



Volume XIX No. 6  
Nov. - Dec. 2007

# Flagship

SEATTLE DISTRICT

**Union Slough returns  
to meet the Pacific**

**waves** Pages 6 -7

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U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Vol. XIX

No. 6

**Execute: the most important step****Olton Swanson**

ditionally, in cooperation with local sponsors, we provide support to numerous entities using our various Civil Works authorities including General Investigation, Construction General, Flood Control & Coastal Engineering and, Public Law 84-99 Flood Control Support and others.

We provide engineering, design, procurement, and construction support to our Operating Projects. We provide engineering and construction support to International and Interagency (other Federal) community. And finally, we provide Hazardous, Toxic & Radiological Waste (HTRW) identification and remediation services to both our civil works and military customers.

You can see by the list above that we have many, many customers and the potential for a great deal of competition for the limited resources we have available to complete our varied missions. This is why it is absolutely critical for our project managers to take ownership of representing our customer's interests when working with in house or contract staff. Without the customer having an advocate to insure NWS staff is making progress on their project(s), the project could easily get lost in the confusion of the day-to-day work.

Although we have management controls in place to assure this doesn't happen, resolution of project issues will be much more timely and effective if those issues are identified by the PM and team rather than relying on a monthly line item review or project review board to work and solve

So, what is "the program"? The program is to get the job done. Execute. And we have a lot to execute.

Seattle District executes projects for the Army (Major Construction, Army as well as Operations and Maintenance), and other military customers. Ad-

ditionally, in cooperation with local sponsors, we provide support to numerous entities using our various Civil Works authorities including General Investigation, Construction General, Flood Control & Coastal Engineering and, Public Law 84-99 Flood Control Support and others.

Our Project Managers have to be team leaders as well as team members. They must play the role of customer advocate and help to translate project goals, objectives, and requirements to the Project Delivery Team (PDT). They must bring a sense of urgency to the PDT, i.e., "work hard to insure team members are working hard on the project."

If they identify issues with project progress, it is their job to first discuss the issue with the team member, and then to elevate the issue to the appropriate level (section, branch or division) to insure the resourcing issue is resolved. PDT members are responsible to help the PM establish the "plan of action" to achieve the project goals and objectives (develop the project management plan).

This includes scope, schedule and budget development, real estate acquisition contracting strategy, construction management, project turnover and operation & maintenance requirements (communication?); none of which should be unilaterally directed by either the PM or any other technical organization. Team members should also work to keep their supervisor fully aware of the project commitments being discussed with PMs as the supervisors or "resource manager" is ultimately responsible to insure that staff is fully employed, but not overcommitted.

I recognize that many of you reading this article are not "on the front lines" providing primary support directly to our customers. What then is your role when we talk about "customer service," given that you may not interact with our external customer in person? How can you help to execute the mission? I have a couple of thoughts in this regard. First, I view the support staff across NWS as "facilitators." Doing your job in support of the rest of the organization, makes it possible for those working on external customer projects to execute with more focus and less distraction. Providing the tools and equipment, maintaining vehicles and facilities, processing finances, providing legal, human resources, equal employment, safety, public affairs, or security advice and inspecting to ensure we are doing the things we are suppose to be doing should put all District staff in a position to be better able to focus on and do their jobs.

My second thought is that in many ways, we are all each other's customer. The broader definition of "customer" used in many quality discussions (such as ISO 9000) is that any one that uses the product or service



**Cover:** U.S. Army Corps of Engineers removed pilings on Oct. 16 that let the tides return to Union Slough at Smith Island in Everett, Wash., for the first time in 40 years. An environmental restoration project, it is one of many in the region that works to return the tides to restore fish and wildlife habitat to Puget Sound area. (Nola Leyde Photo)

*Continued on page 4*



Through his 37 years of commitment to the Corps, Noel Gilbrough, has always had a passion to serve the public and support his teams. He is largely responsible for the District's entering the field of basinwide restoration, with his successes on the Green/Duwamish and Stillaguamish Rivers. His work includes flood damage reduction, ecosystem restoration, navigation, and hydropower, and levee rehab. He also plays a fabulous Santa Claus.

**Flagship**

**Col. Michael McCormick, Commander**  
**Patricia Graesser, Chief, Public Affairs**  
**Casondra Brewster, Editor**  
**Nola Leyde, Contributor**  
**Dick Devlin, Contributor**  
**Kayla Overton, Contributor**  
**Elizabeth Townsell, Contributor**

**Flagship** is your news and feature magazine, published bi-monthly. If you have news, suggestions for articles or ideas you think would be useful for **Flagship**, we'd like to hear from you. Send your ideas to the editor or call the Public Affairs Office at (206) 764-3750.

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Col. Steven Miles (center right) accepts the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Colors from Lt. Gen. Robert L. Van Antwerp in the Nov. 2 Relinquishment of Command ceremony held in Portland. (NWD Photo)



Hiram M. Chittenden Locks personnel remove a large lock emergency closure system. This exercise in emergency system placement is conducted every few years to ensure personnel are trained and the system functions as designed. The large lock was already closed for routine maintenance, allowing for the ease of the emergency exercise. (Elizabeth Townsell Photo)

## Chief Joseph Dam's breaker parts are Haditha Dam's gold treasure

Going through a breaker retrofit, Chief Joseph Dam will be sending electrical equipment to Haditha Dam, located in the Al Anbar Province, Iraq.

Haditha Dam is the second largest hydroelectric producer in Iraq and is very important to the lives of many Iraqis.

"Recently, Haditha Dam was the only source of power in Al Anbar province," said Jay Morgan, Chief Joseph Dam power plant electrician.

The original construction of Haditha Dam was completed in 1986 and now is in need of repairs to keep the dam running smoothly.

Morgan has spent two months of his three deployments in Iraq working at Haditha Dam. While working with other team members they realized that Haditha Dam had similar electrical features to Chief Joseph Dam and could benefit from its equipment.

It is important for Haditha Dam to receive these electrical parts because equipment for older dams are harder to find as many suppliers and distributors no longer carry or supply parts needed. Used parts from Chief Joseph Dam are easily transferable as they share similar qualities to that of Haditha Dam, said Rick Werner, Chief Joseph Dam, chief of maintenance.

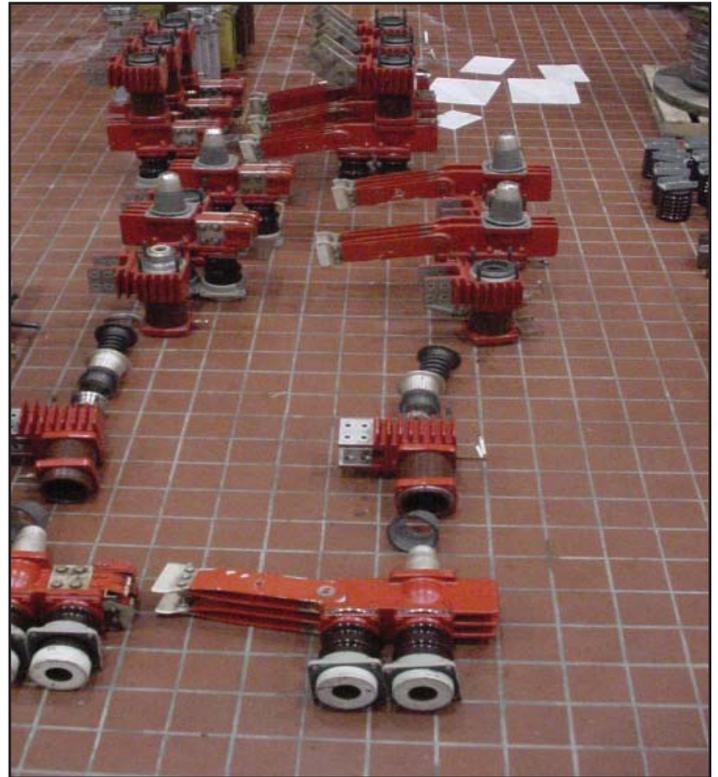
"These are critical parts that Haditha Dam will need in the future," Werner said.

Partnership between Northwest Divi-

sion and Gulf Region Command bring the electrical parts on a journey from Chief Joseph Dam in Washington through, Norfolk Va., and finally into Iraq.

"This is a strong collaborative effort, we're working with resource management, logistics and others to work on getting these parts sent to Iraq," Werner said.

Approximately 550 parts from eight main unit breakers will be shipped to Iraq mid-October in a storage container. Once the parts arrive at Haditha Dam, Corps employees will start teaching and giving local workers lessons on how to manage and maintain the new equipment.  
— Kayla Overton



The Chief Joseph Dam equipment, shown above, was shipped to Haditha Dam, Al Anbar Province, Iraq, for their use. (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Photo)

### Building morale – the CWC wants you

Come January, the Civilian Welfare Council hopes to have new members to provide district employees with all the benefits they enjoy every year and maybe more.

When active, the CWC meets monthly to plan and generate ideas to benefit the district. Annual events sponsored by the CWC include the holiday reception at the Locks, the Corps Day picnic, office decorating contest, and spring basket event.

"The CWC is here to help improve the morale of the workforce, and we need to give the council and its members support," said Olton Swanson, Deputy District Engineer and Chief of PPPMD.

The 2007 picnic was a big success with employees and family members enjoying contests, great food and even a bounce house for the kids.

Other services provided to the district include flowers for employees undergoing surgery and for flowers for memorial services for an employee, spouse or dependent child. CWC provides discount tickets to events like theater productions, Emerald Downs racing and Mariners baseball games.

The CWC supports these activities by holding fund raisers throughout the year. The Council also sells Corps paraphernalia such as mugs, shirts, pins and more.

In November the CWC held an open house to provide information to interested employees. They look to hold elections of new officers in January and are looking forward to new members and ideas. If you are interested in more information, please contact Patricia Graesser,

## Execute

*Continued from page 2*

that you provide is in essence your customer.

If we could treat each other the way we strive to treat our very best and most valued external customer, think about what a wonderful work environment we could create. While I might not always answer the phone by asking "how may I serve you," as suggested by Lt. Gen. R.L. Van Antwerp, I do agree with his intent. We are all public servants. In the interest of executing the mission, let us all recognize that we can most effectively accomplish this by being of service to one another. Essayons.

# Strategic Sourcing update **A-76**

In the past five years, several Army Corps of Engineers functions have been subject to competition with the private sector or have been slated for a thorough review to determine how the identified function can become a High Performing Organization.

The President's Management Agenda outlines specific programs to improve government performance and service to the American public. Competitive Sourcing is a key component of the agenda, and the Corps is fully committed to its implementation.

The Corps developed a plan to compete approximately 7,500 commercial-in-nature positions from 2003 to 2008.

The functions and their associated positions subject to competition are identified in the annual FAIR Act inventory (Federal Ac-

tivities Inventory Reform Act of 1998), Public Law 105-270. The FAIR Act requires federal agencies to annually submit to the office of Management and Budget a list of activities the head of the executive agency determines are not inherently governmental functions. Put more simply, these are activities that could be performed by a contractor.

The functions identified by the Corps for strategic sourcing have included three that were competed with the private sector:

- o Information Management-Information Technology - 1,300 federal positions and 550 contractors at 55 sites
- o USACE Finance Center - 90 positions at Millington, Tenn.
- o Department of Public Works - The DPW function is limited to two USACE sites: the Engineer Research and Development Center (ERDC) facilities in Vicksburg, Miss., and the Cold Regions Research Engineering Laboratory in Hanover, New Hampshire, a total of 50 positions.

The Corps also gained approval to restructure three functions as high performing organizations without competing with the

private sector:

- o Logistics Management- 538 positions
- o Resource Management - 2,400 to 3,000 positions in RMO offices and in the technical organizations
- o Navigation - Operation & Maintenance of Navigation Locks - approximately 2,200 positions

The functions which include Seattle District employees are the IM-IT, logistics, navigation operations and resource management functions (including financial management positions in technical offices such as PPM, Engineer and Construction, and Operations).

The federal bid won the IM-IT competition in June 2006, and the new IM-IT organization is scheduled to be operational in May 2008. The number of employees assigned to the Seattle District is significantly smaller than in the legacy Information Management Office.

Some employees have been offered jobs in the new organization and others have accepted jobs in other functional areas in the district. Many functions are expected to be handled virtually while service levels, processes and equipment are expected to be standardized to gain efficiencies.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Logistics Activity stood up officially April 1, 2007, with all Logistics Management Office employees reassigned to new positions April 15. Of the people working in LMO, some were reassigned to positions on-site at the district office, and some were reassigned to the Millington headquarters.

No employee moves have been required to date. The ULA employees assigned to Millington, Tenn., will work virtually from Seattle for the known future, and when vacancies occur, the position will be filled in Millington. The ULA is scheduled to reach full operating capability on April 1, 2008.

The Navigation HPO study was announced in November 2006 and is ongoing with study completion expected this summer. The Resource Management HPO study was announced in October 2007 and is in the preliminary planning phase.

Current information about Strategic Sourcing at the Corps of Engineers is available on-line at: <https://strategicsourcing.usace.army.mil/> - Patricia Graesser

## National Council honors team featuring Corps' West Coast scientists

Sheri Moore, Seattle District, and Brad Call, Sacramento District, are part of a national team that was recently recognized as the Interstate Technology and Regulatory Council team of the year. Moore and Call are members of the state-led, multi-agency Sampling, Characterization & Monitoring Team of the ITRC, which provides tools, information and training to state regulators across the United States.

These products help state environmental agencies gain valuable technical knowledge and develop consistent regulatory approaches for reviewing and approving specific technologies. State regulators lead ITRC technical teams, which rely on broad-based participation from federal agencies, industry, academia, and other stakeholders in building collective knowledge and collaborative products.

"Sheri's and Brad's technical expertise and practical experience have been invaluable to the high level of quality in the products that the ITRC's SCM Team has been able to provide," said team leader Stuart J. Nagourney with the state of New Jersey.

"Being on this team has allowed us to establish relationships we may not have otherwise, and it allows the states to have access to our technology and people," said Moore.

ITRC consists of 49 states, the District of Columbia, multiple federal partners, industry participants, and other stakeholders, cooperating to broaden and deepen technical knowledge and streamline the regulation of new environmental technologies.

The award winning Sampling, Characterization, and Monitoring Team is led by a representative from the state of New Jersey and includes EPA, Corps and other agency, state and industry participants. It was formed in 2002 to address the opportunities presented by a number of innovations and changes in the sampling and monitoring field related to real-time information, continuous monitoring, and long-term monitoring for site closure and stewardship. The team has examined not only innovative sampling and monitoring technologies, but also innovative approaches, such as EPA's Triad approach.

"Sheri and Brad have been integral parts of Team's efforts to develop technology and guidance documents on a variety of subjects including Triad, Direct-Push (DP) Wells and Sensor Technologies," said Nagourney. "With Sheri and Brad's help, the SCM Team will publish its fourth major document on sensors in May 2008. The use of these documents has saved regulators and property owners millions of dollars while providing more robust and substantiated data sets leading to more certain site decision-making."

"Brad has been part of the training team on DP wells, and Sheri will be one of the trainers for Sensors. SCM Team has trained more than 3,000 regulators, consultants, and other interested parties—all at no cost to the attendees!" said Nagourney. - Patricia Graesser



**\$83,563**  
Total given so far  
in 2007

**Seattle District's  
generosity is  
awesome! Thanks!**

# Tides return to Union Slough channel for the first time in more than 40 years



The fish and wildlife habitat in the Snohomish estuary, including Union Slough, had been significantly degraded as a result of the modifications made to the natural river channel to create a suitable navigation channel. An estimated 75 percent of the wetlands in the lower Snohomish basin have been altered due to local flood control, agricultural conversion and, to a lesser extent, filling over the past 50-60 years. Union Slough was almost entirely diked.

The areas behind the levees were predominantly freshwater wetlands dominated by reed canary grass, and agricultural fields, providing no access for fish. In recent years the farms behind the levees have ceased to operate and the land has passed into public ownership. In two other

locations on Union Slough, the levees have been breached to re-create habitat areas, and one has been preserved as a fresh water wetland.

The Union Slough project in set back levees along a distributary channel of the Snohomish and w 35 acres to tidal influence. This p builds on successful restorations and will be further enhanced by of Everett mitigation project that built along with this project.

The project site covers approximately 93 acres. The project formulated as a whole. The local dedicates 50 acres of the project mitigation for other work. The C is cost-sharing approximately 46 of the project, and the local sponsor funding 50 acres. The cost of the restoration project is approximately million dollars.

Construction was initiated and will be completed this year. consisted of construction of a ne

back levee, filling the old borrow ditches, and breaching the old levee in three lo Bridges to maintain the existing public-access trail span the levee breaches. The e site will flood and drain completely twice a day with the tide.

According to Shaw, the goal of the project was to restore natural habitat fo processes to create a dynamic and self-maintaining environment that is hospita fish and wildlife. The levee along Union Slough was replaced and breached, in or

- Create and maintain tidal inundation in estuarine habitat
- Maintain existing level of flood damage reduction
- Maintain existing public access

The trails for the public are scheduled to be open in 2008, pending paving o trail and resolution of the settling of one of the three bridges for the trail. The b were expected to settle with the return of the tides and effect of the water com and out each day. The northern most bridge settled more than what was expect will have to be resolved before opening next spring. — Nola Leyde

**A** U.S. Army Corps of Engineers contractor removed pilings on Oct. 16 that let the tides return to Union Slough at Smith Island in Everett, Wash., for the first time in 40 years.

An environmental restoration project, it is one of many in the region that works to return the tides to restore fish and wildlife habitat to Puget Sound area.

The return of the tides to the Snohomish River delta was made possible by the joint efforts of the Corps' Seattle District and the City of Everett acting as the local sponsor, and is authorized under Section 1135 of Water Resource Development Act of 1986 which allows environmental modifications to Corps Federally authorized and constructed projects.

According to Tim Shaw, project manager, the federal navigation project was started in 1910 and included dredging, construction of dikes and a settling basin. It was completed in 1963.



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**LEFT:** Saltwater enters from Union Slough into tidal flats on Oct. 16 when the pilings are removed to let the tides return after projects built more 40 years ago turned it into a freshwater wetland area. **TOP:** Nilo Bonifacio, construction, left, walks the nearly completed foot trail at Union Slough environmental restoration project with contractor Jerry Pionessa. A crane on one of the foot bridges is being prepared to remove more of the pilings that have kept the slough back during the construction. Pilings were removed, letting the tides return to Union Slough. **ABOVE:** Tim Shaw, project manager for the Corps, and Heather Griffin, City of Everett Public Works, coordinate the work. (Nola Leyde Photos)

# Phase 5 complete!

*Idaho air base becomes home for 462 more families*

Jasmine Mathis was certainly pleased now that she had been handed the key. She was ready to move into her brand new home...so pleased and excited, in fact, she couldn't bring herself to relinquish the key to her new digs to the Gunfighter standing next to her. Jasmine is four years old.

But Mom and Dad, Talmi and Senior Airman Frederick Mathis, came to the Gunfighter's rescue by cajoling and wheedling the key from Jasmine's grip and, with no tears, passed it back to Col. James Browne, 366th Fighter Wing commander...AKA the Gunfighter.

With the front door now unlocked the tour of Jasmine's new home could now get underway, Jasmine herself leading the parade.

Mountain Home Air Force Base, a bit isolated on its site about 40 miles southwest of Boise, Idaho, is in the midst of a complex multi-phase \$300-million housing replacement program and the Mathis family is its latest beneficiary.

October's completion of Phase 5 brings to 462 the number of new housing units brought on line in the past few years. Phases 6 and 7 are under construction now and will include another 318 units. The total program calls for 1,324 units on base at completion of all construction. The last phase of construction, Phase 8, with 457 units, has a price tag of \$108-million. Phase 8 by far the largest phase, will be completed by a privatization contractor.

Phase 5 was approved as a \$37-million MILCON project in Fiscal Year 2004 which supports the Department of Defense's goal to bring all Air Force housing up to current standards. The design and construction agent for this project was the Seattle District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

"This project was truly a joint effort with Air Combat Command, the Corps of Engineers, the design-build contractor Parsons-Evergreene and the Air Force," according to Browne, Wing Commander of the 366th Fighter Wing, known as Gunfighter," in his comments at the ribbon cutting. The name has its roots in World War Two when the 366th Fighter Group, U.S. Army Air Corps, was stood up in Europe at about the same time Mountain Home was under construction.

"A design-build project, this phase created 153 new junior non-commissioned officer units and demolished 186 substandard housing units in the old Oasis housing area," he explained.

The new units include two-, three- and four-bedroom homes and consist of a mix of duplex and single family dwellings and related work including all new streets and under-



**Col. James Browne, 366th Fighter Wing commander chuckles as four-year old Jasmine Mathis announces "It's mine!" after he had presented her with the key to their new family quarters. Her parents, Senior Airman Frederick and Talmi Mathis eventually coaxed the key free in a tearless coup. (Dick Devlin Photo)**

ground utilities. The "Craftsman" style homes include many desirable features including high ceilings, quality flooring, upgraded appliances, fenced yards and sprinkler systems.

Each unit has a large covered front porch, a large covered patio and an oversized single car garage for two-bedroom units and double car garage for units with three or more bedrooms. There is very little exterior maintenance with the vinyl siding, vinyl framed windows, cultured stone wainscot and 30-year asphalt shingle roofing.

Site amenities offer two basketball courts, a playground, two tot lots with covered shelters and drinking fountains, sidewalks on both sides of the streets as well as jogging and walking paths that connect to other areas of housing and the rest of the base.

Numerous new trees and green spaces were incorporated to soften the desert environment and yard design utilizes "xeriscape" principles to minimize the amount of maintenance and to put the water only where it is needed.

Air Force families began moving in at the end of October.

"Our Airmen can be proud to live in these highly functional, efficient and beautiful homes which have earned design recognition at ACC and Air Force levels. These fine homes and family-friendly neighborhoods greatly improve the quality of life for our Gunfighter

Airmen and their families," asserted Browne.

Earlier the same day a turnover and ribbon-cutting ceremony was held across the base on the breezy and chilly flight line in front of the new 19,100-square foot base operations building.

"The building behind me is the finished product of a \$9.3 million joint effort that replaced one of the oldest standing buildings on Mountain Home AFB," stressed Col. Thomas Laffey, Commander of the 366th Mission Support Group.

It is home to members of the 366th Operations Support Squadron incorporating airfield operations, airfield management, Radar Approach Control, or RAPCON, and a weather detachment.

The Gunfighter commander noted that "When fully operational the facility will include a new state-of-the-art air traffic control system known as STARS, making Mountain Home AFB one of only three bases within Air Combat Command to incorporate that new technology."

He also noted that the rapid pace of construction will allow him to accelerate the finished product and restore full night flying capabilities "by as much as 18 months."

Col. Mike McCormick, Seattle District Engineer, took the opportunity to point out that

*Continued on page 9*

# Locks recognizes volunteers with ‘Metals of Honor’

The Hiram M. Chittenden Locks Natural Resource staff partnered with Northwest Interpretive Association to honor individuals who have volunteered thousands of hours at the Carl S. English Jr. Botanical Garden. This year over 1,000 volunteers worked 3,563 hours at a value of service amount totaling \$66,878.

Five volunteers qualified for The Presidents' Volunteer Service award. These awards are given to individuals whose dedication signifies that they have served our community and country with distinction. Their efforts have demonstrated the values that make our nation strong, by helping build a culture of citizenship, service and responsibility in America.

Awards given this year were Bronze, Silver, Gold, recognizing different levels of hours volunteered in the botanical garden. Each award winner received a certificate, a letter of thanks and recognition from the White House and a lapel pin of bronze, silver or gold

Those recognized with bronze awards contributing 100 – 249 hours individually were Jack Torkko and Bob Anderson. The Greater Seattle Fuchsia Society received a bronze group award. Silver awards went to Dick



**Metal Volunteers pictured above following an award ceremony at the Hiram M. Chittenden Locks: pictured are: (top left to right, Gary Melenzyer, Dick Grace, Bob Anderson. (bottom) Marie Tobiason, Jack Torkko, Faye Greenlee. (Brian Carter Photo)**

Grace and Faye Greenlee with between 250 and 499 hours contributed. Marie Tobiason contributed nearly 600 hours this year and received the gold award.

The awards ceremony and lunch were made possible by the Northwest Interpretive

Association, the Corps' non-profit partner at the locks. The Northwest Interpretive Association supports the Corps Natural Resources mission by providing funds for events that cannot be funded with appropriated funds. – Brian Carter

## Keys

*Continued from page 8*



**Col. Thomas Laffey, 366th Mission Support Group commander makes comments to Mountain Home Air Force families who came to take part in the turnover of Phase 5 Housing on the base. He referred to the Craftsman-style units as “Just simply world class for our word class Airmen.” (Dick Devlin Photo)**

“As a matter of personal pride, it’s rewarding to note this project was fully designed by Seattle District’s in-house design staff. The entire team can also take pride in receiving last year’s Air Combat Command Concept Design Award as well as a nomination in the year’s Air Force-wide Post-Construction Award category.”

McCormick also pointed out that the working relationship between Seattle District and Mountain Home Air Force base goes back more than six decades and is indicative that Mountain Home and the Corps have been on the move...together.

Browne concurred and added that “The success and completion of this building could not have been realized without the exemplary efforts and dedication of everyone who had a hand in its construction.

“Put simply, the Army Corps of Engineers, the 366th Civil Engineering Squadron, and Record Steele Construction, Inc. took a handful of scratch and created a masterpiece: the building standing behind me.”

Next on the schedule? Under construction now a new, 55,000 square-foot Temporary Lodging Facility (extended stay hotel) for in-transit families which will have 35 individual accommodations. – Dick Devlin

# District engineer goes the extra 2,917 miles to help



being used to deliver electricity was basically lamp chord. Because of the poor wiring the buildings were experiencing voltage drop, the building was starting with 120 volts and ending with 60 volts.

“These people would have to be trained about electricity and some techniques to minimize voltage drop,” Lawson said. “My years of teaching Diesel Generator School for the Prospect program really helped.”

Lawson taught the locals about basic modern electricity. He educated them on alternating and direct current and voltage drop.

“The most rewarding part of the trip was the love we felt from the people when we got there,” Lawson said. “I really would like to go back again.”

The group is now looking at returning to Guatemala and building a facility for elderly widows. According to Lawson there are no elderly facilities in Guatemala.

When the group left Guatemala, the metal roof was on, the entire floor was placed, and 15 light fixtures were wired and operational.  
– Kayla Overton

Ken Lawson, Electrical Engineer and chief of the technical section, at Chief Joseph Dam boarded an airplane on January 15, 2007 along with 52 passengers headed to La Esperanza Chilatz, Guatemala.

The group was composed of men women and children from 16 churches from around Eastern Washington and Idaho. The group consisted of one doctor, one dentist, two mechanics, other professionals and Lawson the engineer.



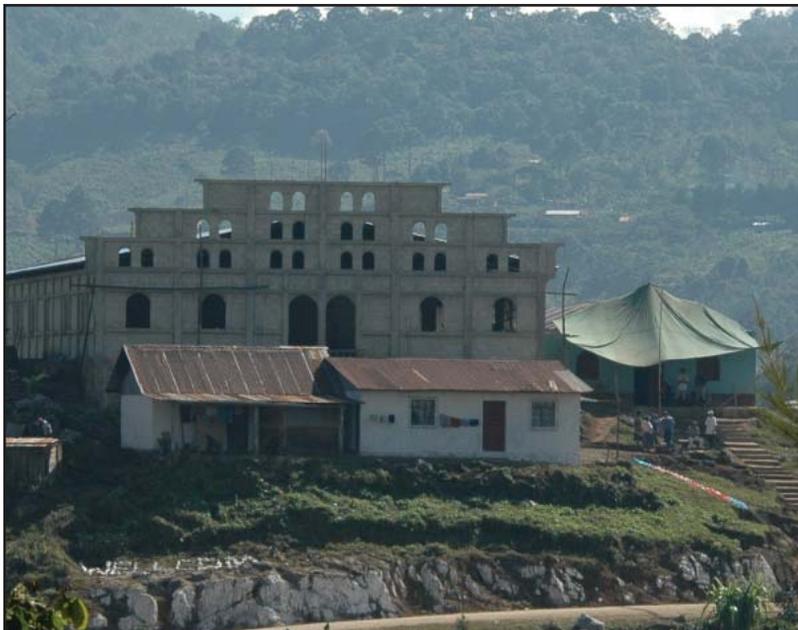
Ken Lawson

Lawson attended the two-week long Work & Witness Program, a missions trip coordinated through his local church. The group’s original task was to put on a metal roof and install as much of the floor as possible in a new church.

Lawson’s major task during the trip was installing the lights and electrical service.

The closest electricity was a mile away, the site was using two to three generators for electricity in three different buildings. The wiring that was

**TOP:** Construction supplies had to be physically carried up a long narrow flight of crude steps for the project to continue. **BELOW LEFT:** The completed project, which can house the town’s congregation. **BELOW RIGHT:** Lawson (right) consults with another volunteer on electricity placement.



# Welcome to the district family



James Bryant  
Chief  
Real Estate



Stephanie Chavez  
Emergency Management  
Assistant - Operations



Rob Didenhover  
Civil Engineer  
Engineer & Construction



Chemine Jackels  
Biologist  
Project Management



Shannon Wilson  
Environmental Protection  
Assistant - Regulatory



Krista Painter  
Supervisory Accountant  
Resource Management



Vilma Gayle Hanson  
Contract Specialist  
Contracting



Jacalen Printz  
Biologist  
Regulatory



Jasmin Lafradez  
Office Automation Clerk  
Records & Information



Bruce K. Skillin  
Chief  
Human Resources



Robert "Bob" Blaesing  
Envir. Compl. Coord.  
Natural Resources



Art Burg  
Mechanic  
Chief Joseph Dam



John William Ching  
Grandchild, 9 lbs.  
Ann Gerner, OC



Lane & Grace Gavin  
Twins!, Teresa Gavin,  
Albeni Falls Dam



John Derby  
Natural Resource Specialist  
Natural Resources



Conway Bondurant  
Power Plant Shift Operator  
Albeni Falls Dam



Joe Cravey Jr  
Electronic System Control  
Albeni Falls Dam



Teresa Gavin  
Materials Handler  
Transfer from CJD to AFD

## Around the district

### Departures



Rick Spiger

**Rick Spiger**, a mechanic at Albeni Falls Dam, has transferred to Omaha District (Big Bend Dam) effective Nov. 25. As an AFD Term employee, he is really excited about joining the COE team in a permanent position.



Mark Ross

**Mark Ross**, an electrician at Albeni Falls Dam, has transferred to the Bureau of Reclamation in Flatiron, Colorado effective Nov. 11.

at the Society for Wetland Scientists and Society of Ecological Restoration joint conference held in Yakima, Wash., Sept. 25-28, 2007.

Terzi made a presentation at the Skagit County League of Women Voters forum on Oct. 4. The forum was titled "Wetland Mitigation Banking 101" and consisted of a panel representing the Corps, Skagit County, a private entrepreneurial banker, and an agricultural community activist. It was standing room only and it was taped for public access television, web cast, radio, and was written up in the local news.

**Ken Brettmann**, water management, was speaker at the Puyallup River Watershed Council's monthly meeting held at Sumner City Hall. His presentation was "Flood Damage Reduction Operations at Mud Mountain Dam." The focus of the talk was flood control operations at MMD with a summary of the



Andrea Cummins  
Biologist  
Environmental Resources



Lan Nguyen  
Biologist  
Planning Formulation



Luciano Cadicamo  
Daughter; 6 lbs 14 oz.;  
Lt. Col. Matt Cadicamo

Nov. 2006 flood. In attendance was a mix of government officials and interested citizens, as well as media.

**Larry Schick**, meteorologist, spoke on Nov. 15 to the Puget Sound Chapter of the American Meteorological Society regarding Corps water management operations and weather forecasting during Seattle District flood control. He explained flood risk management and how the Seattle District operates different projects during reservoir control center flood operations.

*Send us your professional accomplishments. Contact [casondra.brewster@us.army.mil](mailto:casondra.brewster@us.army.mil).*

### Outreach

**Gail Terzi**, Senior Scientist and Mitigation Banking Program Manager for the Regulatory Branch, represented the Seattle District

Public Affairs Office  
Seattle District (CENWS-PA)  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
4735 East Marginal Way South  
Seattle, WA 98134-2392

## Postcards From the Front....



*I believe the Afghan mission is a critical mission for the security of the USA and other nations of the world. The USACE mission in Afghanistan is a true peacekeeping mission.*

*The Afghan people are like anyone else; they want to live in peace, support their families, see that their children are healthy, educated and have a better life than they had. If anyone can create positive conditions like that for people, wars would be harder to start and easier to finish. Afghans have lived under conditions that most Americans can not even imagine and the majority continue to live in (by American standards) extreme poverty. It's my view that most Afghans do not support the Taliban and some live in fear of these terrorists who kill Afghan teachers, engineers, foreign charitable group members or anyone else trying to improve conditions in Afghanistan. I have worked with many devout Muslims. They view the Taliban as just criminals. These Afghans see the Taliban as a terrorist group that uses their religion as an excuse to control the poor and uneducated people of Afghanistan. There are literally millions of peace-loving Muslims in Afghanistan who want an end to the senseless violence. I believe that America and many other concerned nations in Afghanistan are the Afghans only hope to live a better more peaceful life.*

*Even in the present day the danger from terrorist attacks in Afghanistan is somewhat overblown by the American news media. You still have to aware of your surroundings and follow the directives from the military security experts. Afghanistan is probably not much more dangerous than some large American large cities. Just like American cities some areas are more dangerous than others.*

*Going to Afghanistan allows a person to see the best and the worst in the human nature, to experience a life that is surreal at times but also an adventure of a lifetime. You learn to appreciate to the nth degree what we have in the USA especially the ideals on treatment of other human beings on this earth. The job in Afghanistan is far from over and the Afghans are hoping we do not give up on their country with the project only half completed. — Mark Springer*



**Husband and wife, Mark Springer and Tracy Hunter, share a quick snow-filled moment while deployed to the Afghanistan Engineer District with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Springer has done five deployments to Afghanistan. (Courtesy photo)**

### ABOUT THE POSTCARD SENDER:

Mark Springer, normally assigned to the Spokane Resident Office, volunteered to deploy to Afghanistan initially in February 2003 and immediately joined the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers team in Kabul, Afghanistan, in early March 2003. He recently returned home on Oct. 1 after serving five tours in Afghanistan.

Much has changed in those five tours, but the need for people is still high. In 2003, the initial team in Afghanistan consisted of only 14 people total. The USACE mission in 2003 had a substantial workload in relation to the size of its staff.

Today, the Afghanistan Engineering District is located in almost every section of Afghanistan (large cities and small villages) with hundreds of personnel but with 10 times the workload as there was in 2003.

Just as in 2003 the Afghanistan Engineering District (AED) is typically understaffed and in need of many more qualified office and field people. Experienced personnel are strongly encouraged to volunteer and extend while over there. But, AED has also hired with great success less experienced, yet highly motivated employees possessing various technical degrees for in-training project management duties. There are some jobs at AED that are typically not USACE functions such as, war zone logistics, facility maintainer and dining facility management etc.

In fact, Springer's wife, Tracy, Hunter joined him in 2006. She was hired to run the dining facility in Kabul, which serves approximately 500 meals per day and, also, sends special food "care packages" to USACE member in the Provincial Reconstruction Teams throughout Afghanistan.

At the end of his final tour in Afghanistan, Springer was supervisor of three American and seven Afghan Employees.

Mark said that the work is overwhelming at times but also challenging, quick-paced and it is also extremely interesting.