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WILMINGTON DISTRICT TO RENOVATE NEIGHBORING MILITARY OCEAN TERMINAL AT SUNNY POINT

By Penny Schmitt

Wilmington District Commander COL Jeff Ryscavage addresses a crowd of distinguished guest at the Center Wharf dedication ceremony at Sunny Point. Pictured right is MOTSU Commander COL Michael Babul.

Military munitions demand special handling. Wilmington District was involved in building the Nation's first ammunition transfer facility designed primarily with safety in mind, and today, the District is proudly working with that same installation to bring its facilities up to date with the 21st Century.

Military Ocean Terminal Sunny Point (MOTSU) was the Army's answer to improve the safe handling of munitions immediately after World War II. A tragic ship explosion at Port Chicago, California, in 1944 killed more than 700 people. That, and more distant memories of an even more deadly incident in the port of Halifax, Nova Scotia in 1917, convinced the Army that dangerous munitions should be handled in areas isolated from large population centers.

Today, the busy Cape Fear River hardly seems isolated, yet the Military Ocean Terminal at Sunny Point remains a carefully sequestered site where ammunition is handled at safe distances from population centers, on a site designed to buffer and con-

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COMMANDER IN CHIEF PROCLAIMS VETERANS DAY 2008

On Veterans Day, we pay tribute to the service and sacrifice of the men and women who in defense of our freedom have bravely worn the uniform of the United States.

From the fields and forests of war-torn Europe to the jungles of Southeast Asia, from the deserts of Iraq to the mountains of Afghanistan, brave patriots have protected our Nation's ideals, rescued millions from tyranny, and helped spread freedom around the globe. America's veterans answered the call when asked to protect our Nation from some of the most brutal and ruthless tyrants, terrorists, and militaries the world has ever known. They stood tall in the face of grave danger and enabled our Nation to become the greatest force for freedom in human history. Members of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, and Coast Guard have answered a high calling to serve and have helped secure America at every turn.

Our country is forever indebted to our veterans for their quiet courage and exemplary service. We also remember and honor those who laid down their lives in freedom's defense. These brave men and women made the ultimate sacrifice for our benefit. On Veterans Day, we remember these heroes for their valor, their loyalty, and their dedication. Their selfless sacrifices continue to inspire us today as we work to advance peace and extend freedom around the world.

With respect for and in recognition of the contributions our service members have made to the cause of peace and freedom around the world, the Congress has provided (5 U.S.C. 6103(a)) that November 11 of each year shall be set aside as a legal public holiday to honor America's veterans.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE W. BUSH, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim November 11, 2008, as Veterans Day and urge all Americans to observe November 9 through November 15, 2008, as National Veterans Awareness Week. I encourage all Americans to recognize the bravery and sacrifice of our veterans through ceremonies and prayers. I call upon Federal, State, and local officials to display the flag of the United States and to support and participate in patriotic activities in their communities. I invite civic and fraternal organizations, places of worship, schools, businesses, unions, and the media to support this national observance with commemorative expressions and programs.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this thirty-first day of October, in the year of our Lord two thousand eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-third. ***GEORGE W. BUSH***

Wilmington District News Online is an unofficial publication authorized under provisions of AR 360-1 published each month by the Wilmington District Public Affairs Office to keep District employees informed of current District news, activities and achievements. Send your submissions for the Wilmington District News Online to henry.g.heusinkveld@saw02.usace.army.mil or penny.schmitt@saw02.usace.army.mil

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U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Wilmington District

CALL TO DUTY

A SHORT NOTE FROM APRIL WARD IN AFGHANISTAN

The Wilmington District's April Ward poses on top of a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers castle. *"I felt very proud to be an American and part of the mission here in Afghanistan."*

"I went to the field this week, Salerno and Kwost. These are two of the most dangerous areas in Afghanistan as they are near the Pakistan border. It was a good and exhausting trip. We are visiting all of our field sites conducting Human Resources for supervisors, AED version of course. I got to fly in a helicopter and ride in a humvee. As we drove through the country the children would run up to the road and give us a thumbs up. Afghans that live in the city here in Kabul are more westernized than in the remote locations. The woman are completely covered and with a male family member. Some of the children were bare foot with dirty faces. Most of them were in the field working. They could not have been any older than eight years old. Several were alone with no adult in sight. The Corps facilities are within a Forward Operating Base (FOB) and the facilities are much nicer than the FOB. The military on the FOB provide security and support for our mission to rebuild the country. Our Corps teams located in the field cannot leave the compound without coordinating their move with the FOB. Movements require several humvees to convoy to a destination. I felt very proud to be an American and part of the mission here in Afghanistan. It was exciting to help coordinate a convoy and listen to the radio communication, although they would not let me shoot the big gun or drive. I guess they were protecting me and the rest of the convoy group. I had a lot of fun." ■

RECRUITING: A PRIORITY

by Renita McNeill, Chief-EEO

Through retirement, resignation or the like, a progressive workforce must maintain its institutional knowledge as well as capitalize on new scientific and technological advances in order to remain competitive in this ever-changing work environment. One method to address this concern is to hire individuals that can be coached and mentored so that when attrition occurs a seamless transition can be achieved.

Necessity has elevated recruitment efforts. Focus has been placed on institutions of higher learning to *enlist* qualified, interested individuals. A Recruitment Team, comprised of Wayne Bissette, *Chief of Engineering*, Renita McNeill, *Chief of Equal Employment Opportunities*, Gloria Dyson, *Workforce Management Specialist*, Wesley Brown, *Civil Engineer*, and Ryan Phillips, *Engineering Co-op Student*, participated in the 2008 NC State Minority Career Fair held on 29 October. Armed with employment materials, this team worked to give insight on the US Army Corps of Engineers and working as civilians in the federal arena.

Following the Career Fair, the team held an information session attended by interested students, with Wayne facilitating. He presented an outstanding talk about USACE—what we do and who we are. With the added support of Renita and Gloria, the importance of quality resumes, the application/hiring process, and other employment concerns were addressed. The students also enthusiastically embraced the opportunity of hearing from their peers, our newly hired interns: Wesley Brown, *'07 NCSU alumni*, and Ryan Phillips, *current NCSU student*. Wesley and Ryan briefed their varied employment experiences. A general *question and answer* session followed. Time was also allotted for one-on-one inquiries.

Wayne Bissette, Chief of the Wilmington District Engineering Branch, chats with a prospective candidate at the NC State Minority Career Fair.

Students seemed genuinely interested and provided positive feedback. They appreciated the Team's efforts in dispelling any misconceptions and in providing them with valued employment information about USACE, *i.e what we do, job expectations, how to apply for positions, who can apply, etc.* The Team concluded that information sessions, such as this, should be conducted in order to attract students who are sincerely interested in working with USACE.

Although the information session unquestionably extended the workday, it was well worth the effort! A soft, purring snore from one of the Team members could be heard as they traveled in the night back to Wilmington. A job well done! ■

DISTRICT LOOKS AT POSSIBLE EXPANSION OF BRANDT ISLAND

Brandt Island, the man-made dredge material island located in the Morehead City Harbor, could get a major facelift. Project Manager Chris Frabotta said that several things have changed since the District's existing dredge plan for Morehead City Harbor was approved in 1978. Most importantly, new geotechnical information has led the Wilmington District to re-evaluate the compatibility of some Morehead City Harbor-dredged material for placement on area beaches. The District's existing plan, which includes using Brandt Island as a sand recycling facility for eventual placement on the beaches of Bogue Banks, will need to be changed to reflect the reality that much of this material may not be appropriate for placement on the beaches. Therefore, the District is engaged in completing a Dredge Material Management Plan which will explore ways to expand Brandt Island's disposal capacity. The District is currently evaluating the feasibility of raising and/or expanding the existing dikes of the island to allow 20 years capacity for inner harbor material.

Preparing to walk the perimeter of Brandt Island to get exact measurements are (l-r) Doug Wall, Jimmy Hargrove, Ben Lackey, Stacey Samuelson and CPT Andy Baker.

"In the past, we've used Brandt Island as a sand recycling facility where we place material onto the island every other year, then pumped it out on the shoreline of Fort Macon and Atlantic Beach on eight to 10-year frequency," he explained. "Now we're planning to use Brandt Island as an upland disposal facility similar to Eagle Island at Wilmington Harbor. No beach quality material will be going into Brandt Island. It will only be used for non-suitable material, and there are no plans to take anything out for next 20 years."

Frabotta said that the under the proposed plan, the District will still be placing sand along the shorelines of Fort Macon and Atlantic Beach. However, instead of the disposing of material onto the beach originating from the Inner Harbor it will now originate from the Ocean Bar (entrance channel).

Frabotta added the Project Delivery Team is currently working toward awarding a contract to drill samples on Brandt Island. This sampling will be used to test for dike stability, and how high the dikes can be built for expansion for the 20 years of accumulated dredge material.

The proposed plan is to raise or expand the dikes of Brandt Island to allow 20 years capacity for inner harbor material. (Heusinkveld Photos)

SUNNY POINT CON'T

tain any potential explosions. The terminal represents more than half the nation's munitions throughout capacity.

Wilmington District was privileged to build the original facilities for the installation between 1952 and 1955. Although the communities near Sunny Point have been developing and growing over the past 50 years, the installation still comprises more than the original 10,000 acres considered a minimum safety requirement, along with buffer zones that extend all the way across the Cape Fear River from the installation to its opposite shore. On this relatively remote military installation, the Wilmington District constructed a deep water port facility with three wharves, rail lines and a series of storage areas surrounded by earthen berms where ammunition could be temporarily stored so as to prevent an explosion from mushrooming into a major conflagration.

As a near neighbor, Wilmington District became a natural choice to carry forward Military Construction Missions as part of South Atlantic Division's regionalized approach to work management. Starting in the fall of 2008, the District began to carry out a series of projects to bring the facilities and infrastructure of the installation up to date.

Major system modernizations:

In a celebratory ground breaking on 2 October 2008, the Wilmington District initiated its first major project for MOTSU: an expansion of the installation's center wharf. The original facility had been designed to handle break-bulk operations in which pallets of ammunition were carefully packaged in place for transfer. Today, materiel is prepackaged in containers that can be transferred from rail to shipboard without any breakdown. This significant safety and transportation improvement speeds the loading of a ship so that a job that once took several weeks can now be accomplished in as little as four work days. During this $56 million project, the surface of the wharf will be expanded and converted to a single level to allow more space to safely and easily handle the containers. New cranes will also be installed. The project is slated to be complete in April of 2010. Along with the primary wharf expansion, other projects will also be carried out to replace fender systems on the North and South Wharves and to upgrade handrail systems to comply with present-day safety requirements.

A second major project to upgrade the installation's rail lines also got underway early in Fiscal Year 2009.

Workers drive one of the first posts for the Center Wharf Project at Sunny Point.

The installation has a complex network of rail lines used to transport munitions between dispersed storage areas designed for safety and the wharves. The improved rail lines will accommodate the larger cars needed for containers and will also allow more efficient handling of the containers.

Contracts for all of the improvements except the earlier-awarded wharf expansion were awarded as part of an outstanding year-end awards of work by the Savannah

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SUNNY POINT CON'T

Contracting Center and the Wilmington District.

Buildings and grounds:

Although MOTSU has modernized since its creation in the 1950s, and has recently built new facilities like a visitor reception center, many buildings and other facilities are in need of updating. The Wilmington District will upgrade walking and vehicle traffic movement by building a Walking Mall and an expanded central parking lot, and will upgrade the information management building, supply, warehouse and maintenance facilities in the installations administrative area, and the north wharf operations building.

An ongoing partnership:

Over the decades, Wilmington District has worked with MOTSU, assisting the installation with maintenance dredging of its access channels and berths. In the future, that operations assistance will continue, and the Wilmington District will also be helping the installation with environmental assessments and other services. COL Jefferson M. Ryscavage said at the recent wharf ground breaking: "As virtually next-door neighbors to MOTSU we can easily work shoulder to shoulder with COL Babul and installation leadership to execute a menu of very important renovation and expansion projects that will keep this Terminal of Excellence at the forefront of safe, efficient handling for military munitions into the future." ■

COAST GUARD, SUNNY POINT GIVE DISTRICT HIGH CUSTOMER SATISFACTION MARKS

Feedback is always important in any type of situation. And when you hit the feedback jackpot with positive comments you know you're doing the job right. The Wilmington District received a perfect score from the U.S. Coast Guard after the organization responded to the Military Programs Fiscal Year 08 Satisfaction Survey.

According to Survey Manager Patty Hargrove, the Coast Guard responded with "straight fives," five being the highest score. The Coast Guard gave a thumbs up to such survey questions as *"Provides timely service; Delivers quality products and service; Manages your projects/programs effectively."*

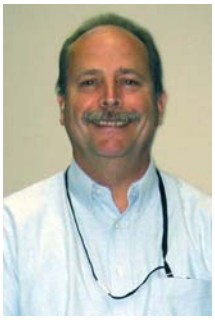
The U.S. Coast Guard vessel Diligence is home ported on the Cape Fear River in downtown Wilmington.

"This is the second year the Corps has conducted the Military Survey," said Hargrove. "As the Survey Manager, much of the credit goes to the excellent job our Project Managers do for our military customers. Every survey received this year recognized the service of our PM's at the highest level possible."

The Wilmington District also received high marks from its other clients. The Military Ocean Terminal at Sunny Point responded with a score of 4.83 which is above average, and officials from Camp Lejeune and the Environmental Protection Agency also responded with above average scores. The Wilmington District is still waiting for a response from the National Park Service.

The Military Programs Customer Satisfaction Survey is an important corporate tool for improving an organization's processes and service to its customers. ■

NEW FACES IN THE DISTRICT



Richard Paarfus is working in the Maintenance Section as a mechanical engineer. He worked for several years with the Naval Sea Systems Command in the D.C. metro area, and he has also worked for the City of Wilmington as a Project Manager. He is married to wife Ann, and they have a son, Alex, who is a junior at Wilmington Christian Academy. Richard enjoys Tae Kwan Doe and keeping in shape.

Sharon Humphrey is a procurement technician in Contracting. Originally from Americus, Georgia, she comes to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers from Marine Corps Contracting at Camp Lejeune. She earned a BA from the University of Phoenix Online, and spent five years overseas in Mannheim, Germany as an Army spouse. She has two grown children, three grandchildren and she enjoys riding motorcycles, reading, going to the movies and being with her grandchildren.

Ildiko Boros Reisenbigler is the District's new ACE-IT Information Product Coordinator/Visual Information Specialist. The Vac, Hungary native is a U.S. Army veteran who served as an interrogator. Her previous employment was with ACLC as a graphic designer and multimedia illustrator. She is mother to twin teenagers, and she likes to run, lift weights and is an accomplished artist.

Charles William Harris, Jr. comes to the Wilmington District from Amerigas Propane, Inc. as a service technician. The South Hill, Virginia native now works at John H. Kerr Powerhouse as a Trainee 1 in the Hydropower section. He has an Associates of Science degree in Electronics Technology from Southside Virginia Community College. He enjoys troubleshooting electrical problems as well as mechanical problems. He attends church regularly, and is very active with the Sunday School program and bible study programs for younger children.

Ryan Beck is a student trainee at the John H. Kerr Powerhouse. He worked previously at S&M Brands, Inc., a manufacturer of cigarettes. He has a degree in Electronics Technology, and he's currently working on a certificate as an Industrial Services Technician. In addition, he's working on getting an electricity certificate and a journeyman's license. He is from Clarksville, Virginia, and he's an avid hunter and fisherman.

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NEW FACES CON'T

Alicia Swartz is a Department of the Army Intern working as a Financial Management Analyst through the first part of January when she'll return to Headquarters, Army Material Command. The George Mason University graduate enjoys Top Golf, going to the movies and watching football.

David Stables, a former nuclear mechanic in the U.S. Navy, is a power plant trainee at John H. Kerr Powerhouse. Before coming to work for the Wilmington District he was employed by Ingenco Distributed Energy as a plant operator. The Durham, NC native is working on an associate's degree in electronic technology, and his interests include computers, music and movies. ■

2008 Annual Corps Holiday Party
Friday, December 12th

Hosted at the Wilmington Shriner's Club 4510 S. College Street

Ribeye Steak Dinner $25
Grilled Chicken Breast $23
Both entrées come with baked potato, salad, vegetables, dinner roll and dessert.

CASH BAR
Bring your own Bottles
If you BYOB, See Shelly Thompson for Bottle Labels, with Lou Smith's Name.

6:00 -7:00 pm Cocktail Hour
7:00 – Until? Dinner, Dancing, Socializing and Holiday Cheer!

Tickets Available: November 10th: See Shelly Thompson or Hank Heusinkveld!

Emily Burton and Rosemary Burke will collect donations for the raffle prizes!

UNDERSTANDING MORE ABOUT DISABILITIES DURING NATIONAL DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH

By Renita McNeil

The Wilmington District observed National Disability Employment Awareness Month by having employees "adopt" a disability. Legally defined, a disability is a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, such as seeing, hearing, speaking, walking, breathing, performing manual tasks, learning, caring for oneself, and working. Employee volunteers were: Alex Rhodes, wheelchair; Ann Rea, crutches; Elizabeth Adams, wheelchair; and Patricia Prentiss, cane. Throughout the morning, the employees worked with their "adopted" disability, experiencing and observing the day in the life of an individual with a disability.

John Edge, the EEO Disability Program Manager, educates fellow District members about learning to live and work with a disability.

At noon, the District Team was invited to a Lunch & Learn. During this session, the volunteers addressed concerns and reasonable accommodations that could be provided and facility enhancements that could be made to better support the needs of our District Team.

Renita McNeil chats with volunteers Alex Rhodes, center, and Elizabeth (Adams) Kurkowski about their adopted disability.

Also during the Lunch & Learn, John Edge, EEO Disability Program Manager, and Robert Tingle, ACE-IT, spoke of their individual disabilities, the daily physical pain that they endure, and the struggles in adjusting to an environment that is not always "handicap accessible". Elizabeth Porter gave a presentation entitled *"Can You Tell Who Has a Disability Just by Looking at Them?"*, which centered on non-visible disabilities.

A listing of assistive devices as well as resources were provided to all attendees. For additional information regarding reasonable accommodations, please contact John Edge. ■

THE CATFISH SHOWDOWN!

By Bob Burick, Park Ranger at John H. Kerr

The Catfish Showdown is a local fishing club at Kerr Lake, whose focus is not the popular large mouth bass, but rather the bottom feeding catfish. Catfish are perhaps the most abundant game fish in Kerr Lake, and the most common caught by local residents. There are multiple species of catfish in the lake, but the most popular are blue catfish and channel catfish. Blue catfish are the largest in the lake, with the record reaching a whopping 96 lbs!! It is not uncommon to hook a 40 lb fish during a long day on the lake, but have fun trying to land it.

This unique group of anglers is not only responsible for legitimizing catch and release catfish tournaments on Kerr Lake but also for creating the largest kids fishing tournament in the area. For the past seven years the fishing club has sponsored their Kids Fishing Day. The event is held annually at the Staunton View Day Use Area, an Army Corps facility, during mid September. The first event was hosted solely by the club and had 85 kids participate in the tournament. Every year the event grows in size and popularity and this year, on September 20th, nearly 500 children registered in the tournament and an estimated 2,000 people were in attendance. The Catfish Showdown gathered two hundred local sponsors and raised over $10,000 for this years massive event. The group purchased $7,000 worth of toys and prizes and ensured that every child who participated in the event left with something.

Bobber the water safety dog entertains two kids during the Catfish Showdown.

The entire event was free of charge and registration started at 7:00 am with a line of children eager to catch that trophy winning fish. If you did not own a fishing pole, or could not afford bait, no worries because the club lent poles and tackle to anyone in need. The tournament started at 8:00 am and lasted until noon. At that time all fish were brought up and weighed. The festivities did not end there however, a lunch of hamburgers and hotdogs was provided to all in attendance along with games and bouncy rooms for all the kids to enjoy.

Many local public agencies were also on scene to meet members of the local community and provide safety information on a number of topics. The Army Corps of Engineers had a large booth, staffed by Park Rangers passing out Frisbees and water safety handouts. Bobber the Water Safety Dog was also present at the event to give out his coloring book and talk to kids about the importance of wearing a life jacket and safe swimming practices.

The event was a huge success and the Rangers at Kerr Lake look forward to helping The Catfish Showdown continue to promote fishing and outdoor recreation to future generations. ■

WILKES COUNTY COMMUNITY PITCHES IN FOR NC BIG SWEEP

Submitted by Juanita Souther

We had 104 volunteers for NC Big Sweep, 24 were at the Wilkesboro Housing Development at Hickory Street with Nickie Brady coordinating the event. They collected 59 bags of trash and this marks the fourth year they have participated. Ranger Dillard registered all participants for the event at Dark Mountain. Our lake clean-up was successful with Boy Scout Troops 399 and 325 present along with Millers Creek Student Council Group at various parks and the New Century Club with Melissa Higgins posted at our Bandits Roost Campground doing trash pick- up.

Ranger Juanita Souther stands before hundreds of pounds of trash collected during the North Carolina Big Sweep clean up.

Thanks to the dock owners who helped in our clean up this year, and to Greg Core and family with his volunteer services and the use of his barge to help us with the trash pick up in the coves. Rangers Juanita Souther and Jory Shepherd had the help of Jamie Triplett, daughter of Ranger Shepherd and Brandon Barker.

With all of the efforts combined, we collected three truckloads of trash and Ranger Stanley and Snyder were there to help transport it to the dumpster. They hauled in 24 tires, one being a tractor trailer tire and one that was found 12 feet up in a tree. They also collected a water heater, and here were large pieces of floatation material from docks. A total of 84 small bags and 92 large bags of trash were collected with an estimated total weight of 4,910 lbs.

Volunteers used their own boats to get trash that had accumulated in coves around the lake.

The Brushy Mountain Cycle Club was busy with a National Public Lands Day project on the trails at Warrior Creek, clearing one half mile of new trail. We had planted 15 trees at Bandits Roost.

The NC Big Sweep State numbers are still climbing and the results statewide will be known in November. Thanks to all who volunteered! Plans are being made for a weekly clean-up day with a Ranger. ■

CORPS FAMILY NEWS

Ryan and **Laura Boyle** are the proud new parents of a baby boy. Jackson William Boyle was born October 1st at 3:17 PM. He weighed in at seven pounds, nine ounces and measured 20.5 inches long.

Kiel and **Elizabeth (Adams) Kurkowski** were married October 4th at Wesley Memorial United Methodist Church. A reception was held at the Louise Wells Cameron Art Museum and the couple honeymooned in Aruba.

Jeff and **Emily (Burton) Hughes** were also married on October 4th at Airlie Gardens. Venice, Italy was the choice for their honeymoon.

SAW RECOGNIZED BY CITY OF WILMINGTON'S CAPE FEAR BREEZE DURING COMMUTER CHALLENGE WEEK

Congratulations to Wilmington District members who ditched their cars and either rode their bikes or walked to work during the annual City of Wilmington Commuter Challenge. In addition, the District was recognized for 221 alternative transportation trips for other necessary (non-recreational) purposes, including "an amazing 69 trips in just one week." from left to right; Doug Wall (coordinator), Steve Delange, Richard Kimmel, Rhonda Wiggins, Rosemary Burke, Chris Swan, Brooke Lamson and Dan Emerson.