

NOVEMBER 2018

Wilmington District Responds to Hurricane Florence

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134 Years old
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Hurricane Florence began forming from a strong tropical wave that emerged off the west coast of Africa on Aug. 30, 2018. Gaining in strength, it formed into a tropical depression the next day near Cape Verde.

Progressing along a steady west-northwest trajectory, the system acquired tropical storm strength on Sept. 1, and fluctuated in strength for several days over the open ocean. It eventually became a Category 4 hurricane and was heading straight for southeastern North Carolina with landfall as a Category 2 in Wilmington and the immediate area.

On Sept. 10, the Wilmington District Crisis Action Team (CAT)



Preliminary Damage Assessment team member Ed Dunlop takes notes on damages sustained from Hurricane Florence at Kure Beach.

activated the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) as Hurricane Florence tracked closer to the Carolina Coast. The following day, the CAT evacuated to the North Carolina Air National Guard Base to set up an alternate EOC. The CAT ramped up quickly to prepare specific tasks to include situational reports, Crisis Management Team briefings, travel orders, funding and other standard procedures during emergency management. The team conducted Crisis Management Team briefings and accountability as Florence pounded the coast, and coordinated with other local, state and federal agencies.

“We plan and train for worst case scenarios,” said Janelle Mavis, Chief of

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Wilmington District Celebrates 134 Years Nov. 24

Team Wilmington,

We've pulled through yet another significant storm event that disrupted our daily routines, damaged some of our homes, and gave us quite a scare. But we answered the call, and I'm immensely proud that our Emergency Management teams and those who volunteered went the extra mile during Hurricane Florence. We kept North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper and other high ranking officials successfully informed of the status of our dams and water releases, and we managed to keep in contact with all District employees when they were scattered about after leaving Wilmington or sitting out the hurricane in their own homes.

I can't help but look at the hurricane battle streamers that are proudly displayed in our main conference room and wonder how the District fared during hurricanes 30, 50 or even a hundred years ago. No doubt the District teams from those times pitched in to help with as much dedication to duty that I saw during this past event. Which brings me to a date that often goes unnoticed; November 24, the Wilmington District's 134th birthday. According to information from our Wilmington District history book, our

organization began on that date in 1884, when we officially opened in a small room on Second Street with a staff of four or five people. The office later moved to the third floor of the Post Office Building, and in 1916 to the Customhouse which was later named the Federal Building. The first District Engineer, Capt. William H. Bixby, who would later become Chief of Engineers, supervised all river and harbor improvements and fortifications in the District. Civilian assistant engineers directed major projects or groups of projects and reported to the District Engineer. Even though the infrastructure was much different than today, I'm sure that Capt. Bixby and his staff faced similar scenarios during hurricanes or other significant storm events and rallied his "troops" to help reduce flooding. I wonder if he ever witnessed downtown flooding in Wilmington from his office on his watch.

The Wilmington District has certainly left its mark in North Carolina for the last 134 years. We've built dams, locks and levees, helped reduce damage to property and save lives through our beach projects, and given the military quality facilities to perform their

various missions.

Our regulatory folks help balance the needs for preserving ecosystems and building the economy of North Carolina, and our rangers have welcomed

tens of thousands of visitors to our projects and have been excellent stewards of the environment at our projects in North Carolina and southern Virginia.

For 134 years we've had dedicated employees who've used their expertise in their various fields and disciplines to contribute to the Nation and to the great state of North Carolina and the commonwealth of Virginia. I salute them and I salute you.

Happy Birthday, Wilmington District.

V/r,

Robert Clark

55th Commander, USACE Wilmington District



District Commander Col.
Robert Clark

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U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Wilmington District

Hurricane Florence Con't

Readiness and Contingency Operations. “Our support to the North Carolina State Division of Emergency Management and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is flexible and scalable based upon the uniqueness of each event. We planned to relocate the Emergency Operations Center for this type of event.”

Hurricane Florence made landfall on Sept. 14. In Washington, D.C., U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Headquarters (USACE) leaders received 18 mission assignments of which 15 were active. The mission assignments included National Activation, Regional Activations, Temporary Emergency Power, Debris, Infrastructure Assessment, Water and Wastewater Assessment, Temporary Roofing, and Dam Safety Technical Assistance. Approximately 131 people deployed to include Temporary Emergency Power Planning Response Teams (PRT), subject matter experts, and Soldiers from one company of the 249th Engineer Battalion (Prime Power). USACE headquarters also deployed seven

Deployable Tactical Operations System (DTOS) vehicles to assist with communication capabilities.

Public Law 84-99 authorizes the Chief of Engineers, acting for the Secretary of the Army, to undertake activities including disaster preparedness, advance measures, emergency operations (flood response and post-flood recovery), rehabilitation of flood control works threatened or destroyed by flood, protection or repair of federally authorized shore protective works threatened or damaged by coastal storm, and provisions of emergency water due to drought or a contaminated source.

In addition, Public Law 93-288, or Stafford Act, constitutes the statutory authority for most Federal response activities, especially as they pertain to FEMA and its programs. In accordance with this legislation, FEMA may direct USACE to use its available personnel, supplies, facilities, or other resources to provide assistance in the event of a major disaster or emergency declaration.

The Department of Defense has designated USACE as the planning and operating agent for Emergency Support Function (ESF) #3, Public Works and Engineering, under FEMA’s National Response Framework (NRF). FEMA’s NRF provides guidance for the Nation’s all-hazards response, identifies key response principles, roles, and structures that organize national response. It describes how communities, states, the Federal Government and private-sector and nongovernmental partners apply these principles for a coordinated, effective national response.

In Raleigh, working with North Carolina government and Emergency Management officials, Deputy District Commander Lt. Col. Yanson Cox kept in direct contact with them to give updated statuses of water releases from Wilmington District Dams and other USACE responsibilities.

As Hurricane Florence made its way toward coastal North Carolina, weather reports predicted at least 24 inches of rain. A total of 35 inches

Hurricane Florence Con't

of rain fell in Elizabethtown, North Carolina, and Florence became the wettest tropical cyclone recorded in the Carolinas, and also the eighth-wettest overall in the contiguous United States. Wilmington District water managers were on call to coordinate with teams at the projects. Their first priority was to make sure that operations weren't going to contribute to any flooding downstream of the projects, since that's where the worst flooding was being forecast to occur. They cut back to minimum releases before the storm to minimize any downstream effects, then closely monitored the situation.

"It's a balancing act determining

when we can start to release water following a storm event," said Water Manager Chief Tony Young. "Like Hurricane Matthew, because downstream flooding was so severe and so prolonged in the Neuse and Cape Fear River Basins, we had to delay our releases longer than we normally would following a typical storm event. The longer we have to wait to start making releases from our projects, the greater the risk, that we could get even more rain. Since the lakes were already half full, even a few more inches of rain could have possibly filled our lakes up completely, taking away all our flood control capability.

Thankfully, we had fairly dry conditions after Hurricane Florence,

Houston when rainfall was measured in feet instead of inches. He knew an event like that could be devastating to North Carolina.

"The track of the Hurricane Florence was going to make all the difference in the world," he said. "We asked ourselves if the worst of the rain was going to stay downstream of our projects or make more of an impact in and around Wilmington. We also thought about if the rain would extend far enough upstream that we could be at risk of overflowing our spillways, something that had not occurred at any of our projects. Thankfully, the worst of the rain was downstream, and our projects were able to handle all the floodwaters that fell upstream of our lakes."

Keeping the public informed of USACE missions during and after Hurricane Florence with timely and accurate lifesaving information was a high priority. The ESF #15 External Affairs integrates Public Affairs and the Joint Information Center (JIC), Congressional Affairs,

and we were able to get most of our lakes back near normal before Hurricane Michael came along."

Young reflects back to 2017's Hurricane Harvey in



District Commander Col. Robert Clark speaks about Hurricane Florence with a local TV news reporter.

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Hurricane Florence Con't

Intergovernmental Affairs, Planning and Products and the Private Sector under the coordinating auspices of external affairs. The JIC ensures the coordinated release of information. The Planning and Products component of external affairs develops all external and internal communications strategies and products for the ESF #15 organization.

Wilmington District Chief of Public Affairs Lisa Parker deployed with the Crisis Action Team to Charlotte as the External Affairs Action Officer. Parker has been a member of the ESF #15 credentialed FEMA cadre since its conception in 2009. She worked closely with FEMA representatives, District Commander Robert Clark, Mavis and North Carolina Emergency Management public information officers to provide updated information of Wilmington District missions via social media, news releases and media interviews.

“For additional public affairs support, we brought on three volunteers from various USACE External Affairs Planning Response

Teams which deployed to North Carolina to assist with communications within the impacted areas,” stated Parker.

By Wednesday, Sept. 19, the weather had cleared. The

CAT team moved the alternate EOC Beach to the Deployable Tactical Operations System (DTOS), providing continuous support to the Wilmington District for Recovery Operations and accountability of District Employees. Hurricane Florence created catastrophic damage to the coast and limited access back to Wilmington, and the team continued operations until the routes from Charlotte were safe to travel. Preliminary Damage Assessment (PDA) teams were beginning to assemble to inspect the conditions of the four Coastal Storm Risk Management projects at Wrightsville Beach, Carolina Beach, Kure Beach and Ocean Isle



The Crisis Action Team used a conference room at their hotel in Charlotte to provide continuous support.

Beach.

“Overall, the beaches performed as designed with minor to moderate sand losses,” said Engineering Branch Chief Greg Williams. “The current Carolina Beach/Kure Beach Preliminary Inspection Report (PIR) is being amended to include the losses from Hurricane Florence so that those quantities can be added to the current solicitation. The Project Delivery Team (PDT) is examining post-storm survey results at Wrightsville Beach and Ocean Isle Beach to determine if quantities and costs warrant preparing a PIR for those locations.”

Debris from thousands of fallen

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Hurricane Florence Con't



Homes were heavily damaged and many dunes failed at Surf City, North Carolina.

trees, flooding and assorted vegetation overwhelmed numerous areas of the state causing additional flooding and road closures. Mavis said that the Wilmington District provided technical assistance to FEMA for the debris mission by providing mission analysis and field assessments that were reported back to FEMA debris officials.

The size and scope of Hurricane Florence prevented normal

operations of the Wilmington District from resuming quicker than normal. What were clear routes back to Wilmington on one day were soon hampered when floodwaters from the upper elevations of North Carolina began reaching the Piedmont and the coastal areas the next day resulting in non-passable routes. Mavis stated that particular scenario was noted in an After Action Review and will be closely looked at if another

Florence-type hurricane happens.

“We plan to educate our staff and plan for a longer timeframe to return to Wilmington based upon the event scenario,” she said.

“Since we relocated the Emergency Operations Center to Charlotte, the equipment and personnel went with us. We were able to operate and function as planned, and with telework capability for those not assigned to work in the EOC.”

DISTRICT HELPS KEEP COMMERCIAL VESSEL TRAFFIC RUNNING POST-HURRICANE FLORENCE

One of the top priorities for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers after a hurricane or other major storm event is to get survey vessels on the water as quickly as possible after danger has passed. If a federal channel is impassable it means a loss of revenue because commercial ships can't deliver goods and products on time.

The Wilmington District responded to the survey mission on the Cape Fear River after Hurricane Florence on Sept. 16 to ensure that no obstructions or shoals prevented ships from reaching the Port of Wilmington from the Atlantic Ocean. In addition to hydrographic surveys of the federal channel, the District was asked to coordinate the removal of bottom obstructions from the Wilmington Harbor Federal Project that were identified by National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) vessels. The District reached out to the Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA) to perform salvage operations with a contract under its purview that can be used through coordination by other agencies. Bullock said collaboration for the NAVSEA contract was performed by



Wilmington District Chief of Navigation Roger Bullock stands before a pipeline dredge pontoon onboard contractor Donjon Marine's salvage vessel.

the Wilmington District's Operations Branch, Programs Management and the Office of Counsel to help speed up the process.

"The NAVSEA contractor, New Jersey-based Donjon Marine, added great support to the Wilmington District by side-scanning areas at the Port of Wilmington to verify NOAA's targets," said Wilmington District Chief of Navigation Roger Bullock. "They subsequently deployed divers

and a salvage vessel to remove a submerged boat from the Wilmington Harbor Federal Project."

Bullock said that Donjon Marine removed other obstructions such as large boulders and a pipeline dredge pontoon from the bottom of the Cape Fear River. He said that it's imperative for opening the port to coordinate immediately to remove such obstacles in support of the U.S. Coast Guard.

Pagan Deploys to Assist in Task Force Puerto Rico Recovery

When Wilmington District electrical engineer Wilmarie Pagan first arrived in Puerto Rico where she was born and raised, she couldn't believe how much destruction was still clearly visible nearly a year after Hurricane Maria devastated the island. Along with the destruction, she saw many homeless people whose faces were filled with anguish and despair.

“When I arrived on the island, at that moment I thought about the difference between when I lived there and now,” Pagan said. “It is sad to see beautiful places full of debris, to see how much the environment suffered in this event, and especially the homes of the families. But in spite of that being part of my island I tried every day to give my best, and give even more than what I could give, learning everything to know about the projects and thus be able to plant a grain of sand in the land where I grew up.”

Pagan, a Department of the



Wilmarie Pagan, front right, tours the Guajataca Dam in Isabela, Puerto Rico on August 31.

Army intern working in the design section, had the opportunity for a one-month rotation and decided to work in the Antilles Office in Puerto Rico for work experience and because she wanted to contribute to getting the island's infrastructure up and running again.

“The first phase for civil projects was to remove electrical poles and

lines that had distributed energy to the town of Dorado,” she explained. “Also, in the military area I helped to inspect a project where the new entry of Fort Buchanan was being renovated. I was involved in inspecting the temporary connection of the guard house and the illumination of the area.”

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Puerto Rico Con't

After civil-type projects, Pagan also worked on construction teams. She gained insight about the devastating effects of hurricane-force winds and how much or how little structures can withstand them.

“Every day we inspected numerous projects and made sure everything was going well. I saw such projects as channeling rivers to reduce flooding, repairs to the spillway of the Guajataca Dam, repairs of military buildings, and new dikes that will reduce future flooding,” she said.



Pagan and Antilles Office Deputy District Commander, Maj. Alexander Walker Rodriguez, discuss repairs near the spillway of the Guajataca Dam.

Pagan said that she could personally relate to how Puerto

Rico's badly damaged infrastructure affected tens of thousands of people. Her own family in Puerto Rico had no damage to their home, but they had to learn to live without power

for five months. But overall, she said that her deployment was well worth it, and that she gained a lot personally.

“I learned that together as a team we can get a lot accomplished,” she said. “It is interesting to see the outcome of a group that shares its knowledge by providing ideas and sharing that knowledge with others. It is impressive how a human being can be willing to help unconditionally for those who need it.”



During her rotation to Puerto Rico, Pagan learned about erosion control methods and other ways to harness excess water flows.

Search and Rescue Teams Use Falls Dam for Realistic Training

North Carolina's Urban Search and Rescue Regional Response system provides quick disaster response for locating and rescuing victims. The Urban Search and Rescue (USR) program responds to every kind of disaster, and the state maintains seven regional Urban Search and Rescue Task Forces. During Hurricane Florence, the Swift Water Rescue Team went into action to assist people who were in danger.

"Our rescue team was deployed to Scotland County," said Capt. Mike Davidson, Technical Rescue Program Manager. "On at least one occasion during the deployment, skills that were taught at the most recent training were utilized. Two of our newest water rescue technicians from that class were on the deployment along with a number of the instructors from the class."

That most recent training Davidson referred to took place at Falls Dam in late August. The churning waters below the dam provided the most realistic area for the team's specific needs.

"Typically the Neuse River in the Raleigh area does not have the flow necessary for that training," Davidson said. "However, when we can coordinate a release of at least 2000 cubic feet per second (cfs) from the dam with our training dates, we are able to train in water that meets those goals. The biggest advantage to us is it allows us to train locally without the need to travel to other rivers within the state."

The Wilmington District is eager to offer its facilities to local, state and other federal agencies for training. U.S.



Swift Water Rescue Team members train throughout the year to maintain their proficiency in search and rescue tactics.

Search and Rescue Con't

Army units from Fort Bragg, for example, have used Corps projects for various training exercises, and the Cary Fire Department Swift-Water Rescue Team trained below Jordan Dam recently by using high releases from floodwaters stored from Hurricane Florence.

“We have good relations with the area fire departments and they use Falls Lake for different types of training throughout the year, as well as provide us rescue back-up when we have confined space entries on the project,” said Carol Banaitis. “Being able to support their training leads to a better partnership, and hopefully we’ll be able to partner again in the future.”

Davidson explained that his organization is a local Fire Department charged with saving lives and property. In addition to fighting fires they have a trained rescue team that



During Hurricane Florence, Swift Water Rescue Team members went into action to assist people who were in danger.

performs rescues in several technical areas such as Trench Rescue, Confined Space Rescue, Vehicle Extrication, High Angle Rescue, Structural Collapse Rescue and Swift Water Rescue.

“For Water Rescue we need to do periodic continuous education training, as well as new technician training, in water that

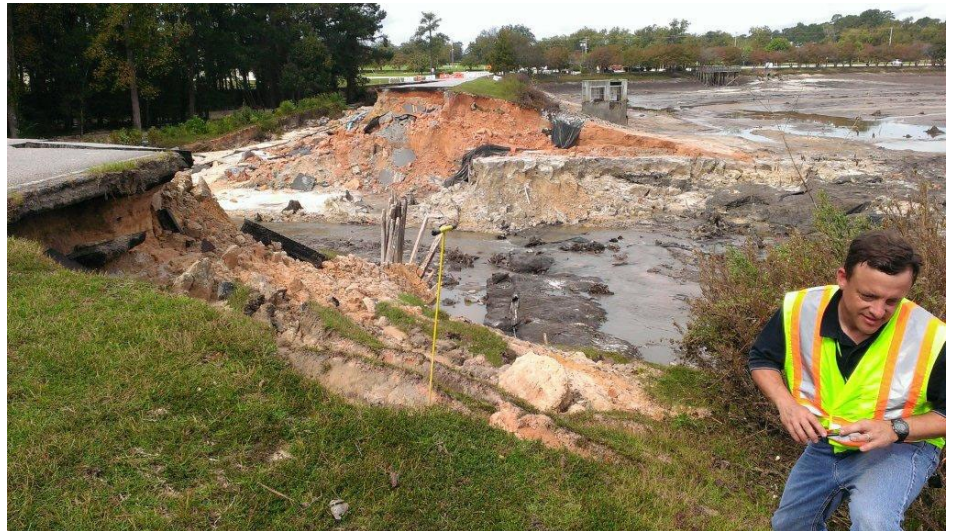
closely represents the water we face when performing rescues. Davidson said that the training they do throughout the year is vital. He said this is even more so in the technical rescue areas as they are low frequency and high risk events compared to some of the other disciplines that they are trained in.

District Wins National Dam Safety Team of the Year Award

A dedicated and experienced group of Wilmington District engineers and scientists earned the 2018 Dam Safety Team of the Year for its work on the Fort Jackson Dam Project Delivery Team (PDT).

Civil engineer Ed Dunlop headed the PDT that was formed in response to a request by officials from the U.S. Army installation Fort Jackson in South Carolina to assist with design and construction of repairs to Semmes Lake Dam, the Upper and Lower Legion Lake Dam, and Lower Twin Lake Dam after the damaging flood of 2015.

“The PDT started with an investigation of the dam failures, and through this early involvement by geotechnical engineers and geologists with the Fort Jackson Department of Public Works (DPW) we developed strong relationships which facilitated open dialogue and design input throughout the project life,” Dunlop said. “The PDT solicited and involved more than 10 different stakeholders, including



Mitch Hall, Wilmington District Chief of Geotechnical and Dam Safety Section, moves to another area of the dam site for further inspections.

Fort Jackson DPW, other USACE organizations, the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) staff, and private industry.”

Dunlop said continuous, and face-to-face engagement resulted in a cohesive team effort. The team’s robust engineering, professionalism and human quality earned complete trust and respect from the main stakeholders at Fort Jackson.

“Every component of the team, from the customer to the designers, was fundamental in executing a

project that flawlessly followed a planned schedule, met all milestones and maintained the efforts within budget for the two-year duration of the design phase,” he explained. “This efficiency was significantly promoted by the continuous engagement, support and mentoring from upper management within the Charleston, Jacksonville, and Wilmington Districts and the South Atlantic Division (SAD). The Savannah and Mobile Districts also provided

Dam Safety Team Con't

key support roles in this effort. The success of the team has shown the effectiveness with which USACE can mobilize resources across multiple districts to engage a challenging dam safety project and create strong relationships with the project sponsor and other interested parties.”

Dunlop said that during their time at Fort Jackson the team developed a strong respect for the powerful weather events that caused so much damage. By standing in and observing the widespread destruction, they put extra effort into their work.

“Potential failure modes are identified during Periodic Assessments of a dam,” said Dunlop. “When inspecting a dam

emphasis is placed on locating signs of the potential failure modes. Inspectors can learn about what to look for by studying failures of other dams. One example of a failure mode is seepage through an earth embankment dam. Seepage can carry soil through the dam and over a period of time could form a path for water to flow. An inspector looks for wet areas on the downstream side of the dam, which may indicate seepage through the dam. Seepage through a dam can also be identified by depressions on the surface of the dam. Depressions on the surface can indicate that soil is being transported by seeping water from within the dam.”

Dunlop said the Wilmington

Engineering Technical Services performed surveys of the Semmes Dam site and prepared numerous cost estimates for alternatives that were studied early in the design. In addition, Dunlop said Engineering Construction team members performed the Hydraulics and Hydrology analysis that determined the height of the dam and the dimensions of the labyrinth weir, and the Geotechnical section performed the geotechnical analysis that determined the internal zones of the dam, as well as seismic analysis that was used to set the elevations of the foundation of the new embankment. Finally, the teammates of Engineering Design prepared the plans and specifications that the construction contractor will use to construct the dam and site features.

Dunlop said construction to build a new dam has been awarded, and that a pre-construction conference was held on Nov. 8, at Fort Jackson. The project is expected to take more than a year and a half to be completed.



Shannon Geoly and Mitch Hall inspect an intake valve structure at the Semmes Lake Dam site.

District team took direction from the Charleston District’s Project Management section for the design and construction of the Semmes Lake Dam, while

NUMEROUS ACCOMPLISHMENTS RECOGNIZED AT TOWN HALL

Wilmington District Commander Col. Robert Clark said during the Town Hall on Oct. 12 that throughout the District each employee was committed and pitched in to make Fiscal Year 18 (FY18) very successful.

“We executed more than 720 contract actions. That’s amazing and pretty high for this District for \$360-million in obligations,” Clark said. “We completed the Language and Culture Center at Fort Bragg for the U.S. Army Special Operations Command, and our dredge fleet completed 973 days of operations with 328 days for the *MURDEN*, 481 days for the *CURRITUCK* and 164 days for the *SNELL*. We completed the Wilmington Harbor Improvement study, and we finished Wrightsville Beach and Ocean Isle Coastal Storm Risk Management projects which protected lives and property during Hurricane Florence.”

For FY18, Clark said the Wilmington District saw 170 deployments that supported the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico



District Commander Col. Robert Clark addresses the crowd during the Town Hall.

(Hurricane Maria), California (Wildfires), and North Carolina (Hurricane Florence). The Wilmington District supported those disasters with 117 employees volunteering, some deploying multiple times. He said that even though Hurricane Florence arrived at an inconvenient time, that missions continued and the District was able to meet the year-end close out.

“This was a bad time to have a storm, but we were able to accomplish our year-end mission. We were able to support the state

and local communities with emergency management,” he said, while our own homes and families were being impacted by Hurricane Florence. He further stated this is a remarkable achievement

Clark said that the annual Climate Survey revealed useful information to improve the District. He said the goal for responses from U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) headquarters was 55 percent. The Wilmington District had 56 percent

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TOWN HALL CON'T

of employees responded.

“The Climate Survey requirement determines whether this is the best place to work,” he said. “I believe that this is one of the best places to work. Wilmington was my number one choice for a new assignment.

It’s has a good reputation and a lot of good projects. But more importantly, if you get recognized as a good place to work, and if your employees believe that, it helps retain quality folks. Therefore, the surveys are important. And one of the questions that made me the happiest and proud, and I hope you’re proud too, is that you responded by answering when



District Water Manager Tony Young received field reports hourly about lake levels.

needed you’ll put in the extra effort. We had the highest ranking in the South Atlantic Division. So I think that speaks volumes of our people and our character. It goes back to how much we were able to accomplish during Florence.”

Col. Clark said that the Wilmington District’s projects and the Regulatory Branch had a busy, and very successful year.

“Regulatory completed 1200 jurisdictional determinations, more than 1,000 pre-application consultations, 1700 nationwide and regional and general permits, and 24 stand in permits. That’s so very impressive across the board.”

He said that the dams generated over \$2-million, and more than seven million visitors took advantage of recreational opportunities. “We issued over 1800 Every Kid in the



The Regulatory Branch completed 1200 jurisdictional determinations and more than 1,000 pre-application consultations.

Park passes, and our reservoirs provided nearly 145,000 acre feet of water storage supply yielding approximately 354 million gallons of drinking water a day,” Clark said.

Col. Clark recognized individual and team awards that reflected positively for the entire District at South Atlantic Division (SAD) headquarters and nationally at USACE headquarters.

“We had Planner of the Year, and the Dam Safety Team of the Year. That’s a significant accomplishment, so next year we should expand on that,” he said.

District Holds First-Ever Responding Strong Day

The wrath of Hurricane Florence caused widespread destruction in North Carolina causing billions of dollars of damages. Wilmington District employees were not immune from that destruction. Several received considerable damages to their homes and were displaced while their homes were or continue to be repaired.

Responding Strong Day was the idea of District Commander Col. Robert Clark. It was gradually modified by input from staff members. The event was set up with four sessions lasting 20-25 minutes in an "round robin" scenario. The first session included "Home Owners, Wind and Hail and Flood Insurance Explained" with an insurance expert who explained the intricacies of home policies in detail. The second session was "Disaster Preparedness, Home Disaster Planning and Safety"



Contracting Officer Mike Mullen, left, asks questions during the insurance presentation at Responding Strong Day.

with Wilmington District Emergency Management Specialist Angela Zephier, Office of Safety Chief Bill Harris, and experts from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). The third session was "How to Select a Good Contractor to Do Repair Work" that was presented by Joel Macon from the North Carolina Licensing Board for General Contractors. The last session was titled "Getting to Know Your USACE Chaplain" with Chaplain (Col.) Raymond

Robinson Jr., from Headquarters U.S. Army Corps of Engineers who explained his role as Command Chaplain.

More than 70 employees attended this first-ever event. Those who attended said that the event was invaluable because they learned something new that they were previously unaware of or were ill informed.

"During the insurance session, I learned that although having a

Responding Strong Con't

policy for wind and hail is great, one may want to think of adding riders to the policy for unknown events,” said Andrea Green of Contracting.

Local insurance salesman Hernan Lois talked about the insurance industry and the questions that most homeowners don't know to ask. He explained that there's not a lot of difference between insurance companies, and that it pays to read the fine print on your policy.

“Hernan, was extremely informative,” said Contracting Officer Mike Mullen. “Never once did it feel as if he was there to do anything other than help us understand the claims process and be informed on how to best make decisions pertaining to insurance. His advice was great regarding flood insurance, understanding my current policy, and comparing the providers in our area.”

Mullen added that the discussion that hit home the most for him was understanding the



Selika Newton, right, and Gloria Price look over insurance information during the home owner's insurance session.

claims cycle as he is currently struggling to get a fair and reasonable price from his insurance provider. He said he appreciated the district having experts who provided candid advice.

Terry Hester, also of Contracting, learned some invaluable information during the "How to Pick a Contractor" session that any construction work over \$30,000 in North Carolina requires the contractor to have a

license.

“I also learned that you can verify that license at the North Carolina Licensing Board for General Contractors (NCLBGC) website,” he said. “From the ‘Home Owners Insurance’ session I learned that insurance companies will basically provide you with an initial check, but you still have the opportunity to claim actual costs once the work has been completed.”

Glazener Wins Planning Excellence Award

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Planning Excellence Award provides honorary recognition to an outstanding District employee in a professional planning position. It's designed to recognize an individual's contributions to advance the state of the art of the practice of Civil Works water resources planning, and recognizes innovation, analytical sophistication, and creativity in the development of a planning product that achieves the principles of the Civil Works Strategic Plan.

The Wilmington District's Jason Glazener was recognized for his extraordinary service and accomplishments as a lead planner in the South Atlantic Division, Wilmington District during fiscal year 2017. His leadership and technical expertise in delivering critical and essential water resources solutions to the Nation and the state of North Carolina contributed immensely to advancing the state of art in the practice of water resources planning.

"I work on a wide range of projects and programs as a civil works planner," Glazener said. "These project types include coastal storm risk management, flood risk management, ecosystem restoration, and stream bank erosion protection. I also manage programs



Jason Glazener stands before a stream bank erosion protection project at Southport, NC.

where we provide planning and technical assistance to state and locals for a wide range of water resource issues or opportunities."

Glazener made exceptionally significant contributions to nearly every planning program effort executed by the Wilmington District during the nomination period. Of note, these civil works projects included multiple Continuing Authorities Program studies, Planning Assistance to States, and Flood Plain Management Services for the state of North Carolina.

"I think that a good way to summarize it is that a planner needs to be able to see the big picture of a project, understand the moving parts and how those parts fit

together, and use a knowledge of the required guidance and regulations to help guide the technical team to a sound recommended plan and approved study report," Glazener said.

A team player, Glazener has a vital role as a planner. With the critical reviews and processes that a project goes through during the feasibility phase, having a member who can help guide the team through that process and develop a successful report is invaluable. On top of that he loves this kind of work.

"I think motivation comes from a combination of enjoying the teamwork dynamic in the office and also wanting to deliver helpful services to our customers," said Glazener.

Kaltenbach Wins the Timothy Skeen Geotechnical Professional of the Year Award

Kelley Kaltenbach, who earned his Professional Geologist license earlier this year, received another award recognizing his accomplishments in the field of geology. He's the South Atlantic Division (SAD) winner of the Timothy Skeen Geotechnical Professional of the Year Award which recognizes his professionalism and commitment to excellence that advances geotechnical, geology and materials community of practice.

Kaltenbach has always been intrigued by geology. In the office, he analyzes sediment, rock formations and various types of concrete used in construction. But he's most comfortable outdoors working from the back of a pickup truck

next to a drilling rig in locations such as the District's Eagle Island Confined Disposal Facility (CDF) or working on board the multi-purpose vessel *SNELL* conducting vibracore missions. During the latter, he enjoys the process of sampling the best grains of sand that will remain on beaches longer than other types of sand, and that will bleach in the sunlight for an aesthetically pleasing off white color.

In other roles he provides expertise in the field of soils, rock, material strengths, groundwater assessment, rock slope stability assessment, foundation assessment, and execution of drilling, survey, and explorations to the geotechnical engineer. He's a well-

rounded geologist who caught the attention of SAD officials who acknowledge to reward his professionalism and dedication for the award.

"A geologist and geotechnical engineer have complimentary roles that are not all inclusive of one another," he said. "Together, they provide engineering guidance, design parameters, text, verbal and graphical input to plans and specifications, field inspections of infrastructure and may conduct construction quality assurance on demand. Geologists are integral to the USACE Dam Safety Program by monitoring instrumentation, conducting field inspections, implementing foundation repairs, drilling operations, and helping the project delivery teams visualize complexities in the subsurface."

Kaltenbach likes to work on a team, something that he grew to love as a Soldier in the U.S. Army. He likes to give answers to complicated questions on the spot, but he also enjoys the challenge of researching complex geological patterns that he might discover while on a project delivery team.

"I like to contribute my expertise about geology to the project manager who might need to know if a foundation is solid enough for a structure to be built on top of it. I really love what I do and being part of a team," said Kaltenbach.



Kelley Kaltenbach is a team player and enjoys all aspects of geology.

PHILPOTT DAM CELEBRATES 65 YEARS OF RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES, SCENIC BEAUTY AND ABUNDANT POWER SUPPLY

Despite being almost overshadowed by Hurricane Florence, more than 600 visitors helped celebrate the 65th birthday of Philpott Dam on Sept. 22, at the Visitor Assistance Center in Bassett, Virginia.

Built 65 years ago after a catastrophic flood in 1937 caused significant damage in the Smith River Valley and sparked the need for flood prevention, Congress authorized the construction of Philpott Dam in 1944. By October of 1951, flood control was being provided and reassured people who lived along and near the Smith River that it was finally going to be tamed.

Today, people in the area still don't take the dam for granted.

"The local public recognizes the importance of Philpott Dam and what it has done to protect property and lives, especially immediately after frequent heavy rain periods," said Philpott Operations Manager Chris Powell. "Hurricane Florence



Philpott Operations Manager Chris Powell addresses the crowd at the Visitor Assistance Center overlook.

came just a week prior to our 65th celebration which provided many teaching opportunities. Also, we keep and share many photos from the historical floods that reminds people what used to happen before the dam was built."

Philpott Lake is well known for its scenic beauty and recreational benefits. Powell, who grew up in the area and started his career there in 2003, loves the lake and spends a lot of personal time enjoying all that it has to offer for him and his family.

"Philpott has always been labeled a hidden gem because it has always lived in the shadow of neighboring Smith Mountain Lake," Powell said. "Development is limited which is not the case for Smith Mountain Lake which is managed by American Electric Power AEP. Philpott is definitely becoming a top tourist designation as it offers some of the best paddling waters, great fishing, abundant wildlife, aesthetic views and some of the best camping

Con't on Page 21

PHILPOTT CON'T

facilities in the state of Virginia.”

Powell said Philpott Dam reached its full potential in 1953 with the completion of the powerhouse and the start-up of three generators having a combined output of 14,100 kilowatts. Today, Philpott’s electrical power enters a sophisticated grid system which distributes the power where needed to satisfy the needs equivalent to 1,600 homes to the area.

Powerhouse Operators control a delicate balance between the upstream and downstream sides of the 920-foot long, 220-foot high dam. At the top of the flood pool, Philpott Dam is holding back enough water to increase the lake size by 1000 acres. The operators carefully control the release of the extra water in the flood pool through generation or by opening the dam’s sluice gates, making room for the next flood. Powell said that significant technological advancements are on the horizon for Philpott Power House.

“Within the next few year the Philpott Powerhouse will undergo a complete rehab on the equipment



Ranger Jessica Mason and Powell talk with a visitor atop Philpott dam.

that produces electricity,” said Powell. “The generators and turbines that are currently in the powerhouse are the original ones from the 1953 completion date. Upgrading this outdated equipment with new technology will give Philpott the ability to not only produce roughly 25 percent more electricity, but also have more variability in water releases.”

For 65 years the towns of Bassett, Martinsville and in the surrounding area have enjoyed the economic benefits of Philpott Lake.

According to Powell, the lake

averages more than 325,000 visits a year. In return, this creates a total of \$8.5-million in spending within the local economy which provides more than 100 jobs. The recreational opportunities and scenery make it easy to understand Philpott’s appeal.

“People visit Philpott to get a tranquil feeling from getting away from their busy lifestyles,” Powell said. “Visitors are always amazed at the natural beauty and natural setting. The locals have started labeling Philpott as the Paddlers Paradise.”

CONTRACTORS HIGHLIGHT THEIR SERVICES AT ANNUAL SOUTHEAST REGION FEDERAL CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ENVIRONMENTAL SUMMIT

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Naval Facilities Engineering Command, Fort Bragg, Marine Corps Installations East, Seymour Johnson AFB, other Army, Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps installations, and Coast Guard, gathered in Wilmington on Oct. 24-25, for the annual Southeast Region Federal Construction, Infrastructure & Environmental Summit held at the Wilmington Convention Center (The Summit).

The event focuses on networking and trade show activities that allow businesses to market their services and products to more than 700 general contractors, specialty contractors, engineers, architects and suppliers. Wilmington District Small Business Deputy Mrs. Donna Walton is the liaison for coordination between the host, the North Carolina Military Business Center (NCMBC), in conjunction with North Carolina Senators Richard Burr and Thom Tillis.

“As the Small Business Deputy I educate businesses on what the Army Corps of Engineer’s needs, how to compete for federal government work, how to use the Federal Business Opportunities website to look for government work, and the Federal Government Acquisition Regulations,” she said.

Mrs. Walton completes and approves through the South Atlantic Division the conference package to include Wilmington,



District Commander Col. Robert Clark and Chief of Coastal Resident Office Shannon Geoly sit on a panel at the summit to discuss the Wilmington District’s role during and after Hurricane Florence.

Charleston, Savannah, and Norfolk Districts. She holds informative meetings within the Wilmington District to ensure that everyone who is involved in the conference knows what to expect. The South Atlantic Division and North Atlantic Division government personnel in attendance are looking specifically for companies at The Summit that can provide a variety of services and supplies to meet mission needs.

“Our audience at this conference was for the construction companies, both small and large and either military or civil works, and the Architectural and Engineering firms that can provide designs for the major Military Construction (MILCON) projects and the

Sustainment, Restoration and Modernization (SRM) Projects,” she said. “We need companies that can compete for the MILCON, SRM, and Civil Works projects, and they need to have experience and the manpower to do the job, as well as the bonding capabilities needed for the project.”

Mrs. Walton said that several firms at The Summit are veteran-owned or hire veterans. She said that being prior service can be advantageous. “A veteran or retired military member can be useful to the company they work for if they have the security clearances required to be able to perform on USACE missions,” she said. “We manage construction for the U.S. Army Special

SUMMIT CON'T

Operations Command at Fort Bragg and the Military Ocean Terminal at Sunny Point in Brunswick County. Both locations require regular and high-level security clearances. It is also useful if we have set aside a procurement for the Service Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business Socio-Economic category. They will need to be a SDVOSB to compete and be eligible for award of a contract.”

The Summit is held in October each year and included pre-activities on Oct. 24, provided were tours of the U.S. Coast Guard Sector North Carolina Command Center and the North Carolina State Port, both facilities are located in Wilmington. An evening social was hosted by NCMBC for all attendees.

Opening remarks were presented by Mr. Scott Dorney, Executive Director, N.C. Military Business Center and John F. Downing, Dean of Continuing Education, Cape Fear Community College. Morning Keynote speaker was Robert B. Hughes, Executive Director, Air Force Office of Energy Assurance.

The Summit included several breakout sessions for open dialogue between the government representatives and the business community. All of the agencies in attendance were able to present their agencies forecast during The Summit. There was also a trade show and separate networking sessions for business and for government. A round table discussion was held during lunch on how the various Government agencies handle their disaster relief processes after a hurricane.



The District's Deputy for Small Business, Donna Walton, received the Summit Individual Award. On hand to present her award were Wilmington District Commander Col. Robert Clark, and North Carolina Military Business Center summit staff members Scott Dorney, left, and Greg Bean.

Mrs. Walton was honored at The Summit and received The Summit Individual Award. She was recognized for “exceptional service, meritorious achievement and conspicuous innovation in the federal construction, infrastructure, energy and environmental marketplace.” On hand to present her award were Wilmington District Commander Col. Robert Clark, and North Carolina Military Business Center Summit staff members Scott Dorney and Greg Bean.

“I was honored to receive the individual Summit award from the North Carolina Military Business Center. NCMBC is part of the North Carolina Community College System. I fully support NCMBC and can always count on NCMBC to support the Wilmington District. North Carolina is the

only state in the country with a military business center, as there are numerous military bases from all of the Military Branches in North Carolina. Again, I was honored to be recognized by the North Carolina Military Business Center and I appreciate all they do for Small Businesses in the state of North Carolina,” said Mrs. Walton.

For more information about the Wilmington District Small Business Office go to the following link;

<http://www.saw.usace.army.mil/Business-With-Us/Small-Business/>

For More information about the North Carolina Military Business Center go to the following link;

<http://www.ncmbc.us>

Fort Bragg Resident Office's Bell Earns Hard Hat of the Year Award

Fort Bragg is well known for its fast-paced operations tempo shared by the elite Soldiers of the 82nd Airborne Division and U.S. Army Special Operations Command. The pace of the tempo filters down to subordinate units and in some ways, Department of the Army Civilian employees.

At the Wilmington District's Fort Bragg USASOC Resident Engineer Office, Construction Control Representative Art Bell is responsible for inspection and quality assurance on such projects as the Special Operations Forces Civil Affairs Battalion Complex and Battalion Operation Facility. A U.S. Air Force

veteran, he's use to the intensity of military construction and thrives on it. His dedication to his job and construction mission earned him the Hard Hat of the Year Award.

"The award, I believe, embodies teamwork through recognition by my peers for demonstrating the passion to provide the best facilities for the Special Forces as possible," Bell said. "By understanding my role in quality assurance and my attention to detail I approach my job daily as if it were my personal home that I was building."

Bell wears many hats in his job. He ensures that safety standards, labor provisions and quality control

payment estimates."

"Probably one of the best things that I do in a group of co-workers is to create a positive team-orientated working environment. I ensure projects are completed on time, on schedule and within contract cost. When your team excels you can get anything done, no matter the workload or the operations tempo."

Bell's diverse educational background has given him a well-rounded career where's he's able to adapt to various missions or jobs that require skill sets that he's acquired over the years. He's been an Air Force civil engineering technician while on active duty, a project superintendent quality control manager in the private industry, and a civilian construction representative for the Air Force.

Working for such a highly respected organization such as USASOC makes him feel proud and gives him a sense of purpose. Simply put, he has nothing but respect for his customers who wear the green berets.

"It is an honor to support their complex mission in providing new facilities for their diverse training needs," he said.

provisions of each contract are fully complied with, and in his contract administration duties he supports modifications, submittal reviews, answering requests for information and processing



Art Bell: "By understanding my role in quality assurance and my attention to detail I approach my job daily as if it were my personal home that I was building."

Volunteer Fishing Tournament Group Supports Active Duty Military, Wounded Vets at Jordan Lake

“Having never been in the service I see this as a way to support our servicemen and women and to say thank you for the sacrifices that they have made and will continue to make to protect our country. We are a completely volunteer organization, and no one receives any compensation other than feeling good about what we do.”

David Blanton, vice president and tournament director for the non-profit Warriors on the Water Military Appreciation Bass Fishing Tournament, looks forward to the month of May when volunteers host the annual tournament at the Wilmington District’s Jordan Lake. Wilmington District rangers assist as needed, and ensured that public facilities were available for use.

The first fishing tournament, he said, started in 2006 on Shearon Harris Reservoir in Wake County with approximately 60 boats. Blanton said it was the idea of three veterans as a way to say thanks to service members. It was only intended to be a one-time event, but



Jordan Lake has been the chosen site for the annual fishing tournament.

after the tournament was over, someone asked if the founders were going to continue it the following year.

“Their answer was to make it bigger!” Blanton said. “So the three decided to form a committee and here we are, thirteen years later. The next year the field was expanded to 150 boats and moved to Jordan Lake.”

Blanton said Warriors on the

Water accommodates all branches of active duty service members from Fort Bragg, Seymour Johnson Air Force Base, and Camp Lejeune. They especially have a soft heart for those who attend the tournament who suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and other battle-related injuries.

“We have had wounded service members from the Wounded

Fishing Tournament Con't

Warriors Transition Center at Fort Bragg in the tournament,” he said. “As far as what they and the active duty service members get out of fishing a tournament, I would say they see the support from the community and the Nation, and they get a day off to hopefully just relax and enjoy the outdoors away from work. And there are always the friendships that are made with their boaters and the whole organization. We average taking out at least 150 service members.”

Blanton said there’s an additional outreach program called Little Heroes. Every year, a few volunteer boaters go to one of the schools on Fort Bragg to talk about



Volunteers are key to successful fishing tournaments because of their dedication to service members.

fishing and the outdoors.

“This is just another way we feel we can serve our veterans,” he said.

The success of the program has begun a dialogue about expansion to include hunting and other

recreational activities. Michael Green, Warriors on the Water president, said that it’s possible, but only for veterans in North Carolina.

“I want to grow it because we have been asked numerous time to expand to other states from New York to Pennsylvania to Virginia, and to South Carolina,” he said. “But due to us being all volunteers and most having jobs, it would be hard to expand to other states. Bringing in other activities is always welcome, and this year we had a fund raiser to send a hunter to Michigan for a deer hunting trip.”



Two Fort Bragg Soldiers, right, try a semi-secluded spot to fish with a volunteer.

JOHN H. KERR RANGERS EARN SAD WATER SAFETY AWARDS

Two Wilmington District rangers were awarded the South Atlantic Division (SAD) Outstanding Individual Water Safety Award for their outstanding commitment, dedication, and contribution to the program.

Ranger David Schwartz and seasonal ranger Jerry Jarman, both of John H. Kerr Dam and Reservoir, practice water safety year-round. While most attention to water safety is given during the warmer months, Schwartz and Jarman see each day as a time to be mindful of what to do when in and around the water. Schwartz points out the difference between the warm and cold seasons.

"Hypothermia and cold water emersion are obviously much more apparent in the fall/winter timeframe, but experiencing extremely cold water and difficult swimming conditions can occur at any time of the year, thus why learning to swim and wearing a life jacket year-round is so important," said Schwartz. "You never know when you are going to be exposed to unexpected cold water and life threatening water conditions."

"If you fall into cold water with a life jacket on and can't be immediately

rescued, try to remain calm and get into the 'huddle position', meaning bring your legs up and arms in and huddle in place, trying to preserve and maintain your internal body temperature. If you don't have a

life jacket on and you fall in, still get in the huddle position, but try to keep your head up and out of the cold water," he said.

Jarman, a retired deputy sheriff with the Mecklenburg County Sheriff's Office, has seen his share of fatalities at lakes, in rivers and other bodies of water. He firmly believes that most drowning's can be prevented by simply wearing a Personal Floatation Device (PFD).

"I'm proactive in the summertime when I'm patrolling beach areas," he said. "I pass out water safety pamphlets and tell parents to pay close attention to their children, even if they're in shallow water. And not to scare them, but also explain to the



Volunteers are key to successful fishing tournaments because of their dedication to service members.

parents how hard it was in my previous job to tell a parent or a loved one that a family member had drowned when I felt if they had taken better safety precautions it could have been avoided."

Schwartz said that during hunting season he advises those on the water not to operate their boats while drinking. In addition, even though they're bulky, he advises hunters and fishermen to leave their PFDs on.

"I think most Sportsman understand the risk of cold water emersion and the benefits of wearing a PFD, especially in the fall and winter. No giant fish or beautiful duck is worth not coming back home to your family."

Veterans Day is Time to Reflect on Service and Sacrifice to the Nation

November 11 is commemorated each year as Veterans Day, a celebration of the patriotism, service and sacrifice of all those who served and presently serve in the U.S. military.

November 11, 1918 is generally considered the end of World War I or what many refer to as “the Great War.” On the 11th hour, of the 11th day, of the 11th month, the battlefields of Europe fell silent to the hostilities of war after more than four years of fighting. In 1938, Congress declared Armistice Day, (the agreement that stopped the fighting on the Western Front), a holiday. In 1954, the name was changed to Veterans Day in honor all military veterans.

This year, the ongoing World War I Centennial Commemoration is raising awareness of the history of the Army American Expeditionary Forces and their contributions to victory in “the Great War.” The U.S. Army, Air Force, Marine Corps, Navy and Coast Guard join the Nation on November 11 in recognizing the many veterans, past and present for their commitment to the ideals of this Nation.

“It’s imperative that we continue to celebrate all military veterans whom have honorably served and/or presently serving, in an effort to maintain freedom throughout the world” said retired U.S.



The District was honored to have former Marine and President of Chapter 885 of Vietnam Veterans of America Curt Farrison as guest speaker. Farrison did two tours with the Marine Corps in South Vietnam as a radio operator.

Navy Chief Gerry Sauls who’s heading the Wilmington District’s Veterans Day observance. “Veterans Day is more than just a federal holiday. It’s a time to reflect and pay homage to our brothers and sisters who died defending our civil liberties and it’s a time to say, ‘thank you for your service’ to those who are serving today.”

The Army and other military services honor and support their veterans in many ways. The Army believes that every Soldier is a Soldier for Life. The Army’s Soldier for Life Program supports

transitioning Soldiers and veterans with opportunities for employment and education. Coalitions of private-sector employers are stepping up to hire veterans and their spouses. Veterans often use the skills they learned in the military to continue to serve their communities.

“I’m a Soldier for life,” said Sheila Figgins, a former Army intelligence analyst. “Veterans share such a unique bond, and I’m so proud to be a part of our large extended family.”

AWARDS AND CAMARADERIE

Congratulations to Wilmington District Resource Management Budget Analyst Lisa James who received a Certificate of Achievement at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers South Atlantic Division (SAD) headquarters in Atlanta for graduating from the 2018 Regional Leadership Development Program (RLDP).

Participants in RLDP gain an increased ability to recognize and respond to issues and challenges within or across the Major Subordinate Command (MSC). It's designed for high-performing, mid-level leaders who have the potential and motivation to progress into more senior leadership roles at the District and across South Atlantic Division Headquarters (SADHQ).

"I truly enjoyed and am grateful for the opportunity to have participated in the Regional Leadership Development

Program," James said.

"I learned quite a few things, for example, the importance of building enduring relationships, networking and maintaining the integrity of a project/mission while ensuring everyone involved feels valued and empowered. I am also grateful for the tools that I learned to improve on emotional

intelligence, particularly social awareness and the ability to understand and relate to others while accomplishing the mission.

James said that she increased her knowledge of effective communication,

negotiation skills, and conflict resolution.

In addition, she learned more about the District's Regional Civil Works and Military Programs, improved her confidence and management and problem-solving skills.



From left to right in photo: SAD Command Sgt. Maj. Douglas Padgett, SAD Commander Brig. Gen. Diana Holland, Lisa James, SAD Regional Business Director Theodore Brown, and SAD Director of Programs Alvin Lee.



Congratulations to "Troop Beverly Hills" who won the 2018 Office of Counsel Halloween Costume Contest and Trophy. From L-R: Richelle Hardman, Christy Folta, Rachel Siefers, and Elizabeth Peedin. Second place went to "Kim Possible", aka, Keleigh Cox, left. There was a three way tie for third place. The winners were "The Weather Channel Guy" (Wes Brown), "Day of the Dead Senorita" (Lauren Davis), and the "Infamous Banksy Self-Destructing Painting" (Austin Balser).

Columbus Day: Why It's a Federal Holiday

He made four trips from Spain across the Atlantic in 1492, 1493, 1498 and 1502.

Christopher Columbus' remarkable accomplishments at the time changed human history forever by bringing in what is known as the Columbian Exchange; the historic exchange of plants, animals, disease, culture, technology and people between the Old and New Worlds. As for Columbus himself, he mapped the coasts of Central America and South America, but never set foot on land that is now the United States and Canada. He died thinking he had

discovered Asia.

Columbus has long been believed to have been born in Genoa, Italy, although some historians say he was born in Spain's Catalonia region. He sailed for the Spanish crown, and his remains are in Spain. Italians in the United States have taken great pride in him, and sponsor many of the celebrations held in his name each year to honor Italian American heritage.

So how did we get a U.S. federal holiday in his name?

The first Columbus Day celebration

recorded in the United States was held in New York in 1792 to honor Italian American heritage and to mark Oct. 12, 1492, the day that Columbus and his ships first made landfall on an island in the Caribbean Sea. In 1892, President Benjamin Harrison issued a proclamation encouraging Americans to mark the 400th anniversary of Columbus's voyage with patriotic festivities. In 1937, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Congress, proclaimed Oct. 12, to be Columbus Day, a national holiday. In 1971, the holiday date was changed to the second Monday in October.



HAIL AND FAREWELL TO COLLEAGUES



NEW EMPLOYEE HIGHLIGHTS



Brandon Alred



Land Surveyor



Motorcycles

“

Surveying is the foundation upon which all construction is built. Without good survey data, knowing what conditions on the ground are like is

paramount to a successful project.



Dedicated SURVEYOR

My position as a land surveyor with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers varies. I go into the field and physically collect data for projects, use drafting software to turn that data into a useable product for engineers doing design work, and develop scopes of work for contractors when we don't have the availability to complete a project in house.



Amy Jenkins



Contract Specialist



Travel & photography

“

I am an essential cog in the machine that is the finest military force

in the world.



Military SUPPORTER

As a contract specialist with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers I am able to serve the men and women of our military. I am charged with ensuring federal tax dollars are used in the most efficient and effective manner possible while providing the needs of our warfighters. There is a great deal of pride that goes into what we do.

NEW EMPLOYEE HIGHLIGHTS



Kurt Heckendorf



Geotechnical Engineer

Grilling/smoking,
gardening, the outdoors

“

Even though soil materials
are out of sight, they are no
less important than others.
In some cases that makes
them even

more important
to understand.

**Detail
ORIENTED**

As a geotechnical engineer with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers I am worried that the project's foundations will support them, and that our projects will remain stable under the various loading conditions that Mother Nature will throw at them. This is not only true when new projects are being designed, but when evaluating and assessing the conditions of existing projects.



Stephen Stello



Civil Design Engineer

Golf, coaching soccer,
bible studies

“

Our aging infrastructure
needs to be maintained
and updated

now more
than ever.

**Creative
ENGINEER**

As a civil engineer with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers I help design and build infrastructure for the U.S. Army and the Nation. By executing my job well I can help provide for the common defense of the Nation, promote its general welfare, and secure the blessing of liberty for generations to come.

Community Spirit Holds Dear at Holiday Awards and Luncheon



District Commander Col. Robert Clark, above left, thanks the crowd for an outstanding Fiscal Year 18 at the luncheon. At right are teammates who received awards at the luncheon.



Employees help themselves to a delicious meal with various foods supplied by volunteers and organized by the Recreation Committee.



Baby Madison Rose got some attention during the luncheon from Anita Bissette, center, and proud parents Josh and Celia Newman.

HONORING ALL WHO SERVED



WWI
100
YEARS

VETERANS DAY

NOVEMBER 11, 2018



va.gov

