that recent events in New Orleans had made urban area nationwide more aware of the need for flood protection. He praised local leaders for their commitment to quality.

Congressman Robert Goodlatte called up vivid memories of past flooding events, and expressed optimism that the careful design and high environmental values of the project would put it on a par with other well-known projects around the nation, like the San Antonio River Walk.

As the officials turned their symbolic shovels filled with dirt, heavy equipment was already at work along the river. Near the city’s 13th Street Bridge, the wide, flat bench cut already demonstrated the shape of things to come for the river channel. As part of the project, aged and useless structures will be removed, and a choking and obstructive tangle of old growth vegetation will be replaced with new landscaping. The project includes a mile of recreational trail linked to trails already built by the city.



Resident Engineer Maks Hromiak surveys project construction.

Time and Patience Needed to Rebuild Iraq (continued from page 3)

that are more appropriate given the circumstances.”

Establishing credibility with his Iraqi employees was one of Jones’ priorities. His approach of “learning by doing” gained approval and more importantly, respect.

“We had a staff of 10 that was used as Quality Assurance. We took them to do work on a military installation to show them western-style construction and it was very eye opening for them. I was showing them what in my mind it should look like. And to a lot of these guys they were impressed, especially when they saw the quality of the work.”

To boost his credibility with the Iraqis, Jones contacted Coleman Long for infrastructure master plans designed for a small city and for a county. Long sent one of each to Tikrit and Mosul.

“Over there, long term isn’t an issue. When you’re talking about a 20-year or 50-year plan they couldn’t comprehend it. When we showed them the construction that we could achieve it started to gel with them.”

Reflecting on his deployment, Jones said that nation building is nothing new for the United States. He said that it takes time, and that it parallels other historic U.S. reconstruction efforts.

“All the smart lessons learned that we got from the end of World War Two unfortunately seem to have been forgotten. It took decades to rebuild Germany during the Marshall Plan. The biggest part of it happened in the first few years. I believe it is in our best interest to make sure that Iraq is stable.



LTC BUD JONES PHOTO

Two Iraqi contractors work on a project in Tikrit.



Bronze Star Awarded to LTC Jones

For exceptional meritorious service in Iraq LTC Jones received the Bronze Star. His citation reads as follows:

During protracted combat operations in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, LTC Jones’ superior technical and tactical knowledge, effective leadership and significant contributions to the welfare and morale of the Gulf Northern District serve as a model of duty and selfless service for all. LTC Jones’ outstanding performance is in keeping with the finest traditions of military service. His selfless service to the Nation reflects great credit upon him, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the United States Army.

Water Safety Messages Effectively Reach Public

Yes, it IS good news when bad things don't happen! The Wilmington District Water Safety Team is both celebrating and campaigning for further improvements. This year the team's emphasis on safety appeared to bring about a remarkable improvement. During Fiscal year 2005, visitation at our recreational areas was approximately 6.5 million. Only one of those 6.5 million visitors drowned, down from about six each year in recent years.

The most effective water safety initiatives were:

- A Life Jacket Loan Program at each project: Volunteer organizations have helped the Corps supply life jackets that visitors can borrow for use during swimming or boating.
- Ranger Trading Card Program: Cards resembling baseball collector cards feature Corps Park Rangers. Each card carries the Ranger's favorite water safety message on the back and kids are encouraged to remember the message.
- Public Service Announcements aired on major English and Spanish-lan-

guage radio stations and local stations throughout major holiday weekends.

- Increased Ranger Foot Patrol emphasizes water safety with a personal touch.
- Learn To Swim Program reached more than 500 children.

The Water Safety Team is not content with this success. "One drowning is STILL too many!" says Paula Carper, who leads the team's efforts. "We are motivated by the tragedy that did occur and by reports of incidents at other Corps lakes, to redouble our efforts."

Safety messages for all visitors:

In June, a six-year-old boy from a Hispanic family drowned at B. Everett Jordan lake. He was a non-swimmer who was not wearing a life jacket, and although he was at a designated swim area, no one was supervising him at the time he drowned. "We are making efforts to ensure that ALL families who visit our lakes receive life-saving safety information," Carper said. "That means making special efforts to communicate

safety effectively to our many Spanish-speaking visitors." Carper cited some new efforts the Ranger staff is undertaking.

"We are developing cards with Spanish language phrases our Rangers can distribute as a quick reference to help communicate safety. They are laminated cards that can easily be carried in the Rangers' citation books. They help everyone, because we don't currently have anyone on our Ranger staff who is fluent in Spanish."

Carper said water safety messages reached far more people this year than in previous years through water safety radio campaigns that aired during the Fourth of July and Labor Day weekends. The Corps bought radio time at a Raleigh Spanish language station and at local radio stations near our other lakes to make sure a major part of the public who visits regional Corps facilities hear important messages like:

- **Parents, please watch your children every minute!**
- **Life jackets float! You don't!**

Convincing a tough audience to think safety:

A second major safety challenge for the Water Safety Team, both at the regional and national level, is reaching adolescent and adult male boaters and fishermen, some of whom like to enjoy beer while fishing. "Research of fatal incident reports has showed that men in this group are nine times more likely to drown than women." Carper said. The reason why? "Members of this group rarely wear life jackets. So they become vulnerable in what I'm sorry to say sounds like an embarrassingly foolish way. When they stand up in an unsteady boat to relieve themselves, they are prone to fall overboard and drown. Rather than be 'discreet' about this situation, we feel that it is more important to identify the action that is so dangerous, and encourage change. Wearing a life jacket properly could have eliminated drowning in all these nationwide cases."



Water Safety Team leader Paula Carper holds a ranger trading card.

(continued on page 14)

Skies Clear for a Beautiful Public Lands Day

By Miriam Fleming, Park Ranger

Tropical Storm Tammy brought more than four inches of rain to the W. Kerr Scott Reservoir area within a three day period just prior to the planned October 8 Public Lands Day event. The western region received so much rain, the reservoir, which had been three feet below normal rose to two feet above normal at the end of those same three days. Even with the threat of more rain, the determined reservoir team and Wilmington District support personnel moved forward with their plans to hold National Public Lands Day on Saturday.

Throughout the rain on Thursday and Friday, rangers prepared work areas by tilling soil for landscaping projects, establishing trail routes, laying in base trail stone, preparing hundreds of plants and trees for planting, pre-positioning materials and supplies and setting up support tents and tables for registration and meals. "We were like wet dogs, every once in awhile we would just shake the cold rain off", said Operations

Manager Terry Ramsey. Rangers prepared for the worst weather, but hoped for the best on Saturday. And that's what they got, as the sun rose over the reservoir, the clouds thinned and by the start of workday, the skies were completely blue-over Wilkes County that is. While it rained in the surrounding counties, it continued to rain heavily to the east and lightly to the west, north and south.

The first workers arrived bright and early at 7:00am. By 8:30am, approximately 126 volunteers and staff were hard at work cleaning the shoreline, building new trails, landscaping and



PHOTO COURTESY LOURAE EUBANK

A National Public Lands Day volunteer makes a trail near the shoreline of W. Kerr Scott Reservoir.



Volunteers remove debris from W. Kerr Scott Reservoir.

working on a new canoe access. Some areas of the trail were sloppy from all the rain but crews were diligent and pushed through those areas completing two new miles of trail. Shorelines were slick but volunteers, including Colonel Pulliam, collected almost one hundred 30-gallon bags of trash. Colonel Pulliam worked so hard; an impressed Boy Scouts working by his side asked Ranger Jory Shepherd if she would get Colonel Pulliam's autograph for him. Colonel Pulliam obliged the young man by autographing some paper and gave it to his new fan.

A highlight of the day was the dedication ceremony officially opening a new trail bridge and new trail that was to become both part of the Yadkin River Greenway system and

part of the Overmountain Victory Historic Trail. This trail will eventually stretch 30-miles from the reservoir to Elkin, North Carolina. Congresswoman Virginia Foxx joined Colonel Pulliam, Paul Carson from the National Park Service and Dick Sloop from the Yadkin River Greenway in officially integrating the trail into both important trail systems. A Commander's Coin and Certificate of Appreciation were also presented to one of Kerr Scott's volunteer partners, the Brushy Mountain Cycling Club for their yearlong trail building efforts.



COL John Pulliam and Lakes Manager Neil Myers pitch in to pick up trash.

Crews returned to the staging area for chicken Bar-B-Que provided by Tyson Foods and prepared by volunteers. "Contributions from many local businesses made feeding this large number of people possible," said Ranger Miriam Fleming. In addition to Tyson Foods, Pepsi Bottling Com-

pany, Vulcan Materials, Wal-Mart, Lowes Food, Wild Haven, and Lowes Hardware also made contributions.

As volunteers began leaving, the clouds began rolling in. Conditions turned out so good, mountain bikers were able to use the trails immedi-

ately. In fact, before the keynote speakers returned to the staging area, Ranger Bryant Curry reported a local mountain biker had already taken a turn down the gorge portion of the new trail to the connector bridge—a fitting end for a hard day of work.



After a long, yet rewarding day's work, these volunteer girls pose proudly.



Jan Wutkowski

Website Highlights

U.S. Census Bureau-Hurricane Data

<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2005/katrina.htm>

The government takes vital census information from areas affected by hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and Wilma, and repackages them into sections on transportation, housing, maps, and more. The People section includes 'Fast Facts on Areas affected by Hurricane Katrina,' 'Poverty Status of Population Under 18,' and 'Demographic Characteristics for Florida Counties,' along with other census markers. Some data is in Excel format.

Environmental Impacts of Hurricane Katrina

http://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/hurricane_katrina/

* NOAA is working with other agencies in evaluating the potential environmental impacts of hurricane Katrina on living marine resources.' Objectives are listed on the website and include Assess Marine Mammal and Turtle Health; Survey Water, Sediment and Fish/Shrimp For Indications of Toxics and Monitoring Seafood Safety; and Assess Socioeconomic Impacts.

Hurricane and Extreme Storm Impact Studies

<http://coastal.er.usgs.gov/hurricanes/>

This webpage from the USGS Coastal and Marine Geology Program 'investigates the extent and causes of coastal impacts of hurricanes and extreme storms on the coasts of the United States.' Their objective is listed as "is to improve the capability to predict coastal change that results from severe tropical and extra-tropical storms. Such a capability will facilitate locating buildings and infrastructure away from coastal change hazards." Information for Katrina, Rita, and Wilma is listed separately.

Uncommon Knowledge [Real Player]

<http://www.uncommonknowledge.org/>

Uncommon Knowledge has been taking a critical look at public policy issues since 1996. With support from the John M. Olin Foundation, Uncommon Knowledge is distributed by American Public Television and can also be heard on NPR. The programs feature lively debate on any number of topics, ranging from gun control to international foreign diplomacy. Visitors to the website can browse through a list of recent shows, or look through their archives which date from 1997. Visitors may also wish to view the entire television program on their computer, listen to the audio presentation, or read a transcript.

One For Fun!

First-Person Narratives of the American South

<http://docsouth.unc.edu/fpn/>

Documenting the American South, an initiative at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, has created a number of digitized collections that document the Southern perspective on a wide range of areas of American history and culture. One of the project's latest additions is the First-Person Narratives of the American South collection, which contains diaries, autobiographies, travel accounts, and ex-slave narratives written by Southerners. Included are Eliza Andrews' "The War-Time Journal of a Georgia Girl, 1864-1865" and Sara Agnes Rice's "My Day: Reminiscences of a Long Life". Visitors may browse the collection alphabetically.

Water Safety Messages (continued from page 10)

Ranger Dana Matics, of Falls Lake, frankly described the dangerous action on a radio spot and added an appeal that may persuade men to wear their life jackets. "Real men don't let their egos get the best of them. You are all husbands, fathers, or sons, and someone cares about you and needs you. If you won't wear a life jacket for yourself, then at least wear one for your family!"

According to Carper, feedback from Matics' radio spot has been good, because people are telling Rangers they have heard it on the radio and the message has stuck with them.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Water Safety Team encourages all visitors to our lakes and dams to be safe around the water. Many people who drown do not intend to go in the water or even get into a boat. Wear a life jacket! Learn to swim! Don't mix alcohol and water sports!

Reaching Out

A TV crew from UNC Public Television interviews **Chuck Wilson** for an upcoming program on North Carolina estuaries at the Corps-built oyster habitat he helped design near Morehead City. The eight-minute segment will feature examples of habitat restoration and is part of a 30-minute documentary that will air on "NC Now", a local public television program.



Corps Family News

Susan Vary Traxel and **Danny L Martin**, both park rangers at Philpott Lake, were married September 12 in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. They spent their honeymoon touring Glacier National Park in Montana and International Peace Park in Alberta, Canada.



Billie Jones, an IM Co-op at Philpott Lake, received a surprise visit from Captain La Rue Meehan, Commander for the Roanoke, VA Recruiting Company. Captain Meehan presented Billie with a Certificate of Appreciation for her exceptional dedication and understanding in support of the U.S. Army Recruiting Mission. Billie's husband, Sergeant First Class Love Jones, is a Station Commander with the Danville, VA Recruiting Station. Lieutenant John Horn, Commander of the Beckley Recruiting Battalion, presented SFC Jones with the Glen E. Morrell Award. This award is the ultimate achievement award offered by the United States Army Recruiting Command for meritorious service and recruiting excellence. SFC Jones has been in the U.S. Army 16 years with five years as an Army recruiter. Captain Meehan pointed out that Billie's spousal support could not

be overlooked in the success of her husband's outstanding achievements and personal contributions to the United States Army. Billie and Love both attend the University of Maryland. They have one child, 10-year-old Jenee.



*Wilmington District
Holiday Party*

Date: December 16th, 2005
Time: Begins at 6:30 pm
Location: Arab Shrine Club
4510 S. College Road
Cost: \$15 per person

Retiree News

There wasn't much activity going on amongst the retirees in August and September, and along with some computer problems, there were no reports. Things seem to have picked up for October along with the unusual weather that has been happening.

Attendees for October: Dan Grimsley, Gloria and Paul Woodbury, Kay and Buddy Johnson, Doris and Ken Old, Betty and Eric Matzke, Sylvia and Rex Phillips, Charlie and Dorothy Hollis, Cheryl and Ed Shuford, Max Grimes, Bettye and Bob Swart

Activities:

- Betty and Eric Matzke will be taking a trip to Vermont to view the fall colors.
- Gloria and Paul Woodbury are taking a trip to Vermont, as well, to winterize their house, visit with family, shoot a couple of grouse and of course to view the fall colors. Paul would like to forget storm windows and just view the foliage.
- Sylvia and Rex Phillips have been having their granddaughter every weekend. They are going to the outer banks next week. Rex is now a semi-bionic man with the installation defibrillator on 1 September.
- Dorothy and Charlie Hollis had a long weekend at the Lodge at Lake Lure, finding it very nice and they recommend it. They also rented a motor home and took their daughter and granddaughter on a five-day trip to North Georgia (Lake Hartwell). It was a great experience.
- Buddy Johnson attended a ROMEO Club (WWII vets) luncheon as the guests of the Marine Corps, MCAS, Cherry Point.

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when getting millions of gallons of water out of the city was their priority.

Time seemed to pass quicker than normal in New Orleans. The initial estimate of unwatering the city was six months. The Unwatering Team, with the help from Dutch, Belgian, and German crews, did the job within a few weeks. The mood in the EOC was becoming more upbeat...that is until Hurricane Rita arrived. The day before, precautions included sandbagging strategic points along the weakened levees. After Rita struck, it was back to new strategies. This time water overtopped the interim repairs. The only way to get to the overtopped area at the Industrial Canal was by foot. COL Gapinski hoofed it with Stuart Waits and others from his team. The water was knee deep and was becoming deeper by the minute. The lifesaver seemed to be Blackberrys. Instant communication allowed COL Gapinski to get the information he needed to hasten strategies. By the next day the flooding had stopped and it would be roughly another two weeks before the city would become unwatered for the second time.



PHOTO COURTESY HANK HEUSINKVELD

Near the shoreline of Lake Pontchartrain in the north part of the city Stuart Waits watches as an Army National Guard AH-47 Chinook prepares to carry 15-thousand pounds of sandbags to an overtopped area at the Industrial Canal.

The New Orleans District members and others on their team had become like a precision military unit; calm, cool and collected under pressure.

My story wouldn't be complete without an update on Rich Varuso's situation. In an e-mail message sent 7 NOV he said he hopes to receive a FEMA trailer so that he can move his family back home. He has seen them only three

times since he left back in early September. He went on to write;

"It has been a difficult time for me and my family, but I cannot imagine not being a part of this historical effort. I have never been more proud and grateful to be a part of what we all consider to be the premier civil engineering organization in the country."

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